ETHNO-CULTURAL DYNAMICS IN AFRICAN AND NAGA WRITERS

(Thesis submitted to Nagaland University in partial fulfilment of requirements for award of Ph.D. degree in English)

By

A.Watinaro

Regn. No.-697 /2015 (w.e.f. 19/05/2015)

Under the supervision of

Prof. Nigamananda Das

Department of English

School of Humanities and Education

Nagaland University, Kohima Campus, Meriema

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DECLARATION

I, Ms. A. Watinaro, hereby declare that the subject matter of my thesis entitled *ETHNO-CULTURAL DYNAMICS IN AFRICAN AND NAGA WRITERS* is the bonafide record of work done by me under the supervision of Prof. Nigamananda Das and that the content of the thesis did not form the basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the dissertation has not been submitted by me for any other research degree, fellowship, associateship, etc. in any other university or institute. This is being submitted to the Nagaland University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English.

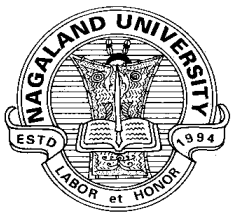
12th February 2020

Ms. A. Watinaro

Regn. No.- 697 /2015 (w.e.f. 19/05/2015)

Countersigned by:

Supervisor **Head**



Nagaland University

(A Central University established by the act of Parliament, 35/1989)

Department of English

Kohima Campus, Meriema, Kohima-797004, Nagaland, India

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis *Ethno-Cultural Dynamics in African and Naga Writers* is the bonafide record of research work done by Ms. A. Watinaro, Regn. No.- 697 /2015 (w.e.f. 19/05/2015), Department of English, Nagaland University, Kohima Campus, Meriema during 2015-2020. Submitted to the Nagaland University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English, this thesis has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or other title and that the thesis represents independent and original work on the part of the candidate under my supervision. This is again certified that the research has been undertaken as per UGC Regulations May 2016 (amended) and the candidate has fulfilled the criteria mentioned in the University Ordinances for submission of the thesis.

Dated the 12th Feb. 2020

Kohima **SUPERVISOR**

Prof. Nigamananda Das

Department of English

Nagaland University, Kohima Campus, Meriema

Kohima-797004, Nagaland, Mob.- +919436608904, Email- nndas69@yahoo.co.in

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A. Watinaro

Research Scholar

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Comparative Literature and its origin is traced back to Goethe's coining of the word *Weltliterature.* In 1827, he wrote to Eckhermann that "national literature does not mean much: the age of world literature is beginning, and everybody should contribute to hasten its advent" (Moretti 1). He states that although a literature is aesthetically unique and has historical roots, the literary imagination itself transcends national and linguistic demarcations. The discipline originated in Britain "as a reaction against the narrow nationalism of nineteenth-century scholarship" (Pathak 17). Comparative Literature as a distinct body is of a recent origin. However, its usage as a critical study has been in vogue for more than two thousand years in Europe alone. Terence, in his comedy *Phormio,* which was published in 161 B.C. juxtaposes and contrasts ancient and modern tendencies in literature. Although the Greeks could not develop Comparative Literature as a result of their closed world, the Romans had access to their works and brought in their literary works to make distinctive parallels with the Roman orators and poets. Although Quintilian was the pioneer, it was Longinus who roped in the discipline in a systematic manner. In order to recognize the spiritual kinship between the great minds, he juxtaposes Homer, Plato, Demosthenes, Thucydides and a few more.

Matthew Arnold is credited with the usage of the term 'Comparative Literature' for the first time in 1848 in a letter that he wrote. He wrote, "How plain it is now, though an attention to the comparative literatures for the last fifty years might have instructed anyone of it that England is in a certain sense, far behind the Continent" (Dhawan 1). When Arnold mentions it, however, he talks of it in terms of plurality of comparative literatures, and not as a discipline of comparison. He used it for contrasts as was apparent from his inaugural lecture as a Professor of Poetry at the Oxford. "No single event," he states, "no single literature, is adequately comprehended except in is relation to other events, to other literatures. The literature of ancient Greece, the literature of the Christian Middle Age, so long as they are regarded as two isolated

literatures, two isolated growths of the human spirit, are not adequately comprehended" (Dhawan 10). George Saintsbury described Arnold as the first English critic to highlight comparative criticism of different literatures "in a systematic and an impartial manner"(Ibid.).

There were comparative works of literature such as when the Hindu thought faced the American transcendental philosophy in the beginning part of nineteenth century. The first work in this discipline was Posnett's *Comparative Literature* in the 1880s. However, comparatism became more pronounced in the twentieth century. Comparative Literature has also been traced back by some scholars to the Cold War when a need was felt to counter the threat of Communism. The discipline was the need of the hour when the politico-cultural scenario in the United States of America necessitated the study of the teaching and the study of foreign languages and literature. It was felt that such a step would greatly enable the younger generation to imbibe the socio-cultural and political insights needed to face the challenges of the cold war period.

The early comparatists felt that the discipline "expressed universality and the kind of understanding gained by philologists about language families… an almost ideal realm" (Said 1993: 45). Rey Chow in *A Discipline of Tolerance* defines Comparative Literature as " the situation in which comparative literature finds itself today- a loose discourse network sprouting from an incessant proliferation, intermingling, and hybridization of subjects" (Chow 24). The possible topics for the discipline includes "comparative literary history, literature and the languages ; world literature, translation, and globalization; colonial and postcolonial literatures; deconstruction and its legacies; hermeneutics; gender, sexuality and eroticism; drama, theatre and performance; the history of the discipline; philosophy and religion; psychoanalysis, trauma and testimony; visual arts and architecture; technology, media, audio-visual culture; sociology, anthropology, and political economy; history and historiography; geography, geology and ecology"(15). David Ferris opines, "The Comparative drive helped Comparative Literature become the preeminent field for theory and transnational inquiry, a drive that placed Comparative Literature in the position of reflecting on what it means to study literature in

distinction to a practice that preferred to limit a literature to its historical and national geography" (Ferris 34).

The discipline came into prominence in 1900 when a whole section of the Historical Studies Congress in connection with the World Exhibition held in Paris was kept aside for '*Historie compare des litteratures*' (Wellek 34). This section was opened by Bruntiere with "European literature". The renowned French medievalist Gaston Paris also addressed the event. This was a prominent foundation for literature to focus on comparative aspects in a systematic manner.

Comparative Literature, as a distinct discipline, is fairly new and therefore, finds itself still developing when it comes to its methods, views and goals. The practitioners of the discipline do not have cent percent agreement on its workings and nothing concrete has been chartered out. Rather, they employ a variety of methods as they incline to this discipline. Some scholars investigate on the identities or similarities and some dwell on the differences and the disparities. However, such approaches only fail to reach the goals of the discipline although not entirely futile. The aim of a comparatist should be to find out the implications and the underlying identities of both similarities and differences so that even the differences can be given their proper place in a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the artist. It should be borne in mind that there can be no significant difference without any underlying identity" (Dhawan 11). The comparatist has to nurture an open mind, earnest and sincere in his investigations for truth.

The pioneers of Comparative Literature held the view that it was basically the study of a literature in connection with another literature. It has been called as a history of literary relations that went beyond the national borders. It had also been declared as having no usage if it could not set up a parallel of dependence. About the aspects of comparison, it has been stated that:

> comparison should be firmly based at either end: it requires a broad knowledge of two literatures and two societies, their different traditions and outlooks.

> Accordingly, the choice of topic will be more limited than might appear….the simplest act of confronting two writers involves at the same time, a host of other confrontations. Every writer brings with him the evidences of milieu and spiritual descent…the most rewarding comparisons are those that writers themselves have accepted or challenged their readers to make-those that spring from 'the shock of recognition', where one writer has become conscious that an affinity exists between another and himself. (Righter 73)

Initially, the concept of Comparative Literature was limited. It was based on comparison of two literatures, one set against the other. However, scholars like Rene Wellek have pointed out the drawbacks to such methods. He observes,

> Comparative literature in the narrow sense of binary relations cannot make a meaningful discipline, as it would have to deal only with the "foreign trade" between literatures and hence with fragments of literary production. It would not allow treating the individual work of art. It would be…a strictly auxiliary discipline of literary history with a fragmentary, scattered subject matter and with no peculiar method of its own. (Wellek 17)

The brochure of East Anglia states that Comparative Literature is that branch of literary study which touches upon the basic structures of all literature. This ushers in an unlimited scope in its study. The discipline is not distinguished from other literary studies but for the focus on and study of two or more literatures, thus, making it a more comprehensive investigation. The task of comparison of literatures is not untouched by other branches as noted by comparatists. Rene Wellek writes, "The method of comparison is not peculiar to Comparative literature; it is ubiquitous in all literary study and in all sciences, social and natural. Nor does literary study, even in the practice of the most orthodox comparative scholars, proceed by the method of comparison alone" (Discriminations p.17, 7). Successful and sound study of Comparative literature can bring out the basic qualities that are inherent in all human beings, irrelevant of

artificial boundaries. “Man, universal man, man everywhere and at any time, in all his variety, emerges and literary scholarship ceases to be an antiquarian pastime, a calculus of national credits and debts and even a mapping of networks of relationships.” (Wellek 295, 8)

About the components of comparstive literature, it has been said: “Comparative literature possesses fairly diversified components. The four well-known aspects of traditional comparative studies pertain to folklore, influence or source, genres, and themes” (Pathak 23). Under the leadership of Julius Krohn, the folklore studies were carried out in Finnish. This study greatly helped in the studies of thematology. It has been stated that folklore studies can establish the origins of the basic literary themes. This study eventually carved out a methodology and scope of its own.

A literary work carries influences from foreign literature and cannot exist on its own. It has been pointed out that “No work exists in isolation and the theory that a work of art is an autonomous entity is fraught with dangers” (Dhawan 11). The product of literature, as unique as it stands, is never free from a source, an influence, although the result may seem different from the original. Scholars have studied the sources and influences including the effects on literature. However, these studies summed up into fragments which do not help much in the pursuance of the discipline.

In the curricula of Comparative literature, genre has branched out as a prominent course. However, the modern literary forms have a fluid-like quality as they are not distinctly defined and the morphological approach is unable to produce desired results. It is said:

> Any study of genre, however, is likely to appear mechanical or artificial, laying stress on the externals of a work rather than its essence, if we fail to remember that genre has a vital relation to the aesthetic elements of a work and that the study of Comparative literature has got to be concerned with the deeper relations

between the theme, the form and the aesthetic excellence of the work" (Pathak 25).

Themes form a part of Comparative literature's study which is focused on mythological source and intellectual history. "The term 'themes', liberally interpreted, would include various thematological categories such as motifs, recurrent images, *exempla* or *topoi*. The study of themes are governed and directed by a variety of psychological and cultural factors which establish rules and patterns for them" (Pathak 25). In such a study, trivial and banal matters should not take precedence. Also, thematic studies do not mean bringing out only the differences and the similarities of different writers.

It has been acknowledged by writers that Comparative literature finds its usage in literature in its historical aspect. What is overlooked in criticism while focusing on the authors can be highlighted by the discipline. Literary themes cannot be contained but they percolate beyond man-made boundaries. It has been felt by scholars that the objective of the discipline is to trace out the history of literary themes. As such, scholars have traced out evidences of literary themes that have webbed the world into dependence, irrespective of where they originated. However, some have contradicted this view point, stating that such investigations will only lead to a dead end. It is impossible to set up a sequencing that will give a holistic view.

Literary criticism as well as translation form branches in Comparative literature. Imminent scholars have considered the comparative investigation as an effective tool of criticism. Rene Wellek remarks, "But true literary scholarship is not concerned with inert facts, but with values and qualities. That is why there is no distinction between literary history and criticism. Even the simplest problem of literary history requires an act of judgement" (Wellek 291-92). When one claims that a writer has influenced another, in order to set the claim firmly, the characteristics of the concerned writers need to be worked out in detail. This will lead to the study of their milieu, the physical and social setting in which they lived and wrote. This will allow "an unremitting activity of weighing, comparing, analyzing, and discriminating which is

essentially critical. No literary history has ever been written without some principle of selection and some attempt at characterization and evaluation" (292). He adds that literary historians who do not accept the critical activity involved in the work are unable to recognize their own critical work as they have simply imbibed the traditional standards. Analyzing, characterization, evaluation and filtration cannot be done without critical activity. Wellek states that theory, criticism, and history collaborate in literary scholarship to reach its objective. Theorists of Comparative literature have, however, rejected this relation. They have claimed that" 'factual relations', sources and influences, intermediaries and reputation as its only topics, will have to find its way back into the great stream of contemporary literary scholarship and criticism" (292). Such adherence in their methods have made the discipline static and prevented its development, therefore, resulting in a stunted growth.

Translation works have proved to house a wide scope for Comparative literature. Scholars have stressed on the 'untranslatability' of a literary work of art owing to its many disadvantages. However, such works usher in a new world, intact with its cultural connotations, thereby, connecting the literary works springing from various backgrounds. There have been instances when a translated literary work of art outshone the original work. Such works also allow the literary work to survive longer in some cases. The translation of Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat* by Fitzgerald is an example. Johnson felt that Pope's translation of Homer's *Illiad* to be the best poetry in the world. Translation as a work is brought out exquisitely when the translator can connect to the writer's thoughts effectively and share a personal bond. Such works afford scholars to see the sensibilities that vary in different ages. In the process, the translator's language, as it translates, reveal the milieu that has gone into the making of the language itself, thus, broadening the scope of comparison. Eventually, it helps in the critical appraisal of the original work itself.

In his essay 'The Crisis of Comparative Literature', Rene Wellek talks about the uncertain circumstances that surround the study of Comparative literature when it comes to stability in its subject matter and formation of a methodology. Various scholars have tried to

box-in different branches into the discipline such as the nineteenth-century factualism, scientism, and historical relativism. Wellek goes on to give credit to this literary scholarship for standing up against the false notion of national literary histories, bringing in the interrelationships of Western literature. However, he cannot agree on how Van Tieghem defines Comparative literature and general literature. He states that the former is concerned with the investigation of the two literatures, how they are related to each other. General literature, on the other hand, is concerned with "the movements and fashions which sweep through several literatures" (283). Wellek argues that Byron's influence on Heine and the study of Byronism in Germany cannot be distinguished. Neither can the study of the influence of Walter Scott in France be held as comparative literature while confining a historical novel belonging to the Romantic Age to general literature. This would make the discipline a fragmentary work without logic and organization. This would allow the study of " only sources and influences, causes and effects" (283), thus, preventing the study of an individual work of art in a holistic manner since it cannot be confined to outside influences or an influence entirely towards foreign countries. He adds that to try and set up artificial boundaries between comparative literature and general literature cannot stand its ground because literary history and scholarship lead to one end, which is, literature itself. To compartmentalize the discipline to an investigation of foreign trade between binary literatures is to undercut its scope with "externals, with second-rate writers, with translations, travel-books, "intermediaries"; in short…a mere sub-discipline investigating data about the foreign sources and reputations of writers" (284)

Wellek observes that it is not only the subject matter but also the formulation of methods that has stepped into troubled waters. The criterion on which Comparative Literature has been distinguished from the study of national literatures has found no firm ground to stand on. According to this criteria, the former deals with myths and legends that has seeped into the work. Its focus is on minor writers. However, Wellek argues that a student of a national literature should not be fettered to take up the above topics. He takes the example of Daniel Mornet in France and Josef Nadler in Germany who have taken up the task of writing national literary history giving attention to "ephemeral and forgotten writers" (284).

In the history of Comparative literature, there has been an attempt to investigate on how nations view each other. As tempting and as interesting as it may seem to pursue such a study, it narrows down the study of literature to a mere national psycho-analysis and sociology. This does not further literary scholarship but becomes useful only as a study on the prevalence of public opinion. The branching of the discipline into this study delineates the subject "into social psychology and cultural history" (285).

As has been acknowledged by the critics of Comparative Literature, its very nature is complex although its importance in the field of literary studies only gains ground. In his essay 'The Crisis in Comparative Literature', Rene Wellek states that "The most serious sign of the precarious state of our study is the fact that it has not been able to establish a distinct subject matter and a specific methodology" (Wellek 1963: 282). The study, in recent times, has however, only grown in importance due to its very nature of being transnational, spanning across cultures and encompassing more than a single discipline.

With the publication of Edward Said's seminal book, *Orientalism* (1978), a major influence on the practitioners of Comparative Literature was created. Being a comparatist himself, he harbs on the connection between postcolonialism and Comparative Literature. Consequently, the interest shifted "from textuality to historicity, from the aesthetic to the political, and from individual receptions to collective responses to literary texts" (Behdad and Thomas 8). Postcolonial studies offer a transnational scope in literature which has been crucial to the studies of Comparative Lierature. It

> brought the issue of colonialism to the forefront of literary studies in the West by critically displaying the ideological underpinnings of scientific and aesthetic representations of "otherness" in European thought throughout modern history…it also enabled a mode of critical inquiry that is attentive to the complex ways in which

knowledge, and more specifically, nineteenth century European literature was implicated in relations of power" (9).

With the emergence of postcolonial studies around the late 1980s, the literary canon was rewritten and as a result, the focus on English literary studies was reshaped, bringing in the works of literary figures from across the continents. Thus, postcolonial authors such as Chinua Achebe, Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Salman Rushdie have irreversibly changed the very face of literary canon. David Murphy states in his essay 'How French Studies Became Transnational; Or Postcolonialism as Comparatism',

> what is important is the survival of the type of work that postcolonial studies has inspired. For over five centuries, Europe set about colonizing vast regions of the earth, and literature went hand in hand with this project: that comparative literary studies should find space to consider this major historical and cultural phenomenon is a critical (and, for many, moral) necessity and not some passing fad. (Murphy 419).

Postcolonial Criticism

When Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak raised the question "Can the subaltern speak?" (Spivak 1985), it was a direct knock on the door of the Western academy to make the voices of the non-West be heard which had been subjugated. 1980s saw the formation of a group by a number of intellectuals who came to be known as the Subaltern Studies group. They promoted subaltern themes in South Asian studies to give a detailed and systematic view. They claimed that their project was to find out "the general attribute of subordination in South Asian society" (Guha 1982: vii). They attempted to finally give voice to the muted and oppressed which was earlier denied in the process of producing historical literature.

Spivak asks a number of questions which delineates the difficult terms "representation and representability" (Gandhi 2). She asks how the historians can avoid the risk of representing subaltern consciousness in an authoritative manner or whether the investigator should avoid representing it. She asks how the intellectual should select which subaltern class to select so as to represent or whether there is a class that cannot be represented, one that knows and speaks on its own behalf. She arrives at the question as to who the real or representative subalterns of history are under the imperialist project.

Subalternity is at the heart of postcolonial studies as it is the study of the relationship between the 'dominator' and the 'dominated'. Spivak's essay on subalternity, therefore, gathered the greatest interest in this study. It provoked some scholars to limit their area of study while it gave more freedom to other scholars. It opened the gate to debates on "anti- and postcolonial subalterns" (2). There is no consensus as to the most victimized group under colonial oppression nor is there a total agreement on which was the most important insurgency in the anti-colonial rise. Although Spivak stated that "the subaltern cannot speak" (Spivak 308), postcolonial study has been marked by a multiple of voices that has found no common ground to stand on. Consequently, the content, scope and the importance of the studies has found itself in troubled waters to circumscribe. There has been much disagreement on the semantic front to come to a terminology agreement on the study. A host of critics argue that the hyphen in 'postcolonial' marks the beginning of decolonization while others maintain that such chronological separation is not possible. As such, postcolonial state began with the beginning of colonial era and not with its end. Thus, the unbroken form 'postcolonialism' covered the experiences of the history that spoke of the colonial oppression.

Postcolonial studies attempt theoretically to cover an era in history where the theory aspect is termed as 'postcolonialism' and the situation that it addresses is delineated by the word 'postcoloniality'. The validity of the arguments that surround the theory can be best judged by the capacity to project the complicated condition which followed the colonial experience.

Once the birth of independent nations took place, ending colonial occupation, these nations tried to forget their colonial past. This was egged on by a number of factors amounting to cultural and political aspects. There was a strong felt need to bury the painful memories of the past to make a fresh start. However, such an emancipation could not be afforded as history shaped their inheritance. Postcolonialism perches on the colonial past theoretically, which leads us to "the academic task of revisiting, remembering and crucially, interrogating the colonial past" (Gandhi 4). Leela Gandhi remarks that the colonial history not only affords theories based on first-hand political experiences and practices but also enables:

> …intense discursive and conceptual activity, characterised by a profusion of thought and writing about the cultural and political identities of colonised subjects. Thus, in its therapeutic retrieval of the colonial past, postcolonialism needs to define itself as an area of study which is willing not only to make but also to gain, theoretical sense out of that past. (5)

The birth of a new nation after a colonial past is marked with multiple emotions. The most prominent feature is the celebratory mood, with the new independence and the freedom to create a new self. It is explicitly projected in the protagonist's birth in *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie. Saleem Sinai's birthday coincides with the Independence of India, that is, on the midnight of August 15, 1947. "Soothsayers had prophesied me, newspapers celebrated my arrival, politicos ratified my authenticity" (Rushdie 9). Consequently, Saleem Sinai, representative of every Indian, discovers that the aftermath holds anxieties and pressure to live up to the expectations of a new country. He says, "I admit it: above all things, I fear absurdity" (9). As Gandhi states, a country's "actual moment of arrival-into independence-is predicated upon its ability to successfully imagine and execute a decisive departure from the colonial past" (Gandhi 6). Albert Memmi states that for a nation to harbor hopes to build itself anew instantly from the debris of colonial past is nothing short of delusion. He maintains," Now, I do not like to say so, but I must, since decolonization has demonstrated it: this is not the way it happens. The colonized lives for a long time before we see that really new man" (Memmi 88). Besides Memmi, other intellectuals like Edward Said have maintained that the birth of a new nation does

not signal the end of colonialism and therefore, does not give birth to a new man instantly. Such critical utterances serve to balance the disappointments and unfulfilled expectations arising out of a hope for radical departure from Europe. Such consequences can be traced back to its own inability to reconsider and resolve its past. The willingness to forget the past cast a gloom over postcoloniality. The value of postcolonialism theory increased as it served to be therapeutic and made the experience less painful by revisiting and recollecting the colonial past. This allows the study to work on the complex historical and psychological level to bring about healing. It not only concerns itself with recalling the historical past in a detailed research but also obligates itself to a political role of helping the scar-ridden children of postcoloniality to accept the reality of their situation and thus, go on with a better understanding of where they belong and how to move forward. When the protagonist of the *Midnight's Children* and his parents discover the crime of Mary Pereira which was committed right after India's Independence, nothing was done to rectify it. Saleem Sinai says," when we eventually discovered the crime of Mary Pereira, we all found that it *made no difference*! I was still their son: they remained my parents. In a kind of collective failure of imagination, we learned that we simply could not think our way out of our pasts…" (Rushdie 118). Leela Gandhi opines that probably the only exit is to allow one to be consumed by the thoughts of the past (Gandhi 9). Homi Bhabha, the post-colonial critic, declares that memory bridges colonialism and the issue of cultural identity. He writes that recollection is "never a quiet act of introspection or retrospection. It is a painful remembering, a putting together of the dismembered past to make sense of the trauma of the present." (Bhabha 63)

Postcolonialism as a theory started developing in the 1980s. Initially, it found itself side by side with marginalized theories such as feminist studies, cultural studies and gay/lesbian studies. They have been classified as 'new humanities'. These disciplines represented an area of knowledge which had been in a subordinate position as a result of the dominant disciplines engulfing them. However, Deleuze banks on the "reterritorialisation" of subjugated studies as "the relay for a revolutionary machine-to-come" (Deleuze and Guattari 18). Feminist studies uphold that the disempowerment of women is traced partly to the exclusion of women from the domain of knowledge proper. A dominant demand of the study was access into the acquisition of knowledge and bias-free participation in contributing to knowledge due to the claim that the

existent knowledge was inclined directly towards the male-centered institutions. Thus, the source of the validation of the inherited knowledge was contested by the discipline. By doing so, they reached out for a more balanced representation in the things known and ways to know. Their objective was to bring women into the mainstream of knowledge as participants rather than be muted onlookers.

Feminism is closely followed by postcolonial studies in its discussions of the validity of the established knowledge. It, however, points out the European cultural hegemony in order to critique it. This is to set up the epistemological worth of the non-European world. Postcolonial study establishes the non-European knowledge system which is in total defiance of the practice of colonizing scholarship and pedagogy.

Dipesh Chakrabarty writes that the Third-world historians "feel a need to refer to works in European history; historians of Europe do not feel any need to reciprocate…We cannot even afford an equality or symmetry of ignorance at this level without taking the risk of appearing 'old fashioned' or 'outdated' "(Chakrabarty 2). He goes on to say that there is no recognition from the Western side of the philosophies that make up the non-Western side:

> For generations now, philosophers and thinkers shaping the nature of social science have produced theories embracing the entirety of humanity; as we well know, these statements have been produced in relative, and sometimes absolute, ignorance of the majority of humankind i.e, those living in non-Western cultures (3).

Although Chakrabarty's argument is centered on history, it touches upon the very problem that postcolonialism faces with the established humanities. The discipline claims that the field of humanities as a whole is biased although claiming to be universal. It is politically motivated although claiming to be disinterested.

Edward Said's *Orientalism,* which was first published in 1978, is generally considered as representing the initial phase of postcolonial theory. Gandhi remarks that the work is "Commonly regarded as the catalyst and reference point for postcolonialism…it directs attention to the discursive and textual production of colonial meanings and, concomitantly, to the consolidation of colonial hegemony" (Gandhi 64-65). It has eventually led to improvisations in the theoretical field. Gayatri Spivak also observes that " the study of colonial discourse, directly released by work such as Said's, has…blossomed into a garden where the marginal can speak and be spoken, even spoken for" (Spivak 1993 56). Said's book is the first of the trilogy that explores the relationship of the world of the Middle East, the Orient and Islam on one side and the European and American Imperialism on the other. Here, he highlights the imbalanced relationship in the history of imperialism, thereby, exposing its pretensions. He writes that the "Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient" (Said 1991 (1978): 3) is engrained in the nature of the West's study and view of the 'Orient'. It is, therefore, imperative to study how the East was viewed to understand the way it was won.

Postcolonial studies are predominantly focused on 'postcolonial literature', literatures written in English which have covered the British imperialism and its downfall. Cultural materialism, which came into prominence in the 1980s and submerged literary theory, was accepted as an inherent component in the material structure of all cultures. There is a consensus now that all texts are a product of their economic and political milieu. All literatures are intertwined with and are sensitive to the "historical conditions of repression and recuperation" (Gandhi 142). Besides taking in cultural materialist theory, postcolonial literary theory also projects that the colonial experience was instigated by textuality. The driving force of colonialism was literature. It was the most potent factor among all social and political products. Its effect was not only the advancement of colonial power but also the resistance that came about. Consequently, the text that allowed colonial power to be established was challenged by counter-textuality which was radically anti-colonial. As Chris Tiffin and Alan Lawson states;

> Just as fire can be fought by fire, textual control can be fought by textuality… The post-colonial is especially and pressingly concerned with the power that resides in discourse and textuality; its resistance, then, quite appropriately takes place in-and from-the domain of textuality, in (among other things) motivated acts of reading (Lawson and Tiffin 10).

The postcolonial literary critic, therefore, on basing postcoloniality as emanating from the text, brings in the undercurrent to build up a contrast to the colonial power. As Gandhi states, "Most textual mappings of the colonial encounter take their cue from Said's monumental reading of imperial textuality" (Gandhi 142). Said undercuts the Western sense of its superiority over the 'Orient' through his writing of the *Orientalists* through the usage of certain metaphors and a number of figurative expressions. He projected the Non-West as a world for the "desires, repressions, investments, projections" (Said 1991(1978): 8) of the West. The Non- West was shown as cultures that could be colonized by the West through the motivation and license of the colonial literature. This ideology paved the way for political domination that was brought about by military campaigns. As Elleke Boehmer articulates, imperial textuality established the British colonial power by domesticating "recalcitrant peoples, unbreachable jungles, vast wastelands, huge and shapeless crowds" (Boehmer 94). The act of writing moulded the new world into familiarity and it allowed "an attempt at both extensive comprehension and comprehensive control" (97). As Gandhi observes, " Indeed, the colonized world does appear to have driven colonisers and their wives into a frenzied verbosity which expressed itself variously in travelogues, letters, histories, novels, poems, epics, legal documents, records, memoirs, biographies, translations and censuses" (Gandhi 143). Simultaneously, the imperial colonizers themselves dominated the textual representation of themselves which was explicit in the narration of the British metropolitan Victorian novels, which finds mention in Said's *Culture and Imperialism*. Consequently, texts that were sustained in imagination helped achieve double feats as they egged on the colonizers to amass great wealth and position on one hand. On the other, it fed an image of the self that stood on a pedestal when placed alongside the 'other' cultures. This was their source of authority over the 'Orient', which was marked as a cultural identity. In Said's

words, “imperialism and the novel fortified each other to such a degree that it is impossible…to read one without in some way dealing with the other” (Said 1993: 84).

Studies have observed that the nineteenth-century colonial ideology and the establishment of English literature in the academic field as a discipline in the ‘Orient’ are intertwined through textuality in the imperial world. The introduced literature helped enforce the idea that the Western culture was superior to the ‘Orient’. It became the most potent force to establish their cultural hegemony.

The author of *Masks of Conquest*, Gauri Viswanathan, acknowledges the nexus between textuality and the imperial rule in India from a different angle. She observes that the existence of British power in India was inextricably linked to the English literature as it strategically brain-washed the natives to subordination. They were made to believe that the colonisers had their best interest in mind and it was a desire for humanistic benevolence that moved the British to introduce direct rule and their rich, vibrant and superior culture and learning literature was used to subvert the ‘Orient’ culture and white-wash the empire by representing it as committed to its mission to educate the natives. In the process, this was to polarize the West and the Non-West, the former gaining ground and popularity. This hid the other face of the imperialists, which was economic exploitation. As Viswanathan states “ A discipline that was originally introduced in India primarily to convey the mechanics of language was thus transformed into an instrument for ensuring industriousness, efficiency, trustworthiness, and compliance in native subjects”(Viswanathan 93). Thus, textuality served to indoctrinate political and spiritual seeds into the natives which ultimately resulted in authorization of the colonial rule by the natives themselves.

Colonial pedagogy was viewed with suspicion in the postcolonial Departments of English and it led to a reform in the curriculum to include texts that were regarded as ‘outsider’ works and exclude colonial texts that were viewed as pro-colonists. This was a re-programming of the

pedagogical practices that induced a thinking pattern that hailed the colonial canon as the superior literature, a biased and handed-down curriculum from the imperialists.

The Kenyan writer and academician Ngugi wa Thiong'o had anticipated the consequences of a study system that had ulterior motives on the unsuspecting natives back in the late 1960s. By October, he and his colleagues in the University of Nairobi came up with a paper entitled 'On the Abolition of the English Department' (Ngugi 1972). They went beyond the change of teaching style and raised protests and challenges against the canonical English literature which was deemed as unfit for the decolonized Africa. They insisted that if literature upheld the duty to reflect the spirit of the people, then the literary canon failed to uphold it in the decolonized African context. Therefore, they called for a radical fixture on authentic African language and literature. In such a set-up, English literature would find a place but it would find its proper place based on the brief historical connection with it, which will be at the margins.

Ngugi felt that English language should not become a "privileged language of administration and the ruling elite" (Ngugi 16). Gandhi upheld similar views in colonial India where he felt that the primacy of English education should give way to Indian languages and texts. He opined that to use English as an official language would bring in a huge gap between the educated population and the uneducated masses.

In literary critical discourse of postcolonial studies, the views held by Ngugi and his associates, along with Gandhi has not gained ground. It has been stated that to seek to reverse the primacy of culture would be falling in line with the old system which sprung up from the colonial world. Although denial of the imperial colonist culture is a must for the decolonizing process;

> In itself, 'abrogation' or inversion represents an incomplete or failed radicalism which needs to acquire the more subtle political habits of 'appropriation' or 'subversion-from-within'. The anti-colonial 'appropriator challenges the cultural

> and linguistic stability of the centre by twisting old authoritarian words into new oppositional meanings. (Gandhi 147)

This allows the usage of English language in a new level where the natives finally find an opening to imbibe a foreign language and make it one's own. The 'Caliban paradigm 'comes into play at this stage which is taken from Shakespear's *The Tempest*. It is a play which has been viewed by postcolonial critics as a metaphor for the coloniser and the colonized. Caliban, the dispossessed native of the island has a heated argument with Miranda, the daughter of the proto-colonial settler Prospero. Caliban declares that the benefit of teaching him the settler's language is that "…I know how to curse" (I.ii.364). What is noted in this outburst is that Caliban uses the coloniser's language to 'speak out' rather than overturning the whole language system.

Homi Bhabha talks about the concept of 'colonial mimicry' which he says are the description of the usual usage springing out of the colonial meanings or representations that are "almost the same, but not quite" (Bhabha 86). Gandhi observes that "'mimicry' …the sly weapon of anti-colonial civility, an ambivalent mixture of deference and disobedience…'mimicry' inaugurates the process of anti-colonial self-differentiation through the logic of inappropriate appropriation" (Gandhi 149-150). It eventually attracted the attention of literary analysis in postcolonial studies. There is a general agreement that in postcolonial literary practice, 'mimicry' has become the most radical weapon in the hands of the anti-colonial writers. The literary pattern for counter-textuality of anti-colonial writing eventually began with blending of local content with that of Western genres. A pioneer in this method is Raja Rao who diluted in his work the tempo of the native speech while writing in English which undercuts the imposing superiority of the imperial textuality.

The anti-colonial novel and the anti-colonial nationalism are closely tied up as textuality brings in the sense of 'nationhood'. The image of the fellow-members of a nation has its source in the novel and the newspaper, without which, it would be quite impossible to hold together a nation when its members have not seen or known each other. This makes the novel a

representative of the nation itself where it is used as a tool of communication and holds it together. It quickly became a reflection of the sociopolitical scene that fired nationalism as it started focusing in realistic prose works.

The counter-textuality of the anti-colonial writer does not have the full acceptance of the postcolonial literary theory when it comes to its involvement with nationalism. Its argument is that such works only dilutes the notion of nationhood as it writes in a dialect that is of the coloniser's. It consequently becomes a hybrid work, which is the inheritance of the colonial nation as it cannot afford to go back to the old purity which was witnessed before the advent of the European colonisers. This ultimately pushes the anti-colonial writer to alienate culturally which is the nationalist elite's peculiar problem. The resultant of the colonial experience concludes with the emergence of the 'migrant' novel. Critics proclaim that the perfect mode of anti-colonial upsurge in writing is found in the cosmopolitan writings of writers like Salman Rushdie, Ben Okri and Michael Ondaatje who encompass the wave of restlessness. This novel format explicitly embraces hybridity. Said observes that "The authoritative, compelling image of empire…finds its opposite in the renewable, almost sporty discontinuities of intellectual and secular impurities, mixed genres, unexpected combinations of tradition and novelty" (Said 1993 406).

Books such as *In Other Worlds* (Gayatri Spivak, 1987*), The Empire writes Back* (Bill Ashcroft, 1989), *Culture and Imperialism* (Edward Said, 1993) and *Nation and Narration* (Homi Bhabha, 1990) heralded the emergence of Postcolonial Criicism. There are a number of characteristics that define such a criticism. According to Peter Barry, noticing that the 'Other' or the "exotic' is always the non-European is the first characteristic.The postcolonial critic views using the coloniser's language as problematic. Therefore, language becomes the second characteristic. The third dwells on the hybridity of identity. A transition of three stages take place where the first is the 'Adopt', the second is the 'Adapt' and the third is 'Adept'. The first phase witnesses the writer as conforming to the standards of European model while the second sees him as making interventions with the standard model. The last phase sees the writer as finally

free from the European authority. “This stress on ‘cross-cultural’ interactions is a fourth characteristic of postcolonialist criticism” (Barry 189). The first stage of postcolonial criticism focused on how the Europeans represented the colonies, which was found lacking and biased. The second stage highlighted on how the postcolonial writers dwelt on “celebration and exploration of diversity, hybridity, and difference become central” (190).

Easterine (Iralu) Kire is a prominent poet and an author from Nagaland.A bulk of her works are based on the “lived realities of the people in Nagaland in north-east India” (Wikipedia). She is the first Naga novelist writing in English. Starting from her first English novel, *A Naga Village Remembered*, she provides an insider’s view and experience on coming fac to face with the colonial power that had taken over mainland India and was shaping the very cultural fabric of the nation. Her first novel, which was published in 2003, paints a picture of a typical Naga village with its rich age-old culture. It comes face to face with the British colonial power which consequently leads to war. Her second novel, *A Terrible Matriarchy*, tells the tale of “internal and social strife that grips Nagaland as a state in India” (en.m.wikipedia.org). The book documents a society in transition where it reflects a hybrid culture and not the one as painted in the first novel. Her other novels like *Bitter Wormwood* and *Mari* also reflect a Naga Culture that has not only imbibed the traditions of the forefathers but also that of the foreign culture, one that was introduced when the British colonized Naga Hills in the 1800s, followed by the American missionaries who brought Christianity and Education simultaneously.

Ngugi wa Thiong’o is a novelist, a playwright, an essayist and an academic among others from Kenya. His name stands out for being in the forefront of decolonization in the area of culture and linguistics. As Mala Pandurang puts it, he “has led the way in questioning of the epistemological criteria of Western scholarship, and has been ruthless in his interrogation of the pressures of international capital and neo-colonial forces on cultural formations within the third-world milieu” (Pandurang 11). At the core of his writings lie the stark realities of the Kenyan people struggling with the consequences of their native culture coming face to face with the culture of the British colonialists as well as with the neocolonialists.

Although *Weep Not, Child* was his first published novel, *The River Between* was his first written novel. Both the novels have protagonists who have the same hopes and aspirations, which is, a way out from the problems of the country. His first novel is set during the 1920s and 1930s. It juxtaposes Christianity with the old religion, thereby, bringing the new and the old culture together into confrontation. His second novel is a continuation of the Kikuyu history. *A Grain of Wheat*, which is set five days before the Kenyan Independence, touches upon a continuing theme in his works, which is, the tie of the people to the soil. *Petals of Blood* focuses on neocolonialism that was threatening to take away power from the people.

Ngugi's works in general, is a "struggle for national expression in culture" (Ngugi 45). Easterine Kire's writings also give an insider's picture on the Naga culture which was otherwise furnished by "the western anthropologist and his ethnographical studies on Naga tribes that can be seen as the colonizer writing us" (The Naga Republic). The need to represent the native people and their vibrant cultures in both the writers stem from a shared history of encounter with the British colonial power that had a direct effect on their traditional tribal lives. Although both writers come from different milieus with continents separating them, the similarity in their will to represent the people accurately in their cultural transition, which is explicitly shown in their writings, makes them a fit subject of discussion through Comparative Studies.

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Chapter Two

ETHNO-CULTURAL DYNAMICS IN AFRICAN AND NAGA WRITERS

Ethno-cultural Dynamics in African and Naga Writers

The information that is passed from one person to another and from one generation to another in a society which affects a person's behavior is termed as 'culture'. It is available, can be accessed and is applicable to every member of the group. There is a general consensus to the conceptualization of this definition. Accordingly, cultural change sets in when non-genetic information like availability, accessibility and applicability is changed in a group. Consequently, the formation, maintenance and transformation of a culture over time highlight the cultural dynamics.

Cultural dynamics stem from four main factors. The first one is 'Importation' which is transmitted from one culture to another where the information was non-existent before in the latter. The second one is 'Invention'. Here, new cultural information is added to the already existing culture without resorting to Importation. The third is 'Selection' where cultural information is selected to be included or excluded from the current system. The fourth is the 'Drift' which is produced over time due to erratic processes of a culture, eventually leading to change.

In the light of cultural dynamics, culture as experienced by Africa and Nagaland has undergone changes due to confrontation with the Western civilization.

Africa in general and Kenya in particular have a long history of importing new cultures. Imbibing countless influences, the land is a melting pot of customs and practices which has been

recorded from the pre-historic times to the present times. It has witnessed culture throughout the ages which has been as diverse as it is colorful.

Kenya houses forty two (42) ethnic groups where each has its own distinct culture although there are certain practices that fall on similar lines. There is also similarity in the languages among the groups. However, it does not have a single prominent culture to identify the country as a whole. In the early times, people migrated to Kenya from different areas such as the plain lands of the South, deserts of the North and the forests of the West. The main tribes in Kenya are the Bantu, the Nilotic and the Hamitic people. The Bantu migrated from West Africa while the Nilotic people came from Sudan. The Hamitic group, comprised mainly of pastoral tribes, came from Ethiopia and Somalia.

The Kikuyu is the largest ethnic group in Kenya. They are one of the Bantu tribes and migrated to this place about four hundred years ago during the Bantu migration. They spread in no time throughout the central Province and Kenya. They can also be identified with the Kamba, the Meru, the Embu and the Chuka. They are closely connected with the land as they were traditionally farmers. They settled around Mount Kenya and cultivated the fertile volcanic highlands. They called it Kirinyaga, which means the shining mountain. According to their mythology, creation itself began at the peak of Mount Kenya.The tribe was founded by a man named Gikuyu, who was called forth by the Supreme Creator, Ngai (or Mugai, The Divider), to be the father of the Kikuyu. The story has it that Ngai took him to the top of Kirinyaga and was asked to build his home there. He was also given Mumbi as his wife and together, they had nine children. Out of these daughters came the nine Kikuyu clans. They were Achera, Agachiku, Airimu, Ambui, Angare, Anjiru, Angui, Aithaga and Aitherandu. When Kikuyu and Mumbi passed away, the nine daughters called all the descendants and formed one clan each under their respective names. These nine clans were given the name ‘The House of Mumbi’.

The Massai, another prominent group, live mostly in South Kenya. They believe that the rain god Ngai gave them the responsibility to take care of the cattles when the earth and the sky split. Therefore, they believed that they were not doing anything wrong even when they steal cattles from other tribes. Cattle-rearing has come to stay as the most important source of economic return for this tribe. Therefore,

they even worship the animal. Rejecting cash economy and a settled farmer's life, they have stayed true to their ancestral nomadic life. The Samburu are related to the Massai and they lead semi-nomadic lives. They are basically pastoralists. They rear cow, sheep, goats and camels. They wear traditional attires which are coloured in bright red and adorn themselves with ornaments.

The coast of Africa brought in influences from far off places like Europe which ushered in a period of struggle for hegemony. Traces of culture that was brought in at this time remains to this day. The luxuriant growth of the spice route saw Africa and Arabia come together which became the source of the distinct and unique culture that sprang up in the Kenyan coastal areas. Africa was a dark continent to the first explorers for whom it was a strange yet magnetic land. It posed as a land filled with great life-threatening dangers as well as captivating exotic beauty. The native culture came face to face with the European explorers and adventurers on one hand and labourers and merchants from India on the other hand, who also brought along with them their own culture. The onslaught of new cultures proved to be pervasive, thus, reshaping and reconstructing the very fabric of the old cultural heritage. Eventually, Kenya imbibed outside influences into its culture and remoulded it to form its very own unique culture.

The Kikuyu, which consists of 22% of the total population in Kenya to which Ngugi wa Thiong'o belong, is among the most prominent groups. Legend has it that they were a matriarchal society until the men rebelled due to the tyrannical treatment meted out to them. Consequently, they changed into a patriarchal set-up. Such changes also took place in other Bantu tribes. During the continuous waves of Bantu migrations of 1200-1600 AD, the Kikuyu developed and they emerged as a prominent group by 1800. In Nyeri district, the Mukurue division is marked for the beginning of the Kikuyu tribe as it is known today.

The Kikuyus did not have chiefs administering over them but a council of elders who were from the elder age-group. They chose a spokesman through consensus. However, he was replaced if found incompetent. A clan (*mwaki*) is made up of many family groups (nyumba). It is administered by the council of elders where the witch doctor takes a prominent role. The medicine man and the blacksmith

are also given much importance. As the Kikuyu god Ngai is believed to have his home in Mount Kenya, they have a practice of building their homes with the door facing it.

An important component of the culture of the Kikuyus is the initiation rites. It is practiced for both boys and girls. The ceremony requires the circumcision of boys and cliterodectomy for girls. However, girls hardly undergo this process rarely in modern times.The youths are clubbed together into age-groups (*riika*), which was about five-year periods. An age-grade name was taken by the men who measured the times in Kikuyu history. There are associated rituals in various stages of life and these age-groups go through together in all these. The female circumcision is still practiced today among the people who have traditional beliefs. It is also practiced among Roman Catholic Christians. However, it caused divisions during the onset of Christianity. It is discouraged by many churches even today.

As the Kikuyus were traditionally farmers and bred animal livestocks, these formed the medium of exchange in trade. They used animals like goats, sheep and cattles for dowry. The Ruracio or the Kikuyu dowry is paralleled with honour for the parents of the bride-to-be. Its negotiations can take as long as weeks or months. It may take years to pay the balance and when it is done, a ceremony takes place. This is significant because it marked the man as the husband of the woman and she became his full responsibility. This old custom is still practiced today. The Christians have replaced the Ngurario ceremony with the Christian ceremony.

The Kikuyus were traditionally superstitious and they still hold on to such beliefs. An example of this is the taboo on whistling as it called evil spirits. They also believe that number 10 was unlucky. This belief is manifested in the way they mention about the daughters of Gikuyu. Although he had ten daughters, they say he had nine. Another superstition was that one was not supposed to speak openly about the impending birth of a child as evil spirits may take the child. Therefore, they have reservations about choosing the name of the baby before birth. They follow a ritualistic system of naming a child which helps them keep their identity intact in a fast-changing world of culture. The first boy-child is named after the father's father while the second born is named after the mother's father. Likewise, the

first girl takes the name of the father's mother while the second girl takes the name of the mother's mother. The generation that follows is named after the siblings of the grandfather and grandmother.

When it came to religion, the tribe traditionally believed in the spirit of the dead. Therefore, they worshipped their ancestors. They were considered as the intercessors to their God and spiritual powers. They believed that the spirits of the ancestors came into the child when he or she was named after them. They worshipped one God and they called him Ngai. He was the supreme creator and the source of all creation. Sacrifices were offered under a mugumo tree, usually on a high place according to the gravity of the situation, such as a drought or some other desperate need. However, today, the majority of the Kikuyus are Christians. They have been Christians for more than a hundred years. Many of them are missionaries and take on the role of evangelists.

According to the old practice, girls were trained to work in the farm or the shamba. Boys had to tend to the animals. However, education has taken precedence for both boys and girls. Also, the division of work for boys and girls has blurred. Like the Nagas and many other African tribes, the oral method of teaching the younger generation has survived to this date among the Kikuyu people. History, stories and legends in orality is of great value to the tribe, including proverbs and riddles. Rhetoric and verbal games also comprised a part of the learning. Besides, music and dance featured in their culture as an important component.

Contact with the outside world for the Kikuyus came in the form of settlers and missionaries. With the arrival of European missionaries in the Akiguyu country in 1888, written literature came into the foreground. Until then, they had an oral literature, expressed only in folklore such as the maiden Wanjiru who was sacrificed to bring rain. The native tongue of the Kikuyus is the Gikuyu language. It is included in the Bantu sub-group of the Niger-Congo family of language. They also speak Swahili and English, which are the two official languages of Kenya. The European Presbyterian missionaries learned the native language and wrote it in a modified Roman alphabet. The language name is spelled as Gikuyu as a result of phonetic change in the grammar. The Kikuyus welcomed the new learning and adapted to

the new system of economy and politics. As a result, they were involved in the new money economy and were a strong force in the political waves that were taking over the country.

The Kikuyus came into contact with the British colonists and the settlers due to certain factors. They were in close range to the colonial government in Nairobi. Also, the settlers preferred the central highlands. Thus, they were thrust into a new cultural fabric out of which, they could imbibe the positive practices successfully. However, they also faced great subjugation and oppression under the foreign hands. It was, thus, a juxtaposition of both negative and positive impacts. The adaptability of the tribe helped them to fight against the colonial masters, using the latter's own system to overthrow them.

In places like Latin America, colonial rule lasted for about 300 years which was under Spain and Portugal. They came to Latin America in the 16th century. However, in Africa, colonial rule began only in the late 19th century and early 20th centuries. By 1960s, colonial rule was over. Thus, in the continent, it lasted for only about two generations. In Ghana itself, the military reign started in 1911 and after forty six years, in 1957, the colonial rule had ended. While in America, due to foreign domination, the native people suffered a terrible demographic collapse, including cultural annihilation, the African indigenous people survived without such disasters and their civilization was left unharmed. European rule in the continent was generally marked by violence, exploitation, and racism which left a traumatic effect in the natives. However, its conduct among the natives was not uniform. It varied from region to region and among men and women, old and young. It was also governed by social, political and economic factors. It was not only influenced by the colonisers but also by the Africans themselves. There was no uniformity in the way the natives accepted the foreign rule. Some took it as an opportunity while others viewed it as a threat to their own civilization. There were others still who took it as both. The situation itself places a challenge to historians of Africa as it eventually produces a complex pattern.

In the 1960s, historians started a systematic research on African history. However, their focus was on the pre-colonial history and not on the colonial past. This was done to show that the continent had a rich and genuine history before the arrival of the ethnocentric European colonisers. Colonial rule

and its consequences, which was considered as illegal and without authorization, was yet fresh and very traumatic to be attempted as a history. The only written African history in the 1950s was the one scripted by the colonizers themselves. The Europeans who wrote it were mostly the colonial officers. Consequently, hardly any Africans featured in their writings. The aim of the liberation struggle in Africa was to end colonial rule and no effort was made to analyze the impact in their society.

Within fifty years of the end of colonial rule in Africa, the perspectives and the interests of African studies have shifted. There is a surge of research studies in the colonial period which is egged on by a rise in its interest. It is testified by protests of scholars in academic conferences and seminars that history before the arrival of the Europeans has been sidelined. With written documents and the passage of time as tools in the historian's hand, colonialism has become a part of African history. As Parker and Rathbone observes, " It is also because an expanding range of theoretical tools and analytical insights have enabled historians to think about colonialism in much more sophisticated ways than before" (Parker and Rathbone 93).

The rapid growth in the colonial history of Africa sheds light on the fact that colonialism projected not only the colonizers in how they ruled or thought. It is also about the natives, what they did or how they thought. It has moved on from the time when students were taught that all that was to know about the colonial period was the reprehensible and digressive way in which the natives were ruled, along with all the horrors that was attached to it. This perspective was deemed inadequate for a study that gave eminence to value judgment on the experience that sprang up from the colonial encounter which was both complex and contradictory in nature.

European Imperialism in the continent was not as coercive or dominant as it was perceived to be. Neither was it logical and well-organized. The natives themselves wholeheartedly participated in the colonial world. A distinct colonial era could not be drawn due to its complex nature and historians are engrossed in tracing out a pattern that brings in continuity as well as change between pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial periods.

The period when Africa witnessed the onslaught of its territory by European colonizers stands out as a one of the epochs of its history. Owing to its complex pattern, it also stands as one of the most difficult eras to decipher. A source for this case stems from the fact that it was recorded as a part of European history and not of the indigenous people. It shed light on events of high drama that portrayed rivalries between colonizer-countries blended with intense diplomacy. Africans had hardly any part in it.

Initially, the Europeans penetrated gradually into Africa but towards the end of the 19th century, there was a mighty rush to conquer territories. The British, the French, the Portuguese, Germans, Italians and King Leopold of Belgium including the Spaniards scrambled for land.

British interests in Africa were threatened when the 'forward policy' of France and the newly unified Germany under Bismarck loomed over the continent's horizon. This was due to the expectations of wealth to be tapped by opening up the interior unexplored parts. They tried to prevent other imperialists from securing what might be a potential place economically.

Along with opening up the continent for trade, the colonizers took upon themselves the white man's burden to bring light to the Dark Continent. They thought that their civilization was superior to that of the Africans and that they needed to help the backward and less fortunate people. As a whole, a mixture of ethnocentric arrogance, self-absorbed interest and a missionary vision came into play. The Berlin West Africa Conference of 1884-5 testifies to a joint effort of the imperialists to dominate Africa, which brought in rules for further annexation.

Territorial occupation in the continent was done through treaties and negotiations that involved false promises of protection. However, majority of the regions did not accept colonial rule and put up a strong fight against the Europeans. The resistance saw many take up arms against the colonizers which were from states that maintained military force. It also came from groups of people who although did not have an organized state, put up a strong fight. The advancement in industrial technology in Europe

proved to be a huge obstacle for the natives and their resistance was broken. Towards the end of the century saw the introduction of steamships, railways, medicines "and the organizational capabilities of the industrial state. Yet it was the technology gap in weaponry that was crucial-horrifically illustrated at the battle of Omdurman in 1898, when the Sudanese Mahdist soldiers repeatedly charged Kitchener's machine guns, leaving some 11,000 dead for the loss of 49 soldiers on the British side" (97).

It was around 2000 BC when the Cushitic-speaking people hailing from Northern Africa came and settled in what is now called Kenya. Arab and Persian colonies were established in this region by the 1st Century AD as the location of Kenyan coast was close to the Arabian Peninsula. Around this time, the Nilotic and the Bantu people migrated to Kenya and settled inland. Swahili developed as the language of trade. The advent of the Portuguese ended the dominion of the Arabs on the coastal area. The former, in turn, gave in to the control of Imam of Oman in the 17th Century. It came under British dominion by 19th Century.

The Berlin Conference of 1885 divided East Africa into territories among the European powers. East African Protectorate was founded by the British Empire in 1895. The white settlers were given access to fertile highlands and were even allowed to have a voice in the government while the Africans and the Indians were denied of such rights until 1944. Around this time, Indians were brought in by the thousands to work on the rail line connecting Kenya and Uganda. Eventually, they settled there and encouraged their family to settle with them.

On the 11th of June, 1920, the Colony of Kenya was established when the former East Africa Protectorate territories were annexed by Britain barring those parts where the Sultan of Zanziba enjoyed sovereignty. The Kenya Protectorate was established on the 13th of August, 1920 when the territories of the former East Africa Protectorate which were not annexed by U.K were established as a British Protectorate. It was governed as part of the Colony of Kenya through an agreement in December 1895 between the Sultan of Zanziba and the U.K. The former and the latter territories remained as part of

British Empire from 1920 until 1963 when, for the first time, a government that had black majority was elected. It went on to declare its independence as 'Kenya'.

When the 'East Africa Protectorate' was carved out by the British in 1895, access to fertile highlands was given to the white settlers. A railway line was built from the port of Mombassa to Lake Victoria in 1901. Also, Uganda's fertile eastern province was transferred to the East African Protectorate. These two factors helped in the settlement of the Europeans and the Indians. The railway helped bring troops to the settlements to combat the resistance in the interiors. Thus, from 1900 to 1908, resistant uprisings were quashed down among the Nandi, Embu, Gusii, Kipsigi, Bakusu and Kabras peoples.

The all-white Legislative Council which was established in 1906 allowed the settlers in the colony to have a say in the affairs of the colonial government. It created White Highlands by declaring fallow farmland and pastures as unoccupied, which served the end of the white settlers. The only natives who were allowed into these lands were the ones who were working in the farms of settlers. They were, however, not free from sudden evictions. Simultaneously, the government forcefully pushed the Africans into the native reserves, majority of which gave out a low yield that was not enough for the families.

The government divided the reserved lands based on the tribe that they belonged to, appointing chiefs as tribal authorities. Among the responsibilities that the chiefs were appointed to take on, they had to recruit labourers for public work projects or for private employers who were mainly white settler farmers. The African adult males were required to carry identification while stepping out of the native reserves to contain labour flight. It was brought about by the Native Registration Act of 1915. The government of the day also used the tool of taxation to extract forced wage labour from the natives. They were made to work on the white settlers' tea and coffee plantations. There were three categories for the native Kenyan labourers. They were squatter, casual or contract. The squatters formed majority of the workers in the settler's plantations by the end of WW I. They mainly comprised of Kikuyu natives

in Kenya. Mala Pandurang writes that "Ngugi's father was a peasant farmer who was forced to become a squatter on his own land under the British Imperial Act of 1915" (Pandurang 12).

A series of Resident Native Labourers Ordinances were introduced which focused on the squatters. The Ordinance of 1939 ended all tenancy rights of the squatters. It permitted the settlers to demand 270 working days from the squatters on their land. The end of WWII saw rapid deterioration of their condition against which they fought passionately. Although there were a large number of native labourers, it was not enough to meet the requirements of the settlers. Thus, the government set up measures to rope in more Kenyan workers with low-wages on settlers' farms. The Kenyan workers were inhumanly treated by their employers and would be beaten to death. Petty offences by the servants would result in flogging.

Only a little over a quarter of the taxes paid by the natives were utilized for their welfare while on the other hand, Europeans had to pay only a negligible amount of tax. Besides low wages, other complaints emerged from early 1930s. They were about land and elected representatives in the African political front. The Carter Land Commission was set up in response to African demand for agrarian reforms. However, its recommendations and concessions to Kenyans did not meet their expectations as it eventually resulted in a conservative outcome.

Before the arrival of the colonialists, Kenya had a simple economic system. Currency was not in use and wealth was measured in terms of material possessions including land. With the advent of the Imperialists came the usage of currency and taxation, which was a process of civilizing them, according to the former. None of these went down well with the natives. The British, being alien to the culture of the natives, assumed that land belonged to the tribal administration. Therefore, replacing them, they thought that the land belonged to them. However, this was not the case with the natives. Land was considered as private property of an individual or a family. They felt robbed of their land when the government declared land as belonging to them. This loss meant loss of economic livelihood. Thus, they had to settle as workers and were poorly paid. Land issue had become the most prominent grievance against the British colonial rule by 1930s, especially among the Kikuyu. Consequently, thousands of

Kikuyu migrated to the cities due to increased job opportunities. Nairobi saw a high increase in population between 1938 to 1952. Around this time, a class of Kikuyu landowners arose who consolidated Kikuyu landholdings and tied up with the British colonial administration. Thus arrangement created a divide within the Kikuyu.

A national political party was formed for the first time on the 1st of October, 1944 called the Kenya African Study Union. The natives masked their anti-colonial politics under this organization. In 1946, they changed their name to Kenya African Union (KAU). However, by late 1940s, Kikuyus were deeply divided among themselves and were submerged in conflict with the economic and political set-up of the colonial government. The KAU as a political organization could not meet the aspirations and solve the grievances of the people. This led to a shift towards the native Kenyan trade union movement to spear-head the people towards the much needed change. Here, the leaders were young and were inclined towards a militant disposition. The squatters who worked on the white settlers' landholdings in the Rift Valley also participated in the political life of the nation along with the KAU branches spread in the Kikuyu districts of central province and in Nairobi.

In recollecting the colonial history of Kenya, the Mau Mau uprising takes center-stage. It was the most important anti-colonial revolt which was a nationalist armed peasant uprising. The dissatisfaction over the colonial rule in Kenya started building up and the fervor to fight for freedom grew. The natives of Kenya wanted to end the oppressive colonial rule, thus, leading the tribes of Kikuyu, Embu, Meru and Kamba taking an oath of unity and secrecy in 1942 to fight against the yoke of British rule.

The Kikuyu built up secret societies, initiating oath-taking to fight against the white oppressors and any of its African allies. This gave birth to the Mau Mau uprising, which means 'get out, get out'. It was a

> movement of protest in which one people, the Gikuyu, protested in a Peasant's Revolt against an unequal economic structure, supported by discriminatory laws and institutions. By paying the African slave wages for his labour, by denying him access to secondary and higher education, and by removing him from the best land in Kenya and treating him with less respect than an animal, the white man in Kenya had created over the years a resentment and hatred amongst Africans which had to explode into violence. (Sinha 34).

The experience of WW II only heightened the dissatisfaction of the Africans as some fought side by side with the discriminatory colonial government. As it was felt by the Americans, they saw that their overlords were not invincible during the 5-year war period. Besides, they were exposed to many new influences which hardened their stand against the present government. Once these veterans went back home, they were discriminated as before. The enlightened natives could no longer restrain their voice against such behaviours. Rebellion resulted and resistance to the colonial rule grew across Africa.

The people had an almost spiritual connection with the land. Mau Mau erupted mainly due to loss of land belonging to the natives. The movement was seen by the white colonists as an emotional outbreak as against rational reasoning. It was deemed as savage and violent which summed up only to a tribal cult. The colonialists viewed the pre-colonial days as savage which was enveloped in an almost indomitable darkness. The arrival of the white people brought light to them and gave them a civilization. However, with the rise of the Mau Mau or the Kenya Land and Freedom Army (KLFA), the Europeans thought that the natives were going back to their savage days. Thus, instead of attending to the economic and social problems of the natives, they termed it as irrational bestial uprising which was the spread of the tentacles of communism. This was largely the opinion that stemmed from the official report for which they failed to bring in an agrarian expert or an economic expert. Historians and Europeans who knew the natives up-close were not roped in to study the situation.

The British employed a psychological warfare which became crucial to quell down the anti-colonial movement. It was the policy of 'divide and rule' which they employed in other colonies as well. Thus, they made the natives feel that it was a civil war and not a war against the alien rule. They segregated the Mau Mau from the Kikuyu and isolated the latter from the rest of the population in the colony. Although the former tactics were not successful, it did manage to drive a wedge between the Mau Mau and the non-Kikuyu natives of the colony.

The Mau Mau leaders were well educated. General Gatunga was a respected teacher in his community before he joined the movement. He had recorded a series of 5 notebooks that explicitly explained the strategic attacks in detail. They were carried out in precision. Therefore, the attacks were accurate and well-planned, contrary to the propaganda of the Colonial rulers. The Mau Mau forces totaled upto 30,000. However, the absence of weapons that could match the ones which the imperialist government used gave a set-back.Their weapons consisted of shotguns, rifles, pistols and machine guns.They also used pangas (African machetes), spears, bow and arrows. "The British responded with regular army troops, engineers, artillery, naval forces, bombers and jet fighters" (37). They resorted to nighttime attacks due to the mismatch in artillery and targeted loyalist positions which were weak. The attack was fast and ruthless as they knew their target well, being loyalist natives of the alien government. The battle, which lasted for years, was diffused till the grass root level.

The management of the movement spread its tentacles to a variety of Kikuyu members. A prominent group was the females. Their participation can be traced back to 1920s when they took part in the Thuku protest. It stands out for the distinct female tactics they used to get their message across. They immersed themselves through the act of Guturama, which involved the display of female genitals as a sign of showing disrespect and an explicit display of anger in a captivating and powerful manner. The female participation in a passionate manner was motivated by continued devaluation and exploitation of their work. With the dawn of WW II, men were called upon to fight side by side with their colonial rulers. Women, along with their age-old role at home, were required to fill in the space left by men in their agricultural works. The advantage that women enjoyed during the troubled years was that they could move about in the colony without arousing the attention of the British Home Guards. They could

even reach the hideouts of the freedom fighters which played a crucial role in their sustainability as such movements ensured supplies such as medical utilities, ammunition and food. Another vital role that the women could afford to play was to pass on information to the guerilla fighters. Therefore, although neglected historically on their contribution to the political and economic impact, later studies confirmed their role and importance to the process of Independence.

Kenya's Governor Philip Mitchell, who retired in 1952, did not give importance to the rising Mau Mau uprising. The Acting Governor, however, sent a steady flow of information to England in 1952 to the Colonial Secretary in London on the state and the manner of the revolt. This showed a rising insurgency that was far more than just a minor revolt. The British initially relied on their military prowess along with technical superiority to quash the movement in a swift manner. However, by Late 1953, they conceded that the uprising was a serious situation and that it would take far beyond their calculation to suppress it. The intensity of situation was briefed by the British army but it took months before London and Nairobi took up the matter. Potter was replaced by Evelyn Baring on September, 1952 in Kenya with no knowledge about the seriousness of the situation by the colonial administration.

It was in October 1952 that the Mau Mau fighters took the life of a European woman for the first time in Thika. Within days, Senior Chief Waruhiu became the next victim. He was assassinated in broad daylight and it shook the foundation of the colonial set-up. He was a prominent and ardent supporter of the British presence in Kenya. Baring eventually requested the Colonial Office to declare a State of Emergency. Governor Baring therefore, signed the order declaring it on the 20th of October 1952. Operation Jock Scott was launched which lead to the arrest of Jomo Kenyatta and 180 others who were alleged Mau Mau leaders . The Operation did not deter the movement as prior information had helped the moderates to await for their arrest while the real militants like Dedan Kimathy and Stanley Mathenge fled to the cover of the forests. They went on to spearhead the freedom movement along with the forest armies.

Nderi, another loyalist chief, was hacked to death the next day after the arrests. It was followed by a series of bloody killings of the settlers which lasted for months. This made the British violent in turn and without any strategic planning, they tried to suppress the movement. It only made the natives turn bitter against the rulers and dived into the cause of the forest fighters even more. Five battalions were organized in Kenya, which totaled to about 3000 native Kenyan troops. The Governor requested assistance from the Security Service.

To justify the declaration of critics in England, six prominent detainees from Jock Scott, including Jomo Kenyatta, were put on trial. However, it was accused of being just a show as it had a bribed judge besides other violations. Jomo Kenyatta was charged with directing the freedom movement in 1953 for which he got a 7 year imprisonment along with the other accused. They were sent to a remote camp near Lake Turkana where they had to undergo hard labour. Due to the movement for independence from the colonial rulers, Kenya was under State Emergency from October 1952 to December 1959. It lead to imprisonment of many Kenyans in detention camps. This period of turbulence saw the involvement of more Africans in political activities. Eventually, Europeans, Asians and Africans were represented in the Kenya Legislative Council.

The declaration of Emergency had forced thousands to flee to the forests. The important Mau Mau operative areas were the Aberdares and the forests around Mount Kenya. A passive support-wing was established outside these primary areas. The British had gathered all the information on the leaders of the movement by September 1953. Their operation was greatly advanced by the capture of General China and the interrogation that followed.

Operation Anvil was started on April 1954 under General Erskine. It targeted the Nairobi native population. The city was considered the heart of the operations of the uprising. It was through the native population that the forest dwellers got their supply of food, money, recruits and other basic necessities. The operation was an ambitious attempt to wipe out all traces of Mau Mau in Nairobi. The General deployed 25000 British security forces and the entire place was secured, following which, all the native

Kenyans were taken to a temporary enclosure. Only the Kikuyu, Embu or Meru were detained and the rest was sent off. A native Kenyan informer gave information on the ones who were most likely involved. By the end of the operation, which lasted for two weeks, 20,000 male Mau Mau suspects were taken to Langata and 30,000 women and children were deported to the reserves.

It took the British four years to defeat the uprising. The suppression started from 1952 and lasted till 1956. In 1956, Dedan Kimathi was arrested for spear-heading the movement and he was hanged by the colonialists.

The first direct election to the legislative Council for the Africans took place in 1957. The ones who got elected took the cause of releasing Jomo Kenyatta from detention. He was released in 1962 and went on to become Kenya's first Prime Minister on the 12th of December, 1963. Kenyatta also became the first President and Kenya became a Republic. It joined the British Commonwealth in the same year. Through the Kenya Independence Act 1963, it established the 'Dominion of Kenya with Queen Elizabeth II becoming head of state. It was named 'Republic of Kenya' on the 12th of December, 1964. . Thus, like many other African countries, it grew out of colonialism that started in the 19th and the 20th century.

An opposition leftist party came up in 1966 known as the Kenya People's Union. It was led by Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, a former Vice President and a Luo elder. However, the party was banned and the leaders themselves were arrested in 1969. Kenya became a one –party state henceforth. It was only after December 1991 that the constitution was amended and multiparty based democracy was formed.

The Naga Colonial History:

Nagas belong to the Indo-Mongoloid race, residing in Nagaland which lies in the North-East of India which is covered mostly with dense jungle and little plain area. It is bounded by Arunachal

Pradesh in the North, Assam in the West, Manipur in South and Myanmar in the East. Its geographical area totals upto 116,527 square kilometers. It is between the Brahmaputra River in India and the Chindwin river in Myanmar. The peak of mountains range from 350 meters to 3000 meters above the sea level. The highest peak is Saramati in Tuensang district. Nagaland has a number of rivers flowing through it and among them, Dhansiri is the largest which merges into the river Brahmaputra. Although the land is hilly, it is fertile. It bears a variety of agricultural and horticultural produce.

The Naga people comprise of various tribes which are further divided into sub-tribes, clans and sub-clans. The tribes migrated to the south-eastern part of South-East Asia which was done in different phases. They finally settled in North East India. The Nagas are spread out in the states of Nagaland, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. "The Nagas are head-hunting tribes living in thousands of villages, many of which are buried in the deep jungles of Indo-Burma, speaking more than fifty languages and dialects, formerly notorious for head-hunting and human sacrifice, which is almost the only thing most people know about them" (Thong 1). As the Nagas migrated in different phases, they developed differences in customary practices and dialects. Before the 'Nagamise' became the lingua franca of Nagaland, the tribes spoke different dialects that could be understood only within the tribe. Every tribe was limited only to their own people for verbal communication. With the advent of Nagamise, inter-tribe communication was made possible. Inspite of adopting English language as the official language of the state today, a majority of the Nagas speak their own dialect, which has consequently led to the popular use of Nagamese.

Contact with the American missionaries and the British colonial rulers established among the Nagas a close bond with Western culture which has left a lasting impression.Nagas have had an oral history and not a written one. Therefore, folklore and myths surrounding the people that were passed on from generation to generation has shed some light on the ancient cultural and political life. Also, recent discoveries of Palaeolithic tools in Nagaland and Manipur has given some information on the religion, customs, social and political organizations of the people.

The name ‘Naga’ was given to them by outside people coming in contact with them. Scholars are of the opinion that they came from South East Asian countries and islands at different times. The Nagas themselves believe that they come from a coastal area. They still wear conchshells in their ornamental dresses which are considered of high value, an item used by the rich. It was also used as a medium of trade exchange.

The Nagas were regarded by scholars as comprising a distinct racial unit, differing in their origin, culture and appearance from the rest of the country. Naga culture is:

> …the way of life of the Nagas, the inherited behaviours and thoughts of their fore-fathers, passed on to the new generation, through oral traditions, and day to day practices and conservative lifestyles-in the form of customs, traditions, norms, values beliefs and conventions; acquired through the process of time, change, innovation, evolution and growth; contact, diffusion, integration, imitation and acculturation. (8)

Head-hunting culture was a means of survival for the ancient Nagas as they dwelt in a hostile environment. It was connected with religious rites and ceremonies, besides social status. This practice literally meant cutting the enemy’s head with dao. They were also speared or shot with an arrow and then beheaded with dao. Once the heads are chopped off, they are carried to the village as trophies while singing and chanting in praise and glory of their god. The practice evolved as a custom which was recognized as a sign of bravery on the part of the warrior.

Head-hunting culture flourished at a time when all the villages were independent and sovereign. The people of a village were self-sufficient and did not depend on other villages. However, there was no peace and it was rather a time when there was constant warfare between the numerous villages. Factors like location of the village and able warriors played a crucial role in the defense system. Thus, warriors were valued and head-hunting was embedded deep within the custom of the people.

In the traditional life of the Naga people, the lives of the people evolved around two major factors, which were, head-hunting and the Feast of Merit. There was honor and glory attached to the two deeds not just in the present life but also in the life beyond. The Feast of Merit was a ceremony that marked the acquisition of status of rich men. A grand feast was given which was followed by merry-making. There were types of feast which differed with different tribes. It involved levels of ceremonies which had to be hosted by the rich man giving the Feast of Merit. Each level marked the access of personal adornment and decoration of the house which could not be used by ordinary people and even prohibition which signified the distinction of the social status of the host. Every level witnessed the slaughtering of cattles, giving rice beer and rice, culminating with the sacrifice of a Mithun.

The Feast of Merit helped a man climb up the social ladder with material wealth as the basis. It was not just limited to the individual man but also gave benefits to the entire village as they believed that the sacrifices appeased the spirits which brought in prosperity to the village. Not only did the feasts bring in social status for him but it also brought in distinctions for his family and the clan as a whole. There was a dormitory for the young men of the village where no woman was allowed entrance. They slept there from puberty till they were married. Its purpose was to serve:

> …as an integral learning institution to teach the young ones the principles of spontaneous obedience to the elders. It was in this institution that the boys were taught the dignity of manual labour, hardworking and economic self-sufficiency. It also played an important role in preparing the young boys for the post of Village Councilin the near future when they grew old. Due to the rigorous activities, the Morung acted like a military training centre for the young boys. (Changkiri 6-7)

Stone Culture was an important practice in Naga culture. It was used for both commemoration and funeral purposes. It "may be in the form of a pillar, tombstone, tablet, or a statue. The practice of such a notable and enduring erection of historic stone structure is called Stone Monument or Stone Culture" (Thong 25). The erection of memorial stones was connected with ceremonies that differed in villages and tribes.

Genna, derived from the Angami word '*Kenna*', was an integral part of the Naga culture that effected both social and religious lives of the people. The word meant 'forbidden', a word that was used largely to mark a religious festival of the people. "When they say 'a day of genna', it indicates that the people are forbidden to go about the normal mode of work or to eat or touch or it may even prohibit them from talking to one another" (27). It could affect an individual or an entire village. The village as a whole observes genna when paddy fields are being attacked and destroyed by pests. There is restriction in eating and drinkingand making the fire. In certain cases when the situation requires it, talking is also prohibited. The day is spent in meditation to the spirits for protection from the pests bent on destroying the paddy fields. Such strict implementation of genna produced results that were desirable. Thus, it was taken seriously. It would give the opposite result if *genna* was not properly observed.

> "Genna is observed during preparation of head-hunting expeditions, Feast of Merit ceremonies, erection of Stone Monuments, animal hunting expeditions, fishing, sowing of seeds, harvesting of crops, the rise of new moon, welcoming of New year, birth of a new baby, death of important personality or Chief, unnatural death of a person who is killed by wild animals like tiger, elephants or drowns in water or being carried away by water current." (Thong, 28)

The practice of genna is common to all Naga tribes. However, there are differences in the way it is practiced from tribe to tribe. For instance, when a natural death occurs among the Aos, the effected family leaves their home and the village for an entire month. During this time, they reside in the jungle. For the Rengmas, they leave their house only for a night although they too, reside in the jungle.

A common trait among the Nagas was the celebration of festival which was a mirror of their cultural life in its entire colour. Their festival was deeply connected with agriculture and its seasons. During this time, feasting with rice beer and meat was a common feature along with adornment of ornamental dresses which were worn for ceremonies. It was a plethora of events where songs and dances accompanied such festivals. It also brought in community work which promoted socializing. It was a time of diverse activities such as enjoyment of games and remembering the dead, along with observing

genna in certain areas. It was marked by sacrifices that were made for fertility and a rich harvest. The rich cultural heritage of the Nagas was passed down to the younger generation at this time.

Although the underlying meaning to the celebration of festivals was common to all the Naga tribes, there were variations in the manner of celebrations. Some Naga festivals with their variations are listed below:

a.) ***Angami-Sekrenyi***: The ceremony is celebrated to bring in the well-being of every member for the coming year. It is the most celebrated one of all the festivals where the observation of genna is strictly maintained which lasts for five days. The first day witnesses all the male members of the village going to the village wells to bathe and wash one's own clothes. They then return with a jar full of water. Once this is done, they prepare a separate hearth and make fire the traditional way. It is followed by killing a chicken which is considered a good omen if it crosses its legs while it is being killed.

b.) ***Ao-Moatsu***: It is a festival that is celebrated to get blessings from the deities to get their blessings on the newly planted crops. Thus, it falls on the month of May when the paddy seeds had just been planted. The centre of the activity during this time is the Morung. The first three days of the celebration is the prelude of the main festival where singing and dancing from the young to the old is witnessed. Games and sports is another feature during this time. The fourth day is marked by adorning shawls like 'tsungotepsu' which were worn only by warriors who have taken enemy-heads or given the Feast of Merit. Enthusiastic feasting and merry-making marks the sixth day of the festival, which goes on till the next day. The Priest offers a sacrifice of pig and a fowl the next day at the village gate which signals the end of the festival.

c.) ***Sema-Tulunyi***: The festival is prominent which figures around the month of July. It lasts for five days where going to the field is prohibited. The first day of the festival does not allow anyone to

leave the village while on the second day, men who have given the Feast of Merit or warriors who have taken enemy's heads prepare rice beer for the following day. The third day ushers in a great feast for the public. Pork being the prominent item in the feast, is a must-have for all the villagers. The rich kill pigs while the poor buy the meat. This was done with the belief that if pork is not consumed during this time, the consequences would be that it would negatively effect the formation of the grains in the field. The fourth day is spent in making offerings at one's own home by both the husband and the wife for healthy growth of crops and protection of their field from any kind of destruction. The fifth day brings the men together for an elaborate social work.

d.) ***Lotha-Rhuven***: The festival stresses great importance on the first sowing of the seed, which is done by the village Chief who also takes on the responsibility of the Priest. This act is carried out at the sacrificial site of the village. Sowing of the first seed is done by the priest oncethe ceremony is completed. He is followed by the other members of the village, with the men who have given the Feast of Merit leading the sowing. The fire offering ceremony takes place after this where the movement of the smoke is scrutinized.

e.) ***Konyak-Aoling Monyu***: The most important festival among the tribe, it is spread over six days where songs of victory over the enemy resound throughout the land. This is also a time when they worship the sky god for keeping their fields protected. It is an important time of interaction and good-will not just among the relatives but with the neighbours and the community. There is feasting in every household which is shared with other people of the village.

f.) ***Chakhesang-Khilunyie***: The festival lasts upto eight days where each day is divided into different activities. It is a harvest festival that is held towards the last week of November. Day one witnesses the ceremony of the closing of harvest. Day two is spent in husking the harvested rice grains. Day three ushers in activity in the streams where women, boys and girls catch fish, collect snails and water insects. The catch is brought home and eaten the same day before the sun sets. Day four is a leisure

day. However, day five is again a hectic day of fishing. The two following days are spent in games and sports.The last and the eighth day is marked by collecting housing materials for both construction of new houses and repairing of old ones.

g.) ***Chang-Naknyulum***: The festival, which lasts for six days, is celebrated before the harvest, unlike the Chakhesangs. In these six days' time, there is a juxdaposition of emotions where the beloved dead members of the family are remembered on one hand and there is a vibrant merry-making with songs and energy-packed dances lighting the Morung. There is also a time of reverence to the sky god where houses are adorned beautifully and prayers sent up. It had been started due to the fear of thunderstorm and hail which was the cause of destruction of their paddy fields.

Before the advent of Christianity among the Nagas, they were animists. Animism is the doctrine that stressed on the existence of spirits in all plants, animals and objects in nature. It attributes a conscious life to the natural world around us. As Chandrika Singh states,

> The ancient Naga people having strong faith in natural forces were animist by the faith. They carried various religious myths, which served as their religious scriptures and creeds in absence of any prescribed religion. These religious faiths helped them not only to understand the environment and universe but also to shape their social and cultural life (Singh 8).

They attributed good and bad evens that befell them to the deities. Thus, they tried to pacify the spirits in order to save them from evil that may befall them as it was traced back to the spirits due to their displeasure.

The Nagas believed in an all-encompassing God who was the source of all creation, including the human race. They believed that the Creator was benevolent and all-transcending and yet immanent in His creation. Thus, they viewed every creation as a reflection of the all-knowing and wise God in whose hand laid the destiny of the people. He was known by different names in different tribes. The Aos called Him Lijaba while the Angamis call Him *Ukepenuopfu*. The Semas call Him *Alhou* and the Rengmas call Him *Sunggigu.*

It was believed that some spirits lived in the houses of people or even in deserted houses which were abandoned due to a tragedy that had befallen the family. The spirits were said to look like monkeys or apes. The people tried to propitiate it by offering food items around the house pillars. They were careful not to displease the spirit as its displeasure meant that they had to go through sufferings.

The deity of harvest was an important spirit for the Nagas as she was attributed with the physical well-being of a man. She was also responsible for giving wealth to a man. A good harvest of rice, which was the most important crop, depended on the benevolence of the spirit who was believed to live under the earth. Thus, during harvest, the Naga-farmer generates enough smoke out of a fire to invite the deity. She was also the protector of the field from different calamities.

With the strong believe in spirits, the Nagas also believed in divination. It was an act of seeking the will of the spirits. They also believed in omens which pointed towards the future through divination. It was used to ascertain important events like war, sicknesses and even expeditions such as fishing and hunting.

The Nagas believed in magic which was distinguished into black and white. They disapproved of black magic which was used to harm an enemy with the help of supernatural powers. This was done without physical contact. White magic was used to undo the sufferings caused by black magic.

Sorcery was also practiced among the Nagas who had great faith in it. This was the practice of divination with the help of evil spirits. The one who practices it was also known as a witch-doctor or medicine man. He was a blend of fortune-teller and a physician. The people relied on him to solve their problems by consulting him.

There was a priestly clan among the Nagas from among whom a priest and a junior priest were chosen. They were differentiated from the witch-doctors and soothsayers. The office of the Priest was held up in the pedestal and was given the responsibility to perform in important ceremonies.

The Nagas were rich in folk-lore which encompasses their songs and dances. Myths, proverbs, legends, tales, and other artistic forms of folk-lore pulled its resources from the very fabric of the Naga society, thereby, giving an in-depth insight into their lives. The medium of this expression was the spoken word which was passed down from generation to generation through orality, thereby, ensuring the continuity of the rich cultural heritage through the ages.

Stories and tales comprise myths and legends where the former is confined within the imaginary stories of famous and great personalities. The latter throw light on religious personalities and important events. The Chang-Nagas, for example, tells the story of how the living creatures were created. They claim that human beings came out of a big hole in the earth's surface. The same followed for the other creatures. The door was, however, temporary and closed up for eternity. The Ao-Nagas, on the other hand, claim that they came out of six stones.

The story of the invention of fire tries to explain why men and animals cannot live side by side in peace. There was a time when men and animals could talk to each other and lived together. This was before fire was made and it was a time when people only used solar energy to cook their food. One day, man and tiger decided to make fire and agreed that the successful one would burn the other and

eat the flesh. The former was successful but the latter was not. So, it ran away into the jungle and lived apart, closing all communication between man and animals for good.

Songs and dances were engrained in the very blood of the Naga people which show-cased their rich cultural heritage. They used these forms not just during important festivals but also while doing different tasks. Different seasons also ushered in different songs. Likewise, dances were not just limited to an occasion but also on different events.

The Nagas are agriculturalists by occupation and therefore, their lives are centered around the land. Their attachment to the land is simultaneously economical and religious. The very cultural festivals which are integral to them as a tribe stem from their agricultural lifestyle which formed their social fabric and ethos. The culture, society, politics and religion of the Nagas were intricately a product of their land.

"The traditional people's abstention from work itself is a sign of their cooperation with the creative activity of Earth. The observance of genna in the traditional Naga society shows the intensity of the Naga attachment to the laws of nature laws, and a commitment to work and participate cooperatively with them. During lijabamong the observance of a strict genna of rest by the Ao Nagas was a time when the people acted in accordance with creation's rhythms to become rejuvenated and recreated". (Imsong 211)

The ethnic identity of the Nagas is deeply rooted in the land itself. As Imsong points out, there will be no village without land and no clan or family without village. Consequently, there will be no history. The culture and tradition that defines the Nagas will itself be non-existent without land. The main festivals arise out of the need to purify land, to start the activity of sowing or harvesting. Kaka D. Iralu charts out three universal laws that define the identity of an ethnic group. The first law states that a definite geographical land is needed for a nation to exist. The second is that "The national

identity of nation is inseperable from the geographical identity of that nation" and the third is that "the national and geographical identity of a nation is indestructible and unchangeable (3-28).

When the British Administration annexed the Naga Hills, policies were introduced which touched upon its territorial occupation, the foundation of the Naga identity. The initial years reflected the colonisers' attempt to control the raids that the Nagas carried out on the Assam tea plantations. However, they also simultaneously carried out a peaceful policy of non-interference. In the year 1873, the British introduced the Inner Line Regulation. It required that non-tribals should first obtain an official approval before entering the Hill area. It also regulated trade and ownership of land beyond the line created. This Inner Line Permit (ILP) has been retained even after Independence.

Besides the Inner Line Permit, land reforms were also introduced. In 1864, the Forest Department of British India was established to have state hegemony over forest resources. It allowed the government to extract economic benefits in a systematic manner. The forests were classified as 'reserved' and 'protected'. The former were considered as resources that could be exploited immediately while the latter were deemed as ones which could be utilized in the future. The ones that did not come under these divisions were also subject to government control for trading of forest resources. While building the railway tracks, however, large scale forest destruction took place and such acts were covered by Government Forests Act (1865) and the Indian Forest Act (1878) "…in which the British Government attempted to settle the "tribal" claims on the forests and lands" (Imsong 96). The Acts introduced for the first time a division of forests into three types. They were Reserved Forests, Protected Forests and Village Forests. These Acts threatened their ethnic identity which was tied closely to their land. After Independence from the British, the Indian Government carried on the former policies.

The Nagas came under pressure from the British Government to abandon jhum cultivation by introducing different policies. However, this proved to be unsuccessful as the very culture and

religion that the Nagas practiced were deeply connected to this system of cultivation. The many religious rites and rituals including the elaborate festivals were all connected to it.

The colonial rule sought to introduce and implement new policies that touched upon the very fabric of the social set-up and culture of the Naga people. Monetary economy was introduced along with the Acts that curbed the usage of land. Individual ownership of lands was introduced by placing monetary worth, thus, reducing it to a commodity. Land became the bone of contention as successive governments regulated the usage of land.

Each of the Naga tribes established their own sovereignty while settling in the hilly areas of the North-East of India. There was no intention or desire among the Naga tribes to unite and form a political unit. Instead, it took the British colonisers to bind them together under one administration in peace and harmony. Until then, they were separated and indulged in headhunting wars.

Inspite of discord arising from quarrels and conflicts among the different Naga tribes, there was a political organization within the tribes. Here, the

> …customary laws served as the code of administration and adjudication. The suspicious nature of the ancient Naga people and their separatist attitude hardly allowed them to come together and form a common social and political platform with the result that various Naga tribes belonging to the same blood and having the same common stock remained untouched to one another. Rather they remained victims of internecine feuds and wars. (Singh 7).

Based on the social behavioural patterns and cultural practices of the Nagas, they displayed characteristics that mirrored civilized societies. However, the practice of head-hunting which was associated with valour and honour produced warriors. It further drove the tribes and even villages within a tribe further away from one another.

Nagas have a long history of war and peace with the Ahoms. It was through the Ahom-land that Christianity came to Nagaland for the first time through the Ao Naga tribe. A church was established initially in Sibsagar during the British rule in Assam. Although records show that the British had no plan to send military expedition to conquer Nagaland, oral history has it that they were planning to annex the border area. This was to obtain more land for tea plantation. Therefore, the colonialists would make incursion into the border areas which was objected by the Nagas settled on the border. American missionaries had come to work in Assam and they had come in contact with the Nagas while they had come to Assam to barter. On hearing the Gospel, they were converted to Christianity and enrolled themselves once they were baptized in Sibsagar. Longjanglepzuk of Merangkong village was the first convert who hailed from Ao Naga community and he was baptized in the year 1851 by Rev. S. M. Whiting. However, he was killed in an attack of his village by enemies. Back in 1840, missionary Bronson, arrived in Namsangia and opened up a school for the children until his sister died, which made him shift to Sibsagar.

Dr. Clark, a missionary, had sent his friend Goddula, an Assamese evangelist, to Naga Hills to spread the gospel. This was because the Nagas were suspicious of him. Through the latter, a church was established for the first time in Molongkimong, which was in the Ao inhabited area in the year 1872. By this time, Dr. Clark was present and they even brought back the names of a few believers whose names were written in the Sibsagar church. Their names were written along with the names of the new converts who were baptized and the first Naga Christian Church came into being. This was on 23rd December, 1872 and it ushered in a new chapter of peace, tolerance and good will among the people. It marked the dawn of a world which had been unknown to the Nagas earlier and which swallowed the age old practices of head-hunting within 50 years of the advent of Christianity.

The spread of the Good News in Nagaland also meant the introduction of a new way of living which was structured to extract all cultural practices that turned into an obstacle. However, along with it, certain cultural heritage got swept away that was never to resurface again among the Nagas. It was due

to the teachings of the missionaries that their customary practices were evil as well as useless and that they had to imbibe the Western practices which were a model for the new believers to follow. Nagaland witnessed their own culture quickly fade away, to be supplanted a new one.

Around the time when Dr. Clark was stationed in Molongkimong village, head-hunting was still prevalent, which was practiced among the tribes and even within a tribe. The arrival of the former influenced its practice in such a way that it was altogether given up entirely eventually. There were many incidents when other villagers would come to attack the village where Dr. Clarke was stationed, which was called Molongkimong. He had guns and ammunitions with him at this time. Thus, his weapons being no match for the invaders, besides completely unknown to them, were used to defend the village effectively. The inhabitants kept two warriors watch over the gate of the village round-the-clock. This discouraged the enemies to attack, aware of the foreign artillery that was lodged in the village. Dr. Clark was not hesitant to declare wherever he went to spread the Gospel that it was futile to fight against the British who were armed with guns and ammunitions which were huge in number. With the weapons that the Naga warriors used, it would only mean eminent death if they waged war against the colonisers. At one point, the villagers of Merangkong descended upon the villagers of Molongkimong . The attack was reported by Dr. Clark to the British administration. This resulted in a confrontation of the Assam Rifles with the Merangkong warriors, the former being sent by the imperialist colonisers. This happened in 1885. It was, however, the presence of Dr. Clark that restrained the dispatched force from inflicting serious repercussions upon the attacking villagers. Nonetheless, the invaders were compelled to give back what had been taken by them as war booties from Molongkimong. It ensured peace between the two warring villages through the intervention of Dr. Clark and the Britishers. The American missionary went to every village in Ao area preaching the gospel. The Britishers, on the other hand, undertook an expedition into Angami area from where they came to Wokha and entered Ao area. They conquered all the villages on their way and established themselves in Ao area in 1889. Before the arrival of the Britishers to Ao area, Dr. Clarke went to Ungma and Longkhum, the two major villages in Ao area from his new station, Molongyimsen, to spread the gospel. The shift has been necessitated by the fact that the village was established by him along with the new believers of Christianity. It was declared as the first Christian village of Ao Naga area. He fore-warned the two warrior villages that they should not wage war against the advancing colonisers as it would be futile and unfruitful. He explained that "…with their

method of warfare and with arms being used by them they could not compete with the Britisher in the battle field" (Bendangangshi, p. 21). Rather, he encouraged them to pursue peace and acknowledge the coloniser's superior method of warfare. He knew that the British would be next to invincible for the Nagas and he managed to persuade the Ao Nagas to accept their sovereignty. Thus, a yearly house tax was paid to the Europeans. The Mongsenyimti village even went to the extend of meeting the British in Wokha station to request for their intervention in their ongoing war with the Chang Naga. Therefore, the latter complied and stationed themselves at the village for a short period during which, they killed many of the attackers. After a few years, the colonisers occupied Mokokchung and remained there until they left Nagaland.

The new faith was firmly established in the Ao Naga hills which dispersed throughout Nagaland in a short span of time. Dr. Clark transferred his Mission Centre from Molongkimong to Molongyimsen in 1885. He shifted again to Impur Mission compound in 1894. He worked tirelessly to spread the Gospel from the Mission centers. Thus, the people who were worshippers of gods like Lijaba, Kodaktsungba, Anungtsungba and a few others, abandoned these heavenly gods. Slavedom, which was a common practice in Ao Naga area, was declared as a wrong practice by Dr. Clark and all the American missionaries who came after him. They pointed out that it was against the teaching of the Holy Bible. They set free many slaves either by ransom payment through cash or kind. These men and women who were slaves initially and ransomed from their masters were eventually baptized and were enrolled in the church register as Christians. The former slaves, now being free men and women, got married and lived peaceful lives as Christians and good citizens in a village of their choice. With the spread of Christianity, slavery was slowly eradicated from Ao Naga community. This was a prominent change that came over in the society due to the new faith, a reformation of the prevalence of such a practice.

Churches were established in every village as the Gospel spread. This was followed by establishment of schools. These primary schools were opened to educate the children of the village. An important feature of the educational system was that the medium of language was in Ao Naga dialect. A Middle school was opened at Impur Mission Compound consequently. It initiated the outpouring of children from all over the area, hailing from different villages. As the number of churches grew and expanded into other tribes, children from other Naga tribes like Lotha, Sema, Phom, Chang also came

and got enrolled in the school. The students got free education around this time. The British policy makers were not keen to focus on education in Naga areas. They did not think it imperative to initiate it. However, the American missionaries had a different vision. They deduced that giving the tribals education would mean opening the way to carry on the mission work in their own native places. Thus, effort was given to impart proper education among the tribal students. The educated students were sent out as teachers to every village as planned to impart education, paying them their salary from the mission fund. Evangelists were also trained and sent out to different mission fields. Thus, the first Middle school in Naga Hills was the M. E. School at Impur Mission Center.

The British policy for the Naga Hills was not to interfere in the natives' social order, thereby, keeping their cultural life preserved. The American Missionaries however, saw a ripe field to be harvested for the Lord. They did what was taught to them, to go and spread the gospel. In bringing the gospel, education was brought in simultaneously to help the mission cause. Naga Hills inhabitants would have remained aloof from the rest of the world, away from the main stream had the American missionaries not arrived. It would have had its first school only after the Independence of India.

The Ao Naga Christians set up a Christian association as the spread of the new faith and education became dominant. It was called the Ao Mongdang. They were helped by the American Home Board. They looked after the whole matter in the Naga Hills. Local missionaries were dispatched with or without American missionaries to different Naga tribes like the Lothas, Semas, Changs, Konyaks,Sangtams and Yimchungers. The Naga tribes, constantly fighting among themselves, never knowing peace, saw a mighty change of culture with the onset of a new faith that talked about shunning violence and imbibing tolerance, forgiveness, hope, faith and above all, love. On the other hand, had the British not imposed peace on the Hills, it would have been a herculean task to overcome the obstacles that stood in the way of spreading the Gospel. Besides, the spread of the new faith would not have progressed as quickly as it did. The friendship that existed between the British and the American missionaries helped the cause of the mission.

Naga Hills was embroiled in ceaseless wars between tribes and even within a tribe, which was, between villages. As a result, the villagers could not even practice jhum cultivation and famines would be a regular occurrence among the people. The people were deeply superstitious in the pre-Christian era. This would often bind them. They had certain observances to follow and therefore, would be left with only an insufficient amount of time to work at the fields for their livelihood. The Nagas also meticulously observed a division of normal deaths and sinful or accursed deaths. On account of the latter death, all their properties were abandoned as it was webbed with superstition. With such social practices and unending warfare, the people were made poorer and there was only reprise of the past troubles. Slavery, a practice that was practiced throughout the Naga Hills, had enmeshed men, women and children alike. People were enslaved even for a meager debt to some man. The slave worked for the person with whom they had debts. They were demoted to a low level, used like the rich person's property. The slaves could, however be ransomed out by another person. All the above practices had ceased to function once the new faith supplanted the old one. "Whenever Culture traits spread from one culture to another it is called diffusion. When the whole system of life in a culture begins to change under the influence of any other culture it is known as acculturation" (Thong 159). On observing Naga culture, it has been greatly influenced by the introduction and spread of Christianity and modern education. "As a result of which the whole system of life has been changed in the process of development due to diffusion, accumulation, adoption and assimilation of the western ideology and beliefs "(159).

J.P. Mills describes how the new education and the new faith transformed the cultural landscape of the Ao-Nagas:

> Another generation and hardly a memory will remain of the stories and songs which the Aos have handed down from father to son for untold ages. What care the well-oiled youths of the Impur Mission Training School for the foolish traditions of their ignorant heathen forebears? To bury the past is the tendency of the semi-educated generation which is growing up. Christians never join in the old songs; they are definitely forbidden to do so, I believe (Mills 307).

Head-hunting and the Feast of Merit were two integral parts of Naga way of life.

Their culture could not be separated from the two practices. It allowed them to wear the finest among Naga textile arts. However, with the disappearance of the two vital cultural practices, the natives could not wear such textiles as these depended on how successful one was at head-hunting or how generous the person was in giving feast to the community. These elaborate textile arts were not accessible to the common man.

The spread of Christianity meant that the worship of other heavenly gods and all rituals, ceremonies and even festivals that stemmed out of religious beliefs were considered as taboo. It would mean that they were not faithful and against the teachings of Christianity. Nagas elaborately decorated their houses with trophies of valour, which included animal and human heads. Mithun horns were a symbol of their prosperity which were also considered as an art object. The tribals were gifted wood carvers. They would carve out on the wooden pillars of their houses. However, all the trophies of war, objects of art and the wooden carvings were branded as un-Christian. Therefore, the once heathen and animistic natives were asked to bring those down and burn them. They were also skilled weavers and could weave out intricate and beautiful designs. They dyed clothes and dresses which were used for religious ceremonies. All these were discouraged as they embraced the new faith. They kept valuable ornaments like cowries, ivories and scarlet for worshipping the pagan gods. They would keep hair taken from enemies' heads and hornbills. Such artefacts had become taboo under the current belief. Nagas had a distinct art of dancing which was also

discouraged along with other social and agricultural ceremonies.

Morung, which was the Bachelor's Dormitory was the nucleus of the men's activity in the village. It was where the male folk received oral education and learned discipline. It had multi-purpose for the menfolk. While it was the guard house, it was also the recreational room and served as a center for ceremonial and festival function. The very life of the Dormitory system disappeared with the entrance of Christianity.

Churches were set up in every village and it took in the very life of the natives. As S.Thong states, "With the advent of Christianity and modern education many changes have taken place in their life style, cooking system, food items, pattern of house building and house decoration, matters relating to personal hygiene and community health awareness, enamel and plastic mugs and plates have taken place of the old bamboo cups and wooden plates" (Thong 160).

The advent of Christianity signaled the great change in the Naga culture which was untouched and practiced from generation to generation. It defined the very essence of the people and all that made them. The process of Modernisation and Westernization undervalued the rich Naga heritage initially but eventually, the natives were motivated to go back to their roots.

The Nagas were independent since time immemorial. "This is an incontrovertible fact of history and admits of no argument. The south-western part of the Naga Territory was conquered by the British in the early 19th century" (Bendangangshi 37). Although they had contacts with the Ahoms, the latter kept their way of living without altering the Nagas in their social and political way of life. Nor did the two sides try to claim each other's sovereignty. Assam itself never was a part of India until the Treaty of Yandabo (Burma) in 1824-26 AD through which Assam was ceded to the British Empire. The British needed to open a direct route between Manipur and Assam Valley. Therefore, it necessitated their confrontation with the Nagas as the route had to pass through a part of Naga territory. It led to the

annexation of this area to British India in the 19th Century. A Survey Party led by Captain Jenkins and Pemberton undertook a survey of the area from Manipur. It carved into the Angami territory, against which the natives stood. Eventually, the surveyors "suffered some casualties at the hands of the 'cunning, treacherous and war like Independent Nagas' "(37). This instigated the British to send six expeditions to conquer and subdue the Naga warriors from 1839-1846. The Nagas consequently yielded to the European colonisers but it did not end the brutal battles. The latter needed to establish outposts in Naga Hills to exert greater and continuous control, which was done during 1847-1850. Initially, the outpost was in Samaguting. Eventually, Mezuma and Khonoma in Angami Naga territory had one post each. It took four British expeditions to establish these posts.

The British force withdrew from Naga Hills in 1851. This outcome was caused due to a number of reasons. The North Western Frontier of India needed to be defended from the Afghans around this time for which the British force was needed there. Also, to subject the Nagas proved to be an expensive affair as the military expeditions racked up a huge expense for the Imperial Government.

" Baffled by the inveterate savagery and the devotional love of the Nagas for Independence displayed during the previous expeditions, the British finally fell back on a policy of what is known in history as 'Lord Dalhousie's Non-Interference Policy' towards the Nagas. The Imperial Dalhousie, the then Governor General of India, emphatically pronounced the game not worth the candle…had found it expedient to pursue a policy of non-interference in regard to the Nagas" (38).

The troops were withdrawn from Samaguting, Mezuma and Dimapur outposts in the Naga Hills and the natives were left undisturbed. The Nagas did not sit back and remained idle during this time. They raided the British borders more than 20 times, killing 55 British subjects and took 113 persons as captives. This set a reversal of the British policy towards the Naga Hills. They set their foot again boldly into the territory with the objective of subjecting and 'civilizing'them, and annexed a part of their territory. By 1878, the colonizers set up an Administrative Centre in Kohima. A sub-centre was set up in Wokha in 1875. In 1881, the British occupied territory was declared as a 'British District' with Kohima

as the Chief Administrative Centre. The Imperialists did not stop there but carved out a Control Area in the Sumi-Naga territory and a sub-centre in Ao Naga area in 1887 and 1889 respectively.

Although the British appointed political officers to administer the Naga Hills Districts, it was the village chieftains and their elders who were given the task of looking after the civic needs and the overall welfare of the villagers. Inter-village rivalry and head hunting was replaced by peace as the new era began. The north-eastern part of the Naga territory bordering Burma, however, was left unconquered by the colonizers. It was independent and had its own traditional governance until India attained its Independence in 1947 from United Kingdom.

The Government of India Act 1919 declared Naga Hills District as a 'Backward Tract' and therefore, any Act that the Indian Legislature passed was not applicable to this area. This set the territory apart from the rest of the Indian Territory. When the Simon Commission (The Indian Statutory Commission) under the Chairmanship of Sir John Simon along with Clemet Attlee as a member came to India, it visited Kohima. They asked the Nagas whether they would become a part of the 'New Reformed Scheme', which was, the Government of India Act 1935.

A memorandum was submitted to the Commission by the Naga Club, which was the only all-Naga representative organization at the time. They stated clearly that the Nagas should be left alone to determine their course once the British leave India. "The memorandum submitted by the Nagas stating their unique cultural identity and demanded for political separation" (Thong 147). It is significant as it is the first written document that spelled out the aspirations of the Nagas, which was, to regain the lost independence. As Joseph S. Thong points out, "The desire for fame, recognition, power and prestige led the Nagas to head-hunting wars. This head-hunting tactics has helped them in military organization. And the Naga system of independent village sovereign states and isolation has made the Nagas determination of self rule, self identity and self protection against foreign rule" (143).

When World War I started, many young men from the Naga Hills took part in it as 'labour corps' to help the British fight the Germans. They came back to their homes only in 1919 after complete victory over the Germans. They went as far as France, bringing back tales of horror experienced during wartime. World War II was no different for the simple minded Nagas who went through great suffering defending the allied nations. They also underwent heavy losses while defending their own land from the Japanese and the Indian National Army (INA) invaders. They had occupied a part of Kohima, the capital of the Naga Hills in 1944. It was made compulsory that the young Nagas were to be enrolled in the labour Corps (L.C). They were employed as armed scouts, spies and some were also used as guerilla force against the invaders.

The first graduate among the Nagas was Mr.A. Kevichusa, followed by Mr. Mayangnokcha. They were both involved in the war, taking the side of the British against the invaders. They were both Government employees and as instructed by the latter, they courageously performed their duty in the war. Under the leadership of Mr. A. Kevichusa, the Naga Labour Corps made it possible for the allied forces to defeat the enemy. At places where the allied forces could not move, the labour corps workers tirelessly moved up and down the difficult terrain, transporting big guns, rations, tents and the like. Nagas comprising of both public and the Labour Corps lost their lives in the war. Both sides had to pay heavily although the enemy was pushed back out of Kohima. Mr. Mayangnokcha was an intelligent officer at Mokokchung Sub-Division. Both the intellectuals were recognized for their valour and their names were enrolled as a Member of British Empire (MBE). There were also others like Mr. Imlong Chang of Mokokchung, Dr. Longrikaba of Changki and Mr. Khodas Yanthan who was awarded by the British once the war was over.

The advent of the Second World War saw A.Z.Phizo spreading the message of Naga Independence. It also awakened a sense of brotherhood among the various Naga tribes. Consequently, the Naga Hills District Tribal Council (NHDTC) was formed. It was started by the last British Ruler of Nagaland, Sir Charles Pawsey in 1945.

The war being over, the Nagas collected enormous amount of arms left behind by the allied forces and the Japanese. The same were used eventually by the Nagas against the Indian occupational forces in their territory. 1929 and early part of 1930s saw the Zeliangrong uprising under Jaduanang which was to overthrow the British power and regain the lost independence. The latter, however, defeated and overthrew the uprising and the leader was hanged at Imphal. The number of Naga people who were killed during the revolution was kept hidden and never revealed to the public by the governing authority.

The Government of India Act 1935, an Act passed basing on the recommendations of the Simon Commission, declared that the Naga Hills District (Backward Tract) be treated as 'Excluded Area' on March 3, 1936. It enabled the Governor to administer the area according to his discretion. The Act made it clear that any Act of the Federal Legislature or of Assam Legislature would not be applied to the Naga Hills. This freed the Nagas from any Government policy.

Sir Robert Neil Reid, Governor of Assam, 1937-41, says in *History of the Assam Frontier Areas Bordering Assam*- throughout the discussions previous to the forming of the New act, the authorities concerned had no difficulty in agreeing that the Naga Hills ought to be kept outside the purview of the New Constitution. They were accordingly declared to be an 'Excluded Area' under the Government of British India (Excluded and partially Excluded Areas) Order, 1936 and have since the 1st of April, 1937 been administered by the Governor in His Discretion".(Bendangangshi 47).

When the Cabinet Mission was sent to India in April, 1946, the Naga National Council, which was formerly known as Naga Hills District Tribal Council and changed its name in March 1946, and represented the Naga people and voice out their sentiments, waited upon them in New Delhi on the very month of their arrival. The latter made known their wishes to the former. The Nagas would not accept any arbitrary decisions made by the British for them and that no recommendation will be accepted without consulting them. It is to be noted that the Naga National council initially aimed at fostering the welfare as well as social aspirations of the Naga people. However, it spread its concerns to political problems which took on an extreme hue through its leader A.Z. Phizo. The Council housed members who

belonged to different Naga tribes on the principal of proportional representation. The office bearers were elected among the members and " Every Naga citizen Was supposed to be a member of the N.N.C. and every family, contributed voluntarily toward the maintenance of the council" (Thong 149).

The Naga National Council requested His Majesty's Government on February 20, 1947 to appoint India as the Guardian power of Nagaland for a period of 10 years after which, they would decide for themselves the course of their political path. The request was a part of the Memorandum submitted to the last Viceroy of India, Lord Mountbatten. They did not get a desired reply to this memorandum. Rather, it was suggested that they take up their case to the advisory Committee on the Aboriginal Tribes which was slated to visit the Naga Hills District.

The Naga National Council yet again submitted a second Memorandum to the Government on May 19, 1947. It stated that during the 10 years interim Government of the Naga people, they will have full Legislative, Executive and Judicial power. It also clarified its stand that Nagaland belonged to the Nagas. The Interim Government would have full power on raising and spending of revenue where the deficit budget would be met by the guardian power. Regarding defence and aiding civil power should an emergency arise, the guardian power was required to maintain an armed force within the Naga territory. The force was to be responsible to the Naga National Council (NNC), who will be responsible to the Indian Government in turn.

When the members of the Sub-Committee of the Constituent Assembly of the Government of India under the chairmanship of Sri Gopinath Bordoloi visited Kohima in May 1947, the NNC sat for a series of talk with them. The latter made known to the committee that the Nagas should be left alone to determine their future after the period of ten years spent as a ward of the Indian Government. The committee, however, made it clear that they were not in the capacity to make any recommendation to the Constituent Assembly. The Nagas on the other hand, tried to make a constitutional arrangement within the Indian Union.

The then Governor of Assam, Sir Akbar Hydari, made a new agreement with the NNC on 27th, 28th and 29th of June, 1947 in Kohima. The former was acting on the strength of the Constituent Assembly of India. There were compromises on both the parties which eventually produced the Agreement, which is known as the 9-Point Agreement. It resulted in an increased administrative control of the NNC. The 9-Point Agreement touched on the Judicial, the Executive and the Legislative powers as well as land, taxation, boundaries, Arms Act, regulations and the period of agreement. The agreement was not a distinctpromise of self-determination but it was a good start for the NNC. They were also made to understand that it would be incorporated in the Indian Constitution. Inspite of all the talks and the Agreement, " one evening, Sir Akbar Hydari warned several Naga leaders that if the Nagas refused to join the Indian Union, India would be compelled to use her force against the Nagas" (Bendangangshi 56).

A memorandum submitted to the Governor by the NNC stated that the constitution cannot be claimed as valid for the Nagas when the framers of it are themselves not aware of the Naga Hills and the people. They demanded that the old boundary of the Nagas be restored to them which have been divided and transferred to other districts of Assam. They demanded for a Boundary Commission to look into the matter and stood firmly on their demand for uniting the Nagas as the existing boundary lines divided the Nagas as belonging to different administrative units.

The Nagas decided to make an appeal directly to the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi in Delhi on July, 1947. To the Nagas, he was "Mahatma Gandhi, the one man, who above all other, was shaping the destiny of the sub-continent, in the name of peace and Liberty" (57). They told him that they had resolved to declare Naga Independence on the 14th of August, 1947. This was a day before India was to declare her Independence. They asked for his support for their cause. Gandhi replied that the Nagas have every right to be Independent. He added that "I believe in the brotherhood of men, but did not believe in force or force unions"(57). However, much to the heartache of the Nagas, he did not live to support them till the end and Nagaland was incorporated within the Union of India. It was against the wishes of the Nagas, which did not acknowledge the 9-Point Agreement. As planned, the Naga Independence was declared on the 14th of August, 1947, a day ahead of the scheduled Independence declaration of the Indian Union.Both the Governmet of India and the U.N.O were informed

about the new development. The U.N.O consequently sent its acknowledgement. " The cable runs:- Benign Excellency (.) Kindly put on record that the Naga will be Independent (.) Discussions with India are being carried on.(.) Nagas do not accept Indian Constitution.(.) The right of the people must prevail regardless of size (.)"(58). Meanwhile, the NNC had taken the decision that they will not set up a parallel government as it could lead to violence. Besides, they did not want to loose the sympathy of Mahatma Gandhi.

On 2nd February, 1948, the Premiere of Assam stated to the representatives of the NNC that there can be no agreement with the Nagas, a two-man Naga delegation went to meet the Governor of Assam , Sir Akbar Hydari in Shllong on the 9th of May in the same year. They wanted to know the position of the 9-Point Agreement of June, 1947. They were told that it would be included in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India but it would have no mention in the Constitution of India.

The Agreement was a Treaty according to the Nagas. They were also given the assurance of the ten-year Agreement and its implementation by the Advisor to the Governor of Assam vide his memo No. 490/C dated 11th June, 1948. The letter reads, "with reference to your letter dated the 25th May 1948 to his Excellency, the Governor of Assam, I am desired by his Excellency to state that the Agreement is to be implemented and that the Machinery necessary to that end is already in motion. There was never, nor shall be, any question of non-implementation of the terms of the Agreement" (58).

A final assurance was issued to the NNC by the then Governor of Assam and the Premier of Assam with a signed statement under Memo No. 88-C/47-570-72 dated June 22, 1948. It was felt that a clear statement on the actual status of the 10-year Agreement (9-Point Agreement) should be sought after. Thus, a three-man delegation of NN went to meet the representatives of the Government of India in Shillong on November 1949. There was a new development which the delegates did not expect. They were told by Sri Gopinath Bordoloi himself with much sorrow that the Agreement was not recognized by the Government of India any more. Inspite of the multiple assurances given by the Government of India

to the Nagas, it all came to nothing. It only alienated the Nagas from the rest of the country and made them more determined to regain their Independence.

When the Naga delegation went to meet His Excellency, the Governor General of free India, Sri Rajagopalachari in Meghalaya on November 28, 1949, His Excellency told them that "India wants to be friendly with you. India does not want to deprive the Nagas of their land. Nagas are at full Liberty to do as they like, either to become a part of India or be separated. If at all to be isolated" (60).

Once the Agreement was nullified, the Nagas were told that all the provisions of the 9-Point Agreement were incorporated into the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India. India went on to say that Nagas should, likewise, accept the Indian Constitution. However, the deal given to them was not acceptable and the NNC in its session on December 30, 1949, resolved to establish a separate Sovereign State of Nagaland, in accordance to the aspirations of the Naga tribes who were represented in the NNC. Consequently, the Council made aware their decision to reject the Indian Constitution to the Government of India, the U.N.O. and all the foreign ambassadors in New Delhi.

The Government of India asked the Nagas to set up District Autonomy on May 8, 1950. The NNC, which housed tribal representatives of the Nagas, rejected this alternative. When the second Nag People's Convention was held in 1958, it was attended by a great number of Naga people from different parts of Naga Hills. It constituted two bodies, namely, the Select Committee and a Liaison Committee. The former in turn, constituted a Draft Committee that was responsible for preparing the Sixteen-Point Proposal. It paved the way for the formation of the Interim Body, leading to the emergence of Nagaland State under the Union Republic of India on 1st December, 1963.

Before the advent of the European colonizers, both Kikuyus and Nagas had a rich tribal culture, one that was deeply connected with the land that they inhabited. They were basically farmers and almost every aspect of their lives rotated around their occupation. However, both met with the colonizers who

wanted to occupy their lands and the resources which were very crucial to the survival of the tribes. Their lives had an impact not just on the economic but also on the social and political front brought about largely by the introduction of Education and Christianity. Such changes which were taking place at a large scale eroded much of the age-old traditions and were replaced by a hybrid culture. The cultural transition that both the societies underwent was documented through the writings of novelists like Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Easterine Kire.

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CHAPTER THREE

NGUGI WA THIONG'O'S CULTURAL IDEAS

The British Empire was the biggest colonizer during the 19th Century. Kenya was among its colonies. It was a country that housed multiple ethnic groups with Kikuyu comprising the largest group. The colonizers brought their system of governance and simultaneously encouraged the white men to settle in the colony .The Kikuyus were agriculturists and therefore, when land was taken from them and given to the white settlers, their very age-old livelihood was taken away. It made them fight back the colonizers which ultimately led to their independence. Simultaneously, Christianity was introduced to the natives and the missionaries established schools where the ways of the colonizers were taught while their own culture was negatively placed.

Ngugi's novels bring up multifarious issues that had cropped up as a result of the encounter with the colonial power. He highlights the Western cultural, political and economic onslaught on the natives and the dynamic changes that were taking place consequently. In doing so, he shows the natives' struggle to stabilize the cultural values that had been crucial in maintaining their identity as a community.

When the Kenyan Government put Ngugi wa Thiong'o under detention in 1977-8, he achieved great renown and afterwards, due to his argument with the African writers for using English as their medium of writing. As Abdulrazak Gurnah puts it, Ngugi's "critical and political writing (and the two have overlapped from the beginning) has focused ever more sharply on issues of culture and language. ( )

Weep Not Child, which is Ngugi's first novel, became the first novel published by an East African. It is set during the rise of independence movement. The Mau Mau struggle against the colonial rulers is brought to light which eventually ushered in the Kenyan Independence. The book brings alive the pain and torture that the individuals went through in their struggle against the colonizers as well as the swift changes that were taking place in the society as the work focuses on Ngotho's family.

The River Between is set during the colonial times and its conflicts are shown through the life of the protagonist Waiyaki. The novel captures the conflict of a society in transition as it came face to face with the new Faith.

A Grain of Wheat came at a crucial moment in the radicalization of Ngugi's thinking, most dramatically evident here in the way the writing moves from the single-character focus of the earlier novels to the social epic mode of the later ones"(Gurnah, ix). As the novel unfolds with the introduction of Mugo, which goes on to focus on a range of characters, his writing gets infused with a strong tie to the rich Kenyan cultural heritage. The novel also highlights the new culture that the people have imbibed from the West as a part of their everyday reality. A reading of the novel shows a community that is "historically oppressed" (xiv) unable to get away from the past. The events that have gone by only come back to modify the present while simultaneously retaining ties with the old culture which eventually accentuates the cultural dynamics of the people.

The Trial of Dedan Kimathy by Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Micere Githae Mugo is a reconstruction of the trial of Dedan Kimathy at Nyeri. It captures the peasants' and workers' struggle against the colonial exploitation for sixty years. As the dramatists put it in their Preface while writing the play, "…the challenge was to truly depict the masses (symbolized by Kimathi)

in the only historically correct perspective: positively, heroically and as the true makers of history" (Thiong'o and Mugo 1976:).

As Ngugi wa Thiong'o portrays the historical conflicts in multiple aspects and the changing landscape of Kenya under the British rule in his novels, he brings out the radical changes taking place in different spheres. Simultaneously, the natives maintain their roots, eventually carving out a hybrid culture.

As Agust Einarsson puts it, "Culture creates, describes, preserves and disseminates the thoughts, emotions and general fabric of human society through the production of cultural goods and services as varied as ideas, sports, arts, languages, religions and traditions. The concept of culture also includes not only the goods and services produced, but also all the work involved in the promotion and dissemination of those goods and services" (Einarsson 13).

Some of the socio-economic and socio-cultural aspects that have helped form a blend of two diverse cultures are mirrored in Ngugi's works. They are highlighted under the two headings:

I. Age-old Cultural identity of the natives as practised in the colonial and postcolonial era

In the onslaught of a foreign culture that swept the natives, they have held on to what made them identify with the land and the community. The following sub-heads underline the ties that the natives have kept with their past as modernity surges in:

The Old Customary Practices:

The Kikuyu were united by three factors: family or mbari, clan and age group or riika. These uniting factors keep the people rooted to their identity.

A Grain of Wheat was set just before the Uhuru celebrations. By this time, the Kikuyu tribe had been exposed to the new faith and the new culture simultaneously. The purity of the old custom could not be maintained. The changes that took place on all fronts of the society on account of exposure to the colonial rule were inevitable. However, the advent of the alien culture could not root out those practices that gave identity to the tribe.

Rika was a generational group in Gikuyu society. Every person belonged to a *rika*. Circumcision was carried out on all the youths of the same rika at the same time. This set up a place for them in their community. This gave unity and oneness to the people. This practice had survived the onslaught of the new culture. In the above-mentioned novel, we see an instance of it in the very first chapter when the widowed Waitherero, a distant aunt of Mugo, "would pester men from her husband's rika till they gave her a drink" (Ngugi 7).

Traditionally, the Gikuyu men married more than one woman. The arrival of the Europeans could not contain this practice. Therefore, when Karanja was conversing with Margery, she asked him "'How many wives have you?' she asked. This was her favourite question to Africans; it began the day she discovered her latest cook had three wives" (38). In chapter Seven, Gikonyo's father, Waruhiu, is described as a squatter on the settlers' farm. With the advent of the colonialists, the father changed the way he earned his livelihood. However, he clung to the old tradition of marrying more than one woman. The narrator describes, "Waruhiu, worked as a squatter on European farms. Being a hard-working man, it was not long before Waruhui found himself the centre of attraction to many women. He got new brides and complained that the thighs of the first wife did not yield warmth any more .He beat her, hoping that this would drive her away"(71). In the face of a changing culture, polygamy was still practised although the foreign culture did not support this. Infact, this practice was engrained in

their culture which weaved a harmonious pattern. In *Weep Not Child,* the protagonist's father, Ngotho, has two wives. The narrator narrates, "Ngotho bought four pounds of meat. But they were bound into two bundles each of two pounds. One bundle was for his first wife Njeri, and the other for Nyokabi, his second wife. A husband had to be wise in these affairs otherwise a small flaw or apparent bias could easily generate a civil war in the family" (10-11). The narrator continues to throw light into their relation to highlight the co-existence of the wives: "He knew that his two wives liked each other and were good companions and friends" (11).

If a person touched a dead body, it made him unclean. This was practiced even after the arrival and acceptance of the new faith. In *The River Between*, Waiyaki is accused by Kabonyi that he had touched the dead body of Muthoni, Joshua's daughter.

Another traditional practice among the Gikuyus was female circumcision. However, the Christian missionaries denounced it. Historically, the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) broke their ties with the government on this issue. Circumcision, being an age-old traditional practice, was at the core of the native society. When a boy was circumcised, he became a man as he was initiated. How the natives perceived it is overtly related in Waiyaki. Circumcision was referred to as the second birth. This process completed a man. *The River Between* highlights the issue in an explicit way.Thus, when Waiyaki wanted to be Demi na Mathathi, a boy from Koina tells him, "'You cannot be Demi… 'You are not ready for circumcision. You are not born again'"(Thiong'o 10). The result is that Waiyaki goes home and tells his mother that he must be born again. The narrator goes on to reveal the emotions of the protagonist as the day of circumcision arrives: "Now the day had come. And when the sun rose and hit the ground…Waiyaki wanted to be happy, very happy. Was he not going to learn the ways of the land? Was he not going to drink the magic ritual of being born again? He knew he wanted to be like his father, knowing all the ways of the land…Only after today he would be ready for the biggest of all rituals, circumcision. This would mark his final initiation into manhood. Then he would prove his courage, his manly spirit"(11). The narrator goes on to describe the experience of Waiyaki during circumcision:

"The ceremony did not take long. It was not even complicated. His mother sat near the fireplace in her hut as if in labour. Waiyaki sat between her thighs. A thin cord taken from the slaughtered goat and tied to his mother represented the umbilical cord. A woman, old enough to be a midwife, came and cut the cord. The child began to cry. And the women who had come to wait for the birth of a child, shouted with joy:

'ali-li-li-li-li-li-lii

Old Waiyaki is born

`` Born again to carry on the ancient fire'.

For a time, Waiyaki forgot himself and thought he was Demi, bravely clearing the forest, a whole tribe behind him…He went to bed early. A strange hollowness settled in his stomach. The whole thing had been a strange experience. He was glad that the ceremony was over. But somewhere a glow of pride was beginning .He was ready for initiation" (12).

In Chapter Six of *The River Between*, after Nyambura and Muthoni have an intense discussion regarding their faith and custom, something happens and Nyambura attributes it as a sign of bad omen: "They took their tin water barrels and began the slow ascent of the ridge back to their home in Makuyu. Suddenly Nyambura heard a slight groan from her sister. She quickly turned round; a look of dismay was on Muthoni's face; her water-barrel was rolling down the slope …Nyambura and Muthoni had to go down again. 'A bad omen', Nyambura thought" (27). Just as Nyambura fears, her sister Muthoni goes ahead with the circumcision, a ritual which was prohibited by the Christian missionaries, and dies from the wound inflicted during circumcision.

In Chapter Nine of *Weep Not Child*, as the people of Kenya prepare themselves for the much anticipated result of the trial of Jomo Kenyatta, they follow closely what kind of an omen

the Nature reveals: “Much rain fell at Kipanga and the country aroundon the eve of the judgement day. People were happy in all the land. The rain was a good omen. Black folk were on trial. The spirit of black folk from Demi na Mathathi was on trial.”(Thiong’o 72)

Orality:

As Jomo Kenyatta defines clearly in *Facing Mount Kenya* the workings of oral teaching in the Gikuyu culture, where he says that

> “The cultural and historical traditions of the Gikuyu people have been verbally handed down from generation to generation. As a Gikuyu myself, I have carried them in my head for many years, since people who have no written records to rely on learn to make a retentive memory do the work of libraries. Without note-book or diary to jot down memoranda, the African learns to make an impression on his own mind which he can recall whenever it is wanted. Throughout his life he has much to commit to memory, and the vivid way in which stories are told to him and the incidents acted out before his eyes helps the child to form an indelible mental picture from his early teaching”(Kenyatta: xvi).

With the arrival of the Western form of education, the natives learned how to read and write. Thus, eventually, oral history was incorporated into the written records. Numerous writers from Africa drew their materials from the age-old oral traditional telling and re-telling of their history. Chinua Achebe, among other writers, stands out in immersing himself in the traditional oral history. As Easterine notes in her work *Folk Elements in Achebe: A Comparative Study of Ibo Culture and Tenyimia Culture*, Achebe’s

> *Things fall apart* and *Arrow of God*, among his novels are the two works that contain a profusion of folk elements because it is in these novels that he has rooted himself in the oral tradition and written from it. They incorporate the elements of oral literature, those elements that are popularly known as the ‘folk elements’ into a written form of literature.

> In the two works, the necessity for the writer to affiliate himself with the oral tradition arose from the fact that Achebe was writing about the Ibo culture and its participants and further, delineating the gradual disintegration of that culture when it failed to withstand confrontation by another culture. (Iralu 2000: 7)

It is not only Achebe but also prominent writers like Ngugi wa Thiong'o who have incorporated elements of folk tales into his narrative works. In his part, Ngugi, being a product of the Kikuyu culture and the Christian values that came with the Western influence, tries to bring a balance between the old culture and the new culture that had seeped through the fortified walls of the former by using the mythological oral narratives.

Easterine writes that "Achebe has made references to the Ibo creation myths, its many gods and goddesses and the concept of the chi or personal spirit and Chukwu, the high god or creator. The presence of these myths explain the Ibo view of how the world came to be and what directions are to be followed to ensure the continued existence of the Ibo world" (13). In his works, as with Achebe, Ngugi uses the myth of Gikuyu and Mumbi, the story of how the Kikuyu tribes came to be and how they were given the land.

Jomo Kenyatta in his book *Facing Mount Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Gikuyu*, writes about the origin of the Gikuyu tribe:

> According to the tribal legend, we are told that in the beginning of things, when mankind started to populate the earth, the man Gikuyu, the founder of the tribe, was called by the Mogai (the Divider of the Universe), and was given as his share the land with ravines, the rivers, the forests, the game and all the gifts that the Lord of Nature (Mogai) bestowed on mankind. At the same time Mogai made a big mountain which he called Kere-Nyaga (Mount Kenya), as his resting-place when on inspection tour, andas a sign of his wonders. He then took the man Gikuyu to the top of the mountain of mystery,

and showed him the beauty of the country that Mogai had given him. While still on the top of the mountain, the Mogai pointed out to the Cikuyu a spot full of fig trees *(mikoyo),* right in the centre of the country. After the Mogai had shown the Gikuyu Ihe panorama of the wonderful land he had been given, he commanded him to descend and establish his homestead on the selected place which he named Mokorwe wa Cathanga, Before they parted, Mogai told Gikuyu that, whenever he was in need, he should make a sacrifice and raise his hands towards Kere-Nyaga (the mountain of mystery), .ind the Lord of Nature will come to his assistance.Gikuyu did as was commanded by the Mogai, and when lie reached the spot, he found that the Mogai had provided him with a beautiful wife whom Gikuyu named Moombi (creator or moulder). Both lived happily, and had nine daughters and no sons. Gikuyu was very disturbed at not having a male heir. In his despair he called upon the Mogai to advise him on the situation. He responded quickly and told Gikuyu not to be perturbed, but to have patience and everything would be done according to his wish. He then commanded him, saying: "Go and take one lamb and one kid from your flock. Kill them under the big fig tree *(mokoyo)* near your homestead. Pour the blood and the fat of the two animals on the trunk of the tree. Then you and your family make a big fire under the tree and burn the meat as a sacrifice to me, your benefactor. When you have done this, take home your wife and daughters, after that go back to the sacred tree, and there you will find nine handsome young men who are willing to marry your daughters under any condition that will please you and your family."Gikuyu did as he was directed by the Mogai or Ngai, and so it happened that when Gikuyu returned to the sacred. tree, there he found the promised nine young men who greeted him warmly. For a few moments he could not utter a word, for he was overwhelmed with joy. (Kenyatta 1965: 3-4).

It was to bring about nationalism among the Kikuyus and to reverberate in the minds of the people that the land that was taken away from them by the colonizers was in fact given to them by *Ngai* (?) to live in it. As Ismail S. Talib says, “With the introduction of writing, an element not conducive to the continuation of colonialism is given shape” (Talib 2002: 80).

In *The River Between* by Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Chege narrates to Waiyaki, his son, about the beginning of things as was orally transmitted from generation to generation. He tells him that Murungu made Gikuyu and Mumbi and showed them the "vastness of the land" (Thiong'o 18) and gave it to them. He adds, "…There, where Mumbi's feet stood, grew up that tree. So you see, it is Kameno that supported the father and mother of the tribe. From here, Murungu took them and put them under Mukuruwe wa Gathanga in Muranga. There our father and mother had nine daughters who bore more children. The children spread all over the country…You understand that Gikuyu and Mumbi set their footsteps here'"(18). Earlier, his father tells him yet another orally transmitted story: "Long ago women used to rule this land and its men. They were harsh and men began to resent their hard hand. So when all the women were pregnant, men came together and overthrew them. Before this, women owned everything. The animal you saw as their goat. But because the women could not manage them, the goats ran away. They knew women to be weak"(15). His father goes on to tell him the ancient prophecy: "Now, listen my son. Listen carefully; for this is the ancient prophecy….I could not do more. When the white man came and fixed himself in Siriana, I warned all the people… Before he died, he whispered to his son the prophecy, the ancient prophecy: 'Salvation shall come from the hills. From the blood that flows in me, I say from the same tree, a son shall rise. And his duty shall be to lead and save the people!'"(20)

Gender Roles:

Men and women have marked roles in the tribal community which have percolated down through the ages. The father is the head of the family unit and thus, the role he plays cannot be carried out by any member in the family.

In the economic life of the people of Kikuyu, Jomo Kenyatta talks about the marked roles in society based on gender:

> "The chief occupations among the Gikuyu are agriculture and the rearing of livestock, such as cattle, sheep and goats. Each family, i.e. a man, his wife or wives and their children, constitute an economic unit. This is controlled and strengthened by the system of division of labour according to sex. From the homestead to the fields and to the tending of the domestic animals, every sphere of activity is clearly and systematically defined. Each member of the family unit knows perfectly well what task he or she is required to perform, in their economic productivity and distribution of the family resources, so as to ensure the material prosperity of the group" (Kenyatta 53).

Further ahead, he adds:

> The entire housework naturally falls within the sphere of women's activities. They cook, bring water from the rivers, wash utensils and fetch firewood from the forests or bush. They also perform the task of carrying the loads on their backs. According to the tribal customs which govern the division of labour, no man would dare to indulge in any of these activities except in a case of emergency, or otherwise he would scandalise the women and it would be difficult for such a man to get any girl to marry him. He would be given a nickname, *Icihongoyo* or *moburabureki*, something like "Nosy Parker." Women are afraid of a man of this character, for they say that if he could perform women's work, what is the use of getting married, for how can a wife and husband be doing the same thing…. (54)

A Grain of Wheat describes how the village women of Thabai get engaged in their daily routine, "And as usual Mugo found that some women had risen before him, that some were already returning from the river, their frail backs arched double with water-barrels, in time to prepare tea or porridge for their husbands and children" (Thiong'o 2). Later on in chapter six, Gikonyo takes part in what is supposed to be 'a woman's role'. The narrator narrates, "It had been a life of struggle. At first other men derided him for doing a woman's job. Brushing sides with women's skirts. But when his fortunes changed, they started respecting him"(57). Since

gender roles are demarcated, Gikonyo faces an adverse reaction when he crosses the boundary. Eventually, it is his success that blurs the line.

In *Weep Not, Child,* Ngotho is the head of the family and he has the final say on all important family matters:

> But whatever Ngotho had been prepared to do to redeem himself in the eyes of his children, he would not be ordered by a son to take oath. Not that he objected to it in principle. After all, oath-taking as a means of binding a person to a promise was a normal feature of tribal life. But to be given by a son! That would have violated against his standing as a father. A lead in that direction could only come from him, the head of the family. Not from a son; not even if he had been to many places and knew many things.That gave him no right to reverse the custom and tradition for which he and those of his generation stood. (Thiong'o 74).

The Importance of Land to the Gikuyus:

The Gikuyus were basically agriculturists. As Jomo Kenyatta mentions in *Facing Mount Kenya*, "The Gikuyu people are agriculturists; they herd large flocks of sheep and goats, and, to a less extend, cattle, since their social organization requires a constant supply of stock for such varied purposes as "marriage insurance", payments, sacrifices, meat feasts, magical rites, purification ceremonies, and as means of supplying clothing to the community." (Kenyatta xv)

Land was an integral part of the tribe around which the very existence of the community revolved. Kenyatta adds,

> The land being the foundation rock on which the Gikuyu tribal economy stands, and the only effective mode of production that the people have, the result is that there is a great desire in the heart of every Gikuyu man to own a piece of land on which he can build his

> home, and from which he and his family can get the means of livelihood. A man or a woman who cannot say to his friends, come and eat, drink and enjoy the fruit of my labour, is not considered as a worthy member of the tribe. (55)

However, as

> "…the Gikuyu seer who once said: there shall come a people with clothes like the butterflies. They gave him, the stranger with a scalded skin, a place to erect a temporary shelter…Soon people saw the Whiteman had imperceptibly acquired more land to meet the growing needs of his position. He had already pulled down the grass-thatched hut and erected a more permanent building. Elders of the land protested. They looked beyond the laughing face of the whiteman and suddenly saw a long line of other red strangers who carried, not the Bible, but the sword" (Thiongo 11-12).

The above line, taken out from the novel *A Grain of Wheat*, outlines the historical arrival of the colonizers to the land of the Gikuyus. In 1895, the British began the work of constructing a railroad that was 700 miles which ran across Kenya. It helped to bring many British settlers as well as missionaries. The former were granted huge lands to farm where crops were grown on a large scale. Upon their arrival, they started taking the native's agricultural lands for their own needs, thereby, depriving the latter of their ancestral lands. This was a serious issue because the life of the Kikuyu was deeply connected to the land that he lived in. As Jomo Kenyatta says, "Then comes a time of relaxation waiting for the harvest. This is a period of numerous dances and songs and performing various ceremonies, especially if a good harvest is expected." (Kenyatta 60).

The efforts of the natives were crushed by the arriving colonists through factors like superior weaponry. Ngugi narrates this experience in chapter two of the same novel:

> Waiyaki and other warrior-leaders took arms. The iron snake spoken of by Mugo wa Kibiro was quickly wriggling towards Nairobi for a thorough exploitation of the hinderland…The whiteman with bamboo poles that vomited fire and smoke, hit back; his menacing laughter remained echoing in the hearts of the people, long after Waiyaki had been arrested and taken to the coast, bound hands and feet…was buried alive at Kibwezi with his head facing into the centre of the earth, a living warning to those, who, in after years, might challenge the hand of the Christian woman whose protecting shadow now bestrode both land and sea.
>
> Then nobody noticed it; but looking back we can see that Waiyaki's blood contained within it a seed, a grain, which gave birth to a movement whose main strength thereafter sprang from a bond with the soil. (Thiong'o 12)

The novel also talks about the historical figure Harry Thuku who led protests against the British and was detained by the government for nine years. The narrator narrates that Thuku

> …denounced the white man and cursed that benevolence and protection which denied people land and freedom…But the white man had not slept. Young Harry was clamped in chains…People went to Nairobi ; they took an oath to spend their days and nights outside the State House till the Governor himself gave them back their Harry…For three days we gathered in Nairobi, with our blood we wrote vows to free Harry…the police who waited for them with guns fixed…opened fire. Three men raised their arms in the air .It is said that as they fell down they clutched soil in their fists. (12-13).

A meeting of the Movement takes place in chapter two of the same novel where Kihika highlights the loss of land to the colonizers: "We went to their church. Mubia, in white robes, opened the Bible. He said: Let us kneel down to pray. We knelt down. Mubia said: Let us shut our eyes. We did. You know, his remained open so that he could read the word. When we opened our eyes, our land was gone and the sword of flames stood on guard. As for Mubia, he went on reading the word, beeching us to lay our treasures in heaven where no moth would

corrupt them. But he laid his on earth, our earth"14. A little ahead in the novel, the narrator brings in the historical account of the occupation of the fertile highlands by the white settlers: " Mahee was a big police garrison in the Rift Valley, the heart of what , for many years, were called the White Highlands"(15).

The British Government declared in the 1923 Devonshire Declaration that the interests of Africans would be prioritized. However, during the Great Depression in the 1930s, the British Government reversed the policy and gave importance to the white settlers. As a result, more African farmlands were lost and became squatters. Many also left for the cities. In *Weep Not Child*, the narrator describes the landscape of the Kikuyuland which is occupied in a different pattern after the arrival of the colonizers,

> In a country of ridges, such as Kikuyuland, there are many valleys and small plains. Even the big road went through a valley on the opposite side. Where the two met, they had as it were embraced and widened themselves into a plain. The plain, more or less rectangular in shape, had four valleys leading into or out of it at the corners. The first two valleys went into the Country of the Black People. The other two divided the land of the Black People from the land of the White People. This meant that there were four ridges that stood and watched one another. …You could tell the land of Black People because it was red, rough and sickly, while the land of the white settlers was green and was not lacerated into small strips.(7)

In *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, it is the love of land that pushes the natives to fight for their right to claim what was taken from them. As the woman and the boy in the play converses, she adds,

"WOMAN: Your words contain wisdom, son. Kimathi was never alone…will never be alone. No bullet can kill him for as long as women continue to bear children. (with even greater conviction): Let a thousand bullets be shot through our heads, but this I believe: one day, the soil

will be restored to the people. Our land shall one day be truly ours"(Thiong'o and Mugo 1976: 21).

The new faith came to the natives but along with it came the colonizers who were bend on taking the choicest land for themselves to settle in. The natives saw good in Christianity and welcomed it. However, the aggrandizement of their native lands eventually was resented. As the boy and the woman converses, she tells him,

> "WOMAN: Ngai! It is the same old story. Everywhere. Mombasa. Nakuru. Kisumu. Eldoret. The same old story. Our people…tearing one another…and all because of the crumbs thrown at them by the exploiting foreigners. Our own food eaten and leftovers thrown to us-in our own land, where we should have the whole share. We buy wood from our own forests; sweat on our own soil for the profit of our oppressors. Kimathi's teaching is: unite, drive out the enemy and control your own riches, enjoy the fruit of your sweat"(18).

As the play progresses, Dedan Kimathi and a Business Executive debate on the issue of freedom while the former is under trial by the imperialist government:

> BUSINESS EXECUTIVE: "…But there have been twoimportant announcements. They have said: No more racialism. No more colour bar. In public places. In administration. In business. In the allocation of loans. In the grabbing, well, in the acquisition of land…Any black man who now works hard and has capital can make it to the top…We can now buy land in the White Highlands. White Highlands no more. It's now: willing Seller, willing Buyer.
>
> KIMATHI: What new song is this? Buy back our land from those who stole it from us? Our land? Have we not bought it with streams of blood? Rivers of sweat?" (45).

Later on, as Kimathi speaks with Shaw Henderson, he declares, "Yes, self-appointed savior of our people. Listen and listen well. I will fight to the bitter end. Protect our soil. Protect our people." (54).

In *The River Between*, as Chege converses with his son Waiyaki, the former asks the latter,

> "'Do you see all this land, this country stretching beyond and joining the sky?' His voice was deep and calm…He whispered:
>
> 'Yes'.
>
> 'It is beautiful to the eye-'
>
> 'It is beautiful'.
>
> 'And young and fertile-'
>
> 'Yes. Young and fertile'.
>
> 'All this is our land.'
>
> 'Yes, Father'.
>
> 'You know Gikuyu and Mumbi-'
>
> 'Father and mother of the tribe…That is the seat of Murungu. He made Gikuyu and Mumbi'… 'He stood them on that mountain. He showed them all the land'…in the beginning of things. Murungu brought the man and woman hee and again showed them the whole vastness of the land. He gave the country to them and their children and the children of the children…" (Thiong'o 18)

Another instance of the connection between the land and the people could be seen during Njahi, the rainy season. The narrator records, "At such times women would be seen in their shambas cultivating; no, not cultivating, but talking in a secret language with the crops and the soil." (79)

In Chapter Three of *The River Between*, Waiyaki imagines himself to be Demi na Mathathi: "'But I am Demi'. And then he saw a tree a little distance away. 'See if I don't cut down that tree', he went on. And he took an axe and rushed to the tree , oblivious of everything.. He began to cut it with all his strength and soon the stick that was the axe fell into pieces. At first the other boys had laughed. But they soon followed his example and went around cutting down trees and clearing the forest ready for 'Cultivation' just like Demi na Mathathi"(11). What is highlighted overtly is the fact that the Kikuyus were agriculturists and they cleared the forest for cultivation. The practice was that after cultivating the land for a few years, they left the land fallow for it to restore its fertility.

Belief in Spirits:

The Gikuyus were superstitious and believed in the spiritual world. They are known for worshipping their ancestors as they believed in the spirit of the dead. The latter were believed to intercede on behalf of the natives to their God and spiritual powers. Thiong'o stresses on this issue in *A Grain of Wheat* through the voice of Wambui: " 'It is like our elders who always poured a little beer on the ground before they themselves drank,' Wambui now said. 'Why did they do that? It's because they always remembered the spirits of those below…." (Thiong'o 20)

In *The River Between*, the narrator narrates the tale of Demi na Mathathi who were known to be giants among the tribes: "They owned many cattle, sheep and goats and they often sacrificed to Murungu and held communion with the ancestral spirits" (Thiong'o 1985: 10). In the same chapter, which is, Chapter Three, Waiyaki prepares himself for the biggest ritual, which was, circumcision. The narrator gives us a glimpse of how the ceremony was celebrated: "Much

beer had been brewed and many elders were beginning to arrive. Two had come early in the morning and were now busy slaughtering a goat. Everyone who was present would eat meat. And the spirits of the dead and the living would be invoked to join in the ritual." (Thiong'o 1985:11)

As the narrator highlights Ngotho's plight in *Weep Not, Child*, belief in spirits among the natives is brought to the forefront: "He had no longer the waiting to sustain him. The fulfillment of the prophecy seemed to be impossible. Perhaps, he had blundered in going on strike. For he had now lost every contact with his ancestral land. The communion with the spirits who had gone before him had given him vitality. But what could he have done? He had to go on strike." (Thiong'o 1985:73-74)

Position of Elders:

In Gikuyu society, elders hold an important place. The clans, which consisted of many family groups, were administered by the council of elders. Jomo Kenyatta writes regarding the formation of the government: "The starting-point was the family unit. From the governmental point of view members of one family group were considered as forming a family council *(ndundu ya mocie),* with the father as the president. The father represented the family group in the government. The next group was the village council *(kianza gia itora),* composed of the heads of several families in the village. The senior elder acted as the president of the council and this group represented the villagers in the government. Another wider group was formed, and named, district council *(kianza kia rogongo),* in which all the elders of the district participated; this council was presided over by a committee *(kiama kia ndundu),* composed of the senior elders of the villages. Amongst these elders the one most advanced in age and wisdom was elected as a judge and president *(mothamaki* or *mociiri)* of the *ndundu" (*Kenyatta 194).

Thus, in *A Grain of Wheat*, when Gikonyo and some others come to the hut of Mugo to request him to lead in the sacrifice and ceremonies to honour those who died in the freedom struggle, he adds, "The elders will guide you in the details of the ritual"(24).

In *The River Between*, Waiyaki's school Marioshoni suffered from poor infrastructure. Thus, he decides to speak to the elders concerning this affair; "He would speak with the elders and see what could be done about the roof' (Thiong'o 1985: 66).

II. Encounter with the West and its Influence on the Native Culture:

Although the natives knew the importance of holding onto their roots to mark their identity as a community, they could not isolate themselves from the surge of modernity and the opportunities that it brought along with it. A close study of Ngugi's novels under the following sub-heads only imprint the importance of imbibing the positivity of the on-coming culture:

Evolution of Weapon Culture:

The novel *A Grain of Wheat* is filled with instances of violence experienced by the native people as they faced the colonial power. The latter introduced their superior weaponry to the former as they intended to set up a colony through violence and exploitation with racism in the forefront. Githua tells Mugo, "I tell you before the Emergency, I was like you; before the Whiteman did this to me with bullets, I could work with both hands, man" (3). Innocent lives were abruptly ended when the Whiteman brought in guns and bullets in their fight for supremacy. This is highlighted in the novel when Gitogo, who was dumb and deaf, gets shot by a Whiteman. "He did not see that a Whiteman, in a bush jacket, lay camouflagedin a small wood. 'Halt!' the Whiteman shouted. Gitogo continued running. Something hit him at the back. He raised his arms in the air. He fell on his stomach. Apparently the bullet had touched his heart. The soldier left his place. Another Mau Mau terrorist had been shot dead" (5). Another instance

is found a little ahead in the novel when the narrator describes how the natives fell victim to the attack by the colonizers;

> On the fourth day, they marched forward, singing. The police who waited for them with guns fixed with bayonets, opened fire…Another volley scattered the crowd. A man and a woman fell, their blood spurted out. People ran in all directions. Within a few seconds the big crowd had dispersed; nothing remained but one hundred and fifty crooked watchers on the ground, outside…'Something went wrong at the last moment', Warui said, and stopped plucking his beard. 'Perhaps if we had the guns…' (Thiong'o 13).

The natives could not fight the colonizers with their native weapons. Therefore, eventually, they took up arms.

The novel, through the life of the revolutionary Kihika, narrates the conflict that came up largely due to the occupation of the native land by the colonial government:

> The greatest triumph for Kihika was the famous capture of Mahee. Mahee was a big police garrison…In Mahee too was a transit prison for men and women about to be taken to concentration camps. Situated in a central position, Mahee fed guns and ammunition to the other smaller police and military posts scattered in the Rift Valley to protect and raise the morale of white settlers…Caught unawares, the police made a weak resistance as Kihika and his men stormed in. Some policemen climbed the walls and jumped to safety. Kihika's men broke into the prison and let the prisoners out into the night. The garrison was set on fire and Kihika's men ran back to the forest with fresh supplies of men, guns and ammunition to continue the war on a scale undreamt of in the days of Waiyaki and Young Harry. (15-16)

It is not only the men but also the women who take active part in dealing with the coloniser's weaponry. In chapter three of the same novel, the narrator throws light on the story of Wambui who actively took part in the underground movement:

> During the Emergency, she carried secrets from the villages to the forest and back to the villages and towns. She knew the underground movements…The story is told how she once carried a pistol tied to her thighs near the groin…she was taking the gun to Naivasha…she was suddenly caught in one of those sporadic military and police operations which plagued the country. People were collected into the square behind the shops. Soon came her turn to be searched. Her tooth started aching; she twisted her ips, moaned; saliva tossed out of the corners of her mouth and flowed down her chin. The Gikuyu policeman searching her was saying in Swahili: Pole mama: made other sympathetic noises and went on searching. He stared from her chest, rummaged under her armpits, gradually working his way down towards the vital spot. And suddenly Wambui screamed, the man stopped, astonished…'you would actually touch your own mother's…the woman who gave you birth...the man involuntarily turned his eyes away.
>
> 'Go away from here,' he growled at her. (19-20)

Just before uhuru, a few gather in Mugo's hut and reflect back on the days the freedom fighters were in the forest. Koina recalls, "'Oh, we did sacrifice-and ate the meat afterwards. We prayed twice a day and an extra one before any expedition to wrest arms from European farms'" (21).

The two world wars where the natives served the colonial masters, was a war that was not their own and yet, suffered great loss. They witnessed great violence where weaponry of the best technology of the time was used to gain victory. The novel brings it up while narrating about General R . and Koina: " Both had been in the Second World War; the General had fought in Burma"(26). Also in *Weep Not Child*, the narrator narrates in the first chapter,

> …some said that it was rebuilt by the Italian prisoners during the Big War that was fought far away from here. People did not know how big the war had been because

> most of them had never seen a big war fought with planes, poisons, fire and bombs-bombs that would finish a country just like that when they were dropped from the air. It was indeed a big war because it made the British worry and pray and hose black sons of the land who had gone to fight said it was a big war. There was once another big war. The first one was to drive away the Germans who had threatened to attack and reduce the black people to slavery…It was not as big as the second because then there were no bombs, and black people did not go to Egypt and Burma. (5)

Chapter One continues to throw light on the violence that was thrown at the natives in a wide scale, something that was inconceivable before they met the colonizers. The narrator observes, "In spite of the fat that they were all white, they killed one another with poison, fire and big bombs that destroyed the land. They had even called the people to help them in killing one another. It was puzzling. You could not really understand because although they said they fought Hitler (ah! Hitler, that brave man, whom all the British feared, and he was never killed you know, just vanished like that), Hitler too was a white man"(6). A little later, we are introduced to the barber who participated in the big war. The narrator narrates, "(The barber lets his clippers go flick-lick-lick-lick. Everyone stands expectantly by waiting to hear about the Big War. The barber… 'My man, you would not ask that if you had been there. What with bombs and machine guns that went boom-crunch! Boom-crunch! troo! troo! and grenades and people crying and dying!...this one, we carried guns and we shot white men.'(9)

The play *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* by Thiongo and Mugo throws light on the use of modern weapon. The play begins in a courtroom where Dedan Kimathi is put under trial by the white judge after he was captured possessing a firearm:

> Courtroom. A white judge presides…The courtroom is overcrowded. Africans squeeze around one side, seated on rough benches. Whites occupy more comfortable seats on the opposite side.

Dead silence

Judge: Dedan Kimathy s/o Wachiuri, alias Prime Minister or Field Marshal, of no fixed address, you are charged that on the night of Sunday, October the 21st, 1956, at or near Ihururu in Nyeri District, you were found in possession of a firearm, namely a revolver, without a licence, contrary to section 89 of the penal code, which under Special Emergency Regulations constitutes a criminal offence. Guilty or not guilty?

(Kimathy remains silent. There is murmuring

in court. Judge hammers on the bench)

Silence in court! I'll repeat the charge. Dedan Kimathi, you are charged that on the night of Sunday, October the 21st…" (Thing'o and Mugo 1976: 3).

A little ahead, the scene where Kimathi is giving a speech to his comrades in Nyandarua Forest in their Guerilla Camp, he talks about their six brave armies and their victories. He also states that their enemies in Kenya have been unable to sleep. All these victories had been possible due to the bravery of the armies and their use of weapons that match up to the enemies'. Thus, he adds,

"That now they have called in

Their best Generals:

Lathbury, Hinde, Erskine

And also

Their latest fighter bombers

Shows that we have hit them

Where it hurts most.

We now must open new fronts

We have sent envoys to arouse

Warriors from Nyanza…

We have also sent emissaries to Ethiopia

To see if we can get a supply of Arms.

But I must continue to stress

That first and foremost

We must rely on our strength

As the most conscious,

The best organized fighting arm

Of the Kenyan People.

We must continue to make more guns

I want to see every warrior with a gun

Hand grenades

Machine guns

Molotov cocktails.

Every camp, every mbuci, should have

its own factory.

We now have excellent blacksmiths

Who can make guns and machine guns

So you can't tell the difference between

Ours and those captured from the enemy…

Long live Kenya People's Defence Council!

Long live Kenya People's Defense Council!

The freedom fighters were forced to move into the forest where they could form their resistant movement without which they would be unable to survive. What stands out explicitly is the fact that the fighters replicate the weapons of their enemies as a part of the strategy to gain liberation. Although few in numbers and far from owning enough weapons for every fighter along with oath detractors, they were able to instill fear into the heart of their enemies. Kimathi talks about how they are trying to get more arms from Ethiopia. A factor in their leap towards victory was possession of modern artillery.

Chapter Nine of *Weep Not, Child* throws light on the evolution of weapon as an argument took place among the boys in the school: "Then one other boy broke the silence by saying, 'I too would like to fight. I would love to carry a big gun like my father used to do in the Big War when he fought for the British. Now I would be fighting for the black folk-'"(Thing'o 1985: 73).

The white people came with their modern artillery to the native people and subdued them consequently. In doing thus, they took the native lands and set up their administrative posts, thus, colonizing them. Although they brought in developments, they also pushed the natives to a new level of violence that was unprecedented. They were made to participate in the two world wars which changed their outlook and made it possible for them to carve out their future in an emboldened way.

The New Faith:

The Kikuyu tribe had their own system of belief which influenced the way they thought and therefore, lived. However, with the advent of the white man, a new faith was introduced to the native people. In place of *Ngai*, they started worshipping the Christian God. This rewrote the cultural landscape of the people.

A Grain of Wheat highlights how the new faith was initially introduced to the people:

> "For a time, people ignored the voice of the Gikuyu seer who once said : there shall come a people with clothes like the butterflies. They gave him, the stranger with a scalded skin, a place to erect a temporary shelter. Hut complete, the stranger put up another building yards away. This he called the House of God where people could go for worship and sacrifice…About Jesus, they could not at first understand, for how could it be that God would let himself be nailed to a tree? The white man spoke of that Love that passeth all understanding…The few who were converted, started speaking a faith foreign to the ways of the land" (10-11).

The influence of the new faith grew among the people. In the above-mentioned novel, the narrator states, "Meanwhile, the missionary centres hatched new leaders; they refused to eat the good things of Pharaoh: instead they chose to cut grass and make bricks with the other children" (12). Eventually, the new faith was felt in all spheres of life: "Harry asked them to join the Movement and find strength in unity.

They talked of him in their homes; they sang his praises in tea shops, market places and on their way to Gikuyu Independent churches on Sundays"(12-13).

The novel narrates the brave deeds of the revolutionary Kihika who quotes from the Bible until he meets his end. Thus, in the meeting of the Movement, he states, "'Watch ye and pray', Kihika said, calling on his audience to remember the great Swahili proverb…" (15). He was a freedom fighter to liberate the people from the colonial rule on one hand. On the other hand, he was an ardent believer in the new faith. Therefore, "Kihika believed in prayer. He even read the Bible every day, and took it with him wherever he went…Again, he never forgot to take his Bible" (22). The narrator further narrates,

> "General R. fumbled in his pockets and took out a small Bible which he passed on to Gikonyo…Gikonyo shuffled through the small Bible lingering on verses underlined in black and red. His fingers were slightly shaking. He stopped at *Psalm* 72 where two verses were underlined in red.
>
> 'What are these red lines?'Gikonyo read:
>
> 'He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.
>
> For he shall deliver the needy when he cometh; the poor also and he that hath no helper.'
>
> …A Bible! You might have thought his father a priest…Our son should have been a priest…He was a priest…a high priest of this our freedom" (22).

A look at the novel shows explicit details of the movement that is immersed in Biblical context. The very faith that the Europeans brought to the natives was taken as a source of encouragement to fight back the former.

The new faith raised questions on the issue of how to filter the age-old cultural practices so as not to come in conflict with the new faith. This is clearly played out in *The River Between*

when Joshua and his followers come into direct conflict with Kabonyi and his followers regarding circumcision and other cultural practices.

In *The Trial of Dedan Kimathy*, a priest comes to Kimathy while he is under trial:

> "PRIEST: (coming out of the shadows): My calling is a little different…in my father's house are many mansions…The world passeth away and the lust thereof, but the word of God abideth for ever. I know you love the Bible. You always read a few verses from the holy book… [Priest reads as if he is Kimathi in the Forest. He holds an invisible Bible firmly in both hands]:
>
> Lamentations, Chapter 5, verses 1 to 9.
>
> "Remember, O Lord, what is come upon us: consider and behold our reproach.
>
> Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens.
>
> We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers are as widows…
>
> Our necks are under persecution: we labour, and have no rest.
>
> We have given the land to the Egyptians, and to the Assyrians, to be satisfied with bread…I only read those sections necessary to our struggle.
>
> PRIEST: You see Dedan. That's where you went wrong. These verses are not talking about earthly things, earthly struggle. It is a spiritual struggle. God and Satan locked in an immortal struggle for the domination of our souls…We are now Africanising the Church. We want to see Christ reflected in our culture. Drums in Church. African Bishops. African Moderators. African Cardinals…Surrender your heart, Dedan. Let Jesus speak to you today" (Thiong'o and Mugo 1976: 47-49).

The conversation between Dedan Kimathi and the Priest show that Christianity has taken root in the native society. It affects the way they think, act and say. As the Priest adds, Africanizing the church brings to the forefront the fact that the society has become hybrid, imbibing the new while balancing the old.

Joshua in *The River Between* had accepted the new Faith and was a faithful believer who followed what Livingstone taught the converts. “But some went back to drinking; to dancing the tribal ritual; to circumcision. And Joshua day by day grew in wrath and vehemently condemned such behavior.”(Thiong’o 1985: 30)

The new faith also influenced marriage system from a polygamous society to a monogamous one. The Kikuyu are traditionally polygynous, but with the influence of Christianity and Western education, the trend has been moved toward monogamy. If a man chooses to marry more than one wife, theoretically he must provide *ruracio* (bride-wealth) and a separate house for each within the homestead.

Westernised attire:

Customs which were foreign to the native culture were introduced with the advent of the new Faith and the new Government. Along with it came attires that were westernized with different dress codes for different purposes. However,

> In the past, Gikuyu adults dressed in animal skins, especially sheep and goat skins. Skin tanning was a vital industry for which many men were renowned as specialists. Women's clothing includes three pieces—an upper garment, a skirt, and an apron. Men wore a single garment covering the entire body. Young men preferred bare legs made possible by wearing short skirts, especially those made from kidskin (lambskin or goatskin) because of its smooth hairs. Elders wore more elaborate costumes—often made of fur.

> European clothing is now commonplace throughout Gikuyuland. In rural areas, women wear multicolored cotton dresses or skirts and blouses. Men generally wear Western-style trousers and shirts with jackets and ties for formal occasions. Women who

prefer to dress in African fashion wear long pieces of colorful cloth as skirts and wrapped around a dress. " (https://www.everyculture.com/wc/Japan-to-Mali/Gikuyu.html).

"The Gīkūyū traditional woman's skirt was called the *mūthuru*, a simple leather wrap-around that was accompanied by a soft leather pubic apron that was worn under the skirt opening, *mwengū* at the front. The pubic apron is called the same as the gap it deals with, *mwengū*. The upper part of the body is protected by a cloak, *nguo ya ngoro,* or *nyathiba,* which can vary in length to just below the waist or up to the ankles. Because the skirt and apron were worn under the rather loose cloak, Routledge Scoresby writing in 1910 referred to the skirt as a petticoat. The cloak is made from three to four goat skins whose hair has been scrapped with a knife and then treated with ochre and castor oil until it was soft…The sewing lines and repair lines for patches that would appear later were oftentimes decorated with beadwork. The cloak was knotted on the right shoulder and it dropped free unlike the Maasai women's cloak which was always held in addition to the shoulder knot, by a waist belt…The little leather apron worn under the skirt provided all the undergarment there was and for young boys and girls constituted all the clothing they had. A leather beaded apron, *Gicoco,* sometimes decorated with cowrie shells and worn over the skirt if there was one, indicated the girl was uninitiated, a *Karīgū* or *Kīrīgū*… A fully beaded tracery apron, *mūniūrū*, was worn during the initiation ceremonies and thereafter until conception of the first child when the woman exchanged it for a broad beaded belt, *ndohi* that supported the pregnancy. This was known as *kwoha nda*, or tying the pregnancy. It is still an expression used today to describe a pregnancy though the belt is no more"(https://www.tuko.co.ke>Facts and Life Hacks).

In *A Grain of Wheat*, while Mugo is passing water, he sees "Two young women dressed for church, passed near…." (Thiong'o 6). The narrator points out that the women wore clothes that were appropriate for church. Such care to be seen in the right dress code for the house of

prayer was non-existent. In chapter Six, the MP is described as he comes to his office; “After an hour or so, the MP arrived; he was dressed in a dark suit and carried a leather portfolio” (61).

In *Weep Not, Child*, while Nyokabi talks with her son Njoroge on attending school, she mentions, “ ‘As soon as your father gets his pay we’ll go to the shops .I’ll buy you a shirt and a pair of shorts’ ”(Thiong’o 1985: 3). She plans on buying these so that her son will wear them to school. As the story progresses, Njoroge and Mwihaki became close and as he goes to meet her, he puts on his best attire, which is westernized. The latter also comes dressed in westernized clothing: “He put on his best, a cheap nylon shirt and a well-pressed clean pair of khaki shorts. With khaki stockings and brown shoes made from the factory near his home town, he looked very smart…Then she came. Her white, low-necked blouse and pleated light brown skirt made him feel ashamed of his clothes” (88).

In *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, in the Third Trial, a Business Executive, a Politician and a Priest come to Dedan Kimathi where the Business Executive is dressed like the colonizers: “Enter an African Business Executive, dressed like an Englishman, politician, and a Priest” (Thiong’o and Mugo 1976: 44). Thus, what the black Business Executive is wearing is a vivid presentation of the cultural change that was taking place as a result of the encounter with the Western culture.

Education:

The arrival of the colonial power opened a whole new chapter on the way education was imparted in the Kikuyu way of life. As was the age-old practice, a child was imparted education at home from an early age through oral teachings. “Before the coming of the Europeans, societies in Kenya had traditional systems of education whose primary objective was to train individuals to fit into their societies as useful members. This type of education provided skills and knowledge, and was a socializing agent that transmitted cultural values from one generation

to another" (https://www.scribd.com/document/327153786/History -of-Education-in-Kenya-pdf 1). Regarding the traditional system of education, Jomo Kenyatta states,

> In every stage of life there are various competitions arranged for the members of the several age-groups, to test their ability to recall and relate in song and dance the stories and events which have been told to them and at such functions parents and the general public form an audience to judge and correct the competitors.

> Like any other Gikuyu child, therefore, I acquired in my youth my country's equivalent of a liberal education, but while I lived among my kinsfolk there was no obvious necessity for writing it down. (Kenyatta xvi)

Further on, he says that "as a boy, I received the usual education of Gikuyu boys and the legends in the chapters on Kinship and Government, and elsewhere in the book, are some of those which I absorbed from my elders during early training in custom and tradition, and later used to relate to my juniors as an evening amusement" (xviii).

The European missionaries who came to Kenya established mission schools for the natives where they were given teachings on Christianity as well as promoting the British culture. With the advent of the new educational system came the institutions which taught the children how to read and write.

> …Christian missionaries introduced Western education in Kenya, as we know it today, by the 19th century when the first mission school was established in 1846 at Rabai, near Mombasa.Early missionary education in the country was linked to conversion of Africans to Christianity and little progress was made to establish formal schools in land until the beginning of the 20th century when the colonial administration took over control of African education. (https://www.scribd.com/document/327153786/History -of-Education-in-Kenya-pdf 1)

The Gikuyus welcomed the Western education as they perceived the advantages inherent in its learning.

In *Weep Not Child*, as the story begins, the protagonist Njoroge's mother asks him, "'Would you like to go to school?'"

'Oh mother!' Njoroge gasped. He half feared that the woman might withdraw her words… 'You won't bring shame to me by one day refusing to attend school?'…Aloud he said, 'I like school'" (3). Throughout the story, the protagonist believes that education will afford him a "bright future"3. This thought is highlighted when he converses with his brother later on. When Njoroge wishes that his brother Kamau would come to school with him, he replies, " ' Don't you worry about me. Everything will be all right. Get education, I'll get carpentry. Then we shall, in the future, be able to have a new and better home for the whole family…That's what I want. And you know, I think Jacobo is as rich as Mr Howlands because he got education. And that's why each takes his children to school because of course they have learnt the value of it.'"4 Education in a formal institution is seen by the natives as a better opportunity in attaining quality life than other options. Jomo Kenyatta, who is magnified in the novel is successful partly due to his learning: "To him, too, Jomo had been his hope. Ngotho had come to think that it was Jomo who would drive away the white men. To him, Jomo stood for custom and tradition purified by grace of learning and much travel."(74)

In *A Grain of Wheat*, Gikonyo is shown making use of his school-based knowledge: "He lifted the pencil with the right hand and tried to scribble a figure. But his hand was not steady, he let the pencil drop"30.Later on in the novel, it is Karanja who picks up a pen; "Karanja picked a clean stencil from a pile on the table and started writing labels. The books recently bound at Githima belonged to the Ministry of Agriculture, Nairobi…He tried with difficulty to control the tremulous pen in his hand."(34)

In *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, as Kimathi makes a powerful speech, he makes mention of the new form of education, that is, the written form. He says,

> "Put more effort in education:
>
> This Earth will form our blackboards
>
> We must know our history
>
> Especially the deeds of those
>
> Who have always resisted
>
> The rape of our beautiful Kenya"(Thiong'o and Mugo 1976: 67).

In *The River Between*, the importance of Education in the Kikuyu society is seen explicitly through the following narration: "Marioshoni had established itself as the centre of the new spirit sweeping through the ridges. And Waiyaki, though young, was considered the unofficial leader of the education movement that would inevitably awaken the ridges" (Thiong'o 1985 78). Earlier, we learn that Waiyaki and his two friends Kamau and Kinuthia go to the white missionary to get education: "The three were destined o live and learn together under the Reverend Livingstone of Siriana Mission, which had now grown into a big institution. Many boys from the hills and beyond, from Kiambu and Muranga, came there for a portion of the white man's magic."(21)

A New System of Government:

In the traditional system of governance, the family is the basic unit which goes to the level of national council. The father represented the family level. The village council (*kiama kia itora*) represented the village which composed of the heads of families. Above this level was the

district council where all the elders of the district took part. A committee which was composed of the senior elders presided over the district council. This led to the next level, which was the national council. In this organization, the merit of the individual decided his position and it was the public voice that led the country in its governance. As Jomo Kenyatta writes, "The Gikuyu system of government prior to the advent of the Europeans was based on true democratic principles"(Kenyatta 1965: 86). He writes that there was once a king who ruled over the people. But they resented his leadership and he was consequently dethroned. He adds,

> After King Gikuyu was dethroned, the government of the country was at once changed from a despotism to a democracy which was in keeping with the wishes of the majority of the people. This revolution is known as *itwika*, derived from the word *twika*, which means to break away from and signified the breaking away from autocracy to democracy. This achievement was celebrated all over the country; feasting, dancing and singing went on with intervals for a period of six moons which preceded the new era of government by the people and for the people. In order to run the new government successfully, it was necessary to have a constitution, so during this time of festivities a revolutionary council, *njama ya itwika*, was formed to draft the constitution...Every village appointed a representative to the Council, which took the responsibility of drafting the new constitution… At the first meeting of the *njama ya itwika* it was decided that in order to maintain harmony in the government of the country, it was necessary to make a few rules which would act as the guiding principles in the new government; and the following rules, which afterwards became law, were made:
>
> > I. Freedom for the people to acquire and develop land under a system of family ownership.
> >
> > 2. Universal tribal membership, as the unification of the whole tribe, the qualification for it to be based on maturity, and not on property. For this reason it was then decided that every member of the community, after passing through the circumcision ceremony as a sign of adulthood, should take an active part in the government…

3. Socially and politically all circumcised men and women should be equally full members of the tribe, and thereby the status of a king or nobleman should be abolished.

4. The government should be in the hands of councils of elders *(kiama)* chosen from all members of the community, who had reached the age of eldership, having retired from warriorhood. And the position of elders should be determined by a.system of age-grading.

5. All young men between the ages of eighteen and forty should form a warrior class *(anake)*, and be ready to defend the country, and that the country should respect them and have pride in them.

6. In times of need, the Government should ask the people to contribute in rotation sheep, goats, or cattle, for national sacrifices or other ceremonies performed for the welfare of the whole people.

7. In order to keep up the spirit of the *itwika*, and to prevent any tendency to return to the system of despotic government, the change of, and the election for, the government offices should be based on a rotation system of generations…It was further decided that one generation should hold the office of government for a period of thirty to forty years, at the end of which the ceremony of *itwika* should take place to declare that the old generation had completed its term of governing, and that the young generation was ready to take over the administration of the country.

8. All men and women must get married, and that no man should be allowed to hold a responsible position other than warrior, or become a member of the council of elders *(kiama)* unless he was married and had established his own homestead. And that women should be given the same social status as their husbands.

9. Criminal and civil laws were established and procedure clearly defined. Rules and regulations governing the behaviour between individuals and groups within the Government were laid down." (187-189)

With the arrival of the colonial government came the rule of the government officials who were aided by the appointed chiefs. This was a different direction from the traditional system of government. The Colonial Office governed the colony of Kenya until World War I comprising of a legislative council. British settlers were a part of this council. The chiefs who assisted them were appointed from the native people and they were under the District Officer. They were looked at as mere puppets of the colonial masters. Along with the colonial power came the new government to govern the natives. In doing so, taxation was introduced. This was resented by the people. Moreover, the natives had to pay more taxes as compared to the European settlers. Besides, only a negligible amount being used for the welfare of the people, it only highlighted the biased nature of the colonial government. Thus, Harry Thuku in *A Grain of Wheat* raises this ssue with the whiteman: "He amazed them by reading aloud letters to the whiteman, letters in which he set out in clear terms people's discontent with taxation…"(12). Historically, the government collected 'hut tax' which was collected annually from every African household.

Traditionally, the Gikuyus did not have chiefs to administer them. The council of elders took to this responsibility. The witch doctor and the blacksmith took an important role in it. However, the colonial government appointed chiefs. Even after Uhuru, they carried on with this practise. Gikonyo tells Mugo just before leaving his hut, "Another thing! You know the government, now that it is controlled by the Movement, will allow chiefs to be elected by the people .The branch here wants you to stand for this area when the time comes"(25).

The natives were introduced to the method of election for the functioning of the government; "Elections came. People voted the Party into power and resumed their toil" (65). Earlier to that, political party leaders are seen canvassing for Kenyatta,

> They said Jomo Kenyatta had to be released to lead Kenya to Uhuru. People would not accept any other person for the Chief Minister. They asked everyone to vote for party candidates in the coming elections: a vote for the candidate was a vote for

> Kenyatta. A vote for Kenyatta was a vote for the Party. A vote for the Party was a vote for the Movement. A vote for the Movement was a vote for the People. Kenyatta was the People! The meeting had, however, really been called to introduce the men whose sacrifice and loyalty to the country had made these elections possible." (64)

In *Weep Not Child*, the first chapter mentions post office as functioning in Kipanga town, "But they also bought in the African shops which stood alone on one side of the town near the post office"(Thiong'o 1985: 7). Njeri talks about the law of the land which is alien to the people:

> The white man makes a law or a rule. Through that rule or law or what you may call it, he takes away the land and then imposes many laws on the people concerning that land and many other things, all without people agreeing first as in the old days of the tribe. Now a man rises and opposes that law which made right the taking away of land. Now that man is taken by the same people who made the laws against which that man was fighting. He is tried under those alien rules. (75)

The Trial of Dedan Kimathi throws light on the new government in the land that seeks to organize things according to its rules and regulations. Shaw Henderson is the representative of the government and when Kimathi does not give in, he threatens the latter: "This democratic government has stretched its patience to limits" (Thiong'o and Mugo 1976: 55). As the Boy, the Girl and the Woman converse in the Third Movement, the Girl adds, "…I have heard of the story of how once he wrote a letter to the Governor. He said he would dine with the Governor at State House. The Governor collected all the police in Nairobi to come and capture Kimathi….He was disguised as a European Inspector of Police…"(61) .Also, during the trial of Dedan Kimathi, the judge announces, "May everyone here present note that the accused has dismissed voluntary legal advice placed at his disposal by the Government."(80)

Joshua in *The River Between* was a staunch Christian and he followed closely what the missionaries taught the Christian natives. This put him under suspicion from many natives. Thus,

> People at Kameno were becoming restless and believed that it was Joshua who was responsible for the white men who these days often came to the hills. There were rumors that a Government Post would soon be built at Makuyu and that the hills would be ruled from there. In his last visit, one of the white men had announced that people in these regions would begin paying taxes to a government in Nairobi…He himself knew what a government was, having learned about this from Livingstone. He knew it was his duty as a Christian to obey the Government… (Thiong'o 1985: 31)

The Movement:

The Gikuyu have figured significantly in the development of contemporary Kenyan political, cultural, and social life. The Land and Freedom Movement (referred to pejoratively as the "Mau Mau" Movement) during the 1950s was primarily a Gikuyu guerrilla war (a war fought without organized government troops) in response to British domination. The British had taken farming lands from the Gikuyu and given these lands to white settlers. Gikuyu were forced to work on these farms and to provide labor for cash crops such as coffee and tea. The Gikuyu nationalist Jomo Kenyatta (1894–1978) became the first president of Kenya at its independence in 1963. He is respected among the Gikuyu for his leadership against colonialism (outside rule) and for his status as is regarded as the father of his country. (https://www. everyculture.com/ wc/Japan-to-Mali/Gikuyu.html).

When the colonial Government amassed huge fertile lands, it led to the movement which saw the peasants rising up against the oppressive government and its allies. It gave the tribes a common cause to unite and fight against. In *A Grain of Wheat,* a meeting of the Movement is vividly described by the narrator: "The meeting started an hour later…There were, however, plenty of speakers from Muranga and Nairobi. There was also a Luo speaker from Nyanza showing that the Movement had broken barriers between tribes" (14).

It was the colonial rule that ended enmity among the tribes: “The revolt of the peasants had failed; the ghost of the great woman whose Christian hand had ended the tribal wars was quietened .She would now lie in the grave in peace” (13). Ironically, having ended the tribal wars, the colonial power faced resistance from the tribes.

The Trial of Dedan Kimathy shows the different facets of influence on the Kenyans as a result of the encounter with the colonial power. Among others, the struggle for freedom from the yoke of the colonizers takes the center-stage. The title of the play itself is symbolic of the movement that began due to the oppression that the people went through in the hands of the colonizers. As the play begins, Dedan Kimathi is under trial by the imperial government. Then

> “Sad music saturates the background as the enactment of the Black Man’s History takes place on the stage. The phases recapitulated flow into one another, without break or interruption.
>
> Phase I: An exchange between a rich-looking black chief and a white hungry-looking slave trader. Several strong black men
>
> and a few women are given away for a long, posh piece of cloth and a heap of trinkets.
>
> Bereaved relations and children weep, throwing themselves onto the ground, while others raise closed fists in a threatening manner.
>
> Phase II: A chain of exhausted slaves, roped onto one another, drag themselves through the auditorium, carrying heavy burdens, ending up on the stage. They row a boat across the stage, under heavy whipping.
>
> Phase III: A labour force of blacks, toiling on a plantation under the supervision of a cruel, ruthless fellow black overseer. A white master comes around and inspects the work.

Phase IV: An angry procession of defiant blacks, chanting anti-imperialist slogans through songs and thunderous shouts:

LEADER: Away with oppression!

Unchain the people!

CROWD: Away with oppression!

Unchain the people!

SONG: Tutanyakua mashamba yetu!

Tutakomboa Afrika yetu

Tutanyakua viwanda vyetu!

LEADER: Away with exploitation!

Unchain the people!

CROWD: Away with exploitation!

Unchain the people!

LEADER: Away with human slaughter!

CROWD: Unchain the people!

LEADER: Brothers, we shall break-

CROWD: Exploiters' chains!

LEADER: Rally round the gun!

CROWD: Make a new earth!

Thus, in these short four phases, the history of how the movement came about is enacted. The people wanted to be free of the yoke from without as they were reduced to an almost inhuman level in their own land, with the land taken away from them.

The movement witnessed not just men but also women contributing towards the cause. When "A white man, johnnie style, in green bush battledress" (Thiong'o and Mugo 1976: 8) encounters a woman carrying a basket, he narrates to her the tale of a Mau Mau woman after satisfying himself that she is not one of the forest fighters:

> "Besides, you might have carried a gun. You look like a Mau Mau. Like one of them, Kimathi women. Wanjiru, they called her. She was lean, wiry and strong. Fought like a tiger in the battle of the Beehive. No wonder the terrorists made her a Colonel. (Somewhat forgetting himself): H'm. Should have seen when we captured her. She swore at us, spat in our faces and kicked like a wild goat a we bound her. Later at Karunaini camp, she would not eat or drink. And she would not tell us where we could find Kimathi…" (11).

In the process of screening out the Mau Mau fighters, the soldiers harassed the civilians:

> "FIRST SOLDIER: (anger and cynicism fused): Where are the terrorists who were supposed to be all over Nyeri? We've been patrolling all night without as much as catching sight of a single one of them. Simply harassing innocent villagers. The way mzungu makes us thirst to kill one another!
>
> SECOND SOLDIER: (irrelevantly. Viciously): The bloodyfuckn' Mau Mau are finished without that bugger Kimathi!"
>
> FIRST SOLDIER: What is the idea of arresting a whole village then?" (12).

A little ahead in the play, while Kimathi is giving his powerful speech, he makes mention of the way the army is organized in the movement:

> "Kimathi: Vigilance. We must be vigilant all the time

Welcome once again warriors and comrades

To the last day of our meeting.

For three days now

We have debated many issues

That affect the conduct

And the growing strength

Of our Movement.

Since we formed our six brave armies:

Ituma Ndemi Army

Gikuyu Iregi Army

Kenya Inoro Army

Mei Mathathi Army

Townwatch Battalions

Kenya Levellation Army,

We have had great victories.

Our enemies all over Kenya

Have not been able to sleep.

As Kimathi continues to motivate his fellow freedom fighters, more important than weapons of war and more efficient than great generals is their unity and discipline:

"KIMATHI: …Stronger than any machinegun fire

Stronger than the Lincoln and

Harvard bombers

Mightier than their best generals

Is our unity and discipline in struggle

With unity, discipline

Along correct lines

People's line

With unity and discipline

In our total commitment to

The liberation of us

Who sweat and labour

We can move mountains

We can yet cut offthe giant's

Legs and mammoth head

Truth is our atomic bomb

But

Discipline is our hydrogen bomb

All: Long live People's Field Marshal

Long live Kenyan People's Freedom Armies!"(69-70).

In a Guerilla Camp in Nyandarua Forest, Kimathi gives tribute to women comrades fighting for liberation:

> "KIMATHI: [pointing to the woman. Talks contemplatively as if agitated within]:
>
> Do you see this woman?
>
> How many tasks has she performed
>
> Without complaint
>
> Between here and the villages?
>
> How many people has she
>
> Snatched from jails, from colonial
>
> Jaws of death!
>
> How many brave warriors has she
>
> Recruited at great risks!
>
> Walking for miles
>
> Hardly getting sleep
>
> For days.
>
> When this struggle is over
>
> We shall erect at all the city corners
>
> Monuments
>
> To our women

Their courage and dedication

To our struggle" (72-73).

The New Economy:

Jomo Kenyatta writes,

> … according to the tribal legend, once upon a time there was a king in Gikuyuland, named Gikuyu, a grandchild of the elder daughter of the founder of the tribe. He ruled many moons and his method of governing was tyrannical. People were prevented from cultivating the land, as he commanded that all able-bodied men should join his army and be ready to move with their families at any time and to wherever he chose. Thus the population lived a sort of nomadic life and suffered many hardships from lack of food. At last they grew tired of wandering from place to place and finally decided to settle down. They approached the King and implored him to let them cultivate the land and establish permanent homes, but owing to his autocratic power he refused to hear or consider their plea. The people were very indignant with him for turning a deaf ear to their appeal, and in desperation they revolted against him. The generation which carried out the revolt was called *iregi1* (revolter), and the next generation which started cultivation was given the name…It is the name of the age-group that revolted *ndemi-* (cutters) in remembrance of the period when the Gikuyu people began to cut down the forests and established themselves as agriculturalists. (Kenyatta 1965: 186-187)

Traditionally, the Gikuyus were agriculturists and they bred animal livestock. The medium of exchange was these. Livestocks were used as dowry. Jomo Kenyatta writes, "Trading is done by both sexes. Carrying and selling grains at the markets is chiefly done by women, while taking sheep and goats or cattle to the markets and selling them is the job of men" (Kenyatta 1965: 55).

Before “East Africans came into contact with outside traders, traditional African communities were exchanging goods and wares through barter trade, a system dating back to prehistoric times. Arab traders travelling through East Africa’s interior in search of ivory, slaves and other goods, were the first to introduce money as an alternative to the cumbersome salt bars normally used as payment” (https://www.the-star.co.ke). They brought in their system of trade which was new to the tribals. Thus, Kenya eventually grew from barter system to use of cowrie shells and then to shilling. Modern currency was introduced as the medium of exchange which is in itself a mirror of the constant evolutuion of society. Jomo Kenyatta clearly states the transformation of the economic system from barter system to monetary system:

> In the Gikuyu country, before the introduction of the European monetary system, sheep and goats were regarded as the standard currency of the Gikuyu people. The price of almost everything was determined in terms of sheep and goats *(mhori)*. This system still operates among the majority of the Gikuyu people who have not yet grasped the idea of a monetary system and its value. These domestic animals play an important role in the economic, religious, and social life of the Gikuyu. A man with a number of sheep and goats feels no less than a man with a large bank balance. The people look upon these animals as a good investment which gives them a yearly income, for if a man has two or three good sheep or female within a year they increase to six or more, and people consider this a good profit. They would argue saying that money is not a good investment, for one shilling does not bear another shilling, whereas a sheep or goat does. This, of course, is due to the ignorance of money speculation, and so they say it is better to buy a sheep or a goat instead of keeping shillings which, if buried in the ground (the only form of saving money the majority, of the people know), would rot and lose their value. Sheep and goats, unlike cattle, are used for various religious sacrifices and purifications. They are the chief means of supplying the people with meat, while the skins are used as articles of clothing. Finally, without them a man cannot get a wife, for it is sheep and goats that are given as *roraclo* (marriage insurances). If a man has cash money and he wants to get married he must, in the first place, buy cattle or sheep and goats, because the parents of the wife-to-be will not accept cash money as *roracio.* To them coins have very little meaning and have no religious or sentimental associations within the people's custom. The real value of money is only realised when a man takes it and

> buys a cow or sheep and goats, or pays the Government taxes, otherwise money as such has little function inside the Gikuyu country .(Kenyatta 1965: 66-67)

Kenyatta mentions that "There are two ways of exchanging goods, one by barter and the other by money. The former is predominant, for the majority of the people still adhere to the old form of exchanging one article for another".(61)

In *A Grain of Wheat*, Gikonyo leaves carpentry and enters the market to make his livelihood:

> He went to the market very early in the morning, bought one or two bags of maize at a wholesale price from licensed, and at times black-market, maize suppliers from the Rift Valley…Along with other market women, Mumbi and Wangari would sell the maize at a retail price using tiny calabashes for a measure. With the money obtained, Gikonyo would again haggle for another bag and the two women did the retail selling. The profit gained would be re-invested in the business on the next market-day. Sometimes Gikonyo would buy a bag of maize and then to another person at a higher price…This way, he coaxed in money. (57)

The natives adopted a whole new system of attaining wealth. Later on, he along with five others tries to buy land from a white settler, Richard Burton, who was leaving Kenya because the British Government was abdicating their power. Thus, Gikonyo "…had already contacted Burton and made preliminary arrangements. Because the five men could only raise half the amount (Burton wanted cash), Gikonyo had gone to see the MP to find out if he could recommend them, or use his influence behind the scenes, to get them a government-backed loan from a bank"(59). As seen from the above lines, the natives were introduced to banking system. "With the growth of inland trade, agriculture and colonial settlement, banks began setting up shop in East Africa giving people a safe place to keep their money" (https://www.the-star.co.ke). Leveraging was adapted to the fabric of the native economy to produce capital. This would complement the survival skills of the natives, bringing out their full potential. Eventually, it would generate

money for the borrower while returning the loan to the lender. Gikonyo hurries to catch a bus for Nairobi once the meeting is over. The narrator states about the bus owner, "The bus, called A DILIGENT CHILD, belonged to one of those people in Rung'ei whose fortunes were made during the War of Independence. Those were men who through active co-operation with the colonial government had acquired trade licenses and even loans to develop their business" (59). As the bus moves ahead, two African policemen stop the bus: "One came in and counted the number of passengers, while the other one asked for the driver's license. The bus had two passengers extra. The driver argued with the policemen. Then the cashier took the two policemen outside, and waved the driver to go on. The driver understood the sign. He drove a few yards and stopped. Soon the cashier came running, and got into the bus. 'They just wanted a few shillings for tea', he said, and people in the bus laughed" (59). Later on, when Gikonyo goes to meet the MP again, the latter states,

> Now, about these loans. They are difficult to get. But I am trying my best. Within a few days, I may have good news for you. You see, these banks are still controlled by whites and Indians. But some are already realizing that they cannot do without *help* from us politicians. Gikonyo, my brother, they *need* us!'…At the door, Gikonyo turned round.

> Do you think it possible to get the loan, or should we go ahead and find other means of getting the money?... 'There is no real difficulty about that. The loans are there…If Mr Burton could accept half the money now, they could surely give him the rest when the loan came or else raise the money by some other means. (61)

In *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, during the 'Third Trial', a Business Executive, a Politician and a Priest visits Kimathi. The conversation that takes place between Kimathi and the Business Executive throws light on the evolution of economy among the Kikuyu people:

> "Third Trial

KIMATHI: [groaning. Turning from side to side]: I knew it;the invisible powers behind them all. So smooth, so confident, heartless, soulless. Banker…Industrialist…Settler…Governor…Police…Army…Judge…all one. Drinkers of Darkness…

BUSINESS EXECUTIVE: You know me. You know me. I have stood by you. Wa Wachiuri, it has been a long struggle. I've given money to the cause. My shop at Masira was an oathing centre"(Thiong'o and Mugo 1976: 44).

Introduction of New System of Transport:

The natives had never experienced modes of transportation such as trains, buses and cars. With the arrival of the Europeans, these locomotives were introduced. Their advancement in inventions and industries brought in an extraordinary advancement in transportation. It affected their very lifestyle. In *A Grain of Wheat*, Gikonyo hops into a bus after meeting the MP for Nairobi; "The bus, called A DILIGENT CHILD, belonged to one of those people in Rung'ei whose fortunes were made during the War of Independence…A DILIGENT CHILD continued on its journey to the city…He got out of the bus and walked down Kenyatta Avenue…"(59). In chapter seven of *A Grain of Wheat*, the arrival of train for the first time is vividly narrated,

Rung'ei had other virtues, too. The iron snake had first crawled along this plain before climbing up the escarpment on its way to Kisumu and Kampala…Even people from ridges bordering the Masai land paid visits once in a while just to see the rain coughing and vomiting smoke as it rattled along…that even the railway line and the train had a mystical union with Thabai; were they not the first to welcome the rail and the train into the heart of the country? Of the story, current to this day in other ridges, which told how men, women and children deserted Thabai for a whole week when the iron snake, foreseen by the Gikuyu seer, first appeared on the land, they kept discreet silence. They ran for refuge to the neighbouring ridges, so the story goes, and only trickled back…brought news that the snake was harmless. (70)

The train, referred to as the "iron snake", later on brought new customs to the people;

> Later, the railway platform became the meeting place for the young. They talked in groups at home, they went for walks in the country, some even went to church; but in their minds was always the train on Sunday…People did not go there, as it might be thought, to meet friends arriving from Mombasa, Kisumu or Kampala-they went there to meet one another, to talk, to gossip, to laugh…Girls normally went to the river on Saturday to wash their clothes…The train became an obsession…From the station they normally went to dance in Kinenie Forest overlooking the Rift Valley…When a person bought a dance, the guitarist played for him alone…The conventions governing the dances in the wood were well understood…the dances ended in fights…At the platform, things were different .Nobody thought of starting a fight. (70-71)

Such rituals became a part of their lifestyle. The young people, therefore, changed the way they tried to attract the opposite sex.

In *Weep Not, Child*, While Njoroge was in his class, the headmaster comes and calls him out, "Njoroge was in the middle of answering a question when the headmaster came to the door…His heart beat hard. He did not know what the headmaster could have to say to him. A black car stood outside the office. Bu it was only when Njoroge entered the office and saw two police officers that he knew that the car outside had something to do with him" (115).

Along with the introduction to new modes of transport came the development of infrastructure to support it. In the first chapter of *Weep Not, Child*, the narrator describes the road with black tar,

> There was only one road that ran right across the land. It was long and broad and shone with black tar, and when you travelled along it on hot days you saw little lakes ahead of you. But when you went near, the lakes vanished, to appear again a little farther ahead. Some people called them the devil's waters because they deceived you and made you

more thirsty if your throat was already dry. And the road which ran across the land and was long and broad had no beginning and no end…Who made the road? Rumour had it that it came with the white men and some said that it was rebuilt by the Italian prisoners during the Big War that was fought far away from here…The Italian prisoners who built the long tarmac road…(5).

In *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi,* mention is made of the modern mode of transportation that had been introduced in Kenya:

"FIRST SOLDIER: Well, time will tell.

Offstage we hear the sound of jeeps and heavy vehicles revving their engines.

SECOND SOLDIER: Quick, the trucks are moving off…

FIRST SOLDIER: Don't other people eat oranges? Come on, let us catch the trucks before they take off"(Thiong'o and Mugo 1976: 13).

A little ahead, as the boy, girl and the woman are in conversation, she mentions the mode of transportation that the army was using to patrol the place where the trial of Dedan Kimathi was taking place:

"WOMAN: Running about and fighting like that when screeners and army jeeps are all over Nyer"(15).

Not only were the road transportations popular but the aircraft also made its impact: "Sound of aero plane overhead. Woman looks up. She continues with her task."(14). As Henderson interrogates Kimathi, the latter states:

"KIMATHI: …Aah, out there! In the Forests of Nyandarua or Kirinyaga. Fighting you. Or shall I go up in one of your aeroplanes shouting: Surrender! Surrender! Surrender!"(55).

In the Third Movement, in a street in Nyeri, "We hear steps of marching feet…Boy and Girl rush to get it. Then they stand aside and look at the sky. Sound of aeroplanes…" (59). A little ahead, the woman tells the boy and the girl that the people used to sing of Kimathi, how he "brought down with only a rifle" (62) the enemy planes.

The River Between reflects the introduction of the new system of transport in Kenya: "Nairobi was already flourishing, and the railway was moving across the country in the land beyond where not many from the ridges had been."(Thiong'o 1985: 7)

Conclusion:

With the advent of colonialism, the Kenyans faced an alien culture. As the colonial government was set up, the native culture went through changes. It was not only the system of governance but also the introduction of western education along with the introduction of the new faith that altered the very lifestyle of the people. Jomo Kenyatta, the historical figure, is included in the narrative in *Weep Not, Child* who is symbolic of the hybrid culture that the society had evolved into: "To him Jomo stood for custom and tradition purified by grace of learning and much travel."(Thiong'o 74)

In *The River Between,* A conversation takes place between Muthoni and her sister Nyambura. Muthoni argues, "'Father and mother are circumcised. Are they not Christians? Circumcision did not prevent them from being Christians. I too have embraced the white man's faith. However, I know it is beautiful, oh so beautiful to be initiated into womanhood. You learn the ways of the tribe…My life and your life are here, in the hills, that you and I know'…Surely there is no tribe that does not circumcise" (Thiong'o 1985: 26). It brings out the tension inherent in the Cultural Revolution that was rapidly taking place in the society. Such changes were

mirrored in the writings of Ngugi wa Thiong'o which explicitly shows the hybrid nature of the native culture.

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Chapter Four

EASTERINE IRALU/KIRE'S EXPLORATION OF NAGA ETHOS

With the arrival of the British in India in the early 1600, trading posts were established under the East India Company. By the next century, the company was controlling a large part of the country. The Company ruled in India from 1757 to 1858. Eventually, the rule of the East India Company was shifted to the British Crown in 1858 through the Government of India Act, 1858. Thus, the era of the British Raj began which lasted till 1947.

During the British Raj, a system of governance was established in the Indian subcontinent. It was during this time that the Naga Hills were annexed by the government. Consequently, the British Administration was set up. Coupled with the Christian Missionaries who brought in the new faith to the Nagas, the colonizers had influenced and altered the entire cultural landscape within a short span of time.

Easterine Iralu, as a representative Naga novelist and a poet, captures the experience of the natives from the time of the arrival of the colonizers to the post Indian Independence in an accurate and vivid way, bringing into light a society under constant transformation.

A Naga Village Remembered is distinguished as the first novel in English written by a Naga. Here, Easterine Iralu tells the story of a small Naga village, Khonoma, that faces the most powerful colonizing country of the time as it tries to consolidate the Naga Hills with the rest of the Indian subcontinent. The novel begins at a time when the colonizers had already set up their

government in the Naga Hills. It traces the lives of three generations; Kovi, Levi and Sato. In doing so, it highlights the cultural dynamics of the Nagas, showing vividly the age-old cultural practices being meticulously carried out by the members of the community initially. Eventually, with the colonizers making deeper in-routes in the Naga Hills, influence the native culture to such an extend in a very short span of time that generations are subject to a cultural shock which they could not fully comprehend, eventually, carving out a hybrid culture as the novel comes to an end.

Mari by Iralu portrays the life of a Naga woman named Mari before, during and after the World War II. As the author details the significant events of the protagonist's life, a clear picture of the dynamics of Naga culture is explicitly drawn. The rich and vibrant culture that belonged to the Nagas and protected from the outside influence for ages had been hybridized through the surge of Western culture and the new faith as the colonial power engulfed the Naga Hills.

A Terrible Martriarchy by Easterine Iralu brings together the lives of three women belonging to three different generations; Vibano, Banu and Dielieno. Dielieno's grandmother Vibano has had a hard life, according to her son Visa and wants Lieno to grow up to be a good woman. In doing so, she brings her granddaughter to live with her and Bano. The grandmother tries to bring her up in a traditional way. As the stories of the three women get enmeshed, the age-old cultural practices are juxtaposed with the Western culture along with the new Faith. The Naga culture, as the novel mirrors, cannot be isolated from the ever-widening outside influence and can never go back to the purity of its past culture. As the novel shows, for its culture to be relevant to the people who practice it, it cannot shy away from the forces of change nor can it change to such an extent that it becomes unrecognizable.

Bitter Wormwood is the story of a man named Mose who stands up for the Naga cause on seeing the injustice being meted out to the Nagas in general and humanity in general. What propels him to join the Naga Movement was the rape and murder of the woman who went

missing. This changes the course of his young adult life. Later on, as an old man, he dies while defending a Bihari boy named Jitu. In the course of his eventful life, we witness Naga culture as it is today. It is no longer the age-old untouched culture but one with a myriad of influences due to the opening up of the hills to colonialism and Christianity.

When the River Sleeps by Kire takes the reader on an adventure through a solitary hunter that is truly unforgettable. We find ourselves absorbed into the world of the protagonist, Vilie, who is a product of the hybrid culture that was taking over the cultural landscape. He is the guardian of the forest, working as a forest guard for the Forest Department. He lives on a salary provided by the same Department and is set to receive a pension once he retires. He acknowledges the educational system that has come to stay in Nagaland. He also acknowledges Christianity. With all these new influences and new system taking over his life, he has also opened up his life to the magical, ritualistic beliefs of the old religion. He goes searching for the heart-stone, a powerful charm, locked in the middle of a specific river which is only for the believers.

Son of the Thundercloud by Kire is yet another fascinating novel that unravels and reaffirms the close affinity between land and the people who inhabit it. As the readers follow the traveller and his various encounters, the nexus between the ability of the land to produce and the survival of the people is firmly established.

As the colonizers advanced towards and annexed the Naga Hills, they brought their culture which influenced the natives. Along with it, the American missionaries brought the new Faith and their Educational system. However, the natives bore their identity from being a part and parcel of the very land and the community that they lived in. Thus, although they welcomed and imbibed the changes that were brought to their land, they held onto their cultural roots. A close study of Iralu's novels under the following heads bring this fact to light:

I. Age-old cultural identity of the natives as practised in the colonial and post-colonial era:

The Naga Hills, which had remained isolated and unconquered for ages, were finally touched by colonialism in the 19th Century. As changes were taking place at a great pace in the cultural front, the following sub-heads show that even as the Naga culture was getting hybridized, the people held on to their roots:

Old Customary Practices:

Three things that unite both the Kikuyu and the Naga people are Family, Clan and Age-group to this day. In *A Naga Village Remembered*, Levi's son Sato is sent to Dr. Sidney Rivenburg's school and this caused an obstacle for him to be initiated. Thus, "Levi worried that the boy had not been initiated yet…At the major festivals, Sato was away at school. Now, Levi was growing impatient for him to be initiated at the coming festival of Sekrenyi…If he chose to be initiated, he knew Chaha would disapprove. What could he do?...Sato found himself repulsing the idea of being initiated into the religion of his father and grandfather. He was happy with his life in the Mission School and all that he had learnt there" (Iralu 2003: 96-97). Although Sato did not want to be initiated, he goes through it due to the pressure that was exerted on him: "Sato hated not being able to refuse to be initiated…His heart had not been in the initiation and the tension had been unbearable. Sato was torn within himself feeling he was being pulled in two directions by two almost equal forces" (99). Although he initially felt that these forces were opposed to one another, reconciliation takes place in his heart."Sato grew peaceful as he thought that the initiation he had taken today would someday be seen as an embracing of the two religions even"(100). With peace in his heart, he takes the ritualistic bath; "At the village spring, the young men bathed the bath of sanctification. Sato, joining them, did not now feel there was incongruity in his actions…he joined in the prayer that the young men chanted at this ritual bath"(100). Waiyaki's initiation is narrated in the novel.

Changes were taking place in the age old Naga culture at a fast pace after the advent of the British colonial power and the American missionaries. People were getting educated in the

new system of education and their outlook were fast changing, not excluding what they ate and what they wore. In the mist of new culture influencing the natives, they never forgot who they were and kept their identity and beliefs. Therefore, in *Mari*, although the protagonist's sister-in-law Bano "…was an educated young woman" (Kire 4), "She was an excellent weaver and could weave very fast. She used to weave beautiful waist-clothes and body-clothes for us those days" (4). Later on, Mari talks about how Marina and her mom used to weave; "Mother and Marina often sat upstairs and wove waist-clothes and body-clothes" (11). Mari also records how during Christmas service, people wore body-clothes as well as waist-clothes along with Western attires; "Everyone had dressed well, the young men in…new body-clothes, the girls in new waist-clothes" (37). Another example is seen when Mari talks about *genna* days;

> Anyie lived in Kohima village. She and our other relatives would visit us all the time, bringing news of happenings in the village. 'It's a genna day today', she announced that day.
>
> 'Is it a fire genna day or a water genna day?' Mother asked her.The genna days were no-work days when it was taboo to work in the fields or woods. They were very important in the old religion.
>
> 'A fire genna', Anyie replied. 'It is taboo to light a fire in the fields today so as to prevent drought in the year to come'. Though we were Christian, we abided by these cultural practices in order to live in harmony with the non-Christians" (5).

Thus, although as a Christian, one is not supposed to be affected by beliefs as genna days, they still observe it so as not to be in conflict with the representatives of their past culture.

Nagas believe in omens. Easterine Kire writes,

> Certain unusual body movements are taken as omens by both cultures…Tenyimia take the involuntary twitching of an eye as a sign that is ominous and indicates a death. If the right eye twitches, the death will be of a relative, if the left eye twitches the person to diewill not be a relative, but it is a

> sign that the person whose eye is twitching will attend the funeral. The Ibo mind, like the Tenyimia mind is a highly superstitious mind reading meaning into almost all aspects of nature and especially into what is regarded by them as a departure from the normal and the natural. The Tenyimia read the evening sky and forecast good or bad weather for the next day. Again, the call of certain birds can be considered a good or a bad omen depending on what bird it is and the direction from which the call came. A twitching ear means the person is being criticized by others…. (Iralu 95)

J.P. Mills writes that among the Ao-Nagas, belief in omens reside. He records; "Besides those deliberately taken, there are countless omens of a more or less fortuitous nature…If a war-party see a Scarlet Minivet there will be bloodshed on one side or the other"(Mills 295-296). Therefore, in *Mari*, when the narrator and a few others were camping out in order to avoid the Japanese soldiers, she gives us a candid description of her belief in omens;

> While we were collecting our things, a lone bee suddenly came buzzing and humming and headed directly for me. It tried to settle first in my hair, then on my shoulder and hovered over me. I tried to swat it away. Then it came right in front of my face and kept buzzing there. We tried to chase it away but it kept returning to me.
>
> 'What's wrong with that bee ?' cried Marina, swatting it. The bee went away for a while and then came back to me. It buzzed around me for so long that everyone was alarmed. Our people always noticed unusual signs in the natural world.
>
> I suddenly felt alarmed and frightened. Was this bee trying to tell me something? Bringing me a message, perhaps? Our people say that if a bee does not leave off bothering a person for a long time, it is because it has a message for the person. My heart went out to Mother and Vic-had something happened to them? Was the bee trying to tell me that Mother had been killed? And Vic? Where was he now? (78)

Although the new Faith and Western Education influenced the natives to a big extend, what was culturally conditioned into their minds stayed with them. Thus, the narrator continues to narrate;

> "'It's not that', I tried to explain, but I couldn't say anything more and simply pointed to the bee, which was still hovering nearby. It continued to come after me again and again, for what seemed like hours. I was very certain something really awful had happened somewhere that would affect me. The bee never tried to sting me and it did not trouble any of the others. Finally, just as suddenly as it had come, it left me and flew off. I felt very desolate and could not forget the experience no matter how hard I tried"(79).

Just as she had feared what the omen meant, she hears from Jimmy that Vic was hit by a sniper's bullet; "With tears in his eyes, Jimmy looked at me and said, 'Vic was killed on the eighteenth of April by a sniper's bullet'…Jimmy's words echoed in my head again and again. Vic killed on the eighteenth of April-that was the same day that the bee had hovered around me for hours"(86). When Mari gives birth to her daughter Lily, she registers the child in the Village Council as the latter's father was Dickie, a British soldier; "After my baby was born, we went to the village council, as was the custom, and registered the child. After this, both my children were acknowledged as the legal offspring of their fathers. This was how a foreigner was accepted by and adopted into a tribe. Now the children had the right to settle in the land of their birth and own property if they chose to" (129).

In *A Terrible Matriarchy*, although a huge wave of the new culture was sweeping the land, practices of the old culture remained deeply rooted. Grandmother Vibano made sure the old culture remained intact in the face of the new cultural onslaught as she herself is a product of the old system. She takes in her granddaughter so as to make her a woman as defined by the old culture. Another instance of the deep-rootedness of the people to their old culture is the observance of the taboo factor. Aunt Bino does not throw away the excess food as it is a taboo to do so. Thus, she gives her leftovers to her dog: "My aunt, who was rich and had only two children, a girl and a sickly boy, threw away food because the children did not want to eat and

she always made too much. Of course, she did not throw it away, as that would have been taboo, but she fed it to the pigs." (2)

Although many facets were changing in the Naga society, the people held onto that which gave them their own identity.

Orality:

Mar Imsong rightly remarks about the oral tradition in Naga society; "The oral traditions and customs are accepted as holy (with taboos) and authoritative to the faith and practice of the people. They have been carefully preserved and transmitted by the Nagas from one generation to the next, even to this day."(9)

The writings of Easterine Kire bring us face to face with the importance and relevance of information transmitted through oral narration as she roots her narrations on it, making it into a written form. In doing so, she brings to the world the cultural practices and the belief system of the natives. In the process, she unfolds the psyche of the natives. By using the oral history, she brings in the native response towards colonialism and the advent of Christianity. Easterine remarks in her work *Folk Elements in Achebe: A Comparative Study of Ibo Culture* : " Achebe's use of the oral tradition also reveals the native patterns of life and their world-view essentially: by this revelation of a world-view and value system that is almost in complete contrast to the world-view and value system of the invading culture the novelist shows the impossibility of the two cultures in the novels co-existing peaceably…"(11). Iralu achieves the same feat in her work by employing oral narration. She brings out the complex and rich pattern of the native way of life and presents an accurate picture of the native culture. She juxtaposes it with the invading outside culture, bringing out the value system of both, consequently, highlighting the differences. She goes on to write that "The African world view can be further comprehended by the linguistic method employed by the author, of nativising the language he writes in, English. Nativising language is a process that indigenizes the medium of narration. For example, African and Indian writers for whom English is a second language, often resort to introducing indigenous or native

terms to convey cultural ideas that do not have an equivalent in western culture"(11). Such a technique can be found in the works of Easterine as the English language that she uses for narrating her stories falls short of the language equivalent. Nativising the foreign language has helped in capturing the essence that influences and moulds the very life of the natives originated in the era before literacy; folk tales.

An example of this can be seen in *A Naga Village Remembered* through the *thehou,* which formed a very influential institution in this little but brave village of well-known warriors. Oral narration was employed here so that the younger men "came to learn the stories of the village. It was good to be called a thehou no, a child of the thehou-it meant that such a person was well-versed in the stories and customs of the village." (Iralu 2003: 6)

Men told the younger ones stories of war exploits as they were too young to take part in the offensive against their warring-villages:

> "Kovi's brother was in the first group of men who led the attack. He recalled the attack for those who had been too young to join.
>
> 'There we were upon the village and many made their war cries and ran forward with spears outthrust. But the women of Gariphe sat at their looms weaving. They did not look up from their work, so confident were they that their men would repulse us and protect them. We cut down the men for we were a greater number than them and then we ran up to the women, cut their looms in half and cut them down too' "(4).

A Naga Village Remembered is replete with such oral story-telling. This practice had survived to the present times although much is now being recorded in the written form.

The protagonist Vilie in *When the River Sleeps* sets out on an epic adventure as a result of an oral story that he had heard:

> He had had the same dream every month for the past two years, ever since he had first heard the story of the sleeping river…The following week he would go on the wretched journey and get the river out of his head…Vilie was fascinated by the tale of the sleeping river. It was more than a story to him. He wanted more than anything to find the mysterious river, and 'catch it' when it went to sleep…He had told and retold the story to different bands of hunters who had come to him in the forest where he lived. Some of them shook their heads in disbelief. Others-like the young boy Rokolhoulie-listened in astonishment, absorbing every detail of Vilie's tale" (2).

As he himself narrates the tale to the young boy Roko, the latter is fascinated enough to want to follow Vilie to find the river when he is big enough:

> 'When the river is asleep, it is completely still. Yet the enchantment of those minutes or hours when it sleeps is so powerful, that it turns the stones in the middle of the river bed into a charm. If you can wrest a stone from the heart of the Sleeping river and take it home, it will grant you whatever it is empowered to grant you… It could be cattle, women, prowess in war, or success in the hunt. That is what is meant by catching the river when it is asleep…The retrieved stone is a powerful charm called a heart-stone.(3)

The story of retrieving the heart-stone did not need to be made into a written format to capture the imagination of the listeners. The traditional method of story-telling, that is, oral narration, was taken as a factual and stirred the heart of the believers. Another instance of the oral tradition that the people practiced is given in the WTRS when Vilie makes a journey for the heart stone. He did not need the help of a map to find his way through the land. It was mapped out in his mind. (16)

Gender Roles:

As the story unfolds in *Mari* gender roles as engrained in Naga society come to light. Men and women worked hard in the fields. But it was the men who fought with their enemies and went on raids while women stayed at home and looked after the household and the fields. Thus, the narrator states, " 'Yes,' Anyie agreed, but I knew that deep down she thought that educating girls was a waste of time, as did most of the non-Christians. In the Naga culture, the woman's role was to look after the house and children, and nothing beyond that" (Kire 6). Thus, even after modernity had to the Hills, men and women basically had varied roles to play. In the novel, Mari narrates to us how the women took care of the household needs;

> In the middle of the week, Mother said we were going to gather firewood from our land on Bayavu Hill, an hour's walk away. We took some food and water with us. It was peaceful in the woodsand we took our time, filling our baskets with the wood that workers had already cut and stacked on the boundary of our land…Mother carried quite a lot of wood and the three of uswalked homeward with our heads bent over from the weight…We didn't linger long though, because mother wanted to get home early and start cooking for the evening meal. (28)

In chapter one of *A Naga Village Remembered*, we are given a view of the village life through the watchful eyes of Kovi, where the people were proud to follow the age-old cultural practices:"Even as he walked outside in the morning he saw the women returning in small groups with their carrying baskets stacked with firewood…Ah, the old ways are good, he thought, our women do us proud when they show themselves so eager to keep the teachings of their fathers…women would set out before dawn to fetch firewood for the day. But if they already had firewood for their households, they could be seen fetching water in their water carriers" (Iralu 2003:1). The culturally handed-down practices of the people are religiously followed without any doubt and with no questions. The first chapter also highlights a gender-based role when we find Kovi being informed by the messenger about the meeting which was to

be held in the upper *thehou*, or, the community hall; "'Tonight's the meeting', hissed the messenger to Kovi as he stood in his compound close by the gate. 'The upper thehou, after supper' added the man in a conspiratorial whisper before he went off on his errand of informing the rest of his clansmen about the meeting" (1). "Talk at the *thehou* often centered round what was called man's talk. No women were allowed to come to the *thehou* or enter the male dormitories. Reminiscing about hunts and battles in the past made the thehou a place where any youth with a man's heart inside him linger to listen or add his stories as well." (6).This domain was an exclusive club for men. The readers are told that "Many men never told their wives about the meetings of the clan and the women could only guess at what went on in the highly secretive all-men meets that infrequently took place. But they knew that it was about grave matter…After the crowd had assembled, Pelhu of the Merhu clan rose up and spoke: 'My uncles and my village men, I am sure all of you know why we have assembled here today. You will recall that we have unfinished business with the village of Garipheju which repulsed our attack…" (3).

Garipheju was known for its brave warriors. Thus, when the warriors of Khonoma went to attack the village, the women were so confident of the warfare skills of their warrior-men that they continued to work on their looms. Some of the women even had bold statements to make on hearing that the men of Khonoma were attacking their village; "When runners came to announce: 'Cho! Men of *Khwunoria* are marching against us', some of the women said,'Ei, how they will assail our nostrils with their stench again' for many men of Khonoma had died at Gariphe in the first attack" (4). Although the British colonizers put an end to inter-village feuds, thereby, making the warrior-role less dominant, little has changed in the role of the man to protect and take care of the family as well as taking important decisions in exclusively male-centered organizations.

A Terrible Matriarchy sets out to absorb the readers based on the gender roles as defined by the social norms. Dielieno, the protagonist of the novel goes to live with her paternal grandmother so she can learn how to serve the men folk better. The latter is harsh with the former while she dotes on her grandsons. Towards the end of the novel, Lieno's mother tries to

make her understand the reason as to why her grandmother treated her different from her brothers:

> I will tell you things that may help you to understand Grandmother better…When she was young she lived through a very hard age. In the village, widows without sons lost all their husband's property to other male relatives. So she understood that it was very important for a married woman to produce as many male offspring as she could. Her mother did not have brothers and they lost all their lands and fields when her father died…The understanding was that a woman without a male heir would be given shelter by her in-laws but her daughters could not inherit the father's property…Grandmother saw her own mother suffer hardship and poverty and exclusion from many aspects of social life because she had no brothers…You know that our people say we should love our sons because they are the ones who look afer us in our old age…She will always think women have to be dependent on men…In her mother's day, men were still going to war, leaving women to o all the field work. No one expected a man to help with field work. He would help in times of peace but otherwise he had the much more important role of defending the village. (250-251)

The realization on the grandmother's part that women and men had different roles and therefore, different status based on gender made her reacts to men and women differently. She is a product of her native culture, conditioned by the social norms. Thus, she "…has to make sure one or more of her grandsons and sons will look after her" (250-251). Besides, having sons would ensure that the property stayed within the family as daughters could not inherit the father's property. This is a facet of Naga culture that has survived through the ages. The cultural practice of differentiating men's role from that of the women has not undergone much change. Generally, ideal Naga women are expected to take care of their men and children and clean, cook and fetch water among other things. Besides, they should uphold virtues and not be assertive and unguarded. It is in this direction that grandmother Vibano tries to mould Dielieno. The first chapter of the novel *ATM* shows Lieno's grandmother treating her differently from her brother

when she served them food: " 'What meat do you want?' she simpered sweetly, as she ladled out gravy and meat. I quickly piped up, 'I want the leg…I wasn't asking you, silly girl', she said, as she swiftly put the chicken leg into my brother's plate, 'that portion is always for boys. Girls must eat the other portions'"(1). This goes to show how men and women are brought up to fit into their respective roles as adults. Later on, her grandmother asks her mother, "'Nino, you sent the older boy to fetch water, I hear?' Grandmother began in a low voice when we went visiting her…I could not leave my cooking…Send the girl next time, that is girl's work. No man in my day has ever fetched water'" (3). Thus, it is the women who still fetch water from the water spot: "I went out to fetch water. The water at the water spot was murky because it was late in the morning and most of the women had already fetched water"(23). Vibano goes on to stress that " 'The girl must start working at home. Don't let her run about with her brothers anymore. That is not the way to bring up girl-children', said Grandmother on another visit. She always referred to me as *the girl*" (4). Later on, Bano clearly outlines the role of a woman: "Their mission in life is to marry and have children and be able to cook and weave clothes and look after the household. If they got married, they would always be known as somebody's wife or somebody's mother and never somebody's daughter. That way they could not carry on their father's name. I thought hard about it but could not think of anything to replace that system so I gave up"(25).

When Lieno turned six years and had been staying at her Grandmother's house for six months, her parents came to have a talk with her Grandmother regarding her education:

> Lieno will be six soon, so she is ready for school too,' said mother quickly…We want to send her to school, Mother. All her age mates are going too,' said mother rather firmly…Grandmother began, 'girls did not go to school. We stayed at home and learned the housework. Then we went to the fields and learned all the fieldwork as well…I really do not approve of girls getting educated. It only makes them get fancy notions about themselves and they forget their place in the family. (21-22)

Lieno's father adds that "she is a bright girl and now that we no longer have the field, she will have the time to devote to her studies" (22). Although Vibano disapproved of women getting education, she relents eventually; "I suppose there is no harm in trying it out for a few months" (22). She did not see the importance of educating women but could not shut out its ever-widening influence.

On the other hand, she herself lives on the pension requited as a result of her husband's Government job. This consequently moulds her as a hybrid, a product of more than one culture.

The importance of Land to the Nagas:

Land as the basis for producing their material needs around which revolved their economy, agriculture, festivals, dances. In his book *God-Land-People: An Ethnic Naga Identity*, Mar Imsong highlights the importance of land to the Nagas; "Historically, Naga people have had communal ownership of land. Land was sacred; it could not be bought or sold. While for many modern cultures land is regarded as a productive economic resource; however, in the case of the Nagas, the concept of land is far greater and far more inclusive. He goes on to add that "It is essential to recognize that the basis of ethnos for the Nagas is the land. However, it is also true to saythat the unity among the Nagas was fostered by the British unintentionally. The Nagas' pride of being a Naga, their love for their motherland, land-centered spirituality, relational definition of identity, and desire for freedom among other forces, nurtured the seeds of ethnic Naga identity, with political implications"(Imsong 2009: 111)

The ethnic Naga identity, shaped by the traditional concept of land, went through structural and institutional changes in the new historical context of the British encounter, but without change in the elemental aspects of traditional Naga identity, based on the deep spiritual relationship with the land. The Nagas also encountered the Christian missionaries who challenged them to discard traditional practices as unchristian. Through their encounter with the

missionaries, too, the Naga people came to reaffirm and reformulate their sense of a shared ethnic identity. (114)

The Nagas traded but it was not as a means of sustainable livelihood. They were farmers and self-dependent. With the arrival of the colonial administration, the tribes branched out into various professions. However, agriculture remained the most important profession for the bigger population as captured in Mari's writing; "Many of our relatives in the village of Kohima had new houses by now, and they resumed their work in the fields. In the summer months we saw new grain in the fields once again and the familiar landscape of young paddy and newly green trees returned to Nagaland."(Kire 118)

J.P.Mills records that "An outpost with a small garrison was established at Mongsenyimti, and the Ao country was formally annexed in April 1889. The subdivisional headquarters were soon afterwards established at Mokokchung"(Mills 13) The presence of military showed the land as already under an authority which was not under the Nagas eg. Govt. offices.

The love of land and to gain freedom from a yoke from without pushes Mose and the other Nagas to join the Underground movement. An Underground officer shouts at trainees on answering a question, "The Indians may have more men and more guns, but this is our ancestral land to which we are bonded. The Indian soldier does not feel for the land as we do. Sooner or later we will defeat them" (95).

"Like most other Nagas, we wanted the British to win the war and chase the Japanese out of our land as soon as possible because our few encounters with them had shown us how ruthless they were"(Kire 2010: 84, *Mari*).

"The Naga encounter with the British resulted in some changes in ethnic Naga identity expression because of the land reforms introduced by the British, and their administration. The land reforms impinged on the Naga's deep spiritual relationships to the land. Nagas had had a dynamic process of interaction with the land…" (Imsong 2009: 87). As Ngotho in Weep Not, Child

In Chapter Six of *A Naga Village Remembered*, the whole village is seen as observing genna days as well as a festival which is related to their soil:

> "It was the first festival that Bilie's three-year-old son had seen for he had been too young to remember the Ngonyi festival of the past year…a day on which it is taboo for us to work. If we work on this day, our crops will be damaged by insects, birds and animals'…There were three more genna days before the festival came to an end. The elders wre filled with a sense of well being-they had successfully held the genna to prevent the paddy dying, and another genna to prevent sterility of the soil as well as the genna to ensure the fertility of the soil. It should go well for this year's harvest, they said to one another"(Iralu 2003: 46).

After Levi came back from jail, he felt the strong bond that had always tied him to his own native village: "Impulsively, he picked up a bit of soil and smelt its earthiness. He felt bonded to the village, to the land, and feelings surged up in him that he'd never known before. I should feel so strongly for a mistress he mused, smiling to himself. That was what this village did to her men, she bonded them to her so strongly that they were always striving to prove themselves men enough for her" (40). "When the sowing was done after Sekrenyi, Sato returned to Kohima" (100).

Belief in Spirits:

A Naga Village Remembered paints a picture of the traditional Naga society in the pre-Christian era. It also captures the initial period when Christianity was taking root among the tribals. Thus, how the people lived in the pre-Christian era is depicted. Among others, belief in the spiritual world is highlighted. When Kovi's wife goes into labour, a facet of their belief in spirits comes to light:

> On the third day of his return, his wife took ill. Her time had come so the girl was sent to call Kotsu's wife who assisted in all the births. …Birthing was women's business…If it were not for the ritual of claiming the newborn he would not be found anywhere near the labour room. With the first child, a boy, his wife did not have much trouble. As the child squealed into the world, Kovi quickly smeared saliva on his finger and touched it to his son's forehead with the words, 'I am first'. That ensured the spirits could not claim the child before him. There had been too many deaths of new-borns in the village because their fathers had not been alert enough to stake claim before the spirits. So Kovi waited in the house that morning, pacing up and down or crouching by the fire till he would be called into the birthing room. (4-5)

Later on, in Chapter Six, Levi remembers what the elders say: " If you honour the spirits, they will bless you, if you defy them, you will learn how mortal man is. Some things were so strange it was difficult to understand. Who could explain the existence of Kirhupfumia and what made them that way?" (41) .The Nagas were Christians and tried to live as one in their outlook. However, their belief in the spiritual life was not very different from the old religion. Chapter Seven captures the ritual that is carried out on entry into a new house: "Kovi and Vipiano supervised the entry into the new house…Levi held a spear and a rooster and led the way. As instructed, he touched all the inner posts of the house with the rooster and rubbed it against the middle beam of the house as well as the ritual post. Then Levi killed the rooster and sprinkled its blood on the middle beam, careful not to sprinkle it too high for that would suppress the household and stop its progress"(52). In the old religion, people sprinkled blood on entering a new house and even after Christianity, while entering a new house, a prayer of dedication is held.

In *Mari*, the narrator talks about her old paternal home where the upstairs rooms "…sent shivers down my spine. …At night and on afternoons when I was alone in the house, I sometimes heard the creaking of footsteps on the floors above, a heavy tread that left me breathless with fear. Once, when a cousin came to visit, he slept in on of the rooms and the next morning he claimed to have seen the ghost of an old woman. Mother shushed us when we talked about it and told us there were no such things as ghosts. Still, amongst ourselves, we could never resist talking about the upstairs rooms and the beings that might be inhabiting them. Mother was the bravest person I knew. She stayed all alone in that house throughout the war" (Kire 11).

As the war comes to an end and people tried to regain normalcy, they discouraged mourning for the people killed during the shelling; "But once the period of mourning was over, further grieving was discouraged. 'Don't displease the spirits', the villagers said. 'If you grieve too much, it will anger the spirits and even greater grief will come o you'. After a great calamity, our people always tried their best to keep their spirits up. That was the way of our people" (Kire 108).Such belief in spirits and the superstition that a greater calamity will come if the spirits are angered have been a part and parcel of the old customary beliefs.

Position of Elders:

The novel *Mari* brings to light the position of elders in the traditional Naga society as World War II rages; "We were not the only ones who were anxious. By night, the council of elders in the village was conferencing over what was to be done next. Chieswema was only nine miles from Kohima, it would be just a matter of a few hours before the enemy was upon us" (Kire 57). Once the war came to an end, the people found undetonated mortars as well as grenades. The elders quickly take up their role to look out for the natives: "The elders in the village cautioned people not to wander about carelessly in the ruins. They warned about the danger of being injured if the undetonated shells were to explode accidently. The elders warned the younger boys in particular, who they knew, would be curious about any ammunition they found" (105).

As the war draws to an end and people as well as the government try to regain normal life, Mari narrates to us an incident that happened between the district commissioner and the elders of the village; "Mr Pawsey, the district commissioner, met the village elders and suggested that the village be levelled down with bulldozers. But the elders were outraged at this… 'Chaha, if you level the village lands, we will lose our boundary lines. The boundary lines are very important to us because they show the borders between clans. How can we distinguish between clan boundaries if you level the village? There will be terrible fights and the land disputes between individuals could destroy the entire village' " (107).

In *A Naga Village Remembered,* the villagers of Khonoma excommunicated the early Christian converts. It is the village elders, the most respected, who meet them and give a strong declaration, "Visited by elders who declared in no uncertain terms, 'You must not live with us. It will displease the spirits', they shifted house beyond the perimeter of the village" (Iralu 2003: 103). Thus, the converts had to shift their dwellings away from the village. The weightage given to their words in this situation showed the position of the elders. Earlier, when the villagers and the British negotiated for a treaty, the elders were a driving force; "The elders said, 'We have been the ones to kill last since we killed them in Assam so it is alright to tak of peace now'…So the elders went to meet Pelhu at Kenoria. Now, the British had killed Sakhrie…But the elders pleaded, 'It is for the sake of our women and children we want you to reconsider" (85).

II. *Encounter with the West and its influence on the native culture*:

As the West brought along their culture and new Faith, the natives welcomed the former's overwhelming influence although they kept their connection to the age-old culture. The entry of British administration into the Naga Hills brought a few changes;

> the subjection of the tribes to an external political authority for the first time in their history ;the introduction of alien administrative and judicial systems that undermined the authority of the traditional systems and imposed entirely new principles of authority and jurisprudence; the introduction of a monetary economy to replace barter, and consumer

items; the establishment of modern communications; the introduction of a number of outsiders-administrators, clerks, soldiers, merchants, technicians and missionaries; the imposition of laws that seriously affected traditional institution.(Imsong 126)

A detailed reading under the following sub-heads of Iralu's work exemplify the length and breadth of the tentacles of Western influence:

Evolution of Weapon Culture:

The Nagas were generally warriors and farmers. They generally used spears, daos and crossbows as weapons. J.P. Mills observes, "The armoury of the Ao is as simple as that of his neighbours. His chief weapons of offence are the "dao" (nokC; anok M) and spear (nu C; ami M)". (Mills 59)

With the advent of the colonial power, high-tech weapons of the time were introduced which revolutionized the way war was fought within and without. Mar Imsong writes, "The advent of the British, who brought modern warfare and weaponry…Under the guidance of white missionary Edward Winter Clark, the new village of Molongyimsen was formed on October 24, 1876. Notably, within this Christian village people were able to obtain a permit for firearms from the British government, with the help of the White missionaries" (Imsong 120). He goes on to write, "The Naga people were avid hunters and modern firearms superseded all traditional weapons. The people envied possessing the firearms for two reasons: to protect the village, and to hunt. Missionaries with their direct access to the Raj helped new Christian converts to obtain the permit to purchase a firearm" (121).

Mari narrates, "…the war in Europe was engulfing the whole world. They said the war was likely to push into India next" (Kire 3). True enough, it reaches Kohima and it changes the lives of the natives for good; "Carefree and innocent and oblivious to the way in which the war would change my life forever"(Kire 2). Later on in the narration, she gives an account of the

war; “The thing that alarmed us most was the occasional sound of distant gunfire at the end of 1942. From Kohima, we could distinctly hear it. The first time we heard it was late one evening, when we were all at home” (15-16). The narrator gives an account of how she met Victor and became engaged to him during the war. When he comes home at night, Mari explains, “…he was fully armed, his loaded rifle on his shoulder and a row of shiny rifle shots on the strap. His kit bag was weighed down with grenades. When I saw the rifle for the first time, I couldn’t sleep, but Vic would fall sound asleep with his rifle on one side and me on the other…At night, we saw many flares go off in the distance. Whenever the sirens went off, we ran to the trenches outside and crouched until the sound of gunfire receded” (47-48). She continues to gives vivid account of her experience of the war as the narration progresses;

> ‘Aviu, open the door, please open the door!’ It was Jimmy and his younger brother. I let them in. ‘Did you hear the shots? They’re coming closer and closer, we are so frightened!’…We had never heard the sound of such intense gunfire before. And though we were well-drilled in what to do if the sirens sounded, it was terrifying to actually put it to practice. Over the past few weeks, we had grown used to hearing gunshots in the distance or the shelling of towns at a great distance from Kohima. Now, it seemed that those sounds had come closer, magnified and multiplied a hundred times…Towards dawn, the noises died down at last. The silence that followed was eerie. The long night had made us accustomed to the intermittent sound of rifle shots and exploding grenades, and with each gunshot we prepared ourselves for more. (51-52)

While in Chieswema, Mari and the others see Kohima burning; “When we reached the wooden gate of the village, we heard the loud roar of guns and the sound of grenades and bombs exploding. We looked towards Kohima anxiously. The village faced Kohima directly and from where we stood, we could see the town and the houses on top of the hills. How shocked we were to see the whole of Kohima ablaze and covered with thick black smoke”(56). The Japanese make their way to the village and take away the belongings and the rations of the villagers. Besides,“It became apparent that the Japanese were going to stay on in the village. So the villagers prepared to leave”(61). Mari and her family along with Vikieu and her baby leave the village and camps outdoor. At this time, Neizielhou comes to them. He brought them rice and “ To our surprise, Neizielhou also brought the half of Father’s gun that we had carried from Kohima. We had

brought it along to Chieswema for safekeeping. Neizielhou said, 'There are just too many Japanese soldiers back in the village. You had better take this with you"(63). A little ahead in the narration, they come across some Japanese soldiers; "We could see two heavily-armed Japanese soldiers walking towards us. We quickly hid the half of Father's double barrel gun that we were carrying with us. The other half was with my brother"(66). While they were still in the forest, they hear "…the sound of shelling and mortar-fire and we knew the war in Kohima had not ended"(68). Mari goes on to record that the tenth of April was Easter Sunday. Instead of going to church, as was the custom in the new Faith, they hear the sounds of war; "It was surprisingly quiet for some time and we realized that with the storm, the gunfire had also stopped. But the silence did not last long, the guns were soon firing again and bombs exploding in the direction of Kohima"(69). Thus, with or without war, the way the natives lived was a consequence of the outside influence that was revolutionizing the way Nagas lived. Eventually, Sam comes to his sisters but not without his share of experience with the Japanese soldiers; "We asked him about it several times until finally, he sat down heavily and said, 'On my way here, I was chased by five Japanese soldiers. They chased me for a few miles until I came to a stream. There was a cave nearby and I ran in there to hide. Losing track of me, they fired shots in my direction and then went back"(70).Mari continues to give us an account of the war times where the people were continually exposed to modern warfare; "The whining of plane engines overhead, the incessant sound of shelling, these were the sounds that had become a part of our lives now. If there was a lull in the firing, we would all stop working and strain our ears, waiting anxiously for it to begin again. The shelling felt normal to us, the silence abnormal" (73). At this point, the natives were so acquainted with the sound of gunshots that they could "…differentiate between the sound of the British guns and the Japanese guns" (76). When they came across the British troops, "They were heavily armed with rifles ready to fire and held grenades in their hands" (77). She goes on to narrate that "The very ground shook constantly with the mortar fire. We realized we were much closer to the sources of firing, and closer to the battle zones…Bullets flew over our heads and all around us. But we had reached a stage where we didn't really care whether we died of a Japanese bullet or a British bullet"(80). She also mentions the "Anti-aircraft guns …and one gun was positioned in the direction of Kohima"(83).

As World War II engulfed the small hill town, the Nagas took an active part in pushing back the Japanese from the Naga Hills. World War I (1914-18) was also witnessed by the Nagas when the British Government recruited labourers and porters from Nagaland, numbering to about 2000. They could no longer remain aloof and isolated from the advancement of the modern age. Thus, in Mari, the narrator narrates, "The war became a reality that sank in as more and more of our young men left home to join the army, the RAF and the navy. Uneducated men were recruited to work as coolies in Moreh and Tamu, carrying ammunition and supplies for the army. The army also paid labourers to work in Tiddim in Burma…Even grown girls left home to join the military nursing service"(Kire18).

Once Mari goes back to Kohima, she narrates a scene where she witnesses a desolate Kohima, far from how she had known before: "We saw abandoned rifles on the street corners and fragments of mortar shells and grenades. We were warned that there were buried mines as well. We couldn't believe this was Kohima, this mess of human destruction"(93). As Mari goes to her house in Kohima that had witnessed the war, she finds that "Large craters had been left by the shells and there was a lot of ammunition near the house, from different-sized mortar shells to glittering rifle shots. Apart from the two big trenches we had built in 1942 when Burma was bombed, there were new dugouts all over the garden. Our big kitchen had been bombed in half" (94). She goes on to explain the atmosphere of Kohima after the war: "Though the war was over, a certain tension remained for a long time – the fear of undetonated mortars and grenades. We found two-inch and three-inch mortar shells on our lands…Jimmy discovered some grenades with the pins removed. They were possibly duds but there was no way to be certain"(105).With the World War II being fought in Kohima, the Nagas could not stay ignorant from the modern developments in weaponry. With the war being over, people tried o get back to their normal lives but not without the dark memories of the terrible destruction that had swept the Naga Hills, using weapons of the highest technology of that period. Thus, "People frequently found mementos of the war-Japanese helmets and rifles and bullets" (Kire 108). Eventually, "Our people also found several guns. However, another order was quickly issued and the men reluctantly brought in the guns they had found and surrendered them to the district commissioner. The people had been duly warned that those who hid any of the guns would be heavily penalized"(110). After Mari

and her family go back to their land, they realized that heavy fighting went on in their land as they found remains of weapons; "When Zhabu and I began to plant flowers again we found our land still strewn with bullets. We found bullet casings each time we dug up a new flower bed. There must have been a lot of fierce fighting on our land after Mother left the house. We spent hours collecting the bullets and remains of shells. Father and Sam took away some undetonated grenades that we found and warned us about mines" (117).

The New Faith:

The Nagas had their old religion before the white men came with the new Faith. They believed in an all-encompassing God who created all the creatures. All creation is viewed as reflecting the Creator.. His name varied in different tribes. Easterine writes, "The Tenyimia recognise one supreme god, Ukepenuopfu (the one who created us or gave us birth) and a host of spirits below the supreme creator. The name Ukepenuopfu is in the female gender but reference is to a male god. Supplication is made to Ukepenuopfü in times of crisis and thanksgiving is made to him at times of abundance. The spirits are feared but not worshipped, however they are propitiated by various sacrifices."(Iralu 78). Regarding the different names that are given to the supreme God, it is mentioned in the preceding chapter. Mar Imsong writes,

> Actually, a few external factors worked very closely among the Nagas in converting them to the Christian faith, as did the British administration. The advent of the British...reminded the Nagas that the traditional village authority, which is closely tied to religious beliefs, is subservient to the White people's religion…Notably, within this Christian village people were able to obtain a permit for firearms from the British government, with the help of the White missionaries. As a result, Christianity became more popular…Naga people started questioning the village authority who had no gun, while new Christian converts possessed guns. This ultimately increased perplexity about the religious beliefs of the village, and thereby helped missionaries to present an alternative religion…In 1891, Rivenburg wrote that the British sought 'the annexation of

> this country to the British Crown and thereby making a desirable field for missionary operation. (Imsong 120-121).

Initially, as the Christian converts lived with the non-converts who were still following the old religion, the former faced conflicts. The early believers and the non-believers were antagonistic towards each other

Eventually, the Nagas became Christians. However, there were a few natives who still followed the old religion. Even so, there was harmony among the people who followed the old and the new Faith. An instance of it is given in *Mari* when the protagonist's aunt Anyie is described to the readers as a non-Christian: "Anyie Kereikieu was not Christian". Mari mentions this as being a Christian and not being one created a vast difference in the way people lived and thought. She gives an instance of this further ahead when she talks about the Manipuri traders: "The Manipuris were popular with the local people. They sold dried fish and small yeast-balls which the non-Christians bought to make rice beer" (Kire 10). Rice beer, which was a part of the culture of the Nagas took a back-seat with the arrival of the new Faith. Imsong records,

> The Christian missionaries forbade many of the Naga practices that defined their ethnic identity but had no or very little connection with religion. For instance, Naga traditional music, songs, dances, festivals connected to cultivation, the dedication of a new house or village, boys sleeping in a men's dormitory (Morung), the practice of the feast of merit and so forth were all forbidden. Rice beer was replaced with tea, and total abstinence from rice beer became a requirement of church membership. According to the report of Mrs. Mary Mead Clark, Pirrine and Haggard even refused baptism to a Naga young man who would not wear Assamese clothes"(Imsong 118).

The novel *Mari* is set during the World War II years and by this time, Christianity had taken deep root in the Naga Hills. The narrator talks about the mission school that was run by the

American missionary Reverend Supplee who was staying in Kohima with his family. She also talks about houses built to conduct services; "They liked to play in the wide space in front of the Mission chapel, a little wooden house used by the missionaries to conduct services"(30-31). When Mari gives an account of the Christmas of 1943, the readers are given a picture of how the Nagas celebrate Christmas;

> Christmas came around so quickly that year. I have always remembered Christmas 1943 as the best Christmas of my life. That morning, Father told us to hurry, so we were dressed and on our way to church when the bell tolled for the first time. The church was overcrowded and we knew we were lucky to have got seats right in front. The pastor preached on the birth of Christ and after the service there was a big feast.
>
> The men had stayed up all night to slaughter two pigs and one cow and cook them in huge pots. This was served with rice and gravy on plantain leaves. (36)

Once the service is over, Mari gives an account of how she and her friends spend the festive season; "We played our favourite songs on the gramophone Vic had given me. Over and over, Bing Crosby sang 'White Christmas', 'Silent Night', 'Blue Hawaii' and 'Road to Morocco'"(37-38). Once the Christmas celebrations were over, the preparation for war was begun. The narrator explains how their faith in God helped them through this difficult time;

> On Sunday evenings, the Mission chapel was packed with British troops and officers, many coming from far-off camps for the service in English. They walked into the small church with their loaded rifles on their shoulders. At such times, we felt sobered by the reality of the war that was drawing closer to our lands…Vic often took me to the service. Many times, we felt the abiding presence of God in the gathering gloom, the helplessness of a life overwhelmed by death, where a person's faith in God was the only sure thing he could rest upon. (41-42)

As the war came nearer and nearer to Kohima, Mari and her family take shelter in God; "My brother and his wife woke and joined us and we all sat in the living room, huddled together, listening to the sounds of battle. My mother came after a while and spoke gently to us,'Don't be afraid, God will not allow anyone to harm us. Just pray to God and ask for His protection'"(51). Along with Christmas, Christians celebrate Good Friday and Easter Sunday, the former being when Christ died on Calvary and the latter being when He arose from death. For the tribals, these days have become important and overshadows any of the old festivals. During the war, Mari and some others are out in the forest to avoid the Japanese and she records thus; "The eighth of April also happened to be Good Friday…We knew it would soon be Easter Sunday and for the first time in our lives we would not be attending church"(68).

In the old religion, people had festivals for planting and harvesting. The new Faith rather focuses on the Birth and Death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Christmas being the celebration of the Birth of Christ.

When Sieso was sent to Kohima with a few army jeeps and trucks to help escort the people who were still in Kohima and meets Mari's mother, he praises the Christian God: "Sieso was mother's nephew. He cried out, 'Anyie! Praise the Lord that you are safe!' Mother and her parents had been in hiding in my uncle Ruzhukhrie's shed"(92). After the war was over, people tried to regain normalcy by rebuilding those that they had lost during the war. How the people prioritize the church is seen in Mari's father as he confides in his cousin; "Before the reconstruction work began, Father said to his cousin, 'Ruzhukhrie, we must build the church first'.

My uncle replied, 'Man, are you mad? You don't have a house to shelter your family and you are saying we must build the church first? Hielie, are you serious!' But father was adamant. 'We must build the house of the Lord first'…two buildings were built at the same time, our house and the village church. This church eventually became too small for the worshippers.

When a new church was constructed in 1954, the old church area was turned into a graveyard"(116).

A Naga Village Remembered reveals the texture of the cultural practices of the Nagas through a little Angami village called Khonoma. As the novel begins, the men of the village are preoccupied with talks of war. The warriors of the village wanted to exact revenge on a village which had crushed their warriors on the last battle. Pelhu of the Merhu clan addresses the gathered men carefully and unfolds the events that led to the night's meeting as it began. "Garipheju was noted for its brave warriors which was primarily why Khonoma had decided to go on an expedition against that famous village" (3). The village had killed many of the Khonoma warriors in the previous battle. This meeting throws light on the love of war by the men of this little warrior village and their pride in their village and its reputation among the Nagas. As the narrator takes us deeper into the lives of this village, we come to know the role played by men when it came to protecting and upholding the name and prestige of the village through the numerous battles that the men of different villages engaged themselves with. This would, therefore, set the tone for their honor among the villages. An important aspect that this meeting throws up is the culture of revenge, among others; "You will recall that we have unfinished business with the village of Garipheju which repulsed our attack some time ago. My brother died at that battle and many of you lost your relatives. This meeting has been called to find out when are we going on the warpath to avenge our dead. It is not a meeting to discuss if we should fight the battle or not. I am sure that is a decided matter. The question now is, when and with what strategy"(3). "A murmur ran through the crowd but it was not a voice of dissent. Each man knew his duty and where his obligations lay…Many other men of the *Merhu* clan shared with Pelhu the obligation to avenge the deaths of their kin"(3-4). A later incident, during the battle against the British colonizers, show the men of Khonoma taking revenge dutifully on the former even at the most inconvenient times; "However, while holding off the British troops, 55 warriors marched through the Zeliang territories into Assam, raided the Baladhan tea garden, killing Mr. Blyth, the manager, and 16 of his labourers. They plundered the place, burned it down and returned to Khonoma safely…But the elders explained that this raid on a British territory and its subjects was necessary because the men of Khonoma were culturally bound to

avenge their fallen men" (85). Revenge was connected with honor as "A man is not a man if you let another man kill your kin and torch your houses and you do nothing about it". They called such men "Thenumia", a term used in a derogatory manner. As the speaker in the thehou states, this encourages and pushes men to battle and earn ornaments of war for themselves. It eventually made it easier for the unmarried men to approach and pay suit to the young women of their choice as it proved that he was capable of protecting his family from the enemy's attacks. Such obligations were faithfully carried out until the new faith was preached to the people. It taught them to forgive and forget the wrongs that their enemies had done to them.

In Chapter Twelve of *ANVR*, when Sato's initiation was nearing, he was torn between his desire to stay away from it and the pressure from his father to go through it. Eventually, he gets initiated. Once he goes through it, he goes through a unifying experience of the two opposing forces. Thus, "Now he no longer believed that the two religions were so diametrically opposed to each other. He thought of Isu on the cross as a chicken sacrifice much greater than all the chicken sacrifices the Angamis had made…How Sato wished that his father would come to see that the new religion was really a fulfillment of the old-answering the questions that the old was struggling with and giving meaning to the feasts and to life as the village knew it and lived it" (99-100). In Sato, we see the intermingling of the old belief and the new Faith. He is the transition from the old to the new. There is no conflict in him and the base for a sure and strong decision becomes available to him. Thus, he is eventually able to stand up and face his fear.

Initially, there was great hostility towards the new converts: "The church at Khonoma had now grown into a little band of believers…There was great hostility in the village community against the small band" (103). Sato's new faith has been narrated in the closing chapters of the novel.

In *Bitter Wormwood*, we see a Christian world, one that is very different from the *A Naga Village Remembered* village where the old religion and the old customs were dominant. Mose,

the protagonist of the novel, is a Christian like the majority of the Nagas. Thus, the Christian teachings remain in his life even at the most trying times. As he grew up, the atrocities that the Nagas experienced in the hands of the Indian army and the continuous loss of life was witnessed by him. A shooting takes place in Kohima town which leads to closure of the school as it was considered unsafe for school children to be "...walking to and from school"(82). A few days after this incident, a woman went missing. In accordance with the age-old handed down culture, a group of thirty men went searching for her with their daos, which is evocative of *A Naga Village Remembered*, where the villagers employed the same means to search for a man who went missing; the community goes searching for the missing person."The missing woman had been raped and murdered and decapitated. There was great anger at her funeral. Men spoke loudly of revenge and no one quieted them because this had never happened before" (82). The revenge culture that has been symbolic of manliness and honor for ages in our Naga culture is highlighted in this event. This was the immediate incident that propelled Mose and his friend Neituo to join the "Naga Underground" (83). Later on, when Mose heard a commotion outside his house, he found out that Jitu, the Bihari boy, was being beaten up by strangers. Thus, Mose did what he thought was right; he sought to protect the victim. This made the strangers retaliate by shooting at him and "Mose died instantly" (224). Due to this incident, his clansmen were "….so upset over Grandfather's death that they began to plot to find the two men and kill them" (236). Culturally, the clansmen did what was required of them and "We are still allowing ourselves to be bound by cultural dictates and the culture of the conflict itself" (236). The family asked their village council to take control of the situation. Neibou states, "It would have been a manly thing to just take a gun and shoot somebody in revenge" (236). Hoewever, he could not do what his forefathers would have done as it went against the beliefs of his grandfather. It would have only dishonoured his grandfather's memory. When her grandson asks her whether he had failed in his duty for not avenging the death of his grandfather, Neilhounuo replies, "That is the old culture, my child. We cannot live like that anymore. It will destroy us. Before our people came to Jisu, we did that. But now, we are to take our burdens to Jisu and leave it with him. Some men take it upon themselves to minister judgement. When they do that, nothing good can come of it. Leave it with Jisu, I say" (241). Culturally, revenge being considered as a duty is upheld in *A Naga Village Remembered*. But, the new culture and the new religion did not support this and, therefore, was brushed aside.

Khrienuo gave her grandson the name 'Moselie', which meant "….one-who-will-meet-life-without-guile….It means that he will never plot to harm another person" (17). The meaning of his life becomes important as it foretells how he would live. This has an impact on Neibou and he follows suit. On his return from Delhi, the grandson visits his grave and Neituo recalls what the pastor had said about forgiving others and goes on to say that " 'I have forgiven..' Neibou replied, 'not so much the men…but the act itself' " (242).Thus, a culture of violence was being slowly replaced by a culture of forgiveness, which is intimately connected with the new religion.

Westernized Attire:

With the advent of the Christian Faith, the Nagas not only converted to Christianity and got western education of learning how to read and write but they also changed their way of clothing. Mar Imsong writes,

> "The British Administration also supported Christian missionary activity even though it differed in its approach to preserve Naga culture. For instance, the British officials started extending financial scholarships to mission schools; however, they restricted the financial aid to those students who remained unchanged in their dress and cultural behaviour. Concerning this issue, G. B. Steward, a British officer, wrote to missionaries stationed at Impur saying, 'those boys who promised to wear only their traditional dress will be granted scholarships'"(Imsong 121).

Although the British followed a different policy towards the tribals, it was the American missionaries who had a lasting influence on the natives. In *Mari*, the protagonist records; "In one of the rooms, we stored heavy wooden and tin trunks filled with clothes. One of the trunks contained Mother's old dresses, lovely poplins that we would try on now and then"(Kire 10-11). Later on, she and her brother sells Western attires; "Sam and I were running a little business at the time, selling ladies' garments and shoes which we ordered from Hall and Anderson, the army

and navy store in Calcutta. Kasano bought a few things" (23). Although they were selling garments and shoes, later on, during the war, they take refuge in a village and try to blend in with the villagers by wearing traditional waist-clothes, body-clothes and kilt. Once the Japanese soldiers come to the village, Mari and a few others decide to camp outside. While camping out, their brother Sam comes to them wearing a kilt; "Sam came to see us the next day. He was wearing a torn Naga shawl and a man's kilt. He still had his Naga haircut" (70). The educated Nagas and the ones residing in towns wore western attire except in certain occasions. The villagers, however, wore the traditional body-cloth, waist-cloth and the kilt. This clearly shows a culture in transition.

The celebration of Christmas in the Naga Hills is a time of feasting and wearing the best clothes or brand new clothes. An account of this is given by Mari; "Everyone had dressed well, the young men in new trousers and bright new body-cloths, the girls in new waist-clothes. A few of the girls wore dresses and new shoes. The girls senior to us at school wore the flared skirts that had been the rage all summer. I wore a new dress that Vic had bought me. It had a wide flared skirt and I wore a little red coat with it"(37). Mari also gives an account of what she and her frinds wore during New Year celebrations; "Marlene and I wore long skirts and high heels. She had a pink lipstick with her, which we both put on before leaving the house. Jimmy had on his brandy-coat and woolen trousers" (38).

As the War came closer to Kohima, Mari and her relatives flee to a village called Chieswema along with their belongings. However, the Japanese comes to that village; "When the Japanese marched into the village, people stopped what they were doing and stood still" (59). The Japanese took their rations and belongings once they entered the village; "We sat in the village square and watched as the Japanese entered my uncle's house and took our belongings. First, they took our clothes out of the house, our nice dresses and coats, and then they began to take our carefully stored rations. Tears stung my eyes when I saw the soldiers take away the coat Vic had given me. But I was helpless, I dared not protest. I fought back my tears and tried to sit very still. They took away Jimmy's brandy-coat, which he had been given when he went to work

at Tiddim…The soldiers laughed and talked loudly to one another as they stuffed the clothes and food into their backpacks"(60). Further ahead, when Mari and a few others reach Jotsoma, they were given ho water to bathe in and "Then we borrowed clean clothes and shoes to wear" (84).

In *A Terrible Matriarchy,* as Lieno narrates her story, she talks about casual wear, school uniforms and formal dresses. All these are not traditional attires but the result of inter-mingling with the Western culture. Lieno narrates, "I was the youngest in a family of five children…because I was a girl after four boys, they never seemed to be sure whether to buy me girls' clothing or let me wear leftover boys' clothing. So I have vivid memories of alternating between wearing new girls' dresses which were tight and uncomfortable and short in the leg or old, torn-at-the knees boys' trousers and stained T-shirts which were immensely comfortable"(2). Besides the everyday casual wear, she also gives an account of her school uniform; "Mother and I went shopping for fabric and she sewed a skirt and blouse for me to wear to school"(22). A little ahead, she talks about formal dresses: "My friend Vimenuo was going with me too. We were about the same age and I liked her because she was as poor as us and she did not have so many pretty dresses. I had three good Sunday dresses that mother let me use alternately. The other girls would sometimes tease us and say that we never had new dresses at Easter and we wore the same dresses we had worn for Christmas"(23). Thus, not only has the western attire influenced the way the natives dressed but it had dress codes for different purposes.

Education:

Before the advent of the Western education, the Nagas had a different system of education. Chandrika Singh records,

> The most attractive feature of each Naga village has been the Morung, a common place of assemblage of the village youths and a sort of village educational institution to impart social, cultural and educational values to the coming generation. The Morung bears several names…The Morung has remained the…learning place for the younger

generation where their elders tell them the legends. They also learn the significance of life and various types of social and cultural values, which are passed on from one generation to another…Today the significance of the Morung has declined, but during the early days it served multi-purposes of the Naga villagers. In olden days when there was neither any school nor educational institutions the Morung was the place of common sitting and learning…The elders used to supply them not only happenings of the past but also some moral and ethical values for decent life. (Singh 2004: 14-15)

When Institutionalized Western Education was introduced to the Nagas, the British administrators and the American missionaries differed in their policy:

> "A tension existed between the American Baptist missionaries' efforts and the British administrators on the question of identity and culture. In the first few decades of the 20th century, various records indicate that the British government saw conversion to Christianity as a concern for the colonial enterprise…Nagas who went to the missionary schools were told they would not get a job unless they went to the schools set up by the British. However, only a primary school was available that was set up by the British administrators; whereas the missionary schools were geared toward higher education…The Nagas who tried to decide their own future were torn between missionary education and modernization, which discarded everything traditional but offered higher education, versus the British administrative view that banned the inter-village feud but left everything traditional and offered only primary education. However, in the 1920s, apparently unwilling or unableto actually expel the missionaries, colonial administrators changed their attitude toward them"(Imsong 120).

Thus, education spread among the natives as Christianity began to take root. It was considered a privilege and it held high prestige among the people. Nagas were no longer isolated and they were brought into the mainstream.

The Prologue of *Mari* introduces the narrator to the readers. She narrates how while cleaning the attic, she finds her diary; "…I spent all afternoon cleaning the attic and found my diary. I thought I had lost it. I found it tucked away between sheaves of old newspapers and magazines. I carefully pulled it out and rubbed off the dust with the end of my apron. Not one page was missing"(Kire 2). The story of Mari is told with the accuracy of dates because of her diary where not even a page was missing. The Nagas had an oral literature and the absence of written form was not felt. However, with the introduction of Western education by the American missionaries, the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening were introduced. Mari's diary is itself a reflection of the extend of Western influence on the native culture. She tells us of how her diary was tucked in between 'newspapers' and 'magazines'. Later on, she talks about how in one room, "We also stored stacks of magazines with pictures of the royal family and movie stars" (11). All these summed up to being a proof of the tentacles of the new form of communication. She describes; "Around me lie books on the war. I have bought every book on the Burma Campaign that I could find…We relive it again and again"(2).With the advent of the new ways of communication, the once secluded Nagas could not remain aloof from the world, consequently having a direct effect on the very culture of the natives. The protagonist relives the Burma Campaign time and again through the books that she buys, unlike the olden times when a story was retold over and again to remember it. Mari goes on to narrate that "…the world was green with the young green of new plants, the hills bathed with thin mist every evening and the nights velvet with the songs of Bing Crosby"(2). The Naga Hills remain the same green world but it hosts the song of Bing Crosby, an American singer and actor. Mari goes on to show how she begins writing on her diary; "It's a new year now. I am sitting by my bedroom window, my diary propped up on the little table, the blank pages dimly lit by my kerosene lamp…So much has happened. I hope I can remember to write all of it down"(3). By using the skill of writing, she is able to record minute details of her experience, being no longer solely dependent on oral telling and retelling of her story. Thus, by Mari's time, education in the Western style had taken precedence. The conversation in Mari between the protagonist's mother and her father's cousin Anyie highlights this fact: " ' She turned sixteen last month', Mother replied.

Anyie looked at me again and said, 'Hmm, at her age, I was already married and a mother of one'.

'Times have changed, Akieu', said mother mildly. 'The children want to be educated before they think of marriage'. (6) Later on, after she meets Victor, he writes a letter to her; "I read his letter at night when everyone was asleep. It was just a few lines long but I read them over and over. He had asked if we could meet and sent me all his love"(29).

The narrator of *Mari* describes how "At night, drunks staggered up the path on their way home. Some would slouch home quietly while others would shout in English"(12). These, although with a tinge of comic, show the influence of Western education.

As was the goal of the American missionaries, the Nagas were introduced to higher education. Thus, "The hospital was in the middle of the town, an old building with few rooms. There were doctors there but no qualified nurses…The hospital staff was gradually supplemented by Naga doctors who had finished their medical studies. Dr. Neilhouzhu, the first Naga doctor, was already working in the hospital before the war" (14).

The work of the American missionaries in spreading education among the tribal is reflected in *Mari* when the narrator informs that as World War II reaches Kohima, the Mission school which was run by an American missionary is forced to close down; "The next day when we went to school, Reverend Supplee and our teachers said they had received orders to teach us safety measures to follow in the eventuality of a war…One afternoon, Rev Supplee called all the students together…the school has been ordered to close down, because it is no longer safe for students and teachers…After the mission school was closed down in 1943, the missionaries, Rev Supplee and his wife and children left for America"(16-19). The Western Education that was introduced to the natives was welcomed and embraced by them. They found much usefulness in it and gave importance to it. Thus, once the war was over,

" …a few young men got together to reopen the school in the town. Neiliehu Belho and Vibeilie Belho had graduated from high school before the war. They felt sorry for the younger ones who were missing out on an education so they got the old school building repaired and began running classes from there, teaching the students themselves. Men came from Kohima village to help repair the damaged school building. Many parents were grateful for the work they had done and they sent their children to school; even Zhabu and Aneiu attended" (111).

However, the government closes down the school to reopen the Mission School as was existent during the pre-war years. " In the absence of the missionaries, Lhuviniu Lungalang, one of the first Naga graduates, was appointed to look after the school with the help of other local teachers. The new teachers, Rosalind Putsure and Lucy, taught alongside older teachers…"(112). The narrator tells us that within a few months' time, Rev Supplee returned to Kohima and " As soon as he returned, he shifted the Mission School into the abandoned hospital premises" (112). The narrator goes on to add that

We were very glad when it reopened because my sisters could continue with their education properly. The Mission School became a high school and was upgraded to include classes seven to ten. This was a big relief to many parents…The school building had been badly damaged in the war. Many rooms were destroyed and took a long time to repair. While the repair work was going on, our uncle *Ruzhukhrie,* who was also the maths teacher, often took his students to his house and taught them there rather than waste a day of teaching. (112)

Education allowed the tribals to get into vocations and earn a comfortable and secure livelihood; "I was on my way to fulfill an old dream-to become a qualified nurse. Of the colleges I had applied to, the most attractive seemed to be the Christian Medical College in Ludhiana. It was one of the best hospitals in India at the time. The course was three years of general nursing and one year of midwifery." (132)

In *A Terrible Matriarchy*, Lieno, the protagonist, narrates how they would run into her Grandfather's 'study' : "If we ran into his study, he would speak to us in English and we giggled because it made no sense to us"(7). The fact that the Grandfather maintained a study and he spoke in English are the influence of colonialism and the new educational system that had taken over the land.

Six months into her stay in her Grandmother's house, she gets a visit from her parents regarding her education. They tell her Grandmother that Dielieno's age-group will be going to school and that she should go too. Although Grandmother did not think it to be a good idea to send her to school, she relents ultimately. This brings

By 1961, the literacy rate of Nagaland was 14%. After 57 years, it stands at a rate of 79.55%. The initiative to spread education is now taken up by the Government.

A New System of Government:

As the British Empire flourished over the Indian subcontinent, it spread its tentacles to the North East. With the inclusion of Assam in the British territory, they decided to establish their governance in the Naga Hills. Chandrika Singh writes,

> "After taking over Assam the British Indian Government had decided in principle to consolidate the British authority all over the plains of Assam and to befriend the hill peoples so long as they did not create troubles to the British interests…Though the Government's standing policy was not to interfere in the internal affairs of the Nagas, the existing situations compelled the Government to penetrate into the areas of the Nagas and subjucate them…they adopted the policy of sending military expeditions to subdue the Nagas"(Singh 2004: 26-27).

With the arrival of the colonial power into the Naga Hills, they set up their administrative headquarters. In *Mari*, the protagonist explains, "Our little town was the headquarters for the British administrative office in the Naga Hills…The new colonies that were developing included

the Public Works Department Colonies, which served as government quarters for the Indians who worked in the district commissioner's office….Further on was the district commissioner's office where Father worked"(3-4). Not only did the arrival of the British signal a revolution in the way the hills were administered but it also brought in non-natives to help in the administration. Mari's father also works in the district commissioner's office which shows that the natives were fast getting absorbed into the new culture. Mari goes on to give details of her father's work; "As an officer in the treasury, Father looked after all the confidential papers. He worked directly under Charles Pawsey, the district commissioner, who lived in the official district commissioner's residence below Garrison Hill, in a very pretty house with a tennis court in the front yard"(7). Eventually, when World War II caught up with the Naga Hills, Mari's father leaves for Shillong , taking important documents with him; "Since father was a treasurey officer in the district commissioner'soffice, he had to leave quickly for Shillong, carrying important documents and money"(45). As the war rages on, "…we learnt that many of the district commissioner's staff were in Dimapur, helping the army"(85).

Once the war gets over, Kohima tries to get back into normal living. It is not only the village elders but also the government under the colonial rule that helps in the rebuilding process; "It was as though nature was repairing the damage suffered by the earth in the previous year and the government, too, worked hard to restore normalcy to the town and village…The government hen appointed men to list the names of those whose houses had been destroyed. Then they began to supply us with tin and timber as compensation. The damage varied from house to house but every house was damaged in some way" (107). The narrator narrates that " Mr Pawsey and his men had been very busy the first few months, distributing building material to those whose houses had been destroyed by the shelling. Around the same time, a bulldozer worked continuously on the village road. With the road built right through the village, it looked better than ever" (116). Another instance of the government putting an effort to help reorganize the town is seen through the district commissioner's orders; "Mr Pawsey gave strict orders for the money to be collected and burned outside the municipal office. This was done and some of the younger boys picked out half-burned notes from the ashes" (110). No longer did the Nagas witness the village elders taking stock of the situation and giving instructions to the people. A

new government had come along with colonizing the Naga Hills that actively administered the people. Further ahead, the narrator explains how the government was taking care of the education of the people; "But in about two months, the government closed down this privately run school and appointed a teacher to reopen the Mission School in its place…The Mission School had always been a government-run school…Although the two men had done good job by reopening the school, it wasn't officially recognized by the government. So it was a relief to get the government school running again so that students could get a proper degree" (111-112). Mari goes on to narrate that "There were some new troops posted under the district commissioner to help build the war cemetery and assist in re-establishing the administration" (118).

The Nagas had their own customary laws to deal with defaulters of society. But when the British Government set up its headquarters in the Naga Hills, they brought along their own laws with which they dealt with the natives. Thus, the protagonist narrates in Mari; "'He looked like a really bad man', said Aneiu. I didn't tell her I thought he looked like a murderer. Criminal laws were very harsh under the British Government. Thieves were sent to Tezpur to serve long sentences. Murderers were hanged in Kohima itself. None of us had seen the gallows that were put up towards Aradura, far away from the town"(9).

When the River Sleeps harbors a protagonist who is a product of the native culture and yet is a part and parcel of the new system of governance. He sets out on a quest that is only for the believers of a supernatural world and yet is grounded enough to be a part of the Forest Department of the new government: "The Forest department asked if he would like to become the official protector of the rare tragopan that liked to nest in Vilie's part of the forest. He agreed to this as well and they paid him a small salary in addition to monthly rations of rice and salt, tea and sugar. Sometimes they would add a bottle of rum"(Kire 2014: 4).

A land of farmers and warriors suddenly led a salaried economic life working for the new Government as in Africa.

Once the British Government established their government in the hills, they introduced administrative centres; "Thus the established administrative centres developed into the full-fledged districts in due course of time. At the village level Gaoburahs were appointed by the Government who acted as the British agents while the sub divisional officers , Extra Assistant Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners were authorized to administer the areas at the District and Sub-divisional level"(Singh 2004: 35-36)

As Imsong writes, "In 1926, the Deputy Commissioner exempted the Christians from payment of the village tax, and in 1939, the Governor of Assam allowed the missionaries to enter Sangtam, a border area"(Imsong 2011: 122). "On the morning of the 14th October1879, Mr Damant, Political Agent and the first Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills, came to Khonoma…the Political Agent was chafed at Khonoma's stubbornness to yield to British administration. He viewed the many raids as symbolic defiance of the Government. The forcible collection of taxes he had undertaken had met with strong resistance…I would demand revenue from Khonoma and Jotsoma…" (Iralu 2003:70).

"Paradoxically, Cawley felt, too the justice of the attack for they had occupied Angami lands, cut down their forests, taxed them and forced them into labour which they hated" (Iralu 2003: 72).

"But as people were counting the days to the harvest, Golhu returned from Kohima. In great haste he called the men together. 'Chaha and his men are preparing to attack us…The next day, Zakiesielie Chase came to the village to call the men for coolie work. Zakiesielie was dobashi for the white man. His village men said, 'We are not going to be coolies anymore for the white man"(69). When the British came o Nagaland, they established the Dobashi system.

Nagaland went on to become a part of India and attained its statehood on the 1st of December, 1963, becoming the 16th state of the Indian union. Thus, it had its government headed by a Naga Chief Minister in the five-member cabinet.

The Movement:

The experience of World War I among the Nagas who went to France made them come to a realization that unity and friendship among the various Naga tribes were a necessity. They understood that holding unto their socio-political identity was indispensable. Therefore, they set up the Naga Club in 1918 under RS Ruichumhao. The priorities of the Club was to provide the "…socio-political foundation for the Naga nationalist movement" (https://en.m.wikipedia.org>wiki>Naga nationalism). This club was to protect the socio-political identity of the Naga people and to protect their rights, their land and the "…Naga Village sovereign system" (https://kharingyoshimrah01.wordpress.com>). It became a poignant point in the development of Naga National movement. Mar Imsong writes, "…the two World Wars gave opportunities for the Naga to transcend a narrowly defined ethnic Naga identity and form a pan-ethnic Naga identity. The pan-ethnic Naga identity formation led to an emerging or evolving Naga nationalism with its concept of a modern nation-state" (Imsong 2009: 114).

As the British Government prepared to leave India, political leaders of Nagaland began to put forward a "…separate, sovereign and independent status of the Naga Hills. This was, however, acceptable neither to the British Government nor the Indian leaders. Thus the Naga politics caught in whirlpool of two cross currents. One was the separatist tendency of the Naa political leaders who wanted independent Nagaland and another was the desire of the Indian political leaders to keep the Naga Hills an integral part of Indian political system and assimilate the Naga people in the mainstream of the Indian nationalism. The President of the NNC, Mr A.Z. Phizo, took the lead of Naga National Movement and organized the people to participate in freedom struggle…the Government of India applied the policy of persuasion to accept the constitutional provisions for the district of Naga Hills on the one hand, and exercised the armed force to suppress the Naga freedom movement on the other. Such conflicting situation led the Naga Hills towards armed conflicts causing loss of lives, properties and enormous troubles for the Naga people" (Singh 2004: 43-44).

The tense situation of the armed conflict is portrayed in *A Terrible Matriarchy* in a vivid manner:

"'Did you say there were fifteen men who were captured by the army?' Father asked…one of them escaped. His bonds were loose and he jumped from the army truck a kilometer from the camp. He sprained an ankle but he crawled away. Sometimes he got up on one leg and just hopped. He couldn't go home of course so he hid in a clansman's house for the night. I know his cousin well so he told me about him. But it's dangerous to let the story leak…It was the new recruits in the Naga Army that had been captured. The boys in our class talked about it a great deal, saying they would join up when they were old enough. They said there were no age limits as there were boys as young as seventeen in the Naga army. I had heard horror stories of what the Indian army did to those who were captured…When Bulie and I were younger, Father's friend, Vechoi would come and stay with us. He was a man of the Chokri tribe from Phek town…We are not fighting an unjust war. We were independent before India became a nation. We are fighting for our freedom…Bulie and I made a pact to join the Naga army when we were grown and vowed to avenge Vechoi's father" (Kire 2007: 161-162).

As the family converse on the tense situation, they are worried about Vini. He had dropped out of school and was fond of drinking. He also kept the company of boys who were violent and black sheep of society: "Better warn Vini not to stay out late', Leto was saying, 'the police and the army are picking up young men at night…Kughato's brother was picked up a week ago and they kept beating him and forcing him to say that he was a soldier in the Naga army…and she heard us talking about the men who were captured by the army so she was very anxious about you. It wouldn't help if you were to be picked up by the army" (162). Also see 226.

The New Economy:

" Agust writes that "The anthropological definition, for instance, is that everything done by human beings falls under the classification of culture" (13 Agust Einarsson). The author continues that "Culture is not only one of the most important elements of any society because of its intrinsic, aesthetic, unifying or other intangible values but it also generates a great deal of economic activity"(10). The Nagas traded among themselves and with the people from the plains through barter system. J.P. Mills records,

> "Though trade is usually carried on either by barter or with coin of the realm, two forms of old currency are still to be found, one in use and one obsolete. The form which is still in use consists of round brass discs (laya C and M) about twelve inches in diameter, with a slightly convex surface…Indeed Dr Clark in his *Ao Dictionary* gives as an alternative to the common name *chabili* (C and M) the word *nokzang*, which means "a single dao"…a bundle of one hundred *chabili* is still termed *noklang*... though no longer used in trade, ceremonial distributions of chabili are still made at certain feasts…They no longer have any value as currency."(Mills 102-10)

The Naga Hills natives traded but they were agriculturists and trade was secondary. As J.P.Mills writes, "At first sight the profits made by Ao traders strike one as enormous. But there are certain factors to be taken into consideration. Most Aos do a little trading, but no one depends on it for his livelihood"(Mills 106). Eventually, however, the Nagas saw non-locals opening up shops as a means of their livelihood instead of agriculture in their native land. In *Mari*, as the war draws near, Kohima, wearing a desolate look, finds all her inhabitants scattered and bereft of all the normal activities; "With the shops closed, there was no movement on the streets. No one loitered around any more and the vegetable market looked run-down, bereft as it was of shopkeepers and buyers. At first, some of the traders sold goods from their homes" (46 Kire). Once the war was over,

> "…the shops reopened. The Bengali shops found a long line of customers when they opened their doors. The Marwaris, however, were not allowed to return to trade in

Kohima. Mr Pawsey had cancelled their permit. The reason he cited was that they had abandoned Kohima during the war, unlike the Bengali traders who had stayed on. Mr Pawsey gave the Marwari shops to some of the Angamis instead, who wanted to become traders themselves. They took on the business and began to sell the commodities…Neilasa was one of the first Angami shop-owners, selling carpentry tools and paint. His success encouraged others to take up the new profession of trade and commerce. For the first time, a shop selling yarn was opened on the Mission Road. The new shops focused on the goods that were most in demand, such as food items, carpentry tools, shoes and clothes. A bazaar for meat and vegetables was set up in town and it ran a thriving business from the beginning" (110).

When Mari and her family take refuge in Chieswema due to the raging war in Kohima, they take some of their belongings and rations along with them including money; "We left everything behind in the trench except for the cash we were carrying-about eight thousand rupees…"(66).

When Mari has her second child, she feels the need to support her family. Due to the new changes taking place in Nagaland, it was not only agriculture that sustained the livelihood of the people as Mari narrates; "My girls were growing rapidly. When they were ready to go to the Mission School, I spoke to Sam about getting some skills so I could get a job and support them…I needed to get the training so I could get a good job and support my family"(132).

Introduction of New System of Transport:

Culture of transportation forms an important component of any given culture. It influences the pattern of human behaviour, consequently leading to a cohesiveness among a group of people. A reading of Easterine's works throws light on the development of transportation as affecting the very culture of the natives.

Mari brings to the forefront the extend of the Western influence on the Naga culture along with the developments as colonialism made its mark in the Naga Hills. Among other developments, roads became important owing to World War II. As Easterine remarks, "It is hard to imagine present-day Kohima as the site of the most decisive battlefield of the Burma Campaign. Never as famous as the storming of Normandy or the siege of Tobruk, the Battle of Kohima came to be called 'the forgotten battle' and its veterans the 'forgotten heroes'. This was the first British victory over the Japanese…War historians who became aware of its significance have called the battle the 'Stalingrad of the East'"(Kire x). In *Mari*, the protagonist gives an account of the preparation for the impending war; "In the middle of 1942, the British army began to enter our lands in large numbers…In the dry months, the convoys left the highway dust-choked as it had no asphalt work on it yet, and in summer the roads were quite muddy from the rain"(15 Kire). Easterine remarks, "Development had come rapidly with the building of the roads. A great number of new roads were built during the war"(ix). In Mari, the narrator gives a picture of this as she talks about the preparations of the impending war;

> "There was the noise and bustle of great activity in those days. We grew used to the movement of troops by night and the building of new roads by the Kohima garrison Engineers. Roads were being built along the Jessami track, on the Bokajan road towards Meriema, and the Indo-Burma road and the Imphal-Kohima-Dimapur highway were widened. The constant whirring of engines was a sound we would always associate with these days of suspense…I suppose there was a great deal of road building to be completed, for the Corps Royal Engineers were now issuing invitations to civilian contractors to build the new roads under their supervision…there were a large number of young men and women from Kohima village who took up construction work…the British Army Engineers were employing local Naga contractors to build new roads on the existing mud paths so that jeeps could ply on them. Some new roads were also being cut through the jungles…" (20).

Mari goes on to inform the readers that she also became involved in the road-building activity; "One afternoon, a young woman named Kasano and her brother came from the village to see me…They asked me to join them in a road contract…I never really expected him to agree but he did, and so I joined the group of contractors…The road construction work began below the village of Keruma…The new road would emerge very close to Dimapur town…They were good workers , and the road soon took shape"(20-21). Later on in the narration, she tells us that "The new roads to the north of Kohima were not tarmacked. When the dust settled, one could see long brown tracks snaking their way down towards Dimapur. Some more roads were still being built in the new year"(41).She also gives an account of the vehicles that ply up and down the road; "The road was dusty and always alive with the Royal Engineering officers driving up and down all day in their jeeps and bulldozers"(21). Later on, "Sieso was sent as guide with a number of army jeeps and trucks to escort the few people still hiding in Kohima town" (91). Mari constructs a picture of the development of transportation system in Nagaland as she leaves for Kohima after Sieso finds her mother and grandparents: "We left for Kohima in the afternoon. By this time, vehicles were plying up and down the Kohima-Dimapur road. Armed soldiers were still patrolling the roads. We drove up to Kohima very slowly" (92).

Along with the roads came the vehicles. As Eaterine recalls, "In the early forties, there were just two cars in town" (ix). In the novel *Mari,* while the young protagonist gives an account of her romance with Victor, she mentions her outings with him in his jeep; "I begged Kasano to come with us and the three of us climbed into Vic's jeep"(26). Later on, when she goes to gather firewood, she keeps an eye for Victor's jeep; "Once we were on the highway…I looked up whenever an army jeep passed" (28).She continues to narrate about her outings with Victor and her friends; "Vic took us on long drives to the new roads, so that he could see how the road work was coming along. We drove past little Angami villages on our way" (31). As the war rages, Victor drives Mari and four others to the village of Chieswema; "Vic parked his jeep on the newly-built Bokajan road just off the highway and we walked up the path with our baggage…He hurriedly got into the jeep and drove off, waving at us. I stood and watched the jeep till it disappearedinto the distance and all I could see was the trail of dust it left behind" (54-55). Later on, she chronicles that they "…waited until late but there was no sign of him or his jeep. From

where we stood, we could see the vehicles moving along the Kohima-Dimapur road" (56). The natives were no longer stranger to modern transportation as the colonial power enveloped the Hills. In *A Terrible Matriarchy*, when Lieno describes how her Grandfather dies, she mentions how they try to save him by taking him to the hospital by a car: "But one day he got sick all of a sudden, and before they could get him to the hospital, he died. So they turned the car around and brought him home to lay him in a long coffin…"(7).

Eventually, aeroplanes were introduced to the natives through the British Administration. As the narrator informs in *Mari*,

> But certain changes became quite visible at the beginning of 1942. For one, aeroplanes flew over our skies for the first time. This was such an amazing phenomenon for us that people talked about it for days. The men said that the aircraft that flew over our town were Dakotas on their way to and from Imphal, where the British army had their airfield.

> The Dakotas were large, grey planes that flew low over Kohima. They created great excitement among the villagers and people would shout to each other whenever they heard the drone of an aeroplane. Many villagers feared them because they were so strange and new, but we in the town slowly got over our fear…As it came overhead, they would wave their arms about and shout, 'Hey pilot, hey!' Sometimes the pilots waved back at them. (Kire 14-15).

The narrator goes on to narrate; "In the weeks that followed, more and more aeroplanes began to fly over our hills. Some of these, we were told, were reconnaissance aircraft…"(19).

With the arrival of the colonial power, trains were also introduced to the Nagas. In *Mari,* when the protagonist goes to visit her father, she boards a train in Dimapur: "I remember so clearly it was on the afternoon of the second of May when we reached Dimapur. We boarded the train to Gauhati almost as soon as we arrived"(Kire 2010: 89).

Modernity: gramophone p.37 Mari. Radio p. Mari. Hospital p.43 Mari after the war, villagers getting corrugated iron roofing p.107 Mari. Mari's house made of modern materials, unlike the traditional materials P.116

> The changes that were brought to the Nagas by the British Administration and the missionaries, even though from different perspectives, were perceived by most of the Nagas to be two sides of the same coin.The educated Nagas started defining their identity in terms of their ability to speak English, knowledge derived from a Western education, and their conversion to Christianity. To become Christian was not just a religious conviction and decision; it was also trendy and fashionable. (Imsong 2011: 122).

Conclusion

The age-old Naga social traditions that were untouched by the cultures that surrounded them for ages suddenly found itself being revolutionized in a radical manner. The people could never go back to the way they had lived in all aspects of life. With the arrival of the British administration and the American Missionaries, Naga culture could not remain unchanged and a clear picture of this is shown in *Mari* when World War II breaks into the Naga Hills. The protagonist and her family had to take shelter in Chieswema as Kohima was not safe for civilians. While there, the town dwellers and the villagers mingle as one. During this time, a culture in transition is explicitly brought out;

> "My brother and his in-laws were being given Naga haircuts when we went across to their house.

> The barber had cropped Sam's hair with a dao. He chopped the men's hair straight across the back and sides, so they would look like the other men of the village. Sam and the young men who had been to school wore their hair in the western fashion, making them an easy target for the Japanese, who could pick them out and force them to work as spies...My uncle was still at Sam's house, watching them get their haircuts and assisting the barber…As my sisters and I ran out to the square to get more news, we met Sam with his new haircut. He was dressed in an old, torn shirt. Instead of trousers, he wore the black kilt that the other men in the village wore"(58).

While the men were getting their hair cut, the women themselves were also making their own preparation; " The rest of us had changed out of our dresses and we wore faded woven Angami waist-cloths given to us by our relatives in the village"(59).

Agust Einarsson states that "Because of its state of constant flux, culture is a dynamic process, changing continually in the course of time" (14 August 2019). True enough, the villagers who kept their old ways of life more intact than the town-dwellers initially, felt the influence of the new government, education and the new faith with the passage of time which brought in cultural changes. The changes were so great that consequently, the Naga culture was hybridized.

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Chapter Five

ASPECTS OF COMPARATIVE DIAGNOSIS: THE AFRICAN AND NAGA ETHOS

When the Kenyans and the Nagas came in contact with the West, there was an intermixing of cultures from both sides. The colonized tribals were introduced to both the governance system as well as the new Faith, Christianity and the new Education system. Although both had their own native ways of governance, the colonizers subjugated them with their superior weaponry and their strength in number. Consequently, the alien victors established their system of governance.

The natives had their own native religion until Christianity was preached to them. The new Faith swept the people away from the old one. Along with Christianity was introduced the system of writing and reading. This was non-existent as both had oral tradition which had sufficed the tribes till then. However, with the advent of the new administration system in their lands, it became imperative for them to learn the colonizer's way of functioning of the system. Also it became important for the natives to read the Bible. All these prompted them to learn how to read and write. This ushered in new facets to the already existent culture.

With the arrival of a new system of Governance, Education and the new Faith, the natives, who led a self-sufficient and guarded life with a vibrant and rich culture, felt themselves influenced greatly by the novelty as the Western culture entered their lands through the colonizers and the missionaries. As Mar Imsong writes, "The Naga traditional worldview of village/place/land ethnic identity faced the unfamiliar terrain of a foreign culture and perspective. It is true that the Naga people could no longer live in a virtual island isolated from the various other cultures: they encountered plains people in Assam seeking trade, the British in their colonial expansion, and the American Baptist missionaries in their attempt to spread the Christian gospel"(Imsong 2009: 87). He goes on to add that "The Nagas remained socially, culturally, and politically isolated until they were forcibly brought under British colonial rule" (89).

With the carving out of 'East Africa Protectorate' by the British in 1895, the white settlers were given the fertile highland that was occupied by the Kikuyus. A railway line was built from the port of Mombassa to Lake Victoria in 1901 and the fertile eastern province of Uganda was transferred to the East African Protectorate. These two factors helped in the settlement of the Europeans and the Indians. Troops were brought to the settlements through the railways to quash the resistance that was surfacing in the interiors. The natives did not have a choice but to surrender to the colonial force. Eventually, the Kenya Protectorate was established on the 13th of August, 1920.

The historical forces that revolutionized the cultural practices of the Nagas and the Kenyans are vividly captured in the works of Easterine Kire and Ngugi wa Thiong'o. In Thiong'o's *The River Between*, we see a marked difference between what the missionary wanted and what the people wanted. "Livingstone was a man of moderation and advocated gradual methods of eradicating the customs…But when he saw that this policy of letting things happen gradually had not had the hoped-for results, he began to preach against the custom vigorously"(Thiong'o 1985: 56). Such kind of history is responsible for the change in customary practices among the people. Eventually, cultural hybridity resulted where the old and the new intermingled. Among other facets of the emerging culture in the Naga and the Kikuyu society, some aspects are listed below:

The Movement:

As the movement for liberation from outside control gripped Kenya and Nagaland, both went through trying trials. Although Kenya got its Independence and Nagaland is yet to come to a political solution, the experiences that the natives of both these places got were similar in many respects. They fought for their land and in the process, they had to employ guerilla tactics and

fight from the forest. They lost many precious lives and the villagers along with the town dwellers were tortured in the process. Besides men, women took active part in the struggle for freedom. They used the very weapons that were introduced by the colonizers to fight for liberation.

Mention is made in both the works of Easterine and Ngugi about the Movement that had changed the lives of the natives. In *Bitter Wormwood*, Mose, the protagonist, goes to join the underground: "It was around this time that Mose was sent news that his mother was very sick. The officers granted him his discharge…In Kohima village, they told their clansmen that they had retired from the Underground…"(Kire 2011: 104). In *The Trial of Dedan Kimathy*, the protagonist is under trial by the colonial government as he had joined the Mau Mau Movement: "In the process of screening out the Mau Mau fighters, the soldiers harassed the civilians"(Thiong'o 12)

The New Faith:

The spread of Christianity all over the world has brought in changes in even the most protected of cultures. The Kikuyus and the Nagas are an instance of this phenomenon. They had their own religion which was overshadowed by the new Faith. This brought in revolutionary changes in both the societies and drove them towards similar paths. Joshua in *The River Between* is an example of a Kikuyu who has embraced the Christian Faith to the extent of forsaking one's own culture altogether. Kabonyi, on the other hand, keeps himself rooted to the old ways although he has also embraced the new Faith. *A Naga Village Remembered* paints a picture of the struggle that the early converts went through as they faced the followers of the old religion. In chapter thirteen, the narrator highlights the dense situation in the village due to the presence of the new converts: "There was great hostility in the village community against the small band…they shifted house beyond the perimeter of the village. The Christians went to live across the river which was really a stream…they were outcasted from the village"(Iralu 2003: 103).

The importance of land:

The Kikuyu tribe and the Naga tribes were agriculturists, inhabiting mountainous areas and rearing livestock. Being agriculturists, they were strongly and deeply connected to the earth that they tilled for their livelihood. It was not just a physical but spiritual connection. Their festivals and their dances circulated around their connection to their land. We see Ngotho of *Weep Not, Child* having a deep connection to the land that he was taking care of. Although Howlands owned the land, he believed in the prophecy that one day, their land will be restored to them. This gives him the will to go on and take care of the land. The spiritual connection that Ngotho exhibits makes the land more fruitful, which is recognised by Howlands himself. In *The Son of the Thundercloud*, the protagonist meets the sisters who have been waiting for the prophecy that rain will eventually come.

Education:

The Kikuyus and the Nagas had an oral tradition where reading and writing was not required. However, with the advent of the foreigners into their land, they not only embraced the new Faith but also reading and writing. *Weep Not, Child* reflects on the importance that was attached to reading and writing: "Waiyaki was superstitious. He believed the things that the people of the ridges believed. Siriani Mission had done nothing effective to change this. His father had warned him against being contaminated by the ways of the white man. Yet he sometimes wondered. Was the education he was trying to spread in the ridges not a contamination?"(Thiong'o 1985: 72). In *Mari,* as the World War II draws near, the narrator informs us that the mission school run by the American missionary had to be closed down: "After the mission school was closed down in 1943, the missionaries, Rev Supplee and his wife and children left for America"(Kire 2010: 16-19).

The Old Customary Practices:

Three things that unite both the Kikuyu and the Naga people are Family, Clan and Age-group to this day. Such factors made the two societies close-knitted. The encyclopedia on Kikuyu states:

The concept of *mariika* (age sets; sing. *riika*) is of central importance within Kikuyu society. Mariika provide a way of keeping track of groups of people (both male and female) who were circumcised in different years. The circumcision group (generation) is given a name that identifies it with a particular event or characteristic of the group. Members of a particular riika, circumcised at the same time, were given a rank in the age groupings. The rank defined the behavior of individual members within a riika and their behavior toward members of other age groups, both younger and older…A strong bond of friendship forms between members of the same riika during Irua (circumcision ceremonies) and continues as a form of mutual social aid throughout their lives.

Although strong tradition and ties are still adhered to by the people, modernity has altered these customs: Younger Kikuyu, however, are usually circumcised in hospitals today, and have a much weaker concept of mariika than earlier generations. In place of Irua, modern young Kikuyu find peer bonds in the school setting. Furthermore, the strict social segregation between the sexes seems to be breaking down as young people of both sexes come into contact with one another in primary classrooms, on the playground, and through church activities.Rika, the generational group in Gikuyu society united the people in oneness and yet setting up a place for every individual in their own society as there was no one who did not belong to a *rika*.

Easterine Kire writes regarding the Angami-Nagas, "The age-group is an important institution…and its members confer on important issues to the exclusion of other age groups…In

the Tenyimia age-groups, all members complete the field work of individual members by community work in turns"(Iralu 2003: 31).

In *A Grain of Wheat*, the widowed Waitherero, a distant aunt of Mugo, "would pester men from her husband's rika till they gave her a drink" (Thiong'o 7). In *A Naga Village Remembered*, the festival that ushered the natives rest from field work is captured vividly in all its vibrancy. The festival highlights the importance of age-group and how it organizes the community life: "There was a lot of merrymaking in the night. Groups of young men and women sat in age-groups singing in unison…On the fourth day, Lato's age-group prepared to go to the woods and fetch firewood"(Iralu 2003: 45).

The Nagas and the Kikuyus went through initiation which was an age-old practice. When a Kikuyu boy was circumcised, he entered manhood as he was initiated. It was referred to as the second birth. *The River Between* highlights the issue in an explicit way. Thus, a boy tells Waiyaki that he cannot be Demi na Mathathi as he was yet to be initiated: "'You cannot be Demi… 'You are not ready for circumcision. You are not born again'" (10). Eventually, he gets circumcised : "Was he not going to learn the ways of the land? Was he not going to drink the magic ritual of being born again?…Only after today he would be ready for the biggest of all rituals, circumcision. This would mark his final initiation into manhood. Then he would prove his courage…" (11). Waiyaki's circumcision is vividly captured by the narrator:

"The ceremony did not take long…The child began to cry. And the women who had come to wait for the birth of a child…For a time, Waiyaki forgot himself and thought he was Demi, bravely clearing the forest, a whole tribe behind him…somewhere a glow of pride was beginning. He was ready for initiation" (12).

When Levi's son Sato is sent to Dr. Sidney Rivenburg's school in *A Naga Village Remembered* to learn the ways of the white man, he gets influenced by the new religion. Therefore, hesitation sets into the young man's heart and he knew that if he went through it, "… he knew Chaha would disapprove. What could he do?...Sato found himself repulsing the idea of being initiated into the religion of his father and grandfather" (Iralu 2003: 96-97). However, he is unable to refuse his father; "His heart had not been in the initiation and the tension had been unbearable" (99). He finds peace in his heart once he balances the old and the new Faith ; "At the village spring, the young men bathed the bath of sanctification…he joined in the prayer that the young men chanted at this ritual bath" (100). In both cases, the young men went through initiation although it was not accepted by the missionaries.

In *The River Between,* the two sisters,Nyambura and Muthoni, get locked up in a heavy discussion regarding their custom which affects their Faith. Then her sister's water barrel rolls down: "…Nyambura heard a slight groan from her sister. She quickly turned round; a look of dismay was on Muthoni's face; "… her water-barrel was rolling down the slope …Nyambura and Muthoni had to go down again. 'A bad omen', Nyambura thought"(27). As Nyambura fears, her sister dies while going through the circumcision. Also, in *Weep Not Child,* rain fell down as the people of Kenya waited for the judgement regarding the trial of Jomo Kenyatta: "… rain fell at Kipanga and the country around on the eve of the judgment day…The rain was a good omen" (Thiong'o 1985: 72).

Easterine Kire writes on the belief in omens by Nagas, "Tenyimia take the involuntary twitching of an eye as a sign that is ominous and indicates a death… the Tenyimia mind is a highly superstitious mind reading meaning into almost all aspects of nature and especially into what is regarded by them as a departure from the normal and the natural" (Iralu 95). In *Mari,* the narrator explicitly portrays her belief in omens when a bee comes buzzing around her: "… a lone bee suddenly came buzzing and humming and headed directly for me… We tried to chase it away but it kept returning to me…Our people always noticed unusual signs in the natural world…(78). Mari fears that she will hear some news as the way the bee hovered around her was not natural.

Eventually, she hears of Vicky's death; "Vic killed on the eighteenth of April-that was the same day that the bee had hovered around me for hours." (86)

In both the Naga and the Gikuyu culture, belief in omens went deep into their belief-system.

Traditionally, the Gikuyu practiced polygamy. The change of Faith among the tribals made the practice unpopular. However, people still practiced it. Therefore, Margery asks Karanja, "'How many wives have you?' she asked…her latest cook had three wives" (38). *The River Between* shows the practice of the Gikuyus when Waiyaki is accused by Kabonyi that the former had touched the dead body of Muthoni, Joshua's daughter. This act made him unclean. In the Naga society, although modernity had seeped in with all its magnetic pulls, the Nagas still learned how to weave traditional body clothes. Such traditional clothes were worn as everyday wear and on important occasions. Mari mentions the body clothes that people wore during Christmas service: "Everyone had dressed well, the young men in…new body-clothes, the girls in new waist-clothes"(37). The Nagas also believed in genna days even after Christianity came to the forefront. Taboos were strictly adhered to even after modernity came rushing into the Naga society. Thus, in A Terrible Matriarchy, Aunt Bino is careful not to throw away food: "Of course, she did not throw it away, as that would have been taboo, but she fed it to the pigs."(2)

Orality:

Before the advent of the White missionaries, the Gikuyus and the Nagas had a strong oral tradition for ages. They did not feel the need for a written form of education. Information that was passed on from one generation to another was orally transmitted and the need for a written record was not felt. What was orally told stood as good as a written record. However, once the natives learned how to read and write, they started incorporating oral elements into their narrative. Thus, Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Easterine Kire employ the oral handing down of information in their novels.

The River Between by Ngugi wa Thiong'o is replete with oral narratives. Chege tells Waiyaki, his son, about the history of how the tribe came to be, telling him that Murungu made Gikuyu and Mumbi and showed them the "vastness of the land" (18) and gave it to them. He adds, "…From here, Murungu took them and put them under Mukuruwe wa Gathanga in Muranga. There our father and mother had nine daughters who bore more children. The children spread all over …'" (Thiong'o 1985: 18). Chege tells his son another oral narrative, this time, that of an ancient prophecy "…the ancient prophecy: 'Salvation shall come from the hills… his duty shall be to lead and save the people!'"(20)

In *A Naga Village Remembered*, the *thehou* formed a very influential institution in Khonoma, the little brave village. Here, the younger men "came to learn the stories of the village. It was good to be called a thehou no, a child of the thehou-it meant that such a person was well-versed in the stories and customs of the village" (Iralu 2003, 6). Vilie in *When the River Sleeps* goes on a quest after hearing an oral story: "…Vilie was fascinated by the tale of the sleeping river. It was more than a story to him…He had told and retold the story to different bands of hunters who had come to him in the forest where he lived. Some of them shook their heads in disbelief.Others-like the young boy Rokolhoulie-listened in astonishment, absorbing every detail of Vilie's tale" (2).

Gender Roles:

In both the Kikuyu and the Naga social set-up, men and women have had divided roles which are still observed even after the cultural evolution, attributing to the encounter with the West. In the former social set-up, the father functions as the head of the family. The men govern which is parallel to the Naga system of government. Eligibility to governance is considered only if one is a male.

The two cultures have an agricultural economy around which their lives revolve. Thus, every family contributes toward it, where division of labour is done gender-wise. Jomo Kenyatta writes that "Each family, i.e. a man, his wife or wives and their children, constitute an economic unit. This is controlled and strengthened by the system of division of labour according to sex" (Kenyatta 1965: 53). He further states: "The entire housework naturally falls within the sphere of women's activities. They cook, bring water from the rivers, wash utensils and fetch firewood from the forests or bush. They also perform the task of carrying the loads on their backs" (54). In the Naga society, both the genders work hard in the field. However, in case of wars or raids, it was the warrior-men who participated in it while the women stayed behind, tending to their fields as well as household chores.

In *Weep Not Child,* Ngotho is the head of the family and he makes sure that this position is not debunked by anyone else. Thus, "A lead in that direction could only come from him, the head of the family. Not from a son...That gave him no right to reverse the custom and tradition…"(74). . Easterine's *Mari* protagonist narrates that "In the Naga culture, the woman's role was to look after the house and children, and nothing beyond that" (Kire 6). This teaching of divided gender roles had been engrained in both the societies and the stepping in of multiculture into the cultural fabric of these social set-ups have not altered it.). Vibano in *A Terrible Matriarchy* raises her granddaughter because she "… must start working at home"(Kire 2013: 4)

The Importance of Land:

In *God-Land-People: An Ethnic Naga Identity,* Mar Imsong unfolds the deep connection that the Nagas have with their land. He states, "Land was sacred; it could not be bought or sold… It is essential to recognize that the basis of ethnos for the Nagas is the land…Nagas' pride of being a Naga, their love for their motherland, land-centered spirituality, relational definition of identity, and desire for freedom among other forces, nurtured the seeds of ethnic Naga identity, with political implications"(Imsong 2009: 111) The very survival of the people, their religion,

festivals and their dances were intertwined with the land that they occupied. As it is with the Nagas, the Kikuyus were agriculturists. Kenyatta writes: "The land being the foundation rock on which the Gikuyu tribal economy stands, and the only effective mode of production that the people have…"(Kenyatta 55). Land was tied to the people for not just economical reasons. It touched upon their spiritual aspect. The dances and the festivals were all inter-connected with the land that they occupied.

The connection that the Kikuyus and the Nagas had with their land is woven into the writings of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Easterine Kire. In *Mari,* the protagonist throws light on the driving force of the economic activity in her narration: " In the summer months we saw new grain in the fields once again and the familiar landscape of young paddy and newly green trees returned to Nagaland"(Kire 118). In *A Naga Village Remembered*, the village as a whole celebrates a festival: "…the Ngonyi festival…a day on which it is taboo for us to work…they had successfully held the genna to prevent the paddy dying, and another genna to prevent sterility of the soil as well as the genna to ensure the fertility of the soil"(Iralu 2003 46). When Levi comes back from jail, he realized the depth of the bonding that he shared with the ancestral land: "He felt bonded to the village, to the land, and feelings surged up in him that he'd never known before"(40).

The novel *A Grain of Wheat* by Ngugi wa Thiong'o brings in historical figures like Harry Thuku who led protests against the British. He was, however, put in chains and the people protested against this action of the colonial government: "People went to Nairobi ; they took an oath to spend their days and nights outside the State House till the Governor himself gave them back their Harry… the police who waited for them with guns fixed…opened fire. Three men raised their arms in the air .It is said that as they fell down they clutched soil in their fists" (12-13). In *The Trial of Dedan Kimathy*, it is made clear that the native people stood against the whitesettlers for taking the land that belonged to the Kikuyu. It pushes the people underground to stand up against the alien rule. As the woman and the boy in the play converses, she states,

"…one day, the soil will be restored to the people. Our land shall one day be truly ours" (Thiong'o and Mugo 1976: 21).

Belief in Spirits:

The Kikuyus and the Nagas believed in the supernatural and it was a part of their everyday reality. Jomo Kenyatta writes, "THE Gikuyu people, it is certain, maintain a close and vital relationship with spiritual entities. Their daily lives, both as individuals and groups, are influenced at all points by belief in the supernatural… the spirits of our ancestors. With them we constantly commune… When both the beer and the animal are offered, an additional term has to be used: *gothenjera na goitangera ngoma njohi-literally* ...to slaughter and to pour out beer for the spirits"(231-233). Easterine writes that "The spirits are feared but not worshipped, however they are propitiated by various sacrifices"(Iralu 2000: 78). She further writes, "It can be seen from here that the parallel existence of the spirit world and the world of the living is very firmly accepted in Ibo and Tenyimia religions" (83).

In *A Grain of Wheat,* Wambui voices the Kikuyu belief in the ancestral spirits: "'It is like our elders who always poured a little beer on the ground before they themselves drank,' Wambui now said…It's because they always remembered the spirits of those below…" (20). Through Ngotho in *Weep Not, Child*, belief in ancestral spirits among the natives is highlighted: "For he had now lost every contact with his ancestral land. The communion with the spirits who had gone before him had given him vitality" (Thiong'o 1985: 73-74).

A Naga Village Remembered incorporates the belief in spirits among the Nagas through the oral lesson that was taught to Levi, "If you honour the spirits, they will bless you, if you defy them, you will learn how mortal man is" (Iralu 2003: 41). Easterine's *Mari* harbors on the belief in spirits when the narrator talks about her old home "…when I was alone in the house, I sometimes heard the creaking of footsteps on the floors above, a heavy tread that left me

breathless with fear. Once, when a cousin came to visit, he slept in one of the rooms and the next morning he claimed to have seen the ghost of an old woman" (Kire 11).

Position of Elders:

The Naga and the Kikuyu cultures give an important position to the elders of their society. Easterine writes, "The clan is all powerful and its power is vested in the elders, the custodians of the laws of the land" (Iralu 2000: 17). Regarding the government set-up, Kenyatta writes:

> The senior elder acted as the president of the council and this group represented the villagers in the government. Another wider group was formed, and named, district council *(kianza kia rogongo),* in which all the elders of the district participated; this council was presided over by a committee *(kiama kia ndundu),* composed of the senior elders of the villages. Amongst these elders the one most advanced in age and wisdom was elected as a judge and president. *(*Kenyatta 194)

In *A Grain of Wheat*, Gikonyo along with some others come to Mugo's hut to request him to lead in the sacrifice and ceremonies to honour the martyrs of the freedom struggle, and states that the elders will guide him regarding the ritual, "The elders will guide you in the details of the ritual" (24), Waiyaki's school Marioshoni in *The River Between* suffered from poor infrastructure. In order to help find a solution, he looks to the elders; "He would speak with the elders and see what could be done about the roof" (Thiong'o 1985: 66).

Mari explicitly and vividly gives a detailed account of the World War II that was fought in Nagaland. At such a difficult time, the elders of their society are seen making important decisions: "…the council of elders in the village was conferencing over what was to be done

next…it would be just a matter of a few hours before the enemy was upon us" (Kire 57). In *A Naga Village Remembered* , the narrator throws light on the important position of the elders ; "The elders said, '…so it is alright to talk of peace now'…So the elders went to meet Pelhu at Kenoria…the elders pleaded, 'It is for the sake of our women and children we want you to reconsider" (Iralu 2003: 85).

Evolution of Weapon:

The Kikuyus and the Nagas have a rich cultural heritage where warriors were respected. Kenyatta writes,

> The whole of the warrior class was divided into several regimental groups, according to the system of age-grades *(riika)…*The warrior dances and songs served two main purposes, namely, enjoyment and drill for physical development. In jumping and running, warriors developed the power of endurance and the art of battle. In time of war these regiments were united under the leadership of *njama ya ita* (council of war) composed of several *athamak]* (leaders) of the various age-grades. At the head of this council was a *mondo mogo wa ita* (war magician or priest), whose duty was to advise the council as to the best time of waging war….There was no particular uniform, for warriors went to war practically naked except for a small apron *(corori),* which was worn at the back, and the head-gear *(thombe ya ita).* On the outbreak of a war, a war-horn was sounded as a signal of readiness. The warriors immediately took arms and started shouting their particular war-cry. This brought together all regimental units in the district and they formed a procession towards the enemy…When there was plenty of work in the fields, the warriors took their full share in it and arranged their dances and songs to take place in the evenings, but when there was less work in the fields, then numerous day dances and songs were arranged. Different age-groups competed in dances, and in dexterity in throwing spears and fencing, as well as high and long jumps. (Kenyatta 205- 208).

The Naga warriors, although known for their agility and fierceness in war, had simple weapons as compared to that of the colonizers. J.P. Mills states; "His chief weapons of offence are the "dao" (nokC; anok M) and spear (nu C; ami M)" (Mills 59). When the European colonizers met face to face with these warriors, the latter could not compete with the former as their weapons were more developed. Thus, both the Kikuyus and the Nagas were subjugated. Eventually, they started using the weapons that were introduced by the colonizers.

In *A Grain of Wheat*, the violence that was unleashed using superior weaponry upon the natives is captured vividly; "The police who waited for them with guns fixed with bayonets, opened fire…Another volley scattered the crowd. A man and a woman fell, their blood spurted out"…'Something went wrong at the last moment', Warui said, and stopped plucking his beard. 'Perhaps if we had the guns…'" (Thiong'o 13). As the natives fight against the colonial force, they make use of the same weapons of offence: "Situated in a central position, Mahee fed guns and ammunition to the other smaller police and military posts scattered in the Rift Valley to protect and raise the morale of white settlers… The garrison was set on fire and Kihika's men ran back to the forest with fresh supplies of men, guns and ammunition to continue the war on a scale undreamt of in the days of Waiyaki and Young Harry" (15-16). In *Mari*, the narrator gives us a clear picture of Kohima town after the war. Once Mari goes back to Kohima, she narrates a scene where she witnesses a desolate Kohima, far from how she had known before: "… abandoned rifles on the street corners and fragments of mortar shells and grenades. We were warned that there were buried mines as well."(93). She goes on to add that "Large craters had been left by the shells and there was a lot of ammunition near the house, from different-sized mortar shells to glittering rifle shots" (94).

The New Faith:

The Kikuyu and the Nagas had their own religion complete with priests and sacrifices. However, when the gospel came along with the white missionaries, the natives embraced it. Initially, there

were only a few converts who were ostracized from the community. However, gradually, the number of believers grew to such an extent that the very culture that was handed down from one generation to another had to undergo changes in many ways. *A Grain of Wheat* shows how the new Faith was bringing in changes : "…This he called the House of God where people could go for worship and sacrifice… The white man spoke of that Love that passeth all understanding…The few who were converted, started speaking a faith foreign to the ways of the land" (Thiong'o 10-11). In *Bitter Wormwood*, the changes that were wrought in by the new Faith affects the decisions of the characters: "On his return from Delhi, the grandson visits his grave and Neituo recalls what the pastor had said about forgiving others and goes on to say that " 'I have forgiven..' Neibou replied, 'not so much the men…but the act itself' " (242). Before the new Faith stepped in, the Nagas had a culture of revenge. It was replaced by forgiveness.

Westernised attire:

The Kikuyus and the Nagas had very specific and detailed body clothes which were worn for ages until the advent of the colonizers and the missionaries. The former had clothes made from animal skins, especially sheep and goat skins. The latter wove clothes into colourful and beautiful patterns. However, with the advent of the Western culture into these lands, the people were Westernised in their attire. Although they wore their traditional clothes, they largely wore clothes according to Western way of dressing.

In *Weep Not, Child*, Njoroge and Mwihaki make it a point to meet each other. This prompts him to put on his best clothes, which is completely westernized. Mwihaki also comes wearing westernized clothing: "He put on his best, a cheap nylon shirt and a well-pressed clean pair of khaki shorts. With khaki stockings and brown shoes made from the factory near his home town, he looked very smart…Then she came. Her white, low-necked blouse and pleated light brown skirt made him feel ashamed of his clothes"(Thiong'o 1985: 88). In *A Terrible Matriarchy*, Lieno recalls, "…I have vivid memories of alternating between wearing new girls' dresses which were tight and uncomfortable and short in the leg or old, torn-at-the knees boys' trousers and stained T-shirts which were immensely comfortable"(Kire 2).

Education:

Education was imparted orally in both Kikuyu and Naga social set-up. The former based their education from the family unit, teaching the child life skills and all that was required in their society. The Nagas maintained dormitories for the young unmarried people where all that they needed to know was taught to them orally. However, all these institutions had to go through changes in many ways once the missionaries came to these lands and taught the natives how to read and write. They established mission schools to impart their system of education to these natives. Eventually, this system of learning caught the imagination of the natives.

Waiyaki's Marioshoni in *The River Between* gains prominence among the native people where reading and writing is taught: "Marioshoni had established itself as the centre of the new spirit sweeping through the ridges. And Waiyaki, though young, was considered the unofficial leader of the education movement that would inevitably awaken the ridges"(Thiong'o 1985: 78).

We see the change in the mindset of the people towards education as Mari's mother tells her father's cousin: "'Times have changed, Akieu', said mother mildly. 'The children want to be educated before they think of marriage'". (6)

A New System of Government:

Before the advent of the British, the Kikuyus and the Nagas had their own system of governance. For the former, family was the basic unit from where it went to the level of national council.. The village council (*kiama kia itora*) composed of the heads of families, the fathers, and they represented the village. Above this level was the district council and it led to the district council,

ultimately ending in the national council. Jomo Kenyatta records that "The Gikuyu system of government prior to the advent of the Europeans was based on true democratic principles" (Kenyatta 1965 86). When the alien rule got established in the native land, government officials were appointed along with chiefs to help administer the land. It was a marked departure from the traditional system of governance. The whole of Kenya came under the new government. The Nagas, on the other hand, had their own system of administration where every village had their own separate governance. The British set up administrative headquarters and appointed their own officials. The Nagas consequently followed a new system of governance with new system of political organization.

The Trial of Dedan Kimathi talks about the new government with its own set of alien laws, trying the native people under these foreign laws. Thus, when Kimathi does not relent, the government representative states, "This democratic government has stretched its patience to limits" (wa Thiong'o and Mugo 1976 55). In *Mari*, the narrator highlights the new administrative set-up in their native land, "Our little town was the headquarters for the British administrative office in the Naga Hills…Further on was the district commissioner's office where Father worked" (3-4).

The Movement:

When the colonial forces entered the ancestral lands of the Kikuyus and the Nagas, a government system was set up that brought the land under foreign laws. The natives did not accept the new alien rule on their land. This instigated a movement that became a major force to oust the foreign rule from their land. Thus, both the natives set up their own native armies who went underground and used guerilla tactics to fight powerful resident enemies. Such struggle that cost many precious lives is vividly reflected in both the works of Easterine Kire and Ngugi wa Thiong'o.

A Terrible Matriarchy brings out the psychological tension that was rampant among the natives in a vivid manner: "But it's dangerous to let the story leak…It was the new recruits in

the Naga Army that had been captured. The boys in our class talked about it a great deal, saying they would join up when they were old enough. They said there were no age limits as there were boys as young as seventeen in the Naga army…We are fighting for our freedom…Bulie and I made a pact to join the Naga army when we were grown and vowed to avenge Vechoi's father" (Kire 2007: 161-162). The movement in Kenya witnessed not just men but also women contributing towards the cause. Thus, in *The Trial of Dedan Kimathy*, when "A white man, johnnie style, in green bush battledress" (Thiong'o and Mugo 1976: 8) meets a woman, he tells her, " You look like a Mau Mau. Like one of them, Kimathi women. Wanjiru, they called her. She was lean, wiry and strong. Fought like a tiger in the battle of the Beehive. No wonder the terrorists made her a Colonel... And she would not tell us where we could find Kimathi…" (11).

The New Economy:

The Kikuyus and the Nagas were both agriculturists and their economy revolved around this. Trade was secondary. They used barter system as the medium of exchange. Eventually, Kenya and Nagaland grew from barter system to use of cowrie shells and *chabili* until it evolved into shilling and rupees.

In *A Grain of Wheat*, as the two African policemen stopped the bus, the cashier hurriedly gives them a few shillings: "Soon the cashier came running, and got into the bus. 'They just wanted a few shillings for tea', he said, and people in the bus laughed" (Thiong'o 59). The protagonist in *Mari* and her family take refuge in a village during the war and she points out that they took with them "…about eight thousand rupees…" (66).

Introduction of New System of Transport:

With the arrival of the colonialists into their land, the Kikuyus and the Nagas witnessed the introduction of new modes of transportation. Trains, vehicles and aeroplanes came into their land along with infrastructure. This greatly changed the way the natives lived. Such historical happenings are woven into the fabric of the story in Easterine and Ngugi's writings.

In *Mari,* the narrator gives an account of what she sees around her; "The road was dusty and always alive with the Royal Engineering officers driving up and down all day in their jeeps and bulldozers"(21). Infrastructure to support it. In *Weep Not, Child,* a lucid picture of the road is given: "It was long and broad and shone with black tar…. And the road which ran across the land and was long and broad had no beginning and no end… it came with the white men and some said that it was rebuilt by the Italian prisoners from here… who built the long tarmac road…"(5).

Conclusion:

Changes were taking place in the age old Naga and the Kikuyu culture at a fast pace after the advent of the British colonial power and the Christian missionaries. People were getting educated in the new system of education and their outlook were fast changing, not excluding what they ate and what they wore. In the mist of new culture influencing the natives, they never forgot who they were and kept their identity and beliefs. As a result, a hybrid culture emerged. Jomo Kenyatta, the historical figure, is included in the narrative in *Weep Not, Child* who is symbolic of the hybrid culture that the society had evolved into: "To him Jomo stood for custom and tradition purified by grace of learning and much travel" (Thiong'o 1985: 74). On the other hand, Singh writes, "The close association of the Naga people with the foreigners enabled them to learn a new culture, follow a new civilization and opt for new political organizations" (Singh 2004: 21). As listed above, the resultant hybrid culture, as it comes to the forefront, marks a striking similarity in almost every facet of the Kikuyu and the Naga culture.

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Chapter Six

CONCLUSION

Hybridity as a critical term has gained wide acceptance where its application has only increased in recent times. It has been a part of the postcolonial concern, occupying an important point of discussion. A term that was initially associated with biology, it has come to signify different facets in postcolonial study. The theory studies a mixture of culture and identity. "As a critical term, hybridity is often discussed in connection with a set of other terms denoting 'intercultural transfer' and the forms of identity such a change generates…" (Kuortti and Nyman 2007:4)

Homi Bhabha has been at the forefront of the study on Hybridity. His theory identifies modern cultures as hybrid. Bhabha talks about the state of in-betweenness which is also the space of liminality. This state is formed in the intercultural space which consequently leads to a hybrid identity. The intercultural space is formed when the colonizer's culture is juxtaposed with that of the colonized and the migrants.

Mikhail Bakhtin's hybridization definition becomes important in the discussion of hybridity .He states that the term denotes linguistic and cultural features. Pnina Werbner states that "For Bakhtin, hybridization is the mixture of two languages, an encounter between two different linguistic consciousnesses." (Pnina Werbner 1997: 4). Werbner goes on to add that his unconscious or organic hybridity follows a natural process where there is absence of "shock, change, challenge, revitalise or disrupt through deliberate, intended fusions" (5). Rather, absorbtion of elements from one language or culture takes place harmoniously. On the other hand, his aesthetic or intentional hybridity has a completely different effect.

In 'So *Mush* of Me,' The Ceylonese Malaysian poet Charlene Rajendran highlights the reality of individuals who stem from a postcolonial cultural hybridity resulting from more than two cultures:

So *mush* of me is English.

My dreaded colonial heritage.

From Enid Blyton to Beatrix Potter

my idylls lie distant in Yorkshire.

So *mush* of me lives Anglo.

My dreaded white inheritance.

From Laura Ashley to Marks & Spencer

my istanas all built in Windsor.

So, *mush* of me

misplaced.

Really I am Malaysian,

Ceylonese, Tamil,

Anglophone, All.

Mingled by history

not choice.(Rajendran 17)

Here, the speaker recognises English as a colonial heritage that has altered her very lifestyle. The speaker becomes a multicultural product which has been constructed by history and not by choice. The poem reflects the recognition of an influence upon the individual by more than one culture which consequently brings about a 'mush' in the formation of the speaker's identitiy.

Joel Kuortti and Jopi Nyman states that

> … the poem uses linguistic play to construct hybrid cultural post-coloniality as a state of inbetweenness constructed in and through historical processes. While the poem mixes languages and cultural traditions to convey a sense of multiculturality, it is by no

means a mere celebration of a post-national and hybrid subjectivity. Indeed, Rajendran's speaker's positionality is problematized as a result of hybridity and described as 'misplaced,' 'misfit,' 'mixed up,' and 'muddled.'…Here, Rajendran's poem uses the Bahasa Malaysia word *tempatan* (Eng. local) to talk about the speaker's dreams. In connection with the metropolitan, *anglicised* fancies, these dreams build up the junction of global and local that is located in the speaker as the 'so *mush* of me.' …"(Joel Kuortti and Jopi Nyman 2007:1).

Two natives, the Kikuyu and the Nagas, far flung from each other geographically and yet harboring many similarities in culture, living a rich and vibrant life, ordered by a sense of identity with their fellow members suddenly found themselves face to face with the forces of colonialism. The subjugation of the natives and the setting up of colonies by the Europeans altered almost every aspect of their native culture. The change and influence was so great that even after the colonizers left their colonies, the natives were left to nurture a balance. Thus, the native cultures were hybridized.

The cultural formation that has taken root in Kenya and Nagaland have been influenced by the same factors, that of colonilisation and change of faith. Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Easterine Kire from Kenya and Nagaland write about the colonial government in their native lands and how it was changing the native people.

In Easterine Kire's *Mari*, when Mari's family talks about a possible war with the Japanese, they are convinced about the might of the British Empire: "'Esh! I don't believe it', Anyie continued. 'The white man's government is too powerful to let that happen. Remember how hard our clansmen fought the British when they first came? Our best warriors fought the white man. We even had help from warriors from Khonoma. And still we were crushed…" (Kire 6-7). In *A Naga Village Remembered*, the British Administration in the Naga Hills is seen intercepting the Naga warriors: "The news came to the attention of the British Government. Word went swiftly to the headquarters of the British Administration at Kohima. 'Intercept them and cut them off'…" (Iralu 36)

When the Europeans came to Africa, they termed it as a "Dark Continent" and felt that it was their responsibility to bring light to the natives. They felt that their civilization was superior

which built up their ethnocentric arrogance coupled with a conflicting self-aggrandizement on one hand and a missionary vision on the other hand. In *A Grain of Wheat*, the zeal that pushed the white man to introduce their superior culture is captured in Thompson:

> Thompson first came to East Africa during the Second World War, an officer…most of his time was spent in Kenya doing various garrison and training duties. After the war he returned to his interrupted studies in Oxford. It was there, whilst reading history, that he found himself interested in the development of the British Empire…And then a casual meeting with two African students crystallized his longings into a concrete conviction. They talked literature, history and the war; they were all enthusiastic about the British Mission in the World. The two Africans, they came from a family of Chiefs in what was then Gold Coast, showed a real grasp of history and literature…His mind started working. Here were two Africans who in dress, in speech and in intellectual power were no different from the British. Where was the irrationality, inconsistency and superstition so characteristic of the African and Oriental races? They had been replaced by the three principles basic o the Western mind: i.e. the principle of Reason, of Order and of Measure…the two Africans seemed proud of their British heritage and tradition… 'My heart was filled with joy,' he wrote later. In a flash I was convinced that the growth of the British Empire was the development of a great moral idea: it means, it must surely lead to the creation of one British nation, embracing peoples of all colours and creeds, based on the just proposition that all men were created equal…a great light had shone in the darkness' (52-53).

Thompson was fired initially with a great moral purpose. However, the novel traces his degeneration into an arrogant colonial master.

The arrival of the white man and the complications that cropped up consequently is captured in the second chapter of *A Grain of Wheat*:

> Nearly everybody was a member of the Movement, but nobody could say with any accuracy when it was born: to most people, especially those in the younger generation, it had always been there, a rallying centre for action. It changed names, leaders came and went, but the Movement remained, opening new visions,

> gathering greater and greater strength, till on the eve of Uhuru, its influence stretched from one horizon touching the sea to the other resting on the great lake. Its origins can, so the people say, be traced to the day the whiteman came to the country, clutching the book of God in both hands, a magic witness that the whiteman was a messenger from the Lord. His tongue was coated with sugar; his humility was touching. (10)

In *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, Kimathi is tried by the imperial law:

"JUDGE: (playing with his glasses, oozing infinite patience): Kimathi, I may remind you that we are in a court of law.

KIMATHI: An imperialist court of law."(Thiong'o 25).

The colonial rule and the change of faith had produced a hybrid identity which is mirrored in Ngugi and Easterine's works. Vibano in *A Terrible Matriarchy* is the upholder of the past traditional practices in her society and yet profits from the new administrative set-up. She enjoys her husband's pension which the government gives and because she has financial stability, she is able to wield the people around her according to her will. Also, when Leto has a conversation with Lieno, he tells her, "You know that people respect government workers more and every mother's dream is to have a son in a Government office" (180). In *Weep Not, Child*, the preacher's declaration in the pulpit blends in both the old and the new belief: "The old preacher was in the pulpit. He spoke of the calamity that had befallen the Gikuyu people, a tribe that long ago walked with God…who had given it a beautiful land"(89). Further ahead, when Njoroge goes to meet Mwihaki, "He put on his best, a cheap nylon shirt and a well-pressed clean pair of khaki shorts…The memory of their hours together at school were still fresh in her mind"(88). These characters mirror reality, who are truly hybrids.

It was not only the colonial power that changed the cultural landscape but also the new faith that was introduced to the natives. In Ngugi's *The River Between*, Joshua, who had accepted the new faith remained "…remained constant, preaching the word, singing the pilgrims' songs. He was certainly the most constant of all" (84). Dr. Sidney Rivenburg in Easterine Iralu's *A*

Naga Village Remembered "…could cure ailments with his medicines. Between treating his patients, Rivenburg continued to tell them of Christ's gospel, making more inroads" (94).

The Kikuyus and the Nagas had a rich culture which was without any outside influence. It was ordered and there was peace where everything in the community had its place. However, with the advent of the colonial power and the new faith, cultures that were once in harmony were thrown open to the waves of change. In all the upheaval, they managed to retain their roots although their culture had to undergo a sea of change. These cultures emerged as non-static, transforming entities not only for its shared history but also for its similar cultural dynamics which can be further probed into greater detail.

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