



## **IMPACT OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES ON NAGA TRIBES: A STUDY OF NAGA TRIBES FROM ANIMISM TO MONOTHEISM.**

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### **Abstract**

Early in the medieval period, religion was a significant part of Naga history. The history and the way of life of the Naga tribes in medieval Nagaland was influenced by the impact of Christian missionaries. The paper aims to highlight the significant contribution that Christian missionaries made to the reconstruction of Naga history during the transition from animism to monotheism. The Naga tribes of Nagaland underwent numerous transformations after the arrival of Christian missionaries. This article discusses the significance of the records kept by Christian missionaries and the discussion of how the Naga people converted from animism to monotheistic, or Christianity.

**Keywords:** Christian missionaries, Animism, trajectory, monotheism

### **Introduction**

During the pre-Christian time frame, the occupants of Naga carried on with an agnostic lifestyle and took part in standard strikes. At the point when they were vanquished, the hero held onto ownership of the fallen town and controlled it. This was done not exclusively to procure esteem yet in addition to shape partnerships, which were generally valuable to prepare for between town fights and head hunting. The town boss, otherwise called the lord, wanted their children and girls to wed other town pioneers or the bosses' children and girls. In the time before Christianity, the Naga public followed a pre-Christian culture that incorporated the act of head hunting, animism, and restrictions. Inside the Naga people groups, an individual's social standing and position are personally related to their support in the social act of head hunting. All things considered, snatching heads has been around since antiquated times and is as yet done at this point.

This term alludes to the act of taking the cut off head or skull of a vanquished rival as an award. It is additionally imagined that individuals of that time span kept the tops of their adversaries as prizes. They would set the tops of their enemies outside the town entryway and have a dining experience after an endeavour. Moreover, it is said that the town drum wouldn't strike until a head had been taken and put on it. The act of headhunting was treated extremely in a serious way and

incorporated no sort of entertainment. <sup>1</sup>The motivation behind "scouting" was to acquire individual status as well as political impact, which was the reason it was finished in any case. Each grown-up man had the chance to show his worth by bringing the heads of individuals from restricting clans or networks. A man was not viewed as an individual from the male individuals on the off chance that he didn't bring head, and a person who had taken the tops of an enormous number of enemies was held in extremely high regard by the local area.

The act of coordinating game with one's mind plays had a critical impact in the everyday exercises of the individuals from many early societies. It has been known for quite a while that Nagas were brutal warriors. In Naga culture, the act of headhunting was viewed as an indication of fearlessness and manliness. It is considered to have a connection among killing and farming in that it guarantees an effective yield, and this connection is one reason for this conviction. Head hunting is the act of cutting off the tops of one's foes. This might be achieved by flinging lances or terminating bolts at the foe, after which the casualty is cut off from the body utilizing dao, or the foe can be wiped out utilizing dao all alone. The requirement for names in the general public is the essential main impetus behind head hunting. Before the appearance of Christianity in Nagaland, struggle, head hunting, animism, and no were all normal practices in the district.<sup>2</sup>

As indicated by Dr. Clark, the Nagas are "men of blood and war," and their style of battle includes hand-to-hand battle with enormous blades and lances. This outlook and such traditions were available among the Naga nation before the appearance of Christianity.

### **Review of literature**

A.Nshoga published *Traditional Naga Village System and its Transformation* in 2009, in which he briefly describes the various changes that have occurred in Naga society. In this book, he also explains the various administration and functions of the village, the chief: power and position of a chief, how village assembly was functioned, executive functions, judicial functions, legislative functions, and administrative functions. He also explains in his works about the traditional culture of Naga villages. The most significant aspect of the social revolution in social, economic, and political life was the introduction of religion and culture. The British acquisition of the Naga Hills was the single most important element in the change. The influence of British governance included the introduction of transport and communication, as well as modern education.

J.H. For his 1921 book, "The Sema Nagas," Hutton attempted to trace the origins and travels of the Sema people. Work, diet, culture, religion, language, and folklore were all briefly discussed. However, he remained silent on the subject of Sema Naga culture.

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<sup>1</sup> American Baptist Missionary union, 1887. *Assam mission paper and discussions of the jubilee conference held in Nowgong*, December 18-29, 1886. Pp. 297.

<sup>2</sup> Avery, John: 1884. *The Hills Tribes of India*. American Antiquarian, VI: 307-16.

In April 1923, J.P. Mills and J. Hutton went on a tour of the Naga Hills, where they recorded everything that happened during their journey. In 1876, J. Hutton also made a journey in which he had a map, but because of the passage of time, the map was altered. Mills and Hutton recorded many strange things in their report; they also recorded the strange warriors and also their strong army through all of the villages. From April 3, 1923, to April 30,

In his 1926 book, "The Ao Nagas," J.P. Mills described the daily lives of Ao people, including their customs and laws, their religion, and a brief introduction to their language and folktales.

Roland Shimmi Y.L.1988.Comparative History of the Nagas; He endeavored to describe the numerous perspectives in his work, the Historical view, as well as the varied cultures, festivals, and the ways in which people celebrate their own unique cultural systems.

The argument on the Naga tribes' early history, and in particular to the government's Inner line and non-interference policy, is discussed in A. Mackenzie's book (1989). The book is where this topic is discussed. The Lieutenant Governor was given the power to prescribe a line, to be known as "the inner line," in all or some of the affected districts according to the Inner Line Act of 1872–1873. No British person of a specific class or foreign resident was allowed beyond this border without permission.

(First Edition: 1991); "Nagaland Darling of the North East" Kiranshankermaitra. He made an effort to do research on the Naga people of Nagaland. He described how the stunning indigenous people of the Northeastern region or Nagaland accept Christianity, and he wrote;

- i) Missionaries try to convince non-Christians and other non-believers that all non-Christians and other non-believers are destined to burn in hell.
- ii) To education.

Joseph Athickal, in his 1992 book titled "Maram Nagas-A socio-cultural study," documented his efforts to learn more about the culture of Manipur's last surviving primitive people. He also tried to assess the effect Christianity had on the group. He noted that people's reliance on institutions (whether educational or social, as in the case of Maram) seemed to have increased with the entrance of Christianity. His last finding was that Maram people tend to move to places with better transportation links and more promising economic prospects. He also learned the hard way that expanding one's horizons via formal education is the surest path to affluence, social status, and the development of one's own distinctive culture. Since the Marams arrived late to the party of modernity's benefits, they missed out on all of these opportunities.

**Impact of Christian Missionaries on Naga tribes: A study of Naga tribes from animism to monotheism.**

The Nagas profited in many ways after Christianity arrived and it presented to them the way to socialize. As additional individuals become mindful of the meaning of contemporary schooling, there is an increased worry among grown-ups that the present youth proceed with their schooling so people in the future will comprise additional informed people. Perusing assisted individuals with looking into the good news of Christ and how to carry on with a socialized life once they become taught men. Perusing likewise assisted individuals with diving deeper into how to carry on with a humanized presence. Also, it makes huge adjustments to every individual's character, lead, and their everyday day to day environments. What's more, it shut down a lot of detestable ways of behaving, for example, head hunting, animism, infidelity, burglary, restrictions, battling, giving bogus declarations, etc. Everyone's lifestyle, as well as their public activity, was unique in relation to how it had been, and many individuals were even changed over completely to Christianity as of now. Thus, the material as well as the otherworldly parts of life were and keep on being benefited. The adoration that Christ has for his adherents has changed the hearts of the Naga public. The force of the good news of Christ amazingly affected the Naga public, making them become compliant and accommodating in all parts of their lives, including their public activity, social life, political life, strict life, and world view. Individuals' lives were decisively modified, their networks thrived, and they figured out how to love God because of these changes.<sup>3</sup>

The unfamiliar evangelist had a critical part in the improvement of new normal practices in Nagaland. They (the ministers) established the expression of God in the hearts of the Nagas through the great response that individuals had to the gospel, which they got in various ways; in any case, these reactions were positive. Soon after the Naga public became mindful of Christianity, temples started to grow up in every one of their few clans. In its newborn child years, some temples met for partnership in structures developed out of tree limbs, while others initially met in individuals' homes. Individual Nagas and their local area in general switched over completely to Christianity during the serious recovery development or otherworldly arousing that happened around then.

Subsequently, the entire Naga people group had the option to set things right with each other, broken homes were fixed and families were united back, and companions who had been harmed by each other had the option to begin again with their connections. On the opposite side, at that time the Nagas were participating in a conflict of dispute with each other over their eating, drinking, offering, and penance rehearses. In spite of this, these things at last become less recognizable, and reality with regards to God in the long run prevails upon the hearts of everybody in Nagaland. Individuals of Nagas wanted to serve the Master and give contributions to him. Everything revolves around Christianity, which goes into our kin's (Nagas) day to day routines and changes their lives to improve things.

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<sup>3</sup> Anderson, B.I. 1978: *we lived in Nagaland*. Aizuto (Kohima, Nagaland), Sema Baptist Church.

During the hour of their predecessors, Nagas rehearsed a sort of otherworldliness known as "animism" or "customary Naga," contingent upon the unique circumstance. Faith within the sight of otherworldly animals in the regular world is at the core of animism, which alludes to such convictions. All Naga clans know about three distinct kinds of divine beings and spirits: the maker God, the spirits that live overhead, and the earth spirits. During this time span, the Nagas felt that God was the maker of the sky and the earth and that he had an ideal mentality toward man. In antiquated days, love followed no specific example or stuck to a specific type of love. The Nagas trusted within the sight of awful spirits, with whom they endeavored to make harmony by means of the creation of penances. Their entire lives were administered by the power of the idea of the odd and animistic love that they rehearsed. Stones are respected as huge objects of divinity over the course of that time span. Most Nagas are said to have a feeling of stone, which is one of the spirits that is accepted to live in them. In any case, while asking, Nagas would move toward the most elevated God, who was the person who made the sky and the earth.

Individuals are so terrified of calling awful spirits that they won't actually take a chance with blowing a whistle around evening time since they figure doing so would bring them. Moreover, they are sure in their conviction that whistling is the medium by means of which the spirits trade data with each other.

The presentation of Christian ministers into the Naga ancestral clan essentially affected the socio-social parts of their general public. As well as carrying proficiency and Christian precept to the Naga public, they additionally presented schooling. Nonetheless, early Christian preachers' overall impression of ancestral custom, practice, and culture as intrinsically agnostic prompted broad misconception. Church enrollment started to outweigh connections to family and local area, permitting converts to start constructing another character close by their strict convictions. The accentuation put on individual salvation brought forth an entirely different individual.

Nonetheless, in current times, with the appearance of Christianity, the extraordinary greater part of Nagas have changed their religion to that of the Christians. There are various Christian groups, yet the Baptists make up most of the populace. Starting from the start of formal tutoring, the Christian temples in Nagaland extensively affect the state's instructive, clinical, and compassionate frameworks. Nagas' occupants are likewise participating in local area occasions intended to reinforce Nagas in general. The congregation has likewise participated in endeavors to stem the tide of social ills in Nagaland. The congregation as it exists currently has the future, a significant job to carry out, and the occupation of achieving an adjustment of Nagaland that is both lovely and significant, as well as moving people toward usefully adding to the development of their networks.

Beside the oral stories, people ditties, and classic stories, various thoughts have been set up by students of history, anthropologists, geographers, and different specialists on the beginning of the Nagas. This is attributable to the way that there are no put down accounts of the antiquated history of the Nagas.

At the point when the earth was still generally youthful, individuals moved about and resided in various areas as per where they could best guarantee their progress with presence. During this time span, individuals were continually moving starting with one area then onto the next. The Naga public were no exception; they moved about a lot until showing up at their ongoing area, which is portrayed by various slopes and valleys. There are various stories and oral customs that have been given over from one age to another corresponding to the beginning of the Naga nation since there are no put down accounts of their set of experiences. One thing, then again, is very far reaching, and most individuals concur with it and find motivations to acknowledge it. The eastern area of the planet is by all accounts where the nagas began. As indicated by E.A. Stride, "all Nagas have a place with the tibeto-chinese" and showed up in the district known as Meikhel from individuals of Mongolia between the years 10 and 12 B.C. Different clans have various renditions or customs encompassing the spread of Nagas Meikhel in regard to the beginning, albeit countless Nagas imagine that their progenitors showed up from a point somewhere far North, in cutting edge China.

The name "Nagas," which is utilized to allude to a group of races that are completely connected with each other, didn't turn out to be broadly utilized around here of the world until after the appearance of the English. No matter what anything clarification for its starting point you decide to accept, this reality doesn't change the way that "Nagas" The Nagas are lucky to be encircled by such dazzling mountains and to be gifted with an overflow of regular and natural assets. The idea that all Nagas have a place with a similar clan was held by many individuals who were not Naga. There are 17 distinct clans that might be found all through the different regions that make up the province of Nagaland and the Nagas slopes. Coming up next are the absolute most noticeable Naga clans: Sumi, Angami, Ao, Lotha, Konyak, Rengma, Zaliang, Yimchunger, Tiker, Pochury, Mao, Phom, and Khimigun, among others. The traditions and customs of every clan are particular from each other, similar to the relating dialects and vernaculars spoken by its individuals. Celebrations in Naga are commended with different moves, music, and strange food sources. It is said that Nagaland is viewed as the nation of celebrations; the Naga public are normally disposed toward music, and accordingly, one would find that each Naga is fit for singing, even those with debilitations. Nagas have forever been rustic individuals, and every town has its own free organization. This suggests that the public authority of the town has outright power inside its lines and is invulnerable to the purview of some other element beyond the town. With the foundation of the Naga club (N.C) in 1918 and the Naga Public Board (N.N.C) as a brought together Naga political association on February 2, 1946, it is feasible to proclaim that every one of the clans that are exceptionally characterized as Ao, Angami, sumi, and Konyak, among others, turned out to be progressively evident.

Before its freedom in 1947, the region presently known as Nagaland was a locale under the territory of Assam called "Naga Slopes." From December 15, 1571, until February 18, 1961, it was known as the Naga Slopes Tuensang Region and was set under the purview of the Service of International concerns. The head of the state of India and the show heads of the Naga public arrive at a 16-point understanding in which India formally recognizes Nagaland as a different state inside

its nation. The Indian Top state leader has marked this report. Appropriately, in 1961, Nagaland was set under the Nagaland guideline, which commanded the foundation of a break board with 45 individuals chose by different clans in accordance with their particular traditions, customs, and utilizations. This was done as such as per the Nagaland guideline. On November 30, 1993, the understudy body was ended as an association. In January of 1964, the residents of Nagaland took part in everyday races for the absolute first time, and on February 11 of that very year, the Nagaland Authoritative Gathering was lawfully settled. These occasions happened simultaneously. Oral history was the main type of Naga history that existed in the past since there were no put down accounts or chronicles of the Naga public. This empowered the Naga moral code to be safeguarded and sent down through the ages. Goliath log-drums, monster husking tables, uber brew tanks, and so on, were ordinary in their hugely estimated material progress. The Naga people groups have a special social history in that every one of them was cut from a solitary tree trunk utilizing just basic hand devices.

Also, every one of the clans has its own particular culture, set of values, and technique for political association. An illustration of the social variety that exists in such a minimal locale is the totalitarianism rehearsed by the Konyak public. In this general public, "average citizens" are not even permitted to stand upright when they are within the sight of the boss. It is intriguing that a wide assortment of political designs can exist inside such a small area. On a scale that is to some degree less significant, we have the central boat of the Sumi (Sema) clan, which was where the expression of the boss was as yet respected regulation. From that point forward, there is something of a conservative framework inside the Ao clan, complete with decisions, and eventually, there is a genuine vote based system inside the Angami clan, in which the quest for understanding was the standard and political race in view of the decision of the greater part was unfathomable.

Nagaland's populace has a rich and different social legacy. Conventional Naga people depended on their individuals' natural abilities in regions like basketry, ceramics, planting, turning and winding around, wanting, passing on, and metalwork to support themselves. The society workmanship that is made from conventional garments is a fundamental and alive piece of every Naga clan's ethnic character, since it mirrors the particular social history of that clan. The conventional dress are a magnificent delineation of how novel thoughts might be coordinated with respected traditions

The traditions and customs of every one of Nagaland's 17 principal clans, as well as the more modest sub-clans, are unique and unique, and these practices and customs are morally addressed in the manner every one of the clans' dresses. The occupants, especially the ladies, are attributed with having made huge commitments to the development of the handloom business in the space through their conventional apparel and dressing rehearses. Individuals from the Naga clan likewise wear pieces of clothing whose examples and tones convey emblematic importance and social personality. Insinuating their set of experiences as talent scouts, these signs presently act as pivotal marks of economic wellbeing. Gems is something other than a singular decoration; it likewise

passes on data about an individual's social and financial position. The mixing of conventional Naga culture with western approaches to everyday life is currently a day to day event in the district of Nagaland known as Nagaland.

### **Conclusions and findings**

The act of head hunting started from the idea that the human cerebrum was the area of the spirit matter, which was believed to be the wellspring of all life and was answerable for keeping up with it. Consequently, assuming an individual was beheaded and his head was brought to another town, the spirit stuff that was contained inside the various heads was likewise communicated to that town (the beneficiary town). It was imagined that this would build the quantity of creatures and duplicate the yields in a lush way.

In the time before Christianity, the religion of the Nagas was animism, and this is additionally valid for individuals. For the Nagas, life had no significance separated from religion, and rehearsing their confidence was a day to day issue. Their religion didn't comprise of an ethical code but instead a stately to go with each penance. The home soul, the trees, the fields, the mountains, the moon, the sun, the sacred stones, the fields, the mountains, the house soul, and different things were addressed toward the start of a request to a particular soul.

Then again, following the appearance of Christianity, otherwise called the Christian period. The Naga were answerable for tremendous changes in each aspect of presence. The Naga public were presented to current schooling by Christian evangelists, which as an outcome has brought about yearly changes to either the Naga society or the Naga public. Individuals' lives went through an ocean shift as an immediate consequence of the spread of Christianity, which dispersed a significant number of the notions that had been rehearsed previously. The Naga public started to instruct their kids by sending them to school, started to concentrate on the holy book, and started to give their assets to improve their own age as well as the age that would come after them. Individuals started to live in a more clean way, and individuals live in fear of God and his kin, the two of which add to their favorable luck by making them more magnanimous citizenry.

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