

Chapter-1

Introduction

1.1 Nagaland: The land and the people

Nagaland, also known as the land of nature and hilly beauty, is a state which is located in the eastern side of Northeast India. Geographically, Nagaland shares boundary with Myanmar which is on the east and is surrounded by Assam lying in the west, Manipur standing in the south, and Arunachal Pradesh and parts of Assam on the north. Nagaland is considered to be one of the smallest states in the whole of India, covering an area of 16,578 sq. Kms. The population of Nagaland in 2021/2022 according to the Aadhar statistics is 2,189,297. The capital of Nagaland is Kohima with Dimapur being the centre of commercial hub. There are sixteen administrative districts in Nagaland namely, Kohima, Phek, Wokha, Mokokchung, Tuensang, Zunheboto, Peren, Mon, Kiphiri, Dimapur, Longleng, Shamator, Tseminyu, Niuland, Noklak, and Chümoukedima. The population in Nagaland is comprised of seventeen different tribes namely Ao, Angami, Sumi, Lotha, Chang, Konyak, Chakesang, Khiamningam, Rengma, Phom, Yimchunger, Sangtam, Zeliang, Kuki, Rongmei, Pochury and Bodo-Kachari and some other sub-tribes inhabiting this hill state. The people residing in Nagaland are broadly known as Nagas and they form one large ethnic community. Each of the tribes has a vernacular term for itself. The Angamis and some other allied tribes call themselves as the *Tenyimia*, the Ao as *Aos*, the Lothas are known as *Kyong*, and the Semas are called as *Sumi*, etc. The tribes have been distributed in different geographical areas of the state and nearby areas for example, Kohima is inhabited by the Angamis, Rengmas and some other tribes. The Chakesang, Pochury and the group of the Sangtam occupy Phek. Zunheboto is inhabited by the Semas and Wokha is home to the Lothas. Longleng is of the Phoms. The

Zeliang, Liangmei and Kuki inhabit Peren with the Sangtam, Yimchunger, Khiamnungam and the Chang residing in Tuensang.

Formerly a district of the state of Assam organized during the British rule, Nagaland attained statehood on the first of December, 1963 with Dr. Sarvepalli Radha Krishnan, the then President of India formally inaugurating it as the sixteenth state of the Indian Union. The Nagas are known to possess a rich cultural heritage which have been preserved and passed down in the forms of oral traditions. All the communities in the state though possessing a distinct language and an oral history of their own adopted Roman script for all expressive purposes since the area came under the British rule. Similar is the process of the beginning of writing the history of the people. A myth goes that the history of the Nagas was actually recorded on the skin of an animal but it was unfortunately eaten by a dog and that was how they started preserving it in their memories and passed down from person to person in the form of folktales, folksongs, and traditional community rites.

1.2 The Angamis

The Angami Nagas are known to be one of the major tribe in Nagaland. They speak a common language called *Tenyidie* which is understood by every Angami. With the arrival of the British government, four divisions were created in the Angami region such as the Western Angami, Southern Angami, Northern Angami and Chakhroma. Under the Western Angami region, villages like Jotsoma, Mezoma, Sechüma, Khonoma, Sechü Zubza, Kiruphema, Mengoujuma, Thekrejüma and Peducha are included. The Southern Angami region is comprised of Phesama, Pfuchama, Kigewma, Khuzama, Viswema, Kidima, Jakhama, Mima, Kezo Basa, Mitelepe, Kezoma, Sakhabama and Kezo town which was formally known as Chakhabama. The Northern Angami region includes Kohima, Chiephobozou, Kohima village, Chiechama, Nachama, Dihoma, Zhadima, Tuophema, Tsiemekhuma, Kijümetouma,

Chedema, Meriema, Chüziema, Nerhema, Tsiesema, Phekerkrie Rüsoma, Seiyhama, Gariphema, Botsa Tsiesema Basa,. The Chakhro Angami include villages and towns like Chümoukedima, Sodzülhou, Vidima, Sovima, Piphema, Medziphema, Kirha, Virhazouma, Toulazouma, Tenyiphe, Kuda, Pherima, Sirhima, Tsiepama, Diphupar, Phevima, and Rüzaphema,. This division of regions was created during the British rule solely to serve the purpose of effective administration.

The Nagas having no written history, everything in relation to their history was passed down through oral transmission. Like most of the ethnic communities of North Eastern India possessing myths of origin and migration, the Angamis were believed to have migrated from South-East Asia though there are some other versions of the myth in relation to their migration. M. Alemchiba in his book *A Brief Historical Account of Nagaland* states that

the Angamis are associated with the Igorots of Phillipine. The evidence of which is shown in their pattern or style of terrace cultivation. Also their practice of headhunting shows their commonality with the Dyaks of Borneo. (Alemchiba, 12)

The term ‘Angami’ was a name given to them by outsiders (Manipuris). K. S. Zetsuvi elaborates on the background of the Angamis by saying that

The Angamis are known to themselves as *Tenyimia* and it is believed that the name has been derived from *Tonyümia* which simply means “swift walker”. *Tenyimia* is an umbrella term used for the Angamis and few other allied tribes. Also, legend has it that there is blood relation among the *Tenyimia* as they are considered to be the children of *Tenyiu* whose father *Vadio* was one of the eldest ancestors of the Angamis. *Tenyimia* is a conglomerative term for the twelve Naga sub-tribes who are believed to be the descendants of *Tenyiu*. Based on the dialectal differences, the *Tenyimia* regions are segregated into:

1. Angami, under which there is Northern Angami, Central Angami, Southern Angami and Western Angami.
2. Chakesang, composed of Chokri, Khezha and Pochuri.
3. Rengma which is Upper Rengma and Lower Rengma.
4. Zeliangrong, under which there is Zemi and Lingmai (Zetsuvi 2-5)

The Angami Nagas like the other tribes of Nagaland have a history passed down orally through generations. There have been various arguments and concepts about the origin of the Angami Nagas and one of it is that they were believed to have migrated from South-East Asia in search of settlement. As stated above, they share similarities with the Igorots of Phillipine and the Dyaks of Borneo. J.H. Hutton in his book *The Angami Nagas* records that

The Angami story of origin of the Naga tribes centres in the Kezami village of Kezakenoma. (Hutton 19)

The Nagas in general trace their origin to the very old legend of Khezakenoma. It was narrated that an old couple Lu-u and Kulao lived with their three sons Chi-o, Khe-o and Tse-o at Khezakenoma. They were also believed to be the first parents of the people from that village. The sons used to lay out paddy to dry on a big flat stone and by evening the paddy will miraculously multiply, for the stone was believed to possess magical powers. As the parents grew older, they divided the property among the sons. To the two eldest sons, the parents gave away all the land. As there was no land left, they gave the youngest son the magic stone. The two eldest sons objected, claiming that they have the right to dry their paddy as they did before. Soon a quarrel broke out between them and the mother fearing that her sons will end up killing each other brought a bundle of mustard plant straw and eggs. She placed them under the magic stone and set it on fire. The stone cracked and the spirit inhabiting the stone left it. Thereafter, the village became poorer and poorer and the three brothers decided to separate and became the ancestors of the Angami, Lotha and Sema. The

parents of the three sons decided to stay on and their other descendents founded the surrounding villages of Khezami (Khezakenoma, Tephulumi, Lotsolomi, Chilemi, Phulomi, Chicholomi and Mevolumi). (Hutton 19-20)

1.3 Significance of the study

The oral transmission of the folktales, folksongs and practices of material culture such traditions, through ages has kept the culture of the Nagas alive. Though the advent of Christianity to a great extent has wiped out most of the practices of old traditions like customs and communal rites, it would be wrong to say that the cultural identity of the Nagas have been erased, because traces of the ancestral practices are still seen in their behaviour and activities. In regard to expressive arts, the Nagas are also known to have a very rich heritage of music. There is barely any occasion where songs are not in use. The Nagas and the Angamis in particular, are fond of singing. The songs are thematic in nature and there are different songs for different occasions with themes dealing in war, love, reminiscences of the departed heroes etc. Music has played a significant role at ushering life and expression in most of the festivals and events. Folksongs are also used to disseminate the heroic history of the past. However, with change and modifications of language over the passage of time, the lyrics of the folksongs have become difficult to interpret where only the elders in villages could successfully manage to explain the significance of the folksongs. With the lyrics posing a hurdle in the way of interpretation, the oral history has been losing its significance as songs are being sung without understanding their meaning and the occasion in which it is sung.

The Angamis being fond of singing, every event or festival is accompanied by a song. Unfortunately, unlike the olden days, people do not hum or sing during the course of performing household chores any longer. But folksongs are still preserved and performed during any cultural events or even during other important occasions. The disappearance of

thehuba has significantly caused the decline of oral transmission in terms of folksongs and several other forms of folklore. Yet the conduct of festivals even today serves as an important platform for learning, transmitting and imparting cultural knowledge not only to the performers but the spectators as well. Also looking at the larger scenario, we can notice the Naga artists performing modern music in fusion with the folksongs. Songs that resonates to the older tradition that appears to be modern and appealing to the present day audience. Many of the folksongs have also been recorded in printed forms already yet the problem exists in not being able to sing. The recorded folksongs in text form barely come with a music sheet disabling any individual from singing on their own. Despite the difficulties and problems in learning folksongs, the village elders are still considered to be the sole repertory of traditional and cultural knowledge and they are always sought after in terms of learning folksongs.

The present study entitled 'Folksongs of the Angami Nagas: Transmission and Preservation of Culture and Tradition' proposes to study the different folksongs of the Angami community in particular to the western Angami region as to how it has been transmitted down the ages and how it has helped to preserve their culture and history through songs that sings of the stories of the past including the contexts of performance of such songs. Like any other oral society, the Angami people have depended and survived upon their folklore, verbal as well as other non-verbal but expressive behaviour invested in the memories of people which are learnt and shared orally throughout generations. The folksongs embodied the belief, knowledge and practices of the Angami community that steered the people and therefore emphasis will be given in the way folksongs have worked in helping the Angami people in keeping the history of their ancestors alive through folksongs and the worldview of the community.

The study will also take into account the process of transmission and the problems of preservation of this oral heritage in the age of rapid urbanization and other inevitable changes

coming as corollary to it since the advent of the missionaries and the British rule as well as western education in the hill state.

1.4 Review of Literature

The Interpretation of Culture (1973) by Clifford Geertz expresses his study and views on what culture is, what the role of culture is in social life and ways to study culture. Geertz brings in a lot of theories from different subjects like anthropology, sociology, philosophy, political science, linguistics and psychology. He points out how the theory propounded in the early years were insufficient to study the human society. He demonstrates cultural anthropology as the central point to the whole of social sciences. The concept is given not through any theoretical abstractions, but by empirical analysis.

Orality and Literacy (1982) by Walter J Ong (2002) emphasises on how communication whether through writing or speaking changes the way we think and behave. He called society that practise oral tradition without any form of writing as primary orality. Oral cultures depend on memories and knowledge which does not follow repetition unfortunately disappeared. Memory is fragile and the only means to reinforce it is to keep repeating it. Without writing, the thinker becomes the sole knowledge keeper as there is no written text available to produce the same thing he has said or done. People in oral societies remember so much of every little thing that was done in the society but writing released humans from the limitations of memory.

Folklore and Folklife (1982) edited by Richard M. Dorson is a book serving as an introduction towards the study of folklore as well as folklife. It contains essays, articles, and theoretical contributions. The book has proven useful in studying the concept of folklore and methods to apply for studying it. Among the various papers, the paper on 'Social Folk Custom: Festivals and Celebrations' by Robert Jerome Smith provides insight into the study

of the various kinds of festivals and its purposes. This has given insight into the study of how the performance of festivals directly involves dancing and music as well which finds its relevance to the present thesis.

The Anthropology of Performance (1987) is a collection of essays by Victor Turner, a distinguished cultural theorist which was published after his death. He states his views on performance and ritual as restorative and reconciliatory. He is of the notion that humanity is homo-performans, which simply means that humans are performing animals discovering themselves through the performance of themselves. The book throws light on various discussion of performance connected with rites and rituals, traditions of music and other arts.

Cultural Memory And The Construction Of Identity (1999) by Dan Ben-Amos and Liliane Weissberg explores the dynamics of cultural memory in a variety of contexts. Memory is considered to be a powerful weapon which can transform a piece of object into symbol or a piece of earth into a homeland. The authors discuss on how memories are incorporated into our everyday ordinary life in the form of clothing, images or utensils. Mention has also been made of customary memory or occasional memory. This memory is concerned with important dates on calendar where various community festivals are celebrated. The activities that take place in the form of singing or dancing works powerfully on an individual's body and impose participation on everyone present. The community creates a feeling of unity because it is unified in practise. The process of "sites sacralisation", according to the authors, can become cultural enclaves where time is rendered incapable of disrupting the historical memory attached to the site. Images also serve as a container for memory for people who have no first-hand experience of an event.

Performance Theory (2004) by Richard Schechner gives an extensive detailed account of Performance Theory by bringing in theatre, games, sports, ritual and play. According to the book, Performance is also seen and read as an everyday occurrence even outside the conventional realm of a stage or a theatre. Schechner makes use of various plays in theatre, sports, behaviour of animal, rituals performed by different communities, even focussing on how a stage is set up for audience to witness a performance to explain how performance theory works at different levels. Performance, according to Schechner is a twice behaviour.

Folklore: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies (2005) edited by Alan Dundes is a compilation of materials on the subject of folklore by different authors. The book is divided into volumes and the first volume discusses on not just the subject of folklore but the discipline of folkloristics which is the scientific study of folklore. The second volume contains works of those pioneering individuals who attempted to analyse the materials of folklore and the theories that are applied on the basis of folkloristic.

Heritage (2006) by Laurajane Smith emphasises on the importance of heritage as both tangible as well as intangible. Heritage is not simply confined to material objects but it includes everything that happens in those sites. Heritage, according to Smith is a cultural process which involves acts of remembering and it is constantly engaged with the present. Smith identifies the real meaning of heritage from authorized heritage discourse (AHD) and states that heritage is not limited or confined to ancestral places or sites rather it is an action of transmitting knowledge in at the right time in the appropriate contexts.

Folklore as Discourse (2006) edited by M.D. Muthukumaraswamy contains nineteen papers on the different aspects of Indian folklore which are written by scholars and compiled into the book. The main subject presented in each paper deals with the way folklore organizes itself in different societal contexts in India. This book has proven to be useful to scholars and students

through the display of ideas and thoughts made accessible. The paper on 'Jagar as a Discourse' by R. Venugopalan Nair makes an attempt to study Goan culture and tradition through the eyes of the artists themselves. The paper has proven how the preservation of the cosmology behind the culture helps the transmission of cultural patterns and enables it live on even in the changing society.

Memory in Culture (2011) by Astrid Erll and translated by Sara B. Young entails the study of memory. From Maurice Halbwach with his concepts of Collective and social Memory to Jan and Aleida Assman, the book elaborates and explains the various concepts of cultural memory according to different researchers.

Sites In Cultural Studies (2015), by L. Imsutoshi Jamir gives an insight into the research done by outsiders on and about the tribals in North East India and how it is linked to the European imperialism and colonial ideology. Though the outsiders conduct their study and scientific researches with much biases, it still remain as a powerfully remembered history for many tribals of Northeast India. The book proposes a few methodologies and methods of doing research in tribal cultural studies which aimed to set right the tribal history from the point of the tribals.

Grand Theory in Folkloristics (2016) edited by Lee Haring is a compilation or expanded edition of a *Journal of Folklore Research*. The book comprises of different articles by different writers. The book evolved around the question of "Why there is no 'Grand Theory' in the study of folklore?" by American Folklore Society Forum. American folklorists have produced few 'Grand Theories.' Gary Alan Fine has stated that the approach to systemizing knowledge is known as 'Grand theory.' The term also refers to an attempt made by the mid-century sociologists to create interlocked concepts to explain social order. Just as theory brings people together, most forms of theory bring concepts together.

Folklore and Its Motifs in Modern Literature by Kishore Jadav (2016) entails an extensive study of the folksongs of different communities in North East India. The book not only records the songs but interpret its meaning and the significance of the songs. In addition to the folksongs, the folk dances of some of the tribes in Nagaland have also been explained in detail exploring the culture and tradition of different tribals in the North East.

The Angami Nagas (1921) by J.H Hutton gives an account of the Angamis as observed by the author. The book explores the Angami society, laws and customs, domestic life, religious beliefs and every structural element that forms the Angami society, from an observer's point of view. There are mentions of folklore of the Angami community and the various symbols and meanings associated with their traditional attires. The whole book is devoted to the study of the Angami tribe alone.

Naga Cultural Milieu (2013) by V. Nienu gives a detailed account of the Naga traditional life from the material as well as from the spiritual perspectives. A lot of scientific data has been given to hone the understanding of the readers in regard to the Naga's way of adapting to their land and environment analysis how it has shaped their culture and way of life. The author has also given clear a explanation behind the ceremonies performed by various tribes in Nagaland and has also explored the significance and importance of symbols in animals and the other natural environment. The system of agriculture also forms a chapter in the book where the author has given in depth analysis of the type of cultivation practised by tribals of Nagaland. Headhunting, which was popularly known to be a practice adopted by the Nagas is explained in the book as an activity conducted for different purposes and reasons and the practice was of a later development. To sum up, the book sheds light on the different subjects of the traditional life of the Nagas.

Traditional Culture of The Angami Nagas (2014), written by K.S. Zetsuvi gives a peek into the Angami tribe with regard to their religious beliefs, social structures, laws and customs. The author laid stress on the institution of Morung which is regarded as one of the core features of the social structure of the Angami community. The Morung is considered to be a place where the younger generation was reared to manhood in the traditions of the particular tribe. The system of Morung is not followed by the Angami communities alone but by the other Naga tribes too. It plays an important role or function at bringing up the young boys and girls to be good humans living on the principles and rules set up by the ancestors. With the passage of time, as the author writes in the book, the institution of Morung has disappeared from most of the Naga villages. It also gives a picture of the changes brought about by the changing social and political environment.

People, Heritage and Oral History of the Nagas (2014) by N. Venuh gives a brief study of the various tribes that are in existence in Nagaland. The book sheds light on the traditional life of different Naga tribes, their religious beliefs and practices, aspects of folklore and oral heritage.

Studies on Naga Oral Tradition: Memories and Telling of Origin Myth and Migration (2018) by Anungla Aier contains collection of research conducted on the different Naga community. This book sheds light on the variety of traditions existing among the different Naga tribes. The author also uses ancestral place and sites to collect folktales narrating the origin and migration myth of the Nagas.

Phousanyi (1981) is a book written in *Tenyidie* dialect by Shürhozelie on the ritual, customs, and traditions of the *Tenyimia* community. The book gives detailed description about the *Sekrenyi* festival which is considered to be the most important festivals for the *Tenyimia* Angami community. The book includes the practices that are followed by the ancestors and

goes further on to explain about the ornaments or the traditional attires worn by both men and women of the *Tenyimia* Angami community. The author has also explored the significance of setting up wooden village gates during the olden days. Before the advent of the British, every village had its own chief. The life of the community as stated by the author was far better because much importance was given to keeping the community strong with a spirit of unity. The traditional attires worn by males of *Tenyimia* Angami community have different meanings and it has been described elaborately by the author. References have also been made to a bird named ‘*sozie*’ in *Tenyidie*. The bird is described in the book as one whose appearance matches that of an eagle. This bird flies very high and in groups giving a picture of a game at play. The ancestors watched these birds flying in the sky and engaged themselves in their playful activities and developed a game which they named it ‘*sozie*’ after the bird.

Tenyimia Kelhou Bode (1993) by Vikielie Sorhie contains a historical study of the Angami community focussing on their culture and traditions. This book has dealt with some of the aspects of the Angami folksongs and gives an insight into the different kinds of folksongs that are in practice among the Angami community. The book also sheds light on the old customs and practices followed by the community some of which are still existent whereas some had been abandoned.

Tenyimia Kelhou Dze (1995) is a book written by Kiezotuo Zhale in *Tenyidie* dialect. The book contains information on the *Tenyimia* people, their culture and traditions.

Ketho Kerhei Nanyü Utsiepfümia Nanyü (2014) written in *Tenyidie* dialect by B.K Sachü explores the myth, religion, customary laws and practices of the ancestors of the *Tenyimia* Angami people. It mentions the teaching of the ancestors about the social life and the rules and regulations to be followed by every sane people in the community. The book begins with

the creation myth of mankind in oral version which is bound to be slightly different from that of the bible. The story goes that the most powerful one ruling the universe created a man in his own likeness and placed him in an opened space. Since animals could talk according to the myth, they witnessed the works and power of the most powerful one but could not imagine what he was like for no one saw him. Every animal that trod upon the land saw the image of man created in the likeness of the most powerful one and every time an animal passed by the image, they would give their opinions and remarks on the way the body of man has been structured. The other chapters of the book emphasises on the laws and customs, taboos and gennas and the other practices of the ancestors of the Angami Nagas.

“Folklore and the Forces of Modernity” (1983) by Richard Bauman centralizes on what modernity really means and how folklore has been disappearing since then. He states that the two tendencies of modernity are social differentiation and centralization. These forces of modernity reveals itself in public enactments of community specially community festivals. The celebration of festival in the contemporary world represents a mechanism by which the community deals expressively with the forces of modernity.

“Re-Interpreting the Myth of Longterok” (2009), is an article by Anungla Aier and Tiatoshi Jamir which explores the story of Longterok narrating that the Ao Nagas appeared from a stone. It also gives the archeological evidence of the stone and how the myth is not only concerned with the Ao Nagas but also with the other neighbouring tribes. The myth of migration in connection with Longterok has been woven around real historical places which are still being preserved in the tales narrated by people orally with the help of memory.

“Rocking the Cannon: Heavy Metal and Classical Literature” (2013) is an article written by Heather L. Lusty dealing with the relationship between heavy metal genre and literature. The influence of canonical literature on the musicians of heavy metal have been studied using

lyrics and how it has adapted historical events, myths, religious themes, and epics into their own contemporary art. Popular music has been considered as a counter culture that is against everything considered normal in the society. The author regards the development of heavy metal as a pattern following the bildungsroman style where the protagonist rejects the world of the society, parents and the set up system then re-asses their own values and joins the society again in terms of the recreated values. It praises heavy metal for embracing literary structure more than other popular music. Moving further on to say that heavy metal music portrait the post-humanist mindset because it is concerned with natural reality which addresses experience instead of moral conclusion and shifting its attention towards subjective experience rather than an objectivity which is derived from the concepts of the society shared by people. The first section of the article is devoted to the Bible as a text and its use in the lyrics of heavy metal genre. The second portion of the article addresses lyric poetry stating that many musicians begin as poets. As regard to lyrical poetry, the band Iron Maiden being the highest at adapting literature into their lyrics. Among many such adaptations, one work include the song 'The Trooper' as adapted from the poem 'The Charge of The Light Brigade' by Lord Alfred Tennyson. The final portion of the article lays emphasis on epic novel and its use in metal music.

“Biodiversity Conservation Ethos in Naga Folklore and Folksongs” (2014) by Martemjen Lanusashi Lkr looks at the natural environment which forms an important aspect in the life of all the Nagas. Owing to their attachment to their surroundings, the myths and taboos, cultures, folktales and folksongs have all been rooted and developed with the help of the natural environment.

“Ritual, Performances, and Transmission: The Gaddi Shepherds of Himachal Himalayas” (2015) is an article by Mahesh Sharma which documents the 'Nuala' ritual of the Gaddi

shepherds as a prism of folklore and social change. The paper also sheds light on the changes in the practice of the ritual and performance with the transmission and change in the environment leading to dislocated disembodied self. The changes in the rituals according to the article, is solely brought about by the introduction of education and modernity.

“Folksongs and Sacred Places Preserving Culture and Promoting Tourism: A Study of Prominent Areas in Himachal Pradesh” (2016) The article is a study conducted on the folksongs of Himachal Pradesh by Amrik Singh and Vipasha. The Folkongs according to the article gives insights on the history of the state, their religion and the culture of the people forming significant part of cultural heritage of the region. It also analyzes the lyrics of the folksongs and gives the interpretation of it. Though Himachal Pradesh stands aloof from the rest of the outside world owing to its geographical location yet, its grand culture is something that can never be left unnoticed. The article discusses on themes like secular culture, religion, patriarchy and women and marriage festivity. Different folksongs of Himachal Pradesh are sung at different occasions and ritual songs are among one which attribute to the preservation of their culture. The temples, churches and other religious places have also been emphasised by the author to portray the important role these religious places plays at preserving culture and promoting tourism. According to the article, folksongs hold a significant part of their cultural heritage as oral literature goes beyond the realm of mere entertainment.

“African Oral Tradition” (2018) by Sharon Wilson talks about the oral tradition of the African people. The oral tradition is very close to the African people’s way of life. Knowledge is passed on from one generation to another through oral narratives. As far as music is concerned, they are also known to be fond of music. Music transfers values and knowledge and it is also a way of celebrating important events in a community.

“Re-visiting Khasi Folktales: Folktales as Resistance” by Hakani Sae Paia Laloo is an article dealing with Khasi folktales to trace the political, economic and social changes which were prominent in the Khasi hills during the earlier period of time. It has also attempted to explore conflicts which were in existence between the Khasis and the British and the resistance brought forward by the Khasis against the invaders. The author narrates the Khasi folktale of “*U Suidnoh bad U Thlen*” which talks about the life of a man named Thlen. The tale has a variety of interpretations to it and one among them is the political implication which associated the British to U Thlen and the Khasi chiefs as U Suidnoh. The other tale is ‘*U Sier Lapang*’ which is a story about a stag that lived with its mother in the plains. Through these two folktales, Hakani Sae Paia Laloo tried to trace to portray the struggles that the Khasi people faced and the changes brought about by the British.

“Identity of Ao-Naga and Sümi-Naga Women as Gleaned from Folklores” (2018) is a paper written by R. Longchar and H.S. Kinny, laying emphasis on the importance of folklore as narratives of the communities who follow oral-tradition. It also emphasises on how the Ao and Sumi communities have relied on the set of folklores to glean their past. The article discusses in depth the customs followed by their Ao-Naga and Sümi-Naga women and the role they played in society with relation to marriage and division of property.

“Divulgence of Naga Culture Through the Concoction of Supernatural and Universal Wisdom in Easterine Kire’s *When the River Sleeps* and *Son of the Thundercloud*” (2018) is an article by Arya Sekhar, R Lekshmi, and RS Anusudha examining the works of Easterine Kire which unveils the Naga culture and traditions by merging the spiritual world and universal wisdom. The article depicts Easterine Kire as a preserver of her own culture and the righteousness of the human world. Globalization and modernization have led to the

deterioration of culture and this article explains how Kire through her writings, safeguards the Naga culture.

1.5 Aims and objectives

- a) To study different forms of folksongs of the Western Angami region.
- b) To analyze the lyrics of the folksongs and interpret the lyrics and meanings then prevailing among the village seniors and the significance of their performance contexts.
- c) To explore certain aspects of Angami people embedded in their folksongs, leading to identification, classification and evaluation of the folksongs.
- d) To examine the issue of transmission and preservation of the folksongs in the wake of changes brought by education, modernity and urbanization.
- e) To analyze the relationality of identity and heritage of the Angami Nagas with the folksongs through memory and performances.

1.6 Hypothesis

- a) The folksongs sung by the Angami community have played an important role at preserving their culture, history and traditions through the passage of time.
- b) Lyrics of the folksongs which incorporated archaic words of the olden days by the elders of the Angami community pose a hindrance in the way of understanding and interpretation due to the change in environment, lifestyle and introduction of modern education and loss of their relevance in modern lifestyle.
- c) The performance of these folksongs during events and celebration has helped in preserving them as agencies of ethnic cultural identity and ancestral wisdom through the ages.

1.7 Methodology

- a) The present research is based on cultural studies with particular references to the oral tradition of the Angami Naga community of Nagaland drawing upon theoretical concepts of orality and folklore, ethnicity and performance, memory and heritage in course of the study.
- b) This research is qualitative in nature. As a qualitative research, interviews and participants observation comes under the research methodology. The data for the research was collected through fieldwork. Fieldwork method collects data which provides the first hand information of the society under study. The researcher considered the different aspects of the society relevant for the present study being mindful that the society is not a material thing that can be studied under controlled conditions.
- c) The fieldwork for the research was done in two phases which lasted from November 2018 to December 2019 and May 2022 to June 2022. The first phase of the research was personal interviews on the folksongs of the Angamis. The songs were recorded from persons having exponential knowledge of the tradition and questions were raised in regard to the meaning, transmission, importance, and the performance of the folksongs. In the process of the interviews, the interviewed resource person faces difficulties at times in remembering the correct tune of the folksongs which were sung in the past. It has also come to the notice of the researcher that in most cases the individual faced confidence issues when it comes to singing a folksong alone as they are meant to be performed in groups and not by an individual. The researcher has also employed the use of available literature on the Angami society, unfortunately in the case of the Angamis; materials on folksongs still remain scanty and limited. Nevertheless, some folksongs have been recorded and found in print yet the

interpretation of the meaning and the usage or purpose of the folksongs have not been mentioned anywhere. The interviews conducted were mostly unstructured and knowledgeable persons of folksongs were chosen for a close reading of the texts for finding proper meanings of the song because of the archaic nature of the language which has to a certain extent lost currency in the modern colloquy. The researcher also participated in the celebration of the Angami Youth Organisation jubilee in order to observe and analyse how the folksongs are still preserved and presented or revived during celebrations and festivals. The second phase of the personal interview mostly dealt with the problem of today's Angami society and how they have been faring in preserving their culture and tradition. The subject of disappearance of many festivals have been emphasised as the folksongs are mostly sung during festivals and it has been noticed that with the abandonment of festivals, the status of folksongs has considerably declined.

1.8 Research gap

- a) There is dearth of written history relating to Nagaland as well as its people except a few among writings done since the later part of the 19th century.
- b) Folklore and other traditions have not much been taken up for extensive research.
- c) More particularly the music tradition of the Angami's, its relationship with the traditional life style, its present scenario in the face of changing environment, efforts for its survival as a site of heritage etc. have not been explored so far.

1.9 Limitation of the study

As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, Nagaland is comprised of a number of tribes having different dialects and traditions. Each tribe has its own unique characteristics and dialectical differences forms a major boundary among the different communities. Though the

Nagas assume a larger identity collectively, they are distinct and discrete entities based on the differences which come in the form of language, origin myth and migration of the tribe in question. The study on Naga oral tradition has still remained very limited owing to the difficulty in understanding dialects. A single community in Nagaland is stretched and scattered towards different villages and it poses as a hindrance towards conducting research by trying to cover the whole region. The Angamis themselves have been divided into four regions and each region has a number of villages scattered kilometres away from each other. The four Angami regions speak a common dialect known as *Tenyidie* even so the tone and accent of speech differs from each other. The villages coming under Western Angami region also speak *Tenyidie* with slight differences in tone and accent from each other. Beside the tone and accent, there are some words differences as well. The present study is limited to only a part of the Angami community residing in the Western Angami region. The Southern Angami region, the Northern Angami region and the Chakhroma are not included in this study due to the challenge of understanding dialects. Based on the interviews conducted and the oral narration of the elders, it has been found that words which are often not used in casual conversations and is considered complex are used in sentences rendering it challenging and problematic for the researcher to understand. The important point to be extracted out of the field work is that an interpreter is necessarily required to break down the words or narration of the elders to simple *Tenyidie* dialect.

1.10 Relevance of the study

Folklore is a representation of life and the society. The concept of folklore relies on change and continuity. It includes every kind of folk traditions and oral texts which has been carefully preserved and transmitted orally from generation to generation. Folklore can also be termed as oral tradition and it is not confined to the past alone. The study of the past enables the present to benefit from it. Though many genres of oral tradition have been lost, many

have managed to adapt and survive in other forms. The folklore materials like folksongs which are only revived during festivals or important events are cultural markers and serve as a community's heritage. It is not important for heritage to be tied to an ancestral site or a specific geographical location, the very act of transmitting folksongs or other traditional knowledge with the help of cultural memory and performing it in a group itself becomes a heritage. The performance of such folk tradition establishes the identity of a community. Despite the changes brought about by modernity on various levels, folklore materials have continued to survive in small and big ways. The preservation of such folklore materials points out to memory as an important vehicle for cultural transmission.

The present study attempts to make use of theories like cultural memory, performance theory, heritage and ethnicity to explore the culture and tradition of the Angami Nagas. Field work was conducted for collecting primary data as the Nagas are known to follow oral tradition. The collection of folksongs was done through interviews and participants were selectively picked out from different villages of the Western Angami region. When we look back at the history of the Nagas, the Christian missionaries forms the major reason behind introducing changes in the Naga society at large. With Christianity came education and modernity and various traditional practices were abandoned. With the disappearance of various traditional and cultural practices, it endangered the existence of folklore materials. Observing the present Naga society and the Angamis in particular, everything has become westernized. From the structure of the house itself to the manner of dressing, the western lifestyle has dominated the native cultural lifestyle. Nevertheless, the culture and tradition of the Angami Nagas continue to be passed on through memory and many have started preserving it through written text by recording it and printing it in books.

However, in terms of folksong, no much importance had been given to preserve or educate the youngsters about it. The materials on folksongs are scarce and researchers prefer

to deal with other materials of folklore beside folksongs. Various materials on folktales have been made available but the statuses of folksong still remain very low. The researcher has also contacted the well known Publishing Heritage House in Dimapur if any books on folksongs have been published and the response was that the need for such books have been discussed but it has not published any books on folksongs yet. This is just an example to showcase the little attention given to preserving folksongs. The Naga society and the Angamis in particular continue to perform folksongs only during festivals and important occasions. Beside this platform, no knowledge on folksongs is being transmitted whether orally or through written text.

1.11 Chapterisation

This thesis has been divided into five chapters.

Chapter 1 Introduction

It will give a brief study of the Nagas, especially the Tenyimia Angami people, and their culture. The chapter will take a peek into the research topic, the nature, scope, literature review, hypothesis, research gap, aims and objectives and the methodology as well.

Chapter- 2 An Overview of Angami Naga Cultural Life

This chapter focusses on the cultural life of the Angami people encompassing various social, political, economic activities, religion, material culture, festivals, traditions of music and dance, continuity and change, myths and legends of origin.

Chapter-3 Themes in Angami Folksongs: Significant Traits

This chapter will analyze the different folksongs of the Angamis and interpret its theme and meanings relating to their history, culture, tradition, ethnicity and identity.

Importance will also be given on how the folksongs reflect the past and how the performance of various folksongs have brought the Angami community together as one, laying emphasis on cultural memory which comes under collective memory. The chapter will also categorize and divide the folksongs into its own specific genre and also look into the relationship between the Angami community and their natural environment. Nature has always played a significant role in the life of the Nagas as a whole. They view nature as a supernatural being, possessing unnatural power and it will be found evident in folksongs which weave their beliefs into the lyrics. The chapter will extract the imageries of nature that has been woven into folksongs and interpret the meaning and significance of it in the Angami society.

Chapter-4 Transmission and Preservation of Folksongs

This chapter will address the research problem on a theoretical foundation bringing in various issues of cultural studies like folkloristics, cultural memory and performance, ethnicity and identity, gender and heritage on the basis of which the tradition of Angami folksongs will be examined.

Chapter-5 Conclusion

This chapter will summarize the whole chapters of the study and give an impression on the central idea of the research.

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