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EDITORIAL

I take this opportunity to write the editorial as ICFAI University Nagaland introduces its first issue of IUN Journal of Social Sciences.

As I began to reflect upon academic excellence, Tim Duncan's quote, "Good, better, best never let it rest until your good is better and your better is best" has really inspired me. It is equally important to excel in our academic domain and to strive to excel in our social life as well. Our society and our academic life are in a constant flux with new ideas and perspectives flooding in from varied corners. In a situation such as this, it is imperative that one is well informed of what is happening in and around us. In this era of globalization, in order to strive for excellence in the academics, one need to be reminded again and again that education and learning influences the decision making in our life and it gives us the advantage to choose a good profession. Education intensifies one's own capabilities and what we are really good at. Being aware or informed of varied fields of knowledge will always facilitate one to reach the higher objective. Perhaps, it is not wrong to say that learned and educated group always resort to logical and rational ways of addressing the issues that surrounds them. Education not only makes one knowledgeable and free, but also brings out the rationality in one's life and issues relating to it.

Recently, Prof. Romila Thapar while delivering the third Nikhil Chakravartty Memorial Lecture (2014), titled 'To Question or not to Question: That is the Question," asked, "There are more academics in existence than ever before but most prefer not to confront authority even if it debars the path of free thinking. Is this because they wish to pursue knowledge undisturbed or because they are ready to discard knowledge, should authority require them to do so." "It is not that we are bereft of people who can think autonomously and ask relevant questions. But frequently where there should be voices, there is silence. Are we all being co-opted too easily by the comforts of conforming," she further asked. Education is certainly a powerful tool in the hands of the person who strives to excel and has immense value in today's rapidly changing world. With this few words I would like to encourage

everyone to contribute and update one's knowledge in order to strive for excellence in the academic arena and beyond. In this first issue of IUN Journal of Social Sciences, there are many interesting papers that touch upon the areas such as advertisements, ethical, ethnoarchaeology, attires, role of Skepticism in the Philosophy etc.

Rovizonuo Angami discusses on how advertising occupies a central place in the competitive or partly competitive market economy and the most popular and the fastest mode of transmitting information to the potential consumers. Although advertisements *per se* can be considered as informative, it is mostly used as an influential devise in business enterprise. The psychological techniques are used by both the visual media and the print media. She further explains that another powerful technique engrained in advertisements is prompting the consumer through the status consciousness.

Anthony Rimai explains that Kant was aware of the evil nature of mankind and the gruesome consequence of war is one of such manifestations. He did not live during the time of First World I, neither the Second but he in a way foresaw and dreamt of perpetual peace which even though it is a far cry can be a possibility because it is ingrained in the very concepts of the pure practical reason. The article is an attempt to consider the ground of such possibilities which Kant felt is in the essence of his ethical discourse.

Nutazo Lohe highlights the rich depository fields of ethnoarchaeology by reviewing the living material cultures and practices of both tangible and intangible sources which are of archaeological and historical importance for the Nagas to know its verifiable past history which is still under investigation. He explains that the premise of carrying out any research is determined by the types of sources and methods one chooses to employ. It is further assessed by how one use different sources and methods to assert the relevance of intended study. In the subject of ethnoarchaeological study, it is equally important to identify the type of people and region one is intending to study and whether or not, the subject under study is relevant in the present context. Taking all these into account, this paper developed to define the concept of ethnoarchaeology, its nature and purpose by highlighting the prospects and relevance of study in Nagaland.

R. Longchar enlightens us the idea of dress which have been neglected by earlier historians but has emerged as an important discourse since it is closely tied with ethnic identity and along with kinship, commensality and common cult are the "surface pointers" which make recognition at a distance possible. Thus the adoption of western culture by the Nagas did not wholly displace the earlier traditions particularly the tradition of dress since using the concept of surface pointers or dresses as ethnic markers we see that even today also it is possible to recognize an Ao woman during especial occasions like festivals and cultural functions because they wear the traditional wrap-around, shawl, ornaments, hair bun etc. Modern scholars believe that dressing is a marker of identity and a means of non-verbal communication.

Talitula Ozukum looks at the ways in which community participates in the functioning of schools in a society. She moves away from the existing proposition of how community participation in education are usually studies in other states. The paper tries to locate the case of Nagaland which gives a new model of looking at community participation through the process of a concept called 'Communitisation'. The paper further attempts to look at the issue of community participation in education, particularly in elementary education in the state of Nagaland. Due attention is given on the concept of 'Social Capital' as a critical component of the process of communitisation.

Rovikotuo Yhoshü discusses the role of Skepticism in Philosophy. He holds that Skepticism has helped to belittle dogmatism. Skepticism has forced the dogmatic philosopher to find better and stronger arguments for their views and try to find answers against the attack of the skeptics. The skeptics have helped stop and check dogmatism. Blind faith cannot exist. It has forced people to think and has stopped rash speculation. So skepticism has become an important and indispensable part of philosophy and it continues to gain ground in philosophical discourses.

(Dr. Resenmenla Longchar)

Contributors

Rovizonuo Angami is Asst. professor (selection grade) at Patkai Christian College (Autonomous) and also a Research scholar at ICFAI University, Nagaland.

Anthony Rimai is a Doctoral Scholar in the Department of Philosophy, University of Hyderabad.

Nutazo Lohe is a Doctoral Scholar in the Department of History, University of Hyderabad.

Resenmenla Longchar is Assistant Professor in the Department of History, ICFAI University, Nagaland.

Tiatula Ozukum is a Doctoral Scholar in the School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Rovikotuo Yhoshü is Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy, ICFAI University, Nagaland.

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Advertisement and Consumer Psychology

ROVIZONUO ANGAMI

The role of advertisement cannot be overlooked in our market driven economy. Organisations invest a significant share of their profit in marketing their products through advertisements. Several outstanding works have been done by management experts in this line. However, the influence of the advertisement on the buying behaviour of consumers to vie with their joneses has been an overlooked phenomenon. According to James Duesenberry, a real understanding of the problem of consumer behaviour must begin with a full recognition of the social character of consumption patterns, which is the tendency in human beings not only *to keep up with the Joneses* but also to surpass the Joneses (Duesenberry, 1949); by Joneses Duesenberry means the rich neighbours.

This, in other words, means that the consumer has a tendency to strive constantly towards a higher consumption level and to emulate the consumption patterns of one's rich neighbours or associates. Certainly, this is the age of high mass-consumption; an era distinguished by consumer's sovereignty. In our times, most of the resources are directed (on a large scale) to the production of durable consumer goods and services. Greater attention is paid to the production of commodities that are preferred and consumed. Hence, in order to promote the commodity and services – goods and services –advertising has become an important part of economic activity.

Hence, advertising occupies a central place in the competitive or partly competitive market economy. The origin of advertising can be traced back to the very beginning of recorded history of trade and commerce, in the form of *announcemen*t. Archaeologists working in countries around the Mediterranean Sea had dug up signs indicating, as a proof of, such announcements of various events and offers. The Romans painted walls to announce gladiator fights, and the Phoenicians painted pictures promoting their wares on large rocks along pirate routes (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004). Over centuries, these elements were used for promotions of products; and that led to the birth of organised form of advertisement. In the early ages, the advertisements (or the announcement materials) were handmade, and were produced on a limited scale. Later on, this phenomenon was further developed, and gradually gained momentum for large scale promotional purposes. Thus, in modern business environment, advertisements have become one of the major communication tools between the manufacturers and the consumer of the products (Zain-Ul-Abideen & Salman Saleem, 2012, p. 55).

Indubitably, advertising can be used both as an informative and persuasive devise. Advertising is the most popular and the fastest mode of transmitting information to the potential consumers. The consumers need information about the prices and the features of different products available in the market, and they want it to be made available to them by the firms; and the mass-media comes very handy for this purpose.

Although advertisements per se can be considered as informative, it is mostly used as an influential devise in business enterprise. When a new product is launched at a low price and where the consumers have larger income to spend, persuading them to buy the product is certainly a very significant activity of market economy. Every firm has different media for advertising their products. The medium or the Communication channel, could

be impersonal (such as mass media) or interpersonal (a formal conversation between a salesperson and a customer, or an informal conversation between two or more people that takes place face-to-face, by telephone, by mail or online). The mass media are generally classified as print (news papers, magazines, billboard), broadcast (radio, television) or electronic (primarily the internet). The new modes of interactive communication of messages to provide direct feedback are beginning to blur the distinction between interpersonal and impersonal communications. For example, most companies encourage consumers to visit their websites to find out more about the product or service being advertised or to order online; but not all visitors receive the same message. The information visitors see on the site and the ordering links to which they are routed depend on their selections (in the form of clicking patterns) during the visits or even past visits to the site. The direct marketers – often called database marketers also seek individual responses from advertisements that they place in the mass media; broadcast, print and online, as well as from direct mail. The Home shopping networks are expanding dramatically as consumers demonstrate their enthusiasm for TV and online shopping. The direct marketers use data regarding recent buying behaviour of their customers. Firms, often, use more than one medium to advertise their products. Remarkably, advertising bestows mixed effects on the growth of economy. Though some of the economic effects may be seen vital for the growth and modernisation of the society, there may be other facets of economic effects of advertising that can be quite lopsided (Schiffman and Kanuk 2008, p. 278). Hence, advertising as a major promotion tool has the following strengths:

1. It provides information about the availability of goods, its price and quality: thus leading the consumer to make an efficient choice.
2. It increases awareness and thereby creates demand for a commodity and helps in expanding the scale of production and achieving economies of scale.

3. It encourages competition. The competing producers are tempted to undertake innovation and adopt new technologies that are conducive for modernising the output and making goods available at a lower cost.
4. It announces the availability of near substitutes and breaks the existence of monopoly element.
5. As a mass means of communication, it can contact and influence numerous people simultaneously, quickly and at a low cost per prospect.
6. It can deliver the same message consistently in a variety of contents.
7. It can reach prospects that cannot be approached by salesmen (such as the top executives).
8. It helps to pre-sell goods and propels the buyers to retailers.
9. It offers a wide choice of channels for transmission of messages such as visual (by sight), oral (by ear), or both oral and visual.
10. It is very useful to create maximum interest and offer adequate knowledge of the new product when the innovation is being introduced in the market.

Nonetheless, it may be mentioned that, advertising as a promotion tool, like any other socio-economic activities, has its own weaknesses. Many of these weaknesses can be eliminated by other elements of promotion when they are combined with advertising (Sherlekar, 2009, p. 346). Hence, some of the weaknesses are:

1. In case it's not in the form of informative advertisement, it misleads the consumer.
2. It can lead to wastage of resources, as each firm is forced by its competitors to advertise even more heavily, thus diverting resources from productive use.
3. The expenses on advertisement cannot be borne by small firms: the growth of advertising has also seen the growth of big oligopoly firms.

4. To a great extent, it is much less effective than personal selling and sales promotion (for example, in convincing and securing a purchase commitment).
5. It is essentially a one-way communication tool. It cannot be used in obtaining quick and accurate feedback, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of message.
6. Advertising media, (such as newspapers, magazines) carry many messages competing to secure attention of audience simultaneously. Thus, it creates noise in communication.

Though it is very difficult to assert whether the net effect of advertisement is good or bad for the society, one can measure its impact in terms of prices, output, employment, resources and so on. Against this backdrop, let us move on to consumer psychology and the impact of advertisement on consumer behaviour.

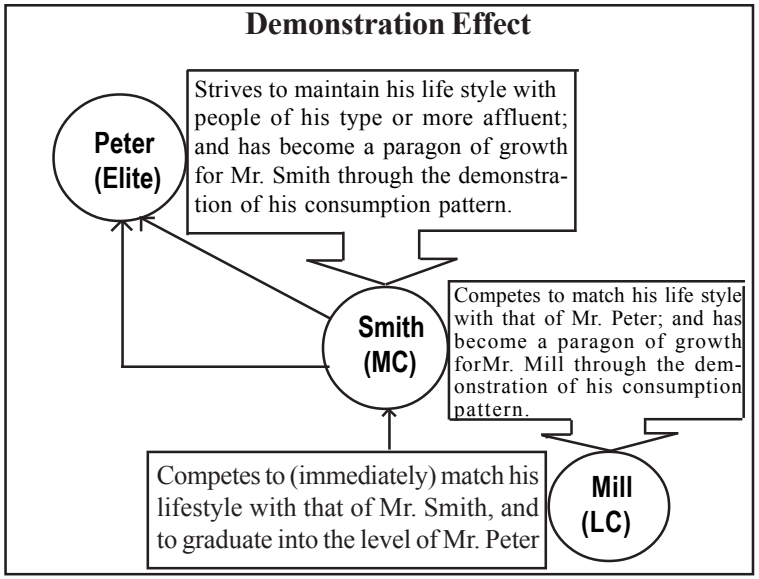
The human psyche is such that most of the consumer choices can be deeply influenced by advertisements. Television has become a very strong media, which influences the consumer taste. Wonder why? The reason is simple. Man processes information through certain representational cues. These are auditory, visual, olfactory, gustatory and kinaesthetic (Alexander, 2005, pp. 76-78). Most people can be easily influenced by visual and auditory information. Let us take an example. I am sure, when you watched the old advertisement of Close-up toothpaste that flashed on your Television screen; you must have watched it with fun and laughter. But, it does not end there: in your leisure, in your lighter moments, you, automatically, tune-out those ad lines: *aap close-up karte hai….aap close-up kyu nahi kartai hai….!* This phenomenon is sure enough an indication that the Close-up advertisement has gone deep down into your cognitive system – to your unconscious mind – and that the name *Close-up* will remain in your mind whenever you set out to market. The advertising

companies know the information-influencing cues of different age group: if the accessing cues used for children is olfactory and gustatory (like in *Melody chocolate* and *Sunflower oil*), then the cues for youth are visual and kinaesthetic (like in *Monte Carlo*); and for the older generation it's mostly auditory and visual, with kinaesthetic elements that work (like the advertisement of LIC). These psychological techniques are used by both the visual media and the print media. This does wonders, when it is intertwined with an element of expectancy for the return of values in the form of quality-products, in equal proportion to the quantum of amount being spent.

Yet another powerful technique engrained in advertisements is that of prompting the consumer through the status consciousness. Man, as a consumer, by nature, is an emulating species: one always wants to be ahead of others in all aspects of consumption! Firms and companies take this competitive-consumption pattern of man into consideration while advertising their products. The companies often point out the superiority of their products in their advertisements, implicitly or explicitly. Subsequently, the vying mortals, being carried away by the advertisements, often end up purchasing those products, which they think are superior to that of their immediate counterpart! The consumer satisfies his psychological desire to be superior to his fellow beings and the company satisfies its desire to make money!

This phenomenon in Duesenberry's *Relative Income Hypothesis* is called *Conspicuous Consumption* through *Demonstration Effects*. The rich (joneses) demonstrates his consumption pattern, which the middle class vie and, at the same time, strive to emulate; this in turn triggers the desire for a change in the consumption pattern of the lower class. In this process of status struggle, the behavioural disposition of the Middle Class (MC) and of the Lower Class (LC) would be to move upwards, while that of the upper class would be maintain the Elite status in

the socio-economic strata. Hence, the Elite class would always look for something rare, and uncommon, while the middle class would look for products demonstrated by the elite class, and the lower class looks for the products demonstrated by the middle class.



To move on a step further, through this process, there would be a radical change in the consumption pattern of individuals and society; and the consumer expenses increase. The poor people try to imitate the living style of the rich. The rich in order to identify themselves go for further superior goods- for example a leap from *Alto* to *Ertica* and so on, as noticeable in our present society. On a wider spectrum, the People in the developing countries try to follow the consumption pattern of the affluent nations. This, in other words, means that the influence of Demonstration Effect cannot be overlooked while reckoning the growth scales in economy.

Needless to say that the consumption beyond one's means would lead to his/her deficit budget; though the competing spirit in

the consumer would enable him to struggle to make good the deficit within an affordable time. However, if the consumer is, in any way, deprived of, or rather bankrupt of, either the intellectual capital or the required resources, then his inclination to progress towards the joneses would lead to frustration, and he may resort to indulging in corrupt practices. Alternately, if the consumer has the right attitude coupled with the right environment and the knowhow for the right workmanship, then he would strive and persevere to match-up his income with the joneses; so that he can reasonably emulate the consumption pattern of the joneses and demonstrate his elevated status to the society. But, If the consumer knows that he is not in a position to achieve the consumption pattern of the joneses and elevate his social status, but has the right environment and the knowhow for the right workmanship, then he would strive and persevere to promote his progeny to that status by way of educating them to augment intellectual capital that would help them move to the status of the joneses.

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Kant on Perpetual Peace: A Rational Enterprise

ANTHONY RIMAI

Scholars have always wondered at the works of Immanuel Kant. His contributions in many ways are unparalleled. The three *Critiques* were completely off the chart and are still echoing even today. On the other hand there are handfuls of his less ventured works until recently. One among them is *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch —1795,* (henceforth, *Perpetual Peace*). This is one of his major works on political philosophy. As a theoretical venture the title speaks for itself, pointing towards a very positive aspiration on political relationships between nations, states or countries. This particular essay of Kant intends to convict humanity of the plausible state of perpetual peace, if not attainable, at least to be an ideal to aspire for. A closer look at the essay would affirm that *perpetual peace* is a rational enterprise, a principle which Kant felt has its locus in the very core of the moral inclinations even though politically loaded term in his essay. In this article, attempts will be made to consider Kant's perspective on *perpetual peace* as a rational enterprise. A principle that has moral demands having its root firmly grounded in the very fabric that which defines one as a morally inclined rational being. So, the thrust is not the technical reading of Kant's perspective on the federation of world but the metaphysical stand of his concepts of perpetual peace having its grounding in the very core of rationality.

One thing history has taught us well is the gruesome consequences of war. Its ghastly truth is the unimaginable cost of precious and innocent lives. Such is the truth of our history. Volumes

have been written about the horrifying facts of war. Enough have been said and done. And is now almost a century since the last World War. Thanks to the varied organizations instrumental in the initiation of peace between nations and countries. Kant's *Perpetual Peace*, is also no less instrumental. More than two centuries have passed and yet Kant is still making the headlines with his philosophical thoughts in and through his readers and ardent followers.[1] Such is the impact of his works even today. Having said, this article does not intend to venture Kant's peace from this line of thoughts but rather stick to his philosophy of man as a morally inclined rational being, an agent who can live out the ideal such as *perpetual peace*. Perhaps, Kant noticed that how fragile and vulnerable mankind might appeared to be, there is a pinch of hope because humans are the only rational being who has moral inclinations with an unquenchable hope for better tomorrow. It is interesting to note that Kant picked up this rather intriguing title of his essay from a caption of a painting of Churchyard at a Dutch inn (Kant, 1917, p. 106). The caption without doubt had a satirical inclination. But the beauty lies in the fact that Kant saw beyond the irony in the caption of the painting, that even though death may be the final doorway to a state of perpetual peace, as rational human being, this is a plausible state to attain while one is still breathing, if not, it can still serve as a perfect ideal for one to aspire for. To Kant, *perpetual peace* was not simply a philosopher's dream or wishful thinking but something that can be realized by a morally inclined rational agent. Before moving further perhaps it is important to have a clearer understanding on morally inclined rational agents according to Kant.

One among the most significant contributions of Kant would be his utmost considerations for human as a morally inclined rational agent who are able to exercise one's free will. Kant in his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Moral* (1785), affirms the distinctive defining feature of a rational being as one 'who has the capacity to act according to the representation of laws; according

to principles, or a *will*' (Kant, 2011, p. 53). At the same time, Kant was certain that the Moral Law is within the rational beings and this is one thing that made him make such an affirmative statement that 'two things never ceases to amaze me, the starry heavens above and the moral law within' (Kant, 2003, p. 133). Following this line of definition, the article aims to affirm Kant's thought on the practicality of perpetual peace as a morally inclined aspiration that has its locus in the very core of one's reverence for law; that it takes a rational being to pursue such a state. But then again, there is another side to rational beings. It is the insatiable thirst for war which very much echoes the dark side of human nature which Kant has aptly put forth as the 'radical evil' (Kant, 1998, p. 59). But one got to be clear that the radical evil Kant was referring, was not some ontological beings or religiously inclined explanation of malevolent spirit, rather a nemesis of a morally inclined rational being. Kant was rather explicit and affirmed that, 'This evil is radical, since it corrupts the grounds of all maxims' (ibid). A. C. Armstrong is of the view that Kant was in essence favored war because of this diabolical nature of human beings (1931, pp. 197-204). This is a rather pessimistic perspective which Kant did not resort to because of his faith in the moral law within rational beings and the plausibility of his postulates. But at the same time, it is this human nature that Kant dreaded because this nature could literally cause all the nastiest things on earth. With this move of Kant, it is not hard to be convinced that a war could occur because of one man's greed in the era of Kings and Queens. Unfortunately, the fact remains that radical evil is essentially a human nature and trend of the above era persist even today. Radical evil is indeed one notorious phenomena of human nature. In spite of this human nature, Kant was hopeful because there is this seed of hope in the predisposition to 'personality' (Kant, 1998, p. 59). This predisposition to personality is a breather for Kant, because he avers that therein lies the seed of a rational, 'responsible being'; that this predisposition alone is rooted in the 'reason practical of itself, i.e. in reason

legislating unconditionally' (Kant, 2011, p. 50, p. 52). Kant is of the view that 'human beings are created for good', that the original predisposition is good (Kant, 1998, pp. 65-66). With this even though Kant admitted the conundrums of the evil nature of human beings, he was optimistic about the plausible community that is freed of the predicament of radical evil. It is to this predicament of mankind which Kant gave his all and consciously inclined even to windows of divine assistance in Religion within the *boundaries of mere reason - 1794* (henceforth *Religion*)

Perhaps, the perfect opponent to such diabolical vices in and through the evil nature of human beings, the insatiable thirst for war and destructions would be none other than its antonym, the peaceful nature of human beings a mirror image of the morally inclined rational beings. In this day and age, 'World Peace' is not only the desire of many beauty pageants' aspirants as they would modestly reply to the questioners. The world really do need a little more of peace every day in every nook of the world. Kant was fascinated by the satirical caption of the painting at the inn simply because he saw it as a practical aspiration of a morally inclined rational being. But before going any further let us consider the concept, 'peace'.

The term, 'peace' is a rather ambiguous word with many facets. The Oxford Dictionary defines it as 'a situation or a period of time which there is no war or violence in a country or an area'. From the religiously perspective, especially the one which Kant is very much aware of is the Biblical concept of peace. In the Old Testament (OT) section of the Bible, the concept of peace in Hebrew is *shalom*. Steven Schweitzer opines that the biblical concept of *shalom* is equally multifaceted (2004, pp. 103-113). James K. Brucker on the other hand read it as a loose synonym for 'wholeness' (2012, pp. 58-59). What Brucker is attempting is to give a pragmatic implication of peace from a believer's perspective that one is made whole or complete in and through the work of God. The *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* defines it as complete, well, happy, peace (-able), welfare,

make good, etc. (James Strong, 1996). According to the *New Bible Dictionary* (3rd Edition), the concept, *ðâlôm* (shalom) refers to 'completeness', soundness' or 'well-being' and its Greek word, '*eirçnç'* in the New Testament (NT) has the full content of the *ðâlôm* coupled with spiritual connotations (Marshall, et.al. 2007). It is imperative to note that in the NT this concept is personified in the person of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. It is on this ground the biblical concept of peace is inherent to the believer who tries to imitate the very nature of Christ. *Peace* is thus an outward manifestation of one's belief. This reading is most significant for this article because of Kant's vast knowledge of Christianity and its influence on his philosophical writings. Robert S. Taylor maintains that there is a close affinity with the concept of perpetual peace and highest good through God as the 'guarantee of perpetual peace' (2010, pp. 1-24). Taylor avers that, highest good and perpetual peace is very much related and is an 'effectively observable condition of the highest good' (Kant, 2010, p. 13). Taylor furthers it by giving three-folded similarities between highest good and perpetual peace (2010, pp. 10-11):

a. They are both objective *ends* derived from obligatory maxims
b. In both the cases Nature acts as a hindrance to achieve them
c. The desirability of approach to both *ends* is continuous

The approach of Taylor from this perspective brings out the perfect picture of the perpetual peace in lined with the highest good, the concepts of the pure practical reason.

From the discussions, so far Kant's concept of peace in his essay, *perpetual peace* is but a product of two distinct sources. The first having its root in his theologically tilted readings of the concept of peace that are implied in his works on religion and ethics through the concept of highest good which is the 'unconditioned totality of the object of pure practical reason' (Kant, 2002, p. 138). We are obliged by the pure practical reason to make complete object of the highest good which in turn gives the necessary practical-rational grounding for faith, immortality of the soul and God (Kant, 2013, xx). Werner S. Pluhar opines that Kant in his introduction of the

highest good gives the complete package of all ends where it is conceived as a condition in which one is not only virtuous but happy (*ibid*, I). Happiness is then a loose synonym of being at a state of peace. Allen W. Wood qualifies it further by saying that the highest good is 'what is best for the world' (2010, p. 124). This concept then very much captures the definition of peace as 'complete' or 'wholesome' which goes in one accord with Kant's perspective on this concept as 'the whole, the complete good' (2013, p. 142). Pluhar further affirms that the highest good is something which 'the moral law (the unconditional) commands us to pursue' and is achievable within the Kantian ethical and religious discourse (ibid, Ii-Iii). Perhaps, this brings us closer to the confirmation that Kant is not simply 'a philosopher who cherish a sweet dream of perpetual peace' but avers it as a possibility to a rational agent. His affirmation of human beings as morally inclined rational agent presupposes the implication it has on one's duty towards other not as a means but as an end in itself. This moral obligation to consider other as end is the second distinct source which brings out the inherent nature of the aspiration for perpetual peace as an end from one's moral inclinations. The act of the reason to willfully comply with the Categorical Imperative suggests the fact that, the rational agent has the duty to stay in a peaceable state with one another because the moral duty towards other as an end demands certain peaceful co-existence which vividly describes Kant's ethical discourse. So from this perspective, to live in harmony within the society is but a different reading of the third Categorical Imperative, 'So act as to use humanity, both in your own person and in the person of every other, always at the same time as an end, never simply as a means' (H. J. Paton, 1947, p. 129). This maxim is from the perspective of upholding other as 'end-in-itself.' The implication of this imperative is duty towards other. So, the bridging of this claim of peace towards other human beings is but reciprocity between any rational agents. In other words, human beings are the only beings who are morally inclined rational beings and can reciprocate such acts. It is without doubt

there are certain groups of people whom Kant definitely kept out of the category by asserting, 'who can apply the laws or act according to the will'. This would definitely rule out infants, 'special people', and so forth.[2] For the simple reason, they cannot consciously apply the laws or act according to the will. One may still argue that, there are people who consciously choose to harm others, for instance, a sadistic person, who delights in inflicting pain on others. This in essence Kant believes but hopes that we tilt towards the predisposition of the goodness in us. So, having ruled out certain categories with respect to those who cannot really act on one's will and a plausible sadist, the move is that those morally inclined rational agent would reciprocate for a peaceful state. It is from this perspective inherent to the morally inclined rational agent because of one's strive for the highest good within that Kingdom of ends. Humanity as the only beings who are capable of morality is also a social being in the first place. As a social being there ought to be community or state where one ought to participate and above all as a rationally autonomous being. With this Kant came up with his formulae of the Kingdom of Ends, 'act as if you were through your own maxims a law-making member of a kingdom of end' (H. J. Paton, 1946, p. 129, 185). H. J. Paton affirms that the members of this kingdom are the rational agents and by participating in the making of this state one's worth of goodness is measured (ibid, p. 36). In *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason-1794 (*henceforth*, Religion),* the kingdom of ends is where the highest good can be realized (Kant, 1998, pp. 105-106). The state of such realization is a perfectly moral and harmonized community which in a loose sense spells a state of perpetual peace as a postulated concept of the pure practical reason. One among the most quoted statement of Kant is, 'I denied knowledge in order to make room for faith' (1965, p. 29). This statement though not really referred to complete denial of knowledge but the need to retain his postulated ideas such as God, immortality and freedom because of their significance in his philosophy. They are the postulates of the pure practical reason.

By postulating freedom, morality is made possible. Since there is postulated ideas of God and immortality the plausibility of the highest good is affirmed. And because of the postulation of the Kingdom of ends, the community of morally inclined rational beings with perfect sense of perpetual peace is a plausible claim. Kant opines that within such postulated community, which is somewhat like a divine state on earth demands its citizen the needs for public form of obligation and to keep on pursuing for such community even though the results have been so far discouraging (1998, pp. 114-115).

In sum, perpetual peace is a rational enterprise simply because it is a state of affair that the morally inclined rational beings participate with their rational autonomy as end. And in their participations, the Kingdom of ends is made possible because morality is a reality wherever freedom is experienced. The highest good is then the inherent aspiration of the morally inclined rational beings. This aspiration unfolds within the Kingdom of ends, a community where the members are rational. This in turn affirms that perpetual peace as an inherent fact of the rational agents who aspire for such community because it is also an objective end. And the morally inclined rational beings are the one that can attend this state of perpetual peace as an end because it is an inner principle of the will. "Hence, if there is an end that is also a duty, the only condition that maxims of actions, as means to ends, must contain is that of qualifying for a possible giving of universal law" (2010, p. 24).[3] Thus, the concept 'perpetual peace' from the perspective of highest good as an end shares the same objective end to morally inclined rational beings.

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Endnotes:

[1]There is a recent international project, '*Perpetual Peace Project*' through the influence of Kant's *Perpetual Peace*. It is a movement with an intention to capture the very core of his philosophy from a pragmatic perspective and splash it all over the world, across countries and nations in and through varied means of communications such as films, books, etc.
http://perpetualpeaceproject.org/
(Accessed on 15th October 2014)

[2]The term *Special people* is used instead of 'mentally challenged people'.

[3]*Metaphysics of Morals* 6:389

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Prospects and Relevance of Ethnoarchaeology in Nagaland

NUTAZO LOHE

Introduction

The writings and representation of any history cannot be limited to one method or source, but are inclined to multiplicity pertaining to the nature and scope of the subject under study. The Naga history first put into written with the coming of British rule in India saw meagre representation of archaeological sources and received minimum attention. The problem extends even today among the Nagas in the construction of the historiography and continues to remain as an important subject matter in order to understand its past history and heritage. There is, thus, a need and justification to carry out ground based field research to investigate and highlight the prospects and relevance of ethnoarchaeological study. In doing so, the paper highlights the prospects and relevance of carrying out ethnoarchaeological studies for constructing and retrieving self perception and consciousness of one's own history from an indigenous standpoint, keeping in mind the rich depository sites of the region of whose culture is believed to be a reflection of historical continuities that did not deviate much from the past.

Concept and definition of ethnoarchaeology

The concept of ethnographic information and its applications developed as early as the seventeenth century, and it has long been used as a method for interpreting and explaining

archaeological findings and records by archaeologists from the later part of the nineteenth century (Stiles, 1971). With this development of ethnographic application in archaeological study, conscious attempts have been made to systematize the use of ethnographic analogy in archaeology. The combination of these two methods is termed as ethnoarchaeology. It is a research approach and framework rather than a proper discipline where the combined methods of both ethnography and archaeology are applied to look out for past indicators or signature of human behaviour towards their physical environment among the non-mechanized traditional society.

The word "ethnoarchaeology" was first used and coined by Jesse Fewkes as early as in 1900 A.D. to refer to an archaeologist "who can bring as preparation for his work an intensive knowledge of the present life of the people whose prehistory is under investigation" (David and Kramer,2001, p. 6). Later on, it emerged as a distinct sub-field in the 1960's as part of broader changes in archaeological method and theory that were associated with what came to be known as "processual" or "new archaeology". Since then, a wide range of theoretical perspectives on the fusion relationship of ethnography and archaeology have influenced the interests, goals, application and methods of ethnoarchaeology. Carrying out ethnoarchaeological research activities, however vary along with the contexts from one region to another region due to various aspects like environment, geographical location, culture and behaviour of the people by which the variability of material culture is produced, distributed, consumed and discarded. Today, it is an accepted fact that the contribution of ethnoarchaeology towards the refinement of archaeological theory and its method cannot be overlooked but continues to remain significant in its approach and application.

According to David and Kramer (2001), ethnoarchaeology is the ethnographic study of the living cultures from archaeological perspectives which does not have a formed

or structured theory nor a method, but a research strategy embodying a range of approaches for understanding the relationships of material culture to culture as a whole.

To quote Stiles, "the field ethnoarchaeology still in the process of formation and as such lacks a general accepted definition or fully developed body of theory and methodology" (Stiles, 1971, p.88). Similarly, "like any other social sciences ethnoarchaeology advances not in its own but in partnership with its disciplinary siblings, archaeology and ethnography, and within the larger context of social science and its philosophy" (David and Kramer, 2001, p.409). Ethnoarchaeology by definition is "the use of ethnographic methods and information to aid in the interpretation and explanation of the archaeological data" (Stiles, 1971, p. 88). By this definition, he means the use of the present to explain the past which he referred as "archaeological ethnography" another name for ethnoarchaeology. Similarly, Gould (1989) uses the term 'living archaeology' for using the methods of both ethnography and archaeology in carrying out the study among living human societies. To Gould, "ethnoarchaeology is an ethnographic approach to the study of contemporary, living human societies that seeks to identify behavioural realities that structure the potential archaeological record" (Gould, 1989, p.3). According to another scholar, the most quoted definition and by far the longest is that of Stanislowski who defines ethnoarchaeology as "participant observation study of form, manufacturing, disturbance, meaning and use of artefacts and their function or institutional setting and social group correlation among non industrial peoples for the purpose of constructing better explanatory models and also to aid archaeological analogy and inference" (Agorsah, 1990, p. 191). Ethnoarchaeology as Stanislowski has viewed therefore is not an end in itself but one of the many tools which can be used to refine our explanations and understanding of the past. One of the most specific aims of ethnoarchaeology is "improving the quality of the

gathered information to make it more useful to archaeologists in formulating models and applying analogies" (Stiles, 1971, p.90).

It can be thus observed that definitions of ethnoarchaeology by different scholars have to be studied together with the specific reflections on the contexts of study in the form of individual orientation, background or areas of study. It is also obvious that such studies are generally carried out among the present traditional non-mechanized societies as a way of understanding the relationship between mankind and environment in an effort to look for some kind of signs or indicators in the understanding of the past.

Significance of Ethnoarchaeological Study

Stating the difference and the significance of studying ethnoarchaeology with archaeology, David and Kramer (2001) defends that unlike archaeology, ethnoarchaeology is not labour intensive nor does it destroy the data in the process of recovery; the data are not unique. It is less threatening to authorities than archaeology. It contributes to the understanding of human behaviour like archaeology does, but without losing the immediacy of human interaction. Archaeologists use their own life experiences, what they have heard, seen and read to interpret the fragmentary archaeological record. Common sense which is found in the archaeologists' cultural background and world views is not adequate to base analogies about the behaviour of other past cultural groups. Thus, ethnographic analogies according to Musalem (2009) is specifically done through ethnoarchaeology and provide a more complete context to understand cultural processes, structure and function of prehistoric societies, rather than the archaeological record alone.

Stating the importance of ethnoarchaeology in interpreting archaeological data, Gould (1989) noted that the archaeological record is subject to a wide range of transformation of both natural

and cultural origin which must be identified, disaggregated, and controlled before one can begin to infer the nature of human behaviour indicated by material remains. Archaeological explanation is an indirect process that must proceed in an organized manner with ethnoarchaeological observations. On the same note, in his book *Recovering the Past*, Gould (1990) further argues that to validate the contribution of an archaeologist to science, one must use and evaluate knowledge that resulted from ethnoarchaeological field work. There is a long duration of human history and one cannot literally read the past from material remains alone and there is a need for ethnoarchaeology to produce inferences of utility in the study of broad human culture. From his perspective, ethnoarchaeological study approaches the past human behaviour entirely from the views of contemporary cultural systems. To him, ethnoarchaeology can be used as a tool in helping form testable inferences from contemporary study of different societies which can be applied to the broader study of long term human history.

Similarly, describing the significance of ethnoarchaeology, Gould (1989) also brings forward a comparison model based on the work of Collingwood's *Idea of History* (Collingwood, 1946). He favours Collingwood's concept of history that views history as an idea of the past which is often invoked by archaeologists as a model for studying human past. However, he also points the limitations of Collingwood's idea of history which failed to provide a framework for evaluating the contested ideas of history about human past which one must construct itself, therefore ethnoarchaeology becomes important. Gould could not agree more on the concept put forth by Collingwood's idea of history, that the past is gone and has become history, and to know anything beyond our knowledge of tangible sources about the past today involves and consists of our ideas about it. To Gould, there is nothing wrong in speculating our ideas about the past. However, he argues that there is always the need of necessary and

complementary relationship between theory and empirical research to make inferences between the past and present which require testing and evaluation with respect to the limits of credibility. Therefore, to Gould, field work based ethnoarchaeological study provides an important framework as an approach to validate theory and speculations (in any) of the past history.

Colonial-Naga Contact and Ethnographic Discourses

The period of colonial contact with the Nagas began from 1832, when two British officers Captains Jenkins and Pemberton took a land route from Imphal to the British headquarter in Assam after they had retained Manipuri kingdom from Myanmar through the Treaty of Yandabo in 1826. The coming of the Europeans is considered to be the beginning of the writings on the Nagas. However, it was only from the 1870s that the Naga Hills came under the purview of a tradition of descriptive ethnography. It began first with the 'soldier-ethnographers' such as Butler and Woodthorpe who gave one of the earliest classifications of the Nagas in 1881. Woodthorpe distinguished the Angami Naga tribe from all the other tribes on the grounds of the presence or absence of the male 'kilt' as a basic item of dress (Imsong, 2004). Apart from this, detailed attempt of anthropological exploration and analysis of Naga culture were first laid by British anthropologists in their books, *The Angami Nagas* (1921), *The Sema Nagas* (1921) by J.H. Hutton and *The Lotha Nagas* (1922), *The Ao Nagas* (1926), *The Rengma Nagas* (1937) by J.P. Mills who came to the Naga Hills as administrators.

In view of this important step of development initiated by the British administrators cum ethnographers, the colonial discourses of framing one's identity largely have been unconsciously accepted by its readers. However, not all their discourses can be taken as adequate sources to make inferences about whose history they were writing. It needs further investigation to validate their

writings before conventionally accepted. Yhome (2007), a Naga scholar argues that the colonial history is however not an innocent narrative of the events of the past. Rather, it is a product of an Imperial rule seeking legitimacy and control. Within the paradigm of colonialism, the space and people are constructed by judiciously employing the western notion of state and its knowledge building apparatus and institutions. His point of argument is that the colonial rule in the Naga Hills had played an important role in the construction of modern Naga history. Nevertheless, considering the nature of their professions as administrators, the discourse and projection of Naga history through their perspective needs to be critically questioned to avoid distortion of facts from reality. For instance, he points out that one limitation on the writings of Nagas by the colonial writers was that, "they lack credibility in their patronage of names and terms against the originality of its actual meanings. Most of the names of communities in the present day usage are not their own but derived from the names referred to them by its neighbouring communities" (Yhome, 2007, p. 27). Further, it was observed that the methodologies of colonial writings served a purpose which came mostly due to sheer interest and administrative expediencies and therefore their methodologies relied more on the positivist approaches-descriptive ones. The speculation of the above limitations can be further seen in the description of Andrew West (1985) who maintained that the British took over the idea of "Nagas" as a separate entity from the plains and the lower hills people of Assam. Various derivations of the word 'Naga' were given by early British writers meaning 'naked', 'warrior' or 'mountaineer'. The Assamese and the Bengalis broadly classified several people as the 'Nagas' including some of the tribal groups of Northeast India like the Adi, Mishmi, Apa Tani, Singpho and Khampti . According to Elwin (1961), in India, it is common for tribesmen to call themselves as 'man', an attractive way of looking at themselves simply as people free of communal or caste associations. Going by his theory, Elwin suggests that the most likely derivation of the word Naga is from the word '*nok'*

which means 'people' in few Tibeto-Burman languages, as in Garo, Nocte and Ao (Indigenous tribes of Northeast India).

Much of the writings of both pre and post independence period continue to rely and replicate the material produced by the British administrators, firmly rooted in colonial discourse. Worth mentioning are the works of anthropologists and scholars like Furer Haimendorf's *The Naked Nagas* (1937) and Verrier Elwin's *Nagas in the 19th century* (1969) were not an exception while they did an extensive study in the life and culture of the Nagas. For instance, Imsong (2004) points out that the term 'Naga' continued to be used in an indiscriminate way including other generalizations like the earlier discourse on the notion of tribe, savages, primitive and uncivilized which these scholars were unable to break away from. Likewise, it is also argued that, "whatever information has been left behind by the colonial writers, it stayed on, to be used and reused again, giving no fresh incentives" (Temjenwabang 2012, p. 32). Scholars dealing with the Naga society today are finally feeling the need to employ different methodologies, thus attempting to make a break from the earlier conventional or stereotypical methodologies of colonial writings. The representation and concept of 'otherness' is questioned by many scholars today keeping in mind the keen interest to know the role of colonial intervention in the discourse of Naga history and identity. Given the situation, one objective of historical enquiry and identity research related among the Nagas today is to look out for different types of sources and scopes to retrieve the past that is bereft of written sources.

Some of the problems which continue to remain as major drawbacks in the history and historiography of the Nagas among both colonial and postcolonial writers are the shortcomings of validity and credibility of approaches, sources, methodologies and interpretations. These problems continue to remain fluid particularly while confronting the questions of origin and migration of the Nagas.

One cannot deny the fact that colonial writings on Nagas laid the foundation in understanding who the Nagas were when they first ame into contact with, while it was still unknown to the outside world. The colonial writings and sources therefore became a reference point in the writings of modern Naga history till date. However, one cannot deny that the writings of Naga history today are directly or indirectly bounded with the replicas of colonial sources. Therefore, there is a quest from the native standpoint to provide a way out, to know its past history of who really were the Nagas before the advent of the British. The questions on which, even the colonial writers have failed to provide a definite answer.

Relevance and Prospects of Ethnoarchaeological Study in the Context of the Nagas

Writing history is not based on a single source and whether it is constructed on historical or archaeological evidences, material cultures or even on intangible sources like oral narratives such as myths and legends needs a proper framework for evaluating different competing ideas of human past for acceptance. Today, most of the civilized and other developed nations had long given up the primitive material cultures. In such cases, collection of tools and artefacts in museums became the showcases for the display of the vanishing primitive world. While acknowledging the idea and essence of the role of museum and other agents alike, one can also still find the reflection of the past cultures among some ethnic communities whose cultures are not completely subjected to the influence of other foreign cultures. The survival of such living tradition and culture in some regions further makes it urgent to study the views and role of indigenous people and their involvement in the production of material cultures.

While describing the nineteenth century Naga material culture of headhunting and Feasts of Merit, it is describe that "one early method of distinguishing Naga groups was to look at the

material culture, particularly at their costumed appearance" (West, 1985, p. 23). Likewise, Woodthorpe (1882) draws a distinction between the kilted and non- kilted Nagas dress, distinguishing the Angami tribe under kilted group and the rest of the Naga tribes under non-kilted group where he maintains that the Angami differs most patently from all the other tribes in every ways including appearance, dress, architecture and mode of cultivation. Therefore, the subject of material culture studies today has become an important matter of concern to make analogies of both the past and present by studying the present community whose cultures still reflect the archaic past.

The given term 'Nagas' as a composite name and identity by the outsiders referring to the inhabitants of present day Nagaland is not a fixed community, but represent internal diversities and it cannot be looked upon as the only way of understanding a region completely. Each tribe is unique in its own way of identifying oneself from the rest. It is also pointed out that, "although Nagas as a whole exhibit a general similarity of culture and posses many ideas, habits, and occupations in common, there also exist many distinct communities each constituting a separate linguistic group and a cultural and social set-up which varies from one community to another"(Imsong, 2004, p. 4) While describing the richness of languages spoken by different tribes among the Nagas, "turning to language, I suppose there is no part of the world with so much linguistic variation in so small a population or in so small an area" (Hutton, 1965,p. 19). Hutton finds that the result of the isolation of village communities, living entirely independent and often with almost entirely self-contained economies, cut off from their neighbours by forest, mountain, and river, has led to the development of some thirty different languages, as different as those of different nations in Europe, in an area the size of Wales.

Considering all these factors, we can look specifically into some of the traditional material cultures which are closely

embedded with the social, economic and cultural life of the Nagas exhibiting the historical continuities of the past. In the first case study, one will notice that the burial practice of the Nagas do not end with the funeral ceremony, but is closely associated with other beliefs and rituals that follow aftermath. Naga burial custom is closely associated with the megalithic culture of the past in terms of burying the objects in the grave coupled with the concept of post-death life. The concept of a person's life, death and life after death were closely tied up with every day beliefs governed by superstitions, culture and traditions, both tangible and intangible. Likewise, the measure of respect given to a person in his or her lifetime continues to follow the same even after death in terms of symbolic representation of different memorial objects and monuments among most Naga tribes. Similarly, a person is also remembered and honoured through the traditions of oral narratives in the forms of folksongs, folktales, myths and legends whereby memory is traditionally regenerated among the living people. Investigating the burial customs, memory and beliefs of the Nagas followed in the aftermath of death is one potential aspect of material culture firmly rooted with traditional beliefs system exhibiting the social and cultural significance of the past. Some of the important research questions which could enhance ethnoarchaeological study out of burial practices for archaeological references can look into questions such as- how life and death are imagined through time and space? Why do certain memories persist while others seem to fade away? How the social life of a person is sustained between the living and dead through material culture in both tangible and intangible form?

Secondly, the popular traditional culture of hunting and trapping which was once the mainstay of dependent subsistence economy has an impact in the social and cultural life of the Nagas. Irrespective of both close and far proximity of hunting areas, Nagas continue to hunt and trap through the deployment of different traditional devices and techniques along with supplementary

activities like fishing, domestication of animals, and agriculture. Hunting and trapping practices also uphold clan and family relationship among the Naga society through its traditional culture of sharing the game. Acknowledging its primitive source of culture, a careful study of this subsistence occupation could further depict how traditional knowledge system is transferred to the present generation through different non-mechanized methods and devices amidst modern culture and technology. For instance, the use of trained dogs and spears for hunting animals and trapping of birds with bird-lime device are some of the common traditional practices still found among the Nagas. Studying the primitive origin of hunting and trapping practices and its devices could reveal how, the long history of agriculture which took over this subsistence occupation has still found its way in supplementing the primitive form of agriculture among the Nagas.

Thirdly, the handmade pottery making among the Nagas is believed to be of prehistoric origin and the whole process involved in pottery making reflects the historical continuities and transfer of traditional knowledge system away from the influence of modern methods and technology. A careful study of this culture can reveal the behavioural aspects of the Neolithic culture in Nagaland, the period which brought the transitional change in the history of human civilization. It is another field of material culture with an important source to understand the form of society in terms of division of household labour and class occupation within the potters' community. Careful study on pottery making also could give link and source of the past to understand the primitive trade and barter system which were carried out both within and outside the state. Further, the study of trade and barter system in exchange of goods and services could unveil the inter tribal and village relationship maintained among the Nagas by studying different pottery products and distribution system.

Finally, another important aspect of material culture which facilitates ethnoarchaeological study is the primitive or of agricultural practices. Largely *jhum* cultivation, also known as shifting cultivation is still the dominant land use pattern among the Nagas and every year major portions of forest are cut down and burnt for the same. From the past, it has been a year round occupation for living among the agricultural communities. The whole process of this agricultural operation and implements reflect traditional elements of the past with agriculture as the main occupation and source of livelihood. The continuity of this aged old primitive form of economy in Nagaland is the result of a very long consistent relationship between man and his environment, closely linked with cultural identity factors. In the past, wealth was measured in terms of agricultural goods owned by each individual household. Exchange of agricultural products in the form of traditional barter, both within and outside villages was a common practice. Accordingly, a village within a tribe was also known and respected for its wealth in terms of the numbers of granaries owned and stored. Exploring this type of primitive origin agriculture practices, its methods and practices can reveal the behavioural relationship of man towards his environment in a non-mechanized form of economy. It also unravels how the adaptation process of cultivation shapes the economy, socio-cultural life of the Nagas beyond the primitive subsistent form of livelihood.

Conclusion

Much of ethnoarchaeological studies developed and evolved as an alternative approach of research have helped to locate, identify and evaluate some of the important archaeological signatures which are of historical importance. It also possesses the credible values of making inferences between the past and present to shape one's history and identity. For societies who had long given up material cultures, museums and other agents alike stored with artefacts have become central agents to understand the past societies.

Taking the case of the Nagas, the presence of rich material cultures and its associated traditional cultures both tangible and intangible still exhibit the social, economic and cultural life of the past though not without immense threat and pressure of extinction today. The subject of ethnoarchaeology is largely relevant in society like the Nagas who did not have written sources of its past history until the advent of the writing culture in later part of the 19th century introduced by the British. In view of this, the subject today also has become important to assert the relevance and urgency of ethnoarchaeological study to convey the intrinsic value of the fast disappearing traditional material cultures, the source of which is important for future archaeological and historical references. On the broader prospects, ethnoarchaeology when studied carefully would also further outline the history of migration, linguistic relationship, distinct cultural zone and affinities with other regions.

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Representation of Ao-Naga Women's Attire and Identity

RESENMENLA LONGCHAR

One of the problems with regard to the history of attire for the Nagas in general and the Ao-Naga in particular is the question of source material. It is particularly important since we are dealing with material aspects like cloth. Therefore different representation of cloth in text, myth and memory only serve to give us different representation of reality which we embark on discussion of the problem. Before proceeding it would be prudent to discuss about the definition of attire so as to help us limit the boundaries of discussion. According to the new Collins Dictionary and Thesaurus, Attire is defined as, to dress especially in fine elegant clothes; array or clothes or garments, especially if fine or decorative (William T. McLeod, 1987). It can be also define as something felt to dress and adorn and clothe in fancy or rich garments, with headdress, ornaments (Konemann, 1993). Attire is also an old-fashioned clothes one wear or dressed in a particular way suitably attired (Cambridge Learners Dictionary, 2001).[1] All these definitions talks about covering of body not just with a cloth but with different ornaments like necklaces, earrings, necessary accessories etc. to complete one's attire. Old fashioned can be understood as attire which shows or represent an old aged culture, tradition, history of a particular place, people etc. For example, in Naga society, the aged old culture in one way is seen in the colorful attire. This article will examine the importance of Ao-Naga women attire and further explain how the attire represent a woman and

reveal the history and identity of the Ao-Nagas even with the coming of Christianity, modernization and influence of outside culture.

Human beings are born naked but need a simple piece of cloth to cover their body. As civilization grew, the simple clothing which was used to hide one's shame became a matter of class, status and culture. Dress is one of the most effective mediums of expression of preserving one's cultural identity (R.R.Shimray, 1985, p. 220). Clothes were accompanied with ornaments and necessary accessories to complete one's attire. Attire plays a very significant role in every culture and also in every aspect of one's life in society. Environment also plays a very significant role because clothes are adopted according to the environment. Nirad C. Chaudhuri said, "I believe implicitly that a man who has lost interest in clothing and adornments has lost interest in life" (1976, IX).

Attire is important because it tells about culture, tradition, customs and religion. It also reveals one's identity and through clothing and attire we get information about the society, history, politics and culture. Apart from that, we also 'create' and store information in them like creating designs and patterns; and even display and preserve our innovative. Likewise, today, possibly more than ever before, both men and women consciously choose their clothing to create and substantiate the image they wish to present to the public; 'role playing' is the current term (Blanche Payne, 1965, p. 5). Clothes are also important because it shows one's wealth, lifestyle, religion, urbanization and levels of education.

According to culture and tradition, the people across the world have different kinds of dresses, style and one's own culture influences the clothing style to her neighbouring countries through contacts. It is indeed strange to note however that despite the contacts of the Nagas with the neighbouring groups like the Meities, the Ahoms, the Burmese etc., they neither adopted the culture

(including dress) of others nor did the others copied the Nagas. However with the advent of modernity coupled with Christianity the Nagas fast adopted the western clothing, lifestyle and many things. The question is how do we account for the two contrasting pictures- that is, non-adaptation of the cultures of neighbouring people and adaptation of western culture?

Weaving is a traditional art handed down through generations in Nagaland. Nagaland is situated in the North-East border of India and is bounded on the west by the plain of Assam on the north by Arunachal Pradesh, on the east by Myanmar (Burma), and on the south by Manipur. Kohima is the capital of Nagaland and there are many tribes in Nagaland where each of the tribes has its own ethnic and cultural identity and practices. Each of the tribes in Nagaland has its own unique designs and colours, meanings and its importance. Nagas are lovers of colour and they are called colourful Nagas. The Nagas must retain their identity of being 'colourful' (R.R.Shimray, 1985, p. 220). For example, festival dresses are the best because it exhibits the various types of shawls and the colour combinations. On festival days, the Nagas are really colourful with their colourful shawls (R.R.Shimray, 1985, p. 216). Nagas are great lovers of ornaments. The first writers to write about the Naga history were the British administrators and Anthropologist, American Christian Missionaries. J.P. Mills compares the attires with the other Naga tribes and brought similarities with the South-East Asian, which gives us further scope for comparative studies which is very challenging and encouraging. Mills writes, the Rengma women dressed similarly to the Angami women (1937, p. 23). Mills also explains sincerely about ornaments with folktales. He compares the Nagas with the people of Borneo by identifying the use of ornaments (1926, p. 49).

Like the other Naga tribes, in Ao Naga[2] society there are various kinds of traditional attire, which is unique and distinct to

each clan. Every man and woman of the Ao Nagas has different kinds of dresses. The Ao territory is bounded by the Tzula River, Sangtam, Chang and Phom tribes on the East, the Lotha tribes, the Assam plains on the west, Konyak tribe in the north and the Sema tribe in the south. The physiographic of the Mokokchung district shows six distinct hill ranges and the range are more or less parallel to each other and run south directions.

As mentioned earlier, attire is defined as more than clothing so in the context of the Ao-Nagas it includes earrings, tattoos, hair bun, feathers, necklaces, armlets, bracelets, other accessories and so forth (A. Lanu Ao, 1999, pp.87-89, p.19). Thus the history of attire includes a very large number of material objects. In this, we see that certain objects like feathers can be analyzed in a more objective fashion unlike tattoos, designs, patterns, social functions because the feathers of a hornbill has not changed much over the past few centuries. Therefore, when we talk of attire, though we do not have many sources regarding the attire of the Ao-Naga as earlier scholars suggest, we are on firm ground when we talk about material objectives like feathers, cowries' shells, cornelian beads, crystal earrings (Mills, 1926, 2003, p. 43, pp. 46-48, pp. 57-58). It was hitherto assumed that the history of Nagas and other pre-literate people like Mizos etc. began only with the rise of British period since the European accounts were the only historical sources that could be objectively dated. Present day academic practice also has followed from this paradigm and flows from this, thereby neglecting the historicity of the Nagas which was available in the form of oral history.

The Ao Naga women's traditional clothes and attires are diverse and explicit with varied meanings.Every woman was supposed to weave the clothes of her family. Since earlier times Ao Naga women have their clan identity through the attire one wears so all the clans maintain their respective attire. An Ao woman gets her dress according to the richness of her grandfather, her

father and husband. During forefathers time there were different ceremonies and for every Mithun her husband has sacrificed, a woman may wear one hornbill feather on her head. Her clothing shows her position in the society; whether she is a rich or a poor woman. Attires were completed with hair band, hornbill feathers, earrings, necklace, tattoo etc. Attires in the Ao Naga society were regulated by social status, gender, age and occasion. They also show the history of the Nagas and give us an understanding of the culture of the Aos like their ceremonies, festivals, economic status. It brought identity to the Aos.

Attires are so to say, the work of one's attitude and identity. It is not limited to clothing or covering of the body. To cite an example, the decorative warrior shawl *tsungkotepsü* is one of the most characteristic cloths of the Aos (M. Alemchiba Ao, 1968, p. 19). This is a status symbol shawl. This shawl is the most popular shawl of Ao men. By tradition all the male members cannot wear this shawl. In the past, only the rich men and warriors were entitled to wear this shawl. In this shawl, there is mithun symbolizing wealth of the owner, elephant and tiger to symbolize valour of the man, human head representing the success in head-hunting and a few other things like spear, dao and cock. In traditional societies, clothing functions almost as a language that can indicate a person's age, gender, and marital status, place of origin, religion, social status, or occupation.[3]

With the coming of the British and American missionaries to the Naga Hills, traditional way of dressing has been changed to modern way of dressing. It has given less importance to traditional clothing and began to give way to styles that combine elements of Western and Asian dress. In the word of Subra Mitra Channa an Anthropologist, "The younger generations are more influenced by western culture than Indian. In fact even at the time of Independence, the Nagas were politically inclined towards the British, than towards the Indians. Even today few Nagas, if any, favour Indian dress, language or culture." (1992, p. 7)

In present time, traditional attire and clothing are replaced by western and modern way of dressing. There is hybridization of the indigenous attire by the influence of other new cultures. Their customs, dresses and ornaments have something to tell the present generation in a society where the influx of mass media has brought about a plurality of cultures. Naga identity of the past, their history and practices has become a rod of revitalization (Mar Atongsanger, 1995, v). Acculturation has made the people modern in dress more than in anything else so dress is the most rapid and quick changing culture of every community. In the long course of the history of the Ao Nagas through education and Christianity, changes took place from tradition to modernity.

The idea of dress was neglected by earlier historians but today it has emerged as an important discourse since it is closely tied with ethnic identity and along with kinship, commensality and common cult are the 'surface pointers' (Howard Michael, 2000, 3) which make recognition at a distance possible. Thus we see that the adoption of outside culture by the Naga did not wholly displaced the earlier traditions particularly the tradition of dress since using the concept of surface pointers or dresses an ethnic markers we see that even today also it is possible to recognized from a distant an Ao woman during special occasion like festivals (A. Lanu. Ao, 1999, pp.105-108) cultural functions because they wear the traditional wrap-around, shawl, ornaments, hair bun etc. This shows that the adaptation of outside culture and Christianity was not wholesale but has left too many residual practices like food, dress, etc. The westerners came to Naga areas with a vision or mission to bring out the Nagas from darkness to light, from sinful life to saintly life, from pre-historic to modern life etc. Sometimes, their mission is also termed by some as 'Whitemen's Burden'. The westerners, to a great extend, influenced the clothing behaviour of the people. Often Christian missionaries are being accused for destroying the rich culture and tradition of the Nagas, especially the ways of wearing and importance of traditional attires,

whose life they have changed but modern scholars believe that clothing provides a mark of identity and a means of non-verbal communication.

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Endnotes:

[1] Attire, http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/learner-english/attire. Accessed: 24/11/2014

[2] Mokokchung is the headquarter for the Ao Nagas

[3] Clothing "The functions of clothing"(http:/Encarta .msn.com), pp. 1 of 5

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Naga Social Institutions, Social Capital and Communitisation of Elementary Education

TIATULA OZUKUM

In mainstream sociology, community participation in education is not a new concept. In India, such studies primarily focused on conventional understanding how a particular community perform certain things for their own community schools rather than locating how community's social capital can be utilized as a toll for further enhancing educational governance. The present studies, therefore, attempts a conscious departure from such existing proposition and take the case of 'communitisation' process in Nagaland as a new model to analyse community participation in India. The main purpose is to focus on the concept of 'social capital' as a critical component of the process of 'Communitisation'.

Introduction

Various sociologists had examined the ways in which community–society–school interactions had contributed to the educational attainments in different societies. In the context of Indian society, different communities have been involved in the running of educational institutions for several years before and after the Independence. However, such participation was contingent upon the individuals rather than the collective participation as a few philanthropists of the community were spearheading the setting up and maintaining the schools and colleges in villages and towns. It was not as widespread as it would have been desired.

As part of Concurrent List, both Central and State government has equal responsibility to design and implement educational programmes in India. Consequently, it resulted in multiple responses to the issue of community participation in education and existence of diverse institutional mechanisms and structures in different states of India. However, Nagaland's model of community participation can be considered unique in many ways in comparison to the other states. For Nagaland, the concept of 'communitisation' is define broadly as a process incorporating the society's social capital in achieving greater participation of the community in public service delivery. The concept of communitisation implies a unique partnership between the government and the community, entailing community involvement in the transfer of ownership of public resources and assets, control over service delivery, empowerment, decentralization, delegation, and building capacity. Its main objective was to harness the rich tradition of community solidarity and bonding, in other words, social capital, inherently existed in the Naga society for several centuries.

Communitisation of elementary education in Nagaland appeared to have created a radically new option for the village communities by instilling a sense of ownership upon them thereby generating a renewed interest in the development of educational institution. It is seen as an experiment of blending tradition with modernity where the traditional strength of the society is harnessed to erect a modern edifice in management of education. The concept of using 'social capital' to revitalize the moribund elementary school system seems to have elicited trust and cooperation of the community in grassroots governance. It thus become fitting to look at what constitutes Naga social capital and how it is invoked to strengthen the communitisation process in the elementary education.

Social capital: Conceptual and Theoretical Discussion

Social capital is arguably one of the most successful 'exports' from sociology to other social sciences and to other public discourses in the last two decades (Portes, 2000, p.1). The first contemporary analysis of social capital was produced by Pierre Bourdieu, who defined the concept as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possessions of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationship of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (Portes, 1998, p.3). He further explained it as an access to institutional resources where group membership provides members with the backing of the collectively owned capital, a credential which entitles them to credit in various senses in the word (Bourdieu, 1986). He postulated that, 'the volume of social capital possessed by a given individual thus depends on size of the networks of connections that he can effectively mobilise and on the volume of capital-economic, cultural and symbolic - possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248).

Bourdieu's social capital is decomposable into two elements: first, the social relationship that allows the individual to claim resources possessed by the collectivity, and secondly, the quality and quantity of those resources (Portes, 1998; Singh & Dika, 2002) and is thus grounded on theories of social reproduction and symbolic power. Ultimately, Bourdieu view it as an investment of the dominant class to maintain and reproduce group solidarity and preserve their dominant position. He sees the existence of a network of connections as neither naturallyor even socially given, but constituted by an initial act of institution represented in the case of family groups, which is the characteristic of a social formation. He, thus, stresses that, 'the reproduction of social capital presupposes an unceasing effort of sociability, a continuous series of exchange in which recognition is endlessly affirmed and reaffirmed' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 249).

Coleman on the other hand, focuses explicitly on the transformation of social capital into human capital. He asserts that if we begin with a theory of rational action, in which each actor has control over certain resources and events, then social capital constitutes a particular kind of resource available to an actor. Accordingly, social capital is inherent in the structure of relationships between and among actors. It is defined by its functions and concerns in the structure and actors across a variety of different entities. He maintains that,

'…the value of the concept of social capital lies first in the fact that it identifies certain aspects of social structure by their functions...The function identified by the concept of social capital is the value of these aspects of social structure to actors as resources that they can use to achieve their interests' (Coleman, 1997, p. 83).

For Coleman, social capital is intangible and has three forms: (a) level of trust, as evidenced by obligations and expectations, (b) information channels, and (c) norms and sanctions that promote the common good over self-interest (Dika & Singh, 2002, 33). Thus, it can take the form of obligations and expectations which depend on the trustworthiness of the social environment; and secondly the capacity of information to flow through the social structure in order to provide a basis for action and the presence of norms accompanied by effective sanctions.

The work of Robert Putnam provides significant theoretical insights on the concept and hasbecome extremely popular in public discourse. He considers social capital as an attribute of community, a property of cities or nations. For Putnam, it includes 'the features of social organizations, such as networks, norms, and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefits. Social capital enhances the benefits of investments in physical and human capital.' (Putnam, 1994, pp. 6-7)

Putnam gives primacy to the community that posses a significant amount of social capital and argues that working together is easier in such community;and as it is productive as any other forms of capital,it makes possible the achievements of certain ends that otherwise would not be attainable in its absence. Acting upon this premise he opined that, 'a group whose members manifest trustworthiness and place extensive trust in one another will be able to accomplish much more than a comparable group lacking that trustworthiness and trust' (Putnam, 1993, p. 167).

He further argues that one distinctive feature of social capital like trust, norms and networks is that, unlike conventional capital which is ordinarily a private good, it isa public good and therefore is 'an attribute of social structure in which the persons are embedded, social capital is not the private property of any of the persons who benefits from it' (Putnam, 1993, p. 170). Like any other public goods, Putnam asserts that, social capital tends to be undervalued and undersupplied by private agents. He strikingly mentions that social capital must often be produced as a by-product of other social activities where he sees 'trust' as an essential and important component of social capital. Likewise, Newton also suggests that "if social capital is anything, it is a societal not an individual property, and should be studied as a social or collective phenomenon, not at the individual level as if was the property of an isolated individual (Newton, 2001, p. 207). According to these views, individuals do not have 'social capital' but it is the society as a whole which generates it as a context in which the individuals operate.

Thus, numerous definitions are attached to the concept of social capital and its components. Different theorists have tried explaining the concept by it relating to wide-ranging terms like social energy, community spirit, social bonds, civic virtue, community networks, extended friendships, community life, social

resources, informal and formal networks, social networks, trust, norms, social glue, etc. Within these associations, there are different conceptualisationsdepending on the theoretical background that contributes to the concept. Social capital, thus, is a useful concept but extremely complex concept in which different perspectives have much to contribute.

Understanding the Social Capital of Nagaland

A major strength of the contemporary Naga society is the inherent 'social capital' stemming from their traditional institutions and practices that culminates in a strong social bonding and vibrant community spirit with the absence of caste and social discrimination. Inherent within the clan, village community, tribes, and so on, strands of social capital are verifiable in the Naga society which traditionally has a long legacy of self- governing 'village republic' having autonomous economic and political entity. Traditional institutional structure such as the Village Council, Khel, and the Morung, therefore continues to exert strong influence on the normative framework of the societal governance and function actively in the village polity and networks.

The societal governance of the village hovers around the traditional institutions both in tangible and intangible way. In one sense, the bonding that binds the community together in a cohesive ways is rather symbolic. For instance, with the advent of modern educational system, the *Morung* or *Ariju*[1] as a learning institution no longer exists and is rather symbolic, but the social fabric that was intrinsic in the system is still in vogue in all the Naga villages. The age-group system of the *Ariju* is still followed in all the villages creating a system on bonding and social network among the varied groups. In the olden days, a strong sense of community participation was instilled in the mindset of the people through their involvement in construction of the *Ariju*. In fact, the entire village participated in the construction of *Ariju* and non-participation was considered as being disrespectful to whole village community (Pongener, 2011,

p.17). In retrospect, while, it is not possible to ascertain whether, the participation was voluntarily unanimous or otherwise, but one can safely asserts that, given the pre-eminence of traditional institutions during period, the adherence to such participation tends to be unequivocal as it instil a spirit of solidarity and being a responsible citizen amongst the populace.

Nevertheless, it would not be entirely unfounded argument if one were to question the association of *Ariju* with 'social capital' and its relevance in modern context as the drive towards modernity with school as a propelling force has replaced and weakened it as an active leaning institution. To counter such queries, one needs to take into account, the very purposes of communitisation i.e., active community participation for common welfare. As mentioned above, the overall function of the *Ariju* was closely circled with the cultural, social, moral, economic and religious life of the Naga societyand was directly or indirectly related to mutual benefits of the community. Therefore, while *Ariju* as a centre of active leaning institution has decline with the passage of time, the symbolic power it holds over the community are remains intact, and its essence and norms are still followed by them. Again, as a learning institution, *Ariju* can be equated with a school in modern parlance for a 'village republic'. Analogously, the community tends to holds both the institutions in high reverence.

Again, the Village Council of the Nagas play the most pivotal role in the administration of a traditional self-governing 'village republic'. It is the highest administrative authority of the village and maintains the societal governance of the community. In fact, all the socio-cultural institutions within the village operate under the aegis of the village council. The Village Council have been existence in villages of various Naga tribes since unrecorded time and is one of the most important traditional institution which has survives the passage of time with almost all its essence intact. The Ao system of the Village Council (*Putu Menden)* is one of

the living examples of the traditional self-governing 'village republics' and it is highest assembly of people in any Ao village having supreme power that regulates the common affairs of the community within its jurisdiction.

The cohesiveness of a village is maintained by the *Putu Menden* and all the villagers adhere to norms and rules laid down by the council. The norms of cooperation or contribution are defined and regulated by the *Putu Menden* and as a source of 'social capital' in undertaking function of governance within the village, its role is indispensible. If we look at the theoretical framework of '*social capital'* (Bourdieu, Putnam, Coleman et al.), norms and networks that generates trust and mutual benefits forms its core conception. It is this established social structure that enables a prompt and productive delivery of public services. Within a village if the government takes into account the importance of the *Putu Menden* and take them into confidence in the sphere of governance, the relationship between the government and the common people will be further enhanced. By the virtue of being the represented of almost all members of the village, the observance to the rule and norms implemented along with *Putu Menden* will be naturally unanimous. The bonds and networks that bind the community together are sustained by the *Putu Menden* as legislator and executor of various norms that governs the village polity.

Another important social and administrative feature of an Ao village is the existence of *Khels*, a distinct institution that brings together several clans within the village community. A village may consist of two or more *Khels* but normally, a village is divided into two halves called '*Yimpang*' (upper) and '*Yimlang*' (lower). Whenever two linguistic groups of *Ao (Chungli* and *Mongsen)* more or less inhabit a village in equal number, members of each group occupy separate *Khels* (Tajen Ao, 1980, p.14). Each *Khel* has its own governing council represented by every clan within its area. Again, a *Khel* may be divided into different *Mepu* or sector

which is divided according to clan or linguistic group. However, any disputes between two or more *Khels* are settled by the *Putu Menden*, the highest governing authority in the village. Often, for the common village work, the responsibilities are done according to such division. Accordingly, we can easily infer that, the closest social network outside the family which elicits instant affinity will be such *Khels*. Therefore, as a source of social capital, *Khels* are the most immediate spheres of social interaction that generates networks and trust among the community.

In this connection, it will be helpful to draw insights from Bourdieu's theoretical conception about the magnitude of 'social capital' being dependent 'on size of the networks of connections' which 'effectively mobilize and on the volume of capital - economic, cultural and symbolic- possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected' (1986, p. 248). Coleman (1997) considers it as an aid in accounting for different outcomes through relationship of various structures in the society. He argues that 'both social capital in the family and social capital in the community play roles in the creation of human capital in the rising generation' and explicitly promotes the notion of social capital as a valuable conceptual tool (1997, p.88). Therefore, as a tool to enhance educational system, *Khels* is another vital institutional source of 'social capital' displaying immediate network, bonding and trust. Likewise, Putnam (1993, p. 167) assertion of an enhanced accomplishment for a community having significant social capital manifested through their 'trustworthiness' is reflected in such institution. Again, the volume of social capital of an individual depends on the network of connections (economic, cultural or symbolic) which can be efficiently mobilised for effective civic engagement and governance (1994, p.9). *Khels* as a social institution represent such trust and networks that can be used effectively for productive engagement.

COMMUNITISATION THROUGH SOCIAL CAPITAL: THE CASE OF UNGMA VILLAGE

The programme of Communitisation of elementary education in Nagaland which was mooted in the middle of 2001 and was initially implemented on trial basis in some schools from September 2002. Subsequently by 2004, all the government schools were brought under the ambit of communitisation. However, the present study analysed the structure, process and the impact of communitisation in a particular village, *Ungma* under Mokokchung district of Nagaland. The study largely relied on both the secondary sources as well as a short term primary fieldwork to understand and capture the actual working of the programme and its processes first hand. The researcher spent close to two months in the village in the months of January and February, 2011, interacting with the community members and education functionaries, for data collection. Discussed below are some of the findings.

The Village Council

The Village Council has been the basis of grassroots level administration in the Naga society since time immemorial. The Ungma Village Council is a 24/7 working body which operates under a Chairman and all the activities of the village covered under its domain. During the course of the fieldwork, one of the most cited instances of the *Village Council's* positive involvement in the school management was the initiation and institution of the Hindi Teachers' salaries. A retired teacher who worked at *Mangkusong* School for 35 years claimed that the government does not give salary for any Hindi teachers in its schools. But it was recognized that, Hindi was a very was an important subject as well as a necessity for those children moving outside the state for higher education. Therefore, the villager decided that the salaries of the Hindi teacher in all the primary schools should be managedthrough their own contributions[2]. A conversation with the

incumbent Village Council Chairman attested this assertion[3]. Once the agreement was takenthe under aegis of Village Council with the participation of all stakeholders initiate such measure, it was implemented swiftly and signifies an important community's collective effort to address a commoneducational concern of their children. It also reflects how communitisation process has enabled the traditional institutional structure to play an active in redressing shortcoming and efficient management of school education.

It is interesting to see how the funds for the salaries of the teacher are generated and distributed by the Village Council. When enquired about it, Kazutemjen, a *Tatar*[4] in the Ungma Village Council reveals that the funds were appropriated from Government Grants-in-Aid and further added that, '*When the village receives grants through schemes like the MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act), the Village Council takes care of the necessities of the village ranging from the various infrastructural needs like maintaining and building roads leading to the fields, bringing in irrigation to the farms, and also for the salaries of the school teachers. Once in a year, around one lakh rupees is utilized for giving salary to the teachers in all the four Primary schools*'[5]

A majority of the works related to school infrastructure and its maintenance are taken up by the Village Council. Annually, the Village Council organizes at least twice or thrice joint meeting of the various stakeholders like parents, teachers and Village Education Committee (VEC, thereafter) to discuss various issues related to school education. The Village Council Chairman also recalls a resolution that was passed in such a meeting for the further advancement of the schools, *'In order to preserve the cultural traditions of the village, in one of our meetings, we decided that there will be a separate slot in school time table for imparting the cultural traditions and activities in all the*

schools. The Village Council will select a teacher for imparting such knowledge and skills to the students and the salary of that teacher will be given by the Village Council.' [6]

According to him, the rich cultural traditions of the past are vanishing with time; therefore, in order to preserve it this particular subject was introduced.[7] However, most notably, even before there solution, some elders of the village knowing detailed history and legend of the village as well as the cultural traditions of the Naga community were already voluntarily imparting the such knowledge to the students. One such elder worth mentioning is Guru Sademmeren, a recipient of *Guru Shishya Parampara Scheme*[8] who visits all the schools in the village and voluntarily teaches wide-ranginghistorical and cultural knowledge to the students without any monetary remuneration. Again, the role of the village church betterment of the school is also worth noting and apart from being representative in the VEC, the members of the church regularly visit the schools and teach music, scripture, and moral values as well as provides entertainment to the students.

The faith reposed by the villager on Village Council for communitisation process is high and it is often contended that the villagers value the institution more than the government created bodies such as the VEC[9]. Such trust and faith in the traditional social institutions invokes passionate approval and substantiation of the role of the Village Council. Recalling some more works done by the Village Council for the schools, Tarentemjen, the ex-chairman of the *Village Council* recalled that a decision was taken in one of the Board of Councillors meeting to provide computers to school and possible avenues to generate funds for the purpose were discussed. Subsequently, he narrates that, '*Besides askingaid from the government, we concurrently requisitioned the Assam Rifles[10] stationed atour village for the computers. After some time in 2008, five computers were provided by them to the school under the Directors General Fund. The*

Village Council also decided to buy two more computers for the schools in the year 2009 and the money was collected from all the households of the village.'[11]

Here we observe that, under the supervision of the Village Council the whole village is directly or indirectly involved in maintaining better development of not only the schools but also the well being of the whole village. Under their watchful eyes, the community members are obligated to follow certain rules and regulations, yet, they also tends to co-operate with the councillors' decisions as the members of Council are mandated by the community itself. Eventually, the level of trust, cohesiveness and solidarity results from such interactions.

Elaborating further on the utilization of funds, the incumbent Village Council Chairman maintains that, while the resources and funds from the government isgenerally used for the schools development, any additional expenses or deficiencies are generated by the village community amongst themselves and such funds are collected from each household irrespective whether their wards are studying in such schools. He claimed that, '*For the sake of education, all the families are willing to donate money whole-heartedly without failure.For schools' construction works such as digging of wells, carrying bricks, etc, the community members also come forward and contribute their human labour without expecting anything from the school authorities.'*[12]

Interestingly, the well-being of the student is also a primary concern of the *Village Council.* One of the interviewee explains that, doctors and other medical practitioners are sought occasionally from outside to check the health of the students. Regarding the expenses he explains that, "*Whatever expenses the VEC incurs organising such camps like conveyance, food, lodging, etc an account is kept for the Village Council by the*

committee in charge of such camp.When expenses are brought to notice to the Village Council and the expenditure is ultimately borne by them."[13]

Thus, the Village Council tries to make use of the available resource efficiently and sought avenues to meet any additional expenses. However, it must be also kept in mind here that the Village Council had a sense of control and ownership in the schools even before the enactment of Communitisation in Nagaland and we can safely assert that, a large contributing factor to the for such a programme was the recognition and harnessing of such inherent social capital.

Role of the Village Education Committee (VEC)

A special mention may be made here about the role of the VEC in Communitisation of school at Ungma village. Unlike in other villages, most interestingly, the village already had an active VEC even before the enactment of Communitisation in 2002. Thus, two comparable committees exist to look after the affairs of the schools – the government mandated VEC and the Village Education Development and Research Committee (VEDRC) which is set up by the village community. While, VEC comprises of representative from church, Village Council, Head Teacher and some parents, the VEDRC members consists of educated individuals from the village, who are mostly lecturers or professors from nearby colleges and universities.

The VEC takes care of the overall functioning of the schools and apart from major works ranging from administrative, academic, financial to extra co-curricular activities they also manages most of the works of the schools with the co-operation of the community. A teacher who teaches at *Mangkusong* School maintains that, a major responsibility of the VEC is to conduct annual training course for the teachers and many positive changes has taken place after the VEC took up various programmes for

the schools. She further adds, '*After the establishment of the VECs, schools have improved for better in many ways. The Committee conducts various workshops in schools for the teachers at least once in a year. For this purpose, the Committee calls experts from outside who trained us with various techniques to improve the quality of teaching.'*[14]

Though, initially, she was sceptic about the functioning of the VEC, after seeing their various works, she is convinced that they had a positive impact on the educational development of the village and foresee increasedtransparency and more democratic functioning in school management. The Village Council Chairman confirms this further, '*The VEC takes care of the overall functioning of the school in minuets detail. Funds from the government for the school are taken out by the Committee with the consent of the Village Council, and they dispatch the salary of teachers in time. Again, VEC keeps a check on regularity of teachers. If teachers want to take leave, he/she has to consult VEC and their salary is deducted if they do not take a leave of absence*.'[15]

While the various projects are undertaken by the VECs, the Village Council is either directly or indirectly engaged in the development of the schools as the committee operates under the tutelage of the council and it guides and supervises the functioning of the VEC. Again, the initiatives of VEDRC were also acknowledged by some respondents. In 2011, the Committee organised a ten day training workshop seminar on 'English Language and Phonetics' which was again funded by the Village Council: *'Last year in the SensoMungdang, the VEDRC had asked for the decision of the village community to hold such kind of workshops in the schools of the village*[16]*. The Village Council along with the approval of the village community passed the resolution and sanctioned an amount of 1.5 lakh to conduct two or three of such workshops.'*[17]

Both the Committees formed to oversee the management of the schools are therefore seen are seen as a positive influence and discharging their duties amply. Further analysis of the VEC functioning reveals that even the overall school discipline has improved since it starts monitoring them. Dr. Temjensosang, a VEC member gives a detailed account of such task, '*The VEC looks into the matters of school furniture, the neatness and cleanliness of the classrooms, and the availability of safe drinking water. They also check the discipline of the teachers and observe whether they are smoking inside the school premises, chewing tobacco, etc.*'[18]

One of the parents who send three of his children to Imrong Primary School was much satisfied with the working of the VEC. He asserted that the members give special attention to the school, students as well as the teachers. According to him, *'Before the functioning of the VECs, the school was not very good. The school authorities especially the teachers did not pay much attention to the students. However, under the VEC, the teachers are much more trained and disciplined. Therefore I can say that the school has become better and the performance of my children has improved significantly.'*[19]

Such impact has elicited alteration in parents' schooling preference for their children in some case. During the course of the fieldwork, the researcher interacted with some of the parents and three of them had apparently had shifted their child from the private to the government school because they thought that the government school was running better than before. One of the parents, who send two of their children to Mangkusong School, affirmed that the primary schools had really started showing good results from the year 2006, and therefore decided to shift the students to the schools.[20]

Role of the Khels

The main architect of the Communitisation programme in Nagaland, R.S. Pandey, remarks that the 'commonality of interest and cooperation in a certain group, which is the basis of social capital, extends to a certain "Radius of Trust" (2010, p. 71). He is of the opinion that the "Radius of Trust" can cover a whole village or some section of the community depending on the size and structure of the population. Thus, in big villages in Nagaland, a *Khel,* is normally the unit from which the VEC usually is constituted and form this "Radius of Trust". In the case of Ungma village, the different primary schools which are located in different sections of the village are under the management of different *Khels* which is further under the management of the Village Council as well as the VEC. However, it may be noted here that, only those *Khels* located in close proximity to the schools are assigned the responsibility of managing the schools.

According to the Council Chairman, the schools are under the management of different *Mepus (sectors)* and a Managing Board normally consisting of five to seven members who are selected by the inhabitants of that particular sector under e general consensus. He adds, *'This Board keeps track of the functioning of the schools and also advises and corrects the VEC regarding their operation and discharge of their duties. However, the management of the resources are not under them and is only managed by the Village Education Committee.'*[21]

Thus, the village schools are not only under the management of the VEC but also under other boards and committees which keep a check on the school from time to time. Ultimately, however, all these committees and entities operate under the guidelines laid down by the Village Council and their entire task are carried out with the consent and knowledge of the Village Council. Besides, the village community is automatically directly or indirectly involved

in the development of the schools. As members of the various committees are selected from the community itself, there is always harmony amongst the community for the betterment of the school and any additional amenities required in the school are actively contributed by the community. For example, the firewood needed for cooking the Mid Day Meal is contributed by the school going parents and any shortcomings are managed by the Village Council.

Another interesting point worth noting and cited by one of the respondent is that, the parents who are very poor and cannot afford to pay the school fees are taken care of again by the Village Council by giving them financial assistance[22]. Thus we see that that there is a sense of solidarity within the village community in their orientation and commitment in discharging their responsibilities. At this juncture, we can certainly assert that, such gestures are a manifestation of the way of life learnt and taught at the Morung *(Ariju)*. The Morung was seen as an institution imparting its members the importance of cooperation, responsibility towards oneself and the society and moulded their lives towards a cohesive Naga way of life. For instance, Mar Pongener explains how members of the Morung were taught the art cultivating moral obligation for others to ensure that every family in the village was cared for. He goes on saying, 'When a family in the village suffers misfortune or face difficult situation, the Morung members assist the unfortunate through various means. The Morung members shared their crops with the families during crop failures, and any household was struck by death or prolonged illness, certain age groups from the Morung was assigned to complete the work of the family in the field.' (2011, p. 31)

Thus, the entire life in the Morung was pervaded by the community spirit of a well-knit society. By rendering such kinds of services towards the welfare of the village community, the members developed a sense of discipline and duty towards their fellowmen and their community as a whole. Such legacies still linger among

the general populace today and indeed cohesiveness, solidarity and common interest are symbolic manifestation of such traditional institution. The introduction of communitisation was done to harness such intrinsic qualities of the society in improving governance and public service delivery. In Ungma, we observe a tremendous positive impact of such programme and it has played an important role in the motivating parents, school authorities, teachers, and the students to standardize modern education through mass participation. The Village Council, VEC, VEDRC, the Managing Boards of the different *Khels* and the community as a whole through their joint initiative seems to have enhanced the quality and management of the village public school in a positive manner.

Discussion and Findings

The concept of '*communitisation'* was started with an objective oftransferring certain management responsibilities to the community in order to involve them in the educational management and seek their support for greater student retention in school. This concept has been unique to Nagaland state public policy and initially introduced with an objective of efficient governance of some social sector programmes including education. With the enactment of the *Communitisation of Public Institutions and Services Act, 2002*, by the state government, the Department of School Education framed necessary rules for the communitisation of elementary education. Through the Act, community now shares the responsibility for management of elementary schools in Nagaland. It is hoped that through communitisation, the inherent problems of control, monitoring, supervision, and management (of both manpower and financial) will be streamlined. The policy stated that, it will revitalize the inherent social capital lying dormant within the community for successful implementation of the programme.

With this backdrop in mind, the paper aimed to look at what constitutes this Naga social capital, a primary focus of the entire communitisation strategy. In doing so, it tries to ascertain what constitutes social capital in Naga society and what type of institutional mechanism has contributed to its accumulation over the years. The existence of mutual trust, bonding and networks within the community are crucial constituents of the communitisation, therefore, the aspect of Naga society that contributed to such values were also examined accordingly. In particular, the role of various traditional institutions such as the Morung, Village Council and Khels were largely taken into consideration in order to establish the linkage between the concept of communitisation and social capital.

If we look at Bourdieu's (1986) main proposition, he maintains that the volume of social capital possessed by a given individual depends on the size of the networks of connections that he/she can effectively mobilise and on the volume of capital possessed in his/her own right by each of those to whom he/she is connected. Hence, if we think this proposition in terms of the institution, *Ariju* fits the context, as it was one of the most important features of traditional Naga society where community life was maintained. In the olden days, the Nagas were seen as a well-knit unit with social cohesion and solidarity, holding the values of their community and capable of strong action for any community cause. Thus, these kinds of solidarity in the *Ariju* led to the development of networks in the society, where one individual is connected to the other through a large channel of networks.

The well being of all the members in the village was taught in the *Ariju* were the service to the community was considered more important than the individual interest (Pongener, 2011). In line with this argument we can also bring in the understanding of social capital by Putnam (1993) where he proposes that social capital is not the private property of anyone who benefits from it,

but a societal property where social capital is often produced by the culmination of varied social activities. We can observe such strands of social ties among the members at the *Ariju* being maintained from the literature. Pongener (2011) opined that, the Naga community life was enriched by working together in the fields, by participating in the community feasts and festivals. Thus people of different temperaments and ideas came closer to one another and from the frequent contact of living together in the *Morung*. The strength of the communal life of the Nagas in the earlier days was thus their identification with their own village community kept alive and active through the *Ariju* (Pongener, 2011, p.120).

When the communitisation process was implemented, this latent social capital was revived and revitalised. As R.S. Pandey, who was instrumental in the implementation of communitisation programme in Nagaland, maintains, 'the commonality of interest and cooperation in a group, which is the basis of social capital, extends to a certain 'radius of trust' that is, the circle of people among whom cooperative norms are operative. And therefore, 'the parents whose children go to the village school have a common interest in the delivery of the school and therefore participated actively in the communitisation process (Pandey, 2010, p. 71). This radius of trust was generated when the villagers were allowed to manage and run the school on their own.

On the other hand, the role of *Khel* is also a determining factor in the whole set up of the village organisation. The *Khel,* which is a unit in the village functions more or less like the Village Council. It is a smaller organisation which is under the umbrella organisation of the Village Council. However, it is also seen as one of the most vital and effective institution in village governance. Longkumer maintains that each *Khel* has its own governing body made up of the clan representatives who are assigned certain jobs according to their clan and the position they occupy in the village organisation (2004, p. 26).

The question now arises as to how these traditional institutions have helped in influencing the framework of educational governance. Drawing upon various findings from the fieldwork, we find that the major institutions which seemed to have important significance for communitisation process were the Village Council and the *Khels.* Other institutions such as Morung played in the overall socialisation of the community around the values of bonding and togetherness, but it is the Village Council and *Khel* which were directly linked to the functioning of the communitisation programme.

Looking at the functioning of the Village Council, one can say that, it have had a major role to play not only in the overall administrative set up of the village (Ungma) but also in acting as an engine in which all other institutions played various parts. From the data generated, one can see how the institution was instrumental in implementing various programmes deemed beneficial for the village. One of the most important works which the village has done for the school under the Village Council was the regulation of teacher's duties and infrastructure building. The community had even gone to the extent of collecting financial resources for paying the salary of the Hindi teachers in all the four communitised schools in the absence of any state support for the same. What is interesting is that the community's willingness to support Hindi teaching lies in Community's aspiration to equip its children with the language of Hindi as it helps them cope with their subsequent migration to other parts of India for higher education. This instance of community aspiration is interesting as it reflects the societal preparation and acceptance of social mobility through education.

The roles of the VEC and VEDRC towards the functioning of the schools also cannot be ignored. Particularly, the role of the VEDRC needs to be highlighted as it was constituted even before the launch of communitisation programme in the villageand can be considered a precursor to the whole process. In Ungma, the

community seems to have recognised the importance active community involvement education quite early and the creation of VEDRC in the 1999 was pioneering and influential in setting up various measures for the schools. Hence, the existence of both the VEC as well as the VERDC adds to the overall betterment of schools in the village thereby complimenting the whole process of communitisation in achieving goals of better schools and schooling more fruitfully.

Another crucial traditional institution instrumental in bringing about considerable changes to educational governance in were the *Khels*. Thus, in Ungma all the four schools which are located in different *Khels* are taken care of by the members of that particular *Khel*. Different *Khels* have set up various managing boards whose primary objective was to oversee the functioning of the schools as well as tend to the needs of the schools in whatever possible ways. Thus, as discussed earlier, Pandey's notion of trust whereby 'commonality of interest and cooperation in a certain group, which is the basis of social capital, extends to a certain "Radius of Trust" (2010, p.71) is verifiable. With the supervision of the managing boards of different *Khels* working in their vicinity, the level of trust is highly built upon in the community which ultimately reflects in positive changes in the schools.

One of the most significant finding of the study of the communitisation process in Ungma was that, it not only improve the pupil retention but also halted apparent transition to private schools at village. We witness even some cases of parents shifting their children from private to government schools. From this, we can infer that, when government school improves, it becomes a school of choice and the parents are willingly shifting their children from private schools because they could witnessenhancement in the functioning of the communitised schools. Thus, the process seems to be bridging the gap between the rich and the poor and at the same time promoting better quality of education.

The communitisation of the schools in Ungma, like in other parts of Nagaland thus seems to have slight, if not significant, changes in the schools. The whole process is seen as a great step for the empowerment of the school education. The most important phenomena of the programme are the selection of various committee members, making them responsible and concerned citizens towards the students and schools of their own community. Under the administration of a strong Village Council, the village community is entitled to maintain certain rules and regulations of the Council which in turn has helped in shaping the growth of the educational system in the village. The synchronization of the various traditional institutions, the Village Education Committees and the community at large has therefore spurred in the use of the community resources for maintaining greater and better educational governance and change.

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Endnotes:

[1] The *Morung* is called *Ariju* in Ao Naga dialect and is one of the most significant social institutions of the Ao people since time immemorial. Literally, *Ariju* means 'fortresses from where the approach of enemy is carefully watched'. It has two connotations where '*Arr*' refers to the enemies and '*Ju*' means to guard or watch. Therefore *Ariju* means, to 'watch people of enemy' in the real sense of the term.

[2] Interview with a retired teacher who was working in Mangkusong Primary School on January 27, 2011, at Ungma Village

[3] A councillor of the *Village Council*, during the course of an interview asserted that it was decided in the *Senso Mungdang* by the community to look after the salary of the Hindi teachers in all the schools.

[4] The councillors of the *Putu Menden* are called the *Tatars*. The legislative, executive and judicial powers of the village are under their domains.

[5] Interview with Kazutemjen on February 8, 2011, at Ungma Village.

[6] Interview with ImolembaJamir on January 28, 2011, at Ungma Village.

[7] Tarentemjen, a Councillor in the *Village Council* also mentioned that they give emphasis on the initiation of a subject which would teach the children the cultural past of the village. The resolution was made known to the community in the Senso Mungdang and with this decided to keep the teacher from the year 2011.

[8] Guru ShishyaParampara Scheme (GSPS) is a scheme implemented to preserve and nurture art forms under the North East Zone Cultural Centre (NEZCC) through financial assistance. The Ministry of Culture, Government of India introduced the GSPS in the year 2004-2005 and has been implemented through the Zonal Cultural Centres (ZCC) to preserve and propagate rare and vanishing art forms. The various arts which are covered under the schemes include folk music that requires preservation and nurturing, training in rare folk music and traditional musical instruments, folk songs, dances and crafts etc (*Nagaland Post; Morung Express*, 21st June, 2011)

[9] The members of the *Village Council* are mandated by the village community through consensus. However, the members of the VEC are selected by the *Village Council* with the consent of the government officials.

[10] The camp of the Assam Rifles is located in the vicinity of the village and therefore they maintain a close relationship with the villages and sometimes provide with medical facilities to the villagers. They also keep an eye on the peace and well being of the village through their defence.

[11] Interview with Tarentemjen, on February 11, 2011, at Ungma Village.

[12] Interview with ImolembaJamir on February 5, 2011, at Ungma Village.

[13] Interview with ImolembaJamir on January 28, 2011, at Ungma Village.

[14] Interview with a teacher at Mangkusong Primary School on January 27, 2011 at Ungma Village.

[15] Interview with Imolemba Jamir on January 28, 2011, at Ungma Village.

[16] Prof. Temjensosang also mentioned that the Committee this year is planning to organize a 'Subject Guidance Programme' where the expenses will be managed by the *Village Council.*

[17] Interview with a teacher at Mangkosung Primary School on Feburary 22, 2011 at Ungma Village.

[18] Interview with Dr. Temjensosang on February 18, 2011, at Ungma Village.

[19] Interview with a parent on February 20, 2011 at Ungma Village.

[20] However, it can also be noted here besides the apparent improvement of the school,financial consideration play a big role in this transition. However, recognition of government school as a viable alternative ultimately was the decisive factor.

[21] Interview with Imolemba Jamir, on February 5, 2011, at Ungma Village.

[22] Interview with Tarentemjen on February 11, 2011 at Ungma Village.

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Skepticism and its Role

ROVIKOTUO YHOSHÜ

It has been said that philosophy began with doubt. Philosophy has always sought to find answers to questions concerning life and the world. What is the meaning of life? What is reality? What is the purpose of our existence? What is truth? Questions like these are the norm in philosophy and they are what have driven people in not only searching for answers to them, but also helped in developing human life as a result of it.

The word skepticism, also otherwise known as scepticism, is taken from the Greek word 'skeptikos' meaning 'an inquirer'. The Greek verb 'skeptomia' literally means 'to look carefully', 'to reflect'. The Encyclopedia of Philosophy defines skepticism as, "… a critical philosophical attitude, questions the reliability of the knowledge claims made by philosophers and others." (Collier-Macmillan, 1967, p.449). Skeptics have questioned whether any necessary or indubitable information can actually be gained about the real nature of things. Popkin is of the view that 'skeptics have organized their questioning into systematic sets of arguments aimed at raising doubts.' (Naess, 1969, p.34). Skepticism is also of the view that there is no such thing as certainty in human knowledge. It is of the belief that all human knowledge is only probably true, that is, true most of the time or not true at all. At best there can only be some private probable opinion. So basically, a skeptic is someone who is unsatisfied and is still looking for the truth.

Skepticism throughout History

Skepticism has been present since the pre-Socratic times. In the 5th century, the Eleatic philosophers who were known for reducing reality to a static one questioned the reality of the sensory world, of change and plurality and denied that reality could be described in the categories of ordinary expressions. They were of the view that reality was to be found only in the conception of a universal unity of Being. However, our senses are inconsistent and can deceive us.

Heraclites stated that the world was in a state of flux and that there is no permanent and unchangeable truth which can be found. Permanence is an illusion. Since there is only ceaseless change, there can be no reality except the reality of change. He illustrates his point by giving the example of a man stepping into a river. It is not possible to step into the same river twice because the water in the river is constantly in motion. What the river was a minute back and what it in after a minute is different. The amount of water at the particular spot he stepped into, the level of water, etc are never constant. Hence, all is a flux.

Socrates observed that "all I know is that I know nothing."[1] It is from this observation of Socrates that *Academic Skepticism* was developed in Platonic academy. Socrates always questioned others, their thoughts and ideas. This method which Socrates employed is called the Socratic Method. In this method, the teacher or the master asks a series of questions to the student or pupil through which the student reaches the answer he is searching for. This method employed by Socrates questions whether the information or knowledge which we get by our senses is reliable and doubts whether our reasoning is also reliable. It is possible to think that our knowledge of something is reliable, but Socrates would have asked a series of questions which would have made us doubt the reliability of the knowledge we possess and how and why we think it is true or reliable. He would argue

that we possess no criterion to determine whether our judgment is true or false. For Pyrrho of Elis, the founder of the Pyrrhonian School, skepticism was an ability, a mental attitude for opposing evidence. They do not commit judgment to anything and by this will have peace of mind as there is no suspension of judgment.

Skepticism during the medieval ages found prominence with the advent of Christianity. St. Augustine in his book *Contra Academicos* tried to address the issue of skepticism which wasprevalent at that time. Religion in the middle age was a very important part of society so a question like 'Could God deceive mankind?' was frequently asked. St.Augustine had been exploring different schools of thought before converting to Christianity and skepticism was one of the schools that he involved himself with. At one point of his life he doubted whether truth could ever be obtained. It is no wonder then that he sought to find answers to his doubts by addressing all these questions which the skeptics had brought up. Questions like 'can a person be certain of anything?' or 'is truth likeness and plausibility coherent and can they function alone?'

Descartes tried to establish a philosophical platform from which no skeptical doubt can arise. He started to doubt everything until he could no longer doubt his own doubt. It was possible for him to doubt the existence of the external world of objects, about reality itself. However, he could not doubt that he was doubting everything. It was just not possible to doubt his own doubt. On the basis of his doubt, he built his philosophy.

Hume was of the view that there is no first principle which is so self-evident as to be beyond doubt. Even if there were such a first principle, we cannot advance beyond it because we would not yet have rescued from doubt our ability to reason deductively.

If the impression that only philosophers are skeptics and that 'needless' questions have been asked by them in the pursuit of knowledge has been produced, it would be good if we can reflect again on whether we too are skeptics ourselves. For, we all are skeptics in one form or the other. It may be someone doubting the reliability of a product that he or she is about to buy, or doubting the weather report that was just read out as you are about to step out of the house. Skepticism is more widespread then we think and is not confined only to the philosophers or thinkers. It may take mild forms or may be extreme, but the importance of its role and presence in our lives cannot be doubted or denied.

Skepticism and its Arguments

Knowledge has traditionally been described as justified true belief. So knowledge is possible if and only if a set of requirements are fulfilled. Skepticism is, however, of the belief that it is impossible to fulfill all requirements. So knowledge is impossible in that sense. Considering all the criticisms that skepticism poses, is it worth embracing it? Does it become more of a hindrance rather than a help?

Hume offers the view that we can know about the external world only through perceptions of it and the accuracy of these perceptions cannot be proven. How can we judge the reliability of our perceptions? Is it possible to prove that our perception is reliable without using our senses? It does seem difficult if not impossible. How do I prove that my sense of perception is reliable? If I try to prove that my perceptions are reliable using my senses, I will encounter a logical fallacy.

The Dream Argument of Descartes states that the waking and dreaming states are not distinguishable from each other. I can be dreaming that I am awake and not be able to tell whether I are dreaming or awake. It is possible that I am only dreaming that I

am awake and not really awake at all. So how can I test whether I am awake or asleep? I can be dreaming that I am awake, and I am trying to test whether I am awake or asleep in that dream itself. So would I be able to pass the test? There is really no way to find out whether I am awake or dreaming because though I think I am awake, I could in all probability be asleep and dreaming about all these in my sleep. I may try to convince myself and say that I can distinguish my dream state from my not dreaming state, but I can be countered because I may be just dreaming; and assuming that I am awake claiming to tell the difference between being awake and being asleep or dreaming. I may even see a bird fly by but there is a problem in this that my senses are not reliable. Perception is thus unreliable and I still cannot tell whether I am sleeping or awake. In the movie "Inception", we see the characters entering a dream state. Within that dream, they again enter another dream state. They enter another dream state within that dream. What we have here are dream states within dream states. If a person was not aware, then he would not know which dream state he was in. he may feel that he has woken up from his dream state but it is possible that he is still in another dream state. Thus, it becomes difficult to differentiate whether we are in a dream or awake.

The Evil Genius Argument states that it is logically possible for demons to exist and that they deceive. We say that 2+2=4, but is it not possible for the demon to deceive us with that equation? Skepticism ventures into logic and mathematics saying that all these supposed truths like 2+2=4 may be all just a trick played out by demons with the intention to deceive. It may be that we only think that 2+2=4 and in reality, it is not true.

If someone says that since skepticism makes absolute certainty a requirement for knowledge then is skepticism beyond doubt too? Skepticism then cannot lay claim to being the complete truth because no one really knows whether skepticism is true.

Defenders of skepticism would however not be deterred by this prospect. They would counter that by saying that skepticism is probably true and that no one really knows that skepticism is true. This argument would then have been played back into the hands of skepticism.

Arguments against Skepticism

Skepticism says that if there is even a small room for uncertainty, then it cannot be considered as knowledge. But the question arises whether we need to have absolute certainty in order to have knowledge. Is it really necessary that this standard be maintained for something to be considered as knowledge? The weather report that is predicted in the news, for example, if it turns out to be correct, can be considered as giving knowledge. There is at least certainty in perceptual knowledge. Perceptual beliefs are based on direct sense experience and hence have certainty or are true. For example, I have a headache. I know that I have a headache because I can verify it by myself. I have knowledge about myself; I have knowledge about my headache. I have direct experience about my headache. So I know when I am dreaming and when I am awake. There may be times when I may be dreaming that I am awake but most of the time I know when I am dreaming and when I am awake.

It is logically possible for the demons to exist but I know that 2+2=4. It is not possible for the demon to deceive me that the answer is not true because I already know that the answer to 2+2=4. There can be no other answer that says otherwise that it is false.

Imagine a scenario where the skeptic is right and perception is not reliable. It means that my other cognitive processes may also be unreliable. Hence, the faculty of reasoning which the skeptic uses is also bound to be unreliable too. For since reasoning is unreliable, any conclusion which the skeptic

arrives at may be unreliable. If the conclusion of the skeptic is true, then since reasoning is unreliable, we need not pay heed to the skeptic. However, if the conclusion of the skeptic is wrong, we need not pay any attention to the skeptic at all.

Conclusion

Critics have claimed that anyone who tried to be a complete skeptic, denying or suspending all judgments about ordinary beliefs would soon be driven insane. For the skeptic, the external world does not exist. The skeptic would live a life devoid of meaning. In fact, the skeptic would say that there is no life at all.

Even Hume thought that the complete skeptic would starve to death and walk into walls or out of windows. So he separated the doubting activities from natural practical activities in the world. Skeptical philosophy was allowed to go in theory while believing occurred in practice. Thinkers like A.J. Ayer and J.L. Austin are of the view that skepticism is unnecessary but it has a place of its own and is needed. Maund (1937) writes that "Skepticism may be self-refuting, but in the process of refuting itself it undermines dogmatism." Skepticism has helped to belittle dogmatism. It has forced the dogmatic philosopher to find better and stronger arguments for their views and try to find answers to the attack of the skeptics. No longer can we accept something as it is in blind faith without questioning it. We can say that the skeptics have helped stop and checked dogmatism. Blind faith cannot exist. It has forced people to think and has stopped rash speculation. So skepticism has become an important and indispensable part not only of philosophy, but of life too.

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Endnotes

[1] *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2nd edition, Vol. 9 (Macmillan)

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