

**IMPACT OF BRITISH INTERVENTION ON ETHNIC  
DIVERSITY OF SIKKIM (1889-1947)**

**A Dissertation Submitted**

**To**

**Sikkim University**



In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the  
**Degree of Master of Philosophy**

**By**

**Bandana Subba**

Department of History

School of Social Sciences

February, 2018



# सिक्किम विश्वविद्यालय

(भारतके संसदके अधिनियमद्वारा स्थापित केन्द्रीय विश्वविद्यालय)

## SIKKIM UNIVERSITY

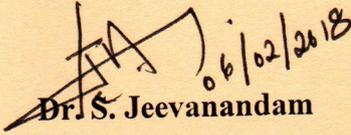
[A central university established by an Act of Parliament of India in 2007]

### CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation titled “**Impact of British Intervention on Ethnic Diversity of Sikkim (1889-1947)**” submitted to the Sikkim University for partial fulfillment of the degree of the **Masters of Philosophy** in the **Department of History**, embodies the result of bonafide research work carried out by **Ms. Bandana Subba** under my guidance and supervision. No part of the thesis has been submitted for any other Degree, Diploma, Association and fellowship.

All the assistance and help received during the course of the investigation have been duly acknowledged by her.

We recommend this dissertation to be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

  
06/02/2018

**Dr. S. Jeevanandam**

Supervisor

Assistant Professor, Department of History

Sikkim University

**Dr. S. Jeevanandam**

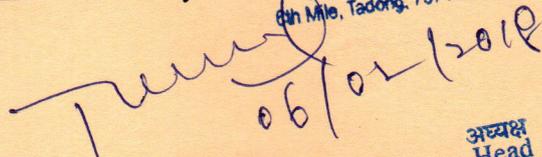
Assistant Professor

Department of History

School of Social Sciences

SIKKIM UNIVERSITY

6th Mile, Tadong, 737102, Gangtok-Sikkim

  
06/02/2018

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Thangellapali**

Head of the Department

Associate Professor, Department of History

Sikkim University

अध्यक्ष  
Head  
इतिहास विभाग  
Department of History  
सिक्किम विश्वविद्यालय  
Sikkim University

६ माइल, सामदुर, पीओ तादुङ-७६७१०२, गान्तोक, सिक्किम, भारत

फोन : ०३५९२-२५१०६७, २५१४६८, फ्याक्स-२५१८६५

6th Mile, Samdur, P.O. Tadong 737102, Gangtok, Sikkim, India

Phone : 03592-251067, 251468, Fax : 03592-251865

Website : www.cus.ac.in

माइल, सामदुर, तादोंग -737102  
गंगटोक, सिक्किम, भारत  
फोन-03592-251212, 251415, 251656  
फैक्स -251067  
वेबसाइट - [www.cus.ac.in](http://www.cus.ac.in)



6<sup>th</sup> Mile, Samdur, Tadong -737102  
Gangtok, Sikkim, India  
Ph. 03592-251212, 251415, 251656  
Telefax: 251067  
Website: [www.cus.ac.in](http://www.cus.ac.in)

## सिक्किम विश्वविद्यालय SIKKIM UNIVERSITY

(भारत के संसद के अधिनियम द्वारा वर्ष 2007 में स्थापित और नैक (एनएएसी) द्वारा वर्ष 2015 में प्रत्यायित केंद्रीय विश्वविद्यालय)  
(A central university established by an Act of Parliament of India in 2007 and accredited by NAAC in 2015)

### DECLARATION

I, **Bandana Subba**, hereby declare that the research work embodied in the dissertation titled “**Impact of British Intervention on Ethnic Diversity of Sikkim (1889-1947)**” submitted to **Sikkim University** for the award degree of **Masters of Philosophy**, is my original work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.

*Bandana Subba*

**Bandana Subba**

Roll No.: 16MPH002

Registration No.: 16/M.Phil/HIS/02



# सिक्किम विश्वविद्यालय

(भारतके संसदके अधिनियमद्वारा स्थापित केन्द्रीय विश्वविद्यालय)

## SIKKIM UNIVERSITY

[A central university established by an Act of Parliament of India in 2007]

### PLAGIARISM CHECK CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that plagiarism check has been carried out for the following M. Phil Dissertation with the help of Urkund Software and the result is within the permissible limit decided by the University.

### IMPACT OF BRITISH INTERVENTION ON ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF SIKKIM (1889-1947)

Submitted by **Ms. Bandana Subba** under the supervision of **Dr. S. Jeevanandam** of the Department of HISTORY, School of SOCIAL SCIENCES, Sikkim University, Gangtok, 737 102, INDIA.

Signature of the candidate

Countersigned by the Supervisor  
**Dr. S. Jeevanandam**  
Assistant Professor  
Department of History  
School of Social Sciences  
Sikkim University  
Gangtok, 737 102, India

६ माइल, सामदुर, पीओ तदुंग, गान्तोक, सिक्किम, भारत  
फोन : ०३५९२-२५१०६७, २५१४६८, फ्याक्स-२५१८६५  
6th Mile, Samdur, P.O. Tadong 737102, Gangtok, Sikkim, India  
Phone : 03592-251067, 251468, Fax : 03592-251865  
Website : www.cus.ac.in

*In Loving Memory of my*

*Mother*

*Madhu Kumari Rai (Subba)*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Although, your presence may not be feel, but your words of reassurance and energize, makes me realize to be strong. Thank you so much my beloved *Aama*.

I am highly grateful to my supervisor, **Dr. S. Jeevanandam**, Department of History, Sikkim University, under whom I had the privilege of carrying on my dissertation work for M.Phil in History. Despite all my shortcomings, he had always encouraged and motivated me. And it is an honor to have **Dr. Vijay Kumar Thangellapali**, as a Head of the Department, whose inspiring lessons always inspire me.

I wish to express my gratitude to the University Grants Commission for providing me with a monthly fellowship. My Sincere thanks to the Central Library (Sikkim University), Centre for Himalayan Studies, NBU (especially documentation section), Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Sikkim State Achieves, and State Library (Gangtok) for giving me the permission to access the books and documents available.

I cannot forget sincere help and cooperation extended to me by my friend as well as my hostel roommate **Anisa Limboo**, *Sister Jeena Tamang* for encouraging me and of course *Sister Reema Rai* for always standing beside me in my days of sorrows. I felt really blessed and great full to have them all in my life.

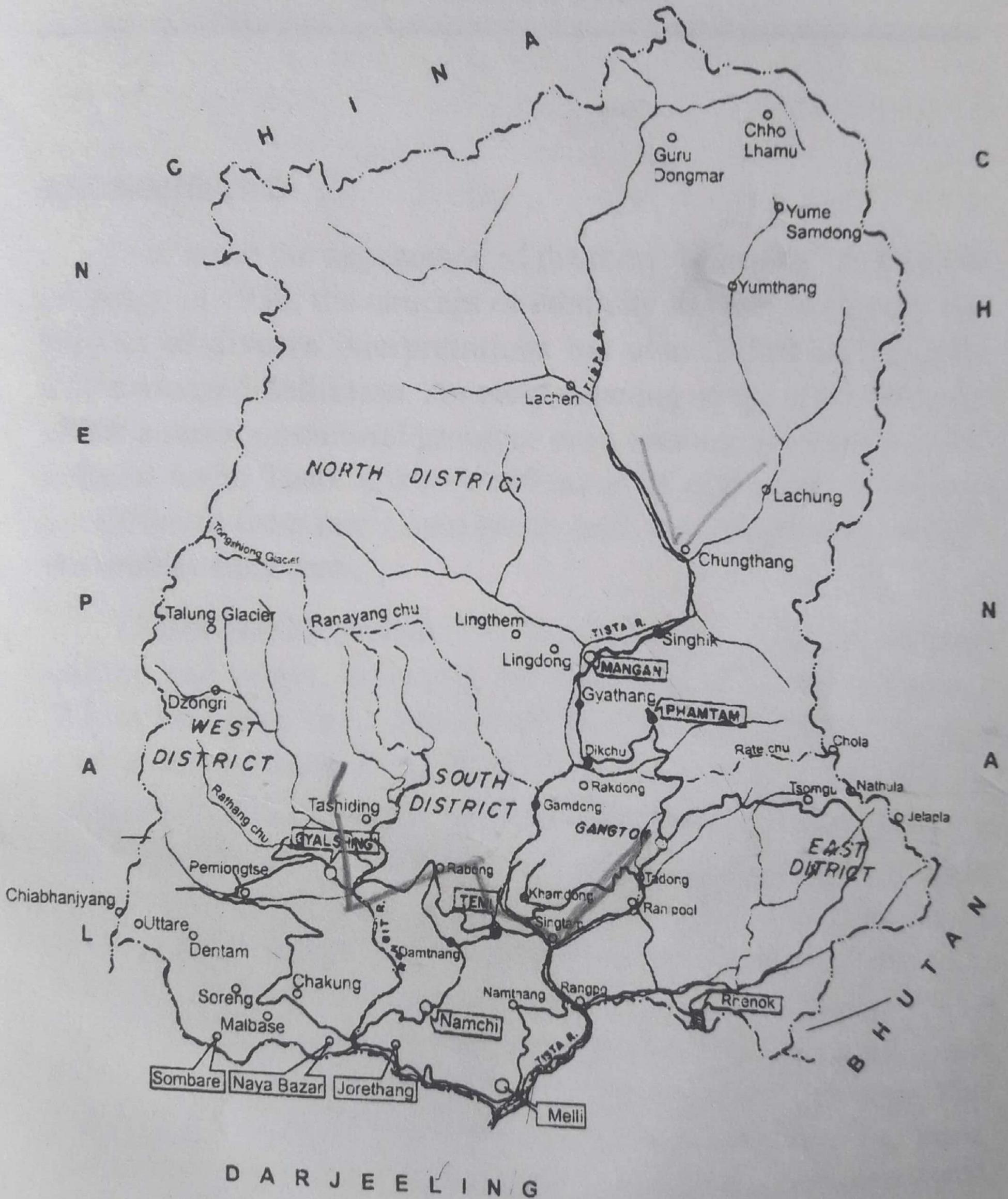
Last but not the least; I would love to share part of my thanks to my father and my sisters for their kind support and understanding me, by not involving me in any hindrance that they faced throughout this period of work. So, thank you all.

**Bandana Subba**

## **CONTENTS**

	<b>Page No</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b>	i
<b>ABBREVIATION</b>	ii
<b>GLOSSARY</b>	iii-iv
<b><u>CHAPTER - I</u></b>	
Introduction	1-11
<b><u>CHAPTER - II</u></b>	
The Ethnic Communities of Sikkim and other sub communities	12-27
<b><u>CHAPTER - III</u></b>	
The British intervention and its impact on Sikkim	28-45
<b><u>CHAPTER - IV</u></b>	
Ethnic organizations and Ethnic problems of Sikkim	46- 60
<b><u>CHAPTER - V</u></b>	
Conclusion	61-66
<b>APPENDIX</b>	67-75
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	76-80

# Sketch Map of Sikkim



## **ABBREVIATION**

SNP	Sikkim National Party
SSC	Sikkim State Congress
PSS	Praja Sudharak Samaj
PSP	Praja Samelan party
SAM	Scandinavian Allied Mission
SUM	Scottish University Mission

## GLOSSARY

Chogyal	Religious head, Dharma Raja
Kazis	Landlord/ Elites
Sikhim	Old name of Sikkim
Rong	Lepcha called themselves as Rong
Dzumsa	Self governance
Denzong	Land of rice
Dzong	District
Dzongpens	District chief
Kalung	Minister
Kiratis	limboo, Rai, Gurung, Tamang and Mangar
Mandala	Power rested in the hands of Tibet
Mandal	Village head man
Ellakas	Blocks
Thikadar	Contractors
Kalobari	Black loaded of bitumen
Panu	Tribal chief/ ruler

Jharlangi	The system of labor work without any wages
Kuruwas	Tenant had to wait for a long period of time
Bethi	Gifts taken by the elites of Sikkim
Gorkhas	Synonyms of Nepali

**CHAPTER - I**  
**INTRODUCTION**

Sikkim is a small mountainous state; it was founded by the Namgyal dynasty in 1642, as a theocratic state by a hereditary *Maharaja* (King), who was assisted by large landowners, *kajis* (hereditary ministers). The state was composed of groups such as the Lepchas, Bhutias, and small number of Nepali community. After British started to persuade Sikkim, there were many changes taking place in Sikkim. With the help of the newly constituted council the British political officer desired to introduce social, political, economic and educational reforms to suit their interest in the state. During the British rule, the *Maharajah* was also assisted by British Political officers along with the *Kajis*. The ruler was placed on the throne with nominal responsibilities.<sup>1</sup>

The British assumed their paramount position over Sikkim through the *Treaty of Titalia of 1817*. Ever since their intervention into the Himalayan kingdom has been marked as a significant in the history of Sikkim. The treaty established a complete control of British in Sikkim and for the First time, the British acquired the right to trade up to the Tibetan frontier.<sup>2</sup> Within four decades, Sikkim was completely transformed into a British Indian protectorate and the annexation of Darjeeling was confirmed.<sup>3</sup> As per *Treaty of Tumlung of 1861* the British could construct roads in Sikkim, station their army, recruit coolies, catch runaway slaves, and control external relations.<sup>4</sup> The British sent number of inspections, missions and expeditions to Sikkim between 1817 and 1861. Another significant development had occurred on its southern territory, which had more significance for Nepali immigration to Sikkim.<sup>5</sup> Khangsa Dewan and Phodong

Lama<sup>6</sup> were determined to use Nepalese for their usefulness on developing Sikkim, issued in 1867.<sup>7</sup>

According to British, Sikkim's people were conceived as backward, uncivilized of acquiring values of enlightenment, irrational, illogical, suspicious, unnatural, orthodox, uncultured etc.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, in order to overcome this problem they brought educational reforms which encouraged for the opening of English Schools in Sikkim. Before their administration was extended, Sikkim had its own traditional Lamaistic system of education. As the British political officer became the guiding spirit of the administration of Sikkim, it was the demand of the situation that the princess of the royal family and the traditional feudal lords started to be taught under western system of education.<sup>9</sup>

In the content of the post colonial discourse Kharel, intend to situate the crisis of identities in the Sikkim society in colonial Sikkim within the immense and heterogeneous terrain of Socio- political, ethnic, religious, legal and mythic discourses that have mediated Sikkim and the British experience during the Colonial period. The ethnic intricacy coupled with the British subjugation made the Sikkim's ruling class to adopt many non- Tibetan elements into political Sikkim.<sup>10</sup> The emergence of lessee landlordism may be taken as an important turning point in ethnic relations in Sikkim.<sup>11</sup> A.C. Sinha writes "In Sikkim there are three main sub- cultural stocks" of the Nepalis community namely "the Kiratis, the Newaris and the Gorkhas." Among the Kiratis, the Limboos, the Rais, the Gurungs, the Tamangs and the Mangars constitute the autochthonous inhabitants of Sikkim.<sup>12</sup> For instance they claim that they constitute separate socio-cultural community and therefore should not be confused with Nepalese.

Nepalese are predominantly Hindus by religion and linguistically different from that of the Bhutias or Lepchas. Nepali is not a complete homogenous group like that of the Lepchas. It is a conglomeration of different and distinct tribes and communities which can be broadly classified under two basic groups: Mongoloids and Aryans. Nepali identity is not just linguistic, but also racial. Nepali is just an umbrella term under which various tribes and communities find a homogeneous representation.<sup>13</sup> The Nepalese being one of the communities of Sikkim assert their own separate identity and resent any propaganda undermining their interest and existence identity. Similarly, among the larger Bhutia community, the real Bhutias and Sherpas assert their separate identity.<sup>14</sup> Among the three major ethnic groups, the Lepchas, also called 'Rong' are fairly established as the original inhabitants of Sikkim.<sup>15</sup>

### **1.1.Statement of the problem**

The British witnessed that the administration system prevalent in the state was not suitable to the new situation. They conceived that Sikkim was internally so fragmented, so heterogeneous such that it needed centralizing forces to sustain its unity. The British decided to increase their influence in Sikkim with a view to opening a trade route to Tibet from India. However, their designs were very clear to bring Sikkim within their sphere of influence, as one of the possible routes to Tibet lay via Sikkim, since the princes of Sikkim were closely connected by matrimonial relation as well as religious affinities with Tibet. Before the establishment of the British political officer in Sikkim three main ethnic groups viz. the Bhutias, the Lepchas, and the Nepalese were ruled by their own social custom and traditions. With the advent of the British administration and with the coming up of new idea and thoughts the social scenario of the society began to change according

to the British.<sup>16</sup> The influx of Nepalese immigrants resulted into the significant increase of population within the state. In fact, during the very first year of J.C. White assuming office in Sikkim, four hundred Nepalese settlers with their families moved to Sikkim in 1889-90, they are almost all Hindus, with innumerable castes, the few exceptions being the tribes coming from the northeast of Nepal.<sup>17</sup> The Nepalese who had followed for conquest of Sikkim's territory beginning with the closing years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, were ultimately to form, not only the most numerous of the ethnic elements that formed the populations of Sikkim but were also to subside the firm foundations of the agrarian economy of Sikkim. However, such transformation took many years, and the early years of the immigration of the Nepalese were full of Strife on account of the opposition of the Bhutias under the leadership of the rulers of Sikkim.<sup>18</sup> There was a Nepalese ethnic substratum in Sikkim even when the Namgyal dynasty was consecrated; in fact the existence of multiple ethnic groups in Sikkim is as old as the Namgyal dynasty of Sikkim.<sup>19</sup> A.C. Sinha figures out that there appears to be two waves of Nepalese immigration in Sikkim such as the Gorkha incursion from 1770 to 1815 and the British induced settlement efforts since 1861 onwards.

The Political officer J.C. White, quote the condition of Sikkim in his own words "Chaos reigned everywhere, there was no revenue system, no court of justice, no police, no public works, no education for the younger generation, on top of it, and coffers were empty". (Sinha, 2006:53) He brought large number of Nepalese community into the Himalayas of Sikkim and Darjeeling as a worker for the enhancement of the economy of the State. Never the less this new Nepali community did not bring them alone but there culture, race, religion, custom, and tradition too which later on played a key role in

occupying the position of one of the ethnic group of Sikkim. As consequences, there were many changes taking place in the fields of socio-economic-political aspects. Therefore, the main objectives of the research work are to throw light upon the impact of the British on the ethnic diversity of Sikkim in respect of social, political and economic condition of Sikkim.

Ethnicity in Sikkim takes shapes of both primordialists and instrumentalists' view, that are interconnected in a model of ethnic identity and grievances which interact to increase insidious ethnic group. It wasn't only primordialists attachments that derived from place of birth, kinship, relationships, religion, language and social practices that are natural, and passed on from generation to generation. But at the same time instrumentalists too, that believed in the construction of social and political institution in order to bring changes in the society. Because within instrumentalists thought, ethnic conflict does not emerge directly from differences in ethnic identity. Rather ethnic conflict arises only when ethnic identities are politicized or manipulated to generate political and socio-economic advantages for an ethnic group.<sup>20</sup>

## **1.2.Literature Review**

Ethnicity is a concept that is at once commonly used yet difficult to define with exactitude. Deriving from the Greek word 'Ethos,' the term has long connoted group claims of commonality based on share historical experiences, geographical origins, cultural practices, and or kinship ties. Glazer and Moynihan considered that any group of distinct culture and origin including the majority as an ethnic group. Ethnicity is a complex phenomenon that refers to the sense of people hood or the feeling shared by the

members of the group. An ethnic group has its own sub structure and sub culture parallel to the larger society.<sup>21</sup> *The Ethnic Origin of Nations* of Smith focused on the concepts like myths, memory, symbol, values and identity, which are necessary elements of the very concept of a Nation that in turn require a study of pre-modern ethnic formations.<sup>22</sup> The society in Sikkim may be conceived as 'ethnically diverse' and in poly-ethnic society, According to Kumar's explanation, the ethnic and political factor that played the role in creating consciousness of belongingness among the communities of Sikkim such as Bhutia, Lepcha and Nepali that constitute the major ethnic group of Sikkim. In which he focused on the issues of identity where it talked about the development of group identity or community.<sup>23</sup> Another related article of Arora's *Assertive Identities, Indigeneity, and the Politics of Recognition as a Tribe: The Bhutias, the Lepchas and the Limbus of Sikkim* highlighted the three major ethnic groups of Sikkim such as Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepali. She discussed about the identity politics of Scheduled tribes in the region of Sikkim. She asserted that history, religion and language emerge as important symbolic sources for furthering ethnic-national claims of tribal identity. In addition, she stated that tribal identity was no longer a sign and symbol of subalternity and marginality, but a political consciousness. Another article of her, *Gandhigiri in Sikkim*, focused on the indigenous Lepchas' of Dzongu Sikkim that comprise one of the major ethnic community of Sikkim, who used Gandhian method of protest to prevent construction of Hydel Project, that will destroy their land and the environment. The article highlighted the awareness among the Lepchas about the right to self-determination. However, their effort did not prove fruitful as a consequence of many

projects has already started in North Sikkim, but the activist still hoped for their good days of hard work.

Further, the view has been supported by Bhattacharyya, who explained that cultural politics and quest for identity of two marginal communities, the Lepcha and the Mangar. She talked about the socio-cultural interaction of various ethnic groups that created cultural boundaries and mixed cultural traits. She mentioned that the importance of printing press, as a major factor in forwarding the issue of the homogenization of the linguistic and cultural traits of the migrant communities, which brought the waves of cultural consciousness among the Lepchas and Mangars of Darjeelling and Sikkim.<sup>24</sup> The book helped to understand in locating the ethnic roots and identity through the prism of culture, myths and religion that reconstruct inhabits on the memory of glorious past.

Kazi's *Inside Sikkim against the Tide* argued that the language as a major factor for unifying the different communities. He had even opined that more than the language, the race and religion may be overriding factor in determining the course of political events in the region, like Sikkim.<sup>25</sup> Basnett talked about the birth of Sikkim and its major ethnic communities. He highlighted that the encouragement of the new political officer of Sikkim J.C. White in the migration of Gorkhas from Nepal in hope of strengthening its economic base. He stated that Chogyal and native people were not interested in the policy of immigration. The entire book concentrated on politics rather than social and economy.<sup>26</sup> Lama's *Sikkim Society Polity Economy Environment*, is divided into four broad sections viz., Society, Polity, Economy, and Environment. It also attempts to present an introspective analysis of how the particular ethnic affiliation vis-a-vis common origin has been important in determining the position of the people in Sikkim. He was in view

that the consolidation of the Bhutia rules in the fifteenth century led to the formation of the state of Sikkim. This book helps in understanding the differentiation among the ethnic group of Sikkim by their separate religion, culture, and language and their migration background.<sup>27</sup>

Datta Ray's *Smash and Grab: Annexation of Sikkim* (1984), being a personal friend of the last Chogyal, P.T Namgyal. He has written this book as a biographical account, however, it deals much with Sikkim's merger with India. But at the same time it also highlights the concept of class conflict between the Lepcha Kazis and the Royal family/*bhutia kazis*,

Sinha's focused on the social change and political developments in Sikkim through elitist approach on the efforts of nation building and search for political and ethnic identity. His book talked about the crucial role played by the elitist in shaping the destiny of the community.<sup>28</sup>

### **1.3. Objectives**

- To know the ethnic communities of Sikkim and other sub communities.
- To analyze the intervention and impact of the British on the social, political and economic condition of Sikkim.
- To identify the ethnic organization and the issue of ethnic problem of Sikkim.

### **1.4. Methodology**

An introspective study is made mostly with the help of both Primary and Secondary sources that enhances the analysis of historical records and documents such as reports

and Gazetteer available on the State Library, Information and Public Report Department, and Namgyal Institute of Tibetology. As a secondary source it examines the available literature, articles, journals, thesis to get acquainted with the problem through the concepts and theories consisting of studies that are similar to the proposed topic.

### **1.5. Chapterization**

This research work attributes five chapters. Chapter one as Introduction intent to covers the statement of the problem, review of literature, objectives of the study and the methodology.

Chapter two provides an insight into the brief explanation of the history of Sikkim with the establishment of Namgyal dynasty in relation with the ethnic group of Sikkim and other sub groups.

Chapter three explains what happen after the intervention of the British into Sikkim. Focusing on the Treaty of Titalia of 1817 and the Treaty of Tumlung of 1861, which gave them the position of lord's paramount of Sikkim. It also discussed the changes that were brought up by the colonial power in the fields of agriculture, trade, commerce, industry, politics and social-cultural activities. In addition, this chapter focuses on the impact that occurred after Nepali migration in this region, particularly emphasizing in the field of economy.

Chapter Four, tried to focuses on the ethnic communities, and its major outcomes in the society as a problem to some section of the community. The chapter tried to show how and what factor makes one community different and distinct from the other. Was it because of having its own language, culture, tradition, custom and practices they are put

together by single title by which they are not accepting the fact that they belong to a particular given Ethnic community, or was it because of some other reason that goes on to become disappointed with the title.

Conclusion is the last chapter, which summarizes the facts from the above chapters.

## Endnotes

---

<sup>1</sup>Kharel, M.P. *Socio Economic condition of Sikkim under Colonial Domination (1889-1947)*. PhD Thesis, University of North Bengal, 2002: 149.

<sup>2</sup>Risley, H.H. *The Gazetteer of Sikkim*. New Delhi: Low Price Publication, 2010: 3.

<sup>3</sup>Kharel, Sunita and Wonchuk Jigme. *The Gazetteer of Sikkim*. Gangtok: Home Department government of Sikkim, 2013: 85.

<sup>4</sup>Risley, H.H. Op.cit.2010: 4.

<sup>5</sup>Sinha, A.C. *Sikkim Feudal and Democratic*. New Delhi: Indian Council of Social Science Research.2006: 37.

<sup>6</sup>Khangsa Dewan and Phodong Lama were considered as right hand men of John Claude White, the Prominent British Political Officer.

<sup>7</sup>Sinha, A.C. *Sikkim Feudal and Democratic*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company. 2008.74.

<sup>8</sup>Kharel. M.P. Op.cit.2002.148.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid. 2002. 149.

<sup>10</sup>Basnet, L.B. *Sikkim: A Short Political History*. New Delhi: S. Chand Publication, 1974: 43.

<sup>11</sup>Lama, Mahendra. P. *Sikkim: Society polity Economy Environment*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company. 2000.72.

<sup>12</sup>Gurung, Suresh Kumar. *Sikkim Ethnicity and Political Dynamic: A Triadic Perspective*. New Delhi: Deepak Offset Press, 2011.94.

<sup>13</sup>Gurung, Suresh Kumar. Op.cit. 2011. 114.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid. 2011. 120.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid. 2011. 96.

<sup>16</sup>Kharel.M.P. Op.cit.2002. 78.149.150.

<sup>17</sup>Sinha, A.C. Op.cit. 2006. 43-47.

<sup>18</sup>Basnet, L.B. *Sikkim: A Short Political History*. New Delhi: S. Chand Publication, 1974. 41.

<sup>19</sup>Gurung, Suresh Kumar. Op.cit. 2011. 8.

<sup>20</sup>Khangohian, Veronica. *Ethnicity, Conflict and Poverty in Manipur: A Study of Tamenglong and Imphal*. New Delhi: PhD Thesis. Jaharlal Nehru University. 2010.6.

- 
- <sup>21</sup> Punekar, V. B. *Assimilations: A Study of North Indians in Bangalore*, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1974.3.
- <sup>22</sup> Smith, D. Anthony, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford U.K: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1986.
- <sup>23</sup> Gurung, Suresh Kumar. Op.cit. 2011.
- <sup>24</sup> Panda, Nandini Bhattacharyya. *Culture, Heritage and Identity*, New Delhi; KW Publishers, 2015.
- <sup>25</sup> Kazi, N. Jigme *Inside Sikkim: Against the Tide*. Gangtok: Hill Media Publications. 1994.
- <sup>26</sup> Basnet, L.B. Op.cit.1974.
- <sup>27</sup> Lama, Mahendra.P. Op.cit.2000.
- <sup>28</sup> Sinha, A.C. *Sikkim Feudal and Democratic*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company, 2008.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ETHNIC COMMUNITIES OF SIKKIM

#### **2.1. Locating Historical Background of Sikkim**

Sikkim, like other parts of India, is an extremely diverse state, which constitutes multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural ethnic groups of people such as Nepalis/Nepalese, Lepchas, Bhutias<sup>1</sup> and minor social groups like Sherpas, Tsongs (Limboos), who are identified as Nepalese in Sikkim. Among these ethnic groups Nepalese constitute the majority population. The different communities in Sikkim are characterized by their individual culture, customs and traditions; it is a home for the numerous different Himalayan people with different culture and religion.<sup>2</sup> Lamaism, Hinduism and Animism are practiced by different ethnic groups of Sikkim, which further provides the basis for the ethnic boundaries between them.<sup>3</sup> Supporting the views of Nathan Glazer and Patrick Moynihan, who considered any group of distinct culture and origin, including the majority, as an ethnic group. Fredrick Barth in anthropological terms defined an ethnic group as a designated population that has four elements.<sup>4</sup> These are biologically self-perpetuating population, shares fundamental cultural values and forms, has a field of communication and interaction and the membership by others, as constituting a category different from other categories of the same order.

Ethnic groups and their identities emerged as part of a social and political movement in Sikkim. It is believed that the shared ethnic identity often makes people to feel comfortable with similar people and give them a sense of belonging.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the growth in caste and community consciousness among the different groups and sub-groups has led to mushrooming of several caste/community organizations with claims and

demands of their own. However, these communities derive their distinct identities from their historical accounts that are constructed from time to time. The existence of multiple ethnic groups in Sikkim can be traced from the Namgyal dynasty. Therefore, it is necessary to study the history of Sikkim to understand the ethnic communities of Sikkim.

The history of Sikkim has come up with the ethnic crises since its birth. As per the first colonial census of 1891, the populations of Sikkim were divided such as Lepcha, Bhutia, Limboo, Gurung, Murmi, Rai, Jimdar, Khambu, Kami, Brahman, Mangar, Chettri, Newar, Darji, and miscellaneous. (See Appendix.1) There are problems of culture and ethnicity claiming one after another as superior one. The different communities in many different aspects developed a sense of belongingness and togetherness among themselves due to their long association with the region.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to understand the identities of different communities of Sikkim.

The different names of Sikkim region in the past is known by the different ethnic names. For instance, Tibetan used to call it as *Denjong* and more rarely *Demojong* or *Demoshong*.<sup>7</sup> The Early European (Dutch) travelers like Samuel Van de Putte and Horace Della Penna considered Sikkim as a land of *Bramosojon*.<sup>8</sup> The name 'Sikkim', is, however, said to have been, derived originally from two *Limboo* words meaning *New Palace*. According to Risley, it was associated with a new palace that built at Rabdentse by Phuntsog Namgyal. As per the Limboo legend, the daughter of Limbo chief, Yo-Yo Hang from Limbuan, got married with Chogyal Tensung Namgyal II. She exclaimed in her word "Su-Him" that meant *new house* and thus, in course of time, rephrase into *sukhim*, *Sikhim* and then to Sikkim. Lepchas considered the place as *Nye-mae-el* or *heaven*. It meant that they were the original inhabitants of the land,

who were residing in a hidden paradise. It is said that the oldest and perhaps aboriginal inhabitants of Sikkim were the *Rong* or, as they identify from their Nepalese title, *the Lepchas*. The *Kham-pa*, the immigrants from the Tibetan province of Khams, whom they popularly called as Bhutias reached Sikkim next to Lepchas. Limboos who came from the Tibetan province of Tsang, the south of the Tsanpo remained the last third aboriginal inhabitants of Sikkim.<sup>9</sup>

However, the Nepali community, as a whole constituted the major population of Sikkim. According to the Survey of 1891, 15,458 Nepalese were populated in Sikkim out of 30,459 total populations. The final wave of migrants came to Sikkim in the first half of the nineteenth century, when the British took over power from the king of Sikkim. They were primarily brought to work in the tea plantations and the constructions of roads and bridges. In addition, the migration was encouraged due to the political reason to counter the strong Tibetan influence in Sikkim. As a result the influx of Nepalese immigrants showed the significant increase of population within the state. However, Risley, while reflecting on the population of Sikkim in 1891, had focused on different nomenclatures, such a Rai, Khambu and Jimdar, considering each one as separate community. The influence of Sikkim to the British has been a main concern for the administration to formulate a feasible policy regarding the settlement pattern of a particular ethnic community. Their involvement in Sikkim's affairs was due to the wars with the Nepal and Bhutan.

## **2.2. Lepcha or *Rongs***

H.H Risley mentioned that “though the Lepcha claimed themselves to be the autochthones of Sikkim proper. Their physical characteristics stamp them to as members of the Mongolian race and certain peculiarities of language and religion

rendered it probable that the tribe was a very ancient colony from Southern Tibet”.<sup>10</sup> King Thutob Namgyal and Queen Yeshe Dolma’s book revealed that Lepchas are the earlier inhabitants amongst the other tribes of Sikkim. Dick B. Dewan considered the Lepchas as the indigenous people living in peace and tranquility with their own lines of Kings, high priests and priestesses.<sup>11</sup> They lived in *mayel-Lyang* (hidden paradise) until the arrival of *Khye Bumsa* from Tibet. *Thekong Mun Solong Panu*, the last *Panu* (lepcha chief). Witness the consecration of the first Chogyal of Namgyal Dynasty (1595-1642).

The Lepchas believed to be a descended of *Fodong Thing* and *Nazong Nyu*, whom God had created from the snows of Mt. Kanchanzunga and became the primogenitor of Lepcha race<sup>12</sup> of the sacred hidden land that they often called *Rongor Rongkup*, which meant ‘Ten Rongs’(Lepchas). Thus, it is difficult to conclude the origin of the Lepchas. According to Wadell,<sup>13</sup> it is said that the title “Lepcha” which meant a rough stone altar lay for the purpose of offering to the “semi-divine” spirits called, *Lungzee*. The word was an anglicized version of the name *Lapchey*.<sup>14</sup> The Lepchas have their own language and perhaps it is considered as the oldest languages of all the hill dialects. Grorer and H.H. Risley considered that the Lepcha alphabet was invented at the end of the seventeenth or the beginning of the eighteenth century by the King Chador Namgyal.<sup>15</sup> The script was known as *Mutanchi Rong Aming*. It has ten vowels and twenty eight consonants with eight conjoint letters.<sup>16</sup> According to the Lepcha mythology, their language is equated with the language of god, i.e., the language of *Fodong Thing* and *NazaongNyo*, to whom they owe their origin.<sup>17</sup> The language is spoken in Sikkim, Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong, Siliguri and Ilām, district of Nepal. Gurung said that the different Lepcha clans claimed their association with the 108 Lepcha ancestors, who rescued the community from the domination of

*Lasomong*, a Tibetan invader, by killing him at the foothill of mount Pandim. In course of time, the title which these warriors earned and got transformed into number of clans such as *Tamsangmoo*, *Lutsommoo*, *Brimoo*, *Fyungtalimoo*, *Sampumoo*, *Numchyomoo*, *Sadamoo*, *Adenmoo* and etc. Further, there was a division between *Rongboo* and *Mongboo* on the basis of social divisions. They are geographically divided into four sects namely, *Renjyongmoo*, *Illammoo*, *Damsangmoo* and *promoo*. The Lepchas of Sikkim, Darjeeling, Kurseong and Siliguri are called *Renjyongmoo*, whereas their *brethrens* in Illam, Kalingpong and Bhutan are called *Illammoo*, *Damsangmoo* and *Promoo*. The Tibetans, Bhutanese alike, call them as *Rong-pa*, which meant “the ravine folk”.<sup>18</sup> However, their population is mostly concentrated in the north district of Dzongu. They were fairly distributed in all parts of Sikkim. The total population of Lepchas in Sikkim during 1840-1991, was 5,762 that consisting of 2,362 males, 2399 females and 1,001 children.<sup>19</sup> (See Appendix.2)

Initially, Lepchas led a semi-nomadic economic life that depended mainly on forest products such as fruits, roots, tubers and hunting and fishing. They practiced shifting cultivation in which they used to grow two varieties of dry-land paddy, millet and maize. Therefore, land and forest are the main sources of their economy.<sup>20</sup> Grover opinioned that from the time of the establishment of a Sikkim’s Kingdom, the Lepchas became an ‘Inferior’ subject race, they were under the domination of the Sikkimese Tibetan or Bhotias/Bhutias, to which race the Chogyal and the big landowners belonged and their intervention had a great influence on the economic life of the Lepchas.<sup>21</sup> Their contacts with the Nepalese forced them to surrender their ancestral lands to accommodate the migrant communities from Nepal who introduced a new variety of crops such as cardamom and wet paddy, along with the system of terrace farming.<sup>22</sup> (Appendix.4) this has proved a significant influence on the

occupational habit and settlement process of the Lepchas. The immigrant Nepalese were helping in cultivating the land of Lepchas and Bhutias.<sup>23</sup>

According to J.C. White, the Lepcha are people of a mild, quiet and indolent disposition. Traditionally, they were considered as good archers. They were interested in hunting of wild animals using bows and arrows. Their homes were found in the midst of forests. However, the Lepcha in their traditional form can be identified by their cultural structure. Lepchas are basically nature worshippers. They worshipped spirits of mountains, rivers and forests. The Lepchas were animists, who were attracted by the rich Buddhist religion and cultural tradition of Bhutias.<sup>24</sup> However, many of them have either been converted to Christianity. For this they were even given the attribute of a dying or shrinking race, because the conversion glorified the act as a noble venture which brought the savage and barbaric Lepchas to the light of civilization.<sup>25</sup> However, the Lepchas were the first to convert their religion into Christianity. *Gombu Lepcha* of Daramdin was regarded as the first converted Christian of Sikkim.<sup>26</sup> Their rites of Passage were different due to the adoption of the different religion.

### **2.3. Bhutias or *Lhopas***

The word *Bhutia* or *Botia* was derived from the original habitat *Bhot*, which meant Tibet. The history of Bhutia in Sikkim dates back to the coming of *Khye-Bumsa*, who was advised to seek the blessings of the Lepcha Chief Thekong-Tek, nor only did he secure the blessings for the son, but the prophecy that his descendants would become the rulers of Sikkim, while the *Rongs (Lepchas)* would become their subjects. As consequence, Phungstog Namgyal became the first Chogyal of Sikkim consecrated

by the three ‘red hat sect’<sup>27</sup> Lama who had fled from Tibet and came to Sikkim in order to rescue themselves from the Tibetan ‘yellow hat sect’ Lama.<sup>28</sup>

To witness the inseparable bond between the two communities (Lepcha and Bhutia), it is said that, several animals both domestic and wild were sacrificed, and knotted the entrails around them, together in a vessel filled with blood, swearing the blood brotherhood to each other.<sup>29</sup> Hence, the friendship of Khye-Bumsa and Thekong–Tek were cemented by a ceremony at Kabi, near Gangtok. Khye Bumsa was succeeded by his third son Mipon-rab and his fourth son was named Guru Tashi, who shifted his family from Chumbi of Tibet to Gangtok. Phuntsog the great-grandson of Guru Tashi and son of Guru Tenzing was born in 1604. He consecrated as the first king of Sikkim.<sup>30</sup> J.C. White remarked that the next race to enter Sikkim, probably long before the time of accession of the Sikkim Kings, were the Bhutias, who are of Tibetan origin. Therefore, they are also known as the earliest inhabitants of “The Greater Sikkim”. Ever since, the History of Sikkim had a great relation with Tibet. Phuntsog Namgyal, the first Chogyal<sup>31</sup> of Sikkim was the head of the state, which was having both the spiritual and temporal powers.<sup>32</sup> Later on, they continued to rule Sikkim until it became the part of Indian Union on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1975.

The dynasty was ruled by the descendant of *Tri-Srong-Den-Tsen*<sup>33</sup> of Tibet for roughly 333 years. The integration of Tripartite Treaty of *Lho-Mon-Tsong-Sum*<sup>34</sup> won the pledge of the Tribes. The Treaty was basically signed to unite three communities under the regime of Solitary kings. Through the Treaty, the Chogyal had announced that the Bhutia should be considered *Lhoas* the father, *Lepcha-Mon* as the Mother and *Limboos-Srongas* the Children of the same family, whose alternative was to help one another at time of need.<sup>35</sup> The ruling Namgyal dynasty was belonged to a minority Bhutia, who was ruling over subjects belonging to different racial cultural

communities as a predominant position in the society.<sup>36</sup> However, Nepalis protested against the discriminatory and oppressive rule of the Bhutia kings and elites.

After the establishment of Bhutia beurocracy, the ownership of the cultivable land came under the control of Bhutia land-lords and aristocracy in the name of the Chogyal. As most of the Lepchas were tenant cultivators, the monopoly over the land resources shifted hands from the Lepchas to the Bhutias.<sup>37</sup> Inter-tribal conflict, raids and wars remained the main preoccupation because by then the two important tribes, Limbus and Mangars, which had not been subdued, were strong enough to challenge the Bhutia over lordship.

Following the classification given by H.H.Risley, the Bhutias of Sikkim may be grouped under three categories. Firstly, the six families descended directly from Khye Bumsa. Those are *Yul-Thenpa*, *Lingzerpa*, *Zhantarpa* or *Sangdarpa*, *Tshegyu Tarpa*, *Nyungyepa* and *Tshepa*. The second category included those who migrated after the exodus of KhyeBhumsa. They are called *Khampasor Bebtsen Gye* by virtue of having founded eight families namely, *Pon-pa*, *rGan-sTag-Pu-Tshogs* or *tGon-gSang-pa*, *Nam-gTsang-sKho-pa* or *sKor-pa.sTag-Chhung- Tar-pa*, *tKar-Tshogs-pa*, *Grong-sTod-pa*, *bTshun-rGyal-pa* or *rGyas-pa*, *mDo- Khang-pa* or *Kham-pa*. The *Pon-pa* was again subdivided into five, viz. *Nag-IDig*, *Lha-bSungs*, *Yos-ICHags*, *Na-pon*, *Pon-Chhung-pa*. The third category was comprised of those who migrated at various times, since the establishment of the Bhutia rule in Sikkim. They were called *Rui-Chhung* or the little families and were divided into groups. The chief and the most important were the *Pu-Tsho-po-pa*, *Lag-IDingpa*, *rGod-Rong-pa*, *Gyeng-pa*, *sTod-pa*, *Shar-pa*, *hBar-Phong-pu-Tsha-po* (Barphungpuso), *A-IDan-pu-Tsha-pa* (Adinpuso).<sup>38</sup> The Census Report of 1891 figured out that the total population of the Bhutia community were 4,894 persons, among 1,966 were males, 1,960 females and 968 were children. (See Appendix.3)

The Bhutias were mostly traders and herdsmen. The sizable numbers were engaged in shifting cultivation, who even led a nomadic life. While some of them were in service and land remained the major source of income. Bhutias possessed their own culture, tradition, custom, festivals and ritual. Their language was one of the *Lingua franca* in the Himalayan region.<sup>39</sup> They practiced Buddhism and their chief deity was the Buddha and Bodhisattvas. They also worshipped the guardian deities, local deities, family deities, village deities, and Kanchendzonga. The most of the deities were identified with mountains, lakes and forests. The Bhutias are distributed in all the districts of Sikkim, and mainly concentrating on the North Sikkim of Lachen and Lachung. The greater number of Tibetan speaking people founded within the traditional administrative system of the village known as *Dzumsa System*.<sup>40</sup>

#### **2.4. The Nepalese or Paharias**

The Nepalese were the people who constituted about 75% of the population of Sikkim. Their migration into the foothills of Sikkim dates back to some 200 years. It proved a boon to the economic well-being of the society. The Nepali community is not a homogenous group like that of the other two communities. It is an amalgam of different and distinct tribes and communities, which can be broadly, classified under two basic groups of Mongoloids and Aryans.<sup>41</sup> Nepali identity is not just an umbrella term under which various tribes and communities find a homogeneous representation, but also racial and above all historical. There was a Nepalese ethnic substratum in Sikkim even when the Namgyal dynasty was consecrated. A.C. Sinha figured out the two waves of Nepalese immigration in Sikkim, the first was the Gorkha incursion between 1770 to 1815, and the second was the British induced settlements since 1861 onwards. The population gradually increased with the passage of time and under various historical and political circumstances. During the first year of J.C. White, the

British officer of Sikkim, four hundred Nepalese settlers with their families had moved to Sikkim in 1889-90. They were followed Hindu and Buddhist religion. The Hindus were divided into number of innumerable castes.<sup>42</sup>

The main ethnic boundary between the Lepchas and the Bhutias who were united in their opposition towards ethnic groups categorized as Nepali and termed as migrants by them on the other hand the Nepalese claims their contribution towards developing Sikkim's economy in the last 150 years to assent their claims over the land belonging in the landscape.<sup>43</sup> In connection with this Annual Administrative Report for the year 1905-1906 stated that, Nepalese immigrants were allowed to settle on all waste lands and to protect the old Bhutia and Lepcha Inhabitants.

The following groups are generally included as Nepali such as Bahun(Brahmin), Thakuri, Chettri, Newar, Rai, Gurung, Tamang, Limboo, Mangar, Jogi, bhujel, Thami, Yolmo, Sherpa, Dewan, Mukhia, Sunar, Sarki, Kami and Damai. Except those who belonged to Aryan stock and basically Hindus by religion like Bahun, Chettri, Thakuri, Kami, Sarki and Damai. Generally, they represented north Indian physical features and the rest of the Nepali sub-cultural groups had their own languages or dialects, traditions, cultures, habits, religion and belonged to Mongoloid racial stock which was mostly bi-lingual. Nepalese therefore, was a mixture of Aryan and Mongoloid racial groups.<sup>44</sup>

However, Risley focused on the different nomenclatures, such a Rai, Khambu and Jimdar, which considering each one as a separate community. Among the Nepali, the *Kiratis*<sup>45</sup> along with the Lepchas were said to be the aboriginals of Sikkim. The *Kiratis* included Limboos, Mangars, Tamangs and some other as well. In the history of settlement of different ethnic groups in Sikkim, the Nepalese seemed to have

followed a natural process due to the prevalence of free intercourse between the people of Nepal and Sikkim. The bulk of the Nepalese, particularly those belonging to the Aryan stock, appeared to have migrated in the middle of the nineteenth century.<sup>46</sup> (See Appendix.4)

## **2.5. The Other Sub-Communities**

In this section, it discussed about certain groups of the Nepalese, who have been presented in view of their ethnic identities. For instance, the Limboos in Sikkim are called Nepalese, but they themselves do not consider as Nepalese. Similarly, Sherpas or Yolmos are subsumed as Bhutia group, but they generally acknowledge themselves as Nepali. This indicates the evolving nature of cultural and ethnic identities.<sup>47</sup>

### **2.5.1. The Limboos**

The Limboo community are said to have been present as far as Lepchas and Bhutias are concerned. Their presence into Sikkim has been supported by the scholars like R.K. Sprigg. According to him, the presence of Limboo in Sikkim was time immemorial. Risley mentioned that the Limboos as one of the early inhabitants of Sikkim and their coexistence with the Lepchas. J.R. Subba stated that the Limboos believed on biogenesis theory of origin of life and also believed that the *Yakthumbas* were the aboriginal tribes of the Himalayas. This argument is supported by the fact that the treaty of *Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum*, that believed to have been signed in the middle of seventeenth century, which signified the historical testimony of a blood relationship among the three communities of Sikkim. They identified themselves as different from the larger Nepali entity. However, the Limboos continued to receive unequal treatment from the successive Bhutia rulers. They were treated at par with other Nepalis and paid higher revenues.<sup>48</sup> They called themselves *Yakthumbas*.<sup>49</sup> They

are known as *TsongsoChongs* in Sikkim by the Bhutias and Lepchas, which etymologically meant merchants. The term 'Limboo' means 'archer' or 'bow shooter'. Limboos belonged to the Kirat race that came to settle down in the west and south-west of the State. The area they occupied came to be called Limbuan<sup>50</sup>. It was Prithivinaryan Shah who gave some of the Limboos, the name of Subba. Hence, many of them use Subba as their surname.<sup>51</sup>

### **2.5.2. The Sherpas**

The word *Sherpa* is a combination of two Bhutia words, *Shayar* (East) and *Pa* (Resident or People). They are Tibetan in origin. They lived originally in the frontier districts in the *Tsing-hai-Sechwan* provinces of China (Kham). The Sherpas are present inhabitants of northeast part of Nepal (Solokhumbu) and Sikkim. Since the Sherpas were, and still are, by and large Buddhist by religion, their occupational indulgence as porters and guides in mountain expeditions till date has provided valuable basis for the theory of migration into hilly areas of Darjeeling and Sikkim. They are also seen having leadership and organizational qualities. In early first half of the eighteenth century, Phuntsog Namgyal, Chogyal of Sikkim married the granddaughter of Rabden Sherpa. Sherpa were in Sikkim long before the date given by the western social authorities. They used to be called Sherpa, which gradually accumulated with Bhutia of Sikkim like *Dopthapa, chumbipa, Amdo, Dukpa* and etc.<sup>52</sup> The Census of Sikkim in 1891 did not provide details about the Sherpa population. Risley remarked that most probably, the Sherpa community was enumerated and shown as Bhutia. At present the Sherpa communities are spread in all the districts of Sikkim. In Sikkim, the Sherpas are mostly engaged in agriculture activities.

### **2.5.3. The Other ethnic groups**

Apart from the above mentioned ethnic communities, there are still some other minor communities such as Mangars, Tamangs, Gurungs, Rais etc descended from the Mongoloid races. However, each of this community has its own story of origin and mythology. For instance, Mangars, the larger Nepali community of the modern times, are among the early inhabitants of Sikkim and are often referred to as contemporary of the Lepchas. According to J.D. Hooker, Mangars were the aborigines of Sikkim, but were driven by the Lepchas to further to the west. The Mangars share some religious, cultural and linguistic similarity with the Gurungs. Some Mangar leaders claim that the British rulers misrepresented them as Nepalese immigrants whom they tend to deny the history of migration from Nepal and believed that the history of their migration is much older than it is claimed in the colonial discourses.<sup>53</sup> In Hooker's writing Murmis (Tamangs) found a special place as one of the native tribes of Sikkim. He wrote that the Murmis (Tamangs) are the only other native tribe remaining in any numbers in Sikkim. They were the scattered people of Tibetan origin, and called Nishung named after the two districts of Nimo and Shung, the places of their early inhabitation, situated on the way to Lhasa. The Rai community, which constituted of a larger Kirati family, was also considered as the ancient inhabitants of Sikkim. Risley also wrote, among the Kiratis, the Limboos, the Rais, the Lepchas, the Gurungs, the Tamangs and the Mangars constitute the autochthonous inhabitants of Sikkim as compared to the later immigrants from beyond River Arun in Nepal.

Hence, the ethnic groups in Sikkim may be viewed as aggregates of prevailing ecological and economical condition. They have occupied different economic status since historical times, this can be observed among elite population of Bhutia, Lepcha group maintaining their status as original inhabitants of Sikkim and their control over

resources and power, thus trying to deny the numerical supremacy of the immigrant Nepali group. The Nepali society in Sikkim presents an image of fragmented entity, divided communally and ethnically.<sup>54</sup> However, ethnic differences in multi-ethnic societies are usually associated with inequalities in resource sharing, power and prestige and results in stratification of the society. So, the population of Sikkim is more or less a mixture of these communities.

## Endnotes

---

<sup>1</sup>Gurung, Suresh Kumar. *Sikkim Ethnicity and Political Dynamics, a Triadic Perspective*. New Delhi: Deepak offset Press, 2011.15.

<sup>2</sup>Mullard,Saul. *Opening the Hidden Land, State Formation and the Construction of Sikkimese History*. Leiden Boston: Global Oriental, Hotei Publishing, 2011. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Bhasin, Veena. *Ethnic Relation among the People of Sikkim*. New Delhi: J.Soc.Sci.6, 2002.3.

<sup>4</sup>Barth, F. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference*. Boston USA: Little, Brown and Company, 1969. 10-11.

<sup>5</sup>Bhasin, Veena. Op.cit. 2002.6.

<sup>6</sup>Gurung, Suresh Kumar. Op.cit. 2011. 94.

<sup>7</sup>*Denzong* means the land of rice that is taken from the guide book of *gTer-sTon* saint named Dorji-ling-pa the Rinchens Gron-Me.

<sup>8</sup>*Bramosojonor Bru-me-jong* signified the valley of rice, had been mentioned hundreds of times in eulogistic style by Guru Padmasambhava in his writings, which he had left hidden in bulk and smaller quantities in various places, amongst other hidden stores.

<sup>9</sup>Risley, H.H. *The Gazetteer of Sikkim*. New Delhi: Low Price Publication, 2010. 27.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid. 2010. 1.

<sup>11</sup>Lepcha chieftainship of Mayel Lyang, Thekong Adek- 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> century. Thup Athak- 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> century, Thekong Tek- 13<sup>th</sup> century, Rujo Panu Athing- (1353 to 1410), Tarvey Panu- (1425 to 1454), Tarsong Panu- (1454 to 1481), Tar eng Panu- (1481 to 1520), Tarjyi Panu- (1520 to 1564), Tar eak Panu- (1564-1595).

<sup>12</sup>Subba, J.R. *History, Culture and Customs of Sikkim*. New Delhi: Gyan Publication House, 2008. 3.

<sup>13</sup>Dr. Lawrence Austine Waddell was appointed as Principle Medical Officer of Sikkim in 1888. He stationed with the British army in Darjeeling and learned the Tibetan language. He visited Tibet several times secretly and wrote an article on *the Birds of Sikkim*.

<sup>14</sup>*Lapchey* from Nepali origin *Lap*, which meant speech and *cha*(vile speakers).

<sup>15</sup>Gorer, Geoffrey. *The Lepchas of Sikkim*. New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, 2014. 38.

- 
- <sup>16</sup>Dewan, Dick. B. *Education In Sikkim: An Historical Retrospect*, Pedong: Society for the Procurement & Sales of Books,2012. 101.
- <sup>17</sup>Administrative Report of the Sikkim State for the year 1934-35 and 1935-36.
- <sup>18</sup>Gurung, Suresh Kumar. Op.cit. 2011. 97.
- <sup>19</sup>Ibid. 2011. 99
- <sup>20</sup>Ibid. 2011.
- <sup>21</sup>Gorer,Geoffrey. Op.cit.2014. 36.
- <sup>22</sup> Panda, Nandini Bhattacharyya. *Culture, Heritage and Identity*, New Delhi: KW publishers, 2015. 86. Administrative report of the Sikkim for the year 1914-15.3(Appendix).
- <sup>23</sup> Administration Report of the Sikkim State for 1905-1906. Received from the British Library following the visit of Shri Pawan Kumar Chamling, Chief Minister of Sikkim To U.K in 2006.
- <sup>24</sup>Bhasin, Veena. Op.cit.2002.4
- <sup>25</sup> Panda, Nandini Bhattacharyya. Op.cit. 2015. 87.
- <sup>26</sup>Lepcha, Tar Tshering. Targain, Jim Pandi, Platinum Jubilee Gaangtok Church EPCS, 1936-2011.18.
- <sup>27</sup> ‘Red hat’ sect Lamaism of Tibetan Buddhism is the religion of the ruling family and the official religion of the country, with thirty-eight major monasteries and several smaller temple. The Red hat sect, representing the oldest branch of Lamaism and has the Tibetan Sakya lama as its supreme head. Its monks have retained the privilege of marriage, and many sikkimese monks are married. They live with their wives and children. They follow Ningmapa or Mahayana form of Buddhism. (Halfdan. Seiger. 1967.34.)
- <sup>28</sup> ‘Yellow hat’ signified Gelukpa Sect, who followed Hinayana form of Buddhism. They practised celibacy, and abstain from idol worship.
- <sup>29</sup>Kharel, Sunita and Jigme Wongchuk. *Gazetteer of Sikkim*.Gangtok: Government of Sikkim, 2013. 72.
- <sup>30</sup> Bhattacharyya, Pranab Kumar. *Aspect of Cultural History of Sikkim*. New Delhi: Delhi University Press, 1984. 11.
- <sup>31</sup>*Chogyal* is a Tibetan title indicating the ruler’s supremacy over secular and religious matters, a system which prevailed in Tibet. It means Dharma Raja/righteous king.
- <sup>32</sup> Spiritual and Temporal power meant two fold powers, which is somewhat different from the Dalai Lama in Tibet. The *gompas* were established as the part of the political scheme of the establishment. All monasteries in Sikkim have been centralized under the secular power of the king, and are not religious organization independent of the political system.
- <sup>33</sup>*Tri-Srong-Den-Tsen* meant the most illustrious of all rulers of Tibet.
- <sup>34</sup>*Lho* refers to Bhutia, Men to *Menpa-Lepcha*, *Tsong to-the Yakthumbas* or the Limboo and Sum means the three.
- <sup>35</sup>Kharel, Sunita and Jigme Wongchuk. Op.cit. 2013. 74.
- <sup>36</sup>Gurung, Suresh Kumar. Op.cit. 2011.15.
- <sup>37</sup>Bhasin, Veena. Op.cit. 2002.4.
- <sup>38</sup> Riskey, H.H. Op.cit. 2010. 28-29.
- <sup>39</sup>Subba, J.R. Op.cit. 2008: 273.

---

<sup>40</sup>*Dzumsa System* meant the system of self- governance, established during the first half of the nineteenth century in order to provide structure and cohesion for these societies. During the rule of Namgyal Dynasty, the *dzumsa* and the *pipons* or village chiefs were recognized and used by the kings as a means of delegating his authority.

<sup>41</sup>*Mongoloids* comprises of- Limboo, Tamang, Gurung, Rai, Mangar, Sherpa/ Yolmo, Mukhia, Dewan and *Aryans* comprises of Thakuri, Chettri, Newar, Jogi, Bhujel, Thami, Sunar, Sarki, kami, Damai.

<sup>42</sup>Sinha, A.C. *Sikkim Feudal and Democratic*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company, 2006. 43.

<sup>43</sup>Arora, Vibha. “*Roots and Route of Secularism in Sikkim*”. *Economic and Political weekly*, Vol. 41, No.38.4065.

<sup>44</sup>Gurung, Suresh Kumar. *Op.cit.* 2011. 115.

<sup>45</sup>*Kiratis* applied to hill people or used only for the primitive cave dwellers of the Himalayas, foresters and uncivilized or barbarous mountain tribes.

<sup>46</sup>Gurung, Suresh Kumar. *Op.cit.* 2011. 117.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.* 2011.18.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.* 2011. 129.

<sup>49</sup> According to J.R.Subba, ‘Yakthumba’ “Yiok, Thum and Ba” meantfort, Province and from together it becomes “From the fort of the province”.

<sup>50</sup>Limbuan is at Nepal. In past, it was come under Sikkim.

<sup>51</sup>*Human Ecology and statuary Status of Ethnic Entities in Sikkim*. Government of Sikkim, 2008: 83.

<sup>52</sup>Subba, J.R. *Op.cit.* 2008. 279.

<sup>53</sup>Panda, Nandini Bhattacharyya. *Op.cit.* 2015. 92.

<sup>54</sup>Sinha, A.C. *Op.cit.* 2006. 192.

### CHAPTER III

#### **The British Intervention and its Impact on Sikkim**

British had already established their colony in India before it penetrated into Sikkim. They promoted their interests through their policies and its impact in India, with the changing pattern of their social, economic and political enlargement. It was Warren Hastings, the first Governor General of India, who tried his best to open a trade route to Tibet through the Himalayan region of Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim.<sup>1</sup>

And among these three Himalayan states, the Company first attempted to open a trade to Tibet through the conventional passage via Kathmandu valley on the second half of the eighteenth century. However, their plan could not prove fruitful as the country was having internal conflict between Hinduised Gurkhas and Newari Buddhist for the consolidation. They found the situation very critical and returned rebuffed by the emergent Gorkhas ruler.<sup>2</sup> Following their expedition on Bhutan in 1773 also proved to be the most difficult campaign, due to the strong friendship between Nepal and Bhutan. The permission to trade and to reside in Tibet through their countries would be impossible in view of the attitude of the Hill people, Gurkhas and Bhutanese. They desired to be completely free in their internal and external affairs. Their mission to Bhutan could not achieve much beyond maintaining cordial relations.<sup>3</sup>

They concentrated on Sikkim after their consecutive defeats in Nepal and Bhutan. Sikkim came into contact with the British power in India during the reign of Tsughpud Namgyal. The matrimonial relations between Sikkim and Tibet created a cordial relation and made the trade route safer. Therefore, J. Adam, Secretary to the Government of British India,

felt that the Company's objective could be achieved, if it opened relations with Sikkim.<sup>4</sup> In 1814, British had established their relations with Sikkim and slowly penetrated inside Sikkim and established their permanent hold to achieve their objects.<sup>5</sup> For which the British Government whole heartily agreed to build road and bridges, and that the state would have to supply labor to repair it.<sup>6</sup>

In regard with the colonial administration in Sikkim McKay concerned to demonstrate that British had established its relation to Sikkim on the basis of structures from the Indian identity, followed by its processes from a Sikkimese identity.<sup>7</sup> That highlighted the fact that it would no longer be a *kazi* or a *Chogyal* (king), who look to Lhasa for administrative and political models. Those models would now derive from Calcutta or later Delhi, and ultimately London. The new structures of government were certainly on the Indian model. Leo Rose stated that modernization in this context meant the introduction of certain administrative forms and values then prevalent in British India.<sup>8</sup> They kept only that thing which was of value to them in planning the future of their territory which would consider as traditional.<sup>9</sup> Apart from them were necessarily discarded such as the fact of Sikkim's subordination in a greater Tibetan mandala.<sup>10</sup>

### **3.1. The British intervention in Sikkim**

Sikkim had not emerged as a supreme political power prior to British intervention. Tibet was considered as the overlord by the Sikkim ruler. This fact had been confirmed by the *History of Sikkim*. The author stated that the Government of Sikkim always looked to the Tibetan Government for the protection and aid whenever the State suffered from any aggression.<sup>11</sup> The population of the state was not static. It had been fluctuating. Moreover,

the ruler could not get sufficient support from the local people. Tsongs and Mangars revolted against the ruler and even they invited foreigners to throw him out of power.<sup>12</sup> Indeed the period of Sikkim history from 1700 until arrival of the British in Himalayan in 1815, was characterized by the fragility and failures of the state structures. The Bhutia ruler of Sikkim lacked secular political qualification to emerge as a state. The state was politically disorganized because of the presence of the fiefdoms, where large land holders were responsible of the implementation of law over the tenants.<sup>13</sup>

As the state had been a victim of foreign invasions in the hands of Nepal and Bhutan, the rulers were forced to shift their capitals from one place to other.<sup>14</sup> By then, the British had identified Sikkim as the weak link among the three Himalayan states, and it also noted that Sikkim ideally lay on the shortest possible route between Lhasa.

The East India Company allied with Sikkim against the Gorkhas in the Anglo-Nepal War of 1815. Captain Barre Latter of the Bengal Army was succeeded in establishing contacts with the Seventh *Chogyal*, Tsugphud Namgyal. For the first time, British interrupted in the issue to induce the Chogyal to bring in large number of troops against Nepal and promised to help him to recover his lost territories to Nepal. Later, Nepal had conquered and annexed in 1780 and overran some of its territories.<sup>15</sup> It was Lord Moira (afterwards Marquess of Hastings), the Governor-General of India, decided to restore to Sikkim, as a part of the territory wrested from Nepal. He authorized Barre Latter to hand over the territory that lying between the rivers Mechi and Tista to Sikkim on certain conditions. The Chogyal accepted the conditions by signing a treaty with the Company at Titalia<sup>16</sup> on 10 February 1817. (See Appendix.5) The Treaty of Tumlong of 1861 (See Appendix.6)

became a watermark in the history of their intervention where they were prepared to convert Sikkim into a proto- type British Colony.<sup>17</sup>

### **3.2. Social, Political and Economical Impact**

When the British first arrived in Sikkim, the condition was unfavorable to them and they conceived Sikkim as backward, uncivilized, Orthodox, Unnatural etc.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, in order to overcome this problem they slowly brought political, social and economical changes in Sikkim. In order to establish sound relations with Sikkim, signing a treaty became their key concept to make Sikkim as a buffer state between Nepal and Bhutan, because for the first time Sikkim was brought under the influence of the colonial authorities in India.

#### **3.2.1. The Treaty of Titalia (1817)**

The treaty helped British to restore the territory to Sikkim that had been lost to the Gorkhas and gave them the right of arbitration in any dispute between Sikkim and Nepal.<sup>19</sup> In the words of H.T. Prinsep, Secretary to the Government of British India, the effect of the Treaty of Titalia had been to shut out the Nepalese from any ambitious views of aggrandizement to the east, and to circumscribe their territory on three sides while on the fourth, the stupendous range of the Himalaya and the Chinese frontier present an effectual barrier.<sup>20</sup> It brought Sikkim for the first time under the influence of the Company. The company gained many privileges. The most important of them was being the right to trade up to the Tibetan frontier. They assumed the position of lord's paramount of Sikkim, and the title to exercise a predominant influence in the State.<sup>21</sup> The

Treaty marked the beginning of British intervention or their interest in Sikkim as a trade route to Tibet and as a factor in India's security.<sup>22</sup>

However, it further gave them the power to suppress the Chogyal of Sikkim under which, they were supposed to grant an additional territory of the Morung<sup>23</sup> under certain conditions, namely that Sikkim was to surrender to the Company all the British Indian criminals and other public defaulters who may take refuge in the Morung, and to allow the police officers of the Company to pursue them into those lands so as to arrest them and in the same manner, they were also asked to do the same to those coming from the Chogyal of Sikkim.<sup>24</sup>

### **3.3. Internal Conflict and Land Disputes**

The rivalry between the Chogyal and the Chief Minister, Chandzok Bolek<sup>25</sup> on the issue of the Lepcha and the Tibetan sections of the Sikkim, turned out to be a major problem in the history of the British intervened Sikkim. When Chandzok Bolek was murdered by Tungyik Menchoo in 1826,<sup>26</sup> his nephews Dathup, Jorung Denon and Kazi Gorok left Sikkim taking with them about eight hundred houses of Lepchas subjects from Chidam and Namthang and settled down in Illam, Nepal.<sup>27</sup> It seriously depleted the Lepcha population in Sikkim. In the meantime, the state wanted to prevent the situation and put their effort to return them to Sikkim. However, they were persecuted by Khangsa Dewan<sup>28</sup>. Therefore they retraced their footsteps back to Nepal and along with the Gorkhas of East Nepal had found willing adventures to carry out raids inside the territory of Sikkim.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, a boundary dispute occurred in 1827, between the Sikkim and Nepal over the jurisdiction of a piece of hill-land called Ontoo that situated on the eastern

side of the River Mechi.<sup>30</sup> These increasing raids found the king helpless. He referred the dispute to the arbitration of the Governor-General of India and lay down the Treaty of Titalia of 1817.

In 1828, Lord William Bentinck, Governor-General of India, ordered officers of the company such as Captain G.W. Lloyd and G.W. Grant to investigate the dispute. During the course of their investigation, they came to know about a small hill village called Dorjeling (Darjeeling). It became an attractive destination for British, especially Viceroy used to reside during the summer months. Instead of doing so, they reported that Darjeeling's climate would be ideal for both sanatorium and military station.<sup>31</sup> The Hill station became an important source of colonial economy. They set up tea and coffee plantations in the adjoining areas, an influx of immigrant labor from the plains began.<sup>32</sup> In 1835, it became the part of East India Company with the compensation of Rs 3,000 per annum, to Sikkim which was raised to Rs 6,000 per annum in the year 1846.<sup>33</sup> In this connection Moktan stated that the Sikkemputtee Rajah, openly present Darjeeling to the East India Company, that is, all the land south of the Great Runjeet River, east of the Balssun, Kahail, and Little Runjeet Rivers, and west of the Rungno and Mahanuddi Rivers.<sup>34</sup>

For the British the acquisition of Darjeeling was the realization of their long cherished desire to get a foothold within the territory of Sikkim, from where they could apply themselves in more effectively building bridges to Lhasa. Therefore, they began to develop Darjeeling without any delay.<sup>35</sup> The population grew by leaps and bounds, chiefly by immigration from the neighboring kingdom of Nepal,<sup>36</sup> Bhutan and Sikkim soon after the establishment of tea garden there. In all of which slavery became prevalent.

Whatever might have been the methods by which the cession of Darjeeling was secured, there is no doubt that it was an important event in the history of East India Company's relations with Sikkim. The loss of Darjeeling entailed further trouble to Sikkim, because the relation between the Chogyal and the East India Company became strained as the latter failed to compensate the former adequately for his cession of Darjeeling.<sup>37</sup>

Moreover, after 1850's Sikkim was suffering from internal disputes between Bhutia and Lepcha for power, so a frequent durbar intrigue were also carried out by them. As a result, the court was full of with intrigues, conspiracy, instability and factionalism. Therefore, this period witnessed the authority of the king and disunity among the Bhutia- Lepcha and the prominent members of the ruling class.<sup>38</sup> However, from this period onwards the system of polarization of the ruling class was witnessed and the internal ethnic disputes started to increased.

The blatantly unequal struggle was further accentuated by the fact that the councilors of the king of Sikkim were far from united amongst themselves. The Bhutia and the Lepcha were, as ever, split in factions. The British took advantage of the incipient conflict between the Lepcha and Bhutia Kazis in Sikkimese court.<sup>39</sup> They found the Lepchas congenial and amenable, on the other hand, considered Bhutias as shifty, cunning and obdurate.<sup>40</sup> However, it could not be a failure to call that the success of the British to establish their political office was mostly because of the weaknesses of the ruler and misbalanced state system in Sikkim.<sup>41</sup> After such situation in Sikkim Eden<sup>42</sup> suggested that if Lepchas could be utilized against the Bhutias, it would be easy on their part to eradicate Namgay's influence from Sikkim, because Dewan Namgay was responsible for the attacked on the British force for several times where they had to return to Darjeeling.

However, Eden also asked the Chogyal to arrange for the surrender of Namgay and release all the British subjects arrested. So, in order to review the entire situation for the prosperity of trade to Tibet that could be materialized without any disturbance, the British force took the final steps, when Dewan Namgay had fled to Tibet.<sup>43</sup> Thus, the colonial interest was further materialized by signing a treaty on 28 March 1861 at Tumlong.

### **3.3.1. The Significance of the Treaty of Tumlong (1861)**

The Treaty of 1861 was very significant in the Indo-Sikkim relations in that it brought Sikkim under the control of British India. Sikkim lost all freedom of action and became a *de facto* protectorate of the Government of British India. All the demands of the Government of British India were realized by that Treaty. Firstly, Dewan Namguay who was mainly responsible for Sikkim's anti-British activities was banished from that state. Secondly, the king agreed not to stay for more than three months in a year in the Chumbi valley of Tibet. Thirdly, the British gained many trade privileges. Apart from the trade privileges, the British gained many other important benefits like the right to lay roads and conducted a topographical and geological survey of Sikkim.<sup>44</sup> Thus, by 1861, Sikkim was completely transformed into a British protectorate and annexation of Darjeeling was confirmed.

From 1817 to 1889, the British Government in India did not interfere with the internal affairs of Sikkim directly. Because they thought that this policy would help in achieving their goals by leaving the affairs in Sikkim undisturbed that would keep the Tibetan authorities in good humor.<sup>45</sup>

### 3.4. The emergence of the Political Officers in Sikkim

British suzerainty in Sikkim was established with the appointment of the first Political Officer John Claude White,<sup>46</sup> in June 1889. Between, 1889-1947, about half a dozen political officers administered the state. With the help of the newly constituted council, the British Political Officer desired to introduce social, legal, economic and educational reforms to suit their interest in the State.<sup>47</sup> According to J.C. White, in Sikkim, chaos reigned everywhere, there was no revenue system, no court of justice, no police, no public works, no education for the younger generation at the top of it the coffers were empty.<sup>48</sup> He initially implemented the settlement plan, with the help of pro-British Lepcha councilors and landlords, who always favored the Nepali settlement in Sikkim for the economic development of the region. Hereafter, from 1890 onwards, he became the virtual ruler of Sikkim, who exercised the power of both internal as well as external affairs of Sikkim.<sup>49</sup> He appointed an Advisory Council to run the administration. It consisted of all *Kazis* and *Lamas*, who belonging to Bhutia and Lepcha communities. He further made a rule that the members of the council have to attend regularly at the palace and the political officer always took attendance of them, in which the Chogyal also has to be present on each occasion.<sup>50</sup> In this connection, Administration Report of the Government of Sikkim stated that, the council grew both in terms of maturity and its content gradually with the progress of time requiring it to meet the council thrice a year.<sup>51</sup> The arable land areas were leased to the bidders on fixed land rent for a period of ten years and the entire country were divided into revenue *Ellakas* (blocks).<sup>52</sup> According to the Administration Report of 1930-1931, There were 104 *Ellakas* in Sikkim and is divided up into convenient blocks, each block being in charge of a *Mandal*.<sup>53</sup> Every lease

holder, who was called *Thikadars* was invested with some class of judicial powers both civil and criminal. The judicial measures of the British weakened the traditional sikkemese institution. This also helped for the growth of a judicial class and this class being influenced by the western ideas in course of time interfered in the debate and reformed the old structure. The monopoly of the *Kazis* and *Thikadars* was challenged by the new judicial courts.<sup>54</sup> The use of unpaid labor was prohibited, like *Kalobari*, *Jharlangi*, *Kurwas* and *Bethi*.<sup>55</sup> Those system of forced labor resulted in considerable hardship.<sup>56</sup> He accelerated the economic growth of the sparsely populated Sikkim by settling the hardworking Nepalese, who were well suited to work in the hills.<sup>57</sup> In connection to this the tenants even faced problems where they presented a petition to the Police Officer on 13 April 1908. The tenants had no rights even to make their houses according to their will, separate house called *Kholma*, adjoining the main house are build in order to keep corns and farming implements and they make another huts called *Yaksa* right away from their house, where people stop their for weeks and months for cultivation, while their main houses are far away to get back from cultivation place.<sup>58</sup>

As stated in the previous chapter that during the first year of White's assuming office in Sikkim, four hundred Nepalese settlers with their families moved to Sikkim in 1889-1991. He encouraged the settlement of Gorkhas<sup>59</sup> including Mangars, Limboos, Newars, and other remaining ethnic groups, who gradually began to clearing and cultivating the large tract of unoccupied areas in the Southern parts of the region, Bhattacharya gave a reasonable answer, why actually British encouraged them in Sikkim. He explained that they were more industrious and advanced in agriculture, hardy porters, and were faithful as well as a reliable people.<sup>60</sup> White preferred hard working and industrious Nepalese.

Debnath also gave similar reason for this, he stated that the important reason behind the encouragement of Nepali settlement in Sikkim was that the British wanted to reduce the Tibetan influence on the Bhutia monarchy.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, he tried to nominate a member of the Nepalese community as a member to the State Advisory Council. However, it failed in his efforts due to the opposition from the Chogyal and courtiers.<sup>62</sup>

J.C. White initiated to Survey the land. It took five years to complete and thus became the basis for taxation and revenue. Forest also brought within the purview of taxation. They classified it as Reserved forest and Khasmal forest.<sup>63</sup> The Census for the first time has been done in 1891 and then the second in a customary decennial trend in 1901 and ever since. In 1906, the power to control the administration of Sikkim was transferred from the Government of Bengal to the Government of British India.<sup>64</sup>

The Administrative Report of the years 1895 to 1900 indicated that an extensive effort was being placed by the British administration to improve the infrastructure, namely roads which included both original works and repair. A dozen Nepalese businessmen sums up and some of his achievement to the common people by saying, that

“Prior we had neither roads nor bridges, but since your advent you have constructed a large number of good roads and bridges all over the country. You have founded charitable dispensaries, established Nepalese and Bhutia schools, with boarding houses, opened weaving schools, laid out beautiful vegetables and fruit gardens and encouraged gardening by a free distribution of seed and grafts... Your impartiality in dealing with various tribes living in this locality, Nepalese, Bhutias, Lepchas and others...are household words in Sikkim”.

### 3.5. Education in Sikkim

Educational reforms of the British administration played a significant role in educating the future elite of the state in the British line. Therefore they established English medium schools in the state. The British targeted three main categories *viz* the royal princes, the kazis and the Newar Thikadars to be educated under English education in the beginning. Very few commoners could avail the benefits of western education because of their poverty. So in order to educate the rural mass in the state SAM (Scandinavian Allied Mission) and SUM (Scottish University Mission) played a significant role with their objectives of not only educating the masses but also to spread the Christianity. However, it cannot be denied that the western influence had not affected Sikkim's society. It certainly affected in the process. As a result, ethnically classified society led to the emergence of an economically stratified society. Hence, the western education and western cultural contact further created a new social interaction. The British tried to create a class of elites from among the feudal to represent British interest in the state. A number of youths from the feudal families were sent to Darjeeling to study in the English schools.<sup>65</sup> These elites helped the British on the other hand in the socio- economic transformation of the state. It was because of the British economic and industrial policy another class of elite known as Newar Thikadars were created. Thus, the kazis and the Newar Thikadars were mostly given the opportunity under the new administrative structure. They enjoyed nearly half of administrative posts.<sup>66</sup>

J.C. White helped to establish the three types of schools they were the Bhutia Boarding School, Nepali Boarding School and the Missionary schools.<sup>67</sup>(See Appendix.7) Before Lamaistic education dominates the entire kingdom where, the practice is fostered by the

deep religious habit of the people and the attraction offered by the high social position and privileges enjoyed by the lamas.<sup>68</sup>

However, it was Sidkeong Tulku (the 10<sup>th</sup> Chogyal 1879-1914), the only Sikkemese ruler to have been educated in a university abroad, Oxford who gave to education in Sikkim a new dimension towards its growth as modern education. In his capacity as the crown prince, he used to visit both the monastic establishment and the schools run by the missionaries. It was under his influence that government grant-in-aid was made available to mission schools, and the first schools directly managed by the government were started.<sup>69</sup>

William Macfarlane, he was the first missionary men, to visit Sikkim in 1870.<sup>70</sup> The missionary school and the village schools maintained by the *Thikadars* and the private people. The Christian missionaries also got the permission from the Chogyal to reside in Sikkim.<sup>71</sup> They contributed a lot to the growth of English education. The missionaries although seemed to have come as church people to propagate their faith but dedicated much more to enlightenment. Their involvement in Social activities proved fruitful for the people of Sikkim. It was the efforts of SAM (Scandinavian Allied Mission) and SUM (Scottish University Mission) which traced its roots for the formation of Christian Society in Sikkim. For which Government of Sikkim contributed a sizeable amount to these missions for the spread of English education. Apart from educating the children of the rural people the missions were also involved in other social activities such as organizing health camp and other humanitarian activities to help the poor and needy. The mission contended that they preferred to civilize the natives more particularly the Lepchas. So, the fact that Lepcha people, the aborigines of the Sikkim, said to have been the first one to

get influenced by them. However, during the process of such transformation in the society the Political Officer's administration indirectly helped the mission activity in the State.<sup>72</sup> Their altruistic hard work really paved the way for the Sikkim, through various means. Their work was immense and respectable because they fulfilled the dreams of the masses irrespective of race, caste, or religion by establishing many elementary schools during the last three decades of the nineteenth century, which was known to have been done by the church of Scotland Missionary Society.<sup>73</sup> Vocational Schools like weaving, crafting and painting contributed significantly by SAM in North Sikkim under missionaries like Signe Ramussuna and Amanda Larson. They went to Lachen first in 1896, later in 1903, they were setting up a weaving school and the state helps by giving grants- in aid to construct looms and free houses.<sup>74</sup> It emphasized the importance of woman education by Auntie Mary<sup>75</sup>. The Christian missionaries established Girls school at Gangtok in 1923 and there was hardly any institution where girls could go and learn anything.<sup>76</sup>

In 1897, dispensaries was opened at many village level under the supervision of Elatji Matiyas, which helped to provide medical aid, in outbreak of measles, influenza, chickenpox, small pox which was a major cause for the death rates in Sikkim.<sup>77</sup> In relation to this it is stated in the Administrative Report of 1909-1910, that two genuine cases of small- pox occurred among the servants of the Maharaja in Gangtok. A serious outbreak of dysentery occurred in and around Namthang resulting in from 30-40 deaths. Therefore, Dispensaries at Gangtok, Chidam and Rangpo were kept open throughout the year. Among some of them apart from the state government dispensaries at Rhenock and Seryong belonged to church of SUM.

The impact of the British Intervention in Sikkim proved to be very effective for the common people because it helped to eradicate many social evils which were also initiated by Kumar Sidkeong Tulku, such as, the abolition of polyandry and reduction of marriage expenses, abolition of salutation by prostration before the kazis and the Lamas.<sup>78</sup>

In comparison it is more in British era that the immigration occurred then in the Gorkha invasion of 1770. The idea was being challenged to them where they proved successful prompting the settlement of Nepalese people in Sikkim.<sup>79</sup> That suited the British interests and as a consequence became the reasons for their imperial ethnic policy in the region.<sup>80</sup> The British hold of power from 1817-1947 turned the Bhutia principality of Sikkim into an Indian State.<sup>81</sup> A number of traditional systems prevalent in the state were considered unusual. Thus Sikkim was found to be leading towards a western civil society under colonial influence.

## Endnotes

---

<sup>1</sup>Kharel,M.P. *Socio Economic condition of Sikkim under Colonial Domination (1889-1947)*PhD Thesis,University of North Bengal,2002. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 2002. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 2002. 13.

<sup>4</sup>Rao ,P.R. *India and Sikkim (1814-1970)*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1972. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Kharel, M.P. Op.cit.2002.78.

<sup>6</sup> Macaulay, Colman. *Report of a mission to Sikkim and the Tibetan Frontier: with the memorandum on our relations with Tibet*. Bengal Secretariat Press: 1885. 12.

<sup>7</sup> Mckay.Alex. “*Preparing for whose future? Colonial Transformation in Sikkim*”. Paper presented at *National Seminar North East India since 1947: Society, Polity and Economy*. University of Sikkim. 2017.1-4.

<sup>8</sup>Fisher, F. James, *Himalayan Anthropology: The Indo-Tibetan Interference*. Great Briatin: Mouton Publishers.1978. 205.

<sup>9</sup> Traditional meant that the idea of Sikkim as a Buddhist state. For instance they refer the status of Pemayangtse monastery as valuable and traditional.

<sup>10</sup> Tibetan *mandala* meant all power rested in the hands of Tibet in which Sikkim elites followed Tibetan cultural as well as political models.

<sup>11</sup> Namgyal, Thutob. And Dolma Yeshey, *History of Sikkim*. Gangtok. 1908. 23.

- 
- <sup>12</sup>Sinha, A.C. *Sikkim Feudal and Democratic*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company, 2008. 66-67.
- <sup>13</sup> Mullard, Saul. *Constructing the Mandala: The State formation of Sikkim and the Rise of a National Historical Narratives*. University of Oxford. 2012. 58.
- <sup>14</sup> Yoksam (1642-1814), Rabdentse (1670-1814), Tumlong (1814-1892), Gangtok (1892-till date)
- <sup>15</sup> Rao, P.R. Op.cit 1972.2.
- <sup>16</sup> Titalia falls under south of Siliguri, the modern district in the state of West Bengal.
- <sup>17</sup> Kharel, M.P. *Socio- Economic Condition of Sikkim Under Colonial Domination: (1889- 1947)* PhD Thesis, University of North Bengal,2002.104.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid. 2002. 149.
- <sup>19</sup> Mckay. Alex. Op.cit. 2017.
- <sup>20</sup> Prinsep, H.T. *History of the Political and Military Transactions during the Administration of Marquess of Hastings 1813-1823*. Vol.1.London:1825. 207.
- <sup>21</sup> Risley, H.H. *The Gazetteer of Sikkim*. New Delhi: Low Price Publication, 2010. 3.
- <sup>22</sup> Rao, P.R. Op.cit. 1972. 4.
- <sup>23</sup> Morung is the low-land lying between the rivers Mechi and the Mahanadi.
- <sup>24</sup> Rao, P.R. Op.cit. 1972.6.
- <sup>25</sup> Chandzok Bolek was the Chief Minister and leader of the Lepcha.
- <sup>26</sup> Tungyik Menchoo was the father of Dunya Manguay, better known as Pagla Dewan or the mad chief Minister.
- <sup>27</sup> Kharel, M.P. Op.cit. 2002.80.
- <sup>28</sup> Khangsa Dewan was a Virtual PM, recommended by the British Deputy Commission at Darjeeling. He was a right hand man of J.C White. He play a significant role in regional power politics of the times standing by the side of the British.
- <sup>29</sup> Basnet, L.B. *Sikkim: A Short Political History*. New Delhi: S.Chand Publication,1974. 31.
- <sup>30</sup> Rao.P.R. Op.cit. 1972. 7.
- <sup>31</sup> Ray, Datta. K. Sunanda. *Smash and Grab: Annexation of Sikkim*. New Delhi: Vikas Publication. 2013.30.
- <sup>32</sup> NCERT “Themes in Indian History”: Human Resource Development Department. Gangtok: Kwality Stores, 2007. 327.
- <sup>33</sup> Basnet, L.B. Op.cit. 1974.35.
- <sup>34</sup> R. Moktan, *Sikkim: Darjeeling Compendium of Documents*. Kalimpong: Sumaralaya publication,2004.11.
- <sup>35</sup> Basnet, L.B. Op.cit. 1974.36.
- <sup>36</sup> There was an influx of the Nepalese in Darjeeling. Lachimidas Pradhan with his uncle Keshav Narayan came to Darjeeling in 1853 from Nepal, and probably no Newar had had come to Darjeeling before them. They settled in Sikkim in 1867 for working in copper mine in southern Sikkim land later on worked in a number of other copper mines. Therefore this family was pioneer of mining in Sikkim where no mining was done due to superstitions inherited by the Bhutias form Tibet that believes that attempts to make use of treasures below the earth would cause sickness of men, cattle and even the Dalai Lama and the crops would fail. The Lachimidas family in 1883 was authorized by the Sikkim Government to collect taxes on Land, liquor etc. and to utilize the forests in south Sikkim. The family possessed a number of estates in Sikkim with the help of Phodong Lama and Khangsa Dewan, the two important Lepcha officers in Sikkim court.

- 
- <sup>37</sup>Rao.P.R. Op.cit. 1972. 14.
- <sup>38</sup>Sinha, A.C. *Sikkim Feudal and Democratic*. New Delhi: Indian council of Social Science Research. 2006.41.
- <sup>39</sup>Ibid. 2008. 83.
- <sup>40</sup>Basnet, L.B. Op.cit. 1974. 36.
- <sup>41</sup>Ibid.1974. 47
- <sup>42</sup>Asley Eden, he was a joint Secretary to the Board of Revenue as envoy and special Commissioner in Sikkim.
- <sup>43</sup>Kharel, M.P. Op.cit. 2002. 90.
- <sup>44</sup>Rao. P.R Op.cit.1972. 46.
- <sup>45</sup>Kharel, Sunita and Wonchuk J. *The Gazetteer of Sikkim*. Gangtok: Home Department government of Sikkim, 2013: 90.
- <sup>46</sup>J.C. White, born in Calcutta in 1853 of a mixed German and British parentage. He attended secondary school in Bonn, Germany and graduated in 1876 as a civil engineer from the Royal Bengal Public Works Department. He joined as an engineer in 1883 at Kathmandu British Residency and worked there for about a year. Before coming to Gangtok as a Political Officer he was posted at several other places of India. Apart from his sterling service in Sikkim, White played a significant role as the Deputy Commissioner of the Tibet Expedition, 1903-04.
- <sup>47</sup>Kharel. M.P. Op.cit. 2002. 149.
- <sup>48</sup>Sinha, A.C. Op.cit. 2006. 53.
- <sup>49</sup>Mullard, Saul. *A History from the Hidden Land: Some Preliminary Remarks on a seventeenth Century Chronicles*, Bulletin of Tibetology, vol. 41, No 1, May 2005. 4.
- <sup>50</sup>Ibid. 2005. 197.
- <sup>51</sup>Administrative Report of the Government of Sikkim for the year 1935-36.
- <sup>52</sup>Kharel, Sunita and Wonchuk J. Op.cit. 2013. 90.
- <sup>53</sup>Administrative Report of the Government of Sikkim for the year 1930-31. 8.
- <sup>54</sup>Judicial Department 1926-1927. Government of Sikkim, Gangtok. Sikkim State Archives.
- <sup>55</sup>Kharel.M.P. Op.cit 2002. 156.
- <sup>56</sup>Ray, Datta. K. *Smash and Grab: Annexation of Sikkim*. New Delhi: Vikas Publication. 2013.44.
- <sup>57</sup>Rao.P.R. Op.cit. 1972. 65.
- <sup>58</sup>Land Revenue Department. File No. 76 of 1908. Sikkim State Archives.
- <sup>59</sup>Gorkha and Nepalese denote the same meaning.
- <sup>60</sup>Bhattacharya, Aparna. *The Prayer-Wheel and scepter: Sikkim*. Mumbai: Nachiketa Publication Pvt. Ltd., 1994.69-70.
- <sup>61</sup>Debnath, J.C. *Economic History and Development of Sikkim*. New Delhi: Abhijeet Publication. 2009. 22-23.
- <sup>62</sup>Op.cit. Sinha, A.C. 2006. 43.
- <sup>63</sup>Reserved and *Khasmal* forest is something where a certain portion of forest area was set apart with a view to allowing settlement to the new comers and using suitable land there in for paddy and maize cultivation.
- <sup>64</sup>Kharel, Sunita and Wonchuk J. Op.cit. 2013. 91.
- <sup>65</sup>Macaulay, Colman. Op.cit. 1885.12.
- <sup>66</sup>Ibid. 2002. 265-266.
- <sup>67</sup>Administrative Report of the Government of Sikkim for the year 1909-1920, 6-8.
- <sup>68</sup>Risley, H.H. Op.cit. 2010.294.
- <sup>69</sup>Dewan, Dick B. *Education in Sikkim: A Historical Retrospect, Pre-merger and Post-merger period*. Kalimpong: Sharda Enterprises, 2012. 183.
- <sup>70</sup>Subba, Bandana. *Early Christian Missionaries in Sikkim and their Contribution*. M.A Dissertation. Sikkim University, 2015. 13.

---

<sup>71</sup> Tingbo, P.S. “Tar Tshering Targain and Ms Jem Pandi Targain”.*Platinum Jubilee Gangtok Church*. EPCS1936-2011. 4-5.

<sup>72</sup> Kharel.M.P. Op.cit. 2002. 263.

<sup>73</sup> Dewan, Dick B. Op.cit. 2012. 174.

<sup>74</sup> Administrative Report of the Governmetn of Sikkim for the year 1909-1920. 26.

<sup>75</sup> Mary Scott was the person, who came to Sikkim for teaching and preaching in the early nineteenth century.

<sup>76</sup> Dewan, Dick B. Op.cit. 2012. 175.

<sup>77</sup> Kharel.M.P. Op.cit. 2002. 211.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. 2002. 150.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. 2002.58.

<sup>80</sup> Sinha, A.C. Op.cit. 2006. 44.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. 2006.56.

## CHAPTER – IV

### **Ethnic Organizations and Ethnic Problems of Sikkim**

The preceding chapter discussed the ethnic communities of Sikkim in its earlier period. During the Chogyal's rule, the Tibetan way of life was emphasized to such an extent that it led to the feeling of marginalization among other ethno cultural groups of Sikkim.<sup>1</sup> However, Sikkim did not have a long history of conflict among different communities. There is evidence showing cultural exchanges and inter-community marriages among the members of the three major communities in the past.<sup>2</sup> The Namgyal rulers happened to be setting the relevant example of the inter-community marriages such as, Chogyal Tensung Namgyal married the daughter of Limboo Chief YoYo Hang<sup>3</sup> the sixth Chogyal Tenzing Namgyal, married a daughter of a Lepcha Minister Changzot Karwang and she became the mother of the succeeding Maharaja.<sup>4</sup>

The modern ethnic crisis of Sikkim is directly related to the British interest in the region, Sikkim. The interest was aroused due to its geopolitical relevance for access to Tibet. Ever since the inception of Sikkim's effective contacts with the British in 1817, British encouraged large-scale Nepalese immigrants to settle in Sikkim. The indigenous Buddhist Bhutia-Lepcha community opposed this migration. British adopted a divisive policy based on racial and religious consideration with their base from India. They encouraged the Hindu Nepalese to settle in Sikkim to counter the composition of the local population to secure their position in the region.<sup>5</sup> H.H. Risley considered that the British experiment in Sikkim was a complete success.<sup>6</sup> The multiplied numbers of Nepalese settlers changed the demographic structure of Sikkim. British continually encouraged

Nepalese labor migration for the infrastructural development of the Sikkim.<sup>7</sup> These resulted in the minor clashes between the Sikkimese forces and the British constabulary. Bhutia rulers failed to control the flood of the Nepalese immigration to the repressive and regulative devices of British. Bhutias encouraged the Tibetans to settle down in Sikkim to counteract the growing number of the Nepamul.<sup>8</sup>

Their (Nepali) involvement in the History of Sikkim, gave a taste of a plural society inhabited by different ethno-cultural or linguistic groups often, exhibits antagonistic tendencies due to the presence of divergent concepts of belongingness.<sup>9</sup> Vibha Arora stated that the cultural, religious and linguistic differences between the Lepcha Bhutia and the Nepalese created the ethnic boundaries between them, and thus further underplays the competing definitions the internal variations, and the intersections between the diverse ethnic groups in Sikkim. The main ethnic boundary is between the Lepchas and the Bhutias who are united in their opposition towards Nepali community, and termed them as migrants.<sup>10</sup>

Prior to 1947, the political leaders of Sikkim had come in close contact with the Indian National Congress leaders like Gandhi and Nehru. Hence, the change in the pattern of Indo-Sikkimese relationship then after led to the emergence of several developments affecting the ethnic and political issues.<sup>11</sup>

The ethnic scene became the scenario of not only bitter conflict but rapid political changes. The supremacy of the Bhutia-Lepcha community, who were more loyal to the ruler, an intricate system of parity between them and the majority was evolved. It led to considerable disaffection amongst the Nepalese majority. They protested against the

discriminatory and oppressive rule of the Bhutia king and elites. These protest movements were not known as the movement by Nepalese rather it was the grievances surfaced in the form of movement for introduction of democracy in Sikkim.<sup>12</sup>

#### **4.1. The Evolution of the Political and Administrative Structure of Sikkim**

The political structure of pre-colonial Sikkim was tribal society. The tribal polity basically played a key role in forming the unity among the group with its tribal chief as their ruler/king, who is called as *Panu*. It is however, lost their authority with the solicitation of a legendary brotherhood pact with the migratory Bhutia patriarch, Khye Bumsa. Thus, it passes into the hands of Namgyal dynasty in the seventeenth century, who belonged to a minority Bhutia racial community started to rule over subjects belonging to different racial-cultural communities; that helped them to acquire a predominant position.<sup>13</sup>

For a long period, Sikkim has been on the horns of a dilemma; to strike a balance between a theocratic monarchy and constitutional democracy. Sikkim was politically a theocracy. The various aspects of political life in Sikkim were bound to lead to a struggle between Lamaist traditionalism and secular democracy. During the Namgyal dynasty, the political system of Sikkim was typically Himalayan theocratic feudalism,<sup>14</sup> which was similar in many ways to the Tibetan Lamaist system. The ruler was not only the temporal or secular head of the State, but also an incarnate lama with responsibility to rule the subjects in accordance with the tenets of *Chhos*, the Dharma, and his social structure that was based on social status and economic organization<sup>15</sup>, which was basically feudal. The political system of Sikkim was laid down by following the system of absolute monarchy

with feudalistic root.<sup>16</sup> However, the Lepcha conversion to Lamaism paved the way for a social intercourse at the highest level with the Bhutia aristocracy that inveigled them into a ritual bond of blood brotherhood. That is how a new social class of the *kazis* emerged in Sikkim.<sup>17</sup>

The Bhutia ruler possessed the entire land under his jurisdiction, which was divided into the *Dzong* (District) and estate and it was kept under vassals, the *kazis*, who exercises in his ellaka the authority of a forest office and is responsible to the state for the good management of his forests etc.<sup>18</sup> They compare themselves with the barons of feudal system.<sup>19</sup> In general, *kazi* collected the taxes and had a kind of hereditary title to his office. However, they had no proprietary right in the hand. The *kazi* or the landlord appointed *mondal* (village head man), who could rent out the arable land to the individual households. They became the power behind the throne acquiring a social and economic dominance.<sup>20</sup> After the establishment of Bhutia bureaucracy, the ownership of the cultivable land came under the control of Bhutia land lords and aristocracy in the name of the Maharajaha or Chogyal.<sup>21</sup>

When phuntsog Namgyal was consecrated as the first Chogyal of Sikkim, in 1642, the first thing he did under his administrative system was, he created a twelve Lepcha *dzongpons* (district chief) and twelve Bhutia *Kalons* (ministers) who had specific function to play in the society.<sup>22</sup>

It was obvious that these two dozen families had been very influential during those days. Phuntsog Namgyal, being a far sighted ruler, did not want to dissatisfy Lepcha chiefs, who had accepted him as their ruler and were possibly converted to Lamaism. He might

have recognized them as his *Dzongpens*. He established matrimonial alliances with them and he commanded the Bhutia aristocrats to marry with the Lepcha chieftains. Since, Lepchas held the landed estates the institution of *Kazi*, became natural for them to hold the position of Kazihood first.<sup>23</sup>

Therefore in Sikkim, the ethnicity or the lamaist theocracy is linked with ownership of land and it is well known that the Namgyal rulers came to be the masters of the entire land of the state, which was initially community land under the Lepcha chiefs.<sup>24</sup>

By then, two of the important tribes, or the earliest settlers of the land along with Lepchas i.e. Limbus and Magars, which had not been subdued, were strong enough to challenge the Bhutia over lordship, such overtures proved inadequate because they had been left out in society who had been used by the *kazis* constantly as unpaid labor for the construction of buildings and fortifications and for household chores.<sup>25</sup> In a sense there was parity between the Bhutia-Lepcha versus the other small communities.

The political and administrative structure of Sikkim underwent further evolutionary refinement under the first Political Officer of Sikkim, John Claude White. He usurped the authority of the Chogyal Thutop Namgyal and brought the administration of the State under his complete control. He introduced Advisory Council, later it was called as State Council, which was composed mainly of *Kazis*<sup>26</sup> and landlords, who were considered faithful by the British government. He implemented the plan, largely through the help of the two Khangsarpa brothers, Phodong lama and Khangsa Dewan.<sup>27</sup> He became the virtual ruler of Sikkim. He exercised powers both in internal and external affairs of Sikkim.<sup>28</sup> He tried his best to establish a modern system of administration in Sikkim. In

1888, he modified lease system of land tenure, which resulted into emergence of some early Nepali settlers as lessee land lords known as *Thikkedars*.<sup>29</sup> Among them were Newar or Pradhan families, who worked as contractual landlords, miners and minters for the Sikkim court. History bears evidence to the fact that the Nepal minted coins for Tibet, Bhutan and Sikkim. These traders mainly settled in urban areas and were divided into two groups, Hindus and Buddhist but practiced and performed ritual of both the religions. They had good relations with *Kazis* as well as with British Colonial administrators.<sup>30</sup>

The entire ethnic scene had changed in Sikkim by 1947 when the British left India and India became independent. Gradually as the number of Nepalese immigrants increased up to seventy-five percent of Sikkim's population, and nearly outnumbered the Lepcha-Bhutia population.<sup>31</sup> Chogyal P.T. Namgyal, the last in the Royal lineage, brought about a drastic change in the political arena of Sikkim by establishing constitutional government in the state.

The Indian struggle for freedom inspired the educated Sikkim people to set the machine to action for doing away with the yoke of feudalism and to bring in the refreshing breeze of democracy in the political arena. Three political parties emerged during this time.<sup>32</sup> These three pioneer political parties of Sikkim ultimately merged together and gave rise to a new party, the *Sikkim State Congress*, with Tashi Tshering as the party head. This party demanded for the abolition of landlordism or they struggled against the exploitation by the rich landlords under a feudalistic system and setting up a democratic government.<sup>33</sup> However, they stood up some party who favored for the old system of governance or who was Pro-Chogyal Bhutia Lepcha Party, the *Sikkim National Party* (SNP), formed in April, 1948, which articulated interests of a particular community. For

instance, it was an organization of the aristocrats and the rich Bhutias and it sought to safeguard Lepcha-Bhutia interests against the alleged Nepali, who came into conflict with desire of the people who aspired to get rid of economic exploitation, social oppression and of sterile system of government.<sup>34</sup> Even though, Sikkim State Congress (SSC) and other parties included Bhutia-Lepcha leaders, became mainly a Nepali party. And did not fight on the racial basis rather they fought for the betterment of the society as a whole.

#### **4.2. The Ethnic Organizations of Sikkim**

The political environment of the colonial Sikkim was basically unfavorable for the formation of political organization. The elements were representing the ruling elite like *Kazis* (landlords) and lamas, who represented monasteries, that had maintained organizations like Denzong Lhade Tsogpa (Monastic Association) for their own parochial and vested interests.<sup>35</sup>

With the increasing birth of the political parties in the 1940s, the demand for democratic government and economic reforms started to gain momentum.<sup>36</sup> The growth in caste/community consciousness among the different groups and sub-groups had led to mushrooming of several caste/community organizations with claims and demands of their own. There were attempts at cultural-ethnic mobilization became discernible with the emergence of political parties during the second half of the twentieth century.

The Lepcha organizations like *Rangjyong Mutanchi Rong-Ong Shejum* (Sikkim Lepcha Youth Association) demanded for fifty percent reservation in the State Assembly, education and public employment, legal protection of their land, separate delimitation etc. The Bhutia dominated organizations like Survival Sikkimese and Sikkim Bhutia-Lepcha

Apex Committee emphasized for restoration of rights and privileges of the community, which they had been enjoying before the merger. On the other hand, the Nepali organization like Gorkha Apex Committee demanded for equal treatment at par with the Lepchas and Bhutias, and extension of 'creamy layer' concept to exclude members of royal family and *Kazis* from the tribal list. Thus, when political mobilization takes place, appeals to these caste/community organizations naturally take place and the community centered demands and grievances are also represented in the political arena.<sup>37</sup>

The authoritarian rule however, were not in favor to allow further, growth of any diverse groups in Sikkim and more so in the case of the plainsmen living in Sikkim. But the emerging association of Sikkim Byapari Sangha,<sup>38</sup> comes out with their agenda. For which they had no political rights during the rule of the Chogyal, but that does not mean that they had no political involvement. The Marwari traders supported the cause of different political parties from time to time. Though, they could neither contest nor cast their vote. They did not fail to patronize the different political parties of Sikkim. However, up to 1973, with the introduction of the democratic form of government in Sikkim, the group tried to access, the executive the bureaucracy, the political parties etc. to promote their business interest and particularly to achieve their long standing demand for changing the system of trade license which they considered it be one of the most important detriments to their interest.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, by articulating aggregation demands and aspirations of a group of people, political parties and organizations mobilized people in support of the issue or demand, and generate consciousness regarding the demands. Thus, through political parties and organizations, aspirations and demands of cultural-linguistic groups are expressed and

legitimized.<sup>40</sup> Hence, it started to show its growth only by a later half of the twentieth century.<sup>41</sup> The entire ethnic complexity had changed after 1947 with an immediate effect of the political departure of British from India.

### **4.3. The Problems and the Issues of Ethnicity**

Ethnic groups are segments of population which differ in descent, in cultural and physical traits, and in collective identity.<sup>42</sup> For instance, in Sikkim it is inhabited by major socio-cultural groups or communities before its merger with India and even today that comprise of the Lepchas, the Bhutias and the Nepalese.<sup>43</sup>

The political hegemony rested with the minority, namely the Bhutias-Lepchas community, which receives the royal support and patronage, while the Nepalese, the numerically large community, felt aggrieved over the denial of proportionate representation in the political domain.

Nepalese have been subject to discrimination of various kinds during the theocratic monarchical regime of the Namgyal dynasty. When the political development began in the late 1940's it was natural for the majority Nepalese to demand for democratic government as a means for elimination discrimination and making them accessible to decision making organs of the state and resources of other kinds.

The intricate relationships of influence and ethnic affiliation cannot be reduced by a super imposition of political and ethnic affiliations, and to a binary division, as has been pointed out by Rose:

“Prior to accession to India in 1975, Lepcha and Bhutia kaji and Mandal (landowning nobility and their local representatives) families that opposed Nepalese migration and supported the Namgyals against both the British and their Sikkimese ‘favorites’ formed the leadership core of the pro-monarchist, strongly nationalist Sikkim National party. The Descendants of the Khangsapa family (another landowning noble family who supported both the British and the Nepalese immigration), and associated Sikkimese and Nepalese families, maintained an ‘oppositional’ posture to the Court, first in coalition with their old Newari Thikadai (landlords) colleagues in the Sikkim State Congress, and later with a menagerie of other peripheral ‘non-establishment’ groups in the Sikkim National Congress. The Newari Thikadari families and their affiliated Nepalese (not necessarily Newari) families joined the Sikkim State Congress and eventually transformed it into an instrument of their communal interests. A number of other non-newari Nepalese families were not traditionally affiliated with the Thikadaris, have become politically active since 1947.”<sup>44</sup>

#### **4.4. Economy**

The economic imbalances amongst the three communities were also marked. The Bhutias owned the best of lands. The Lepchas, mostly confined to Dzongu area in the north. The Nepalese were agriculturist with limited land rights and were mostly sharecroppers and were allowed to settle on all waste lands and to protect the old Bhutia and Lepcha inhabitants. However, there is one important saying in Sikkim, *Padhi guni ke kam, halo joti khayo mam*, which means what, is the use of reading and writing, as ultimately you have to plough the field (Sinha, 2009). The biggest imbalance however was almost half

the land of Sikkim being vested with the Maharaja and his family as private estates. All these factors contributed towards general dissatisfaction amongst the people which later on demanded special attention.<sup>45</sup> (See Appendix.8) Nepalese had to pay higher rent than Lepchas and Bhutias. However, It was only in 1956, the king abolished the discriminatory rent system and declared that Lepcha- Bhutai and Nepalese would pay rent at equal rate.<sup>46</sup>

#### **4.5. Sub-Groups**

Within the group, there are certain smaller communities which were considered as sub-groups of larger communities, who often started to assert their distinct culture, social values and racial origin. Such groups demand for a separate recognition as a distinct community and not just as either Bhutias or Nepalese. For instance, the Tsongs (Limboos) and Tamangs claim that they constituted separate socio-cultural community and therefore should not be confused with Nepalese.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, among the larger Bhutia community, the Sherpas assert their separate identity because they generally acknowledge themselves as distinct from that of 'real Bhutias'.<sup>48</sup> Thus, Nepali as predominantly Hindus by religion and linguistically different from that of the Bhutias or Lepchas started to assert their own separate identity, the grievances surfaced in the form of movement for introduction of democracy in Sikkim.<sup>49</sup> All these factors contributed towards general dissatisfaction amongst the people.

#### **4.6 Language**

Language was yet another issue. Sikkimese language was the official language without any roots. It meant a Tibetan script with a local dialect spoken by less than ten percent of

the population. The Lepchas who had their own dialect were forced to learn Tibetan in schools. They called themselves as *Rong* and are known to the Tibetans as *Mon-ba* or *Mon-rik*.<sup>50</sup> Yet, the lingua-franca even amongst the Bhutias and Lepchas was Nepali.<sup>51</sup>

From the racial point of view Nepalese may be broadly classified into two major categories- Aryans and Mongoloids. In a sense *kazi* has rightly pointed out that, elsewhere in the world politics may be decided by the color of one's skin, or by the faith that one professes; but in this part of the region, the shape of things to come may ultimately be determined by the shape of one's nose. The traditional Aryan Nepalese have pointed noses and the Mongoloid segment of Nepalese have flat noses, *thepche-nepche* divide denoting their racial differences, is gradually surfacing and will definitely set the future political agenda in the Himalayan borderland.<sup>52</sup> All these developments are indicative of a sharp increase in community consciousness and community identity. The lack of a common racial background is responsible for the disunity of the Sikkime people.<sup>53</sup>

Hence, the process of modernization and the speed of change have led to greater political consciousness and more democratization of the political system.<sup>54</sup> Thus, it is necessary that these identities of different communities, including the little communities, should not only be studied but it is also important to find out where the identity of the Sikkim's lies. In Sikkim, the factors that may give rise to ethnic conflict are the changes that have been brought about after its merger with Indian Union.

## Endnotes

- 
- <sup>1</sup>Gurung, Suresh Kumar. *Sikkim Ethnicity and Political Dynamic: A Triadic Perspective*. New Delhi: Deepak Offset Press, 2011. 140.
- <sup>2</sup>Yasin, Mohammad and Durga P.Chettri. *Politics, Society and Development: Insights from Sikkim*. New Delhi: Kalpaz Publication, 2012. 72-73.
- <sup>3</sup>Risley,H.H. *The Gazetteer of Sikkim*. New Delhi: Low Price Publication. 2010. 11.
- <sup>4</sup>Seiger, Halfdan. *The Lepchas: Culture and Religion of Himalayan people*. National Museum of Denmark Anthropological field work in Sikkim. Ethnographical series, Vol.xi, Part 1. 1967. 32.
- <sup>5</sup>Kazi, N. Jigme. *Inside Sikkim: Against the Tide*. Gangtok: Hill Media Publication, 1993. 322.
- <sup>6</sup>Risley, H.H. Op.cit. 2010. 10.
- <sup>7</sup>Das, B.S. *The Sikkim Saga*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 2002: 6.
- <sup>8</sup>Sinha, A.C. *Politics of Sikkim: Feudal and Democratic*. New Delhi: Indian Council of social Science Research, 2006: 14.
- <sup>9</sup>Gurung.Op.cit. 2011.155.
- <sup>10</sup>Arora, Vivah. *Assertive Identities, Indignity and the politics of Recognitions as a Tribe*. Economic and Political weekly, Vol.56. No2. 197.
- <sup>11</sup>Das. Op.cit. 2002. 9.
- <sup>12</sup>Ibid. 2002. 10.
- <sup>13</sup>Yasin. Op.cit. 2012. 72.
- <sup>14</sup>Sinha, A.C. Op.cit. 2006: 16.
- <sup>15</sup>Ibid. 2006. 16.
- <sup>16</sup>Gurung.Op.cit. 2011. 46.
- <sup>17</sup>Sinha.Op.cit. 2006. 10.
- <sup>18</sup>Administration Report of Sikkim for the year 1914-1915.5.
- <sup>19</sup>Basnett, L.B. *Sikkim: A Short Political History*. New Delhi: S.Chand &Co (Pvt) Ltd, 1974. 72.
- <sup>20</sup>Das.Op.cit. 2002. 7.
- <sup>21</sup>Bhasin, Veena. *Ethnic Relation among the People of Sikkim* Journal of Social Science 6, no.1. (Jan 2002): 4.
- <sup>22</sup>Ray, Datta. K. Sunanda. *Smash and Grab: Annexation of Sikkim*. New Delhi: Vikas Publication, 2013: 44.
- <sup>23</sup>Sinha. Op.cit. 2006. 29.
- <sup>24</sup>Bhasin. Op.cit. 2002. 12.
- <sup>25</sup>Sinha. Op.cit. 2006. 25.
- <sup>26</sup>*Kazis* were the landlords, who claim to belong to the old nobility and compare themselves with the barons of the feudal system. They have been accustomed to oppress the people and to expect the utmost subservience from them. They form the exclusive and influential coterie around the ruling family and are able to impose their will on all and sundry.

---

<sup>27</sup> Khangsa brothers were the leading members of the nominated council which acted as rubber-stamp for whatever White, its president, decreed. They were greatly rewarded for this farsightedness, for they were the first beneficiaries of Gorkha (Nepalese) toil and industry.

<sup>28</sup> Gurung. Op.cit. 47.

<sup>29</sup> Unlike *kazis* the rest of the landlords, were called *Thikedars* they were content to play second fiddle to the *kazis* and thus share in the loaves and fishes of office and other privileges. Bound by a common policy to oppress the ryots, the *Thikadars* especially the more influential among them, have proved as bad as any of the *kazis*. They were contract holders for mining, forest clearance, or settling the *paharias* on the land leased to them on terms of cash payment. They brought immigrant from Nepal and settled them on their land and paid taxes to the *kazis* and the king to begin with.

<sup>30</sup> Bhasin. Op.cit. 2002. 5.

<sup>31</sup> Das. Op.cit. 2002. 7.

<sup>32</sup> The *Praja Sudharak Samaj* at Gangtok, The *Praja Samhelan* at TemiTarku, *Prajamandal* at Chakhung.

<sup>33</sup> Sengupta. Op.cit. 1985. 18.

<sup>34</sup> Basnett, L.B. Op.cit. 1974. 103.

<sup>35</sup> Gurung. Op.cit. 2011. 316.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. 2011. 49.

<sup>37</sup> Gurung. Op.cit. 2011. 17.

<sup>38</sup> Administrative Report of Sikkim for the year 1916-1917.2.

<sup>39</sup> Sengupta, Nirmalananda. *State Government and Politics: Sikkim*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishing Pvt. Ltd, 1985:130.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. 2011. 19.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. 2011. 13.

<sup>42</sup> Bhasin. Op.cit. 2002. 1.

<sup>43</sup> Yasin. Op.cit. 2012. 72.

<sup>44</sup> Rose, L.E. *Modernizing a traditional administrative system: Sikkim 1890-1973*. In James .F. Fisher (ed.). *Himalayan Anthropology: the Indo-Tibetan interface*. The Hague, Paris: Mouton. 1978.66.

<sup>45</sup> Das. Op.cit. 2002. 8. And Administrative Report of Sikkim for the year 1905- 1906.

<sup>46</sup> Yasin. Op.cit. 2012. 93.

<sup>47</sup> The Bhutias had been divided into the ‘real Bhutias’ and the ‘Other Bhutias’ mainly on the basis of period of settlement.

<sup>48</sup> Gurung. Op.cit. 2011. 156.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. 2011. 120.

<sup>50</sup> Mon-ba or Mon-rik referring to the people of the Mon country- a general Tibetan name for the lower Himalayas, from Kashmir to Assam and Burma.

<sup>51</sup> Das. Op.cit. 2002. 9.

<sup>52</sup> Kazi. Op.cit. 1993. 321.

---

<sup>53</sup>Jenkins, M. William and Karan.P Pradyumna. The Himalayan Kingdom: Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal. London: D.Van Nostrand Company.1963.62.

<sup>54</sup> Kazi. Op.cit. 1993. 322.

## CHAPTER – V

### CONCLUSION

The nature of colonial penetration and its operation in Sikkim was not the same compared to other classical colonial situations. In a classical colonial situations, the colony is subordinated (politically, military, administratively, economically, socially and culturally) by overthrowing the ruler and ruling class of the colony. The imperialist power completely dominates the political, administrative and economic resources of the colony to the needs and requirements of the imperialist power.

Sikkim situation during the colonial period had a different picture. The ruler was never overthrown; rather, he was urged to occupy the throne with nominal responsibilities under the supervision of British. Consequently, after 1918, the new ruler, Tashi Namgyal was molded under the British line of thinking and the administrative power structure was restored to him. However, political, military and commercial powers were still rested in the hands of the British. British did not exploit the economic resources to that extreme extent compared to other colonial situation. They targeted Tibetan trade and Sikkim was utilized as trade route to Tibet.

The colonizer was attempted to realize their objectives more particularly by reducing the ruler to a mere puppet. His powers were reduced to such and extend that he was helpless to voice his grievances. British created a set of elite, who could be easily, molded the British line of thinking. With the help of British, they realized their objectives of cultural transformation in the state. They became successful to de-Tibetanise, which is considered as the Sikkemese traditional administrative structure. They had undertaken a number of

reformative measures. Under these measures, Sikkim was converted into a proto-type British colony, which was different from the classical colony. British created an aristocratic class, which was called *Kazis, Thikadars, Mukthiyas, Mandal* and *Karbaris*. They exercised in favor of British. Under them, British introduced a lessee system on contractual basis for specific period on a fixed annual rent. This was a landmark in the administrative history of Sikkim.

J.C. White, the first British Political Officer, replaced the old and traditional structure of feudal based Tibetan theocracy with the creation of eight member council. With the help of these councilors, White remodeled the political structure of the state. This arrangement continued till the year 1918.

After this year, the administration power was restored to the Maharaja under the British Political Officer's supervision.

Educational reforms of the British administration played a significant role in educating the future elite of the state in the British line. British targeted three main categories *viz* the royal princes, *the kazis*, and the *Newar Thikadars* to be educated under English education in the beginning. There were very few commoners who could avail the benefits of western education. In most of the cases, the beneficiaries were *Kazis, Lamas* and *Newar Thikadars*. The Scottish mission and the Scandinavian alliance mission played a very important role to educate mass in the state. The other important features of the missionary activities were the spread of female education in Sikkim.

As a result of the British administrative reforms such as economic, judicial administrative, social and educational the pre-British Sikkim society based on ethnicity

resulted in the emergence and growth for a middle class purely on economic basis. Nepali migration had enormous impact on economic field especially on agriculture, trade and commerce and on minting and mining. After British encouraged them, they were allowed to clear forest and settled there. Therefore, they put afford on agriculture and they change the agriculture pattern of Sikkim with terrace farming that help the country to increase the economy of Sikkim. With this kind of motivation, Nepalese became successful in improving their economic position within a short period of time and they were in comparable position with some community such as Lepchas. Due to their hard work, they were little ahead in their agricultural skill. In addition, this was how after Nepali migration emerged, the trade and commerce was flourished. However, after British established their monopoly over trade, Newars became active to show their trading activities. They got land on lease and they started minting and mining in Sikkim, which was considered as a taboo for Lepcha and Bhutias of Sikkim. They even mint coins for Sikkim government, which ultimately helped for flourishing trade that further gave impact on economy of Sikkim. With this, they pushed back Bhutias in trading activities, from the fact that they marginal traders before Nepali migration.

In between the process, it was seen that there were emergence of force labor in Sikkim, where the Nepali people have to render free services like *Kalo-bari*, which means a black load of bitumen; another was *Jharlangi*, in which tenants had to work without any wages. Another was *Kuruwa*, under which tenant had to wait for a long period of time. Hence, this people were not only supposed to pay rent, but also had to render a free service for *Kazis* and *Thikadars*. However, the system resulted in considerable hardship.

British played a divide and rule policy. British brought larger Nepali immigrants to Sikkim. It was not their aim to uplift their condition. However, it was their intention to make use Nepali for their benefit, especially in the field of economy and to bring fragmentation within the residing community. Therefore, the innocent and hardworking Nepalese had been used in many ways. More than half of the population from Nepali community had been victim of exploitation by the aristocrat class. Among them, Newars occupied a good position because of their active participation in trade and commerce. Their work was highly praised by the Government and they became successful in occupying a position of Landlord. In the process of Sikkim History of pro-British scenario, could be looked as something, which is unequal and unjust in sharing powers because somewhere richer was becoming richer and poorer even worst. Nepalese were asked to pay high tax compare to the other two Bhutia and Lepcha community. Indeed, there survive a number of royal proclamations from successive Chogyals from the period 1860-1900 which prohibits the Nepalese settlement in Sikkim.

The Sikkim's peasants were too ignorant, illiterate, unorganized to think of collective action to remove the curse of oppression and iniquity that had always been their lot. Therefore, it inspired by the movement for independence in Indian plains. Some of the educated and enlightened Sikkim's people such as Tashi Tshering, Kezang Tenzing and Sonam Tshering had formed a reformist forum, Praja Sudharak Samaj (PSS) at Gangtok in early 1940s. Followed by other two party, Praja Samelan Party(PSP) and Praja Mandal Party(PMP).They had petitioned to the authorities against forced labor and oppression of the landlords. In addition, they pleaded for paying lad rent directly to the State Bankers

instead of the lessees. Their petitions were not only ignored, but they were also charged with spreading Nepalese communalism.

Soon after the independence of India, three political parties sprang up in Sikkim and later on these parties merged together and formed a new party called Sikkim State Congress. They come with the three fold demand i.e. Abolition of landlordism, Formation of an interim government as a necessary precursor of a democratic and responsible government and accession of Sikkim to the Indian Union.

It could be seen that British within a hundred and thirty years (1817-1947) turn Sikkim into a part of the Indian State. First, they appeared as the uninvited benefactor of Sikkim in 1817 that helped Sikkim to get back the lost territory to Nepal which was secured as war booty from them (Nepal). It highlighted how desolate Darjeeling was secured as a health resort and turned into a thriving frontier trading centre within twenty-five years, which made the Himalayan kingdom envious. British got Nepalese and settled them in Sikkim. The king and his courtiers opposed the move. However, they were simply removed from the political scene of Sikkim. British brought J.C. White as the Political Officer, who ruled Sikkim for the next two decades. White had secured Sikkim so well within the British Empire that half a dozen Political Officers had just to follow the routine.

Ever since, after the migration of the bulk of Nepali people that contributed to bring the changes in the society. British gave platform to the migrant Nepali. However, they never considered as a cultural identity. It led them to demand for their land rights and representation of their community. After the Indian Independence, their demand

culminated into a formation of multiple parties and ethnic organization that paved the way for merger of Sikkim with Indian Union. So, finally, in 16 May 1975, Sikkim was merged with the Indian Union, and in the process, the monarchical system was replaced by Democracy with the majority of Nepali Ethnic groups who constituted 75% of the total population in Sikkim. As a consequence at present the ethnic parity still continuous in Sikkim, that again has a long run in the days to come.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **Primary Sources**

Judicial Department (1907-1943), Sikkim State Archives.

Administration Reports of Sikkim 1905-1941. Government of Sikkim, Gangtok.

*Human Ecology and Statutory Status of Ethnic entities in Sikkim.* CRESP, Gangtok: Department of Information and Public Relation, 2009.

Kharel Sunita, J.Wangchuk. *The Gazetteer of Sikkim.* Gangtok: Home Department Government of Sikkim, 2013.

Macaulay, Colman. *Report of a mission to 'sikkim and the Tibetan Frontier': With a memorandum on our relations with the Tibet.* Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Press, 1885.

Risley, H.H. *The Gazetteer of Sikkim.* Delhi: B.R Publishing Corporation, 2005.

### **Secondary Sources**

Arora, Vibha. "Assertive Identities, Indigeneity and the politics of Recognition as a Tribe. *The Bhutias, The Lepchas and the Limboos of Sikkim.*" *Economic and Political Weekly* 56,no.2. (May-Aug 2007): 195-220.

Arora, Vibha. "Roots and Route of Secularism in sikkim." *Economic and political weekly*, 41, no.38. (Sep 23-29, 2006) 4063-4071.

Arora, vibha. "Unheard Voices of Protest in Sikkim." *Economic and Political weekly*, 42, no 34 (Aug 25-31, 2007) 3451-3454.

Barth, Fredrik. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The social Organisation of Culture Difference*, Boston USA: Little, Brown and Company.1969.

Basnet, Lal Bahadur. *Sikkim A Short Political History*. New Delhi: S.Chand & Co (Pvt) Ltd, 1974.

Bhasin, Veena. *Ethnic Relation Among the People of Sikkim*, 6, no 1 (Jan 2002) 1-19.

Bhattacharya, Aparna. *The Prayer-Wheel and Sceptre: Sikkim* . Mumbai: Nachiketa Publication, 1994.

Bhattacharya, Pranab Kumar. *Aspect of Cultural History of Sikkim: Studies of doinage*. New Delhi: Kanak Kumar Bagchi, 1984.

Chatterjee, Partha. *The Nation and its Fragments*. New York: Princeton University Press, 1993.

Chaudhery, Maitreyee. *Sikkim, Geographical Perspectives*. New Delhi : A mittal Publication, 2006.

Das, B.S. *The Sikkim Saga*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 2002.

Data-Ray, Sunanda. K. *Smash and Grab Annexation of sikkim*. New Delhi: Tranquebar , 1984.

Debnath, J.C. *Economic History and Development of Sikkim*. New Delhi: Abhijeet Publication, 2009.

Dewan, Dick B. *Education in Sikkim*. Darjeeling: Sharda Enterprises, 2012.

- Dolma, Thutob Namgyal and Yeshey. *History of Sikkim*. N.I.T. Library, 1908.
- E. Ansell, Amy. *Race and Ethnicity: The Key Concepts*. Malden,USA: Routledge,2013.
- English, Richard. "*Himalayan State formation and the impact of british Rule in Nineteenth Century*." Mountain Research and Development.vol 5, No.1, 1985.
- Fisher, James F. *Himalayan Anthropology: The Indo- Tibetan Interference*. Great Britain: Mouton Publishers , 1978.
- Gorer, Geoffrey. *The Lepchas of sikkim*. New Delhi: Gyan Publising House, 2014.
- Gurung, Suresh Kumar. *Sikkim Ethnicity and Political Dynamics,A Triadic Perspective*. Delhi: Deepak offset Press, 2011.
- Hidden, David J. Smith and John. *Ethnic Diversity and the Nation State*. New York : Routledge, 2012.
- Hong,Tran. *Chogyal's Sikkim:Tax,Land and Politics*. Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for Nepali: Tibetan and Himalayan Peoples, West Bengal: SIT Study Abroad, 2012.
- Karan, Pradyumna P. *The Himalayan Kingdom; Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal*. New York: D. VAn hostrand Company, 1963.
- Kazi, Jigme N. *Inside Sikkim, Against the Tide*. Gangtok: Hill Media Publication , Gangtok Sikkim, 1994.

Khangihian, Veronica. *Ethnicity, Conflict and Poverty in Manipur: A Study of Tamenglong and Imphal*. New Delhi: Phd thesis,submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University. 2010.

Kharel, M.P. "*Socio-Economic condition of Sikkim under Colonial Domination:(1889-1946)*." PhD thesis submitted to the University of North Bengal, 2002

Lama, Mahendra P. *Sikkim Society, Polity, Economy, Environment*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company, 2000.

McKay, Alex. "*Preparing for whose future? Colonial transformatin in sikkim*." Paper presented at the University of Sikkim seminar North East India' since 1947: Society, Polity and Economy.2017.

Mohammad Yasin, Durga P. Chettri. *Politics, Society and Development*. New Delhi: Kalpaz Publications, 2012.

Mullard, Saul. *Constructing the Mandala: the State formation of sikkim and the rise of a National Historical Narritive*. University of Oxford, 2012.

Panda, Nandini Bhattacharyya. *Culture,Heritage and identity*. New Delhi: Kalpana Shukla, KW publishers Pvt Ltd, 2015.

Punekar, V.M. *Ethnic Relations in India: Reinforcing and Re-grouping of Ethnic Identities,Man in India*. Vol.55, No.2, 1986.

R.Moktan. *Sikkim: Darjeeling Compendium of Documents*. Kalimpong: Sumaralaya, 2004.

Ramachandaram, Kanak Mani Dixit and Shastri. *"State of Nepal."* Nepal: Himal Books , 2002.

Rao, P.R. *India and Sikkim (1814-1970)*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishing, 1972.

Ray, Sunanda k. Dutta-. *Smash and Grab*. New Delhi: Vikas Publication, 2013.

Risley, H.H. *The Gazetteer of Sikkim*. Delhi: B.R Publishing Corporation, 2005.

Sinha, A.C. *Sikkim Feudal and Democratic*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company, 2008.

Sinha, A.C. *Sikkim Feudal and Democratic*. New Delhi: Indian Council of Social Science Research, 2006.

Smith, Anthony D. *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Malden, USA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1986.

Subba, Ash Bahadur. *History, Growth and Development of Limboo Language*. Sikkim: Gamma Publishing, 2016.

Subba, J.R. *History, Culture and Customs of Sikkim*. New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, 2008.

Subba, T.B. *Ethnicity, State and Development. A case study of Gorkhaland Movement in Darjeeling*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.

### Appendix 1: POPULATION, TRIBES, AND CHIEF FAMILIES OF SIKHIM

Race or caste	Males	Females	Children	Total
Lepcha	2,362	2,399	1,001	5,762
Bhutia	1,966	1,960	968	4,894
Limbu	1,255	1,159	942	3,356
Gurung	1,108	1,047	766	2,921
Murmi	801	778	1,288	2,867
Rai	742	691	587	2,020
Khambu	726	648	589	1,963
Kami	626	464	580	1,670
Brahman	521	372	521	1,414
Mangar	363	346	192	901
Chettri	303	253	273	829
Newar	240	183	304	727
Slaves	124	99	103	326
Dirzi	102	92	93	287
Miscellaneous, including troops	350	72	99	521
	11,589	10,563	8,306	30,458

Source: A census taken in Sikkim in February 1891 roughly shows the division of the population.

**Appendix 2: NUMBER OF LEPCHA POPULATION DURING 1840-1991**

<b>Census Year</b>	<b>Numerical figure</b>	<b>Percentage of total population</b>
1840	3010(Approx)	43
1891	5762	19.1
1909	6000	9.7
1931	13,060	11.89
1951	13,625	9.89
1961	14,847	9.8
1971	22,306	12.4
1981	22,147	8.3
1991	56,904	14.0

Source: Sikkim Human Development Report, Govt. of Sikkim,2001.

### Appendix 3: NUMBER OF BHUTIA POPULATION IN SIKKIM FROM 1840-1991

#### Communities

Year	Sikkemese Bhutia	Bhutia unspecified	Tibetan Bhutias
1840	1995	N.A	N.A
1891	4894	N.A	N.A
1909	6000	N.A	N.A
1911	10411	12433	N.A
1921	9639	9639	N.A
1931	11070	15130	560
1951	15626	15626	N.A
1961	36577	10762	6690
1971	36760	29875	33931
1981	21548	N.A	4149
1991	65033	N.A	N.A

Source: Sikkim Human Development Report, Government of Sikkim, 2001.

#### Appendix 4: NEPALI POPULATION IN SIKKIM DURING 1840- 1991

YEAR	Total Population
1840	1995
1891	18,981
1909	50,00
1931	36,105
1951	97,863
1961	88,916
1971	1,34,236
1981	1,92,295
1991	2,84,520

*Source:* Census records. Note: Separate enumeration of groups like Gurung, Rai Mangar, Chettri, Kami are not available for this period. Taken on the basis of religion (Hindus) inclusive of Indian plainsmen. On the basis of language spoken.

## Appendix 7

OF THE SIKKIM STATE FOR 1909-1910.

7

direct by the observers, and the figures for these stations are therefore not available. The figures for the station at Gangtok are given below.

*Rainfall.*—The total rainfall for the year was 138·89 inches or 31·56 inches above that for the previous year and 22·26 inches over the average for the past 3 years. The heaviest fall of 3·67 inches was registered on the 7th June 1909.

*Snowfall.*—None fell at Gangtok.

*Temperature.*—The highest point registered was 80·2 F. on the 13th July, 1909 and the lowest 34·2 F. on the 21st February, 1910.

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### EDUCATION.

*Bhutia Boarding School at Gangtok.*—The general tone of the school has been good and the progress made in education has been fair. The daily attendance at the school has averaged 26 boys. Of the 31 boys on the roll 24 are boarders.

Two boys left the school to join the Medical School at Patna. Their expenses are defrayed by the Government of India and at the end of their 4 years' training they will be employed as Civil Hospital Assistants in the dispensaries attached to the British Trade Agencies at Yatung and Gyantse in Tibet.

English and Tibetan are taught; also History, Geography, Mathematics and Drawing. Their Highnesses the Maharaja and Maharani have continued to show an interest in the school, which they have visited on several occasions, taking particular interest in their physical training. The health of the school has not been very good this year, owing to several cases of dysentery among the boys.

*Nepali Boarding School.*—There were 57 boys on the rolls at the close of the year as against 61 in the previous year. The decrease is due to the inability of parents living at a distance to maintain their sons at school. The daily average attendance was 16·28, which is very poor. The majority of the boys are day scholars and live, some of them, at great distances from the school. The rainy season was an abnormally heavy one and this would account for the very small attendance. One boy, the son of the late Taxari Chander Bir of Rhenock, was sent by the Durbar to Patna for medical training. At the end of his 4 years' training he will be employed as a Civil Hospital Assistant in one of the State dispensaries.

English and Hindi are taught, the subjects including History, Geography and Mathematics. The boys are also taught Drawing, and their physical training receives careful attention. The general tone and health of the school has been good.

Both the schools have been inspected by Mr. Rapcha, the Sub-Inspector of Schools in the Darjeeling District, whose services were lent by the Government of Bengal, and the curriculum suggested by him has been adopted. Quarterly examinations have been held by the Maharaj-Kumar in both schools and he considers that the results show fair progress.

*Mission Schools.*—The Church of Scotland Mission assisted by the State maintained 13 day schools and 8 night schools during the year which ended on 31st December 1909. Four lace schools for girls were also maintained by the Mission. The total number of pupils was 330 as against 327 in the previous year, with an average attendance of 25·5.

The small school at Lachung in North Sikkim for the semi-Tibetan population of the Lachung valley was also maintained.

### CHAPTER IX.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

The history of Sikkim, which is being prepared under the direction of His Highness the Maharaja, is not yet completed.

Roadside trees were planted along all the roads. Those planted by some of the Kazis, prominent among them being Jerung Dewan, Jasso Kazi and Yang-thang Kazi, were carelessly done; the trees were not of the prescribed kinds nor were they properly fenced. These Kazis were fined.



## Appendix 5

### The Treaty of Titalia

- I. The company transfer and makes over in full sovereignty to the *Chogyal* of Sikkim *Tsugphud Namgyal*, the territory lying between the rivers Mechi and the Tista.
- II. Not to commit aggression on the Gorkhas or any other state.
- III. To submit to the arbitration of the Company his disputes with Nepal and other neighboring states.
- IV. To render military assistance to the Company in case of need when they are engaged in war in the hills.
- V. Not to allow any European or American to reside in his kingdom without obtaining the permission of the company.
- VI. To deliver up British-Indian dacoits who may take refuge in his kingdom.
- VII. Not to afford protection to the British-Indian revenue defaulters or other delinquents.
- VIII. Not to levy transit duties on British merchandise and to afford protection to merchants and traders from companies.
- IX. In return for these privileges, the Company under Article nine, guaranteed to the Raja and his successors the peaceable possession of the territory made over to him under Article one.
- X. The parties agreed to ratify the treaty within one month of its signing.

## **Appendix 6**

### **The Treaty of Tumlong**

- I. It cancelled all the former treaties between the British Government and Sikkim.
- II. The Government of India restored the territory under its occupation to the Chogyal. Here after the Chogyal will be referred to as the Maharaja.
- III. The Maharaja undertook to restore to the government of India, all its property lost during Campbell's retreat.
- IV. To pay an indemnity of Rs. 7,000 retreat.
- V. To prevent depredations on British territory.
- VI. To surrender all British criminals and other delinquents who may take refuge in Sikkim
- VII. Under Article seven, the Sikkim Government agreed not to allow Dewan Namguay or his blood relations to enter into Sikkim or hold any office under the Maharaja or his family either at Sikkim or in Chumbi.
- VIII. Articles eight to twelve dealt with matters relating to trade. Under these Articles, the government of Sikkim agreed to abolish all restrictions on travelers or monopolies in trade.
- IX. To afford protection to merchants or traders of all countries.
- X. Not to levy import or export duties on British goods.
- XI. To levy only 5 percent on the value of goods imported from or exported to Tibet, Bhutan and Nepal.
- XII. To prevent fraud, the Sikkim government got the right to purchase goods on their face value, from the traders.

- XIII. The government of India got the right to construct a road through Sikkim
- XIV. To conduct topographical or geological surveys of Sikkim.
- XV. The Government of Sikkim agreed to abolish slave trade.
- XVI. Grant freedom of movement to its subject.
- XVII. To refer to the British arbitration all its disputes with the neighboring states
- XVIII. To assist the British with its army when they are engaged in the hills.
- XIX. Not to cede or lease any portion of its territory without the British permission.
- XX. Allow the armed forces of other countries to pass through its territory without the prior British permission.
- XXI. To secure for the British, the seven criminals escaped to Bhutan.
- XXII. The maharaja agreed not to stay in the Chumbi valley of Tibet for more than three months in a year.
- XXIII. The last Article twenty-three provided for the ratification of the treaty by the viceroy of India Within six weeks from the date of its signing.

## Appendix 8

OF THE SIKKIM STATE FOR 1914-1915.

3

sown and not on the produce. At a meeting of the Council held on the 30th October 1914 it was decided to revert to the old system of assessing 'Koot' as a temporary measure, pending the final settlement of the question. The matter was finally settled at a meeting of the Council held on the 26th January 1915. The following rates were agreed to:—

	Rates per pathi of seed sown.								
	1st class land.			2nd class land.			3rd class land.		
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
For Nepalese . . . . .	2	0	0	1	8	0	1	0	0
„ Bhutias and Lepchas . . . . .	1	8	0	1	2	0	0	12	0

The classification of the terraced rice lands was commenced in March 1915 and is nearing completion. By first class land is meant land on which in average years four *manas* or less of seed produce one *Murhi* of paddy, second class land on which in average years between four and six *manas* of seed produce a *Murhi* of paddy, and third class land on which more than six *manas* of seed are required to produce a *Murhi* of paddy.

These rates have been accepted by both landlords and raiyats and are generally considered to be satisfactory solution of the vexed question of 'Koot.' They come into force from the harvest season of 1915.

### CHAPTER III.

#### PROTECTION.

The following report regarding the Co-operative Credit Societies is written by His Highness the Maharaja.

#### *Co-operative Credit Society.*

There are two rural Societies, one at Gangtok and the other at Rhenok. The former was established on 26th March 1914 and the latter on 11th May 1914.

An application for permission to open a society has also been received from the people of Pathing and the matter is under consideration.

The attached schedule shows the financial results of both societies for the year under report.

#### *Liabilities.*

#### *Assets.*

Particulars.	<i>Liabilities.</i>		Particular.	<i>Assets.</i>	
	Gangtok Society.	Rhenok Society.		Gangtok Society.	Rhenok Society.
Loan from State . . . . .	3,838 0 0	2,200 0 0	Loan recoverable from members.	3,542 0 0	2,967 4 9
Interest due on above	501 5 0	129 0 6	Interest recoverable on above.	268 1 0	205 6 3
Deposit from outsider	...	699 0 6	Balance in hand.	426 1 6	...
Interest due thereon.	...	50 0 6			
Add—Profit to the society.	96 13 6	94 8 6			
Total . . . . .	4,236 2 6	3,172 11 0		4,236 2 6	3,172 11 0