

Social Change in Sikkim in its Historical Context

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The History of Sikkim

Sikkim is a land of myths, who has lost the pre-historic written documents but has left with the remarkable mystery of the country. Sikkim was sparsely populated and rich in natural resources including a large number of flora and fauna. There are three major ethnic communities, Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalis inhabiting in the country. In the early period, Sikkim had a gigantic physical structure from the Himalayas to the plains. Earlier, the Tibetan called the territory of Sikkim as “Denjong, Demojong, and Deoshong, which have the same meaning as “Valley of Rice”.¹ There is another myth, that, the first Tibetan king had made a palace in Rabdenchi, at that period of time the Limbo community people called the palace as “SU- HIM” which meaning as “New Home”. Another myth tells that in early days the Lepcha head married a Limbo girl from Limbuwan, and when she went to her father’s house, she told the people of the village that she had come from ‘Su Him’ or ‘New Home’. Later on, the Nepalese called it as ‘Su Khim’ instead of ‘Su Him’ but the advent of British in India, who could not pronounce the word ‘Su Khim’ and called it as ‘Sikkim’. That was the last change in the name of the nation for forever.²

Inhabitants of Sikkim

Lepcha people are known as the original inhabitants of Sikkim, but some writers have expressed that they have come in ‘early thirteen century’³ from hills of Assam and Upper Burma⁴. It is also believed that before the advent of Lepchas, there were three different tribes inhabiting in Sikkim⁵. The Lepchas called themselves as ‘RONG or RONGKUP’ which meaning ‘the son of snowy peak’, they called Sikkim as “MAYEL LYANG” which meaning “the hidden paradise”.⁶ In the genesis of the earth the ‘RUM’ meaning Lepchas almighty ‘GOD’, had created two people, man and women with a handful of snow of Mount Kanchenjunga. From the mighty right hand, he created a man and from the mighty left hand created a woman. Lepchas have their oldest ancestor or progenitors because of them. Since then the Lepcha population has grown in the large number. They were called as ‘FODONG THING’ as a male ancestor and ‘NAZAONGNYO’ as the female ancestor.⁷ Sikkim, as the Lepcha kingdom was vastly spread country at that period of time, in the East Tegong rang, in West the river Arun, Chumbi valley in the North and Darjeeling district in the South. Probably the other different ethnic community have lived in the past on these parts of the region and have maintained the social relations among each social group. The other ethnic people were playing a vital role, like in trade and business, costume makers, shoe makers, wooden craft experts, weapon and utensil makers, transport and communication.⁸ “The Lepcha were early inhabitants of the region, apparently assimilating with the Naong, Chang, Mon, and other tribes.”⁹ The Lepchas were called “LAPCHEY” which meaning “VILE SPEAKER”¹⁰ by the Nepalis because Lepcha speaks only their own language which is different from any other languages in Eastern Himalayas. The Lepcha mythology suggested that Lepcha language as the language of God¹¹ which the Lepcha’s early father and mother ‘*Fodong Thing*’ and ‘*Nazaongnyo*’ used this language given by Lepcha God. The Lepcha people follow the animist culture where they worship the spirits and nature especially the ‘Mount Kanchenjunga’ and ‘Tendong Hill’. The Lepcha is a homogenous community and peace-loving, nature worshipers, the people are meek or shy in nature; they follow the “Mon” culture and also called themselves as “*Monpas*” but contemporary Lepchas are converted into other religions like Buddhism and Christianity, they lived in isolated forestry sloppy hill areas which are away from the mainstream societies.

¹ Sharma, 1997; “Sikkim Hijo Dekhi Aaja Sama”, p. 4.

² Ibid. p 5.

³ Joshi,2004; pp.60.

⁴ Rao. 1978; pp.2.

⁵ Gurung S.K 2011, pp.93.

⁶ Sharma, 1996; pp. 6-7.

⁷ Ibid. p. 8.

⁸ Ibid. p. 10.

⁹ The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 21, 15th Edition, Chicago, 1974/2003, pp148-49, cited in Gurung; 2011; pp. 93.

¹⁰ Sinah A.C., 2008; pp. 30.

¹¹ Gurung 2011; pp.98.

The political life of the Lepcha people in early periods was basically based upon headman ship or village chief system and had their own territory, the population they called leader or king as “PUNU” in their language, the first Lepcha king was the “*Turvey Pun*”. The Pun died in battle with the Kirats and his followers became the king, the last Lepcha king was “*Tub Athak*”. After the death of the last king, the Lepcha society lost the kingship system and they used to chaos old people who could guide them, having spiritual knowledge and solved the social problems.¹² In the history of Sikkim there is one novel person who had made great prediction on monarch of the country in his time, “*Thekungtek*” the Lepcha chief and priest or in Lepcha language they called “*Bungthing*”¹³ who uses wizardry or have magical and divine power which was not only confined in the country but in the periphery areas had highlighted his healing power. It was in the period when India was ruled by Muslim king the Akbar (1560-1605 B.C.).¹⁴ In the same period in Tibet, there was a young man believed to possess the power of thousands of men and had lifted the four huge pillar in “*Sakya Monastery*”¹⁵ alone called “*Jyo Khye Bhumsa*”. But what today is said that the Sakya Monastery was build in the year of 1268 B.C. due to this matter of fact the reign of the Lepcha chieftain and Khebomsa’s period is not matching.¹⁶

As the record in the writings of different scholars has mentioned about the relation started by Tibetans and the Sikkimese Lepchas from the Khye Bhumsa and his wife and Thekongtek the priest of Lepcha community. Where the story begins like this, these two desperate couples from Chumbi Valley, Tibet came to the Lepcha priest for his blessing so that they could have their own kids. Kabi is the place where the incidence took place, it is nearby Gangtok, Bungthing started the ritual with the blood sacrifices. Today in Sikkim this became a significant story to build brotherhood or friendly relations within two communities, the Lepchas and the Bhutias, celebrate an as big festival called “*Pang Lhabsol*”. Later the couple was blessed and returned to their destination and a few years back they were having four sons, thus the satisfied couple used to came to Sikkim frequently to visit the Bungthing.

The Bhutia Theocratic Kingdom and Feudalism

The Bhutia tribe in Sikkim were immigrants from Tibet and the word “*Bhot*” itself denotes Tibet.¹⁷ In Tibet there was chaos between two sects of Buddhism, the one is ‘*Yellow Hat Sect*’ (Gelukpas) and the ‘*Red Hat Sect*’ (Nyingmapas) this evolved a situation where ‘*Red Hat Sect*’ had to flee from Tibet with their leaders.¹⁸ In the period when Tibetan Buddhist Lamas, as missionaries came to spread the religion in different parts Sikkim, it was a difficult job to propagate Buddhism among the Lepchas. Those circumstances forced the Lamas to have a capable ruler in Sikkim to increase the number of followers of the Buddhist religion. ‘*Red Hat Sect*’ Lamas were in search of such a ruler in Sikkim, the three lamas came from the north, west and south to Yuksom where they found Phuntsok Namgyal the great grand-son of Guru Tashi and he was consecrated as the first ‘*Chogyal*’ or king of Sikkim in 1642 A.D.¹⁹ The Bhutias increased their population with migration from Tibet and they had a good number of Lamaist Buddhism follower, which strengthened the relation between Sikkim and Tibet There were a number of monasteries build up in Sikkim and the Lamas were in politics of state and they were involved as adviser committee of king. Tibetans consolidate the political affairs of the state and gained the power to have control over the people and territory of Sikkim. They were large in number and influenced the Lepcha to convert to Buddhism and over shadowed the Lepcha ‘*Mon*’ religion. The cultural system which began was the result of the assimilation and enculturation among these two communities. Even the matrimonial ties among them became frequent which played a major role in making Lepchas subordinate to the Bhutias. The influential Lepcha chiefs were drawn into the feudal political system and made them administer the district level as twelve ‘*Dzongpens*’²⁰, so the king, this way was able to manipulate the Lepchas and be his subject. The Bhutia language became the language of court and the monastic

¹² Sharma 1996; pp. 12-13.

¹³ The person who cure diseases and do priesthood job in Lepcha rituals, festival and ceremonies.

¹⁴ Sharma 1996; pp.13.

¹⁵ In the southern Tibet.

¹⁶ Sharma 1996 pp.14.

¹⁷ Gurung, 2011; pp. 105.

¹⁸ Ibid. pp. 105.

¹⁹ Sengupta Nirmalananda 1985; p.2.

²⁰ There were twelve Political officers who were given a power by the king.

Lamas were appointed as officials and advisers of the king.²¹ In the reign of King Puntsok Namgyal, the boundaries of Sikkim extended to Chumbi Valley at North, Tagongla in the East, Titalia in the South and Devagaon and Singlila in the West.²² The Lepcha people were dominated by the Bhutias the Tibetan immigrants in Sikkim by the theocratic monarchical social structure and unfortunately, they became the ruled in their own land.

This theocratic feudalism form of government changed the social structure of Sikkim. The simple political structure, with which the Lepchas were accustomed, changed dramatically under the new political structure brought about by the Bhutias. After the death of first Gyalpo of Sikkim Phuntsog Namgyal, his son Tensung Namgyal becomes the Gyalpo (king) who shifted the capital of the country from Yoksum to Rabdantse.²³ He had married the Limbo girl the daughter of Yo-Yo Hang of Kirat state in Nepal, which resulted in the settlement of the Kirats in west and south district of Sikkim. Tensung Namgyal united the people from different communities and he included the Tsong chief into the council. He had an open public meeting with the ministers and monks, for the first time in Sikkim to discuss and solve the social issues or problems; this meeting was called "Lhadi Mhed".²⁴ Rabden Sarpa was appointed as the state representative in Sikkim by the king of Tibet after he had helped the king of Sikkim to rebuild the nation after its defeat at the hands of the Nepali King Prithivi Narayan Shah, who had introduced the taxation system on land and trade in the state of Sikkim.²⁵

British Invasion to Sikkim and Nepalese Settlement

The British came to Sikkim during the late eighteen century and their missionaries converted a few of Lepcha people into Christianity.²⁶ They were also looking at the eastern Himalayas to open the trade routes across the Himalayas from Indian plains. After the victory in Bengal battle in 1757, they began to work on it vigorously. The first Governor-General, Warren Hasting, had tried to find a trade route to Tibet via Kathmandu valley but it was difficult for them with Gorkha ruler.²⁷ The Nepal invasion in 1774-75, where western parts of Sikkim had increased the Nepalese settlements, by 1790, Nepal kingdom stretched the territory to lower Teesta basin. The ruler of Sikkim was helpless for those settlements, increasing of a foreign power and lastly the ruler request the British East India Company for assistance to send back foreign invaders from the state. The British had sent the troops against the Gorkha troops and defeated them but the Nepalese settlers stayed back in the state.²⁸ The Sigauli Treaty in December 1815 was signed between Sikkim ruler and Nepal which allow Sikkim to restore her territory.²⁹ Sikkim was fortunate to gain the favour of British and to regain its territory but British were successful in their own plans to build trade routes for that they wanted to take hold the land from Sikkim. After a couple of years on February 10, 1817, the British India had signed the treaty of Titaliya with Sikkim Maharaja, whereby the whole land was transferred to British territory. The British government agreed paying compensation of 3,000 rupees per annum to the Sikkim government and it was raised in 1946 by 6,000 per annum.³⁰ The British intervention in Sikkim had an impact upon the state political and economic administration. The British Government had taken Darjeeling the western part of Sikkim and developed rapidly. The new settlers from Sikkim, Nepal and Bhutan had come to build their villages under modern amenities. New buildings, wide and better roads were constructed an image of modern civilization in Darjeeling was created by the British Government.³¹

²¹ Ibid, p. 3.

²² Gurung. 2011;pp.34

²³ Ibid. pp.34.

²⁴ Sharma 1996; pp.32-33.

²⁵ Gurung 2011; pp.35.

²⁶ Das B.S. 2002;p.5.

²⁷ Sinha A.C. pp. 69.

²⁸ Das B.S. p.6.

²⁹ Gurung pp.37.

³⁰ Joshi2004;pp.61.

³¹ Sengupta 1985; p.4.

Political Upheaval and Changes in Sikkim

In 1849, Dr Campbell and Dr Hooker were arrested in Sikkim when they were returning from Chola at Sikkim-Tibet border.³² It was a disturbing factor in the relation between the British government and Sikkim. The British denied the Sikkim ruler to pay any allowance for the territory of Darjeeling that they had taken. The earlier treaty of Tumlong was revived in 1861 and this led to Sikkim being the protectorate of the British government of India. The Gyalpo of Sikkim demanded the annual allowances to the British government which was banned for a few years, it was resumed in 1862. Due to the poor economic condition of Sikkim, the allowance was increased to 9,000 per annum in 1869 and further, the Darjeeling allowance was increased by 12,000 per annum in 1873.³³ The British government gradually exercised authority over the Sikkim kingdom. The British government appointed J. Claude White as a political officer of the protectorate state in 1889 at Gangtok and he took charge of administration, the King and his Kazi or Kalon were under his control.³⁴ The demographic composition of Sikkim was a highlight in 1891 census where the total population was 30,455, including Lepcha 5,762, Bhutia 4,894, and Nepalese 18,714.³⁵ The political officer J.C. White had called the Nepalese as 'Paharis' people speaking Nepali language which is different language than Lepcha and Bhutia., The ethnic relation between Nepalese and the Bhutia has not been seen as friendly as Bhutia-Lepcha ethnic ties. Nepalese were separated into two groups, 'Tagadhari' those who wear holy thread and 'Matawali' those who do not wear thread and traditionally they are allowed to consume alcohol.³⁶ There are two different racial groups are found in Nepalese one is Mongoloid and another is Aryan. The Nepalese of Aryan race started immigrating in Sikkim after the military expedition in the mid-nineteenth century.³⁷ The Nepalese immigration was encouraged in the 1890s by the political officer in the state to increase the land cultivation that increased the land revenue in Sikkim. The 'Paharias' (Nepalese) were very hard working people³⁸ and they enhanced the cultivation lands and that helped to generate land revenue to the government of Sikkim. The Pahari people developed agriculture on a large scale by using the techniques of terrace farming which was practised in Nepal for cultivation in steep land.³⁹ The development was undertaken in Sikkim with the new economic system and followed by the construction of roads under the leadership of political officer.⁴⁰ In 1894 the capital of the state was shifted to Gangtok from Tumlong.⁴¹ Gangtok became a prominent place for administration, trade and commerce, increasing the merchants and buyers in the market. Some Indian business community started arriving Sikkim in search of the scope of business in the state. In this way, Sikkim was transforming and development and modernisation started to take place gradually under the British. In 1906, for the first time, Gangtok was linked with India by wheeled traffic.⁴² During J.C. White's period, Sikkim advanced in economic and efforts were made to make Sikkim as economically self-sufficient state. He introduced horticulture, cottage industries, sericulture, forestry and fruit cultivation.⁴³ In earlier periods the people of Sikkim lacked better facilities of health, education, and employments etc., at that period of time the people were illiterate and education was one of elite's domain. The administration was very bad because the Kazi was designated as the royal officials who were holding the authority of every Illakas (Blocks) in different parts of Sikkim and they treated the people in a ruthless manner. These Kazis (officials) had exploited the common people of Sikkim and they introduced various feudal practices like Kalobhari (Black Loads),⁴⁴ Theki-Bethi (Gift and Wageless Work), Kuruwa (Waiting Long), and Zamindari System (Land

³² Ibid p.4.

³³ Sinha pp.87.

³⁴ Gurung pp.42.

³⁵ Sinah 2008;pp.37.

³⁶ Ibid pp.35.

³⁷ Gurung 2011; pp.157.

³⁸ Sinah 2008; pp.93.

³⁹ Ibid pp.95.

⁴⁰ Joshi 2004;pp.70.

⁴¹ Arha R.S.& Latika Sigh 2008;p.7.

⁴² Joshi pp.70.

⁴³ Sinah 2008;pp.94.

⁴⁴ Sinah 2008; pp.96.

Revenue System).⁴⁵ Even the Mandals and Karbaris (the Middlemen) used malpractices in collection of revenue and harassed the peasants. The new immigrants the Paharias (Nepalese) started cultivating land on lease, some Lepcha Kazis encouraged Nepalese settlements and among the Nepalese, the commercial communities of the Newars emerged as economic opponents to the Bhutia-Lepcha, with the beginning of copper mines.⁴⁶ There was a huge transformation taking place in Sikkim in the field of politics and socio-economic domains, during the British regime.

In 1947 British withdrew from India, and India gained independence and this affected Sikkim very much as it had not developed completely nor the socio-political changes had taken place holistically. Many political parties in Sikkim were formed and some of them were ethnically based. Nepalese population was highest in comparison to the Bhutia-Lepcha population and Nepalese were mobilized into the political parties. The leaders were emerging from the educated middle class and efforts in the government to remove high taxation and exploitation of peasants by Kazi were being made. Darjeeling remained with India as a district of West Bengal and the government of India had another Treaty with the Maharaja of Sikkim Sir. Tashi Namgyal 'Gyalpo' on the 5th December 1950,⁴⁷ it reassigned the status of Sikkim as a protectorate of India and the government of India under took the external affairs, military affairs and communication of the small state. The government of India provided autonomy to the state on the one hand and on the other they provided compensation of three lakhs rupees (3, 00,000) per annum to the state.⁴⁸

End of Namgyal Regime and Sikkim Merger with India (1975)

Around one hundred thirty years of rule by the British and the Indian Union has brought about changes in the political and economic affairs of Sikkim. The British subjugated under his authority the Maharaja of Sikkim and was under the supervision of British political officer. The educated and enlightened Sikkimese such as Tashi Tshring, Kezang Tenzing and Sonam Tshering had formed reformist forum, 'Praja Sudharak Samaj' at Gangtok in the early 1940s. They had petitioned to the authority against the forced labour and oppression of landlordism. Gobardhan Pradhan and Dhan Bahadur Tiwari at Timi Tarku in south district organised another such forum, 'Praja Sammelan'. The Lepcha Kazi of Chakung, Lhendup Dorji Khansarpa (L.D. Kazi), established a third organization called 'Praja Mandal' in west Sikkim. In 7th December 1947, the party meeting was held at 'Polo Ground' presently 'Palzor Stadium' Gangtok, and that was for the first time Sikkimese heard political speeches in any form. That was the time when the new political party 'Sikkim State Congress' was born through the merging of the above three parties of the state. The party had three demands (1) abolition of landlordism, (2) formation of a democratic form of government, and (3) accession of Sikkim to the Indian union.⁴⁹ The first general election was held in Sikkim on the basis of 'Party System' in 1953. The elected representative of 'Sikkim state Congress', was K.R. Pradhan and from 'Sikkim National Party', was Sonam Tshering. The first executive council was formed of three members, the Dewan Nari Rustomji, and two representatives of two parties and later the number of the executive council was increased to twenty including all community representatives. In 1955, High Court was established in the state and Chief Justice was appointed from India. There were four District Magistrates appointed in four Districts and a Chief Magistrate at Gangtok the capital of Sikkim.⁵⁰ Gradually Sikkim had witnessed the evolution of the modern political form of bureaucratic authority and there was communal politics seen among the ethnic community of Sikkim. The emerging educated political elites were mobilizing the masses against the feudalistic theocratic monarchy of Sikkim and leading towards a modern democratic form of government. There were conflicts between the political parties and the leaders of a different ethnic group. By July 1961, Maharaja of Sikkim had established the 'Sikkim Subject Regulation' in the state, this was for the recognition of his subject but it was beneficial only for the Bhutia-Lepcha and Tsong. There was huge opposition from the Sikkim State Congress party on the issue of the subject hood. Later it was solved when the Maharaja of Sikkim declared that those who had settled in Sikkim before the 1950s and those who had gone to work in India, were given Sikkim Subject.⁵¹ Maharaja Sir Tashi Namgyal died in 2nd December

⁴⁵ History of Democratic Movement in Sikkim 2002;pp.17-19.

⁴⁶ Sinah 2008; pp.62.

⁴⁷ Sengupta 1985;pp.11.

⁴⁸ Sharma 1997;pp.113.

⁴⁹ Sinah 2008;pp.100-102.

⁵⁰ Ibid pp.106-107.

⁵¹ Sharma 1997;pp.121-131.

1963, in Calcutta and Maharaja P.T. Namgyal was coronated as 'Gyalpo' of Sikkim in 5th December 1963.⁵² His American wife Hope Namgyal 'Gyalmo' had tried to consolidate Sikkim once again into an autonomous state including Darjeeling as before but the political situation in Sikkim prevented this from happening.

The gradual spread of education, rising contact with the outside world, the exchange of ideas and advancing knowledge of about the people and government of different countries, had contributed to rising in the general standard of political consciousness of a section of the people. All the political parties conceded democracy and popular government as their ultimate goal.⁵³ The political parties were gaining popularity among the people of Sikkim and that was lessening the Chogyal authority over the subjects. Chogyal and his American wife had started camping on anti-Indian issues, writing and distributing pamphlets among the public and also used school text books to propagate their anti-India stand.⁵⁴

The education in the state was first started by the Scottish missionaries and then later the government took the responsibility of spreading education in the state. Education was one of the powerful forces which stalled the notion of nationalism among the educated youths and the masses, not only that their rational thinking started questioning the activities of king towards his subjects but in 1973, there was massive agitation in Sikkim whereby people gathered from different parts of the state against the Chogyal and the Nepalese were in the forefront. There were three political parties involved in agitation 'Sikkim National Congress', lead by L.D Kazi, 'Janta Congress' lead by C.K. Pradhan, and 'Sikkim National Party' lead by Netuk Lama. In the same year on 8th of May the 'Tripartite Treaty' was agreed upon by the Chogyal, the Foreign Secretary, the government of India, and the representative of political parties.

The first general election for 32- Member Assembly was held in April 1974. In the meantime, two political parties 'Sikkim National Congress' and 'Sikkim Janta Congress' merged into a single party 'Sikkim Congress Party'. The new party promised to ensure full-fledged democracy, rule of law, clean and efficient administration, social justice, economic progress and protection of the right of the minorities.⁵⁵ This party had a significant role in mobilizing the masses and making them politically conscious and the necessity of political change from feudal to a democratic system. The political turmoil in Sikkim had affected every aspect of social life, from the villages to towns and the communal politics which had created conflict among inter-community relations, was suspended. In the ensuing period, there was a conflict between the 'Sikkim Congress Party' and Chogyal, as head of the state, to govern the state smoothly.

On 10th of April, 1975; the Sikkim Assembly consentaneously passed a resolution seeking the abolition of the institution of the Chogyal and demanding the merger of Sikkim with India. The government of India accordingly proposed the constitutional Amendment Bill seeking to make Sikkim the 22nd state of Indian Union. The Bill was passed on 26th of April, 1975; on 16th of May, B. B. Lal the chief executive was appointed as first Governor of Sikkim.⁵⁶ L. D. Kazi became the first Chief Minister of Sikkim and his administration ended in 1989 election.

The changes in the outside world had led Sikkim in an entirely new path of development and there was the construction of roads, schools, hospitals, and public offices etc. The changes in the political system had impacted the social life of the people and the new democratic form of government-led towards development in the state. Sikkim had a mixed of three ethnic populations and there has been diffusion of cultural value system. There was a new elite emerging in Sikkim with package modern values and were eager to control the power of the state. N.B. Bhandari became the next Chief Minister of Sikkim after L.D Kazi. Later the 'Sikkim Democratic Party' (S.D.F.) led by Shri. Pawan Kumar Chamling defeated the 'SSP' government and still the S.D.F. government is ruling in Sikkim since 1994. These gradual political changes also brought about socio-economic progress in the state.

⁵² Ibid pp.135.

⁵³ Sengupta 1985; pp.24.

⁵⁴ Das 1983; pp.23.

⁵⁵ Sengupta 1985;pp.26-27.

⁵⁶ Ibid pp.32-33.

After the merger with India and the consecutive elected government, there have been a large number of development activities in Sikkim and the hardship and exploitation faced by the people during the time of the Choygal rule have been something of a history. There has been growth of economy, modern bureaucratic administration system came into existence, service sector opened up, trade and commerce and employment opportunity have increased and the state has witnessed an influx of large number population from different parts of India to the Sikkim.⁵⁷ The government was handled every aspect of public welfare in the state and different departments for giving service to the people very efficiently.

Transforming Society of Sikkim

The merger of Sikkim with India (1975) has brought about an unbelievable transformation in the state's socio-economic and political structure. Sikkim has been transformed in the lines with the ideas envisaged by the French sociologist Emile Durkheim that society evolves from the stage of Mechanical solidarity to that of Organic solidarity. 'Mechanical solidarity' is the stage of development of the society, where the solidarity is based on resemblance and 'Organic solidarity' is characterised by a complex division of labour, specialization of skills and interdependence among the individuals in the society.⁵⁸ Sikkim has started developing its economic infrastructure and a large number of government employment opened in different government departments. Urbanisation started taking place gradually in different parts and the business community, as well as people from different parts of India, came to Sikkim due to increased efficiency in the transportation system in the state. The people from the village came into market areas for employment and to access modern amenities. The intra community relations changed into inter-community and there were no community chieftains to maintain social coherence instead the constitutional legal system was introduced to control the social offences. There has been progressing in infrastructure in the state, level of education among the people and it was contradictory to the emerging social issues and problems in the state like the women problems and family issues, alcoholism and drugs, drop-outs and unemployment, and social security, etc. The pace of modernisation and globalisation has also led to the emergence of new institutional values within community and society at large in the state of Sikkim. There are questions from multiple perspectives that, what is the relation of social change with social problems? The society we are living today according to Ulrich Beck is called a "Risk Society". The contemporary Sikkim's society where there are ample changes taking place due to modernisation, now individuals have lost their autonomy in a fragmented society. Weber says, that rationality of modern society is the iron cage to the individual which imprisons them due to lack of social unity.⁵⁹

The small state of Sikkim has witnessed huge movements of people who are exposed to global societies and increase in economic opportunities to its peoples. These changes in the socio-economic and political scenario of Sikkim have led to changes in the social relations among the people. Fragmentation in the families, communities, religion and other institutions has become a norm and has led to disintegration among the people. Gradually the changes have come across in the life style of peoples and changes in social values in society. That is due to not only the movement of economic capital and materials but also the human capital across the nations of the world. The human mobility leads to changes in human values and culture. Urban centres have become more cosmopolitan even in Sikkim and reflect more interaction among peoples of different cultures which contributes to changes in human values and institutions, including the universal institution of the family. In family, parents are the role model for their child, as changes taking place in social structure the role of parents are also changing and directly or indirectly affecting their child. The influence of peers tends to increase as the influence of family decreases.⁶⁰ Thus, 'social change is basic to the appearance of social problems. A change inevitably threatens strong interests, disrupts habits, creates distress, and result in the development of new social patterns. Social change generally focuses on the conflict of values'.⁶¹ This modern culture consequently reflects the "status frustration"⁶², because there is unequal access to opportunity, there is greater pressure on certain groups within the social structure to deviate. According to R. K.

⁵⁷ Gurung 2011;pp.267.

⁵⁸ Abraham Francis and J.H. Morgan, 2009; pp.107-108.

⁵⁹ ed. Joseph Jonathan, 2005; pp.145

⁶⁰ Skinner et al. 1991

⁶¹ Ibid pp. 556

⁶² Haralambos M., 2002; pp. 416,417

Merton, another sociologist argued that deviance result not from 'pathological personalities' but from the culture and structure of society itself.⁶³ The advancement of universality and common attitudes are affecting the traditional value systems.⁶⁴

The changes in material culture are affecting the behaviour of the people of Sikkim, gradually there is increased of individualistic phenomena in society. Cultural lag in the society of Sikkim is evident and this needs to be explored to understand how modern values are affecting the behaviour of the people.

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⁶³ Ibid pp. 413

⁶⁴ Somayaji Sakarama and Ganesha Somayaji, 2006; pp.335-336.