

village officials, the 'Kalim' or Headman, the 'Kabur' or assistant headman."<sup>35</sup> In their political life only men have the privilege to take part and make the necessary decisions in accordance with the official hierarchy, while women are excluded.

Besides, women are not allowed to attend the village council or committee called "Devan" or rorelna. So women do not have any part whatsoever in political activities. The democratic tradition among the Hrangkhols is limited to men only and is not universal at all.

#### 4 Women in religious Life:

Traditionally, women are expected to be passive and should stay aloof from active participation in religious matters. Like the ancient Jewish society, there are many instances, to show the superiority of men and subordination of women found in the Hrangkhol religious activities whatever part, however humble, the women are to play is to be done behind the screen only.

In the religious rituals and customary practices the sign of privilege memberships is called 'Puanpu' which is the initiative right for male only while women are excluded.<sup>36</sup> Only those who have undergone such ritual and religious ceremonies are eligible to take part fully in religious performances and fastivities.

In the priestly ministry women are not permitted any role in the priesthood. Moreover, they are not even allowed to attend the sacred place called 'bozol' or 'bolzol' where religious rites are performed, only men are expected to attend such sacred places.

It may well be claimed that the greatest impact of Christianity among the Hrangkhols is to be seen in their religious life. Now the Hrangkhol women are liberated to freely participate in the worship and witnessing of the church. Christian

<sup>35</sup> S. Barkataki, **Tribes of Assam**, Revised edition, New delhi, 1984, p. 67

<sup>36</sup> Sumchonlal Hrangkhol, op.cit., p. 15