

CHAPTER V

IMPACT OF CHRISTIANITY ON HRANGKHOL SOCIETY

Initially, the principal cause of sociocultural change in tribal culture was the powerful influence of British imperialism and Christianity. Church historian like Frederick S. Downs writes:

In fact the imposition by force of British administration was culturally traumatic for the tribals. It created a crisis in which every aspect of their lives, of their cultures, was affected.¹

So many Scholars argue that the British administration was the primary agent of change, while Christianity played mainly a role of acculturation.² With the introduction of western culture, English education, written literature, Christian Mission, as well as money-economy are supposed to have caused a profound effect on social and cultural life of Irangkhols. The above elements are the indicators to the impact of Christianity upon the life of Irangkhols society.

The impact of Christianity can be studied into two ways.

(a) Negative Impact and (b) Positive Impact.

A. NEGATIVE IMPACT

The negative impact of Christianity can be studied from the following perspectives.

1. Traditional religious life

a) Persecution and loss of religious discipline:

Prior to the advent of Christianity, the Irangkhols have firm faith in their traditional religion. Strictness and discipline was enforced for observing the

¹ Frederick S. Downs, *Essays on Christianity in North East India*, New Delhi, 1994, p.186.

² *Ibid.*, See also O.I. Snaitang, *Christianity and Social Change in North East India*, Shillong, 1993, p.143.