

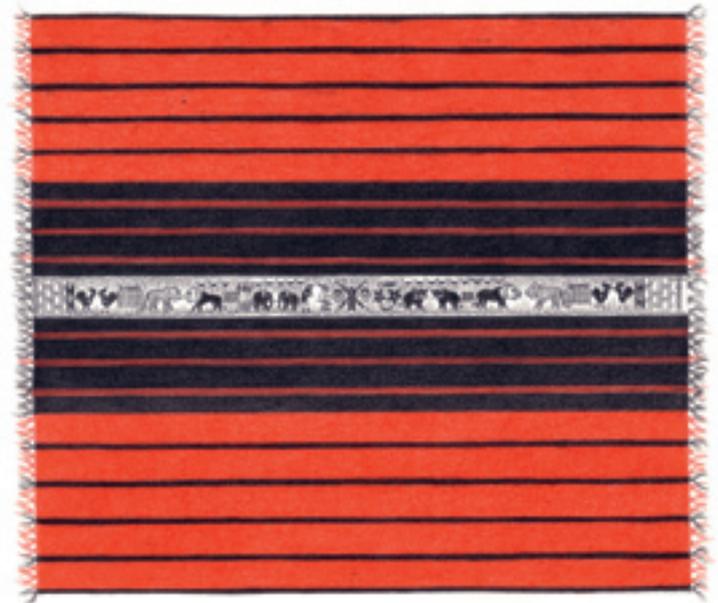
Defeated Warriors, Successful Weavers:

Or how Men's Dress Reveals Shifts of Male Identity among the Ao Nagas

Marion Wettstein

Among the Ao Nagas, a man's shawl does not merely indicate >who he is<, but rather >who he ideally should be<. Ao men's shawls refer particularly to the aspects of identity a man is especially proud of; to the notions reflecting the qualifications of a >good Ao man< in a certain time and context. In this article I will show how Ao Naga men's shawls – as part of a dress code, and thus subject to changes in fashion – do not merely record a man's current position in the social system, as suggested by Mills (1926c). They represent rather the ideal of male identity composed of specific elements – including several social categories – expected by producers and users and changing over time. It is not my intention to decipher the current male dress code in Ao society exhaustively, but to determine a shift in male identity indicated in men's dress by primarily concentrating on shawls locally regarded as >traditional<.

After briefly discussing colonial classifications of Ao men's shawls, I shall outline the basic design principles visualised in those textiles. The argument that a system of design modules underlies Ao men's shawls is developed while simultaneously determining the elements of identity these modules represent. To find out how these elements have changed over time in both design and meaning, specimens of shawls from the beginning of the 20th century assembled in European museums will be analysed and then compared with current examples seen in my field research between 2003 and 2007.¹ Although a loss of design variation can be noted over time, new inventions can also be observed. The shift from an individual to a collective meaning of textiles will be discussed while looking at one of the best known



△ Fig 1. Model drawing of a contemporary *tsunkotepsü* shawl, as seen in Yaongyimsen village in 2005. The shawl is worn by Ao men in everyday life, and especially when they act in a representative function. For a detail view of the symbols in the middle band see fig. 7. (MW)

Ao men's shawls, the *tsunkotepsü* (see fig. 1). The aim of the following section will be to examine how the changes in men's shawls relate to changes in the dress code on a broader level. This issue necessarily involves other >traditional< ornaments as well as >modern< dress. To conclude, I shall argue that the changes in elements of identity, as indicated in male dress code, are related to social and cultural changes in Ao society in general, a topic that draws our attention particularly to changing gender roles.

Classifications of Ao men's shawls in colonial times

When we consider the corpus of ethnographic writing on the Ao Nagas, and when we look at the major museum collections of Ao material culture, which contain some 60 specimens of men's shawls, we observe that for data on the early 20th century we are particularly reliant on the information provided by the British colonial administrator James Philip Mills. Despite the fact that the museum collections also hold specimens from other collectors, especially from James Henry Hutton, Henry Balfour and Christoph von Furer-Haimendorf, the Mills collection, which is stored at the Pitt Rivers Museum of Oxford University², is by far the largest and the most detailed when it comes to descriptions and supplementary information. J. P. Mills is the only author of his time to offer an interpretation of the meaning of Ao men's shawls (Mills 1926c: 34-39). W. C. Smith (1925), another major ethnographer of the Ao pays little attention to textiles, except for notes on specific techniques. Concerning the Ao, the same is true of his contemporaries (e.g. Hutton 1924b).

Leaving aside plain white or blue shawls as everyday wear, Mills (1926c: 34-39) suggests a classification of men's patterned shawls, which are worn on special occasions and during festive periods, into two groups. Both groups are related to social status, the first group indicating wealth measured by the *mithun* sacrifices³ a family has offered in feasts of merit, the second group indicating levels of heroism by distinguishing common men from warriors and headhunters. While Mills presents a list of shawls for both groups – sorted by shawl names and described roughly by their design – he only vaguely senses the relation between the underlying modular design principles and the constituting components of social status: He remarks that »*Tapensasü* or *warusü* (C[hongli]), *turanamsü* or *warusü*, (M[ongsen])⁴, is the first of a well-defined series of three cloths in which the *motif* is light blue bands ornamented in red on a red cloth« (1926c: 36). Without pursuing the idea that there might well be a specific meaning tied to the variations in the designs, he continues his list of shawl names. At times he notes that this list is not satisfactory for categorising the textiles, as is evident in several of his remarks, as for

example: »*Yangnangsü* (M) has a pattern consisting of rather narrow alternate bands of red and dark blue, some of the dark blue bands having narrow light bands in the centre. In the Mongsen villages of the Changkikong where it is worn, its significance is exactly that of the *shipensü* described above« (ibid.). And some lines later he continues, with reference to the shawl mentioned last: »*Shipensü*, called in many villages *aomelepsü* and by the Mongsen *aowamelepsü*, resembles the last cloth, but has still narrower blue bands. It can be worn by a man whether he has sacrificed *mithun* or not himself, provided his father or brother has done so« (ibid.). Other examples in the list report of >different< shawls of the same name and design, but some Ao classify them as >warrior's shawls<, others as >*mithun* sacrificer's shawls<. It becomes apparent from Mills' list that names are probably not a distinguishing feature for the categorisation of either the function or the design of shawls. This is corroborated by an observation I made during recent fieldwork: that names attributed to shawls are – with the exception of some widely known designs – not used in common by all villages. Shawl names often refer to visual analogies or to specific textile techniques, but rather seldom to the social function of the textile. To give an example of the way names are attributed to shawls, I shall select the above mentioned *aomelepsü*: literally translated, *aomelepsü* reads as >red(*ao*)-fixed-in-between(*melep*)-cloth(*sü*)< and is used for a wide variety of textiles that feature red patterns woven with supplementary weft on a blue (or black) ground – no matter whether it is a man's shawl, a woman's shawl or a woman's skirt. In another case a pattern in a woman's skirt is called >grasshopper's house<. My initial conjecture was that the reason for this may possibly lie in some myth, ritual, social category or textile technique. But the simple answer was that there is no other reason than that »the pattern just looks like a grasshopper's house«. Not even the most prestigious men's shawl, the *tsunkotepsü* which will be described in detail later, derives its name from its function as a warrior's shawl. As explained to me, the name translates as >species-of-a-tree-providing-resin(*tsunko/junko*)⁵-painting(*tep*)⁶-cloth(*sü*)<. Thus, for a categorisation of Ao Naga men's shawls – or even Ao textiles in general – it seems inadvisable to rely solely on the names given to shawls or patterns.



◁ Fig. 2. One of the groups of Ao men's shawls is composed of the following modular design units: a basic background cloth – not presumably worn as such – is given tassels to indicate two generations with complete series of *mithun* sacrifices (middle field), plus side tassels with cowries and goat's hair (left seam) to indicate three generations with complete series of *mithun* sacrifices. This variation of the shawl is mostly called *rongsüsü*. (mw)

A clear-cut distinction between shawls for warriors and shawls for *mithun* sacrificers, as suggested by Mills (1926c: 34-39), seems not so helpful either, because some shawls may belong to both categories, as we shall see later. Rather, I would suggest approaching a classification from the angle of the design and visual composition of the textiles. On taking a closer look at the shawls preserved in museum collections, we find a tendency for them to be composed in groups of modular design units. By categorising the shawls according to these modular units, we can deduce not only the elements of identity encoded in Ao men's shawls as such, but also their interrelations and their immanent hierarchical gradations.

One elementary group of modular design units: basic cloth, tassels, fringes

On examining the specimens of Ao men's shawls in European museums, a first group of modular design units immediately attracts our attention. It can be described as two varieties of shawls composed of the following three units (see fig. 2)⁷:

- A dark blue or black background basic cloth filled with red lengthwise stripes and thin red lengthwise lines, six regularly distributed blue thin lengthwise lines in between the red stripes, and occasional red triple lines crosswise to effect a broad tartan pattern;
- Tassels of red dyed dog's hair on the surface of the background cloth, usually fixed along the thin blue lines and set within the inner squares of the broad tartan pattern;
- Specially decorated side tassels constructed by bundling some of the side fringe, and binding this with black yarn to allow a bunch of either red or black dyed goat's hair to be secured in it, and sewing four cowries to the wound knot.

A variation of this shawl without goat's hair side tassels could be worn by a man, provided a >full series of *mithun* sacrifices< had been achieved by male family members of two generations in direct patrilinear descent, which means by himself and either his father or his son. If the *mithun* sacrifices have been performed by three successive generations – e.g. a man, his father and his grandfather – the side tassels with cowries are added. In most regions where it is recorded, this variation of the shawl has been called *rongsüsü*, translating as >tassel(*rong*)-*mithun*(*sü*)-cloth(*sü*)<⁸. A man wearing the first stage of the shawl without side tassels not only signaled the completion of the full series of *mithun* sacrifices by two generations of his family, he already implicitly proclaimed the ambition of his patrilineage to complete the full series of *mithun* sacrifices in each of three successive generations. This can be read as a publicly announced challenge, because the family will most likely try to accomplish the task foretold in the >unfinished< shawl. In some regions the shawl would also be worn by the women – the wife and/or the daughters – of the feast giver.⁹

The full series of *mithun* sacrifices took a minimum of three years to complete and entailed enormous expenses. In the case of the Chungli-speaking Ao, a bull sacrifice, several pig sacrifices, and last of all a *mithun* sacrifice would complete one cycle of feasts of merit. Three such cycles would count as a full series of *mithun* sacrifices. Among the Mongsen-speaking Ao, the full series of *mithun* sacrifices included a bull sacrifice, a *mithun* sacrifice after no more than three years, a sacrifice of 30 pigs after no more than three years counting from the *mithun* sacrifice, and the offering of a second *mithun* thereafter (Mills 1926c: 370-396). The chances of completing a full series in a man's lifetime were quite small, given the additional condition that only a man whose wife was still alive could perform any of these rituals (Mills 1926c: 257), not to mention the necessity of it being performed by three successive generations. On the label next to a shawl with side tassels collected from Chantongya village around 1922, Henry Balfour¹⁰ states that there was only one very old man left who had fulfilled the requirements for wearing it.¹¹ In the early 20th century, Christianity had already taken grip in the region and feasts of merit were hardly performed anymore. Baptist

missionaries had succeeded in outlawing *mithun* sacrifices together with many other customs and institutions, such as the *ariju* and *tsüki*, mostly translated as boy's and girl's dormitory¹², institutions with a similar function to that of a school (Jamir & Lanunungsang 2005: 75-112). But even Mills, who was quite critical about the impact of missionaries in Nagaland, was not unhappy about *mithun* sacrifices being forbidden, because he considered it a >torture< for the animal (1926c: 259, 410).

Another elementary group of modular design units: basic cloth, ornamented stripes, middle bands

A second group of modular design units consisted partly of what Mills identified as the afore-mentioned »well-defined series of three cloths in which the *motif* is light blue bands ornamented in red on a red cloth (1926c: 36).« What can be gathered from the museum collections is, likewise, a tendency for a group of modular design units to be composed according to a man's qualifications. From the design perspective, those units can be isolated as follows (see figs. 3-5):

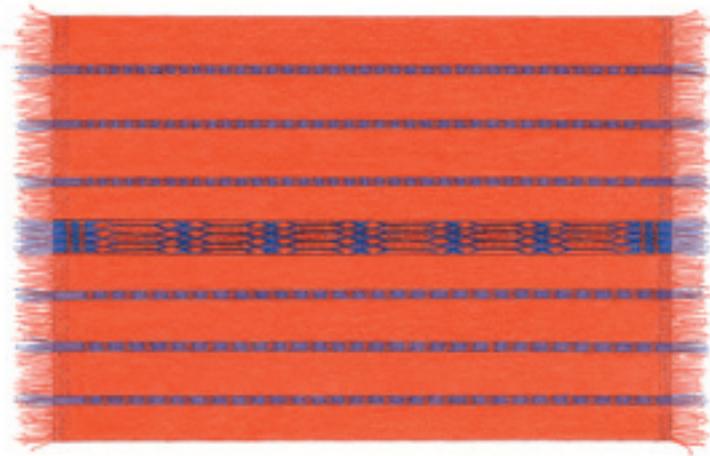
- A background basic cloth with red and black thin lengthwise lines and/or wider lengthwise stripes. This background may vary in the number and width of the stripes and lines:
 - (1) With a red background colour and numerous thin black lines;
 - (2) With broad areas of black and red, formed into sections by thin lines of the opposite colour;
 - (3) With alternating red and black stripes.
- One to six blue lengthwise stripes of 2-3 cm width decorated with red, geometrical, abstract repeating patterns;
- A lengthwise middle band of 10-15 cm width, which can be designed in four different styles:
 - (1) Composed of four conjoined blue lengthwise stripes of 2-3 cm width decorated with red, abstract, geometrical repeating patterns, similar to the stripes mentioned above, but usually with a different variation in the patterning. Shawls with this middle band were usually called *tapensasü* or *takarsü* (fig. 3);¹³

- (2) Composed of four adjoining white lengthwise stripes of 2-3 cm width containing red, geometrical, abstract repeating patterns, the patterning similar but not identical to that in the blue stripes. Shawls with this middle band would usually be called *süvangsü* and are only recorded as coming from the very eastern Ao region of the Langpangkong hill range (fig. 4);¹⁴
- (3) With a light blue background with three thin black lengthwise lines (suggesting a grouping of four blue stripes) and occasionally crosswise triple lines in black and red, which in most specimens are hardly visible. Specimens collected with this middle band all originate from one single village, Mongchen, which is situated in the geographical (but not historical or economical) centre of Ao region. No name is recorded for the shawls with this type of middle band in the collections (fig. 5);¹⁵
- (4) With a white background (with three thin black lengthwise lines that are hardly noticable) painted with many figures like animals and arms. Shawls with this middle band have been recorded from various Ao regions. The shawls are well known under the already mentioned name *tsunkotepsü* (figs. 1 & 7).

In theory the units could be composed in many ways, but in practice only a specific set of compositions is accounted for in the collections (compare figs. 3-5). A man whose family could point to at least one person within one or two generations in his direct patriline who had succeeded in completing the entire series of *mithun* sacrifices (e.g. himself, his brother, his father, or more seldom his grandfather) would wear a variation of a shawl composed of a red background with up to six, more or less evenly distributed lengthwise patterned stripes. According to contemporary informants, the number of stripes seemed to have been linked to the number of exact *mithun* offered in an ongoing attempt to fulfill the full series of offerings. Generally, one can surmise that the blue stripes with red patterning were in some regions associated with single *mithun* sacrifices.

If this cloth contained a blue middle band composed of four conjoined red patterned stripes (middle band no. 1), the required qualification usually (but not with all of the recorded specimens) rose to two successive generations having completed the full series of *mithun* sacrifices. In some villages, the wearer had to be qualified instead as a headhunter. If the shawl contained one of the other three middle bands (middle bands nos. 2, 3, or 4) the qualification of being a warrior was noted for most specimens as mandatory. Additionally, museum labels sometimes state that the wearer had also performed *mithun* sacrifices, but whether this was mandatory to wear the shawl cannot be determined.

This indicates that the >middle band modules< cannot be categorised as either warrior's or feast giver's shawls. Some of the shawls may indicate both qualifications simultaneously, or one qualification in one village and the other in another. Two shawls composed with modular design units of this group were especially suitable for indicating both *mithun* sacrifice and warrior status simultaneously.¹⁶ The first one was a combination of the basic cloth no. 1 (visually perceived as side sections); a middle band of red and white geometrical patterning (middle band no. 2); and some blue stripes (usually two to three) with red geometrical patterning in one of the side sections. The middle band indicates that the wearer was a headhunter, while the blue stripes in the side section show that he had also sacrificed *mithun* (see fig. 4). The second shawl to visually indicate both *mithun* sacrifice and headhunting is combined by using background no. 4 and middle band no. 4, i.e. the well-known *tsunkotepsü*. Only a warrior was allowed to wear this shawl; by painting the respective figures on the middle band, he could indicate not only whether he was a veritable headhunter, but also whether he had offered *mithun* (see figs. 1 & 7). It seems plausible that a man would try to show both qualifications in the same shawl, as from the point of view of the wearer it makes no sense to have two separate shawls for each qualification – because he will wear only one shawl at a time.¹⁷



△ Fig. 3. A variation of an Ao men's shawl composed of some of the modular units from the second group of designs: a basic background of red cloth with thin black lines (basic cloth no. 1) is subdivided by blue stripes with red geometrical patterns to indicate a specific number of *mithun* sacrifices. If the count is full – six stripes = six *mithun* = two complete series of feasts among the Chungli-speaking Ao – the shawl tends to receive a blue middle band with red patterning (no.1) to indicate two generations with complete series of *mithun* sacrifices. This cloth was mostly called *tapensasü* or *takarsü*. (MW)

The Nagas were generally associated with a very active headhunting tradition before colonial administration and Baptist missions put an end to it. However, as a recent historical study on headhunting among the Nagas suggests, it was colonial occupation itself that made headhunting flourish by provoking rivalries between local groups and villages (Schäffler 2006a). Schäffler argues that headhunting was actually much less frequent before the British invaded the region. While the colonial administrators officially prided themselves on having stopped headhunting in the so-called administered areas, they were more than keen to watch headhunts across the Dikhu River in the unadministered area because of the related rituals. They even encouraged headhunting ceremonies by bringing the head trophies personally to the villages in the administered territory (see Schicklgruber in this volume). Not all regions were as active in headhunting as the Ao, as reported for instance by Smith, who states that the »Aos seem to have found a great deal of pleasure in headhunting, and so it was

to them a mode of recreation (1925: 73)«. His appraisal that »the most deep-lying motive [for headhunting] seems to have been of a social nature, because a man's social position depended upon his success in war« (1925: 71) was repeatedly asserted to me with emphasis – while often refusing any other explanations such as a connection with fertility (Hutton 1928b; Mills 1926c: 254). This connection was borrowed from ethnographic literature on Indonesia and Borneo from around 1900 and was soon challenged by Needham, who with particular regard to the Nagas advises caution not to generally assume that the life force is some sort of »soul-substance« transmitted inside the head from the slayed human to the land or the village of the head-takers (1976: 74).

As Smith observes, a man was called a boy, a woman or even a cow as long as he had not made his contribution to the head trophy collection. Villages with only few head trophies had a weak reputation (1925: 71-72). Even today one can hear young Ao women state in disdain they would never marry a man from such and such village, because it is a »sissy village«. And the most assertive answer to the question as to why people practiced headhunting in earlier times came to me from an old Ao warrior: »Only for beauty, only for the ornaments.« Apart from selective headhunting, feuds and wars would provide an opportunity for a man to prove his bravery. They were, as stated in Jacobs (1990: 135-148), not uncommonly provoked by failed marriage negotiations or by the break of marriage alliances.

Thus, the decoration of the warrior and/or headhunter was important for a man's social status; for his chance to get the wife of his choice; and to gain the respect of his »enemy«. Among the Ao, to qualify for a warrior's or headhunter's shawl required proofs of bravery, sometimes varying from clan to clan and from region to region. Men of some clans were eligible to wear such a shawl only after having taken a head with their own hands, other clans had only to participate marginally in a successful headhunt in order to wear it. In yet other regions I was told that all the men of certain clans were granted such a shawl automatically on reaching the age of becoming a warrior (at around 16). Since head-

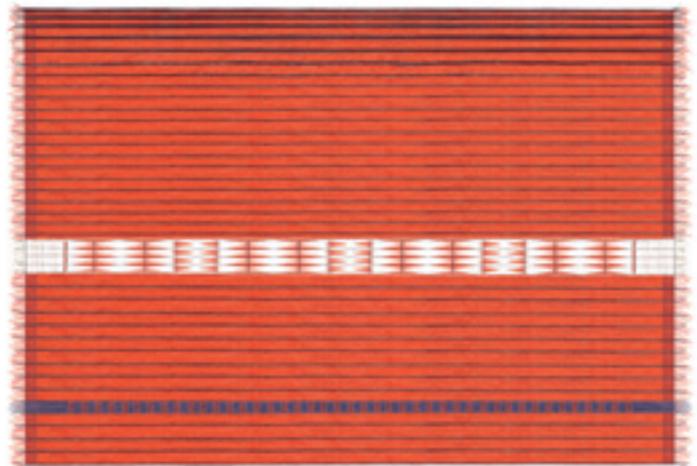
hunting was already on its decline in the early 20th century, the right to wear such a shawl could also easily be bought from the village council (Mills 1926c: 38).

Apart from the units of modular shawl design mentioned, less decorative shawls can be found in the museum collections, which mostly consist of lengthwise stripes or length- and crosswise stripes (>tartan pattern<). Sometimes they belonged to headhunters, sometimes to *mithun* sacrificers, sometimes just to >old men<. Looking at the museum collections and Mills' name list (1926c: 34-39), no systems of modular units have been identified among them so far. But according to collection labels, some of the shawls – like for example the >tiger cloth< composed of a red background with many thin, lengthwise black and blue lines – were highly esteemed in certain villages. The >tiger cloth< was not associated with tiger hunts or lycanthropy (transformation into tigers / parallel souls in tigers), but got its name – as previously described for other shawls – merely because of its design of red and dark stripes.

One of the most desirable warrior's shawl among Naga men would be one with circles of cowries sewn to its surface. According to Mills it meant among the Ao that, in addition to his other qualifications encoded in the design, the wearer had burnt down the whole village of an enemy.¹⁸ This was an award which, unlike the right to other body decorations, including many of the above-mentioned shawls, could not be bought for money from the village council (Mills 1926c: 38). Unfortunately British museum collections do not hold any of these prestigious cowrie shawls from the Ao region.

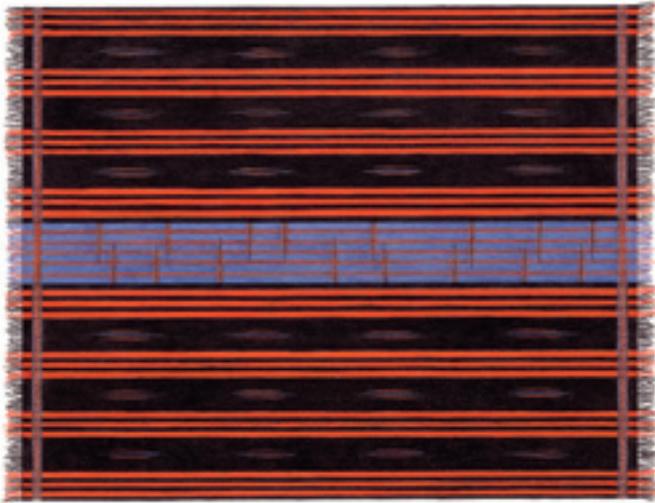
Precise gradations of identity elements

Before comparing the above-described shawls with those of present time, let us summarise the elements of identity represented so far. Generally speaking, the elements of identity represented in Ao men's shawls are wealth and heroism. However, these elements are precisely graded by certain measures of social categories that can be deduced from the design codes immanent in the modular design units presented above. There seem to have been several



△ Fig. 4. A variation of an Ao men's shawl composed of some of the modular units from the second group of designs: a basic background of red cloth with thin black lines (basic cloth no. 1) with the addition of a white middle band with red patterning (middle band no. 2) identifies the wearer as a warrior. If blue stripes with red geometrical patterns are added, the warrior has sacrificed the respective number of *mithun* as well. Both variations were known as *suvangsü*. (MW)

modular shawl design units and some single shawl designs for distinguishing a man's status, as measured in *mithun* sacrifices over several generations of his family, and to indicate his position as warrior and headhunter. The identity element of wealth seems to have been a collective identity on the level of the family following patrilineal descent. A shawl not only represented who a man was (e.g. the son of one who has performed a full series of *mithun* sacrifices), it reminded him also of who he ideally should be (one who has performed a full series of *mithun* sacrifices like his father and possibly his grandfather). The identity element of heroism seems to have had, as we have seen, some weak link to clan membership. While shawls denoting *mithun* sacrifices were totally disconnected from clan membership, the requirements to gain the right to wear a headhunter's shawl would differ from clan to clan. But once this right was gained, the design would be the same for all clans. Thus the possible identity element of clan membership was not a relevant part of the male shawl code, quite unlike women's skirts, where designs were clearly attributed to clans and marriage groups.



△ Fig. 5. A variation of an Ao men's shawl composed of some of the modular units from the second group of designs: a basic background of alternating red and black stripes (basic cloth no. 3, here with additional decorative lines) with a middle band in light blue (middle band no. 3) indicates the wearer to be a warrior and/or a feast-giver. The shawl has only been found in Mongchen village. (MW)

To sum up, we can conclude that the following gradations of identity elements were encoded in the modular design of Ao men's shawls at the beginning of the 20th century, as documented in museum collections:

- A Wealth transformed into status
- by single *mithun* sacrifices, and/or
 - by a full series of *mithun* sacrifices
 - (1) over one,
 - (2) two,
 - (3) or three successive generations of a patrilinear family.
- B Heroism transformed into status
- by being a warrior in general,
 - a headhunter in particular, and/or
 - by having burnt down an enemy's village.

Standardisation in the 21st century

Of the many versions of men's shawls described above, only two varieties still widely exist today at the beginning of the 21st century.¹⁹ Both are based on the second group of design module units. One is the already mentioned *tsunkotep-sü*, which will be examined in detail later. The other is the *tapensasü* in several variations, showing a red background with blue stripes and a middle band ornamented in red and blue – and nowadays also in red and black. What we can observe concerning the *tapensasü* is a standardisation of the design showing the maximum combination of all design module units, and therefore laying claim to maximum glory. No shawls are found without the middle band, and certainly none with only a few stripes. The shawl has lost its specific meaning of precisely differentiating wealth over one or two generations and been shifted to a broader, more general level of identity: to wealth in general. It is considered a >rich man's shawl<, a shawl worn by wealthy people during festive times. This is the most common understanding of the shawl's function and corresponds to a broader meaning compared to its former, precisely graded meanings. However, some types of this shawl exist with differing meanings, which only vary minimally in design.

In Ongpangkong Range (the economic and historical centre of Ao region), two variations are known. Besides the >classic< *tapensasü*, a less ornamented one can be seen, which is considered a >youth shawl<. In some regions, especially Langpangkong Range of the eastern Ao region, a variation is known by the name *chuchusü*, the shawl of Chuchu village, where it is reserved for the members of the village council and is also called *putusü* (council cloth).

Today's variations of the *tapensasü* and also occasional notes on labels in the museum collections suggest that the geographical region or even the village might be an important aspect in men's shawl design. The next section will therefore examine the relation between shawl design, village, and identity.

Emphasising village identity: the case of the Akhoya shawl

The importance of village membership as an element of male identity cannot be deduced satisfactorily from men's shawls in European museum collections. Unfortunately the museum collections do not show a representative geographical distribution of specimens. Most of the specimens were collected in the central and eastern Ao region, in other words among the language group of the Chungli Ao. Mongsen and Changki speaking villages are under-represented in the collections of early 20th century shawls. Thus, the relevance of the village or of regional sections to the shawl designs is difficult to determine. But in his monograph, Mills emphasised the importance of the village for a person's identity (1926c: 34-39), and Arya and Joshi show its relevance for shawls in other tribes (2004: 118). The analysis of some researchers who are well known locally, states the following about Ao >self-identity<:

»In the study of Naga society and culture, the village identity occupies the most important position in respect of every tribe. The answer to the question of which tribe or village makes a person's identity more apparent. In Ao society, they do ask, *koyimer* >whose village</shir chir >whose son<? *Kechi kidong?* >Which clan<? The identity of a person is known better through these answers that start from the village and clan hold followed by the tribe's name. Generally, the character of a person is well read even by the name >village< in Ao society because every village has peculiar traits of its own (...)« (Bedangangshi & Jamir 2005: 37).

Given the importance of the village membership for a person's identity, we can assume that this element might have played a role in the dress code of either the men or the women. However, during my fieldwork, village shawls or skirts were presented to me as a recent invention. The most prominent example may be found in Akhoya village, where a special village shawl illustrating the founding history of the village was designed in the 1990s. A variation with middle band is assigned to the men, and one without a middle band to the women of the village. The middle band with a black background shows several figural motives. None of

these motives are selected by chance or merely decorative; each choice is well considered and placed in relation to the others with a purpose (see fig. 6): In the very centre a tiger stands in profile. Before the founding of the village, according to oral history, the settlement area was covered by jungle and many tigers used to live there. The tiger is fenced in by crossed spears and *dao* (knife) on both sides. As such, the weapons stand for the bravery of the Akhoya men. They are symbols of the successful warrior in general and declare the men of the village to be heroes. But the spears and *dao* also tell of the domination of man over tigers, which were controlled by the villagers of Akhoya in order to make the place inhabitable: by defending themselves against the tigers and clearing the jungle to gain land for cultivation. Thus, it cannot be an accident that the weapons on the middle band control the tiger from both sides. It is said that twelve ancestors migrated to the place where Akhoya village stands today. It was them who had killed a big tiger in the days of the founding of Akhoya. The village founders are represented by twelve stars, six on both outer ends of the middle band. The cloth section on both sides of the middle band shows lengthwise stripes in red and black with 60 uniform signs of crossed spears distributed evenly over the surface, symbolising >the 60 regions of the village<. The territory of the village – including paddy fields, jungle and fallow ground – is said to be divided into 60 clearly located and spatially defined units.²⁰

The invention of the shawl for the village of Akhoya not only strengthens village identity among its inhabitants, but also introduces a new idea to the meaning of shawl designs in the Ao region: the idea of visualising mythological narratives. As far as I know, Akhoya is in this respect a pioneer among Ao villages. It is quite remarkable that the symbolical visualisation of mythological stories happens in a time, in which oral transmission of tradition has largely lost its relevance in society. However, the figural motives for conveying this new idea are commonly known, as we shall see in the next case, the *tsunkotepsü*.

**A shift from individual to collective identity:
the case of the *tsunkotepsü* shawl**

In the *tsunkotepsü*, the middle band is the most meaningful part of its design, so we shall direct our attention to the figures painted on it: the animals, arms and armour, currency, heads and geometrical patterns (see figs. 1 & 7). While the signs of weapons and heads constitute icons, which is to say they refer to the depicted object itself with the help of a visual similarity (a hunted head, the *dao* every warrior possesses, or a countable currency of special iron sticks, *chabili*), the shown animals – with the exception of the *mithun*, denoting the sacrificed *mithun* – are not usually understood as icons. Nor are they symbols suggesting a randomly associated meaning, or metaphors in a figurative sense. Rather they are emblems suggesting that the characteristic of the depicted animal is the characteristic of the shawl wearer. The right of a man to wear a certain emblematic animal in the shawl had to be agreed upon in the community, for example by the village council. Comparing the different specimens of *tsunkotepsü* shawls in museum collections, one finds a customary maximum set of emblematic animals painted on the middle band. Hence, by praising the virtues of an animal depicted, people simultaneously express their opinion about a man's ideal character. These characteristics were described to me as follows, on the basis of the set of figures painted nowadays on the middle band:

The tiger (sometimes paired with a lion) is not only a determined fighter that never gives up once it has started, but also silent while on the prowl. These virtues were attributed to good fighters, so the right to wear the emblem of a tiger (or lion) was only granted to famous warriors. A relation to tiger hunts, as sometimes stated by Mills on labels of the collection specimens²¹, or indeed to lycanthropy, was generally contested by my informants.

The elephant is so huge that it is virtually invincible, and its temper is calm and thoughtful. In earlier times, only special men chosen by the village council would be allowed to wear the elephant emblem on their *tsunkotepsü*.

The hornbill is one of the most important birds in the symbolism of Naga material culture. Its white tail feathers with a single black cross-stripe are widely used for ornamentation by all Naga groups. In the Ao region it stands for the ideal of beauty. Beauty is seen as an important feature of a person and is usually associated with ornaments and decoration. But even if the hornbill has become something like a national Naga symbol today, to say that a man is »a bit like a hornbill« is rather ambiguous. As young Ao girls sometimes joke, »the hornbill is a beautiful bird but also extremely stupid« because it does not sense danger when attacked.

The drongo is considered the king of birds, because it is known for its outstanding bravery: if its nest is attacked the drongo will fight until death to protect its offspring, no matter how large the enemy. Among the Ao, warriors who have gained merit for defending a village would be the most likely to be granted the drongo emblem for their *tsunkotepsü*.²² As Oppitz (1991 & 1993) points out, many ethnic groups in the Himalayan region attach importance to this specific characteristic of the drongo, and the bird often takes a special position in their mythology.

An important animal mostly placed at the two outer ends of the *tsunkotepsü* middle band is the cock. To this day, people say that a good village leader has to be like a cock and have a loud voice that can be heard throughout the village. And just as the cock knows when the sun will rise, before anybody else can see it – because it hears the crackling of the branches the sun creates every morning as it climbs up the same charred tree into the sky – a good village leader should see and hear situations in advance.

Apart from such emblematic animals, other figures painted on the *tsunkotepsü* are explained in a more metaphoric or symbolic sense. Among them one can find the sign of the sun, the moon and the stars, which are associated with luck and »shininess«. Men who have had a lot of luck in their lives or who have stood out as »shining examples« in society were granted the symbols on their *tsunkotepsü*. Alterna-

▷ Fig. 6. Model drawing of a men's shawl of Akhoya village – newly designed in the 1990s – featuring the myth of the founding of the village in the middle band: the six ancestors, >shining< examples (stars) fought heroically (spear and *dao*) against the tigers that lived in the area (tiger). The ancestors turned the jungle into cultivated land (*dao*), dividing it up into sixty territorial units (spears in the side sections). The women's shawl of the village lacks the middle band. (MW)



tive interpretations of an association with a >cosmic law<, as suggested by Stirn & van Ham (2003: 155), were flatly rejected by many of my informants.

Even if none of the above described characteristics matched the characteristics of a man, he would still be allowed to wear the *tsunkotepsü* in its simplest form – provided he had been member of an *ariju* (boy's dormitory) and successfully passed all stages of teaching. This simplest form of the shawl showed no animals or other signs except some abstracted shields and many vertical lines filling up the entire middle band. This form of the shawl was mostly worn by young men with little experience in life, as the lines symbolically represent >youth< and are called *atsü*: the fence. It was the duty of young men to protect the village >like a fence< in the case of enemy attack. Interpreted from the perspective of the shawl design itself, the fence also visually >fences< off all the animals and other signs in the *tsunkotepsü* (if there are any), as if to say that it is the duty of youth to protect the virtues and values of society.

It must be noted that in early 20th century specimens of *tsunkotepsü* shawls, some of the above-mentioned emblematic animals are not recorded. In particular, birds like the hornbill, the drongo or the peacock are missing. Whether these birds are a recent addition or whether they had

belonged to the full set of animals and the specimens collected for museums simply did not show them²³, cannot be determined. However, on the label to a quite extraordinary specimen of a *tsunkotepsü* containing a second painted band along the bottom seam, Mills has noted that >the latest elaboration of the painted band [is] now changing almost yearly<²⁴, stressing that the shawl designs are (and always were) subject to fashion, like any other dress item.

The case of the *tsunkotepsü* suggests that every man would be geared to gaining the right to depict the full set of the most prestigious symbols and emblems on his shawl. He would shape his personal profile by cultivating the required characteristics. While the ideal to be reached was of course a matter of collective ideas, the personal achievement of a shawl design was a question of individual and active competition among the men.

Let us take a look at what happened to the concept of individual competition for *tsunkotepsü* emblems and symbols over the course of time: At the beginning of the 21st century, the *tsunkotepsü* is a shawl commonly worn by all Ao men. It is considered a >national dress< or >Ao uniform<. It has become a symbol of the Ao tribe as a whole. Apart from that, it is one of the best known Naga shawls of all, both inside and outside of Nagaland. The middle band has a comparatively



standardised design containing most of the above mentioned figures at more or less fixed positions. The right to wear the emblems and symbols no longer has to be proven by one's personality or earned by headhunting and feasts of merit. The *mithun* will be painted in a standard way, usually including some four to eight *mithun* heads, without the wearer ever necessarily having seen a *mithun*. The *mithun* sacrifice was forbidden a long time ago and other means to display wealth have replaced it, e.g. expensive marriages or Christmas feasts – mostly comprising a banquet with large amounts of meat. But the icon as such has remained on the shawl, even including an imaginative count of *mithun* offerings. The head icon will also not be lacking, even though headhunting would be beyond the imagination of a good Naga Christian. We can understand that *mithun* sacrifice and headhunting, although no longer practiced, are kept in iconic form in the design as a reference to the glorious past, or as Jamir and Lanunungasang put it, to >the Golden Age of Naga Society and Culture< (2005: 332). Clearly the ideals of bravery and beauty still persist. The elements of constituting >the ideal Ao man< have not totally changed over time. Maybe they have seen some additions, as for example education or administrative and political skills, and these new virtues could easily be visualised symbolically. Or one could formulate new conditions to the right to wear the shawl, as in the case of some Chakhesang Naga villages in southern Nagaland, where today a highly esteemed, so called >elephant< cloth may only be worn by lawyers, men with high academic degrees, or by notable political functionaries. Instead, the right to wear the standardised form of *tsunkotepsü* seems to have been transferred almost indiscriminately to all Ao men. In this process the depicted virtues and values have shifted from having to be proved to being assumed and automatically attributed. Thus, a shawl that once would have denoted a rather individual identity by claiming a precise position in the collective notion of

△ Fig. 7. Middle band of a *tsunkotepsü* shawl (comp. fig. 1) painted by Manko Longkumer (comp. fig. 8) of Ungma village in 2006. The animals – apart from the *mithun* – are emblems suggesting the characteristics of the animal representing the virtues of the wearer. Until around 80 years ago, the wearer had to prove these virtues in order to be allowed to paint a certain symbol on his shawl. Today a maximum set of symbols is drawn as a standard design.

the >ideal Ao man<, has become a strong symbol for a collective identity on the tribal level, by *a priori* postulating the ideal applying to every Ao man. This shift has not gone unnoticed by the Ao community itself, and when asked for the reasons one often encounters the rationale that >nowadays everybody is Christian< and that >in Christianity all humans are equal<. However, this rationale abstracts from the fact that the collective identity expressed by today's notion of the *tsunkotepsü* is restricted to the tribal level.²⁵

It should be kept in mind that the *tsunkotepsü* shawl is certainly not the only example of dress or body decoration considered >traditional< that has undergone standardisation and shifted as an identity marker from a rather individual to a more collective level. We already noted this in the case of the *tapensasü*. The tendency towards standardisation, and thus the tendency of increasingly emphasising collective identities through >traditional< dress and body decoration, can be observed in a wide variety of ornaments also among other Naga groups. The political and social developments towards Naga unity show here a direct relation to material culture. But rather than wanting to determine cause and effect, I would suggest that we encounter a mutually reinforcing process: the quest for unity encourages a standardisation in design while at the same time the standardisation in design generates a feeling of unity. And standardisation is usually accompanied by the elimination of variation.



In the case of the Ao, it is interesting to observe how this process of standardisation and elimination of variation in >traditional< men's shawls is related to the change in the Ao fashion system in general. This shift will find its mirror in the changes in Ao society and especially in the balance of gender roles, which will be examined in the concluding section.

Defeated warriors, successful weavers: an altered balance in gender roles

Obviously we are witnessing an elimination of variation in >traditional< men's shawls. Can this process be explained by the ban on headhunting and *mithun* sacrifices? The situation, as was emphatically stated by many informants, seems not as easy as that. By considering the local narratives of how the once manifold variations in men's shawls and the memory thereof got lost over time, we can learn about an aspect of identity among the Ao – and maybe among many Naga groups – which is closely linked to material culture: In the independence struggle the collective notion of >Naganess< attempts to stand up to >Indianness<.

The initial motivation not to continue to weave certain shawl variations is usually accredited to the ban on headhunting and *mithun* sacrifices. But old specimens of all types of material culture were and still are often carefully collected and kept in the family as a memento. In this way, as many families said, they could hold their >old traditions< high even during times of strong Christian influence. As enthusiastic as people may be about religion – even going to church several times a week, forming prayer groups and organising social work in church programs – many of them consider the impact of the first Baptist missionaries as having been destructive to Ao culture. All the remains of the

old culture had to be destroyed, but in spite of this, many families kept their shawls and ornaments safely in their homes.

However, between the 1950s and the 1980s a bloody war raged on Naga territory between the separatist Naga rebels and the Indian army. According to informants, many villages were burnt down more than once by the Indian army. In the Ao region, some villages have been burnt as many as eleven times. Thus, much of what was left of the material culture originating from the times of headhunting and feast-giving fell victim to the flames, all that was manufactured from combustible materials. There was no reason to reweave the old designs, because their meaning had become obsolete, and so the memory of former designs and meanings faded. In such narratives, the loss of variety in material culture is attributed to the war with India, a war which happened largely unnoticed by the rest of the world and led to strong anti-Indian feelings, even among many politically rather disinterested Nagas. Often the story ends with the conclusion that »they not only took our lives, but also the last bit of our culture«. So, the lost memory of Ao men's shawls is simultaneously a reminder of a humiliation, as if the brave warriors they once were – and by adopting the new Christian religion ceased to be – were finally defeated. The effect on self-esteem among Naga men can only be guessed at.

The loss of variety in Ao men's shawls accompanying the loss of warrior status and bravery is at the same time an expression of changing gender relations. The handling of solid objects of any kind used for jewellery making, such as beads, feathers, bones, claws, animal teeth, as well as basketry are seen as male crafts. All textile techniques – such as spinning, weaving, and embroidery – are performed solely by women. Weaving in particular is seen as *the*

female craft. The only techniques associated with textiles that are performed by men are that of painting the *tsunkotepsu* middle band (see fig. 9) and of sewing on cowries or other solid objects. But nowadays even the craft of painting on cloth is slowly getting lost among men, and women take over not by painting, but by embroidering the animals and symbols. It seems that nowadays women do not feel as much interest in rewarding their men with new shawl designs, as they had proudly done in the >days of Chungliyimti<, the days lived in the mythological founding village of the Ao tribe.²⁶ A folk song referring to those times says it was the women who encouraged their men to be brave and go headhunting:

Then the woman of Jungliyimti had taken
 A decision to award each and every warrior,
 With a special shawl of mangkotepsu (*tsunkotepsu*).²⁷
 Those who victoriously fought back their enemies
 (Bendangangshi & Aier 1997: 64).

The ideal of a brave warrior was as much an ideal in women's eyes as in men's self-esteem. As mentioned before, a village with a small head trophy collection would not be a woman's favourite to marry into. Thus, by losing the possibility of individual competition in war²⁸ and at the same time losing the possibility to show off their personal virtues in ornaments in a meaningful way, Ao men sometimes express the sentiment of having lost the women's respect.

Other reasons for a feeling of loss of male identity can be grasped by comparing the different identity elements indicated in women's and in men's dress as composed of textile and non-textiles components. Textile components can be defined as all objects woven²⁹ by yarn, whereas non-textile components are all objects not woven by yarn, including plaited bamboo and orchid stems.³⁰ When examining woman's textiles that are considered >traditional<, we will find that they are closely associated with and distinguished by clan and village membership. Clan membership is not of great importance in men's shawls, and also not so in men's non-textile ornaments. Only very few men's non-textile ornaments – especially brass and ivory armlets as well as hereditary pieces claimed to originate from the

Kachari kings of Maibong – were used solely to indicate clan membership. Most of them can be traced back to a mythological story telling of a fight for power between two clans, which finally was decided with the help of the Ahom king of Assam (Mills 1926c: 42-52). All other ornaments had to be gained via the qualifications of being a warrior, headhunter or *mithun* sacrificer. Among these ornaments are feathers for ears, headpieces, necklaces, shoulder ornaments, baldrics, weapons and weapon holders. Likewise, women's non-textile ornaments were not closely connected with clan membership either. Apart from brass rings for head decoration ascribed to the same mythological story as above, most ear-ornaments, necklaces and bracelets referred to wealth, either defined by *mithun* sacrifices by male relatives, or by purchasing power (Mills 1926c: 42-58). Put simply, we can say that non-textile ornaments tend *not* to relate to clan membership, but they do tend to relate to heroism and wealth transformed into status in male dress code – but seldom in female; and to purchasing power in the female dress code – but seldom in the male. Textiles, however, clearly tend to relate to clan membership in female dress code – but never in male; they tend to relate to heroism in male dress code – but never in female; and they relate to wealth transformed into status in both male and female dress codes (see table in fig. 8). This allows proposing a slightly different categorisation than that of Barnes (1992), whose approach shall be discussed elsewhere.

If we compare Ao gender roles expressed in >traditional< dress codes from the beginning of the 20th century with those at the beginning of the 21st century, we can conclude that both sexes have lost an opportunity to express identity as a result of the extinction of feasts of merit, because both would have indicated this element of status in their dress. But while headhunting was forbidden, and thus a prominent male opportunity to express identity was strongly challenged along with its pure male dress code, the importance of clans persists and with it a predominately female dress code. To this day the Ao are known among other Naga groups for their continuing adherence to tribal endogamy and their strict practice of clan exogamy. A second aspect of identity that has survived to this day is represented in women's ornaments: the notion of wealth measured by

| elements of identity | textile components of body decoration (such as shawls, skirts, sashes, aprons, i.e. all yarn-woven components) | | non-textile components of body decoration (such as feathers, stone beads, bamboo, orchid-stem, bones, teeth, bells, i.e. all non-yarn-woven components) | |
|--|--|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| | relevance in male dress code | relevance in female dress code | relevance in male dress code | relevance in female dress code |
| status of warrior/headhunter | ++ | -- | ++ | -- |
| wealth transformed into status (<i>mithun-sacrifice</i>) | ++ | ++ | + | + |
| wealth in the form of purchasing power | -- | -- | - | ++ |
| clan membership | - | ++ | - (+ Maibong myth) | - (+ Maibong myth) |
| village membership | - (ancient) / + (present) | + | - | - |

purchasing power. While men’s non-textile ornaments were always to some extent connected with headhunting or feasts of merit, women’s necklaces and crystal earrings could be purchased by anyone who could afford them.

Thus, if we compare the possibilities of both sexes to express identity by body decoration, women seem to be in a much more stable position than men. Male and female crafts for body decoration are used in different contexts in today’s Ao society: traditional textiles have found their way into everyday and official life, e.g. as evening gowns, as party dresses at weddings, as >Sunday dresses< for church services or >political dresses< at council meetings. Non-textile ornaments seem largely reserved for festivals and tourist attractions. This is especially true of the male >headhunter’s gear< worn in a standardised form for dancing. The dichotomic equivalence in gender roles expressed by the prototypes of >the (male) warrior< and >the (female) weaver< in Ao society, which were already noted by Barnes (1992), seems to have gone out of kilter in favour

△ Fig. 8. This table indicates varying tendencies towards certain elements of identity in male and female dress codes, mainly relying on historical data and museum collections.

of the women: Currently one can witness a lively scene of weavers and fashion designers among many Naga groups, including the Ao, who are constantly inventing new styles of handloom skirts and shawls for women. The weaver’s market reaches from home production for friends, to local markets, to regional markets and even to occasional international sales. Meanwhile, the female fashion code distinguishes between >traditional<, >modified traditional<, and >design< handloom textiles woven locally, and adds the category of >modern dress<, which means imported clothes or clothes manufactured from imported fabrics. In the local perception, the categories of >designer< handloom textiles and >modern dress< are both perceived as belonging to >modernity< (Wettstein 2007). If we take a glimpse at the annual >Miss Nagaland Beauty Pageant< featured as a pictorial essay in this volume, we realise that Naga handloom



◁ Fig. 9. Mangko Longkumer painting a *tsunkotepsü* middleband. (Ungma; AVS 2004)

► Fig. 10. Two Ao men sitting on the stairs of a memorial site in their village, Mongchen, one wearing a *tsunkotepsü*, the other a *tapensasü*. (AVS 2005)

designers, who are all female, show an ambition and self-esteem that clearly competes with that of contemporary European *haute couture*. Ao women not only play a prominent part in establishing and organising this event, but also in winning awards. Thus, the craft of weaving, linked with a notion of modern fashion, both with reference to female identity, provide women with a very potent means to move nimbly between their local notions of >tradition< and >modernity<. Where crafts for body decoration are concerned, this link is missing in male self-perception. The production of male necklaces or headgear, armllets and bracelets is often linked with the notion of headhunting. But headhunting is not seen as an appropriate feature to be linked with >modernity<. While women can – in many varying fashions and styles – present themselves through their craft of weaving as integrated into a continuum of the two spheres >tradition< and >modernity<, men predominately use only one style of fashion to move between the two spheres: >modern dress< (trousers and shirt) plus one of their >traditional< shawls, the *tsunkotepsü* or the *tapensasü*. Even if women have, since a short time, started to design men's fashion – as yet mainly in the form of waistcoats and ties based on traditional cloth – men are, for their vestimentary balancing act between tradition and modernity, quintessentially dependent on women.

Endnotes

- 1 This analysis was made possible by the project >Material Culture, Oral Traditions and Identity among the Naga of Northeast India< funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF/FNS), the financial support of the Ethnographic Museum of the University of Zurich, the administrative support of the Dept. of Anthropology, Science College Kohima, the Dept. of Arts and Culture of the Government of Nagaland, and by the great help and hospitality shown by the local authorities and people in around 50 Ao villages, which I visited between 2003 and 2007. Special thanks are due to Ungma village and to my local research partner S. Alemla Pongentsür and her family.
- 2 For the present analysis the Pitt Rivers Museum of the University of Oxford (in the following PRM), the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology of Cambridge University and the *Museum der Kulturen* in Basel kindly granted me access to their collections of Naga textiles.
- 3 The *mithun* is a semi-domestic, indigenous buffalo (*Bos frontalis*) that is allowed to graze freely in the forest areas near the villages.
- 4 Chungli and Mongsen are the two major language groups of the Ao, a third being Changki.
- 5 So far not botanically determined.
- 6 The term *tep* is used both for >painting/drawing< and for >writing<.
- 7 Model drawing according to PRM Acc. No. 1953.10.44 and PRM Acc. No. 1928.69.715
- 8 As Ao languages are tonal, but the tone is not indicated by the newly adopted Latin script, *sü* for *mithun* and *sü* for >cloth< will sound slightly different.
- 9 A nearly identical shawl was also worn by Konyak men (comp. Schicklgruber in this volume), portending mutual influences between the tribes.



- 10 Henry Balfour was the first curator and initiator of the exhibition display at the Pitt Rivers Museum at Oxford University. He personally travelled to the Naga region in the early 20th century. Thanks to his continuing friendship with Mills, Hutton and many others, and thanks to his great love of the Nagas, the collections of Naga objects assembled by these researchers were finally donated to the Pitt Rivers Museum (M. Oppitz, personal communication).
- 11 PRM Acc. No. 1953.10.44
- 12 Many sources on various Naga groups refer to this by the Assamese term *morung*, also widely used in spoken language today.
- 13 Model drawing according to PRM Acc. No. 1928.69.1405
- 14 Model drawing according to PRM Acc. No. 1928.69.454
- 15 Model drawing according to PRM Acc. No. 1928.69.499
- 16 Even though they are generally only referred to as >warrior's shawls<.
- 17 Today it seems that at certain festivals of the cycle of the year only shawls indicating wealth are worn, but not the headhunter's shawls.
- 18 The meanings of cowrie circles vary from tribe to tribe. In the districts east of the Ao, the circles are associated with hunted heads and the shawls are often also adorned with human figures done in cowries.
- 19 With the exception of a few shawls kept in local museums or in some villages, where former rich men's shawls have been recently recreated for the purpose of historical memory.
- 20 However, the exact parcelling of the land could not be specified on site.
- 21 For example PRM Acc. No. 1928.69.1411
- 22 The drongo is nowadays often replaced by the peacock, which stands for beauty like the hornbill. But the hornbill – as may be guessed from its importance in mythology – was, contrary to Mills (1926c: 313), not necessarily seen as the king of birds.
- 23 This would be possible if we assume that a man would most probably part with a shawl he no longer considers appropriate in order to have an >upgraded< one designed for himself.
- 24 PRM Acc. No. 1928.69.1411
- 25 The Naga National Movement has generated a so-called >Naga Union Shawl< that is supposed to strengthen the national identity of the Nagas. Up to now it has not really caught on with people. (For a discussion of the concept of >tribes< in the case of the diverse Naga groups see Lotha in this volume.)
- 26 Today situated in Sangtam Naga territory. Currently attempts are being made to accurately date the so-called >Chungliyimti civilisation< (see Vasa & Jamir in this volume).
- 27 (Brackets in original.) The word *mangko* means >head< and the name *mangkotepsü* is sometimes given to the shawl when a head is painted on the middle-band.
- 28 Whether the freedom fighters – in the early phase when still fully supported by the people in general – were rewarded with special shawl designs, could not be found out so far.
- 29 Other textile techniques as knotting for example are very rare in Naga region.
- 30 These are the two main materials used for plaiting. Other materials are rather rare.

Lists and Credits

Interviews

All interviews were conducted and recorded in Nagaland, resp. Assam, by Alban von Stockhausen, Marion Wettstein, Rebekka Sutter or Christian Schicklgruber. Interviews given in Ao were translated by Toshi Jamir, Nungsangkokba Pongener, Tsangshingla Imlong and Alemlla Pongentsür. Most of them, however, were given in English; to keep them as close as possible to the original, the wording has not been changed in writing.

Abbreviations

| | |
|------|--|
| AVS | Alban von Stockhausen (Zürich) |
| CFH | Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf (MVW/ SOAS) |
| CRS | C.R. Stonor (Naga Database archival material) |
| CS | Christian Schicklgruber (Vienna) |
| DV | Ditamulü Vasa (Kohima) |
| HEK | Hans-Eberhard Kauffmann (Institut für Ethnologie und Afrikanistik, München) |
| JHH | J.H. Hutton (PRM) |
| JPM | J.P. Mills (PRM) |
| JS | Jan Seifert (Leipzig) |
| KL | Kathrin Leuenberger (Zürich) |
| MO | Michael Oppitz (Zürich) |
| MVW | Museum für Völkerkunde Wien |
| MW | Marion Wettstein (Zürich) |
| PRM | Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford |
| RGW | R.G. Woodthorpe (PRM / Museum of Mankind) |
| RS | Rebekka Sutter (Zürich) |
| SOAS | School for Oriental and African Studies, London |
| SZ | Stephan Zeisler (Vienna) |
| TJ | Tiatoshi Jamir (Kohima) |
| TK | Thomas Kaiser (Zürich) |
| TP | Tenzing Paljor (Kabul) |
| VMZ | Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich |
| WGA | W.G. Archer (Naga Database archival material) |

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| CS | Photographs: 121, 383, 384, 386 |
| DV | Photographs: 333, 336, 337 |
| HEK | Photographs, archive of the Institut für Ethnologie und Afrikanistik der Ludwig-Maximilian Universität München: 15, 19, 59, 173, 179, 199, 202, 203, 206, 266, 267, 268, 298, 299 |
| JHH | Photographs, PRM Photograph Collections: 1998.327.3.835 (p. 263), 1998.327.3.898 (p. 264Δ), 1998.327.3.899 (p. 264∇) |
| JPM | Photograph, Naga Database archival material: 195 |
| JS | Photographs: 194, 277, 278, 390, 391 |
| KL | Object photographs for VMZ: 81, 82, 90, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 175, 214, 218, 254, 256, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349 |
| MO | Photographs: 123, 124, 180, 186, 187, 188, 189, 193, 195; Drawing: 176 |
| MW | Colour drawings: 129, 131, 134, 135, 136, 139; object-scan: 140; Diagram: 409 (based on template by the author) |
| PRM | Object photograph (objects collection), 1923.85.961: 175 |
| RGW | Autograph, Museum of Mankind (British Museum): 31 Watercolours and sketches, PRM Manuscript Collections, Woodthorpe Collection: 1910.45.4.1 (p. 40Δ), 1910.45.4.3 (p. 34Δ), 1910.45.4.4 (p. 34∇), 1910.45.4.5 (p. 37Δ), 1910.45.4.6 (p. 37∇), 1910.45.5.1 (p. 38Δ), 1910.45.5.2 (p. 38Δ), 1910.45.5.4 (p. 40Δ), 1910.45.5.5 (p. 39∇), 1910.45.5.6 (p. 39∇), 1929.87.40 (p. 42Δ), 1929.87.41 (p. 45), 1983.7.11 (p. 44), 1983.7.17 (p. 39∇); Watercolours and sketches, PRM, Photograph Collections: |

- 1914.5.2.4 (p. 40Δ), 1914.5.2.10 (p. 35Δ), 1914.5.2.13 (p. 36∇),
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- RS Videostills: 271, 283, 284, 287, 288
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Authors

STUART BLACKBURN is Senior Research Fellow at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, and director of the project *Tribal Transitions: Cultural Change in Arunachal Pradesh* at SOAS.

GEORGE VAN DRIEM is Research Professor and director of the *Himalayan Languages Project* at Leiden University. He is also field coordinator of the European research programme *Languages and Genes of the Greater Himalayan Region*.

MOALASA JAMIR is a lecturer at the Department of Anthropology, Kohima Science College, Nagaland and president of the Beauty & Aesthetics Society of Nagaland.

TIATOSHI JAMIR is a lecturer at the Department of History & Archaeology, Nagaland University, Kohima, and working on an excavation project in Chungliyimti, Tuensang District, Nagaland.

VIBHA JOSHI is post-doctoral Research Fellow at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford, engaged in a comparative study of Naga textiles and museum collections.

THOMAS KAISER is member of the research project >Material Culture, Oral Traditions and Identity among the Naga of Northeast India< funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and also working, with Dharamsing Teron, on oral traditions of the Karbi in Karbi Anglong, Assam.

DOLLY KIKON is a doctoral candidate at the Department of Anthropology, Stanford University. Her research work focuses on the legal and human rights situation in Northeast India.

ARKOTONG LONGKUMER holds a PhD in Religious Studies from the University of Edinburgh. His research is focused on the Northeastern region of India and on a religious reform movement known as *Heraka* in the North Cachar Hills of Assam.

ABRAHAM LOTHA is a doctoral student at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, and initiator of the Chumpo Museum in Dimapur, Nagaland, dedicated to Naga identity and culture.

ALAN MACFARLANE is a historian and Professor of Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. His main areas of work are England, Nepal, Japan and China, and he has a special interest in the use of digital media for anthropological and historical sciences.

WOLFGANG MARSCHALL is Professor (emeritus) of Anthropology at the University of Berne. His research focuses on Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia. A musician himself, he takes special interest in ethnomusicology.

KEVILHUNINUO NAGI is a lecturer at the Department of Anthropology, Kohima Science College, Nagaland.

IRIS ODYUO is currently writing her MA on Naga artisans at the Nagaland University in Kohima. As a painter she is known as Iris Yingzen.

MICHAEL OPPITZ is Professor (emeritus) of Anthropology at the University of Zürich and former director of the Ethnographic Museum. His interests as a scholar and writer are oral traditions, material culture and visual anthropology of the greater Himalayan region, especially Nepal and Yunnan. He is head of the research project >Material Culture, Oral Traditions and Identity among the Naga of Northeast India< funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation.

CHRISTIAN SCHICKLGRUBER is curator for South and Southeast Asia and the Himalayas at the Museum of Ethnology in Vienna. His main interest is in Bhutan, where in co-operation with other institutions he is busy establishing a new museum.

ALBAN VON STOCKHAUSEN is team member of the research project >Material Culture, Oral Traditions and Identity among the Naga of Northeast India< funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. He is writing his doctoral thesis on the visual representation of the Naga in the 1920es and 30es. In another project he is working on shamanism among the Dumi Rai of Eastern Nepal.

REBEKKA SUTTER is team member of the research project >Material Culture, Oral Traditions and Identity among the Naga of Northeast India< funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. She is presently working on her MA on tiger-men in Northeast India and in another project on shamanistic practices in Eastern Nepal.

MARK TURIN holds a PhD in Descriptive Linguistics from Leiden University where he was affiliated with the *Himalayan Languages Project*. He is presently Chief of Translation at the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), and director of the *Digital Himalaya Project*. His interests include ethnolinguistics, visual anthropology and oral history.

DITAMULÜ VASA is a lecturer at the Department of History & Archaeology, Nagaland University, Kohima and working on an excavation project in Chungliyimti, Tuensang District, Nagaland.

MARION WETTSTEIN is team member of the research project >Material Culture, Oral Traditions and Identity among the Naga of Northeast India< funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. She is working on her doctoral thesis on textiles and social structure among the Ao Naga. Another comparative project of hers focuses on dance in Nepal.

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Michael Oppitz
Thomas Kaiser
Alban von Stockhausen
Marion Wettstein

NAGA IDENTITIES

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