

TRIBES OF
ARUNACHAL
PRADESH
IN
TRANSITION



GURUDAS DAS

4
3

This book presents a critical analysis of the processes of transition of the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. By analysing the emergence of private property and the existence of social stratification among the tribes in the historical past, the author questions the validity of the myths of 'egalitarianism' and 'non-hierarchy' among the tribes of north-east India. As the internal dynamics of the tribal societies prior to their integration with the national 'mainstream' was too weak to bring any substantial and sustained change within themselves, the author explains as to how the external forces of change have played the pivotal role in modernising the traditional tribal socio-economic formations in Arunachal.

A critical evaluation of the genesis and growth of Nehru-Elwin's revivalist - protectionist policy towards tribal development and its subsequent rejection in favour of the policy of progressive integration has made the book essential for the tribal developmentalists.

The author's enquiry into the processes of capital accumulation in the hands of the local people, the areas of cooperation and conflict between the local and national capital, and the emergence of different classes in Arunachalee society have made the study interesting as well as thought provoking for general readers too, cutting across academic disciplines.

GURUDAS DAS teaches Economics at St. Anthony's College, Shillong.

ISBN 0-7069-8648-2

Rs 295

F233
189

Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh in Transition

Gurudas Das



VIKAS PUBLISHING HOUSE PVT LTD

Anil Kumar

VIKAS PUBLISHING HOUSE PVT LTD

576, Masjid Road, Jangpura, New Delhi-110 014

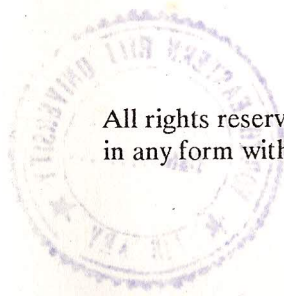
NE
301.4510954163
DAS;5

COPYRIGHT © GURUDAS DAS

First published, 1995

ISBN 0-7069-8648-2

GENU LIBRARY
Acc. No. 135156
Acc. No. Anil Kumar
Date 11/6/98
Cl.
Sub
Enter
Trns



All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without the prior written permission of the publishers.

*In Honour of the Philanthropic Vision of
Sri Anil Kumar Sengupta*

Preface

Till the other day, Arunachal Pradesh was the "forgotten frontier" and the indigenes therein were strangers even to many of the next door neighbours. The situation has undergone a sea-change since Independence with the gradual incorporation of the territory into, and progressive integration of her people with, the national 'mainstream'. The age-old tribal socio-economic formations, idyllic life, traditional authority structure - all have been exposed to the realm of modernity and development with the continued opening up of the territory. This book attempts to envisage the transition of the tribal societies of Arunachal Pradesh from their relative isolation to assimilation into the network of market economy. The focus of this study, in fact, revolves round a central query as to how the capitalist system is working in the basically pre-capitalist tribal socio-economic formations and how the former is, through a process of interaction, reshaping the latter in favour of a class divided society. This work is a preliminary attempt towards the study of transition and social change of the highlanders of Arunachal Pradesh. Obviously many of the dimensions of this multifaceted process need further examination and analysis.

The support of the Centre For Himalayan Studies, University of North Bengal, in the way of offering a research fellowship for my Ph.D. work and excellent academic environment, has largely made this book possible. I express my warm, thanks to the then Director, Professor B.P. Misra, and other Staff of the Centre for their generosity, hospitality and intellectual stimulus during my stay. I am indebted to the Indian Council of Social Science Research, North Eastern Regional Centre, and its Deputy Director P.S. Datta for offering me a study grant at the later stage of the study.

All along the work, starting from the articulation of the problems to the preparation of the final draft, I received invaluable guidance,

stimulation, and criticism from my guide, Professor Misra. I have little doubt that I remained far away from his exacting standards in cognising a social reality. Nonetheless, contrary to the usual customs, he is also responsible for the limitations of this study in the sense that without his keen interest and continuing encouragement I doubt whether I would have persisted.

I am grateful to R.N. Bhattacharya, Pinaki Chakraborty and Jeta Sankritayan of the Department of Economics, Ajit Kr. Roy of the Department of Commerce, R.S. Mukherjee and Saswati Biswas of the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, North Bengal University; Nikhilesh Kumar of the Department of Sociology, North-Eastern Hill University and Randhir Singh of the Department of Political Science, University of Delhi, for sharing their ideas and insights on various aspects of this study.

I am thankful to Fr. Stephen Mavelly, Principal, St. Anthony's College, B.B. Datta, J.N. Chowdhury, B. Datta-Roy, Rabijit Chowdhury and Prof. J.B. Bhattacharjee, for their interest and invaluable assistance in collecting materials for this study.

I am indebted to Debasish Chowdhury, Rakkhal Purkayastha, Ramkrishna Sadhu, Sarajit Sensarma, Kajal Biswas, Ashis Tarafdar, Provash Mondal, Subhashis Sanigrahi, Swati Mondal, Sutapa Datta, and my wife Bela Das for their assistance and cooperation at various phases of the work. I am grateful to Alope Kumar Roye who shouldered the responsibility of typing the manuscript.

Finally I would like to mention my two little nieces Bublan and Munni who used to refresh my fatigued mood during the days of stress and strain.

Gurudas Das

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	vii
<i>List of Tables</i>	xi
<i>List of Maps</i>	xiv
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xv
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Background and Scope of the Study	1
1.2 Survey of Literature	5
1.3 Method of Enquiry	13
2. Economic Activities Before Independence	19
2.1 Agriculture	22
2.2 Crafts and Manufacture	29
Weaving - Cane and Bamboo works -	
Pottery -Blacksmithy - Metals and Ivory	
Works - Wood Carving and Carpentry -	
Other Activities	
2.3 Trade	38
Trade with Tibet and Bhutan - Trade with	
Burma - Trade with Assam - Trade Fairs:	
Forerunner of Market Economy	
3. Property Rights and Social Stratification in Pre-Industrial Arunachal Pradesh	61
3.1 Property Rights	62
3.2 Social Stratification	68
4. State Policy Towards Development and Industrialisation since Independence	75
4.1 Policy Shifts towards Development since Independence	76
4.2 Development Planning for the Backward Hill Areas	92
4.3 State Policy towards Industrialisation	98

5. The State of Industrial Development in Arunachal Pradesh	115
5.1 Growth and Performance of the Public Sector	115
Craft Training cum Production Centre –Government Companies– Arunachal Pradesh Forest Corporation Limited –Arunachal Pradesh Industrial Development and Financial Corporation Limited – Centrally Sponsored Programmes/Schemes for Industrial Development –Industrial Estate Programme – District Industries Centre Programme – Central Investment Subsidy Scheme–Central Transport Subsidy Scheme – Central Infrastructural Assistance Scheme–Infrastructure Industry - The role of North Eastern Council - Industrial Training.	
5.2 Private Sector	154
5.3 Co-operative Sector	178
6. Emergence of Industrial Classes in Arunachal Pradesh	184
6.1 Emergence of Entrepreneurs	188
The Marwaris - The non-Marwari non-tribals–The Tribals - The Sample Study	
6.2 Emergence of the Industrial Work Force	201
The Sample Study: Socio-Economic Background of the Industrial Workers - Working Conditions - Trade Union Movement	
7. Conclusion	223
Maps	229
Selected Bibliography	233
Subject Index	245
Author Index	250

List of Tables

<i>Table No.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Page</i>
2.1	Tribe-wise Distribution of Population in A.P. – 1961	21
4.1	Land Development under Permanent Cultivation in A.P.	89
4.2	Net Area Sown under Permanent and Jhum Cultivation in A.P.	90
4.3	Growth of Bank Branches in A.P.	91
4.4	Economically Viable Minerals of A.P.	104
5.1	Craft-wise Distribution of the Passed-out Trainees during 1954-55 to 1981-82	118
5.2	Statement Showing the Number of Craft Centres and Out-Turn in A.P.	119
5.3	Statement Showing Annual Out-Turn and Sale Proceeds during 1984-85 – 1988-89	120
5.4	Statement Showing the Summarised Financial Results of Nocte Timber Company Ltd. (1980-81 to 1986-87)	124
5.5	Statement Showing the Summarised Financial Results of Arunachal Pradesh Forest Corporation Ltd.. For the Year 1978-79 to 1984-85 (Provisional)	126
5.6	Statement Showing Annual Turnover & Profit or Loss of the Production and Trading Units directly run by APIDFC During 1985-86 to 1990-91 (Provisional)	129
5.7	Statement Showing Industry wise Distribution of Industrial Loans by APIDFC During 1980-81 to 1990-91	130

List of Tables

5.8	Industrial Estates and Area Developed in Arunachal Pradesh as on 31.3.1991	134
5.9	Particulars of Industrial Estates in A.P. (As on 31.3.1991)	135
5.10	Statement Showing the Particulars of Industrial Estates of Naharlagun and Ganga	136
5.11	Statement Showing the Progress of DICs in North-Eastern States during 1978-79 to 1982-83 (Average per DIC)	138
5.12	Statement Showing Assistance Received and Loan Disbursed Under DIC Programme Since Inception	140
5.13	Statement Showing the performance of DICs in Disbursing Loans from 1983-84 to 1987-88 in A.P.	141
5.14	Central Investment Subsidy in A.P.	143
5.15	Central Transport Subsidy in A.P.	144
5.16	Position of Existing Micro-Hydels in A.P.	147
5.17	Centrally Sponsored Hydro Electric Projects in A.P.	148
5.18	Trade-wise Out-turn of ITI Trainees in A.P.	150
5.19	Entrepreneurial Development Programmes by NEITCO in A.P.	152
5.20	Particulars of NEITCO's Entrepreneurial Development Programmes in A.P.	153
5.21	Product-wise and District-wise Distribution of Industrial Units in A.P. - 1972	156
5.22	Industrial Units Functioning in A.P.	158
5.23	Industry-wise Distribution of SSI Units working in A.P. (1973-74)	159
5.24	Distribution of workers by Economic Activities - 1971	160
5.25	Distribution of Small Scale Industries in North Eastern Region - 1971	161
5.26	No. of SSIs Provisionally Registered with Directorate of Industries, A.P.	162
5.27	District-wise Number of Permanently Registered Functioning SSI Units and Employment	167
5.28	Product-wise and District-wise Distribution of Permanently Registered Functioning SSI Units	169
5.29	Employment Size-wise and District-wise Distribution of Permanently Registered Functioning SSI Units	172

List of Tables

5.30	Product-wise and District-wise Distribution of Non-Government Companies in A.P.	175
5.31	Distribution of Companies by Authorised Capital in A.P. (as on 31.12.91)	177
5.32	Statement Showing the Basic Particulars of Co-Operative Societies in A.P. (as on 31.1.92)	180
6.1	Industry-wise Distribution of the workers	204
6.2	Sources of Labour Supply in A.P.	206
6.3	Ethnic Composition of the Industrial Workers of A.P.	207
6.4	Family Background of the Industrial Workers of A.P.	209
6.5	Occupation of the Workers before joining the Industries	210
6.6	Educational Level of the Industrial Workers of A.P.	212
6.7	Age, Sex and Marital Status of the Industrial Workers of A.P.	213
6.8	Industry-wise Distribution of Workers by Wage/ Salary range	214

List of Maps

<i>Map No.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Page</i>
Map - 1	: Arunachal Pradesh	229
Map - 2	: Arunachal Pradesh and Surrounding Areas	230
Map - 3	: Distribution of Tribes in Arunachal Pradesh	231
Map - 4	: Hydel Projects in Arunachal Pradesh	232

List of Abbreviations

AP	:	Arunachal Pradesh
APIDFC	:	Arunachal Pradesh Industrial Development and Financial Corporation Limited
APFC	:	Arunachal Pradesh Forest Corporation Limited
DIC	:	District Industries Centre
IE	:	Industrial Estate
IIAS	:	Indian Institute of Advanced Study
NCAER	:	National Council of Applied Economic Research
NEC	:	North Eastern Council
NEFA	:	North Eastern Frontier Agency
NEICSSR	:	North-East India Council for Social Science Research
NEITCO	:	North Eastern Industrial and Technological Consultancy Organisation
NER	:	North Eastern Region
SSI	:	Small Scale Industry
TRC	:	Terrace Rice Cultivation
WRC	:	Wet Rice Cultivation
UT	:	Union Territory

Chapter 1

Introduction

International intervention with the proclaimed aim of developing the poor countries in the world, and state intervention in order to develop the backward regions within a country so that fruits of development may reach everyone, have generally been in practice for a long time. The underlying notion of 'development' in such attempts has essentially been teleological in nature, and a unilineal path towards development is assumed throughout. Such efforts have also been sought to be legitimised with the aid of various modernisation theories, current among the academic circles.

The programmes of such modernisation in many cases have, however, resulted in either extermination or subjugation of the indigenous population. Elsewhere, the transformation of traditional economic bases in the process of incorporation into the dominant mode of production, have resulted in a kind of dependency of the former upon the latter.

Unlike the developed countries, the problem of integration of the isolated indigenous populations is many times higher in developing countries, like India, due to their belated process of nation-building. This work attempts to understand one such experience of integration through development and modernisation being carried on in one corner of the vast Indian sub-continent demarcated by a very sensitive international border.

1.1 BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is concerned with the extreme north-eastern state of the Indian Republic, i.e., Arunachal Pradesh, the erstwhile North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA). Arunachal, having a geographical area of

83,743 sq. km., and a population of about 9 lakhs (1991) has been the traditional habitat of tribal people categorised so far into 110 major and minor groups of Paleo-Mongoloid stock, speaking mostly the Tibeto-Burman group of languages. Though the different tribal communities of this territory since time immemorial had some sort of socio-economic interaction among themselves in their neighbourhood as also with the neighbouring people of Bhutan, Tibet and Burma across the present political boundary on the one hand, and, with the people of Assam on the other, through either migration or trade, or war, they were definitely lesser known beyond their hills, before the twentieth century.

This has happened because every part of the geographical territory of what constitutes India today was neither brought under a uniform pattern of political rule nor were they completely absorbed economically all at once into the vast Indian market network during the British rule. In fact, the process of incorporation of areas contiguous to India's northern borders has been a long and continuous process and may continue until the two great ancient civilisations of Asia-India and China-come across each other leaving no frontier between their political boundaries along the range of the mighty Himalayas. Needless to say that this possibility is subject to two factors, viz., the future role of the buffer states in world politics and the degree of assimilation of the Paleo-Mongoloids-the ancient Kiratas-of this region with their neighbours as was envisaged long ago by Suniti Kumar Chatterji¹.

A few tribes of Arunachal living in the foothills and adjacent hilly tracts of the Brahmaputra Valley had some association with the Ahoms who ruled over Assam till 1826, the date of British annexation. This can well be understood from the names like Aka, Dafla, Miri, Abor, etc. which are all exoethnonyms used by the people of the valley against the tribal communities with whom they used to come in contact². Though the Ahom rulers had established some sort of political authority (through expeditions) and also friendship (by granting Posa-a tribute paid in kind by the villagers at foothills to their highland tribal counterparts) with certain sections of the tribal communities during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this influence had faded out during the chaotic period in the declining years of their rule. The socio-economic and political structures of different tribal communities of Arunachal were hardly affected during the long reign of the Ahoms in the Brahmaputra Valley.

The incorporation of the Brahmaputra Valley into the colonial

British-Indian empire since 1826 also did not produce any immediate or significant structural change. In fact, the British policy towards the tribal communities of Arunachal was largely based on the cost-benefit criterion. In the absence of any potential threat from the north-eastern borders of British-Indian empire, extension of direct political administration to the sparsely populated and large hill areas of Arunachal was viewed as unnecessary as also unrewarding³. Like Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal, the hills of Arunachal could also be allowed to remain as a buffer zone along the eastern Himalayan range to play a more significant role against any future threat from the Far East and Central Asia. These political calculations perhaps restrained the Britishers from further extension of direct colonial rule to the north of the Brahmaputra Valley.

However, through a modified Posa system, frequent army operations and introduction of 'Inner-Line' along the foothills, the Britishers had successfully established political supremacy over the recalcitrant tribes in order to protect their colonial interest in the Brahmaputra Valley on the one hand and to extend British commercial interest to Tibet, China and Burma across the frontier on the other. The apprehension about the expansionist designs initially of Tzarist Russia, and later of China towards Tibet coupled with the realisation of the geo-political importance of the frontier during the world wars, compelled the Government of India not only to bring the frontier tribes under a loose political control but also to draw the disputed McMahon line in place of the hitherto unspecified Outer Line showing the extent of British influence towards the north-eastern border in the Simla Conference of 1914.

After the departure of the British from the sub-continent in 1947, India inherited a definite frontier in the north-eastern extremity of the country. The whole sequence of development-the transformation from an undefined to a defined frontier-from frontier to the emergence of a political boundary-and the pattern of subsequent socio-economic development provides the broad canvas of our present enquiry. 'The strongest states showed close ties between the border and state core. Any tendency for the connexions to be weakened would weaken the state and result in the loss of the the border through its assertion of independence or its incorporation within a neighbouring state'⁴. This Ratzelian vision concerning the bordering zones of a state appears to have prevailed over the government of independent India, and moulded the future frontier policy, including its pattern of economic development.

Just after Independence, the Government vigorously pursued a policy of administrative expansion and consolidation all over the frontier to catch up hurriedly with the McMahon line to the north. The number of nucleus administrative centres has gone up from 5 before 1947 to 74 in 1961⁵. This action of the Indian State to the south of the frontier generated much reaction from the Chinese to the north. And the frontier was effectively converted into an international border following the Sino-Indian conflict in 1962. In subsequent years, the whole territory was quickly brought under regular administration through a reorganisation of the internal political structure. And, with the commencement of the Panchayati Raj in 1969, the political integration reached its culmination.

This process of political integration has been instrumental in bringing about appreciable change in the spheres of production, distribution and exchange, thereby accelerating the process of economic integration. Both the capitalist mode of production and system of governance have been superimposed upon the traditional order, and in many cases they even co-exist with each other, thereby providing a fertile field for enquiry by the political economists.

The study seeks to examine the nature of economic activities that had been practised traditionally by the various tribal communities of Arunachal in the past and the role of the autonomous tribal socio-political institutions in the sphere of production, organisation of labour, circulation and distribution. The nature of emerging social stratification within the tribal societies is also examined along with the pattern of property right developed among them during the pre-Independence period. It also seeks to address itself to the queries as to what has been the policy of the Government of independent India towards the development of this frontier? What politico-economic measures have been initiated to facilitate the transition from isolation to assimilation into the market network? And what role has been and is being played by the capitalist state and other state-sponsored agencies in the process of integration and development? How the capitalist system is working in the basically pre-capitalist tribal socio-economic formations and how the former is, through a process of interaction, reshaping the latter in favour of a class divided society.

We have made an attempt to analyse these transformations on the basis of a study of the growth of the secondary sector in the State. Though the capitalist market forces have also penetrated into the primary sector of the State's economy, due to the age-old tribal customs

and agricultural practices they are not as distinct as in the secondary sector. Among the multifarious dimensions of development, the development of the secondary sector in general and the industrial development in particular play the most crucial role in shaping the future pattern of the economy of an area. Furthermore, the realignment of social relations in the sphere of industrial production appears to be more pronounced than in other areas of production. The development of the tertiary sector as in many other societies of the third world does not reflect the real state of development in a hinterland like Arunachal. Here the growth of the tertiary sector is more due to the administrative expansion than a natural outcome of other sectoral development. Hence, the study envisages to understand the dynamics of development in Arunachal mainly by looking into the processes and patterns of industrialisation of the State on the one hand and the processes of emergence of different industrial classes on the other. The resource base of Arunachal and their potentials have also been referred to wherever necessary, because these provide in a sense the perimeters within which commercial penetration is feasible.

It may also be pointed out that unlike many other Indian tribes who lost much of their traits due to the diffusion over time of culture of the neighbouring caste societies, or due to the propagation or imposition of western culture by the missionaries and colonial administrators the indigenous people of Arunachal largely maintained their distinctive tribal features till very recent times. Perhaps the geographical and political isolation of the territory had been instrumental in keeping their indigenous formations, by and large, intact. But with the opening up of the territory since Independence, fast changes of these last remnants of a primitive way of life are taking place making it possible for us to undertake an objective enquiry into the historical fact of tribal society's transition to higher stages of development.

1.2 SURVEY OF LITERATURE

In this section, an attempt is made to map out the existing literature on the society, polity and economy of Arunachal Pradesh. Considering the extent of work dealing with diverse issues and their contextual differences, we have opted for a thematic presentation instead of highlighting individual work, unless required for our purpose. In the following paragraphs we have arranged and classified the available

works related to Arunachal Pradesh keeping their contextual origin, as far as possible, in mind.

The first impetus for investigation came up with the establishment of the British power in the Brahmaputra Valley. As the Britishers were completely in the dark about their neighbours in the north-eastern frontier, the administrators specially appointed in the districts adjacent to the frontier, army chiefs and political officers faced serious problems to administer the valley. They had been the first group of people who produced a set of primary work on the area and people of the North-Eastern Region (NER). The celebrated works among them include: R.B. Pemberton's *The Eastern Frontier of India* (1835); T.T. Cooper's *The Mishmee Hills* (1873); G.W. Beresford's *Notes on the North-East Frontier of India* (1881); J.F. Michell's *The North-East Frontier of India* (1883); A. Mackenzie's *History of the Relations of the Government with the Hill Tribes of the North-East Frontier of Bengal* (1884); J.F. Nedham's *Report of a trip into the Abor Hills* (1884); G.W. Dun's *Preliminary Notes on Daphlas* (1896); J.F. Nedham's *Report on the Bebejiya Mishmi Expedition - 1899* (1900); A. Hamilton's *In Abor Jungles* (1912); and B. Duff's *Report on the Miri country and Operations of Miri Mission* (1912)⁶.

Of the above mentioned books, Pemberton's had been the first attempt to compile all the available information gleaned from different sources on the area and people of the eastern frontier of British-India in order to use as a ready reference by the Britishers. Later on, Mackenzie, who was then in-charge of political correspondence of the Bengal Government, was prompted to update the account for official use and accordingly he wrote a *Memorandum on the North-East Frontier of Bengal* (1869). After repeated requests from Government quarters, he elaborately developed it and the result was the book referred above covering the history of the British relations with the frontier tribes during 1826-82. Later, R. Reid supplemented Mackenzie's work by his book *History of the Frontier Areas Bordering Assam from 1883-1941* (1942). Following these two British authors, Indian scholars like L.N. Chakraborty and J.N. Chowdhury have systematized the history of Arunachal Pradesh in their books *Glimpses of the Early History of Arunachal* (1973), and *Arunachal Through the Ages* (1982), respectively.

A spate of similar studies focusing on the British relations with the hill tribes of Arunachal have been done by Indian scholars after Independence where the authors heavily utilised these early historical

accounts along with various archival data. Among them, B.C. Chakravarty's *British Relations with the Hill Tribes of Assam* (1964) covered the second half of the nineteenth century 1858-1900; D.P. Choudhury's *The North-East Frontier of India* (1978) supplemented Chakravarty's work upto 1914, and M.L. Bose's *British Policy in the North-East Frontier Agency* (1979) encompassed the period from the British annexation of Assam in 1826 to the Independence in 1947. All of them have been savants of history and have earned a good repute for their works moulded in the nationalistic perspective of writing history for the colonial period⁷.

It may be pointed out that though the scholars of Arunachal history have changed in course of time, the scope for occidental bias still remained due to paucity of source material. Though Chowdhury was aware of the fact, he could do little to reinterpret the tribal history of Arunachal in the absence of any written documents on how the tribals themselves viewed their historical events.

Apart from books, the early British administrators and explorers of the nineteenth century also produced a good number of piece works published in various journals, especially in the Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal. These *piece de resistances* contained valuable information about the people of Arunachal, their economy, history, trade, etc. The documentation of these piecemeals had later resulted in the publication of two valuable books—*Selection of papers regarding the Hill Tracts between Assam and Burma and on the Upper Brahmaputra* (1873), and V. Elwin's, (ed), *India's North-East Frontier in the Nineteenth Century* (1959). Both the books served the posterities as important primary sources.

It may, however, be pointed out that the task of documentation of piecemeals of historical and research importance is being neglected for a long time after Elwin. For example, C.R. Stonor's article on 'The Sulung Tribe of the Assam Himalayas' published in 1952 is not now readily available even though it deserves to be documented⁸.

Anthropological study of the tribes of Arunachal did not thrive much during the British regime. Dalton⁹ was not a trained anthropologist. He only collected information on some basic anthropological parameters. Long after Dalton, R.S. Kennedy, an English medical officer, prepared *Ethnological Report on the Akas, Khoas and Mijis and the Monbas of Tawang* (1914). It was not before 1944 that C.V. Furer-Haimendorf, an Austrian anthropologist, was appointed by the Government as a special officer to conduct a full-

fledged study of some of the tribes. Haimendorf's *Ethnographic Notes on the Tribes of the Subansiri region* (1947) and his subsequent works are now invaluable source material to researchers of tribal studies in general and Arunachal in particular¹⁰.

Just after Independence, the Administration of this area severely felt the paucity of basic knowledge about the people to be administered and integrated. Another spate of literature, mostly tribe-specific anthropological studies, has emerged out of this necessity following the administrative policy to protect and promote tribal culture under the influence of Nehru-Elwin line of tribal development. To this group belongs the publications made by the Directorate of Research, Arunachal, e.g., *The Tangsas of the Namchik and Tirap Valleys* (1959) by Parul Dutta. *The Daflas of the Subansiri Region* (1959) by B.K. Shukla, *Aspects of Padam Minyong Culture* (1960) by Sachin Roy, *The Idu Mishmis* (1960) by T.K.M. Baruah, R.R.P. Sharma's *The Sherdukpens* (1961), Raghuvir Sinha's *The Akas* (1962), L.R.N. Srivastava's *The Gallongs* (1962) and a number of subsequently conducted similar ethnographic accounts¹¹.

The problems of development of tribal population in relation to the post-Independence reconstruction of the Indian society and polity have been articulated in the writings of Verrier Elwin. His book *A Philosophy for NEFA* (1959) has been a useful text for the tribal developmentalists. Elwin's *Art of North-East Frontier of India* (1959) is perhaps the first attempt to describe the state of manufacturing activities among the tribal societies of Arunachal¹². Though the work is romanticized in order to glorify the tribal arts, it has immense value in reconstructing the tribal economies of the past. His *Democracy in NEFA* (1965) is an attempt to weave the tribe-specific micro studies in order to highlight the role and importance of indigeneous democratic institutions in tribal communities and their relevance in tribal administration. Elwin's another documentary work done with the assistance of B. Shastri and I. Simon is a compilation of *Important Directive on Administration of NEFA* (1967)¹³. In fact, it is due to his toil and foresight that today we get a good amount of research material on Arunachal¹⁴.

In the aftermath of the Indo-Chinese border conflict in 1962, a number of books were published following the nationalistic upsurge. Army officials, newspaper columnists and academicians narrated the war events and aired their viewpoints. As Arunachal had also been in the war-front, such literature provided many valuable information which

would have otherwise been unknown. Some of them are Ramesh Sanghvi's *India's Northern Frontier and China* (1962), P.C. Chakravarty's *India-China Relations* (1965), J.P. Dalvi's *The Himalayan Blunder* (1969), S.P. Verma's *The Struggle for the Himalayas* (1971), and Karunakar Gupta's *The Hidden History of the Sino-Indian Frontier* (1974)¹⁵.

The nation-wide political concern arising out of the border conflict drove the attention of the inquisitive mind towards this otherwise isolated area. During this time appeared B.K. Roy Burman's *Demographic and Socio-Economic Profiles of the Hills of North-East India* (1970), where he compiled a good amount of tribe specific empirical data that have been collected during the Census operations in the past. In his book *Enchanted Frontiers* (1971), Nari Rustomji reflected on some aspects of policy measures towards Arunachal and their evolution. In his subsequent book *Imperilled Frontiers* (1983), he articulated his views much more sharply.

During the last two decades, the growth of ethnic movements particularly among the tribals and also the increasing role of regional politics specially in the hills have become a challenging concern to the academics and administrators alike. Studies have been carried out in increasing numbers over the years to cognize the tribal tangle in the Indian society, and thereby bringing into existence a separate school of tribal development studies. In some of these studies, Arunachal is represented directly, in some others indirectly. A few of the books in this category are K.S. Singh's *Tribal Situation in India* (1972), L.P. Vidyarthi's *Tribal Culture of India* (1977), Bhupinder Singh and J.S. Bhandari edited *Tribal World and Its Transformation* (1980), K.S. Singh edited *Economics of the Tribes and Their Transformation* (1982), Jaganath Pathy's *Tribal Peasantry: Dynamics of Development* (1984), J.P. Singh & N.N. Vyas edited *Tribal Development* (1989), and S. Sengupta & D. Mukhopadhyay edited *Alternative Tribal Development Perspective* (1989).

Coming now to the area of specific studies on economic development of Arunachal, the literature, so far published, is indeed scanty. The first such study had been done by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) as early as in 1967 in order to facilitate plan formulation for economic development—the need that was felt after 1962—and was published under the title *Techno-Economic Survey of NEFA*. However, inadequacy of data and practical needs had made it largely an impressionistic and prescriptive study that

intended to prepare a framework of development with which specific programmes of action could be fitted as and when appropriate detailed data were available¹⁶.

The NCAER suggested utilisation of two of the available physical resources, i.e. forests and hydro-power of Arunachal for the "national interest" which would otherwise remain unutilized in the absence of any local demand. It recommended, *inter alia*, three priority areas for action : 'transport', 'development of natural resources', and 'improvement in human resources'. It advocated, 'relaxation of the Inner Line regulation', 'which prevents any immigration of labour in NEFA that has created shortage of even unskilled Labour'¹⁷. The Council also suggested to develop 'agricultural colonies' in sparsely populated areas and hand them over to suitable outsiders. It held 'that this sort of controlled migration will be the first step in the integration process which must inevitably come; a continued isolation of the NEFA tribals from the rest of the population is also pernicious for the development of the tribals and their economy'¹⁸.

At quick succession, another similar but more specific survey was done by a study team sponsored by the IDBI and other financial and developmental agencies. The survey report came up in 1972 under the title *Industrial Potential Survey: Arunachal Pradesh*. This report also echoed the policy prescriptions of the earlier NCAER study in relation to industrial development¹⁹.

Many of the suggestions made by the NCAER were executed in later years. But till now, no work has been undertaken from any quarter to study the pattern of economic development that Arunachal has undergone for the last 25 years since the formulation of its "framework of development" in 1967 by NCAER. S.D. Jha's *Wealth of Arunachal Pradesh* (1985), and P.S. Datta's *Economic Development of Arunachal* (1991) are no doubt complementary work in this regard. While the former primarily deals with the quantitative aspects of the development of agriculture and allied activities, the latter seeks to evaluate the role of the North-Eastern Council (NEC), a premier regional development agency, in the economic development of Arunachal.

A separate mention may be made of the study *Economic and Social Change in North-East* (1988) by Habung Payeng, a young Apa Tani Scholar, that carries a participant observer's view on the process of change in Arunachal.

A few books published in recent years on the economy of the North-East, e.g., A.K. Agarwal's *North-East India : An Economic*

Perspective (1985), and *Economic Problems and Planning in North-East India*, (ed), (1987), Gopal Bardoloi and A.K. Neog's *Economy of North-East India* (1986), have either presented state-wise accounts of various economic activities or activity-wise position of the north-eastern states measured in terms of conventional quantitative indicators of economic development. These works, though rich in information, hardly help in understanding the socio-economic dynamics of change and development of the tribal societies in Arunachal.

A few studies have been made in the recent past which can profitably be used towards these ends. They are : S.K. Chaube's *Hill Politics in North-East India* (1973), S.M. Dubey's *Modernisation and Elites in Arunachal Pradesh* (1975), J.K. Barthakur's *Land and Landlock* (1980), B.P. Misra's "Kirata Karyokinesis : An Introduction to the Political Economy of Tribal Societies in North-East India" (1982), and "Society and Politics in the Hill Areas of North-East India" (1983), in *Economics of the Tribes and their Transformation* by K.S. Singh (ed) and *The Emergence and Role of Middle Class in North East India* by B. Dutta Ray (ed) respectively; S.N. Mishra's "Arunachal's Tribal Economic Formations and their Dissolution" (1983), in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XVIII, No.43, 1983; J.B. Ganguly's "The Economic Condition and Change in North-East India", and B. Pakem's "Political Development and change in North-East India", both in A.P. Sinha (ed), *Changing North-East India* (1986) and P.S. Datta's "Electoral Dynamics in the Eastern Himalayas : The case of Arunachal Pradesh", in author's *India's North-East : A study in Transition* (1992). These studies focussed on the socio-economic dynamics of the tribal communities in Arunachal. Even though most of them are piece works lacking a totality in their perspectives, they contain useful insights about the internal dynamics of change of the tribal communities of the region in general and Arunachal in particular.

Apart from them, a good number of micro-studies have already been carried out by the Census organisation and the Agro-Economic Research Centre (AERC), Jorhat, at various points of time. During the 1961 census, while Arunachal was for the first time brought under census operation, socio-economic survey had been conducted in villages like Sibuk, Jia, Momong, Dalbing, Ramsingh, Jara and Koreng. Village survey monographs for all these villages had been prepared by B.K. Roy Burman but except one of the monographs—Jara (1966)—all remain in mimeographic form. The 1971 Census published two important micro-studies—J.B. Ganguly's *A Pilot Study of Pasighat* and Roy

Burman's *Socio-Economic Survey of Rupa*, a Sherdukpen village. Similarly, the 1981 census published a detailed *Town Survey Report on Tezu*. Beside these empirical census works, scholars of AERC also conducted socio-economic survey in a few villages in Arunachal. Of them, D. Gohain and S. Saikia's "Khonsa : A socio-economic survey of a Nocte-Naga Village in NEFA" (1970) (mimeo), M. Barkataky and P.C. Dutta's "Pakam : Socio-Economic Survey of a Gallong Village" (1972) (mimeo), U. Phukan's (et al) "Bamin : A Socio- Economic Survey of an Apa Tani Village" (1978) (mimeo), and N.R. Goswami and S.N. Buragohain's "Hatiduba : A Socio-Economic Survey of a Miju Mishmi Village" (1982) (mimeo), are important. These empirical micro-studies can be gainfully used to arrive at some sort of generalisation of the traditional tribal economy of Arunachal.

During the last few years, a series of publications have been brought out by the NEC, Shillong, the North-East India Council for Social Science Research (NEICSSR), Shillong, a premier research institution, and the North-East India History Association, Shillong. Their proceedings, books, journals and reports often contain writings on Arunachal which are also no less important. Apart from them, State Government departments like the Directorate of Research, Directorate of Information and Public Relations, and the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, produce and publish material worthy of consultation.

Whatever research works—of course in the realm of pre-Doctoral and Doctoral level—have been undertaken, most of them are either historical or at cultural plane. A few works have addressed themselves to the administrative development of the State or on tribal administration. Except Sudatta Sikdar's "Assam Trade of the Arunachalis 1884-1905: A Study of the British Policy" (1981), (M. Phil.), North-Eastern Hill University, (Unpublished), no work so far has been undertaken to study the emerging pattern of Arunachal economy with reference to her industrial development and consequent realignment of production relations. A general perspective is yet to be framed which could be used to explain the process of socio-economic development of Arunachal Pradesh and to understand the role of internal social dynamics as well as the influence of external factors in this process. The nature of social transformation which has been a concomitant outcome of the erosion of traditional tribal economic structure in the face of planned capitalist penetration, also remains to be enumerated.

1.3 METHOD OF ENQUIRY

This study is mostly empirical in nature. The facts and figures used to analyse the queries raised and incorporated in different chapters were gathered from both secondary as well as primary sources. Data have been collected through a number of visits to different places. During December-January, 1989-90, a visit was paid to Shillong, Jorhat and Itanagar, the capital of Arunachal Pradesh, to work at the libraries of both academic as well as government institutions. The next trip was undertaken during February-March, 1990, to work exclusively at Itanagar in order to collect material from various government departments and non-government developmental agencies. Both formal and informal consultations had been made with the officials and other knowledgeable persons during the stay. Another visit was undertaken in the month of September in order to collect and consult material at the libraries and regional offices of various developmental agencies located both at Guwahati and Shillong. During January 1991, a short visit was arranged for Delhi to work at the office of the Planning Commission. The data gaps in our investigation were then sorted out after analysing the collected material. Accordingly, two more trips were undertaken—one to Itanagar during December-January, 1991-92, and another to Dibrugarh and Tinsukia during October, 1992—in order to generate some fresh data through both formal interviews and also informal ways.

For secondary data, cross-verification was made wherever possible between various institutional statistics. Moreover, the congruity and incongruity between descriptive or qualitative reports and other such departmental publications were noted and necessary observations have been made in proper places. In many cases, quantitative evidences could not be supplied for qualitative evaluation as the same are not available. As a result, impressionistic statements, in spite of conscious attempt to keep them as minimum as possible, can be found in some cases. While secondary data have been used, inferences and explanations are made independently and attempts have been made to avoid the publicity biases of such data for which these have often been generated.

Primary data used in this study are of two types. One set of data have been culled from the records of different Government departments as well as non-Government agencies which are then classified, processed and analysed. Data of this category are not generated by the present researcher but have been used for the first time. Another set of data, used mainly in Chapter-VI, has been generated through formal

interviews using classified interview schedules. Apart from these, facts and information are also gathered through informal talks with officials and other individuals.

A total of 55 small and tiny industrial units extending over Naharlagun and Itanagar have been surveyed formally. Separate interview schedule has been prepared and canvassed for the enterprise, entrepreneurs and workers. While studying the emergence of the entrepreneurial class in Arunachal, only private sector entrepreneurs are taken into account and interviewed accordingly. But in case of workers, both those who are employed in the public sector as well as the private sector have been incorporated into the sample. Out of a total of 497 workers employed in all the 55 units under survey, a sample of 75 workers, i.e. 15 per cent of the total, has been drawn for the study. A multi-stage purposive sampling technique has been adopted for which the detail is presented in the proper place in the text.

In addition to this present chapter where a brief introduction is followed by literature survey, and the method of enquiry, the work is divided into six more chapters. An attempt is made mainly on the basis of historical and anthropological studies in Chapter-II to reconstruct the economic activities of the frontier tribes prior to Independence. The pre-Independence state of agriculture, crafts and manufacturing, and trading activities have been discussed elaborately. Chapter-III has outlined the pattern of emerging property rights, and hierarchical social relations among the traditional tribal communities of Arunachal. Chapter-IV contains discussions on the policy of the Government towards development and industrialisation of the territory during the post-Independence period in view of accelerating the process of integration. The state of industrial development under public, private and co-operative sectors, and the pattern of industrialisation witnessed by the State have been presented in Chapter-V. Chapter-VI deals with the emergence of industrial classes, i.e., the entrepreneurs and the industrial workers in Arunachal. Finally, concluding observations have been made in the last Chapter.

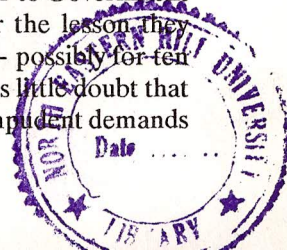
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, *Kirata-Jana-krti*, (1974), The Asiatic Society, Calcutta. Also Chatterji's observation that: "In Hindu history and

Hindu religion in Nepal, north and east Bengal and Assam, assimilation of Kirata elements is a factor of primary importance". Quoted in J.N. Chowdhury, *Arunachal Through the Ages*, (1982), published by J. Chowdhury, Shillong, p.77.

2. Harakanta Barua, *Assam Buranji*, p. 40, referred to the Akas, Daflas, Miris and Abors who were granted, during the reign of King Pratap Singh (1603-41 A.D.), some villages in the plains where inhabitants had to cultivate paddy for their masters, i.e., the above mentioned tribes. S.K. Bhuyan, (ed), *Deodhai Assam Buranji*, p. 54-55, mentioned of an early expedition of the Ahom army in 1614 A.D. against the Bangnis known as Paschima Daflas to the Assamese. Harakanta Barua, Op. cit., p. 46, reported that the Mishmis were first known to the Ahoms during the reign of King Shuchingpha (1644-48 A.D.). S.K. Bhuyan, (ed), *Kachari Buranji*, pp. 94-97, narrated the marvellous performance of the Miris who joined in King Rudra Singha's army to fight against the Kacharese (1706 A.D.). U.N. Gohain, *Assam Under the Ahoms*, pp. 7-8, reported that the migrated Khamptis from Burma were permitted to settle on the Tengapani river in 1751 A.D. by the then Ahom King. S.K. Bhuyan, *Tungkhungia Buranji*, p. 150, noted that in 1797 A.D. the Singphos in alliance with the Moamarias ravaged a number of villages in the eastern part of Assam. (Cited in L. Devi, *Ahom-Tribal Relations*, (1968), published by the authoress, Gauhati).
3. Ms. Bower also noted the point as to why the Britishers annexed and brought the tribes living south of the river Brahmaputra under direct administration sparing their northern counterparts while both the cases were unrewarding. She observed that the tribes south of the river are strong and aggressive while their compatriots to the north were 'milder' and hence the Britishers had no choice but to bring them under direct control, though it was expensive. (Ursula Graham Bower, *The Hidden Land*, (1953), John Murray, London, p. xi).

In this connection the view of Mr. Ward, the Chief Commissioner of Assam, may well be noted. Following the Abor Expedition of 1893-94, he, while reviewing the results in a letter to Government of India, wrote : "They (the Abors) may, after the lesson they have now learnt, keep quiet for five years or so - possibly for ten years; but after that, the Chief Commissioner has little doubt that the lesson of the past will have been forgotten, impatient demands



Recent Publications

STATUS OF TRIBAL WOMEN IN TRIPURA

Malabika Das Gupta (*Ed.*)

The status of the tribal women of Tripura, looked at from various angles, both in the past and at present, forms the subject-matter of this book which contains eight papers by eminent scholars of Tripura working on various aspects of the problem. The book will be informative to anthropologists, social activists and scholars involved in the study of North-East India.

SCHEDULED TRIBES IN RAJASTHAN BELOW POVERTY LINE

Bhupinder Singh and S.L. Batra

It is admitted that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes constitute the bottom dociles of the Indian society. Unlike the Scheduled Castes who live intermixed with the rest of the population, the Scheduled Tribes have been living in isolation, in most remote, inaccessible and inhospitable areas.

The importance of studies like the present one lies particularly in the fact that in planning for tribal areas and tribal communities, characterised by enormous diversities, the unique situation for each tribe has been taken into account.

VIKAS PUBLISHING HOUSE PVT LTD

576, Masjid Road, Jangpura, New Delhi-110 014