

POLITICS IN NAGA SOCIETY—THE INTER-TRIBAL RELATIONS

By

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This is to certify that Mr. Asielie Pusa has completed his Ph.D thesis "Politics in Naga Society The Inter-Tribal Relations" under my supervision. The thesis comprises original research work of his own and it has not been submitted for a Degree of Ph.D or any other Degree in any University. I recommend that this thesis be submitted for a Ph.D degree in North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong.

Prof. A. K. Baruah
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CHAPTER I

TRIBES: IN QUEST OF A DEFINITION

This work being an investigation into the inter-tribal relations within the Naga society, the assumption that there are tribal groups within the Naga society is inherent in the investigation itself. This calls for an understanding of the term tribe in conceptual and theoretical perspectives, so as to be able to identify the tribal groups in terms of their socio-economic and political features. The term 'tribe' is mostly used by sociologists and anthropologists in their study of primordial societies. Such a usage has mostly been ascriptive. They often attribute the term to any backward, primitive and traditional society which falls short of a modern organised state - as was the existing tradition in the West as well as in some civilisations of the Orient. There was very little attempt to make a theoretical investigation into the concept of 'tribe'.

The need to seek a theoretical perspective in defining 'tribe' arises in this study because it is important to know why Nagas are called tribes and in what political, socio-economic, cultural and historical structures these 'tribes' are

constituted. Only then, the inter-tribal relations can be understood and assessed.

Therefore, the method followed in this work has been of two major approaches. One required a comparative study of various tribes in general to get a view of what constitutes a tribe and what its common features are. This is done to bring out a working definition of tribe and also to formulate a theoretical framework within the ambit of which the basis for the analysis of the Naga society is formed. At this level, the study is based on secondary sources. The works of various scholars, their definitions and commentaries on tribes have been examined. A comparative analysis of the socio-economic, political, historical and cultural background of different tribes, based on relevant works by anthropologists and sociologists has been attempted as an introduction to the main research into the Naga society.

The second approach is directed to the Naga society. Here the focus is on the historical evolution of the Naga society from its primordial conditions to its present status. The study examines the structural and superstructural changes it underwent in the wake of the transformations that overtook the traditional socio-economic and political bases of the society. For this references are drawn from both primary and secondary sources. Apart from existing literature such as books, newspapers,

reports, government publications and records, wherever necessary, unstructured interviews have been conducted to substantiate the findings of this study.

With regard to press releases and pamphlets of various organisations mentioned in this work, it may be pointed out that references are mostly drawn from newspapers. This has to be resorted to because it is found that in most cases, organisations write directly to newspaper editors who publish them mostly as news items. The idea of collecting data through questionnaires was mooted, but it was decided that it would not be of much use as the subject of investigation seemed susceptible to biased responses.

The term 'tribe', etymologically, comes from the Latin word Tribus. Its earliest known application was to the three divisions of the early people of Rome - namely, Latin, Sabine and Etruscan. The Greeks applied it to the twelve tribes of Israel, pertaining to descent from the twelve sons of Jacob. Its earliest use in the English language was in the form of this usage.¹ Thus, initially, we can see that the term tribe was first adapted from its Roman root Tribus to mean social groups of common ancestry. Latter, it came to mean a primary aggregate of people in a primitive or barbaric condition, under a headman or chief.² Here,

1. Oxford English Dictionary, Vol. XI, (London, 1920), p. 339.

2. Ibid., p. 339.

we can see that it denotes a stage of development of the people it describes.

According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, characteristics of a tribe are common language, contiguous territory, common descent, uniform culture and rules of social organisation. It differentiates tribes which are "groups whose unity is based primarily upon a sense of kinship ties" from those societies "that have achieved a strictly territorial organisation in large states."³ Such a view is outdated because almost all tribes today are part and parcel of large organised states.

In International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, I. M. Lewis mentions that the term 'tribe' is derogatory and suggests that it will be preferable to use the expression "tribal society", rather than synonyms such as "primitive society" or "preliterate society". He also says that the term 'tribe' has become a technical word denoting a territorially defined political unit.⁴ The tribes today are no longer totally preliterate or primitive societies. Even the Nagas, like many other tribes today in India, have a high literacy rate.⁵ The majority in a tribe may be illiterate, but most tribes have

3. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Micropaedia, Vol. X. (Chicago, 1974), p. 115.

4. I. M. Lewis, "Tribal Society", in David L. Sills (Ed.), International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, Vol. 16, (Macmillan, 1956), p. 146.

5. See Basic Statistic of North Eastern Region, 1995, (Shillong, 1995), p. 136.

individuals who are educated on Western lines. Again, as many tribes have been incorporated into Western systems, the primitivism of these societies has to be newly interpreted as backward or undeveloped.

We find that the term has undergone changes in usage over the times. There exists a view that a tribe is a stage of human social evolution - "that society is not static".⁶ Ghanshyam Shah writes:

"All social groups were at one stage of the tribal society at one point of time; and no group can be treated as a tribe indefinitely. Socio-cultural characteristics of a tribe changes with the changes in the economic and political structure."⁷

What Shah means here is that society evolves from being a tribe into other developed systems due to changes in politico-economic structures, which is why he takes tribe to be a temporary social stage. We do agree that society changes, but society is not the tribe. A society which has already been termed tribe, may continue to identify itself as a tribe inspite of the social changes it might have undergone. This is because apart from its socio-economic features, the term 'tribe' also has acquired a political connotation, and even in times of social changes, its political character can be retained, though not necessarily in its original form. This is how tribes in India,

6. Ghanshyam Shah, Economic Differentiation and Tribal Identity, (New Delhi, 1984), pp. 4 - 5.

7. Ibid., p. 5.

like the Nagas are still known as tribes inspite of the socio-economic and political changes that they have been undergoing.

This is why we need to examine tribe from a broader perspective. Roy Turner says that anthropologists use the word 'tribe' in three distinct, but related ways: to stipulate an evolutionary stage, to distinguish one type of society from others and to label any population whose members share a common culture.⁸ In such a case it will be extremely difficult to find a singular theoretical approach. The kinds of social groups which can be called tribes under the above categories seem to be too vast. This is quite true as groups called tribes by various writers differ greatly from one another in terms of socio-economic, political, cultural and historical factors, as well as population and territorial sizes. For instance, tribal societies of the Galla and the Somali, both of north-east Africa, have a population of about three millions each, and in terms of sheer numerical size they have assumed proportions of small nations. Such tribal societies may have wider internal differentiations in their political and legal institutions than others.⁹ There are much smaller Arabian and African tribes who partially use the Arabic language and associate themselves with the world of Islam. Even in the Indian context, it can be seen

8. Roy Turner, (Ed.), Ethnomethodology, (Aylesbury Bucks, 1975), p. 54.

9. I. M. Lewis, Op.cit., p. 147.

that in many cases, social groups categorised as tribal, which are culturally and linguistically distinct, cannot be separated from the caste system and Hinduism.¹⁰ This is quite true in terms of many central Indian ethno-linguistic groups like Bhils, Korkus and Gonds etc.,¹¹ which have been singled out as tribes by the administration in view of their social characteristics and economic backwardness.

This wide ranging application of the concept of tribe gives rise to the opinion that though it is functional and "an idealised type of society", it is not "an absolute category", and also that "some societies are more or less tribal than others."¹² The underlying assumption here is that there are various categories of tribe, undergoing a process of change towards a post-tribal society. If this is so, there must be an existing limit of development beyond which a society is no longer tribal. But such a yardstick cannot exist because tribal identity in the contemporary sense is larger than the development criteria which might have been instrumental in its initial formation. History has shown that societies that have once been called tribes have not grown out of their labeling, rather they seem to have crystallised into more identifiable entities because of the formal recognition they receive from established political

10. Ibid., p. 148.

11. See Stephen Fuchs, The Aboriginal Tribes of India, (New Delhi, 1992), p. 13.

12. Ibid., p. 148.

institutions, and as we shall see later, in India they are recognised as Scheduled Tribes. In this context, what is tribal appears to mean more than merely a society in a temporary stage of social development.

It can be seen that there is an emerging reawakening of tribes even in other developed societies. Desmond Morris and Peter Marsh write of tribes as societies which are trying to claim an identity by reverting to those social practices which were common to them when they were at a particular stage or a tribal stage of development. They write:

"In West Africa we ... find many examples of recreated tribes in the newly developed cities. They are instrumental in preserving tribal traditions, rituals, and habits in settings which may appear to be a little incongruous. Industrialisation and economic development, far from destroying tribal ways of life have both fostered the re-establishment of traditional groups and generated quite new one."¹³

They also point out that even in North America there is a re-awakening of tribe consciousness, leading to the formation of tribal associations which seek to promote tribal interest and identity. They cite as examples the Crow Indian Tobacco Society, the Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia and the Pueblo Indians, as tribes which are going back to their traditional cultural

13. Desmond Morris, Peter Marsh, Tribes, (London, 1988), p. 18.

practices as an attempt to redefine their identity within their new social environments.¹⁴

Thus in defining a tribe, population, territory and developmental factors cannot be the sole determinants. There exist the postulate that social structure and social relations are important in the conceptualisation of tribe and that one has to approach it at the micro-level by being specific and subjective.¹⁵ Likewise, F. G. Bailey attempts at identifying tribes in the Indian context. He argued that tribes are not autochthones, but migrants from elsewhere. It may be noted here that all migrants are not necessarily migrants. Their weak economic conditions do not differentiate them from poor peasants in non-tribal societies. He also claims that tribal pantheon includes Hindu gods and that their religious practices are identifiable with that of the lower castes. Bailey also argues that tribal problem arises because tribal geographical isolation does not exist.¹⁶ This indicates that societies politically called tribes in India cannot be totally separated from the non-tribe mainstream because according to him in many ways they appear to be part and parcel of it. For Bailey there exist in India, a third social system which is neither caste nor tribe,

14. Ibid., p. 18.

15. See Andre Beteille, Six Essays In Comparative Studies, (New Delhi, 1974), pp. 59-62.

16. F. G. Bailey, Tribe, Caste and Nation, (Bombay, 1960), pp. 203-264.

but a result of their merger.¹⁷ This system, according to him, is agrarian; and consists of a heterogeneous body of peasants distributed into various ethnolinguistic categories.¹⁸

Caste and tribe are, however, apparently differentiable. To Bailey caste is organic and hierarchical, while tribe is segmentary and egalitarian.¹⁹ Beteille points out three criteria for caste and tribe differentiation: 1. The relative isolation of tribes as compared with caste; 2. Tribes speak a variety of dialects which differ from major Indian languages spoken by various castes; and 3. Tribals are animists while caste is associated with Hinduism.²⁰ As we proceed, we shall show that such an interpretation of tribe is no longer relevant in the contemporary sense.

As we have already seen in our reference to Bailey above, these differences do not give a clear picture of the dividing line between caste and tribe as they exist in India. Beteille writes that segmentary systems which are small in scale and also represent a definite structural type, which is easily distinguished from the more complex social systems, cannot be applicable in the Indian context because of the problem of identifying segmentary societies. From this he concludes that

17. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

18. Andre Beteille, *Op.cit.*, p. 74.

19. F. G. Bailey, *Op.cit.*, p. 15.

20. Andre Beteille, *Op.cit.*, pp. 72 - 73.

"there is no way of defining tribal society" because if we approach it broadly, it will become inclusive of the peasantry and if we take a narrow approach it would leave out many tribes which are already regarded as tribal.²¹

Both Bailey and Beteille have shown that social groups in India cannot be termed as tribes because they cannot be isolated from the mainstream social system of caste and Hinduism. However, they cannot deny that there are social groups in India which have been called tribes and furthermore, that these groups have developed a sense of identity. Tribal movements such as the demand for Bodoland and Jharkhand state are the direct outcome of tribal politics in India. This happens because they are no longer merely tribal societies, but they have developed tribe consciousness at the political level. It also can be seen that there works have been confined to only those tribes in India which have had links with the Indian mainstream. But there are many tribes in North-East India which might not have any substantial link with the central Indian culture and social system. Many tribes in North-East India were brought into contact with the mainstream only in the British era. In fact, in India tribes are so varied and are from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds that one might question as to how they came to be called tribes. We may look for the answer to this by examining the historical process under which they came to be

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

recognised as tribes.

II

The process of tribal identification started with the convention introduced by the British administrators to categorised certain backward groups in India as tribal. From 1930's onwards list of Indian tribes were prepared with a view to giving them administrative and political concessions. The list of Scheduled Tribes incorporated into the Constitution of India had its origin from these lists.²² In the 1931 Census of India, conducted by J.H. Hutton, the distinction between caste and tribe was based on religious practices. When a group appears to be clearly Hindu it was caste and, when it was 'Animist' it was treated as tribe.²³

It is seen that different states in India adopted different criteria in distinguishing tribals from the rest of the population. In Assam, one of the social categories identified as tribe was the people of Mongoloid stock belonging to the Tibeto-Burman linguistic group, existing in a village-clan type of social organisation. The Hyderabad government considered tribals as those who lived in the forests, speaking a local

22. Ibid., p. 62.

23. Ibid., p. 63.

dialect; practising marriage by force, and for their livelihood resorted to hunting, fishing and gathering of food as their main means of subsistence.²⁴ This approach to tribal identification was not empirical because there was no consistency. It appears that whether a social group was tribe or not depended on the state's prerogative. Beteille observes that "the same groups might be treated as a tribe in one state but not in another."²⁵ This leads us to the conclusion that tribes in India are not sociological categories, but are politico-administrative units.

While in India the problem of tribal identification results from the caste-tribe confusion, in Africa demarcation of tribal boundaries is found to be marred by the new tribes which are "continuously being discovered" from within the "existing clusters and language groups."²⁶ Apparently there is also a problem of anomaly in tribe consciousness. In 1960, in Ghana when the term tribe was defined as a group occupying a contiguous area, with a feeling of unity which derived from similarities in culture, having friendly contacts and a certain community of interests, a difficulty arose because members differed in their perception of their own tribal affiliation.²⁷ In this connection, it may not be out of place to quote Henry L. Bretton at length:

24. G. S. Ghurye, The Scheduled Tribes, (Bombay, 1959), p. 8.

25. Andre Beteille, Op.cit., p. 62.

26. Henry L. Bretton, Power Politics In Africa, (London, 1970), pp. 149 - 150.

27. Ibid., p. 150.

One of the most misused and abused terms encountered in the study of Africa is tribe. One must suspect that frequently its use reflects mindless addiction to a labels. It may also reflect desire by Western observers -- a desire founded on ethnocentric perspectives -- to make invidious distinctions in favour of their own culture. Many, possibly all, of Africa's tribes may well be figments of non-African imagination. They certainly seem to have more substance in the eyes outsiders than they do among indigenes. They are, in the main, products of definitional efforts not only by non-African anthropologists, sociologists and linguists but also by colonial administrators whose perception of ethnic identity appears to have been governed by administrative considerations."²⁸

In both cases, Indian and African, we find the term 'tribe' representing an ascribed classification of people into social groups by outsiders, in which the grouping was based on linguistic, cultural and territorial criteria. These so-called tribes were distinguished from non-tribal societies in respect of their primitive and fragmentary socio-economic and political systems as compared to those of the developed societies.

We find that contemporary theories on tribe are mostly attempts at defining it on the basis of the assumption that all societies distinguished from the Western concept of organised states, characterised by traditional social institutions which are more or less primitive in nature, are tribal societies. Such

28. Ibid., p. 149.

an approach seeks to conceptualise tribe by analysing its social institutions and their characters.

Likewise, tribes are said to be those ethnocentric societies in which there is "a corresponding unity and coherence in values" which are "intimately related to social institutions."²⁹ This indicates that there is bound to be group consciousness and collective participation within the system. But such a society cannot qualify as a tribe unless it fulfills the political and ideological connotations of being a tribe. For any group to be a tribe its collective identity and behaviour must reflect the existence of the notion of a tribe. We are of the view that such a notion did not exist as it does in contemporary tribal societies, in the pre-colonial period. Our argument here is that tribe is essentially a foreign concept with which the so-called tribals came to familiarise themselves with as result of its imposition on them.

Jacob J. Kattakayam sees tribal communities as "closely knit" and "self-contained" groups which are isolated from the mainstream of society, which is why they are more susceptible to the forces of social change than open societies.³⁰ For him tribal communities seem to be an inseparable part of a larger society, and tribal identity is realised only when it is juxtaposed

29. I. M. Lewis, Op.cit., p. 147.

30. Jacob J. Kattakayam, Social Structure and Change Among Tribals, (New Delhi, 1983), p. 1.

comparatively, with the "mainstream" or the modernised segments" of society. He opines that tribal societies are characterised by "traditional values and primitive technology" which are incongruent with those of the modern world. Hence, he says "governments everywhere are striving to modernise them in an attempt at integrating them with the mainstream of social life."³¹

Kattakayam, in assuming that all tribal societies exist within larger modern societies, commits a historical blunder because societies that we call tribal existed on their own even prior to their exposition to developed societies. Here, he can only mean that a society is tribal when it becomes part of a larger system within which it retains its original characteristics. But this is unacceptable because in a multi-ethnic system any minority group can exist without necessarily being labeled a tribe. It also fails to explain those tribal societies that might have undergone structural changes and reorganisation. Also, the question of integrating tribals with the mainstream of society may not be applicable in all cases, especially with those tribes which have assumed proportions of nationalities.

It can be seen that it is not possible to generalise societies which are called tribes and arrive at a common

31. Ibid., p. 1.

definition by subjective approach alone. Such attempts have failed mostly because these societies vary greatly in many aspects from one another. We may say that a comprehensive and acceptable study of tribal societies must encompass three categories of tribes: 1. Tribes which are in their pristine stage, 2. tribes which have come under modern systems and, 3. tribes which have been transformed into nationalities or independent states.

The parameters we have traversed so far in our search for a centralised idea of tribe seemed to have only widened our perspective. For our purpose, let us at the moment agree, at the subjective level, with the philosophical proposition that different tribes are tribes "because of a network of criss-crossing resemblances."³² The basis of our study so far, we can bring out the following areas in which criss-crossing resemblances may occur: 1. Peoples of common ancestry and language occupying a contiguous area or migrating collectively; 2. Economically unorganised societies, using primitive technology; a production system which barely meets subsistence level; 3. Social systems are governed by traditions which exist intrinsically within the cultural and religious milieu; and 4. Consequential to the ascription of societies sharing such features as tribes, was their continuous transformation in all

32. Laldineni, "The Idea of a Tribe and the Problem of Cultural Identity", (Unpublished M. Phil Dissertation, submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1985), p. 12.

aspects which developed from their merger with the developed systems:

Such subjective approach has been found to be too broad. It fails to differentiate between tribes and non-tribes. It confuses ethnic groups of similar features with tribes. In the same way, it renders no solution to a distinction between caste and tribe. But the fact remains that many societies sharing similar characteristics have been categorized as tribes. As a result of being inducted with the idea of tribe, these societies have developed tribe consciousness and assumed tribal identity. This gives rise to an objective meaning of tribe, in order to understand and define which, it is necessary to examine the processes leading to its formation.

The development of the need for a distinction between tribal and non-tribal societies was essentially a result of the merger of the two. Most tribal societies got their label at the time of the imperialist expansion. This distinction becomes automatically acceptable to the so-called tribal societies as they were absorbed into the hegemonic domain of the West. Breton explains this:

"Scholarly or not, tribe is in any case a form of culture bias, for in its current use in the African context the term is rooted quite evidently in Western social consciousness. In literary existence it is a reflection mainly of Western European demographic mapping endeavours."³³

33. Henry L. Breton, Op.cit., p. 262.

Here, he is outlining the cultural implications which acted as the basis for the demarcation and identification of tribes. We cannot neglect the underlying hegemonic political impositions by way of which the so-called tribal societies were brought under the purview of Western political systems, under which they were adopted as stateless territorial societies and absorbed into the 'State' of the imperial invaders. By virtue of the presumption that imperial states were the only accepted systems, they unilaterally legalised the adoption of these societies into their states.

We can see that the term 'tribe', at the time of its origin, served as a term which is ascribed to those primordial and native societies which the Western states came into interaction with in the process of the advancement of imperialism. Initially it seemed to have served as a term which differentiates between societies on the basis of the extent of their development. This reflects the possibility that the utility of the concept tribe was simply representative of the desire of ethnocentric Western observers who made the distinctions in favour of their own culture.³⁴ If this is so, there may be some truth in saying that "tribe has been an instrument of colonial rule."³⁵

34. See Ibid., p. 149.

35. Ibid., p. 149.

In the relationship between the two, it was the tribal insignia which implicitly placed the Western ruler in the role of the altruistic good Samaritan, come to save the primitive tribal people and rescue them from the dark ages. In a way, the basis of this distinction is ideological. It derecognises the validity of tribal rights to self-determination and maintenance of status-quo, while at the same time it justifies the imposition of Western socio-economic and political systems upon the tribes for whom its acceptance becomes cogently binding. This was more so because imperialism also marked the establishment of the nation-state as an insuperable ideological principle. In this connection, we may mention Crawford Young's statement that "the public ideology of the colonial state was adapted to the practical exigencies of securing its hegemony."³⁶

It can be seen that the conceptualisation of tribe has to be done in the context of its juxtaposition and relationship with the nation state. Tribal societies were chalked out on the basis of language, religion and community etc.³⁷ This classification of social groups into tribes does not denote uniformity among them; it was done by outsiders in an arbitrary manner.³⁸ There is a possibility that societies called tribes may differ in many ways from one another. It may be noted here that

36. Crawford Young, "Ethnicity and the Colonial and Post-Colonial State in Africa", R. Paul Brass, (ed.), Ethnic groups and the State, (Kent, 1985), p. 61.

37. See Ibid., p. 74.

38. Henry L. Bretton, Op.cit., p. 152.

what we call tribes are "administratively created" by "colonial regimes."³⁹

It may be said that tribal boundaries demarcated by the colonial rulers were based on administrative convenience. This diminishes the importance of conceptual considerations in the attribution of societies as tribes. Thus, initially, we may say that the reason for calling a social group a tribe was not because it had features befitting an existing idea of a tribe, but rather because it was in conformity with the administrative policy of the colonial ruler. This indicates that tribal boundaries were drawn without any references to the nature of the tribes in question. This leads us to the crux of the problem - the processes of change that led to the conceptual development of the idea of tribes as it exists today.

On the basis of our study so far, we reject casual socio-anthropological labeling of primitive systems as tribes,⁴⁰ as tribes which are no longer tribes by that definition still tend to claim its identity as tribes. The view that all societies were at one point tribal⁴¹ and that all societies go through a

39. Raymond Arthorpe, "Does Tribalism Really Matter?" As cited in Paul Brass (ed.), Ethnic Groups and the State, (Kent, 1985), p. 74.

40. See S. N. Eisenstadt (ed.), Political Sociology, Vol. 1, (Jaipur, 1989), pp. 84-85.

41. Ghanashyan Shah, Op. cit., p. 5.

stage of development as part of their social evolution⁴² cannot be accepted because it assumes that the path of social change is calibrated - a point of which is demarcated as tribal. The objective usage of tribe, in which it is not an attribute of society, but one which defines it, assumes that the idea of tribe precedes the society so-called. Prior to being called tribes these primordial societies were having their own modes of existence regardless of what the term 'tribe' may mean. We may say that it was with the attribution of the term tribe on these societies that it began to crystallise as a concept and derive its meaning.

All societies brought under the category of tribes are not homogeneous entities. In chalking out tribal boundaries, structural aspects did not seem to have carried any weightage. The possibility of being called a tribe was dependent on the colonial administration and the question of qualification did not arise. We cannot say that all tribes originate in the same way. Some may emerge from splits in existing tribes, resulting from developments in tribal politics. A fine example of this can be seen in the emergence of some new Naga tribes. The Pochury tribe recently split from the Chakhesangs to become a full-fledged tribe; while the Chakhesangs themselves had been a tribe which resulted from splitting away from the Angamis. We shall discuss

42. Adityendra Rao, Tribal Social Stratification, (Udaipur, 1988), p. 5.

this in detail later.

This leads to the fact that all tribes are not created by the same determinants. Tribes have undergone tremendous changes. The term tribe has acquired new meaning and tribal societies have become complex. It must have been this that prompted Bailey to presume that tribes can turn into non-tribes systems.⁴³ But we disagree and here, we shall contend that whatever forms or meaning they might have taken, we cannot deny that there are societies which have developed tribe consciousness and that tribes have come to stay. They have found a place as a political entity within the present system. Thus, the conceptualisation of a tribe and the derivation of a definition of a tribal society within the contextual limits of the subject in question, as Beteille says of Bailey's approach,⁴⁴ is no longer appropriate. It has to be a general approach.

Now, we feel that the term tribe represents a singular concept. This is because tribes are no longer merely so in nomenclature. In most so-called tribal societies, members have begun to identify themselves with their respective tribes as they seem to have developed common socio-economic and political goals. In most cases, group consciousness and a sense of belonging to a particular tribe has developed. Not only does tribal identity exist but also group behaviour in terms of allegiance to one's

43. F. G. Bailey, Op.cit., p. 74.

tribe, giving rise to inter-tribal confrontations has become a reality. It can be found that this occurs mostly because tribes are in pursuit of goals within a singular system which also serves as a common resource arena. For instance, let us consider the Jharkhand movement in Bihar. Only recently the Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council has been created for the tribals of Bihar. But the Paharia tribe is unhappy with their representation in the Council and they have started agitating in demand for a separate council for themselves.⁴⁵

We cannot agree more with Bretton, in saying that "tribe is in dire need of reinterpretation, and that in its traditional form it is an extremely undependable analytical tool."⁴⁶ Earlier attempts to define tribe have failed, we can say on account of its dependence on anthropological inferences and imperialistic distinction of societies, which can be found to be meaningful only at the formative stage. Anthropologists were not willing to reinterpret tribe and accept its new dimensional expansions. This shows in Beteille's opinion that "we no longer have tribes in their pure state but only tribes in transition."⁴⁷ We reject this because if there is a "pure state" of tribes, at such a stage all tribes should be homogeneous and there should be an empirical consensus on its meaning. Besides, being

44. Andre Beteille, Op.cit., p. 62.

45. Tapas Chakraborty, "Paharias Renew Stir for Autonomy", The Telegraph, (Calcutta, 8th October, 1995), p. 7.

46. Henry L. Bretton, Op.cit., p. 262.

transitional is not exclusive to tribes. All societies are subject to change and the fact that tribes are in transition should not mean that tribes are no longer tribes. We believe that the idea of a tribe has come to stay with those societies which have come to identify themselves with it; and that even in transition, they do so as tribes.

As Beteille mentions of the changes that have been taking place among India's tribal people, we agree that there have been changes among tribals with respect to modes of production, relations of production, and that market economy has rendered in structural changes into tribal societies.⁴⁸ This changes cannot be isolated from the capitalist system which was introduced into the Third World countries as result of colonial rule.⁴⁹ The integration of tribal societies into the new world system invalidates the transitional attribution of tribal societies as isolated primitive social systems.

Theoretically, tribals are no longer animists, illiterate and traditional in toto. They have become participants in the democratic processes, capitalists market economy and also come in within the social umbrella of contemporary culture. Morris and Marsh write:

47. Andre Beteille, Op.cit., p. 70.

48. Ibid., p. 70.

49. Pierre Francois Gonidec, African Politics, (The Hague, 1981), p. 4.

"Traditional tribes are ... fast disappearing from our planet. "Civilisation" has with ruthless efficiency waged a genocidal war against tribal cultures Tribes are seduced away from their traditional life style by false promises of 20th Century technological societies."⁵⁰

However, with can say that this did not result in the exit of tribes. Instead, tribes seem to have found a niche as a forceful entity in modern politics. In post-colonial era, tribes have adapted themselves in the newly formed nation-states as an influential structural force. This is what Morris and Marsh have to say:

As the "primitive" mode of living vanishes, tribalism lives on. The larger and more heterogeneous modern societies become, the more people are inclined to recreate the tribe; they fashion for themselves natural units in which a sense of "belonging" is still possible."⁵¹

This is why they attempted at making a distinction between what they say are moribund traditional tribes and emerging modern tribes. But we find that they ignore the traditional and modern continuum of tribes when they say that tribes are recreated; and that groups with common social bondings, newly created out of social conditions in modern societies also can be called tribes.⁵² However, we feel that

50. Desmond Morris, Peter Marsh, Op.cit., p. 9.

51. Ibid., p. 9.

52. See Ibid., pp. 9 - 11.

tribe has been purely a colonial legacy and it is not possible for such new groups to develop a common consciousness and identity, comparative to established tribes which have a political orientation directly linked to their socio-economic and political history. Our present study is to examine tribes in the light of this perspective.

It is seen that the formation of tribes can be traced back to the beginning of the identification of societies as tribes by scholars and writers. But mere identification from outside cannot mean anything by itself. It was the inculcation of the notion of a tribe into the minds of the people which made it acceptable. This was done through the imposition of Western rule, along with which came Western education and its cultural influence. This destroyed the very roots of the traditional value base and the newly ascribed identity became acceptable to them as one which distinguishes them from the Western societies. The ideological implications in this distinction cannot be underestimated as it is instrumental in upholding Western hegemonic dominance. It was made rationale behind the acceptance of Western rule. Now, we may inquire into the various factors emanating from the circumstances involving such a relationship which contributed to the crystallisation of tribal identities.

The question remains - if tribes are primitive societies why do they persist even after exposure to developed

societies and their systemic merger with them. The answer to this lies in the fact that the so-called tribes have come to identify themselves as societal entities and also find political recognition as tribes within the larger systems. In incorporating these entities, systemic politico-administrative and economic adjustments occur. The tribal character itself come into play with the social and structural changes. As we shall see later, the development of these complexities lead to the politicisation of tribes from which emerges tribalism. We may call these the process of tribalisation and examine it more thoroughly for our purpose of conceptualising 'tribe'.

The acceptance of a new political status, as tribes, within the structural periphery of the nation-state by native societies, necessitated the induction of politico-administrative caveats into the political system. This accrues from a relationship between the two in which there is a marked difference in development level. As an example we cite the Indian tribes which are constitutionally recognised as Scheduled Tribes. It seem appropriate to quote Adityendra Rao here:

"In the Indian context, tribe is ... basically a politico-administrative category and has hardly retained any of its socio-cultural characteristics. That is why, perhaps, our constitution uses the term tribe in its administrative connotation. For constitution Scheduled Tribes are those which are backward and which deserve special provisions for

development."⁵³

Such formal provision form the basis on which tribals find identification with the new nomenclature. This makes a tribe a formal political entity and a morphological appendage of politics in general.

Joane Nagel writes that tribal identity in America is the result of a policy which recognises tribes "as geo-political units and thus foci of government programmes and legislation."⁵⁴ This is clearly reflected in American Indian policy which suggests the maintenance of tribal sovereignty within the boundaries of tribal reservations and finds the individual tribe as appropriate units for representation of tribes at the national level.⁵⁵ In the case of African countries where political system may be more or less entirely tribal, colonial administrators have left behind tribal identities formed on the basis of administrative considerations.⁵⁶ All these cases indicate that in the post-colonial era, the tribe has become a

53. Adityendra Rao, Op.cit., p. 7.

54. Joane Nagel, "The Political Mobilisation of Native Americans," Norman R. Yetman, (ed.), Majority and Minority: The Dynamics of Race and Ethnicity in American Life, (Massachusetts, 1985), p. 458.

55. Alvin Ziontz, "Recent Government Attitudes Toward Indian Tribal Autonomy and Separation in the United States", Paul R. Brass, (ed.), Op.cit., pp. 321-323.

56. Henry L. Bretton, Op.cit., p. 149.

formal political unit, deeply rooted within the state political system.

It may be pointed out here that the intrinsic character of societies which came to be called as tribes might also have contributed towards the crystallisation of tribal identities. The weakness of such societies, their backwardness and their susceptibility to exploitation when merging with developed societies, rationalises the need for creating caveats to protect their interests. We have already seen that these societies are closely-knitted and bound together by traditional kinship ties. This may continue to influence tribes.⁵⁷ On the other hand, the administrators or rulers may for their own advantages seek to sustain the traditional character of these societies, by distorting it to match their own purposes. Bretton calls this "the mummification of so-called tribal traditions."⁵⁸

It is seen that under colonial rule native societies have been formally constituted as tribes within new administrative set-ups. This subjected tribes to a new economic and political system - one which is dominant and assimilative and therefore hegemonic according to the Gramscian notion.⁵⁹ We can assume that this becomes the basis for a change in the

57. See Renuka Pamecha, Elite In Tribal Society, (Jaipur, 1985), p. 26.

58. Henry L. Bretton, Op.cit., p. 263.

59. Richard R. Weiner, Cultural Marxism and Political Sociology, (London, 1981), p. 20.

consciousness of the societies in question. Since consciousness is derived from "existing praxis,"⁶⁰ Here, we can say that colonial rule ushered in a change of praxis which in the Marxian sense is catalytic to society.⁶¹ In this case, we cannot agree more that "socio-cultural characteristics of a group change with the changes in economic and political structure."⁶² In the Indian context, Andre Beteille has pointed out that with changes in technology, tribal production system has changed and market economy has altered the socio-economic structure of the village itself.⁶³ We may say these changes resulted from colonial rule and have sustained as a post-colonial phenomenon.

The changes that came about in the colonial era can be identified in the sphere of economic practices, administration, education, religious behaviour and cultural values. The impact of these changes brought about social imbalance and created social stratification.⁶⁴ Here, it may be relevant to quote John, who says:

"An important dimension of social differentiation in colonial society is between those who participate in the new economy and those who exist outside of it."⁶⁵

60. Ibid., p. 30.

61. Ibid., p. 17.

62. Ghanshyam Shah, Op.cit., p. 5.

63. Andre Beteille, Op.cit., p. 70.

64. See Adityendra Rao. Op.cit., pp. 2-4.

65. John Rex, Race Relations In Sociological Theory, (London, 1983), p. 38.

An illustration of this can be found in the writings of Pierre Francois Gonidec. According to him, colonisation helped break up pre-capitalist relationships in Africa. The African Chiefs were transformed into bourgeois by becoming landowners. On the fringe of dominant foreign bourgeoisie who controlled the mining, industrial, commercial and financial sectors, an African bourgeoisie and petite bourgeoisie emerged. Africans trained in colonial schools, loaded with Western values, who took over subordinate functions of the administrative set-up emerged as a bureaucratic petite bourgeoisie. And thus, "it underwent the influence of the capitalist system."⁶⁶

Tribal social stratification is characterised not only by a change in the economic and power base but also the interference of new set of values and a change in the value system.⁶⁷ This does not mean that the old values are cast away, rather they come into interplay with the new ones.⁶⁸ Therefore, in the stratification of society value aspects have considerable relevance. Since the dominant values undoubtedly Western oriented, those who represent them occupy the higher rungs of the social strata. This leads us to agree with Pradip Kumar Bose, that the existence of a tribal identity does not reflect identical economic interests, but that interests may be

66. Pierre Francois Gonidec, Op.cit., p. 11.

67. G. S. Ghurye, Op.cit., p. 11.

68. K. S. Padhy, Satapathy, Purna Chandra, Tribal India, (New Delhi, 1989), p. 13.

contradictory among the different ranks in tribes.⁶⁹

Now, let us examine the societal milieu within which such contradictions take place in order to understand its consequences. The homogeneity of what came to be known as the tribal society was broken with the influx of aliens brought by colonial rule. We may say that tribes themselves became ethnic groups within the new multi-ethnic social systems.⁷⁰ When a society is multi-ethnic the problem of power balance between the different ethnic groups arises. In such a situation, tribal groups which are composed of subdued backward native peoples, naturally become minority groups.⁷¹ Under these circumstances, tribal identity is likely to get strengthened, as it is confronted with other groups of conflicting interests.

This accrues from the fact that the modern state, which every tribal society has become part of, is a storehouse of common resources; and social relations are determined by access to these resources.⁷² In this context, Dan R. Aronson says:

69. Pradip Kumar Bose, Classes and Class Relations Among Tribals of Bengal, (New Delhi, 1985), p. 123.

70. An ethnic group "is socially distinguished or set apart, by others and / or by itself, primarily on the basis of cultural or nationality characteristics."
Joe R. Feagin, Racial and Ethnic Relations, (New Jersey, 1978), p. 9.

71. Minority groups refer to "a distinct group or social category occupying a subordinate position of prestige, privilege, and power.", Norman R. Yetman, (ed.), Op.cit., p. 1.

72. See Paul R. Brass, (ed.), Op.cit., p. 3-6.

The pursuit of value alternatives within a single resource arena divides ethnic groups from other self-conscious, political, even historically permanent, groups."⁷³

In addition to this, in most modern states, there exist 'protective discrimination' to meet the needs of the weaker sections of society which may promote the formation of new group identities.⁷⁴ Under these circumstances, as tribes become part of a plural society, vying for maximum access to resources from a common source, demands for new tribal status and stronger tribal identities may emerge.

In stratified tribal societies, the elite has come to occupy a dominant and influential position.⁷⁵ The tribal elite has their own aspirations and interests within the system, and they may use their position to mobilise tribal allegiance in pursuit of their own goals.⁷⁶ This can be seen in cases where tribalism is invoked "to mobilise support for purely factional assaults on the power structure."⁷⁷ It may also, like in the case of African petite bourgeoisie, lead to movements against colonial

73. Dan R. Aronson, "Ethnicity as a Cultural System: An Introductory Essay," Frances Henry, (ed.), Ethnicity in the Americas, (Paris, 1976), p. 17.

74. Paul R. Brass, Op.cit., p. 7 - 8.

75. See Asielie Pusa, "The Emergence of Naga Consciousness", (Unpublished M. Phil. Dissertation, Submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1987), pp. 46 - 53.

76. Ibid., pp. 77 - 80.

77. Henry L. Bretton, Op.cit., p. 268.

rule, and propagate nationalist ideas among tribals.⁷⁸ In this connection, we may say that the processes through which tribal sentiments are invoked and mobilised result in the politicisation of tribes.

It is clear from the above that politicisation of tribes takes place when the dominant and influential stratum within the stratified tribal society, attribute and interpret their behaviour in pursuit of their own goals, to that of tribes. When this happens, tribalistic considerations may begin to influence individual and group behaviours; and what ensues from this we may term as tribalism. Therefore, tribalism is a behavioural trait in an individual, characterised by tribal sentiments and prejudice, which is collectively present in social groups, in the form of a common consciousness of being a tribe.

It can be seen that tribalism denotes a conflict of interests among social groups and this has given rise to the organisation of groups into political entities, led by tribal elites, after their education in Western political systems. There is no doubt that the development of tribe consciousness can be traced back to the political history of societies which came to be known as tribes, as a result of Western imperialism - when tribes were first encountered by outsiders and categorised as

78. Pierre Francois Gonidec, Op.cit., pp. 23 - 25.

tribes on the basis of their socio-economic and political backwardness.

But since then tribes seem to have come a long way; and on the ^sba₁is of the new role tribes pose in modern day politics, tribes can no longer be defined within the limits of the ascriptive parameter which accounted for its origin. We know that earlier attempts to define tribe from this perspective were unable to bring out the distinction between tribes and other social groups with which they share silmilar socio-economic and political features; also the emergence of new tribes could not be explained. A new and comprehensive definition of tribe must incorporate its historical développement and also explain its character as a contemporary political concept. Therefore, as it is understood from our analysis, from a general standpoint we can see that a tribe is a socio-economic and political entity, operating within a lager system, apparently seeking its group inerests, on the basis of its ascribed status. Finally, we may say that tribes as we find in contemporary India are political units, identified by the developed West on the ^sba₁is of their level of development, and adopted by various communities, which find recognition in organised political institutions or systems, within which they act as interest groups on a formal basis.

We must admit that the definitional problem of tribe is really a huge task for a researcher and it requires much deeper study than what we have attempted in this work. It is quite obvious that we have to draw a line within the scope of this study. Our purpose is to use the above theoretical framework as an analytical tool in our investigation of politics in Naga society. And we hope for the present it will suffice to arrive at a clearer understanding of Naga society and its politics.

CHAPTER II

THE NATURE OF TRIBES IN THE PRE-BRITISH NAGA SOCIETY

CHAPETR II

THE NATURE OF TRIBES IN THE PRE-BRITISH NAGA SOCIETY

As we have established in our theoretical framework, the Naga society in the pre-British period has been found to be categorised as tribal by their Western administrators, based on a general approach to the term 'tribe' in the field of social sciences, in view of its primitive socio-economic and political character; which was enveloped within a traditional cultural system as compared to the developed Western societies organised into states. But we can see that a lot of changes have occurred since. The constitution of tribes and the state of inter-tribal relations in the pre-British period are found to be entirely different from that of the present. However, as the basis of the existing classification of Naga tribes goes back to the pre-British period, a study of inter-tribal relations within the Naga society cannot be conducted without a thorough understanding of the nature of Naga society at this period.

Very little history of the Nagas has been recorded. Since the Nagas did not have a script, all history had been passed on through an oral tradition. Serious consideration of such history becomes extremely difficult as it cannot be separated from myths and lores. Also, urbanisation and Western

influence, apart from undermining its weightage, have almost totally disrupted the chain of this tradition. Another problem is that very little research work on the Nagas has been done so far, and those written by Western writers may not be comprehensive and insightful or may lack factual accuracy. This could arise because their perspective was restricted by the tendency to interpret facts in the Western outlook. A fine illustration of this can be seen in the confusion over defining traditional social divisions. As we shall find later in our study, it can be seen that the labelling of social groups by Western authors in certain cases did not tally with the traditional system. Even then, for our purpose, it will be beyond the scope of this study to look for first-hand materials to substantiate this chapter, therefore we shall rely solely on secondary sources.

The Nagas are Indo-Mongoloid people,¹ occupying the eastern Himalayan foothills, extending from the plains of eastern Assam to the Samract tract of Northern Burma, with Manipur to the South and Arunachal Pradesh to the North.² It is difficult to identify the exact boundaries of the Naga inhabited areas because they fall within different political units. According to J. P. Mills Naga inhabited territory is bounded by the Hukawng valley in the North-East, the plains of Brahmaputra valley to the North-West, Kachar to the South-West, with the Chinwin river to

1. Verrier Elwin, Nagaland, (Shillong, 1961), p. 1.

2. Asoso Yonuo, The Rising Nagas, (New Delhi, 1974), p. 1.

the East.³ The total area occupied by the Nagas is said to be around 20,000 square miles.⁴ Of the tribes living in this territory Asoso Yonuo identifies thirtynine tribes: Angami, Chakhesang, Ao, Sema, Lotha, Kuki, Chang, Konyak, Khienmungan, Sangtam, Yimchunger, Phom, Damsa, Zemai, Liangmai, Rongmai, Mao, Maram, Thangal, Tangkhul, Maring, Kom, Chiru, Anal, Moyong, Mongsang, Lamgang, Nocte, Tangsa, Wancho, Sinpho, Khampti, Haimi, Htangram, Rangpan, Para and Kalyo Kengyo.⁵

We do not know the basis of this classification. Factors such as British recognition of tribes, tribal reorganisation, Naga nationalism and the political division of Nagas into different states, may have a role to play in tribal taxonomy. As such, we can safely say that there is a difference in the constitution of tribes between the pre-British period and the present day. Our purpose now will be to find out at what social and political organisational level a tribe might have been identified as a distinct tribal entity in the pre-British period. In order to investigate this we shall start with the early migration of the Nagas.

The exact origin of the Nagas remains unknown due to lack of dependable historical records. Some writers have suggested the original home of the Nagas to be the east, and that

3. J.P. Mills, The Lotha Nagas, (Kohima, 1980), p. xvi.

4. Asoso Yonuo, Op.cit, p. 1.

5. Ibid., pp. 6 - 7.

similarities they share with the natives of Borneo, Sumatra, Formosa and Phillipines support their view.⁶ On the other hand, Visier Sanyu, a Naga scholar believes that the Nagas migrated from China in the pre-Christian era. Their migration, he says, took place in various waves spreading over centuries; in the process of which they came across influences in technology, varied social, political and religio-cultural traditions as they came into contact with other races. He believes that the nations of Borneo, Java, Sumatra and the Phillipines are also a part of these migrations.⁷ Sanyu, however, fails to authenticate this theory as he does not provide any evidence, except for claiming that there are similarities among them.

M. Alemchiba is of the opinion that the different Naga tribes share the same original home at one time. He groups the Mao, Angami, Sema and Lotha tribes as a single wave of immigrants whose original home was Khezhakenoma. The Tangkhul, Sangtam, Kheinmungam, Yimchunger, Chang and the Ao tribes are considered as another such 'wave group'.⁸ This wave theory suggests that some Naga tribes were sharing the same home at a particular point of time in their history. Therefore, there is the possibility that they might have shared the same village and come

6. M. Alemchiba, A Brief Historical Account of Nagaland, (Kohima, 1970), pp. 12 - 16.

7. Visier Sanyu, "The History of Village Formation Among The Angami Nagas: A Case Study of Kohima and Khonoma Villages", (Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, Submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1987), pp. 22 - 24.

8. M. Alemchiba, Op.cit., pp. 19 - 21.

from a much smaller social group such as a single tribe, clan or even family. But it is difficult to explain the relationship between two different wave groups from this dimension, and this needs further investigation.

The postulate that the Nagas might have been of a singular origin and ancestry finds support in the works of many anthropologists pertaining to the Nagas of the 19th century. W. C. Smith found similarities, though apparently they were not entirely uniform, in the customs and lifestyle of the Naga tribes.⁹ M. Horam opines that the Naga tribes and sub-tribes resemble one another to a great extent and as such the similarities outstrip the differences between them. He says that factors such as the multiplicity of language can easily be understood when one realises the isolated nature in which they lived as small social groups.¹⁰ According to E. A. Gait, the Naga tribes shared the same religious beliefs and differences occurred only in terms of practice, while the fundamental principles remained the same.¹¹ Pemberton also describes the Nagas as a "singular race of people" and identified them as those living between the north-western extremity of Kachar and the frontiers

9. See W. C. Smith, The Ao Naga Tribes of Assam, (London, 1952), as quoted in M. Horam, Naga Polity, (New Delhi, 1975), pp. 36 - 37.

10. M. Horam, Naga Polity, (New Delhi, 1975), pp. 40 - 42.

11. E. A. Gait, "Census of India, 1891", in Verrier Elwin (ed.), The Nagas of the Nineteenth Century, (Bombay, 1969), pp. 36 - 37.

of Chittagong.¹² In the view of William Robinson, there appears to be some marks by which the Naga tribes are distinguished from their neighbours and some commonalities by which they are all bound together as one people.¹³ The works of these commentators reveal that they have come to these conclusions by observing the customs, traditions and cultural practices of the various Naga tribes. Verrier Elwin observes that "there is an atmosphere, a spirit in a Naga which is unmistakeable."¹⁴ But of course, this seems like, it is a very personal view.

The Nagas might have been one people, but they did not have a common name known to themselves - one which defined their identity as a single ethnic group. Their stage of development in the pre-British period is proof enough that there existed no socio-economic, political or religious unity among the Naga tribes and that they did not have pan-Naga inter-communication among themselves. Each individual village, therefore, might have existed independently on its own. It may be appropriate to quote Verrier Elwin here:

"The name (Naga) ... was not in general use among the Nagas until recently. It was given them by the people of the plains and in the last century was used discriminately for the Abors and Daflas as well as for the Nagas themselves. Even as late as 1954, I found

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12. R. B. Pemberton in H. H. Wilson, Documents Illustrative of the Burmese War, 1827, Verrier Elwin (ed.), Op.cit., (Bombay, 1969), p. 42.
13. William Robinson, A Descriptive Account of Assam, 1841, (New Delhi), p. 381.
14. Verrier Elwin, Nagaland, op.cit., p. 5.

people of Tuensang rarely speaking of themselves as Nagas, but as Konyaks, Changs, Phoms and so on Gradually, however, as the Nagas became more united they began to use the name for themselves, until today it has become widely popular."¹⁵

A point worth mentioning on the Naga identity is that though they themselves did not have unity and lack a common name, they were easily distinguished from non-Naga tribes such as Kukis, Lushais and Chins inhabiting the same geographical area by early anthropologists.¹⁶ Even T. C. Hodson picked up Tangkhuls, Mao and Maram, Kolyo Khoirao, Kubuis, Queirengs, Chirus and Marings as Naga tribes in Manipur, but clearly stated that the Kukis who were a nomadic tribe are not Nagas.¹⁷ Again, it may be mentioned that though the Naga territory touches the Hindu boundaries of Manipur and Assam, they remained more or less untouched by Hinduism.¹⁸ This happened in spite of the contact they had with both the Ahoms and Manipuris, and the economic relations that existed among them.¹⁹ The fact that there exist a distinctive Naga character cannot be doubted. Neville Maxwell points out that Nagas find no difficulty in identifying themselves from the other non-Naga tribes of Assam and Burma.²⁰

15. *Ibid.*, p.4.

16. See Ursala Graham Bower, Naga Path, (London, 1986), p. 1.

17. T. C. Hodson, The Naga Tribes of Manipur, (New Delhi, 1986), p. 6.

18. J. Hutton, Report on Naga Hills, (New Delhi, 1986), p. 6.

19. See Asielie Pusa, "The emergence of Naga Consciousness", (Unpublished M. Phil. Dissertation submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1987), p. 23.

20. Neville Maxwell, India and the Nagas, (London, 1973), p. 2.

Similarly, Hokishe Sema opines that the Naga identity is distinct both in India and Burma.²¹ However, it is evident from their amorphous state that in the pre-British period, the Nagas never claimed such an identity.

What we have seen so far is that the Nagas might have come from a common origin and that they apparently share common features of a distinguishable identity. What then are the reasons for their division into different tribes of distinct characters that led authors such as Hokishe Sema, to say that the Naga "cultural and social set-up varies vastly from tribe to tribe?"²² The underlying assumption here can be seen to be that social organisational patterns and cultural traits form the basis of tribal differentiations. A similar opinion has been propounded by Sanyu in saying that "the whole Naga tribal society was divided into various tribes and each tribe was independent of the other."²³ We know here he is referring to the pre-British period because he claims that "there was no centralised political structure and each tribe was governed by its own Chiefs or elders, under various tribal customs and traditions."²⁴ Such a tribe as mentioned by Sanyu, cannot encompass a social organisation bigger than the village, since in the early days Nagas had no organisation beyond the bounds of the village.

21. Hokishe Sema, The Emergence of Nagaland, (Salibabad, 1986), p. 1.

22. Ibid., p. 1.

23. Visier Sanyu, Op.cit., p. 51 - 52.

24. Ibid., pp. 51 - 52.

Due to factors of primitive economy, social structure and geographical isolation, it is believed that the Naga village was self-dependent, sovereign, politically and economically distinct, as well as a completely separate religious unit.²⁵ Therefore, at this period a tribe could not have been larger than the village.

We agree with Hodson that "the village rather than a group of villages or tribe, is the natural unit of organisation and therefore the proper basis of investigation," for the understanding of the Naga society.²⁶ By this we do not deny that cultural and linguistic links may extend beyond the village organisation. Henry Balfour says:

"Although the Nagas as a whole exhibit a general similarity of culture and possess many ideas, habits, and occupations in common, there are many individual traits which differentiate the culture of one group from that of another. Variations in physical type, in language, and in customs afford materials for classification and segregation into more or less well defined ethnic divisions, and inspite of evidence pointing to a common ancestry, it is manifest that various influences have affected the development of the Nagas, both physically and culturally, and have contributed to a complex which calls for scientific analysis."²⁷

We can see that this justifies the Western division of Nagas into tribes. But such a classification may not be totally dependable as there is the tendency to differentiate between

25. Asielie Pusa, *Op.cit.*, p. 20.

26. T. C. Hodson, *Op.cit.*, p. 20.

27. J. P. Mills, *The Ao Nagas*, (Bombay, 1973), pp. xix - xx.

tribes on the basis of external variations, such as dress and coiffure, which are liable to change, rather than on more important aspects like structure and customs which are less capable of undergoing rapid change.²⁸ It is more so because customs and styles may emerge loosely as cultural phenomenon, but are not necessarily ethnic. We need to note that differences in customs and traditions within the same group, such as the Angamis, may also exist at different levels.²⁹ A. Yanang Konyak, writing about his own tribe says cultural practices among the Konyaks differ from village to village.³⁰ In the opinion of J. H. Hutton, a tribe such as the Semas, can only be called so because the villages which they inhabit are organised on a generally prevalent pattern throughout the tribe, as "the tribe itself is not an organised community at all."³¹

As far as differences are the matter, we find that in a single village such as Tesophenyu, two widely differing languages are spoken.³² It may be difficult to draw tribal boundaries on the basis of differences in characteristics, as proximity between villages may act as a determinant of affinity. To quote Hodson:

"The affinities of the tribes with their proximate neighbours are great, and they are very similar in political construction, in economic development, in the essence of their religious beliefs and in

28. T. C. Hodson, *Op.cit.*, pp. 20 - 21.

29. J. H. Hutton, *The Angami Nagas*, (Bombay, 1969), p. 10.

30. A. Yanang Konyak, *From Darkness to Light*, (Gauhati, 1969), p. 11.

31. J. H. Hutton, *The Sema Nagas*, (Bombay, 1968), p. 121.

32. J. P. Mills, *The Rengma Nagas*, (Kohima, 1982), p. 285.

their general habit of thought."³³

We also share the view that neighbouring Naga villages interact regardless of tribal differences.³⁴ Therefore, even though we are working on the assumption that the Naga society can be divided into different tribes, it is extremely difficult to demarcate tribal boundaries. The questions relating to differences and similarities existing between various Naga tribes cannot be easily understood without going into a deeper study of the Naga village, its formation and structure.

The Nagas did not have a common political organisation in the past. In the Naga society it was the village which was the sole political and social unit.³⁵ This is quite true since no traces of a socio-economic and political organisation beyond the village society could be found. This is why Yonuo, who says the Nagas had a fairly developed culture, made a parallel comparison of the Naga village system with those of the Greek city-states. He reasoned that the failure to develop an integrated political structure by the Naga villages was due to geographical isolation.³⁶ It must be this that leads him to say "the permanent political institution of the Naga society has been the sovereign

33. T. C. Hodson, *Op.cit.*, pp. 19 - 20.

34. See J. Hutton, *Report on Naga Hills, Op.cit.*, pp. 66 - 68.

35. Tuisem A. Shishak, "Nagas and Education", *Nagas '90 Souvenir*, (Gauhati, 1990), p. 24.

36. Asoso Yonuo, *Op.cit.*, p.x.

village-state."³⁷ However, he fails to show why the Naga village organisation can be called a state.

Hodson suggests that traces of "higher organisation of villages" resembling a tribe can be seen in the similar practices found in the different villages which speak a language more or less intelligible, the inter-marriage between villages which are mutually intelligible in language and the "political supremacy" of one village over other neighbouring villages which are weaker.³⁸ Since tribal identities do not exist, such relations are bound to be determined by proximity and the possibility of drawing out political boundaries between tribes does not occur. Mills talks of a "tribal feeling" and a sharp distinction which might have existed among the Aos with other tribal groups. But he was paradoxical as he also says that in times of war between villages "an Ao head was as good as any other."³⁹ He himself writes that "with all the Nagas the real political unit of the tribe is the village."⁴⁰

A Naga village is composed of clans living in a well-defined territory.⁴¹ It is a complete societal system in itself. Hodson describes the Naga village thus:

37. Ibid., p. 15.

38. T. C. Hodson, Op.cit., p. 74.

39. J. P. Mills, The Ao Nagas, op.cit., p. 176.

40. Ibid., p. 73.

41. T. C. Hodson, op.cit., p. 73.

"Not only is a village a distinct unit of political and economic importance, but it is organised as a religious community, acting as whole, affected as a whole by food gennas, participating in the ritual associated with and intended to assist the cultivation of the staple of the country."⁴²

According to Horam, the independent and self-sufficient nature of the Naga village facilitated their separation from one another.⁴³ We can see that the Naga villages were still at a level of primitivism in which the socio-economic and political character did not require a social organisation above the village boundaries. Such a society is bound to be insusceptible to change as it is not open to outside influences. We must say that, at this stage, if a consciousness of being a political tribe existed at all, it could not have been outside the village organisation, which was apparently a closed and a well-knit one.

This does not amount to an acceptance of the idea that the village was the tribal unit. We need to further analyse the different social components of the village. The Naga village is said to have consisted of clans which formed the real social unit of the village.⁴⁴ The clan is described by Hodson, as a sub-group composed of a number of nuclear families, occupying a definite portion of the village. It is supposed to be strictly exogamous and its members are believed to be descended from a common ancestor, by whose name the clan is usually known. ⁴⁵

42. Ibid., p. 74.

43. M. Horam, Op.cit., p. 126.

44. J. H. Hutton, The Angami Nagas, Op.cit., p. 109.

45. T. C. Hodson, Op.cit., p. 71.

There is another sub-division in the Naga village which has been referred to as Khel by many writers, and is often confused with clan. The term Khel is borrowed from the Ahoms for whom it is a division of the adult population on the basis of their their occupations and sometimes territory.⁴⁶ We will find that its usage is quite different in the case of the Nagas.

A. W. Davis records Khels as exogamous sub-divisions among the Angamis.⁴⁷ But this is not true. Keviyiekielie Linyu, in his analysis of the Kohima village structure clearly differentiates between clan and khel. He identified six Thinuos (khels) and mentioned that each Thinuo is composed of several Chienuos (clans).⁴⁸ We know that both these two categories can claim common ancestry. But Thinuo denotes an earlier ancestor. Chienuos are splinter groups which take after ancestors descended from the Thinuo. In Thinuos the lineage can be diluted, but in Chienuos such chances are less. This more or less explains the fact that Chienuos are exogamous while Thinuos are endogamous social formations. Since Chienuos are only immediate family ties through blood relationships, their boundaries are not politically defined as Hutton claims,⁴⁹ but they may be found

46. S. K. Bhuyan, Anglo - Assamese Relations, 1771-1826, (Gauhati, 1974), p. 10.

47. A. W. Davis, "Census of India, 1891, Vol. I," in Verrier Elwin (ed.), Op.cit., (Bombay, 1969), p. 305.

48. Keviyiekielie Linyu, The Angami Church Since 1950, (Kohima, 1983), p. 2.

49. See J. H. Hutton, The Angami Nagas, Op.cit., p. 109.

living together in a particular section of the village. Hutton did say the sub-division of the Thinuo is the Putsa and translated it as 'kindred'. But literally, Putsa is just another term for Chienuo. The confusion over Chienuo and Thinuo also can be seen in Sanyu's work, where he identified Thinuos such as Rhiepfumia, Tsieramia and Huruotsumia, which are actually endogamous groups, as clans.⁵⁰

The social unit Khel⁵¹ or what has been called the Thinuo in Kohima village is particularly characteristic of the Naga village system. A. Y. Konyak mentions that the Konyak village organisation is characterised by Thinuo and clan system.⁵² Mills writes that an Ao village is divided into two Thinuos, and that two lingual groups, like the Chongli and Mongsen can be living in the same village, occupying different Thinuos and existing like each group occupying a separate village.⁵³ Even till today, we can see that in most of the Angami villages, each Thinuo builds its own village gates and lives within a specific confine of the village area. It can be seen

50. They are actually separate Thinuos, even though they have merged to form a single Khel. See Visier Sanyu, Op.cit., pp. 62 - 63.

51. We shall refer to it as Thinuo which is more appropriate. In Sema it is Asah. See J. H. Hutton, The Sema Nagas, (Bombay, 1968), p. 121; in Ao it is Muphu, See J. P. Mills, The Ao Nagas, Op.cit., p. 82. But the difference lies only in dialect and their meaning is nearly the same.

52. A. Yanang Konyak, Op.cit., p. 5.

53. J. P. Mills, The Ao Nagas, Op.cit., p. 82.

that the Thinuo identity existed as an obviously visible social unit incorporated into the village organisational system.

Conflicts and wars between rival clans were common and these may occur regardless of Thinuo and village boundaries. This is because the clan was a "unit of blood revenge." It is said that inter-clan feuds were as sanguinary as those between whole villages."⁵⁴ As inter-clan relations existed in both alliances and infighting, it may be said that clan independence existed within the village. This is also true of the Thinuo.⁵⁵ A good illustration of Thinuo independence can be seen in the incident leading to the siege of Kohima on 3rd October, 1879, by a group of Angami villages. Here, the villages of Viswema, Ciedema, Jakhama and Jotsoma consorted to form a combined force against the British, but from Kohima village only the Tsutuonuoma Thinuo took part.⁵⁶ Hence, we may note that though the village is considered a political institution, sovereign and independent in all spheres, it was not a governing one, like the modern states. Its role appears to be limited. Therefore, we prefer not to call them states.

Yonuo observes that the Naga society was peaceful and stable because of the uniformity of customs, which is made

54. T. C. Hodson, Op.cit., p. 73.

55. See J. P. Mills, Op.cit., p. 176.

56. Visier Sanyu, Op.cit., p. 147 - 148.

binding by the religiosity of sanctions.⁵⁷ Horam also feels that the unity, closeness and discipline of each Naga village, is the outcome of collective adherence to uniform religious beliefs and practices.⁵⁸ From this we can conclude that in a small and primitive society such as that of the Naga village, it may not be practically possible to demarcate between what is custom and religion from that of political and economic practices. This shows that we need to look into the Naga society in a holistic manner as their multi-faceted social life seems to be interlinked and interdependent, cumulating into a harmonious whole.

While at their own levels, the clan, the Thinuo and the village become functional and politically active, there appears to be a superstructural unity above them. As we cannot identify any authoritative institution in the Naga society, we may say that there was an absence of government just as it was stateless. Therefore, we cannot agree with Mishra that democratic pattern of self-government prevailed in Naga village-states.⁵⁹ The Naga society can only be classified as a primitive traditional system which is characterised by the rule of blood ties, customs and beliefs, rather than a formal government.

57. Asoso Yonuo, Op.cit., p.17.

58. M. Horam, Op.cit., p. 121.

59. Udayan Misra, "The Naga National Question", The economic and Political Weekly, Vol. xiii, No. 14, April, 1978, (Bombay), p. 621.

If there is one thing that places weightage on the village as the tribal unit, it is the organisational pattern of the village social system. This is because above the clan and Thinuo divide, the village stands as the highest form of social system which is representative of its structural-functional unity. It may be relevant here, to examine its structure briefly.

We do not agree with the view of N. K. Das, that the traditional Naga society can be stratified into priests and village chiefs.⁶⁰ The Naga village is an independent institution and the village functionaries, whether the chief or Headman and religious priests such as the Putir or Kemevo perform their functions only within the limits of a particular village. They are not linked with similar functionaries in other villages. Their roles are confined to their respective villages. As such they do not belong to the same social system.⁶¹

The Naga villages are ruled by two main type of rulers and according to Yonuo one is the monarchic Chiefs and the other is the elected republican council.⁶² But Horam, maintains that these rulers did not exercise unlimited power.⁶³ We agree, firstly, because the individual's alliances to his clan and

60. N. K. Das, "The Emergence and Role of Naga Elite in Independent India", in B. Datta Ray (ed.), The Emergence and Role of Middle Class in North-East India, (New Delhi, 1983), p. 260.

61. Asoso Yonuo, Op.cit., p. 15.

62. Asoso Yonuo, Op.cit., p. 15.

63. M. Horam, Op.cit., p. 83.

Thinuo may take precedence over that of the village.⁶⁴ Secondly, as we have seen earlier, in the Naga society, what is political, economic and religious cannot be put into watertight compartments, as in the absence of a government, the same social rules, beliefs and customs are binding on the rulers as well as the people in general.⁶⁵ Also, the ruler cannot be a powerful one because of the size of his jurisdiction, which is usually very small. The average population, for example, of an Angami village in 1901, was only 450.⁶⁶

The pre-British Naga economy was at a primitive stage. Each household had to produce its own needs as market economy has not developed.⁶⁷ Though private ownership of land prevailed, it was obviated by the existing pattern of community ownership of land. Also, as there was neither the technology nor the market for disposal of surplus produces, cultivable land was available in plenty. This is why, though private and personal property existed, it did not warrant the growth of social stratification as it was unimportant "as a lever to social and political power."⁶⁸ It can be said that the social differences which appeared in the Naga society were merely the outcome of

64. ibid., p. 50.

65. Ibid., pp. 80 - 81.

66. B. C. Allen, Naga Hills and Manipur, (Delhi, 1905), p. 33.

67. M. Alemchiba, Op.cit., p.142.

68. Udayaon Misra, "Naga Nationalism and the Role of Middle Class", in B. Datta Ray (ed.), Op.cit., p. 163.

functional divisions, necessitated by societal complexity and need.⁶⁹

In view of the above, we may say that the traditional Naga society was a classless and an egalitarian one. This is because social classes arise from the relations of production or relations of power through which one class dominates the other.⁷⁰ The Chiefs, Headman and religious priests in the Naga society cannot be a class because they do not belong to the same socio-economic and political system. They also do not possess any socio-economic or political leverage over the rest of the population through which they can claim their dominant status.

We can see that the Naga social organisation has a highly decentralised structure, extending from the individual to the family, to the clan, the Thinuo and then the village. The relationships between all these categories are determined by pre-existing social codes, in term of customs and traditions. In the absence of a highly authoritative ruler or ruling class, along with the egalitarian social composition, the basic factor influential in mobilising collective allegiance remains to be in blood ties. This indicates that our next task will be to examine the processes leading to the formation of the village and to analyse its constitution with respect to the character and role

69. See Asielie Pusa, Op.cit., pp. 38 - 40.

70. See T. B. Bottomore, Elites and Society, (Middlesex, 1964), p. 97.

of clan and Thinuo which are its key embodiments.

II

What are presently called the Angami, Sema, Lotha and Rengma tribes, are known through oral history, to have migrated into their respective present locations from Khezhakenoma.⁷¹ There exist a legend that the dispersal from Khezhakenoma was the result of a quarrel between brothers over a magical stone.⁷² This indicates that all these tribes are of the same ancestry, originating from a single family. This finds reasonable explanation in the pattern of migration and village formation. We find that migration was not synchronous, but rather it was a continued process, with people further migrating from the settlements, multiplying into numerous villages.⁷³ The village formation does not take place with the migration of a whole clan or tribe. It was individuals who were responsible for new settlements.⁷⁴ Therefore, migration caused clans to split up into different groups and also became the basis in the formation of new clans.

71. J. P. Mills, The Rengma Nagas, Op.cit., p. 4.

72. Ibid., p. 4.

73. See Ibid., p. 4.

74. Visier Sanyu, Op.cit., p. 61 - 62.

If we roughly examine the formation of Kohima village, we can see that the first settlers were Rhieo and Tsiera, from whom the Rhiepfumia and the Tsieramia Thinuos⁷⁵ came into existence. Huoruotsu, the third Thinuo in the present day Lhisema,⁷⁶ are descendants of Huoruo who came from the Zeliang⁷⁷ country and was adopted into the village.⁷⁸ We also find that the Dapfutsuma Thinuo is formed with a migrant from the Mao tribe called Dapfu, along with two sons of Rhieo called Yiese and Sachu.⁷⁹ This leads us to conclude that a village is not formed by a single clan, but by individuals who may have come from any ancestry or any other settlements. It also gives us a picture of how clans are formed. For example, Tsiera had five sons - Suorhie, Liezie, Rulho and Kesiezie. Each of these sons of Tsiera and Huoruo developed into separate clans.⁸⁰

Now we can see the difference between clan and Thinuo. Tsiera and Huoruo might have represented clans, in view of their initial development at the beginning, but later as their descendants multiplied, from each of their sons a new clan emerged. These clans came to be collectively known as a Thinuo

75. Ibid., p. 62.

76. Ibid., pp. 62 - 63. Lhisema, literally means people of three groups. It is actually a combination of three Thinuos into one, and not three clans as Sanyu claims.

77. Zeliang is an acronym which developed quite lately, representing Zemai and Liangmai groups. So Huoruo could be from any of these two groups.

78. Visier Sanyu, Op.cit., p. 62.

79. Ibid., p. 63.

80. Ibid., p. 62.

under the name of their respective ancestors Tsiera and Huoruo. So we know that a clan is not indivisible in the long run. It can spilt up into component clans.⁸¹ The Meyase clan of Khonoma, for instance, split into six sub-clans, namely, Zetsuvi, Kenie-u, Khwukha, Pfulise, Sanyu and Iralu.⁸² It can be seen that the formation of clans is a continuous process characterised by time and population.

The village may not be of a single ancestry; it may be composed of settlers from different roots. The present Rengma tribe is said to have clans such as Lorin, Kepen, Kemp, which directly migrated from the Angami village khonoma.⁸³ Hutton says that the relationship between collateral clans continue to exist even after split-ups due to migrations,⁸⁴ This may quite true as long as contact is not wholly severed for a considerably long period. The Western and Eastern Rengmas separated long ago and it is said that "no connection between their clan groups are now traceable."⁸⁵ It is also known among the Lothas and the Rengmas, which are completely separate tribal identities today, that once they were a single tribe. However, details of their common origin seem to have been lost due to the intricacies of their migrations.⁸⁶ The unity of different clans spreading over the

81. J. H. Hutton The Angami Nagas, Op.cit., p. 109.

82. Ibid., p. 110

83. Visier Sanyu, Op.cit., p. 40.

84. J. H. Hutton, The Angami Nagas, Op.cit., p. 114.

85. J. P. Mills, The Rengma Nagas, Op.cit., p. 11.

86. Ibid., p. 4.

Angami villages can be seen in what Sanyu classified as 'moities', which grouped clans into Thekrunomia, Thevomia or Thepa/Thevo or Kepepfumia and Kepezuomia.⁸⁷ All clans will fall into either group of these classification, irrespective of their Thinuo or village boundaries. Apart from this, there is also the belief that the whole of Angami villages originated from two out of four sons of Vadio, namely, Zuonuo and Keyhonou.⁸⁸

Our study so far, seems to show that the Nagas might have been of the same origin. But due to migrations and population increase which brings about proliferation of clans and villages, the relationships between different migrating groups might have grown apart. The purpose of migration may not be political to the extent that a clan decides to search for its own political identity, such as that of a separate tribe, with migration. We have already seen that the village formation was a multi-tribal process. In the opinion of Hodson, the agriculture based mode of livelihood requires a minimum amount of land necessary to feed the population. And when the population outgrows the land held by a tribe or village, migration is forced upon by the pressures of population and available land.⁸⁹ In this case we may say that migration among the Nagas was a socio-economic and political phenomenon.

87. Visier Sanyu, Op.cit., p. 79.

88. Ibid., p. 42 - 45.

89. T. C. Hodson, Op.cit., p. 10.

It is evident that anthropologists and early investigators found the Nagas to have been of a common ancestry. Their studies of the different tribes and their findings suggest that the diversities among various Naga groups are rather the outcome of centrifugal movement rather than the difference of origin.⁹⁰ The reason behind this diffusion of Naga culture may be attributed to the absence of a script, the isolated nature of the villages, and their migratory habits through which they come under new environment and cultural influences.⁹¹

We understand that the differences in language cannot form the basis of tribal division. Due to isolation and migratory behaviour, Nagas have developed a weird lingual system. What we call the Ao tribe can be broken into three linguistic categories - Chongli, Mongsen and Changki. How group interactions chisel out new cultural structures is evident from the disappearance of a fourth language called Sanpur, spoken in Longsa, which is said to have been replaced by Chongli.⁹² We find that two lingual groups can be living in the same village, occupying different Thinuos and existing like each group is a separate village.⁹³

90. See J.P. Mills, The Ao Nagas, Op.cit., pp. xix - xx.

91. Visier Sanyu, "Nagas In History", Nagas '90 Souvenir, (Gauhati, 1990), p. 8.

92. J. P. Mills, The Ao Nagas, Op.cit., p. 2.

93. Ibid., p. 82.

Mills classified the Rengmas into three language groups--the Southern group of Western Rengmas, the Northern group of Western Rengmas and that of the Eastern Rengmas. Apart from this, he says that there are dialectical differences between the languages spoken in different villages.⁹⁴ According to Mills, "languages are strictly local," and two widely differing languages may be spoken in the same village.⁹⁵ It can be seen that the linguistic groupings cannot be taken as rigid and closed categories. Environmental influences may prove to be catalytic and bring about lingual changes. We find that in Tesophenyu village when certain clans moved from the upper to the lower Thinuos, they abandoned their original language and adopted that of their new neighbours.⁹⁶

What proves beyond doubt that language patterns are characterised by migration and environmental influences among proximate groups can be found in the Rengma language. Of the three groups of languages spoken by the Rengmas, the resemblances between two of them can be traced back to a previous common habitat. The third group which is said to be utterly unintelligible to either of the other two is found to be closer to the Angami language; while the other two have their affinity with the Lotha and Sema linguistic groups.⁹⁷ If we look at the

94. J. P. Mills, The Rengma Nagas, Op.cit., p. 285.

95. Ibid., p. 285.

96. Ibid., pp. 285 - 286.

97. Ibid., p.286.

settlement pattern, we find that the Angamis are found to the South of the Rengma group which speak the language closer to theirs, and their territories are contiguous. In the same way, the other two Rengma language groups which are nearer to the Lotha and Sema, are also their immediate neighbours on the Northern and Western side.⁹⁸ Here, it should not be out of place to quote J. H. Hutton who writes that:

"the linguistic distinction between sub-groups can hardly be said to correspond to any sort of racial distinction, and monosyllabic languages like those of the Naga groups grow apart from one another very rapidly, particularly under conditions of isolation such as obtained till recently in the Naga Hills."⁹⁹

This isolation does not create distinctions in language but also in customs, habits and even personal appearance.¹⁰⁰ The interactions among various social groups brought about by inter-group migrations might have given rise to a multifarious growth of lingual and cultural divisions. In regard to this, Hodson writes:

"The more detailed our examination, the more would it be possible to augment our display of variety, and to emphasise the remarkable graduation and series of development."¹⁰¹

98. *Ibid.*, pp. 1 - 2.

99. J. H. Hutton, *The Angami Nagas, Op.cit.*, p. 9.

100. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

101. T. C. Hodson, *Op.cit.*, p. 19.

We need not go into details but it may be necessary to illustrate the fact that interaction and isolation among migrating groups determine their characters. An example can be seen in the case of Svemi village which was raided by the Kukis. Later this village was inhabited by both Mao and Tangkhul groups, and it is said that this resulted in the modification of the typical customs of both the groups owing to the synoecism that took place.¹⁰² A case in which isolation created difference with the parent group can be seen in the village of Oinam and Purum, which belong to the Mao group but are quite different from it in character because they are far removed from the influence of Mao.¹⁰³ J. P. Mills makes the same point in saying:

"The Eastern Rengmas have been cut-off from all communications with their parent stock for many generations, and provide specially valuable material for the study of the extent to which isolation causes changes of customs and language."¹⁰⁴

If we look at the migrant Rengmas who had gone to the Mikir Hills, we find that they have not only abandoned many of their tribal customs, but also due to inter-marriage, they have very little physiognomical difference with the Kacharis.¹⁰⁵

So we can say that the migratory mode of Naga lifestyle was the main reason behind the multiplicity of language and

102. Ibid., p. 4.

103. Ibid., p. 4.

104. J. P. Mills, The Rengma Nagas, op.cit., p.1.

105. Ibid., p. 2.

culture. The processes through which these diversities occur can be seen to be caused by both centripetal and centrifugal forces. A migrating group moves away from a centre delinking itself from its parent group, but it comes to a new centre where influences from the new environment cause it to adopt a new character. We may say this is how differences among the various Naga groups emerged. Therefore, the varied character of the Nagas cannot be a case against the existing sense of an underlying unity, but it must be realised that these variations are outcome of the social evolution and development which came as man adapts himself to his environment in pursuance of his own benefits in life.¹⁰⁶

The purpose of investigation into the processes of change which brought about fragmentary socio-cultural systems into the Naga society, is not for the justification of the Naga historical unity, as it might seem to be, but to help identify political entities which we may find deem fit to be called tribes, if they existed at all in the pre-British Naga society. Our analysis has shown that at this period, the only identifiable social institutions are clan, thinuo and the village. But none of these have come to be known as tribes. We do not deny that there were linkages beyond village boundaries. We have already seen that proximity is a determining factor of relations and inter-cultural influences between villages. But

106. T. C. Hodson, Op.cit., p. 21.

for the same reason, we must say that it will be extremely difficult to demarcate tribal boundaries on the basis of similarities and intercourse, because all Naga villages fall within a contiguous geographical stretch and inter-relations between villages form a continuous link, extending throughout Naga inhabited areas.

Apart from this, we know that at this period no group of Nagas thought of themselves as a tribe. This only came along with the coming of the British. This is what Hodson has to say about the Kabuis:

"In most respects the idea of tribal solidarity meets with no recognition among them. A Kabui, for instance, owes no duty to the tribe; he enjoys no right as a member of the tribe; it affords him no protection against an enemy, for as often as not his worst enemies are those of his own village or tribe. He acknowledges no tribal head either in matters of religion or in secular affairs. He is, it is true, acquainted with the general legend that all Kabuis are descended from one of three brothers, but probably regards it as a far off event destitute of any real importance."¹⁰⁷

In view of the above, we are given to conclude that in the pre-British era, the Naga society did not have distinct tribes which can be identified in respect of their organisation on the basis of socio-economic, political, cultural or historical and territorial variations, as we seem to have today.

107. Ibid., p. 18.

This does not mean that the Nagas had no existing nomenclature by which different groups were originally known to one another. R. G. Woodthorpe divided the Nagas into two sections, the kilted and the non-kilted.¹⁰⁸ This grouping is identical with the Tenyimia nomenclature, who by being the kilted group, called the non-kilted as Mezhamia.¹⁰⁹ Both these groups can be further broken into sub-groups. The Tenyimia group for example, consists of sub-groups such as Chakri, Kheza etc.¹¹⁰ But names describing such groups are not consistently known among the various groups. Each group seem to have its own name for the other. The Tenyimia are known to the Semas as Tsungimi, to the Rengmas as Tsugenyu, to the Lothas as Tsungung and to the Aos as Morr etc.¹¹¹ The same is true of the group presently known as the Ao tribe. They distinguished themselves from the Sangtams, Changs, Phoms and Konyaks and call them Mirir, while the Aos themselves can be further grouped into Chongli, Mongsen and Changki.¹¹²

It is found that factors such as dialects, proximity and contact have much to do with nomenclature. It can be seen that each of the three Rengma groups, as classified by Mills, have their own names of different tribal groups surrounding them.

108. R. G. Woodthorpe, "Note on the Wild Tribes Inhabiting the So-called Naga Hills, on Our North-East Frontier," in Verrier Elwin (ed.), *Op.cit.*, (Bombay, 1969), p. 49.

109. Keviyiekielie Linyu, *Op.cit.*, p. 1.

110. See J. H. Hutton *The Angami Nagas, Op.cit.*, p. 15.

111. See *Ibid.*, pp. 338 - 389.

112. J. P. Mills *The Ao Nagas, Op.cit.*, p. 3.

This phenomenon of individuality extended to such a point that those groups which were far out of contact could not have any name for each other. The Western Rengmas never heard of the Southern Sangtams and had no name for them. The Eastern Rengmas knew nothing of Lothas, Aos and the people of the plains and did not have names for them.¹¹³

From our study so far, it is clear that the grouping of different Naga villages into a common name was exclusive to the nomenclature and it does not necessarily indicate the presence of group awareness among those to whom the name is common. It can be seen that the same group can be called different names by those groups which come into contact with them. These names also do not necessarily identify with the name or the boundaries which may be known to the group they describe. As such we cannot rely on them for the classification of Nagas into different tribal entities. They were merely descriptive names which cannot be ascribed to any socio-economic and political category of the Naga society. However, we cannot ignore the fact that they might have formed the basis on which the present tribal identities emerged in the Naga society, as formal tribes, which is for us to examine in the next chapter.

113. J. P. Mills, The Rengma Nagas, Op.cit., p. 321.

CHAPTER III

THE EMERGENCE OF FORMAL TRIBES

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The state of inter-tribal relations in the Naga society, as we shall see, is founded on the present 'tribewise' political groupings of the Nagas, which have become distinct socio-political categories, acquiring group consciousness from well-defined and specific community of people. It is etched into the social system in the form of formal recognition and policy application. In chapter I of this work, we have already seen that this 'tribe' or 'socio-political unit' has its roots in colonialism. In Chapter II we have shown that these 'tribes' as distinct entities did not exist in the traditional Naga society. In the present Chapter we take up the emergence of formal tribes. We deal with the British era, its administration and those factors which led to the emergence of formal tribes.

In the pre-British period, even though the Naga villages were found to be isolated from one another, it had been said that they were in contact with their neighbours of the plains with whom they traded. This relationship is characterised by both friendliness and hostility without amounting to subjugation.¹ However, the Ahom-Naga relations during the most

1. M. Alemchiba, A brief Historical Account of Nagaland, (Kohima, 1970), pp. 38 - 39.

part of sixty years of Ahom rule in the Brahmaputra plains, can be quite confusing without proper analysis. This is because it is most often assumed to be characterised by three co-existing features: trade, conflict and subjugation.

S. K. Bhuyan writes that the Ahom policy was not one of complete subjugation and annexation of their tribal neighbours, but that of reconciliation and friendly intercourse.² This did not prevent Naga aggressions on their subjects and in order to protect them, the Ahoms even constructed embankments called Naga Ali to keep the hillmen away.³ The Ahoms also undertook punitive expeditions to the Naga hills.⁴ This might have led to the subjugation of some Naga countries by the Ahoms. Historians like S. K. Bhuyan pointed out that the Nagas living in the low hills south of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur districts, from Dikhow to the Buri-Dihing, were subjects of the Ahom government and that they paid taxes.⁵

Whatever the Ahom-Naga relations were, since the Nagas were not a collective political entity at the time, it could only occur between the Ahoms and those Naga villages proximate to

2. S. K. Bhuyan Anglo-Assamese Relations, 1771 - 1826, (Gauhati, 1974), p. 34.

3. Ibid., p. 43.

4. H. K. Barpujari, Problem of the Hill Tribes of North-East Frontier, 1822 - 42, Vol. 1., (Gauhati, 1970), pp. 16 - 18.

5. S. K. Bhuyan, Op. cit., p. 42.

their country, with whom they had contact. These Nagas had been identified by the Ahoms as Tablungias, Jabaka, Banfera, Kaboongs, Paniduarias, Borduarias and Namsangias and so on.⁶ These names were only used by the Ahoms. They are foreign to the Nagas, as such no Naga tribe is known by these names today. It is said that the Ahoms called the Nagas after the names of their villages and duars or passes through which they frequented the plains.⁷

We need to consider the fact that at this period, the Nagas were an amorphous people and each village was a separate political unit. Most Nagas lived in inaccessible hills and forests. It could not have been possible for the Ahoms to come into contact with all the Nagas. We are given to believe that the Ahom-Naga relations was restricted to a limited territory along their contiguous areas. Also, one of the factors which undermines the importance of this relationship is the lack of Ahom influences on the social and cultural life of the Nagas. Bhuyan writes:

"The isolation of the hillmen from the formative influences of the religions of the plains accounts for the continuance of the border tribes in their own code of life brought to being by their environments and the influence of their primitive instincts. Whereas life in the plains is rapidly changing these hillmen are living as they used to do many thousand years ago."⁸

6. H. K. Barpujari, Op.cit., p. 3.

7. S. K. Bhuyan, Op.cit., p.

8. Ibid., p. 33.

This is why at the time of the arrival of the British in the 17th Century,⁹ the Nagas were still living in their traditional domain, leading their own life which was mostly untouched by civilisation. The British first came into contact with the Nagas about the year 1832.¹⁰ But it was only in 1866-67, that the British decided to have a permanent footing at Samooguting (Chumukedima), in the foothills of the Naga Hills, with a view to check the raiding Nagas from marauding the districts of Nowgong and Sibsagar.¹¹ It was in 1881 that a final decision to make the Naga Hills a British district was taken.¹²

In 1882, British control covered only Kohima and Wokha along with their immediate neighbourhood. It took sixty long intervening years for the British to become responsible for an administered area that constituted the Naga Hills district.¹³ It was the policy of the Government of British India not to interfere in inter-tribal feuds committed outside the Naga Hills district, unless British subjects were involved.¹⁴ The British interest in the Naga Hills at this period did not seem to go beyond the need to contain Naga raids on their subjects and they

9. H. K. Barpujari, *Op.cit.*, pp. 21 - 43.

10. Verrier Elwin, *Nagaland*, (Shillong, 1961), p. 19.

11. Robert Reid, *History of the Frontier Areas Bordering on Assam, 1883 - 1941*, (New Delhi, 1983), p. 94.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 101.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

were quite unwilling to spend unnecessarily in order to extend their area of control.¹⁵

The British made no secrets of their unwillingness to extend control over independent Naga villages unless there were some special reasons for it.¹⁶ Because of this firm policy of non-interference even those villages like Yatsimi, Melomi and Lapvomi, which sought British protection had to be rejected.¹⁷ The village by village process of bringing the Nagas under the British control and the time it took best explain the independent and isolated nature of the traditional Naga villages. Even at the time of British departure this process was not completed. A sizable number of Naga villages bordering Burma and Tibet were left unadministered.¹⁸

When the British first arrived, they did not want to interfere in the affairs of the Nagas. Their policy was to use the Cachar and the Manipuri kingdoms to subdue the Nagas. They were of the view that this would suffice in curbing Naga raids on their subjects, but it was unsuccessful.¹⁹ This was why the

15. Ibid., pp. 106 - 107.

16. Ibid., p. 129.

17. Ibid., pp. 132 - 134.

18. Udayon Misra, "Naga National Question", The Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. xiii, No. 14, (Bombay, 14 April, 1978), p. 619.

19. M. Aliemchiba, Op.cit., p. 44.

British themselves had to lead the expeditions and confront the Nagas.²⁰ The British invasion started a unity among some Naga villages which joined forces to counter them. But these alliances turned out to be purely military and they lasted only as long as the dangers persisted.²¹ It did not lead to the formation of any supra-village organisation of the Nagas.

The coming of the British brought tremendous influence and change into the Naga society. The Nagas emerged from the cocoons of their isolated villages which became part and parcel of various political units of administration. With the expansion of British administration over a major portion of Naga inhabited areas and the establishment of Naga Hills District in 1881 with headquarters at Kohima, the amorphous Nagas were brought under a single political roof for the first time. The general boundaries of the district within which effective British administration came into being as outlined by W. W. Hunter were:

"On the north the district of Nowgong; on the east the district of Sibsagar, the Doyang river and the Sinpho and the Abor country; on the south the semi-independent state of Manipur and the district of Cachar; and on the west the district of Nowgong and Khasi and the Jaintia Hills."²²

If the isolated nature of the Naga villages had been

20. Asoso Yunuo, The Rising Nagas, (New Delhi, 1974), p. 72.

21. Ibid., p. 40.

22. W. W. Hunter, A Statistical Account of Assam, (London, 1879), p. 173.

advantageous in the past to the extent that they prevented the en masse subjugation of the people, it was undoubtedly this factor which became responsible for the division of Nagas into separate administrative units. In 1842, the Mao, Tangkhul and Tamenlong Naga areas were incorporated into Manipur.²³ The separation of Burma from India in 1937 excluded a number Naga villages from British India.²⁴ Large tracts of Naga areas were also transferred to the adjoining districts of Assam for the purpose of what had been purported as administrative expediency.²⁵ As such, though the Nagas were brought under a common sovereign, they were distributed into different political compartments. From here we can deduce that the British did not encourage Naga unity.

With the incorporation of the Nagas into Western rule, they began to experience an exposure to the new culture. Nagas received Western education from Christian missionaries under the aegis of the British; many adopted Christianity. The Naga society was introduced to a new economic and political system. We shall now discuss the transformation of the Naga society that took place as a result of these changes.

The British administrative set-up had its headquarters

23. Asoso Yunuo, Op.cit., p. 369.

24. Ibid., p. xiii.

25. M. Alemchiba, Op.cit., p. 129.

at Kohima, with a sub-centre at Wokha and another sub-center which opened at Mokokchung in 1888. The chief function of its officials was to act as arbiters in the inter-village feuds; a house tax of two rupees was collected and a police force was planted in the interior.²⁶ The policy of the British was to run the administration through village Chiefs and Headmen, a method which is aptly described as non-regulated administration.²⁷ The people were left to their own customary laws without any British interference.²⁸ The singular real concern of the British was the stoppage of headhunting, the curbing of inter-village feuds and the prevention of Naga raids on the plains. It appears that at this they were quite successful. Verrier Elwin comments that due to British administration, the Nagas were able to settle down "to a peaceful life of cultivation and trade."²⁹ B. B. Ghosh agrees, but he also points out that the non-interference policy of the British kept the Naga people outside "the influence of modern civilisation for long."³⁰

Even after the creation of Naga Hills District, the

26. Verrier Elwin, op.cit., p. 24.

27. V. H. Zhimomi, "The British Policy and Administration in Nagaland", (Unpublished M. Phil. Dissertation Submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1981), pp. 118 - 199.

28. M. Horam, Naga Polity, (New Delhi, 1975), p. 15.

29. Verrier Elwin, Op.cit., p. 24.

30. B. B. Ghosh, "The Emergence and Role of Middle Class in Nagaland", in B. Datta Ray (ed.), The Emergence and Role of Middle Class in North-East India, (New Delhi, 1983), p. 215.

Nagas were left to determine their own life. Administrative provisions were made to protect them from exploitation by the people from the plains. Maxwell writes:

"The British had by regulation and practice kept their (Naga) lands out of the hands of speculators or squatters from the plains, and strictly limited the number of plains people allowed into the hills for any purpose."³¹

The British did not encourage free interaction between the Nagas and the people of the plains.³² Misra points out that although geographically Nagas were in the Indian sub-continent, they maintained their separate way of life and the changes that the British rule brought about in the other parts of India did not affect the Nagas.³³ Furthermore, the Inner-line Regulation of 1873, which restricted British subjects from freely going into the hills,³⁴ also served to isolate the Nagas from others.

Under the Government of India Act 1919, The Naga area became a 'backward tract', which was by a subsequent Government of India Act 1935, changed to Excluded Area. By this Act the Nagas were put along with those who were excluded from the competence of the Provincial and Federal Legislatures.³⁵ This administrative legislations came to play a vital role in the

31. Neville Maxwell, India and the Nagas, (London, 1973), p. 6.

32. See Ibid., p.4.

33. Udayon Misra, Op.cit., p. 622.

34. M. Alemchiba, Op.cit., p. 150.

35. Verrier Elwin Op.cit., pp. 35 -36.

political bifurcation of Naga identity from that of India. In doing so, it helped the Naga society to develop a character of its own on the line of its peculiar tribal social system.

The British did very little to develop the economic life of the Nagas.³⁶ There was only a single cart road in the district, going from Dimapur to Imphal through Kohima. Apart from this there were two bridle paths connecting the interior areas with Kohima.³⁷ In 1904, there was a combined post and telegraph office at Impur, Mokokchung, Nichugard and Wokha.³⁸ There was not much trade, but with the introduction of money very little barter existed by then. A few shops run by Marwaris were opened at Kohima.³⁹ The 1905 Census shows that 93.8% of the population were engaged in pasture and agriculture. A very small percentage of the Nagas worked as traders, officials and labourers.⁴⁰

In 1901, only a single nominal town existed in the district.⁴¹ It was said that the occupation of Chumukedima was followed by the opening of communication, schools dispensaries and the introduction of money as the medium of exchange.⁴² But

36. Udayon Misra, "Naga Nationalism and the Role of Middle Class", in B. Datta Ray (ed.), Op.cit., p. 154.

37. B. C. Allen, Naga Hills and Manipur, (Delhi, 1905), pp. 56 - 58.

38. Ibid., p. 58.

39. Ibid., p. 59.

40. Ibid., p. 41.

41. Ibid., p. 31.

42. V. H. Zhimomi, Op.cit., p. 100.

these developments remained negligible as they were made only to meet the bare necessities of British administration. They did not bring about any noticeable change in the economic position of the Nagas. Immatemsu Ao writes:

"Despite the inroads made by modern influences, the Naga village life and social institutions still retained their unique character. The original village organisation continues to remain as before and the impact of industrial civilisation and culture and modern polity is only superficially felt."⁴³

We can see that British rule did not bring any radical structural changes in the village organisation of the Nagas. But the Naga philosophy of life as well as their socio-economic and political attitudes were due for change. The influences of modern education and Christianity inculcated in them a new interpretation of the social system they lived in, which they now perceived in the Western outlook.

British administration in the Naga Hills merely looked after the maintenance of law and order. Because of this education was left in the hands of Christian missionaries.⁴⁴ At the initial stage, the response to Christianity and education was poor. In 1901, there were only 563 Christians, 153 literate persons in English and 210 literate persons in Bengali.⁴⁵ But

43. L. Immatemsu Ao, "Organisation and Working of District Administration in Nagaland," (Unpublished M. Phil Dissertation Submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1982), p. 62.

44. M. Alemchiba, *Op.cit.*, p. 156.

45. B. C. Allen, *Op.cit.*, p. 80.

the growth rate in Christianity acquired gigantic proportions and in 1932 there were already 14, 392 Christians, which was almost four times that of 1922; and in 1942 it grew to 31,678. In 1950, the total number of Christians reached 50, 500.⁴⁶ The British government started their own schools in the footsteps of the missionaries, but they were negligibly few compared to the Mission schools.⁴⁷

In 1931, Kohima and Mokokchung sub-divisions had 42 and 52 schools respectively, but higher education facilities of matric standard were still lacking. Only in 1938, the school at Kohima was elevated to High School standard.⁴⁸ Therefore, predictably the literacy rate in the Naga Hills as late as 1941 was only 5. 09%.⁴⁹ Considering the immense changes in the Naga life, the rapid spread of Christianity on the one hand, and the slow progress of education on the other, we may postulate that between the two, the influence of Christian principles had a greater bearing in the changing social outlook of the Nagas than education which only a few experienced.

The success of Christianity not only depended on the

46. Vihuli Sema, "The Work of the American Mission in the Naga Hills", (Unpublished M. Phil Dissertation, Submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1981), p. 117.

47. M. Alemchiba, Op.cit., p. 158.

48. Op.cit., p. 159.

49. M. Alemchiba, "Problems of Re-adjustment to New Situation", in K. Suresh Singh (ed.), Tribal Situation in India, (Simla, 1972), p. 483.

superimposition of Western theology and religion on what Imchayanger called the Naga religion, but also the condemnation of the Naga way of life.⁵⁰ Vihuli Sema writes:

"Christianity had struck the very deep roots among the remote self-contained and isolated Nagas and effected them in positive as well as negative ways. It shook the very foundation of their long held traditional assumptions upon which the early stages of their civilisation was based, and eventually changed altogether to new institutions and cultural forms. It provided a break with their past religion and the blending of the old and the new culture was brought by the new religion and Western civilisation."⁵¹

There is no denying the fact that Christianity apart from being a religion was also the embodiment of Western culture. Moreover, we need to consider the fact that its promulgators were Westerners. It was brought to the Nagas by American missionaries. The acceptance of Christianity was also the acceptance of Christian principles which cannot be separated from the culture it represents. Christianity might have acted as a catalyst, therefore, by which Naga attitudes were conditioned to accept the hegemonic rule of the Western empire, and thereby inducting all that accrue from the new dominant culture. The transition from being mere tribals to becoming participants at different levels

50. Imchayanger, The Ao Religion, (Unpublished M. Phil Dissertation, Submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1981), p. 96.

51. Vihuli Sema, Op.cit., p. 118.

of political organisations such as tribal and national politics may be attributed to this change of attitudes.

It may be said that though the imparted education fell upon only a handful of Nagas, its impact is to be in no way undermined. According to Vihuli Sema, the teaching of English language broke down the linguistic barriers that existed among the Nagas and brought about a sense of solidarity among the different Naga tribes. The spread of Christianity and education started a gradual migration of the people to the urbanised centres to seek better economic opportunities.⁵² There is no denying the fact that Naga tribals came to mingle and interact in these centres. Imnatemsu Ao sums up the impact of British rule thus:

"Along with the work done by the Christian missionaries in educational, social and medical fields, the British established communication and administrative unity among the different parts of Nagaland. All these led to the emergence of a new political consciousness and aspiration among the Nagas."⁵³

Though British rule could not bring about a major upheaval in the economic life of the Naga people, the introduction of Christianity, education and market economy had far reaching effects on the Nagas. We do not claim that there was

52. Vihuli Sema, *Op.cit.*, pp. 120 - 121.

53. L. Imnatemsu Ao, *Op.cit.*, p.1.

a radical change in the social structure. But we can say that there was a marked difference in the traditional society in which the attitudes and beliefs were universal, and there was uniformity in the means of livelihood. With the coming of market economy, monetary wealth began to influence society. Because of education there was a change in the occupation of the people. The educated took to white-collar jobs. They were in a position more accessible to money and hence more respectable in the new society. The church also brought about a similar division among the Nagas because the educated Nagas took over its leadership, as they were the ones who were first exposed to Christianity in their Mission schools. Therefore, the social composition of the Naga society was no longer homogeneous. There emerged an obvious difference in outlook, beliefs and attitudes among the people. We shall elaborate on this in the next chapter.

All these changes caused the very roots of the Naga traditional cultural system to be shaken and Imchaynager laments that this has resulted in political turmoil, economic instability, social disintegration and loss of identity.⁵⁴ In many ways he is right. Under British administration the Nagas had to adapt themselves to an alien political system which they do not understand; the economic aspiration of the common man extended

54. Imchaynager *Op.cit.*, pp. 100 - 101.

beyond daily sustenance in the midst of the growth in economic disparity. As a result, there arose a situation where the Naga needed to redefine his identity within a larger political environment. As we shall see below, this formed the background to the emergence of formal tribes.

II

We have already seen in the preceding Chapter that most of the tribals names, originally existing in the pre-British times were not adopted by the British. One simple reason for this can be that they took their names from outsiders. The use of Naga names was difficult because each group had its own name for the other. A group may be called different names by different villages. The original local names that British writers adopted were also found to be corrupted in use. The tribal appellation 'Ao' for example, is said to be 'Aor' in its original form.⁵⁵ In case of of Aos, the Assamese name Hatiguria was not used. But the tribe which came to be known by the Assamese name Lotha, were known to themselves as 'Kyou'.⁵⁶ The Kacharis of Assam called the

55. J. P. Mills, The Ao Nagas, (Bombay, 1973), p. 2.

56. Robert Reid, Op.cit., p. 99.

Angamis as Dawansa.⁵⁷ This group was known to themselves as Tenyimia. It is believed that the name Angami came from 'Gnamei', a term used by the people of Manipur to describe them as raiders⁵⁸

R. G. Woodthorpe mentions that the Nagas have no generic name for themselves or for the various tribes constituting their race. He says "a Naga when asked who he is, generally replies that he is from such and such village, though sometimes a specific name is given to a group of villages."⁵⁹ We know that it was the British who started using names to distinguish between tribes. They first came into contact with the Angami group and knew no other tribes beyond this region.⁶⁰ But later on, they began to identify more tribes and put them on record.⁶¹

It may be pointed out that at this time many writers started to describe the Naga tribes in terms of their attributed

57. John Butler, "Rough Notes on the Angami Nagas", in Verrier Elwin (ed.), Nagas of the Nineteenth Century, (Bombay, 1969), p. 294.

58. J. H. Hutton, The Angami Nagas, (Bombay, 1969), p. 14.

59. R. G. Woodthorpe, "Notes on the Wild Tribes Inhabiting the So-called Naga Hills on Our North-East Frontier of India", in Verrier Elwin (ed.), Op.cit., (Bombay, 1969), p. 47.

60. A. Mackenzie, "History, 1884", in Verrier Elwin (ed.), (Bombay, 1969), p. 168.

61. See W. Robinson, "A Descriptive Account of Assam", in Verrier Elwin (ed.), Op.cit., (Bombay, 1969), p. 86.

names and cultural traits. This is best explained by Robert Reid when he says that ethnologists such as Hutton and Mills have the nomenclature on the Nagas put on a scientific footing. He cites the Angamis, Semas, Aos, Rengmas and Lothas as examples.⁶² In the work of A. W. Davis, *Census of India, 1891*, we find these tribes being categorically described with respect to their territories, customs and traditions, by way of distinguishing one from another as separate tribes.⁶³

Language was a major criterion in the classification of tribes by Davis. On the basis of the difference of language in Chongli and Mongsen, he spoke of the Aos as two tribes.⁶⁴ On the same ground, he says that the three groups of Chakrima, Chakroma and Tengima to which the Angami tribe can be divided, are the same tribe because of similarity in language.⁶⁵ Davis is not alone in this; John Butler refused to accept the two neighbouring Angami and Mao as the same tribe, though they share a lot of common features because of their dissimilarity in language.⁶⁶

62. Robert Reid, *Op.cit.*, p. 99.

63. See A. W. Davis, "Census of India, 1891, Assam, Vol. I." in Verrier Elwin (ed.), *Op.cit.*, (Bombay, 1969), pp. 322 - 548.

64. *Ibid.*, p.322.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 547.

66. John Butler, "Tour Dairy of the Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills for the year 1870", in Verrier Elwin (ed.), *Op.cit.*, p. 616.

It is seen that the general perception of the Nagas by the British was in terms of a people divided into different tribes on the basis of language, customs and habits. Of these, language seems to be the most important determinant of tribal segregation. The British administration incorporated into its system the linguistic basis of tribal identification in appointing official interpreters called Dobashis. They were appointed as representatives of various tribes grouped on the basis of language. This was done at a ratio proportionate to the population of each tribe. In 1930, the tribal distribution of Dobashis in Mokokchung stood as follows:⁶⁷

Aos - 10;
 Lothas - 4;
 Semas - 4;
 Changs - 3; and
 Konyaks - 1

The role of Christianity and its corollary, education, with regard to the emergence of formal tribes, consequential to the linguistic basis of classification of the Nagas, is a major factor which requires elucidation. This may be considered as the first step towards the concretisation of what had been till then assumed as tribes. The first school in the Naga Hills was opened

67. Piketo Sema, British Policy and Administration in Nagaland, 1881 - 1947, (New Delhi, 1991), mpp. 34 - 35.

at Namsang, through the affords of Rev. Miles Bronson.⁶⁸ The Naga villlage of Molungyimsen was the first to house a Christian centre which was started in March 1876.⁶⁹ Initially, the missionaries chose Assamese as the medium of instruction.⁷⁰ In 1885, the Rivenbergs came and they began to study the Ao language.⁷¹ Very soon the scriptless Naga dialects were put into writing by using Roman script. The first written works in Naga vernacular were undoubtedly Christian oriented. They were translations of Bible, Christian Hymns and other literary works.⁷² By the end of 1884, there appeared a dictionary, an Ao primer, a catechism, a life of Joseph, a Hymn book, and a translation of the Gospels of Mathew and John, all in the Ao dialect.⁷³ In 1904, various books in Naga dialects started emerging with the approval of the Naga Hills Government Officials.⁷⁴

The introduction of an educational system in which each linguistic group is unified was significant in the development of the idea of the tribe within such a group. This helped in bringing down the language barrier between villages, and even of Thinuos, as the major dialect which represented the written form,

68. Vihuli Sema, op.cit., p. 83.

69. Ibid., p. 49.

70. Ibid., p. 85.

71. Op.cit., p. 49.

72. Ibid., p. 92.

73. Ibid., p. 93.

74. Ibid., p. 94.

within a circumscribed tribal confine, became central to all. In the case of the Ao tribe, the written dialect which became common to the tribe was mainly adopted from the Molung and Merankong villages. This was so because Rev. Rivenberg, the missionary who first scripted the Ao language settled in these parts.⁷⁵ The common use of this dialect by the three lingual groups - Mongsen, Chongli and Changki, must have had a unifying influence on them.

The rapid growth of Christianity as seen earlier in the same Chapter, made the Church an important social institution which gathered much influence. Since education came from the missionaries, they played an important role in the formation of tribes. They helped in defining tribal boundaries by introducing the use of a common dialect in their schools and churches. The use of the same translations within a particular area, for a particular group of people became an important criterion for the formation of tribal identity. It gave the group a cohesiveness which later showed in the formation of tribal church associations. We shall discuss this further in Chapter V.

The first tribal church Association was formed by the Aos.⁷⁶ Following the Ao Baptist Association, different other tribes formed their own Associations.⁷⁷ This marked the first

75. Ibdi., p. 49.

76. Ibid., p. 53.

77. Ibid., pp. 53 - 79.

instance of formal organisations of the Nagas into different tribes, and also the institutionalisation of tribal divisions. This tribe-wise church Associations are formed on the basis of the language groups identified by the missionaries. They played an important role in the development of a strong bond of group consciousness. The Konyaks who claimed to be a single tribe, inhabit Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and even Myanmar (Burma), but these State and international boundaries do not seem to deter them from coming together under a single church Association.⁷⁸ This implies that with the formation of Christian Associations, tribe consciousness was beginning to crystallise.

The British did not interfere with the native political system. The Naga traditions and customs prevailed. British rule did not amount to imposition of European model of administration on the Nagas. In terms of politico-administrative policy, the British wanted the traditional social system to flourish, hence the Naga society remained intact to a certain extent, in character and content.⁷⁹ Though the Naga Hills was a district within Assam, it was never integrated into the administrative set-up of Assam. It continued to enjoy an isolated treatment as an exclusive socio-political entity.⁸⁰

78. O. M. Rao, Longri Ao: A Biography, (Gauhati, 1986), p. 50.

79. Piketo Sema, Op.cit., pp. 28 - 29.

80. Ibid., p. 56.

In spite of the apparent British efforts to preserve and retain the Naga way of life, we find that changes have become inevitable. Though not much development has taken place, the enforcement of law and order has ushered in a peaceful life among the Nagas.⁸¹ The new political unity brought in by British rule opened up inter-societal communication between the previously isolated villages. Christianity and education have done their part in rendering the traditional system of life incompetent. Thus, a conducive atmosphere was created for the formation of a new social order and this turned out to be no other than the emergence of distinct tribal identities. In this context, we find much relevance in what B. Pakem has to say:

"In the pre-colonial period most of the communities of North-East India were not conscious about their ethnic identities and their world was confined to their family, clans, and villages. The first sociological process has been to develop an ethno-tribal identity which was acquired in the phase of colonial administration."⁸²

We can trace the beginning of this 'sociological process' to the coming of the British. The new administration and Western cultural influences, the main vehicles of which have been education and Christianity, broke open the traditional society which was a closed one. There was a change in the

81. See Ursula Graham Bower, Naga Path, (London, 1986), p. 187.

82. B. Pakem (ed.), Nationality, Ethnicity and Cultural Identity in North-East India, (Guwahati, 1990), p. 1.

attitudes of the people. Western ideas and influences began to replace the old values. The adoption of the idea of a tribe came as result of the same process.

Prior to the coming of the British, the highest social organisation of the Nagas was only the village. But when the British came, they began to interpret the traditional Naga society in terms of tribes. The general Western concept of tribe is that of a primitive society of people, sharing common ancestry, language and culture. British administrators and writers began to identify Naga tribes on the basis of these features. In doing so they began to borrow names from those used by both the Nagas and their neighbours. Therefore, the Naga society was not originally divided into tribes; the tribal identities of today have been formed on an ascriptive basis.

So far we have seen that tribes in the Naga society are social groupings founded on language, costumes and habits which came to acquire a common nomenclature. But the process of tribe formation does not end here. Tribes gain formal recognition in the different institutions of society and goes on to acquire new characteristics. Three main social institutions within which the crystallisation of tribal identities takes place can be identified as follows:

1. The Church which began to organise itself on the basis of tribes;
2. the educational system which began to impart knowledge about these tribals divisions; and
3. the Government which set-up an administrative system that incorporates the tribe as a socio-economic and political entity.

Within these institutions, tribal boundaries have been defined and tribal identity has been organised. Therefore, now we can say that tribes have become formal societal entities, and also assume that tribe consciousness has emerged to a certain extent.

The emergence of tribe consciousness can be linked to the break-up of the traditional society. The educated Nagas first came to accept these groupings. They were educated in Christian mission schools. Not only they learn about Western administration, but also they got directly involved in it by way of their employment in white-color jobs. This group began to have a higher status and a more influential position because they have better access to money and the seats of power in the new society of market economy and modern administration. With the rise in the aspirations of these people, they began to mobilise tribal

sentiments for their own good and this is largely responsible for the spread of tribe consciousness. In the next chapter, we shall examine how as a result of a series of socio-economic and political changes, these processes took place and led to the politicisation of tribes.

CHAPTER IV

THE POLITICISATION OF TRIBE

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In the British era, the Nagas experienced a series of influences brought about by Western education, Christianity, modern administration and market economy. This incurred a strong impact on the traditional social structure of the people. The structural changes that ensued gave rise to new political developments. We shall now see, how the institutionalisation of tribes into formal social groups affected these developments and how ultimately, this led to the politicisation of tribes. But first, let us briefly recapitulate on what we understand of the Naga society so far.

Earlier in Chapter II, we have shown that traditionally the Nagas lived in societies which were more or less classless and egalitarian. This was so because the people were living under uniform religious beliefs and traditional practices which accorded no exception to any individual or group. Also, the village which constitutes the limits of the organised society was negligibly small. Its economy was primitive in nature. Private ownership of land was unimportant as land was available in plenty and there was neither the technology for production of surplus nor the market for its profitable disposal. The Naga

village was structured only in terms of functional divisions as necessitated by its complex cultural practices, and such divisions did not have much politico-economic significance.

The social changes brought by the advent of British rule as we have seen in Chapter III, had tremendous effect on the traditional Naga society. The Naga society which was so far closed and integrated was broken open with the introduction of British administration. It is said that the new administration did not seek changes in the basic customs and traditions of the people.¹ But, to a large extent it freed the individual from the strict bonds of traditional social life and this gave rise to the disintegration of the village society. People began to move to urban areas, the emergence of towns and markets brought about an urban culture, and people began to adopt non-agrarian occupations by accepting government jobs in various offices.²

As a result of urbanisation and opening of communication facilities, markets began to emerge. With the introduction of money economy, a few merchants began to deal in imported goods. In 1904, there were eighteen shops in Kohima, of which thirteen were kept by Marwari merchants.³ But the most

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1. M. Alemchiba, A brief Historical Account of Nagaland, (Kohima, 1970), p. 131.
 2. V. H. Zhimomi, "British Policy and Administration in Nagaland", (Unpublished M. Phil Dissertation Submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1981), p.121.
 3. B. C. Allen, Naga Hills and Manipur, (Delhi, 1905), p. 59.

important point was, now payments for labour, salary and commercial transaction could be done through the medium of currency. Hence, wage earners came into existence and also the unlimited amassing of wealth has been made possible. But at the initial stage of British rule, trade and commerce was very small and its development was quite slow. Total revenue in the Naga Hills District in 1903-1904, was only Rupees 75,540.⁴

It is said that the Nagas who acted as porters in the Abor expedition of 1912, and who went as Labour Corps to France in 1918, came back with their accumulated earnings and affected the local economy.⁵ But this only temporarily enriched a few persons and its impact may be negligible. However, in the wake of World War II, a considerable amount of economic developments took place. The communication network was improved to a great extent and Dimapur, which was till then only a small-railhead market is reported to have grown into a larger town.⁶ As quite a lot of money had circulated at this period in payments for labour and the purchase of goods, Alemchiba points out that as a result, a shift of influence and social leadership from the traditional elite to the younger generation of the nouveaux riche might have taken place.⁷

4. Ibid., p. 80.

5. M. Alemchiba, Op.cit., p.137.

6. Ibid., p. 136.

7. Ibid., p. 137.

The traditional Naga religious life was closely linked with the society and unless this link is broken to some extent, individual responses to the new socio-economic environment would have been difficult. Therefore, the role of Christianity in bringing about the disappearance of the social and communal institutions and the emergence of a spirit of new individualism which led to the erosion of family and clannish ties,⁸ is vital for the success of the new way of life. Christians began to defy the rigid orders of the village and break away from both the old religion and fellow villagers, hence contributing to the process of village disintegration.⁹ It also brought "a change in the world view, philosophy of life and perspective of spiritual and moral values."¹⁰ Yonuo writes that "Christianity was an inward machinery which brought modernisation, western ways of life, education, the renaissance of Nagaism and unity among the Nagas."¹¹ It is quite possible that a realisation of Nagaism occurred, but we rather not call it renaissance because traditionally, a composite Naga society was not in existence.

When education was first introduced people were reluctant to send their children to school because they did not value education and also fear the conversion of their children

8. Vihuli Sema, "The Work of the American Baptist Mission in the Naga Hills", (Unpublished M. Phil Dissertation Submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1981), p. 126.

9. M. Horam, Naga Polity, (New Delhi, 1974), p. 120.

10. Vihuli Sema, Op.cit., p. 128.

11. Asoso Yonuo, The Rising Nagas, (New Delhi, 1974), p. 128.

to Christianity.¹² There was also an economic disadvantage, as the sending of children to school would mean the loss of field-hands for cultivation. The Naga families were large for social and economic reasons. The abundance of offsprings strengthened clans and facilitated the possession and cultivation of more land.¹³ This could have been one of the reasons why "the spread of Western education and modernism among the Nagas was not confined to any particular section of the people and the educated group of Nagas that emerged was representative of a cross-section of Naga tribes."¹⁴ It is said that Christianity and modern education were viewed with suspicion and distrust by the village chiefs and elders.¹⁵ However, a small number of Nagas received Western education and began to engage themselves in professions ranging from trading to law and medicine.¹⁶

Thus a lot changes occurred in the Naga society during the British rule. But it must be noted that these changes only brought about superficial differences in the occupations and life of the people. The economic pattern did not undergo any major

12. Khrielenuo Terhuja, "The Christian Church Among the Angami Nagas", in Suresh Singh (ed.), Tribal Situation in India, (Simla, 1972), p.295.

13. Ibid., p. 299.

14. Udayon Misra, "Naga Nationalism and Role of Middle Class", in B. Datta Ray (ed.), The Emergence and the Role of Middle Class in North-East India, (New Delhi, 1983), p. 157.

15. M. Alemchiba, "Problems of Re-adjustment to New Situation", in Suresh Singh (ed.), Op.cit., p. 479.

16. Udayon Misra, "Naga Nationalism and Role of Middle Class", in B. Datta Ray (ed.), Op.cit., p.164.

changes during the British rule so much as to pose a threat to the traditional authority of tribal councils.¹⁷ In the first decade of the 20th Century, we find that there was not much trade among the Nagas.¹⁸ Again, though the growth of Christianity became rapid from 1922 onwards,¹⁹ the spread of education was slow and even as late as 1941, the literacy rate in the Naga Hills was only 5.09%.²⁰ Hence, despite these new developments, we find that the old Naga society had not changed much, a process class formation had not taken off and the Nagas continued to live in their own tribal isolation.²¹

Though the changes brought about in the Naga society did not cause the stratification of society into distinct opposing groups or classes, we find that the intensity of differences between the different categories of people engaged in the new socio-economic system, which has broken away from the traditional society with the adoption of new social life, occupations and changes in attitudes and beliefs, has increased by a cognizable margin. As a result, a new social group which is in a position to influence another on account of its newly acquired socio-economic and political status might have emerged.

17. Ibid., p. 161.

18. B. C. Allen, Op.cit., p. 59.

19. Vihuli Sema, Op.cit., p. 117.

20. M. Alemchiba, "Problems of Re-adjustment to New Situation", in Suresh Singh (ed.), Op.cit., p. 483.

21. Udayon Misra, "Naga Nationalism and Role of Middle Class", in B. Datta Ray (ed.), Op.cit., p. 154.

In order to understand this new society in which disparities have brought in elements of stratification, it is necessary to examine the social relations of such a society.

All societies, except primitive societies are said to be stratified into different groups or classes; and it is often assumed that all other socio-economic and political aspects have their basis on the social structure. The Marxist theory claims that every society is divided into a ruling class and one or more subject classes. The basis of this division is basically economic -- those who own the major instruments of economic production occupy the dominant position, and their political dominance is consolidated, when their hold of power over military forces and production of ideas is established.²² On the other hand, we have the elite theory which attributes the stratification of society to the different activities the individual performs in the social system and the position he occupies in the society. Pareto divides society into two strata. A lower stratum or the non-elite and a higher stratum, the elite, which again is divided into two, a governing elite and a non-governing elite.²³ According to Mosca, in all societies backward or advanced, two classes of people can always be identified -- "a class that rule and a class that is ruled."²⁴

22. T. B. Bottomore, Elites and Society, (Middlesex, 1964), p. 97.

23. Ibid., p. 8.

24. G. Mosca, The Ruling Class, (New York, 1939), p. 50.

On the basis of these theories different writers have opined that with the coming of socio-economic changes, the Naga society has been stratified into different economic classes. Zhimomi is of the view that with the coming of education, an educated Naga middle class has emerged and taken over the traditional leadership of the tribal Chiefs.²⁵ He appears to be assuming that a middle class has emerged because they have education. Misra also writes that the emergence of middle class among the Nagas has greatly been influenced by Christianity and education, however, he adds that even the most educated Naga retained his link with his village and was guided by the traditional relationships of tribal life.²⁶ He holds that the character of middle class among the Nagas was not born either of the landed aristocracy nor it was the result of commercial activity.²⁷ It is difficult to relate the concept of middle class to this proposition as social classes arise out of the relations of production. It is said that in former colonial countries of Asia and India, educational and administrative systems were largely responsible for the creation of middle class.²⁸ But these societies were either traditionally stratified or at least had developed an economic basis for their stratification. What we called the Naga middle class simply turns

25. V. H. Zhimomi, Op.cit., p. 121.

26. Udayon Misra, "Naga Nationalism and Role of Middle Class", in B. Datta Ray (ed.), Op.cit., p. 156.

27. Ibid., p. 161.

28. T. B. Bottomore, Op.cit., p. 97.

out to be a differentiated group of people which have to an extent separated from the original bulk, and has gained a more or less respectful and influential position with the establishment of the educated status which came from the nature of jobs they occupy. It does not qualify as a middle class, because as Manorama Sharma says, "a class to be a class in Marxist theory must be one economically, ideologically and politically."²⁹

Besides the only purpose for the suggestion that a middle class has emerged among the Nagas seems to be for the explanation of the emergence of Naga nationalism and not so as to explain the socio-economic and political character of the Naga society, which is quite irrelevant to the use of a class concept. Misra is of the opinion that "in the process of growth of Naga nationalism, no threat was posed to the traditional leadership of the tribal councils and the village Headmen continued to play as affective a role as ever in the Naga life."³⁰ Thus, we find that the use of the term middle class does not denote social relations and social stratification in the Naga society. It turns out to be just a term used to explain the emergence of a new social category in the society. By examining the character and role of this new social category we can be in a better position to label it correctly.

29. Manorama Sharma, Social and Economic Change in Assam, (Delhi, 1990), p. 4.

30. Udayon Misra, "Naga Nationalism nad Role of Middle Class", in B. Datta Ray (ed.), Op.cit., p. 161.

Socio-economic and political changes seem to have brought about three identifiable categories under which the Nagas can be grouped: Christians -- non-Christians; educated--illiterate; and rich--poor.³¹

It is to be noted that Christianity was common to all the three categories as both the educated-illiterate and rich-poor groups had Christian members. The difference between the educated-rich Christian and the illiterate poor Christian has to be recognised as due to Western education, there must have emerged a difference in their cultural outlook and value orientations. Therefore, the illiterate-poor Christian can be categorised with the non-Christian group. One can say that the educated were almost all Christians, as education and Christianity came from the same source, the Christian missionaries.³² Even otherwise, since Christianity and education are both loaded with Western values, we may say that the educated and the Christians share a similar value system. The educated were also rich because they are the salaried group as they worked in the government offices and they were the salaried group. In the same manner, those who did not come under the influence the influence of Western education and Christianity can be said to

31. This distinction is in terms of money only and differentiates between the salaried and the non-salaried groups.

32. In 1901, there were 563 Christians and a total of 363 literate persons in the Naga Hills District. B. C. Allen, Op.cit., p. 80.

have been poor as they have no or very little monetary income.³³ So let us say the non-Christians were almost all poor and illiterate.

From the above analysis we can make out two distinct social groups forming the Naga social structure--the educated-rich Christians and the illiterate-poor non-Christians.³⁴ The basis of this distinction as can be clearly seen is a matter of social differences. Hence, we do not have two opposing groups, but two groups separated by their socio-economic backgrounds. In the previous Chapter we have seen that there was a rapid growth of Christianity among the Nagas in the first half of the 20th Century. As Christianity brought in Western culture and values, there was a growing respect among the Nagas for education. That is why the educated Nagas gained an influential position over the masses. Therefore, between the two social groups we have brought out, one may say that the educated-rich Christian group is in a position to influence the illiterate-poor non-Christian group.

33. In 1901, there were 2388 persons on Government payroll, forming 2.3 percent of the population, while those who continued in the traditional agrarian mode of livelihood constituted 93.8 percent. B. C. Allen, *Ibid.*, p. 41.

34. The purpose of this stratification is only to bring out a tentative arrangement so as to understand the basis of different social groups and they are not closed categories.

The membership of the Naga Club was made up of educated Naga youth and Government officials.³⁵ They were mostly the products of Christian institutions.³⁶ Again the members of the Naga National Council (NNC) is said to have been largely drawn from what has been called the newly emerging middle class,³⁷ which we have already seen, has its basis on Christianity and education. A random list of twenty Naga leaders, taken from both the Naga Club and the NNC, shows that all were educated and only one was a non-Christian.³⁸ It can therefore be safely said that most of the Naga national leaders came from the educated-rich and Christian stratum of the society.

The elite are "holders of a high position in a given

35. Udayon Misra, "Naga Nationalism and the Role of Middle Class", in B. Datta Ray (ed.), Op.cit., p. 159.

36. Vihuli, Sema, Op.cit., p. 128.

37. Udayon Misra, "Naga Nationalism and the Role of Middle Class", in B. Datta Ray (ed.), Op.cit., p. 161.

38. Some of the founding members of the Naga Club and the NNC are the following : Kevichusa, Visar, Kezehol, Vizol, Mayannokcha, Nchumo Lotha, L. Lungalung, Zashei Huire, Krusiehu, Pelhouvilie, Ruzhukhrie, T. Aliba, T. Sakhrie, T. Haralu, Mondamo, Imkommeren, Levi, Yajen Aier, T. N. Agnami and Kukato. All these persons are found to be literate Christians except for Visar, who was a non-Christian. But as he also studied in mission schools his value orientations might have been the same. He also is said to have adopted the Christian religion in his later life.

Source : Kezehol, a founding member of NNC, in an interview in Asielie Pusa, "The Emergence of Naga Consciousness", (Unpublished M. Phil Disseration Submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1987), p. 52.

society."³⁹ This means that there are different positions in a society and that they exist in a hierarchical order. This can occur only in a society with organised sections. Mosca defines elite as "an organised minority, obeying a single impulse which holds domination over an unorganised majority."⁴⁰ In this sense the elite does not just hold a high position in the society, but also dominate over the majority and organisation is key to their influence.

We have seen that the Naga national leaders mostly come from the educated-rich Christian stratum of society. They were the ones who formed the Naga Club and NNC, which are organisations through which they propagated their ideas to the masses. Therefore we can say that the educated-rich Christian Nagas became the elite of the Naga society by forming organisations such as the Naga Club and the NNC, through which they were able to hold their domination over the Nagas. It may be pointed out here that what has been most often assumed as the Naga middle class is no more than a differentiated group of people, separated from the original bulk, who have gained a dominant position due to a change in the value system, which brought their educated status and the nature of their employment to prominence. We prefer to call it the Naga elite.

39. Harold D. Lasswell, Daniel Lerner and C. Easton Rothwell, The comparative Study of Elites: An Introduction and Bibliography, (Stanford, 1952), p. 6.

40. G. Mosca, Op.cit., p. 53.

As the Nagas were under British rule, the Naga elite had no control over the reins of the government machinery. Yet, they could no longer equate themselves with the common man because of their newly acquired status. They became a displaced lot in the society because they could not identify themselves with the traditional social system anymore. They were faced with an identity crisis. The only way they could assert their new status and play a dominant role in the society was by forming a Naga organisation and assuming its leadership. There is no doubt that this led to the formation of the Naga Club, and later, the NNC.

With the formation of the Naga Club in 1918, for the first time an organisation claiming to represent the interests of the Naga people came to surface.⁴¹ An analysis of the Memorandum⁴² submitted by the Naga Club to the Simon Commission in 1929, points to the following:

1. There was no unity among the Nagas except for the political unity which resulted from the common British rule.
2. The Naga Club sees the Nagas as a single group which can be distinguished from other ethnic groups in the region or under the British imperial rule.

41. Chandrika Singh, Political Evolution In Nagaland, (New Delhi, 1981), pp. 31 - 32.

42. See Appendix A.

3. Members of the Club take the Naga people to be a group divided into tribes which are different from one another.
4. Each member of the Club, signatory to the Memorandum, claimed to represent the whole of their respective tribes.

It is discernible from the above that the constitution of the Naga Club reflects the formation of a single political platform of the Nagas on the basis of tribe-wise representation. As members of the Naga Club belonged to the educated-rich Christian group, which constitutes the Naga elite, we may say that their idea of a tribe was derived from their Western education and cultural orientation, which made it possible for them to accept the tribal taxonomy and nomenclature as given by early anthropologists. In the previous Chapter we have already shown how such a classification of Nagas into various tribes not only found recognition from the administration and the Christian mission, but was also incorporated into the administrative and educational systems. In this respect it may be relevant to point out that most of the early tribal history of the Nagas were written by their administrators themselves.

There is no doubt that the Naga Club laid down the foundation for a separate Naga political entity consisting of

tribes. But it was the NNC which first used the term 'national' by way of denoting the Naga people.⁴³ In 1945, the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. C. R. Pawsey, of the Naga Hills District formed the Naga Hills District Tribal Council. The immediate objective of the Council was to bring about the unification of the Nagas and the repairing of the damage caused by the World War II.⁴⁴ Later, at its 1946 Wokha Session, it was renamed the Naga National Council (NNC). Under the NNC the Nagas were brought together for the first time within a single political organisation and it contributed immediately toward the emergence of an all-Naga consciousness.⁴⁵ Misra write: "It was the NNC which, through its social and political demands and its method of organisation, paved the way for the emergence of a modern Naga nation."⁴⁶

Misra is of the opinion that the organisational pattern of the NNC was based on the traditional tribal pattern and there was no clash between the emerging 'middle class' leadership of the NNC and the traditional tribal councils which gave unstinted support to the movement led by the NNC.⁴⁷ We agree with Misra as far as the relationship between the NNC leadership and the tribal

43. Udayon Misra, "Naga Nationalism and the Role of Middle Class ", in B. Datta Ray (ed.). Op.cit., p. 160.

44. M. Horam, Op.cit., p. 16.

45. Udayon Misra, "Naga Nationalism and the Role of Middle Class", in B. Datta Ray (ed.), Op.cit., p. 160.

46. Ibid., p. 161.

47. Ibid., p. 161.

councils is concerned, but it is not true that the tribal pattern of organisation is a traditional legacy. An analytical overview of the NNC will show that the tribal councils were the handiwork of its leadership, borrowed from the Western political tradition of federalism.

The working system of the NNC has been briefly put by

A. Z. Phizo in the following words:

"Every Naga is a member of the Naga National Council and every Naga has the right to speak in the Local, Regional and National Council. Each Naga village is a Republic with its own people's Assembly and court of Justice. The villages are combined again to form higher Regional councils for its parliamentary works. The Tribal Councils send its representatives to the Naga National Council."⁴⁸

The Yehzabo or the NNC's constitution of Nagaland, clearly states that the National government of Nagaland shall be the 'Federal Government of Nagaland'.⁴⁹ This 'Government' is to be constituted with the Naga tribes as the units of the federation. In part 1, Clause 3, of the Constitution it is written:

48. A. Z. Phizo, President NNC, Letter to Federick H. Boland, President, United Nations, dated October 8, 1960, The Naga National Rights and Movement, (Publicity and Information Department, Naga National Council, Kohima, 1993), p. 56.

49. Luingam Luithui and Nandita Haskar, Nagaland File, (New Delhi, 1984), p. 96.

"Each area or territory inhabited by the communities of a tribe shall be constituted into a federated unit to be called a Region and each of the Regions shall be given autonomy to the extent of management of local affairs and administration."⁵⁰

The Constitution also provides in part II, Clause 14, that citizens will not be discriminated on the basis of tribe.⁵¹ But what constitutes this tribe or how is a tribe to be defined? From the above, we learn that a tribe consist of communities. These communities come from a grouping of villages. In part I, Clause 7 of the Constitution we read that "the demarcated boundary between Regions or sub-Regions from the day of the British shall continue to have legal recognition of this Yehzabo."⁵² Thus, it can be seen that the sole criterion of the division of Nagas into various tribes was inherited from the British administration.

It is clear that the NNC envisages a political system based on a tribal structure in which the tribe retains its identity as a distinct political unit. The NNC passed a four-point resolution on June 19, 1946, claiming that it stands for the solidarity of all Naga tribes, including those in the unadministered areas, protesting against the grouping of Assam with Bengal, and demanding autonomy, along with a separate

50. Ibid., p. 96.

51. Ibid., p. 96.

52. Ibid., p. 96.

electorate within Assam in a free India.⁵³ These resolutions point to the fact that, initially the political aspirations of the NNC did not amount to a sovereign state. It only called for a unified Naga political realm, endowed with autonomy. But this political stand of the NNC was soon to change. The NNC also repudiated the propositions that were made to retain the Naga Hills as a Crown colony or bring it under the United Nations Charter as a Trust Territory. They began to demand a fully independent state.⁵⁴

In 1947, the 9 - point Hydari Agreement was signed between the NNC and Sir Akbar Hydari, the Governor of Assam, who represented India. The Agreement guarantees autonomy to the NNC for internal affairs in judicial, executive and economic spheres. But this Agreement was never implemented because it failed to clearly define whether it would lead to complete severance of the Nagas from India or retained them within India at the time of its expiration after ten years.⁵⁵ After this, the NNC boycotted all Indian political activities. As a result, the Nagas did not participate in the election for the constitution of District Councils, and the General Elections in 1952. The NNC also declined the invitation to send representatives to the

53. Mhiesizokho Zinyu, Phizo and the Naga Problem, (Dimapur, 1979), p. 14.

54. Asoso Yunuo, Op.cit., p. 169.

55. See Asielie Pusa "The Emergence of Naga Consciousness", (Unpublished M. Phil Dissertation Submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1987), pp. 60 - 61.

Constituent Assembly of India. Instead, on the eve of January 26, 1950, when the new Constitution of India was to be Communicated, the NNC declared that the Nagas will become a free nation outside the Constitution of India. In 1951, it conducted a plebiscite in which it is reported that a unanimous vote in favour of independence from India was obtained from the Naga people.⁵⁶

It may be said, the NNC practically demonstrated that it was determined to go for a fully independent Naga state. It rejected any consideration of an autonomous status within India. But the Indian Government went ahead to formulate constitutional provisions and under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India, autonomy in cultural, religious and economic matters as well as local administration has been made. This followed the pattern envisaged in the NNC Constitution which recognises the tribal organisation as the key socio-political and economic institution. But the NNC was no longer looking for mere autonomy or the protection of its tribe-based political formula.⁵⁷ The armed uprising that ensued as a result of the NNC's determined struggle for full independence led the Assam Government to abolish the Tribal Councils existing under this scheme.⁵⁸

56. Ibid., pp. 61 - 62.

57. Ashikho-Daili-Mao, Nagas : Problems and Politics, New Delhi, 1992), pp. 44 - 48.

58. Ibid., p. 53.

The NNC went on to proclaim the establishment of a 'Federal Government of Nagaland' on March 22nd, 1956, and declared Nagaland as a 'People's Sovereign Republic'.⁵⁹ This was followed by an armed confrontation which went unabated for years together, as the Nagas went underground and took up arms against India.

It is said that the sufferings and the violence became unbearable. This prompted a moderate group of the NNC to look for an alternative solution to the problem. They formed a Reforming Committee at Kohima, on February 18, 1957. These moderates opposed the violent methods of the NNC.⁶⁰ In August 1957, they organised the first Naga people's Convention at Kohima. They demanded that the present Naga Hills District of Assam and Tuensang Frontier Division, along with the reserved forests of Naga Hills District which was transferred to Assam in 1921, should be constituted into a single administrative unit.⁶¹ The Indian Government responded by creating a new administrative unit called the Naga Hills Tuensang Area in 1957.⁶²

The desire for the establishment of a state of Nagaland within the Indian Union was brought up for the first time by the moderates, consequent to the Naga people's Convention held at

59. Neville Maxwell, India and the Nagas, (London, 1973), p. 12.

60. Asoso Yunuo, Op.cit., p. 221.

61. Chandrika Singh, Op.cit., p. 61.

62. Ibid., p. 170.

Ungma, in May 1958. This came in the form of a Sixteen-point proposal which was adopted in the third Naga People's Convention held at Mokokchung from 22nd to 26th of October 1959.⁶³ On January 24, 1961, Nagaland (Transitional Provision) Regulation was promulgated. It provided for an Interim body to act as the legislative body of Nagaland and an executive council to act as its Cabinet.⁶⁴ The demand for statehood was realised in 1962, when the Thirteenth Constitution Amendment Bill and the Nagaland State Bill were passed by the Indian Parliament and the President of India was granted his assent. On December 1, 1963, the State of Nagaland was finally inaugurated.⁶⁵

It must be noted that the Sixteen-Point Agreement is not a digression from the tribal model of government which was the handiwork of the NNC. The proponents of this Agreement were only a moderate group of the NNC itself. The only difference was in the status of the government. The NNC wanted a sovereign state of Nagaland, independent from India. The moderates opted for a state within the federal Constitution of India. It is a fact that the Naga People's Conventions, organised by the moderates were attended by delegates who came as representatives of the various Naga tribes.⁶⁶ It became quite evident that the tribe as a

63. Ibid., pp. 67 - 69.

64. Ibid., p. 77.

65. Ibid., pp. 86 - 90.

66. Ashikho-Daili-Mao, Op.cit., pp. 59 - 60.

political unit as envisaged by the NNC was beginning to crystallise. It is no gainsaying that the moderates contemplated a Naga state on the same principle.

An examination of the Sixteen-Point Agreement reveals the continued desire to model the state of Nagaland within India in the lines of the tribal system of government propounded by the NNC. In Clause V of the Agreement we find that the Legislature is to consist of elected and nominated members who are to be representatives of different Naga tribes.⁶⁷ According to Clause VIII, the Tribal Council is to constitute the main unit of local self-government.⁶⁸ On the same basis, the Interim body constituted as a step towards statehood, was to consist of forty members according to the following tribal distribution : Five from the Angami tribe, four from each tribe such as Ao, Lotha, etc., and two from each minor tribe.⁶⁹ Today the Nagaland Legislative Assembly consist of sixty members. Initially, for a period of ten years it was provided that the total number of seats was to be fortysix, with six of them allocated to Tuensang.⁷⁰

We can say that the attainment of statehood brought about a lull in the independent movement. This is because in it

67. Luingam Luithui and Nandita Haskar, Op.cit., pp. 59 - 60.

68. Ibid., pp. 154 - 155.

69. Ashikho-Daili-Mao, Op.cit., p. 76.

70. Ibid., pp. 86 - 88.

the Naga elite found a role playing field. It partially fulfilled their need for an organised political system through which they could exercise their dominance over the masses. By taking over the government and assuming the seats of power, its status as the ruling class found materialisation. Thus their identity as the elite of the Naga society was crystallised.

It is already evident from the tribe-wise representation in the Naga Club and the NNC, that the Naga elite has accepted the tribe as the basic political unit of society. The roots of this can be traced back to the influence of British administration and the Christian missions. Tribal divisions among the Nagas were first identified by Westerners on the basis of language, costumes, territory and the like. But most of all when these divisions were formally incorporated into the administrative system and the church organisation, it found substance. The Naga elite came to realise their place because of the education they received from the Christian mission schools and their association with the administrative system. This more or less explains the process under which the Naga elite came to adopt the concept of tribe.

The organisation of Nagas on the basis of tribal identities has been a major characteristic which has resulted from the acceptance of such a concept. The organisation

of the Church and political entities such as Naga Club and NNC have been founded on the same tribal basis. In the formation of the state of Nagaland this tribal factor found re-inforcement. It found a permanent political arena within which it could nurture itself. Since the state recognises the tribe as a political entity, it cannot function without making frequent references to it. Thus the tribal composition of society becomes a major determinant of the functioning of the government.

Therefore here, we have a State where politics is run by an elite, divided by their affiliation to different tribes. In such a case the elite may invoke tribal support and mobilise their respective tribes as a means to achieve certain political ends. This is further strengthened by the multi-tribal character of the state. Hence, tribes are no longer mere ethnic groups. The politicisation of tribes has taken place and this give rise to the emergence of inter-tribal politics as we shall see in the next Chapter.

CHAPTER V

THE EMERGENCE OF INTER-TRIBAL POLITICS

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In order to understand the different factors leading to the emergence of inter-tribal politics, we need to examine how each tribe identifies itself within the larger society and how it maintains its identity by generating tribe consciousness. This can be understood by looking into the development of various tribe-based organisations, existing at different levels of society. The social organisations in which manifestation of tribal identities as concrete socio-political units may be identified, are those of the students, the Church, socio-political regions, the underground 'Government' and, also the state of Nagaland. We shall examine the structural composition of these tribe-based organisations and also see how their functioning contributes to the nature of inter-tribal politics.

At the time of the attainment of statehood, Nagaland was consisted of three districts - Kohima, Mokokchung and Tuensang.¹ However, Section 8 of the Sixteen-Point Agreement, leading to statehood, incorporates that each tribe is to have units of rule making and administrative bodies for dealing with matters relating to the respective tribes and areas. These bodies are to be the Village Councils, the Range Councils and

1. Easterine Kire Iralu, A Historical and Geographical Study of Nagaland, (Kohima, 1986), p. 112.

the Tribal Councils.² On the same basis, the Government of India agreed to convert Community Development Blocks in Nagaland into special Tribal Pattern Blocks.³ This indicates that the districts were to remain mere formal administrative units. The real functioning of the administration was conceived according to a tribe-wise structural pattern, which was per se accepted by the Government to be essentially Naga.

This form of administration requires the formal recognition of tribes by the Government. Tribal boundaries need to be defined so that its authority can be conferred. In 1981 Census, the Naga tribes in Nagaland, have been classified into the following : Angami, Ao, Chakhesang, Chang, Chirri, Khiemnungan, Konyak, Lotha, Makware, Phom, Rengma, Sema, Tikhir, Yimchunger and Zeliang.⁴

These tribes are not merely recognised for the purpose of administration at the local level. They are also a major influence in the distribution policy of the state. To cite an example, the Government has listed out eight tribes, namely, Konyak, Chakhesang, Sangtam, Phom, Khiemnungan, Chang, Yimchunger and Zeliang, as backward, in view of their insignificant representation in the state services. Through a Notification, the

2. Luingam Luithui and Nandita Haskar, Nagaland File, (New Delhi, 1984), pp. 154 - 155.

3. Easterine Kire Iralu, Op.cit., p. 125.

4. Statistical Handbook of Nagaland, (Kohima, 1990), p.63.

Government announced a policy under which 33% of all posts under the Government of Nagaland are to reserved for these tribes.⁵ It is found that this policy of reservation has been, in practice, extended to selection of candidates for technical studies under state quota.⁶

The indications that the government recognises the tribes as a formal political unit are easily discernible from its methods of working. In acting to resuscitate the dormant Tribal Councils, the Nagaland Legislative Assembly passed the Nagaland Village, Area and Regional Council Bill in 1970.⁷ The Government's system of functioning proves beyond doubt that it considers tribes as equal participants in the affairs of the state. In forming a committee, the Government may requisition the inclusion of equal number of representatives from each tribe. In August 1968, the Government of Nagaland initiated Peace Talks for which a Special Committee was constituted, comprising of ten representatives from each tribe.⁸ There are also instances in which the Government consults tribal hohos (parliament) before major decisions are carried out. S. C. Jamir says that this was resorted to when he, as the Chief Minister of Nagaland,

5. Compilation of Important Notifications, Orders and Instructions Issued by Various Departments Under the Government of Nagaland, Vol. III, (Kohima, 1992), p. 18.

6. See The Vanguard, Vol. AI, (Kohima, 1992), pp. 20 - 21.

7. Hokishe Sema, A Collection of Speeches and Statements of shri Hokishe Sema, Chief Minister, 1969 - 1974, (Kohima, 1984), p. 14.

8. Ibid., p. 78.

brought about the Total Prohibition legislation into effect.⁹ It may also be pointed out that in chalking out electoral constituencies, it was originally decided that they should be determined on the basis of population so that even minor tribes can have a fair representation.¹⁰

However, it may be noted that it is not the state government which is responsible for the formation of the various tribal organisations. It only came to acknowledge and adapt itself to an existing tribal system which has already crystallised in the form of concrete organisations, like the ones we shall be examining in this Chapter. It is a fact that there were already deeply tribe-wise divisions in religious, political and student organisations, prior to statehood. This is why, when the state came into existence, it became more or less imperative for the state to organise itself on tribal lines.

In 1929, when members of the Naga club submitted a Memorandum on Naga self-determination to the Simon Commission, they wrote : "we claim (not only members of the Naga Club) to represent all those tribes to which we belong."¹¹ This perhaps,

9. S. C. Jamir, "Press statement", The Warrior, (Kohima, June 1989), p. 21.

10. Gazetteer of India, Nagaland, Kohima District, (Kohima, 1970), p. 211.

11. Memorandum on Naga Self-Determination Submitted to the Simon Commission by Naga Club on 19th January, 1929. Appendix A.

was the first indication of tribe consciousness at the political level. But at this time there were no tribe-based political organisations. This only came about with the formation of the Naga National Council (NNC) in 1946. The NNC started as a federal body with twentynine members representing different tribes on the principle of proportional representation.¹²

The NNC declared independence on the 14th of August 1947.¹³ They formed the 'Federal Government of Nagaland' with the Tatar Hoho as its parliament. This parliament was to have elected representatives from each of the Naga tribes. Each tribal area was to be called a Region. These Regions were to have their own Regional Leasy (Assembly), with wide ranging powers in regional matters. The Executive Head of the region was to be called Midan Peyu. Each Region was to have its own Regional Court. All these provisions can be found in a written constitution called the Yehzabo.¹⁴

Since under this scheme each Region is to consist of "communities of a tribe",¹⁵, we know that these Regions are conceived as tribal organisations. This proves that the NNC

12. Udayon Misra, North-East India, Quest for Identity, (Guwahati, 1988), p. 7.

13. Phizo's Letter to C. Rajagopalachari, First Governor General of Free India, dated 22 November 1948, The Naga National Rights and Movement, (Publicity and Information Department, Naga National Council, Kohima, 1993), p. 28.

14. Luingam Luithui and Nandita Haskar, Op.cit., pp. 95 - 108.

15. Ibid., p. 96.

conceives of a government for the Naga people in terms of a federation of tribes. As each tribe is to have its own regional organisation and court, endowed with a certain degree of autonomy, we may say that the NNC recognises the tribe as a distinct political entity. It is extremely difficult to bring out the NNC's concept of a tribe as they did not make any attempt to define it. But it is quite clear that it is meant to be the unit of the federal 'Government'. There is no doubt that they borrowed from Western federal states. It is certainly not a political entity originally devised by the NNC. This takes us back to our definition of a tribe in which we have shown that it is an acquired system of ethnic grouping.

Following the precedent set up by the NNC, the moderate group which separated from the NNC and opted to settle for statehood, also demanded for a state after the tribal model of the NNC. The evidence to this can be seen in the 16-Point Agreement between the Naga People's Convention and the Government of India in which a system of local self-government in the form of Tribal Councils was outlined.¹⁶ It was on these principles that the State of Nagaland came into existence. This explains to a certain extent the subsequent tribe-based policies of the Government. We shall come to this later.

16. Ibid., p. 96.

Alongside the political division of the Nagas into distinctive tribes, the Church also began to organise itself in the same manner. The development of such a pattern can be traced back to the early works of the missionaries. It can be seen that the Church started its works after the British administrative practice of giving name to tribes. In the same way the idea of a tribe percolated down to the NNC and influenced its politics as well as that of the state of Nagaland.

We can understand the role of the missionaries in the emergence of tribal groups among the Naga villages by examining their works. Once the missionaries put up their headquarters in a village, they started using that as their base for their work in the surrounding villages. They also introduced a single written form of languages to all these villages which might have so far spoken different dialects,¹⁷ like the Aos who spoke three languages, namely, Chongli, Mongsen and Changki.¹⁸ This may have become a unifying factor. This unity was expanding as more and more people embraced the new religion. An example of the outcome of such a growing unity can be seen in the first association of the Ao churches which was held at Molung, in 1897.¹⁹ There is no doubt that these churches used the same Ao language as brought out by the missionaries in written form. We quote Vihuli Sema:

17. See Vihuli Sema, "The American Baptist Mission and the Nagas", (Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis Submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1984), pp. 49 51.

18. J. P. Mills, The Ao Nagas, (Bombay, 1973), p. 2.

19. Vihuli Sema, Op.cit., p. 53.

"The method of forming association was adopted when a large number of churches using the same language was established among the members of a tribe other than that dominant in the original association. This was in itself unique in that this approach was not followed in other areas served by the Assam Mission."²⁰

From this we can deduce that language was a determining factor in the organisation of church Associations. This is quite true because the use of the same language by a group of villages was made possible by the Christian missionaries who adopted the language, developed a written form and used it to propagate their religion. We do agree with Vihuli Sema, that the formation of a tribal association by the missionaries was not a deliberate act. This is because it had nothing to do with the main purpose of their mission. But the circumstances leading to its formation were in no way natural as she claimed.²¹ This contradicts the fact that the language used in these Associations were those picked out from a myriad of dialects spoken by the people.²² Also their purpose of evangelisation includes the broadening and the development of a well-organised community of Christians. Due to their Western background as well as the influence of anthropologists and the local administration, we can assume that these missionaries already had a pre-conceived notion which sees such a community as the tribal association.

20. Ibid., p. 58.

21. Vihuli Sema, Op.cit., p. 58.

22. See Ibid., p. 92.

The impact of these Associations on the Naga society has been put by Vihuli Sema, as thus :

"The Mission... organised large associations to serve as forums(sic) for discussion on social welfare activities as well as church policy. These associations also serve to integrate Nagas of the same language groups. With their hugh(sic) annual meetings drawing thousands from distant villages these associations not only broke down inter-village barriers but raised to a much higher level the forum of discussion on issues formally decided only at the village level."²³

This means that its impact was not limited to religious matters alone. The activities of the Church apparently had socio-economic and political implications on the society. It not only helped bring together various isolated Naga villages within a centralised language bracket, but also started the process of change towards the formation of a single political identity which can be understood as the tribe.

Thus, the formation of tribal church Associations can be attributed to the work of the early missionaries. The Ao Nagas were the first to be exposed to Christianity. The first church to be established on Naga soil came up in 1872, at Molungkimung.²⁴ Between 1887 - 1896, there was a growth in church membership. It was around this time that the Christian Mission was able to extend its activities to other groups such as the Angamis and the

23. Ibid., p. 141.

24. Renthly Keitzar, Triumph of Faith in Nagaland, (Kohima, 1987), p. 2.

Lothas.²⁵ So it does not surprise one to find that the Ao Baptist Association was the first to emerge. Subsequently, following its footsteps many other tribes started their own parallel Associations.²⁶

The formation of these tribal church bodies preceded the emergence of the Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC), which as stated in its Constitution, was organised in 1937, with a view to promoting the unity of the Baptist Churches.²⁷ Despite the existence of a vision for the integration of the Naga Baptist churches, they continued to remain as an integral part of the Baptist Mission in Assam, till the idea of a Nagaland Baptist Church Council originated about the year 1935.²⁸ At this time the tribal organisations were already going strong, and leaders from the Ao and the Angami tribes, which are the two dominant groups, decidedly felt that the Naga churches should separate itself from a Council which includes the people of the plains.²⁹ This led to the involvement of various tribe Associations in the emergence of the NBCC. By the time it became a full-fledged organisation in 1959, it already had membership of the following tribal Associations:

01. Angami Baptist Association.
02. Ao Baptist Association.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

26. Vihuli Sema, *Op.cit.*, pp. 53 - 79.

27. Renthly Keitzar, *Op.cit.*, p. 56.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

29. See *Ibid.*, pp. 8 - 9.

03. Chang Baptist Association.
04. Chakhesang Baptist Association.
05. Khiemnungan Baptist Association.
06. Konyak Baptist Association.
07. Kuki Baptist Association.³⁰
08. Lotha Baptist Association.
09. Rengma Baptist Association.
10. Phom Baptist Association.
11. Sema Baptist Association.
12. Sangtam Baptist Association.
13. Yimchunger Baptist Association.
14. Zeliang Baptist Association.³¹

Today, the NBCC is no longer strictly a central body of tribe-based Baptist Associations. It has inducted into its membership an association of the Nagaland Police Churches. Sema tribe has three associations separately affiliated to it.³² This does not mean that the NBCC is no longer a tribe-based institution. As a body of a multi-tribal character, it still remains a common arena where tribes come into interplay. It may be appropriate here, to examine its Constitution.

30. Kuki is organised as a tribe, but not considered a Naga tribe.

31. Renthly Keitzar, *Op.cit.*, p. 12.

32. Source : NBCC Office File Relating to Membership. No. NBCC/AM/30/91/105.

The main decision-making organ of the NBCC is the General Council. It consist of five representatives from each member Association.³³ Since most of the Associations are tribal bodies and only a simple majority is required to form a quorum,³⁴ it may be said that the NBCC is nothing but a commonly shared platform of the tribal Associations. When asked about the autonomy of the Angami Baptist Churches Council (ABCC), Zhabu Terhuja, who is its Executive Secretary, said that the decisions taken by the NBCC are not binding or obligatory, because they already have ABCC's full participation and approval.³⁵ What he is hinting at is that the NBCC is a federation of tribal Associations. In fact, the federal character of the NBCC is clearly reflected in its Constitution which states that "each Baptist organisation holding membership in NBCC shall have an identity of its own."³⁶ This is why we may conclude that tribal identity stands out as a strong force in the organisation of the Church.

Originally, the NBCC was Naga Baptist Church Council. But after Nagaland became a separate state, it was changed to Nagaland Baptist Church Council.³⁷ One can easily notice that its member Associations are within Nagaland state.³⁸ This is why

33. Renty Keitzar, *Op.cit.*, p. 54.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

35. Interview with Zhabu Terhuja, Executive Secretary, ABCC, Kohima. See Appendix B.

36. Renty Keitzar, *Op.cit.*, p. 66.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

38. See *Ibid.*, pp. 66 - 67.

it became necessary for the Naga Baptist Churches of Nagaland, Assam and Manipur to come together and form a new combined organisation. This resulted in the birth of the Council of Naga Baptist Churches. It was formally constituted on 22nd March 1987, at Khedi Baptist Church, Kohima.³⁹ This is how the Naga churches, both within and outside Nagaland, came to be organised on the basis of tribes.

Another major section of the social milieu within which the tribal factor plays a dominant organisational determinant belongs to the students. The Naga Students' Federation (NSF), which is the apex body of the student community, has its inception dating back to 1947.⁴⁰ Though only a student body, the NSF also plays an important role in the socio-economic and political affairs of the Naga society. How the NSF envisages its role is reflected in the resolutions adopted by it in its 14th General Conference of 1991, which goes as follows:

1. The NSF shall play a constructive balancing and unifying role in the Naga national politics.
2. The NSF shall initiate necessary actions to preserve and promote the rare natural flora and fauna in Nagaland.
3. The NSF shall set up an expert committee to spell out a relevant educational system for the Nagas.
4. The NSF do not recognise the artificial boundaries demarcated by foreigners.
5. The NSF shall urge the churches to progressively preach a theology of liberation."⁴¹

39. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

40. The Constitution of Naga Students' Federation, (Kohima, 1992), p. 18. See Appendix C.

41. "NSF Discussion-Cum-Planning Forum" *The Vanguard*, (Kohima, May 1992), pp. 7 - 8.

True to these resolutions the NSF demanded the deletion of names of foreigners and non-indigenous inhabitants from the electoral rolls.⁴² They appealed to the Prime Minister of India for the revocation of Terrorist and Disturbed Area Act, from Nagaland.⁴³ The NSF also reiterated its insistence on a greater Nagaland by opposing the break-up of Naga inhabited districts in Manipur.⁴⁴ The Bengal Frontier Regulation Act, 1873, prohibits non-Nagas from entering Nagaland without a valid pass, and its enforcement has always been a major concern of the NSF. They even made a public appeal to all the Naga Christians for support.⁴⁵

These only represent some of the activities of the NSF. We can see that the NSF is almost equivalent to a political party when we look at the way it functions. Moreover, it has a number of affiliated student bodies over which it exercises Constitutional power. All these compel us to ignore the importance of the NSF as a pressure group and a powerful influence on the Naga society. In order to understand in what way the NSF contributes to the emergence of inter-tribal politics we need to analyse its Constitution.

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42. NSF Letter to Chief Electoral Officer, Nagaland, dated November 1, 1991, The Vanguard, (Kohima, May 1992), pp. 13 - 15.
43. NSF Letter to Prime Minister of India, dated 3rd October, 1991, The Vanguard, (Kohima, May 1992), pp. 22 - 23.
44. NSF Letter to Governor of Manipur, dated 16th December, 1991, The Vanguard, (Kohima, May 1992), pp. 26 - 28.
45. The Vanguard, (Kohima, May 1992), pp. 29 - 43.

The Constitution of the NSF opens with a preamble which reads thus:

"We the Naga Students, having solemnly resolved to constitute ourselves into a federation to: cultivate and preserve our cultures, customs and traditional heritage; ameliorate social and moral activities; safeguard common interest, integrity, fraternity and co-operation among ourselves all over the Naga inhabited areas."⁴⁶

This preamble gives us a clear picture of what the NSF is all about. Its interests are very broad. It mentions the "Naga inhabited areas" as its field of operation, rather than Nagaland. The Constitution even goes further. It declares that "every bonafide Naga student" is to be a primary member;⁴⁷ and that the territorial jurisdiction is to extend beyond the Naga territory, to all those places where Naga students may be found to be residing.⁴⁸ Membership is therefore obligatory and racial.

In article Five, Clause 2 of the NSF Constitution, provision is made for federal membership. It says:

"All bonafide Naga Tribes Students' Organisation shall be a member of the Federation and the Federal Assembly and shall be called the "Federal Unit" of the Naga Students' Federation."⁴⁹

The NSF is to have a legislative body which is to be

46. The Constitution of Naga Students' Federation, Op.cit., p. 1.
Appendix C.

47. Ibid., p. 2.

48. Ibid., p. 3.

49. Ibid., p. 2.

called the Federal Assembly. This Assembly is to be consisted of two representatives from each Federal Unit,⁵⁰ which as we can see from above is nothing other than the student organisation at the tribe level. The Constitution clearly mentions that affiliation for membership to the NSF can only be granted to Naga Tribal Students' Organisations. Any other organisation formed by Naga students, whether pan-tribe or intra-tribe, is to remain as a sub-ordinate body.⁵¹

A few examples of these bodies can be, the Naga Students' Union, Shillong; the Naga Students' Union, Delhi etc. It may be mentioned here that even these bodies are structured in the same federal pattern as the NSF, with tribal organisations as their federal units. In fact, the tribal identity at the student level has become so strong that even singular colleges are starting to have formal tribal unions, such as the Chakhesang Students' Union, Alder College, Kohima.

In order to complete the tribal picture at the student level, it may be relevant to examine the Constitution of an organisation at the tribe level. The Angami Students' Union is such an example. It has its membership drawn from bonafide students belonging to the Angami tribe and its jurisdiction

50. Ibid., p. 4.

51. Ibid., pp. 2 - 3.

52. Constitution of the Angami Students' union, (Kohima, 1991), pp. 1 - 2. See Appendix D.

extends to all Angami inhabited areas.⁵² Since the Angami territory is large, it has four sub-unions representing Western, Southern, Northern and Chakro Angami areas. These bodies are not independently represented at the NSF. They remain part and parcel of the Angami Students' Union.⁵³

The duties of the Angami Students' Union representatives to the NSF are defined in the following way: "they shall ... raise and answer questions in the Federal Assembly as and when situation demands, to defend the interests of the Union."⁵⁴ This reflects the relationship between the Angami Students' Union and NSF. It appears that the tribal body is comparatively autonomous and pursues its own interests, to which it allots greater priority than that of the Federation.

From the above, it becomes clear that the students community is organised on an existing pattern of tribal identities. The federal character of the NSF can be seen to be no different from that of the NNC and NBCC. It has most of the Naga student organisations such as the Ao Students' Conference, Chakhesang Students' Union, Lotha Students' Union, Rengma Students' Union, etc., affiliated to it as federal units. It is axiomatic from the federal character of these major pan-Naga organisations that there is an established perception among the Nagas that they are a multi-tribal community.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

As such, it is a curious fact that none of these pan-Naga organisations have been able to have a socio-political definition of its member tribal entities. The student tribal organisations are not given recognition as separate entities simply by way of acknowledging their tribal identity, but they seem to form the very basis or raison d'etre of the NSF. Even then, NSF fails to define these tribal entities. Its Constitution merely states that affiliation will be granted when three-fourth majority of the Federal Assembly members present vote in favour.⁵⁵ It does not envisage any criterion with which the eligibility of a prospective member can be assessed.

This is also true in all other tribal organisations. Even the Government does not have a clear idea of what constitutes a tribe. The fact remains that tribes become full-fledged tribes only when their organisations received formal recognition from established pan-tribal institutions such as the government, the Church, or student bodies, which again may act independently. A tribe recognised by one does not get automatic recognition from others. It is the lack of a single set of criteria for defining tribe that creates the problem in identifying tribes. This is why conflicting claims arise between smaller tribes which insist on a separate status, and their parent tribes which claim them to be their offshoots. This is what is happening with smaller tribes

55. Naga Students' Federation Constitution, (Kohima, 1992), p. 3. See Appendix C.

or sub-tribes such as Makware, Chirr and Tikhir, which at present are trying to part ways with their parent tribes.⁵⁶

The Pochury tribe was once such a sub-tribe, forming part of its parent tribe which was Chakhesang. But it got admitted to the NBCC in 1974, as a full-fledged tribal Association. Keitzar comments that "its inclusion into the membership of the Council settled a protracted issue of intra-tribal church relationship in Christian spirit,"⁵⁷ meaning peacefully. The Nagaland Government's recognition of the Pochury as a separate Naga tribe came much later. The Home Department issued an order to this effect only on 31st March, 1990.⁵⁸ This tribe is yet to be accepted as an affiliated Federal Unit of the NSF.⁵⁹

From the above, we can understand that a Naga tribe is not a closed ethnic group which can be identified on the basis of language, culture and political boundaries. Therefore, we totally disagree with Hokishe Sema, who opines that tribes can be distinctly different from one another in terms of language, cultural and social set-up, as well as in physique and

56. B. B. Ghosh, History of Nagaland, (New Delhi, 1982), pp. 20 - 21.

57. Renthly Keitzar, Op.cit., pp. 13 - 14.

58. Government of Nagaland, Notification No. Home/SCTA/3/4/83, dated 19th April, 1990.

59. Stated by Ketsodi, Convener, NSF Inner-line Committee, in a discussion on 14th April, 1994.

appearance.⁶⁰ If this is true the question of tribal integration and disintegration which leads to the emergence of formally recognised tribes would not have arisen. But this is because the idea of a tribe has developed among the people and the mobilisation of people for a centripetal drive towards the formation of a tribe is determined by socio-economic and political reasons, rather than ethnicity. In such a case the presence of an ideological phenomenon becomes axiomatic, one which promotes the idea of a tribe, which again is representative of the existence and involvement of an interest group. Our argument here is that the Naga elite is such an interest group and that they generate tribal ideas in pursuit of their own socio-economic and political ends. Our next Chapter will illustrate this further.

The outcome of this is that each tribal entity is held together by a common allegiance of its members. Such a group has tribe consciousness. Now, we can say that the tribe-wise divisions of Nagas are no longer mere anthropological categories. They have become distinct political entities, co-existing in a common socio-economic and political environment. In such a situation tribes may take on new attributes and use them as distinguishing features.

60. Hokishe Sema, The Emergence of Nagaland, (Sahibabad, 1981), pp. 1- 2.

This is why tribes are not identified by their political and territorial boundaries alone. There is an emerging symbolic and attributive character which every tribe is claiming to be its own exclusive trademark. The areas of tribal differentiation are getting enlarged beyond the ideological raison d'etre of each tribe. David Syiemlieh notices that in the present day "each tribe has its distinctive pattern of shawls."⁶¹ What substantiates this point is that new patterns of tribal shawls are also emerging. A newly designed Chakhesang shawl was brought out in 1989.⁶² This shows that differences are also concocted and not wholly inherited as believed. Khodao Yanthan observes that Nagas are developing a system of tribe branding according to their apparently distinctive behavioural characters. He cites the examples of branding the Angamis as a prideful tribe, the Aos as cowardly, the Lothas as suspicious, the Chakhesangs as jealous and the Semas as savages.⁶³

In the light of the above, we may say that the tribe-wise division of the Nagas has become a prominent feature of the Naga social character. We find tribal organisations existing at different levels of society. The Angami Public Organisation, The Lotha Hoho, the Sema Hoho, the Chakhesang

61. David Syiemlieh, A brief History of the Catholic Church in Nagaland, (Shillong, 1990), p. 30.

62. The Shawl was demonstrated at Ura Academy Seminar on 24th April, 1989, at Kohima.

63. The Naga National Rights and Movement, Op.cit., p. 246.

Public Organisation, are examples of pan-tribe organisations. But tribal organisations also exist at the local level. Thus we have an Ao Union, Kohima, and Phom Union, Kohima, etc. These Unions cover only members of these tribes residing in Kohima town. These unions may not be formally instituted as the pan-tribe organisations, but they do reflect the tendency for Nagas of the same tribe living in an area, to organise themselves on the basis of tribes. They reflect the existence of tribe consciousness among the Nagas.

It is beyond our purpose to investigate and identify all forms of tribal organisations. It may suffice to say that contemporary Naga society is characterised by the existence of tribal identities which are formed into well-organised socio-political entities. This tribal character of the Naga society has its repercussions on the functionings of the state. The Governor of Nagaland, M. M. Thomas, on his Republic Day address, 1992, points out that due to the interference of tribal loyalties and political interests, the problem of law and order gets aggravated. This happens because due to tribalism there is the tendency to condone a crime committed by one's own tribe.⁶⁴ It may also have an impact on Government policies and legislations. The fact that the Government takes into its confidence the ideas and suggestions of the tribal Hohos in

64. M. M. Thomas, Governor of Nagaland, Republic Day Address, (Kohima, 1992), p. 7.

carrying out its legislative duties is a case in point. S. C. Jamir, Minister of Nagaland, in a Press Statement, states that the Total Prohibition legislation was referred to the tribal Hohos before its enactment.⁶⁵ In all these, we find that the state has become a common arena within which the various tribal units come into interplay. Now, we shall need to show how and why this leads to the emergence of ~~inter~~-tribal politics.

In order to find out the role of the state, we shall look into the following three contemporary theories of the state brought out by Paul R. Brass:

1. The state is supposedly a neutral agency. Its policy making and its distribution of resources are done in response to existing groups and caters to the formation of new groups.
2. Classical Marxist view of the state is that the state is the instrument of the dominant class for oppressing the lesser classes. There are two modifications by neo-Marxists. (a) The managers of the state apparatus may develop interests of their own and may act independent of the dominant class. (b) The second group of Marxist argue that the Capitalist world economy and imperialist state expansion have led to imbalanced distribution of state resources and valued employment opportunities among ethnic groups, making ethnic struggles more salient than class struggles.

65. S. C. Jamir, Chief Minister, Government of Nagaland, "Press Statement", Warrior, (Kohima, June 1989), pp. 20 - 21.

3. Another theory is that in a plural society the state apparatus and power may be monopolised by a cultural group and dominates over other cultural groups which exist side by side with it in the same political unit.⁶⁶

Our purpose here is not to define state. It is only to get a general view of the state, so that we can work out a model to explain the impact of the interplay of tribes within the same state. For this, from the theories presented above by Brass, we make out the following generalised deductions: that the state possess power over common resources; it has a system of distribution of these resources; the recipients of state resources are compartmentalised into groups; the power imbalances within these groups affect the distribution; and the interests of these groups are conflictual.

As the "state is a territory in which a single authority exercises sovereign power",⁶⁷ we can say that with the formation of the State of Nagaland, the Nagas have been brought under a single resource arena, the power over which held by its own elite. But as we have seen earlier, the Nagas are divided on the basis of tribes. Each tribe is found to be a well-organised

66. Paul R. Brass, (ed.), Ethnic Groups and the state, (Kent, 1985), pp. 3 - 6.

67. Frederick M. Watkins, "State", in David L. Sills (ed.), International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, Vol. 15, (London, 1969), p. 155.

socio-political entity. These tribes are represented in the distribution system by an elite which occupies the seats of power by drawing support from their respective tribe. Hence, the elite derives its power from the tribe. It needs to mobilise tribal allegiance by propagating tribe consciousness. It does so by promoting tribalism on an ideological basis.

The elite has its own interests. It is seeking optimum returns from its involvement with the state. For this the elite needs to take control of the power apparatus of the state, which is a major determinant of access to state resources. As the resources of the state are limited, there is immense competition for its control. Since the main force behind the elite is the tribe, we may attribute this competition to the tribes they represent. It is the processes leading to such a competition among the Naga tribes that ushered in the emergence of inter-tribal politics in the Naga society. We shall examine its nature in the next Chapter.

CHAPTER VI

INTER-TRIBAL POLITICS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR THE NAGA SOCIETY

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In the previous Chapter we have shown that when distinct tribal identities are brought within a common political arena as socio-political entities, inter-tribal politics come into play. Such an interplay of tribal politics in the Naga society finds manifestations in the Naga national movement, state politics and other social organisations, including those related to the Church and student bodies. We shall try to understand the nature of tribal interplay within these socio-political areas. Also by looking into specific cases of tribal conflicts and confrontations, we shall try to bring to light the consequences of inter-tribal politics for the Naga society. It may be noted that the number of such cases available for analysis are by far too many. We shall only choose some important ones for illustrating our points within the ambit of this Chapter.

We have shown that the formation of the state of Nagaland has catered to a centralised resource arena for the Naga tribes. This does not mean that the inter-tribal relations are to be seen only in this context. It is already seen that the formation of tribal identities took place much before statehood. The emergence of Nagaland may be said to be a direct outcome of

the Naga national movement which was led by the NNC.¹ Naga nationalism encompasses "all Naga inhabited areas between Chinwin in Burma and the Brahmaputra in Assam", as Misra puts it. This is quite true, as many Naga tribes are left outside the boundaries of the state of Nagaland. Our study is not necessarily confined to Nagaland, and it includes even those Naga tribes which may be found outside of it.

The evolution of a tribe-based socio-political system and the conditions under which inter-tribal politics occur resulted in the demand for new tribal entities. Before going any further, it may be appropriate to indicate the processes which give rise to the emergence of tribes that become socio-political units of distinct identity within the Naga society.

In view of the preceding Chapters, we may say that prior to the coming of the British, there was no tribally organised socio-political or territorial entities. The collective terms used to describe various groups and sub-groups³ were not universal in usage, but localised. This is why different groups have different names for the same group. The

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1. See Asielie Pusa, "The Emergence of Naga Consciousness", (Unpublished M. Phil dissertation Submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1987), pp. 56 - 68.
 2. Udayon Misra, "Naga National Question", The Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. xiii, No. 14, (Bombay, 14 April, 1978), p. 618.
 3. See M. Horam, Naga Polity, (New Delhi, 1975), p. 24.

tribal names which came into formal use had various origins. For example, let us take the case of the Rengma tribe. This group was known unto themselves as Njonyu. It had a sub-group comprising of Nsunyu, Tseophenyu, Kotsunyu villages called Ethiyia. The term Rengma is said to have come from an encounter of a Britisher with a villager from this area. It is told that in order to frighten the Britisher, this villager introduced himself as reme, meaning 'nightmare' in Rengma.⁴ In the same way the tribal name Konyak is said to have come from a man who told a Britisher that he was Khaonyak, which means 'man' in his dialect. The Konyaks are known to themselves as Wanchos and in Arunachal Pradesh, they are still called by this name.⁵ However, we find that not all British names have been retained. The tribe which the British called Kalyu Kengyu, which means slate-roofs, after the way they built their houses, came to be known in their own term as Khiamniungan, meaning 'great source of water'.⁶ Also there are tribes wanting to change their names. The Sema tribe has applied for a formal change of its name through a government

4. Source: Thomas Kent. See Interview at Appendix B.

It is difficult to find proof of this, but people do talk about them and may be in many varied versions. Anyway, this serve our purpose because we only want to illustrate that names like these are given by outsiders and that they are in no way cognatic.

5. Source: Wangyu Konyak. See Interview at Appendix B.

Also see K. Peseye, A Historical and Geographical study of Nagaland, Vol. I, (Kohima, 1986), p. 35.

6. T. Liang, Letter to the Editor, Nagaland Post, Vol. III, No. 316, (Dimapur, 15th November, 1993), p. 4.

notification, from that of the British designated Sema to the traditional Sumi.⁷

We can understand that tribal identity formations took place on the lines of tribal names given by anthropologists and British administrators. These names were both of traditional origins and accidental christenings. The tribal boundaries of these tribes, we may say, were determined by the following factors: identification on the basis of anthropological and administrative ascription; the level of tribe consciousness dissemination; and influences of inter-tribal organisational conditions. It may be said that the need or the demand for the formation of new tribal identities emerges due to the quintessential condition raised by the tribe-based socio-political system which survives on the interplay of tribes.

Verrier Elwin observes that "the tribal groups of Nagaland are forming new affiliations and using names hitherto unknown to anthropology."⁸ We shall now elaborate on this and show how as a result of inter-tribal politics, the demand for the formation of new tribal alliances and identities emerged.

There may be some truth in what B. B. Ghosh has to say.

We quote:

7. Nagaland Post, Vol. IV, No. 70, (Dimapur, 23rd February, 1994), p. 8.

8. Verrier Elwin, Nagaland, (Shillong, 1961), p. 5.

"Originally Nagas were not known by the names of the tribes as they are known now, but by the name of a group of villages. Gradually they have settled down to the tribe names as they are found now, but still then the process of amalgamation or separation is going on. For example, Phoms were formally included in Konyak tribe but now they are separate. In as late as 1948, some three tribes such as Chakrima, Khezhama and Sangtam together formed into one tribe called Chakhesang. This name was formed by taking Cha of Chakruma, Khe of Khezhama and Sang of Sangtam."⁹

What Ghosh says here, may not be a general rule for the emergence of all Naga tribes. But it clearly demonstrates that the Naga tribes as they exist today are not entirely based on ethnicity. Some tribes have obvious political origins. To understand this further, we shall study the Chakhesang tribe in detail.

Wezhulhi Krome, a founding member of the Chakhesang tribe claims that the name was first coined on 10th January, 1945, at old Phek village, in a meeting attended by members from all the three groups -- Chakru, Kheza and Sangtam, represented in the acronym Chakhesang. He is of the opinion that the formation of the Chakhesang tribe was necessitated by the tribal pattern of organisation adopted by the NNC. At this time there were no tribal animosity. It was only the tribal system of administration envisaged by the British and its adoption by the NNC which

9. B. B. Ghosh, History of Nagaland, (New Delhi, 1982), p. 20.

required the Nagas to be grouped into various tribal entities.¹⁰

Of the three groups forming Chakhesang, Chakru (also known as Chokri) and Kheza were known to early anthropologists as Eastern Angamis.¹¹ When this new tribe was formed, many Chokri villages such as Viswema, Kezoma and Khuzama, etc. were left out. These Chokri villages continue to remain within the Angami tribe till today. Not all Kheza villages too could become part of the Chakhesang tribe. Jessami, Krowemi and Khotsami, which are Kheza villages were left out. These villages fall outside the boundary of Nagaland and they are in Manipur. Instead three Poumai villages -- Zemai, Chobama and Zeluma became part of the Chakhesang tribe, as they fall within Nagaland. The bigger bulk of the Poumai people lives in Manipur.¹² This Poumai group, as we can see, are not represented in the acronym.

The third group in Chakhesang, the Sangtams were earlier referred to as Eastern Rengmas by writers. This group claims that they were wrongly called Sangtams (which is the name of a tribe in Tuensang district). J. P. Mills identified the villages of Meluri, Sehunyu and Lephori as Eastern Rengmas and Sangtams as their neighbours on the South.¹³ This group is the

10. Wezhulhi Krome, Ex - M. L. A., (Chakhesang), See Appendix B.

11. Sipra Sen, Tribes in Nagaland, (New Delhi, 1987), p. 47.

12. Tsopelo Kapfo (Kheza), See Appendix B.

Also see Statistical Atlas of Nagaland, (Kohima, 1991), pp. 50 - 54.

13. J. P. Mills, The Rengma Nagas, (Kohima, 1982), pp. 2 - 3.

smallest of the three constituting Chakhesang. They began to call themselves as Puchori. This is again an acronym representing three clans, namely, Pu, Cho and Ri.¹⁴ The Puchori group sought separation from the Chakhesangs and approached the Government for recognition as a formal tribe. This was opposed by the Chakhesangs. But the Home Department of the Government of Nagaland has already issued a Notification recognising the Puchori as a separate tribe in 1990.¹⁵ Even then, till today the name Chakhesang is still retained and has not been changed due to this development.

Within the Chakhesang tribe there were four language groups, namely, Chokri, Kheza, Poumai and Puchori. All these languages are not 'inter-intelligible.' Of these Chokri and Kheza are the two major groups. Their languages are used in schools and also in All India Radio programmes. But because they belong to the same recognised tribe, the Education Department has placed them under the same Language Officer. This post has been held by a Chokri and this has caused resentment to the Kheza group. They feel that this post should be held by the two groups alternately.¹⁶

14. Visier Sanyu, "The History of Village formation Among the Angami Nagas: A Case Study of Kohima and Khonoma Villages", (Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis Submitted to NEHU, Shillong, 1987), p. 41.

15. Government of Nagaland, Notification No. Home/SCTA/3/4/83, dated 19th April, 1990.

16. Stated by Ruluonuyiu Pusa, Language Assistant, Directorate of School Education, Kohima, in a discussion on 14th April, 1994.

In All India Radio, Kohima, the Chakhesang programmes are broadcast alternately in both Chokri and Kheza. Of these two languages, Kheza is quite different but Chokri speaking people can understand Angami, a language which is also used by All India Radio, Kohima, and hence, its use seems superfluous. The Station Director, Miss V. Sekhose, clarified this by saying that the tribal pattern of the Nagaland Government has been followed.¹⁷ By this she means that Chakhesang language has been used because it is a recognised tribe, separate from the Angamis. In fact, language seems to be the real problem facing the Chakhesangs today. Neither the Kheza nor the Chokri group is willing to accept the language of the other. This is why they combinedly use the Angami Bible and Hymnal in their churches.¹⁸

The Chakhesang tribe proves beyond all doubts that this tribe is not an ethno-lingual group, but it is a political entity, emerging out of the socio-political environment created by the processes of socio-economic and political changes in the Naga society. In other words, the emergence of inter-tribal politics is partly or largely responsible for the emergence of new tribes.

Another tribe which deserves mention is the Zeliangrong. This tribal name is derived from the prefixes of

17. Stated by Miss V. Sekhose, Station Director, All India Radio, Kohima, in a discussion on 20th April, 1994.

18. Tsopelo Kapfo, Op.cit., See Appendix B.

three individual tribal names -- Zemai, Lingmai and Rongmai.¹⁹ These three groups claim to be descendants of three brothers of the same parents who migrated together.²⁰ Earlier the Zemais and the Liangmais were known to the British as Kacha Nagas, and the Rongmais as Kabuis.²¹ There is also the contention that Kabuis and Rongmais are two separate groups.²² The Zelaingrongs can be found to be inhabiting the South-Western part of Nagaland, the Tamenglong area in the South Western part of Manipur and also the North Cachar Hills of Assam.²³

In Nagaland, this tribe is officially recognised as Zeliang,²⁴ as the Rongmai group belongs to Manipur. The coming together of the Liangmais, Zemais and Rongmais as Zeliangrong is said to have taken place on 15th February, 1974, with a view to furthering their economic, social, educational and political advancement.²⁵ Hence, we know that their interests were far beyond ethnicity. The Zeliangrong people went on to demand a common administrative unit carved out of their inhabited areas in all the three states on Nagaland, Assam and Manipur, in the form of a Homeland, from the Government of India.²⁶

19. See Asoso Yonuo, Nagas Struggle Against British Rule Under Jadonang and Rani Gandinliu, 1925 - 1925, (Kohima, 1982), p. 5.

20. Ibid., p. 4.

21. Ibid., p. 5.

22. G. G. Kamei, "Zelaingrong and Kabui", The Weekly Journal, Vol. 3, No. 2, (Kohima, 28th August, 1991), p. 4.

23. Sipra Sen, Op.cit., p. 43.

24. Asoso Yonuo, Op.cit., (Kohima, 1982), p. 5.

25. Ibid., p. 127.

26. Ibid., p. 159.

The Naga tribes of Tuensang represent another case of supra-tribal regional separatism. These tribes, namely, Chang, Yimchunger, Phom, Sangtam and Khienmungan are in the present day Tuensang district of Nagaland. However, they were not part of the Naga Hills District of Assam in the pre-statehood period. At the time of India's independence there were uncontrolled areas belonging to these tribes. It was only in 1951, that they were consolidated into the administration of the Tuensang Sub-division, which was brought under North Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA), presently Arunachal Pradesh.²⁷

Thus the Tuensang district had a political history of being at one time separate from the rest of Nagaland. The demand for the unification of the Tuensang division of NEFA, with the Naga Hills District into a single administrative unit, to be called the Naga Hills Tuensang Area came about in a resolution adopted at the Naga People's Convention of 1957.²⁸ After statehood, arrangements were made so that Tuensang could be represented in the Legislative Assembly for an interim period of ten years, with six members indirectly elected by its Special Regional Council.²⁹

These historical developments have their significance

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27. H. Bareh, Nagaland District Gazetteers, Kohima, (Kohima, 1970), p. 50.
 28. Easterine Kire-Iralu, Historical and Geographical Study of Nagaland, Vol. 2, (Kohima 1986), pp. 107 - 109.
 29. H. Bareh, Op.cit.p. 211.

for the eruption of a separatist movement from the tribes of Tuensang district. On the basis of being an unadministered area in the time of the British, they began to claim being a Free land Area. As a result, the Tuensang District Students' Federation (TDSF) was formed, and in 1972, the student bodies of the Tuensang tribes withdrew from the all Naga body, the Naga Students' Federation, (Although, later the Yimchungers left the TDSF and rejoined the NSF). This marks the existence of a separate political identity of the Nagas in Tuensang. Recent political developments have even led to the demand by these tribes for separation from Nagaland.³⁰

The question arises as to why these separatist regional bodies such as the Zeliangrong and the Tuensang tribal groups occur and whether inter-tribal politics has any part in it or not. This can be understood in the context of our theoretical postulate that the centralisation of resources leads to inter-tribal conflicts. In the case of the Zeliangrongs, it may be noted that though they are distributed in three different states, the role of each state as a distribution agency of resources is homogeneous. We do admit that the demand for separation may include socio-political reasons other than being entirely economic. The Zeliangrongs, for instance, in their Memorandum to the Government of India, demanding a separate

30. Stated by Toshi Wongtong, TDSF Founding Member, in a discussion on 2nd June, 1994, at Kohima. See Appendix B.

administrative unit, cited reasons ranging from political, administrative, historical and geographical factors to that of common culture, religion, custom and language.³¹ However, it is possible to show that the economic factor plays a major role in evoking group sentiments leading to such demands.

Rani Gaidinliu, the leader of the Zeliangrong people, in her meeting with Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, in 1972, clearly stated that the real grievances of her people emanate from the apathetic stand of the state governments regarding their development. She lamented the lack of schools, dispensaries and communication facilities in the Zeliangrong inhabited areas of Assam and Manipur.³² The fact that there is uneven development may also be true in Nagaland. In his Republic Day address, the Governor of Nagaland, Dr. M. M. Thomas said: "During my visit to Mon and Tuensang district (sic), I got an impression that the people of these districts feel that they are neglected by the Government".³³

Uneven development is undoubtedly the cause of resentment among the people and it can be said to be a major cause of regional separatism among tribes. The fact that various tribes may feel there is unequal distribution of state resources

31. As quoted in Asoso Yonuo, *Op.cit.*, (Kohima, 1982), p. 159.

32. As quoted in *Ibid.*, pp. 169 - 170.

33. Dr. M. M. Thomas, Governor of Nagaland, Republic Day Address, as quoted in *The warrior*, Vol. 20, No. 1., (Kohima, January 1991), p. 10.

seems to have its repercussions on inter-tribal relations, the dynamics of which may cause both centripetal and centrifugal tribal political affiliations. As we shall see later, such movements may be led by interest groups within the Naga society.

It can be found that the correlation between the distribution system and the tribe-based Naga society results in tribal infighting which materialises due to the alleged inequitable distribution of resources and the struggle for favourable access to state resources. Such a state of order may have its political implications, especially when the distribution policy of the Government itself is designed for accommodating such elements. The Compact Area Development Scheme of Nagaland Government, for example, leaves much room for politicisation of distribution, as it is drawn up on the basis of Assembly Constituencies, with politicians directly involved in the distribution process.³⁴ This has been replaced by the District Plan, a scheme which again, is built on the same lines as its precedent.³⁵

In addition to this, the administrative set-up of the State seem to have been structured on tribalistic patterns. The

34. See Government of Nagaland, Compact Area Development Scheme, 1991, Department of Planning and Co-ordination, Kohima, (Booklet).

35. See Government of Nagaland, Annual Plan, 1994-93, Kohima District, District Planning and development Board, (Booklet), pp. 1 - 2.

districts are carved out on the basis of tribal boundaries. And even where multi-tribal districts exist, demands for separation are coming up. In these districts too, tribes are politically bracketed into different Sub-Divisions.³⁶ The district of Mokokchung, Wokha, Zunheboto and Mon, are single tribe districts belonging to Ao, Lotha, Sema and Konyak tribes respectively. In multi-tribal districts such as Kohima, we find tribal Sub-Division such as Tsemenyu which is inhabited by the Rengma tribe and Peren which is inhabited by the Zeliangs.³⁷ Such a tribe-based administrative set-up co-exist with sixty Assembly Constituencies, almost all of which are dominated by a single tribe, except for one or two cross-tribal ones which may occur in urban areas such as Kohima, Dimapur, etc., where there is a mixed population.³⁸

The prevailing system, no doubt, has become a boiling cauldron within which inter-tribal conflicts get cooked up at the slightest provocation. Such problems arise when Government distributes on the basis of tribal considerations. The tribal criteria which was relied on by the Government for selection of candidates to the seats under state quota for technical studies was not very well received by all sections of the student

36. See Ura Mail, Vol. xvi, No. 30, (Kohima, 22nd August, 1990), p. 4.

37. See Statistical Atlas of Nagaland, (Kohima, 1991), p. 9.

38. See Easterine Kire-Iralu, A Historical and Geographical Study of Nagaland, Vol. II, (Kohima, 1986), pp. 194 - 196.

39. Nagaland Post, Vol. I, No. 215, (Dimapur, 24th July, 1991), p. 1.

community. This was vehemently opposed by the Angami Students' Union which demanded that selection should be done only on the basis of merit.³⁹ This is how the editor of Nagaland Observer comments:

"This is a serious precedent and could prove dangerous in a state like ours where tribalism frequently rears its head. However, it is not fair. It is no fault of a candidate that he happens to be born in a certain tribe and it would be unfair to deprive an able student because his tribal quota has been filled."⁴⁰

However, regardless of tribal considerations there is every likelihood that any distribution system may be taken as lopsided by the recipient tribes. The protest launched by the Angami Students' Union, demanding for a review of the list of beneficiaries under the educated unemployed scheme by the District Industries Office, Kohima, is the result of such a case.⁴¹ Many tribes feel that equal opportunities are not given by the Government for their development. The Chakhesang Students' Union, Kohima, issued a Press Release, lamenting that there is not a single Head of Department from their tribe in the state capital.⁴² The Tuensang tribals too feel that they have been deprived of privileges in matters of employment and development

40. Nagaland Observer, Vol. IV, No. 13, (Kohima, 15th August, 1991), p. 4.

41. Hill Express, Vol. III, No. 8, (Kohima, 3rd March, 1992), p. 1.

42. The Weekly Journal, Vol. II, No. 3, (Kohima, 16th May, 1990), p. 9.

and that the development funds meant for them have been diverted to other areas.⁴³

It is no wonder that tribal organisations often come to interfere in even the smooth functioning of the Government by meddling in its affairs relating to transfer and posting of public servants or disciplinary actions against them such as suspension from service. The Tuensang District Students' Federation strongly opposed the transfer of a Lower Division Assistant and a Typist, along with their posts from the executive Engineer's office of the Irrigation Department in Tuensang. They called for immediate cancellation of the transfer Orders and threatened to take their own course of action if this was not done.⁴⁴ A good example of interference by tribal organisations in the suspension of an officer by the Government comes from the case of Mr. Ato Sangtam, a police officer. The Sema students started an agitation demanding his suspension, alleging that he had atrociously treated two persons from their community. When their demand was acceded by the Government, the United Sangtam Students Conference submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister of Nagaland, demanding that the suspension Order be revoked. They accused the Semas of turning the case into a communal issue.⁴⁵

43. The Weekly Journal, Vol. II, No. 25, (Kohima, 5th December, 1990), p. 9.

44. Nagaland Post, Vol. I, No. 261, (Dimapur, 9th September, 1991), p. 8.

45. Nagaland Post, Vol. I, No. 208, (Dimapur, 17th July, 1991), p.1.

It will not be wrong to believe that the 'ethnic factor' plays a decisive role in the elections. Mr. Neiphi-u Rio, pointed this out in his assessment of Lok Sabha election in 1991.⁴⁶ In this election Imchalemba exceeded his nearest rival Shikiho, by 19387 votes in the Constituencies belonging to his own tribe, the Aos; while Shikiho polled 6519 votes more than Imchalemba in his own Sema Constituencies.⁴⁷ This tribe-biased voting is made more credible because Nagaland only has a single Lok Sabha seat. The chances for tribal alliances and connivance are more here. Also, despite the tribal Constituencies, there is every likelihood that individuals may choose to vote for the political party in which their tribes have an edge. In the 1993 Nagaland Legislative Assembly Election, the Indian National Congress, under the leadership of Mr. S. C. Jamir, an Ao, won nine out of ten seats from the Constituencies falling in Ao area.⁴⁸

It can be seen that there is tribal awareness in party leadership. There even exist opinions that the leadership in political parties should be rotated among the tribes. In 1991, when Dr. Setu Liegise, an Angami, contested for party president

46. The Weekly Journal, Vol. 2, No. 40, (Kohima, 15th March, 1991), p. 1.

47. Report on the Tenth Election to the House People from the Nagaland Parliamentary Constituency, 1991, (Kohima, 1991), pp. 138 - 263.

48. Report on the Eight General Election to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly, 1993, (Kohima, 1993), pp. 208 - 209.

post of the Congress (I) party in Nagaland, he justified his candidature by saying that tribes from the districts of Kohima and Phek have not been fairly represented in the party leadership. He voiced that since people from other tribes such as Mr. Hokishe Sema, Mr. Chiten Jamir, Mr. Khyomo Lotha and Mr. Shikiho Sema, have already served as party president, the post should be given to one from the Angami, Chakhesang, Zeliangrong or Rengma tribe.⁴⁹

Tribal considerations may even bypass all party norms and democratic principles at times. When Mr. Vamuzo had to win a bye-election in 1990, in order to retain his position as the Chief Minister of Nagaland, the Chakhesang Public Organisation went all out to elect him unopposed. Mr. K. G. Kenye, then a minister of State for Irrigation, representing Chizami Assembly Constituency in Phek district, resigned his seat to make way for Mr. Vamuzo.⁵⁰ On this Mr. Nirendra comments:

"The Chief Minister's earlier decision to contest from Tening, Mr. T. R. Zeliang's stronghold, was spiked when Mr. Vamuzo's Chakhesang tribesmen transformed the issue into one of prestige and would not allow him to contest from any constituency other than Phek district. If Mr. Vamuzo contests at all from Phek district, he is expected to be a consensus candidate in spite of differences existing since the fact that he is the first Chakhesang Chief Minister overrides all other considerations."⁵¹

50. The Weekly Journal, Vol. 2, No. 19, (Kohima, 10th October, 1990), p. 1.

51. Nirendra, "Vamuzo's Bye-election," The Weekly Journal, Vol. 2, No. 19, (Kohima, 10th October, 1990), p. 5.

Mr. Kenye's resignation from office is symbolic of his tribal leanings. But he was not alone here. It is quite possible that he was, being junior politician, under pressure from his tribe. This is because the Chakhesangs were so keen on retaining the Chief Ministership that they went to the extent of turning the bye-election into a tribal issue. They crossed all party lines in favour of the candidate from their tribe. As a result the Chakhesang Public Organisation itself came out publicly to mobilise tribal support. It is said that the Chakhesang public leaders even physically attempted at preventing other candidates from filing their nomination papers.⁵²

It has become evident that Naga politics has always been affiliated with tribalism. There are instances in which major tribes feel sidelined when they are not given a berth in the Cabinet, while minor tribes demand for equal representation in the Council of Ministers. In a letter to Nagaland Post Editor, R. Yanthan, Chairman of the Lotha Hoho, wrote that the fact that a Lotha has not been included in the Cabinet of S. C. Jamir's Ministry has been resented by them. He feels that the Lothas are a major tribe and they should not be marginalised because they equally constitute the state of Nagaland with all the other tribes.⁵³ Also, some party workers from the Rengma and Zeliang

52. See Nagaland Newsreview, Vol. VIII, No. 18, (Kohima, 19th November, 1990), p. 4.

53. Nagaland Post, Vol. III, No. 101, (Dimapur, 1st April, 1993), p. 4.

tribes accused the Chief Minister S. C. Jamir, for not carrying out his commitment to have equal representation of all tribes in his Council of Ministers. The non-inclusion of representations from their tribes in the Council of Ministers was viewed by them as negligence of the weaker sections of the society.⁵⁴ These tribal pressures may become effective. It may also become imperative for a Government to react and give in to such pressures for fear of being toppled by dissidents. Mr. S. C. Jamir went on to expand his Ministry and induct five new ministers. After allocation of portfolios, while on his way to Delhi, he is said to have told The Telegraph over telephone that the expansion had been made to grant proper representation to all tribes, and that Mr. Sedem Khaming, was inducted from the hitherto unrepresented Khiemnungan tribe.⁵⁵

Thus, there is a lot of interference in the political processes of the State due to the active politicisation of tribes. Under these circumstances it is difficult to rule out the existence of tribe-biased practices in the political arena and its party system. The behaviour of politicians may be influenced by tribal pressures. This is more so because they need the support of their tribes to stay in power and pursue their own interests. The recent allegation against Mr. K. L.

54. Nagaland Post, Vol. III, No. 85, (Dimapur, 15th March, 1995), p. 4.

55. Subir Ghosh, "Jamir Pacifies Rebels With Cabinet Expansion", The Telegraph, (Calcutta, 14th December, 1995), p. 9.

Chishi, the Finance Minister, making payments amounting to Rs. 1.3 crores, exclusive and preferential in favour of his own tribal district of Zunheboto stands out as a glaring example.⁵⁶ When Mr. Vamuzo was Chief Minister, as opposition member, Mr. S. C. Jamir lashed out at him, accusing the Government of having political reason to develop Phek district which is that of his tribe.⁵⁷ Also, it is not unusual for a member of the Legislative Assembly, to bring up special demands for his tribe in its sessions, like Mr. Azu Newmai, who brought up questions relating to the declaration for their recruitment to Government jobs in the Eight Session of the Assembly.⁵⁸ We may also mention the controversy over the selection of Lumami, as the site for the Headquarters of Nagaland University. Many feel that this site was chosen purely on tribal bias as it is in the interior of Nagaland and unfit for the purpose.⁵⁹

Since the Naga society has evolved such a system in which the tribe has become the nodal socio-economic and political unit, and has become a major determinant in the distribution of shared resources, it is axiomatic that sub-tribal groups would aspire to gain recognised tribe status and create

56. Nagaland Post, Vol. IV, No. 96, (Dimapur, 21st March, 1993), p. 8.

57. Assembly Proceedings, 21st March, 1991, as published in The Weekly Journal, (Kohima, 27th March, 1993), p. 5.

58. Assembly Proceedings, Eight Session, (Second Assembly/ 18th to 29th March, 1971, Assembly Secretariat, Nagaland, (Kohima, 1971), p. 37.

59. See Nagaland Post, Vol. V, No. 228, (Kohima, 12th August, 1995), p. 6.

propensity for the proliferation of tribal entities. It is under these circumstances that many new tribes come into existence.

One such tribe is the Phoms. This tribe was formed on the 6th of June, 1952, which is observed every year as the Phom Day. Prior to this they had no tribal identity. They were loosely distributed in different areas of Mokokchung and Tuensang districts, as well as Konyak and Chang areas. A large chunk of Phom people live outside Nagaland, in the Sibsagar district of Assam.⁶⁰ It may be noted that the Phoms were an amorphous group of people living in various villages as was the Naga society in the pre-British period. But as civilisation came to them, they might have borrowed the concept of being a tribe from the other Naga tribes which were already well-organised. Earlier, we have already seen that the Chakhesangs were formally part of the Angami tribe. Now, we find that a new tribe call the Puchori has emerged after splitting from the Chakhesangs.

The demand for recognition of new tribes is still continuing among some sub-tribal groups. At present we find the Tikhirs trying to part ways with the Yimchungers, a tribe which claims to be its parent tribe. But the Tikhirs dispute this and asserts its identity as a full-fledged tribe. This controversy got out of hand and erupted into wide-spread clashes in 1989, between the two groups. As a result, the Tikhirs Baptist Church

60. Nagaland Post, Vol.II, No.166, (Dimapur, 6th June, 1992), p.2.

at Shamator, was also burnt down.⁶¹ In a Press Release, the Tikhirs, stated that the Tikhirs cannot be disclaimed from being a tribe just because they are not officially recognised by the Government and other tribal organisations of churches because the Tikhir tribe was created a tribe by God.⁶²

The Naga tribes of Poumai and Mao of Manipur are also facing a problem of the same nature. The Poumai group is refusing to be included within the Mao tribal identity. It is seeking recognition as a separate tribe by pan Naga bodies both in Manipur and Nagaland. The Mao Students' Union objected to the inclusion of three persons from Poumai tribe to the executive body of All Naga Students' Association, Manipur. They claim that the Poumai tribe is legally and officially known as Mao tribe. The Poumais do not accept this and argue that they constitute three-fourth of what the Maos claim to be the Mao tribe. They refused to be called Maos and are seeking recognition from pan-tribal bodies, including the Naga Students' Federation of Nagaland.⁶³

There is all likelihood that tribes which have been formed as a result of certain sub-tribal groups integrating for

61. The Weekly Journal, Vol. 4, No. 20, (Kohima, 25th August, 1993), pp. 1 - 10.

62. Nagaland Post, Vol. V, No. 261, (Dimapur, 16th September, 1995), p. 6.

63. Nagaland Post, Vol. XXI, No. 49, (Dimapur, 12th June, 1991), p. 4.

collective benefits, may due to the pursuit of parochial interests by individual members again disintegrate. This is because we find that these sub-groups tend to assert their individual identities, and also in some cases even form organisations at their own level. The Zeliangrong which is seeking recognition as a single tribe, consisting of Zemai, Liangmai and Rongmai, has a fourth group, the Kabui, which has been represented within the Rongmai group. But G. G. Kamei, a Kabui Naga, wrote that the Kabuis are the fourth member of the Zeliangrongs, distinct from the Rongmais. He claims that all the four have their identities, including separate dialects of their own.⁶⁴ When the Rongmais were accused of disintegrating the Zeliangrongs in forming the Kohima Rongmai Welfare Society, G. G. Gamei, who is also its president, said that it is a temporary organisation and it would stand automatically defunct as soon as the Zeliangrongs as a single tribe finds recognition in the hands of the Nagaland Government.⁶⁵ This corroborates our point that the State has a role in the emergence of tribes.

The mushrooming of tribal entities has ushered in a state of affair in which inter-tribal conflict has become inevitable in most cases of societal interaction. There has developed a tendency to interpret almost every individual or

64. G. G. Kamei, "Zeliangrong and Kabui", The Weekly Journal, Vol. 3, No. 2, (Kohima, 28th August, 1991), p. 4.

65. Nagaland Post, Vol. III, No. 256, (Dimapur, 10th September, 1993), p. 2.

collective social action in tribal perspective. The all-pervasive tribal pattern of organisation in which tribal identities find subsistence are even surfacing at micro-social levels. We find that even in individual colleges, tribal unions are being formed. The Chakhesang Students' Union of Alder College, Kohima; the Dimapur College Ao Students'⁶⁶ Union are fine examples. As such, we are tempted to agree with Sebastian Zumvu, when he says that the tribal question plays a vital role in college elections.⁶⁷ In Kohima, when residents of Agriculture, Electric and Forest colony, held a meeting on 25th July, 1991, they resolved that one member from each tribe should be represented in their committee.⁶⁸

As tribe consciousness has become a strong bond with the growing importance of the tribe as an interest group, each tribe is beginning to juxtapose itself with the others on the basis of being equal socio-economic and political entities in a larger system. But like any other plural system, such an equilibrium cannot exist and when it is broken tribal conflicts as it appears is bound to ensue. It will not be out of place here, to cite a few cases of tribal conflicts by way of

66. See Nagaland Post, Vol. 4, No. 105, (Dimapur, 31st March 1994), p. 2.

67. Sebastian Zumvu, "Science of Improvement", The Nagaland Journal, Vol. 3, No. 7, (Kohima, 9th October, 1991), p. 9.

68. Nagaland Post, Vol. 1, No. 243, (Dimapur, 22nd August, 1991), p. 2.

illustrating our point. It may be noted that there may be umpteen instances of such conflicts and it is beyond the bounds of practicability to cover all of them, except for some important ones.

The Changs and the Konyaks were living together in separate Thinuo of Tobu village since 14th November, 1949, when the village was first formed.⁶⁹ When the Government announced the upgradation of Tobu, from that of a Sub-Division to Additional Deputy Commissioner Headquarters, bringing it within Mon district, the Changs were infuriated because earlier Tobu was within their district, Tuensang. They claimed that their land was being given away to the Konyaks. This led to a bloody tribal war between the Changs and the Konyaks, in which many lives were lost.⁷⁰ A similar situation developed between the Angamis and the Semas over the Ghaspani I and II Assembly Constituencies. The Angamis were against the transfer of these two areas from the jurisdiction of Additional Deputy Commissioner, Dimapur, to that of Kuhuboto Sud-Division, which falls in the Sema region.⁷¹

It may be said that the role of tribes as pressure

69. The Weekly Journal, Vol. 2, No. 3, (Kohima, 27th March, 1993), p. 9.

70. The Weekly Journal, Vol. 2, No. 16, (Kohima, 5th September, 1990), p. 9.

71. Hill Express, Vol. Vi, No. 57, (Kohima, 17th December, 1991), pp. 1 - 8.

groups has become an inevitable outcome of the prevailing system. Since the system is multi-tribal in character, very often we find that pressure input from one group results in counter-pressure from another, giving rise to inter-tribal conflict. The Government is found to have capitulated to such pressures. In the case of the conflict between the Semas and the Sangtams over the suspension of a police officer which we have mentioned earlier, the Government responded to pressure from both the parties by suspending the officer and then withdrawing it. The officer was transferred, but before long, again a suspension Order was served on him.⁷² Here, tribalism seemed to have prevailed over the rule of law which is a Liberal Democratic concept.

Tribalisation of service matters are not unusual. The Zeliangrong Students asked for immediate revocation of the suspension order on Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, D. K. Zeliang, blaming the Government of getting rid of a person from a minor tribe to make way for one from a major tribe.⁷³ The Kohima Town Lotha Women Hoho appealed to the Government to reconsider the relegation of T. C. K. Lotha, from the post of Chief Secretary to a lesser post.⁷⁴ When Abong Imlong, was removed from the post of Chief Secretary, the Chang Tribal Council took

72. The Weekly Journal, Vol. 3, No. 1, (Kohima, 14th August, 1991), p. 12.

73. The Nagaland Journal, Vol. 3, No. 31, (Kohima, 22nd July, 1992), p. 1.

74. The Weekly Journal, Vol. 3, No. 2, (Kohima, 28th August, 1991), p. 1.

it as an insult to their tribe and pressurised him not to hand over charge to the new incumbent.⁷⁵ The Government is not given a free hand to consider each case in terms of merit due to tribal pressures.

As the tribal factor has become a strong influence on the socio-economic and political character of the society in Nagaland, it evolves into a tribal system where tribal organisations become more powerful and the dissemination of tribe consciousness is maximised. This is why tribes may take up issues where group interest is not necessarily involved. Mrs. Imtimenla, an Ao lady, was accused of being a drug peddler and was assaulted by a mob. She was arrested and hospitalised for treatment when some unknown gunmen killed her on the 8th of August, 1989.⁷⁶ The Kohima Ao Union took up the issue and in a Memorandum, threatened to take the Government to court if it fails to pay a compensation of Rs. 25 (twenty five) lakhs, to the next of kin of the deceased.⁷⁷

The Angamis also took up the case of Pudil Hibo and Vimechol Hibo of Khuzama village. They were allegedly murdered by the Kukis in the village of Taphou. As a result, the Angami

75. The Nagaland Journal, Vol. 3, No. 24, (Kohima, 29th April, 1992), p. 1.

76. T. C. K. Lotha, Commissioner, Nagaland, "Commission of Inquiry, (III)", The Weekly Journal, Vol. 2, No. 40, (Kohima, 15th May, 1991), pp. 5 - 8.

77. The Weekly Journal, Vol. 2, No. 18, (Kohima, 3rd October, 1990), p.12.

Public Organisation declared that the Angamis shall cease to have peace with the Kuki village of Taphou. The Angami Youth Organisation issued a 'Quit Notice' to all Kukis residing in Angami territory.⁷⁸ An indefinite economic blockade of the Imphal-Kohima highway by the Angamis took place.⁷⁹ When 'General' povezo of the 'Federal Government of Nagaland' was assassinated on 20th June, 1995, the Chakhesang Public Committee of Phek town issued a similar 'Quit Notice' to the Tangkhuls for their alleged involvement in the assassination.⁸⁰

The complex nature of tribalism makes it incomparable to similar problems such as communalism. Tribes are closed cognate entities, but communal groups are not -- their membership is liable to change as it is subject to individual choice and cross-communal allegiance is possible. In a tribe or its components of sub-tribes, where a strong tie of common history, ancestry, language and traditional unity is claimed, individual allegiance is not volatile, as it is not likely to occur outside the tribe. This is why communalism may be restricted to communal issues, but tribal issues are apparently all-pervasive. In other words, all tribes are communities, but all communities are not tribes. This could be one reason why the present day multi-tribal

78. Nagaland Post, Vol.V, No.216, (Dimapur, 3rd August, 1995), p.1.

79. Nagaland Post, Vol. V, No. 176, (Dimapur, 21st June, 1995), p. 1.

80. Nagaland Post, Vol.V, No.197, (Dimapur, 12th July, 1995), pp. 1 - 8.

Naga society has become so vulnerable to inter-tribal conflict. This is true not only in the domain of state politics. Even the underground 'Governments' are found to be afflicted with it.

We have already shown that the organisation of Nagas into various tribes first found formal political recognition when they were accorded the status of constituent units of the "Federal Government" which was formed in the process of Naga national movement. This movement has not been without inter-tribal afflictions. We shall examine the consequences of inter-tribal politics on the various organisations, originating out of the Naga national movement and involving it.

There was no political unity among the Nagas prior to the formation of the NNC. At the initial stage, the Naga struggle led by the NNC was largely responsible for the unification of the Naga people. It generated among them a sense of national unity.⁸¹ But with the growth of tribe consciousness, the NNC which was the sole organisation of the Naga national struggle became infested with tribal animosities. As a result factional infighting ensued.

Internal crisis in the NNC started after the failure of six rounds of peace talks with the Government of India in Delhi. On November 1, 1968, Mr. Khughato formed a Revolutionary

81. See Udayon Misra, "The Naga National Question", The Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XIII, No. 14, (Bombay, 8th April, 1978), p. 618.

Government, becoming its president, with Mr. Scato as Prime Minister. They blamed the policy of the NNC for the failure of the peace talks.⁸² But it is apparent that the Semas were not happy with the dominance of the Angamis in the NNC. At the same time, when "General" Kaito Sema revolted, it was purportedly said to be a move against the 'hegemony' of the Angami tribe. Incidentally, this accusation against the Angamis was further strengthened, when in response to the crisis, Mr. Mhasi-u, an Angami, arbitrarily dissolved the 'parliament' and declared himself the head of the Naga 'Government'.⁸³ Another faction comprising of the Tuensang group, led by Mr. Thongdi Chang, broke away from the 'Federal Government of Nagaland' in 1968 and formed the 'Hongkin Government'.⁸⁴ Both these groups surrendered in 1973,⁸⁵ thus leaving the NNC, once again in full control over the movement.

But this was to be short lived. On 11th November, 1975, a section of the NNC signed the Shillong Accord, Clause Three, Section One of which is as follows: "The representatives of the underground organisations conveyed their decision, of their own volition, to accept, without condition, the Constitution of India".⁸⁶ This created a rift in the NNC. In his speech on the

82. The Naga National Rights and Movement, Naga National Council, (Kohima, 1993), p. 144.

83. Ashikho-Dali-Mao, Nagas: Problems and Politics, (New Delhi, 1992), p. 131.

84. Ibid., p. 132.

85. Ibid., pp. 143 - 144.

86. Luingam Luithui and Nandita Haskar, Nagaland File, (New Delhi, 1984), p. 158.

Twentyninth Anniversary of 'Naga Independence' on 14th August, 1976, Isak Chishi Swu, Chairman, Executive Committee, of the 'Federal Government of Nagaland' accused the signatories of the Shillong Accord of entering into an agreement with the enemy, saying that it was an act of cowardice and total capitulation, and will not find the approval of the Naga people.⁸⁷ Mr. Isak Chishi Swu, also issued a joint statement with Mr. Th. Muivah, General Secretary, NNC condemning the Shillong Accord, on the 16th of August, 1976, at Suphao.⁸⁸

The President of the NNC, A. Z. Phizo, did not endorse the Shillong Accord,⁸⁹ nevertheless, Th. Muivah began to defy him. On 16th August, 1976, he censured the NNC Vice-President, Mr. Imkongmeren, and nominated Mr. Isak Chishi Swu to take his place.⁹⁰ Eventually, in a meeting on 2nd August, 1978, at Sikba village, Th. Muivah passed resolutions rejecting the leadership of A. Z. Phizo, and his policy as was adopted by the NNC. This led to the house arrest of TH. Muivah and Isak Chishi Swu, along with some others by the Naga army. After their release, they were able to convince the newly elected 'Federal' President, Khaplang Heimi, to adopt their 'New Line Policy' of socialism and take control of the 'Government'. On 2nd February, 1980, Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and Khaplang Heimi, made a joint declaration that

87. The Naga National Rights and Movement, Op.cit., p. 182.

88. Ibid., pp. 185 - 186.

89. Ibid., pp. 196 - 197.

90. W. Shapwon Heimi, Reports on Naga Political Affairs from 1978 to 1981, (Eastern Oking, undated), p. 2.

the 'Federal Government of Nagaland' would be replaced by the 'National Socialist Republic of Nagaland'.⁹¹

The Nagas were divided on the socialist policy initiated by Th. Muivah. W. Shapwon Heimi, who was 'Finance Minister' of the 'Federal Government' at that time writes that this policy was strongly resented by the Khiamnungans, Aos, Konyaks, Maos, Chakhesangs, Angamis and Heimis, while it was supported by most of the Semas and Tangkhuls of the organisation. This division was made worse and almost erupted into a tribal war, when the Muivah-Isak faction decided not only to assert its policy, but also decided to use force and started a spate of political killings. A high percentage of those killed by the Muivah-Isak group apparently turned out to be from the Ao and Chakhesang tribes.⁹² Thus, inter-tribal conflict has taken its toll, indicating the disruption of the Naga national movement by tribal elements, and threatening the very unity of the Naga nation.

The development of Muivah's opposition of Phizo, can be seen as not so much on the difference of policy, as much as it was against the Angami tribe, the one to which Phizo belongs. Muivah's rejection of Phizo's leadership has been said to have started when he was angered by Phizo's use of the Angami language

91. Ibid., pp. 5 - 9.

92. Ibid., pp. 4 - 9.

in an official letter addressed to him.⁹³ This reflects that Muivah was aware of the dominance of the Angamis in the NNC, and he interpreted Phizo's letter as the imposition of the Angami language on him. Not long ago, on 21st March, 1990, Mr. Isak Chishi Swu, who is now Chairman, National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) in his 'Republic Day' speech, accused the NNC of drawing their support from the 'Tenyimias' (Angamis and their related group of tribes).⁹⁴

Thus, it can be seen that tribe consciousness was a divisive factor in the Naga national movement. It was for the same reason that there was a further split in the NSCN, in 1988.⁹⁵ The new faction was led by the erstwhile 'Federal' President of the NSCN, Khaplang Heimi, and it came to be known as NSCN(K). It is found that this split occurred due to the grievances of some tribes which felt that the NSCN is dominated by certain tribes, which filled up all the higher rungs of the organisation.⁹⁶ The new faction, the NSCN(K), overtly expressed their unhappiness over the alleged domination of the pre-split NSCN by the Tangkhul tribe.⁹⁷ The NSCN(K) even went to the extent

93. Ibid., pp. 2 - 3.

94. The Weekly Journal, Vol. I, No. 48, (Kohima, 4th April, 1990), p. B.

95. Kitovi Zhimomi, 'Deputy Minister', NSCN(K), In an Interview in The Weekly Journal, Vol. 4, No. 22, (Kohima, 15th September, 1993), p.12.

96. K. Kiyekhu Awomi, 'Captain, NSCN, In a Press Release, The Weekly Journal, Vol. 4, No. 18, (Kohima, 12th August, 1993), p. 10.

97. John Awungshi, "Naga Revolutionary Process", The Nagaland Journal, Vol.4, No.19, (Kohima, 18th August, 1993), p.4.

of issuing a Quit Notice to the civilian Tangkhul Nagas from their strongholds of Mokokchung and Zunheboto districts in Nagaland.⁹⁸

The NNC, which continued to exist even after the Muivah-Isak faction parted ways, also isolated the Shillong Accordists. In a meeting held from 28th - 29th August, 1981, under the banner of Naga National Workers' Conference, chaired by Thinoselie Keyho, it was resolved that the Shillong Accord does not have the consent of the Naga people and it can not form the basis for solving the Naga problem.⁹⁹ On 28th July, 1989, a groups of Nagas claiming to represent seventeen tribes, issued an Open Letter reaffirming the resolutions.¹⁰⁰ This more or less divided the NNC into two groups. However, this division did not affect the real structural arrangement of the NNC. It was only after the death of its President, A. Z. Phizo, that tribal colours within the party became prominent.

This happened mostly due to the election of a candidate to the post left vacant by the demise of A. Z. Phizo. On 7th June, 1990, in a meeting of delegates from the NNC, at Mokokchung, under the Chairmanship of 'Gen'. Merentoba, the election of Adino Phizo, the daughter of A. Z. Phizo, as NNC

98. The Nagaland Journal, Vol. 4, No. 38, (Kohima, 16th February, 1994), p. 7.

99. The Naga National Rights and Movement, Op.cit., p. 199.

100. Ibid., pp. 234 - 238.

President, was declared unconstitutional and as such null and void.¹⁰¹ In a subsequent meeting on 17th July, 1990, at Mokokchung, by the same group, Khadao Yanthan was elected the new President of the NNC.¹⁰² This went on in spite of the fact that the Adino Phizo supporters held a meeting at Tuensang, on 10th July, 1990, and reaffirmed her appointment as NNC President.¹⁰³

The Naga tribes were divided on this issue. The Lotha Regional Council of the NNC, issued a Press Release in favour of Khadao Yanthan, who himself is a Lotha Naga, and also claimed the support of the Angami Region.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, most of the tribes from Tuensang district, refused to acknowledge the leadership of Khadao Yanthan. In a meeting of regional authorities, representatives from the Chang, Sangtam, Yimchunger and Khamniungan regions, decided to boycott a meeting called by Khadao Yanthan, at Wokha, as they felt that he had no official authority to do so.¹⁰⁵ Also, in a Press Release, the Chakhesang Regional Council of the NNC, expressed its support for Ms. Adino Phizo.¹⁰⁶ This problem still remains unresolved.

Therefore, we can say that tribalism has posed a threat

101. Ibid., p. 165.

102. Ibid., pp. 272 - 273.

103. Ibid. p. p. 271.

104. The Weekly Journal, Vol. 2, No. 33, (Kohima, 13th March 1991), p. 1.

105. The Weekly Journal, Vol. 2, No. 18, (Kohima, 3rd October, 1990), p. 1.

106. The Weekly Journal, Vol. 2, No. 34, Kohima, 20th March, 1991), p. 1.

to Naga national unity. It is largely responsible for the disruption in the Naga national movement, and subsequently, its decline. The roots of all these can be traced back to the arrival of British administration, Christianity and Western education. It was at this period that side by side with the emergence of Naga nationalism, the tribal division of Nagas into distinct socio-political entities began. The development of these tribal identities, as it is seen, had an adverse impact on the political unity of the Naga people, but it could not be cured because the emergence of a strong tribe consciousness, nurtured by an organised culture began to have a serious influence on the socio-economic and political system of the society. However, this work will be incomplete, if it fails to point out some positive aspects of the tribe-based Naga society.

The tribal organisations led by the new elite, have become potent bodies and are able to command high respect from their members. The advantage of such a situation is that they become affective in handling internal problems at their own levels. To a certain extent they are able to police themselves by acting against social vices such as immoral traffic, bootlegging and extortion, etc. On 17th February, 1992, the Sema community of Zenheboto, excommunicated two girls for their suspected immoral behaviour.¹⁰⁷ A statement issued by the Sema community in

107. Hill Express, Vol. VII, No. 9, (Kohima, 10th March, 1992), p. 1.

Kohima, warned of taking strong action against members of their community who may be found involving in extortion of money.¹⁰⁸ In a meeting at Kohima, the Phom tribe too decided to take stern action against members of their tribe, if they were found to be indulging in drug trafficking and abuse.¹⁰⁹ These are not mere threats because tribal organisations are strong enough to enforce them.

Earlier, we have already established that tribes are effective as pressure groups because they have political weightage. This is why the Government cannot ignore tribal organisations when they take up issues of public interest. The Sumi (Sema), Hoho submitted a memorandum to the Governor on 23rd February, 1994, demanding a high level inquiry into an alleged misappropriation of a large sum of money which was sanctioned for the construction of an Indoor Stadium at Zunheboto.¹¹⁰ Complaint from tribal organisations against improper functioning of the Government offices cannot be undermined. An organisation of the Tuensang tribes submitted a very strongly written memorandum to the Government on irregularities and absenteeism prevalent in the Government offices of Tuensang district. They warned that they

108. The Nagaland Journal, Vol. 3, No. 28, (Kohima, 3rd June, 1992), p. 1.

109. Nagaland Post, Vol. II, No. 23, (Dimapur, 7th January, 1992), p. 2.

110. Nagaland Post, Vol. IV, No. 79, (Dimapur, 4th March, 1994), p. 1.

111. Nagaland Post, Vol. IV, No. 232, (Dimapur, 10th August, 1991), pp. 1 and 8.

would conduct surprise checks and take their own course of action.¹¹¹ The Angami Students' Union even volunteered to take on governmental responsibilities in improving the deteriorating condition of Government schools in the Angami area.¹¹²

The emergence of tribe consciousness also has a unifying influence on those tribes which have been divided by different national and international political boundaries. The Konyak Tribal Union, recognises all Konyaks living in Nagaland, Assam, Arunachal and even across the international border in Burma, as people of the same "flesh and blood".¹¹³ In the same way, we cannot question the fact that the Khianmungans in Nagaland and those in Burma, are aware of their common identity. The Khianmungan Tribal Council, in a meeting on 4th April, 1970, at Pangsha, adopted a resolution not to recognise the Indo-Burma boundary which divided them.¹¹⁴

While on one side, tribalism has caused the break up of Naga society, due to the stiff competition that arises among tribes, in their search for socio-economic and political advantages in a multi-tribal society, for the same reason, there

112. Nagaland Post, Vol. IV, No. 137, (Dimapur, 7th May, 1994), p. 2.

113. C. Mopen Konyak, General Secretary, Konyak Tribal Union, Mon, "Backsliding Konyaks", The Nagaland Journal, Vol. 3, No. 4, (Kohima, 11th September, 1991), p. 10.

114. The Weekly Journal, Vol. 2, No. 19, (Kohima, 10th October, 1990), p. 12.

has also emerged a tendency for related tribes to seek a common platform. A recent example of such a union is the Konyak-Wancho Tribal Union, which came into being only in January, 1996.¹¹⁵ Not long ago, the Tenyimia Union was formed, comprising of seven tribes, namely, Angami, Chakhesang, Mao, Poumai, Zeliangrong, Pochury and Rengma.¹¹⁶

There is no doubt that individual tribes do seem to assert themselves, but we cannot undermine the positive role played by pan-Naga tribal organisations in the Naga society. These organisations play a vital role in settling inter-tribal conflicts and maintaining harmony. The Naga Council of Dimapur, has proved to be an outstanding performer in this regard. It mediates between feuding tribes and co-ordinates inter-tribal activities. Its contribution in maintaining tribal harmony in Dimapur is noteworthy.¹¹⁷

It may be true to some extent that the tribe-based organisation of the Nagas helps them to sustain their cultural inheritance. This is because tribe consciousness involves the continued use of tribal symbols, customs and traditions. Also since tribes are well-established and tribal boundaries are

115. Nagaland Post, Vol. VI, No. 50, (Dimapur, 12th February, 1996), p. 2.

116. Nagaland Post, Vol. V, No. 228, (Dimapur, 12th August, 1991), pp. 1 and 8.

117. Nagaland Post, Vol. 1, No. 163, (Dimapur, 1st June, 1991), pp. 1 and 8.

defined, it is less likely for outsiders to come and dilute the society. In fact, they are closed social categories where membership is possible only by birth. The Naga society in the pre-British period was disorganised. This is why the emergence of tribal organisations was a welcome sight, as it represents the coming of a feasible and manageable socio-political system in the Naga society.

The locus standi of tribal organisations in the state political system is non-governmental. Tribes are recognised as ethnic groups and not as politico-administrative units. This is why the positive role of tribe in the state structural system is of less importance. Rather, the politicisation of tribes, the interference of interests groups and the inter-tribal competition for shared resources, which take place within the state, have far greater impact on its system. Therefore, the negative dimension of the tribal system, which comes as a disruptive force and caters to inter-tribal conflict, is far more hazardous to society and its development.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

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CONCLUSION

In the past, the Nagas have lived in villages which were geographically isolated from one another. There was very little interaction between the villages. The Naga people lived a more or less primitive life. Their socio-economic activities were mostly confined to their villages. At this period, it was blood relationship which remained the sole determinant of allegiance to any social group. Family, clan and kinship ties formed the bases on which social relationship revolved. As such, as we have seen in Chapter II, the Nagas might claim to have common origin and similarities in language, culture and tradition, but in their pristine days they had no socio-economic or political unity.

It was with the coming of the British that the Nagas emerged from their cocoons of isolated village life. They not only began to interact with one another, but also came under a common modern administrative set-up. The change in the socio-economic and political environment led to the emergence of a Naga consciousness among them. In Chapter III, the process leading to a change in this direction, have been shown to have marked the origin of various tribal identities within the Naga society.

The division of Nagas into various tribes on the basis of socio-political factors, and the subsequent development of tribe consciousness, vis-a-vis the transformation of the political system, has brought about a societal phenomenon, emanating from the inter-tribal relations. Such a development is characterised by the proliferation of tribes, the emergence of a tribe-based socio-economic and political system, as well as the occurrence of inter-tribal conflicts. Therefore, we may say that the nature of politics in the Naga society needs to be understood in the light of its inter-tribal relations. For this reason, the main focus of this thesis has been the emergence of tribes, the nature of inter-tribal politics and its consequences on the Naga society.

The fact that Nagas have been compartmentalised into different tribes, denotes that the Naga society is tribal in character. This means that one can arrive at a deductive meaning of tribe by analysing the Naga society. Such a definition is larger than the real meaning of tribe, because it cannot be isolated from the socio-economic and political milieu within which it exists. In a multi-tribal system, it is under the same environment that inter-tribal relations are moulded. Therefore, our study of the Naga society, which is characterised by inter-tribal politics requires that the concept of tribe be understood in this larger perspective.

Our search for an analytical framework for the purpose of this study is based on such a perspective. In Chapter I, we found that early use of the term 'tribe' by anthropologists and sociologists started in their christening of backward, primitive and traditional societies, in the wake of imperialist expansion, to those part of the world outside the Western universe of the organised state. At this point the literal connotation of the term was perhaps derogatory. Prior to this there could not have been any society with an awareness of its tribal identity. We know that in usage the term 'tribe' is mostly ascriptive. We can see that tribal societies were so called by non-tribals from well-organised societies, which placed these societies on a comparative plane with their own, using the development level as a yardstick. By such perceptions, a tribe is considered to be a singular ethnic group, living within a single contiguous area, permanent or temporary, in a more or less primitive condition, having common culture, traditions and ancestry.

We find that the rights and the status associated with such a stage of a tribal society is not recognised by modern states. Its independence is not equated with sovereignty. Most of these societies after coming into contact with modern states are found to be absorbed by them. It is at such a stage that tribal identities as political identities crystallise. Their induction into the new system and their association with

it, place them in an environment where they acquire new socio-economic and political meaning. Their separate identity comes to light in their juxtaposition with the non-tribal societies with whom they now share a common system. Such a system may also have structures, functions and provisions which distinguish between the two. From then on, the term 'tribe' can no longer be accepted as merely ascriptive or taxonomic. Its politicisation leads to its development as an ideological instrument. When we conceptualise the term 'tribe' in this manner, we will find that a major portion of socio-economic and political phenomena revolves around it.

At such a stage, the original characteristics of a tribe becomes less relevant, because its traditional primitive culture, and its socio-economic and political life have been broken down. The tribe then would no longer be a tribe if we continue to use the original criteria with which it was first identified. In the new system, tribals might have adopted non-tribal values and education ;changed religions, taken to new socio-economic and political roles which are features of modern non-tribal societies. Logically, they have become part and parcel of the modern system which have absorbed them. In such a case, where both tribals and non-tribals may be living within the same system, it becomes difficult to make a distinction between the two. But we know that tribal identities

once formed are not easily erased. We find that in some systems, constitutional provisions which differentiate between tribals and non-tribals exist. Hence, the degree to which a society is more or less tribal does not exist because the development criterion is no longer relevant. Tribal identity has found a niche in the present day order of society and the tribe as a political unit has come to stay.

This is why we need to understand tribe as a political category which finds its identity in the light of its socio-economic and political character, relative to a modern recognised system, organised as a state. Since the tribe becomes a socio-economic and political entity within the state system, it becomes a key determinant in the distribution of state resources. As can be seen in Chapter V, this is why tribe consciousness which, like in the case of the concept of a nation, is often constituted of the will of the people, becomes representative of the ideology of the dominant section or the elite of the society. Under this circumstances tribes become part of a plural system, vying for maximum access to common resources. Not only do tribes assert themselves, but also demand for recognition as tribes by new groups may ensue. The invocation of tribal sentiments and its mobilisation by interest groups come into play. The cumulative

impact of all these bring out the character of inter-tribal relations.

There is every likelihood that the nature of the Naga society in the pre-British era formed the basis of its classification into tribes. But when we actually look into the original structure of the Naga society, we find that it is difficult to identify any group which correlates with our conceptualisation of tribe. There is a strong believe among scholars that the Nagas did not come to their present home as a singular group. This does not mean that they came as separate tribes. We can explain this by looking into the migration pattern of the Nagas.

In Chapter II, we found that Naga migration within the Naga inhabited hills was a continuous process. Such migratory practice involves the linking and delinking of various Naga groups. It causes the inter-mingling of Nagas in different places. This makes it extremely difficult to classify Nagas into different ethnic groups. At the same time, we do not have enough historical evidence that the Nagas are one people. As we have seen, the main reason for this could be the absence of a script, for which there is no written records of their early life.

However, it can be seen that there is an overall unity in the different Naga customs, traditions, philosophy, beliefs, cultural and lingual phenomena. We find a concentric pattern of expanding differences among villages depending on the distances between them, which indicate their level of contact or isolation from one another. We do not claim that Nagas did not come under outside influences. We may very reasonably say that those Nagas having common borders with other peoples could have had lingual, cultural and even blood relations with their neighbours. This could be the cause of a break in the concentric pattern of differences, resulting in greater differences between villages. In this regard, one may make mention of the Ahom-Naga relations. As we have seen in Chapter III, some Naga villages were even found to have been subjugated by the Ahoms.

Therefore, it is believed that the Nagas have come from a common origin and ancestry. It must have been due to their migrations that variations in their language and customs occurred. Most of the Naga tribes that claim separate identity today can be traced back to a common origin, where they once shared the same village. There is every reason to believe that at this stage their language and cultural practices were the same. Due to the isolated nature of Naga villages, migrants may lose all contact with their parent village and adapt themselves to their new environment. As we have seen in Chapter II, the

Angami village of Kohima was originally formed by the descendants of settlers from at least three different tribes, of which only one was Angami and the other two were from Zeliang and Mao.

In Chapter II, we also found that in the pre-British period, the highest form of Naga social organisation was only the village. The villages were independent from one another and inter-village relations depended much on proximity and accessibility. Clan and party relations may exist outside the purview of inter-village relations. This happens due to the breaking up of clans in different villages because of migration. In most cases, the village is a non-governing one, as clans and other social groups may act independently of it.

It can be found that it is difficult to identify any tribal group in the pre-British Naga society. In nomenclature, there exist groups such as Tenyimia and Mezhamia. These terms are descriptive and merely used to distinguish between types. They are not politically relevant. Thus, we may say that there were no Naga tribes as they exist today in the pre-British period and that the idea of a tribe and the emergence of tribe consciousness are post-British phenomena.

The origin of formal Naga tribes, as seen in Chapter III, can be traced back to the era of British rule. With the

coming of the British, the independent village organisational pattern was broken. British administration along with Western education and Christianity brought about major changes in the Naga way of life. The very roots of Naga traditional beliefs, attitudes and philosophy underwent tremendous change. The Nagas were brought out from their isolated villages to a new order of pan-Naga socio-economic and political life. It was the early writers and administrators who first grouped the Nagas into different tribes. In doing so, the criteria they adopted were mostly based on physical features, language, cultural practices and geography.

With the establishment of British administration inter-village feuds and rivalry were brought under control. Head hunting was no longer the order of war. The independent and isolated nature of the Naga villages no longer existed, as they were brought under a unified administrative system. This made it easier for them to come together under common tribal identities. In doing so they were not interrupted by the people from the plains as the British did not encourage the Nagas to inter-mingle with them. In the newly developed pan-Naga political order of tribal divisions, individual villages were caught in the trend of tribal affiliations. Tribal identities also became functional in *the* administrative system.

Western education and Christianity which worked side by side are two important factors in the development of formal tribes. Their relationship cannot be ignored. It was Christian missionaries who first brought education to the Nagas and these missionaries were Westerners. Early Naga Christians received their education from missionary schools. For the educated Nagas it was not difficult to get indoctrinated with the works of Western writers. This is because the acceptance of Christian principles cannot be separated from the culture it represents. The Nagas were educated on a tribal foundation and they learned to be tribes. The tribal dialects which the missionaries translated into scripts and the subsequent translations of the Bible, as well as the use of these tribal dialects in text books, also played a vital role in the emergence of tribal separate tribal identities.

We may say that the British administration itself fostered the idea of separate Naga tribal identities. It not only recognised the grouping of Nagas into various tribes, but also set the trend of incorporating it into the administrative system. It formally recognised the tribes, their boundaries and considered them as both traditional and governmental units. With this, the institution of tribes in the Naga society not only found its roots but also became an indelible presence.

In the newly acquired political and administrative unity an arena where different Naga tribes come into interaction surfaced. At this stage the Nagas were exposed to the outside world. Christianity and Western education brought about a change in the world view of a certain section of the people. The introduction of market economy and the beginning of white-collar jobs did away with the traditional egalitarian society. And as we have shown in Chapter IV, this led to the emergence of a new social group in the Naga society, which we may call the Naga elite.

The rapid growth of Christianity and the proliferation of Western values facilitated the strengthening of the position of the elite in the society. Initially, the Naga elite did not have a platform from where they could exercise their influence. Thus within the existing system they were faced with an identity crisis. This resulted in the formation of the Naga Club in 1918. The Naga National Council was to follow in 1946. Through these organisations the Naga elite took over the political leadership of the people.

It was the Naga Club which first brought out the idea of Naga independence. The Naga national movement, however, took off only with the arrival of the Naga National Council (NNC). It was under the NNC that all the Nagas were brought together under

one political banner. There emerged a strong link of unity among the Nagas which took shape in the form of Naga national consciousness. The Naga national movement and the resulting armed conflicts with India, further strengthened the bonds of Naga unity. At this time a break-away group of Naga leaders accepted Statehood within India and Nagaland became a state in 1963.

It can be seen that in all these processes of political development, tribe was used as a fundamental political unit of society. This is understandable because the Naga political leaders had in them the notion of a tribe, as instituted by the British, and they incorporated it into political organisations such as the Naga Club and the NNC. In the same way the Nagas began to organise themselves on the basis of tribes. This tribe-based Naga society found new strength in the formation of the state of Nagaland because it provided a government within which the tribe could ascertain its role as a political entity.

Now we can no longer look at the tribe as a mere social category. Its politicisation has brought it into inter-play with government and politics. And as we have shown in Chapter V, this led to the emergence of inter-tribal politics in the Naga society. As a result, the tribe began to play a major role at the organisational level. It affected all aspects of socio-economic, political and even the cultural activities of the

people. It brought about tribe consciousness, which resulted in the formation of different tribal identities in all spheres of social organisations.

To a certain extent, it may be said that the state is organised on the basis of tribes. From the time of the creation of the state of Nagaland, it was thought that the Naga society was essentially tribal and that each tribe should have its own rule-making and administrative body. The administrative set-up in the state seem to follow the same pattern, as administrative units such as the districts and its sub-division are carved out according to tribal boundaries. Assembly constituencies are also mostly tribal except for one or two urban ones. Tribes are not only formally recognised by the government but they are also classified and backward tribes are given special opportunities in areas such as employment through a reservation policy. All these indicate that the distribution system in the state is tribe-based. Also, the importance of tribal organisations in policy making cannot be underestimated. It can be seen that the government itself often consults tribal groups for decision making and policy formulation. Apart from this, tribal organisations themselves remain a strong force as pressure groups.

In such a situation, all major organisations are found to be structured on the basis of tribes. The earliest pan-Naga organisation, the Naga Club was started with its members claiming to represent the whole of their respective tribes. Later, when the NNC was formed, they developed the idea of a Naga nation as a federation of tribes. In the same way, they formulated a Naga 'Federal Government' with the various tribes as its federal units.

Even the church is organised in the same manner. The Nagaland Baptist Church Council is the central body of all the Nagaland Baptist Churches, which are affiliated to it as member of their respective tribal bodies. The next organisation which befits mentioning here, is the Naga Students' Federation, which also is organised as a federation of Naga tribal student bodies.

Other than these major organisations, tribe-based organisations are found to be existing even at micro-social levels. In Chapter VI, we have shown how tribes in a single college may have separate unions. There are also cases in which even a single residential colony may have its meetings with representatives from different tribes. All these show the extent to which tribe consciousness has developed in the minds of the people. Not only has tribal allegiance become a common feature, but also as we have found in Chapter V, tribes are getting more

and more differentiated, as each tribe began to claim symbolic, cultural and even behavioural attributes as exclusive to its identity.

As the divisions among tribes in the Naga society is so strong, it is bound to be reflected in the workings of the state, which has become a common arena within which various tribal units come into inter-play. Since the state is a store house of common resources, which is limited, and has a distribution system in which the tribe is recognised as a participant and recipient, it may be said that the aim of each tribe will be to optimise its share. For this tribes will compete for control of state's power apparatus, as it is a major determinant of access to its resources. In doing so, these tribes are represented by their dominant section, which we have identified earlier, in Chapter V, as the elite. We have also seen that the elite may have their own vested interests in pursuit of which they may invoke tribal sentiments. It is under such circumstances that inter-tribal politics take its form, which is why it tends to be conflictual.

So we see that inter-tribal politics has given rise to tribal conflicts. This has brought about the polarisation of tribes. We can see that there is a widening gap between the tribes as the individual identity of tribes becomes more pronounced. Tribes have become more assertive and there is a

psychological barrier cropping up among the tribes. Tribal antagonism has become such that any kind of conflict arising at the family level or individual level, not to speak of official matters, tends to flare up into inter-tribal issues.

As we have seen in Chapter VI, since the system of distribution of resources is tribe-based, many social groups are demanding for tribal status. This has brought about divisions in many major tribes and has created a tendency for the proliferation of tribal entities. At the same time, we find that some tribes feel there is uneven development and that the distribution of resources is inequitable. These tribes are coming together to press for separation and demand for a new administrative unit within which they can have sole control over its resources. Therefore, we can say that inter-tribal conflict has the tendency to develop into both separatism and irredentism.

It also has been seen that the tribal factor plays a major role in party politics and elections. The voting behaviour of an individual may be marked by his tribal affiliations. Political leaders may seek berths both in party leadership and ministries by relying on their tribal support. Very often politicians and voters may be found to have acted across party lines in favour of their own tribes. There are also occasions when tribal organisations may demand support for its own

candidate from members of its tribe. This is why sometimes political parties may get sidetracked and even result in a spilt. It may be correct then, to say that inter-tribal politics and tribalism are near synonyms in a multi-tribal state.

We find even the underground movement is not free from tribal afflictions. Nationalism was a cohesive force for the Naga tribes. As we saw in Chapter IV, it brought the Nagas under a single organisation and it instilled in the Nagas, the common desire to share the same state. But the organisational structure of the underground government which was founded on the basis of tribes could not withstand the waves of tribal conflicts among the Nagas. We have seen in Chapter VI that the 'Federal Government' which was thought to be ideally constituted on the basis of tribe-wise representation was imbued with inter-tribal conflicts. The singular underground political party, the NNC, had to pay the price with a split in the emergence of a new group call the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN). This was to be followed by further split in both the NNC and NSCN.

There may exist a certain level of positive competition in cases where different tribes try to surpass one another in different fields of development. But it is extremely difficult to be assertive here, because the processes through which these goals are sought cannot be easily separated from its tribal

infrastructure. However, tribal bodies do play a positive role in settling cases of disputes among tribes as shown in Chapter VI. They are also found to be successful in controlling social evils, most effectively within their own groups, to a certain extent.

In conclusion, we may say that the nature of the Naga society in the pre-British period did not generate inter-tribal conflicts as we see it today. If we say that Nagas are tribals because of their primitive ways of life, the coming of British administration and the introduction of Nagas to modern system of society would have put an end to it. Also, the Naga communities cannot be attributed as tribals because of their traditional culture, because a majority of them have adopted Christianity, which we know is the very embodiment of Western culture. Added to this, a number of Nagas have already received Western education. Thus, we can only attribute the beginning of tribalism to the British groupings of the Nagas into different 'tribes'.

This was followed by the development of tribe consciousness, based on different tribal identities which paved the way for the emergence of various interest groups of which the Naga elite was the most conspicuous. The formation of the state of Nagaland opened up new avenues for the politicisation of tribes. The state began to adopt itself to the demands of

existing tribal structural-functional phenomenon and brought about its crystallisation.

The evolved system of tribe wise distribution gave rise to the demand for new tribal identities. Some dissatisfied tribes clustered together for separation from the state. Smaller groups started demanding full-fledged tribe status. The government's attempt to appease smaller tribes by formulating a policy of reservation for them further deteriorated the situation. Tribal identities became more prominent and there developed a tendency to interpret issues as tribalistic regardless of the nature of its origin.

Inter-tribal conflicts and Naga politics are near synonyms. It is found that voting behaviour is subservient to tribal attachments. This becomes most effective because constituencies are distributed on the basis of tribes. Often which party comes to power can be predicted by analysing the leadership or membership pattern in terms of tribal dominance. Hence, it is quite possible that tribal bias exist in the distribution system as alleged by certain tribes.

Naga nationalism was a process of change towards Naga unification. It was a search for a singular political identity for the Nagas. The wave of Naga nationalism preceded inter-tribal

conflicts. We know that there cannot exist inter-tribal relations unless the tribes are first identified and brought under a single political framework. The state of Nagaland has become an arena where inter-tribal politics found expression. The result was the emergence of strong tribal identities which in turn effected the decline of Naga nationalism.

It is evident that tribal separatist forces are caused by dissatisfaction with the state's allocation of resources. And since tribal identities become politically affective only when they are recognised by the government as a tribe, tribal boundaries existing outside such recognition remain ineffective. Therefore, culture, customs, traditions, language and common ancestry, on the basis of which a tribe is supposed to have been founded becomes secondary to the real motivational force which is access to resources.

Hence, we refused to accept any definition of 'tribe' which is solely based on socio-cultural and economic development criteria alone, without taking into consideration the politico-historical processes under which it evolved. This is because what have been attributed as tribal features -- such as common language, culture, descent and contiguous territory -- are in many cases also true of Western developed societies. The development criterion is also irrelevant because a tribe is not

temporary. It does not vanish as development comes. It is a fact that tribes are capable of coping with modernization, otherwise they would have been all gone by now.

All societies called tribes today, have only one thing in common, a colonial past. Otherwise, as we have seen in Chapter I, tribes around the world differ in many aspects from one another. The notion of being a tribe was brought by their Western rulers. It was used on all societies which were found to be in a politically unorganised state. Its use was ideological because it distinguishes between native societies and the ruling imperial states in terms of their levels of development. Therefore, it can be said that the idea of a tribe came only as a hegemonic imposition on native societies, which not only adopted it, but also capitalised on it in building their own socio-economic and political systems.

We find that tribalism, in our sense of the term, is a destructive element which has etched into the Naga society and has become part and parcel of its socio-economic and political order. It is not only a disruptive ~~force~~, but it also hampers economic growth and overall development by rendering equitable distribution unrealisable. This is more so because there is active competition among the tribes for access to a common source of limited resources. There is no immediate

remedy to the problem and any effective measure to combat inter-tribal conflict must start at the very roots, involving changes in organisational patterns and structural changes in the governmental machinery. In the long run, social linkages emanating from steadily increasing inter-tribal marriage, inter-tribal migration, urbanisation, etc., may broaden the vision of the tribes. Also, socio-economic and political developments bringing with them modernisation and new cultural values may render tribalism irrelevant. The strengthening of Naga national consciousness may further weaken the negative impact of tribalism. But a reverse trend is also possible, particularly if parochial social forces are allowed to become a commanding factor in the areas inhabited by the Nagas. However, these possibilities need to be examined in a further study, and as for now, the idea of rooting out inter-tribal conflict from the Naga society under the present conditions remains a distant dream.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX - A

Memorandum on Naga Self-Determination Submitted to Simon
Commission in 1929.

Dated, 19th January, 1929

To

The Indian Statutory Commission
Camp-India.

Subject: Memorandum of the Naga Hills

Sirs,

We, the undersigned Nagas of the Club at Kohima, who are the only persons at present who can voice for our people have heard with great regret that our Hills were included within the Reformed Scheme of India without our knowledge, but as the administration of our Hills continued to be in the hands of the British Officers we did not consider it necessary to raise any protest in the past. Now we learn that you have come to India as representatives of the British Government to enquire into the working of the system of government and the growth of education

and we beg to submit below our view with the prayer that our Hills may be withdrawn from the Reformed Scheme and place outside the reforms but directly under the British Government.

Before the British Government conquered our country in 1879 - 1880, we were living in a state of intermittent warfare with the Assamese of the Assam valley to the north and west of our country and Manipuris to the south. They never conquered us, nor were we ever subjected to their rule. On the other hand, we were always a terror to these people. Our country within the administered area consists of more than eight tribes, quite different from one another with quite different languages which cannot be understood by each other, and there are more tribes outside the administered area which are not known at present. We have no unity among us and it is only the British Government that is holding us together now.

Our education at present is poor. The occupation of our country by the British Government being so recent as 1880, we have had no chance or opportunity to improve in education and though we can boast of two or three graduates of an Indian University in our country, we have not yet got one who is able to represent all our different tribes or master our different tribes or master our languages, much less one to represent us in any

council of a province. Moreover our population numbering 10,02,000 is very small in comparison with the plains districts in the province, and any representation that may be allotted to us in the council will have no weight whatsoever.

Our language is quite different from those of the plains and we have no social affinities with the Hindus or Mussalmans. We are looked down upon by one for our beef and the other for our pork and by both for want of education which is not due to any fault of ours.

Our country is poor and it does not pay for its administration. Therefore, if it is continued to be placed under the Reformed Scheme, we are afraid that the new and heavy taxes will have to be imposed on us, and when we cannot pay them all our lands will have to be sold and in the long run we shall have no share in the land of our birth, and life will not be worth living then. Though our land at present is within the British territory, Government has always recognised our rights in it, but if we are forced to enter the Council all these rights may be extinguished by the unsympathetic Council, the majority of whose number is sure to belong to the districts. We also much fear the introduction of foreign laws and customs to supersede our own customary laws which we now enjoy.

For the above reasons, we pray that the British Government will continue to safeguard our rights against all encroachment from other people who are more advanced than us by withdrawing our country from the Reformed Scheme and placing it directly under its own protection. If the British Government, however, want to throw us away, we pray that we should not be thrust to the mercy of the people who could never subjugated us, but to leave us alone to determine ourselves as in ancient times. We claim (not only the members of the Naga Club) to represent all those tribes to which we belong: Angamis, Kacha Nagas, Kukis, Semas, Lothas and Rengmas.

Yours faithfully,

- (1) I. Nihu Angami, (2) Nisalie Angami, (3) Nisier, (4) Khosa,
- (5) Gepo Kacha-Naga, (6) Vipunyu, (7), Goyiepra, (8) Ruzhukhrie,
- (9) Dikhrie, (10) Zapuzhulie, (11) Zepulie, (12) Katsumo,
- (13) Nuolhoukielie, (14) Inzevi, (15) Apamo Lotha, (16) Resilo,
- (17) Lengjang Kuki, (18) Nikhriehu, (19) Miakra-0, (20) Levi.

APPENDIX - B

Transcripts of Interviews (Extracts)

1. Mr. Zhabu Terhuja, Executive Secretary, Angami Baptist Churches Council, Mission Compound, Kohima. Date: 22nd February, 1994.

Question: What is the relationship of Angami Baptist Churches Council with Nagaland Baptist Church Council? What kind of autonomy does it enjoy?

Answer : The decisions of the NBCC cannot be said to be binding or obligatory because they are made with ABCC's full participation and approval. The ABCC plays a vital role in the decision making of the NBCC. As members of the NBCC's General Council, which is its main decision making body, we are the main decision makers.

2. Mr. Thomas Kent, Assistant Director, Directorate of Tourism, Kohima, Nagaland. Date: 18th August, 1994.

Question: How were the Rengmas originally known as ?

Answer : Our Rengma tribe was known to ourselves as Njonyu. There is also a sub-tribe comprising of Nsunyu, Tesophenyu, Kotsunyu villages, called Ethyia.

Question: Then how your tribe came to be known as Rengma and what does it mean ?

Answer : It is said that one of our ancestors in full traditional dress met a British traveller who asked him to which tribe he belonged. In order to frighten the traveller the tribal native answered 'reme' because it means nightmare in his language. It is said that the British recorded him as belonging to the Rengma tribe in his notes.

3. Mr. Wangyu Konyak, Tourist Officer, Directorate of Tourism, Nagaland. Date: 18th August, 1994.

Question: What was the original name of the Konyaks prior to the coming of the British ?

Answer: The Konyak's original name was Wancho. In Arunachal Pradesh Konyaks are still known as Wanchos. Only in Nagaland our tribe is recognised as Konyaks.

Question: How Konyaks in Nagaland got their name then ?

Answer: The story goes that when a Britisher asked an old man what they are known as -- he replied 'khaonyak' which means 'man' in our language. That's how we came to be known as Konyaks.

4. Mr. Wezhulhi Krome, Ex - M. L. A., Nagaland State Legislative Assembly, Midland, Kohima, Founding member of Chakhesang tribe. Date: 26th April, 1994.

Question: Tell me something about the formation of the Chakhesang tribe ?

Answer : The name Chakhesang was first coined on 10th January, 1945, at the Inspection Bungalow, Old Phek village. At the initiative of the then Deputy Commissioner, Kohima, Nagaland, leaders from the three communities -- Chakru, Kheza and Sangtam meet to coin the acronym Chakhesang, using the first syllables from each of the names of the three communities.

Question: Why was the formation of Chakhesang tribe necessary ?

Answer : At this time a lot of tribal organisations were coming up and the Deputy Commissioner asked us how we would like to be known. We decided to form a new tribe. The formation of Chakhesang tribe was necessitated by the tribal pattern of organisation adopted by NNC. We had to be a tribe to be a member of the NNC. There was no tribal animosity at this period. It was only the tribal system of administration envisaged by the British and its adoption by the NNC which required the Nagas to be grouped into various tribal entities.

5. Mr. Tsopelo Kapfo, Chairman, Christian Youth Endeavour, Chakhesang Baptist Church, Kohima. Date: 13th April, 1994.

Question: Is it true that all Chokri or Kheza villages are not part of the Chakhesang tribe?

Answer : Yes. You can see that Chokri villages such as Viswema, Kezoma, and Khuzama are part of the Angami tribe. Among the Kheza villages, Jessami, Krowemi and Khotsomi fall within Manipur and they are not included in the Chakhesang tribe.

Question: Are there any village belonging to the Chakhesang tribe which do not come from any of the three groups represented in the acronym forming the name Chakhesang ?

Answer : Yes; Zemai, Chobama and Zeluma are Poumai villages, the majority of which fall within Manipur. But since these particular villages are in Nagaland, they are also included in the Chakhesang tribe.

6. Miss. Ruluonyi-u Pusa, Language Assistant, Directorate of School Education, Kohima. Date: 4th April, 1994.

Question: The Education Department has introduced both the Kheza and Chokri languages of the Chakhesang tribe in schools. Does the fact that they belong to a single tribe create any problem ?

Answer : Yes; as they belong to a single tribe, the Education Department has only one Language Officer in charge of both the languages. This post is now been held by a Chokri. The Kheza group is not happy with it. They are demanding that the post of Language Officer should be held alternately by both Chokri and Kheza.

7. Miss. V. Sekhose, Station Director, All India Radio, Kohima.

Date : 20th April, 1994.

Question: Kheza is quite different from Angami, but Chokri speaking people can understand Angami. So why do you alternately use Chokri and Kheza in Chakhesang radio programmes ? Don't you think Chokri can be dropped as Angami is already used by All India Radio, Kohima ?

Answer : We follow the tribal pattern of the Government of Nagaland. We need to conform to the state policies, otherwise political problem might arise.

8. Mr. Toshi Wontong, Founding Member, TDSF. Date : 2nd June, 1994, at Kohima.

Question: As a founding member of the TDSF, can you give me some background information on the emergence of separatist movement in Tuensang District ?

Answer : Most parts of the District remained unadministered at the time of British rule. This is why this part of Nagaland is claimed to be a Freeland Area. On the

basis of this the Tuensang District Students' Federation was formed in 1972. This was an attempt to separate from the rest of Nagaland. The student bodies of Tuensang tribes withdrew their membership from the Naga Students' Federation. Later, the Yimchunger tribe left the TDSF and rejoined the NSF. But the TDSF continued to exist. And in fact the demand for separation from Nagaland by the tribes of Tuensang is closely related to this student movement.

APPENDIX - C

THE CONSTITUTION

OF THE

NAGA STUDENTS' FEDERATION

PUBLISHED BY :-

NAGA STUDENTS' FEDERATION

WORKING : NAGA CLUB BUILDING

KOHIMA, NAGALAND.

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THE CONSTITUTION
OF
NAGA STUDENTS' FEDERATION

PREAMBLE

WE, THE NAGA STUDENTS, HAVING SOLEMNLY RESOLVED TO CONSTITUTE OURSELVES INTO A FEDERATION TO :

CULTIVATE AND PRESERVE OUR CULTURES, CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONAL HERITAGES; AMELIORATE SOCIAL AND MORAL ACTIVITIES; SAFEGUARD COMMON INTEREST, INTEGRITY, FRATERNITY AND CO-OPERATION AMONGST OURSELVES ALL OVER THE NAGA INHABITED AREAS;

IN OUR FEDERAL ASSEMBLY, WE DO HEREBY ORDAIN, ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS (AMENDED) CONSTITUTION, ON THIS DAY, THE TWENTIETH OF OCTOBER, NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY FOUR, ANNO DOMINI.

ARTICLE ONE

Name

The Name of the Federation shall be called the "NAGA STUDENTS' FEDERATION".

ARTICLE TWO

Motto

The Motto of the Federation shall be "FOR A GREATER LIM AND GLORY OF THE NAGAS".

ARTICLE THREE

Flag

The Flag of the Federation shall comprise of three colours: BLACK, WHITE AND GREEN.

1. The BLACK signifies, the past dark days of the Naga Students in particular and the Nagas in general.
2. The WHITE signifies, Unity, Understanding and CO-operation amongst all the Naga Students towards fulfillment of the ideals of the Federation.

3. The GREEN signifies, generation to the Naga Students in the strive for unification of all Naga inhabited areas, progress and prosperity.

ARTICLE FOUR

Emblem

The Emblem, a man holding a flaming torch in one hand and a Naga spear in the other representing the Naga Students, is imprinted in the middle of the Flag.

1. The flaming torch signifies, Power of Knowledge.
2. The Naga Spear signifies, the cultural traditions and symbolises courage and strength.

ARTICLE FIVE

Membership

1. Primary Membership:

Every bonafide Naga Student shall be a Primary member of the Federation.

2. Federal Membership:

All bonafide Naga Tribes Students' Organisation shall be a member of the Federation and of the Federal Assembly and shall be called the "FEDERAL UNIT" of the Naga Students' Federation.

3. Sub-ordinate Membership:

All other Naga Students' Organisation and other Organisation(s) formed by members of various Naga tribes collectively or otherwise not affiliated to the Federation shall remain as Sub-ordinate body(ies) to the Naga Students' Federation.

4. Affiliation:

- a) Only one membership shall be given to one bonafide Naga tribe.
- b) Affiliation for membership shall be granted to only Naga Tribal Students' Organisations as and when the Federal Assembly is satisfied with the reason of seeking affiliation and agreed to by at least 3/4th majority of the members present and voting.
- c) The affiliation fee shall be Rs. 100/ (Rupees one hundred) only.

5. Loss of Membership:

Any member of the Federation, collectively or individually can lose its membership on :

- i) Violation of the Constitution; in words, in action or otherwise.
- ii) Decision of the Federal Assembly:

When at least 3/4th majority of the members present and voting is satisfied with the charges laid against the member(s) Unit(s), for a given period of time.

ARTICLE SIX

Jurisdiction

1. The Territorial Jurisdiction of the Federation shall extend to all Naga territory and to wheresoever any Naga student(s) inhabits/resides.
2. The Executive Jurisdiction of the Federation shall extend over all the Federal Units and Sub-ordinate bodies.
3. There shall be no Co-ordinating Naga Students' Organisation other than the Sub-ordinate Bodies.

ARTICLE SEVEN

Official Language

The Official Language of the Federation shall be English.

ARTICLE EIGHT

Legislature

1. The Legislative body of the Federation shall be called the "FEDERAL ASSEMBLY" which shall consist of the representatives of the Federal Units.
2. The Federal Units shall delegate 2 (two) representatives; they shall be called "MEMBERS" of the Federal Assembly; they shall represent their respective Unit for any period of time according to their own Constitutional provisions and procedures.
3. There shall be an Executive Organ of the Federal Assembly consisting of the following:
 - a) The Speaker
 - b) The Deputy Speaker
 - c) The Assembly Secretary

ARTICLE NINE

Quorum

1. The quorum of the Federal Assembly shall be formed by 2/3rd members of the Federal Units of the Federation.
2. The quorum for the Executive Council Meeting/Emergency Meeting/Committee Meeting shall be formed by a simple majority of the members.

ARTICLE TEN

Assembly, Conference and Meeting

1. The Federal Assembly shall have its sitting at least thrice in a calender year.
2. There shall be a General Conference / Session of the Federation once in a Tenure.
3. The Executive Council Meeting shall be held at any time of the year as and when situation demands.

ARTICLE ELEVEN

Executive Council

1. There shall be an Executive Organ of the Federation and shall be called the EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.
2. The Executive Council shall consist of the following Officers:
 - a) President : 1
 - b) Vice President : 1
 - c) General Secretary : 1
 - d) Assistant General Secretary... .. : 1
 - e) Secretary-Finance : 1
 - f) Secretary-Education and Statistics : 1
 - g) Secretary-Social and Cultural. : 1
 - h) Secretary-Debate, Symposium and Seminar... .. : 1
 - i) Secretary-Publicity and Information.. : 1
 - j) Secretary-Games and Sports... .. : 1
 - k) Editor : 1
 - l) Auditor General.. : 1
 - m) Women Co-ordinators. : 2 (two)

ARTICLE TWELVE

Tribunals

1. There shall be Tribunals of the Federation consisting of three members.
2. The Tribunals shall be elected/nominated by the Federal Assembly.
3. It shall be headed by a Tribunal General elected/nominated by the Federal Assembly, from amongst the Tribunals.

ARTICLE THIRTEEN

Tenure

1. The Tenure of the Executive Council shall be 2 (two) calendar years.
2. In the event of circumstantial compulsion, the Federal Assembly shall extend the Tenure of the Executive Council for a period of 3 (three) months.

ARTICLE FOURTEEN

Finance

1. The Federation shall seek and receive contributions from its members, well wishers, Institutions and Organisations for its functioning.

2. There shall be a Finance Committee of the Federation, comprising of the Finance Secretary as its Chairman,
President, Member
General Secretary, Member and
two others, appointed by the Executive Council.

ARTICLE FIFTEEN

Oking

1. The permanent Oking of the Federation shall be Kohima.

2. In the event of circumstantial requirement, Camp Oking may be set up at any suitable place.

ARTICLE SIXTEEN

Committee

The Federal Assembly shall set up Committee(s) and shall function as per the terms of reference prescribed by the Federal Assembly.

ARTICLE SEVENTEEN

Powers and Function of the Federal assembly

1. The Federal Assembly is the highest authority of the Federation.

2. The Federal Assembly shall legislate any matters concerning the common interest of the Nagas and shall:-
 - a) Discuss and resolve any such matter;
 - b) Formulate policies;
 - c) Affiliate Units;
 - d) Take disciplinary action/impeachment;
 - e) Decide financial matters; and
 - f) Elect/nominate/institute the various Executive(s), committee(s) and commission(s) of the Federation.

3. The Federal Assembly shall elect its own Executives.
4. In the event of any constitutional inconsistency between the Federation and any of its Federal Unit(s) and Sub-ordinate body(ies), the Federation shall prevail.
5. In the event of a Constitutional breakdown of a Federal Unit or Sub-ordinate body and once it is brought to the notice of the Federation, the Federation shall assume immediate charge of the functioning of the body till Constitutional process and normalcy is restored.
6. All Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Federal Assembly shall be final and binding on all the Federal Units and Subordinate bodies.

ARTICLE EIGHTEEN

Powers and Functions of the Tribunals

1. The Tribunals shall function as the Legal Advisor to the Federation.
2. In the event of any crisis pertaining to the Constitution of the Federation, the matter shall be resolved by the Tribunals, whose decision(s) shall be final and binding.
3. In the event of a motion for the amendment of the Constitution, the matter shall first be referred to the Tribunals for examination and shall refer to the Federal

Assembly for necessary amendment(s).

ARTICLE NINETEEN

Powers and Functions of the Finance Committee

1. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for all the Financial transactions of the Federation and shall maintain strict accounts.
2. The Committee shall prepare and present the yearly budget of the Federation to the Federal Assembly.
3. The Committee shall delegate Financial powers to the respective Executive members and other Committee(s) from time to time in accordance to the Budget provision of the Federation.
4. The Committee shall be responsible for all the properties of the Federation.
5. No contribution shall be received or dispersed without the unanimous decision of the Finance Committee.

ARTICLE TWENTY

Powers and Function of the Assembly Executives

1. Speaker :

- a) The Speaker shall summon, preside and prorogue the Federal Assembly.
- b) The Speaker shall receive, reject, propose agenda and place them to the Federal Assembly.
- c) The Speaker shall assume the powers of the Executive Council in the event under which the Executive Council is:
 - i) dissolved;
 - ii) defunct;
 - iii) suspended. The Speaker shall formulate programme and policies in consultation with the Federal Assembly for the restoration of the Executive Council within a period of two months.
- d) The Speaker may suspend or take disciplinary action on member(s) of the Executive Council, Committee members and other organs of the Federation in the event when the

Speaker is satisfied that :

- i) the concerned member(s) has failed to uphold the Constitution of the Federation ; or
- ii) the concerned member(s) has misused the good office of the Federation ; or
- iii) the concerned member(s) has failed to discharge his/her responsibilities.

The Speaker shall table the matter to the Federal Assembly within a period of 30 (thirty) days.

2. The Deputy Speaker

- a) The Deputy Speaker shall assume all functions and powers of the Speaker in the event of the latter's absence or through authorisation by the Speaker.
- b) The Deputy Speaker shall assist the Speaker in the smooth functioning of the Office in all normal circumstances.

3. Assembly Secretary

The Assembly Secretary shall record and maintain all the proceedings, minutes of the Federal Assembly.

ARTICLE TWENTY ONE**Powers and Functions of the Executive Council****1. The Executive Council**

- a) The Executive Council shall execute the decision(s) of the Federal Assembly.
- b) The Executive Council shall conduct its meeting at least once in a month.
- c) In the event of any member(s) of the Council failing to attend the Council meetings three times consecutively, disciplinary action(s) shall be taken against the concerned member(s).
- d) The Executive Council members shall have no voting rights in the Federal Assembly.

2. President

- a) The President shall be the head of the Executive Council.
- b) All the Executive Powers and Functions of the Federation rests on the President. The President shall execute them directly or in consultation with the General Secretary and the members of the Executive Council.
- c) The President shall either accept or reject the resignation tendered by any member(s) of the Executive Council or Committees and shall forward the matter to the

Speaker.

- d) The President may appoint any member of the Federation as his/her Special Secretary.
- e) The President shall exercise his/her vote in the event of a tie in the election of the Federation.

3. Vice President

- a) The Vice-President shall assume all the powers and functions of the President, in the event of the latter's absence or impeachment from the office.
- b) The Vice-President shall discharge the responsibilities of the Federation as may be assigned by the President from time to time.

4. General Secretary

- a) The General Secretary shall record and maintain all the minutes and proceedings of the Executive Council meetings.
- b) The General Secretary shall co-ordinate and supervise the functioning of the respective Secretaries.
- c) In the absence of the President and the Vice-President, the General Secretary shall assume their responsibilities and function as the head of the Federation.
- d) The General Secretary shall be responsible for the official correspondence of the Federation in consultation

with the President.

5. Assistant General Secretary

- a) The Assistant General secretary shall assume the powers and function of the General Secretary in the event of latter's absence or impeachment from the office.
- b) The Assistant General secretary shall discharge the responsibilities of the Federation as and when assigned by the President or the General Secretary from time to time.

6. Secretary Finance

- a) The Secretary-Finance shall record and maintain all the financial transaction of the Federation.
- b) The Secretary-Finance shall be the sole trustee of the treasury of the Federation.
- c) The Secretary-Finance shall be the ex-official Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Federation.
- d) The Secretary-Finance, the President and the General secretary shall be equally responsible for the financial management of Federation.
- e) The Secretary-Finance shall receive or advance payments as and when decided by the Finance Committee or in the event of emergency requirement.

7. Secretary-Education and Statistics

- a) The Secretary-Education and Statistics shall be responsible for organising tours, visits to different educational institutions, and shall submit reports and may recommend for the improvement of education to the Executive Council.
- b) The Secretary-Education and Statistics shall collect the statistical reports of students, teachers, educational institutions, etc. once in every calender year.

8. Secretary-Social and Cultural

- a) The Secretary-Social and Cultural shall be responsible for organising and promoting cultural and co-curricular activities.
- b) The Secretary-Social and Cultural shall be responsible for revival and promotion of the cultural and traditional practices. Cultural meets shall be organised at least once in Tenure.

9. Secretary-Debate, Symposium and seminar

- a) The Secretary shall be responsible for organising and promoting symposium and Seminar at least once in a Tenure.
- b) The Secretary shall organise Debating Competitions during every General Conference of the Federation and

as and when necessary.

10. Secretary-Publicity and Information

- a) The Secretary-Publicity and Information shall be responsible for the wide publicity of the programmes and policies of the Federation.
- b) The Secretary shall look after the affairs for promotion of good relationship with the Public, amongst the Nagas, other communities and Nationalities and Organisations by formulating policies and programmes in accordance with the Constitution of the federation.

11. Secretary-Games and Sports

- a) The Secretary-Games and Sports shall be responsible for organising, promoting games and sports activities.
- b) The Secretary-Games and Sports shall, in consultation with the executive Council organise Games and Sports tournaments at least once during the tenure.

12. Editor

- a) The Editor shall be responsible for the publication of magazine(s); periodical(s); journals, etc. of the Federation from time to time.
- b) The Editor may set up Editorial Board to assist the functioning of the office.

13. Auditor General

- a) The Auditor General shall audit all accounts and financial transaction of the Federation and shall submit the report to the Speaker for necessary approval of the Federal Assembly.
- b) The Auditor General shall nominate two members as Auditors to assist him/her in the discharge of the responsibilities with the due consent of the Federal Assembly.
- c) The Auditors shall conduct and submit yearly audit report to the Federal Assembly.

14. Women Co-ordinators

- a) The Co-ordinators shall be responsible for co-ordinating the activities of the Federation with other Women Organisations.
- b) The Co-ordinators shall be responsible for organising programmes and policies for promotion of the welfare of women in addition to the programmes and policies of the Federation.

ARTICLE TWENTY TWO

No Confidence Motion and Disciplinary Action

1. One or more member(s) of the Federal Assembly may move a No Confidence Motion against one or more member(s) of the Executive Council; Committee(s) and the Executive Organ of the Federal Assembly by submitting a written petition to the Speaker, Federal Assembly stating why the concerned member(s) should not vacate the chair by stating the reason duly supported by substantial evidence(s).
2. The member(s) of the Executive organs of the Federation shall hold office as long as he/she enjoys the confidence and faith of the Federal Assembly.
3. The Federal Assembly shall take disciplinary action against any member(s) of the Executive organs of the federation in the event when :
 - a) His / her continuance in office of the Federation is considered as a threat and a disgrace to the Federation ;
and
 - b) the Constitution of the federation is violated in any manner.
4. The Executive member(s) against whom a No Confidence Motion is moved shall be called for explanation, and the concerned

- member may submit his/her explanation to the Assembly. The decision by 3/4th majority of the members present and voting during the Federal Assembly shall be final and binding.
5. The Motion shall be tabled to the Federal assembly within one month (thirty days) from the date of the receipt of the petition.
 6. In the event of a No Confidence Motion tabled against the Speaker, the Speaker shall relinquish his/her Chair to enable the Deputy Speaker to assume the powers and functions of the Speaker.
 7. In the event of a No Confidence Motion tabled against the Speaker and the deputy Speaker, the Tribunals shall convene a meeting to discuss and examine the matter. The recommendations and observations of the Tribunals shall be presented to the Federal Assembly for immediate resolution.

ARTICLE TWENTY THREE

Amendment of the Constitution

1. One or more member(s) of the Federal Assembly may move for amending any part(s) of the Articles of the Constitution by submitting a petition to the Speaker.
2. Any petition for amendment shall be referred to the Tribunals

for examination, thence table in the Federal Assembly for necessary resolution.

3. The approval of 3/4 majority of the members of the Federal Assembly present and voting shall be final and binding.

ARTICLE TWENTY FOUR

ELECTION

1. Election Rules and Procedures

- a) Election of the Office Bearers shall be conducted after every two calender years. It shall be conducted during the General Conference/Session of the Federation.
- b) Executive officials are eligible for re-election.
- c) An Election Commission shall be appointed by the Executive Council. The Commission shall consist of three members, with a Chairman appointed from amongst them.
- d) The Electoral College of the Federation shall be formed by the members of the Federal Assembly.
- e) The mode of voting during election shall be by secret ballot system.
- f) A candidate seeking election to any post of the Executive official shall be a member of the Federal Assembly.

- g) In the event of a candidate duly elected to any post of the Executive official, the candidate shall immediately ceased to be a member of the Federal Assembly.
- h) In the event of post(s) declared vacant, by-election shall be conducted within a period of 3 (three) months.

2. Qualifications for Candidates

A candidate seeking for election to any post to the Executive Official of the Federation shall possess the following qualifications :

- a) The candidate must be a bonafide Naga citizen;
- b) The Candidate must be a person of high moral integrity, having a wide range working experience in social organisation(s);
- c) The candidate must obtain an authorisation from his/her concerned respective Federal Unit;
- d) The candidate must not be affiliated to any political party(ies);
- e) The candidate must not be a Government employee;
- f) The candidate must not be married person;
- g) The candidate must be a person capable of rendering full time service during the Tenure; and
- h) The candidate must not be a person with any criminal conviction or case pending against him/her.

3. Powers and Functions of the Election Commission

- a) The Chairman of the Election Commission shall in consultation with the members appoint the following officers for the conduct of Elections :
 - i) Returning Officer - 1
 - ii) Presiding Officer - 1
 - iii) Polling Officers - 2
- b) The Election Commission shall be responsible for the conduct of election(s) by;
 - i) announcement of date, time and place of election schedule;
 - ii) preparation of ballot paper(s) nomination papers and issuing of the same;
 - iii) preparation of electoral rolls;
 - iv) scrutiny of nomination of candidates;
 - v) polling, counting and declaration of results, and
 - vi) issue of Election Certificates.
- c) The Election Commission shall accept on the appointed date and time the nomination paper(s) from the candidate duly proposed and seconded for candidature in not more than three nomination paper(s).
- d) The Election Commission shall accept the appointment of one person to be present as polling agent and one person as counting agent by the validity nominated candidate in

- the prescribed form.
- e) In the event of a tie in the election, the Election Commission shall invite the President of the Federation to cast his/her vote.
 - f) The decision of the Election Commission shall be final and binding.

ARTICLE TWENTY FIVE

Fundamental Duties

In accordance to Article 5 (A and B) and Article 4 (1, 2, 3, 5) where by every Federal and Sub-ordinate members and individual members of the Federal and Sub-ordinate bodies are bound as the sanctified duty:

1. To uphold, defend and cohesively work for the Naga Unity and integrity irrespective of territorial divisions;
2. To render service and defend the Nation and the Federation when summoned by need to do so;
3. To individually and collectively strive towards excellence in all spheres of mental and physical activities to do honour and proud to the Nation;
4. To promote the basic Human principles of peaceful co-existence;

5. To protect human lives and rights and properties and to support all movements safeguarding them;
6. To adhere to morally and socially acceptable norms that shall project the good image of the society and the Federation ;
and
7. To abide by the codes as notified by Federal Unit(s) and Sub-ordinate from time to time.

ARTICLE TWENTY SIX

Directive Principles

1. To promote cultural, educational and economic interest and programmes of the Nagas.
 2. To preserve our cultures, customs and traditions.
 3. To champion the cause and interest of the students.
 4. To fight social, economic, educational and regional injustice.
 5. To formulate and promote inclusion in the school curriculum a study of Naga history and literature, art and culture.
 6. To safeguard wildlife and natural resources in all the Naga inhabited areas.
 7. To strive for ensuring all educational facilities in educational institutions.
 8. To evolve methods and implement them for bringing about an
-

egalitarian Naga Society, and

9. To cherish uphold and further promote the fraternal feeling among all the Naga Tribes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Naga Students' Federation acknowledge the Pioneers of the Federation since its inception in 1947 under the Presidentship of Late Mr. Z. Ahu and the respective Office bearers and activists in bringing up to the present status of functioning of the Federation. The Federation has gone through its ups and downs in the course of its history and only after its Ist General Conference held at Kohima in October 1972, the Constitution was adopted in its Special Session at Dimapur in April 1973.

In pursuance to the ideals of the Federation, the scope for its effective functioning demanded the frequent review and amendments of the Constitution. Of late, the Federal Assembly in its Session at Oking on May 16, 1991, a three member Drafting Committee consisting of 1) Mr. Neiwete Chirhah, 2) Mr. Artex A. Shimray and 3) Mr. Elias T. Lotha was ordained to review and amend the Constitution. The reviewed and amended Constitution was presented to the Federal Assembly and was unanimously ordained, adopted and enacted on September 26, 1991. Further, the Federal Assembly endorsed the Tribunals, namely: 1) Mr. Ruguozelhou Paphino 2) Mr. Artex A. Shimray and Mr. Elias T. Lotha to bring out the Constitution in a printed form.

The Naga Students' Federation acknowledge the meticulous work of the Drafting Committee and the Tribunals and the members of the Federal Assembly in bringing out the Constitution in the present form. The Federation further acknowledge the help and support given by the members and well wishers towards the venture for the Greater Lim and Glory of the Nagas.

K U K N A L I M

Dated Oking, April 24, 1992.

Sd/-

(K. TEMJEN JAMIR)

President, N.S.F.

Sd/-

(THEJA THERIEH)

Speaker, N.S.F.

APPENDIX - D

OFFICE OF THE
ANGAMI STUDENTS' UNION
HEADQUARTERS, KOHIMA - 797001, NAGALAND

CONSTITUTION OF ANGAMI STUDENTS' UNION

ANGAMI STUDENTS' UNION CONSTITUTION
RE-DRAFTING COMMITTEE

1. RUGUOZELHOU PAPHINO (CONVENOR)
2. THEYIEVILIE ANGAMI (MEMBER)
3. PRASIELIE PIENYU (MEMBER)

Dated Kohima
the 23rd January, 1991.

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CONSTITUTION OF ANGAMI STUDENTS' UNION**PREAMBLE**

We, the Angami Students'; having solemnly resolved to constitute ourselves into a Union, for the upliftment of Educational values; to preserve the sanctity of our rich Cultural heritages; to promote and uplift the welfare of the Community through mutual understanding and co-operation.

We do hereby adopt this constitution on this day, the thirty first of January, nineteen hundred and ninety one, Anno Domini.

ARTICLE ONE :- NAME:

The Name of the Union shall be called "Angami Students' Union".

ARTICLE TWO :- MOTTO AND EMBLEM: (DESCRIPTION AND DEFINITION)**ARTICLE THREE :- MEMBERSHIP:**

- I. Every bonafide Angami Student shall be considered as a member of the Angami Students' Union.
- II. All the Angami Villages Students' Organisations shall be considered as a Constituent Units of the Angami Students' Union.

- III. Membership fee of Re. 1 (One) shall be realised from each member which shall be submitted to the Treasurer of the Angami Students' Union during each Annual Conference.
- IV. Member(s) shall cease to continue as an Angami Student's Union member, if :-
- a) He/She violates the constitutional norms.
 - b) Ceased to be a member of his/her Unit.
- V. Without assigning any reason if any Unit fails to attend the A. S. U. Union Assembly two times consecutively, the membership of such Unit will be suspended from A. S. U. for 6 (six) months after referring the matter to the Union Assembly.
- VI. Any Angami Student having no membership in the A.S.U. shall not be allowed to have membership in the Naga Students' Federation.

ARTICLE FOUR :- JURISDICTION :

- I. The jurisdiction of the Angami Students' Union shall extend to all the Angami inhabited areas.
- II. The jurisdiction of the Angami Students' over all other Student Organisations shall prevail and all shall remain subordinate Organisations to the Angami Students' Union.

ARTICLE FIVE :- TENURE:

- I. The tenure of the Executive Council shall be 2 (two) Calender years.
- II. The term of the Office bearers may however, be extended for a period of three months under circumstantial compulsion, if the Union Assembly finds necessary.
- III. By virtue of being elected as the President of the Range the same shall be automatically considered as a member of the Executive Council. The tenure of the Executive Council consisting of the four Ranges Presidents shall be determined on the basis of their tenure in their Range Union.

ARTICLE SIX :- ELECTION:

- I. Election of the Office bearers shall be conducted after every 2 (two) Calender years, during the General Conference of the Union.
- II. All the Executive Officials are eligible for re-election.
- III. Every Constituent Unit member of A. S. U. is eligible for election in any post.
- IV. Only the President of the constituent Units or one person authorised by him containing his

signature and seal shall have the right to vote in the election of New - Office bearers.

V. Voting can be exercised by the Constituent Units on the condition that :-

a) Clearance of Membership fee.

b) Submission of Unit flag prescribed the motto and emblem explicitly.

VI. An election commission, consisting of 3 (three) members, with one member as the Chairman shall be nominated by the Executive Council to conduct election of Executive Officials by means of secret ballot.

ARTICLE SEVEN :- CONFERENCE, ASSEMBLY, MEETING:

I. There shall be at least a General Conference after every 2 (two) Calender years.

II. The Union Assembly shall meet once in every three month, at least 10 (ten) days notice should be given prior to the Assembly Session.

III. The Executive Council meetings can be held at any time of the years as and whenever situation demands, within 5 (five) days notice prior to the meeting.

IV. The President can at anytime summon emergency meeting of the Executive Council.

ARTICLE EIGHT :- LEGISLATION:

- I. The Legislative organ shall be called the "Union Assembly", which shall be constituted by the Presidents' of every Unit or of one person authorised and deputed to the Union Assembly by the Unit President with signature and seal of the same.

ARTICLE NINE :- POWER AND FUNCTIONS:

- I. The Union Assembly shall have the power to legislate on any matter concerning the common interest of the Angami and (A) Formulate policies (B) Affiliate new Units and also take disciplinary actions (C) decide on impeachment of or removal of Executive Officials and other matter having common concerned.
- II. In case of any constitutional inconsistency between the Union and any of the Constituent Units, the Union shall prevail.
- III. All resolutions and decisions passed by the Union Assembly shall be final and binding on all the Constituent Units.

ARTICLE TEN :- EXECUTIVES:

The Executive Council of the Angami Students' Union shall consist of the following Office bearers:

1. President
2. Vice-President
3. General Secretary
4. Joint Secretary
5. Secretary Finance
6. Secretary Games and Sports
7. Secretary Social and Culture
8. Secretary Educations and Statistic
9. Editor
10. Representative to N.S.F. 2 (Two) Members
11. Presidents of the Four Ranges, that is,
 - (i) SASU, (ii) NASU, (iii) WASU, (iv) CASU

1. PRESIDENT :

1. The President shall be the head of the Union
2. The President can summon, preside over the Executive Council Union Assembly and Voluntary Organisation unless declared otherwise by the Constitution.
3. The President can incur an expenditure of Rs. 1,000 (One thousand) only at a time his discretion and submit the account in the first sitting of the Executive Council Meeting.

4. The President is empowered to :-
 - I. Accept / Reject the resignation of any office bearers after referring the matter to the Union Assembly.
 - II. Decide by exercising his/her vote, in case of a tie in election.
- V. The President will co-ordinate with his/her Executives to safeguard all the articles and also to implement the functions and programmes prescribed in the Constitution.

2. VICE-PRESIDENT :

1. The Vice-President shall help and assist the President in any work entrusted to him by the President.
2. In the event of Resignation, death of the President, the Vice-President shall assumed the office of the President.
3. In temporary absence of the President he/she will be in charge of all powers and functions of the President on receiving a formal intimation from the President himself.

3. GENERAL SECRETARY:

1. The General Secretary shall execute every official correspondence for proper information and notices.

2. He/She shall issue notices of all meetings with the consent of the President.
3. She/He shall act as secretary in every meetings and keep proper records of all meetings and proceedings of the Union.
4. In the event of resignation by both the President and Vice-President, He/She shall act as the head of the Union and He/She shall summon the Union Assembly for the election of a President and Vice-President within 30 (thirty) days.

4. JOINT SECRETARY :

1. The Joint Secretary will have the same functions and powers of the Vice-President in relation to the General Secretary.

5. SECRETARY FINANCE :

1. The Finance Secy. shall be responsible to look after the Financial matters, relating to all incomes and expenditures of the Union.
2. He/She shall keep and maintain all the records/documents relating to the Fiance.
3. He/She shall deposit the money in Banks in a joint account with the President and General Secretary.

4. He/She shall from time to time inform the President of the latest position of the Union Funds.
5. He/She shall withdraw money from Banks only on obtaining prior approval of the President.
6. He/She shall not disburse finances without the written sanction/order of either the President or the General Secretary.

6. SECRETARY GAMES & SPORTS :

1. The Secretary Games & Sports shall organise games & sports for competition and maintain proper records of the same and shall be responsible in selecting players to other sports tournament and meets.
2. He/She shall be in charge to keep and maintain all sports and games goods.

7. SECRETARY SOCIAL & CULTURAL :

1. The Secy. Social & Cultural shall be responsible for formulating all Socio-Cultural activities of the Union.
2. He/She shall be responsible in Organising Meetings, exhibitions competitions for Socio-Cultural activities etc. to preserve and uplift the rich cultural heritage and also to create consciousness amongst the young generations for the same.

8. SECRETARY EDUCATION & STATISTIC :

1. The Secretary Education and Statistics shall be responsible for collecting statistical data of Students/Educational institutions in Angami areas in every 1 (one) Calender year and maintain the records.
2. He/She in addition to His/Her normal duties shall assist and held the General secretary in any works entrusted to him/her by the General Secretary.

9. EDITOR :

1. The Editor shall be responsible for the publications of records and Magazines once in every 2 (two) Calender years and also responsible for organising programmes for any literary values
2. He/She shall work for the improvement and upliftment of Tenyidie vernacular.

10. REPRESENTATION TO N. S. F. :

1. The Union shall be represented by two members to the N. S. F..
2. The two Representatives shall represent the Union in all the Federal Assembly/Meetings of N. S. F. and co-ordinate the outcome of the meeting to the Union.

3. They shall also raise and answer questions in the Federal Assembly if and when situation demands to defend the interest of the Union.
4. They are responsible to the Federal Assembly and not to the Union Assembly. However, they shall remain as Executive member in the Union.

11. PRESIDENTS OF THE FOUR RANGES : SASU, NASU, WASU, CASU:

1. The four Ranges Presidents, on assuming office of their respective ranges shall automatically become members in the Executive Council.
2. They are members of Executive Council and not members in the Union Assembly, as such, they shall co-ordinate and refer the programmes and resolutions of the Executive to their respective Units for speedy implementation.

ARTICLE ELEVEN :- COMMITTEE:

1. The Executive Council shall set-up a 4 (four) members Audit committee comprising one each from the four Ranges to audit the accounts of the Union and present their reports during General Conference which holds once in every 2 (two) years.
2. The Executive Council shall set-up/form Action Committee at any time headed by a Chairman for any purposed/issues to tackle/negotiate for that specific

matters in questions, whenever, necessary arises and situation demands.

ARTICLE TWELVE :- QUORUM:

1. The quorum of the Union Assembly shall be formed by 2/3rd members of the constituent Units of the Union.
2. A 2/3rd majority of vote shall prevail in any matter in the Union Assembly meetings/Executive meetings.
3. The quorum for Executive and emergency meetings shall be formed by a single majority of the Executive members/Union Assembly members.

ARTICLE THIRTEEN : REMOVAL/IMPEACHMENT OF OFFICIALS :

1. An executive members shall hold office as long as he/she enjoy the confidence and faith of the Union Assembly (a) However, the Union Assembly may remove/impeach any of the Union's official if his/her continuance in office becomes a threat/disgrace to the office of the Union, by 3/4th majority of the members present and voting.
2. The Union Assembly may remove/impeach any of its officials, if he/she violates the Constitution of the Angami Students' Union by 3/4th majority of members present & voting.

ARTICLE FOURTEEN : AMENDMENT :

1. Any provision or Article laid down in the Constitution can be re-pealed or amended if the Union Assembly approve it with at least 3/4th majority of the members can move the Union assembly for inclusions of new articles, which shall be decided by 3/4th majority of the Union Assembly members present and voting.

"KEVI-U UYA"

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