CHAPTER-5

Theoretical Inferences- Part- A

A close analysis of various dimensions of the Naga movement reveals some of the distinct features that give it a unique place among movements of national self-determination. The formidable uprising by apparently small group of diverse tribes in different stages of socio-economic development for the preservation of their identity, culture way of life against an apparent threat of being absorbed by a newly emerging Indian nation from the ashes of British colonialism has also been one of the most protracted movements for self-determination. A set of historical, cultural and religious factors formed a catalyst to bring together a group of similar at the same time diverse tribes to launch one of the most bold and innovative movement for national self-determination against a common adversary. With an initial peak in the first two decades of its existence, the movement started to flounder towards the end of 1970s particularly due to politics of tribalism and since then the Naga self-determination movement and desire for a unified and autonomous Naga homeland continues to exist despite being plagued by centrifugal forces from within and pressures from without. The influential role played by the tribal councils with a small incipient middle class at the helm in the articulation of nationalist sentiments gave force to the NNC- the sole organization resisting the Indian government through an armed rebellion. The monopoly of armed insurgent factions with totalitarian ideologies in the subsequent phases has prompted many scholars to consider these insurgencies as sole representative of Naga nationalist sentiments. Thus, the role of elites or the leadership in Naga self-determination movement has mostly dominated by the armed nationalists of the NNC and later the insurgency under NSCN and its factions. The gradual splintering of the armed
nationalists and considerable loss of public support as we discussed earlier has thrown up serious challenges to Naga nationalism as the leadership is steadily losing its strength to counter the might of the Indian state. In our subsequent discussion we shall see that the insurgent groups in spite of the fact that they are the central players in Naga self-determination movement, they are not the sole actors in this regard. This perspective would help in getting a broader understanding of the current fissures in Naga movement and conflict between the insurgent factions.

It is a sort of riddle to ascertain as to how the determined resolve by a united Naga house during the inception of the movement has given away to inter-tribal mistrust and clannish divisions further worsened by factional rivalry and killings among the underground groups or nationalist factions. In a recent article in the Hindu, Namrata Goswami has asserted that despite the best efforts of pan-Naga bodies like the Naga Hoho to create a unified Naga identity, still there is wide prevalence of fragmented identities that finds reflection in Naga militias being divided along tribal lines or factional loyalties. It therefore becomes imperative to decipher those forces that lend strength to these fragmented identities in conflict to a larger unified ‘Naga’ identity. In this chapter we attempt to analyse certain fundamental socio-cultural attributes of the Naga society that have affected the nature and content of the Naga self-determination movement from within by drawing suitable inferences from the major theories of nations and nationalism like modernism-instrumentalism, primordialist-perennialist argument and ethno-symbolism. In our following discussion we analyse some of the reasons for the upsurge of centrifugal forces in the Naga movement.
5.1 Primordialist-Perennialist and Modernist-Instrumentalist Debate

Primordialist-perennialist and modernist-instrumentalist debate on the origins of nations and nationalism has special significance in the context of our research. In the following discussion we study the evolution of Naga movement from the perspective of modernist-instrumentalist argument versus some of the basic premises of primordialist-perennialist argument that would yield interesting answers to the surge in centrifugal tendencies affecting the movement. According to the modernist-instrumentalist argument nations can only emerge in situations where there is wide prevalence of factors like social mobilization and social communication, proper interest aggregation, political communication, mass mobilization and civic participation that is only possible in industrial-bureaucratic era. Thus, modernists invariably rule out the existence of nations and nationalism in pre-modern social settings.

Moreover nations and nationalisms are essentially social constructs and cultural creations of modernity designed for age of revolution and mass mobilization (Smith 1998: 22). In this respect, we also seek to draw suitable inferences from basic tenets of historical materialism as extensively employed by all the prominent scholars of the modernist school to explain the birth of nations and nature of nationalism in the modern period as a result of significant shifts in industrialization, capitalism and bureaucratic authority which invariably leads to the development of conditions necessary for the birth of nations nationalism. If we examine the development of modern nation states, especially those in the first world, it can be discerned that these societies essentially passed through different conditions of societal evolution- tribal, slave, feudal and capitalist societies. The societies in the respective nation states also experienced momentous changes in the basic form of societal structures by the advent of historical forces like capitalism;
industrialization and urbanization which have substantially altered the traditional structures rooted in fragmented identities and loyalties like feudalism. It is a historical reality that modern nation states came into existence in those European countries as a result of complete victory over feudalism, abolished all feudal remnants in the social and economic life of their nations and further, assisted their free and rapid economic and cultural development (Desai 2000: 361). Our case study involves the study of nationalism in a society that essentially reflects the dominance of tribal or pre-modern\(^5\) social and political structures amidst considerable penetration of modernist values and institutions. Thus, the identities of individuals are still largely conditioned by traditional values and institutions like customary laws, traditions and institutions of tribe and clan. Moreover, the limited interference of the British colonial power in altering the traditional laws, values and institutions of various tribes meant that these factors aided the survival and importance of traditional authoritative structures like the institution of village, tribe and clan in defining social and political interaction and exchanges in the society. This survival of these traditional power structures and institutions may also be attributed to the scarcity of powerful forces of social change like industrialization and urbanization that hastens remarkable changes in the structures of the society. Thus, the development of sense of nationhood and peoplehood among the physically, socially, economically, politically and culturally disunited family of tribes was conditioned by peculiar historical and political circumstances that cropped up at the end of British colonial rule in the sub-continent instead of a natural process of evolution as seen in case of nation states built around conditions of modernization. Thus, the development of nationalism in Naga society remained incomplete even distorted as the subsequent events of fragmentation in leadership demonstrated.
On the other hand perennialist argument, the nation is a politicised ethnocultural community and has appeared and declined in different periods of history. Moreover, the nation is persistent and immemorial, with a history stretching back centuries, if not millennia. Modernism-Instrumentalist argument on the other hand argues that nations cannot exist in pre-modern eras as the structural conditions necessary for the birth of nations is absent. These structural conditions essentially refer to the origin of new classes as a result of significant shifts in conditions of modernity like industrialization and capitalism that leads to further developments like increasing trend of urbanization and secularization. The role of print capitalism and the leadership of new educated elite in the articulation of nationalist assertion are given utmost attention. For modernists, the nation is both recent and novel, a product of wholly modern and recent conditions, and therefore unknown in pre-modern eras (Smith 2008: 22). Primordialism that is the radical form of perennialist argument holds nations to be something related to socio-biology, that claims ethnic groups and nations should be seen as extended kin groups, and that both nations and ethnic groups, along with races must be ultimately related to the need to maximise his or her genetic pool and progeny, favour kin groupings that is through nepotism and ‘inclusive fitness’. Van den Berghe further traces these groups to small tribes; linked by ties of kinship (Smith 2008: 147). Thus, ethnic groups are super-families in different periods of human history maintain social and territorial boundaries with other ethnic groups (Smith 2008: 147). Thus, nations have existed from time immemorial and have formed around kinship ties and biological factors.

It is interesting prospect that looking at the various tribes and their relation with the different nationalist factions from the primordialist-perennialist perspective.
Looking at the behaviour of each tribe and their significance and role in Naga political movement, there are many occasions when these tribes demonstrate unmistakable traits that give each tribe demonstrating characteristics of individual entities conforming to tribal nations. The different socio-cultural and separate value systems give each tribe its distinctive character and which in turn influences the traditional bonds of loyalty and nativity did not considerably fade away, with the emergence of ‘Naga nationalism’. On the contrary, it was these primordial features that was a chief inspiration behind the rebellion and collective resistance by the tribes against the Indian state. One of the distinctive characteristics of Naga nationalism is that it happened without any significant qualitative structural changes in the society that radically alters the socio-economic scene. Unlike many national movements for self-determination that resulted from a qualitative structural transformation in the society, Naga nationalism basically conforms to different category where the resistance movement gathered momentum in a society dominated by traditional structures and institutions like tribal identities and clannish loyalties owing to a widespread perception of a common external adversary.

Thus, a closer examination of the nature of Naga national movement reveals the dominance of primordialist elements in the socio-political structures and psychological orientation of the respective tribes. It also reflects their strong roots in ‘Gemeinschaft’ and each tribe is identified with its own culture and value systems as we have already discussed in our preceding chapters. The tribes may be thus, effectively termed as ‘Naga nations’, with strong primordial features shaping the socio-cultural and political history of every tribe. This could be an explanation for the dominance of tribalism and clannish divisions that gave strength to centrifugal forces. Thus, drawing suitable inferences from the major theories of nations and nationalism in studying the Naga case
reveal those quintessential features that gives a unique character to the sentiment of Naga nationalism and the idea of ‘Naga nation’. While studying the dynamics of Naga nationalism, keeping in mind the prominent theories of nationalism, the primordialist argument appeared suitable to explain the fact that each the prevalence of unique traditional practices; customary laws; social and political institutions of various tribes often finds reflection in larger ‘national’ politics. The significant role played by the various village councils, village assemblies and tribal councils in the socio-political affairs of each tribe also adds significantly towards giving voice to the issue of distinct identity and interest articulation.9 From the primordialist-perennialist perspective the Naga tribes rebellion against the Indian nation building project thus show distinct characteristics conforming to a confederacy of individual ‘tribal nations’ coming together to fight a common adversary. Moreover, the limited impact of industrialization, bureaucratization and secularization that essentially requires significant strides towards the qualitative structural transformation of the society10 from clannish loyalties and divisions has given a distinctive character to Naga nationalism in general.

5.2 Tribe and its Significance in the Naga Society

In the Naga society, the aspect of tribe still plays a very crucial role in determining the political behaviour of individuals. Tribal loyalties become important determinants in power struggle between different political factions and often take the form of militias and outbreak of violence between these militias and conflict of interest among the tribal groups. In addition, tribal loyalties are apparent within the fabric of the society and remain an important part of interest articulation and political mobilization. These loyalties derive from familial and kinship ties and is representative
of local and regional interests and directly or indirectly influences politics in the larger context.

Nationalist groups like the NSCN tried to undermine the political salience of the tribe as a parallel structure in the Naga self-determination movement by employing socialist, nationalist and Puritan ideologies. Despite their stated opposition to tribal division, the tribal structures of the society sometimes prevail over the organization in their behaviour and functioning. Naga country is marked by great pluralism and diversity as we have already discussed. Religion and nationalism representing ideals and beliefs that attempt to supersede loyalties created by ethnic, linguistic, cultural and tribal differences are themselves conditioned by the latter factors. This is confirmed by the support that builds around political factions or armed militias on the basis of tribe and tribal loyalties are often used by the leadership to gain support. The formation of NSCN (Unification) in 2007 represents a suitable case as it was formed at the behest of a particular tribe (Lotha 2013: 29). As the subsequent events unfolded it turned out to be essentially a militia of the Sumi tribe. This was not the first instance of formation of political groupings on the basis of tribal loyalty. The formation of the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland (RGN) in 1968 was another instance. Despite, the claims made by the NSCN (IM) in representing all the tribes, experts believe that the Tangkhul tribe has disproportionate advantage over other tribes in the organization. The Konyak tribe had a dominant share in the composition of the NSCN (Khaplang) and its splinter group Khole-Kitovi. The NNC on the other hand still commands loyal following among the Angamis and Chasengs. This in built nature of tribal allegiances and affiliations determines to a great extent the nature and content of politics played around the question on Naga self-determination. The most recent example of militias formed
around tribal loyalties is the Zeliangrong United Front (ZUF) that has emerged as a serious challenge to the NSCN (IM) in implementing its pan-Naga project especially in the areas of Manipur inhabited by the Zeliangrong tribe.

It may be recalled that the ideology of Naga Socialism and Puritan Christianity mooted by the NSCN was intended to overcome the tribal and clannish loyalties. However, these were not able to withstand the onslaught from the pressure from in-built social structures. Finally, the central role played by various tribes in interest articulation in the Naga self-determination movement is also evident by the fact that various commentators and leaders of NPGs have emphasised the need to take the opinion and wishes of various tribes to find a suitable and peaceful settlement to the Naga imbroglio. For instance joint tribal forums like the Naga Hoho and the ENPO are constituted by various tribal councils which give representation to the views and opinions of various tribes on the Naga self-determination movement. Mainstream nationalist groups like the NSF is also organized on the basis of tribe and regional affiliation as it is composed of various student unions giving representation to particular tribes.

Notably, some Naga commentators have started using the term ‘Naga nations’ for the different tribes as evident from the content analysis of various columns and articles of some distinguished commentators in regional newspapers. Thus, the role of ‘tribe’ has been accorded much significance in Naga self-determination movement and incidentally recent scholarly interpretation has delicately identified the similarities between ‘nations’ and ‘tribes’ by the primordial interpretations and even went on to equate the two. The part played by tribe in the rebellion under the NNC and continued resistance under NSCN has been significant in the context of Naga self-determination
movement. It therefore becomes imperative to decipher the factors that led the tribes under varied patterns of socio-economic development and least innovations of conditions of modernization could launch one of the most enterprising rebellions against a common adversary.

The central role of tribe in Naga self-determination movement gives every tribe the characteristics to be classified under the category of nation in its own right. The Naga resistance movement initiated by the NNC and the Naga Club earlier saw a unique case when group of tribes still under agro-literate stage of socio-economic development stood up for protecting their respective social, cultural, traditional and historical rights from being besieged by an external power. Such resistance was akin to the resistance offered by Native American tribes who had resisted European colonial expansion in the continent during the 16th and 17th and the American colonialists in 19th centuries. Interestingly, these tribes were classified as pre-modern old world nations as they formed loose confederations within themselves and often with European colonialists and were mainly in a tribal stage of socio-economic development. Thus, the central role of tribe in the initiation and persistence of the Naga movement still determines the overall shape and nature of the Naga national movement to which we shall return in our subsequent discussion.

5.3 Strong Presence of Tribal or Pre-modern Socio-Political Structures and their influence in shaping the Politics of the Naga Political Groups

As we have discussed earlier, that primordialist-perennialist argument reasonably argues the existence of nations even in pre-modern social-settings and identifies people forming strong bonds of kinship based around cultural, linguistic and religious factors like the ancient Egyptians, Persians, Greeks and the tribes of Israel
Another example that can provide a suitable analogy with our case study is the history of native American Indian tribes or nations who offered strong resistance to European colonial expansion in the new world in the 16th and 17th centuries. In our analysis, we also closely adhere to some aspects of the primordialist-perennialist argument that is applied to understand the structural foundations of the Naga society that aided the above mentioned factors in considerably affecting the nature and content of the Naga national movement and cast a definitive influence in shaping centrifugal tendencies. In our theory section we made a reference to the main theories of nations and nationalism and studied the modernist-instrumentalist argument that nations and nationalism arise as a result of maturing of certain structural conditions in capitalism, secularism and bureaucratic authority. Moreover, modernists like Earnest Gellner have ruled out the existence of nations and nationalism in agrarian or agro-literate and pre-agrarian societies, and requires a transition to modern or industrial society. Moreover, it is difficult to create a single homogenous culture for all the members of a given society as most agro-literate are highly stratified where power and culture are united according to status where the elites are a series of small, but powerful section arranged in a horizontal strata, including the military, bureaucratic, priestly and aristocratic castes, who use their own culture to separate themselves from the rest of the society. The masses of population in such state consist of agricultural producers, and they too are separated with their own folk culture and customs. Modern industrial societies on the other hand are fluid, mobile and constantly changing; and their mode of production depends on the shifts in division of labour, in which individuals must meet and communicate with large numbers of people they never knew before and they must move from one activity to the other. Another notable characteristic of such societies is
the mass education system that shapes the beliefs and attitude of individuals in contrast to agrarian societies where education is relatively restricted to contextual nature provided by the family and village school (Smith 1998: 30, 31).

It would be attractive prospect to examine the beginnings of the Naga movement keeping in view this argument, when most of the Naga tribes especially in Eastern Nagaland were still in the stage of historical development that could be effectively described as agro-literate. The active participation of these tribes in the cause of Naga national movement is a strong indicator that could counter the modernist argument of Earnest Gellner. However, this argument can be applied to understand the cleavages and fissures that arise in national movements in societies that are characterized by the strong presence of pre-modern and tribal socio-political structures based around primordial loyalties. In addition, the significant contribution made by one of the prominent primordialist thinkers, Clifford Geertz can be applied to study our case where he examines the primary bonds that emerge in populations in the new states, often old societies of Asia and Africa less by the civil ties of rational society and more by the primordial ties of language, custom, race, religion and other cultural givens (Smith 1998: 151). This in turn implies that these societies to serious disaffection as people’s sense of self remains bound up in the gross actualities of blood, race, language, locality, religion and tradition. Notably, a close examination of the Naga national movement, reveals the crucial role played by primordial attachments in giving rise to the rebellion led by the NNC and continued by its de-facto successor- the NSCN. However, same primordial attachments have been the main reason for internal cleavages and fissiparous tendencies of tribalism and clannish divisions.
The Naga self-determination movement demonstrates the emergence of a powerful self-determination movement in a society still dominated by tribal social and political structures with some aid from conditions of modernity that was the result of partial British colonization of the Naga territories. What is more striking is the determined resistance to the Indian state from the tribes in Eastern Nagaland, that was virtually untouched by modernization till the withdrawal of British, it was mainly led by the tribal councils- that formed the ENNC (Eastern Naga National Council), whom Phizo had earlier won over for supporting the Naga resistance. In my interaction with the President of Konyak Union, he asserted that it was only in 1956, that the eastern Nagas contend that any outside force invaded their territory. In addition, the term ‘free Nagas’ is used to imply that these areas were even outside the control of the British and was invaded for the first time only when the Indian army moved in 1956. No doubt, the small middle class initiated the uprising under the NNC, but it was the individual tribal councils whose support and aid was crucial for the NNC to continue its resistance. However, pre-modern traits and primordial factors predominated as far as the collective resolve by various ‘tribes,’ under the leadership of the NNC. In fact, primordial factors of identity and history constituted the ‘core values’ of the uprising under the NNC with the crucial supplementary role played by the ENNC or the ‘Free Nagas.’ Notably, the NNC took formal shape from the erstwhile Naga Hills Tribal Council- a conglomeration of tribal councils that was earlier floated to give representation to various tribes. Moreover, the initial nature of revolt under the NNC can also be interpreted as some sort of tribal confederacy as various tribes with little contact and harbouring relations often hostile to one another in the past came together at a moment of urgent necessity which they perceived as a grave threat to their identity from a
common adversary. The setting up of the Federal Government of Nagaland (FGN) by the NNC in 1956 and the decentralized organization of the NNC and FGN on the basis of tribal denominations also points towards the federal character of the Naga uprising (See Appendix II). This lends strength to the argument that instead of monumental changes in the structural foundations of the society caused by significant shifts in socio-economic conditions, the Naga self-determination movement emerged in a society predominated by pre-modern ties of blood, kinship, race, language, ethnicity and the earnest desire by a group of tribes to protect their identities centred around these factors.

In the context of Naga movement, scholars like Udayon Misra have pointed out the spread of education and the emergence of middle class under British rule as a decisive factor in the emergence of Naga nationalism. He has also pointed out the middle class cooperation with the tribal councils was crucial in giving further strength to the Naga movement. At the same time scholars like SK Chaube have commented that overreliance on leadership of the tribal councils rather than a middle class leadership has been responsible for latter fissures in the movement. Keeping in perspective, the modernist argument, it cannot be denied that some of the necessary conditions of modernization in the Naga society as a result of the advent of British like spread of western education and emergence of a small middle class did play a decisive role in the birth of nationalist consciousness. However, one cannot escape notice the strong presence of pre-modern elements and social structures that have been a crucial in shaping the nature and content of Naga nationalism and have been playing an instrumental role in determining the course and direction of the movement. The partial and incomplete process of modernization that has come to characterize the Naga
society gets reflected in the existence of traditional power structures like importance of clan, tribe and village in determining an individual’s place in the society. Urbanization and industrialization exemplified by the growth of trade and commerce has been of critical importance in giving rise to various nationalist movements around the world by weakening feudal conception of state, society and the status and position of the individual has had limited influence in altering these arrangements in the Naga society. Notably these features have not been too prominent in the Naga country and did not hasten significant changes in the socio-economic structure what Marx termed as qualitative structural transformation in the society that in turn has helped in the preservation of traditions, norms and practices still retaining elements of primordial ‘nations’ that have considerably shaped and influenced community solidarities. The internal cleavages, differences and conflicts also shapes the politics and behaviour of nationalist groups that often finds expression in the ‘national’ scene with the development of fissures in a united movement. This also partially explains the cause of existence of clannish loyalties and tribal divisions in the national movement. These assertions shaped by primordial elements like the significance of tribe, clan and village holds good even today as the tribal councils have been playing an important role in the articulation of nationalist consciousness. This can be discerned by the commemoration in memory of ‘martyrs’ killed in the military conflict with the Indian state that is practiced individually by different tribal councils. Curiously, joint commemoration of such ‘martyrs’ gets less emphasis and the ceremonies held by the individual tribes get more attention. Thus, the role of kin and kinship still shapes the public culture of various tribes. As we earlier discussed in our theoretical understanding that a smaller kin unit may under favourable circumstances form the basis of powerful sentiments we
call nationalism, tribalism, racism and ethnocentrism (Smith 1998: 148). The essential attributes or reliable indicators of this kin selection may be language, religion, customs, dress, hairstyles and manners or some other cultural traits. Our research shows that some of these indicators like differences in customs, value systems and linguistic variations play a decisive role in moulding the public perception of each tribe and its relation with the neighbouring tribe at the micro level and having a crucial role at the macro level.

Moreover changes in capitalism, industrialization and secularization also play a dominant role in shaping the social and political relations between individuals and groups in a particular setting leading to the emergence of new classes and socio-political forces. In the Naga case, the non-interference of the British in altering the basic conditions of production and distribution produced limited impact in heralding any significant qualitative structural transformation of the society, constraining the social forces in challenging breaking traditional loyalties shaped by primordial factors like tribe, clan and locality proved instrumental in the subsequent emergence of fissures in the form of tribalism within the Naga movement. In addition, these features also gain strength from the fact, that the Naga society is still predominantly a rural society, with majority of population living in villages where the role of tribe and clan plays an instrumental role in political socialization. This aspect gives a distinct rustic touch to the politics of nationalist factions.

Thus, a critical examination of the Naga political movement reveals the dominance of pre-modern elements that overwhelmingly influenced and to a large extent shaped the politics of nationalist groups like the NNC and later the NSCN. In other words, the Naga society and polity displays signs of what Ferdinand Tonnis
describes as Gemeinschaft especially in case of social-political interactions within tribes are mostly regulated on the basis of traditional social and customary rules that finds expression through various expressions of emotions and sentiment often predisposed towards parochialism. An insight into the nature of all modern nations reflects this fact that greater rationalization, secularization and differentiation exists in a society’s political culture that positively contributes towards nation building. As nationalism is a dynamic process, we need to see Naga national movement from the perspective of nation building. The fundamental principle of nation building exercise requires that people shift their commitment and allegiance from local tribe, villages and petty principalities to a larger political system and a community of people living within a jurisdiction of a political system and provides a sense of identification, a common object of allegiance, and an emotional bond of social solidarity (Gauba 2009:556) . The examination of the Naga case has thrown up certain new aspects of a community of people striving for nationhood without a fixed political entity like an independent state that could enforce uniform rules and regulations. In the absence of such a territorial state, the task of nation building is the responsibility of non-state actors, in our case the nationalists both armed and mainstream groups. Due to prevalence of tribal, clan and narrow loyalties, the main actors in the Naga political movement have not been successful in their effort.

As pointed earlier, the relative absence of the powerful forces of social change like industrialisation and urbanization in the Naga society has enormously contributed in the preservation of several traditional norms and values that have been playing an instrumental role in shaping the political culture of respective tribes. This can be further ascertained by the socio-political organization of the tribes at the village and tribal level
and the institutions that acts as important agents of interest articulation in the society. Most tribes are organized in a village type of democracy. In the village state everyone contributes to the decision making process in meetings convened by the village and tribal councils with the exception of few tribes like the Konyaks where the word of the Chief or Ang is law. Centred on a hierarchical structure of village councils that constitute the tribal councils, their decisions have important significance at the local, regional and ‘national’ levels. In other respects these bodies also deliberate on issues regarding from customary laws to the future of the Nagas and this can be discerned from the fact that issues of vital or ‘national’, importance that cannot be settled at the local levels is forwarded to the tribal councils that in turn refer the issue to pan-Naga bodies like the Naga Hoho (Welman 2011: 52). The Konyak tribe, that is the largest tribe among the Nagas has a form of benevolent despotism where the rule of hereditary chiefs is quite distinctive from some tribes like the Angamis who have perhaps a radical form of direct democracy (all significant decisions are taken by a consensus), while other tribes like the Semas and Tangkhuls have varying forms of monarchy and democracy. These marked differences in political culture often get reflected in the politics of nationalist factions which in turn impacts the character of Naga self-determination movement.

The tradition of village states with varying forms of republics and monarchies have given a peculiar shape to the political culture of the Naga country that finds occasional reflection in politics in the form of tribalism and clannish loyalties. As R Vashum writes,

“Naga polity was in essence, set in some source of sequence, developed from village (villageism) to village confederation (village confederation in few cases like those of
the (Konyaks and the Maos) to tribe (tribalism) and to collective tribal association (Nagaism), where the appearance of the last concept of ‘Nagaism’, manifests emergence of ‘Naga nationalism’, in the modern sense of the term”. 19

The disagreement over the nature of political leadership and choice of ideology among the elites negatively affected the popular perception on the leadership. The NNC sympathisers who mostly come from the Angami tribe have been very critical of the NSCN of injecting elements of Maoist socialism in the Naga national movement. As one prominent critic of NSCN in Kohima asserted that, the Nagas who are accustomed to purest form of democracy does not need any foreign political ideology of Maoism to guide the Nagas in their struggle for self-determination. Conversely, there were many instances, when there were others who were supportive of the ideology of the NSCN but critical of its methodology. Many mentioned that the Naga movement needs a firm and cementing foundation on a formidable and powerful ideological conviction and the deviation from the noble path has done immense harm to the Naga self-determination movement. Most of these responses came from the sections that have been known to support the NSCN as mentioned earlier. In addition, the split in 1988 can be attributed largely to the irreconcilable differences between the leaders regarding ways and means of running the organization. SS Khaplang, who came from the Pangmei tribe of Myanmar was ideologically bent towards autocracy and resented of being playing a second fiddle role in the organization (Vashum 2005: 99) . There were also issues regarding the implementation of extreme Puritan principles in the organization as SS Khaplang was against ban on smoking tobacco and other forms of narcotic stimulants. Interestingly, taking opium for medicinal and recreation purpose is an important part of day to day activities in the areas inhabited by the Konyak tribe. The Konyak tribe also
has strong cultural and family connections with the tribes in Myanmar and it is not hard to decipher why they took the side of SS Khaplang when the latter challenged the leadership of Muivah and Swu in the organization.

Thus, a closer analysis of the dynamics of Naga nationalism reflects the powerful influence of primordial elements over the former. In fact it was the perceived threat to primordial elements like race, culture and social and customary laws and traditions of individual tribes that gave the various tribes a distinct identity vis-à-vis the larger population of Indian subcontinent was the primary reason to revolt against Indian government at the first place. This can be seen in the influential role of tribal Hohos in shaping the nature and content of Naga national politics since its inception. The individual tribal councils have on various occasions put their weight behind one nationalist group or the other. In fact, no nationalist group can claim to represent all the Nagas as the former does not have the support and goodwill of all the councils at the same time. Likewise, pan-Naga organizations also do not represent all the tribal councils at the same time. The Naga Hoho does not represent the tribes of eastern Nagaland. They have their parallel organization in the form of Eastern Naga Peoples Organization (ENPO) and the constituted by the councils of the tribes in the areas. The reasons for the existence of tribalism in Naga national movement can be discerned by the existence and influence of traditional power structures like the village and tribal councils playing a crucial role in interest articulation. An attempt to penetrate the political culture of the tribes involving their norms, attitudes, values and orientations towards political institutions would reveal the crucial role played by village council and tribal councils in regulating the customary laws and conventions that also have impact on political relations in the society. In addition, there has been very little change in
these traditional power structures due to the minimal effect of social forces like industrialization, urbanization, technological development, education and the impact they have in altering traditional bonds and relationships. The tribal councils have also been performing the role of interest articulation as far as nationalist interests are concerned and the commitment and support these councils get from their respective communities also influences the former’s role and contribution to the Naga national movement and their support to a particular nationalist group who can be placed in the role of interest aggregation. The inability of any of the armed nationalists to secure the support of all the councils at the same time has been one of the prominent reasons for tribalism and clannish divisions among the former. In order to have a further understanding, we need to study the case of Naga nationalism from the perspective of political modernization and social change that involve processes where old social, economic and psychological commitments are eroded or broken down the people become available for new patterns of socialization and behaviour.20

In other respects like demographically, the population is divided into districts and scattered in specific areas with their own social, cultural specifications and value systems as we have seen in our earlier discussion. There is limited mobility of population due to the unique socio-economic structure of the Naga society and it is difficult if not impossible for one tribe to settle in the area of another without the latter’s goodwill and permission. In this respect, there has been less interaction and intermingling of various tribes. It is for this very reason that intellectuals like Abraham Lotha cited the importance of celebration of Hornbill Festival by which the various tribes from different corners of the Naga country can understand each other and its
significance in the cultural regeneration based on a collective identity (Lotha 2014: 101).

An attempt to penetrate the political culture of the tribes involving their norms, attitudes, values and orientations towards political institutions would reveal the crucial role played by village council and tribal councils in regulating the customary laws and conventions that also have impact on political relations in the society. This explains why despite its dominance, the NSCN- both the factions have not been able to garner the overwhelming support from all sections of the masses and as a result the nationalist leadership is still divided. Thus there despite the strong practice of collective resistance against external elements, the Naga nationalist opinion is equally predisposed to fragmentation when it comes to the role and part played by the nationalist leadership in the movement. Thus we find the emergence of rival even counter ethno-histories in the social and political discourse of various tribes that we shall see in our following discussion. We have examined the significance of collective ethno-history and the role it has played in sustaining Naga nationalism all these years, but curiously the peculiar traditions and customs of the tribes sometime throw up their own ethno histories that may run counter to the collective ethno-histories of various tribes. A classic case can be seen in the recent declaration of Sumi Martyrs Day on 28th December, 2013 by the Sumi Hoho, in honor of those who died in the clash with NSCN (IM) cadres in Zunboto district during the Mulakumi seize during the Christmas Eve. It also announced that a martyr’s park would be erected at the burial site of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for the Sumis. There are other instances of celebrations and commemoration of martyr’s day by other tribes like the Konyak organizations in remembrance of the members of the community killed by the NSCN (IM).
These primordial elements formed fertile ground for the emergence of tribalism has been one of the biggest challenges to the Naga national movement since its inception. Interestingly, the socio-cultural, ethnic, historical, political and Naga geographical forces that shape the character and nature of the Naga national movement also contained strong elements that could generate and unleash centrifugal tendencies.

5.4 Traditional Power Structures and their role in Interest Articulation

Since the beginning of the Naga political movement, the respective tribal hohos (councils) have played a very significant role in determining direction and course of the Naga political movement. The tribal hohos are integral parts of the traditional power structures and play an authoritative and significant role in the society and politics of all Naga tribes that in many ways also influences the course and direction of the Naga political movement. The Naga Hoho and ENPO have been performing a role of articulation of interests between these various tribal councils. These organizations have not been able to come together mainly due to certain significant events that transpired in the history of Naga movement. The ENPO communities are largely estranged from the NSCN (IM) due to the policy of ‘purges’ carried out by the group in eastern Naga areas. The Naga Hoho on the other hand has been much closer to the NSCN (IM) and working together with the latter in putting forward the Naga cause of self-determination. This has resulted in the two conglomerate bodies representing various tribes take divergent stand on several issues.

Thus, the civil society that essentially reflects modern values and standards of an industrialised and bureaucratic society that have shaped and characterized many national movements of self-determination elsewhere in the world had a limited role in Naga national politics. In other words the Naga national politics is deeply influenced by
the role and behaviour of the tribal councils. The close relation between interest articulation by tribal councils and the politics of NPGs was recently witnessed when some members of a specific tribe from the NSCN (IM) and NSCN (K) declared the formation of unification group and claimed to work towards Naga unification without the support of civil society groups or mainstream pan-Naga groups like the Naga Hoho, NSF and NPMHR. The Sumi Hoho (Council) declared their support to the new group while others rejected it as a futile exercise as it excluded some particular tribes from its Naga unification project. This step came under sharp criticism from many quarters of the civil society who condemned the narrow and short-sighted effort to bring Naga unity and self-determination without the participation and collaboration of the civil society. The Naga Hoho also expressed its suspicion and concern to bring unification headed by one particular community excluding the civil society and one specific tribe from outside Nagaland.23 Thus we see that the Naga national politics is intensely and deeply affected by the dominance of tribal power structures and current fissures caused due to the unleashing of centrifugal forces that has also characterized many new independent nations of the post-colonial world especially societies in Asia and Africa. The recent case is that of South Sudan that fought a long and bloody war of secession against Sudan has fallen victim to the politics of tribalism and is engulfed in a bloody civil war.

Thus, the shape and character of unified movement for national assertion in a diverse and pluralistic social setting is largely determined by the extent of change in economic social and cultural life of the people. It requires transition from dominance of primordial factors towards a setting defined by modernist value systems based on civil ties of rational societies that is mostly representative of societies experiencing higher
stages of political modernization and development. Keeping in perspective the arguments offered by primordialist-perennialist argument and the modernist-instrumentalist argument, we need to distinguish between ‘nation’, that is a socio-historical entity existing in different periods and places in history and nationalism which is essentially a modern phenomena of socio-political change heralded by the conditions of modernity like emergence of industrialization and capitalism in the late 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. As pointed out earlier, this argument subscribing etymologically to the modernist-instrumentalist school comes from the Marxist viewpoint that applies tenets of Historical Materialism in the study of nations and nationalisms. It asserts that before national communities, national societies, national states came into existence, communities in various parts of the world generally lived through tribal, slave, and feudal phases of social existence. Thus, the modernist argument puts nationalism into a category of social phenomena that emerges when certain socio-historical conditions both objective and subjective mature in the life of a community. However, it would be interesting to examine the emergence of nationalism in societies retaining significant aspects of pre-modern social and political structures exemplified in tribal and primordial allegiances.

5.5 Crisis in the smooth and uninterrupted interplay between Elite Proposals and Majority Responses

According to the ethno-symbolism, nationalism essentially implies smooth and uninterrupted interplay between elite proposals and majority responses. The approach also seeks to understand how their needs and ideals influence one another and helps to shape national identities and ideologies (Smith 2009: 28). In addition, due attention is given to understand as to what extent do the various proposals of nationalist elites
strike a chord or find support among the different strata of the designated population whom they seek to mobilize and empower (Smith 2009: 28). The rate of success of the elite proposals is largely dependent on the support and good will of the designated population. Thus, nationalism is at once an elite and a mass phenomenon. The elite places the people’s memories, myths, symbols and traditions at the centre of its concerns and a popular movement that seeks expression through the ideas and goals of the nationalist elites symbiotically complement each other. The idea of ‘historic nationhood’ finds expression through sense of national identity and distinctiveness both among the elites and the masses that are collectively constituted by ethno-histories- the stories told by the members of a national community to each other which distil shared memories, values, myths and traditions handed down through generations of a community (Smith 2009: 74).

It is desirable there may be ideological conflict and disagreement between the elites over the nature and form and visions of nations. This is mainly because of initiating different narratives and proposals of nations by the elites. One of these proposals may become the dominant narrative or official project. In addition different classes, castes, confessions and regions and ethnic groups may take up rival narratives and alternative versions of the nation (Smith 2009: 33). This creates different and often rival versions of nationalisms and nations they may lead to conflict. There may be variant understandings of the national past that can give different forms to national character and composition of nations. By the study of some essential characteristics of the Naga political movement, we find that various tribal councils and their conglomerate bodies like the Naga Hoho and the Eastern Naga Peoples Organizations (ENPO) have been playing an instrumental role in the articulation of nationalist
interests together with the armed nationalists and may be effectively regarded as elites in their leadership of the movement. However, on many instances they are divided regarding their support to one nationalist faction or the other that perform the role of some kind of interest aggregation. This reflects to a great deal in current fissures in the Naga movement as there is a marked discrepancy in interest articulation by these bodies and interest aggregation by the armed nationalists.

When it comes to the Naga political movement or Naga nationalism, though the proposals of the elites regarding self-determination has popular roots and there have been smooth interaction between the elites and masses on many occasions, there have been certain discrepancies as well. In the Naga socio-political system where loyalty and allegiance to the tribe constitutes an important factor in influencing the wider activities of the associations and individuals in the society, differences among the elite gives opportunity to centrifugal forces that adversely impact the collective nationalist sentiments. Therefore cracks in elite ranks would definitely impact majority response and weaken the appeal of collective interests and create hurdles in smooth interaction between elite and the masses could lead to further obstacles in the proper articulation of collective national opinion. As already pointed out, tribalism has been one of the biggest challenges to the Naga national movement since its inception. There is no denying the fact that the movement has lost its energy and vigour of the initial years with the first major split towards the end of 1970s that lead to the formation of a new nationalist group- the NSCN and the second one in 1988, when the Hemi- Konyak leadership walked away after a violent coup. As R Vashum writes,

“The Nagas have been badly divided on factional political parties (mainly in the underground level) cutting across tribal solidarities and allegiances. Today, every
Naga tribe big or small is observed to have divided as to their loyalty and affiliation to one underground political group or the other. Domination of one political group/faction with their counterparts among the tribes is also prominent. For instance, if the recent developments are anything to go by, the NSCN-IM has upper hand among the Semas, Lothas, Tangkhuls, Zeliangrongs, Maos, Poumains, Marings, etc., while the NSCN-K has some grip among the Konyaks, Tuensang areas, some parts of Mokokchung and Zunheboto districts, etc. The NNC (Adino) though not active these days has supporters from the Angami country among others, while the Federal Government of Nagaland (FGN) is said to be active among the Chakasang tribe”.

These rivalries among the factions or political relationships have adversely affected the cordial relationship among the various Naga tribes and there is domination and competition among the tribes over ownership of the Naga national movement (Vashum 2005: 139). R Vashum further writes about the conflicts over political power and influence have also thrown certain challenges towards the solidarity of Naga movement. Some of these are local in nature such as intra and inter-clan- fighting for seniority among clans and/or other forms of power struggle, inter-village conflicts fuelled by inter-village territorial disputes effects the social fabric of the society. In addition, the inter-tribal conflicts are serious challenges to the solidarity of the Naga society. Every Naga tribe has a share of being hated by the other for several issues ranging from contestation for traditional rights, territorial encroachments, deprivation and/or suppression of rights, dominance, pride, high-handedness, prejudice, jealousy, political crisis etc. Tolerance and accommodation of each other’s ideology, perception and interests are difficult to contain. Thus, the legacy of the tradition of ‘village states’ and traditional solidarities is quite strong even today that feeds the forces of clan
and tribe loyalty reinforced by the forces from outside like the devices adopted by the Indian government to contain Naga nationalism.

In addition ethno-symbolism pays due attention to the conflicts within a community or a perceived nation. The reciprocal relation between the elites and the non-elites is one of the central concern of this approach and the vision of the nation proposed by one or the other elite may not find adequate support or strike a chord among the members of the non-elites evoking a strong or weak response. In addition, the non-elites may reject or amend the project and accept the project offered by the rival elite. There also exists a possibility of conflict between various segments of the non-elites who may have their own needs, outlook and traditions that may be amplified by conflicts between elites. We have discussed how pan-Naga organizations like the Naga Hoho and the Naga Students Federation (NSF) have been striving hard to disseminate pan-Naga consciousness and contributing to the articulation of nationalist interests. However, in spite of their best efforts their support is mostly confined to the advanced tribes in Nagaland state and some tribes in Manipur, as tribes in eastern Nagaland have their own apex socio-cultural organization- the ENPO to which the tribes are affiliated. Similarly, they have their own student organization- the Eastern Naga Students Federation (ENSF). These two organizations have been in the news in recent years in propagating the cause of ‘Frontier Nagaland’. One reason for the estrangement with the Naga Hoho is that it is rightly or wrongly perceived as agents of the NSCN (IM) (Lotha 2013: 68). Naga national politics on many aspects revolves around the collective articulation of nationalist sentiments by various tribal councils under the forum of Naga Hoho and the ENPO. In this context, the role performed by the armed nationalist factions is significant since each faction commands allegiance
from the tribes affiliated to the two conglomerate tribal bodies. Notably many sections in the tribes in eastern Nagaland are estranged and alienated from the NSCN (IM) due to past memories of violence and purges carried out by Muivah’s men in these areas that has left a bloody legacy to which we shall return on our subsequent discussion.28

5.6 Existence of strong parallel historical narratives

The historical narrative also seems to be taking a different course as far as tribes in eastern Nagaland are concerned. Recently, the Eastern Naga Peoples Organization (ENPO) has also been substantially contributing to the historical narrative of ‘free Nagas’. Notably, the ENPO represents six respective tribes in eastern Nagaland-Chang, Konyak, Khiamiungmam, Phom, Sangtam and Yimchunger through a representation to the ENPO. The ENPO contends that the eastern Nagas have been deprived of the fruits of development by the advanced tribes despite making significant sacrifices for the Naga nation that eventually led to the creation of Nagaland state.29 Though, the creation of the state of Nagaland is disapproved in the radical nationalist circles there is also an agreement that the creation of separate political unit for the Nagas with the present autonomy was only possible due to the enormous sufferings and sacrifices made by all the tribes to assert their historical claims.30 In addition, there is also an opinion among the eastern Nagas that they have been the worst sufferer in the cause of Naga nationalism as their territory was pertinently exploited by the national workers in their fight against the Indian state but now some of the national leaders have forgotten their contribution and going for integration of only the Naga inhabited areas in India.31 The president of the Konyak Union mentioned that the eastern Nagas or the free Nagas territory was dissected by the Indian and Burmese government separating their age long established bond of kinship and affinity. Thus, starting from their first
political organization- the ENNC, the eastern Nagas have consistently insisted on their separate historical narrative as ‘free Nagas’, though closely associated with the greater interest of all the Nagas.

The eastern Nagas claim to be “free Nagas”, as their territories were never conquered by any power even by the British. It was only in 1955 that AZ Phizlo, the leader of the NNC came to mobilize the eastern Nagas for the joint Naga cause. The existence of this isolation also implied that the political movement in eastern part of Nagaland functioned for the greater period under the Eastern Naga National Council (ENNC) and it was only in the end of 1970s that the eastern Nagas merged with the splinter group of the NNC led by Muivah and Swu to form the NSCN for the larger interest of the Nagas. In my several interactions with Village elders in Eastern Nagaland, they asserted that they were the worst sufferers of army excesses during counterinsurgency operations against the NNC. The president of the Konyak Union mentioned how the national workers in their war with India made ample use of the land of the eastern Nagas to train, feed and maintain their cadres in a safe base during the heydays of the NNC and the undivided NSCN. In spite of all the sacrifices, the eastern Nagas have been denied their due share in the fruits of development by the state government. This sense of alienation and estrangement has resulted in the ENPO demanding a separate state of Frontier Nagaland comprising of the eastern Naga tribes inhabiting the districts of Longleng, Kiphrie, Tuensang and Mon districts of Nagaland and the Triap and Changlang districts of Arunachal Pradesh.

This trend of separate historical narrative is not only confined to eastern Nagas but also extends to various sections of certain tribes like the Zeliangronggs who have resisted the imposition of Puritanical Christianity by the NSCN (IM), that is an integral
element to further its ‘Nagalim for Christ’ project on their areas of inhabitation in the Dima Hasao (formerly NC Hills) district of Assam who are very much attached to their Heraka religion. Moreover, I had the personal experience of this rival narrative from some sections of the Zeliangrong tribe whom I personally interacted in the district and Cachar district of Assam. One research scholar in Assam University, Silchar mentioned that the dominant Naga national narrative has failed to give due recognition to their great leader Jadunaung as the progenitor of the Naga movement and instead concentrate on AZ Phizo of the NNC and the present leaders of the NSCN (IM). Thus, there is also a possibility of conflict between various segments of the non-elites each with their own different needs, outlooks and traditions which may again be reflected in conflict between the elites (Smith 2009: 116).

5.7 Ethnic Composition of the Nationalist Factions

The ethnic composition of the armed nationalist/underground groups has also to be taken into consideration while analysing the nature and content of the Naga national movement as each faction is an integral player in the Naga self-determination movement. Tribalism also finds reflection over differences in a common consensus over the acceptance of leadership of the Naga national movement. Nagas in Nagaland state are envious and apprehensive over the domination of Tangkhuls over Naga national politics since the 1970s. Incidentally, the proportion of Tangkhuls is much larger in the composition of the most dominant group, the NSCN (IM) with the veteran leader- TH Muivah hailing from the Ukhrul district of Manipur. Moreover, there is a sense of insecurity among many tribes as the Tangkhuls are among the most advanced and the second largest tribe among the Nagas only after the Konyaks. These mutual differences and jealousies are often manipulated and exploited by political leaders of
respective tribes to create more confusion among the Nagas that often leads to open confrontations (Vashum 2005: 140). In addition, the spate of killings that began after the split in NNC in 1975 and further intensified after 1988, added to inter-tribal mistrust and rivalry. Tribes in eastern Nagaland have accused Muivah’s men of carrying out mass killings of NNC sympathisers in the region who had disagreed to the formation of the NSCN. The massacre of many people that included women and children by the loyalists of SS Khaplang during the coup in 1988, was the another major schism that was to have far-reaching consequences to the Naga national movement. Incidentally, most of the victims belonged to the Tangkhul tribe, the tribe to which the General Secretary, Thuingaleng Muivah came from. This incident in the long run gave rise to a chain reaction of events leading to killings with both groups accusing each other of being reactionary force. The factional fights resulted in further casualties as both the groups assorted to brutal tactics of terminating any opposition to their authority in order to extend their territorial influence and control over population. Many people in Nagaland got further estranged from the NSCN (IM) due to the arrogance and highhandedness of the group especially the continued termination of members of opposition groups. This explains the reasons for the civil society groups making sincere efforts at reconciliation among tribes to work towards a ‘united Naga house’ to rejuvenate the spirit of unity and solidarity among the tribes.

Thus, there is strong disapproval of Muivah’s leadership among the tribes of eastern Nagaland due to the bitter legacy left by the past events that unfolded in the region. The GPRN/NSCN (Khaplang) group that wields substantial influence in the region reiterated the horror and brutality perpetrated by Muivah’s men aganist Lainong, Pangmi, Khiamnuingen and Yimchungru people during Muivah’s good will mission in
Nagaland in 2010. Similar charges are made by many other informed persons in Nagaland who accuse the group of carrying out irresponsible killings of members of the NNC. In fact, I was told by some village elders in eastern Nagaland, under the condition of anonymity that many people had joined the Khaplang group to avenge the killings of their kin by the IM group. There were also reports of senior leaders of the group being killed by the IM group on charge of being reactionary traitors. These are some of the reasons why, many in Nagaland are not prepared to approve and accept Muivah’s leadership as he is not a resident of the state. In addition, the anti-NNC purges carried out by the NSCN (IM) that resulted in the death of about 3000 Nagas has alienated a large section from the group who are deeply resentful of Muivah’s leadership. These factors have resulted in increasing the alienation and estrangement of certain groups that Tangkhuls were served quit notices and some even went to the extent of branding the Tangkhuls as non-Nagas. Many concerned citizens whom I interviewed in the state of Nagaland expressed their anger and fear of not knowing about the content of proposals that was being negotiated between the GOI and the NSCN (IM). The factions of NSCN dominated by the Nagas from Nagaland like Khole-Kitovi, that has been working hard to spread its influence in the state after its split with Khaplang in 2011, has expressed their apprehensions of not knowing what are being negotiated between the GOI and NSCN (IM) (Lotha 2014: 69). Some people in Nagaland have expressed their disapproval in arriving at a settlement only with the NSCN (IM) as they have grown weary of the highhandedness by the members of the organization. As pointed out earlier, some students and research scholars in Nagaland University, Lumami expressed their disappointment at not knowing what is being discussed in the current political negotiations between the NSCN (IM) and the
Government of India. Others went to the extent of expressing fears of a civil war if a settlement with only the IM group is sought to be imposed on the people. Others say that the NSCN (IM) has not bothered to take all the interested parties on board in its negotiations with the GOI. In the recent interactions with civil society groups, the NSCN (IM) has been known to only consult the Naga Hoho, the NSF in its recent interaction with civil society groups recently but has not bothered to consult the ENPO (Lotha 2013: 69).

The Khaplang faction has also strongly disapproved of the actions and motives of the NSCN (IM) and some leaders from the organization have even called Thuingaleng Muivah as, “elder brother of Meitis.” Thus, the domination of non-Nagaland tribes, especially the Tangkhuls over the most prominent nationalist organization, the NSCN (IM), is disapproved in many circles of Nagaland state. In addition, the recklessness and arrogance by some cadres of the organization has added to the fear and uncertainty of the Khaplang faction, which later split in 2011, like Kitovi Zhomimi who has called for Naga unification minus the Tangkhuls. In addition, after the split in 2011, the group led by SS Khaplang still holds sway in the Naga inhabited areas of Myanmar and have accused leaders like Khole Konyak and Kitovi Zhomimi of betraying the Naga cause and disregarding the cause of the Nagas of Myanmar by placing the Burmese tag on the veteran leader, SS Khaplang and concentrating only on the Nagas of Nagaland. Thus, dichotomy between ‘Nagas of Myanmar’, and ‘Nagas in India’, is another negative trend in the propagation of ‘pan Naga identity’. These differences and rivalries have been aptly utilized by the Indian security establishment to weaken the insurgent groups by using one group against the other.
5.8 Naga Socialism and Naga Nationalism

The NSCN sought to give a more monolithic and unitary character to the Naga movement—that was essentially decentralised and federal in orientation by a totalitarian ideology and a centralized system that it felt was necessary to rescue the Naga movement from the fissiparous tendencies of tribalism and clannish loyalties. This is evident by the Constitution (Yehzabo) of the NNC and the Manifesto of the NSCN (See Appendix II and IX-5, 9). It was also thought to be a corrective to the flaws in policies framed by the NNC that divided the Nagas on the basis of tribe and region (Shimray 2005: 150). The dictatorship of a single revolutionary organization to guide the people as devised by the NSCN could be discerned by the past experiences that led to the weakening of the Naga movement due to fissiparous tendencies of tribalism and clannish loyalties. It was thought that the revolutionary organization could crystallize the Nagas—a conglomeration of diverse cultures and traditions into a compact unit and strengthen the idea of Naga nation. It cannot be denied that despite many similarities in the history, culture and religion of the tribes classified as ‘Naga’, the differences far outweigh the similarities (Chasie 2000: 27). A hierarchal central command structure was deemed to be able to root out tribal and clannish divisions that had plagued the organizational structure of the NNC. Termed as Naga socialism by the NSCN, it was mainly aimed at strengthening the ethnic unity of the Naga tribes (Shimray 2005: 54). However, the structural foundation of the Naga society with strong tradition of village states and influential role of individual tribal bodies like the tribal councils and the prevalence of long established customary laws and traditions shaping the political culture of each tribe predisposed to autonomy and independence refused to be moulded into a homogenous and monolithic entity as designed by the NSCN. Moreover, the
rhetoric of ‘Nagalim for Christ’, was aimed towards some sort of theocratic and Puritan state in a community with strong structural foundations of diverse cultural and societal aspects that defined the behaviour of the people. It is one of the reasons why SS Khaplang and his Konyak leadership were against the imposition of moral code of conduct among the cadre’s ranks and the resentment of SS Khaplang in being given a subsidiary role in the organization.

The attempt by the NSCN to give a centralized and monolithic orientation to Naga nationalism thus has suffered a backlash from within that conforms to a more decentralized and federal classification of Naga nationalism. This attempt to monopolise the Naga movement can be interpreted as the practical application of Naga Socialism devised by the organization to establish a more consolidated and homogeneous Naga identity from the above by a “revolutionary organization”, that was necessary to do away the fissiparous tendencies of tribalism and clannish divisions. However, the socio-cultural characteristics and political structures of the Naga society strongly based on the principle of ‘primordial nations’, exerted a counter-force that was opposed to the imposition of a homogeneous and monolithic identity from the above.

From the examination of these characteristics that constitute the gist of Naga nationalism, we can also infer that essential conditions of modernization enhancing significant qualitative structural transformation in the society contributes more towards national consolidation than a strategy of bringing it through a grand design implemented from the above. This phenomenon is more applicable to societies significantly retaining pre-modern; tribal or feudal social and political structures with relatively minimal impact of economic and social transformations aided by conditions of modernity. This also applies to societies with extensive socio-cultural diversity.
Moreover, the nature of Naga self-determination movement has seen considerable shifts during the course of its evolution as far as leadership is concerned. The tribal foundation of the movement though not dwarfing the united character of the movement and sense of common cause among the tribes, there have been many instances when position taken by one tribe or the other proved to be instrumental in determining the course and direction of the movement. Support of tribal leaders was crucial in giving momentum to the movement under the NNC. Another important fact is that the respective tribes from different regions played more dominant role at different phases of the movement. The NNC was mostly dominated by the Angamis, while the off-shoots- the NSCN (IM) and the NSCN (Khaplang) are dominated by the Tangkhuls and Konyaks respectively. Another faction that had split form the NNC, the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland (RGN) in 1968, that later surrendered to the government was mainly constituted by the Sumi tribe. Some commentators have asserted that the Naga political movement was mainly initiated by the 16 tribes inhabiting the area of what constitutes the present Nagaland state. Some even contend that the Nagas of Manipur did not participate in the plebiscite conducted by the NNC in 1951. The tribes living outside this territory did not join the movement at the initial stage. However, in the 1960s these tribes too joined and since then have been making significant contribution to the movement. These accidents of history have been a dominant influence in shaping people’s perception about the leadership and nature of the movement that we have discussed earlier. The inter-tribal rivalry and mistrust over the question of ownership of the Naga movement, has been one of the main causes of weakening of the movement and it can be understood as to why earnest appeals have been made from a resilient civil society for reconciliation.
5.9 Creation of Nagaland State and Surge in sub-nationalist forces

Another tricky situation that arose with the emergence of Nagaland state under the 16 Points Agreement (See Appendix- III) with special provisions under Article 371 A as it created many situations of schism and division between the tribes within the state and the tribes outside the state. In other words, it led to the penetration of forces of sub-nationalism in Naga national politics. The creation of the state of Nagaland thus planted the seeds of regionalism and marked the decisive entry of Indian state into the political history of the Nagas and created great confusion and controversy among the Nagas and contributed to further division.

In a way, the creation of Nagaland state created new challenges and complications for Naga nationalism. The extra benefits accrued by the inhabitants of the new state under Article 371 A were not available to those Nagas who were left out of the ambit of the new arrangement that created ground for further mistrust and conflict between the Nagas. On many occasions, the Nagas from outside the state have expressed their displeasure as they are denied certain accommodations and adjustment by special autonomy provisions of the new state. The Nagas from within the state argue that they are conscious and aware of the plight of the Naga brethren from outside the state but history has placed the Nagas under different political and administrative set-ups and therefore, it is imperative that the Nagas should accept the rights guaranteed under the present political arrangements and not try to encroach upon the rights of others. There is a sense among many Nagas within the state that, the state was a result of enormous sacrifices and sufferings from the tribes within the state and the Nagas from outside the state who were largely indifferent and did not participate in the Naga movement in its early years of its inception. Recently, the state government
in Nagaland had unveiled plans for recognition of certain tribes not indigenous to the state as tribes in Nagaland apparently as a goodwill gesture to contribute in irredentist politics. However, this gesture was fiercely resisted in certain quarters. For instance, the ENPO communities- tribes in eastern Nagaland namely Sangtam, Chang, Konyak, Khiamuingan, Phom and Yimchunger inhabiting the districts of Kiphre, Mon, Longleng and Tuensang have strongly opposed the recent declaration by the state government to recognize the Mao and Zeliangrongs as tribes in Nagaland.\(^{46}\) Thus, the legacy of the controversy and confusion created by the ‘Nagaland state’ is a bone of contention among various sections of the Naga society (Vashum 2000: 84).

Another result of penetration of regionalism is the belief among some inside the state of Nagaland that the tribes inside the state are genuine Nagas and those from outside the states are ‘wanna be’\(^{47}\). Thus, the creation of the state of Nagaland in 1963, under special autonomous provisions under Article 371 A has created new complications and challenges to the collective claims of the Nagas. In addition, it is also alleged that certain sections in present Nagaland state believe that they have the first claim to the rights and privileges guaranteed by the autonomy provisions under Article 371 as they suffered and sacrificed more in the creation of the Nagaland state, in comparison to the Nagas outside the state and therefore.\(^{48}\) Regionalism has consolidated its hold over the tribes within the Nagaland state and it is evident from the opposition to the recognition of Maos and Zeliangrongs as indigenous tribes in Nagaland and stride towards the formation of the Nagaland Tribes Council (NTC) in 2013, to protect the interests of the Nagas in Nagaland who gave been given special rights over land and resources by Article 371 A.\(^{49}\) Thus, it can be rightly said that the issue of tribes inside the state and outside has the potential to contribute to contentious
politics. In a seminar that I attended in Nagaland University as a part of the audience on the issue, “Alternative Arrangement for the Nagas of Manipur”, the issues facing the tribes in the state were extensively deliberated upon. While most of the participants in interaction expressed their concerns on the grievances of Nagas in Manipur, there were others who expressed their doubts on ability of the NSCN (IM) and the Govt. of India in bringing a peaceful and acceptable settlement to the Naga imbroglio as it had become evident that the influential political faction had dropped the demand for sovereignty and integration and deliberating on a scheme of alternative arrangement for the Nagas of Manipur. Moreover, interestingly most of them dismissed the supposed proposal of the Chief Minister of Manipur, Okram Ibobi Singh that Nagas of Nagaland should welcome the tribes of Manipur minus any territorial alterations.

The Naga entry into the fray of Indian electoral politics after statehood in 1963 created new challenges to the collective sentiments. The new centres of power- the legislative assembly and the executive had its own role to play in contributing to tribalism as clan and tribe became a basis of election and suitable tools of mobilizing support in elections (Misra 2000: 50-51). The advanced tribes benefitted most out of the statehood as they were far ahead from the ‘free Nagas’, to be brought in contact with modern amenities of western education and it was mostly their members who constituted the core of Naga national politics. It is significant that many erstwhile nationalists joined the mainstream and entered either the state executive or the newly constituted state bureaucracy. As one commentator recently pointed out

“Tribalism, Naga Nationalism and Nagaland state politics are intricately related. This relationship is dubious in many instances which otherwise are tantamount to the survival of all the three”.
Thus, the entry of Nagas to the vortex of Indian democratic system, tribal and clan affiliations became important for survival and competition in the arena of electoral politics that directly or indirectly affected the wave of nationalist sentiments in the society. The demand for eastern Nagaland can also be attributed to this sentiment of being denied the fruits of creation of Nagaland state. The ENPO demand of a separate state for the eastern Nagas is also closely related to the feeling of deprivation of the fruits of development by the advanced tribes despite making significant sacrifices for the Naga nation that eventually led to the creation of Nagaland state.\textsuperscript{53}

**Some Final Observations**

Thus, the examination of certain fundamental aspects of Naga national movement from the perspective of main theories of nations and nationalism brings up certain implications for our research that opens up new frontiers for the study of nations and nationalisms in societies where modern and pre-modern elements exist together and gives a unique shape to national self-determination movements. In addition, the examination of the dynamics of the movement also reveals the fact that any national movement for the attainment of autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a larger population can be sustained only under socio-political conditions where the dominance of tribal or feudal vestiges are shrunk off and adequate space is created for the penetration of modernist values and principles determining the relations between groups and individuals in a socio-political setting.

In addition, we may also discern that the modernist-instrumentalist approach in explaining the growth and sustenance of nations and nationalism holds good as far as the solidarity, strength and sustenance of national movements are concerned. In discussing our theoretical framework, we had dwelled on the modernist paradigm that
associates nationalism with modernity and asserts that nationalism arises as a result of maturing of certain structural conditions in the capitalism, secularism and bureaucratic authority. We had also emphasised the inadequate development and maturing of these conditions in the Naga case. Thus, nationalism and national movements in areas without an adequate development and maturing of these structural conditions have been more prone to weaken and lose their vigour in the long run due to pressures from within and without. The colonial policy of keeping the Nagas under excluded areas and partially excluded areas also had tremendous impact in not heralding any significant alteration in the socio-economic structure. In other words, the colonial policy was responsible for the least industrialisation, bureaucratization and urbanization in the Naga country in contrast to the Indian scenario where the emergence and expansion of middle class and concurrent urbanization took place as a result of initiation of the social and political process resulting from significant economic and social changes brought about by the British policies that contributed immensely to the national movement. Notably, since the inception of the Naga national movement, significant changes have been taking place in the Naga society in general with the gradual spread of education and the slow and steady expansion of the middle class like intellectuals, authors, clerics, bureaucrats, businessmen and politicians.

The forces of modernization like industrialization and urbanization that played a huge role in the emergence and sustenance of nationalist consciousness and subsequently gave rise to well-built nations in many parts of the world had relatively minimal effect during the inception of the Naga political movement. The gradual expansion of the middle class is a significant factor in relation with the evolution of Naga nationalism. Our research has proven that the leadership and role of tribal leaders
has been a significant factor in the inception and continuance of the Naga movement in its initial years, on certain occasions, primordial and clannish loyalties among the leadership had created situation of schism and conflict that was detrimental in sustaining a united front. Notably, most of the nationalist literature is produced by the enlightened minds of the middle class and this section has also recently has been the most vocal in their criticism of the Naga Political Groups (NPGs) for their self-aggrandizement and the harm caused to the Naga cause because of the behaviour of armed factions. In fact, the middle class played a crucial role in initiating the forum for Action Committee Against Unabated taxation ( ACAUT) that has called for “one government, one tax”, or a “national government.” Notably, the people did not refuse to pay tax for the “Revolutionary tax”, instead their opposition was to pay taxes to different factions and agreed to have a united Naga house under a national government. This shows that the cause of Naga self-determination still finds wide resonance in the society.

The study of the dynamics of Naga nationalism brings out some interesting facts regarding nationalist movements and nation-building exercise in the societies of the post-colonial world. The areas with least development of urbanization and modernization with a stifled middle class and existence of strong pre-modern social structures in the form of importance of clan, tribe and region, have found it harder to ensure a fare degree of social cohesion and stability and prevent cleavages arising out of the parochial and tribal solidarities. Some instances may cited in countries of central Africa and a large part of the Arab world, where national solidarity movements have succumbed to challenges of tribalism, sectarianism and regionalism. The significance of tribal groups and alliances still play a very crucial role in shaping the overall pattern
of political development in these societies, and the current sectarian and political conflict may be suitably attributed to some of these factors. The study of Naga nationalism also brings out the fact movements of self-determination or nationhood can mature and develop effectively under essential elements of modernization like adequate levels of industrialization, secularization and differentiation in the society with the strong presence of a sense of common citizenship and proper organization of the aspirations of nationalism and citizenship. Although, small and large nations have emerged and faded away in different periods of history, the force of ‘nationalism’, with the emphasis on ‘autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of the population, that emerged as a result of maturing of certain structural conditions of capitalism in the 18th and 19th centuries, was primarily responsible for the emergence and consolidation of nations during this phase and continue to be the main trend in present day world. This practice was common both in case of nations founded on civic and ethnic nationalism-classic instance are post-Revolutionary France and the United States of America based on civic and the German Unification in the 18th and 19th Centuries. Thus, modernization and transition from feudal or tribal vestiges can be considered crucial for the sustenance of any national movement. The idea of ‘nation’ in order to have a firm foundation has to be closely associated with a more evolutionary process- “nation building when a ethnic group consolidates into a ‘nation’, that takes a long time to mature and develop not only relying on political leadership but also significant changes in technology and economic processes, communications, culture and civil society and other related factors.56

On the other hand, the same force of nationalism has not been equally successful in societies without a substantial shift in terms essential elements of
modernization like industrialization, secularization and differentiation and firmly rooted in traditional values, practices and essentially reflecting the powerful presence of pre-modern structures in their socio-political and cultural traditions and practices. Thus, it becomes imperative for the progress and development that ‘nations’, should be based around Gesellschaft and essential conditions of modernity instead of Gemeinschaft that would give a more comprehensive impetus to the centripetal forces.\

Thus, an in depth look at the primordial features should not lead us to deny the existence of Naga nationalism. As we discussed in our previous chapters, a sense of shared history and collective resistance against the Indian state has strengthened a sense of common identity and the cherished goal of a unified homeland for all the tribes. Moreover, the efforts by the nationalist intellectuals mostly coming from the expanding middle class in strengthening Naga nationalism by stressing on the unifying aspects of Naga culture and a shared sense of history has contributed immensely towards the evolution of Naga nationalism since its inception. Moreover, despite the differences in tribe, languages and regions, there is a firm emotional attachment to the Naga cause and a common agreement that India and Nagas are two distinct ‘nations’, that is strongly supported by socio-cultural organizations like tribal hohos and various pan Naga organizations. In fact it is the unifying aspects of Naga culture that has been the chief source of inspiration for the survival of Naga struggle against all odds. As Udayon Misra writes,

“The feelings of separateness from the rest of India has been so widely shared by the Nagas that it may be seen as one of the prime motivating forces in their struggle against New Delhi. The Naga loyalty to his tribe and clan today counter-balanced by
his loyalty to the concept of a united Naga inhabited territory between Chindwin in Myanmar and Brahmaputra in Assam. However, the progression from tribe and clan loyalties to allegiance to the concept of a sovereign Naga state comprising the entire Naga nation is bound to be complex and a difficult one. But the experiment is on.”

Thus by a close examination of historical and cultural resources that constitute the essence of Naga nationalism or Naga self-determination movement, we may suitably assert that since the rudimentary beginnings in 1928, Naga nationalism has developed and matured over the years. Despite the presence of tribalism and clannish divisions, the collective historical experience and close similarities in culture, tradition and practices have enabled the nationalists to inspire people about the collective history fostered by intense struggle and resolute determination to protect their ‘distinct’ identity from being threatened to be swallowed by a larger Indian Identity. The first revolt by the NNC, to the Indian government’s recognition of the unique history of the Nagas, the Naga struggle for self-determination continues to find adherents among intellectuals, mainstream social and cultural groups like students’ organization, women forums, human rights groups and traditional bodies like various tribal Hohos. The subsistence of Naga nationalism can also be discerned by the fact that noted intellectuals that include historians, anthropologists and noted personalities among the Nagas have produced a large volume of work dedicated to the history and culture of the Nagas as a common entity. In addition symbolic elements like memories, myths, symbols and traditions that bestow the Nagas a unique ‘public culture’ that has developed and matured over the years. The popular perception is strongly inclined towards living in accordance with own laws and customs without outside interference. We have also examined the sincere efforts by various socio-cultural organizations and
intellectuals in disseminating a distinct public culture composed of myths, memories, symbols, values and traditions that foster and feed the element of discrete identity to authenticate their claim of ‘nationhood’. In this respect we may suitably refer to statement issued by the Angami Public Organization during the celebration of its Silver Jubilee, On December 20, 1997,

“What the Nagas have achieved from the beginning of their struggle to be a people and nation belongs to all the Nagas. Accidents of history and geography may have made different leaders hailing from different tribes to play more prominent roles than others at different times. This is how it will be. But this is less important than the fact that by their natural choice all the Nagas have come to feel that they are a people today.”

The increasing focus towards cultural aspects of nationalism is another phenomenon that has been witnessed in the Naga case in recent years. One integral element of the social forces unleashed by the Naga resistance against the Indian state is the unleashing of vital intellectual activism that is not only confined to the new middle class composed of writers and commentators, historians, research scholars, authors and novelists who have purposefully or inadvertently made significant contribution to the ‘national history’ of the Nagas as a collective entity by their works and opinions on Naga self-determination movement. This intellectual activism also finds resonance and has given concrete shape to the assertion of a ‘unified national identity’, as propagated and promoted by various socio-cultural organizations.

Finally, the momentous changes in the Naga society, that has set in the last few decades has seen increasing spread of education and perceptible transformation in socio-economic scenario that can be gauged from a measured trend towards
urbanization, an expanding middle class with more people mingling in the socio-political spheres as evident from the increased civic activism exemplified by greater exchange of opinions and views about Naga self-determination movement. The British conquest and occupation of a part of the Naga country began the process of social transformation in the Naga society. We have examined the role played by introduction of western education through Christian missionaries and the role of small middle class in the inception of Naga self-determination movement. Before the advent of the British, the Naga society was stagnant and village centric with age-old customary laws and institutions regulating the relation between individuals. The various tribes were separated, disintegrated and often hostile to one another. The process of social change got an additional impetus after the creation of Nagaland state in 1963 with substantial autonomy provisions. Although the creation of Nagaland state was frowned upon among the nationalist circles, it cannot be denied that this event imperceptibly helped in the consolidation of nationalist forces and the state became some kind of hub for nationalist politics. The setting up of new administrative headquarters and sub-divisions aided the process of urbanization and modernization albeit in a minute scale. This in turn was instrumental in more social, economic and political developments as the new state created new avenues for employment and need for educated men and women to take the role of bureaucrats, clerks and officials in the state administration. New educational centres sprang up in different towns of the state giving adequate space for the expansion of middle class. The flourishing of urban centres across the state also encouraged migration from rural areas to avail the newly available employment, education and business opportunities. Thus, these urban centres enabled greater interaction between various tribes erstwhile confined to their villages. Moreover,
construction of new roads connecting remote villages with these urban centres brought greater mobility among the population that indirectly has aided the larger exchange of ideas. The impact of these developments has been quite remarkable if not phenomenal in broadening the outlook of people by altering age old parochial and tribal loyalties centred on village and tribe. According to available data, there has been an increase in urban population to 17.74 % in 1981 from 15.52 % in 1991. Meanwhile, the decennial growth rate of population in rural area was 53.86 % in comparison to urban area that was around 74.84 % (Singh 2008: 230). According to latest census figures, 17.74 % of the state’s population lives in nine urban centres. Nevertheless, the urbanization has been qualified and restricted as the Naga society is overwhelmingly rural with 70 % of population still engaged in agriculture and the institutions of village, tribe and clan still play a significant role in the life of the individual and shaping the society and politics in the state.

Keeping in mind some of the basic tenets of Historical Materialism, that nationalism emerges in the life of a community when certain socio-historical forces mature, we can say that introduction of some of the conditions of modernization- like the advent of British rule and spread of western education did give rise to a small middle class that took the pioneering role in the Naga rebellion during the initial years of its inception and the role of this section has expanded in recent years seen in increased civic activism in affairs relating to the movement. The crucial role played by the intellectual class in emphasising the unifying aspects of the Naga movement with their extensive work on history, culture and political dimensions of the Naga self-determination movement has added new dimension that can be seen in heralding the beginning of new trends of political modernization mostly in terms of secularization.
and structural differentiation$^6$ in the society. This shift from dominance of tribal politics with a military-oligarchic organization playing the main role in directing the course of the Naga movement can have far reaching changes in giving a new form and character to the basic nature of the movement in the coming years. The increasing civic activism can also be regarded as signs towards significant shifts from a parochial-subject political culture to subject-participant political culture. This can be further ascertained by the fact that pressure from the civil society has been considerably successful in reducing inter-factional warfare among the armed nationalist factions and push towards reconciliation that has culminated in the Lenten Agreement of 2014. These significant trends positively point towards the gradual emergence of new socio-historical factors feeding the centripetal forces. Thus, there has been a struggle between the centripetal forces unleashed by the changes in the Naga political scenario challenging the centrifugal tendencies that could give new orientation to the overall nature of the Naga self-determination movement. However, on many occasions, the politics of the NPGs have demonstrated certain traits strongly demonstrating pre-modern traits and conforming to typologies of politics found in societies with the dominance of parochial-subject political culture. As we have already mentioned that differences among the elite became irreconcilable and led to several splits as there was no third force to act as mediator and go-between. Despite the armed nationalist factions and mainstream nationalist groups have been striving to perform the role of mobilising popular opinion on nationalist aspirations but there are certain inconsistencies in this effort as most of the armed factions do not have the backing of the collective will of all the Naga tribes. These military-oligarchic tendencies of the NPGs is confirmed by the argument by one noted Naga intellectual who contends that
these groups focus too much in solidifying their territories like warring gangs or warlords without any common vision for the Nagas and also mentioned a comment by another distinguished commentator who laments at the emphasis too much in state building in terms of demarcation of territory instead of focussing on nation building that implies good relations between different nations. That national leaders are more interesting in state building rather than nation building (Lotha 2014:35).

Notably, the study of Naga national movement also reveals some basic concepts regarding the nature of ethno-nationalist movements in the third world involving powerful insurgency movements. By an examination of the fundamental contours of the Naga movement, we may suitably infer that nationalist and self-assertion movements in societies without a paradigm shift in degree of modernization and its subsequent impact in determining the social, political and cultural relations are more prone to succumb before forces from without and within. The emergence of strong and vibrant civil society with a dynamic middle class and mainstream social and cultural organizations reflecting modernist values of nation building and common citizenship is crucial for the sustenance and development of any national movement. In addition this element also contributes solidly and crucially to nation building exercise from within the society. The beginnings of vibrant civil society opinion and their role in breaching the divide in nationalist leadership and challenging the centrifugal forces could prove crucial in carrying the Naga movement forward and contribute towards the consolidation of the concept of ‘Naga nation’. Here we can apply some of the basic tenets of political development process where it is been identified with nation building. According to Lucian Pie, development entails translation of diffuse and unorganised sentiments of nationalism into a spirit of citizenship and proper organization of the
aspirations of nationalism and citizenship (Johari 2002: 171). Moreover, on the issue of nation building Lucian Pye has also pointed out the significance of political modernization and politics typical of industrial societies as necessary conditions of nation building process. Political modernization\(^{64}\) stands for the transformation of political culture in response to changes in social and physical environment.\(^{65}\) Although he contends that state institutions perform this role of organization by policy and programmes, it would be interesting to see who performs this function in lieu of state institutions. In the Naga context the nationalist groups both underground armed groups and over ground mainstream nationalist groups are expected to perform this role by suitable strategies and programmes of political education by the dissimilation of nationalist consciousness. The nature of Naga society still evolving from a lower to a higher stage of political development have had a substantial impact on the movement of national self-determination due to the challenges posed by the fissiparous tendencies dictated by the strong pre-modern structures dominated by primordial loyalties of tribe and region.

References:

1 Tribal Councils or tribal Hohos may be regarded as indigenous parliament of the Nagas. The Naga village assemblies and tribal councils evolved within the Naga society. While members of the village council are selected representing each clan, all male members who have been inducted in the Morung automatically become the members of the village assemblies. Various tribal councils are constituted by members of the village councils. Strikingly, the structure and form of these bodies have changed a little over the years of their existence. These bodies are powerful organizations in regulating the affairs relating to the customary laws of all the tribes. B Hanshen Phom, Tribal Hohos can change Naga Community, Nagaland Post August 11, 2013, page-6.

Interest aggregation is the process whereby various divergent interests and collected collated and translated into concrete demands of a very large section of society (preferably appealing to all sections of the society), policy proposals and programme of action, etc. Political parties are most suited to perform this function.

In his monumental work “Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism- A Cultural Approach”, on the origin, characteristics and nature nations and nationalism, Anthony D Smith has extensively used the term ‘pre-modern’ in dwelling on Modernist-Perennialist debate on the origin of nations and nationalism. While the modernists rule out the existence of nations in pre-modern epochs- that could be effectively interpreted as referring to tribal and feudal societies in contrast to capitalist society build on the edifice of modernism.

Pre-modern in the context of our research would specifically refer to tribal social and political structures of the Naga society. Incidentally, unlike other parts of the subcontinent, the British advent into the Naga Hills was essentially an encounter of a predominantly tribal society with a colonial power. In the broader context the term also implies to feudal and traditional societies.

Van Den Berghe as cited by Anthony D Smith in Nationalism and Modernism, Routeledge, London and New York, Page147.

Karl Marx cited by AR Desai in Social Background of Indian Nationalism, Popular Prakashan, Mumbai, Page-xviii.


Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft: Terms introduced into social science by the German Sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies in 1887. Most commonly translated as ‘community’ and ‘association’, the concepts refer not only to idealized types of society but also broadly to forms of social organization and social relationships. The movement from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft indicates the idealized transition from small, rural, tightly knit communities in which kinship ties and traditional values predominate, to an associational impersonal industrial society based on the rational pursuit of self-interest and contract characterized by heterogeneity and diverse belief-systems, Oxford Dictionary of Politics, p-219.

See OP Gauba, Interest articulation implies the processes whereby opinions, attitudes, beliefs, preferences, etc. are converted into coherent demands on the political system. This function may be performed by various structures, but interest groups are most suited to perform this function, Approaches to the Study of Politics, An Introduction to Politial Theory, Macmillan, New Delhi, page-113.

Karl Marx cited by AR Desai in Social Background of Indian Nationalism, Popular Prakashan, Mumbai, Page-xviii


SK Chaube referred by Udayan Misra in The Periphery Strikes Back- Challenges To the Nation-State in Assam and Nagaland, page-46.


Interaction with the speaker of the NSF, Kohima

17 According to VK Nuh 90 % of Nagas are rural people as cited by Kaka D Iralu in the Naga Saga, Kaka D Iralu, 2009, page-20.


25 The NSCN (IM) group has minimal support in areas under ENPO’s jurisdiction where the Khaplang group exercises sway. For illustration see Appendix X (12), (14)


28 4 tribal regions slam Muivah, Nagaland Post, July 1, 2010, Page-1

29 The Background of ENPO Separate State Demand, http://nagalandjournal.wordpress.com/2013/04/19/the-background-of-enpo-separate-state-demand/, accessed on 08/05/2014.


33 4 tribal regions slam Muivah, Nagaland Post, July 1, 2010, page-1.

34 The names and addresses of respondents have been withheld at their request.

35 See Khomdan Singh Lisam, Encyclopaedia of Manipur, p-462, from, http://books.google.co.in/books?id=Z6d-1ylNTtk4C&pg=PA461&lpg=PA461&dq=khaplang+on+tangkhuls&source=bl&ots=QaUsnWP_FAA&sig=ppGoEl9Ren1p14b0OISLu4OofRQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=Cy8oVNbrO47nuQ52h0LYCW&ved=0CCoQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=khaplang%20on%20tangkhuls&f=false, accessed on 11/08/2013.


38 Nagaland Post, June 8, 2010

39 Khomdan Singh Lisam, Encyclopaedia of Manipur, p-462, from, http://books.google.co.in/books?id=Z6d-lyljNtk4C&pg=PA461&lpg=PA461&dq=khaplang+on+tangkhuls&source=bl&ots=QaUsnWP_EA&sig=ppGoEl9Ren1p14b0OISLu4OprFQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=Cy8oVNBprO47nuQSZhLYCw&ved=0CCoQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=khaplang%20on%20tangkhuls&f=false, accessed on 11/08/2013


47 The Nagas Beyond the Ceasefire, Nagaland Post, October 22, 2011


49 Hoho Sees no Threat to the Council, http://www.telegraphindia.com/1131007/jsp/northeast/story_1735517.jsp#VGymn7Hs0, accessed on 03/05/2014.

50 Prof. John Sema’s interaction with students on “Alternative Arrangement for the Nagas of Manipur”, Nagaland University, Lumami, March 2014.

51 Ibid.

52 Sema Public Against relentless NSCN (IM), Nagaland Post, January 3, 2014.


54 According to VK Nuh, 5 % are middle class, as cited by Kaka D Iralu in the Naga Saga, Kaka D Iralu, Page-20.


Secularization of culture denotes the process by which people gradually adopt more rational, empirical and analytical outlook in their political thinking and action, OP Gauba, An Introduction to Political Theory, p-554.

Structural differentiation implies the evolution of distinct structures, organs or institutions for the performance of different functions of political system. At the input level, it envisages the emergence of suitable non-governmental structures for performing the functions of political socialization (family, peer groups, etc), interest articulation (interest groups), interest aggregation (political parties) and political communication (media or mass communication), OP Gauba, An Introduction to Political Theory, p-554.

Notably, some Naga scholars use the term nations to describe the different Naga tribes who constitute the greater Naga nation. If we go by the primordialist argument, then each Naga tribe comes very close to be classified as a ‘nation, with strong primordial features determining its place and significance in the larger Naga self-determination movement.

Political modernization takes place at various levels- At the Psychological level, it involves change in norms, values, attitudes and orientations of the people; at the intellectual level, it involves a tremendous expansion of man’s knowledge about his environment and diffusion of this knowledge throughout the society through increased literacy and mass communications; at the demographic level, it implies improvements in the standards of living and progress to the mobility of people and urbanization; at the social level, it has a tendency to replace the focus of individual loyalty to family and other primary groups of voluntary organized associations and; at the economic level, it involves the growth of market agriculture, development of industrialization and widening of the economic activity (Johari 1982: 195).