PREFACE

Northeast India has been witnessing various forms of movements and conflicts as a result of competing assertions of the ethnic identities in the region. Despite the reorganization of states in the northeast India on ethnic lines, the region continues to witness identity assertions and ethnic movements of diverse forms. The assertion of ethnic identities and ethnic movements in the northeast is not confined to the larger communities or nationalities; many of the smaller ethnic communities in the region are also asserting and articulating their rights, interests and identities. In spite of the fact that ethnicity is a collective or group affair, there are always individuals or group of individuals that articulate, organize, educate, and lead the masses and movements. The crucial role played by the elites in the ethno-national movements and in the identity discourses of a community or nationality makes it necessary to comprehend the nature and role of indigenous ethnic elites. The present doctoral thesis entitled, ‘Role of Paite Elites in the Construction of Paite and Zomi Identities in Manipur’, is an attempt at understanding and analyzing the nature of Paite elites and the role they play in the identity politics of the community. The thesis has six chapters, each focusing on the different aspects of the study. The study uses information collected from both primary and secondary sources. The study relies on theoretical insights of different scholars of ethnicity for analyzing and explaining different but inter-related dimensions relevant to the study.

A number of people have helped me in completing this thesis. I sincerely acknowledge their support, cooperation, and valuable advice and express my deep appreciation to all of them.

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Thianlalmuan Ngaihte