CHAPTER-II

MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT
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The migration of peoples and tribes has been an important aspect in history since the very inception of human society. There has been migration from one country to another and from one continent to another. This movement has always shaped and reshaped human history. In the European continent, the Germanic and Celtic tribes crossed over to Rome and laid the foundation of early medieval society in Europe. A classical example of the history of migration was that of the Maori people who migrated from Havaiki in the Eastern Pacific to Aotearoa - "Land of the Long White Clouds" - which later became New Zealand when the Europeans migrated to the islands and defeated the Maoris. India also has its long history of migrations. Aryans crossed over from Central Asia and settled in India.


2. Robert Paul Jordan, "New Zealand: The Last Utopia?" in National Geographic, Vol. 171, No. 5, May, 1987. The history of the Maori people was also told to the scholar by Te Rangi Huata, a Maori people from New Zealand. Havaiki was a legendary island which no longer exists, but the famous voyage of the Maoris by canoes formed an interesting part of the Maori history of New Zealand.

Ever since, different peoples and races had been migrating to India from all directions.

The non-Aryans came both before and after the Aryans to the Indian sub-continent. The non-Aryans who were in mainland India before the advent of the Aryans are generally described as aborigines, but their ancestors too must have migrated to India in different phases. The social categories described these days as 'tribals' had also migrated in various streams. There is evidence to show that some of the tribes of non-Aryan origin migrated to India much before the arrival of the Aryans. In the Indian context, the North Western and North Eastern frontiers have been the main entry points from very early times.

On the North Eastern Frontier, we find that the Boros were one of the first major tribal groups who migrated to the plains of Assam. Their language was fundamentally Tibeto-Burman. The other early groups which, perhaps, preceded them were speakers of the Austric group of languages.

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4. There are varied definitions of 'tribe', but the generally accepted version is that it is a small group of people who can trace their origins to a common ancestry, possessing a communal social organization peculiar to their custom and tradition, and remaining integrated because of their singular ethnicity.
They may have been akin to the present Khasis. Those tribes who came after these early groups and settled in this region were the various tribes of Koch, Hajong, Dalu, Garo, Mikir, Dimasa, Arleng, Chutiya, Moram, Lalung, Rabha, Mech, Adi, Apatani, Mishing, Nishi, Ahom, Singpho, Khamti, Kuki, Mizo, Naga and so on.

The Nagas who settled in the Naga Hills have various theories of their migration, often recorded by foreign writers. However, the earliest specific reference to the Nagas was made by Claudius Ptolemy in 150 A.D. in his Geographia where he referred to the Naga country as "The Realm of the Naked."

5. Rashid Yusuf Ali, administrator and scholar, who has studied the migration of tribes to the North Eastern region, was kind enough to provide his unpublished materials on the subject. See also W W Hunter, A Statistical Account of Assam, in two Vols., Delhi, 1975 (reprint).

6. Asoso Yonuo, The Rising Nagas, Delhi, 1974, pp. IX-X.

7. Claudius Ptolemy, Geographia VII, ii, p.18. Rashid Yusuf Ali was kind enough to translate the original text from the Greek.
On the basis of language, their origin is assigned by Sir G A Grierson to that of the Tibeto-Burmans, who came with the second wave of migration from North Western China between the upper waters of the Yangtse-Kiang and Hoang-Ho rivers. According to Grierson, the Angami Naga language is of the Tibeto-Chinese family.

Huang Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim who visited Assam during Bhaskarvarman's rule in 645 A.D. said,

"the east of this country is bounded by a line of hills, so that there is no great city to the kingdom. The frontiers are contiguous to the barbarians of south-west China. These tribes are in fact akin to those of the Man people in their customs."

Ahom Buranjees also recorded that by the time the Ahoms came to Assam in the thirteenth century, Nagas were already settled in Naga Hills. They wrote of Naga resistance to Sukapha, the founder of Ahom Kingdom. However, from all these pieces of evidence, the exact date of the arrival

9. Ibid.
   P Gogoi, The Tai and the Tai Kingdom, Gauhati, 1968, pp.256-258.
of the Nagas into the Naga Hills cannot be established with precision but at the same time their entrance before the Christian Era cannot be ruled out.

While discussing the history of Naga migration there emerge some important questions:

a. What was the original home of the Nagas before migrating to the Naga Hills?

b. What are circumstances that forced them to migrate from their original homeland?

c. What was the nature and route of migration?

Our sources do not provide the exact answers to all these questions at present but some of the legends, folktales and mythology examined with the help of the oral approach, do help to a great degree in solving these problems. Basically, for much of its history, South East Asia has been oriented towards the two great world cultures - China on one hand, and India on the other. In South

12. Due to the lack of written or recorded sources it makes it exceedingly difficult to analyse the history of the Nagas particularly for the pre-British period. However, the tribal societies had their own ways of recording events from generation to generation through professional story-tellers. It is the information extracted from them which lends credence to our analysis.
East Asia, the earliest settlers were Paleolithic or pre-Paleolithic food-gatherers, hunters, fishers and folk who had not made the transition to a stone-using culture. The units of this social organization seem to have been small. Often the hunting group or the clan, though in its infancy, were nomadic in habit and generally moved in a defined hunting territory. A traditional division of labour existed between the sexes. The men concentrated on hunting while the women and children collected insects and vegetables for food. By and large, the people could be labelled as primitive. Yet in some of their practices one can glimpse the beginnings of agriculture. For example, the Semang of Malaya devised a rudimentary form of tree cultivation and put back into the ground the tips of wild yams in

14. Ibid.
15. S D Marshall has clearly maintained a distinction between the peasant and primitive. He mentions that "in primitive economies most production is geared to use of producers or to discharge of kinship obligations rather than to exchange and gain. A corollary is that de facto control of means of production is decentralised, local, and familial in primitive society...." S D Marshall, "Political Power and the Economy in Primitive Society" in Essays in Science of Culture in Honour of Leslie A White, edited by G E Dole and R L Carriero, New York, 1960, p. 408.
order that a fresh crop might grow. Some of the groups did not use hoe or plough but remained satisfied with digging sticks while other groups practised sedentary agriculture with the hoe as the basic implement. In fact, there were racial contacts between these groups in spite of the technological contrasts. Those who practised the more primitive type of agriculture belonged to some of the earlier stock like Negrito and Nesiot, who originally occupied much of the region but who were increasingly displaced by later groups.

In course of time some of the tribes in upland areas inserted themselves into the existing ecological equilibrium and created for themselves a living space with minimum disruption of that equilibrium incapable of mastering nature. There was a passive adjustment to the environment. In generalized terms these groups would not reach the age of stable agricultural systems based on furrowing. The shifting cultivation was more a shifting of fields rather than a

16. John K Fairbank, Edwin O Reschauer, and Albert M Craig, East Asia Tradition and Transformation, London, 1973, p. 18 - "Rice, which is the chief cereal of Asia today, is a plant of Southeast Asian origin, and its cultivation was already well established in the Yangtze Valley in pre-historic times".

shifting of crops. The growing population pressure necessitated an increasing area of land which caused some of these groups who could not cope with the environment to migrate to other parts in search of more favourable conditions. At this stage the migrants were directed by the intervening barriers of mountains and jungles southwards along the seaways of the Malayan world. The other factor which added to this migration within Asia was the expansion of the Chinese Han people pushing southwards as population grew in the cradle area in the valley of the Yellow River. They filled up sub-tropical and tropical China and the pressure of population triggered the momentum which set off great ripples of migration which affected the whole of Asia. As Buchanan remarks,

18. The amount of land for shifting cultivation was not enough to correspond to the growing population. The ratio of agricultural land must have also been maintained at a low rate due to the nature of technology. Keeping in view the claims of the clan, the kinship obligations, particularly at a time when everything was to be made from the produce of the land and in view of the primitive agrarian technology and the means of irrigation, there clearly was a low land to man ratio.


20. Ibid.

over hundreds of years the pre-Chinese peoples of Central Asia were displaced into the upland areas of Indo-Chinese lands far to the South and their pressure in turn triggered tribal movements which affected the whole of mainland South East Asia and the adjoining island worlds. 22

These immigrant tribes took different routes. Some took the Himalayan section which extends down through the Patkai, Arakan Yoma, and Banda Arch towards Sumatra and Java, and some took the Pacific section which extends from Formosa through the Phillipines, Borneo and on to Japan. 23

From the above description it can be argued that perhaps the Nagas were among those tribes who migrated from China through the Patkain section and settled on the way in the Naga Hills. There are living examples to illustrate how during migration some of the tribes broke away and settled down enroute. In Borneo and Formosa, there are some tribes who still have the same traditions, culture, tribal socio-religious organizations as the Nagas in the

Naga Hills. Some of the mountain tribes of Vietnam also have much in common with some Naga tribes, particularly in manner of dress and food habits.

The Naga scholar, Horam, has his own views about the original home of his people. He writes,

"There can be little doubt that at one time the Nagas must have wandered about before they found their permanent abode; from their myths and legends one gathers that there is a dim relationship with the natives of Borneo in that the two have a common traditional way of headhunting; with the Phillipines and Formosa through the common system of terrace cultivation; and with the Indonesians, as both use the loin loom for weaving cloth. The embroidery on the Naga cloths resemble the kind done on Indonesian cloths."  

According to the Burma Census Report, successive invasion of Tibeto-Burman peoples came from the region of Western China, between the sources of the Yangtse-Kiang and Hoang-Ho rivers. Marshall writes,

24. Hans Mathisen, a Sami tribal from Norway has conducted a comparative study of the Nagas and the tribes of Formosa and found many similarities in cultural and social organisations. He visited both the places in 1977. But unfortunately his travel accounts have not been published. The author of this thesis met him personally in Norway in 1984 to get this information.

25. The scholar visited South Vietnam in 1974 and met members of the mountain people, and noted certain striking similarities between the two tribes, particularly, some weaving patterns were identical.


"the early home of the people of Eastern Asia was in the upper reaches of Hoang-Ho or the Yellow River of China and that from this centre the Tibetans moved westwards; the early tribes of Indo-China southwards; and the Chinese south-eastwards. According to this view the progenitors of the Karen probably formed a part of their southward migration."28

Another Naga, Alemchiba, says,

"We can conclude that, the original stock starting from the centre of dispersion in Sikiang Province first moved westerly and upon reaching the headwaters of Irrawady and Chindwin rivers, bifurcated into several directions, ultimately leading to Tibet, to Assam, to the hill ranges between Assam and Burma. That branch which came to the hill range moved further west and entered Naga Hills. Another wave from South East Islands taking a north-westerly direction and entered Naga Hills using Burma as a corridor."29

Another scholar we have referred to earlier is Hutton. He wrote,

"The history of how the Naga tribes came precisely to occupy their present position has, of course, passed into the dim obscurity of vague traditions. But enough of them remain to give some indication of the course which

28. Ibid., p.6. - The Karens of Burma are closely related to the Nagas.

the migration took. The legends of the Aos and of the Semas give those tribes a more or less autochthonous origin, though these legends are probably the old legends of the race which have been given a local value. The Angamis, too, spring from ancestors who emerged from the bowels of the earth, but that not in Angami country, but in some land to the south. And all the weight of tradition points to migration from the south, except in the case of Kacha Naga.30

All these observations suggest very important solutions to two aspects: (a) the origin of the Nagas, and (b) the route of migration. It becomes amply clear that the Nagas came from the Mongoloid stock who migrated from China before the Christian Era. This also suggests that the migration of these Nagas did not take place in one wave. It must have continued for some centuries in various groups because our oral sources, folklore and other legendary sources do support us in suggesting that all the Naga tribes did not split up into different tribes only from Naga Hills itself. There are some tribes like Angami, Sema, Lotha, Rengma, and Chakhesang who have branched out from Khezhakenoma.31 But there are other tribes too who branched out

31. Khezhakenoma is the original home of many Naga tribes. It is named after Koza the founder of the village. Khezhakenoma villagers still call their village Kozami, which means 'man of Koza'.
Source: from Khezhakenoma villagers.
either enroute to Naga Hills or in their early homeland. The former tradition seems to be more probable, so far as the question of the racial symptoms of the Nagas are concerned, there is no doubt that they are a Mongoloid race and a distinct unit in themselves, but the centuries of migration on their route must have certainly brought them into contact not only with some other races but must have also been influenced by their technology and varied social, political, and religio-cultural traditions. To accept Horam's view that they are of a mixed blood and that "no Naga tribe is of pure blood"\(^{32}\) is historically unintelligible.

It is also difficult to believe that the art of terrace cultivation practised by the Angamis and the Igorot of Philippines is the same and that they could be one as has been put forward by W C Smith.\(^{33}\) The way the art of cultivation is carried out does not always depend on the way man wants to carry it out, but often depends on definite environmental and ecological conditions. Eric Wolf has profoundly established how such environmental factors play a role in evolving a diverse society.


"Civilization has a long and involved history; the archeological record indicates a great diversity in the processes which allowed men in different parts of the world to make the transition from primitives to peasants.... From these or similar original centres, cultivation spread out with variable speed in different directions, being adapted to demands of new climates and new social exigencies."34

However, the influences of the races they came into contact with cannot be completely ignored.

A thorough examination of sources leads one to believe that the Nagas took the route of the Patkain Himalayan section and it could be possible that some branch of the tribe did not settle in Naga Hills but continued their march to Borneo, Java, Sumatra and the Phillipines. The view that they took the Pacific section and then reached the Naga Hills is not historically convincing and appropriate.35 Although the possibility of some branch having taken a different direction through the Pacific cannot be ruled out, yet Alemchiba on the basis of Marshall's view and the Burma Census Report, derives the conclusion which is not far from our view so far as the origin of the Naga is concerned.36

Apart from this written record as a source material, we have some oral source - folklore, legends and traditions which throw light on the subject of migration. Today, almost all the Naga tribes trace their origin back to the village of Khezhakenoma in Nagaland. Khezhakenoma is a village in Chakhesang area near the present Manipur border. The legend tells us that a person named Kosa came from the East and after reaching Mekroma (Maikhel) in Manipur he rested for some time and pondered on which way his steps should lead him next. Ultimately, he prayed to his God for guidance. Suddenly a bird flew by and

37. The legends of Khezhakenoma are very popular in Nagaland. The scholar met many elders from various villages to get this information during field work. It is impossible to mention them all by name but the main informants are the following from Khezhakenoma:

From Chisomi clan:
Mr Vivotso (63) Area Council Member
Mr Lhouchinyi (61)
Mr D K Ngone (53) Ex-Village Chairman
Mr Selu (52) Gaon Bura
Mr Mebemvu (90) - the eldest man in the village

From Zeipfemi clan:
Mr Khalo Ladu (58) Area Council member
Mr C Kedonyi (52) School Teacher
Mr Kepfelhou, Gaon Bura

From Komino clan:
Mr Chelo (64)
Mr Ngoc (75) Ex-Gaon Bura
Mr Kodova (50) Gaon Bura
Mr Kevekha Zehol, research scholar NEHU, who also acted as interpreter for the author.
alighted on the horn of his mithun and then flew off again in the direction of Khehakenoma. In order to doubly check this guidance from above, he placed his walking stick on the ground and the stick fell down, pointing in the same direction towards which the bird had flown. Koza took this to be direct guidance from the Spirits to continue his journey in that specific direction. He set off for Khehakenoma and upon reaching his destination, legend has it that he saw the very same bird that had appeared to him earlier resting there upon a stone. Later on, Koza found that a frog had brought a grain of rice and left it on the Stone where it multiplied into two. Tradition continues to state that Koza also brought a basket of rice which doubled when placed on the Stone. He then decided to settle down in Khehakenoma along with his cattle wealth. Koza was blessed with sons in course of time. The sons continued the practice of spreading rice on the Sacred Stone. However, one day they began to fight over whose

38. Mithun is the most valued and prestigious animal among all the Naga tribes. It is the status symbol demonstrating wealth and power. The original word for mithun is not known but perhaps originates from the Angami word mithu meaning cow. Bos Frontalis is its Latin name.

39. According to legend, Koza stuck his rod into the ground where it took root and grew into a tree. There is still a tree in Maikhel village which is supposed to be an off-shoot of the original tree. This tree is much revered by the people of Maikhel because of its connection with Koza.
turn it was to spread the rice on the Stone. Koza's wife realized then that the Stone would prove to be a bone of contention between her sons. So she lit a great fire under it. The Stone exploded with a mighty sound like thunder, and the Power of the Stone left it and went to Heaven.  

Legend traces the growth of Koza's people in this land as they prospered and multiplied. It is said that their numbers swelled to seven thousand and resulted in the formation of the seven villages of (1) Khezhakenoma, (2) Tipfolomi, (3) Mobvolomi, (4) Laculomi, (5) Chilhuomi, (6) Pfulomi, and (7) Chichulomi. As they increased in number, the land grew too small for them. Thus the people migrated in search of land and food. The people spread out in different directions and formed the different Naga tribes.

Although the legend of Khezhakenoma is generally accepted by most of the Naga tribes, viz., Angami, Chakhesang, Rengma, Sema, Zeliang, Lotha, etc., some of the other

41. This is the original content of the legend as told by the people of Khezhakenoma.
tribes have their own versions and legends. For instance, the Aos have a legend that they originated from six stones which were shaped in the form of the male and female human reproductive organs. These stones were from Chongliyimti, a village in the Sangtam area, where to this day they are located.\(^{42}\)

A careful examination of these legends and folklore reveal that when the first wave of migration took place, a branch of this Mongoloid race, after taking the Patkain section, must have reached Manipur area first after crossing Burma. This assumption can be made in the light of the legends of many Naga tribes in Manipur which refer to Maikhel as their original homeland.\(^{43}\) Although Nagaland does have a direct border with Burma, migration seems to have taken place from the south in Manipur. A possible reason for this could be the course of the Chindwin river which flows southwards towards Manipur where it meets a tributary flowing down from Manipur near Tammu, a village in the present Manipur-Burma border.\(^{44}\) It is most probable that these early groups of migrants used the Chindwin river as their guide since it is the largest river in the


\(^{44}\) Please see Map for routes of migration at the end of this chapter.
region. It therefore is quite probable that while some may have continued southward, others could have settled near the confluence and even followed the tributary northwards through Manipur towards Nagaland. The theory that they followed the course of the Chindwin river is supported by an Angami legend which says that they travelled across "big waters" before they arrived at their present homeland. If this is the migratory route they followed, it would substantiate the theory that the tribes entered Nagaland from the south and not via its northern border.

After entering Manipur, they might have settled in and around Maikhel. Since the early tribal community before settling in Naga Hills was pastoral in nature, the settlers would look for land that was conducive to agriculture as well as good for pasture. It is perhaps as a result of this that some branch of the same tribe followed their chief, Kosha, and left for Kheshakenoma. This land must have had considerable attraction for them as it was virgin land before Kosha arrived.

The legend of the Bird and the Walking Stick could be an exaggeration, but it was also a part of the early tradition where everything good or bad was attributed

45. This legend was told by Peselie, an old man of 85 years from Kohima village.
to nature and man was not in a position to be the author of his own actions. As is usual, myths and legends have a tendency to be exaggerated, and here it is interesting to note the mention of Koza’s mithun. The mithun (Bos Frontalis) is a wild bison. The domestication of this wild animal prior to the arrival of Koza is most unlikely.

The legend which refers to the Frog, the Sacred Stone, and the Single Grain of Rice which multiplied provides some important clues. That Koza and his followers had rice with them could point to a knowledge, on their part, of the art of agriculture. The mention of the frog provides a clue to the nature of the local fauna which in turn would indicate that the land was suitable for their purposes as frogs are generally a type of amphibian found in areas which have a good water supply throughout the year. The story of rice multiplying on the Sacred Stone could reflect the fertility of the land they had come to. When Koza’s group arrived, the general condition of the land – its fertility as well as the pasture land must have induced them to settle there for a while. A careful examination of this site makes it amply clear that what has been referred to as the Sacred Stone is actually a raised platform of stones on which a dolmen was found which is now cracked in several
parts.\textsuperscript{46} The other probable thesis which can explain the existence of this stone is that since the people of Kosa's group were not well aware of the ecological and environmental conditions of Kheshakenoma, and finding by chance some grains of rice on the rock, they must have deduced that the land was suitable for the cultivation of this crop. The stone may have been used for threshing paddy and that was how some rice was left on it, which would give them this clue. Whatever the possible conjectures, it is as a result of this that the stone is held most sacred.\textsuperscript{47}

However, after settling down in Kheshakenoma, Kosa's clan seems to have been placed in a more advantageous position than they were in their previous settlements. On the one hand, they were now possessed with fertile land for settled wet agriculture. On the other hand, the forest areas not only provided wood and cane for their domestic needs but also some land for dry agriculture which could be devoted to cereals, pulses, maize, etc., and the grazing lands to support their cattle. Apart from this the new fauna and flora gave them an added advantage. Birds and

\textsuperscript{46} The exhaustive field work of the author includes his visit of the Sacred Stone of Kosa in Kheshakenoma village. See photograph of the Stone at the end of this chapter.

\textsuperscript{47} In early times, when society was not yet developed to combat the natural forces with scientific tools and mind because of a lack of knowledge, various spirits and powers were attributed to all the natural forces involved in any economic activity concerning human life.
animals multiplied in new varieties by cross-breeding and domestication. A living example of this is the mithun. This rare animal which is found only in the North Eastern region is the result of domestication of the wild *Bos Frontalis*.

However, gradually, as population went on increasing, Koza's generation subjected nature and brought more land under terrace cultivation and supplemented their living by hunting and craft-making. This was the natural and historically inevitable course to follow. What was the nature of this development in settlement and what were the main hindrances will form part of our discussion from here onwards.

Generally, the setting up of human society does not alone depend on the amount of human labour power that will be utilized for various production techniques, but depends much on the ecology, environment and demography of the area they were settling in. It generally depends on the nature of the soil, the capacity of arable land, the availability of forest land, pasture, and other resources of the area. It also has a close relationship with nature and technology.  

The examination of the landscape and the ecology of the area clearly reveals that these Naga Hills were rich in forests, pasture and fruits. Besides, there were varieties of wild animals in these thickly wooded forests to support human habitation. But here emerges an important question that any student of history can ask his source materials: if this was the case, then why did the transition not take place to another mode of production? Or, why did society continue to remain unchanged in tribal formation?

Our assumption, which is based only on oral information of legends and traditions, is that when some groups of tribes first came and settled in Khezhakenoma area they started terrace cultivation. But the natural disruption, the backward and primitive technology did not permit them to develop their material resources. Though these tribes were agriculturists and also reared animals, it should be noted that they never utilized their cattle for labour power in agriculture or for transportation. Even when they found some portions of land were favourable to settled agriculture, they still continued to depend on human labour.

49. Tradition reveals that hunting played an important part in this society. Ritually, hunting and war were closely related. In the Angami language, the two words are synonymous - "chu-terhu" literally meaning "hunting-war".
power only. Here, it clearly indicates that this was an important factor which strengthened the tribal social organization based on the communal mode because of the absence of technology and any labour other than their own. As these men were forced to depend on the members of their community, obviously, the division of labour could not grow that fast. The other reason that was responsible for such slow growth was that in those early days, their strength and schedule was largely determined by nature. 50

The lack of labour force did not help them in cultivating their land appropriately and when they were not certain of their one crop economy, they continued to subsist on hunting and food gathering. The other factor was that the area remained completely cut off from the growing influence of the world. The people maintained isolation because the coming of more people would have affected their livelihood though it would also present its own contribution in various

50. Charles Montesquieu rightly believes in the influence of soil and climate on the history of nations. He believes that geographical environment determines men's needs and that these needs in turn determine the laws and usages evolved in one social milieu or another. Montesquieu is right in asserting that the geographical conditions of an area determine the social conditions. But what is wrong with his thesis is that geography alone is insufficient to explain the history of nations, and that the additional objective historical reasons have also their own role to play. Kh. Monjan, Landmarks in History, Moscow, 1979, p.89.
ways. Therefore, we can postulate that due to these factors, their material life did not improve much. It also appears that only when the supply of their hunting was almost exhausted, would they start looking for alternate sources of sustenance.

It was this slow pace of development which prolonged the transition from tribal conditions to non-tribal and served to keep tribal ties very strong. When these tribes started looking for alternate avenues of sustenance, they were forced to settle in various sparsely populated settlements within the Naga Hills. It was due to this reason that some went from Khesahkenoma to the southern Angami area.51

From the demography of Naga settlement, it seems that a group of people from within the tribe came into conflict with Koza's authority in Khesahkenoma and that the group went back to Manipur and, in course of time, the migration from Khesahkenoma took a serious turn because now we see that generally all who came out from Koza's group proceeded in a westerly direction and some towards the north-west of the Naga Hills. One really faces a problem while looking for an answer to the question of why this migration proceeded in two directions only and not to other areas which were supposed to have been equally virgin.

51. The Southern Angami group is also known as Zonuo-Keyhonuo.
at the time. Probably one can believe that by the time migration from Khezhakenoma took place the Manipurs were already settled in their present homeland. The other reason could be that the northern Naga tribes had also entered into Naga Hills and started spreading in westerly and south-western directions. Possibly because of this Tenyimia group the northern tribes did not proceed towards the south Naga Hills and in the southwest direction.

It seems that during Kozas time clanship or chiefship among the Nagas was deeply rooted and Kozas appears to have divided areas under his various clanships, like one group which went to Manipur and became Tangkhuls. The other tribes which emerged were Sema, Rengma, Lotha, Zeliang, Mao, Maram and Angami. Except for the Tangkhuls, all the others who branched out from Khezhakenoma had relationships with Angami which makes it clear that the Tangkhuls who left for Manipur either lost contact with the Angamis or came under the influence of the Meiteis.

58. Ibid.
It could also be possible that during Koza's lifetime some sub-clans emerged to control larger areas and after his death they split into independent units of full-fledged clans or tribes. Here it should be noted that the formation of these tribes took place much later though the process of migration had set in.

Among these, one group which occupied a village known as Sumi became the Sema tribe. Hutton wrote,

"the Semas point to the south direction from which they came. They relate the story of the Kheshakenoma Stone as well as many other folktales common to the Angamis and Lothas, particularly the latter. They do not, however, trace their origin south of Mao, but point to Tuhaju (Japvo) as the place from which they sprang. The ancestors of the Sema came from that mountain and the Sema villages spread, according to one account, from Sumi or Somi, a village near Kesabama."

But according to the Kheshakenoma version the ancestor of the Semas who left Kheshakenoma was a man called Chilo and his descendants came to be known as Chimi from his name and hence the name Sema.

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63. This information was obtained from Kheshakenoma village elders as already referred.
As mentioned earlier, one of the groups left Kheskakenoma and went to Manipur and settled in a place which has been called Kozabe which means 'Koza's place' the name of the place which still remains to this day. This group must have found that the Meiteis had already occupied the valley of Manipur, so they settled in the hills in dispersed settlements. It is probably due to these reasons which imply a sparse nature of settlement that the Tangkhul tribe got its name. In Meitei language - literally, Tang means scarce and khul means village. However, Hodson gave another version of Tangkhul migration. He wrote,

"In the case of the Tangkhuls, the tradition as to their origin resolves themselves into at least three groups. In the first group are the traditions which connect them with the valley and derive them thence as immigrants on account of heat and mosquitoes. According to the second group of traditions, the village of Hundung (which must be distinguished from Tangkhul Hundung) is the centre of their dispersion, and the story is clear that they sprang from immigrants from the village of Maikhel Tungam (a village which is also the traditional home of the common ancestors of the quasi-Angami tribes in the Mao group). The Tangkhul legend is to the effect that one day a sow, heavy with young, wandered from the village of Hundung and was tracked to the valley of the younger of the two brothers who had migrated from the village of Maikhel to Tungam."  

64. This information has been cross examined and verified by interviewing a Tangkhul Naga, Ayo, from Manipur.  
The Zeliang consisting of Zemi and Liangmei tribes have various versions of their migrations. The descendants of Koza believe that they went on a hunting expedition and while pursuing a stag, lost their way home and thus settled in their present homeland. But the Zeliangs themselves say that they came through the Japfu mountain near Mao country. This view would also mean that at one time they branched out from Kheshakenoma. There is also an explanation of how they were termed as Kacha Naga. It was believed that the word was derived from the Hindustani word, kacha the antonym of pukka but the Zeliangs themselves deny this version. They say that when a British officer asked the name of a tribe, an Angami interpreter said that they were all Ketsa meaning 'forest' in Angami because the Zeliang were known to be forest inhabitants, the land being thickly wooded. Whatever may be their origin, it is erroneous on the part of the British writers to refer to them as inferior.

Another group from Kheshakenoma left and formed the two big villages of Kheso and Sohe. From there they

66. Based on the information from Kheshakenoma village.
68. This is the version of Zeliang group of Nagas.
moved to Pfuchumi, the present Pudanamai, then to Pubonamai, and onwards to Tadubi and so on until they occupied the whole of the present Mao-Maram country. Here it is important to note the importance of Maikhel village of Mao. According to the Khezhakenoma legend this was the place where Koza stopped to rest and where he was directed by the Spirits to proceed to Khezhakenoma. But some Mao legends tell us that this village was the centre from where they migrated to other parts. Hodson wrote,

"At Maikhel is to be seen a stone, now erect, which marks the place from which the common ancestors emerged from the earth. Maikhel is regarded as the centre from which migration took place."  

The group of people who left the Mao country first but proceeded to the area known as Soheme, are presently known as the Rengmas. The present Rengma tribe, however, consists of a number of clans who directly migrated from Khonoma. Some of these clans are Lorin, Kepen, Kemp.

69. Information of Khezhakenoma villagers.
72. Even in 1974 some members of these clans came to Khonoma for the clan reunion feast. The author of the thesis was a participant of the feast.
The section which migrated to a distant area from Khezhakenoma came to be known as Lothas — the ones who settle in a far-off land. The Khezha word for far is Lotha. But there are other versions too, and the Lotha call themselves Kyong probably from their own word Kyon, which means Man.

The Chakhesang tribe is a combination of three smaller tribes — Chakri, Khezha, and Sangtam. The Khezhas are the original descendants of Koza who remained in Khezhakenoma and the surrounding villages. The Chakri settled next to the Khezha, but further to the west. The third tribe — the Sangtams — is the smallest of the three and call themselves Puchori, again a combination of three clans — Pu, Cho, and Ri.

The Angami tribe, which forms the focal point in this thesis, is also a group which traces its origins to Khezhakenoma. The legend says that a group from Khezhakenoma

74. Ben Lotha gave this information.
75. The formation of Chakhesang Tribe took place in the post Independent era and the formation of Puchori is very recent. Unfortunately there is no written record on these tribes. The only work now being done on the tribe is by A Venuh.
went and settled down at Khesoura. There lived a man called Kesieu at Khesoura. He had two sons - Pfuvio and Vadio. Pfuvio stayed on and his descendants went further north, and Vadio migrated to Maikhel in Mao country. Vadio had four sons and two of them - Zuonuo and Keyhonuo - became the ancestors of the Zuono-Keyhonuo group of Angamis. The descendants of Zuono-Keyhonuo, in the process of migration and expansion formed ten villages which later were termed by the British as the southern Angamis. These villages are Kigwema, Viswema, Jakhama, Khusama, Kidima, Kesoma, Phesama, Pfachoma, Mima, and Mitelephe.77

Our oral traditions and legends suggest that the descendants of Zuonuo and Keyhonuo increased in the village of Kigwema and therefore some of them decided to migrate to other villages. Hence the village acquired the name Kigwema, meaning 'people who occupied the old house.'78 One of these migrants known as Vise founded Viswema village. Later another group went to Jakhama. Some clans of Jakhama believe that they got their name from the word Mejakha which means 'to stop or block the "Mejamai", the northern


See also N K Das, Agrarian Situation in India, Delhi, 1985, Vol. I, p. 86. "The Zuonuo-Keyhonuo consider themselves as a particular clan descended from Zuono and Keyhonuo, the twin ancestors of all living.

77. Based on field work.

78. Literally, Ki=house, gwe=occupied or old, ma=man.
tribes. They say that this happened because Jakha was sent to form a village in order to stop the northern tribes from invading the Angamis. The Angamis refer to all the northern tribes such as Semas, Lothas, Aos as Mejamia or Mejamia. Hence, from the word Mejaka came Jakhama, Kha meaning to stop or block, and ma meaning man.\textsuperscript{79} Others say that one of the descendants of Zuonuo-Keyhonuo was a man called Jakha, the brother of Vise, who founded the village of Jakhama.\textsuperscript{80} Likewise, in the process the other villages emerged due to increasing population.

It was from this group that people migrated further and formed the northern and western Angami villages. These villages were formed almost at the same time but some villages were settled before the others. In the western group Jotsoma and Secuma were settled before Khonoma and Mezoma. Likewise, Merema in the northern group was one of the oldest villages. In fact legends tell us that the present Angami religion was founded in Merema village. There was a man called Jieseu who became very rich. He wanted to give a Feast of Merit to his villagers but had forgotten the rituals connected with it.\textsuperscript{81} Then he

\textsuperscript{79} Vithuto an Angami from the Jakhama village gave this information.

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{81} A Feast of Merit is a symbol of status. The greater the number of such feasts given to the village, the higher one's social standing. Thus, there are degrees of Feasts of Merit. Petenihu Chase of Merhu of Khonoma village was kind enough to narrate all the details of the legend of Jieseu to the writer.
had a dream and God told him in the dream to go ahead with the preparations. Jiesen got ready with his mithaus.

At night the Spirit of God came and recited all the blessings, prayers and rituals connected with the ceremony. Jiesen repeated all these after Him. Thus the Angamis revived their old religious practices which in course of time had been dominated by the other practices in the process of their long migration.82

Natural circumstances caused them to further migrate and in due course the northern villages of Kohima, Nerhema, Tophe, Keruma, Merema, Rukhroma, Ciedema, Seiyhama, Chiezhiema, Phekerukrie, Chiophobozhu, Gariphe, Tsiese, Vipho, Diho, Jumetu and Chiechama were formed.83 In the western sector, the villages of Jotsoma and secuma prospered and grew and soon the other villages of Khonoma, Mesoma, Kiruphema, Khabvuma, Thekrujuna and Dzulekema were formed.84

The last group of villages that were formed were known as Chakhroma, literally meaning 'those who live

82. Ibid.
83. Of all these villages it is Kohima which had figured prominently in records from the British occupation of Naga Hills and after. However, the importance of other villages in their own context is no less significant.
84. Based on field work.
below the road'. They were so referred to because they went down to the plains for settlement as a result of Angami expansion. It was this group that first came into contact with the Dimasas in Dimapur, as one of the main villages, Chumukedima, was settled on the plains near Dimapur the capital of the Dimasa Kingdom.\textsuperscript{85} The Chakhroma villages too began to expand and in the process formed the new villages of Piphema, Medziphema, Sithekiema, Rusiephema, Socunoma, Pherima, Tsiepama and Tsuuma.\textsuperscript{86}

The Nagas who branched out of Khezhakenoma, broadly speaking, split up into two groups. The six tribes of Chakhesang, Angami, Rengma, Mao, Maram and Zeliang termed themselves as Tenyimia and more or less functioned in a confederation.\textsuperscript{87} At this stage we have no means of knowing how and when the Tenyimia group was formed, but we do know that the Tenyimia tribes called all the non-Tenyimia tribes ad Meahamia - which is a rather

\textsuperscript{85} Dimasas are among the earliest settlers in Assam valley. The capital of Dimasas was in Dimapur when they ruled Assam in ancient times. R M Nath, The Background of Assamese Culture, Shillong, 1949, p. 72.

\textsuperscript{86} These villages are presently located in western portions of Naga Hills.

\textsuperscript{87} From the field work conducted by the scholar.
deragatory term. The *Tenyimia* group shares some common traditions, culture and agricultural practices such as terrace cultivation whereas the *Meahamia* group practice jhum cultivation and were usually naked or semi-naked. Some traditions say that the *Tenyimia* are descendants of *Tenyiu*, one of the sons of *Wadio*. Others say that it comes from the word *Tanyumia* meaning 'those who ran away' because they left their original homeland and migrated elsewhere.

The Angamis seem to have emerged prosperous and powerful because they controlled the general affairs of some of the tribes for centuries. One of the reasons for the Angamis becoming powerful enough to manage the affairs of the other tribes is that in the process of breaking up, the Angamis took up settled agriculture and settled in areas which were more suitable for good agriculture and thereby improved their means of subsistence and increased their production. Hunting was left as a supplement. Gradually their number increased and they subdued the neighbouring tribes.

89. Zievilie Sakhrie of Khonoma village gave this information.
90. The Zeliangs and the Liangmeis especially were dominated by the Angamis.
It would not be historically incorrect to say that the Angamis laid the foundation of the process of state formation. We refer to it here as 'state formation' although under the Angamis the state did not develop to the extent of completely transforming tribal organisation but the symptoms of the dominating process of production did emerge with them. The most important factor that emerged is that the Angamis demanded tribute from other tribes as already mentioned and provided security to them in return. These were the basic fundamentals of the Angami state. It appears that as part of their tribal organisation, the Angamis did not interfere with the internal affairs of the other tribes, but continued to remain satisfied with the collection of tribute.

The refusal to pay tribute was taken as a denouncement of Angami power and authority. Such villages were burnt and properties were confiscated. A series of such developments gave the Angamis a political strength and security. It was from this time onwards that we find that the Angamis remained in constant touch with the affairs of the tribes bordering their territory.

92. Ibid.
However, in spite of all these advantages, the Angamis never formed a state as defined by H J M Claessen. 94 Curiously enough, the population of the Angamis, like that of all the Nagas, began to decrease when the British arrived in their land. This strange phenomenon occurred due to many factors which is beyond the scope of this thesis at present. But the British themselves recorded as Hodson wrote,

\[ \text{"There is, however, enough evidence to show that the Naga population is slowly diminishing. A village like Maram had 900 houses in 1859, 200 houses in 1891, 120 in 1900. There is, therefore, less pressure of population on land and formation of colonies is for the moment checked."} 95 \]

This factor was one of the main reasons that checked the expansion and development of Angami economy and political power. 96

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96. The decrease of the native population wherever colonization took place was a common phenomenon such as in the case of Aborigines of Australia, Maoris of New Zealand and Red Indians of America. In Naga Hills too the population began to diminish in the 19th century. There could be many reasons for this. A sudden contact with western civilization brought new diseases. In other cases, due to native resistance of colonial power, large numbers were decimated when villages were burnt, crops destroyed and the remaining population dispersed.
The Dimasa who were the earliest settlers of the region came into contact with the Angamis. But since the Angamis were expanding their territory to the plains, there was necessarily a lack of cordial relations between the two. The Angamis fought and defeated the remaining Dimasas and seized their capital at Dimapur which still forms part of present Nagaland. The relationship soon took on the nature of intermittent periods of war and peace, and both were influenced by each other's military tactics and other affairs as well. In cultural and social spheres we find various cases of intermarriage between the Dimasas and the Angamis right down to the present day. Hutton wrote of the Angami relationship with the Dimasa Kacharis as follows:

"They must have come into contact with the Kacharis, whose capital was at Dimapur on the edge of Angami country, and legends of the Kachari king Bhim are still current.

97. Prior to the attack of Angamis on Dimasas, the Ahoms had sacked the Dimasa Capital at Dimapur and defeated Dimasas.

98. The Pfulise clan of Khonoma are the descendants of a Dimasa princess who married a man from the Meyase clan called Pfulise. Information collected from Theyieviso of Merhu clan of Khonoma village.
among the Kacha Nagas and the Angamis of Khonoma ... there is also a legend current among the Kacharis of Diger Mauza below Henima that when Bhim Raja built his great Keddah at Sonapur, in that Mauza, he fell in love with a Nagini whom he found in the jungle and who became by him the ancestress of the Diger Kacharis, who pride themselves on their descent.\textsuperscript{99}

With the Manipuris the attitude of the Angamis was very much the same as with the Dimasa. There were wars at times but the Manipuris generally adopted a friendly relationship with the Angamis most of the time. The Manipuris occasionally invaded Angamis in retaliation to the Angami raids on the Manipuri subjects. Much later, after the Angami settlement, Hutton recorded one such ugly incident.

"With the Manipuris the relations of the Angamis, at any rate, were anything but friendly, as somewhere about 1833 a Manipuri raid was made into Angami country as far as Kohima, which the Manipuris attacked and burnt, slaughtering a large number of the inhabitants."\textsuperscript{100}

Angamis also carried out trade and commerce with Manipuris from ancient times. This friendly relationship proved advantageous to the Angamis. They learnt the art of gun-making and gun-powder and other artisanal skills

\textsuperscript{100} \textit{Ibid.}, p.13-14.
from the Manipuris. Even in the matter of defence, we have references prove that the Angamis used to hire the services of Manipuris to invade the other tribes.\textsuperscript{101}

Though the Ahoms came much later, their contact with the Nagas is worth mentioning. In fact, the Ahoms entered Assam in the 13th century A.D. through the Naga Hills with their leader, Sukhapa.\textsuperscript{102} Of all the people, the Nagas strongly resisted but were given severe treatment by Sukhapa's men.\textsuperscript{103} For quite some time the hostile feelings continued but in the past centuries, we find the Nagas and the Ahoms living in a friendly manner. Perhaps the Nagas had realised that the areas occupied by the Ahoms were the main outlet to the rest of the sub-continent of India.

Before we close this chapter, it may be observed that the whole Naga tribal society was divided into various tribes and each tribe was independent of the other. There was no centralised political structure and each tribe was governed by its own chiefs or elders under various tribal

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101. Recorded from Theyieviso of Merhu clan, Khonoma.  
\end{flushright}
custom and traditions. The transition from primitive settlement to a more developed type of village settlement was, of course, accompanied by the pressure of increasing population, the search for subsistence, the struggle and aspirations for improved material conditions. Having these factors as the basic objective, there were a series of efforts made by the Angamis before the establishment of Khonoma and Kohima as permanent seats of their social and economic life. The series of efforts carried out by the Angamis included clan alliances, development of terrace cultivation, improvement of implements and other challenges imposed by demography and environment before they finally choose to settle down in the present village.

104. There are about 34 Naga tribes. Sixteen in Nagaland itself, ten in Manipur, and some in Burma, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. Each of these tribes have a tribal social organization of their own, e.g., among the Konyaks the absolute power rests with the chiefs. The Angami, Ao, Mao and Tangkhul have a kind of democratic system run by the village elders, likewise the Sema have their own system with some variations.
POSSIBLE ROUTE OF NAGA MIGRATIONS

INDEX

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
RIVERS
NAGA MIGRATIONS
OTHER MIGRATIONS
STUDY AREA

Fig III

Map Source - Reader Infotac Great World Atlas, 1970