CONCLUSION

The Karbis for many centuries acted as a bridge between the two powerful neighbours - the Jaintias and the Ahoms. There is a hypothesis that such community is segmented and each of its segments identifies itself with the politically dominant community. But in doing so, it does not lose its own identity. Secondly, the cultural changes of the bridge community is arrested to dominant contact group. The Chintong Karbis came into contact with the Ahoms and the Hri and the Hongkhung Karbis lived under the Jaintias.

The Karbis is not a buffer community because the latter is deliberately created to serve a political purpose. It is inferred that the Kuki group of population only acted as the buffer between the Jaintias of the Manipur Valley and the Naga of north. Similarly, the Lukis formed the buffer community between the Naxais and the Mizos.

The strength of a community lies in its knowledge in three sectors: (i) physical mobilisation (ii) social mobilisation and (iii) bio-social response.

The physical mobilisation means the knowledge about the properties of the natural resources, the creation of the infra-

1. Demographic and Socio-economic profiles of the hill areas of the north-east India, census of India, pp.110-11.
structure and adoption of appropriate technology for optimum utilisation of the natural resources.

The social mobilisation means how the society is socially integrated within the framework of its own laws.

Bio-social response means the physiological adoption a group of people is capable of against diverse environment opposition. It relates to the process of evolution as well as adoption of socio-cultural practices.

The physical mobilisation requires a long stay in the region in which the Carbis acquitted themselves well. They are here in this region for at least five centuries, it can be verified from the fact they had a quarrel with the Dimasas over the present territory of north Assam in the sixteenth century. It is significant that when the Mon army laid siege on Haibong, they got the support of the K erbisis.

Of course, the Carbis stayed in the territory of the Jaintias and some of them shifted over to the Mon territory. The society, it seems, preserved its best history only of that period of their travels. The physical mobilisation took place at this stage with solid infrastructure. They society produced some leaders to give it a lead in diverse fields.

The present Carbi character and their socio-political attitudes were grown during that period to the fullest extent.
Their previous sojourn was isolated but they were now under the glare of two strong monarchical systems, the Jaintia and the Ahom. The latter already came under the influence of the Hindu culture. The arbis did not get the full exposure of it but the light percolated down into it through the above-mentioned intermediaries.

The arbis were a third factor in the process of Hinduisation and received its influence too scantily. The present writer was told by the inhabitants of Unswai that in the olden-days, the hindokpos of that area used to go to Hartiang in the Jaintia kingdom to witness a puja. On their return, they used to bring 'rasada' for distribution to the villagers. They saw the priest of the puja when they remembered clearly. Hence the tribe's exposure to the wider horizon of Hindu culture was present. The curiosity mixed with admiration was there but that did not lead to acceptance. The yearly journey to Hartiang was discontinued after the creation of the district of Umbi Anglong. Hartiang remained within the Jaintia hills and Unswai fell under Hartiang. The villagers remembered that the hindokpos offered posts at the sacrificial altar of the goddess. The head of the sacrificed goat was taken by the priest. They thus established a rapport with the region.

2. The arbis did not receive the Hindu religion through proselytisation.

The Karbi responses to the changes in the environment is therefore the result of long stay. The changes were widespread and they adjusted their attitudes to these changes. These environmental stimuli were continuous challenges to the tribes and to its spirit of resilience. The Karbis fashioned their attitudes for their own racial preservation in this region-quantitatively and spiritually.

Low Use of the Resources

The Karbis could not use the physical properties properly and they will have to go ails to achieve a reasonable breakthrough. After the independence, the process of development in economic and educational fields started from almost a 'zero level' of growth but it is yet to gather momentum. The road system is still inadequate and its enormous forest resources are not tapped properly. There is a possibility of agricultural technology entering into the traditional jhum cultivation but this is still a far cry. The socio-economic relation are not still ready to accept this change. The north-eastern hill areas are associated with agriculture only and this area is far from the plane of the industrial growth.

The industrial growth means the induction of labour and capital in large measure. The induction of these factors means the swarming of the local population by the outsiders. The dominant civilisation in the vast Indian subcontinent is bound to clash with the interests of the smaller tribal entities.
The rapid industrialisation in the neighbouring plains is a definite hazard to the separate entity, therefore, the friction occurs between the physical mobilisation at the plains and the hills.

Low Social Knowledge

The carbis lack an elite. This group provide leadership to the people in all directions. The elite is 'the brain trust' of the race. They know the past, involved in the present and think about the future. They are educated in the modern sense having the knowledge of scientific management of resources.

The younger generation of the carbis genuinely think about the language, literature and customs. They are only to be processed into an elite. The hardening of social structure and other institutions does not mean that the society has an elite in the modern sense. It is a development through conscious efforts. Its responses to wider environmental changes are based on scientific analysis.

The Carbis and the surrounding civilisations

The carbis like many other tribes faced the surrounding civilisations. Most of the tribes are living in the subarctic regions. Those who are living in the plains are accepting the traits of wider civilisation. 'The carbi' or the plains carbis have changed enormously in language, race and habit due to acculturation. The hill carbis, on the other hand, are free
from these wider changes, the exposure to wider culture is called a dimension of modernism.

Similarly, the Karbi villages on the Meghalayan border imbibe the traits of the Khias and the Jaintias, but a tribe which is conscious of its own status wants to live independently. A tribe retires into deeper forests or far away places only because of the invasion on them by a powerful enemy.

Inequity of land as commodity

The traditional Karbi view of land is that it is the gift of God and therefore it is limitless. This view is sustained in many quarters even today. The cadastral survey was started in Karbi Nagdong in 1976 but it encountered this traditional belief. It is difficult to dislodge this belief in hill areas, but in plains areas, it is possible because there the socio-economic factors are favourable.

The wandering Karbis are in the midst of a completely new phenomenon of the land ceased to be enormous and limitless quantity. The British for the first time created physical boundaries and thus land has now become a negotiable quantity.

4. Infinite delimitation of boundaries was introduced by the British in the internal as well as in external sectors. In the Karbi land, there was no record of land during the British time, but now the pressure of population is making 'land' a purchasable commodity.
The land threw open many avenues of social progress. The optimum use of land presupposes a change of attitude towards land. Some essential characteristics of 'development' must be present in fair measure in any community which want to go forward. The 'profile' enumerated these points in the following way: 5

1. Sense of participation in the decision-making at every relevant level.

2. Conviction of having rational control over the implementing agency at every relevant level.

3. Possession of social knowledge.

4. Sense of moral propriety of the system (or the evolving system) which provides the framework of developmental activities.

5. Commitment to the maximisation of happiness of human individuals belonging to the group.

6. Recognition of rights of individuals and groups in the pan-human situation.

All the factors mentioned above are termed as (social capital) and if a race or tribe is endowed with the fair degree of these characteristics, it has a better chance to survive in the volatile situation in the north-eastern hills.

The presence of the song belt is

It is an interesting phenomenon in the geography of earl

long. It is divided into two parts. A slice of land belonging

5. Demographic and socio-economic profiles of the hill areas of the north-east limit, p.374.

***A sketch of the map is on the page facing.
to the district of Nowganj intervened between two parts. The intervening land looks like a valley. This land area (danger point) is a non-tribal belt and it is quite likely that the population there will multiply manifold in the near and far future. The Nowganj bulge includes six police stations—Kampur, Jarunamukh, Jojai, Purajhar, Lanka and Lumding. The total land area of this bulge is 195.10 sq. km. and the population is 46,674. The police station wise breakup is given below to emphasize the point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Police Station</th>
<th>Area in Sq. Km</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Kampur</td>
<td>390.9</td>
<td>94,918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Purajhar</td>
<td>279.7</td>
<td>59,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Jarunamukh</td>
<td>207.2</td>
<td>73,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lumding</td>
<td>411.8</td>
<td>53,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Lanka</td>
<td>383.3</td>
<td>95,601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Jojai</td>
<td>264.2</td>
<td>92,203</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Total: 1,955.1 sq. km. 46,674

The total population of Karbi Anglong is 3,79,310. Therefore the population of the bulge is quite significant in relation to that of Karbi Anglong and the vast majority in the

Vulgar are the non-tribals. They are pausing themselves as the block separating the two parts of Arbi long.

Lumding is a railway junction of immense importance. It is a great economic possibility. The flood tide of the non-tribal population who cannot settle in the sixth schedule areas are settling in this area in great number. It is growing at a fast rate. If the population becomes enormous, the district of Arbi will be fully divided within itself.

The territorial separation accentuated by an intervening non-tribal population will give rise to a mental alienation which may start in a way thoroughly unnoticed by all. The leaders of Arbi long are not seized of the problem at present perhaps the problem does not belong to the generation.

The Jobhunting Arbi middle Class

Arbi long, is an agricultural conception. They are the late starters in the field of education but they are also in lock out for Governmental jobs starting from grade IV upwards. In fact most of the grade IV jobs are given to the Arbis. The clerical jobs are also increasingly claimed by them.

A middle class is sustained on the employment opportunities and in Arbi long, the jobs are scarce. The district's traditional elite is in no way capable of opposing the emergence of middle class. There is a definite relation between the education opportunities and job opportunities. At present, of course,
a Marbi is not so choosy but in the next generation when he will go for specialised studies, he will stake his claim for higher jobs.

Tertiary and service sector may not be able to accommodate all the young people. The economic sector will have to engage a large section. The secondary sector and the major part of the tertiary sector belongs to economic sector. The present tendency of the Marbi educated youth is to exploit as much as possible the service sector but it is very limited in scope.

It is expected that most of the educated youth of the present generation would be absorbed in the service sector and the process is likely to continue during the incoming decades. Uptil now, there is no sign of the secondary sector although the entrepreneurial and motivation centre of the labour department has its branch in the district. One Industrial training centre is also established in the district.

In the plains, it is seen that a distinct cleavage is created between the educated and the uneducated sections of the population and the former very quickly merge into the

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7. Primary sector includes cultivation, agricultural labour, mining, quarrying etc.

Secondary sector includes household industry and manufacture of essential commodities.

Tertiary sector includes transport, storage and communication (marketing) and other services.
middle class. In a society, which is still forming, the cleavage is not quite discernible. What role the Diphu based Karbi middle class will play, only the future will be able to say.

**Autocratic tendencies in the Karbi traditional policy**

The Kartsis are a socially disciplined community. The clan divisions are elaborate and it is taken into consideration in time of marriage, death and also in succession and inheritance.

The Hindokpo in olden time held enormous powers and he was obeyed by all. He was a kink - a king. He wielded his powers with a facade of constitutionality. The members of the Pinpomar represented all the clans and the Hindokpo took their advice. But the presence of the Hindokpo was felt by everyday. He was a benignly respected figure. In good old days, his powers were political as well as social.

The Khasi land was ruled in the olden days by the Syiem. A Khasi Syiem was also a powerful Chief and he ruled his area autocratically. When a society is republican in attitude, it

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9. Republicanism is a fully democratic concept. 'The profile related the turmoil among the Khais' in Manipur due to their republican character (p.378).
is most likely to suffer from turmoils and restlessness. The Kukis are cited as example. The lack of sovereign power overhead in the past threw them into restlessness. The fragmentation of their society was the result of it. The British were the only effective sovereign authority in the region during the hundred years prior to 1947.

The Karbis lived within the sovereign limits and their society was firmly controlled by the chiefs. His subordinates the Kabais and the Sarthes were great wielders of power within limits. This discipline enforced through tradition had far reaching affects. This made the peaceful agitator and not the restless wreckers.

The Karbi Lindokpoship was autocratic but not feudal because land was not still a commodity in the Karbi land. The Khasis on the other hand was ruled by the feudal chiefs. The Karbis were great wanderers but the Khasis were the settlers of the soil.

If the Karbis maintain the basic character of their resilience and evolutionary intents, they are likely to survive as a distinct ethnic group in this complicated geo-political region i.e. the north-east India.