CHAPTER VI.

CONCLUSION
Socio-cultural regionalism is a 'built in process within nationalism' and a federal phenomena in the process of nation-building and state-formation in a multi-regional, multi-lingual and multi-cultural society. The primary object of socio-cultural regionalism is to serve the identific requirements of a socio-culturally distinct region. The impetus for the emergence and growth of regionalism is provided by the multi-ethnic framework of society and the federal nature of polity itself. Ideology of nationalism aspires the socio-cultural groups to organize themselves as viable political units in the federal dispensation of nation-state building. Therefore, the first stage is that of territorial community formation or regional identity formation on the principle of 'maximum homogeneity within and maximum identity without'. Several objective factors are selected for the regional identity formation. They usually are language, culture, religion, historicity and contiguity of the region etc. On these bases, 'horizontal commradeship' is achieved among the people of a region. This is theoretically significant in the sense that a community may externally seem homogenous but internally may be divided along different sociological factors of social formations such as tribe, caste and Jatis.

However, in the subjectivists-objectivists framework of analysis it is elite who transforms objective markers of
group identity into a subjective consciousness of separate ethnic identity by selecting and emphasizing the central symbol of group identity over other symbols of identity. This is only partially true. Vertical mobilization by elite may cause counter mobilization by parallel elite which may further create rupture or weaken the process of horizontal comradeship. In fact, in a federal process of nation-building, regional identity formation is subject to several external stimulants such as inter-regional conflict generated over particular socio-cultural policies of the state; conflict in the state-society relationship; ethno-demographic composition of a state; and a perceived sense of deprivation by the regional community in terms of economic development, political power and cultural development. In other words, formation and consolidation of a regional identity is sometimes subject to the cleavages generated by the state in the structure and process of polity and society. It is also in this respect that the structural analysis of the events occurring in the inter-community (read regional) relations and in the state-society relations become significant in order to analyse the intensity, range and depth of regional identity and to assess the relative strength and weaknesses of regional movements.

So far as the Maithili movement is concerned, it is primarily a socio-cultural regional movement, espousing and
emphasizing the cause of Maithili language and its promotion. It is because the salience of language factor that the movement is quite often characterized as a language movement. However, protagonists of the Maithili movement have selected language, culture, historicity and contiguity of the region as the building blocks of separate Maithili identity. After a careful scrutiny of the cultural and linguistic identity of Mithila in the previous chapters, it is found that there exist two parallel identities in Mithila—one is the elite cultural identity of 'great tradition' and other is the folk cultural identity of 'little tradition'. Both these traditions are in conflict and harmony depending upon the exigencies of overall political process and the socio-economic factors.

Though there are certain commonalities in cultural norms, the overall cultural practices, customs, traditions and belief patterns vary from caste to caste. However, an interesting feature of Maithili identity is that though they are internally differentiated, externally they are exclusive to Mithila, i.e., not found in other regions. In this sense, the socio-cultural identity of Mithila is a composite identity. On the other hand, linguistically Mithila constitutes a distinct dialect zone of Bihar. Maithili, on any linguistic principles of language/dialect development, is a separate language and not a dialect of Hindi. But
dialect variations exist among the Maithili speaking community. This variation is also along the caste-groups - especially in terms of selection of words, forms of address and the subjective contents of language. While elite tradition lays emphasis on the use of standardized and sanskritized Maithili, in the little tradition emphasis is placed on the popular expression of folk-lore and folk-tradition. On the other hand, the state's deliberate promotion of Hindi at the cost of other dialects of Bihar, has gradually initiated the process of assimilation of different linguistic groups in the broader framework of Hindi nationalism. The assimilation process was first initiated at the educational level. Hindi, besides being medium of instructions in schools and colleges, was practically made singular means of advanced learning in different disciplines. Having the status of official language of state, Hindi has received tremendous support and patronage for development and popularization. Also, for all practical purposes, Hindi has been made sole language of communication and exchange of information between individual and state. As a result, use value of Hindi has increased remarkably when compared to other language of Bihar. Aftereffect is the creation of two parallel linguistic identity in the Maithili region and for that matter in other dialect zones of Bihar as well.
Another social fact, undermining the process of Maithili regional identity formation is the factor of caste-identity. Caste is an important unit of mobilization for serving the secular and non-secular interests of caste groups. Due to the salience of caste in the overall state politics of Bihar, individual's first loyalty is to the caste and any other forms of socio-cultural identity is secondary to it. Caste vertically divides the horizontal comradeship of people. This factor is further reinforced by the caste-specifications of Maithili movement, especially in its formative years. Analysis of the membership and leadership patterns of different socio-cultural organizations reveal that they are overwhelmingly dominated by Maithili Brahmins and Karna Kayasthas. This created a negative impression of movement among other castes, especially backward castes, of Mithila. Also the other objective factors of Maithili nationality formation have not been able to absorb the factor of caste in the general framework of regional identity.

As mentioned earlier, through its different phases of development, Maithili movement has had always been a language movement; and therefore, it has always accorded priority to the different aspects of the Maithili language development and recognition. Other factors of identity were relegated to secondary position. There has never been any
congruence of different objective bases of Maithili identity in the movement. But such congruence of two or more objective markers of identity becomes essential, especially in the absence of any politically significant inter-regional linguistic conflict within a state. Here it may be mentioned that the language identity of Mithila has never been in conflict with any other language identities of Bihar.

Due to lack of any formal structure, the movement has not succeeded in mobilizing the people to the political cause of a separate Mithila state and in defining the common socio-economic interests of the people of Mithila by highlighting the different factors of under-development of the Maithili region. In order to succeed, socio-cultural regionalism must combine the political and economic issues with the exclusive ethnic identity of the region. But reversely, in Mithila, socio-economic factor of development has been defined in terms of caste groups and caste-identities. This has adversely affected the consolidation of separate regional identity of Mithila.

So far as the other operational dynamics of the movement is concerned, the movement has never been a mass-movement, rather it has centred its activities in the urban locality only. Rural population have never been brought into the mainstream of the movement. This creates a rupture
in the perceptions of rural population and urban intelligentsia. Movement has yet to receive legitimacy and support from the subaltern masses of Mithila. Once again, this is due to the lack of formal structure of participation and mobilization. The movement is organizationally weak and lacks symbolized and popular leadership for the convergence of people to the cause of Mithila - Maithili and Maithils.

So far as the attitude of state towards Maithili movement is concerned, it has, as a policy, rejected any further linguistic reorganization of states. However, state periodically conceded some of the language demands of Maithili movement, except three major demands - a separate state for Mithila, inclusion of Maithili language in the eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution, and making Maithili an official language of Bihar. But, here, it may be mentioned that such a periodic concession, given to socio-cultural movements, only diffuses the cause of main demand - the formation of a separate state on socio-cultural considerations. Therefore, any such concessions should not be interpreted as the achievements of a regional movement. Rather, it dilutes the objective of a socio-cultural regional movement.