CHAPTER-III
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It is known that without the common process of political culture and political socialisation, no any community, groups, nationality or nation could survive its political aspiration. Our present discourse on identity crisis is developed from the lack of common political socialisation. As consequence, we have not common political aspiration, which is one of the most important elements of the nation building and nation state. So it is necessary to analyse the political culture and political socialisation of the three major ethnic groups of Manipur.

Political cultures consists of the ways the majority of the population thinks about the political authority, the government and the society and are established through the process of political socialisation.¹ This political culture of a society defines the situation in which the political action takes place. The people living in a society shared a common

human nature which express itself in the form of certain values, beliefs and attitudes are transmitted from one generation to another, though with greater or lesser modifications and this constitute the general culture of the society. This culture is therefore, a profound possession that ramifies throughout human life. No matter what aspect or part of society is considered, the presence of a cultural mode of transmission is of paramount importance. Each and every political system is embedded in a sociological and psychological environment-set of values, beliefs, orientations and attitudes of the people towards politics i.e. the political culture. Political system thus operates within the framework of a set of meanings and purposes - the political culture of the society. It includes not only the attitudes of politics, political values, ideologies, national character and cultural ethos, but also the style, manner and substantive form of politics.²

The political culture of a people gives them an orientation towards their polity and its process. To be

politically oriented would mean, in general, knowing how our government operates, they will usually be able to act together, understanding what each is doing and avoiding conflict and discussion.³

It is the product of both the collective history of a political system and the life and the life histories of the members of that system and thus it is rooted equally in public event and private experiences. In brief, political culture is to the political system while culture is to the social system.⁴

Political Culture

According to Almond and Powell, “political culture is the pattern of individual attitudes and orientations towards politics of the members of a political system.”⁵ It is the set of attitudes, beliefs and sentiments that give orders and meaning to a political process and that govern behavior in

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the political process and that provide the underlying assumptions and rules that govern behavior in the political system. It encompasses both the political ideals and the operating norms of a polity. Political culture is thus the manifestations in aggregate form of the psychological and subjective dimension of politics.

According to Alan R. Ball, 'A political culture is composed of the attitudes, beliefs, emotions and values of society that relate to the political systems and to political issues. These attitudes may not be consciously held but may be implicit in an individual or group relationship with the political system'.

Robert A. Dahl has singled out political culture as a factor explaining different pattern of political opposition whose silent elements are: 6

1) Orientation of Problem Solving;

2) Orientations to Collective action;

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3) Orientations to the political System &

4) Orientations to other people.

Development of Political Culture

According to Beer and Ulam, 'certain aspects of the
general culture of a society are especially concerned with
how government ought to be conducted and what it shall
try to do. This sector is called political culture'. The general
culture influences the political culture and in term gets
influenced by it. However, the political culture, is not static, it
is dynamic and thus responds to the needs generated within
the political system or imparted or imposed from outside. Let
us discuss the factors that are responsible for the
development of political culture.

History: History plays an important role in the making and
evolution of political culture. Historical events always
influence the shaping on political culture of a nation big
way. The French political culture bears a deep of the French

House.1968, p.32.
Revolution and the Declaration Right of Man and of citizen. In case of the American political culture, the American Declaration of independence the war of independence and the civil war of mid 19th century exercised a big influence upon it. In the same way, the signing of Magna Carta, 1215, Petition of Right, 1628 and the 17th century struggle between the king and the parliament over the issue of sovereignty, the Glorious revolution of 1688 etc. have played a significant role in British political culture. The Indian political culture shows an influence of colonial domination, the freedom struggle and the gradual introduction of the Westminster model of government. Likewise, the advent of Christianity and introduction of separate hill and valley administration by the colonial authorities, merger of Manipur to the Indian union etc. have given a big share in shaping the Manipur political culture. Thus historical events greatly influenced the political culture of a society.

Geography: It is another important factor for shaping a political culture. Britain's island insularity protected a political the country foreign invasion. The vast size and diversities have helped the Americans to accept the values of equality and freedom for all. 9 The land locked location of Manipur, having a small plain area and surrounded by hill in all direction developed the value tradition and attitudes in the midst of sharp ethnic difference.

Ethnicity: The existence of different ethnic group and conflicts amongst several Ethnic group or minorities which line in the society always determine the nature of political culture varies. These ethnic differences have begun to affect attitudes in the countries of Europe, Asia and Africa. Event it tends to lead to the process of Balkanisation, ethnic cleansing etc. In India's North east in general and Manipur in particular, these ethnic differences had severely affected the process to develop a common political culture. Instead

9. Ibid.
of it, these gave rise to the emergence of sub-political culture within the natural political culture.

**Ideology:** This is also one of the determinants of political culture. The concept of political culture always refers to orientation which is greatly influenced by the ideologies that are popular with the people. The influence of the ideology of liberalism has been instrumental in changing the orientation of the people of socialist state towards their socialist ideology is seen in the case of the Indian political culture. Sometime the differences of ideological interpretation may lead to internal discontents and disaffection and eventually destroy, rather than enhance the unity of the collectively.\(^\text{10}\)

**Socio-Economic Factors:** This is also one of the important factors that play a deterministic role in laying down the foundations of the political culture. The development of agriculture and industry always influence the political culture. The developments in the field of science and technology

have their impact on the process of transportation and communications, migrations and immigration, import and exports, revolution and warfare. These entire factors in turn lead to change in political values and beliefs of the people. Mention should be made that before capitalist economy, in pre-annexation period we have economic interdependency between the hill and valley people. So the people have symbiotic relationship. But in the post annexation period, it is characterized by complete economic dependency to mainland India. It leads to erosion of such symbiotic relationship in the social and economic fabrics of the state.

Types of Political Culture

Almond specifies three distinct types of political culture—parochial, subject and participant culture.

Parochial Political Culture: It characterizes traditional societies in which the people are backward and ignorant about their political systems. Here the orientations of the citizen towards political object are extremely weak and he
does not relate himself in any passive way to national political institution, to national question and policies, nor does he see himself as affecting them. They are basically alienated from their government and apathetic, with very low confidence in their ability to get government officials to help them or to effect political change. In this system, the citizen may, nevertheless, be intensely involved in local tribunal or village politics, i.e. the societies within which institutional and role differentiation are simple. For him, the political system remains, at most on the border line of awareness.

**Subject Political Culture:** This type exists where there is a high frequency of orientations to the system as a whole and to its specifically output aspect. Here the citizen is strongly aware of the political system and its outputs and he may like or dislike them but, he has only a weakly developed sense of the institutions through which social demands are channeled and only a limited sense of personal political efficacy. The

citizen interprets his role as one in which he must accept the system as it is, not try to change it, and obediently follow the instructions of his political leaders. Society is seen as possessing an essentially hierarchical structure in which all individuals and groups have a well-defined place which they ought to be content.\textsuperscript{12} This type of political culture is found in developing societies.

**Participant Political Culture:** In this type of political culture, there emerge new attitudes in society at large. The individual is seen and sees himself, as an active member of polity. He has right and duties which he is accepted to be consciously aware of, and where necessary, to exercise. He is oriented to all types of political objects. Evaluation and criticism of the system exists at all levels, and it is generally accepted as desirable that political activity should be under the close scrutiny of individuals and group within society.\textsuperscript{13}


\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
However, the above three types of political culture are extreme types. No society is characterized by a single variety of political culture. In every society a mixture of this variety is also found. So, the following political culture has been typified by several other political scientists:

Civic Culture: Civic culture is a mixture type of all the three types of political culture.\textsuperscript{14} In this type of political culture the decision making power are vested with an elite and people who do not participate in the input process, People send their representatives who are responsible to public opinion. This type of culture exists in a democratic set up. It includes the motion of participation in structures widely regarded as legitimate, in which, for most commitment which help to developed both a sense of political personal competence and a sense of trusting other people. The sense of competence and trust allows the citizen to feel at ease with the government so that he will not feel it necessary to oppose the government on all issues but does not feels to be

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid, p.118.
important. This type of political culture characterizes developed societies like western society.

**Secular Political Culture:** Secular political culture characterizes a society in which people are secular in their outlook. People take part in the decision making process in a rational and analytical manner. There are group of electrons with votes to sell for polices.\(^{15}\) Politics is seen by the participants as a set of give and take interactions in which each side bargains for a set of more or less limited objectives. In general, a political must be increasingly secularized if the new, differentiated structures are to operate effectively.\(^{16}\)

**Ideological Political Culture:** These types of political culture exists in which free tendencies do not find a scope for development rather a particular ideology is encouraged and a particular type of political orientation finds a way for development. Such a culture is opposed to secular political

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\(^{16}\) Ibid. p.59.
culture. People having particular ideology; do not make political life dynamic rather it becomes static.

**Homogeneous Political Culture:** This type of political culture exists where the people have been living under a political system continuously characterized by the same set of values, belief, orientation and attitudes towards a political action. In such type of political culture, there are different political parties, and group but they shared common long-cherished values, ideal and ideologies. The politics of western countries are the example of such a political culture. To concentrate only on shared belief might lead one to overlook situation where significant political belief were held only by certain group, and where the very fact these attitudes were not shared by most member of the system was of crucial importance. This is particularly a problem as one begins to deal with societies as large and complicated as the nation-state.  

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Fragmented Political Culture: Fragmentation, of political culture is due to an uneven pattern of development, to significant survivals or 'out cropping' of order culture with their own political manifestation, though they also have common roots and a common heritage, unlike many of the pre-industrial system.\textsuperscript{18} This type of political culture is found in such countries in which different people and their group share different types of values or ideologies.

Political Socialisation

It is through the process of political socialisation that political culture passes from one generation to other. The process by which a particular set of attitudes, belief and orientations is passed on from one generation to another is known as political socialisation. According to Almond and Powell, 'political socialisation is the process by which political culture are maintained and changed.'\textsuperscript{19}

Through this process individuals develop their orientations. When the totalitarian political elites try to revise the accounts of history, they are simply attempting to shape and control the process of creation of political socialisation. Kenneth Langton emphasized that, ‘citizenship training and civic socialisation are strongly emphasized in Plato’s Republic, Aristotle’s Politics and Rousseau’s Emile’.20

It is very closely related to the concept of political culture. It is through the process of socialisation that political culture passes from one generation to the next. It is the performance of this function that individuals are inducted into the political culture; their orientations towards political objects are formed. Changes in the patterns of political culture also come about through political socialisation. Political culture are maintained and changed through the process of socialisation. Without the process of socialisation, the society could not perpetuate itself beyond a single generation and culture could not exist.

According to Greenstein, political socialization is a process which would encompass all political learning, formal and informal, deliberate and unplanned at every stage of the life cycle, including not only explicitly political learning that affects political behaviour such as the learning of the politically relevant personality characteristics. This process goes on continuously throughout the life of the individual. Attitudes are not established during infancy and untouched after the age of ten. They are always being adopted or reinforced as the individual goes through his social experience. Early family experience can create a favourable image of a political party, for example, but subsequent education, job experience, and the influence of friends may alter early image of a hostile and unfriendly one.

It is the process, mediated through various agencies of society by which an individual learns politically relevant attitudinal dispositions and behaviour patterns.\textsuperscript{21} Every political system aims at maintaining its political culture from

generation to generation. It is chiefly done through evolving different agencies for achieving political socialisation of the people which would ensure the political culture.

Thus, in the process of political socialisation several elements or institution play a part which are called agencies or agents of political socialisation. These are family, educational institutions, mass media, peer groups etc. Each and every agency has their respective contributions in this regard and it is desirable to know it.

**Family:** The family is the first primary important agency of political socialisation. It is through family that an individual’s political characters is formed and develop. An early experience with participation in family decision making process can increase the child’s sense of political competence, can provide him with skills for political interaction, and make him more likely to participate actually in the political system as an adult. Further, the child’s pattern of obedience to decisions at family can motivate him to the norms of the political system as a political subject.
The family is the child first window on the world outside, it is the child's first contact with the authority, it is here that the first difference in the role expectation between the sexes are implanted, and surveys have shown the strong link between the voting behaviour of parents and their children.\textsuperscript{22}

The family also shapes future political attitudes by locating the individual in a vast social world, establishing his ethnic, linguistic, religious ties and social class, affirming his cultural and educational values and achievements and directing his occupational and economic aspirations. Thus, the attitudes and behaviour patterns established in the family will constitute the base of future socialisation experience.\textsuperscript{23}

**Educational Institution:** Educational institution such as schools colleges and universities are other important agents of political socialisation. School provides the adolescent

citizens with knowledge about the political world and his role in it. They provide children with more concrete perception of political institution and relationship. They also transmit the values and attitudes of the society. Mostly, schooling pattern is turned in conformity to the political ideology of a country. Schools can bring an awareness of other values and circumstances, providing a basis for new political aspirations. They can reinforce affection for the political system, and can provide common symbols for expressive response to the system.

As the individual matures and begins to explore beyond the family environment, he confronts other groups and institutions which also socialised him to politics. Many of these experiences take place within the context of the school. Such agencies often support the attitudes and behaviour patterns established in the family environment, but they can also foster new political orientations. The school contains a particular pattern of authoritative decision-

making to which all the students are exposed. Participating in decision making at school can do something to make up for a lack of it at home or can reinforce the previous patterns. This problem of participation and authority patterns is important at the adult as well as the primary level of education. The mode of participation at this level helps in the formation of attitudes and values.

**Peer groups:** The peer groups are reference groups which include childhood play groups, friendship organization and small working groups in which members share relatively equal status and close ties, play an important role in shaping values and orientations in the process of political socialisation. Peer groups prepare individuals to face emerging political climate and if necessary, for specific political roles. It helps in developing an individual for intimate emotional relationship with other peer group members. It is often considered as an important agent of political socialisation.
Social Institution: There were many clubs and union existed in the state. In real sense they constitute the channels for the explicit communication of political information and beliefs. Any short of participation in the process of collective bargaining or involvement in strike can be a powerful socialising experience for the people of both hill and valley. If the leaders of the clubs and unions or associations are not having common political aspiration, they socialise their people in their own political interest. It creates fragmented political culture instead of bringing homogeneous political culture. In Manipur, for Nagas they have their own organizations and Kuki also followed the same suit. In early days all the social functions, festivals of each group were being organised separately and not a common participation at all even it was going on up to 1980s. Nevertheless after the Naga Kuki clash, some civil society organisation like All Manipur United Clubs Organisation (AMUCO), All Manipur Ethnical Social and Cultural Organisation (AMESCO), Committee for peace and Integrity (COFPAI) and National
Research Centre (NRC) have started to organize common participation in the both grand festival of hill and valley.\textsuperscript{25} Here one may raise a question of ‘Mera Houchongba’ and its importance in bringing unity among the people of hill and valley. It cannot be denied that it was shared by both hill and valley since time immemorial in Manipur. All the members present were only chieftains of the hills. It is quite suitable when the people were in the parochial political culture but very much contrary in the participant political culture of today’s present trend.

**Shumang Lilla (Open Air Drama):** Shumang Lilla has been one of the factors for politicizing the people. It played a very systematic role instrumental in socializing the people politically since the reign of king Chandrakriti during the devi puja period.\textsuperscript{26} The story and play style is really based on the condition of Manipur society and its problems. If the social

\textsuperscript{25} AMESCO started to organise ‘Ningol Chakouba’ at Malom in October, 1993. In this festival of grand feast, this organisation invited 1500 women of each tribal group from Naga and Kuki. NRC also organized to participate in the Chakan-Gan-Ngai festival of Kabui continuously after COFPAI campaign of unity and peace since 1996. Today this festival becomes so popular in Manipur even it becomes state holiday.

\textsuperscript{26} Ibobi N, “Manipur Shumang Lila Amasung Wareng Makhal Makha”, Imphal, 1986, p.3.
trend is simple the play is also very simple and when there is complex, the play is also very complex and full of social criticism. Shumang Lila had been playing throughout the state of Manipur continually. More interest had been taken in rural areas it is very helpful in politicising the audience. But the notable thing is that the popularity of shumang Lila among the hill people is a very recent one. Nowadays the main theme of various plays is hill-valley unity.

**Nupi Keithel (Women Market):** Women market of Manipur is also important agent of politicization of women in Manipur both hill and valley. It is only the place in which both hill and valley women are sitting together and selling their goods. When there is no customer they are talking about the problem of family and politics of state. They know current events and have fresh information about the malpractices of the state. In other words, they are in current politics as too receptive and attentive people. They produce women leaders in social and political uprising. All the women agitations are led by them.
Mass-Media: The communication and information technology has enhanced the role of mass media as one of the important agents of political socialisation. The role of mass-media like radio, television, newspapers and magazine often help in transmitting different sets of values and ideas in the minds of individuals. In Manipur before publishing English newspaper, majority of the hill people are reading newspaper of their local dialect’s as it is so effective to the literate groups. But the negative effect of this politicisation process is more and more localized and confined to their narrow outlook. These set of ideas and views reflected on such print media communalized them and antagonized participant political culture. That is the result that most of intellectual and social activities of hill areas could germinate their political interest among themselves. To them, the print medias of valley based are always bias and asserted only the interest of majority.27

27 Personal interview with Kh. Loyalakpa on 12 August 2007.
Thus separate political socialisation project different political aspiration among the hill and valley people. This is the root cause of divergence view without positive contention in the state. More over the tri-ethnic of Manipur are also associated with different political culture when they are in the process of cultural transformation. For instance all of them are parochial in the monarchical political system and subjective in British colonial periods. But they could not transform the participant political culture when they are in the democratic system after Manipur annexed to Indian union. In brief the Manipuri Meiteis are in the stages of participant culture yet both the Manipuri Nagas and the Manipuri Kukis could not escape from the Cocoon of parochial and subjective mixed political culture. Still we have mixture of traditional and modern administration in hill and valley.

Judged by the above theory of political culture, one could find that all the movement of Manipur in pre-annexation period to India like Nupi Lal Ahanba (Women
Agitation) in 1904, Thoubal agitation (1913), Kuki Rebellion (1917-19), Zadonang Movement (1921-31), Irawat Movement (1934-50), Nupi Lal Anisuba (1939) which translates as the Second Women War were launched separately against the feudal lord and colonial masters. Even in the post annexation, all the tribal movement was to follow on ethnic lines. The tribal cultural mobilisation and tribal movement in the state remains an on-going process. For instance the Kukis have formed the Kuki National Assembly (KNA) which is a political party to represent the Kuki tribes and the Nagas formed Naga National Party (NNP) based in Manipur to muster the support from the Nagas.

Another impact of different political socialisation and possession of different political culture is that both the Kukis and Nagas have their own organization like Kuki Inpi, Kuki Students Organisation (KSO). For Naga also, mention should be made of United Naga Council (UNC), All Naga Students Association Manipur (ANSAM) etc. All of them are demanding and asserting their interest for only themselves in
a very sectarian way. So assertion of their interest and reaction from others always make spiral conflict situation in Manipur. That is why the emergence of ethnic nationalism and ethnic armies are also the product of it. That means they have to demand their homelands.

Lastly it is said that even the state versus ethnic groups in Manipur with the identity card is also because of not having common political culture, common political socialisation and common political aspiration. Thus various ethnic movements have been launched in order to pressurize their demand and maintain separate political and ethnic identity of their respective group. In reality the failure of this socialisation process is only by the factor of British’s divide and rule policy. The British colonial administration unhesitantly encourages all the ethnic movements in Manipur. The same formula was applied by India in the later part of the political history of the state. But not Nagas and Kukis are thinking over the impact of these two political systems. Instead they are heading to the fight each other by
bearing the nomenclature given by the British i.e. the Nagas and Kukis. At the same time the Meiteis is also in the game of different treatment to the hill people mainly by political executive and temporary executive. Ultimately it adversely affected the socio-political inspirational level in the valley and in the hill in the post statehood period. Gradually, in the process of change compounded with modernisation, the tribal elites against the masses of hill have their dreams of separate social and political identity. On this line, they politicised their people and have been launched many movement which ultimately leads to the threats of the state's territorial integrity. This is the big tragedy to both the common people of hill and valley.