CHAPTER V

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In order to understand the different factors leading to the emergence of inter-tribal politics, we need to examine how each tribe identifies itself within the larger society and how it maintains its identity by generating tribe consciousness. This can be understood by looking into the development of various tribe-based organisations, existing at different levels of society. The social organisations in which manifestation of tribal identities as concrete socio-political units may be identified, are those of the students, the Church, socio-political regions, the underground 'Government' and, also the state of Nagaland. We shall examine the structural composition of these tribe-based organisations and also see how their functioning contributes to the nature of inter-tribal politics.

At the time of the attainment of statehood, Nagaland was consisted of three districts - Kohima, Mokokchung and Tuensang.¹ However, Section 8 of the Sixteen-Point Agreement, leading to statehood, incorporates that each tribe is to have units of rule making and administrative bodies for dealing with matters relating to the respective tribes and areas. These bodies are to be the Village Councils, the Range Councils and

the Tribal Councils.\textsuperscript{2} On the same basis, the Government of India agreed to convert Community Development Blocks in Nagaland into special Tribal Pattern Blocks.\textsuperscript{3} This indicates that the districts were to remain mere formal administrative units. The real functioning of the administration was conceived according to a tribe-wise structural pattern, which was \textit{per se} accepted by the Government to be essentially Naga.

This form of administration requires the formal recognition of tribes by the Government. Tribal boundaries need to be defined so that its authority can be conferred. In 1981 Census, the Naga tribes in Nagaland, have been classified into the following: Angami, Ao, Chakhesang, Chang, Chirr, Khiemnungan, Konyak, Lotha, Makware, Phom, Rengma, Sema, Tikhir, Yimchunger and Zeliang.\textsuperscript{4}

These tribes are not merely recognised for the purpose of administration at the local level. They are also a major influence in the distribution policy of the state. To cite an example, the Government has listed out eight tribes, namely, Konyak, Chakhesang, Sangtam, Phom, Khiemnungan, Chang, Yimchunger and Zeliang, as backward, in view of their insignificant representation in the state services. Through a Notification, the

\textsuperscript{4} \textit{Statistical Handbook of Nagaland}, (Kohima, 1990), p.63.
Government announced a policy under which 33% of all posts under the Government of Nagaland are to reserved for these tribes. It is found that this policy of reservation has been, in practice, extended to selection of candidates for technical studies under state quota.

The indications that the government recognises the tribes as a formal political unit are easily discernible from its methods of working. In acting to resuscitate the dormant Tribal Councils, the Nagaland Legislative Assembly passed the Nagaland Village, Area and Regional Council Bill in 1970. The Government's system of functioning proves beyond doubt that it considers tribes as equal participants in the affairs of the state. In forming a committee, the Government may requisition the inclusion of equal number of representatives from each tribe. In August 1968, the Government of Nagaland initiated Peace Talks for which a Special Committee was constituted, comprising of ten representatives from each tribe. There are also instances in which the Government consults tribal hohos (parliament) before major decisions are carried out. S. C. Jamir says that this was resorted to when he, as the Chief Minister of Nagaland,

8. Ibid., p. 78.
brought about the Total Prohibition legislation into effect.\textsuperscript{9} It may also be pointed out that in chalking out electoral constituencies, it was originally decided that they should be determined on the basis of population so that even minor tribes can have a fair representation.\textsuperscript{10}

However, it may noted that it is not the state government which is responsible for the formation of the various tribal organisations. It only came to acknowledge and adapt itself to an existing tribal system which has already crystallised in the form of concrete organisations, like the ones we shall be examining in this Chapter. It is a fact that there were already deeply tribe-wise divisions in religious, political and student organisations, prior to statehood. This is why, when the state came into existence, it became more or less imperative for the state to organise itself on tribal lines.

In 1929, when members of the Naga club submitted a Memorandum on Naga self-determination to the Simon Commission, they wrote: "we claim (not only members of the Naga Club) to represent all those tribes to which we belong."\textsuperscript{11} This perhaps,

\textsuperscript{10} Gazetteder of India, Nagaland, Kohima District, (Kohima, 1970), p. 211.
\textsuperscript{11} Memorandum on Naga Self-Determination Submitted to the Simon Commission by Naga Club on 19th January, 1929. Appendix A.
was the first indication of tribe consciousness at the political level. But at this time there were no tribe-based political organisations. This only came about with the formation of the Naga National Council (NNC) in 1946. The NNC started as a federal body with twenty-nine members representing different tribes on the principle of proportional representation.\textsuperscript{12}

The NNC declared independence on the 14th of August 1947.\textsuperscript{13} They formed the 'Federal Government of Nagaland' with the Tatar Hoho as its parliament. This parliament was to have elected representatives from each of the Naga tribes. Each tribal area was to be called a Region. These Regions were to have their own Regional Leasy (Assembly), with wide ranging powers in regional matters. The Executive Head of the region was to be called Midan Peyu. Each Region was to have its own Regional Court. All these provisions can be found in a written constitution called the Yehzabo.\textsuperscript{14}

Since under this scheme each Region is to consist of "communities of a tribe",\textsuperscript{15}, we know that these Regions are conceived as tribal organisations. This proves that the NNC

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12} Udayon Misra, \textit{North-East India. Quest for Identity}, (Guwahati, 1988), p. 7.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Phizo's Letter to C. Rajagopalachari, First Governor General of Free India, dated 22 November 1948, \textit{The Naga National Rights and Movement}, (Publicity and Information Department, Naga National Council, Kohima, 1993 ), p. 28.
\item \textsuperscript{14} Luingam Luithui and Nandita Haskar, \textit{Op. cit.}, pp. 95 - 108.
\item \textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 96.
\end{itemize}
conceives of a government for the Naga people in terms of a federation of tribes. As each tribe is to have its own regional organisation and court, endowed with a certain degree of autonomy, we may say that the NNC recognises the tribe as a distinct political entity. It is extremely difficult to bring out the NNC's concept of a tribe as they did not make any attempt to define it. But it is quite clear that it is meant to be the unit of the federal 'Government'. There is no doubt that they borrowed from Western federal states. It is certainly not a political entity originally devised by the NNC. This takes us back to our definition of a tribe in which we have shown that it is an acquired system of ethnic grouping.

Following the precedent set up by the NNC, the moderate group which separated from the NNC and opted to settle for statehood, also demanded for a state after the tribal model of the NNC. The evidence to this can be seen in the 16-Point Agreement between the Naga People's Convention and the Government of India in which a system of local self-government in the form of Tribal Councils was outlined.\(^\text{16}\) It was on these principles that the State of Nagaland came into existence. This explains to a certain extent the subsequent tribe-based policies of the Government. We shall come to this later.

\(^\text{16}\) Ibid., p. 96.
Alongside the political division of the Nagas into distinctive tribes, the Church also began to organise itself in the same manner. The development of such a pattern can be traced back to the early works of the missionaries. It can be seen that the Church started its works after the British administrative practice of giving name to tribes. In the same way the idea of a tribe percolated down to the NNC and influenced its politics as well as that of the state of Nagaland.

We can understand the role of the missionaries in the emergence of tribal groups among the Naga villages by examining their works. Once the missionaries put up their headquarters in a village, they started using that as their base for their work in the surrounding villages. They also introduced a single written form of languages to all these villages which might have so far spoken different dialects, like the Aos who spoke three languages, namely, Chongli, Mongsen and Changki. This may have become a unifying factor. This unity was expanding as more and more people embraced the new religion. An example of the outcome of such a growing unity can be seen in the first association of the Ao churches which was held at Molung, in 1897. There is no doubt that these churches used the same Ao language as brought out by the missionaries in written form. We quote Vihuli Sema:

"The method of forming association was adopted when a large number of churches using the same language was established among the members of a tribe other than that dominant in the original association. This was in itself unique in that this approach was not followed in other areas served by the Assam Mission."20

From this we can deduce that language was a determining factor in the organisation of church Associations. This is quite true because the use of the same language by a group of villages was made possible by the Christian missionaries who adopted the language, developed a written form and used it to propagate their religion. We do agree with Vihuli Sema, that the formation of a tribal association by the missionaries was not a deliberate act. This is because it had nothing to do with the main purpose of their mission. But the circumstances leading to its formation were in no way natural as she claimed.21 This contradicts the fact that the language used in these Associations were those picked out from a myriad of dialects spoken by the people.22 Also their purpose of evangelisation includes the broadening and the development of a well-organised community of Christians. Due to their Western background as well as the influence of anthropologists and the local administration, we can assume that these missionaries already had a pre-conceived notion which sees such a community as the tribal association.

20. Ibid., p. 58.
22. See Ibid., p. 92.
The impact of these Associations on the Naga society has been put by Vihuli Sema, as thus:

"The Mission... organised large associations to serve as forums(sic) for discussion on social welfare activities as well as church policy. These associations also serve to integrate Nagas of the same language groups. With their hugh(sic) annual meetings drawing thousands from distant villages these associations not only broke down inter-village barriers but raised to a much higher level the forum of discussion on issues formally decided only at the village level." 23

This means that its impact was not limited to religious matters alone. The activities of the Church apparently had socio-economic and political implications on the society. It not only helped bring together various isolated Naga villages within a centralised language bracket, but also started the process of change towards the formation of a single political identity which can be understood as the tribe.

Thus, the formation of tribal church Associations can be attributed to the work of the early missionaries. The Ao Nagas were the first to be exposed to Christianity. The first church to be established on Naga soil came up in 1872, at Molungkimung. 24 Between 1887 - 1896, there was a growth in church membership. It was around this time that the Christian Mission was able to extend its activities to other groups such as the Angamis and the

23. Ibid., p. 141.
Lothas. So it does not surprise one to find that the Ao Baptist Association was the first to emerge. Subsequently, following its footsteps many other tribes started their own parallel Associations.

The formation of these tribal church bodies preceded the emergence of the Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC), which as stated in its Constitution, was organised in 1937, with a view to promoting the unity of the Baptist Churches. Despite the existence of a vision for the integration of the Naga Baptist churches, they continued to remain as an integral part of the Baptist Mission in Assam, till the idea of a Nagaland Baptist Church Council originated about the year 1935. At this time the tribal organisations were already going strong, and leaders from the Ao and the Angami tribes, which are the two dominant groups, decidedly felt that the Naga churches should separate itself from a Council which includes the people of the plains. This led to the involvement of various tribe Associations in the emergence of the NBCC. By the time it became a full-fledged organisation in 1959, it already had membership of the following tribal Associations:

01. Angami Baptist Association.
02. Ao Baptist Association.

03. Chang Baptist Association.
05. Khiemnungan Baptist Association.
06. Konyak Baptist Association.
07. Kuki Baptist Association. 30
08. Lotha Baptist Association.
14. Zeliang Baptist Association. 31

Today, the NBCC is no longer strictly a central body of tribe-based Baptist Associations. It has inducted into its membership an association of the Nagaland Police Churches. Sema tribe has three associations separately affiliated to it. 32 This does not mean that the NBCC is no longer a tribe-based institution. As a body of a multi-tribal character, it still remains a common arena where tribes come into interplay. It may be appropriate here, to examine its Constitution.

30. Kuki is organised as a tribe, but not considered a Naga tribe.
The main decision-making organ of the NBCC is the General Council. It consist of five representatives from each member Association.\textsuperscript{33} Since most of the Associations are tribal bodies and only a simple majority is required to form a quorum,\textsuperscript{34} it may be said that the NBCC is nothing but a commonly shared platform of the tribal Associations. When asked about the autonomy of the Angami Baptist Churches Council (ABCC), Zhabu Terhuja, who is its Executive Secretary, said that the decisions taken by the NBCC are not binding or obligatory, because they already have ABCC's full participation and approval.\textsuperscript{35} What he is hinting at is that the NBCC is a federation of tribal Associations. In fact, the federal character of the NBCC is clearly reflected in its Constitution which states that "each Baptist organisation holding membership in NBCC shall have an identity of its own."\textsuperscript{36} This is why we may conclude that tribal identity stands out as a strong force in the organisation of the Church.

Originally, the NBCC was Naga Baptist Church Council. But after Nagaland became a separate state, it was changed to Nagaland Baptist Church Council.\textsuperscript{37} One can easily notice that its member Associations are within Nagaland state.\textsuperscript{38} This is why

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{33} Renthy Keitzar, \textit{Op. cit.}, p. 54.
\item \textsuperscript{34} Ibid., p. 58.
\item \textsuperscript{35} Interview with Zhabu Terhuja, Executive Secretary, ABCC, Kohima. See Appendix B.
\item \textsuperscript{36} Renthy Keitzar, \textit{Op. cit.}, p. 66.
\item \textsuperscript{37} Ibid., p. 11.
\item \textsuperscript{38} See Ibid., pp. 66 - 67.
\end{itemize}
it became necessary for the Naga Baptist Churches of Nagaland, Assam and Manipur to come together and form a new combined organisation. This resulted in the birth of the Council of Naga Baptist Churches. It was formally constituted on 22nd March 1987, at Khedi Baptist Church, Kohima. This is how the Naga churches, both within and outside Nagaland, came to be organised on the basis of tribes.

Another major section of the social milieu within which the tribal factor plays a dominant organisational determinant belongs to the students. The Naga Students' Federation (NSF), which is the apex body of the student community, has its inception dating back to 1947. Though only a student body, the NSF also plays an important role in the socio-economic and political affairs of the Naga society. How the NSF envisages its role is reflected in the resolutions adopted by it in its 14th General Conference of 1991, which goes as follows:

"1. The NSF shall play a constructive balancing and unifying role in the Naga national politics.
2. The NSF shall initiate necessary actions to preserve and promote the rare natural flora and fauna in Nagaland.
3. The NSF shall set up an expert committee to spell out a relevant educational system for the Nagas.
4. The NSF do not recognise the artificial boundaries demarcated by foreigners.
5. The NSF shall urge the churches to progressively preach a theology of liberation."

True to these resolutions the NSF demanded the deletion of names of foreigners and non-indigenous inhabitants from the electoral rolls. They appealed to the Prime Minister of India for the revocation of Terrorist and Disturbed Area Act, from Nagaland. The NSF also reiterated its insistence on a greater Nagaland by opposing the break-up of Naga inhabited districts in Manipur. The Bengal Frontier Regulation Act, 1873, prohibits non-Nagas from entering Nagaland without a valid pass, and its enforcement has always been a major concern of the NSF. They even made a public appeal to all the Naga Christians for support.

These only represent some of the activities of the NSF. We can see that the NSF is almost equivalent to a political party when we look at the way it functions. Moreover, it has a number of affiliated student bodies over which it exercises Constitutional power. All these compel us to ignore the importance of the NSF as a pressure group and a powerful influence on the Naga society. In order to understand in what way the NSF contributes to the emergence of inter-tribal politics we need to analyse its Constitution.

45. The Vanguard, (Kohima, May 1992), pp. 29 - 43.
The Constitution of the NSF opens with a preamble which reads thus:

"We the Naga Students, having solemnly resolved to constitute ourselves into a federation to: cultivate and preserve our cultures, customs and traditional heritage; ameliorate social and moral activities; safeguard common interest, integrity, fraternity and co-operation amongst ourselves all over the Naga inhabited areas." 46

This preamble gives us a clear picture of what the NSF is all about. Its interests are very broad. It mentions the "Naga inhabited areas" as its field of operation, rather than Nagaland. The Constitution even goes further. It declares that "every bonafide Naga student" is to be a primary member, 47 and that the territorial jurisdiction is to extend beyond the Naga territory, to all those places where Naga students may be found to be residing. 48 Membership is therefore obligatory and racial.

In article Five, Clause 2 of the NSF Constitution, provision is made for federal membership. It says:

"All bonafide Naga Tribes Students' Organisation shall be a member of the Federation and the Federal Assembly and shall be called the "Federal Unit" of the Naga Students' Federation." 49

The NSF is to have a legislative body which is to be

47. Ibid., p. 2.
48. Ibid., p. 3.
49. Ibid., p. 2.
called the Federal Assembly. This Assembly is to be consisted of two representatives from each Federal Unit, which as we can see from above is nothing other than the student organisation at the tribe level. The Constitution clearly mentions that affiliation for membership to the NSF can only be granted to Naga Tribal Students' Organisations. Any other organisation formed by Naga students, whether pan-tribe or intra-tribe, is to remain as a sub-ordinate body.

A few examples of these bodies can be, the Naga Students' Union, Shillong; the Naga Students' Union, Delhi etc. It may be mentioned here that even these bodies are structured in the same federal pattern as the NSF, with tribal organisations as their federal units. In fact, the tribal identity at the student level has become so strong that even singular colleges are starting to have formal tribal unions, such as the Chakhesang Students' Union, Alder College, Kohima.

In order to complete the tribal picture at the student level, it may be relevant to examine the Constitution of an organisation at the tribe level. The Angami Students' Union is such an example. It has its membership drawn from bonafide students belonging to the Angami tribe and its jurisdiction.

50. Ibid., p. 4.
51. Ibid., pp. 2 - 3.
extends to all Angami inhabited areas. Since the Angami territory is large, it has four sub-unions representing Western, Southern, Northern and Chakro Angami areas. These bodies are not independently represented at the NSF. They remain part and parcel of the Angami Students' Union.

The duties of the Angami Students' Union representatives to the NSF are defined in the following way: "they shall ... raise and answer questions in the Federal Assembly as and when situation demands, to defend the interests of the Union." This reflects the relationship between the Angami Students' Union and NSF. It appears that the tribal body is comparatively autonomous and pursues its own interests, to which it allots greater priority than that of the Federation.

From the above, it becomes clear that the students community is organised on an existing pattern of tribal identities. The federal character of the NSF can be seen to be no different from that of the NNC and NBCC. It has most of the Naga student organisations such as the Ao Students' Conference, Chakhesang Students' Union, Lotha Students' Union, Rengma Students' Union, etc., affiliated to it as federal units. It is axiomatic from the federal character of these major pan-Naga organisations that there is an established perception among the Nagas that they are a multi-tribal community.

53. Ibid., p. 3.
54. Ibid., p. 5.
As such, it is a curious fact that none of these pan-Naga organisations have been able to have a socio-political definition of its member tribal entities. The student tribal organisations are not given recognition as separate entities simply by way of acknowledging their tribal identity, but they seem to form the very basis or *raison d'etre* of the NSF. Even then, NSF fails to define these tribal entities. Its Constitution merely states that affiliation will be granted when three-fourth majority of the Federal Assembly members present vote in favour.\(^55\) It does not envisage any criterion with which the eligibility of a prospective member can be assessed.

This is also true in all other tribal organisations. Even the Government does no have a clear idea of what constitutes a tribe. The fact remains that tribes become full-fledged tribes only when their organisations received formal recognition from established pan-tribal institutions such as the government, the Church, or student bodies, which again may act independently. A tribe recognised by one does not get automatic recognition from others. It is the lack of a single set of criteria for defining tribe that creates the problem in identifying tribes. This is why conflicting claims arise between smaller tribes which insist on a separate status, and their parent tribes which claim them to be their offshoots. This is what is happening with smaller tribes.

\(^{55}\) *Naga Students’ Federation Constitution*, (Kohima, 1992), p. 3. See Appendix C.
or sub-tribes such as Makware, Chirr and Tikhir, which at present are trying to part ways with their parent tribes.\textsuperscript{56}

The Pochury tribe was once such a sub-tribe, forming part of its parent tribe which was Chakhesang. But it got admitted to the NBCC in 1974, as a full-fledged tribal Association. Keitzar comments that "its inclusion into the membership of the Council settled a protracted issue of intra-tribal church relationship in Christian spirit,"\textsuperscript{57} meaning peacefully. The Nagaland Government's recognition of the Pochury as a separate Naga tribe came much later. The Home Department issued an order to this effect only on 31st March, 1990.\textsuperscript{58} This tribe is yet to be accepted as an affiliated Federal Unit of the NSF.\textsuperscript{59}

From the above, we can understand that a Naga tribe is not a closed ethnic group which can be identified on the basis of language, culture and political boundaries. Therefore, we totally disagree with Hokishe Sema, who opines that tribes can be distinctly different from one another in terms of language, cultural and social set-up, as well as in physique and

\textsuperscript{59} Stated by Ketsodi, Convener, NSF Inner-line Committee, in a discussion on 14th April, 1994.
appearance. If this is true the question of tribal integration and disintegration which leads to the emergence of formally recognised tribes would not have arisen. But this is because the idea of a tribe has developed among the people and the mobilisation of people for a centripetal drive towards the formation of a tribe is determined by socio-economic and political reasons, rather than ethnicity. In such a case the presence of an ideological phenomenon becomes axiomatic, one which promotes the idea of a tribe, which again is representative of the existence and involvement of an interest group. Our argument here is that the Naga elite is such an interest group and that they generate tribal ideas in pursuit of their own socio-economic and political ends. Our next Chapter will illustrate this further.

The outcome of this is that each tribal entity is held together by a common allegiance of its members. Such a group has tribe consciousness. Now, we can say that the tribe-wise divisions of Nagas are no longer mere anthropological categories. They have become distinct political entities, co-existing in a common socio-economic and political environment. In such a situation tribes may take on new attributes and use them as distinguishing features.

This is why tribes are not identified by their political and territorial boundaries alone. There is an emerging symbolic and attributive character which every tribe is claiming to be its own exclusive trademark. The areas of tribal differentiation are getting enlarged beyond the ideological raison d'etre of each tribe. David Syiemlieh notices that in the present day "each tribe has its distinctive pattern of shawls." What substantiates this point is that new patterns of tribal shawls are also emerging. A newly designed Chakhesang shawl was brought out in 1989. This shows that differences are also concocted and not wholly inherited as believed. Khodao Yanthan observes that Nagas are developing a system of tribe branding according to their apparently distinctive behavioural characters. He cites the examples of branding the Angamis as a prideful tribe, the Aos as cowardly, the Lothas as suspicious, the Chakhesangs as jealous and the Semas as savages.

In the light of the above, we may say that the tribe-wise division of the Nagas has become a prominent feature of the Naga social character. We find tribal organisations existing at different levels of society. The Angami Public Organisation, The Lotha HoHo, the Sema HoHo, the Chakhesang

62. The Shawl was demonstrated at Ura Academy Seminar on 24th April, 1989, at Kohima.
Public Organisation, are examples of pan-tribe organisations. But tribal organisations also exist at the local level. Thus we have an Ao Union, Kohima, and Phom Union, Kohima, etc. These Unions cover only members of these tribes residing in Kohima town. These unions may not be formally instituted as the pan-tribe organisations, but they do reflect the tendency for Nagas of the same tribe living in an area, to organise themselves on the basis of tribes. They reflect the existence of tribe consciousness among the Nagas.

It is beyond our purpose to investigate and identify all forms of tribal organisations. It may suffice to say that contemporary Naga society is characterised by the existence of tribal identities which are formed into well-organised socio-political entities. This tribal character of the Naga society has its repercussions on the functionings of the state. The Governor of Nagaland, M. M. Thomas, on his Republic Day address, 1992, points out that due to the interference of tribal loyalties and political interests, the problem of law and order gets aggravated. This happens because due to tribalism there is the tendency to condone a crime committed by one's own tribe.64 It may also have an impact on Government policies and legislations. The fact that the Government takes into its confidence the ideas and suggestions of the tribal Hohos in

64. M. M. Thomas, Governor of Nagaland, Republic Day Address, (Kohima, 1992), p. 7.
carrying out its legislative duties is a case in point. S. C. Jamir, Minister of Nagaland, in a Press Statement, states that the Total Prohibition legislation was referred to the tribal Hohos before its enactment. In all these, we find that the state has become a common arena within which the various tribal units come into interplay. Now, we shall need to show how and why this leads to the emergence of inter-tribal politics.

In order to find out the role of the state, we shall look into the following three contemporary theories of the state brought out by Paul R. Brass:

1. The state is supposedly a neutral agency. Its policy making and its distribution of resources are done in response to existing groups and caters to the formation of new groups.

2. Classical Marxist view of the state is that the state is the instrument of the dominant class for oppressing the lesser classes. There are two modifications by neo-Marxists. (a) The managers of the state apparatus may develop interests of their own and may act independent of the dominant class. (b) The second group of Marxist argue that the Capitalist world economy and imperialist state expansion have led to imbalanced distribution of state resources and valued employment opportunities among ethnic groups, making ethnic struggles more salient than class struggles.

3. Another theory is that in a plural society the state apparatus and power may be monopolised by a cultural group and dominates over other cultural groups which exist side by side with it in the same political unit. 66

Our purpose here is not to define state. It is only to get a general view of the state, so that we can work out a model to explain the impact of the interplay of tribes within the same state. For this, from the theories presented above by Brass, we make out the following generalised deductions: that the state possess power over common resources; it has a system of distribution of these resources; the recipients of state resources are compartmentalised into groups; the power imbalances within these groups affect the distribution; and the interests of these groups are conflictual.

As the "state is a territory in which a single authority exercises sovereign power", 67 we can say that with the formation of the State of Nagaland, the Nagas have been brought under a single resource arena, the power over which held by its own elite. But as we have seen earlier, the Nagas are divided on the basis of tribes. Each tribe is found to be a well-organised

socio-political entity. These tribes are represented in the
distribution system by an elite which occupies the seats of power
by drawing support from their respective tribe. Hence, the elite
derives its power from the tribe. It needs to mobilise tribal
allegiance by propagating tribe consciousness. It does so by
promoting tribalism on an ideological basis.

The elite has its own interests. It is seeking optimum
returns from its involvement with the state. For this the elite
needs to take control of the power apparatus of the state, which
is a major determinant of access to state resources. As the
resources of the state are limited, there is immense competition
for its control. Since the main force behind the elite is the
tribe, we may attribute this competition to the tribes they
represent. It is the processes leading to such a competition
among the Naga tribes that ushered in the emergence of
inter-tribal politics in the Naga society. We shall examine its
nature in the next Chapter.