TERRITORIALITY AND ETHNONATIONALISM: A CASE STUDY OF THE NAGA NATIONAL MOVEMENT

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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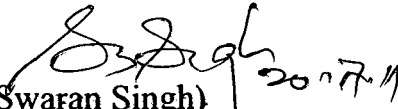2011

Date: 20·07-2011

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation titled "**Territoriality and Ethnonationalism: A case study of the Naga National Movement**" submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.
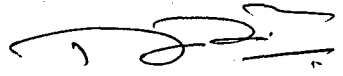
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We recommend that the dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONTENTS

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

The Naga national movement for independence has been a live issue in South Asia since the last six decades. It has accompanied the course of the Indian and Burmese States independent existence right from their inception[1]. As an armed movement, it is one of the world's most protracted conflicts (Baruah 2003, 2005). Historically the movement has had two main demands; the self determination of Nagas over their territory, and the unification of all Naga territories. These territories are currently spread over the four states of Manipur, Nagaland, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh in India and in the Chin and Sagaing division in Burma.

In the Indian context the Naga issue has been the progenitor for all movements of self determination and armed insurgencies in the Northeast region. In this way, the Naga national movement has been not just a pervasive security threat to the territorial integrity of the Indian State, but also among the most serious challenges to its nation-building project. Thus, it has substantially contributed to the Northeast being seen as a 'peripheral region'[2] of the country. The history of the relationship of the Northeast and the Government of India is overwhelmingly one of security concerns. Following from this, apart from some creative experiments in federalism, like the creation of new states and autonomous district councils; the trend of 'containing' the challenges of the Northeast is geared around poorly targeted and disproportionate dispersal of funds, and the abetment of what Bethany Lacina (2009: 998) calls 'localized ethnic autocracy'. But with India's adoption of the Look East Policy in the early 1990's there was a change in the way the Northeast was regarded by the Centre. As Jairam Ramesh, during his tenure as the

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[1] Marcus Franke claims that while the Indian State regarded the Nagas in a centre-periphery relationship, the Naga National Movement saw it as a center-center relationship thus undermining the Indian nation building project since the very beginning (2006: 69).

[2] Here, the understanding of peripheral units is borrowed from Ronald L. Watts. These, according to him, involve relatively small populations and whose relationships with the centre are distinct from that of the units in the mainland (Watts 1999 in Tillin 2006: 56)

Minister of State for Commerce, had announced, the future of the Northeast lay in "political integration with India and economic integration with South-East Asia" (Ramesh 2005: 550).

Ever since, the Indian State's thrust of engagement with the Northeast has been that of aggressive development. While the nature of this development in an ecologically fragile and politically fragmented region raises a whole set of alternate questions; for the purposes of the study, it can be said that; from the vantage of the Indian State, a favorable security situation in the Northeast is crucial to the success of the Look East policy. Among the various armed movements in the region, the Nagas in the course of six decades have emerged as the most powerful, influential and expansive, spread as they are across four border states. Not only has it spawned many more insurgencies (especially in Manipur), but as a people's movement with an overwhelmingly territorial agenda, it also impinges on the economic and political futures of many other people and nationalities. These nationalities, on their part, are no less capable of challenging the Indian State than the Nagas, and they have consistently done so. Therefore, it will not be too far-off-the-mark to consider that the solution to the Naga national question holds the key to the stability of the Northeast.

It is not surprising then, that academic literature on the Naga political issue has been extensive, finding space, both, individually, and as a part of the larger context of the Northeast. The earliest scholarships on the Nagas were accounts of anthropologists and political officers of the British India[3]. This constituted the knowledge base of the British Colonial administration and subsequently Indian administration's earliest dealings with the Nagas and their political demands. Contemporary scholarship can be roughly classified into three major types. The first is mindful of the interests of the Indian State. The lenses employed are that of geo-strategy, foreign policy, counter-insurgency, and challenges to nation and state-building. The major contributions are by Gundevia (1975), Rustomji (1985), Rammunny (1988), Anand (1980), Renaud (2006), Verghese (1996,

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[3]See Mackenzie: 1884, Johnstone: 1896, Allen: 1905, Hudson: 1911, Hutton: 1921, Mills: 1922, Fuuhrer Haimendorf: 1939, Elwin 1961.

2008), Goswami (2007). The thrust of these works is to advocate the increase of law and order, targeted development, creative federalism and better governance, but all in the service of the security challenge posed by the Naga issue in particular and the Northeast in general.

The second comprises of indigenous Naga scholarship, in English and in various Naga languages written in service of the Naga political cause. Alechimba (1970), Yunuo (1974, 1982), Horam (1977), Mao (1992), Vashum (2000), Iralu (2000), Ao (2002), Nuh (2004) are among the more prominent works. Concerns here are mostly with the national struggle, the occupation and human rights violations by the Indian and Burmese States, issues of inter-tribe solidarity, fractionalization of the movement, and with Naga national identity. Though such works do not directly address the territorial issue underlying the national movement, either theoretically or practically, the study considers such scholarship as a part of the discursive territorial strategies in service of the Naga movement.

The third kind is attempted by scholars and activists, both Naga and non-Naga, who have had a sustained engagement with the Naga national movement. These broadly range across theoretical, historical and empirical studies of nationalism, human rights, state terror, civil society, governance, development, ethnic strife, and political economy. The notable contributions are by Nibedon (1978), Hazarika (1995), Chasie (1999), Fernandes (1999), Mishra (1999), Baruah (2003), Srikant and Thomas (2005), Kikon (2005), Biswas (2006), Franke (2009), Lotha (2009), Bhaumik (2009). While such studies touch most pertinently upon the outstanding issues informing Naga nationalism, both for the Nagas themselves and for the Indian State; the territorial dimension is only sporadically and implicitly addressed. This too is done in service of the other issues like governance and development as by Baruah (2003) and Verghese (1996), or as an offshoot of the nation-state discourse in Yhome (2007).

The territorial aspect, as a crucial part of Naga history, and as the very crux of the current phase of the Naga National Movement, finds prominence only in the local and regional

print media. There are very few academic works that deal directly and exclusively with the territorial question. The few that do, like that of A.S. Atai Shimray (2005) and U.A. Shimray (2007), again fall under the second category of being written in service of the Naga cause and form themselves a part of the Naga National Movement. Interestingly, the territorial question, in wake of the renewed apprehension it causes among the neighboring states and the people therein, has begun to find increasing prominence in Manipuri Assamese accounts. Akoijam (2001), Tarapot (2003), Jusho (2004), Paratt (2005) are some of the examples of the former while Baruah (1999) and Gohain (2007) are of the latter. On the whole, there is scarcely any academic scholarship undertaken to examine the territorial dimension of the Naga National movement that would contribute towards a way out of the deadlock of the Naga issue, either through historical appreciation, or through policy recommendation. The current study, in proposing a contingent relation between the territoriality and the politics of the Naga National movement, is an effort to address this gap.

The present study examines the Naga issue through the theoretical lenses of ethnonationalism and territoriality. Walker Connor's understanding of the nation as a 'self differentiated ethnic group' (1994) informs the study. Such a view of national identity lays more emphasis on the perception of the peoples, that they constitute an ethnically distinct nation, and less emphasis on the practical determinants of descent and history. The study sees Naga national consciousness as an evolving and continuous process. The legitimacy of such an expansive identity however, becomes contentious when it is tied to territorial claims in service of such identity.

The territorial component of the different indigenous tribes that make up the Naga was an established practice since 'time immemorial[4]'. But these tribes lived alongside other historically established kingdoms and peoples, their territories overlapping, but without being directly subjugated by such entities. The coming together of these different tribes under the umbrella identity of the Naga Nation is a fairly recent phenomena dating not

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[4] This has been the line of Naga historians and chroniclers.

beyond 1832[5]. Therefore a composite Naga territorial identity in the region is preceded by the historical territorial identities of the Kingdom of Manipur and of the Ahom rule in the valley of Assam. But this is the case only with a certain section of Naga tribes and Naga territory. The other, larger majority of the Nagas however, lived in a frontier landscape that was not under the occupation of any other peoples or historic entities[6]. The British in the 19th century were the first to foray into such lands. Even then, their interference and administration was restricted to a portion of this frontier landscape. It was only with the independence of British India and the creation of the Indian State that these territories were legally bequeathed to her by the colonial predecessor. It was then that the rest of the Naga tribes, whose lands had so far been untouched by any 'outsider' came into contact with foreign rule. Seen as such, the agitation of the Nagas, at least in these parts, was not so much about independence, as a resistance to what they saw as Indian invasion. *It has been the work of the Naga national movement to extend this understanding of resistance to the whole of Naga identity and all Naga territories. As a result, the Naga national project runs on a collision course with other historic and national identities in the region.*

As a protracted struggle conditioned by forces from both within and outside of Naga society, the nature of Naga demands, centering around self-determination, sovereignty and integration, have undergone substantial changes (Kikon 2005: 2844). The current thrust of the movement is not so much on absolute territorial sovereignty as much as on the integration of contiguous Naga territory. With almost all other parties that would bear the consequences of such territorial integration vehemently opposing the Naga movement, the situation is one of deadlock. However, in looking for a way out, it is important to factor in that the Naga movement has had a unique history in each of these regions. This is crucial for understanding the territoriality of the Naga National Movement. The study also considers that the way in which the Naga (territorial) movement has emerged in each of these areas is a result of the long and evolving politics of the movement.

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[5] The year 1832 marks the beginning of British colonial raids into Naga territory.
[6] This was a feature of what Stanley Tambiah calls the Galactic nature of South Asian polities (Tambiah 1976 in Franke 2009: 19). It will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

Further, in tandem with the territorial aspect, the study sees Naga national identity, (which is territorially rooted) also to be a consequence and a reflection of the politics of the movement. The actors in the politics of the national movement as held in this study are not just the changing and contested leadership of the underground governments and the armed insurgency. It involves the traditional tribal structures, the church bodies, the civil society organizations, the participants in the Indian political process (both independentists and integrationists), and the Naga academia. In as much as Naga national identity shapes itself in response to the Indian State, the Government of India too is an actor in the politics of the movement.

And finally, the study attempts to show that the politics of the Naga national movement has had a deterministic influence on the territoriality of the movement. The territorial claims of the Naga nation then, is not a non-negotiable given, but an active construction of the changing politics of the movement. The theoretical lens of critical geopolitics underlines the treatment of territoriality in the study. Very briefly, the study considers territoriality as used by ethnonational movements, to serve a dual purpose. First, it is the passive logic of Westphalian territorial sovereignty, on the basis of which such movements lay claims to sovereignty and territorial exclusivity. The second lies in the active attempts, 'by an individual or group, to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships, by delimiting control over a geographic area' (Sack 1986:1).

Thus, the study proposes that *territoriality of the Naga Nationalism is contingent on the politics of the movement.*

The implications of such proposition are several. For the ongoing peace process, commentator Bharat Bhushan holds that it is important to understand 'why and in what perspective the Nagas seek a settlement' (2004). By studying the territoriality of (practiced by) the various actors on the Naga national scene and the history of such claims individually in the states concerned, it intends to contribute to such a perspective.

It also follows from the proposal that if the nature of Naga nationalism and its territoriality has been changing as a result of the evolving politics of the movement, it is further subject to change. The diverse possibilities through which this can happen would inform a sustainable settlement, to the approximate satisfaction of all parties to the issue. And finally, the contingent territoriality of the Naga movement in particular (dependant on its politics), makes a case for considering the contingent territoriality of ethnonational movements in general (dependant on any other variable/s).

The methodology of the study relies on a theoretical understanding of ethnonationalism and territoriality. Relevant theoretical literature in these areas is consulted. Thereafter, the study is mostly a historical interrogation of the course of the Naga national movement. It borrows from both primary and secondary sources. The former comprise of texts of agreements, panel reports, recommendations from civil society, archival sources, maps and newspaper articles wherever applicable, while the latter comprise of competent and representative literature on the Naga National movement. It needs to be emphasized that the current study treats the Naga movement primarily as a bilateral case between India and the Nagas and only then as a tripartite one between India, Burma and the Nagas. In the absence of much literature on the Naga issue in Burma, the argument that it is India that is more constructively engaged with the issue gains weight. Still, the omission is serious. Apart from the dominant narratives of the Naga freedom struggle, the study also looks at the course of the movement in those areas where it is facing most resistance. Accordingly the study is structured as follows:

Following this introductory chapter, chapter two discusses the available theoretical literature on nationalism, ethnonationalism and territoriality. In undertakes a review of the modernist, the primordialist, perennialist and the ethnosymbolist approaches to explaining the phenomena of nationalism. It examines the concept of ethnicity, before going on to deal with ethnonationalism. For the purposes of the study, the latter is used to refer to those nations that are agitating for independence within established States, or non-state nationalisms. Most importantly, it regards ethnonationalism as a distinctly modern phenomena shaped firstly, by structural factors in the international system

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following the two World Wars, and secondly, by the State from which they seek to separate. The second part of the chapter looks at territoriality, firstly, as held within the realm of classical geopolitics, and then, through the lens of critical geopolitics. It then goes on to study the phenomenon of ethno-territoriality, which roughly stands for the practices through which ethnic national movements strengthen their case for self determination.

Chapter three deals with the Nagas as a people and traces the development of national consciousness and nationalism in their midst. It spans from 1832, the time of the first British forays into certain Naga tracts to 1956, when the Federal Government of Nagaland was established. In between, British administration, the spread of Christianity, the two World Wars, and the period of British retreat, the Indian occupation and Indian use of armed forces mark the development of the politicized social consciousness of the Nagas. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the nature of the incipient Naga Nationalism. It attributes equal roles to the strong ethnic core of the Naga people, to the geopolitical conditions of South-East Asia then prevalent, to the international climate where the concept of self-determination was rapidly gaining currency, to the British Colonial administration and the newly independent Indian State, as well as to the missionary zeal of Naga national workers.

Chapter four studies the journey of the Naga national movement from 1956 to the present day. This was the period marked by the rapid spread as well as rapid fractionalization of the movement. It was also marked by the emergence of multiple actors on the political scene and the subsequent struggle for defining what Naga nationalism stood for. The Indian State is identified as the primary agency that targeted existing chinks in the movement and employed military, administrative and political means to widen those chinks into deep fractures. As a direct result of the prolonged demand for self-determination and the armed movement, the period is also marked by the emergence of a co-constitutive relationship between the 'mainstream' political life and the 'insurgency'; a patron-client relationship in a culture of violence that Baruah terms 'durable disorder (2005:13). Through episodes of failed ceasefires, failed peace talks and failed accords,

the end of the century saw both India and the Nagas come to an minimum understanding; while India recognized the 'unique history' of the Nagas vis-à-vis other national movements challenging the Indian State, Naga politics scaled down their refrain of absolute territorial sovereignty to demand instead a federated relationship with India. The pitch of the movement shifted to the integration of Naga contiguous areas. Many observers also consider the current ceasefire not as an effort at a final resolution, but as a 'containment' of the Naga issue through further fractionalization. But the defining characteristic of the new phase was the democratization of the national movement. Actors that determined the politics of the movement multiplied and unlike the previous years they were not just confined to those who had political influence or the backing of force.

The fifth chapter deals most directly with the territoriality of the movement. Towards this end, it first brings out the territoriality of the armed movement, i.e. it traces what Naga areas were involved in the armed resistance to Assam Police and then to the Indian Army. It then separately considers the issue of Naga nationalism and Naga unification in Burma, Manipur, Assam and in Arunachal Pradesh. The method of interrogation is again historical. *It finds that the cluster of political actors in each of these territories has been slightly different. Therefore the territoriality exercised and the consequent strength of claims to these territories is also different.* Finally, it looks at the outstanding issues that animate the current phase of the movement. Prime among these are the emergence of a powerful and politicized civil society that is not always led by the armed actors, but also increasingly provides leadership the movement. It is this section that has lent substance to the peace talks accompanying the ceasefire, by putting immense pressure on both parties, the NSCN (I-M) and the Indian Government, to meaningfully continue talking. The theme of reconciliation (among various factions and tribes), though always a consistent feature in the fractured course of the movement, takes centre stage in current times. It is increasingly believed that reconciliation in Naga society needs to precede a sustainable settlement with the Indian Government and other concerned regional parties. Lastly, it is the territorial integration of all Nagas that takes precedence over absolute separation from India.

Chapter six attempts an analysis of the movement as seen thus far. It makes a two main points; first, the scaling down of the Naga demand from total independence to autonomy is not only the result of a weakening of the armed resistance. It is a direct reflection of the democratization of the movement, wherein the concepts of sovereignty and independence, through constant negotiation, have been redefined to more adequately represent the varied Naga interests and aspirations. Secondly, the theme of integration of all Naga territories is not recent. It has been a consistent demand of the movement. Initially, the expression of this unification was not as assertive on the ground level. It was the brainchild of the elites of Naga society and of Naga National workers and found representation in the various petitions made by the Nagas from time to time. However, with time, the agenda was pursued with varying degrees of assertiveness by the various actors in the movement, in their own ways. The current mass upsurge in favor of unification is the direct result of the propaganda by all actors of the Naga theatre. It is made successful primarily by long period of relative peace brought on by the ceasefire. In light of the different histories of the regions, the study finds that the strength of the demand for unification of the different territories, need to be evaluated individually, not together. Finally it makes a few comments on the tentative nature of the political solution to the Naga national question.

Chapter Two

NATIONALISM, ETHNONATIONALISM, TERRITORIALITY: A THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter is concerned with the theoretical examination of the concepts that will inform the case study. The first section reviews the available literature on the theories of nationalism. It is shown how the concept of the nation and the movement of nationalism is an overwhelmingly modern category. But nonetheless, the nation derives its source from an ethnic core. This core, though in a constant process of redefinition, goes far back in time. After having looked at the category of ethnicity, the phenomenon of ethnonationalism is examined. It is understood as a distinctly modern development, spread in the wake of the nation building process engineered by established States in the years following the two world wars.

It is also seen that such non-state nationalisms, while claiming authenticity over State led nationalism, approaches nation building and uses territoriality in the same ways as established States. This leads us to the second section of the chapter; the theoretical study of territoriality. After understanding the difference in the way classical and critical geopolitics look at territoriality, the territoriality of ethno-nationalisms, understood as both a constituent and a practice, is examined.

Theories of Nationalism

Understanding a concept as heavy and diffuse as nationalism must necessarily proceed with an appreciation of its contextual contingencies. Sociologist and eminent theorist of nationalism, Anthony D Smith has this in mind when he notes that "the history of nationalism is as much a history of its interlocutors as the ideology and the movement itself" (Smith 1992: 58-80). A preserve initially of historians, sociologists and anthropologists, it is only well into the twentieth century, that scholars of political science and international relations began to engage with it.

The broad debate in the field takes off initially among the modernists, perrenialists and primordialists. The former are a large diffuse body who trace the genesis of the concept to conditions of modernity, taking off with, or around the time of the French Revolution and spreading from Europe to the rest of the world. The perrenialists see the nation existing in varied manifestations across all epochs and societies, and primordialists insist on the indelible ties of blood and kinship as the basis of nations and nationalism.

The discourse is further enriched by the post-colonial scholars who challenge the derivativeness of the discourse of nationalism in the third world (Chatterjee 1986), by post-modernists who focus on the narrative function of the discourse (Bhaba 1990), and the enthno-symbolist understanding of Anthony D Smith, that seeks to explain the salience of the loosely defined ethnic core in the modern manifestation of the ideology of the nation and the movement of nationalism. For the purposes the study, we look also at ethnonationalism as a distinct phenomena, and at the territorial aspects of nation and nationalism.

Modernist Theories

The opening lines of Ellie Kedourie's seminal work, "Nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century," (1960:1) has been largely criticized

for its explicit bias (Chatterjee 1986), but it enables getting into the heart of the modernist understanding, of both the ideology and the movement. Nationalism is understood by Kedourie as an 'organic theory of the State,' and his discourse typically rests on three propositions: "that humanity is naturally divided into nations, that nations are known by certain characteristics which can be ascertained, and that the only legitimate type of government is self government" (1960: 9). The idea that the political sovereignty of a unit is vested in its people was a far cry from the earlier practices of regarding the territory of a prince as his polity, and the population therein as his princely patrimony (Greenfeld 2006: 78). It was also a drastic change from the still prevalent trends of dynastic interest, indirect rule, virtual representation, brokerage among multiple ethnicities and extensive particularism (Tilly 1994: 142). Acquiring an almost 'natural' aura in the light of enlightenment radicalism and Kantian ethics (Kedourie in Stokes 1978: 154), it is related intimately to the growing trend of the individual supplementing the community as the unit of political life.

Liah Greenfeld (1992) traces the etymological roots of the 'nation' a few centuries before Kedourie and others to sixteenth century Tudor England. Seeing it as a contingent response to the disorder brought by the collapsing traditional societal structure, 'nation' initially implied 'elite' and referred to the representatives of cultural and political authority (69-70). Nation served as the legitimation for this post-feudal, heterogeneous, mobile aristocracy's greater voice in the political process. It gave rise to the idea of the entire English population participating on an equal footing in the well-being of a commonwealth, and gradually morphed into the democratic egalitarian form in which it is widely understood today (47-49). Charles Tilly throws further light on the emergence of the phenomena in Europe by differentiating between its two manifestations, State-led and State-seeking nationalism (1994: 133). While Rulers who spoke in the name of the nation demanded that their citizens (erstwhile subjects) identify themselves with that nation and subordinate other interests to those of the state exemplified the first kind, the very same idea that the political and national units should be congruent (Gellner 1983: 1) engendered people of a distinct cultural identity to seek Statehood. The period also saw the growing nexus of nationalism and historians, whose historiographies, served to extol

the emergence of their nations on the world scene, with their claims to legitimation as a culmination of a long and inevitable historical process[7].

A crucial corrective to this ideologically motivated historiography is provided by Ernest Renan. He says; "Forgetting, I would even go so far as to say, historical error, is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation, which is why progress in historical studies often constitutes danger for (the principle of) nationality" (in Bhaba 1990: 11). Thus, though nationalism as a contingent response to the crumbling social structure (Greenfeld 2006: 69) entered history and acquired pervasiveness by the efforts of historians, it essentially succeeded as an ideology, according to Gale Stokes , "because it simultaneously satisfied the ancient human need for community and the modern need for personal autonomy (Stokes 1974 in Stokes 1978: 157). Modernists focusing on the twin aspects of nationalism's continuity and break from tradition also see it claiming its place beside religion in the minds of men. For Heinrich Schneider the modern idea of the nation is a 'political appropriation of a theological concept' (Schneider 1995: 39 in Tirakiyan 1997: 168). Anderson too regards nationalism, as a tool that, alongside religion, helped transform fatality into continuity and continuity into meaning (1983: 19).

Dawa Norbu, speaking in the context of third world nationalisms, holds that most world religions have potential for mass politics, thus making for an easy transition from religious activity to mass politics in third world societies (1992: 3).

Understood as a modern phenomenon, the relationship of nationalism to industrialization has also been studied at length. Thus, if Greenfeld asserts that, "..nationalism, not industrialization, lies at the basis of modern society and represents its *constitutive element*" (2006: 68), Gellner (1996) differs by saying, "It is modernity which produces nationalism and it is nationalism which engenders the nation, and not the other way around". Gellner bases his understanding of nationalism on the difference between culture and structure that separate industrial societies from others. In simple societies, the

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[7] Tirakiyan (1997: 152) cites the examples of historians like Michelet in France, Bancroft in the United States, Macaulay in Great Britain and Treitschke in Germany.

social 'structure' or the totality of social roles was 'tightly circumscribed, nested, and ascriptive' (Gellner 1964 in O'Leary 1997: 193). The demands of socio-economic modernization made a homogenized population, speaking a common language, a functional requirement for the emerging industrial order. Communicating with people now required not just socio-structural, but cultural cues, and thus culture came, not only to underline structure, but to replace it (O'Leary 1997: 194).

Considering nationalism as a useful ideology, quite akin to a Platonic myth, to integrate the republic, Gellner notes how nationalism engenders the nation into units that are larger than kinship groups, but smaller than empires. This leads him to conclude that 'nationalism is a phenomenon connected not so much with industrialization or modernization as such, but with its uneven diffusion' (1964: 166 in O'Leary 1997: 194). The uneven diffusion of modernity is of crucial importance in explaining the tenor of post-colonial nationalisms, a subject we return to while discussing Ethnonationalism.

While Gellner's liberal functionalist perspective sees nationalism as an useful player for the consolidation of modernity, Benedict Anderson, with an anthropologist's insight, makes a case for considering nationalism not as an ideology at par with other modern ones like liberalism or fascism, but rather as 'a distinct mode of understanding and constituting the phenomena of belonging together, comparable to kinship or religion' (1991: 5). Shifting the spatio-temporal location of the development of nationalism to the Creole resistance of European hegemony in the Caribbean, Anderson's idea of national solidarity, much like Hobsbawm and Ranger's 'Invention of Tradition' rests upon the development of print capitalism. The development of vernacular language and literature that this effected, permitted the readers for the first time to think of themselves relationally beyond small, everyday, face to face communities. The nation then, for Anderson, is an 'imagined political community'. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation would never know most of their fellow members, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. Such a community is necessarily limited, because it has finite, if elastic boundaries, beyond which would lay other nations.

Most importantly, the imagination is in the form of a community because the nation is seen as not a hierarchical, but a deep, horizontal comradeship (1991: 6-7).

ISSUES IN THE MODERNIST THEORIES OF
NATION AND NATIONALISM

LANGUAGE

Seen as the cognitive creation of literary and cultural elites and resistance leaders, language is central to Anderson's analysis of the nation. But the scope and role of language to the constitution of nationalism has been well debated among the modernists. Though Anderson understands language primarily in terms of continuity, he refuses to attach any primordial connotation to it. The language of nationalist movements most often is not the parental tongue, but the tongue of the aristocracy or even the colonizer. Enabling the reader of newspapers and novels to situate her/himself alongside of the activities of other individuals in the same temporal moment, language, for Anderson, is not the test of nationhood, but the means of imagining, and thereby creating the nation. Gellner agrees with Anderson in as much as the standardization of language leads to a condition where, "a high culture pervades the whole of society, defines it and needs to be sustained by the polity" (Gellner, 1983: 18). Underlining the role of social communication, Karl Deutsch (1966) sees nationalism emerging in the transmission of mass media to the non-nationalized populace. Language, for him, is a crucial enabler of such communication. Gellner on the other hand holds that nationalism is engendered, not in the mere transmission of specific messages, but in the notion of media itself, as an abstract, centralized and standardized fount of high culture (1983: 127).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A second crucial factor in modernist analyses of the nation is the role of economic development. The traditional narrative has been about capitalism bringing together large scale markets and transforming thus the bases of economic activity and interest (Eisenstadt 1966, Gellner 1983 *et al*). Inherent in such an understanding is the homogenizing effect of industrial development, whereby nationalism emanating from the centralizing state structure brings peripheral regions into its fold. Any contrary ethnic mobilization therein would be merely transitory in nature. In contrast, later researchers, focusing more on the logic and empirics of the capitalist system than on state activities have shown how such incorporation, of necessity, disadvantages the periphery economically (Wallerstein 1974-1988). Such relative economic deprivation itself fans ethnic mobilization and counter-nationalism (Hechter 1975). Though Hechter's analysis traces counter-nationalism to the economic dynamics of 'internal colonialism', he does not offer an account of why the counter-mobilizations are constituted on the planks of ethnic identity.

ETHNICITY

Thus modernists, unlike the primordialist and ethno-symbolist understandings, do not regard ethnicity as the fount of nation and nationalism; they however, engage with it variously. Eric Hobsbawm treats nationalism as a movement of false consciousness that ethnicity helps to produce, but cannot explain (Hobsbawm 1990, Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). Similarly the Marxist analysis of Balibar and Wallerstein (1991) acknowledges the reality of race, ethnicity and even nation, ultimately in "people based activity". In as much as the nation's appeal to its community rests of 'fictive ethnicity' they view the concept as indispensable to the idea of nation-hood. Such a stance is also discerned in Max Weber, when he holds that 'It is primarily the political community, no matter how artificially organized that inspires the belief in common ethnicity' (Weber 1978 in Norbu 1992: 44). A diversion is made by anthropologist Edward Tirakiyan. Viewing ethnicity as

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a distinctly modern exercise in categorization, he proposes the treating of ethnicity and race as a dynamic set of factors creating modernity, rather than as constants or residuals in the general process of modernization. (1997: 149). Craig Calhoun (1993) joins the debate later to insist on terminologically separating the categories of ethnic group and nation, reserving the former term for communities that desire autonomy short of international recognition.

WARFARE AND POLITICS

The role of modern warfare, for the consolidation of both, nation-states and non-state nations is explored at length by Charles Tilly, Michael Mann, John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith (Smith 2002: 24). Their insights help also to explain the tendency to conflate the terms of state, nation and ethnic group that Calhoun seeks to separate. With the gradual consolidation of the peace of Westphalia, politics has come to replace warfare, both in the creation of ethnic groups as well as their coalescing into a nation, through nationalism. Thus Hans Kohn (1944), Hugh Seton-Watson (1977) have stressed on the role of modern politics towards the creation of the nation (Calhoun 1993: 227). Gordona Uzelac (2002) goes on to show the centrality of the political organization towards the twin role of stratifying the political system by forming political parties, leadership and state system on the one hand, and offering a nationalist ideology on the other. On the basis of the politicized culture so resulting, the social agency perceives of itself as a community (48). A more straightforward role of politics is envisaged by Paul Brass, for him, the nation is nothing else, but "an ethnic community politicized" (1991: 20).

The role of politics is also central to Dawa Norbu's analysis of Third World Nationalisms. Rejecting Gellners structural model in favor of a more voluntaristic one (1992: 10), he sees third world nationalism as politicized social consciousness rather than as a neatly formulated ideology (1-2). Though modernists have stressed the deeply penetrative role of the state, and mass politics for the invention and consolidation of the

nation, the limits of the power of the nationalist imagination has been upheld by ethnographers and anthropologists (Scott 1985, 1990, Abu-Lughod 1995, Akhil Gupta 1995 in Straker 2007: 209). At length they have explored local events, demonstrating not only the failure of the states discursive efforts to 'secure the consent,' trust and enthusiasm of people, but also the 'negligible character of nationalism's impingements upon specific localities and social groups' (Straker 2007: 209).

LIMITATIONS OF MODERNIST EXPLANATIONS
OF NATION AND NATIONALISM

Modernist theories of nation and nationalism explain much, equally, they also come up against fundamental conceptual and empirical challenges. A most obvious and useful contribution is made by Craig Calhoun when he stresses upon the inherent internationalism of the nationalist discourse. For all the supposed pre-modern roots of the nation, their claims to distinctiveness is invariably vis-à-vis other nations, making the ideology of nationalism a very modern phenomenon (Calhoun 1993: 216). On the other hand, their structural and economic analyses do not help explain why counter nationalisms are based primarily in terms of ethnic identities. While they stress the constructivist role of history in the consolidation of the national myth, they refuse to engage with the politics of selective and appropriated historiography. Mostly tight lipped about assimilationist tendency inherent in the conflation of the terms State and Nation; they are unable to explain the xenophobia both between and within, not just less developed, but also highly developed States.

Such shortcomings have led later generation modernists to sort through political theory afresh to redefine the meaning of the contemporary nation. Julia Kristeva's is one such attempt. Hailing Montesquieu's notion of *espirit generale*, she sees the nation as a positive dynamic entity, as a politico-legal pact between free and equal individuals. Embodying the spirit of the French Enlightenment, the nation, as envisaged by Kristeva involves enlarging and diversifying its citizenry, and serving as a half-way house towards

a broader international economic and political setting. It thus constitutes of foreigners participating fully in the contractual, cultural and transitional national project. Such an imagination of the nation, she stresses is a more viable alternative to regressive ethnic and cultural mobilizations that have almost hijacked the everyday meaning of nationalism (Kristeva 1993 in Tirakyian 1997: 163). It is the perrenialists and primordialists who have engaged the questions of ethnicity in nationalism more deeply, to whom we now turn.

Primordialist, Perennialist and Ethnosymbolist Theories of Nation and Nationalism

PRIMORDIALISM

The ethnic question in the study of nations and nationalism is approached only instrumentally by the modernists. In contrast, the three approaches we now examine, consider ethnicity as the central concern of their investigation. In order to appreciate the development of the debate, it is necessary to begin first of all with the primordial school of thought. Nationalism, as not only a basic form of political association, but as an organic form of human nature and the human condition, underlie this stream. The nation for them lies outside of history. The primordialist understanding of the nation however is not uniform. The earliest primordialists, like Herder, considered the national form to be an essential part of God's plan for humanity. This belief, in its secular version, held the facticity of nations as analogous to organisms in the natural world. The trend of neo-Darwinism in the social sciences, saw Pierre Van Der Berghe present an instrumental spin to a primordial understanding of nationalism (Berghe 1978 in Smith 2004: 5). The basic unit of his socio-biological approach was the individual seeking to maximize his gene pool, and he saw both, nations and ethnic groups as types of large scale kinship groups, distinguished by different cultural signs, that assisted individuals to determine their inclusive fitness groups.

In stark contrast are the works of Clifford Geertz and Edward Shills. Regarding primordial attachments like kinship, contiguity, customs, race, language and religion to be the cultural givens of society, they saw these forces as both prior to and overriding any constructed political and civil ties. It should be mentioned that Geertz has often been mis-interpreted to speak on behalf of the 'primordialism' of the 'nation'. He rather holds nations to be modern constructs, the salience of which was threatened by such 'primordial attachments.' Shils, though insisting that "Nations exist because of the sensitivity of human beings to the primordial facts of descent and territorial location" (Shils 1997 in Leoussi 2002: 250), does not consider a nation to be safest only when it is realized as a state. He acknowledges the reality of multiple nations within states as the basis for the development and maintenance of a liberal and pluralist civil society.

Rogers Brubaker (*et al.*) have sought to show how scholars usually termed as primordialists, do not uphold so much the apriori aspect of primordialism, but rather are analyzers of primordial attachments, placing the final emphasis upon people's perceptions about such attachments (2004: 49). Accordingly, Steven Grosby, who sees the nation as a self-defined, bounded and translocal territorial community; cites the primordial ties of territory and kinship not as life nurturing in themselves, but in people's sense of the prior, binding and overriding nature attributed to them. (Grosby 1997 in Smith 2004). This was also the sense in which Carleton Hayes invoked the primacy of nationalism in equating it with religious belief. Nationalism, he held to be, "an emotional loyalty to the idea or the fact of the national state, a loyalty so intensely emotional that it motivates all sorts of people" (Hayes 1928 in Stokes 1978: 150).

It is Walker Connor however, who fuses the cognitive agency of the group most closely with the primordial foundation of their self definition. Thus nation for him is both, a self differentiating ethnic group, and also a group of people who believe that they are ancestrally related (1994: xi). In the final analysis however, he holds that it is the self view of one's group, rather than tangible characteristics that is of essence in determining the existence or non existence of a nation (1972: 337).

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PERRENIALISM

If the nation and the emotion of nationalism is organic and ahistorical for the primordialist school, for perrenialists, the national form is deeply historical. But unlike the modernist understanding, the nation is not tied to any particular stage of history. Anthony Smith provides a succinct understanding, "In the perrenialists view, nations form, change their character, and dissolve or are absorbed into other human communities, along with all other forms of human identity and community" (2004: 8). The recurrent perennialist thought sees nations to appear and re-appear whenever conditions for its development are conducive.

John Armstrong thus acknowledges that some national revivals are inspired by the modernist ideological blue-print of nationalism, but denies that there is any essential difference between such nations and those of the pre-modern epochs. Both, he holds, share the properties of ethnic cohesion, ethnic self differentiation, and a cluster of shared sentiments, myths and symbols (not necessarily territory) that guard their borders (Armstrong 1982, in Smith 2004: 9). While Joseph Llobera and Miroslav Hroch trace the origin respectively of Central and Western European, and Eastern European nations to the Middle Ages, Adrian Hastings stretches the nation back to Christian and European roots, claiming that the essence of the Bible sanctions the imagination of a community in a national form (Hastings 2003 in Smith 2004). Still others like Gillingham and Scales see the authentic national forms not as recurrent but in continuity with their medieval origins.

ETHNICITY IN THE MAKING OF THE NATION

While the modernists attribute to ethnicity a mere instrumental role in the making of nations, and primordialists and perrenialists almost tend to conflate the ethnic community with the nation, sociologist Anthony Smith undertakes a sustained analysis to factor in both contributions. He regards the prevalent understanding of the nation as an 18th

century construct and nationalism as a wholly modern ideology. What however, lay both outside history and stretches back to pre-modern epochs with substantial continuities through time is not the nation, but its ethnic core, or the ethnic community (Smith 1986, 1991). To second his understanding, he attempts a qualitative separation of what he calls the ethnie, the nation, and the modern version of the nation fostered by nationalism. Thus the ethnie (ethnic group understood as the ethnic core of the nation) is characterized by self definition, shared myth of common origins, shared memories of past communal events, one or more elements of shared culture, and a sentiment of solidarity, at least among the elite. The nation shares the first two features of self definition and myth of origin in common with the ethnie, thereafter, it is characterized by a distinctive public culture, the possession of a historic homeland, and established common rights and duties for all its members (2004: 23). For Smith then, when a particular ethnic community manifests these additional processes, "..to a sufficient degree and in a mutually reinforcing combination, then there is prima facie case for designating it a 'nation' (2004: 17).

His understanding of the nation is a form that is never totally achieved and is always being developed. The modern version of the nation, which is centered primarily on the territorial and civic aspects, then is an outcome of a particular milieu and its specific history. He thus also lays down the features that characterize the modernist understanding of the nation. The nation, for them is necessarily territorial, legal-political, participatory, culturally homogenous, sovereign, and international (2004: 17). The origin and spread of this modern variant of the nation lies in the successful bureaucratization of the ethnie (Smith 1986: 109). Thus separating the ethnie from the nation and the essential nation from its modern variant, he acknowledges the separate role of nationalism as also a distinctly modern phenomenon. He defines it as "..an ideological movement that seeks to attain and maintain autonomy, unity and identity for a population some of whose members believe it to constitute an actual or potential 'nation'. ..it combines an ideology with political movement with clear goals of national autonomy, unity and identity" (2004: 23). Moreover, nationalism for Smith need not always be a mass phenomenon.

Smith, like Hastings[8] considers merely, the political ideology of nationalism to be a mass phenomenon. The nation, at least at the time of the nationalist struggle, might well be an elite solidarity (2002: 11). But the success of the ideological mobilization, for Smith lies in the 'ethnic cores, homelands, heroes and golden ages'. (1986: 216). Thus, for Smith; "Any theory of nations and nationalism must, (therefore) confront the centrality of ethnicity in the origins and persistence of nations, and consider the links and differences between core ethnies and nations...This is central to the antiquity of nations as well as to their modernity" (2004: 19).

ETHNOSYMBOLISM

This link between nations and core ethnies is the central concern of Smith's ethnosymbolist perspective (2004: 18). Unlike the modernists who treat economic and political changes of the superstructure and the ideology of nationalism as the central variables in the proliferation of the nation, ethnosymbolism stresses on the symbolic and social elements that compose collective cultural and ethnic identities. Smith is quick to add that, alongside the subjective elements of attachment of individuals, equally important is the institutional expression of these elements. Thus myths, symbols, values, styles of art, music, literature, law, ritual and activity are all spheres that give concrete and recurrent embodiment to these elements (2002: 29-30).

It needs to be noted however that, similar to the modernist understanding of the role of language, neither primordialism, nor ethnsymbolism considers language to be the most stable attribute of the nation. Bromley pointing towards the Scots and Irish tells us that nations might move on partly or wholly to a new language while preserving its identity vis a vis others. (Bromley 1984 in Acharya 1988: 1073). Socio-linguist Joshua Fishman also holds that while there might not be anything natural in the choice of cultivating a language as the medium of nationalism, its crucial task is to provide authenticity towards

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[8] "One cannot say that for a nation to exist it is necessary that everyone within it should want it to exist or have full consciousness that it does exist; only that many people beyond government circles or a small ruling class should consistently believe in it" (Hastings 1997: 26).

"safeguarding the sentimental and behavioral links between the speech community and its (real and imaginary) counterparts yesterday and in antiquity" (Fishman 1972 in Stokes 1974: 156). For Fishman then language becomes salient because the "nationalist tour de force is to combine authenticity and modernism (*ibid.*).

The ethno-symbolist perspective discerns three kinds of relationships between the ethnic core and their manifestation as the modern national form. There is recurrence, where ethnies in the modern world are successfully traced back to pre-modern epochs, there could be unbroken continuity between modern nations and their pre-modern ethnies, there also takes place be the rediscovery and appropriation of communal ethno-histories. Unlike the modernist stress on elite manipulation that brands this appropriation as a wholly constructed project, ethno-symbolists look to sift the novel categories and interpretations from pre-existing traditions of ethnic myth, memory, symbol and value (Smith 2004: 25). The enduring importance of the ethnosymbolist approach lies in the following observation by Smith, "modern nations and nationalism have only extended and deepened the meanings and scope of older ethnic concepts and structures. Nationalism has certainly universalized these structures and ideals, but modern 'civic' nations have not in practice really transcended ethnicity or ethnic sentiments" (1986: 216).

Though it is the ethnic core that is central to the identity of a nation, Smith tells us that the identities that base themselves upon such a core is subject to change. In this regard he says, "...It is true that we are dealing here with long-term constructs, but these are not essences or fixed quantities or traits...national identities change, but this is a process that occurs in every generation, as external events and internal realignments of groups and power encourage new understandings of collective traditions" (2010: 22). For Ted Gurr too, all collective groups whether they be ethnic or nation-states are both stationary and transitory to degrees. But Gurr goes a step ahead of Smith and tells us that what shapes the outer boundary of such group identities are not merely the presence of one or more traits but the shared perception that these traits set the group apart (1993: 3).

If the burden of Smith's ethno-symbolic approach has been to underscore the centrality of ethnicity in the constitution of the nation, in both its pre-modern and modern manifestations, he does not adequately explain the explosion of counter-nationalisms, and smaller nationalisms within and across States in the modern world. Smith only hints at the phenomenon when he observes that; "In order to survive, the ethnie must take on some of the attributes of nationhood, and adopt a civic model" (1986: 157). But he does not concern himself with the objective empirical conditions that primed such ethnies, either to fear for their survival, or to claim their 'legitimate' space in the inter-national arena. This is the burden of scholars who term such phenomena as ethnonationalism. In order to better appreciate the contribution of the ethnonationalist perspective, it is first important to be briefly acquainted with the perspectives and politics of the terms "ethnicity" and "ethnic group". It is to this task that we now turn.

Ethnicity

Deriving from the Greek term 'ethnos' or 'ethnikos' that referred to tribe or nation, the usage of the 'ethnicity', as anthropologist Edward Tirakiyan tells us, takes off in the post World War Two social sciences (1997: 150). Replacing the politically incorrect nomenclatures of 'race' and 'tribe'[9], for the purposes of sociological analysis as late as 1953, ethnicity also came to be seen as a positive explanation of the cultural and economic plurality of the American way of life (Glazer and Moynihan 1975). A working definition suggested by Rajat Ganguly and Urmila Phadnis sees ethnicity as the quality of "either a large or a small group of people, in either backward or advanced societies, who are united by a common inherited culture, (including language, music, food, dress, and customs and practices), racial similarity, common religion, and belief in common history and ancestry and who exhibit a strong psychological sentiment of belonging to the group" (2001: 29). The last feature of the sentiment of belonging to a group is stressed by

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[9] Burman (1989) forwards an alternate understanding of the 'tribe'. He sees not just as a marker of a historical stage of evolution, but as a multifunctional group based on kinship ties. Thus, while they outgrow their primitiveness, the social boundary, defined by kinship forms the basis of their identity (693).

Anthony Smith, who sees it as separating authentic 'ethnic communities' from mere ethnic categories. By the latter term he refers to the classification of groups of people by outsiders, who might not have a strong sense of solidarity or developed networks (2002: 16).

The notion of shared solidarity and common inherited culture is also taken up by Marxist interrogations of ethnicity, but only to strip them of any primordial and organic attributes. Thus harping on the theme of the invention of tradition, Eric Hobsbawm claims that the "supposition of a historically shared 'common culture' in an ethnic group is open to question just as it is in the case of a nation" (Hobsbawm in Fenton and Maye 2002: 2). Balibar and Wallerstein (1991) too situate ethnicity, along with race and nation, in its broader sociological and material conditions, and ultimately in 'people based activity'. Walker Connor attempts to bridge the organic and selective aspects of ethnicity when he stresses that it is not biological kinship, but felt kinship, or the presumption of shared ancestry and cognate lines of descent that matters for the salience of an ethnic community (1994: note 6 Chapter 7). He says, "identity does not draw its sustenance from facts but from perceptions, perceptions are as important or more than reality when it comes to ethnic issues" (Connor 1997: 33). Paul Brass on the other hand stresses the extreme instrumental side of the term when he describes ethnicity as the social and political creation of "of elites, who draw upon, distort, and sometimes fabricate materials from the cultures of the groups they wish to represent in order to protect their well being or existence or to gain political and economic advantage for their groups as well as for themselves" (Brass 1991 in Phadnis and Ganguly 2001: 26).

Primordial and instrumental understandings of ethnicity aside, anthropologists like Barth (1969) and Jenkins (1997), also look at it as a system of relational classification. This could involve both- self classification, as well as classification by others (Barth 1969: 9-38). While Anderson (1991:168) and others have pointed to the modern devices of census and mapping as creating, sustaining and helping proliferate classification by others; the politics of delineating classification by the 'self' from the 'other' is subject to the diverse intentions of the actors themselves involved the process (Calhoun 1993: 222). Frederick

Barth while thus understanding ethnicity as the "social organization of cultural difference" (1969:6), sees the salience of ethnic group or community not in its cultural content but in its boundaries. Thus ethnic classification, whether by self or others, is for Barth, a boundary making exercise. Harvey Sacks too treats ethnicity as a 'skilled practical accomplishment', as a result of making ethnic categories relevant to participants of a 'particular interactional trajectory' (Sacks 1995 in Brubaker *et al.* 2004: 35-36.) Pointing to the centrality of cognitive processes, Brubaker *et al.* warn against looking at ethnicity as a bounded given. It need not be seen, he insists, as a thing in the world, but as a perspective on the world, as epistemological and not ontological realities (2004: 45).

Such contributions establish that ethnicity is a 'product of processes which are embedded in human actions and choices, rather than biologically given ideas whose meaning is dictated by nature' (Phadnis and Ganguly 2001: 24). Especially relevant to the study at hand, Phadnis and Ganguly point us towards the changing connotations of ethnicity, where it has grown to mean "..a quasi national' kind of minority group within the state, which has somehow not achieved the status of a nation" (2001: 18-19). While Craig Calhoun makes a plea for distinguishing an ethnic group from a nation[10], such a view takes away the embedded ethnic identity of established nations. Thus according to Fenton and Maye (2002) "..all groups, both minority and majority incorporate a ethnic dimension and the failure of the latter to recognize or acknowledge this has more to do with differential power relations between groups than with anything else" (10), and that "..majority ethnicity is disclosed (or exposed) when its equation with the nation is contested by minorities" (12).

Ethnonationalism

Having looked at the various ways in which the socio-political category of the nation and the ideology of nationalism are understood and explained, and having noted the

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[10] By an ethnic group Calhoun (1993) refers strictly to a minority community that seeks recognition within a State and not international recognition.

contemporary perspectives in the study of ethnicity, we can now turn towards the sub-variant of ethnonationalism. The term is of recent vintage, and while fully conscious and even etching out the majoritarian ethnic character of most nation-states (or state-nations as Connor would have put it), the nomenclature is used for nationalist assertions within states, or non-state nationalities. Montserrat Guibernau defines ethnonationalism simply as the work of "cultural communities sharing a common past, attached to a clearly demarcated territory, and wishing to decide upon their political future which lack a state of their own". (Guibernau 1999, 2000 in Lotha 2009: 78). Similarly Thomas Eriksen reserves the term for unsuccessful nationalisms "whose members reside more or less uncomfortably under the aegis of a state which they do not identify with their own nationality or ethnic category" (Eriksen 1991 in Lotha 2009: 79).

Though the ethnic core, as shown by Smith before, underlies the basis of all nations, be they States or non-state nationalisms, Walker Connor's understanding of ethnonationalism is a post Second World War phenomena. Indeed, as Connor (1972) goes on to show, the subjective and objective conditions of its emergence lie in- the conflation of the State with the majoritarian national group, in the assimilationist project put in place by large scale attempts at social engineering for the purposes of nation-building by existing States, and in the spread of the rhetoric of self-determination across inter-state institutions to a far more pervasive degree than was intended by its original interlocutors. Thus in order to appreciate the dynamics of ethnonationalism, it is important to take stock, however briefly of these various factors outlined by Connor.

Connor turns to a standard dictionary of international relations[11], to bring out the terminological obfuscation of the terms state, nation and nationalism. While the state is defined as a "legal concept describing a social group that occupies a defined territory and is organized under common political institutions and an effective government", the nation is defined as "a social group which shares a common ideology, common institutions and customs and a sense of homogeneity", and that "A nation may comprise part of a state, be coterminous with a state, or extend beyond the borders of a single state". At the same

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[11] Plano, Jack C. and Roy Olton, (1969), *The International Relations Dictionary*. New York.

time, nationalism is defined as a mass emotion that "makes the state the ultimate focus of the individual's loyalty". This usurpation of the ideology of nationalism as loyalty to the state thus sets in place the practice of using a range of subordinate terms to connote loyalty to the nation that is not coterminous with the existing state. The more benign ones would be regionalism, parochialism, primordialism, communalism, ethnic complementarities and tribalism (Connor 1972: 334), while the more challenging terms would be 'balkanization', 'criminalization of politics' (Mitra 1995: 59) separatism and anti-nationalism[12].

Such a state of affairs was pre-empted through the two World Wars fought in the name of the national principle. Inis Claude in 1955 observed that "within the frame of reference set up by the ideology of nationalism, national states and national minorities are incompatible" (Claude in Ryan 1988: 170). Even earlier, in 1907, Lord Acton foresaw the trouble inherent with the fast spreading European national state model. He observed, "The greatest adversary of the rights of nationality is the modern theory of nationality. By making the state and the nation commensurate with each other in theory, it reduces practically to a subject condition all other national allies that may be within the boundary. It cannot admit them to equality within the ruling nation which constitutes the state because the state would then cease to be national, which would be a contradiction to the principle of its existence. According therefore, to the degree of humanity and civilization in that dominant body which claims all the rights of the community, the inferior races are subjected to extermination, or reduced to servitude, or outlawed, or put in a condition of dependence" (Acton in Ryan 1988: 169) The turn of events in the century since has seen the acceptance of the multicultural and multinational characters of most states and the practice of consociational federalism in quite a few pockets. But Acton's observation of the dominant ethnic nationalism characterizing states still remains a tacit, if not overt force. Michael Billig is closest to the mark when he notes that the legitimacy of the 'hyphen' in the term 'nation-state' is now almost banal (Billig 1995).

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[12] Unlike Smith and Calhoun who analytically separate the categories of the tribe, ethnic group and national group, Connor in his resistance to the widespread application of the blanket term 'minority' in the decolonization decades, conflates them all under 'nation'.

In a state of affairs where the neat division of national groups along territorial lines was far from plausible and the multinational character of most 'national states', even within Western Europe was an accepted fact, the post world war years saw the vigorous pursuit of nation-building. Broadly understood as a feat of social engineering, it would be realized through the mobilization of populations under the impact of modernity and lead to the assimilation of smaller or weaker ethnic groups into larger and more powerful ones (Stokes 1978: 57).

The unqualified merit of the national building project is best observed in the works of its most prominent voice, Karl Deutsch. Assuming the successful integration of the people's within the national-states of Western Europe, he felt it a feat that could be applied to the rest of the world as well, and that the matter of assimilating diverse ethnic groups lends itself to social engineering (Deutsch 1953/61 in Connor 1972: 324). Especially in the case of Asia and Africa, he felt that the process of partial modernization would draw, "the most gifted and energetic individuals into the cities or the growing sectors of the economy away from their *former minority or tribal groups* (emphasis added), leaving these traditional groups weaker, more stagnant and easier to govern" (Deutsch 1966 in Connor 1972: 325). If dominant nationality for Deutsch was akin to benign and passive clay shaped by the forces of modernity, its reality was acknowledged more explicitly by Edward Shils who held it to be coterminous with civil society and its existence absolutely essential to keep the lesser nations within the larger state from warring with one another (Shils 1995 in Tirakiyan 1997: 160).

On the other hand, Marxists like Eric Hobsbawm, saw in the hyper-globalization of late modernity, the slow demise of the salience of ethnic groups and nations along with nation-states. Charles Tilly (1994) too held that with the loosening of ties between culture and state, and the increasing determination of great powers to maintain existing boundaries, nationalism, both of the state seeking as well as the state led variant would soon be a thing of the past (143).

But not only did the unfolding decades of hyper globalization towards the end of the twentieth century challenge the analysis of Hobsbawm and Tilly[13], events right from the 50's and 60's onwards pointed otherwise. Ethnic unrest proliferated all parts of the world irrespective of geographic and economical factors or regime type (Connor 1972: 332,342). It prompted Deutsch to rethink. Thus he first acknowledged that rapid social mobilization may lead to the consolidation of largely homogenous groups, but could threaten the unity of states with diverse peoples, and later went on to isolate the two processes of mobilization and assimilation linked only by a chronological frame. In a tautological observation, he held finally that in instances where assimilation progressed faster than mobilization, states would remain stable, while where mobilization took over, the opposite happened (Deutsch 1961 in Connor 1972: 325).

Walker Connor attempts to refine Deutsch's understanding of the relationship between assimilation and mobilization to explain what he calls ethnonationalism. He first separates the nature of assimilation undergone by the population of Western Europe at the time of forming States, from the kind that is experienced by those in the newly *independent states* of Asia and Africa post the Second World War. The former assimilation was a slow process and geared more towards inaction than towards social engineering. The technological advances of late modernization, with its cables, train lines, televisions and airplanes has in it an in-built accelerator that brings hitherto isolated ethnic and national groups closer in ways not expected before. The frequency and pervasiveness of inter-group contacts, thus increases exponentially and nulls any deliberate attempts at social engineering. Thus for Connor, "..there is little evidence of modern communications destroying ethnic consciousness, and much evidence of their augmenting it" (1972: 350). Moreover, so intense and complete is the penetrative reach of the modern state so as to threaten the very isolation of these groups that had previously kept them from partaking of the nationalist ideology sweeping world affairs.

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[13]Catarina Kinvaall (2004) picture of nationalism during late globalization is instructive. According to her, it is a time of existential anxiety, insecurity and threatened self identity. In such times, nationalism, alongside religion serve as powerful identity-signifiers and provide for security, stability and simple answers (in Lotha 2009: 71).

For Connor the pervasive reality of the state apparatus, presents to such groups not just questions of legitimate governance, but becomes a matter of cultural self-preservation, resulting very often in xenophobic hostility. If the move towards nation-building still continued in the face of growing ethnic unrest, for Connor, it was due to two factors- mistaking the absence of overt ethnic unrest in Western Europe for achieved integration, thus holding ahead an inherently flawed model for integration elsewhere, and secondly to treat such ethnic unrest, as unrelated and ad hoc events rather than as "contemporary manifestations of a more enduring global phenomena" (1972: 350). If the instances of growing unrest as such, did not deter the course of mainstream scholarship on nation and nationalism and State and International policies on 'nation-building', it was the articulation of such unrests in the language of the right to self-determination that made them take notice. The notion of self determination, then, is for Connor the third pillar shaping the ethnonationalism of the decolonization decades.

The term 'self-determination of nations' gained wide currency when used by Woodrow Wilson as the basis for the settlement of territories post the First World War. It was, however intended to be applied only to the areas under the sovereignty of the defeated powers (Connor 1967: 31). Even as it became the rhetoric on which the matured anti-colonial movements quickly shaped themselves, self determination, paradoxically was granted not to peoples, but along arbitrary borders shaping either the sovereignty or the administrative zones of the colonial powers. At the international level however, alongside UN declarations on decolonization, and the resolutions for non-self governing territories (Resolution 1541 of 1960) gradually gave way to the Declaration on Friendly Relations. According to it "all peoples have the right freely to determine, without external interference, their political status and to pursue their economic, social and cultural development, and every State has the duty to respect this right in accordance with the provisions of the Charter"[14]. The provisions to achieve this were through independence, through free association with an independent state, or through integration with an independent state (Peang-Meth 2002: 104).

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[14] The same statement is repeated verbatim in Article 1 of both the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966, The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966, and in Article 2 of the United Nations Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 1993.

Highlighting the essential continuity between decolonization and subsequent separatist ethnic nationalism, Hobsbawm says; "ethnicity turns into separatist nationalism for much the same reasons as colonial liberation movements established their states within the frontiers of the preceding colonial empires." (1992: 6). But with the convention of Uti Possidetis Juris[15] freezing the borders of these newly independent states, those very champions of decolonization, once in power in their new states, now refused to recognize any such right to self determination for their own minorities (Emerson 1964 in Connor 1967: 44).

Indeed the Realist school of thought (purporting to explain, but in the process shaping Inter-state relations) that overwhelmingly guided State's actions not just among but also within themselves, further underscored these States resolve to maintain the integrity of the territorial borders bequeathed to them. Richard Sterling explains that though classical and neo realism does not concern itself with power relations within the borders of a state, states with internally divided power are considered by themselves and by others as externally weaker than their internally united counterparts (Sterling 1979 in Ryan 1988: 170). Thus norms like the UN Declaration of Friendly Relations are to be read against other deeply entrenched conventions of the UN that in prohibiting interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states, de facto sanctifies the use of force from within[16]. Thus Rupert Emerson keenly observes that the dim likelihood of governments granting self determination has not led to a substantial withering away of such demands (Emerson 1964 in Connor 1967: 48). The outcomes of individual cases then are determined by what S Ryan calls the "trial by combat between the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity and national self-determination in divided societies" (1988: 174).

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[15] The legal convention, first used as the basis for carrying out decolonization in Latin America, is defined in *Black's Law Dictionary* as "The doctrine that old administrative boundaries will become international boundaries when a political subdivision achieves independence".

[16] An example is the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 that stipulated that in cases where inviolability of borders and territorial integrity of states on the one hand collide with the equal rights and self-determination of peoples on the other hand then the international community should favor the former principle (from Berg 2009: 219).

In highlighting the three unique developments of the twentieth century, namely; conflation of the state and the majoritarian nation, attempted assimilation by social engineering carried out in the name of the nation building project, and the ideational and rhetorical force of the norm of self determination, Connor presents the structural conditions against which ethnonationalism emerges in the twentieth century. The instrumental ways in which ethnonationalism shapes itself is highlighted by Stanley Tambiah (1989).He agrees with Anderson and Wallerstein in seeing nationalism as a modular form transmitted from the centre to the periphery. However the new peripheries of the decolonized centers face novel conditions of the twentieth century characterized mainly by the world capitalism and aggressive nation-building. In light of these new factors ethnonationalism for Tambiah "unites the semantics of primordial and historical claims with the pragmatics of calculated choice and opportunism in dynamic contexts of political and economic competition between interest groups." (1989 in Lotha: 81) But unlike Connor whose ethnonationalism is defined by the end of self determination (popularly understood then as State-hood), Tambiah highlights the possibility of seeing them as newer kinds of devolutionary politics (1989 Lotha: 81)[17].

Connor highlights the structures of the current global political order that are responsible for the rise of ethnonationalism. There are others however, who pay equal importance to the (constituent) State for causing the emergence of ethno-nations. Ted Gurr (1993) and John Breuilly (1994) both point to the failure of the modern State to create inclusive national identities. Daniele Conversi (1995) engages with the role of the state through the homeostatic approach. This approach "focus[es] precisely on the process of reaction against state intrusion." (4) For him, nationalism figures as the most universal ideology in the contemporary world only because the state (which cites nationalism as its raison' d'etre) is the most universal mode of political power. Ethnonationalism for Conversi is then "a primary and spontaneous reaction against state sponsored bureaucratization and assimilation" (5). While the homeostatic approach identifies the state as the force against which ethnonational consciousness takes shape and is asserted, neither Conversi, nor the

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[17] The study shall return to this theme, in Chapters 5 and 6 while discussing the gradual redefinition of self determination since the late twentieth century.

other theorists discussed above throw any light on the substance of this consciousness vis a vis the state.

The conceptualization of homeland societies is useful here. Phadnis and Ganguly (2001) describes them as having long time occupancy over territory and thereby claiming exclusive and moral rights over it (19). This can also be thought of as what Anthony Smith describes as ethno-scapes. The conception of the homeland also forms a crucial part of the recent rhetoric of the right to self-determination of indigenous people.

Writing in the context of Northeast India, Prasenjit Biswas sees ethno-nationalism as 'nations from below'. Unlike 'nations from above' which include peripheral nations from a distance and from a position of strength, their authenticity is not based on the primacy of the state. Authenticity in such instances, lies rather in "its parallel counterclaim based on its own cultural distinctness not based on the power of the state" (Biswas 2002 in Roy 2005: 2176). Apart from insisting on this qualitative difference from the State (or the State-Nation), Biswas and others are quick to point out that such movements as articulated by their elite very often refuse to engage in the harder issues of equality and inclusive growth, and much like the State-Nations themselves, seek to subsist only on identity defined in cultural and political terms (*ibid* 2180). A salient feature of such nations, as indeed of all ethnonationalisms as pointed by Nag and others, is a constant process of 'othering'. Indeed after cultural and political entities different from them have been 'othered' and made into an enemy, ethnonationalisms start looking for characteristics of the other in its own self and shedding them. Thus if nation-creating and building, as Smith pointed out is a continuous process, this continuity in ethnonationalisms is also characterized by "unending one of forming an exclusive elite group in the name of homogeneity" (Nag 2001: 4754).

Summary: Theories of Nationalism

We have seen so far that the concept of the nation and the force of nationalism, even if a primarily modern phenomena, has its roots in the ethnic cores of communities. While contemporary political philosophy does try to redefine the nation to correspond to the multi-ethnic, multi-racial and multi-national composition of contemporary States that are subjected to both centripetal and centrifugal forces of globalization, we cannot afford to ignore the tacit majoritarian ethnic character of even multi-national states. We have also appreciated that though these cores go far back into history, the basis on which they constitute either tribal identity, an ethnic community or an ethno-nation is not static, but subject to both changes in response to socio-structural conditions and lend themselves to instrumental appropriation by elites in the group.

Having identified the structural conditions in which ethnonationalism emerges as a distinct post WW II phenomena, we have also seen how these ethno-nations, while claiming self determination on the basis of being more authentic than the States in which they are enclosed, adopt nation creating and nation building tactics which are very similar to the ones employed by the nation-building projects undertaken by territorially sovereign states. What is common however to both established States as well as assertive ethno-nations is their claim to territorial exclusivity. The nature of such claims differs though; the territorial integrity of States is guaranteed by the International system, and the territoriality of ethno-nations rests upon more primordial claims of homelands, ethnoscapes and indigenity. Both however are motivated by the dominant imagination of territorial exclusivity and use territoriality as a practice to consolidate their claims.

This brings us to the second aspect of our study. Territoriality is interrogated both in the context of classical geopolitics and critical geopolitics. The former takes the territorial integrity of State structures as the touchstone of their existence and thus doesn't concern itself with the active usage of territoriality as a practice. The latter in contrast, has two main agendas. Firstly it seeks to unravel how the dominant notion of territoriality informing the International system has come about through practices and customs,

fortified by international covenants and customary laws. Secondly, it looks at territoriality as a set of practices attuned to diverse ends. The potential to which space and territory lend themselves on ideational, discursive and practical planes are considered. Thereafter, we move on to the crux of our interrogation, namely how ethnonationalisms not just base their claims on the plank of territoriality, but use territoriality as a practice, on multiple levels to strengthen and further their claims.

Territoriality

The debate on territoriality till late into the twentieth century, as John Agnew points out has been "overwhelmingly in terms of the presence or absence of the territorial state" (1994:54). Taking the Westphalian state as a given, political interrogation has tended to maintain strict separation of politics within states (Comparative Politics) and between states (International Relations). Thus classical geopolitics in the contemporary times is based solely upon the legal principle of territoriality of sovereign states (Vollard 2009: 688). RBJ Walker defines the larger condition as one of treating space and time like "some uniform background noise, as abstract ontological conditions to be acknowledged and then ignored (Walker 1993 in Forsberg 1996: 355-56).

Henri Lefebvre locates the seeds of collapse of time and space in the body of the State, in the legacy of Hegelian idealism. He says, "For Hegel space brought historical time to an end, and the master of space was the state." (Lefebvre 1991: 279). Though some observers have claimed that the progress of modernity is leading ultimately to an "annihilation of space through time" (Harvey 1989 in Forsberg 1996: 365), such progress is no doubt being regulated through State actors who derive their legitimacy from territorial sovereignty (Forsberg 1996: 357). Against this scenario, critical geography does not place itself within the strict confines of International Relations but as the contribution of political and cultural geographers, it is composed to various strands of

social theory[18] and is geared towards problematizing the ways in which "geopolitical discourses, practices and perspectives have measured, described and assessed the world" (Dodds 2000 in Kelly 2006:36).

John Agnew traces the genesis of the dominant notion of territoriality defining the International System. Manifest first as the voyage induced visualization of global space, the production of geographies in terms of binaries is followed by the practice of translating time into space. The 'territoriality trap' is thus both, a constituting and constituent feature of the imperatives of colonization and the march of modernity. More specifically the 'territoriality trap' for Agnew consists of "thinking and acting as if the world was made up entirely of states exercising power over blocks of space which between them exhaust the politico-geographical form of the world (Agnew 1998: 51). Such notions of spatial exclusion had to overcome previously pluralistic practices of hierarchical and galactic distribution of power and loose and plural conceptions of sovereignty. In such kinds of polities, frontiers were not clearly demarcated on the ground. They rather indicated the cultural fringes of imperial civilizations, were outer oriented and were a 'manifestation of centrifugal forces ' (Kristoff 1959 in Vollard 2009: 695).

Though the modern norm of territorial integrity traces its roots to the treaty of Westphalia and came into widespread practice through the Covenant of the League of Nations, it had its predecessor in the legal doctrine of Uti Possidetis Juris (see footnote 9). Making the administrative boundaries of the colonial possessions international boundaries when a political subdivision achieves independence, it in effect made territory and not people the basis of 'self-determination'. The 1933 Convention of Montevideo in its conditions for the acknowledgement of a government by fellow governments made the effective control of territory a basic criterion, thus further underlining the mutual exclusivity of territory in the society of governments (Vollard 2009: 697). Finally face to face with the growing challenges to the territorial sovereignty of established states made by groups empowered

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[18] According to Phil Kelly (2006: 28), the primary philosophical inspirations behind critical geography are Michel Foucaul (interview with French Geographer Yves Lacoste in *Herodete* in 1976) and Edward Said (*Orientalism* 1978).

by the rhetoric of the 'self determinations of peoples' , the Helsinki Final Act in 1975 upheld the principle of the inviolability of existing borders over that of self determination (Berg 2009: 219). Thus if the international state system is characterized by decentralization and anarchy, it is because the logic of territorial exclusivity has been followed to its extreme (Vollard 2009: 701).

This has important consequences for the way politics both within and between the State-system is understood and practiced. John Agnew points towards the tendency to view the territorial state 'not in its historical particularity, but abstractly, as an idealized decision-making subject' (Ashley 1988 in Agnew 1994: 63). Also for Walker, it 'denies alternative possibilities because it fixes our understanding of the future opportunities in relation to a distinction between history and progress within Statist communities and mere contingency outside them' (Walker 1990 in Agnew 1994: 64). The larger critique leveled at such a reified conception of spatial exclusivity is that, understood as knowledge structures, it is their inherent feature to preclude changes in the way the field is perceived and examined (Ashley 1981 in Albert 1998: 57).

In such a state of affairs, sovereign states entrusted with the task of speaking on behalf of their nation or nations resort to various ways to broaden their base and define their space in the State system. Citing the case of China, playing off notions of an idealized cultural-historical distinctiveness against real and created others is understood by Prasenjit Duara as 'Strategies of Closure' (Duara 1997 in Murphy 2002: 196). Such strategies of the creation and maintenance of a people-hood is pursued in the context of a territorial ambition and also inevitably has a territorial component. Robert Sack sheds light on such practices in his description of political territoriality as a strategy to "affect, influence or control resources and people by controlling area" (1986: 1). By no means the only way to organize political control and relations of authority, it certainly includes the establishment of both coercive and socializing mechanisms and institutions to uphold territorial control (Vollard 2009: 691).

The uncertainties that motivate such strategies on part of the State are at their most acute at the territorial borders of the state. Because borders are reminders of what needs to be achieved for the [dominant] nation by the State, they are the focus of cartographic anxiety (Sankaran Krishna 1994) the populations therein based on the degree of cultural difference from the national conception of the State are subject to the most conspicuous strategies of territorial closure. But territoriality as a practice is not exercised solely by the State-Nation, but also by nations within states or ethnonationalisms in ways which are both similar and dissimilar. In order to appreciate the territoriality of ethnonationalisms, it is imperative to better understand the practice of territoriality.

TERRITORIALITY AS PRACTICE

A conception of space prefigures any understanding of territoriality. Henri Lefebvre is helpful in this regard by identifying three types of socially produced spaces. Perceived space, encompassing the material spaces of daily life where social production and reproduction occurs is spatial practice. The representation of this through socially constructed discourses, signs and meaning constitutes conceived space. Lived space is representational and encompasses the former two types. As the "actually lived material and symbolic experiences" this *lived space* is always a potential terrain for the emergence of "counterspaces" that are resistant to the dominant order (Lefevbre 1991 in Martin and Miller 2004: 146). Jan Penrose also points towards the material and emotional dimensions of space that, filtered through human agency is transformed into territory, giving rise consequently to the phenomena of territoriality (Penrose 2002: 279).

Charles Taylor thus simply described territoriality as "a form of behavior that uses territory for securing a particular outcome" (Taylor 1994 in Levine 1999: 30). Mathias Albert (2001) takes a more holistic view of territoriality. For him it is not just an epistemological and social-structural principle linked to processes of modernization and rationalization, it is also a code, a symbolic reference to territory which underlies the construction of collective identities, which in turn shapes it as a form of segmentary

differentiation of world society (6-11). Sack (1986) sees the inherent benefit of territoriality for the organization of both simple and complex societal structures. Requiring only one kind of sign, the boundary, territoriality is thus most easy to communicate and the most efficient strategy for enforcing control (32). It is in fact needed to 'coordinate efforts, specify responsibilities, and prevent people from getting in each other's way' (219). In contrast Jouni Hakli sees territoriality not flowing from some inherent logic or predetermined structural changes but as a result of political innovations flowing from the cultural logic of historical contexts (Hakli 1994 in Forsberg 1996: 365).

More importantly for our purposes Benedict Anderson shows how by simplifying issues of control and by providing "symbolic markers of property, possession, inclusion and exclusion" territoriality gives relations of power greater tangibility. And it is the "actual material and symbolic experiences" of such lived spaces that breeds the potential for the emergence of counterspaces that are resistant to the dominant order (Lefebvre 1991 in Martin and Miller 2004: 164). Anderson too sees the binaries of domination and resistance, hegemony and counter-hegemony as embedded into the tangible potentials of territoriality (Anderson in Abdewani, 2007: 217). Extending Anderson's argument Wale Abdewani insists then that all space-identity formations are imbued with oppositional potential (Adebanwi, 2007: 213). It is in this context that we can understand the territoriality of nationalism movements in general and ethnonationalisms in particular.

TERRITORIALITY, NATIONALISM AND ETHNONATIONALISM

Both theorists of nations and nationalism and geographers have long argued that territory is central to the self-definition of the nation. In fact, Winchikaul argues that supplementing ethnic factors such as culture, kinship and polity "nationhood was literally 'formed' by the demarcation of its body, the territoriality of a nation". The mapping of a nation in this respect helps constitute the 'geo-body' of the nation and demarcates what the nation is and what it is not (Winchikaul, 1996 in Lotha 2009: 69). But in as much as

the nation is premised on its difference with the Other, the notion of boundaries, both symbolic and territorial becomes central to national identity.

Thus Daniele Conversi looks at nationalism as a process of border maintenance and creation. For the nation to be defined, it needs to be bounded and de-limited and thus tied to a previously established space. Nations therefore are bounded communities of exclusion (1995: 76). Frederick Barth (1969) has shown how the practice of institutionalizing containment through border gaurds, administrative districting and naming helps reify the national idea. On the one hand establishing both distances and differences between territories, boundaries on the other hand help create unity within those territories. This leads ultimately to conflating survival of those groups that are contained within, with the sanctity of those boundaries (Ouali 2006). National identity construction can be understood in this way as a "sort of boundary producing political performance" (Ashley 1987 in Herb 2004: 142).

But this insistence of critical geographers and some theorists of nationalism on the centrality of boundaries and borders for the nation and nationalism fails to provide a holistic picture of how territoriality is employed by the nation. Guntram Herb employs Sacks definition of territoriality[19] in the case of national identity as a strategy to create a community that is "deemed worthy of the ultimate sacrifice- to give one's life for its continued existence". Thus territoriality for him is composed of two components. The process of territorial differentiation revolves around boundary making and has been discussed above. The second and equally important component for Herb is 'territorial bonding' or the fusing of the population to the land to create an emotional bond that makes the 'belonging' tangible (2004: 144). The process of territorial bonding also cuts across hitherto boundaries that may have existed within the identity of the nation itself. These two processes occur within a larger strategy of the geographic narrative or the 'territorial script' which allows members of the nation to make sense of their place in the world system of nations and nation-states. While the processes of territorial

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[19] "Political territoriality is a strategy to affect, influence or control resources and people by controlling area" (Sack 1986: 1).

differentiation and bonding, within a larger territorial script is practiced both by State-nations and nations within States, it is in the case of ethnonationalisms that the component of territorial bonding takes on greater significance and is a ground for greater authenticity vis-à-vis the nation-building attempted by states.

Ethnoscapes, as used by Anthony Smith, refers to the territorialisation of ethnic memory, or the shared belief in a common spatial frame of origin (1986: 445-458). Just like the shared perception of the traits rather than actual traits are necessary for a group to qualify itself as an ethnic community, similarly it is not necessary for the members of the ethnic group to actually dominate their ethnoscape. The alleged or felt symbiosis between an area and its community or the mythical and poetic character of the territorial bond is considered significant (Forsberg 2003: 13-14). The allegorical character of the territorial bond aside, many ethnonationalist movements do claim a very real connection with the territories they include in their national project.

Graham Clarke (1996) has shown how the clan notions of territoriality in many parts of South Asia fuse the ethnic character of a group and their territory in an almost primordial bond (Clarke 1996 in Lotha 2009: 69)[20]. The recent and growing norm on the inalienable rights of indigenous peoples on their lands is also a case in point. The claim that a culture-group has patrimonial rights to a territory separate from other groups has been defined as ethnoterritorialism by Zariski (Zariski 1989 in Dahlman and Trent 2010: 414).

The conundrum lies in situations where such ethnoterritorial projects are directed not only towards the States in which these ethno-nations find themselves but also against those peoples, groups or nations that inhabit the same territory, and often claim their nationalism over the same piece of land/s. Because of such exclusivist understanding of national territory (following the logic of the territorial exclusivitity of Nation-States in the International System), leaders of such ethnonational movements often engage in the territoriality of ethnic engineering, aiming to exercise through various means exclusive control over their claimed lands (Berg 2009: 223).

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[20] This is also true in case of the Nagas, as we shall later see.

Summary: Territoriality and Ethnonationalism

Thus we have seen how critical geopolitics not only traces the ways in which the traditional or classical notion of geopolitics comes to condition political imagination and interrogation, but also examines given notions of territory, territorial exclusivity and territorial sovereignty. After establishing territoriality not as a passive given, but as a strategy to enforce control, we see the various ways it has been used both by States trying to further or maintain their project of nation-building and also by non-state nations agitating for Statehood. Territoriality as used by actors then, does not just manifest in the establishment, and maintenance of boundaries, but also in the creation of a sentimental bond fusing land with the population therein. In the case of ethnonationalisms, we saw how this claim was strengthened on the basis of their patrimonial attachment to land. Within the dominant imagination of territorially exclusive nation-states, such ethnoterritorial attachment also finds it imperative to claim exclusive rights over land, often against other peoples or nations claiming the same territory. The intractable nature of such claims, leads to the territoriality of ethnic engineering, often with violent results.

The case study of the Naga national movement exhibits all of these processes at work. Chapter three purports to show how Naga nationalism, with a long drawn ethnic core, was shaped against the intrusions of the British and then the Indian State structures. The territorial spread of the Naga people ranged from co-existence with other communities within the old Ahom kingdom, the Manipur State, the British province of Assam to what was known as the Free Naga Territory, which was only under the legal jurisdiction of British India since 1879 and under the practical jurisdiction of no one save the Nagas themselves.

Around 1947, more than the increasing presence of the Indian State (exemplified by its Military), in those areas where the Nagas resided in some arrangement with the Meiteis, Kuki's Paite's, Ahoms and other tribes and polities; it was the incursion of the Indian Army into the Free Naga territory, that formed the narrative of the Government of India

as an occupying force, and consequently, of the Nagas, as a nation, just like the many other nations across the world, agitating for their inalienable 'right to self-determination of peoples'. It was this understanding of India-Burma-Naga affair that came to characterize the Naga national movement across the varied territories where groups who called themselves Nagas resided.

Claiming patrimonial attachment to their land as the basis of their struggle, the movement evolved against the twin process of defining Naga identity vis-à-vis the Indian State, and vis-à-vis the political entities of the Princely State of Manipur and the province of Assam. It was also directed aggressively towards the tribes who comprised the Nagas themselves. Chapter four, traces this development, and highlights the contemporary state of the Naga National Movement, characterized by a powerful civil society and a persistent call for reconciliation amidst a culture of fractionalization, tribalism and violence. It also traces the shift in the demand for sovereignty to the demand for integration not to the weakening of the armed resistance, but rather to the democratization of the movement.

If, as U A Shimray claims, "Land itself is Naga history" (2007: 130), then the ethnoterritoriality of the Naga National Movement is of vital importance to resolve the deadlock of the Naga issue. Chapter five concerns itself with the ethnoterritoriality of the Naga National movement as it manifested in Burma, in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and in Manipur. It finds that the case for an integrated Naga homeland rests differently in each of these regions and impacts the lives of the other populations there in, in different manners.

Chapter six analyses the Naga National Movement as seen thus far to infer that the territoriality of the movement is contingent upon its politics. It acknowledges the historicity of the claim for integration of contiguous Naga areas, while at the same time suggesting that each of these areas be considered separately while attempting any solution to the demand for Naga integration.

Chapter Three

EMERGENCE OF NAGA NATIONALISM - 1832 to 1956

This chapter introduces the people called Nagas and looks at the early stages of Naga nationalism. For the Nagas, the earliest contacts with outsiders were with the Ahoms and the British[21]. However, for most Naga areas, the first pervasive presence was the Indian State and the Indian Army. Nation formation, for the Nagas is a continuing project, shaped by internal and external factors. This project found its first clear expression in the announcement of the Federal Government of Nagaland in 1956. The movement thereafter took to armed struggle. This chapter thus traces the Naga journey; from a group of diverse independent tribes occupying a contiguous area in the Patkai range to a national group agitating for sovereign statehood. It concludes with a theoretical analysis of Naga nationalism as it manifested prior to the intensification of the armed resistance.

THE NAGA PEOPLE

Naga versions of their history begin with settlement on the lands that they currently occupy. Anthropologist S K Chatterjee dates the presence of Nagas in the Naga Hills back to 8th Century BC (Vashum 2000: 22). Oral literature dates it back between 1st Century BC and 1st Century AD, and accounts for details of at least 52 generations. Greek Historian Claudius Ptolemy's account of Nagas in their current habitat around 150 AD is cited as evidence. Nagas are also mentioned in the accounts of the buranji's or the court histories of the Kingdom of Manipur that date back to 600 AD, and the Ahom Kingdom that date back to 1300 AD, and Burmese history (Yonuo 1974). They are said to have migrated from Mongolia, through South-West China and Burma, with some of their kin going further down to South-East Asia (Lotha 2009: 21).

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[21] The Nagas' earliest contacts were with the Meitei's of the Manipur Valley too, but that will be taken up in Chapter 5.

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The territorial expanse of the various Naga tribes, as currently maintained by the NSCN (I-M) and backed by other organizations (Naga Hoho, NPMHR, etc), spans across 93°30' E and 95°15' E and 24°30' N and 27° N (Shimray 2007: 16), over an area of 120,000 square kilometers. A similar estimate is also to be found in the accounts of Capt John Butler in 1875, where he sees the 'Naga' as a group of cognate races "lying between the parallels of 93 degrees and 96 degrees longitude" (Butler 1875 in Alechimba 1970: 29). Except for some groups in present day Assam, Nagas in both India and Burma inhabit a contiguous territory. Apart from the State of Nagaland, consisting of the districts of Dimapur, Kohima, Wokha, Tuensang, Mon, and Phek, in Manipur Nagas inhabit the districts of Ukhrul, Senapati, Tamenglong and Chandel, in Arunachal the districts of Lohit, Tirap and Changlang and in Assam, parts of Karbi-Anglong, Mikir, Sibsagar, Nowgong, Lakhimpur, and North Cachar Hills. On the Burmese side, Naga lands are in the Chin and Sagaing Division (Shimray 2007: 16).

The Government of India lists 16 tribes as Nagas, mostly the ones that inhabit the present day State of Nagaland. Naga estimates however, vary between 42 and 44 groups.[22] The varying estimates is a result of the ongoing process of assimilation of 2 or more tribes into a single tribe, as well from as the division of a tribe into two or more, and reflects the fluid, complicated and ongoing process of Naga identity (Lotha 2009: 25). For the same reason, while the Census of India estimates the Naga population to be around 1.98 million, estimates by both Naga civil society and Naga underground put the figure between 3.5 to 4 million. It is claimed however, that a proper census of Nagas, both residing in India and Burma, has been not yet been undertaken.

A characteristic feature of Naga tribal polity is the tribal and clan notion of territoriality, leading to tribes occupying more or less exclusive areas of Naga territory. This is

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[22] Collins (2005) lists the tribes as follows: Anal, Angami, Ao, Chakesang, Chang, Cheril, Chirr, Chiru, Chothe, Heimi, Hewa, Htangan, Inpui, Konyak, Khiamnungam, Kharam, Koireng, Kayo, Khaklak/ Hkallak, Kengu, Lankang, Liangmai, Laihe, Lainung, Lotha, Maram, Mao, Maring, Moyon, Monsang, Makhori, Malang, Nokho, Mokte, Nolang, Namshik, Pakang, Phellongri, Phom, Pochuri, Phango, Phankem, Pangmi, Pangu, Para, Poumai, Pangpan, Rasit, Rekho, Rengma, Rongmei, Sangtam, Saplo, Singpho, Sira, Somi, Sumi, Tarao, Tangkhul, Thangal, Tangsa, Tikhir, Wanchao, Yimchunger and Zeme.

reflected to some extent in the delimitation of districts on the Indian side. Except for the major towns such as Dimapur and Kohima where the population is a mixture of the various groups, the different groups inhabit specific areas of Naga territory.[23]

The application of the nomenclature- 'Naga' to these diverse tribes is also a matter of some contention. The explanations most readily accepted are the Burmese use of 'Naka', referring to people with pierced ear-lobes, and the Khasi usage of Nhagra, meaning 'brave person', adopted subsequently in Ahom dialects as 'Noga' and then 'Naga' to refer to those tribes settled on the hills in the present day districts of Lakhimpur and Sibsagar (Hodson 1911) It was the British who popularized the term 'Naga' for colonial and western academic consumption, using it not so much to create a homogenous identity as to differentiate those tribes from the plainsmen below (Misra 2005: 3276). Indeed, as late as 1881, the Census of Assam understood 'Naga' as a generic term for disparate tribes, who came together only to fight off common enemies like the British and Manipuri's, and who otherwise had no internal coherence (Franke 2009: 52). For the tribes in Manipur, even the appellate 'Naga' was not used till the beginning of the twentieth century (Tarapot 2003: 204). What then emerges clearly is that the term Naga was an external creation, accepted by the tribes themselves, for convenience in dealing with outsiders, be they Ahom, Manipuri or British.

This disparity typical of Naga tribes continues even within the tribal set up, and into the unit of the village. Much like a Greek city-state, the Naga village, mostly occupying a cleared hill top, is said to have population, sovereignty and territory as its components, along with individual foreign policy (towards other Naga villages, tribes or outsiders) and customary laws (Shimray 1985: 43). The Naga attachment to their land is seen also in the refusal to abandon the site of their village even if resources are exhausted. It is said, that they would rather walk miles to new farm land than shift their village. Likewise, land

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[23] Abraham Lotha (2009: 26) provides a territorial list of Naga tribes in Nagaland and Manipur.
In Nagaland Kiphire dist.-Sangtam, Yimchunger. Kohima dist.– Angami, Rengma, Longleng Phom. Mokukchung dist.– Ao. Mon dist.– Konyak. Peren dist– Zeliangrong. Phek dist.– Chakesang, Pochuri. Tuensang dist.– Chang, Sangtam, Khianmungan. Wokha dist.–Lotha (Kyong- name changed in 2008), Zhuneboto dist.– Sumi. In the State of Manipur: Chandel dist.–Chote Thankgal, Tarau, Moyon. Ukhrul dist.– Tangkhul. Senapati dist.–Mao, Maram, Poumai. :Tamenlong dist.– Rongmei.).

owning is a universal feature across all Naga tribes, with village, communal and private land owning systems. In some Naga areas, the village and forest land is controlled entirely by the Village Council. There is rarely any land, within or between villages that are not under ownership (Vashum 1996: 66-67). This is also the reason why tribal and clan affinities remain strong till the present day. Jusho informs, "The primary economic requirement of a villager is not that he should be the owner of the land, but that he should be a member of the local groups in the village." (Jusho 2005: 80). It is this territorial system that is responsible for the continuance of the communitarian social system among most Naga tribes (Shimray 2007: 52).

The political system in villages ranged between an extreme form of dictatorship (among the Konyaks), and monarchical dictatorship (among Semas, Maos, Tangkhul, Zeliang) to extreme democracy (among the Angami's) (Vashum 2000: 58-59). The peculiar nature of Naga social organization and the possible reasons are neatly captured by Marcus Franke. He says, "Nagas knew they were militarily weaker (compared to plains people and other invaders), their only protection the difficulty of the terrain. Socially organized in a multitude of polities, partially based on a mix of (strategic) kinship and territory, [Nagas] had a high military participation, strong ethos on individual freedom and collective responsibilities, and cross cutting ties between the different groups whose actual extent and quality still evades rigorous analytical understanding" (2009: 146). Moreover, the practices of inter-tribal-warfare (headhunting being a component) and ecological and population challenges arising from the practice of swiden agriculture, and mutually unintelligible languages and dialects kept tribes separated from each other. But even in the midst of what Julian Jacob's described as 'ethnographic chaos' (Jacobs 1990 in Baruah 2002: 4179), that the Naga tribes are a related people is affirmed by practices of intermarriage and the forming of connections and alliances through treaties of trade and friendship; practices that they do not share to the same extent with tribes not belonging to the Naga community (Alechimba 1970: 25). Apart from kinship and patrilineal descent system, their customary practices such as land dispersal, food habits, dresses, and social and cultural life are also more similar than different.

Most importantly, what bind most Nagas together are their shared stories of origin and migration. The two sites most commonly associated with their entry as one people into their present habitat and subsequent dispersal are two stone monoliths, still present in Makhel in Mao area (in Manipur) and Khezakeno in Chakesang Area. Legends of the major tribes like Angami, Chakesang, Rengma, Sema, Lhota, Tangkhul, Somra Tangkhul (In Burma), Mao, Maram, Thangals and Marims point to these two sites as their origin (Vashum 2000: 21).

INTERACTION WITH THE AHOM KINGDOM

Prior to the advent of the British, it was the Ahom's with whom the Nagas had intermittent contact. The Patkoi ranges and current day Tirap district where Nagas resided lay in the path of the Ahom's first treks to the Brahmaputra valley from beyond the Arakan Mountains. King Sukhapa's fierce encounters with the Nagas in 1228 AD are recorded in the Ahom court chronicles. The strategic importance of the Naga Hills lay in the fact that the Ahom's had to subsequently use the route to maintain relations with their kin in Burma (Misra 1978: 618). It was only a section of the Nagas, those residing in the Nowgong, Sibsagar, Lakhimpur and Tirap areas that came into contact with the Ahoms. Their interaction consisted of Nagas contributing towards the Ahom royal harlem, in trade in cloth, shells and salt, and in the use of farms and fisheries reserved for friendly Nagas in the Ahom lowlands. Nagas were also recruited in the Ahom army. Moreover, the Ahoms were drawn into the inter-tribal and inter-village feuds of the Nagas and extended protection to the Bori (submitted) Nagas, against the Abori Nagas (Alechimba 1975: 36). On the other hand, Ahom kings, during foreign invasions or domestic disturbances often took shelter among the Bori Nagas.

But their relationship, contrary to Verrier Elwin's understanding, was not one of ruler or ruled (Elwin 1961: 18), but had an especially complex, spatial, cultural and political dynamic (Baruah 2005: 101). Marcus Franke takes recourse to Stanley Tambiah's explanation of the galactic nature of South Asian polities to explain the Naga-Ahom

relation. In between powerful politics centre's were societies assembled in concentric circles, at the further end of which were large territories of difficult access. He says, "No state incorporated such dependants fully, they remained a stateless penumbra of the state, often indispensable providers of forest or sea products, messengers, warriors and slaves-tributary but distinct and perceived as uncivilized but also as free" (Tambiah 1976 in Franke 2009: 19). He aggress with Lieberman's observation that South and South-East Asian polities retained this galactic quality till the arrival of European powers (Liberman 1993, 1997 in Franke 2009: 19). But the Nagas that encountered the British in the 19th century were not the same that had been in contact with the Ahom. The latter were North and North-Eastern Nagas, while the British encountered the South and South-Western Naga tribes (Alechimba 1975: 41).

ADVENT OF BRITISH COLONIALISM

Unknown to the Nagas, the first division of lands inhabited by them was effected by the Treaty of Yandabo signed in 1826 as a culmination of the First Anglo-Burman War (Shimray 2007: 1). Fought in the wake of the Burmese conquest of the independent kingdoms of Assam and Manipur, the impending Burmese threat of annexing the Kingdoms of Cachar and Synthia and the invasion of British Indian territory, the war saw the gradual extension of British interest in Brahmaputra Valley and to the hills beyond[24]. In the words of Franke, "The decision to keep Assam and to annex Cachar, and the installation of dependant governments in Upper Assam and Manipur brought he British to the foot of hills separating Assam from Burma" (Franke 2009: 9). At a time of revenue stagnation and decline, British interest in the Naga Hills arose also from the need to open up communications for trade between Assam and Manipur, and by the proposition of settling farmers on the fertile Naga hill slopes and growing tea and other cash crops. Asking the dependant Government of Manipur to subjugate the Nagas was a cheaper option for the Imperial Coffers and for this reason, Manipuri troops under Raja Gambhir

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[24] Assam, as we shall see in Chapter 5, became a colonial province in 1874, and Manipur was brought under the suzerainty of the British Crown in 1891.

Singh were armed by the British. In a situation where war had to be waged not against an identifiable regime or enemy, but on the people as a whole, led to many violent confrontations between the Manipuri's and the Nagas. The earliest British foray however, was led by Captains Francis Jenkins and R.C. Pemberton in 1832, with the help of Manipuri troops and porters and after fierce battles in the Tengami region of Angami Naga territory, the first British military post was established in Samadgooting. In the meanwhile, the Manipuri raids on Angami country were retaliated by the Nagas with equally severe raids on North Cachar and Manipur. This led the British to subsequently drop the strategy of asking Manipur to make tributaries of the Nagas (Franke 2009: 13). This initial period between 1832 and 1838 is seen by many historians as the period of expeditions.

The period between 1839 and 1843 saw attempts to integrate the Naga areas into the economy of British imperialism. The establishment of a military post or bridgehead, instead of a military expedition was seen as a cheap and effective way of achieving such integration, at the same time signaling that the British had no interests on the sovereignty of the Naga areas (Misra 2005: 3273). But the discovery that the Arakan mountain ranges formed a natural barrier to the British interests in the sub-continent, led to a renewed interest in the permanent occupation of Assam. From the lenses of this new geopolitical imperative, the Nagas, from potential economic partners, were now seen as 'barbarians', against whom the Assamese subjects had to be protected (Franke 2009: 7). Basing their knowledge on old Ahom maps that divided the Naga areas into tribe-wise districts (which the Nagas didn't know anything about) the British undertook a series of expeditions with the aim to quell the occasional Naga raids on the Assamese lowlands. The resistance that the British officers encountered here was however not a collective effort of all Naga tribes, but of either sporadic villages (some Sema villages revolted, while others gave them way) or of a group of villages of the same tribe temporarily rallying around the flag. Understanding that it was the inaccessibility of their terrain that afforded them protection, the Nagas relied on extreme measures like burning their own villages or granaries and 'panjying' (laying the path with sharp bamboo stems) the retreat path of the expeditions. British actions in response to such staunch resistance got even more fierce, and in a war-

like situation which lasted between 1849 and 1851, an expedition led by Captain Jenkins tried his best to end for all time the "useless striving for their rude independence and right to plunder and murder their neighbors" (Jenkins 1850 in Franke 2009: 15).

On the part of the Nagas however, having no conception of a paramount power, it was assumed that that the British were just another contestant, drawn into their local power struggles and did not believe that the British would stay on. Franke makes a case for likening the Agami's to the notion of 'segmentary political systems' used by Fortes and Pritchard to describe African societies that lacked any central authority that could be coerced into imperial enterprise (Fortes and Pritchard 1987 in Franke 2009: 24). Thus, for all the persistent violence that the British used to achieve a period of lull, there followed even more savage raids by the Angami Villages. A Government enquiry into the situation found that the raids had increased in number and in ferocity, not in the absence of regular military expeditions, but in response to intervention by the British themselves (Franke: 16). This led to a strong condemnation of Jenkins and his party by the then Governor General, Lord Dalhousie. The minutes record him saying, "I dissent entirely from the policy which is recommended of what is called obtaining a control; that is to say of taking possession of these hills and of establishing our sovereignty over the savage inhabitants. Our possession could bring no profit to us; and would be unproductive". But in keeping with imperial conventions of the time, such retreat was to be effected only after a decisive military victory; to demonstrate that "we have no wish for territorial aggrandizement and no designs on the independence of the Naga tribes" (Dalhousie 1851 in Franke: 16). Thus the period of expeditions between 1839 and 1850 gave way to a decade and a half of non-interference till 1866.

When the policy of non-interference did not bring much relief from the raids on the plantation workers settled at the foothills of Upper Assam, a renewed forward policy was adopted, and a rudimentary and incomplete demarcation of Naga Hills district was undertaken in 1867. The constant transgressions that took place across the borders of the district alerted the British even more to the 'unscientific nature' of the demarcation (Robb 257) and convinced them of the need for "an advanced chain of posts connected by patrol

paths to protect the whole tract of country" (Robb 1997: 259). The intention was to not just demarcate British territory more clearly, but also to make the Government more visible to the Nagas, a section of whom, by then were considered as under British protection. Hostility to the survey activities of the British provided a further pretext, this time of civilizing the tribes by curbing the practice of head-hunting[25]. Such pacification was also aided by the policy of Inner Line Regulation adopted in 1873. Designed primarily as a way to formalize the hills-plain (dichotomy) to protect British commercial interests in the Assam plains, it not only made it easier to subjugate the Naga Hills (Yonuo 1974: 26) but was also presented as a philanthropic measure to safeguard the interests and way of life of the Hill people.

In this phase of renewed control two major confrontations took place, in Lhota Naga area in 1875, which resulted in the shifting of the military post from Samadgooting to Wokha in Lhota territory (Lotha 2009: 55), and the second in 1879, when a force of 6000 Angamis from 13 village states banded together to defeat the British stockade at Kohima, (where the headquarters had been shifted in 1878). The siege of Kohima continued well into 1880, and for the first time united a substantial number of Naga villages to fight a common enemy, marking an important step towards the development of national consciousness in later years (Yonuo 1974). The defeat of the Angami's, often also recounted as the battle of Khonoma, is put into perspective by Franke, who opines that the Angami's even till then, did not contemplate that the British were there to stay and thought of it as a temporary state of affairs. The actual surrender, according to him, was "a gradual process of disbelief and realization, a successive accommodation to the presence of foreign occupants" (25). The subsequent pacification can also be attributed to the light administration the British kept up, whereby villages didn't see a Britisher amongst them for years at a time.

The permit from London to not only extend the Naga Hills District to Angami and some parts of Lhota and Sema territory, but also to install British rule in the hills is taken as the

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[25] Drake informs this to be a larger phenomena; "The battle over tribal sovereignty was largely waged over the suppression of headhunting" (Drake 1989 in Franke 2009: 22)

start of the nominal colonization. Thus by 1881 the boundaries and subdivisions of Naga Hills District were formalized. This was also the time when British took to settling Kuki's in Cachar and in the Naga areas of Manipur in order to check possible forays and raids of Nagas on the plains, a practice carried out till as late as 1917 (Alechimba 1975: 5). Though periodic policy declarations were issued decrying the extension of the NHD further and deeper into Naga territory (*ibid* 30), the non-observance of the District boundary by the trans-frontier Naga's[26] led to the pursuance of the policy of direct subjugation. Without further changes in this policy for the next three and a half decades, by 1920, NHD as a result, included Angami, Kacha, Kuki, Kachai, Rengma, Lhota, Sema, Southern Sangtam, Ao, some Konyak and Kalyu Kenyug areas. The Naga territories outside the boundaries of the NHD came to be known by various names like Naga Tribal Area, Free Naga Area, Excluded and Un-administered Areas, and formed the ambiguous edges of the British boundary with Burma. As for the legal status of the area, it was not considered to be a part of British India, but supervised directly by the Governor General acting as the agent of the British Crown[27]. Citing the lack of men and funds to extend the NHD further, the DC of the District was required to limit his influence to frequent and friendly meetings with these Chiefs, to the occasional distribution of presents and to a friendly dispensing of advice during disputes. The British Burmese policy too, as declared in 1895, was to leave the Naga areas alone subject to their refraining from raids on the plains (Alechimba 1975: 100-128).

As for the Nagas within the NHD, they were now subjects of the British crown and of their patrimonial concern. Their subjugation was to be a sensitive affair, in accordance to the Scheduled Districts Act passed in 1874, according to which tribal areas were to have an administration separate from the provinces. The Chief Commissioner summed up the prevalent British attitude in his desire to change the Nagas from 'a warlike and marauding to a peaceful race' but was anxious also to match his rule to 'their character and expectation' (Robb 1997: 257). On the ground however, "the whole process was

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[26] Franke says, the district boundaries were unmarked zones, rather than lines. Trans-frontier Nagas referred to those on the border with British Burma (2009: 37).

[27] This state of affair reversed only after the Transfer of Power. The Indian Independence Act of 1947, and the Extra Provincial Jurisdiction Act of the same year authorized the Government of India to continue its administration (Alechimba 1975: 128).

marked by particularly obvious social engineering and standardization in the interests of the state" (*ibid.* 261). For example, while non-interference was maintained in matters of customs, laws, religion and tradition, all efforts were made to disarm the Nagas and to stop the practice of fortifying the village roads with bamboo sticks, because it was 'no longer [considered] necessary that they should take upon themselves the burden of private defense' (Elliot 1881 in Franke 2009: 36). Immigration from Assam and Nepal (in spite of the Inner Line) was encouraged, and a class of interpreters or Dobashi's and Goanbura's were created to see to the implementation of the orders from above. Though the powers of the village chief was retained, the position unlike before, was made hierarchical, and he was co-opted into the British administrative system by being allowed to retain 20 percent of the revenue collected in return for protection of his position against 'disobedience and disrespect' (Robb 1997: 261). Most importantly, the power of village chiefs, as constituted by law, was now territorial in nature. Whereas earlier inter-clan disputes used to be solved through clashes or conference, the disputing clans under the new system had to accept the verdict of the territorial chief. Together with the imposed practice of referring the more serious disputes to the District Commissioner, the orientation of village populations in this way gradually shifted from kinship to territory (Chaube 1999: 41). Thus the British retained just as much of the prohibitions and customs of the native culture necessary for the polity to not intrude into the space of colonial political culture. The logic of cultural protection thus also operated as a support mechanism of political control (Biswas and Suklabaidya 2008: 63).

Interestingly, such maintenance of status quo for the purposes of effective administration was slowly being undermined by the spread of Christianity and Christian education in the Hills. With the British administration not keen on getting involved in religious (and thus political) awakening in the Hills, the area was allotted to American Baptists and Methodists (while the British Presbyterians, Anglicans and Methodists worked in the mainland) (Fernandes 1999: 3580). Entering the Ao Naga area in 1832, the first Naga Christian Community was established in 1872. The process of bringing warring tribes together under the aegis of the church, though slow and difficult, was an incipient threat to the Colonialist, whose political consolidation was dependent on internal divisions

between the tribes. Though eventually the chiefs too converted, the difference in their approach persisted (Fernandes 1999: 3580).[28] Moreover Western Education and Christianity brought with it the ideas, language and terminology of 'Independence'. But, this new development, according to Franke, was "only a translation of an indigenous concept that had even more radically and decidedly insisted on personal freedom, compared with the independence of the whole people, which the Nagas now had to adopt to survive in the new state system" (Franke 2009: 58). Similarly, Downs too argues that unlike the colonial presence, Christianity in the Hills was not as much an agent of social and political change as an agent of 'acculturation'. It provided the skills needed to function effectively within a modernizing future, and thus helped retain economic and social control in hands of the peoples themselves (Downs 1992 in Paratt 2005: 65). And most importantly, Christianity made large parts of the populations accessible for the emerging Naga elite in the days to come.

WORLD WAR ONE, THE NAGA CLUB AND SIMON COMMISSION

If Christianity along with modern western education led to the growth of an elite receptive to the ideas of nationalism, independence and territorial self-determination, it was the experience of the First World War that brought the elites of different tribes together into an incipient national consciousness. The War saw the recruitment of around 4000 men from different tribes to the Labor Corps to work on road building in France. Beside this, a large number of Nagas, from both the Naga Hills and the Hills in Manipur were recruited as a part of regular units (Franke 2009: 60). The experience in France, according to Horam, proved consequential in two ways: firstly- watching the British and her allies attempt to keep afloat in the War alerted the Nagas to the myth of British invincibility, and second- the extensive interaction, for the first time, among Nagas of different tribes, including those from the un-administered areas, gave rise to a sense of belonging among them (1988: 35). The supervision of the Naga Labor Corps by the

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[28] This dualism between the traditional chiefs and the young educated elite would come to play a decisive role in the coming days. While the latter would be agitating for autonomy, the former would be adamant about 'complete independence'.

American Baptist Chaplain J.R. Bailey, also lent momentum to the deeper spread of Christianity in the coming decades (Joshi 2007: 547). The internalization of the category of "Naga", hitherto used only by others, had begun. At the same time, they were also aware of the prevalent indifference of their masses to potentially national affairs (Franke 2009: 61), and thus to the fact that the "nation in its consciousness about itself was yet to be realized" (*ibid* 58). Against this background the Naga Club was formed by the war returnees, in Kohima and Mokukchung in 1918. The club was the creation of a class that had just been plummeted into the monetized economy (Alechimba 1975: 137), and it was the first organization representing all the Naga tribes. Taking the existing the disunity of their people as given, and thus the Naga national consciousness they worked towards was con-federal in nature

The first major political decision to which the Club applied itself, revolved around the proposed reform scheme in British India, in which rumors of their closer integration with Assam province and British India were circulated. Hitherto kept away from the independence movement raging in the sub-continent (in no small measure by the Inner Line), the Nagas were filled with consternation at the prospect of being clubbed with Hindu and Islamic plains people. The two latter being politically and numerically superior, they feared being overpowered by men whom they thought despised the Nagas and their ways (Franke 2009: 40). This was the predominant sentiment expressed in the "Naga Memorandum to the Simon Commission" who visited Kohima in January of 1929. Stressing that "We never asked for any reforms and we do not wish for any reforms" they asked to remain under British protection which hitherto was the only unifying factor among them. "If the British Government however want to throw us away, we pray that we should not be thrust to the mercy of the people who could never have conquered us themselves, and to whom we were never subjected, but to leave us alone to determine for ourselves as in ancient times" (Naga Memorandum to the Simon Commission 1929 in Vashum *et al.* 1996: 151).

It is thus clearly seen that even at the time of the reform scheme, Naga Nationalism was not articulated so much in terms of an aspiration for an independent Naga nation but as

rudimentary political fundamentalism of wanting to continue living "wild but free" (Sakhrie 1946 in Lotha 2009: 137). The Simon Commission on its part understood the demands of the Nagas, not as self determination through rapid political advancement, but protection, especially against economic and cultural subjugation by the plains (Franke 2009: 41). But in spite of pleas against inclusion into any reform scheme, they were brought into the province of Assam in April 1937, albeit as "Excluded Area" a tag which applied also to the Lushai and North Cachar Hills, and North-East Frontier Tract, and were to be administered by the Governor of Assam as the agent of the Central Government (as against the former practice of being governed directly by the an agent of the Governor General acting on behalf of the crown). Though the Memorandum to the Simon Commission was not a declaration of Naga self-determination in the modern sense of the word (that came to fire the imagination of the entire third world a decade later), Charles Chasie holds that "The Naga people are where they are today because of the sense of history of the same people who signed the Memorandum to the Simon Commission" (Chasie in Venuh ed. 2004: 138).

The paternalistic attitude that guided the Simon Commission's decision to exclude the Naga Hills from the Indian mainland also informed the Coupland Plan or the Crown Colony proposal, mooted first around 1928 and debated in the British Parliament in 1943-44. With the independence of the sub-continent looming closer, it was held that the tribals would not be able to take their place in a democratic constitution or to compete with the sophisticated Indian political system for place and power (Lotha 2009: 31). Moreover, the population of the Naga Hills and its allied regions, according to Professor Coupland, were neither Indian, nor Burmese, but Mongoloid, and ought thus to be united under a single administrative zone with both India and Burma working out a joint arrangement of sovereignty and responsibility (Bhattacharya 1967: 491). Although Naga accounts hold that it was their refusal to accede to the Crown Colony proposal that led to it being dropped; more probable reasons for the abandonment of this novel experiment in sovereignty can be located in the ferocious opposition to the plan expected from the Indian National Congress, and in the course of the Second World War which changed the priorities of the British Parliament (Franke 2009: 42).

The Second World War proved for the Nagas too, to be politically more consequential than the events of the last hundred years. With the Japanese offensive towards the Indian mainland, Kohima became to Burma what Stalingrad was to Russia and what Alame was to the Desert (Alechimba 1975: 152). With Dimapur as an infrastructural corridor, the areas of Jotsoma, Phekekrima, Mokukchung, Sakahlu, Zubza, Wokha and even Imphal and Ukhrul in Manipur turned into battlefronts (Franke 2009: 62). Not only were the Nagas involved in road building and supplies, and in actual fighting alongside the British, they also witnessed an onslaught of refugees in form of Indian soldiers and settlers from Burma (Franke 2009: 61). Moreover the Japanese siege which lasted for four months, resulted for the first time in the abolition of the division of the Naga hills into administered and un-administered areas (Yonuo 1974 in Franke 2009: 62). Though the fighting ended, Kohima, apart from serving as a rest area also saw the halt of two divisions of the British Army for the purpose of building roads for the re-conquest of Burma. The War, in its wake, brought about chaos in the Naga social fabric. Before even being fully conversant with monetary economy, the War economy had overtaken them, and the massive confrontation with the outside world put their traditional way of life in question; generating much mental ferment and restlessness among the post-war generation (Mankekar 1967 in Franke 2009: 64).

Most importantly the destruction that the War left behind gave rise to the conviction that they wanted to be left alone (Rustomji 1983 in *ibid.*). The common experience of endurance and participation on part of the Nagas finally widened the social base of an infant national consciousness and made the masses receptive to the political program of their elite. Meanwhile, exposed to the western concepts of nationality, and territorial sovereignty in action, the elites were quick this time to locate their own incipient nationalism, alongside India, within the global context of post-war anti-colonial struggles (Lotha 2009: 32). While the Second World War helped Naga national consciousness become a mass phenomenon, on the other hand, it led to the abrupt evacuation of the American Missionaries before they could accomplish their mission of penetrating Naga territory in Burma. In this regard, Lanunungsang Ao observes, "Had they entered into the

Eastern part of Naga territory...... the question of Naga unification would have been different today" (Ao 2002: 219).

THE NAGA NATIONAL COUNCIL

The rapid pace of political developments post the World Wars saw the establishment of the Naga Hills District Tribal Council in 1945, set up by Charles Pawsey, then the District Commissioner of Naga Hills District. Within a year, the NHDTC gave way to the Naga National Council. While the former was set up for the purpose of post-war reconstruction and extension of the system of tribal council followed in Angami, Ao and Lhota areas to the rest of the Hills (Lotha 2009: 183-184), the latter was informed by the political tides of decolonization and Indian nationalism, and looked "to struggle for freedom and to manifest a new self-assertive quest for Naga identity" (Yonuo 1974: 161). It had 29 members through a system of proportional representation of most tribes in the NHD, and soon changed from a pressure group to the political mouthpiece of Naga nationalism, replacing the British officers from a position of articulators to mere interlocutors (Franke 2009: 43). Guha describes the NNC within the ambit of the "classic trappings of a nationalist movement, in embryo: led by middle-class intellectuals" (Guha 2007 in Lotha 2009: 33). An allied development was the revival of the Naga Students Federation, languishing since 1939, in order to "voice the legitimate aspiration of the Nagas and to seek its fulfillment through peaceful means" (NSF 1997 in Lotha 2009: 191). Debates on the impending status of their lands were also conducted through the journal Naga Nation launched by T Sakhrie and Vichazelhu Iralu. The Governor of Assam Sir Andrew Clow is said to have expressed his views on the Naga course of action. He writes in the journal "Why lose the bone of 'autonomy' to try to get the bone of independence' which is not possible to get?" (Guha 2007 in Lotha 2009: 35).

The shift in the nomenclature from Naga Hills District Tribal Council to Naga National Council indicated of the clout of the tribal chiefs who were in favor of complete independence, alongside that of the educated middle-class who were in favor of

autonomy. But the plan of action adopted by the Council at their meeting in June 1946, which they presented to the Cabinet Mission, spoke of autonomy within the Indian Union[29]. The highlights of the declaration were: the NNC stood for the solidarity of all Naga tribes, including those in the administered areas, it was against the grouping of the province of Assam with Bengal, that the Naga Hills should be included in an autonomous Assam in free India, with local autonomy and due safeguards, and that Nagas should have a separate electorate (Yonuo 1974: 161-62). The same resolutions were also sent to Jawaharlal Nehru, who appreciated the fact that the Nagas stood for the solidarity of even the un-administered areas, expressed his doubts over the desirability of a separate electorate and instead suggested that the Nagas should learn Hindi and participate fully in the life of Assam Province (Sema 1986: 157). The Cabinet Mission in the meanwhile satisfied that the NNC represented no other power but itself, ignored the Naga issue altogether (Franke 2009: 43). Cold shouldering by the British, combined with Nehru's less than satisfactory response, added to the incessant build-up of administration in the Hills, alerted Nagas to the need to take more drastic steps. Thus was strengthened the separatist faction in the NNC.

A second plea was sent to the British Prime Minister, to Winston Churchill and to Sir Paul Simon, proposing a ten year interim period to develop themselves politically, after which the Nagas could take a call on either complete independence or on some arrangement with India. As for the British administration in the Hills, Franke notes that "The British, trying to uphold the image of an ordered retreat, muddled through as fast as they could, and on their way out, tried to advise the Nagas to remain within the Indian Union" (Franke 2009: 81). Even on the issue of the NNC standing for the solidarity of all Nagas and seeking to represent the un-administered areas, they were discouraged from going ahead by the British adviser Archer. The NNC had by then deputed 5 members to draft out a Constitution for themselves with the "solidarity of the Naga Nation" as their ultimate goal (Franke 2009: 84), which was to be the basis for their incorporation into the Constituent Assembly's proceedings. However, the sub-committee of the advisory

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[29] Some accounts also claim that the national work was primarily done by the tribal councils and the NNC was formes only for the Cabinet Mission (note 10 in Franke 2009: 83).

committee on tribal affairs that came to Kohima refused to accept their proposals, much less pass it on to Constituent Assembly. The Sub-committee then came up with its own plans for the Naga Hills wherein it treated the NHD as a part of Assam, giving the Governor the power to dissolve even the NNC. The NNC rejected their recommendation (Franke 2009: 86). Left thus with no voice in the Constituent Assembly (Vashum 71), the Nagas presented a ten year interim period plan to both the Government of India as well as to Lord Mountbatten. According to the plan, the Interim Government was to have full control over judiciary, executive and legislation, with the power to raise revenue, the annual deficit being paid by the Indian Union, and with the power to approve the maintenance of a force by the Guardian power for civil and defense purposes. The plan moreover reiterated that the government stood for all Nagas, the land would be inalienable, and that at the end of ten years, Nagas would be free to chose any form of government they wished (Ao 2002: 278).

HYDARI AGREEMENT AND DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

In response to the strongly asserted plans made known to the highest levels, Nehru deputed Sir Akbar Hydari, the Governor of Assam to bring the NNC to an agreement that would be the basis for their incorporation into the Constituent Assembly. The result was the Nine-point Hydari Agreement of June 1947. It had amongst its clauses the retransfer of forested areas given to Sibsagar and Nowgong districts of Assam province by the redrawing of the NHD in 1925, and the proposal to bring all Nagas under a single administrative unit ("as far as possible") who would then be under the scope of the Hydari Agreement (NNC Hist: 14 in Lotha 2009). The 9th clause, referring to the option to either extend the agreement or draw up a new one at the end of ten years, was, even according to Phizo (of whom we shall see more later) not a clear promise of self determination, but an acceptable start (Vashum 2000: 72). But confidence in the agreement just concluded faded the same evening, when Sir Hydari warned the Naga delegation that India might use force in the event that the Naga Hills District refused to join the Indian Union. They had interpreted the 9th point as a guarantee of possible

separation from the Indian Union, but learnt that the Indian side did not see it as such (Lotha 2009: 207). The confusion caused by the contradictory signals of appeasement and imposition on part of the Indo-Assamese agents served the purpose of causing much unanimity in the ranks of the NNC (Franke: 2009: 66-68). The intimidation strengthened the faction that favored complete separation from India; and hurriedly, an "Ultimatum" was issued to the Government of India. It stated that, the Hydari agreement notwithstanding, if the original Ten Year Interim Government Plan (sent to Nehru and Mountbatten) was not accepted, the Nagas would secede from the Indian Union[30]. In response the Government in the making got back with the vague assurance that the proposals to the Constituent Assembly would be drafted only in consultation with the Nagas, which would be done no later than the 20th of June, 1948.

The confusion reigning at that time is best seen in the chain of events unfolding on the 14th and 15th of August of 1947. A section of the NNC declared Independence, a day before the Indian Union's was decided, and sent copies of their declaration to the United Nations and to selected newspapers in Europe and America[31]. It is also alleged that this declaration of independence, included only those Naga tribes in Manipur, NHD and Cachar that had experienced British rule, and left out those in Burma and the un-administered areas (West 1993 in Paratt 2005: 220). Ao sums up the significance of the event with his observation, "If in Kohima Indian Independence Day was dry, chilly, and lifeless (as the Naga Nation described it), the mood for Naga Independence also proved equally feeble and abject (Ao 1993 in Vashum 2000: 74). The day after their declaration, on the eve of Indian Independence, the NNC sent a communication to Hydari asserting that "Nagas could only be part of the Indian Union if the Nine-points agreement was accepted with the ninth clause modified" (Franke 2009: 86). The declaration of Naga Independence of 1947 is thus to be understood as a fire-fighting measure, as brinkmanship resulting from the uncertainty kept up by the Indian side, and not as a pre-planned strategic move towards Naga separation. The conundrum is explained by

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[30] The date first declared for secession was 6th Dec, 1947 and was changed later to 31st December 47.

[31] Some accounts (Franke 2009) hold that the copies of the declaration were intercepted and blocked by the District Commissioner- Charles Pawsey, while Ao (2002) claims that acknowledgement of the declaration was received from the UN.

Verghese, "Pressures to integrate were mistaken as steps towards annexation or forced assimilation. This was as far from the truth as differentiation, a holding out for time to consider and consult, was interpreted as separatist, or secessionist" (Verghese 2008: 16).

The Nagas who were pacified by the vague assurances of India that they would be consulted for their incorporation into the Constituent Assemble not later than 1948, were kept hanging further by positive assurances in this regard, first by Sir Akbar Hydari and then by both, Hydari and the Premier of Assam, Gopinath Bardoloi (Lotha 2009: 37). However the building up of the administration in the NHD continued, and by 1948, the Army had moved in to the Free Naga/ Un-administered area. This led the NNC to seek clarification from the Assam Premier and Governor for a third time. This time however, on the 3rd of November, 1949, they were bluntly told that "there was no agreement made with the Nagas" (NNC Hist: 17 in Lotha 2009: 38). This last move on part of the Indian Union widened the gulf between both parties and helped rally all sections of the NNC and also the masses in favor of full separation from the Indian Union. Subsequently, the NNC on the 24th of January, 1950 sent a second cable to the United Nations and informed the UN and the Indian Government that "the Nagas do not accept the Indian Constitution" (NNC Hist: 18 in Lotha 2009: 38).

EMERGENCE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NAGALAND

The actions of the Government of India, which led to the sidelining of the moderates in the NNC also coincided with the rise of Angami Zapu Phizo. A prisoner of the Second World War, Phizo had fought with the Indian National Army alongside the Japanese. He left NNC soon after joining it in 1946 to form the People's Independence League with the intention of carving out an independent State of Nagas of both India and Burma. He is also credited with the forming of the Naga Youth Movement and the Naga Women's Society. After serving a jail-term for subversive activities, he was welcomed back into the folds of the NNC as its fourth president. This was when the increasing presence of the

Indian Army in the Naga Hills led to the swelling of the ranks of militant radicals within the NNC (Franke 2009: 90).

The first task that Phizo applied himself to was the voluntary plebiscite of all Nagas, to "disprove the slander that the desire for Independence was held only by a few educated Nagas" (Nibedon 1978: 36). In the memorandum, Phizo explained his decision to refrain from holding the plebiscite under international auspices to prevent "any possible injury that may be otherwise be done to the reputation of India" (NNC 1951 in Means and Means 1966: 292) and invited India instead to send its observers, which the latter declined. With 99.9 % of the population in approval of Naga Independence, the 80 pounds of thumb impressions were sent to the President and Prime Minister Nehru in May 1951. It elicited the response that the demand was absurd and the NNC was warned of the violent results of their policies and actions (Franke 2009: 91). As the first truly mass act of Naga Nationalism, it has been agreed by even the Nagaland Congress Party that the plebiscite "emotionally integrated the various Naga tribes" (Jamir 2000 in Baruah 2005: 111).

It was on this basis that a mass civil disobedience movement was subsequently launched, keeping with the ideals of Gandhi[32] and Christ (Franke 2009: 91). School, Colleges and Offices were boycotted, as were the first General Elections of 1952. The crackdown by Assam police that followed, helped Phizo to start recruiting for his army first from among the southern Nagas (Sema, Angami, Chakesang) then from the Eastern counterparts (Konyak, Chang, Phom, Kheimungan) (Nibedon 1978: 46). This was followed by building of bases in Burmese Naga country, setting the stage for the Eastern Naga Revolutionary Council to emerge later (ibid. 39). Intercepted and jailed during one such border crossing in 1952, he was released soon after on humanitarian grounds[33]. While the new assertive and single minded character of the NNC is to be attributed to Phizo's almost religious determination [indeed his phraseology was full of terms like 'mission and duty' (ibid. 41)], its rapid spread to the masses was largely due to Phizo's tactic of

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[32] Nibedon says Phizo in his writings admitted that in their meeting at Delhi, Gandhi had made the Naga delegation promise to follow the path of non violence (1978: 33).

[33] Phizo's wife and child had died in a road accident.

co-opting and relying on the tribal power structure. Mishra notes in this regard, "Naga nationalism did not grow at the expense of the tribal structure of the village administration but virtually on it" (Misra in Lotha 2009: 135).

It was the leaders of tribal councils then, who shocked Nehru and U Nu during their visit to Kohima. Nehru, who popularly pleaded sympathy with tribal aspirations, along with the Burmese Premier, visited Kohima in March 1953, "to study personally the law and order situation in the frontier areas." (Franke 2009: 69). The tribal chiefs who had gathered in Kohima from all over Naga territories to present a memorandum to Nehru, were barred from doing so by the then District Commissioner of the Naga Hills District, Barkati. Assuming that the orders had come directly from Nehru (it was not so), they boycotted the Nehru's address en-masse. Considering this a "deliberate discourtesy, not so much to him as to U Nu (Gopal 1979 in Lotha 2009: 212), Nehru then onwards gave the Assam Chief Minister Bishnuram Medhi, a free hand in dealing with the Nagas. With the immediate arrest of 8 NNC leaders and a ferocious crackdown by Assam Police in the hills, Phizo's followers were forced underground. Even as Nehru declared in Parliament that India would not hold any part of the union by the strength of arms (Nibedon 1978: 37), the Assam Maintenance of Public Order (Autonomous Districts) Act was passed, with which began the violent phase in the course of the Naga National Movement.

Assam had always found the Nagas to be the most formidable spoiler towards the building of a greater-Assam identity by an Assamisation of the hills. It now employed all its means of coercion to break the Naga resistance. Random arrests, rape and torture, raids on villages, the regrouping of villages sometimes for months on end[34] became endemic. The burning of granaries and the killing of trees was supplemented by the Forced Labor Regulation (Sept 1953) whereby the population was forced to carry equipment for the police at gunpoint (Navlakha 1997: 299). With the intimidation of Guanburas (administrative leaders in the villages), they too resigned en-masse. The

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[34] Such actions were enabled and abetted by the Assam Maintenance of Public Order Act, 1953. Section 7(i) of the Act empowered the government to impose collective fines on the inhabitants of any area, "if it appears to the state government" that they have failed or "are failing to render all the assistance in their power to discover or apprehend the offender..."

reaction to the crackdown is summed up in NNC History. "If the Government had hoped to terrorize the Nagas into giving up their rights, it failed miserably. Faced with this common danger the different clans became more united." (Lotha 2009: 238). Even as the NNC pleaded with the State Reorganization Commission for an early recognition of Naga sovereignty, the Assam Disturbed Areas Act of 1955 was launched, which was to be the precursor the AFSPA. The Government at the centre who had till then relied on the accounts of the Assam Government, gradually begin to perceive that the Assam police and civil authorities might be responsible for the protracted nature of the Naga resistance (Franke 2009: 71).

While the Assam Police wrecked havoc in the Naga Hills District, in the un-administered/ Free Naga areas, the Indian Army went about systematically building their administration and destroying villages. To the Nagas there, this was their first encounter with India and Indians, and they saw it as invasion. They were thus instantly receptive to Phizo's program when he went there. By 1954 then, the Underground had spread deep into the Tuensang Frontier Division (*ibid.* 92). It was the annihilation of the Yimbang village in Tuensang by the Indian Army in 1954 that prompted Phizo to begin his offensives (Ao 2002: 51). The first formal declaration of sovereignty therefore came from this region, when in September 1954, the NNC declared the Sovereignty of the Republic of Free Nagaland or the Hongkhin Government. One of the first tasks of the Hongkhin Government was to write a letter to the President of India describing the army atrocities and pleading for their removal (NNC Hist in Lotha: 215). Across the border, though the Burmese Nagas actively contributed manpower towards the Hongkhin Government, it largely escaped the notice of the Burmese Government, embroiled as it was in a civil war in the mainland (Shimray 2005: 302).

In the meanwhile, in the Naga Hills District, the atrocities of the Assam police strengthened the extremists in the NNC there even further, and following the resignation of the moderates, Phizo declared the Federal Government of Nagaland on the 22nd of March, 1956 in Phenseyu in Rengma Naga country. The Hongkhin Government was merged with the FGN, the blue flag was unfurled and portfolios distributed (Ao 2002:

51). Conscious of the fact that it was a self appointed government, whose claim to legitimacy rested on the imagined support of their people, the Constitution of the Federal Government of Nagaland (Yezhabo) provided for an elaborate democratic set-up. Protestant Christianity and Naga religion were the accepted religions in the Constitution. Thoroughly planned and drawing its legitimacy from the village institutions[35], the writ of the Federal Government spread rapidly (Misra 1978: 620) and by the time the Army replaced Assam police in May 1956, large parts of the Hills district and even parts of the Manipur hills were effectively under the control of the FGN and its armed wing- the Naga Federal Army (Franke 2009: 71). While Phizo's dogged determination and strategic alliances with the tribal chiefs led to the consolidation of the incipient movement into a popular (albeit underground) government, his insistence on maintaining a single line of action (one that embraced a future of violent retribution of Indian occupation) would admit of no alternative. Because of his open abhorrence of the recourse to violence, T. Sakhrie, one of the earliest architects of the Naga National Movement, its prime ideologue and interlocutor, and Phizo's comrade-in-arms, was physical annihilated in 1956. The Naga National movement had witnessed its first fratricidal casualty. The death of Sakhrie, while on the one hand disillusioned hundreds from the vision of Phizo, on the other hand strengthened the extremist side of the NNC.

ANALYZING EARLY NAGA NATIONALISM

Having thus traced the journey of the Nagas from a set of diverse, autonomous tribes without any consciousness of a common ethnic or political agenda to a confederal national collectivity fighting for self determination and sovereign status in a world of nation-states, we can now examine the nature of Naga nationalism as it manifested by the end of the 1950's. Aishikho Daihi Mao sees the Naga national movement as both nativist and as a result of the British experience. Understanding 'Nagaism' as a defensive tendency directed first towards the British and then towards India, he highlights four

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[35] The Federal Government of Nagaland was to be run by a 100 tatars, elected by adult suffrage, with 15 kilonsers (ministers) drawn from their ranks. The Naga Federal Army, or the Home Gaurds as it was called in the initial days, were to be under the command of the leader of the FGN. The Government in turn was subservient to the parent body, the NNC (Nibedon, 1978: 29).

main reasons why Nagas resisted inclusion into India. They are- the prolonged isolation and separation from the plains and from the Indian national movement, brought about by the protectionist measures of the British administration; the propaganda about the religions and the Hindu caste system of mainland India and the fear of being relegated to the lowest sections of society in the new independent polity; the fear of the Assamese, who by virtue of them being more educated and 'advanced', occupied the key positions in the new administration over Naga areas, reducing the natives thus to subject people in their own lands; and lastly, the direct encouragement of independent political status by some British officials in the Naga Hills District (Mao: 1992: 35-36).

Shimray on the other hand, holds Naga Nationalism to be 'an act of consciousness' (2005: 52), which in turn is based upon an ethnic core. In accordance with Anthony Smith's argument about the ethnie sustaining the modern movement of nationalism, Shimray sees the myths of common origin, shared memories, intimate relation to the territory and a feeling of solidarity forming the ethnic core of the Naga nation (Shimray 2005: 52-55). Similarly Udayon Misra considers the Nagas not only to be displaying all the marks of territorial nationalism, like a deep attachment to the native soil, established territorial authority and common economic pattern based on such authority, he also sees the existence of a shared psychological structure which forms the basis of a common Naga culture. Moreover, the spread of Christianity helped cement solidarity between the various Naga tribes to the extent of it becoming an ethnic marker for differentiating Nagas not only from other tribes, but from the dominant Hindu nationality of India and dominant Buddhist nationality of Burma (Misra 1978: 622). The absence of a common language did not prove a barrier to the process of nationality formation[36]. The widespread and voluntary adoption of Nagamese (a pidgin between Ao and Angami Naga languages and Assamese) and English reflected, according to Acharya, the "innate urge of the Naga people for unification" (1988: 1068).

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[36] The relation between language and the nation and nationalism has been elaborated in the previous chapter.

While acknowledging the existence of a sound ethnic core, there are others who trace the emergence of Naga nationalism not to the British but to the Indian experience. Abraham Lotha makes an important intervention here to remind that the British had colonized only a fraction of all Naga tribes and Naga territory. He nuances the India's legal claim to sovereignty over Nagas by virtue of being a colonial handover. He says, "In India's claim over the Nagas as a colonial legacy, the history of Naga nationalism tends to be focused on the partial colonization of Naga Hills District, but the truth that the majority of the Nagas were not colonized is not emphasized." (Lotha 2009: 147). Franke shows that, even in the accessible parts of the Naga Hills District, British had ruled with a light administration, with entire villages not seeing a British for years together. By contrast, Indians were a massive and pervasive presence, and the initial interaction confirmed fears that the Nagas, if left to India, would be assimilated into the lowest layers of Indian Society (2009: 82). Moreover, for large parts of Naga territory, the first interaction with India had been through the Indian Army and before that the Assam Police. It is with this insight that the Indian State assumes the trappings of a colonial power, much like its imperial predecessor, and its army action, can be seen as invasion and occupation (Franke 2009: 146).

Lamenting the high politics of security that dictated the Indian State's policy towards the Nagas, Udayon Misra says "Much of the tragedy unleashed on the Assam hills could have been avoided had a serious and consistent effort been made to understand the Nagas initial demand of Home Rule." (1999: 15) The violence launched by the Army over the entire Naga population, helped cement Naga solidarity against the clearly identifiable enemy. Thus Franke holds that majority of the Nagas had not thought in terms of national self-determination, rather they were opposing what they saw as armed invasion by Indians (2009: 103). In contrast Misra attributes the development to the machinery of Indian democracy. He says, "The incorporation of areas which had hitherto been un-administered territories inhabited by people living in tribal isolation, into the democratic frameworks of a new nation, committed to the ideals of secularism, equality and representative government, speeded up the process of nationality formation which otherwise might have taken ages." (1999: 11) In this homeostatic understanding (see

Conversi, Chap 2), Christianity was not so much the prime factor animating Naga nationalism, but rather as a mark of resistance. Franke says, "The indo-Naga war, though started only in the 1950's turned out to be the decisive catalyst for Christianity (and the Naga nation) and not the other way round..." (2009: 59).

On the part of India the initial days saw Nehru's sensitive dealing with what he saw as legitimate tribal aspirations[37]. He held initially that the feeling of separateness was not generic but resulted from the misdirected intervention of the dominant nationalist discourse of the mainland (Biswas and Suklabaidya 2008: 115). But, in light of the loss of territory and identity to the breakaway nationalism of Pakistan, Nehru's concern with Naga territories were informed most by what Sankaran Krishna (1994) calls India's cartographic anxiety. Pimomo says, "Nagas and their country became in the eyes and imagination of most Indian leaders their Other, a kind of primal scene (along with, and partly because of, Pakistán's break-away) for India's national anxiety" (1995: 30). Remarking on the dominant majoritarian character of the Indian State, Pimomo states, "sectarian Hindu India and Nehru's secularist India merged their roles in Nagaland; they were united in their view of Naga extraneousness to the Indian 'national culture,' for one because of the Naga belief in Christianity, for the other because of their wish to be politically independent of India" (1995: 32).

The development of an ethnic Naga core into Naga nationalism, by being pushed against the forces of British imperialism and the Indian post-colonial state, however, need to be foreground-ed against the larger tides of nationalism sweeping across the world. Nirmal Nibedon makes a case for viewing Naga Nationalism in the perspective of a nationalist upsurge which was overtaking the tribal as well as non-tribal polities of Southeast Asia in

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[37] Franke's (2009: 73) assessment of Nehru's views on India's tribal population is instructive here: "Nehru, as we know by now was in theory sympathetic to the tribals, could retain his sympathy only once the tribals followed his evolutionist world view and shed their past differences. Nehru was not only incapable of understanding minority fears in terms other than as vested interests of a local elite, but he was also utterly exasperated at every insistence of difference that he saw as fissparous manifestations of past backwarness, getting in his way of building a nation. Nehru, who was aware of contemporary literature on nation and nationalism, knew that the nation had still to be achieved, and partition panfully alerted him to its fragility and its potential for 'balkanization'. From then it was his paramount task to fight off any attempt to leave the Indian Union."

the 1940's and 1950's. For the Nagas, Phizo, who had fought and witnessed the Burmese upheavals, brought in the tide of 'revolutionary nationalism' (1978: 53). Thus we see, Naga nationalism also as the groundwork of Naga intellectuals, whom Nibedon calls the 'cream of the Naga society'; and who both openly and then underground, disseminated the idea of the Naga nation with missionary zeal. Misra (1978) attributes to the NNC, the addition of a corporate will to an incipient Naga national consciousness, for breaking through the autonomy and isolationism of the separate tribes and for cultivating the idea that their socio-cultural, economic and political future was predicated on the Nagas being a nation (622).

Chapter Four

EVOLUTION OF NAGA NATIONALISM: 1956- PRESENT

The previous chapter dealt with the emergence of Naga national consciousness and the initial stages of the national movement. Outstanding characteristics of the movement, as seen in the previous chapter were that it was based on the traditional tribal structure, envisaging a confederal nationalism, and notwithstanding different ideas about the struggle held by men like T. Sakhrie, it was united under the umbrella of the Federal Government of Nagaland, and steered ultimately by the Naga National Council.

The present chapter demonstrates the changes that have taken place in this enduring movement in the half-century that followed. Abetted directly and indirectly by the Government of India through its political and military agents, the movement has deeply fractionalized among tribal lines and into localized ethnic autocracies with well demarcated territories of control. On the other hand, it has not only internationalized but also democratized. Though the armed resistance still remains in a co-constitutive relationship with the other actors in the politics of the movement, namely the political parties, the church and tribal councils, the civil society and the intelligentsia; these forces have come into their own. The current ceasefire, in place since 1997, though tenuous, has only given a boost to the democratization of the movement. It is directly a result of this, that the issue of the integration of Naga contiguous areas has taken centre-stage over the demand for complete territorial sovereignty.

1956: INDIAN ARMY OFFENSIVE

The Central Government took over from the Assam Police, as the latter's excesses were engendering an increase in resistance in the Naga Hills. But the Army's own strategy in the hills in 1956 was to practice martial law, albeit initially without either name or

legislation (Franke 2009: 74). Even before the promulgation of the ordinance of the Armed Forces Special Powers Bill, there was a deployment of 40,000 regular troops (106) among a population of less than 500,000. Indeed while tabling the bill in the Parliament, it was informed that "a regulation more or less on the lines of this bill was applicable to that area" (Navlakha 1997: 302). As a direct consequence of such military build-up, the underground resistance intensified and spread rapidly[38]. By 1958, the Assam districts of United Mikir, and parts of Cachar and Sibsagar had to be brought the under the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Ordinance. In this regard Franke has noted; "In India, the major tool for nation building was the Indian Army" (2009: 67). The extent of violence perpetrated by the counter-insurgency operations can be estimated from the plea sent by the Naga National Council to the United Nations in 1960 to intervene in the impending genocide[39].

In 1962 the Nagaland Security Regulation was passed, providing for impunity to those who assist the Army's efforts to crush the insurgency, and providing for the removal of people to any area for any length of time (Navlakha 1999). While the first measure legalized any criminal activity appropriately presented, the latter formed the basis for the notorious village regrouping scheme. The forced herding of entire village populations into camps for months intended to cut the supply chain of the underground. More importantly, realizing with time, that the main strength of the Naga movement derived from the tribal council, which in turn based itself on the economic pattern of land-relationships, the regroupings were directed towards breaking up this economic pattern altogether (Misra 1978: 621). Those initial days saw the Army and the Central Government pointing fingers at the foreign missionaries for instigating and abetting the population and the insurgents. Even as numerous missionaries were driven out[40], the Inner Line Regulation of 1873, much criticized by Assamese and Parliamentary

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[38]This causal relation is forwarded by Richard Jenkins. He says that a state, which during the incorporation of a region continuously falls back on violence, will fail to establish its monopolization of violence (1997: 137).

[39] The plea read: 'Unless the United Nations intervene, the Naga citizens will continue to die... Nobody's life is safe anywhere throughout Nagaland' (NNC Hist in Lotha 2009: 322).

[40] Subsequent research has shown that the suspicion against the missionaries was ill founded. Dependant on Government co-operation for their prosletyzation, they scarcely involved themselves in politics and even repeatedly issued denials to that effect (Nag 1994: 1424).

legislators as discriminatory, was reactivated; this time to keep out foreign journalists and keep the ongoing war a closed affair (Franke 2009: 72). Even the domestic constituency was fed the story that the war in Assam was not a rebellion, but 'just a police operation against a band of terrorists', with the collapse of the uprisings always just around the corner (The Times 1956: in Franke 2009: 72). The conundrum of Indian military policy towards the Nagas is captured by Franke; "The right to self determination, on which the independence of the new post-colonial state rested, made it necessary to deny resistance at all, to play it down or to criminalize it" (2009: 149). The period between 1953 and 1964, (when the ceasefire and peace talks started), is commemorated across Naga society as a time when they experienced the wrath of the Indian Army. The Naga National Council claims 100,000 Nagas were killed in the period, and though the credibility of the numbers can be debated (Lotha 2009: 64), it points towards the existence of a situation of war perpetrated by the State on its own citizenry.

NAGA PEOPLE'S CONVENTION AND STATEHOOD

In view of the protracted nature of the armed engagement, the need was felt, as early as 1957, for removing the Naga Hills from Assam and administering it directly from the Centre. This however, was to be done in a manner which showed that the demand for the separation from Assam came from the Nagas itself, and that it was accepted by the Centre as a token of goodwill (Mullick 1972 in Lotha 2009: 42-43). At around the same time, the Church spoke up against the violence perpetrated by both the Naga Underground and the Indian Army, and led to the founding of the Naga People's Convention in Kohima in August 1957. It was attended by almost 2,000 delegates representing most Naga tribes. Kevichusa, the convener of this first meeting, envisaged the NPC as a bridge or intermediary between the underground and the Government of India, and did not see a direct political role for itself. Sections of the NPC were however cultivated by the Indian Government. The second meeting of the Convention was held behind the back of Kevichusa: the predominant talk there was of separation from Assam, of how peace reigned in the Tuensang Frontier Division as it was Centrally administered, and of the

need for a political solution to Naga aspirations (Franke 2009: 73). The third meeting saw the drafting of the 16 points demand that was subsequently accepted by the Centre (Nibedon 1978: 117-118).

Though the change in the original mandate of the NPC came in for severe criticism, and gave a fresh lease of life to the Underground, some of the resolutions in the Sixteen-points were far reaching; either in their immediate effects, or in their legacy. Immediately, it asked for the release of all Nagas held captive by the Central Government, made a plea for the continuance of the Inner Line, for the exclusive control of its lands and resources, and for Nagas to draft their own Constitution. It provided for the local governance to remain in the hands of the tribal and village councils, for each tribe having its own court (though ultimate authority rested with Supreme Court), for the provision that any act of the Indian Parliament affecting the Nagas should be operative only after ratification by the Naga assembly, and for placing the State within the Ministry of External Affairs. Most importantly, the Nagaland State that was envisaged in the Sixteen-points was to comprise of the contiguous areas of Assam, Manipur, the NEFA and the Naga Hills Tuensang Area. There was also a demand, as in the Hydari Agreement, for the ceding back of reserve forests from Assam to the new state of Nagaland. (Sixteen points agreement 1960 in Datta 1995: 159).

Even as the radical nature of the negotiation did not go down well with the domestic constituency in the Indian mainland, with Members of Parliament asking how citizens of the country could have an agreement with their own government (Franke 2009: 76), Phizo and the NNC remained un-reconciled and continued with their attacks and ambushes (Gokhale 1961: 39). Phizo's grip over the Naga National Movement derived not just from his loyalists and supporters, but from the neutrality of a majority of the masses; who, though ambivalent towards the Federal Government of Nagaland, took tacit pride in the challenge mounted to the Indian State (Means and Means 1966: 296). Even as this majority considered the NNC's insistence on Independence as the primary reason why Nagas could attain full Statehood within the Indian Union, the Underground

assassinated the prime architect of the Sixteen-points Agreement- Dr. Imkolingba Ao, in 1961. Dr. Ao's was the second major casualty within the Naga national movement.

Formed out of the Naga Hills District and Tuensang Division (christened sometime back as the Naga Hills Tuensang Area), the granting of Statehood in December 1963 was preceded by the buildup of a massive military campaign (Franke 2009: 79)[41]. Sanjib Baruah locates the larger geo-political imperative of granting statehood, in the defeat of the war with China in 1963. It was only then, that the Indian State came to see the possibility of its internal and external enemies coming together, and thus nationalizing this frontier space assumed prime importance (2005: 191). Against these priorities then, the question of statehood was separated from questions of financial viability and came to signal the beginning of what Baruah calls the 'cosmetic federal regional order' (37). Typical of such an order was the hierarchical state that granted autonomy at the grass-root, but imposed its machinery from above (Biswas and Suklabaidya 2008: 121). The most characteristic feature of this order, however, was the creation and cultivation of a section of moderates, whom Baruah calls 'the weakest link in the chain' (2005: 22). In the Naga scene, this link was the Naga National Organization, the party that was formed by the members of the Naga People's Convention, and consisted mainly of representatives of the Sema tribe. Against an understanding that the NNO could always be ensured an artificial majority in the State's legislature[42], they were presented with the challenge of convincing the populace that the Sixteen-points Agreement was the best obtainable for the Nagas (Gokhale 1966: 39).

For the moment, this was a tall task, as the original architect of the Naga People's Convention- Kevichusa, declared the Statehood to be a veil, and formed the Democratic Party of Nagaland, to oppose the NNO and to keep up the demand of negotiations with the underground. The DPN lost the 1964 elections, which observers say was marred by rigging and graft. If the NNO didn't manage to win over the masses, it certainly was

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[41] Simultaneously, the Army organized the Village Volunteer Force across Nagaland, Manipur and Assam. The VVF's were later compelled to fight the underground.
[42] Among the tactics to ensure their majority was the device of government nominating members for areas where elections couldn't be held due to disturbed conditions (Anon. 1974a: 375).

effective in stalling the fledgling peace process that was being initiated on the sidelines of the Sixteen-points. Phizo had offered to come to India for peace talks with the Centre in 1960 and 1962, but was ignored (Ao 2002: 53). Phizo had also suggested measures like a plebiscite to be held under Indian Military occupation itself, and a qualified sovereignty, not necessitating United Nations membership, and guarded jointly by India and Burma (Franke 2009: 77), in vain. The Sarvodaya Mission was however working hard behind the scenes and tentative peace talks between a Peace Mission and the underground Federal Government of Nagaland were scheduled to begin in April 1963. The NNO, under the Chief Minister Shilu Ao and Member of Parliament S. C. Jamir, were however against any peace parleys before the inauguration of Statehood, as they feared the talks would stall the statehood process. Also, it was in the interests of both the Indian Government and the NNO, for the talks to begin only after the Statehood was a fiat accompli, so that the FGN would be under greater pressure to come around. Immediately after Statehood in December 1963, however, peace efforts were initiated, led this time by the Nagaland Baptist Church Council (Means and Means 1966: 299).

CEASEFIRE AND PEACE MISSION

The efforts of the Naga Baptist Church Council led to the announcement of a mutual ceasefire between the Indian Army and the Naga Federal Army effective from the 5th of September, 1964. The territorial ambit of the ceasefire included not just the new State of Nagaland, but also the Naga-inhabited hills of Manipur and the North Cachar Hills of Assam. It did not include, however, the Naga inhabited districts of the North East Frontier Agency. While Indian Army agreed to patrol the international border with Burma only up till a depth of 3 miles (as the crow flies), the Naga Federal Army assured on its part that it would cease to import arms from abroad[43]. Moreover, the Army agreed to patrol the streets only till sundown and to stop the decimation of Naga Federal Army camps (Nibedon 1978: 116). Preliminary discussions for the peace talks began in

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[43] The primary source of arms those days was East Pakistan, though some accounts say that most of the Naga arsenal was bought from the Indian Armises foot soldier in Naga areas (Franke 2009: 132).

Chedema from the 14th of September. That the Peace Missions sailing would not be smooth was evident from the mutually opposing positions with which the two parties agreed to hold dialogue. The FGN espoused the two nation theory, pressed for the problem to be submitted to the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion, and agreed to let the NNO be a party to the talks only under the condition that it represented the Indian Government and not the Naga people (Means and Means 1966: 300). On the other side, the Peace Mission was strictly mandated to discuss proposals within the Indian Union. Accordingly, Jayaprakash Narayan, speaking on behalf of the Peace Mission, which comprised, apart from him, Rev. Michael Scott and Bishnuprasad Chaliha, the Chief Minister of Assam; insisted that the problem could be viewed in its true perspective only when seen in the context of a union of self governing states (Misra 1999: 46).

While asking the FGN and NNC to accept the "historical processes that have taken place to give birth to the Union of India and to the great concepts and ideals underlying the Indian Constitution", the peace mission however, went far enough to admit that the movement led by the NNC was "most certainly a struggle for national freedom", with its aim, "the throwing out of… the Government of India, which it regards as established .. by force" (Misra 1999: 46). The recognition of the legitimacy of the Naga national movement and the acceptance of their demands on the moral plane, even as the Mizo rebellion was being crushed, raised hopes all around, leading some observers to note that it had given rise to the wrong political climate (Nibedon 1978: 123). The delicately balanced Mission, with Jayaprakash Narayan seen as representing India's interests, Michael Scott as Naga interests, and Bishnuprasad Chaliha as neutral; enjoyed the support of the masses across all Naga territory. The Democratic Party of Nagaland, then in opposition in the Nagaland State Government (NLSG), claiming satisfaction in the peace process, dissolved itself. The rhetoric of a vested interest in peace did hold some truth for the Naga rural population and for the first time a Lok Sabha delegation visited the Naga Hills[44]. The third round of talks led to the setting up of a Peace Centre to

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[44] The Lok Sabha delegation was greeted by Naga tribal leaders and other people who had assembled from afar. In between them 1500 ISF troops were stationed. Franke's reading of the incident is incisive, 'a truly surrealist picture to imagine: the senators of the empire visit the embattled province in which a volatile truce allows for a mutual glance between them and the warriors of an insurgent province' (2009: 129).

monitor the ceasefire, but with the incidents of breach on the rise soon after, it was to become a 'puppet show' (Nibedon 1978: 132, 191).

Indeed the mutually irreconcilable positions of the two parties led the Indian negotiator, Y.D. Gundevia to observe in 1965 that the talks had led to "a truce without a political settlement" (Gundevia in Means 1971: 1005). The FGN consistently took the hard-line in the talks. They interpreted the proposal that the FGN could on their own volition decide to be a participant in the Union of India, to mean that the could hold a plebiscite (in this they were seconded by the Tatar Hoho). Simultaneously, they never failed to invoke their right to self-determination or remind the Indian side of their spirit of the Bangdung and of the Asian Solidarity Conference (Means and Means 1966: 302). Talks began to take a grim turn as Jayaprakash Narayan tendered in his resignation, citing he had lost the confidence of the Nagas[45]. Meanwhile, Phizo, encouraged by the establishment of correspondence with China[46], was determined not to scale down his demands. He decided instead to sharpen the guerilla line and keep it ready and thus encouraged the talks to continue, instructing the FGN to not be the first ones to pull out of the talks (Nibedon 1978: 135).

It was in these circumstances that the talks shifted to the Prime Ministerial level. Despite scathing criticism from large sections of the bureaucracy, press and government, Indira Gandhi continued to engage the Nagas over six rounds of intensive talks. She however, exploited the latent tribal divides among the FGN to the fullest by isolating the Sema leader Kughato Sukhai (then the Ato Kilonser or the Prime Minister of the FGN) and talking to him alone (Nibedon 1978: 142). In the meanwhile a series of overtures made by Phizo, proposing him to be a party to the talks were rejected. In the talks of October 1966, Sukhai was presented with the option of complete autonomy, not necessarily within

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[45] This was on account of a statement he made in Hindi in Punjab in 1966- that the underground had developed a realistic approach after the defeat of Pakistan in Indo Pak War in 1965 and knew that the Government of India, if it so decided, could put down the rebellion with arms (Nibedon 1978: 136).
[46] Helped by East Pakistan, the Naga National Council had written to the Chinese authorities in 1963 asking for help and established communications soon after (Nibedon 1978: 131).

the constitution, but within the Indian Union (Franke 2009: 111).[47] Well wishers of the Naga people, advised Phizo and the FGN to make most of the offer, considering that Indira Gandhi had two-thirds of the majority in the Parliament for only a few months, after which the country went to the polls (Nibedon 1978: 159). But by this time, the fledgling connection with China had assumed primary importance for Phizo and he felt confident enough to stick to his hard-line. On being informed by Kughato Sukhai that Sukhai was close to reaching an understanding with Gandhi, Phizo shot him down; reminding that Sukhai was nobody to barter away "the land of Nagas which they had defended with their blood" (Nibedon 1978: 160). Soon after, in a reiteration of his stated positions, Phizo released a press statement saying that the Indians were trying to confuse the Naga issue. Nagas were not demanding independence but were defending their territory (The Times 1967 in Nibedon 1978: 181)[48].

Even as the first batch of handpicked Naga guerillas made their way through Burma to Yunan in China in 1967, the latent schism in the political and military wings of the FGN came out in the open. Sukhai's deliberations with Indira Gandhi were marred by a train blast in Diphu, Assam, near Nagaland, which claimed more than a hundred lives. Bishnuprasad Chaliha, expressing regret that the Naga Federal Army was no longer under control of the political wing or the FGN, resigned from the Peace Mission. Shortly before that, Scott too had been removed from the Peace Mission by the Indian Government and expelled from the country on charges of attempting to internationalize the issue. Such a turn of events led to the hardliners in the Indian establishment gaining an upper hand. Sidelined, against immense odds[49], first by Shastri and then by Gandhi, the hawks, led by

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[47]The actual substance of the offer was minimal. It did not even approve of a Sikkim type status and was intended to make only minor changes in the constitution (Means and Means 1966: 307).

[48] This was the political line that would be subsequently maintained by the NSCN in the 1980's and 1990's.

[49] According to Franke, from the very beginning of the Peace talks, the Government was criticized for the way the negotiations were carried out. In their view, the wordings, symbols, gestures and flags had accorded too much legitimacy to the Nagas. Indira Gandhi also could not reveal in the Parliament, that the Nagas demanded full independence in all their meetings with her (2009: 106,107,111). After his expulsion, Scott blamed the Indian establishment of paying far too much attention to anthropologists like J.H. Hutton (Nibedon 1978: 225) and categorically named the Home Ministry under B.S. Chavan and then Gulzari Lal Nanda for contravening the ceasefire in the Manipur Hills, arming the Village Volunteer Forces in the name on maintaining law and order, and using the long ceasefire period to strengthen its positions in Naga territory (Franke 2009: 110). However it was B K Nehru who was against the negotiations altogether and in favor of prolonged fighting with a view to tire out the guerillas into truce (Nossiter 1970 in Lotha: 221)

the Governor of Nagaland, B K Nehru, advised Indira Gandhi to delink herself from the negotiations.

Six rounds of talks with Gandhi were summed up in the two paragraph statement released by Tatar Hoho, expressing regret that India was not recognizing the sovereignty of Nagaland. On her part, Indira Gandhi now directed future talks to be held by the Nagaland State Government. But according to Nibedon; "If New Delhi had closed the door to negotiation, far away in the Naga Hills its manipulators were opening the flood gates of tribalism" (1978: 227). The chinks in the unity of the Federal Government of Nagaland, thus, soon developed into broad divisions, thus playing into the hands of the Central Government and ultimately derailing the peace process. In order to appreciate how this came about, it is necessary to examine the events of that time in some more detail, as undertaken in the next section.

FRACTIONALIZATION OF NAGA NATIONAL COUNCIL
& FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NAGALAND

Though it was the FGN that carried out the underground political and armed struggle, the NNC led by its President Phizo still retained supreme power. This was declared by the FGN several times during the peace talks (Means and Means 1966: 294). But structural changes came about with the duration of the peace process. The guerilla groups, formerly far flung and autonomous, working only under the word of Phizo, could now come over-ground and meet each other frequently. Thus were raised many tactical and policy questions, and the decision making process of the FGN underwent some diffusion (Means 1971: 1008). Even though the armed wing, the Naga Federal Army, had placed its representatives Isak Chisi Swu and Brigadier Thinoselie on the tables at the peace talks, both as participants, and as listening posts; the schism in the political and military factions widened, primarily in two directions. Firstly, the NFA let know its opposition to any solution between Gandhi and Sukhai, by way of a massive train blast at Diphu (Means and Means 1966: 304). The other tangent came about along tribal lines, with

Kaito Sema defecting from the Federal Government of Nagaland, with a majority of his Sema fellowmen in 1967, and forming the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland in 1968. Kaito Sema had been furious for being denied the chance to head the maiden trip to China[50], and resented what he saw as the growing Angami-Chakesang clout in the FGN. Soon, he was joined by his brother Scato Swu and brother-in-law Kughato Sukhai, who had been negotiating with Gandhi till then. With the assassination of Kaito Sema in 1968, the movement had claimed its third internal casualty, but this time around, the fight was between major tribes and the spears were drawn. The Government of India, too, lost no time in cultivating the RGN as a counter force to the FGN, even as the peace process continued. Fearing a pincer movement executed by the RGN in tenterhooks with the Centre, the NNC was consolidating its ranks. In a statement released in 1968 it said that in the event of the Naga people being exterminated, all powers were vested with Phizo to continue the fight from abroad in defense of the remaining survivors (Nibedon 1978: 215). The NNC also worked hard to keep up its democratic credentials by successfully holding the 29th session of the Tatar Hoho and democratically electing a new set of office bearers (*ibid.* 264-265).

CALLING OFF CEASEFIRE AND THE IMPOSITION OF AFSPA

New Delhi, taking advantage of the split within the FGN, began to extend the ceasefire only four weeks at a time. Even the renewed peace parleys extended by the Naga Baptist Church Council and the Naga People's Convention (this time led by the original architect- Kevichusa) was given a cold shoulder (Nibedon 1978: 226). Instead co-ordination with the Burmese military was sought, border posts were built and joint patrols and joint operations were effected (Shimray 2005: 304). The immediate intention was to prevent the return of Nagas trained in China and holding up in Burma into the Naga Hills in India.

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[50] Kaito Sema was among the finest of the NFA guerrillas, famous for his exploits against the Burmese Army and was the first to suggest the China connection. Sema's notoriety aside, Thungaleng Muivah was chosen for the first mission to China as he had studied Marxism thoroughly in his postgradation days; more importantly, being a Tangkhul Naga from Manipur, the move was intended to draw more Tangkhuls into the movement (Nibedon, 1978: 155, 160).

In the meanwhile the Army, which had recovered from the debacle of the China War of 1962, and was no longer engaged with Pakistan as in 1965, or with the Mizo's as in 1966-67, resumed the clearing of jungles in anticipation of renewed operations (Franke 2009: 113)[51]. In 1968, an Indian Army raid (in contravention of the ceasefire) in Jotsoma on the camps of guerillas returned from China, led to the seizure of documents confirming the China connection (Shimray 2005: 313). In 1969, the Army, in one of their biggest hauls, used to RGN to capture another battalion of China returned guerillas. Nibedon notes that this was "perhaps the first time that tribalism was employed operationally to hit guerrillas decisively" (1978: 238). By the early 70's then 'the Peace Agreement had become a scrap of paper' while 'politics was stuck in the bush' (Nibedon 1978: 208,223). A decisive victory in the Bangladesh war-of-liberation restored confidence in a military solution and the Government of India unilaterally ended the ceasefire in September 1972 (Franke 2009: 116).

This was followed immediately by the declaration of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, whereby the NNC and FGN were declared unlawful organizations. The Armed Forces (Assam & Manipur) Special Powers Act was amended as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act to make it applicable to the State of Nagaland (and to the whole of the Northeast). Also in contravention of the Sixteen-points Agreement, Nagaland was shifted from the External to the Home Ministry. In the meanwhile the RGN, even with the backing of the Centre and the Indian Army failed to overtake the Naga Federal Army of the FGN. Therefore, in 1973 they were then disbanded[52] and absorbed as two battalions of the Border Security Force.

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[51]Franke also holds that the Army's engagement with Pakistan and the Mizo's contributed directly for the ceasefire holding on for almost a decade in the Naga Hills (2009: 68).

[52] Nibedon says that the event was staged as a 'surrender' and was declared as a crucial development towards the ending the insurgency.

PRESIDENT'S RULE

The repression that followed the breakdown of the ceasefire was not confined to the Underground alone. It was being pursued by the Centre and by its agent in the form of the Naga National Organization, even in over-ground politics. The torture meted out by the ex-RGN battalion to the rural Nagas (the former knew who the relatives of the Underground NFA and FGN were), was one of the clinching factors for the United Democratic Front (formerly DPN) to win the elections of 1973 (Chandola 1974: 671). The priority of the UDF, as stated in its manifesto, had changed this time around from insisting on engaging the Underground to working for the solidarity of all Naga tribes (Nibedon 1978: 282). This is indicative of the changing nature of the Naga National Movement.

The odds were stacked against the UDF, with the Centre re-organizing constituencies to ensure the votes went to the NNO, with non-Naga residents including the Army being given the vote[53], with villagers being escorted to polling stations, and with troops outnumbering civilian administrators (Franke 2009: 117). In a reflection of the extreme discontent with the Indian Government, the UDF won a decisive victory. Despite that, the Governor initially refused to swear the Government in, and consented only when heavy weights of the UDF threatened with dire consequences (Anon. 1974a: 375). The victory of UDF was taken as a defeat of the strategy and planning of the Indian Army and its Intelligence wing, and therefore efforts were on to topple it. This came through an engineered defection from the ranks of the UDF, with many alleging that the concerned MLA's had been kidnapped by the Army for the intervening days (Deb in Franke 2009: 118). The alternate NNO Ministry however, lasted only eleven days, after which Presidents Rule was clamped on the state in March, 1975. Thus Nagaland had the conditions of the Emergency come upon it three months prior to the rest of the country. It

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[53] The Supreme court judgement that had given the assam rifles the vote was meant to be a postal vote sent to their home constituencies. The Chief Electoral Officer of Nagaland, had instead given the AR, most of whom were stationed there for only a few months, the right to vote in Naga constituencies. With three Army Divisions comprising roughly of 45,000 in a population of around 500,000 this was a decisive measure (Anon. 1973: 1580).

was under such conditions of duress that the Shillong Accord of November 1975 was signed between the Government of India and a section of the Naga National Council.

THE SHILLONG ACCORD

The NNC, its Government- the FGN and the armed wing- the NFA were already beset by substantial schisms when they were pursued relentlessly by the Army since 1972. The resistance, as a consequence had split up and most of them were concentrated within the aegis of the Eastern Naga Revolutionary Council (ENRC) in the Konyak Naga territory that bordered Burma (Franke 2009: 136). With the news of a possible accord in the air, the NNC convened a two day session in May, reaffirming confidence in the "incumbent office bearers" and urging for a "peaceful political solution". On the other hand, Thuingaleng Muivah, who had returned from China in 1970 as the General Secretary of the NNC, convened a National Assembly (before leaving for China again). This was in the September of 1975, and in the absence of Phizo (who was in London) or Imkongmeren (the NNC's patriarch, who was now bedridden in the jungles). At this assembly it was resolved that "every patriotic Naga will have the right to condemn any Accord agreement entered into, that entails the loss of sovereign right of Nagaland" and that "Nagas would fight to the last drop of their blood if India refuses to leave Nagaland" (Shimray 2005: 316).

With the declaration of Emergency in June 1975, AFSPA was clamped on the whole of the North-East and in the Naga areas itself, 30,000 troops moved back. Against this backdrop the Shillong Accord was signed on the 11th November, by a section of the Naga National Council. It had three main clauses: the free and voluntary acceptance of the Constitution of India, the deposition of arms, and formulating of issues for a final settlement. The agreement however embraced only the territory of the Nagaland State and left out those in Manipur, Assam and Arunachal. The UDF, who (even after being ousted forcibly from power in the Nagaland State Legislature) had worked hard towards the Agreement, alongside the section of the NNC; offended the Government of India with

their take on the Accord. The UDF wanted to treat all three clauses together, implying that if the last clause, that of formulating issues for a final settlement was not honored, the Underground shouldn't be bound by the first two clauses (Chaudhuri 1977: 2029). Even as the Emergency was lifted, while the NNO merged itself with the Congress, the UDF leaders were arrested for insisting on the full implementation of the Accord (Anon. 1977: 380).

As for the Underground, Phizo, from London, denied the existence of the Accord altogether. Muivah and Isak Swu, who were camping across the border in Burma, unable to return, owing to the sealing of the border, in accordance with their past resolution in the National Assemble of September 1975, denounced it (Jusho 2004: 46). The Accordists of the NNC, with the desire to have their decision endorsed widely, convened a meeting of the Tatar Hoho in Khonoma in 1978. There too the Accord, was subsumed under all other issues, leading an observer to see it as a "disturbing sign of the still continuing intransigence of a section of Naga people- on the question of sovereignty and independence" (Anon. 1978a: 743). In an admittance of the very limited popular mandate of the Accordists, at the Khonoma meet itself, it was resolved that, "contact should be made with those who are outside for which an early implementation is required" (Anon. 1978b: 859). The only section which was jubilant about the Accord was the Nagaland Peace Council, and it sought to make good the intransigence of the Khonoma meet of the Tatar Hoho, by holding an All Naga People's Conference. Here the Shillong Agreement was passed with only 20 out of 600 delegates approving it (Anon. 1978b: p 859-860).

Such unpopularity aside, that the Agreement shifted the balance of power in the Naga Hills from the Naga National Council over to the Government of India and its local establishments was evident from Prime Minister Morarji Desai's attitude to the Naga issue thereafter. While he met Phizo in London, he refused to talk till Phizo didn't consider himself an Indian citizen (Nibedon 1978). Later, during his tour of Nagaland, he declared that the Hydari, Sixteen-points Agreement and the Shillong Accord notwithstanding, there was no commitment on part of the Government to take steps towards the incorporation of Naga contiguous areas outside Nagaland (Anon. 1978c:

1871).The question of sovereignty, which the Shillong Agreement hoped to settle, and the question of integration, which it did not address immediately and which it refused to acknowledge, would both come to dominate the Naga National Movement thereafter. For, the next few years saw the formation and rise of the Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland.

EMERGENCE OF THE
NATIONALIST SOCIALIST COUNCIL OF NAGALAND

The genesis of the Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland can be traced to the long stays of several batches of the best guerillas of the Naga Federal Army in China in the late 1960's and early 1970's. With the growing schism within the ranks of the NNC along both tribal lines and between the political and military factions, the group that was to form the NSCN later, during the intense military crackdown of AFSPA, was camped along the Burmese border under the aegis of the Eastern Naga Revolutionary Council. Preceded briefly by the All-Nagaland Communist Party (Ram 1979: 1873), the NSCN was initially formed only as a temporary measure to salvage Naga political identity after the Shillong Agreement.

During the Shillong Agreement and through the emergency years, Muivah and his NNC contingent had put up in Burma, on their way back to the Naga Hills from China, but owing to extensive border control jointly by India and Burma, they could not return. Through a coup late in 1979, the Muivah-Swu leadership took control of the NNC camping in Burma. It thereafter denounced the NNC as traitors and proclaimed a rival Naga Federal Government (NFG as against FGN of the NNC) with the Burmese leader of the erstwhile ENRC S.S. Khaplang as the President. It is important to take note that the NSCN was formed in the eastern part of what is claimed as Greater Nagaland, and at least at its genesis, did not have the mandate of the people, especially the people of the western part of Nagaland (Ao 2002: 96).

But the formation of the NSCN marks a qualitative break in the course of the Naga National Movement. For the first time, there was a proclaimed government based on coherent ideological principles. Its manifesto underlined its central beliefs (NSCN Manifesto in Ram 1981: 272). Firstly, the NSCN in contrast to the NNC looked at the Naga issue as not just between India and the Nagas but as between India and Burma. It endorsed the need for an armed struggle, the importance of self reliance and the need for unity. It was against the party system of Indian politics and resented the influx of Indian national and Indian capital in Naga territories. Against this, the NSCN believed in the dictatorship of the people, but drew a thick line between theoretical Marxism and practical communism. And most importantly, asserting difference from their Chinese mentors, the NSCN sought to harmonize Christianity with Socialism[54]. In fact their explanation for a Sovereign and united Naga nation was a theological one (Lotha 2009: 120). And most importantly, the manifesto claimed to "stand for the unquestionable sovereignty of the Naga people over every inch of Nagaland and admit of no other existence whatsoever."

The announcement of the existence of the NSCN was immediately followed by a massive reprisal by the Indian Army. This time around, the active co-operation of the Burmese military was sought in order to nip the new military government in the bud (Shimray 2005: 305). The Burmese Government too had stakes in the counter-insurgency measures, since unlike the NNC, the NSCN had proclaimed to direct its ire against Burma as well. Accordingly, the Army of both governments had the mandate to enter ten miles into the other State's territory in 'hot pursuit' of the NSCN and other rebel groups (Lintner 1992). The biggest joint operation was conducted in 1986. Through the novel strategy of protected guerilla warfare, NSCN continued not only to survive but gradually strengthened its presence in the four states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland and Manipur. By 1987, the NSCN had sufficiently percolated the Naga national movement in

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[54] The impending fear of a communist wipe-out of the Christian character of Naga society and Naga nationalism have been the subject of heated debates since the very beginning of the Chinese connection. While it had been deplored by the Naga Baptist Church Council, it was also used by the NLSG and the NNO to its advantage. After Kaito Sema was not chosen to lead the China Mission, the RGN spread fears of a communist takeover of the NNC amongst the masses and the NNC had to work hard to convince people otherwise (Nibedon 180,198,199).

a decisive way. As for the over-ground political situation, engaging the rebel groups still formed the plank of those contesting elections under the aegis of the Indian State. The difference from earlier years was that, whereas the Nagaland Congress (erstwhile NNO) had shunned any engagement with the underground, it now fought the 1987 elections on the plank of engaging the NSCN alone for talks with the government. In contrast, the United Democratic Front, who had been let down by the Shillong Accord, spoke of engaging not only the NSCN but also the greatly weakened NNC and the faltering FGN (Misra 1987: 2193). Those elections again saw political manipulations at work and the imposition of President's Rule for the second time (Franke 2009: 137).

SPLIT WITHIN THE NSCN

The apparent closeness between the NSCN and the Congress (I), cost the former dear, as rumors of the sections of the NSCN striking a covert deal with the Government of India began to do the rounds. While the Prime Minister of the NSCN S.S. Khaplang alleged the duo of Swu and Muivah of being in cahoots with the Indian Government, the latter till date, allege Khaplang of the same. The relationship between the anti-communist ENRC leader and the China trained leadership of Isak Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah were never very clear (Nibedon 1978: 303). Things came to a head in April 1988, when Khaplang with his followers attempted a bloody coup at the Head Quarters, killing more than 100 of Muivah's cadres, including top military and political personnel. Another 200 died while trying to cross the Chindwin river into safety (Misra 1999: 53). Muivah and Swu managed to escape unhurt. The split came out in the open with the IM faction accusing Khaplang of collaborating with Burmese forces in engineering the April attack. With a help of reportedly one million dollar from Pakistan[55], NSCN (I-M) quickly regained lost ground, and by the 1990's, Nagaland State, came to be ruled by four parallel underground governments apart from the Nagaland State Government. There was the NNC which had

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[55] This connection with Pakistan was re-established after 1971. The link this time was the Inter Services Intelligence of Pakistan.

split into the Accordists and the denouncers (of the Shillong Accord) and the two socialist governments of the NSCN (I-M) and NSCN (K) (Ao 2002: 91).

The split in the ranks then necessitated the collaboration with other insurgent groups in the region. It was in line with the strategy (inspired by Mao) of building up a 'united front' against both India and Burma towards a 'patient and protracted war' (Banerjee 1992: 1526). In this the NSCN (K) took the first step to launch the Indo-Burmese Revolutionary Front in 1992. The United National Liberation Front (UNLF) of Manipur, United Liberation Front of Axom (ULFA), Kachin National Army (KNA), and Kuki National Organization (KNO) were the major partners. Khaplang as the leader of the Front asserted that any talks with the Government of India would only be held at the level of the IBRF. The NSCN (I-M) too followed suit with the Self Defense United Front of the South-East Himalayan Region in 1994 with the National Democratic Front of Bodoland and Assam, the Hynniewtrep Achik Liberation Council of Meghalaya among others, as partners. The I-M faction, hypothesizing that Nagas could be free only if India herself broke up, abetted and trained many other insurgent outfits in the North-East besides claiming contacts with Tamil, Sikh and Kashmiri separatists (Dasgupta 2001: 60).

Though it broadened the range of their operations and made the NSCN the most formidable insurgent/ liberation outfit in the region, the split also made deep inroads into the tribalism of Naga society itself. The NSCN (K), in an understanding with the KNO, serving a quit notice to Tangkhuls[56] in Nagaland State in wake of the Naga-Kuki ethnic cleansing of 1992 is a case in point (Anon. 1994: 68). That the Khaplang faction's action against their own Naga brethren found support across the rural population of Nagaland State (who were harassed by the police after every IM ambush on its convoys) shows the extent of damage done by violence towards inter-tribal relations (Patel 1994: 1331-1332). By the 1990's, the two factions of the NSCN had neatly carved territorial domains of influence with the I-M (reportedly with 6000 fighters) entrenched in the Manipur Hills, New Cachar Hills of Assam and Nagaland, and the NSCN (K) (with approx 3500 men

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[56] Tangkhuls are the Naga tribe from Manipur who form the base of the NSCN IM's fighting ranks.

and women) in Nagaland, especially eastern districts bordering Myanmar and in Myanmar itself (Tarapot 2003: 183).

INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE NAGA ISSUE

The NSCN (I-M) in the meanwhile diversified its strategies to include, apart from military strikes against the Indian Army, propaganda of the Naga issue at the international level. While Phizo had tried and failed in the same attempt some three decades back[57] the end of the Cold War brought back latent issues of peripheral societies onto the world stage and opened up what Maiz has called 'political opportunity structures' for the Naga national movement (Maiz 2003 in Lotha 2009: 317). The Unrepresented Nations People's Organization was one such, and the NSCN (I-M) as the representative of the Naga national movement gained entry to the UNPO in 1993. Its membership was challenged by the Government of India who, while not recognizing the UNPO, cited the violent record of the NSCN (I-M) as a ground for their removal, and even tried sending its own Naga delegation there (Shimray 2005: 289). NSCN (I-M) however, retained its membership and articulated its position in terms of Human-Rights violations by the Armies and Government of both India and Burma. Besides finding an outlet to other International fora, and receiving training to better their diplomatic and other non-violent pursuit of conflict resolution, the UNPO membership raised the stature of the NSCN (I-M) across Naga society and many allegedly left the NSCN (K) and the NNC to join hands with it[58] (Shimray 2005: 288-290).

Aided by the United Nations declaration of 1993 as the International Year of Indigenous People, the other such platform was the Asian Indigenous People's Pact, through which a Naga delegation[59] contributed at the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. The

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[57] 1960's onwards Phizo's energies were directed at securing the help of other Governments; though he won empathizers and powerful lobbies over to his side, international help was largely non-existent.
[58] Notable examples in such shift of alliance are the entire Yimchunger battalion from NSCN K and the oldest, most respected NNC leader Khodao Yanthan.
[59] The delegation comprised of members of the Naga People's Movement for Human Rights- of whom we shall hear more in the next chapter.

WGIP platform at Geneva, as articulated by Isak Swu in his address there, gave the Nagas a voice, who otherwise were "choked up so far without any outlet to the outside world" (Swu 1993 in Lotha 2009: 331-332). Citing difference from other indigenous people[60] who seek redress of their problems within the nation-state they are in, the NPMHR described the Nagas as 'an indigenous people under forced occupation and seeking recognition of their right of place as a sovereign State' (Lotha 2009: 335). In pursuit of this stated project the NSCN (I-M) also sought, and secured recognition from many influential non-governmental organizations, Church bodies and global civil society organizations from across the world[61].

The international turn in the Naga national movement was geared not only towards seeking ultimately, 'an identity in the global world of nation states', but also helped to put forth the latent question of Naga oneness and Naga territorial integration back to the centre stage. The lead towards this end was taken in the early 1990's by the Naga Students Forum, when they spoke of a Naga-lim[62]. They held that "Even more than in the past, there are definite signs blossoming everywhere signaling that a practical solidarity is workable in the midst of diversified Naga tribes. Nagas belong to one single race with a common interest and goal. This is a workable, practical basis for a unified Naga Lim." (NSF 1995 in Lotha 2009: 192). The nomenclature of 'Nagaland' used so far, with different meanings by different players in the National movement was replaced by Nagalim (the IM faction introduced the change in its nomenclature as well), and came to stand for "the right to live together as a people through unification of all Naga inhabited areas" (Naga Week declaration, 1995 in Lotha 2009: 228). The celebration of Naga week

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[60] The definition of Indigenous people's most widely used is as follows: "Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societieis that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of societies prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present, non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of continued existence as people, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems" (Cobo 1986 in Vashum 2000: 49).

[61] The most notable among such groups are the United Kingdom Parliamentarians for National Self Determination, Flemish support group KWIA, NSCN Justice and Peace centre, International Human Rights Association of American Minorities, World Baptist Alliance, Asian Cultural Forum on Development, Naga Vigil Group, Minority Right Group, International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), Society for Threatened Peoples, International Alliance for Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests (IAITTF) and UN forums like UNHCR, IWGIA, UNPFII etc (Shimray 2005: 291)

[62] 'Lim' is the Ao naga word for 'land'.

in 1995 saw the beginning of large scale civil society entry into the Naga national movement; it was no longer the exclusive domain of armed nationalists (Lotha 2009: 330).

CEASEFIRE WITH NSCN (I-M)

Simultaneous to this paradigmatic shift in the Naga theatre, the Government of India's policy towards Naga insurgency too was undergoing a shift of stance. The newly articulated Look East policy necessitated a re-engagement of India's traditional security concerns in the Northeast. It now saw the future of the Northeast in "political integration with India and economic integration with Southeast Asia" (Ramesh 2005: 550). Marcus Franke sees the imperative of opening up transports corridors with Southeast Asia as the most important reason for the Government of India wanting to re-approach the Naga insurgency (2009: 125). Gautam Navlakha, on the other hand, locates it more immediately in the bid to increase economic co-operation with Myanmar vis-à-vis China (2003: 684).

Regionally too, the rapprochement with China, friendly governments in Bangladesh and greater collaboration with Myanmar, altered the security assessment of the Naga issue. A section of the Army, suffering from war weariness and constant casualties after almost half a century of constant engagement, wanted some breathing space (Anon. 1997a: 1939-1940). These factors, aided by the ability of both the NSCN , through their tie-ups with other insurgent groups, to spread disorder across the whole of the northeast (Lacina 2009: 1014), led the Government of India to initiate talks with the NSCN (I-M) for a ceasefire. The first overtures were made by Member of Parliament Rajesh Pilot acting on behalf of the Congress Government of I.K. Gujral. But the decisive shift in the discourse on part of the Government of India came with the accession of George Fernandes as the Minister of Defense in the National Democratic Alliance Government (Franke 2009: 122). Fernandes, was known for being openly wary of China's designs in the sub-continent, and had for long been an active sympathizer of Tibetan and Burmese liberation movements. After a series of unofficial meetings between the NSCN (I-M) collective

leadership and Indian emissaries in Paris, New York, Bangkok and Geneva, a cease-fire was announced in 1997, for an initial period of three months. The accompanying peace talks were predicated on the following conditions; that they be held at the Prime Ministerial level, in a third country, without conditions from both sides, with the objective of finding a peaceful honorable solution, and embracing all Naga areas (from Ao 2002: 192).

But with the initial territorial reach of the ceasefire confined only to the State of Nagaland, (where the writ of the Khaplang faction ran stronger), the NSCN (K) denounced the move as farcical, and designed towards keeping Nagas divided (Franke 2009: 140). In a vindication of NSCN (K)'s apprehensions of losing base, the ULFA (supported by the Khaplang faction) too caved in about the same time as the ceasefire came about. With a ceasefire and peace talks, at long last in place, large scale doubts were raised on the desirability of conducting the 1998 Nagaland State Legislature elections till outstanding Naga issues were settled. With the slogan, "Solutions, not elections", the NSCN (I-M) urged its followers, and coerced others to boycott the elections. The mistake would have to be undone in the next term, as the boycott simply resulted in the Nagaland Congress Party seizing power. The NSCN (K) came around to a ceasefire with the Centre in 2001 (much to the chagrin of the IM faction) and the NNC too followed suit. But the arbitrary way in which the NSCN (K) ceasefire was pulled off; before the laying down of ground rules, and without the mention of NSCN (K)'s previous rhetoric negotiating only through the IBRF, and its own pre-conditions, led many to believe that it had already been co-opted by the Government of India (Ao 2002).

The ceasefire with all major players in the Naga theatre helped to free up arsenal and angst aimed thus far primarily at the Indian State, and turn it inwards, amongst the insurgent factions themselves. By thus allowing for the consolidation of violence by the local autocrats so emerged, observers saw it as a master-move on part of the Centre to

buy temporary stability[63] in Naga areas (Lacina 2009: 1015). The efficacy of this strategy was periodically put to question in light of the spiraling instances of fractional violence, with the first four years of the cease-fire itself recording over 300 deaths. But the reduction of both groups' manpower and support to rest of the insurgent groups in the region paid real dividends (Anon. 2001b: 4596).

BREAKTHROUGH, TROUBLE and DEMOCRATIZATION

Two consequential breakthroughs came by in the following years; the declaration and the revocation of the ceasefire without territorial limits, and the Government of India's recognition of the uniqueness of the Naga history and Naga national movement. The latter formed the bedrock for future deliberations and resulted immediately in the NSCN (I-M) leaders softening their stance on the demand for sovereignty; indeed, they also accepted Indian passports and traveling to Delhi after a gap of 36 years. Consequently, the periodic ban of the NSCN (I-M) was permanently lifted in 2002. But the former development, that of ceasefire without territorial limits, opened up a Pandora's box in adjoining Manipur and in the rest of the region. The declaration of the ceasefire without territorial limits came about after relative ebb in the talks; preceding that Muivah was randomly arrested in Thailand for charges of holding a fake passport while Isak Swu threatened to pull out of the talks if the ceasefire's territorial limits were not extended. It was done by the Government of India on the understanding that it should not be interpreted as a step towards the recognition of their claim to Nagalim, or Greater Nagaland (Ao 2002: 70)[64]. That disclaimer however, did nothing to assuage the fears of the Meitei residents of Manipur, who effected a frenzied and violent protest against the declaration (made on the 18th of June 2001), forcing it to be revoked on the 24th of July. The next chapter deals with the Manipuri question in greater detail. For the Nagas however, the move resulted in the civil society, presided over by the traditional power

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[63] Baruah (2005) explains the survival of insurgencies, in not just the cause of national liberation, but also as a provider of security. He applies the realist logic of 'anarchy' and 'security dilemma' to insurgencies in the Northeast (16-17).

[64] Muivah has always maintained that the unity of Naga territories is not a claim, but a fact, that had to be recognized by all parties concerned (See Muivah interview in BBC Hardtalk 2005).

centre of the Naga Hoho, to gather representation from all Naga areas in the four states and reiterate the demand of unification (Ao 2009: 231). Muivah, publicly stated that 'a ceasefire is a ceasefire and at present has nothing to do with the demand for Nagalim', and in his 2003 statement of the 'Journey of Peace' even held out the possibility of a dialogue with the Meitei's in Manipur and other people with stakes in the creation of Nagalim.[65]. But his consistent line that without the unification of Naga territories, no political settlement was possible (Shimray 2007: 107), has kept alive fear and resentment in the region. The talks in the middle years of 2000 focused on the less contentious but substantial issues like dual citizenship, flags, and control over defense, trade and currency. But Bharat Bhushan notes the un-doing of the gains made in the peace process, by the UPA government, in its staunch insistence of a settlement purely within the ambit of the Indian Constitution (Bhushan 2005).

The over-ground political scene in the meanwhile got more vibrant with the same opposition parties, who in 1998 had insisted on "Solution not election", in 2003 spoke of "Elections for Solutions". The NSCN (I-M) desisted from interfering in the elections this time around and the NSCN (K) remained tight lipped about its support. Through a combined weight of veterans like Vizol and Neiphu Rio, the Democratic Alliance of Nagaland, defeated the Congress government (Dev 2003: 1639). With such wide spread participation in the Indian democratic process, many alleged that the prolonged negotiations with the NSCN (I-M) were designed only to wear down the separatists and bring them around to a fiat accompli (Navlakha 2003: 684). Such apprehensions were however brought to naught with reports of the NSCN (I-M) actively cultivating contacts with China and the UK pressure group Parliamentarians for National Self Determination. In the meanwhile the 2007 UN declaration of rights of indigenous people[66] was welcomed by the NSCN (I-M) as a "vindication of the last 61 years of the Naga case" and hailed as a "standard for the Indo-Naga political settlement" (Morung Express Sept 15, 2007). This development, followed in the same year by both the NSCN (I-M) and the

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[65] The year 2003 was also a first in the history of the Indo-Naga peace talks, in as much as the NSCN IM held broad based consultations, with not just the ruling coalition, but also the opposition parties.
[66] Article 3 of the UNDRIP says, "Indigenous peoples have the right to self determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their common, social and cultural development" (UNDRIP 2007 in Lotha 2009: 318).

Government of India agreeing to an indefinite extension of the ceasefire subject to progress in talks finally brought about a stable ground in the chequered history of the armed movement.

SUMMARY

In tracing its long evolution, the chapter highlights a few characteristics of the Naga national movement. Though there always existed a moderate section in the Naga National Council, in the initial days they were sidelined by force. The Sixteen-points Agreement and the subsequent Statehood helped launch two more actors on the scene. One was the Naga National Organization, which had been co-opted by the Government of India and would function as its extension in the State thereafter. The second was the democratic opposition, appearing first as the United Democratic Front and then as the Democratic Party of Nagaland, and later as the Democratic Alliance of Nagaland and the Nagaland People's Front. This section has concerned itself with engaging the underground in a political solution with the Centre and in seeking reconciliation among the Naga tribes.

The 1960's and 1970's saw the Naga National Council too develop serious splits. Its government, the FGN was loosing hold of the military wing or the NFA. Later, one group of the NNC signed the Shillong Accord. They were consequently sidelined in the Naga political scene and continue to exist only through Indian patronage. The other group formed the NSCN. NSCN marked a qualitative break in the movement. It was authoritarian and militant. But at the same time it was vocal and consistent in its demands for territorial sovereignty. It was largely due to the NSCN that the Naga national movement kept afloat its journey on the South Asian stage.

The second half of the twentieth century also saw the spread of a culture of violence and the development of a co-constitutive relationship between 'mainstream' politics and the 'insurgencies', a condition that Sanjib Baruah calls 'durable disorder' (2005: 13). This, as well as the fractionalization of the various actors was a direct result of the divide and rule

policies of the Indian Government. The 1997 ceasefire, followed by the larger round of ceasefires with militant groups across the Northeast, was also looked upon as the manifestation of such a policy. But the internationalization of the Naga issue and the accompanying diffusion of politics to the realm of civil society have contributed to Nagas rediscovering their voice, drowned so far amidst violence and patronage politics. In recent times then, the theme of the Naga movement revolves less around separation from India and more around the unification of Naga territories. This is the concern of the next chapter.

Chapter Five

TERRITORIAL ASPECTS OF
THE NAGA NATIONAL MOVEMENT

This chapter looks at the territoriality of the Naga national movement from various vantage points. As the history of the Naga movement, as seen so far, has primarily been the history of the armed resistance to the Indian State, first we look at the territoriality of the fighting, both against the State of India, and also between the Nagas and other ethnic groups, and the Nagas themselves. Next, since the territorial claims are made on the lands currently under the sovereignty of Burma and under the control of Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, the chapter takes a brief look at the history of the Naga national movement in each of these States. It is found that the Naga claim for the preservation of its territorial integrity, or territorial unification has varying degrees of strength, legitimacy and motivation in these different parts. The chapter traces out the legalities, the use of violence and intimidation, and the political compulsions of various actors that keep up the claim for territorial unification uniquely in each of these areas. An appreciation of these differences contributes to a case against the implementation of a blanket measure of federal devolution for the Naga national movement and its allied issues. Finally, we take stock of the outstanding features of the movement that animate it at present.

Territoriality of the Armed Resistance

Naga armed resistance kick-started by 1956. Even before the Army took over from the Assam Police the Federal Government of Nagaland was lodged not only deep in the Naga Hills district but also in parts of the Manipur Hills (Franke 2009: 71). As the Army was initially concentrated exclusively in the Naga Hills, it was easy for the FGN to take over the National Highway 39 and large parts of Mao Naga area in Manipur (Nibedon 1978: 75).The rapid military build-up by the Indian Army, engendered a parallel spread and

escalation of the resistance; by 1958 pockets of the United Mikir, Cachar and Sibsagar in Assam, along with the Ukhrul district of Manipur had to be brought under the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Ordinance. The border with Burma too, was neither demarcated, nor manned, and fighters in the Naga Hills would regularly escape to Burmese Naga territory (Nibedon 1978: 327). Till 1961, the approach of the Burmese Government was to leave the NNC alone as long as the latter didn't disturb Burmese law and order with their traffic (Shimray 2005: 303).The ceasefire of 1964 was preceded by the Naga Federal Army relocating their operational camps to the Somra Naga territory in Burma (Nibedon 1978: 103) and numerous 'farewell fights' in the Manipur Hills and the Naga Hills Districts border with the rest of Assam (112).

Most significantly, the ceasefire of 1964 ran through not only the Naga Hills district, but also through 3 sub-divisions of Manipur and the North Cachar Hills. It did not however, run through the Naga inhabited districts of NEFA, as neither the national movement nor the insurgency had taken hold among the Nagas, residing there, by then (Nibedon 1978: 116). But the ceasefire of 1964 was more of a paper formality, and outside the Naga Hills District (which was under the constant vigilance of the ceasefire monitoring cell of the Peace Mission), both the Indian Army and the NFA occasionally indulged in fierce fighting and ambush (Franke 2009: 112). While in Burma, the 1960's saw the Eastern Naga Revolutionary Council give the Burmese military a tough time, within Indian, accounts indicate that the Assam borders were more volatile than the Manipur Hills (Nibedon 1978: 135).

However the situation changed during the last part of the 1960's. The Indian Army, in contravention of the ceasefire, had created and armed what it called the Village Volunteer Force in Manipur, to fight the NFA. Even the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland under Kaito Sema had set base in Sathaka, close to the Mao Naga area in Manipur. Thus the Indian Army and its collaborator the RGN, the Village Volunteer forces (who fought sometimes on behalf of the RGN), the NFA fighters fleeing Nagaland as well as those fighters going to or returning from Burma, all crossed tracks in Mao Naga country in Manipur. It was thus the most disturbed area during the ceasefire years (Nibedon 1978:

259). With the NFA actively recruiting among the Tangkhul Nagas and taking extreme measures to enable the Tatars of the tribes in Manipur to meet up with the rest of the Tribal chiefs at the Tatar Hoho summits, the Manipur Naga hills were also brought into the fold of the armed resistance (Nibedon 1978: 138).

Also it was in Manipur Naga country that the resistance was more belligerent; even as the NFA in Nagaland paid heed to the Naga Women's Association to refrain from violence on the eve of Indira Gandhi's visit to Kohima, in Manipur, the Prime Ministerial visit was marked by the ambush of the convoy of Murkot Rammunny, then the Security Commander of the Border Security Forces (Nibedon 1978: 250-251). The Naga Hills of Manipur also suffered as it formed the NFA's corridor to Burmese Naga tracts. The NFA in Manipur and the ENRC on the Burmese side both continued the practice of pulling out of the pillars and border posts hours after they had been erected by the Indian and Burmese joint border patrols. Unhindered barter trade between Nagas on both sides of the border was a regular feature (Nibedon 1978: 194-195). Thus by the end of the 1960's, Mokukchung, Tuensang, and large parts of Sema areas (Zhuneboto) were virtually guerilla free. Within the State of Nagaland, most fighting took place in Angami and Chakesang country. In Manipur the Tangkhul and Mao areas saw most violence (Nibedon 1978: 240).

By 1969 the National movement diversified and diverted in at least 3 directions; the NNC/FGN/NFA and its over-ground sympathizers- DPN/UDF, the NNO created out of the co-opted section of the NPC, and the RGN which split from the NFA but was soon co-opted by the Government of India. All these factions were however, unanimously behind the core issue of the integration of all Naga areas (Nibedon 1978: 252). It was the Nagaland State Legislature that had passed three resolutions in this regard[67]. In 1967 and 1969, they had also made formal representations to the Government of India, demanding the Naga Hills of Manipur while the latter was still an Union Territory (Jusho 2004: 29). The Naga Integration Committee of Nagas in Manipur, which operated from Kohima, in 1970 declared the 20th of November as 'Naga Integration Day' (Anon. 1970a: 631). After

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[67] The resolutions were passed in December 1964, August 1970 and in September 1994.

the ceasefire was called off in 1972, the Army had a free hand to pursue the guerillas, armed as it was with the Armed Forces Special Powers Act. The heavy fighting between 1972 and 1975 resulted at last in the splitting up of the FGN/NFA resistance. While a small section of the NNC came around to accept the provisions of the Shillong Accord signed (under duress) later that year, the ones who were opposed to it were concentrated in Burma and in the Konyak terrain bordering it, under the aegis of the ENRC (Nibedon 1978: 136).

It was from among these fighters, who were holding out, that the NSCN would be formed. Among the strategies employed by the Indian State to nip the NSCN in the bud, was the abetment of a movement for the separation of the Mon and Tuensang areas of the Nagaland State into a Union Territory (Anon. 1980: 620), known till date as the Eastern Nagaland movement. But the NSCN had managed to percolate the Indian side of the border and was making rapid inroads in Manipur, into the rest of Nagaland, and for the first time, in the Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh (Franke 2009: 136).

The 1980's saw the AFSPA being applied to the whole of Manipur. Even as the Imphal valley of Manipur was up in arms against the Indian State, demanding the restoration of the sovereign status of the ancient Kingdom, the surrounding Manipur hills witnessed the consolidation of the NSCN. Indeed, in the 1980's most of the fighting for Naga liberation took place not in the State of Nagaland, but in the Naga Hills of Manipur. Sometimes, as in the case of Operation Bluebird (1987), even the State government was not taken into consideration by the Indian Army (Lotha 2009: 232). The large scale human-rights violations that had been the feature of the Army presence in the Naga Hills District and its adjoining areas in Assam between 1956 and 1964, now became typical not so much of Nagaland State as that of the Naga Hills of Manipur. The Tangkhul and Mao Nagas, among others, were now fully in the fold of the armed resistance.

As for the status of the Burmese Nagas, with the split of the NSCN in 1988, the Khaplang faction concentrated on consolidating itself in the State of Nagaland. The merger of the Eastern Naga Revolutionary Council with the NSCN led the former to lose its character,

and Burmese question in the Naga national movement gradually slipped into the background. In 1992 however, a massive military crackdown by Burmese authorities[68] resulted in the exodus on nearly 100,000 Burmese Nagas into Nagaland and Manipur[69] (Banerjee 1992: 1525).

In the 1990's both factions of the NSCN were involved in successful joint operations with other insurgent outfits in the region. Though both the factions proclaim their commitment to the integration of all Naga inhabited areas, their operational imperatives often discount the cause. A case in point was NSCN (I-M) and Kuki National Organization's fall out over the control of the border town of Moreh which quickly escalated into a three year bout of ethnic cleansing of Kukis and Nagas in the Manipur Hills. The NSCN (K), in this wake, committed as it was to the cause of the IBRF (of which the KNO is a part) served quit notices to the Tangkhul Naga population in the State of Nagaland. With such divisions in place, by the time the ceasefire was signed between the NSCN (I-M) and the Indian State in 1997, the IM faction with an estimated 6000 active fighters held sway over Tamenglong, Senapati and Ukhrul districts of Manipur, over Tirap and Changlang in Arunachal Pradesh, New Cachar Hills of Assam and Mokokchung, Zhuneboto, Wokha districts of Nagaland. The NSCN (K), with an estimated cadre strength of 3500, held out in Myanmar and (with active patronage of the Congress government) in the Eastern Districts of Nagaland (Franke 2009: 138).

This brief account of the territoriality of the armed resistance shows that the guerilla's claim towards a Greater Nagaland or Nagalim is not a recent development, but an intrinsic part of their agenda, not just on paper, but also operationally. The Naga national movement, that emerged under the NNC initially claimed to speak for all Naga areas, these areas in turn, through taking to guerrilla warfare became a part of the national movement. We now turn to the larger aspects of the Naga national movement in each of the States of Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, and briefly, in Burma.

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[68] The Burmese Junta was clearing up the Sagaing division to make for the entry of multinational oil and timber companies.

[69] Lintner (1992) on the other hand quotes a figure of 1500 displaced.

THE NAGA NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN BURMA

The Naga inhabited areas of Burma fall within the Chin State and the Sagaing Division. It borders the Naga areas in the Lohit, Tirap and Changlang districts in Arunachal Pradesh, the Mon, Tuensang and Phek districts of the state of Nagaland, and the districts of Ukhrul and Chandel in Manipur (Shimray 2007: 16). Of the 68 tribes listed by the NSCN (I-M), 25 are in present day Myanmar while the international border cuts across the homeland of 11 Naga tribes (Lotha 2009: 146). As of 2010, the Naga population in Burma was around 500,000 (NYO-Burma 2010: 20). The American Baptist mission of spreading their work in the Burmese Naga areas remained unfulfilled when they were forced to abruptly leave, in wake of the 2nd World War. Subsequently it was a pastor from Ukhrul in Manipur who, in 1936, initiated them into Christianity. Along with their traditional religious practices, Christianity today forms the dominant religion of Burmese Nagas. The Naga Baptist Convention of Myanmar was however founded as late as 1993 (NYO-Burma 2010: 47).

After a forcible takeover from the Free or Un-administered Naga areas in 1947, the Burmese Government in 1963 undertook to divide the contiguous Naga territory between Kachin State and Sagaing Division. A further carving up followed, with the "Naga Self Administrative Area"; it took away the most important townships and mineral rich areas of Naga territory (9). The Eastern Naga Revolutionary Council (ENRC) was formed by E.V. Jopoh in 1965 (21), under the tutelage of the NNC. The NNC, from the beginning of their movement, and later as the FGN and the Naga Federal Army were harbored and helped by the Burmese Nagas. Their identity in these parts was that of being 'Phizo's Nagas' (Nibedon 1978: 161). A limited consensus was reached between India and Burma on the question of the Naga menace and joint border patrols were initiated in 1968. The formal boundary between the two States was settled only in 1972.

When the Shillong Accord was signed under duress with a section of the Naga National Council in 1975, the ENRC, which had itself 'liberated' large pockets of the Naga Hills in Burma, was crucial for the shelter and survival of the faction of the NNC which

resisted the Accord. In 1979 it merged with the NNC and, re-emerged in 1980 as the NSCN. It was only in the 1980's that Burma had agreed to India's insistence on Joint Operations and the fledgling NSCN had to face the wrath of both armies in its initial days of survival (Lintner 1992). However it was the formation of NSCN (K) in 1988, which saw the Burmese military increase its presence in the Naga Hills by ten fold and unilaterally hound, not only the guerillas of Khaplang, but also entire Christian Naga population (NYO-Burma 2010: 53).

The year 1988 also saw the brief participation of the Naga population in the democratic process that was allowed by the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). The Naga Hills Regional Progressive Party, formed out of the Youth Association, was the first and only political platform of the Nagas in Burma, its objective being not national self-determination, but the safeguarding the social, cultural, economic and human rights of the Naga population in Burma. The military government thereafter refused not only to dishonor the results of the elections (which had resulted in a landslide victory for the democratic forces), but also forced the NHRPP to close down (24). Education, opportunities and democratic mobilization remains low and outlet to the outside world is almost non-existent. The Naga Hills were further carved up, in 2010, under the semblance of a Naga Self Administered Zone. Therefore, even with the NSCN (K) operating in Burma, the outstanding challenges for Nagas has been to struggle for group and human-rights, to resist the economic exploitation of their land and its resources and to prevent the further division of their territory.

THE NAGA NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN MANIPUR

Most accounts of Nagas in Manipur go back to the Treaty of Yandabo signed between the British and the Bumese Kingdom in 1826. Maharaja Gambhir Singh with help from the British, was instrumental in ceding Manipur back from Burmese occupation. It was the imperative of opening up Manipur to the rest of Assam and thus to the Indian subcontinent that led to the first attempts at pacifying the Naga tribes. For it was through

the Nagas territory that the path to Manipur had to be carved out. As a cheap and sound option, the initial task of pacifying the Nagas was given to Manipur. With raids as savage as that of the Nagas themselves, Manipur managed to buy peace with some Naga tribes (Alechimba 1975: 43-44). The pacification did not however last long, and in 1834, the boundaries between a Manipur and the adjoining Naga Hills District were fixed at the junction of the Mao and Angami Naga areas (Tarapot 2003: 89). Since then, the territorial expanse of Manipur, at 22, 327 square kilometers, has been more or less constant. With a part of the Naga territory always in a relation of some kind with Manipur[70], there were regular raids and occasional revolts and wars, but never any ethnic cleansing on a mass scale. The Meitei King was a third-party actor and arbitrator between the warring Naga and Kuki tribes, and often sent his forces to repudiate the attack on smaller villages by larger ones (Tarapot 2003: 202). Relations underwent a drastic change when the Kingdom came under British paramountcy in 1891. The hill people, Nagas, Kukis, Chins, Zomi's, Paite's and Hmars included, were put to work by the Meitei's in order to pay the agreed fine towards British coffers (Shimray 2007: 59)[71]. Thereafter, the administration of the Hills was separated from that of the valley and brought under the de facto control of the Governor of Assam (Tarapot 2003: 141). Tarapot maintains that it was only after 1891, that the appellate 'Naga' was brought into use by the British, and the tribes consequently started identifying themselves with it (204). Though Christianity arrived in these Naga Hills with Rev William Pettigrew in 1897, most conversion happened between 1949 (when the Kingdom acceded to the Indian Union) and the 1960's (when the Government of India forced foreign missionaries to leave from the Naga Hills and Manipur) (Paratt 2005: 61-71). Also, in the 1930's and 1940's, a large section of Nagas came under the influence of social reformer and self proclaimed God-man Jadonang and his disciple Rani Gaidinlu. These tribes (Zeliang, Rogmei and Kabui are the main ones) later assimilated to form the Zeliangrong and are one of the largest tribes in the region.

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[70] Nagas maintain that this relation was never one of being subservient to the Meitei Rulers by way of any formal treaty.

[71] The following was the observation of a British officer in duty in Manipur at the turn of the century: "Hill people were governed avowedly for the benefit of the Manipuris only; they had to make journeys to Silchar bringing goods for their ruler. Although the manipuri's were almost entirely illiterate, they treated all hillmen as inferior creatures, good only to carry loads, pay revenue and do menial work. They used to Kukis, who to a great extent were armed, to overawe the other tribes and they managed the Kukis by cajolery and deceit." (Shakespeare 1907 in Shimray 2007: 59).

As non-Christians with the separate identity of the Herka religion (many also regard themselves as Hindu) the Zeliangrong are not yet enthusiastic supporters of the Naga Integration Movement (Paratt 2005: 222).

During the Second World War, Imphal and the hills surrounding it saw heavy fighting (Tarapot 2003: 168). At the time of the British exit from the subcontinent, Manipur, like all other princely states, was clamoring for the right to an independent sovereign existence. The two major movements towards this end were the Nikhil Manipuri Maha Sabha (NMMS) and Praja Sangh, the communist movement under Hijam Irabot Singh. The latter had some representation from the hill tribes and had made efforts to co-ordinate their activities with the NNC in the neighboring Naga Hills District. The Manipur State Congress, (which at first had no relation to the Indian National Congress), was the only political formation in favor of a merger with India and didn't fully support the Manipur State Constitution Act of 1947. It was under this act, that the Kingdom conducted the first elections based on universal franchise in the sub-continent (Tarapot 2003: 170-173). The only outfit unenthusiastic about the elections was the Naga National League. Formed in 1946, it was against the plans for closer governance between the Hills and the Valley. Abandoning the preparation of the electoral rolls or the payment of house-tax, it sought to secure the secession of the all Hill tribes (not just Naga) from Manipur. It saw in this the only solution to the centuries of injustices and indignities suffered at the hands of the valley administration. The Maharaja of Manipur had to seek help from Assam police to quell the agitating Nagas (Shimray 2007: 82-87).

There is considerable controversy over whether the Hydari Agreement, negotiated in 1947 between the NNC and the Governor of Assam acting on behalf of the Government of India at all referred to the Naga areas of Manipur. It did have a provision "to bring under a unified administrative unit as far as possible all Nagas", and that, "All the areas so included would be in the scope of the proposed agreement". But Yunuo holds that the Governor could not have given his word on behalf of Naga areas of Manipur, as the Kingdom did not accede to India till 1949 (Yunuo: 1982: 177-185). John Paratt holds that even the Sixteen-points Agreement of 1960 precluded any guarantee to deliver the Naga

areas of Manipur. While the Government of India had clearly stated that the provisions for the alterations of state borders were provided for in the Constitution (Article 3 & 4), Manipur was not to become a full fledged state till 1972. Rather Paratt holds that the claim to Manipur first emerges in the 1962 Constitution (Yezhabo) of the FGN, which held that "the territory of Nagaland shall comprise all the territories inhabited by indigenous Naga tribes and such other territories the Tatar Hoho may, by law, admit on such terms and conditions as it deems fit" (Paratt 2005: 220-221).

Even as the writ of the FGN successfully ran in the Hills of Manipur (based as it was on the traditional tribal councils) the NFA and security forces clashed here before, during and after the ceasefire of 1964. On its part, the Central administration provided for nominal autonomy for the Hill areas through Territorial Councils since 1957 (Jusho 2004: 18). Though the 6th schedule is not operative in the Manipur Hills, the provision of autonomous Hills District Councils has been a simmering issue ever since it was proposed in 1971. Nagas and other tribes consider it to be a fig-leaf to maintain the valley's control over the hills by way of quasi dictatorial powers of the Governor (Franke 2009: 115). Similarly, even the Manipur Land Revenue and Land Reforms Act has been resisted by the Tribal Chief's Union (Jusho 2004: 80). On the other hand the opinion of the Meitei populace of the valley is that those very Hill activists who allege maltreatment and lack of development in the Hills, take part unhindered in the non-communal political life of the State and go on to become Cabinet Ministers and Chief Ministers (Tarapot 2003: 206). Indeed this is borne out by the experience of the Naga Integration Council.

The NIC was floated in 1968 by a Tangkhul Naga politician Rishang Keishing, after he was abandoned by the Congress for anti-party activities. The first moves by the NIC were to welcome the inclusion of the Manipur Hills within the purview of the 1964 ceasefire, and submit a memorandum to the Central Government for the Integration of the Manipur Hills with the Nagaland State (Shimray 2007: 91). Working out of Kohima, the NIC appointed Nagas of repute like Rano Shaiza, Rani Gaidinliu and Rev. M. Savino to spread the word of Naga integration, and observed Naga Integration Day on the 20th of November, 1970. Even as the imperatives of representing all shades of Naga opinion led

the NIC to morph into the United Naga People's Integration Council and they backed the United Legislature Party of Manipur, they were denounced by the Naga underground movement. The dominant theme of the Naga national movement in those days, Naga independence, and the broad-based UNIC with its multiple agendas was looked down as indulging in Indian Constitution based politics. Naga civil society was not as vocal then, and many Nagas, fearing for their lives and prospects, as much from the Indian establishment as from the Naga underground, did not sustain the movement (99).

Instead, with Manipur being accorded statehood, the outfit took to mainstream state politics and came to play a decisive role in it over the years[72]. Shimray explains, "Electoral politics brought a new political paradigm vis-à-vis weakening of the Naga Integration Movement. In other words, NIC's active participation in Manipuri electoral politics eventually sidetracked its aims and objectives" (Shimray 2007: 96). Also, unlike the NNC, the UNIC in Manipur failed to tap into the traditional power structures of village councils and tribal councils, contributing further to the disintegration of the movement (98). In August1972, with Rishang Keishing again at the helm of affairs, the UNIC merged with the Congress (I). Though the merger agreement clearly provided that the "Congress des not oppose the Naga Integration Movement and does not consider Naga Integration Movement as anti-party, anti-state and unconstitutional activity" (97), the political theatre at that time dictated that the demand for integration was not raised and instead the UNIC dedicated itself to Manipur state-based politics.

The Naga underground's condemnation of the UNIC is also to be looked at from the perspective of the latter serving as an alternate option for all those Nagas who did not support the armed insurgency. Indeed the Naga Hills of Manipur had seen some of the fiercest fighting of Naga liberation and not only were they reeling under the Armed Forces (Assam & Manipur) Special Powers Ordinance since 1958, by 1980, the whole of Manipur state was under AFSPA. But if the UNIC brought Nagas into mainstream politics, the continual draconian experience of the AFSPA played a crucial role in driving

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[72] Even though Ministries with fair representation of Nagas provided some relief to the Hill people and linguistic minorities, the radical Nagas saw these as outsider governments (Anon. 1974: 1938).

people underground and increasing the support base of the armed resistance. Not only have massive violations of human rights by the Army been recorded in the Hills (and in the Valley), the Army has often even bypassed the state governments (who are otherwise usually co-opted into the military rule) in spreading terror and indiscriminately injuring, looting, killing the populace. In 1988, when the Naga Chief Minister Rishang Keishing, defying the Centre's diktats, spoke out against the Army's Operation Bluebird in the village of Oinam, the Army accused him of being in cahoots with the NSCN (I-M) and he was promptly removed from his office by the Centre (Anon. 1988a: 1714). It is to be noted however that the AFSPA has helped proliferate a thriving underground not just in the Hills, but in the Valley as well[73].

While the question of Naga integration, through the 1970's and 80's continued to simmer through NNC and later NSCN and NSCN (I-M) activity, the Naga-Kuki clashes of 1992-1994 and the ethnic cleansing that it unleashed again brought the issue to the fore. The Nagas have always maintained that the Kuki's, as migrating tribesmen with superior weaponry, were tactically settled on their lands by the Manipuri Kings and the British, as a check against Naga raids on the plains. While the NNC in their memorandum to the Simon Commission and during the Hydari Agreement had maintained that they also represented the Kukis, the NSCN not only excluded them from their plans of integration, but also imposed practices like the hut-tax for being settled on Naga lands. The Kuki's in turn started agitating for a separate state for them. The bone of contention lay in territory. Nagalim and Kukiland as envisaged by both ethnic groups overlapped over large swathes of the Hills of Manipur (Patel 1994: 1331-1332). Instigated by NSCN (I-M)'s struggle to wrest control over the lucrative border town of Moreh from the Kuki National Organization, the clashes that followed quickly spread over entire Hill region of Manipur. In a span of three years it left more than 5000 dead and 10,000 homeless. The alleged neutrality of tribes of the Paite's and Hmars, towards the Kuki cause led further to the Kuki-Paite clashes in 1997 (Tarapot 2003: 217).

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[73] The United National Liberation Front of Manipur was the progenitor of all liberation movements in the valley. It was a non-violent movement from its inception from 1964 till 1991. By 2010, there were more than 33 insurgent groups operating in the State.

Through the cycle of bloody inter-ethnic and inter-rebel clashes in the region, the Central Government's response has largely been that of non-interference. Bethany Lacina sees in this a studied strategy to enable the emergence of local autocrats and thus buy temporary stability (2009: 1016). But for Naga over-ground politics, the challenge of ethnic bloodshed presents is far more complex. This is made apparent in the reactions of the Naga Chief Minister Rishang Keishing to the Naga-Kuki clashes. While Keishing had put at stake his Chief-Minister-ship in highlighting Army excesses on Nagas in Oinam in 1987; in 1994 he came under severe criticism from the opposition, his own party members and civil society for allegedly trying to withhold the official report of the Naga-Kuki clashes from the Central Government (Anon. 1997b: 3169). The same Keishing in 1997, had reacted to the ceasefire between the NSCN (I-M) and the Indian State, by proclaiming that he was against the territorial dissolution of the State of Manipur (Shimray 2007: 98). Similar compulsions are seen in the way, the Naga MLA's belonging to the Congress party in the three states of Manipur, Assam and Arunachal came out against the National Democratic Alliance government's announcement of the ceasefire in 1997. They also accused the Central Government of letting the NSCN (I-M) get away with intimidating voters and rigging elections in these states[74] (Paratt 2003: 221-222).

In Manipur, the question of Naga integration and the incipient threat to Manipur's territorial integrity resurfaced in a big way at around the same time as the 1997 ceasefire. Towards this end, the Manipur state government adopted three successive resolutions (in 1995, 1997 and 1998) rejecting the concept of Greater Nagaland or Nagalim. It held that "Historically, successive legal and administrative decisions taken between 1826 and 1972 affirmed and reaffirmed the distinct territory and identity of Manipur.. Manipur has since been maintaining its distinct territory as sanctified, administratively and legally by the Manipur Merger agreement of 1949 and the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act 1971 read with Article 1 of the Constitution of India." (Jusho 2004: 29). It also claims

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[74] Reflecting the standard practice of northeast politics, the same Congress MLA's have been keeping quite during the UPA regime led peace talks with the NSCN (I-M).

that at the time of signing the ceasefire, the Central Government had assured that it would be applicable only in Nagaland (Anon. 2001a: 2304). The fissures between the hill and valley resurfaced with the Nagas under the aegis of the United Naga Council writing to the Prime Minister extending support to peace talks and requesting to extend the ceasefire (Shimray 2007: 103), even as the All Manipur United Clubs Association (AMUCO) held a rally in Imphal the same month to 'protect the territorial integrity of Manipur (109). While the Manipur Assembly declared the 4th of August (the day the ceasefire came into effect) as "State Integrity Day", the Naga Chief Minister Reishang Keishing played it safe saying that the onus to oppose the extension of ceasefire should be taken up by the Meitei's (Shimray 98).

The 2001 talks between the NDA Government and the NSCN (I-M) resulted among other things, in a declaration to extend to ceasefire 'without territorial limits'. The immediate reaction in Imphal valley was one of the few times that the Northeastern state made headlines in mainland India. Mass protest rallies were organized, public buildings were vandalized and the Manipur State Legislative Assembly was burnt to ashes. 16 people were killed as a result of police firing on the protestors. The All Manipur College Teacher's Association (AMCTA) came out with a strong declaration: "Since it had a definite historical international boundary at the time of the merger, India should not destroy these boundaries. No alien force or internal contradictions can break the territorial integrity of Manipur" (Shimray 2007: 116). More immediately the populace and the state governments of the three states of Manipur, Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh were concerned about the NSCN (I-M) obtaining a free run in their states to consolidate their military bases and to extort money from the civilian population (Paratt 2005: 223). On the other hand, a substantial Naga population of Manipur (whether by conviction, or political and security compulsions) under the aegis of the United Naga Council, Naga Women's Union and All Naga Student Association of Manipur (ANSAM) asked the Union Home Ministry to not give in to the valley protests (Franke 2009: 124). Nevertheless, the Indian State's interlocutor K Padmanabaiah on the 24th of July retracted

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his statement to remove the offending phrase[75]. Though the Meitei's (who constituted the bulk of the 18th June protestors) emphasize the non-communal political culture of their state by maintaining that the 2001 protests were aimed against the Government of India and not the Nagas; observers have given credit to the Naga civil society, especially the Naga Hoho and the Naga Mothers Association for preventing a reactionary outbreak of violence in Manipur and the three other states (Misra 2002: 3785). There were however mass migrations of Nagas from the hills and valley of Manipur into adjoining Nagaland (Anon 2001b: 4597). Alongside the NSCN (I-M) leadership that spoke of reaching out to all parties who had stakes in the creation of Greater Nagaland, the Naga Hoho extended an open invitation to the AMCTA (who had organized the 18th June protests) to identify their apex decision making body for the purpose of negotiation. The Hoho maintains that no reply was tendered (S 113).

In the meanwhile, the Naga movement for integration was rapidly gaining momentum in Manipur. It had risen from the burial it was given 25 years back by the Naga Integration Committee, and now spread from an underground movement to one that was backed across Naga civil society. In August 2001, a Naga People's Convention at Senapati, organized by the United Naga Council, which is widely considered as the mouthpiece of the NSCN (I-M), reaffirmed its ethnoterritoriality by declaring, "Nagas have nowhere at any point given their allegiance to the Meiteis, or their Maharaja to decide their future, orally, or through an agreement. Neither in history were the Nagas given land by the Meiteis.. The Nagas were the first settlers in the land where they are today." (Qouted in Jusho 2004: 32). The declaration was later endorsed at a public meeting convened by the Naga Hoho in Kohima that was attended by representatives of all tribes across the four states. At Senapati, it was also decided to snap ties with the state government of Manipur, vesting the UNC instead, with the powers to run the administration in the meanwhile. While the Senapati declaration was signed by almost all Naga Members of Legislative Assembly and Members of Parliament in the state, many later confessed to doing so under duress (Oinam 2002: 2684). Such confession is an important indicator of the

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[75]Franke extends the possibility that the Government of India did not reverse the decision, since two years later the Economist states it as.a fact (Economist 2003 in Franke 2009: 124).

compulsions of political survival that, alongside the emotional force of ethnonationalism (as seen from a strengthened civil society), animates Naga politics. Back in 1972, the NIC and then the UNIC had to stop agitating for integration in order to survive in mainstream politics. Three decades down the line, the political climate dictated the opposite.

The Senapati declaration was followed in 2003 by the UNC calling for a South Nagaland state to be carved out of Manipur (Paratt 2005: 222). The year 2005 saw frenzied political activity with the Secular Progressive Front Government of Manipur resolving to observe June 18 as 'State Integrity Day'. Terming the decision 'communal' and a 'deliberate insult to the state's Naga population', the student body, ANSAM retaliated with a 52 day blockade of the National Highway 39, thus paralyzing life in Manipur (Anon. 2005: 3699). With Meitei hegemony instigating a Naga backlash, Pradip Phanjoubam saw the restive climate of Manipur, bordering on the violent, as inflicted with a 'politics of conditioning' (quoted in Shimray 2007: 113). But many others regarded the successful imposition of the Naga blockade to be a show of force to the Government of India, and as a signal of NSCN (I-M)'s restiveness and frustration with the pace of the peace talks (Anon. 2006: 2275).

The crux of the deadlock in Manipur is summed up by Sanjib Baruah when he says, "The goal of creating a single political unit out of the Naga inhabited areas puts the Naga project of nationhood in collision course with a parallel Manipuri project." (Baruah 2005: 100-101) But Meitei opposition to Naga unification goes beyond sentimental associations with the State's century's old territorial unity and sovereignty[76]. With land as the most crucial resource in the state, observers like Pradip Phanjoubam and Hitson Jusho feel that the anxiety has economic roots (cited in Shimray 2007: 107, 110). With the State's territorial integrity at stake not just from outside forces, but from within its own territorially dominant population, the Meitei intelligentsia has been hard-pressed to redefine its identity. Some have sought to dwell on the State's historic pluralism

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[76] The state is threatened with annihilation, should the Naga demand come by. The 2,238 square kilometers that will remain after the ceding of the hill region, it is argued, will be too small and unviable to remain a state.

(Akoijam 2001: 2807-2812) and show how the hill populace is not worse but better off, politically and economically, than that of the valley (Tarapot 2003: 203, 204/ Paratt 2005: 225-226). On the other hand there has been a simultaneous trend of Meitei revivalism seen not only amongst the civil society, with the revival of the Meitei script and the Sanamahi religion, but also in the State's language and cultural policies (Shimray 2007: 78, Jusho 2004: 31). While older accounts of the State of Manipur conflated Manipuri identity exclusively with the Meitei of the valley (Roy 1958 in Shimray 2007: 56) there have been a recent attempts to define the hill population as Manipuri 'National Sub groups' (UCM in Shimray 2007: 119). There are still other Meitei bodies, like the Apunba Lup (an apex body of Twenty Seven Meitei social organizations), who undertake the difficult task of standing apart, from both the state's reactionary, populist politics and the insurgency's coercive politics, to speak against what they see as the vicious and deteriorating political climate of the state (Biswas and Sukalabaidya 2008: 14).

THE NAGA NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN ASSAM

While the Naga demand for integration in Manipur, by laying claim to ninety percent of its territory, threatens the very existence of the state, in Assam, the claim is towards the substantial districts of Lakhimpur, North Cachar, Nowgong, Sibsagar, and parts of Karbi Anglong. The Naga estimate of 'their' land here is approximately 5,000 square miles out of Assam's total area of 47,009 square miles (Anon. 1972: 698). But unlike in Manipur where the lands in question are overwhelmingly settled and cultivated by Nagas, in Assam the contested region has seen large scale settlement and cultivation of some Assamese and mostly Bangladeshi migrants. And unlike in Manipur, where the demand was raised more powerfully by the underground and the civil society, the case of Assam, in addition to these two, has also seen a long drawn out and bitter boundary dispute between the government's of the two states of Assam and Nagaland. Over the years, the Nagaland state's assertiveness on the issue, both on the ground and through a legal campaign, has effectively qualified the area for the current movement for a Greater

Nagaland/ Nagalim. Behind the present state of affairs, however, lies a long and chequered history.

Before being made a British province, the entity of Assam was confined to the valley kingdom of the Ahoms. Post 1874, it came to refer to the entire territory in the under the commissioner of Assam, including the Kingdom of Manipur. When the Naga Hills District was created in 1866, it included in addition to the present day territory of Nagaland State, the current districts of Nowgong, Jorhat and Karbi Anglong. The imperatives of colonizing the district for commercial exploitation, by 1898, led to de-notification of large swathes of the NHD and their transfer to Sibsagar (856 sq miles) and Nowgong (1929 sq miles). Dimapur and adjoining areas were retransferred to the Naga Hills District in 1930 (Alechimba 1975: 129). The Naga claim is to the reserve forests of the Desoi valley, Nambor, Rengma, Diphu and Dhansiri (Anon. 1972: 968). The Federal Government of Nagaland and the Naga Federal Army, since its inception operated as extensively in the United Mikir and Sibsagar areas of Assam as in the Naga Hills (Franke 2009: 73). These areas were among the first to come under the Assam Disturbed Areas Act in 1953, then the Armed Forces (Assam & Manipur) Special Powers Act of 1958, and have more or less continuously been under the AFSPA since 1972.

The first official demand over the reserve forests can be traced back to clause six of the Hydari Agreement negotiated between the Naga National Council and the Governor of Assam. Even the Naga People's Convention that negotiated the Sixteen-points agreement had the retransfer of the forests high on its agenda. In contravention of the provisions of the agreement, the territorial demarcation of the current day state of Nagaland was effected along the notification of 1925. The issue was taken up by the Nagaland state government as soon as its inception. It wanted the settle the boundary with Assam on the basis of the Notification of 1867. Assam on the other hand, stuck to the status-quo, citing Ahom and British records to show that while there were occasional Naga raids on the forests and plains in question, the Ahoms had not at any point conceded territorial rights of these plains forests to the Nagas (Anon. 1972: 968).

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Assam's tendency, as a large colonial province, and later as an Indian state, has always been to try and assimilate the diverse population of the hills into a greater Assamese identity. But, even as it demanded the 'administrative and emotional integration of North East Frontier Agency with Assam" in 1964, the latter was carved out as a Union territory and developed later as a separate state. And even as the then Chief Minister Bishnuprasad Chaliha claimed in 1968 that, "We cannot allow a division of Assam and we shall fight to the last for maintenance of the status quo of the present state" (quoted in Anon. 1970: 1995) the Assam Hills Re-organization followed in 1972. Therefore its territorial anxiety vis-à-vis Nagaland stems not only from its historical claims, but also from the perceived loss, through territory, of its past glory, identity and power. As a result the 434 kilometer boundary between the two states has been a perpetual live wire.

Though the forests in question were reserved and settlement either from the side of Nagaland, or Assam was prohibited, the problem of illegal migration from Bangladesh saw non-Nagas outnumbering Nagas. In spite of the demographic set-back, the Nagaland state not only constructed posts and established Naga villages but also encouraged the imposition of taxes upon all farmers by the Nagas (often as much as fifty percent of the crop harvested). It also encouraged politically influential Nagas to invest their newly accumulated wealth in the land of the region, thus providing patronage to construction, forestry and other economic activity (Anon. 1989: 756-757). The first border war between the two states was in 1969 (Nibedon 1978: 256). In 1979 the Doyang Forest saw raids by Nagas (akin to the raids in previous times) in which 54 villagers were killed. It was alleged that some members of the Nagaland Armed Police (in all probability members of the disbanded Sema battalion of the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland) were also involved in the raids (Gohain 2007: 3280). While the Government of Assam came under severe criticism for not being able to control the Naga raids, the Centre largely refrained from intervening. It had however, set up the Sundaram Commission in 1972 to enable both the governments to settle the dispute bilaterally. With the recommendations of the commission in 1976, going in favor of Assam, the Nagaland rejected it as a basis for settlement (Misra 1987: 2195).

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The year 1985 also saw a long drawn border clash between the two states in which the respective armed police also used rocket launchers and mortars. More than hundred Assam villagers were caught in the cross-fire. The Assam Chief Minister, Hiteswar Saikia's observation that it was almost like 'a war had broken out between two states', was vindicated when truce could be obtained only after the common Governor[77] Krishna Rao brokered talks in the neutral setting of Imphal, Manipur (Anon. 1985b: 1062). Though both sides had agreed to the stationing of Central Security Forces as peace-keepers, the Central Government remained reluctant to get involved in the bilateral dispute and this worked in favor of the Nagas. Naga interests in the area extracted land revenue, house-tax and 'ration-tax' (food-grain) under the eyes of the Central Forces (Gohain 2007: 3280).

By then, the border issue had percolated the popular imagination of both the States. The All Assam Student's Union criticized the inept handling of the issue by the Hiteswar Saikia ministry but fully backed the Government's claims to the lands[78]. In Nagaland the Naga Student's Federation in the meanwhile cooperated with the successive governments in building up the Assam border issue as an effective plank for the agitation for a Greater Nagaland/ Nagalim (Anon. 1985a: 1061). Interestingly the border issue with Assam, always served as a trump card for the (loyal to the Centre) Naga National Organization and later Nagaland Congress, who also won the 1988 elections on the canard that the opposition United Democratic Front, if voted to power, would give up on the lands in Assam (Anon. 1988b: 1869). The Merapani violence of 1985 resulted in the setting up of a fresh inquiry to look into the border dispute (Anon. 1989: 756-57). Considering the sensitive nature of subject matter, the Variava Commission still lingers (Gohain 2007:

[77] The security mindset of the centre that dictated a single Governor for the North-Eastern States, further compounded the issue. The same governors have had, on many occasions, to express differing and even contrary opinions on the boundary issue (Anon.1981: 787).

[78] AASU's concerns were more to do with the territorial anxiety of the reduction of the size and supposedly the power and influence of Assam and not with the plight of the mostly Bangladeshi population caught in the dispute. This is evident from the fact that while, alongside the AGP, it reacted strongly to the imposition of the AFSPA and Assam Disturbed Areas Act in mainland Assam in the 1990's, it had not raised a murmur when the reserve forests in the Naga-Assam border were under these acts for decades. (Anon. 1990: 2693).

3280). To further complicate matters, it came to light in 2008 that the Central Government and the Government of Assam have lost the original maps pertaining to the creation of the Nagaland State (Mohan 2008). This has given an upper-hand to the Government of Nagaland.

While the Assam government has over the years, kept up its rhetoric of not parting with its lands and is quick to lodge protests at every incursion made, the Nagaland state government has gone ahead and built up its administration in the area. It launched the subdivisions of Newland and Kohobotu in 1991 and Uriamghat and Hukai in 2006. By 2007, it had occupied 200,000 hectares of prime land. The economic benefits in terms of agriculture, mineral and oil deposits that are for the taking in the region, has led the state government along with the vested Naga interests to make common cause with the NSCN (I-M) (Gohain 2007: 3283). The resultant state of affairs is summed up by Shimray "..there are certain tracts of land the ownership of which lies with the Nagas and present possession with Assam. From the standpoint of Nagas, the matter is merely of returning to the Nagas those Naga areas now occupied by Assam." (Shimray 2007: 129).

Post the ceasefire in 1997 the Assam Government regularly launched protests against the impunity given to the NSCN (I-M) for indulging in extortion and other illegal activities. In 2001, it was one with the Governments of Manipur and Arunachal in opposing the territorial extension of the ceasefire. But it has not backed its opposition to the project of a Greater Nagaland/ Nagalim with effective administrative action. As a consequence, the popular fear in Assam is that the project of Nagalim would be primarily carved out of Assam. Such rumors have also been backed by the NSCN (K) (Gohain 2007: 3281). While the ULFA had long been objecting to the maps of Nagalim circulating extensively in the region (Misra 1999: 57), the Asom Jatiyabadi Yuva Chhatra Parishad has taken an extreme stand to the Nagalim project. It declared that if the centre tried to redraw the state's boundaries, then a "thousand Muivah's will be born in Assam" (Misra 2003: 596).

THE NAGA NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Being a recent state of the Union of India, Arunachali identity is a post-facto development. The bone of contention here are the districts of Tirap and Changlang, both bordering the Naga territory in Burma. The Nagas here belong to the Tangsa, Wakching, Nocte and Singpho tribes and were a part of what was known as Free Naga areas during the Colonial rule. The two districts were demarcated to NEFA from the latter's inception, and against the efforts of the NNC, who were lobbying hard to have them included in the Naga Hills District (Ao 2002: 214). National consciousness had not taken off among these tribes during the early decades of the movement. They had maintained strict neutrality in giving Phizo and his men safe passage through their territory, when the latter were on their way to China (Nibedon 1978: 160). The low tenor of the national movement here is also substantiated by the fact that the 1964 ceasefire, which embraced the Naga Hills in Manipur, and the forests of Assam, did not include Tirap and Changlang.

It was only in the late 1980's and early 1990's, that the districts became the scene of turf wars between the NSCN (I-M) and the NSCN (K). The abundance of petroleum and other natural and mineral resources gave added incentive to the underground to intensify the movement in this area. Successive Arunachali State Government's have tried to contain the fast spreading movement to be a part of the proposed Nagalim by providing various sops, among them being the constitution of a separate Department of Tirap and Changlang (DoTC) for the targeted development of the region. With the underground effectively calling the shots, DoTC has not borne any fruits and the Eastern Naga People's Organization cite the lack of development for their inclusion of the two districts in thier demand for a separate 'Frontier Nagaland' state.

The long period of relative peace that the current cease-fire has fostered has tempted not just the underground, but also the Nagaland People's Front, headed by the Neiphu Rio to spread its network in the districts. This has ignited two contradictory debates: bodies like

the Arunachal Pradesh Student's Union (APSU) hold that there are no Nagas in Arunachal, that the four tribes are Arunachali. Simultaneously, they also condemn the NPF for dividing the populace among communal lines, claiming for example that though the Nyishi's are the most populous tribe in the State, there has not been a Nyishi union (Anon. 2007b). Much to their chagrin, official records like the Scheduled Tribe notifications continue to list the four tribes as Nagas. Arunachali civil society also expresses frustration at the State Government's for turning a blind eye to the growing movement of Naga nationalism, leading to widespread fears that Nagalim would be overwhelmingly carved out of Assam and Arunachal. They see the Naga national movement as a more immediate and potent threat to Arunachali territorial identity than the overtures by China (Dorjee 2010).

OUTSTANDING FEATURES OF THE NAGA NATIONAL MOVEMENT POST 1997 CEASEFIRE

With the signing of the ceasefire in 1997, the course of the Naga National Movement entered a new phase. The initial years of the movement were informed by a certain nativism and religious and cultural fundamentalism. Consolidating and spreading through the resistance to what it saw as an occupation by Indian Army and state machinery, helped cement Naga nationalism further. Before long, it spoke the language of the self determination of people's and the right to territorial sovereignty that had animated the decolonization decades. In those days, neither was participation in Indian democratic politics looked upon as serving the Naga national cause, nor was Naga civil society active, both as an entity and as a force. The underground had to bend over backwards to put up a democratic and representative front. Even then, tribalism had made severe dents into the national struggle.

While the counter-insurgency measures of the Indian State were successful in making a section of the national movement give up its demand for sovereignty to an extent; for those who were still holding out, it served to make them even more radical and much

more resilient. The role of foreign powers, especially China, cannot be overlooked in this regard. More than providing operational bases and arms, it was the indoctrination and education they provided in guerilla-warfare that allowed a section of the movement (represented later by the NSCN) to hold out against odds and keep up a semblance of direction and ideological coherence. Indeed the only reason that the NSCN (I-M) receives broad based support from even those who have no vested interest in the insurgency is their consistent line on integration and their refusal to accept the Indian Constitution in its current form. But unlike in the early days of the movement, the NSCN (I-M) is not the sole voice of Naga Nationalism. It has to contend with issues such as tribalism, with the power wielded by other insurgent factions like the NSCN (K), the NNC (Adino) and the NNC (Pangher), and with actors such as the pro-India political parties and their robust opposition. Indeed the Naga National Movement operates in a condition that Sanjib Baruah analyses as 'durable disorder' (Baruah 2005: 13)[79].

But the decades since the signing of the ceasefire have seen a qualitative change from this state of affairs. It has been brought about by both- external conditions, and through the emergence of newer, substantial actors in the Naga national movement. The external conditions centre primarily on India's formulation of the Look East policy which envisages the Northeast as a collaborator and partner in its engagement with South-East Asia. The new actors on the scene are a vibrant civil society and a resurgent Church who have undertaken not just the project of reconciliation of a deeply divided Naga society, but also increasingly influence the peace talks between the Indian State and the NSCN (I-M). This section of the Chapter thus, looks first at the phenomena of tribalism and fractionalization and the forces influencing it. It identifies reconciliation, alongside unification, as the dominant theme of the current phase of the movement. Finally it looks at the emergence of the church and civil society as a force for reconciliation and resolution.

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[79] Baruah's says: "Rather than continuing to re-enforce a fake separation between insurgency and main stream political life, I shall bring aspects of the ethnic militias, counter insurgency operations, state backed militias, developmental practices and the deformed institutions of democratic governance together to suggest that for analytical purposes they can be seen as constituting a coherent whole that I will call durable disorder" (2005: 13).

Fractionalization in Naga society

To phenomena of tribalism and fractionalization in Naga society can be traced to the diversely independent and autonomous tribal structure and the con-federal nature of their national polity. Various authors also attribute the initial tribalism in the incipient underground national movement to the tacit or active role of Phizo. But the picture wouldn't be complete without taking into account the working of what Clifford Geertz calls the 'integrative revolution'. Engineered by the dominant State, (India in this case) it consists of a two way process of suppressing the voice of a rebellious minority while simultaneously creating a class of collaborative elite among them (Geertz 1993 in Biswas and Sukalbaidya: 167). Carried on along communal and tribal lines, the subcontinent and Naga society perceives it as 'divide and rule' (Franke 2009, Misra 2003, Baruah 2005, Pimomo 1990)[80]. This was pursued by the Indian State from the very beginning, alongside its conventional counter-insurgency measures.

Thus the state of Nagaland, since its creation, thrives on and perpetuates the fractionalization of Naga society. Not only does it profit from the thriving drug trafficking, it has deep stakes in the continuance of the insurgency in order to secure greater benefits from the centre (Misra 1999: 55). With the articulation of the Look East policy, Nagaland state also acts as the proxy of the Central Government in opening up Naga areas to rapid (often unsustainable) development activities, often bypassing the consent of the Nagas concerned (Anon. 2007a: 3689). In the year 2000, the Nagaland Congress (with a long history of loyalty to the Central Government) sought also to reify the tribalism it had helped create through a controversial publication- "Bedrock of Naga Society"[81]. According to Abraham Lotha, Naga national workers consider the Nagaland state as the biggest obstacle to a sustainable political solution (Lotha 2009: 188).

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[80] Pimomo (1990: 2340) puts forth this view most clearly. He says: "Sure there was tribalism among the Nagas before the Indian occupation, but Indian leaders worked on it, complicating it further and transforming it into new insidious forms by manipulating the Naga leadership, and applying military force where manipulation failed, The divisions and confusion in Nagaland politics today are the direct result of the past forty years of Indian domination.."

[81] 'Bedrock..' claimed that before the Sixteen-points Agreement there was no basis for a collective Naga identity or nationality. It was subsequently condemned across the Haga hoho, student bodies, insurgent groups and the intelligentsia.

Such divide and rule was also employed towards the underground movement. The alleged cultivation of NSCN (K) by the India in 2001, and the subsequent ceasefire with both groups has resulted in a neat division of not only territorial control, but, as seen before, also of alliance partners in the region (Franke 2009: 141). Moreover it has increased fratricidal and civilian casualties (Beth 1015). The announcement of the territorial extension of the ceasefire, was also, according to long time observers, a move towards isolating the NSCN (I-M) and downgrading its position of leadership among the northeastern insurgent groups (Misra 2003: 595). The Indian State's encouragement of the movement for a separate Eastern Nagaland is another case in point. Propped up since 1979 in a bid to undercut the NSCN support base, the Eastern Nagaland People's Organization since 2007 has been raising the demand for a separate state. Comprising of the Mon, Tuensang, Longleng and Kiphire districts in Nagaland and Tirap and Changlang in Arunachal Pradesh, it cites the neglect of development as the reason to separate (Anon. 2007a: 3183). Another, more recent move by the Centre to contain the Naga national movement is the encouragement of Bangladeshi settlers in the state of Nagaland[82]. With the flagrant violation of the Inner Line regulation, the migrant population, concentrated in Kohima and Dimapur make up almost 20 percent of the states population and constitute a permanent and convenient vote bank for the 'loyalist' Nagaland Congress.

Efforts at Reconciliation and Unity in the Naga national movement

In as much as the manipulations of the Indian State contributes overwhelmingly to the division of Naga society and the national movement, Udayon Misra reminds us that, "..the measure of the State's success is bound to be proportional to the degree of inbuilt weakness in the structure of the opposing forces" (199: 50). In recognition of this inbuilt weakness, reconciliation and unity has been a consistent theme in the movement. Keeping in mind the geopolitical isolation of the Naga nation, the extent of the schism and its role in undermining any sustainable political solution for Naga national movement is confronted by Charles Chasie. Precluding the possibility of a reconciliation following from a political settlement, he says, "In other parts of the world political settlements

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[82] According to Fearon and Laitin (2001) the encouragement of migration in frontier spaces has long been a nation-building strategy of States. Such immigrant populations act typically as a conservative force therein (cited in Baruah 2005: 36).

come about as a result of, directly or indirectly, external pressure. But the geopolitics and dynamics of our situation are different from those other conflict situations and our people cannot hope that the same results can be effected in like manner. In our situation, there is no alternative to reconciliation" (Chasie in Venuh *et al.* 2004: 137).

The Church is the primary actor in the theatre of the Naga national movement that has taken the task of reconciliation most seriously. With the network of the main Church bodies spread across Naga areas in the four states as well as in Burma, the church has been initiating inter-tribal and inter-factional dialogue at every low point since the start of the national movement. The Naga People's Convention has been initiated by the Naga Baptist Church Council in 1957, 1972, and 1975. Following the 1997 ceasefire, the Baptist Fellowship of North America (BPNA) hosted a meet for reconciliation in Naga Society in Atlanta, Georgia, USA in 1998. This initial effort was abandoned by the NSCN (I-M). Emphasizing the extent of fractional tendencies instilled through years of violence and rivalry, Abraham Lotha has observed that "Christianity is still just one of the many garments used strategically by the Nagas" (Lotha 2009: 313). But Ao considers that, "Had there been no intervention by Naga Churches in the present on-going internal clashes between the Naga factions, there would have been a total civil war in Nagaland" (2002: 187). Thus, though the Church might not have had the most decisive influence on the course of the Naga national movement, it has certainly been a consistent and important actor.

While the Church had been a constant fixture in the Naga theatre, the emergence of Naga civil society is largely a phenomenon of the past two decades. It has been alleged that the various civil society bodies are the mouthpieces of one or the other insurgent factions. But precisely because they are not apolitical, but have been deeply politicized by over fifty years of violence and repression from a variety of actors, Naga civil society organizations have come to play an immensely decisive role in the course of the movement. The earliest activism was by the Naga Student's Federation; in 1973 it had appealed to the Government of India for not so much sovereignty, as unification (Shimray 2007: 95). The 1990's saw the emergence of the Naga People's Movement for

Human Rights among other bodies, and led on by the NSCN (I-M)'s engagement with an international audience; they contributed greatly to the emerging global discourses on human rights, indigenity and self determination. Lotha sees this global engagement as a dialectical process; that the search for an identity on the global stage has helped cement Naga national identity (Lotha 2009: 348-349).

Post the 1997 ceasefire, largely, due to the work of these organizations, the demand of Integration overtook the agitation for sovereign status (Shimray 2007: 102) and came occupy centre-stage. It was also to their credit, to shed the traditional Naga tendency to conflate the multicultural Indian polity with the bitter experiences Nagas have had with the Government of India, and to seek to engage the Indian masses in the Naga issue[83]. Also understanding that any future solution lay necessarily through Indian legislative bodies, they encouraged parliamentary politics (Shimray 2007: 14). In this, they were one with the ideals of Kevichusa and his political parties (the DPN/UDF/DAN), who had first envisaged the constructive role of the Parliament for the Naga cause.

Naga civil society has also played a direct role in the peace process. The NSCN (I-M), in the absence of any democratic mandate to speak on behalf of the Naga people, depends on the goodwill of these organizations for its legitimacy to pursue its peace parleys with the Indian State. The earliest General Meeting of the Consultative Body (of the Naga's side in peace process) was convened by the NSCN (I-M) in 1999 in Nagaland and attended by CSO's, NGO's, Church bodies and Naga individuals from all walks. The 2nd and 3rd meetings were held in Bangkok in 2002 under the themes of "Reconciliation and Realization" and "Strengthening the Peace Strategy". In 2005, the fourth meet in the NSCN (I-M)'s Camp Hebron in Nagaland was attended by over 6000 individuals and representatives of various sections of Naga society. It was resolved here that the "Unification of Naga areas is legitimate and therefore non-negotiable". (Shimray 2007: 105-106). Moreover, since 2007, the Forum for Naga Reconciliation has brought together the leadership of the NSCN (I-M), the NSCN (K) and other factions. In 2009, the Joint

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[83] In this regard the NSCN (I-M) and (K) have often acknowledged the support from civil society actors hailing from mainland India. Both factions maintain that these organizations have helped immensely to restrain the cadres from attacks against ordinary non-Naga Indian citizens.

Working Group comprising of these bodies reiterated their refusal of any 'conditional package offered to the Nagas by the Government of India' (The Hindu 2009).

An outstanding feature of these recent developments is the co-option of the traditional power structures in the form of the Naga Hoho. The current Naga Hoho, as the apex body of all Naga social organizations, is a "synthesis of traditional linkages and modern institutional ideas" (Misra 2003: 594). Like in the initial days of the Naga National Council led by Phizo (1950's and 1960's), the Naga Hoho, extends the Naga national movement both horizontally and vertically. Together, their immense pressure on both factions of the NSCN ensures that the peace process is not derailed. Bharat Bhushan sums up the present situation with his observation; "the biggest contribution in sustaining the peace process has been made by the Naga civil society organizations. In fact it has been a dialectical process- the civil society strengthening the peace process in turn giving an unprecedented voice to the civil society. Today, Naga civil society organizations can criticize and would give direction to the peace process. A decade ago people would have been assassinated for being critical of the underground" (Bhushan 2005 in Shimray 2007: 104).

SUMMARY

This chapter concerned itself with the examination of the territorial claims made by the various actors in the Naga national movement, and the territorial strategies they employed towards such claims. Thus, it not only undertook to study the territoriality of these different actors, but also the history and substance of the demands made by these various actors in Burma, and the Indian states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur. It found firstly, that the demand for integration of contiguous Naga territory was not a recent development, or diversion of the Naga national movement. The demand was in place since the very beginning. However, the politics of the demand initially centered upon complete territorial sovereignty. For an incipient nationalism like that of the Nagas, the twin issues of integration and sovereignty could not be carried together.

The former paled in importance and urgency. It was the democratization of the politics of the movement, and the entry of more and diverse actors with a decisive say, that the issue of integration took centre-stage, so much so that it has almost replaced the demand for complete territorial sovereignty. The chapter thus favors the contention that the territoriality of the Naga nationalism is contingent upon the politics of the Naga national movement.

Further, the chapter examined the veracity, legality, strengths and motivations of the territorial claims and the territorial strategies employed by the movement (through its actors) in the various regions. It found the claims to have differing degrees of legitimacy in each of these areas. The strategy of the NSCN (I-M) has been to drown out all these differences with their stand that 'Nagalim is wherever Nagas are'. Notwithstanding this, the chapter finds a sound case for the evaluation of the Naga case for territorial integration, on an individual basis for each of the states, and not together. The following chapter sums up the facts presented and the arguments made in the preceding chapters and highlights possible theoretical and policy implications.

Chapter Six

CONCLUSION

The study has engaged with Naga nationalism on two fronts. One was to study the nature of the Naga demand for self-determination. The other was to examine the territorial claims of the Naga demand for unification. The theoretical lenses employed were of ethnonationalism and territoriality. The former was understood as non-state nationalism, manifested as a world wide phenomena post the two world wars: the latter, understood simultaneously as both, the territorial idea of Westphalian sovereignty, and the territorial practices employed towards the maintenance and achievement of such sovereignty, by both state and non-state actors. The Naga claim to territory was also seen as ethno-territoriality, or the claim that a culture group has patrimonial rights to a territory separate from other groups (Zariski 1989 in Dahlman and Trent 2010: 414). The method employed by the study was historical. A close reading of events and facts was used to analyze the nature of Naga nationalism and its territorial claims. This chapter sums up the findings of the previous chapters and makes some tentative proposals.

It is divided into three parts. The first engages the changing nature of the demand for self-determination. It first highlights that independence, and sovereignty[84] was a part of what Smith would call the 'ethnic core' of the Naga tribes. It then, finds that the change in demand from complete separation from India and Burma, to autonomy, is not a novel development, nor is it only tied to the reduction in strength and bargaining power of the militant factions. While the political theatre of the Naga national movement always had multiple actors, the current situation is a result of the democratization of the movement; wherein newer players, within a changed international scenario, are more vocal.

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[84] Independence and sovereignty here do not refer to the modern western conceptions that guide the international system, but rather a set of approximate ideas.

The second part tackles the question of territorial unification. Here too the strength of these claims is traced to the 'ethnic core' of the Nagas, a typical feature of which is an intimate relationship with the land of dwelling. Observing that different tracts of Naga territory (and thus different Naga tribes) have had different histories of occupation, it finds that the demand for unification too is not a new one, it was always on the agenda; but was subsumed under the demand for independence. It then takes stock of the territoriality (understood as practice) of the various actors that contribute to the national movement; the national organizations, militant groups, the Nagaland state government (including the opposition), the traditional power structures like the Tatar Hoho's and Naga Hoho, the Church bodies, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and the Indian State. It also studies the history of Naga territorial claims individually in Burma, Manipur and in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. With the strength of the territorial claims varying in each case, the study proposes that the territoriality of Naga nationalism is contingent on the politics of the movement.

Finally, in the third part, reflecting on what Arjun Appadurai refers to as the poverty of the territorial imagination; the study examines certain emerging forms of territorial redistribution of powers within States, and the need for greater asymmetric federalism to sustainably accommodate Naga aspirations with the Indian Union.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE DEMAND FOR SELF DETERMINATION IN THE NAGA NATIONAL MOVEMENT

We have seen in chapter three that the Naga tribal polity was marked by a large measure of autonomy. This was confined not just to the tribal, but to the individual village level. Each village had population, sovereignty and territory as its components, and it individually decided its (foreign) policies towards other villages and tribes (Shimray 1985: 43). The village till date is the ultimate social unit of Naga identity. The national movement that emerged in the wake of the two World-Wars was led by the newly educated elite. Their understanding of self-determination was more akin to 'home-rule' or

autonomy, than Westphalian territorial sovereignty. This was the theme of the Naga Club's Memorandum to the Simon Commission, as well as the petitions to the Cabinet Mission. On being consistently ignored or misappropriated by the British and the incipient Indian Government, the radical faction of the Naga National Council took centre-stage. Those were the decolonization decades, and the NNC saw itself as one of the many non-state nations, clamoring for independence based on the 'right to self-determination of peoples'.

Mobilized by Phizo, this section overtook the NNC and rapidly spread its influence throughout Naga territory. Phizo based his movement, and later the Federal Government of Nagaland, on the Tribal Councils. It was the writ of these councils that were reflected in the NNC demands for complete independence, which marked the period from 1956 to 1975[85]. The creation of Statehood cut through the national movement in decisive ways. Not only was a faction of Nagas, loyal to the Indian Government nurtured, but a robust opposition (party/parties) entered the scene. This opposition spoke of engaging the underground, but was also in favor of a solution that granted greater autonomy and not necessarily complete independence. Those who denounced the Shillong Accord did so more because of the infamy and high-handedness surrounding the signing and not just because it spoke of an acceptance of the Indian Constitution. This however helped strengthen the radical militants who were indoctrinated in the skill of protracted warfare by China. Through NSCN, the demand for sovereignty re-emerged forcefully.

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[85] Michael Scott, who was widely regarded as sympathetic to Naga 'separatism' had made interventions in the sovereignty debate, which was largely unheeded at that time. He had written, "Independence conceded to Nagaland might stimulate secessionist tendencies, which would threaten the integrity of India as a whole.... What does India require of Nagaland other than the security of the border? Far from exacting tribute from the Nagas, the flow is rather from India to Nagaland in the form of a large proportion of its annual revenue...As compared with African or a colonial territory, Nagaland, under the present set-up, has the ownership of land and settlement under its control. Nagas cannot be forcibly or constitutionally deprived of their land as the indigenous people of South Africa for example have been deprived ...Education, health and finance are subjects under Naga jurisdiction... If Nagaland, in its present stage of development, has not the economic resources enabling it to be independent in this real sense of the word, Naga leaders would be honest and realistic if they face these facts of life and pursue a policy which, while bringing peace to the people, will also give a reasonable prospect of achieving progress..." (Scott 1965 in Misra 2003: 597).

The two decades following the end of the Cold War saw a gradual change in the way ethnonationalisms were dealt with across the world[86]. The violence in former Yugoslavia and in Africa steered international opinion against the break-up of existing states for the creation of new ones. While this clearly worked in favor of the status-quo of existing states, the logic was also one of reducing the violence that ensued overwhelmingly from partitions. For the Nagas, the 1990's provided an opportunity to reach out to an international audience. This necessitated the emergence of a civil society that, alongside the armed movement would represent the Naga issue on the global stage. The concerns of the Nagas at this stage revolved around human rights and indigenous rights. Politicized through five decades of violence and suppression, this emergent civil society was deeply engaged in the outstanding issues of the movement. It was here that the meaning of self determination was redefined to stand for autonomy and not full independence. Dolly Kikon (2005: 2844) explains; "Protracted struggles for right to self-determination show that notions of sovereignty, self-determination and nation not only get interpreted and re-interpreted during the transition of power from one generation to another, but also engineer negotiation processes with centralized governments and redefine priorities of the people.' Thus, beginning with the late 1990's, unification of all Naga contiguous territory became the central plank of the Naga national movement.

A parallel theme that dominated the Naga national discourse in the last two decades was reconciliation. A sound 'ethnic core' notwithstanding, Naga tribes were autonomous in nature. It was the joint struggle against outside actors, supplemented by the efforts of national workers that helped create a common Naga identity. The six-decade span of the conflict saw the deep division of Naga society and polity. This fractionalization occurred within the armed movement, the over-ground political movement and along tribal lines. Fomented and maintained in most parts through the efforts of the Indian State; repeated efforts at reconciliation, from the very beginning of the movement did not bring about the desired change.

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[86] This is in no way to suggest that the response to ethnonationalisms in these years was uniform through out the world. Indeed, the international community dealt with European ethno-national conflicts very differently from Asian and African ones.

Hinting at the incomplete work of the nation-building process, Charles Chasie's observations are relevant here, 'We created a Cause, before we could fully become a people. This was alright if it helped us to become a people. And initially, the Cause did accelerate the process of our tribes coming together. But the Cause, for various reasons, soon preceded the process of our becoming a people and seemed to have gone on its own. The building of our nationhood got neglected and even began to slide backwards. What further accentuated this neglect was the explanation that our nationhood was already a fact and that our people would automatically unite and become one, cooperating with each other, once the Cause was achieved. The logical extension of such thinking process is that only a few 'traitors' were standing in the way.' (Chasie in Venuh 2004: 135). He holds that unlike instances of self-determination in other parts of the world, the geopolitical location of the Nagas, excludes a political settlement through external pressure. Therefore the Naga case dictated that reconciliation precede any political settlement (137). The Naga civil society, by engaging all other actors in the movement, has been actively applying itself to this task.

TERRITORIALITY OF DIFFERENT ACTORS
IN THE NAGA NATIONAL MOVEMENT

We have seen earlier that the Naga claim to land forms a part of their ethnic core. Complete jurisdiction over the well demarcated farm and forest land was the characteristic of each village. Naga historiography also begins with their migration to the current areas of the Patkai mountain range that they occupy. Speaking in the context of Naga nationalism, U.A. Shimray holds that "Land itself is the Naga history" (2007: 130). The emergence of Naga national consciousness should be read along with the different histories of occupation of different parts of Naga territory. The Naga-Ahom relations embraced the tribes in the North and North-east, the British foray was into the South and South-eastern tracts. The Kingdom of Manipur had a longer interaction with the Southern Nagas. It was the Nagas in Burma and in the Free Tribal Area that had seen almost no interaction or interference. The Indian State, through the Indian Army, and the Burmese

State, through its military, were the first presence here. Since the incipient national consciousness was almost absent in the Burmese tracts, on the other side of the border, the Indian military and administration was seen explicitly as invasion. The radicals in the Naga national movement, during its heydays, extended this understanding of the Indian experience to the entire Naga national discourse.

Though the earliest leaders of the national movement were aware that Naga national consciousness was far from realized across all Naga tribes, in interacting with the outside forces of the British, they claimed to speak on behalf of all Naga areas and all tribes. Furthermore, the demand for integration of all Naga areas under a single administrative umbrella has been expressed since 1946. It was a demand even of the Hydari meetings and the Sixteen-points convention. Therefore, it can be said that the issue of Naga territorial integration is not a recent development but one of the key issues of the national movement since its inception. Earlier the demand for independence had overshadowed the question of integration, so much so that those actors who spoke of integration through participation in Indian politics were looked upon as traitors to the Naga national cause (as seen in the case of the Naga Integration Committee in Manipur in the 1970's). But territoriality as a practice has been employed by each actor, in their own way, towards the national movement.

The most conspicuous is the armed movement. We have seen in chapter five that guerrilla resistance to Indian occupation was not only restricted to the current state of Nagaland, but was a feature equally of the areas in Burma, the Naga Hills in Manipur, the forest tracts in Assam, and the hills of NEFA. The 1964 ceasefire between the Federal Government of Nagaland and the Government of India ran across contiguous Naga territories within India (barring the Tirap and Changlang districts of present day Arunachal Pradesh). But even during the ceasefire years, the violations occurred mostly in the Naga areas outside of Nagaland state. The NSCN was formed in the eastern Naga tracts bordering Burma, but it soon spread to all Naga areas. It was also a characteristic feature of the 1980's and 1990's that more violence took place in Naga areas outside of

the state of Nagaland. It can be read as the entrenchment of the armed movement and the expansion of the militant Naga national consciousness.

Overwhelmingly in the Naga national discourse, the Nagaland state government is looked upon as the greatest impediment to a political solution. But this entity too steadfastly stood behind the idea of (administrative) integration. Regarding Manipur, it passed several resolutions demanding the merger of the Manipur Naga Hills with the Nagaland State. In the case of Assam it has not only kept alive the legal dispute about the retransfer of several districts from Assam, but has actively abetted the takeover of these areas by Nagas. It raises taxes and builds administrative sub-divisions there on a regular basis. In this, both the ruling and opposition parties of Nagaland state are on the same plane.

The traditional power structures were the Tribal Councils and in the Federal Government of Nagaland, they were represented in the Parliament or the Tatar Hoho, through their elected chiefs. The Tribal Councils and the Village Councils formed the base of the militant phase of the movement; they were one with Phizo in the demand of complete separation from India. During the early days of the movement, the FGN was represented by Tatar Hoho's from all over the Naga areas in Assam, NEFA and Manipur. With the rise of the NSCN, there was no separate military and political wing of the underground government/s. The Tribal Councils again came into prominence in the national discourse in the 1990's when they were co-opted into the movement along with the civil society organizations. The Naga Hoho today is the apex body of all Tribal Councils as well as other Naga organizations working for the national movement. It extends its reach to the Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh and forms the base of the Consultative Body to the NSCN (I-M) in its negotiations with the Indian Government.

The Church bodies like the Naga Baptist Church Council and Council of Naga Baptist Churches (they are the two biggest), through their consistent efforts at reconciliation have been playing an active role in consolidating the national movement across all its territory. The former has jurisdiction in the State of Nagaland, while the latter works in Manipur and Burma. The Naga Peoples' Conventions have largely been the work of the Church.

Both the NBCC and the CNBC have been working together on a 'Joint Naga Peace Mission' since 1993.

The civil society is the most significant actor to emerge in recent times. They were among the earliest to table the demand for integration over the demand for separation to the Government of India[87]. The new wave of the Naga national discourse taken up by Civil Society organizations centered upon human rights and indigenous rights. Being common issues, it found resonance across all Naga territory and thus allowed the national movement to re-entrench itself forcefully. Subsequently it is these associations (Naga People's Movement for Human Rights, Naga Students Federation, Naga Mother's Association, All Naga Student's Association of Manipur, United Naga Council etc) that lead the movement for unification in present times. They are also responsible for re-calling attention to the Sixteen-points agreement of the 1960's, and those provisions within it[88] that have gone far to protect the Naga territorial autonomy within India.

TERRITORIALITY OF THE NAGA NATIONAL MOVEMENT
IN DIFFERENT AREAS

The Naga national consciousness, being a largely a phenomena of the twentieth century, developed its course largely alongside the independent existences of the States of India and Burma. The Indian political system offered more latitude for the emergence of a pan-Naga identity and its consistent expression than the Burmese political theatre. This contributed to the peculiar feature of Naga nationalism expressing itself more vocally in India, than in Burma. The Nagas in Burma, as seen in the preceding chapters have been party to the national movement since its inception. But this was more by way of militant separatism, through the Eastern Naga Regional Council, than through a broad based

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[87] Naga Student's Federation in 1973.
[88] They point especially to the clause related to 'land and resources' whereby the economic exploitation of the lands is in the hands of the Nagas, and to the clause providing that no bill passed in the Parliament would apply to Nagaland unless approved by the State Legislative Assembly.

pervasive national consciousness. Thus, the armed movement did take place in Burma, but the democratization of the movement could not take hold there.

While Phizo (though he claimed to speak on behalf of Burmese Nagas also) treated the Naga issue as a problem between India and the Nagas, the NSCN sought to make it a tri-lateral issue. This was partly because the NSCN had emerged out of the eastern naga tracts bordering Burma and through the fusion of the ENRC and the NNC camp there. With the split into the I-M faction and the Khaplang faction, the question of involving the Burmese areas in a sustainable settlement took a backseat. The Burmese government in the meanwhile continued with the program of administratively splitting the Naga territory and depriving them of the control of their resource rich areas. The 500,000 strong populations of twenty seven Naga tribes in Burma in the meanwhile, have been struggling for basic human, economic, territorial and political rights.

The Naga tribes in Assam were among the earliest to respond to the NNC's armed movement and these areas have seen a more or less continuous application of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (also in its earlier avatars) since 1953. But these areas are not just a claim of the separatist Naga national movement; it has been a consistently simmering boundary dispute between the two States of Assam and Nagaland.[89] While a boundary commission appointed by the Central Government has favored the legitimacy of the Assamese claims, the situation on the ground is fast changing. The economic prospects of these areas (which are largely reserved forests), has helped the armed movement and the state government of Nagaland make common cause in gradually extending their influence. That the population is mostly non-Naga migrants further compounds the issue. The current situation is of Nagas having ownership of the lands and controlling most of the economic activities therein. Nagaland state government has also built up its administrative machinery there. A sore spot with the Assamese authorities and Assamese people for long, it is only in wake of the ongoing peace talks, that there has been a broad based and even violent opposition to the Naga claims.

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[89] The boundary dispute is reflected in the Naga national movement as well. The Hydari agreement of 1947 and the 16 points agreement of 1960 both demand the transfer of large areas back to the Nagas.

The case of Manipur is by far the most contentious. Sanjib Baruah describes it succinctly: 'The goal of creating a single political unit out of the Naga inhabited areas puts the Naga project of nationhood in a collision course with a parallel Manipuri project' (2005: 100-101). The Manipuri project designs itself as civic nationalism citing the long and illustrious history of the Kingdom of Manipur. Within Naga national consciousness, this civic nationalism is looked at as an apology for Meitei hegemony. But Manipur has had a long history of electoral politics of which the Nagas have fully partaken, and also enjoyed political power from time to time. Thus the Naga question in Manipur, at least for the Naga politicians in the state is not only an expression of national sentiment, but also a question of political survival.

The movement for Naga integration initiated by the Manipur Nagas active in electoral politics, in the 1960's and 1970's, had to be put on the backburner as the Naga national movement, dominated by the idea of complete separation from India, looked upon them as traitors to the cause. Thereafter, political expediency dictated that they work inside the Manipur state structure and speak on behalf of the Manipur. With the Naga armed movement, along with the mass movement gradually firing the imagination of the Nagas in the state, and with the high expectations that the ceasefires have generated, these same politicians are compelled again to speak the language of Naga unification. In the meanwhile the Naga claim (of ninety percent of the area) threatens the annihilation of the Manipur state. Moreover, the Kuki population in the state (which shares large territories along with the Nagas in the areas claimed), in response to the Naga national project, has taken to a national project of its own. Previously taking pride in its composite civic identity, Manipur has become the seat of militant movements and ethnic violence.

With the varying history, and varying strength of the Naga claims over the different states, it is said that the NSCN (I-M) has taken advantage of the long period of truce with the Government of India to build a broad based mass movement for the integration/ unification of Naga areas. Interestingly, if it is the legality of claims to Naga areas that is being pursued by the Nagaland State Government and backed by the armed and mass

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movement in the boundary dispute with Assam; for Manipur, it is the legal claims of the Manipur State itself which is stronger. The NSCN strategy is to drown all these details in the contention that 'Nagaland/lim is wherever Nagas are'. This was also the line taken by the NNC in its claims that 'Nagaland is not only a topographical borderline; it is also a cultural borderline' (NNC 64 in Lotha 2009: 106). However, these claims need to be weighed against the individual histories and claims of the party's that are directly affected by the Naga movement.

The burden of the study has been to historically analyze the territoriality of the Naga national movement from different Naga perspectives; studying and weighing the claims of other parties that are affected by Naga nationalism is beyond the its scope. However, in presenting the unique historical trajectories of the Naga nationalism in these areas, the study makes a case for considering each area individually for the purpose of a sustainable settlement of the Naga issue.

Issues and Implications

The burden of the investigation in the study was to shed more light on the territorial dimension of the Naga National Movement, and thus contribute meaningfully to a sustainable framework towards finding a lasting solution for the Naga political issue. The theoretical lenses used were that of nationalism, ethno-nationalism, and territoriality, manifest in this case also as ethno-territoriality. The method employed was historical. Accordingly the study throws light on two aspects.

First, the demand for the integration of Naga contiguous areas is not new; it had accompanied the course of the movement from the beginning. However, being an incipient nationalism, the question of integration, in the initial decades, had paled in front of the demand for complete territorial sovereignty from India, and also Burma. Six decades down the line, the changing international and Naga domestic climate has resulted in the latter demand going on the backburner and the former taking centre-stage. In as

much, the study makes a case for reconsidering the apprehensions most often expressed in the media, academic and policy circles in the Northeast and in the Centre; that the demand of a Greater Nagaland or Nagalim is recent 'mischief' of a misdirected national movement. Rather, the study finds the demand to be the culmination of a long and historical national movement, and a direct result of its democratization.

This brings us to the second, and the central argument forwarded by this study. Through a study of the territorial aspects of the Naga national movement, the study finds that the territoriality of the movement, manifest, firstly as territorial claims, and secondly as territorial strategies in service of the those claims, is contingent upon the politics of the movement; a politics that is defined by the various actors in the movement. Thus, though the demand for integration was not a new one, in the initial phases of the movement, the politics of the movement was effectively confined to the armed resistance, with the tribal structure and the populace providing covert support to it. The other actors, like Church and the political parties (those that were not aligned with the Central Government), were often compelled to toe the line adopted by the Federal Government of Nagaland. The later decades saw the gradual democratization of the movement and the increase in the number of actors. Not only could these actors speak vocally, without the fear of being exterminated (by the armed resistance, or the Indian armed forces), they also provided the moral legitimacy to the armed resistance under the NSCN (I-M) to negotiate with the Indian State on behalf of the people of Nagaland.

This is not to say that fractionalization, or fratricidal violence is not a characteristic feature of Naga politics and even Naga society anymore. Indeed the theme of reconciliation, always accompanying the movement, has taken on a renewed significance and urgency in light of the assurance that slow but certain headways are being made in the negotiations between the NSCN (I-M) and the Government/s of India[90]. Chasie's observation that, 'You simply can't build a nation without massive and continuous nation-building works' (Chasie in Venuh 2004: 136) is pertinent here. Accordingly, the

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[90] Indeed in 2011, both the Indian interlocutors and the NSCN (I-M) leadership have been giving feelers that a negotiated solution is a little more than a year away.

project of the Naga national movement, applies itself to the uphill task of bridging centuries of tribal isolation, clan-affinity and decades of fractionalization amidst a deeply pervasive culture of violence.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY

The case of the Naga national movement, as seen in this study, also allows for the reflection of possible implications for the theories of ethnonationalism and territoriality. It was seen how ethnonational movements were a phenomena of the post World War years, shaped by the structural forces of the prevailing political form of the nation-state. It shaped itself as much also, against the nation and state-building efforts of existing and newly established States.

Through a historical narrative of the deadlock characterizing the Naga and allied political issues, the study had hoped to highlight the deeply problematic nature of the Westphalian conception of territorial sovereignty[91], seen starkly when applied by ethnonational movements. Arjun Appadurai presents a succinct exposition of the situation, 'Although many anti-state movements revolve around images of homeland, of soil, or return from exile, these images reflect the poverty of their (and our) political languages rather than the hegemony of territorial nationalism. Put another way, no idiom has emerged yet to capture the collective interest of many groups in trans-local solidarities, cross-border mobilizations and post-national identities. Such interests are many and vocal, but they are still trapped in the linguistic imaginary of the territorial state. This incapacity of many deterritorialized groups to think their way out of the imaginary of nation states is itself the cause of much global violence since many movements of emancipation and identity are forced, in their struggle against existing nation states, to embrace the very imaginary they seek to escape' (1996: 166).

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[91] The Naga territory and its adjoining polities fall in a geopolitical region that for the most part of the last two thousand years had been subject to the galactic (Stanley Tambiah 1989) and overlapping (Winchikaul 1996) nature of sovereignty.

But, at the same time, the Naga national movement is instructive of how the meaning and the end of nationalism is amenable to change. Though a nation is a unit that aspires to become a state, it need not cease to either be a nation, or consider itself as a nation, if it does not become a state. Forces on the international scene are also aiding such a trend. The United States has explicitly stated its position, in considering self-determination as more consistent with integration than with disintegration (Strobe Talbott cited in Misra 2003: 597). The Naga movement too, realizes its approximate culmination as a nation in territorial integration rather than in full territorial sovereignty. This has paved the way to explore and implement more novel and creative forms of federalism to successfully and sustainably accommodate non-state nationalisms and ethno-nationalisms within existing States.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

The nature of the territoriality of the Naga national movement as seen in this study allows for highlighting two possible policy implications towards the resolution of the Naga issue. Firstly, as highlighted above, the need to explore forms of federal devolution of power and responsibilities beyond that accorded by the sixth-schedule of the Indian Constitution is urgent. This is in light of the signs and public declarations that the Government of India and the NSCN (I-M) are anxious to come to an early, sustainable and peaceful solution to the Naga national question. It has been noted by Tillin (2006) that the asymmetrical federalism that exists in relation to Kashmir and in the Northeast is more de-jure than de-facto. With the talk of a federated agreement that binds the Indian and Naga Constitutions into an arrangement which neither can unilaterally revoke, the issue of Indian asymmetrical federalism comes to the fore and needs to be engaged in greater detail. The ideas of regionalization (Ohmae 1993) and functional territoriality (Hans 2009) underline the suggestions like a second legislative chamber for Nagas across all states (Baruah 2005 in Shimray 2007: 128), or non-territorial apex councils (Verghese 1996).

Secondly, the study showed how the territorial claims of the Naga national movement differ in strength, legitimacy and motivation in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Manipur (apart from Chin and Sagaing in Burma). It follows then that, any plan for administrative or functional integration of Naga contiguous territories must be designed taking into account these differences. The federal arrangement therefore, rather than being uniform, should correspond, at least approximately, to the histories and aspirations of both the Naga and non-Naga populations of those regions. David Smith (1994) reminds that 'geography and justice are positively related' (quoted in Forsberg 1996: 375). For the set of issues involved in the Naga national question, it becomes imperative to keep Smith's words in mind.

Appendix

A SELECT DATELINE OF
THE NAGA NATIONAL MOVEMENT

8 BC: First estimated presence of Naga tribes in Paktai Hills, by Anthropologist S.K. Chatterjee.

150 : Nagas chronicled in the Patkai Mountain Range by Greek Historian Ptolemy.

600 : Nagas mentioned in Manipur Court Chronicles.

1228: Trekking from Burma to the Brahmaputra valley, Ahom's face resistance from Nagas in present day Tirap district of Arunachal. Ahom Buranjis, or Court Chronicles mention the existence of and relations with Nagas.

1826: Contiguous Naga territory divided into British India and Burma with the Treaty of Yandabo.

1832: British Colonial raids into Angami Naga territory begin. They are aided by Manipuri Troops. First outpost established at Samadgooting.

1834: British officers carve out rough boundary between Manipur State and future Naga Hills District from between Mao and Angami Naga areas.

1832-38: Period of expeditions into South and South-west Naga territory.

1839-43: Attempts to integrate Naga areas into British Imperial economy.

1849-51: Sustained military expeditions by British officers to permanently 'pacify' Naga tribes to 'protect' Assamese plains people

1851-66:   Period of British Administration's non-interference in Naga areas.

1867:   Rough borders of British Naga Hills District (NHD) drawn out: borders more akin to zones rather than lines.

1872:   First Naga Christian community set up by American Baptists in Ao Naga Area.

1873:   Inner-Line Regulation brought into effect for all Hill tribes surrounding Brahmaputra valley

1874:   Ahom Kingdom, suzerain of British Empire since 1826, becomes Assam province of British India.

1874:   Scheduled District Act introduced, whereby administration of scheduled areas to be separate from that of the provinces where they are located.

1875:   British military outpost shifted from Samadgooting to Wokha in Lhota Naga area.

1878:   Pacification of Naga tribes continues, with the aim this time of civilizing the Nagas as subjects of the British Queen. Headquarters of NHD shift to Kohima.

1879-81:   Battle of Khonoma. Thirteen Angami villages lay siege to Kohima: first joint struggle against British. Borders of NHD formalized. British colonial rule over Naga territory and Nagas formally established.

1881-17:   British settle nomadic Kuki tribes in Naga areas with the aim of checking raids by Nagas into lowlands in Cachar, Assam and within the Kingdom of Manipur.

1881- 20: Through direct subjugation, NHD borders extended. The Naga areas outside of NHD now known as Naga Tribal Area, Free Naga Area or Un-administered and Excluded Area and form the edges of the ambiguous British Indian border with British Burma.

1891: British become suzerain of Kingdom of Manipur. Administration of the Manipur Hills separated from that of the valley and brought under the de-facto control of the governor of Assam province.

1898: Denotification of large areas of NHD and their inclusion into Sibsagar district of Assam province. These areas today approximate to parts of districts of Nowgong, Jorhat and Karbi Anglong.

1914: World War One. 4000-6000 Nagas from NHD and Free Naga Areas recruited as part of British Labor Corps in France.

1918: Naga Club formed in Kohima and Mokokchung by returnees of the Labor Corps of first World War.

1929: Naga Club memorandum to Simon Commission opposing reforms aimed at further integration of NHD and other Naga areas with Assam Province.

1930: Retransfer of Dimapur and allied areas from Sibsagar to NHD.

1931: Haipiu Jadonang, founder of Heraka religion and socio-political reformer among Nagas of Manipur, hanged to death by British for subversive activities.

1937: Following recommendation of Simon Commission, NHD brought under the political control of Assam Province, but as Excluded Area. To be administered by Governor of Assam acting as agent of British Crown.

1943-44: Coupland plan, first mooted in 1928, debated in the British Parliament. Plan envisaged a common territorial boundary of all hill tribes governed through shared sovereignty of India and Burma.

1944: Kohima, adjoining Nagas, Imphal valley turn into battlefronts during World War II. NHD and Free Naga area briefly come under Japanese administration.

1945: Formation of Naga Hills District Tribal Council (NHDTC) for post-war reconstruction and extension of British approved Tribal Council system from Lhota, Angami and Ao territories to rest of NHD.

1946: NHDTC changes into the Naga National Council. Naga Student's Forum, languishing since 1937 also revived. Both organizations intend to agitate for 'Naga aspirations'. In June, NNC sends proposal of maximum autonomy for Nagas within free India to Cabinet Mission. Same proposal sent to Jawaharlal Nehru.

1946: In Manipur Communist Movement 'Praja Sangh formed under Hijam Irabot Singh. Movement had fair representation from Hill tribes of Manipur including Nagas. Later, Naga National Leage formed in Manipur with the aim to secure secession of all Hill tribes from the Meitei State.

1947: Separatist faction of NNC gains prominence within the organization. Sends a second proposal to British Prime Minister and others, mooting a plan to remaining under the guardianship of Indian State for ten years, after which Nagas would take a call on union with India or separate status. NNC deputes 5-member Commission to chart out its Constitution, aim being 'Solidarity of the Naga Nation', and it would be the basis of their incorporation into the Indian Constitution. Subsequently, Nagas fail to find any representation in Constituent Assembly. Sends second proposal of ten-year interim plan to British Government and Lord Mountbatten.

1947: Nine-point agreement negotiated with Assam Governor, Sir Akbar Hydari, to be the basis for their incorporation into Indian Constitution. Agreement embraces demand for the return of reserve forests from Sibsagar and Nowgong into Naga Hills District and recognizes that NNC stands for the solidarity of all Nagas, even those outside of the NHD. Ninth clause has ten year provision after which Nagas would be free to decide on their political future. NNC and Indian Government hold contradictory views on last clause. Hydari warns NNC on Indian use of force in the event of Naga belligerence. NNC radicals again send an ultimatum to Indian Government for initial ten-year interim proposal to be followed. Government gives vague assurances that their views would be incorporated within the Constituent Assembly by June 1948.

1947: A section of NNC declares Independence on 14th August. On 15th August, another section of NNC sends communication to Government of India, that Nagas could accept the Indian Constitution only if the Hydari proposal was accepted, including its 9th clause.

1947: Burmese and Indian Army move into respective Free Naga territories on each side of roughly demarcated international border.

1949: Kingdom of Manipur accedes to India as Union Territory.

1949: Assam's Premier Gopinath Bardoloi and Government of India deny existence of Nine-point agreement altogether. Maintain no agreement ever made with Nagas.

1950: All sections of NNC united in declaring that Nagas do not accept Indian Constitution. Send cable to the United Nations to this effect.

1951: Phizo elected as fourth President of NNC. Voluntary plebiscite held by NNC and allied organizations in Naga Hills. India refuses to send observers. Results show 99.9 percent in favor of no association with India.

1952: NNC launches civil disobedience. Nagas boycott first Indian General Elections.

1953: Mass boycott of Jawaharlal Nehru and Burmese Premier U Nu's address in Kohima, after Tribal Chiefs not allowed to read out their demands to Nehru. Subsequently, Assam Maintenance of Public Order (Autonomous districts) Act launches Assam police atrocities in Naga Hills.

1954: Indian Army annihilates Yimbang village in Tuensang Frontier Division of Free Naga territory. NNC declares the Sovereignty of the Republic of Free Nagaland or Hongkhin Government from Tuensang.

1955: Assam Disturbed Areas Act declared; precursor to the AFSPA.

1956: On 22nd March, Federal Government of Nagaland declared at Phenseyu in Rengma area of Naga Hills District. Hongkhin Government merges with FGN. Blue Flag unfurled and portfolio's distributed. Armed resistance to Indian Army begins in full swing under the aegis of Naga Federal Army.

1956: Because of his disagreement with Phizo over the strategy of violence in the national struggle, T. Sakhrie assasinated, allegedly on Phizo's orders.

1957: Founding of the Naga People's Convention (NPC) with Kevichusa at the helm. Initial aim was to facilitate dialogue between Indian State and Naga underground.

1958: Promulgation of Armed Forces Special Powers (Assam and Manipur) Ordinance.

1960: NPC, sidelining Kevichusa and its own original mandate, drafts a Sixteen-points charter of demands in consultation with Indian Government.

1961: Dr. Imkolingba Ao, main architect of the Sixteen-points charter, assassinated by the Underground.

1962: The Constitution, or Yhezabo of FGN in place. Contains first clear plan of integrating Naga areas in the clause- "The territory of Nagaland shall comprise all the territories inhabited by indigenous Naga tribes and such other territories the Tatar Hoho may, by law, admit on such terms and conditions as it deems fit."

1962: Nagaland Security Regulation Act launched in NHD and NHTA.

1963: Sixteen-points agreement accepted by Indian State and statehood granted to NHD and NHTA, amidst intense military build-up. Simultaneously in Burma, Naga territory administratively carved up into Chin state and Sagaing Division.

1964: Kevichusa calls statehood a veil and forms Democratic Party of Nagaland (DPN) to contest against NPC turned Naga National Organization (NNO), hereafter an arm of the Central Government in Nagaland. Nagaland State Legislature, with NNO in office, passes resolution demanding integration of all Naga areas.

1964: Ceasefire between Indian Army and Naga Federal Army from 5th September. Talks begin from 14th September. Citing satisfaction at the overtures of Peace Mission, Kevichusa dissolves DPN.

1965: Talks shift to Prime-Ministerial level on part of Indian State. Indira Gandhi exploits latent divide between Sema's and other tribes, by isolating Sema leader Kughato Sukhai for exclusive negotiations.

1967: First batch of Naga Guerrillas reach Yunan, China, through Burma. Phizo continues to dictate hard-line in the peace-talks.

1967: Schism between Federal Government and Federal Army deepens. Train blast at Diphu Assam that leaves 100 dead, attributed to NFA. Peace mission member Michael Scott deported. Bimal Prasad Chaliha quits.

1968: Revolutionary Government of Nagaland (RGN) formed by Sema leader Kaito Sema after defection from NNC. Sema is joined by Scato Swu and Kughato Sukhai, erstwhile negotiators with Indian Prime Minister. Kaito Sema assassinated soon after. With the help of RGN, Indian Army ceases documents incriminating the China connection of FGN. Subsequently, large contingent of China returned guerrillas captured.

1968: Indian and Burmese Government agree to joint border patrols.

1968: Naga Integration Council (NIC) founded by Rishang Keishing in Manipur.

1969: First border war between state's of Assam and Nagaland.

1970: Nagaland State Legislature passes second resolution demanding the integration of all Naga areas.

1970: NIC calls for the observance of Naga Integration Day on 20th November. Changes its nomenclature to United Naga People's Integration Council (UNIC) to accommodate all shades of Naga opinion in Manipur. Disowned by Naga underground for indulging in Indian Constitution based politics.

1972: Formal demarcation of International boundary between India and Burma.

1972: Government of India unilaterally calls of ceasefire. Declares FGN and NFA as unlawful organizations under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act. Imposes Armed Forces Special Powers Act in Nagaland state. Next three years witness heavy fighting, and counter-insurgency manages to split resistance.

1972: UNIC of Manipur merges with Congress (I) on the understanding that; "Congress does not oppose the Naga Integration Movement and does not consider Naga Integration Movement as anti-party, anti-state and unconstitutional activity."

1972: Central Government institutes Sundaram Commission to address the border dispute between Assam and Nagaland.

1973: RGN, till then supported by the Indian Military, disbanded and absorbed as two battalions of the Border Security Force. Event staged as surrender of RGN and success of counter-insurgency. United Democratic Front, formerly the DPN, wins Nagaland Legislative Assembly Elections amongst widespread repression.

1973: Naga Student's Federation sends representation to Indian Prime Minister demanding unification of Naga contiguous areas, not sovereignty. This tone was to become dominant 20 years later.

1975: Central Government and NNO engineer downfall of UDF Government. President's Rule imposed on Nagaland in March. In June, Emergency declared, and AFSPA extended across all of Northeast.

1975: Shillong Accord signed with a section of the Naga National Council, during the Emergency, and under duress. Accord applicable only within State of Nagaland.

1976: Emergency lifted. NNO merges with Congress. UDF leaders arrested for insisting on full implementation of Shillong Accord, i.e. acceptance of Indian Constitution be read along with the formulation of issues for final settlement.

1976: Sundaram Commission report on border dispute in favor of Assam. Nagaland rejects it as basis for settlement.

1979: Agitation for a separate Eastern Nagaland begins. In light of feelers about NNC resistance holding up in Burma, Eastern Nagaland movement abetted and supported by Government of India as a possible counter to a renewed resistance.

1980: Isak Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah, helped by the Eastern Naga Revolutionary Council, take control of the NFA camp holding out in Burma. Condemn the NNC Accordists for signing the Shillong Accord. ENRC and NNC (I-M) dissolves to form the Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN).

1980-86: Large Scale joint operations by Indian and Burmese military to contain NSCN.

1985: Assam-Nagaland border clashes involving armed police of both states and weapons like rocket launchers and mortars, leave more than 100 dead. Variava Commission appointed by the Centre to re-look at the border dispute.

1987: Both political parties, Nagaland Congress and UDF advocate engaging the underground in talks. Following downfall of Congress Government, President's Rule imposed on Nagaland State a second time.

1988: Following bloody attempt at coup by S.S. Khaplang, split in NSCN ranks into the NSCN (I-M) and NSCN (K).

1988: In Burma, Naga Hills Regional Progressive party formed; it was the first open political platform of Nagas in Burma. Aim not to agitate for self determination but for human rights of Nagas. Dissolved soon after it won local elections. Following establishment of NSCN (K), Burmese junta intensifies counter-insurgency

operations on its side, resulting in large scale repression of entire Christian Naga population in Burma follows. NSCN (K) concentrates on building presence in Nagaland state.

1988: Indian Army's Operation Bluebird leaves many dead and harassed in Oinam village, Manipur. Chief Minister Rishang Keishing complains of human rights violations by the Army. He is accused of being in cahoots with NSCN (I-M) and removed from office by Central Government.

1990: NSCN (I-M) receives One Million $ in aid from ISI of Pakistan and gradually consolidates its strength.

1991: Government of India initiates its Look East policy.

1992: NSCN (K) forms Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front, comprising of The United National Liberation Front (UNLF) of Manipur, United Liberation Front of Axom (ULFA), Kachin National Army (KNA), and Kuki National Organization (KNO) among others.

1992: Burmese Junta repression on Naga population, to wrest control of the land for commercial exploitation. An estimated say 100,000 Burmese Nagas cross the border to Manipur and Nagaland.

1992-1995: Naga-Kuki clashes in Manipur leave over 5,000 dead and 10,000 homeless.

1993: NSCN (I-M) gains representation in Unrepresented Nations People's Organization. Naga People's Movement for Human Rights sends delegation to Asia Indigenous People's Pact. Beginning of the internationalization of Naga issue. NSCN (I-M) rides the goodwill wave this generates and consolidates its position across Naga societies.

1994: NSCN (I-M) forms Self Defense United Front of the South-East Himalayan Region comprising of National Democratic Front of Bodoland and Assam, the Hynniewtrep Achik Liberation Council of Meghalaya among others. Nagaland State Legislature passes third resolution demanding the integration of all Naga areas.

1995, 1996, 1998: Manipur State Government passes three resolutions rejecting the concept of Greater Nagaland and upholding the territorial borders of Manipur State.

1997: Ceasefire between Indian State and NSCN (I-M) on 4th August, and beginning of peace talks. Manipur Government declares 4th August as State Integrity Day.

1997: Kuki-Paite clashes in Manipur. Large numbers left dead or homeless.

1998: Largescale boycott of Nagaland state elections under the slogan 'Solution. Not Election.'

1998: Baptist Fellowship of North America (BPNA) hosts a meet for reconciliation in Naga Society in Atlanta, Georgia, USA in 1998.

1999: General Meeting of the Consultative Body [of the NSCN (I-M)'s side in peace talks] in Nagaland attended by civil society organizations, Church bodies and Naga individuals from all sections of Naga society.

2001: Ceasefire between Indian State and NSCN (K) and later with NNC.

2001: Unique nature of Naga national movement acknowledged by NDA Government at Centre. Announcement of extension of ceasefire with NSCN (I-M), on June 18, without territorial limits, unleashes fury in Manipur, Assam and Arunachal

Pradesh. Violence and deaths from firing on protestors in Imphal. Naga civil society bodies urge Centre not to pay heed to protests. Territorial clause revoked on 24th July.

2001: United Naga Council of Manipur signs broad-based Senapati declaration, cuts ties with Government of Manipur and vests itself with the power to administer the Hills.

2002: NSCN (I-M) leadership travels to Delhi on Indian passports. 2nd and 3rd General Meeting of the Consultative Body held in Bangkok on the themes "Reconciliation and Realization" and "Strengthening the Peace Strategy".

2003: NSCN (I-M) issues Journey of Peace statement; invites Meitei's and all others affected by Nagalim proposal for talks. UNC demands South Nagaland State to be carved out of Hills in Manipur.

2005: Fourth General Meeting of the Consultative Body in NSCN (I-M)'s Camp Hebron in Nagaland attended by over 6000 individuals and representatives of various sections of Naga society. Resolved- "Unification of Naga areas is legitimate and therefore non-negotiable".

2005: Secular Progressive Front Government of Manipur declares 18th June (in memory of 18 June 2001) as State Integrity Day.

2006: India takes objections to NSCN (I-M) sending its emissary to China and addressing the first meeting of the UK Parliamentarians for National Self Determination.

2007: NSCN (I-M) welcomes UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People, hailing it as a 'vindication of the last 61 years of the Naga national movement'. Government of India and NSCN (I-M) agree to indefinite extension of ceasefire

subject to progress in peace talks. Eastern Naga People's Organization raises demand for separate 'Frontier Nagaland State' comprising districts of Mon, Tuensang, Phek, Kiphire in Nagaland and Tirap and Changlang in Arunachal Pradesh.

2008: Forum for Naga Reconciliation facilitates top leaders of NSCN (I-M) and NSCN (K) to meet at Chiang Mai, Thailand.

2009: Joint Working Group for Naga Reconciliation comprising of middle and top order leadership of NSCN (I-M) and NSCN (K) and the Forum for Naga Reconciliation sign 'Declaration of Commitment' towards Naga reconciliation. Archbishop Desmond Tutu praises Forum for Naga Reconciliation.

2009: Joint Working Group for Naga Reconciliation re-affirm the rejection of any 'conditional package offered to the Nagas by the Government of India.

2010: Manipur State Cabinet denies permission for Thuingaleng Muivah to visit his native district of Ukhrul. All Naga Students Association of Manipur hold strike on National Highway 39 for 60 days, paralyzing life in Imphal valley.

2010: Naga territory in Burma further divided up under the provision of the Naga Self Administered Zone.

2011: NSCN (I-M) leadership and Home Secretary to Government of India, G.K. Pillai declare that both parties are hopeful of a solution by the end of the year.

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