**Summary On:**

**G) In the Shadows of Naga Insurgency: Tribes, State, and Violence in Northeast India by J.P. Wouters**

In the Shadows of Naga Insurgency the Indo-Naga war has generated an description of how the struggle unfolds at the level of everyday. It foregrounds the embodied and emplaced experiences of ordinary Naga men and women living in villages and tells the politics of insurgency and counter insurgency have shaped their lives. It further looks at the ways in which the Naga armed conﬂict, and the Indian state’s response to it, lapping into the domains of governance, development, and the democratic process, showing how underground and overground politics have merged into a single political ﬁeld. This book indicates the spacious and rich scholarship the Nagas were once known by, especially, if also problematically, during the colonial epoch. While evidently sympathizing with the Nagas, Wouters does not refrain from being critical in his analysis of the Naga Movement. Wouters starts the book with an insightful sketch of Naga political history as it moved from the pre colonial to the colonial period, and subsequently culminated in the declaration of Naga independence, which was declared one day ahead of India’s independence. The author thinks as the “insurgency complex,” which captures how the Indo-Naga conﬂict “has long ﬂooded the banks of political conﬂict and washes through all ﬁelds of social life”. The “insurgency complex” runs through all the chapters of the book, in which it unravels itself variously in relation to identity, ceaseﬁre economics and politics, governance and administration, corruption and moral reasoning, and democratic politics.

The Indo-Naga ceaseﬁre, which  was signed in 1997   has  existed ever  since without it leading to a political settlement. It reveals itself particularly in the relight of a pre existent and volatile struggle fought out within the wider Indo-Naga conﬂict and between now rival Naga underground factions over historical legitimacy; leadership contests; ideological diﬀerences; and territorial, tribal, and taxation domination. Wouters has become particularly charged, as many Nagas have grown somewhat dis illusioned with the Naga Movement, not necessarily of what it stands for but because especially after the ceaseﬁre they noted a change in the motivations and behavior of many “national workers,” as cadres of Naga underground groups are referred to locally. As opposed to earlier generations of Naga ﬁghters, these “post-ceaseﬁre recruits” do not have the embodied experiences of suﬀering and sacriﬁce, and they are now perceived to be increasingly driven by selfish and financial motives and this is widely resented. Naga villagers have experienced and consequently seen the Indian state and its development programs and projects. They show how the initial state approach through state violence, became over time complemented by a “policy of seduction. The clear aim of weaning Nagas away from the politics of insurgency. While this policy was successful to an extent, it came with varied social consequences. One such consequence was the emergence of a “class society” whose origins can be traced to a “neo-tribal developmentalism” , which was put in place and on political purpose by the post colonial Indian state.

It focuses on the contemporary demand for “Frontier Nagaland,” which insists on the bifurcation of the Nagaland state through the creation of a separate state for so-called eastern Nagas, a demand that goes against the grain of the wider Naga Movement. The contemporary moment, however, is encouraged by an experienced neglect on the part of the Nagaland government, which eastern Nagas see as being controlled and dominated by western Nagas.

The last chapter tells about entries into how what is locally called “the underground factor” interferes in “over-ground” elections, and into the ways Naga villagers apply their agency to appropriate and rework the Indian democracy process, which they perceive as alien to their own cultural life worlds and uses, particularly in struggling over pre-existing divisions over status, standing, and dominance, both between villages and between clans within villages.

