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(Title of the Thesis) . . . . . .

TRADE AND ECONOMY IN MANIPUR FROM THE REIGN OF KIYAMBA TO PAMHEIBA (GARIB NAWAZ) (15th TO 18th CENTURY AD)

. . . . . .

A thesis submitted during (Year). . . . . 2021 . . . . . .to the University of Hyderabad in

partial fulfillment of the award of a Ph.D. degree in (Department/Centers/School). HISTORY/SOCIAL SCIENCES . . . . . .

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TRADE AND ECONOMY IN MANIPUR FROM THE REIGN OF KIYAMBA TO PAMHEIBA (GARIB NAWAZ) (15th TO 18th CENTURY AD)

By

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A Thesis Submitted in 2021 to the University of Hyderabad in Partial Fulfillment for the Award of a **Doctor of Philosophy** degree in History, School of Social Sciences

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The thesis has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

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DECLARATION

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Is a bonafide research work. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this University or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

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Part of the Thesis have been

A. Published in the following publications:
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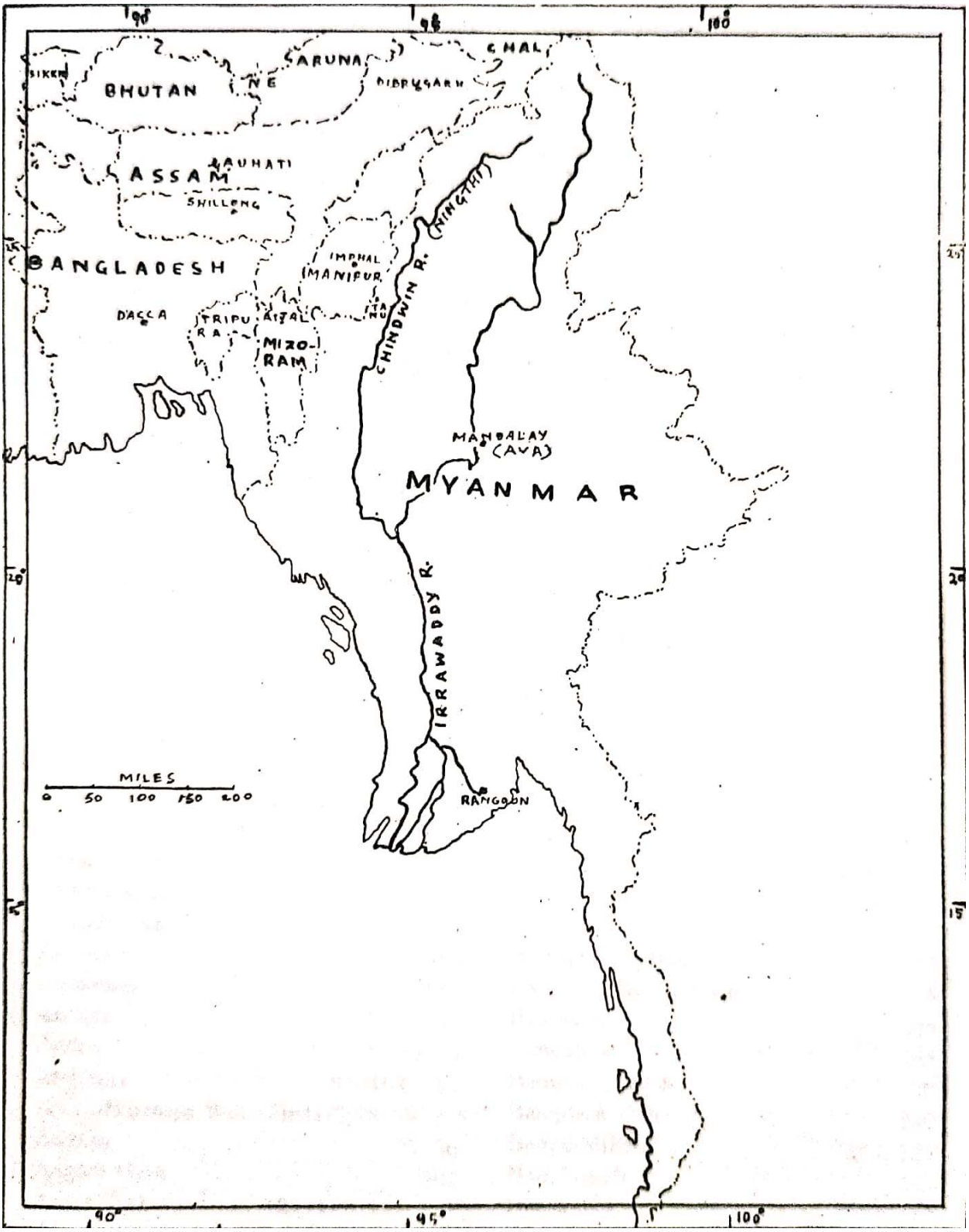
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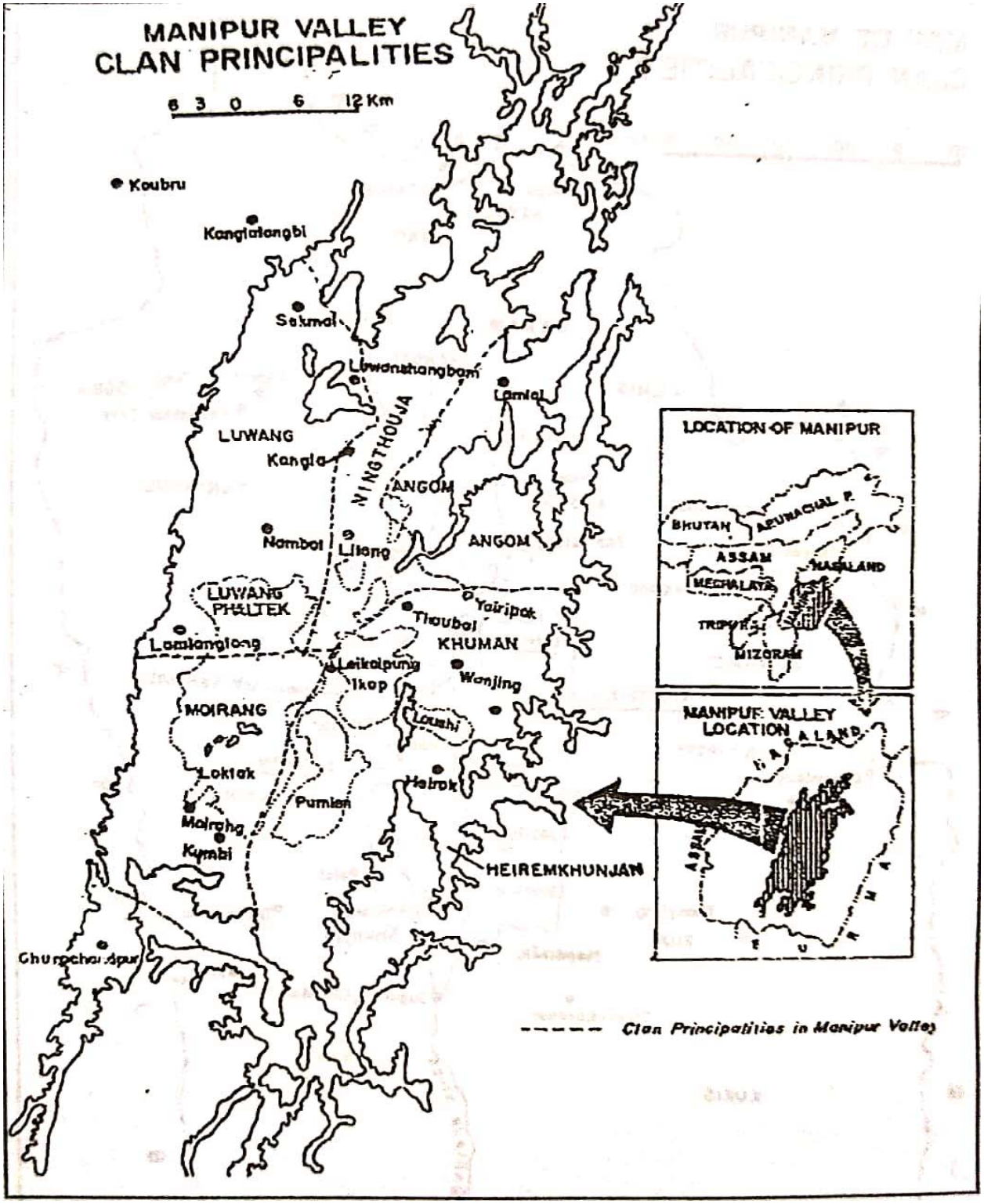
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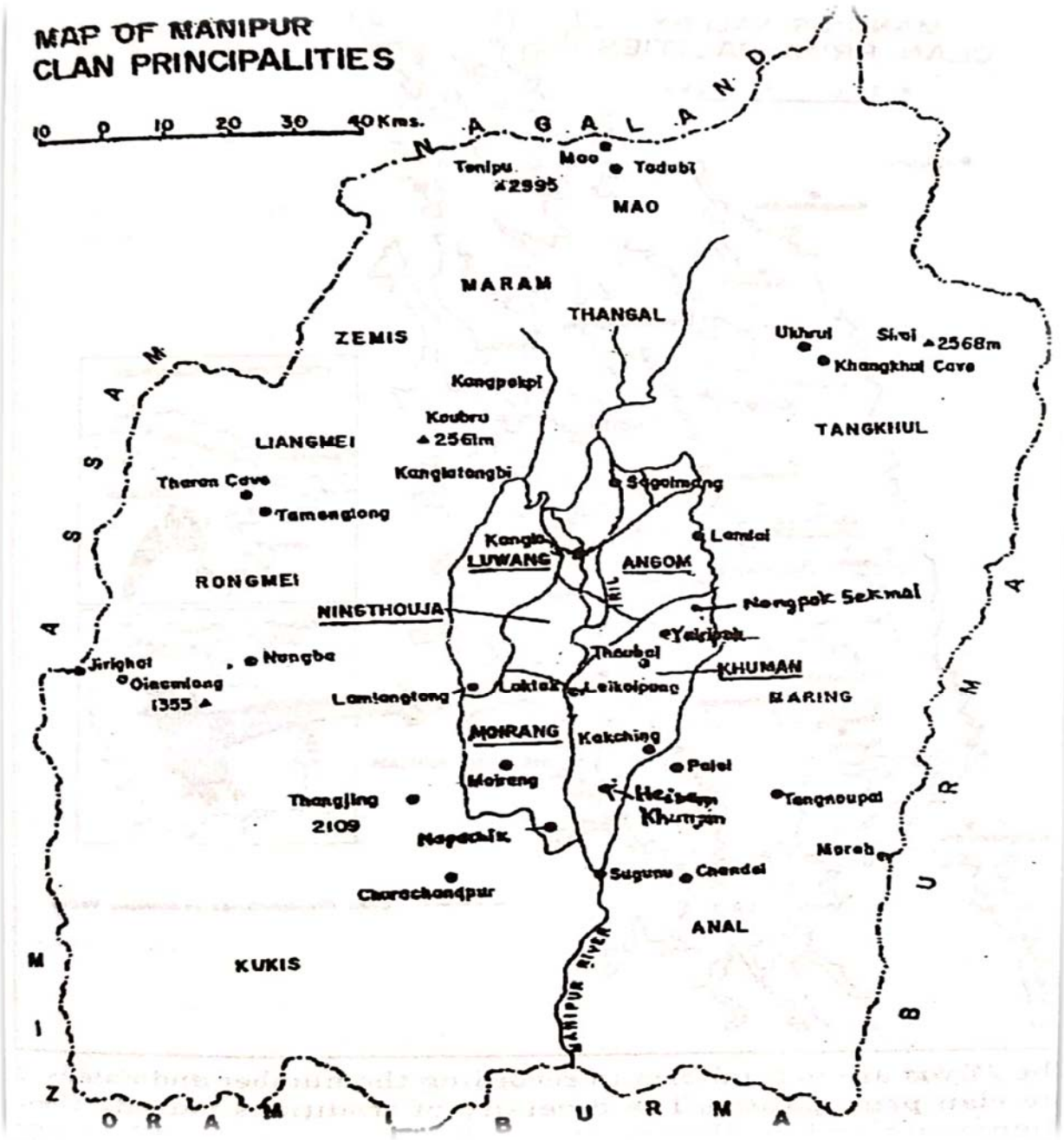
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Source: Rena Laisram, *Early Meitei History: Religion, Society and the Manipur Puyas* (New Dehli: Akansha Publishing House, 2009).p.206

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CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis has taken up an important topic for research that has been neglected in the historiography of Manipur. Political history and socio-cultural history and the history of religions have been the main concerns of the historians working on Manipur. Some archaeologists have also worked on issues relating to the economy, but the economy has rarely preoccupied historians' minds. Therefore, this thesis has taken up this challenging topic to address the Problem of economic patterns in medieval Manipur as the economy forms the base for all the other facets like culture, society, polity, religion, etc. Therefore, to assume that the economy is a simple economy without any change is unconvincing and also a simplistic generalisation that goes against the grain of the sources. There exist a large number of primary sources that help us to narrate the economic history of Manipur. Keeping these challenges in mind and the underutilisation of sources, the thesis has embarked on an exercise to narrate the economic history of medieval Manipur from the 15th century AD in a comprehensive way to account for the rise of Manipur in the 18th century AD.

1.1.Explanation of the Title

The research thesis highlights the historical context of Manipur's economic structure from King Kiyamba (1467-1508 AD) to Garibnawaz (1709-1748 AD). Manipur is renowned for its diverse ethnic and geographic mosaic. The evolving processes and evolution from the simple way of dwelling to complex forms of civilisation were the objects of their continuing actions and hardships. The core theme or the objective of this thesis revolves through various forms such as agricultural production and the pattern of land use, industry and production,

like pottery, salt manufacturing, manufacture of *yu* or rice beer, manufacture and exchange of industrial goods, trade and related prospects and challenges.

Trade is a fundamental economic principle involving purchasing and selling products and services, reimbursement charged to a vendor by a buyer or trading goods or services between parties. Trade will take place in a producer-consumer economy and in a different form in pre-modern economies. According to its most general meaning, the term trade is defined as the relationship between exports and import prices of a given country.[1] Goods or services that are bartered among different peoples are an age-old tradition, perhaps as old as human history. However, foreign trade explicitly refers to an interaction between representatives of various countries, and accounts and descriptions of such work begin only with the emergence of the modern nation-state at the close of the European Middle Ages. When political theorists and scholars started to investigate the nation's existence and work, trade with other countries became their inquiry's specific topic.[2]

Economic history typically concerns how humans have historically organised the world to produce food; clothing and shelter, and fellow human beings. Meanwhile, about other concepts; economic historians are keen to look at the process by which society retains its material prosperity. The study of economic history is the study of human life in its totality. It means that how all human characters and these components shape our actions are taken into account in our research. This thesis will deal with the interplay between economic, political, social and cultural behaviour in Economic History.[3]

An economy is a man-made institution that satisfies human needs.A system by which people get living.[4]Every individual in society is engaged in making the source of livelihood in

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[1]W.W. Rostow, "*The Historical Analysis of the Terms of Trade*," The Economic History Review 4, no. 1 (1951): 53–76. Accessed October 16, 2020. doi:10.2307/2591657.
[2]"International Trade | Definition, History, Benefits, & Types," Encyclopedia Britannica, accessed October 16, 2020, https://www.britannica.com/topic/international-trade.
[3]Donald J. Harreld, *An Economic History of the World Since 1400* (Teaching Company, LLC, 2016).p.4.
[4]A. J. Brown, *Introduction to the World Economy* (London: Routledge, 2013).p.11.

one way or another. All the works are associated with the cultivation and other activities such as weaving, pottery, handicrafts, trade and commerce, etc. In exchange for their material and non-material returns, they generate products and services.

Economic history is defined as the study of monetary issues and material development. It is the account of man's struggles to deliver his material needs and fulfil his desires, i.e. the necessities of food, clothing, and shelter. Such activities are called economic effort. These activities are called economic practices, and the things that he wants for his physical requirements such as luxury, comforts and leisure, which he gets through labour or sacrifices, are called wealth. A great and significant aspect of social progress is the subsequent evolution of increasingly significant are wealth production methods. This progress owes to the steady growth of expertise and economical operations division into their three significant branches, agriculture, trade, and commerce. Since the time immemorial, economic activities are always linked to socio-cultural and political movements. The methods of producing certain types of arrangements between producers reveal to share the wealth and others engaged in consumption. Full customs and agreements regulating wealth production and distribution in every society are known as its economic system.[5] If we want to include an alternative concept of economic history, we might say that it accounts for the past's economic systems.

In society's development, the economy is crucial in meeting individuals' daily needs and society members. A civilised' society in human history tackles the demands of survival, transformation and development. The use of fire and the invention of metal tools and the monetary system's creation have been a turning point in human history. This development process is related to the generation of surpluses. Before coins were struck, people in ancient societies used the barter system as a form of exchange. After the invention of coins, man used

[5]Arthur Birnie, *An Economic History of the British Isles* (London: Routledge, 2013).pp.1-2.

them as a means of exchange for goods. The reality of human experience developed through the production and reproduction of materials for their daily needs. Trade-in Manipuri is translated as *Lallonba.*[6] It described the purchasing and selling practices, and the economy is defined as *Senmitlon*[7]in Manipuri. In Manipuri language, the word 'socio-economy' is implied by the term *"Wattapadaba"* which means that "it has neither the surplus nor the accumulation of the demands of existence".which is still an unsettled issue[8]

Manipur's economic situation in medieval society was based on a full-fledged or settled agrarian structure. Metal tools and monetary system replaced the stone tools and the barter system, respectively. Manipur's economic growth and development in the medieval period were due to small-scale production such as handicrafts, textile weaving, pottery, etc. The state-controlled the kingdom's economic activities. The evidence of a market in Manipur indicates that it was founded in 1580 AD during King Mungyamba's reign.[9] One of the key factors contributing to establishing the Manipur market was the *Lallup*[10]system, an ancient labour system in which males between the ages 16 to 60 were sent to cultivate in a faraway land. Khagemba's period (1597-1652 AD) was one of the significant milestones in Manipur's history regarding economic development. During his reign, there was a significant economic change and the expansion of the agricultural system and the introduction of currency coinage and trade in small and large commodities.

1.1.1. Elements of the Title

Though some sources have found that it is difficult to be formulated or deciphered, the accurate date of medieval Manipur's economic history cannot be fixed due to the lack of

[6]HidamDolen, *Manipuri Dictionary, A comprehensive Manipuri to English learners Dictionary in Meitei Mayek and Bengali Scripts.* (Assam: Hodamba Publications Cachar, 2016).p.106.
[7]Ibid.,p.93.
[8]N. Vijaylakshmi Brara, *Politics, Society, and Cosmology in India's North East* (New Dehli: Oxford University Press, 1998). p.233.
[9]Thomas Callan Hodson, *The Meitheis* (London: D. Nutt, 1908).p.23.
[10]L.Ibungohal Singh and N KhelchandraSingh, ed. *Cheitharol Kumbaba* (Imphal: Manipur SahityaParishad, 2015).p.9. (*Lallup-Lal* meaning wars *Lup* meaning organisation or division means groups into which the male subjects of the country divided for development service to the country, agriculture as well as including defence).

abundant data. The economy's essential characteristics can only be reconstructed by the archaeological and literary sources. In the prehistoric caves in Tharon (Tamenglong District), Napachik (Wangoo Village) and Khangkhui (Ukhrul), the findings of the archaeological site demonstrate the use of bone tools and neolithic equipment.[11] Those results have indicated a hunting and food gathering economy in this region at some stage. The Napachik excavation shows further the existence of agricultural practices and settled life in the valley of Manipur.[12]The stone tool in Napachik illustrates fishing, hunting and food production as a basis for the mixed economy. The existence of settled agriculture and associated technologies and tools is essential in understanding local communities' economies by historians and archaeologists. The chronicles of Manipur and various literary texts revealed that indigenous species of paddy was discovered, agricultural invention and cultivation by shifting practices, the development of bronze and the iron techniques, and *daos axes* and *hoes* made for agriculture and allies.[13] In various literary texts, the myths and traditions indicate that the ancient Meitei practice was shifting cultivation. They practised shifting cultivation on the hillside or forest dryland areas before gaining knowledge of wet rice agriculture. Dense forest drylands, the Eastern and Northern parts of the valley of Imphal were the appropriate environments for this sort of agricultural production. They adopted *daos* and axes as agricultural tools for deforestation and clear jungles and tiny iron hoes to dig the soil.

There is an indication of a Neolithic Celt tool[14] that shows the likelihood of these being used in primitive agricultural practices long before iron hoes were introduced. The reference can be found in the protohistoric era of Manipur for the discovery of an ancient variety of paddy named *MorshiThangi.*[15] The earliest reference to the cultivation of paddy

[11]Okram Kumar Singh, *Stone Age* Archaeology *of Manipur* (Imphal: State Archaeology, Government of Manipur, 1997). pp.101-118.
[12]Ibid.,p.126.
[13]M.Chandra Singh, *Poireiton Khunthokpa* (Imphal,1967). p.3.
[14]Singh, *Stone Age* Archaeology *of Manipur*. Op, cit.,p.4.
[15]M. Narendra, *Langwol* (Imphal,1981).p.1.

crops in the valley, using the hoe, is provided in the Meitei texts, such as *Soubol Lairembi Loutarol, Ningthou Maputhiba, Soubol Yairel Chanu.* However, in the literature on the pre-Pakhangba period, there is no mention of the usage of plough or animals. During the period of Poireiton, a contemporary of Nongda Lairen Pakhangba, agriculture was further developed as iron was used and animal domesticating, including cattle, was added.[16]The Royal Chronicle gives an in-depth account of the river dredging and several irrigation systems that were drained from the Central Valley of Manipur's low marshes.[17]Another relevant literary text, *Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba,* states that the *Shelloi-Langmei* hill tribes practised shifting cultivation and that Meitei cultivated wet rice in the valley.[18] These activities imply that there was food production and also hunting-gathering.

Ningthourol Lambuba described that the owners could not carry the paddy to the village's barns as excellent paddy was harvested in some hills. The use of a paddy basket known as *Sangbai* is also noted.[19] Cultivation technology is not to refer. Nevertheless, by using mortar and stick, the people were husking the paddy. The fishing weir of reeds, both mentioned in the chronicle, and the text was also a viable economic activity. The women's vocation was weaving of cotton wool and silk. Hunting was another activity with a commodity and economic interest. Animal production had also evolved with prominent references to raising cattle, goat rearing, dogs, pigs, buffalo, and horses. Chicken and duck are often referred to as poultry.[20] The royal proclamation *Loiyumba Shinyen/Silyel* (1074-1122 AD) and *Mashil* (Distribution of the Occupation) also relate to the amount of tax levied on Agriculture State peasants during the reign of King Loiyumba. He gave a particular profession to a specific family (*Yumnak).*

[16]Singh, *Poireiton Khunthokpa*.op,cit., p.3.
[17]Singh and Singh,*Cheitharol Kumbaba*. Op, cit., pp.2-3.
[18]N Khelchandra Singh, ed. *Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba* (Imphal,1968).p.38.
[19]Gangmumei Kabui, *History of Manipur: Pre-Colonial Period* (New Delhi: National Publishing House, 1991).p.114.
[20]Ibid.,

Furthermore, the agricultural economy developed along with crafts and manufacturing, and the kingdom divided into Six *Lups* (division). They are *Angouba Lup, Khurai Lup, Akong Lup, Langmai Lup, Chingcha Lup,* and *Kaicha Lup* for better administrative management.[21]In the later parts of his reign, the king's control over the families of artisans' economic occupations are represented in the royal decree. He was considered to be the great reformer and nation builder in the history of Manipur.[22]

In the valley of Manipur, this involves the prevalence of wet rice cultivation. The usage of iron plough driven by bullock is referred to in earlier works but not explicitly stated. However, myths that tigers yoked by serpents and beak of stork were used as plough by Gods.[23]Due to the progress in metallurgy knowledge, especially iron, and the continuation of usual trade between Manipur and neighbouring Burma and Indian states such as Ahoms, Tripura, and Kacharis, that plough must have been used in the Naothingkhong period in the 7thcentury AD.

Though agriculture in Manipur is explicitly indicated to have improved during the Khagemba'speriod (1597-1652 AD), advanced agricultural technology was introduced by Muslim immigrants, including transplantation of paddy seedlings.[24]*Nongsamei Puya* mentions Muslim farm activities and specifically the cultivation of wet rice and bullocks.[25]The usage of plough driven by cattle in Manipur valley was also the general agricultural custom. The development of enhancing paddy varieties in the Manipur valley rendered communication with outer regions possible. The surplus production of paddy could be collected as State revenue, and wet rice cultivation in the kingdom made excess output

[21]Konsam Manikchand Singh, ed. *Loiyumpa Silyel* (Imphal, 2012).p.2.
[22]R. K. Jhalajit Singh, *A Short History of Manipur* (Imphal: O.K. Stores, 1965).p.60.
[23]Jayanta Bhusan Bhattacharjee, ed., *State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur* (New Dehli:Akansha Publishing House, 2010). pp.147-148
[24]B. Kullachandra Sharma and Badruddin.*Pangal Hourakpham* (Imphal, 1991).p.146.
[25]Oinam Bhogeswor Singh and M.A. Janab Khan, ed. *NongsameiPuya* (Imphal, 2014).p.39.

possible.[26] By utilising dredging rivers and clearing water reserves from swampy regions and marshes. The royal chronicles recorded the various instances in which the State undertook establishing flood protection measures by building canals, dykes, and bunds.[27]

The rise of the Meitei Kingdom as a prosperous state in the 18thcentury was the vigorous efforts of Khagemba (1597-1652 AD) in the history of Manipur. Immigrants from neighbouring regions such as –Kabos, Shans, and Muslims, *Pangals* from Cachar, and Brahmins from Bengal contributed a lot to the kingdom's economic growth. During his reign, Muslim immigrants developed favourable economic conditions by introducing new crops, transplanting system, processing small metals, and other artisan based production Centers. Khagemba's reign marked the growth of trade and commerce beyond the traditional agro-based economy with the opening of ten markets in different parts of the kingdom. Moreover, the large-scale production of paddy made its surplus crop, which became a commercial item. New cash crops such as tobacco were also introduced, which laid the foundation for a new trade network, systematic trade, and trade, as markets were established in different parts of the valley leading to the trade-in horses and salt. The market exchanged and transaction in which both barter and cowry are as a monetary economy. For transport, bullock carts and other carts had drawn by oxen, buffaloes, elephants, and horses used. The recurrent wars between Manipur and Burma brought many hill people as economic agents, not just as raiders, but also as network exchange. After the development of artificial irrigation and landmass reclamation, large businesses were also taking place in commodities such as salt, metal, silver from Burma's Shan region, and Zed from Irrawaddy plains and Burma. The recurring wars between Manipur and Burma brought the hills' people as raiders and network exchange agents. It thus led to a new sphere of interaction between different sections that also had an economic aspect which is overlooked.

[26]Bhattacharjee, *State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur*. Op,cit., p.148.
[27]Singh and Singh,*Cheitharol Kumbaba*. op,cit.,p.38.

1.1.2. Central Focus of the Thesis

The thesis tries to explain the evolution of the economy in Manipur and the transition from a use economy to a full-fledged exchange economy with developed institutions. Based on this argument, the actions that started during the reign of Khagemba(1597-1652 AD) created conditions for the rise of Pamheiba (Garibnawaz) (1709-1748 AD) and the base for his large-scale transformations in all fields that needed a substantial surplus.

The thesis focuses on the medieval Manipur's economic condition, which deals with economic activities such as agriculture, trade, crafts, farming and handicrafts, such as weaving, pottery and salt production and iron smelting. The study seeks to define the mode of production-establishment of agriculture in the valley and the shifting agriculture in the hills, to examine the feudal system. This proposed study deals with the period from King Kiyamba (1467-1508 AD) to King Pamheiba (Garibnawaz) (1709-1748 AD). Renowned historians such as Kabui (1991), Khelchandra (1963,1984,1997,2007), Roy (1958) Jhalajit (1965), Kirti (1980), SarojNalini (1980), Ibohal (1986), Sanajaoba (1988), Tensuba (1993), Phanjoubam (2003), Lisam (2011) and Hodson (1908) have focused on political, social and cultural aspects, while the economic importance remains a significant lacuna. Essential features are the rise of state-society based on the Meitei/Meetei state's development, broad-ranging social integration, religious stratification, and Hinduization. The Meitei state's economic basis was a transition from the self-sufficient economy and barter system, TC Hodson could not comprehend this in *The Meitheis* (1908). There are several works by Kabui (1991-2004) and Snajaoba (1988, 1995, 2003, and 2005) based on political history and which have now become a landmark in Manipur's historical writing. However, the kingdom's economic condition is not highlighted. Considering the importance of the economy in medieval Manipur, previous studies have neglected that Manipur, due to the expansion of economic and political forces, became an expansionist military state. Even in Khagemba's coins and inscriptions, there are references made to the medieval period's economic

activities. This thesis attempts to study the medieval economy and give details of medieval Manipur's economic structure.

1.1.3. Temporal Span of the thesis

The study of the period from the 15th to the 18thcenturies was a remarkable phase in Manipur's history regarding economic, social, and political conditions. This period was the extensive military expansion of the Ningthouja dynasty to establish its sovereignty over the principalities of the Kha– Ngangba, Angom, Luwang, and Khuman clans in the valley. The Moirang and Chenglei often revolted but were suppressed by the Ningthoujas. In this period, Ningthouja consolidated political authority over the valley of Manipur. Kiyamba, Kabomba, Mungyamba, Khagemba, Khunjaoba, Paikhomba, Charairongba, and Pamheiba (Garibnawaz) extended their military expedition to the hill tribes and brought them under the supremacy of Nignthouja. The powerful kings of the 15th to 18th centuries, such as Kiyamba, Mungyamba, Khagemba, Paikhomba, Charairongba, and Pamheiba (Garibnawaz), resisted and defended Manipur against the invasions of the neighbouring politics. For example, the Shans, Burmese, Chinese, Bodo, Kacharis, Ahoms, and Muslims- opened the trade link of Manipur with the outside world and various groups of people who passed through and settled in the country. They were politically, socially, and culturally absorbed into the Manipuri society. The Manipuri community of the 15th to 18thcenturies experienced changes in the economic and political structure of the Meitei.[28]The form of production of the Meitei kingdom became the model for the rest of the communities.

King Kiyamba (1467-1508 AD) conquered the Kabaw valley, earlier known as Thangwai Ningthouba. The reconstruction of the history of Manipur has been relatively simple and accurate at the beginning of this remarkable king. He began keeping the royal chronicle known as the *Cheitharol Kumbaba*. In addition to many related literary sources,

[28]Kabui, *History of Manipur*.op,cit.,pp.194-233-234.

Manipuri history has taken a sharp and precise shape. This marks the phase from literasation to literalisation, meaning elaborating literature for aesthetic purposes beyond instrumental purposes. The high regard for the strength and influence of Manipur led to the King Kiyamba being invited by the king of the Shan Kingdom of Pong in Upper Burma, and they took part in a mutual military campaign into the trans-Chindwin Basin, home to the number of Shan principalities. In general, the Meiteis knew as Pongs as the Shan from Upper Burma. Alternatively, the Shan state itself and the Chindwin Basin Shan are recognised as the Kabaws. Kabaw was the ethnic group's name and the valley where they inhabited.[29]

Nevertheless, in 1470 AD, Manipur and Pong's combined powers occupied the Chindwin Basin's Shan principalities. Manipur's chronicle informs us that the Combined Armies joined in the capture of Kyang, Kabaw valley in the Shan principalities. King Kiyamba made an offering of a Mithun to mark his victory as his military mission went through the present Tengnoupal hills. Kyang was a principality connected with Poireiton and his wife Leinaotabi, who attempted to rear dogs and piggery in this region. Kiyamba showed power and bravery as he conquered Kyang.[30]

Cheitharol Kumbaba recorded with great pomp, the King of Manipur and his ally was welcomed triumphantly. Over the *Ningthi* River (Chindwin), they built a silver bridge of 600 ft wide; both rulers crossed it, sat on golden chairs together, ate together from one royal plate, and drank from the same royal glass. And they exchanged the *pung* drummer of King Kiyamba, servant Sekta, with the servant of Choupha Khekhomba, the trumpeter named Louwan.[31]Raised as a conqueror, he was equally effective in his management. His efforts as ruler and reformer were well crafted in his numerous administrative inventions. By assigning two people as administrators and *Lakpas* (supervisors) of the *Panas* (administrative division)

[29]Ibid.,p.195.
[30]Ibid.,
[31]Saroj N. Arambam Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur–Cheitharon Kumpapa: Original Text, Translation and Notes Vol. 1. 33-1763 CE* (New York: Taylor& Francis, 2005).pp.38-39.

in 1497 AD, he set up two tax or administrative divisions or circles named "*Ahallup* and *Nahallup Panas.*" In the chronicles, it is informed that King Loiyumba founded six vital administrations at the beginning of the 12thcentury. Kiyamba modified the *pana* system further to suit his time's needs. The setting up of panas in *Ahallup* and *Nahallup* strongly contradicts many scholars' arguments that the Nongda Lairen Pakhangba set up the four *Panas*. The use of the term *Pana's* administrative revenue influenced the Shans, who in the 15thcentury came in touch with Manipur.[32]

The social restructuring took place after the immigration and new groups of people from both the east and the west – the Kabo / Shans, the *Pangals*, the Brahmins, the Lairikyengbam, etc., started coming to Manipur. During that time, Manipuri powers had carried out many defensive and offensive raids. Over the last few years, several ethnic groups have migrated to Manipur and have persisted over the next century. Manipur and the present Manipuri population's development integrates all the people from various ethnic groups into the Meitei society. During King Khagemba, several local cults, beliefs, and religious convictions arose concerning religious affairs. By the middle of the 18th century AD., these native cults were established. Simultaneously, spiritual traditions, neo-Hinduism spread and found in the social ethos of Manipuri. This external stimulus produced a new cultural structure.

1.1.4. Geographic span of the thesis

Manipur is geographically comprised of hills and valleys. The region of today's Manipur is roughly 22,356 square kilometres. Which there are around 2230 square kilometres in the valley. Manipur valley is 2,600 feet, and some of these mountains are 10,000 ft to 12,000 ft above the sea level. Manipur's area is under $23.^{0}$N. to $25^{0,}$ 41N, and the longitude of $93^{0,}$2E. to $94^{0,}$47 E. It is situated on the eastern frontier of India. The territory of Manipur was

[32]Kabui, *History of Manipur*.op, cit., p.198.

dependent on the competence of the Kings of Manipur. It expanded to the east of the Chindwin at one time. At another time, it included Kohima and the Kabo Valley. However; its significance lies not in its size and population, but its highly civilised and ancient past. However, small in size is the natural area of historical and political activity since time immemorial. Imphal, Manipur's capital, is situated in the middle of the State.

Defining Manipur Kingdom boundary needs to be investigated in two sets. They are ancient Manipur's Kingdom and present Manipur. Determining the frontier of the ancient kingdom is a challenging task. The population was scarce, mostly clustered as chief political units in small, better habitable regions, the adjacent landmasses, no man's land, and under the sway of that political unit was the territory of that political unit. The first political core of the ancient Kingdom of Manipur waiting for a name to be given was a small region on the south-east corner of present-day political Manipur. It contained the small valley now known as the proper Kabaw valley and its surrounding hills around 200 BC. This political unit was called Moriya. This political unit's sway was primarily north, east, and south. But over time, its switch often focused westward. A second political nucleus started rising about 800 AD on a tiny area in the Imphal plateau's Upper Iril Valley. An unofficial border map of the ancient Kingdom of Manipur can be taken up to 1750 AD at the princes' fortunes.[33]

King Kiyamba (1467-1508 AD), the Manipur's international diplomatic policy founder, established with the Meitei and the Pong kingdom. Khekhomba's relationship with Kiyamba was cordial, just the bond between a grandfather and a grandson and drinking water from the same bowl. Kiyamba's earlier name was Thangwai Ningthouba. He attacked Kyang and overpowered his chief named Chao Seng, offering one princess named Sana Langmeirembi and another girl, Haoroksu, and since then recognised him as Kiyamba. It assumed that the frontier of Pong's realm started from north-east Samjok. In the border

[33]Wahengbam Ibohal Singh, *The History of Manipur: An Early Period* (Imphal: Manipur Commercial Company, 1986). pp.1-2.

between Khekhomba and Kiyamba, it is described that the eastern boundary of the Kingdom of Manipur was the whole of the Loijeeree Hills. Running between the river Mu and the river Chindwin *(Ningthi)*, to the north the eastern line from Samjok to the hill Loijeeree through the areas where the dwarf variety of mango trees was grown; to the south to Meeyatong were also produced the dwarf variety of mango trees.[34]It was the territory of Manipur.

The half-century that followed Kiyamba's death was a phase of internal turmoil and instability. Attributed to the frail rulers who succeeded Kiyamba in the first half of the 16thcentury before the inauguration of another brilliant era by Mungyamba and his great son Khagemba, which lasted a century. Around 1508-1562 AD. There were six kings in the fifty-four years; ranging from the reign of one year to eighteenth years. The kings were Koiremba (1508-12 AD), Kiyamba's second son followed by Lam Kyamba (1512-24 AD), who followed Kabomba (1524-42 AD), whose eighteenth-year reign was the most praiseworthy phase in the half-century of tragic history. Following Kabomba, Tangjamba ruled from (1542-45 AD). And Chalamba leads from (1545-62 AD).[35]Above mentioned period, there was no record found in expanding territory. However, Kabomba reign saw some critical events. In 1533 AD, he defeated Tripura. Notice the event; a canal dug in Imphal in 1534 AD. It was called *Takhel Khong* (*Takhel in Manipuri* Tripura and *Khong* means Canal). He suppressed Kabaw's revolt in 1542 AD without any trouble.[36]

Ningthourol Lambuba provides the details of Mungyamba's (1562-1597 AD) relationship with Burma. The earlier name of Mungymba was Thanwai Ningthou Kyamba. He subdued Mung yang's chief to vengeance the insult of one of his nobles named ChakpaTete. Since then, knew him as *Mung Yang Ngamba,* meaning (Victor of Mungyang and shortened Mungyamba). In 1562 AD., Mungyamba attacked Sagang, in which he lost seven men. But he seized Chao HpaMangtra and Chao HpaWomsingnaba along with

[34]Ibid.,p.316-317.
[35]Kabui, *History of Manipur*.op,cit.,p.202.
[36]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur*. op,cit.,pp.87-88

weapons and other booties. He restricted the boundary between Khamaran (the people of Ava and Saigang) and Meitei. The dividing line of these two kingdoms was the hills to the west of Mu River, known as the Noijeeree (Loijiri) Hills. In 1568 AD, the ChakpaPungPung and ChakpaChirang, the ChakpaAngo *Ching* (hill), were subdued. There are records of the Imphal Valley people using the brine spring located on the Noijeerree hills' foothills south-east of Samjok. Several streams drained from the mountains of Loijeere to the river *Ningthi* (Chindwin). The Meitei used to gather gold from the gold particles on the bed of these streams. The Meitei called the salt of the above source was *Kabawthum*.[37]

King Khagemba (1597-1652 AD) was Mungyamba's eldest and most capable son. The best example is Meitei's heritage and culture, and the administrative reforms and armed expeditions to subjugate rebellions and peaceful strategy to conquer people's hearts during his father's rule continued. He was earlier named Sana Hihouhan Poirei Ningthouhanba. He destroyed *Khagi* in 1631 AD, referring to Shan or Southern China. Khagemba is short of *Khagi Ngamba* (victory over *Khagi*).[38] He resisted the numerous invasions by the Bengali Muslims, the Tripuris, the Ahoms, etc., and the Cacharis; he also attacked other Shan princedoms to recognise his supremacy. Matrimonial alliances were established with King of Kachar, King of Tripura, King of Shan or the Princes, and the King of Myanmar, by offering the hands of the princes of Meitei and the girls of the clans**.** *Thibomei* (formerly Kohima) marked his dominion boundaries on the north, Nariya River and Tazu River on the northeast, *Mungkhong* (Maungkiang) and *Kyang* (Kunfat) on the east, Chin hill on the south-east foothill of Chin hill, southwestern Changhat, west Badarpur, and foothill of Maibong. Reduction in the realm suffered because of intense interest in social reform under political and economic force.[39]It is believed that this dominion, with its borderline restriction during

[37]Singh, *The History of Manipur*. op, cit., pp.318-319.
[38]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur*.op, cit.,p.75.
[39]LaishramVijaykumar Singh, "*Historical Geography of Manipur through Ages*" (PhD Thesis., Manipur University Imphal, 2007), pp.152-153.

King Charairongba (1697-1709 AD) was the King after Paikhomba and Kunjaoba, the son of Khagemba, was the dominion of the Kingdom of Meitei during the 17thcentury and the 18th Century appendage.[40]

King Garibnawaz (1709-1748 AD) conducted seven military campaigns within ten years against the Myanmar kings of Toungoo dynasty subdued the allied armies of Myanmar and the Tripura who had attacked the Meitei Kingdom simultaneously from the east and the west in 1742 AD. He made armed expeditions and expanded his rule.[41]The boundary demarcations were the Meitei King Garibnawaz – Sadiya (on the right bank of the Lohit River in the far north) western foothills of the Patkai range and Tuensang range in the north-east; Maungkiang region and beyond Kendat in the south; Kalewa town and Gangaw in the south-east; Chin hills in the southern edge. Manipur on the south of Chittagong on the south-west; Kusiyara and Barak on the west and embodiment of Maibung, Diphu, Dimapur, Sibsagar and left bank of Brahmaputra River on the north-west.[42]Manipur's present boundary was not the same as it was in the past when military successes and other factors influenced size and shape. *Cheitharol Kumbaba's* verses and other texts detail issues regarding expanding the frontier to and beyond the western and eastern fringes of the Ningthee River during the rule of Kyamba (1467-1508 AD), Khagemba (1562-1697 AD), Pamheiba alias Garibaniwaz (1709-1748 AD) are facts rather than fictions.[43] According to R. B. Pemberton, "*territories of Maneepoor have fluctuated at various times with their princes' fortunes, frequently extending for three or four days journey east beyond the NingtheeKhyendween river, and west on the plains of Cachar*."[44] Sir James Johnstone also shares the same view:

> "The territories of Manipur varied according to the grit of its rulers. Sometimes they held considerable territory east of the Chindwin River in subjection, at other times only the Kubo

[40]Ibid.,p.153.
[41]Ibid.,p.155.
[42]Ibid.,p.156.
[43] N Pramodini Devi, *The Historical Background of Kakching* (Kakching: SahityaSevaSamiti, 2017).p.1-2.
[44]Robert Boileau Pemberton, *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India: With an Appendix and Maps* (Calcutta: order of the Supreme Government of India, 1835).p.20.

> Valley, a strip of territory, inhabited not by the Burmese, but by the Shans, and lying between Manipur proper and the Chindwin. Again they were driven back into Manipur proper. For the more significant part of the last century, the Kubo Valley unquestionably belonged to Manipur, and it was never in any sense a Burmese province, when it was not under Manipur, a feudatory of the great Shan Kingdom of Pong."[45]

It is the borders of Manipur that kept fluctuating and not the territories as the core of the Imphal valley was always the centre. Though it has become fashionable to refer to north-east India's concept as a non-state society applying the idea of *'zomia'* as a non-state space, the Kingdom of Manipur centred in the Imphal valley was a state structure.

1.1.5. Central themes informing the study

Lack of reliable source materials and authentic records create problems and make hurdles to studying the economic history of Medieval Manipur. It cannot be fully explored about what happened in the productive system of the saying period. However, Manipur has an enormous amount of local literature, known as *Puya* in the Manipuri language. The archaeological research is in its infancy. The *Puyas* provides detailed information on agriculture, indigenous arts and crafts, the people's occupation, and the kingdom's natural resources. Some scholars have used the sources, but they do not mean the medieval period's economic importance. Manipur is traditionally rich with cultural heritage. Arthur Birnie says,

> "Economic history deals primarily with the material side of human progress, but it is not, therefore, a materialistic study. Civilisation is bound up with achieving a certain degree of material prosperity in its intellectual and spiritual aspects. Here bread and butter questions are important because, without bread and butter, the artist could not paint, the poets could not dream, the philosopher could not weave his theories on the politician could not save his country".[46]

[45]James Johnstone. *My Experiences in Manipur and the Naga Hills* (London: Sampson Low, Marston Company 1896).p.81.
[46]Birnie, *An Economic History of the British Isles*. op,cit.,p.3.

In this light, the study of economic history is about material aspects and political, religious, agricultural rites and rituals of ancient human society's socio-cultural and intellectual elements. The progress of human society, using its intelligent tools to carry out its economic activities, is of paramount importance.

1.2.Temporal Scope of the Study

The chapter's temporal scope is centred on medieval Manipur and is more critically based on the 15th to 18th centuries. These centuries demarcate the medieval from the earlier and the later modern periods. However, while employing the tripartite division of history, the thesis also attempts to argue that the medieval age problems in Manipur are a bit complicated rather than in India. The agricultural expansion and the emergence of regional mainly were rather late.

1.2.1. Thematic scope I- Historical development

The themes in Chapter 2 form the first theme, and they introduce the reader to the historical development of Manipur. Here, the emergence of Manipur as a viable polity is narrated. The chapter also engages with debates on the nature of the Manipuri society's evolution, which is the chapter's central theme.

1.2.2. Thematic Scope II- Economic structure of Pre-Modern Manipur

The second theme contains the economic structure of Pre-Modern Manipur. It is a combination of a descriptive and analytical essay that seeks to narrate the forms of production and economic exchanges in Pre-Modern Manipur and the various institutions' role. This is a core chapter and tries to locate the emergence and transition of the Pre-Modern Manipur economy.

1.2.3. Thematic Scope III-Production patterns in Pre-Modern Manipur

The third theme discusses the production patterns in Pre-Modern Manipur. It thus brings to the core, the idea of the relationship between production pattern and the geography leading to an interlinked/mutual understanding of the eco-zones of Manipur. In this chapter, the diverse

eco-zones and the resultant forms of production that were also diverse are also essayed. They attempt to narrate the various forms of production changes over the centuries in medieval Manipur.

1.2.4. Thematic Scope IV-Economic exchanges

Exchange in both local, regional and long term and all volumes form the core theme of them, and thus the chapter is titled Trade and commerce in Pre-Modern Manipur. In this chapter, focus on the role of commodities and the institutions, namely the market that facilitated exchanges. In the absence of a fully developed market, there were other forms of interactions. This was further complicated by the need for certain goods and the need to maintain a surplus and create favourable trade terms. These contexts are dealt with under the rubric of trade and commerce in Chapter five.

1.2.5. Limitation of the Study and themes beyond the purview

Previous scholars' economic history of earlier/ancient Manipur and the medieval period is not thoroughly examined, as sound sources and materials are inaccessible under those periods' economic conditions. Fortunately, there were various sources as Meitei *Puyas* in the medieval period, based on historical writing. Among them are chronicle published by scholars, such as *Cheitharol Kumbaba, Loiyumba Sinyen/Shilyen, Nignthourol Lambuba, Nongsamei Puya, and Kangleiron*. Some of them are not yet issued, such as *Khagemba Matamgi Keithel and many more*. Some of the *Puyas* are edited and posted by the scholars, protected as the original copy, frame, and private collections. Few of them are:

i. *Thumkhonglon* (Account on Indigenous Salt production).[47]

ii. *Yellon* (Is a record of the edible plants).[48]

iii. *Waron* (A description of the Bamboos of Manipur.).[49]

[47]Ch. Hemchandra, ed. *Thumkhonglon* (Imphal, 1996).
[48]P. Chandrasekhar, ed. *Yellon* (Imphal, 1998).

iv. *Hidaklon* (Account of aspects Medicine).[50]

v. *Leiron* (A record of Bloom's).[51]

vi. *Uron* (Account on the Economic Aspects of the tree).[52]

vii. *Sading* (Sading is a valuable stone used in stone cutting and metal – throwing).[53]

viii. *Nunglon* (Interpretation of the Precious Stone).[54]

1.3. Brief Survey on sources informing the study

The most crucial literature source for the reconstruction of Manipuri history is the *Cheitharol Kumbaba.*[55] This chronicle contains information on water-management, land-reclamation, canal-building and irrigation, taxes and tributes, technological innovations and creative products, and agricultural practice. Moreover, manufacturing operations include useful crafts such as salt production, sericulture, weaving and dyeing, trade and marketing, and the most significant part as the forms of life in Manipur and economic circumstances since earlier days, as well as a detailed list of day-to-day political, administrative, socio and cultural events such as ear-piercing ceremonies of Meitei Kings. It also provides information about the importance of war boats, fun tours and social activities; lakes and rivers that appeared as military and leisure war-scene, and many people's migration from neighbouring countries to the kingdom. Further, *Cheitharol Kumbaba's* activities and events focus primarily on warfare, inner conflicts and Kings of Meitei's brave achievements in Manipur.

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[49]Waron's a *manuscript unpublished. The original text is in Imphal Dr Birachandra Singh Archives*.
[50]Hidaklon is' *original text in Imphal's**Padmasree N. Khelchandra collection*. Manuscript unpublished.
[51]Chitrasen. ed.*LeironTengtha* (Imphal,2004).
[52]Uron is an unpublished manuscript. *Imphal's original text is in Shri B Kullachandra Sharma collection*.
[53]Ng. Kullachandra Singh, ed. *Sading* (Imphal,1982).
[54]IromAmubi Singh, ed. *Nunglon.*NingthoumachaManisanaKeibung, Imphal .n.d.
[55]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur – Cheitharon Kumpapa*.

'Loiyumba Shinyen'[56]the royal proclamation on the social allocation of economic and administrative duties, declared by King Loiyumba of Manipur in 1074-1112 AD. The Loiyumba's decree includes the separation by *Yumnaks* (families) of occupation, assigning priestly duties to the residential divinities of the *Umanglais* (village deities). Setting-up the *Loishang,* royal duties and responsibilities of queens and noble titles and decorations, Department of justice, retention of standard time etc.[57]*Loiyumba Shinyen* is an extraordinary royal declaration of Manipur's economic occupation, social distribution and management. Manipuri people were traditional weavers. The king divided the weavers and dyers into two categories, with 30 families in different designs to weave clothes. The colours designed to produce different colours were based on the flowers' colour and the number of families involved in weaving processes.[58] Later, rulers like Kiyamba (1467-1508 AD), Khagemba (1597- 1652 AD), Garibnawaz (1709- 1748 AD), Bhagyachandra (1759- 1798 AD) Chourjit (1803- 1813 AD) and *Loiyumba Shinyen* expanded it further.[59]

Nongsamei Puya[60]is a unique chronicle as it includes the accounts of the Meitei kings from Khagemba (1597-1652 AD) to Bhagyachandra (1759-1798 AD). However, the work is primarily devoted to King Khagemba in the historic battles with the Cacharis, the Muslim invaders, Burma, and the tribal in the surrounding hills. The text deals extensively with the Muslim community's social organisation based on the clans, the emergence of some Muslim families, economic and technological contributions, and their administrative and political positions. It also provides detailed information on the Muslim settlements in Manipur and the

[56]Kh. Chandrasekhar Singh, ed. *Loiyumba Shinyen* (Imphal,1982).
[57]Gangmumei Kabui, *A note On "LoiyumbaShinyen*,"(1110 AD.) *The first written Constitution of Manipur, in Manipur, Past and Present: History, Polity & Law.Vol.1*.ed. Naorem Sanajaoba, (New Dehli: Mittal Publications, 1988).pp.307-308.
[58]Kabui, *History of Manipur*.op,cit.,p,127.
[59]Kabui, *A note On "Loiyumba Shinyen*,"(1110 A.D.). op,cit.,p.307.
[60]Oinam Bhogeshwar Singh and M.A. Janab Khan, *Nongsamei Puya* (*Immigration of Muslims to Manipur*), (Imphal,2014).

introduction of new agricultural practices, such as the transplantation of paddy, tobacco use and pot wheel techniques, and several fruit plants in the kingdom.

Kangleirol[61] is also one of the essential texts for the study of the economic history of Manipur. This text deals period from the Pakhangba (33-154) to Garibaniwaz 1709-1748 AD).In this chronicle, we get detailed information of the Meitei kings. For instance, development works for the kingdom like the construction of the house, the inauguration of the granary, introducing a new market, dredging canal and irrigation for better agricultural surplus; metal works such as iron smelting, production of gold and silver articles, expertise in trade and commercial activities. Besides, the Queen of Manipur participates in the protection of the kingdom against invaders and administrative activities.

1.3.1. A note on the sources

It believed that the *Cheitharol Kumbaba* or the Meitei Kings royal chronicle began to be recorded in the royal court since King Pakhangba's period in 33 AD. *Cheitharol Kumbaba,* the royal chronicle of Manipur, provides valuable, information on the history of Manipur. The learned *Maichous* (scholars) recorded these state chronicles in *Meitei Mayek* script in the royal court. *Cheitharol Kumbaba* is documenting the historical events that spanned almost two thousand years between the reigns of seventy-eight kings, from NongdaLairenPakhangba (32 -154 AD) to Maharaj Bodhachandra Singh (1941–55 AD). When this chronicle started to be recorded, several scholars debated the contents. The chronicle also states that in the year 1485, AD., King Kiyamba initiated the *Cheithaba* system or counting years. Before, the accounts were inadequate, and the scholars have persuaded that it has to be made from the materials available. E. Nilakanta cited the event of 1780 AD when king Bhagyachandra is said to have called the recompilation of the lost *Cheitharol Kumbaba.* The circumstances suggest that the chronicle already existed before this king's

[61]Chanam Hemchandra, *Kangleirol* (Imphal, 1996).

reign. The text's vocabulary and style have led scholars to believe that historical recording events from the 15th century AD were prevalent must have begun in the chronicle.

Nevertheless, nobody negates the point that the *Cheitharol Kumbaba* is the most comprehensive and systematic document of Manipur and is extensively used by historians as a Manipur history source. Available in print, for example, Th. Madhob Singh (ed), *Cheitharol Kumbaba*, Imphal, 1939. L.Ibungohal Singh and N. Khelchandra Singh (ed), *Cheitharol Kumbaba,* 1967. The chronicle contents are also in English translation in some sections. Instantly after the British annexation of Manipur in 1891, the government-appointed Bama Charan Mukherjee translated into English in 1897 and finished the work with the support of the 14 MeiteisPandits. In the Indian Office Library and Archives, London, the translated texts were subsequently admitted. A copy of the translation was collected by L. Joychandra Singh of Imphal and published under *The Lost Kingdom* – The Royal Chronicle of Manipur, 1995. Saroj Nalini Arambam Parrat latest translation from the original, *The court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur: The Cheitharon Kumpapa, 2005*.

Loyumba Shinyen is an essential source for the reconstruction of Manipur's social, political, and economic history. It was an urgent order issued at the beginning of the 12th Century by King Loiyumba. Now, an edited volume by Kh. Chandrasekhar Singh, in 1968 is available. A note on *"Loyumba Shinyen"* (1110 AD.) was published in 1982, by the Proceedings of Northeast India History Association 3rdSession at Imphal to observe its importance *Shinyen / Shilyen* as a source of State and economy in earlier Manipur and the Meitei State Formation by Gangmumei Kabui. In 2012, Konsam Manikchand edited and published the same in English and Manipuri Language.

Ningthourol Lambuba[62] edited by O. Bhogeshwar in 1967 vividly depicts the chivalrous activities of Nigthouja rulers in various wars from which large numbers of booties;

[62]Oinam Bhogeshwar Singh, ed. *NingthourolLambuba vol.1*. (Imphal, 1967).

tributes including captives were brought which strengthened the economic, military and political power of the kingdom. Therefore, the work is evident in the absence of dates and years of significant events, links to neighbouring countries and migration to this place. It focuses on accounting for the personal achievements and glorification of the Meitei rulers. The periods of King Khagemba, Pamheiba (Garibnawaz) and Chingthangkhomba or Bhagyachandra are significant achievements in the history of Manipur, during which not only excellent/large territories and political achievements performed, but also significant cultural and spiritual stirrings were taken place.

Nongsamei Puya deals with Muslim migration in Manipur during King Khagemba (1597-1652 AD) and is edited by O. Bogeshwar Singh and M.A. Janab Khan in 1973 AD. The literature/text tries to place the mixture of brain and brawn on the Meiteis in a good light. The Meiteis suffered defeat at Cacharis' first incursion because of the enemy's superior strength in firearms, and thus the Cacharis settled in the part of Meitei territory. Nevertheless, the annexation could not go much further. Furthermore, the cattle and ordinary people were started being captured as hostages.

Kangleirol is an account of different places of Manipur with critical historical events during the reign of Pakhangba (33-154 AD) to Garibnawaz (1709-1748 AD), Chanam Hemchandra edited it in 1996 AD.

1.3.2. Primary Non-literary Sources

Manipur's non-literary primary sources are epigraphical records, numismatic, sculptures, and remaining historical monuments that provide Manipur's history's essential details. However, the most regrettable significant gap in Manipur is a proper investigation and the absence of archaeological facts. However, there is ample scope as new technologies like GIS and the use of satellite imagery and digital methods have opened up new avenues and can be gainfully employed to reconstruct Manipur's past using archaeological material.

Historical Monuments and Temples

The temple and monuments built in the ancient days are of perishable materials such as wood, thatch and bamboo, etc. Natural forces rapidly destroyed these materials. Through these perishable materials, those temples built in the earlier period could not survive for an extended period. Hence, no Pre-16th Century AD temples remain as archaeological evidence to prove our arguments strongly. The earliest literature of Manipur mentioned the temple building in the 1st Century A.D.is in *Poireiton Khuthokpa*. Poireiton was built, using bamboo, wood and thatch. Poireiton's worshipped supreme god and goddess at the time of migration to Manipur to shield their children from illness and death by building a temple, built with wood and bamboo in front of their house.[63]

The earliest record of making bricks in the Manipur was during the reign of Khagemba (1597-1652 AD), while Burmese's frequent invasion contributed to the non-existence of old monuments. The first record of the construction by bricks was mostly very late in Manipur.[64]Kunjeshwori argues that the foundation of civil architecture was laid in ancient times. And that different designs, patterns, and styles used in the construction of thatched houses, huts, pillars, etc. contributed to the rise and growth of the various architectural styles that were adopted in Manipur during the post-15thcentury."[65]The Temples of Bricks were found in Manipur, and they commonly believed to the Temple of Vishnu in Bishnupur, constructed by King Kiyamba period (1467- 1508 AD).[66]They first used stone and brick to build a building during King Khagemba's period (1597-1652 AD).[67] The shrine of the *Nongshaba* (Sun God) is said to have been constructed by King Khagemba in 1633 AD.[68]

[63]Kh.Yaima Singh, ed. *Poireiton Khunthokpa* (Imphal, 1971).p.70.
[64]Singh, *Stone Age Archaeology of Manipur*. op,cit.,p.p.17-18.
[65]L. Kunjeswori Devi, *Archaeology in Manipur* (New Dehli: Rajesh Publications, 2003).p.110.
[66]Ibid.,p.111.
[67]Devi, *Archaeology in Manipur*. op,cit.,p.109.
[68]Bhattacharjee, *State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur*.op, cit.,p.50.

Other temples include the Brahmapur Krishna Temple of King Charairongba, Imphal, the Mahabali Hanuman Temple, the old Govindaji Temple (in ruin), Vrindavan Chandra Temple of Tikendrajit inside the Kangla Fort. The temples dedicated to Thangal Menjor and Leimapokpa Sajou Keirungba, and the Sanamahi Temple, were built by Nara Singh in 1844 AD.[69]During Khagemba (1597-1652 AD), some new features had an adopted named such as *"Sana Sangai"* (Golden House). The Bengali's square styles continued to be the same fashion as they had been in Manipur. The decoration of the ceiling started with the aluminium on the roof of the Kangla Uttra. This period is considered the most significant development period due to the impact of Burma and Thailand's architectural styles on Manipur's architectural designs.[70]It indicates Manipur has social, cultural and economic relations with neighbouring countries.

There are few constructions like the Old Kangla Fort, the Royal gateway- Langthabal and other monuments built on the rulers' cremation ground and significant personalities. Until, April 27, 1891, it was the old palace and fortress of Manipur. It signifies the traditional concept of a citadel and fortification of the royal residence. In 1611 AD, during King Khagemba (1597–1652 AD), the Royal chronicle records the citadel's construction. The fort consists of well-burnt bricks, about 20 feet high. There are also numerous sacred places and monuments inside the old fortress. BirTikendrajit Residence and Temple of Brindabanchandra situated on the northwestern side of ancient palaces. Shri Govinda and Beithob Temple, Darbar Hall, Graveyard, Coronation Hall, etc. are located on the southwestern side.[71]

However, some indigenous sources comprise information about the development of an d architecture before the dawn of the 15thcentury. To the beginning of this century, anything favourable about the subject matter cannot be defined. It is, in fact; the 15thcentury that

[69]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op,cit.,p.40.
[70]Devi, *Archaeology in Manipur*. op,cit.,p.109.
[71]Singh, *Stone Age Archaeology of Manipur*. op,cit.,p,18.

established the origin of art and architecture. After the Vishnu image's worship during the Kyamba period, the temple building began between the 15th and 20thcentury some notable Hindu temples such as Vishnu temples and Krishna temples, Hanuman temples and Kali Temples and Govindaji temples of Kangla complex and Kanchipur. And the temples of traditional gods and goddesses, the temple of architecture reached its height of progress, especially during the Charairongba and Garibaniwaz periods of the 18thcentury.[72]

J.B.Bhattacharjee says that in the context of the Meitei State formation in Manipur, palaces, buildings, and temples, roads and bridges, dams, dykes and canals were constructed by the rulers show that the riches and affluence of the State and its technological growth and the solemnity and dignity of the royalty.[73]The ruins of Kangla fort, temples and other structures are evidence of a bygone era. The ruins of stone and bricks speak silently about Manipur's past.

Inscriptions

Inscriptions on Maring village of Khoibu taken from the time of Marjit Singh (1813-1819 AD), but the inscriptions made in the account of Sameirang (518-568 AD), Kiyamba (1467-1508 AD), Khagemba (1597-1652 AD), and Paikhomba (1666-1697 AD) and Mathangsoi, the Khoibu Maring village progenitor and reclaimed.[74]The texture of the epigraph is rough sandstone slabs, some iron and copper plates. Earlier stones inscription were written in the archaic Manipuri script except for some stones, Note is written in Devanagari and subsequent-era in Bengali. The features of the stone inscriptions discovered in Manipur differ from region to region.

The Konthoujam and Khoibu Stone No.1 stone inscriptions portray the status of village people. The Khoibu Stone inscriptions No.3 and Heisnam Lairembi stone

[72]Devi, *Archaeology in Manipur*.op, cit., p.164.
[73]Bhattacharjee, *State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur*.op,cit.,p.43.
[74]Devi, *Archaeology in Manipur*.op,cit.p., pp.65-66.

inscription, represent the localities religious and cultural traditions. Bhuvan Ching (hill) (Cachar) 's stone inscription indicates the Kohima and Chibu demarcations referring to Manipur's rulers' domination over tribal chief. The Karang inscriptions record the grant of the market place. An engraved stone discovered in Nungba is supposed to be tribal records in an area that partly deals with religious beliefs. In Manipur, there are few copper plates and one iron plate inscription. One provides comprehensive information on religion and culture and the other on political growth in the contemporary scenario.[75]

The stone inscription of KonthoujamLairemma is considered as the record of granting land. The topic of the account is Goddess Konthoujam Lairemma and Haorok Konthoujam clan. The descriptions of Konthoujamdocumented with two dates, one during King Khagemba's era (1597-1652 AD), the second during Charairongba's time (1697-1609 AD).[76]

Khoibu Stone has three inscriptions, found but undated. The names of the Kings, Kyamba (1467-1508 AD), Khagemba (1597-1652 AD), Naophangba (428-518 AD) and Sameirang (518-568 AD), occur respectively. In those inscriptions, but we cannot state with any certainty that they belonged to their periods. Such descriptions belong to the later period because of previous rulers' activity by their future successors as stated by established tradition. There is nothing specified in the inscriptions such as the date a specific king who inscribed them; it can be assumed safely that the evolution of the past could represent in notes by the customs during the period that followed. These inscriptions, however; deal with the history and culture of the past. They demonstrate the expansion of the king's political influence to the periphery, contemporary social and political life, religion and artistic practices about the continuation of an ancient tradition of erecting the megalithic, and on so.[77]

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[75]Ibid., p.65-66.
[76]Mutua Bahadur and P. Gunindra Singh, *Epigraphical Records of Manipur* (Imphal: Mutua Museum,1986).pp.i-ii.
[77]Devi, *Archaeology in Manipur*.op,cit., pp.73-74.

Ningel inscription is another source and, Ningel is renowned for its salt wells. Most of the State's salt production was from Ningel wells. The inscription of Ningel recorded during the reign of King Garibaniwaz (1709-1748 AD). The ancient scripts of Manipuri, Bengali and Assamese.[78]

The location where the records mounted further shows the significance of this record. Ningel's village was the State's important salt production area that supplied half of the State's entire product. People from every corner have come here to collect the necessary human needs every day.[79]

The inscription documents the king's defending royal slave colonies from frequent attacks by the hill tribes nearby. Several omens and curses listed that the hill tribes had threatened the colony's Officer-in-Charge. On the other hand, rewards were also offered to the Officer-in-Charge and the colony people; if they cooperated with the Officer-in-Charge.[80]

The archaeologists have even found inscriptions of other rulers with the royal symbol of the legendary dragon-lion and symbolic royal footprints carved on them, the famous being Raja Gambhir Singh's Kohima inscription of 1812 AD, Maharaja Chourjit'sNoney inscriptions of 1813 A.D., Tipaimukh inscriptions of Pamheiba, Bhagyachnadra's Akhui inscriptions, Chandrakriti's Tuiva inscriptions. In 1817 A.D. Wangoi inscriptions were issued by Maharaj Marjit Singh at the opening of the market. The caption of Marjit of 1815 AD describes the brick pillars and the ramparts found in the Royal Kangla Fortress compound.[81]The earliest inscriptions available on a metal plate are an iron plate in southern Manipur's Chothe Naga village. Maharaja Bhagyachandra's reign (1759-1762 AD) and (1763-1798 AD), the iron carved container. Manipuri is the script, but it is written in the manuscript of Bengali and Assamese. There is the first-hand evidence of writing on a copper

[78]Bahadur and Singh, op, cit., p.8.
[79]Ibid.,p.13.
[80]Devi, *Archaeology in Manipur*.op,cit.,p.79.
[81]Kabui, *History of Manipur*.op,cit.,p.44.

plate recorded in native chronicles during the reign of LoirenKhomba popularly known as Labanya Chandra (1798-1801 AD). No other record is found asa copy of writing on metal beyond the Maharaja Bhagyachandra's era, except for the Phayeng copper plate whose antiquity is highly questionable. W. Yumjao Singh, based upon his archaeological work in 1935 AD, investigated the Phayeng copper plate. He bought it from Phayeng villagers. According to him, there were seven plates with a few parts. According to the present result, the vessel is seven-plus three. The Sanskrit text includes Sri, Puran, Siva, Devi, Nirbamsa, Kula, Sap, Ganesh, Kru, Puspa, Manik, Rasayan, Dharma, Biswakramman, and Puja. Some of the Sanskrit words used in the earlier days by the adherents of Saiva, Sakti and tantric worship are found in the text. The copper plate writing style is in the royal proclamation's context and the predictive method of prophecy typically used in chronicles Puya.

Nevertheless, the text highlights the Saiva – Sakti religion and the deity Hari, the Lord. It throws some light on chemistry, too. The first time during the King Khagemba period (1597-1652 AD), there was a type of predictive writing. This form of predictive writing first began during King Khagemba (1597-1652 AD) reign. Phayeng is a village located 15 kilometres west of Imphal at the foothill of the Kangchup Ranges. Phayeng's inhabitants are Chakpas, who never adopted Hinduism until Garibnawaz (1709-1748 AD).[82] Epigraphical records are one of the histories which were of crucial sources of information. There are records of significant events that provide us with detailed knowledge of officers to whom rulers commanded various duties. In Manipur, few inscriptions were written in the late Manipur historical period, which deals with the inauguration of the market, cultural, religion and the origin of the tribe's clan. Kings ordered customary tribal law and historical events as well as economic matters too.

[82]Devi, *Archaeology in Manipur*.op, cit., pp.101-102.

Coins

Manipur is full of mystery in its ancient/earlier/past numismatic history. For scholars, there is always a difficulty with the lack of reliable sources for this period. There is no corroborative support for much of the information accessible in the chronicle. Nevertheless, the accounts of some of the significant political activities and numismatic report do provide such information from the 17th century onwards. The accessible records assessment shows that the Meitei rulers' coins are some of the most reliable contemporary documents, even though the start of Manipur's numismatic history is still open to debate.

Local tradition suggests the early introduction of coins in the Manipur region. The currency of bell metal, possibly issued by King Pakhangba (33-154 AD), was seen by Hodson in the late 19th century. This coin was a tiny disc with a diameter of about 3.5 inches and no notes on it. N.K. Singh suggests that the coins, known as *Taret Maji Naiba,* were used in worshipping Gods in earlier days, but K.Sobita Devi and L.Kunjeshwori rejected these ancient accounts of cash because of the lack of any justifiable reason other than being traditional attributions.[83]

Recent historians' first coin to a specific ruler is a bell metal piece allocated to Wurakonthouba (568-659 AD). This interpretation is solely focused on the word "Wa" occurring on the script of the coin in the archaic Manipuri. Due to the letter "A.", other currencies are associated with Ayangba (821-910 AD), to Lairenba (1394-99 AD) because of the message "La". It is attribution appears to be extremely doubtful in the lack of any corroborative pieces of evidence. There are some other interpretations for these letters' significance that the first parts of these specific rulers' names are so commonly segregated in time.[84]

[83]Nicholas G. Rhodes and SK. Bose, *The Coinage of Manipur* (Kolkata: Library of Numismatic Studies, 2012).p.15.
[84]Ibid.,

The coins portraying the legend 'Ma' in archaic Manipuri script have been recognised as King Khagemba's coins (1597-1652 AD). All of Khagemba's coins maintained weight, sizes diameter and accuracy. His coins indicate a significant improvement in legend relative to his ancestor's currencies.[85]

Paikhomba is the next ruler. No artefacts, but a drawing of a bell metal coin is known about the king. But, it is known that the kingdom's trade and commerce were thriving during that time, particularly with neighbouring kingdoms.[86] King Pa's name in the archaic Manipuri script is depicted on the opposite side of the coin. King Paikhomba's currency is the last Manipuri coin to be described in the Manipuri ancient script.[87]Manipur's subsequent rulers struck coins, mostly on bell metal flans and scripts in either Devanagari or Bengali.[88]

It claimed that King Charairongba struck the first coin of the Devanagiri script, although royal people did not patronise this script during that time. The coins struck of the legend 'Shri- Krishna'. The guru's name was Shrikrishnacharya, by the way. The above attributions to Paikhomba and Charairongba regarded as speculation in the absence of any substantiating evidence. It concludes circumstances in coins found indicated a date of issue at the end of the 18th century, the year of around 1700 AD. The bell-metal alloy in Manipur was a deliberate effort to produce a low-value coin for ordinary people, unlike neighbouring countries. It was consistent with the then low cost of consumer goods available on the Manipur markets for daily use. These low-value coins, except for cowries, are rarely produced in northeastern India. The bell metal probably came from Burma (Myanmar), where it was used extensively for gongs, bells and other items.[89]Numismatic history took a new turn with King Garibnawaz's 1709 AD ascendancy. His reign identified by many different socio-economic, religious, cultural changes. As far as Devanagiri scripts are concerned, the

[85]P. Gunindra Singh, *Manipuri Numismatics* (Imphal: Mutua Museum, 1983).p.24.
[86]Rhodes and Bose, *The Coinage of Manipur*. op,cit.,p.16.
[87]Singh, Manipuri *Numasmatics*. op,cit.,p.24.
[88]Rhodes and Bose, *The Coinage of Manipur*. op,cit.,p.17.
[89]Ibid.,

emergence of Hinduism during this period deeply affected the direction of coinage evolution in Manipur. He attempted to change the Meitei's ancient religious identity, replacing it with new Hindu beliefs and traditions. The Devanagari script has become very popular with the spread of Hinduism. Hindusim also left behind Manipur Coins' influence, which shows the Devanagari script often depicted on his coins. In January 1729 AD, the Devanagari script first appeared.[90]

King Garibaniwaz issued several coins in various styles depicting the legend. The king's name, country, and Chief Queen's name appear in some of his coins. Moreover, the year, month and date of issuing the currency were depicted in some other coins. The king issued coins off four denominations. They were,

i. *Seljao*square type

ii. *Feikak* or cross-bar type

iii. *Selmakhai*or Small circular style

iv. *Selkup,* the smallest circular type denomination

The king produced the smallest and most large type of coin.[91]

Incarnate of the coins in Devanagari script with *Ja, Shri, Je Shri, Je Shri Ram, Ram, Shri Ram, Je Shri Garibaniwaja Mekhaleshwor, Cheitra Sudhi Tarsa Wadha 2 Sawana*. Just one fair coin was in use with the archaic Meitei script initial letter *'Ma.'* Among the collections were the circular bell-metal coins included with a different legend like Shri Ram, Nagari, and Bengali. The coins in Bengali and Devanagari have initial letter *la, Cha, ka, Ma* and *Ra.*[92]

In the last 50 years, the coins of Manipur have been discovered as a primary source of information. Yumjao Singh had found two silver coins with Sankrit legends and perhaps a

[90]Devi, *Archaeology in Manipur*.op,cit.,p.45.
[91]Singh, *Manipuri Numasmatics*. op,cit.,p.29.
[92]Singh, *Stone Age Archaeology of Manipur*. op,cit.,p.12.

hallmark of India's 3rd Century model. Coins were made of bell metal, silver and gold. Wurkonthouba's currency was the first coin to have been discovered. Khagemba issued some coins, and Paikhomba, Charairongba, Garibnawaz, Jai Singh, Chourjit and Gambhir Singh followed.

Moreover, the different rulers of Manipur issued different kinds of coin. Manipur's ancient coins are made of bell metal known as *sel*, but there are also silver and gold commemorative coins. The coins are approximately circular or square. Bell metal is also believed to have not made locally in Manipur. Manipur's coins hold different legends and the initial letter of the issuing ruler's title. The Bengali script was also launched as a popular coinage script during this period.[93] Coins informed Manipur about the prosperity of the economic condition and also traded relation with other countries.

Sculpture

There is no explicit reference to the origin of Manipur sculpture. The earliest record available for casting idols in Manipur is Panthoibiand Sanamahi in the early 17th century AD. Following Hinduism's adoption as Manipur's state religion, worshipping Hindu gods and goddesses became a common practice of the Manipuri. In 1706 AD Kalika was honoured as the deity in Manipur. Many Hindu icons, like Vishnu, Shiva, Ganesh, Karttikeya, Bhairav, Hanuman, Garuda, Sarasvati, Nara Simha, Ram-Sita, Varsha, Vamana, Krishna, Balaram etc., mainly flourished in Manipur valley. They were given local origins and made by sandstone. Icons of the Buddhist pantheon also been found in various areas of the valley and one Buddhist Icon from Tengnoupal district has also been recovered. They were mostly made of white marble. This material is not present locally. Probably, the icons were carried from neighbouring countries.[94]

[93]Ibid., p.11.
[94]Ibid.,p.12.

1.3.3. Secondary literature on the emergence of Manipur- The early phase

In the field of historical research in India, British officers serving the East India Company were pioneers. Carry, Marshman, V.A. Smith, Grant Duff, Cunningham, Wilson, and Sir Edward Gait are the leading figures in this field who have given us the first opportunity to get a glimpse of our political and cultural heritage. Similarly, during the 19th century, the British officers carried out the reconstruction and research of the history of Manipur.

J.P. Wade mentions in his *Account of Assam*, the Mughal link to Manipur, an English surgeon following Captain Welsh in his 1792-94 AD expedition to Assam. Francis Hamilton dedicates a portion to Manipur in his Account of Assam (1808 AD).With the conquest of Manipur by Burmese, known as the seven-year devastation (1819-26 AD) and Manipur's reflections in the First Anglo-Burmese war and British military officers posted by the East India Company. The history of officials Manipur's ethnology and Meitei people and the hills' people became more active subjects for these historians.

R.B. Pemberton as Joint Commissioner at Manipur published the first, *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India* in 1835 AD. His book, the early genuine account and origin of the Meiteis provided, the mythical viewpoint of the Meitei's, mentioned in the Puyas as another idea. He explored the existing records and accessible historical literature. He addressed a Pong chronicle (a chronicle of Shan Kingdom Mogaung) in his studies related to Shan invasion of Manipur in the 8th Century and Manipur's conquest of Kabaw Valley. He denied the Meitei' Hindu origin and proposed an untenable theory of the same people's Tartar origin. Also, the economic and administrative detail of his period is discussed mainly in his book.

Lt. Col. Mc.Culloch, who served from 1845 to 1867 AD as Manipur's Political Agent, followed Pemberton's work. His book, *An Account of the Valley of Manipur (1859 AD),* provides useful information about various valley elements and the descent of the Kuki chief and Naga chief, the hill tribes and the other languages. Moreover, he has given insight into the social culture, religious and economic features of the Meiteis and the hill tribes.

R.Brown gave a similar view in his work, *Statistical Account of Manipur (1874).* He points out that people of the valley and the hill had a common origin. Also, he studied extensively on multiple aspects of the State, including the valley and hill territory's geographical and physical features.

Therefore, Manipur's History was not tried in the proper context until Alexender Mackenzie's, *"History of the relation of the Government with hill tribes of North Eastern frontier of British Bengal's* published in 1884". Manipur is a pride in this work outside the British Indian Empire. His book reflects the official's views of historical events and is considered an authentic history was relying on the official documents of the Indian Government.

In 1886 AD, E.W. Dun published titled *"Gazetteer of Manipur."* His book consisted of the people, physical geography, history, agriculture, revenue, administration, and the State route. So, the study gave a clear cut and many comprehensive data about the people of Manipur from different sections of life in distinct parts of existence such ancient records supplied several bits of data and would be helpful for potential researchers.

In 1890 AD, in Manipuri, Haodijam Chaitanya published, *Manipur Itihas*, the first historian of the Manipur, perhaps in contradiction with the British writings writers, reaffirming Manipur's Aryan origin. His Manipuri Itihas presents Manipur's dynastic history was relying on the chronicles after Hinduization.

Manipur was a new concern in the British conquest of Manipur in 1891 AD and the British agents' contentious intervention, including Chief Commissioner F.J. Quinton, and political agent Grimwood. *My three years in Manipur* in 1891 were a personal account of the events by Mrs Ethel Grimwood. In 1891 AD RG. Basak's *Manipur Prahalika,* the Indian perspective was described in Bengali and Manmohan Ghosh's *"Did the Manipuri Princes get a fair Trial"* includes legal documents. These works are not history, but reports of eyewitnesses and records of the last days of Manipur's independent existence. There was much debate after the war about Manipur affairs. James Johnstone, a former political agent who had a remarkable career as a frontier officer in India, published in 1896 *My Experience in Manipur and Naga Hills*. Only a few British scholars like BC. Allen and TC Hodson used the chronicle translation at the beginning of the 20th century and used it in their work. B.C.Allen's *Gazetteer of Naga hills and Manipur* was published in 1904 AD.[95]

TC Hodson was the first anthropologically knowledgeable scholar to study the Meiteis, Naga and Kuki tribes and published his book *The Meitheis* in 1908 AD. His Meitheis remains the best full-scale Meiteis study based on ethnological and historical evidence in society, politics, religious affairs, and culture. During the colonial rule, Manipuri scholar P. Parijat published *Manipur Purabritta* in 1917 AD, focusing on the genealogy and chronology of the Meitei Kings. An Indian archivist Abdul Ali published a *Note on Manipur's early history* in 1923 AD concentrate on the relationship between Manipur and the East India Company. In 1935 AD, Manipur's amateur archaeologist W. Yumjao published his work, *Manipur Report on the Archeological Studies in Bulletin No. 1.* His study is more about Manipur's coins, numismatics, and historical landmarks. However, they show a clear bias in selecting subject matter and themes and barely focusing on the economy.

[95]Gangmumei Kabui, *On History and Historiography of Manipur* (New Dehli: Akansha Publishing House, 2006).pp.115-116.

1.3.4. Secondary literature during the Nationalist Movement

In 1942 AD, Assam Governor Sir Robert Reid published a book named *History of the Frontier Areas Bordering Assam.* Reid's study is a compilation of documents, he was not to be a historian, and his work is just a documentary, and the central theme is missing from his position. It is not a history. Nevertheless, the information is essential for Manipur and other regions. This book covers historical accounts of the 1891 A.D. Anglo-Manipur War, the execution of Assam's chief commissioner and his officers, and Manipur's eventual defeat. It connects with the anti-British colonial movement such as the Kuki Rebellion (1917-1919), the Jadonang and Gaidinliu motion (1930-1933 AD), the Manipur Valley Women's Agitation (1939-1940 AD), etc.

The literature of the colonial writer is not so sufficient and does not cover enough history. The colonial writers were not concerned with the main feature of North East India's history. In the reconstruction of the northeast history, region including Manipur state, various post-independence writers, or the post-colonial period provided the information and helped future researchers.

1.3.5. Secondary literature during the Post-Colonial Period

After the British left Manipur, contemporary history started in Manipur. Though in historiography, the post-independence era can be regarded as the post-colonial period. For certain countries that were under British colonial rule, post-colonialism is simply a concept of English literature. A significant publication was on the post-colonial trend of literary, sociological, political and historical scholars. We can find post-colonialism in the post-colonial scholars' reaction to colonial writings—in the historiography of Manipur. Manipur had a history of colonialism. The history of the colonial writer was inadequate, with no clear view of the people and its past. They formed a gap between the communities, of the Meitei Hindu and tribes on religious grounds. They decided to save the tribal from the powerful

Meiteis. Colonial historiography failed to acknowledge mainstream conceptions of Meitei's history and origins, inspired by Bhramanic scholars. They did not seek to give credence to Meitei's indigenous historiography. In the post-colonial era, however, historians speculated to write Manipur's composite history.

Nevertheless, historians have tried to write a composite Manipur history in the post-colonial era. In the post-colonial period, moreover, scholars took an effort to compose Manipur's hybrid history. Two aspects were there.

i) The first was the extension of the Brahmanical ideas of writings.

ii) The second was almost a scientific method of historical writing.

History and historical activities have evolved since then. The history of pre-colonial and colonial periods sought glorified by the scholar.

There were four crucial works on Manipur's history published between 1947 and 1991 AD. In 1947, R.K. Sanahal published *Manipur Itihas* in Manipuri. His work was a groundbreaking study relying on Manipur chronicles and British archive data and information sources in Bengali with a scientific method and contributed to post-colonial writings' historiography. He tries in a short compass to present critical historical events and give valuable information on the people's culture and traditions and the location of the geography. Besides, J. Roy's book titled *History of Manipur* was published in 1958 AD. The book was Manipur's first history in English and distributed broadly in India. His book was only restricted in-depth, focus only from the 18th century. The author had not explored into a reference to Manipuri's indigenous sources. Following, this R.K.Jhalajit Singh's, *A short history of Manipur* published in 1965 AD is a complete history concentrated on the dynasty of Ningthouja based on the royal chronicle. His book includes all phases of history, from the First Century to the Indian Union Merger of Manipur (1949), ancient, medieval and modern. In Manipuri and the British archival records, Jhalajit Singh used indigenous sources. The

intention was to pursue Manipur's proliferation of Aryan culture and Hinduism. He was influenced by the Brahmanical ideas, which states that Meiteis are Indo-Aryans both ethnically and linguistically. *History of Manipur Pre-Colonial Period* by Gangmumei Kamei was published in the last quarter of the twentieth century in 1991. His work is a history that is well investigated. His study and period from the ancient and medieval time were relying on the indigenous sources. He explained the origin of Meitei Salai and other ethnic groups such as Naga Kuki etc. It is a work that is widespread, and the author has implemented the scientific method of historiography.

Between 1953 AD and 1970 AD, the range of published texts were concerned with a particular detail of politics and history. They are *Pakhangba* (1953 AD) by Atombapu Sharma concerned with religious history. The *Meitrabak* (1960 AD) by Nandalal Sharma deals with ancient Manipuri literature, Manipur's political structure and the last days of state independence. In 1966 AD, N. Ibobi Singh from the *Manipur Administration*, focus with the Manipur political and administration system in the 18th to 19th Centuries. Another work is *Manipur Itihas* by L.Chandramani published in 1970 A.D.dealing with the Anglo- Manipur relationship in the 19th century.

M.Kirti Singh's study on *"The Religious Development of Manipur in the 18th and19th Centuries"* (1980 AD) focuses at studying, especially throughout the two centuries, the development of beliefs and practices in Manipur. He also describes to some extent of the State's political and socio-economic conditions. The alliance of Manipur with Bengal, Assam and Tripura, which arose from political concerns that gave rise to religious ideas and, as a successor to it, took the people into Indian civilisation's mainstream.

WahengbamIbohal Singh in "*The History of Manipur (An Early Period*)" (1986 AD) provided intricate details on Manipur. This book gives a simple overview of the State from its geographical point of view; the population; the chronicle; the migration of the other ethnic

group of people in the Imphal valley. Also defines historical, political, religion, a festival of the Sylvan gods; how the name of the State Manipur was made and the literature, the writings, the terms of the families, the origins and clans of the various inhabitants. Singh tries to systematically establish Manipur's history, denying the earlier theory and assumption, which may bring about a transformation in the perception of history in Manipur and North and North-East India overall.

The book *"Introduction to Manipur"* (1987) by Iboongohal Singh gives an overview of Manipur's territory, borders, society, people and religions. He talks about man-gods in the ancient days of Manipur, the Kirata people, and the Aryan assimilation. The religious and partly secular dances of jagoi (dance) are carefully examined here, their lifestyles, their past, the time of their glory and development.

"Manipur Past and Present, vol-I" has an article from various scholars that provides an overview of the people of Manipur. The book is edited by NaoremSanajaoba and published in (1988 AD). This book is divided into four parts that address the history of Manipur alongside Anglo Manipuri relations (1762-1947 AD), Meitei state evolution, its political history of the post-merger period, the ancient Meitei written constitution and punishment, etc. The treaties signed between the State and the governments of India were mentioned as well.

The geography of Manipur (1992) by M.T. Laiba attempts to analyse from a geographer's perspective. The ancient geography of Manipur dating back to 300 BC is primarily discussed. In terms of location, border, framework, cultural aspects, administrative systems, trade, commerce and the period of British Merger Agreement (1891 –1949 AD), and also the general character is the geography of Manipur.

Ranajit Kumar Saha has analysed the different ethnic groups in Manipur in detail. In his book, *"Valley Society of Manipur (A Cultural Frontier of Indian Civilization)"* (1994), he explores the classification of the different ethnic groups, their lineage, clan and genealogical

structure deals with the reign of Kingship political organisation the authority of the king and the form of the intergroup status of these ethnic groups.

In 1997, *Women of Manipur* by Ghosh and Shukla was published. Its primary focus is on the women of Manipur. It includes everyday activities, food, clothes, socio-religious roles, agricultural trade, etc. It indicates women's position in every large and small area of their family and society is very significant.

In work *'The Loi of Manipur'*: by Bino Devi (2002), in her study, focus on the Andro, Khurkhul, Phayeng, Sekmai, and Chakpa. Traditionally, the Lois of these communities is known as the oldest groups of Manipur. Thus, Lois is a single community and includes different sections of Meitei, Chakpa, etc. shows that the conversion of Meiteis to Vaishnavism has maintained their identity within Meitei 's social fold. She also studied the various beliefs of the ethnic group's practices and the routines of their everyday life and their relationships with each other.

1.3.6. Summary of the Primary trend and Literature Survey

Various literary sources cited the primary sources available for knowing the vibrant essence of economy, politics, culture, and religion. Royal chronicles such as *Cheitharol Kumbaba, Ningthourol Lambuba, Nongsamei Puya, Loiyumba Shilyen and Kangleiron* etc. are indigenous ancient literature. British ethnographers and officials and recent authors passed on old legend and *Puyas* to posterity. Whoever created the documents, the origins of the people, their social structure, belief system, specific cultural values, and the change can be studied carefully verifying these documents. From the above literature, we get an idea of the continuous tradition of sources from medieval Manipur. They form a literary tradition accompanied by other sources like iconography and epigraphy. The re-reading of these sources in the modern period has brought about a new possibility of reading the sources and

thus gives us an idea of how the history writing is proceeding with a focus on political and socio-cultural history and the near-total absence of economic history.

1.4. Main methods for informing the Study overview

As the thesis focuses on Pre-modern Manipur's economy, methods from economic history have been adopted and methods from political and social history to understand and explain the context in a holistic manner.

Patterns of production and the means of exchange and the emergence of crafts specialisation and the extractive institutions are the main concepts and categories employed in the thesis. They are used to understand developments like the expanding territory and the valley/hill divide and patronage and the emergence of institutions that serve as social and economic institutions. Reciprocity, redistribution, economic institutions' prevalence, and the transformation of exchange patterns are adopted to understand the changes.

1.4.1. Method in Economic history

Patterns of production and exchange forms are the two main economic history methods from a primary source study. At the same time, some scholars have dealt with the concept of feudalism. Then conclusive nature of the debate in the context of Manipur does not validate the term. However, it does not argue for an egalitarian society but says that the stratification was also based on polity and religion.

Market system and the agricultural process, including agrarian expansion stories, surplus production are all employed as concepts. They are analysed for recurrence in the inscriptions and the texts that form the primary sources to assess their importance. Others have used the study of material artefacts borrowing from cultural materialism. This has broadened the scope of economic history and has proved EH Carr's idea of history as a continuous dialogue between the past and the present as a reality.

1.4.2. Main theories of economic history

The emergence of surplus and the process or redistribution and exchanges of reciprocity existed in Manipur well before the emergence of a market. This was the situation in many simple societies that transformed into complexity based on economic and social stratification resulting from introducing new crops and newer techniques in craft production and long-distance exchanges. Therefore, these theories are not applied in abstraction but contextualised in the case of Manipur, and we find the emergence of river valley surplus and the exogenous influence of higher yields due to technological advancement. Theories of economic geography also find a receptive situation in Manipur where the Imphal valley acted as a model for the other regions with differing geographies and production patterns. Here the concept of zomia as a non-state region that is peculiar to south-east Asian history is also examined and problematised. Apart from these growth models and demographic expansion and rise in political centralisation, production is also employed.

1.4.3. Problem of applying Western Theories to Manipur

Western theories of economic history evolve in the Mediterranean and the Roman Empire and the rise of a post-classical society labelled as feudal. Most spaces were occupied by the transition from feudalism to capitalism. Both the ideas of feudalism and the transition to capitalism are problematic in Manipur. They do not share the western experience as the political and economic institutions, and the factors also were markedly different. The looming presence of the Church in Europe was absent, and no comparable institution was present in Manipur. Similarly, Manipur is a landlocked region and the economic orientation of all the eastern landlocked areas was towards Bengal and thus; a peripheral economy evolved. However, the eco-zones of Manipur and echo hill/valley divide and represent two forms of production. The highlands of Asia have only been recently theorised as an escape zone or zomia with no available western equivalent. Thus, the context of Manipur makes the application of western theories in the

real Problem. However, one cannot wish away all economic theory ideas as demography increases competition and social stratification. Statists expansion needs a strong economic base and can be applied after suitable contextual reading in Manipur.

1.4.4. Arriving at the method to interpret the Source Materials

Inscriptions are an essential source material as they can be located in space and time. The thesis surveyed a topography of the inscriptions to understand the spread of conscious economic patronage. This was elaborated after a reading of the primary sources that comprise literature, and then a detailed description of the forms of production was clear in detail. They are then delineated and grouped according to the indigenous categorisation against the agricultural calendar to arrive at a holistic picture of productive eco-zones and the production calendar.

The economic picture that emerges from this reading was against the polity's background and the institutions to assess the nature and political narratives like expansionism, wars and peace treaties etc. that led to the various periods of growth and ebbs. All these readings then understood against the background of the material culture that has survived to validate production patterns and the subsequent exchanges.

1.4.5. Summary

This chapter has outlined the plan of the thesis. It has also spelt out the main focus of the thesis, i.e. to understand the nature of the development of economy in Pre-modern Manipur and the typology of exchange and how it led to a regional emergence particularity, i.e. Manipur as a viable state. The chapter also outlines the methods and sources of the primary and the secondary sources and the geographical context of Manipur. Further, this chapter also has given an idea of the thesis's main themes divided into chapters based on thematic categories. Thus, the chapter makes a case to explore the economic history of Manipur and does so based on available primary and secondary sources. These sources mainly comprise literature but complemented by epigraphy and material remains that can reconstruct medieval Manipur's economic history. This theme was

not explored in detail by the historians working on Manipur in the contemporary period. From the above discussion and a perusal of both the primary and the secondary sources, a reader would get the impression that questions centred on pre-modern Manipur's economy are not addressed in detail. At best they are dealt only in certain specialised studies. This leaves a lot of space for a discussion on the economy as the research works on modern and pre-modern Manipur mainly on the themes of political and social history. Therefore, this chapter argues that there is a disconnect between the primary sources and their reception, leaving a significant gap. Consequently, this chapter argues for a case to study medieval Manipur's economic history in a comprehensive way that would take up both the local, regional and supra-regional connections and study them in a more holistic framework by linking these trends with the trends of economic history.

CHAPTER- II

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF SOCIETY IN MEDIEVAL MANIPUR

Manipur became a meeting ground for ethnic groups, and the dominant narratives trace the peopling of Manipur in this fashion drawing a binary of the hill and valley. But this is a simplistic picture that ignores the larger realities, and this chapter proposes to dwell on those themes. Begin with the literary accounts and the context; the chapter moves to the ethnogenesis of different groups and the changing contexts in which they became part of Manipuri society in various capacities. This complexity explains Manipuri society's evolution and accounts for the diversity embedded in the economic matrix rather than just as a social process.

2.1.Early literature on the Manipur Society

Very little is known about the origins of Manipuri literature. The long and continuously filled Manipuri history suggests about its existence at different periods. Since ancient times, these *Puyas* or texts have abundantly included prose and poetry. The ancient Manipur is a rich literature, but the exact date of the beginning of ancient Manipuri literature remains an arduous task as they are not dated clearly.

The ancient kingdom of Manipur was considered rich in history and civilisation. Manipuri people have a strong sense of history though it is expressed in many non-literary media. In a very early phase of the Meitei civilisation, the art of writing began to retain records or chronicles in the 15thcentury. However, literary texts were concerned with historical events which occurred from the commencement of the Christian era. The king's royalty and nobility controlled the education and scholarships, and it was confined to a very few scholars treat condescendingly and used by the monarch. The view of Meitei from the past (or history) is the holistic approach. It was not effortless to divide essential things from a myth, legends, religion, tradition, and theology. The historical writings were indirectly and

directly managed by royalty, and theological interest or consideration was there. The classic example is that *Leithak Leikharon,* a text of the 18th century. It contained a compendium of cosmology and genealogy, myths, legends, culture and religion; the craft and history that expected to be fully known by scholars of the Meitei or *Maichou.* A *Maichou* was a scholar, priest, astrologer and a mentor of the royalty or nobility advisor. The *Maichou* had to analyse society, state and religion as a whole, and their knowledge became widespread and extensive, or comprehensive to some great scholars.

In the ancient and medieval period, historical characteristics or specific differentiation of history had not developed.[1] Manipur was the Old Kingdom with a rich history and civilisation. Ancient Meiteis had a strong historical sense. The Meitei term *Puwari* (Story of Predecessors) expresses the traditional notion of history. Instead of the English term history or Greek history, it comes closer to *Sanskrit Itihasa Purana*. The Meitei *Puwari* comprises the country's myths, legends, folklore and historical accounts. The myths or cosmological traditions, the clans' origins and genealogies, and the chieftains' religious reports are described prominently. The principal ancient literature is the chronicle with or without chronology[2] such as *Cheitharol Kumbaba and Ningthourol Lambuba.*

The Meiteis had a beautiful writing heritage. This was elaborated in the medieval period with the transformation from literisation to literalization, the latter indicating the use of literature for aesthetic purposes. It is not entirely distinct when archaic Manipuri's Meitei Mayek script's first use emerged. Nevertheless, it is inevitable that from King Kiyamba's time in 15th Century AD., *Cheitharol Kumbaba* was carefully stored, and the earliest surviving inscriptions date from around this time. Therefore, Kiyamba's reign was thus, likely a period of significant literary development. Before this, for literature, one must go back to at least

[1]Gangmumei Kabui, *On History and Historiography of Manipur* (New Dehli: Akansha Publishing House, 2006).pp.111-112.
[2]Gangmumei Kabui, Keynote Address: *Objectivity in the Historiography of Manipur.in Proceedings of the Second Session of Manipur Historical Society 1995 Vol.1.*(Imphal: Manipur Historical Society, 1996).p.4.

9th century AD. Writing skills were the privilege of traditional Meitei culture's professional scribes and scholars, the *maichous*. The later spread of theological, proto-scientific, and astrological texts (usually called *Puyas*) would indicate that it grew beyond these skilled scribal groups as time progressed.[3] Nevertheless, since almost all *Puyas* are unidentified and undated, and their scholarly study is still in its infancy, we have no apparent means of knowing when they occurred. We cannot have any definitive opinion on this.

Many scholars have a different opinion about the periodisation of Manipuri literature. But two approaches are primarily applied to the periodisation in the literature of Manipur. The renowned Manipuri scholar N.Khelchandra states that period before 1709 AD, was old period and the year when the King Garibnawaz ascended the Manipur throne, and British conquered Manipur and is dated as of the Medieval Manipur literature between 1709 and 1891 AD. All the old Manipuri literary manuscripts were burnt on the king's order. Several works in Sanskrit and Bengali were translated into Manipuri since his period. Scholars such as Angom Gopi have been translating Ramayana and the Mahabharata since the King's Garibnawaz period was dated. These changes have been historically considered very momentous by Khelchandra. According to R.K. Jhalajit, early period is from the 8th Century AD to 1074 AD Century. And the early medieval period is from 1074 AD to 1709 AD. and the late medieval literary period from 1709 AD to 1819 AD. Jhalajit said that the period of King Loiyumba in 1074 was crucial and stated that:

> "The salient features of this period are the rise of Shan influence on the culture of Manipur between the years 1074 AD and 1469 AD, further consolidation of the Manipuri-speaking people, the annexation of the Kabow valley, Manipur's recovery from Shan influence and the revival of Manipur's close contact with the rest of India."[4]

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[3]John Parratt, *Wounded Land: Politics and Identity in Modern Manipur* (New Delhi: Mittal Publications, 2005).pp.25-26.

[4]L.Damodar Singh, "*Medieval Manipuri Literature,"in Medieval Indian Literature: Surveys and Selections.Vol.1*.ed. K. Ayyappa Paniker (New Dehli: Sahitya Akademi, 1997), pp.324-325.

Vishnu's worship was the sign of the coming of Brahmins or Vaishnavites faith. From various parts of India who lived in the Kingdom and King Charairongba was initiated into Vaishnavism in 1704 as Brahmin immigration persisted throughout the late medieval period, which had a significant effect on people's spiritual, social and literary lives.[5]

Although the above two scholars' views have not reached any clear consensus, many researchers have noticed the historical and societal alterations affecting the early Manipuri literature.Therefore, considering the scholars mentioned above, it can be claimed that the periodisation depending on the historical point of perspective would be more useful concerning the Manipuri literature. Even though religious and administrative shifts have had essential effects on Manipur's works on literature. Hence, the literature of Manipur is divided into three phases:

- Ancient
- Medieval
- Modern.

From the earliest times till the 17th century, is considered in ancient Manipuri literature. The Medieval period starts in the 18th century and remains until the 20th century, and from the early portion of the 20th Century, Manipuri literature is considered modern.

The authors of earlier eras did not indicate their names, date, or time to write a Manipuri literary work. The earliest literary pieces contain a wide range of subjects such as traditional faith, mythological customs, administration rules, chronicles, and descriptions of the various mountains of Manipur's precious stones, cloud studies, forecasts, astrology genealogy, ballads and other fictitious pieces of classic literature.[6]

[5]Ibid.,
[6]Kalachand Shastri, *Asamba Manipuri Sahitaygi Itihas* (Imphal, 1979).p.11.

Prose, as well as poetic forms, were the vehicle of ancient literature. Poetry first appeared in the early literary history of Manipur. Early literary works included, *Numit Kappa, Ougri, Kenchou, Hijan Hirao, Anoirol,* are the oldest literary works that have sung and written as poetry. After the 10th Century AD, prose started to be written; *Poireiton Khunthokpa* and other books such as *Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba, Chainarol, Thouwanthaba Hiran, Loiyumba Shilyen, Chengleiron* and *Luwanglon Khongul* were written in prose form. The various Manipuri clans used multiple dialects during the early period, although they could comprehend the language and talk in the language of Meitei. We locate the multiple dialects used by the people of the different Manipur clans from these writings. With time, their distinct languages were also fused into the Meitei dialect, absorbing the separate peoples of the multiple groups into the Ningthouja or Meitei groups, thus; ultimately developing today's cultivated Manipuri Language.[7]

In this period, the authors invoked the supreme universes such as creator, celestial bodies, the Sun, moon or star and the King and concluded by prayer. It was one of the essential characteristics of newly created literature. The greatest of the ancient Manipuri literature products were written for chanting and singing and reached people in the creative manner of dance and song. The works on early literature can be classified into following categories such as:

- Rituals and hymns
- Heroic works
- Romantic story

Rituals and Hymns

The ritual tunes and hymns have emerged as the beginning of early Manipuri poetry. The hymns were recognised as *Tengtha,* a sense on lament, spread and were learned orally

[7]Th. Ibohanbi Singh, *Anganba Matamgi Manipuri Sahityada Imagery* (Imphal,1997).p.10.

and later written into the textual form. The old ritual chants were oral and later became part of written literature, such as *Ougri, Kenchou, Anoirol, Lairemma Paosa, Pakhangba Langyenshei*, and *Sana Lamok, Hijana Hira*o and *Ahonglon. Ougri* is known as *Leirol Nonglao Eshei.* Traditionally, it was conceived to have been strongly connected with the earth's formation and usually performed for the Kingdoms welfare. In *Lai Haraoba*, the ritualistic festival of Manipur, *Ougri* is still sung. Ougri sang with his consort Laisana at Nongda Lairen Pakhanbga's coronation ceremonies in 33 AD.[8]The Sage Luwang King instructs *Ougri* to the Meitei King Naothingkhong who ruled the country in the 7th Century AD mentioned in *Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba's* manuscript.[9]The language and word used in *Ougri* are purely poetic and utterly free of other alien worlds. *Ougri, Kenchou* is also an essential component of Lai Haraoba's regular procedure, performed by musicians who clap their hands rhythmically and get into and out of the ring.[10]*Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba*, states that *Khenchou* was performed in Manipur before 7th Century AD. Sage Luwang King, also taught Prince Hongnem Yoi Khunjao the reign of King Urakonthouba (567-657 AD).[11]

In addition to *Kenchou* and *Ougri*, the ritual chants *Anoirol* and *Lairemma Possa* are essential for Lai Haraoba like *Kenchou*and *Ougri.* Another example of ancient literature is *Sana Lamok,* an unspecified work representing a prayer to Pakhangba (a deity of the Meitei people). It is stated in *Loiyumba Shinyen* to be performed by the priest.[12]The purpose was to bring the king to immortality, and good health was sung. Therefore, as the song related to the *Loiyumba Shinyen*, considered academic progress of King Loiyumba's reign, the music was dated back to the 12th century AD. The song, *Khoiju Lamok,* was a pre-12th century product

[8]N. Khelchandra Singh, *Ariba Manipuri Sahityagi Itihas* (Imphal, 1969).p.25.
[9]N. Khelchandra Singh, ed. *Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba* (Imphal, 1967). p. 62.
[10]Ch Manihar Singh, *A History of Manipuri Literature* (New Dehli: Sahitya Akademi,2003).pp.14-15.
[11]Singh, *Ariba Manipuri Sahityagi Itihas*.op,cit., p.38.
[12]Kh. Chandrasekhar Singh, ed. *Loiyumba Shinyen* (Imphal, 1982). p. 23

as it was used in Loiyumba Shinyen. King Loyumba invited Saraicham to perform *Khoiju Lamok*.[13]

Other rituals or cultural events were often marked as significant by some poems such as *Ahonglon, Pakhangba Langyensei, Langmailon*, and *Kumdamsei*. The Ahonglon, with its vibrant rhythm, depicts the beauty, grandiosity and the annual happiness celebration of consecutive Meitei rulers. The Loyumba Shinyen manuscripts mention the history of their ancient works back to the era before the 11th century. The *Maibas* can recite the whole poem with ease while assigning their responsibilities on the king's subject.[14]

Pakhangba Langyensei has been renowned and more pronounced in its subsequent structure for its relationship to the coronation event. In early Manipuri poetry, however; it can affirm the stance and mention its alleged use and connection to the divine existence of the Meitei rulers with the mythical consideration of the human and universe's creation and with other philosophical riddles.[15]

The *Langmailon* is also an entertaining piece conducted on ceremonial events connected with the king's crowning event. In the resonant rhythmical sequences, the corresponding titles of the Meitei King described carefully, as rightly derived from his performance and the splendid essence of his Kingdom. Finally, two powerful Meitei rulers King Khagemba and Thawanthaba are mentioned.[16]

Kumdamsei, the song that is sung during a new season literally, helps to culminate a prolonged evolution of ritual songs. It describes a new season's scenic nature, spring features, beautiful earth, and sky.[17]

Moreover, *Mei, Nonglao Esei, Louta Esei, Phoukouron, Apoklon* are some of the most influential poems. *Mei* is short and straightforward songs were sung at fire-god worship for

[13]Ibid., p.24.
[14]Singh, *A History of Manipuri Literature.*op, cit.,p.p.17-18.
[15]Ibid., p.20.
[16]Ibid.,
[17]Ibid., p.21.

extraction of fire. It portrays it on religious occasions, like a hill watershed purging over the pebbles, and from its connection with the explorer Poireiton who visited Manipur before the emergence of history.[18]

Nonglao Esei is an entertaining piece performed by men and women before the dawn in groups when severe droughts occur in the country.[19]

Louta Esei is sung during the eve of ploughing the field when the new season begins. It begins at a flurry of incantation, followed by an unpretentious account of glories of the bright Sun, by a divine couple's first seed sowing with the aid of other holy hands and by a long spiritual priestly prayer to reward them.[20] It indicates the success or failure of cultivation depended upon the natural phenomenon believed to be possessed with divine power.

Phoukouron was sung at harvest and characterised by a slow movement of lines created by juxtaposed words, cryptic and often abstruse. The concluding lines, however, do not conceal their purpose. The grain goddess, *Phouibi* (Demeter of the Meiteis) is in all modesty, implored to produce the best harvest.[21] The above texts and the contents imply that in the early agrarian society of Manipur, all the agricultural activities were associated with specific rites and rituals.

Path of Heroism

Since the early period, the clans' dynasties often involved long internal feuds for superiority and extension of the corresponding territories. Every small Kingdom's people had the strength to become warriors regardless of gender or family status. The more informed, the more skilled and the more powerful was a cult of prosperous bravery that sometimes pursued its end as destroyed and the path burned up to the late 19th century. In those early periods,

[18]Shamurailatpam Shantibala Devi, *"Manipuri Society as Reflected In Its Literature (1891-1947)"* (PhD Thesis., Manipur University Imphal, 2007), p.45.
[19]Singh, *A History of Manipuri Literature*.op, cit., p.22.
[20]Ibid.,
[21]Ibid, p.p.22-23.

anonymous authors offered diverse and colourful accounts of this adventurous life in *Numit Kappa, Tutenglon, Chainarol, Nongsamei,* and *Chengleirol*.

Numit Kappa is one of the earliest literary works written in poetry verse of Manipuri script, and it means to shoot the Sun. While this *Puya* was anonymous and undated, the Meitei scholars thought it could date back to the first century AD.[22]*Numit Kappa* is an allegory and legend that depicts the people's exploitation by the royal people and the courage to oppose them.[23]Pramodini Devi says,

> The text refers to the slave-owning peasant society in which the ordinary people were in the upper classes' mercy. Subsequently, a revolt broke out. However, the socio-economic imbalance and class stratification proceeded even after the rebellion. The uprisings of the oppressed in the slave-owning and primitive social orders, notwithstanding, could not conclude the misuse because the condition was not yet ready for this.[24]

The text mostly contains hymns in *Chup Saba's* ritualistic function (a solemn rite). It highlights the role of slaves in early society.

Tutenglon is the saga of Meitei, Yoimongba, and Taothingmang, dredging the most essential and longest rivers in Manipur, Irl and Imphal.[25]

Chainarol's duels of chiefs and nobles as a text is another work based on heroism. It demonstrates that the Manipuris had a healthy respect for themselves, moral justice, courage, faith, and destiny. The victor was entitled to murder the defeated in mortal combat. In some cases, the opponent forgave, and the two were friends. Their laws on the fight were laid down. Life was secondary, and the honour was supreme. The minstrels sang the narratives of

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[22] "Manipuri Literature | World Library - EBooks | Read EBooks Online." Accessed March 5, 2018. http://worldlibrary.org/articles/Manipuri_literature.
[23]Singh, "*Medieval Manipuri Literature,"* op,cit.,p.332.
[24]N. Pramodini Devi, *Numit Kappa &Panthoibi Khongkun: A study of socio-economic and politico-religious aspects of Early Manipur* (Kakching : Times Publishing House Manipur,1988).p.19.
[25]Singh, *A History of Manipuri Literature*.op, cit., p.25.

this book of the councils of Kings, particularly the Ningthouja. Most of the fighting in this book happened before the 12th century, probably in the second half of the 16th century, it was converted into writing.[26]*Chainarol* shows the warlike tradition that existed among the clan's major fight mentioned in the text, i.e. between Heirem Kangbeihsu and Khuman Chakha Moiremba dispute over land where economic activities had been carried out. Special mention should make further literary works of the same topic, such as *Ningthourol Lambuba, Moirang Nignthoourol Lambuba*, *Thawanthaba Hiran,* etc.

Romantic Stories

There is no shortage of romantic stories in old Manipuri literature, *Panthoibi Khongul* (Panthoibi's footstep*), Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba* (Naothingkhong's accession to the throne), are examples of the tales that epitomise numerous sinuous sequences of romance. In *Panthoibi Khongul*, the poet depicts everlasting romance against socio-traditional barriers. After her marriage to Tarang Khoinucha of Khaba Dynasty, Panthoibi ran away with her lover Angouba Kainou Chingsompa, the Lord of the Langmaijing Hills.[27] This text is not a simple and semi-historical literary piece. The history of Manipur was related to personalities such as Nongpok Ningthou, Panthoibi and Khaba Shekchrongba. This text was possibly a fantastic work in which the plot built on the place, time, and historical characters. It nevertheless sheds essential light on the study of early Manipuri society and culture. The community was a slave-owned, patriarchal farmer's society. In the slave society, the slaves were at the mercy of their masters, who controlled their labour's hard-earned fruits. The primary sources of livelihood, ginger, banana, and sesamum were farmed; agriculture, weaving, pottery, hunting, cattle rearing, fishing, beekeeping, and collecting from the forest were there. This text mentions Panthoibi fishing using *Tungol* (fishing hamper)

[26]Singh,"*Medieval Manipuri Literature,"* op, cit., p.332.
[27]Ibid. p.331.

and *lu* (fishing weir), which means there is no difference in work culture between the royal family and the ordinary people.[28]

Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba is a notable 16th century written piece about how, the vicissitudes of life, a prince of the 7th century *Ningthouja dynasty* lastly ascended the throne. It informs the Ningthouja prince's warriors who ruthlessly attacked fugitives from Shelloi Langmais or the Nongmaijing hills, the farewell scene of the lovers among the Shelloi people, who had surrounded them for the life of the prince of Ningthouja, his escape from the prince, who had finally become the king.[29] It also shows that the bamboo consecration ceremony witnessed that early people were fully conscious of bamboo's role in economic activities.

The texts of *Konthuojam Nongaron, Soubon Lairema Loutaron*, and *Phou-oibi, Waron* are legends of love between the gods and the humans. Konthoujam Nongaron dealt with the affection of a mortal girl of the Konthous, a clan, between the God of rain, *Soraren. Soubon Lairema Loutaron* recounts the story of the romance between the God-the Sun, and a mortal girl. Paddy goddess *Phouoibi* is also known as *wealth,* and it means lady paddy.[30] The legend is Manipur's fantastic product as rice culture. This deity is assumed to be in love with more profound emotion. She will fall in love with many mortals, but she does not stay with any of them forever. She travels from country to country and gets in an embrace with many people only to subsequently discard them. For some moment, she has been living with her favourites and continues to spread her affection. It is an allegorical story. Moreover, it occurs in countries where war and natural disasters are widespread. The goddess of paddy is considered to be very inconsistent in giving human beings its favour.[31]

[28]Devi, *Numit Kappa &Panthoibi Khongkun.*op,cit.,ppp.21-23-29.
[29]Singh,"*Medieval Manipuri Literature,"*op, cit.,p.333.
[30]Ibid.,p.334
[31]Ibid.,

Chada Laihui is a Meitei King's genealogy that starts with the title of Nongda Lairen Pakhangba's mother, Chaka Nuron Piron Yambi, who came to the throne in 33 A. D.

Besides the royal chronicles, many subsidiary chronicles such as *Khuman Kangleiron*, *Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba, Chengleiron, Luwanglon, Angomlon,* etc. They provide a comprehensive account of clan principalities events like Khuman, Moirang, Chenglei, Luwang and Angom.[32]

Some other development of the early literature of Manipuri is *Tharon,* a poetic interpretation of the twelve months. *Leithak Leikharol* vividly portrays the accounts of the earth's creation; remarkable work believed to have been written during King Khagemba.[33]

The advent of Vaishnavism in Manipur was in the later period, particularly in the 18th century. There was content with Sanskrit, and Bengali vocabularies as in *Sanamahi Laikan, Chingthangkhomba Gangachatpa, Dhanajoy Laibu Ningbu, Langoi Sagol Thaba.* And so forth and message were without such languages, for instance, *Samsok Ngamba, Takhel Ngamba, Chothe Thangwai, Pakhangba* and *Thouwanthaba Hiren,* a large portion of which contain valid entries. Historical stories were mixed with Purana, resulting in a new style of writing. For example, *Vijay Panchali* or *Garib Niwaz Charit*. Towards the end of the 18th-century interest in dwindling of romance and heroics. Literary directions pointed towards moral preaching and devotion to God. For instance, instead of glorifying king Chingthangkhomba (Jai Singh) for his country's valiant defence against Burma, more attention was given to his devotion to God as evident in the book *Chingthangkhomba Maharaj Ganga Chatpa*. The content, language, and style of books were becoming more marked and distinguishable. The names of the writer and the time of writing were shown in the books. The translation of the Ramayana and the *Mahabharata, Lakshmi Charit, Charairongba Khungun* etc., literary products integrated the local tradition, and the outside

[32]Singh, *A History of Manipuri Literature*. op, cit., p.77.
[33]Ibid., p.82.

ethos appeared in this period. *Dhananjoy Laibu Ningba, Sanamanik, Arong Nandakumar* are examples. Anonymous books on historical themes and events, but mainly in the form of Puran also existed. *Sanamahi Laihui, SnamahiLaikan*, *Nungban Pombi Luwaoba* and *Chothe Thangwai Pakhangba* are such literary products. In books based on the local tradition, the origin of the Salais and various thematic contents are found as in *Nongkhrung, Pakhangba Nongaron*, *Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba,* and *Khuman Kangleiron* etc. Books describing the heroic exploits of the local heroes are *Samsok Ngamba* and *Takhel Ngamba Chandrakriti Jilla Chatpa*.[34]

It was essential to reconstruct the *History of the Manipur,* which is above literature. Whether credible or not, literary texts retained important and indescribable truths appropriate to human's social, political, religious, economic, art and cultural activities. In the earliest stages of human civilisation, the absence of historical sense and text established the requirement for presenting a full history.

2.1.1. Ethnic groups of Manipur

Manipur has a specific ethnicity, history, ecology, and geopolitics background. The population and state politics within the region are integral parts of this peculiar reality. Formed the state was on 1947 former princely state has a multi-ethnic social structure. The state's social system is now broadly divided into three ethnic groups: Meiteis, tribes and 'Others.' Manipur has forty-odd ethnic communities. Nearly all of them are referred to by their identity of linguistic culture, religious orientation, political identification, or their settlements' names. We usually apply those words to ethnic identity, tribal identity or ethnicity.[35]In the sense of ethnic identification, the race has been freely used in its meanings.

[34]Singh, "*Medieval Manipuri Literature,"* op,cit., p.p.338-39.
[35]Naorem Sanajaoba, ed., *Manipur, Past and Present: The Heritage and Ordeals of a Civilisation.Vol.1*. (New Dehli: Mittal Publications, 1988), p.82.

Clifford Geertz described "Ethnicity as an activated primordial consciousness". It is a feeling that an ethnic group belonging to its ancient roots and heritage. Their ethnic genesis, ethnic origins and background are being actively sought nowadays by historians. While Meiteis is a nationality with a lengthy history of citizenship, Nagas and Kuki-Chin are ethnic entities that march towards pre-State or non-territorial race. Manipur is a pluralistic society. The main groups are Mongoloid Phenotype, who speaks Tibeto Burman languages, with some non-Mongoloid elements, Aryan and Tais.[36]

Manipur was the home of several ethnic groups during the period of the old Kingdom. The Meiteis who lived in the central valley from ancient times to the present is the dominant groups. While only live in the valley that includes one-tenth of Manipur. Meiteis are made up approximately two-thirds of the state's total population. In some areas of Burma, Bangladesh and Cachar and certain Assam regions, there is a significant number of Meiteis. While the valley was the ancient habitation of the Meitei people, several tribes of Nagas lived in the neighbouring hills. The ancient Meiteis chronicles and texts indicate that the significant Nagas such as the Tangkhul, Kabui and Mao lived in the mountains of Manipur since ancient times.

However, in the 18th century, the non-Naga ethnic group was regarded as the Kuki groups originated from Burma's hills, which the Manipuri kings permitted to settle in the southern hills.[37]There are around 29 subgroups within Naga and the Kuki tribes, which have different narratives of their origins and talk different dialects that cannot be understood. Therefore, they used Meitei or Manipuri language for communication between them. The Meiteis have called Naga and Kuki or Khongjais or Hao and applied this to all hills.[38]They

[36]Gangmumei Kabui, *Ethnicity and Social Change: An Anthology of Essays* (New Dehli: Akansha Publishing House, 2007).p.4-5.
[37]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur*. op, cit., p.17.
[38]Asoso Yonuo, *The Rising Nagas: A Historical and Political Study* (New Dehli: Vivek Pub. House, 1974). p.44.

regarded derogative use of this terminology, and therefore, the term *Chingmi, "Hillmen"* replaces the ancient language.

Apart from the Meiteis and the Hillmen, Brahmin and Muslims were living in Manipur. The existing Muslim community primarily descended from inmates of war seized by King Khagemba (1597-1652) in 1606 A. D.[39] For the Muslims, the term Meitei or Manipuri is *Pangal*, a Bengali-like *corruption*; because it originated from Bengal. The ethnic ecological and historical situation of Manipur is exceptional. The people, state, and state politics within the region are essential components of this distinctive truth. The tribes and Meiteis are an inherent component of the region's multi-ethnic communities.

2.1.2. Manipuri societies and their linkages with the neighbouring community

Manipur is a path from South East Asia to South East Asia and Central Asia. Manipur has been seen many ethnical groups from pre-historic times to the present day, including those belonging to southern, the Mongoloid, the Tibeto- Burman and the Indo-Aryans, and a significant section of Tai (Shans). Manipur's present ethnic groups, the Meiteis, Naga tribes, the Kuki-Chin tribes, and other Indian communities, are the offspring of these migrants.[40]The Meiteis' relationship to the neighbouring hill tribes like Naga and Kukis has been quite polite and respectful, though it belongs to various ethnic groups. Although the hostilities and disputes are continuous, there is always a feeling of fraternity and unity. Until today, the Meiteis refer to the rest of India as Mayangs (outsiders), Naga and Kukis have never been treated as the same, regardless of where they live. This perspective shows how close to the Meiteis are to the Naga and Kukis. Since time immemorial, there was a cultural and social affinity and the relationship between the Meitei and the hill peoples.

[39]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur.* op,cit.,pp.98-99.
[40]Kabui, *History of Manipur.* op, cit., p.12.

Though they were subjugated and taken under some control, the Meites established no social or religious link. Even before the most hill tribes were head-hunters, and any interaction with them was somewhat dangerous. Anyone who inadvertently or intentionally entered their territory would be at most significant danger of death.

The spirit of the people of typical Manipur hill and valley people relationship is the best expressed in two famous sayings in Manipuri

1.*Chingburoi Tamburoi*

2.*Haoringjel Nairingjel*.

The first phrase means a relationship based on love, affection, real understanding and friendship, but the second is a sense of mutual mistrust, hatred and animosity between the two. Emotions are part of nature and the relation between the two. However contradictory, they may be to one another. Sentiments, though contrary to each other, are part of the relationship between the two. The words that have been heard for a long time could not exist unless they represent emotions.[41]

Such dual elements of their relationship have influenced by historical facts. The state of these people is the most crucial factor in history itself. For example, tribes were engaged in raids by the valley inhabitants in an inter-tribal war but frequently. TC Hodson said:

> We know from the chronicles of Manipur that raids and reprisals marked the relation of the hill villages with the people of the valley from the earliest time.[42]

It is also prevalent for those people living on the edge of the valley to endure attacks from the tribes from surrounding hills. Like *Mangba-Sengba* (unpure-pure), the tradition of headhunting between the different tribes did not help establish mutual trust and friendship. Alternatively, both of them had very harmful effects. Those matters led to the following

[41]S. Mangi Singh, "*Traditional Relationship Between the hill and Plain of Manipur,"* in *Proceedings of The Second Session of Manipur Historical Society 1995 Vol.1.*(Imphal:Manipur Historical Society,1996) ,p.64.
[42]Thomas Callan Hodson, *The Nāga Tribes of Manipur* (New Dehli: B. R. Publishing Corporation, 1974).p.17.

saying to emerge *"Haoringjel Nairiljel"* as an intense reflection of the relationship between hills and the valleys.

Nevertheless, *Chingburoi-Tamburoi* also means and mainly, a very close, caring and organic relationship between them. Some ancient Meiteis' legends tell stories about the close connection between the two. Examples are *Panthoibi Haoreima* and *Nongpok Nigthou* legends. Between the two from ancient times, there were many instances of intermarriage. Mangthoi Thaimei says, *"There were cases of intermarriage since the period of our ancient ancestors, and indeed it has been increased even more recently".*[43]History shows that both of them have been close relationships. There was intermarriage between the people of the valley and the people of Lingmais on the Nongmaijing hill east of Imphal during king Ura Konthoubain the 6th Century AD. History shows that the two have close relations.[44] During the King Charairongba and Garibnawaz period, the hills' people and the valley's connection ended. It is true that King Garibnawaz adopted Hinduism and led to the separation of hill people from Meiteis' social life. Although, he was very close to the hilly people, and many Tangkhuls, Thangal, Kabuis Marings and Anals joined the expedition when he attacked Burma.[45]

In the ancient period, many valley people went up the hills and became tribes and vice versa. While the original seven clans of the valley were an inter-clan war, people from the weak family fled to the mountains and gradually became tribes. According to the old Meitei manuscripts' *Chakpa, Khunda Khunthok ', many* Khabaclans withdrew from their territory. When Pakhangba defeated Khaba Nong Chenba of Khaba Clan, and when Khaba province destroyed, many became Tangkhul some Mahou Lontai and some Kabui Nungnangs.[46] The old text, such as *Leithak Leikharol*, *Pudin* and *Leishangthemlon, Lamlekshang*, the elder

[43]*Ching Amasung Tamgee Maree Vol II.* (Published by The Cultural Integration Conference Imphal, 1977).p. 8.
[44]C*hing Amasung Tamgee Maree Vol, I.* (Published by The cultural Integration Conference, Imphal, 1976).p.14.
[45]Ibid., p.p.6-16.
[46]*Ching Amasung Tamgee Maree Vol II.* op,cit.,p.6.

brother of Sharang Leishangthem's Mabudhou Yum Thangaba, was also transformed into Kabui.[47]The people of some Yumnaks, on the one hand, such as Shougaijam, Konthoujam, Sanasam, Nandeibam, Khaidem, and Sinam, from the present valley of the Meiteis, as in the former *Keithi Keikoi* manuscript bear close blood relations with the people of the hills.[48]The old Meitei manuscript *Nongthrang Puran* includes further evidence of the absorption of many people from the mountains into the valley's Ningthouja clan.[49]

In their socio-cultural existence, the close ties between the hills and the valley were further reinforced by some critical similarities. The dormitory system was also found among the Meiteis, not only in the tribes like Kabui, Tangkhul, Maram Mao, Anal and Khongjai. One stand with three legs without making holes beneath the earth is followed every day when making a fireplace within the home. In the religious life of hill and valley people, household and outdoor deities have been found. Traditionally, tribal costumes remain a necessity while performing certain rituals associated with *Laiharaoba*. In the *Laiharaoba* of some eastern villages of the valley, inviting Tangkhuls is traditional. Apart from all these, it is common in the hill and valley people to use the local priest to appease Gods.[50]

The Tangkhuls' folklore gives an overview of their relation to the Meitei. There is the *Mera Haochongba* festival, which carries exceptional evidence of the close link between the two. This festival proposes to show that people on the hills and the plains are brothers and sisters in a three-day annual meeting. The exchanges of gifts as a sign of love and affection between both participants will occur during this festival.[51] The king also gave sacrifices of *Mithun* meals while they delivered the traditional lunches to the hillmen. That is why the proverb *Mera Sanduba.*[52]*Mera* is the month when these festivals are held, while *Sanduba*

[47]Ibid.,p.8.
[48]Ibid.,p.7.
[49]Ibid.,p.20.
[50]*Ching Amasung Tamgee Maree. Vol, I.op, cit.,* p.8.
[51]*Ching Amasung Tamgee Maree Vol II.op, cit.,* p.14.
[52]Ibid., p.8.

means the death of *Mithun* in huge numbers. Therefore, this festival represents passion and bond that the two share.

In the chronicles, the monarch's control over autonomous tribal chiefs in adjacent hill areas and contiguous regions of Tripura, Cachar and Burma is also expressed in king's strength and prestige. Nevertheless, the coexistence-marked political partnership between autonomous hill tribes and the king. The kings of the valley relied on the hill tribes for defence, and the hill tribes even sheltered the rulers. Historical accounts of some region of hill tribes indicate several frails and minor tribal leaders were suppressed. Few of them attempted refuge and safety from the monarchy. Mostly the tribal people viewed the authority of the king, and the allegiance was to pay homage. There are also resistance narratives predominantly from the more dominant tribes and leaders who were able to keep up a healthy, independent and political choice. In both cases, the autonomous social structures of the tribes remain unchanged. Moreover, in many respects, the king's political relationship with the tribal chiefs was limited to sporadic raids and punitive expeditions between the Chiefs and the Kings. The earliest incident of the Meiteis attack in the people of hills was on the Maring in 1302, as stated in *Cheitharol Kumbaba*.[53]

Manipur's history shows that after consolidating its position in the valley, the Meiteis began to subjugate and overpower the hill tribes. The *Haomacha Loishang* was founded,[54]for the tribal institution of Manipur, during the reign of Meitei King Irengba (984-1074 AD). By Loiyumba's period, it is evident that the Ningthouja kings' realm comprised of several hills now within Manipur's present frontier. In Loiyumba's rule, we see the king moving north and west to realise tributes from the default hill ruler. Tributes were charged for clothes and other goods of the hills.[55]However, the hill tribes those were very ferocious and violent, sometimes pillaged remote villages near hills. Brown writes that the Tangkhul and Luhupa were the

[53]Sanajaoba, "*Manipur, Past and Present,Vol.1."op.,*cit.,p.86.
[54]B. Kulachandra Sharma, *Phamlon* (Imphal, 2009).p.22.
[55]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur.* op.cit.,p.59.

most troublesome, occasionally raiding the valley itself, but like all the hill-men, they were afraid to leave the shelter of their hills for any distance. They were quickly beaten back by the state's pony cavalry.[56]

In written records such as *Cheitharol Kumbaba* or *Ningthourol Lambuba*, from the 12th century, Manipur's relations with his neighbouring kingdoms/states are accessible. In the Buranji's of the Ahoms and the Rajmala of the Tripura, corresponding records are discovered. *Cheitharol Kumbaba* records the state relations with other neighbouring kingdoms of the northeast (Ahom, Cachar, and Tripura). The people of Cachar (now in Assam) and Brahmaputra Valley have had cohesive ties with Manipur. Eastern Bengal, Tripura and Orissa also contact established.[57]

Manipuris were known as *Takhel* to Tripura. It is located to the south of Sylhet, the entry point for the Manipuris to India. The migration of Bengali to Manipur took place through Tripura. In 1533, 1634 and 1696 AD; a war took place between Tripura and Manipur. In 1534 AD, the *Takhel Khong* canal was dug in Manipur to mark Manipur's victory over the Tripuris.[58] The channel is a useful boat way and reservoir for water transport. Assam was called *Tekhao* by the Manipuri. It was the stream Dikhu which flows in the vicinity of Sibsagar from which *Tekhao* derived.[59]

The greatest Manipuri King, especially King Garibnawaz, waged wars with Burma and China with its highest number. There were approximately 64 wars during his 32-year reign. Antagonistic relations with countries on the eastern front, such as Burma and China, may have contributed to the Hindu state's close ties in the early 18th century, such as Ahoms and Tekhao in the west. His mission was unbeaten when he adopted a policy which

[56]R. Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur* (New Dehli:Mittal Publications,1975). p.71.
[57]Naorem Sanajaoba, ed., *Manipur, Past and Present: The Heritage and Ordeals of a Civilisation Vol IV*(New Dehli: Mittal Publications, 2005), p.xivi.
[58]Lal Dena, *History of Modern Manipur, 1826-1949* (New Dehli: Orbit Publishers-Distributors, 1991). p.194.
[59]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur.* op, cit.,p.22.

synchronised the traditional cult and practices of Manipur with the alien faith. This ritualistic functioning of Laininghou Sanamahi that was performed by a Brahmin.[60]

2.1.3. Overview of the Current State of Research

In this area, the most remarkable landmark works are following Gangmumei Kamei's *History of Manipur Pre-Colonial* (1991), Lal Dena's *History of Modern Manipur* (1991), Laiba's*Geography of Manipur* (1992 AD). Naorem Sanajaoba *Manipur: Treatise & Documentation* (1993), *History of Manipuri Literature* by Ch. Manihar Singh, 1996. Phanjoubam Tarapot, *Bleeding Manipur,*2003). Ghosh and Shukla's research in their book *Women of Manipur* (1997). Naorem Sanajaoba,(ed), *Manipur Past and Present,* Volume II. (1995), John Parratt, *Wounded Land: Politics and Culture in Modern Manipur* (2005).Sanajaoba, Naorem, Manipur: *State and Country,* 2003. R.K. Jhaljit, *"Golden Rule of Garibniwaz"* (2009). Laisram, Rena. *Early Meitei History: Religion, Society and the Manipur Puyas,2009.* Irene, Salam, *Muslim Manipur:* 2010. JB Bhattacharjee, *Society and Economy In Pre-Colonial Manipur,* 2010. N. Pramodini Devi. *Early Manipur Cultural History:* 2011. *These are the most important works that help us to understand the state of the research on Manipur.*

2.1.4. Main social Group of Manipur

Various ethnic groups inhabit the hills of Manipur and the valley. The tribes, namely the Nagas and the Kukis, are generally divided into two. They both may have split into several tribes and sub-tribes. Moreover, in Manipur valley, the Brahmins are found, and Muslim communities and the latter are called *Meitei Pangal*. The Meiteis in Manipur Valley is the dominant group and therefore it but natural that the bulk of material represents the Meitei ethnicity who are primarily peasants.

[60]Moirangthem Kirti Singh, *Religion and Culture of Manipur* (New Dehli: Manas Publications, 1988). p.257.

Meitei

The Ethnonym Meitei is traced to the Ninghoija Dynasty established by Nongda Lairen Pakhangba, and different groups have absorbed this dynasty politically and assimilated into the social structure. These tribes, clans or social groups are Mangang, Angoms, Luwangs, Khabas, Nganbas, Khuman, Moirang, Sarang, Leisangthem, Heirem Khunjan, Lera Khongnang, Thanga Kambong, Ulok Ushai, Haokha Lokha, Ningol Laton, Phantek Khuyon, Chakpa, Haorok Konthou and so on. These clans and groups are generally made up of seven *Salai* (*Yek* or Clans) existing today. The Mangang, Ningthoujas, Angoms, Khuman, Moirang, Khaba-Nganbas, Luwangs, and Chenglei are all members of this group. All those tribes and groups socially organised into seven clans, which are still present today.[61]In addition to Meitei, a tribe of *Helots* named *Phunganai* resided in the valley and split into Hidakpham, Potsangba, Tangkhul, Ayokpa, and Kei. All of them seemed to have been slaves and were most likely blended with Meiteis and Nagas tribes.[62]The population of Meitei was also made up from the Brahmin, Bishnupriya, the Lois and Chakpa, Yaithibi, and the Meitei *Pangal* (Manipuri Muslim).

Manipuri *Bamon*

Manipuri Brahmin's migration dates back to the 15th century, much before the Hinduization process started in Meitei society. A traditional text *Bamon Khunthoklon* provides since King Kiyamba (1467-1508 AD), period the Brahmins' immigration in the Kingdom.[63]The Meitei kings of multiple phases introduced them into the valley of Manipur from various areas of India when Meiteis' accepted the Vaishnavism. Some of those outsiders brought women, but most married Meitei girls or retained them as wives after settling in the

[61]Kabui, *History of Manipur.* op, cit., p.19-20.
[62]E. W. DUNN, *Gazetteer Of Manipur.* (New Delhi: Manas Publications,1992).p.13.
[63]Brara, *Politics, Society, and Cosmology in India's North East*.op.cit.,p.109.

valley of Manipur. The latter's successors were however provided with the Brahmin's social status.[64]

Bishnupriya

The Bishnupriya according to the Meitei's point of view, which is also adhered by all the other non-Bishnupriya in the valley, is identified by two different similar opinions; and the Bishnupriya itself maintains the perspective. The primary arguments of Bishnupriya are the indigenous Kshatriyas of the valley. They pretend to be Babrubahan's descendants from the Mahabharata. The evidence of their assertion to be the valley's initial Kshatriya is according to them. The Bishnupriya also declared that they were the first to worship the God Vishnu in the valley. Later on, the Meitei king's had gained lasting authority and expelled them. They say that when the Meitei King, along with his retinues, accepted Vaishnavism, invited them to teach the Meitei, the Hindu way of life. The primary argument of the Meiteis is that the Bishnupriyas are external residents and late settlers in the region of the valley.[65]

They never regard them as indigenous. It is claimed that initially, the Bishnupriyas belonged to a range of gotras and not indigenous. The Meitei also regard them as the bearer of lower culture, but state that the ruler of Meitei first mistreated Bishnupriya as a superior cultural community. However, the Bishnupriyas culture was of lesser value, and they assigned the job of providing the royal stable with forage.[66]However, it should be noted that this view was influenced by the School of thought, which promotes the Indo-Aryan origin of Meiteis. They are also relatively well represented in literature in various capacities and are described as having specific distinct cultural characteristics. However, these two opinions continue to persist and are not resolved.

[64]Ranajit Kumar Saha, *Valley Society of Manipur: A Cultural Frontier of Indian Civilization* (New Dehli: Punthi-Pustak, 1994).p.65.
[65]Ibid.,pp.65-66.
[66]Ibid., p.66.

Loi

The Lois, when used as an independent word or as a prefix or suffix, the term "Lois" has been various meanings. It is also associated with being subdued. *Loi –Thaba*, for instance, implies being exiled to or outside Manipur. *Loi Hanba* implies returning from exile, *Loi-Chanba* implies conquering a country, and *Loipot Kaba* must give homage to the conquering force. Loi can categorise as birth and Loi through punishment.[67]

There are various opinions about how the Loi /Chakpa originated. The legend of the Loi / Chakpa shows that an independent tribe once controlled the valley. R. Brown's views that "The Loi is not recognised as a pure Manipuri. They appear to be descendants of the former inhabitants of Moirang, one of the original tribes which formerly occupied the valley to the south. They were formerly independent but were reduced ages ago by the Meiteis. Hence, the name Loi or subdued which was given them after their subjection".[68]The Loi is presently one of Manipur's Scheduled Caste communities. Historically, Lois has emerged from an influentialManipuri social group. They were earlier known as Chakpa and lived in the northern Kangla region.

Moreover, the Ningthouja or Meiteis subdued all, and Meitei became applicable to all the tribes under Pakhangba's kingship. However, Chakpa denied joining Meitei under Pakhangba and stayed as the Lois by granting tribute to the King of Meitei. As a result, they were provided with the title Loi, meaning subdued and expelled from the Kangla. Later, Lois position degraded due to many reasons. One of the factors involved in bringing people of flawed characters to the Loi settlements and penalty them for committing offences or disobeying the kings' command. Also, the captures in the wars pushed into the villages of the Loi.

[67]Brara, *Politics, Society, and Cosmology in India's North East*. op, cit., p.115.
[68]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur.* op, cit.,p.14.

Therefore, the Loi villages became a place of detention for those who defied the king's command. For instance, Meitei Loi's community occupied the Loi village Kwatha close to the town of Moreh. The Chakpa of Phayeng, Awang Sekmai, Leimaram, Koutruk, Andro, Tairenpokpi and Lois like Kakching, Kakching Khunou, Waikhong, Chairen, Moirang, Thangga, Thongjao, Kameng, etc., whose custom, diet, practices and other cultural aspects have some unique elements, i.e. the continuity of traditions despite possessing comparable features to those of others. They are still producing rice beer, pottery, piggery, and ironworks in their indigenous mode.[69]Seven Scheduled Caste groups exist in Manipur: Loi, Yaithibis, Namsudra, Patni, Dhobi, Muchi, Ravis, and Sutradhar. Among them, Lois and Yaithibi are the state's only indigenous tribe groups. The others are migrants from outside Manipur.[70]

Besides, the Yaithibi is a Meitei term used in violations of social customs. The prisoners of war also included among this socially ostracised group. They were, allowed to live on outskirts of the valley of Manipur.[71]Yaithibi is the Meitei term about social patterns. The Meitei also recognises that one of their communities was the Yaithibi. However, they do not call them Meitei, for they now understand the making up of exiles who, for serious crimes such as their marriage to families like siblings, stepmother and other blood or close family members are culturally outcasts. According to Brown "Yaithibi is the exiled people, and they used to perform the scavengers job in the palace only for the Raja and his family. He labelled them as "Mehter caste".[72] There is a debate that is still going on about the position of the Yathibi in Manipur and is still an unsettled debate revealing the fact that the medieval has a bearing on the modern.

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[69]Devi, *The Historical Background of Kakching,* op, cit.,p.11.
[70]Lairenlakpam Bino Devi, *The Lois of Manipur: Andro, Khurkhul, Phayeng and Sekmai* (New Dehli: Mittal Publications, 2002).p.4.
[71]Kumar Suresh Singh and Anthropological Survey of India, *People of India: Manipur* (New Dehli: Anthropological Survey of India, 1998).p.242.
[72]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit., p.13.

Hill People

The Meiteis lived in the valley while the Nagas and the Kuki groups in the hills. The hill people of Manipur are mainly the Nagas and Kuki tribes. The sub-groups within the broader Naga category are Tangkhul, Mao, Maram, Poumei, Zemei, Liangmei and Rongmei, Anal, Maring, Moyon, Monsang, Lamkang, etc. They all speak Tibeto – Burman group of languages.[73]The Kuki-Chin groups are of recent migrants, primarily live in the southern regions of the state. Thadou, Paite, Simte, Ralte, Hmar, Zou, and so forth belong to the Kuki-Chin communities. Language close to the Kuki- Chin groups is smaller tribes such as Kom, Chiru, Anal, Aimol, etc. As these tribes had established themselves in the foothills near the Meitei were specific Meitei impacts on them.[74]

Meitei *Pangal* (Manipuri Muslim)

The Meitei-*Pangal* (Manipuri Muslim) had migrated from Sylhet (now in Bangladesh) and Assam district of Cachar in Manipur. During King Khagemba's rule (1562-1652 AD), many Muslim armies from Sylhet entered Manipur. When Sanongba went to the King of Cachar for assistance in vengeance against Khagemba, the King of Cachar and the King of Sylhet united and attacked Manipur under Mohmmad Shani, Nawab from the south district Taraph (Sylhet) Kingdom. In Manipuri troops' hands, the combined forces and the warriors and Mohammad Shani became prisoners of war. Approximately one thousand Muslim warriors imprisoned. Over time, the Khagemba, impressed by the Muslim duties and ability, permitted them to settle in Manipur at the moment, recognising them as privileged people of the Kingdom of Manipur. They were empowered to legalise wedding by Manipuri women and were permitted to live indefinitely as an essential aspect of the Manipuri society.

[73]Brara, *Politics, Society, and Cosmology in India's North East*. op, cit.,p.110.
[74]Ibid., p.111.

This historical event can be attributed back to 1606 AD in the record available in Kingdom history.[75]

Each community has its tradition, heritage, background, social order and geography. Different groups have recently migrated out of their traditional residential areas. The tribes mainly lived in the hills, Lois in the far edge of the valley, and Meitei Brahmins and Muslims lived in the valley. Each ethnic group is a separate unit, but together it constitutes a core of variety. In the appropriate element of our research, unification centred on language and culture, and their power would indicate their social, cultural and economic importance.

2.1.5. Minor social groups of Manipur

In the late 19th century, various Indian populations migrated to Manipur. They were the Biharis, Bengalese oil crushers and, in colonial times, the Marwaris, Nepalese, and even the Hindus among Sikhs, Tamils, and others. Multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multilingual culture and cultural systems give a picture of homogeneity and heterogeneity. Manipur's past is such a civilisation and a culture's continuing evolutionary cycle.[76]

2.2. Geographical location of Different Social groups

The founding of the Kingdom at Kangla under Nongda Lairen Pakhangba, especially the improvement of the Kingdom of Manipur, was of incredible historical significance. The differentiation of various ethnic groups and community chiefs throughout the valley affected the Ningthouja Kingdom. Among the Manipuris, there are seven clans (Salais). They are represented as follows in the table below and form the vital constituent of the Manipuri society and are the reference point for endogamy and ritual and ceremonial practices.

[75]Rajiya Shahani, "*Social Structure of Meitei-Pangal(Muslims) Of Manipur" (*PhD Thesis., Aligarh Muslim University Aligarh India, 2006), pp.8-9.
[76]Kabui, *History of Manipur.* op, cit.,p.24.

Table 2.1. Seven Clan in Meitei Society[77]

Ningthouja/Mangang
Angom
Khumal
Moirang
Luwang
Sarang-Leisangthem
Khaba-Nganba

These seven Salais had independent principalities in various areas of the valley and some areas of the hills. However, these seven Salais' geographical location is hard to ascertain today as their borders fluctuated in different points according to their rulers' fortune. The original site could be broadly located.

The principality of Ningthouja was on the right bank of the River Imphal and both sides of the River Nambul. Their capital was at Imphal Kangla, formerly the place occupied by Khaba. The Imphal River bordered it in the east, and the southern borders of the Khuman principality located in the south, Lamphel and Langjing hill in the west. It's, therefore, included the present part of Imphal and some neighbouring villages.[78]One of the oldest social groups was Mangang. In the current Imphal region, they also controlled Kangla and its surrounding. Mangang territory established the heart of the Ningthouja Kingdom at the subsequent period.[79]

The Angoms territory is situated east and north-east of the Principality of Ningthouja, northwest of the Ningthouja region. Traditionally, Angom's were migrated from Ukhrul's Kangkhui caves. Angom had been dividing into three groups: Tari, Puleiromba, and Khoidon-Mandop. Tari was a Sarang Leisangthem; the progenitor of the Angom clan was Puleiromba. The Angom settled for the first time on the hills of Nongmaijing where *Angom Yumpham*, the homestead of the Angoms were located. Their territory in the east covered

[77]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur.* op, cit.,p.13.
[78]Saikhom Gopal Singh,*The Meeteis of Manipur: A Study in Human Geography* (New Delhi: Ruby Press & Co, 2015).ppp.35-36-37.
[79]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.73.

Kasom Yangpung, in the north Telou Channa and Lamlai, in the west Phaknung and Angom Leikai, and the south Yairipok. The Angom Chiefs were subsequently given a residence by the Meitei Kings in the north of Kangla, but then taken to the northeast of Imphal to Kontha and, on the east side of the *Imphal Turel* the *Turel Achouba*, to Puleiromba east of Sanjengthong. Angom supported Pakhanba as Kangla Kingdom ruler.[80]

The originator of the clans / salais, the Khuman, and the Luwang were *'Peireiton',* a contemporary of the Pakhangba. Singtapung, the son of Poireiton begot, Areng, and Pamingnaba were his two sons. As Areng's descent became a Khuman clan, Pamingnaba's descendants became a Luwang clan.[81]It seems that in a vastly compact territory, the Luwang and Khuman were residing together. However, Khuman occupied a wider settlement area in the central and south-east Imphal valleys after being separated from the Luwangs. Hou Langloi Lammahanbi included Hiyangthang, Langthabal, Heiyen, Keirak, Wabagai, Meijarao, Mayang Imphal, Wangoi, Pumlen, Yairipok, Sikhong, Thoubal Tamding Tentha, and Wangjing. Lammangdong's, once, Khoiriyan chignon, Ningombam, and Namkujin were also included. Originally Thoubal had their capital and subsequently moved to Meikoipung close Mayang Imphal.[82]

The records and ancient traditions of the Moirang are that they had been blooming as a powerful clan since their pre-historic period. King Nganghunthok and King Ngangningshing were the originators of Moirang *Salai* / Clan. However, in Moirang's oral History, God, Thangjing, went down from heaven in the form of a boar and created them. He incarnated and reined as the prince of Moirang seven times.[83]Moirang king had a long legacy towards the south-west of Manipur close the Loktak Lake that was the Moirang clan's homeland. They also identified their territory as Ngangoi and Moirang Kege. The part

[80]Ibid., pp.72-73.
[81]Singh, *The Meeteis of Manipur,* op, cit.,p.52.
[82]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.72.
[83]Singh, *The Meeteis of Manipur,* op, cit.,pp.63-64.

of the Moirang bordered by Loktak Lake and Khuman territory, the southern regions of Ningthoukhong, the settlements of Lammangdong, the western lands of Thangjing hills, Leimatak Basin, in the south-east Manipur River and *Turel Achouba*.Moreover, Thanga islet, Lokha – Haokha close to Sugnu were also covered.[84]

The genealogical records of Luwang mention the habitat of the clan of Luwang. According to Mahou Naophamlol, *"The Luwngs lived at Kekrupat, then at Langol Hills."* According to Langtai Khuya, the Luwang Territory was from *"Liklaleima Chengjin to Hou-Thangwai"* Hou Thangawai includes Lamdeng, Kameng, Mayanglangjing, Terak, Urak, Chirang, Luwangsangbam, Khonghampat, Chnggin, Sekami, Khoiri Village and Lamphel of West Imphal. The principal river is Luwangli that runs into the Iroisemba Irong stream from Tamphailing in Kameng, to Lamdeng. They were claimed to have created their capital at the Koubru Hill's foothills and subsequently on the Funan Hills, Loijing and Lammangdong.[85]

Before the Christian era began, the Khaba and Nganba clans existed in the central valley of Manipur. The capital of Khaba Nganba was located in Wangjing Sangai Imphal (Cherapur).[86] While they come from distinct paths, they also think that they are the incarnations of God, settled initially in Manipur. The Khaba was once an active group that had occupied and rule over Kangla before the ascent of Pakhangba. The Khabas had a sequence of struggles with Pakhangba and eventually overcame them. The Langol hills connect Kangla territory to the west, the Khaonghampat to the north, the Nongmaiching hills to the east and the Lamdaibung to the south. They were decreased to a tiny social group after Pakhangba's victory of the Khabas and united with the Nganbas. They were known as the clan of Khaba-Ngaba.[87]

[84]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit., pp.73-74.
[85]Ibid., p.72.
[86]Singh, *The Meeteis of Manipur,* op, cit., p.49.
[87]Kabui, *History of Manipur.* op, cit., p.73.

The old social groups appeared to be the Chengleis, Sarangthem and Leisangthem. The Chengleis split into Sarangthem and Leisangthem, who merged with one Salaï Sarang-Leisangthem. Moirangthem Narendra state that the name of the leaders mentioned in the text of the 17th Century, *Thiren Layat* belonged to Sarang Leisangthem. Their leaders were also the first to rule in Kangla. Other clans such as Thanga Kambong lived in Luwang Territory, Lokha both a tribe and place name, in Moirang Principality's south-west Imphal valley, Haorok- Konthou in Luwng Territory, Mori Territory and Kege Moirang Territory.[88]

The first geographical location of the Lois was at Chaubripung, Pungsaikhong, Salwa, Ahongei and Langjing.[89] They have then distributed the areas of their settlement to the Langmaiching Hills. Lois moved from there to the various locations of the valley. They settled at Thanga, Ething, Karang, Sekmai, Thongjao, Thoubandong, Chandrakhong, Kakching, Chairen, Heirok, Thangjing, Sugnu, Langathen, Andro, Kameng, Suisa Kameng, Leimaram, Phayeng, Koutruk, and Yimtheng.[90] The king imposed a severe penalty later on interclan marriages and those who performed such significant criminal deeds, which degraded them to the Lois ' position. They were permitted to live in the villages of Loi.

In the early settlement period, Muslims were provided territory close to the Royal Palace and served as soldiers in the king's military. Their migration in King Khagemba period was known as *Khunthok Achouba* or massive migration. R.K. Snahal says the first Muslim settlement places were Myangkhang and Lilong.[91] Although habitation pattern cannot be traced in full detail, data on some of the vital Muslim villages are accessible. Some scholars view Muslim people are settled initially only in Imphal's capital city. Later they were distributed to the other areas of the Kingdom, especially in Bishnupur and Thoubal. Muslim

[88]Ibid., p.74.
[89]N. Debendra Singh, *Identities Of The Migrated Peoples of Manipur* (Imphal: Centre for Manipur Studies, 2003).p.9.
[90]Ch Hemchandra, *Meihoubaron Sanggai Phammang* (Imphal ,2004).p.175.
[91]Sanjoy Ahanthem, "*Immigrant Communities In Manipur: A Historical Study (12th -19th Century AD)"* (PhD Thesis., Manipur University Imphal, 2017), p.106.

villages were scattered mainly on Imphal, Iril and Thoubal's major rivers and lakes. Further, Keirao, Lilong, Sekta, Yairipok, Hafta were the places where king Khagemba allotted them to settle in.[92]

Brahmins came in the period of King Kiyamba (1467-1508A.D.), and at different times a significant part of them arrived in Manipur in small waves. They came from other regions of the Indian subcontinent, such as Gujarat, Tripura, Kanauj, Mathura, Sylhet, Nadia, Kanpur, Gouradesh, Shantipur, Calcutta, Kuligram, Baranagar, Prayag, Puri, Brindaban, Gangotri, Raibari, (Radhakunda, Kashi, Nepal, etc.).[93] They were permitted to marry local girls and lived in Brahmapur, Singjamei, Khwaramband, Uripok, Chingakham Leikai Thangmeiband, Elangbam Leikai, Sagolband, Lalambung, Khurai, Wangkhei Leikai, Pisum, etc. The Brahmins or Bamons are a vital part of the Manipuri society. According to *Bamon Khunthoklon*, an undated document on the Brahmin's migration, seventy-four personal Brahmins first came to Manipur during King Kiyamba's rule (1467-1508 AD) and persisted till King Churachand's reign (1891-1941 AD). The most extensive number of the group located in Bamon Leikai and Khawai Brahmapur, presently in Imphal. However, households of Bamons are found in almost every area in Manipur.

The Bishnupriya Manipuris resided in the western part of Manipur Valley before the nineteenth-century Burmese attacks. At the time of Burmese occupation of the valley, they escaped the country and lived like others in Cachar, Sylhet and Tripura.[94]

The hill people's geographical location is no abrupt border between the country's regions inhabited by Nagas and Kukis' two races. It can be expected that a line running east from Kachar to the Manipur Valley (about 24'70 north latitude) would indicate the border dividing the two races, the Nagas lying north of this line, the Kukis south. Crossing the valley, the Heirok hills that separate Manipur from Burma are inhabited mainly by the three

[92]Brara, *Politics, Society, and Cosmology in India's North East*. op, cit., p.119.
[93]Bamon Khunthoklon (Manuscript/MS).
[94]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur*. op, cit., p.16.

tribes – south and east by the numerous MaringNagas. However, essentially differing from the Nagas to the north in their facial and other features, thus to be described, and a few Kuki, sections of the great Khongjais tribes; to the north and east the Nagas tribe name Tangkhul or *Luhoopa*; scattered across the entire range is the Khongjai tribe village. The Lumlangtong on the Limatal hills, which surround the valley westwards, also has a mixed Kubui Nagas, Khongjai and Chiru Kuki population. To the north, the numerous Nagas tribes are in interaction with each other, there is no country tract of any uninhabited breadth, as in the south. In that portion of the hill country lying directly north of that occupied by the Lushai tribes of Kukis. There are no settlers, and the unpopulated tract spreads as the Lushai gathers power and threatens the vulnerable tribes to the north of them, the Lushai did not occupy the land thus depopulated.[95]The hills' people are of a lower order of civilisation; their manual outputs are less, unimportant and insignificant; they did not have written character.

2.2.1. Professions and livelihood of Different Social Groups

The ethnic culture of Meitei evolved through a long process of social integration and amalgamation. The remarkable demonstration of ethnic proto-Meitei factions that had migrated to the Manipur valley from Southeast Asia. In various waves at the different purposes of time is taken up to be the seven groups, namely the Ningthouja, Angom, Luwang, Khuman, Khaba-Nganba, Chenglei, and Moirang. Every one of the seven clans had settled solely in various portions of the valley and those settlements in the long run formed into independent principalities or chiefdoms.[96]The Meitei kings gradually expanded their predominance over the wealthy forest, open areas in the Imphal-Iril catchments. In the northern Manipur valley which was part of the principality of the Ningthouja Clan**.** These regional diversities also point to the human geography of Manipur.

[95]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur.* op, cit., pp.15-16.
[96]Bhattacharjee, *State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur*. op, cit., p.vii.

Meitei

The Meiteis are mainly agriculturists. Their staple food is rice, and they primarily produce paddy. Various streams from the base of the hills surrounding the valley ensure adequate irrigation even to the fields above the flooding's general level. Therefore, crops are usually abundant. Tobacco, indigo, mustard, sugarcane, and various types of pulses are also grown besides paddy.

The people are mainly occupied in agriculture. The kingdoms of Ningthouja, Khuman, and Luwang were dedicated to wet rice cultivation, while the Shelloi Langmais, as hill inhabitants were engaged in shifting cultivation. Another profession of livelihood was fishing. In the chronicle and the text, the fishing weir is made of reeds. Women are involved in spinning and weaving cotton cloth and silk. Hunting was a past time and a significant source of economy for the community. Animal husbandry is a form of raising domesticated animals that involves raising goats, pigs, and buffaloes. Also, chicken and ducks are considered as poultry.[97]

In the central valley, Meiteis are primarily populated. Kurta, dhoti, and pagari are the man's garments. Their attire is tailored for special occasions—white Kurta and dhoti in cotton or *'end'* or silk shawl around the body. On ceremonial occasions, no other clothing is permitted—the women dressed in Choli and wrapped around the ankles with a skirt-like garment called *Phanek.*[98]Women enjoy ornaments made from gold. Possessions of gold are considered as a token of prosperity. They have various types of earrings. Also carried are necklaces and bracelets. In Manipur, tattooing is not performed as in other north-eastern hills.[99]Col. Mc Culloch described:

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[97]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit., p.114.
[98]R. K. Jhalajit Singh, *Manipur* (Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1975).p.22.
[99]Chander Sheikhar Panchani, *Manipur, Religion, Culture, and Society* (New Dehli: Konark Publishers, 1987).pp.44-45.

> The Manipuri's dwelling is all of the same kinds, except those of the wealthy, are larger and made of more substantial materials than those of the poor, which are posts and beams of the former's houses. The house walls are made of reeds and thatched with straw, and the roof is made of thatch. All the dwelling houses face to the eastward, in which direction they have a large open verandah. In the South verandah, the family sits during the day, and in it, all the household chores are carried out, except cooking, which is done indoors.[100]

Villages formed in pockets are distributed throughout the valley with a cluster of few houses. The housing can be characterised by the growth of trees within and around the village, the rest of the surrounding area can be cultivated and covered with paddy groves where no trees usually have grown.

Agriculture is the main or common profession for men. The primary concern of Meitei women is weaving and making of the basket. It said that even in the palace there were looms. The loom installed in every house and women is at work. They are in weaving art.

Agriculture has been implemented by animal propulsion for a lengthy time. In agriculture, Meiteis have been far developed and self-sufficient from ancient times in food grains. Fishing took the form of a hobby as well as profession. Fisher-folk inhabits the outer bank of Lotak Lake. It is the principal place to see women involved in fishing with the assistance of weirs, traps, fishing nets, spears, and fishing baskets in freshwater ponds, streams, and marshes. They use distinct techniques for fishing; according to the requirements and capacity of the community. Hodson gives an exciting overview of the fishing net. The women fish with a square net suspended from a central pole by four strings at each corner and dip the net well under the turbid waters of the edges of lakes, ditches, and slowly raise it till the catch rises above the surface of the water and they smartly bring it out.[101]

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[100] W. McCulloch, *Account of the Valley of Munnipore and of the Hill Tribes with a Comparative Vocabulary of the Munnipore and Other Languages* (Calcutta: Bengal Printing Company, 1859).p.20.
[101]Hodson, *The Meitheis.* op, cit., p.45.

The specific food item is fish. The hearty meal is rice. Meitei makes pickles called *'Iromba'* from the dried fish and makes bamboo shoots or banana trunk pieces.

Loi or Chakpa

In addition to Meitei, there are autochthonous pre-Meitei communities that have been progressively transported by the Meitei into the marshy land, which are less productive foothills Loi, Chakpa and few other minor ethnic groups who possessed the valley.[102]However, all of the inhabitants speak with a broad mix of Manipuri terms of unique dialects. Using *Yu* (rice beer), poultry, piggery, darker skin, and snub nose, Lois can be identified from the Meiteis.[103]They are professional peasants. Some of them engage in pig rearing, liquor distillation, salt making, pot making, breeding, silk manufacturing, and fishing. Long ago, Lois or Chakpa were powerful, and they dominated all the other ethnic groups, and they controlled Manipur's most fertile land and set up their rule. Nevertheless, the Meitei later became the dominant group, defeating the Lois or Chakpa and leading them to the region's foothills.[104]

Every Loi village is regarded for a particular traditional occupation. In the Sekmai village, for example, high-quality alcoholic liquor is produced by Lois. In the village of Khurkhul, Phayeng and Leimaram, for the outstanding value of silk yarns. The village of Andro is renowned for its pottery skills. Women perform a crucial role in this traditional occupation. Women also work in the distillery business in Sekmai and other villages. After many years of regular practising, they have become experts. Even for the Phayeng and the Leimaram villages, Silkworm rearing was the speciality of women from the community of Khurkhul. Women in those villages have adequate knowledge of worms and cocoons. As

[102]Bhattacharjee, Jayanta Bhusan. op, cit., p. vii.
[103]Moirangthem Kirti Singh, *The Loi Community of Manipur,* in *Lanmei Thanbi* (Journal) Vol. III. No.-7, (Imphal, 1985).p.13.
[104]Sipra Sen, *Tribes and Castes of Manipur: Description and Select Bibliography* (New Dehli: Mittal Publications, 1992).p.65.

with Andro, pottery is a profession for both genders. Thus, in each economic activity, women have equivalent shares with their male counterparts.[105]

The Loi's Villages were forced to occupy and give their tributes to the king by various sectors, and without the king's authorisation, the occupation could not be changed. The preceding were the traditional Lois professions, according to Kei-Loi Lingkhatpa (manuscripts). The Lois of Leimaram, Phayeng, Khurkhul, and Kouturk raised the silkworms and paid tribute to the silk articles' king. Waikhong Shikhong and Ningel manufactured salt and spent a month as the tribute to the king. The Loi of the village of Kakching were blacksmiths. Their real duty in life was to dig up iron ore in the neighbourhood and to produce nails and daos for the state. In Sugnu, Wangoo and Nungoo, the profession of wood cutting and building houses. They cut woods for the king every month. The occupation of Haiyel, Phoubakchao and Hangul villagers were to produce *Sel* coins and pay tributes to the kings. They were known as *Sellois*. Chairel, Andro, Thoubandong and Thongjao villagers were the prominent people who had to produce pots of earthen in tribute to the king and paid these earthen pots. The Loi of Moirang, Arong, and Thanga, villages activity was the fishing profession and paid tribute to the king.[106]

In addition to those activities, they were primarily involved in food grain cultivation, raised livestock, hen ducks, pigs, etc. The manufactured country's spirit was recognised as the *Yu* for both house consumption and use in ceremonies and rituals.

Yaithibi

A small endogamous community, Yaithibi or the Andro, resided in the periphery of Manipur, Thoubal, Andro and Bishnupur district. They populated the hill and less fertile areas and the lowlands around lakes. Earlier, they knew that the Yaithibis are outcaste and

[105]Singh and India, *People of India*. op, cit., p.114.
[106]Pheiroijam Sanathoi Devi, "*Social Change Among The Lois Of Manipur"* (PhD Thesis., Assam University Silchar, 2012),p.64.

untouchable groups. The Yaithibis have a smaller population. Fishing is their traditional profession. There are usually fishermen on Loktak Lake who live in Ithing and Thanga. Others produce *Loo* (fishing basket), while others weave *Lang* and *Inn* (fishing nets).[107]

Moreover, some of them cultivate pineapple in the hilly slopes. Some depend on rearing fowls and goats for their livelihoods. Furthermore, serving as a porter is a tough job for agriculture. They also do cultivate.

Muslims

Muslims, who lived in Manipur, being a minority, had to use the traditional economic activities of Manipur to gain livelihoods on the soil of Manipur. In the era of Manipur, agricultural products primarily rice with other food grains was the focus. In a farming economy, the Meitei Pangal had adopted the traditional way to gain a livelihood. The main element that promoted their incorporation into economic existence with the Meiteis was their marriage with the Meitei women. The Meitei Pangal had better outcomes for rapid economic growth because of their expertise in the agro-economic and their place of settlement. Their settling areas are mainly close to banks of the Irl river, the river Nambul, the river Thoubal, the river Imphal so on and the lakeside namely Ikop pat, the Loktak lake, the Loushi pat, the Kharung Pat, the Heningsoi Pat, the Iroi Pat, the Qazi Pat, the Ngangou pat, Porom pat, the Waithou Pat, etc. The soil close to the riversides and Lake periphery is more fertile and efficient, leading to the people's economic development and growth in those areas. By utilising their agriculture knowledge, they generated more food grain such as paddy, vegetables; etc. They also performed fishing as a specialist in fishing; Md. Latif Shah opined that "*the fishing industry in Manipur has also become an essential income source for the Muslims*."[108]History shows that the fishing industry plays a necessary part in Manipur's

[107]Sen, *Tribes and Castes of Manipur*. op, cit., p.68.
[108]Md. Latif Shah, *"Bio- Anthropology of the Muslim of Manipur*" (PhD Thesis., Manipur University Imphal, 1990), p.7.

ancient kingdom's social and economic life. Since early times, the fishing in rivers, lakes, has been carried out by ordinary people and ruling classes that have been evident from the old texts in the Manipuri, such as *Panthoibi Khongul, Khongchomnupi Nongarol* and *Moirang Kangleirol* etc.[109]

The family is an essential institution of domestic life in an agrarian-based economy a state like Manipur, and the *Meitei Pangals* are a family community. Almost, all the males are involved in agriculture, and related professions and the Manipuri Muslims family have peculiar economic importance. The family is also a necessary component in the agricultural economy and serves as a home for his wife, kids, elderly parents, and perhaps other relations. Almost every member contributes to the agricultural production process in some way. The wife's role in agricultural production is beneficial. Women's labour is widely used in farming—For example, in rice and vegetable production. In rural areas, they constitute almost half of the complete agricultural labourers. Their labour is mainly used in cultivation activities such as the broadcasting of rice seeds and their transplantation, sowing and harvesting, threshing, drying of the paddy, etc. They also tend and handle vegetable gardens, connected to their homes, produced in local communities. They also cultivate livestock and poultry.[110]From their settlement in Manipur until today, cattle rearing became an essential profession for the *Meitei Pangals* as they were skilled in this field. They raised livestock to satisfy their demands for dairy products, food and sale in the markets, and they get the right amount of prices from this profession. Cattle are imported from Burma and exported by *Meitei-Pangal* to Manipur as late as 1891.[111]

Pangals may be attributed to the culinary talent that is evident in tasty curries' preparation, the taste enhanced by spices, mustard oil, ginger, garlic, etc. They possess

[109]Md. Nazir Ahmad, "*The Muslims In Manipur*: A Study In Their History and Culture"(PhD Thesis., Manipur University Imphal, 2013), pp.176-177.
[110]Salam Irene, *The Muslims of Manipur*(New Dehli: Gyan Publishing House, 2010).p.53.
[111]Khullakpam A. Hakim Shah, *The Manipuri Government to the Meitei Pangal (1606-1949)* (Imphal: Pearl Education Society, 2008).p.31.

special techniques to extract mustard oil and to make spices. Like the Meiteis, they prepare *'Kheer'* (rice pudding), but they also make special sweetmeats and sharbat. In particular, they enjoy the Meitei *Iromba* or *ametpa* delicacies, which are freshly prepared every day. Religion and the state both prohibit them from using alcohol and wine.[112]

Brown says, they mainly follow the trades of gardening, turning, carpentry and pottery. They also serve as sepoys, and almost all the buglers and drummers attached to Raja's army were Musalmans. Furthermore, he says that these Pangals had the reputation of being honest and hard-working, performing *Lallup* as Manipuri.[113]Mc Culloch wrote that Mussulmans were divided into four main branches, sepoys, gardeners, turners, and potters. Kazi, the king, assigned them to govern the Mussalman for the service he might have rendered for the king as a manual servant. Furthermore, *Nongsamei Puya* says that some of the Manipuri Mussalman's contributions to the valley are paddy transplantation, *dolai puba* (carrying of Palanquin), *hidak thakpa* (smoking tobacco) paper production, etc.[114]

Brahmin

Bamon and Meitei also populated the most abundant plains and are known as the most highly regarded people in social stratification. The priesthood is their typical occupation. The typical Meitei Brahmin cannot be a farmer and a ploughman.

Another constituent of *Nongchup haram* is the Brahmins, also known as Bamons, the Manipuri society segment. Royal Chronicles mention that the Brahmin community's main occupations are:

1.Priestly duties

2. Astrology.

[112]Irene, *The Muslims of Manipur*. op, cit., p.99.
[113]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit., p15.
[114]Saha, *Valley Society of Manipur.*, op, cit., p.68.

The priest or Brahmin perform all the rituals and rites of the Hinduised Meitei Society. Professional astrologers are the second categories of the Brahmin. The Brahmins have always regarded themselves as skilled astrologers because of their capacity to perform ritual functions. Many Brahmins belong to *Rahri Shreni* and educated in ritual food and group festivals related to spiritual and cultural activities. The Vaishnavite rulers Meitei led the Brahmins to teach the Vaishnavism and function in the valley as a priest. As the Brahman of Gouriya Meitei, they pierce their ears, wear the sacred thread and shave the heads, and put holy marks symbolising Vaishnavism and Shaivism on their foreheads. They vary conspicuously from Meitei, and they never plough the land. They are the only people to cook and serve cooked food to invitees at the Gouriya Meitei's community feast. Their traditional occupation is priesthood and cooking.[115]

Cheitharol Kumbaba has several records about the use of Brahmins in the Manipuri administrative, military, diplomatic and religious activities. There are some entries related to Brahman social and cultural activity on every page of *Cheitharol Kumbaba*, starting from the King Charairongba (1697-1709) to King Churachand Singh (1891-1941 AD). The kings of Manipur appointed the Brahmins as a negotiator, messengers, and ambassadors. King Bhagyachandra has sent a Brahmin from Assam to give his people a message concerning his arrival at Manipur, named Jayadeva.[116]

Brahmin's rituals are often the same as Gouriya Meitei, except for Meitei religious components in regular activities and life-cycle. Two times in the morning and evening; they worship the deities of shrines located in their courtyard. Hindu festivals are prominent in their annual cycle of festivities. They may accompany the Meitei festivals, although they are peripheral participants. If they have acknowledged up at festivals of Meitei, they can

[115]Ibid.,p.76.
[116]*Singh and Singh, Cheitharol Kumbaba*. op, cit., p.125.

contribute, but they do not have an active role to play. Mostly they are keeping *Umanglai and Lamlai*. This contribution is rendered to gain indigenous status.[117]

2.2.2. Problems associated with Studying the Meitei Ethnic Group

As scholars make various assumptions and notions on the origin of Meitei, the influential ethnic group of Manipur, is still obscure. Manipur was a meeting place of different migrating groups in pre-historic times. For example, the Austric, the Mongoloid, the Tai, Tibeto-Burman, the Indo-Aryan, etc. But today we do not accept these categories as 'racial' but only as linguistic and physical, and the idea of phenotypes has replaced race but is not mainly employed. Therefore, its origin cannot be confined to a specific group. The Meiteis are formed as a result of the long-drawn conflicting process of ethnicity. Its distinctive position is established by the systematic process of cultural and political absorption of the other ethnic groups in some consequent period. Several theories and approaches have been speculated about Meiteis' origin. Analytical surveys of its cultural, geographical and physical structure, language, customs, artefacts, etc. form ideas about the interrelated forces that created the distinctive Meitei in the context of historical formation. The Meitei *Puyas* and foreign works on ethnology, anthropology, sociology, local chronicles, Southeast Asia's works, Tibet and Assam. The facts and archaeological findings, folk myths and local *Maichous* are the significant components of its study.[118]Also, the subject matter should concern both primary and secondary sources. Collectively, pluralistic perspectives focused on the scientific method, and folklore brings a speculative solution to the study.

The legend of the origin of Meitei creates the view that a supreme god was Meitei as its descendants. The creator, *Atiya Guru Sidaba*, instructed his son *Asiba* to create the earth. And then *Asiba* was called to make a human being after finishing the mission. *Asiba* had

[117]Saha, *Valley Society of Manipur,* op, cit., p.77.
[118]N.Pramodini Devi, *The cultural history of Early Manipur* (Kakching: Times Publishing House Manipur,2011). p.11.

made *Ngamu* (lata fish), frog, tortoise and ape. The last creation was a human being. Then *Guru* gave *Kangla's* throne to his youngest son *Konjin Tuthokpa*, personified as Pakhangba.There are two narratives concerning the emergence of Pakhangba.Following the first accounts, Guru directed his three sons, *Asiba, Atiya Sidaba* and *Konji Tuthokpa*, to move around the earth. The two elders flew to complete the mission. But the younger took the opportunity to roam his father's throne seven times. Through his wisdom acquired from his mother *Leimaren Siadabi*, he could win the race for Kangla 's throne. In the second accounts, Guru floated on the river in the disguise of a dead bull to hunt the talents of his sons, *Shentreng* (Pakhangba) and *Kupterng* (*Sanamahi*). *Shentreng* acknowledged his father and was appointed as *Ningthouja's Piba* (head) who came to be Meitei.[119]

The legendary narratives refer to Meitei's as Guru's descendants. However, it cannot use an authentic opinion. Facts and observations of evolutionary theory show genuine evidence that Manipur was not the first area where humans developed, on the other hand, South East Asia. Southeast Asia was the first location where the transition from earlier forms of human life occurred, as demonstrated by discovering the central Java skull of a very early human in 1891.[120] These first inhabitants spread successively in each region. Meitei's origin theories, the Aryan origin being the most vigorously propounded and vehemently opposed by the protagonists and their critics, respectively. Aryan relation resulted from the eighteenth-century embrace of Hinduism by the royal family and the people in the valley and the subsequent assertion of the ruling dynasty's descent from Babhruvahana, a scion of the Pandava hero, Arjun of the Mahabharata. Despite Brahmin's tremendous effort, the Meiteis, Aryan or Indo Aryan is an ethnic group or language.[121] Meitei scholars including Atombabpu

[119]Keerti Chand Tensuba, *Genesis of Indian Tribes: An Approach to the History of Meiteis and Thais* (New Dehli: Inter-India Publications, 1993).p.60.
[120]Brian Harrison, *South-East Asia: A Short History* (London: Macmillan, 1963). p.1.
[121]Kabui, *Ethnicity and Social Change*. *op, cit.,p.6.*

Sharma, L Iboongohal Singh, says that the Meiteis are descendants of Arjuna, Mahabharata's hero. Gangmumei Kabui stated that:

> "The Brahmins and the Hinduised Meiteis helped propagate the claim of the Aryan origin. Identification of the followers of Hinduism with the Aryan speakers, a deliberate attempt for the title of a religion with a language or a race, was the cause of this controversy: The Meiteis as a whole are not Aryan, but there are Aryan elements amongst them."[122]

Their general characteristics are Mongoloid. It's believed that Meitei had developed through a substantial mixture of blood. R. Brown stated:

> "Although, the general facial characteristic features of them show a regularity approaching the Aryan type. Among both men and women, the stature is various, differing about as much as is found among Europeans."[123]Sir James Johnstone believed that Meiteis were a great race from an Indo-Chinese stock, with some blend of Aryan blood from successive waves of Aryan invaders passing through the valley in prehistoric times. He also noted, "The Chinese blood in them has made the Manipuris an industrious and inscrutable set of people which the Burmese, Shans, and ordinary Asiatic lack.[124]

Captain Pemberton also considered the Meitei or Manipuri as descendants of a Tartar colony that probably emigrated from China's northwestern border.[125]However, the Meiteis and the Tartars' supposed link is highly speculative in the absence of reasonable proof. Col. McCulloch, while disagreeing with Capt. Pemberton's view noted that the Meiteis descended from the surrounding hill tribes based on certain similitudes in customs, language, and houses.[126] On the contrary, W. Robinson point of view is that the Manipuri who inhabit this

[122]Ibid.,
[123]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit., p.57.
[124]Johnstone James, *My Experiences in Manipur and the Naga Hills* (London: S. Low, Marston, limited,1896).p.80.
[125]Robert Boileau Pemberton, *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India: With an Appendix and Maps* (Calcutta: order of the Supreme Government of India, 1835). p.37.
[126]W. McCulloch, *Account of the Valley of Munnipore and of the Hill Tribes with a Comparative Vocabulary of the Munnipore and Other Languages* (Calcutta: Bengal Printing Company, 1859).p.4.

valley are not generally supposed to connect with the Nagas' great family.[127]Some scholars have traced the Meiteis to the Tai branch of the Moi tribe. Brian Houghton Hodgson made this statement that"In the 'Moitay' of Manipur, we have the combined appellations of the Siamese Tai and the Kochin Chinese 'Moy'. In other words, The Manipuri tribes, called Cossiahs by the Bengalis, belong to the Moi section of the great tribe called Tai by themselves and Shan vel Syan by the Burmese, the sectional name being also foreign and equivalent to the natives."[128]From the overhead view, Hodson notes that:

> At the same time, Shan influence has exerted a great influence over the culture as over the politics of Manipur. It is difficult, especially on linguistic grounds, to group the Meitheis with the Tai races when the structure and vocabulary of the Meithei language alike agree with those of the Tibeto –Burman races.[129]

However, it must be noted in this connection that it cannot determine the race while language is an essential factor. Language has no real test of race.[130]The Khasi of Meghalaya is racially Mongoloid but Austrian (Mon-Khmer) in the language, likely through contact with Austric people in ancient times.[131]Again, in the lack of definite anthropological evidence, it is hard to evaluate the validity of the theory mentioned above. Even today, most scholars shift their focus to the east, especially Indo-China or South-East Asia, on the origin of the Meiteis. The Manipuris (Meiteis) are distinctively Mongoloid in appearance, suggesting that their roots should seek further east.[132]

The Meiteis are of Mongoloid Phenotype in appearance, suggesting that their origin should search further east. Apart from the same Mongoloid family, traditional society and the pattern of the behaviour of the ancient Meitei have significant contact with the Shans, the

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[127]Verrier Elwin, *The Nagas in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969).p.38.
[128]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit., p.10.
[129] Ibid.,
[130]Edward Gait, *A History of Assam* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Company, 1906). p.1.
[131]SK. Chatterji, *Kirata-Jana-kirti*.(Calcutta, 1974).p.166.
[132]Saroj Nalini Parratt, *The Religion of Manipur: Beliefs, Rituals, and Historical Development* (Calcutta: Firma KLM, 1980).p.2.

Burmese, the Chinese, etc., particularly in the field of certain fundamental customs such as death, worship of the ancestors, worship of spirits, superstition, etc. Additionally, the resemblance between the traditional Meitei religion and that of Indo-China's people before the early impact of the influence of the Indians, such as the ancestor's worship, the place of shrines in the elevated locations of burial in jars or dolmans, etc., is startling.

However, in the lack of clear evidence, it is impossible to precisely ascertain which branch of the Mongoloids belongs to the Meiteis and from which specific part they had come. In these circumstances, we cannot go beyond the fact that the Mongoloid Meiteis had established themselves in the valley of Manipur years before the Christian era. They have settled there under a *chief in kin* groups that each one of them occupies a specific territorial area. Kings appeared and at the dawn of history started the process of amalgamation of various tribes led by the king (Chieftain) of the most powerful group, the *Ningthouja Salai* (also known as Meiteis), resulting in the creation of a new community called Meiteis.

2.2.3. Spread of the Meitei

The name Meitei was not known to the Imphal Valley's earliest settlers. Tibeto-Burmans followed by proto-Burmese and proto-Tibetans were the earliest settlers. These groups of people focused mainly on Imphal Valley's north-eastern corner. Then another group of Astro-Asiatic tribes entered the valley and settled in the eastern part. In contrast, another group of tribes came to the present political Manipur and settled on the western side. In the Southern part of the valley, some groups from the Himalayan tribe, Moriya the Tibeto-Burma, the proto-Burman, Chinese people and Indians. Due to its natural girdle of mountains and hills protecting them from external aggression, Imphal's valley was a refuge of fugitives from its surroundings. The Meitei community came into being when all these groups of

people merged.[133] Manipuri history has the legacies of Manipuri prominently the Meiteis. Their settlements had spread in several states and parts of Asia, Manipuri Diaspora had emerged beyond its original roots in the form of Manipur. In Myanmar (Burma), Bangladesh, Tripura, Cachar, Assam, North-eastern states, and some enclaves such as Nabadwip and Brindavan, the Pan-Manipuri settlements could be dated back to medieval times and even to distant pasts.[134]

The Meiteis and their colonies in some Asian countries and location were Manipuri's heritage in Asia. The rise of Manipuri immigrant groups past their unique source on Manipur territory.[135]The early period of Meitei population spread with the period starting during Meitei ruler Kangba's proto-historic rule.[136]As mentioned in the Manipuri Royal Chronicle, *'Cheitharol Kumbaba,'* which is also revealed by another remarkable Meitei Chronicle, *Ningthourol Lambuba*, the Meitei ethnicity spread in the rule of the first history of Meitei King Nongda Lairen Pakhangba in 33 AD.

The Meitei lived in the valley and made up a considerable population of Manipur. Meitei was used during Nongda Lairen Pakhangba's establishment of the Ningthouja dynasty only as of the clan or dynasty and the social and ethnic groups that integrated politically and socially into the suzerainty of the Ningthouja.[137]Several cultural communities had lived in the area and outskirts namely. Mangang, Luwang, Moirang, Khabas, Nganba, Sarang Leisangthem, Angom, Haorokonthou, Heirem Khunjan, Lera Khongnang, Thanga Karang, Urok Ushai, Haokha Lokha, Ningal Laiton, Phantek Chakpa before the Ningthouja kingdom was established in Kanglá.[138]

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[133]Singh, *The History of Manipur.* op, cit., p.309.
[134]Naorem Sanajaoba, ed., *Manipur, Past and Present: The Heritage and Ordeals of a CivilizationVol, IV.(* New Dehli: Mittal Publications,2005).p.xxxviii.
[135]Ibid.,p.12.
[136]Ibid.,p.xx.
[137]H. Sudhir, ed., *Social History of Manipur* (New Delhi: Sunmarg Publication, 2012),p.35.
[138]Y. Bheigya Singh, ed. *Leithak Leikharol* (Imphal, 1967).p.111.

Ethnic assimilation has taken place in this kingdom since the earliest phase, because of numerous political and social variables. With this ethnic fusion, different ethnic groups were created, and some had vanished. Mangang and Haokha Lokha's ethnic groups formed a new band called Ningthouja.[139]Lera Khongnang and Ningol Laiton ethnically constitute Angom, Heirem Khunjam and Phantek, Luwang Thanga Kambong and Uro Ushai, to Nganba. They were also different ethnic communities.[140]It is not just that small weaker groups have merged and formed a new one, such as Sarangthem and Leisangthem as Sarang Leisangthem, Khaba and Nganba as Khaba -Nganba. Therefore, in the early Christian era, there were only seven communities in the valleys of Imphal viz, Ningthouja, Angom, Khuman, Luwang, Moirang, Kha-Nganba and Sarang Leisangthem. These ethnic groups formed socially into clans.[141]Among the Manipuris, the family or lineage is *Salai, Sagei Sandokpa lai,* meaning lineage's ancestors' father. Each *Salai* speaks a different language or dialect possessing a region, having an independent principality under a ruler who was both a political chief and a clan's social leader. The head had to defend the clan's lands, pasture farmland, fishing, hunting forest areas, etc.[142]

Over time, Meitei's political power and position were substantial; they could expand and control another realm like Khuman during the rule of Meidingu Puranthaba (1247-1263 AD).In the latter period, Moirang was overpowered in the hands of the Ningthouja at the beginning of the 15th century. Meitei resettlement had additionally been uncovered in *Chengleiron* in the 5th century AD. During Meitei King Naokhamba; Chingjen Naran Panggalba left his local land to settle at Pasa.[143]

The traders from Manipur entered Upper Burma, China, on horseback during Khui Ningomba, Pensiba and Naokhamba, starting in the 4th century AD. In the early period,

[139]Kh. Yaima, ed. *Meihourol Pukok* (Imphal,1972).p.25.
[140]Sudhir, "*Social History of Manipur,"* op.cit., P.35.
[141]Ibid.,pp.35-36.
[142]Ibid.,p.36.
[143]Sanajaoba, "*Manipur, Past and Present Vol.IV,"*op,cit., p.xi.

Manipur was a trade route. It connected to China and the East with Assam's in the west neighbouring countries. India had hardly reached Assam till British India annexed Assam in 1826 AD. In the early period; migration and settlement took place slowly. Several immigration waves took place from Western and Eastern countries like Yunnan, Tibet, China, Upper Burma and Southeast Asia, Assam, and India. In ancient times, they spread to Manipur also. Assamese and Bengalis had assimilated in the Meitei fold in enormous quantity and friendly states like Assam, Meitei and had settled in large numbers.[144]When the Sylhet-Cachar region opened the West Gate in Manipur in the 8th Century two-way immigration had aided. In 1536 AD, the route was further developed. When the road to Assam and Manipur was improved significantly. Pan – Manipur settlements were automatically encouraged based on a good relationship with the neighbouring states. There is a feasible conjecture that since 1603 AD, the Manipuris, then known as Moglais, had settled, in Taraf, and today's Bangladesh. During King Pamheiba (Garibnawaz) of Manipur in 1709-1748 AD, the Meiteis could have settled in Sylhet.[145]

The other reasons for the Manipur settlement outside Manipur were the matrimonial alliances between the Manipuri and different ruling dynasties. The Meitei matrimonial alliance could not be located beyond the 12th century AD.Meitei King Thawan Thaba married Mayang Princes Chingurembi in the 12th century. In the Meitei surnames, her entourage had absorbed. For example, Sanasam Oinam and, Taimujam. Manipur's six Leiremma Phouoibis left for Cachar during King Thawan Thaba's reign. After the Kabo Valley's annexation to Manipur by King Kiyamba in 1475 AD., Kiymaba's gave his daughter to the Pong King in Marriage. The route to Manipur Assam launched in 1526 AD, and Tekhao Leima Khongnambi left for Assam.[146]

[144]Ibid., pp. xi-xii.
[145]Ibid.,p.xii.
[146]Ibid.,p.xiii.

2.2.4. Social Stratification in the Imphal Valley

The traditional social stratification of Meiteis: Hierarchical society may be based on geographical distance and the religion of the people in general, it can be divided into two classes. They are the plains inhabitants who are mostly Hindus, Muslims, and Christians on the hills. Meiteis have historically been divided into seven clans, called the *'SALAI.'* The clans are Ningthouja, Angom, Khuman, Moirang, Luwang, Khaba Nganba, and Chenglei and each *Salai* is made up of a multitude of sub-clans, known as *'Sagei'* and *'Yumnak'*.The Ningthouja clan eventually defeated all the other families and gained control of the rest. Ningthouja since ruled the state until India's independence, and as a consequence, this clan has achieved a higher social status than the other groups. In the past, the people had an established relationship of service with the king.

The Meiteis cover the entire Manipur valley, although the Meiteis vary from other communities such as the Yaithibi, the Brahman, and the Loi/ Chakpa. Besides, many standard features, including the language, are shared between so-called outside groups, namely Brahman, Bishnupriya, and *Pangal*. The *Pangal* has also preserved their ethnic and cultural differences in a more significant proportion than the other communities because of a distinct crystallised culture of a broader heritage with a definitive sacred text.

The ordinary people of Manipuri differentiate themselves from Meitei and Loi in their self-identification. The Meiteis were split between aristocrats and ordinary people. Loi saw degraded individuals. They are now classified as Scheduled Castes.

During the pre-Hindu period, there was no caste system in Manipur. Moreover, the hierarchical structure of separate caste categories became more significant as Hinduism was

introduced into the state's religion at the beginning of the 18th century. K.B.Singh defined three classes[147], and they are:

i. The Nobles

ii. The Commoners

iii. The Slaves

Although W. Ibungohal Singh says, we can divide society into the nobles and the commoners, into two strata.[148]R.K. Saha specifies three status groups among people while they are said to be inseparable from each other in broader terms. *Achou Asang Macha* (Aristocrats), *Meecham* (Commoner) and *Hanthaba Mee* (degraded People).[149]

Achou Asang Macha

The *Achou Asang Macha's* (aristocrat) position is because of their relationship with the king; he was the lineage head. The members of the family who were king's closer kin were the Aristocrats. They were engaged in the responsible for the palace's administration, military, and the judiciary. This group of people belonged to the king, and thus the lineages are known as royal lineages. After the marriages between Meitei royalty and the other Meitei lineages, primarily the chiefs broadened the Meitei elite. Generally speaking, they are three classes of origins; namely, the royal line of *Ningthoumacha* (descendant of the king), *Ningthou* (Chief, genealogical head of the family or king), the lineages of *Sija Mawa* (Husband of the Princess) and the clans of the king's favourite formed a division of the Nobles.[150] No caste system existed in Manipur in the pre-Hindu period. For all segments of

[147]S. M. Dubey, ed., *North East India: A Sociological Study* (New Dehli: Concept Publishing Company, 1978),p.22.
[148]Singh, *The History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.344.
[149]Saha, *Valley Society of Manipur*. op, cit., p.85.
[150]Ibid., p.86.

the population, the Nobility was not hereditary, anyone who was recognised and was favoured would become the noble.[151]

Meecham

The *Meecham* (ordinary or commoner) group of status consists of the common lineages of Meiteis. Some of them add pure Brahman lineages to this community. The ordinary Meitei consisted of the Meitei lineages, which had no royal connection in their early days and had marriage alliances with specific non Meitei families. Therefore, since they had no marital relations to the royal lineages, they were distinct from the aristocratic section. They founded three separate groups, i. *Meitei Ariba,* ii. *Nongchup Haram*, iii. *Nongpok Haram*. The last two classes are the foreigners who were slowly incorporated in the Meitei fold by adopting lineages, practices, habits, etc. They further divided into separate categories:

i. The king allotted the ordinary people of Meiteis lands to survive in the upper part of the valley's fertile northern plain.

ii. The degraded people of the Meitei, who were not allotted the lands by the kings to remain in the upper or north fertile plain of the valley and they, settled in the southern part of the valley, the flat marshy land.[152]

The first group consists of indigenous people; the second group consists of *'foreigners'* from the west, including Bishnupriyas and Brahmans, while the third group consists of people from the east. The last two classes are now socially and culturally distinct from the Meitei and are part of the common Meiteis.

Common Meiteis are generally divided into two categories of lineages, namely Non-Occupational and Occupational lineages. They were traditionally assigned the lands to each of the occupational clans. Also, occupational families split into artisans and non-artisans. The

[151]Kunj Bihari Singh, "*Social Stratification and Mobility in Manipur,"* in*North East India: A Sociological Study*, ed. S. M. Dubey (New Dehli: Concept Publishing Company, 1978), p.62.
[152]Saha, *Valley Society of Manipur.* op, cit., p.87.

family of the artisan, in a limited sense, is called *Khutnaibas*. Some yumnaks provided the king with basic needs such as clothes, Yotsuba and Thangsaba (blacksmith), Sanasbam (goldsmith) are Khutnaibas. Aheibam, Thangjam, and Sanjam are Yotsuba Lineages, Konheiba (brass metal worker) and Tourangbam, Keisam and Kangabam are Sanasabam lineages. Formerly, the Lairikyengbam had been in the king's court since 1606 AD. Hence, during the native rule; they were not Khutnaibais. The kings have not separated or subjugated the non-occupational lineages living in the region's fertile northern plains. A kind of status distinction was maintained within these common Meiteis during the fundamental rule. However, no such difference supported is today. The lineages of the non-occupational people enjoyed the approval of the king and received the highest status. Next to the non-occupational families listed the Lairikyengbam who supported the king in administrative, clerical services. As the artisans assisted the kings with their art (goods), they were in the third hierarchical position. In short, each of these occupational groups, social status relied on the king's influence on them. Today, however, all of this status and differentiations almost do not exist.[153]

The Brahmins, who did their priestly work, have been called *pure* and *pious* Brahmins, favoured by the rulers. A few of the Pure Brahmins are priests of the State Temple of Gobindaji (Lord Krishna), some are preceptors to royal families, and some act as priests closed to the Meitei commoners or the Bishnupriya. Though there is no difference in status between them, they had differential status positions during the kings' rule. The worshipers of Gobindaji were higher than the preceptor, and the regular priests were lower than the preceptor. The Brahmins were allowed to take lineage names after the introduction of Vaishnavism as a state religion. By this occurrence, the king's enabled them to follow lineage

[153]Ibid.,p.88.

names and placed them in commoners' class along with the common Meitei lineages. It is noteworthy that these pure lines of Brahmin are not part of the Meitei family structure.[154]

Hanthaba Mee

This deteriorated group includes the degraded segment of the Meitei sections, the unclean Brahman sections, the Loi / Chakpa lines, and the Yaithibi lineages. The families of the lower group were formed under specific pressure from the king. It also believed that such origins were created after creating the clans representing the commoner's group. Therefore, their genealogical status set below the place of ordinary families in the whole genealogical system. They became part of the state structure through the act of *Loipot* service.[155]

The degraded faction of the Meitei lineages consisted of *Meitei Ariba, Nongpok Haram* and *Nongchup Haram.* They are loosely named as Loi, a word that signifies low status. They are different from common Meitei because they are either compelled by the king to take up some occupations or are not allowed to live in the upper part of the fertile northern valley. Although, low domains have allocated and kings have also punished some of them. They vary from the Loi /Chakpa in so far as they usually stick to non-derogatory professions. They are identified personally by the name of their home. They have two classes, namely:

i) The inhabitants of Moirang were not part of the valley's upper part, for instance, the subdued people.
ii) Those people compelled to remain on the lower portion of the valley, on the low marshy ground.

Furthermore, two separate groups were formed. One group was not assigned a profession, and the other group was forced into an assigned profession.

[154]Ibid.,p.89.
[155]Ibid., p.90.

Some of the professions were clean, and others were impure and rotting. The villagers of *Ithing* and *Thanga* were allocated to fishing as clean work as their means of subsistence. The villagers of Chairel have been granted pot making an inferior occupation. The people of the village of Wangoo were not forced to accept any specific profession. In Manipuri history, the division of status was based on the criteria alluded to the above was for industrial and residential assignments. Nevertheless, such a difference does not exist any longer.[156]

2.2.5. Social Structure of Imphal Valley

A mixture of the different but strongly tied community was established by Meitei, who once settled in various parts of Manipur, each independent from the other. Throughout their battle for supremacy, internal warfare between them was the order of the day, and the more influential groups absorbed, the weaker. By forming bastions in different parts of Manipur, only seven of the most influential groups could survive. Such seven groups have now been identified as the Meiteis' Seven Clans. Once, these seven clans had to go through an age-long struggle for power between themselves, which lasted for several centuries until the Ningthoujaclan eventually established its sovereignty over the others. These seven clans had to endure a long-standing fight for power among them, lasting several centuries before. Yet, the Ningthouja clan could claim domination over the other groups.

Nevertheless, the name must note, 'Meiteis' was extended only to the clan of Ningthouja. The term 'Meitei' also became applicable to all seven lines after the amalgamation of the different groups under the Ningthouja banner. Therefore, after the Ningthouja clan's dominance was established, the greater Meitei community came into existence.

Besides the Meiteis, who belong to the seven clans, there is a community called the Loi. They assumed that they were one of the earliest settlers in Manipur, but they subdued by

[156] Ibid. p.91.

the Meiteis and thus gave them the name Loi. However, they did not admit to the Meitei Confederation even after their subjugation, and therefore; they still retain a distinct identity. The Loi population consists of people who pay tribute and is considered so inferior that the name Meitei is not given to it.[157]

In the past, vast numbers of Meitei who perpetrated offences against the state or abused societal norms and practices were exiled as retribution to the village of Loi. Those people then amalgamated into that community. Hence, there was a lot of Meitei blood in Lois. However, the Meitei and Lois closely resemble each other that they are indistinguishable for all purposes.[158]Although it has retained as an identity, it has become an integral part of the society of Meitei, and most of the traditions and practices of pre-Hindu Meitei preserved even to the present days.

The present society of Meitei is the consequence of the amalgamation of Seven Clans, as mentioned above. However, besides the pure "Meiteis" of the seven lineages, people came and settled in Manipur as prisoners of war or as friendly East immigrants (Shans, Burma and China) and other parts of India. Furthermore, many hill people were imprisoned or settled in the valley by the Meitei kings. Over time, all these people had merged into the population of Meitei. Then, they assigned to one clan or the other.

Nevertheless, after the general classification of alien's lineages, some new immigrants from India's rest had arrived in Manipur. Even though they fused into the Meitei social system, the later immigrants remain outside the clan structure's pale. The *salai* comprised of several sub-groups called *Yumnaks*.[159]Atombapu Sharma provides a Yumnak list under different *Yek-Salais.* Ningthouja, there are as many as 116 Yumnaks, 52 following Angom, 100 following Khuman, 46 following Luwang, 55 following Moirang, 20 following Khaba-

[157]McCulloch, *Account of the Valley of Munnipore*. op, cit., p.13.
[158]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit., p.3.

[159]Ibid., p.73.

Nganba, and 44 following *Chenglei Yek Salais.*[160]The *Piba* /Chieftains in the Meiteis society are divisible

(i) *Yumgee Piba* (the household chieftains or the head of the house/household)

(ii) *Sagei Piba* (Sagei Piba (Family chieftains who lead a family made up or composed of sub-family members, conduct family cult ritual services as priests)

(iii) *Salai Piba*, (the chieftains of subclan, formed of families and he leads and served the subclan as the family chieftain in the Salai/ Subclan).

(iv) *Yek ki Piba* (The clan chief and he lead the line, work and act as the family or sub-clannish or clan chief in the clan domain). So he is over and above the three grades of *Pibas* chieftains.[161]

The heads of the individual clans known as *Ningthou* and *Piba* serve their respective sibs in religious and social organisational roles. There is a provision that a *Piba* is allowed to marry a girl of higher status and not a girl of inferior rank, and only the eldest son of a *sib-sib's* head is allowed to be *Piba*. Earlier, the role of *Piba* was connected to the political authority of the principality and to an instrument to incorporate social segments. Nowadays, the primary function of *Piba* is to worship *'Taibangpanaba Mapu'*(the supreme God of the universe) for the well-being of members of his clan.[162]The Meiteis original was one of the seven salais. Every sagei originated from a common ancestor, the founder of the *salai* (*Salai Apopka*). Each *salai's* founder had his ancestry, but he considered himself the originator of *salai* in his place as first and foremost leader of *salai,* politically or otherwise. Thus, the Ningthouja *salai* founder was Nongda Lairen Pakhangba; the Angom, Pureiromba, Nganghunthok, or Ngangingshing; the Khaba- Nganba, Thongaren; the Chenglei; Nongou

[160]Saha, *Valley Society of Manipur*. op, cit., p. p. 97- 98.
[161]Sharma, *Phamlon,* p.103.
[162]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit., p.p.73-74.

Yumthangba; but Poireiton, contemporary of Pakhangba was the originator of the Khuman and Luwnag salai.[163]

The structure of the Meitei society is based on a *pana system* consisting of seven *salais*. *Pana* was society's central unit. The entire population of Meitei divided into various divisions, with each Meitei belonging to either of these divisions known as *panas*. Those who belonged to none of those *panas* were not considered Meiteis. Whether a Loi or a Naga must be assigned to one of the *panas* to become a Meitei, it renamed *Pana-Thokpa* (which became Meitei). The *pana* was so unique that someone whose *pana* was doubtful could not participate in social games and other state contests. In the past, the *panas* were organised territorially, mostly for administrative and military purposes. However, it was structured based on *Yumnaks* or sub-groups, most of which had their respective trades or occupations, making it functional rather than territorial. TC Hodson said, "The basis of it was personal, not territorial, a feature which is because such a system only became possible after the hegemony of the Ningthouja clan had been finally settled."[164]

In the past, only four panas were present, namely, *Ahallup, Naharup, Khabam,* and *Laipham*. With two new panas, *Hidakphanba* and *Potsangba*, the number subsequently increased to six *panas*. The *panas* played a significant role in the cultural, political, and economic life of Meitei. These *panas* have periodically sent a team of men to work under the *Lallup system,* mandatory state services. The *pana* organisation was thus the backbone of the social structure of Meitei.[165]

In the 15th century AD, historically Meitei society set the framework of a feudal state established from the primitive tribal state until the 19th century. *Lallup* system as it was known, was indeed a system of enforcing the king's mandatory military service with no compensation from the age of 16 to 60 to every man. It constituted all the social and military

[163]Sanajaoba, "*Manipur, Past and Present Vol.1,"* op,cit., p.149.
[164]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit., p.p.58-59.
[165]Sanajaoba, *Manipur, Past and Present Vol.1.* op,cit., pp.148-149.

activities of the state. The war organisation is the literal definition of *"Lallup."*The system shows the formation in the administrative, political and social structure of the Meitei Kingdom of feudalism. In Manipur, the root of the *'Lallup'* system was of a remote past.[166]Lallup's duty had begun, once a man attained 16 years old, he was entitled to grow one *'Pari'* of land (approximately one hectare) by the tax in kind, as the king had demanded.[167]

Throughout this form, a man subject to *'Lallup'* visits a 10-day *loishang* (Royal Office) that he worked based adequately on his rank and for the rest of the days he had to do menial work. He served in the army during the war, and in peace, he worked for the country's economic advancement. They never had an undefined result that is not part of *Lallup*.[168]The different roles allocated in the *'lallup* system are as follows:

Table.2.2. Allocation of a different role in Lallup System[169]

Manipuri	**English**
Ningthou Senba	King's Bodyguard
Leima Senba	Queen's Bodyguard
Maiba Sanglel	King's Physician office
Pacha	Women's Court of Justice
Singgei Panaba	Fire-wood officer
Thangja Panaba	Black Smith's Officer
Sagol Sang Panaba	Royal stable officer
Samu Sang Panabas	Elephant Officer
Pena Khongba	Artists of the Fiddle
Arangbam	Members of Management.
Shanglen	Department
Dolai Paiba	Messengers
Dolai-Roi	Palanquiners
Apalba	Army
Phourungba	Paddy Collector

Centuries before, the reign of King Loiyumba; the *Lallup* system was in operation. The *lallup* social and administrative system was best managed across the divisions. Throughout the power of Garibaniwaz (1709-1748 AD), other released individuals had a direct and

[166]*Singh and Singh, Cheitharol Kumbaba.* op,cit., p.8.
[167]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit., p.65.
[168]Moirangthem Ranjit Singh, "*Social Change in Manipur (1597 To 1798, AD)"* (PhD Thesis., Manipur University Imphal,1996), p.59.
[169]Ibid., p.60.

almost identical blood relations to the Kings, i.e., *Sana* or *Rajkumar* and *'Leima'* or *'Rakumari'* (Sana and Leima) and the sons of a courtier, even the children of the aristocrats, etc. The status of the *Sana* and *Leima*, preferably of the lallup, they assigned to the (*Apam Thougal*) as their roles.[170]

Meitei society is Patrilineal and Patrilocal. Father is the head of the family, and the descent goes through the lineage of the father. Married women have practically no right to their father's property. Only, the sons and unmarried daughters inherit all the movable and immovable assets of the deceased father. Moreover, the share of unmarried sisters' property usually goes to their brothers after their death.[171] Today, married and unmarried daughters can claim their right to inheritance on their father's property.

The Meitei family has an enlarged family system, including one or two grandchildren, including a father; mother, married son, daughter-in-law and other kids. His eldest son inherits his father's power and retains his control and command when his father dies. Sometimes, even before his parents' death, a separate family of the son or grandson' are found. When necessary, the parents accept the idea of an individual family. There is, however, no customary law to separate a married son from his parents and establish a family.[172]The Meitei are exogamous to the clan, and their society is endogamous. Two types of marriage prevail among the Meitei:

i. Marriage through negotiation

ii. Love or elopement marriage

Usually, the guardians fix marriages. Nevertheless, a boy and a girl often understand marriage before their parents formally give their consent. In the marriage by negotiation, the boy's parents or their agents' discuss the marriage proposal with the girl's parents and the formal discussion between them. And they reach the final decision when a ceremonial

[170]Ibid.,pp.60-61.
[171]Singh and India, *People of India*. op, cit., p.187.
[172]Ibid. p.168.

Waroipot would be held to signify the agreement to give the girl to the boy in marriage. *Waroipot* is also performed in weddings with love or elopement, depending on both sides' desire. Following the *waroipot*, a ceremony is performed *'Heiching Kharai Puba'* (seven kinds of fruits, of which amla is a must, are put in a *Kharai*, a carrier made of thin bamboo pieces), to which the Meitei's tradition is considered to be the bride's price. The groom's father hands it over to the father of the bride. It takes place just one day before the marriage ceremony, and the groom receives a formal invitation to marriage from the younger brother of the bride. The bride's more youthful brother invites the groom to marry one day before the marriage ceremony is conducted. On the marriage day, the rituals concerning are performed at the groom's residence and the bride's home. Marriage cannot take place in either of the family in a ritually impure period. After the wedding, the bride is taken to the groom's home, where her mother-in-law hold her in arms. On the fifth day, a grand feast is arranged by the bride's parents, in which both the parties take part. In Manipuri society, re-marriage and divorce are also permitted. However, in widow marriage, no rituals are performed. The husband and the wife have to perform only a ceremony called *Loukhatpa* (acceptance) for social recognition.[173]Meitei Society's various structural units perform different functions for continuity and effective maintenance of the social structure.

2.3. An Overview: Changes in Manipuri societies over the Centuries and Landmark events

Hinduism in Manipur

Over the ages, Meitei society and community have been affected by the old religion and later Vaishnavite Hinduism. However, traditional religion's influence was so high that it defied the stringent prohibitions to put on it by the 18th-century royal conversion to

[173]Sanajaoba, *Manipur, Past and Present Vol. IV.* op, cit., pp.190-191.

Hinduism. The most fanatical of these Hindu converts, King Pamheiba (Garibnawaz), attempted to destroy all ancient religious scriptures and buried the customary deities' images.[174] Though none of his predecessors could wipe out the old religion, they raised Hinduism to the state religion's status.

Hence, the old faith appeared to be an integral feature of the Meiteis' magnificent spiritual heritage. It can be seen in creating the root of social and political structures from the past to the present. Thus, Meitei's traditional faith and its effect on people's politics and socio-economic existence is in order. Meitei's name for God is *'Lai,'* and the Meiteis believe in God's supreme and eternal presence. R.K.Jhalajit claims that Manipur's early people worshipped natural phenomena like the sky, sun, moon, air, water, etc.[175] Early Meiteis' religious beliefs and practices were classified features and functions. Monotheism, polytheism, animism, evolutionary values were the component pieces of early religion. Practising formal ceremonies and rituals rendered the essential aspect of early Manipur's cultural existence. It could not be isolated from all things, i.e., economy, policy and social events, etc. Beliefs in the Supreme Being or Almighty God in Guru or *Atingkok Guru Sidaba* developed the concept of monotheism. Number of *Umanglais* were connected to ancestral worship. Earth, wind, air, fire and sky were assumed to have supernatural powers. Each house had household deities' seats, i.e. *Sanamahi* in the southwest corner, *Leimaren Sidabi* in the shape of an earthen pot filled with water in the north face, and *Phunga Lairu* in the middle of the hearth. *Leimaren Sidabi* symbolised earth mother goddess's idea, while *Phunga Lairu* was identified with fire worship and wealth goddess. *Koubru, Thangjing, Marjing* and *Wangbren* were considered to be the main deities to defend territorial borders.[176]

[174]Singh, *Ariba Manipuri Sahityagi Itihas*.op,cit.,P.41.
[175]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.20.
[176]Devi, *The Cultural History of Early Manipur.* op, cit.,p.115.

Taibangpanba Mapu was portrayed as the supreme God in the pre-Hindu Meitei belief system which believed him to be the soul of the universe and protector of the world. His two descendants — *Sanamahi* (the elder one) represented as the authority for each house, while *Pakhangba* (the younger one) served as the political authority of the state naming him as *Mayum Taretki Piba* (the king of the seven clans)—Meiteis still worship these two deities. The pre-Hindu Meitei cosmology is that there is one supreme God identified in different names. *Tengbangba Mapu* or *Sorarel Sidaba* or *Atiya Mapu* (Immortal Sky God) controls humankind in descending order of hierarchy over other geographic regions through subordinate deities.[177]

He is the universe's founder and master. *Sanamahism* (Sanamahi religion) is focused on God *Sanamahi* worshipping socially and legally-recognised faith. The underlying theory of *Sanamahism* became enlightenment and understanding. Manipur's culture, people worshipping God *Sanamahi*, and their faith trusted in reality and fairness. God Sanamahi was adored on three levels:

i. as the God of the State

ii. as a Sagei Deity (Sub Clan)

iii. and a family deity.[178]

He was the manager of life and death. Regularly, a Meitei kneeled before *Laiingthou Sanamahi* (King of all gods) at *Sanamahi Kachin* (Southwestern corner in a house) before leaving a vital concern for his grace. *Lai Haraoba* is assumed as the authentic of all typical festivals of Manipuri community. *Lai Haraoba* signifies *"God's joy."* The purpose of the rite

[177]Kh. Bijoykumar Singh, "*Craft of Hinduism and state Formation in Pre-Modern Manipur,"* in *Social History of Manipur,* ed. H.Sudhir (New Delhi: Sunmarg Publication, 2012), pp.68-69.
[178]Nunglekpam Premi Devi, "*Impact of Hindu Religion in Manipuri Society (1900-1950)" (*PhD Thesis., Manipur University Imphal, 2008), p.9.

is to give him joy. E. Nilankanta Singh assumes that Lai Haraoba is *"The merry gods and goddesses."*[179]

A lovely piece of oral literature is connected with the ritual songs and hymns sung by the *maiba* and *maibis* (priest and priestess). During the *Lai Haraoba* festival, it is associated with the creation of human beings. *Lai-haraoba* is included as Manipur's unique contribution to world culture. Today, the *Lai Haraoba* festival continues to be the living legend of Manipuri culture.

Therefore, Meitei's traditional religion and its impact on people's politics and socio-economic life are in order. Meitei's term for God is *'Lai',* is the supreme omnipresent and eternal belief in Meiteis belief in God's existence.

Brahmin's immigration began in the 15th century, during the reign of King Kiyamba. The Sanskritic influence had started by Brahmin scholars in the court of Manipur, who was meticulous in astrology. Monarchs employed Brahmin scholars for various activities in administrative and religious affairs, especially for rite and ritual performance.[180] Since Muslim power was increasing in Bengal, Brahmins immigration in Manipur increased and Hindus were subsequently suppressed, and they were religiously persecuted.[181]These interventions helped them to influence the new Vaishnavism faith in the king. While Brahmins migration into this country constitutes a significant reason for Hinduisation, the Brahmins could not make the Meiteis mass conversion into Hinduism.[182]These immigrant Brahmins were later dominated in the king's court, particularly in writing astronomy, clan genealogy and astrology, and finally the state's day-to-day political affair. Such intervention allowed them to manipulate kings' toward Vaishnavism, a new religion.

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[179]Ibid, p.10.
[180]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op,cit.,pp.236-237.
[181]Kunj Bihari Singh, "Manipur Vaishnavism: A Sociological Interpretation," *Sociological Bulletin* 12, no. 2 (1963): 66–72, http://www.jstor.org/stable/42864621.
[182]Singh, "*Craft of Hinduism and state Formation in Pre-Modern Manipur*," op, cit.,73.

Through various stages, Hindusim came to Manipur. Manipur had seen the advent of three different forms of Vaishnavism: the Nimbarka School (named Nimandi), the Ramananda School (named Ramanadi) and finally the Chaitanya School (named Goudiya) one after the next.[183]

Since the beginning of the 17th century, increasing numbers of Brahmins have begun to migrate to the Valley of Manipur. They lived with the Meiteis and shared a corporate life with them through Meitei's way of life, language and customs, and even the adoration of non-Hindu deities. In words, it can be said that Vaishnavism emerged in Manipur from the cross-fertilisation of Hinduism and Meitei's religious movements.[184]

The watershed moment in Manipur's religious history coincided with Charairongba's 1697 AD throne accession. Charairongba became the first King of Manipur to initiate Vaishnavism officially. The enactment took place in 1704 AD by Rai Vanamali, who came from Sweta Ganga, Puri to Manipur.[185] Nimbarka sect started spreading Sanskrit practice, especially in astrology, to win the royal family and associated Brahmins. The VaishnavismSchoolChrairongba had initiated worshipping Shri Krishna as Supreme Deity.[186] Charairongba built several temples for Meiteis deities, including goddess Panthoibi, Sanamahi, and others, mentioned in the *Cheitharol Kumababa.* The king was deeply involved in a spree of temple building dedicated to Lord Krishna, Kali, and others after his conversion to Hinduism. The temple of Krishna, which he built, is still in good condition at Imphal's Brahmapur.[187]While not being a fanatic, Charairongba did not even attempt to establish Hinduism as the state's religion. There was also no discontinuation of the royal hunting game, meat preparation at the Kangla. The *Lai* and the old customs even more strongly observed

[183]Khomdan Singh Lisam, *Encyclopaedia Of Manipur (2 Vol.)* (New Dehli: Gyan Publishing House, 2011).p. 715.
[184]Singh, *"Manipur Vaishnavism: A Sociological Interpretation,"* op, cit., p.66.
[185]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur*. op, cit., pp.114-115.
[186]Ibid., p.116.
[187]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit., p.237.

with the people. Also, burials seemed to continue as a standard way of disposing of the dead.[188]Although at the end of Charairongba's reign (1709), Hinduism was at the rivalry level or better co-existence with mainstream Meitei religion. Throughout the Charairongba period, Vaishnavism's spread was slow and late; Krishna and Radha's cult could not raise much, and the Nimandi Vaishnavism lasted no longer.

Another Vaishnavism school that appeared in Manipur in the first quarter of the 18th century was Vaishnavism's Ramanandi School. A Brahmin named *Santidas Gosai*, a disciple of Vaishnavism Ramanadi School came from Sylhet and introduced Rama and his associate Hanuman to be worshipped. He was later nominated as King Garibnawaz's great minister (1709-1748 AD), and his Ramanandi School succeeded Nimbarka School.[189]

Under Santidas Gosai's reliable guidance, the propagation of a new religion started with full vigour. Vaishnavism became Manipur's state religion. King Garibnawaz conferred charity on both Brahmins and astrologers. He declared to the people and forbade them from consuming beef. Poultry and pigs are no longer permitted to be raised in the capital. The temples of the nine Sylvan Gods *(Umanglai temple*) were demolished.[190] He refused to pay the duties to the traditional priests of the Meiteis, and the king ordained the employment of Brahmins in the worship of supreme gods such as *Nongshaba, Yimthei lai, Panthoibi,* and *Taibangkhaiba* (Sanamahi). In 1724 AD, on 20th Sunday, *Phairel* opened the graves of former kings, queens, princes, and princesses and exhumed and cremated death skeletons again. The ashes were immersed in the River Chindwin. The chronicle records that from that year, the burial of the dead was introduced.[191]

During his reign, Hinduisation's of Manipur began in a full-fledged manner. With this in mind, it would be successful in recognising that Hindu proselytising was deliberately

[188]Parratt, *The Religion of Manipur*. op, cit., p.143.
[189]Singh, *"Craft of Hinduism and state Formation in Pre-Modern Manipur,"* op, cit., p.76.
[190]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.130.
[191]Ibid.,p.32.

aggressive and fanatical, especially during Maharaj Garibnawaz reign who entailed various fanatical steps. Such as the devastation of traditional deities of Meiteis, the burning of old manuscripts called *Puya,* the ban of the Meitei script, the subsequent substitution by the Bengali script, the enforcement of the practice of purity and pollution of the caste system, and sanctification, in the history of Manipur, the first recorded example of the sati system in 1726 AD.[192] So, Ramanandi's Vaishnavism was supported by the king. He had built up a temple for Rama and Sita's worship on the bank of a large tank. Hanuman's image was made out of a large plate of stone kept in the market but later transferred to the temple's present location.[193]In the *Mahabali* temple on the bank of the River Imphal.

The king had constructed temples for worshipping Hindu deities. Kritana'sform of devotional singing was further promoted. Many other Hindu traditions were started, and he introduced the Hindu calendar in Manipur.[194]The *gotra* replaced the former *Yek-Salai*.

Table. 2.2. Meitei clan and the Gotras[195]

Clan	Gotra
Ningthouja	*Sandinlya Gotra*
Angom	*Gautam but some follow Bharatdwaj Gotra*
Moirang Ariba	*Atreya Gotra*
Moirang Anouba	*Angiras Gotra*
Luwang	*Kasyap Gotra*
Khuman	*Madhugeilya Gotra*
Khaba	*Bharatdwaja Gotra*
Nganba	*Neimis Gotra*
Chenglei	*Bashishtha Gotra*

Since its inception, the Gotras system has served Meiteis', a unique social and relationship rites. Throughout the ancient Meitei society, there was no caste system but social divisions like the Hindu culture, i.e. the aristocratic elite, the nobles and the ordinary people.

[192]Singh, *"Craft of Hinduism and state Formation in Pre-Modern Manipur,"*op, cit., p.76.
[193]Singh and Singh, *Cheitharol Kumbaba*.op,cit.,p.70.
[194]Parratt, *The Religion of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.150.
[195]Lairenmayum Iboongohal Singh, *Introduction to Manipur* (Imphal: Global Publications, 2014). p.216.

Nevertheless, a stereotypical caste-in Meitei culture emerged with the rise of Vaishnavism. While the Brahmans who were Indian immigrants stayed Brahman and Meiteis were associated with the Kshetriya castes. The Brahmans and Meiteis have also identified respectively by caste titles of *Sharma* and *Singh*.[196]However, Brahman and Meiteis female names have the same suffixes as *Kumari and Devi*.[197]Throughout the Meitei society, there was no room for other Hindus castes, namely, the *Vaishya* and *Sudra*. The Hindu concept of piousness and impurity came into existence within the caste structure. By then, the Meiteis also had minimal social connections with other groups, save Manipuri Brahmans. Today, while the Brahman maintains a distinct ethnic heritage, almost all the rights and social prestige they once possessed have lost. The Meiteis do not consider themselves as any more a castes of Kshatriya. Instead of the caste names *'Singh,'* presents younger generations taking their clan names like Ningthouja, Luwang, Khuman, etc. gradually. The gap generated by Hinduism from the Meiteis and other communities, particularly in religious functions, remains unbridgeable.

It is consequently evident that it was between 1709 and 1748 AD. At the cost of indigenous culture and religion, Hindusim prospered in the soil of Manipur. However, given these numerous attempts by fanatical Brahmins, the traditional social and cultural ideals of Meitei cannot be entirely replaced by the new Hindu beliefs. Instead of systematically subsuming the essence of Meitei culture and tradition within the boundaries of Hinduism's socio-cultural supremacy. Due to this Pre-Hindu Meitei deity, *Sanamahi* and *Leimaren* still adorated in every household in Manipur. Every year in all the villages, even *Lai Haraoba* is celebrated. This Ramanandi school of Vaishnavism, which was also replaced by Chaitanya School of Vaishnavism, was not very long in Manipur without the masses' popular support.

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[196]Singh, "*Social Stratification and Mobility in Manipur,"* op, cit.,p.64.
[197]Moirangthem Kirti Singh, *Folk Culture of Manipur* (New Dehli: Manas Publications, 1993). p.181.

Vaishnavism's influence in Manipur reached its zenith during King Bhagyachandra's reign (1759-1798 AD). Maharaj Bhagyachandra was not like Garibnawaz; he was a devout, kind ruler. This new school introduced Krishna and Radha as the prime deities, and *Kritans* and *Ras Lila* were the vital aspects of the school, which had a significant impact on Meitei culture and faith. The propagation of the Chaityana School of Vaishnavism, not by violence but by persuasion and peaceful means, became more successful. Progressively Hinduism became Manipur's most popular religion.[198] King Bhagyachadra's most remarkable contribution was the construction and installation of Shri Govindajee's wooden statue. In their traditional faith, the Manipuris worshipped God through dance and music. When Vaishnavism's spirit penetrated throughout the entire Hindu community of the kingdom, notably the king, he disclosed in his dream that Ras Leela's composition was at the heart of the Manipuri classical dance, a fusion of the traditional Meitei and Vashanvite dance forms.[199] The Hinduization of Manipur was influenced by Bengali language and literature since religious preachers were Bengali speakers who preached Bengali at Vaishnavism School. Brahmin's influence was dominant. The Sanskritisation began in the first half of the 18th century, was deeply rooted in Manipur. It attributed to changes in dress, clothes, and the Bengali's adoption in the singing of hymns or writings as a medium for religious transactions.[200]

It saw that Vaishnavism became the predominant religion of the Meiteis primarily with royal support, which in the latter part of the 15th century was apparent from the reign of Kiyamba. In the 18th century, the process intensified by prominent kings' contributions, including Charairongba, Garibnawaz, and Bhagyachandra. Vaisnavism was founded at the beginning of the 18th century as a dominant religion and a doctrine of the supreme faith and people's dedication in general, sometimes aberrations even to date.

[198]Singh, *Craft of Hinduism and State Formation in Pre-Modern Manipur*. Op, cit.,p.78.
[199]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op,cit.,pp.276-277.
[200]Ibid.,p.277.

Moreover, in few of the British scholars writing on Manipur argue that although they have followed many formalities, the Meiteis never really contributed to Vaishnavism's essence. Mc Culloch addresses that Meitei's Vaishnavism observances are only for appearance sake, not the heart's promptings.[201]Hodson comments on the same matter:

> It is challenging to estimate Hinduism's precise effect on the civilisation of the people. The outward observer seems to have adopted only the festivals, the external ritual, the caste marks, and Hinduism's exclusiveness, during all unmindful of its spirit and inward essentials.[202]

The fact remains; however that Vaishnavism has been a profound influence on the Meiteis ' cultural system for almost three centuries. The best flowering is to be seen, as its effect on the people's economy and social life is also very important in developing the musical and performing arts.

2.3.2. Hinduisation of Manipur from Kangleipak to present-day Manipur

During ancient times, several names were given to the present state of Manipur. The Meiteis old text *Shakok Lamlen* indicate that the kingdom was first named *"Poirei Namthak Sharongpung."* Following, various names like *"Tili Kokton Ahanba," "Mira Pongthoklam," "Hana Shemba Konna Loiba,"* and *"Muwapali"* named at different ages.[203]Although various names have been called to the kingdom in ancient times, *Meitrabak* (Meiteleipak) has been the kingdom's most famous name. Brown says that the Manipur valley name recognised the Manipuri themselves as Meiteileipak or the country of the Meitei. [204]

All these names are, however, never used outside the country (kingdom). Her neighbouring nations gave Manipur, various expressions. It's named Meckley in India's

[201]McCulloch, *Account of the Valley of Munnipore.* op, cit., p.17.
[202]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit., p.96.
[203]Singh, *.Ariba Manipuri Sahityagi Itihas*.op,cit., p.2.
[204]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur.* op, cit., p.2.

Rennels Memoir and Maps. The state is called *assay* in *Symes'*reports and in Maps of those time.[205]Pemberton wrote:

> The country inhabited by the Muneepoorees is, by the Burmahs called Kathe, the term which they equally apply to the people; by the inhabitants of Cachar; it is named Moglie. By those of Assam, Meklee, and by the Shans, or those who inhabit the country's most comfortable of the Ningthee or Khyendwen River, it is Known as Cassay, the term to which the Burmese word Kathe is a corruption.[206]

Ahoms called it Mekheli, and the Kacharis Magli, while the old Assamese name it as Moglau.[207]

As mentioned above, in ancient times, Manipur was known by different names, and no records are found in old manuscripts and chronicles as the name *"Manipur"*.Therefore, her neighbouring kingdoms had never known the realm of that name as late as 1762 AD. The word *"Manipur"* existed when the East India Company Treaty of Alliance was concluded—still named Meckley's *Empire*.[208]While *Cheitharol Kumbaba* never mentioned *'Manipur'* until the recent past of this region. The most crucial royal chronicle was dated back to the 1st century AD. However, some Brahmanic scholars such as Atombapu Sharma and others say that Manipur has been the name of this kingdom since ancient times. In this way, they try to identify Manipur today with the Mahabharata Manipur, where Arjuna secured Princess Chitrangada's hands.[209]

Nonetheless, there was insufficient and inaccurate evidence supporting this identification, and several eminent scholars and writers vehemently denied these statements. A specific group of non-Brahmanical scholars from Meitei viewpoints and English scholars argue that Manipur cannot identify with Mahabharata's Manipur. Furthermore, the ancient chronicles and legends from Meitei never referred to the Mahabharata. The kingdom's

[205]Abdul Ali, *Notes on the Early History of Manipur* (Calcutta: Superintendent, Government Printing,1923).p,1
[206]Pemberton, *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India.* op,cit.,p.19.20.
[207]Gait, *A History of Assam*. op, cit.,p.263.
[208]Dunn, *Gazetteer of Manipur.* op, cit.,p.40.
[209]Atombapu Sharma, *Manipur Itihas*(Imphal,1944).p.191.

original name is *Kangleipak.* Therefore, it should be no doubt that the name Manipur was recently born and coined during Garibnawaz (1709-1748 AD) by Shanti-Das Goshai, the Hindu missionary from Bengal under whose patronage Hinduism fully introduced and became the state religion of Manipur.[210] Manipur means the city or the land of gems. According to Manipuri's historical text, *Sanamahi Laikan,* Manipur was first formally adopted in the early 18th Century during Hinduized Garibaniwaz's reign (1709-1748 AD).[211]

2.4. Summary

In this chapter, we note that the historical process of the peopling of Manipur did not take place in a single phase but several phases. Manipur has been a meeting ground for various ethnic groups, drawn from the hill and valley and also from beyond. This complexity explains that the Manipuri society's evolution accounts for the diversity embedded in the economic matrix rather than just as social processes.

Most of the works on medieval Manipur have devoted considerable space to explain the ethnogenesis of the Meitei and their spread to the different parts of Manipur and thus understand the peopling of the region in Manipur. This chapter supplements the earlier works and finds that all types of sources, literary, epigraphical and more so the traditional lores converge on the facts relating the origin and the spread of various Meitei clans. All the sources also explain ion detail the settlement of the different regions and the establishment of the durable village communities, thus completing the narrative of the human geography of Manipur in a historical framework. This chapter argues that the spread of the Meitei and the long historical continuity was possible only due to the presence of the durable village communities that contributed surplus in terms of material goods and human resources in the formation of the Lallup system was unique to Manipur. Elaborating this argument we also find that the economic structure was not uniform, but displayed minor variations and these

[210]Konsam Manikchand Singh, "*The Social Institutions of the Meiteis"* (PhD Thesis., Gauhati University Assam, 1984), p.16.
[211]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit., p.1.

variations can be found in the different eco-zones. They can be explained by the economic activities of the different groups like the smaller social groups like the Chakpa, Loi and other immigrant groups like the Brahmins, Muslims from Cachar, Bishnupriyas and also the absorption of different tribal groups. The point of emphasis is that all these social groups performed certain economic functions and were also economic actors. Their role as economic agents in the evolving economy of Manipur is spelt out in the sources, which becomes more apparent from the 15th century onwards.

CHAPTER-III

ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF PRE-MODERN MANIPUR

One of the turning points in human history is the shift from foraging to agriculture. Hunting and food-gathering were replaced by farming, settlements in different regions, planting crops and rearing domestic animals. They produced food and gave up the habit of travelling from one place to another, searching for food when man began to live a permanently settled life. The transition from nomadic to sedentary life led to the population's growth, the village settlements, and handicraft production, including pottery and metallurgy. And then finally, urban development and urbanisation started and became centralised. The references to the expertise of commencing food production are extracted from excavation reports. Human beings did not know how to read and write in the initial stages of food making. This period is regarded as *Pre-history,* human history until the records exist. Archaeologists note the related characteristics of the beginning of food production. The relevant aspects of the initiation of food production are alluded by the archaeologists. The oldest human utensils for cooking food were earthen pots baked by fire. During this time, polished stone tools were used for various purposes—crushing seed, grains, etc. Having started food production man has associated with animal domestication.

However, in the Indian subcontinent, almost all of the earlier farming societies used small amounts of copper implements. Such people were represented as Chalcolithic cultures as they used stone tools and a few copper items. The essential point here is that the animals were killed and eaten immediately at the food-gathering stage. Nevertheless, when people started domesticating cattle at the food-producing phase, animals now reared to serve as walking barns used in times of recession. Combined as a way of life, the development of food and animal domestication was a revolution. At the detriment of the old lifestyle, this new agricultural economy grew. Mehrgarh is the prime rural settlement in the Indian subcontinent

in Baluchistan in the Bolan Pass, a province of Pakistan. In other terms, the Indian subcontinent is an only Neolithic settlement dating back to 7000 BC. This process of transition was related to the mode of production. There are five socio-economic structures in the Marxist perspective. They are as follows:

i. Primitive communal in which all the means of shows and all the products were considered as ordinary assets.

ii. The slaves owing which resulted from the breaking up of the clans into sub-clans, families into sub-families, growth of the private ownership, competitions and conflicts arose for right in which slaves were engaged in the mode of productions.

iii. The feudal system was associated with full-fledged agriculture that the state functionaries were assigned large stretches of land exercised judicial, administrative and military powers. They owned the products produced by the labour of serfs. Thus, they became the owners of all means of production and products.

iv. In capitalism, the capitalist monopolised all the productive forces and effects consuming the toils of works.

v. In communism, all the powers were vested in the workers in which all were brought in the public sector.[1]The economic life of the people in the Pre-Industrial and Pre-Capitalist economy. Braudel says, "The informal another half of economic activity, the world of self-sufficient and barter of goods and services within a minimal radius."[2]

Economic growth is usually related to the history of transition in its people's socio-economic structure. In this regard, it may be pointed out that the economy's progress depends on improving the production of goods and services, particularly material wealth. In addition to this, the production of material resources requires, among other things, human labour,

[1]Devi, *The cultural History of Early Manipur* .op, cit., p.p.147-148.
[2]Fernand Braudel, *Civilisation and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, Vol. I: The Structure of Everyday Life* (California: University of California Press, 1992).p.24.

labour artefacts and means of work in which energy is a crucial factor. In Engel's statements, "Labour created man himself."[3]However, the products of resources suited to society's needs cannot be produced using labour and labour alone. The most advanced device, each part built with mental and physical work, has no sense of energy inactivity. Social and environmental institutions have once again influenced the population, productivity, and overall development level. The productivity of labourers', stemming in no small measure from the institution mentioned above, clearly correlates with economic development.

In the medieval period, Manipur's economy was a typical peasant economy, and its structure was characterised by the network of landholdings that ruled and its land ties. The peasants mainly did the feudal services to the king known as *Lallup*. *Lallup* included all state — military work as well as construction works and maintenance. The king owned all the land, and the king had divided all the land for agriculture. The nobles exercised the land owned by the king by engaging peasants. During the famine, drought or other disasters, villagers had to offer some paddy of quotas to the granary to fulfil the people's requirements.

King Loiyumba's reign improved the economy, enhanced craft and small scale industry. In 1110 AD, King Loiyumba released a royal proclamation on socio-economic and administrative roles. *Loiyumba Shinyen* had built a well-structured community and economy since the 11th Century. By creating six *Lups* (division), he systematised the administrative divisions of the country. They are *Khongchalup, Nogmailup, Angoubalup, Khurailup, Laiphamlup,* and *Khangjenglup.* Perhaps the six lups were the foundation of the Pana system's extension in the later historical period; historical notes to the *panas* of *Ahalup, Naharup, Khabam,* and *Potsangba.*[4]The chronicle informs, soon after the Kings of Manipur Kiyamba (1461-1508 AD), Khagemba (1597-1652 AD), Garibaniwaz, (1709-1748 AD),

[3]Petr Ivanovich Nikitin, *The Fundamentals of Political Economy* (Moscow: Progress, 1983).p.14.
[4]Kabui, *History of Manipur.* op,cit.,p.125-126.

Bhagyachandra and Chourjit (1803-1813 AD) acquired this *Loiyumba Shinyen* more systematic way.[5]

The royal decree allocated social and economic roles to various families (clan or *Yumnak*), priests and priestess' duties and kept chosen the families engaged for keeping deity shrines (Umanglais). Things that were listed in the *Shinyen* are too many, and the family lists are too long. For example, the traditional weavers were divided into two groups, weavers, dyers. Families were named for weaving various cloth styles, and eight families were assigned the task of differently colouring the yarns. Fifty-five families were entrusted with preserving the holy shrines. The priest's chosen families (*maiba*) were appointed to worship different deities. One hundred and one families of priests and priestess *Maibi* were given the task to heal diseases by prescribing herbal remedies and ceremonial. Ten state officials were established to oversee the land.[6]

In the Kingdom, the capital was divided into four administrative circles: the *Panas,* specifically *Khwai, Yaiskul, Wangkhei* and *Khurai*, each *Pana* held under the control of one *Lakpa* (The Divisional head of the land or officer who locally supervised).[7] During Mungyamba's rule (1562-1597 AD), *Keis* established various granaries or state godowns in many regions, including Mongsangkei and Chajing.[8]*Lourungpurel Achouba's* revenue department had proposed paddy per pari (hectare) to be paid to the king.[9]

The functional division was the allotment of Manipur people. According to their functions, there existed a type of division of labour in Manipur's history. The *Thangjam*, the clan, e.g., engaged, was making daos; the *Tenshaba,* another family, had a particular duty to

[5]J.B. Bhattacharya, "'Loiyamba Shinyen': A Landmark in Meitei State Formation in Medieval Manipur," *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 64 (2003): 362–68.
[6]J.B. Bhattacharya, "*Economic Dimension of the Meitei state Formation*," in *Society and Economy in North-East IndiaVol.2*. ed. Momin, Mignonette, Cecile A. Mawlong, and Fuẓail Aḥmad Qādrī. (New Dehli: Daya Books, 2006).p.67.
[7]Sharma, *Phamlon,*op,cit.,pp.14-15.
[8]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.208.
[9]Ibid.,p.261.

make arrows; the *Lairikyengbams,* the line, concerned with the clerical functions; the *Konshaba* involved with the manufacture of brass and vessels. All of these functional classes lived within the same village. Some officer like *Thangsuhanba* (master of the daos) and *Tensuhanba* (Chief Arrow Maker) belonged to *Laipham* and *Ahallup Pana*. However, officers like *Huroi Lakpa* (Chief of the Scouts) and *Konsahanba* (Chief Brass Workers) belonged to *Khabam,* and *Naharup Pana*. Different officers belonged to different panas.[10]Among similar professions, affection was no less than respect among an individual of the same village. For instance, among all *Thangjams,* appreciation was greater than preference among people of the same village having different functions. If operated *Lallup* was for the same person, it was more convenient than a *Lallup* of a particular village or tribe. Because if *Lallup* worked for a single village or tribe, village security against emergency would be hard. This challenge may be eliminated by *Lallup*-based practical separation.

Functional separation meant labour divisions. The worker became a specialist in a profession. He may improve his ability and skill, delivering more excellent outcomes in less time. Furthermore, such division shortened the part of art's training time. It saves time and tools. However, a structured division generated worker monotony. In those days, labour was the only commodity that the people could spare, paying all kinds of taxes. Some of the central department had a functional operating division. Based *Ushuba* Department (Heavy Carpentry Department) was on clan like Usham. This rendered usable administrative division with a practical touch.[11]

The sovereignty of Meitei in the valley of Manipur started with their dominance over fertile land. For a long time, the three endogenous communities, the Meitei, Loi/Chakpa and Yaithibi, fought to rule the valley. The Meiteis occupied the northern plains of the valley, which were most fertile and they transported Lois and Yaithibis to the less productive

[10]N.Ibobi Singh, "*The Manipur Administration (1709-1907)"* (PhD Thesis., Gauhati University Assam, 1968),p.104.
[11]Ibid., pp.105-106.

peripheral foothill area. The Bishnupriya, perhaps the first to arrive in the Manipur Valley following the Meitei hegemony, were among the exogenous groups in less fertile marshy regions. The land was allocated to them. The *Pangals* were agricultural experts and expected to teach the Meiteis paddy transplantation techniques.[12]Hence, land on the banks of the river was issued to them.

The Brahmins preferred to function as preceptors and priests. They certainly lived with the Meitei in the fertile northern plains. Some people have been punished and imprisoned for crimes and immigration; some abducted during wars, and other unpleasant people of the royalty were forced to settle into the marshy lowlands. Also, fixed in the same area where the tribal communities that descended into the valley, people in the valley were, in general, more prosperous than the people of the hills. The hilly people relied on shifting cultivation and horticulture, while agriculture in the valley was ploughed (both dry and wet paddy).

Therefore, the abundance of the land under occupation resulted in social stratification within the valley's inhabitants. Meiteis and the Brahmins, who settled in the northernmost fertile plains, better for agriculture and the abundance, were more prosperous than any other community. The handloom was mainly a household occupation for the Meiteis and held an honourable profession in addition to agriculture. The *Pangals* (Meitei Muslim) lived on the river banks, depending on agriculture, they grew vegetables. The peripheral area, inhabited by the Lois and the Yaithibi, were less productive and mostly flooded. As a result, agricultural production was not sufficient for livelihood.

Consequently, this area's inhabitants were accustomed to growing fruits on the hillsides, breeding goats, fowls, pigs, distilling alcohol, poultry raising, producing charcoal, making pottery, etc. Some of them served in the royal family and the aristocrats as palanquin

[12]Bhattacharjee, "*Economic Dimension of the Meitei state Formation,"* op, cit., pp.65.66.

bearers. Compared to the northern plains, the marshy lowlands were inhabited by the Bishnupriya, Meitei of low status, also less fertile. Also, in this area, the flood was a constant and common problem.

However, agriculture and other professions like farming, basketry, salt making, lime making, ironworking, and other works were the main occupations of this area, which the Meitei refused to do. Most villagers were ordered to provide the king and high officials with manual services.[13] Theoretically, the king was the landowner, and only users were the subjects. In this process, king at the heart of the State and the social system structurally merged all the ethnic groups by creating the Kingdom as an arrangement for the different ethnic groups.

Manipur's economy was self-sufficient, especially in the medieval period. People enjoyed a simple lifestyle. They also had to rely on their cotton dresses for a longer time, while their food habits were limited to rice, common fish vegetables, and animal flesh. Every house had its loom. Hence, as long as the fertile valley was more or less able to meet people's demand for food, at least enough for its livelihood provided by the forests, streams, rivers, and lakes. More than 2/3 of the State's total geography is occupied by forests of various floras in which several wild animals were present, including rare species. This gave, among other things, an appropriate spatial range to the people for hunting on hills. Again, the state forest provided the people with materials to build homes, render firewood, furniture, etc. Fish were found abundantly, simultaneously, in lakes, streams, and rivers, with large numbers in larger lakes such as the Karang, Ekop, Loktak, etc.,[14]the local villagers used these streams, rivers, and lakes as a fishing site. Also, people processed various services and goods in their everyday lives.

[13]Ibid.,pp.66-67.
[14]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit., p.44.

The State's essential characteristic was several voluntary organisations called the "*Singlup*", *Keirup* and *Leirup* in every village, specifically in the valley. As a result, each household was a part of the village's *Singlup*. This Singloop's primary intention was to provide mutual support to its members by the labour, materials, and money, of a member suffering from hardship.[15]The *Keirup* was an agency. The person belonging to *keirup* were war messengers. When war broke out, they went to the battlefield. Besides fighting, they were even responsible for capturing tigers. So they became village police. The *Leirup* managed development processes. It had to create and maintain roads, bridges, river embankments, and field canals drilling.[16]At the same time, hill tribes such as Naga and Kukis are renowned for their hard work. As Hodson said, despite working hard on craggy rocks to make a living, they also used to earn extra by working as a labourer for the valley's people, especially during and after the harvesting season.[17]

Therefore, there were more or less primary needs in their respective settlements, such as food, clothing, and shelter, and their cost of living was significantly low. It led people to make a living all year round by working just one part of the year, and the state economy with the simple lifestyle, where mutual support had a crucial role to play, was adequate based on them.

3.1.Ancient, Medieval, Modern period in the context of Manipur

History deals with time and space as a study of society. Therefore, history cannot separate itself from the period of man's social development, which is why periodisation is still essential for the study of history. At the same time, history is a never-ending stream of events, and the traditional canvas does not set the time correctly. Historical distinctions are more abstract than realistic. European historiography, based on Greek and Roman historiography,

[15]McCulloch, *Account of the Valley of Munnipore.* op, cit.,p.25.
[16]Singh, *"The Manipur Administration (1709-1907),"* op.cit.,p.113.
[17]Thomas Callan Hodson, *The Nāga Tribes of Manipur* (New Dehli: R.B. Publishig House, 1982). p.57.

influences historical study and contemporary historiography. In general, the history of every country or any part of the world is determined by thinkers, intellectuals, and literary evidence in historical studies, based on specific criteria. History and historiography have, therefore, become a Euro-Centric. Periodisation may be classified into three criteria viz. Time, Mode of Production and Technology.[18]

European history has divided into three periods timelines: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern. The modern period begins with the beginning of the 16th century, which marked the European renaissance and reformation. It also marked the beginning of the industrial and agricultural revolution and the geographical exploration of various parts of the world. The period saw the culminations and the decline of feudalism and capitalism's growth in the non-European world and European imperialism. From the early days till the 5th century AD, was the ancient period. The Roman Empire and its decline and rise in Christianity coincide with creating numerous kingdoms and principalities on the Roman Empire's ruins.

Medieval or Middle Ages between the 5th and 15th centuries characterised Christian society's universalisation, medieval religious obscurantism. The standard paradigm was that the periodisation was based on time, that is, ancient medieval and modern. However, with the rise of archaeology and anthropology as a 19th-century scholarly discipline, the concept of "Pre-history" emerged based on historical excavations and anthropological evidence of ancient non-European societies. In today's, *"Pre-history,"* archaeology has covered all historical subjects in all Pre-Ancient historical periods. No history is now complete without archaeological evidence.

Marx's historical economic interpretation-both as a method for studying social science and a communist-based philosophy has revolutionised the historical analysis based on the role that economic powers have played in defining human society. He divided the advancement of

[18]Kabui, *On History and Historiography of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.29.

human social evolution into primitive communism, slave, mode of production, feudalism and capitalism's emergence; and he prophesied the rise of socialist's civilisation and communism. Throughout, the Marxist political method – the way of production from slavery to the freedom to create and period is a time scale- was removed. Periodisation often focused on technologies such as the Palaeolithic (Old Stone) age, Neolithic (New Stone) Age, Iron Age, Steam Age, Nuclear age, Space age, etc.[19]However, the European and Indian periodisation systems were not developed, adapted, or applied in the history of Manipur. Manipur is a cradle of civilisation; the historical development established gradually over a long period. The problem stems from Manipur's distinct sovereign status; it was conquered in 1891 by the British and created as a Native state between 1891 AD and 1947 AD. Their different political situation specified Manipur from that in other parts of British India.

In America's history, the modern era, in Africa, Asia, and Oceania, was fixed by contact with the European powers. For example, Plassey's (1757 AD) battle in India; the First Opium War (1839 AD) in China. The expedition of Perry to Japan (1854 AD) in Japan; the Yandabo Treaty (1826 AD) in Burma. In the case of Assam, the British conquest of Assam was the beginning of the modern period in Assam in 1826 AD, as the European contact is the yardstick. The modern period in the non-European world also varies from country to country. Inside India, various states and regions would also differ from that of national historical periodisations.

In Manipur, the Indian periodisation scheme, comprising ancient, medieval, and modern periods, is based on the early 12th century AD. It is inconsistent with the period of historical time from 12th to the mid-18th century and today. Some scholars have proposed the timeline that follows, which is not appropriate for Manipur.

Ancient Period: From the earliest to the 12th century AD.

[19]Ibid.,pp.30-31.

Medieval Period: From the 12th century AD to the starting of 1819 AD.

Modern Period: From the Treaty of Yandabu in 1826 AD to the present day.

Gangmumei Kabui declines to accept the above arrangement of periodisation as a lack of justification in terms of the time frame and historical theme; he suggested the following model for implementation.

Ancient Period

It can be traced from the earliest *"Prehistoric"* period until the completion of the establishment of Manipur as a sovereign state during the reign of King Kiyamba. In 1471 A.D. Kiyamba entered into an external treaty with Upper Burma's Kingdom of Pong (Shan State). Manipur progressed through the integration of political and social regional principalities.

Medieval Period

From 15th century AD and last quarter to the end of the 19th century, Manipur had emerged as an imperial power in the 17th and 18th centuries and began to decline until the British conquest in 1891 AD Feudalism developed as a social, economic, and political system.

Modern Period

Since 1891 AD, the modern period may have started. In British rule (1891-1947 AD), modernism's age continued after 1947, with the British occupying Manipur; capitalism, feudalism, and Indian administrative system have been functioning completely. It is assumed that the modern era began in 1826 AD when the Treaty of Yandaboo recognised Manipur as an independent country (and yet Manipur did not lose her independence due to that political agency's relations with the British).

Contemporary History

From 1947 is regarded as a present period of Manipur history. European colonialism, feudalism, the monarchy was replaced by democracy, capitalism and internal colonialism.[20]

3.1.1. Historiography of Economic History of Pre-Modern Manipur

In the 19th century, the British conquest of Manipur was closely followed by the colonial structuring of the economy and colonially subsidised social construction, was the case in the rest of the Indian subcontinent. However, in the historiography of economic history is not fully explored in Manipur even though we can find some of the British scholars' work. They posted as political agent in the region. Moreover, the various books of British frontier officers, especially. R.B. Pemberton, *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India* published in (1835 AD), W.Mc.Culloch, *Account of the Valley of Munnipore and the Hill Tribes with a Comparative Vocabulary of the Munnipore and Other Languages (1859). E. W. Dun, Gazetteer of Manipur (1886),* R.Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur (1874),* J. Johnstone, *My Experience in Manipur and Naga Hills (1895),* EA Gait *(1905), History of Assam,* Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the Relations of the Government with the Hill Tribes of the North-East Frontier of Bengal (1884)* andT.C. Hodson *The Meitheis (1908).* The above colonial writer gives information on the socio-economic, political, cultural, and administrative conditions of the Kingdom.

While scholars from Manipur argue that Manipur has a documented historical tradition in Royal Chronicles and family chronicles, scholars have started making full use of these in recent years. The first published works in English begin with the British writings, such as T.C. Hudson, *"The Meitheis",* first published in 1908 AD. Sanajaoba grieves that, *"Till date, historians had not given serious thought to the history of Manipur".* The same scholars had

[20]Ibid., pp.32-33.

made an essential point regarding historiography in Manipur when he wrote that historians had a significant influence on glorifying the past of Manipur.[21]

Another important work is on *"Coinage and Economy of the Meitei Kingdom"* by NG. Rhodes and SK. Bose in 2010 AD. The authors state that, unlike Manipur, no neighbouring kingdom has struck a small coin for market use. The small bell-metal-coins were struck in Manipur to provide the ordinary people's need for coins.[22]

Most scholars writing focuses on Manipuri politics, social culture, and religion. Works such as the *State and the Economy in the Pre-Colonial Manipur* edited by J.B.Bhattacharjee in 2010 AD were a set of papers from numerous authors, concentrating on Manipur's economic history in the Pre-Colonial period. The book, based on agriculture, land, forests, mines minerals, industry and craft, including people's clothing and ornaments, were governed by the Kings. Consequently, natural and human capital has not fully explored, and technology cannot fully develop. Bhattacharjee said the authors have gone beyond Manipur's historical chronicles' precious treasure to explore pre-history, archaeology, epigraphy, and numismatics. And any other evidence of material culture can be traced to the social and economic foundations of the State of Meitei.

3.1.2. Settlement pattern in Pre-Modern Manipur

The word settlement refers to an organised human colony, their houses and other structures, and the paths and streets they pass along. It is highly relevant to human geography as the shape and pattern represent the human relationship with the surrounding environment in any particular region. The settlement grew and evolved over a long period, and the history of human land use examined by analysing the settlement's size, pattern and type of

[21]Manorama Sharma, *"Trends, Possibilities and Problems in History Writing in Pre- Colonial North East India Economy and Society*," in *Society and Economy in North-East India* (*Vol.2)*. ed. Momin, Mignonette, Cecile A. Mawlong, and Fuẓail Aḥmad Qādrī (New Dehli: Daya Books, 2006).p.15.
[22]Nicholas G. Rhodes, andS.K Bose, *"Coinage and economy of the Meietei Kingdom, "*in*State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur,* ed. Jayanta Bhusan Bhattacharjee (New Dehli: Akansha Publishing House, 2010).p.79.

arrangement.[23] Also, the settlement reflects his society's cultural, religious and social customs. The settlement patterns have populated in Manipur since prehistoric times are of two groups:

i. The central valley and

ii. The hills.

They were divided into groups and subgroups in the early days and occupied different parts of the State. The people who inhabited the mountain led an isolated life. The environment offered very little mobility and evolved into distinct ethnic groups.[24]

Human settlements in this area of the valley during the prehistoric periods are described in the mythological stories. There are regular historical accounts that people settled in the valley since the beginning of the Christian era. When Khaba declared 'Kangla' as his Kingdom's capital, King Pakhangba overthrew him in 33 AD. Several inhabitants' houses were limited and were assumed to concentrate in small areas of the valley throughout that time.[25]

In the historical period, the human settlement in the valley occurred by the successive rulers of the Meitei King. From century to century, the kingdoms' rise and falls were sporadic fightings with her neighbouring kingdoms. The number of settlements and people living in the valley grew up by absorbing the indigenous people, with the people coming from the east and west directions in various historical periods.[26]Archaeological reports demonstrate that the settlements in Manipur Valley grew fast after the water was drained from the marshes in the early period. Toward inhabitants and agriculture, the lands were reclaimed. The material remains indicate the earliest was the Chakpa settlement, and the existing chronicles corroborate this fact. For the previous periods, the structural remains at Kangla do not

[23]Singh, *The Meeteis of Manipur.* op,cit.,pp.163-164.
[24]Sultan Ahmed Ansari, "*Economic Geography of Manipur"* (PhD Thesis., Gauhati University Assam,1973),p.50.
[25]Yengkhom Nabachandra Singh, "*Functional Organization Of Settlements In The Manipur Valley"*(PhD Thesis., Manipur University Imphal,2006), pp.4-6.
[26] Ibid.,p. 6.

produce any primary structure except the citadel area, which is even today venerated by the people of Manipur. The channels, brick platforms and shrines signify that a seated power exists. The Kangla site seems to have seen great human activity, particularly during King Khagemba's reign, where the Imphal River crossed Kangla, and several other waterways were dug up.[27]

Although there were initially more than seven ethnic groups in the Manipur Valley, all identities are divided into seven *Salais* or main clans, with only seven family clan that has remained to this day. The historical shreds of evidence show the different ethnic groups, including Angom, Luwang, Ningthouja, Khaba, Nganba, Leisangthem, Chenglei, Haorok Konthong, Manting Mara, Lokha Haokha, Chakpa, Huirem, Khunjan, Loukha, and others existed. These lineages have a place with the Tibeto-Burman, Tai and other Mongoloid groups. They were first brought progressively under the political suzerainty of driving factions with their territories and assembled into seven clans. The Meiteis maintained their dominance over other groups politically.[28]Nevertheless, all ethnic groups held their own identities at the social level, and the geographical location of the settlement allowed ethnic identity to be preserved. The settlement pattern in the Pre-Modern village in the valley may be categorised into three kinds.

i. The first type villages' occupants have the best quality of land in the valley, depend totally on agribusiness, and are recognised as Meitei. *Gopal Hanjaba* is the head of their traditional village organisation.

ii. The second type of Villages has low land, agricultural products and exploit the available natural resources. Such villages distinguished by their living arrangement name or are inexactly called Loi to demonstrate their subordinate

[27]S. Amal Singh, "*Technology, Occupational Distribution and Settlement Pattern in Early Manipur," i*n *State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur, ed.* Jayanta Bhusan Bhattacharjee (New Dehli: Akansha Publishing House, 2010),p.104.
[28]Ibid.,pp.107.

status. The heads of their traditional village organisation are *Hanjaba*, denoted by their representation of the residence. The exception is that Barpatra heads the villages of Bishnupriya, prefixed by their original name of the house.

iii. The third type of village depends on the valley as well as the hill. They are now known as their community and name identify Scheduled Castes. The head of their traditional association is assigned to *Khullakpa*.[29]

People in the valley of Manipur built a homestead or *Ingkhol*, which was initially owned or allocated to a family. A family lived in an Ingkhol-built house (*Yum/Yumjao*). A family lived in a house built, a *Kollup*. When the son gave birth to a child, a new home built within the parents, *Ingkhol* meant a fresh family start. Similarly, when there was a need for a new house built for each of the other sons. This cycle has allowed both the original families and the settlers to grow and expand. Many *Kollups* made a *Leikai*, which developed in the same area when different *Kollups* appeared. All the *Kothong* (gates) of the houses were connected by a road called *Leirak konshang*. The *Leikais* created alongside *Leirak Konsang*. At the following stage, several *Leikais* had made a *Khul* or village. Several *khul* or villages had formed an area called *Pana*, which had developed in the Meitei state as an administrative district. After that, many *Panas* began a segmentary state with significant local autonomy and a limited bureaucracy for its governance.

Kings of Meitei played an essential part in forming and determining different types of villages in other areas; thus, building a hierarchical relationship between different types of communities in different *Panas*. The valley of Manipur is divided into three main areas, namely the fertile northern plains, the marshy lands, and the peripheral foothill areas, depending on physical and social ecology, for the space sites of different types of villages.[30]In a place, the villagers were equal, and the various regions were hierarchically knitted together.

[29]Saha, *Valley Society of Manipur*. op, cit., pp.48-49.
[30]Singh, "*Technology, Occupational Distribution,"* op, cit., p. 109.

Nonetheless, the inhabitant status of areas differed significantly within terms of productivity, efficiency, and professional practicality.

Over a long period in Manipur valley, the migrations and settlements led to the emergence of the larger Meitei society through assimilation and immigrants' absorption. Since, the days of Pakhangba, the original Meitei community had seven clans (*salai*), each comprising many sub-clans (*sagei/yumnak*). The *Sageis Salairol,* an early Meitei text, gave the traditional seven (*Salais*), a list of around four hundred and thirty-two sageis (*Yumnaks*).[31] In Meitei Society, there were approximately 432 original Yumnaks or household lineages. As more people immigrated from the east and west of Manipur and settled in the Manipur Valley, the number increased. These newcomers or immigrants accepted and absorbed into their fold by the Meitei society. Either by setting up new *Yumnaks* or joining the former original *Yumnaks,* they were accepted into the Meitei Society.

Eastern migration was primarily from China and the Kabo Valley (Shan States). There were massive migrations from the west. Among them were Bishnupriyas, Brahmins and Muslims. The majority came from the neighbouring territories of Manipur, viz. *Lairikyengbam, Basa* (Cachar), *Tekhao* (Assam), *Takhel* (Tripura), etc. They were first settled in *Mayang Yumpham* (today recognised as Mayang Imphal), Bishnupriya (known as *Mayang Kalisa*). Later, they spread over different parts of the valley, such as Ningthoukhong, Heirok Khangabok, etc.[32]

The *Nongpok Haram* (People from the East), a local text stated that many immigrants from Yunnan, Burma, and the Shan states emigrated to Manipur.[33]Blood relations also existed between Shan King Chaopha Khekhomba and the King Kiyamba of Meitei from the 15th century AD and a Manipuri Brahmin, named Swamy Chibananda, laid the foundation of the

[31]Irom Amubi,*Sagei Salairol* (Imphal : Manipur State Kala Academy,1994).pp.28-34.
[32]Singh, "*Technology, Occupational Distribution,"* op, cit., pp.110-111.
[33]Ibid.,p.112.

Koumudo Pegoda Temple.[34]Sir James Johnstone reported that the Chinese captives taught brickmaking art in Manipur, though the Meiteis King, Khagemba who defeated King Hongdei in 1630 AD, had initially taken prisoners. In Imphal, they settled in a place named Susha Kameng.[35]Nevertheless, just like all the Manipur valley immigrant groups, in the Meitei community, these Chinese settlers were also apparently assimilated.

A most significant number of the Shans migrated are shown in Meitei genealogies. For instance, the Chengsubam lineage, a sub-clan or *Sagei,* specified that *Chengsubam di Kengsen Leibaktagine* (a sub-clan of Chengsubam originated from the land of Kengsen). Kengsen indicates that a former Shan state place with the same name.[36]Also, Eastern people, including Shans, residing in various parts of Manipur listed as *Nongpok Haram* during the reign of early Meitei Kings. This migration had happened since King Naothingkhong's period (663-763 AD). All the migrants assimilated in different Meitei *Yumnaks*. Some of the *immigrants* accompanied their wives, while others were permitted to marry local girls.[37]

Likewise, in the same assimilation and absorption process, *Nongchup Haram* (people who migrated from the west) also integrated themselves with Meitei society. It is said that people had come from the west to Manipur, including Cachar, Tripura, and Assam, since King Thawanthaba's reign (1195-1230 AD). They were either enrolled in one of the original *Yumanks/Sageis* (lineages) or introduced new ones by the Meitei society. The entourage of Chingurembi, a western Prince (Bengal), who was married to Kwakpa Thawnathaba (14th Century), came along with many families. The people were also adapted in society as new *salai* names granting to them. The Brahmins, now known as *Meitei Bamon,* have preserved their identity. However, they gave the *Yumnaks* too. For example, Laipubam, Phurailatpam, Kakchingtabam etc. The Brahmins did not have a compact area or *Piba*. Their *sagei* surname

[34]Daniel George Edward Hall, *A History of South-East Asia* (London: Macmillan Education, 1981). P.p.384-385.
[35]Johnstone, *My Experiences in Manipur and the Naga Hills*. op, cit.,p.80.
[36]Singh, "*Technology, Occupational Distribution,"* op, cit., p.112.
[37]Atombapu Sharma, *Manipuri Itihas* (Imphal, 1942).pp.303-306.

is quite distinct from others. It says that certain *Yumnaks* gave them a name based on their ancestral homes or the place or occupation of the first settlement in Manipur. Bachashpatimayum includes descendants of Brahmin, whose original surname or title was *B*achashpati. The first Brahmin to stay at the place named Kakching received from the area, the name of his lineage (Kakchingtabam).

During the reign of Charairongba (1697-1709 AD), the descendants of Laipubam, who came to Manipur with Lord Jagannath's statue, were called Phurailatpam. The Brahmins were, however, entitled to keep their Gotras. There are lineages such as *Ningthouja In ba, Luwang In ba,* etc. which can define indicating that a migrant may have lived in the locality of a specific clan such as Ningthouja, Luwang, etc. In Manipur, Brahmins came mainly from Gaudaof Bengal, also from Orissa, Gujarat, and Nepal. Indeed, *Bamon Khuthoklon* describes only one from Nepal. They came along with their families and the deities' idols—for example, Lord Krishna. Among them were Singjamei's Kongbrailatpam Subclan, Yumnan Leikai's Labuktongbam, Brahmapur's Gurumayum, Imphal-Bazar's Harimayum, Thangmeibad's Brajamayum.[38]In Meitei society, they played a crucial role as priests and preservers. In *Leikai,* they showed an increment in social restructuring and state formation in Medieval Manipur.

3.1.3. Typology of settlement and production patterns

The Typology of settlements is a blended approach to understanding man's engagement with his environment. The fulfilment of the village groups and the social changes led to the betterment of the population. The Manipur's history, settled human life, started with the emergence of villages. In every village; some skilled labourers were placed by the Chiefs or the rulers who necessitated attention on the people's demands and managed labour

[38]Singh, "*Technology, Occupational Distribution,"* op, cit.,p.p.113-114.

division. As a result, each village produced houses of these craftsmen and artisans who served the existence of village population and its growth.

Pottery

Just a few Loi villagers do pottery work in the valley. They were unable to use the potter's wheel, so the pots are hand-beaten. The principal pottery villages of Chairel and Sugnu are located on the Imphal Riverbank, possibly because there is suitable clay around them and elsewhere, even as pottery is produced on the hills in Tangkhul villages near the clay of sandstones. The clay can be found between strata of valuable deposits in the bed of an old lake.

The pottery developed in Manipur as traditional crafts of women folk. Earthern wares of various shapes and sizes were commonly used among the Kingdom's people to preserve water, cooking, and other substances. Simultaneously, some pots and pitchers were used to keep food in containers safe and secure. It is discovered from the Meitei scriptures that the pot was identified as *Phu*. Moreover, art was named as *Phusaba*, and the village or place it performed was called *Phu Sakhul*. All the associated pottery objects identified by prefixing the term, *Phu.* For example, *Phusasang* (pottery workshop), *Phusapham* (the place where pottery is produced), *Phusaphan* (Pottery Manufacturing Board), *Phuyeichei* (pottery hitting stick) etc. Specific names like *Chak* (cooked rice), *Chakphu* (cooking pot) and others included, in addition to the *Phu* prefix.[39]

The pottery culture varies significantly from the valley to the hill. They developed independently based on local requirements and adapted the craft based on market demand. The contribution of raw materials often differs from these two community. In both the case, a few clusters specifically intended for pottery, which formed in the vicinity due to clay.[40]The potters in the valley are predominantly the Chakpas, an indigenous Meitei tribe speaking a

[39]Ksh, Kumar.*Manipurda Chaphu (History of Pottery In Manipur),* (Kakching: Peoples Museum,1985).pp.2-9.
[40]G. K. Ghosh and Shukla Ghosh, *The Crafts of Manipur* (Kolkata: Firma KLM Private Limited, 2003).p.46.

dialect with minor phonetic differences. According to *Chakparol,* an archaic manuscript/*Puya,* the Chakpas probably first practised pottery craft. The Chakpas were those who settled at the foothill of Nongmaijing range for the first time. Therefore, King Khaba knocked them down. Instead of finding another friendly and fruitful settlement, they moved in many directions. They spread over time. Sadly, the time set in Manipur with the arrival of Hinduism. The Hindu Meitei was the highest caste as they became the lower caste. Like other occupations, the artisan's profession was inferior. Many people have given up the skill since it was considered an offensive talent for hierarchical social stability. So, many people abandoned the art of potter to remain in the society of hierarchies.[41]B. Kulachandra Sharma has given the settlements of Chakpa villages are Andro, Chairel, Kharoi, Hemcheng, Pungpoun, Shugunu, Langmai, Thongjao (Thongjaorok), Thoubandong, Kwatha, Phayeng, Leimaram, Soichep/ Susa Kameng, Thongjao (Kakching side), Awang Sekmai, Kha-Sekmai, Sekta, Mahayimaru, Oinam Khul, Yumthin, Kontang Khurkhul, etc.[42]

Tribes like Hundung, Nungbi, Oinam, Tanghkul and Paomei also produced pottery in the hills. Throughout the year, villages like Thongjao, Andro Nongpok Sekmai etc. make pottery. It was done only before sowing and after the harvesting of food grains in some village-like Chairel, in dry seasons. Traditional potters are economical and caste-based and are consistent with the agricultural society. Real inequality is supposed to take into consideration through traditional or ecological labels of pottery work. Nevertheless, there is no casual work for pottery production. Because it is:

i. A skilled profession, and

ii. ii. Potters want less expenditure.

[41]Laishram Imoba, Thiyam Rabikanta and Chirom Rajketan. *Pottery in Manipur (Imphal*: Mutua Museum 1999).p.45.
[42] Ibid.

Below is the tabular description of the division of labour that was a part of the allotment of work in Manipuri society. This was followed for a long time and was the main factor that led to the pottery tradition's continuity.

Table.3.1.Division of Labour in Pottery Work

Place	**Person Engaged**
Andro	Married women
Thongjao	Women (Nowadays, men join every process.)
Chairel	Women
Nongpok Sekmai	Women
Ningthemcha Karong	Women (Men could have been joined.)
Nungbi	Men (Women are not restricted.)
Oinam	Women

There is a historical and traditional belief in the valley that it is taboo if men are involved in pot/pottery manufacturing. The modern age also allows the craft to be carried in Thongjao by men as well. Meitei is a patriarchal society where males are the breadwinner. The man works in agriculture, though pottery is regarded as secondary for them. Thus, the pottery is an assigned work of the womenfolk. In the history of Manipur, there was also hostile and cultural force were necessary for military organisations from those fewer workers at any time. Agriculture in hilly regions is crucial when men go hunting; women perform domestic work and most agricultural activities. Manipur's hill men are requisite to hunt or fight the war while other tasks are assigned to womenfolk. Pottery is also a work of feminine. It could be the only source of employment for women in Oinam village.

Nevertheless, pot manufacturing at Nungbi is men's main focused job. They make pots after galvanising the rocks into powder; and they also do pottery firing done in the deep jungle at the cost of uneconomic fuel — both dry and green branches and leaves. Also, male abilities are depleted to consume a great deal in smashing serpentine rocks. Several potters use soft stones. However, for this craft, women are not tabooed. Other than tedious quarrying

and shipping clay and tampering dirt, powdering and baking, these are lighter duties where women make pottery from the pounded products.[43]

Although potters are also in an agricultural society, they serve the needs of the various institutions. They provide both secular and religious articles for earthen usage. Provisional and commercialisation of pots are an exciting business. Nungbi potters barter pots in exchange for their accommodation and food. This exchange system is *Samset*. As a symbolic exchange, the tribal folk come with ritual items, particularly roosters for the Andros, and in return, they get ritual pots after the event. These are some of the unique aspects of the sales organisation. In the selling system, potters often sell their products to consumers for cash or kind. Potters House is also a shop to buy goods directly. Pottery production villages are in remote locations. Again, people from the neighbouring community buy either by kind or cash from the potter's house. People may trade pots with cloth and eatables like pumpkin, arum, ginger, etc. The potters also go to other locations for selling their pots.[44]

Named the different types of pots were based on the method of use and contained the objects. It was developed and used to store raw foodgrains and cooked food in ancient times. It was subsequently linked to people's religious, cultural as well as socio-economic life. It was the totemic emblem of *Leimaren's* household deity. For example, Ishaphui, an earthen pot, was used to store water and approach the woman's image. Various types of pottery in sizes and shapes were designed for specific purposes. Household pottery was used by *Chengphu* (for storing rice pots), *Ngaphu* (dried fish storage pot), *Thumphu* (salt storage bowl), *Ishaiphu/Pangalpun* (water fetching pot), *Kambi* (earthenware pans, plates, bowls), *Eyokphu* (for drinking water storage), *Chaphu* (for cooking rice), *Ewan/Wallong* (for cooking curry), *Khujam Phu* (handwashing pots).[45]

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[43] Ibid.p.46.
[44] Ibid.,pp.46-47.
[45]Kumar,*Manipurda Chaphu.* op, cit., p.18.

Private and public pottery use such as *Kumphu* pot to process and store *Kum* liquid dye (for blue and black colours). *Sunuphu* for storage of paint and colouring lime, *Leiphu* for storage of liquid red dye. *Kuhee Phu* to store *Kuhee* pigments, *Kwaphu* to keep areca nut, *Tongloiphu* to ferment rice beer, distillate potted liquors, and *Laphoi Omphu* banana ripening pot.[46]In addition to these pots, people use many other pots in different cultural-religious aspects. The role of pottery in various ceremonies of people was the birth ritual when a child is born in a family; the child's placenta was cut and placed in a new pot. It was the first and principal traditional religious activity among the Meitei and Chakpa communities. On the day of *Yupanthaba* (sacred function on the 6thday after birth), one earthen pot with water, among other things is offered to God. A pot of water was religiously and spiritually sanctified, reflecting holy water. It claimed that as water could dissolve many items and hold them, it might be cited and preserved in the *Kumbh* or a pot of water by invoking gods and goddesses' spirits. The socio-religious rites and ritual aspects such as marriage ceremony in Meitei marriage, pottery could not be limited. Mainly, for *Kambi,* earthenware *Chaphu* to *Mitam nga* (human representative fish release), Hindu acculturation, and the extensive use of steel pots later. Typically, the dowry included all household utensils, including the utensils above. Different types of pots used in the Meitei's post-death ceremony as *Meikoi Chaphu* pot in which the Meitei household's holy fire is lit on the funeral pyre. It was in 1724 AD, according to the Royal Chronicle, the burial of death in Manipur introduced with the conversion from animistic Meiteism to Hinduism. Since then, Meikoi chaphu has been in use.[47]

Thus, we consider that in every walk of life, starting from birth; pots are connected with them. The pottery production flourished for family needs and in commerce and export. The manufacturer did not directly sell the pots in the markets. A group of sellers from

[46]Ibid., pp.19-20.
[47]Imoba, Rabikanta and Rajketan, . *Pottery In Manipur.* op,cit.,p.57.

Lamanai village near Thongjao collected the producers' pots and sold them.[48] Pots were transported on foot, carts or boat. The primary route to this trade was the Imphal Rivers. They used the bullock cart frequently. Usually, they carried it on their heads. Sellers put the products in the market, selling it to people. Most of the women were engaged in this exchange activity. Exchange transactions often operated without the need as other people visited individual producers homes' with their agricultural surpluses. Andro's earthen pots and the surrounding hills used to obtain them by exchanging with their agricultural products such as pumpkin, arum, etc.[49] After all, this occupation was useful throughout history and even today.

A healthy atmosphere was used to assist people in the growth of their primary and secondary properties. The distances between each pottery village's resources were near their homes and provided immediate resource collection benefits. In the manufacturing of pottery, clay, water, broken pots, were the primary sources, while the fuel and other instruments required for making pots were the secondary sources. In the case of a pottery village, the selection of raw materials (*Leitan*/clay and *Leichreng*/temper) is a social operation that differs from some other non-potter villages (Meitei villages, along with the other village of Chakpa/Loi). The community of potters carries out certain activities in keeping with its village traditions, values and beliefs. Potters have sufficient knowledge of primary and secondary resource collection and preservation.

Salt

Since time immemorial, the salt has been produced locally in Manipur. Salt manufacturing was one of the primary industries in medieval Manipur. Some of the hills, mainly the valley had extremely rich wells of saltwater. Out of these wells, they collected salt. The quality of the salt produced was excellent. Lois and Chakpa groups' communities

[48]B. Kullachandra Sharma, *Meitrabak Manipur gi Phusha-Wansharol*. (Imphal, 1998).p.83.
[49]Imoba, Rabikanta and Rajketan, *Pottery in Manipur*.op,cit.,p.10.

were skilled or perhaps required to specialise in processing salt from several salt wells spread throughout the valley and hills of Manipur. Such a community's services were exclusive. The production of salt was a significant contribution to the needs of the people and the state economy. The entire quantity of salt of Manipur consumed in the past came from the salt wells of the valley. Occasionally, small amounts of salt were brought in times of scarcity from Assam, Cachar and Burma. Lois and Chakpas engaged in salt production for two factors:

i.The salt wells found in the foothills were occupied by those peoples, and

ii. The foothill region was inadequate for agriculture.[50]

Therefore, people had to seek alternative economic activities such as salt production and pottery under potent requirements.

The salt wells were situated in the Manipur hills and the valley. The valley and hills contain over 80 *Khongs* (salt wells).[51] In the valley, precious salt wells were located in the Chandra Khong, Sikhong, Ningel, Waikhong, Gourkhong, Kadangban Thumkhong Lok, Sekmai Khunou. Furthermore, the vital salt wells on the hill include Namli, Kharasom, Maram Khulen, Maramphung, Luchai Khulen, Luchai Khunuo, Paoyi, Chalou Khulen Chalou Malhou, Tasou Khunou, Thingai, Kahlang Khulen, Kahlang Khunou, Wahong and Thiwa. Besides Torbung, Chibu were also included in the list of Manipur's valuable salt wells.[52]

There are significant salt wells on the northeast foothills, about 14 kilometres from Imphal Valley. Ningel, Chandrakhong, Sikhong (*Chi*=Salt, *Khong*=Well) and Waikhong; they are located nearby and surrounded by villages that produce salt.[53]The spot held the spring found by noticing an early morning strange mist floating over the site. When the place established for sinking well, a full hollow dropped slowly until the water reached the surface.

[50]Singh, "*Technology, Occupational Distribution," op, cit.,p.90.*
[51]Singh, *Introduction to Manipur*. op, cit.,p.77.
[52]Irom Mangi and L. Binashakhi Devi, *Manipurgee Thumkhongsing* (Imphal,2007).p.51.
[53]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit., p.33.

The depth of water in the Ningel wells was about 35 to 40 feet. Depending on the durability of used wood, the cylindrical trunk inserted in wells was long used. Water was drawn from wicker baskets and emptied into a larger earthenware container called gurrahs or hollow trunks of trees into the wells. From there it was brought to the boiling shed some distance away in smaller vessels. The saltwater evaporated in the thin, shallow and saucer-shaped earthenware plates. They were covered with plantain leaves before the water poured into them — saucer-shaped salt cakes formed after evaporation and solidification. The quantity of salt production varies depending on the season, the most fruitful being in the winter season when salt concentration was at its peak. Chandrakhong is worth noting that there is a sufficient freshwater well near the salt. This well needs continuous pumping to ensure that saltwater is not polluted in the nearby water wells. The very edge of the salt deposit in this place seems like the existence of this freshwater well.

The saltwater here does not appear to be as petrifying as it is in Ningel, and the same observation is right regarding the other wells. The additional wells have no distinctive features. Sikhong has four wells, Waikhong five, from which the king, and his immediate retainers, have a better quality of salt. They can be purchased on the market at a price of the standard type. It varies only from the fact that they are cleaners. Ningel is the oldest and the most efficient among the wells. The processing amount of salt varies depending on the season, with the highest salt concentration in the water being most active during the cold season. Salt produced as approximately 150 maunds of Manipuri salt a year, of which Ningel salts made more than half.[54]

Salt was said to have been collected in the hills of Chinga and Langol. In Manipur, Salt wells were divided into categories depending on their production quantity and quality. They are known as *Numitloi* and *Tharoi*. Daily necessary trading activities completed salt

[54]Ibid, pp.34-35.

well called *Numitloi Thumkhong,* in this category Ningel and Waikhong are included. On the other hand, the monthly trading activities of completed salt wells are known as *Tharoi Thumkhong,* comprise Sikhong. The additional salt wells are Chandrakhog, Chalou, Torbung, Chibu *Thumkhongs* etc. Moreover, less salt was also produced from the salt well, known as *Tharoi Thumkhong. Numiloi Thumkhongs* was a tribute to the king daily because they made the excellent quality of the salt.[55]

The salt wells of Manipur were under state control. People working in the salt wells were paid for their labour and provided a typical salt portion in exchange for their work. The Royal Chronicle refers to the salt extraction of tribals like Ukhrul, Huning, Choithar, Tangkhul Hao and Chiru.[56] The share of the product that the king received was 30%, and the rest of 70% was divided among the workers.[57] The Salt wells were under the Thumjaopuren Officer's control, who regulated salt extraction from different salt wells in Manipur during King Garibnawaz (1709-1748 AD).[58] In Manipur, salt manufacturing is an old business, either mythologically or historically. It occurred from or a little earlier than in 1195 AD., King Thawanthaba's reigns. It was used rather than salt before *Thumnambi* herb (a tiny plant with a salt taste).[59] Pottery making and salt manufacturing were inseparable business since ancient time. These two professions were interdependent to each other, and it showed that salt manufacturing required pottery to store the salt. For instance, Nongpok Sekmai made pottery and Sikhong and Ningel manufacture salt.

Fishing

Fish is the most common food item of Manipur. As the legend mentions, all Manipur was once underwater, except for the hills; fish was famous for historical roots a large part of

[55]Mangi and Devi, *Manipurgee Thumkhongsing*. op, cit., p.76.
[56]Singh and Singh, *Cheitharol Kumbaba*. op,cit.,p.p.341.395.
[57]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit., p.p.35-36.
[58]Mangi and Devi, *Manipurgee Thumkhongsing.* op, cit.,p.88.
[59]Singh, *Introduction to Manipur*. op, cit.,p.78.

the valley remains underwater. Fish remains the Meitei people common food item. Primarily, this delicate art offers a job for many people.[60]The King of Manipur's also encouraged fishing. Fishing was controlled mostly by the Loi people, including Thanga and Karang. The most abundant fisheries in the region are the Loktak, Waithou and Ekop lakes. Often, the Kings rented the lakes for their soldiers instead of paying their salaries.[61]Usually, the state utilised coercion to settle the inhabitants in the valley. For example, Mungyamba (1562-1597 AD), sending a military mission to a tribal settlement on the Koubru hillside to the north of Imphal. The prisoners were the fishermen who were permitted to live in the plain.[62]

There are different approaches in use due to specific locations, demands and capabilities. Weirs fishing baskets, traps, bows, nets are all used, and all show high fishing suitability. Manipur's womenfolk were also involved in fishing. The women catch fish with a square net hung by four strings from a central pole from each corner and drop the net well below lakes or ditches' turbid waters and steadily raise it until the catch reaches the water surface and smartly pull out. Pemberton notes that no less than twenty-six varieties of fish exist at Loktak Lake.[63]During the rainy season, fish are more plentiful than in Sylhet or Kachar, and their quality is more inferior. R. Brown identifies fish with a significant variety, and abundant river fish are provided with around thirteen different kinds. The various notable fish among these are the Bengali Boales (Manipuris' call it as Sareng), the *bas mach*, *gna-ra*, the *rani machh*, the *surrong koibi*, *bagmach*, the *papia-gnatel*, and all the other are tiny, and they are not very prominent. There are 22 types of fish in the Lakes and Jhils.[64]The royal chronicle rarely describes the fish names found in Manipur are insufficient.

[60]G. K. Ghosh and Shukla Ghosh, *Women of Manipur* (New Dehli: APH Publishing, 1997). p.107.
[61]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.8.
[62]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - Cheitharon Kumpapa*. op, cit.,p.35.
[63]Pemberton, *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India*. op, cit., p.21.
[64]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit., pp.8-9.

Weaving

Weaving was an occupation of the household. The people of Manipur traditionally weaved their clothes. In Manipur, there was no different weavers class. Almost all homemakers incorporated in clothes making for the entire family. The essential skills of all Manipuri women are spinning and weaving. Weaving characterised as the art of making cloth by crossing two separate sets of fibres that move from one end of the wrap to the other. Weaving had been a primary occupation of the people of Manipur in the hills and the valley. In particular, culture played an essential role in the past and during medieval times.

In Manipuri, there appeared an ordinary loom in the porch of every house. It indicated that the weaving by Manipur women was a significant economic liveliness. The cotton and silk were the essential spinning resources. The clothes mostly made of different kinds of cotton; generally, a crude material called *Kess*. The rough clothing was bought predominantly by the Nagas' hill tribes. The hill tribes mainly bought ragged clothes, but a few make their way to Kachar.[65] It demonstrates how cotton is available and manufactured in larger quantity in Manipur.

Meitei's cultural practice of weaving was on a mythical basis. According to a manuscript on myths name *Leinunglon,* the supreme goddess of the traditional pantheon of Meitei, Leimaren said to introduce the practice of weaving as a necessary work in the entire process of the formation of the social life. It also claimed Panthoibi Goddess to be the first primaeval celestial of the Meitei. She invented weaving, imitating the webbing pattern that a spider provides while weaving its cobweb. The manuscript from *Leinunglon* specifies that the initial fabric produced by deity Panthoibi was crafted from soft wooden and bamboo membrane material. In the same text, Tamitnu, one of Meitei's seven primaeval celestial ancestors, created cotton to make clothes. Tamitnu is regarded as the goddess of cotton for the

[65]Ibid, p.89.

creation of the first cotton production. Another reference is in the manuscript notes that Leimaren, the head of those seven primaeval ancestors, invented the art of making raw cotton yarn for weaving. To celebrate this accomplishment, the Institute of *Sinkhombi's* founded and preserved the people's history to take care of weaving. The weaving place was called *Sinsang*. The term *Sinsang* further connects to the institution that operates as the administrative machinery to manufacture royal clothes. The Mieteis inscribed history states that a lady of the Sinam family regularly held *Sinkhombi's* office.[66] Throughout history, the tradition endured symbolically as the lady of the said family has spun a cotton yarn like a traditional activity that was compulsory on every occasion of the Meitei Kings' coronation.

Agriculture in the valley had settled while shifting agriculture has existed in most of the hilly areas of the Kingdom. However, some Ukhrul, Mao, and Tamenglong districts are still practised as modern terrace cultivation.[67]The production method was simple. The aspects of production focused on the essence of mere survival. The settlers were able to produce enough food for them; the surplus was not fewer. Nonetheless, the village economy was self-sufficient, and there were not standard imports feasible or required.

With better fertility and excellent topography, the valley had always drawn people from various parts of the country and the neighbouring countries. Sedentary life has enhanced the people's social and economic conditions and had associated themselves with the Meiteis. Apart from Meitei, the valley is split into Hidakpham, Potsangba, Tangkhul, and Kei by an ethnic group called Phunganai. The Phuganai served the king's multiple tasks. The Hidakpham was recognised because they had to engage in the making of hookah of the king. The Potsangba arranged the king's clothes to sit down. They also had to take care of the king's assets. The Tangkhul's main task was to garden, but sometimes they cut stones and made vessels out of them. The Ayokpa constituted of Naga and other hill men, who sometimes

[66]K. Sobita Devi, Traditional *Dress of the Meiteis*. (Imphal: Bhubon Publishing House, 1998).p.1.
[67]M. Bhattacharya, *Gazetteer of Manipur.* (Calcutta, 1963).p.202.

became poor and fugitives. Various kings who helped them to live in the valley. They cultivated 2 hectares of land for *Lallups,* such as Meiteis.[68]

Nevertheless, it has been a long way to establish feudal, hierarchical, and tribal ties throughout the settlement cycle and links to the King of Ningthouja and his nobles (Phamdous). It was a long way to establish feudal, hierarchical and tribal relationships.[69]Furthermore, an additional tax was imposed in the form of *lallup* duties. They also used to make king's stalls baskets and brooms.

Agriculture is a significant economic activity as land is the primary means of production. The distillation of countryside alcohol, silkworms, pigs, and poultry are other essential revenue sources in most Loi villages. The Lois are silk producers, iron smelters, spirit distillers, earthenware producers, blacksmiths, carpenters, salt-makers, fishers, etc.

3.1.5.General picture of the economy in the pre-Khagemba period

Accurate data on critical aspects of early Manipur's economy is not sufficiently available. Simultaneously, archaeological and traditional literary texts are useful in the tentative reconstruction of the economy's fundamental elements.

The traces of Manipur's stone-age religious and culture were found from archaeological discoveries at Kangkhui cave, Puhnal hills, Napachik hills, etc. The *Puyas* such as *Sakok Lamlen, Ningthou Kangbarol, Thirel Layat,* also provide abundant sources of this culture. *Thiren Layat* writes that *"Chaktum"* (probable fruit and other) as their food and Barks of the trees as their clothing were used by the earliest people whose living shelter was in the caves since they did not know how to use fire and rice.[70] Also, during the reign of Kangba, *Sakok Lamlen* gives evidence of *"Chaktum." Ningthou Kangbalon* refers to the

[68]W.Jyotirmoy Singh, "*Socio-Economic Study of Manipur (1467-1891 A.D.)"* (PhD Thesis., Jamia Millia Islamia Jamia Nagar New Delhi, 1999), p, 25.
[69]Ibid. p.p.25-26.
[70]N. Ibochouba Singh, ed.*Thirel Layat*.(Imphal,1981).p.5.

Kangba born on a hill in a cave in Koubru and lived on fruit, animals, streams and forest waterfalls together with his people.[71] O. Kumar Singh suggests that the findings of the Machi stone tools and handaxes at Kangkhui cave No.1, chopper devices were generally similar to the Paleolithic period tools. He also claims a Southeast Asian chopper found in 1969 from Kangkhui.[72]

The people of Manipur's main occupation was agriculture. The cultivation method was rudimentary during the early period of civilisation, and production was only for local consumption. As revealed in numerous literary sources, the myths and traditions indicate that the ancient Meiteis live a life of shifting cultivators. They cultivated shifting crops on dryland forest areas or hill slopes before acquiring knowledge of wet rice farming. Densely forest drylands, the northern and eastern portions of Imphal Valley extended the ideal environment to grow agriculture. Axes and daos were adopted to clean the jungles, and small iron hoes were used to dig up the soil. There is evidence of the remains of the Neolithic Celts.[73] It is indicative that they used in simple agricultural practice long before iron hoes were introduced. The reference is obtainable in the proto-historic period's exploration of an indigenous paddy known as *Morshi Thangyi* in Manipur.[74] An early text, *Poireiton Khunthokpa,* also found the first literary evidence to paddy cultivation in the valley of Manipur.[75]

However, in Pre-Pakhangba literature, there is no mention of the use of plough or livestock. Agriculture likely developed more during the period of Poireiton, a contemporary of Nongda Lairen Pakhangaba. However, the association was made to the management of

[71]L.Nityai Singh, ed. *Ningthou Kangparol Ponglen Puya Meihouba*. (Imphal, 1982).p.1.
[72]Okram Kumar Singh, *The Antiquities of Manipur* (A brief report),(Manipur State Museum Bulletin No.1, August, 1972).p1
[73]Singh,*Stone Age Archaeology Of Manipur*. op, cit., pp.101-118.
[74]M. Narendra, ed. *Langwon 1st part*. (Imphal: Manipur Folklore Society,1981.p.1.
[75]Moirangthem Chandra Singh, *Poireiton Khunthokpa* (Imphal: Manipur Sahitya Parishad, 1967).p.3.

iron and domesticating animals, such as cattle.[76]*Cheitharol Kumbaba* reveals various drainage works and river dredging and canals to clear the water from the Central Imphal valley's low lying wet areas.[77] The significant literary source Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba describes the shifting cultivation structures in the Nongmaiching Hills Shelloi Langmai tribe and wet rice cultivation in the Meiteis of the Valley.[78] In the early period, two traditional cultivation methods existed. Two traditional cultivation methods had existed before the Khagemba period. In the Valley of Manipur, *Punghul* and *Pamphel* have operated extensively. These are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Jhoom was the most common form of early Manipur's shifting cultivation. The people of the hills usually followed this process. It was generally called *Pamlou.* They used tools to clear and till the forest. They left the land after they had yielded the crops and were able to recover their fertility. Afterwards, they moved to new places.[79]

Literary texts like *Poireiton Khunthok, Panthoipi Khongun*, and *Numit Kappa* give accounts of using slave labourers in Pre-Pakhangba period's productive activities. Nongda Lairen Pakhangba (33-154 AD) introduced "*Lallup*" system. King Loyumba's Royal Edict *Loyumba Shinyen* (1074-1122 AD) was famous for its code of conduct, which also implemented its economic activities in labour division based on the clan's group.[80] It concerns the production level imposed by the state on agriculture. The prevalence of wet rice cultivation in the Manipur valley area gave the economic system, an immense impetus. Within the earlier literary works, there are no explicit references to iron plough by a bullock. Nevertheless, myths remain that tigers have been yoked as plough by gods, serpents, and the story behind it. The existence of iron and the frequent trade in the metallurgy between Manipur, the Burmese and neighbouring Indian countries such as Kachari, Tripuri and the

[76]Ibid.,
[77]Singh and Singh, *Cheitharol Kumbaba.* op,cit., pp.2-3.
[78]Singh, *Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba.*op,cit., p.38.
[79]Devi, *The cultural History of Early Manipur.* op, cit.,p.152.
[80]Ibid. p.151.

Ahom States; it may be believed that the plough had to be in the 7th century afterwards or before King Naothingkhong.[81]

The rise and expansion of the Meitei state, turning a tiny Chiefdom into a comparatively powerful kingdom was dependent on the wet rice cultivation which maintained the power structure. Therefore, the growth of damp agriculture was vital for the state economy. Nevertheless, the soggy rice economy needs vast catchments of human resources to recover lands for clearing marshes and swamps and soil levels. However, it also requires an effective water management system that irrigates agricultural land. In the case of Meiteis, there was a large amount of steady rain, and the state succeeded in generating the resources required to increase the agriculture of wet-rice. The state played a leading role in land restoration with its power over labour supply, irrigation, water supply, and effort in the State area. However, the availability of water was regarded as an essential factor in wet rice cultivation. The desirable nutrients for the crop's successful production needed a sufficient amount of rainfall, huge in Manipur. The state was required to establish minor-scale of drainage system at the village level through the peasant community.

Archaeological discoveries and written records indicate that technology advanced moderately but firmly in Manipur from the earliest times in the 17th century A.D. The activity of pottery has flourished since the initial period and has regarded as an example of technological improvement. The items found in Napachik bears witness to the function of the village potters. The history of pottery in Manipur also shown by the archaeological sites such as Khagabok, Phunan, Sekta and Khamaran Irengbam. A few of the pottery contained in the location of Napachik was determined to be linked to ancient Northern China potteries. The

[81]Bhattacharjee, *State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur*. op,cit.,pp.147-148.

Chakpas, which scattered throughout the valley of Manipur, identified as Manipur's earliest pottery makers[82].

The Khuyoi Tompok's (154-264 AD) reign seems to be a period of various technological advancements. He was active, and his power brought so many improvements. He was the ruler who invented a drum that was most popularly known. The bronze smelter and bell metal caster and technological innovation in metallurgy are recorded in the chronicle. The metal bell *gong* and *senbung* were made during his reign. The *gong* is a vital cultural relation travelling through Manipur and Thailand and upper Burma. Weaving also developed, womenfolk designed printed clothes and mainly red colour dyeing was introduced. The manufacturing of bronze, weaving, printing designing as well as dyeing was done in his rule. According to popular traditions, silk rearing inventions, boat making with Luwang chief and mineral discovery aid are also credited to his reign.[83]

The State of Manipur's traditional economy was based on its sources of water. Several water authorities such as Pumshakhong, Marong-Khong, Nungcheng, Kha-Khong, Laikhong etc. also identified as the dwelling place of God's beings. Such water sources claimed to be critical features of Meitei's myth concerning creation.[84] The head of the state politically controlled the primary water sources. Irrigational canals were dug for channelling streams and rivers, which resulted in agricultural land and the growth of human crops and livestock. Water was one of the most significant causes of conflicts between the Mangang, Luwang and the Angom, the three dominant groups. According to a legend, one of the water sources had taken the form of *Nungkhong Nunglaobi,* three pieces of stone. Such a water source is still worshipped in the drought and is believed to be the ultimate water source. Since Meiteis was an agricultural society, water has historically been a significant social-economic basis. The valley was lined with many lakes crossed by several rivers and streams. The traditional

[82]Sanajaoba, *Manipur, Past and Present vol.iv*.op,cit., p.419.
[83]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op.cit.,pp.96-97.
[84]Brara, *Politics, Society, and Cosmology in India's North East*. op, cit., p.p.233-234.

sources of economic sustenance were these rivers and lakes. Loktak is the biggest freshwater lake with an area of approximately 55 sq. Km. Moirang and Khuman principalities were established around the Loktak and the lakes around. These two principalities, myths and legends have closely associated with Loktak.[85]These lakes produced a plentiful source of plants and fruits. Innumerable streams and rivers were a way of transporting valuable goods between various principalities.

The increment in the system of private property was associated with the change in production mode. Since the king and other state officials were owners of the productive forces and all the commodities they consumed and ordinary people employed in production. Early Manipur's socio-economic structure was pre-agrarian, feudalistic. Based on this hierarchical system, members of a society divided into three hierarchies, they were:

i. The king and his royal family
ii. The lords of the court and
iii. The ordinary people, including slaves.

Studying various economic system approaches from the pre-agrarian stage to the feudal system throws an essential light on early Manipur's economic history.

3.2. Role of King Khagemba in the Economic History of Manipur

A turning point in the history of Manipur was the reign of Khagemba (1597-1652 AD). Khagemba was also brilliant as a conqueror and a war hero, as a leader and a nation-builder. He was behind every social and cultural advancement, economic and technological growth, constitutional, institutional changes and the Kingdom's religious and literature progress. In 1606 AD, Khagemba overthrew his younger brother Sanongba and with numerous Cachari Muslim soldiers revolted against him. His forces captured 30 elephants, several muskets, and a significant number arrested Muslims were blacksmiths, artisans, musical artists,

[85]Ibid.,p.234.

washermen, grooms and elephant tenders and many more.[86] The prisoners of war were allowed to marry Manipuri girls and resided in various parts of the state. Most significant of them were involved in production activity.

Nongsamei Puya states that the war prisoners' farmers practised the transplantation method that astonished Manipuris' first but later became widespread.[87] Until his reign, there was no evidence of the cultivation method of transplantation *(Lingthokpa)*. The power of Khagemba was marked by significant development in agriculture. The king was a great agricultural leader himself. With the capture of the Kabaw Valley, the natural resources of the Kingdom's increased considerably. However, Manipur Valley was a swampy region in the 17th century that needed constant removal of the water from marshes to the river systems to drain continuously. Khagemba had expressed an interest in accommodating people with irrigation. Dredged rivers and streams like *Kyang Khong* (Kyang Canal), *Takhel Khong* (Tripura Canal) and so on. Bunds built to regulate rivers flooding. Agricultural technology improved with introducing a paddy transplantation system introduced by the Muslim peasants who were prisoners of war. The Muslim peasants also introduced the bullock's and buffalo's plough in Manipur.[88]

However, the valley's swamps did not allow for the entry of such sophisticated cultivation as the water level was always high. Therefore, Khagemba had brought a new paddy called the *Taothabi* (a Red Tail Paddy), planted in the swamps in 1634 AD, a rapidly growing crop.[89]In 1614 AD in various parts of his Kingdom, Khagemba constructed ten new markets. These markets considerably enhanced the sale and purchase of the surplus products. Furthermore, in 1605 AD, he launched the gold and silver decoration system for distinguished service. In 1623 AD he announced the accumulation of gold from river beds mentioned in

[86]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur*. op, cit., p.98.
[87]Oinam Bhogeswor Singh and M.A. Janab Khan, ed. *Nongsamei Puya* (Imphal, 2014).p.161
[88]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. *o*p, cit., p.219
[89] Ibid., p.219.

Cheitharol Kumbaba.[90] In the Kingdom, Khagemba implemented bell metal currencies.[91] Khagemba was known for several changes in technology in the region. Manipur was conscious of the guns and muskets he had captured from Burma and Shans.

Nevertheless, the manufacturing of gunpowder and gun did not develop. It is said that Manipur bought Chinese gunpowder. Meanwhile, in 1628 AD, the king's workshop could make the musket barrel. However, Manipur could not generate enormous volumes of muskets.[92] Metal products were essential imports of Manipur. Gun and gun powder and its use came to Manipur in the 17th and 18th Centuries, especially during King Khagemba's reign. The bricks production was done owing to Khagemba's rule and was learnt from Chinese. Brick's name in Chinese was *chek* and incorporated into the vocabulary of the Meitei's. The chronicle shows the royal fortress gate erected by the bricks.

The jewellers and silver artisans cast silver crowns-statues made in Manipur were made of copper or wood.[93]It further developed housing technologies in the region. The houses of Manipur were made of timber, thatches, and bamboo. As chronicle symbolises, they constructed temples or *phuras* for deities and gods and designed with 5-storey houses. It built and decorated the eaves of the temple and the royal house known as the *Momit Yuba*. To strengthen the house structure, Khagemba introduced support for the base and introduced *Sana Yumbi*.[94]The people used turban and silver caps. In 1610 AD, tobacco smoking was introduced, and it was grown as a new luxury.[95] Therefore, Khagemba was one of the brilliant epochs in Manipur's history. Khagemba's reign (1597-1652 AD) was a milestone in Manipur's account to transition several technologies. In his rule, Manipur was

[90]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur*..op, cit., p.105.
[91]Rhodes and Bose, *The Coinage of Manipur.* op, cit.,p.16.
[92]Singh and Khan, *Nongsamei Puya* (2014).op,cit., p.162.
[93] Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.221.
[94] Ibid.,p.221.
[95]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur.* op.cit.,p.106.

able to see growth and development in different economic fields. With the rise of diverse arts, crafts and improved technology, agricultural and industrial life witnessed remarkable growth.

3.2.1. Main forms of Production in Pre-Modern Manipur

The soil is the main production element and the principal source of state income in a nation where agriculture is the main occupation of its population. In Manipur, the state played a significant role in the development operation as an agent to coordinate and track dredging, create flood control units and clear drainages. However, the state's function in the production processes and production organisation was not exact. Nevertheless, labour is a pivotal factor in Meitei's growth. A highly inventive system of labour mobility through a *Lallup* system, which has already stated elsewhere, was established by the beginning of the 12th century.

The succeeding kings of the Meitei's made this structure more formal and changed the economic motion's fundamental nature by placing it under the state's direct control. With the implementation and development of this feudal service, the loosely organised militia turned into a centralised, regularly-graded militia gathering - the operation of this system supervised by an officer known as *Lallup Chingba*. The *Lallup* service was called as a system of forced labour by a few colonial writers.[96] Johnstone opines that:

> "The *Lallup* system was a good one, and when not carried to excess, pressed heavily on nobody. It was specially adapted to a poor state, sparsely populated. In such a state, under ordinary circumstances, where the amount of revenue is small, and the rate of wages is often comparatively high, it is next to impossible to carry out many such needed public works by payment. On the other hand, India's man who lives by cultivation has much spare time on his hands. The *lallup* system very profitably utilises this to benefit the community at large. Many of the great works of the former ages in other parts of India are due to something of the same kind. We have still to

[96]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit.,p.31.

learn that the native system has much good in it, much to recommend it, and the natural outgrowth of its requirements."[97]

In these state controls over Meitei kings, mobilisation strengthened Meitei kings' legitimacy and authority and allowed the state to intervene in the production process directly. The quality of the soil was important for agricultural production. Owing to Manipur's geographical position, the area seemed relatively fertile for agricultural productivity. The valley was the most fruitful region as it had the profound, fertile alluvial field, plenty of irrigation water and rivers flowing into the valley brought fertilisers with them. The irregular monsoon rains combined with sunshine were also beneficial factors. This natural status was perfect for the valley area, and the soil quality was important for agricultural production. Agriculture is a collective term that includes crops, seasons, land preparation, cultivation, land management, irrigation, horticultural preservation, etc. The processes and means by which agricultural materials and agricultural products produced from the cultivation of crops, corn, etc. have been planted and harvested have been included in the aspects concerned. Since the early days of Meiteis, most of the population has a rural basis in their social and economic existence.

Means of Cultivation

The agricultural tools used by Meiteis were indigenous and straightforward-the *Kangpot*, or sledge, the *utkai or ananaba*, the *Langol* or Plough. The *Phou intok* or paddy spoon, *humai* or the fan for paddies to winnow, the *utkai samjet*, or the toothed harrow, the *thangol* or sickle (lit round *dao*), the *Cheirong* or paddy-thrasher or flail, the *yot* or the spade, the *thangjou* or the large *dao*, the *Yeina phak* or the threshing mat and so on.[98]

The agricultural method in Manipur differs with the soil type. Cultivation took place in *Kanglou* (dryland), with irrigation and *Patlou* (wetland), a marshy land before the monsoon.

[97]Johnstone, *Manipur and the Naga Hills*. op, cit., p.114-15.
[98]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit.,pp.42-43.

A specific paddy type called *Taothabi* sown in this type of wetland. Three agricultural methods practised in Manipur were *Punghool, Pamphel* and *Lingba.*

The *Lallois,* which regulates the state machinery of Meitei's workforce, were farmers and essential producers. Although not participating in the state duty, the *Lallois* pursued their livelihood activities predominantly through agriculture. In addition to growing wet rice in state-allotted areas, they have also engaged in small-scale production, mostly for the household. The peasants raised an extensive range of vegetables and crops like *anganphou* (early crops), comprising *Sajikhong, Tumai, Kabaw Phou* and *Phourel Angangba.* These crops take three months to get ripened and are ready to harvest in September every year. Inundated fields, marshlands, and marshes are alongside the slopes and rugged terrains, which can hardly decrease to the plains.[99] It followed the varieties of paddy (*Athengphou*) cultivation. The late crops, the transplanted one, the seeds have been sown and nurtured for almost two months in the nursery beds, and in June or July, the seedlings are transplanted into properly arranged fields, which have been ploughed up to four or five times until the soil became a puddle of clay. In six months, the late crops get ripened and are harvested in November.

The vast majority of rice is cultivated by late crops, consisting of 15th types, primarily characterised by colours and grains (see table 3.2).

Table.3.2. Typology of Rice

Meitei	**English**
Phourel	White rice was delicious and the most popular one.
Yentik	Rice topography ranges in degree from high to medium.
Moirang Phou	Moirang Rice white colour
Phoukok Chahao	Black Rice
Chahao Massapanbi	Whitish rice having a floral scent (an interesting smell).
Luining	

[99]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit., p.p.83.

Phoungang	Red colour taste is not so good.
Touthabi Phou	Red in colour, planted in lowland or flooded fields.
Chahao Poireiton	Black rice had a good sweet smell and flavour.
Chahao Munkhang	White rice with a floral smell.
Kakcheng Phou	
Haitup Phou	
Sagol Yangba	
Chahao Erikol	More scented and white rice
Chahao Sempak	White rice with a floral smell.

Womenfolk were mainly involved in seedling transplantation of the field.[100]In addition to paddy, various food crops and cash crops plantation were cultivated during medieval time, including cotton sugarcane, tobacco, indigo, mustard, many millets, sweet potatoes, arums, maise, and pumpkin, pulses, so on and so forth.[101] In the Kingdom, other fruits such as apples, apricots, raspberries, strawberries, oranges, mangoes, guava and jackfruit were also planted.

In Manipur, many forms of economic production were practised, but the people were mainly concentrating on the agricultural economy. Colonel McCulloch stated:

> In a country where each family produces nearly all that it consumes, any arts advancement can scarcely be expected. But if an improvement could occur without other impediments, it would be repressed under a Government such as Manipur. In the operation of the Laloop, a good artificer, operating with a poor one, gets no more thanks for his work than if it were as bad as that of his less skilful partner. He becomes disgusted, and his only aim is to amass quickly, by his superior intelligence, enough to purchase his release from work. This done, he thinks no more of his trade. Thus all are ever at the rudiments, and no progress is made. What clothes are made are distinguished for strength more than fineness, and the inventive faculties having no

[100] Ibid.,p.84.
[101]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur*.op.cit.,p.245.

paly, there is very little variety in pattern. Some little embroidering is practised, in which the same lack of invention is more apparent. Their eating and drinking vessels principally of bell metal, are substantial, but in shape vary little from those of the west. They have some dyes and taste in the arrangement of colours, but they have no drawing or painting.[102]

Due to the favourable climate and fertile land, the central Manipur farmers could produce a massive rice quantity without much labour.[103]The agricultural produce consisted primarily of rice, which was the staple food. Apart from the agricultural productions, fruits provided a significant cash crop, and large plantations grew mango, pineapple, jackfruit, lemon, tamarind, banana, orange, berry, and Jamon, kamranga and wood apple also cultivated.[104]Tea is indigenous in the hills, and before unwise greed ruined it, the trade-in-tea seed was profitable alike to the state and the traders. Rubber, too, grew in natural profusion in the hills. The teak timber in the state represents a natural wealth whose limitations are yet to be unascertained.[105]

Table.3.3. Agricultural Economic Activities[106]

The following table gives the schedule of economic activities in Manipur and is of great interest as it dictated the production patterns. Based on the systematic division of labour between both genders. Both eligible males and women attended it. The majority of the work was carried out to ploughed and timely inspect the field to check the growing plants and unwanted plants' clearing. During transplanting and harvesting in the valley, women played their role in the central parts. However, the women usually clear the dense jungles and cut trees in the hills. In the medieval period of wars and conquest, the Kingdom's protection

[102]McCulloch, *Account of the Valley of Munnipore.* op,cit.,pp.33-34.
[103]S.K Bose, "Intriguing Manipur": The Views of a 19th century Trader", in *Proceedings of North East India History Association*. Vol, 27(Aizawl, 2006.).p.210.
[104]Bhattacharjee, *State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur*. op, cit.,p.164.
[105]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit., pp.1-2.
[106]Wareppam Jibanlata Devi, *"Manipuri Society and economy (15th – 19th Century A.D.)"* (PhD Thesis., Manipur University, Imphal, 2004).ppp.56-57-59.

required its menfolk's service, and they had to coordinate between the two businesses. This tends to be why women have had to share more roles and duties.

There is a clear indication of the eco-zones and the diversity of the agricultural production in these eco-zones reflected in the agrarian calendar, which also coincides with the seasons and has ordered the ceremonial calendar to enable the union of the seasons and the social production as well.

Rainfall	**Agricultural Activity**	**Month**
Low or medium rainfall	In spring, rain enabled plants to sprout	*Wakching* (January)
Clouds began thundering in the sky Kumtaba (the first day of thunder decides next year's fate.)	Farmers began ploughing and preparing the field for the shown crops.	Fairel (February)
Sudden temperature rise and the constant wind blowing until the end of this month Rain seldom happens.	On the hill slopes, tribal people began clearing jungles and burning the same for Jhoom agriculture.	*Lamda* (March)
Storms with hailstones are associated with heavy rainfall caused by cyclones from the Bay of Bengal	It sprouts trees and plants.	*Sajibu* (April)
Windy days are over though monsoon is yet to appear from the Bay of Bengal triggering heavy rains.	Punghul sowing of the seed (dry cast seeds).	*Kalen* (May)
Western hills get heavy rain for the Rainiest month.	Paddy seed sowing for pamhel (Wet rice crop)	*Inga* (June)
Precipitation in the central valley reduced	Nursery plants transplantation.	*Ingel* (July)
Average rainfall for a short period, heavy rain came to an end and stopped again in intervals – very sunshiny days.	Weeding of the field to ensure proper plant growth.	*Thawan* (August)
The rainy season is nearing its end, and sunny days are rising.	Because of the heat farmers could not clear the weeds.	*Langaban* (September)
Incessant rain triggers Cyclones from the Bay of Bengal. Included in the valley were floods.	Crops, especially rice, suffered considerable damage as the crop was ready for harvest.	*Mera* (October)
The weather got more enjoyable. There was a slight rainfall occasionally.	Farmers were busy gathering grains from the fields for months of harvest.	*Hiyangei* (November)
Steady rain at the end of this month.	Before the rain came, Framers tried to complete the harvest.	*Poinu* (December)

Moreover, required manual labour was in agriculture work. Labour was inexpensive in those days. They supported each other in the village instead of employing manual labour. The

defined system is *Khutlang*.[107]In some instances, though, farmers used to hire labourers for wages but at low prices. The task of tilling the land and *Louri* (constructing low ridges) was the men's task. *Louri* developed in a criss-cross shape to maintain water in the fields, and the excess water was drained whenever needed. The women, on the other hand, were active in transplantation, weeding and supporting men. This led to the increase in production and the rise in the land area cultivated in Manipur as a result of which a robust agrarian surplus emerged.

3.2.3. Main economic activities and typology mentioned in primary sources

The Kingdom's rice economy was well established. The people of the valley engaged in wet rice production practice while the hills extensively practised jhum cultivation. When paddy was transplanted, and bullock was drawn in Manipur after Muslim war prisoners came in the early 17th century, the transforming technique appears to have been used even to cultivate wet rice in the region.

Handloom Industry

Most occupations were performed next to each other. Weaving was usually done in every house. Expert carpenters, painters, masons, workers in bamboo, conch makers, fishing and brewers flourished. The Bihsnupur people inhabiting south of the Imphal valley are recognised for their work in stone. Literary works dealing with mineralogy (*Chingkheiron*) and forestry (*Lamkallol*) are in existence. The Royal chronicle shows several artisans, including brass smith, blacksmith, and weapon and gun manufacturers. The expertise of Manipur's craftsmen were highly coveted among her neighbours, as in Assam and Burma.[108]

[107]Manipur Historical Society Session, *Proceedings of the Manipur Historical Society: Eight Session, Standard College, Kongba, Imphal East District, 2015* (Manipur Historical Society, 2016). p.160.
[108]Singh, "*Socio-Economic Study of Manipur (1467-1891 A.D.),"* op, cit., p. 89.

The weaver instructed the designs on clothing. Their garments had bird or animal patterns. There was a necessity of the floral motives, and Manipur artisans met them. In creating and designing the embroidery, the Royal family took a great deal of interest; Yenglou Keiphaba (969-984 A.D.) was introduced to embroider the Phanek border with the curved *Khoi Lonba*[109] patterns.[110]

Sericulture

As a consequence of frequent contact with the Shans, sericulture and the silk garments industry was established, the manufacturing of silk yarn developed. During this period of the Meitei and Shans' historical interaction, the Shans influenced the floss silk used by the Meiteis for the embroidering of various types of garments. The term Meitei, Kabrang originated from the words *Kabo* and *Lang,* for floss silk.[111] Silks and other clothes produced and the use of these clothes were prevalent during King Khagemba's period (1597-1652 A.D.).[112] Clothes were embroidered with silk floss.

In Manipur, there are several narratives in circulation about the roots of silk and sericulture. According to Major Mc Culloch, the art of sericulture and silk was produced in Manipur and was moved to China. From China, it was spread to other countries. The second narrative tells that silk introduced in Manipur around 600 years back during Khagemba's reign, Manipur's glorious and mighty king. King Khagemba is noted to have defeated the Chinese army and have taken some Chinese soldiers as prisoners of war.[113]

Furthermore, it allotted them to live in Kamen, a hamlet of the Loi. It is said that many of them knew sericulture and silk textile technology that they implemented on their settlement. Since, they married different girls from Lois, the Lois invention seep the silk.

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[109]*Khoi* is the shape of bees; the lonba is to knit on the border of the female garments or elsewhere.
[110]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - Cheitharon Kumpapa*. op, cit.,p.28.
[111]*Kabo* is the word that Meitei used to identify Shans, and lang is a word for thread, thus showing Shan's associations to floss silk's influence in Manipur.
[112]Devi, *Traditional Dress Of the Meiteis*.op,cit.,p.13.
[113]Ghosh and Shukla, *The Crafts of Manipur.* op, cit.,p. 2.

Maybe, that is why silk and sericulture were still practised in several Lois villages such as Sekmai, Laimaram, Kakching Khunou, and Kurkhul. The third legend states Thoibi's mythological princess of the Principality of the Moirang, had been exiled to the Kabow Valley, had acquired the skill and had been introduced to Manipur. The mythical princess Thoibihaving gained the craft from the Principality of the Moirang and raised to Manipur, the gift of extending silk was exiled to the Kabow valley. Meiteis and Lois traditionally used to rear cocoon Mulberry and Eri worms and spin yarn and produce different fabrics. Once the Meitei was Hinduised, they regarded reeling worms as lower caste work, so they started leaving Lois to precede it.[114] Though, it was considered to be a thriving economic profession. These four kinds of silk are presently contained in Manipur: *muga, mulberry, eri* and *tasar.* Manipur is one of the few spaces that are convenient for all four kinds of silks. The most extensively used silk was mulberry, known as Kabrang in Manipuri. The most impressive range spun from the *Kabrang Teel* or *Leima Teel* cocoon that relies on the *Kabrang Chak* (Mulberry). This type of silk can turn to the fineness to any extent. There were different types of silk in the period under study: *eri*, known as *Keege* in Manipuri. It assumed that it grew and produced on these plants a range of silkworms. This variety is known as *Keege Teel*.[115]

Most of the women in Manipur, regardless of the hill and the valley were capable of weaving; every house had a loom. Hence, at the time of marriage, a loom was seen as one of the essential dowry items, including these women who were extremely good in weaving and were typically considered the best brides even within the hilly people. Such weavers have been seen to weave clothes for both women and men of variable quality, style, and colour according to society's distinctive class and status. These items vary from ordinary garments to extremely luxurious and royal clothes from day to day. In this regard, even a person's quality throughout Manipur was identified from the outfits they wore. For example, only those of the

[114]Ibid.,
[115]Singh, *The History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.359.

male members of the Royal family and those authorised by the king's were allowed to carry *Khamen Chatpa* (a special silk dhoti). Likewise, the *Phige- Napu* (orange –coloured skirt, the particular silk skirt) was intended solely for the woman who belonged to the royal family.[116]

Moreover, in the king's presence, the officeholders chose to wear the silk *Gulap Machu* dhoti (rose-coloured dhoti) and the silk dhoti *Jugi Mari* (red silk dhoti) according to the rank of the officers. Simultaneously, sportspeople and servants also had to wear different types at worship, festivals, ceremonies, etc.[117]It was seen, especially before the British invasion, that these attire varieties were never imported from outside the region. It shows that Manipuris were indigenous weavers and they produced the clothes.

The state handloom industry is a female monopoly. It could be because Manipur's male had always engaged in wars and their women had to supply all family members with clothing items. Then the selling of woven clothes to others became the source of income. The women supported this source of the economy. Handloom is well-developed in Manipur now, and the state is famous for its handloom products.

The weaving techniques developed by Goddess *Panthobi* were known as *Khwang Iyon* (Loinloom). Two advanced machines were introduced subsequently. They were known as *Pang Lyong* (throw shuttle loom) and *Kol* (fly shuttle loom). *Laishana,* the chief queen of *Nongda Laire Pakhangba,* is supposed to have introduced the *Pang Lyong.* The *Kol* (fly shuttle loom) was introduced in 1921 A.D., by master artisans of his time, Huirem KeiphaSingh Selungba of Yaiskul Hiruhanba Leikai.[118]

To produce good yarn, they go through the following process:

i. Ginning is the process of removing the cotton seeds.

ii. Carding is the method of cleaning the cotton by flicking.

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[116]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit.,p.15.
[117]Ibid.,pp.15-16.
[118]Devi, *Traditional Dress Of the Meiteis*.op,cit.,p.65.

iii. Spinning is the mechanism by which the cotton wrapped around a wooden or iron bolt.

iv. Winding is the method of converting the yarn from wanks to bobbins.

v. Dyeing with indigenous dyestuff is mainly barked and the typical mordant type.

vi. Sizing – as soon as the thread is ready, the weaving begins,

vii. Finally, the garments produced have to go through the bleaching process. Yarns are bleached so they become white and is prepared to be printed.[119]

While the method, style, and weaving technique were not substantially different in the valley and the hills.

Table.3.4.Equipment of weaving tools[120]

Manipuri	**English**
Nachei	*Bar strip of bamboo*
Yetpu	*Thread rolling in or out wooden Pole*
Shamchet	*Reed*
Tem	*Hand/bar reed*
Pangal -tem	*Shuttle*
Khunet	*Pedestal*
Tamang	*Handled cylindrical thread railing frames*
Langthok - tareng Masha	*Thread rolling cylindrical order*
Konnaba	*Wrap and cloth beams*
Suna	*Heddles*
Tareng	*Spinning wheel*
Kabtreng	*Cottonseed weeding wooden roller*
Yongkham	*Handloom*
Tareng - Mayot	*Iron spindle*
Phi- hou- Keirak	*Warp making frame*
Sanam	*Floral/fauna brush*
Shiyaruk	*Weaving basket for keeping implements*
Tawot	*Thread bundle preparatory frame*
Langchak	*Thread pipe of the spindle*

[119]Khomdan Singh Lisam, *Encyclopaedia Of Manipur (3 Vol.)* (New Dehli: Gyan Publishing House, 2011).p.885.

[120]Devi, *Traditional Dress Of the Meiteis*. op,cit., ppp.79-80-81.

Sheenaichei	*The handle of the spinning wheel*
Huitri	*Cleft bow (The cleft bow rod made by the Maring tribes were highly prized).*
Lashing Kapon	*Long basket for bursting cotton*
Kochee	*Hook*
Singkap	*Cloth cleft bow*

The historic progress toward the social and economic growth of the Meitei Kingdom was the distributing of distinct social and economic professions to the clans or sub-clans, or individual households during King Loiyumba'sreign (1074-1122 A.D.).[121] The king Loiyumba had attributed social and economic roles to particular families or lines or sub-clans in the royal proclamation in 1110 A.D., usually recognised as *Loyuimba Shinyen*. The king's measure ensured the division of labour in society and facilitated professional specialisations. This king's effort maintained the division of labour and professional expertise of work into the community. It also increased textile production in Manipur. Meanwhile, Manipur already had a significant step in hand-knitted garments, which had different already known designs. These manufacturing arts were allocated accordingly to a given lineage as follows.

Table. 3.5. Lineage based distribution of arts[122]

Name of the Cloth	**Assigned Family name**	**Summary: Description**
Mungphi	*Thingujam*	Completely black cotton dye.
Laiphi	*Lairenlakpa*	Women's black and white cloth with stripes
Wana Katang Phi	*Keisham*	Cloths in Olive Green
Laiphi-Tonkap	*Chakpa Thiyam*	Black, white and red stripe with wide border women's fabric.
Phiren Phee	*Chakapa Lampham*	Cotton cloth wears by both sexes in the white course.
Langtomphee	*Kongpacham*	Beautiful cloth of white cotton worn by both the sex.
Yarongphee	*Thongkabam*	Men wear whitish brown coarse cotton cloth.
Chamiphee	*Khumallabam*	Both the sex wore the padded fabric of white thread.
Sarong phee	*Laikhuram*	White but red textured cloth worn by the priestess.

[121]Singh and Singh, *Cheitharol Kumbaba*.op,cit.,p.9.
[122]Devi, *Traditional Dress Of the Meiteis*.op,cit.,p.9.

Leirum Phee	*Salchiiram*	White and red with black marks fabric used by both the sex.
Dolai Kup Phee	*Wahengbam*	Small cover with a whitish coarse cloth.
Dolai Thanaba Phee	*Kabacham*	A seat cover of white cloth.
Phiren Phee	*Apucham*	Coarse white cloth.
Heikoi Phee	*Haodijam*	White yet Black with red-spotted, enlarging other clothes.
Singkap phee	*Thoidingjam*	White but black marks of stripes worn by men.
Laiyek Phee	*Thongam*	White, but pink, warped clothing worn by both genders.
Purum Phee	*Kongbam*	Men wore white but red dotted fabric
Tarao Phee	*Chigkhalpam*	White coarse, male cotton cloth.
Pumthit Phanek	*Thinpam*	White all-embroidered ladies clothes.
Phimu Yekpa phee	*Taibangcham*	Black though red mark men's cloth.
Nongphi	*Yumlempam*	The transparent white fabric of both sexes.
Khunung Musum phee	*Wokthiyambam*	Coarse brown cotton cloth with red marked men's wear.
Phagang Phee	*Thoudam*	Men's cotton cloth with white coarse.
Ningthou phee	*Nongthongbam*	Half circular weaved fabric in silk or more durable cotton yarn on its dorsal side.
Tungkap Phee	*Haokam*	Women wear red and white colour broad striped border cloth as loungers.

According to the *Loiyumba Shinyen* manuscript, itis also stated that most traditional dyes had been obtained and developed under the patronage of *Loiyumba.*

Table.3.5.1. Allocation of duties for dyeing[123]

Yumnak /Sagei (Lineage, Sub/Clan)	**Colour of Yarn**	**English translation**
Akangcham	*Leirel Khoipaklei*	Light Pink
Chingkhwampam	*Chingshang Mayumlei*	Dark red
Yiroibam	*Ureiron Makong Meiri Machu*	Saffron, dark flame red
Khulmanthempam	*Higok Nanou Lei*	Light blue
Khumukcham	*Kumlang Kumpal lei*	Black
Yipusangbam	*Chingya Napu Lei*	Yellow
Heitroi	*Lei*	Grey, Yellow, green, deep and maroon
Washiyampam	*Wana Katang Namba Sanglen Yaichu Lei*	The greenish-red shade produced by mixing green and red threads

From time to time, weavers and dyers had to strictly maintain the dress and colour codes introduced by the Meitei kings. The dying method was well established, and special dyes were used for each variety of clothing. Some of the indigenous trees, barks, seeds and

[123]Ibid, p.11.

creepers used in the past to make dyes of various shades and this ancient art of dying still exist in Manipur.

Table.3.5.2.Dyes of different shades[124]

Manipuri	**English**
Kumna	Kumna is a herb that is harvested black blue and green colours (*Staabi lanthas flaciedifolious*).
Ureirom	Gold colours and orange-red is extracted from the seeds of Ureirom (Bika Orellana).
Kuhi	Kuhi (castamopsispp) is provided brown and fawn colours
Kusum Lei	Kusum Lei (curathamus Texetoruis) for Pink and Rhodium
Unapu	A yellow-coloured herb.
Yaingang	Gives yellow and reddish colours.
Chingsu Mana	A black-coloured source.
Cha (Lac)	They extracted dark red.
Kuhi and Moyun	From Sahi Kuhi (Castamopsispp) and Moyun trees are extracted maroon pigment.

Meidingu Kiyamba's reign (1467-1508 A.D.) saw the introduction of a new style of clothing items in Manipur, arising from the western part of the region. In the present Kabo valley of Burma, the king of Kyam Khabat was a tribal state and was a common enemy of both the king's Kiyamba and Pong (Shan) Chaoapha KhekKhomba. Both kings invaded Kyam Khabat, their well-known rival. In combat, Victorious, ChaoPha Khekkhomba offered to Kyamba, a box bearing an idol, symbolised their friendship allegedly of Vishnu, the Hindu god, in exchanging gifts tokens with the two Kings. History tells that Kyamba invited the west Brahmins to perform the Hindu God's worship possibly on the present day, Assam. Historical shreds of evidence show many people from the west of Manipur have already been exposed to the Hindus' cultural influence and settled in certain areas, especially in the western hills and the present Manipur's foothills.[125] It means saying that the Meitei of those periods must have adopted those cultural traits, including exogenous attire and clothes types through interaction with those people. Royal chronicle also mentions *Phisha Sangai* (Royal house

[124]Singh, "*Technology, occupational Distribution,"* op, cit., p.p.100-101.
[125]Devi, *Traditional Dress Of the Meiteis*.op,cit.,pp.11-12.

weaver), all the kings' clothes were woven, and the house refers to the place where the Royal clothes were knitted.[126]

Native historians believe that the proper initiation of Brahmin priesthood for worship as a historical one. Accordingly, some scholars attributed this historical event to traditional Hindu dress initiation such as the dhoti, kurta, and thin wrapper, all in white cotton. The way dhoti is implemented named the *Kaptreng Thougal phiset,* and cultural practice of adoration of the Hindu God Vishnu was added.[127] The royal chronicle states that a wax-coated shirt made of *beeswax* was invented in Mungyamba in 1562 AD. Embroidery was already placed on the feminine dresses' boundaries, and the men's clothes were developed in his period.[128]Production of silk and other garments decorated with embroidery works in floss thread, and the use of these clothes became common during the Khagmeba (1597-1652 AD).In his rule, the locally recognised weight and measure tools *Chei* and *Khal* for silk trade and commerce were introduced.[129]The other textiles polished with works in floss silk, became a prominent silk product. Khagemba also adopted the custom of giving exclusive prizes inexpensive clothes to the hill members, nobles and talented subjects. He introduced *Mana Phi, Pari phee* and *Wanphak Phurit*, *Salai Kokyet, Ningkham Phurit Lairen,* and *Ningkham Samjin Lengkhang Phee, Kokyet Kangdrum, Phirangchi, Pana Phee,* etc. And *Pala Kokyet* was introduced by Charairongba (1697-1709 A.D.).[130] Therefore, both the valley and the hills were well enriched with weaving while the manufacturing was primarily for domestic use.

Bamboo crafts

Other significant professions of those who were principally involved in agriculture were basketry and carpentry works. In this context, it is imperative to note in the

[126]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - Cheitharon Kumpapa*. p, cit.,p.106.
[127]Devi, *Traditional Dress Of the Meiteis*.op,cit.,p.12.
[128]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - Cheitharon Kumpapa*. op, cit.,p.55.
[129]Devi, *Traditional Dress Of the Meiteis.* op,cit.,p.13.
[130]Lisam, *Encyclopaedia Of Manipur (3 Vol.)*.p.882.

unavailability of any modern conveniences until very late, people had to establish their convenient method of carrying their products. The barter system, during the medieval period, was prevalent in measuring the value of various products. An example such as rice mostly was regarded as the volumes included in the traditional local basket known as *Sangbai*, which was as small as sixty-fourth unit named "Utong Meruk" with several sizes. Another significant feature of this profession had a massive demand that the hill inhabitants had to use arrows and bows as the primary weapons of both hunting and defence. Throughout their lifestyle, the valley people used various fishing tools and other purposes, such as *Tungol, Longup, Kabo Loo, Taijep, Sora-loo,* etc. The other requisite canes and bamboo items were *Phaklen,* a large mat with paddy and several other crops harvesting from its plants, *Kharai* and *La*, where everything was spread to the Sun's exposure *Yangkok*, a flat basket oval shaped for winnowing grains. And numerous extremely decorative and luxurious objects in their household good s were made in society. For instance, *Shilluk, Phingaruk* (precious goods container), *Liphal* (cane-dining table), are commonly used by people and conceived a substantial dowry provision.[131]

The Meitei plantation of bamboo plants throughout the valleys and the hills from a very early stage is revealed in ancient manuscripts. Selected bamboo species were grown in the mountains. A residence with a house and a garden began operating with bamboo cultivation. The name *"W.A."* is given to bamboo because it comprises happy and sad Meiteis life cycles. Different roles were correlated with varying species of bamboo. Among the tribal groups on the hills, this cultural connection was absent. Bamboo's function is vital for a household — Manipuri *Pangal* (Muslims) also utilises various bamboo products in their daily lives. There is no written record of bamboo articles used in manuscripts of the old texts like *Ningthourol lambuba, Langgol Chinggoirol, Chainarol, Apoklon Numit Kappa.* For example, bamboo

[131]Md. Ashraf Ali, "*Economic History Of Manipur (1801-1951)"* (PhD Thesis., Manipur University Imphal, 1988),p.105.

bows and arrows were defensive and charming methods were used. They bear witness to the long-term use of bamboos. During King Loiyumba (1074-1112 A.D.), various clans were given tasks simultaneously, and *Loiyumba Shinyen,* arranged under him, included the accounts and explanations of bamboo items.[132] They still produce and use without modifying their original names.

A certain period is lost in the bamboo item; thus, it is rare for a long time to maintain it. Antique results were not removed. Therefore, there is no end to the longevity of traditional bamboo products. Intermarriage among different Meitei clans is still a Taboo. There is a common phrase *'Sairuk Tinnnaba'* meaning intermarriage cannot take place. A *Sairuk* is a thin, four-legged, lidless bamboo basket.[133] In an early Meitei social life, family members used to eat cooked meat from this basket. Later, it was said that the use of different baskets was a prominent sign for taboo from an early age.

During the medieval period, basketry became one of the most prominent cottage industries. This work usually carried out before or after the seasons of harvest. This profession was performed in the valley and the hill throughout the Kingdom. Except for weaving, it was accomplished mostly in the Kingdom by the menfolk. Older adults who were unable to work in the paddy field took up basketry as their profession. Nevertheless, basketry items have been made not for sale but general uses at home. A household could not make basketry articles to exchange their goods, relying on the producer's necessities.[134]

Mainly bamboo, cane, and reed were the raw materials used in the basketry activities in this Kingdom. The Kingdom had almost the vast dense jungles of bamboos, canes and reeds.[135] Bamboo is a tall, sustained plant found in the tropical and subtropical regions of the globe.

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[132]MutuaBahadur, *The Art of Bamboo: Bamboo in Manipuri Cultural Life India, Bangladesh and Myanmar : Cane and Bamboo Crafts of NE India, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Thailand* (Imphal: Mutua Museum, 2013).p.12.
[133]Ibid.,p.12.
[134]Mutua Bahadur, *Cane and Bamboo Crafts of Manipur* (Imphal: Mutua Museum, 1994).p.9
[135]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit., p.5

An approximate forty-four varieties of bamboo plants are located in the hills and the valley of Manipur. It also produces various weaving instruments and accessories for women and baskets, sleeping mat and threshing mat, fishing traps, stools, and thatched houses.

Like bamboo, the grass is one of the fastest-growing species. Most of the forests are covered with it and are also easily harvestable and therefore provide one of the essential sources of sustenance and is used in many aspects. In many of the south-east Asian societies, we find the prevalence of hand to hand combat and stick fight, and this is also there in Manipur and is explained by the fact that Manipur did not suffer from a fate like many of the island societies of South East Asia who did not transition to a state society.

Table.3.6.Bamboo Species[136]

Manipuri	**Scientific Term**
Saneibi	*Bambusa nutans*
Khok	*Bambusa mizorameana*
Naat	*Schizostachyum munsoi*
Watangkhoi	*Dendrocalamus hookeri*
Longa, tenwa	*Neomicrocalamus prainii*
uein	*Dendrocalamus Longispathus*
Wamu, unal, unap	*Dendrocalamus hamiltonii*
Utang	*Bambusa Tulda*
Poksang	*Schizostachyu, pergracile*
Meiribop	*Dendrocalamus latiflorus*
Moubi	*Melocanna baccifera*
Liwa, Laiwa	*Chimonobambusa callosa*
Ui	*Dendrocalamus manipureanus*
Tongjiwa	*Schizostachyum Fuchsianum*

Even *Yumsharol* is not of much support, is a kind of treatise of the progressive improvement of the Meitei House and its related architecture. It shows changes over the centuries in building or making houses until the Meiteis started living in the *Yum Laikhal*

[136]Bahadur, *The Art of Bamboo.* op, cit.,p.13.

Thaba or a place with a base. Nevertheless, during the significant historical times in which these transformations happened silently. A hint of the root of *Yum Laikhal Taba* provided in *Poireiton Khunthokpa*. During the 2nd Century A.D., utilising houses with bases and with floors and built with bamboos had walls of a combination of straw chips and earth, covered with thatches. *Ningthurol Lambuba*, a chronicle that says numerous rulers of Meiteis, discussed the use of the *Pai* luggage basket. They were either hanging on the right or on the left shoulder to carry very light stuff. It was also claimed that *Pai* steadily vanished from the Méiteis and substituted cloth bags around the 17th century.[137]

Throughout Manipur, both bamboos and the varieties of canes are in plenty. The inhabitants of Manipur were primarily occupied with basketry. For domestic and ceremonial use, various baskets were produced of multiple shapes, sizes and designs. Ritual and religious practices were such as ceremonies of marriage as well as domestic help:

Table.3.6.1.Bamboo in Ritual and Domestic uses[138]

Meitei	**English translation**
Heijing Kharai	*Bamboo basket of Meiteis was used to hold fruit for marriage ceremonies, prepared by a groom's family member.*
Phiruk Macha	*Bamboo baskets of Meiteis were used for marriage ceremonies used for storing rice.*
Chapot	*Andro Bamboo Basket was used as a carrying basket used to carry the wedding dress of the bride.*
Phingaruk	*At the marriage ceremony, the Meiteis used for the apok- asa (creator), which includes sweetmeats and fruits.*
Sipak	*Bamboo baskets were also used to perform a rite of death ceremony.*

Bamboo was an essential part of the diversified life of Manipurians, especially for hillmen who build bamboo houses and used different vessels to store salt, *hentak* (dry

[137]"Cane and Bamboo Crafts of Manipur Part 1." Accessed February 29, 2020. http://www.e-pao.net/epSubPageExtractor.asp?src=manipur.Arts_and_Culture.Mutua_Bahadur_Art_Collection.Cane_and_Bamboo_Crafts_of_Manipur_Part_1.

[138]Bahadur, *The Art of Bamboo*. op, cit., ppp.30-31-22.

pounded fish) etc. Typically, they lit the fire in bamboo bits with two strings. The young and tender shoot, known as *Ushoi*, could be made into a delicious curry dish. In addition to *Ushoi* (finely sliced bamboo shoot), another kind of food was *shoibum* (fermented bamboo shoot) was made.[139]Some of the essential bamboo products in Manipuri household are as follows:

Table. 3.6.2.Bamboo in Household use[140]

Manipuri	**English description**
Meruk	Bamboo basket used by Meiteis as a container for collecting cooking rice.
Chengjamuk	Bamboo basket used by Meities as a storage basket holding rice before cooking for washing and cleaning.
Polang	Bamboo baskets used by Meiteis were used to contain vegetables for washing and cleaning before cooking and used as a container basket.
Sek	Bamboo or cane basket used for storing pounded mustard seed as a container bag.
Uning	The bamboo tune used by Meiteis were with lid used for storing salt.
Ngarubak	Bamboo basket used by Meiteis to store dry fish as storage.
Phirubak	Bamboo basket of Meiteis to store clothes.
Phoura	Bamboo basket used by Meiteis to sunshine up paddy.
Yangkok	Meiteis circular rice chaff bamboo basket.
Chengbol	Meitei bamboo basket for clothes used for carrying/storing.
Phei	A rounded bamboo weaved to put a pitcher
Sotu	Bamboo smoking pipe.
Waktang	Bamboo hooka.
Samjet	Bamboo Comb.

Several royal departments dealt the various areas of administration. As *Phuju* was one of them, the department assigned for the poor, old and physically challenged persons to engage in basketry and allied works. King Pamheiba (Garibnawaz) founded *Sangsaroi* departments in 1709-1748 A.D. This department involved several activities related to bamboo crafts, their use and production. Bamboo had also been collected in various forms by *Sangsaroi*.[141]

The royal chronicle of *Cheitharol Kumbaba* includes historical accounts of the presence of multi-storied houses in King Khagemba's time as the early part of the 17th century. It is said

[139]Bahadur, *Cane & Bamboo Crafts of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.9.
[140]Bahadur, *The Art of Bamboo.* op, cit.,pp.23.24.25.26.27.28.29.
[141]Bahadur, *The Art of Bamboo*. op, cit.,p.83.

that five-storey dwellings were built during his time. It is noticed that during the reign of Charairongba a three-storey metal roofing house was erected in 1704 AD, and with a three-storied building in 1735 A.D. and it had a *Chirong* set up on top of the roof, shaped like a V, during the King Garibnawaz was introduced. It saw wooden ceilings during his time.[142] Therefore, in his Kingdom, basketry was made but extensively used — and the artisans from a specific ethnic group used were his people. In the valley, the Meiteis used *Khe* oil to reinforce and waterproof the finished basketry products. In the valley, the Meiteis used *khe* oil to strengthen and waterproof the finished basketry products. We have observed that in the medieval times as it is today, bamboo and canes played a fundamental role in the Manipuri people's domestic life.

Manipur's total geographical location, except for that tiny valley, consists of hills covered by several trees' dense forests. Not only were these forests sufficiently supplied with firewood and other construction equipment, as well as expensive wood of various species that can be used to manufacture the furniture and other essential tools and instruments required for the traditional Manipur economy. The main products comprised spinning rollers, hookah, cupboards, beds, desks, shuttles, chairs, and various agricultural equipment types.[143] Carpentry products, including *Kangpots* and Canoes, were necessary to transport commodities from place to place. However, new wheel carts in the Kingdom were not so prevalent. Besides, this the village of Hiroi Lamgang, at Sugnu, signified to identify the people in the Loi who were predominantly involved in making boats by occupation,[144] since boat races constituted one of the most prominent sports, from time immemorial, Manipur was a part of culture and tradition. The most common means of water transport is a boat. The Hiroi Langanga Village is given a special status to make royal boats because of its extreme importance. This village created various kinds of crafts for the royal uses as well as for the

[142]Ibid.,p.61.
[143]N. Ibobi Singh, *The Manipur Administration 1709-1907* (Imphal, 1976).p.120.
[144]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit., p.33.

common man. Therefore, there was a demand that was both elites as well as popular, and it served to increase the production base and also increase the bottom of the workers and the materials. The consequence of this increased demand was the rotation of more and more goods and money in the market.

Table. 3.7. Types of Boat[145]

Manipuri	English Translation
Hiyang-Hiren	Swift, big-size rowing boats adorned with Bow's head-antler deer on the deck and human head on the stern. It was used for competition in the royal boat-race.
Hiyang	Large size, swift rowing boat.
Hiren	Great larger-sized boat
Wak-yei	Medium-sized fishing boats with sidewalls and that sounded stunning with a stitch to attract the approaching fish.
Tong- cheng	the small boat rowing and tapered towards the stern
Lookay-	One person smaller rowing boat to remove fish from the net.
Hijao	Significant size ferry rowing boat.
Hinau	Smaller primary private rowing boat.
Pong	A raft on any *f*loating material and rowing devices such as *Nou* (Oar) in different sizes and *Chei- Ngak* (rowing sticks, poles)

The resources, i.e. the boat making woods, were obtained from the surrounding hills. The wood cutting for building houses, boats and other uses required royal approval as forestry and natural products belonged to the state. The royal chronicle mentions that *Phamdou* (Courtier) was with an iron chain as he found the wood-cutting in the forest of Pantakiin the reign of King Paikhomba in 1693 A.D.[146]However, several bamboo and wood bridges across the river and waterways were built. Therefore, carpentry was a significant part of the economic lives of the Manipuri people.

Yu (Local Liquor)

The preparing of the *Yu* was another significant household industry. This industry's chief characteristic was that the Loi community and the people of the hills primarily managed

[145]Devi, *"Manipuri Society And economy (15th – 19th Century A.D.),"* op, cit.,pp.125-126.
[146]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - Cheitharon Kumpapa*. op, cit.,p.102.

this sector. The *yu*, chiefly manufactured out of rice, were of various categories, such as *Pook-yu* and *Wai-yu* (rice beer) and *Kalei* (strong Liquor). This context shows that, while the people from the Loi community prepared Liquor generally by distilling the fermented rice. The hill people used to make the only *book-yu* by fermenting cooked rice by adding a kind of *Creeper*(*Yangli*) juice to make it intoxicating. *Wai-Yu* was prepared in another way by the *Maring* peoples. To extract the Liquor, they had to ferment the cooked rice in bran with the creeper as mentioned above.[147]

Several folk tales and historical accounts reveal that drinking *Yu* was not a taboo in the Pre-Hindus era. The females usually manufactured Liquor. There was no formal training for this. The hill tribes produced it only for the sake of household consumption. The processing of alcohol was considered the healthiest drink. It was equally available at all ceremonial festivals and social gatherings. Upon hard work, it was also taken personally for refreshment and the pleasurable blow. Other liquor products were made, especially *Yupang* (distillation decayed rice materials) used to feed cows and pigs to make them fat and safe by water-insoluble components. The lace, resin lacquer, candle wax, etc., could be defined as it was used as the liquid in various colours. Therefore, the Kingdom was very successful in the rice beer industry. Andro, Awang Sekmai, Leiaram Phayeng, Koutruk, Tairenpokpi, etc., still carry on the industry as the customary laws had permitted them.[148]

After a successful military campaign and the Royal Chronicle, recorded in 1614 A.D., the *Yu* was drunk on market opening.[149]The early literature records the use of rice beer in the initial years in the first century A.D. For Poireiton, at the beginning of the first century A.D., while passing via the Shan villages, *Yu* and other food items were offered. It was consumed even during religious and other activities. The Hindu and traditional deities such as *Hanuman, Snamahi* and Pakhangba were also provided. In the reign of Garibnawaz in 1746

[147]Ali, "*Economic History Of Manipur (1801-1951),"* op, cit.,pp.115-116.
[148]Devi, *The Historical Background Of kakching.* op, cit.,p.8.
[149]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - Cheitharon Kumpapa*. op, cit.,p.70.

A.D., *Yu* was offered to the gods, *Phamdou* (Nobles), and *Naicha* (division /Pana) took part.[150]It indicates that consuming alcohol has not been limited to the kings, the nobles, the priests and the masses have drunk this. Further, it was also used to barter with the neighbouring States' products while meeting internal demands.

Iron Smelting and Metalwork

Since reliable sources are not there to certify how metal objects were used, it is assumed that people produced a variety of iron tools and devices including axes, hoe, spear and dao, etc., since time immemorial. Some metal utensils and decorative items have been excavated at Kakching Panjao Palum, Sekta and other places. Gold and copper found as a mixture of cupric oxide and rocks in the minimal amount in the hills of Manipur. Copper and nickel were found in the areas of Nungao, Kongal Thana and Ningthi.[151] The specific date of beginning the work and finding mine-like locations is in darkness. However, during King Khagemba (1597-1652 A.D.), the result of bell metal refinement had begun. They also began to make barrel guns in 1628 A.D.[152] Most of the brass and copper were imported from China and Burma. In Cheitharol Kumbaba, there was a reference when the Meitei Kings often invaded the neighbouring kingdoms by which gold, silver and copper could be gathered. The chronicle includes a passage that depicts King Khagemba's table men's magnificence, who feasted on substantial gold vessels and sat on a golden chair.[153]

Another sub-clan or lineage called *Thangjam* or skilled blacksmith inherited skills that were related to iron. The small knives, tongs daos, furnace, were made in several ways and were thus necessary equipment or tools for everyday use by each family. By this profession, the *Thangjam* sustained their livelihood.[154] The blacksmith's importance is also illustrated by

[150]Ibid.,p.p.70.162.
[151]Singh, "*The Manipur Administration,"* op, cit.,p.8.
[152]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - Cheitharon Kumpapa*. op, cit.,p.74.
[153]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit., p.30.
[154]Singh, "*Traditional, Occupational Distribution,"* op, cit.,p.87.

the variety of tools that made, including both the weapons and even agricultural and household tools.

Table.3.8. Household and Public use Tools.[155]

Manipuri	English
Thangjou	Complete dagger-like weapon for multiple purposes.
Thangpak	Bighead tool-like large dagger.
Heijrang	Kitchen knife
Yot- Pak	Spade/hoe
Langol	Plough.
Nahei-thang	Sword-like tool for weed cutting
Shanghai	Long-handled knife
Shingjang	Rectangular shoulder axe
Kati	Scissors
Khujin- thang	Nail cutter
Yotshubi	Oven frame platform
Khabei	Ladle
Chegap	Tongs

The chief items of production were ploughs, axes, and hoes for timber felling, preparing land for farming purposes, arrowheads and spear for hostility and self-defence. These items have been produced to a significant extent, indicate that their social activity was well preserved. Likewise, several tools were created for carpentry, showing that carpentry had become a well-known profession.

Table.3.8.1. Warfare Weapons[156]

Manipuri	English
Thangkak	*Dagger*
Ta	*Spear*
Arambai	*Battle –iron*
Chei-Shuthang	*Sword stick*
Nongmei –Yot	*the iron portion of musket*
Yotchei	*Battle iron rod*
Tenjei	*Arrowhead*
Namei –yep	*Battle knife.*
Thangshang	*Sword*

[155]Ghosh and Ghosh, *The Crafts Of Manipur.* op, cit., ppp.57-58-59.
[156]Devi, *"Manipuri Society And economy (15th – 19th Century A.D.),"* op, cit,p.p.142-143.

The production of war weapons was manufactured, and one had to rely on their inherent characteristics and long-lasting durability. (for the protection of the person.)

Goldsmith

Respectively, the Meitei jewellery signifies social status for the monarch, the queen consort, the king's assistants and ordinary people. It is an article worn for sexual fascination.[157] Goldsmith played a crucial role in the Meitei society, who were settled in their chiefs' respective areas. This occupation inherited specific sub-clans, including almost all metal items, other utensils, decor, and the images of deities produced. The families of Kangabam, Aheibam, Konheibam, Konsam, etc. have been assigned to work in this profession.[158]

Gold, silver, copper, and brass account for *Chinglon Laaihui, Thengkourol* and *Nongmaiching Chingoiron,* informing us about importing gold and silver from China Burma. The Burmese gold presentation was a royal tribute to the Meitei King Kiyamba (1467-1507 A.D.).[159]

The indigenous goldsmith practitioner is known as *Sanasaba*. He not only focuses on gold items but also on other metals. Many local goldsmiths stay attached to their profession, satisfying their local demands. They do not work in different fields during the interim periods. Gold is the principal means of obtaining their daily bread. As a tradition, the goldsmith's sons serve their father as assistants. Such young artisans will take possession of the profession as their old one dies.[160]

None of the family members is permitted to enter another group of the job. The *Aheibam* groups cast and produce utensils. *Aheibam* implies moulding or throwing in the

[157]Mutua Bahadur, *Jewelleries of Manipur* (Imphal: Mutua Museum, 1988).p.1.
[158] Kh.ChandrasekharSingh,*Loiyumba Shinyen* (Imphal,1975).p.25.
[159]Bahadur, *Jewelleries of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.4.
[160] Ibid, p.7.

local language. Word Aheibam is from the place *Aheiba* that bears the signature of the activity in artistic ornamentation. Few families belonging to other specialist groups also became Aheibams by being incorporated into the former fold. For example, Takhellambam (Luwang and Ningthouja clan), Ngangom (Ningthouja clan), Pebam (Ningthouja clan), Sarangthem(Leisangthem and angom clan), and Khuman Cheirakpam came to Aheibamwhen they also began working as utensils and ornaments moulder.[161] It was a prosperous occupation, as Manipuris usually liked decorations. The ornaments of gold were used, *Kiyang Likphang, Heikru Pareng, Snadrembi, Heibi Mapan, Marei, Ngangoi Pareng, Kongdu Pareng, Koichik Pareng* etc.

The rings had various kinds, respectively *Khoi Mahum, Lairen Makhoi, Parei Khudop* and *Charo Khudop*. The royal family members also used exclusive ornamentation, which is not permitted to commoners. *Takopi Sana* (Thinning of Gold) and *Sana Phuhing* (Purification of the Gold) process have been used by Kangabam, Konsam and Keisham sub-clans to make the ornaments of King (*Ningthou's)* only.[162] The woman cast necklaces into wax moulds. Men appear only in casting and moulding. Angomcha crafted the royal ornaments that rendered during King Loiyumba'sreign.[163]Kangabam, Keisam and Turangbam groups emerged the only goldsmith workers in a much later scene from 18thand 19th century.[164]During King Garibaniwaz (1697-1709 AD) goldsmith designed a bangle named *Samshok Ngamba Khuji* was intended as a commemorative piece.[165]

3.3. Summary

A survey of medieval Manipur's economic structure reveals many facts and points that far from being characterised as a simple economy, there were many forms of production with

[161]R.K. Birendra Singh, *Bell-Metal Industry of Manipur;* Census of India Vol xxii (Manipur Imphal, 1965).p.1.
[162]Singh, "*Traditional, Occupational Distribution,"* op, cit.,p.88.
[163]Singh,.*Loiyumba Shinyen.*op,cit.,p.9.
[164]Oinam Bhogeshwor Singh, *Ningthourol Lambuba Vol .2.*(Imphal,1982).p.3.
[165]Bahadur, *Jewelleries of Manipur.* op, cit.,p.28.

predominant agriculture. However, agriculture was also highly diversified with many different practices suited to diverse eco-zones.

Rice was the most important crop, and we find a significant shift was the introduction of new forms of paddy with the rise of Muslim settlements. This was made possible by the draining of marshes and the introduction of many rice varieties that could grow in the different eco-zones from extremely wet to semi-arid and on a wide range of soils. Therefore, the space devoted to rice in the narratives is justified as it formed the mainstay of surplus and a very strong base for continuity of the Meitei polity. While the agrarian surplus undoubtedly boosted agricultural production, it also led to increased surplus accumulation and led to the emergence of more unique industries. These industries were part of the 'pre-industrial' production process and were predominantly cottage industries with the cloth being the prominent followed by sericulture, metal and other crafts including basketry. They also reveal a wide range of institutions and methods of exchange and the prevalence of coinage.

Therefore the voluminous references to the different varieties of rice and textiles and to a lesser extent to metal and cloth and the ritual and ceremonial significance of these items is an indicator of the spread of rice culture and the subsequent spread of cottage industries that may be called a secondary economic take off from the 15th century A.D.

CHAPTER-IV

PRODUCTION PATTERNS IN PRE-MODERN MANIPUR

Production is always not explained in abstraction, but in specific contexts in the case of medieval Manipur, the fertile Imphal valley and the hills are often understood as the two regions. Still, there are many more refined categorizations of land shaped by both geographical and human agency. Rice cultivation, fishing, animal husbandry, and small scale handicraft production formed the Manipuri society's economic basis, and they were continually being diversified and increased. The reasons for this are not too far to seek – increasing surplus production and demand that also led to the need for goods from other regions and the emergence of new trade networks. Behind the shift from a use economy to an exchange economy is the idea of increased surplus production due to various factors and not just grow in arable land. This chapter tries to engage with all the different.

4.1. Relation between production pattern and geography

Various unaccountable valleys, fields, hills, lakes and rivers or creeks mark the borders of Manipur. Historical incidents of sorrow and joy have spread across Manipur. Through power, determination and courage, this state's peoples have shown–the solidarity in diversified culture in unity. Manipur has been independent for many years in the world under this unification. The singer sang, *Manipur as the golden land is surrounded by the hills and guarded by the hill people. It is a land where the beautiful Loktak Lake shines like a mirror. It is a precious natural gift to men.*[1]

Man's search for life needs such as food, clothing and shelter for himself and his family. To do so, he uses physical resources in his environment. Environments vary from region to region, as in soil, water, forests, and mineral resources. A society's level of

[1]M Gourachandra, "*Lammitlon" The Manipuri Toponomy: A treatise of Place Names in Meitei* (Kakching: People Museum,2004).p.xxiv.

prosperity relies on resources available and the extent to which they utilized. The wealth of material depends on the production of material goods. The optimal resources efficiency will ensure a decent living. While choosing an occupation or a means of livelihood, the first requirement is to follow the activity in which the effort should be least, and the returns should be maximum. One or more of the following resources may be allocated to a specific region: agricultural land, fishing grounds, grasslands, forests, minerals, etc. And the core occupations include agriculture, lumbering, mining, animal husbandry, fishing, etc. A region may be provided with one or more of the following cultivable land, forest, grassland, fishing ground, minerals, etc.[2]Humans are, therefore, heavily influenced by natural resources. Because of variations in physical resources, occupations vary from region to region.

Biological factors affected human civilizations to a significant extent. The landscape, the climate and the soil have placed constraints and limitations on human settlement and growth throughout human history. The social formation must keep these features in mind. It is challenging to rebuild the ecosystem from every historical period as there are many different disciplines needed to analyses such broad trends. Thus, only a comprehensive overview could be sought of the region. Manipur is a hilly, mountainous region on India's eastern frontier bordered by mountains on all the directions. The State of Manipur, geologically, goes to the alpine region of young folded peaks which emerged in the shallow *Tethys Sea*, around 40 to 90 million years ago. The current state landscape gives an indelible imprint of the organic movement during the first and second Himalayan outbreaks.[3] The State of Manipur is rectangular in the middle of an alluvial fertile valley and hills in all directions.

[2]Ansari, "*Economic Geography of Manipur,"* op, cit., p. xii.
[3]Ravindra Pratap Singh, *Geography of Manipur* (New Dehli: National Book Trust, India, 1982).p.15.

It is surrounded by Naga Hills (now Nagaland) to the north, Assam to the west, Lushai Hills (now Mizoram) to the south-west, Myanmar (Burma) to the east and south-east. Manipur is physically divided into three geographical areas:

1. The hills of Manipur,
2. The valleys of Manipur and
3. The Basin of Barak.

The mountains of Manipur comprises of a sequence of parallel stretches in both the Naga Hills to the north and Mizo hills and Chin Hills to the south. The mountain faces north-east towards the south-west and prevails on the region. Manipur hill ranges are mainly in two sections, the eastern hills of Manipur and the western hills of Manipur. On the present Indo-Myanmar frontier for about 200kms, the eastern hillsides form a compact and continuous chain. The western cliffs of Manipur spread throughout the west, including parallel mountain ridges and valleys that stretch north to south for roughly 180 km.[4]The valley stretches higher up to the foot of the hill with a north-south incline.

The state's drainage system may roughly be classified into three rivers and streams. The central part of the area is Manipur River and its branches, Imphal, Iril, Thoubal, Nambul, Nambol, Khugaand Sekmai, with Loktak and other connected lakes. They also inundate the soil along their banks by discharging full water throughout the monsoon season. The Barak River and its tributaries – Irang, Makuy, Tuivay, Jiri, and their connected rivers drain the region's north and western hills. They pass in deep gorges, side by side with thick forests. Several small Chindwin network streams have washed the eastern mountains of the east Manipur hills. The Akonglok River and its affluence Chamu, Chingai, and Yurivers with their sub-parallel patterns along their sloped valleys, Maklung,

[4]VedajaSanjenbam, *Manipur: Geography and Regional Development* (New Dehli: Rajesh Publications, 1998). pp.18-19.

Tuyangbi, TaretLok, Lokchao, Lalinlokand Tiuyang finally reach the Chindwin River in Kabaw Valley of Myanmar.[5]

Further, in Manipur valley, few larger and smaller lakes exist, and the sides of the lake are in the inter-riverine areas along these rivers including swampy and marshy lands. Paddies like *Taothabi, MorshiThangyi, Morshilaiphou,* and other aquatic plants, were cultivated in the swampy and marshy areas. All the rivers in Manipur have produced a distinctive culture and civilization in an ecological environment. The people who live in their waterfront environment live on these rivers and fertile streams. However, during the rainy season, they have become destruction tools and create the alluvial soil, making them fruitful.

There are many lakes, the Loktak Lake being the largest freshwater lake at the bank of the Moirang and Khuman principalities. There is a clump of low hills in the lake forming small islets called the Thanga. This lake provides a large number of people with their livelihoods. To the south of the lake is the vast floating swamp, KeibulLamjao, famous only for its brow-anchored deer known as *Sangai* within Manipur. Further, there are lakes like Lamphelpat, Phumlenpat, Charangpat, Ngangloupat, Porompat, Loukoipat, Poiroupat, Akampat, Khonghampat are major lakes found in the valley.

Moreover, group lakes known as the *Zeliad* located on the hills on the Barak's western bank falls. These lakes, rivers, streams and mountain peaks intertwined with the people's lives, culture and traditions. Anyone who occupies the fertile river basin has the economy's power and ultimately controls the state's system.[6] Such lakes, including Loktak Lake, are extremely useful to the fishing industry. The lake has strengthened Manipur's economic development cycle as a production base in the fishing industry in the past and present.

[5]Ibid.,pp.20-22
[6]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit., p.10.

The cultivation trend is in a specific region grows on soils with a greater or lesser extent of natural fertility, being one of the critical drivers for the physical environment that impacts agriculture. It is no wonder that grounds were a significant factor in agricultural developments during historical periods because, in pre-historic times, the abundance and distribution were driven by human settlements.[7] The varieties of land and soil may divide into:

1. Low sandy soil hill land, and
2. Fertile clayey soil valley land.[8]

The valley's grounds are formed mainly of clays, silts, sand, etc. of *fluvial-lacustrine* origin and terrigenous red soil in the foothills. The alluvial deposits found in the valley areas at both the sides of the river banks. The ground of clayey is abundant and exceptionally fertile in the valley. Because of the steady and frequent silting of dirt from the hills surrounding areas, the valley is still thick and rich in original content. However, Pemberton holds that the early 19th-century agricultural products consist of rice, which forms the staple food. The fertility of the soil is so great that crops generally prove most abundant.[9]In a similar vein, McCulloch holds that the only cultivation of any importance is that of rice. Not a particle of manure ever placed on the ground, and yet, year after year, good crops are raised on the same spot.[10]

The fertile soil and ample rainfall from the combined monsoon tend to produce viable crops. Although, in contrast to the valley, the soil incorporating the mountains and hills is thin. While reddish loam late rites are also evident in sandy soils, the hilly areas are dominated by reddish loam soils. Simultaneously, paddy farming and planting crops in the mountain regions were possible due to organic carbon in soils. The precipitation and

[7]Normal J. G. Pounds, *An Historical Geography of Europe 450 B.C.-A.D. 1330* (New York: CUP Archive, 1976). P.18.
[8]Ansari, "*Economic Geography of Manipur,"* op, cit.,p.42.
[9]Pemberton, *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India*. op, cit., p.p.29-30.
[10]McCulloch, *Account of the Valley of Munnipore.* op, cit.,p.87.

occurrence of steep slopes made it possible to grow *Jhum* less sustainable, less economical, and more labour-intensive than the valley. Moreover, soil in Manipur's valley and the Kingdom's foundation was remarkably fertile and well-suited for all agricultural practices. The climate with its altitude variations is very healthy, and the rainfall is between 74 and 100 inches a year. The Manipur hills are covered with forests and swamps, and for centuries, the forest provided food for the people. The principality that controlled or gained access to forests in the hills built a strong government and endured more than others with no such advantage. The forest provides the hill cultivator with cultivation fields, wood, bamboo and grass to construct houses, and daily livelihood. They are also the animal hunting ground. Over the years, primarily the forests were commercialized during the colonial period, forests fell under a proxy axis of shifting cultivators, and traders' extractors' greed, who have deforested Manipur forests. The whole forest of Manipur is a part of the Himalayan system. Altitude is the influential ecological factor in classifying the different vegetation zones of a region:

i. Sub-montane zone
ii. The montane or temperate zone
iii. Subalpine and
iv. Alpine zone.[11]

The state is fortunate to have enormous forest resources. The natural vegetation is composed of grass, bamboo, reeds and high trees. The forests include some of the most valuable trees, including pine and teak. Pemberton wrote:

> I know no spot in India in which the forests' products are so varied and magnificent. Still, their utility is entirely local, as the country's number precludes the possibility

[11]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit., pp.10-11.

> of transporting to foreign markets. The valley itself is practically free of forests although a grove of forest trees surrounds every village.[12]

Dun share similar views:

> The tree –forest presents a great variety and lies west of the Manipur valley. There are extensive forest tracts of trees comprising Nagesar, Jarul, and Indian –rubber, Tun, oak ash etc. and bamboo of the commoner kinds is plentiful between Cachar and Manipur. On the higher ranges to the north ringals and thorny bamboo are found.[13]

In the early days, Manipuri people depended for their livelihoods on agriculture. Significant portions of their field production were rice, garden fruit and vegetables in particular. The essential economic contribution is livestock. Cattle played a substantial role in the economy of the village because agriculture is unavoidable without them. Household industry, especially weaving, was complementary production activity. Most people generated their income from several small industries like carpentry, bell metal industry, goldsmiths, garment industry, bamboo and cane processing, silk cloth, etc. The fishing activity also played a significant role in Manipuri's livelihood.

4.1.1. Typology of Production Patterns

The Medieval agrarian society relied on rites and rituals, and the state economy's productive forces had increased. For example, *ImoinuAhoungbi* (Goddess of Wealth), and *Phouibí*(the Goddess of Rice), and they expected essential means of economic activities in the medieval society of Manipur. The principle of worshipping of God and Goddesses refers to abundant prosperity. *Laiharaoba's*socio-religious position refers to economic activity, i.e. planting crops, yarning and weaving clothes, and making houses. *Panthoibi Louyan Jagoi* (*Panthobi* Paddy Dance) was associated with the feudal economy and private land ownership

[12]Pemberton, *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India*. op, cit.,p.27.
[13]Dunn, *Gazetteer of Manipur*. Op, cit., p.6.

system during the medieval period.[14]Several works including *Louta Eshei, Tharon* and *Phoukouron,* specified the various stages in ploughing, seeding and harvesting. Sung *Louta Esei* was on the eve of ploughing the field before the new season began. It started with ebullient remarks of improvisatory syllables accompanied by a racy invocation of the glories of the ever-bright sun, the recounting of the earth's first turning for celestial hands to sow, and the closing lines of a long spirited prayer for bountiful blessing. The 12 months of the year are alluded to by *Tharon.* It notes that in *Poinu's* (November December) cold month, the crops were heaped by the women's folk on bamboo mats to be threshed and winnowed by capable, men. Shortly afterwards, took the grains were to the Royal *Keis* (granary). At the time of harvest, sang *Phoukouron*.[15]

Women have traditionally played a significant role in growing rice from weeding to seed planting, grain crushing, sourcing and winnowing. Even royal ladies engaged in planting.[16]Manipur is incredibly proud of indigenous women's enduring socio-economic positions and their indistinguishable historical encounters with the most comprehensive political necessities of the state from time to time.[17]During the reign of Khagemba in 1644, *Cheitharol Kumbaba* recorded a presentation to Queen Meitei LeimaMayambi of the new cultivable land. It also saw women as a whole proliferation image.[18]The family's older women mostly took charge of the *Ingkhol* (kitchen garden) by arranging soil planting in their spare time.

Agricultural production required favourable and fertile types of soil. In most cases, the area seemed right farming products because of the geographical location of Manipur. It had a high and fertile alluvial soil and the availability of water for irrigation. The valley was the most productive area. It was because of the flowing rivers towards the canyon had fertile soil

[14]Singh, *"Social Change In Manipur (1597 To 1798 AD),"* pp.113-114.
[15]Singh, *A History of Manipuri Literature*.pp.22-100.
[16]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - CheitharonKumpapa*.op, cit.,p.31.
[17]Sudhir, *"Social History of Manipur,"* op, cit., p.152
[18]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - Cheitharon Kumpapa*. op, cit.,p.80.

in them. The discontinuous rainstorm and sunshine were the other beneficial factors. The typical situation was healthy in the field of the valley. For the area of the valley, this normal situation was healthy. Typically, the cultivation of land for paddy cultivation began in February *(Phairen)*. These tilling opened the soil to the sun to keep it fertile. Therefore the planting was commonly performed 2/3 times, if necessary. There were three types of paddy production, *punghul, pamphel* and *Lingba*.In Manipur, three traditional cultivation methods are practised:

i. *Punghul* (the agricultural activity on dry land): It's a type of cultivation in drylands. The scrabbling of the dry land starts in February when the rainy season begins, i.e. around May and June, the ground is provided with harrowing and ploughings, and it becomes a state of liquid mud where the seed is cast. The source is water moist and floats on the surface of the soil. The seeds must be carefully watched and covered from ducks and other birds before they rooted.[19]

ii. *Pamphel* (wetland cultivation): This method of cultivation is done in wetlands-Pamphel. The swamp must be treated muddy and then levelled. The seeds that had been soaked in water and placed in an air-tied bag to germinate appropriately before they grow their roots regularly. In June and July each year, sowing takes place.[20]

iii. *Lingthokpa* (transplantation): It is the most appropriate land where water can either be supplied or drained out as needed. The farmer raises paddy a nursery, and as the season arrives, plants are picked in a handful of the dirt. The mud stuck to the plants is washed away and put into the soil one by one. First,

[19]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit.,p. 87.
[20]Ali, "*Economic History Of Manipur,"* op, cit., p.67.

all the plants are shrivelled up, but they quickly grow up and receive excellent cultivation. Then the weeding takes place.

When the rice crops start maturing, the farmers must take precautions to avoid birds, deer and wild animals from destroying them. The paddy gets ripened, chopped with a sickle, and spread as a bunch on the surface, and when it is dry, wrapped up in the sheaves. The sheaves are put in a thick mat where rice is threshed. Instead, the paddy is winnowed by a fan and taken to the granary. The dried up paddy is retained in husks for a long time, but rice can only be kept for a short time before cleaning from the husks for a short period. Most of the state's rice supply comes from Thoubal, and its surroundings and people in the valley have to rely on it.[21]The agricultural products primarily consist of rice, the staple grain. There are nineteen rice varieties available in Manipur, which can be divided into early and late types. The agricultural products primarily consisted of rice, the staple grain. The primary assortment of paddy discovered was *MorshiLaiphou*.

The local name of the paddy is *phou,* and the name *cheng* was utilized for husked paddy. With time, they developed more assortment of paddy. For example, *Sajiphou, Tumai, Kabow Phou* and *Phourel Anganba*are the early rice varieties. This crop matures in three months, while the latter takes six months. The following are the late varieties: *Kakchengphou, Moirangphou, Phoungang, phourel, Heitupphou, Chahao Sempak, Chahao Poireiton, Chahao Erikole, Chahao Masapanbi, Yentik, Phoukok Chahao, Sagolyangba, Luining*and *Taothabi.*[22]They are grown in soft and moist soil. The cultivated crops include cash crops, cotton, sugar cane, tobacco,[23] etc. Also crops such as pumpkins, chillies, millet, ginger, cucumber, cauliflowers, onion, beans, peas, sweet potatoes and pulses etc.[24]

[21]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.87.
[22]Ibid.,p.84.
[23]In Manipur the 17th century, during King Khagemba's reign (1597-1652), it indicates that tobacco smoking introduced. *Cheitharol Kumbaba*. op, cit.,p.35.
[24]Singh, *A Short History Of Manipur.* op, cit.,p.245.

Within the hills, Jhum and terrace cultivation is done by both, the Naga and the Kukis. It is also known by its unsettled nature, as Jhum, or nomadic cultivation.[25]The tribes of Africa, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines practice this system. Anthropologists have referred to it as the cultivation of slash and burn.[26]Cultivation of Jhum has its phase, and a cultivable forest is first selected that is sufficiently large for a family. Then, they chop down the assigned jungle. The jungle is typically cleared for around one month from November to February. Sometimes in March, the dropping jungle is fired and reduced it to ashes. The unburnt logs or leaves are later burned or discarded, and then the inner diameter is used for the paddy seeding along the field's length and breadth. The area is also terraced for footpaths at different locations. After this, the soil which is thoroughly burned for one inch or two and is scratched with small hoes is mixed with ashes and is ready to receive the seed which has the plant to broadcast.[27]It may be noted that ThadouKukis does not sow seeds like the Nagas, but digs and some seeds are placed in a small hoe called *Tutcha.*[28]The seeds germinate, rising young paddy. Until harvesting, weeds have to be removed two to three times.

Varieties of rice crops are cultivated in September, October, late November and December. The crop's stem is then sliced by the sickle and tied into bundles of leaves as broad as the man's hand and placed on its branch. In a few days, the pile dries and then carried to the floor. When threshed on the mat with cane and bamboo pieces explicitly designed for the purpose, the grain separates from the plants. Once more, the Kuki harvest style is somewhat different from the Naga harvest methods. They slit the sickle right at the stalk of the paddy and put it on their back in the basket. It is taken to a threshing floor

[25]Brian Roberts, Peter Atkins, and Ian Simmons, *People, Land and Time: An Historical Introduction to the Relations Between Landscape, Culture and Environment* (London: Routledge, 2014).p,41.
[26]Katherine A. Dettwyler, *Cultural Anthropology & Human Experience: The Feast of Life* (Waveland Press, 2011).p,65.
[27]Hodson, *The Nāga Tribes of Manipur*. op, cit., p.52.
[28]William Shaw, *The ThadouKukis* (New Dehli: Cultural Publishing House, 1983)..p.87.

paddy is obtained by trampling it on their foot until all the soil is cleared. The paddy then is taken to the barn, a temporary godown constructed in the field from where it is finally brought home to be stored in the granary.[29]Usually, the period of this cultivation is ten years. The cultivated land is left idle so that the forest will expand to regain fertility once again. Next year, the cultivation is the shift to another area - many tribes such as Monsang, Kom. Kharam, etc., perform two cultivation forms, one or three years is the cycle. In addition to rice, several crops such as mustard leaves, chillies, linseeds, sugar cane, ladies fingers, tobacco ginger, oilseed, pepper, brinjal, cucumber, etc. are grown as Jhum is considered more economical.[30] Axis, dao, sickle, spade hoes, etc. that are imported from Imphal Valley or Cachar of Assam are typical instruments.[31]

The essential traditional industries include handloom, loin loom, carpentry, basketry, cane and bamboo, pottery, earthenware, metallurgy and metal works, salt-making, gur making, spirit making, etc. The people of Manipur's people mastered the art of managing these industries by hard work at home. Johnstone observed that Manipuri have stable and industrious qualities which the Burmese and Shans do not possess. The men are capable of learning anything.[32]

In the industrial processing units, the spinning and weaving are the essential qualifications of every woman in Manipuri Society. The chief raw – materials are cotton and silk. There is no separate professional weaver in Manipur, and some families are associated with the processing of design and types of handloom and handicrafts. Fine yarns used by women are famously authenticated by the name of *Tara Konbi* and *Manga Konbi* design and specially mentioning the name of the cloth being designed. *Moirang Phi* design

[29]K.Gailangam, "*Economic Changes in Manipur during The British Rule 1891-1947"* (PhD Thesis., Manipur University Imphal,1997).p.14.
[30]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.18.
[31]Ibid.,p.20-21.
[32]Johnstone, *My Experiences in Manipur and the Naga Hills*. op, cit.,p.97.

is a one-inch solid border and one and a half inches of the pyramidal figure to which geometrical and floral arrangements are added.[33]

The Textile industry is believed to have been the indigenous occupation of the people of Manipur since early times. Handloom or loin loom is an art of the craft that needs skill with hands. The people of Manipur, particularly women in the valley and hills, do not lack this quality which is an exciting feature of the traditional economy of Manipur. During the reign of Khagemaba, Chinese visitors introduced to weave a kind of clothes known as *Khamen Chatpa* to be worn by Royal male members. The women wove different types of clothes for different categories of people and various occasions and festivals. *Phige – Napu,* a striking silk skirt, is worn by female members. According to their respective ranks, clothes for ordinary people and officials are *Gulap Machu Dhoti* and Dhoti, and different occasions like religious festivals and worships.[34]

Carpentry work is associated with the people of Manipur from early times. Brown commented that carpenters of Manipur were capable of producing first-rate results.[35]In the valley, the carpenters were monopolized by the King.[36]Some of the essential carpentry works are beds, stools, spinning wheel, shuttle, chairs, cupboards, hookah and other agricultural implements. Pottery is defined as the earthenware or the earthen made pot. It is handmade or a wheel made. It is one of the essential ideas of the material culture in any community in the early centuries. It became a household activity from the Neolithic age—housewives engaged in pottery making. In any primitive society, this practice is found continuously. Eventually, it developed into a highly specialized craft. And a group of people came to be identified solely with pottery making and was called potters. In Manipur,

[33]Ghosh and Ghosh, *Women of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.150.
[34]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit.,pp.15-16.
[35]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.90.
[36]Dunn, *Gazetteer of Manipur.* Op, cit., P.63.

too several societies got involved in this professionals craft. The *Chakpas* and the Lois especially made a larger number and of different sizes.

4.1.2. Landmark Works in Production Pattern

There was a significant development in agriculture during the reign of Khagemba in Manipur. The King himself was a great agricultural patron. The natural resources of the Kingdom had significantly increased with the conquest of the *Kabaw valley*. Manipur Valley was a swampy area in the 17th century that continuously drained water from the marshes to the rivers. Khagemba was interested in providing irrigation facilities for the people. Dredged streams, rivers; and built bunds, canals, and dams were to control river floods. The purpose Manipur's kings took a particular interest in constructing canals and dams arose because agriculture was their primary source of income. At the same time, we also saw in *Cheitharol Kumbaba* that the activities of the construction and dredging of the canals were practically in every King's reign. E.g., reported in the *Cheitharol Kumbaba, Takhel Khong* (canal) was dug in 1534 AD to signify victories against the Tripuris during the reign of Kabomba (1524-1542 AD).[37]

During the reign of Chalamba (1545-1562AD), *Leishang Khong* was in 1555 AD to celebrate the achievements over the Chirus tribe.[38] In 1591 AD, Mungyamba (1562-1597 AD) dug the *Kokchai Khong*, built many boats in the Tangkhul inhabited areas, and utilized transportation and war.[39]The *Kayang Khong* (Canal) was excavated in 1613 AD by Khagemba (1597-1652 AD), and *Prasat Khong* (Canal), Khrapan in 1699 AD by Charairongba (1697-1709 AD).[40]Garibaniwaz (1709-1748 AD) also contributes to the irrigation system by many works of construction. In 1718 AD completed the Imphal River dredged from the area of Singjamei. Completed the bridge at *Keira* was as well as dredging

[37]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - Cheitharon Kumpapa.* op, cit.,p.49.
[38]Ibid.,p.53.
[39]Ibid.,p.62-63.
[40]Ibid.,pp.70, 109

also took place in *Angouba Khong* (canal). Dammed both *Naka Thingen* and *Kaya Thingen* dams were so and so.[41] The *Kyangkhong* (canal) leading up to the river was repaired by his people under his instructions in 1723 AD.[42] Under the King's order, the villages' inhabitants dug the irrigation canal in the paddy field at *Yarou Khong* (Canal) in 1742 AD. Even in 1743, Garibnawaz was participating in damming the river at Singjamei to dredge it. The dredge of the river from *Kona Kochin* penetrated Koiremgei and finished the work. Furthermore, in 1744 AD, under the control of *Katwan* (Official responsible for settlement distribution of new land) of Moirang dredging Loklou area. [43]

Manipur is also an agricultural kingdom since the earlier period. The settlement of the Muslims in Manipur from 1606 AD onwards achieved some improvement in agrarian advance.[44] During the reign of Khagemba, Manipuri society demonstrated advancements in agriculture as likewise trade and wide-ranging of the production of new goods that were not known in the earlier period. The technological changes to a great extent, especially the Labour of Muslims in Manipur increased. Khagemba's (1597-1652 AD) group of competent people skilled in manufacturing iron weapons were captured as Cachar prisoners of war.[45]These prisoners of war had contributed to in the iron and ore production in Pre-Modern Manipur. Brown mentioned that chiefly it followed the trade of gardening, turning, carpentry, pottery, and drummers attached to the Raja's army were the Mussalmans.[46]

Agriculture became the main effort as the economic activity was transformed from food collection to food production. Agriculture was the most important occupation of the people in ancient Manipur. Pre-Modern Manipur's economic practices can be referred to as a traditional economy. Traditional economy means the system or structure of the past's

[41] Ibid.,p.126.
[42]Ibid.,p.130.
[43]Ibid.,pp.153-155-158.
[44]Irene, *The Muslims of Manipur*. Op, cit., p.31.
[45]Okram Kumar Singh, *Archaeology in Manipur* (Imphal,1972).p.20.
[46]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.15.

economy as established by a society that has passed down through successive generations and retained or maintained in the current scenario.[47]The Swidden system or Khuming was the most common form of shifting agriculture in agricultural production, and this method of shifting cultivation was called *Pamlou*. Also, Khagemba's reign was marked by significant agrarian changes with the introduction of a Muslim prisoner in the system of transplantation. They were also used in productive activities by the King.

Most modern advancements in agriculture, handicrafts, woven goods, carpentry, basketry, cane and bamboo pieces, pottery and ironware, were also brought by Muslim migrants. There was a remarkable growth of agriculture under King Khagemba in Manipur in the 17th century. It was one of the essential contributions to Manipur's agricultural economic development. These Muslim farmers were the first to establish a buffalo and bullocks.[48]*Nongsamei Puya* related to the fascinating tale of using the technique mentioned above: The Meiteis falsely assumed that the Muslims were trying to escape, as they were transplanting paddy by taking out the young plants to a new plantation. The King took them all and banished them to the *Kabo* frontier because of this misunderstanding.[49]

In the swampy areas of the valley, the enhanced cultivation method could not be practised. Therefore, Khagemba developed a new paddy known as *Taothabi*, which could be cultivated in these regions.[50]The paddy *Taothabi* can make due for a long time inside the water, and afterwards, its progression transcended the water level. The sort of paddy is momentary assortment which can harvest within more than two or three months. Be that as it may, the rice shade was red, and the taste was not very significant. The improvement in production process might have set the standard and provided the boost to the market

[47]Theodore William Schultz, *Transforming Traditional Agriculture* (United State: Arno Press, 1976). p.23
[48]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.219.
[49]Singh and Khan,*NongsameiPuya*(2014).op,cit.,pp.39-40.
[50]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.219.

extension. In 1614 AD, the King founded ten markets.[51] The selling and purchase of the surplus items were expedited.

Further, chewing *Kwa* (betel nut) was known from the 8th century through the *Pong* kingdom of upper Burma *Shan* prince Shamlungfa who introduced chewing *Kwa* (betel nut) in Manipur.[52] Then the Manipur king patronized the *Kwa* (Betel Nut) plantation. *Thanga, Kwatha* and *None* are some of the vital betel nut sites. Claimed that the *Kwatha*, a betel-growing village on Burma's road, King Kiyamba was to established.[53]Betelnuts were planted at *Thanga* by Garibnawaz (1709-1748), and he visited the place, even after he retired from his seat.[54] Betel nuts were subsequently connected to traditions and still play a significant role in today's religious ceremonies and rituals.

The *Pangal* (Muslims) were specialists in vegetable cultivation. The most significant vegetables produced by them were throughout their homes. The King, Khagemba recognized their skills and assigned them their *Sagei* titles, as *Hawai-Ingkhol-Mayum* (Hawai-bean,ingkhol-garden,mayum-house or area).[55]They have introduced several other new vegetable and fruit varieties in Manipur. The Kings assigned *Pangal* (Muslims) to expand royal lands. In KhomidokHeinouKhongnembi, a royal order of fruit and vegetable growing was introduced by the *Pangal* (Muslim) in different varieties of fruits such as mango seeds and a garden named *Ningthem Ingkhol.*[56] The *Pangal Ingkhol* (Kitchen garden) grew coriander, flower seeds, sugarcane, opium, pakhon, chantruk, hop, etc. They also grew onion, garlic, mustard seed, and presented to the King.[57]

The precise date of launch of the oil crushing small-scale industry is unclear. Nevertheless, it is given that *Patinee* fisherman's descendants named Gangaram, who

[51]Singh and Singh, *CheitharolKumbaba* .op,cit.,p. 35.
[52]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.110.
[53]Ibid.,p.211.
[54]Singh and Singh, *CheitharolKumbaba.* op,cit.,pp.108-120.
[55]B.Kulachandra Sharma and Badr-ud-din, *Meitei PangalHourakpham*(Imphal, 1991).pp.42- 43.
[56]Singh and Khan,*NongsameiPuya*(2014). op.cit.,34.
[57]K. Manikchand Singh, *Sang PanabagiMasil (*Imphal, 2007). p. 52.

migrated King Kyamba's reign via the Tripura (1467-1508) became the queen's preceptor guide. He inspired the King a lot with the help of the queen.[58]The forefather of *Sheejagurumayum*'s Meitei *Bamon* family named Gangaram *(Bhattapoora)* was in the oil-crushing occupation as given by the scripture *(BamonMeihoubaronYumchangba)* and as he married *Maimubee* (a lady from Sekta'sgranary/godown keeper). So, probably the Brahmin populated Sekta village where he initiated oil -crushing occupation after his marriage.[59]In 1614 AD, King Khagemba established a market at *Sekta*.[60] The market may have given some facilities later period to the descendants of the first oil crushers. During the successive rulers, the oil crushing enterprise developed rapidly in the capital complex, assisted by the existence and appointment of *Teli Hanjaba*[61] post and sustained the oil-crushing industry in medieval Manipur. Despite the small-scale sector, the production could be supported and continued to satisfy the Kingdom's requirements and needs.

Morok (Chillies) is the most popular since Meiteis love spices dishes. Muslims introduced it in Manipur during Khagemba's reign (1597-1652). Chillies came from the West Indies. It was introduced to India by the Portuguese. It extended to East Bengal from where transported it was to Manipur Valley. However, it is considered a spice and found to be grown on a wide scale. Green or dry chilly plants are essential to prepare local dishes such as *Iromba, Kangsu* and *Singju*. This is not mentioned *Pangal* (Muslim) kitchen garden without chillies.[62]

Kwaklei (Vanda coerulea Griff) has three petals with a first petal that denotes a brave Mughal king and a second one a spotted tiger and the third one with Meitei King Kyamba

[58]Eight Session, *Proceedings of the Manipur Historical Society*. op, cit.,p.74.
[59]Ibochouba,Chitreshwor and Kullachandra, *Meitei BamongiHourakpham*(Imphal,1995).p.267.
[60]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - CheitharonKumpapa*.op, cit.,p.70.
[61]Sharma, *Phmalon.* op, cit.,p.56. (Institutional head of operation of traders of edible oils, refining and grinding of small-scale edible oils).
[62]M. Ahmed and Potsangbam Singh, "Trading Activity and Ethnodomestication of Plants by Manipuri Muslims," *Notulae Scientia Biologicae* 1 (December 1, 2009), doi:10.15835/nsb.1.1.3462.p.15.

(1467-1508), which *Leiron* mentioned allegorically. On the other plants, the plant grows i. e., epiphyte. At present, many Muslim houses are growing on the bottle brush and the Mango.[63] *Chuwa Chandan* (Santalum album) is a flower that arrived in Manipur in King Mungyamba's reign (1562-97).In Bengal on the banks of Sankhu, it was said to be growing and described that the flower had two identical halves. This plant is associated with Meitei King Mungyamba. Burmese rulers in jewellery work used this flower. A scented plant and Meiteis used this plant's rubbed extract as a marker on their brow.[64]

Hidakmana (Nicotianarustica) Muslims may have carried this kind of tobacco, also found in Manipur. It is also grown in Kuch Behar, Cachar, Rangpur and Sylhet, other East Bengal, Manipur, and Assam areas. *Cheitharol Kumbaba* mentioned introduced *Mughal pho* (*Mughal pot*), and smoking *Hidakmana* was began in 1610 during the reign of Khagemba.[65]Each house had a *Hidakphu* or *Hookah* or *Mughalphoo* to smoke *Hidakasuba* (Tobacco has processed in the plant sections, i.e.petiole, old buds, etc.). Used *Hidakmana* (tobacco) pieces were for crushing to render it consumable at finally. More to grind the elements, more to flavour. *Hidakasuba* (Crushed Tobacco) brought into a *Kankar* (Y-shaped earthen container) over which used a burned *Tikki* (a circular shape about 3-5 inches in a thick structure made of crushed charcoal, molasses, plantain spathe ash blended with water by drying in the sun). A hollow wooden connective attaches *Kankar* to a coconut shell containing half-filled water. When *Tikki* begins to burn *Hidakasuba*, a man is ready to smoke through the hole over the coconut shell. Water in the body of Coconut believes in absorbing the smoke-induced substances. Manipur people use *Hidakphu* when they relax. Chewing tobacco sold in a set of around 20 dry leaves called *Khudap* in the market. The plant is part of the centre of origin of Peru-Chile. This is related to agriculture and is grown in the fields.[66]

[63]Ibid.
[64]Ibid.
[65]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - Cheitharon Kumpapa*. op,cit.,pp.69-71.
[66]Ahmed and Singh, "Trading Activity and Ethnodomestication of Plants by Manipuri Muslims," op, cit.,p.16

The *Chujag* (Maise) appeared for the first time around *Langban* (September) during the reign of Paikhomba, 1683, according to *Cheitharol Kumbaba*.[67]Maise is an indigenous of South America brought to Europe by the Spanish which entered India further. Maize from the Mughal Empire has been introduced to Manipur by Manipuri *Pangals*.[68]Maise is known to be food for breakfast in the morning and is treated as food for strength. This is used to eat in places at work. *Pangals* are maize growers. The maize crop is agricultural and can also be grown in the garden of the kitchen and the soil of Manipur, widely dispersed in the later stage.

During Khagemba reign in (1597-1652 AD) Guava was introduced in Manipur. It was assumed to be presented by the Portuguese into Burma's Irrawaddy Valley and spread to northern Burma's the Shan Kingdom of Pong. A king of Pong gave King Khagemba a fruit tree of guava to help treat Manipuri dysentery. Two deadly diseases - smallpox and dysentery - were experienced in Manipur in the medieval period. At the first dysentery attack, Manipuris ate the guava tree's tender buds (two leaves and one bud) as medicine.[69]

Pineapple is another Portuguese gift to India. It was raised in Brazil and is named *nanas*. It also appears that introduced pineapple from other parts of India was in Manipur. The pineapple production began around the 15th century on the west coast of India. In Assam in 1663 AD, noted it was cultivation.[70] In 1732 AD, when King Garibnawaz (1709-1748 AD), ruling at Manipur, first-time *Cheitahrol Kumbaba* mentioned the pineapple was in a picnic to enjoy the fresh fruit in *Leima* hill.[71]In the early 19th century, the low detached hills have been found uniformly favourable to garden fruits' culture throughout the valley. The pineapple, which in Manipur attains a degree of excellence not surpassed in any part of the

[67]Singh and Singh, *Cheitharol Kumbaba*.op,cit.,p.51.
[68]Ahmed and Singh, "Trading Activity and Ethnodomestication of Plants by Manipuri Muslims," op, cit.,p.17.
[69]*History of Medieval Manipur 2*." Accessed May 19, 2018. http://e-pao.net/epSubPageExtractor.asp?src=manipur.History_of_Manipur.History_Of_Medieval_Manipur_2.
[70]TapanRaychaudhuri et al., *The Cambridge Economic History of India: Volume 1, C.1200-c.1750* (New York: CUP Archive, 1982). p.485.
[71]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - Cheitharon Kumpapa*. op, cit.,p.139.

world, is very extensively cultivated.[72]Pineapple is knowns as *Kiyom* in Manipuri.[73] Simultaneously, Manipur is located far inland, even though it was benefited by Christopher Columbus' 1492 discovery of America. In the medieval period, introduced Manipur was to chillies, tobacco, guava, and pineapple.

During the reign of King Khagemba, Manipur saw significant technical advancement in manufacturing industries too. It was primarily due to the arrival of new migrants, especially Muslim communities. They have been highly proficient in handicrafts like weaving, carpentry, pottery, etc., so they had to be implemented in emerging technologies and methods of various industries. One of the most significant innovations during the British industrial revolution was the flying shuttle.[74]It enhanced the weaving process. Also, one individual-made it much easier to weave broader clothes. In Manipur, it was called *Pangandem*. The flying shuttle's arrival was an enormous support to develop the handloom industry that the Muslims might have launched in Manipur. Several talented Muslim weavers immigrated to Manipur during Khagemba's rule. They were allowed to retain their own *Sagei* (clan). They were designated as *Phisabam* clan by the King and focused on their weaving expertise (*Phi*-cloth, *sapham* place of production). At *Apong Ingkhol*, the Muslims of Manipur manufactured an excellent quality of silk.[75]The Manipuri *Pangal* added to Manipur's economic growth by the usage of more efficient handcrafts and techniques.

The crafts of pottery have flourished since ancient times in Manipur. The Chakpaswere regarded as the first pottery producers of Manipur. The domestic utensils included, an earthen pot produced primarily by Lois of *Shugunu* and *Chairel*, who made stone bowls and transformed the coarse sandstone, black lamp to a polished one. The cooking pot of iron,

[72]Pemberton, *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India*. op, cit., p.26.
[73]"History Of Medieval Manipur 2."
[74]William Cunningham, *The Growth of English Industry and Commerce in Modern Times* (New York: CUP Archive, 1938).p.613.
[75]Sharma and Badaruddin. *PangalHourakpham*.op,cit.,p.40.

copper and bell metal widely used but were imported from Cachar.[76] Most of the potteries used in Manipur are handmade. In Manipur, one of the Muslim captives, Nauriya Sheik from the Lamangdong battle of 1606 AD, introduced wheel-made pottery. He was honoured with *Phusham's* clan by the Manipuri King Khagemba (1597–1652 AD).[77] Traditionally, people used pots to store clean water in a house which is called *Sanabun.* Muslim's were appreciated by presenting them a pot style-*Punkangnanbi,* later called *Sanabun. Sanabun* is highlighted to be a part of Manipuri's bride's *"awoonpot*."[78]

The Muslims were skilled in using *Phundrei* (wooden lathe) for fine wood polishing from the time, they settled. Such innovative methods and inventions increased the designs and performance of traditional carpentry works. To affirm the carpenter's work, they played a crucial role. The King acknowledged their strengths and bestowed the *Sagei's"Phundreimayum."* The clan of Phundrei with the manufacturing work *Hidakphu Mangak* (Hookah Neck), *Hidakphu makhong* (Hookah Stand), basket leg charkha, book stand, etc.[79]Muslim artisans or the Pangal carpenters have also produced a *Topo machine* used for sugar cane pressing.[80]Manipur considerably progressed economically with the advent of Muslims. Muslims gifted king Khagemba with a splendid and very well-decorated palanquin. The glory of the professional artisans who crafted a lotus flora made of ivory had eight leaves on its top canopy.[81]

The use of paper in Manipur is seen before the Muslims came to this place. It assumed that few Chinese merchants carried the papers to Manipur as the trading products. The Meiteis learned the techniques of the typical Chinese handcrafted writing. Before

[76]Hodson, *TheMeitheis*.op, cit.,p.39.
[77] Singh and Khan ,.*Nongsamei Puyai*.op,cit.,pp.159-160.
[78]Irene, *The Muslims of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.128.
[79]Singh, *Sang PanabagiMasil*.op,cit., p.46.
[80]Irene, *The Muslims of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.129.
[81]Singh and Khan,*NongsameiPuya*(2014).op.cit.,p.159.

moving to Manipur, the Muslim acquired the method, they knew in Bengal. The clan of *Chesham* recognized the craft of papermaking.[82]

The Meitei *Pangals'* livestock rearing from their settlement in Manipur to the present days as they were competent in this area and became an outstanding professional. They raised the cattle to meet their milk, food and selling needs on the markets and could make a good income from this occupation.

Therefore, Muslims played a significant role in the state's economic production. Manipur witnessed a new, enhanced agricultural method using new growing techniques such as rice transplantations. They introduced several fresh fruits and vegetables and added new strategies and innovations to various producing activities. Pottery and carpentry were the significantly growing industries in Manipur and had become more advanced and prosperous with the Muslims' advent. Hence, Manipuri Pangals consolidated into society and the economy of Manipur. The local people have always believed them to be the descendants of local women from Manipur.

4.1.3. Indigenous Classifications of land

The Seven distinct salais (clans) settled in various areas were independent of each other at an earlier stage. It happened in 33 AD that those leaders came under one King Nongda Lairen Pakhangba of Mangang Salai Suzerain control. As a result of this, King Pakhangba subdivided the valley into four *"Panas."*[83] Consequently, in 1074 AD, the Kingdom was divided into six Panas when King Loiyumba came into the throne of Manipur.[84] In his reign, he introduced *Loiyumba Shinyen* as known as occupational distribution to his people.

[82]Irene, *The Muslims of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.130.
[83]Singh, "*The Manipur Administration (1709-1907),"* p.26.
[84]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.57.

The land tenure system in the valley began on the presumption of the King's property.[85] He was the sole owner of the land that could dispose of it as he wished, and that no one forbade the cultivation of the earth. The King of Manipur is, therefore, generally referred to as *Leimaba* or Landlord of the Kingdom. The Kingdom had been subdivided into villages. A headman of each division or village was responsible for the well-being of the population, and each farmer was liable for the tax (payable) in the same manner. There was an official over the village chief, *Phunan Shelungba*, whose role was to oversee the things related to cultivation. He took care of the land's measurement obtained as the rental property and transacted all the business issues related to the ground on behalf of the King.[86] During the medieval period, the entire territory of the Kingdom of Manipur was divided into three groups:

i. The hilly area subdivided into privilege and non-privileged or *chingloi.* (The hilly tributary classes).

ii. The land in the foothills area were divided into:

   a. Chakpas (the valley's taxpayer)
   b. The Nai (servant and attendant)
   c. The Keis was (guards of the State granary).
   d. Others like the *Yaithibis*, the *Tingsang*, the *Kakching, Moirangs* and the others. They were generally referred to as the *TampakLoi* (Valley Taxpayers).[87]

iii) Valley area was comprised of three categories viz., i) *Ingkhol* (Homestead land) ii) *Shanjabung* (Grazing ground) iii) *Lou* (Agricultural Land).

Ingkhol

[85]Hodson, *TheMeitheis*.op, cit.,p.85.
[86]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit.,p. 85.
[87]Devi, *"Manipuri Society And economy (15th – 19th Century AD),"* op, cit.,p.41.

The homestead, known as *Ingkhol,* is still even today. Every house built as far as possible in the centre of the homestead of land, leaving enough land all around. Every homestead was well-defined by boundary or earthen-plinth boundary fencing. They were even planting trees and shrubs throughout this area. The residential houses were built on the rear part of the compound, and there was plenty of space ahead even when the area was small. In every household, open space on the front of the house was appropriate, and the Meiteis carried out all rituals and activities in the courtyard of the residential dwelling. This courtyard was kept clean almost every day by sweeping—the animals-shed built in a household with livestock in the homestead land. Within the homestead, each typical peasant family built a living house with an attached kitchen, a granary and a cowshed. Regardless of the space left, vegetables were grown primarily for domestic consumption. The predominant home-grown products were carrots, sweet potatoes, beans, brinjal, cucumber, pumpkin, onion, cabbage, cauliflower, etc., except tobacco and pepper.[88] More regarding *Ingkhol,* where the industrial raw materials of different plants, and kitchen vegetables were produced. The inhabitants of the valley had much pleasure in preparing food or planting. In the valley, particularly the Meiteis, each house maintained a kitchen garden where spicy plants and condiments were cultivated. Sometimes, a part of the plot was also used to dig ponds for drinking water and other domestic uses. In those days *Ingkhol's* size was usually important; having around one acre in total, but it varies from place to place. Its ownership stayed tax-free. The village *Ingkhol* record was in village headman control (*Khullakpa* or King). Like the Imphal Valley, the privilege was permanently tax-free.

[88]Hodson, *TheMeitheis*.op, cit.,p.43.

Shanjabung

The King granted each village grassland for the village cattle. There were usually no boundaries to that kind of land, but the villagers knew it, and it was controlled by the village associated. It was forbidden to infringe but authorized the payment fee. There was also such a grazing land in the heart of the Imphal valley.[89]

Classification of Agricultural Land

Locally known as *Loupham* or *Loubuk* (agricultural land) is the place for paddy cultivation. It exists primarily in the open areas of the valley's land. Different species of paddy were cultivated. The Manipurisare used to wet cultivation. No tax obtained from the property other than Chakpas, Lois, Nais, etc. The homesteads and cultivated fields were subdivided into *Kanglei* (urban) and *Louwai* (paddy field area or countryside) to ease land income administration. It stated in Manipur's earlier history before the British conquest, which is believed to be a component of the Meitei kings. More than the 19 species of local rice were grown in the valley.[90]

All the fields in the valley are classified into

i. Tax-free and

ii. Taxable lands.

The specific tax-free type of lands include:

i. ***Ningthem Lou*** **Or** ***Sana Lou*** **(Royal Family Land)**

Such lands constitute a property given by the King to the King's spouse, brothers, children and others who belonged to the royal family. More or less, they permanently controlled such types of land. The possession of such property

[89]Eight Session, *Proceedings of the Manipur Historical Society*. op, cit.,p.206.
[90]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.83.

was one *Shellungba* (the officer responsible for business and the affairs of the treasury, revenue and finance of the Kingdom).[91]

ii. *Lugun Lou* (Land allotted to the Brahmin)

The Brahmins of the State-owned this sort of property. Usually, when a Brahmin wore scriptural thread, the King of Manipur granted one *pari* (2.5 acres) of land at his initiation to wear the sacred thread *Lugun.*[92] When the Brahmin died, *Lugunlou* was taken over by the state. However, if the Brahmin left any dependent, the King allowed them to maintain half the land to possess the late Brahmin's family. The ground under this group originated, possibly after King Garibaniwaz (1709-1748 AD) adopted Hinduism as the State religion of Manipur.

iii. ***Lai Lou* (Gods and goddess Land)**

Some lands were exclusively reserved for God and Goddess, and these lands were given to those who, from time to time, were servants of the respective temples and shrines, was also a common tradition. The *Lai lou* was classified as this type of property. Since the rise of Hinduism in Manipur, religion has also become a reward to those who have maintained their beliefs, rites, and gods and goddesses' in society.[93] However, there was a shifting role of people, and the land stayed in possession of the Gods or Goddesses.

iv. *Mana Lou* (Rewarded Land)

There was a type of land which people kept as a reward. When the King was glad of those distinguished servants, he granted land in compensation. Receivers were not allowed to move or sell the property to anyone on this type of ground.

[91]Sharma, *Phamlon.* op, cit.,p.8.
[92]*Lugun* is Hinduism's holy thread. Brahmins usually begin wearing it in their adolescence, and the occasion is ceremonies like *UpanayanaYajnas*.
[93]Ali , "*Economic History of Manipur (1801-1951),"*p.57.

Also, after the death of a recompensing individual, the King took back the land. Nonetheless, their families would like to maintain the land by paying the state specified taxes.[94]

v. *Pangal Lou* (Land for courageous)

It was an assorted kind of *Mana Lou*. The King also rewarded a person's bravery, particularly war-field and wild animal capturing activities. The family of the person who is granted this type of land may hold it after the person's death.[95] Therefore, this was a land grant in perpetuity and thus ensured the loyalty of the descendants of the land grant to the state and served as a role model for the spread of bravery and royal ideology.

vi. *Siphai Lou* (Land for the Sepoys)

No organized recruiting of military staff occurred during the early period. However, before 1891 AD. the Sepoys had no right to regular payments. The sepoys were not paid in cash, as the role of compensation or benefit was through granting land by the state. The land holdings ranged in scale based on their grades. If a sepoy died during the battle, then his male heir was granted half a *Pari* to his father, and the remaining land was returned to the state. After the deceased sepoy son entered the King's army, the same land was entitled to the son. The sepoy who had surplus land could subdue him with the ordinary rent of 24 paddy baskets per *pari*.[96]

Upon taking note on the land categories granted free of tax by the King, specific land categories were allotted to the land tax subject.

vii. *Phamlou* (Service land)

[94] Ibid.,p.56.
[95] Ibid.,57.
[96]KakchingtabamRuhinikumar Sharma, "*Social and Polity Formation in Pre-Colonial Manipur in the Eighteenth and the Nineteenth-century" (*PhD Thesis., Manipur University Imphal, 2002),p.79.

In every administrative work, the King had to select many people and compensate them appropriately. There were lands approved for service to the Kingdom and maintained instead of being paid by ministers, nobles and officers. The land was either cultivated by officials and nobles, slaves or by the free people. The rent owed for farmers or free people was 24 baskets of paddy per *pari*, and the existing officers or nobility charged the state, the fee of 2 baskets of paddy per pari. Also, for the noblemen and officials, the prompt payment of the taxes were strictly enforced. Failure to pay taxes on schedule time lead to the confiscation and redistribution of the *Phamlou*.[97]The King needed to hire and compensate several people at various civil society levels, as it did in other administration.

viii. *Sarkari Lou* (King own land)

The rent rates were very high either worked by slaves or free people and other tenures' relatives. Every slave gave a *pari* land with plough, cattle, tools, and was obliged to provide sixty baskets of paddy as rent. If the land was of free man, they had to pay twenty – four baskets of paddy. The free man, however, didn't have to supply cattle and other resources.[98]

ix. *Tounarou* (general field of paddy)

Lands were belonging to ordinary civilians. They were the new acquired private areas that belong to the common man. Approximately one-fifth of the regions were under cultivation included in this group. They were two kinds:

i. **Areiba Lou or Holding by buying**

ii. ***Lounouninba***or keeping on authorization was through removing jungles. The King's prior approval was required. The King supported the

[97]Ibid.,.
[98]Ibid.,

> cultivation of new land to larger fields. The man had to prepare the ground for cultivation after obtaining permission. In the first two years, tax receipts in these areas were excluded. From the third year onwards, the tenants owed to the payment of six paddy *chengkok* (about three maunds) per annum. Whether the landowner could inherit the land under this category *Tounarou* or he could dispose of it.[99]

The *Lallup* members cultivated both *Touna Lou* and *Sarkari Lou* by charging a fixed payment directly to the state. There were some variations between the two. It was the case of *Tounalou;* when the King forced the owner to pay land tax. Nonetheless, when the state demanded it, they were not required to pay the tax. The state usually requested rice tax as the price increased whereas the *Sarkarilou* cultivators had to pay tax generally after the harvest. In comparison, unlike *Tounalou,* a *Sarkarilou* cultivator never retained permanent possession.

In comparison, unlike *Tounalou,* a *Sarkarilou* cultivator never retained permanent possession. The headman of every village under the direct supervision of *Lourungpuren Achouba* or *Phunan Selungba* who controlled the settlement of land and revenue management on behalf of the King received the rent or revenue at kind. This *Lourungpuren Achouba* analyzed the land.[100]Revenue generation typically happened during harvesting time. Land revenue was raised as cash and kind but mostly as a kind. Khagemba (1597-1652 AD) implemented the cash payment system. Still, in his reign, the payment of revenue in kind was familiar since it founded several royal keis in a different part of the Kingdom. This payment system proceeded in cash and kind till 1892 AD, after the British conquest of Manipur, and implemented in money.[101]

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[99]Devi, *"Manipuri Society And economy(15th – 19th Century AD),"* op, cit.,p.p.49-50.
[100]Singh, *Introduction to Manipur*. op,cit.,p.93-94.
[101]Eight Session, *Proceedings of the Manipur Historical Society*. op, cit., p.15.

4.1.4. Typology of land in literature

The Meiteis also came up with names in several locations, villages, mountain ranges, lakes, dens, weirs, battlefields, etc. because of their connections with some of their ancestral cultural legends or the other things they referred. Other cultural activities would also benefit people who have heard previously, why they named the places and areas so well or why the sites' names were assigned because of an occurrence. The valley and its geographical location, it is stable. The cohesive nature and the thorough communications of water and soil in peasants settlements allowed communities in particular to establish signs, communication technologies, gossip rounds, symbols and faiths that ranged from village to village from the courtyard to courtyard and from *Leikai* to *Leikais.*

Therefore, *Lammitlon* of Manipur's toponymic analysis opens new perspectives about the region's nature, socio-economic, culture, history, and geography. The *Lammitlon* is a significant depot of the Meitei people's information and their neighbouring lands. The picture is made more evident by defining the name of the place, fixing the historical-geographical account of its areas and contributing to the growth of modern knowledge of the existence of the Meitei Civilisation.

The hills mentioned by the Meiteis in the earlier period of *Cheitharol Kumbaba as' Ching'* have been commonly defined in the text, which suggests settlement areas. The early Meitei kings' provincial existence is not well-demarcated, and the surrounding mountains and hills define the people's settlements. It claimed that Manipur's seven salais had respective tiny states. Even though their locations can be broadly situated, there is no specific tracing of the seven Principalities.[102]While the clans asserted jurisdiction over the region, there was no idea of a distinct area at that period.

[102]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.14.

Consequently, the edge among clan territories continues to be classified based on geographical characters of hills, forests, streams and rivers. *Cheitharol Kumbaba* indicates the Khuman clan area near the mountain was described as the Hill of Moicha. It reveals that the Khumans were furious with the King during the King Ayangba 821-910 AD when he invaded their land chasing an animal that fled to the Hill of Moicha.[103] The *Nongmjing* hill is mentioned in the *Shelloi Langmais* are in the settlement area, while the *LoibiMarem* (Maram hills) intends the settlement area of the Maram tribe.[104] Hereabouts, *Loibi* refers to the Meitei's old term for the mountains, while Marem will assist Maram's similar expression.

The hills were also used as war and battle places. King Kongyamba's (1324-1335AD) defeat of the *Mayangs* (It applies to people from Sylhet or Cachar) may have been a nod to Kouba's battle *Hinglenching* references in the text on the foothill or neighbouring hill. The dispute between the Meitei King Kongyamba and the Mayangs had exploded in areas northward as *Kouba* associated with Koubru,[105]peak to the north of Imphal, the current capital of Manipur. Undoubtedly, this battle also represented the first invasion of Meitei kingdom by foreigners. Simultaneously, the other disputes were more evident while wars between separate groups or wars between Kings of Meitei and various clans to strengthen the Meitei Kingdom.

From the past onwards, the rivers described in the text as *Turen/Turel* tend to be a primary transport resource of Manipur, apart from identifying them in their natural form. In some instances, it even held equal importance as the hills. The river was used to reach the desired destination, the importance of the means of transport was seen. It stated that Sammlung, Pong King Sukanpha's younger brother, back to the Kingdom on the *Yiril/Iril*

[103]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - CheitharonKumpapa*.op, cit.,p.27.
[104]Singh and Singh, *CheitharolKumbaba* .op,cit.,p.5.
[105]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - Cheitharon Kumpapa*.op.cit.,p.35.

river course. Although a regular highway would be quite rare in those early days, Sammlung could have taken the river as it may have been the fastest route to navigate.[106] In ancient times, the rivers were also a place for battle, besides being a significant transport mode. There were many fights on both the rivers and around the banks of different rivers. The earlier evidence of the battle in the river witnessed in King UraKonthouba during the 6th century AD.[107] Furthermore, the reign of ChengleiIpanLaanthaba in the 9th century AD, the Luwang clan people who came by boat to the Luwangliriver were reported as seized by the Meiteis.[108]

It is important to note that the lakes described in the earlier period of the *Cheitharol Kumbaba* are almost identical and do not vary from the rivers and hills. Like the rivers, the lakes also showed up as a battle site. The fight against ChingkhuTelheiba's daughter, YaorenTonpokpi, in the 1195 AD, waged war at Loktak Lake in the head of the Moirang clan, the Meitei King Thawanthaba.[109]Therefore, it would be right to infer that the *Hiyanghirel* or the Boat Race of Manipuri Festival bears the naval war picture between the Meitei King Thawanthaba and Khumans at Loktak Lake. The lake is often referred to in involving the settlement areas. One of the prisoners of war captured by King Punsiba in 1404 AD, a battle against the Moirang clan was a *Yakot Sinheipa* (dentist), who lived in the Kampongpat Lake.[110]

The people referred to in the cases of Kapo, Pong, Maring, Mayang, Koireng, and Tangkhul reflect the specific regions in which they lived. While these people further or less identified the war against the Meitei rulers, they were not all recognized as Manipuris. Although, the Kabo, the Pong whom immigrants from the East and Mayang from the west of Manipur have become outsiders. Such people as Tangkhul Maring, Koireng and Maram

[106] Ibid.,p.p.26-27.
[107] Ibid.,p.25.
[108] Ibid.,p.28.
[109] Ibid.,p.32.
[110] Ibid.,p.36.

are the various Manipuri tribes that inhabited the state's hilly areas. Thus, it is clear that the war which the early Meitei kings had fought on one level seemed to be a war between clans to reinforce their dominance, but on the other, it can also be seen as a struggle to protect their boundaries from foreign invasions.

The *Cheitharol Kumbaba* has more reliable and comprehensive documented records from the 15th century AD until the 18th century AD. The improvement in the descriptive accounts are evident in the geographical representation of the characteristics. In the earlier period, the hill that represented the settlement location means the gods' dwelling later. The hills listed in this section of the *Cheitharol Kumbaba* are

i. Thangjing in the direction of Manipur to the south-west

ii. Lanmaijing, situated to the south-east

iii. Marjing in the north order of Manipur and Koubru, in the north-west of Manipur.

The double interpretation in Manipur is surprising for the so-called mountains. Some of the famous hills in Manipur include *Thangjing, Marjing, Koubru and Langmaiching/Nongmaijing.* They are called not only cliffs but also gods. People wished for a healthy and good life for them. All the saviours of the directions observed during King Khagemba in 1631 A.D. King Khagemba offered 100 sheep, 100 swans, 100 buffaloes, 100 goats, 100 chickens, 100 rats, 100 pigeons, one hundred fruit and one hundred ginger of all kinds. He prayed that he would have a long life.[111]They are called not only cliffs but also gods. People wished for a healthy and good life for them. Moreover, a religious association could also occur on the Khari hill.[112] While not mentioned in the chronicle, King Kiyamba conducted a ceremony to gain the *Kabo Kyang* expedition as

[111]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - CheitharonKumpapa*. op.cit.,p.75.

[112](The Chronicle does not give where this hill located. Nevertheless, if it said that Khari assigned to the Meitei after the King Kyamba and the King of Pong's joint expedition to *KaboKyang*, Khari Hill may be situated on the border of the Meitei King's territory or it may be located within the territory of *KaboKyang*).Ibid.,p.19.

an accurate description of the foothill of the Khari hill in a manner that would suggest the beatitude of the slope or the area.

As far as the rivers' portrayal is concerned, they suggest certain essential aspects of transportation mode. To some point, the significance of waterways illustrated when used as a place for leisure and fun—using boats by early Meitei kings and nobles for pleasant excursions after their throne ascensions demonstrate the significance of rivers during those periods. The Meitei kings and nobles also stated many references in *Cheitharol Kumbaba* about fishing and tours. In both the reigns of King Paikhomba and his son Charairongba, the referring to the Leimatak and Ithairivers were a fishing ground. King Paikhomba and his wife Leima Ponglengkhonbi headed for fishing to rivers Leimatak in 1690 AD.[113]

A fishing tradition was relishing royalty shown in King Charairongba, where the King and his queen, nobles went to the river Ithai for fishing often. Several kings and queens drowned on the river during their royal boat tours. During King Mungyamba's reign in 1565 AD, one such instance of drowning was in a pleasant voyage to Sugnu, Queen Meiteleima Serembi and her assistant Khomshen perished when their boat sank.[114]

Because of no common men taking such trips described in *CheitharolKumbaba,* it shows that the practice of boats toward fun trips was the inheritance of Kings and nobleman. The river also constitutes a basic premise defining the Meitei Kings territorial boundary limits. King Kyamba and ChouphaKhe Komba, the King of Shan state, were cited as crossing Kyang. The *Ningthi /Yingthi*[115]river suggest the Chindwin River, which now flows in Manipur.

The rivers, lakes mentioned *'pat',* and *'soi'* also have identical meanings in the Cheitharol Kumbaba. It is even a sporting venue for the King and also appears to be a

[113]Ibid.,p.55.
[114]Ibid.,p.27.
[115]Ibid.,p.19.

route. King Paikhomba's (1666-1697 AD) refers to the bird shooting in a lake named Heiningsoi, indicated in 1695 AD.[116]

As far as the terms of the places, we have seen various names of the site stated in the *Cheitharol Kumbaba* from the 15th century AD. It involves the characters, both of the geographical areas and the surrounding Manipur states. The names recorded of the places are related not only to battles and war but also to immigration and marital relationships of the Meitei Kings. Here, it is essential to keep in mind that specific names of the Meiteis recognized neighbouring Manipur states. For example, the neighbouring countries like Cachar wrote as *Mayang*, Assam in the text as *Tekhao*, Tripura as *Takhel*, Burma as *Kabo* and *Awa.* China as *Khaki*, Pong as *Shan*.

There are various palaces associated with past experiences and tragedies that were memorable for the country's people. Later generations regard these notable locations as special episodes of history. There is also a practice of naming places in Manipur after such events, naming a village or area after historical events.

King Kiyamba's reign in 1467 AD had excellent relations with ChouphaKhekomba, the Pong king. Pong's King offered as a gift a *Vishnu Chakra Saligam* and one *Kwagok* (container of the pan) made of gold. Kiyamba ruled at that time in Lamangdong with his capital. Assumed that the place became famous as Bishnupur from its earlier name Lamangdong because the Vishnu icon was adoring.[117]During King Khagemba's reign (1597-1652 AD), the *Mayang* army led by Bimbol and Yakhrok, invaded Manipur by King Saprada of *Mayang Leibak* (Cachar). The Mayang army infiltrated to *Sekta* villages of Meitei where they kept warhorses and stolen horses. Some valiant Meiteis chased after them, snatching the midway horseback. And the horse remained hidden to save for a while, and the area was

[116]Ibid.,p.58.
[117]R. K. Sanahal Singh, *Manipuri Itihas* (Imphal,1947).p.37.

named Sagolband (*Sagol*-horse,*band*-to stay). It is adjacent to Imphal city.[118]Also, *Lammitlon* referred to the building of granaries. There were granaries named Kyamgei since granaries for the rice and paddy stock for lean periods were built during King Kiyamba's reign (1467-1508 AD), citing food grains stored on the edge of the granary. If the state was facing scarce seasons, the rice and paddy distribution must fulfil the people. The place Kyamgei is known after King Kiyamba's named and was called Kyamgei (Kiyamba Granary).[119]It is situated about 8 kilometres southern side of the Imphal valley.

During King Mungyamba (1562-1597 AD), the King's granary was in Mungshang Kei (Mungyamba Granary).[120] It is where rice, paddy etc. were stored, anticipated for distribution in the state's lean seasons. It is located on Imphal West and around 8 km from Imphal on Imphal-Mayang Road.

Moreover, King Mungyamba (1562-1597 AD) and his people built a new water route/boat way that would enable them to make a one-day trip to Sugnu by boat. The King, his queen and personal attendant drowned in capsize on the waterway. The water route became known as Hiyanglam (Hiyang-Royal Boat, Lam-way/route) because it was the waterway or the boat path where King Mungyamba went with the large royal boats.[121]Presently it is a village in the district of Kakching. Kakching is in 45 Km from Imphal in the south. Hiyanglam village is about 4 km from Kakching.During the reign of King Mungyamba (1562-1597 AD). The Meiteis procured and carried many weapons from a battle with the Kabaw (Burma, now Myanmar). Constructed a tall mound was to install heavy guns. The pile where mounted the large guns were known as the Nongmeipung (*Nongmei*-gun, *Pung*-mound) to date.[122]It is in the midst of Imphal East.

[118]SarangthemBormani Singh, (Imphal, 1988).pp.116-117.
[119]Singh, *Lammitlon.*op, cit.,p.27.
[120]MutuaTombi, *Imphal*(Imphal, 1975).p.82.
[121]Singh, *Lammitlon.*op, cit.,p.129.
[122]Tombi.*Imphal.* op, cit.,p.67

And found some evidence of cannon production and testing during the reign of King Khagemba (1597-1652A.D.). The cannon, locally named top, was installed at SingjameiTop Leikai. Dragged the *top* was to open field and checked with the aid of wheels after finished the installation. The site is known to date as Topchingtha (*Top*-Cannon, *Chigtha*-Drag down).[123] The person accustomed with the top was also honoured by giving the surname *Nongmeikapam* (People who fire the guns).

The Mayang captives (people from outside Manipur) were a fortified barrier during King Khagemba's reign (1597-1652A.D.).The place was Khagempali after the king name (Khagemba - King Khagemba Name, *Pal*-fence and *Li*- Line) to mark the event (or that time),[124] situated within Tiddim road, NH150 and the Imphal – MayangImphal Road State Highway. Furthermore, in Kongba area, a broad pond of 100 square was dug up in 1725 AD during King Garibnawaz's reign to fulfil the people's water shortage. In the later period, it was known as *Ningthem Pukhri* (*Ningthem*-Prince, *Pukhri*-Pond).[125] Hence, *Ningthem Pukhri Mapan* became known in the pond's nearby areas in Wangkhei, 3 km from Imphal.

4.1.4. Conversion of marshland into Fertile Agricultural Land

Marshes were converted by introducing new varieties of crops like rice from the Cachar valley after the Muslim immigrants came and settled. It led to new technology where the inlets of water were blocked and diverted, and at the same time, the outlets were created so as not to retain moisture. Therefore, new land that had copious supply was also added to the existing land that could be used to increase the agricultural output significantly. There is an important innovation as it signalled the extension of agriculture and peasant intrusion into parts of the Imphal valley but unreachable. It is an example of

[123]Ibid.,p.66.
[124]Singh, *Manipuri Itihas*.op,cit.,p.44.
[125]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - CheitharonKumpapa*.op, cit.,p.133.

geographical possibilism that is not taken into account and thus goes against the idea of geographical determinism.

4.1.5. Conversion of the Forest Land into Agricultural Land

Some forest land areas were also converted into peasant land as that were on the peripheries and under the political ambit of the Meitei state. This did not include large scale forest clearance like in other regions of India. This action's importance is the extension of settlements to areas in terrains that could be made hospitable. It thus brings forth the idea that there were different types of agricultural practices that were being followed. In other parts of the thesis, these aspects are elaborated at length.

4.2. Conversion of Pasture Land into Settled Agricultural Land

In addition to home and paddy fields, a large amount of land was used for farming, leisure, industry and transport. Also, particularly in lakes and marshlands were used for fishing for and shooting game. It is noted that reclamation of agriculture began between 1644-1671 AD, with the clearance of woods and shrubs and the occupation of *Lamhang* (non-used state land), which subsequently increased in terms of population pressure.[126]

Kings were personally engaged in development work supporting the feudal system of *Lallup* regime during King Paikhomba's reign (1666-1697). When stability in the country sustained natural growth and immigration increased the population as well. Hence, an enormous area of swampy land, surrounded by jungles and tall grasses brought to cultivation. Through dredging the rivers, connection across the rivers was retained through the boat. He repaired the Chinga-Phungsanrei road in 1675 AD. In 1680 AD river Nambul was dredged and built river bunds to control floodings as well. In 1695 AD, the King supervised a bund in Singjamei along the Imphalriver. Instances of paddy field irrigation by

[126]RK Ranjan Singh, *"Pattern of Land – Use in the Manipur Valley"(*PhD Thesis., Gauhati University. Assam,1981).p.98.

the river water also existed. There was considerable potential in industrial growth. Five hundred and four people from the *Panas* of *Ahallup, Nahrup, Laipham, Khabam* and other Lois and Keis were produced in 14 brick kilns for three months in December 1687. [127]
The state-managed the forestry and forest resource production fully developed using salt cakes and wood for canoe and boat making.

The challenge faced by killing the tiger and capturing tigers in Paikhomba 1666-97 AD reign was mentioned in several records in the *Cheitharol Kumbaba*. It is stated that wild animals, particularly the tiger in the Imphal valley forest were much disturbed by their jungle hideout by growing population and redeveloping forestry and swamps for cultivation purposes. The tigers and leopards killed many people and animals. The state planned a very careful capturing of tigers and leopards from various parts of the valley, dead or alive. The tigers and the leopards killed many people and animals. To catch a tiger dead or alive from multiple parts of the valley, the state made a very elaborate arrangement. The King captured a leopard alive once. He used to go and hunt tigers. It was for facing the tigers' menace that the *Keirup* clubs were established in the villages. The *keirups'* representatives sought to shield the animals and humans from the tiger and, in large numbers, they pursued and killed the tiger. He founded *dudgeons* to house the captured tigers. This form belonged to *Keishumsang*.[128]The *Keishumsang* system, which later became a common prison term, was based.

Hunting for tigers or catching tigers had become a highly advanced practice. The King even supported the battle against the tiger with swords and spears. A recurrent exhibit of combat in the market between humans and animals. Manipur's valley was a thickly forest/wooded habitat with animals such as lions, leopards, goats, wild boars and numerous kinds with deer in the later 17th centuries. Feral animals and the environments were the

[127]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op,cit.,p.p.227-228.
[128]Ibid.,p.228.

targets of humanity and his desires in the years that followed.[129] The forest destroyed necessities of the poor, the wealthy's avarice, and the state's essentials increased. The man succeeded in building his society, the outcome of his power to nature, and the everlasting battle between man and beast and nature.

4.3. Summary

We may summarise that the production in the medieval Manipur was not in a state of stasis as is often represented but in the form of dynamism despite the vagaries of nature that caused lots of destruction to the crops. The mastery of these elements and the increase of agricultural production by extending the land and introducing new crops and techniques in the different eco-zones and mastering the same. The ability of the various aspects like water supply and its channelization also required human organization that resulted in the use of the Lallup system and brought about the unique social patterns of Manipur on whose kinship were superimposed the new economic patterns at the village level. These changes led to the classification of land-based on functional and socio-cultural and politico-economic sorts that were geared towards the production patterns. Introduction of newer crops only added to the surplus and was channelized to the industries. Thus, the production patterns reveal the spread of agriculture and the rise of agricultural abundance and its extension into new production areas.

Earlier works on the production patterns of medieval Manipur took into account the geographical determinism that still continues to this day and traces the limits of the production patterns as determined by geography. This chapter challenges the assumption of geographical determinism and posits that it was geographical possibilism and not determinism that enabled the expansion of an agrarian society in Manipur. The argument is

[129]Ibid.,pp.228-229.

based on the fact that the draining of marshland was an act of human agency that was consciously promoted the Meitei kings as a process of agrarian expansion that led to the colonization of large tracts of lands and bringing them under the plough. Similarly the varieties of rice that number almost a hundred were all part of the fine-tuned agrarian practices that helped in rice cultivation on the inhospitable eco-zones by the human agency and thus led to peasant intrusion into these areas. One of the important examples of human agency in the production process is the Lallup system of mobilization of labour that significantly transformed the landscape by settling durable agrarian settlements followed by the draining of marshlands. Another finding of this chapter is that the insular nature of Manipur that is represented is also misleading as we see the regional and supra-local connections exemplified by the flow of Burmese silver after the invasions of the shan region. The Columbian exchange brought in many products like tobacco, pineapple etc. that were successfully domesticated and became part of the agrarian cycle. Thus the production patterns in medieval Manipur were the product of geographical possibilism and led to a considerable expansion of the economy.

CHAPTER-V

TRADE AND COMMERCE IN PRE-MODERN MANIPUR

Trade is a form of human activity that is signified by the exchange of commodities, both raw and processed for some value in the form of barter or money. This chapter traces the origins of different exchanges and their development into full-fledged regular trade in medieval Manipur. It represented the exchange economy and took over a few centuries, reaching its fruition in the 18th century. Man is unable to fulfil his innumerable desires by his unassisted efforts. Human autarky, that is, a genuinely autistic self-sustaining economy is unlikely. It is an economy that only exists in *Utopias* such as *Robinson Crusoe's* but never in man's life. In return to the goods and services that a man gets from other men, he has to do the same as he receives. The consequence is the individual family's household economy, where the man hunted or fished while shielding his family members from danger. They looked after the hearth, prepared meals at home, collected the wild fruits from the forests, and made simple clothing. They traded with one another in exchange for services and products offered to others.[1]

Since time immemorial, trade has been a central element of human existence in areas where large-scale commercial activities have always established great powers. Trade is a commercial entity for the sale and purchase of products, supplies or information. It is a transition of ownership by the consumer of goods and services between people, and the network makes a trade referred to as the market. Trade was mean to exchange in ancient times and indicated the sale of goods between the buyer and the seller in the barter system. Later, the buyer exchanged goods, and the seller had to pay money for precious metals such as silver or gold, instead of other commodities. The trading of goods with the currency, which is primarily

[1]Faustino Ballvé, *Essentials of Economics* (United State:Ludwig von Mises Institute, 1963). p.11.

paper money, has carried out transactions in modern times. Trade emerged due to specialisation and division of labour, owing to the production, supply and demand of one region over the others.

Trade and commerce mean *Lalonetki*[2] in Manipuri. The State's mode of appropriation in the type of labour services managed the manufacturing and the growth of network marketing and ultimately determined the significance of trade, buying and selling operation within and outside the countries. The variety of trading operations at different levels was significantly restricted due to the appropriation mode's constraint. The accessible information indicates that the State provided in-kind and made frequent in-kind and services.[3] Therefore, surplus mainly took the form of labourers leasing for immediate appropriation by the ruling class. Besides, most of the peasant's primary needs for food, clothing, etc. were fulfilled within their household.

As noted in any economy, in the market system, the nature of trade within the kingdom of Manipur and the exchanges between Manipur and other regions were straightforward. However, although transactions were primarily defined by the exchange of goods (barter), there was no daily market. In the producers and consumers' houses, commodities were frequently exchanged and sometimes in a position that relied upon their convenience. The market in this type is considered as old as civilisation.

Manipur's medieval economy can be defined as the barter economic system. Although the bell – metal coin gradually replaced a barter system, it did not assist much in Manipur's inner and external trade. Despite the production of a minimal surplus, the marketing and trading networks were established was rudimentary. Local economies traded rare goods. The private

[2]Dolen, *Manipuri Dictionary*.p.106.

[3]K. Ruhinikumar Sharma and O. Ranjit Singh, "*Outlining Pre-Colonial economy Of Manipur,"* in*State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur* ed. JayantaBhusanBhattacharjee (New Dehli: Akansha Publishing House, 2010), p.168.

transaction did not seem important, but the State did not seem to have promoted it. In early Manipur, it is not supposed to have been completely missing from private trade. Due to the short range of marketing, private exchange tends to be very limited and prone to the day's political vagaries. Moreover, with their primary occupation in mind, most traders never severed their connections to agriculture.[4]The Meiteis'State's power showed economic glorification and regional expansion in the mid 15thcentury and the trade and army paths between the Manipur valley and Upper Burma.[5]

Nevertheless, the trade could not thrive in the earliest days, owing to the economic system itself, the underdeveloped road and transport systems, and the lack of an adequate and regular marketing operation. Although, agriculture was the common profession, Manipuris involved in a rudimentary form of commercial activity not only in the region, but also with people from several other Indian states like Assam, Cachar, Luishai hills, Tripura, etc., and with neighbouring realms like the people of Burma and Southern China.[6]

5.1. Marketing Centre

Since ancient times, in the struggle for existence, people have been exchanging their commodities and products. They used a specific location for such exchange practices in addition to the passing of time. They used to stack up to their products in such systems that the customers could readily see it and exchange it as a means of return, either through bartering or any other products. This fixed location was known as the *Keithel* (market). The market was arranged every day, weekly or monthly. Market meant *Keithel* to the Meiteis. A mixture of two words is the compound word *Keithel* meaning market.′ *Kei*′ signifies granary and the location

[4]Ibid.,pp.168-169.
[5]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit., p.194.
[6]Pemberton, *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India*. op, cit.,p.3.

where grains and other commodities are deposited, and *'Thel'* implies the products purchased. Therefore, it is the location where individuals have shown their surplus food grains and other goods in the type of granaries. Trade was characterised in both the ancient and medieval times by an exchange of goods for goods. There was no specific period of the sale in the kingdom. Before 1588 A.D., there was no market place listed in Manipur's Royal Chronicle. It is generally accepted goods mostly exchanged at the producer or in the consumer's house. It was frequently exchanged for both the people in a suitable place.[7] Men and women have engaged actively in commercial activities. It's a notable characteristic of the economic history of Manipur.

Manipur's society had flourished in livelihood industry. Excess ranges between Manipur and its neighbours, including Upper Burma and China were also engaged in trade. Manipur's Royal Chronicle recorded during King Khagemba's period. Shows found ten markets in 1614 A.D, *Sana Keithel, Kha Keithel, Moirang Keithel, Khuman Keithel, Phaibung Keithel, Chairen Keithel, Namphaon Keithel, Konglang Keithel, Phayeng Keithel* and *Andro Keithel.* Those markets significantly aided the sale and purchase of the surplus generated goods.[8]

Among those markets, *Sana Keithel* was the largest and the only place where products were easily accessible from the Royal need to ordinary people. T.C. Hodson views that King Mungyamba constructed Sana Keithel in 1580 A.D.[9]Apart from these above markets, Manipur's Royal chronicle mentions several markets in the various parts of the Kingdom by King Khagemba's successors, like Charairongba (1697-1708 AD), the *Kha keithel* place was very tiny. The *Sangsang* (Rest of travellers' house or youth hostel) construction residents were

[7]Ali, "*Economic History Of Manipur (1801-1951),"* op, cit.,p.155.
[8]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.220.
[9]Hodson, *The Meitheis*. op, cit., p.23.

removed in 1700 AD., and the area integrated into the market.[10]It further constructed *Panthoibi Keithel* in 1705 AD.[11]In 1730 AD., Garibnawaz introduced a new rural market called *Ayuk Keithel* (morning market) and a weekly daytime market at Moirangkhom in 1746 A.D.[12]

Manipur's women took sole responsibility in marketing operation activities. There were various kinds of the market; few outside the Imphal regions, began their practices early in the morning and ended before the afternoon. In some markets, the operations started in the afternoon. Some markets were only opened in a week. It was known as *Hapta Keithel* (weekly market).[13]The morning market of *Sana Keithel* was a pleasant sight to witness various things. It was the location for seasonal vegetables, including *hangam* (mustard), chicken, *yendem* (arum), *sebots* (fish gourd), *pan* (arum stems), chilli, gourd, cucumber, *torbot* (yellow gourd), fish, spice leaves (maroimarang) and *laphu* (plantain stem) etc. Sales brought position at a lower price in quantity to vendors. The majority of the sellers were known in Manipuri *Lalonbi* or *Achanbi*.[14] Manipur,s Royal Chronicle, mentioned managing specific markets like *Phaibung Keithel* for clothing and edibles. *Chairen Keithel* specialisation for the sale of paddy and it took place once in a week. *Kontong Keithel* sold *Takhel* baskets, and *Andro Keithel* was a spot for Mao's people to visit monthly.[15]

There were three significant markets near the capital building, *Sana Keithel, Awang Keithel,* and *Kha Keithel* created the foundation for the kingdom's trade and commerce in the Kangla area. Several products and finished goods from agriculture, forests and minerals have

[10]Ch. Hemchandra,.ed. *Kangleirol* (An account of different places of Manipur with important historical events). (Imphal,2014).p.61.
[11]Singh and Singh,*Cheitharol Kumbaba*. op,cit., p.69.
[12]Nepram Bihari, *The Cheitharol Kumbaba* (Guwahati: Spectrum Publications, 2012).pp.94-111.
[13]S. Jayalaxmi Devi, "*Pre-Colonial Trade And Commerce Of Manipur,"* in Manipur Historical Society Session, *Proceedings of the Manipur Historical Society: Eight Session, Standard College, Kongba, Imphal East District, 2015* (Imphal: Manipur Historical Society, 2016). p.62.
[14]Jamini Devi, *Manipuri Culture and Manipuri women* (Imphal, 2009). p.44.
[15]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur – Cheitharon Kumpapa*. op, cit.,p.70.

been accessible here. Also, available here were products imported from outside the kingdom. It is assumed that dealers from other markets in different areas of the kingdom received their commodities, products, etc. from here and then marketed on their corresponding needs. Concerning *Khoiri Keithel* and *Awun Keithel*, Kings, such as Chalamba, Khagemba and Paikhomba, built stone megaliths to demonstrate the markets' development during their regimes. Moirang traditionally had needs in each of its local markets, including *Ngankhai Leikai, Koyal Leikai, Nganlou Leikai* and *Youshu Leikai.* Besides the rulers, the nobility and other eminent persons also set up the markets.[16] In 1736 A.D., the Royal Guru of Garibniwaz, Shantidash who introduced a *Keithel* was recorded in the Royal Chronicle.[17]The opening of a *Keithel* by royal guru shows that in the mid-18th century. Manipur's Brahmins increased their status and were involved in trading business activities. There seemed to be a unique segment selling different commodities in the market like the present day. The fish market, vegetables, meat, dry fish, rice, pan leaves, supari, clothes, ornaments for hillmen and sweetmeats were prominent features.[18]

The markets were also essential for other activities apart from these business activities. King sometimes transmitted his message to the masses to show his authority to the groups or similar cases. The King Chalamba erected stone megalith stone on the marketplace in 1555 A.D.[19]The markets also served as an arena for gladiatorial warfare. The hunting of elephants and tigers were one of the favourite pastimes for the Royal family. The Royal Chronicle frequently mentions tiger and animal hunting. They caught elephants and were kept in the Royal stable, provided as a gift and sometimes to the royal trip. The Royal Chronicle revealed the

[16]W. Jyotirmoy Singh, "MARKET IN MEDIEVAL MANIPUR," *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 76 (2015): http://www.jstor.org/stable/44156597. p.300.
[17]Singh and Singh,*Cheitharol Kumbaba*. op,cit.,p.96.
[18]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit., p.90.
[19]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.204.

captured tigers were sometimes shown on the market place.[20]In other occasions, there was an event of combat between tiger and elephant and warriors on the market. Along with his queen, nobility and the general masses, in the Khunjaoba 1652-66 AD., reign observes a contest between a trapped tiger with broken forelegs. Consequently, sometimes the markets also acted as a significant location for leisure activities.[21]

5.1.1. Internal Trade

The internal trade was conducted within the State with the hills and the Meiteis of the valley, exchanging various goods mostly perishable. The main markets were visited by a large number of hill people, especially during the winter seasons. For the hill people, the sweetmeats and the majority of the items sold or exchanged in the markets were dry fish, rice, vegetables, pan, supari, clothing and ornaments.

One of the Manipur's most prominent marketing systems was that of the womenfolk operated the buying and selling activities in the valley. Trading article ranged from home-woven cloth, spinning wheels, crop-to-vegetable, agricultural products, vegetable goods, cane and bamboo items, cocoons and yarn etc. Ghosh and Ghosh stated that universally men controlled in this profession but exception is the case of Manipur where women do trading.[22]The men, except for outsiders, were not allowed to enter the marketplace. Dun observed:

> They are very diligent; All the marketing is done by women, all the work of buying and selling in public, and the carrying to and fro of the articles to be sold; whilst at home,

[20]Singh, "*Market in Medieval Manipur*."p.301.
[21]Ibid.,p.302.
[22]Ghosh and Ghosh, *Women of Manipur*. op, cit.,p. 85.

> they are busily employed in weaving spinning. It would be difficult to find a more dynamic woman in India that the Manipuri. [23]

From the historical period to the present day, internal trade activities were practised by the womenfolk of Manipur.

Salt was the most significant product; the hill people purchased from those markets. They exchanged or sold the carrying baskets; wax, ginger, cotton, pepper, etc. trade was performed at a micro-scale with the hilly tribes. The activity was held out primarily on the grounds of use-value or consumption. The products were generally bartered mostly at the personal level. The State did not seem to exercise a great deal of control over them.[24]

The intense responsiveness of food production to consumer demand was a remarkable characteristic of inner trade. The primary shopping market had a great range of food item from outside, and pottery, salt, silk and homegrown vegetables were carried from the countryside to Imphal. Imphal served as the shortest-range as a trade centre between multiple settlements.[25]

Trading activities were carried out solely by women in the valley. In addition to their family responsibilities, women came up to the villages where salt wells existed to obtain salt for fish, rice, etc. Likewise, some traders turned to the villages near the lakes to buy rice, salt and other items and traded them in fish, water, nut, etc. The hill tribes exchanged between themselves and occasionally came down to the valley to exchange goods from the Meitei traders. They transacted goods such as cotton, spear, clothes, plantain leaves, cane, bamboo products, etc. The products' value or price was usually determined to negotiate between consumers and vendors against their corresponding effects.[26]A product was produced in different phases by another person, goods such as raw materials, intermediates and finished

[23]Dunn, *Gazetteer of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.17.
[24]Sharma, and Singh. "*Outlining Pre-Colonial economy Of Manipur,"* op, cit.,p.169.
[25]Singh, "*Socio-Economic Study of Manipur (1467-1891 A.D.),"* op, cit., p.141.
[26]Devi, "*Pre-Colonial Trade And Commerce Of Manipur,"* op, cit.,pp.60-61.

products were sold in a separate stand in the same sector. A cloth seller often purchased its yarn from the same market to transform it into the cloth and returned for trading. The same is the case for sericulture, crops and vegetables etc.[27]

There was systematically divide in each market into different sections. Every section was regarded locally as *Pana Potpham* (vendor), and they were necessary. Chengbon *Potpham*, for instance, treated jewellery items. The subclans of Keisham, Taorangbam and Kangabam, were mostly under this particular supplier. Sairuk *Potpham* also owned jewellery items. The Kangabam sub-clan controlled it. *Lallonpham* took with the items needed for celebrations of religion and society. For this, no sub-clans specifically enjoyed a monopoly. Thangjam *Potpham* handled equipment from the blacksmithy. The Thangjam subclan sweetmeats were controlled and slaughtered. Lairikyengbam *Potpham* held with sweetmeats and beat rice products. It designated for the clan of *Lairikyengbam*. Also, these women vendors had a specially selected place on the local market, as the usage of *Phiribi Potpham,* a plot for female embroidery clearly stated. *Phiribi,* of course, means the craftsmanship thus suggesting that the female embroidery engaged in this specific craft also were involved.[28] Not surprisingly, only needlework items could be purchase in *Phiribi Potpham.*

5.1.2. External Trade

To external trade, although inadequate shreds of evidence are made in the Royal Chronicle. The exchange between Manipur and the neighbouring kingdoms such as Assam, Burma, Tripura and Cachar, there as clear idea cannot be taken of the nature and quantity of the trade between Manipur and those countries in the absence of adequate information. Although the chronicle reveals, elephants and horses were essential to trade items. The elephant trade

[27]Ghosh and Ghosh, *Women of Manipur*. op,cit.,pp.85-86.
[28]Ghosh and Ghosh, *The Crafts of Manipur.* op, cit.,p.26.

seems to have been solely a Royal monopoly. Regarding the horses, the quantum of work was implicitly not recorded. The Burmese claimed that the Manipuri silk, which was of good quality, in great demand.[29]

In the heart of the mountain chain between Brahmaputra Valley and Surma valley, on the route between South Asia & South-East Asia, Manipur provides traders on both sides, particularly during cold weather. Manipur acted as the east and west portal during the medieval period. Although the main silk route passed in the ancient days from *Yun – Nan* in the Chinese region to the USSR Bactriana, another land route occurred as a significant branch of the silk route from *Yunnan* to *Pragajyotishapur* (current Gauhati) going through the valley of Chindwin, the mountains and valleys of Manipur and *Mekok* (located in Makokchung in Nagaland).[30]Manipur's trading route served on the silk route's to Southeast Asia for their external trade. The Manipuris used this ancient land route until the late 18th century. It had been with Indian, Tai, Chinese trader, and indirectly with Roman merchants in the old historical period. Manipur connected to Shan, Cachar, Tripura, Ahom and Burma, etc.

External trade was carried out via mountain routes between Eastern India and Upper Burma, two of which were traversed by the mountains of Manipur. L. Boulnois says that the course had to be via Burma.[31] In 1630 AD, the Royal chronicle recorded Chinese merchants' who visited in the kingdom saw that trade between Manipur and Yunan province of China had learned the art of manufacturing gun powder. Trade persisted until 1813 A.D. In Manipur, Chinese traders and technology influenced, i.e. the advent of silk and silkworms, the manufacturing of bricks and gunpowder, etc.[32]

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[29]*Annual Administration Report of the Munnipoor Agency* (Calcutta: Foreign Department Press, 1874).p.8.
[30]Devi, *"Manipuri Society And economy (15th – 19th Century A.D.),"* op, cit., p.81.
[31]LuceBoulnois, *The Silk Road* (Allen & Unwin, 1966). p.72.
[32]Kabui, *History of Manipur*.pp.13-14.

The other neighbouring countries trade relations with Manipur were *Kapo* (Kabaw), *Mayang* (Cachar, Bangladesh), *Pong* (Shan State), *Kakyen* (a Shan State in upper Burma), *Aawa* (Ava), *Takhel* (Tripura), *Tekhao* (Ahom) and *Khaki* (Southern China) etc.[33] The external trade confined to luxury goods such as wax, ivory, tusk, and livestock such as buffaloes, ponies, and elephants, which were also essential trade commodities.

The first contact with Assam was during King Kabomba'sreign (1524-1542 AD). In 1536-1537 AD, a trade route was introduced to Assam, even presented to a Manipuri girl named Khongnanbi in marriage to the ruler of Ahom. A fishing trap with bamboo pieces was created that year, apart from exchanging gifts between the rulers. The name was called *Tekhao- Loo* or *Assamese fishing* trap. The name indicates that this kind of fishing trap was made in Assam. In the same year, *Aniseed* was introduced in Manipur. It assumes that the Elephant *Tekhao Ngamba, Tekhao Loo,* is presented by Assam.[34] In the Manipuri society peasants and fishers folk, *Tekhao Loo* is still used in their field stream and river.

Manipur has social and cultural interaction with a neighbouring kingdom. For example, some bridewealth elephants arrived from the Kabow during Mungyamba in 1569 A.D.,[35] and elephant *Khantengamba* also came from Tripura in 1584 A.D.[36]It shows Mungyamba's reign was a close relationship with the neighbouring kingdom too. A group of Manipuris came back from Assam in 1662 A.D. There was also a large group of people going to Tripura. Many immigrants, including those from Varanasi, Gujarat, Vrindavan and Prayag, the inhabitants of Burma, arrived Manipur during Paikhomaba's rule (1666-1697 A.D.). The trade and commercial activities promoted people's movement and the long-distance trade between Manipur and its

[33]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur – Cheitharon Kumpapa*.op, cit.,p.4.
[34]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur*.p.p.88-89.
[35]Singh and Singh,*Cheitharol Kumbaba*.op,cit., p.27.
[36]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur – Cheitharon Kumpapa*.op, cit.,p.61.

neighbouring Kingdoms, such as Assam, Burma and Tripura, mainly involved in elephants and horses.[37] There was trade with Burma, Cachar and Tripura during King Paikhomba's rule (1666-1697 AD). Manipur purchased the elephants from these countries. In Manipur valley, horses from the Kabaw valley were valued. Some of the elephants exported had Sanskrit names like *Mukta, Paban,* etc.,[38] the import of elephants from Burma persisted as before during the rule of Chrairongba (1697-1709 A.D.). Pemberton claims that the Manipur valley inhabitants carried some traffic with those living on the Ningthi river banks and the Irrawaddy rivers doab. Extreme significance was given to road maintenance. Manipur across Chindwin valley was essential for the transit and communication of the people, goods and thoughts between the Indian sub-continent in the west, Burma and South China Yunnan Province. Trade routes with Burma and China retained across the land routes through the hills. Harvey cites three paths to India from China, two lengthy ones to the *Salween* and the Irrawaddy river and Manipur down the Chindwin River.[39]

5.1.3. Medium of Exchange

At the earliest stages, goods and commodities were the mediums of exchange as trade passed through the barter system. The currency system did not evolve in the early period in Manipur. There is no historical evidence to collaborate with individual scholars who argue that King Pakhangba introduced the currency system and issued various denominations. T.C. Hodson's shows a bell-metal coin. Reportedly issued by King Pakhangba (33-154 A.D.). W. Yumjao Singh also discovered some Sanskrit legends using Samvat era coins, eluding to Kings of Manipur's and their use of Sanskrit engraved coins.

[37]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op,cit.,p.p.226.229.
[38]Singh, *A Short History of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.111.
[39]Singh, "*Socio-Economic Study of Manipur (1467-1891 A.D.),"* op, cit.,p.p.144-155.

Gunindra exclusively indicated that those coins were not issued by Kings of Manipur but were Manipur's external trade relics. Manipur has found a large number of coins mainly from the 18th and 19th Centuries. However, there are few coins from the 17th and 18th Centuries before this.[40]

In the medieval period, King Khagemba (1597-1652 AD) established several markets and systematically brought the exchange instruments and measuring devices to the marketing system. Barter was the earliest exchange system associated with world history. Later, the exchange tool appeared to have been through cowries. However, it is still obscure that the introduction of cowries as a tool for essential goods. Gunindra doubts that cowries used in the kingdom were the tools of exchange.[41]

Trade and social contact were the primary highlights in the medieval period. *Tangkhul*, for example, supplied cotton in the valley. In Imphal's *Sana Keithel* (Khwairamband market), the central market, Tangkhul came and did business. Manipuri bell metal coins are locally known as *'Sel'* used as an exchange medium, introduced by King Khagemba (1597-1652 A.D.).[42]The most exciting aspect of Meitei's coinage is the issue of very tiny denomination coins or *sels*. Meitei's *sel* coins allowed ordinary people to get used to using cash instead of cowries to purchase their supplies from the market to satisfy their day-to-day needs.[43]But the exchange tends to have been conducted only in Manipur's inner trade. The primary instrument for trading and marketing operations was in the remote areas of Manipur, particularly the mountainous region's barter system.

The shift from tribal to the feudal of Manipuri society required exchanging commodities and trading with their neighbours. The barter system was also conducted within Manipur and

[40]Singh, *Manipuri Numasmatics*.pp.2-3.
[41]Ibid., p.16.
[42]Lisam, *Encyclopaedia Of Manipur (3 Vol.)*. 2011.p.521.
[43]Rhodes and Bose. *The Coinage of Manipur*. op, cit., p.11.

the sale of products in *sels* (coins). During the reign of Khagemba (1597-1652A.D.), an outsider from *Kabow* (upper Burma) traded on the *Sana Keithel*, a monkey for a *Thamchet* (east Indian Lotus, Nelumbonucifera) and a chicken for a salt cake on the Sekmai market.[44]Currency deficiency does not seem to be a justification for the barter economy's practice during this period. It stated that the bell metal coins were in combination with silver coins were enough in Manipur. The only thing that matters in the country is the bell metal, which is tiny and weighs nearly seventeen grains, which the King's coins were needed to buy products or money given in exchange. The metal was mainly acquired from Burma and is made up of ancient gongs. Apart from coins, it was quite prevalent to barter items in the marketplace.[45]The land reclamation charges also started to be charged in *'sel'* during the Garibnawaz (1709-1748 A.D.) reign. Mostly the *sel* was circulated only in Imphal regions. The issue and circulation of currency could not be regulated as a financial institution. The King governed it.[46] Metal Copper and tin used in minting coins were accessible in the neighbouring country. It may be said that Manipur had a trader's connection with neighbouring countries and using both coins and barter system was the practice in this period.

5.1.4. Traders

As already stated, the traders were generally women in the internal market. Male traders played a more critical role in the case of external trade. As a merchant, one had to bring his goods for a while along the hilly paths, surrounded by numerous tribes who used to have

[44]Singh, *Nigthourol Lambuba.Vol.1*.p.299.
[45]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit.,89
[46]Gailangam, "*Economic Changes in Manipur during The British Rule 1891-1947,"*.p.17.

genuine passions. Consequently, no significant number of people could enter the business, and only the small numbers of traders were able to achieve a relatively high-profit margin.[47]

The merchant of the period was heterogeneous. They were not confined to a particular community, caste or class. Nor, were their reasons for engaging in trade, the same way. Some of the Brahmins seen in participating in the deal. It shows that Brahmins did not confine themselves to their traditional duties of performing religious rites.[48] One of the powerful merchant guilds of the period was the women vendors. They ran all the markets. The women of Manipur and the women vendors in the market the over time became a powerful entity. It could be inferred from instances like their refusal to accept the circulation if new coins were issued by the King, forcing the State to abandon it altogether.

5.1.5. Riverine Routes

In the earlier period, rivers were by far the State's most effective forms of travel and communication, particularly; for carrying high tons of products. During the rainy season in the medieval period, they were restricted and impracticable for the land routes. Therefore, for their inter-village activity, people, by and large, had to rely on rivers. But for want of ships, Manipur's waterways were not discovered as suitable for steamers and large-scale navigation. Nevertheless, it is noted that goods, particularly Manipur's forest products, could be carried to Sylhet (now in Bangladesh), Chahtak, and the State's largest river, the Barak.**[49]** There are many rivers in Manipur traversing their valleys and hills. One of the benefits of the river trade or waterways was the easy and cheapest mode of transport. The transporting of products through the rivers were practised over the centuries. For a long-distance, the Barak and Jiri rivers were

[47]Ali, "*Economic History of Manipur(1801-1951),"* op, cit., p.178.
[48]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.75.
[49]Pemberton, *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India*. op, cit.,p.52.

navigable. The Imphal river is connected and traversed to the valley and Nambul, Iril, Kongba, Sekmai, Khordak, Khuga, Chakpi, Thoubal and gave a proper waterway.[50] And, it was almost dry except for rainy seasons. Boats and rafts, hand Oar and bamboo sticks were the modes of transport during the rainy season.

Furthermore, Imphal and Nambul Turel (river) during the rainy season, practised for trading activities done through boats. Small boats used to transport up to 20 maunds of agricultural products. People also brought articles of grass, bamboo, timber and pottery. A reference made when King Mungyamba (1562-1597 A.D.) and his son King Khagemba travelled from Imphal to Sugnu on a boat trip to and fro in a day.[51] The Loktak Lake is also a major waterway, such as YumnamTomba and HongbaNgairangba by boating the Imphal river to go to Moirang to purchase fishes.[52] It discloses that the people of Manipur used riverine routes, not only by ordinary people but also by the Royal family travelled in the waterways. Manipur has enriched itself with several rivers flowing through its valleys and hills. Boats could navigate almost all of the rivers in Manipur. Most of the Manipur's kings acknowledged improvement effort to take out trade in riverine. Important priorities were bestowed to boatyards.

Manipur's kings' opened up construction projects to operate riverine trade, indicating that the State was very much aware of trade and commerce. Concerning the income from the agricultural surplus, businesses were the second most important source of revenue-yielding. That is why the royal authority recognised this dimension and was interested in giving traders various means and facilities. From an economic point of view, intelligent leaders were directly interested in improving and developing current trade routes. Although the land routes were only

[50]Gourachandra, "*Lammitlon(*2004)*."* p.3.
[51]*Singh and Singh,Cheitharol Kumbaba*.op,cit., p.27.
[52]*Nongshaba Laihui.*(Manuscripts /MS).

useful at the fair weather, initiatives were provided to flow back from floodwaters by constructing canals intended for irrigation and waterways. Royal Chronicle records that in 1534 AD, *Takhel Khong* was dug, in 1555 AD. Heiyen to Leishangkhong, Kokchaikhong was excavated in 1513 AD, and Para Thingel in 1624 A.D.The river Nambul and Naga streams were drained into Imphal during King Khunjaoba (1652- 1666 AD).[53]

In 1661 AD, to prevent continual overflow of water and flood to the east and western part of the villages, a small bund along the Naga stream was built by the King. The Nambul river bed from the *Khwairamband* market to *Chinga* hill in the South of the capital was dredged in 1665 AD, to make it more accessible for boating to and fro from the central marketing areas. They protected the market place by the digging of the drained and by building the bund against flooding. The Nambul river also dredged by King Paikhomba in 1680 AD and built river bunds to protect the areas from the floods and communication were maintained through the waterways by dredging the river.[54]Charairongba built new canals and repaired the old ones that had been dried up for a long time. He dug a trench at Khurai in 1706 AD.[55]

During the Garibnawaz's reign also, who initiated the dredging of the Singjame*i* and Keiranthong river area in 1719 A.D. as well as the dredged Angoupa canal, the Laipakhra river area and Loklaobung were dredged in 1725 AD. The King barred the river in the Langmeipung area. He built a navigation canal in the Mangsamkei area in 1738 A.D. In 1743 A.D., the *Turen Amanpa* in the Singjamei area was dredged, and in 1744 AD, the Loulampan river area was dredged.[56] During the medieval period, the state-managed boat manufacturing as timber comes from the state-owned forest. Some individuals were assigned the task of acquiring wood from

[53]Singh and Singh, *Cheitharol Kumbaba*. op, cit.,pp.24-26-30-37.
[54]Kabui, *History of Manipur*. op, cit., pp.226-227.
[55]Raj Kumar Somorjit Sana, *The Chronology of Meetei Monarchs: From 1666 CE to 1850 CE* (Imphal: Waikhom Ananda Meetei, 2010). p.47.
[56] Ibid.,ppp.78-79-80.

the forest and make boats by the rulers. The chronicle reveals that numerous boats were manufactured in the Tangkhul area.[57] All of the above activities show the State's concern about the development of riverine trade. Goods were transported through rivers and routes on land. Places flourished and enriched in particular on the river banks. We may claim the river banks prospered as a result of trading activities. Goods shipped from these rivers to the inland regions via available land routes.

5.1.6. Land Routes

The intensity of growth of transport network during the medieval era has been very sluggish. Under the royal patronage, only a few muds and earth paths were established to connect with the capital Kangla, with the valley-administered regions. The land route was a link between different villages within the country. Manipur's land route connecting with neighbouring countries had known to the western world since prehistoric times. Merchants, traders, pilgrims and even invaders had been between India and Burma. Historic routes like *TongjeiMaril* (ancient Cachar highway) can be mentioned – beginning from Bishenpur to the various hills and places like Nungba and reached Baskandi in Cachar. From Torbung in the southwestern portion of Manipur, the Khongjai or Kuki routes lead to Baskandi through the Barak's big western curves. Another road connects with Assam to the west of Manipur in the Thonglan*g* district continues to the north-west, the Dunshri river and Jorhat.[58]

On the southeastern part, Manipur is linked by Heirok and Imole route to Burma, each of which has a total distance of about 75-80 km. It travelled through the hills populated by Marings. It entered Kabaw valley in Burma. Manipur is also linked to Burma by the northern

[57]Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur – Cheitharon Kumpapa*.op, cit.,p.63.

[58]Sheikhophao Kipgen, "*Traditional Socio- Economy of The Kukis of Manipur"* in Manipur Historical Society Session, *Proceedings of the Manipur Historical Society: Eight Session, Standard College, Kongba, Imphal East District, 2015* (Imphal: Manipur Historical Society, 2016). p.99.

path that begins from Sekmai- passes through the Tanghkuls and Kuki hills and enters Kabaw valley its north-western extremity. These routes went through the hilly territories populated by the Nagas and Kukis who also flourished along. Loaded animals like oxen, pony horses carry the principal forms of travel on land for longer distances were prevalent in the medieval period was a sledge drawn by buffaloes.[59]

There were many other routes of minor significance. A few of them are mentioned as- Pong *Lambi* referring to the Kingdom of Pong passing through the Kongpal area of Manipur. Kongdong *Lambi* (road) now is used as an international highway under Indo-Myanmar road N.H.39.The kingdom was the gateway from Kwatha to Tamu. Wakha *Lambi is* heading from Akhui, Mao, Maram and Wakha to Shibshagar, the capital of the Ahom. The Somra range connects to Samsok (Hwang-hsup). *Takhel Lambi* linked to *Takhel* (Tripura) via Cachar reaching the Chittagong region. And *Tekhao Lambi* opened during King Kabomba's rule in 1536 AD.**[60]**It is believed that, besides trade and commerce, these routes were mostly used for military purposes.

After the consolidation of the various principalities to create the unite a Kingdom, the development and repair of inter-village roads began in a reasonable effort. Several routes, such as Phayeng Oinam hills, Khagempali, Wangthonbee, were made to link with Kangla.In the year 1614 AD, ten markets and their linkage routes were built in various areas of the valley under the patronage of King Khagemba. Khagemba enhanced transport further and maintained roads such as the Makak Road. It is interesting to note that King Khunjaoba (1652-66 AD) built a Thangmeiband Lambi bund. In the Imphal river, King Paikhomba also made banks on Singjamei to Kyamgei in 1695 AD to protect from the floods. During his reign, roads between

[59] Ibid.,p.p.99-100.
[60]Devi, *''Manipuri Society And economy (15th – 19th Century A.D.),"* op, cit.,174.

Chinga and Mongsangei were also repaired and expanded.[61]In 1713 AD., Garibnawaz planted trees along the routes to provide shelter for weary travellers and build the Kongba road in 1716 AD. Along the highway from Uchiwa to *Mayang* Cachar were also constructed in 1734 AD.[62]

5.1.7. Commodities Engaged in Trade

The sources noted various types of goods that were popular on the market. The goods can contain under forest goods, such as timber, wax, ivory and, textiles, handloom, etc. and the livestock such as horses, buffalos and elephants.[63] Pure silk became the critical item in Manipur's trade basket. Finished garments, the leafs covering the cob of maise were also shipped to Burma to manufacture cigarettes. The most crucial import element of Burma was a bell metal. Additional goods transported from Burma but returned to other nearby countries involved bullock buffalos, tea seeds and ponies.[64] It is also reported that the tribe of Manipur's Thadou Kuki used to trade with cane and bamboo in the famous Yazgyo market in the Chin Hills of Burma for salt, iron ornamentation, cotton, thread, etc.[65]The trade merchants from Yunnan, a southern province of China, between Manipur and China is worth noting. They arrived in Manipur via Burma. Pemberton has reported and produced the same goods as Burma, woven silk, tea, paper, different kinds of trifles and other fruits. In an exchange with them, cotton, ponies, ivories, wax and clothes were obtained from the State.[66] In tea, it is believed since an indigenous variety of tea was developed in Manipur. If the tea was imported, only the

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[61] Ibid.,176.
[62]Sana, *The Chronology of Meetei Monarchs*. op,cit.,78-79.
[63]Dunn, *Gazetteer of Manipur*..pp.61-62.
[64]"Manipur Channel >>History of Manipur ~ E-Pao! News About Manipur," accessed December 23, 2020,http://e-pao.net/epPrinter.asp?src=manipur.History_of_Manipur.Pre-colonial_trade_of_Manipur_Part_2_By_Budha_Kamei.
[65]Bertram Sausmarez Carey and Henry Newman Tuck, *The Chin Hills: A History of the People, Our Dealings with Them, Their Customs and Manners, and a Gazetteer of Their Country* (Cultural Publishing House,1983).pp.214-215.
[66]Pemberton, *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India*. op, cit. p. 33.

neighbouring State people who visited Manipur could have introduced it. It is noted that the Manipuris trade goods for the neighbouring Indian State in many commercial centres, like Assam, Cachar, the hills of Nagaland and the hills of Lushai (Mizoram), Tripura and Bengal etc. Manipur mostly exports chillies, cotton, tea seeds, pans, wax, ivories, elephants, cattle buffaloes, ponies, yarn-dyed, native spirit, clothes, etc. Simultaneously, the significant imports were betel-nuts, iron and brass bell and hookah's ,yarn velvet and other miscellaneous, etc.

Furthermore, the villagers on the border side used their products or goods obtained somewhere else to exchange them for their neighbouring state fellow traders' outcomes. For instance, people from some village of Manipur's western border took advantage of exchanging their salt products with the Cacharis, even though the state villagers near the Naga hills had to exchange salt for brass vessels Nagas Manipuri Khonjai tribes. They brought the iron from the valley and bartered it for clothes or guns with the Lushai hill people.[67] Another expensive good involved in the trade was agarwood, mostly grown in Manipur and obtained from the exporting Kabaw valley. It is pointed out by *Angom Ningthou Lairabaga Onnaba* and *Makoki Wari*, in a famous folk tale.[68] From time to time, the State's external trade was carried out on the undeveloped hilly roads, and the amount of transaction was thus restricted.

Another problem was that the State was at war with a neighbouring state and the external trading disrupted. Nevertheless, the people suffered very little as the Manipuri products served almost in all the State's needs; even the State stopped its external trade. Local products range from everyday goods to luxuries, including rice, organic vegetables such as fruits, betel leaves and salt, and pottery to silk and cotton.[69]

[67]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*. op, cit.,p.53.
[68]OinamBhogeshawar Singh, *Manipuri LokSahitya*. (Imphal,1985).pp.107-177
[69]Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*.p.89.

While the market emerges as an essential component and cornerstone of trade, early trade derived from barter and was rudimentary. Itinerant business based on agricultural surplus and some commodities like rice,grains and other items like salt, livestock, and other products became more widespread in volume and geographical reach. This rise in trade volume led to the establishment of regular trade routes and finally traded marts that transformed into traditional markets.

5.2.Summary

As traditional markets were part of the social structure of Manipur, it was operated mainly by women as a consequence of the *Lallups* system, and the other imprints of royalty here are the establishment and patronage of the trade marts. This led to the rise of large markets that catered to flourishing internal trade. Such trade was not possible only by exchange systems that were a rudimentary level. Therefore, the introduction of coinage and the other economic institution s also served to increase this volume. With the expansion of internal trade and secure trade networks, politics followed career and Manipur developed trade links with the neighbouring regions and were all finally linked to Bengal, the natural outlet to the sea. The trade network's dynamism lay in the increased agricultural surplus that creates favourable conditions for craft diversification which was patronised by extending facilities and providing security.

One of the striking features of the regional particularity of Manipur is the presence of a significant number of women in the market, and while traditional histories credit the role of able kings like Khagemba, Mungyamba and Pamheiba with the establishment of markets, the narrative is deeper. The presence of women as managers of exchange in the market as a consequence of the Lallup system and gave women relative freedom from demystifying to take

part in economic activities. However, the question is that such a phenomenon was noticeable only largely from the century was not adequately addressed. Many factors point to this when we study the range of commodities, and they include both raw and finished products that were traded not only within Manipur through land and riverine routes but also in a regional setting to Cachar, Burma and other regions. Diversity of the economy also indicates the increased range of products that was constantly being expanded, and more importantly, the increasing complexity of the economy. One of the factors directly related to the flourishing economy and it elaboration from the century onwards was the presence of political stability that rested on strong agrarian surplus and which in turn fostered the growth of exchange networks by providing secure trade routes. The culmination of this economic process reveals the increased nature of economic and trade activity during the time of Pamheiba by which time economy in Manipur progressed from the regional to the supra-local, and we find the flow of silver to Bengal as it was the only access to the sea for the landlocked regions in the east.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The present research topic titled trade and economy in Manipur has taken up the study of production and exchange patterns in medieval Manipur, ranging from the agrarian, pastoral, fishing, hunting, craft and allied products and items that were being produced and exchanged through these forms of production. The central focus of the thesis is, therefore, to map the production of a wide range of items in their larger context(s) and explain the evolution of the same through the centuries by accounting for the rise of new forms of production, innovations, ebbs and tides. At the other end of the spectrum, which is complementary to production is an exchange of items and services from within the region of Manipur and also from beyond. It is the totality of these production-related activities and exchanges that form the core of the thesis, and an attempt is made to proceed from mapping the same to offer a historical explanation of these processes over the centuries. In keeping with the recent advances in history, one has to go beyond the narrative tradition that offers the descriptive account to a more nuanced analysis that takes into account many inter-sectional aspects like the intersection of culture and economic process, the intersection of gender in the redistributive process and so on.

As the thesis is centred on the rise of the economy under the kingship of Pamheiba, it started with the assumption that while the sources deal in considerable length on the contributions of Pamheiba, the process could not have been sudden and would have taken many centuries and decades to evolve. Therefore, the historian has to try to look for the stable beginnings in the earlier period and centred in on the reign of King Kiyamba in the 15th century. A survey of the setting and the sources was attempted in chapter one that also spelt out the main arguments of the thesis and the plan of the thesis, from a perusal of the sources. One gets an

understanding that there is a fundamental disconnect between the primary and secondary sources in terms of thematic selection and it is this thematic selection that conditions the choice of topic and the direction through which the primary sources have to be understood. Most of the secondary works on the history of Manipur began with the colonial writings of the British administrators, ethnographers and other interested persons whose main aim was to demonstrate both explicitly or in many cases, implicitly, the superiority of the best and the deficiencies of Manipur in terms of the polity and the social, economic structure. At the same time, they have left behind voluminous accounts, most of them concerning the 19th century. In Manipur and in terms of thematic content are centred on politics, social, economic structure and religion. As a reaction to this trend, there emerged, a nationalist school of writing that also sought to counter these writings on the one hand, and demonstrate the vitality of the indigenous culture.

One divergent trend in this, try to link the greatness of Manipur with the pan- Indian narratives that were also part of the larger nationalist writings until the 1950s. A further churning took place with the rise of many indigenous historians examining many other facets of the history of Manipur from the 1960s onwards. What was replicated here was again the focus on the political structure, society and culture, including religion. Since the last twenty years, newer writings have proliferated adopting advanced methods. But the problem again seems to replicate the earlier agenda as of dealing with the polity and society. On the other hand, in the primary sources, one understands that there is a great deal of data in terms of the economy. These are available in the texts and also the other inscriptions and above all, the coinage, which is primarily an economic artefact. Therefore, one can make a case for studying the economic history of premodern Manipur based on a fresh reading of the primary sources and contextualising the same with the help of the well-established narratives in the secondary sources. Economic data in

the form of various commodities, flora and fauna are important markers of the economic process. Having an economic value, processes like agriculture, animal husbandry, the crafts and trade all of them are well represented and occur in considerable strength in the primary sources. Therefore, the case for studying economic history becomes stronger. It is also doubly confirmed by the presence of data in the primary sources.

In the second chapter, the focus is on a historical overview of Manipur and is largely concentrated in explaining the context and a description of the peopling of Manipur. While the peopling of Manipur is a topic that has occupied the minds of many anthropologists, sociologists and historians who have tried to reproduce this question of peopling of Manipur by explaining the settling of different ethnic groups over a period of time. While deliberating this issue from a more comprehensive perspective, we find that the ethnogenesis of the Meitei and their spread to different parts of the region of Manipur indicates the spread of durable village communities. The transition from the durable village-based communities that were largely self-sufficient and based on barter for a more supra-local organisation like chieftaincy is reflected in the organisation of the Meitei into the different *Salais*. Further transition to another advanced political system of an articulated kingship would also mean that the economic basis for such a kingship needed more surplus for the simple reason that to maintain administration and overlordship over disparate territories under supra-local organisation needed an army of non-food producing people who could take part in the military activities. It was the unique contribution of Manipur in terms of the socio-political organisation where the *Lallup* system of the organisation led to the mobilisation of young men who are in the productive age. The populating of the various regions of Manipur included the colonisation of semi-arid and relatively inhospitable territory by the different clans of the Meitei. One gets a clear idea about the economic component that has been

relatively missed out by many of the earlier historians when the settlement patterns are examined in detail. Most of the settlement patterns reveal the identification of certain professions with the settlements like silkworm rearing and other craft-based professions. Therefore, the settlement and peopling of Manipur, which is largely examined through ethnic frames of reference are limiting, and the thesis argues that it is the economic base that has led to the large-scale peasant intrusion into inhospitable terrains through human agency and the subsequent colonisation of the Imphal valley. Newer techniques of agriculture that help in the present intrusion to the relatively arid regions. A major boost was given with the settling of Muslims who brought in new techniques of paddy cultivation, thereby enabling the settling down of wetlands and at the same time, significantly increasing the surplus.

The economic structure of premodern Manipur also reveals the transition from a simple economy to a more complex economy of mass production of many different commodities based on crop production. This complexity is clearly apparent in the typologies of agricultural practices, depending on the months of the year. There is a clear-cut classification of the agricultural activities that are to be undertaken in certain months based on fine calculations of water availability, precipitation and wind patterns. Most of the festivals also coincided with the agricultural calendar, which also conditioned the cultural production, including the folk and the classical culture. The emergence of social stratification and classical culture, including writing was only possible because of the advanced state of the economy that had diversified from a very strong surplus oriented agrarian base to craft diversification and production in other sectors like animal husbandry and fisheries. The unique geographical pattern was also not exploited uniformly, but keeping the productive potential of the different eco-zones. One of the main problems in the earlier historiography of Manipur dwelt on the hill-valley divide as a natural

phenomenon conditioned by geographical determinism. A study of the primary sources and the production patterns make many of these myths redundant. One of the important generalisations regarding premodern Manipur is the isolated nature and the underdevelopment of the region that was conditioned by hostile geography. The reading of the primary sources, including the *Cheitharol Kumbaba* and the various inscriptions, document the spread of the population to different eco-zones. Most of the regions that had the potential for agriculture became surplus yielding regions and were settled by the various Meitei clans after the human intervention, pointing to the geographical possibilism as a factor rather than geographical determinism. This is also expressed in most of the classification of the land that was allotted to different functionaries based on certain service conditions. Some of the service conditions included the lands allotted to the soldiers, Brahmins, temples and other service groups that reveal a stratified society.

Over the centuries, beginning from the 15th century onwards under the rule of Kiyamba, more marshland was brought under cultivation, and many other forms of surplus flowed into Manipur due to incessant wars with the neighbours, and one of the important surplus yielding regions was the Kabaw valley of Burma. Similarly, the Shan region of Burma also yielded silver and was one of the only silver producing regions in South and Southeast Asia. Thus, agrarian productivity and craft diversification that began in the 15th century also lead to expansionist tendencies that were bolstered by rising inflows from Burma in terms of silver and tribute. On the other hand, the introduction of new commodities like tobacco, maise, pineapple etc. are markers of the Columbian exchange. We can understand from this that Manipur was not an isolated region, but rather connected to many of the trade networks from India and mainland Southeast Asia, primarily, Burma. Since Bengal was the only outlet to the sea for all the eastern Himalayan regions, trade routes converged and led to Bengal, which explains the cultural

connections with Bengal. Such connections developed not only in Manipur but also in regions like Tripura. One of the findings of this thesis is that Manipur was not isolated, but exposed to many of the regional and supra-regional trade and political networks, as evidenced by the impact of the Columbian exchange that led to the adoption of new crops like tobacco, et cetera. Similarly, these ideas also go against the central argument of classifying Manipur as part of Zomia or a nonstate space that remained in voluntary isolation from the state societies. The presence of a strong state that was constantly expanding, mainly from the 15th to the 18thcenturies onwards and presence of economic and social stratification goes against the grain of zomia. The other fundamental arguments of zomia are a non-settled population and the lack of written script. Manipur was settled in the villages with the durable agrarian communities that are adapted to the different eco-zones and combine various forms of production. Further, the rise of the script also meant the rise of a literate community who did not engage in food production, but received patronage to produce and disseminate works of literature that are not purely ornamental or of aesthetic value only, but also served in administrative apparatus and thus marks the evolution of language from the stage of literation to literalisation.

In this context of a surplus economy in Manipur from the 15th century onwards, marks the beginning of the expansion of the state that is marked by battles and wars of expansion, which were not merely political as a brought in a lot of economic dividends in the form of tribute, silver and control over territory, which again yielded surplus in the form of taxes. Internal surplus facilitated the growth of markets that evolved from itinerary exchanges to full-fledged commodity exchange networks. One of the consequences of the Meitei practice of warfare was the Lalllup system that led to the migration of men and their conscription for military duty and

placed economic transaction in the hands of women. As a result of this, women in Manipur became more involved in the exchange mechanisms by taking on the roles of shopkeepers and managing markets. One of the best examples of this is the Ima market that has been in continuous existence since the 16th century and is India's only example of a women-only market. The trade-in commodities of processed items such as dried fish, salt, textiles, metal goods and livestock also testify to the growth of the local economy. Items such as betel leaves and nuts were imported from neighbouring Silchar, that was one of the main centres of the trade network in north-east India. Many varieties of textiles are also exported along with other commodities and one of the important destinations for silver. As already mentioned, was Bengal, which was perpetually short of silver, but was the only outlet to the sea for many of the Himalayan regions and thus most of the trade routes were or oriented towards Bengal in the larger networks. While items of mass consumption like foodgrains and some varieties of cloth were traded locally, items of elite consumption like jewellery and other precious metals were traded through distant regions. Crop diversification was a continuous process, and the impact of the Columbian exchange testifies to this. In the ultimate analysis, these developments clearly point to the transition from a use economy to an exchange economy that had taken strong structure by the 17th century.

One may therefore conclude that the emergence of Manipur in the 18th century under the rise of Garibnawaz has to be understood as a long-term process that began with the reign of the Kiyamba in the 15th century A.D. and the 18th-century rise of Manipur is due to the transition from a use economy to an exchange economy in the 17th century and its elaboration till the 18th century, under the patronage of able kings who had the benefit of a stable polity that rested on strong economic foundations.

APPENDIX -MEITEI MATERIAL CULTURE



Phoura(bamboo basket used to dry up paddy).Source: MMRC Unity Park Khangabok.



*Yangkok-Meiteis :*circular rice chaff bamboo basket.



KhwangIyon (Loinloom) Source:MMRC Unity Park Khangabok.



Pang Lyong(throw shuttle loom) Source:MMRC Unity Park Khangabok



Pangal –tem (*Shuttle)*



PhanekMapanNaiba Khoi Lonba: Ceremonial wear for women Phanek Bee designed on the border.



Tareng-(Spinning wheel) *Source:*MMRC Unity Park Khangabok.



Phi- hou- Keirak-(Warp making frame) and*Shamchet*-(Reed)Source:MMRC Unity Park Khangabok.



Hidakphoo-Hukah, Source: MMRC UNITY Park Khangabok.



Hidakphoo-(Hukah)Source:MMRCUnity Park Khangabok.



Meruk- bamboo basket used by Meiteis as a container for collecting cooking rice.



Sangbai: Paddy measuring basket



EeSai Pun-(Dringking Water Storage Pot). Source: MMRC unity Park Khangabok



Thangjou-Complete dagger-like weapon for multiple purposes.



Thangol(Sickle)



*Langol-Plough.*Source*:MMRC Unity Park Khangabok*



Kangpot(Bullock Cart) Source:MMRC Unity Park Khangabok



Yotpak:Spade



SangariKangkhong (Bullock cart Wheel).Source: MMRC Unity Park Khangabok



Thumok(Basket)



Taijep(Fishing Trap)Source:MMRC Unity Park Khangabok



KaboLoo(Fishing Trap)



Sara-Loo (Fishing Trap).



Tungol-(fish basket).Source:MMRC Unity Park Khangabok.



Cheirong(paddy-thrasher)



Chengphu (Rice Storage pot) and Uning (Salt Storage container) Source: MMRC Unity Park Khagabok.



Ngaphu(dried fish storage pot)



Phou intok (paddy spoon) Source: MMRC Unity Park Khangabok



PhanekMayekNaiba– (Meitei women wear at marriage ceremonies).Source: MMRC Unity Park Khangabok.



KhamenChatpa(a special silk dhoti for male)Source: MMRCUnity Park Khangabok.



MugaPhanek(Manipuri ankle-length skirt for Women daily wear)



Source:"Hijagang (Boat-Yard) Closely Associated with the Religious History of the Meitei People at Kangla : August 21, 2013, Pictures from Manipur." Accessed November 18, 2020. http://www.e-pao.net/epGallery.asp?id=3&src=Landscape/Kangla/Hijagang20130821_2.



Source:"Traditional Boat Race HiyangHirelTanaba." Accessed November 18, 2020. https://www.prokerala.com/news/photos/imphal-traditional-boat-race-hiyang-hirel-tanaba-27485.html.



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Ningel Salt Well



Salt Cakes at Ningel



Source: The Optimist Citizen. “Ima Keithel – The Oldest Woman Run Market of Asia, a Vocal Flux of Women Voices in Manipur,” May 23, 2018. https://www.theoptimistcitizen.com/ima-keithel/



Source: “Ima Market | Imphal West District, Government of Manipur | India.” Accessed November 18, 2020. https://imphalwest.nic.in/gallery/ima-market/.



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GLOSSARY

Ahallup: One of the divisions in which the land was divided for administrative purposes.

Ahonglon: A ritual song about festivals performed by Meitei Kings.

AkongLup: Society of *Sheloi* ethnic/subclannish section of people led by Kongbam menfolk.

AngoubaLup: Organisation of Angom, undercommand of axial Angom regal dynasty.

ChingchaLup: Union of Leichon and Tollong villages' inhabitants led by the presiding officer of the two villages named Leichan –LaakpaTollongkhombaaa.

Chup Saba: Rite observed for the unnatural deaths/also for the end of issueless.

HijanHirao: Narrative poem sung at the conclusion of *Lai Haraoba* festival.

KaichaLup: Khwai small commune's organisation's dwellers under the supervision of*Chahui-LeirongPaamba*, an eminent resident of domain.

Kenchou: Ritual song associated with the Lai Haraoba.

KhuraiLup: Association of settlers of the Khurai commune.

Lai Haraoba: Ritual and religious festival of the Meiteis/festival of pleasing the gods.

LairemmaPaosa: Love repartee between young gods and goddesses.

Lakpa: Divisional Officer

Langmailon: Composition recited on the Meitei Kings coronation

LangmaiLup: Association of Lannngmai/ Nongamai sub clannish section.

Loishang: Institute of local priests and priestess.

*Maibas:*Religiousfunctionary male (priest).

Maibi: Priestess/Also used for midwife.

Maichou: Meitei Scholars and advisers in the service of the king who wrote in the Meitei script.

*Mithun:*Bovine species of north-east India.

Nahallup: One of the divisions into which land was divided for administrative purposes.

Ougri: An archaic song sung for prosperity of landPakhangbaLangyenshei, second son of Supreme being and first king of Ningthouja Clan.

Pangals: Manipuri Muslims, and integrated into the culture while still retaining their faith. Probably derivedfrom 'Bengali,' their original homeland.

Panthoibi: Name of the Goddess

Potsangba: Security guard.

*Puya:*Old literature.

*Salai/Yek:*Each of the clan groups: Angom, Chenglei, Khaba-Ngaba, Khuma, Luwang, Moirnag and Ningthouja.

Sana Lamok: A tribute to the ancestral diety, Pakhangba.

Sanamahi: First son of the Supreme Being and the household deity of the deities.

Tengtha: to express sadness and feeling sorry about something.

TurelAchouba: Big River

Turel: River

Umanglais: Forest deities, used of ancestral gods in the broader context.

*Yumnak:*Name of the sub-Clan.

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Condition of the Trade and Commerce in the history of Manipur during 16th to 18th century.

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Abstract:

Trade and commerce were, which since time, immemorial have been an essential element of human existence. Countries with a large market have always had outstanding powers. Trade carried out in modern ages with the return of cash products, which is primarily paper money, receipts, etc. Trade emerged between regions expertise and division of labour, as well as the comparative manufacturing advantage of one country over another. For all societies, however, it cannot be regarded as uniform. This paper is an attempt to examine trade and commerce during the medieval economy of Manipur, which will form the basis for an understanding of the evolving trend of the state economy. In this context, it is essential to see how trade and commerce carried out during the centuries across different times and spaces.

Keywords: Trade and Commerce, Market, Economy, Manipur.

Introduction

Trade has been a central element of human life since time immemorial in places where the broad-based market activity has always formed great powers. Trade is a commercial entity for the sale and purchase of products, supplies or information. It is a transition of ownership by consumers of goods and services person to person and the network making a trade referred to as the market. Trade used to mean in the ancient times the exchange of goods between the buyer and the seller with other goods. Later the buyer exchanged goods, and the buyer's seller had to pay for precious metals such as silver or gold, instead of other commodities. The trading of goods with currency, which is primarily paper money, has carried out transactions in modern times. Trade emerged as a result of the specialization and division of labour, owing to the production supply and demand of one region over others.

Trade and commerce are known as *Lalon-etik* in Manipuri. [1] The state appropriation mode for the kind of labour-service not only regulated the amount of production and the growth of the marketing network but eventually determined the value of trade and buying and selling within and outside states. Due to the limitations of the appropriation mode, the range of trading operations at different levels is significantly restricted. Accessible information indicates the state provided not only kind but also frequently made in-kind and service. Hence, the surplus took the form of labour leases for the ruling

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class ' immediate appropriation.[2] Also, most of the peasant's primary food, clothing, etc. needs were met within their household.

The medieval trade and commerce of Manipur described as the system of the barter economy. Even though metal coin gradually replaced a bartering system, this did not much help internal and external trade in Manipur. As can be seen, by minimal surplus production, the establishment of the marketing and commercial networks was rudimentary. Local economies exchanged rare commodities. Private trade appeared trivial, but the State seems not to have encouraged it. In early Manipur, private trade should not have missed it completely. Due to the lack of trade, private trade appears to be very restricted and very vulnerable to the political hazards of the day.[3] However, with their primary occupation in mind, most traders never detached from agriculture. The influence of Meitei state displayed economic glory and regional development in the middle of the 15th century, as well as the commercial and military route between the valley of Manipur and Upper Burma.[4]

MARKETING CENTRE

Since ancient times, people have been practising goods to exchange their products in the battle for existence. They used a particular location for such exchanges. In these structures, they stored their goods so that consumers could readily see them and exchange them as a means of return, either by selling or by any commodity. Every day, weekly or monthly, they organized. This fixed place was known as the *Keithel* (market) in Manipuri. Hence, it is the place where people have displayed their excess food grains and other products in granaries forms. Trade defined by an exchange of goods for items in both the ancient and medieval periods. In the Kingdom of Manipur, there was no regular exchange. No market place mentioned in Manipur's Royal Chronicle before 1588 A.D. Generally accepted commodities mostly traded at the manufacturer or the consumer's home. It often exchanged in an appropriate location for both people.[5] Men and women actively engage in trade. It is a notable feature of the medieval Manipur economy.[6]

The livelihood industry had flourished in Manipur society. Manipur and its neighbours were traded too soon with excess ranges, like Upper Burma and China. Manipur's Royal Chronicle recorded ten markets in 1614 A.D., *Sana Keithel, Kha Keithel, Moirang Keithel Khuman Keithel, Phaibung Keithel, Chair Keithel Namphaon Keithel,* and *Konglang Keithel,* Phayeng Keithel, and Andro Keithel.[7] These markets significantly helped the sale and purchase of the surplus-generated goods.

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T.C. Hodson view that *Sana keithel* built by King Mungyamba in 1580 A.D.[8] Apart from these markets, Manipur's royal chronicle mentioned the establishment of several markets in the various parts of the kingdom by King Khagemba's successors, such as Charairongba (1697-1708 A.D), the Kha keithel site was tiny, and the Sagang (the rest of the house or youth hostel) construction residents evicted in 1700 and the area integrated into the market;[9] further built *Panthoibi Keithel* in 1705 A.D.[10] In 1730 A.D., Garibaniwaz introduced a new rural market called *Ayuk Keithel* (morning market) and a weekly daytime market at Moirangkhom in 1746, so on.[11] The women of Manipur were solely responsible for market operations. There were different kinds of the market; few outside the Imphal regions started their activities early in the morning and ended before afternoon and operations began in the afternoon in some markets. They are known as morning and evening market. Some markets opened in a week. It referred to as *Hapta Keithel* (weekly market).[12] Sana Keithel's morning market is a pleasant sight. It is the location for seasonal vegetables, including hangam (rice seeds), chicken, yendem (arum), sebots (fish gourd), pan (arum stems), chilli, gourd, cucumber, torbot (yellow gourd), fish, spice leaves (maroimarang) and laphu (Plaintain stem) so and so on. Sales offer vendors a place in quantity at a lower price. Manipuri, known as *Lalonbi* or *Achanbi,* was the majority of traders women.[13]

Manipur's Royal Chronicle mentioned expertise as in markets like *Phaibung Keithel* was for clothing and edibles. *Chairen Keithel* specialisation for the sale of paddy and it took place once in a week. Kontong keithel selling Takhen baskets as well as *Andro keithel* was a spot for the people of Mao to visit monthly.[14]

There were three significant markets near to the capital building, *Sana Keithel, Awang keithel,* and *Kha keithel* created the foundation for Kingdom trade and commerce in the Kangla area. Several products and finished goods from agriculture, forests, and minerals have been accessible here. Also accessible here were products imported from outside the kingdom. It is assumed that dealers from other markets in different areas of the Kingdom received their commodities, products, etc. from here and then marketed on their corresponding markets.[15]

In relation to that on *Khoiri Keithen* and *Awun Keithel,* Kings, such as Chalamaba, Khagemba, and Paikhomba, built stone megaliths to demonstrate the development of the markets during their regimes, Moirang traditionally has markets in each of its local markets, including *Ngankhai Leikai, Koyal Leikai, Nganlou Leikai,* and *Youshu Leikai*. In addition to the rulers of the day, the markets were also set up by the nobility and other eminent persons.[16]The opening by a royal guru of the *keithel* demonstrates that in the middle of the 18th century, the Brahmins in Manipur increased their status as well as they also involved in the trading business activities.

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There seemed to be a unique segment selling different commodities in the market like the present day. The fish market, vegetables, rice, meat, dry fish, clothes, pan leaves, supari, sweetmeats, and ornaments for Hillman were some of the prominent features.[17]

INTERNAL TRADE

The internal trade was conduct within the state with the peoples of the hills and the Meiteis, a variety of exchanged goods, mostly perishable. The main markets were visited by and a large number of hill people, especially during the winter seasons. For the hill people and the sweetmeats, the majority of the items sold or exchanged in the markets were dry fish, rice, vegetables, pan, supari, clothing, and ornaments.

One of Manipur's most prominent marketing systems was that women folk operated the buying and selling activity in the valley. Trading article ranges from home-woven cloth, spinning wheels, crop-to-vegetable agricultural products, vegetable goods, cane and bamboo items, cocoons and yarn, etc. G.K Ghosh and Shukla Ghosh said that "Almost all over the world this profession is controlled universally by men. It is true all over India too. But Manipur and its neighbouring states it is an exception where trading is done by women".[18]The men, except for outsiders, were not allowed to enter the marketplace. From the historical period to the present day, internal trade activities is the practice by the womenfolk of Manipur.

Salt was the most significant product the hill people purchased from these markets. They carried baskets, wax, ginger, cotton, pepper, for cash exchange or sold. Trade performed at a micro-scale with the hill tribes. The activity was held out primarily on the grounds of use-value or consumption. The products were generally bartered mostly at a personal level. The state did not seem to exercise a great deal of control over them.[19]

There was systematically divide each market into different sections. Every section was regarded locally as *Pana Potpham* (vendor) and these were important e,g. *Chengbon Potpham* handled with jewellery products. This specific vendor was under primary control of the *Taorangbam, Keisham* and *Kangabam* Subclans. *Sairuk Potpham* also handled with jewellery products. The *Kangabam* sub-clan had managed it. *Lallonpham* handled with the items needed for celebrations of religion and society. For this, no sub-clan specifics enjoyed a monopoly. *Thangjam Potpham* handled the equipment from the blacksmith. The *Thangjam* subclan sweetmeats were controlled and slaughtered. *LairikyengbamPotpham* handled with sweetmeats and beat rice products. It designated for the clan of *Lairikyengbam*.[20]

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EXTERNAL TRADE

External trade although inadequate evidence made in the royal chronicle, the trade between Manipur and the neighbouring kingdoms such as Assam, Burma, Tripur and Cachar, a clear idea cannot be taken of the nature and quantity of the trade between Manipur and those countries in the absence of adequate information. Although, as the chronicle revealed, elephants and horses were important trade items. The elephant trade seems to have been solely a royal monopoly. Regarding the horses, the quantum of trade is implicitly not recorded. The Burmese claimed that the Manipuri silk, which was of good quality, was in great demand.[21]

In the heart of the mountain chain between Brahmaputra Valley and Surma valley, on the route between South Asia & South-East Asia, Manipur provides traders on both sides, particularly during cold weather. Manipur acted as the east and west portal during the medieval period. Although the main silk route passed in the ancient days from Yun – Nan in the Chinese region to the USSR Bactriana, another land route occurred as a major branch of the silk route from Yunnan to Pragajyotishapur (current Gauhati) going through the valley of Chindwin, the mountains and valleys of Manipur and Mekok (located in Makokchung in Nagaland).[22] Manipur trade route was operating on the South of the silk route. The Manipur has used this ancient land route until the end of the 18th century for their external trade. Manipur mainly linked to Shan states Cachar, Tripura, Ahom and Burma, etc. The external trade confined to luxury goods such as wax, ivory, tusk, and livestock such as buffaloes, ponies, and elephants, which were also important trade commodities.

External trade was carried out via mountain routes between Eastern India and Upper Burma, two of which were traversed by the mountains of Manipur. L Boulnois says that the route had to be via Burma.[23] In 1630, the Royal Chronicle recorded Chinese merchants who visited in the kingdom saw that trade between Manipur and Yunan province of China that they had learned the art of gun powder manufacture. Trade persisted until 1813 A.D. In Manipur, Chinese traders, and technology influenced, i.e. the advent of silk and silkworms, the manufacture of bricks and gunpowder, etc.[24]

The first contact with Assam during the reign of king Kabomba's (1524-1542 A.D.). In 1536-1537 a trade route was introduced to Assam, even presented to a Manipuri girl named Khongnanbi in marriage to the ruler of Ahom. A sort of fishing trap was produced that year with pieces of bamboo, apart from the exchange of gifts between the rulers. The name was called *Tekhao-roo* or Assamese fishing trap. The name indicates that this kind of trap made in Assam. In the same year, Aniseed was introducing in Manipur. It assumes that the Elephant Tekhao Ngamba, Tekhao Roo, is presented by Assam.[25] In the Manipuri society peasants and fishers folk, Tekhao roo is still used in their field stream and river too.

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The trade and commerce activities promote the movement of people, and the long-distance trade between Manipur and the neighbouring Kingdoms, such as Assam, Burma, and Tripura, which mainly involved elephants and horses.[26] There was trade with Burma, Cachar, and Tripura during King Paikhomba's rule (1666-1697). Manipur purchased from these countries elephant. In the Manipur valley, horses from the Kabaw valley were valued. Some of the elephants exported had Sanskrit names like Mukta, Paban, etc.[27] The import of elephants from Burma persisted as before during the rule of Chrairongba (1697-17107). Pemberton claims the inhabitants of the Manipuri Valley carried some traffic with those living on the banks of the Ningthi River and the Ningthi and Irrawaddy Rivers doab. The extreme significance is given to road maintenance. Manipur across Chindwin Valley was essential for the transit and communication of the people, goods, and thoughts between the Indian Subcontinent in the west and Burma and South China Yunnan Province. Trade routes with Burma and China retained across the hill through land routes. Harvey cites three paths to India from China, two lengthy ones to the Salween Rivers and the Rivers Irrawaddy and one to Manipur down the Chindwin River.[28]

MEDIUM OF EXCHANGE

At the earliest stages, goods and commodities were the medium of exchanges as trade passed through the barter system. The currency system did not evolve in the early period Manipur. There is no historical evidence to collaborate with certain scholars who argue that King Pakhangba introduced the currency system and issued the coins of various denominations. T.C. Hodson's shown a bell-metal coin, reportedly issued by King Pakhangaba (33-154). W. Yumjao Singh also discovered some Sanskrit legends using Samvat Era coins, eluding Kings of Manipur's use of Sanskrit engraved coins. P. Gunindro exclusively indicated that these coins not issued by Kings of Manipur but were relics of Manipur's external trade. Manipur has found a large number of coins mainly from the 18th and 19th centuries. However, there are only very few coins from the 17th century and the 18th century.[29]

In the medieval period, King Khagemba (1597-1652) established several markets and brought the exchange instruments and measuring devices to the marketing system in an entirely systematic manner. Barter was the earliest exchange system so far associated with world history. Later, the exchange tool appears to have been through cowries. However, it is still obscure the period of the introduced of cowries as a tool for essential goods. P. Gunindro doubts too that cowries used in the Kingdom as a tool of exchange.[30]

Manipuri bell metal coins are locally known as *' Sel 'used* as an exchange medium, introduced by King Khagemba (1597-1652).[31] The most exciting aspect of Meitei's coinage is the issue of very tiny denomination coins or *sels*. Meitei *sel* coins allowed ordinary people to get used to using coins instead of cowries to purchase their supplies from the market to satisfy their day-to-day demands.[32] But the exchange tends to have been conducted only in Manipur's inner trade. The primary

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instrument for trading and marketing operations was in the remote areas of Manipur, particularly the mountainous regions barter system.

The shift from the tribal social structure to the feudalism in Manipuri society required the exchange of commodities and trade with their neighbours. The barter system also conducted within Manipur, along with the exchange of products in *sels* (coins). During the reign of Khagemba (1597-1652A.D.), an outsider from Kabow (upper Burma) traded on the *Sana keithel*, a monkey for a *Thamchet* (East Indian Lotus, Nelumbo nucifera) and a chicken for a salt cake on the Sekmai market.[33] The only thing that matters in the country is the bell metal, which is tiny and weighs nearly seventeen grains, which the King coins as needed and products or money given in exchange. Metal is mainly acquired from Burma and is made up of ancient gongs. Apart from coins, it is quite prevalent to barter items in the marketplace. Mostly the *Sel* was circulated only in Imphal regions. The currency issue and circulation not be regulated as a financial institution. It governed by the king.[34]Metal Copper and tin used in minting coins were accessible in the neighbouring country. It may say that Manipur had trader connection with neighbouring countries and using both coins and barter system practice in this period.

CONCLUSION

The above description proved that the economy of medieval Manipur was started with a barter system and gradually replaced by a metal coin. It was characterized in both the ancient and medieval times by an exchange of goods for products. Witnessing of men and women actively engaged in commercial activities was a notable characteristic of medieval Manipur's economy. There were different kinds of the market in the state and each market is a unique segment selling different commodities such as fish market, vegetables, meat, rice, meat, dry fish, clothes, pan leaves, supari, sweetmeats, and ornaments for Hillman were some of the prominent features. Besides, the markets were also essential for other social interaction apart from these business activities. One of Manipur's most prominent marketing systems was that women folk operated the buying and selling activity which give them economic freedom and empowerment.

Internal trade was essential to conduct within the state with the hills and the Meitei's inhabitants, a variety of trade goods that also reinforce social and cultural ties among different ethnic groups. On the other hand, despite inadequate evidence in the royal chronicle, trade between Manipur and neighbouring kingdoms such as Assam, Burma, Tripura, and Cachar, a clear idea of the nature and quantity of trade between Manipur and those countries cannot be taken in the absence of adequate information. Although, as the chronicle revealed, elephants and horses were essential commodities. Elephant trading seems to have been a royal monopoly. It's vital to revisit the state's earlier economic history, which will provide the necessary information and help us capture the holistic understanding of Manipur's changing economic pattern.

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ECONOMIC HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL MANIPUR

Moirangthem Suresh Singh*

Abstract:

This paper highlights the historical perspective of economic system in Manipur during the Medieval period. Manipur is known for its unique mosaic of ethnic diversity and geographical features. It is also stated that the history of mankind, primitive or civilized dealt with their battle for existence. The changing processes and evolution from the barbaric way of dwelling to civilization were the possessions of their consecutive and nonstop efforts and struggles of living. The main theme of the paper revolved around various economic activities like agricultural production and nature of land use; Industry and Manufactures; Pottery; Salt Manufacturing; Yu or Rice beer; Boat Manufacture and Trade and commerce and its associated problems and prospects. This paper concludes by highlighting the economic changes inaugurated by Khagemba (1597-1652) such as the large scale introduction of the wetland, agricultural and trade goods, like tobacco, metal, brick making transformed the economic structure of Manipur. It resulted in improving the resource based and therefore increased the available surplus in bulk and the diversity of crops and goods also brought in craft specialization and social stratification, this period also witnessed the maturation of a grocery store. During the reign of Khagemba a marked shift in the economy took place; from use economy to an exchange economy. It was the broad economic base of Manipur, along with the shift of the economic system that leveraged a shift in the other areas as well.

Key words: Keithel,Puya, Loiyumba Shilyen,Yu, Chaphu.Lallup.Lou.

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Introduction:

Manipur is a state, regionally located in the North – Eastern part of India. The state is surrounded by Burma in the east, Nagaland in the north, Mizoram in the south, and Assam in the west. The present Manipur state lies in 23.50' and 25.30'latitude north and 93.10'and 94.30' longitudes respectively, are the dimensions bounding the state.[1] Manipur has a unique mosaic of ethnic diversity and geographical features. Different ethnic groups include the Meitei, Naga, Meitei Pangal, (Muslim) and Kuki – Chin communities living together in for centuries. Their legendary folklore, myths and dances, indigenous games and martial arts, exotic handloom and handicrafts have a mystique of nature. Manipur lies on a melting pot of culture, rich in aesthetic and traditional and surcharged with nature of pristine glory.[2]

Etymology of the word Manipur

In the ancient period, her name was known by different names such as Kangleipak, Meitei Leipak, Poireipak and Meitrabak.[3]The name 'Manipur' was assumed during the reign of king Garibaniwaz who converted to the Vaishnavism in (1709-48).[4]

Feature of Economic condition in Medieval Manipur

History of mankind, primitive or civilized dealt with their battle for existence. Changing the processes and evolution of the barbaric way from dwelling to the civilization were the possessions of their consecutive and nonstop efforts and struggles for the living. The means of livelihood and the way to get their requirements can be termed as an economic institution.[5]The Pre-Colonial economic system of Manipur can be classified into three levels. 1) Savagery; whose livelihood and shelter depended on the fauna and flora in their surroundings. 2) The Primitive; whose shelter was moved from caves to permanent huts, food producing activities substituted the food gathering. 3) Civilization; society established on the basis of agrarian structure that is full-fledged or settled agriculture. Metal tools, mainly iron tools, interchanged the stone tools and barter system was progressively replaced by the monetary system. Mercantilism became one of

[1] Singh, Lairenmayum Iboongohal. *Introduction to Manipur:*Imphal Global Publications, 2014.p,1.
[2] "Manipur – Jewel of India – a Mosaic of Traditions & Cultural Patterns." Accessed November 8, 2017. http://toursoperatorindia.com/Manipur.
[3] Kabui, Gangmumei.*History of Manipur: Pre-Colonial Period*.New Delhi National Publishing House,1991.p, 1.
[4] Sanajaoba, Naorem. *Manipur, Past and Present: History, Polity & Law.Vol.1*. New Delhi Mittal Publications, 1988.p,3.
[5] Devi,N. Pramodini.*The cultural History of Early Manipur:*Times publishing House Manipur,2011.p,147.

the significant features of productive force. Small-scale industries accelerated the development of the economic system.[6]

The economic history of early Manipur, the reliable sources on important features are not sufficiently available, however the archaeological and literary findings helpful in tentatively reconstructing the basic characteristics of the economic system.[7]The archaeological discoveries of the Neolithic, bone tools from the pre-historic caves at Kangkhui, Phunal hills, Tharon and Napachik traces stone age culture of Manipur.[8]These findings indicate in this region at some point of time existence of a hunting and food gathering economy. And the further excavation at Napachik site exposes the prevalence of agricultural practices and settled life in the Valley of Manipur. The Manipuri chronicles and other literary text Puyas (ancient text) like Sakok Lamlen, Ningthou Kangbarol, Thirel Layat mentioned the innovation of indigenous varieties of paddy, the invention of agriculture, practice of shifting cultivation, and also the development of bronze and iron technology and the making of daos, axes and hoes for agriculture and related purposes. The ancient Meitei were practicing shifting cultivation before knowing the wet rice cultivation, they took out the shifting cultivation on the hill slopes or dry land forest areas.[9]The northern and eastern parts of Imphal valley, which were thickly forested dry lands, offered the ideal surroundings for the growth of this type of agriculture. The agricultural implements adopted were axes and daos for falling down trees and clearing the jungles and the small iron hoes for digging up the dirt.[10]Poireiton khunthokpa the first literary text revealed the paddy cultivation in the valley of Manipur.[11]In that respect there is no reference to using plough or animal- driven in the pre- Pakhangba literature. During the Pakhangba period mention of the role of iron and domesticated animals like cows and buffaloes. Another chronicles, Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba refer to the method of shifting cultivation being practiced by the Shelloi Langmai tribes of Nongmaiching hill and adoption of wet rice cultivation by the valley inhabitants (Meiteis).[12]The royal edict of King Loiyumba (1074-1122 A.D.) known as Loiyumba Shilyen

[6] ibid,p,149.
[7] Bhattacharjee, Jayanta Bhusan. *State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur:* New Delhi Akansha Publishing House, 2010.p,146.
[8] Singh, Okram Kumar. *Stone Age Archaeology of Manipuri:*Imphal,1997.p,101,118.
[9] Bhattacharjee, Jayanta Bhusan. op.cit.,p,146,147
[10] Singh, Okram Kumar. *Stone Age Archaeology of Manipuri:*Imphal,997.p,4.
[11] Singh,M. Chandra (ed), *Poireiton Khunthokpa*: Manipuri Sahitya Parishad,1979. p,3
[12] Singh,N. Khelchandra (Ed.),*Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba*:Imphal,1968,p.38.

(Division of labour),[13] refers to the division of labour such as clan groups and the rates of revenue imposed on the agricultural fields by the state an enforced on economic activities. It contributed a great drive to the economic system.

Economy is one of the basic aspects contributing towards the development of societies. It is an innate activity of the human society. It is the very livelihood of human beings. Since the beginning of the human society, humankind has established the art of exchange in different methods. Earlier to the innovation of the coin, the people of the early society linked each other with the barter system as a resourceful mean of transactions. As man moved from single level to another, they also raised a new economic transaction. When the coin was introduced, man used it for the medium of trade for goods in return. For survival, humans produce and reproduce a material, which is fundamentally the necessity of the daily life. To bear out this process of production and exchange, humans enter into social relations.[14] Exchange is the principle of economy- full integration that compels the participants to conform to conventions where everyone sells their product for something. Exchange of the products does not necessarily require a regular market-that exists as a place to engage in a transaction of the goods, but a place where buyers and sellers congregate. People derive its livelihood from selling their products at market. The evidence of market in Manipur was established in 1580 during reign of Mungyamba.[15]

Agricultural production and nature of land use:

The Meitei supremacy in the Manipur valley began with the establishment of their control over the rich agriculture land. The Meitei settled on the northern plains that were the most fertile area in the valley. Agriculture is widely practiced and regarded basically as the pedestal for survival in the state. People inhabiting the hills practice slash and burn cultivation, but those residing in the valley practice wet rice plantation. Agriculture was the main livelihood and the main contribution to the kingdom economy.

[13] Singh,Kh Chandrasekhar (ed.) *Loiyumba Shilyen:* Imphal,1982.
[14] Capaldi, Nicholas, and Gordon Lloyd. *The Two Narratives of Political Economy*: John Wiley & Sons, 2011.p,415.
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Manipur is an agrarian-based economy. The agricultural crop of the country comprises mainly of rice, which constitutes the basic article of food and the fertility of the soil is so abundant that the crops largely show most plentiful. Dr. Brown says that "No fewer than seventeen varieties of rice are grown; these may be divided into early and late crops. The large mass of rice grown in the country is of the late varieties, which comprises thirteen kinds, primarily distinguished by the size of grain and colour. The finest of these are named Phourail, Yentik, and Loeening; these are white and large grain-dal".[16]

No less than 10 varieties of rice are produced in the state. These may be allocated in early and late crops. The early crop ripens in three months and is ready for cutting in September. Of late years, an enormous quantity of the early sort has been sown. Of the early, there are four varieties, viz, Sujikhong , Dumai, Kubbo phow, and Phowrel. The late crop ripens in six months and is reaped about November. The large bulk of rice grown in the country is of the late varieties, which comprise 15 kinds, chiefly notable by size of grain and colour and they are Phorail, Yenthik, Moirangphow, Phowkuk Chahow, Chahow Massapalbi, Luining, Phongang, Touthabi Phow, Chahow Puritole, Chahow Minkhang, Kukcheng Phow, Haidup Phow, Sugole Yangba. Chahow Erikole, Chahow Sempak. Rice is generally transplanted, and the land appropriate for it is wet and muddy.[17]

Paddies grown in Manipur are categorized separately into Anganphou (early) and Athengphou (late) crop. Saji khong , Tumai, Kabow phow, Phourel- Anganphou are the favourite varieties, Phourel, Luining and Yenthik are very popular. Farmers partially ran for the early variety, as it required less time and labour. The other late varieties were Moirang phou, Phowokok Chahaow, Chahow masa palbi, Phoungang, taothabi, Chahow Poireiton, Chahow Munkhang, Kakcheng Phou, Haitup phou, Sagol yangba, Chahow Erikole and Chahow sempak.[18] Along with rice, the Meitei Pangals grew a modest quantity of jute and opium. In the homestead, they cultivated onion, garlic, ginger, spices like jeera (cumin) and Methi, Tobacco, Mustard plant, Kumchakl,Palak , Hawai mangal Machin mubi (dal), Sagol hawai, Morok (chilli), Yaingang (turmeric), Khongdrum (bottle guord) Mairel (Pumpkin), Pangal Khamen (brinjal), Tejpata,

[16] ibid.,p,43.
[17] Dun, E. W. *Gazetteer of Manipur*: New Delhi Manas Publications, 1992.p p, 56,57.
[18] Brown, R., (F.R.C.S.E.). *Statistical Account of Manipur*:New Delhi Sanskaran Prakashak,1975. P,9.

Tomato, Tomatato, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Lady finger, Swu (raw materials of paper), Raddish, Turnip. In Manipuri they also planted fruit trees like mango (Heinou khongnembi and Meitei heinous) Lemon, jack fruit, guava, plum cherry and peach."[19]

During the reign of King khagemba the Muslims who made Manipur their home from 1606 onwards, favoured to establish their settlements by the side of water bodies, like rivers, lakes canals, tanks. The cause for this partiality was their capacity to grow pulses, grains, vegetables, and herbs on this fertile ground.[20] Khagemba took attention in providing irrigation facilities to the masses. Rivers and streams were dredged; the canal was dug like Kyang Khong (canal of Kyang), Takhel Khong (canal of Tripura etc.). Bunds was constructed to contain the overflow from the rivers. Agricultural technology was enhanced with the introduction of transplanting system of paddy cultivation introduced by Muslim peasants who were war prisoners. These Muslim peasants introduced the plough drawn by the bullock and buffalo. In the year 1634 A.D. Khagemba introduced a new paddy known as Taothabi (a red- tailed Paddy) which was fast growing species planted in the swamplands.[21] The improvement of agricultural output; the cultivators were to yield revenue in the form of paddy to the state. The surplus production was made possible by the wet rice cultivation and the surplus from the production could be collected by the state. The revenue department was set under the Lourungpurel Achouba who supervised the work of Pana puren and Lourung macha. They were paid salary in paddy.[22]

In the history of Manipur, there is not much information about the land tenure system or the landholding patterns, rates of revenue or rent for different categories of land the extent of cultivation in the valley. Even though the Colonial scholars and officials in the nineteenth century had left behind some useful information on the subjects in the form of official reports, accounts, and memoirs.[23] In the valley of Manipur the land areas can be classified into two i) Inkhol(Homestead land) occupied by the houses and gardens; and all the Ingkhol lands were free from revenue and could be sold at the will of the owner. It was inheritable and transferable.

[19] Irene,Salam,*The Muslim Of Manipur:* New Delhi Kalpaz Publication,2010 .p,120.
[20] Ibid.P,113.
[21] Kabui, Gangmumei. *History of Manipur: Pre-Colonial Period*:New Delhi National Publishing House, 1991.p,219.
[22] ibid.p,220.
[23] Bhattacharjee, Jayanta Bhusan. *State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur*: New Delhi Akansha Publishing House, 2010.p,149.

ii) Lou (cultivable/Agricultural land).The Lou or Paddy field in the valley were divided into –i) Tauna Lou (land under tenants), ii) Sarkari or Ningthou Lou (Kings own land), iii) Phumlou (These were rice lands held by the officers of the state in lieu of their salary.iv) Siphai lou (land of the State army),v) Manalou (Reward of paddy fields was usually given in recognition of personal contribution to the State or the king and such land were known as Manalou, vi) Brahminlou this category of land grant was popularly known as Lugun lou.Since the 18th and 19th century Manipuri kings were loyal to Vishnavites.vii) Temple lou or Lai lou (this kind of land grant was also known as Lailou). Temples and Umanglai (forest dieties) were granted paddy field for their maintenance and these lands never revert back to the King .viii) Royal family Lou or Sana lou (Members of the royal family were also granted lands and these were probably handed down from father to son.) ix) Pangal lou person of eminent service in war were granted such lands .The Pangalou holders were normally the favorites of the king.[24] The nobility owing to its close links with the kings and having enjoyed the agricultural lands at the pleasure of the King, could not emerge as autonomy powerful lords. This indicates the absence of landlordism in the Meitei kingdom.[25]In kingly Manipur , the state played a significant role in the production methods by acting as the catalytic or assisting agent by the way of forming and controlling the agricultural proactive activities , like construction of bunds and dykes to check inundations, and the clearing of the drainages digging of the rivers and canals.[26] In tradition believed that the King Nongda Lairen Phakhangba introduced the well-established division of labour called lallup system, its contribute growth of productive forces.[27] Lallup literally means war organization (lal=war, Lup=organization). Lallup cover all the state works- both military and development maintenance of the kingdom. Lallup which was a feudal service extracted by the subjects to the king or the state.[28] In the beginning of the twelfth century the king Loiyumba was systematized and labour mobilization through the lallup system in the state service. The succeeding Meitei kings through initiations and revisions and its renovated the whole nature of the economic activity by carrying it under the direct control of the state.

[24] Howell,A.A. *A short Account of Land Revenue in Manipur:* Imphal,1907.p9
[25] Ibid.,p,8-9
[26] Bhattacharjee, Jayanta Bhusan.op.cit,p,154.
[27]Devi,N. Pramodini.*The cultural History of Early Manipur:*Kakching.Times publishing House Manipur,2011.p158
[28] Kabui, Gangmumei. *History of Manipur: Pre-Colonial Period*.New Delhi National Publishing House, 1991.p,126.

Industry and Manufactures:

Apart from agriculture, crafts and industry, weaving, knitting, pottery, liquor processing, so forth were the sources of income.

Handicrafts of Manipur have an exclusive place among the different trades of the country due to owning its own artistic value. Even though the handicraft industry started since time immemorial, as traditional part-time activities in rural regions without any major market demand over the year has switched into a successful industry. Existing trends of handicraft product are not just regulated to aesthetic or artistic value. It combined new design and new ideas that prepared these products marketable and expand the scope of Handicrafts products.[29] Still, metal technology was not so advanced in the kingdom of Manipur but in the line of handicrafts, she possesses a unique individual identity. From the time of the earlier period, Meitei used the artistic production of textile in back strap/loin loom. Silk and plain cotton are general in Meitei textile. There was believed queen Laishna wife of Nongda Lairen Pakhangba innovated several designs of cloths based on the pattern of python, the phanek phibal, Samchil,etc., and for the borders of shawls. These designs are called Namthang khulak, Khamen –chatpa, and Ningkham, which were used by the family of the king and nobles.[30] Later rulers improvised and produced the new pattern, cloths like Lairen, Huikok Mayek were during the reign of Khuiyo tompok(154-264A.D) by a person named Khoriyan Phisaba.[31]Also the king Taothingmang(264-364) reign khwang Iyang,[32] and King Yanglou Keiphaba (969-84) in his reign embroidery on women Phanek Phiban was introduced.[33]

Since time immemorial, the Meitei ancestors practiced ginning before spinning. The ginned cotton is then rolled for about a palm's length with the assistants of Lang –gom. This method is known as Mothap Naiba- spinning. [34] Tradition suggests that since the 11th century, led off to practice in Manipur Pang Lyon (throw shuttle loom).. At that time, Chinese silk was the most important article imported which contributed to the trade and commerce in Manipur. The Meitei

[29]"Handicraft IndustriespotentialinManipur. Accessed December 6,2016.http://investinmanipur.nic.in/handicraft.htm.
[30] Bhattacharjee, Jayanta Bhusan.op,cit.160.
[31] Khelchandra,N(ed). *Chada Lahui*:Imphal,1966.p,1.
[32] Singh,O Bhogeshwar (ed.).*NIngthourol Lambuba*:Imphal,1967.p,p,11,12.
[33] Kabui, Gangmumei. *History of Manipur: Pre-Colonial Period*.New Delhi National Publishing House, 1991.p,123.
[34] Bahadur , Mutua. *Traditional textiles of Manipur*: Imphal Mutua museum,1997 p,13.

women were especially engaged in the productions of silk and textiles. The Meitei women also excelled in the aesthetic production of handloom weaving of textile of exquisite design patterns, and textures. Khwang Lyong (loin looms) is traditional weaving loom in Manipur. Weaving with spinning of cotton yarn and silk was done by the women folk. The Loiyumba Shilyen thus projected the picture of a well organized economy of Manipur in which the wet rice agrarian economy was supplemented by the growing handloom and handicraft industries. The weaving prevalent in Manipur was an indigenous one, and the spinning, weaving and dyeing were fairly developed in the state. Later on, Handloom industry was further developed with the introduction of flying shuttle, known as Pangandem. It believed that the flying shuttle have been introduced during reign of Khagemba by the Muslim immigrants.[35]

Pottery:

The making of Chaphu (pottery) throughout the ages in Manipur, there was a change in the present shapes and interior ornaments. The pre and proto-historic Chaphu in Manipur are handmade by thrashing with a paddle which is either plain or cord wrapped or carved. The same method is going forward in making both the historic and modern ethnographic pottery. The use of the wheel made technique is evident in some of the historic pottery. The bowl type of pottery from Kanchipur historical site and gourd-shaped pot from Kangla show a clear evidence of wheel made technique in the yesteryear. Pottery making as the blend part of the industry, played a dynamic role in the economic life of early Manipur. In cooperation decorated and plain handmade pots were found in places of Andro, Chairen, Thongjao, Nungbi Tangkhul, Oinam and Nongok Sekmai etc. These were the places practicing production for pottery industry in Manipur.[36] In the early historical period, pottery was made by a specific ethnic group in Manipur, namely the Chakpas who were dispersed in different parts of Manipur valley.[37]During the reign of the king of khagemba, the Muslim potter introduced the wheel techniques its produced attractive products.[38] The pot which is used traditionally for storing clean water in a house is known as Sanabun. Muslims are attributed with introducing the sophistication of pot-

[35] Ibid,p,13,14
[36] Devi,N. Pramodini.*The cultural History of Early Manipu:*Kakching Times publishing House Manipur,2011.p163.
[37] Bhattacharjee, Jayanta Bhusan. *State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur*:New Delhi Akansha Publishing House, 2010.p,158.
[38] Irene,Salam,*The Muslim Of Manipur:*New Delhi Kalpaz Publication,2010 .p,128.

punkangnanbi, which later came to be named as Sananbun.[39] The chief ecstatic pottery manufacture as it was a very useful craft for the society, it played an essential role in the social, economic, cultural and religious life of the Manipuris.

Salt Manufacturing:

The salt has been locally manufactured in Manipur since time immemorial. The Lois and the Chakpas communities specialized or perhaps were forced to be specialized, in the natural process of manufacturing salt from the several salt wells spread over in the valley and the hills of Manipur. Pemberton wrote about the rich of valuable mineral of salt, found on its northeastern side, in the foothills about fourteenth mile away from the capital. The main salt wells are named Waikhong, Ningel, Seekong, and Chandrakhong where salt is manufactured in quantities not only sufficient for the sustenance of the inhabitants of the valley, but also to be made an article of traffic with the surrounding hill tribes, who barter it for their tobacco, ginger, cloths, and cotton.[40]The Meitei Kings took initiative in the salt industry by constructing roads connecting the villages which manufactured salt. The production of salt manufactured varied from season to season. Salt was manufactured mostly in the winter seasons when the brine water used to be at its strongest. The salt manufacturing was a singular contribution to satisfy the demand of the multitude and to the economy of the state.[41]

Yu or Rice beer:

Yu or rice beer country spirit, is fabricated by several Loi villages. The rice beer was an indispensable item to be used in socioeconomic, political and cultural function and spiritual observances.Therefore, in the early period the *Yu* manufacturing industry was highly developed. The sociological study on Sekmai, Andro, Phayeng, Leimaram etc.provides accurate data about the practices in this industry.[42]

[39] ibid,p.128.
[40] Pemberton, Robert Boileau. *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India: With an Appendix and Maps*. order of the Supreme Government of India, 1835.p,28,29.
[41] Bhattacharjee, Jayanta Bhusan. Ibid,p,90.
[42] Devi,N. Pramodini.*The cultural History of Early Manipur:*Kakching Times publishing House Manipur,2011.p165.

Boat Manufacture:

. The boat construction was another important industry under the state supervision. This manufacture was also supported by the profound demand of boats for shipping in the waterlogged valley region and the easy accessibility of the forest and free labour of the *Lallup*. The artisans made elegant and imposing boats, both large and small. The officials, called *Hiyangloi Hanjaba* and *Hisaba hanjaba*, supervised the whole operation of construction and maintenance of the boats.[43]The people of *Hiroi* –Lamgang village (a Loi Village) in the south of the valley not far from Sugunu made distinctive boats for the kings.[44]Extensive use of boats is also shown by the annual boat race competitions, known as Hiyang Tannaba (boat race), which was regularly held in the month of September every year. As per many, seventy rowers occupied one boat in the competition. This festival was the most important held in Manipur, and great provision was made for it.[45]

And the other artisans or workmen like the blacksmiths, goldsmiths and basket makers are found in each village. The subject of the development of the iron industry in Manipur can be drawn from various sources based on myths, historical information, archaeological findings, oral traditions, literary texts, etc. The principal job of the Loi community of Kakching was iron smelting and they produced various iron tools. According to T. C. Hodson the soils in the south east of the valley at Kakching lived by iron smelting.[46] An enormous quantity of iron tools manufactured in the former stage of causation was used in felling timber, tilling agricultural land, self-defence and aggression. The chronicle records the presence of a class of artisans like blacksmiths, dressmaking and weapon making. Natural resources and forests were under the control of the state. The gold washing in rivers of Manipur including, possibly, the Chindwin and its tributaries was done by the state.It was recorded in1623A.D.[47]

The technology of brick manufacture was found out from the Chinese during the reign of Khagemba. The Chinese name for Brick is *'check'* and later included in the Meitei vocabulary.

[43] Singh,N. Khelchandra (ed.). *Phamlon*: Imphal ,1987.p,p,4,14.
[44]HODSON, Thomas Callan, and Sir Charles James LYALL. *The Meitheis ... With an Introduction by Sir C. J. Lyall ... Illustrated*. David Nutt, 1908.p,33.
[45] Ibid,p,52.
[46] Ibid,p,9.
[47] Kabui, Gangmumei.*History of Manipur: Pre-Colonial Period*.New Delhi National Publishing House, 1991.p,p,220,221.

The chronicle record shows the structure of the gate of the royal fortress with bricks. Silver crowns were put by the jewels and silver artisans. Statue making either by wood or copper was already done in Manipur.[48] *Senjeng* is a local word for bell metal. Utensils made of bell- metal is regularly using items of the Meiteis. During the 16th century, the barrels of gun were cast in bell metal. In Cheitharon Kumbaba it mentioned the used of bell metal sheets for roofing during the sovereignty of King Charairongba in the 17th C. Bell metal coins were in circulation beginning from king Nongda Lairen Pakhangba (33-156 A.D) till king Kulachandra(1890-91).[49]

Trade and commerce

Introducing of the new technology Manipur economy had passed over the subsistence economy There was surplus traded to long distances between Manipur and neighbouring countries including upper Burma and China even. During the reign of Khagemba, who established ten markets (Keithel) in 1614), *Sana Keithel, Kha Keithel, Moirang Keithel, Khuman Keithel, Phaibung Keithel, Children Keithel, Namphaon Keithel, Konglang Keithel* and *Andro Keithel*.[50] Every Sagei or clan at the *Keithel* has its own expertise of producing rice and rice products, textiles and cotton, ceramics, fresh produce and hence along. The wealth of the clans was managed in the *Keithel*, by the senior daughter in law, who, after a period of experimentation and begin conferred the right and responsibility to represent their families by sitting in the *Keithel*, to deal on their behalf and to partake the economic policies of the country, in their favour. The enormous networks of *Keithel* over the valley, promoted the essential components of this sophisticated commercial infrastructure. Each outlying *Keithel* focused on a particular group of products according to their *sagei- leikai*. As a consequence, the Lamlong Keithel was the base of the rice trade. Precisely, dozens of varieties of rice, perhaps hundreds were brought and traded in that location.[51]

Among the several types of handicrafts in Manipur, wood carvings are really notable. This art in Manipur established out of the necessity. Referable to the deficiency of a dependable

[48] Ibid,221.
[49]Sharma, Laimayum Bishawnath. *Cultural Heritage Complex*:Imphal Mutua Museum, 2006.p,21.
[50] Parratt, Saroj N. Arambam. *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur - Cheitharon Kumpapa: Original Text, Translation and Notes Vol. 1. 33-1763 CE*.London Taylor & Francis, 2005.p,70.
[51]Protection Of Indigenous Women's Traditional Markets." Accessed December 29, 2016. http://e-pao.net/epSubPageExtractor.asp?src=leisure.Essays.Protection_Of_Indigenous_Women%27s_Traditional_Markets

communication system, the people of Manipur utilized wood to produce different items of necessities.

We take in many references to women in many productions- associated activities. It can be argued that was heavy –scale contribution of adult females in production activity, as the colonial writers did not drop out. This fact, since they were also concerned with the observation of Manipur society on a superficial level only. Therefore the fact that empty reference to Meitei women is noteworthy as participation production, particularly agriculture and weaving is clearly visible. Meitei women have inherited social responsibilities in different patterns and in a changed position. According to E.W. Dun, they are very hard working; in this respect the opposite of the male, who are lazy and slothful. Most of the work of the state, except heaviest, is performed by them and they are therefore the mainstay of the family . In agricultural occupation except for tilling the land, women do nearly all the works only. In every household, the wife weaves the cotton clothes for her household and husband. The women hold a high and liberated position in Manipur, all the internal trade exchanges of the produce of the country being brought off by them.[52]

Dun states that women in the open air conduct the marketing of the country. Many of these collections of women are to be found throughout the Imphal or the capital city of Manipur State; but the primary gathering place for women trading there is on an empty bit of land to one side of a brick bridge here, during the former portion of the day, the women assemble with their wares for sale. In this market, which consists of food, such as dry fish, rice, veggies, pan, Supari, clothes, ornaments for the hill men and sweetmeats.[53]The other major crops are sugar cane, maize, potato, cabbage and tomato. The primarily cropping pattern is mono cropping. The vegetable productions of the country are as follows: potatoes, sweet- potatoes or sukurkunds, Kalindri, Kolee Haoye, Haoye assungbi, brinjal, cucumber, pumpkins, onion, pepper and tobacco of good quality.[54]

[52] Sanajaoba, Naorem. *Manipur, Past and Present: History, Polity & Law.Vol.1*.New Delhi Mittal Publications, 1988.p,167.
[53] Dun, E. W. *Gazetteer of Manipur*:New Delhi Manas Publications, 1992.p,64.
[54] ibid.pp,57,58.

The Manipuri, both male and female, are inveterate chewers of pan and Supari, brought from the neighbouring district of Cachar and forms a considerable deal. The betel nut tree will not grow in Manipuri territory. Tobacco is also utilised by all classes and historic periods and the tobacco is manufactured and smoke as in Bengal.[55]

Manipur as well as preserved and reared goat, cattle, buffaloes, pig, dogs and horses. This yielded a reference that they have developed animal husbandry. Poultry chicken and duck is also preserved. This signifies that Manipur has developed the animal agriculture and poultry husbandry. Apart from the husbandry activities, hunting was another past time which also delivers economic and material value of the autochthonous people of Manipur.[56]

The hills of Manipur are covered with rich forests, but once upon a time the valley also covered with forest swamps and now it is totally stripped. The forests for centuries provided sustenance to the people. The forest provides cultivation fields to the hill cultivator. Forest as well provides a raw fabric for household for the structure of homes and daily way of sustenance. Hunting ground of the animals. There are mixtures of trees, in the varieties lying west of the Manipur valley huge woodland tracts of trees, comprising nagesar, jarul, Indian rubber, tun, oak, ash and bamboo are found. Along with the higher ranges to the north, trees and thorny bamboo are found.[57]

Teak is common plantation to the slope overlooking the Kabow valley. The *Cinchona* (camphor) would most probably grow well on the sides of the hills, especially those lying nearest to the Manipur valley and in the Hirok range. The sole part of the immense forest tract, which are utilized those of the Jiri forest and the hill slants lying nearest to the valley. Most of the wood used in construction is obtained; some of the mixtures are stated to be proof against the depredations of the white –ant.[58]

Manipur geographically and historically connects the neighbouring countries with India. Manipur and her neighbouring states were trading mainly through two gates, eastern i.e. Former

[55] Brown, R., (F.R.C.S.E.). *Statistical Account of Manipur*:New Delhi Sanskaran Prakashak, 1975.p,20.
[56] *Economic and Political Weekly*: Sameeksha Trust, 1998.p,170.
[57] Brown, R (F.R.C.S.E.). *Statistical Account of Manipur*:New Delhi Sanskaran Prakashak, 1975.p,5.
[58] ibid.p,6.

Burma and China (Yunnan Province), and the western i.e. Cachar and Sylhet (now in Bangladesh). Manipur had a limited relationship with trade and commerce towards the eastern frontier. [59]The Burmese and the Chinese were main trading partners in the east.It has transacted through the kabaw valley.In 1861- 69 Silk formed and important export item from Manipur to Burma and the manufacturers were migrants from kabaw valley.The main imported item was salt silk ,wax and ivory.[60]

The outdoor trade of Manipur was largely through Cachar that was more easily reachable and partly with plain Brahmaputra areas.From the Burma the Manipuris were importing certain goods like tea seeds and buffaloes and exporting them to Cachar.As well as the export item from Manipur was rice, cattle, timber and bamboo.Timber was floated on Barak to reach Silchar, and rice was transported through carts to Dimapur. The hill people coming from the surrounding hills an exchanged their products of cotton, chillies and Lac with rice, salt, cloth and several articles on daily market in the valley. Manipur used to import goods,like yarn, salt, dried fish, betel nuts and cotton piece etc.[61]

The formal designation of social and economic function of private families by King Loiyumba (1074-1112) was indeed a really significant step in the production of the goods. We may therefore say that silk weaving, metal and exchange were not insignificant, but could go to exchange networks and establishes the capacity of economy to accommodate specialized groups for production including the dynamism of the economic system.

Conclusion:

In the long history of Manipur which can be traced archaeologically from a very early period to the emergence of Kings in the early mediaeval period, we discover a historical continuity. In this historical continuity, the Imphal valley has been at the marrow, in terms of civil order, economic

[59] Singh, E. Ishwarjit. *Manipur, a Tourist Paradise*:New Delhi B.R. Publishing Corporation, 2005.p,134.
[60]"AHistorical viewpoint of Kabaw Valley." Accessed December 29, 2016. http://www.thesangaiexpress.com/30394-a-historical-viewpoint-of-kabaw-valley/.
[61] "Pre Colonial Trade of Manipur Part 2 By Budha Kamei." Accessed November 8, 2017. http://e-pao.net/epSubPageExtractor.asp?src=manipur.History_of_Manipur.Pre-colonial_trade_of_Manipur_Part_2_By_Budha_Kamei.

infrastructure and socio- religious and the cultural secretary. Though the border of Kangleipak and its transition to Manipur waxed and waned over the centuries, the Imphal valley was the kernel part.

The economic changes inaugurated by Khagemba (1597-1652) like the large scale introduction of the wetland, agricultural and trade goods, like tobacco, metal, brick making transformed the economic structure of Manipur in two ways, firstly it led to the increase of the resource base and therefore increased the available surplus in bulk. Secondly, the diversity of crops and good also brought in craft specialization and social stratification, this period that also witnessed the maturation of a granary store. During the reign of Khagemba marked a shift in the economy from use economy to an exchange economy took place. It was the broad economic base of Manipur, along with the shift of the economic system that ran to a shift in the other areas.

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