Feudal Mode of Production:

'Feudalism' was a system of contractual relationship among the members of the upper class in medieval Europe, in which Lords made grants of fiefs to vassals in return for pledges of military and political service. Feudalism came to affect the basis of political organisation in most of medieval Europe. Originating in the early 8th century, it reached its fullest development and widest extent between the middle of the 11th and the middle of the 13th century.¹

From the very end of the 9th century comes the first recorded use of the vernacular word 'fief' in place of 'benefice'; the word 'feudalism' itself is derived from the Latin form the 'fief', 'feodum'. The word 'fief' is of 'Teutonic Origin', coming from the first letter of the runic alphabet ('fe'), which signified cattle and thus movable properly.²

Feudalism has to be seen as a mode of the distribution of the means of production and of the appropriation of the surplus. Feudalism appears in a predominantly agrarian economy which is characterised by a class of land-lord

². Ibid., p. 138.
and a class of servile peasantry. In this system the landlords extract surplus through social, religious or political methods, which are called extra-economic.

Feudalism, like other social formations before or after it, was a transitional system. The concept of 'Feudal Mode of Production' is inadequate, the relations of production are neglected and there is confusion over the nature and function of Rent. The relations of production are based on separation of the producers (Peasants) from both land and other means of production. Rent establishes and reproduces such as 'separation' and is itself dependent for its existence on the relations of production. Rent also, through its various forms, structures the labour process. Thus, rent is not an external exaction encroaching on the peasant sector. 3

'Feudal Mode of Production' means that the labour process and rent are subsumed within it. Thus, social consumption can not be seen as a necessary condition of the feudal mode. Historically, such consumption may be low if the priority for the landlord class is to increase (Separation' through investment.

Although feudalism and mode of production meet at many points they do not by any means necessarily synchronise with one another. Like feudalism, mode of production

is a term used in distinct and contradictory ways, the expressions of completely differing modes of perceiving social organisation, methodologically and philosophically. Thus, the mode of production is the main basis for the evolution, progress, development, growth and changing stages of human society.

According to Marx, 'The phenomenon of social change is the economic factors that are responsible for the change and that is why he has been called 'Economic Determinists'. Again, he observed that the change in the means of production is responsible for social change. In other words, change is the means of production which is the result of technological and scientific developments and is responsible for social change.'

Indeed, Marx's theory does present an idealistic form and it is the ideal of classless society and technology is only indirectly responsible for the social change as well as the theory of social change interprets history. Therefore, he has laid emphasis on material wants, needs and requirements and he does recognize the class struggle and the struggle between the two opposing forces — thesis and anti-thesis which lead to synthesis or development of new situation.

The mode of production should have a content that operates far beyond the mere unit of production beyond the family, the village and the peasant, in order to focus attention upon the relations of production in which such units and classes function, and within which should be included systems of surplus extraction (taxation and rent), juridical orders, organisations of commercial, market mediated kinds of exploitation of peasant labour, and the like. Mode of Production also generates the conceptual inspiration to synthesis, to add to a framework of relevant to implode inwards self-reflexively upon the limited and cultural inheritance, and to explode empirically beyond established, conventional frontiers.

Indeed, the terms refers in a critical way to concrete condition and relationship by the project of re-synthesising and re-constructing larger societal, relational complexes within which these conditions are found. Thus, the productive forces and relations of production constitute the mode of production. Although the mode of production also constitutes a unity of the productive forces and relations of production, these are different aspects of it.

The mode of production embodies contradictions at each of these points which both drive it forward and develop the conditions for its own disintegration, through the development of class struggle and of class alliances involving

5. ibid., p. 105.
6. ibid.
those emmeshed in the surrounding modes of production.

Indeed, Marx's concept of social change based on the mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual process of life. Once a change in the mode of production takes place, new production relations are established leading to social change as a result of which political system also undergoes certain changes. He (Marx) does recognize the class struggle and struggle between the two opposing forces — Thesis and anti-thesis which lead to synthesis or development of new situation. Therefore, the Marxist doctrine is omnipotent because it is true.

The theory of Dialectical and Historical Materialism, the notions of the terms Thesis-anti-thesis and synthesis, lead to the studies of social change for example, political, economic, educational, science, jurisprudence, etc.

In Manipuri society, the notion of the term synthesis is reflected because of this feudal state like Manipur, of a 'Medieval' society, realization of the tax in terms of labour and in kind under 'Lallup' and other socio-economic institutions which had been mainly change in economic history as well as the transformation from the collecting primitive agricultural stage to permanent settlement. Manipuri economy (mode of livelihood) i.e., the mode of

production is the important basis for the evolution, progress, development and changing phases of Meitei society. The important feature of Medieval Manipur feudalism was that of ‘Lallup’, ‘Slavery’, ‘Pana’ etc. Thus, medieval Manipur expected a full-fledged feudal state based on feudal economy. Nevertheless, the important feature of feudal order of Manipur differed from that of European and Indian feudalism because of this, evolution of feudalism in Manipur were slave-labour, tenant, tribute, tax, landholding, rents, state revenue, Lallup and Pana.

In Medieval Manipuri society, feudal power rested in the hands of the king and his royal mason, the nobles, the Brahmins and the clan 'Pibas'. Indeed, the feudal system was followed on the basis of social and political institutions and it has been subject to changes in different spheres of state administration, judiciary, revenue etc., under which the kings have had to adjust themselves in political care to the administrative innovations with divine status to the monarch. The Meitei believe in the "Divine Rights Theory of Kingship" during the Medieval period in Manipur. For instance, during king Khagemba's time in 1608 A.D., the title of the king was changed to Lainingthou', the Godly king, thus according to a divine status to the monarch, who is appointed to look after the affairs of the State. Moreover, as far as the 'Law of Succession' is concerned, 'kingship'
was not always hereditary. Then the 'Law of Primogeniture' is not always respected.

**Economic Change:**

The transformation from the traditional subsistence farming and hunting stage in the primitive agricultural stage to Medieval stage of permanent settlement with agricultural land holding, tax in terms of labour and inkind under Lallup, were the forms of changes in the economic history of Manipur.

Traditionally, in the sphere of agricultural production the 'Swidden' system or 'Thuming' was the most prevalent form of shifting agriculture and this method of shifting cultivation was known as 'Pamlou'. Moreover, Khagembha's reign was marked by great agricultural change, with the introduction of transplanting system of paddy cultivation introduced by Muslim peasants who were prisoners and they were also used in productive activities by the king. These cultivators introduced the transplanting method which at first astonished the people but was widely practised later.

Then, these Muslim peasant also introduced the plough drawn by the bullock and buffalo. But the swamps of the valley could not be brought under such improved cultivation system, as the water level was always high. Therefore, king Khagembha introduced a new paddy known as 'Taothabi' (a red and tailed

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paddy) which was a quick growing species planted in the swamps in 1634 A.D.9 The rice was the main and popular agricultural products and others were maize, potato, pumpkin, arum, mustard etc. The revenue system was systematised with the improvement of agricultural production; the cultivators were to pay revenue in form of paddy to the State. The revenue department was supervised under the 'Lourung-purel Achouba'. The land was owned by the king in theory but the nobles had utilised them by employing peasants who were possessors of these land and payers of rent to the State.

During the reign of king Paikhomba (1666-97 A.D.) a large tract of swampy land covered by jungles and tall grasses was brought under cultivation as well as it caused agricultural productions to the State. There were instances of irrigation of paddy field by the water of the river.

The reign of king Charairongba (1697-1709 A.D.) was involved in the development of agriculture of the country. During the flood and famine, the king gave 'doles' to the needy peasants by distributing paddy stored in the royal granaries known as the 'Keis'.

During the king Garibaniwaz's time (1709-1748 A.D.) the revenue system was greatly changed. Due to the development of agricultural lands in the valley of Manipur, the records 9. Gangmumei Kabui, op.cit., p.219.
of the land rights were prepared under the department of revenue known as 'Lourungpurel'. The maker of the land records was known as the 'Loukok Eba' (recorder of the paddy fields).

The fee of entry in the record was 50 shels for one Pari (one hectare). For those who made fresh reclamation of land was charged an amount of 500 shels; 1000 shels for one 'Loukhai', 2000 shels for one 'Loupu'. The rent was 60 pots (two baskets known as Sangbai) per pari to be given to the State. 10

In the reign of king Bhagyachandra (1749-1798 A.D.) the land tenural system was changing with the help of a prince of Rangamati, named locally Koireng Khullakpa. The land survey, documentation of land holdings, rates of revenue and rents and premium for the newly reclaimed lands were already introduced by Garibaniwaz but he (Bhagyachandra) improved upon it with the experience of Bengal and Assam styles.

The revenue was collected mostly in forms of paddy from the cultivable fields, services from subjects and tributes from the hill tribes. The whole land system of the valley starts with the assumption that all the land belongs to the king. 11

10. Ibid., p.261.
In the Medieval Manipur, the land system and the concept of land ownership were developed with the progress of agrarian structure. For the system of revenue collection of the country, the land was divided into revenue free lands and revenue payable lands. The most important ones of the first kind were, the 'Ningthou Lou', a paddy field enjoyed by the king; 'Lai Lou', an endowment of land for the maintenance of temples and servants of God; 'Lugun Lou', the gift of lands by the king to the Brahmins at the time of initiation and lands granted to the favourites and relatives of the king and the officials for the whole of life or for some fixed years.

The gifts were reverted to the king after the death of recipient and his wife.12

Granting of lands to the nobles and war heroes in lieu of services, as rewards contributed to the growth feudal land system.

Gangmumei Kabui observes that the changing land holding system was caused by the mode of agricultural productions from shifting to horticulture, terrance cultivation.13

Due to the changes of land holding system and agricultural technology, the revenue system was also systematised with the improvement of productive forces, the cultivators

Taxes in medieval Manipur were mainly observed from paddy cultivations, tributes, vegetable grains and Lallup services. The tax derived from each cultivator, and possess by the king, is liable to many modifications, but in theory the tax is a fixed one. The proportion land cultivated authenticity what may be called the direct system in accordance with the king, is about a third of the whole, rather than a third is in the derived of the members of the royal mason, Brahmans and Sepoys, the remainder is in the hands of the nobles, officials etc., who hold it by favour from the king. Each individual liable for Lallup for the state is entitled to cultivate for his support one pari of land, subject to the payment of the regular tax in kind. The tax varies from two baskets to thirteen from each pari of land.

The two baskets of paddy which nominally should only be taken from every cultivator, is realized from favourites of the king, and the average from others may be set down at twelve baskets yearly, this is seldom exceeded, except in the time of emergencies and as war. In cases where lands are held by nobles and officials, as the middle class of men, the burdens are more severe, running as high as twenty-four baskets per pari, which is said to be the outside limit. 16

Thus, the rules and regulations of taxation were changed in Medieval times that also were payment of taxes in kind.

labour was a special feature and the Lallup service was a form of tax which was paid in form of labour, and industrial facilitated the selling and buying of the commodities which were produced with surplus, was the main process of taxation.

In the process of industrial units, the spinning and the weaving are the essential qualifications of every Manipuri woman in Medieval society. The chief raw-materials are cotton and silk. There was no separated professional weaver in Manipur and some families were associated with the processing of design along types of handloom and handicrafts. The raw-materials i.e., short staple cotton was grown in the hilly soils of Churachandpur, South District, and other hilly places in the South-East of Manipur. Fine yarns used by women were famous authenticated by the name of 'Tara Konbi' and 'Manga Konbi' design and specially mentioning about the designing name of cloth i.e., 'Moirang Phi' design with one inches solid border and one and a half inches of Pyramidal figures to which geometrical and floral designs have been added.

During the reign of king Khagemba, Chinese visitors introduced to weave a kind of cloth known as 'Khamen Chatpa'. It is a great weaving technological changes in the Medieval Manipur. This type of cloth was used fondly in Manipur only by the king and the nobles and was strictly prevented by
the State.

The main industrial production was the Silk manufacturing of Manipur. Sir James Johnstone avers that 'Silk manufacture was introduced by the Chinese settlers in Manipur in the 13th century'.

But, there is difficulty in accepting his view as we find the use of it in the local sources by the first century A.D. Silk-worms are fed on the leaves of the mulberry tree and fine quality of silk is made from the worms. The chief centres of silk industry are available at Kameng, Sagolmang and Sekmai areas of the country.

King Khagemba introduced a particular type of turban wearing and it was made of silk yarns. It had a great change for mechanical arts of wearing and it had a very fair of knowledge about handloom and handicrafts in Medieval Manipur Society.

B.R. Pemberton, the Joint Commissioner of Manipur known to have visited some centres of silk industry, writes as follows:

Their silk manufactures which are remarkable for their strength, and the brilliancy of their colours are made up principally into petticoats, jackets and large scarfs, the last of which are only worn by the higher orders of the male sex,

Some these scarfs are richly embroidered and though the work is coarse, they are highly prized in Awa. 18

It is also worth mentioning that some of the Manipuri silk goods received wide acclamation in the neighbouring countries. The Burmese traders who came to Manipur, brought up greedily all the raw silk, they could collect from the Manipuris'. 19

This speaks well for the quality of the silk of the Medieval Manipuris. Indeed, in the Medieval Manipuri society, the State was self contained and it did not depend upon any foreign country for agricultural and industrial products.

The next industrial production was the manufacturing of iron and ore and it was an important source of income of the life of Medieval Manipuris. The process of the metals from ore and the manufacturing objects were the main industry of some section of the people viz., the Thangjams, by doing the work of blacksmith, the Kangabams, Tourangbams and Keisams, by doing the work of goldsmith and making ornaments of jewels, the Ayekpams, by doing the work of painting and the Aheibams by specialising in brass work.

During the reign of Khagemba a group of people who were skilled in manufacturing iron weapons were captured as war captives from Cachar. 20 These war captives had contributed

to the changes of iron and ore manufacturing in Medieval Manipur.

Khagemba's reign was also marked by a number of technological changes. Manipur was aware of the muskets and guns which were captured by her from the Shans and the Burmese. In 1628 A.D., the royal workshop was able to carry out the boring of the barrel of the musket. The chief centre of iron works was Kakching areas, about twenty-eight miles to the South-West of Imphal valley.

Bricks making industry was also attributed to the reign of Khagemba and it was learnt from the Chinese war prisoners. Thus, the industrial productive forces and relations of production constitute the progress of the revenue of the country.

The important developments of State revenue was the pottery industry of Manipur. Pottery was an important source of economic life of the Medieval Manipur. In the sliding process of inferiority expected the potters who were the 'Loi' people and they managed their trade in making earthen jars and pitchers. And, the pottery industry is remarkable for their strength of labours. The important industrial centres were at Andro, Thongjao, Chairen, Nungbi and Nongpok Sekmai. Forty-two tripod ledges handmade potsherds both of plain and cormarks with reddish brown colours were excavated from Napachik hill and these have affinity with that of China and

probably a group of people from the regions of China equipped with corded tripod wares entered in Manipur. 22

Indeed, the pottery industry was introduced since primitive time for using in certain rites and rituals, collecting water for domestic uses and for cooking wines. In Medieval Manipur, the pottery industry was thrown out of fear by the invasion of the Burmans. The progress of mercantile society was changed by the increase of production. Manipur's economy had crossed the subsistence economy. The surplus was now traded. The barter economy was being gradually replaced by money economy. Therefore, it caused to the development of the market for selling and buying of the commodities which were produced with surplus and it progressed the State revenue. To mobilize the trade and commerce, king Khagemba established ten marketing centres in different parts of Manipur: in 1614 A.D., viz., Sana Keithel, Kha-Keithel, Moirang Keithel, Khuman Keithel, Pahibung Keithel, Chaire Keithel, Haophao Keithel, Konglang Keithel, Andro Keithel and Khawai Keithel. 23

Indeed, Medieval Manipur's economy had changed the subsistence economy to money economy and surplus was converted into traded. Manipur's trade relations with the foreign countries was a source of revenue to the State.

During the reign of king Bhagyachandra (1749-1798 A.D.) the economic system was changed by the invasion of the Burmese which reached its medieval stage in 1762 A.D. After that Manipur concluded a treaty with the East India Company. The trade and commerce with the neighbouring countries expanded. The memorandum of understanding signed between the East India Company and the king listed the items of exports and value of goods which give a fair idea of the commerce of the country in the medieval period. The monetization of the economy continued. The revenue was collected mostly in forms of paddy from the cultivable fields, services from the subjects and tributes from the hill tribes. Keirungshang, Lourungshang, Urungshang (civil supplies, Revenue and Forest) were important departments which were under the supervision of royal princes. The land survey, documentation of land holdings, rates of revenue and rents and premium for the newly reclaimed lands were improved by king Bhagyachandra with the experience of Bengal and Assam styles of the land revenue assignment systems.

Medieval agrarian society was depended to rites and rituals and it had to increased the productive forces of State Economy. The concept of the worship of God and Goddess refers to the prosperity of wealth, for example, 'Imoinu Ahongbi' (Goddess of Wealth) and 'Phouoibi' (Goddess of Rice), and it expected the essential means of economic activities in the medieval society. The socio-religious function
of 'Haiharaoba' indicates the economic activities i.e., plantation of crops, yarning and weaving of clothes and making of dwelling houses. The feudal economy, i.e., the private landownership system was associated with 'Panthoibi Louyan Jagoi' (Panthoibi Paddy Dance) and with this slave owning economy was also emerged in the Medieval period.

In the early time, Manipur was connected by trade routes with the countries of South Asia, South East Asia and central Asia and through these routes she has commercial and cultural contacts with the neighbouring kingdoms.24

Indeed, traders, merchants, pilgrimage, invaders have travelled all along these routes between India and Burma. Laden animals and Ponies were the main means of transportation. During the reign of Khagemba, transport and communication were improved and he constructed 'Makak' road and provided riverine network of transportation by boats.

Advantage of communication and transport facilities were the crying need of a changing society. Mass exchange among the people for economic, social and cultural progress was possible only when there were total objects for quick travel.

Since, Medieval Manipur completely lacked in the means of transport and communication, it stumbled blocks in eco-

nomic and cultural exchange among the people.

But the feeble character of transport facilities in Manipur was better a little and it was changed by the concluding treaty of king Bhagyachandra with the British East India Company in 1762 A.D. The socio-economic background against which Medieval Manipur originated changed until the British conquered it. The system of trade and commerce brings us to question of finance.

When the revenue payment in form of fixed amount of money was adopted, the old objective village agriculture, i.e., subsistence farming was now determined by the new objective namely Permanent Settlement. The realization of tax in terms of labour and in kind under 'Lallup and other feudal Socio-economic institutions which had been in existence during the Medieval period, was insufficient to meet such an economic drain. Private ownership of land in turn brought about change in the system of revenue payment.

Medieval Manipur's economy never came into contact with the massive forces of outsiders so it just only thrive on a self-sufficient agricultural economy with simple minimum needs which were produced locally. And, the techniques of production were primitive. Therefore, there was no process of capital formation for the economy as a whole.
People were backward and lacked in basic ideas of economic production and the will to economic development was completely absent.

Religious Change:

The main aspects of change in Medieval Manipur was the influence of external forces that is, the coming of Hinduism and Sanskritization of Manipur. Religion played a better role in bringing about social change in Manipur.

Since the 15th century, Vishnu worship was started in Manipur during the reign of King Kyamba (1467-1508 A.D.). According to tradition, the idol of Shri Vishnu sitting on a Gurudas was presented by Tsaoba Khehkomba, the Shan king of Pong in 1474 A.D., even now there is a Vishnu temple at Bishenpur, about 35 km. on the south of Imphal valley, on the highways of Tiddim-Chin Roads.

Moreover, the kings of Manipur were not converted into Hinduism till the reign of King Charairongba (1697-1709 A.D.). The presence of Hindu mode of worship in Manipur could be easily implied due to the migration of Brahmins in these kingdoms.

During the regime of Khagomba, there were expected religious syncretisms or dual worships of traditional Meitei Gods and Hindu Gods. Khagomba was not a Hindu but he did not show any disrespect for the Hindu religion. He contributed to the progress of Hinduism.
In 1636 A.D., Khagemba introduced in the annual boat race festival by keeping a boat apart for the image of Vishnu. The successors of Khagemba, i.e., king Khunjabba and his son Paikhomba seem to have followed this new faith. The Manipuri society was changed and stratified by the Vaishnavisation of the country. In the Medieval periods the Hindu concept of 'Varna' was indicated in Manipuri society and this tendency rise to the characteristic feature of 'Meiteism', i.e., the concept of 'Yek-Salai' flourishing side by side with the Hindu concept of 'Caste' and 'Sapinda'.

With the dawn of the 18th century, Manipur had change of her culture and society by the influence of a powerful process of Sanskritization. It was also a revolutionary era in which Manipur was converted into Hinduism and in this religious transformation the impact of which changed the whole social and cultural landscape of Manipur.

The reign of Charairongba (1697-1709 A.D.) was a transitional period from the traditional Meitei social situation to a Hinduised Meitei society. It was also a transition to a mature and powerful feudal system. It was said that Saivism or Saktism with Tantrik worship in existence in Manipur as early as 8th century. on the basis of the 'Copper Plate' inscriptions of the king Khongtekcha (763-773 A.D.)

\[25\] Yumjao Singh, W., op. cit., pp. 112-113.
Yet king Charairongba was the first Manipur king to be initiated into Hinduism by a Brahmin named Krishnacharya, who came from Shweta Ganga, Puri.

Manipur's contact with India became greatly strengthened after his conversion into Vaishnavism. So, many Brahmins migrated to Manipur and settled in the kingdom. The school of Vaishnavism established to which the king was baptised and adopted the worship of 'Lord Krsna' as the main philosophy.

Another tradition says that Charairongba accepted the sect of Vaishnavism established by 'Nimbarkacharya'. And the name of the sect introduced in Manipur was called 'Nimandi'.

Charairongba was thus the first Hindu king of Manipur, he adopted the Sanskrit name of Pitambar Singh. He changed his Hinduism from Saktism to Vaishnavism. The king worshipped the image of Lord Krsna and the said Krsna is now under the sacred icon worship at the residence of Guru Aribam family in the Brahmapur Guru Aribam Leikai. Here the word 'Guru' was first practised during the reign of king Charairongba.

With the conversion of Hinduism, the king was deeply involved in a spree of building of temples dedicated to Lord Krsna, Kali and others. In his reign, the ancestors of the following Brahmins came and settled in Manipur, i.e., Guru Aribam from Shweta Ganga, Puri, Laimayum from Tripura, Laipubam from Kanchan, Nagar (Orissa), Hangoibam from Mathura (Uttar Pradesh).
Pradesh), Lai-mayum Anoubam from Tripura and Choudhurimayum from Utkal (Orissa).  

These Brahmins immigrants entered into marriage relationship with the local women, settled down permanently and left behind their descendants. So it changed in the social folds of the Meiteis. Then, they became an integrate part of Manipuri society and changed social system by way of their contributions. Indeed, Hinduism led to the introduction of several changes in the spheres of social, religious, cultural, literary and artistic fields, the impact of which changed on the Art and Architecture, Sculpture and iconography, dance and music, literature and drama and various other aspects of the social and political life of the Manipuris of the Medieval periods. Thus it began a new era in the fields of Temple architecture, Fine-arts and Literary.

The chronicle records that despite his conversion to and profession of Hinduism, he could not totally make a break from the traditional Meitei religion and social norm.

With the accession of Garibaniwaz to the throne in 1709 A.D., the history of Manipur took a significant change by the influence of Hindu currents. Garibaniwaz's form of Vaishnavism was at first Chaitanya's School of Vaishnavism. Another form of Vaishnavism referred to a 'Mimandi'. Apart

from these two forms, another third form, referred to as 'Ramanandi' cult, authenticated by a new preceptor named Shanta Das Mahanta Beiragi from Nara Singh Tilla of Sylhet in Bengal. On the full-moon day, October, 1737 A.D., the king along with three hundred persons was invested with the sacred Thread.

During his reign, Hinduism was declared as the State religion, which really marked the opening of a new era in social and religious history of Manipur. The king along with his people of seven clans strictly followed the rules and regulations of Hindu Caste system. Propagation of this new religion, he strongly declared the eating of meat by the people as forbidden and the rearing of Pig and keeping of poultry were banned in the capital areas. The temples of nine Umang-Lais (Salvian Gods presiding over villages and lineages) were destroyed by the instructions of the king and his preceptor named Shanta Das Mahanta Beiragi. The tombs of the former kings, queens and princes and princesses were opened and the skeletons of the dead bodies were exhumed and cremated again. The ashes were immersed in the Chindwin River. The king installed the images of Shri Ram, Lakshman, Sita and Hanumangi in the Ramji temple in an auspicious hours.

With the heavy instruction of Shanta Das Mahanta, the king went against the use of Meitei scripts, songs and prayers. So, king Garibaniwaz introduced the Bengali scripts and substituted Meitei songs by Bengali songs. He, ill a fit of religious fanaticism, collected the valuable Meitei manuscripts numbering one hundred and twenty-three and the books were burnt up at the 'Kamala Utra' by the Ramanandi preacher with the help of the king. Among six of them proved to be fire-proof, viz., Nonglon, Pakhanba Naoyom, Singkhal Naoyom, Yangbi Thiren, Tharoainai Naoyom and Sagok. Manipur has thus been deprived by many rare religious and historical books through Garibaniwaz's fanaticism.

The traditional Meitei custom underwent considerable changes as a result of the growing influence of Hinduism. The pre-hindu traditional custom of dedicating the houses and temples of the kings and other buildings to a particular deity came under the Hindu influence and styles.

The whole social and political system of Manipur were transformed into a 'Hindu State' and 'Society'. The epithet 'Maharaja' was first used as one of the royal titles by Garibaniwaz. The adoption of the name of 'Manipur' for this ancient kingdom was the beginning of the process of Sanskritization brought about by conversion into Vaishnavism.

34. Ibungohal Singh, L., Introduction to Manipur, p. 56.
35. Kaomacha, Kh., Manipur Itivritta, p. 87.
Garibaniwaz was the first Manipuri king to introduce the 'practice of burning the dead bodies' and 'bone-gathering ceremony' and it also became the symbol of change in Manipuri society. The term 'Guru' is applied to a person who has encyclopaedic knowledge of puranic lore and yogic practice and sadhana. During his time some 'Parvas' of the Mahabharata and some 'Cantos' of the Ramayana were translated into Manipuri for the first time.

Shanta Das, according to 'Sanamahi Laikan' introduced the 'Gotra' for the seven Salais or the clans of the Meiteis. Adoption of Hindu Gotras in the Salai(clan) system is indicated in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salai</th>
<th>Gotra</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ningthouja</td>
<td>Shandilya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Angom</td>
<td>Kaushika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Chenglei</td>
<td>Bhardhwaja</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Luwang</td>
<td>Kashyap</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Khuman</td>
<td>Madhugalya</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Moirang</td>
<td>Aitereya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Khaba-Nganba</td>
<td>Gautam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The king and all the Meiteis after conversion were declared as 'Kshatriyas'. The Hinduised Meiteis had become a single caste society. The king's dynasty had been equated.

36. MS. Sanamahi Laikan, pp.59-60.
with the 'Surya Vansa' or 'Solar dynasty' of Shri Ramchandra of Ramayana as Garibaniwaz's dynasty was founded by Pakhangba, who according to myth was born of a divine cloud egg from the Sun and given to Yaibirok.\(^{37}\)

Thus, Hindu caste system took place a number of changes in the fields of culture, society, identity and religious of Medieval Manipur.

According to chronicle in 1744 A.D. a new calendar was introduced in Manipur, to which religious ceremonies and rites were performed on an auspicious occasions.\(^{38}\) The concept of Hindu practices were widely spread and it occurred to change in the society of Medieval Manipur. The Brahmins formed a separate caste outside the Meitei society and non-Hindu hill tribes and the Muslims, the Shan Buddhists also formed separate social groups outside the Meitei society. Another feature of Garibaniwaz's Sanskritization was the emergence of a princely group known as the Rajkumars (R.K.), who were the children of the wives and concubines of the king.

With the great propagation of Vaishnavism by Shanta Dād Mahanta, the Manipuri wives started performing the self immolation at the death of their husband (Sati Burning).

\(^{38}\) Ibungohal and Khelchandra, *op.cit.*, p.98.
The chronicle refers to the many Sati burnings voluntarily performed by the wives of princes, Brahmins and court nobles. The first recorded case of Sati Burning was in 1726 A.D., when prince Murari died, his two wives performed the Sati by burning themselves to death in the funeral pyre of the dead prince. 39

Thus, the Hindu concept of Sati burning practices indicated change in the Medieval Manipuri society.

The cultural contact with the 'Hindu World' of 'India' was established during his (faribaniwaz) reign. Pilgrimages to the Hindu holy places became a practice. A number of the members of the royal household including princesses went to the Ganges for pilgrimage under escort of the Brahmin priests. The practice of pilgrimage to the outside Manipur was contributed to the development of knowledge of the people of Manipuris expecting the progress of Hinduism, and took a more effective role in bringing about social change. The practice of immersing the forehead bones of the cremated persons was also followed. 40 Thus, the Hindu concept of Bone-gathering practices also indicated change in the Manipuri society.

In Medieval Manipur, the institution of marriage has underwent a tremendous change in the society. The marriage forms were changed by certain rules of Hindu concepts of

exogamy and endogamy. It was enacted that a marriage should not take place within the same Yek or Gotra and in that sense it was exogamous. In one way, there was another 'Sairuk' Tinnaba' (Sairuk exogamy) which related to the prohibition of marriage among the persons who are of the same mother but of different fathers. 41

Indeed, a marriage in order to receive sanction had to be endogamous as regards the 'caste' and exogamous as regards the 'Yek-Salai' or 'Gotra' and sapinda relations.

After conversion, the Manipuri society had changed eight forms of marriage viz., Brahmya, Daiva, Arsa, Prajapatra, Gandharba, Asura, Raksys, and Peisaca. But the first mode of marriage was expected as suitable in the Manipuri society.

Indeed, with the coming of Hindu concept of marriage forms, there took place a great change in the socio-cultural life of the Meiteis. So it produced a far reaching consequence in the Medieval society. It also culminated in the breakdown of the old social values, norms and orders and it became a new one.

With propagation of Vaishnavism, the indigenous Meitei God and Goddesses were identified with that of Hindu God and Goddesses, i.e., the Soraren, king of Heaven was identified with Indra, Nongpok Ningthou with Shiva Mahadev, Panthoibi

with Durga or Parvati, Wangbaren, the Water God with Varmha etc. legends about the exploits of Arjuna of Mahabharata and his fight with Brabuvahan had been created.

The traditional Meitei festivals were converted into Hindu names or modified with Hindu form. Indeed, the annual boat race, known as the 'Heigru Hitongba' festival was renamed 'Jal Yatra'. The Waira Temkap festival (Archery) was converted into a kirtan of Lord Rama. The Kongba Leithong Phatpa ceremony was changed to 'Vishnu Samkranti' and the Ahong Khongching was also changed by 'Ratha Yatra'. The Wakambung Chingnunghongombi was replaced by Dasma Kwaktanba of Durga Puja or Dusserah. 42

King Garibaniwaz tried to destroy Meitei religion through the physical destruction of the temples and statues of the Meitei Gods and Goddesses. And, those who did not follow the dietary rule of the new faith were punished. At the same, Lourembam Khongnangthaba, the great erudite scholar philosopher of the Manipur strongly opposed to this new faith. But the effort of the king and his preceptor to destroy the ancient Meitei religion failed due to opposition by the followers of the ancient religion.

One of the remarkable changes which took place in the socio-cultural and religious fields was the depiction of the evidents, Garibaniwaz was the first ruler of Manipur

42. Sanamahi Laikan, pp. 63-64.
who had depicted the name of Hindu deity on coins. For instance 'Shri Ram' was depicted in Nagri script on the abverse side of his 'Seljao' type of coins. Apart from the epigraphical evidences of Garibaniwaz, the use of words 'Jaya Shri Garibana' and 'Ram Ram' respectively had been used in the royal chronicles for the first time in the history of Manipur, and which also help us to show the patronage extended by the king to Ramanandi cult of Vaishnavism. During one generation, the social folds and even the racial identity of the Meiteis were radically Sanskritized. The Brahmin scholars had started to exert Sanskrit influence in every ways of Manipuri social life specially in the fields of education, astrology in performance of rites and rituals and political affairs.

Hinduism did not have change on the hill people of Manipur and they (hill tribes of the surrounding hills) were the practitioners of the animistic tribal religion.

Hinduism, which flourished in Manipur prior to and during the 17th and 18th centuries was motivated but a synthesis of the Medieval Meitei religion with its Gods and Goddesses, usages and ceremonies, rites and rituals and of Vaishnavism with its special worship of 'Radha Krsna' and 'Sita Ram' was there.

During the regime of king Jay Singh (1759-1798 A.D.) the Chaitanya School of Vaishnavism was became more popular. The
influence of Chaitanya Vaishnavism was centered round the personality of Jay Singh, whom the Manipuris call 'Rajarshi' Bhagyachandra (Royal Saint). He discarded Ramanandi cult and introduced Gaudiya Vaishnavism as the State Religion of Manipur. He was formally initiated into Gaudiya Vaishnavism by Shri Rup Parmananda Thakur. The most remarkable contribution of Jay Singh was the construction of installation of the wooden statue of 'Shri Govindajee'. The images of 'Shri Govindajee', 'Shri Bijoy Govinda', 'Shri Advaita' and 'Shri Gopinath' were made out of the Jackfruit tree by a wooden statue maker Sapam Lakshman Singh. The four images of Lord Krsna were worshipped at four different places of Manipur: Shri Govindajee at the temple at Langthabal Palace authenticated by king Joy Singh, Shri Bijoy Govinda under the care of Minister Ananta Shai, the uncle of the king, Shri Advaita was worshipped at the second Palace of Bishenpur and Shri Gopinath was looked after by Krittidhwaja who was given the title of 'Kala Raja' by the king, the temple was located at Ningthoukhong. Krittidhwaja was the son of Dsaraja, the chief of the Bishnupriyas who accompanied king Jay Singh during his refuge in Assam and died there. With the conversion of Gaudiya Vaishnavism, Manipur society had also changed continually in dress, food habits and the adoption of the Bengali as medium of religious transaction, either in singing of hymns or writing of scripts.

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44. *ibid.*, 
Manipur society had changed in all directions of livelihood, religious affinity and cultural identity by Gaudiya Vaishnavism with its emphasis on 'Sangkirtana' accompanied by hymn singing and dance 'Ras', forms. King Jay Singh composed three 'Ras' forms and dedicated to Lord Govindajee; they were Kunjaras, Maharas, and Basantaras. Ras forms which were a combination of the traditional Meitei dance forms and vaishnavite theme. His religious devotion was emulated by his daughter Princess Bhimbavati Manjuri who was symbolically married and dedicated to 'Shri Govindajee'. She followed her father to Nabadwip, where she worshipped of Shri Anu Prabhu.

During the Jay Singh's time, the domination of Bengali Brahmins on Manipuri society was completed and inter-caste tension, cleavage between the Hindu and non-Hindu subjects emerged. The sati burning was so popular during the regime of Gariibaniwaz but it became unpopular and another 'Satidah' was recorded in 1784 A.D. Due to the transformation of these social structures, Manipur society took underwent a massive change.

Stratification in the Medieval Meitei society in the form of Hindu caste system had come to stay. The Brahmins and Rajkumars including the kings were formed automatically.

45. Gangmimei Kehri, op.cit. p 277
a upper caste and privileged class as they were also exemp-
ted from taxes, levies, cultivation and Lallup feudal service. Royal patronage was given to them for the religious activ-
ities and Brahmins were settled in every villages of Mani-
pur and 'temples' and 'Mandops' which were managed by them. So the temples and Mandops were the centres of Vaishnava religious propagation with feudal control agencies. The Brah-
mins were addressed on Male as 'Bigya' and on female as 'Thourani', as mark of honour by the peoples. The descendants of the king and his royal sons were called 'Ningthemachas' or Rajkuaars(R.K.) and were addressed as 'Sankhya' when marri-
age. The royal daughters called 'Sana' or 'Leima' or 'Raj-
kumari' and were also addressed as 'Shijah' when marriage as the mark of honour in Manipuri society.

The social outcastes were put at the lowest level of untouchable.46

Indeed, there were certain cruel practices such as 'Mangba-Sengba' (Ostracisation and Purification of persons), which continued to prevail in the country under the orthodox section of the Brahmins and the king.

After conversion, Manipuri society had changed in dress, foodhabit, art and rites and ritual's observations. People had started using Bengalis clothes, dhoties and Kurtas.47 Moreover, 46. ibid., p.278. 47. Kaoba,M., History of Manipur (1709-1826), Imphal, p.28.
the traditional Meitei clothes and dresses were used in the social festivals and ritual occasions. The Meitei women used their 'Phaneks', which were symbols of the continuity in Meitei sartorial tradition.

By the influence of the Bengali clothing style, the Manipuri feudal nobles and royalist had adopted the Indian royal clothing style.

With the pervasion of Gaudiya Vaishnavism through royal helps, the 'Padavali Kirtan' was changed into 'Natya Pala Kirtan' in Medieval Manipur according to regional variations and the reading of Vaishnava texts, the system of 'Ani Phambi' (one for reciting and another for translating the Verses) feeding to the people for the first time in Manipur.

The king collected a large number of Vaishnava manuscripts including Srimad Bhagavat, Dasansrandha and Gita. A Brahmin named Ramakand from Assam, brought a copy of 'Bhagavat Purana' with utmost care and presented to king on Monday, October 1, 1775 A.D. Thus Assamese scriptures moulded the religious ideas of Manipuri Vaishnavas. Jeo Sharma, a Brahmin from Assam also introduced the art of 'Story-Telling' system in Manipuri for the first time. It took a better role in bringing about social change in Manipur. The traditional social customs and habits of the

people were affected to a social dimension i.e., the gradua-
tional extension of Brahmins in Manipuri society. Most of
the 'Socio-religious festivals', 'rite and rituals' functions
like 'Marriage', 'Sasadha', 'Sacred-Thread', 'Ear-boring', Swasti-
puja' etc. were performed authenticatedly by Brahmins. Thus,
the Brahmanical Hindu culture became part and parcel of
Manipur society.

The next notable changes, which took place in Manipuri
society was that the indigenous name of the kings and com-
mon people got sanskritized name, for example, Khagembba was
converted sanskritized name as Khagendra, Charairongba as
Pitambar Singh, Pambeiba as Garibaniwaz, Chinthangkhomba as
Jay Singh or Bhagyachandra and so on.

Some important places, temples, hills and rivers were
also converted into Sanskritized names viz., Hongmaijing
Hill as Millakhantha Giri, Laimaton Hill as Narundhaj Giri,
Heibok Hill as Vageneshwor Giri, Kongba River as Gyabi Ganga,
Nungshang Ekon as Bindh Shorobar, Laahangdong as Bishnupur,
Thanga-Karang as Duwarka, Hiyangthang Lairembi as Khyamakha
Devi, Mongba-Hanba Umanglen as Mahabali Hanuman Thakur etc.
The Manipuri word, 'Lai' has been conveniently dubbed by
some as a derivative of Hindunized 'linga' and this assump-
tion is not found valid, because linguistically the word Lai
does not relate to Linga. But the Lai is a common word for
the deity and it identifies with the days of week in Manipur
whereas Linga represents the phallic symbol of Lord Siva or Mahadev. Everything pertaining to religion in Manipur is prefixed by the word Lai such as Laining Louba (incarnation), Laining Lambi (way of devotion), Laipham (place of god), etc.

Another Hindu concept of changes, which took place in the Manipuri society was that the root meanings of the words 'Shri', 'Shrimati', 'Kumari', 'Devi', 'Singh' and 'Sharma' before and after to every names, such as Shri Moirangthem Ranjit Singh, Shrimati Moirangthem Ongbi Nongthombam Ningol Bkashini Devi, Kumari Salam Tombi Devi, Shri Phurailatpam Modhu Sharma, etc., have been used in common name of Manipuris including the Brahmans. These words or root meanings are memories testifying the contact of Manipur with other parts of India. Thus the mode of naming is due to Vaishnava influence and this shows them not only as followers of Vaishnavism but a preservers of the Sanskrit and Bengali culture as well. It took a better role in bringing about social change in Manipur.

Many people were attracted to the Vaishnava fold by their pleading and good examples and they converted many non-Meitei people like the Lois and tribal peoples. Due to the transformation of these social structures, Manipur society took underwent a massive changes.

Different Hindu religious cults like 'Saivism', 'Saktism' and 'Tantrism' worship are in existence in Manipur but in comparison to these three cults of Hinduism, Vaishnava form of Hinduism gained momentum due to the declaration as the State Religion of Manipur in the 18th century. Due to the changes of social customs, rites and rituals, festival and other functions by the adoption of Gaudiya Vaishnavism and identification of the Meitei Gods and Goddesses with the deities of Hindu pantheon went a long way in mass mobilization of the Hindu currents.

Moreover, the opposition of the Hindu faith by the protagonists of the indigenous Gods and Goddesses the Old form of worship continued and the Meiteis worshipped 'Pakhangba', 'Sanamahi', 'Leimaren' and three hundred and sixty three Umanglais scattered in all places of a fine synthesis had been effected because, in which traditional and Hindu deities received in equal amount of attention from the king and it continued and developed side by side in Manipur society.

**Political Changes**

The medieval period of Meitei kingdoms witnessed a full fledged feudal State, prior to and during the 17th and 18th centuries has been subject to changes in different spheres of State administration, under which the kings have had to adjust themselves in political care to the administrative innovations with divine status to the monarch.
Polity, as defined by the modern authorities, was a form of government or society as an organised state. It was also observed by the physical basis of the territory constituting the state, the prevailing level of social and economic organisation and political traditions. Thus, polity observes with the nature of the state, its people, sovereignty, the working of political forces internal and external needs of the country.

Traditionally, Meitei Polity is a monarchy. The belief in the 'Divine Rights Theory of Kingship'. For instance, during Khagemba’s reign, in 1608 A.D., the title of the king was changed to 'Lainingthou', the Godly king, thus according a divine status to the monarch, who was appointed to look after the affairs of the State. Moreover, as far as the 'Law of Succession' was concerned, 'Kingship', was not always hereditary. Then, the 'Law of Primogeniture' was not always respected, any strong man of the Ningthouja clan may become the king.

Generally, the eldest son of the chief queen was nominated to the throne, but sometimes even the youngest son could become king. The Meitei king was indicated to be a sovereign with absolute power, but his power and function were limited by nobles. The king appointed officers called 'Ningthou Pongba Tara' (Ten Nobles) and sixty-four 'Phamious'.

(Representatives of the people) to assist him in the administration.

During Khagemba's time, the feudal system was perfected and slave labours were used in agriculture, cutting of firewood, trees, and collecting vegetables. There are some references of the slave labours rendered services to the king and the nobles. Moreover, this was not the real sense of Lallup. The growth of surplus productions by using advanced tools, influx of population that led to the breakdown of clans into lineages and families led to changed of slave owning economy and private ownership of land from the primitive communal land system. Most of the developed agrarian society the wealth of a person was measured in terms of lands and cattles. Granting of lands to the nobles in lieu of services, as rewards contributed to the development of feudal land system.

The changing land holding system was caused by the mode of agricultural productions from shifting to horticulture and terrance cultivation. 52

It was existed to the higher stage of development with the changing of land holding system in the State due to the feudal mode of production on behalf of the rising power of ruling class.

The administration of revenue circles known as 'Panas' being four in number had been further strengthened. Panas system was introduced not only in administrative affairs but also in military, sports and games, also. For the betterment of administration of the country, Khagemba divided four Panas, viz., the Ahallup, Naharup, Laipham and Khabam Panas, looking after and managing the service of 'Lallup'. The nobility who formed the backbone of the State system and it changed due to increased in the workload of administration affairs, feudal State system and immigration of foreigners in the country.

Khagemba appointed the following posts for the betterment of administration, viz., Dalairoi Hanjaba (Head of the Palangquin riders), Khabam Shanglenlakpa (Head of Khabam Panas), four Shanju Lakpa, Khetri Hanjaba, Lairikyengbam Hanjaba (Head of the royal scribes) etc. Thus, the feudal state system was perfected and feudal mode of production was geared up on the basis of social and political institutions.

King Paikhomba (1666-1697 A.D.) was personally involved in development work carried out by the feudal labour of Lallup system. It appeared that the activities of the State were greatly increased. The four administrative divisions (Panas) were given greater administrative responsibility.

During the reign of Charairongba (1697-1709 A.D.), the Lallup labour was extracted from the villages which were

situated near the valley or near the main trade routes. And in case of their refusal to pay tribute or lallup service the king sent military expeditions as punishment.

In the reign of Garibaniwaz (1709-1748 A.D.), the Lallup system was in practice in full swing. His imposition of the Lallup was a great burden on the hill tribes. He also introduced some changes in the administration on the hill areas, i.e., the headmen of the tribal villages as chiefs or Ningthou, but they changed the word as 'Khullakpa' to mean the village chiefs. The village was under the administrative control of the Khullakpa assisted by the Luplakpa and the office of the Khunbu (owner or head of the village). This was also established.

Thus the officer of Khunbu, Khullakpa and Luklakpa were officially introduced by Garibaniwaz in 1736 A.D. among the hill villages. 54

Indeed, the use of both Khunbu and Khullakpa in place of Ningthou was a very significant transformation of the administrative control and relation of the king of Manipur over the hill villages. Therefore, the title used was Ningthou, the hill chiefs were independent or autonomous. But Khullakpa was the administrator of the villages and Khunbu was the owner of the village.

So, the feudal state system was improved during his (Garimeniwaz) reign. The Meitei feudalism was centred around the king and his court. 55

During king Jay Singh's time (1749-1798 A.D.), the armed forces were still changed in militia based on the Lallup system.

Indeed, one of social institutions which played an important role in the socio-economic life of the people during the Medieval period was the Lallup system.

A feudal state like Manipur of the Medieval period had no formal code of law in order to administer justice. The administration of justice was changed in referring to the legal rules and institutions, indicating the function of law as an indicator of social change. During these periods, the forms of law expecting the 'Rationalization' and 'Realization' of the legal functions were regarded in needs, in administration of justice. Therefore, law was not differentiated from religion and morality. But, in legal procedures and it could not be handled by people; a method called 'trial by ordeal', which had always been used by the king or the nobles, was restored to. The trial by ordeal system may be classified into three categories i.e., Ordeal by water, indicated in plunging underneath the water, those who remained below longest; another form of ordeal was that two pieces of

gold and silver were thrown on the ground, the persons who could pick-up the gold was innocent.\textsuperscript{56} and the Oath taking was another form of legal procedure.\textsuperscript{57} There were courts like Khundin, Kuchu, Pacha, Pala Loisan and Cheirap. Cheirap was the highest court of justice. Treason against the king was the highest crime that could be committed.

In Khagemba's time, the criminal cases which could not be settled in the village courts were referred to the royal court known as 'Khagemba Loishang'.

During the reign of Paikhomba, the administration of justice was harsh. There were several instances of murder, theft and violation of State laws. Those who were involved in the theft of Khamenchatpa, a printed silk dhoti awarded by the king were punished to death and the abetter were punished by cutting off his nose.\textsuperscript{58} In his reign, two persons named Amu Nakahba and Atom Laishuba were hanged at Kangpokpi for forcible entry into the King's herem at midnight.\textsuperscript{59}

In the reign of Charairongba, the punishment awarded to offenders was severe. In 1705 A.D., he awarded death sentence to eight thieves. The sentence was to be executed by drowning them in the Imphal River below Sugnu (about 64 kms. to the South from Imphal).

\textsuperscript{56} Ibungohal and Khelchandra, op. cit., pp. 821, 337.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibobi, N. op. cit., p. 206.
\textsuperscript{58} Gangmumei Kabui, op. cit., p. 230.
In the Garibaniwaz's time, a great Cathartic change came over in the religion of Manipur. Every non-believer of Vaishnavite religion might at any time be punished. The forms of punishment continued to be severe, like the cutting of limbs and exile to penal settlements.

During the reign of Jay Singh, the administration of justice was changed. He divided the law court into six divisions, viz., Langdai Kaibiron Shanglen, Ngamda Shat Thaba Shanglen, Cheirap, Kuchu, Gaudiya Shinba Shanglen and Apam Shanglen.

In 1793 A.D., Jay Singh exiled Ibugshija Krishnachandra to Khoupum for plotting and waging war against the king. Persons who were involved in such crimes were also sent to Loi villages.

In the Medieval period, the nature of punishment in Manipuri society expected to be more rigorous and in some cases rather rigid. There was no uniformity in awarding punishment and it changed from time to time and from king to king. Thus law also plays as an initiator of social change.

Educational Change:

The important aspect of social change in Manipur was the educational upliftment with its structural changes. In Manipuri society, education expected in different specialized

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actions like physical education, training for moral development, courage skill etc., and it severe two different categories viz., Literary and Non-Literary.

Literary education assumed with historical process, philosophy, astronomy, astrology etc. authenticated by 'Madi-chous' (astrologer-scholar).

And Non-literary education, which dealt with physical training, martial art and courage skill.

One of the notable aspects of social change in Manipur was the adoption of Meitei scripts and changes through the time and space of paleography. The evolution of Meitei script can be traced back to the early period. With expectation of cultural exchanger, the Meitei script was on Tibeto-Shan footing, while the substratum was on Brahmi-Nagari frame, and hence the motif and motivation of the script was of hybrid naturalism with its particularities of localised Mongoloid characteristics.

R.K. Jhalajit writes, 'In Khagemba's time the Manipuri literature came out of the rut into which it had fatten in a previous period, and reached new heights. The golden age of Manipuri literature was in the future, not in the past, but the time of Khagemba like a few other times, shines brilliantly in the long and chequered history of Manipuri literature.'

Khagemba introduced a new script with the consultant of his court scholars, which were approved thirty-six alphabets. A large number of books were written viz., Khagemba Yumlep, Leithak Leikharol, Thawan Michak Khenhenglon, Tharon, Panthoibi Waron, Shukhan Laikhan, Kaibaron and Khagemba Shingkak.

In the reign of Charairongba, the formation of Meitei script was to respond the gratis-gratitude of the influxing Hindu culture and Shan influence. Therefore, he changed the formation of alphabets letter four consonants and three of them are in the near likeness of soft sound consonants.

During Garibaniwaz's time, Manipur indicated significant changes in the literary education. The Meitei script formation was changed i.e., five another initial consonants were probable, to develop as much as the letters of his predecessors had undergone palaeographic changes for cursive writing.

As the new initiation of Hindu faiths, the Meitei scripts were changed into Brahmi and Devanagari scripts. Bengali and Sanskrit words got inter-woven with the archaic Meitei words were spoken there. Most of Manipuri scholars started to change Bengali and Sanskrit as the medium of their literary education.

In the Jay Singh's time, many forged records regarding the ethnic origin of Meitei were interlaced in version and expounded the same in Hindunisation literary forms. He translated
Srimad Bhagavatum, Chaitanya Charitamrti and Gitagovinda into Manipuri. Some educational institutions were established in connection with the religious themes. Thus educational policies are generally framed with an eye on the religion.

Over and above, these educational system, since the Medieval Manipur was lying a strategic point always influenced by external forces, so it had greatly changed in the social structures and social systems.

Thus, the main reason for this was that the social system in Medieval period stood as an obstacle of development and progress. Therefore, it is a fact that main object of education was to serve the needs of the individual learner in particular and of the society in general, to which there stood in the ways of learning the superstitious beliefs and religious orthodoxy of the people. Indeed, the attitude adopted by the Meiteis towards the Non-Meiteis including their political nobles and the Brahmins were entrusted the educational forms to the masses, rather than Vaishnava Schools played a vital role. So, the Medieval society as a whole was oriented in such a type of system that there was ample scope to fulfil its needs. Therefore, education played a better role in bringing about social change in Manipur.