CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Different aspects of social change that existed in Manipur from 1597 to 1798 A.D. have been examined in the preceding chapters. In order to resolve a systematic, comprehensive, analytical and critical study of the subject concerned, it may be concluded that there were several landmarks in social change in Manipur from the 17th to 18th century A.D.

Social change indicates continuous flux, all changes are purposive and a ubiquitous phenomenon as well as an alternation in the state of society resulting in modifications of old ways or in new social forms. But it changes whenever new forces of transformation emerges with the help of external and internal forces. Social change takes place only when there is a shift in social structure, transformation in social institution and assimilation of the new social values, norms, folkways etc. Contemporary social conditions in societies all over the world are being increasingly influenced and shifted by significant social changes.

International and National contacts rapidly increase, bringing together frequently and for varying durations of time different cultures of the world and setting in motion of host of influences that generates change both in the
culture of society and in the structure. Thus groups, social relationships in organisations, institutions are in the throes of change. The rate, the direction, the degree of change may vary from society to society from gradual and almost imperceptible in some societies that are still primitive, to rapid with increasing acceleration in modern dynamic and complex western societies.

Historical prosperity has shown changes of the domicile of tribes and ethnic groups, of people's way of life in society, of family and day to day relations.

The social change in Manipur society might be regarded as the same as any social change occur in any society of the world from the view point of external and internal forces, i.e., the forces of home and abroad. People themselves have undergone a change, acquiring new knowledge of the world around them, new production, experience, socio-economic and cultural change and so on. Similarly, the Manipur society had also changing night from the early periods of history. For instance, change had taken place in Manipur in certain cultural spheres, such as religion, literature, technology, art and science, with the help of external forces, i.e., the coming of Hinduism and Sanskritization of Manipur, prior to and during 17th and 18th centuries. Moreover, changes in Manipur society can not be assigned to these external forces only.
In this both endogenous and exogenous changes, i.e., change originating within and outside were strictly responsible for bringing about social change in Manipur. And, due to the development of internal forces, such as, expansion and strengthening internal feuds of the kingdoms of Medieval Manipur achieved in the 17th and 18th centuries, by some powerful kings, viz., Khagemba, Charairongbam Garibaniwaz and Jay Singh, who had to contend with Manipur's neighbours, i.e., the Shans, the Burmese, the Chinese, the Bodo of Tripura, the Oimasa Kacharis, the Ahoms and the Muslims. Again, Manipur trade linked with the outside world, different groups of people passed through and settled in this country and they assimilated on the culture of Meiteis. Therefore, these external new forces, influence observed Manipur society underwent transformation not only this, it also brought change in the economic and political structure of the life of Meiteis.

Social change is based on mode of production in material life, that 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, and it recognizes the class struggle and struggle between the two opposing forces - - thesis and anti-thesis which leads to synthesis or development of new situation.
The notion of the term synthesis is reflected in Manipur society because of this, a feudal state like Manipur from 17th and 18th centuries had some of the ingredient of a 'Medieval society', realization of the tax in terms of labour and in kind under 'Lallup' and other socio-economic institutions which had mainly changed in the feudal mode of production.

The country was self-contained and it did not depend upon any foreign country for agricultural and industrial products. In the rural areas it was characterised by the existence of subsistence farming and self-sufficiency in all industrial products. Moreover, with the coming of Hinduism and Sanskritization in Manipur, the economic life of Manipur was transformed from the existence of subsistence farming of primitive agricultural stage to permanent settlement and mode of agricultural transplanting system of paddy cultivation by plough drawn by the bullock and buffalo and introduced a quick growing specie planted in the swamps areas. The old objective of village agriculture and production for village consumption was no longer in existence in the country due to the development of technology and manufacturing.

But people were backward and lacked basic ideas of economic production and rays of modernization had not reflected so the will to development was completely absent. Thus, the economic life of Medieval Manipur did not have any
resemblance to that of the Modern period (here Moderniza-
tion came to Manipur very lately, it came during the reign

Religion played a vital role in bringing about social
change in Manipur. The Meiteis, however, came within the fold
of Hinduism extensively since the beginning of the 18th
century on account of the proselytization. Hinduism had taken
roots in Manipur in a peculiar and superficial way wherein
the Meiteis rejected many of its tenets while at the same,
keeping up most of their traditional basic elements which
formed the core of the Meitei religion.

Hinduism led to the introduction of several changes in
socio-political economic and cultural fields. The whole social
and political system of Manipur was transformed into Hindu
State and society. The epithel 'Maharaja' was first used as
one of the royal titles by king Garibaniwaz. The offices of
the 'Yubaraj' (crown prince), Senapati (general), Mantri (minister)
were also created during Garibaniwaz's time. The adoption of
the name of 'Manipur' for this ancient kingdom was the begin-
nning of the process of Sanskritization brought about by
conversion into Vaishnavism.

The impact of Hinduism also felt on the art and archi-
tecture, sculpture and iconography, music and dance, literature
and drama and various other aspects of politico-economic
institutions of the life of Meiteis.
Moreover, the Hindu religion could not totally replace the traditionally Meitei religion, so the two currents had flowed side by side in Manipur society. Again, Hinduism did not have impact on the hill people of Manipur.

Thus, Hinduism, which flourished in Manipur during the 18th century was motivated but a synthesis of the 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.

In the 18th century, educational policies were generally framed with an eye on the religion. With Gaudiya Vaishnavism becoming a State religion in Manipur, in king Jay Singh's time, Bengali Brajabuli and Sanskrit words got inter-woven with the archaic Meitei words which were spoken there.

Thus, education system, since Medieval Manipur was lying a strategic point always influenced by external forces, it had greatly changed the social structure and social systems, impact of which, Manipur stood as an obstacle to development and progress, and ways of learning were the superstitious beliefs and religious orthodoxy of the people, and left a lasting imprint on the culture, thus Manipur society underwent transformation.