Chapter – 4

Linguistic Purism through Religious Revivalism

4.1. Introduction

As a result of hinduisation of Meiteis into the 18th century by the Bengali speaking Hindu agents, Bengali language left its considerable marks on Meiteiron. The result of this influence on Meiteiron during the last three centuries was introduction and assimilation of a large number of Bengali words into Meiteiron. We have already seen in the previous chapter that the influx of Bengali words in the last few hundred years had predisposed Meiteiron speaker to borrow from Bengali languages. During this period of hinduisation this predisposition was given full scope, and a large number of Bengali words had made inroad into Meiteiron. When we think of Bengali words in Meiteiron we no doubt think first of words connected with religion and its associated rituals and also with words connected with literature. Various other dependent changes have taken place in Meiteiron, though not as far-reaching in their effects as those caused in the aspect of vocabulary
associated with religious terms. It was also made to feel that anybody who wanted to appear more-refined, cultured and sophisticated had to learn some vocabulary of Bengali. Many people did so because spattering of some Bengali vocabulary while speaking Meiteiron or a little knowledge of Bengali was considered as a mark of respect and status.

However, in the late 1930s some significant and interesting socio-cultural changes were evident in Meitei society. This was the religious revivalist movement in 1930s which led to profound socio-cultural upheaval and discontinuity of Hindu faith in some section of Meitei community. As a part of this effort to prove the unquestionable independent identity of Meiteis and its language the need of linguistic purification was felt urgently. In this process, the use of Bengali borrowed linguistics terminology became a negative influence on the language and hence discouraged to be used. At this juncture religious revivalists would try to avoid all the existing words and usages of Bengali origin and replaced by indigenous words. In this process, revivalism is seen characterized by its opposition and convert protest not to use any of the Bengali origin words. This could be regarded as a fight for cultural identity of Meiteis against the fetters and obtrusion of Bengali language.
The extent to which Manipuri has been changed through the procession of hinduization has been discussed at length in the previous chapter. In this chapter we will discuss how Manipuri has been impacted primarily in the realm of vocabulary through religious revivalism. To enlarge its vocabulary Manipuri depends on its resources. Sometimes it coins new words from native elements. The removal of Indo-Aryan origin words was part of a larger vocabulary maintenance, where all Indo-Aryan words are being targeted for eradication and replacement by pure Meiteiron words. When pure Meiteiron words are not found easily the writers and purists try to search through many varieties of Manipuri to get a replacement of the borrowed vocabulary. In the process they try to exploit or revive the extinct pure Meiteiron words or to create new words based on the existing form or to translate the borrowed items to sound like Meiteiron. Before we actually go to the analysis of linguistic purism brought apparently by religious revivalism a background study of religious revivalism and purism is in order.

The structure of the chapter is as follows, after a brief introduction we will discuss the General Background of Religious Revivalism. It will be followed by the study of emergence of religious revivalism among the Meiteis. The section on Emergence of religious revivalism among the Meiteis’ has a section on Purism in Meiteiron. And under this section we will discuss religious terms
used in the invitation cards of the religious ceremonies of birth, marriage and death of both the Hindu faith and the Meitei faith. It will be followed by the analysis of relevance of purism in Meiteiron which is discussed in two section (1) Native linguistic material and (2) Loan translation. The chapter further focuses on religious terms used in religious ceremonies birth, marriage and death.

4.2. General background of religious revivalism

Revivalism is a phenomenon where a new and unexpected burst in spiritual concern spurs a sudden increase in religious outpourings and intense and surprising conversions. As such “Revival is a term that generally refers to a specific period of increased in spiritual interest or renewal in the life of a community”. Revival is the noun form of the verb “revive,” a derivation of the Latin revivere, meaning “to live again” or “to return or to restore to consciousness or life.” Religious Revivalism is an approach to religious beliefs and practices that stresses the literal interpretation of texts sacred to the religion in question and the application of their precepts to all aspects of social life. This process has been increasingly associated in the late 20th century with revivalist movements in a number of world religions, including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and Hinduism.

Revival can also be “the restoration of something to its true nature and principle.” Additionally, the term may mean “reform,”
as in the profound change of social morals or doctrine. Murray recognizes that in genuine revival there is “an observable rising of the whole moral tone” of the affected community. According to William James, psychologist and philosopher- revivalism is the calculated arousal of religious excitement on the part of preachers in order to produce the desired effect, namely conversion on the spot. (Varieties of Religious Experence,1902). Religious revival has been able to make a point, all through history in the whole world. Every corner of the world had gone through the ritual of religious revivalism in order to give an identity to each particular society. For instance during 18th century England saw a series of Methodist revivalism that stressed the tenets of faith, in addition of stressing the evangelist combination of bible, cross, conversion and activism. In New England, the renewed interest in religion inspired a wave of social activism, including abolitionism. In western New York, the spirit of revival encouraged the emergence of new Restorationist and other Christian denominations and movements such as the Holiness Movement. Religious revivalism is considered as the renewal of attention to religious faith and service in a community. Revivalism centers on vigorous preaching and audience singing of popular religious songs. The preaching and the singing aim at eliciting both rational and emotional responses from the audience.
Protestant revivalism developed out of two late seventeenth-century European movements—English Puritanism and Continental Pietism. The Puritans contributed an emphasis on visible conversion. The Puritans often described the event of becoming a Christian as the "New Birth." At other times and places, it has been described as "trusting Christ," "experiencing salvation," making a "decision for Christ," or being "born again."

Pietism contributed an emphasis on personally experiencing the divine, resulting in holy living. Pietism developed in Germany in reaction against the formalism of state-church Lutheranism and the aridity of Protestant theology. The early Pietists formed small groups for prayer, Bible study, and exhortation to live by Christian principles. They emphasized the priesthood of all believers, and that true Christian faith led one to a relationship with God rather than mere knowledge about God. They avoided theological disputation, favoring instead devotional activities and charitable acts.

It is said that Puritanism and Pietism were not insulated from each other; in the late seventeenth century they mingled each other's main characteristics. They fused most dynamically in the 1740s in the Methodist movement of John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield. Two of its most innovative elements were field preaching and popular hymnody. Methodism eventually became a main source for American revivalism, and open preaching-and-
singing services on denominationally neutral ground became one of revivalism's hallmarks.

Then revivalism became an inter-colonial phenomenon when Whitefield undertook a series of itinerant preaching tours that drew enormous crowds throughout the middle colonies and New England. Historians have called this upsurge of revivalism America's "First Great Awakening." It introduced the main pattern for subsequent American revivalism: nondenominational settings, the absence of social distinctions in the audience, using popular religious songs to engage audience participation and passion, and itinerant preachers exhorting people to New Birth, holy living, and "revival" of religious zeal in local churches.

Revivalism was therefore both divisive and unifying. On one hand, it split existing denominations into pro-revival and anti-revival parties; and it shepherded many of the newly awakened into pro-revival denominations. In the First Great Awakening, Presbyterians split into New Side and Old Side, Congregationalists into New Lights and Old Lights. Meanwhile, revivalism greatly expanded Baptist numbers throughout the colonies.

On the other hand, revivalism produced a common-denominator Protestantism that transcended denominational differences and stimulated ecumenical activity. The ecumenical
power of revivalism became clear after the "Second Great Awakening," beginning around 1800 at several outdoor meetings in Kentucky. African Americans were for the first time Christianized in large numbers; and a genuinely new American religion, Mormonism, emerged. But in style and outcome the basic patterns repeated. The revivalists' success in preaching conversion and holy living prompted Protestants to cooperate across denominational lines to form societies that would convert America and make it holy. Thus from the above literature, it can be observed that this was how the Evangelical United Front—a network of interdenominational organizations like the American Bible Society, American Sunday School Union, American Temperance Society, and others—began in the 1810s and 1820s.

Another significant kind of revivalism can be mentioned is the Evangelical United Front which was anti-Catholic, in spite of which; Roman Catholics in the United States had their own form of revivals called "parish missions." These originated in sixteenth-century when some religious orders set out to revitalize Catholicism through itinerant preaching. When these orders immigrated to the United States, they brought parish missions along with them. The revival began in the 1850s, gained momentum in the 1860s, and did not decline until the 1890s. Like Protestant revivals, parish missions employed music and sermons aimed at conversion, the direct
experience of God, and holy living (which often included signing a temperance pledge). Unlike Protestant revivals, the parish missions remained thoroughly Catholic, retaining ritual, sacraments, catechism, and confessional. The result was a personal religion of the heart that resembled revivalistic evangelicalism, but in form and structure remained clearly Roman Catholic.

Another revivalism which needs to be highlighted is the revivalist of the nineteenth century Dwight L. Moody, a layman who led enormously successful revival meetings throughout the United States and Britain in the quarter century after 1876. Moody focused his efforts on exclusively religious activities and institutions. Meanwhile, the preachers of the new Social Gospel movement (some of whom were Moody's pupils) resurrected the old Unitarian assertion that revivalism inhibited social reform. These developments, along with historical criticism of the Bible and the increased prestige of science, divided American evangelicalism into modernist and traditionalist groupings.

The Social Gospel's critique of revivalism also had a lasting impact on historical writing about revivalism. Since then, the question that has preoccupied historians has been, "To what extent has revivalism led to social reform?" In general, historians of religion whose personal roots lay outside revivalism have argued that modernism, not revivalism, most advanced social
improvement, while historians with backgrounds in revivalist traditions have argued that revivalism promoted social reform. Despite the vigor of this discussion, it has had little influence on historians who write surveys of American history. They generally ignore religion when discussing social reform between the Civil War and the 1980s Reagan Revolution. When revivalism is discussed at all, it is treated as a reactionary force impeding social progress.

India also has its share of revivalism. Hindu revivalism remains an emergent force in India. It is also a concern among the millions of displaced Hindus scattered around the world. Its roots lie in the belief that Hinduism is an endangered lifestyle. This notion is fuelled by the political assertiveness of minority groups, efforts to convert Hindus to other faiths, suspicions that the political authorities are sympathetic to minority groups and the belief that foreign political and religious ideologies are destroying the Hindu community.

The origins of nationalist movements in nineteenth century India can be traced to the expansion of Western, English education. Those attracted to the new education came primarily from high caste Hindu groups. Many of the proponents of social, political and religious reform among Hindus were drawn from this English educated class.
Until very late in the nineteenth century, most politically articulate Indians were willing to collaborate with the colonial administration. However, a shift from collaboration to criticism began in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Two broad movements emerged among Hindus seeking to define their national identity: modernists and revivalists. The modernists adopted models of social and political change based upon Western patterns; they appreciated many of the Western philosophies and wanted India to follow suit. The revivalist view was based on returning to a Hindu antiquity that was thought to be superior for governing India—a "Hindu" nation. Many felt that this desire to recreate the age of Hindu grandeur was also a result of English education; ideas of patriotism and nationalism crept into these peoples way of thought. It was the English study of the Indian way of life that added to the revivalist movement. Revivalism included those who wanted to preserve the traditional social order as well as those who sought to reform Hindu society as a way of strengthening Hindu solidarity.

The Hindu revivalists sought to recover fundamental truths about their people. They argued that the loss of national consciousness had created conditions that facilitated British domination of the land. By appealing to an idealized past, the revivalists reminded the Hindu public of the suffering and degradation experienced under British rule. The call for
independence was a logical next-step, for the degraded present could only be overcome by eliminating the foreign intruders who had supposedly disrupted the original blissful society. Muslim rulers and the British were identified as sources of that disruption and many revivalist spokesmen sought to place limits on their political power and on their cultural influence. The proposed changes in Hindu society were justified by the proposition that the changes were not new at all, but were in fact a revival of older, purer forms of Hindu culture that had degenerated during foreign rule.

The major response of revival proponents has been to point to the positive results they claim for religious revival and revivalism in society since the beginning of the movements. Significant moral, social, and cultural changes have accompanied the major awakenings. The ecumenical spirit of revival efforts has often produced a level of cooperation among, not achieved in any other way. Religious institutions and organizations to promote Christian causes and social concerns, including most of America's Christian colleges, seminaries, Bible institutes, and many mission bodies, are products of revivalism. Revivalism has also been one factor of restoring its pagan identities all over the world such as the established churches too, were influenced by the evangelical revival.
4.3. Emergence of Religious Revivalism among the Meiteis

With the aforesaid background, in this chapter an attempt is made to discuss the religious movement, under which language purism will be discussed. Despite the fact of the emergence of various types of movements, religious movements have by and large, predominated from very early times. Rethinking religious ideas, revisiting and exploring the lost meaning of particular culture have long been the favourite tool for expression of separate identity. Meitei revivalist movements have been a recurring phenomenon throughout the Manipuri history and have generated great interest among Meiteis. The causes and manifestation of the Meitei revivalism have been well documented. Some have attributed to the rise as a consciousness among Meitei as part and parcel of the growing Meitei revivalism and also as a Meiteis strategy of reinforcing their ethnic identity in the face of changing globalized world.

Meitei society has undergone certain basic structural and functional transformations, through different historical periods. The major transformations apparently occurred in the areas of culture and identity. Therefore, it is commonly felt that the culture, tradition and religion have been threatened by, Hinduism. When Hinduism finally took its root in Manipur with the patronage of king Garibaniwaj (1709-1748), the Meiteis considered themselves as
descendents of the Aryans. They felt proud to be the kins of the great Aryans of Mahabharata. They used to perform the rites of passage and rituals, like other Hindus. They employed Bengali as their scripts. Socially it was not surprising that the Meiteis lost their total identities (Gokulchandra, 2003). The revival of Sanamahi faith had a strong impact on the Hinduized Meiteis. Such experience seems to inspire the Meiteis to take up certain measures to safeguard their identity as Meitei or Manipuri. From the initial stage itself, the movement is a socio-religious movement, which strived to remove the Brahminical domination in Meiteis socio-religious spheres.

To grasp this change fully, of course, would require a more comprehensive enquiry in the changing structure of Meitei society with the rise of ethnic consciousness. In this context it would be pertinent to mention in brief as to how the process of de-Hinduization found its way in Manipur.

It is believed that during the reign of king Churchand (1908-1941) in the thirties, a revivalist movement of the traditional religion popularly known as Sanamahism started in a Meitei village in Cachar, Assam. While investigating the origin of revivalism in Manipur, revivalism both in forms of religious faith and script, the pioneering combination made by the far-sighted visionary Naoriya Phulo is inevitable. It was Naoriya Phulo (born 28th August, 1888) who founded the Apokpa-Marup, the backbone of the Meiteis
revivalist movement. It would not have been possible to see the re-emergence of the Meitei faith (Sanamahi) without this humble beginning made by Naoriya Phullo and his companions in 1930s. The enlightened mind of Naoriya Phulo and his followers was genuinely attracted to reviving pre-Hindu religious tradition and practices and language and script. While he was struggling to safeguard his identity through the revival of indigenous faith and script, there seemed to have developed a sharp controversies and hatred towards the then orthodox Hindu Meiteis at Cachar and this has resulted in extreme reaction that ostracized him from Hindu society as unclean. This crisis has been generated by the displacement of indigenous faith and script by the Hindu faith and Bengali orthography respectively. The displacement of the crisis has virtually created in the psyche of the more conscious Meitei minds the primary basis of de-hinduization process. They strongly realized that they have been deprived of their rightful linguistics privilege. Deprived of their rightful claim, they became embittered and conscious of their linguistic identity. Their struggle was to revive, rehabilitate and restore Meitei script and language in its original form. Gradually emerged in Manipur and slowly began to take its shape amidst negative attitude and criticisims.

The news of the movement for the revival of traditional religion reached Manipur valley in 1934. This revivalist idea crept
into the minds of the Meiteis. Then Meitei Marup as a branch of Apokpa Marup was born on May 14, 1945 in Manipur. The 14th May, 1945 marks a very important event in the religious history of Manipur. On this day the Meitei-Marup was formed in Manipur. This paved the way for revival of the Meitei tradition, culture, script and traditional religious ceremonies relating to Meitei society. This impact encouraged some section of Meiteis that they began questioning some of the time honoured religious practices of Hinduism. The formation of the Meitei-Marup, on the otherhand was a morale booster to the people who were victims of the strict code of conducts of the Brahma sabha. This led to constant communal distrust and conflict between the followers of Hinduism and Sanamahism. The enmity between the followers of these two faiths were so visible that they prohibited themselves to work together or to eat together. Inter marriage between the members of the Hindus and Sanamahi was something that was beyond imagination. They would not attend each other’s ceremonies including death. This was however changed over the years. At the close of the 20th century Sanamahism gained a strong foothold probably due to the coming of modern education among others.

In 1975 a movement was organized by the Meitei Sanamahi devotees to discontinue the worship of the image by a Brahmin with tulasi ‘basil plant’ leaves on the ground that traditional deities
should be worshipped by Meitei Maibas (priests) and in place of *tulasi leaves* *tairen leaves* were to be used in worshipping of traditional deities.

The term revivalism, in the Meitei sense of terms here implies an attempt to reorder or rearrange society in the area of social values, customs, beliefs, structure and control which the Meiteis consider to be very unique and different from those of the Hindu society. All socio-religious movements also attempt to change the existing system, ranging from the relatively limited reformation to a complete rejection of the existing status quo. In this way the present movement among the Meiteis also demands a change that is complete replacement of Hindu socio-religious values with the traditional Meitei socio-religious practices and values which is called Sanamahism. Several writers called the present Sanamahi movement as ‘Meitei revivalism’, ‘de-Hinduisation’, or ‘de-Sanskritisation’.

During recent years Manipur saw a series of revivalist campaigns that stressed the tenets of Manipur pagan faiths. Apart from the Hinduism today, various other forces like modernization and globalization have spread far and wide and the people are also aware of such outside influences. This suggests that while opening up more and more to the outside world, the society is also returning to its roots. The understanding of their culture and belief systems
also indicates that such a return to the past could help them preserve their identity that is constantly threatened by the influence of more dominant culture. This particular effort of reviving past glory is also part of an attempt to evade from the strain induced by various forces of modernization and globalization that threatens the native culture of Manipur. Therefore, today, Meiteis started adhering strictly to the beliefs and practices of their traditional religion.

A glimpse of Meitei society reveals that the pervasive force of Hindu culture that in every locality we can find at least one Hindu temple with a big community hall called Mandop. A Brahmin family looks after the temple, with offering made by the people of the locality. The mandap is an important centre for Vaishnavite rites and rituals such as ceremonies of marriage, death, etc. are performed in this place for those who do not have a large courtyard to perform the ceremonies. Every Manipuri house also keeps a basil plant at Tulsi-bung literally means a ‘mound of tulsi’ in the middle of the courtyard as a symbol of their adherence to the Vaishnavite faith. But as an effect of emerging revivalism some Meiteis instead of the Tulsi plant, have started planting a particular plant called Tairel (cidrella toona), of which however, the practice of keeping the mound in the middle of the courtyard is thus continued. It is a symbol of resistance to the increasing force of Hinduism. All Meitei male and female also wear the tilak mark (chandan) on their
forehead in every religious occasion. This tilak signifies purity and cleanliness in the Meitei society because a person can adorn the tilak on the forehead only after having a bath. This tilak is mostly worn by the women in their everyday chores like praying to God or while cooking which signifies serving the god and their family purely. However, it is the style and the colour of the tilak that marks the difference between the Sanamahi Meiteis and Hindu Meiteis. Hindu Meiteis use yellow colour Chandan ‘sandalwood paste’ and start with an elongated quadrilateral mark on the bridge of the nose. This is connected by two parallel lines reaching up to the forehead. On the other hand the Sanamahi Meiteis use black colour which is known as leisa (mud mix with water) which is stamped on the forehead in a single round shape. In every Meitei house, three propitious places are dedicated to three important ancient deities of the Meiteis. Thus, it is discerned that Meiteis still adhere strictly to their ancient faith. At present this belief has grown up as a strong force to resist and replace the alien culture of Hinduism that had been rooted for many years. Meiteis consider every house as the most sacred temple of the three deities-Sanamahi, Leimarel and Phunga Lairu. These deities are honoured with lamp every evening for the prosperity of the family.

The cultural momentum of revivalist movement involved a deliberate and conscious effort of rejecting Hindu values and relics.
Rejection of worshiping of Hindu deities, wearing tilak, singing the Sankritana, discarding the titles ‘singh’ and ‘devi’ in their names were social cultural goals. Another significant change is also noticed that revivalists discard the Brahmins from their religious rites, rituals and festivals. Instead they employ indigenous priest and priestesses who are locally known as maiba ‘priest’ or maibi ‘priestess’ in the function of their socio-religious ceremonies. The adherents of this movement are variously known in local vernacular as Sanamahi Chatpa, Meitei Marup, Sanamahi Laining, etc.

Though there had been considerable influence of revivalist movement on Manipur society since 1930s, the influence has been particularly strong over the last thirty years or so with speakers becoming more conscious of their identity, culture and script. It is particularly during last few decades that see tipping of the balance away from using Indo-Aryan borrowed linguistic items and back to Manipuri indigenous words. It is also during the last decade that the rise of successful local indigenous movement such as the protest of an organization called Meetei Erol Eyek Loynasinlol Apunba Lup which is popularly known by its acronym as MEELAL. They strongly protested against the inefficiency of the government despite the acceptance of the Meitei Mayek on the recommendation of the expert committee in 1980, the accepted scripts have not been taught in school and colleges.
This aggressive purist group responsible for the opposition over the last decade has grown powerful under the leadership of Chingsubam Akaba. Through it all, the language purists have kept this opposition to any inclusion of Bengali/Indo-Aryan words and the use of Bengali orthography. They are quite aggressive in their approach to introduce Meitei Mayek that they advocate outright ban on Bengali orthography and vocabulary. They also give the justification that the use of Meitei Mayek can help in solving the spelling problems which Meiteiron has been facing since the introduction of Bengali orthography. For example, the use of long and short ‘i’ which is there in borrowed Bengali orthography but Meiteiron does not use the distinction as it has only one ‘i’ and many other problems of inconsistencies of the spelling in Meiteiron written in Bengali orthography. This particular organization body supported by other student bodies was successful in their endeavor to include Meitei Mayek in school curriculum.

In the struggle for the replacement of Bengali script by Meetei Mayek in the school and colleges, the MEELAL initiated its violent campaign by burning text books written in Bengali script. The organization intensified its campaign by imposing economic blockade where they burnt freight trucks that entered Imphal. They even went to the extent that they burnt the Manipuri state central library where more than 1,45,000 books were destroyed on April 13, 2005.
At one stage they even issued diktat that a vernacular daily should begin using Meetei Mayek by March 1, 2005. The act of destroying books written in Bengali by burning, as they admit, is the symbolic reprisal for the burning of ancient Meitei scriptures called ‘puyas’ in 1726 during the reign of king Pamheiba who also rechristened his name as Garibaniwaz.

The government too is to be blamed for the predicament in spite of the promises of taking up steps to restore the ancient script, it remained as a promise because there was hardly any step taken up to implement the policy even though the government had approved 27 letters as the script to be restored. There were heated debates and confrontations going on for many years whether the numbers of letters was to be of 36 in number or 27 in number. This among others probably might have delayed the re-introduction of scripts into the school curriculum.

Such incidents had led the community members to critically reflect on language and more particularly script issue. Because of the movement the first batch of matriculate with Meetei-Mayek word be generated in the next year that is, 2014. Here, we can see how ideologies of native language have shaped and motivated changes in the direction of the development and promotion of the script and language. By next year we can expect a
complete shift of script from Bengali to Meitei-Mayek. The rejection of the Bengali orthography has stemmed from the fact that indigenous script of Meiteis departs from a hinduized tradition that have been associated with for at least three centuries. It appears that local ideologies and the outside ideologies have intersected in the way that it has led to creating a new framework which have caused the community speakers to reflect on and reformulate their understanding and attitude towards their language and culture. So, it is quite visible that the revivalist movement seeks to reawaken the Meitei faith and revive the indigenous customs and practices and language and script. The increase in ethnic feeling led to a greater interest and pride in the Meitei script, while Bengali script is slowly falling into the background.

As purism is the conscious rejection of elements that are regarded by the speech community as undesirable. Purism in Meiteiron is closely connected with the growing social consciousness aroused around 1930. Purism in the case of Meiteis is used as one of the instruments which are being used to break from past hinduised Meitei society. The transformation of Bengali script to Meitei script is not seen simply technical and educational but most important implication is, it manifests an important part of the changing socio-historical life of the Meiteis who use their language. It is being instrumental in creating a modern Meitei identity and also
their renewed ethnic consciousness leads to conscious attempts vernacular literature in a new way.

4.3.1. Purism in Meiteiron

It is a fact that all languages contain foreign, borrowed elements there is no language that is completely isolated from other language. But sometimes a language may decline or come under threat from another language. So in order to protect one’s identity, resistance to the foreign influence is a method adopted ever since. It is a period, when regional consciousness flourished, and people beginning to realize the importance of their own language. One such resistance is by religious revivalism, through language purism. Language purism is to purify the language use in the religious context completely with the native language.

_Purism is the manifestation of a desire on the part of a speech community to preserve a language form, or to rid it of, putative foreign elements or other elements held to be desirable. It may be directed at all linguistic levels but primarily the lexicon. Above all, purism is an aspect of the codification, cultivation and planning of standard languages (Thomas 1991: 12)_
Nicoline Van Der Sus has given different ways of language purism. They are adaptation of loanwords, loan translation, semantic expansion, compounds and derivation and native linguistics material. However, a language will apply from these methods according to the structure which the language permits.

Through the process of hinduisation a large number of loanwords have been assimilated into Meiteiron. As a result, some of the native words were displaced and discarded in favour of new cultural words mainly from Bengali, which is predominantly found after the advent of Hinduism in the 18th century. With the entering of Hinduism in Manipur came along a number of loanwords which as the time changes became an integral part of Meitei lexicon. Switching to borrowed words excessively discards the native words which sometime diminishes the usage of the native words. Thus, at later stage, they are being marginalized and have less frequency in general usage; this makes the native words partially or completely archaic words to the new generations. Such displacement can be found mostly in the religious context in which the corresponding native words have almost become obsolete.

Like any other religious revivals that pivoted on powerful preaching it is also apparent to certain level that Meitei revivalism is primarily is based on language revivalism which surfaces with the religious revivalism that is, discarding of Hindu faith since it is
a fact that religion has faster and greater impact on society. To
tackle this socio-cultural issue, has widened the scope from
religion to language use to academic to script. Revivalism defiantly
forms its roots from the religion but it may be possible to say that
revivalism has its impact on language. The roots of any indigenous
language lie in the heart of its respective culture. Expression of any
language becomes more fluent and powerful when it takes the route
through indigenous language (Abbasi and Asif, 2010). When a
language used is revived half the battle of revivalism is won. This is
very significantly evident in the Meitei religious revivalism as
Meiteis adopted many Indo-Aryan words in the different context of
communication which is known as loanwords or borrowed words.
This has been discussed in great length in the previous chapter that
borrowed words mostly entered through the religious context due to
the adoption and dominance of the Hinduism in the Meitei society.

Now as part revivalist movement we can see a conscious
and concerted effort is being made to eradicate the loanwords from
the surface of the religion as well as from our day to day
conversation. In order to discard the uses of loanwords the
equivalent terms in Meiteiron are being used in place of the
loanwords. Here, it is important to make a note that, the Meiteis
never discarded its indigenous faith and practices even after
addressing this socio-cultural issue.
Hinduism played a dominant role in the Meitei religion. In any religious ceremonies we can clearly witness that every practices begins by showing adherence to the indigenous deities, worshiping them in some way or the other. Certain practices are interwoven and elaborate rituals flourished as the Meiteis religious ceremonies, in order to enhance or with a belief of bringing the culture into a higher status. “It is difficult to estimate the precise effect of Hinduism on the civilization of the people, for the outward observer they seem to have adopted only the festivals, the outward rituals, the caste marks, and the exclusiveness of Hinduism, while all unmindful of its spirit and inward essentials” (Hodson 1993:97). It may be because the ideologies of the religious practices are borrowed, but the kinds of ritual practices are modified versions according to the tradition, customs and values of the Meitei society. The Manipuri Vaishnavism was not purely a brand transplanted from Bengal, it was adopted to suit the local tastes and ideas which showed the vitality and accommodating qualities of Hinduism (Kabui,1974).

In the light of this discussion it will be interesting to know what are the methods used in the process of language revivalism. The method of coinage, translation or revival of pre-Hindu terms which were considered as obsolete or not frequently in use are
being used nowadays. We will focus on the language usages brought by the changes in the religious practices and religious ceremonies. The changes made in the three important rites of passages marriage, birth and death will be analyzed below. “Language and culture are inseparable: neither exists without the other. It is equally impossible to imagine a human culture without a language and a human language without a culture” (Haslett 1989:31). It is agreed that the relationship between language change and cultural change has been that it is the changes in culture that cause linguistic changes, not vice versa (Blount & Sanches 1977:4)

The first movement emerged in an effort to save Meitei language and its indigenous religion that were attracted to the cultural customs and religious ritual of Hindus. Naoria Phulo worried by the religious degeneration of Meiteis, founded an active group focusing on inculcating true Meitei beliefs and behavior among the Meiteis. Meiteis revivalism has multiple manifestations of renewal, reform, radicalism and resistance. Revivalist movements of all persuasions presupposes the beauty and strength of indigenous Meitei religion that if it is not greater than any other religion it is no less than any other religion. The exclusively superior sense of religion empowers its practitioners. This has also generated a sharp and strong linguistic awareness among Meiteis almost simultaneously.
It is worth reflecting on some of the notions about Manipuri languages that are expressed and embedded in language usage, in particular the purist language ideologies that are taking root in Meitei community. Linguistic purism in the case of Manipur, may be defined as an insistence on correction of linguistics form and, in the case of Manipur would obviously be separating Manipuri with other languages particularly more so with words of Bengali origin. The primary target of the purists, as they considered to achieve by avoiding the influence or mixture of Indo-Aryan origin particularly Bengali and Hindi. In the context of recent cultural revival movement the Meiteis are increasingly revaluing their language by purifying the language.

Accepting Bengali/Indo-Aryan words in any form into Meiteiron threatens their existence and identity. The idea that Meiteiron needs to be purified of various foreign elements has been popular among certain organizations for at least last 80 years. Language purism in Manipur first came into being in the 1930s with attacks against the use of Bengali orthography and later the corresponding words of Bengali/Hindi/Sanskrit origin. Indo-Aryan words have been vehemently opposed by purists. It is the issue that really began the purist crusade at the beginning of 1930. It is the most contentious of all debates over language purism to this day.
However, due to its strong presence and influence in the literary history of Meiteis, the use of Bengali orthography has continued amidst the mounting pressure till now. Though language purists have had a very difficult struggle over the issue of Bengali orthography, it seems their influence on a long held Meitei script only policy in the state is rapidly slipping.

It would not therefore be wrong to say that, the first to hold aloft the torch of language purism in Manipur was Naoriya Phulo. Phulo was the first pioneer of language purism called for the eradication of Bengali orthography and its replacement with Meitei script as the only medium of writing Meiteiron. Up to this time Bengali influence and script had been serving as a mark of status and had been associated with educated elites and literates for hundreds of years while Meitei script was not in the widest dream of the population that it may someday be revived, revitalized and promoted. Phulo and other purists based their promotion of ‘Meitei script only policy’ on the belief that the Meitei script is superior to Bengali orthography. In this way religious belief has intertwined with words and linguistics usages. The existing words and images reflecting unwanted Indo-Aryan influence are to be eradicated and replaced by purer ones. It can be said that this is the first line of linguistic struggle which deals with the challenge from outside,
chiefly the challenge imposed by Bengali language. This does not only influence the indigenous religious thought on Meiteis but also leads to increasing tendency towards the communalization of politics. The revivalists were so strong in the mind that they were deadly against the Hindu practices. As a result, this movement has resulted in creating certain upheavals in Meitei society. The reflection of this upheaval is often perceptible in the society and in the family as well. The conflict between the younger generation and Hindu tradition bound older generation becomes inevitable. Traces of such intra-familial conflicts are evident that there are cases where father does not participate in ceremonies performed by his son who is inclined towards revivalist movement because all ceremonies performed are per-Hindu practices. Some kinds of estrangement was even noticed between the father and the son in the same family. As Meiteis were quiet conscious in pursuing the eradication of Bengali orthography since 1930s they have been pushing the government to eradicate Bengali orthography and replaced it by indigenous orthography.

In this way people are led to reflect on the language and religious practices during this period a feeling of consciousness about language and culture flourished that Meiteis began to realize the profound importance of their own language, script and culture.
In this period while cultural revivalism is going hand in hand with purism on the one hand and it is important to note that purism is also going along with standardization of Meiteiron. People’s awareness of their language is also helping the language being standardized and regulated by expanding the vocabulary. The expansion is mostly done through the creation of new words from olden forms or by reviving the archaic form we can see a struggle going on in order to adapt and meet the growing demands of communication.

In the next section language revivalism will be shown with the replacement of loanwords by the Meiteiron. In the surface of religion revivalism is certainly towards the linguistic revival, the change is brought by the change in the language use which people terms it as religious revivalism. As we can see in some of the examples given below how the loanwords are replaced by the Meiteiron. But an interesting factor is that though the words has the equivalent terms such replacement is done only by people who are inclined towards Meitei faith or those who now thinks it is time to revive our language, culture and tradition in order to save our Meitei identity. The general trend what we have noticed is, majority of the Meiteis feel that it is collective responsibility of the Meiteis to save and protect their identity.
4.3.1.1. Religious Terms Used in Invitation Cards

The extreme expression of Meitei revivalism has been manifested in the change of the words of invitation cards of ceremonies into indigenous Meitei lexical items to wipe out the cultural traces of Hinduism from their memory. Thus, we will see that terms like tarik ‘date’, bor ‘bridegroom’, kumari ‘girl’ have been replaced by cheichet ‘date’, piba ‘bridegroom’, chanu ‘girl’ respectively.

As discussed above, Meiteis have been experiencing a revivalist movement since 1930s. Its aim is to restore and revive largely Meitei social values and virtues at the cost of other socio-religious groups. Recent trends in the movement also demonstrates that it aims to purge the multi-religious Meitei society by raising social consciousness among Meiteis that unwanted and undesirable Hindu elements must be eradicated. The staunch revivalists have imposed and prohibited strict adherence to the set of Meitei beliefs and practices among Meiteis. As an aggressive Meitei conservative revivalist movement it excludes and expels those who do not share its conservative faith. Anti-Hindu sentiments began to grow during this period. The rivalry between the followers of revivalist and Hindus led to the argument that the revivalist thought Hinduism were the motivating force for destroying ancient Meitei scriptures by burning and shifting of Meitei orthography to Bengali orthography.
The revivalists’ primary goal is to deal with the influx of loan words and concepts which had entered from Bengali (Hindi and Sanskrit). The influences of these languages, some people have reacted mildly to this phenomenon while some people and members who belong to the organization of MEELAL express strong views, seeing the influx of IA words as a linguistic invasion that contaminates Meiteiron. The strong objection of revivalists is clearly visible in the study of invitation cards of birth, marriage and death. It is believed that inviting someone through, printed invitation actually began after the advent of Hinduism in Manipur. And now it has became an integral part of the Meitei society. But as a result of revivalism, Meitei society can clearly witness two different invitation cards of any religious ceremonies. Though interestingly the language use is different but the message or the meaning the invitation conveys is the same. We can clearly witness the existence of two different faiths by comparing invitation cards of a same religious ceremony.

As it is believed that the tradition of inviting people with the written form came along with the adoption of Hinduism and the process is now assimilated in the Meitei culture. It is to note that, since ancient times Meiteis have been practicing sending invitation for all the religious ceremonies, but in a traditional way by symbolic presentation with betal nuts and pan leaves folded inside a banana
leave. It is therefore, quite natural that, when invitations are given in the written form the presentation of the message is also borrowed from Bengali culture. The revivalists, however, strong in their minds, have not revived the traditional way of inviting the people probably because it is quite a cumbersome processes and also inconvenient in this present day world. As the society has grown bigger and more complex invitations are sent to far off places also. Sending invitation cards continues with the revivalists but process of replacing the loan words have already begun. We will now discuss two different invitation cards one of the Hindu follower and other of the Meitei faith follower of the rites-of-passage ceremonies of birth, marriage and death.

4.3.2.1. Invitation Card of Birth Ceremony

We find two different types of invitation cards, in the Meitei society which has the same presentation and message but the language used is different according to the faith they follow, that is Hindu faith or Meitei faith.
4.3.2.1.1. A Sample of birth invitation card for those who follow Hindu faith

sostipuzē ‘birth ceremony’

laklibē taŋ 4/5/2012 in, kalengi noŋme panbe numitē eigi ica nupa khumukcēm boboca əmēsun ımēunupi khumukcēm əŋbi rita əŋgi əhanbe phēŋzēbe isunupigi sostī-puza numit thokle numit aside ɲemzēbe hei lei khoṛedēŋ sosti Əbīgi cērēndē kēt cēgēdēuri.

upēlēkhyē əside bramēn-beisnēb, əhel-lēmēn, mērup-mēpaŋ, ice-icēl khwai-khibiknē mētem cane əŋbīrēktunē əhanbe phēŋzēbe isunupigi mēngol ērsibat pibirenēbē əmēdi pērādī phēŋbīnēbē pēttrenē nīmēntē kētcēri.

pēttrenē nīmēntē kētcēbēgi əpērad khibik ɲakpiqēni.
Gloss

You are cordially requested to attend on 4-10-12, (which corresponds to) 1st day of kalen ‘summer’ (Meitei lunar month which falls during the month of October) Wednesday, the traditional ritual of sosti puja of the first-born daughter of my son khumukcham Bobocha singh and daughter-in-law khumukchum (ongbi) Maheswari Devi. On this auspicious day, offering of fruits, flower will be made to the goddess of sosti devi.

On this occasion elders, friends, relatives and clan members are requested to attend the function in time and give blessing for long ands prosperous future to the new born child. All the invitees are requested to enjoy the lunch as well.

Your forgiveness, for sending the printed card, in place of flowers, is highly solicited.

4.3.2.1.2. A Sample of birth invitation card for those who follow Meitei faith

 ipan-thabə ‘birth ceremony’
You are cordially requested to attend the traditional ritual of birth ceremony of our new born son to be held on 11-10-2012, (which corresponds to) 26th day of langban ‘summer season’ (towards the end of the summer season, i.e. September-October) Thursday at the auspicious time 11:00 a.m.

All the elders, friends, brothers-sisters, family and clan members are requested to give blessing long life and prosperity in future to our new born son.
Your forgiveness for sending the printed card, instead of flowers, is highly solicited.

The two specimen invitation cards testify the existence of the following of two different religious faiths. Even though the two invitation cards imply the same message of birth ceremony, the uses of the lexical items referring to the ceremony is quite different. One can easily point out that, the one with conspicuous borrowed Bengali words are of those who follow Hindu faith and the other is of revivalist. This is being illustrated in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lexical items used by the followers of Hindu faith</th>
<th>Lexical items used by Meitei faith followers</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/sosti-puza/</td>
<td>/ipan-thabə/</td>
<td>‘birth ceremony’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/taŋ/</td>
<td>/cəicət/</td>
<td>‘date’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/məŋol-ərsibat/</td>
<td>/jaiphe-θəuzal/</td>
<td>‘blessing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/pətrəə/</td>
<td>/cənə/</td>
<td>‘letter’, ‘paper’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We can see that the etiquette regarding the text on the formal cards look quite distinct according to the faith they follow.

4.3.1.2. Invitation Card of Marriage Ceremony

4.3.1.2.1. A sample of marriage invitation card for those who follow Meitei faith

punsi-leipun  ‘marriage’

laklibe cœicet 4/5/2012 iŋ, kalengi nipaŋ panbe numitki nunthiŋ puŋ 1:00 tabe mɛtɛmde eikhoigĩ icanupi

ɛkoizem chĩŋlɛmbi chũnu-ge

lœmlen uripok polem leikaide leibe ŋmom sɛrɛt sîŋh amɛsũŋ ŋmom ŋobi nirmɛle pɛvi ŋnigi mɛcanuŋe

cauheĩ ŋɛmbɛ ŋmom-ge
You are cordially requested to attend the traditional ceremony of marriage on 21-11-12, (which corresponds to) 8th day of (Meitei lunar month of) Hiyanggei, Wednesday, at 1:00 p.m. the marriage ceremony of our daughter Akoijam Chinglembi Chanu with Chaohei Ngamba Ngangom 2nd son of Ngangom Sarat Singh and Ngangom (ongbi) Nirmala Devi of uripok polem leikai.

At this auspicious occasion all elders, brothers and sisters, friends and relatives are requested to come in time and give blessing to the
newlywed couple (Leima-Piba). Your forgiveness for sending the printed invitation card in place of flowers, is highly solicited.

4.3.1.2.2. A Sample of Marriage invitation card for those who follow Hindu faith

subh-č-bibh-č ‘marriage’

laklibe tan 21/11/2012 in, hijangêigî nipan ni panbe
numitki nunthil puq 1:00 tebe metembë eikhoigi
icanupa

siriman sorokhaibem nojjinphabë-ge

nêgëpan paonem leikaide leibi shirimeti tonanbem
ôbî zeni debigi mœcënuip

kumari tonanbem bitu debige

loinene shubhe-bibhe pañthok cœcëuri

upelkheï aside bramen-beisneb, eñel-łenem, mœrup-
mœpën, ice-icel khwai-khibikne metem cane
leñbirëktune neune greñeshrem khoñdazërek ibe bor
kəina ənibu məngol arshibət pibirənəbə pətrənə nɪmənтрə kətcabəği aпərad khibik əкəпигənі.

As in birth ceremony we can also find the use of different lexical items depending on the faith they follow. The table below shows the difference of the use of lexical items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lexical item used in Hindu invitation</th>
<th>Lexical item used in revivalist invitation</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>subhə-vivbhə</td>
<td>punsi-ləipun</td>
<td>‘marriage’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upələkhıə</td>
<td>thəuərm</td>
<td>‘function’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bor</td>
<td>piba</td>
<td>‘Groom’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kəine</td>
<td>ləimə</td>
<td>‘Bride’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kumari</td>
<td>chənu</td>
<td>‘Girl’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.1.3. Invitation card of Death ceremony

4.3.1.3.1. An invitation sample of who follows Meitei faith
lanne-thourem 'death ceremony'

taibəŋ phempak thekside mepugi sinta pandune
eikhai khwai pumnemekpu naokonbirambə huidrom
tombe meitei-ne mepune thebe ceitek-ceisin
loiredune heokhibe ceicet 17/09/2011 kumze, lanbengi

kun ni panbe thanze numitte thewai yaibine mepugi
thewai i yaibirelde tinzekhere.

laklibe ceicet 21/09/2011 kumze, lanbengi
kulhumdoi ni panbe jumsekeise numitte menani leihui
temzerege, ceicet 27/09/2011 kumze, lanbengi kunhra ni
panbe leipakpokppε numitte cinu sidεbe mepugi
nεnlukhεde nεmvεbe heiraŋ leiren ketcebege loine
minkhei sek-sonzedune leikhidrebεgε thεwei
jeibine inne-cikne leize runebεgε demek lanne-
thεurem pantyokkedεuri. thεurem eside αhel-lemen,
imai-iben, mεrup-εpaŋ, emedi ice-icel khwai terane
mepugi mεkheiphεmde heiraŋ-leiraŋzεbe, thεunizebe
esibu waqlen cene
4.3.1.3.2. An invitation sample of the follower of Hindu faith

siri siri gourèchëndre namo ‘death ceremony’

purbèsremde eikhoi pumnèmëkpu konbirembi laitonza
nupimèche devi-ê mahèikki nujìzerèbe emuñ mènuñ
amèdi sagei natei khwai pumnèmëkpu thadoklèmlège
haukhibe tañ 6/4/2012 eñ shazibugi purnime, erai
numit-të shirigurugi kripe-dègi besh ollege
pèremeswar shiri krishane cheitene dasi phaṇzèdune
brindebèn prapti oikhère.

laklibè tañ 11/4/2012, sëzibugi kum ni panbë,
yumsèkèise numitte asti-sënzoi leukhèt cèrègë, tañ
19/4/2012 in, sëzibugi 28 ni panbë, sègolsel numitte
sèradhë-din thokle, numit aside leikhidrëbëgi atmë
By comparing both the invitation cards, a list of words can be identified from the above invitations which carry the same meaning but different terms are used according to the faith they follow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hindu invitation</th>
<th>Meitei invitation</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/taŋ/</td>
<td>/ceicet/</td>
<td>‘date’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/purbeʃrem/</td>
<td>/taibəŋ phəmpak/</td>
<td>‘birth place’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/asti-səŋjəy/</td>
<td>/məŋani-leiun/</td>
<td>‘the death ritual after the fifth day of death’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analyzing all the invitations of the rites-of-passage that is, the birth ceremony, marriage ceremony and death ceremony, it can probably be said that the invitation used by Hindu followers mostly consists of Indo-Aryan loanwords while those who follow Meitei faith prefer to use a card that is printed based on indigenous Meiteiron. Language purism plays a significant role in the Meitei religious revivalism, of which will be the focus next section how language purism played its role in Meitei religious revivalism.
4.4. Relevance of Purism in Meiteiron

Studying religious revivalism of Meiteiron helps to understand language purism better since it enables us to compare the actual change in a language. Since the movement of religious revivalism began in Manipur, the primary importance of revival is discarding the influence of Hinduism in all aspect such as socio-cultural, education and especially adoption of Indo-Aryan languages. Such language revivalism through religious revivalism in Meiteiron can be clearly witnessed from the ceremonial invitation cards discuss above. There are two methods involved in Meiteiron which is affected by religious revivalism they are

1. Native Linguistic Material and
2. Loan Translation

4.4.1. Native Linguistic Material

When a language looks for new word element in their own linguistic stock that is no longer used or which is considered as non standard to replace loanwords will be considered as native linguistic material. Under this section we can discuss some of the revived old words which were replaced by the loanwords but were apparently used before the advent of Hinduism or which are used less frequently compare to the loanwords for example, /ceicət/ means ‘date’ in
Meiteiron. It is an old Meiteiron word use as a revived word of the loanword /taŋ/ which is derived from the Indo-Aryan /tarik/ which means ‘date’.

A representative list of revived words along with their borrowed counterparts are given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LW</th>
<th>MW</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/sosti-puza/</td>
<td>/ipan-thabɔ/</td>
<td>‘birth ceremony’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/taŋ/</td>
<td>/cɔicɔt/</td>
<td>‘date’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/subhɔ-bibhɔ/</td>
<td>/punsi-lɔipun/,</td>
<td>‘marriage’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/luhoŋbɔ/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/bor/</td>
<td>/piba/</td>
<td>‘groom’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/kɔiŋə/</td>
<td>/lɔimɔ/</td>
<td>‘bride’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/kumari/</td>
<td>/cɔunu/</td>
<td>‘girl’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/sri-hari/</td>
<td>/ciŋŋu sidɛ-mɔpu/</td>
<td>‘deity’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/sɔradʰɔ/</td>
<td>/lannɛ-tʰurɛm/</td>
<td>‘death ceremony’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Similarly /lanna-thoamat/ means ‘death ceremony’ in Meiteiron. It is the word which was probably used for the death ceremony before the advent of Hinduism. The followers of Meitei faith use this compound word for death ceremony in place of the term /sorat/ ‘death ceremony which is the nativised form of borrowed term /sordho/ ‘death ceremony’.

- /ciŋŋu sidəbə məpu/ ‘name of a God’

/ciŋŋu sidəbə məpu/ is a name of the Meitei deity, Sanamahi. It is a name known to the Meitei community since time immemorial. The word is used in place of the loanword /fri-həri/ which is the another name of the Hindu god Krishna.

- /luhoŋbə/ or /puni-ləipun/ ‘marriage’

/luhoŋbə/ and /puni-ləipun/ are the expression used for marriage ceremony for followers of Meitei faith while those who
follow Hindu faith continue with Hindu marriage terminology /subʰa-bibʰa/.

- /ipan-thabə/ ‘birth ceremony’

/ipan-thabə/ means the birth ceremony in Meiteiron. But this word became almost extinct after the influence of Hinduism as its place was taken over by Hindu term /sosti-puza/ for birth ceremony. This expression has been revived by the revivalist as they have discarded the Hindu borrowed expression /sosti-puza/ ‘birth ceremony’.

4.4.2. Loan Translation

Besides reviving the old words, another method used in order to eradicate the loanwords from the religious context, is through the process of loan-translation. Since loan translation is a form of borrowing from one language to another whereby the semantic components of a given term are literally translated into their equivalents in the borrowing language. Loan-translation is to translate the borrowed word with the equivalent term of the native language. According to the semantic connotation of the loanword the word is translated and used as a Meiteiron lexicon. And thus such newly created words became part of the natives. A representative list of
revived words along with their borrowed counterparts are given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LW</th>
<th>MW</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>purbəɔsrəm</td>
<td>taibəŋ phəmpak</td>
<td>‘the birth place’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asti-səɲjəy</td>
<td>məŋani-leihun</td>
<td>‘offering of flower at the burial place’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>santi</td>
<td>iŋȵa-cikna</td>
<td>‘peacefully’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>məŋgəl-əɾsibat</td>
<td>jaipʰə-tʰəuzal</td>
<td>‘blessing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pəʈtra</td>
<td>cəŋə</td>
<td>‘letter’, ‘paper’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nɪməntra</td>
<td>ləiɾəŋ-łəihut</td>
<td>‘intivation’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>binitəŋ</td>
<td>nonɬukəɾibə</td>
<td>‘host’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the list of words the first two words are discussed below.

- /taibəŋ phəmpak/  ‘the birth place’

/taibəŋ phəmpak/ is a newly coined expression, by literally translating the loanwords used in the invitation card of Hindu follower /purbəɔsrəm/ which means “the birth place”. Generally the birth place is /poknəpʰəm/ or /mələm/ in Meiteiron. But in the religious
context every word has its religious semantic values, which uplifts a very formal meaning. So in a religious invitation, words like /poknœphœm/ or /malam/ which is used in other contexts might not be considered appropriate to use. So words which have religious value are used. Thus the word /taibœŋ phœmpak/ is a word developed to mean ‘the birth place’. We can clearly see from the meaning of the word /taibœŋ phœmpak/. It is a compound word where /taibœŋ/ means “soul” and /phœmpak/ “a large open ground” which literally means a place where soul resides.

-/mœŋani-leihun/

/mœŋani-leihun/ as in the words of Bhagyachandra (1991), “the Meiteis do not observe the rites of Ashthi Sanchaey as is done by the Hindus on the fifth day”. /mœŋani-leihun/ literally means ‘to offer flower on the fifth day after a person dies at the burial place’. So the word /mœŋani-leihun/ might probably be named based on the day and the way the ritual is performed. Such that /mœŋani/ means ‘the fifth day’ and /leihun/ is a combination of two words /lei/ means ‘flower’ and hun means ‘to throw’, on the fifth day after a person dies, the family will go and offer flower at the particular spot
where the body was cremated, the compound word /leihun/ could mean to worship by offering flower to the soul of the deceased.

Occurrences at sentence levels

We will now see how the terms and expressions discussed above occur in sentences.

After comparing all the invitation of the rites of passage, the comparison can also be done at the sentence level too. The comparison of the sentences clearly shows that revivalists’ intentions are to purify the language in linguistics is evident from the language used. For example

(1.1) Hindu follower’s Invitation

petrœnə nimœntrem kētcœbœ-gi əpared khibik nəkpiqenĩ

Gloss

‘forgive (me) for giving the invitation through this written piece of paper instead of coming in self and requesting to please attend the ceremony’

The Meitei faith follower conveys the same message by using indigenous Meitei words or by translation.
(1.2) Invitation of Meitei faith

əjibə cənə ləirəŋ-gi ləihut sinjə-bəgi ērən-ahui khibik khwai təranəŋəkpi-nə-bə khurəmzərī.

Gloss

‘forgive (me) for giving the invitation through this written piece of paper instead of coming in self and requesting to please attend the ceremony’

(2.1). prəbhəu.gi cərən.ə kət.cəgədəuri (Hindu faith)

‘(I am) offering (something) at the feet of God’

(2.2.) taibən məpu.gi khuja.kha.ə kət.cəgədəuri (Meitei faith)

‘(I am) offering (something) at the feet of God’

All the three invitations of Meitei religious ceremonies almost have similar words besides the signified words of the particular ceremony. From the data above it may be probable to say that most of the words used as revived word are Meiteiron words. Because words like mətəm or puŋ which means ‘time’ in Meiteiron has an old word wañlen which is not used in any of the Meitei invitation cards. It is a
kind of revival of group identity and everything Meiteis was accompanied by a renewed interest and adherence to Meitei culture. Essentially then, this phenomenon signified a symbolic resistance to everything which represented the culture of Hinduism. To a certain extent it is believed that this language resistance movement encouraged a return to Meitei roots, both cultural and religious. It can essentially be said as a desperate attempt to reclaim a sense of identity.

4.5. Religious Terms Used in Religious Ceremonies

In the preceding section we have already discussed the religious terms used in the invitation cards of rites of passage birth, marriage and death. In addition to the study of these terms we will now discuss the replacement of loanwords by the indigenous Meitei terms and concepts in the observance of religious rituals of the above rites and passage.

Meiteis religious ceremonies especially the rites-of-passage shows clearly that Meiteis has never lost its indigenous beliefs. It was only at the superficial level that Hindu faith was more prominently visible than the indigenous beliefs and practices. There is no ceremony which does not begin by paying homage to the indigenous deities of Meiteis. It can be clearly seen through the importance of the
ancestor worship in every religious ceremony like birth, marriage and death. As we have discussed in the second chapter ancestor worship, that Meiteis ancestor worship is strictly indigenous. So a movement to revert to the pre-Hindu style of religious rituals of rites-of-passage is through linguistic purism. A large number of Meiteis has reverted to the religious ceremonies by sticking themselves to using Meiteiron instead of loanwords. It is believed that at structural level there has been much changes in the practices of the indigenous rituals, although the borrowed words had greatly influenced and replaced Meitei words, particularly words relating to religious sphere. For which the prior factor of religious revivalism is to discard the words which inherited from Hinduism to purely Meiteiron in all the religious ceremonies. As a part of revivalist movement, in religious ceremonies of Meiteis rites of passage, it has been a constant effort to follow the pagan beliefs and practices. After the advent of Hinduism, in any religious rituals Hindu Gods and Goddess became the sole idol to be worshipped and give homage. Today, as the revival movement advances, those who are inclined towards the Meitei beliefs, in any religious ceremonies the Meiteis pagan Gods and Goddess are worshiped.

4.5.1. /ipan-thabǝ/ ‘birth ceremony’

In Manipur, birth ceremony is celebrated very religiously. On the sixth day from the child is born the religious ceremony of the birth
will be celebrated. Birth ceremony of the Meiteis is one of the rituals which are predominated by the indigenous beliefs and practices. Birth ceremony celebrated in Manipur has two observances, one which is done in the morning is completely based on Meiteis beliefs and practices and the one which is performed in the evening, is known as /sosti-puza/. It is believed that the Meitei birth ceremony is called as /sosti-puza/ after the influence of Hinduism, since the word /sosti-puza/ is a loanword. Where /sosti/ means ‘the sixth day’ and /puza/ means ‘to worship’, such that it might be possible to say that the Meitei birth ceremony is called /sosti-puza/ because it is celebrated on the sixth day after a child is born. The follower of Meitei faith has revived the birth ceremony which is known as /ipan-thabə/. /ipan-thabə/ is also known as /yu-pan thaba/, in other dialects of Meiteiron like those of Andro, Chakpa, Phayeng. It is quite possible that /yu-pan thaba/ came to be known as /ipan-thabə/ in the present day Meiteiron, /yu-pan thaba/ means ‘to offer rice bear’ (local wine) to the god, since offering of wine is considered as a taboo as Meiteis became Hindu, it is quite possible that /yu/ ‘wine’ might have been changed to /i/ ‘water’. Other terms which were strictly replaced in the birth ceremony who are inclined towards Meitei faith are given below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LW</th>
<th>MW</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sosti-debi</td>
<td>pitʰraï-kʰōŋtaibi</td>
<td>‘name of the goddess’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>om</td>
<td>hūŋ</td>
<td>‘beginning words of chanting mantras’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tulsi</td>
<td>tairen</td>
<td>‘holy leaves’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bramin</td>
<td>maibi</td>
<td>‘priest’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dan-thadēbə</td>
<td>tərət-senkət</td>
<td>‘to offer money to the child’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of all the terms given above the word /tərət-senkət/ ‘to offer money to the child’ has not gained much currency as people continue using the borrowed expression /dan-thadēbə/ ‘to offer money to the child’

4.5.2. /luhoŋbə/ or /punsi-ləipun/ ‘marriage’

The Meiteis marriage ceremony is known as /luhoŋbə/. But for the people who are in favor of Hinduism they prefer using the
word on the wedding card as /subhə-bibhə/ which is a word formed by compounding of two loanwords (discussed in the previous chapter 3). Followers of Meitei faith use either the expression /luhoŋbe/ or /pun.si-lei.pun/, the expression /pun.si-lei.pun/ is a newly coined expression which the meaning sounds very Meitei like and quite stylish too. This is a compound word formed by combining /pun.si/ ‘life’ and /leí/ ‘flower’ - /pun/ ‘tie’ means (two) lives tie by garland of flowers’.

The following is a list of expressions used by the followers of both the faiths.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LW</th>
<th>MW</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>subhə-vibhə</td>
<td>luhoŋbe/pun.si-lei.pun</td>
<td>‘marriage’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kəi.na</td>
<td>nupi/nŋol/leimə</td>
<td>‘bride’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bor</td>
<td>nupe/pibe</td>
<td>‘groom’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kəi.na-dan</td>
<td>luhoŋbe</td>
<td>‘offering of bride’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dijuti-okpə</td>
<td>məibul-məizao-okpə</td>
<td>‘welcome the groom’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bor-zətra</td>
<td>piba-khoŋ-san.ə</td>
<td>‘to begin the journey’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the data given above it may be possible to say that the loanwords are translated with the equivalent Meitei ron words. Those words which have an equivalent word and if the translated words do not give derogatory meanings the translation is accepted. There are also words which do not have equivalent words, they can still be literally translated. But at times it seems that such literal translation is not accepted as the meaning rendered is inappropriate. The word like /kəi.na-dan/ which can be literally translated as /nupi-pibə/, where /nupi/ means /kəi.nə/ ‘bride’ and /pibə/ means dan ‘give’. But such translation are not done, because according to revivalist or those who are following Meitei faith the meaning it conveys shows women as an object which can be easily given away. In the Meitei sense of terms there was no /kəi.na-dan/ before the influx of Hinduism. It was only known as /luhoŋbə/ ‘marriage’. Also because of the belief Meiteis considered marriage as a sacred ritual, and not simply giving off one’s daughter. Besides looking on the Hindu faith /dan/ does not only mean ‘offering a daughter’, it is one of the most prestigious act of a man who is a father of a daughter, there is even a saying that a man who is not fortunate enough to give a /kəina-dan/ ultimately goes to hell after death. So with such semantic connotation the meaning cannot be easily translated in order to nativise it.
These are few examples revived in the marriage ceremony of Meiteis that follows the Meitei faith. Besides these changes in the language as a part of revivalism another significant revival is the dress worn by the bride. In a marriage as according to the Meitei Hindu beliefs the bride will wear /poloi/ which is like a modified version Indian Ghaghara. The staunch revivalists in view of strong opposition whatever is Hindu, feels that the /poloi/ must be replaced by traditional /phanək/ ‘sarong’. In some of the marriage of the followers of Meitei faith the brides are found to wear Meitei traditional /phanək/, while majority of the people even though they follow Meitei faith continue with /poloi/ as a decorative wedding dress. It may be because the bride looks much more decorative and beautiful with the dress. Almost all the girl would prefer wearing /poloi/ instead of /phanək/. it is even said that / poloi/ is worn only in a lifetime but /phanək/ is worn every day. There is, therefore, a great demand to were /poloi/ as a very special marriage costume on the wedding day.

However the followers of Meitei faith even though they wear / poloi/ still prefer to mark a difference from that Hindu style with the way the sandal paste is marked on the forehead. It is the style and the colour of the tilak that mark the difference between the Meiteis faith followers and Hindu faith followers. Hindu Meiteis use yellow colour /candon/ ‘sandal paste’ and start with an elongated quadrilateral mark on the bridge of the nose. This is connected by two parallel lines
reaching up to the forehead. On the other hand the Sanamahi Meiteis use black colour which is called as leisa (mud mix with water) which is stamped on the forehead in a single round shape. In the marriage ceremony of the Hindu follower at the moment when the groom is to reside at the middle of the /mandəp/ which is known as /sonə-bunə/, a bench will be placed on which a white cloth will be spread, and that bench is known as /luhoŋ-phan/.

The swastika an equilateral cross with its arms bent at right angles, in either right-facing (ﬞ) form or its mirrored left-facing (ײַ) form will be drawn. Similarly in the marriage of the Meitei faith follower also /luhoŋ-phan/ will be placed in the middle of /sonə-bunə/, and under that /luhoŋ-phan/ a sign known as /kisi-məri leibə məəm-paphəl/ (certain pose of coiled serpent symbolizing the cosmic power) will be drawn. Drawing the coiled serpent of /pakhaŋba/ in place of swastika is done in view of the belief that they are giving homage to the deity. The symbolism behind this drawing is that the marriage is performed in a non-Hindu way; in other words in the Meitei way. Pakhangba was the first recorded king of Manipur who ruled in the 33 A.D. and younger brother of Lord Sanamahi. ‘pafəl’ is a particular form or pose of coiled serpent which has as many as three hundred patterns.
The traditional Sanamahi religion, therefore gives homage to serpent. James Fergusson (1971) wrote that the Hindu epic opened with ‘a curse on serpent’ and that ‘serpent worship is essentially that of a Turanian, or at least of a non-Aryan people’. Thus in order to present this difference, the following proposition laid by Naorem Sanajaoba can be considered. First serpent worship or adoration of snake power are found among the non-Aryan people and Saivism, which is older than Hinduism proper. Serpent worship was also practiced in Abyssinia and Ethiopia among others in the soil of Africa, where the first Human being had lived. Secondly, the Meiteis also regard serpent and serpent power as a part of their religious belief system. Thirdly, the Aryans were hostile to Saivism, serpent adoration (Sanajaoba 1991). In the /luhoŋb꣗/ of Hindu faith the bride goes round the groom seven times who is sitting in the middle of the mandap or /sonabuŋ/ in the clockwise direction. Whereas in the /luhoŋb꣗/ of Meitei faith the bride will go round the groom seven times in the anti-clockwise direction. These few changes are found as a revival movement in the Meiteis marriage ceremony.

4.5.3. /lannǝ-thǝurǝm/ ‘death ceremony’

The death ceremony is known as /sɔrǝt/ ‘death ceremony’, which is a nativised form of the loanword /sradhɔ/ to the followers of
Hindu faith. Most of the revived terms for the death ceremony are already discussed in the above section. The word which is not discussed is /potloibɔ/. It is said that the burning of dead body by the Meitei society started from the time of Pamheiba who was rechristened as Garibniwaj (1709-1748) when he accepted the Hinduism. Before that both the people of the plain and hills used to bury the dead. The cremation of dead body known as /səŋskartʊɔb/ became to be used among Meiteis (see more details in chapter 3-section-3.4.2) and it has been well integrated into Meiteiron. Prior to the advent of Hinduism an expression /potloibɔ/ ‘cremation’ was in used in the past. With the assimilation of /səŋskartʊɔb/ ‘cremation’, the two words namely, /səŋskartʊɔb/ and /potloibɔ/ have been in use simultaneously, with /səŋskartʊɔb/ as more prestigious word during 19th and 20th centuries where Hinduism in Manipur reached its peak. As the word /potloibɔ/ sounded like very colloquial and casual, people preferred using the loanword as a prestigious form. With the waves of revivalism in Manipur we can now see that speakers and writers started discarding the expression /səŋskartʊɔb/. The use of Meiteiron word /potloibɔ/ is used more widespread as the word has taken over the contexts where /səŋskartʊɔb/ was used.

Besides the revival process in the rites of passage, linguistic revivalism is advancing to other spheres of social activism. Even the words associated with religion like religious places, things, foods, prayers etc have been constantly changing.
Some of the loanwords which reflects the values and beliefs of Meitei society which are substituted with the words which are believed to be used in pre-Hindu times or which are considered pure Meiteiron are given below (a more comprehensive list of words which have replaced Hindu borrowed linguistic items is given in the appendix no. 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LW</th>
<th>MW</th>
<th>GLOSS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hare krisnə</td>
<td>jaiphəre</td>
<td>‘the immortal god is the ultimate’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irat-pu.za</td>
<td>irat-thəuni</td>
<td>‘worship’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>durga-puza</td>
<td>pnthoibi-iratpə</td>
<td>‘worship of goddess’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>om</td>
<td>həijum</td>
<td>‘mantra’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mandop</td>
<td>sonə-buŋ</td>
<td>‘a pillared outdoor hall’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dokhineə</td>
<td>akət-sən</td>
<td>‘remuneration’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>candon</td>
<td>leisa,</td>
<td>‘sandal paste’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>leisə-paklei nəmbə</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prasad</td>
<td>heiməl-leiməl</td>
<td>‘remnants of food offer to god’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
But the lists of loanwords given above are not completely eradicated by the equivalent Meiteiron words in the Meitei society. The words are still used in parallel, the Meiteis who are inclined towards Hindu faith still use the loanwords and those who are inclined towards Meitei faith used the Meitei words. The analysis of the words is given below.

1) \textit{sidabhama\textbar puna jaip\textbar ere} ‘the immortal god is the ultimate’

In the Meitei society there is a custom to greet each other with an expression, verbally in their day to day meeting. The followers of Hinduism greet each other as /hare krish\textbar na/, /hare-rad\textbar e/ or like /rad\textbar e-rad\textbar e/. While the follower of Meitei faith use
the indigenous Meitei expression as /yaipʰəre/ or /si.də.bə-
me.pu.nə-yai.pʰə.re/ ‘the immortal god is the ultimate’. 
Expression /yaipʰəre/ or /si.də.bə-mə.pu.nə-yai.pʰə.re/ 
has became a part of veritable icon of Meiteiness.

2) **irat-thəuni**  ‘worship’

With the influence of Hinduism the word /puza/ ‘worship’ the act of showing reverence to a god through invocation, 
prayer, songs and rituals has been introduced and well assimilated 
in the Meiteiron. Even though the word /puza/ ‘worship’, has not 
fully replaced the Meitei indigenous word /irat/ ‘worship’ as is 
evident in the use of the compound word /irat-pu.za/ ‘worship’. 
The native word /irat/ is not used in the Hindu religious context, 
is apparently because of the initial word i ‘water’ which is 
homophonous with ‘i’ blood, so the word iratə ‘to worship’ is 
forbidden in Hindu ceremonies (Promodini,2004). But nowadays the 
Meitei purists has started using /irat-thəuni/ ‘worship’ instead of 
/irat-pu.za/ ‘worship’.
3) **pantʰoibi-iratpe** ‘worship of goddess panthoibi’

/durga-puza/ is an annual Hindu festival that celebrates worship of the Hindu goddess /durga/. /durga-puza/ is celebrated in the month of /mera/ ‘October-November’. On the same day the followers of Meitei faith practice /pantʰoibi-iratpe/ which is a recent phenomenon, it is the day Meiteis worship the Meitei goddess /pantʰoibi/ which is considered as similar to the goddess /durga/. Because both the goddesses represents ‘power’ power of creation and annihilation (Mangi, 2010). So, during the /durga-puza/ the idol of goddess /durga/ is worshipped by the follower of Hindu faith and Meitei faith followers worship the Meitei goddess /pantʰoibi/.

4) **hāijum** ‘a sacred word’

With every beginning of the religious mantra’s the syllable /om/ is chanted in the Meitei speech community. As the revivalist attempt is to discard anything of Hindu, they also have discarded this term and have replaced it by /hāijum/ which they consider it as of indigenous origin. However, if we dissect the word /hāijum/ it appears that it is a naturalized form of /hāri-om/. And it is believed that both the words are considered as the sacred words
which are of more or less the same meaning by the followers of both the faiths.

5) sonicbuŋ  ‘a pillared outdoor hall’

The place where religious rituals are performed is known as /manḍop/ as according to the Meiteis who follow Hinduism whereas, the same place is known as /sonnicbuŋ/, where /son/ ‘to chant’ and /-ṇə/ is the nominal marker and /buŋ/ ‘elevated place’. An elevated place meant to perform religious rituals. The word has not gained much currency as it is confined to the staunch priests.

6) əksəsən  ‘remuneration’

The amount of remuneration paid to the priest for his service of religious ritual is /dokʰɨnə/ in the Hindu context, where the same term is said as /ə.kət.סən/ in the Meitei religion context. Where /kət/ means ‘to offer’ and /סən/ means ‘money’. This expression means the money which is offered as an honour of the religious performance done by the person.

7) ləisa-nəmbə  ‘sandal paste’

The application of sandalwood paste on the forehead is usually known as according to the Hindu custom /cəndon thinbə/
where /cəndən/ is the native pronunciation of the loanwords /cəndən/ and /thinbə/ is to ‘put on’. For wearing of the same /cəndən/ on the forehead, the followers of Meitei faith are found to use other expressions such as /ləīsə-nəmbə/ ‘to put a paste of soil’, /ləīsə-pakləi nəmbə/ ‘to put a paste of soil’ and /nəmsə/ ‘to put a paste of soil’. It appears that this is particularly created impression in order to oppose Hindu faith. The manner in which /cəndən/ is worn is also done in different styles by the followers of both the faiths. For a Sanamahi follower they just mark a round dot on their forehead. But for those of Hindu follower they will mark the sandal-paste like it is worn by the Vaisnavite followers in that, two perpendicular lines meeting at the nose and it is joined by a part of /cəndən/ like a tail.

8) həīməl-ləiməl ‘remnant of food offer to God’

The remnant of the offering made to the god is referred to as /prəsəd/ to the followers of Hindu faith whereas, it is referred to as /həiməl-ləiməl/ to those who are inclined towards Meitei faith. Here /həiməl/ comes from the word /həi/ means ‘fruits’ and /məl/ is derived from the word /əməlbə/ ‘the old one’, fruits already offered to god. And similarly /ləiməl/ where /ləi/ means flower
and /məl/ means old, already used or already offered to god. The fruits and flowers already offered to god when it is used by humans it is called /həiməl-ləiməl/ ‘remains of fruits and flowers (offered to god)’.

9) lai ‘god’

The word /lai/ is the term used for god in the Meitei speech community. But the word /isər/ which is the native pronunciation of the loan word /isʰwər/ came in existence after the penetration of Hinduism in Manipur. The followers of Meitei faith deliberately replace the word /isər/ ‘god’ by the native word /lai/ ‘god’ in their religious activities and day to day conversation.

10) laison-tinson ‘recitation of sacred words’

Hindu religion has a rich tradition of religious recitation which is known as /məntrə/. The word /məntrə/ has also been assimilated into Meitei society through the religious rituals of Hinduism. In the Meiteis religious context, the word is replaced by the word with equivalent meaning as /laison-tinson/ where the word /laison/ is a combination of two words /lai/ means ‘god’ and
/son/ comes from /sonbə/ means ‘to recite’ the word /tinson/ were /tin/ means ‘insect’ and /son/ ‘recite’. The compound word /laison-tinson/ is a reduplicated form where the second element /tin/ though there is a meaning as ‘insect’ and /son/ ‘chant’ the literal meaning (that is ‘to chant insect’) of it cannot be taken into account as it does not make any sense here. As it is a reduplicated form, the meaning we can deduce is ‘to chant the names of gods and the like’. This is similar to the meaning of the reduplicated form for example, /cai-wai/ ‘the tea and the like’. The word /laison-tinson/ therefore, conveys the meaning of ‘chanting the activities relating to god’.

11) urep- ujun ‘to lay the foundation stone fixed’

When a foundation of a house or mandop is laid, the process is known as /zətra-hunbə/ which is hybrid compound (discussed in chapter-III section 3.3.2.1). Nowadays we frequently find a compound word for laying foundation stone as /urep-ujun təmbə/ of which the word /urep/ means ‘tree that is fixed’ (literally tree that is made to stand) and /ujun/ means ‘tree that is erected’. The expression /urep-ujun təmbə/ means to lay the foundation stone fixed. Even though this is a recently coined expression it has gained a wide currency and it is
rapidly replacing the hybrid compound /zọtra-hunbə/ ‘to lay foundation stone’. An interesting fact to be noted here in this expression is that the construction materials in the past were of trees, bamboo etc. Even though these materials are not used in modern building construction the expression of /uŋ-ujən təmbə/ is an established expression which is well accepted by people.

12) lainiŋ-laison  ‘religion’

The word /lai.nilə/ where /lai/ means ‘god’ and /nilə/ means ‘devout’ and /laison/ ‘to chant god’s name’ (lai ‘god’ and son ‘chant’). These two compound words together means religion. This expression is used in place of /dhərmə/ by the followers of Meitei faith.

13) laisəŋ  ‘temple’

In each locality in Meitei community we generally find a temple, of which the number of temples grew to a large number. One can expect a temple if there is a Brahmin family in a locality. The temple is known as /məndir/. A Brahmin family in a locality has to give service to the people in the locality in terms of religious rituals, pujas and other services. In Meiteiron /məndir/ is known as /laisəŋ/.
The term /laisʊŋ/ is gradually replacing the term /məndɪr/ particularly among the people who follow Meitei faith. The word /lai/ means ‘god’ and /ʊŋ/ means ‘hut’ which literally means the ‘hut of god’.

4.6. Conclusion

The religious movement along with language movement or purification initiated by Naoria Phulo in the 1930s bolstered feeling of ethnic consciousness among Meiteis. This was the first time that the pride in the local language and script was equated with the ethnic pride of Meiteis after almost two hundred years of Meiteis adopting Hindu religion as their religion. Although the work of language purism began in 1930s, the work reached its culmination as Meitei script has completely replaced the Bengali orthography in the 21st century. This is evident from the fact that the first matriculate with Meitei script as MIL would be generated by the year 2014.

Revivalism is a major component for ethnic assertion. This heightened awareness and consciousness has manifested itself via a religion and cultural revivalism. Old customs and practices are being resurrected to emphasize the uniqueness and distinctiveness of Meitei religion and cultures. In an attempt to strengthen their feelings of
identity, Meiteis are retuning as reinstallation of Meiteis idols of Gods (for example, when Durga puja is celebrated people had started installing the idol of Goddess Panthoibi a Meitei God instead of Hindu Goddess Durga puja). And also many Meitei rites that had become rather marginal like /apokpə-khurumbə/ ‘ancestor worship’, /cheiraobə/ ‘new year’, even the titles taken after the names as a follower of Hinduism such as /siəh/ for male and /dəvi/ for the female came to be discarded and people started adopting identity marker such as /məitəi/ for male and /cənu/ for female unmarried girl and /ləimə/ for married women for example /poiəi.ŋəmbə məitəi/ for a male and /pən.təoi cənu/ and /əpəbi ləimə/ for female etc are now very rigorously being performed by the Meiteis.

While freedom of expression goes hand-in-hand with freedom of religion, appropriating words from one religious tradition in an effort to deceive people into accepting another tradition oversteps the boundaries of religious freedom and enters the area of surreptitiousness. Undoubtedly, the intentions of the majority of Meitei who desire to use Meiteiron religious terminology is to enhance their own religious understanding and, in general, that of their own religious communities.
This chapter as stated at the beginning is largely focused on the study of purification of Meiteiron by the revivalists and their activism. The linguistics purism advanced by the revivalist is certainly a product of Meiteis’ search for a new identity under which there are different types of freedoms, cultural and linguistic rights. As we know purism can take various shapes and degrees and of course which may yield different results on different situations. Purism in contexts are in extreme forms which purists themselves do not realize that they are quite impracticable. Those involved in purism may or may not be conscious of the activities they are engaged in that all of us live in a multidimensional space of language and cultures. To this end to keep Meiteiron completely pure in a sociolinguistic myth than a social reality.