CHAPTER – VI

Conclusion

After having thoroughly investigated the subject we know that the Manipuri Muslim who were commonly known as Meitei Pangals were not the original settlers of Manipur. The migration and settlement of the Muslims in Manipur may be traced back to the reign of King Khagemba. According to the Lost Kingdom (Royal Chronicle of Manipur), in the year Saka 1527 Sanongba, the younger brother of King Khagemba of Manipur came from Cachar side with a large number of troops to invade Manipur but King Khagemba defeated them and took 1000 captives including their leaders with 30 elephants and 100 rifles. The war captives were allowed to settle in Manipur by giving Meitei ladies as their wives.

In Manipur history, Muslims entered into Manipur from different parts of India during the reigns of King Khagemba (1597-1652), King Khunjouba (1652-1666), King Paikhomba (1666-1697), King Charairongba (1697-1709), King Pamheiba (1709-1748), King Chitesai (1748-1752), King Bharat (1752-1753), King Moramba (1753-1759), (1762-63) and King Chingthangkhomba (1759-1762), 1763-1793). R.K. Sanahal writes, during period of above mentioned kings the Muslims from the west came to Manipur and inhabited in this land. The Meiteis Pangals had their own Sagei as the Meitei had. The Sagei of the Meitei Pangals were named in the Meitei Lon which shows that they were different from the Muslims who lived outside Manipur as they do not
have such Sagei names live Meitei Pangls. Muslim migration in Manipur began
from the time of King Khagemba to King Bhaigachandra’s period. However N.
Debendra Singh stated that the migration of Muslim did not stop during the
reign of Bhaigachandra but continue up to the time of King Chandrakriti. As
the Meiteis are bold, generous and secular minded people, the then kings of
Manipur gave proper treatment to those new commers.

Initially the Muslims settlement was confined to the capital of Manipur.
But in course of time they established their settlement in different parts of
Manipur like Moirangkhom, Singjamei, Bhamol Leikai, Langthabal, Keibung,
Maklang, Lamshang, Taothong, Patsoi, Pangal Tabi, Khongjom Nagthem
Lawai, Wangjing Turel Wangma, Heirok, Malom, Changamdabi Kangla Ukok,
Phuldrei, Bishnupur Maning Khoubum Chingin, Malom Komjal, Keinou,
Moirang Taothong, Yairipok Ningthou Ngai, Kyamgei Leishangthong,
Uchiwas, Sugnu, Kajipat, Solai (Sapam Solai), Nongjai, Kameng, Heingang,
Kaisang Khumidok Heinou Khongnembi, Mapal Engkhol, Shembi Kandong,
Maibam Lokpa, Wangban, Singjamei Chingagi Wangma, Bamon Kampu,
Mayang Impal, Kontha etc. The recorded history informed us that at their first
settlement in Manipur they were concentrated in the capital area, later on they
move to different places for habitation. During the period of seven years
Devastation of Manipur from 1819-1826, many Muslims along with Meiteis
were taken as war captives to Burma and other Muslim took shelter outside
Manipur like Cachar, Sylhet etc.
In the *Troko Afghalgi Chada Naoda* and *Meitei Pangal Haurakpham* made references to the name of the places resided by Meitei Pangals as in Cachar district of Assam- Baskandi (Keinao, Sabal Leikai Khangbak, Epahm, Heinou Makhong, Lambal Basti Khorgandi), Moijing Gobindapur, Joynapur Hilaghat, Singarband, Lalpani etc. in Tripura-Lalasora, Mithirma, Alali, Lalgabil, Kamalpur, Manik Vandar, Moleiya, Borbarik, etc. in Bangladesh-Shreepur, Jalapur, Madhabpur, Moulabi Bazar, Kunago, Phultori etc.

According to 1831 census Muslims population in Manipur was twenty two thousand six hundred eighty four. As per the census 1951-2001, *Meitei Pangal* population of Manipur in 1951 was 37, 197, in 1961-48, 588, in 1971-70, 969 in 1981-99, 327, in 1991-33,535 and 2001-90, 335, constituting 6.44, 6.23, 6.62, 6.99, 7.27 and 8.32 of the total state population of Manipur. Regarding the social life of the *Meitei Pangal*, it is significant to note that the family life and social organization of the emigrant Muslim of Manipur were greatly influenced by Meitei family institutions and social organizations. The immigrants were absorbed to Meitei society either by accommodating in traditional *Yumnaks* or by introducing new *Yumnaks*. The Meitei Pangals were accommodated in the Meitei society by enlisting them in many new lineages based on occupation, incident, place of settlement, physical feature etc. The Yumnak which were conferred to the Muslim who settled in Manipur on the basis of their profession, residence, their administrative duties and reasons are –Korimayum, Kamalamayum, Kakchingmayum, Karpursungbam, Konthamayum, Kazikhut, Keitheningkhol, Sangom Sumbam, Sajabam, Sairem,
Singakhongbam, Shakakpam, Surmanayum, Loitongbam, Loubuktongbam, Lairikyengbam, Leishangkhong, Koupalmayum, Luplakpam, Moijingmayum, Moinammayum, Mayangmayum, Manzammayum, Malsam, Miraimayum, Maibam, Mayangmayum Ariba, Makakmayum, Phukhrimayum etc.

The Muslims in Manipur can be broadly divided into four groups namely Sheikh, Syeed, Pathal and Mughol. Most of the Sageis belong to Sheikh group. The Islamic society, at first, was a perfect model of the teaching of Islam, but with passage of time in different parts of the world were influenced by the indigenous culture. It is said that the social life of Muslim everywhere is based on two factors – (1) Islami belief, way of life and code of ethics and (2) the influences of indigenous civilization and customs of the people amongst whom the Muslims live. The social structure of Meitei Pangal was mainly based on kinship social system which was greatly influenced by the culture and social structure of the Meitei. Their culture becomes the combination of both Islamic and Meitei influence.

Muhamadan law defines marriage as contract which has for its object of the procreation and the legalizing of children. Marriage of the Muslim is not a sacrament but a civil contract. In Meitei Pangal society no matrimonial alliance is made within the same Sagei which too is the influence of the Meitei custom on the Meitei Pangal. In Meitei society no restriction was imposed therefore, the re-marriage of widows, widowers and divorces could be done which means that such persons had a good place in the society. Society allowed the windows, widowers and the divorces to re-marriage. Likewise in the Meitei
Pangal societies widows, widower and divorces are allowed to remarriage if they like. Hence sororate and liverective marriages can be traced in the Meitei Pangal society. However such marriages are not considered as compulsory. Like the Meiteis, the Meitei Pangals used to follow three system of marriage –
(a) Luhongba (b) Keina-Katpa and (c) Loukhatpa. As the Muslims, the Meitei Pangals followed the Islamic rules of divorce laid down in their law texts however, in the case of Meitei Pangal we do not find clear evidence of the strict rules of divorce until they followed Islamic rules.

Birth is a very important social event around which gather many traditional practices and associated with the religion. Within the seven days from the birth of the child, naming ceremony was performed on which the child was given a name ritually. Every Muslims boy in the world under ten years of age had to be circumcised. The Meitei Pangals adopted Islamic way of disposal of death.

Owing to the influence of Meitei custom on the Muslim in Manipur, the games and sports of the Meiteis became chief amusements of the Meitei Pangal. Meitei Pangal adopted Meitei Lon as their language. They are the only community in Manipur who speak Meitei Lon next to the Meitei. The dresses of the Meitei Pangals were also almost similar to that of the Meitei. The Meitei Pangal also constructed their houses in the same way of the Meiteis.

The foods of the Meitei Pangal were almost similar to that of the Meitei before the advent of Vaisnavism in Manipur. However the food and drink for
the Meitei Pangals are divided into two – (i) *Haram* (forbidden) and (ii) *Halal* (un-forbidden) like the Muslims of the other parts of the world. Meitei Pangals enjoyed three festivals namely *Id-ul-fiter, Id-ul-Zuha* and *Muharram*.

The Meitei Pangals are the followers of Islam, however, they practice other customs and traditions and held beliefs which the orthodox Muslims would argue are beyond the pale of Islam. These are accretion drawn from the local environment, development as a response to the local cultural situation for survival and practical need. They adopted the local customs and beliefs to their own requirement and needs by putting an Islamic into it. The Pangals, like their Meitei counterparts, believe in the existence of local malevolent spirits e.g., *Helois, Bhuts* etc. In the early stage of their settlement they were not strict followers of Islam. Mashajid, the religious institution of the Meitei Pangal came to be existence very late in Manipur.

The agricultural technology was improved with the introduction of transplanting system which is known as *Linthokpa* by the Muslim immigrants from Bengal. Prior to the coming of Muslim in Manipur only two methods – *Punghul* and *Pamphel* were adopted. Agriculture technology was further developed with the introduction of plough drawn by the bullock and buffalo by the Muslims in Manipur. A Muslim sepoy named Nuriya Shaikh, had presented an exquisite mud-pot to the king. In recognition of the potter’s skill his clan had been named Phusam. Muslims were also credited with introducing a wheel made pot called *Pun-kangnanbi* which later came to be known as *Sanabul*. The
immigrant Muslims introduced improved technology of pottery making by using wheels. Some of the Muslim immigrants were skilled in the art of weaving and made a very important contribution made to development handlom and handicrafts in the kingdom. So King Khangemba assigned *Phishabam Yumnak* to those Muslim professional weaver. *Phuldrei*, wooden lath came to be used by the Meitei Pangal for which *Phudreimayum* clan was given to those Pangal who used *Phuldrei*. The Muslim community or Meitei Pangal of Manipur played a very big role in the economy development in Manipur since the time of their settlement.

*Pangal Loishang* was established by King Khagemba in 1606. Mahamed Sani was appointed as one of the *Pongba Tara* by King Khagemba. The Pangal took part in the offensive and defensive of the country in different historical period from the time of their settlement. It is recorded that many Muslim soldiers were accompanied in the military expedition of King Garibaniwaz (1709-1748) against the Awa. They were Khunagm and Muba of the Makak Sagei, Angouba and Macorok of Khulakpam Sagei, Khungam and Mote of Beshei Sagei, Tolba from Mughal group Babrula from Pathal group, Kiyang of Phuldreimayum etc. Kheiruddin Khullakpam had given the names of the Meitei Pangal who were in the army of Kings Chourajit, Marjit, Gambhir Singh and Nara Singh, who entered into Manipur from the Cachar side in 1825 in order to drive out the Burmese from land of Manipur. In the Anglo Manipur war of 1891 numbers of Meitei Pangals soldiers fought against the British for the kingdom of Manipur. The Meitei Pangals had been participating in the
political and administration of the Manipur since Monarchical form of Government. From Kazi to mere soldiers of the king they were playing very important role to the transformation of the Manipur. They were countries during the period of different kings of Manipur in spite of their micro minority, they also fought against the British and feudal lord. It may be mentioned that on 12\(^{th}\) December, 1946 the Maharaj of Manipur constituted a constitution making committee which included Maulvi Basiruddin Ahamed. In the interim council which was formed on 15\(^{th}\) August, 1947, with the laps of British rule, Maulvi Basiruddin Ahamad became the Minister of Medical, P.W.D and Jails.

In the election of the Manipur state Assembly in 1945, 5 (five) Meitei Pangals namely (1) Muhamad Suleiman from Mayang Imphal, (2) Muhamad Amjal Ali from Yairipok, (3) Muhamad Alimuddin from Lilong, (4) Muhamad Abdul of Kayamgei and (5) Maulvi Kadir Khan of Lilong were elected.

Loiyumba Silyen throws light on the nature and scope of technical education in Manipur. We found reference to the existence of medieval education in ancient Manipur. Panji Loishang was colleges of astrologer, which also supported by T.C. Hudson. The seed of English education was first sown by Captain Gordon in the beginning of 19\(^{th}\) century in Manipur. Madrassahs were the centre of learning for the Muslim the year 1907-1908. These years were a landmark in the history of the education of the Meitei Pangal. A Madrassah was established at Lilong during that period. The first two Maulvis in Manipur were Abadullah from Irong Chessaba and Abdul Jalil from Thoubal in 1910.
The number of Meitei Pangal students admitted in Johnston school was very low in early period of the history of education in Manipur which indicated that Meitei Pangal did pay less attention to the education system at that particular period of time. However, in course of time the Meitei Pangals realized the needs and importance of Western education system. So as to compete with the other communities in this modern age, with this view many Meitei Pangal students admitted to the schools, college and Universities as well as other institution in different field run by government or by missionary. In short, at present Meitei Pangals both man and woman are realizing the importance of education to compete with the others in the global context. Their children are no longer confined to Madrasshas. They were neither strict followers of Islam nor the followers of indigenous Meitei religion for many years. It is fact that when they began to settle in Manipur they sowed the seed of Islam. However, because of the marriage of Meitei women they were ignorant of Islamic religions, which are supported by numbers of historical evidences. In beginning of the 20th century, the Muslim self-consciousness had started. Some Manipuri Muslim was sent to Northern India for undergoing religious training as Maulvis.

The emergence of trained Maulvis in the Meitei Pangal Society came to witness a strong pursuit in terms of giving and absorbing Islamic knowledge. At the same time increasing number of the enrolment of the Meitei Pangal students to the government institution, Christian missionary schools and
colleges and other institutions marked a good sign of education in the present society of the Meitei Pangal.

Islamization is a process through which Muslims attempt to distinguish themselves from non-Muslim. Among the *Meitei Pangals* the movement of revivalism of Islam begun towards the end of 19th century or the beginning of 20th century. The revivalist movement among the Pangals started with great effort of *Ulama* and the movement reached its momentum in the early part of 20th century. The movement served as the vanguard of the Meitei Pangal community and helped in asserting their religious identity but also introduced Islamic dress code, manners, lifestyle etc. among the Meitei Pangal.