CHAPTER - I
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Change and uncertainty are characteristics of human society, and various forces are at work to make change inevitable. The tempo and extent of change vary from society to society and from country to country. Some parts of India have experienced speedy transformation due to industrialization while some rural areas change very slow. Some of the tribal societies in Africa and some Pacific islands have remained relatively static for centuries. The human composition in societies changes, institutional structures and functions undergo transformation, and their technological and ideological changes. As Gerth and Mills (1953) remark, social change refers to ‘whatever may happened in the course of time to the role, the institutions, or the orders comprising a social structure, their emergence, growth and decline.

Philosophers of ancient times had their views on social change, and in modern times many sociologists, philosophers, geographers, biologists and other have tried to explain it. Some geographer mentions that social change results from drastic climatic changes or large-scale migration from one region to another. A biological theory suggests that gene composition of the population is undergoing changes due to differential birth rate in the various social classes or due to inter-marriages. Such inter-marriages greatly increase during times of war and political revolution when large-scale exodus of people from one region to another is experienced.

‘Social change is the development of new meanings and values, or the substitution of new ones for old, and thus it involves changes in the characteristic behaviour patterns in society (Arnold M. Ross, 1957) Social change is a fairly large-scale transformation in a number of related meaning and values affecting the behaviour of most people in a society. In a sense it involves a large number of persons engaged in activities which differ from what they were doing before, or what their parents used to do. Wilbert Moore (1987:2) has pointed out the following characteristics of modern societies:

(a) For any given society rapid change occurs frequently or constantly.
(b) Changes are neither temporarily nor spatially isolate – that is, changes occur is sequential chains rather than as ”temporary” crisis followed by quiet periods of
reconstruction, and the subsequences tend to reverberate through entire regions or virtually the entire world.

(c) Thus, single contemporary change is probable everywhere and its consequences may be significant everywhere; it has a dual basis.

(d) The proportion of contemporary change, that is either planned or issues from the secondary consequences of deliberate innovations, is much higher than in former times.

(e) Accordingly, the range of material technology and social strategies is expanding rapidly and its net effect is additive or cumulative despite the relatively rapid obsolescence of some procedures.

(f) The normal occurrence of change affects a wider range of individual experience and functional aspects of societies in the modern world—not because such societies are in all respects more “integrated” but because virtually no feature of life is exempt from the expectation or normality of change.

Social change in some western societies is so rapid that some sociologists fear that socialization of children is very chancy. In the past the older generation socialized the younger generation. Now the young may socialize the old. What is happening is that culture is being created from one day to the next. The new is rising out of the old, yet it is transforming the old at the same time.

Social change is essentially a change of social structure like the population changes and changes in the relationship of the components of the social structure. Individual in a society occupy different position and play different roles over a period of time. The position and role, which the individual has also, change over a period of time. In static society the status and role of the individual do not undergo noticeable change from generation to generation. However, such static societies are rare in the modern world. A dynamic society is one where basic social changes occur. Structural aspects like status and role are measurable to a certain degree, and aspect like employment, place of residence, educational attainments income, marital status, number of children are taken into account. Social change is comparatively swift in societies where many people change these and other aspects of status. There is no prescribe time interval though some think in terms of generations, decades and centuries.

Social change is often associated with progress, but this is not widely accepted as change can be either for good or for bad, and hence this has to be treated as neutral. Progress
means change in as positive valuation. In the post-independence era, India has undergone rapid social changes, most of which are planned changes. Similarly, Western Europe and North America have undergone tremendous social changes since the Industrial Revolution. One of the most striking changes is urbanization, and the concentration of people in certain areas has affected various aspects of social life. Rapid industrialization, improved means of transport and other means of communication, industrialized agriculture, and urbanization have created tremendous changes in a society’s mode of living. Cities develop distinctive social climates. As urbanization increase this social climate diffuses until the ideas and practices radiate throughout the society. Rural areas also absorbed these ideas and practices so the uniformity and unification in the way of living result in the total social organisation. Difference disappears in the exchange of ideas, folkways, norms, and values until a common culture tends to characterize the whole society.

Social change and cultural change, though having many common grounds, have differences. The patterned system of interaction found between individual or groups refers to society, while the products of interaction refers to culture. Social changes involves alterations in interaction patterns, while cultural change involves modifications of social norms, belief systems, symbolic systems, values or technology. The interaction of human beings produces institutions, values, status, roles and techniques which form culture. It is patterned behaviour resulting from social interaction. Thus, society refers to patterned systems of interaction among individuals and group, whereas culture refers to pattern of values, ideas and other symbolic meaningful system that direct human behaviors. Society and culture are intertwined but are not the same.

The study of social change in modern India is vast and complex which has not only a fathomless historical depth and plurality of traditions but is also engulfed in a movement of nationalistic aspiration under which concepts of change and modernization are loaded with ideological meaning and an adequate understanding of it will require the collaboration, for many years, of a number of scholar in such diverse fields as economic, social and cultural society, law, politics, education, religion, demography and sociology.

Sanskritization as a process underlining social change in India, according to MN Srinivas (1991:6). “is the process by which a “low” Hindu caste, or tribal or other groups, changes its customs, ritual, ideology, and way of life in the direction of a high, and frequently “twice born” caste. Generally such changes are followed by a claim to a higher position in
the caste hierarchy than that traditionally conceded to the claimant caste by the local community. The claim is usually made over a period of time, in fact, a generation or two, before the arrival of conceded. Thus, through this process low caste people attain a higher position in the caste hierarchy due to change in their custom and rituals. However, the mobility associated with Sanskritization results only in positional changes in the system and does not lead to any structural change. The system itself does not change. As a result, Sanskritization cannot introduce structural change in the society (Hindu) and it cannot help as a means to bring a social change in India.

During the nineteenth century the British slowly laid the foundation of a modern state by surveying land, setting the revenue, creating a modern bureaucracy, army and police, instituting law courts, developing communication – railways, post and telegraph, roads and canals – establishing schools and colleges, and so on. The British also brought with them the printing press, and the profound and many-sided changes brought about in Indian life and though deserve a volume in itself. One obvious result was that books and journals, along with schools, made possible the transmission of modern as well as traditional knowledge to large numbers of Indians – knowledge which could no longer be the privilege of a few… (Srinivas, 1991: 46).

Associate with Sanskritization are Srinivas concepts of ‘Westernization’ and ‘Secularization’. Srinivas (1962:55) used the term “Westernization” to characterize the “changes brought about in Indian society and culture as a result of over 150 years of British rule, the term subsuming changes occurring at different levels…technology, institutions, ideology and values”. Thus, Westernization refers to all cultural changes and institutional innovation in India as this country came into political and cultural contacts with the Western nations, primarily the United Kingdom. Since then, the term ‘westernization’ has assume importance as a concept for understanding the changes taking place in the India society.

However, Srinivas prefers the term Westernization to “modernization”. Srinivasa found that to equate modernization with Westernization cannot fully explain the process of modernization in Indian society, for modernization is not the exclusive domain of the west. For example, Japan, though not a Western nation is nevertheless a modernized nation. So, taking this into consideration, Srinivas substituted the term Westernization to explain the process of change in India.

According to Srinivas, modernization is normally used to stress the essential feature of an important culture. It brings about an open society from closed one where individuals of talent, enterprise and training can find a place in the society appropriate to their achievement.
It is a revolutionary ideal, but does not advocate a complete breakdown with the past nor the destruction of its traditions. Rather as Lylyod Rudolph (1968) has stated in ‘The Modernity of Tradition’ that there seems to exist in developing societies a dialectical relationship between tradition and modernity rather than clashing ones. The two, that is, tradition and modernity may thus co-exist side by side and such is the case in India society. Milton Singer also formulates a statement about cultural changes in India:

“That in a primary civilization like India’s cultural continuity with the past is so great that even the acceptance of ‘modernizing’ and ‘progress’ ideologies does not result in linear form of social and cultural change but may result in the ‘traditionalizing’ of apparently ‘modern’ innovations” (Singer1955:23-24)

Modernization may also assume a variety of forms, the most outstanding being the industrial and technological forms of modernization. Besides this, changes simultaneously occurs in various other fields such as educational, economy, health services, bureaucracy, and recreation, thereby involving the total society. Modernization is thus a many-sided process involving changes in all aspects of human thought and activity. It is a process which takes place not only at a very superficial level. For instance, a society may adopt scientific invention and yet may remain at a traditional level with respect to its ways of thinking and believing. Such as society cannot be called a fully modern society, because modernization is neither the process of imitation and adoption only, though it involves both. It is a process whereby man’s whole outlook is changed. For instance, traditional man did not expect or consider that human beings are capable of changing or controlling society. However, modern man differs and he accepts the possibility of change and in fact believes that changes are desirable. He is such that he can adjust to changes in his environment. Such a difference in the attitude, beliefs, values and expectations of the modern man differentiates him from the traditional man and this change in his values and attitudes implies modernization of the individual at the psychological level. On the other hand, modernization at the intellectual level involves a vast expansion of man’s knowledge about his environment and the spreading of this knowledge throughout the society through education, increased literacy and mass communication. It brings about changes in the life-style of an individual and thus increase mobility –be it geographical or occupational resulting in a noted population growth in the urban areas.

As stated earlier, modernization may be viewed from various perspectives – social, economic or political. From the social viewpoint, modernization tends to supplement basic
groups where roles are vaguely defined such as the family, with deliberately organized
groups where role functions are more specific and defines. As a result of modernization,
there is noticeable change in the social structure from one that is traditional characterized by
sharp separation and inequality among social status to one where persons can have more than
one status and where inequalities are not consistently disturbed. In such a modern society,
status is achieved rather than ascribed. There is also an increasing differentiation of structure
and increasing specialization.

From the economic view, modernization refers to differentiation of activities,
replacement of simple by complex occupations, increasing efficiency in occupational skills,
increasing capital to labour, decline in the importance of agriculture compared to commercial
activities, geographical expansion of economic activities accompanied by a growing national
market, national economic institutions which eventually results in an increasing level of
economic prosperity and decreasing economic inequality. Here, it may be stated that even
today only one-third of the nations of the world have achieved this level of modernization.

Modernization from the political perspective may be defined as a movement from a
traditional to a modern form. Viewed from this way political modernization may be
classified into three important aspects.

Firstly, political modernization includes the nationalization of authority which means
that the traditional religious, political authorities are replaced by a single non-religious
national political authority. It implies a change in the belief that government is a product of
man rather than of nature or God and those human laws are the final sources of authority. It
believes in the political supremacy of nation in terms of relation to local or regional forces
within the nation and also in the international sphere.

Secondly, political modernization implies the differentiation of the new political
functions and developments of specialized structures to perform specific functions. It leads
to the development of specific fields to deal with legal, military, administrative, scientific,
etc, functions, working independently of each other but at the same time being
interdependent, thus resulting in a complex and more discipline structure. Official’s
positions to these various levels are also distributed according to the achievement and ability
rather than by tradition.

Thirdly, political modernization involves increased political participation by
individuals and social groups throughout the society. Citizens become directly involved and
affected by the politics of their nation and are direct participants towards its development or
even destructions.
However, it is not sufficient to conclude that political modernization merely involves the rational of authority, differentiation of structures and increasing political participation, such a view assumes that there is a direction in which political change should move, i.e. from a tradition form to modern politics. However, in actual life, though political modernization involves a change and usually a breaking up from a traditional political system, it does not always specifically involves a significant movement towards a political system. To understand this difference between a modern and traditional political system, it may be stated here that a modern political state in characterized by the extent to which people participate in politics and its effect on a large unit of individuals. In traditional societies, participation may be extensive at the village level, but apart from these only very small groups takes part or are affected by the political system, which is not the case in a modern society. Here, large units are affected by the political system beyond the town or village level. This is accompanied by the emergences of new political parties and such other political institutions to organize public political participation. Political modernization is thus the effect of the old values substituted by the new ones. It is a transformation which takes place in respond to the changes in the social and economic sphere, hence is “intricately related to a wide spectrum of social and economic functions” (Morton R. Davis & Vaughan A. Lewis : 1971).

Modernization as a concept thus encompasses a deep and complex range of significances. The term carries the meaning of a total transformation of society including such aspects as political, the social, the economy, technological and the intellectual. The concepts include everything that development stands for and entails. But this does not mean that it entails a total absence of tradition. The two, i.e. modernization and traditional may co–exist side by side as is the case of the Indian society; and in order to understand this unique case of the Indian society, a brief discussion of modernization of the Indian society may be made.

The process of modernization in the Indian society did not evolve just recently, though it is true that it was only after the II\textsuperscript{nd} World War that the process speeded up and spread widely. Modernization in India started with the Western contact through the British rule. The contact led to the growth of a modernization culture particularly in Bombay, Madras and Bengal where a new class of traders cum middlemen emerged who were gradually being socialized in the western ways, adopting western cultural norms and modes of thinking. However, this is a very narrow concept of modernization, for while Westernization penetrated only a particular class of individuals, modernization on the other
hand, is a process which involves the masses, their intellectual outlook, rational thinking and scientific humanistic values.

What seems to have taken place in the society is that most Indians accept modernity in their professional work while in other spheres of life especially their religious life, they may still maintain their tradition. This could be illustrated by citing one example. For instance, an educated farmer who had adopted the new scientific and modern technology for his farm may despite this modern outlook, not hesitate to perform his daily ritual of worship or even a special puja for a good harvest, or even before using his new tools and implements.

Nevertheless, despite this co-existence of tradition and modernity, the India society has today witnessed drastic change in all spheres of life due to the impact of the forces of modernization. Old custom and belief are gradually being replaced by new ones as the number of education Indians are steadily increasing. For instance, the traditional economic sphere is undergoing changes with the improvement of educational standard and contact with the west. The modes of thinking and the performances of the younger generation today, show a marked change from the older ones. Infact, there is no aspect of life that has been left untouched – be it economic, political, cultural or social; modernization has engulfed the whole of the Indian society especially after Independence. The rising population, preponderance of the young in society, the greater political participation, exposure to the media such as radio, newspaper, magazines. Television, public meetings, etc, have led to a new social and political awareness. The welfare policies for Schedule Castes and Scheduled Tribes, land reform and developmental planning have led to the emergence of a category of people from the lower strata who were previously self conscious of their deprivation, but now could assumes a leadership role for their community and mobilize them for organization.

Along with this change in the social framework, changes are also apparent in the other spheres. For instance, with the major investment in science and technology for agriculture, industry and health services, the economy of the country too is changing into a modernization economy. The rural areas too are experiencing a rapid process of social structuration resulting in substantial changes in their values and beliefs and a massive absorption of science and technology in agriculture. A new interaction among technology, social relationship and culture is now taking place in the rural societies resulting in social mobility, emergence of new power structure and changes in to the modes of exploitation of the deprived classes. The new agriculture activities requires for the illiterate to learn the skill to negotiate with banks, revenue authorities, police administration, marketing bodies, etc.
They are required to consult the experts and technicians for various modern agriculture works. This could not usually be handled by the elder uneducated generations, hence an increasing number of them have been attending the adults school especially opened for them and are learning the importance of being literate. Such awareness constitutes one of the importance aspects of modernization. Another consequences of this growing modernization in the Indian economy is the increasing numbers of rural youth engaged in the agriculture activities – such as negotiations for loans with banks or consultations with experts as regard to the use of improved seeds, irrigations, fertilizers and so on – due to the fact that their elders are not able to handle such activities due to illiteracy. Such roles are thus being increasingly performed by the younger generation who are either school or college educated or they may even be a drop-out.

Changes are also visible in the Panchayat elections and rural electoral politics in general. They are now more organized and in the fields of politics also the youth are gradually replacing their elders. Traditionally, youth were normally never involved in the local politics, this was a field reserved for the elders of the village only. But today, even the rural areas have young leaders who deal with the various agencies of development, takes active part in various local and regional activities.

Together with these changes, one may also note the positive effect in the economic ethic which is productive and generates surpluses leading to capital accumulation which in turn contributes towards the upward mobility of the lower castes and rural folk and ultimately resulted in the growing awareness for a better standard of living and its simultaneously achievement.

Modernization as a process has not only brought about changes in the rural areas among the illiterate masses. It has also showed its influence in the urban industrial sectors of the Indian society, where one may observed a growth in the size of the services professions and administrative bureaucracy. This in turn reflects that there are a higher percentage of educated individuals – and education is one of the indices of modernization. Then again due to the impact of modernization there is a higher degree of communication, mass media exposure, political activism and participation which in turn has resulted in the growth of the previously medium-sized cities into urban metropolis.

These development and changes taking place in the Indian society due to the process of modernization and is initiated by science and technology proceeds along with traditional beliefs and values especially in the religious sphere. The Indian society is characterized by this unique and successful adaptive synthesis between scientific, technological innovation
and traditional values, which is possible only because of the unique of the Indian society. There is a creative linkage between the rich oral tradition and the modern secular values which makes it possible for the two to coexist side by side.

Again, British rule brought with it a process of secularization of Indian social life and culture, a tendency that gradually became stronger with the development of communication, growth of towns and cities, increased spatial mobility, and the spread of education, the two World Wars, and Mahatma Gandhi’s civil disobedience campaigns, both of which socially and politically mobilized the masses, also contributed to increased secularization. And with Independence, there began a deepening as well as a broadening of the secularization process as witnessed in such measure as the declaration of India as a secular state, the constitutional recognition of the equality of all citizens before the law, the introduction of universal adult suffrage, and the undertaking of a programme of planned development.

According to Srinivas (1991:118-119) the term “secularization” implies that what was previously regarded as religious is now ceasing to be such, and it also implies a process of differentiation which results in the various aspects of society, economic, political, legal and moral, becoming increasingly discreet in relation to each other. Secularization is a counterpart of the process of Westernization specially as it merged after independence as a national ideology. The ideology calls for a spirit of religious and cultural tolerance and co-existence amongst the religious groups. It also refers to various legislative and constitutional provisions that have been made in India to reinforce its foundation. In fact, one of the greatest changes in the Indian society has been the change from a ‘sacred society’ to a ‘secular society’. Srinivas has thus attempted to portray the most important processes of social change in India through these three concepts.

**TRIBAL SITUATION IN INDIA**

The present study is an attempt to examine the process of social change of a tribal community in the state of Manipur. Hence, it would be worthwhile to have a closer examination of the existing tribal situation in India and see as to what extent the Government of India provided constitutional safeguards for the Scheduled Tribes’ population to improve their lot.

The tribal communities in India constitute a sizable segment of the country’s population. Through the ages, they have formed an integral part of the Indian society. Various authorities have referred to them using different names. For the first time in the
Indian census. Sir A. Baines, the Census Commissioner of 1891 had given classified information about the tribal communities under the category of ‘Forest Tribes’. Their population during that time was estimated to be nearly sixteen million. In the Census Report of 1901, the tribal were known as ‘Animists’ and in 1911 as ‘Tribal Animists or people following tribal religion’. Again, the Census Report of 1921 classified the tribal’s under a different name that is ‘Hill and Forest Tribes’ and in 1931 as ‘Primitive Tribes’. The Government of India Act, 1935 specified then as ‘Backward Tribes’. However, in the 1941 Census Report they were simply referred to as ‘Tribes’ (Verma, 1970:10).

Besides the various terms used by the Census Report, the tribal communities were also given several other names by different authors. For instance, Sir Herbert Risley and Lacey. Elwin and Thakkar called them ‘aboriginals’. G.S Ghurye calls them ‘Backward Hindu’, While Dr. Des and Das renamed them as ‘submerged humanity’. Besides, the tribal's are also popularly known as ‘Adivasis’ as they are regarded to be the original inhabitants of the country.

Literally, the term ‘tribe’ has been derived from the Latin word ‘tribus’ which means “three diversions”. This word was first used to imply the three diversions among the early Romans. In English. “The word was used in the 16th Century implying the original Roman meaning as used in the Bible and it denotes a group of person claiming descent from a common ancestors’ (Choudhury 1977:6). However, in the modern usage, the term ‘tribe’ generally denotes “a group of people in a primitive or barbarous stage of development acknowledging the authority of a chief and usually regarding themselves as having a common ancestor”.

Various social scientists have attempted to define the term ‘tribe’ or tribal society. But it is difficult to arrive at a definition, which is universally acceptable. W.H.R. Rivers define tribe as “a social group of a simple kind, the members of which speak common dialect, have a single government and act together for such common purpose as warfare” (Rivers 1969:465). And yet, according to Lewis (1968:147), an ideal definition of tribal societies is that “they are small in scale, are restricted in the spatial and temporal range of their social, legal, and political relation and possess a morality, a religion, and a world view of corresponding dimensions. Characteristically too, tribal language are unwritten, and hence, the extent of communication both in time and space in inevitably narrow. At the same time, tribal societies exhibits a remarkable economy of design and have a compactness and self-sufficiency lacking in modern society”
In the Indian context too, there has been some controversy regarding the definition of a tribe. Various anthropologists define tribal society on the basis of certain characteristics which they think constitute a tribe. In general, kinship ties, common territory, one language, joint ownership and one political organization have all been referred to as the main characteristics of tribe. The reason why there exists such diversity of opinion is because each anthropologist and other social scientists defined the tribal society on the basis of data with which he was most familiar (Majumdar 1969:240).

The tribal society in India is not a homogeneous one. There has been great variation among the tribal’s from region to region and within a region from tribe to tribe. As such, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to define all the Indian tribes in terms of universal characteristics. Therefore, “the working definition of any tribe would depend on the actual tribe studied” (Nambissan 1979:6).

According to Majumdar, the tribal population of India can be broadly classified into three racial divisions – namely, (i) The Mongoloids

(ii) The Negritos, and

(iii) The Proto – Australoids or Indo-Australoids.

The Mongoloid race is represented by the tribals of sub-Himalayan region, and can be divided into two sub-divisions. Viz. Paleo-Mongoloid and Tibeto-Mongoloid. The first type can be found in the north eastern states of Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura, and is represented by tribes such as Khasis, Mizos and Nagas. While the Tibeto-Mongoloid race is represented by tribes in the state of Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, tribes belonging to the Negrito race are found mostly in the coastal region of Kerela and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The Kedars, Irulas, Onges and Sentinelese are some of the representatives of this racial group.

The majority of the tribal population of India belongs to the last group, that is, the Proto-Australoid or Indo-Australoid. These tribal groups are found in the central region of India such as the Chhotanagpur Plateau, Rajmahal Hills, Aravalli range, Central Vindhyachal, Deccan Plateau and Nilgiri Hills. The Oraons Gonds, Munda and Santhals are some of the more prominent tribes belonging to this Proto-Australoid race.

Besides racial differences, the tribes of India exhibit variation in their culture, religion, dialect, etc., which is mainly due to the differences in their surrounding environment and differential exposure to the outside world. For instance, the tribal communities in the central region of India have always been living side by side with other communities and there
exists a considerable amount of interaction between the tribal’s and the non-tribal. As a result of these continued interaction, the tribal communities of this region are greatly influenced by the neighboring Hindu culture. “Except in a few areas, it is very difficult to come across communities which retain all their pristine tribal character. In fact, most such tribal groups show in varying degree an element of continuity with the large society of India (Beteille 1977:7). Moreover, due to the industrialization of this region, many tribals had lost their land and were forced to give up their traditional agricultural occupation and worked in the industries as laborers.

However, regarding the tribes of north-eastern region, the situation seems to be somewhat different. Due to their geographical isolation and late appearance in the national mainstream, they are not much influenced by the Hindu culture. Moreover, the “Inner Line Regulation” which has enforced in 1837 restricted entry of non-tribal’s into the hill areas of north-east India and thereby enhanced the already existing barriers between the hill tribes and the non-tribal plainsmen. At the same time it also protected the tribal from exploitation at the hands of outsiders and helped preserve tribal and identity. As a result, many tribes of north-east region still retain their tribal cultures and are, to a large extent free from the clutches of landlords and moneylenders.

Commenting on the tribal situation in NEFA in the nineteen fifties, Verrier Elwin (1964:7) writes that “in NEFA there are no landlords, no extortionate moneylenders, no liquor-vendors, and there is none of the economic improvisation, the anxiety and the corruption that such people have brought to other more accessible tribal areas. Here, tribal culture, social organization and traditional institutions are still strong and vigorous”. Further, due to the impact of Christianity and the educational activities of the Christian missions the tribals in the north-east region are found to be educationally more advanced than the tribals of the other regions.

Altogether, there are about 350 Scheduled Tribes living in almost all the states and Union Territories of India, and they constitute the deprived section of the country’s population. After the attainment of independence, the Constitution of India made special provisions for their social, economic and educational development. As per Article 46 under the Directive Principles of State Policies of the Indian Constitution, ‘the state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interest of the weaker section of the people, and, in particular of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation’. The special safeguards for the Scheduled
Caste and Scheduled Tribes provided in the Indian Constitution have been spelt out in 24 Article and two Schedules – namely, the Fifth and the Sixth Schedule.

Of the various development programmes for the tribes, education has been greater emphasis because it is considered fundamental to the overall development of the tribals, as well as other deprived communities. According to the Commissioner for the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, “The spread of education among the weaker section of society is an essential pre-requisite to the all-round development, and one of the most important media to assure them benefits of various safeguards provided under the Constitutions”. (Report, 1964-65:11)

Besides education programmes, various provision are also being provided for the employment benefits of the tribals. To improve the representation of tribals in the service sector, the Constitution of India under Article 335 provides for reservation of posts in services: Articles 330, 332, and 334 also provides for reservation of seat for the Schedule Tribes in the House of the People and the State Legislature. Moreover, there are other special provisions such as age relaxation for five years, minimum qualifying standard and pre-examination coaching facilities are also provided for the tribal candidates.

These special provisions and other development programme are expected to improve the overall socio-economic conditions of the tribals and bring them at par with the national mainstream. Hence, the problems raised in this context is: How far has changes occurred for the tribals due to special provisions provided for them, and to what extent modernization has enable them to improve their socio-economic and in fact, their overall conditions – from traditional to a modern one?

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON HMAR

Since the beginning of the present century, various scholars and administrators have been working on the Indian tribes. In the pre-independence period, studies on tribal society had mostly focussed on the distinctive characteristic of their life – such as the institution of family and kinship, religious, socio-political and economic, etc. Therefore, while numerous books and articles focusing on the tribal cultures have been published, various problems of the tribal’s often remain neglected. For instance, the early works of Mills (1926), Hutton (1921) and Shake spear (1912) were mostly descriptive ethnography and did not deal much with the problems of the tribals.
However, after the attainment of independence, the Government’s policy on tribal development seems to have altered this situation to some extent. The Government has taken steps to uplift the tribal situation and to integrate them into the national mainstream. Studies are now directed towards the problems of the Scheduled Tribes. Moreover, the forces of change which have swept the country and brought about a large scale transformation in the socio-economic and political field is also being witnessed by the tribal community. No longer can they remain in isolation as the forces of science and technology in transforming them bringing about a change in the system of communication, thereby integrating the tribal societies. As a result, numerous studies have been carried out on the different aspects of tribal society. This is also true regarding the Hmar tribal society in Manipur.

‘The Hmar’s of Manipur’ by V.P. Sharma (1992) is a basic ethnographic monograph of Hmar – once feared headhunters of Manipur of North-East India. It presents a vivid penetrating and sympathetic analysis of life and culture of Hmar tribe based on the author’s intensive fieldwork among the Hmar of Manipur during the year 1987. The book deals with their history, identity and migration their distribution and their present settlement at Manipur. According to the book, the Hmar people did not come directly under the control of Maharaja Gambhir Singh of Manipur. It is only the treaty of 1833 between the Maharaja and the British which brought the Hmar east of Jiri River and west of Barak river under the control of Maharaja. Their social organization including clan, marriage, family and kinship have been dealt with. Youth organization called Buonzawl (Zawlbuk) have been elaborately discussed considering its various norms and changes after colonial regime. He observed that political organization of the tribe depicts both the traditional and modern political structure. Forest economy reflects the dependency of Hmar’s on forest. Jhuming cultivation is the backbone of their economy. The traditional style and the indigenous, environmental and technical knowledge for Jhu-ming have allowed them to survive all the dangers living in the forest. In an unconventional Hmar manner the author have classified craft of weaving and basketry under performing art along with dance, music, and musical instruments. Every stage of textile technology and basketry have been taken into account with decorative arts which include body decoration, dress and ornaments, thus presenting a very interesting account of social function of ‘Arts’ in Hmar society. The book is a successful attempt to explore anthropologically unstudied the Hmar tribal community of Manipur.

Louis L. Keivom (1982) made a critical study of the Hmar customary laws and practices and gives useful information on the non-material aspect of cultural transformation in Hmar society. The book deals lucidly the customary laws and usages as practiced and
handed down from generation to generation. He critically examined the origin and migration of the Hmar people right from the earliest time that can be obtained. He analyzed clearly the role and function of the village chief and his village councilors in the administration of the village day-to-day life. The role and function of the village priest, the village black-smith, the village crier, and the youth-commander are clearly mentioned. The author also interestingly deals with the Hmar marriage customs which generally are still in vogue till today. Payment of principal bride-price and its subsidiary prices along with the associated tribals property and feast are deals in detail. The role of various kin-groups in all matters of social obligation during marriage are lucidly mentioned. The author found that marriage is one of the important occasions on which the activities of the clan members could be displayed at its best. The social role of the youths under the youth commander, through the institution of Zawlbuk (youth dormitory) is dealt with. In short the book is a record of the customs by which Hmar people are governed in their daily lives and according to which cases are decided by the chiefs and the village courts.

Zarzolien (1987) studied the history of Hmar religious beliefs and practices through the ages. He asserts that the whole structure of Hmar religions is based on the ultimate principle – God which the entire philosophy of Hmar religion rotates. God is reverended as the omni-present and omni-science which remained relatively constant through the ages. In his overall survey, he observed the wide diversity of beliefs and practices prevalent in the religious system of the Hmar people. He found that the primitive monotheistic cult has been devoured by polytheistic worship within the compass of her religious history. In this social apathy personal faith replaced erstwhile monotheistic religion of the community. He observed God is not only the heart of the ancient Hmar religious philosophy, but also the crux of the entire Christian theology. He shows that Christian missionary movement took place within the cultural milieu of the people.

Raltawnluoi Riengsete (1980) has studied the Hmar kinship and marriage system in Churachandpur, Manipur. According to his findings, the Hmar kinship system is the Omaha type of terminology, which is classificatory type. However, the same term become descriptive while in reference. He found that the universally followed rules of kinship system as observed by Sol Tax is applicable to the Hmar society, except the rules of equivalence. A clear-cut differentiation is noted between cross-cousin and parallel-cousin. One’s maternal cousin is the preferential mate. He observed that the Hmar kinship terms sometimes disregards the principle of generation. Although the Hmar society is patrilineal,
some elements of matrilineality is also traced in a rudimentary form in their social organization even today. In marriage, the Hmar are not restricted to any particular clan, tribe or community. Marriage between the same clan is also not prohibited. In other words, according to him, it can be said that it is neither endogamy nor exogamy.

Darliensung (1988) presents a vivid and fairly comprehensive account of the origin, history of migration, clan-wise analysis, the chronology of the rulers, their conversion to Christianity and the spread of modern education, their language, their socio-economic and cultural life, their mode of village administration, and major festival of the Hmar people. He also presented his view stressing the antiquity of the Hmar tribe and also their affinity to a great extent with other hill tribes at the same time worthy of being mentioned in the large interest of the tribal community and also is the broader national interest of the tribal community and also in the broader national perspective. The author observed that the Hmars are a patriarchal society and as such, clanship plays an important role in the social system. He pointed out that originally, the Hmar tribe followed the principle of altimogeniture but they are not found to be sticking to this rule of inheritance. Through the book, the author’s intention is to introduce the history and culture of the Hmar people.

Rosiem Pudaite (1988) studied the history of the Hmar people their oral sources which reflects about their past events, His study mainly focussed on their origin, migration movements, socio-cultural, politico-economic and their religious aspects. Due to the absence of written records about the Hmar past events this study extensively used oral sources such as a traditional practices, songs, folksongs, folktales, legends, etc. as data for the reconstruction of meaningful history of the Hmar tribe. He also briefly mentioned the impact of colonial administration on the Hmar society. He also studied the impact of Indian National Movement in this hill areas of north-east India with special reference of the Mizo Union Movement (1994). His study gives a comprehensive account of Hmar’s participation in the political movement against the traditional village chiefs and their subsequent political history.

Hranglien Songate’s (1977) book gives a comprehensive account on the origin of the various Chin-Kuki-Mizo tribes with special reference of the various clans that are under the tribe ‘Hmar’. The book also gives an account of their folklores, songs folktales and stories of the forefathers and their where about long before the eighteen century A.D. The book briefly mentioned about the various intra tribal feud between the Hmar and their neighbouring tribes. The book also deals with the coming of Christianity and the division within the Hmar christian.
Rochunga Pudaite’s book (1963) book, the first of its kind ever written in English by a Hmar deals not only with the educational works of the Hmar tribe but also the social, religious and economic life of the people by tracing their history right from the earliest time that can be obtained. He gives a valuable account of Hmar tradition, culture, and their social customs. He briefly discusses the question of education and also point out the various lapses in the educational administration and planning of the Hmars, and the means whereby it can be improved for their future development. However, this book is not to be treated as a treatise on the historical, cultural and social life of the people. Whatever is included here is meant for the understanding of the educational need of the Hmar tribe.

Vanrammawi (1992) studied education and occupational mobility of the Hmar tribe in Manipur. The study is based on her field work in three Hmar villages viz. Sielmat, Saidan and Pherzawl. The study emphasizes that despite high literacy rate, the overall educational attainment level of the Hmar people is considerably low which need to stress on higher education. This is particularly essential if education is expected to play its ameliorative role in the development of the tribe communities. The study also shows that though education has widely spread among the Hmars, a large majority of them are still engaged in their age-old traditional occupation (i.e. shifting cultivation) without much change. Education does not lead to the improvement in their method of cultivation. As is well known, shifting cultivation is unscientific and destructive in nature. But due to the non-availability of other occupation particularly in the hilly areas, even a highly educated person often resort to this activity if unable to secure a job in the organized sector. According to her findings, vocationalization of education might not be a new issue at the national level, or even at the state level, but till today, there is not a single vocational institution in the whole of Tipaimukh sub-division where the Hmar tribe constitute a majority of the population.

Again, her study highlighted the presence of a certain level of education inequality within the Hmar society. Formal education is not new among the Hmars, and enrolment at the primary stage is significantly high for all section of the society. But certain structural constrains, such as poor economic condition of the family and non-availability of good educational institutions, have affected the enrolment of older children among the more deprived section of the society (i.e. the low status category and those living in a village without good educational facilities). This has an important significance as higher education is the one that ultimately matters when it comes to employment opportunity. Therefore, according to her, there is need to take special care of the deprived section within the tribal society. Finally, her study indicates that the Hmars are neither apathetic nor have negative
attitude towards women’s education. Nevertheless, women are still not given equal opportunity because of social traditions.

Thus, from the literature reviewed above, it is found that a large number of studies have been carried out on the different aspect of the Hmar tribe. However, no in-depth studies have so far been made on social change among the Hmar. Moreover, as far as it is known, no one has ever attempted to look critically the process of transformation that took place on the life of the Hmar community.

Therefore, the present study, which is an attempt to examine the processes of social change among the Hmar of Manipur, is expected to give us useful information in this regard.

THE PRESENT STUDY:

The present study deals and examine the processes of social change among the Hmar community in the state of Manipur. It also highlighted the level of modernization existing among the different sections of this tribal community whose main concentration is found in Tipaimukh, Churachandpur, Jiribam sub-division and the capital Imphal.

Before the advent of the colonial power to this region, the tribal communities remained almost segregated. There was little scope for mixing together with other people of the country. As such, in the early days, tribal communities in the hill areas were left alone to lead a life according to their own ways of life, following their own customary laws in all matters of their activities.

Later on, the picture become quite different after the arrival of the Britishers and more so after India’s independence. All the hill tribes formed an important part of the Indian Union. The hill people living in the mountainous region, very often cut off from each other have their own ways of life which certainly add to the beauty and variety of Indian culture. To preserve such a valued culture and to throw light in the history of human civilization, a detail study of the lives of the Hmar tribe will be of much value and also it will give us a peep into the inner social and their politicojural structure of this distinct ethno-cultural ground.

To crystallize the subject matter of study the various institutions such as family and kinship, religious, political, economic and the overall social institutions of the Hmar, we need to study their village community life from different angles covering the many divergent patters of organization and ethos. As such, it deals with the present. But in dealing the
present we cannot ignore the past, because the present Hmar community is the result of a series of change in the past Hmar community. Until this is done our picture of ‘social change among the Hmar’, the hub of the present study will remain vague and inadequate.

In the light of the above discussion, the present study examined the process and the level of social change and transformation of the Hmar community to the new situation from the old, that had developed slowly with the pace of colonial administration and in particular, with the introduction of Christianity in the year 1910. The study also draws a clear and precise picture of the Hmar traditional social structure as it existed during the pre-Christian era. It also examined briefly as to what factors and forces brought about transformation among the Hmar people in its historical and sociological perspective. The present study is not intended to give a theoretical analysis of social change on either of the community or its social evolution: rather, it is an attempt to examine the extent of social change visible in the Hmar community through the process of modernization. Hence, the main questions are:

A) How far does modernization brought about social change in the Hmar tribal community?

B) Do all section of the Hmar community have an equal access to the various agencies of social change? ‘or’ do all sections of the Hmar community have a balanced nature of modernization and social mobilization?

C) Does tradition and continuity still exist in the present Hmar community inspite of the onslaught of modernization?

Objective

The following objectives have been kept in view of the present study:

a. To find out the various versions of the origin of the ‘Hmar’ and to trace the historical background.

b. To reconstruct the traditional structure of Hmar community as it existed before the introduction of Christianity for the understanding of the changes that occur today.

c. To consider the Hmar community is in transition from its traditional state to modern one through the process of modernization which is still an on-going process.
Methodology

The present study is based on my fieldwork among the Hmar community of Manipur. Keeping in mind their differential exposure to their surrounding environment, the milieu of study has been drawn from a few selected Hmar settlements.

Fig – 1
Location Map of the Sample Areas

The fieldwork on which the major thrust is based was carried in the Hmar settlement area of Imphal, the capital of the state, where the Hmar population constitute 5029 (census on Hmar population in Imphal by HSA, Joint Hq. Imphal), and Churachandpur, the district headquarter of Manipur South (where 80.10 percent of the Hmar population settled) during the latter part of 2008. A more intensive fieldwork was conducted in the early part of 2009. During this time, I had met and interviewed fifty informants including academicians, social workers, administrators, etc., through either formal interview or informal discussions, besides
obtaining the data from forty village authority members and a few village Chiefs and prominent leaders whom I came across during my fieldwork. It was found that informal interview was more convenient as people were rather forthcoming in giving better information. In order to bring out a more general picture of the area, case study of a specific area or village was discarded and the study was focused on the whole Hmar settlement area of Manipur. However, with the difficulty of going to the interior villages for want of transport and limited funds available, it was not possible to covered many villages in the course of field investigation inspite of my best effort; and as such, a large number of information and material were collected from informants in towns and easily accessible centers. But whatever information and materials collected form the villages assure that the processes of social change in the interior villages follows more or less the same pattern that we find in towns. Much of the research work is carried out on the basis of informal interviews.

Materials for reconstructing early Hmar history was extremely difficult to obtain due to lack of written materials. As such, the task of reconstruction of early Hmar history has been done mostly relying on in formal interview with older persons having profound knowledge of early Hmar history i.e. oral tradition. Of the contemorary situation in the form of social change among the Hmar tribe, materials are mainly drawn from primary and empirical sources. These are supplemented by secondary sources including published and unpublished research papers, journal, magazine, news papers and Administrative reports and records, statistics provided by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Manipur are also widely used. Available missionary works on and after the advent of Christianity in the Hmar areas were also widely consulted. My M.Phil level reseach has been incorporated in this thesis.

I am aware that the present study deals with an encounter between two distinct world views. As such, I have tried my level best to be as objective, factual and balance in my approach as possible. Moreover, the main purpose of the study is to understand the process of social change upon the life of Hmar community brought about by the various agencies of modernization, and it is for the well informed readers to say as to what extent it fulfilled its objectives. This paper gives us the basic idea of the transformaton taking place among the Hmar in Manipur and no claim, however, is made towards an exhaustive treatment of the subject matter.
Chapterization

The thesis is broadly divided into five chapters:

Chapter-I presents a conceptual analysis and the process of social change with special reference to the modernization in India with a brief account on tribal situation, and a brief review of existing literature on Hmar community. Objectives of the thesis with the methodology is also discussed here.

Chapter-II discusses the land and the people in general with special reference to the Hmar community.

Chapter-III reconstruct the early Hmar history and provides the various versions on the meaning of the term ‘Hmar’, their myth of origin and migration from Sinlung to the present settlement to understand their historical and cultural background.

Chapter-IV presents the Hmar social structure as it existed on the eve of British occupation of Hmar inhabited hills, hitherto undefined territory, towards the end of the 19th century A.D, and in particular, before the advent of Christianity in 1910.

Chapter-V examines the process of social change and transformation of the Hmar community. Conclusion is a summary of all the five chapters and the major finding of the research.