



## Religious Syncretism among the Meiteis of Manipur, India

Naorem Naokhomba Singh

Department of Anthropology, North Eastern Hill University Shillong-793022, Meghalaya, INDIA

Available online at: [www.isca.in](http://www.isca.in)

Received 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015, revised 15<sup>th</sup> July 2015, accepted 7<sup>th</sup> August 2015

### Abstract

*In this digital age today we see our world as a global village. Indeed, the world has become a global village with the advancement of transport and communication, science and technology and in many other domains as well. In this present era of interculturalism and transculturation syncretism is a prevailing event. Religious syncretism is one of the most interesting events in a country like India where various different ethnic groups with their own culture, tradition, religion, language and different origin live together as a nation of 'unity with diversity'. The present study deals with religious syncretism among the Meitei peoples of Manipur, a north-eastern state of Indian union. The state is the meeting point between the east and west, i.e. south-east Asia and south Asia in terms of culture. Anthropological field work has been conducted to collect primary data for this study using interview (structured and non-structured), observation, case study methods etc. From this study it was ascertained that religious syncretism of traditional primordial religion and Hinduism among these people gave rise to a new and unique essence to their culture. Present day Hinduism of this population exhibits aesthetic cultural products of religious syncretism.*

**Keywords:** Interculturalism, transculturation, syncretism, religious syncretism, primordial religion, Hinduism, cultural products.

### Introduction

Religion is generally understood as a system of beliefs in something which the humans consider to be beyond themselves and which binds them together as to organize their lives into some kind of group or community. The term religion owes its origin to the Latin word 'religio' which means beliefs about and reverence for the gods. Different scholars give different definitions of religion. Frazer (1890) defined religion as a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and human life. Emile Durkheim (1915) defined it as a unified system of belief and practices relative to sacred things. Paul Radin (1957) defined religion in two parts, the first an easily definable, if not precisely specific feeling; and the second includes certain acts, customs, beliefs and conceptions associated with this feeling. For E.B. Tylor (1958) religion is the belief in spiritual beings. Yinger (1970) define it as a system of beliefs and practices by means of which a group of people struggles with the ultimate problems of human life. Clifford Geertz (1973) defined religion as a system of symbols. It is an organised system of beliefs, attitudes, emotions, behaviour and a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature and purpose of the universe.

In this present era of interculturalism and transculturation<sup>1</sup> syncretism is an interesting prevailing event. The English word syncretism is derived from two Greek words; syn meaning 'with' and krasis- 'mixture' which means the mixing together of two or more elements<sup>2</sup>. The term syncretism was originally used by Plutarch for 'fusion of religious cults' which occurred in the

Graeco-Roman world, 300BC-200BC<sup>3</sup>. The Oxford English Dictionary defines syncretism as attempted union or reconciliation of diverse and opposite tenets or practices, especially in Philosophy and religion. Syncretisms are cultural mixes, including religious blends that emerge from acculturation- the exchange of cultural features when cultures come into continuous firsthand contact<sup>4</sup>. Encyclopaedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology defines it as hybridization or amalgamation of two or more cultural traditions. Syncretism is blending of ideas and practices, by means of which either one set adopts more or less thoroughly the principles of another or both are amalgamated in a more cosmopolitan and less polytheistic shape. An outcome of the process is the borrowing or assimilation of deities, synthesis of customs and traditions, similarities in rituals, new political alliances and so on<sup>5</sup>. In other words syncretism is the mixture of folk religion with one of the religions from the so called "great traditions"<sup>6</sup>.

### Material and Methods

Anthropological field work has been conducted to collect primary data for this study. Primary data collection was done with the help of observation, interviews and case study methods. Observation, both participant and non-participant had been used to collect data on various rituals and festivals. Interviews were conducted with the help of schedule with *Maibas* (priest), *Maibis* (priestess) and local peoples who have a good knowledge about Meitei religion and life cycle rituals. Necessary aids have been taken for secondary data collection

from the earlier monographs, books, journals, ancient Meitei texts and chronicles.

**Land and People: Study Area and Community:** Manipur is situated at the North-eastern corner of the Indian sub-continent. It is one of the seven (eight, including Sikkim) north-eastern states commonly known as seven sister states of Indian union. The state lies between the 93<sup>0</sup>03' to 94<sup>0</sup>78' east longitudes and 23<sup>0</sup>83' to 25<sup>0</sup>68' north latitude covering a geographical area of 22,327 square kilometres. The state is bound by Myanmar (Burma) in the east, Nagaland in the north, Assam in the west and Mizoram in the south. Geographically the state can be divided into two; the oval shaped valley at the centre and its surrounding parallel hill ranges. The surrounding hill ranges constitutes more than 90% (3/4<sup>th</sup>) of the total geographical area of the state. The oval shaped valley in the centre is of approximately 2000 square kilometres.

According to census 2011 data the total population of the state is 25,70,390 out of which 12,90,171 are male and 12,80,219 are females. Sex ratio of the state is 992. 67.5% of the total population lives in the rural areas and 32.5% is of urban population. Literacy rate of the state is 79.21% in which 86.06% is of male and 71.73% is of female population. Population density of the state is 115 persons per square kilometres. Out of 9 districts Imphal west being the state capital has the highest population density (998 per sq.km) and Tamenglong has the least population density (32 per sq.km). The state has 9 districts out of which 4 districts belong to the valley and 5 to the surrounding hills. They are; Imphal east, Imphal west, Thoubal, Bishnupur, Chandel, Tamenglong, Churachandpur, Ukhrul and Senapati district. Manipur observes a moderate climate. Summer prevails from the month of March to May. Monsoons arrive in the month of June and extend the rainy season up to September. The state receives an average annual rainfall of 1467.5mm. The winter season extends from December to February. The maximum temperature during summer is recorded up to 32<sup>0</sup> C while in the winter season the temperature often falls below 5<sup>0</sup>C and sometimes up to 0<sup>0</sup>C.

The history of the Meitei people goes back to a very early stage despite the fact that its recorded history came to existence at much later phase. Manipur was inhabited since Stone Age which has wide cultural affinity in Asia, particularly with the Stone Age cultures of south-east Asia<sup>7</sup>. The Meitei as a distinct ethnic group, speaking a Tibeto-Burman language and having their history of origin as far back as the ancient pre-chin China as an early phase and their basic culture rooted in the oriental cultural complexes settled in and around the present Manipur as early as, at least, the time when Klandios Ptolemy noticed their existence, i.e., the very beginning of the present Christian era in this region<sup>8</sup>. The recorded history of Manipur begins from the second quarter of the first century of Christian era when Pakhangba became the king of Meiteis<sup>9</sup>. The state was an ancient sovereign civilization ruled by independent rulers (clan leaders) in their respective areas. This kingdom (Manipur) had

been known to different nations of that period and they had trade relations between them as well. It had trade relations with the countries like Myanmar (Burma), China, Indian mainland, Arab and Greek world. Indian trade routes to China and south-east Asia also lay through Manipur<sup>10</sup>. Manipur was known by various names to different countries and states in the past. In the past the name of the kingdom was 'Poirei Meitei Leipak' or 'Kangleipak'<sup>11</sup>. The name Manipur came into existence only after the adoption of Hinduism in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Before that there is not a single word Manipur referring as the name of this kingdom in ancient manuscripts or the royal chronicle. In the first recorded treaty between East India Company and Jai Singh (king of Manipur) in 1762 the kingdom was recorded as 'Meeckley'<sup>12</sup>. To the Shans the kingdom was known as 'Kase' and to the Burmese as 'Kathe', a corruption of the same word. The Ahoms called it 'Makeli' and the Cacharis 'Magli'; while the old Assamese name for it is 'Moglan'. There are differences of opinion whether the name Manipur is associated with this land from very ancient time or in recent period. Whatever it may be, in view of the old manuscripts it can be safely asserted that the name Manipur of this land became popular only in the modern age<sup>13</sup>.

There are different opinions on the origin of Meitei people. According to Dr. S.K. Chatterji the Meiteis or Manipuris are the most advanced section of the Kuki Chin people<sup>13</sup>. Brian H. Hodgson in a foot note to a contribution to the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1853 expressed the view that in the Moitay of Manipur we have the combined appellations of the Siamese Tai and the Kochin Chinese Moi. In other words, the Manipurian tribe belongs to the Moi section of the great tribe called Tai by themselves<sup>13</sup>. Sir James Johnstone writes the early history of Manipur is lost in obscurity but there can be no doubt it has existed as an independent kingdom from a very early period. In the days when Indian branch of the Aryan was still in progressive and colonizing stage this district was repeatedly passed over by one wave after another of invaders intent on penetrating into the remotest part of Burma<sup>13</sup>. Another scholar is of the opinion that the modern Manipuri people are a composite one formed out of several tribes. The fertile valley of Manipur witnessed the invasions of different tribes from time immemorial. At different periods the Nagas, the Kukis, the Shans and the Chinese came and settled in this land and merged themselves into the Manipuri community. Some Aryans and Dravidian features are also found in them<sup>13</sup>.

From the archaeological perspective it seems highly probable that a group of people from the regions of south China equipped with fully ground and polished stone tools and corded tripod wares entered into Manipur following the courses of Irrawaddy River and its tributaries<sup>13</sup>. This valley with its great fertility and favourable topography had always attracted peoples from different parts of the world; likewise the ancestors of the different clans of Meiteis came from many different directions and built up a settled civilization and evolved into a remarkable nationality with unique national character and pristine national

heritage long before the Aryan migration in this belt. Thus ethnologically and linguistically the Meiteis are Tibeto-Burman Mongoloid with Australoid, Aryan and Thai admixture (including some Negrito and Dravidian elements). Sociologically Meiteis have absorbed these foreign elements and completed integration in their social structure<sup>12</sup>. On the archaeological findings- before the coming of the Tibeto-Burmese speaking proto-Meitei tribes, there were Mon-Khmer speaking Australoid-Mongoloid people who were later on absorbed by the Tibeto-Burmans<sup>12</sup>. The dominantly Mongoloid somatic features of these people, their Tibeto-Burman linguistic affinity and the oriental base structure of their cultural system- all however may also be considered together pointing to an association with early Chinese history<sup>8</sup>.

On the other hand, the Hinduised Meiteis of Manipur strongly believe that they are of western and Hindu descent. This Aryan connection was an outcome of the adoption of Hinduism by the ruling family and the people of the valley in early 18<sup>th</sup> century and resultant claim of the descent of the ruling dynasty from Babrubhahana, a scion of the Pandava hero, Arjuna of the Mahabharatta<sup>12</sup>. But the Manipur mentioned in Mahabharatta was situated near Kalinga and its identification with the modern Manipur is not justifiable<sup>14</sup>.

Meitei-leipak (Kangleipak) which has been known in the sanskritized nomenclature as Manipur during the last three centuries had been the cradle of the autochthones which evolved the Stone Age culture, the earliest settlers and the other ethnoses in the early period of history. This process of assimilation of the ethnoses was completed in the pre-Christian era with the integration of seven major principalities, which ultimately emerged into a confederate nationality- the Meiteis<sup>15</sup>. The ethnic group of Meitei as we find it today was formed by the amalgamation of seven different but closely knit and allied principalities, once settled in different parts of Manipur, each independent of each other. The components of Meitei confederacy were; the Meitei also known as Ningthoujas, Khaba-Nganba, Chenglei, Angom, Khuman, Luwang and Moirang. Besides these there existed several other tribes such as Mangang, Manding, Chairen, Khende, Heirem Khunja etc., all of whom were in course of time, merged into one or the other of the seven major principalities. The seven principalities again went underwent an age long struggle amongst themselves till the Meiteis (Ningthoujas) finally established supremacy over the rest and absorbed them one by one in a period that covered several centuries. After this association, the name Meitei became the common nomenclature for all of them<sup>9</sup>.

It is well known that historically, the word Meitei was used during the period of the establishment of Ningthouja dynasty by Pakhangba to mean this clan or dynasty and those ethnic and social groups who were politically and socially integrated within the suzerainty of the Ningthouja<sup>12</sup>. Thus after amalgamation of those principalities the Meitei became their common name. Perhaps it may be pertinent to mention here that different

scholars are found using two names, Meitei and Meetei while describing this same ethnic group. But the scuffle among the people over their ethnic name as to whether it is Meitei or Meetei need not linger on; Meitei or Meetei carries the same historical meaning. They are simply free variations of this language like any other language so permits<sup>8</sup>.

Manipur continued to exist as the sovereign kingdom of its own till the year 1891 despite ever increasing British influence in this region. After the Anglo-Manipuri conflict of 1891 which was caused by a strained relationship developed between the British and the Manipuris on account of the murder of five British officers; Chief Commissioner of the erstwhile British province Mr. JW Quinton, the Political Agent of Manipur, Mr. Grimwood, Colosel Skene, Lieutenant Simpson and Mr. Crossins by a unruly mob at the Manipur's palace, Kangla on 24 March 1891. Manipur lost her independence to the British India on 27<sup>th</sup> April 1891. From 1892 onwards the state became a princely native state under British India. The British Paramountcy continued till 1947. According to a merger agreement signed on 21<sup>st</sup> September 1949 between Maharaja Budhachandra, the then king of Manipur and the Government of India, the state was merged to India as a part 'C' state on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 1949. On 1<sup>st</sup> November 1956 Manipur became a union territory. It became a full-fledged state of the Indian union on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1972.

## Results and Discussion

**Religious Syncretism among the Meiteis:** The Meiteis have their own system of religion which has its own myths and legends, gods and goddesses, priests and priestesses, rituals and festivals, etc. The religion centres around their belief in a supreme being, Taibang Mapu Sidaba who is a formless divinity having myriad manifestations and also his two progenies-God Sanamahi and God Pakhangba<sup>16</sup>. This primal religion of ancient Manipuris known as Sanamahi, not only thrived reached its zenith as a state religion during the reign of King Khagemba (1597-1652)<sup>17</sup>. This ancient kingdom however, came within the fold of Hinduism since the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Charairongba who ascended the Manipuri throne in 1697 was the first Manipuri king initiated into Hinduism. His initiation to Hinduism was done in 1704 and he was given the first Sanskrit name, Pitambar Singh among the Meitei Kings<sup>17</sup>. Before him no Meitei king had Sanskrit or Hindi names. After the death of Charairongba, his son Pamheiba also known as Garib Niwaz ascended the throne in 1709. In the year 1717 he was initiated into Hinduism by Gopal Das. Some time afterwards, in 1729 he was again initiated into the fold of Ramanandi Hinduism on the advice of his spiritual guru Santa Das. Since his initiation onto Ramanandi he became much more spirited and endowed with much greater valour, prowess and inspiration hence used with significant end result in his aggrandizement policy and wartime pursuits to achieve 'Greater Manipur'. On that dimension Lord Ram of the Ramayana seems to have had much greater religious

sway and impact on the faithful Garib Niwaz than the Shri Krishna focused-Bhakti cult earlier initiated by Gopal Das<sup>17</sup>.

In spite of all possible attempts of Garib Niwaz to establish supremacy of Hinduism over the traditional religion, the worship of traditional deities continued along with that of the Hindu gods. In fact, the root of traditional religion was so firmly embedded in the soil of Manipur that it was well-nigh impossible for him to stamp it out completely<sup>18</sup>. Both the religious system - a system based on the Vaishnava doctrines of Hinduism and traditional religious doctrines and also the cultural pattern based on the Hindu culture and the traditional culture, as followed by the king Charairongba since his initiation into Hinduism in 1704 constitute the earliest evidence of religio-cultural syncretism in Manipur<sup>18</sup>. Even though the Meiteis have pronounced Hindus and passed through the golden period of Hindu orthodoxy they never ceased to worship their native deities or follow indigenous cultural practices and creeds. They have rather been adhering to an amalgamated or a composite code of religious practices. Each and every Meitei household worship the prime and primary deities of both the religious beliefs in ordinary daily life<sup>19</sup>. An apparent process of amalgamation can be seen at the instance of the Meitei king Garib Niwaz as well. The king himself would accompany an image of his divine Lainingthou Sanamahi on any armed expedition even though he had accepted the Nimandi cult of Hinduism<sup>19</sup>.

After conversion into Hinduism, the old kingdom of the Meiteis was renamed as Manipur and identified as the Manipur of Mahabharata, once ruled by Babrubahana, son of Arjuna<sup>17</sup>. Till the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century in the Royal Chronicle Cheitharol Kumbaba the word 'Manipur' was never used<sup>20</sup>. Manipur Hinduism gradually became a synthesis of the old Meitei religion with its gods and goddesses and myths, its own legends and traditions, its social customs and usages, and its priests and ceremonials and of brahmanical Hinduism with its special worship of Radha and Krishna<sup>21</sup>. As usual, approximation of the old Meitei religion to the Hindu brahmanical one began with the identification of the gods of two religions. A syncretism of the old pre-Hindu Meitei religion, mythology and ritual with the Hindu brahmanical religion started very early; and with the friendly cooperation of the Maibas and Maibis (priests and priestesses of the old Meitei religion) on the one hand and the brahmins and vaishnavas on the other for some centuries gave to Manipur its own distinctive form of Hinduism<sup>21</sup>.

The spread of Vaishnavism was achieved only by a compromise with the ancient faith. Traditional Lais (gods) were brought into the Hindu pantheon. Hindu deities were absorbed into the Meitei culture. As a consequence of this process of assimilation Manipur exhibits today a remarkable synthesis of the indigenous faith of the Meiteis and Vaishnavism<sup>20</sup>. Vaishnava form of Hinduism flourished side by side with the traditional religion during that time. The worship of Panthiobi - the greatest goddess in the Meitei pantheon continued concurrently with that of the

Hindu deities. The identification of the local deities with the divinities of the Hindu pantheon also began. Goddess Panthiobi was identified with goddess Kali<sup>18</sup>. Nongpok Ningthou of the Koubru hill became god Shiva and lairembi (goddess) of Hiyangthang hillock became goddess Kamakhya during the reign of Bhagyachandra 1759-98<sup>18</sup>. During the brief reign of Labanyachandra (1798- 1801) the traditional and Hindu deities received an equal amount of attention from the king. The traditional deities were worshipped even by the followers of Hinduism and Hindu rituals were also adopted in worshipping the traditional deities<sup>18</sup>.

On the advice of preceptor Santa Das, Garib Niwaz introduced the Hindu Gotra system and identified traditional seven yeks/Salais (Clans) of Meitei into respective Gotras as follows; Yek/Salai (Clan) – Hindu Gotras, Ningthouja/Mangang – Shandilya, Luwang – Kashyap, iv. Khuman – Madhugalya, Angom – Kaukhika, Moirang – Aitereya, Khaba-Nganba – Gautam, Sarang Leisangthem – Bhardwaj<sup>17</sup>.

During the reign of king Garib Niwaz a number of Manipuri traditional festivals were modified or identified with concurrent Hindu festivals<sup>17</sup>. The annual boat race festivals then traditionally known as Heigru Hidongba was renamed as Jala Yatra. The festival of Waira Tenkap was redesignated as Kirtan of Lord Ram. The traditional festival of Kongba Leithong Phatpa was reidentified with Vishnu Sankranti. The festival of Ahong Khongching was modified as Dol Yatra. The ancient festival of offering feast to the ancestors known as Tara Chanou Katpa became known as Priti Lok Iratpa. The worship of Nunggoibi was substituted by Dusserah. Festival of testing newly harvested rice known as Chanou Huichintu in the month of October was replaced by Govardhan Puja.

The introduction of Hinduism marked the synthesis of the old and new elements and consequently it led to the evolution of a syncretised form of Hinduism which is still practised here in Manipur, and that the harmonization which has been going on in India since ancient times forming a single culture was also seen at work in Manipur and it can be seen from the syncretisation of old and new faiths or tenets<sup>22</sup>.

Unlike in other regions, after conversion to Hinduism all the converted Meiteis, including members of the king's own family and other royal dynasty were declared to belong to the Kshatriya caste. It is one of the unique features of Manipuri Hinduism where only two castes viz. Kshatriya and Brahmin coexist; descendants of immigrant Brahmins belonging to the Brahmin caste and the rest Meitei population belonging to the Kshatriya caste, in particular, Surya Vamsa of Shri Ramchandraji of the Ramayana<sup>17</sup>. Another significant aspect of syncretised Manipuri Hinduism can be seen in Ras Lila, a dance drama. The Ras Lila also known as Manipuri Ras is one of the few classical dance forms of India. It was introduced by Rajarshi Baghyachandra, then king of Manipur during his reign (1759-98). It is based on Srimad Bhagavatam: Dashan Skanda: 29-33 Adhyaya but

enacted with indigenous dance forms, in particular Lai Haraoba dance<sup>23</sup>. The fundamentals of the Ras dance are based on the various forms of Lai Haraoba dance (a traditional form of dance). When Bhagyachandra invented the Ras Lila, he presented its dance forms out of the ancient Lai Haraoba dance making some modifications. The main aspect of the Ras Lila; Bhangi pareng are the modified versions of the Laibou Jagoi and Panthoibi Jagoi of ancient Lai Haraoba dance<sup>23</sup>.

Since 1930 the traditional cult has undergone a crusade for revival through a process of renovation, reinstatement, reformation etc. As a result, the amalgamated/ composite religious motto began to wane<sup>19</sup>. But these amalgamated beliefs and practices had very deep roots in the lives of the people and it is not easily possible to separate them completely. So there are many aspects that show the result of amalgamated beliefs and practices. In fact, it gives a unique and aesthetic feature to the culture of Meitei people which is different from the rest of the Hindu population of other regions. These syncretised features can be seen in day to day life activities, life cycle rituals, ceremonies and festivals. Perhaps, we can see these syncretised elements in every aspect of Meitei way of life if we observe carefully.

In birth rituals we observe the synthesised elements in different stages. In Heisoi Eepan Thaba (Swasti Puja), which is held on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of birth there are composite activities of traditional religion and Hinduism. Rituals perform in the morning of this day are traditional practices and in the evening Hinduised forms of puja is conducted along with the indigenous ritual of arrow shooting; in the view of protecting the child from evil spirits by the maternal uncle. Present day Meitei marriage incorporate elements from both the religions (traditional and Hinduism) in its system, process and procedures. Meitei Hindus do not arrange yajna (sacrifice) for marriage, but hold Sankeertan (a form of ritual singing, drumming and dancing). They have also modified the satpathi (seven steps) in the form of circumambulation of the groom seven times by the bride. They have also redefined that the nuptial garland be necessarily made of Kundo, a specific white flower (*Jasminum multiflorum*)<sup>19</sup>. In the funeral ritual there is traditional rituals accompanied by the Hindu practices like walking around the funeral pyre seven times etc. In death ritual, on the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> day after death the Asti-Sanchaya or mangani Leihun is arranged and the ash/bone of the dead is collected as per traditional Meitei rites in addition to the Hinduized Shradha occasion on the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> day<sup>19</sup>. Hinduism as we see now among the Meiteis in Manipur is a fusion of the two religious traditions, one represented by classical Hinduism and the other by the primordial religion of the Meiteis. The syncretism of the Meitei indigenous religion with its gods and goddesses, its myths and rituals, its legends and traditions, its beliefs and practices and its rites and ceremonies and the brahmanical faith and Vaishnava Hinduism constitutes the essence of present day Hinduism in Manipur. The religious system prevailing today in Manipur valley can be

taken as a legacy of syncretised form of Hinduism that evolved during 18<sup>th</sup> century Manipur.

## Conclusion

Manipur lies in the meeting point of south and Southeast Asia. From the very early period of human history this region had been a connecting link between east and west (southeast and south Asian countries). This can be observed from its varied cultural affinity with Southeast Asian countries. Linguistic affinity, food habits, dressing pattern, traditional religion, performing arts, martial arts, mythology and folk lore are some of the cultural traits that shows close connection with southeast Asian nations. For instance, eating with chopsticks, one of the most significant trademarks of Southeast Asian culture prevails till Moreh (an Indo-Myanmar border town) of Manipur. This population is more close to Southeast Asia in terms of somatic characters. In the early period of 18<sup>th</sup> century this state witnessed the influence of Hinduism. Thenceforth the state has been a melting pot of cultural traits of Hinduism and traditional religion. This syncretism of Hinduism and traditional religion gave rise to a new unique form of culture among these people.

## Acknowledgment

I wish to express my gratitude to the Department of Anthropology, NEHU, Shillong for continuously supporting me throughout my work.

## References

1. It is a term coined by Cuban Anthropologist Fernando Ortiz in 1947 to describe the phenomenon of merging and converging cultures
2. Bowie F., *The Anthropology of Religion*. London, (2006)
3. Das N.K. (ed). *Culture, Religion and Philosophy*, New Delhi., 15, (2003)
4. Kottak C.P., *Cultural Anthropology*, New York, (2002)
5. Moffat J., *Syncretism: James Hastings (Ed): Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol.xii. Edinburg, 155 (1921)
6. Grayson J.H., *Religious Syncretism in the Shilla period: The Relationship between esoteric Buddhism and Korean primeval religion*, In *Asian Folklore Studies.*, 43, 185 (1894)
7. Singh O.K., *Aspects of Archaeology in Manipur: N. Sanajaoba (Ed) Manipur: Past and Present*, Vol. I. Delhi, 69 (1988)
8. Ch. Budhi, *The Ethonym "Meitei": N. Sanajaoba (Ed) Manipur: Past and Present*. Vol. I. Delhi. 79-80 (1988)
9. Manikchand K., *The Evolution of the Meitei State, (A confederacy through the last two millennia): N. Sanajaoba (Ed) Manipur: Past and Present*, Vol. I. Delhi., 149 (1988)

10. Acharya N. N., *Manipur in the Eye of Foreign Historians*: N. Sanajaoba (Ed) *Manipur: Past and Present*, Vol. I. Delhi, 57, (1988)
11. Sanajaoba N., *Introduction, Manipur: Past and Present*. Vol. I. New Delhi, i. (1988)
12. Gangmumei Kabui. *Glimpes of Land and People of Ancient Manipur*: N. Sanajaoba (Ed) *Manipur: Past and Present*. Vol. I. Delhi, 3 (1988)
13. Roy J., *History of Manipur*, (Rev. Ed). Calcutta: Eastlight Book House, (1973)
14. Bhattacharya S., *A Dictionary of Indian History*, Calcutta, (1967)
15. Sanajaoba N., *Introduction. Manipur: Past and Present*, Vol. 2. New Delhi, 23 (1991)
16. Manikchand K., *The Evolution of Meitei state*: N. Sanajaoba (Ed) *Manipur: Past and Present*. Vol. I. Delhi, 145-146 (1988)
17. Nilbir S., *Sanskritization process of Manipur Under King Garib Niwaz*: H. Dwijashkekhar (Ed) *New Insights Into the Glorious Heritage of Manipur*. Vol. II. New Delhi, 239 (2009)
18. Singh G. P., *Religious and Cultural Syncretization of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Manipur*: H. Dwijashkekhar (Ed) *The Other Manipur*. Vol. I. History, Ethnicity, Bio-Recources and Environment. Part. I. New Delhi, 2 (2013)
19. Kulachandra B., *Similarities between Sanamahi and Vaishnavsm*: H. Dwijashkekhar (Ed) *New Insights into the Glorious Heritage of Manipur*, Vol. II. New Delhi, 449 (2009)
20. L. Bhagyachandra Singh. *A Critical Study of religious Philosophy of the Meiteis before the advent of Vaishnavism in Manipur*. Imphal, 4 (2008)
21. Chatterji S.K., *Kirata-Jana-Kriti*: Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal. 16(2). Calcutta, 288 (1950)
22. Chatterji S.K. *Religious and Cultural Integration of India*. Imphal, 41-49 (1967)
23. Manikchand Singh K. and Rajarshi Bhagyachandra- *The Royal Saint and Patriot*: H. Dwijashkekhar (Ed) *New Insights Into the Glorious Heritage of Manipur*. Vol. II. New Delhi, 288, (2009)