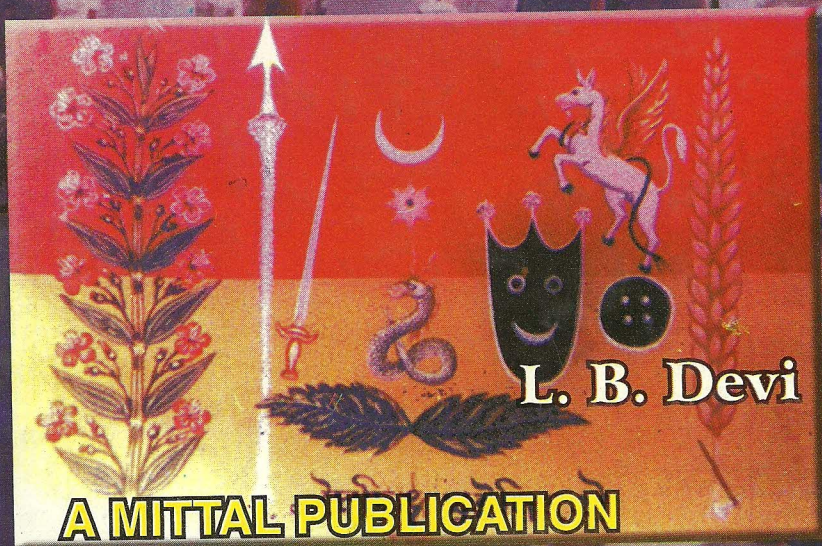


# Lois of Manipur

(Andro, Khurkhul, Phayeng & Sekmai)



L. B. Devi

A MITTAL PUBLICATION

09541  
2 7

# THE LOIS OF MANIPUR

(Andro, Khurkhul, Phayeng and Sekmai)

**Lairenlakpam Bino Devi**

*Foreword by*

**GANGMUMEI KAMEI**

Former Professor of History  
Manipur University and  
Former Minister,  
Forest and Environment, Manipur

## THE AUTHOR

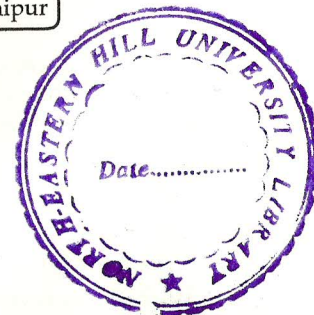
DR. LAIRENLAKPAM BINO DEVI (b. 1955) an M.A. from J.N.U. Post-Graduate Studies Centre Imphal, and a Ph. D. from Manipur University was a Junior Research Fellow and later U.G.C. Research Associate.

She has taught political Science in different colleges of Manipur. At present she is Selection Grade Lecturer in D.M. College of Arts (Govt.) in Manipur. She has contributed a number of Research papers to many journals.



**MITTAL PUBLICATIONS**

NEW DELHI-110059 [INDIA]





## Foreword

---

Dr. L. Bino Devi's 'The Lois of Manipur' (Andro, Khurkhul, Phayeng and Sekmai) is a pioneering work on the Chakpa section of the Lois of Manipur. Historically, the Lois do not constitute a single community but cover various several sections belonging to the Meiteis, Chakpa etc. The present study is concentrated on the Chakpas who are among the earliest communities of Manipur. The Chakpas have maintained their identity within the Meitei social fold despite their conversion to Vaisnavism.

Dr. L. Bino Devi has successfully analysed the relationship between the Chakpa of the four villages and the Meitei. The ethno-history of this section of the Lois is well-projected for which credit should be given to her.

Of course there is a current controversy that the term 'Lois' as a distinct social category under "Scheduled Caste" should be expanded to all historical Lois covering over thirty villages.

This original research work of the scholar will contribute to a better understanding of the Lois and specially the Chakpas of the four villages.

I congratulate the author for the original piece of research. I hope, this work will be well-received by the

scholars and those who are interested in the rich history and culture of Manipur.

**GANGMUMEI KAMEI**

Former Professor of History  
Manipur University and  
Former Minister,  
Forest and Environment, Manipur

## Acknowledgements

---

The present Research work on: 'Socio-Economic and Political Life of the Scheduled Caste Community (Lois) in the Meitei Society' is undertaken with the advice and initiative of my teacher Dr. M. Horam. So my foremost thanks and gratitude go to my teacher Dr. M. Horam for advising me to take up this Research project and supervising me in the work.

The Research work is done with the financial help from the University Grants Commission. So I acknowledge my gratitude to the Commission for granting me the Research Associateship for the Research project without whose financial assistance it would not have been possible to do this project.

In the field work a number of persons belonging to the Loi communities of Sekmai, Phayeng, Khurkhul and Andro helped me. So, I express my gratitude and thanks to the members of these communities as a whole. But I will be failing in my duty if I do not express my gratitude to some of my friends who belong to these communities who always assisted me in the collection of materials. So my gratitude and thanks go to Miss. Kh. Sunetra of Sekmai, Miss. S. Tampakleima of Andro and Shri Angom Mangi, Khullakpa of Phayeng.

I extend my thanks to the Department of Political Science of Manipur University for providing me the necessary facilities to conduct the Research work.

My thanks and gratitude are also due to the members of my family for encouraging me to do the Research work. My brother Shri L. Raghmani Singh formerly Chairman, Council of Higher Secondary Education, Manipur and my sister-in-law Mrs. (Dr.) W. Ibempishak Devi, Reader and Head of the Department of English D.M. College of Arts have extended their helping hands right up to the publication of the work. I extend my thanks to my niece Miss. L. Rimasri Devi for accompanying me in my field work.

I am grateful to Prof. Gangmumei Kamei, formerly Minister Forest and Environment, Manipur who gladly went through the book and wrote a foreword.

Last but not the least is my thanks and gratefulness to the management of Mittal Publication, New Delhi specially to Shri K.M. Rai Mittal who has undertaken the task of publishing the book.

No Research worker can forget her indebtedness to the pioneers in the field. I bow my head in obeisance to those masters whose footprints I have tried to follow.

**L. Bino Devi**

## Preface

The present work is mostly based on a Research Project – “Socio-Economic and Political Life of the Scheduled Caste Community (the LOIS) in the Meitei Society” carried out under the U.G.C. The bulk of the work was undertaken with the advice and initiative of my guide Prof. M. Horam who was in the Department of Political Science in Manipur University.

I always felt it interesting to study the caste system prevalent in Manipur which is quite distinct from its practice in other parts of India. (The historical background of their origin and also the practice as prevalent here with less rigidity in matters of social relation with other groups show the nature of the Lois of Manipur in a different light as distinct from the caste system in other parts of India). In this connection the Lois of Manipur who are treated as scheduled castes have a slightly different status but not as low as that of other scheduled caste communities.

Another interesting aspect is the language of the “Lois” which is considered to be dialects. The tonal aspect of their language is different from the language spoken by the general Meiteis. All the British scholars marked that many Meitei words are in the Loi language. But the question is not of similarity but of difference. Language-wise the two languages are closely identical. The Lois of Andro, Sekmai and Phayeng believe that once they had a separate dialect though it is mostly

forgotten. But as of now they speak the Meitei language with certain tonal difference.

The similarity of the 'Meiteis' and the 'Lois' in matters of religious worship and language and the present trend in the behaviour of both groups are matters of great interest.

To the present day Manipuris, it will be quite interesting to note that the Andros once occupied the present 'Khuman Lampak' where now a big sports complex with modern facilities had been constructed 'Khuman' meaning 'Khun aman (ba)' i.e. old discarded 'Khun' (village).

My effort has been only to have certain aspects and it has not been possible to have in-depth study of the 'Lois'. I have made some effort to touch on the socio-economic and political life of these people under the guidance of my supervisor. Any mistake or shortcoming is due to my lack of knowledge. My supervisor had given immense help and guidance throughout the work for which I cannot help expressing my indebtedness. Any such work has to depend on the scholarship of a number of pioneers without whose works, I shall be simply groping in the dark. Some of the records are old and some personalities mentioned herein like the eminent minister from Sekmai, Kh. Chaoba Singh is no more. For omissions and commissions here and there, I crave the indulgence of my readers and whatever credit from the book I owe to my guide and teachers who inspired me for studies.

I am grateful to the management of Mittal Publications, New Delhi specially to Shri K.M. Rai Mittal for taking the responsibility of publishing the book which otherwise might not have seen the day.

**L. Bino Devi**

## Contents

<i>Foreword</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix
<i>Preface</i>	xi
1. Geographical Setting of Manipur and Settlement Patterns of the Lois	1
2. Origin, Meaning and Status of the Lois	9
3. The Loi Family	21
4. Traditional Customs of the Lois (Khurkhul, Andro, Sekmai and Phayeng) of Manipur	31
5. The Religious Practices among the Lois of Andro, Phayeng, Khurkhul and Sekmai (Scheduled Caste Communities of Manipur)	45
6. The Political Life of the Lois	61
7. The Economic Life of the Lois	73
8. The Relationship Between the Lois and the Meiteis	85
9. Summary and Conclusion	93
<i>Bibliography</i>	103
<i>Index</i>	107

## More books from Mittal

- ▷ Anal : A Trans-border Tribe of Manipur \* GANGMUMEI KABUI Rs.70
- ▷ A Dictionary in English, Bengali and Manipuri Rs. 300
- ▷ Communities of North East India \* F. A. DAS and I. BARUA Rs.295
- ▷ The Eastern Frontier of India \* R. B. PEMBERTON Rs. 295
- ▷ Encyclopaedia of North-East India (8 vols.) \* H.M. BAREH Rs. 6000 (set)
- ▷ Ethnic Groups, Cultural Continuities and Social Change in North East India \* INDIRA BARUA [et. al.] Rs. 695
- ▷ From Phizo to Muivah-The Naga National Question in North East India \* A. LANUNUNGSANG AO Rs. 500
- ▷ Gazetteer of Bengal and North-East India \* B. C. ALLEN [et. al.] Rs. 500
- ▷ Gazetteer of Naga Hills and Manipur \* B. C. ALLEN Rs.295
- ▷ History of the Christian Missions in Manipur and Other Neighbouring States \* K. M. SINGH Rs. 300
- ▷ Manipur : Culture and Politics \* B.J. DEV & D.K.LAHIRI Rs.145
- ▷ Manipur : Past and Present : The Heritage and Ordeals of a Civilization \* NAOREM SANAJAOPA  
vol. 1. HISTORY, POLITY & LAW Rs.500  
vol. 2. PHILOSOPHY, CULTURE AND LITERATURE Rs.550  
vol. 3. NAGAS & KUKI-CHINS Rs. 795  
vol. 4. PAN MANIPURIS IN ASIA AND AUTOCHTHONES Rs.900
- ▷ Manipur: Treaties and Documents (1110-1971) \* NAOREM SANAJAOPA Rs.550 (Vol. 1)
- ▷ The Mao Naga Tribes of Manipur—A Demographic Anthropological Study \* LORHO MARY MAHEO Rs.295
- ▷ The North-East Frontier of India *prefatory introduction* B. K. Roy Burman \* ALEXANDER MACKENZIE. Rs.360
- ▷ Social Movements in Manipur \* N. JOYKUMAR SINGH; Rs. 190
- ▷ Statistical Account of Manipur \* R. BROWN Rs.295
- ▷ Towards Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Nagaland and Manipur \* B. K. ROY BURMAN Rs. 75
- ▷ Tribal Studies in North East India \* SARTHAK SENGUPTA Rs. 495
- ▷ Tribes and Castes of Manipur \* SIPRA SEN Rs.395



## Mittal Publications

PUBLISHERS OF SCHOLARLY BOOKS

A-110, Mohan Garden  
NEW DELHI - 110 059 (INDIA)

Tel.: 5351493, 5351976, Telefax : 91-11-5351521,

E-Mail : Mittalp@ndf.vsnl.net.in Gram : Mittalbox, Website : www.mittalpublications.com

SHOWROOM : 4594/9, Daryaganj, NEW DELHI- 110002 Tel.: 3250398

ISBN 81-7099-84

