

Brahmans Migration in Manipur: Ascertaining the Reason

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Abstract: *The Bamon (Manipuri Brahman) form a part of Manipuri society. Manipuri Brahmans are somehow different from Brahmans in other parts of the country. One possible reason for such a difference is that when they started inhabiting in this tiny State they imbibed many of the traditions and culture of the local dominant community, the Meeteis, on the other they are the offspring of Brahman migrants and local women of Manipur valley. This article counters the arguments that great expansion of Muslim in India and stability of Manipur valley facilitated the people of neighbouring countries to enter into Manipur, so number of migrants especially the Brahmans in Manipur grew substantially. It is also found that the requirements of the state endorse the Brahmans migration in Manipur.*

Key Words: *Migration, Assimilation, Brahman, Caste, Hinduism, Vaishnava, Sanskritization/ Hinduization.*

I. Introduction

The spatial population movement, which is generally referred to as 'migration', had occurred all through the history (and still continuing, though in a different form within specific legal bounds). If we take into account the human origin theory which locates the origin of human beings in Africa, it will not be wrong to claim that we are all migrants. Throughout the past, people moved from one place to another beginning with the movements of the first human group from their place of origin in East Africa to their present homes. Thus, the movement of the people crossing boundaries (political as well as geographical) was (and to certain extent it has been), a normal aspect of the human development. However, it carries huge socio-politico-economic and geographical significance for both the origin and receiving states. As such there are various theories on migration and human settlement. Especially in the 20th century, attempts to assign a theoretical framework to migratory phenomena have been made by the representatives of various disciplines of social sciences, including sociology, economics, and human geography. We may not go into details of those theories at the moment. However, it would be appropriate to talk very briefly about the term at this juncture especially to do away with whatsoever confusions that may be developed on the meaning. For the sake of clarity, the generally implied meaning of the term is being employed here too. Thus, the word 'migration' simply denotes the movement of the people from one place to another as a group or individual or otherwise. On the basis of type, migration may be casual or minor, temporary, periodic, semi permanent and permanent; which can be occurred as international, inter-regional, inter-urban, and rural-urban and intra-urban. Going deep into these theoretical frameworks of migration may be of little use for us for some good reasons. Most of these theories try to present various factors leading to migration such as causal factors, types, economic and political implications, etc. Many of the issues accentuated in these theories (or analysis) would be shown up once the case of Brahmans in Manipur is discussed.

2. Brahmans migration in Manipur

It is understood that the Brahmans of Manipur were migrants. They arrived in the state over a period of time. However, no scholar has been able to give an accurate time and date of their first migration to Manipur. There are claims and counter claims on this issue as many scholars argued in their own convenient ways. In two major sources (manuscripts) of history of Brahman migration in Manipur, namely- *Bamon Khunthok* and *Bamon Meihoubarol*, it is mentioned that the first arrival of Brahmans in the state happened to be during the reign of king Kyamba (1467-1508 CE). The arrival of Brahmans during this period comes to light with the engagement of Subhi Narayan in 1470 CE for Vishnu worship (Ibungohal and Khelchandra 2005). Chaterjee (1950: 28) remarked that the arrival of the Brahmans was started sometimes around the beginning of 4th century CE and they were gradually absorbed into the Meetei population of the valley. Kabui (1991: 199) also supports earlier migration of Brahmans i.e. prior to Kyamba reign. However, the record of early Brahmans migration cannot be focused due to shortage of authentic sources. It does not necessarily mean that their actual date of arrival was on that particular time of Kyamba. It is also probable that some groups or person of this community had already been in existence, whatever their number, or may be they were not recognized by the then Meetei society because of the reason that they might be remained as fugitive hiding from the society.

From the very beginning, the Manipuris are very advanced and they have the habit of keeping records. There are important documents for the historical study of the migrants very clearly. The people coming from the

eastern side into Manipur during the reign of different kings were known as *Nongpok Haram*¹. Another document is *Nongchup Haram*². The coming of Brahmans in Manipur is also a land mark in the history of Manipur. They came from different parts of India like Gujarat, Tripura, Kanauj, Mathura (U.P), Orissa, Calcutta, Assam, Sylhet, Nadia, etc. They were allowed to settle in Manipur and recorded their identities according to the place from where they came from, their original homelands, progenitors, clans, deities they worship, sacred books they use, clan bird, etc. They were also allowed by the ruler to get different *Yumnaks*. *Pandit Loishang* had properly recorded about the reasons for giving such *Yumnaks* (clan). Their ancestral home, their place of settlement in Manipur and their occupation, etc. were the main basis for giving the *Yumnaks*. The names of the local women married with the migrated Brahmans were also recorded in different periods of kings. This recorded book is known as '*Bamon Meihoubarol*' and '*Bamon Khunthoklon*'. These sources recorded fifty-nine number of Brahman families were existed during the period 1878 CE.

The Manipuri Brahmans are in general the *Bamons* in Manipuri society. They are known as *Meetei Bamon*. The term *Bamon* is a corrupt form of Brahman. Brahmans are those Priestley class traditionally versed in the Vedas. Manipuri Brahmans are somehow different from Brahmans in other parts of the country. One possible reason for such a difference is that when they started inhabiting in this tiny State they imbibed many of the traditions and culture of the local dominant community, the Meeteis; on the other hand, they are the offspring of Brahman migrants and local women of Manipur valley. In this respect, table 1 highlights the place from where the Brahmans were migrated to Manipur valley, whom they married, and what clan/ family names was accorded to those Brahman families and their descendents. In this way they had been evolved into a different sort of 'Brahmans'.

The chronicle of Manipur, *Cheitharol Kumbaba*, gives us an account of the coming of some Brahmans, several wandering monks and Vaishnava ascetics from the rest of India to Manipur. For instance, during the reign of king Charairongba (1698-1709 CE), who was the first king to be formally adopting Vaishnavism in Manipur, a pious Brahman named Krishnacharya alias Rai Vanamali came from Sweeta Ganga Puri with some of his companions in about October 1703 CE. His wife Krishnamayi, two Sudras and a Brahman named Ballabhadra Brahmachari are mentioned as members of his party. And Rai Vanamali was the person who induced Charairongba to profess the Vaishnava faith. A year later, 22 *Muni Gosais* (*Sadhus* who do not speak) came to Manipur (Ibungohal and Khelchandra 1967: 56). Besides, there are such a number of instances. On Thursday, 3rd of *Kalen* (April-May), 1730 five Brahmans reached Manipur with a present of *Mahaprashad* of Jagannath of Puri for the Vaishnavas of Manipur (Ibungohal and Khelchandra 1967: 78). Sanahal (1947: 47-48) also mentioned that a Brahman of Nimbarka sect came to Manipur on a preaching tour and the people favoured it. It is clearly stated that during the reign of Meidingu Kyamba, the word *Bamon* was not used, but the migrants were known as *Miyancha*. Later, the descendents of those *Miyancha* were accorded as *Bamon* (Brahman) only during the reign of Meidingu Pamheiba (Bamon Khunthoklon: 1). Though the *Miyancha* were not recognized as *Bamon*, they were permitted to settle and allowed to marriage with local girls, and the surnames accorded to those migrants (*Bamon*) were also given only in later period.

Discussing the causes and circumstances that lead to migration of Brahmans in Manipur, would be major part of this article. Thus, it would be quite essential to answer the questions such as "Why Brahmans started migrating to Manipur, one of the tiny and very remote corners of the Northeast region?" Was it just an accident or a deliberate move on the part of the Brahmans? No one has answered such questions concerning the Brahmans migration to Manipur. The journey to this hill logged tiny state would not have been an easy task on the parts of any migrants. Surprisingly, very few contemporary scholars have taken interest in this subject. Even two of the most important sources that deal with the Brahmans in Manipur, namely, *Bamon Khunthok* and *Bamon Meihoubalon* barely discuss such issues.

3. Ascertaining the reasons

As hinted earlier, a very mystifying question concerning the study of Brahmans' migration is that how the Brahmans as a class come into existence in a hill logged tiny state like Manipur. One of the factors given by historians in Manipur is the 'stability and powerful kingdom of Manipur during Kyamba's reign (1467-1508 CE)' (Kabui 1991: 199). Kabui (1991) also mentioned that Brahmans, during the reign of Kyamba, were employed under the Meetei king as well as to look after the Hindu temples and act as astrologers. From this view it is revealed that stability and powerful kingdom could provide shelter to the migrants. He is of the opinion that during that period great expansion of Muslim in India and stability of Manipur valley facilitated the people of neighbouring countries to enter into Manipur, so number of migrants especially the Brahmans in Manipur grew substantially. Further the reign of Charairongba (1697-1709 CE) coincided with the great Hindu proselytizing expansion in the North-eastern region in the last part of the Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb. So, numbers of Brahmans were grown up in Manipur as recorded in the *Bamon Khunthok* chronicles (Kabui 1991: 234). Jhalajit (1992: 234) mentioned that the Muslim rulers of Bengal, U.P., and Orissa were not tolerable to the

Brahmans and it was not possible for people to freely profess and propagate Hinduism in those places. So, the more adventurous among Hindus moved to this part of the world (Jhalajit 1982: 85). Jhalajit (1992: 97) opines that the Brahmans and members of other caste who felt that they should come to live under Hindu rule and had the necessary means and courage to travel to Manipur. This distant kingdom became their heaven (Kirti, 1980). Kirti (1980: 41) stated that by the persecution of the Muslims many Brahmans and *yogis* migrated from the rest of India to Manipur where they settled permanently. Paratt (1980: 3) mentioned that the first Brahman settlers came to Manipur during the reign of Kyamba and a fairly steady stream entered the state from various parts of India, that presumably with the connivance of the Rajas, for they were allowed to settle.

4. Countering the normative claims

The arguments put forward by many of the historians in Manipur regarding the reasons and circumstances leading to the arrival and settlement of the Brahmans in Manipur have to be looked into properly. As mentioned earlier most of them evoked the theory of the expansion of Muslim rule in India in medieval period. According to this theory, the single most important reason for the migration of the Brahmans in Manipur was expansion of Muslim rule in India. However, one important fact one needs to understand is that there are a number of Brahmans settled in Manipur who had migrated from *Takhel* (Tripura), but this place was untouched by the Muslim power in 14th and 15th century.³ For instance, Suvi Narayan, who was regarded as the first Brahman in Manipur, Mishri Pitambar, Mishri Panda, Patnigiri Gangaram, Ghanaram Tantradhar, Ganesh Giri, Jabasing, Raghunath Das, Harideva were originally migrated from *Takhel* (Tripura) during the reign of Kyamba. These are few examples just to substantiate the argument. There are many more such individuals who came from places where Muslim rules were not established. Moreover, during 14th and 15th centuries CE Muslims' political expansion did not reach many parts of the country. Therefore, one can also assume that the people who descended to Manipur might not be necessarily ones who faced destitution in the hands of the Muslim rulers. There might be some other reasons other than Muslim expansion in the eastern India. As far as some of them came from Bengal, even if some of them from Mughal dominated area, the idea of Muslim torture is not supported by empirical evidences. Richard Eaton has showed that Eastern Bengal and Bengal as a whole was not the frontiers of Mughal Empire, where Muslim state authority was felt the least. Even if largest number of Muslim population came up, the reasons for their growing population ascribed to the role of Muslim religious men such as priests and others (Richard Eaton 2001).

Another important point in this context is that the true identity of the individuals who came to Manipur and recognized as Brahmans were unknown. Some of them even started their lives by selling local wines. Their real identity as such remained anonymous. Only certainty one can mark out was their physical attributes which were entirely different from the local mongoloid folks. One may ask whether they were true Brahmans who tried to look for a safer home due to hardships faced in Muslim ruled areas, or were they from amongst lower caste Hindu families who face 'hardships in the hands of Brahmans' and wanted to run away for a better future. Both could be possible.

If one takes the first argument given above seriously it also can be argued further that in most of the Hindu dominated areas (politically or otherwise) Brahmans remained economically the most affluent and socially powerful group. They even could assert enormous political influence. In the 14th and 15th century even in many of the Muslim ruled areas, though their political power reduced to a great extent, their social status and economic prosperity were not scratched too much. This is because of the fact that the larger population (majority) being the Hindus, they still managed to get huge respects from the mass.

From the same analysis, it can also be suggested that the people who were recognized and settled in Manipur might not be Brahmans. Rather, they might be from amongst the members of lower caste Hindu families who often faced discrimination in the hands of the Brahmans and poverty came to this tiny state for a better future. This is also possible because of the problems of caste discrimination faced by them around this time. Again, in any awful condition they are the ones who suffered the most. The journey from outside Manipur to the valley is quite difficult as it had to cross nine hill ranges and other communication and transport problems. It was not certain that they would be welcome properly by different sorts of people in this hill logged region. How many of the Brahmans might be ready to face all these hardships considering their affluent lifestyles. This may also strengthen the argument that the people who came to Manipur in this period might be from lower caste families especially in search of a better economic opportunity. Many of them even start by doing odd jobs. However, when they arrived in Manipur they had to hide their real identity otherwise they would not have been accepted by the people. Thus, they might in all possibility come in the disguise of Brahmans. And there were no one who could arbitrate their identity.

In this connection, Paratt's (1980) view has more empirical; that the first Brahman settlers came to Manipur during the reign of Kyamba and a fairly steady stream entered the state from various parts of India, that presumably with the connivance of the Rajas, for they were allowed to settle. This would be much clear once one looks at specific role played by the state (read as the different Kings) in giving recognition to the migrant

Brahmans (often with special status after the adoption of Hinduism as state religion) and arrangements of their religion. There is hardly any record of kings trying to assimilate them by force in the larger socio-cultural traditions of the Meeteis. Put in a different way, there had not been any instance in the history of Manipur (and of the Brahmans) of the kings and general populace of imposing any socio-cultural and religious milieu on the migrant Brahmans. They were allowed to practice their cultural and religious activities often with state supports. Neither were they segregated at any given period of history of the kingdom. Instead, as mentioned earlier, policies had been formed to incorporate the incoming Brahmans in the society by granting state recognition. An important element in the larger process of state recognition which has enormous social significance in Manipur is the state sponsored inter-community marriage between the migrated Brahmans and the local women. In their entrance to Manipur the Brahmans hardly accompanied women from their native places. As part of the state policies of inhabiting those properly in Manipur different kings arranged their marriages with the local women who otherwise were very conservative. The first instances of such marriages were found during the reign of king Kyamba who ruled Manipur during 15th century. Many of such instances were found in the later part of the Brahman migration (till 1859 CE).

Another reason for the increasing number of the Brahman migration in Manipur is due to the needs of the state. With the Sanskritization/ Hinduisation process in the state of Manipur, Brahman scholars had started to exert Sanskrit influence on Manipur's court life especially in the field of religious for the performance of rites and rituals. Beside religious services, the Brahmans extended their services in the field of politics, matrimonial alliances, foreign affairs, etc. So, with the pronouncement of Hinduism as the official religion of Manipur, Brahmans has become essential parts of the society and consequently for the fulfilment of the needs the state took certain initiative to increase the number of the Brahmans.

Thus the article revealed that Brahman came to Manipur is only to avoid destitutions in the hands of Muslims has little sagacity. From the same analysis, it can also be suggested that the people who were recognized and settled in Manipur might not be Brahmans. Rather, they might be from amongst the members of lower caste Hindu families who often faced discrimination in the hands of the Brahmans and poverty came to this tiny state for a better future. But this argument also could not be able prove under empirical study. Thus, the reason for the arrival and rise of Brahmans in Manipur is the adoption of Hinduism in Manipur though they had arrived in Manipur prior to Hinduism, their position in the society was not given due recognition by the Meetei society. The Brahmans were accommodated and integrated into the Manipur society as the requirement of the state to practice Hindu rites and ritual of the Hinduized Manipuri society.

Table 1: Name of the migrated Brahmans, their company (if any), local women married to them, original homelands of the Brahmans, and clan/ family name given to the Brahman families and their descendents by the state.

Name of the king of Manipur	Sl. No.	Name of the migrated Brahman	Wife from Manipur	Original Homeland	New sub-clan given by the state
Kyamba (1467-1508 CE)	1	Shuvi Narayan	Hokei Chanu Thoinu	<i>Takhel</i> (Tripura)	Phurailatpam
Number of migrated Brahmans during his reign is 16	2	Mishri Pitambar	Ngaprum Hao Chanu Hongbi	<i>Takhel</i> (Tripura)	Pitambar Cheithabamayum
	3	Mishri Panda	Mayang Nachou Chanu and Kumbi Chanu	<i>Takhel</i> (Tripura)	Pandamayum
	4	Shree Raidhar	Heraini	Gujarat	Shreemayum
	5	Sivagi	Heikhong Chanu Kumbi	Nepal	Gotimayum
	6	Patnigiri Gangaram	Kei Chanu Maimubi	<i>Takhel</i> (Tripura)	Shijagurumayum
	7	Ghanaram Tantradhar	Chanu Kumu	<i>Takhel</i> (Tripura)	Kakchingtabam
	8	Harividyalankar	Tangthamkei Chanu Maymubi	Dhanugaon (Bengal)	Takhelchangbam
	9	Rangcharan Benerjee	Tingbi	Khardah (Bengal)	Adhikarimayum
	10	Tennana	Kumbi Chanu Shamdenbi	Nadia	Bachaspati
	11	Damudar	Not mentioned	Kanpur (U.P)	Leihaothabam
	12	Ganesh Giri	Toubul Chanu Choubi	<i>Takhel</i> (Tripura)	Leihaothabam
	13	Sitaram	Meipakpi	Nadia	Sitarammayum
	14	Jabasing	Dhani	<i>Takhel</i> (Tripura)	Leikhunchangbam
	15	Raghunath Das	Chaobi	<i>Takhel</i> (Tripura)	Sanjukimayum
	16	Harideva	Samphabi	<i>Takhel</i> (Tripura)	Dhyandasmayum
Nong Yin Phaba (1523-1524 CE)	1	Muniram	Haochongpan Chanu Ngoubi	Not mentioned	Arambam
No of migrants- 2	2	Haridas	Loitang Chanu	Kanpur, U.P	Hidangmayum
Chalamba (1545-1562 CE)	1	Gobindagiri	Houchongpan Chanu	Gourdesh	Hanjaba Chandrashyammayum
No of migrants- 2	2	Krishnacharon Tewari	Not mentioned	Kanouj	Khuraitaba Kanoujmayum
Mung Yamba (1562-1597 CE)	1	Keilyambar	Companying wife, name not mentioned	Gourdesh	Gurumayum
No of migrants- 4	2	Raghunath	Ningel Lakpi, Kabo Chanu Porashine and Shykhom Chanu Chinti	Gourdesh	Gurumayum
	3	Shrinath	Not mentioned	Gourdesh	Gurumayum
	4	Harihar Bhattacharya	Not mentioned	Shantipur Gourdesh	Loubuktongbam
Khagemba	1	Nordhuram	Heri	Mukherjee	Kongbalailatp

(1597-1652 CE)		Mishra		Gaon, Navdip, Gouradesh	am
No of migrants- 10	2	Shrinath Mukherjee	Yairipok Chanu	Calcutta	Samulailatpam
	3	Brajananda	Charangpat takyenjam Chanu Hongbi	Calcutta	Vishnulatpam
	4	Paninath	Kakching Chanu Pini	Assam's Goalpara	Hidangmayum
	5	Jaganath Acharya.	Not mentioned	Kulingram or of Bangladesh	Shanglakpam
	6	Paninath	Not mentioned	Goalpara, Assam	Thongratabam/ Thonkhatabam
	7	Paninath	Not mentioned	Gosalpara, Assam	Aribam Vishnulatpam
	8	Paninath	Not mentioned	Gosalpara, Assam	Aribam Tampak Lailatpam
	9	Paninath	Not mentioned	Gosalpara, Assam	<i>Aribam Sagol Lailatpam</i>
Paikhomba (1666-1697 CE)	1	Brahmachari Bishnuram	Heirop Chanu Puni	Prayag	Brahmachari mayum
No. of migrant-6	2	Joykrishna	Leishangkhong Chanu	Magadha Gaon	Heikakshimayum
	3	Gonok Subol	Thinungei Chanu	Takhel	Shijagurumayum
	4	Balaram	Lanshonbi Kei Chanu Mubi	Takhel	Shijagurumayum
	5	Mukundo	Not mentioned	Gujarat	Bachaspatimayum
	6	Motiram Dubey	Not mentioned	Nandagram	Gurumayum (Angom Lailatpam)
Charairongba (1698-1709 CE)	1	Nishiram	Ahonkei Chanu Maipakpi	<i>Takhen</i>	Laipubam
No. of migrant-19	2	Jaba Taru Phayeng Chanu Situ	Phayeng Chanu Situ	Not mentioned	Laipubam
	3	Bichitrapuri	Khongonbi a Kei Chanu	Jagannathpuri, Orissa	Hangoibam
	4	Bimola	Pangan Chanu Taba	Mathura	Mathurabasi mayum
	5	Manohar Das	Mongpu Haoa	Nadia of Gouradesh (Bengal)	Manoharmayum
	6	Raghunath	Chaobi		Gopal Hanjabamayum
	7	Bhagirath Thakur	Chaobi	Krishnnagar Sunaraski of Gouradesh	Hajarimayum
	8	Bamdev Pandit	Not mentioned	Khardah, Goshpur	Laimayum
	9	Gangaram	Kei Chanu Maimu	Takhen	Laimayum

	10	Sishupal	Mayang Toubul Chanu Mubi	Takhel	Laimayum
	11	Surath	Not mentioned	Takhel	Laimayum
	12	Dasharath	Not mentioned	Takhel	Laimayum
	13	Udhab	Haochongpan Chanu Ngoubi	Takhel	Laimayum
	14	Jagannath Choudhuri	Utkal Setganga Pandathakur	Not mentioned	Choudhurimayum
	15	Mishri Jagadwishwar	Langnung Chanu Maichonbi	Takhel (Tripura)	Choudhurimayum
	16	Manu Sanjuki	Keikhu Hao Chanu Maichonbi	Orissa	Samulailatpam
	17	Krishnacharya alias Vanamali	Companying wife named Krishnamayi	Shweta Ganga (near Puri Orissa)	Guru Aribammayum
	18	Balabhadra Bramacharyi	Not mentioned	-Do-	Guru Aribammayum
	19	Brindaban	Not mentioned	Orissa	Guru Aribammayum
Garibniwaj (1709-1748 CE)	1	Sarbananda Banerjee	Salam Chanu	Kanya Kubja (Kanauj, U.P)	Hanjabam
No. of migrant-5	2	Nakha Kon/Gon	Maring Tribal woman Konbi	Not mentioned	Tinkhakmayum
	3	Beninath Banerjee	Not mentioned	Goalpara, Assam	Hidangmayum
	4	Devicharan Mukherji	Not mentioned	Sonarandi Palaspara, Bengal	Hidangmayum
	5	Kaiba Thakur Tiwari	Accompanied with wife Champak Lata	Santipur, Bengal	Gotimayum
	2	Jaduram	Not mentioned	Ahom	Warilibamayum
Gambhir Singh (1824-34 CE)	1	Brajadev Ramdila	Not mentioned	Shantipur (Bengal)	Brajamayum
No. of migrant-3	2	Lakhikanta Acharya	Not mentioned	Dacca	Acharyamayum
	3	Narayan Thakur	Not mentioned	Gangatir	Anoubam
Chandrakirti (1834-44 CE; 1850-86 CE)	1	Sanuria	Not mentioned	Radha Kunda, Brindavana	Radhakundabashimayum
No. of migrant-3	2	Kanhailal	Not mentioned	Raibeli	Brajabashimayum
	3	Bakeshshwor Bandhopadhyai	Not mentioned	Navadwip	Bachaspatimayum
Nar Singh (1834-1859 CE)	1	Chandra Goswami	Adhikarimayum girl called Leima	Shantipur, Bengal	Gosaimayum
No. of migrant-2	2	Ramgopal Kulin	Not mentioned	Bengal	Kulinmayum

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¹ The literal meaning of ‘*Nongpok*’ means ‘East’ and ‘*Haram*’ means ‘direction’, thus it means that people coming from the eastern side. The history of their migration into Manipur were properly arranged and recorded in the form of literature by the *Pandit Loishang* (Royal Scholars Office) under the patronage of the kings (*Nongpok Haram*).

² The term is being used to those groups of people who came to Manipur from the western side through the various stages of historical periods. The people who had migrated mainly from the western side are from Tripura, Sylhet, Cachar, Assam and adjoining areas (*Nongpok Haram*).

³ It may be noted that the royal chronicle *Rajmala* revealed that during 14th and 15th century CE, Tripura was ruled by the Tipperas, namely- Mukud Manikya, Maha Manikya, Dharma Manikya, Dhanya Manikya, etc. During the reign of Danya Manikya (1463-1515 CE), the Bangal Nawab invaded Tripura three times, but defeated by the Raja of Tripura.