

CHAPTER VIII

IMPACT OF ACCULTURATION

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Introduction

Having discussed about the various cultural approaches (Ref. pp.-119-125 from the thesis), here an attempt is made to study the impact of these processes on the Kukis in particular and other two communities i.e. Meities and non-Manipuris in general.

VIII.1. Acculturation and its Effects

The three groups which have been taken for the present study consist of the Kuki tribes, the Meities and the non-Manipuris of Manipur. The Kuki tribe comprises the nine sub-groups i.e. the Thadou, Vaiphei, Zou, Gangte, Hmar, Paite, Simte, Kom and Ralte. The Meities are the people of Manipur who inhabit in the valley and are Hindu Vaishnavites. The non-Manipuris comprise the Nepalese, Biharis, South Indians, Punjabis and Muslims. Among the one hundred and eighty Kuki respondents of the total sample 28.89% got converted during their lifetime, of which 2.22% converted to Judaism. 67.22% were born in the converted Christian families. And 1.67% is non-converts who are still following their indigenous religion. Among the sixty Meitie respondents, 25% are converted Christians and 1.67% is converted Buddhist. While 73.33% are non-converts and still continuing with their indigenous religion. 28.33% are converted to Christian, 1.67% is converted to Judaism and 70% are non-converts among the sixty non-Manipuri respondents. The three groups taken for the study have different cultures and tradition of their own communities, inspite of living together in the same village or town.

VIII. 1. a. Exchange of Culture among the three groups

The Kuki respondents said that most of the festivals of the other two communities are based on religion and God. So they do not prefer to attend their religious festivals. The Kuki respondents have problem in attending the religious functions of the Meities because of the traditional dress code for particular functions which the Kukis do not have.

However, according to 10.56% Kuki, 8.33% Meities and 6.67% non-Manipuri respondents there has been some exchange of culture between the communities. But mostly the non-Manipuris have cultural exchange especially with the Meities only. The converted Christian non-Manipuris have cultural exchange with the Kukis regarding their religion. Some of them have got married with the Kuki women and have settled down in the Kuki villages too. There has been exchange of culture between the Kukis and the Meitie community specifically in regard to the adoption of the dresses of the Meities and vice-versa. The Meities and the non-Manipuris usually participate in the Christmas celebration of the Christian Kukis. They also participate in other festivals of their Kuki neighbors like in the Chavang Kut festival. The Kukis also do participate in the festivals of the Meities and the non-Manipuris. The Meities and the non-Manipuris go and convey their best wishes. The Kukis generally do not go if the festival of the Meities or the non-Manipuris was of some religious matter. The Kukis only go where there is no restriction of religion. The Kukis go to the social functions i.e. in time of birth, marriages and death of the other two communities. The festivals of the other communities in which they participate are 'Ningol Chakouba' (a day after Diwali the married women are invited for a grand feast at their maternal home. After lunch they are given dakshina), Holi, etc. In Diwali they go and wish their friends and neighbors.

Only 20% Meitie old men and women respondents said they do not attend the festivals of the Kukis as they butcher animals and feast on it, though the Kukis do not force them to have it. The older Meitie respondents said that in certain functions and festivals of the Kuki dominated villages, where they inhabit, were invited as the representatives of the Meitie community. If a Kuki host invites a Meitie on some occasions, food was arranged separately for him/her. Though the older people do not go

to the festivals of the Kukis their children and grandchildren go and participate in the festivals.

Regarding religion, all the Kuki and 73.33% Meitie and 70% non-Manipuri respondents did not like or want to accept anything from the religion of the other community. But the Kukis generally liked the dress code for different occasions and festivals of the Meities. They also liked the tradition of the Meities of not going into the kitchen of others; taking bath before cooking and praying; keeping the fireplace sacred for it is believed among the Meities that in the fire place Emoinu (Goddess of bounty) resides, so the fire has to be lit everyday; and not sitting on other's bed especially of the male elders of the family mainly for women's biological reasons.

73.33% Meities and 70% non-Manipuri non-convert respondents said that they like certain features of Kukis such as the unity among them, togetherness, no fixed timing for any ceremonies, no burden on the poor for any social obligations or ceremonies, etc. And the 25% Meitie and the 28.33% non-Manipuri Christian followers said that they liked the Kukis' belief in one God, unity in the Church, concept of going to God after death, concept of salvation, no elaborate rituals, no pollution-purity, etc. Because of all these reasons they got converted to Christianity. While the other 1.67% Meitie Buddhism followers and the 1.67% non-Manipuri Judaism follower respondents did not make any comments.

Among the three communities there is participation and conveying good wishes on various social functions could be found in the study. In the Kukis' harvesting festival, which is celebrated at the state level, general participation is there irrespective of the communities. They also participate in the social functions of the rite de passage of each other. Regarding the religious festivals there is insignificant participation and celebration in each others religious festivals. But those converted Meities and the non-

Manipuris now celebrate Christmas and other Christian festivals along with the Kukis for they are all believers of Christianity. The Kuki, Meities and the non-Manipuris all have different food habits. They do not practice commensality. Eating food together in a big single plate among the Kukis has been observed during festivals.

Human beings need to interact with others. One, living along with different communities of people, need to know a lingua franca to communicate with one another. This multi-cultural aspect of a society could be seen among the Kukis, Meities and the non-Manipuris. Tremendous acculturation could be found regarding language among the three groups. All the three communities have adapted the language and dialects of each group to carry out their daily activities or trade. Some extent of acculturation could also be found between the Kukis and the Meities and the Nepalese regarding the dress pattern. Though the Kukis have become more Westernized and taken over the Western dress pattern they are found to be preserving and upholding their traditional dresses. But, in some cases, it has been observed that the traditional casual dresses of the Kukis and the Meities have been taken over and used by both the two groups in certain occasions. While among the non-Manipuris, except the Nepalese, the other groups are found to be maintaining their traditional dresses without being any acculturation from the other two. As for the Nepalese it can be said that since they have been settled in the state since long time they have adapted some of the Meitie dresses.

Changes in the behavior of the Kukis are not noteworthy. But it would be a bias attitude to generalize the whole group. For, regarding the changes in the behavior of the Kukis it could also be observed that some of the educated lot who came across during the fieldwork is found to be more cultured, and helpful. This may be due to the impact of modern education among the Kukis.

A society's culture could be glanced through its literature, art and craft, music, etc. The Kukis also have a rich cultural background which could be seen in their art of making baskets, weaving, musical instruments, music, folk dances, etc. In some house, the women were observed weaving their traditional clothes, and men making the baskets from the bamboo strips or cane. Though the percentage of such activities is low it clearly indicates that they are still continuing their traditional activities. No men or women, irrespective of the age, were found sitting idly. But, with the inevitable change of time and in the economy the lifestyle of the Kukis have changed to a great extent. Changes in the material culture could also be found in the lifestyle of the respondents. Most of the houses of the middle income group were found to have certain modern facilities like electronic gadgets, household appliances, vehicles, proper furniture, etc.

VIII. 1. b. Relation with Burma and China

Only 5.56% respondents of the all Kuki and 3.33% non-Manipuri respondents had business or family link with Burma or China. The non-Manipuri respondents had link with Burma since they have migrated from there. Their forefathers had business in Burma. Among the 5.56%, a Thadou rural woman said her husband is from Burma and he had migrated to Manipur in 1972. So whenever they had to visit their in-laws they had to be smuggled to Burma and it was always a risk. But nowadays because of the international law they can go freely. Another four Thadou men said that they have links with Burma since long time. And a Vaiphei woman said that she is also married to a Burmese man. They used to visit Burma once in a year before to meet her in-laws. She also said that they had to hide since the junta used to come for patrolling and check every house for any outsider. Those days were frightful ones and had to spend a lot of money as they had to hire people who could smuggle them into Burma. Because of these they could not make frequent trips and started losing contacts.

According to this group of respondents as a result of the link with Burma there has been no influence at all on their religious and social life. This could be clearly seen from the evidence that Burma is mainly a Buddhist country and traces of Buddhism are not found among the Kukis or in Manipur.

VIII. 1. c. Impact of Modern Western Education

Education is the scientific analysis of both formal and informal learning in a society (Encyclopedia of Sociology 1974:94). Education was seen as a way out of a life of poverty and more laxity. The schools would inculcate in their students attitudes leading to profitable, morally upright, and industrious lives (ibid: 252).

Modern education system, according to 86.67% urban and 70% rural respondents, has helped them a lot in molding their religious beliefs. Since they can read and write atleast they do not have to depend on others for reading the Bible to them. Whenever they have free time they can read the Gospel. Just listening to what others talk would not help to understand the word of Jesus. If they have any doubt now they can refer on their own and learn more. It has also widened up their knowledge and thinking. The younger generation is very lucky since they can read and understand the Bible on their own and know the difference between right and wrong. So it is now easy for them to choose the right path. The Bible has been published in every dialect of the Kuki tribes.

2% rural and 3.33% urban Kuki illiterate respondents, including the non-converts, did not make any comment. They said that even though they are illiterate they still believe in God.

2% rural and 10% urban Kuki respondents have the opinion that modern education system has not made any significant impact in molding their religious beliefs.

But 21.67% respondents who are illiterates have a different story to tell about. They regret that they had not studied properly and did not give importance to

studies. They felt that if they had studied properly, they would have understood God more clearly than what they knew about Him. The illiterate Kuki respondents also said that though they did not learn to read and write which would have helped them in bringing a significant difference in their lives they can clearly see the difference modern education has made in their society.

63.33% non-convert, 25% Christian and 1.67% Buddhist Meitie convert respondents said that modern education system has helped a lot in molding their religious beliefs and helped them to know God and understand the importance of other religions and their beliefs, develop respect and tolerance in the society. Education, learning to read and write has helped them in coming to the True God. Without education they could not have realized what truth is. Among the Meitie, according to 10% Meitie non-convert respondents, modern education system has not made any impact on their religious beliefs.

According to 28.33% Christian and 1.67% Judaism converted respondents they have realized who the True God is. And this realization has come only through education which enabled them to reason things. 70% non-convert respondents who strongly have faith in their respective religions and beliefs are of the opinion that education has helped them to know their religion more in-depth and not divert from it.

The Kuki respondents felt that there was no difference in the educational level and standard of living among all the three groups-the Kukis, the Meities and the non-Manipuris. There was no difference between the Christian and non-Christian believers of the said three communities. The reason for not having any difference was that those who could afford, whether Christian or Hindu and who were interested in studies went for higher education. Those who could not afford lagged behind.

According to all the respondents of the three communities, Hinduism has not made any impact on their religion and their society. The religions of the Meities, the

Kukis and the non-Manipuris are in their own places. There was no interference from any group. Since time immemorial the different communities have been living together but never tried to change each other. The non-Manipuris, other than the Nepalese, had problems with the food habits of the Kukis which became a barrier in mixing with the Kuki community. The Meities follow their own religion which they thought was true and good. The Meities also neither gave any explanation (preaching) nor asked the Kukis to change their belief. Hinduism, the religion followed by the Meities does not preach their religion to Kukis unlike Christianity. They were following their own religion which is the most important factor for maintaining a pluralistic society. 1.11% Kuki respondents whose daughters were married to a Meitie and a Naga, said that their daughters are following the religion and traditions of the Meitie and the Naga. They have taken up the dress style, participate in festivals, etc. The Kukis helped the Meities and the non-Manipuris who have settled down in their village in many ways. The Kukis attend certain ceremonies and functions but they do not pray to the Hindu Gods. The changes in their way of talking and life styles are not because of Hinduism. The Kukis were following their own culture and religion which suited to their lifestyle. But none wanted to take up the Hindu religion. One old Kom man said that the Meities and Kuki indigenous religions were similar to each other. In the first quarter of the 18th century during Meidingu (King) Pamheiba (aka, Maharaja Garibaniwaj), the King accepted Hinduism as a Royal Religion in place of the original Meitei faith of Sanamahi and ordered the burning of all religious scriptures related to Sanamahi, which is still remembered as "Puya Meithaba". By 1891 the Meities have embraced Vaishnavism after much resistance. Along with this came the pollution and purity which started demarcating the population of the state which was hard to adapt by the animist Kukis. Besides this, there are no records which mention that the Kukis were

preached about Vaishnavism. So, when the British missionaries came and preached Christianity to them, gradually they accepted.

VIII. 1. d. Intra and Inter Group Differences in the Standard of Living

The minimum standard of living has been defined as the goods and services for an individual or family to live in a society at a given time according to the society's lowest acceptable norms of decency (Encyclopedia of Sociology 1974: 187).

There is a big difference, between the Kukis who accepted Christianity and those who did not, regarding the standard of living according to all the Kuki respondents. Christianity has taught the value of education, sanitation, health care, better standard of living which the non-converts were not ready to accept. Christianity gave the Kukis enlightenment in every way of life. 16.67% urban and 27.33% rural respondents said that since most of their community people are still settled in the hills, they lack information and were not interested in studies also. As for the standard of living, it could be clearly observed that the non-convert respondents are not concerned with hygiene and cleanliness. They were still leading their old traditional way of lifestyle. The non-Christians still worship their ancient God and drink zu.

To this the non-convert middle aged woman had a different view and gave her reasons. She said "Of course, there is a big difference between the Christian believers and the non-Christian believers. This is mainly because of education. Since non-Christian are less in number and dwell mostly deep inside the hills, the available infrastructure or government schemes do not reach them. So they are devoid of any opportunity". Another middle aged Vaiphei rural man also said that since the non-Christians are very less in number and still follow their indigenous religion, drink zu, there is a marked difference between the two groups of the same tribe.

As for the living condition of the Kukis, the present environment in which they live now is totally different from those of the traditional ones. The present Kuki

houses no more shelter the pigs and poultries in the houses. Dead bodies are no more buried under the house. Cleanliness has become a part of their lives.

According to all the Meiteis and non-Manipuri respondents there is no difference regarding the standard of living and educational level between the Christian and non-Christian believers of the said two communities. The reason for similarity in the educational level of the Christian and non-Christian believers is that those who can afford, whether Christian or Hindu and who are interested in studies go for higher education. A middle aged Meitie woman, who has a small snacks stall at the bus stand at Saikul, Senapati district said that she sends her daughter to a school which actually is not an easy task considering her income. She also gave instance of certain Christian families who do not even send their children to a government school because they do not even have proper clothes to cover themselves. So it is not at all due to religion.

Regarding the standard of living those who are rich have high standard of living at least hygienically. But among the Meities and the non-Manipuris also those who are staying in the hill districts are mostly small business holders and daily wage earners who came from different states and districts of the state to earn. 83.33% of Meitie and 40% of non-Manipuris who have settled permanently and doing good business and service can be said to have a high standard of living as per their income. Those 43.33% of non-Manipuris who live in rented houses and involved in small business like barber, cobbler, carpenter, panwala, snacks stall keeper, vegetable vendors, etc. have limited income and they also send some money back home if their families are not staying with them, have slightly low standard of living. This can be compared to those 16.67% who also live in rented houses but have a better business holdings like grocery shopkeepers, pharmacist, furniture workshop, etc. maintain good standard of living. No matter whether they are following Christianity or not if they were poor, standard of living hardly mattered for the

33.89% of the Kuki respondents whose annual income was between Rs.10,000-24,000. People will only think of their square meal a day and to get enough to feed their children said 3.33% non-Manipuri respondents.

Among the Kuki Christian believer respondents, the difference in educational and standard of living could also be seen within the same group which follows the same religion. This indicates that the standard of living and education cannot be credited wholly to religion. But the difference may be because of the lack of infrastructure to educate or make aware of those who are staying deep in the hills. And the reason for those who stay in the town may be due to lack of interest in studies which later hampered in getting themselves a good job and fixed income which in turn failed to get a good standard of living.

VIII. 1. e. After Effects of Converting to Christianity

Of the total Kuki respondents 28.89% and 2.22% respondents got converted to Christianity and Judaism respectively during their lifetime. 1.67% of the Kukis are non-converts. Other 67.22% Kuki respondents were born in converted Christian families. Since their respective families were already following Christian beliefs they came in contact with the religion in an early age through their parents and other family members.

13.89% urban and 43.33% rural Kuki respondents are of the opinion that there are no changes in the family and villages after following Christianity except in the rise of educational level of the Kukis. Among this group the 2.22% younger respondents could not assess most of the changes which may have come up in their society due to conversion to Christianity. The reason for this is that they were born in the converted Christian families.

2.78% urban and 36.11% rural Kuki respondents felt that there are some changes in their family and village because of Christianity. The urban respondents are of the opinion that educationally there has been great change in their society. They were open minded towards education and they were able to read God's word. So with the coming of education their children and they got more prospects in their career and life. After following Christianity they started going to school, know the true value of education, which led to higher education and which naturally help them directly or indirectly to manage time and money without spending unnecessarily. Increase in the level of education also resulted in good jobs and sound financial conditions of the family. Even the older villagers have learnt atleast to read the Bible. Financially, they have learnt to manage their income by saving something for the future. The church also extended help to those members who are poor. Those who could afford have to give tithe (one tenth of their earning) to the church which again goes out to the needy people.

The 1.67% non-converted Kukis did not comment on this issue.

Among the 25% Meitie convert respondents, 8.33% are of the opinion that there have been changes in education, financial and professional aspects after converting to Christianity. From this group of respondents, a middle aged woman said that the changes could be seen in her village where some youth from very poor families could go for further studies through the church. Other four respondents were of the view that educationally the Meities were in good form but after completing the required education their children would not be having any prospects professionally.

The other 16.67% Christian believer respondents said there are no changes in the village or in the family educationally, financially or professionally even after following Christianity.

75% of the non-converted Meitie including the Buddhist follower did not comment.

Among the 30% non-Manipuri convert respondents, 26.67% said there are no changes in their family or village educationally, financially or professionally. Only 3.33% said that there were changes after conversion. From this one middle aged man said that there are some changes educationally, financially and professionally in his family. The church helped in his children's studies and when he had financial problems they lend money and as a Pastor he also gets some stipend too. Another old aged man also said that there are changes in the village. When some church members are in trouble the church and its members come forward to help the family. Saying this he cited an example of an old aged man who is from Bihar and is a Christian believer. This person met with an accident while he was arranging for a church convention. In the accident his whole body got paralyzed. He is surviving with his wife. For them the church committee sanctioned Rs. 1500/- every month.

The 70% non-converted respondents said they are not aware of any changes due to Christianity.

All the Kuki Christian believer respondents said that all their relatives have converted to Christianity some before them and some after them. According to the respondents the reasons, why their relatives have converted may be due to the realization of who the real God is; they liked the principles of Christianity; knew that Jesus is the only true God, the Saviour of their souls. And when other family members started to follow, the relatives also came to know the difference. Thus they all accepted Jesus as their Savior.

But 1.67% non-convert Kuki respondents said that their children converted since 1976. Their children thought that Christianity is better than what their parents and forefathers followed and believed in. They liked the Christian philosophy and thought that the indigenous religion is not true religion and their indigenous Gods are not true Gods.

And 2.22% of the Kuki respondents said their families and few relatives have converted to Judaism in the early nineties.

According to the 25% Meitie convert respondents their own families are the only one who got converted to Christianity. None of their other relatives accepted the religion. The respondents of Chandel district said that they have separated from their families. Because their parents and their relatives did not like them following Christianity, a middle aged man said that some of his relatives have severed all ties with his family.

A middle aged woman of Senapati district said that her parents thought that she was being stubborn and let her to choose her own path. But they were still with her. And her relatives were mostly Christian believers except her immediate family. One of her grandfather was the first convert among the Meities.

Among the three middle aged men of Senapati district only one convert's four relatives who were in Sikkim and Darjeeling got converted before him in the year 1994. The other convert said that only his sister who was married to a Kom was converted to Christianity. No one else in the family got converted. While the third one said none in his family or among the relatives even liked him for following the religion. Even his wife was sent to her parents' home by his own family and both of them were separated for almost two and half years. He did not force her to come back but whenever he went to meet her he explained what he thought and told her if she comes back he would be happy. Now his wife has come back and has also started believing in the religion slowly. But she has not yet converted to Christianity.

28.33 % of the converted non-Manipuri respondents said only their families are following Christianity. But one middle aged man said all his family and his wife's family are converted after he explained to them about the Creator of all, the True God.

One respondent said that his family has converted to Judaism.

After accepting Christianity life has been completely changed forsaking the cumbersome rituals, killing of animals for performing rituals for a sick person, mostly connected with the evil spirits, drinking zu, etc. Lots of developments have come up, they have stopped brewing zu, changed a lot in their lifestyle, learnt to maintain time and money, pray to God regularly. It has also brought a good chapter in their lives. Patience, harmony, knowledge got wider, unity among themselves increased.

Traditionally, the Kukis killed animals, enjoyed the feast after a wild hunt, even for simple diseases the thiempu would ask the people to offer sacrifice of animals, drink zu. If they do not follow all these then psychologically they would not feel good and starts correlating any untoward incidents and happenings with everything. But now only medicines were used and kept their faith in the only one God, the Savior, the True One-Jesus. Fighting, stealing of domestic animals, killing one another was thought as normal things. But now they have changed as they are all God's children. Non-Christians and Christians are all created by God. Those who believe in Jesus Christ will get salvation. This thought changed their life. Now they have understood the real meaning of God and spiritually they were uplifted. They have discarded their violent act of hunting, sacrificing and being superstitious. If they had not been converted they would have been leading a meaningless life who drank zu and just went on hunting animals.

The difference which a middle aged Simte woman felt can be put in her own words as "Before, we were just leading a life with no idea or knowledge of what will happen to us after death, who our creator was. Whatever believed was all myth. Now, after converting to Christianity, we know who we are and why we are here for. Because of this we are able to love others, abandon the warfare to expand territory and dominate others. But now after death Salvation will be ours".

One Simte old man said, "As far as I remember for everything, my parents used to consult the thiempu. In time of sickness, when they did not know the cause they thought it was caused by the evil spirits, the supernatural powers were causing it for some wrong deeds committed by the person. And they would make sacrifices of animal, gave paddy to the thiempu. They were always anxious about things, thought things were all because of spirits, and feared everything. They had no idea about hygiene and proper living. Now we do not have to kill our animals unnecessarily, and we are living a simple, clean and better life than before. We have also become more economically sound as we save in the name of God atleast".

An old aged man and a middle aged woman also felt that after converting they have changed their food habits, stopped drinking zu, killing animals for sacrifices; started respecting the elders; stopped spending time sluggishly; started respecting women in the society and feeling mental peace.

An old aged Hmar man said that his views on social values, value of life, peace, patience, etc. have changed after converting to Christianity. Another old aged Paite man said that when he was as young as 10-15 years they drank zu, enjoyed life doing nothing. But after converting he realized it was all waste of time, energy, not utilizing the gift of life God has bestowed upon them. Another old aged man said that before without having zu he could not sleep. But now he can stay without it and has stopped it totally, no more fighting, and his anger has been reduced greatly.

One middle aged Thadou urban man said that he used to be ill all the time. But after praying to Jesus he got cured slowly. Before he used to believe that he was surrounded by the Thilhas.

Another old aged woman said giving up drinking zu is the main difference she could see after converting to Christianity. The changes they are witnessing in their life

before and after conversion are in lifestyle, beliefs and practices. And the changes in lifestyle would surely save their children from drinking.

An old aged Vaiphei urban man said they just pray to Jesus now, to help them and this was good for the poor people also as they do not have to afford the sacrifices of animals for every rituals. One middle aged Vaiphei urban man said, "After death our body will be on earth and soul will be with God. But these thoughts were not there before. Now I am not afraid of death anymore".

The difference the converts feel after converting to Christianity is internal peace, love, confidence, truthfulness and also stopped drinking zu. One middle aged man said he was a heavy drunkard but after converting he had stopped and now enjoys good health, peace in the family, etc.

Another five middle aged Thadou rural men said that after converting to Christianity they have learnt to respect elders, developed humility, etc. Before they used to think only about their day to day life, now how to please the Savior occupies their thoughts. No matter about rank, social status or classes everyone is same as equally created by God. They have learnt peace of mind; to forgive and forget other's wrongs; to live together with love, etc. are their new lessons by emphasizing 'God is Love'. They now feel that by living according to God's wish evil things could be overcome, feel close to God, secure and free about the life after death.

But an old aged thiempu who migrated from Tamenglong said that Almighty God was also there in their ancient religion. Bible says not to take others things, not to eye other's wife, etc. All these were also there in their indigenous faith. Christianity says not to drink, the Pastor preaches the same, but people still drink. After Christmas many become pregnant. So the question which frequently comes up in his mind was how they can be pure Christians. He felt that people have become more selfish after converting.

Even evangelists come to him for treatment. According to him they are not practicing what they preach. He added he cannot say all these because he is not a well off person.

The younger generation could not find much difference since they have not seen the life before conversion, as they all have born into already converted Christian families.

Among the 25% Meitie converts a middle aged woman felt that after converting to Christianity a lot of difference has come in her life. She has learnt to be more patient with others, to be helpful to others, to be caring, to work in group, to work voluntarily for some good cause of the society. The difference according to the four middle aged urban men is that they got a new dimension in life, at peace with themselves, know God, confident to love and respect all people, stop drinking and felt good that their soul will get salvation and be with God. Those who were rough in their attitude and who went off the path have mended their ways and their wives and children were happy that they have come back on their righteous path.

The 13.33% Meitie converted respondents from Churachandpur district said that they were at peace with their lives thinking that they will attain eternity even after death and salvation will be theirs. Among this group, three middle aged men added that they used to talk and look at Christianity negatively. After converting they realized their wrong deeds and know the true meaning of life now.

A non-Manipuri convert man from Andhra Pradesh, who is a lecturer in the Theological College of Churachandpur district, and married a Hmar woman, said that until he was baptized he was a nominal Christian in his Christian family. He used lie to his mother but once he had faith in the Lord, truthfulness has become a main thing.

Another non-Manipuri convert accepted that he was a narrow minded person, simply boasting about Hinduism without any clear idea about the religion. After

knowing Christianity and fully accepting it he did not compare it with other religions or talk anything bad about anyother religion. He felt rich with Jesus. Another middle aged man said he was searching for truth. He enjoyed sin in a way. But now he does not feel the same. One should be truthful to oneself. This is the greatest change he can feel.

Another old aged non-Manipuri respondent said that he was paralyzed but felt that the Lord has helped him in his hard times, cured and saved him from such a grave danger. Now he could speak and move his hand atleast. Faith in Him can make anything happen. The second old aged man said that he had learnt to face troubles bravely which only could happen with full faith in Jesus.

One middle aged man said he was a lost man before converting. But now he has stopped all the bad habits. Even his parents were worried about him and could not do anything. They are not happy with his conversion. But after realizing that their son was now into good company, and has stopped every bad habit, made them to stop worrying about him.

In general the converts feel that their life has been changed. They are happy with their decision, were peaceful with life, have learnt to be more patient, to be co-operative, developed love for all human beings. And they were at peace with everything as they believe that after death their souls will be with God.

VIII. 1. f. Reasons for Not Converting to any other Religion

Among the urban and rural Kuki respondents only 2% rural respondents have not converted to any religion. The reasons they gave for not converting are that they can not discard their traditional customs and traditions. They are here because of their father, the father because of his forefathers. So they believed that they should believe in what their forefathers believed in. They are of the view that they should not change to other's religion. They were worried that the present generation does not even know about

their traditional customs and cultures; how their forefathers lived; and now their customs and culture would be lost, etc. The respondents also added that the Christian followers can not swear to their heart truly of leaving zu. They also feel that they should keep their identity which is unique.

Among this 1.67% an old aged man, who is a thiempu, said that his children are all following the Christian religion. The children got converted and left him and his wife. The sons said they can not live with him because of differences in religions. But the old man does not like to change his religion and beliefs or the practices. He also said that even those health problems which can not be treated by doctors are brought to him. And with his medicines they are cured and he felt that the traditional methods used by their forefathers were not meaningless.

According to 73.33% Meitie respondents who have not converted to Christianity had no objection in following what one likes. But they felt that all Gods are the same. One should follow one's own religion what their forefathers have followed and transferred to them. 20% of them said that evangelists came to preach but they did not like or want to accept. One middle aged man said that it is not necessary that one has to go door to door to preach. If anyone wants to listen and wants to know or accept God they will come on their own. An old aged man had a question in his mind. He said "the evangelists come to my house to preach to my family. I welcomed them, listened to what they wanted to say. They preached that God is one and there are no different names. I told them then what I believe in is also a God with a different name. Then why do you want me to follow your God?" The old man also said that he even have a Bible but did not like the rigidity in it he feels that their traditional practices are becoming more flexible.

70% of the non-Manipuri respondents have not converted to any religion. They are following their own religion. The reasons they gave for not converting to

Christianity are that they do not like the religion in particular and they also have their own religion which has been followed by their forefathers. One middle aged man said that he even attended a preaching session and liked what was preached, in principle. But he never considered converting to anyother religion. The respondents felt that they have their own religion which is not less than any other. So they never can be inspired or want to convert.

VIII. 1. g. Views Regarding Preaching of Christianity, Conversion and Hindu Religion

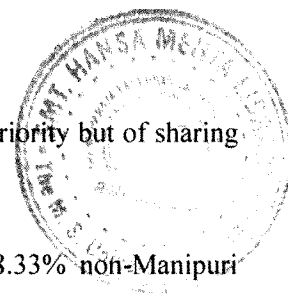
Conversion is nothing new in India. Conversion is turning to something definite and positive and is therefore, associated with repentance. So conversion is turning towards God. It is in other words, a turning in Christ. Banerjee has given the meaning of conversion as –

- “a voluntary and personal confession of one’s sinfulness and repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior. Real conversion means a change of religion from one faith to another with corresponding change in attitude, motivations character and morality”.

Pandit Nehru frankly acknowledged this need when he said: “I am not religious, but I am not irreligious. Religion is not real to me. I wish it were. I have often felt the need to it. There are ashes in my heart and it is cold. The fact is, what I need is conversion for myself, or else I must warm my heart up against someone who has found it” (Banerjee 1968 :17).

The main purpose of Christian missionaries is to present the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. Conversions may or may not take place. Conversion according to the Christian understanding is an act of the individual will, moved by the spirit of God which has touched his heart. It is not something imposed on him (ibid: 241). The Christian

attitude towards other religions in India was not one of assumed superiority but of sharing human honor and dignity.



According to the 28.89% Kuki, 25% Meitie and 28.33% non-Manipuri Christian convert respondents, preaching of Christianity should be increased. It should reach every nook and corner of the world. According to them it was considered as the only means to awaken a person's faith and spread Jesus' words. Through preaching the words of Jesus could be reached to a larger population and give them a chance to save their souls. For those illiterate lots it is also a good way of communicating God's words to them. By preaching and spreading the words of Jesus the followers were doing their duty in delivering His words to the unknown.

A non-Manipuri Christian convert married to a Kuki woman said that until he was baptized he was not behaving like a true Christian. But once he had developed faith in the Lord he became truthful. He also said that the following stanza of the Bible changed his life-

*O loving and kind God have Mercy
Have Pity on Me and take away the awful stain of my transgressions
Oh wash me, cleanse me from this guilt
Let me be pure again, for I admit my shameful deed- it haunts me day and night.
It is against you and you alone
I sinned and did this terrible thing
You deserve honesty from the heart, yes, utter sincerity and truthfulness
Oh, give me this wisdom
Sprinkle me with the cleansing blood and
I shall be clean again
Wash me and I shall be wither than snow (PSALM 51: 1-16)*

In preaching the Gospel, Jesus' words were explained that the day one accepts and follow Him, the person's soul will be with Jesus. If one follows the preaching then one can lead a tension free peaceful life forever. By listening to the preaching of Jesus' words those who are away from God and in the wrong path could be saved from going to hell. It also helps people by guiding their way to God. If one is not properly

preached one would not have understood what Jesus wants us to do and what all His words were. Every human being should know the Gospel. It will bring them peace and help to lead a good life even after death. It gives knowledge and detail information of our creation and the creator, about life after death and the Savior.

This group of Christian believers, i.e. the 28.89% Kuki, 25% Meitie and 28.33% non-Manipuri respondents, advocate conversion and said that all should know the Lord. If one has faith in God, one can be converted. Peace and love, faith in God, eternal life, are all there in Christianity. People should convert otherwise no savior would be there in their last journey. Only a convert can get an eternal life. Those people who are coming into the fold of Christianity are saving their souls. They have realized that they want to be with God even after death. In fact conversion depends on the individual. If one wants to accept Christ and free his soul from sins he should understand God first and have deep faith in Him. Conversion is a step forward to salvation believes the respondents. Conversion is giving oneself wholly to God. Those who want to accept Jesus and know Him should get converted as soon as possible. The individual should accept without any hesitation and come truly to God. Conversion is open to all without any pollution and purity, no minute restrictions in the belief. Regarding Hindu religion the respondents are of the opinion that Hindu religion believes in rebirth. The path and conception of salvation is totally different from that of Christianity. Hindu religion is elaborate in nature, very flexible and vast. They believe in so many Gods and Goddesses. They cremate the dead body which is not liked by the respondents. They believe in purity and pollution.

The 1.67% Kuki non-convert respondent did not make any comment regarding conversion, preaching of Christianity. But regarding Hindu religion they said every religion has its own doctrines and principles and its followers must have liked it so they are following it.

According to 2.22% Kuki Judaism follower respondents, preaching should be there so that people come to know about the True Creator as they have come to know now. They said that they were in wrong path but now they have chosen the right path by accepting Judaism. According to them Hindu religion is also good in its own place, but they did not like the tenets of Hinduism.

According to the 71.67% Meitie non-converts, they do not have any problem with anyone following any religion. If one thinks it is good and wants to follow that particular faith it is upto the individual only. Their views regarding preaching are not very favorable. The non-convert respondents also said that the Evangelists come and preach. But these respondents felt that one's religion should not be imposed on others. It seems, according to them, that Christianity is just collecting people. When a person does not want to listen they should not insist upon. Hinduism and Sanamahi does not preach or impose its doctrines on others. About Hindu religion they feel that it is a popular religion which is much older than any religion in the world. It does not lack anything which people are searching for in another religion.

Again, 18.33% non-convert Meitie respondents said that they do not like the way of preaching of the Evangelists for they keep on insisting upon converting people.

While one non-convert respondent, said that preaching of Christianity is good because many people are converted after listening to such preaching and many others are also enlightened after attending and listening to such preaching. But, personally he does not want to change or convert to other religion.

Meitie Buddhist convert respondent said that every religion is same in its teaching, only their approach is different. So there is no harm in choosing one's choice and following it.

While the 25% converted Meitie respondents have something different to say regarding conversion, preaching and Hinduism. Their views regarding conversion was that if one feels that one should follow a faith which is all truth and nothing else then he/she should get converted. Until and unless one accepts the Lord wholly one will not get salvation. One should give oneself totally to God. If one does not do a work with full concentration one will not get good results. So, one has to opt for a particular path which would give them satisfaction. If one believes in Jesus and wants to save one's soul then one should get converted. If one has faith then one should at once accept and come to Jesus, get converted and be reborn again.

According to them preaching is letting people who are unaware of the True God know who He is, spreading God's word, giving others a chance to save their souls. Only through preaching many people come to know about God. It is the only means through which one comes to know about new things. Preaching helps to realize what and who is the True God.

Regarding Hinduism they find it good but they wonder it has to have so many facets. The respondents also said that it did not turn out to be what they thought it to be. Talking about Hinduism one converted respondent said that when one becomes old and has no work to do one devotes himself to God. When they are young and productive when they could do or serve others they did not do anything. If one wants to know God there is no bar on time or age. In Christianity even the teenagers go to Theological schools, join the church services and extend their hands in the work of development of the church.

Another converted man and a woman said Hindu religion is too vast and not true with many facets of Gods and Goddesses. So they came to Christianity where there is only one True God.

The 70% non-converted non-Manipuri respondents said that the evangelist came to preach and also insisted them to accept Christianity. The respondents felt that they should not impose anything on others. The evangelists told them that if the non-converts accepted Christianity they will go to heaven. Sometimes the evangelists try to forcibly convert people and are backed by terrorists. Some youths after training and learning the Vedas from Vrindavan came and were talking about the Vedas, some time Christian believers came from the neighboring village and started threatening. They also said that in the village only Christian preaching should be given. The respondents feel that Christian preaching was for their benefits only. They think theirs' was the only ultimate religion (Christianity) and does not even take Prasad from them.

On the other hand the non-convert non-Manipuri respondents' view about preaching of Christianity was, sometimes it becomes too much to listen to. The respondents felt that such preachings were being imposed on them. They do not like it at all. The respondents asserted that Hinduism does not preach others or impose on others and it is no less than any other religions. 58.33% of the non-convert respondents, are migrants from different parts of India. They are living alone or with their relatives far away from their families. They have not married any Meitie or Kuki woman. They go to their native places once or twice in a year. Most of them are here to earn and were doing business. 1.67% Muslim respondents did not make any comment.

The 28.33% converted non-Manipuri respondents said that preaching of Christianity should be done for it gives a chance for those who are unaware of Jesus and His words. From preaching they can know God and become His children. Preaching is the duty which every child of Jesus should do. The children of Jesus should work for God in making aware those who are unaware of God and who are neglected by the greater section of the society.

One middle aged converted man said, "Bible says-share what you get". There is no force. If one wants to become a Christian then they should accept Jesus and can become one. Faith in Jesus should be there. In the Bible there are commandments to let the people know about God, His miraculous work. Those who are preaching and have faith in God will get salvation. The respondents also believed that those who do not have faith and accept Jesus will not get Salvation, they will be in Hell.

Regarding conversion the converted 28.33% respondents are of the opinion that if one has full faith in Jesus one should accept Him and get converted and become a true child of the True Father. The 1.67% respondent who is following Judaism also advocates preaching and conversion to the religion of one's choice or belief. He said that after listening to the preaching, he came to know that Judaism is the original religion from which Christianity tenets has been extracted. Regarding Hindu religion the 28.33 % respondents said Hindu religion is also good in its own place. Rebirth and recycling of human life is believed to be there which is not believed in Christianity. Hindu religion is very vast with lots of restrictions. It does not advocate Salvation. With lots of Gods and Goddesses it confuses people though the culture is good.

5% of the converted non-Manipuri respondents did not give any comment regarding the conversion, preaching of Christianity or about Hindu religion.

The word 'sacked ' has been used with regard to Christian influence over the tribal religion to imply the assimilation of the contents of the subjects concerned and not the destruction of it by foreign elements. Since tribal religion seems to share a common substance of all religions, it may be improper to say that a tribal religion is already destroyed by foreign element. But the tribal religion in North-East India is forced to remain incognito in the foreign element. We remember that Christianity triumphed over Graeco-Roman world and thereby revolutionary alterations emerged in that world as well as in the Christian tenet. In the process of growth, culture and religion change each other.

This can be observed on a small scale with reference to Christian acculturation of the tribal people and their religion (Sema 1980: 73-74).

VIII.2. Persistence of the Tribal Customary Laws and Traditions among the Kukis

Customary laws are still enforced and followed strictly in the Kuki villages, though in a modified form according to the changing situation and time. Customary laws are followed regarding settling in a new village; settlement of family or land disputes; dealing with fighting and quarrels in the village. Irrespective of community, the judgment would be same for all. If the youth fight no matter who is right or wrong both sides would be fined, for spilling blood in the village. They have to go according to the village's rule where the incident actually happened. Both the parties have to compensate a fine to the whole village by giving a pig. After this they will be judged and the proved guilty person/party then again has to compensate to the whole community.

It helps them monetarily and is less time consuming in getting justice. If any problems or disputes come they are solved among themselves according to the customary law without taking the matter outside the village i.e. to the police or court, thus saving the expenditure that would be incurred in the governmental procedures. These customary laws also give them a fair and early judgment to the individual or parties involved. Thus gives justice and also upkeeping their traditional customs.

The customary laws regarding wife choosing, forms of marriage and bride-price are still followed though not strictly regarding the custom of bride-price. The tuchas have to take the responsibility of the family as any member of the family would do.

These laws are still followed in their society for various reasons. Firstly, they feel that these laws bind them together and help them in many ways. These laws keep the solidarity of their society. They also believed that first of all they are all Kukis before

being Christians. One cannot forget one's culture and customs. It has been following since their forefathers' time. Because of these laws they are still bound together. These customary laws are good so they are still in vogue. With the creation of the world, law and customs were there for every group, every tribe. So they have to follow them.

Even Bible says to accept or retain what is good. These laws are also not against the principles of Christianity. Most of the ancient beliefs and practices related to rituals and sacrifices have been discarded. But the customs and traditions have been modified to suit the present situation but still serving the purpose. They are social practices only. They also define the identity of their tribe which is unique and respected by others. No one can cross the limit, even the family of the village chief has to obey the laws. If these laws are not followed in any form, the respondents feel that their identity would be lost. If one's custom and identity is lost, then they would be nameless.

The Government has also recognized some of their customary laws and does not interfere. The Government agrees to the decisions made according to the customary laws. So religion and custom are not mixed said the 97.78% respondents except 0.56% who said it is no more followed properly because all the customs have been modified to suit the modern situation and religion. His opinion has been seconded by the 1.67% non-converts too. They also added that they feel sorry to see the changes. The laws have been changed according to their wishes for their benefit only.

VIII.3. Beneficiary Schemes, Programmes and Developmental Activities among Kukis

State policies and programmes in respect of tribes are broadly of two kinds- protective and developmental. The 'protective' includes constitutional and legislative rights that safeguard the interest of the tribes. Developmental measures include programmes and activities that are initiated for promoting the welfare of tribal people

(Xaxa 2004:359). Article 46 of the constitution lays down that, “the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interest of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from special injustices and all forms of exploitations”. There is a special provision made under Article 275 of the Constitution for payment by the Central Government, out of the consolidated Fund of India, as grant-in-aid to state on approved schemes of development for the purpose of promoting the welfare of the Scheduled tribes in the State (Annual Plan 2008-09). The Department for Development of Tribals and Scheduled Castes, Manipur is working in a three dimensional approach viz. i) Protection of the SC/ST people from atrocities through provisions of the PCR Act, 1955 and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe (prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, ii) Promotion of socio economic condition of the SC & ST people through the implementation of various developmental programmes funded under a) State Plan, b) Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Plan/Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan, c) Special Development Programmes of Article 275 (I) of the Constitution, and d) Centrally sponsored schemes, and iii) Preservation of rich cultural heritage of the SC and ST people through systematic preservation, documentation and allied research works (Annual Plan 2008-09).

For the development of scheduled tribes in Manipur, schemes for development of education include-financial assistance for Civil Services examination; financial assistance for Kut, Lungaini and Gang-Ngai festivals; assistance for Youth Clubs/Societies; repairing of schools and hostels; construction of village level community halls; special coaching for Scheduled Tribe students; running of tribal training institute; computer training programme; encouragement in tribal dialects; production of text books; assistance to Adimjati Shiksha Ashram.

For the economic development of the Kukis certain schemes like the land development programme; aids to tribal weavers/artisans; construction of village level marketing shed; opening of small shops; rearing of animals; construction of tribal market complex; Health-aids for medical treatment and aids to tribal handicapped; rural shelters for scheduled tribes; construction of approach road of cemetery, etc. have arranged by the Government.

60% urban 65.33% rural Kuki respondents said they do not get any beneficiary schemes or programmes introduced by the Government. Among this group of respondents, middle aged Paite man said that such schemes and programmes introduced by the Government though were mainly for the poor but it hardly reaches to the target groups, and was enjoyed by the ones who are aware of it and knows the channel to get it.

Only 40% urban and 34.67% rural Kuki respondents benefited from these schemes of promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes. From the schemes and programmes the Kukis availed educational scholarships; agriculture and cattle rearing loan; farming loan; housing loan (for construction); ration at subsidized rate for the lower income groups; reservation of posts in Government jobs; reservations of seats in higher educational institutions, etc. Some respondents also got the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. 2.22% old aged men from this group said they get old age and war pension.

All the Meities and non-Manipuri respondents said they did not avail any such schemes.

According to 66.66% Kuki respondents, the development of their society has been very slow due to various reasons. The respondents felt that slow development of a society is mainly due to lack of education and infrastructure. They also mentioned that there is lack of political awareness by the masses. They are ignorant of many programmes, they lack knowledge about many developmental and beneficiary schemes provided by the

government mainly for them, only few people know the proper channels for getting benefits and they are enjoying all the benefits. So the mass of the population is left out. All these developmental schemes are not administered properly to the targeted population. They said that the leaders of the community or the politicians who are narrow minded, take undue advantage of the poor and illiterate people. Different voluntary organizations and associations which have coming up for the welfare of the people are also unable to help the people. Besides, there is disunity, which has come up due to greed, among the people trying to take advantages of each other among the group. Though they claim to be true Christians themselves they do not follow its doctrine, so do injustice to the people, suppress the poor, etc. besides negligence from the government. Some are still indulging in bad habits and not keeping the faith properly. They are not true to themselves.

The 1.67% non-convert Kuki respondents are of the opinion that their society is not developing. Even if it is developing it is very slow. Because in the name of their religion they are fighting for power among themselves and those who are aware and have power go away with all the grants and schemes given by the government. The three respondents feel that their fellow group members who are following Christianity are not true worshippers. With the change in time greed among people has also increased.

According to this group of respondents the reasons for being slow in the development of the tribal society are due to lack of understanding of their people who are slow in learning and quick in quitting. The hill people are very good in merry making, so spend everything without saving anything for the future. Some are still in the hills and does not want to come out. Nor do the education schemes or any developmental programmes reach them. So, they are illiterate and ignorant about any developmental schemes available for them.

One middle aged Zou rural man strongly felt that it is because of indifference among themselves. The chief of a Kuki village has the supreme power. Among the Kukis, even if there are five households settle just five kilometer away from another established village with a chief as the head, this five household village will not affiliate itself under the established village but select a chief of their own. So, the Kukis have several small villages which are ruled by different chiefs which is difficult to be organized and united. They have democratic power but in the village the chief has the supreme power and everyone obeys the chief. Another reason is that the people who live mostly in the interior of the hill districts do not have proper information at proper time and the grants do not reach the people and in between the middle man enjoys all the benefits.

17.78% Kuki respondents were of the opinion that their society is developing gradually. The main reasons they felt for the gradual development of their society are education and Christianity which showed the right path. Those who go fast will go down soon. So they have to develop properly taking care of each step and in proper way which takes time. Developmental programmes can not be adopted at once. It would take time. Though certain schemes and programmes are introduced they do not become fruitful because of mismanagement, unorganized distribution, bureaucrats and insurgents. So the mass of the population still remain in some state of poverty. In whatever stage of development they are in now, are mainly due to Christianity and the education they spread.

13.89% of the Kuki respondents said that the tribal society has been developed very fast. According to them the fast pace of development of their society is due to Christianity which has changed their lives, by giving education and consequently improving their standard of living. They also said that they get funds from the US Missionaries. The education programmes of the government have also helped them a lot.

Education changed their lives which also brought an end to the world of jealousy. The respondents feel that if Christian missionaries had not come they would have been like before quarrelling with each other, feeling jealousy towards one another, etc. The responses of the Kukis regarding the development of their society is given in Table VIII.1.

Table VIII. 1

Kuki respondents' opinion about the development of their society

Kuki society is developing	Rural (150)		Urban (30)		Total
	n	%	n	%	
Very slowly	96	64	27	90	123
Gradually	29	19.33	3	10	32
Very fast	25	16.67	0	0	25
Total	150	100	30	100	180

Table VIII.1 indicates that the pace at which their society is developing is very slow according to majority of the respondents. The probable reason could be increase in population, unemployment, problem of insurgency, hostility among the groups for affiliation to a major group, etc. These hamper the development activity of the society and of the state at large. Though the Government has placed special emphasis on the tribal development the results are not up to the expectations of the Government. Apart from the non-tribal exploitation, there is intra-tribal exploitation as well. There is a wide gap between elite and the folks resulting in quick development of certain tribes and underdevelopment of many tribes (Satyanarayan 1990:131).

VIII. 4. Conclusions

Considering the acculturation of the Kukis, Meities and the non-Manipuris, adaptation of the culture, values and modes of life between the communities is not significant though they have been staying in opposite lanes of a street. All the three

communities participate in each others social festivals only. None of the three communities are willing to accept anything from the religion of the other community. But the Meities and the non-Manipuris liked the unity among the Kukis, their least cumbersome social functions, absence pollution or purity and the burden free social ceremonies. Religious or family link with Myanmar (Burma) and China is non-existent though the Kukis claimed their origin to be from these two countries. Though, Moreh, the urban area of Chandel district, neighboring Myanmar (Burma) and which also has Kuki majority population, and the business centre of India and Myanmar did not have much influence of Buddhism. Beneficial schemes provided by the Government are not reaching to the targeted population especially in the rural areas. Religious beliefs have been molded by the system of modern western education since education helps men to rationalize their own practices. Kuki society is unaffected by any aspects of Hinduism. The reasons for converting mainly to Christianity by the Kukis, and some Meities and some non-Manipuris are two fold. Firstly, because of convincing preaching and strong belief in the True living God, Jesus; secondly, because of the financial benefits, health benefits, jobs, educational benefits as well as a sense of elevated status in their own community. Most development among the Kukis after converting to Christianity could be seen spiritually, hygienically, socio-economically. Conversion and preaching have been advocated. If one has faith in Jesus one should get converted. Hinduism is not liked by the Kukis because of certain factors such as cremation of the dead bodies, Hindus rarely came forward to preach them, beliefs in number of Gods and Goddesses, etc. Kukis' customary laws are still followed strictly in terms of their social and cultural aspects. But religiously, everything that is indigenous has been discarded.

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