Abstract

This paper mainly concentrates on the formation of Meetei surnames through the process of Compounding. Indigenously no surname is found without the ending phoneme /m/ in Meetei society. Therefore, all the Meetei surnames end with a common identical phoneme /m/. In this paper the classification of compounding process of the Meetei surname is also studied in different ways by applying different formulae.

The paper attempts to discuss not only the indigenous Meetei surnames but also the Meetei Brahmin surnames still existing in Manipur.

INTRODUCTION

In the past, the offspring of the same family were settled together. After increasing number of the family members, some had separated and made new houses for their needs. The new houses were also made near the old one. Like this, many houses have been gradually extended near the same old ancestor. From that tradition, the Meetei Yumnak (Meitei surname) came into existence. Here, jum means ‘house’ and nak means ‘near’ and become ‘jumnak’ (R.K., 1970). In the past, jumnak indicated both house and owner or any one of them. For example, someone can ask about a person or of a house whether he/she is known or unknown to him. Such a question can be put as, kaijum ma chano or kaijumno ‘which surname is referred to (you or him)? Later on, it seems to be known as the family of the house. From that point of view, elders used to address an individual by his/her surname. Therefore, the Meetei surnames are perhaps, derived from the nicknames given to the original founder of a family in connection with various activities, namely, for doing something, making something, arranging something, for an individual peculiarity, skill of the person, for having supervisory work, etc. It is believed that all the Meetei surnames were derived from eponyms (i.e., derived from the peculiarity of the individuals). If the name of a thing, a place, and an individual of a society or a group is derived from the name of a person, it is known as Eponym. For example, Rome is an eponym coming from Romulus (Concise Oxford Dictionary, Judy Pearsall, Tenth edition: 480). In Meeteiron, the eponym of Sagolsem surname is sagol senba mi ‘person who tends cattle’. Therefore, an eponym is a person after whom a discovery, invention, place etc. is named. Hence the person may have mythical character.

SURNAME

A surname is considered as a name which is added to the given name. Unlike other languages, the nature of surname prevailing in Meeteiron (Meitei ‘Meetei people’ + ron-lon ‘language’) is formed by adding some words before or after or both, to the given name. And
it is regarded as a part of personal name. In short, the name used to identify the members of the family is known as surname.

**ORIGIN OF MEETEI SURNAMES**

In Meetei society, the introduction of surnames took place in the reign of king Sameirang (518-568 A.D.). It was recorded on page 4 of Cheitharol Kumbaba (Lairenmayum and Ningthoukhongjam, 1967).

All the Meetei surnames originated from the seven clans of Meetei. There are altogether 716 surnames in Meetei society (Ayekpam, 1993). These clans have their specified numbers of surnames given below.

1. məŋəŋ 219
2. luwəŋ 77
3. kʰumən 167
4. əŋom 89
5. moirəŋ 90
6. kʰaŋənə 34
7. salai ləisaŋʰem (ceŋlai). 40

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*Fig: Seven clans showing the number of surnames contained.*

**FORMATION OF MEETEI SURNAMES**

There are two types of word formation in this language. They are a) Affixation and b) Compounding. In Meeteiron, compounding is more prominent in forming words. From the linguistic point of view, surname in Meetei society should be treated as a single word. In Meeteiron, words are formed by adding prefix or suffix to the roots. On the other hand, it may also be that two or more than two roots are used in making a word. Therefore, the words of the first kinds are not used prominently in dealing with compounding of the Meetei surnames. And those kinds of compound words which are created by combining two or more roots will be discussed here for the Meetei surnames.

The formation of the Meetei surnames can be divided into 20 formulae. Those formulae are given as under.

**First Formula: v + n**
Here surnames are formed by adding pʰəm~bʰəm ‘place’ to the verb roots as described below.

**Examples:**

- ना + bʰəm  (speak + place)  = नाbʰəm
- tʰoŋ + bʰəm  (cook + place)  = tʰoŋbʰəm
- ता + bʰəm  (shelter + place)  = ताbʰəm
- इर + bʰəm  (bath + place)  = इरbʰəm
- स + bʰəm  (bloom + place)  = सbʰəm

It can be noted that verbs - ना ‘speak’, तो ‘cook’, ता ‘shelter’, इर ‘bath’ and स ‘bloom’ are followed by bʰəm-pʰəm ‘place’ to form these surnames. Here the aspiration of the word bʰəm-pʰəm does not appear in these surnames. In fact, the aspirated sounds lose their existence in these final forms of surnames because of their morphophonemic change.

**Second Formula: ə + v + n**

In this kind the surnames are formed by adding attributive ə as a prefix and bəm~pəm ‘place’ to the verb roots respectively.

**Examples:**

- ə + hai+ bəm  (attr + mould + place)  = əhəibəm
- ə + tʰok + pəm  (attr + come out + place)  = ətʰokpəm
- ə + jek + pəm  (attr + draw + place)  = əjekpəm

It is noticed that all these verb roots - है ‘mould’, तो ‘come out’ and जेक ‘draw’ are prefixed by the attributive ə and immediately followed by bəm~pəm so as to obtain these final surnames.

**Third Formula: ə + adj + n**

Such type of the surname is formed by prefixing attributive ə and by adding bəm~pəm to the adjective. It is rarely found in this language.

**Examples:**

- ə + nəu + bəm  (attr + new + place)  = ənəubəm
- ə + li/ri + bəm  (attr + old + place)  = əribəm
- ə + sanct + bəm  (attr + long + place)  = əsanbəm

**Fourth Formula: n + v + n**
In this construction of surnames, an NP is added just immediately before the verb root and followed by **bam-pam** as described below.

Examples:

- `lairik + jeŋ + bam` (book + look + place) = `lairikjeŋbam`
- `condon + tøk + pøm` (santalum + grind + place) = `condontøkpøm`
- `canøm + tʰa + bam` (garlic + plant + place) = `canømtʰabam`
- `køitʰel + lak + pøm` (market + guard + place) = `køitʰelakpøm`
- `kaŋjen + pai + bøm` (fowl + fly + place) = `kaŋjenpaibam`
- `lairen + lak + pøm` (python + catch + place) = `lairenlaŋpøm`
- `lai + søŋ + bøm` (God + guard + place) = `laisŋbøm`
- `moibuŋ + kʰøŋ + bøm` (conch + blow + place) = `moibuŋkʰøŋbøm`
- `samøt + sa + bøm` (comb + make + place) = `samøtsabøm`
- `sørøk + kʰai + bøm` (road + cut + place) = `sørøkʰaibøm`
- `ten + su + bøm` (bow + make + place) = `tensubøm`
- `hui + ren + bøm` (rivet + cut + place) = `huirembøm`
- `kaŋkenŋ + ta + bøm` (name of a place + settle + place) = `kaŋkenŋtaŋbøm`
- `kʰwai + rak + pøm` (everyone + control + place) = `kʰwairkpøm`
- `tʰaŋ + su + bøm` (sword + make + place) = `tʰasubøm`
- `køitʰel + lak + pøm` (market + control + place) = `køitʰellkpøm`
- `naŋ + roi + bøm` (young one + rear + place) = `naŋroibøm`
- `ŋari + jan + bøm` (fermented fish + hang + place) = `ŋarijanbøm`

**Fifth Formula: n + 3pp + n**

Unlike the four formulae analyzed above, the fifth type of surnames does not use any verb form. It is only constructed through the addition of an NP before the third person pronominal prefix and by following another NP.

Examples:

- `tʰonŋau + mø + jum` (large bridge + his + house) = `tʰonŋauŋamunj`
- `lairen + mø + jum` (python + his + house) = `lairenmøŋamunj`
- `tʰoidiŋ + mø+ jum` (sesame. *Sesamum indicum Linn* + his + house) = `tʰoidiŋmøŋamunj`
- `kʰunŋuŋ + mø+ jum` (remote area + his + house) = `kʰuŋuŋmøŋamunj`
- `nįtʰemca + mø+ jum` (king’s son + his + jum) = `nįtʰemcamøŋamunj`
- `kʰunŋau + mø+ jum` (large village + his + house) = `kʰuŋauŋamunj`
- `tʰömürbal + mø + jum` (lotus + his + house) = `tʰömürbalŋamunj`
- `waŋkʰsi + mø + jum` (name of a place + his + house) = `waŋkʰsimøŋamunj`
- `takʰel + mø + jum` (name of a place + his + house) = `takʰelmøŋamunj`

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Compounding in Meetei Surnames
mo’îræ + mæ + jum (name of a place + his + house)
= moîræmæjum
kʰ’umboŋ + mæ + jum (name of a place + his + house)
= kʰ’umboŋmæjum
mænætri + mæ + jum (minister + his + house) = mænætrimæjum
kʰetri + mæ + jum (kshetriya + his + house) = kʰetrimæjum

Sixth Formula: n + n

Surnames constructed through the sixth formula are very few in number. It is only formed by two NPs as given below.

Examples:

soi + bøm (a kind of fishing net + place) = soibøm
i + ləm (thatch + place) = iləm
kaŋŋə + bøm (swan + place) = kaŋŋəbøm
kʰoi + bøm (bee + place) = kʰoibøm

Seventh Formula: n + n + v + n

Seventh kind of surname is formed by deleting the nominalizer pə–bə from the verb root.

Examples:

samu + lai + lat + pə + pəm (elephant + God + worship + nzr + place)
= samurailatpəm
hui + niŋ + lak + pə + pəm (rivet + back + control + nzr + place)
= huiṇiŋlakpəm
pʰəu + kəi + saŋ + bə + pəm (paddy + granary + watch + nzr + place)
= pʰəukəisəŋbəm
koŋbə + lai + lat + pə + pəm (name of a place + God + worship + nzr + place) = koŋbrailatpəm

The nominalizer pə–bə does not occur at these surnames.

Eighth Formula: v + bə + n

This kind of surname is formed by adding nominalizer pə–bə to the verb root and followed by an NP as given below.

Example:
net + pə + ləm (trample + nzr + place) = neprəm

The verb root net ‘trample’ is suffixed by the nominalizer pə-bə and then followed by ləm ‘place’. The NP ləm ‘place’ becomes rəm when it follows the nominalizer as a morphophonemic change.

**Ninth formula: n**

Here a noun alone can make a surname as given below.

Examples:

οŋom (name of a clan)
kolom (graft)

In Meetei society there are seven clans. Angom clan is also one of them and it can be both the clan and the surname.

On the other hand the act of grafting something onto something else is a common phenomenon and it is known as kolom sembo ‘to make graft’ in Meeteiron.

**Tenth formula: n + n + adj + nzr**

These surnames in this language are very few in number. To make an identical ending phoneme /m/ of the Meetei surname the nominalizer bə/pə is dropped and the sound /n/ of nan is changed to /m/. Such type of changes frequently occurs in this language. Illustrations are given hereunder for making surname.

Examples:

mai + sa + nan + bə (face + body + clean + nzr) = maisnam
həi + sa + nan + bə (fruit + body + clean + nzr) = həisnam

**Eleventh formula: a + v + nzr + v + nzr**

This kind of surname is formed by deleting the nominalizer bə-pə and the first sound /c/ of con is changed to /j/ and the final sound /n/ of con is changed to /m/ as illustrated below.

Example:

ə + koi + bə + con + bə (attr + round + nzr + make + nzr)
= əkojəm

**Twelfth formula: v + adj**
Surnames consisting of verb and adjective are very few in the occurrence of the Meetei surnames. This type of surname is given below.

Example:

\[ t^h \text{ii} + \text{jam} (\text{search} + \text{many}) = t^h \text{ij} \text{am} \]

**Thirteenth formula: n + adj + n**

It is formed by adding two nouns to the adjective before and after it as follow.

Examples:

\[ k^h \text{un} + t^b \text{o} + b^b \text{om} (\text{village} + \text{high} + \text{place}) = k^h \text{undo}b^b \text{om} \]
\[ l\text{œubuk} + t^b \text{o} + b^b \text{om} (\text{paddy field} + \text{high} + \text{place}) = l\text{œubuko}b^b \text{om} \]
\[ l^\text{ai} + t^b \text{o} + b^b \text{om} (\text{earth} + \text{high} + \text{place}) = l^\text{ai}b^b \text{om} \]

**Fourteenth formula: n + v**

It is formed by adding a verb to the noun as follow.

Examples:

\[ n^\text{o} \text{ma}i + t^b \text{em} (\text{name of a community} + \text{appease}) = n^\text{o} \text{ma}ib^b \text{em} \]
\[ k^b \text{i} + s^\text{am} (\text{tiger} + \text{disappear}) = k^b \text{i} \text{sam} \]
\[ k^b \text{o}i + k^b \text{om} (\text{bee} + \text{collect}) = k^b \text{o}ib^b \text{om} \]
\[ l^\text{an} + t^b \text{om} (\text{war} + \text{keep}) = l^\text{an}b^b \text{om} \]
\[ s^\text{h} \text{an} + t^b \text{em} (\text{senior} + \text{appease}) = s^\text{h} \text{an}b^b \text{em} \]
\[ c^\text{i} \text{ja} + k^b \text{om} (\text{name of a hill} + \text{end}) = c^\text{i} \text{j} \text{ak}^b \text{om} \]

**Fifteenth formula: n + v + nzr**

It is formed by deleting the nominalizer \( b^\text{ø-} \text{pa} \) from the verb root and the first /c/ sound and final /n/ sound change to /j/ and /m/ sounds respectively to be the Meetei surname as given below.

Examples:

\[ h^\text{ui} + l^\text{en} + b^b (\text{rivet} + \text{cut} + \text{nzr}) = h^\text{uir} \text{em} \]
\[ k^\text{a} \text{ñ} + c^\text{an} + b^b (\text{chariot} + \text{make} + \text{nzr}) = k^\text{a} \text{ñ} \text{om} \]
\[ l^\text{ai} \text{ren} + c^\text{an} + b^b (\text{python} + \text{control} + \text{nzr}) = l^\text{ai} \text{ren} \text{om} \]
\[ s^\text{a} \text{gol} + s^\text{en} + b^b (\text{horse} + \text{tend} + \text{nzr}) = s^\text{a} \text{gol} \text{sem} \]
\[ k^h \text{urai} + c^\text{an} + b^b (\text{name of a place} + \text{control} + \text{nzr}) = k^h \text{urai}b^b \text{om} \]
\[ n^\text{i} \text{ñ}^h \text{u} + c^\text{an} + b^b (\text{king} + \text{make} + \text{nzr}) = n^\text{i} \text{ñ}^h \text{u} \text{om} \]
\[ m^\text{a} \text{i} + k^b \text{am} + b^b (\text{fire} + \text{bruise} + \text{nzr}) = m^\text{a} \text{ik}^b \text{am} \]
Sixteenth formula: \( v + nzr + v + nzr \)

Such surnames are formed by two verbs nominalized by the morpheme \( \text{pə~bə} \) but this morpheme is deleted to get these last surnames as given below.

Example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{k^b ai + bə + tem + bə (cut + nzr + trim + nzr)} &= \text{k^b aidem} \\
\text{koi + bə + cən + bə (round + nzr + make + nzr)} &= \text{kojəm} \\
\text{hai + bə + tem + bə (swing + nzr + trim + nzr)} &= \text{haidem}
\end{align*}
\]

Seventeenth formula: \( n + \text{adj} \)

This is formed by combining a noun and an adjective as given below.

Example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{hui + jam (rivet + many)} &= \text{huijam}
\end{align*}
\]

Eighteenth formula: \( n + \text{adj} + v + nzr \)

This kind of surname is formed as under.

Example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{sa + nəu + cən + bə (animal + new + make + nzr)} &= \text{sanəuəm} \\
\text{lai + mu + cən + bə (God + black + make + nzr)} &= \text{laiməm}
\end{align*}
\]

Nineteenth formula: \( \text{adj} + n + nzr \)

This surname is formed by deleting the nominalizer \( \text{pə~bə} \) from the noun \text{ram} as illustrated below.

Example:

\[
\begin{align*}
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\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Example:}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{hi + cən + bə (boat + make + nzr)} &= \text{hiəm} \\
\text{loŋ + cən + bə (spear + make + nzr)} &= \text{loŋəm} \\
\text{t^bəŋ + cən + bə + (knife + make + nzr)} &= \text{t^bəŋəm} \\
\text{laŋkon + cən + bə (plough + make + nzr)} &= \text{laŋgoŋəm} \\
\text{u + səm + bə + (wood + join + nzr)} &= \text{uəm} \\
\text{səna + səm + bə + (gold + join + nzr)} &= \text{sənasəm} \\
\text{li + səm + bə (cane + join + nzr)} &= \text{ləsm} \\
\text{jum + nan + bə + (house + rub + nzr)} &= \text{jumnam}
\end{align*}
\]
kə + lam + bə (excess + eagerness + nzr) = kəram

**Twentieth formula: n + n + n**

This surname is formed by combining three nouns as given below.

Example:

lai + sa + lam (God + body/animal + place) = laisrəm
ləihau + rəm + bəm (champaka, *Michelia champaka* + place + place)
= laihaurəmbəm.

**Classifications and meanings of the Meetei surnames**

The Meetei surnames were more or less related to one’s place of settlement or geographical location, profession, incident, availability of the things, flora and fauna etc. Therefore, the naming of the Meetei surname can broadly be divided into the followings:

a) Surnames given depending upon their professions

b) Surnames given relating to the events

c) Surnames known after the place of settlement

d) Surnames known after the availability of things/flora and fauna

e) Surnames known after their physical appearance of a person

f) Surnames known after the seven clans

g) Surnames given to their habits

h) Un-clan surnames

**Surnames given depending upon their professions**

**Keithellakpam** /kəitʰəlləkpm/

The surname Keithellakpam was given to a person for controlling the market place. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

kəitʰəl + lək + pəm > kəitʰəlləkpm

market control place

It is a surname given to a person for controlling the market place.

**Khundrakpam** /kʰundrakpm/
This surname was given to a leader for controlling a particular village. It was first derived from $k^h$und $\leftrightarrow$ lak $\leftrightarrow$ mi “person who controlled of a particular village”. Linguistically it can be discussed as follows:

$k^h$un + d $\leftrightarrow$ + lak + p $\leftrightarrow$m $\rightarrow$ k$h$undrakp $\leftrightarrow$m

village    loc.    control    place

A surname given to a person for controlling the particular village.

**Khuraijam /k$h$uraij $\leftrightarrow$m/**

This surname was given to an individual person for having the guard of a particular place. In Khuraijam surname, the final syllable of the word was derived from $c$ $\leftrightarrow$ $n$ $\leftrightarrow$ “to protect”. Here, the final sound /n/ can be replaced by /m/, a nominal suffix. But, before such replacement takes place, the infinitive suffix $b\alpha$ or nominalizer should be dropped first. The process of surname may be as follow:

$k^h$uraij $\leftrightarrow$m

$k^h$urai + j $\leftrightarrow$m < c $\leftrightarrow$n $\leftrightarrow$ > k$h$uraij $\leftrightarrow$m

name of a place    to guard

A surname given to a person for keeping guard of a particular place.

**Thongbam /t$h$oN $\leftrightarrow$m/**

This Meetei surname was given to a person for doing the work of cook. Therefore, this Meetei surname was given on the basis of profession. Scientifically it can be described as follows:

$t^h$oN + b $\leftrightarrow$m $\rightarrow$ t$h$oN $\leftrightarrow$m

cook    place

A surname given to a person whose profession was recognized as a cook.

**Laishangbam /laisaNb $\leftrightarrow$m/**

This surname was given to a person for watching over god’s image or statue by profession. It can linguistically be described as follows:

lai + saN + b $\leftrightarrow$m $\rightarrow$ laisoNb $\leftrightarrow$m

god    w    atch    place

A surname given to a person for watching over the statue of god.
**Khwairakpam** /kʰwairakpəm/

This surname was given to the person for being controlled of the general people of the king. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

kʰwai + lak + pəm > kʰwairakpəm
general people control place
“A surname given to a person whose knowledge was to control the general people”.

**Lairenlakpam** /lairenlakpəm/

This surname was given to the person for being of the capability of the catching the python by wisdom. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

lairenlakpəm
lairen + lak + pəm > lairenlakpəm
python control place

A surname given to a person for controlling python by profession.

**Lairikyengbam** /lairikjeNɓəm/

This surname was given to a non- Manipuri whose work was to write or read the religious book. In those days, most of the people of our society were illiterate. So such kind of work was done by the non-Manipuris who possessed reading and writing skills. The surname process can be described as follows:

lairik + jeN + bəm > lairikjeNɓəm
book look place

A surname given to a person for doing the work of writing or reading religious books by profession.

**Lairenjam** /lairenɭəm/

This surname was given to the person who had the skill of controlling or catching python. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

lairen + jɭəm < (cənbə) > lairenɭəm
python to control

A surname given to the person for having the skill of catching python.

**Aheibam** /ɑhəibəm/

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This Meetei surname was given to a particular person for doing the work of moulding utensils by profession. Structurally it can be described as follows:

\[
\text{attr} \quad \text{mould} \quad \text{place}
\]

A surname which was given to a person whose job was to mould utensils.

**Kebam** /kebam/

This Kebam surname was given to a person for residing at the place where the beatification work was done. It can linguistically be described as follows:

\[
\text{make up} / \text{beatify} \quad \text{place}
\]

A surname given to a person in connection with the work of beautification was done.

**Langoljam** /laNgolʃm/

This surname was given to a person whose work was to make ploughs by profession. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

\[
\text{plough} \quad \text{to make}
\]

A surname given to a person whose work was to make ploughs.

**Khaidem** /kʰaidem/

This surname was given to the person whose work was to cut or to trim something with an instrument like cutter or spade. The ending **dem** was derived from **tembə** meaning ‘to trim or to level surface of earth’. Before such replacement took place, i.e. **tem** should change to **dem**, the nominalizer **bə** was dropped first. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

\[
\text{to cut} \quad \text{to trim}
\]

A surname given to a person for having the skill of cutting and trimming something else.

**Khairom** /kʰairom/

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This surname was given to the person whose work was dexterous in cutting and making handicraft products. The ending rom in kʰairom surname was derived from lonba ‘to weave’. Linguistically, it can be discussed as follow:

kʰairom
kʰai + rom < lonbə > kʰairom
cut to weave/interlace

A surname given to a person for being dexterous skill of cutting and weaving of something else.

Kangjam /kaŋjəm/

This surname was given to the person whose work was to make chariot. In those days the Meeteis used to start to play the game by making chariot. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

kaN + j↔m < cənb ↔ > kaNj↔m
chariot to make

A surname given to a person for making chariot.

Kanghujam /kaNhuj↔m/

This surname was given to the person whose work was to make the hockey sticks (bamboo). From the time immemorial the people of the Meetei had been using the hockey sticks as an instrument of the game. It can be described as follows:

kaNh u + j↔m < c↔nb ↔ > kaNhuj↔m
hockey stick to make

A surname given to a person for being done the work of making hockey stick.

Landham /landam/

This surname was given to the person whose work was to look after a particular area, as a protection work from the enemies. Scientifically it can be described as follows:

lan + dam < tʰamb ↔ > landam
war to keep

A surname given to a person for watching a particular area as a protection work from the enemies.

Kolom /kolum/

This surname was given to the person for having the knowledge of grafting small plants by profession. Linguistically it can be described as follows:
kolom

graft

A surname given to a person for having the knowledge of grafting.

Koijam /kojɔm/

This surname was given to the person whose job was to make pond around with bricks. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

koi + ʒɔm < ɔnəbə > koiɔm

A surname given to a person for making a pond around with bricks.

Surnames given relating to the events

Kongkham /koNkʰam/

This surname was given to a person whose capability was to compromise on quarrel for the payment of fine. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

koN + kʰam > koNkʰam

fine  compromise

A surname given to a person who could compromise on quarrel for the payment of fine.

Surnames known after the place of settlement

Keithelchangbam /kɔitʰelcəŋbəm/

The surname Keithelchangbam was given to a family whose residence was the gate way of the market place. Later on the person who was settled at that place came to be known as Keithelchangbam. The process of formation of this surname can be described as follows:

kɔitʰel + ɕəŋ + bəm > kɔitʰelcəŋbəm

market  enter  place

A surname given to a person for residing his family near the entrance area of the market.

Khongbantabam /kʰoNbantəm/

This surname was given to the person whose residence was on the bank of a ditch or canal. Scientifically it can be described as follows:
A surname given to a person who settled on bank of the ditch.

**Khundongbam** /kʰundoNbām/<m/>

This surname was given to the person for being settled at the high area of the village. Structurally it can be described as follows:
kʰun + tōN + bām > kʰundoNbām

village  high place

A surname given to a person who settles at the high place of the village.

**Khunjaomayum** /kʰunjaumajum/<m/>

This surname was given to the person whose residence was at the large village. Linguistically it can be described as follows:
kʰun + jau + mē + jum > kʰunjaumajum

village large 3pp house

A surname given to a person whose house was in a large village.

**Khunungmayum** /kʰunųmgajum/<m/>

This surname was given to the person whose house was at the rural area since the concept of Khunung was a rural area to the Meetei society. The composite meaning of Khunungmayum is the house of rural/remote area. It can be described scientifically as follows:
kʰunųn + mē + jum > kʰunųmgajum

remote 3pp house

A surname given to a person whose residence was at the remote area.

**Khundangbam** /kʰundaŋbam/<m/>

This surname was given to the person who took shelter to another village.

kʰun + tāŋ + bām > kʰundaŋbam

village shelter place

A surname given to a person who took shelter to another village.

**Surnames known after the availability of things, flora and fauna etc.**
Kangabam /kaŋabəm/

This surname or family name was given to a person for being settled at the place where the bird goose stayed. Linguistically it can be discussed as follows:

kaŋə + bəm > kaŋabəm

geese   place

A surname which was given to person residing at the place where a goose stayed.

Keisham /kəisam/

The surname Keisham was given to a person for settling at the place where a tiger disappeared. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

kəi + sam > kəisam
tiger   disappear

A surname given to a person who settled at the place where a tiger disappeared.

Laishram /laɪsəm/

This surname was given to the person for residing at the place of god’s image or chapel. To the knowledge of the Meetei, in olden days, it was taken that there were many sacred altars in Manipur. So, one of the persons who settled in such a chapel came to be known as Laisaram. Linguistically, it can be described as follows.

lai + sa + ləm > laisəm
god   statue/body   place

A surname given to a person residing at the place where a god’s statue is located in standing posture.

Khoibam /kʰoibəm/

This surname was given to the person for settling at the place where plenty of bees were available. Scientifically it can be discussed as follow:

kʰoi + bəm > kʰoibəm

bee   place

“A surname given to a person for being resided at the bee keeping place”.

Khoikhom /kʰoikhom/
This surname was given to a person for doing the work of bee keeping by profession. Structurally it can be discussed as follow:
k^h\text{oi} + k^h\text{om} > k^h\text{oi}k^h\text{om}
bee collect

A surname given to a person for doing beekeeping works.

Laiphangbam /laip^h\leftrightarrow Nb\leftrightarrow m/

This surname was given to the person settled at the place where any form of god’s statue was available. Linguistically it can be described as follows:
lai + p^h\leftrightarrow N + b\leftrightarrow m > laip^h\leftrightarrow Nb\leftrightarrow m
god find place

A surname given to a person settled at the place where the statue of god was available.

Surnames known after their physical appearance of a person

Ashangbam /\leftrightarrow saNb\leftrightarrow m/

This surname was given after the physical appearance of the person whose height was very tall. Such surnames are few. Structurally it can be described as follows:

\leftrightarrow + saN + b\leftrightarrow m > \leftrightarrow saNb\leftrightarrow m
attr long place

This surname was given to a person who is very tall in appearance.

Khagokpam /k^h\text{agokp}\leftrightarrow m/

This surname was given to the person whose head seems to be a h\leftrightarrow rik^h\text{agok} (scientific name ‘Aegel marmelos’). Linguistically it can be described as follows:
k^h\text{agok} + p\leftrightarrow m > k^h\text{agokp}\leftrightarrow m
Aegel marmelos place

This surname was given to a person who had a big head and looked like a h\leftrightarrow rik^h\text{agok}”.

Surnames known after the seven clans

Khumanthem /k^h\text{um}\leftrightarrow nt^h\text{em}/
This surname was given to a group of people who came from Khuman area. It is assumed that the ending *them* was derived from *then* meaning ‘to display’ or ‘to exhibit’, ‘*t*en’ became ‘*t*em’ as a process of making identical ending sound of the Meetei surname (Namoijam, 1997).

It can structurally be described as follows:

\[ k^h\text{um}\leftrightarrow n \quad + \quad t^b\text{em} \quad < \quad t^b\text{enb} \leftrightarrow \quad k^h\text{um}\leftrightarrow nt^b\text{em} \]

name of a clan to display

This surname was given to a group who came from the place where Khuman clan settled.

**Surname given based on the habits**

**Karam /kəram/**

This Meetei surname was given to a person with excessive eagerness character. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

\[ \text{kw} \quad + \quad \text{ram} \quad + \quad \text{bə} \quad > \quad \text{kəram} \]

excess eagerness nzr

This surname was first given to a person for feeling of greedy over one’s wealth.

**Khadangbam /kH<δαNβ<μ/**

This family name or surname was given to a person relating to a place where a talkative person resided. In Meetei society, a talkative person has been considered as Khadanggi mi “man of talk”.

Linguistically it can be described as follows:

\[ k\text{H}<\delta\alpha\text{Nβ}<\mu \quad + \quad \beta<\mu \quad > \quad k\text{H}<\delta\alpha\text{Nβ}<\mu \]

talkative place

A surname given to a talkative person.

**Kiyam /kijam/**

This surname was given to a soldier for being timid in war. In the society of the Meetei, in those days, there was a lot of fighting amongst one principality (country) over another. During the war, in the battlefield, the timid soldier did not fight strongly. When the war was over and when he came back home, Kiyam surname was given to the timid person after his character. Structurally it can be described as follows:

\[ \text{ki} \quad + \quad \text{jam} \quad > \quad \text{kijam} \]
fear very

A surname given to a person whose role was very fearful character in war.

Ngangbam /NaNb↔m/

This surname was given to a spokesman in connection with his residence. The person might be the spokesman of the king. It can linguistically be described as follows:

NaN  + b↔m > NaNb↔m

speak  place

A surname given to a person who was the spokesman of the king.

Non-clan surnames

All the Brahmin surnames of Manipur are included in this group:

Kshetrimayum /kʰetrim↔jum/

This surname was given to the descendants of Kshetriyas, coming from outside Manipur and is related to Sanskrit Kshatriya who first started settling down here during the reign of king Chalamba (1545 to 1562 A.D.). Scientifically it can be described as follows:

kʰetri  +  m↔  +  jum  >  kʰetrim↔jum

name of a community  3pp  house

A surname given to a person who came from the house of the Khetri.

Lairenmayum /laienm↔jum/

This surname was given to the person who settled at the place where python resided or was found. Structurally it can be described as follows:

laien  +  m↔  +  jum  >  lairenm↔jum

python  3pp  house

A surname given to a person for residing at the place of python.

Loubuktongbam /ləubuktoNb↔m/

This Brahmin surname was given to a person who came from outside Manipur and settled at the mound of the paddy fields. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

ləubuk  +  toN  +  b↔m  >  ləubuktoNb↔m

paddy field  high/mound  place

A surname given to a person for settling at the elevated area of the paddy field”.

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Laimayum /laim⇒jum/

This surname was given to the person who settled at the chapel. It can structurally be described as follows:

lai + m⇒ + jum > laim⇒jum
god  3pp  house

A surname given to the person who settled near the chapel.

Kongbrailatpam /koNbrailatp⇒m/

This Brahmin surname was given to the worshipper of god who came from outside and settled on the bank of Kongba river. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

koNba + lai + lat + p⇒m > koNbrailatp⇒m
name of a place  god  worship  place

A surname given to a person relating to a place where the god of Kongba was worshipped.

Samurailatpam /səmurailatpəm/

This surname was given to a Brahmin family which worshipped the lord Ganesh. To the knowledge of the Meetei, in those days, it was taken that the statue of Ganesh was an elephant. So the name was given to them.

samu + lai + lat + pəm > samurailatpəm
elephant  god  worship  place

A Meetei-Brahmin surname which was given to a person in a place where the elephant was worshipped.

Guruaribam /ɡurʊəribəm/

This surname was given to a Meetei-Brahmin who could advise and teach the king. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

guru + ə + li+ bəm > guruəribəm
teacher  Att  old  place

A Brahmin surname which is given to a person for being an old learned teacher of the king.

Laipubam /laipub⇒m/
This surname was given to a person whose profession was to carry the god’s statue. Then the place where that person resided came to be known as Laipubam. Linguistically it can be described as follows:

\[ \text{lai} + \text{pu} + \text{b} \leftrightarrow \text{m} > \text{laipub} \leftrightarrow \text{m} \]

god carry place

A surname given to a person whose profession was to serve and to carry god’s statue (image).

**CONCLUSION**

There are also some surnames which are not included in the above forms. In modern days many new surnames have been created because of the need to live independently in Meetei society. Certain surnames show the alertness exhibited in a profession, some relate to absconding, settling in the individual’s wife’s house, searching for personal profit, etc. From this situation, a surname may have many clans, for instance, *Ayekpam* is included in *Luwang, Mangang and Kha-nga-nba* clans. The surname *Usam* is also included in *Mangang, Luwang, Moirang* and *Angom* clans.

**Abbreviations**

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<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>verb</td>
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<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>noun</td>
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<td>3pp</td>
<td>3rd person pronominal prefix</td>
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