

A STUDY OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ZAIREMA, J. MALSAWMA
AND DARCHHAWNA IN MIZO LITERARY CRITICISM

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A Study of the Contributions of Zairema, J.Malsawma and Darchhawna in Mizo Literary
Criticism

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CERTIFICATE

This is certify that the thesis entitle ‘**A study of the Contributions of Zairema, J.Malsawma and Darchhawna in Mizo Literary Criticism**’ is the bonafide research conducted by Lalnunzira under my supervision. Lalnunzira worked methodically for the thesis being submitted for the degree of Master of Philosophy in the Department of Mizo, Mizoram University.

This is to further certify that he has fulfilled all the required norms laid down under the M.Phil regulations of Mizoram University. Neither the thesis as a whole or any part of it was ever submitted to any other University.

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DECLARATION

I, Lalnunzira, hereby declare that the subject matter of this Dissertation is the result of the work done by me, that the contents of this dissertation did not form the basis of the award of previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the dissertation has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

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Chapter – 1

Introduction

1.1 Meaning and Definition of Criticism

One of the main functions of literature is to reveal human behavior, feelings, thoughts and capabilities. Likewise, literary criticism makes an inquiry into literary approaches, evaluates and interprets literature. Criticism, in the simplest sense, is an analytical study of literature. Human beings create literature and literature in turn creates criticism. “Literary creation is almost as old as human history and literary criticism nearly as old as literature” (Nagarajan 1). Literature is the image of life while criticism is the examination of literature. “Criticism cannot exist without creation. Creation comes first, criticism next” (Kumar 1). Literature cannot survive without literary criticism and hence, literature is incomplete without literary criticism.

“Criticism is the branch of study concerned with defining, classifying, expounding, and evaluating works of literature” (Abrams 36). Thus, we can say that criticism is the definition of literature; it expounds the values and techniques of literature. “Literary criticism and theory have encompassed the study of a number of issues in its attempt to interpret, evaluate and contextualize literature” (Cuddon 170). Criticism deals with literary writing and theory; it criticizes literary history, society, religion, culture, national character and also expounds all aesthetics and analytical assessment of literature.

“Arnold’s critic is a critic of life, society, religion, culture, national character and all aesthetic activities” (Jain 65). In fact, criticism reveals literary value and languages. Therefore, literature and criticism co-exist which means literary criticism is within literature. It

is no more a supplement of creative activity, but by producing literature of its own, it becomes a kind of art form, a *para-literature*, which is a mixture of creative and critical writing.

Practical criticism, otherwise called applied criticism or even descriptive criticism, may be defined as an attempt to explicate particular poems or passages of prose bringing out what is implied in the choice and arrangement of words, images, etc., describing precisely what one feels about them and *placing* them. The guiding principles, theoretical and evaluative, are often not stated, though they must be at work helping and guiding the reader in his interpretation and evaluation (Practical Criticism 3).

The history of literary criticism runs parallel to the history of literature in ancient Greece. Likewise, the study of development of literary criticism corresponds to the development of literature as well. Literary criticism is to inquire and evaluate the literary works and is the study concerned with defining, classifying, interpreting and evaluating works of literature.

New criticism takes a stand that the nature of literary language is different from the scientific, or everyday language. The latter is denotative depending on a one-to-one correspondence between words, and the object they stand for (Nagarajan 125).

Literary criticism pushed critical views and approaches in various fields of literature, culture, society, religion and language. Culture, society and language produce literature and in return, literature cannot develop without culture, society and language. “Webster’s New International dictionary defines criticism as the art of judging or evaluation with knowledge and propriety the beauties and faults of work of art or literature” (Kumar 1). In the Greek root, the term criticism means to judge literature.

The word criticism is derived from the Greek root *krinei* which means to judge, and the term *kritikos* means a judge of literature. The Greek term originated as early as in the fourth century. The term criticism as applied to the study and analysis of a body of literary writing, developed only in the seventeenth century in Europe, and later become a term used in common parlance accepted as being, authoritative (Nagarajan 1).

Literary criticism is the appreciation of literary works of art. It provides a deeper understanding and appreciation of specific works and authors. It is the act of judging literary writings with the conscious evaluation and interpretation of a work of art. In *Encyclopaedia Britannica* Edmund Grosse defines criticism as “The art of judging the qualities and values of an aesthetic object, whether in literature or the fine arts” (Kumar 1-2).

According to *The Concise Oxford Thesaurus (A Dictionary of Synonyms)*, criticism means “actions receiving fault-finding, censure, reproof, condemnation, disapproval, disparagement, captiousness, carping, caviling, animadversion” (The Concise, 157). Also, “The English word criticise is derived from Latin word *criticus* its means to speak against or reproach or reproof and judge” (Khangte 10).

Therefore, criticism is regarded as the explanation and expression of literature. It is the definition of literary works of art. It analyses literary works and reproach or reproof and judge social life, language, culture and society. Some definitions of literary criticism stated by some critics are the following :

- 1.1.1 According to Matthew Arnold, “Criticism is a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world, and thus to establish a current of fresh and true idea” (qtd. in Jain 65).
- 1.1.2 According to John Dryden, “Criticism is any formal discussion of literature, and it was first instituted by Aristotle, was meant a standard of judging well” (qtd. Classical to Contemporary Theory, 2).
- 1.1.3 According to MH Abram, “Criticism is the branch of study concerned with defining, classifying, expounding, and evaluating works of literature” (A Glossary of Literary Terms, 36).
- 1.1.4 According to Laltluangliana Khiangte, “criticism is distinguish and to ensure literary writing, in Mizo word *Thu-thlitfimna*” (Thu leh Hla Thlitfimna Lam (Literary Criticism),10).
- 1.1.5 According to Middleton Muray, “Criticism is to establish a definite hierarchy among the great artists of the past, as well as to test the production of the present” (qtd. in History and Principle of literary Criticism, 2).
- 1.1.6 According to Walter Pater, “Criticism is the art of interpreting art. It serves as intermediary between the author and the reader by explaining the one to the other”. (qtd in History and Principle of literary Criticism, 2).
- 1.1.7 According to B.Worsfold, “Criticism is the exercise of judgement in the province of art and literature,” (qtd. in History and Principle of literary Criticism, 2).
- 1.1.8 According to J.W.H. Atkins, “Criticism is play of the mind on the aesthetic qualities of literature, having for its object an interpretation of literary values” (qtd.in Principle & History of literary Criticism, 4).

1.1.9 According to T.S.Eliot, “Criticism is the commentation and exposition of works of art by means of written words” (qtd. in History and Principle of literary Criticism, 4).

It seems the complete definition of the meaning of criticism cannot be produced; criticism today has become voluminous, abundant and multifarious that it defies all attempts at classification and complete definition. Various and contradictory definitions of criticism have been given by different critics from olden days to the present day, and still the controversy has not been resolved.

Criticism point out three main functions of criticism: The recreative or appreciative, the historical and judicial. The methods of experiment and analysis, interpretation and evaluation are the essential parts of the critical process. Criticism is, in fact, an intelligent discussion of literature which leads a reader to the full evaluated understanding of literature (Gupta & Mundra129).

On the basis of the nature, concept and definition of literary criticism, we can conclude that the meaning, definition and function of criticism and the role of the critics is to interpret, to enlighten and to judge a work of art and literature. It is also an intelligent discussion of society and culture at the present time.

1.2 Function of criticism

The duty of criticism is not only to inquire but also to make a good deal of every creative work. Critical faculties are very important for creative faculties:

Arnold believes that critical faculty is important as creative faculty. Behind every act of creative activity there is a good deal of critical activity. In fact, no creative work of any value is possible without a good deal of critical activity behind it (Jain 115).

Literary criticism involves analyzing and appreciating literature, explaining and the expression in literature of a people during a period of time, in place, in a language as part of History.

Literary criticism, meaning understanding and appreciating literature, evolved gradually out of these studies. Again, whereas most of these disciplines had developed methods of studying literature, literary criticism did not have any systematic method of enquiry into the artistic phenomenon (Nagarajan 1).

The duty of critics is also considered to be the law giver whose main function is to instruct the writers on how to write and to interpret, to enlighten and to judge and evaluate a work of art and literature.

Opinions differ about the functions of criticism and the role a critic has to play. According to the classical view, the critic is considered to be the law giver whose main function is to instruct the writers how to write, and to lay down certain rules which they must follow. The opposite view is that the function of criticism is to interpret, enlighten and to judge of a work of art and literature (Kumar 2).

Therefore, from the above statement, the main function of criticism can be summed up into five, such as :-

1.2.1 Function of instruction

1.2.2 Function of interpretation

1.2.3 Function of Judgement

1.2.4 Function of evaluation

1.2.5 Function of enlightenment

Since ancient times the function of instruction is maintained in the field of literary criticism. Criticism is to teach the writer how to write and the critic is considered to be the law giver who instructs the writers on how to write and lay down certain rules which they must follow.

According to classicist the function of criticism is to teach the writer how to write. They thus constructed dogmatic principles based on the generalizations of Aristotle and Horace, which were founded on a dispassionate analysis of ancient classics of Greece and Rome (Kumar 2).

Interpretation is one of main important functions of criticism. The interpretation of art and literature is the key for the enlightenment of the masses and to create an ideal atmosphere for the development of literature. Criticism interprets the value of work of art and literature for readers. According to Carlyle,

Criticism stand like an interpreter between the inspired and the uninspired; between the prophet and those who hear the melody of his words and catch some glimpse of their material meaning, but understand not their deeper import (Kumar 2).

The critic explains any work of art and literature to readers. He interprets the full meaning and value of work of art to readers. He exercises the essential qualities of beauty, power and appeal. Thus, the function of criticism is to furnish exposition and description by using interpretation to writers and readers. According to B.Prasad, "Criticism is the art of interpreting art. It serves an intermediary between the author and the readers" (A Background to Study of English literature, 240).

Another important function of criticism is judgement of a work of literature. “The English word criticise is derived from Latin word *criticus* its mean to speak against or reproach or reproof and judge” (Khiangte10). In the Greek root, the term criticism is ‘to judge literature. Also, “The word ‘criticism’ is derived from the Greek root *krinei* which means “to judge” and “the term *kritikos* means a judge of literature” (Nagarajan 1). So, it can be said that the chief function of criticism is to be a judgement of literature and work of art.

The two functions distinguished, judgement and appreciation, lead to an examination of the two opposed standpoints from which the world has looked at criticism – the Classical and Romantic, or Dogmatic and the Impressionistic (Prasad 242).

Evaluation is also the essential part of the critical process. Evaluation and appreciation are the main power of a critic. Recreation and appreciation of literary writing is the main object of a critic. The evaluation and assessment of the value of literary work is also the primary function of criticism.

Criticism points out three main functions of criticism: The recreative or appreciative, the historical and judicial. The methods of experiment and analysis, interpretation and evaluation are the essential parts of the critical process (Gupta & Mudra 129).

One of the primary functions of criticism is also to enlighten the readers and to create an ideal atmosphere for the development of culture and society. Criticism creates good writers and readers and that is the root of good literature. According to Matthew Arnold;

That literature is a criticism of life, he conceived it to be his duty as a critic of literature to bring it out into the open in the life of society. A disinterested endeavour to learn and

propagate the best that is known and thought in the world, and thus to establish a current of fresh and true idea, that is the keynote to his task (Jain 41).

Criticism embraces all branches of knowledge, language, culture, theology, philosophy, history, society, literature, Art and science and all human feelings and thoughts. According to Kumar, “The main object of criticism is to make the best idea prevail in the world from which the creative writers may derive inspiration to literature of every high order of excellence” (Kumar 3).

Therefore, the function of criticism is very vast. All aesthetic activities of the art of work are the duty of critic. Interpretation and judgement of literature, evaluation and appreciation of the art of work are the role of the critic. Therefore, instruction, interpretation, judgement, evaluation and enlightenment are the main functions of criticism, from which the creative writers derive inspiration.

1.3 Survey of Mizo Literary criticism

When we talk about Mizo literary criticism, review of books and articles in book form and in literary journals can be included. However, as aforementioned, literary criticism involves a comprehensive critical view and approach in various field of literature, culture, society, religion, language, national character and all aesthetic activities.

It has been observed that criticism, in proper the manner, is hardly to be found in the initial years of the development of Mizo literature, particularly since the introduction of Mizo alphabet in 1894 until the recent years.

Criticism is the study and analysis of the literary theory and languages. Nagarajan states that “The wide and general view of the term Criticism, meaning literary criticism encompasses

three distinguishable fields of inquiry – literary theory, literary history, and literary (or evaluative) criticism retaining the original Greek sense” (Nagarajan1).

In the general view of the term, *criticism* also implies a critical view on language, culture, society, religion and theory, apart from the literary reviews. The period between the advent of Christianity in Mizoram in 1894 and 1920 may be referred to as the root period of Mizo literature since this period witnessed the introduction of Mizo alphabet, opening of schools, translation of Bible into local dialects; it was a time when many of the ‘converted Christian’ Mizo began to learn and started writing and composing hymns in their own dialects. Thus, this period witnessed great enlightening in education and no doubt, can be considered as the root period of Mizo literature. But if we look from the mirror of literary criticism, no critical and theoretical writings were produced in this period.

The period between 1920 and 1970, a wide gap of about fifty years, witnessed certain developments in Mizo literature. This period saw the appearances of various literary critics such as R. Vanlawma (1915 -2006), Rev Dr. Zairema (1917-2008), C. Thuamluaia (1922-1959), JF Laldailova (1925-1979) J. Malsawma (1927-), KC Lalvunga (1929-1994), Dengchhuana (1929-2004), Darchhawna (1936-), Lalhmingliana Saiawi (1937-2016), C.Sangzuala (1937 - 2020), Siamkima Khawlhring (1938-1992), L.Keivom (1939 -). These writers can be considered as the forerunners of Mizo literary criticism. They criticized society, culture, society, theology, philosophy, History, language, art and science through their critical writings. Thus, we may regard this period as the first phase of Mizo literary criticism. The central focus of critical writers in this period is judgement, interpretation and theory of poetry and the analysis of social life and language.

The subsequent period from 1970 until the recent years can be considered as the second phase of Mizo literary criticism. Some critical writers during the previous phase such as R.Vanlawma, Rev. Dr. Zairema, J.Malsawma, KC Lalvunga, Dengchhuana, Darchhawna, Lalhmingliana Saiawi, C.Sangzuala, James Lianmawia, L. Keivom were still in active participation in criticism in the next phase. Apart from them, Rev Dr Lalsawma (1930 -), T.Nghakliana (1932 -), B. Lalthangliana (1945 -), Peter Lianhleia (1945 - 1997), Rev Chuauthuama (1947 -), C. Lalsiamthanga (1950 -), Dr. R.L. Thanmawia (1954 -), Darchuailova Renthlei (1956 -), Dr. Laltluangliana Kiangte (1961 -), H. Lalrinfela (Mafaa Hauhna) (1976 - 2019), and others have contributed much in the field of criticism during this phase.

During the recent phase, the concept and perception of criticism among the Mizo literary writers have been widened and improved which makes the trends and development of Mizo literary criticism more standardised.

As we have already mentioned, Mizo writers think of criticism mostly as literary review especially book review, but now literary theory has been introduced among the younger writers. Therefore, the trends and development of Mizo literary criticism are very high, not only quantity but also in quality. Therefore, among these critical writers, Zairema, J.Malsawma and Darchhawna will be discussed in detail in the following chapters.

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Chapter – 2

A Study of the Contributions of Zairema in Mizo Literary Criticism

2.1 Life of Zairema

Zairema was born on 4th March, 1917 at Hmunhmelṭha near Champhai. His father was Doliana (d. 1922) and his mother was Aibuani (d. 1946), daughter of a prominent Mizo poet and the chief of Leng Saihnuna. His uncle Rualkhuma was PWD overseer. Zairema completed his matriculation in 1936 from Shillong Govt. High School, and completed his B.sc (Chemistry) in 1940 from Cotton College, Gauhati under Calcutta University.

He was employed for nearly two years in a Christian school among the Kachari, now called Bodo people, at Harasinga in the northern part of the Brahmaputra. In 1941, he went to Serampore College to study Bachelor in Divinity, but due to his illness he could not study for a year. When he continued his BD, he was transferred to Chandernagore under French Government due to the Second World War, and in 1945 he completed his Bachelor in Divinity in the first division.

He returned to Mizoram in 1945 from Chandernagore and he was employed under Mizoram Synod (Presbyterian Church of Mizoram). The Synod asked him to work part time in Mizo High School but instead he dedicated his full time for the school. In 1949 the Govt. of Mizoram took over the school and Zairema served till 1954. During this time, he acted as an Inspector, serving more than hundred students without a clerk, peon etc.

Due to riot among the non – Mizo Christians in Cachar, missionaries in the area could not continue their work. On account of the unfavourable situation, the Presbyterian Church Assembly asked him to serve at Cachar. He returned after ten years, and he was appointed as General Secretary of Mizoram Synod. In 1974, he became the Senior Executive Secretary of Mizoram Synod till the end of 1982, and retired at the age of 65 in 1982. In 1988, he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Serampore College, and in 1991, he received D.Litt. from North Eastern Hill University.

Zairema played a vital role in the translation of the Mizo Bible. After World War II, the translation of the Bible was started by the Mizoram Synod. There were three groups- group one was named Mr Lloyd's group consisted of Mr Muka and Pastor Chhuahkhama, group two was named Mr Basil E. Jones's Group, with Pastor Liangkhaia, Mr Pasena and Upa Vanchuanga as group members and group three consisted of Rev. Saiaithanga, Rev. Thanga and Rev. Zairema. In 1956, they completed the translation work and published the Second edition and enlarged version of the Bible.

After his retirement in 1982, the Bible Society of India appointed him as the Chief Translator for the second phase translation of the Bible. The committee was formed by the Baptist Assembly and the Presbyterian Synod for north and south; Southern Committee members were C.L. Hminga, H.S. Luaia, Raltawnga, Thanchungnunga, Chalbuanga and R.L. Hnuni. The Northern Committee members were Lalbiaktluanga, Pazawna, Nguraua, V.L. Zaithanga, Zaihmingthanga, Ronghinga and Zairema. The draft translation was completed in 1984. They completed the Old and New Testament and released on 25th November, 1995.

Zairema dedicated his entire life for the service of God and for the development of Mizo literature. He wrote more than ten books during his life time, and his other contributions were

compiled into seven books posthumously. He worked under the Presbyterian Church of India for 36 years during which he made significant contributions and played key role in different committees. He studied and analyzed Mizo language and culture and produced many critical writings in these two areas. He died on 11th December 2008 at the age of 91.

2.2 Works of Zairema

Zairema can be regarded as one of the most important contributors in the field of theology, Mizo language and culture among the Mizo writers. He was a language expert who analysed language on the basis of a grammar, Mizo, English, Greek or Hebrai. As aforementioned, he played crucial role in the translation of the Bible to Mizo language. His much celebrated book *Kan Bible Hi* was awarded as Book of the year 2003 by the Mizo Academy of Letters.

Though he was a fulltime pastor, he had a great contribution not only in the field of translation of the Bible and theology, but also in the field of literature. His literary contribution was mainly in the field of language criticism. His published works are : *Nilai Thupui* (1946). *Bilat Lei Hnathawh dan* (1957). *Genesis Thlan Chhuah Hrilhfiahna* (1957). *Marka Hrilhfiahna* (1971). *Johana Hrilhfiahna* (1974). *Seven Day Adventist* (1977). *God's Miracle in Mizoram* (1978). *Bible Thuneihna* (1980). *Apokrifa (Lehlin - 1989)*. *Kan Bible Hi* (2003). *Pi Pute biak Hi* (March 2009). *I Ni Min Pek Hi* (2009). *Thukhawchang Mipekte Hi* (2009). *Random Notes* (English 2009). *Thian Lekhathawn* (2009). *Lekhabu té Pasarih published* (2009).

Nilai Thupui (1946). *Genesis Thlan Chhuah Hrilhfiahna* (1957). *Marka Hrilhfiahna* (1971). *Johana Hrilhfiahna* (1974). *Apokrifa (trans. to Mizo – 1989 and Kan Bible Hi* (2003). *Zairema Biblical Commentary* (2013) are works related to theology or works written with a

biblical approach. Zairema's theological view is comprehensive and well-grounded; he thinks on the basis of culture, society and grammatical language. He is particularly cautious with language, and his translation *Apokrifa (Lehlin - 1989)* was also very clear and meaningful in terms of language.

His much celebrated work, *Kan Bible Hi* published in 2003, is one of the most important books on the study of the Bible translation. It was selected as Book of The Year of 2003 by Mizo Academy of Letters. It is a powerful and influential book, where he defined the Bible on the basis of chronology and interpreted the translation of the Bible to Mizo with a special focus on grammar. This book has twelve chapters which have been titled as follows: "Aw Bible, aw Bible ! Ka ngai, ka thlahlel em e !" (*Kan Bible Hi* 1). "Bible-a pawm" (9). "Judate leh Kristiante lehkhabu pawimawh dang" (25). "Qumran puk" (53). "Thuthlung Hlui Text" (73). "Thuthlung Thar Text" (89). "Bible khawla chhut, sap tawng lehlin" (111). "Mizo tawng Bible lehlin tum khatna" (135). "Mizo tawng Bible lehlin tum hnihna" (155). "Bible, Pathian thu" (177). "Bible chhiar dan tur" (209). "Isua hnathawh, chhandamna thu" (241).

Pi Pute Biak Hi (2009) is a book about Mizo traditional beliefs and religious practices which proves to be an important document for Mizo society till today. The book is a study of Mizo traditional thought and faith and the comparison of Mizo religion and other religions in nine chapters such as- "Pi pute khawvel thlir dan" (1). "Thlarau thate" (11). "Thlarau chimawm" (77). "Mihring nuna hun pawimawh" (115). "Thiang leh thiang lo, serh leh sang" (141). "Hring nun tin zawn" (159). "Kut leh thil dang thenkhat te" (175). "Pi pute biak hi tu nge" (195). "Sakhaw dang rindan leh Mizo rin dan" (211).

Thukhawchang Mi pekte Hi (2009) can be regarded as the most important critical work of Zairema. Almost all of Zairema's critical view points in different topics can be seen here.

The book is categorized in to three sections: the first section is *Bible leh Sakhaw lam* (Religious and the Bible) and it consists of twenty seven chapters. The second section is *Essays leh Ram thil* (Essays and Nationalism) it contains forty six chapters, and the third one is *Mizo tawng Huang* (The Mizo Language) which has ten chapters.

Random Notes (English) publish in 2009 is a compilation of Zairema's English articles and it has thirty nine chapters with the subject matter ranging from politics, religion, translation, translation of the Bible, to geographical boundaries of Mizoram, nationalism and social issues. *RandomNotes* is often regarded as a historical record book of various incidents in Mizoram.

Lehkhabu te Pasarih published in 2009, is a compilation of Zairema's seven small books such as- "*Bible Thuneihna*" (1). "*Khati khan kan hril thin a*" (23). "Seventh Day Adventist" (67). "*Pathian Hming*" (121). "*Bilat Lei Hnathawh Dan*" (155). "God's Miracle in Mizoram" (183). "Who are the Mizos" (223). This book has both Mizo and English writings. These seven small books focus on religion, faith and worship; it is an important book for the study of theology.

Thian Lekhathawn (2009) is a compiled record of letters. It contains three chapter one is letters written by Zairema for his friends Rev. HS Luaia, which contains thirteen letters. Capter two is letters received from his friends Rev. HS Luaia which has twenty two letters and one article "Mizo Sakhua" (95) written by Rev. HS Luaia. Capter three is English Letters, which has nine letters written by Zairema for his non Mizo friends such as Mr Narayan, Dr Arangaden, Mrss Christy, Mr Ben (Two letters), Mrss Lioyd, Rev T. Lunkim, Dr Clark, Mr Zaia (Two letters) and two letters written by Christy. These are letters about religion and the church written by Zairema.

2.3 Contributions of Zairema in Mizo Literary Criticism

Zairema's critical works are mainly focus on Mizo language. He views grammatically and focuses on the use of Mizo language in relation to culture. He has insightful ideas and views, especially re regarding the translation of the Bible and writing of Mizo language.

His critical writings are of great value in Mizo language criticism. However, his critical works do not have any recorded date of writing. Zairema's critical works focuses on Language criticism are as follows: "Mizo ṭawng hman dan leh ziaak dan kalhmang" (Thukhawchang 493). "Mizo ṭawng dik hman zir" (542). "Mizo tawng ziaak dan" (555). "Ziaka Mizo ṭawng" (563). "A eng nge upa zawk?" (569). "Mizo ṭawng awmze inhnaih ṭhenkhat" (575). "Mizo ṭawng v leh h" (583). "Mizo ṭawng kan hman dan ṭhenkhat" (588). "Hmeichhia nge Minu" (227). These critical writings are present in a compiled volume *Thukhawngchhang Mi Pekte Hi*. Also, his much celebrated work, *Kan Bible Hi*, contains seven critical writings on Mizo language such as: "Lehlin ṭha nia ngaih lem loh" (148). "Ṭawngkam pawl thei a ni em" (150). "Chhiar dik loh theih" (151). "Rilrua rethei engtihna nge" (159).

2.3.1 *Mizo Ṭawng hman dan leh ziaak dan kalhmang* (The usage and writing of Mizo Language)

This essay is a grammatical approach to Mizo language. Here, Zairema brings forth the correct way to write and use Mizo language. According to Zairema, the letter tone must be same in every alphabet but with letter 'h' there should be three tones. He states :

The alphabets that we use must always have the same tone. However, with the letter *h*, we have three tones. First, we have the ordinary *h* tone used in words such as *hâng, hîk, hung* etc

1. Aspirate- to enhance other tones-ah eg. *hmâr, hnâr, hlau, hrâm*, etc.
2. Eg. *Chhang, sangha, khing, phung, thang, thing* etc.

(Thukhawchang Mi Pekte Hi 495).

In this manner, he examines the different uses of *h* in Mizo alphabet. Sometimes it is used as the first letter and sometimes in the middle. For example, if we look at the word *Hmâr*, non- Mizo readers would read it as *Hamar*, but if it is written as *mhar* non- Mizo readers can read it correctly. So, according to Zairema the uses of *h* in Mizo word should be in the same position as when the alphabet is pronounced, eg: *mhar, nhar, lhau, rham, chhang, sangha, khing, phung, thang, thing* etc.

Some linguists proposed the long tone to be written as double letter but Zairema was strongly against it. He states :

Some linguists have given the suggestion that we use double letters for the long tones. But this is not applicable because we pronounce all the letters in a word. This suggestion would mean that instead of writing *hmaah* we would have to write it as *hmaaah*. In international practice, they write the letter *t* as *tr*. For Mizo speakers, we can say *Ka ril a t-r-am*, and *tr*, if spoken hastily, may sound like *ti*. I, therefore, do not recommend the use of double letters for a single sound and *tr*. Even when we type it out with a typewriter, we can manually put the small dot under the *t* (496).

Mizo alphabet is phonetic alphabet. However, there is no tone marker, due to which it becomes very difficult to read correctly. We write *Lalthanhawla*, which non- Mizo readers read as *Lalthan-u-la* (w-double u). Therefore, Zairema suggests that the tone *aw* is *o* eg *Lalthanhola*, like *aw, ch, ng* are one tone. Therefore, he suggests a rewriting of the alphabet, he states :

Our alphabet is what is popularly known as phonetic alphabet, having one tone, one phoneme and one marker. Even though *aw*, *ch* and *ng* have one phoneme, they each have two letters. When we write *Lalthanhawla*, non- Mizo speakers often find it difficult to read and they tend to pronounce it as *Lalthan-ul-la* (w-double u). They would read it correctly if we write it as *Lalthanhola*. Using two letters for a single sound is not difficult for us native speakers, but it becomes a difficulty when non- Mizo speakers read or type it out for us. We Mizo know that *aw*, *ch* and *ng* should be pronounced in a single sound, hence we never write them separately. But non- Mizo speakers tend to break up the words while typing- *tic-chuan*, *ka-wl*, *dawn-gdah*. This makes the task of proof reading difficult. Would it be better if we make it easier for reading? The way we pronounce *J* and *Z* are also very similar, and we need a differentiation for this. We also have a problem in differentiating between *s* and *sh* in our pronunciation. These are important matters which need to be tended in order to communicate with non- Mizo speakers (497).

He also suggests the tone of letter to mark as much as different tone, he states :

There is a saying that *Since a difference in tone that alters the word is a valid thing, that same tone should be used for the rest as well*, but I hold the opinion that we recognize a tone depending on where it is located. *Pa* is a passive case that has a high elongated sound, whereas the word *pa* in *pa pakhat* has a short and low sound (499).

He also states that using *v* for writing words is unnecessary. For example words such as *lovin*, *lova* can be written without *v* alphabet though we may utter them with *v* sound. He states :

During the Centenary celebration, one of the highly educated English missionaries said, *I find it difficult to read the word 'lovin' in the new Bible translation, which ought to have been changed to 'loin'*. It must have been indeed difficult for someone whose lips are not accustomed to the word. In writing, we should omit the *v* and we can always add the *v* sound when speaking (501).

The important observations that Zairema suggested from this article are as follows:

- 2.3.1.1 The use of letter tone must be same without one letter *h*.
- 2.3.1.2 The letter *h* in Mizo word should be in the same position as it is when the word is uttered, eg *mhar, nhar, lhau, rham, chhang, sangha, khing, phung, thang, thing* etc.
- 2.3.1.3 He is against the linguistic proposal to use double letter eg *hmaaah* and use of *tr*.
- 2.3.1.4 He also suggested the use of *o* than *aw*.
- 2.3.1.5 Though sometimes we speak with *v* sound in words such as *lovin, lova, etc*, *v* need not necessarily be included while writing the words.

2.3.2 *Mizoṭawng dik hman zir* (To use correct Mizo Language)

Zairema mentions in this Essay that language is communication. According to him, it is the most important that the listener understands what the speaker is trying to convey. He states :

We should always keep in mind if our audience and reader can comprehend what we are trying to convey. We create meaning when we join different words together to form a concrete sentence. If we use words according to our own wish and understanding while neglecting the understanding level of the listener, then we are only making meaningless sounds (543).

Therefore, language is a combination of different words which work together to form meaningful symbols for different things. Zairema says that the problem of communication in Mizo language between the urban layman and educated city dweller is because Mizo alphabet makers and language teachers do not have a proper understanding of Mizo language. So, from the beginning, the Mizo educated person blindly accepted the writing style of non-Mizo teachers to be applicable to Mizo writing. The English missionaries gave us the Mizo script, taught us how to read and write using the books they wrote. Here, we failed to realize that the people who taught us how to read and write Mizo language were the English missionaries who did not fully grasp the nature and correct usage of Mizo language. On account of this, the educated Mizo failed to have a proper understanding of Mizo language. He states :

It is an essential point that the ones who taught us the Mizo language were not native Mizo speakers themselves and lacked an understanding of the nuances of the language. One that does not know enough cannot teach adequately..... This is similar to how we are taught our Mizo alphabets as well. The white man created our alphabets for us, they taught us to write, taught us how to create books and it has led to a state where we accept the white man's limited understanding of Mizo as the normal way to write our language. If we look at the newspapers before 1920, we find that even the village men with no knowledge of English wrote in a very English accented Mizo..... With the idea that the white man's way of writing Mizo is the correct way, they ended up imitating their English accents in their Mizo writing as well (543).

According to Zairema, borrowing words and concepts from other languages is one way of enriching and developing Mizo language. He strongly criticized the Mizo educated class whom he accused of not giving serious academic interest in learning Mizo language. He

observes that uneducated Mizo individual often has a better grasp of Mizo language even though he may not be well- educated in other fields of academics.

He states that the English and other nations often have a book on literary language which cannot be easily understood by common man and requires an intensive studying of the literary language. However, the case is different for Mizo language. Zairema argues that for the Mizo people, the language and linguistic style of the common man can be accepted as the correct way of speaking. He states :

The white men and men of other races have *literary language books*, a book that is not easily comprehensible to the layman, but only understood after an in-depth study of it. We Mizos, however, do not have the same system, for us the illiterate Mizo seems to be the purest and correct form of Mizo (545).

Therefore, this article clearly states that the sole function of language is communication and has to be comprehensible by both the speaker and the listener. Mizo educated persons accepted the style of non Mizo speakers as the correct form of speaking and writing Mizo language and this has continued to cripple our understanding of Mizo language to a large extent.

2.3.3 *Mizo ṭawng ziak dan* (Writing system of Mizo Language)

One of the major problems heavily debated upon regarding the writing of Mizo language is the issue of the combination of words. According to Zairema, single words which do not have substantial meaning on their own in relation to the intended sentence should be joined with the preceding word. For example, the word *fak* and *awm* should be written as *fakawm*. Similarly, words indicating gender such as *nu*, *pa*, etc., should be joined with the preceding word. For

example, *arpa*, *bawngnu*. In this way, he suggested the systematic writing of Mizo language. He states :

A : a word made up of two made up of two small words that would not have a definite meaning if taken apart or used individually are always to be written together in that one word. For example; *chaltlai*, *tlaitla*, *fakawm*, *thahnemangai*, *langsar*, *thuhnuairawl*, *boral*, *thlarau*, *boruak*.

B : nu, pa, la etc or any other word that reveals the gender or a common noun should be joined to the word: Bawngla, arpa. Diminutive *te* are also to be joined with the word. Adjective *te* and conjunction *te* are, however, not to be joined with the word before them, it must be joined in the case that it is plural. Plurals and diminutives are to be recognized from their tone, in the same way the superlative *pui* is also to be joined to the word they describe. Eg: *Kan lenna kar a hla e bawihpui*.

C : single words which, when placed together create a name should always be joined. Eg, *tuichhunchhuah*, *lungphun*. *Thutphah*, *Themthainumawngtawlh*, *damlohna*, *thahnemngaihlohna*, *thiltihtheihna*, *kaltheihlohna kawng* (555 &556).

In this way, he made strong and powerful suggestions in areas where critical and problematic debates arise in the usage of Mizo language. These suggestions and changes have been widely used till today, thereby clarifying many doubts on the usage and writing of Mizo language. He states :

1. *a*: at the end of a sentence, at the end of a clause and when joining pronouns.
2. – *ah* : this is a preposition, should be joined with the word before it. It can be misunderstood if it is used before the vowel *i* and *u*, the use of hyphen (-) is imperative in such cases. Eg., *Li-ah, chiliah*.
3. *In* : used as a prefix or a suffix, it should always be joined with words,
4. *Lo* : this is most often used separately. Eg., *Lo kal, Dam lote*.
5. *Ti* : this is causative and thus, should be joined with words. Eg., *Tisual, tikal, thiltihtheihna*.
6. *Tir* : it is causative that should join other words. Eg., *eitir, kaltir*.
7. *Ber* : it should be used separately, but should join words in cases that it is used to denote a title. Eg., *Lalber. Chungnungbera*.
8. *Na* : a suffix that should always join other word. Eg., *Inneihna, Ropuina*.
9. *Tu* : used as a suffix or a prefix that must join with words. Eg. *Zirtirtu, tupawh*.
10. Plural : the words that help denotethe plurality of word must always join the word they describe. Eg., *Unaute, lala teho, unauhote, kalte*.
11. *Tak & takin* : should be used separately from other words. Eg., *Dam takin, tha tak*.
12. *Zia* : if it is a suffix, it should always be joined to the word. Eg., *chakzia, theihzia*.
13. *Pui, san, sak* : should be joined with the verb before it. Eg., *kalpui, kalsan, eisal*. If *pui* is an adjective it should not be joined to a word. Eg., *Phung lian pui*.
14. *Tin* : a distributive that should be used separately. Eg., *Mi tin, chi tin, ni tin, in tinah*.
15. *Mi* : should always be used separately. Eg., *Mi fel. Mi ngawichawi, mi sual*. (a word that is made up of two words, which, if taken apart would not make sense on its

own, but creates a meaningful word only when joined should always be put together) eg., *mihring, misualte, sanghamantheimi, ami an riang maw* etc.

16. *Hun sawina* : words that indicate time should always be joined. Eg., *Naktukah, nakum, thawhlehni*.
17. Apostrophe : should be used only when its absence would cause confusion.
18. a & e : when used at the end of a sentence, it should not be joined with the word, but if 'v' is used, it must join the word. Eg., *a kal lo va, a va paw ve*.
19. *Ta, dawn, mek, tur, reng, rawh, sa, tawh, lai* : these are considered auxiliary verbs, and they must be written separately.
20. *Nimahsela, amaherawhcu* : if they are used as conjunction they must be joined, if not, they must be used separately.
21. *Mahse* : if it is used as a conjunction or next to a sentence, it must be joined.
22. *Thu kar cheh nei* : certain words that are joined often require an 'a' to fall between them, in such cases they must be written separately. Eg., *riltam – ril a tam, englo – eng ilo, bengvar - a beng a var*. etc.
23. Numerals : tens, hundreds, thousands must always be written together one after another. Eg., *singthum, sangli zariat sawmkua pasarih*, the word 'leh' is not a necessity, but can be used if one wishes to.
24. Hyphen : should be used only with figures, or after foreign words, or foreign proper names. Eg., *Mel 8-na, officer-te, Adam-a*.
25. Foreign ordinary words : it is preferable to write foreign words as they sound in the Mizo language, and after, indicate the English spelling within brackets eg., *karfiu (curfew) was declared ny our paws kawmandarin (post commander) but was*

rejected by our eaw (AO). In proper human names a/i must be used at the end to indicate the gender of the parent.

26. *U* : it is a pronoun that must be written separately. Eg., *kal ula, ti ula, ulang (ila, ilang)* (556-559).

Zairema clearly voiced his opinion about the grammatical aspect of the Mizo language. His suggestion is used as the correct writing of the Mizo language till today. He also suggested that certain words should be joined to form a single word like these double syllable word such as:

Achin, anaranin, alangin, atuk, ader, anazawng, alawm, aṭangin, ahnek, aping, aliamin, avangin, ahnuin, apumin, asin, aho, aruakin, afalin, azawnga, ahrang, arualin, atlarin, azawngin, akhuain, arukin, athlawnin, awzia, achhun azan, alian etc, atawpah, achuang aliam, apui apang, atawp berah, ahmei apa, athlum aal, atirin, akawi angil, aṭhen azar, akip akawi, azawng aza, achhuk achho, athim avar (559).

2.3.4 *Ziaka Mizo ṭawng* (Written Mizo Language)

In this article, Zairema mentions that it is unfortunate that the English missionaries made double letters for one tone in alphabet. This created difficulty, especially for children and non Mizo readers. For non Mizo readers and speakers, the fourth letter of the Mizo alphabet ‘ch’ is very difficult to read as two letters share one tone to produce a single syllable sound. Similarly, the second letter of the alphabet ‘aw’ is often read by non- Mizo speakers as *ui*. He states :

We are given three letters, ch, ng and aw to indicate one tonal marker. We are also given a single alphabet that indicates a double tone. Our alphabet *o* is a combination of the two sound *aw* and *u*, if we were to use our *o* in the place of *aw* then *o* would have to be

written as *ou* to indicate its difference. In all languages, the complex aspects of it are often the legit ones and yet speakers always tend to adopt the easier version of a language (564).

He suggested the replacement of *ch* with *c*, *ng* with *n*, *aw* with *o*. In this manner, it becomes easier for non Mizo readers and younger children to read and write correctly. Zairema argues that if this simple method had been applied, the Mizo Bible would have been 120 pages lesser. He states :

If we were to replace certain letters, *ch* as *c*, *ng* as the elongated *n* or perhaps *aw* as *o*, we would have to discard, from every page of our translated Bible, about 60 *h*, 60 *g* and 50 *w* and if we were to replace *o* with *ou* we would have to add 20 *u* in each page. All in all we would have 120 pages lesser in our translated Bible. In every three hour exam that we write we would save up to 10 minutes. Most typewriters do not have the elongated *n*, which however will simply be recognized with the letter *n* or perhaps create a new button for it. We don't have *t* in typewriters either and yet we use them anyway; we would no longer have any use of *w* of which we could perhaps come up with a new use for it (565).

Zairema argues that the Mizo alphabet is bound to meet certain changes in the hands of the future generations and it is imperative that the necessary modifications and changes must be made and applied at the earliest. He is of the opinion that the required changes to the Mizo alphabets must be made before our written literature starts to expand. He states :

It will be inevitable that the new generations to come will make more changes to our letters, and if that is the case it is better to make those changes as early as possible. It simply is the case that we don't have any prominent Mizo books to type or edit yet, and

it is wise to make those changes before those books come to be. Just because the older generation is well versed with the current ways it would be unfair to keep the new generations to come from progressing, even for the current generation, the changes that are to be made are not so colossal that they can't be understood or gotten used to within a week (565).

Ri chhinchhiahna: Zairema also states that the most important aspect in Mizo language is the tone marker. The Mizo people cannot eloquently express their feelings in writing, and they write on the basis of the sounds they hear. For example, if we write *He pa hi pa tha tak a ni*, the sentence can have multiple meanings because the word *pa* indicates several meanings. *Pa* means mushrooms, father, manly and is also used as the masculine gender indicator. Hence, the reader would not be able to identify if the word *pa* in the above sentence is a reference to a mushroom or a man. The problem lies in the fact that without a tone marker, it becomes difficult to read sentences correctly. Zairema, therefore, suggests the use of tone markers in the writing of Mizo language. He states :

- a) High tone to lower tone: A in lo chu ram rawh se. the tone of letter *a* in the word *Ram* is the most common tone that we use, perhaps we could indicate this tone with a dash that slants down wards from the right to left.
- b) High tone: Ka *Kal*. The tone of *a* in the word *kal* is a high tone that could be indicated with a dash above the letter.
- c) Low tone: Ka *kal* chuan. The tone in *kal* is a low tone that could be indicated with a dash beneath the letter.

- d) Crescendo tone: we have a lot of words that rise to a higher tone from a low tone. *Palai bawngte* consists of *aw* and *e* that rises from a low tone. Perhaps could be indicated with an oval dash above.

Apart from these tones there are other tones as well, however, all tones are made of two, high and low tones only. In the word *Hnamtur* the *u* is of a high tone, and we can use the original tone indicator for this, while *a* has low tone we can indicate with a tone indicator placed beneath the letter. There are various short tones that can very easily mispronounced as well, therefore, we can put a dot on top of short high tones, and put a dot beneath the letter for low tones. When we write about *Pasawntlung* (mushroom); eg *he pa(mushroom) hi pa tha tak a ni(It is good mushroom)*. Here in the first one *pa*, *a* is we should write it as with *marking rising tone*, in the second one *pa*, *a* is we should write it as *short high tone*. When we write about men; eg *he pa(masculine) hi pa(men) tak a ni(he is gentlemen)*. Here in the first one *pa*, *a* is we should write it as with *marking high tone*, in the second one *pa*, *a* is we should write it as *marking short falling tone*. These are simple markers and are easy to remember (566 & 567).

In this article, Zairema clearly states that in Mizo alphabet *ch*, *ng*, *aw*, create difficulty for non Mizo readers and children because the alphabets were created by the English missionaries on the basis of their own understanding and pronunciation of Mizo language. His suggestion regarding the use of tone markers brought about remarkable change in the writing and reading of Mizo. According to Zairema, Mizo language is a tonal language and without tonal markers one cannot read correctly. It is imperative that we have tonal marks especially for high tone, low tone, slide down tone and slide high tone in our language such as descending from high to low tone, high tone, low tone and crescendo tone.

2.3.5 *A eng nge upa zawk ?* (Which elder)

According to Zairema, all languages in the world started with complex pronunciation of words and then gradually changed to simpler pronunciations as the language moved through the course of time and history. For instance, the Mizo fruit *sinhlu*, is often pronounced as *sunhlu* and this is because to pronounce *sun* is easier than *sin*. Hence, the word underwent a change from *sinhlu* to *sunhlu*, even though *sinhlu* is the older word. Similarly, the original Mizo word for banana is *Banhla* but it has been changed to *Balhla* because *bal* is easier to pronounce than *ban*. Language, for Zairema, must feel comfortable in the mouth of the speaker and in the ears of the listener.

In Mizo language, when we write sentences such as *Bazarah a kal a*, here *kal a* is read as *kal-la*, the name *Lala* is also written by some people as *Lalla*. Zairema suggested in order to solve the confusion related to the difference in pronunciation, it might be easier to write in this way: *Kal a* is *ka la*, *Lala* is *La-la*, *I dam em* is *I da-em*, *eng a* is *e nga*. *Nge* is used as an interrogative term so it should be written separately. Eg, *Eng nge, khaw nge*. He states :

Now let us take a look at how we may simplify certain pronunciation. *Bazarah a kal a* is how we spell this sentence and yet never really pronounce the words *Kal a*, we could be fastidious about it and try to say it the right way but it is an inconvenience for most people, and to make it simple we most often say ‘kal-la’ in our speech. The name *Lala* is often spelled as *Lalla* by some people and this is perhaps because our pronunciations emphasizes the *l* much more than the others, and to make our writing compatible with our speech we could change it to *ka-la*... the word *eng-a ?* is also pronounced as *E nga*. In the same way, are we to write *Eng e* as *Eng nge?*. *Nge* is a word used for asking a

question, it is a completely different word from *eng* and thus, should be written separately (570-571).

Zairema revealed from this article that any language change from complex pronunciation to easier pronunciation, so, complex pronunciation is older and earlier. He suggested in writing Mizo language like these ; *Kal a* is *ka la*, *Lala* is *La-la*, *I dam em* is *I da-em*, *eng a* is *e nga*. *Eng nge* is use for question so he say *Eng nge* is correct writing, like this *khawi nge* is not correct but *khaw nge* is correct.

In this article, he was against Siamkima's opinion, Siamkima states regarding Mizo language, "Mi tam ber ɬawng hi ɬawng dik a ni mai" (573). But Zairema say due to more user is not correct language. He states :

The popular pronunciation of a word does not make the pronunciation the correct one, if we were to be around people who cannot pronounce *o*, making it into an *au*, are we to simply adapt to the majority pronunciation even though it is wrong? This could be right only if we were to discard of our language and replace it with theirs. Just because there are more people who say *Balhla* does not make the word *Banhla* and less legit than it was before. Language has small nuances that help differentiate between meanings. The word *hek* is an indicator that we have been falsely accused; now we often say *min hek* but we do not add the word *dawt* we do not relay the entirety of its meaning (573-574).

He also says that in Mizo language, we used *v* sound after *u* sound, while *aw* is double letters but in reality we use one sound, whereas *o* sound is double but we used one letter, so, our pronunciation and grammatical writing is disturb. Therefore, he suggested writing *aw* instead *o*. and we pronounce *o* is *ou* eg *duh lo* is *duh lou*.

2.3.6 *Mizo ṭawng awmze inhnaih ṭhenkhat* (Some closely related meaning in Mizo Language)

In this article, Zairema examines several Mizo words which have closely related meanings such as *Hamtha*, *Nihlawh*, *Vannei*, *Engthawl*. These are spelled and pronounced differently but their surface meanings are more or less the same. However, each of these words have their own context and have specific uses depending on the contexts the meaning and incorrect uses are the following:

Hamtha: *Ham* is the cover of any living things. In the simplest term, it may be translated as *membrane*, and all living things are said to have *Ham*. Any living things which have not good *Ham* are not health, so, good *ham* is very important for healthy. According to Mizo culture, if *ham* is damage, that person is not health and easier die, so, the word ‘Hamtha’ mean a persons having physically strong and ability to do any works. He states :

Animals are all known to have what we call *ham* (membrane). And it is a saying in Mizo culture that if the *ham* or membrane is damaged, the animal can no longer survive. If their membrane is sturdy and healthy, they are safe from most diseases, they do not die easy and have greater endurance to pain and sickness. The same idea goes for those who are of a strong built. Therefore, people who can work well, who can put in a lot of work in their farms are termed *Mi ham tha* (576).

Nihlawh: A person achieved or reach or earn not deserve and in-possible aims which is *nihlawh*, it also implies lucky and blessed. He states :

When something good comes along unexpectedly or undeservingly, or when one receives good favours without putting in as much effort, it is termed as *nihlawh*, where one receives an undeserved blessing. Because the word *hlawh* indicates something that is

earned or reaped, it also requires the receiver to work for it, and they receive it without the work is an undeserved blessing. When one seeks out a profit and acquires it, it warrants *A va nihlawh bike em* (576).

Vannei : It implies a person who has very valuable things unexpectedly and suddenly which is *Vannei*, it also means unexpected gift. Its opposite word is *Vanduai* its means unlucky and not blessed. He states :

It means that the speaker has the sky in his hands. When people acquire something precious they say *Van ka nei*. It means they have in their hands, blessings that are undeserved and unwarranted, beyond their own dreams and aspirations. Now, *Vanduai* can be translated to *Van tha lo, chan tha lo* (Bad luck). To claim that someone is *Vanduai* or saying *I va vanduai ve* means we express their bad luck. To say *I duai lo ang* on the other hand means to say *I chan a chhe lo ang* or that misfortune will not befall you. The very opposite of this is what it means to be *Vannei* or fortunate. The words *Ni* and *van* indicates the sun and the sky; the sky being a much more magnificent object than the sun, is not something that can be acquired by natural laws, it cannot be acquired simply because we wish it, but as something that comes to us unwarranted and undeserved (577).

Engthawl: The word *Engthawl* means free from any burden. If a person having sorrow or any burden in life can change that in to happiness, that person is free from that and this situation is call *Engthawl*. The words *Engthawl* and *Thawveng* are very closely defined, but they are different, the word *Thawveng* implies not cover from any other things and proud, while the word *Engthawl* implies free from any internal burden and feeling. He states :

When misfortune, pain and troubles befall us, life becomes much more difficult and we describe that as *eng a pik*, or that the light has been snuffed out of our lives. When our troubles are suddenly relieved we state that we are *eng a thawl* or the light has been rekindled and the light that is blocked is now set free. When the light that has been snuffed out is rekindled, we say we are *engthawl* or that the light has been revived. *Engthawl* and *thawveng* are two very similar words, a mountain that is *thawveng* means one that has no obstacles around. A carefree and uninhibited person is what we term *thawveng*. It claims that it has no obstacles in its way. Such an uninhibited character is also termed as *khauphar thawven*. The words *engthawl* and *thawveng* have been used so interchangeably that the lines between them are blurred and *engthawl* does not express the depth of peace it once did. Living under the fear of demons, and the sense that darkness surrounded us back in our past, is an idea from which we are not set free or made *engthawl* (577).

Therefore, from this article, Zairema mentions and defines relative four words such as *Hamtha*, *Nihlawh*, *Vannei*, and *Engthawl*. These words are very related but different in usage, so, he ensured the meaning and usage and mixed use. Especially the words *Engthawl* and *Thawveng* are most related, he ensures a word *Engthawl* means free from any burden. A person having sorrow, sadness and any burden in life, suddenly changes to happiness, which is call *Engthawl*. The word *Thawveng* implies careless and proud, while the word *Engthawl* implies free from any burden and happy.

The word *Vannei*, means unexpected gift. The opposite word is *Vanduai* which means unlucky and not blessed. The word *Nihlawh* means a person who achieved and earn fortunately

but not deserve and like impossible which is call ‘nihlawh’, and also implies lucky and blessed, the word *Hamtha* mean a person having physically strong ability to do any work.

2.3.7 *Mizo tawng v leh h* (v & h in Mizo language)

Zairema, in this article talks about adding *v* and *h* in writing some words. Eg *Ka duh lo va ni* here *v* sound is we pronounce when we speaking, though sometime we speak with *v* sound but he suggested to write without *v*. The English missionaries wrote some words without *h* in the southern part of the Mizoram. Eg *Pate u, in nupuite khawngai rawh u* (in the Bible) and these words such as; *bawi, dawi, pawi*. But Welsh missionary write with *h* in the northern part of the Mizoram, so, Zairema suggests writing without *v* and with *h* in some words of after he ask and enquired linguist. Eg without *v*, eg *Ka duh lo a ni, A pawi lo e* etc. and with *h* *Khawngaih, Bawih, Dawih, Pawih*. He states :

In the south of Mizoram, the words are written as *bawi, dawi and pawi*, while in the north we claim that they must be written as *dawih, bawih and pawih*. The missionaries who entered the south were English and their ways greatly influenced the people. The missionaries in the north, however, were Welsh missionaries who did not wholly imbibe the English way of doing things. When the Bible was to be printed in Mizo, I asked the Bible Society Linguists whether we must include *h* and *v*. To add *h* is and underdifferentiation, a debate that has not come to a conclusion, and thus must always be included. The letter *v* however, is an overdifferentiation, out of their attempt to clarify it. Hence, it is equally correct whether one uses *v* or not in a spelling is the reply I received to my question (584).

According to Zairema, we should appreciate our missionaries but now, we must have free mindset and be free from the influence of missionaries. He says we must move on from the missionaries era, we need to review the missionaries method of writing language, our missionaries teach us one word in English to write one word in Mizo, eg, *who* to write one word in Mizo *Tunge*, but Siamkima was against this method, he says *nge* is question it is not relate prefix *tu*, therefore he proposed like this; *tu nge ?*, *engtizia nge ?* according to Zairema, it is more important to write a word on the basis of tone than neither join nor not a word. He states :

We are slowly ridding ourselves from the sway of the white man, and paving new roads for ourselves. We have our own university where we have a Master's degree in our own language with our very own professors. In this way, since the white man left we have paved our own way in our education. It is now necessary to look back on how they taught us to write. We were taught that a single English word must also be converted to a single mizo word, and thus, to write *who* as *tunge*.....Pu Siamkima critiqued that there is no such written law for this rule passed on to us, that *nge* indicates a question and does not have any relationship with the word before it.... The word written as *Engtiziange* must now be written as *engtizia nge*. The issue lies not just in what words we are to separate or join, but in how the mizo speech is translated to match its Mizo spelling (585).

Zairema also talks about the tune marker in Mizo language. Likewise, Siamkima also suggested the use of tune marker. Zairema uses tune marker in his book *Kan Bible Hi* and in the revised edition of the Bible. People in the rural areas appreciated these books but intellectual persons of the city may not necessarily appreciate them. Zairema feels that the aim of Mizo educated persons during this time was to imitate the English style, so he blamed some people in

their style of writing names such as Colney, Poonte, Sylo, etc. So, without tone marker it becomes very difficult to read correctly, Zairema suggested tone markers in the writing of Mizo language. He states :

When we took part in the Pulpit Bible typing committee, Pu Siamkima suggested that we record how Mizo words sound, as he had done before, he got us to listen to a tape recording of a non-mizo speaker reading mizo and we saw that other than their pronunciation of the consonants there was no tilt in their accent. He told the both of us to look deeper into this..... I used this technique in the previous translation edition and afterwards in my book *Kan Bible Hi*, and even wrote down how to use this technique in my introduction. What we consider the uneducated from the villages were quite pleased with this edition. The people from the city however did not share the same appreciation... and in the newly translated edition, they got rid of all the signs and symbols that indicates tone and pronunciation....To simply follow the English tradition and write our names as Colney, Poonte, sylo etc does not necessarily indicate that they are superior in their knowledge of English (586-587).

Zairema also talks about the discussion of alphabet reform. *Ch* is to *c*, *aw* is to *o*, *ng* is to *y* or *n* for long leg, *au* is to *o*. If we follow these discussions and suggestions, it will be available for systematic letters for the compiler of Dictionary and the Bible will be reduce for twenty five pages. He states :

If the people who taught us to write were the Italians, our ways of writing would not be as they are today. We were taught by English men whose alphabets have no link with their pronunciation, and thereby taught us just the same... the sound *ch* turned out to be similar with the word church and thus they gave us the letter *ch*, two letters to represent

a single tone.....all the while, we also use the single letter *o* to represent two tones....If we were to alter the way we write, making *ch* into *c*, *aw* into *o*, *ng* into *y* or elongated *n* (like the linguists), or *au* is to *o*, the sentence *chaw i ei duh lo ngang em ni ?* would become *co i ei duh lou yay em ni ?*, perhaps this would cause some confusion for a month or so. However, this would allow for the Bible to be atleast 25 pages shorter.....Those who create Dictionaries would also have a systematic alphabet system to look up to. It truly is time to pave our own way and have our own say in our writing without looking back into the past, and rather, look forward with our own skills (587).

2.3.8 *Mizo ṭawng kan hman dan ṭhenkhat* (Some usage of Mizo Language)

Zairema defines the meaning and usage of some words of Mizo language in this article. He felt that Mizo language, which has been carefully and systematically crafted by our ancestors have been misused and modified to the extent where the actual and original meanings have been lost in the process. He states :

Our forefathers forged our language with a lot of care, diving into speech only after careful contemplation. Can this be considered why the Mizo speech in general is not fast paced? Our language has been developed carefully, and to alter its meaning and to rearrange it may not be wisest decision on our part (588).

According to Zairema, all languages will develop and change with time. However, it cannot be regarded as a positive change if the change brings about the loss of meaning. Therefore, in order to avoid this change in word meaning, he defines some phrases with their original meanings and usage such as: *Mipat hmeichhiat*, *Nulattlangval*, *Puh-mawh*, *Mawh*.

Mipat hmeichhiat : Zairema feels that there has been intellectual misuse of this phrase. Some intellectuals use this word to describe sex before marriage. Zairema argues that this phrase is used between married couples as well, especially in situations of hindered sexual relationship between the man and woman. It originally refers to a man or woman who has trouble in having sexual intercourse with his/her partner. In Mizo, the phrase *Mipa thei lo/Hmeichia thei lo* indicates a person who cannot perform his/ her sexual duties towards his/her partner. He states :

Mizo Academy of Letters gave the Academy award to pi Kawlkungi for her works on Dec 1998, and the their reason for choosing her as the awardee was that, *She contributed in spreading the idea of abstinence against pre-marital sex in her stories and writings, relaying the message to the youth which warrants the status of being a natural treasure.* I, for one, have not found any such concepts in Pi Kawlkungi's works, although she did write stories that catered to young men and women. Sex in most Mizo writings is usually only related to man and wife, and the problems that can arise within it; there are much more men who cannot perform sexually than there are women in each clan.....I directly critique the choice of words that the Academy has decided to use, and they claim that *These are the words used by members of Synod.* I do not expect the Academy of letters to excuse the misuse of words just because those words are used by the Synod (589).

Nulat tlangval : Originally, this phrase indicates the act of sexual intercourse outside the ring of marriage. What is interesting here is that the female gender *nula* comes before the male gender *tlangval* and according to Zairema, the arrangement is in such a way because women are considered more important in this context. He states :

This is a concept where a man and woman take part in what the English language calls *sex* before marriage. The more essential and important gender is the woman, and for that we mention them first (590).

In Mizo society, women are considered to be the responsible agent for sex before marriage because a Mizo man is believed to never initiate the act without a green signal or a positive body language from the woman. This shows how women are given respect and importance in olden Mizo society. He states :

When it comes to pre-marital sex, women are held much more responsible than men. When we say we are critical of their *mitmei* or character, it involves all that they do in their actions. If they are reckless and too open with men, it is difficult for the men to be mindful and thus, their actions can lead to the downfall on an entire tribe (591).

The words *Nula* and *Tlângval* have positive and negative implications in Mizo language, and hence one must be careful in using these words, he states:

The words *nula* and *tlangval* have other various connotations. We also use it to address those who have turned into young adults by saying *I va nula ve*, *I va tlangval ve*, and it is, in a way, a term of endearment and for the recipient, it is much more preferable than being commented *I va tar ta ve* or look how old you have become. These two words are also employed to relay a message with negative connotations as well. If we were to comment to a married man, *I tlangval hle*, it means he still has the tendency to cat call women and get too close to them. The same goes for a married woman, if we comment *A nula deuh mang e*. we mean that she is still too uninhibited around other men (592).

In this article, Zairema stresses on the importance of preserving the original meanings of words and the correct contexts in which words are used. Even though language is bound to undergo changes and modifications, the meaning of words and the contexts in which they are used should not be altered. He accused the intellectual class for their carelessness and inaccuracy in using words in the right contexts. The mistakes made by intellectuals have led to the loss of original word meanings to a large extent. He states :

It is a great mistake that we now revert the words *nulat tlangval* by saying *mipat hmeichhiat*. The words that our forefathers arranged with its specific context and meaning is now reversed and we darken our own cause (593).

Puh-mawh: According to Zairema, the word *Puh-mawh* is a new word which may have been likely coined by politicians. He says the word has been used in two contexts. In the first context, we use the word *puh* as an equivalent word to *mawhchhiat*, *mawhphurhtir*, *dem*, etc., all of which points to the act of putting the blame on someone. *Mawh* is also used as responsibility, consequence, etc. Another use of the word of *mawh* refers to refusal, hesitate, delay, eg (in Mizo) *ti duh lo*, *hreh*, *harsa ti*, *muangchang*, etc. The new word *Puh-mawh*, according to Zairema, is an unnecessary combination of two words which have more or less the same meaning. He states :

When we use the word *Puh-mawh*, we seem to use two synonymous words at the same time; to use this word is similar to us saying *mawhchhiat*, *mawhphurhtir*, *mawh*, *dem* and the like. Why is it that we add the word *puh* to the word *mawh*. It seems only the result of a greater convenience. To use a word to the point that it changes the rules is not something I consider to be the best move.....*Puh-mawh* is synonymous to saying puh-

dem, puh-mawhchhiat, and the like, and the way we use the word *mawh* has now deviated from the original use, of which I cannot agree with (594).

In short, Zairema redefines and clarifies certain words and phrase which have been misused, especially in terms of meanings and the contexts in which the words and phrases are used. He gives clear contextual meanings for important phrase such as *Mipat hmeichhiat*, *Nulat tlangval*, *Puh-mawh*. These words, on account of the loss of the original meanings, have become very controversial, especially among the intellectual circles. Therefore, the usage, meaning and its implication in connection with culture are clearly defined in this article.

2.3.9 *Hmeichhia nge Minu (Hmeichhia or Minu)*

The Mizo word for woman *Hmeichhia* is often regarded as offensive by some women and prominent citizens and they have made several replacement for the word; the most popular suggestion is the word *Minu*. Zairema defines and explains the origin and the root of usage the word *hmeichhia* which turned out to be quite different from the interpretation of the word by feminists and other concerned members of society. Here, we can see the importance of critical writings for Mizo language in solving linguistic problems related to big social issues.

Zairema says the word *Hmei* implies two meanings. The first implication of the word *hmei* is the second wife of the village chief. Such a woman is called *Hmei*. However, if a commoner or layman had a second wife, she is never referred to as *hmei*; she is simply referred to as the *second wife*. In Mizo society, the chief's *hmei*, which is the literal equivalent of mistress, has a valued status. She is given similar treatment as the chief's daughter, and is treated with respect and kindness. However, some intellectuals and women often failed to understand the original word meaning and context of the word *hmei*. They often interpret the

word as a derogatory term referring to a second wife, a second choice or mistress who is looked down upon by society. He states :

Women often claim their discontentment with the word *hmeichhia*, *hmeiah pawh a chhia lehngal chu* or *to be termed the lowest even amongst the mistresses* is their discontentment. When a man marries two women, his second wife is considered the *hmei* or the mistress, often understood to be *the second choice*. A man of low rank does not get the chance to get another wife, and even if he does they are termed *the second wife*.....when a king passes away, his first wife and children inherit their house and assets, whereas their mistresses and their children do not receive of the same, but only the assets at the edge of the town (227).

Hmei also stands for the word *nu* which means mother or someone who is married. The word *hmei-thai* refers to a woman single living in a house without husband on account of death of the husband or divorce. The word *Pa-hmei* means father and mother, and it means a married couple living together on their own without the support of their children. The phrase *a hmei a pa* is a general phrase that is use to indicate all men and women and is equivalent to the English word *everyone*. He states :

The word *hmei* simply means *nu* or *woman*. *Hmeithai* also translates to a woman who was married but now lives on her own again as a result of death or divorce... *Pahmei* translates to *man and woman*, a man and woman who live together sperately. Even if they have had children, if their children are still too young to contribute to their family, and the man and wife are still the only ones earning, even that is termed as a *Pahmei* relationship. Amongst animals, the ones who carry the children are termed *a nu*. When

we say *a hmei a pa* we are referring to human beings, and if we say *a nu a pa* we are referring to animals (227-228).

Zairema admits that the second part of the word *chhia* implies something unfavourable, bad or not good enough. Due to this, the word *hmeichhia* is loosely interpreted as a second wife/mistress who is not good enough at all. This is the main reason why women find the word *hmeichhia* to be derogative. However, Zairema also defines the contextual use of the word *chhia*. Though the word imply bad, not good and beauty the word might have its origin in the Burmese word *sai* is used to indicate something/someone respectful and honourable. Zairema also states that the word *chhia* might have come from the casual attempt made by the men folks to maintain their superiority. He states :

The word *chhia* does have a negative connotation, to denote something bad or ugly, where *hmelchhia* is to describe an ugly person who is not pleasing to the eyes. Mizo people seem to have an odd characteristic where we put down others in order to lift ourselves in the eyes of others; with the ones whom we cannot catch up to we resort to shaming them with our words....so it would seem that from a certain age the Mizo men felt greatly inferior to mizo women and thus resorted to use language as a tool to drag them down, perhaps with the hope that the women themselves would feel inferior, labelled them with the words *nu (hmei) chhia*....I do not have any other explanation than this. For the Burmese, the word *sai*; is used to denote respect. The Sukte assign the term *sai-pa* to their pastors to indicate that they are respectable.... *hmeichhia (sai)* thus indicates respect (228).

Another interpretation of the word *chhia* is when it is used as a cover-up word when the opposite meaning is the real intention of the speaker. Such words used for covering up the real intention is known as in Mizo as *thukhuh*. For example, a young girl may use the word *chhia* to her boyfriend, saying, *I chhe roh/I chhe belbul e a*, which is a subtle way of teasing him, a discreet way of showing affection and fondness. He states :

There is yet another clarification to make. We tend to use a lot of hidden words that have other meanings such as *ui hum lek* which means, they have a year's worth of rice, *hawp khawp che che* which means they have more than enough for one year.....If a mizo young lady claims that a man is ugly or *I chhe bel bul*, it is actually looking quite hopeful for him (229).

Therefore, Zairema was against the interpretation of the word *hmeichhia* by some women and intellectuals. *Hmei* might not be the term for a proper wife but it implies someone that the chief takes care of as his wife. They are entitled to be owned only by the chiefs. They enjoy a valued status in olden Mizo society, and to have the identity of the *hmei* was a status aspired by the lower class in society. Therefore, Zairema is of the opinion that the word *Hmeichhia* does not necessarily signify a secondary status of the wife or a servant. This interpretation changed and influenced many readers which to a certain extent, clarified the linguistic debate regarding the word *Hmeichhia*.

2.3.10 *Kan Bible Hi* (Our Bible)

The book *Kan Bible Hi* is a renowned book in Mizo literature. It was selected as Book of the Year 2003 by the Mizo Academy of Letters. Its contains four critical views on the Bible

translation such as : “*Lehlin tha nia ngaih lem loh*”(148) “*Tawngkam pawl thei a ni em*”(150), “*Chhiar dik loh theih*”(151), “*Rilrua rethei engtihna nge*” (159).

2.3.10.1 *Lehlin tha nia ngaih lem loh* (Possible Incorrect translation) : Here, he discussed and ensured the translation of *Love* to Mizo. All the words *love* in English are translated as *Hmangaihna* in Mizo Bible. Mizo language is richer than the English language in terms of the word *love*. So, according to Zairema all the words *love* are translated to *hmangaihna* is incorrect. He states :

The English word *love* was first translated to *hmangaihna*, so wherever the word *love* arises we replace it with *hmangaihna*. However, compared to the English language the Mizo language has much lesser situations where we use the word *love*. The relationship between men and women is called *inngaizawng*, the relationship between husband and wife is called *induh* and friendships are termed as *inngaihna* and parents *duat* their children. It is because of this we now use the word *hmangaihna* even in places where we naturally would not use before (*Kan Bible Hi* 148).

In Mizo language, *i* is the symbol of feminine gender, but in Greek those words *Finna* (Brightness) and all the names of town and cities are feminine gender. Due to these, in Greek all feminine gender are translated as feminine in Mizo. So, the word *Brightness* is translated as *finng-i* in Mizo word *Fingi* is a personal feminine gender, so, it is very difficult to read and understand. So, according to Zairema, word by word translation is not good translation method, though in Greek word is feminine Gender not translated as feminine gender in Mizo. He argues :

The translations made back in the day are not considered quite inaccurate anymore...various words which did not make sense on their own were all translated. It

seems that they did not consider how it would not make sense in the mizo language, like, *Fingi an thiam e* that does not really make sense for us. *Finna* or wisdom is considered the feminine gender in Greek language but in Mizo we do not have anything similar to that, the only way we denote a feminine gender is by adding the letter *I* at the end, and they seem to have added the word *I* which makes it hard for us to comprehend what they mean. If they had simply used the term *Finna* or wisdom, it would be much simpler for us; we have no need for the Greek version of it. In the Greek language, the names of towns and places are all assigned the female gender, and because of that we have Rodhi, Kaisari, Phillipi all assigned with *I* to denote the gender. Although these do not pose any real problems, and we don't know any other reason for them writing this way, it might be easy to get confused when visitng these foreign lands where they simply write Athens for Atheni (148).

2.3.10.2 *Tawngkam pawl thei a ni em* (Is it incorrect words) : Zairema says that the English word *sacrifice* translated to Mizo as *inthawina* is incorrect. The English regarded all cutting of animals for the sake of religion as sacrifice. However, in Mizo language and culture the word *inthawina* implies the special rites performed by the priest in order to cure a sick or diseased person. In Mizo cultural context, the word *inthawi* often involves the cutting of animals to cast away the evil spirits. Also, in Mizo language the word *bia* is an invitation for presence. Hence, according to Zairema, the English word *sacrifice* is to be translated in Mizo as *bia* as the interpretation and meaning corresponds to the religious connotation. He states :

I cannot conclude whether it is truly problematic or not, but something that I find quite inaccurate is how the English translated *inthawina* as sacrifice. In the mizo sense, the word *inthawina* is used in cases of sickness where the Bawlpu scarifices chicken to the

demons to appease them so they would go away. The demons are threatened to not come near the ailing person again and rids of them with enchantments. They claim that the Mizos took part in religion....Any form of animal butchering was translated as sacrifice. The English did not understand it and it would seem the Mizos did not have the ability to explain it either.... If we say that a man has *bia* or made a spoken agreement with the woman, it is forever binding, in the same way, if we say *bia* or take part in a religion, it is meant for eternity as well (150).

2.3.10.3 *Chhiar dik loh theih* (Possible incorrect reading) : In this chapter of the book, Zairema examines Luke 1: 46 as translated in the Mizo Bible where the word *soul* is translated in Mizo as *nun*. In this verse, Mary's words is translated as *Ka nunin Lalpa a chawimawi e* (My soul rejoices in the Lord). Mizo translation seems to denote a certain sense of pride in Mary's tone. Zairema suggests that it be translated as *Ka thinlung takin Lalpa chu ropui ka ti a, ka fak a ni*, and this suggestion echoes the humble tone in which Mary has spoken. Zairema says that when engaging oneself in translation work, the meaning, nature and context of the words should be taken into consideration and that the cultural context of words must be given importance. He states :

My life sing praises of the glory of God has had many sermons based on it and as I have heard, *Mary's blameless life gave praise to the Lord, and in the same way our life should give praises to the glory of God in the eyes of the non-believers* is what that sentence really teaches.....What Mary tried to say, however, is that *I truly believe with all my heart that God is great, I praise him and glorify his name* (151).

Zairema also examines these words from the Bible *Lallukhum*, *Thiltihtheihna*, *Rawngbawl*, *Vantirhkoh*. He states that these words are new words coined at the time of translation. He argues that *Angel* is not *tirhkoh* and that it should be *tirhkah*. The sea angels in Greek myths are similar to what we call *tui huai* in Mizo folktales and to translate angels in the Bible as *Tirhkoh* is incorrect.

...the word *tirhkah* or prophet perhaps actually means messenger. We are well aware of the Greek language *Angel*. What they term *Sea angel* may actually be equivalent to what we call *Lui Huai* (151).

2.3.10.4 *Rilrua rethei eng tihna nge* (What is poor feeling) : Zairema also adds that phrase *Rilrua rethei* in Mizo Bible is an incorrect translation. He says that on the basis of English and Greek words, *rethei* should be replaced by *Pachhia*. According to Zairema *rethei* is incorrect because the word has two meanings. One is when we suffer from sorrow or burden, we tend to say *a retheih thlak*, and the second use of the word is to indicate financial poverty. For the latter use, the word *Pachhia* is an equivalent word. What the verse in Luke refers to is the people who are economically poor and hence, the word *pachhia*, in the Biblical context, means an economically poor person. He states :

In the previous translation, it is stated that *Rilrua retheite chu an eng a thawl e, vanram an ta a ni si a*. In Greek and in English, the singular word translates to *thlarau rethei* or those who are poor in spirit. The word *thlarau* or spirit is translated to *rilru* or mind in this translation, they seem to lack what we call consistence... the word *rethei* or poverty has two implications; when one faces an arduous episode in their life we call it *a retheih thlak* to emphasize the misfortune. Then there is the usual *mi rethei* or poor person lacking money and assets, they are also termed *pachhia* or downtrodden.....It is written

in the book of Luke that it does not indicate hardship but rather material poverty. Therefore, rather than misfortunes, Jesus speaks of those who are poor and downtrodden.....and thus we write, *an thlarau lama pachhia* or *they are poor in spirit* (159).

Zairema also says the usage and meaning of the word *Engthawl* in the Mizo Bible in the sentence *Lungngaithe chu an eng a thawl e*, is a conflicted sentence. When suffering of sorrow and burden cannot be happy or free in Mizo content. The original meaning of the word *engthawl* implies the feeling of relief that one experiences after a long or intense period of heavy sorrow or burden. However, younger generations have used the word to describe the state of being carefree without having any concern of anything or anyone. However, it is evident from the two definitions that the word *engthawl* is a state of mind, a feeling. Therefore, to say that *Lungngaithe chu an eng a thawl e* is a contradicting sentence since one who is in a state of sadness (*lungngai*) cannot be carefree / relieved simultaneously. He states :

Our forefathers explained what it really means to be *engthawl*, that when we are burdened and overcome by hardships, the light is snuffed out from our lives, and then all of a sudden there comes a better turn in life where our hardships are suddenly wiped away. The new generation's understanding of this word, as a lack of mindfulness, and recklessness....to mean that one does not have qualms in life is a false definition that does not seem to go away any time soon. To be *engthawl* is actually one's way of addressing and dealing with the experiences that befall us.....to claim that *Lungngaithe chu an eng a thawl* or *happy are those who are faced with hardships* is perhaps not accurate as long as they are faced with that hardship, *An eng a thawl ang* or *they will be relieved of their burdens* is a much more accurate translation. (159).

2.4 The value and importance of the contributions of Zairema in Mizo literary criticism

Zairema's contributions to Mizo language is noteworthy till today, and his critical writings have a great impact on the growth and development of Mizo literary criticism. Zairema's views and observations on Mizo language are evident in his critical writing about Mizo language grammar, and this marks him as a true language critic. According to Nagarajan Literary language should be different from everyday language, he state :

New criticism takes a stand that the nature of literary language is different from the scientific, or everyday language. The latter is denotative depending on a one-to-one correspondence between words, and the object they stand for (Nagarajan 125).

Following this line of thought, Zairema also mentions :

The English and other races have something called *literary language*, a book that deals with their language, something that is not simply comprehended by the lay man, but requires a lot of studying. Mizos however do not have any such concept and the common illiterate speech seems to be the most correct form of speech we have (*Thukhawchang Mi Pekte Hi* 545).

He views all languages and their meanings with the grammatical approach and he links the usage of language with culture. He strongly suggested the amendment of Mizo alphabet on the basis of pronunciation. One of his significant suggestions was to write certain words without *v*, eg: *Dailoa*, *Ka duh lo a ni*, *A paw lo e* etc. Also, he suggested writing with *h* *Khawngaih*, *Bawih*, *Dawih*, *Pawih*. He also had a great contribution in the translation of the Bible.

Zairema strongly suggested on making clear decisions regarding the controversial words which, for long, have created debates and arguments among language experts and within the literary circles. For this, he undertook a serious inquiry into the study of Mizo language usage and their meanings. His observations, suggestions and propositions have greatly influenced Mizo writers and much of his suggestions have been followed by writers till today as the common method of writing. According to Zairema, all languages are bound to change and develop with the course of time; however, but it is not always wise to undergo rapid change with the usage and meanings of words. He also constantly urged Mizo writers to teach the correct way of writing and speaking Mizo language to the younger generations.

Zairema also suggested the use of tonal marks. According to him, Mizo language is tonal language, and without tonal marks one cannot read correctly. We must have tonal marks especially for high tone, low tone, slide down tone and slide high tone in our language such as : *High tone to falling tone, high tone, low tone, rising tone.*

Rev. Chuauthuama comments, “Zairema’s writings, on careful inspection, reflect his dedication. He pays attention to the most minute detail, and his patriotism and strong rooted principles cannot be ignored. Particularly, his expertise in Mizo language looms larger than anything else. I doubt there will be another Mizo man as brave, determined and multi talented as him in future.”(Thukhawchang Mi Pekte Hi, cover page)

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Chapter – 3

A Study of the Contributions of J. Malsawma in Mizo Literary Criticism

3.1 Life of J.Malsawma

Popularly known as *Mang N Mang and Thanpuui Pa*, J. Malsawma (Jehova Malsawma) was born on 28 February, 1930. However, in his book *Vanglai*, he wrote that he was born on the second year of *Thingtam*, either in 1927 or 1928 at Lungsum villege, three weeks after New Year celebration. He writes:

....1927 or 1928 would be the year of *Thingtam*. I was born three weeks after the New Year celebration. When I was about to face the matriculation exam, my teachers filled up my form in such a way that I would turn 18 on March 1, 1948. Calculating from this, February 28, 1930 was then accepted as my date of birth. I might have been 2 or 3 years younger in actuality (*Vanglai* 3).

His father was Lianhnawka Hmar of Lawitlang clan, a cabinet and *Ramhual*, a selected advisor to the chief under Lusai chief and his mother was Darlianhhingi (Chhingtei). In the year 1932, they moved to Vervek village and in the year 1934, he started his schooling in Vervek Primary School. In 1935, they moved again to Lungsum village, and in 1936 he went to Thingsat village to continue his education among the family of F.Lawmkima. In the year 1937, he returned to Vervek to continue his education in Darthianga's School, Vervek. In 1939, he continued his education at Sakawrdai Primary School, and completed his Lower Primary School

in the highest level in 1940 and he received scholarship of Rs 3/ per month between 1941–1943.

In 1941, while he studied class 4 in Govt. Boy M.E School at Sikulpui Aizawl, his father died. He continued his education under the care of his mother's uncle and his father's brother Hrangchhuana. He had maintained excellent academic record during his school time. In lower Primary scholarship Exam 1940, he obtained 489 out of 600 ie. 81.5 %. In Class 4 promotion Exam 1941, he obtained 639 out of 750, ie 85.2 %. In class 5 promotion exam in 1942, he scored 429 out of 500 ie 85.8 %. In the Middle English Scholarship Exam in 1943, he obtained 800 out of 1050 ie 76.19 %. He received Rs 10 per month for High school study.

J. Malsawma's high school period was between 1944 – 1947. He studied in Mizo High School, Aizawl and he was among the first batch in 1944. He passed his matriculation in 1948. He, then, continued his education with the support of his uncle Vanlalthanga and Hrangchhuana. He studied I.Sc in Gauhati University at Cotton College and he completed I.Sc in 1950. He completed BA in 1952. He studied MA (Economics) with BL (now LLB), and finished his Masters in 1954 and BL in 1956, securing the fourth position in the University. He secured the second position in LB, and the first position holder was A. Thanglura.

After he completed his MA and LB, he worked as an advocate for six years between 1956– 1961. During his service as an advocate, he had many experience in legal services which he wrote in detail in his book *Vanglai*. In 1962, he cleared his examination in Mizoram Civil Service and he worked in civil secretariat and Assembly secretariat. He retired in 1988 and he was re-employed for one year and he retired in 1989. He is currently living in Macdonald Hill, Aizawl.

J.Malsawma is not only a prominent citizen but he is also the pioneer in the development of Mizo language and literature. He plays an important role in adding Lushai vernacular in the college syllabus. For this he met then Assam Governor Jairamdas, Chief Minister Bishnuram Medhi and Chief Secretary BC Kapoor ICS in 1949 to negotiate for Lushai vernacular to be added to the college syllabus. As a result of his perseverance and hard work, Mizo subject has been included in college syllabus since 1961-62 sessions.

He was also the Editor of Mizo students Union (MZO) monthly magazine for eight consecutive years (1958 September- 1965 September). He was the pioneer who initiated *Hla Kutpui* event, organized by MZO on 22nd and 23th October, 1959. He was the first secretary of Mizo Academy of Letters (MAL) and he is also the current senior adviser in MAL. He received the Mizo Writer Association Award in 1990, 1993, 1996 and 1999 and the Mizo Academy of Letter Academy Award in 2001.

3.2 Works of J.Malsawma

J.Malsawma is popularly known as an essayist. He has a great contribution in social satirical essays and critical views, particularly in regards to Mizo poems. He takes great interest in the study and use of Mizo language. His famous essay “Kan mizia” (*Zonun*,129) is an influential writing among the Mizo people. Though he was a lawyer and an administrative officer, his contribution to Mizo literature is of immense value. His literary contributions are mainly focus social, culture and poetical criticism.

J.Malsawma started his literary career since 1950. He published *Mizo Hla Hlui leh Thar* in 1962, *Zonun* in 1963, *Vanglai* in 1995, *Zo-zia* in 2000. *Vanglai*, published in 1995, is divided into five parts. This book is the compilation of all his essays and articles which were previously

published separately. Part -I is titled *Ka Vanglai -1*, it contains 8 articles such as. “*Nau Vannei*” (3), “*Middle school-ah*” (14), “*High School kal lai*” (28), “*College-ah*” (41), “*Graduate Val Zirna sangah*” (50), “*Ukil tuai*” (57), “*Women and their legal status*” (72), “*Legal Awareness*” (80). Part – II is title *Mizo Hla* and has 7 articles such as: “*Mizo Poems- Old & New*” (93), “*Ka Hla duhzawng-1*” (103), “*Ka Hla duhzawng-2*” (119), “*Hla Ṭha ber chungchang*” (127), “*Ka Hla Chuam-1*” (136), “*Ka Hla Chuam-2*” (151), “*Mizo Sakhua leh Hla*” (157). Part – III is title *General Essay* and has 17 articles namely : “*Chhawrpial run leh a kawng*” (177), “*Vana Pa College*” (182), “*Mi Huaisen*” (186), “*Harsatna*” (190), “*Kan Mizia*” (199), “*Ṭinsan khuang*” (202), “*Buang khaw perpui*” (208), “*Tlawmngaihna*” (214), “*Impact of various ideologies*” (218), “*Tunlai Khawtlang nun*” (224), “*Causes and Nature of corruption*” (229), “*Darlawn zinkawng*” (245), “*Uluk takin aw*” (251), “*Dawrpui Kohhran leh Krismas*” (261), “*Mahna*” (268), “*Ka Ṭhuro*” (274), “*Kum 50-na jubilee*” (292).

Part- IV is *An Vanglai* 12 articles such as “*Awithangpa a nih kha*” (309), “*R.L. Kamlala*” (316), “*Ka pu- Pu Hleia*” (320), “*C. Ṭhuamluaia*” (324), “*Good-bye My Old Teacher*” (328), “*Pu Sangliana te tak kha aw*” (335), “*Ka u – Bawichhuaka*” (341), “*Leitlangpui leh Chhawntangpa*” (358), “*Ka ṭhian Zikpui Pa*” (371), “*Pastor Sena*” (386), “*Ka Pu – Vanlalthanga*” (396), “*Ka Pa – Hrangchhuana*” (403). Part – V *Ka Vanglai -2*, it contain 6 articles such as ; “*Rorelna Ṭhutthlengah*” (421), “*Union Territory Sorkar-ah*” (457), “*Assembly Secretariat-ah*” (478), “*Civil Secretariat-ah*” (490), “*Chawlh hah dam*” (511), “*Tlipna*” (519).

Zo-zia published in 2000 is again divided into IV parts. Part – I “*Ka naupan lai*” (3). Part –II such as, “*Thih ni*” (25), “*Mo lawm*” (40). Part – III it contain 6 articles, such as “*Mizo Hmeichhia : Hman leh tun*” (65) “*Fur khaw hnawm*” (68), “*Chanchinbu leh Zoṭawng*” (76),

“Mizo Hnam dan leh Thangtharte” (91). Part – IV it contain 4 articles such as; *“Hranghluite sulhnu”* (119), *“Tluk loh val”* (145), *“Hla nge nge”* (162), *“Hmawr bawkna”* (187).

3.3 Contributions of J.Malsawma in Mizo Literary Criticism

J. Malsawma’s critical works can be divided into two categories on the basis of theme and aspect, i.e, theoretical criticism on Poetry and social criticism. Under the category of theoretical criticism on Poetry, his writings such as :- *“Mizo Poems- Old & New”* (93), *“Ka Hla duhzawng-1”* (103), *“Hla Tha ber chungchang”* (127), *“Mizo Sakhua leh Hla”* (157). Social criticism such as :- *“Kan Mizia”* (199), *“Mi Huaisen”* (186), *“Chanchinbu leh Zoṭawng”* (Zozia 76). These critical writings show case Malsawma’s refined criticism within the field of Mizo poetry and theology. They serve as useful sources for many writers and academicians working within these two areas.

3.3.1 Mizo poems – Old & New

In this article, Malsawma brings forth his opinion about what he considers as good poets and poems. According to him, a poet is a talented being who creates a powerful poem through the combination of artistic poetical words combination which can deeply influence the reader’s feelings and thoughts. A good poem has a good combination of poetical words and poetic flow which is different from a writing produce by a person with no poetic talent which lacks the rhythm and melody of good poetry. The refined quality of a good poem is determined by the use of the right poetical words and the creation of rhythm and flow. Malsawma also draws a clear difference between prosaic words and poetic words. He states :

A truly gifted songwriter creates lyrics that are deep and more expressive of sentiments than the regular lay man’s speech, creating words that are much more memorable. On

the other hand, one with no poetic talent with no skills for song writing, but only the zeal to write a song creates one that is not suitable to sing, and not memorable in the minds of people (Vanglai 94).

According to J.Malsawma, a good poem has the ability to guide the listener of the reader's feelings and thoughts towards the poet's way of thinking. It has the power to bring the poet and the reader in one world. A good poem, he says, must control the atmosphere of the reader in such a way that the reader would be able to imagine himself in the position or state of mind of the poet. He states:

A song is truly a poetic creation, that when sung, has the ability lead one into the mind of the writer, that is able to make the singers feel that they are standing right in the shoes of the writer (94).

He compared and discussed about the old and new poem. According to J.Malsawma, old poems imply folk songs and new poem refers to modern songs especially pop songs composed by the younger generations. According to J.Malsawma, though the old poems have much simpler subject matter as compared to the new, they are often richer in poetical words and flow. He argues that most of the new songs lack the sentimental flow and the engaging power that old poems have on listeners and readers. These new songs, be it secular or gospel songs, appear to be mere unsystematic arrangement of random words to which tunes are added. J.Malsawma points out that the difference between old and new poem mainly lies in the use of poetical words and the creation of poetic flow. He states :

Many old Mizo songs that are still available to us today are worthy of praise and has withstood the test of time. It just so often is the case that their reasons for writing, or

their subject, is usually a simple one, but they possess the quality of being created by a truly talented songwriter. The songs that are produced these days, be it *lengzem* or *gospel songs*, are simply words that rhyme and are put together, added with solfa to create a tune that can be sung quite systematically. It is not even recommended that they are sung by mediocre singers. The writers now do not give in enough thought. And most of the time the lyrics and the tune do not really compliment each other (94).

J.Malsawma also says that a good composition is a reflection of society and culture. The contents of such poems are always worth examining because they often contain insightful perspectives and are rich in meanings. A good poem must also have melody, good proportion of poetical words which work together to make melody and rhythm. He is strongly against poems composed through the use of prosaic words. He also notes that any song composition must leave room for the imagination and hence, should not be too straight forward regarding the message that the composer wishes to convey to readers and listeners. He states :

Any song, written in a crude and unrefined manner hardly ever has any lasting impact, but to write songs that evoke thought and greater perception have a much more lasting impact on the minds of people (104).

In Mizo poetry, there are several poetical terms used to symbolize a woman such as *chhawkhlei par*, *dingdi par*, *ainawn par*, *siali*, *hermawii*, etc.. These poetical terms are carefully chosen so as to represent the beauty and delicate nature of a woman. In contrast to this, composers of Mizo new songs and poems fail to treat the idea of or symbol of a woman with these delicate and suitable metaphors. The talent of the old composers lie in the fact that they

bring out their subjects through the combination of poetical words and appropriate metaphors. Malsawma feels that new composers have greatly failed in this aspect of composition. He states:

Mizo songs always took a lot of effort to address women with a lot of care and embellish them with poetic words such as, Chhawkhlel par, Dingdi par, Ainawn par, Siali, Hermawii and the like. But nowadays it seems that these efforts are no longer given any attention or thought (105).

He makes several suggestions for the development and improvement of Mizo poetry. He urged all poets and composers to use language with utmost care. He argues there are certain words which are meant to be used for poetic composition and words which do not particularly contribute to the creation of flow and rhythm. Here he differentiates between poetical words and prosaic words. According to J.Malsawma, the poem must be about imagination and feelings. He states:

A step to improving the kind of songs we create is to carefully choose words that are appropriate. There are words that are more lyrical than others; if used in the right place and the right time it creates a more meaningful effect. For example, in lyrical words *Luathli* can also be written as *mittui*. Songs nowadays often make use of the word *luathlipui*; rather than giving the sense of *mittui* or tears it gives off the idea of a storm of a cyclone. Perhaps it could do without the word *Pui*. In the same way, we are to be careful with how we use words such as *zun* and *buan ang pawm* (106).

3.3.2 *Ka hla duhzawng – I* (My favourite Poem - 1)

In this article, J.Malsawma talks about his idea and observation regarding Mizo songs and composition. According to him, a song must have depth and one should be able to

immediately identify that it is a poetic composition even while reading it. It should be influential and imaginative, and it must be composed using poetical words. He states :

Whether it is love songs, or funeral songs, or patriotic songs, or songs about praise – whatever the subject of a song may be, a song should fully embody the idea that it is a song. In more elaborate words, a song should not simply be a crude arrangement of words that rhyme, superimposed with solfa to create its tune, but to contain lyrical words as much as possible, with a tune that compliments the words of the song, that it should reveal its musical quality even when it is only read and not sung, and one that can be sung harmoniously by everyone (109).

He says that any song which lacks poetical words will fail to attract listeners and is deprived of influence and power over the imagination and feeling of the reader or listener. A good composer is able to affect people with his composition and guide their feelings and imaginations towards his own.

According to J.Malsawma, good song is created by the right combination of poetical words and tune or poetic flow, and the tune of a song must have a good flow and rhyme. The tune of the song should not be difficult and obscure but easy, simple and comfortable to be sung by everyone. The tune must also have originality on its own. Such tunes, he says, create the kind of songs which becomes quickly popular with the public. He also says that even without the use of much poetical words, the right flow and rhyme can make a good song. He states :

The essence of a song is its lyrics and its tune. It is most preferable to use lyrical words as much as we can, and it is preferable if the tune is musically simple, which the majority of the people can sing.... A song that cannot cater to the musical sensibilities of

the majority does not make a good song in my opinion. Even if lyrical words are not used, in the least, the flow should be musical and harmonious (112).

J.Malsawma argues that modern day composers do not give proper attention and care to their compositions. He says that random arrangement of words and simply adding solfa notes to it cannot make a good song. He urged composers to be more attentive towards their compositions and warns them that a good composition is more than merely putting together words and tunes. He states :

.....I really wish song writers these days would put in more effort into their songs. Superimposing the tone and music on to the word does not make a worthwhile song (114).

3.3.3 *Hla tha ber chungchang* (About the best Poem)

In this article, J. Malsawma talks about the different ways in which Mizo folksongs have been renamed in the modern day. He particularly points out how the much valued songs of Awithangpa have been given names by announcers on the radio. He says that these folk songs are cultural artifacts and should not be renamed according to one's own wishes or convenience. Many people have mixed up the names of the Mizo folk tunes and forms and this may cause great harm in the cultural knowledge passed down from one generation to the other. He states :

I was informed about the various songs and tunes of Awithangpa and how they were assigned with their own names depending on their tunes. Songs such as *Awithangpa kaihne*, *Tlawh zai* and *Chhem zai* were all sung in their own specific tunes....but nowadays, the *Tlawh Zai* are now termed *kaihne*, while the *Kaihne* are termed *Chhem zai* they have all be assigned names quite different from what I had previously

known, and even announced as such on the radio. We seem to take our old cultural songs for granted and we have named as we wish...One group announced that they would be singing *Chalmar zai* but what they actually sang was *suakpuivungi ruah var pui theh zai*. What was previously called *Hla thar* are now called *Khawha...* *Awithangpa's Darzo Zai* has also been given a completely different name. I feel that it is most crucial that that the Art & Culture Dept. look into these matters and preserve the traditional names of our folktunes and songs (130 -131).

He also discussed about poetical words written by Lalsawmliana's definition about Awithangpa's composition:

Lai ah chawium ang a thu hmeltha,
Lalthanpuii sial sawm man tur a piang e,
Chhantling dar bang mawia leng tur chu

He examines the line *Chhantling dar bang mawi* and the use of the poetical word *Run*. Here the poetical word *Chhantling* implies human house in particular. *Chhantling run*, *Dawhtling run*, are also used to refer to human residence. J.Malsawma questions Awithangpa about his use of the poetical word *Chhantling*, to which Awithangpa replies, “A ! *hei mawle, in ðha, bangla ang, in vai in ang hi maw le*” (134). So, the poetical word *Chhantling* is the symbol of residence, now we use *run*, the poetical word *run* is also the symbol of human residence. J.Malsawma also criticized the prominent Mizo poet Rokunga's composition:

Chhingkhual mipui pungkawm zingah,
Marin riah run a chang ve lo,
Bawng in runpui a bel.

J. Malsawma is of the opinion that the word *run* symbolizes human residence in particular, but Rokunga used the word to symbolize a cattle house in his song. Hence, J. Malsawma is against the misusing of the poetical word *run* among the poets and intellectual circle. He states :

It is common knowledge that the word *Run* denotes a home or house; however, houses where human beings don't reside, such as *zawlbuk, pum, thlam....* They cannot hold the same value as the word *Run....* Cow sheds and chicken coops cannot be given the term *Run* or home.... The assign the term *Run* to a cowshed is beyond the understanding of a cow. *Bawng in runpui* han tih pheih chu five star hotel nena tehkhin mai tur em ni dawn le? (132).

3.3.4 *Mizo Sakhua leh Hla* (Mizo religious and Poems)

This article was written in 1995. According to J.Malsawma, attractive and charming poems are created on the basis of culture, religious feelings and thoughts, all the poets reveal that culture and religious aspect. So, he stated that the poet's culture and religion are very related to subject matter, thought and feeling. In Mizo folksong it seems that ancient Mizo culture and religious thought and feeling, but now new religious born by the influence of English Christian missionaries which influence and guide new poems. After Christianity since 1920, Mizo Christian poets composed their poem by new thoughts and feelings about after death and heaven, some conventional epithet poetical word ie *Pialral, Rihli* are found in the poems, so, poets cannot create on appealing and influential poems without Mizo culture and philosophy. But now, some song writers compose their song on the basis of tonic solfa, which lacks attractive quality and charm. Therefore, J. Malsawma was against poems composed on the

basis of western style and songs. He suggests that Mizo poems and songs must be composed with sentimental feeling, thought, philosophy and culture. He states:

Ever since our conversion to Christianity, and especially from the year 1920, followers of Christianity took up the task of creating gospel songs, songs base on God, or the Cross or songs about the after life; they have done quite a good jo of it.....putting the *afterlife* and *heaven* on the same level. Rih Li and Pialral are still two very common concepts even after the influence of Christianity. This reveals how much our Mizo culture and philosophy are still very much a part of our lives. In light of this, to have written and created our Mizo gospel songs in the style and sentiments of Mizo culture would have had a much more impactful presence in the Mizo community To sing western songs, without any knowledge of tonic solfa, with a tune that is foreign to our culture inhibited the beauty of singing (170 -171).

3.3.5 *Kan Mizia* (Our Character)

J.Malsawma is popularly known as a social critic. His essay *Kan Mizia* written in 1960 was a famous essay on social criticism, his view and observation influence all Mizo people during this time. According to him, social life of Mizo is very backward but they enjoy high leaving standard, he criticize the life style of the Mizo. His essay *Kan Mizia* is very concrete and deep. He states :

We are an inferior tribe, that puts on airs to appear and behave like a superior people, that puts on all our riches to try and impress others, that do not have the means to earn a good living and yet have no sense to be prudent with our money, spending our earnings recklessly are what we are made of. Made of cowardice, who puts on airs to appear

brave, who will step forward only as long as there are others to save us and yet have no real courage to dive into problems; and yet after all this, still puts on an act of bravery are what we are made of (199).

He says that, Mizo people are mostly very bad in social condition, Mizo feeling and life style are of luxuries, selfish, proud and greedy, and spurious. He states :

We put on an act of good friendship when others are around and yet talk behind their backs in their absence, and to gossip about the lives of others seem to be our favourite pass time..... we put on acts of diligence and yet have no qualms about cheating if it would profit us, we put on acts of trust and honesty and yet will not use weights that are accurate; to go as far oppose those who wish to right the wrongs, such frail minded people are what we are made of..... we want to pave our own way and in that process take away the profit from our own friends.... With no respect or fear for our fellow leaders and yet will bow before foreign leaders. We cannot take criticism and revel in fake praises, willing to lie if it is to benefit our cause.....we are all made up of fake virtues, we are put of masks to hide our true selves (200).

3.3.6 *Mi huaisen* (Brave person)

His essay *Mi huaisen* is a fearless and honest criticism of Mizo society. It was written on 5th October, 1950. J.Malsawma carefully observes Mizo lifestyle, moral values and behavioral pattern and from his findings, he produced an honest constructive social criticism through his essay. He focuses on the concept of bravery and how it is directly linked to other values like honesty and deidication. He encourages Mizo people to be brave and to have high thinking for their future. In this essay, he defines the character and nature of *huaisenna* (Bravery). He says

that one who lacks bravery will ultimately lose the trust of other people. The enemy of *huaisenna* is *dawizepna* (cowardice/craven) and cowardice tends to make one untrustworthy. He states :

The greatest enemy of bravery is cowardice; we give into telling lies because of our cowardice. The moment our cowardice drives us to lie, we immediately become dishonest people (187).

J.Malsawma suggests that to be brave we must be trustworthy. According to his view, Mizo people tend to lack trust and are often dishonest which is evident in how business is being run in the market place. Shopkeepers and businessmen only think of ways to earn maximum profit, even to the extent of employing unfair means and measurements in selling goods to the people. All these, Malsawma says, stems from the fear of not having enough profit where people have lost the bravery to run their business honestly. Malsawma seems to be deeply unsatisfied with the work culture of Mizo society and the degradation of moral value in every living. His criticism on society is with the intention to reform and reshape the value system of Mizo society and to encourage people to take up an honest living. He states :

One stroll in the Aizawl markets will reveal to us that we Mizo are a dishonest people. The vegetable vendors will not agree to take money that is old and torn and yet they attempt to use that same type of money to buy their materials. *Thehret hralh laia lungtum hlum hnan chin avangin zai phel zel a lo tul ta a.* all of this is out of the selfish cowardice where they are afraid they will not earn enough, at the core it is all cowardice. Cowardice breeds dishonesty, and dishonesty is the greatest enemy of bravery. Thus, to be truly brave is the bravery to hold on the honesty (188).

He is deeply concerned about the future of Mizo society and his essay can be seen as an attempt to bring about moral reform within the society. He is, therefore, honest and straight forward in his criticism and leaves no stone unturned. It is evident from his writing that Malsawma is strongly driven by his desire and passion to rebuild Mizo society for the sake of the future generation. He states :

When the heart holds on the bravery, bravery comes to be in our action as well. While the Mizo tribe is still flourishing, it is imperative that we teach each other to be brave enough to hold on to what is true. We must pass on to students, ideas of dignity, understanding, honesty and the will to hold on to what is true. If we are brave enough to make these changes, we may not need another Khuangchera, the honest and fearless Mizo warrior (189).

3.3.7 *Chanchinbu leh zotawng* (News Papers and Mizo language)

J.Malsawma is not only a social and poetical critic he is also a prominent language critic. His article “News Papers and Mizo language” (*Zo zia*, 76) revealed his in depth knowledge and perceptive ideas on Mizo language. Here, he encouraged journalists to write and use correct Mizo language in their works and also urged ministers and elders of the church to promote the correct usage of Mizo language in church services and in their ministry. He points out certain incorrect usage of several words and also provides the correct usage in this article.

Fo, Reng, Thin : According to him, *fo* implies some time or ofetn, but journalists and intellectuals have used the word to denote always. He suggests that the word *fo* should be used correctly in the right context. He states :

Fo, reng, Thin ; these three words are often misused in our speech today. We most often use the word *fo* at the inappropriate place in our songs. *Fo* is not to be used in cases where the action is not a continuous never ending action nor is it to be simply interchanged with the word *Reng*.... *Pathianin min veng fo* is an incorrect sentence- for god is with us always (83).

Engemaw zat, engemaw chen : These words are commonly used to denote uncountable or indefinite quantity. J. Malsawma says *Mi bo zawng turin mi engemaw zat an kal* is incorrect, according to him *tam fe, tlem te* is correct, eg *Mi bo zawng turin tam fe/tlem te an kal*. He states:

Engemaw zat, engemaw chen : these two words are not clear in what they define. *Mi bo zawng turin engemaw zat an kal*, it is difficult to comprehend whether the ones who went are only a few or quite a lot. *Tam fe an kal, tlem te an kal*, will have a much more accurate presentation of how many actually went (83).

Vel : Mizo word *vel* means *about*, it is an uncertain word, some intellectuals and journalists commonly use it. Eg *a tawk vel chiah chiah*, *vel* and *chiah* is opposite word. He states :

Vel : This is also a word that is very often misused, *a tawk vel chiah chiah, a daih vel chiah chiah* has so many errors in itself, it does not make sense to put the words *vel* and *chiah* together for they are oxymorons, as opposite as south and north (83).

La lut : J.Malsawma is also against the use of the word *la lut*. Intellectuals and churchmen mostly use *la lut* instead of the word *ruat/nemngheh*. For the purpose of the use of *induct/appointment* in English we use *La lut* in Mizo. J.Malsawma suggested the use of the word *ruat* instead of the word *la lut*. He states :

When ministers are appointed, just because the English use the word ‘induct’ we use the word *lalut* or to take in correspondence with the English word. The word *lalut* seems to be our most common usage in such cases but it is much more accurate to use the word *ruat* and *nemnghet* (86).

3.4 The Literary Value and Importance of the Contributions of J. Malsawma

J.Malsawma can be regarded as social critic. His contributions to Mizo literature is of great importance. His critical writings proved to be greatly influential in Mizo society. His poetical criticism and theories inspired many Mizo poets and writers. His critical works, though few in quantity, are concrete, deep and very influential. His social criticism *Kan Mizia* received positive literary reviews and comments from various intellectuals and prominent writers. In his essay *Kan Mizia*. He states :

A coward, who can spew words of bravery only from the comfort of their own homes, to put on an act of bravery only with the knowledge that there will be people to get their backs, with no real bravery to take a bite of the real problem; a people who try their best to be considered or to simply appear brave make up a great part of our characteristic (199).

Members of the Mizo Students Union (MZP) and many intellectuals and writers strongly reacted to this essay, but many prominent citizens showed their appreciation. Therefore, this social criticism pushed and guided Mizo society and the mentality and life style of young Mizo citizens, so, it can be said that the Mizo society is transformed and rebuilt largely due to the contributions of J.Malsawma.

“Literary criticism and theory have encompassed the study of a number of issues in its attempt to interpret, evaluate and contextualize literature” (*Penguin* 170). Criticism deals with literary writing and theory, it criticized literary history, society, religion, culture, national character and also expounded all aesthetics and analytical assessment of literature.

J.Malsawma evaluates and analyses literary theory and national characters, he was against social evil and made suggestions on social reconstruction, in his essay “*Mi huaisen*” (*Vanglai*186). He states :

In the rubber selling business, they put rocks within the rubber rool to make it look bigger and hence, had to be cut into half to make sure that there is no scam. They do this because they are afraid that they would not be able to take in good profit, it is an act of cowardice. Cowardice leads to dishonesty, and dishonesty is the enemy of the brave. Therefore, one who is truly brave must be honest (188).

J.Malsawma’s social criticism is not large in quantity but they are deep and effective, and they prove to be of great significant for Mizo moral reformation. His social critical essay *Kan Mizia* and *Mi huaisen* are very curious and effective, many prominent and important citizen are sweep. Many people were encouraged to feel and study the life of Mizo people. He is among the prominent people in Mizo society.

Vanhela Pachuau IAS comments, “*Kan Mizia* was criticized by many readers, but I beg to differ. I think it is a great work which deserves to be studied in the Sunday School” (201).

R.L. Thanzawna Mizoram Finance & Account Officer also comments, “I ziak hmasak aia chiang zawk leh zep nei miah loin, *Kan Mizia* kha han ziak leh the khai” (201).

L.Keivom IFS (Retd.) also writes *Kan Mizia II* as a result of the influence of J.Malsawma's essay. Therefore, his contribution on social criticism is very important and to enrich social critical writing in Mizo literature.

J.Malsawma's poetical theory and criticism are also very important for the development of Mizo poetry. According to him, it can see culture, custom and social life from the Poem, and a good Poem must have melody and charm. He is against poem composed using prosaic words. it must use poetical words and should be in good proportion.

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Chapter – 4

A Study of the Contributions of Darchhawna in Mizo Literary Criticism

4.1 Life of Darchhawna

Darchhawna was born on 26th January 1936, at Lunglawn. His father was Sapkungna and his mother was Thangziki. He started his education in 1943 at Lunglawn Primary School. He studied at Serkawn Middle English School between 1947 and 1950. He finished lower and upper class during this period. In 1951, he studied class VII - IX at Lunglei High School, Lunglei. In 1955 he completed his matriculation in first Division.

He continued BA at St. Anthony's College, Shillong. He graduated in 1959, and he was invited to be high school headmaster at Thingsai. However, he joined only six months after that in 1961- 1962. Then, he continued MA in the Dept. of History at Gauhati University.

Four months after he completed MA in 1963, he worked as a teacher at Serkawn Christian High School, Lunglei. Then, he was invited to work as Lecturer in the Dept. of History at Pachhunga Memorial College (now Pachhunga University College) where he served during 1963 – 1974. During this period he took study leave to take theological training at Australia.

After he returned from Australia, during 1974- 1977, he become the Principal at Lunglei College. In 1977 – march 1978 he was Deputy Director in School Education and in April 11, 1979 - 1980 he was appointed as Officer on Special Duty(OSD). In 1981-1983, he was Principal of Pachhunga University College and in 1983 Joint Director in school Education

Department. In 1984-1989 he was again Principal at Govt. Lunglei College. In 1990- till his retirement he was Director at Department of Art & Culture. After he had superannuation from Director of Art & Culture, he was invited by Chief Minister Lalthanhawla to be Officer on Special Duty at Chief Minister's office, and he joined for about two years. He has been living at Kulikawn, Aizawl since 1963 till today.

Darchhawna is a prominent and proficient citizen among the Mizo. When he was the Director at Art & Culture he made great contributions in Mizo literature, language and culture. He organized Mizo folksong competitions, group dance and singing competitions, and organised symposium for Mizo language, and 'thu leh hla kutpui' (literature festival) North-east zone cultural centre (NEZCC) festival for 7 states at Aizawl was organized twice under his supervision.

The major Mizo festival *Chapchar kut* was initially organized by Information Dept. However, while Darchhawna was Director of Art & Culture, it was organized by Art & Culture Dept. The institution of Music & Fine Arts (IMFA) was also established under his initiative. Many libraries were also set up in various District capitals in Mizoram during his term

Besides these, during his served as Director of Art & Culture, the Tribal Research Wing has started publish and reprint valuable literary works like Pu Buanga Dictionary, Mizo history written by English missionaries and many books such as, *Mizote Mizia, Lal chanchin, Infiamna etc have also been published, Lai(Pawi), Mara(Lakher), Chakma, Pang, Bawm, Hmar, Paihte* are also published by them. These books are very useful for research scholars. Darchhawna was also one of the founding member who framed Mizoram Publication Board Act 1993, State Library Act 1993. He made a draft which was approved by the state Government. These are

very important for Mizo writers and for the development of Mizo literature. He received various awards such as: (a) Best citizen award 1998, (b) Shri Ganga Sharan Singh Puroskar – 1999, (c) Millenium award 2000, (d) Academy award 2004, (e) Padma Shri 2005.

While serving as a Govt. servant, he was member of Mizo language Board under MBSE, member of Mizo Academy of Letters since its establishment 1964, and Christian Literary Society. Therefore, he played a vital role in the development of Mizo literature and language, culture and society.

3.2 Works of Darchhawna

Darchhawna is popularly known as historian and essayist, he has many contributions in various fields such as religion, music, culture and language. He wrote 22 books for various subjects such as : 1. *Music* 1967, 2. *Kailek Hla Bu*- 1968, 3. *Solfa Zirna Bu* – 1970, 4. *Baptist Principles* – 1976, 5. *Junior Lessons*, 6. *Kum Sang Rorel*, 7. *Kohhran thurin*, 8. *Kohhran chanchin*, 9. *Upate Rawngbawlina*, 10. *Beisei ram-1 (contain 27 Essays)*, 11. *Hla Siamtu Hmingthangte*, 12. *Zaipawlte Kaihhruaina*, 13. *Khawvel History*, 14. *Chanchintha Eng*, 15. *Sunde Sikul Zirtirtu Tanpuina*, 16. *Worship and Music*, 17. *Kulikawn Arsi Eng*, 18. *Beisei Ram – 2 (contain 28 Essays)*, 19. *Kristian Hla Bu Staff & Tonic Sol-fa* 2004, 20. *Ka Batah ruat ang che*, 21. *Leadership*, 22. *Meditation*.

The book *Beisei Ram* publish in 1999 contain 27 Essays such as ; “Ader’ (1). “*Buaina*’ (4) “*Huaisen*” (7). “*A bumboh piah lam*” (10). “*Hruaitu*” (15). “*Hun hman that*” (21). “*Tha tharin aw*” (27). “*Nghah*” (31). “*Nihna*” (38). “*Themthiam chungchuang*” (43). “*Tlawmngaihna*” (51). “*Val Upa*” (58). “*Chibing Politics*” (64). “*Kohhrana Mizo tawng*” (69). “*Mizo culture awmzia leh a lo danglam zel dan*” (79). “*Zirlaibu leh culture*” (94).

“*Khawthlang rimawi leh Mizo Culture*” (100). “*Music*”(105). “*Mizo zai thar*”(116). “*Music conductor tih tur leh a mawhphurhna*” (123). “*Kan tunlai hlate hi*” (128). “*Handel-a leh a hla – Messiah*” (138). “*Kawnga mite tuarna*” (143). “*Art*” (154). “*The Christian and culture*” (159). “*The Gospel and society*”(165). “*Enjoying Music*” (170).

Beisei Ram -2: (28 essays) :- “*Culture*” (1). “*Culture leh hnam inpumkhatna*” (8). “*Mizo Culture leh Kristianna*” (20). “*Hnehna hi hneh a har*” (44). “*Harsatna – Malsawmna hnar*” (48). “*Ka teh ve dan*” (53). “*Mozart-a phum nia khaw awm dan*” (58). “*A bum boh piah lam*” (66). “*Hlahna*” (72). “*Lehkhabu tha*” (81). “*Thlaler kawng kual*” (86). “*Jazz leh Blues*” (92). “*Rockabilly*” (99). “*Ka nung thiam ve dawn ta*” (103). “*Kei hi keimah*” (108). “*Thurawn*” (113). “*Harh teh le*” (117). “*Serendipity*” (122). “*Nun peng zar*” (131). “*Thiltihtheihna*” (140). “*Nihna*” (152). “*Hlimna*” (157). “*Literature leh History*” (164). “*Lengzem hla zir chianna*” (170). “*Chapchar kut thar thawh leh dan*” (191). “*Hma i sawn thei e*” (203). “*Pen khat pawh ni mah se*” (209). “*Beidawng mai suh*” (222).

4.3 Contributions of Darchhawna in Mizo Literary Criticism

Darchhawna writes deep and insightful essays where he traced social life, culture and language from the basic thought and feeling. Therefore, a selection of Darchhawna’s literary works will be studied as cultural and social critical essays in this chapter.

4.3.1 *A der* (Pretend)

This essay is a social criticism. He points out J.Malsawma’s concluding line *A suak vek kan ni* in his essay “*Kan Mizia*” (Vanglai199). However, according to Darchhawna *A der vek kan ni* is more correct than *A suak vek kan ni* in terms of literary usage and meaning. He states :

“*Kan Mizia*” (199), J. Malsawma, he uses the sentence *A suak vek kan ni*, however, it seems more accurate to use the words *a der vek kan ni*. To appear as the way we are is to be real and honest in our appearance, and to fake our appearance is to appear *der* (*Beisei Ram 1*).

He analyses human life and blamed selfish, incorrect life style. He mentions clearly about superficial social life by using the phrase *A der*. A wise man pretends to know nothing, whereas a foolish and proud person tries to present himself as clever and brave; a coward and craven person may try to look like a brave person and use proud words whereas a humble person is silent and down to earth but in reality a humble person and clever man is honoured and respected. He states :

The wise assume the idiotic characteristic, while evil assume to have good characteristics. The dishonest talk in ways that will make them look like honest people, while the coards put on airs to appear brave. The ones who cannot accept and live with who they are put on fake virtues and principles; this has a negative impact in various ways, in social life, and in religion, causing complications for those around them (1).

According to Darchhawna, Mizo people are ashamed of their own culture; they want to maintain high living standard which is beyond their capacity. Therefore, we practice unreliable life style, hence, the whole life of Mizo people becomes tainted with dishonesty. He states :

We are ashamed of our own way of life. We blame our parents and we are not proud of our men. We wish for the other side of the coin to be true, and we want others to only see that side as well. If we live authentically we complain about each other, we indulge ourselves in bad mouth and hate. Other than living authentically, we wish to live a fake

life, so long as we are surrounded by fake praises. Perhaps it is understandable if we wish to evade defamation, but if these praises do not really correspond to our real life and our character, they are of no use (2).

4.3.2 *Huaisen* (Brave)

Darchhawna analyses the meaning and implication of the word *Huaisen*. He says the character of *Huaisen*, according to him, one who can stand up with the truth, and has love for his fellow men, men who are willing to give up their life for their land are the ones we can call brave men. Wealth, size and physical appearance do not matter, fear has no meaning in the face of men who possess the right mind and attitude.

A person who loves the truth, who loves his neighbors and who perseveres to uplift his nation and is willing to give up his life for it, is a brave person. In such case, we cannot judge him for his status and it would be disrespectful to point out his failures. The virtues in his heart will shine through his eyes; his mind leads his feet to move forward; to reach for what he believes to be true and right he will preserve his virtues, to express it, to make it better, and if necessary, he will step out to die for it (8).

On the negative side, there are men who have no fear in committing theft in order to avoid poverty, who are willing to lie instead of taking the blame, who do not hesitate to commit bribery and unfair means to earn the favour of their masters, men who are recklessly fearless in flirting with women but do not have the courage to face real treats and danger. Such men can be labeled negatively as fearless men.

Instead of attaining riches and status through corruption and greed, to have the courage to face being poor in the name of what is right. To walk away from the castle of pride

and idiocy and to follow the narrow path of dignity, and chooses to live in the land of meekness (8).

In Mizo language the word *Huaisen* has positive and negative implications. On the positive side, it implies that brave men are those who are willing to suffer for the truth, who choose to stay poor instead of stealing, who are willing to lose and not be tainted by corruption and unfair means. He states :

Rather than building a grand home with one's stolen money, to face poverty in the name of virtue is a much braver move. Rather than inflicting pain on the innocent, it is much braver to save a widow from her burning and then lose your life.....it is not wise, however, to put on an act of bravery in the name of what is right, one must be brave with a clear mind, and those who project bravery simply in the face of what they do not fear will only reap trouble....for those who are brave in the face of fear are truly brave; to give in the wrongdoers, out of love for the wrongdoers themselves is also an act of bravery, and those who can profess their own faults and weaknesses are also those who are brave (8-9)

4.3.3 *Kohhrana Mizo Tawng Hman Dan* (The Church language)

Darchhawna clearly defines the church language. He is against the misuse of language by pastors, elders and active persons in the church along with the Bible translation. According to him, every nation expects the language in the church to be proper and honourable; it must be true, correct and clear. He states :

Every culture holds that the language and vocabulary used for the worship of God must be formal, ceremonial and proper. We look onto our god and offer praises in His name

with a formal attitude. The devotee's sincerity and respect shown to God is projected in his actions, and to maintain the sanctity and sacredness of this devotion, we human beings try our best to act with respect and honour during worship services (69).

He suggested that the language of the church must be proper, honourable, correct as much as possible and true. He also revealed some common misuse among the active members in the church and he highlights these common mistakes in his critical work. He mentions the following mistakes:

a). *Nân* ; He says the word *Nân* is mostly misused in the church. Mizo devotional songs are different eg, *fakna hla*, *chawimawina hla*, *sunna hla*, *tawngtaina hla*, the meeting chairman in the Church mostly misuse always they use like *Ṭan nân*, *Ban nân*, *Thawhlawm khawn nân*, *innghahkhawm nân* etc, Darchhawna is against these misusage and he suggests to use on the basis of the song writer's word. He states :

Praising god in our songs...to claim that to praise God... in all our songs is inaccurate. Our song book consists of Praises for god, glorification of god, prayer songs, motivational songs and various other types of songs. To simply sing for the sake of waiting on others, or ending a prayer, or songs for collecting donation is not accurate either (71).

b) *-na* ; *na* is commonly used to make noun form in Mizo language, Darchhawna is against the common use of *na* in verb used by the chairman and speakers in the church service, eg *ṭawngtaina*, *Hla sakna*, *thusawina*, *hlanna*, he states :

There are songs in praise of god called *faka zaina*, and *hla sakna*, to pray or *ṭawngtaina*, a and to deliver a sermon or *thusawina* and within that there is a time to collect church

donation or *thawhlawm khawwnna* and after that is the offerings or *hlanna* made to God. Our reckless use of the word *na* is perhaps, also a result of us being taught by people who had to learn our language in the first place (72).

c) *-tu* ; *tu* is mostly used as object in Mizo language, eg *Tu maw kala chu*, *Tu maw kal ta chu*, but now commonly use no objection, Darchhawna mention and against misused *tu* without object. He states :

We add *tu* to a verb that has no object...*Tu maw kaltu chu* is a sentence we often use. In the norm of Mizo language, we are to say *Tue maw kala chu* ? or *Tu maw kal ta chu* ? or either one of these.....*chuangtu*, *sumdawngtu*, *lawmtu*, *zuitu*, *phaltu*, *zaitu*, *thintu*, *tawhtu*, *peihtu* etc are also common words we use (72).

Darchhawna argues that there is a certain style of language mean for preaching and other church related activities. He wanted to use good and honourable and correct language as much as possible. He is against using street and slang language in the church and he even goes on to suggest that preachers should refrain from jokes and humour while preaching. Within the confines of the church, rumours and local gossips should be avoided so as to maintain the sanctity and honour of the church. He states :

The one who preaches the word of God should use language that is refined and respectful; it is not preferable to use exaggerated and local ways of speaking, and jokes and parody are especially not welcomed. Our pulpits are places from where we spread the word of God, and the lay man's speech and unrefined language is not the way to spread the word of God. Our words should be filled with depth and worth the test of time, and one must no speak out ideas which cannot survive criticism. These words – *em*

em, lutuk, ropui ber, thlawt, chungchuang, khawp, nasa, zia, rapthlak are words that we must be careful with. (72-73)

d) *Tan leh Sak* : Darchhawna was also against the church leader's use of parallels *Tan* and *sak* eg, *Zaipawl tân i ngen sak ang u. Dam lo tan i dil sak ang u.* According to him, the parallel use of *Tan* and *sak* is incorrect. He states :

Since these words have been misused in the Bible itself, we continue to make the same mistake....*zaipawl tan i ngen sak ang u* or *damlo tan I dil sak ang u.* It is clear that we can pray for the sick and that we actually do pray for the sick. *Tan* and *sak* are two words that are not precise if used together (73).

e) *nasa leh zia* : According to Darchhawna, *nasa leh zia* is also marked by deferences, the word *nasa* implies someone who is hyper active and loud, *tawrhhlhawm*, he is against the misuse of the Bible eg *Mipui nasa tak, hmeichhe nasa* etc. *Zia* is use as superlative degree. He states:

The phrase *mipui nasa tak* is often used in the Bible and it would seem to mean *Tam tak* or a lot of people. When I first came across this, it struck me as to mean a rowdy group of people who were affected by an influential speaker. If we were to say *Hmeichhe nasa* it strikes the reader as a single woman who is untameable..... When we add *zia* to end of single word, we are not trying to make an abstract noun form, but simply adding to the degree of emphasis on that word (73).

f) *Ngaimawh, ngai pawimawh, pawi, pawimawh* : Darchhawna points out the ways in which these words have been mixed up incorrectly in our present day usage. *Ngaimawh* denotes concern about the things that one dislikes or is against. On the other hand, the word *ngai*

pawimawh refers to someone / something which we give importance to, someone / something which we give priorities. The word *Pawimawh* means important or significant. And the word *pawi* means something regretful or to feel sorry about something or someone. However, these words have been mixed up and used incorrectly without paying attention to their original meanings and contexts. He states :

We use the word *ngaimawh* when referring to something we do not like. We say, *A inchei duh lo lutuk hi chu ka ngaimawh ngawt mawi*. However, we use the word *ngai pawimawh* to refer to something/someone we consider. Similarly, we use the word *pawi* when referring to a situation where things do not go as expected (74).

4.3.4 *Khawthlang Rimawi leh Culture* (Western Music and Culture)

Darchhawna defined and analysed western music and the negative impact it has cast on Mizo way of singing. According to Darchhawna, culture is the dynamics of lifestyle and human behaviour. It does not belong to a particular individual but is the collective expression of a community. Culture unifies and solidifies different people within the community and determines the behavior, thoughts and perspectives of the people through the collective knowledge passed down from one generation to another. He states :

Culture does not belong to a single person, it is a thing which an entire tribe lives on, that guides and leads human life, passed on from our forefather that is still a treasure till today, a thing to bind the sentiments of the new generation together and to create uniformity amongst a people. culture is not something that is born within a day, but a thing that evolves over many years of human life, that grows amongst a people who share a language and those who share similar sentiments (100).

According to Darchhawna, music is one of the most significant tools for the English in transforming Mizo culture, and it is through the medium of music that our culture has severely suffered. They composed Mizo Christian songs on the basis of western musical style, which they taught us. We were a tribe who has their own original language and musical style but of foreigners which we had to learn and adopt to, and we often do so with the fear of committing mistakes and our natural voice is not meant for the western musical stylistic. For such reasons, it is difficult to invoke emotions and sentiments which stunted the growth and development of Mizo songs and music. He states :

If we look at it closely, we realize that western culture was able to get its hold on us with their instrument of music and song. This western music is what has caused the disintegration of our Mizo culture. Rather than any other aspect of our life, our culture is the one that has taken the harshest blow. Our old Mizo songs had to be abandoned, those that were not welcomed within the light of Christianity were pushed to the side.....with the fear of making mistakes we took up learning their music, we sang them. But it seems that, one cannot keep going in this manner and we cannot sing truly from our hearts (106).

Darchhawna talks about the impact and effects of Christianity in Mizo culture. In his essay, he critically viewed the impact and effect of western music among the Mizo people. According to him, western music changed the music and culture of the Mizo people, which affects and disturbs the real life and imagination of the Mizo people. Now, the life and styles of Mizo also imitate from western styles, which is appreciated among the Mizo people, he states:

Western music has come to occupy a very big space in the hearts of the youth, and yet it would seem that it holds us back when it comes to the church. Our missionaries used western culture as a tool to convert us to Christianity, to be Christian in the most western way and to sing western Christian songs. They made us wear their clothes and taught us to look up to their way of life. We can say that they taught us to live like dolls that imitate them (104).

4.3.5 *Mizo Zai Thar* (Mizo New Song)

Darchhawna did a comparative study on Mizo songs of the pre- missionary period and post- missionary period in this critical work. He says that in the later part of the 19th century, Christian missionaries introduced the new religion which was immediately followed by the introduction of the Mizo alphabet and eventually new songs, which were all created on the basis of English culture. This new religion rebuilt the culture, lifestyle and literature of the Mizo people, especially in the field of literature where new Christian songs were introduced. He states:

When Christianity came to us at the end of the 19th century, they came in with their songs. These were songs that were born of another culture, songs that the English let us borrow to promote Christianity. Hence, the songs were different from the Mizo songs we had previously known... This new religion brought with it every new way of life...a new religion, new songs and new ways of singing were the tools that the first Christians came with to build Christianity amongst us (117).

According to Darchhawna, the Mizo traditional song is low in tune and gentle in flow, which made it easy for both the young and the old people to sing. On the other hand, the new

songs introduced by the English missionaries are high in tune and their flow is less gentle than the Mizo traditional songs, making it difficult to sing for the Mizo people. This new style of singing did not suit the Mizo sentiment. He states :

The Mizo way of singing is calm and harmonious, it is simple and easy to execute, be it young or old it poses no struggle to sing it. The new Christian songs on the other hand, needed immense learning, with pitches that were hard to reach. With different voices and in the way of the white man we took up training. There were times when one has to tilt back his head towards the sky in order to get the tone of *m* and *f* correct (118).

Darchhawna argues that Mizo traditional song was gradually regarded as worldly, sinful and anti- religious in the eyes of the Christians. Therefore, Mizo traditional song was branded as an opposing force to Christianity. Whether they enjoyed it or not, the English style of singing must be learnt by the Mizo Christians even though it did not suit their sentiment. He states :

The traditional Mizo way of singing was then considered to be worldly and non- religious, hence, becoming an enemy of the Christians. They had to learn new songs, new singing style, new tunes; and whether they like it or not, it was mandatory that they sing like the missionaries and apply the English singing style. This had to be done for spiritual upliftment (118).

According to Darchhawna, the Mizo people had difficulty in adjusting themselves to the English style of singing; even the youths were not accustomed to the rigid hymnal tune. The new Mizo songs were composed in accordance to the English style and they sounded different from the previous Mizo songs that they used to sing. The new style failed to cater to the

emotional needs of the Mizo people. Darchhawna felt the need to restore the dying spirit and sentimentality of the Mizo people which they had lost to the English style of singing. He states :

The western Christian way of singing, with its strict music laws that could definitely not be sung casually, was difficult for the young mizo men and women to get used to and for them to sing with emotion. If anything is done with the constant fear of making a mistake it becomes difficult to develop a passion for it. When humans are to express their deepest emotions, it is a much more effective catharsis to sing it all out rather than just say it. But it seems that in this new Christian way of singing, one is not able to reach that state of emotional release, we definitely need mending (119)

4.3.6 *Kan tunlai hlate hi* (Our New Poems)

In his essay “*Kan Tunlai Hlate hi*” (128), Darchhawna clearly reveals the true nature of poetry and song. He says that poetry is composed seriously and it involves the use of poetical words accompanied by a good poetic flow and an in depth philosophy. According to him, poetry is often difficult to understand and comprehend for an uneducated reader whereas a song is a simple composition with prosaic words, not necessarily having profound philosophy. He states :

The westerners have two types of songs, the type that is sung and not sung but recited. The ones that cannot be sung are those made with highly technical methods and require a lot of studying. They make use of impactful words that are arranged in the most suitable way; it also contains a lot of wisdom and philosophy in it. A piece that is not easily comprehensible for the illiterate. On the other hand, their love songs, patriotic songs and country songs usually consist of regular simple words, with simple musical tones. The

ones that are sung in concerts, TVs and radios are not so refined or musically superior either. (128)

Darchhawna mentions that in his study of the recently composed songs are in the Radio, he noticed that forcing poetical words into certain songs create an imbalance. He is of the opinion that since they are songs composed with a tune and meant to be sung, it would be more appropriate to use simple language instead of high poetical words. He also states his concern about composers who lack the lyrical talent, those that blindly indulge themselves in song composition with any knowledge of the techniques and methods of composition. According to Darchhawna, a composer must carefully study the lyrical content of the song and understand every word employed in the composition. He also states that if a song is composed to be sung, the composer should refrain from using deep and profound poetical words without really knowing what the words meant. He adds that such blind employment of poetical words only lessen the value of the work. He argues:

When I listen to the present day music composed by the youth put up on the radio, I listen to them closely.....what I've come to notice is that they make too much attempts to use lyrical words, to the point that it sounds odd and unfitting with the music. It would be much better to simply use regular words. To simply replicate the works of famous song writers and attempt to use difficult words without truly understanding them, reduces our songs in value, and only provokes the critique of others (12).

Darchhawna also says that the new song composers unknowingly exploit Mizo poetic symbols, metaphors and phrases without properly understanding what they mean. He urges such composers to employ the use of prosaic words and refrain from using the technical poetic

methods. He points out different Mizo poetic phrases which have been misused by new composers:

Ai ang sân, ai ang vial, bing ang kir, buan ang pawm, chem ang dam, chhâm ang zâl, chhâwl ang uai, chhâwn ang thlê / tawn, chum ang kiang / zing, dâr ang chhai / lêng / tawng / thlê, dawî ang dawm, ngha ang lêng, hai ang tar / sen / ðhang, hâwktui ang, hmawng ang pê̄m, hriau ang tawi, hrui ang phuar / sei / tawi / vuan / zâwt, kâwl ang êng / hnim / vai / var, khau ang vuan, khuai ang châwl / kai / lawi / thlum, lâm ang hawi / her / lét, lawi ang ðhang, lei ang do / thei, lêm ang der, mei ang chhawm, mim ang piang, mu ang lêng / ðhawng, nau ang awi / nuar / nui / lâwm / ðap, pai ang pawm / hnâwl, pal ang do / tlu / dâl, pâ̄r chuai / chul / lâwm / thliak / tla / ðil / vul, pui ang bang / chul / hlui / hnâwl / khawng / nê̄m / thar / thlang, rial ang dai / ral / tla, sai ang hrâng / lian / sât, sam ang ðhen, ser ang cham, ang ngir / hâwl / lawi / lian / riak / tuai / ðhang, suar ang chim, sul ang hawi / tum / zui, thlang puan ang, thli ang hrâng, tui ang dang / dai / dam / dawn / hnâm / la / liam / lian / nê̄m, tê̄ ang pê̄l, ðhâl tui ang nghak, ðhuam ang do, um ang ðhu, vai ang ðhâm, vau ang vul, zo chum ang zing (130).

4:3:7 *Ka teh ve dan* (My Own Judgment)

This essay is also one among several social critical essays by Darchhawna. Here, he throws light on the concept of appearance in everyday human life. He states that everything has two sides where human life is always marked by a sense of duality- pleasant/unpleasantness, happiness/ sadness, success/ failure. Hence, he says, one should not hastily run after whatever appeals to the emotion and excites the mind nor take the path that seems to have the easy way out. One should not be too quick to judge merely from appearance or from the little knowledge of first experiences. He says that one should always have an inquisitive mindset and critical

outlook towards everything, and that is when one becomes wise enough to make his own decisions and judgments. He states :

I implore us all to not chase after anything that evokes feelings and thought, there are many unreliable things out there. There are many traps laid amongst them. As they say that all that glitters is not gold, it is not wise to run after everything that seems hopeful. The things that are too easily acquired also slip out of reach easily (*Beisei Ram -2, 53-54*).

Darchhawna also warns that one should not easily believe whatever one hears or listens to. According to him, one can never really acquire all the necessary information in a single instant. Human beings have the tendency to overlook the details in any given situation, and the truth is often hidden behind the scene and in places where people often tend to look past. He criticized the general Mizo mentality which, according to him, often fails to look beyond what is on the surface. In relation to this, he adds that diamonds and precious gems are often hidden between and beneath the rocks which indicates that the ones whom we consider unwise and imprudent can also be of high value. In this manner, Darchhawna carefully inspects the people and his surroundings and offers fearless social criticism marked with a devout aim to correct the wrong in Mizo society and promote what is right. He states :

We must never take for granted those that we assume are lesser or smaller. Even precious stones are found between rocks and diamonds amongst the dirt.....While you attempt to get a bargain out of the poor village woman selling vegetables, she makes no attempts to bargain the price of your money.....The thing that gives birth to love may be outer

beauty and attraction and yet what nourishes it to maturation is kindness and fidelity. And that is something which even poverty and ill health cannot destroy. (55-56)

4.3.8 *Mizo Culture leh Kristianna* (Mizo Culture and Christianity)

In this essay, Darchhawna provides an insightful critic on the dynamics of Mizo culture and Christianity. He clearly highlights the clashing and contradictory points between Mizo culture and Christianity. According to Darchhawna, even though each and every individual is a global citizen inhabiting the same planet, it is through our own unique culture shapes our perspectives and lived experiences in different ways. He states :

We are all people who share the same earth and yet, the way we view this world and the way we live is all dictated differently by our cultures. We hardly ever think of we came to be the way we are, and perhaps it is the best to simply embrace the practices of our own culture (20).

His essay presents a comprehensive look into Mizo culture where he states that the everyday life of the Mizo people such as food choices, eating habits, value system, etc., is governed by what we see and hear in our surrounding environment. He also mentions that the communitarian values of showing care and support to one another, uplifting the poor and down trodden and selfless sharing of food are the important value factors of Mizo culture. He states :

Mizo are a people who live and earn a living with the borders of their culture. It is difficult for us to enjoy a meal without *chingal* and *saum. Bai, an tuihang, sa rep* and *thlai rep* are a staple. The singular aspect of our culture, of which we never want to get rid of is our classless society and how we always attempt to uplift the poor and down trodden (24).

Darchhhawn argues that non- material culture is that part of culture which cannot be easily deterred by development and progress in society. This consists of abstract aspects such as moral principles and communitarian acts such as gathering together to console bereaved families, sharing food with neighbours, organizing social work for the poorer section in society. All these are an intrinsic part of Mizo culture which have been practiced since olden times and are continues till today amidst the strong Western influence and progress in different fields of life. He states :

There are various aspects of Mizo culture that can never be eradicated even with the onset of modernity, like our food, *an tui hang*, *bai*, *saum* and *chingal bawl* and various other fermented foods. And most of all, our practices when it comes to mourning the dead such as *khawhar inlenpui*, *thlan laih*, *mitthi lumen*, *khaw kar kawng sah*, *tui tla ni sarih chung zawn*, *thawkmawh inkhaichhuah*, *hlo thloa inlawm*, *sangha tlang vuak*, *mi zawn* and various other important practices. These are the aspects that make us *Mizo* and it always has a place in our hearts (30).

Darchhhawn argues that non- material culture is that part of culture which cannot be easily deterred by development and progress in society. This consists of abstract aspects such as moral principles and communitarian acts such as gathering together to console bereaved families, sharing food with neighbours, organizing social work for the poorer section in society. All these are an intrinsic part of Mizo culture which have been practiced since olden times and are continues till today amidst the strong Western influence and progress in different fields of life. He states :

It must have been difficult for the older generation to be Christians. They have had to let go of all that they are used to and all of their songs, all their rituals and their modes of worship.....they must learn all over again the ways of praising God...they seem to share the same life as rigorously as the old Pharisees. It may not be difficult to just listen to the Gospel but to take part in a completely new form of praise and singing (31).

According to Darchhawna's view point, the English are the ones responsible for converting the Mizo people from the old traditional belief to Christianity. They cast a strong influence on the Mizo mentality that their practices, life style, fashion and way of thinking were considered to be the best Christian way of life. Traditional practices and beliefs were eventually cast away to make room for the English life style. In this way, the colonizers cast their powerful influence on men of authority and influential members of society who in turn expect the general public to follow the same course. The Mizo people lived in fear of committing errors which would be deemed as sinful in the eyes of the English missionaries and the church authorities. They found themselves in a limit position or crossroad where they had to make the choice between the old cultural practices and the new found faith. This proved to be a difficult task because they were taught and civilized in such a way that English way was considered to be the Christian way of life. Hence, Mizo Christianity is rooted in the idea of the English cultural practice; early Mizo Christians imitated the English missionaries as best as they could in order to become good followers of Christ. Darchhawna argues that Mizo literature and language are two significant aspects of our culture on which the English had cast a negative influence on. He states :

We have had to let go of all the things that did not fit within Christian teachings. The ones who introduced Christianity to us were the English and thus we have grown to

blindly appreciate their way of life, and our Christianity is strongly tinted with English practices.....The first Christians were taught to let go of their religion and their cultural practices and this is a teaching that is still strongly embedded within the hearts of the church leaders. We adopted this western culture along with Christianity. We did not have the guts to correct their mistakes with our songs and we are manipulated in the way that we dress up as well (33).

Darchhawna is of the opinion that on account of the influence of the English missionaries, many of the traditional poetic expressions and idioms that we used for expressing our emotion and mentality were considered to be anti- Christian by the English missionaries. However, these are part of the non- material culture mentioned earlier which the Mizo people could not cast- off easily. Darchhawna traced and examined the different ways in which these poetic expressions were modified and altered so as to maintain the balance between the teachings of the new found faith and preservation of traditional poetic expressions and language. They could not part with the olden ways of expressing their emotions and hence, looked for the ways and means to accommodate these into the newly formed Christian society. Many of these poetic words and expressions are utilized in the composition of Christian hymns. In this manner, Mizo poets and composers found a way to connect Mizo traditional culture and Christianity, thus preserving certain aspects of Mizo culture. This signifies that there are certain intrinsic core cultural values which could not be easily discarded and cast-off even though many aspects of Mizo culture was changed and altered in order to accommodate western faith and culture. Apart from preserving many cultural values related to literature and language, the modifications and reforms made in literary expressions and language further enriched and widened the scope of Mizo literature and language to a great extent. He states :

In the Mizo sentiments, words such as *riakmaw*, *romei*, *thinglenbuang* hold a very emotional place. When we are drenched with sweat on a hot day, we yearn for *thlifim*, *zotui thiang* that mentally quenches our thirst. Even when we speak of the heavens, we use words such as *vanrang chhum piah lam*, *romei zam kar*, *pialral ram nuam*, to describe what heaven means to us. We even use the word *rihli pui* when we talk about the river Jordan. Even in our Christian songs, we have lyrical words such as *rihsang mual liam.....lungloh tui*, *hawilo par*, *chhawrpial run*. Even though we were constantly taught to discard of all our old ways of life, it is not just that we cannot do so, but that we have found ways for our old practices and sentiments to become a part of our new Christian society (34-35).

4.4 The Literary Value and Importance of the Contributions of Darchhawna

Darchhawna's offers significant and invaluable contribution to Mizo literary criticism. He deals with diverse and varied themes from culture, morality, society to language, poetical works and many other aspects. He analyzes society and culture from the basic root which provides valuable perspectives and view points, especially for Mizo writers. He, therefore, plays a crucial role in the enrichment of Mizo literary criticism. Till today, Darchhawna's works prove to be useful tools and guidelines for many Mizo writers, poets and song composers. His critical insights about poetry, song composition and language have been closely followed by many literary artists. In light of this, Darchhawna's criticism can be termed as practical or applied criticism.

Practical criticism, otherwise called applied criticism or even descriptive criticism, may be defined as an attempt to explicate particulars poems or passages of prose bringing out

what is implied in the choice and arrangement of words, images, etc., describing precisely what one feels about them and *placing* them. The guiding principles, theoretical and evaluative, are often not stated, though they must be at work helping and guiding the reader in his interpretation and evaluation,” (Practical Criticism 3).

As aforementioned, Darchhhawna’s critical works are clearly marked by perceptive insights into the workings of social life and culture from the very basic roots. He carefully identifies the problem and offers invaluable solution that would suit the Mizo cultural context. His works assist the readers in interpreting and understanding social issues and the cultural setup, thereby contributing to the betterment of society and the people. Thus, he can be classified as a social and cultural critic.

Darchhawna’s poetical theory and criticism also contribute immensely to the development of Mizo poetry. He provides clear distinctions between poetry writing and song composition, and offers critical opinions about who a poet is and what a song composer should be, and how poetry must be written and how songs should be composed. He also traces the evolution of music in Mizo culture, especially in terms of song composition. Darchhawna identifies music as one of the most significant tools of the English missionaries in transforming Mizo culture and society. He examines the loss and gradual alteration that the Mizo traditional music had to go through on account of the coming of Christianity. In this manner, Darchhawna’s critical works offers insightful historical criticism about the transformation and development of Mizo music and songs.

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Chapter – 5

Conclusion

The development of Mizo language and criticism is marked by the collective efforts and contributions of different significant figures within the Mizo literary circle. Among these, Zairema, J.Malsawma and Darchhawna can be placed among the pioneers in Mizo literary criticism. The contributions of these critics have influenced Mizo literature, language, society and culture to a great extent. Their critical writings have greatly influenced Mizo writers, academicians and intellectuals in Mizo society. Moreover, the views and perspectives present in their writings have positively shaped the mentality and mindset of many people and this influential power of their works have in turn contributed towards the betterment of society as a whole. Hence, it can be said that their contributions surpass the literary field and have positive consequences beyond literature and language.

Zairema can be regarded as a true language critic. His contribution to Mizo literary criticism is mainly focused on language criticism. He perceives and analyzes language in terms of grammar and its usage in relation to the cultural context. According to him, the Mizo script is composed of phonetic alphabets. However, there is no tone marker which creates difficulty in correct and accurate reading of Mizo words. He, therefore, uses tone marker in his book *Kan Bible Hi* and in a revised edition of the Mizo Bible. His works are greatly appreciated by the general masses though there are few among the Mizo intellectual circle who opposed his views and standpoints.

The literary contributions of Zairema enriched and enhanced the outlook of Mizo language. He stresses importance on the grammatical aspect of language and the use of words and their meanings in relation to the cultural context. He provides insightful suggestions to amend the Mizo alphabets on the basis of pronunciation. He was also one of the pioneers in the translation of the Bible to Mizo. He throws light on the blind ignorance of people in terms of words, the usage and the cultural context which generates the meaning of words. For instance, his clarification of the cultural context that lies behind the use of the word *Hmeichhia* has greatly shifted the perspectives of many women who once viewed the word as offensive. In this way, Zairema offers invaluable contribution to the development and deeper understanding of Mizo language.

J.Malsawma can be regarded as social critic. His contribution to Mizo literature is of great importance. His critical writings proved to be greatly influential in Mizo society. His poetical criticism and theories inspired many Mizo poets and writers. His critical works, though few in quantity, are concrete, deep and very influential.

J.Malsawma's social criticism is not large in quantity but they are deep and effective, and they prove to be of great significant for Mizo moral reformation. His social critical essay *Kan Mizia* and *Mi huaisen* are very curious and effective, many prominent and important citizen are sweep. Many people were encouraged to feel and study the life of Mizo people. He is among the prominent people in Mizo society.

J.Malsawma's poetical theory and criticism are very important for the development of Mizo poetry. According to him, it can see culture, custom and social life from the Poem, and a good Poem must have melody and charm. He is against poem composed using prosaic words. it

must use poetical words and should be in good proportion. Therefore, J. Malsawma's views and observations on Mizo Poetry and social life are evident in his critical writing about Mizo poetical theories and social criticism, and this marks him as a true critic.

His contribution in the development of Mizo poetry cannot also be ignored. He offers valuable suggestions and propositions on what a good poet should, how a good poem should be written and the characteristics that make up good poetry. He also stresses importance on the flow and rhythm of poetry and argues that a good poet must possess a skilled command over poetic words in order to create the flow and rhythm of the poem.

The manners in which Darchhawna studied, analyzed and examined culture reflect his status as true cultural critic. In his critical works, he provides insights on how different cultures evolved and developed through the course of history. He keenly examines Mizo culture from its root and traces how it continued to evolve through changing times and conditions and provides a comparative study with contemporary Mizo culture today. He highlights the many aspects of our culture which have been lost in the name of development, religion and westernization. Furthermore, he examines how these cultural changes affected the perspective, mentality and behavior of the Mizo community. He also points out the key factors which brought about the different changes and modifications that Mizo culture had to go through.

Darchhawna's perspective seems to focus on the coming of Christianity as the main reason for the change brought about in Mizo culture. He discusses in detail the different cultural changes brought about by the English missionaries, particularly in the field of literature and language. He critiques Christianity as the driving force that isolated Mizo people from their traditional cultural values and practices, and argues that culture and religious faith are closely

related to each other. This is evident in the manner in which early Mizo Christians had to gradually leave behind many of the old ways in order to accommodate the new religion.

Darchhawna also discusses the positive influence that cultural changes have on Mizo society. This constructive impact is seen largely in the case of Mizo literature and its further development. Even though many aspects of Mizo traditional practices and values had to be discarded for the sake of Christianity, as aforementioned, Mizo Christians had to carefully try to find the balance between what was accepted by the Church and the traditional cultural aspect. This led to the modification and alteration of many old forms of poetic expressions which further enriched Mizo literature and language. Darchhawna historically traces the gradual change in Mizo songs and its composition and argues that the coming of Christianity and the introduction of English music style altered Mizo musical development. In providing the merits and demerits of cultural changes, his works can be regarded as comprehensive analysis of Mizo culture.

Darchhawna stands out as a true cultural critic in the way he critiques society, human behavior, moral values, literature and language, particularly in his examination of the relationship between these different aspects of culture. He presents to his readers insightful perspectives on the dynamics between culture and religion and how they shape the mindset, mentality and behavior of the people. The critical works of Darchhawna prove to be of immense value not only in the field of literature but in cultural studies and sociological analysis as well. It has been greatly utilized by students and scholars of literature, linguistic and the social sciences. His invaluable contribution to the study of Mizo culture and literature provides the necessary critical lens through which contemporary Mizo society and culture can be better understood.

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ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ZAIREMA, J.MALSAWMA AND DARCHHAWNA IN MIZO LITERARY CRITICISM

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN A PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF
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DEPARTMENT OF MIZO
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A STUDY OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ZAIREMA, J. MALSAWMA AND DARCHHAWNA IN MIZO LITERARY CRITICISM

(ABSTRACT)

The dissertation is about the examine of the contributions of Zairema, J. Malsawma and Darchhawna in Mizo Language and Criticism. The development of Mizo literary criticism is marked by the collective efforts and contributions of different significant figures within the Mizo literary circle. Mizo writers think of criticism mostly as literary review especially book review, but now Literary Language and criticism has been introduced among the younger writers. Therefore, the development of Mizo literary language and criticism is yet emerging only.

Zairema, J.Malsawma and Darchhawna can be placed among the pioneers in Mizo language and criticism. The contributions of these critics have influenced Mizo literature, in language, and in the expression of Mizo society and culture to a great extent. Their critical writings have greatly influenced Mizo writers, academicians and intellectuals in Mizo society. Therefore, the contributions of Zairema, J.Malsawma and Darchhawna in Mizo Literary Criticism will be examine in the dissertation.

Chapter-1 Introduction

“Criticism is the branch of study concerned with defining, classifying, expounding, and evaluating works of literature” (Abrams 36). Thus, we can say that criticism is the interpretation of literature; it expounds the values and techniques of literature. “Literary criticism and theory have encompassed the study of a number of issues in its attempt to interpret, evaluate and contextualize literature” (Penguin170). Criticism deals with literary writing and theory; it analyses literary history, society, religion, culture, national character and also expounds all aesthetics and analytical assessment of literature. Also, “The English word criticise is derived

from Latin word criticus its means to speak against or reproach or reproof and judge”
(Khiangte10)

The duty of criticism is not only to inquire but also to make a good deal of every creative work. The main function of criticism can be summed up into five, such as :-

- 1.2.1 Function of instruction
- 1.2.2 Function of interpretation
- 1.2.3 Function of Judgement
- 1.2.4 Function of evaluation
- 1.2.5 Function of enlightenment

Therefore, the function of criticism is very vast. All aesthetic activities of the works of art are evaluated by the critics. Interpretation and judgement of literature, evaluation and appreciation of the work of art are the role of the critic. Therefore, instruction, interpretation, judgement, evaluation and enlightenment are the main functions of criticism, from which the creative writers derive inspiration.

When we talk about Mizo literary criticism, review of books and articles in book form and in literary journals can be included. However, as aforementioned, literary criticism involves a comprehensive critical view and approach in various field of literature, culture, society, religion, language, national character and all aesthetic activities.

The period between 1920 and 1970, a wide gap of about fifty years, witnessed certain developments in Mizo literature. This period saw the appearances of various literary critics. They criticized culture, society, theology, philosophy, History, language, art and science through their critical writings. Thus, we may regard this period as the first phase of Mizo literary criticism.

The central focus of critical writers in this period is judgement, interpretation and theory of poetry and the analysis of social life and language.

The subsequent period from 1970 until the recent years can be considered as the second phase of Mizo literary criticism. During the recent phase, the concept and perception of criticism among the Mizo literary writers have been widened and improved which makes the trends and development of Mizo literary criticism more standardised.

Chapter - 2 A Study of the contributions of Zairema in Mizo Literary Criticism

Zairema's contribution to Mizo literary criticism is mainly in the field of language criticism. He views language grammatically and focuses on the use of language in relation to culture. He has insightful ideas and views, especially regarding the translation of the Bible and writing of Mizo language.

Zairema's critical works mainly focus on Language criticism and his writings related to this are as follows: "*Mizo ṭawng hman dan leh ziak dan kalhmang*". (*Thukhawchang min pekte hi* 493). "*Mizo ṭawng dik hman zir*" (542). "*Mizo tawng ziak dan*" (555). "*Ziaka Mizo ṭawng*" (563). "*A eng nge upa zawk ?*" (569). "*Mizo ṭawng awmze inhnaih ṭhenkhat*" (575). "*Mizo ṭawng v leh h*" (583). "*Mizo ṭawngkam hman dan ṭhenkhat*" (588). "*Hmeichhia nge Minu*" (227). About the Bible translation : "*Lehlin ṭha nia ngaih lem loh*" (*Kan Bible Hi*148). "*Ṭawngkam pawl thei a ni em*" (150). "*Chhiar dik loh theih*" (151). "*Rilrua rethei engtihna nge*" (159). From these essays he describes the correct way to write and use Mizo language.

In His essay, "*Mizo ṭawng hman dan leh ziak dan kalhmang*" (493). He examines the uses of *h* in Mizo alphabet. Sometimes it is used as the first letter and sometimes in the middle. For example, if we look at the word *Hmâr*, non- Mizo readers would read it as *Hamar*, but if it is

written as *mhar* non- Mizo readers can read it correctly. So, according to Zairema the uses of *h* in Mizo word should be in the same position as when the alphabet is pronounced, eg: *mhar, nhar, lhau, rham, chhang, sangha, khing, phung, thang, thing* etc.

He states that the English and other nations often have a book on literary language which cannot be easily understood by common man and requires an intensive studying of the literary language. However, the case is different for Mizo language. Zairema argues that for the Mizo people, the language and linguistic style of the common man can be accepted as the correct way of speaking. Therefore, Zairema states that the sole function of language is communication and has to be comprehensible by both the speaker and the listener.

One of the major problems heavily debated upon regarding the writing of Mizo language is the issue of the combination of words. According to Zairema, single words which do not have substantial meaning on their own in relation to the intended sentence should be joined with the preceding word. For example, the word *fak* and *awm* should be written as *fakawm*. Similarly, words indicating gender such as *nu, pa, etc.*, should be joined with the preceding word. For example, *arpa, bawngnu*.

Zairema also mentions that it is unfortunate that the English missionaries made double letters for one tone in alphabet. Eg *aw, ch, ng*. This created difficulty, especially for children and non Mizo readers. For non Mizo readers and speakers, the fourth letter of the Mizo alphabet *ch* is very difficult to read as two letters share one tone to produce a single syllable sound. Similarly, the second letter of the alphabet *aw* is often read by non- Mizo speakers as *ui* He suggests the replacement of *ch* with *c*, *ng* with *n*, *aw* with *o*. Eg *Lalcatuana, Lanilneiha, Lalthanhola*. In this manner, it becomes easier for non Mizo readers and younger children to read and write correctly.

Zairema argues that the Mizo alphabet is bound to meet certain changes in the hands of the future generations and it is imperative that the necessary modifications and changes must be made and applied at the earliest. He is of the opinion that the required changes to the Mizo alphabets must be made before our written literature starts to expand. According to Zairema, Mizo language is a tonal language and without tonal marks one cannot read correctly. It is imperative that we have tonal marks especially for high tone, low tone, falling tone and rising tone in Mizo language.

These Essays “*A eng nge upa zawk ?*” (569). “*Mizo ṭawng awmze inhnaih ṭhenkhat*” (575). “*Mizo ṭawng v leh h*” (583). “*Mizo ṭawngkam hman dan ṭhenkhat*” (588). Zairema states from this article that any language change from complex pronunciation to easier pronunciation, so, complex pronunciation is older and earlier. He suggests in writing Mizo language like these ; “*Kal a is ka la, Lala is La-la, I dam em is I da-em, eng a is e nga*” (Zairema 570) . *Eng nge* is use for question so he say *Eng nge* is correct writing, like this *khawi nge* is not correct but *khaw nge* is correct.

Zairema examines in his article *Mizo ṭawng awmze inhnaih ṭhenkhat* several Mizo words which have closely related meanings such as *Hamṭha, Nihlawh, Vannei, Engthawl*. These are spelled and pronounced differently but their surface meanings are more or less the same. However, each of these words have their own context and have specific uses depending on the contexts.

Therefore, from this article, Zairema mentions and defines relative four words such as *Hamtha, Nihlawh, Vannei, and Engthawl*. These words are related but different in usage, so, he ensured the meaning and usage. Especially the words *Engthawl* and *Thawveng* are closely related, according to him the word *Engthawl* means free from any burden. A person having

sorrow, sadness and any burden in life, suddenly changes to happiness, which is call *Engthawl*. The word *Thawveng* implies careless and proud, while the word *Engthawl* implies being free from any burden.

Zairema, in this article *Mizoṭawng v leh h* talks about adding *v* and *h* in writing some words. Eg *Ka duh lo va ni* here *v* sound is we pronounce when we speaking, though sometime we speak with *v* sound but he suggests to that *v* should not be wriiten. The English missionaries wrote some words without *h* in the southern part of the Mizoram. Eg “*Pate u, in nupuite khawngai rawh u*” (584) and these words such as; *bawi, dawi, pawi*. But Welsh missionary write with *h* in the northern part of the Mizoram, so, Zairema suggests writing without *v* and with *h* in some words. Eg without *v*, *Ka duh lo a ni, A pawi lo e* etc are incorrect, with *h* *Khawngaih, Bawih, Dawih, Pawih* are correct writing. According to Zairema, to add *h* is an *underdifferentiation*, and add *v* is an *overdifferentiation*.

Zairema stresses on his attricles “*Mizo ṭawng kan hman dan then khat*” (588) the importance of preserving the original meanings of words and the correct contexts in which words are used. He accuses the intellectual class for their carelessness and inaccuracy in using words in the right contexts. The mistakes made by intellectuals have led to the loss of original word meanings to a large extent, Therefore, in order to avoid this change in word meaning, he defines some phrases with their original meanings and usage such as : *Mipat hmeichhiat, Nulat tlangval, Puh-mawh*.

Mipat hmeichhiat : Zairema feels that there has been intellectual misuse of this phrase. Some intellectuals use this word to describe sex before marriage. Zairema argues that this phrase is used between married couples as well, especially in situations of hinder sexual relationship between a man and a woman. It originally refers to a man or woman who has trouble in having

sexual intercourse with his/her partner. In Mizo, the phrase *Mipa thei lo / Hmeichia thei lo* indicates a person who cannot perform his/ her sexual duties towards his/her partner.

Nulat tlangval: Originally, this phrase indicates the act of sexual intercourse outside the ring of marriage. What is interesting here is that the female gender *nula* comes before the male gender *tlangval* and according to Zairema, the arrangement is in such a way because women are considered more important in this context.

Puh-mawh: According to Zairema, the word *Puh-mawh* is a new word which may have been likely coined by politicians. He says the word has been used in two contexts. In the first context, we use the word *puh* as an equivalent word to *mawhchhiat*, *mawhphurhtir*, *dem*, etc, all of which points to the act of putting the blame on someone. *Mawh* is also used as responsibility, consequence, etc. Another use of the word of *mawh* refers to refusal, hesitate, delay, eg *ti duh lo*, *hreh*, *harsa ti*, *muangchang* etc. The new word *Puh-mawh*, according to Zairema, is an unnecessary combination of two words which have more or less the same meaning.

In short, Zairema redefines and clarifies certain words and phrase which have been misused, especially in terms of meanings and the contexts in which the words and phrases are used. He gives clear contextual meanings for important phrase such as *Mipat hmeichhiat*, *Nulat tlangval*, *Puh-mawh*. These words, on account of the loss of the original meanings, have become very controversial, especially among the intellectual circles. Therefore, the usage, meaning and its implication in connection with culture are clearly defined in this article.

The Mizo word for woman *Hmeichhia* is often regarded as offensive by some women and prominent citizens and they have made several replacement for the word; the most popular suggestion is the word *Minu*. Zairema defines and explains the origin and the root of usage of his

article *Hmeichhia nge Minu*. The word *hmeichhia* which turned out to be quite different from the interpretation of the word by feminists and other concerned members of society. Here, we can see the importance of critical writings for Mizo language in solving linguistic problems related to big social issues.

Zairema says the word *Hmei* implies two meanings. The first implication of the word *hmei* is the second wife of the village chief, such a woman is called *Hmei*. However, if a commoner or layman had a second wife, she is never referred to as *hmei*, she is simply referred to as the second wife. In Mizo society, the chief's *hmei*, which is the literal equivalent of mistress, has a valued status. She is given similar treatment as the chief's daughter, and is treated with respect and kindness. However, some intellectuals and women often failed to understand the original word meaning and context of the word *hmei*. They often interpret the word as a derogatory term referring to a second wife, a second choice or mistress who is looked down upon by society.

Hmei also stands for the word *nu* which means mother or someone who is married. The word *hmei-thai* refers to a woman single living in a house without husband on account of death of the husband or divorce. The word *Pa-hmei* means father and mother, and it means a married couple living together on their own without the support of their children. The phrase *a hmei a pa* is a general phrase that is used to indicate all men and women and is equivalent to the English word everyone.

Another interpretation of the word *chhia* is when it is used as a cover-up word when the opposite meaning is the real intention of the speaker. Such words used for covering up the real intention is known as in Mizo as *thukhuh*. "A young girl may use the word *chhia* to her

boyfriend, saying, *I chhe roh/I chhe belbul e a*, which is a subtle way of teasing him, a discreet way of showing affection and fondness” (229).

Therefore, Zairema was against the interpretation of the word *hmeichhia* by some women and intellectuals. *Hmei* might not be the term for a proper wife but it implies someone that the chief takes care of as his wife. They are entitled to be owned only by the chiefs. They enjoy a valued status in olden Mizo society, and to have the identity of the *hmei* was a status aspired by the lower class in society. Therefore, Zairema is of the opinion that the word *Hmeichhia* does not necessarily signify a secondary status of the wife or a servant. This interpretation changed and influenced many readers which to a certain extent, clarified the linguistic debate regarding the word *Hmeichhia*.

Zairema’s critical views of the Bible translation, he discussed and ensured the richness and correct usages of Mizo language and incorrect translation of the bible guided to incorrect usages of Mizo language. All the words *love* in English are translated as *Hmangaihna* in Mizo Bible, so wherever the word *love* arises we replace it with *hmangaihna*. He discussed and ensured the Mizo language is richer than the English language in terms of the word *love* from the chapter *Lehlin tha nia ngaih lem loh*. So, according to Zairema all the words *love* are translated to *hmangaihna* is incorrect. He says, the relationship between men and women is called *inngaizawng*, the relationship between husband and wife is called *induh* and friendships are termed as *inngaina* and parents *duat* their children.

Zairema says that the English word *sacrifice* translated to Mizo as *inthawina* is incorrect. The English regarded all cutting of animals for the sake of religion as *sacrifice*. However, in Mizo language and culture the word *inthawina* implies the special rites performed by the priest in order to cure a sick or diseased person. In Mizo cultural context, the word *inthawi* often

involves the cutting of animals to cast away the evil spirits. Also, in Mizo language the word *bia* is an invitation for presence. Hence, according to Zairema, the English word sacrifice is to be translated in Mizo as *bia* as the interpretation and meaning corresponds to the religious connotation.

Zairema also examines these words from the Bible in the chapter of *Chhiar dik loh theih. Lallukhum, Thiltihtheihna, Rawngbawl, Vantirkoh*. He states that these words are new words coined at the time of translation. He argues that *Angel* is not *tirkoh* and that it should be *tirkah*. The sea angels in Greek myths are similar to what we call *tui huai* in Mizo folktales and to translate angels in the Bible as *Tirkoh* is incorrect.

Zairema also adds that phrase *Rilrua rethei* in Mizo Bible is an incorrect translation. He says that on the basis of English and Greek words, *rethei* should be replaced by *Pachhia*. According to Zairema *rethei* is incorrect because the word has two meanings. One is when we suffer from sorrow or burden, we tend to say *a retheih thlak*, and the second use of the word is to indicate financial poverty. For the latter use, the word *Pachhia* is an equivalent word. What the verse in Luke refers to is the people who are economically poor and hence, the word *pachhia*, in the Biblical context, means an economically poor person.

Zairema's contributions to Mizo language is noteworthy till today, and his critical writings have a great impact on the development of Mizo language criticism. Zairema's views and observations on Mizo language are found in his critical writing about Mizo language grammar, and this marks him as a true Mizo language critic.

Chapter - 3 A Study of the Contributions of J. Malsawma in Mizo Literary Criticism

J. Malsawma's critical works can be divided into two categories on the basis of Poetry and social criticism. Under the category of Poetical criticism his writings such as :- "Mizo poems – Old & New" (*Vanglai* 93), "*Ka hla duhzawng – I*" (103), "*Hla Tha ber chungchang*" (127), "*Mizo Sakhua leh Hla*" (157). Social criticism such as :- "*Kan Mizia*" (199), "*Mi huaisen*" (186), "*Chanchinbu leh zo tawng*" (*Zo-zia* 76). These critical writings show case Malsawma's refined criticism within the field of Mizo poetry and theology. They serve as useful sources for many writers and academicians working within these two areas.

J.Malsawma compares and discusses about the old and new poem in his article "Mizo poems – Old & New" (93). According to him, old poems imply folk songs and new poem refers to modern songs especially pop songs composed by the younger generations. According to J.Malsawma, though the old poems have much simpler subject matter as compared to the new, they are often richer in poetical words and flow. He argues that most of the new songs lack the sentimental flow and the engaging power that old poems have on listeners and readers. These new songs, be it secular or gospel songs, appear to be mere unsystematic arrangement of random words to which tunes are added. J.Malsawma points out that the difference between old and new poem mainly lies in the use of poetical words and the creation of poetic flow.

He makes several suggestions for the development and improvement of Mizo poetry. He urges all poets and composers to use language with utmost care. He argues there are certain words which are meant to be used for poetic composition and words which do not particularly contribute to the creation of flow and rhythm. Here he differentiates between poetical words and prosaic words.

J.Malsawma talks about his idea and observation regarding Mizo songs and composition in his article “*Ka hla duhzawng – I*” (103). According to him, a song must have depth and one should be able to immediately identify that it is a poetic composition even while reading it. It should be influential and imaginative, and it must be composed using poetical words.

He says that any song which lacks poetical words are will fail to attract listeners and is deprived of influence and power over the imagination and feeling of the reader of listener. A good composer is able to affect people with his composition and guide their feelings and imaginations towards his own.

According to J.Malsawma, good song is created by the right combination of poetical words and tune or poetic flow, and the tune of a song must have a good flow and rhyme. The tune of the song should not be difficult and obscure but easy, simple and comfortable to be sung by everyone. The tune must also have originality on its own.

J.Malsawma argues that modern day composers do not give proper attention and care to their compositions. He says that random arrangement of words and simply adding solfa notes to it cannot make a good song. He urged composers to be more attentive towards their compositions and warns them that a good composition is more than merely putting together words and tunes,

J.Malsawma criticized in his articles “*Hla tha ber chungchang*” (127) the prominent Mizo poet Rokunga’s use the poetical word *Bawng in runpui a bel*. J. Malsawma is of the opinion that the poetical word *run* symbolizes human residence in particular, but Rokunga used the word to symbolize a cattle house in his song. Hence, J. Malsawma is against the misusing of the poetical word *run* among the poets and intellectual circle.

J.Malsawma also against poems composed on the basis of western style and songs in his article “*Mizo Sakhua leh Hla*” (157). According to him attractive and charming poems are created on the basis of culture, religious feelings and thoughts, all the poets reveal that culture and religious aspect. So, he stated that the poet’s culture and religion are very related to subject matter, thought and feeling. In Mizo folksong it seems that ancient Mizo culture and religious thought and feeling, but now new religious born by the influence of English Christian missionaries which influence and guide new poems. After Christianity since 1920, Mizo Christian poets composed their poem by new thoughts and feelings about after death and heaven, some conventional epithet poetical word ie *Pialral*, *Rihli* are found in the poems, so, poets cannot create on appealing and influential poems without Mizo culture and philosophy. But now, some song writers compose their song on the basis of tonic solfa, which lacks attractive quality and charm. Therefore, J. Malsawma was against poems composed on the basis of western style and songs. He suggests that Mizo poems and songs must be composed with sentimental feeling, thought, philosophy and culture.

J.Malsawma’s social critical essay “*Kan Mizia*” (199) was a famous essay on social criticism, his view and observation influence all Mizo people during this time. *Kan Mizia* is very concrete and deep, he says that, Mizo people are mostly very bad in social condition, Mizo feeling and life style are of luxuries, selfish, proud and greedy, and spurious. According to him, social life of Mizo is very backward but they enjoy high leaving standard, he criticize the life style of the Mizo.

His essay “*Mi huaisen*” (186) is also a fearless and honest criticism of Mizo society. J.Malsawma carefully observes Mizo lifestyle, moral values and behavioral pattern and from his findings, he produced an honest constructive social criticism through his essay.

J.Malsawma suggests that to be brave we must be trustworthy. According to his view, Mizo people tend to lack trust and are often dishonest which is evident in how business is being run in the market place. Shopkeepers and businessmen only think of ways to earn maximum profit, even to the extent of employing unfair means and measurements in selling goods to the people. All these, Malsawma says, stems from the fear of not having enough profit where people have lost the bravery to run their business honestly. Malsawma seems to be deeply unsatisfied with the work culture of Mizo society and the degradation of moral value in every living. His criticism on society is with the intention to reform and reshape the value system of Mizo society and to encourage people to take up an honest living.

He is deeply concerned about the future of Mizo society and his essay can be seen as an attempt to bring about moral reform within the society. He is, therefore, honest and straight forward in his criticism and leaves no stone unturned. It is evident from his writing that Malsawma is strongly driven by his desire and passion to rebuild Mizo society for the sake of the future generation.

J.Malsawma is not only a social and poetical critic he also contributes to language development. His article "*Chanchinbu leh Zotawng*" (Zo-zia 76) revealed his in depth knowledge and perceptive ideas on Mizo language. Here, he encourages journalists to write and use correct Mizo language in their works and also urges ministers and elders of the church to promote the correct usage of Mizo language in church services and in their ministry. He points out certain incorrect usage of several words and also provides the correct usage in this article.

Fo, Reng, Thin : According to him, *fo* implies some time or ofetn, but journalists and intellectuals have used the word to denote *always*. He suggests that the word *fo* should be used correctly in the right context.

Engemaw zat, engemaw chen : These words are commonly used to denote uncountable or indefinite quantity. J. Malsawma says *Mi bo zawng turin mi engemaw zat an kal* is incorrect, according to him *tam fe, tlem te* is correct.

Vel : Mizo word *vel* means *about*, it is an uncertain word, some intellectuals and journalists commonly use it. Eg *a tawk vel chiah chiah*. *vel* and *chiah* is opposite word.

La lut : J.Malsawma is also against the use of the word *la lut*. Intellectuals and churchmen mostly use *la lut* instead of the word *ruat/nemngheh*. For the purpose of the use of *induct/appointment* in English we use *la lut* in Mizo. J.Malsawma suggested the use of the word *ruat* instead of the word *la lut*.

J.Malsawma can be regarded as social critic. His contribution to Mizo literature is of great importance. His critical writings proved to be greatly influential in Mizo society. His poetical criticism and theories inspired many Mizo poets and writers. His critical works, though few in quantity, are concrete, deep and very influential.

J.Malsawma's social criticism is not large in quantity but they are deep and effective, and they prove to be of great significant for Mizo moral reformation. His social critical essay "*Kan Mizia*" (199) and "*Mi huaisen*" (186) are very curious and effective, many prominent and important citizen are sweep. Many people were encouraged to feel and study the life of Mizo people. He is among the prominent people in Mizo society.

J.Malsawma's poetical theory and criticism are very important for the development of Mizo poetry. According to him, it can see culture, custom and social life from the Poem, and a good Poem must have melody and charm. He is against poem composed using prosaic words. It must use poetical words and should be in good proportion. Therefore, J.Malsawma's views and observations on Mizo Poetry and social life are evident in his critical writing about Mizo poetical theories and social criticism, and this marks him as a true critic.

Chapter - 4 A Study of the Contributions of Darchhawna in Mizo literary Criticism

Darchhawna critical essays mainly focus on cultural and social criticism, he traces social life, culture and language. According to Darchhawna, Mizo people are ashamed of their own culture; they want to maintain high living standard which is beyond their capacity. Therefore, we practice unreliable life style, hence, the whole life of Mizo people becomes tainted with dishonesty.

Darchhawna clearly defines the church language. He is against the misuse of language by pastors, elders and active persons in the church along with the Bible translation on his article Kohhrana "*Mizo Tawng Hman Dan*" (Beisem ram 69). According to him, every nation expects the language in the church to be proper and honourable; it must be true, correct and clear.

He states that the language of the church must be good and honourable, correct as much possible and true, he also highlights common misuse among the active person in the church, he writes some misused language in his critical work, such as his revealed common error in the church language let mention such as :

Nân : He says the word *Nân* is mostly misused in the church. Mizo devotional songs are different eg, fakna hla, chawimawina hla, sunna hla, tawngtaina hla, the meeting chairman in the

Church mostly misuse always they use like ‘*Tan nân, Ban nân, Thawhlawm khawn nân, innghahkhawm nân* etc, Darchhawna is against these misusage and he suggestes to use on the basis of the song writer’s word.

–*na* : *na* is commonly used to make noun form in Mizo language, Darchhawna is against the common use of *na* in verb used by the chairman and speakers in the church service, eg *ṭawngtaina, Hla sakna, thusawina, hlanna*.

Ngaimawh, ngai pawimawh, pawi, pawimawh: Darchhawna points out the ways in which these words have been mixed up incorrectly in our present day usage. *Ngaimawh* denotes concern about the things that one dislikes or is against. On the other hand, the word *ngai pawimawh* refers to someone / something which we give importance to, someone / something which we give priorities. The word *Pawimawh* means important or significant. And the word *pawi* means something regretful or to feel sorry about something or someone. However, these words have been mixed up and used incorrectly without paying attention to their original meanings and contexts.

Darchhawna talks about the impact and effects of Christianity in Mizo culture. In his essay “*Khawthlang Rimawi leh Culture*” (100), he critically viewed the impact and effect of western music among the Mizo people. According to him, western music changed the music and culture of the Mizo people, which affects and disturbs the real life and imagination of the Mizo people. Now, the life and styles of Mizo also imitate from western styles, which is appreciated among the Mizo people.

Darchhawna did a comparative study on Mizo songs of the pre- missionary period and post- missionary period in his critical work “*Mizo Zai Thar*” (116). According to Darchhawna,

the Mizo traditional song is low in tune and gentle in flow, which made it easy for both the young and the old people to sing. On the other hand, the new songs introduced by the English missionaries are high in tune and their flow is less gentle than the Mizo traditional songs, making it difficult to sing for the Mizo people. This new style of singing did not suit the Mizo sentiment.

According to Darchhawna, the Mizo people had difficulty in adjusting themselves to the English style of singing; even the youths were not accustomed to the rigid hymnal tune. The new Mizo songs were composed in accordance to the English style and they sounded different from the previous Mizo songs that they used to sing. The new style failed to cater to the emotional needs of the Mizo people. Darchhawna felt the need to restore the dying spirit and sentimentality of the Mizo people which they had lost to the English style of singing.

In his essay "*Kan Tunlai Hlate hi*" (128) Darchhawna clearly reveals the true nature of poetry and song. He says that poetry is composed seriously and it involves the use of poetical words accompanied by a good poetic flow and an in depth philosophy. According to him, poetry is often difficult to understand and comprehend for an uneducated reader whereas a song is a simple composition with prosaic words, not necessarily having profound philosophy.

Darchhawna mentions that in his study of the recently composed songs are in the Radio, he noticed that forcing poetical words into certain songs create an imbalance. He is of the opinion that since they are songs composed with a tune and meant to be sung, it would be more appropriate to use simple language instead of high poetical words. He also states his concern about composers who lack the lyrical talent, those that blindly indulge themselves in song composition with any knowledge of the techniques and methods of composition. According to Darchhawna, a composer must carefully study the lyrical content of the song and understand

every word employed in the composition. He also states that if a song is composed to be sung, the composer should refrain from using deep and profound poetical words without really knowing what the words meant. He adds that such blind employment of poetical words only lessen the value of the work.

His essay "*Ka teh ve dan*" (*Beisei ram-2*. 53) is also one among several social critical essays by Darchhawna. Here, he throws light on the concept of appearance in everyday human life. He says that one should always have an inquisitive mindset and critical outlook towards everything, and that is when one becomes wise enough to make his own decisions and judgments. Darchhawna carefully inspects the people and his surroundings and offers fearless social criticism marked with a devout aim to correct the wrong in Mizo society and promote what is right.

In this essay "*Mizo Culture leh Kristianna*" (20), Darchhawna provides an insightful critic on the dynamics of Mizo culture and Christianity. He clearly highlights the clashing and contradictory points between Mizo culture and Christianity.

Darchhawna traced and examined the different ways in which these poetic expressions were modified and altered so as to maintain the balance between the teachings of the new found faith and preservation of traditional poetic expressions and language. They could not part with the olden ways of expressing their emotions and hence, looked for the ways and means to accommodate these into the newly formed Christian society. Many of these poetic words and expressions are utilized in the composition of Christian hymns. In this manner, Mizo poets and composers found a way to connect Mizo traditional culture and Christianity, thus preserving certain aspects of Mizo culture. This signifies that there are certain intrinsic core cultural values

which could not be easily discarded and cast-off even though many aspects of Mizo culture was changed and altered in order to accommodate western faith and culture. Apart from preserving many cultural values related to literature and language, the modifications and reforms made in literary expressions and language further enriched and widened the scope of Mizo literature and language to a great extent.

Darchhawna's offers significant and invaluable contribution to Mizo literary criticism. He deals with diverse and varied themes from culture, morality, society to language, poetical works and many other aspects. He analyzes society and culture from the basic root which provides valuable perspectives and view points, especially for Mizo writers. He, therefore, plays a crucial role in the enrichment of Mizo literary criticism. Till today, Darchhawna's works prove to be useful tools and guidelines for many Mizo writers, poets and song composers. His critical insights about poetry, song composition and language have been closely followed by many literary artists. In light of this, Darchhawna's criticism can be termed as practical or applied criticism.

As aforementioned, Darchhhawna's critical works are clearly marked by perceptive insights into the workings of social life and culture from the very basic roots. He carefully identifies the problem and offers invaluable solution that would suit the Mizo cultural context. His works assist the readers in interpreting and understanding social issues and the cultural setup, thereby contributing to the betterment of society and the people. Thus, he can be classified as a social and cultural critic.

Chapter – 4 Conclusion

The development of Mizo language and criticism is marked by the collective efforts and contributions of different significant figures within the Mizo literary circle. Among these, Zairema, J.Malsawma and Darchhawna can be placed among the pioneers in Mizo language criticism. The contributions of these critics have influenced Mizo literature, language, society and culture to a great extent. Their critical writings have greatly influenced Mizo writers, academicians and intellectuals in Mizo society. Moreover, the views and perspectives present in their writings have positively shaped the mentality and mindset of many people and this influential power of their works have in turn contributed towards the betterment of society as a whole. Hence, it can be said that their contributions surpass in the field Mizo language and criticism, and have positive consequences beyond literature and language.

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