

POSTMODERNISM IN MIZORAM: A STUDY OF MITCHEL  
FOUCAULT'S POWER/KNOWLEDGE RELATIONSHIP IN THE  
CONTEXT OF MIZO SOCIETY

BY

RAMENGLIANA

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR JC ZOMUANTHANGA

Submitted

In partial fulfilment of the requirement of the Degree of Master of  
Philosophy in the Department of Political Science Mizoram University,

Aizawl



मिज़ोरम विश्वविद्यालय  
MIZORAM UNIVERSITY  
आइजॉल, मिज़ोरम-७९६००४  
Aizawl: Mizoram, 796004

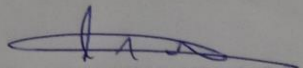
Post Box No. 190  
Gram : MZU  
Phone: (0389) 2331609  
Fax : 0389 - 2331611  
www.mzu.edu.in

Department of Political Science  
Dr JC Zomuanthanga

No. MZU./M.Phil./618 of 12.06.2020  
Dated: 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021

### CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled “**Post Modernism in Mizoram: A Study of Mitchel Foucault’s Power Knowledge/Relationship in the context of Mizo Society**” submitted by **Ramengliana** for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**, is a research work, done under my supervision and guidance. The dissertation, submitted by her has not formed the basis for the award to the scholar for any degree or any other similar title and it has not yet been submitted as a dissertation or thesis in any University. I also certify that the dissertation represents objective study and independent work of the scholar.

  
(Dr. JC ZOMUANTHANGA)

Place: Aizawl

Supervisor

DECLARATION

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

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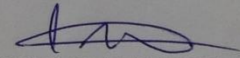


(RAMENGLIANA)

विभागाध्यक्ष  
Head  
राजनीतिक शास्त्र विभाग  
Dept. of Political Science  
सिफोई.के.विश्वविद्यालय  
Mizoram University

Head, Department of Political Science

Mizoram University



(Dr. JC ZOMUANTHANGA)

Supervisor

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I praise and thank to the Almighty, the author of knowledge and wisdom, for his countless love and shower of blessings throughout my research work.

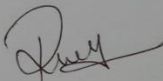
The completion of this undertaking could not have been possible without the guidance of my supervisor. I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitude to my research supervisor, Dr. JC Zomuanthanga, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Mizoram University, Aizawl, Mizoram for his tireless guidance and assistance throughout my research work. Indeed, I could not imagine of completing my work without the continuous guidance, encouragement, motivation, knowledge, and help from my supervisor. It is a privilege and honour to work and study under his guidance and completes my research.

Also, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all my faculty members, Department of Political Science, Mizoram University, through whom I learnt about the research.

I am extremely grateful to my parents and family for their love, prayers, caring, sacrifices and continuous support and help in terms of financial and motivation during my entire research work.

I would also like to thank my brother for his enormous help and support during my research work.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all my friends and others who in one way or another supporting me either morally, financially and physically.



(RAMENGLIANA)

Dated: 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 2020

Department of Political Science

Aizawl, Mizoram

Mizoram University

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AAP	Aam Aadmi Party
ABVP	Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad
AD	Anno Domini
BJP	Bharatiya Jana Party
BLM	Black Lives Matter
BMS	Baptist Missionary Society
BNLF	Bru National Liberation Front
ECI	Election Commission of India
EITU	Eastern Indian Tribal Union
Gaze	Object of Knowledge and subject knowing that object
HPC	Hmar People's Convention
IIRSF	All India Revolutionary Students' Federation
INC	Indian National Congress
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
LPG	Liberalisation, Privatisation, Globalisation
MIMER	Mizoram Medical Education and Research
MJD	Mizo Janata Dal
MNF	Mizo National Front
MNFF	Mizo National Food Front
MPC	Mizoram People's Conference
MPCC	Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee
MST	Mizoram State Transport
MSU	Mizo Students Union
MU	Mizo Union
MZP	Mizo Zirlai Pawl
NDA	National Democratic Alliance
NEEPCO	North Eastern Electric Power Corporation
NSUI	National Students' Union of India
UMFO	United Mizo Freedom Organisation

UPA	United Progressive Alliance
UT	Union Territory
WW1	First World War
WW2	Second World War
YMA	Young Mizo Association
ZMC	Zoram Medical College
ZNP	Zoram National Party
ZORO	Zo Reunification Organisation
ZPM	Zoram People's Movemnet



## CHAPTER 1

### **Introduction:**

Sociologists of different ages had undertaken the study of society in different dimensions which resulted in new and varied theories. These studies usually describe the development of society into various phases. Each of these phases marked the development and progress of each society. These phases were traditional, modern and postmodern. The study of these phases paved a foundation for welfare of human beings. Sociologists accepted that most of the world society had gone through Traditional and modern phase of development; and claimed contemporary society as a postmodern phase which rejects principles of the earlier phases.

Thus, sociologists focus on the theory which could study society over the world. Their efforts had benefited different societies in solving diverse problems from individual freedom to prevention of war between states. But there is no unity among sociologist which resulted in the emergence of various theories ranging from liberal to Marxist, and far right of Nazism. These theories had been the main approach for the study of society. These different approaches made an endless debate among the social thinkers.

The debate among sociologists reached its vertex when the two World Wars broke out in the early and middle 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, sociologists began to focus on a

tussle between the notion of liberal and Marxist.<sup>1</sup> But they accepted that their study of society had reached a modern phase in the middle of 20<sup>th</sup> century. The modern society was benefited by elites and high-ups of society which in turn came to oppress the poor and the downtrodden. The Great Depression of Europe in 20<sup>th</sup> century proved that the liberal and Marxist ideas were redundant to solve the economy of European society and states. In this juncture, the Frankfurt school of Critical theory made its debut in the arena of Marxist-liberal debate for the development of society.<sup>2</sup>

The Frankfurt School of Critical Theorist comprised of academicians, high intellectuals and political dissidents who condemned the contemporary socio-economic system of capitalism, fascism and communism of early half of 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> They proposed that social theory was irrelevant for determining the conflict, factionalism and reactionary politics in the latter half of 20<sup>th</sup> century by claiming the end of Modernity and beginning of postmodern society. They highlighted alternative path for realizing the socio-economic development of society and the nation. Thus, the Frankfurt school of critical theory gave a new theory and concept 'Postmodernism' for the study of contemporary society.

Postmodernism is a broad movement that began in the latter half of 20<sup>th</sup> century making a departure from modernity. Postmodern social theory contributed much for the welfare of man and state. Postmodernism is associated with many theories and approaches. However, many sociologists accepted that postmodern

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<sup>1</sup>S.L. Doshi (2003). *Modernity, Postmodernity and Sociological Theories*. (New Delhi: Rawat Publication. p.33-34

<sup>2</sup>Francis Barker, Peter Hulme. & Margaret Iversen. (eds) (1992). *Postmodernism and the Re-reading of Modernity*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. p.3

<sup>3</sup>Rolf, Wiggershaus. (1995). *The Frankfurt School: Its History, Theories and Political Significance*. Cambridge: The MIT Press. p. 656

social theory had deeply rooted in the age of enlightenment in Europe in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Most historians also considered the age of enlightenment as the age of reason which was a seed of renaissance, humanism and the recovery of classical thought in Europe from 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century. Postmodernism is a social theory characterized by a search for truth and reason. Postmodernism is a rejection of modernity which resulted in the rejection of institutional authority of religious, educational and economic. Postmodernism is defined by an idea of skepticism, a rejection of grand narrative of liberal, fascism and communism. According to British sociologist, Anthony Giddens (1938), “Postmodernity is pluralistic and diverse”.<sup>4</sup> He is of the opinion that postmodern thinkers reject the opinion and theory propounded by classical thinkers who took their ideas and inspiration from the notion of history. In fact, Postmodernism is a theoretical framework to understand social phenomena which acclaimed that everything in the society are superficial and provisional. Postmodernism accepted that society is fully fragmented of different cultures and ethnics.

Postmodern social theory is deeply influenced by a French philosopher, post-structuralist and sociologist, Michel Foucault. He defines postmodernism in terms of discourse which is interpreted through power. His main interest lies in the knowledge of human, and the power that acts on mankind. He said that power is knowledge which linked all the aspects of postmodernity. Foucault had rejected class analysis of power and also rejected the idea that power is ultimately located within the state. Foucault main interest was to find out positive knowledge which had shaped all

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<sup>4</sup>Anthony Giddens (1990). *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press. p.38

human life. He was of the opinion that all knowledge was for the welfare of human being. Foucault believed that the history of man showed that knowledge became a tool to subordinate the individual. Thus, he tried to establish that knowledge, truth and power are related each other in all aspect of life.

Michel Foucault examined the French society from the 18<sup>th</sup> century by claiming the postmodern notion was there in French society during that time. His main aim was to find out the source of knowledge. For that he started investigating the different layer of civilization and French revolution which changed the French society once and for all. During that time French society was divided into three estate First Estate i.e. Clergy, Second Estate i.e. Noble and Third estate i.e. Commoner. One of the major causes of the French revolution was the oppression and discrimination of the commoner by the two higher classes. The two higher classes levied high taxes to commoner while exempting the two estates. The two high classes enjoyed in the midst of scandalous luxury and extravagance which resulted in the outbreak of the French revolution and the subsequent overthrow of the French monarch, Louis XVI. Besides the Seven Years' War against England devastated the French economy which resulted in high taxes levied on the commoners. In this respect Foucault was of the view that with the rising consciousness of the masses the revolution was achieved which he defined in the form of consciousness as knowledge and the eventual exercise of power.

Foucault also believed that knowledge is a pre-condition for power which culminated into a postmodern state. He is of the opinion that in the present society truth is produced by the virtue of several forms of constraints. He claimed that

postmodern society is fragmented into several cultures and uniqueness. Each society has its own truth and general politics of truth which is the type of discourse and made functions as true. Power and Knowledge are used to control society and state through discourse. Discourse means social institutions, the discipline and language. It is diffused everywhere in the society. Thus, Power is everywhere in society.

The tenets of Postmodernism as stated by Foucault exist in the Mizo society. The advent of the British in Mizoram had changed the culture and socio-economic system. The abolition of chieftainship was initiated by the British and brings the whole of Mizoram under one administrative unit. The abolition process of chieftainship was further accentuated by the formation of the first political party in Mizoram, the Mizo Union. Subsequently, the Mizo Union won the first Mizoram District Council General Election in 1951. In essence, power can be said to have emanated from the people in the process of this election. Indeed, the knowledge of modern culture affected the Mizos, which in turn shape their culture, politics and socio-economic perspectives.

### **1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The tenets of Postmodernism can be said to have taken a deep root in the societies of Europe and America. Many Sociologists were of the view that it emerged from the societal background of enlightenment. The structure of postmodernity is not uniform all, as there are different postmodern perspectives in this regard. Industrial revolution in Europe and America in 18<sup>th</sup> century had left many people unemployed. Industrial revolution resulted in pollution and environmental decay. The consequences of lack of raw material resulted in colonial expansion and slave trading

system. This inhuman treatment, oppression and mercenary ideal of western people worsen the modern state of European countries. It is in this background postmodernism emerged in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In India, perspective of postmodernity is quite contrasting to that of Europe and America. The countries of Europe and America had experienced democracy, industrial revolution and technological innovations much earlier. Their history and culture were much different from India. The technological innovations, justice, codified law, freedom, and equality were brought by British in India. Most sociologists credited the British for bringing modernity in India. India is a caste ridden society which is rooted in occupation, food habits, dress and marriage. Thus, modernity in India is benefited by the higher caste and group. However, principles of modernity and postmodernity is not a new thing to Indians as social reformer like Raja Ram Mohan Roy paved the way for modern society through his social organization, Brahmo Samaj. He was against the Brahmanism of Hindu culture in which the subaltern caste, Sudras had been treated as untouchable. Hindu practices of Sati, child marriage, occupation based on caste, dowry system, and joint family system were prevailed during this time which hinders India from modernity. Many social reforms took place due to his efforts. However, the concept of modernity and postmodernity in India gained momentum only after independence from colonial rule. The adoption of the Constitution in 1950 signifies that the power of democracy is consolidated in the hands of the people. The central essence of the Constitution such as equality, freedom, justice, and liberty are in a sense a strong indicator of the concept of Postmodernism enshrined in the Constitution.

Modernity in Mizo society can be said to have been brought by the British. Before the advent of the British, Mizo society was characterized by the practices of animism and other primitive orthodox practices. The chief of the village enjoyed supreme power. He was assisted by his council of elders who shared this power. The commoners lived a miserable life. They could not raise their voice against the Chief and the Elders. The British introduced not only democracy but also modern culture and education. They abolished chieftainship, animism and backward socio-economic system. The knowledge of western culture instilled a thirst for civilized culture in which power is shared and enjoyed by all people. This significantly contributed in the awakening of the socio-economic and political consciousness of the Mizos which eventually resulted in the evolution of a political movement in the early years of India's independence. In this instance the evolution of multifaceted sources of power is realized indicating that power emanates from below.

Eventually, contemporary Mizo society can be said to have transformed itself into a postmodern society with the onset of globalization in India. The advancement and development of tribal culture postulated western culture and identity. Indeed, the globalization of Mizo society entails increased awareness of diverse cultures all over the world. This gives them an inspiration to break with their own local traditions and live the lives they choose. Subsequently, it expands acceptance of plurality and practicality among the Mizos. The plurality of Mizo culture can be attributed in the peaceful maintenance of different ethnic identity within its state. The dominant Mizo culture did not oppress the smaller ethnic cultures of the Lai, Mara and other minor identity. Besides, Peaceful coexistence, mutual understandings among different

cultures in Mizo society is a specimen which condones the tenets of postmodernism. Moreover, Mizo society has been drawn closer to other societies as a result of international trade and electronic mass media that linked different societies of the world. International trade among Mizo is not a new concept, the traditional practices of barter system with British was a terminus a quo with postmodern international trade among Mizo. The modern trade practices between Mizo and Burmese also widen the pluralistic idea among Mizo. The augmented digital development expands the traditional orthodoxy in the culture of Mizo in marriage, eating habits, occupation, lifestyle and dresses. Thus, the process of globalization assists to swift transformation and quantum leap on diverse international facets in the Mizo society.

In this context the Mizo society had enjoyed a certain level of postmodernity. However, there seems to be a conflict in the traditional values and ethos of the society which is still prevalent as against the emergent postmodern pluralistic ethos and skepticism. Inadvertently, the introduction of democratic form of government and modern education system on the other hand can be considered as an imitation of western ways of life which again can be considered as a cultural and identity assimilation. As such postmodernity in Mizo society is a complex phenomenon; a dilemma of change from the old traditional to a new pluralistic form of society. In addition, the evolving contemporary pluralistic Mizo society with its pluralistic ethos and skepticism exhibits a trend where power seems to emanate from everywhere. In this regard, Foucault's analysis of French society through his concept of power/knowledge relationship can be juxtaposed in our analysis of Mizo society. Similarly, in the political realm, the Constitution of India is an important landmark. It



gave a Schedule Tribe status to Mizo under the Sixth Schedule which is a constitutional safeguard to protect the culture and identity of the people. This is in tandem with the Inner Line Regulation Act of 1873 which was instituted by the British. In a Postmodern perspective it can be considered as an impediment as this safeguards points towards exclusivity and negativity towards plurality which is the hallmark of Postmodernism.

Lastly, the political development in Mizoram can be considered as a process where there is an increase in the dominance of two political parties under a hegemonic leadership as against the concept of postmodernity in which the individual is considered as the essence of democracy.

## **1.2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The book *'Michel Foucault: Key Concept'* edited by Dianna Taylor and published in 2011 by Acumen analyzed Foucault's theory on power/knowledge relationship in postmodern society and his idea on freedom. Richard A Lynch considered Foucault first task while defining power is to develop a new method.<sup>5</sup> However, Foucault's concentrated in understanding of power which was culminated into knowledge. Foucault is of the opinion that Power can be understand in two ways. Firstly, Empirical power which can be analyzed in detailed examination of modes of Power. Secondly, Theoretical power which is a hierarchical order of power dissemination in different level. Richard A Lynch also criticize the theory of power in postmodernism is taken from three mistakes. But Foucault theory is a unique and a milestone in understanding power in the postmodern society. In this book, Lynch

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<sup>5</sup> Dianna, Taylor. (2011). *Michel Foucault: Key Concept*. New York: Routledge. p.8

also criticized Foucault for being misinterpretation on the flow of power from bottom to top. In democratic country power is in the hand of people, the election system and representative system proved the flow of power from bottom to top. Ellen K Feder also misinterprets Foucault conception of power Knowledge relation in modern society that power comes from unexpected ways.<sup>6</sup> Foucault did not mean power comes did not come from unexpected place while mentioning power is everywhere, He is of the opinion that power is diffused in different people and the exercised of power can be in the hand of someone who possessed knowledge.

*The Cambridge Introduction to Michel Foucault* by Lisa Downing, published in 2008 by Cambridge University Press, highlight various ideas against Foucault that had risen among feminists. They considered Foucault's theory of power and knowledge as a counter argument for women in which power is concentrated in man. They are of the opinion that man is naturally strong, well-educated and have more chance to influence society.<sup>7</sup> But the fact is that Foucault did not favor man to be in power, he is the opinion that person that possessed knowledge to be in power. This is the universal truth that without knowledge there is no chance to control the well-educated mass in contemporary world.

*'The power of Discourse: Michel Foucault and Critical Theory'* by Torbjorn Wandel, published in 2001, mistaken Foucault as a mere critical theorist which had left modern society as a society of oppression and inhuman treatment. Postmodernism is a rejection of grand narrative Traditional idea. In this context

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid, p.70

<sup>7</sup> Lisa, Downing. (2008). *The Cambridge Introduction to Foucault*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p.104

Socialism and Postmodernism share a political and ethical outlook. Both socialism and postmodernism of Foucault is against the traditional ideas of Karl Marx. Both accept that the traditional ideas of Karl Marx as traditional because of the historical determinism with the exercise of Power.<sup>8</sup> Foucault is ahead in Critical theory than socialist thinkers in which both challenge traditional notion of language and power. This book much paid attention in Foucault critical idea in language and discourse in medical research. It did not focus on the power knowledge relation through which his critical idea emerges. However, this book relates the Critical idea in postmodern society and make relevant of Foucault's idea. But it is important to know that the grand narrative of socialism and communism had transformed even in Russia and China.<sup>9</sup> Communist thinkers and political dissident like Vladimir Lenin and Mao Zedong transform their own society through Communist idea, but they applied communist ideology to suit their own society. So, it is clear that we could not reject all of the Grand narrative of modern ideas. But it is necessary to revamp according to the needs of society and people. Postmodernism is a rejection of traditional grand narrative.

*The Philosophy of Foucault* by Todd May published in 2006 main intension is to focus Foucault's history of present. Postmodernism is a philosophical skepticism, in which neither truth nor reality cannot remain the same. Norms and values in society differ from society to society. He is of the opinion that Foucault history of present is just twenty year of experience in modern Europe. But Foucault main

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<sup>8</sup>Torbjorn, Wandel. (2001). *The Power of Discourse: Michel Foucault and Critical Theory*. New York: Routledge. p. 2

<sup>9</sup>James, M. A. (2017). *Vanguard of the Revolution: The Global Idea of Communist Party*. New Jersey: Princeton Press. p. 117

intension is the society we live in are the gradual development of society in which the rejection of old ideas made them modern.<sup>10</sup> In this context, Foucault examination of French and American society is the future of the present third world countries. However, the end of last century marked a gradual change in which various countries got an independent; following of disintegration of Soviet Union and neo-liberalism come to replace the liberal notion of welfare society. Thus, Todd May's main argument on Foucault history of present is completed in the last century within twenty years.

In '*The Order of Things: An Archeology of Human Science*' which was published in 1970 by Vintage and translated by Pantheon Books Publisher, becomes clear what Foucault is doing here. When Foucault defines "order" as a kind of priority in his book. He wove an intensely complex thought story with a virtuous explanation. In the fields of literature, arts, economics, and even biology, it arose in the order of things that perhaps date back to the twentieth century. One of the most important but still overlooked works of the century. Overshadowing his later work on power and discourse, the order of things confirmed Foucault's reputation as a spiritual giant. Foucault, sneaking around the outer edge of the language, breaks the surface of his literary writing. By outlining the boundaries of our usual taxonomies, it opens the door to a whole new system of thinking called "exotic charm". This book is a key book for those who want to understand the strange beast called postmodernism and become a necessity for all Foucauldians.

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<sup>10</sup> Todd, May. (2006). *The Philosophy of Foucault*. Durham: Acument Publishing Limited. p. 132

In the study of Foucault power knowledge relation, *'Foucault: The Birth of Power by Stuart Elden*, published in 2017 by Polity Press is a relevant book in which Foucault invented the concept of government influence. According to Foucault, governance is "the art of governing", not only at the level of state policy, but to govern a wide range of objects and people, as population as a whole at the most abstract level. And, their own desire and thought on a more micro level. In contemporary times, Foucault was interested in behavioral governance was increasingly focused on population management. Unlike the disciplinary power of forming individual bodies, population management depended upon on bio-power which is understood as policies and procedures that has authority to control births, deaths, reproduction, health and disease within the society based on a large scale.

In *'The Birth of the Clinic'* which was published in 1963 by Michel Foucault, and translated by Alan Sheridan, Foucault tried to explore the "conditions of opportunity" for a modern medical concept. By collecting scientific, political, and philosophical texts from the late 18th century, he explored the medical discourse in which he found changes in the idea of death and disease. Foucault described such a practical way of medicine with a spatial metaphor of depth and dimension. The physician has classified the disease from the patient by creating a two-dimensional mental image: the idea of classification gives itself a basic space to clear at any time. Disease exists only in that space due to that space shapes it as nature; and yet, relative to space, it is always quite intermittent because it occurs in a real patient, under the supervision of the forearm physician. The delicate, two-dimensional space of a portrait is both its origin and its end result: one that initially allows for a

reasonable, well-founded sum of medical knowledge, and for which it must continually hide what it conceals. The classical ontological structure explained the “kind of theory” for identifying the essences and ideal forms of diseases. By investigating the relationship between medical knowledge, politics, economics, and religion, Foucault made an opportunity to come upon revolutionary changes in attitudes toward freedom and social well-being: “Man is only fully and permanently healed before he is first released”. Foucault linked such policy views to the hospital and university reform lineup, which influenced the form of new medical knowledge.

*Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* is the work of the French philosopher Michel Foucault in 1975, translated by Alan Sheridan. It is an analysis based on French historical documents, the social and theoretical mechanisms behind the changes that have taken place in Western criminal systems today. Foucault argues that the prison has become the primary form of punishment, not just because of the humanitarian concerns of the reformers. Track the cultural changes that led to the rule of the prison through body and violence. A prison that is used by "disciplines": new technological forces that, according to Foucault, can also be found in schools, hospitals and military barracks.

The important collection of lectures and interview by Michel Foucault was compiled and entitled as *'Discourse and Truth" and "Parresia"* edited by Henry Paul Fruchaud which was published in 2019, was dedicated to his Discourse analysis. Henry misinterprets Foucault main intention and argument throughout his life. According to this book throughout his career, Foucault main intension is in the phenomenon of discourse, mainly in the way of discourse defines the reality of the

society and human, ideas and opinion that reside in it. He is of the opinion that, discourse is a way of speaking or writing institutionally about the reality that defines what can be thought and about the world and what cannot be done. Foucault argued in his book 'The History of Sexuality' that a new discourse on "sexuality" has basically changed the way we think about desire, joy, and our happiness. Foucault is of the opinion that, discourses of sexuality did not reveal an existing basic truth on human identity, but rather created it through particular practices of power and knowledge.

Robert Hurley translation of "*The History of Sexuality*' (Volume 1) by Foucault which was published in 1976, Foucault contradicts with the assertion that sex has been repressed and silenced. He claims that in his book, the discourse on sex dates back to the 18th century. It escalated and spread only over a century. Priests confessed that confessions reveal the slightest temptation or desire, and sexual behavior has become an important constituent in demographic and statistical analysis. As the argument intensified and spread, the insistence ranged from married couples to cases of sexual "perversion": childhood sexuality, homosexuality, and so on. Sex has become more and more an object of knowledge. Other cultures treat sex as an object of knowledge as an erotic burn: the art of sensual pleasure. However, our culture is separate when we treat sex as scientific sexuality: the subject of distance scientific research. The scientific discourse mixed with the form of confession formed our gender discourse. Subjects were expected to confess, to reveal their darkest secrets, and these confessions were codified in a quasi-scientific form. The "right to die" of the era of absolutism has been restored by a "life force." Power is

practiced primarily to promote and save life. Stern controls were carried out to standardized body discipline and population control. The construction of sex and sexuality played a key role in this life of power, because we respected these controls for a "healthy" sexuality. We consider sexuality as our ethos that makes us as a human, when in fact it is only a social construction that facilitates control.

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

There are five objectives of the study. They are as follows:

1. Study the values and ethos of the traditional Mizo society that is still prevalent as against the postmodern pluralistic ethos and skepticism.
2. Analyze the norms and values in Mizo society that can be regarded as an impact of British colonialism.
3. Examine the process of transition of Mizo society through the concept of Michel Foucault's power/knowledge relationship.
4. Evaluate the constitutional safeguard that can be regarded as a hurdle towards further integration into the mainstream political identity.
5. Analyze the hegemonic dominance of two political party in Mizoram in the context Postmodernism.

### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The proposed study has five research questions, they are as follows:



1. What are the traditional values and ethos of the Mizo society that is still prevalent as against the postmodern pluralistic ethos and skepticism?
2. What are the norms and values in Mizo society that can be regarded as an impact of British colonialism?
3. How is the process of transition of Mizo society enacted/accentuated through the concept of Michel Foucault's power/knowledge relationship?
4. What is the constitutional safeguard for Mizo which can be regarded as a hurdle towards further integration to the mainstream political identity?
5. What is the hegemonic dominance of two political parties in Mizoram in the context Postmodernism?

## **1.5 METHODOLOGY**

Mixed method methodology will be used for conducting the propose research. Both primary and secondary data will be used to study the proposed research. The primary data will be collected through observation, case study and questionnaire. In observation, naturalistic observation will be used that includes observing involves studying the immediate behavior of participants in natural surroundings. Case study will be exploited for digging the layer of events that will be helpful for proposed study. Questionnaire will also be used for collecting primary data from potential respondents. Besides, primary data will include relevant documents and reports of government. Secondary data will include Articles, Journals, magazine and books.

The data collected from both sources will be analyzed by mixing both quantitative and qualitative to assess the postmodern condition in Mizo society and power knowledge relation in Mizo society.

## 1.6 Chapterisation

CHAPTER I. **Introduction:** The first chapter introduced the concept of Postmodernism as well as the rise of Critical Theory.

CHAPTER II. **Traditional Norms and Values of Mizo Society in the Context of Postmodernism:** This chapter examined traditional norms and values of the Mizo society. The impact of British colonialism and the Constitutional safeguards included in the Constitution of India will be examined in this chapter.

CHAPTER III **Power/Knowledge Relationship in Mizo Society:** This chapter discussed and analyze Foucault's concept of power/knowledge relationship as a medium for the interpretation of the transition of Mizo society from traditional to Postmodernity.

CHAPTER IV **Political development in Mizoram:** This chapter evaluated the political development of Mizoram after statehood and the dominance of the two political parties under its hegemonic leadership as against the concept of Postmodernity.

CHAPTER V **Conclusion:** The last chapter summarized the study which will include findings of the research work.

## CHAPTER 2

### **Traditional Norms and Values of Mizo Society**

#### **Introduction:**

Mizoram is known in British times as Lushai Hills, which is located in a mountainous area in the extreme corner of Northeast India. It has international borders with Myanmar in the east and Bangladesh in the south. It has state boundaries with Assam, Cachar district in the north, Tripura in the northwest and Manipur in the northeast. The whole geographical area covered by the State is 21,081 square kilometers<sup>11</sup>, stretching from 92 ° 15 'to 93 ° 29' east longitude and latitude 21 ° 58 ' - 23 ° 35' N<sup>12</sup>. Tropic of cancer pass through the city of Thenzawl, which is furthest 80 miles away to south of the capital 'Aizawl' at latitude 23 ° 50 'N. Mizoram currently has a total population of 1,091,014 according to the 2011 census of Government of India. Mizoram, 23<sup>rd</sup> state of The Union of India is a mountainous area with many hills areas extending mainly from north to south and separating to each other through valleys and deep river couloirs

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<sup>11</sup> Mizoram Statistical Handbook. (2018). *Directorate of Economics and Statistics*. Aizawl: Government of Mizoram. p. 12.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid, p.12

According to Lalthangliana, Mizo is the common name of an analogous hill tribes living in Mizoram. The word "Mizo" is a compound word "Mi" and "Zo", literally translated as "Hill people". Therefore, "Mizo" literally means highlanders or people live on a hilly areas<sup>13</sup>, this explanation is usually the most acceptable term. No one has ever correctly explained how the name "Lushai or Lusai" has originated. The colloquial language of the term Lushai in old times, means people with long head. The word "Lu" means head, and 'Sei' means long or elongated, so the name "Lusai" means people whose heads seemed elongated due to them normal hairstyle with long hair and a strand of hair on top their heads<sup>14</sup>. In fact, that was the most acceptable meaning of the term "Lusei"

Mizoram was inhabited by various tribes that could be divided into five major and eleven minors' tribes. The tribes were again divided into a series of clans<sup>15</sup>. The five principal tribes were Lusai, Ralte, Hmar, Paite and Pawi. In Lusai clan there were ten ordinary people (Hnamchawm) and six chief clans (Lai) namely Pachuau, Hauhnar, Chhangte, Chawngte, Chuaungo, Chuauhang, Hrahse, Vanchhawng, Tochwawng and Chhakchhuak in the previous category and Zadeng, Palian, Rokhum, Thangluah, Rivung and Sailo in the latter category<sup>16</sup>. The minority tribes were Chawngthu, Chawnte, Ngente, Khawhring, Kiangte, Pautu, Tlau, Rawite, Renthlei,

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<sup>13</sup>Thangliana, B. (2005). *Culture and folklore of Mizoram*. New Delhi: Publication division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

<sup>14</sup>Zawla, K. (1976). *Mizo Pi Puteleh an ThlahteChanchin*. Aizawl: The Gosen Press. p.11

<sup>15</sup>Lalthangliana, B. (1980). *History of Mizo in Burma*. Aizawl: Zawlbuk Agencies. p. 23

<sup>16</sup>Ibid, p.24

Vanchhia and Zawngte<sup>17</sup>. These eleven minor tribes were known linguistically under the common name "Awzia"<sup>18</sup>.

Also, there are several other tribes, such as the Lai (Pawi), Lakher(Mara), Chakma and Riang (Bru), etc. Lakhers also known as 'Maras', their dialect, customs and culture are different and they live in the southern part of the state. The 'Chakmas' and the 'Riangs' were not regarded as native tribe while Lai and Lakher were regarded as brother by the lusei. The Chakmas allegedly hold Buddhism as their religion and speak a Bengali dialect. Riangs or Bru live especially along the river valley to the west and northwest part of the state. They were the most backward tribe with unique customs and cultures.

In the 1950s, these tribes and sub-tribes preferred to identify themselves as "Mizos" and that was it formally when Lushai Hill District was formed in 1952. In 1954, An Act was adopted by the Union Parliament. In this Act, former name of the Lushai Hills district changed to "Mizo District" with effect from April 1954.

## **2.1 ORIGIN OF MIZO**

The Mizos and all related tribes claimed that they came themselves from what they called "Chhinlung" or "Sinlung"<sup>19</sup>. It was a large cave or hole in the ground with a cover. They have different interpretations in the light of the 'Chhinlung' tradition. It could be the current "Tailing" or "Sinlung" in southwest China or it could be" Sining "in central China or it could be taken from the Chinese

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<sup>17</sup>Hrangthiauva and Lai Chungnunga. (1978). *Mizo Chanchin*-History and Culture of the Mizos. Aizawl; Lalrinliana& Sons. P. 45

<sup>18</sup>Thanga. L.B. (1987). *The Mizos*. Guwahat: United Publishers. p.5.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid, p.3

king of Chien Lung<sup>20</sup>. It could also be referred to the Great Wall of China or perhaps the name of Mizo King Aupalaung (Awksatlang) may be in Myanmar or it may be "Chinlung" near Bhamo in Kachin state in Myanmar<sup>21</sup>. Whatever the truth, "Chhinlung" is generally it is believed to be in China. Names or places like Chiu-lung, Kui-lung, Tsinlung, Sinlong, Xinlong, meaning "Chhinlung", is located in Sze-chwan Province South China<sup>22</sup>. This gives us strong sentimental grounds for believing the Sze-Chwan as the province as an early settlement of the Mizo. However, the Chhinlung tradition could not be accepted as a historical fact due to absence of supporting evidence. Instead, it may refer to the past times when the first Mizo lived in caves.

The history of the mizo people as far as we can know, is the history of the return or a whirlwind of the great wave of immigration generally believed to have started from northwestern China<sup>23</sup>. In the investigation of a migration of Burmese, Shans, Karens, Kachin and other tribes, B.Lalthangliana allegedly confirmed that Mizo may have reached the Kabow Valley, Myanmar in the 8th century AD, especially around 750 AD they probably stayed there for almost 600 years<sup>24</sup>. From the Kabow Valley, moved west and settled in the Chin Hills of Myanmar. Here, different clans were located in different places with no formal chiefs. In an endless struggle for supremacy, they fought each other and in finally, Lusai, due to their courage and bravery in the art of war, established a paramount that expelling all other

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<sup>20</sup>Nunthara. C. (1994). *Mizoram Society and Polity*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing Co. p.29.

<sup>21</sup>Zawla. K. (1976). *Mizo Pi Puteleh an ThlahteChanchin*. Aizawl: The Gosen Press. P.7

<sup>22</sup>Sangkima. (1992). *Mizos, Society and Social Change, 1890-1947*. Guwahati;Spectrum Publications. p.99

<sup>23</sup>Allen, B. C. (1984). *Gazetteer of Bengal and North-East India*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications. p. 458

<sup>24</sup>Lalthangliana, B. (1992). *Mizo - Studies on the Minority Nationalities of N.E. India*. Aizawl: Directorate of Higher and Technical Education. p.8-9

clans. Of these Lusai clans, Sailo were the most powerful leaders of Lusai chief and almost all chiefs belonged to this Sailo family<sup>25</sup>. From Lentlang all the lusei clans migrated into present-day Mizo country between A.D. 1700 and 1730<sup>26</sup>.

## 2.2 Traditional Norms and Values of Mizo Society

Pre-Christian Mizo worshiped what is known as 'Sa'<sup>27</sup>. It is the object of worship of particular clans, who ruled over the clan and its members. It was a clan god, a supernatural person who gave each clan his unique identity. It is true that Mizo thought Pathian as 'Sa', who is transcendent, pure, Immaterial, Creator-God. This creator lives somewhere in space far from the reach of man<sup>28</sup>. Each clan offered a hog to keep out the anger of the spirit. It is accompanied by songs. This sacrificial hog was not to be shared with other clans. 'Khua' has been described as a good spirit, who has the power to protect members of a village community along with their domestic animals<sup>29</sup>. Almost every life experience from birth to death, failure or success was attributed to Khua, which was recognized almost as fate.

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<sup>25</sup>----- (1992). *Hmasang Zonun: Studies in Mizo Culture, Tradition and Social Life*. Aizawl, R.T. Press. p. 45

<sup>26</sup>----- (1980). *History of Mizo in Burma*. Aizawl: Nazareth Press. p. 86.

<sup>27</sup>Lalhmuaaka.(1988). *ZoramThim Ata Engah*. Aizawl : Synod Publications.p.13

<sup>28</sup>Ibid, p.14

<sup>29</sup>Liangkhaia, Rev. (1975). *Mizo Sakhua, Mizo zia-rang*. Aizawl: J.K. Press. p.4

Mizo's early society was governed by superstitious beliefs. An unusual thing or events are taken as a sign of blighted<sup>30</sup>. Their superstitions usually involved in crops, animals, birds and snakes. It was forbidden to do certain things and kill certain animals. It was believed there was witchcraft. The life of society was bounded on 'Thiang' or holy and 'Thianglo' or unholy. It is believed that some dreams, deeds and visions were unholy or witchcrafts. In this regard, they consulted a priest to avoid misfortune<sup>31</sup>. Even if two members of the same family travel east and west on the same day, it is believed that one of them will have an accident. A thick wooden and bamboo fence was built around a village and sharp spears were introduced to keep out the plagues and infectious diseases. On the high poles placed between them, the dead monkeys were stiff and the people hoped that this was enough to ward off the evil spirit responsible for their disease<sup>32</sup>. Mizo's had their own beliefs and practices related to their daily affairs.

Mizo believed that there is a supreme reality or a supreme soul that creates and sustains everything in this universe even before the Christianity arrives. They conceive God as 'Pathian' who was the creator of all things. 'Pa' means father and 'Thian' means saint. They believed that the pathologist had creative power.

It is necessary to study Mizo's death practices, including previous understandings, to show the changes that have taken place, as well as to understand how death practices are now a focal point of Mizo's identity. The Mizo had their own thoughts and opinions about death, after death, soul, etc. before Christianity

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p.7

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p.11

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p.11



swept the state. Different types of death were classified: Awmlaiathi (Natural Death); Hlamzuih (death of a child or infant); Raicheh (death of a woman during childbirth); and Sarthi (unnatural death)<sup>33</sup>. All of these, Raicheh was considered the most horrific death. On the day of her death, no one should twist or roll cloth or cotton, and the loom, of death was considered taboo. It is also believed that their spirit would roam the village, so every branch house would repair leaves or ferns to keep the spirit away<sup>34</sup>. The body of a man who died unnaturally was not carried through the back door and he was not allowed to spend the night in the house<sup>35</sup>. For a baby, they moistened a piece of cotton wool with the mother's milk and put it in the baby's mouth to suck on the way to the spirit world. They also put some of raw rice in baby's one hand and in the other, a chicken egg, so that the egg rolled before him in the 'mitthikhua, the village of the dead. They put the cadaver in a large clay pot and buried it. The ancestors did not know how to bear the pain and mourn the death of a relative. He deliberately refuses to eat any food for two or three days. There was no quick hard rule for fasting or not. Nine weeks or about three months after the funeral, they made "Inthian or Inthen" sacrifices and ceremonies to purify themselves and their families<sup>36</sup>. They thought it was the end of the spirit's stay in the house since they believed that the spirit live around them for three weeks.

The soul is believed to have a human-like personality. The soul lives in man. The human soul is considered superior to the soul of an animal. The soul is believed to live forever. When a man died, his soul absconded on his forehead. After the wall

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<sup>33</sup>Remkunga. (1977). *Mizo pipute khawsak dan tlangpu*. Aizawl, J.K. Press. p.35

<sup>34</sup>Ibid, p.36

<sup>35</sup>Ibid, p.37

<sup>36</sup>Lalsawma, Rev. (1994). *Kristian Sakhualeh Mizo Hnam Culture*. Thu lehHla, Vol. 20(3), March 1-7. p.12

and roof of the house, the soul wandered through the village for three months, then a simple ceremony released the soul and the soul passed to MitthiKhua and Rih Lake and so on. So generally, Mizo has been classified as animists<sup>37</sup>, and further study reveals that they worshiped a supreme person and sacrifices were made to appease the anger of spirits when they fell ill or were the subject of some natural fraud.

The Mizo also believed that the whole world was occupied by a number of spirits that could lead to the advantage and disadvantage of a man destined for it. Therefore, it is believed that these spirits or demons lived in objects like trees, caves, hills, mountains, etc<sup>38</sup>. These demons or spirits were generally called Huai. Those believed to be living in the water were called Tuihuai, and those living on land were called Ramhuai. It is believed that there are a large number of huai or evil spirits like Tau, chawm, phung, khawhring, hmuithla, dilhuai, sihhuai etc. Therefore, the Mizos were always afraid of these evil spirits who believed that they could harm them. To appeal to them, they often sacrificed for evil spirits. According to Saiaithanga, "Mizo religion is nothing but demon worship."<sup>39</sup> It is also noted, however, that Mizo did not worship these evil spirits. They just wanted to please them, as they are believed to have caused their illness and injury.

In pre-Christian times, marriage was only a civil contract, although a pseudo-religious ceremony took place. Monogamy prevailed, although there were rare cases in which polygamy was practiced. Polygamy was limited to chiefs, but with Christianity polygamy faded. The most important aspect of a Mizo marriage is the

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<sup>37</sup>Hluna, J.V & Sangkima & Romesh Buragohain. (1992). *Studies on the Minority Nationalities of North East India - The Mizo*. Aizawl: Directorate of Higher & Technical Education. p.34

<sup>38</sup>Lalremsiama, F. (2012). *Pialral lamtluang*. Aizawl:Lengchhawng Press. p. 2

<sup>39</sup>Saiaithanga, Rev. (1994). *Mizo Sakhua*. Aizawl :Lengchhawn Press. p. 1

price of the bride. No marriage is made without paying at least part of the bride price to the bride's family. There are two parts of bride price: 'Manpui' and 'Mantang'. Manpui is the main price of the bride given to the father or brother of the bride<sup>40</sup>. The price of the bride was given in the form of sial (mithun). Sialo girl price was ten 'Sial' and all other clan bride price was five 'Sial'. As is the custom, the families of the bride and groom prepared Zu (rice beer) for the wedding celebration, which is an inviolable accompaniment to the wedding.

Between the years 1450-1700, Mizo held three great festivals<sup>41</sup>. They were: Chapchar Kut, Mim Kut and Pawl Kut. Chapchar Kut has been celebrated annually in late March or early April, after the clearing of forest for jhum cultivation and before burning. It was celebrated by drinking "zu", drums, dancing and feast with the hogs and mithuns. The festival ran for 3-7 days and was the happiest event or festival in Mizo's life a long time ago.

Mim Kut is the oldest festival of Mizo. It was celebrated in late August or early September. It is also considered a festival in honor of the dead. The origins of this festival can be traced back to the Ngama and Tlingi of ancient lore. Ngama in state of trance, and saw his dead wife with pale, weak, malnourished, and on another occasion, after offering fruits and vegetables to his wife's graveyard, he saw she is strong, chubby and plump. So this festival establishes a strong bond between the dead and the living. From then on, he and his neighbors began offering food on the same day each year, and thus "Mitthithlai-chhiah" (offering vegetables to the dead)

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<sup>40</sup>The Mizoram Gazette Extra Ordinary. (Aizawl: Authority). Regn. No. NE-313(MZ) VOL - XXXIV, Wednesday 6.4.2005 Chaitra 16, S.E. 1927, Issue No. 66

<sup>41</sup>Hrangthiauva and Lal Chungnunga. (1978). *Mizo Chanchin*. Aizawl: Lalrinliana & Sons. p.78

and "Mim Kut" (the festival of rubbing work) became a tradition<sup>42</sup>. It was celebrated with meatballs made with glutinous rice and offering the first fruits of its product to deceased relatives. This festival took only one day.

Pawl Kut: This is a harvest festival that takes place at the end of December, after a rich harvest of rice, cereals, roots, etc. During 1450-1700, when they were in Chin State, they suffered from "Thingpui tam" which means "famine" for three consecutive years<sup>43</sup>. By the fourth year, their barns were full. They thought it was a good reason to celebrate the occasion. As such, this festival has become a firm, rigid, and consolidated part of Mizo customs and traditions. They celebrated it by drinking "zu", eating meat, dressing the children with all their belongings. Like Chapchar Kut, they also went to 'Lungdawh,' or the entrance of the village where a platform of large stones was erected in memory of the dead.

The Chief was the executive head of all political and legal authorities. The chief was the secular head of a village; however, he does not performed ritual and religious practices. Chieftainship in Mizo society was originally an evolution, but over time it became hereditary<sup>44</sup>. Most of the chiefs belonged to the "Sailo" family, but there were also some 'Hualngo' chiefs who had a sub-pillar under the Sailo chiefs and have been recognized as independent leaders. In the southern region, there were many Lai and Lakher chiefs who never fell under Sailo's influence. There were also some Fanai chiefs, who followed Sailo traditions and cultures.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid. p.79

<sup>43</sup> Lalthangliana, B. (1992). *HmasangZonun: Studies in Mizo Culture, Tradition and Social Life*. Aizawl: R.T. Press. p. 47

<sup>44</sup> Thanga, L.B. (1978). *The Mizos*. Guwahati: United Publisher. P.9

In the early days, a chief did not have aristocratic privileges because his main activity was raiding other clans. After the establishment of village sovereignty as a political institution, the chief gained more privileges and powers and became dictators. His words were the law in his own territory. All the villagers belonged to him. He could summon his subjects to give him whatever he wanted. He was a chief judge in all disputes and cases, and he also enjoyed supreme power to pardon, remit or reduce the subject. In short, he was supreme in his own village. Therefore, each village was a separate sovereign state ruled by its own Lal or Chief.

Traditionally, Chief of Mizo was the guardian over his subjects, war leader, defender and donor of food in times of scarcity and suffering. A war refugee used to take refuge at home. Each family had to add a certain amount of rice called "Fathang" each year to support Chief<sup>45</sup>. Every portion of animal which was hunt or captured with trap was his privileges.

"Zawlbuk" was a bachelor's dormitory where bachelor's slept together and learned the values of the village community. It is not known exactly when Zawlbuk started. When Mizo migrated west and crossed the Tiau River in 1700, the young bachelor's used to sleep on the porch of the chief's house, always available for his call in any emergency. The main objective was to protect and defend the village from enemies, maintain law and order in the village, etc. The Val Upa who was highly respected usually takes the responsibility of the administration inside the Zawlbuk. "Zawlbuk" was usually built in the center of a village near the chief's house. In the old days when villages were always in war between them, the young men had to

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid, p.10

sleep together in one place so they can be easily mobilized in any emergency. "Zawlbuk" developed a series of functions to become the most important social institution in Mizo society. Therefore, it could be said that "Zawlbuk" played a very important role in the formation of the youth Mizos as responsible members of the village.

The most valuable value in Mizo's traditional society was "Tlawmngaihna", which does not have its exact English equivalent. Tlawmngaihna had value and victory, indeed the "highest good" in traditional Mizo society. As a cultural value, it served as a way to endanger the lives of a group that was constantly threatened by raids, wars, and obscure realities of tribal life. The boys often did their best to be the best, but the desire for prizes never inspired them. It is applied only through the emotions of the group and the feeling of the group was so strong that no other mechanism was needed to impose value.

However, the greatest Tlawmngai person was honored in a village at the time of the festival or festival where the whole community gathered. The Tlawmngai person, chosen without favor or descriptive status, but based on the personal qualities of the foreman and his elders, was awarded by offering him a ZU in NO PUI (a cup made of gay horn). However, the chosen Tlawmngai person shall always run away trying to avoid such award, but the people will not participate in the event unless and until the man is found and taken to receive the prize.

Everyone was expected to have Tlawmngaihna. The children were first socialized to be tlawmngai in the family. Often around adults, the community trains and teaches children to become tlawmngai through the Zawlbuk institution, which

was home to a bachelor and home to all the important traditional apprenticeships such as fighting, war, hunting and crafts.

The second important value of traditional Mizo society seems to be the “big family”. As has been said, the economic situation of the society required a strong workforce, and the danger of the raids and wars also claimed "many life". A father with three or more children gained respect and prestige in society. In case of divorce, remarriage is allowed in the society.

The cultural aim of Mizo's traditional society was to become a Thangchhuah pa, a man who achieved the highest performance of the religious ceremony<sup>46</sup>. It is believed that only one person from Thangchhuah would go to Pialral for eternal consolation. However, Thangchhuah was not an easy achievement which involved organizing community feast with all domestic animals. Thanchhuahpa also shared some of his properties like Thi, Dar and Mithun etc. A man could be also a 'Thangchhuah' by killing certain wild animals, each killing, however, was to be accompanied by a ritual ceremony over the head of killed animal<sup>47</sup>. One notable fact is that institutional norms, or in Merton's words, "acceptable ways of achieving these aims" have never been violated<sup>48</sup>. In short, the state of “Normlessness” was absent. This can be attributed to presence of the cultural balance between material and irrelevant cultures and the presence of an “inviolable consciousness” to support the social order of the time.

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<sup>46</sup>Hluna, J.V & Sangkima and Romesh Buragohain. (eds.) (1992). *Studies on the Minority Nationalities of North East India - The Mizos*. Aizawl: Directorate of Higher & Technical Education. p.36

<sup>47</sup>Thanga, L.B. (1978). *The Mizos*. Guwahati: United Publisher. p.34

<sup>48</sup> Merton, Robert K. (1968). *Social Theory and Social Structure*. New Delhi: Amerind Publishing Co. p.9

Another important aspect of traditional Mizo society was the nomadic life<sup>49</sup>, which was essential to its jhum economy. They moved regularly from place to place in search of a virgin forest. Their nomadic life was evident in the construction of their house with thatches and bamboo, which only last not more than ten years.

### **2.3 Contemporary Norms and Values of Mizo Society**

The British colonialism had changed the Mizo society which was inclined towards modernization of the society. British colonialism began in India in 1600 AD. The British assumed economic and political control of all of India with their policy of divide and rule. British colonialism in northeast India began only with the signing of the Yandaboo Treaty in 1826<sup>50</sup>. After this treaty, all of northeast India was annexed one after another. The Lushai Hills was annexed in 1890. Due to their differences in the ethnic, cultural and social life from the mainland India, the British colonial leader ruled the Lushai Hills separated from mainland India.

The British colonialism in Lushai Hill is a milestone in the history of Mizo as the whole Mizo came under a single administration. Before the advent of British each village was under one different chief and there always a war between each village. One of the most important influences of British colonialism is the adoption of the Inner Line Permit in Lushai Hills. It was first known as the Eastern Bengal Frontier Regulation, 1873, which later became known as the Inner Lines Regulation or Inner Line Permit (ILP)<sup>51</sup>. This regulation prohibited outsiders from visiting areas of Lushai Hills without prior permission from the authority and restricted tribes from

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<sup>49</sup>Thanga L.B. (1978). *The Mizos*. Guwahati: United Publisher. p.5

<sup>50</sup>Mackenzie, Alexander. (2012). *History of the Relations of the Government with the Hill Tribes of the North-East Frontier of Bengal*. Cambridge:Cambridge University Press. p.176

<sup>51</sup> Aggarwal, Ravina. (2004). *Beyond Lines of Control*. Durham: Duke University Press. p.57



raiding and attacking the plain area. Thus, the tribes were protected from the exploitation and assimilation of the mainland people, and the people of mainland areas were protected from the treacherous incursions and aggressions of the tribes. Till today ILP is still functioning in Mizoram. In fact, this regulation helps the people of the tribal to preserve their identity and protect the land of their ancestors from the common people. It can be said that this regulation acted as a political foundation for tribes to later claim superior political status.

The British Empire expanded its colonies to all nooks and corners of the world, covering the northern and southern hemispheres. The British Empire was always followed by the missionaries to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. The missionaries not only preached the gospel, but also introduced primary education to the natives. While missionaries have not been able to provide widespread higher education, the little teaching given to the tribes of the region awakens them literally, educationally, and politically. Then they began to become aware of their rights and political status. The Arthington missionary, Rev JH Lorrain and Rev F W Savidge come to Mizoram; they open not only school in 1897 but also introduce modern system of education with numeric and alphabet system<sup>52</sup>. Before that Mizo never had alphabet and modern number system, the history and important event were transfer to each generation by lore and story. Modern system of education bears a fruitful result in knowledge in science and technology which remove superstitious beliefs and blind faith.

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<sup>52</sup>Lalbiakliana. (1979). *Mizoram Zirna Chanchin*. Aizawl: Department of Education. p.4

Before the advent of British, the Chief and his elders were expected to be rich but the commoners were living a miserable life. However, after the advent of British the commoners also got a higher status through business and white collar job. The women also play a great role in shaping the community organization. There is equality among women in terms of bride price, earlier Sailo bride price was ten mithun while the rest is only five mithun.

In the case of the old marriage system, the new religion rejected it. The missionaries introduced the Christian marriage system in Mizo. But the old practice of "bride's money" continued to shape customary laws. The price of the bride came to be paid in cash and not in the form of mithuns or any other animal. The marriage was to be solemnized by a named priest or elder in the Church. After the marital system became Christianized, its influence was systematized by taking a Western culture to achieve it. The old practice of throwing water, mud and rotten eggs at the bride's party was ended, when she was brought from home to the groom's house and secretly listened to the conversation between a woman and her husband at the first night was done away with the new religion. Instead of drinking "Zu", a cake cutting or reception ceremony is introduced. So, from the wedding dress to the food, there were many adopted modern versions that they considered as their own version. Divorce is not allowed in Christianity. Divorce for any reason is an act of sin. Education through missionary work has made Mizo's marital ties more stable and reduced divorce cases.

The chieftainship slowly ended with the British colonization of the Lushai Hills. Some of the rights and prerogatives of chiefs have been abolished,

significantly reducing their status. The chief was now subject to the British leader. Many ancient institutions have lost their meaning and importance, one such case is Zawlbuk. It was gradually neglected and abandoned, leading to a great spiritual aura over time and especially with the advent of Christianity and the opening of day schools by missionaries and the British government. In 1925, there was no more functional Zawlbuk<sup>53</sup>. In 1938, Superintendent A.G. Mc Call (1935-1945) organized social gathering in Aizawl, Thakthing Veng to discuss the restoration of Zawlbuk<sup>54</sup>. People considered it irrelevant and incompatible with education and Christianity, so the superintendent decided not to restore Zawlbuk, and finally Zawlbuk was abolished.

On the other hand, the spirit of Tlawmngaihna was Christianized. While Tlawmngaihna means of the essential goodness- of man which was not very different from the core of Christianity, the former dissolved with the new religion easily and became quite obscure. The Bawi (slavery) system was abolished with the introduction of the new religion. An agreement was reached on the recommendation of J. Hazlett, superintendent of Mizoram in March 1914. According to him, the Bawis could now leave their owners as they wished, and the chiefs had no right to put them in force; no longer remains in his service, but may sue law at the price of

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<sup>53</sup>Lalthangliana, B. (2005). *Culture and folklore of Mizoram*. Guwahati: Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. p. 77

<sup>54</sup>Sangkima. (1992). *Mizos, Society and Social Change, 1890-1947*. Guwahati: Spectrum Publications. p.132

liberty, i.e. 40 rupees. The use of the term Bawi would be suspended. The Bawi system at Mizoram ended in 1927.<sup>55</sup>

Zu (Rice Beer) in Mizo society was an essential part of Mizo society and culture in the pre-Christian era. Zu was rejected by the teachings of Christian missionaries. Zu has been replaced by tea as a popular drink. It had a positive effect on the elimination of intoxication. The traditional festivals of Mizo have also been under the influence of Christianity and modernism. There was strong opposition to the old practices, whether religious or cultural. The gospel and modernism has built its own form in the Mizo culture. All indigenous festivals have been replaced by Christian festivals other than Chapchar Kut. Good Friday is celebrated in the same manner as Mim Kut. The elements of Mim Kut could be found in the continuation to commemorative erection of stones for deaths. During Chapchar Kut, young people perform different types of Mizo traditional dances. The traditional and cultural dance early prohibited by the church leaders has now taken a new form in the life of Mizo society. The first public Christmas celebration took place in 1903 at Mission Veng<sup>56</sup>. After that, the importance of the traditional Mizo festivals decreased and most of them were already faded. The New Year holidays have also been introduced instead of the traditional harvest festivities. A resemblance is redrawn between the New Year's festival and Pawl Kut. But, as can be seen, not all old practices can be eliminated at once. In the early years, the drum (Khuang) was not allowed in the

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<sup>55</sup>Pachua., Joy L. K. and Willem van Schendel. (2015). *The Camera as Witness-A Social History of Mizoram, Northeast India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p.81

<sup>56</sup>Sadokpam, Dhiren A and Bhagat Oinam. (2018). *Northeast India: A Reader*. Oxford shire: Taylor & Francis Publisher. p. 304

church because they were involved in traditional festivals. But without drum, singing or dancing became impossible and lifeless. The Forbidden Drum was used again on July 29, 1919<sup>57</sup>. Since then, it has been adopted by the leaders of the Mizo Church as one of the most important instruments for receiving God's praise. The period was psychologically traumatic under the influence of foreign leaders who embraced their religion. They were also tempted to think of a Western way of life because it was believed to be appropriate for the new religion.

The spread of Western cloth as well as changes in cultural practices were often due to intervention of western missionaries. In addition to missionaries, the government brought young people into contact with the outside world during World War II<sup>58</sup>. There have been changes and advances in clothing and apparel. This is partly because indigenous clothing was not available even though foreign clothing was of better quality and easier to buy and handle. Shirts, pants and trousers are now popular. Mizo women continue to wear traditional clothing in a modified way. Fittings are an area of rapid change. Western dress is now the dress code of the day. It's incomprehensible what Mizo would wear if not wear a western dress.

Mizo society is more oriented towards the western culture and society- that could find its appearance in dress, food, music and dance. Christianity, which was associated with British rule, rejected all that was held as culture, especially in its faith, dismissed them as superstition, and put man and nature on an equal footing with God's creatures. The traditional practices of magic, the sacrifices, superstition

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<sup>57</sup>Lalrinawma.V.S. (2005). *Mizo Ethos: Changes and Challenges*. Aizawl: Mizoram Publication Board. p. 117

<sup>58</sup>Liangkhaia, Rev. (1976). *Mizo Chanchin*. Aizawl: Mizo Academy of Letters. P. 49-50.

and blind faiths were made redundant by the teachings and the practice of the missionaries. Modern Mizo society witnessed change in the value system of the people. Before the British, most of the young men wish to kill animals as much as possible to show their bravery and hunting skills. The society also admired the brave and tlawmngai people in times of war; they decapitate their enemy as much as possible and bring them back which is a sign of not only victory but also for their soul in the Spirit world. They believe that the enemy they had killed would become their slave. That is why mizo were recognized as Head Hunter by western people.<sup>59</sup> This traditional value has been replaced by the struggle for higher education, thirst for knowledge which offered white collar job.

Traditional economy of mizo society was based on agriculture which also turn a new shift toward the mixture of capitalism and socialism which is implemented through central government. The chief and Thirdeing was feed by the villagers in the early period; which is also turn a new shape. The economy of each village was determined by various modern economic activities ranging from agriculture to industry. The traditional tools for agricultural activity was replaced by modern machines and soil fertilizers, shifting cultivation is in transition to permanent settlement with scientific irrigation system and other modern means. The result of banning chief also widened private ownership; even the descendants of chiefs have no right to own his villagers' property in these contemporary world. The court of Chief for resolving any cases in early days was also replaced by modern judicial system. The written rules and regulation with more freedom is a locum for the unwritten rules which had been followed in the society.

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<sup>59</sup>Josh, H. G. (2005). *Mizoram-Past and Present*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications. p. 128

The end of 'Saphun' system is another important indicator of change in Contemporary mizo Society. Saphun means change of identity or clan name. In traditional mizo society there had been a discrimination based on clan, the high caste or clan includes the chief clan and his elder clan; all other clans were recognized as 'Hnamchawm'. But the class or caste stratification in mizo society was different from the Hindu people which are based on occupation. The Hnamchawm people can change their clan name to other higher clan not often in Chief clan but often in Chief's elder clan like Pachuau clan. Neither high clan nor Hnamchawm prevailed in modern Mizo society. Eventually, the King was not able to kill in times of war but they can be captured by the raiders. But they can be ransomed which permits the slave king to kill one villagers with the prior recognition of that village.

The development in transport and communication also marked the onset of modernization in Mizo society. The absent of proper road and communication that connected villages in traditional Mizo society was evident when number of chiefs visited viceroy of India Lord Curzon in 1903 at Kolkata<sup>60</sup>. The chiefs were not only recognized each other but also never experienced a big populous city like Kolkata. Indeed, they witnessed the world which is far away from development in every aspect.

Thus, modernity in Mizo society is introduced by the British through their colonial expansion. Traditional practices of blind faith and superstition had left the society due to Christianity and education. However, modern Mizo society is still induced with some traditional practices. Modern Mizo society believed that it is a

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<sup>60</sup>Zairema, Rev. (1993). *Mizo Lalber Kairuma Sailo*. Aizawl: V.L.B. Press. p.173

bad sign when brother and sister married within one year. Also, they do not want to travel from their home to different destination in a day which they believed that one of them may surely face an accident. They believed that if they built a house over a valley or public path, a family member would suffer. It is also believed that till the month of August the spirit live around their house. So, they never arrange marriage function in the month of August.

The wave of modernity in Mizo society was co-terminus with identity movement which was evident in the isolationist tendency among mizo people from the mainland India. Eventually, the tribal identity was in transition with the western culture and traditions which is against the Hindu and Muslim culture and tradition. The clash of identity between the two claimed much life. The prejudice mindset of the mainland people adds fuel to the fire upon modern Mizo society whom in that time faced Mautam famine in 1959<sup>61</sup>. Besides, 'Mizo National Famine Front' (MNFF) was converted into a political party 'Mizo National Front' (MNF) in 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1961<sup>62</sup>. As a result of political unrest and the demand for greater independence including recognition of ordinary laws, Mizo district was elevated to the Union Territory status under the name Mizoram, in January 21, 1972<sup>63</sup>. Later, as a continuation of the signing of the historic Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of India and the Mizo National Front which went into armed conflict with the government of India in 1966, seeking political independence from the Union of India. In 30<sup>th</sup> June 1986, Constitution of India was amended, Article 371G was

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<sup>61</sup>Raatan, T. (2004). *Encyclopedia of North-east India*. New Delhi: Kalpaz Publications. p. 253

<sup>62</sup>Ibid, p. 253

<sup>63</sup>Ibid, p. 254



inserted with special reference to Mizoram. Consequently, Mizoram was granted statehood on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1987 to make the 23<sup>rd</sup> state of the Union of India<sup>64</sup>.

The peaceful agreement between them has been one of the successful peace accords so far which can be attributed through the political honoring maxims, ‘most peaceful states in India are Mizoram’<sup>65</sup>. Besides, Peaceful coexistence’s mutual understanding among different cultures in Mizo society is a specimen which condones the tenets of postmodernism. Moreover, Mizo society has been drawn closer to other societies as a result of international trade and electronic mass media that linked different societies of the world. International trade among Mizo is not a new concept, the traditional practices of barter system with British was a terminus a quo with postmodern international trade among Mizo. The modern trade practices between Mizo and Burmese also widen the pluralistic idea among Mizo. The augmented digital development expands the traditional orthodoxy in the culture of Mizo in marriage, eating habits, occupation, lifestyle and dresses. Thus, the process of globalization assists to swift transformation and quantum leap on diverse international facets in the Mizo society.

### **Conclusion:**

Traditionally, Mizo society was characterized by the practices of animism and other primitive orthodox practices. Tribalism, nomadic life, head hunting culture and the practices of primitive way of life is the best explanation of that time. The chief of the village enjoyed supreme power. He was not only supreme in his territory

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<sup>64</sup>Sharma, K Suresh. (2015). *Discovery of North-east India- Geography, History, Culture, Religion, Politics, Sociology, Science, Education and Economy*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications. p. 212

<sup>65</sup>Chhuanawma, L.H. (2008). *The Congress Party in Mizoram*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company. p.26

but also in upon his villagers and their property. He was assisted by his council of elders or 'Upa' who shared this power; they were the high class or caste in their territory. The commoners or Hnamchawm lived a miserable life. They could not raise their voice against the Chief and the Elders; they live completely under the supreme reign of the chief. The British introduced not only democracy, modern economic system but also modern culture and education. They abolished chieftainship, animism, orthodoxy, blind faith and backward socio-economic system. The knowledge of western culture instilled a thirst for civilized culture in which power is shared and enjoyed by all. This significantly contributed in the awakening of the socio-economic and political consciousness of the Mizo's which eventually resulted in the evolution of a political movement in the early years of India's independence. In this instance the evolution of multifaceted sources of power is realized indicating that power emanates from below. The knowledge of people's power in democratic society is the basic foundation of republic which eventually leads to raise charismatic leader from the commoners.

Eventually, contemporary Mizo society can be said to have transformed itself into a postmodern society after almost one century in modernism with the onset of globalization in India. The advancement and development of tribal culture postulated western culture and identity in all sphere. Indeed, the globalization of Mizo society entails increased awareness of diverse cultures all over the world. This gives them an inspiration to break with their own local traditions and live the lives they choose. Subsequently, it expands acceptance of plurality and practicality among the Mizos. The plurality of Mizo culture can be attributed in the peaceful maintenance of

different ethnic identity, culture and tradition within its state. The dominant Mizo culture did not oppress the smaller ethnic cultures of the Lai, Mara, Chakma and other minor identity.

### **CHAPTER 3**

**Introduction:** Paul Michel Foucault (1926-1984) was a French political philosopher and historian, associated with post-structuralist and postmodernism. . He was a son and grandson of psychiatrist, born in a solidly bourgeois family, resisted what he argue as provincialism of his upbringing and native country. He was one of

the most influential and controversial scholars of 21<sup>st</sup> century. His work is Trans disciplinary in nature ranging from history, humanity, sociology, philosophy, history and political theory. He is one of the most cited scholars during and after the Second World War era in social sciences. Foucault is known as the architect of the theory of power knowledge relationship on postmodern era. This idea is emerged from his empirical case studies on various social institutions. Power knowledge relationship has had made a dominant shift in thinking of Sociology and Political Science.

### 3.1 Foucauldian view of power/knowledge

Foucault's ideas about power:

“It seems to me that power must be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization; as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses them; as the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from one another; and lastly, as the strategies in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulation of the law, in the various social hegemonies.”<sup>66</sup>

### 3.2 Power knowledge relationship

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<sup>66</sup>Foucault, M. (1976). *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction Volume 1*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group. p. 92-93

Michel Foucault main idea was to establish power knowledge relationship, for this theory, he borrowed many ideas from various sources and amalgamated them in his foundational theme that knowledge gives power.

### 3.2.1 Archeology of Discourse

The notion of archeology is the scientific case study of material remains of artifacts and residing of past human life and activities. The backbone of Foucault's work is in the field of epistemology. He wanted to discover knowledge and his probing for knowledge led him to uncover power. In his discourse, he claimed that truth, power and knowledge are interconnected through text and discourse. Discourse in simple terms means social institutions and discipline. For instance, crime, village, leadership, democracy etc. are discourse. In his book, 'The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Science' (1966), he regarded that in the study of history there is a constant change in the discourse. Foucault claimed that history's probing for genesis in grand moral truth is misled; everything is subject to history deteriorating gaze. There are no absolute.

In his book, 'Archeology of Knowledge' (1969), he discusses discourse along with archeology of knowledge. He is of the opinion that archeology is not the history of ideas and archeology defines discourses in their specificity. He is curious in how discourse of a particular period is different another period of discourse. For instance, the discourse on LGBT and 'Black Live Matters' movements in 17<sup>th</sup> century and 21<sup>st</sup> century is different in their natures. His archeological findings concentrate on the types of rules which control the discourse. He is of the opinion that archeology gives systematic description of the object-discourse.

### 3.2.2 from archeology to genealogy discourse

The problem with the archeological method is that if on one hand allows the comparison of different discursive formations of different periods, that is to say it helps suggesting the contingency intrinsic in a given way of thinking by simply showing that different ages had thought differently, on the other hand this method cannot satisfy the will of the historian to know more about the causes that produce the transition from one way of thinking to other. Hence, Foucault opted to study not the archeology of knowledge but the Genealogy of it.

### 3.2.3. Genealogy of discourse

In simple terms, genealogy means ‘to study and analyze the descent of knowledge or to show that means of knowledge are inextricably tied to the eruption of forces. His genealogical discourse was influenced by Nietzsche in which he regarded there is no proper, essential, definitions and original of truth. He is of the opinion that truth is linked within the operation of power and sovereignty. Truth is resulted by power and the effects of the exercise of power are formulated as truth.

In his book ‘Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison’ (1979), Foucault links knowledge with power. The emergence of prison and penal system served the notion of controlling people by forging power. This forging power brings about discipline in society. Hence, society became a disciplinary society.

‘The History of Sexuality’ was prepared by Michel Foucault in three volumes in which he analyses power, knowledge and pleasure that sustain discourse on human sexuality in part of the world. He study history of 17<sup>th</sup> century in which he put

attention on history of sexuality in each epoch. He is of the opinion that people discourse on sexuality has constantly undergone change. From this we can know that Foucault secretly campaign for LGBT rights across the nation through his books. He believed that sex is the truth of life. In a nutshell, he revolves around the circle of knowledge, power and truth.

### 3.3 Operation of Power

#### 3.3.1 Sovereign power

Foucault is of the opinion that sovereign power is the obedience, will or obey to the king or chief. According to him, sovereign power is taken over form disciplinary power form eighteen or nineteen century.

#### 3.3.2 Disciplinary power

Disciplinary power is a system of power that regulates and control human behavior in society. Foucault made clear that when he mentioned disciplinary power, he does not specify disciplinary power. According to him, there are three principle mechanism of disciplinary power- hierarchical observation, judgment or normality and the examination.

#### 3.3.3 Bio-power

According to Foucault, Bio-power means that the internationalization of scientific concepts of health and normality which are administered by professional groups on the lines of their claim of scientific knowledge (this idea is also known as bio-politics). He is of the opinion that Bio-power created a new body i.e. countable but

continuous. Bio-power aimed to discipline and control human body and their sexuality (This notion is called Anato-mo-politics).

### **3.4 Power/Knowledge Relationship in Mizo Society**

Foucault Power-Knowledge relationship is a binary concept in which society is examined through psychiatry and penal institutions. Foucault did not agree with society's view. For Foucault, people do not have a real identity within themselves; that is just a way of talking about person- a discourse. An identity is communicated to others in your interactions with them, but it can shift; it is not fixed. It is an impermanent feature. He is of the opinion that people did not have power unreservedly; instead, power is a technique or action, which individuals can engage in. According to him, there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations. Thus, looking in the three stages of Mizo society, there prevails power knowledge relationship, which is culminated into postmodern society. However, there instilled a criticism in each epoch which were omnipresent in every postmodern society. It is interested to study the transition of traditional to modern Mizo, and again, modern to post modern society.

#### **3.4.1 Process of Traditional society into Modern Society**

According to Michel Foucault, Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes



to a complex strategically situation in a particular society. He is of the opinion that people of postmodern society live in a web of power relations. The prelude, that Foucault proposition of power is inequality based on the knowledge of how to exercise power. Thus, Foucault examined the clinical and penal institution of the French Society. In which he found that the basic knowledge in medicine and penal system gave the Power to few people.<sup>67</sup> The traditional Mizo society sets a good example French society in terms of the exercise of power. Power in Mizo society is attribute to the Chief of Village. Each village has its own Chief; the reign of Chief depends on his knowledge of administration. As Foucault, claim power is always exercised unequally which is dispersed among the people.<sup>68</sup> The power of chief is sometimes abused which can be seen in the story of that time. To make clear that when shifting cultivation is to begin, the head of each family must book it. Then the Chief decides the best places for farming based on favouritism. Sometimes, widowed and poor family must choose the worst place for their farming. The penal institution in traditional Mizo was chieftainship where the Chief and his Elders exercised power. Their decision in various cases like Magdalene, Thief and robbery were sometimes unequal which prove that Foucault proposition of power 'Power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of non-egalitarian and mobile relations'.<sup>69</sup> He also said that power operates at the most micro level of social relations. Power is omnipresent at every of the social body.

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<sup>67</sup> Foucault, M. (1982). *The Subject and Power*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. p. 777

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, p. 779

<sup>69</sup> Foucault, M. (1975). *Discipline and Punish – The Birth of the Prison*. New York Vintage Books. p. 132

The notion of social institution by Foucault is that School and traditional social institution served the same social function as prisons and mental institutions to define, classify and regulate people. Thus, the institution of chieftainship also served to control power in order to wield power that further produces the knowledge of regulation of people. Thus, looking into the traditional social institution like chieftainship and its related functions, it is purely the weapon to forge power. The Chief; which generally called “Lal”, which in Mizo, means "Lord". He kept his position more because of his personal qualities than because of his hereditary rights; in fact, the post of village chief was a mourning ruler. Everyone who lived in the village was their own family member. He was obliged to help them with their problems, to warn them of their difficulties, to reward them for their achievements, and to punish them when they found guilty of wrongdoing or violation of ingrained habits.<sup>70</sup> The townspeople, in turn, had to implicitly obey his orders, make the mistakes assigned to them individually and collectively, and assist the chief in every way possible. It must mentioned, however, that the chieftain was an autocratic mutiny and indeed, he could not afford it if he wished to maintain his sovereignty, as they would leave him and find refuge under a different deities in another village if they found him tyrannical or indifferent to their needs and facilities.<sup>71</sup> The caciques respected the administration they carried out to return their materials; the Sailo clans that founded their caciques assure that you left the space between the moon and the sun.<sup>72</sup> The murder of Sailo's chief was the most heinous crime of those days and Sailo captured in a raid must not be slaved or killed according to convention. The

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<sup>70</sup>Nunthara, C. (1996). *Mizoram Society and Polity*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing Co. p.19

<sup>71</sup>Vanlawma, R. (1975). *Mizo Lalteleh A khualehtui-Mizo Zia rang*. Aizawl: Mizo Academy of Letters. p.75

<sup>72</sup>Chawngkunga, R. (1996). *Genealogical Tree of Mizo*. Aizawl: Art and Culture Department. p. 8

chief exercised judicial powers, including the power of life and death. Being the defender and father of the subjects, he leads the war group during the war. He appointed important village officials such as the Council of Elders (Lal Khawnbawl), Blacksmith (Thirdeng), Priests (Sadawt and Puithiam) and Village Crier (Tlangau).<sup>73</sup>

Michel Foucault is suggesting that power is not a tool that individuals or groups of people use; rather we are the tools of power. In his analysis, power becomes the subject or agent of history. You may be not far off to say that he anthropomorphizes to power. Foucault is of the opinion that there is no outside to power. For him, we cannot escape it; we are always embedded in the web of power relations. From traditional institution of chieftainship and their knowledge to forge power in order to dominate not only the discourse of their domination but also other area through their knowledge; in which anyone cannot escape from it. The institution of chieftainship is anthropomorphism of power upon the chiefs, which served the institution of prisons and mental institution during the French Revolution.

### **3.4.2 Power comes from Below**

While the institution of Chieftainship expressed certain level of power institution but actually the power that Foucault mentioned is not the institution. He is of the opinion that Power is not an institution, and not a structure neither it is a certain strength we are endowed with it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategic situation in a particular society.

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<sup>73</sup>Call, A. G. M. (1977). *Lushai Chrysalis*. Calcutta: Firma KLM Pvt.Ltd. p.37

The close examination of the history Mizoram reminded that power comes from the lowest level through which it builds the structure of power discourse. The early Mizo migrated towards the west because they were minority and lack of strong administrator. During that time, not only administration but also organisation family based on clan is not effective as it must be. During 1400 AD- 1700 AD, the knowledge of 'Unity is strength' became popular among the Mizo and they organised themselves in a group.<sup>74</sup> When they reached Lentlang and Tiau, they settled a short period. The Shan and Burmese attacked them variously. Even the Mizo attacked themselves for farming, struggle for water and other disputes. This period saw the emergence of Chieftainship in Mizo. In 1580, a war fought between Lusei settled at Seipui and Paihte stationed at Tiddim. The Lusei captured Chhuahhlawma.<sup>75</sup> Surprisingly, Chhuahhlawma was not treating like slaves; but like their own kin. Chhuahhlawma marriage Lusei girl 'Lawileri' and they have a son 'Zahmuaka'.<sup>76</sup> Zahmuakahave seven sons but unfortunately the youngest one died during childhood. In the meantime, Hnamte settled at Khawrua andTlangkhua lost their headman 'Chhanpiala' who did not have a successor.<sup>77</sup>The Lusei advised their brother, 'Hnamte' clan to make Zahmuaka as their village chief. Then, Zahmuaka became the Chief of Hnamte clan. But after Zahmuaka was not happy with the Hnamte clan and went back to his birthplace 'Seipui' Myanmar. However, Hnamte begged to Zahmuaka as their Chief and promised a paddy tax 'Fathang' every year.

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<sup>74</sup>Thangliana. (1992). *Hmanlai Mizo Awmdan*. Aizawl: Tlangveng Printing Press. p. 32

<sup>75</sup>Nunthara, C. (2008). *Land Control, Land use and kinship structure in Lushai Hills*. Aizawl: RTM Press. p.2

<sup>76</sup>Ibid, p.2

<sup>77</sup>Ibid, p.2

This is the milestone of Paddy Tax or Fathang among the Mizos. Then, Zahmuaka with all his six sons went back to Hnamte Clan as their chief.<sup>78</sup>

The chieftainship culture comes on the questions of justice. Since, a just society like Mizo invited their brother as their chief for a time being. Foucault is of the opinion that Justice must be question itself, just as society can exist only by means of the work it does on itself and on institution. All Zahmuaka sons were eventually became the Chiefs. Descendants of Paliana were the first who entered in the present Mizoram followed by Zadeng, Rokhum, Thangluah and Rivung. The Thangurs were the last to enter in Mizoram. Thangura had to two sons namely Chawnglula and Thanmanga. Thangmanga was the father of Sailova. The Sailo were the most powerful rule among the Lusei Chiefs, they not only success in administration but also in village organisation and warfare. The descendants of Thangura called themselves as ‘Sailo’ clan.<sup>79</sup> The Sailo chiefs dominated the pre-modern era period in Mizo society. Thus, the study focused on the Sailo chiefs as a medium of interpretation of process of transition of traditional to modern mizo society.

It is from the above cases of Sailo chiefs; Foucault preposition of power ‘Power comes from below’ is quite relevant and suitable in the Mizo Sailo chiefs. The ancestor of ‘Sailo’ was the slave of Lusei settled at Seipui.

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<sup>78</sup>Nunthara, C. (2008). *Land Control, Land use and kinship structure in Lushai Hills*. Aizawl: RTM Press. p.2

<sup>79</sup>Vanlalsiama. (1953. *Mizo History*. Aizawl: Dy. Inspector of Schools. p.7

### 3.4.3 The clinical and psychiatry institution of Traditional Mizo society

Foucault in his examination of the French society in which the clinical or psychiatry institution, prison and schools. He based his thesis on these institutions by concluding 'A regime of truth'. He opines that Truth is to be understood as a system of ordered procedure for production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statement. Truth is linked in a circular relation with system of power, which produces and sustains it, and effects of power which it induces and which extends it. Thus taking into consideration of the above cited discourse on institutions, the institution of Puithiam and Sadawt in Mizo society sets a good example on circulation of reasoning of the discourse of power. The puithiam or Sadawt was the traditional doctor who had possessed some knowledge in medicinal herbs, skills in healing people including witchcraft. Puithiam or Sadawt was the head of all religious activities including the protection of villagers from evil and demon spirits.<sup>80</sup> It is also believed that Puithiam or Sadawt was expected to relieve the pain from evil spirits, mercy and bless from Pu Vana (Pu Vana is believed to be stayed in heaven, who have all the blessings; looked after people with mercy and gratefulness). Traditional Mizo did not worship demigod, evil or other idolatry but Sakhua. Sakhua is a combination of the word 'Sa' and 'Khua'. 'Sa' means the creator of all the people, and Khua is the protector.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>Lalthangliana, B. (1992). *Hmasang Mizo Nun*. Aizawl: RTM Press. p. 13

<sup>81</sup>Liangkhaia, Rev. (1988). *Mizo Hnamzia leh Hnam Siam thama*. Aizawl: Synod Press. p.18

Traditional mizo worshiped Sakhua for their longevity, blessing in rice and other vegetables, protect from evil spirits.<sup>82</sup> They believed that Cave, big foundation of trees, forest trees possessed evil spirits that could not only hurt but also caused their lives. This superstitious believe drove them to Puithiam or Sadawt for their healing from all the curses. It is also believed that bones of Monkey in forest or farm could be the curse for the entire family, if they found they need some psychiatric medicine to be performed by the Puithiam or Sadawt. The traditional believes of Mizo cost lots of their property. Puithiam or Sadawt needed domestic animals for every time when he performed traditional religious activity. Thus, it is clear from the above case that Sadawt or Puithiam possessed knowledge in healings, language or discourse to be spelled out during religious performance, curiosity in different pains and the pain that caused by different evil. The knowledge of Puithiam or Sadawt put them in a higher status in the village. It is interesting to note that puithiam or sadawt in traditional Mizo were usually high Elders of the Chief council 'Mualkil Upa'.<sup>83</sup> This knowledge put Puithiam or Sadawt to control the people, this knowledge eventually demands the properties of the villagers that made Puithiam or Sadawt richer than the commoners.

This is the unique phenomenon of Foucault power knowledge relationship with the special reference to power. Marxist conception of power is depending on the 'Have' and 'Have not'. Marxists believed power is always reactionary; whether they have possessed knowledge or not, if they possessed the means of production power is always in the hands of the have in every society. This power of the have turned into tortured of have not, economic exploitation of the entire society. However, while

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<sup>82</sup>Ibid, p. 19

<sup>83</sup>Lalthangliana, B & F. Lalhmingthanga. (2000). *Mizo Nun hlui*. Aizawl: Mizoram Board of School Education. p. 32

Foucault is interested in how power is exercised in the society?<sup>84</sup> Not only how power is exercised; but also the relationship of power, knowledge and truth is the interest of Foucault.

Traditional Mizo is a unique phenomenon in clinical and psychiatric observatory from Foucault power knowledge relationship. The little knowledge of Puithiam and Bawlpu turned into the exercised of power, this study reveals the truth of traditional Mizo society.

#### **3.4.4 Towards of Modernisation and the period of colonialisation**

The westward migration of Mizo ended in 1750AD when they reach the present Mizoram.<sup>85</sup> During that time, the life of Mizo society was animistic, tribal culture, superstitious beliefs, and backward society in every aspect. However, the British colonialization of Northeast India shaped the nature of Mizo society from traditional to Modern. The British colonialization of Northeast India began with the signing of the Treaty of Yandaboo on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1826.<sup>86</sup>

At the initial stage of colonialization, the British did not interest in the colonialization of the entire Northeast, since the British were interest in business,

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<sup>84</sup> Foucault, M. (1984). *The Foucault Reader-Space, Time and Power*. New York: Pantheon Books. p. 54

<sup>85</sup> Thanga, L. B. (1987). *The Mizos*. Guwahati: United Publisher. p. 5

<sup>86</sup> Hall, D. E. G. (1981). *A history of South East Asia*. London: Palgrave. p.642



search for the wealth of soil in the Assam plain. Plantation of trees and other business drew the attention of the Colonizer. They do not want to intervene with tribal people who dwell in the hilly areas with low economic condition.

The Assam valley had a good fertile for tea plantation, which attracts the British. In the meantime, the Assam plain was home for animals that have had been regarded as hunting place of Elephant for Mizo. The clearing forest for tea plantation angered the Mizo chiefs that resulted into war between chiefs and British. In, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1871 the Sailam chief Bengkhuaia invaded Alexandrapur.<sup>87</sup> They killed Scottish farmer James Winchester and took her daughter Mary Winchester. Mary Winchester was the first white person who had most encountered by the Mizo. She was capture and held hostage by the Mizo on 1871;<sup>88</sup> this angered the British government, which immediately launched 'The Chin Lushai Hill Expedition' on 8<sup>th</sup> October 1872 to rescue the white Scottish girl Mary Winchester.<sup>89</sup> This marked a milestone for British colonialization in the hill of Mizo. This indirectly also paved the way for Christian Missionary in Lushai hills or the present Mizoram, the entire Mizoram was formally declared as a part of British India in 1895.<sup>90</sup>

The effect of British colonialization in Mizoram was the pace towards modernisation. The British laid the foundation of modernisation in Lushai Hills. The

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<sup>87</sup>Samuelson, R. S. (1985). *Love Mizoram*. New Delhi: Goodwill Press. p. 16

<sup>88</sup>Thangliana, B. (2003). *Zoluti Laklehna Khua*. Aizawl: Art & Culture Department. p. 7

<sup>89</sup>Ibid, p. 9

<sup>90</sup>Sundram, K. (2009). *State at Glance: Mizoram*. Agra: Pratiyogita Darpan. p. 121

politics of Mizo was limited only to chiefs and his Elders in early period. The dress and economic condition of the society was backward which is evident in 'Hnawkhal' (made from trees root worn by male) and 'Siapsuap' (worn by female and made from trees roots) were worn during 1950 in some remote areas in Mizoram.<sup>91</sup>

### **3.4.5 Modernisation of the life of Mizo**

The advent of the British in Mizoram changed the looks and shape of the mizos. The life of Mizo was sometimes, referred to as the intimidation of the western culture. Before the British, Mizo society is full of superstitious beliefs, blind faith, worst working habits, simple dress code, unhygienic eating habits, unhygienic life, animistic and other backward tribal culture. The British gradually change the tribalistic life of Mizo with the advanced modern culture of the west.

After the British, the village organisation of mizo took a new form. Before that, the chief house was at the top of the village surrounded by the elders' house. The chief house was usually at the centre of the village near 'zawlbuk', a bachelors' dormitory. Nevertheless, with the end of Zawlbuk in 1938,<sup>92</sup> the village organisation was base on household that change towards the western culture. The ban of the chief is also evident in the change of village organisation where the chief did not build house at the centre of the village. In late 1980s, the chief and his elders did not stay together as a colony or at the centre of the village. The commoner or 'Hnamchawm' were not expected to build their house at the bottom of the village. The construction of house

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<sup>91</sup>Sangkima. (1992). *Mizos, Society and Social Change*. Guwahati: Spectrum Publications. p.48

<sup>92</sup>Lalthangliana, B. (2005). *Culture and Folklore of Mizoram*. New Delhi: Publications Division Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. p. 259

also turned a new look where the traditional mizo house did not have window or veranda except for the 'Thangchhuah Pa'. In order to open the window in their house, the villager must do 'Thangchhuah'. These superstitious beliefs in the construction of house took a new shape where construction house in 1920s had window and veranda. Descendants of chief have not expected to live at the centre of the village.

The urbanisation also began during the colonial period when the British opened Political Office in Aizawl on 22 April 1890.<sup>93</sup> The first North Lushai Political Officer was Captain HR Browne IA. This Office marked the beginning of urbanisation of Aizawl. Before that, John Shakespeare was appointed as Lunglei Political Officer on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1889 under Chittagong.<sup>94</sup> Traditional Mizo did not contain huge number of households except once in Selesih Sangsarih under Pu Kawlha in which more than seven thousand households were existed during 1740AD but not last for long.<sup>95</sup> Thus, people from remote villages migrated to urban places for business.

The link road between villages were narrow, there is no formal approach road between them. They followed river and mountain to reach their destined village. Nevertheless, when the British colonized Mizoram, they developed link road between villages for maintaining their colony. The road construction also began in

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<sup>93</sup>Vergheese, B. G. (1996). *India's Northeast Resurgent*. New Delhi: Konark Publishers. p. 365

<sup>94</sup>Ibid, p. 365

<sup>95</sup>Nunthara, C. (1996). *Mizoram Society and Polity*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company. p. 44

the early 1920s that led to jeepable link road in Aizawl in 1950.<sup>96</sup> Pu C Rochhinga was the first person who drove motor in Aizawl on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1969.<sup>97</sup> In late 20<sup>th</sup> century, all Mizo villages were link up with Jeep able road. The British colonialization marked milestone in the link between each village, if Mizo were not colonized, this may not happen till today.

Traditional Mizo did not have a proper channel of information between villages. There are no written documents, formal institution and education. The main institution for preparing good citizen of young men was the Zawlbuk. Women learned the way of life from mother. Their story of their ancestors, village and other important historic events were transferred from generation to generation by lore, folk story etc. The British Empire was followed by the Christian missionaries. They laid a found for educational institution in Mizoram. The Arthington Mission sent two missionaries namely Rev Dr F.W. Savidge (Sap Upa) and Rev JH Lorrain (Pu Buanga) who prepared a Mizo alphabet in 1893 at Silchar.<sup>98</sup> They constructed an educational institution in Aizawl on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1894 and started education on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1894.<sup>99</sup> At the initial stage, the Mizo alphabet 'A AW B' was twenty-three in number.<sup>100</sup> Pu Buanga and Sap Upa prepared Mizo alphabet based on Hunterian

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<sup>96</sup>Prasenjit, Biswas. (2006). *Peace in India's North-East: meaning, metaphor, and method: essays of concern and commitment*. New Delhi: Daya Books. p.67

<sup>97</sup><https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/Mizoram-remembers-its-date-with-first-vehicle/articleshow/16360569>.<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/Mizoram-remembers-its-date-with-first-vehicle/articleshow/16360569.cmscms> Retrieved on 12th January 2021

<sup>98</sup>Lunghnema, V. (1993). *Mizo chanchin-B.C. 300 atanga 1929 A.D.* Shillong: H LianDawla Publishing Co. p.64

<sup>99</sup>Lalthangliana, B. (2001). *History and Culture of Mizo in India, Burma and Bangladesh*. Aizawl: Communication Department Baptist Church of Mizoram. p. 745

<sup>100</sup>Ibid, p.745

system of spelling or Hunterian system of Orthography.<sup>101</sup> Rev Edwin Roland added the alphabet 'J' and 'NG' that sum 'A AW B' with twenty-six in number.<sup>102</sup> The first Mizo who learned in school was Suaka and Thangphunga. In 1989, Rev DE Jones opened another school at Aizawl, since then the fire of education never ceased until today. They prepared a book 'Mizo Zir Tirh Bu on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1901.<sup>103</sup>

Christian missionary laid a foundation for print media, drama and other; the first Printing press 'Loch Printing Press' arrived Aizawl in 1911. The first magazine was published John Shakespeare 'Mizo leh Vai Chanchin' in 1895 and the first Mizo language Magazine 'Mizo Chanchin Laisuih' was also published in 1898.<sup>104</sup> Not only development in print media but also mizo had for the first time in mizo history 'Mizo Customary Law' prepared by N.E Parry during 1924 to 1928.<sup>105</sup> All the mizo were put under the same customary law. These laws maintain equality in all aspect of social life.

The unhygienic way of life also gradually changed. The Christian missionaries also developed the clothes and trousers. The dressing style of women in their undergarment take a new development, 'Puanbih' also modernized accordingly. In

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<sup>101</sup>Ibid, p.746

<sup>102</sup>Ibid, p. 746

<sup>103</sup>Malsawma, H. L. (2002). *Sociology of the Mizos*. Guwahati: Spectrum Publication. p. 173

<sup>104</sup>Thirumal, Laldinpuii & C. Lalrozami. (2018). *Modern Mizoram History, Culture, Poetics*. Oxfordshire: Taylor & Francis. p. 23

<sup>105</sup>Ranjan, Nag Chitta. (1999). *Post-colonial Mizo politics, 1947-1998*. Noida: Vikas Publishing House. p.54

the mid 1940, the dress style of entire Mizo more developed than expected. This dressing style was the imitation of the western culture. During 1950s, people never expect women would wear a trouser instead of plain sheet of cotton or silk.<sup>106</sup> On the eve of British, Men did not cut their hair, but this also turned a new look. In the late 1920, no men in the Lushai hills with long hair. This transformation is the knowledge of western that is superior and more advance by the Mizo. In traditional Mizo, smoking of pipe is the tradition, which is habitat with their life; it is practise not only by male but also by the women. However, the unhygienic culture of smoking pipe 'Tuibur' also faded especially among women.

The working habit or working culture also developed to suit the western work culture. Before the British, mizo were hard working people with no rest day. They do not even the proper name for weekdays. Then, the introduction of Schools in Mizoram; And, the introduction of the Gregorian calendar among the Mizo by Missionaries to suit the working cultures of mizo society and the new learning system in school. Christian missionaries named Monday as Thawhtanni (literally means Start working day), Tuesday as Thawhle Ni (repeat working day), Wednesday as Nilai Ni (Mid working day), Thursday as Nilathawhtan Ni (start working day after Mid-day), Friday as Zirtawp Ni (End day of Learning), Saturday as (The day of preparation for upcoming Holiday dedicated for God). Early Mizo were hard working with no rest day except important occasion or special day like

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<sup>106</sup>Ibid, p.69

Chapchar Kut, Pawl Kut, MimKut, ThangchhuahNi etc.<sup>107</sup>To suit the Gregorian calendar, which is used till today by the entire world, was introduced among the Mizo. The western people introduced the working culture of western society among Mizo to suit their own society. Not only the working culture but also the eating habits also transformed from traditional to modern. Early Mizo had been breakfast around 11:00 O'clock by naming Tukthuan, they usually had meal around one to two o'clock by naming it as Chhunchawfak, they usually had dinner 'Zanriah' around six to seven O'clock. These un-biological eating habits also change after the starting of school. The knowledge of western culture by the Mizo changed the way of their life and the entire society.

The economic conditions of Mizo on the eve of British were low since Mizo practice shifting cultivation. They moved from place to place for cultivation. The tools for cultivation were primitive and the production of their farm could only serve the family. They do not have a food reservation and proper storage of food. Besides, they need to pay paddy tax 'Fathang' to the King.<sup>108</sup> The white-collar job and blue-collar job were far away from them. But due the introduction of education among Mizo which offers white collar job and other business job added the family income of the people. The colonialization of British led to the introduction of monetary system that enables Mizo to keep money for emergency and others. The traditional barter system no longer practises since monetary system in Mizo society. Shifting cultivation also

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<sup>107</sup>Thirumal & P.Laldinpui & C. Lalrozami. (2018). *Modern Mizoram-History, Culture, Poetics*. Oxfordshire: Taylor & Francis. p. 32

<sup>108</sup> Dutta, B B & Mahendra N. K. (1987). *Land Relations in North-east India*. New Delhi: People's Publishing House. p. 185

changed to permanent settlement that strengthens the formal use of land for cultivation.

The new form of government as followed by British was imparted in Mizo society. Before the British, each village was under a sovereign ruler, the chief was the head of each village. The British government put all Mizo chief under one umbrella, which automatically put all the Mizo under one administrative unit. The sovereignty of Chief was ceased when colonial ruler establishes a strong central government all over India. The chief of Mizo was for the first time in history put under another ruler. From that moment, Mizo were aware that it is necessary to unite to subdue the power of foreigners. The well-organised military, well form of organisation structure of British government, proper flow of administration impressed Mizo people. The knowledge of western culture and way of life changed the whole society.<sup>109</sup>

Thus, from the above close examination of Mizo, it can be attributed to Foucault power knowledge and truth relationship. The knowledge of western culture and knowledge of outside world culminated in the truth of discourse, which claimed that power is in the hands of the people. The great British Empire was built on the foundation of people who elect their representative in the King's council or Queen's council. The unity of western people could conquer different country. The knowledge of well form of government is the priority for welfare of the society

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<sup>109</sup>Sangkima. (2004). *A Modern History of Mizoram*. Guwahati: Spectrum Publication. p. 20



impressed the Mizo. This knowledge led them to support the Indian freedom movement in the mainland.

The knowledge of western culture is the knowledge of the truth of contemporary world of that time. This truth provides power to the individual, which further add to thirst for power. The knowledge of western world impressed the Mizo, which led to the gradual transition from traditional to Modern society of contemporary world. The intellectual Mizos were aware that how the colonial ruler exploits the native in different form? How they discriminate the native? The proclamation of the truth of colonial society led to a thirst for independent nation state. The educational institution added fuel to the fire in the thirst for knowledge among the Mizo. Early-educated people proclaimed the real status of Mizo under Colonial rule in different magazine. The knowledge they gained in higher studies were transferred different mode. This led to a thirst for independent nation state that guarantee rule by them and complete freedom.

#### **3.4.6 Modern Mizo society under newly independent India.**

The Indian struggles for freedom reach it zenith in the mid-1940s. During that time, Mizo society was more modern than most of its neighbouring state or the then Assam

state. Some intellectual Mizo already participate in the freedom struggle of India. The moral supports of Mizo during the freedom struggle also strengthen the unity of Indian people. Since, modern Mizo conscious of freedom is crucial for the development of the entire country. That is the reason behind they help British Indian army during the Second World War. Many lives of Mizo were sacrificed for their beloved country. The knowledge of 'freedom' pushed them into Indian army to protect from Japanese invasion. When India got independence in 1947, Lushai Hill (Mizoram) was put under the Assam state. The political consciousness or knowledge was more than we could expect at that time, when India got independence, Mizoram or Lushai Hills was offered three choices:- To join India Union, to join Myanmar or to opt as crown colony under the British empire. The Mizo Union which was formerly known as 'Commoners Party' opted for joining Myanmar but while the United Mizo Freedom Organisation (UMFO) opted for joining the Indian Union.<sup>110</sup> It is the fact that, joining India offered democracy, republic and freedom of individual. Thus, the educated youth opted for joining India and Mizoram or Lushai Hills was put under Assam state with District Council status.

The modernity of Mizo was evident that after independence, mainland Indian people is far away from modernity. Even though the British introduced modern education system, women or girl were not allowed to attend school by their parents. Dowry and

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<sup>110</sup>Ranjan, C N. (1993). *Mizo Society in Transition*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd. p. 183

Sati system still prevailed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>111</sup> Many acts were introduced for mainland but arrogant and anti-western culture among the mainland India hindered from modernity. The anti-western culture was popularized by Gandhiji Satyagraha, which supports the India made tools, clothes and other garments. In the meantime, Mizo people were adapting to the western culture to suit their own society, this increase the process of modernity among the Mizo.

On the eve of independence, schools in Mizoram were handed over to the Christian missionaries by the British government in 1944.<sup>112</sup> Thus, schools acted a medium for transferring modernity among the youth of Mizo. The educated youth who were the leaders of the Mizo society lead the society towards modernity. The knowledge they gained from the Missionaries enables them to lead the entire society. The knowledge thus provides them the power that could lead the entire Mizoram. The decision they made during the independence of India were a right decision ever made that could be proof until today. If Mizoram happens to be a part of Myanmar, how backward should it be under the Oligarchic ruler? The neighbouring Mizo who had settled in Myanmar had to fly from their village due to the aggressive ruling of Military. They seek a refuge in different country; they leave their home, their parents and their loved one behind. Until today, many looked a refuge in different country which evident that the choices of the youth of Mizo during independent period was the right choice.

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<sup>111</sup>Magadi, Ranganathan. (2007). *The Literary Works of RanganathanMagadi*. Morrisvile: Lulu.com. p.485

<sup>112</sup>Ranjan, Nag Chitta. (1993). *The Mizo Society in Transition*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd. P. 103

The knowledge of the power of people in democracy, political parties were formed to aggregate the interest of the people. In the meantime, India followed multiple party systems. To summon the power of the people, different political parties were formed immediately after independence. Mizo Union was formed on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1946 to draw the sentiment of the people of commoners.<sup>113</sup> But, half of its members comprised of the Chiefs. There a debate between the members on the issue of Mizoram, the chief's members withdrew from Mizo Union and formed a new party United Mizo Freedom Organisation (UMFO) on 5<sup>th</sup> July 1947.<sup>114</sup>

In 25<sup>th</sup> January 1947, The Drafting Committee appointed an Advisory Committee on Minority and Tribal related issue under the chair of Sardar Vallabhai Patel, which further appointed a subcommittee under the Chairmanship of Gopinath Bordoloi to consider the tribals of North East India and Excluded, and partially excluded area. This sub-committee included the Khawtinkhuma and Ch. Saprawnga, which submitted the memorandum, consisted of special status to the North East Tribal. This memorandum is relevant which safeguard the tribal ethnic identity from encroachment of mainland people. Thus, Mizoram was put under the Indian Constitution under Article 374G. The power of knowledge in politics enables the Mizo to protect their culture and identity.

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<sup>113</sup>Balwally, D. (2003). *Growth of Totalitarianism in Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram & Nagaland*. Guwahati: Spectrum Publications. p.120

<sup>114</sup>Sarkar, B. (1998). *Tackling Insurgency and Terrorism Blueprint for Action*. New Delhi: Vision Books. p. 60

The democratic form of government is based on people. It means the power of democracy depends on the power of the people. To aggregate the power of people, many intellectual Mizo formed a political party to exercise the power of democracy. The Mizo Union was the first political party, which was formed on the eve of India independence. This party was against the chiefs. As Foucault argued that when there is power, there is always a resistance. The sovereignty of chief ended after the British colonialization of North East India. However, even after the official dissolution of the Chief status in August 1954, the influence of chief can be seen the Village council election of 1950s. All the Village Council President of that time was the former chiefs of each village. The intellectual commoners of Mizo resisted the influence of the chiefs. They formed a political party 'Mizo Common's People Union on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1946 which later known as Mizo Union. The antagonistic exercised of power by the chief angered the commoners from long time. Thus, Mizo Union were able to conquer the heart of the commoners which is evident that when the Mizo Union come into power in the first District Council election in 1951. Mizo Union arose from the irate commoners of [anachronism](#) of the tribal administrative system, in which a [tribal chief](#) had an absolute power on the welfare of the citizens, and that most often was exercised in prejudice. The original bearing "Common" was expressly clear that it was a force to overthrow the oppressive tribal governance of the chiefs, which was further exploited by the British. For this reason alone it readily gained support from majority of the population.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>115</sup>Lalhmanmawia, C. (2011). "Mizo Insurgency Vis-a-vis Human Rights". PreserveArticles.com. Retrieved 21 January 2021.

The 1951 election was a milestone in the end of the chief with Mizo Union won the election by 23-1 against the United Mizo Freedom Organisation (UMFO).<sup>116</sup> This resulted to the dissolution of The United Mizo Freedom Organisation, which was formed by the chiefs to oppose the Mizo Union and merger with the Indian National Congress (INC). The Mizo Union won the election also resulted to the joining of India Union for its democratic ideology that promises the power to be vested in the people or its citizens. It also won District Council election in 1957, 1962 and 1966 respectively. This clearly proves that Mitchel Foucault proposition of ‘powers always have a resistance’. The power of Mizo Union also have a resistance when it failed to accommodate the people of Mizo who had faced the famine of 1958 and its protégé of the insurgency movement by the Mizo National Front (MNF), formerly known as the Mizo National Famine Front.

In 1958, a famine broke out in the then District Council area of Mizo, popularly known as ‘Mautam’ famine. Mizo Union failed to resolve the food distribution and accommodation for the commoners. The Mizo National Famine Front took a lead part during this famine period to relieve the people. This resulted into the aggregate of power is automatically transferred to the Mizo National Famine Front. The Mizo National Famine Front got the trust and faith of people due to the help that they received during their worst time. When the Mizo National Famine Front turned into a

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<sup>116</sup> Narayan, P. R. (1987). *Government and Politics in Mizoram*. New Delhi: Northern Book Centre. p. 111

political party in 1961,<sup>117</sup> it got a huge support from the commoners. The party sets its ideology as ‘For God and our Country’; and aimed at independent nation for Mizo. It is believed that during famine Mizo were left behind by the Indian Union, thus MNF party fight for independent.

During MNF insurgency, people not only from Mizoram but also from the neighbouring state supported the insurgency by providing food, shelter and clothes for the militant group. In fact, the democratic form of government is people’s government. Majority of people during that time supported Indian National Congress throughout the country. Not only minority but also tribal people were left behind in development and other aspects of welfare of society. These add fuel to the fire upon MNF insurgency.

In other terms, the power exercised by the Indian National Congress give priority to the mainland, the newly independent nation of India was also threatens by the neighbouring country like Pakistan and China, struggle for arm and ammunition, violent within the country due to partition of India. All these factors weakened the Central government not able to establish a strong power organisation in the far remote area of North Eastern Mizoram. The knowledge of the left behind, unable to provide goods and facilities, unequal development among states etc also further angered the Mizo people.

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<sup>117</sup>Ranjan , N. C. (1999). *Post-colonial Mizo politics, 1947-1998*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd. p. 110

The struggle for power and complete freedom for Mizo nation, MNF seek help from Pakistan and China. The insurgency turned a violent upon the citizen or native Mizo, this resulted into grouping of villages in 1966.<sup>118</sup> Since then, more than Seven hundred and fifty villages were group into one hundred and ten villages. Not only village grouping, but also Mizoram was put under Arm Forces Special Act on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1966. The Indian Air Force for the first time in Indian history started an airstrike upon its citizen in 1968 under the command of Lieutenant General Sam Manekshaw. The violent movement turned into a peaceful cooperation in the late 1980s. After twenty years of insurgency, Mizo National Front under the leadership of Laldenga and R.D Pradhan, Home Secretary, Lalkhama, Chief Secretary of Mizoram signed a historic peace accord on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1986 which was entitled as “Mizoram Accord, 1986: Memorandum of Settlement.”<sup>119</sup> This marked a milestone in the history of Mizoram which enabled the smooth flow of the development in Mizoram. This peace accord is the most successful peace accord so far in India. Mizo National Army surrendered with their arms and in return, they will succeed the government in Mizoram i.e. Indian National Congress under the leadership of Lal Thanhawla.

The knowledge of peace in development further drives Mizo National Front to come peace accord with government of India. It is said that during the early period of insurgency, independent could be achieved easily but later the eve of peace accord

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<sup>118</sup> Sen, S. (1992). *Tribes of Mizoram Description, Ethnology, and Bibliography, 1840-1990*. Kolkata: Giant Publishing House. p. 46

<sup>119</sup> Pradhan, R. D. (1995). *Working with Rajiv Gandhi*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company. p.65



most of the army including their leaders believed that independent could not achieved so they aimed at statehood. Thus, the peace accord contained the statehood bill for Mizoram. Then, Mizoram was uplifted in statehood status from Union Territory on 26<sup>th</sup> February 1986. The government in power, Indian National Congress under the Chief Minister of Lal Thanhawla also drives by the peace talk, which further let his seat to vacate by the MNF party. All these could easily happen due to the intellectual Mizo mindset during that period. Without knowledge of peace, development and welfare of society, the violent or arm struggle insurgency could not be stopped.

Since the statehood of Mizoram, peace was successfully maintained in Mizoram. Mizoram became one of the most peaceful states in India. Development activities were resumed, peace co-existence of different ethnic clans, smooth flow of election etc proved the situation of peaceful Mizoram. Besides, Mizoram have to international boundaries with Myanmar and Bangladesh, and state boundaries with Manipur, Tripura and Assam. In maintaining boundaries with these states and countries, Mizoram was one of the successful states. The modernity of Mizoram was evident even after the statehood period. The leaders of various parties in Mizoram accumulate the power of people in various ways. This marked the republic nature of government that is prevailed in the first world country of the west.

But modernity was very limited for Mizoram since India followed the socialist idea. Many companies and developmental activities were owned and run by central government. This hindered India from development and other. Western companies were not allowed to set up within India, Business were done in the name of central government, blue collar job was no more. Besides the bipolarity of world politics, divide different countries. International trade and business had a limited reach in India and Mizoram. Tourism and commerce were limited for first world country inside India. This in turn limited the modernity of Mizoram in one part and the socialist policy of central government hindered Mizoram from modernity in another part.

However, after the disintegration of Soviet Union in 1991, India quick response was to turn its policy of Socialist ideology to Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation. The new liberalisation policy of India is a backbone for the postmodern society in Mizoram. The enlightened Mizo were capable to run its own state government smoothly in the changing scenario of world.

Since the 1990s Mizoram, the liberal ideology deeply influenced government policy, which further affected its citizens. Before the introduction of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation, India's company were unable to compete each other and with other abroad companies because they were run by the central government. Under the new schemes, many companies were privatize which provides a

competition between them and with companies of foreign country. Since financial year 1991-92 to 2017-18 the [Government of India](#) sold public assets totalling ₹3,47,439 Crore.<sup>120</sup> The liberalisation also furthers wider the view of its citizens.

The assets and clothes companies of foreign country made its debut in India since 1990s. Mizo were capable to develop themselves to intimidate the foreigner of the westerners. The democratic form of government also further provides to establish parties and pressure group for the welfare of society. In Mizoram, Young Mizo Association was one of the biggest non-governmental Organisation which was established by the missionaries on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1935.<sup>121</sup>

Even after the establishment of Young Mizo Association, the intellectual Mizo at Shillong also formed Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1935.<sup>122</sup> These two organisations were the most active pressure group in the politics of Mizoram in district council period, union territory period and statehood period. Before the statehood period, these two organisations were the only pressure group for government. After 1990s, many pressure groups like Mizo Students Union, Hmar Students Association, Paite Association etc. were active during and after election of legislative council.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup>"Performance of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) during 2015-16". pib.nic.in. Retrieved 22 January 2021.

<sup>121</sup>Ranjan , C. N. (1993). *Mizo Society in Transition*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Private Ltd. p. 152

<sup>122</sup>Ibid, p. 154

<sup>123</sup>Ibid, p. 155

After privatisation of Television and internet, many channels and websites were open for the public which wider the knowledge of the people. Today, when they release any movie in the USA or other western country, we can watch inside our home immediately. The constitution of India allows the Right to Speech and Expression for its citizens that are further extended by the social media. The properties we have experienced in everyday life is international standard. All these reasons are the knowledge of the developed western nation. They are more than modern; they can be attributed to the postmodern as claimed by Foucault in his different books. The liberalisation, capitalist idea of economy, the private culture made the postmodern society of Mizoram. Globalisation also further helps to enable the claim of post modernity in Mizoram.

In Foucault analysis of prison and psychiatric institution, Foucault claimed the knowledge authority steals the power of people. Thus, his further study revealed that power and knowledge is related in the society, which helps to develop into a postmodern society. The struggle for power, the resistance of power and the thirst for power in democratic form of governments have related each other, which enabled the society to develop into a post-modern society. In the light of this clarification we can easily claimed that Mizoram is a post-modern society. Till today, the struggle for power, aggregate of power, the thirst for power among the knowledge people in republic society resulted in the truth of a postmodern nation state. Today, Mizoram is a successful experiment in postmodern society; there are more than eighty-four Non-

governmental organisation which includes health, culture, art, dance, politics, society, welfare, philosophy, pressure group etc. Post modernism is a general term which is applied to literature, art, philosophy, architecture, fiction, culture and literary criticism. Post modernism is largely a reaction to the scientific or objective efforts to explain reality. The term post modernism is first used around the 1870's in various areas as a general theory of a historical movement. The present postmodernism is characterized by the ascendancy of science and explaining the world. It is often associated with identity, authority, certainty, difference, separation, textually and skepticism.

The search for the truth in contemporary world and enlightenment in science and technology brings curiosity among the people. The consequences of this enlightenment are that knowledge in the truth of the world which is based on science and technology. Increase in the rejection of the old believes and practices including the modern practices of worship of God and salvation theory. The postmodernity in Mizoram also exposes heresy of church which was establish by the western missionary who build a foundation stone of modernity in Mizoram. In fact, the Welsh and BMS missionaries established The Presbyterian Church and Baptist Church, but in 2015, there are more than seventy-seven churches in Mizoram. This reveals that the search for the truth of salvation in the progenitor churches did not satisfy the intellectual younger generation.

The present scenario in Mizoram envisages the postmodern character. Modernity was first introduced by western missionaries, which further culminated into postmodernism in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The democratic form of government further increases the transition process. The modern Mizo society reaches its zenith in the early 1990s. In fact, all developmental process and welfare of the society were the result of the search for truth in Modern Mizo. Truth is the basic seed for postmodernity. The search for truth in society like empowerment for women would increase the national and household income. Modernity allowed women to participate in the election as a voter, which is regarded as the constitutional duty. But later, the search for the truth of the society further resulted into a new notion which allowed women should be included not only in election but also to participate in the national and state politics. This notion has been already imparted in the constitution of India. However, Mizoram experienced the first woman Mrs. Lalawmpuii Hmar Legislative Member in 1987.

In fact, the search for the best of society is the truth of every society. Since independence of India, it is for everyone to seek a better society which culminated into struggle for power among the people. The knowledge or intellectual people accumulate the power from the people by forming political party and other pressure group. This acted as a strong opposition during the ministry which helps government from bribes and other fault activities. With the introduction of Right to Information Act in 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2005 in India and 26<sup>th</sup> June 2006 in Mizoram help people to seek government activities from any department. The intellectual Mizo frequently used

this act which they had any doubt in any developmental activity undertaken by the government. Thus, the culmination of postmodernism in Mizoram can be said that Foucault power knowledge relationship is an ideology behind Mizo society. In every developmental stage in Mizoram, Power, truth and knowledge prevailed. But however, since the statehood period in Mizoram experienced two party systems unless multiple party systems are rampant within the state. Despite people were allowed to set up any association, party and pressure group within India, Mizoram can be said under the two party dominance which is an inquisitive for examining the postmodern political structure in Mizo society. The evolution of political development in Mizo society is interesting to study the knowledge power relationship.

The dominance of two party systems also entails the postmodernity in the western country like the United States. In the meantime, the political development in Mizoram embedded a hegemonic leadership since statehood. This hegemonic political rule in the state is against of the concept of postmodernity where power and authority would be disseminated and democratic form of government is another term for change of government alternately according to the will of the people. The political development in Mizoram may involve mass hypnotism where two parties strongly dominated since statehood. It is inquisitive to study where these two parties aggregated the power from the people and dominated through knowledge.

## CHAPTER 4

### **Political development in Mizoram**

4.1 Postmodern political philosophy or ideology reflects the liberty of its citizens where every citizen participated in the politics of state. In fact, postmodernity is the result of enlightenment among the people. Thus, politics of postmodernity vested its foundation on the people. Democracy with republican nature is best suited for postmodern society which allowed citizen to elect their representatives and leaders, change them accordingly. However, democratic country like India cannot be claimed as a postmodern country although it is a republican country. Since India followed a multiple party system in which several parties struggle for power which resulted in coalition of party and change of leader alternately. The politics of mainstream experienced several changes of head of government i.e. Prime Minister and President.

In fact, Indian political system is although a multiple party system, any association or party cannot be simply claimed as a political party. Since independence, Election Commission of India (ECI) is the supreme authority regarding election of Prime



Minister, President, Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and other states elections, further it also includes recognition of national party, regional party, nomination of candidates and code of conduct for election. For recognized A political party shall be treated as a recognized political party in a State<sup>124</sup>, if and only if either the conditions specified in Clause (A) are, or the condition specified in Clause (B) is, fulfilled by that party and not otherwise, that is to say<sup>125</sup> -

(A) That such party –

Has been engaged in political activity for a continuous period of five years; and

Has, at the last general election in that State to the House of the People, or, as the case may be, to the Legislative Assembly of the State, returned-

Either (i) at least one member to the House of the People for every twenty-five members of that House or any fraction of that number from that State;<sup>126</sup> or (ii) at least one member to the Legislative Assembly of that State for every thirty members of that Assembly or any fraction of that number;<sup>127</sup>

(B) that the total number of valid votes polled by all the contesting candidates set up by such party at the last general election in the State to the House of the People, or as

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<sup>124</sup> Thorpe, Edgar. & Showick Thorpe. (2012). *The Pearson CSAT Manual*. New Delhi: The Pearson Pvt. Ltd. p. 75.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid, p.75

<sup>126</sup> Kafaltiya, Anand Ballabh. (2003). *Democracy and election Laws*. New Delhi : Deep & Deep Publication Pvt. Ltd. p. 149

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, p. 149

the case may be, to the Legislative Assembly of the State, is not less than six per cent of the total number of valid votes polled by all the contesting candidates at such general election in the State.<sup>128</sup>

2. The conditions in Clause (A) or Clause (B) above shall not be deemed to have been fulfilled by a political party, if a member of the House of the People or the Legislative Assembly of the State becomes a member of that political party after his election to that House or, as the case may be, that Assembly.<sup>129</sup>

3. 'State' includes the National Capital Territory of Delhi and the Union Territory of Pondicherry.<sup>130</sup>

4. If a political party is treated as a recognized political party in four or more States, it shall be known as a 'National Party' throughout the whole of India, but only so long as that political party continues to fulfill thereafter the conditions for recognition in four or more States on the results of any subsequent general election either to the House of the People or to the Legislative Assembly of any State.<sup>131</sup>

5. If a political party is treated as a recognized political party in less than four States, it should be known as a 'State Party' in the State or States in which it is so recognized, but only so long as that political party continues to fulfill thereafter the conditions for recognition on the results of any subsequent general election to the

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<sup>128</sup> The Mizoram Gazette EXTRA ORDINARY Published by Authority VOL. XXVII Aizawl, Thursday, 8. J. 1998, Pausa 18, S.E. 1919, Issue No.4, p.2

<sup>129</sup> Ibid, p.2

<sup>130</sup> Ibid, p.2

<sup>131</sup> Ibid, p.2

House of the People or, as the case may be, to the Legislative Assembly of the State, in the said State or States<sup>132</sup>.

Thus, today there are eight national parties and fifty-three recognized state party. It is clear that in order to form government at central it is necessary to form coalition of party. Since India is a multiple identity, ethnicity, culture, tradition, language and custom. Regional or state party plays an important or crucial role in each state. It is difficult for national party to form government in state. That is why coalition government is very popular in Indian government and politics. India experienced its first coalition government in 1977 when Janata Party under the Prime Minister of Moaraji Ranchodji Desai<sup>133</sup>. Since 1996 there is neither a single party nor national party that can form government in central due major role played by state party. In 1996 United Front under the Prime Minister of H.D Deve Gowda formed government. United Front was a coalition of thirteen parties. In 1998, National Democratic Alliance (NDA) was formed to fight against Indian National Congress coalition which formed government in the same year under the Prime Minister of Atal Bihari Vajpaye<sup>134</sup>. NDA is a coalition government led by Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP). However, in 2004, United Progressive Alliance (UPA) was formed under Indian National Congress which formed government in 2004. After decade of UPA government, National Democratic Alliance (NDA) formed government from 2019 to till today.

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<sup>132</sup>Ibid, p.2

<sup>133</sup> Harris, L. M. (2014). *Heads of states and governments since 1945*. New York: Routledge. p. 385

<sup>134</sup> Nissam, B. U. (2009). *India: Economic, Political and Social Issues*. New York: Nova Publisher. p. 5

It is clear from the above statement that Foucault power knowledge relationship on politics is lacked or hardly found in Indian politics. In fact, after the fall of Indian National Congress in 1970s central government was not able to concentrate its power. The intellectual Indian leaders had limited view on the far North East and other corners of the country people who still believed their belongings to others. It claimed that independent nation could be the salvation from India. Since, the mainstream politics did not have much effect on the corners of the nation. The notion of mainstream politics as a national politics among the leaders of national party resulted in the unequal development of states. As Foucault claimed power comes from below which he stated power is the concentration of the all the lower power.<sup>135</sup> The government formed in India did not include that representative from different states. For instance, National Democratic Alliance which formed government in 2014 did not included Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee which formed government in Mizoram. Foucault claimed 'power is everywhere' in postmodern society is not existed at all in Indian politics<sup>136</sup>. That why Mizoram had a unique political system which manifests the existence of two party struggle in the formation of government at the state. Although, Mizoram is under the constitution of India; and central government's which followed multiple party system. Mizoram experienced two party systems in every election even though there also some coalition government is existed.

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<sup>135</sup> Doshi, S.L. (2003). *Modernity, Postmodernity and Neo-Social Theories*. New Delhi: Rawat Publications. p. 310

<sup>136</sup>Foucault, M. (1975). *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*. Trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith. New York: Vintage. p. 173

The national political party is also based on ideology which reflects the foundation of party. Indian political party is based on leftist, centrist and rightist. The leftist believed in the communist ideology which strongly favored state control of economy. This further reveals that religion should not play a role in government. The leftist party in India for instance Communist Party of India and Communist Party of India (Marxist) favored equality of people, state control of economy and other socialistic idea were pursued. On the other hand, rightist for instances Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) and Shiv Sena were of the view that religion is the guiding principle of its party which further affected its policy and programed. Centrist party like Indian National Congress, All India Trinamool Congress and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) stand between leftist and rightist party. All party who formed government in central was guided by these ideologies. This is one of the reason which effected Indian politics unable to transform itself from post modernity.

On the other hand, Political parties in Mizoram were lacked in ideological basis which means that they were guided the contemporary needs of the society. Even though there are several national political parties like BJP, INC, AAP and others in Mizoram, they were quite different from mainstream politics. Mainstream political parties had their own pressure groups like National Students Union of India (NSUI) was based on Indian National Congress (INC), Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) were based on BJP, and All India Revolutionary Students' Federation (IIRSF) was based on Communist Party of India (CPI). Pressure groups and student's organization in Mizoram had no affiliation in political party which also further is able to play an opposition role for the welfare of society and state.

However, as Foucault claimed of power knowledge relationship which enabled the society and politics of Mizoram to transform itself to postmodernity was quite inquisitive in the political development in Mizoram since statehood. The power of chief in traditional Mizo society was inherited through Village Council even after the banning of chief and in Independent of India from the British. However, there was much resistance of power exercised of Chief on the eve of independent which culminated into the formation of Mizo Commoners Union which later known as Mizo Union in 9<sup>th</sup> April 1946.<sup>137</sup> This party is the first political party in Mizoram which dominates the politics of Mizoram during District Council era. In 1947, Mizo Union organized a conference on Aizawl, in which the passed a resolution against the power of Chief viz. paddy tax and meat tax. This party is form to against the authority and power of the chief. In other words, it can be said that the first political party in Mizoram was formed to resist the power and authority of traditional Mizo chiefs. In the meantime, the group of Mizo chief formed a political party United Mizo Freedom Organization. Thus, political development in Mizoram can be embedded to a struggle between the Chiefs and commoners.

The first district council election was held in 1951 which revealed the resistance of commoners against the chief who inherited a traditional power including a paddy and meat tax. In the election Mizo Union won the election with a huge number. In 1957 election, Mizo Union and Eastern Indian Tribal Union (EITU) fought for the election but Mizo Union won 14 seats out of 17 seats, EITU won 3 seats.<sup>138</sup> In District

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<sup>137</sup>Prasad, R.N. (1987). *Government and Politics in Mizoram*. New Delhi: Northern Book Center. p. 77

<sup>138</sup>[Verma, B.&Syed Amanur Rahman](#) (2006). *The Beautiful India: Mizoram*. Ontario: Reference Press. p. 49

Council period, Mizo society experienced the rule of Mizo Union which is due to the anachronism of irate commoners against the long rule of the Chief. Their main aim is to subjugate the tribal administration of the chief and to establish democratic institutions in Mizoram.

During that time, Mizoram faced a famine called 'Mautam' in which Mizos suffered a lot due to lack of food storage which resulted in the formation of Mizo National Famine Front (MNFF) which later transformed into a political party 'Mizo National Front' after the famine.<sup>139</sup> In 1966, Mizo National Front (MNF) propagated independent status for Mizos due to backwardness and lack of aid from India Union during the famine time. This turned into a political movement, MNF declared independence of Mizoram on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1966 which led to bloodshed and caused thousands of lives. MNF was declared as 'Unlawful Organization' on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1979 by the Indian Government. Government troops relocated some 50,000 Mizos to 18 "protected and progressive villages" between January 4 and February 25, 1967. The armed struggle of MNF took twenty years.

In the 1970s, delegations of Mizo District Council met Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for full-fledged statehood for Lushai District. Then, after discussions and negotiations Mizo was offered Union Territory status in July, 1971. Then, Mizo District Council was officially elevated to Union Territory status on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1972 in the name of Mizoram which further enabled two representatives of Mizoram in Parliament of India, one seat each in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. The first Union Territory

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<sup>139</sup>Bihari, K. B. (1996). *Re-organization of North-east India: Facts and Documents*. New Delhi: Omsons Publications. p. 60

election was held on 18<sup>th</sup> April 1972 in which Mizo Union won 24 seats and Indian Nation Congress won six seats out of 30 seats. Thus, Ch Chhunga, President of Mizo Union was appointed as the first Chief Minister of Mizoram in 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1972 by the first Governor of Mizoram SP Mukherjee. However, after five years and eleven days of Union Territory and full term of the first Chief Ministerial term, Mizoram was put under Presidential rule.

*President's Rule refers to the suspension of a state government and the imposition of direct rule of the Centre. The central government takes direct control of the state in question and the Governor becomes its constitutional head. The Vidhan Sabha is either dissolved or prorogued. Such a situation forces the Election Commission to conduct a re-election within six months. Article 356 of the Constitution of India gives the President of India the power to impose this rule on a state on the advice of the Union Council of Ministers.*<sup>140</sup>

After one-year of Presidential Rule, election was held in 1978 in Union Territory of Mizoram, the newly formed political party Mizo People's Conference (MPC) won the election against the Indian National Congress which was merger with Mizo Union in 1974.<sup>141</sup> In fact, due to political unrest and human rights violation upon the Mizo by the Indian army, Brigadier Thenphunga Sailo formed Human Right

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<sup>140</sup> <https://www.business-standard.com/about/what-is-president-s-rule> accessed on 20th May 2021

<sup>141</sup> Kueck, G. W. & D. D. Khanna & A. K. Mehra. (2003). *Political Parties and Party Systems*. New Delhi: SAGE Publication Pvt. Ltd. p. 362



Committee in 1974.<sup>142</sup> During that time, violation of human rights was rampant in Mizoram where Mizo people were unable to protect themselves since they were lacking knowledge in human rights and protection given to its citizens by the constitution of India. The knowledge on human rights, the brilliant retired Brigadier Rank Officer imparted the knowledge in the rights and constitutional status among the Mizo which gave a brighter political career for Brigadier T Sailo. Then, due to the situational needs and pressure from the people, Human Rights Committee was converted into a political party on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1975 which later known as Mizo People Conference.

However, due to political unrest and underground movement of Mizo National Front, Presidential rule was imposed again on 19<sup>th</sup> November, 1978 in Mizoram after 161 days of MPC party in office. However, President's rule did not last long, after 179 days Mizo People's Conference party was able to reclaim their power in May, 1979. In May, 1984, Mizoram Congress overwhelmed Mizo People's Conference in that election. Then Lalthanhawla was sworn in as Chief Minister of Mizoram.

Thus, looking at the above brief examination of District Council period, Mizoram experienced a confrontation of power between commoners and the supporters of chief. In the first District Council election, Mizo Union won the election with seventeen seats out of eighteen against the United Mizo Freedom Organization. Before that, there was a first democratic election on the Advisory Council which was formed to consider the future of Mizoram on the issue of joining India Union and Burma. On that election, Mizo Union won the election by capturing 23 seats out of 24 against of the UMFO who favored joining of Burma; this is the beginning of the

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<sup>142</sup> Sangkima. (1992). *Mizos, Society and Social Change, 1890-1947*. Guwahati: Spectrum Publications. p. 180

downfall of UMFO and finally dissolved after the first District Council election in 1952.<sup>143</sup> It is clear that the power of the people against the traditional chief had an effect on the election. The 1957 election also witnessed that Mizo Union even though split in the party won the election by capturing 11 seats against the UMFO which won 8 seats.

Foucault said that each historical age is characterized by the particular form of knowledge which he claimed as an episteme. Episteme means the knowledge of the needs of the society that could be counted for the welfare of the society. The episteme is driven by the situational needs of the society which shape its culture, society and people in various ways. Thus, the District Council episteme is that the hurled down of traditional powers of the Mizo chiefs. That is the main reason of Mizo Union was in power during district council period. The main driving force of Mizo Union was that hurled down of traditional chieftainship which is inherited through Village Council system. However, Mizo Union became redundant since its main objective was accomplished. Besides that, there was a split among its leaders which increased the strength of its rival UMFO. Even though, Mizo Union won the last district council election of 1966 and the first Union Territory election of 1972, the party was merger with Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> January 1974 since its main objective of subjugation of inherited power of chiefs was already achieved. Thus, the resistance of traditional power of the chief of Mizo was an episteme which culminated into the concentration of power on the few intellectual

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<sup>143</sup>[Nunthara](#), C. (1996). *Mizoram Society and Polity*. New Delhi:Indus Publishing Company. p. 131

formed party called the Mizo Union which further increased the power of commoners upon the chief that can finally hurled down the power of the Chief.

As mentioned early, some of the intellectual Mizos were of the opinion that the limited and discriminative view of the Mizo Union was exclusive in nature which further promoted division among the Mizo. Thus, Lalbiakthanga and Rev Zairema formed a political party 'United Mizo Freedom Organization' (UMFO) on 5<sup>th</sup> July 1947 which was supported by a group of Mizo Chief. This party was the only political rival of the Mizo Union during the district council era. In the meantime, after the resignation of R Thanhlira from the president of Mizo Union, there was a split among the party into Saprawnga side and Lalsawia side (also known as Mizo Union Right Wing). Then, Mizo Union (Right Wing) and UMFO merge into North East based party 'Eastern Tribal Union' on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1957 which was after lost to Mizo Union with small margin in district council election. But however, the aggregation of power from the people of Mizo by the Mizo Union could not compete during that time. This exposed that powers of the chief were done away by the intellectual Mizo through mobilizing the people into a group called Mizo Union.

The Mautam famine arise during the Mizo Union in 1959 which increased the discontentment of larger section of Mizo who was afraid of assimilation pave the way for the formation of Mizo National Front (MNF) party which was earlier known as Mizo National Famine Front. This party enjoyed lot of supports from the erstwhile

UMFO and EITU, even from the Mizoram Congress party. The main propaganda of MNF was independent and greater Mizoram which engulf the land like a wild fire. Thus, MNF declared independence on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1966 which led to bloodshed and sufferings among the Mizo since Mizoram was put under Armed Forces Special Act of 1958 in the same year. Under this Act, Indian armies were allowed to capture civilians as suspect who further led to human rights violations among the Mizos. During this hard time, Mizoram People's Conference made its debut as Human Right Committee in 1974. During that time, the sufferings and endurance was beyond the premises of the constitutions of India which was due to the innocent and lack of knowledge among the Mizo on their rights and dignity. This hard time experienced the retired army officer Brigadier T Sailo as a paramount of the salvation for Mizo who were under the strict regulations of Indian Army. Thus, most of the Mizo trusted T Sailo's Human Right Committee. This paved a way for the success of transformation from NGO to a political party. The political unrest of MNF, sufferings and feelings of frustration among civilian gave their power (power of citizens) to the newly formed political party which successfully claimed power in the election of 1978. But due to the underground movement and political unrest of MNF, Mizoram was again put under the President's rule on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1978.

However, president's rule took 179 days which further led to conduct fresh election for Mizoram the Election Commission of India in 1979 win which MPC party under the leadership of T Sailo won the election against the MPCC (formed on 10<sup>th</sup> August, 1961) party led by Lal Thanhawla by 52.93 per cent of votes. This reveals

that the early conference holds by the Human Right Committee on 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> April 1975 were truly an aggregation of power by T Sailo in which 882 delegates from 192 villages were the fact that power is in hands of the citizens which made T Sailo as a paramount Chief Minister in the last Union Territory election in Mizoram. Here, we can find that the true democratic spirit was exposed when the MPC won the election by more than 50 percent of citizens. During this time, India was under the Prime Minister of Ch Charan Singh who was from coalition party of Janata party. In fact, Janata could not able to form government on its own. It seeks partners from Congress (O), Bharatiya Lok Dal, Bharatiya Jana Sangh in that election. It means that, Janata party did not enjoy 50 percent of votes from citizens but still form a government with its partners. In fact, those who cast a vote during that election voted not in favor of Janata Party came to more than 50 percent. This is one of the weaknesses of democracy in India which hinders postmodernity in India.

In a nutshell, let us examine the percentage of vote by the winner party in each election. In 1952, MU won by capturing 76 percent of vote polled, again 50 percent in 1957. In 1962, District Council election MU won by more than 50 percent valid vote polled. In 1972, first Union Territory election was held in which Mizo Union (merger with Congress) won the election with 67 percent of valid vote polled. In 1978, MPC party won the election by capturing 23 seats in which the party got 39 percent valid votes. This clearly showed that the party who were elected during District Council election and Union Territory exposed that knowledge of intellectualism by early politicians which had imparted politico-socialism among the

Mizo. The last election to UT Mizoram was held on 1984 in which MPCC overwhelmed MPC party; Lal Thanhawla was sworn in as Chief Minister on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1984. But due to the peace accord between MNF and government of India, Lal Thanhawla vacates his seat for Laldenga who was the president of MNF.

Thus, the truth of political unrest deliberately aimed for greater Mizoram despite could not achieved at the end. But still paved the way for politics in Mizoram vis-à-vis influence every nook and corners of Mizoram. It is a platitude to say that even the army of MNF doubt the notion of independent resulting in an uncertain determine of ex ante that enhance endless debate among the scholars till today. The vagueness of independent notion even thought it was elusive in nature gave higher status for Laldenga and his political party that can still the biggest state party in Mizoram. If turmoil and arm rebellion were not carried out by MNF would Mizoram was elevated to statehood? Scholars were still confusing in independent notion is a paradoxical or bewildering variety that constructs a political instrument that empowers MNF and its leader Laldenga. This is what exactly claimed Foucault that Truth, knowledge and power were related for molding the postmodern state which culminated into a postmodern politics.

#### **4.2 Political Development since statehood**

The long 20 years arm rebellion and political unrest, Mizo National Front and Government of India signed a historic peace accord on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1986 which resulted into upgradation of Union Territory of Mizoram to statehood on 26<sup>th</sup> February

1987<sup>144</sup>. Thus, Mizoram became the 23<sup>rd</sup> state of India Union. In fact, the struggle for independent is an ex ante of struggle for power. The culmination of Union Territory is can be credited to the struggle for power between commoners and the chiefs including the liberal intellectuals of Mizo. If one studies the district council era and UT era, the concluding remarks would be the truth viz. the relationship of power and knowledge in the paradigm shift in each epoch. In fact, during this time, modernity had much rooted in the politics of Mizoram despite a paradoxical phenomenal situation in that time. Since Mizo people were imparted educational and politics through different propaganda of political parties through their pamphlets, newspapers, Radio and Television despite lack of electronic media in India then.

Let us discuss and examine the politics of Mizoram in which truth, knowledge and power related for the culmination into postmodern society. Before we straight up to postmodern politics, let's assume the modern phase politics of Mizoram. In modern phase politics of Mizoram, there is a strong will of creating greater Mizoram which culminated into an arm struggle for 20 years. Despite MNF could not succeed in its propaganda, Mizo were imparted with unity in diversity, brotherhood, equality of clans, equity in fortune etc. In the meantime, intellectuals of Mizo revolutionized Mizo through their prestigious work in literature, books and songs which manifests the patriotism in different dialects. Despite afraid of assimilation, strong will of survive was imparted. The enlightenment in education gave a strong minded will which was one of the foundations of modernity in Mizoram. Before statehood of Mizoram, many intellectuals were thirst for white collar job for the salvation of their

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<sup>144</sup> <https://www.thebetterindia.com/148387/mizo-peace-accord-laldenga-rajiv-gandhi/> accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021

family from poor. Their strong will was bloom during this which is clear that when 57 Mizo were recruited in the highly prestigious job under Indian government i.e. Indian Administrative Officers (IAS) between 1950-1990; Not only this, another central service officer who were recruited in several services like Indian Foreign Service (IFS), Indian Police Service (IPS), Indian Postal Service (IPS), Indian Audit and Accounts Service (IA&AS), Indian Accounts Service (ICAS), Indian Revenue Service (IRS), Indian Defense Account Service (IDAS), Indian Information Service, Indian Broadcasting Programmed Service (IBPS) etc. In which 78 personnel from Mizoram were recruited and served for the nation through the above stated services. Not only these Civil Service Officers, many more were recruited in other central government jobs. These people were one of the backbones for transitions from traditional society to Modern Mizoram. They imparted the knowledge they gained through education among the people in different modes of communications. This is one of the reasons which capable of development in Mizoram that enlightened the commoners who were the base of Modernity foundation Mizoram then.

Educational enlightenment bore a fruitful result for transition of traditional to modernity in every aspects of Mizo life. This is evident that when MNF returned from underground movement the then Chief Minister of Mizoram, Lal Thanhawla vacates his office for Laldenga as per the peace accord of 1986. Then, Lal Thanhawla was Deputy Chief Minister. In the interim government of newly state Mizoram, MNF party contributed 3 personnel for Minister viz Zoramthanga, Tawnluia and Rualchhinga. From MPCC, Vaivenga, R. Thangliana, Sainghaka and



C.L Ruala continued as Ministers but while Hiphei, Liansuama and Rokamlova had sacrificed their seat for the above stated MNF returnee. The truth is that, if MPCC personnel ignore seats for MNF returnee, it is an ex ante that peace could not be able to enjoyed by people during that time. The knowledge in peace, patriotism and political landmark for Mizo and others were the motive behind which enabled to form the first coalition government for Mizoram. Then, the interim government was able to enjoy power under the umbrella of democratic form of government from 21<sup>st</sup> August 1986. This interim government life time is six months only since MNF ministers were not elected by the people, so election to the first Legislative Assembly was conducted in 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1987. In this election, MNF party overwhelmed MPCC and MPC party by capturing 24 seats out of 40 seats. In fact, the charismatic leadership of Laldeng, with his oratory skill that melted the hearts of Mizo during election campaign. H Rammawi who was elected from Sangau constituency on MPC ticket also joined MNF right after the election. Thus, the first elected ministry was MNF party in which Laldenga continued as Chief Minister.

The newly formed Ministry faced slanderous charge which was known as ‘Lottery scandal’ that can be a potential threat for the ministry was inflicted upon Chief Minister, Laldenga by Lalduhawma, President of Mizo National Union (MNU) and Member of Parliament. This allegation was in the appointment of Mizoram State Lottery by Laldenga was too vulnerable for corruption in which Laldenga could not extricate himself from that imputation which was published in daily newspapers. Then, Lalduhawma stir and furor public for a time being; Despite that imputation,

MLA's elected on the ticket of MNF condemned Laldenga on the issue of appointment of Ministers in which H Rammawi was appointed as Minister of State despite he was recently joined the party. Three MLA's viz. R Lalawia, Hrangdawla and Vanlalhraia subdue Andrew Lalheriana, Chawngzuala, Zahungliana, P Siamliana and Lalrinmawia which effected MNF ministry in public notice formed Mizo National Front (Democratic). Thus, MNF had 16 MLAs on the state assembly. However, Speaker J Thangthuama immediately announced the above mentioned defected MLAs for suspension. The speaker himself did not accept Anti-Defection Law in which he claimed himself as Alpha and Omega, there's no power over him and even Governor was crippled on that matters. Over the above matter that, Speaker did not accept the claimed of K Thanfianga on his supports of dissident MLA which he sent to his son and after through Telegram since he was hospitalized in Boston, USA. The irksome issue of dissident MLA, Anti Defection Law, claimed of authoritarian rule by speaker and imputation on the issue of lottery scandal and crisis of MNF family, the first Governor of Mizoram, H Saikia announced the promulgation of President's Rule in Mizoram through All India Radio (AIR) on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1988 under the Constitution of India, Article 356. In fact, the fall of MNF ministry was thirst for power which some MLAs felt that favoritism on Ministerial status, public pressure on the allegation of state lottery, speaker over power himself which was further culminated into the fall of MNF ministry after 2 years and 17 days.

It is the fact that, during that time, Laldenga could not or not able to counter Lalduhawma on the imputation on State Lottery issue was public platitude that Laldenga was less repulsive since he was the main culprit was an ex ante of the face of new ministry. It is also clear that Laldenga showed his favoritism behavior on appointing H Rammawi who joined the party after election and appointed of his brother Ngurchhina on Ministerial status. Over and above those matters the claim of authority above the Governor is against the provisions of the constitution. Thus, power of MNF ministry in State Assembly was weakened which further led to the fall of itself. Thus, the first elected ministry in the state was dissolved for the betterment of society, welfare of the then politics which was based on the whims and impulses regime on individual, for the safeguard and supremacy of constitution. This political landmark is the milestone in politics since democratic form of government is in fact not to rein people with supreme power because the constitution of India vested its power upon the people.

The event of dissolution of ministry and fall of MNF is depicted by R Lalawia as the fall of dictators as General Ne Win and General Zia-Ui-Hag both from Burma and Pakistan respectively fallen. In such manner, Laldenga was fallen from his dictatorship form of government. On the same time, some church leaders explained the event as *'The answer of God to the prayers of Church members on the issue of liquor.'* Thus, truth, knowledge and power are related to each other even after statehood for the welfare and development of Mizoram. In fact, the expectations which they had upon on the new Ministry was faded when favoritism, nepotisms,

corruption and liquor issues were rooted in the ministry which was against the will of Church and people.

After 136 days under President's rule, a fresh election was conducted on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1989 in which MPCC overwhelmed MNF and MPC party by capturing 24 seats. MNF could only bag 14 seats; even Laldenga was lost in Aizawl North II but while won from Aizawl South II. The erstwhile ministers in MNF ministry like H Lalruata, Ngurchhina, Lalhlimpui and Saingura Sailo were not able hold their constituency. MPC only got 1 seat which was less as compare to the previous election in which they got 2 seats. Thus, MNF and MPC for the first time worked together and blaming MPCC as 'Vais', they also allegedly claimed the election as 'rigging'. Their imputation of rigging was allegedly held on Santosh Mohan Dev who was Minister of State for Home at the Centre. Their allegation on was put up on the High Court for validity but the High court did not see any rigging on its final decision.

Thus after the election, All Regional Party Convention (ARPC) was held on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1989 in which MNU, MNF and MPC party come together to save the country on democratic principles in which they claimed Congress (I) as solely based on 'Secularism'. Then, the convention accepted the formation new political party 'Democratic Party', a name suggested by Malsawma Colney. Three political party MNF (N), MNU and MPC was merged into this party in which Brig.T Sailo (MPC) was elected as its President, Lalduhawma(MNU) as Working President,

Laalhmingshanga Sailo as Vice President and Malsawma Colney as Treasurer respectively. During this period, Ladenga founder of MNF was sadly demised due to cancer in New York on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1990. Then, the new party 'Democratic Party' held assembly on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1990, in which they decided to merge into the Janata Dal Party. Thus, a new Janata Dal party was officially inaugurated on 27<sup>th</sup> September 1990.

In 1993 election, Congress party won 17 seats only but while MNF got 15 seats. In the meantime, independent candidates won 8 seats in which Congress won the election by forming coalition with MJD and five defected MLAs' from the MNF. During that time, Congress was able to enter peace agreement with Hmar People Conference (HPC) on 26<sup>th</sup> November, 1994 which resulted into the creation of Shinlung Development Council on the same day. This is another political landmark which brought Hmar people together with peace and tranquility both for Hmar and for Mizoram. In fact, HPC were an arm militant group which was formed in 1989 for demanding a separate district for Hmar people since they believed that they were lacked behind in development as compare to other Mizo clans. But Lalthanhawla claimed Hmar were not backward and they don't need a district earlier in 1989.

After the election of 1993, coalition of Congress and MJD did not work together well since they the then Finance Minister, Lalmingshanga (MJD) and Minister of State, H Thangkima were sacked from the ministry but while MJD minister like Zosiama

Pachau and C Chawngkunga, who officially joined Congress were not drop. Later that, the remaining MJD Minister of State viz. C Vulluaia, Hrangthanga Colney and F Lawmkima was also dropped from the ministry.

It is from the above clear that, the struggle for power in the 1993 election in which no single party was able to form ministry. Thus, Congress and MJD formed coalition ministry but later that Congress party was joined by some independent candidates and even from MJD party itself which resulted into the sacked of MJD MLA's from the ministry. This clearly conveyed that the struggle for power that in order to control fully by the Congress, they should have sacked their coalition partner since they had a knowledge that if the coalition party were with them, it is difficult to control and exercise power deliberately for them. Then, the Congress dominates Mizoram Assembly; they even make peace agreement with HPC after reformation ministry in 1994. But it is important to note that HPC may reach an agreement but the diffuse HPC known as HPC (D) did not accept the agreement and continue to fight for their Hmar tribe.

A new fresh election was held under peace and tranquil environment on 25<sup>th</sup> November 1998. In this election, Young Mizo Association (YMA) and Churches play an important role making peace electoral process in that election. The MNF and MPC formed a coalition party in which they overwhelmed other party by capturing 33 seats. MNF captured 21 seats while its partner MPC got 12 seats. It is claimed that during the two terms of the then ruling party Congress was blamed for nepotism, favoritisms, greater gap between the haves and have not, absence of economic

opportunity for common man who were not Congress party members. All these factors created a bad first impression on Congress party which resulted in 1998 election that they could only get 6 seats, from these 6 seats, 3 newcomers were included, 3 seats were successfully reclaimed in three areas like Tuipang, Chawngte and Saiha the far most remote constituency in southern part of Mizoram.

The new coalition ministry of MNF and MPC however, did not last long since all the important offices, status and portfolio were vested upon the MNF leaders. It is clear that when only two Cabinet Ministers out of 10 including Chief Minister was from MPC and two others were appointed as Minister of State out of four Ministers of State were from MPC. Thus, after one year and 6 days of its rule, the MPC MLA's were sacked from the ministry. Since the disappointed MLA's from MPC were secretly made an agreement with Congress for the coming election of Village Council. Thus, the ministry turned into a pure MNF ministry since it captured 21 seats in 1998 election. On the other hand, one independent candidate joined MNF which strengthened MNF with 22 seats which increased the capability of forming MNF ministry on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2000.

The modern Mizoram in which MNF was in power the then politics of Mizoram was rudely shaken when Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF) attacked Mizoram State Transport (MST) Bus on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2000. It is said that, BNLF were about 20 numbers, kidnapping two Public Health Engineering Department faculties, namely,

Jolly Lalzawmliana and Lalchhanhima including the luggage and luxurious things from other passengers. After that, on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2000 BNLF kidnapped one passenger, Lalnunfela Rokhum (Teacher of FLAKM School at Lunglei) from Sumo service plying between Aizawl and Zampui (Tripura). But he was soon released. During that time, it is a platitude that said that MNF ministry was too weakened to tackle the outlawed BNLF within the territory of Mizoram.

On the other hand, the factional group of Hmar People's Conference (Democrats) also threatens the MNF ministry by kidnapping the North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO) six workers who were engaged in Tuirial Hydel Project. The incidents took up by the BNLF and HPC (D) gave a quite jolt to peace and tranquil atmosphere which was pervading in Mizoram after the signing of the Peace Accord with government of India on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1986.

The new millennium brought a new hope for restoration of peaceful atmosphere for Mizoram and MNF ministry when BNLF and HPC (D) released their hostage on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2000 and on 12 June 2000 respectively. But the new hope was faded when BNLF killed seven Mizoram Armed Force Police on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2000. This sad incidence took place between Mausam and Malsuri at Lunglei district. This resulted into a creation of a platitude that says MNF could not made an atmosphere of peace and tranquility within Mizoram since they were also once a militant group which



fought for their own dependence. But fortunately, MNF ministry was not bothered after all till the end of their Ministry in 2003.

Thus, Modern Mizo society was at its hike or zenith during that time, since some scholar and critics claimed that post modernity is already there when the Indian Government introduced Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization in 1991. It is somehow not wrong to say that since Mizoram was under political unrest for 20 years, the peace atmosphere within the state itself was not fully recovered within just a decade. Further, there is lots of debates and dissolution within the ministries which debacle the peace, economic growth and social development within the state itself. However, it is clear that when LPG was introduced in nationwide, Mizo were put in different atmosphere of central government's ideology but still adapted rapidly even though young government form by young ministry in politics. The struggle for power also led to the spread of government policies, national status, economic conditions, knowledge and enlightenment towards the most developed country, all these factors, at the same time, were difficult to imparted in the society itself during this time. But we can have claimed that the modernity period of Mizoram was an example of the French revolution in which the root of democracy was laid upon.

Foucault even discussed in his famous book 'The Birth of Prison and Clinic' the basic foundation for postmodernity is that revolution which was to be experienced by the French society in order to bring post modernity in society. Taking this statement

that, French is a great country during the 18<sup>th</sup> century but had a serious internal problem. The winter famine of 1788 also disturbed the French monarchy in which people were left behind and even put behind the bar for begging the monarchy to solve their problems. Instead of solving their problems, they levied higher taxes for the peasant class while enjoying luxurious life. On the eve of revolution in French, a winter famine devastated the economy of the Monarchy. Thus, the third estates were mobilizing and attack the monarchy for not relieving from their starvation. This is the indirect result for the dead of Louis XVI and his wife Mary Antoine in 1793. During this, the foundation of Democracy-Liberty, Equality and fraternity was successfully practiced which further led to the declaration of the Right of Men. Monarchical reign was executed followed by the reign of terror in which thousands of suspected enemies were killed by the Jacobins. It is important to note that most of the modern nations were going through bloody period or enlighten period. The transformation of traditional practices caused many lives. This intellectual paradigm shifts from traditional to modern is sometime called as 'Madness' by Foucault. This what exactly gone through Mizoram when the banning of Chief was followed by the fight for power which they feel that they were left behind by the central government during and after famine which led to the birth of arm militant group MNF. Then, peace and normalcy was achieved while internal peace was a new task for modern Mizoram government. This new task was at hands of each new ministry which is to be discussed in the later.

The fifth Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2003 as envisaged by the Election Commission of India. On this election, Electronic Voting Machine was introduced for the first time in Mizoram. Then, election was held with peace atmosphere all over Mizoram except in Suangpuilawn constituency in which three candidates from MPCC, MNF and MPC were kidnapped by unidentified arm personnel but the suspect was HPC (D) since they did not accept the peace agreement between MNF and HPC. But however, election was conducted as plan by the ECI. Then, MNF reclaimed its power by capturing the 21 seats while MPCC could win 12 seats. In this election, MPC and Zoram Nationalist Party worked together but MPC captured 3 seats and ZNP captured 2 seats respectively. As mention early, ZNP was formed by Lalduhawma after he left MNF since he was defeated by Zoramthanga in a party presidential election held on 27 Feb 1997. Then, he formed MNF (N) on 18<sup>th</sup> April 1997 which was known later as Zoram Nationalist Party. In this election, P.P Thawla from Mara Democratic Front (MDC) supported MNF in which he became Minister of State.

The remarkable 2003 election in Mizoram was that all leaders from Congress, MNF, MPC and ZNP were elected from different constituency. But a critical situation arises when EVM was suspected to have been destroyed at Suangpuilawn constituency were sent to the ECI in which vote counting was to be done by the ECI members. In which a controversial election result was ensue, then, H Lalsangzuala was elected. But YMA advised him to resign even after being sworn in as MLA. Since, Suangpuilawn was the area where HPC (D) were conducting a serious

violations of law regarding from threat to kidnapping of innocent people. However, H Lalsangzuala was not resigned within the date fixed by Central Young Mizo Association (CYMA). Thus, we can have assured that the culmination into postmodern politics have to face a critical situation where society, ethnicity, culture and traditions were blooming each other.

The new MNF ministry was blamed on the issue of shifting of Assam Rifles from the heart of the town to Zokawsang area. Since MNF gave priority of shifting of Assam Rifles in 1987. Another issue, an ambitious State Referral Hospital was to be constructed at Falkawn area, which is the northern part of Aizawl. This project was abandoned in 1998 and still could not achieve any progress till the end of the ministry. So many worked had done by the ministry which include BAFACOS project which was demand successfully from central government to support the Mautam famine erupted in 2007 but the same ministry was blamed again due to corruption and nepotism in different department which further led to incomplete project of Tuirial Hydel Project. But one should note that Mizoram University was established in 2001 as per the agreement between MNF and Central government on Peace Accord.

Then, MNF ministry brought peace and tranquility when the search for settlement with BNLFF was over on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2005. The two sides agreed to sign Memorandum of Understanding after 13 protracted parleys at State Guest House, Aizawl. It was

signed by H.V Lalringa, Chief Secretary of Mizoram, on behalf of state government and by Suriyamoni, President of BNLF, on behalf of BNLF. It is the fact that peace is utmost important for the postmodern society in which people live with freedom, further development is based upon peace. Political science is a search for better society in which all philosophers and political scientists are thirst for a nation in which peace, development and equity are paramount.

The sixth Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held in February 2008. This election was a turning point for Congress by proposing a New Land Use Policy in which each subsidiary was to be allotted 50,000 rupees for agricultural purposes. It is the fact that MNF even though succeeded in many projects and development programs, MNF were not able to make peace with HPC (D), failed to impress people especially of rural areas. Thus, in 2008 election, MPCC overwhelmed all other parties by capturing 32 seats. In the meantime, MNF was able to capture 3 seats. ZNP and MPC were also able to capture 2 seats respectively. The ex-Chief Minister, Mr. Zoramthanga was also defeated by two MPCC candidates TT Zothansanga and JH Rothuama in Champhai North and Champhai South constituency respectively. Since MNF ministry was blamed for corruption in MIP (Mizoram Intodelhna Project). Further, the death of Rev Chanchinmawia, Chairman of Mizoram People Forum had shaken the foundation of MNF ministry since the court decision of suicide was not accepted by Churches in Mizoram. That is why MNF was downtrodden, weak and frail in public appearance which further led into failure in wooing of voters. In Mass Media and Social media, there are a lot of criticisms against MNF which made them

silent in that election. Then, MPCC under the leadership of Lalthanhawla ruled the politics of Mizoram. They introduced New Land Use Policy (NLUP) for wooing the voter's especially of rural people, since they claimed a huge victory in this election. The Seventh Mizoram Legislative Assembly witnessed the continuous victorious rule of MPCC. Government of India introduced Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) along with the Electronic Voting Machine in this election for a nationwide. Congress won the election by capturing 34 seats which is 38.89 percent of total vote cast in this election. But, MNF, ZNP and MPC could win six seats in which ZNP could not able to win any seat in this election. While losing this election MNF still got 30.64 percent of votes. Since, the Indian Government introduced NOTA (Non-of The Above) in election for the voters who may not favor any candidates in election. ZNP while losing its previous two seats, still got 10.22 votes cast in the election. But MPCC under the leadership of Lal Thanhawla overwhelmed Mizoram politics since he was elected as Chief Minister for nine times which made him the longest serving Chief Minister in India. Lalthanhawla was elected both in Serchhip and South Tuipui constituency. Then, bye election was held in South Tuipui constituency since Lalthanhawla left this constituency in which John Siamkunga of MPCC was elected. MPCC were succeed in many projects like the first Medical College, MIMER (Mizoram Medical Education and Research) at Falkawn, Aizawl which later known as Zoram Medical College, introduction of Artificial Football turf for youth, establishment of Mizoram Youth Commission etc. But however due to arrogant character of Lal Thanhawla, the party itself faced internal problems on the issue of leadership, portfolio on the ministry itself, issue of candidate for the next election. This burden and imputation eroded the party

internally which led to decrease the influence of the party itself among the people which led the downfall of MPCC in 2018 election against their political rival MNF. However, in the seventh Mizoram Legislative Assembly election which was held on 9<sup>th</sup> Dec 2013, Congress overwhelmed other parties since NLUP project attracts the rural people other than state capital Aizawl. MPCC reclaimed power with more seats than the previous election. Though MNF and MPC formed Mizoram Democratic Alliance, still MPCC captured 33 seats which are more the previous 32 seats. MDF captured 6 seats in which 5 seats is captured by 6 MNF and one seat belongs to MPC. However, ZNP could not stand up in this election. Congress got 44.63 percent, MNF got 28.65 percent, ZNP got 17.42 percent, MPC got 6.15 percent and other parties got 1.24 percent. Despite their victory in this election, Lal Thanzara, younger brother of Lal Thanhawla was resigned from his constituency, Aizawl North III due to the pressure of opposition parties on the issue on false affidavit and office of profit which was considered as a fraud and against the constitution. Then, as the ECI notified a letter which mentioned bye-election was to be held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2015. In this bye-election Lal Thanzara (INC), K Vanlalvena (MNF) and Lalduhawma (ZNP) were contested but a ruling candidate Lal Thanzara was elected again.

But however due to arrogant character of Lal Thanhawla, the party itself faced internal problems on the issue of leadership, portfolio on the ministry itself, issue of candidates for the next election. Tussle of leaders for candidates led to fragmentation of MPCC. This burden and imputation eroded the party internally which led to

decrease the influence of the party itself among the people which led the downfall of MPCC in 2018 election against their political rival MNF. On the other hand, the issue of new creation of three new districts which was promised and passed it on State Assembly by MNF Ministry on the eve of 2008 state election which became the problems for MPCC since they could not able to fully function nor not function at all after decade. MPCC did allow functioning only by words; but absence of infrastructure and progress were not seen in the three constituencies of Hnahthial, Saitual and Khawzawl. This issue affected the congress ministry which resulted into the resignation of Home Minister and Sr. Vice President of MPCC R Lalzirliana from Saitual constituency on the eve of new election.

Since then, MPCC lost 29 seats in the eight Mizoram Legislative Assembly elections which were held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018. Even the longest Chief Minister, Lal Thanhawla lost in his Serchhip constituency against Zoram People Movement (ZPM) leader, Lalduhawma. MPCC could only return with five seats. Remarkably, BJP captured one seats at Tuichawng constituency. MNF won the election by capturing 26 seats. MNF got 37.70 percent vote, MPCC got 29.98 percent, ZPM got 22.94 percent, and BJP got 8.09 percent. It is important to note that, ZPM was a movement which was formed to against Congress and MNF party since these two party ruled Mizoram since statehood. It can be said that it was an alliance party which was formed by six different parties i.e. ZNP, MPC, Zoram Decentralization Front, Zoram Reformation Front and Mizoram People's Party and Zoram Exodus Movement. They set up their candidates as an independent but later formally formed into a political



party 'Zoram People's Movement'. Since, they are not recognized party at the time election, and in 2019, ECI recognized it as a party. A result of being elected as an independent, an incumbent MNF ministry filed case against Lalduhawma on the issue anti defection law which resulted into a disqualification of opposition leader Lalduhoma from the Assembly in 2020. He became the first MLA's to disqualify from the Assembly in the state of Mizoram. Then, Bye-Election was to be held at Serchhip constituency at the time of writing this chapter. Even though capturing 26 seats by MNF, it has already shaken its foundation on the issue of distribution 3 lakh each household under New Economic Development Policy (NEDP), the issue free traffic jam city of Aizawl, the issue of Citizenship Amendment Act, the issue of Audit of Health Department, the issue of new Office Bearers of MNF and others already shaken the foundation of the incumbent ministry today. At the time of writing this chapter, different parties were preparing for the upcoming Bye-election at Serchhip constituency. The candidates set by different candidates are namely, Vanlalzawma (MNF), Lalduhoma (ZPM), Lalhriatrenga Chhangte (BJP), Vanlalruata (MPC), Ramhlun-edena(Ind) and PC Laltlansanga (MPCC).

Since statehood, Mizoram experienced three Chief Ministers namely, Laldenga, Lalthanhawla, and Zoramthanga. However, Laldenga was died in 1990 and served as Chief Minister for two years and 17 days only. Since then, as we already examined the political progress based on the election in the above, we can clear that Mizoram was under the dominance of two leaders i.e. Lalthanhawla and Zoramthanga till today. In the traditional period, the Chief and his descendants were ruling each

village. Different clans have their own chiefs, but generally the chieftainship belongs to the Sailo clan due to knowledge of warfare, organization skill, administration skill and the well-trained of their descendants to rein their villages and finally, maintained the relationship of ancestors. On the other hand, they were imparted to help each other in times of war and difficulties. This led to the strong rule of Sailo clan in Mizoram even though there were numbers of different clans that ruled villages. But the Sailo were on the top clan among the chief clans. But, after the annexation of Lushai Hills by the British, they introduced western administration. The chief powers were limited since they have to serve the Majesty of United Kingdom. They were even though a chief, but could not have full power as the used to have before the western people. They need to pay taxes and those who refuse to do it were sentenced by banning their chieftainship authority and replaced them by some suitable commoners. This marked the beginning of modernization in this society which rejects some superstitious beliefs and sovereign rule by chief. Then, after India got independence from the British, the newly independent India adopted democracy as its model form of government. All contents of the constitution and preamble were derived from the western democratic country even though it has some socialistic character in some parts. Since the adoption of democratic spirit, the chieftainship was formally banned in 1954. On the eve of independence there was a tussle between commoners and chiefs on democratic ideals. But however, due to education and western culture effects on Mizo led to the victory of commoners in the first democratic election in Mizoram, Thus, simply we can have assumed that commoners were the victor in the transition period. Then the leaders of commoners ruled the district council period till 1972 since independence of India in 1947. During this

time, Mizoram was clouded with independent movement spearheaded by Laldenga. Since, modern political knowledge gave a spirit of patriotism among Mizos. The famine of 1950s led to knowledge of contemporary political truth that the mainland people were eschewed tribal people of Mizoram. This insular ideal politics add fuel to the fire of stranded people of Mizo due to famine. Then, Modern political development in Mizoram was overshadowed by the equality, freedom and equity. Since Mizoram was prejudice as a tribal people with fetish religion by the mainland people. Most of political leaders of Mizoram were supporting MNF but later they change their mind since India's policy upon state independence was clearly known by them. Then, they fight for Union Territory and statehood. During this time, modernization was already set it foundation on Mizoram. The political development during this time was that fight for equality, enlightenment in education resulting in political modernization. Then, modernization in Mizoram was a fight for freedom, human rights, equality, fraternity, liberty and equity. It is also marked by a fight for traditional politics. Generally, the project of modern politics was to define and implement universal goals like freedom, equality and justice, in an attempt to transform institutional structures of domination. Modern politics emerged from the enlightenment project of subjecting to critique by the norms of reason all forms presupposed a democratic public sphere where individuals and social groups could discuss political problem and choices, and intervene practically in public affairs. Modern Politics in Mizoram involved attempts to discern basic human rights, the common good and universal values, and to provide institutional guarantees that allow democratic rights, discussion and consensus. Thus modernity in Mizoram was a movement which rejected the legacy of the chieftainship of the traditional period that

was caught up in the early enthusiasm for new political progress and sought to build a new society based on contemporary political ideology of the west. However, modern politics of Mizoram was accompanied and may have been seen as the French Revolution which rejected the monarchical rule of the society, was a culture of innovation and change for Mizoram.

The transition of tradition to modern society in Mizoram seemed like a socialist or Marx ideology of revolution. But it was not based on the revolution of the haves and have-nots nor high class and lower people. It is a dramatic change which eschewed traditional norms of beliefs, custom and tradition in which the chiefs were at the top of the societal order. The period of 1960s to 1990s can be attributed to the period of Modernity in Mizoram. The group of commoners who were against the chieftainship since independence were turned themselves into the political elite itself. They regarded themselves as a high class people who had stolen the knowledge of political understandings of commoners in the claimants of their rights. At the beginnings of Union Territory, there was a huge blooming of white collar jobs as well as developmental projects which marked the beginning of corruption, favoritism and bribery among the high class politicians. They exercised the power bestowed upon them by the constitution through people were the instruments of humiliation of their own people. This worse situational UT status was increased when statehood was granted as per Peace Accord of MNF and Indian Government. Then, vote buying, booth capturing, distribution of money at the peak of election etc. were practices which resulted to a birth of new party, new pressure groups and associations. But due to the

role of Mizoram People Forum, role of church and the Right to Information Act of 2005 in postmodern Mizoram decreased at the ground level of the darkness of politics which were rampant in the modern politics of Mizoram.

In fact, the notion of postmodern politics was already started in the western country during the 1960s to 1970s where new ideologies were proposed by new scholar. The unique of this postmodernity from modernity is that postmodernity stands for superficial, provisional, fragmentation and difference. Some of these are revolutionary in character. The notion of postmodernist is that there is nothing real in the neither society nor truth. When Soviet Union was disintegrated some scholar like Fukuyama declared the end of ideology while declaring the victory of capitalist ideology. But some socialist thinkers like Lyotard and Rorty including Foucault were of the opinion that socialist ideology was in a stress period. This vacuum in ideology tussle, there emerge the postmodern ideology which reject all classical and modern ideology for the welfare and progress of the society.

Modern political ideology was based on the utopian ideology and totality as terroristic while searching for the new style of life as a different as possible from each other. Postmodern political thought rejected the grand theory of totalizing theory. It means that rejection the western or European model as a world system. Postmodernism is largely a form of apolitical individualism which emphasizes transformation of values and lifestyles while rejecting the traditional politics.

Postmodernism is deeply rooted in the struggles of new social movements and developments in contemporary political theory. These new social movements become transformed into 'identity politics' for example 'Black Lives Matters' and LGBT movements. Identity politics bears the influence of postmodern theory, which is evident in the critique of modern reductionism, abstract universalism, and essentialism as well as a use of multi-perspective strategies that legitimate multiple political voices.

## CHAPTER 5

### 5.1 Conclusion

Postmodernism is a broad movement that began in the latter half of 20<sup>th</sup> century making a departure from modernity. Postmodern social theory contributed much for the welfare of man and state. Postmodernism is associated with many theories and approaches. However, many sociologists accepted that postmodern social theory had deeply rooted in the age of enlightenment in Europe in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Most historians also considered the age of enlightenment as the age of reason which was a seed of renaissance, humanism and the recovery of classical thought in Europe from 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century. Postmodernism is a social theory characterized by a search for truth and reason. Postmodernism is a rejection of modernity which resulted in the rejection of institutional authority of religious, educational and economic. Postmodernism is defined by an idea of skepticism, a rejection of grand narrative of liberal, fascism and communism. In fact, Postmodernism is a theoretical framework to understand social phenomena which acclaimed that everything in the society are superficial and provisional. Postmodernism accepted that society is fully fragmented of different cultures and ethnics.

Postmodern social theory is deeply influenced by a French philosopher, post-structuralist and sociologist, Michel Foucault. He defines postmodernism in terms of discourse which is interpreted through power. His main interest lies in the knowledge

of human, and the power that acts on mankind. He said that power is knowledge which linked all the aspects of postmodernity. Foucault had rejected class analysis of power and also rejected the idea that power is ultimately located within the state. Foucault main interest was to find out positive knowledge which had shaped all human life. He was of the opinion that all knowledge was for the welfare of human being. Foucault believed that the history of man showed that knowledge became a tool to subordinate the individual. Thus, he tried to establish that knowledge, truth and power are related each other in all aspect of life.

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The Indian political system also deep rooted in modernization of western country since the British introduced the new form of government in all over India including the North East India of Mizoram. Since then Mizoram, this had been in traditional culture also shifted in the direction of Modernity; and followed by postmodernity. Postmodernity and modernity has its variants from country to country, state to state and society to society. Modernity of western countries included democracy, capitalism, state power, military and secularism. There is a clear cut separation of Church and State in the formation of government. The situation is different in India, since for Indian society the main challenge is politics of communalism, sati, caste, etc. The constitution of India, adopted in 1950 ushered Indian society towards Modernity. Then the pace of development and transition of society as a nationwide took a new shape i.e. Modernity. Eventually, contemporary

Mizo society can be said to have transformed itself into a postmodern society after almost one century in modernism with the onset of globalization in India. The advancement and development of tribal culture postulated western culture and identity in all sphere. Indeed, the globalization of Mizo society entails increased awareness of diverse cultures all over the world. This gives them an inspiration to break with their own local traditions and live the lives they choose. Subsequently, it expands acceptance of plurality and practicality among the Mizos. The plurality of Mizo culture can be attributed in the peaceful maintenance of different ethnic identity, culture and tradition within its state. The wave of modernity in Mizo society was co-terminus with identity movement which was evident in the isolationist tendency among mizo people from the mainland India. Eventually, the tribal identity was in transition with the western culture and traditions which is against the Hindu and Muslim culture and tradition. The clash of identity between the two claimed much life.

. Besides, Peaceful coexistence's mutual understanding among different cultures in Mizo society is a specimen which condones the tenets of postmodernism. Moreover, Mizo society has been drawn closer to other societies as a result of international trade and electronic mass media that linked different societies of the world. International trade among Mizo is not a new concept, the traditional practices of barter system with British was a terminus a quo with postmodern international trade among Mizo. The modern trade practices between Mizo and Burmese also widen the pluralistic idea among Mizo. The augmented digital development expands the traditional orthodoxy in the culture of Mizo in marriage, eating habits,

occupation, lifestyle and dresses. Thus, the process of globalization assists to swift transformation and quantum leap on diverse international facets in the Mizo society.

In this context the Mizo society had enjoyed a certain level of postmodernity. As such postmodernity in Mizo society is a complex phenomenon; a dilemma of change from the old traditional to a new pluralistic form of society. In addition, the evolving contemporary pluralistic Mizo society with its pluralistic ethos and skepticism exhibits a trend where power seems to emanate from everywhere. In this regard, Foucault's analysis of postmodernism through his concept of power/knowledge relationship can be juxtaposed in our analysis of Mizo society. Even though Mizo society is unfledged as compare to most of Indian society and western country, Mizo society expresses the notion of postmodernism.

Traditionally, Mizo society was characterized by the practices of animism and other primitive orthodox practices. Tribalism, nomadic life, head hunting culture and the practices of primitive way of life is the best explanation of that time. The chief of the village enjoyed supreme power. He was not only supreme in his territory but also in upon his villagers and their property. He was assisted by his council of elders or 'Upa' who shared this power; they were the high class or caste in their territory. The commoners or Hnamchawm lived a miserable life. They could not raise their voice against the Chief and the Elders; they live completely under the supreme reign of the chief. The British introduced not only democracy, modern economic system but also modern culture and education. They abolished chieftainship, animism, orthodoxy, blind faith and backward socio-economic system. The knowledge of western culture instilled a thirst for civilized culture in which

power is shared and enjoyed by all. This significantly contributed in the awakening of the socio-economic and political consciousness of the Mizo's which eventually resulted in the evolution of a political movement in the early years of India's independence. In this instance the evolution of multifaceted sources of power is realized indicating that power emanates from below. The knowledge of people's power in democratic society is the basic foundation of republic which eventually leads to raise charismatic leader from the commoners.

Eventually, contemporary Mizo society can be said to have transformed itself into a postmodern society after almost one century in modernism with the onset of globalization in India. The advancement and development of tribal culture postulated western culture and identity in all sphere. Indeed, the globalization of Mizo society entails increased awareness of diverse cultures all over the world. This gives them an inspiration to break with their own local traditions and live the lives they choose. Subsequently, it expands acceptance of plurality and practicality among the Mizos. The plurality of Mizo culture can be attributed in the peaceful maintenance of different ethnic identity, culture and tradition within its state. The dominant Mizo culture did not oppress the smaller ethnic cultures of the Lai, Mara, Chakma and other minor identity.

Mizo society transforms itself from traditional to modern, which is followed by postmodern within a short span of time. There also a paradigm shifts in value and norms of Mizo which is the result of postmodernism. The heresy of culture which was an imitation of western culture sets its seed on the mind of Mizo. The values and

ethos of political behavior that affected the power structure in the political process among Mizo also took a new shape in contemporary time. The voting behavior also changes since postmodernism has imparted a new seeds of knowledge among Mizo which transform political outlook. During and after statehood, people were thirst for power for their own political party. It is said that people shall cast their vote to their own party even dog or pig was a candidate. The present situation is far away from that stranded ideas of the past, imputation and accuse were proof by the people themselves through their knowledge. Thus, it affected the power culture, power system of Mizo political scenario of these days.

There is no class war or social formation has undergone a massive change due to capitalism and globalization. During and after the formation of the state of Mizoram, regionalism had been the main problems. Since BNLF and Hmar People Conference were opined that new state or autonomous areas should be carved out from the Mizoram for their respective ethnic group. But, after the peace treaty between the two with Mizoram government has further made postmodernism on the onset of globalization in Mizoram.

The system approach of sexuality upon politics also rooted in the Mizoram. There would be a time when LGBT saturate the politics of Mizo. By globalization and mass media the rights of LGBT gained more priority than before. Their voices were bigger even after the delivery of historical verdict that decriminalized homosexuality by Supreme Court of India which strike down 399IPC section on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Social media were the instruments which were popularly used by the third gender to raise their voices against society. During modern days, it was

ashamed of being third gender, but the case has changed not only society but also the politics. Modernity of Mizoram experienced discrimination upon the races when Burmese people were forced to leave Mizoram. But postmodern Mizoram experienced the hospitality of Burmese people these days. Critics claimed during the period of modernity in Mizoram, the Burmese people were illegally entering Mizoram. But the situation of postmodernity of Mizoram illegally helped refugees of Burmese these days even though they are not accepted by Gov't of India as refugees. As Foucault claimed one of the truths is that sex, Mizo believed that the Chin people of Mizo as same race and regarded as brothers. While accepting foreigners some of Mizo still neglected Chakma as foreigners. The gene of Mizo got priority in the politics of Mizo which is clear from the records of Mizoram general assembly election till today. Each national party inside Mizoram adapt themselves to suit the culture and traditions of Mizoram. For instance, Hindu based party like BJP in Mizoram have their own Christian Missionary Cell in 23<sup>rd</sup> (Wednesday) July 2019 which is regarded as against the ideology and philosophy of BJP.

Modern political ideology was based on the utopian ideology and totality as terroristic while searching for the new style of life as a different as possible from each other. Postmodern political thought rejected the grand theory of totalizing theory. It means that rejection the western or European model as a world system. Postmodernism is largely a form of apolitical individualism which emphasizes transformation of values and lifestyles while rejecting the traditional politics. Postmodernism is deeply rooted in the struggles of new social movements and developments in contemporary political theory. These new social movements

become transformed into 'identity politics' for example 'Black Lives Matters' and LGBT movements. Identity politics bears the influence of postmodern theory, which is evident in the critique of modern reductionism, abstract universalism, and essentialism as well as a use of multi-perspective strategies that legitimate multiple political voices.

Foucault Power-Knowledge relationship is a binary concept in which society is examined through psychiatry and penal institutions. Foucault did not agree with society's view. For Foucault, people do not have a real identity within themselves; that is just a way of talking about person- a discourse. An identity is communicated to others in your interactions with them, but it can shift; it is not fixed. It is an impermanent feature. He is of the opinion that people did not have power unreservedly; instead, power is a technique or action, which individuals can engage in. According to him, there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations. Thus, looking in the three stages of Mizo society, there prevails power knowledge relationship, which is culminated into postmodern society. According to Michel Foucault, Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategically situation in a particular society. He is of the opinion that people of postmodern society live in a web of power relations. The prelude, that Foucault proposition of power is inequality based on the knowledge of how to exercise power.

Michel Foucault is suggesting that power is not a tool that individuals or groups of people use; rather we are the tools of power. In his analysis, power becomes the subject or agent of history. You may be not far off to say that he anthropomorphizes to power. Foucault is of the opinion that there is no outside to power. For him, we cannot escape it; we are always embedded in the web of power relations. From traditional institution of chieftainship and their knowledge to forge power in order to dominate not only the discourse of their domination but also other area through their knowledge; in which anyone cannot escape from it. The institution of chieftainship is anthropomorphism of power upon the chiefs, which served the institution of prisons and mental institution during the French Revolution. In Foucault analysis of prison and psychiatric institution, Foucault claimed the knowledge authority steals the power of people. Thus, his further study revealed that power and knowledge is related in the society, which helps to develop into a postmodern society. The struggle for power, the resistance of power and the thirst for power in democratic form of governments have related each other, which enabled the society to develop into a post-modern society. In the light of this clarification we can easily claimed that Mizoram is a post-modern society. In this context the Mizo society had enjoyed a certain level of postmodernity.



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## BIO DATA OF CANDIDATE

Name : Ramengliana

Course : Mphil

Registration No : MZU/M.phil./618 of 12.06.2020

Date of Birth : 9<sup>th</sup> August 1994

Address : Model Veng, Hnahthial

Contact : 9366211341/8013359018

Email ID : ramengliana62@gmail.com

**POSTMODERNISM IN MIZORAM: A STUDY OF MITCHEL FOUCAULT'S  
POWER KNOWLEDGE RELATIONSHIP IN THE CONTEXT OF MIZO SOCIETY**

**ABSTRACT**

**Introduction:**

Sociologists of different ages had undertaken the study of society in different dimensions which resulted in new and varied theories. These studies usually describe the development of society into various phases. Each of these phases marked the development and progress of each society. These phases were traditional, modern and postmodern. The study of these phases paved a foundation for welfare of human beings. Sociologists accepted that most of the world society had gone through Traditional and modern phase of development; and claimed contemporary society as a postmodern phase which rejects principles of the earlier phases.

Thus, sociologists focus on the theory which could study society over the world. Their efforts had benefited different societies in solving diverse problems from individual freedom to prevention of war between states. But there is no unity among sociologist which resulted in the emergence of various theories ranging from liberal to Marxist, and far right of Nazism. These theories had been the main approach for the study of society. These different approaches made an endless debate among the social thinkers.

The debate among sociologists reached its vertex when the two World Wars broke out in the early and middle 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, sociologists began to focus on a tussle between the notion of liberal and Marxist. But they accepted that their study of society had reached a modern phase in the middle of 20<sup>th</sup> century. The modern society was benefited by elites and high-ups of society which in turn came to oppress the poor and the downtrodden. The Great Depression of Europe in 20<sup>th</sup> century proved that the liberal and Marxist ideas were

redundant to solve the economy of European society and states. In this juncture, the Frankfurt school of Critical theory made its debut in the arena of Marxist-liberal debate for the development of society.

The Frankfurt School of Critical Theorist comprised of academicians, high intellectuals and political dissidents who condemned the contemporary socio-economic system of capitalism, fascism and communism of early half of 20<sup>th</sup> century. They proposed that social theory was irrelevant for determining the conflict, factionalism and reactionary politics in the latter half of 20<sup>th</sup> century by claiming the end of Modernity and beginning of postmodern society. They highlighted alternative path for realizing the socio-economic development of society and the nation. Thus, the Frankfurt school of critical theory gave a new theory and concept 'Postmodernism' for the study of contemporary society.

Postmodernism is a broad movement that began in the latter half of 20<sup>th</sup> century making a departure from modernity. Postmodern social theory contributed much for the welfare of man and state. Postmodernism is associated with many theories and approaches. However, many sociologists accepted that postmodern social theory had deeply rooted in the age of enlightenment in Europe in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Most historians also considered the age of enlightenment as the age of reason which was a seed of renaissance, humanism and the recovery of classical thought in Europe from 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century. Postmodernism is a social theory characterized by a search for truth and reason. Postmodernism is a rejection of modernity which resulted in the rejection of institutional authority of religious, educational and economic. Postmodernism is defined by an idea of skepticism, a rejection of grand narrative of liberal, fascism and communism. According to British sociologist, Anthony Giddens (1938), "Postmodernity is pluralistic and diverse". He is of the opinion that postmodern thinkers reject the opinion and theory propounded by classical thinkers who took their ideas and inspiration from the notion of history. In fact, Postmodernism is a theoretical

framework to understand social phenomena which acclaimed that everything in the society are superficial and provisional. Postmodernism accepted that society is fully fragmented of different cultures and ethnics.

Postmodern social theory is deeply influenced by a French philosopher, post-structuralist and sociologist, Michel Foucault. He defines postmodernism in terms of discourse which is interpreted through power. His main interest lies in the knowledge of human, and the power that acts on mankind. He said that power is knowledge which linked all the aspects of postmodernity. Foucault had rejected class analysis of power and also rejected the idea that power is ultimately located within the state. Foucault main interest was to find out positive knowledge which had shaped all human life. He was of the opinion that all knowledge was for the welfare of human being. Foucault believed that the history of man showed that knowledge became a tool to subordinate the individual. Thus, he tried to establish that knowledge, truth and power are related each other in all aspect of life.

Michel Foucault examined the French society from the 18<sup>th</sup> century by claiming the postmodern notion was there in French society during that time. His main aim was to find out the source of knowledge. For that he started investigating the different layer of civilization and French revolution which changed the French society once and for all. During that time French society was divided into three estate First Estate i.e. Clergy, Second Estate i.e. Noble and Third estate i.e. Commoner. One of the major causes of the French revolution was the oppression and discrimination of the commoner by the two higher classes. The two higher classes levied high taxes to commoner while exempting the two estates. The two high classes enjoyed in the midst of scandalous luxury and extravagance which resulted in the outbreak of the French revolution and the subsequent overthrow of the French monarch, Louis XVI. Besides the Seven Years' War against England devastated the French economy which resulted in high taxes levied on the commoners. In this respect Foucault was of the view that



with the rising consciousness of the masses the revolution was achieved which he defined in the form of consciousness as knowledge and the eventual exercise of power.

Foucault also believed that knowledge is a pre-condition for power which culminated into a postmodern state. He is of the opinion that in the present society truth is produced by the virtue of several forms of constraints. He claimed that postmodern society is fragmented into several cultures and uniqueness. Each society has its own truth and general politics of truth which is the type of discourse and made functions as true. Power and Knowledge are used to control society and state through discourse. Discourse means social institutions, the discipline and language. It is diffused everywhere in the society. Thus, Power is everywhere in society.

The tenets of Postmodernism as stated by Foucault exist in the Mizo society. The advent of the British in Mizoram had changed the culture and socio-economic system. The abolition of chieftainship was initiated by the British and brings the whole of Mizoram under one administrative unit. The abolition process of chieftainship was further accentuated by the formation of the first political party in Mizoram, the Mizo Union. Subsequently, the Mizo Union won the first Mizoram District Council General Election in 1951. In essence, power can be said to have emanated from the people in the process of this election. Indeed, the knowledge of modern culture affected the Mizos, which in turn shape their culture, politics and socio-economic perspectives.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The tenets of Postmodernism can be said to have taken a deep root in the societies of Europe and America. Many Sociologists were of the view that it emerged from the societal background of enlightenment. The structure of postmodernity is not uniform all, as there are different postmodern perspectives in this regard. Industrial revolution in Europe and America

in 18<sup>th</sup> century had left many people unemployed. Industrial revolution resulted in pollution and environmental decay. The consequences of lack of raw material resulted in colonial expansion and slave trading system. This inhuman treatment, oppression and mercenary ideal of western people worsen the modern state of European countries. It is in this background postmodernism emerged in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In India, perspective of postmodernity is quite contrasting to that of Europe and America. The countries of Europe and America had experienced democracy, industrial revolution and technological innovations much earlier. Their history and culture were much different from India. The technological innovations, justice, codified law, freedom, and equality were brought by British in India. Most sociologists credited the British for bringing modernity in India. India is a caste ridden society which is rooted in occupation, food habits, dress and marriage. Thus, modernity in India is benefited by the higher caste and group. However, principles of modernity and postmodernity is not a new thing to Indians as social reformer like Raja Ram Mohan Roy paved the way for modern society through his social organization, Brahmo Samaj. He was against the Brahmanism of Hindu culture in which the subaltern caste, Sudras had been treated as untouchable. Hindu practices of Sati, child marriage, occupation based on caste, dowry system, and joint family system were prevailed during this time which hinders India from modernity. Many social reforms took place due to his efforts. However, the concept of modernity and postmodernity in India gained momentum only after independence from colonial rule. The adoption of the Constitution in 1950 signifies that the power of democracy is consolidated in the hands of the people. The central essence of the Constitution such as equality, freedom, justice, and liberty are in a sense a strong indicator of the concept of Postmodernism enshrined in the Constitution.

Modernity in Mizo society can be said to have been brought by the British. Before the advent of the British, Mizo society was characterized by the practices of animism and other

primitive orthodox practices. The chief of the village enjoyed supreme power. He was assisted by his council of elders who shared this power. The commoners lived a miserable life. They could not raise their voice against the Chief and the Elders. The British introduced not only democracy but also modern culture and education. They abolished chieftainship, animism and backward socio-economic system. The knowledge of western culture instilled a thirst for civilized culture in which power is shared and enjoyed by all people. This significantly contributed in the awakening of the socio-economic and political consciousness of the Mizos which eventually resulted in the evolution of a political movement in the early years of India's independence. In this instance the evolution of multifaceted sources of power is realized indicating that power emanates from below.

Eventually, contemporary Mizo society can be said to have transformed itself into a postmodern society with the onset of globalization in India. The advancement and development of tribal culture postulated western culture and identity. Indeed, the globalization of Mizo society entails increased awareness of diverse cultures all over the world. This gives them an inspiration to break with their own local traditions and live the lives they choose. Subsequently, it expands acceptance of plurality and practicality among the Mizos. The plurality of Mizo culture can be attributed in the peaceful maintenance of different ethnic identity within its state. The dominant Mizo culture did not oppress the smaller ethnic cultures of the Lai, Mara and other minor identity. Besides, Peaceful coexistence, mutual understandings among different cultures in Mizo society is a specimen which condones the tenets of postmodernism. Moreover, Mizo society has been drawn closer to other societies as a result of international trade and electronic mass media that linked different societies of the world. International trade among Mizo is not a new concept, the traditional practices of barter system with British was a terminus a quo with postmodern international trade among Mizo. The modern trade practices between Mizo and Burmese also

widen the pluralistic idea among Mizo. The augmented digital development expands the traditional orthodoxy in the culture of Mizo in marriage, eating habits, occupation, lifestyle and dresses. Thus, the process of globalization assists to swift transformation and quantum leap on diverse international facets in the Mizo society.

In this context the Mizo society had enjoyed a certain level of postmodernity. However, there seems to be a conflict in the traditional values and ethos of the society which is still prevalent as against the emergent postmodern pluralistic ethos and skepticism. Inadvertently, the introduction of democratic form of government and modern education system on the other hand can be considered as an imitation of western ways of life which again can be considered as a cultural and identity assimilation. As such postmodernity in Mizo society is a complex phenomenon; a dilemma of change from the old traditional to a new pluralistic form of society. In addition, the evolving contemporary pluralistic Mizo society with its pluralistic ethos and skepticism exhibits a trend where power seems to emanate from everywhere. In this regard, Foucault's analysis of French society through his concept of power/knowledge relationship can be juxtaposed in our analysis of Mizo society. Similarly, in the political realm, the Constitution of India is an important landmark. It gave a Schedule Tribe status to Mizo under the Sixth Schedule which is a constitutional safeguard to protect the culture and identity of the people. This is in tandem with the Inner Line Regulation Act of 1873 which was instituted by the British. In a Postmodern perspective it can be considered as an impediment as this safeguards points towards exclusivity and negativity towards plurality which is the hallmark of Postmodernism.

Lastly, the political development in Mizoram can be considered as a process where there is an increase in the dominance of two political parties under a hegemonic leadership as against the concept of postmodernity in which the individual is considered as the essence of democracy.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

There are five objectives of the study. They are as follows:

1. Study the values and ethos of the traditional Mizo society that is still prevalent as against the postmodern pluralistic ethos and skepticism.
2. Analyze the norms and values in Mizo society that can be regarded as an impact of British colonialism.
3. Examine the process of transition of Mizo society through the concept of Michel Foucault's power/knowledge relationship.
4. Evaluate the constitutional safeguard that can be regarded as a hurdle towards further integration into the mainstream political identity.
5. Analyze the hegemonic dominance of two political party in Mizoram in the context Postmodernism.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The proposed study has five research questions, they are as follows:

1. What are the traditional values and ethos of the Mizo society that is still prevalent as against the postmodern pluralistic ethos and skepticism?
2. What are the norms and values in Mizo society that can be regarded as an impact of British colonialism?
3. How is the process of transition of Mizo society enacted/accentuated through the concept of Michel Foucault's power/knowledge relationship?
4. What is the constitutional safeguard for Mizo which can be regarded as a hurdle towards further integration to the mainstream political identity?
5. What is the hegemonic dominance of two political parties in Mizoram in the context Postmodernism?

## **METHODOLOGY**

Mixed method methodology is used for conducting the propose research. Both primary and secondary data will be used to study the proposed research. The primary data will be collected through observation, case study and questionnaire. In observation, naturalistic observation will be used that includes observing involves studying the immediate behavior of participants in natural surroundings. Case study will be exploited for digging the layer of events that will be helpful for proposed study. Questionnaire will also be used for collecting primary data from potential respondents. Besides, primary data will include relevant documents and reports of government. Secondary data will include Articles, Journals, magazine and books.

The data collected from both sources will be analyzed by mixing both quantitative and qualitative to assess the postmodern condition in Mizo society and power knowledge relation in Mizo society.

### **Chapterisation**

CHAPTER I. **Introduction:** The first chapter introduced the concept of Postmodernism as well as the rise of Critical Theory.

CHAPTER II. **Traditional Norms and Values of Mizo Society in the Context of Postmodernism:** This chapter examined traditional norms and values of the Mizo society. The impact of British colonialism and the Constitutional safeguards included in the Constitution of India will be examined in this chapter.

CHAPTER III **Power/Knowledge Relationship in Mizo Society:** This chapter discussed and analyze Foucault's concept of power/knowledge relationship as a

medium for the interpretation of the transition of Mizo society from traditional to Postmodernity.

**CHAPTER IV Political development in Mizoram:** This chapter evaluated the political development of Mizoram after statehood and the dominance of the two political parties under its hegemonic leadership as against the concept of Postmodernity.

**CHAPTER V Conclusion:** The last chapter summarized the study which will include findings of the research work.

## **Conclusion**

Postmodernism is a broad movement that began in the latter half of 20<sup>th</sup> century making a departure from modernity. Postmodern social theory contributed much for the welfare of man and state. Postmodernism is associated with many theories and approaches. However, many sociologists accepted that postmodern social theory had deeply rooted in the age of enlightenment in Europe in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Most historians also considered the age of enlightenment as the age of reason which was a seed of renaissance, humanism and the recovery of classical thought in Europe from 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century. Postmodernism is a social theory characterized by a search for truth and reason. Postmodernism is a rejection of modernity which resulted in the rejection of institutional authority of religious, educational and economic. Postmodernism is defined by an idea of skepticism, a rejection of grand narrative of liberal, fascism and communism. In fact, Postmodernism is a theoretical framework to understand social phenomena which acclaimed that everything in the society are superficial and provisional. Postmodernism accepted that society is fully fragmented of different cultures and ethnics.

Postmodern social theory is deeply influenced by a French philosopher, post-structuralist and sociologist, Michel Foucault. He defines postmodernism in terms of discourse which is interpreted through power. His main interest lies in the knowledge of human, and the power that acts on mankind. He said that power is knowledge which linked all the aspects of postmodernity. Foucault had rejected class analysis of power and also rejected the idea that power is ultimately located within the state. Foucault main interest was to find out positive knowledge which had shaped all human life. He was of the opinion that all knowledge was for the welfare of human being. Foucault believed that the history of man showed that knowledge became a tool to subordinate the individual. Thus, he tried to establish that knowledge, truth and power are related each other in all aspect of life.

In fact, the notion of postmodern politics was already started in the western country during the 1960s to 1970s where new ideologies were proposed by new scholar. The unique of this postmodernity from modernity is that postmodernity stands for superficial, provisional, fragmentation and difference. Some of these are revolutionary in character. The notion of postmodernist is that there is nothing real in the neither society nor truth. When Soviet Union was disintegrated some scholar like Fukuyama declared the end of ideology while declaring the victory of capitalist ideology. But some socialist thinkers like Lyotard and Rorty including Foucault were of the opinion that socialist ideology was in a stress period. This vacuum in ideology tussle, there emerge the postmodern ideology which reject all classical and modern ideology for the welfare and progress of the society.

Modern political ideology was based on the utopian ideology and totality as terroristic while searching for the new style of life as a different as possible from each other. Postmodern political thought rejected the grand theory of totalizing theory. It means that rejection the



western or European model as a world system. Postmodernism is largely a form of apolitical individualism which emphasizes transformation of values and lifestyles while rejecting the traditional politics. Postmodernism is deeply rooted in the struggles of new social movements and developments in contemporary political theory. These new social movements become transformed into 'identity politics' for example 'Black Lives Matters' and LGBT movements. Identity politics bears the influence of postmodern theory, which is evident in the critique of modern reductionism, abstract universalism, and essentialism as well as a use of multi-perspective strategies that legitimate multiple political voices.

The Indian political system also deep rooted in modernization of western country since the British introduced the new form of government in all over India including the North East India of Mizoram. Since then Mizoram, this had been in traditional culture also shifted in the direction of Modernity; and followed by postmodernity. Postmodernity and modernity has its variants from country to country, state to state and society to society. Modernity of western countries included democracy, capitalism, state power, military and secularism. There is a clear cut separation of Church and State in the formation of government. The situation is different in India, since for Indian society the main challenge is politics of communalism, sati, caste, etc. The constitution of India, adopted in 1950 ushered Indian society towards Modernity. Then the pace of development and transition of society as a nationwide took a new shape i.e. Modernity. Eventually, contemporary Mizo society can be said to have transformed itself into a postmodern society after almost one century in modernism with the onset of globalization in India. The advancement and development of tribal culture postulated western culture and identity in all sphere. Indeed, the globalization of Mizo society entails increased awareness of diverse cultures all over the world. This gives them an inspiration to break with their own local traditions and live the lives they choose.

Subsequently, it expands acceptance of plurality and practicality among the Mizos. The plurality of Mizo culture can be attributed in the peaceful maintenance of different ethnic identity, culture and tradition within its state. The wave of modernity in Mizo society was co-terminus with identity movement which was evident in the isolationist tendency among mizo people from the mainland India. Eventually, the tribal identity was in transition with the western culture and traditions which is against the Hindu and Muslim culture and tradition. The clash of identity between the two claimed much life.

. Besides, Peaceful coexistence's mutual understanding among different cultures in Mizo society is a specimen which condones the tenets of postmodernism. Moreover, Mizo society has been drawn closer to other societies as a result of international trade and electronic mass media that linked different societies of the world. International trade among Mizo is not a new concept, the traditional practices of barter system with British was a terminus a quo with postmodern international trade among Mizo. The modern trade practices between Mizo and Burmese also widen the pluralistic idea among Mizo. The augmented digital development expands the traditional orthodoxy in the culture of Mizo in marriage, eating habits, occupation, lifestyle and dresses. Thus, the process of globalization assists to swift transformation and quantum leap on diverse international facets in the Mizo society.

In this context the Mizo society had enjoyed a certain level of postmodernity. As such postmodernity in Mizo society is a complex phenomenon; a dilemma of change from the old traditional to a new pluralistic form of society. In addition, the evolving contemporary pluralistic Mizo society with its pluralistic ethos and skepticism exhibits a trend where power seems to emanate from everywhere. In this regard, Foucault's analysis of postmodernism through his concept of power/knowledge relationship can be juxtaposed in our analysis of Mizo society. Even though Mizo society is unfledged as compare to most of Indian society and western country, Mizo society expresses the notion of postmodernism.

Traditionally, Mizo society was characterized by the practices of animism and other primitive orthodox practices. Tribalism, nomadic life, head hunting culture and the practices of primitive way of life is the best explanation of that time. The chief of the village enjoyed supreme power. He was not only supreme in his territory but also in upon his villagers and their property. He was assisted by his council of elders or 'Upa' who shared this power; they were the high class or caste in their territory. The commoners or Hnamchawm lived a miserable life. They could not raise their voice against the Chief and the Elders; they live completely under the supreme reign of the chief. The British introduced not only democracy, modern economic system but also modern culture and education. They abolished chieftainship, animism, orthodoxy, blind faith and backward socio-economic system. The knowledge of western culture instilled a thirst for civilized culture in which power is shared and enjoyed by all. This significantly contributed in the awakening of the socio-economic and political consciousness of the Mizo's which eventually resulted in the evolution of a political movement in the early years of India's independence. In this instance the evolution of multifaceted sources of power is realized indicating that power emanates from below. The knowledge of people's power in democratic society is the basic foundation of republic which eventually leads to raise charismatic leader from the commoners.

Eventually, contemporary Mizo society can be said to have transformed itself into a postmodern society after almost one century in modernism with the onset of globalization in India. The advancement and development of tribal culture postulated western culture and identity in all sphere. Indeed, the globalization of Mizo society entails increased awareness of diverse cultures all over the world. This gives them an inspiration to break with their own local traditions and live the lives they choose. Subsequently, it expands acceptance of plurality and practicality among the Mizos. The plurality of Mizo culture can be attributed in the peaceful maintenance of different ethnic identity, culture and tradition within its state.

The dominant Mizo culture did not oppress the smaller ethnic cultures of the Lai, Mara, Chakma and other minor identity.

Mizo society transforms itself from traditional to modern, which is followed by postmodern within a short span of time. There also a paradigm shifts in value and norms of Mizo which is the result of postmodernism. The heresy of culture which was an imitation of western culture sets its seed on the mind of Mizo. The values and ethos of political behavior that affected the power structure in the political process among Mizo also took a new shape in contemporary time. The voting behavior also changes since postmodernism has imparted a new seeds of knowledge among Mizo which transform political outlook. During and after statehood, people were thirst for power for their own political party. It is said that people shall cast their vote to their own party even dog or pig was a candidate. The present situation is far away from that stranded ideas of the past, imputation and accuse were proof by the people themselves through their knowledge. Thus, it affected the power culture, power system of Mizo political scenario of these days.

There is no class war or social formation has undergone a massive change due to capitalism and globalization. During and after the formation of the state of Mizoram, regionalism had been the main problems. Since BNLF and Hmar People Conference were opined that new state or autonomous areas should be carved out from the Mizoram for their respective ethnic group. But, after the peace treaty between the two with Mizoram government has further made postmodernism on the onset of globalization in Mizoram.

The system approach of sexuality upon politics also rooted in the Mizoram. There would be a time when LGBT saturate the politics of Mizo. By globalization and mass media the rights of LGBT gained more priority than before. Their voices were bigger even after the

delivery of historical verdict that decriminalized homosexuality by Supreme Court of India which strike down 399IPC section on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Social media were the instruments which were popularly used by the third gender to raise their voices against society. During modern days, it was ashamed of being third gender, but the case has changed not only society but also the politics. Modernity of Mizoram experienced discrimination upon the races when Burmese people were forced to leave Mizoram. But postmodern Mizoram experienced the hospitality of Burmese people these days. Critics claimed during the period of modernity in Mizoram, the Burmese people were illegally entering Mizoram. But the situation of postmodernity of Mizoram illegally helped refugees of Burmese these days even though they are not accepted by Gov't of India as refugees. As Foucault claimed one of the truths is that sex, Mizo believed that the Chin people of Mizo as same race and regarded as brothers. While accepting foreigners some of Mizo still neglected Chakma as foreigners. The gene of Mizo got priority in the politics of Mizo which is clear from the records of Mizoram general assembly election till today. Each national party inside Mizoram adapt themselves to suit the culture and traditions of Mizoram. For instance, Hindu based party like BJP in Mizoram have their own Christian Missionary Cell in 23<sup>rd</sup> (Wednesday) July 2019 which is regarded as against the ideology and philosophy of BJP.

Modern political ideology was based on the utopian ideology and totality as terroristic while searching for the new style of life as a different as possible from each other. Postmodern political thought rejected the grand theory of totalizing theory. It means that rejection the western or European model as a world system. Postmodernism is largely a form of apolitical individualism which emphasizes transformation of values and lifestyles while rejecting the traditional politics. Postmodernism is deeply rooted in the struggles of new social movements and developments in contemporary political theory. These new social movements become transformed into 'identity politics' for example 'Black Lives Matters'

and LGBT movements. Identity politics bears the influence of postmodern theory, which is evident in the critique of modern reductionism, abstract universalism, and essentialism as well as a use of multi-perspective strategies that legitimate multiple political voices.

Foucault Power-Knowledge relationship is a binary concept in which society is examined through psychiatry and penal institutions. Foucault did not agree with society's view. For Foucault, people do not have a real identity within themselves; that is just a way of talking about person- a discourse. An identity is communicated to others in your interactions with them, but it can shift; it is not fixed. It is an impermanent feature. He is of the opinion that people did not have power unreservedly; instead, power is a technique or action, which individuals can engage in. According to him, there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations. Thus, looking in the three stages of Mizo society, there prevails power knowledge relationship, which is culminated into postmodern society. According to Michel Foucault, Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategically situation in a particular society. He is of the opinion that people of postmodern society live in a web of power relations. The prelude, that Foucault proposition of power is inequality based on the knowledge of how to exercise power.

Michel Foucault is suggesting that power is not a tool that individuals or groups of people use; rather we are the tools of power. In his analysis, power becomes the subject or agent of history. You may be not far off to say that he anthropomorphizes to power. Foucault is of the opinion that there is no outside to power. For him, we cannot escape it; we are always embedded in the web of power relations. From traditional institution of chieftainship and their knowledge to forge power in order to dominate not only the discourse of their domination but also other area through their knowledge; in which anyone cannot escape from

it. The institution of chieftainship is anthropomorphism of power upon the chiefs, which served the institution of prisons and mental institution during the French Revolution. In Foucault analysis of prison and psychiatric institution, Foucault claimed the knowledge authority steals the power of people. Thus, his further study revealed that power and knowledge is related in the society, which helps to develop into a postmodern society. The struggle for power, the resistance of power and the thirst for power in democratic form of governments have related each other, which enabled the society to develop into a post-modern society. In the light of this clarification we can easily claimed that Mizoram is a post-modern society. In this context the Mizo society had enjoyed a certain level of postmodernity.

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