

**UTOPIAN ELEMENTS IN THE FICTION OF
C. | HUAMLUAIA**

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UTOPIAN ELEMENTS IN THE FICTION OF C. | HUAMLUAIA

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DECLARATION

I, Lalnunpuia, hereby declare that the subject matter of this dissertation, “Utopian Elements in the Fiction of C. |huamluaia” is the result of the work done by me, that the contents of this dissertation did not form the basis for the award of any degree to me or to anybody else to the best of my knowledge, and that the dissertation has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University or Institute.

This is being submitted to Mizoram University for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in Mizo.

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Mr. Paul Lalremruata (1976-2012), my dear fellow scholar, a PhD scholar in the Department of Mizo, passed away on 10 December 2012. I was deeply moved by his death because he had been a close friend of mine and I regarded him as my elder brother. May his soul rest in peace.

Last, but not the least, I greet every reader of this dissertation with a warm welcome and happy heart. I wish this dissertation would prove a success in enriching and uplifting the literature of Mizo.

Dated Aizawl

The 18th December 2012.

(LALNUNPUIA)

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CHAPTER - I

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF MIZO FICTION

According to Baldick, fiction is “the general term for invented stories, new usually applied to novels, short stories, novellas, romances, fables, and other narrative works in prose, even though most plays and narrative poems are also fictional.”(Oxford 96) Wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia defines: “Fiction is an imaginative form of narrative, one of the four basic rhetorical modes. Although the word fiction is derived from the Latin *finxio*, *finxere*, *finxic*, *fictum*, ‘to form, create,’ works of fiction need not be entirely imaginary and may include real people, places, and events.”

Even though fictions are works of imaginations, all imaginative or creative works are not fiction as “fiction is now used in general of the novel, the short story, the novella and related genres.” (Cuddon 320) Therefore, fiction is another genre which is different from drama and poetry, though both have fictional elements. It belongs to the genre of prose, and it has the nature of narration of which characters, plot, setting and diction (dialogue) are the elements.

The Mizo people have been tale-lovers since time immemorial. They have plenty of folk narratives including myths, folktales and legends. Since the Mizo forefathers did not have an alphabet and paper to have their different tales recorded, the tales had been orally passed and transmitted from time to time. In 1874, T.H.Lewin’s *Progressive Colloquial Exercises in the Lushai Dialect of the Dzo of Kuki languages with Vocabularies and Popular Tales* was published in which were included three of the Lushai (Mizo) folktales, *Chemtatrata*, *Lalruanga* and *Kungawrhi* (Khangte, *Thuhlaril* 102-103). These were the first tales ever recorded in a written form.

The Mizos did not have their own fictional writings before the coming of the first Christian missionaries in Mizoram. Rev. J.H.Lorrain (1871-1944) and Rev. F.W.Savidge (1864-1936), who were known as Pu Buanga and Sap Upa respectively, came as Christian missionaries to the soil of Mizoram on 11 January, 1894 (104). It was they who introduced the Mizo alphabet based on the Roman script and began translating hymns, Bible, and other literary works, and also published many other texts using the new alphabet. The new alphabet paved the way for the emergence of Mizo literature.

Forty second year after the introduction of Mizo alphabet, in 1936 (Lalthangliana, *Mizo* 306), Mizo fiction appeared as a literary form of novel. The first to appear was *Hawilopari*, and the writer was an eighteen year old young man called L.Biakliana. Biakliana wrote two fictional works, one a novel and the other a short story. Three other writers, Kaphleia, Lalzuithanga and C. |huamluaia followed the footsteps of Biakliana. Although their lives were short, these four writers contributed invaluable fictional works to Mizo literature, 5 novels and 21 short stories. They prepared the way for Mizo fiction which was gradually developing till today.

L.BIAKLIANA (1918-1941)

Biakliana was born in 1918 at Mission Veng, Aizawl. His father was Rev.Liangkhaia, one of the first hymn writers and theological writers. Biakliana passed Middle School Leaving Certificate at Aizawl, after which completed Matric (now HSLC) in 1936. While he was studying I.A. at Gauhati Cotton College in 1937, he was infected with TB (tuberculosis), the most dangerous and infectious disease of that time. As a result, he could not complete his education and he had to go home.

After getting a well treatment at Durtlang Hospital as well as at home, he was thought to be completely recovered. The result was that he went to Cherra with a view to theological education. But soon, three months later, he was again infected with the same disease, TB. After he got medical treatment at Shillong Robert Hospital, he died on 19 October 1941, and was buried in Robert Hospital cemetery.

During his short lifetime, L.Biakliana contributed much to Mizo literature, especially to poetry and fiction. Apart from his contribution to Mizo poetry, as Laltluangliana Khiantge proposed, he could be regarded as the “Father of Mizo fiction” (*Mizo Novel Golden Jubilee 1937-87 Souvenir* 157) because his two fictional works were the first and the second in the fiction of Mizo. His first fictional work, *Hawilopari* was written in a novel form, written in 1936. This novel had 29 chapters and 139 pages long in a condensed page format of *Biakliana Robawm* edited by Dr.Laltluangliana Khiantge in 2007. Laltluangliana Khiantge has remarked: “Though *Hawilopari* is the first novel of Mizo, the plot construction, characterization, and unity of the story has to be highly regarded. The author’s employment of Mizo language and his arrangement of appropriate words or clauses in their respective places were also excellent.” (Khiantge, *Biakliana* 25).

Hawilopari, the first novel of Mizo, is an interesting story. B.Lalthangliana said that this novel was a ‘historical novel’ and the setting of time covered about ten years, i.e., approximately before the beginning part of 1872 (*Mizo Literature* 308). The novel had love and friendship in its main themes. In the Mizo society, self sacrifice for friends against harmful enemies had been highly regarded and the most notable reward named ‘Chawimawina Nopui’ was often awarded to those whose bravery and strength had been sacrificed for others. In Biakliana’s novel

also, one of the important characters Zema sacrificed all of his time and even his life for his friends, Hminga and Liana, the two orphans.

The two orphans, Hminga and his younger brother Liana were ill-treated by their step-mother. Therefore, being upset and depressed, the two brothers made a plan to run away from their family, and their beloved older friend Zema agreed with them. Having had a farewell to their girlfriends in the forest, the four young lads namely Zema, Hminga, Liana and Chhana, a chief's son ran away wandering in the forest. They did not have any place to go, but went on and on in the forest. Their girlfriends at home, as were told, kept the secret of those four boys. The villagers searched for the lost four boys but failed to find them, and at last attributed the losses to 'khawmu chawi bo,' meaning that one of the spirits called 'khawmu' might have carried them away.

Four years later, the four young lads were recruited in the British army and they had been quickly promoted to the higher ranks by their British leader. In that time the Lushai raiders often came to their neighbouring areas inhabited by other tribes, they had the habit of killing many people and thereby plundering their wealth. This resulted to the first British expedition to the Lushai hills during 1871-1872. In this expedition, the four friends were also participated. Moving along the Tlawng River, the expedition party penetrated the Lushai hill. Somewhere in the Lushai hill, they wished to visit their long time parted village and see their beloved friends and families. They were fortunately permitted to fulfill their wish, and then decided to go home soon.

While staying away the four friends among the foreigners, Hawilopari and her friends were very faithful to them. Though many years had passed between them knowing nothing about themselves, the young lads and their girlfriends

faithfully waited the reunion. Hawilopari, in particular, suffered innumerable problems not only of family affairs but also of her personal enemies. She was loved by Khualluta, the village nobleman's son. Being dedicated herself to Hminga, Hawilopari refused to have marriage with Khualluta who afterwards defamed her by lying that he had sexual intercourse with Hawilopari. Hawilopari and her parents were very angry to the chief's court, because they were wrongfully defeated by Khualluta and his father, the accusers. Therefore, they migrated to other village at night with a heavy heart. Pari (Hawilopari) was hesitant to leave the village where she and her friends had lived happily, but now he had to leave for good and therefore left.

The four friends now reached the forest where they met Mawii and Ngaihi, their beloved friends; they saw them collecting firewood. Hminga became chaotic before and after he heard of the news of Pari's departure. Unfortunately, the two orphans saw their dead father when they returned home, their father was about to be buried when they entered the village. But their stepmother became penitent and had a new heart, and the family happily reunited. Chhana and Ngaihi wedded, and Mawii was also married to Liana, Hminga's younger brother.

Hminga felt very lonely as Hawilopari was no longer to be seen in the village. Therefore he decided to look for Pari and then secretly got off at night telling nothing about himself even to his bother. But when he reached Pari's new village, nothing was there as the enemies burnt almost everything in the village. The village had been invaded by the Pawi enemies, burnt the village, killed many and took others as captives. Hminga and twenty young man escapees quickly gave chase to the invaders. Zema, who belonged to the Pawi clan, rescued the captives and laid down his life for Hawilopari. The rescue party arrived and among them

was Hminga. The dying hero, Zema proposed the marriage between Hminga and Pari, and after hearing Pari's father's consent, he died of a great sacrifice. Thus ended the story.

The second fictional work of L.Biakliana, *Lali* was the second fictional work of Mizo. *Lali* was a short story, and the first prize winner in the story writing competition organized in 1939 or 1940 by Mizo Zirlai Pawl, and in this competition the theme should deal with women condition in the Mizo society ('Mizo hmeichhe chan') (Lalthangliana, *Ka* 192). As B.Lalthangliana noted, *Lali* was written in 1937 (*Ka Lungkham* 192) and the setting of time was during 1920 to 1940 (Lalthangliana, *Mizo* 310). The story was divided into four chapters and it was twenty four pages long as in the second edition (2007) of Dr.Laltluangliana Kiangte's *Biakliana Robawm*. Amazingly, both the first and the second fictional works of Mizo by L.Biakliana had by its title the maidens' names, i.e., *Hawilopari* and *Lali*.

Lali (the full title *Lalawmpuii*) was a Christian love story revealing the bad condition of women in the Mizo society of the time. In this story, the main character Lali who was a true Christian and a Sunday school teacher lived at a drunkard's family. Because of her father's drunken nature, she and her family members lived under a bad circumstance. Biakmawia who had been spending his nighttime at Lali's house since childhood fell in love with Lali. At the same time, Lali was also loved by Rozika who belonged to a well-to-do family. In order to have her a wife Rozika's parents sent messengers to Lali's parents for Lali. Lali's refusal made chaos in the family as her parents wanted her to marry Rozika. As a result, Lali's mother and younger brother Zuala fell a victim to Lali pa's violence of anger. Zuala was grievously hurt and died a few days later.

Lali's father was deeply moved by his dying son's words, "Dad, will you come to heaven?" The short words of Zuala completely altered the character of his father and had a new life since then. The death of Zuala exposed the value of Biakmawia to Lali's family. Therefore, about one year after the death of Zuala, there was a marital agreement between Lali and Biakmawia, and thus ended the story happily.

The first two fictional works belonged to one author, L.Biakliana. They were written in 1936 and 1937, having had a title of maidens' names. It was notable that the 23 years old Biakliana could write two important fictional works during his short lifetime. It was he who paved the way for Mizo fiction both in novel and short story. Therefore, as Dr.Laltluangliana Kiangte suggested, L.Biakliana could be called the "Father of Mizo Novel."

KAPHLEIA (1910-1940)

L.Biakliana was soon followed by Kaphleia who was a contemporary of the former. Kaphleia was born in 1910 at Thiak village, his father was Chhingvunga and his mother was Chuailovi. He loved reading and writing since his childhood, and he began writing his personal diary in 1931, and he recorded even the simplest things relating to his personal account in his diaries. Like his friend Biakliana, he was also infected with TB (tuberculosis) in 1937 while he was studying the second year of Intermediate Arts (now class xii). Getting back to Mizoram, he and his friend Biakliana were admitted in the Durtlang Hospital where they separately lived in 'Inte thawveng' (a lonely cottage). Here, both of them spent much of their time for writing and they produced a lot of literary pieces. They also published a manuscript magazine called 'Chhura Chanchin' regularly up to 20 volumes. When

he was 30, Kaphleia died in 1940; but, as he wished, his literary works survived and lived in the hearts of the Mizos.

Kaphleia was mostly known as the first essayist in Mizoram. He wrote 'Thlirtu' (the onlooker) in 1938, this essay was accepted as the first formal essay written by the Mizos (Khangte, *Thuhlaril* 130-131). He also wrote and translated many songs and poems. Besides, Kaphleia was a fiction writer who contributed a notable and important novel to enrich Mizo literature. His only and lonely novel, *Chhingpuii*, written in 1938-1939 (Lalthangliana, *Mizo* 310), was regarded as the third fictional work of Mizo. He wrote this novel based on a historical event told to him by some older people while he was at his own village, Tachhip.

Chhingpuii was an interesting novel. Like Biakliana's two fictional works, this novel was also titled a young maiden's name, Chhingpuii who could be said to be the heroine of the story. Chhingpuii and Kaptluanga lived in Buangtheuva's village. Kaptluanga, who was a great hunter and a prominent hero of the village, fell in love with a young beautiful maiden called Chhingpuii. Some young men were very jealous of Kaptluanga as they also loved Chhingpuii. Therefore, they cast a spell on Kaptluanga who now became an unhealthy man. Kaptluanga could not get well and had to spend all of his time at home. Therefore, he and Chhingpuii could never work together in the field. While Kaptluanga was staying at home every day, Chhingpuii had to follow the older people to the field to work. One day, Chhingpuii was beheaded by some enemies coming from their neighbouring village called Tachhip. When he heard of sad news, Kaptluanga was very angry but could do nothing because of his sickness. As life was nothing to him but sorrow and sickness, he shot himself dead.

Though Kaphleia contributed only one novel to Mizo literature, it is certain that we do not have to measure it by quantity but by quality. Many words were lost from the decaying original manuscript although it fortunately survived. But, the Mizos of today are fortunate enough to have such an interesting and touching novel contributed by Kaphleia.

LALZUITHANGA (1916-1950)

Born on 2 April, 1916 in Kulikawn (Aizawl), Lalzuithanga was a talented man in arts, i.e. literature, performing arts and fine arts. He passed Class VIII in Middle English at Aizawl. During his short lifetime, he worked at different posts, such as Fine Arts teacher in Aizawl Middle English School, Mizoram Labours, Indian Air Force, etc. He took keen interest in the Mizoram politics of his time. He suddenly died on 28 September 1950 in Monachera Tea Estate at Cachar at the age of 33.

During his 33 years, Lalzuithanga contributed 9 songs, 15 short stories, 2 novels and some plays to Mizo literature. He was not only the third fiction writer of Mizo but also was the first detective fiction writer. One of his two novels, *Thlahrang* was the first detective novel of Mizo, and it could be regarded as his masterpiece in literature. At the same time, his other novel, *Phira leh Ngurthanpari* was also a good and interesting novel pertaining to romance. As mentioned by *Thuhlaril*, his short stories were *Khawfing chat*, *Eng dang nge ni*, *Eng nge pawl*, *Aukhawk Lasi*, *Ka damchung leilawn chanve*, *Ka nu*, *Tumahina hriat loh tur*, *Min hriatreng nan*, *Tu thiam loh nge*, *Char huai i hlau lawm ni*, *Chawngi*, *Khawimu chawi*, *Kawla tlan zel rawh*, *Rina lohva uibuk sa*, *Hrangkhupa khua* (Khangte 132). The first four stories were compiled and published in 1983 in one book titled *Aukhawk Lasi* (132). Some of Lalzuithanga's fictional works like *Aukhawk Lasi*, *Thlahrang*, etc. could be classified as a Gothic literature.

Thlahrang, the first detective novel of Mizo, was an interesting novel. It was full of suspense. Like other Gothic novels, strange things happened in frightening places. Disguise played an important role in this novel, it hid the real nature of many incidents, and people took every strange happening for any ghost's deeds. But in reality, it was Kawla who disguised himself and haunted such places to frighten the people for his criminal action. The people in the story and the readers were not able to understand the real nature of the story till all was revealed by Kawla at the end of the story. Kawla sacrificed his life for Tawia, the protagonist of the story.

The other novel, *Phira leh Ngurthanpari*, was an interesting novel in which the hero, Phira, was characterized a man of extraordinary strength and courage. He fell in love with Ngurthanpari, a very beautiful maiden. War was an important theme and mass murder was prevalent in the story.

Lalzuithanga paved the way for detective and gothic fiction in Mizo literature. His fictional contribution was to be highly valued and measured both in quality and quantity. He wrote far more in number than the other writers who were included in the "Four Wheels of Mizo Fiction." The quality or value of his fictional works could never be measured; they were an important works which will survive in the field of Mizo literature.

C. |HUAMLUAIA (1922-1959)

C. |huamluaia was born in 1922 at Lungmam village; His parents were Lalnghinga and Darlianchungi. They migrated to Lunglei town in 1926 and lived there permanently. He completed Bachelor of Arts (BA) in 1950 from St. Edmund's College, Shillong. After his return to Lunglei, he joined the post of Assistant Headmaster of Lunglei High School, and when Ch.Saprawnga left the Headmaster's

post, |huamluaia occupied the Headmaster's post in 1952. But in March 1954 he went to Gauhati (now Guwahati) to study B.T. There he met two other major writers, Zikpuii Pa (K.C.Lalvunga) and Thanpuii Pa (J.Malsawma) with whom he contributed much to Mizo literature under a good environment. He later took up politics as a career and was elected Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) in 1957. Two years later, he died suddenly of headache on 29 May 1957.

Like L.Biakliana and Lalzuithanga, C. |huamluaia wrote both novel and short stories. He wrote as many as five short stories both in English and Mizowhich are *Sialton Official*, *Leitlang Dingdi*, *Pu Hanga Leilet Veng*, *The Disaster*, and *The Days That Followed*. He wrote, like Biakliana and Kaphleia, only one novel titled '*Engtin awm ta zel ang maw?*' His fictional works and essays possess highly artistic beauty and value. Nature and beauty are important elements in his works.

The uniqueness of the fictional works of C. |huamluaia lies in the fact that they possess some utopian elements. The setting of his fiction combines both real and imaginary worlds. It would not be an exaggeration to say that |huamluaia paved the way for utopian literature in Mizo. His short stories are coloured by utopian elements, especially *Engtin awm Ta Zel Ang Maw?* This novel was written in 1945 at Calcutta while studying in Scottish Church College (Vannghaka 2).

Sadly, the four pioneers of Mizo fiction, L.Biakliana, Kaphleia, Lalzuithanga and C. |huamluaia were all short-lived. But, during their short lives these 'Four Wheels' contributed as many as 26 fictional works to Mizo literature, a few essays and poetry.

After the four pioneers, fiction gradually developed. With the coming of Capt.C.Khuma (1914-1990), the publication of Mizo fictional works spurred up. One of his fictional works titled *Maymyo Sanapui* written in 1946 was published as a

separate book in 1950 with a particular cover design (Lalthangliana, *Mizo* 317). This was regarded as the first fictional work printed and published through printing press. Thus the novel marked a new chapter in Mizo literature.

Capt.C.Khuma also wrote other fictional works namely, *Hmangaih Thiamna* (1944), *Fahrah Nun* (1947), *Phuloh Zunleng* (1950), and *Chhingkhual Lungdi* (1952). These works were also published separately (317).

As B.Lalthangliana noted, the first four published fictional works in Mizo were printed in Burma (now Myanmar). The first step was taken by Capt. C. Khuma who published his novel titled *Maymyo Sanapui* in 1950 at Burma Union Press, Rangoon. The two fictional works of R.L.Rina, *Lungtiawii leh Parchuailova* and *Lungngaihna Virthli* were published in 1961 and 1962 respectively, both printed at Britannia Press, Maymyo. Later in 1970, the work of VZK (Zokima), *Pathian Samsuih* was also published and printed at Linn Press, Rangoon (*Ka Lungkham* 208).

The first printing press of Mizoram was donated to the Presbyterian Church of Mizoram in 1912 (ca) by CH.Loch after whose name the press was called “The Loch Printing Press” (Lalthangliana, *Ka* 209). But the press was not meant for printing secular literature but mainly for religious writings. Therefore, the first Mizo printing press was not useful for literary publication. But, private printing presses appeared after 1947 when R.Thanhlira ran his private press. Zoram Printing Press was established in 1950, and again, Khuma Printing Press was established in 1952 (210). Since then, a number of printing presses had been frequently established, and this paved the way for the publication of Mizo literature including fictional works. The first novel printed in Mizoram printing press was *Khawkil Bunghuai* by Darhlira in 1975, but the novel had been written in 1971 (210). By 1987, as B.Lalthangliana noted, 72 fictional works had been published (211).

Lalsiama (1923-2006) contributed two fictional works namely *Tlanthangi leh Lianhnuna* (1947) and *Lalruati leh Tlanzara* (1970). The latter work has not been published till today.

‘Zikpuii Pa’ is the *nom de plume* (pen name) used by K.C.Lalvunga (1929-1994) who, among the Mizos, was the first Indian Foreign Service (IFS). He was a poet, an essayist, and a fiction writer. Because of his invaluable contribution to Mizo literature, he was selected, among many other writers, as *Writer of the Century*, i.e. the century of 1900-2000. Zikpuii Pa wrote 12 fictional works namely, *Lalringa leh Thangzuali Hmangaihna Vanduai* (ca.1948), *Champhai Kawng Khualzin* (ca. 1948), *A Thurochhiah Chu Zawm Tlak A Ni*, *Mumangah Talin Aw*, *Lalremmawia*, *Curzon Road Hostel A-38*, *Lalramliana*, *Silvarthangi*, *Hostel Awmtu*, *C.C. Coy No.27*, *Kraws Bulah Chuan* and *Nunna Kawng\huam Puiah* (Lalthangliana, Mizo 318-319). Among them, the first five works were lost before publication, and *Lalramliana* was not completed, while *Curzon Road Hostel A-38* was not published (318). In 1994 the latter four fictional works mentioned above were compiled and published in one book titled *Lungrualna Tlang*, while the lastly mentioned work, *Nunna Kawng\huam Puiah*, an interesting novel was published in 1989.

Among the published fictional works, *Silvarthangi*, *Hostel Awmtu* and *Kraws Bulah Chuan* were short stories; *C.C. Coy No. 27* was a novella written in 1963 and first published in 1986; and his masterpiece, *Nunna Kawng\huam Puiah* was a novel published in 1989. Zikpuii Pa’s fiction lent a new perspective to Mizo fiction; it utilized the theme of struggle for survival in life which was clearly evident in some characters like Ralkapzauva in *C.C. Coy No. 27* and Chhuanvawra in *Nunna Kawng\huam Puiah*. Following the footsteps of L.Biakliana and Kaphleia, Zikpuii Pa often had the subject of women’s bad condition in Mizo society. In *Silvarthangi*,

the main character Silvarthangi lived in deplorable condition and she faced a lot of problems in her life.

An Important political movement called ‘Ram Buai’ (‘insurgency’ or ‘struggle for independence’) period began in Mizoram from 1966 and ended in 1986 with the elevation to the statehood. Violence curtailed the freedom of Mizos especially during 1966 to 1971. During this period the Lushai Hills (now Mizoram) had been in a state of total chaos, poverty and famine were prevalent, many houses were burnt down, paddy fields were devastated, and many people left their homes in towns or villages and took refuge in safer places. Therefore, life was not free in this dark period which resulted in a break in the writing and publication of not only fictional works but also other genres of literature. This period (1966-1971) could be called the “Dark Age of Mizo Literature.”

Since 1972 peace was gradually restored in Mizoram with the upgradation from District Council to Union Territory. Writers began to appear on the platform of Mizo literature. As K.C.Vanngaha noted, during 1970-1980, the Social Education Wing under Education Department published a number of volumes in short stories namely, *Khawkil Bung Huai* by Darhlira, *Khawfing Chahlai* by R.Zuala, *Khuarei Ram Zopui* by Selet Thanga, *Khawnglung Run* by Vanlalruata, *Fahrah Nun* by Khawlkungi, *Pathian Samsuih* by VZK (Zokima), *Zu Um A Keh Ta* by K.Saibela, *A Tlai Lutuk Ta* and *Sangi Rinawmna* by Khawlkungi, and *Ma Thanite Unau* by R.Lalchungnunga (Vanngaha 3).

In 1986, Mizoram was promoted from Union Territory to Statehood. With the peace settlement between the MNF and Government of India, there began a new environment for literature. Now, writers were free to write and express their thoughts. New writers also came out. The financial condition of the state became

improved day by day, people began to have more and more leisure to do what they liked, the improvement of educational system begat better generations, and they also became more and more in touch with outsiders and foreign literature.

Khawlkungi (b.1927) marked the beginning of women's involvement in Mizo literature. She contributed 66 fictional works till 2004 (Lalthangliana, *Mizo* 463). She began writing fiction at an early age of 19 in 1946, with *West Wind and East Wind*. Many of her early works were printed in Cyclostyle. Among her works, *Zawlpala Thlan Tlang* (1983), *Sangi Rinawmna*, *Fahrah Nun* and *Pasal Duhthlan* (1982) are better known. She also contributed a number of children's fictional works like *Hmanlai Mi Thianghlim Chanchin*, *Kan Chhehvel Hnamte Thawnthu*, *Thawnthu Za*, *Naupang Thawnthu Pasarih*, *Lal Fapa Leh Kutdawh* and others (463). Because of her invaluable contribution to Mizo literature, Khawlkungi was awarded Padma Shri in 1987 and Mizo Academy Award in 1998.

One of the prominent figures of Mizo literature, James Dokhuma (1932-2007) contributed a lot of fictional works other than prose works, drama and poetic contribution. Although he completed class V only in education, he could be said to be a learned man because of his unique quality. He was a good writer and an expert of Mizo language. He began writing in 1970 and procured big achievement in literature. He was awarded Academy Award by Mizo Academy of Letters in 1983, Padma Shri in 1985 and Bhasa Saman Award in 1997. James Dokhuma wrote about 14 novels (Lalthangliana, *Mizo* 464). Among them *Khawhar In* (1970), *Thla Hleinga Zan* (1970), *Ni Leh Thla Kara Leng* (1978), *Tumpang Chal Nge Saithangpuii* (1981), *Irrawady Lui Kamah* (1982), *Kimoto Syonora* (1984), *Gabbatha* (1989), *Rinawmin* (1992), *Goodbye Lushai Brigade* (1983), *Thla Hleinga Zan 2* (1999) and *Silaimu Ngaihawm* (1992) were his well-known works. He also

wrote a Cowboy novel titled *Lonesome Cowboy* which was published in 1990. Being an expert of Mizo language, he was highly appreciated with his employment of diction in his fictional works.

C.Hermana (b. 1937) is also a novelist apart from being politician. He writes prose works and a number of his books have been published. His published novels were *Vangkhawmawii - I* (1992), *Vangkhawmawii - II* (1993), *Vangkhawmawii - III* (1994), *Vangkhawmawii - IV* (2000), *Duatlai Marini* (1995), *Rairah Vangin - I & II* (1997), *Tleitir Hum Sual Dai - I & II* (1998), *Bahsamseihniangi* (1997) and *Country Girl - Lalhniangi* (2009). Many of C.Hermana's works are serial novels.

Lalzuia Colney who was born in 1937 at Farkawn village also wrote a famous novel titled *Lal Hlau Lo |hi* published in 1993.

The year 1937 saw the birth of a great novelist in Mizoram; it was Lalhmingliana Saiawi, an IAS retired. He is a famous essayist and a good novelist. His novels are *Lungrang Laiawrha* (1993), *Lungrang Hmangaihna* (1995), *Nukawki* (1996), *Keimah Union Liana* (1997), *Nukawki Fanu* (1998), *A Na Lua* (2002), and *Tawitawkawn Chemangi* (2006). He is unique for his unabashed treatment of sex and his economy of words.

The first man who acquired Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in Mizo fiction is H.Lallungmuana with a thesis titled *Themes and Technique of Mizo Fiction* in 1989. This marks a significant change for the development of Mizo fiction as it paves the way for a critical study of the same. Dr.H.Lallungmuana is not only connected with study of Mizo fiction, but also is deeply involved in fiction writing. His first novel, *Ram Leh I Tan Chauh*, written and published in 1995 was selected as 'Book of the Year 1995.' He has also written two other novels, *Hmangaih*

Zoramthangi (1996) and *Hara Kima* (2007). His three novels have 'love' as their main themes, and the major characters usually have unique natures and qualities.

During 1970-1980 C.Lianmawia also wrote and published three fictional works, such as *I Tan, Mami I Nun Ka Zir Lo A Ni* (1978) and *Hmangaihna Vang Em Ni?* (1980).

Among the major fiction writers of Mizo, Lalengmawia Ralte may be included. He began writing since 1969 and had written and published 24 fictional works, mostly short fiction. His well-known works had English titles such as *Honey Moon* (1985), *Eternal Bliss* (1985) and *Never Leave Me Alone* (1987). Among the Mizo titled works *I Tan A Tawk* (1980), *Beidawn Mai Lovah* (1981), *A Sawt Tawh Lo* (1981), *Kan Hlimna Tur* (1981), *Tihngaihna A Awm Ta Lo* (1982), *Tu Fa Nge?* (1986), *Eng Vang Nge?* (1989), *A Va Pawi Em!* (1989), *Khawngaihna Batu* (1990), *Aigupta Sabel* (1992), *Chhum Zinna Ram* (1995), *Enga'n Ka Lo Tawn Che* (1995), *A Tlo Lo* (1999), *Inneihna* (2002) and *Lelen Par* (2006) are his outstanding works.

Born in 1959, C.Laizawna began his career of writing at an early age of 23 in 1982. He wrote a number of novellas and novels. Most of his works were published in a smaller sized book with beautiful covers. His novellas included *Remi Leh Ruata* (1984), *Thuruk* (1985), *Hmangaihzi* (1985), *Lei Theih Loh Ruali* (1985), *Hmaithinghawn* (1985), *I Ta Ka Ni Si A* (1985), *Honeymoon* (1985), *In\hen Tawh Lo Turin* (1987), *Pari Zun* (1987), *Chhelna Rah* (1987), *Mittui Nen* (1988), *Duh Luat Vangin* (1989), *A Thlawn Mai Maw?* (1990), *Lala Dawhthlak* (1991), *|ah A |ul Leh |hin* (1991) and *Omnus* (1994). C.Laizawna wrote compound novellas *Chemte Thla*, which had a different sub-title in every book. They were *Chemte Thla -Zalen Hma Chuan* (1986), *Chemte Thla - Zungbun Chu* (1986), *Chemte Thla - Thani Tan* (1986), *Chemte Thla - Thir Thingrem Thuruk* (1986), *Chemte Thla - B-245S* (1986),

Chemte Thla - Zan Mak Tak (1986), *Chemte Thla - In Hrang* (1987), *Chemte Thla - Vehthlem* (1987), *Chemte Thla - Mittui Nen* (1988) and *Chemte Thla - Thih Leh Thih* (1988).

In addition to novellas, C.Laizawna also wrote a number of novels, two of which were selected as Book of the Year - *Hmangaihzuali* (1990) and *Anita* (1998). His other novels were *Zizyphus* (1990), *Ka Phal Lo* (1991), *K.S. Min Ti Maw* (1992), *Ka Thlang Zawk* (1993), *Remi Leh Ruata* (1994) and *Kan Tiam Tawh Si* (1996). Almost all of Laizawna's fictional works are love stories.

The legal conscious novels of C.Remtluanga (b.1951) introduced a new perspective in Mizo fiction. Being LL.B (Bachelor of Law), almost all of his novels are concerned with law and it seemed that he made his novels a campaign for legal awareness. His works included *Keimah Vang A Lo Ni* (1995), *Min Ngaidam Rawh* (1995), *Van A Duai Chuang* (1995), *Engan Ka Lo Tawn Che* (1995), *Fate Nu Atan* (1996), *Chhawrthla Eng Hnuaiiah* (1996), *Hlimna Kawl Eng* (1996), *Hrai Riangte* (1996), *A Pawi Zo Ta* (1997), *Ka Thlang Sual Nge* (1997), *Buaina Kara Hmangaihna* (1997), *Leng Rei Ta Sa Sa* (1997), *Inneih Present* (1998), *Tu Hrai Nge?* (1999) and *Tu Thah Nge?* (2000).

Beginning in 1996, Thankima (b.1963) also contributed 10 fictional works till 2011, such as *Lainattu Hmelma!* (1996), *Teirawlai* (1997), *Nun Ninawm* (1997), *Tleirawl Tuarchhel* (1997), *Tawn Loh Zuapa* (1998), *Damlaite Nunkhua* (1998), *Shillong Hotel* (2000), *Hlimna |hian* (2001), *Fanu Maltlat* (2003) and *Muantei Mizo Hindu* (2011).

The footstep of Khawlkungi has been followed by other women writers, but less in number than men writers. Among them, H.Lalngurliani (b.1951) is the most outstanding writer. Her fictional works include *Mang\ha Mai Aw Mama I & II* (1994),

Mary Lanzes (1996), *ihian Rinawm* (1998), *Lungawina Kim* (1999), *Zirtirtu |ha* (2000), *Rinawmna Rah* (2000), *Inneih Thilpek* (2000), *Thisena Thutiam Ziak* (2002), *Silai Aiah Hmangaihna* (2003), *Zorinpari* (Book of the Year 2004), and *Thudik Leh Saihlum A Nget Ngai Lo* (2009).

The other women writers, both major and minor, also contributed some fictional works (mainly novel) to Mizo literature. In 1986, K.Laldawngliani wrote *Mang\ha Ka Ti Phal Lo Che*. In 1991, two works by women authors were published, such as *Buaina Chhum Kara Ni Eng Mawi* by Lalringliani and *Ka Hmangaih Tlat Che* by Lalruali. Lalchhawnkimi's novel, *Zu Zuar Fanu* was also published in 1999. From 2000 to 2010, Romuanpuii Zadeng wrote 5 fictional works namely *Puk Dangdai* (2000), *Parfung Chawi* (2004), *Tainam Fa* (2007), *Hmangaihtu Leh Hmangaih* (2009) and *Tawksir (Di Rim A Nam)* (2010). In 2001, *Hmangaihna Chul Lo* by Lal Remsiami was published. Mafeli also contributed three novels such as *Confession* (2006), *Bawih* (2007) and *Nghilh Har Kan Tuar* (2010). Till 2011, C.Zolianpari have already written four fictional works namely *Hling Zinga Rose Par* (2007), *Nunhlui |ahna* (2007), *Hmangaihna Hi Ka Tan Hmelma* (2008) and *Beiseina Beidawnthlak* (2009). The other works and writers are *March 19 Part - I* (2006) by Linda Zorinpuii, *Rodang Hmel\hai* (2007) by Buangi Sailo, *Tuarna Phenah* (2007) by Rozamliani, *A Dang Si Lo* (2008) by Lalparmawii, *March 19 Part - II* (2008) by Linda Zorinpuii, *Hellai Di* (2009) by RTC Lalduhawmi, and *My Destiny* (2009) by K.Lalmuanpuii.

As mentioned earlier, detective novel was introduced into Mizo fiction by Lalzuithanga, one of the 'Four Wheels of Mizo Fiction.' Lalzuithanga's *Thlahrang* which was written in 1946 was published very lately in 1992. Lalzuithanga was followed by modern detective novelists like T.N.Vanlal\ana, Lianhluna Renthleii (Sena), Samson Thanruma, Lalpekkima, Lalchhuanawma Sailo and Lalchungnunga

(Machunga). In addition to these novelists, some writers also included detective parts in their novels. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's detective story, *Sherlock Holmes* had a great influence in Mizo detective fiction especially in the works of T.N.Vanlalana and Lianhluna Renthlei. Both these writers set their characters in the form of Sherlock Holmes and his associate, Dr.Watson. The pattern of plot construction also imitated that of *Sherlock Holmes*. T.N.Vanlalana wrote a number of the adventure stories of Sailokhawma, a famous fictional detective of Mizo, and the books were serialized with a title *Sailokhawma*. Every story had a sub-title and every story was a complete adventure.

Lianhluna Renthlei (Sena) also wrote three detective novels all of which had the main title *The Adventures of Din Din*. His first novel, *The Adventures of Din Din - I* was published in 2003; Part II and Part III were also published in 2005 and 2006 respectively. They were interesting novels which attracted the younger generation of Mizo-speaking world. Two of Samson Thanruma's novels, namely, *Hmaithinghawng Phena Inlarna* (2007) and *Sulhnu Hliam* (2009) are also interesting detective novels. |huamtea Khawlhring's *Detective Denga* (2005) is a detective novella and it was written with a view to humour and pleasure. The other fictional works like *Lungpuk Huai* (2009) by Lalpekkima, *The Lost Cemetery: Inrukbona Rapthlak* (2009) by Zonunsiam Ralte, *Rammutna Hautak* (2008) by Lalchhuanawma Sailo and *Inchona Dar* (1988) by Lalchungnunga (Machunga) may be classified as detective novels.

Mizo literature is not rich in utopian and dystopian fiction. C.|huamluaia was the pioneer of utopian fiction in Mizo. He was later followed by Lalsangzuala with a novel titled *Hun Awm Loh Hunah* (2008). Some of the Mizo Gothic fictional works contain some dystopian elements. Such works are *Khawkil Bunghuai* (1975)

by Darhlira, *Thlahrang* (1976) by Lalzuithanga, *Ruamrai Thuruk* (2007) by C.Lalnunchanga, *Lungpuk Huai* (2009) by Lalpekkima and *The Lost Cemetery: Inrukbona Rapthlak* (2009).

Lalrammawia Ngente has already written 5 novels and a number of short stories which are compiled in *Hringnun Hlimthla - 1 & 2*. His novels are very popular such as *Damlai Thlan Thim* (2005), *Hmangaihna Par* (2005), *Thlaler Pangpar* (2006), *Dan Rual Loh Hmangaihna* (2008) and *Rintei Zunleng* (2009). Lianhluna Renthleis also came out with a notable movement. His detective novels, *The Adventures of Din Din* part 1 to 3 and romance novels *Jojo Stop - I & II* were very popular in their respective times.

Three novels have also been contributed by C.Lalnunchanga, namely, *Ka Mi Huaisen Leh Ka Pasa\ha* (2005), *Pasa\hate Ni Hnuhnung* (2006) and *Ruamrai Thuruk* (2007). Besides, a collection of short stories titled *Vutduk Kara Meisi* was also published in 2011. One of the promising fiction writers of modern time is Samson Thanruma who has written *A Rei Ta Hle Mai* (2006), *Hmaithinghawng Phena Inlarna* (2007), *Lalrinawmi* (2008), *Sulhnu Hliam* (2009), *Beiseina Mittui* (2010) and *Priya Leh Kei* (2011). Darrokima's *Thih Sak Pawh Ka Ngam* (2007), *Thih Sak Pawh Ka Ngam 2* (2009) and *Gemini 13* (2011) are also popular novels which attract public interest. Recently, in 2010, Mafaa Hauhnar published his *Vaihna Var\ian*, a collection of short stories.

From 1970 onwards, Mizo fiction has been rapidly developing every year. As was incompletely recorded by *Mizo Novel Platinum Jubilee (1936-2011) National Seminar cum Workshop Hand Book*, 21 fictional works were written within 1970 to 1980, 68 works within 1981-1990, 112 works within 1991 to 2000, 142 works within 2001 to 2010 (Khangte 37-48). Every new decade brought out more and more

works. New writers also came out from time to time with new styles and techniques. Among the modern fiction writers Lalrammawia Ngente, Samson Thanruma, C.Lalnunchanga, Darrokima, Rozamliani, Romuanpuii Zadeng, Mafeli, RTC Lalduhawmi, Zonunsiana Ralte, P.C.Zalawra, Lalpekkima, Lalthangliana Sailo, T.N.Vanlalana and Lianhluna Renthlei are the most notable figures.

The modern fiction of Mizo has developed owing to a number of factors. First, the rapid progress of journalism gives an opportunity for writers to write and publish their fictional works in periodical magazines. It also inspires the young writers to write fictional works. A number of new short stories come out every week or every month through periodical magazines. Secondly, the development of Offset Printer gives a great thrust to the publication of new fictional books. Before the coming of an offset press, there were a few number of letter presses in Mizoram which did not satisfy the publication of new literary works. On the other hand, offset press produces a large number of works with better qualities and more impressive looks. Thirdly, Mizoram Publication Board, an important wing under Art & Culture Department has given financial assistance to a number of writers to publish their books every year. This wing helps many fiction writers to bring out their works from time to time. Fourthly, the State Library also contributes a lot to the development of Mizo literature including fiction. Marketing of books has always been a big problem in Mizoram owing to limitation in buyers. The Mizoram State Library under RRRLF (Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation) scheme has been selecting many books for purchase every year since a few years. This scheme provides a solution to marketing problem of new books. Fifthly, the Mizo Academy of Letters (MAL) annually selects 'Book of the Year' which provides a better opportunity for the popularity of Mizo fiction. Sixthly, modern writers live

under a better environment for writing. Many writers can read both Mizo and English fiction which are available in a number of bookstores.

Mizo Academy of Letters (MAL) has been selecting 'Book of the Year' (the best book published within a year) every year since 1989. Being primarily creative work, fiction has been the most common selection for this award. The first fictional work selected as Book of the Year was a novel titled *Hmangaihzuoli* written by C.Laizawna. Till 2012, as many as 23 books have been awarded Book of the Year, of which 13 books are fictional works, all in the form of novel. They are - *Hmangaihzuoli* (1990) by C.Laizawna, *|hangthar Taitesena* (1992) by Romawia, *Ram Leh I Tan Chauh* (1995) by Dr.H.Lallungmuana, *Anita* (1998) by C.Laizawna, *Chawngmawii leh Hrangchhuana* (2000) by R.Rozika, *Runlum Nuthai* (2002) by Capt.L.Z.Sailo, *Zorinpari* (2004) by H.Lalngurliani, *Damlai Thlipui* (2005) by Lalhriata, *Pasal\hate Ni Hnuhnung* (2006) by C.Lalnunchanga, *Chun Chawi Loh* (2008) by Lalhriata, *Rintei Zunleng* (2009) by Lalrammawia Ngente, *Beiseina Mittui* (2010) by Samson Thanruma, and *Zodinpuui* (2011) by Lalchhantluanga. This shows that fiction has now become the most important genre of creative literature in Mizo.

Since the beginning of Mizo written literature, translated works have been nourishing Mizo literature. Even before the birth of Mizo fictional works some allegorical novels were translated which taught the Mizo people the meaning and techniques of fiction. The first novel ever translated in Mizo was John Banyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* by Pastor Chuautera in 1908 as *Kristian Vanram Kawng Zawh Thu*, and was first published in 1910 (Lalthangliana, *Mizo* 148). Even the Bible which contained a number of true stories was translated which had a deep influence in some of the pioneering Mizo fictional works. Following the footsteps of

Pastor Nikhama who translated *Quo Vadis* and Lalkailuia who translated *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Pu Tawma In), a number of Mizo translators came out such as J.F.Laldailova, Lalsawia, R.Zuala, L.Thanmawii, K.Zachhunga, Khawlkungi, R.Lalrawna, P.L.Liandinga, Lalsangliana, B.Lalthangliana, James Lianmawia, K.Lalchungnunga, Tluangte Hnamte, R.Bawlliana, Revd.Lalramliana Pachuau, etc. Translation opened the window to western fictional works for Mizo readers.

Mizo fiction has yet to see emergence or development of different genres of fiction such as science fiction, fantasy fiction, horror fiction, mystery fiction, superhero fiction, thriller fiction, detective fiction, utopian fiction, dystopian fiction, etc. Most of the Mizo fictional works belong to the genre of Romance. It seems that writers have to step into other genres uncommon in Mizo fiction. Even children literature has also to be developed. But, Mizo fiction is still young, and it can be said to be rich as regard to its youthful of age. When in 2035, the hundredth anniversary, it is believed that as many as 1000 Mizo fictional works will be available in Mizoram.

CHAPTER - II

1. MEANING AND DEFINITIONS OF 'UTOPIA'

In 1516, Thomas More's influential fictional work, *Utopia*, was published. Its full title was a long one: *Libellus Vere Aureus, Nec Minus Salutaris, Quam Festivus, De Optimo Reipublicae Statu Deque Nova Insula Utopia* ("On the Highest State of a Republic and on the New Island Utopia") (*Encyc. Britannica* 315). It had great influences upon different fields of study in education, especially in both literature and political science. It has also become a text-book of Socialist propaganda (Adams 137). It was Thomas More who coined the word 'utopia' by developing it from Greek words. First, it can be a combination two words, *ou* meaning 'not' and *topos* meaning 'place.' Thus the two words in a combined form mean 'no place' or 'nowhere' and thus mean a place which does not exist in reality (*Encyc. Americana* 844). Secondly, 'utopia' can also be a combination of other words, *eu* meaning 'good' or 'well' and *topos* (place) (Wikipedia, *Utopia*). Thus, *utopia* can be said to be a 'good place' or in another sense 'an ideal place' for human living.

Thomas More's *Utopia* was written in Latin, and it was first translated into English by Ralph Robinson in 1515 (*Encyc. Americana* 844). In this book More described a pagan and communist city-state in which institutions and policies were entirely governed by reason. The order and dignity of such a state was intended to provide a notable contrast with his description of the unreasonable state of the Europe of his time, which he saw being divided by self-interest and greed for power and riches (*Merriam Webster's Encyc. of Literature* 1152). The title of the book signified an imaginary kingdom where Christian communism was practised by men who inhabited the island. The main point of this book was that an ideal

society was realizable if men wanted it. Therefore, according to one notion, idealism was an important factor in forming the utopia of Thomas More. On the other hand, many scholars argued that *Utopia* was a satirical fiction which suggested the impossibility of utopian community. For example, Angela Marie Warfield, in her *Utopia Unlimited: Reassessing American Literary Utopias* writes: “The initial title of *Utopia* as well as the subject-matter and tone of More’s letter strongly suggest a thematic of impossibility which casts an apocryphal light on the notion that utopia has always been, and can only be, about the attainment of a perfect society” (14). M.H.Abrams in his famous book, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, says: “The utopia can be distinguished from literary representations of imaginary places which, because they are either inordinately superior to the present world or manifest exaggerated versions of some of its unsavory aspects, serve primarily as vehicles for *satire* on contemporary human life and society” (416).

Utopia, written by Sir Thomas More, was broadly divided into two books. It was prefaced by a letter to Peter Giles, More’s friend. Supposedly, Giles introduced More to Raphael Hythloday, a fictitious character who tells More about a visit to the island of Utopia. The first book revealed an actual trip made by Thomas More (the author) as an ambassador for Henry VIII to the Low Countries in 1515. There he met Hythloday with whom he discussed the state of Europe. Hythloday told More how he once discussed at the home of John Cardinal the crucial problems confronting England. The second book dealt with Hythloday’s account of his journey in Utopia. The political, social, economic and many other conditions of Utopia, an ideal island was mentioned in details in the second book. After Hythloday finished his description, More concluded that many of the Utopian

customs described by Hythloday, such as their methods of making war and their belief in communal property, seem absurd. He does admit, however, that he would like to see some aspects of Utopian society put into practice in England, though he does not believe any such thing will happen. It was believed that More created his ideal republic in order to satirize by contrast the conditions of his contemporary England.

One of the significant functions of literature is to give pleasure to the readers. As the real world cannot change its natural aspects by itself, many writers take interest in forming a fictional world where impossibility becomes possibility. In *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, Herman writes: "All fiction, by projecting a world that is different from the real, physical ones, has a potential utopian component. Indeed, the attempt to imagine a world better than our own has long been recognised as one of the crucial functions of all literature" (624). But, many writers usually deal with the real nature of the world and are not interested in fiction. Among the fiction writers also, there are many who write to depict the real nature of human life and everything that has any relation with human life. At the same time, "Some works of literature are more specifically dedicated to the projection of utopian visions than are others. This is, in fact, an entire tradition of utopian fiction that attempts to envision ideal societies, generally far removed from the author's world either temporarily or geographically" (624).

In defining the meaning of 'utopia' Kim Stanley Robinson says: "Utopia is the process of making a better world, the name for one path history can take, a dynamic, tumultuous, agonizing process, with no end. Struggle forever" (*Quotes About Utopia*, n.pag.). Here he means that every utopia does not have an end, or

simply said, a climax. The reason lies in the fact that human wants are unlimited, and those who live in any utopia also have to work for a better state or condition. Toni Morrison's definition is also acceptable in many ways: "All paradises, all utopias are designed by who is not there, by the people who are not allowed in." (*Utopia Quotes*, n.pag) This shows the impossibility of creating real utopia, and all utopias are of fictional products. This idea is supported by Albert Camus (*Between Hell and Reason*) who says, "Utopia is that which is in contradiction with reality." M.H.Abrams also defines the meaning of utopia in a simple but clear form emphasizing its non-existent nature: "The term *utopia* designates the class of fictional writings that represent an ideal, non-existent political and social way of life" (*A Glossary of Literary Terms* 416). Again, Karla Zubrycki, in her *Literary Utopias: Literary Hells?*, also writes: "A true utopia can never exist, for there will always be someone who finds a situation or environment unpleasant" (265). Therefore, utopia has been usually used in fiction as an important means to depict an ideal state of human beings who want to live a better life in a better world where freedom, riches, leisure and pleasure can be attained.

At the same time, utopia has many significant impacts on the human minds. Anatole France says, "Without the Utopians of other times, men would still live in caves, miserable and naked. It was Utopians who traced the lines of the first City...Out of generous dreams come beneficial realities. Utopia is the principle of all progress, and the essay into a better future." (qtd. in *Utopian Visions in Speculative Fiction*, n.pag) Oscar Wilde (*The Soul of Man Under Socialism*) also supported the above quotation: "A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a

better country, sets sail. Progress is the realisation of Utopias.” (*Quotes About Utopia*, n.pag) Again, E.M.Cioran in his *History and Utopia* says, “Life without utopia is suffocating, for the multitude at least: threatened otherwise with petrification, the world must have a new madness.” (*Utopia Quotes*, n.pag) All these point to the importance of utopia which, though it cannot exist in reality, gives an impetus for making progress in human life.

Though scholars often mean utopia as an ideal place free of evils, it is undeniable that there is no complete freedom from evil. Many utopias often have some dystopian elements because of which crimes and sufferings are to be found amidst many utopian elements. For example, the Christian religious utopia known as *The Garden of Eden* had to be guarded against human beings since the first two people fell into sin by the successful temptation of Satan who appeared in the form of a serpent. In Thomas More’s *Utopia* also, the people of Utopia were oftentimes victims of evils like murder, war, adultery, etc. It was because of this reason that King Utopus and other authorities made laws for different cases of crimes. In Mizo utopian fiction *Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang Maw?* by C. |huamluaia also, a utopian place called ‘Kantu’ has people most of whom were unkind to strangers, and they themselves were in civil war at the end of the story.

From the word ‘utopia’ come other terms ‘dystopia’ and ‘anti-utopia’ which become another genre of literature. Some definitions mention that the two terms, ‘dystopia’ and ‘anti-utopia’ have the same meaning while others give different definitions; but both the terms are closely related to each other and both stand against the word ‘utopia.’ *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia* defines the word ‘dystopia’ as follows: “A dystopia is a hypothetical or otherwise imaginary society, often in the context of a work of fiction (especially one set in a speculative

future), characterized by elements that are opposite to those associated with utopia. A dystopia is, therefore, a place in which people lead dehumanized and often fearful lives or in which everything is unpleasant or bad, typically....totalitarian or environmentally degraded... dystopias have taken the form of a multitude of speculations, such as pollution, poverty, societal collapse or political repression and totalitarianism.” The *Urban Dictionary* also defines it: “A dystopia (alternatively anti-utopia) is the antithesis of a utopian society. A dystopian society is usually characterized by an authoritarian or totalitarian form of government, or some other kind of oppressive social control.” From the aforementioned definitions it is clear that dystopia represents a counterpart of utopia, and simply saying, it signifies a bad place undesirable for people to live in. The word ‘anti-utopia’ is also defined by the *Urban Dictionary* as: “An anti-utopian society where, instead of a paradise, everything has gone wrong in the attempt to create a perfect society.” *The Free Dictionary* also defines the word as: “An imaginary place or society characterized by human misery and oppression; a dystopia.” The *answers.yahoo.com* relates or differentiates the two words as follows: “an anti-utopia is either the exact same thing as a dystopia, or it may also be a kind of failed utopia. In the latter sense, then, a dystopia would be a system that was designed to be bad, but an anti-utopia was supposed to be good but completely fails.”

2. ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF UTOPIA

The first important utopia that was put in a written form was 'The Garden of Eden' in Genesis 2-3 of the Holy Bible. Here is the story of Eden as described in Genesis 2:8-15 in the Living Bible Edition:

Then the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, to the east, and placed in the garden the man he had formed. The Lord God planted all sorts of beautiful trees there in the garden, trees producing the choicest of fruit. At the centre of the garden he placed the Tree of Life, and also the Tree of Conscience, giving knowledge of Good and Bad. A river from the land of Eden flowed through the garden to water it; afterwards the river divided into four branches...The Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden as its gardener, to tend and care for it

(2)

The Holy Bible has been the best-selling book in the world (Wikipedia, the free encyc.), and it has been widely read throughout the world by people belonging to different cultures or nations. This literature has great influence upon many other literatures of the world. The Garden of Eden, the oldest and the most well-known utopia, is also a remarkable one though it has to be categorized as religious utopia. In stressing the importance of geography in utopian literature, Karla Zubrycki wrote: "From the time the story of the Garden of Eden was recorded, humans have heard of idyllic lands and cultures and compared them to their own, less desirable, environments" (265). *The Holy Bible* sets examples of utopia in three forms - *Heaven*, *Paradise* and the *Garden of Eden*. But the first two are of lesser importance in the field of utopian literature because they are made for spirits of human beings, while the last one is for mortal life. The geography of

the Garden of Eden, by its idyllic and utopian natures, pioneered utopianism in many fields especially in literature, political and sociology.

Hesiod, the Greek poet who lived around 8th century BC, wrote a famous work titled *Works and Days*, a compilation of the mythological tradition of Greek. In this book he wrote that, “prior to *the present era*, there were other four progressively more perfect ones, the oldest of which was the *Golden Age*” (Wikipedia). In the first book of *Metamorphoses*, Ovid also wrote about the myth of the Golden Age, “from which man sprang and to which he may someday hope to return” (Adams 89). The Greek historian and biographer, Plutarch who belonged to the 1st century, also wrote about “the blissful and mythic past of the community” (Wikipedia). A number of utopias were also to be found among different nations who were rich in mythology and literature, and among those who had had deep thoughts in religions.

But in the fiction form, it was accepted that the concept of writing about visionary ideal societies was initiated by Plato with his well-known book titled *Republic* (later 4th century BC). The *Republic* “sets forth, in dialogue, the eternal Idea, or Form, or a perfect commonwealth that can at best be merely approximated by political organizations in the actual world” (Abrams 416). Between 413 and 426 AD, Augustine of Hippo also wrote *The City of God* in which he described a utopia for all Christians, that is the eternal Jerusalem, an ideal city (Wikipedia).

But it was Sir Thomas More who, by his book *Utopia* (1516), named the genre ‘utopia’ and enriched the same. Many European writers who dealt with utopian fiction usually followed the style of Thomas More in forming their utopias; they usually created utopia in a distant land and the major characters made

adventurous travels, and there the characters experienced many uncommon things like lifestyle, law and custom, religious and political administration, etc. Most of utopian literatures after Thomas More's *Utopia* were written as travel stories and the main target of such fictions was a visionary ideal state or society which could be termed as 'earthly paradise.' "In *Utopia*," wrote Thomas More, "where everything belongs to everybody, no man need fear that, so long as the public warehouses are filled, he will ever lack for anything he needs. Distribution is simply not one of their problems; in Utopia no man are poor, no men are beggars...For what can be greater riches than for a man to live joyfully and peacefully, free from anxieties, and without worries about making a living?" (Adams 82). Many utopian fiction writers who came after More were influenced by the above concept while creating their utopias. Therefore, every utopia was based on a commonwealth society where the best elements of societies were collected for the creation of such utopias.

After the publication of Thomas More's *Utopia*, a large number of utopian writings had been made and published till the end of the 20th century, and one of the latest works titled *The Giver* by Lois Lowry was published in 1993 (Wikipedia). In 1619, *Christianopolis* describing a Christian democratic utopia was written by Johann Valentine Andreae. Tommaso Campanella's *The City of the Sun* (1623) was an example of practical utopia depicting "a theocratic and egalitarian society" (Wikipedia). *New Atlantis* (1627) by Francis Bacon was "practical in its scientific program but speculative concerning philosophy and religion" (Merriam Webster's Encyc. of Lit. 1152). Other important utopian works before the 20th century included *Erewhon* (1872) by Samuel Butler, *News from Nowhere* (1892) by William Morris, *Looking Backward* (1888) by Edward Bellamy, and *Gloriana, or the*

Revolution of 1900 (1890) by Lady Florence Dixie. Among the 20th century productions, these are the popular works concerning utopia listed by *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia: Childhood's End* (1954) by Arthur C. Clarke, *A Modern Utopia* (1905) by H.G. Wells, *Islandia* (1942) by Austin Tappan Wright, *Walden Two* (1948) by B.F. Skinner, *Big Planet* (1957) by Jack Vance, *Island* (1962) by Aldous Huxley, *The Islar* (1969), *The Lathe of Heaven* (1971) by Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Dispossessed* (1974) by Ursula K. Le Guin, *Ecotopia* (1975) by Ernest Callenbach, *Women on the Edge of Time* (1976) by Mage Percy, *The Probability Broach* (1980) by L. Neil Smith, *Always Coming Home* (1985) by Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Fifth Sacred Thing* (1993) by Starhawk, and *The Giver* (1993) by Lois Lowry. Angela Marie Warfield writes: "From 1865 to 1917, an estimated 362 utopian works, by at least 100 authors, were published in America and the majority of them appeared before the turn-of the-century with more than 100 produced between 1886 and 1896 alone" (*Utopia Unlimited: Reassessing American Literary Utopias* 2) In *Utopian Literature: A Selective Bibliography*, The New York Public Library recorded as many as 404 utopian literature books, i.e., from Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516) to *Communities Directory: A Guide to Intentional Communities and Cooperative Living 2000 Edition* (2000) (Bruckmann).

Eric S. Rabkin in his *History of Utopian Literature* writes the historical development of utopia as, "Ancient World - Economy based on slaves; Christian Renaissance - Economy based on regularized work; Industrial Revolution - Economy based on machines (or their rejection); and, Post-Industrial Revolution - Economy based on humans as machines (and vice versa)." (n.pag)

3. UTOPIANISM

American Heritage Dictionary defines utopianism as, “The ideals or principles of a utopian; idealistic and impractical social theory.” *The Free Dictionary* also defines it as, “1. the views and habits of mind of a visionary or idealist, sometimes beyond realization. 2. impracticable schemes of political and social reform.” Again, *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines the word ‘utopianism’ in a simple way: “utopianism, in social and political thought, is an interest in creating or imagining an ideal society” (315). From these three definitions it is clear that utopianism is a concept developed from utopia, and it deals with the idea or principle of creating or imagining an ideal society which is sometimes beyond realization.

Many people think that there can be established an ideal society with ideal systems for living harmoniously and they have strong desire to live in that community. Therefore, there have been many attempts by religious groups and political reformers to establish utopian communities. Their method has been to withdraw from the world and found an experiment community that will serve as a model for the new beneficial social order to come. According to *Encyclopedia Americana*, “Utopian societies are divided between the religious and the secular and according to the nature of their economies” (845) and each of the two has its own nature. “The most usual type of economy was communistic, in which all property was held in common. Other societies were cooperative or, rarely, capitalistic. The religious societies in general were quite authoritarian, with a strong leader. The secular communities, on the other hand, were largely democratic” (845).

The early example of an ideal religious society was the first Christian group in Jerusalem. Acts 4:32-37 of The Holy Bible says:

All the believers were of one heart and mind, and no one felt that what he owned was his own; everyone was sharing. And the apostles preached powerful sermons about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and there was warm fellowship among all the believers, and no poverty - for all who owned land or houses sold them and brought the money to the apostles to give to others in need (*Living Bible*. 147-148).

During the Second Great Awakening of the 18th century and thereafter, many radical religious groups formed utopian societies in the United States and Europe, all aspects of people's lives could be governed by their faith. Quakers were a well-known example; they originated in England in the 17th century but moved to America shortly afterwards. As *Wikipedia* records, a number of religious utopian societies from Europe came to the United States from the 18th century throughout the 19th century and the most popular groups were the *Society of the Woman in the Wilderness* led by Johannes Kelpius, the *Ephrata Cloister*, the *Harmony Society*, and the *Oneida Community* founded by John Humphrey Noyes in Oneida (New York).

Secular Communities or Utopias were generally short-lived and were concerned mainly with political and economic change. These communities were influenced mainly by Plato's *Republic* and Thomas More's *Utopia*. According to *Encyclopedia Americana*, the two men responsible for the establishment of secular Utopian communities were Robert Owen who advocated cooperative agricultural-industrial communities that would be self-sufficient, and Charles Fourier who believed that systematic economic units (called phalanxes) should be established with work assigned according to each member's natural inclination (845). The important secular communities included *New Harmony* founded by Robert Owen in

1825 in Indiana and *Brook Farm* founded by George Ripley in 1841 at West Roxbury. Although short-lived, the two communities had an important influence upon the development of American thought (845).

4. UTOPIAN ELEMENTS

According to *Utopian Visions in Speculative Fiction*, “In all, there are four ‘kinds’ of utopias: a paradise (Garden of Eden), an externally altered world (Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*), a willed transformation world (Dwight's *Greenfield Hill*), and a technologically advanced world (*Looking Backward* by Edward Bellamy).” (n.pag) But, for simplicity's sake, this research paper divides utopia into two kinds - utopia of geographical setting and utopia of culture. By these two divisions the elements of utopia will be studied below.

There are a number of elements which make any literary piece a utopian literature. But, the elements may vary from one literature to another, or from one fiction to another. For example, according to Sylva Sylvarum, Thomas More's *Utopia* was formed by these elements: the dialogue form, the author as character(s), a blend of Christian mores and civic rules, the existence of a utopian civilization on an island and/or theretofore undiscovered world, a description of the structure of the city and society, and a reference to the Americas. Most of the utopian fictions follow the styles of Thomas More in creating their utopias. Some formed complex societies where there were ideal political, social and religious administrations. On the other hand, some utopian fictions were simple ones containing Arcadian elements with simple societies and simple pastoral settings. The purpose of utopian literature also differs from one fiction to another; some were written as a satire to ridicule existing conditions rather than offering

practical solutions for them, while others were written with a view to give pleasure to their readers.

The important nature of utopian fiction is a TRAVEL STORY. Most of the utopian fictions are travel story in which one or more characters make an adventurous journey to a utopia. For example, in the fiction of *Utopia*, More traveled to Antwerp as an ambassador for England and King Henry VIII. There he met Raphael Hythloday who talked a lot about his travels especially to the island of Utopia. Hugh Conway and other characters in the *Lost Horizon* also left Baskul (India) by plane and set foot on the Tibetan mountain because their plane was high-jacked and it crashed in that area, and they entered and stayed in 'Shangri-La' with the help of its citizens. Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* is also a travel story about Crusoe who survived a shipwreck and lived on a South American island for twenty-eight years until he was rescued. In this way, other utopian fictions like Aldous Huxley's *Island* (1962), Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) and Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627) are also stories of travels to utopias.

Below are some of the elements of utopia mentioned in point by point:

(1) Geographical Setting:

Although contemporary literature does not appear to have been as thoroughly analyzed for its geography, it is undeniable that geographical setting is the first and foremost element of utopian fiction. There can be no utopia without this element. Geographical setting includes the physical features, resources, weather or climate, population, etc. of the setting of the fiction. It also concerns with the boundaries, isolation and resistance to external influences. Karla Zubrycki, who advocates the importance of geography, writes in her *Literary Utopias: Literary Hells*:

From the time the story of the Garden of Eden was recorded, humans have heard of idyllic lands and cultures and compared them to their own, less desirable, environments. Even in Genesis, in which the world and, therefore, geography itself is created, geography is viewed as merely a backdrop to the morality and obedience lesson in Genesis 3, when Adam and Eve are expelled from Eden. The geography is present in many interpretations of the garden, Eden has four rivers - Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel and Euphrates; it has an abundance of gold, myrrh and onyx; like most utopias, it evidently has boundaries, for God drives Adam and Eve out of the garden and blocks re-entry. Yet despite the abundance of fascinating, rich geography, the landscape is like the wallpaper of the room; more attention is paid to the room's inhabitants and their actions than to their surroundings (265-266).

In fact, the characteristics of a utopia are affected a great deal by government, administration, law, culture and other factors. But, geography plays the most vital role in utopia and it cannot be dismissed as merely incidental. It will not be an exaggeration to say that there cannot be an ideal society without an ideal geography because life is hard, harsh and even boring in a bad place. Most of the utopian fictions are set in ideal places which are rich in geography, with rich flora and fauna, beautiful landscapes, and rich economies. There are also a number of other elements in geographical setting which may be mentioned below.

1. (a) Isolation: The role of isolation in utopia needs special mention in length. Most utopian fiction writers set their stories in isolated places and commonly in hidden places. There are often natural boundaries to keep such utopias from

outside countries, villages or cultures. Isolation makes different cultures in many utopias. The first example of isolation was the Garden of Eden which once was connected with other parts of the world; but, as the first human beings fell into sin, God expelled them out of the Garden and placed mighty angels at the east of the Garden, with a flaming sword to guard the entrance to the Tree of Life. Thus, the Garden now became isolated and no human being could ever enter the same.

But isolation as an element of utopia was developed mainly by Thomas More with his book *Utopia*. In Book Two of his fictional work, More described a detail geography of Utopia, a good island. “The island of the Utopians is two hundred miles across in the middle part where it is widest, and is nowhere much narrower than this except toward the two ends. These ends, drawn toward one another as if in a five-hundred-mile circle, make the island crescent-shaped like a new moon. Between the horns of the crescent, which are about eleven miles apart, the sea enters and spreads into a broad bay” (Adams 31). The land was not always an island before, but they “cut a channel fifteen miles wide where their land joined the continent, and caused the sea to flow around the country” (31). Other utopias found in Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1946), Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travel* (1965), Austin Tappan Wright’s *Islandia* (1942), Aldous Huxley’s *Island* (1962) and other fictions are placed on islands. Again, many other utopias which are placed in continents are also hidden by any means. For example, Samuel Butler’s utopia in *Erewhon* was hidden in the mountains of New Zealand and *The Lost Horizon*’s Shangri-La was also hidden in the Tibetan mountains. Rupert explains: “Ever since More described his island Utopia, boundaries, walls, trenches, moats, and a variety of other spatial and temporal barriers have been indispensable features on subsequent maps of utopia” (qtd. in Zubrycki 267).

1. (b) Difficult Entrance: Many utopias are characterized by their difficult entrances. For example, the Utopia of Thomas More could not be easily approached because, first, it was isolated, and secondly, “since the other rocks lie under water, they are very dangerous to navigation. The channels are known only to the Utopians, so hardly any strangers enter the bay without one of their pilots; and even they themselves could not enter safely if they did not direct themselves by some landmarks on the coast” (Adams 31). Almost all religious utopias are inaccessible to general people without some transformation. The Garden of Eden was guarded by mighty angels and a flaming sword. Christian’s *Heaven* and *Paradise*, Ancient Greek’s *Elysium* and Mizo’s *Pialral* could be attained only in spirit and there was no place for livings in human forms. Some other utopias were not known by outsiders and as the citizens of such utopias had the spirit of isolation they did not or seldom have any connection with outsiders. The visits to such utopias were always incidental and were often done without any will or intention. For example, in Aldous Huxley’s *Island* and Daniel Defoe’s *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, the protagonists entered the utopian islands because of shipwrecks. In *The Lost Horizon* also, Hugh Conway and his friends could set foot on the soil of Shangri-La only because their plane was high-jacked and crashed in the Himalayan Mountains. Shangri-La, Erewhon, Islandia and a litany of others were hidden utopias the existences of which were not known by outsiders and there was difficulty in their entrances; the permission of the utopian citizens was always needed.

1. (c) Beautiful Scenery: This is an important element in utopia. In many utopias, beauty lies not only in the beholders but also in nature or man-made objects. When talking about utopia there is an idyllic picture in our mind. In utopia,

pleasure and beauty go hand in hand. The people of utopias always live a contented life not only because of abundance of food and materials but also because of nature's charm manifest in beautiful sights and sounds. Greek's utopia, Arcadia had "an idyllic vision of unspoiled wilderness" (Wikipedia). In Hilton's *Shangri-La*, there were (as Conway described it) "the loveliest mountain on Earth" and a great and beautiful valley. The Garden of Eden in The Holy Bible also had the abundance of fascinating, rich geography and the landscape was a beautiful sight. Some utopias have man-made geographies, i.e., people work hard to make a beautiful or better outlook of their utopias by changing their natural geographies. In More's *Utopia*, people "cut a channel fifteen miles wide where their land joined the continent, and caused the sea to flow around the country" (Adams 31) and thus made the land an island. They also built fifty-four cities on the island, all of which were well-planned and a number of beautiful sights were to be found in every city. Ihuamluaia's *Kantu* was rich in flora and fauna, and the beauty of nature was perfected by the beautiful sounds made by birds and animals.

1. (d) Abundance and Self-sufficiency: Being isolated and independent of other nations or countries, every utopia is economically self-sufficient. Since they do not have any relation with other countries upon which they can depend, they need to produce every basic necessity such as food, clothing, instruments and other materials. For example, in More's *Utopia*, people were engaged in different occupations like agriculture, trade, wool-working, metal-work, carpentry, masonry and even linen-making. Therefore, the country of *Utopia* was self-sufficient in economy and could stand independently. As the lands of most utopias are productive, they can produce enough crops or vegetations to support their living. The valley of *Shangri-La* was a perfect soil which was perfected by good sunlight,

good climate and regular water supply which made them produce enough crops for their living. In C. |huamluaia's short story, Mr.Hanga's farm was rich in fertile soil and water supply, so different kinds of crops were produced in abundance. Some utopias are rich in natural resources; for example, the Garden of Eden abounded with gold, myrrh and onyx. In Shangri-La also, gold is found in the valley in large quantity.

1. (e) Mystery: Mystery is an important element of utopian fictions. The geographical setting of utopia itself is a mystery because it was different in its form and nature from other settings or real world. The geography of utopia contains a number of materials or other natural things which are of unique qualities and the value of utopia is uncountable. The mysterious nature of utopia also lies in the fact that it has some hidden facts which are usually revealed in the fiction. For example, Shangri-La residents could live a longer life, so Father Perrault was 251 years old. In *The Land of Cockayne* by German tradition also, there was a fountain of youth which keeps everyone young and active. The natural fortifications and protections of Shangri-La and Erewhon were also wonders of geography. |huamluaia's utopia, *Kantu* also had some mysterious natures which will be dealt or studied in Chapter IV of this dissertation.

2. Ideal Culture:

The community of utopia is always bound by one culture under which people live in harmony. They are isolationists and are afraid of the influence of any other society which may cause change in their society. Lukermann and Porter explain: "Because the consequences cannot be foreseen, any change threatens the equilibrium of a system. In utopia nothing is left to chance. Relations with the outside world, for example, are carefully regulated" (qtd. in Zubrycki 267).

Zubrycki gives an example of this caution from *Lost Horizon* by writing: "...newcomers are welcomed with great hospitality, but are later told that they can never leave, for fear of revealing the location of Shangri-La" (267-268). Besides, the geographical isolation creates an isolated culture. There is unity in language, custom, belief, dress or clothing, and even in code of conducts. There are some other important utopian elements in culture which may be mentioned below.

2. (a) Social Morality: Every society can be called a dystopia if there is lack of social morality. No utopia can be an ideal place if its citizens are cruel, undisciplined, mischievous or violence loving. Peace in utopia is the outcome of isolation and social morality. Dragomir writes that More in his *Utopia* "overlaps the civic duties with the individual virtue by suggesting that the best form of society is the one consisting of citizens continuously preoccupied with the welfare of the public sphere" (*Utopia and New Atlantis, Utopia Revised* 7). Jon Will advocates humanity achieving utopia in life. He writes: "Utopia can happen if you ask not what Humanity can do for you, but what you can do for Humanity" (*The Ultimate Philosophy - Book I: A Map to Utopia* n.pag). There is harmony among the people of many utopias in working for the welfare of their societies. In the fictions of C. |huamluaia the communities of utopias are bound up by love, friendship, sympathy and self-sacrifice for others.

2. (b) Peace: One of the ideal elements present in utopia is peace. War, violence and murder are seldom seen though not totally free from any of these. There are no harmful dangers both from inside and outside the boundaries. The natural boundaries such as mountains, walls, moats, trenches, water, etc. protect them from outside invaders. Besides, the isolated and hidden natures of the utopias

keep them safe from outsiders who are not even aware of the existence of such utopias. Inside the utopian society itself, as most of the people are perfect citizens, peace prevails everywhere and they are not afraid of any violence. Therefore, people of every utopia live peacefully and happily and they can freely do their own business.

2. (c) Ignorance of Outside World: It was a common characteristic that the people of utopias were ignorant of outside world. They were isolated by natural boundaries such as mountains, hills, water, thick forest, walls, trenches, moats, and a variety of other spatial and temporal barriers. Besides, their economic self-sufficiency and the charm of their beautiful lands made them stable in their places. Again, the people of utopias generally did not have any spirit of adventure to move outside their boundaries. All of these factors were responsible for the ignorance of utopian people who lived a simple but contented life. The inhabitants of the Valley of the Blue Moon in *Lost Horizon* were ignorant of anything outside their mountain walls, while citizens in *The Giver* did not have any memory of the past and therefore, had no alternatives on which to look back. Both these societies were ignorant of other possible ways of living, largely due to their boundaries. Many utopian people did not even know the existence of neighbouring villages or countries and thought that they were the only people in the world. The people of Kantu, who, though their location was in the eastern part of Mizoram, did not know that there was modern Mizoram which surrounded their land, were the best example in this regard. In many utopian fictions, it was the outside characters who introduced themselves and their cultures to utopian people.

2. (d) Religion or Beliefs: In some utopian fictions religion is an important element and it serves as a key to achieve social morality. Kim Daley and Suzanne Gaulocher in their *Elements of Utopia* also mention religion as an important element and they point out some examples to clarify their argument. Although Thomas More has not made his Utopia a Christian state, Christianity is the most important religion of the state. Their moral philosophy, based on the theory that happiness is the greatest good, is closely linked with their religions. In *Sialton Official* also, it is Christianity which makes Zolawn an ideal town because many of its people are true Christians who have social conscience and good morality.

2. (e) Simplicity: In most of the utopian fictions the general life of the people is a simple one. The wealth of utopias facilitates easy occupations for the utopian people and they need not worked for a living. By a little effort they can get abundant things needed for living. For example, the first two humans Adam and Eve, while living in the Garden of Eden, did not have to work hard for their living because there were plenty of foods in the garden. Some utopian people are also contented with their ignorance because a wide knowledge is not needed for their living. Since knowledge is sometimes a burden in human life the utopian people are free of big worries and they can live happily in simplicity.

2. (f) Social Administration: Zubrycki writes: "In nearly all criticism of utopian literature, geography is secondary to government, law, social organization and morality, which are all seen as more central to a culture" (266). She also quotes Goodney's saying: "(More's) *Utopia* was not written as a geography. The locale of More's society is almost incidental to the social structure that he describes..." (266). Therefore, a good social administration is an important element in utopian society. There must be a government of some sort for humans to peacefully

coexist. As every community needs laws and customs, some form of authority is needed for their enforcement. Some utopias like *Utopia* is ruled by kings, some by chiefs, some by governments, and some by other authorities. These authorities are present in utopias for the proper functioning of social administration and for the avoidance of chaos.

5. ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF MIZO UTOPIAN LITERATURE

Before the coming of Christianity to Mizoram, the Mizo people believed in two afterlife abodes known as 'Mitthi khua' and 'Pialral.' The first one was believed to be a big village where the spirits of the dead people who had not fulfilled all the religious rites and duties needed for the title of 'Thangchhuah' dwelt after death. The village was believed to be virtually worse than the human village of the living world and its citizens lived in miserable condition. In the folktale of *Tlingi leh Ngama*, we see that hunger and poverty were experienced by the people of 'Mitthi khua' although they worked very hard. On the other hand, there was a utopia known as 'Pialral' which might have resemblance to 'Paradise' of the Christian concept. A person who wished to live in Pialral must fulfill all the religious rites and duties necessary for the citizenship of that utopia. Pialral was located beyond the border river called 'Piallui' which flowed between the two villages and that river divided the two areas. Pialral was believed to be a beautiful and pleasant village where all citizens lived on milled rice without any hard work. Therefore, it was clear that the Mizo people, whose life was full of hard work, imagined an ideal place for their eternal rest and they wanted to live a better life at least in the afterlife.

The pre-colonial people of Mizo had a few folktales featuring transformation showing that they wanted a better life and a better world. They often imagined other worlds such as heaven or sky, underworld and underwater where life as they thought would be much better or more comfortable than the real world. In the folktale of *Chawngmawii leh Hrangchhuana*, both the two characters were changed into stars and they have been having a date at regular intervals till now. Likewise, some clusters of stars like *khiangte zawng zim*, *zangkhua*, *siruk* and *chhohreivung* were also believed to have been transformed human beings. The Mizos of olden times had some other folktales about transformation of human beings into other living things or non-living things. Rairahtea was changed into cicada while he was living because he had been mistreated by his stepmother. He knew the secret intention of his stepmother to have him killed. Then he went away to a forest and climbed up the tree and later changed into a cicada. The two brothers in *Pa Fa Hruai Bo Thu* were also changed into hornbills. We see heavenly abodes in the stories of *Sichangneii*, *Kungawrhi* and *Vanchungnula*; underground abodes in *Kungawrhi* and underwater abodes in *Luipui Lal Nula* and *Ngaiteii*. The above mentioned transformations and some other abodes other than earth and afterlife may be seen as the Mizos' ideas about utopia or a better world and life.

The colonization of Mizoram by the British government was complete in 1890 (Lalthangliana, *Mizo* 80). Since then, the people of Mizoram were more in touch with their neighbouring states and they came to see towns, cities, countries and societies which were of better organized forms. The first Christian Missionaries, J.H.Lorrain (Pu Buanga) and F.W.Savidge (Sap Upa), who came to Mizoram in 1894 introduced a new alphabet and education. The early students who wanted to pursue higher education went to other towns or cities outside Mizoram

like Shillong, Chittagong, Gauhati, Calcutta, etc. The knowledge and sights of outside cities and scenery influenced many of the Mizos. Besides, the new religion that came to Mizoram, Christianity, also introduced to Mizos many utopian elements and thoughts. Again, education opened up their minds to new thoughts and they also began reading western literatures. All these factors were responsible for the introduction of utopian literature in Mizo.

Mizo literature is not rich in utopian fiction although a number of fictional works have already been published. It was with the coming of C. |huamluaia that Mizo utopian literature emerged and developed. Born in 1922 at Luangmam, |huamluaia lived for 37 years only dying in 1959. A brief account of his personal life was already given in the previous chapter. Many of his writings included utopian elements. He wrote a novel *Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang Maw?* in 1945 at Calcutta while he was studying at Scottish Church College. This novel was the first utopian novel or the first utopian fiction of Mizo. The novel was postscripted *Calcutta 11, Oct. 1945*, and this was believed to be the date when he completed writing this novel. Saplana Chawngthu copied the original manuscript of the novel in 1961 (|huamluaia Mual Celebration Committee 37). As the original manuscript was lost, the manual copy of Saplana Chawngthu was the only source of the novel. The copy of Saplana was given to B.Lalthangliana who edited it for publication and it was for the first time printed and published in 1990 by RTM Press, Chhinga Veng, Aizawl. Saplana Chawngthu said that when he copied the original manuscript, there were some six pages lost in the middle of the manuscript which made the story incomplete. Therefore, Saplana made some efforts to supplement the missing parts of the story (37). Thus, the novel somehow survived through difficult times and turned a new chapter in Mizo literature.

Among the five short stories of |huamluaia three of them (all written in Mizo) such as *Pu Hanga Leilet Veng*, *Sialton Official* and *Leitlang Dingdi* contain some utopian elements. These three short stories will be studied in the next chapter (Chapter III) in the light of utopian elements. On the other hand, his two other short stories written in English with setting in Shillong are bare of utopian elements and it is not necessary to study these two stories in this paper.

The optimistic nature of |huamluaia was seen in many of his writings. In his essays, he viewed, like the poet Rokunga, the good sides of Mizoram. For example, in one of his essays titled *Zoram Nipui*, he saw Mizoram as a utopia. The author said that the spring season in Mizoram was a good time when everything was in bloom and happiness and contentedness were to be found in everything that could be heard or seen. The hills and mountains shimmered in haze, birds happily sang sweet songs in the trees, flowers and trees were in bloom, different kinds of cicada sang melodious tunes and a number of poets composed new melodious songs of spring. The spring season of Mizoram is also mentioned in *Sialton Official* which has been regarded as |huamluaia's best fictional work. "Summer in the hills lost none of its beauty, with tender shoots and buds giving way to greenery everywhere. Birds flew amidst the haze engulfing the forests, their lonely calls echoing in the hills..." (|huamluaia, *Sialton* 182). In this way |huamluaia painted a number of beautiful pictures in his writings - both in essays and fictions.

The literary genre of utopian fiction in Mizo is still a lonely road to follow till today. In 2008, another utopian novel titled *Hun Awm Loh Hunah* by Sangzuala was published. In this novel, following the style of |huamluaia, the author created 'The Forbidden Forest,' the location of which was uncertain, but it was a parallel world and it was set in the future. As Lukerman and Porter write: "As European

empires expanded in scope and power, the utopias did too; and since utopists were running out of places to put their imaginary worlds, they had to go underground or resort to outer space or future time” (qtd. in Zubrycki 288), the author set one part of the story under the sea in which the major characters saw many good aliens who helped them in managing the ecology and environment of the world for the welfare of both humans and aliens.

CHAPTER - III

UTOPIAN ELEMENTS IN C. |HUAMLUAIA'S SHORT STORIES

During his writing period of about 14 years (Lalthangliana, *Kap* 114), |huamluaia wrote six fictional works among which four were written in Mizo and two in English. He wrote both short stories and novel. Most of his fictional works contained some utopian elements. His novel, *Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang Maw?*, a utopian novel will be the subject of study in the following chapter. But, none of his short stories can be categorized as purely utopian fiction. However, like some of his essays, most of his short fiction contained some utopian elements. His two English fictional works, *The Disaster* and *The Days That Followed*, were bare of utopian elements. Both dealt with the sad romantic stories experienced in Shillong by the author under the name 'Evenge' in the two stories. They were stories written in a sequel and they could be classified as autobiographical fiction since both portrayed the experiences of real people including the author who was the main character and thus narrated his life history in fictional forms. Therefore, these English fictional works will be excluded from our study of utopian elements in C. |huamluaia's works.

This chapter is dedicated to the study of utopian elements in the three short stories which were written in Mizo, viz., *Sialton Official*, *Leitlang Dingdi* and *Pu*

Hanga Leilet Veng. Strictly speaking, and as mentioned above, none of these three works is purely utopian, but all of them possess some utopian elements. Like other utopian fictional works, it was the geography (or setting of place) of the stories which made them utopian. Being born and living in rural Mizoram, all his fictional works contain 'Arcadia,' a word used commonly as "a synonym for any rural area that serves as a pastoral setting, as a *locus amoenus* ("delightful place")" (Wikipedia, *Utopia*). Even when some settings of his fiction are based on real places, he usually added other settings which were obviously fictitious. As in his prose works, the fictional works of C. |huamluaia are based mainly on his imagination. His utopian thought was concentrated on a country or a big village, not on city or metropolis. In his imagination he created a fictional village or farm in which nature was the basic element and the characters of his fiction enjoyed simple rural life.

Karla Zubrycki in her paper, *Literary Utopias: Literary Hells?* states:

Geography as a backdrop is typical of most utopias. In nearly all criticism of utopian literature, geography is secondary to government, law, social organization and morality, which are all seen as more central to a culture. In his paper on More's work, Goodney (1970) even goes as far as to say: "*Utopia* was not written as a geography. The locale of More's society is almost incidental to the social structure that he describes..." (266)

From the above quotation, and from the whole content of the paper, it is clear that Karla Zubrycki argues that geography plays the most significant role in utopian fiction. But, she does not deny the importance of other elements which form utopia. Again, as the above quotation denotes, many critics gave importance

to other elements like social administration, morality, political system and other aspects of advancement which made the society ideal. But this does not mean that geography is not an important element of utopia. In fact, it was geography which makes any specific area of land a utopia, and it will not be an exaggeration to say that without an ideal geography there can be no utopia. But, at the same time, as mentioned earlier, there can be a number of elements which form utopian literature. In this paper also, our focus will not only be on geography, or in a literary term, 'setting of place,' but also on other elements which are necessary to be included in this dissertation. While Thomas More and other utopian writers set up complex societies with ideal social orders and political administrations in their utopian fiction, |huamluaia included small utopian elements in his short stories. His style was the presentation of idyllic imageries by using simple settings of place and simple life and thereby gave idyllic impressions to his readers.

I. Sialton Official

Sialton Official is the most famous literary piece of C. |huamluaia. Being regarded as the masterpiece of the author by a number of scholars, it is one of the best short stories in Mizo. The author spent four years in Shillong, studying at Shillong Govt. High School during 1940-1943. After he finished I.A. (Intermediate Arts) in Calcutta, he returned to Shillong for B.A. degree. During his study of B.A. he enjoyed the environment of Shillong and he loved a girl whose name, according to his record, was Aquilina. He was reluctant to go home even at vacation when many students readily went back to their homes or states because of his affair with the girl. When his father sent him a telegram asking him to come home for a

vacation, he was unwilling to leave Shillong even for a few weeks, and therefore he wrote on the edge of a telegram, “Will I go home without Aquilina?” (Lalthangliana, *Kaphleia* 96). T.Lalzika, in his *Chawimawi Tlak |huamluaia*, also wrote that |huamluaia fell in love with a beautiful Khasi girl whom he wanted to marry. He told his parents everything about their love relation and how he wanted to marry her. But he got his parent’s reply - “We do not want a non-Mizo woman as our bride!” (|huamluaia Mual Celebration Committee 33). Being an obedient son, |huamluaia did not marry his beloved girl but he could never drive away that Khasi girl from his heart even after a long time. As his bosom friend Mr. K.Lalzika reported, he visited Shillong in 1954, some years after he left it, and there he came to know that his beloved Aquilina had been married to another person. He then returned with a heavy and lonely heart to Gauhati (now Guwahati) where he was studying B.T. (Lalthangliana, *Kaphleia* 96).

It was, therefore, strongly believed that *Sialton Official* was written in the very mood of this sad experience. This famous work might depict the real experience of the author at Shillong. Regarding the characters of the story, the narrator, whose name was known in the story as Sialton Official, portrayed the real character of C.|huamluaia. It could therefore be categorized as an autobiographical short story. Aquilina, a Khasi girl, represented the fictional character called Dorothy who was the beloved girlfriend of the narrator. Both the real ones and the fictional ones had a common sad story, their love relations ended as both girls were married to other persons belonging to their community. There was a recollection of those sad memories in the minds of C.|huamluaia, and he constructed a plot of fiction based on his life experience, and the result was a popular literary output titled *Sialton Official*.

There are five big important elements of utopia in this story, such as utopia of geography or setting, utopia of life, simplicity, utopian reformation or transformation, and religion. This chapter will be dealing with such five elements which are important to the formation of utopian fiction or literature.

Setting or Geography:

In this story the main setting was Zolawn, a fictional town. |huamluaia set up two fictional towns in this story - Zolawn and Sialton. Before being posted to another town, the narrator had been at Sialton working as a government official. Much was not known about the Sialton town, but as the narrator introduced himself as 'Sialton Official,' it was sure that the town had some significance on the narrator's life. The story was based mainly on Zolawn, a fictional one and Shillong, a real town. Both Sialton and Zolawn were located somewhere in Mizoram, and like *Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang Maw?*, there was mention of real places like Aizawl and Champhai. Therefore, it was certain that the author set up these two fictional towns among the real ones in Mizoram. Again, as the story suggested, Zolawn was located between Aizawl and Champhai (199).

Although there was no detail or clear mention about Zolawn, it was certain that the town was not located in isolation like Kantu in |huamluaia's novel, *Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang Maw?* The town had relation and contact with other villages or towns, and it was under the control of the Government of India. At the same time, Zolawn was a civilized town having some utopian elements as compared to other places. The story was written sometime between 1945 and 1959 (104) and the author used his contemporary period as a setting of time. But, as Zolawn was still ruled over by a chief, it was certain that the time setting could not be later than 1954 when chieftainship in Mizoram was abolished by government (Lalthangliana

Mizo 385). During that period the villages and towns of Mizoram were still underdeveloped; even Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram, was still a town. |huamluaia, who had been influenced by utopianism and had been at Shillong for many years, set up Zolawn, a fictional town as a civilized and advanced one.

The author did not mention the details of Zolawn town, only some aspects of the town were mentioned in the story. But, while Sialton could be imagined as a big and civilized town the narrator's previous settlement as a big official, Zolawn may be accepted as a big and civilized town according to the narrator's description. Zolawn, as on the narrator's first description, was a good and breezy place and there was a good hotel in that town (199). As often seen in utopian fiction, the narrator set foot on the soil of Zolawn, a civilized or ideal town for the first time. The narrator had not had any experience at Zolawn and every sight was new to him. As mentioned before, as he was posted to another town in the south (the name of the town was not mentioned in the story), he and his family had to leave Sialton with tearful farewell to their relatives and friends. En route to his new posting, the narrator and his family had their stay at Hotel Odyana, the best hotel at Zolawn. They still had to leave Zolawn for the new posting after sometime. But, because of tragic incident at the Hotel, the main focus of the story was on Zolawn, not on the new posting place.

In the story, Hotel Odyana was the only asset of the town called Zolawn. It was a highly advanced hotel which, according to B.Lalthangliana, "was far better than today's best hotels at Aizawl city" (108). The "Hotel Odyana had everything to serve, like tea and bread (and even liquor for those who order it)... (200) Besides, the hotel had an attractive compound which was full of beautiful flowers..." (200) Again, when the narrator paid a visit to the hotel after it was

once burnt down, it “had been reconstructed on a much grander scale, and the guests who came to the hotel often saw some bachelors and maidens coming here and there hand in hand enjoying their pastimes” (215). The Hotel was isolated from the town, and both the Hotel and Zolawn town stood opposite each other (211). It was certain that Zolawn, in order to have a well-equipped and proper functioning hotel, had to be a big town where a number of people lived and where a number of travelers, both incoming and outgoing, visited day and night. Besides, both the local people and travellers had to be rich, and the town should also have some important or valuable assets other than its political importance in order to attract travellers. As the narrator mentioned that Hotel Odyana was the best hotel at Zolawn, it was certain that the town had some other hotels to compete with. Therefore, the only assets of Zolawn mentioned in the story were Hotel Odyana and other hotels the names of which were not mentioned. But, the mention of these assets made the readers of the story believe that Zolawn would have other valuable assets other than hotels, and it was a much more civilized town as compared to contemporary towns or villages.

Another important element which makes us believe that Zolawn was an advanced town was a national newspaper titled *Shillong Times*. With regard to the time setting of the fiction, i.e. a few years before 1959, it was believed that the Mizo people did not subscribe many of today’s national newspapers. Only an educated person who could read English and having stayed outside Mizoram would be in touch with such newspapers. A small number of local newspapers were available in Mizoram at that time, and there were only a few people who could read English newspapers or books. It was even hardly possible for those educated persons to subscribe national newspapers because of transport problem, financial

problem and slow circulation. Therefore, |huamluaia used national newspaper as an important element of utopia in this story. Although the newspaper found by the narrator was an old issue, it was certain that the Hotel or the town was reached by that newspaper. There should also be new issues of the paper if an old copy was found in the Hotel.

Utopian Life:

Life portrayed in *Sialton Official* was a beautiful one. The beautiful life enjoyed by the characters could be counted among the elements of utopia in this fiction. The characters enjoyed elements of beautiful life such as love, happy family life, brotherhood and unity. These elements were necessary for an ideal community, and the lack of these elements would make even a civilized community a dystopia. The community of Zolawn was created as an ideal one by the author because of the beautiful life enjoyed by them. The happy life of the narrator's family before the unexpected disaster painted the story as an ideal one. Zolawn was bound with ideal love; the people loved one another, and they showed their love and sympathy to the victims of mishaps, and they were ever ready to help those who needed assistance. The story did not mention the bad sides of the town or the people. The good sides mentioned in the story made Zolawn an ideal town.

Zolawn received her ideal visitors, a family of four members. This family loved one another and it would not be an exaggeration to say that they enjoyed a perfect family life. The narrator mentioned that, from the viewpoint of his family, "the world was beautiful, enjoyable and even really joyful" (200). When the narrator returned from Aizawl and rejoined his family at Hotel Odyana, they were extremely happy. According to the narrator, life reached its climax when the

family met again at the Hotel and their happiness knew no bounds, and his two children ran to him and happily embraced him (200). He further mentioned: "Sitting down to dine, I decided that even the mundane sound of our children squabbling over the cutlery was amongst the most joyous sounds in the world. We all looked at each other and we knew we were happy." (Ihuamluaia 171) Everything they did was done in a happy mood and everything they saw was wonderful and beautiful to them. Therefore, it was certain that the beautiful and happy life of the narrator's family was included by the author as an element of utopia in this fiction.

The community life of Zolawn itself was an ideal one as love, sympathy, unity and brotherhood were the elements of the society. When Hotel Odyana where the narrator's family stayed caught fire, people took every means or measure to rescue the hotel guests, putting their own lives at stake. Everyone came to put out the fire as soon as they heard the information on the town's crier. The narrator who tried to save his family was badly burnt by fire and was given medical treatment at the chief's house by the town's compounder. All his family members were now dead in the fire and he himself lay ill. The people of Zolawn took sympathy on the narrator. When the narrator revisited the town he was assisted by the community to erect a memorial stone for his wife and two children. They were willing to help the narrator in every possible way. This showed that they not only loved others but also were ready for self-sacrifice to others. As for the deeds of love and service there was unity and integrity among them and they rendered social services hand in hand.

The chief and all the people wanted to help the narrator who was now wandering throughout the length and breadth of Mizoram. They wanted to uplift

his undesirable and sympathetic condition and thereby make him a new person in the eyes of both men and God. When the narrator accepted the chief's job offer as a school teacher, the people of the town were very happy and urged him to deliver a sermon in the church. At that point of time, the whole community at once made preparation in unity and eagerness to have a church service. The story did not mention the bad sides of the community; no evil was seen and nothing wrong was done by the people. On the other hand, everything mentioned about them were ideal ones which are important elements of utopia. There was no other clear or detail description of the community life of Zolawn; but the above mentioned points which had some connections with the narrator and his family revealed the true nature of their community life.

Love, the most important theme of *Sialton Official*, was also an important element of utopia in the story. Love brightened the life of every character, and it was love which made the setting of the story, Zolawn, an ideal town. Again, love conquered everything and no hatred had any inch of place in the story. Every character in the story enjoyed beautiful life because of love. There were three types of love in *Sialton Official*, such as romantic love, family love and social love. All these types of love formed a beautiful life and an ideal community.

Romantic love was portrayed in the two major characters of the story - Sialton Official (the narrator) and Dorothy, a Khasi girl. The two characters met in Shillong, a town where Dorothy lived and where the narrator stayed for some years to get his education. The two loved each other and spent a lot of time together. The narrator was very contented to have a girlfriend like Dorothy who loved him back. They often had pleasant moments, the narrator sometimes pinned some flowers in her hair, sometimes embraced her, and sometimes even kissed her.

When he kissed her, the narrator remarked: “Oh, the intensity of that spell, it was our one moment in time when the earth ceased to be and the pleasures of life turned ethereal and eternal” (Ihuamluaia 175). In every moment of love the author emphatically employed the language of love because it was love which made his life meaningful and happy.

Secondly, family love also played an important role in the formation of an ideal life in the fiction. Although the story of the family of Dorothy and her husband as seen in *Shillong Times* newspaper was a tragic one, the lives of the two other families at Zolawn were beautiful ones. The first family belonged to the narrator who had a wife and two children. Until fate bewitched the narrator this family lived happily because every member gave to the others tender loving care, compassion and affection. Below are some of the narrator’s presentations of his family:

Nguri was responsible for making me forget all about Dorothy and my unhappy past. She was all that I could ever want... In fact we would have no qualms about singing, “Wondrous beauties we claim not to be, our charming looks suffice for our village.”

We were, as I stated earlier, a happy contented family and Nguri and I were very much in love. With Nguri by my side I had nothing to fear, nothing to regret, for she was my strength and my inspiration... (177)

The author also mentioned the couple of the chief in a few lines. Although much was not mentioned about this couple, it was clear from their behavior that they were true Christians. They lived a good and happy life, and they took every care of the narrator. They were ever ready for any service to others who needed

help. The people of Zolawn also lived peacefully beside their chief's family and everyone willingly obeyed this family. It was in the house of the chief that the narrator was given medical treatment when he was badly burnt in the burning Hotel. Again, it was the chief and his wife who uplifted the condition of the narrator by appointing him as a school teacher after a long time of his vagrancy. Therefore, the family life of the chief was certain to be a happy one, and this was because of cordial family love.

Thirdly, social love or mutual love among the people of the society made Zolawn an ideal town. As mentioned before, all the people loved each other and tender loving care was shown by one to others. The chief and his wife loved their subjects who in turn willingly obeyed them. No hatred, no enmity, no complaint, no bad character, and no ill words were found in the society. Unity was their strength. They not only showed compassion to any victims of mishaps but also helped them as much as they could. They were also very kind to strangers, and both the local people and strangers lived happily in the town.

Transformation:

Among the elements of an ideal community, reformation or transformation could also be included. When the narrator paid a second visit to Zolawn, we see three types of transformation. First, the new building of Hotel Odyana had been constructed after it had burnt down. The narrator said that Hotel Odyana "had been reconstructed on a much grander scale, and the guests accommodated in the hotel often saw bachelors and maidens coming here and there hand in hand for their pastimes" (Lalthangliana 215). The Hotel that the narrator saw on his second visit was a new one and its shapes and structures were also believed to have been changed. It now became more attractive not only to guests but also to the local

people who often visited its compound for their pastimes. Therefore, it became a more valuable asset of the town than it had been before.

Secondly, the narrator went through various stages of life in the story. As fate had made him lose his family, he now became a vagrant without hope or happiness. But, as time rolled on, he revisited Zolawn in the beginning of April. A memorial stone was erected for his family with the help of the chief and the people. He wanted to make transformation in his life after a long time of vagrancy. He was determined to begin a new life when he saw that the people of Zolawn and the chief's couple wanted to uplift his condition and they were ever ready to sacrifice themselves for him. Therefore, he gladly accepted the job offered to him by the chief and thus became a school teacher of Zolawn, and the chief's wife was the first to congratulate him on his becoming of a teacher. The narrator, who once was a Sialton Official and then became a vagrant for a long time, was now ready for a new life with a new post. A mood of despair and grief was gone, and a new happiness came to him like sunshine. That is why he could smile for the first time after he lost his entire family. Besides, a vagrant had now become a citizen of Zolawn town.

Thirdly, the end of dark period paved the way for the beginning of a new period. After he ceased wandering the length and breath of Mizoram, a new year came and "summer in the hills lost none of its beauty, with tender shoots and buds giving way to greenery everywhere. Birds flew amidst the haze engulfing the forests, their lonely calls echoing in the hills..." (Ihuamluaia 182). Here, a new season heralded a new life for the narrator. He who had always pessimistically viewed life before now had a new view and began to live a new and happy life. Besides, while he was wandering he often heard the voice of her daughter who

prompted him in his mind, “Dad, go ahead, just go ahead.” After he had completed erecting a memorial stone to his family, the narrator no more heard his daughter’s voice echoing in his mind. Now, the narrator was no more bothered by any evil, and therefore he now began to have a new, bright and happy life.

Simplicity:

Simplicity, which according to Kim Daley and Suzanne Gaulocher is an element of utopia (Daley 6), played an important role in *Sialton Official*. By simplicity, they mean simple life and simple thinking, but with contentedness. The lives enjoyed by the characters in the story including the narrator’s family were simple ones. But, at the same time, most of the characters were contented with their conditions and they had a bright view of everything. Although Zolawn was a civilized town administered by a government, it was still under the authority of a chief, a representative of government. The people had a simple life under the influence of their chief with church and social service as a means of good fellowship. The family life of the narrator, though simple, was a beautiful and happy one. They had an ideal perspective on everything; the world, according to them, was beautiful, pleasant and joyful. During the narrator’s passionate courtship to a Khasi girl named Dorothy, both lived a simple life. Dorothy, who was not from an affluent family, made Shillong and its locales pleasure dome for the narrator. The narrator said, “She was contented with everything, so it was always a pleasure to be with her” (|huamluaia 173).

Religion:

In Thomas More’s *Utopia*, Christianity ideally controlled the general life of the people, so there was high moral values in the community. Zolawn town was also influenced by Christianity which made the community life happy and united. It

was undeniable that love, unity, self-sacrifice, and many other public or private morals were partly the fruits of Christian code of ethics. People loved church services and they were always willing to attend any service. It was by this Christianity that the narrator experienced moral transformation and the people were happy to come to congratulate and listen to the narrator's sermon.

II. *Leitlang Dingdi*:

The date of writing of *Leitlang Dingdi*, one of C. | huamluaia's short stories is not known, so it should be confined to the period 1945-1959 when the author was in his writing career. This story was unique as compared to other fictional works of the author. The story is based on a dream and it had no definite or formal plot. Regarding its narrative mode, it is in first person narrative. The narrator who, on his day of rest, had a dream while he was sleeping, and in his dream he saw some people with whom he made a brief story. Most of the characters he saw in his dream, being unreal, were unknown to him. The plot itself was also irregular as events, settings and characters changed constantly. Unlike other short stories by the same author like *Sialton Official* and *Pu Hanga Leilet Veng*, this story is not rich in utopian elements. But, like the mentioned two stories and the novel, this story was also influenced somehow by utopianism, and thus it came out of the author's utopian thought.

A Travel To Dreamland:

Most of the European utopian fictions are travel stories. *Leitlang Dingdi* could also be called a travel story in the sense that the narrator made his travel to a dream land, a place which never existed. The story was set at Leitlang (now Lunglei) in a dream, and the look of the town was a fairy one. When the narrator

entered a dream land, he saw himself in the house of a rich man who prepared a grand feast and invited many people to come. All the people of the town came to the house of the host and the house and its compound was also full of guests. There, in the house while singing, the narrator saw a girl of 'sweet sixteen' whose beauty was emphatically narrated. He named her 'Darpuii' or 'Leitlang Dingdi' and as the story progressed, this girl was the main focus of the narrator as well as the readers. The dream went through six stages, all in a series. The first stage was over when all that was in the house were gone at once and the second stage began with the narrator's driving a good car. He saw Darpuii waiting for him in Street X, and both of them had a joyful ride in the street. The narrator awoke from this dream when a strong wind blew and moved the window curtains. He slept again and had a dream which followed the previous stages. But now he saw himself in the classroom teaching students on the subject of beauty and in defining the meaning of beauty he set Darpuii as an example. Soon all the students were lost and now he saw himself standing in the meadow at the fourth stage. At the edge of a meadow was a cliff where two Mizo flowers called *dingdi* and *chawnpui* were in bloom. When the narrator stretched out his hands to pick them, the wind tossed those branches away over to the cliff. In the fifth stage, the narrator went to Street X again and saw Darpuii and her elder sister Chawngpuii, but returned immediately without visiting their house because of his shyness. In the last or sixth stage, he found himself at home pining for the two sisters. He answered the door knock and, to his surprise, Darpuii appeared. But soon she flew off from the window as he tried to embrace and kiss her. The narrator at once awoke from a deep dream in time to find a cock flying out of the window, and he himself

embracing a pillow. In this way, his travel to the dreamland, a place where he saw an ideal place and ideal people, ended with loneliness in his heart.

Setting:

That the author desired to live in a pleasant and beautiful place is implied in the story. The desire was realized in the form of fiction where he often set strange and romantic places that could never exist in reality. In the story of *Leitlang Dingdi* also, the author set pleasant places which were ideal for people to live in. The name 'Leitlang' is a poetic name for Lunglei, a real town, but in the story it has a totally different existence. As utopian fiction deals with an ideal place, this story was also set in an ideal dream place. The uniqueness of the story from other fictional works of the author lies in the fact that the setting was not only fictional but also a dream. Again, being based upon a dream, there were quick changes in the settings and there was only a brief description of those settings.

There were four important places in the story - a rich man's house or compound, a meadow, a street X and the narrator's home. Among these four, the first three were more significant since they contained some utopian elements. When the narrator began having a dream, he saw many people sitting in the house of a rich man who was preparing a feast for them. The people sat and enjoyed themselves by singing, and many who did not find room inside sat in the compound. In the beginning the author mentioned some aspects of Leitlang as in a dream world. There was unity and good cooperation in the community, and the people loved feasts and celebrations. Whenever there was a festival or celebration, it affected the whole community, and all the people presented themselves willingly and happily in such activities.

In Mizoram, there are few meadows as forests, hills and cliffs cover most of the land. Therefore, 'meadow,' as in other countries, represented a beautiful and pleasant place. In his dream, the narrator saw a meadow on the edge of which was a cliff where there were two Mizo regional flowers namely *dingdi* and *chawnpui*. Both these flowers, which the narrator could not pluck, represented Darpuii and Chawngpuii respectively; and later, *dingdi* was transformed into a human form and became Darpuii. The meadow was part of the Leitlang areas and it was a windy place. Thus, the meadow was an ideal place where beautiful things were abundant. It was certain that the author used such pleasant and beautiful place as an element of utopian setting in this fiction.

Again, we see 'Street X' in this fiction. But the narrator did not describe the look of this street. Mr. Zara's daughter, Darpuii, whom he called 'Leitlang Dingdi,' was living in that street. The narrator, in trying to find out Darpuii, went to that street in a nice car and when he reached there he saw her standing beside the road waiting for him. Then, the narrator picked her up and had a ride with her before he was awakened by a strong wind which struck his house. In this way the style of the author, like in his other stories, can be seen in his setting of the story in an amazing but ideal place. 'Street X' in the story is much better than the streets of Lunglei (Leitlang) in the author's time. In that street the narrator had a ride in his "nice car" with a beautiful girl sitting beside him. In the author's time motor cars were not even imagined, not only in Lunglei town but also in Mizoram. Jeeps and other automobiles which could carry heavy loads were common at that time, and even these were not many in number. Therefore, an imaginary ideal street and a nice car were used by the author as the materials of an ideal town of Leitlang.

Beauty:

Jhuamluaia included beauty in this fiction as an element of utopia. There were two types of beauty in the fiction - beauty of nature and beauty of women. Definition of beauty was one of the author's objects, and he employed many words to define it. In the third stage of his dream he saw himself in a classroom teaching students, and the subject was the meaning of beauty. The narrator's definition of beauty covered five paragraphs and at last he made Darpuui of Street X an example of beauty. In order to portray his ideal beauty, he applied the nature of beauty in two ways.

Nature was eulogized in the narrator's dream; but there were only few mentions of natural objects in his dream. There was a meadow, a wide area of flat land covered with grass, beautiful and pleasant. It was on top of a hill or maybe it was a table land, and there was a high cliff on its verge. Being a high place, there was a gentle breeze to cool the meadow. On the cliff were two beautiful flowers known in Mizo as *dingdi* and *chawnpuui*. These were among the most beautiful and popular regional flowers of Mizoram, and both were used commonly as similes or symbols in Mizo poetry to represent beauty itself or beautiful women. As the narrator neared them, they looked much more beautiful than they were at a distance and they were in their full bloom. Then, the narrator stretched out his hands and embraced those flowers, and when he sniffed them he found that they were filled with fragrant smells. Beauty is objectified in nature in the story.

In many utopian novels authors showed their readers beautiful sights for pleasure. In *Leitlang Dingdi* also, in addition to beauty of nature, the author showed the beauty of Darpuui. Darpuui possessed the physical quality of blameless perfection. The narrator was completely elf-struck by her beauty and it was

difficult for him to live without her. Not only in her physical nature but also in her moral conduct and behavior, Darpuii was an ideal woman. She deserved to be called in the mind of the narrator as 'Leitlang Dingdi.' Her presence in the fiction figures as an element of utopia.

III. *Pu Hanga Leilet Veng*:

Pu Hanga Leilet Veng literally means *Mr.Hanga's Farm Village/dwellings*. The date of writing this fiction is not known, and it has to be accepted as written between 1945 and 1959. Amazingly, this story and two English short stories, *The Disaster* and *The Days That Followed* have often been excluded from the fiction of |huamluaia. These three are also short stories having the qualities and characteristics of fiction. Therefore, |huamluaia did not write only three fictional works, but instead six in all. *Pu Hanga Leilet Veng* has also been classified by some as an essay, and of course, it is written in the style of narrative essay. But, its real nature and more acceptable form is fiction since it possessed the elements of fiction such as characters, setting and diction. On the other hand, there is no regular plot as in other good fictional works. However, the irregularity of plot is not an obstacle to categorize this story as a fiction since even some European fictions, e.g. *Utopia* (by Thomas More), do not have regular or good plot of the story.

Pu Hanga Leilet Veng is a utopian short story. The title itself is the name of a utopian place; it was a farm owned by Pu Hanga who was a rich man. The farm covered a vast area and it was situated within the jurisdiction of Zolawn town. A small number of families lived in harmony and there was no fear of shortage of food or other livelihoods. Every aspect of the farm mentioned in this fiction showed that it was an ideal hamlet where every people lived with contentedness.

The third part of this chapter will make a thorough study of this short story by picking out the elements of utopia.

Geographical Setting:

The first five paragraphs of the fiction gives a detailed description of the geographical features of Pu Hanga's farm. Pu Hanga was a rich person who bought this land to make a farm, and the farm was named after him. He had his residence at Zolawn and he spent most of his time in that town. Being a good man he was very prosperous, in good or bad times. He employed a number of families in his farm; those families formed a small village within that farm. The farm was about ten years old during which no failure was experienced by that farm.

The farm was a large area of flat land which was cultivated for growing crops; the land, being fertile, was productive. Although the farm did not enjoy complete isolation, it was surrounded by hills and forest. The farm was penetrated from time to time by travelers who always took short rest in that farm especially in the meadow. There was also good communication between the people of Zolawn and the Farm. Below is a description of the geographical boundaries of the farm:

There was an open view to the western horizon as it was bare of any obstacle. There was a thick forest about one mile away to the east and south of the farm which served as a surrounding barrier for the same. A slope gently climbed to the east, and a thick forest was stretching far away, which bounded with different kinds of animals. On its north was a high mountain wall of Zolawn; but it, being not so near, did not block cool breeze coming to the farm (My translation).

The geographical aspects of the inside of the farm were mentioned from the second to the fifth paragraph. Of all the fictions of C. Jhuamluaia, *Pu Hanga Leilet Veng* gives the most detailed description of geographical aspects of its setting. The following is the general features of the inside of the farm as it appeared in the second paragraph:

The main path went straight from the south and crossed a rivulet which was some half mile away from the forest. There was a footbridge upon the rivulet. The rivulet flowed through the meadow and then flowed northward to a distance... On its bank were some short trees under which were grazing animals and the birds flocked together on their branches. The air was fresh and clean. From the west blew a gentle breeze which consistently cooled the farmers toiling there. After walking on the footbridge, it is inevitable for exhausted travellers to sit on the wooden bench. The bench attracted passersby to come and sit on it with gentle words, "Take rest here and you will feel completely at ease" (My translation).

The meadow served as a resting park for the farmers living in that farm. In the evening when their working hour was over, two workers in the farm namely Pu Duma and Pu Haka usually took their evening rest in the meadow, sitting on the wooden bench and talking about different things in their rustic way.

The people of the farm lived in thatched cottages and there were cattle sheds near those cottages. Old fences surrounded each of those cottages, and on the fences were grown some kinds of creepers. Outside the fences were vast tracts of cultivated land where different kinds of crops were grown. From the contents of the third paragraph, it can be surmised that there were about ten houses

(cottages) in the farm. This meant that about ten families lived in the farm. People in the farm - both children and adults - were all busy doing their respective duties. Although few in number, the farm was full of noise and beautiful sounds as children enjoyed merrymaking and the birds around them sang sweet songs from time to time. The noise they made eclipsed all other sounds that came from the neighbouring town. People also had joyful pastimes and did not get bored of watching their fields in the evening. Therefore, it was clear that the farm, though simple in its appearance, was an ideal place not only for the characters but also for the readers.

Self-sufficiency:

Most of the utopian societies found in world literature are self-sufficient. Self-sufficiency is the key to keep these societies independent and isolated. No country or society which is dependent upon others can become a utopian one. The people of the farm, living a simple life, had enough for their living. The soil was fertile and productive, so it produced more than enough different kinds of crops including rice. From the talk between Pu Haka and Pu Duma it was known that fortune favoured Pu Hanga, so he was always successful every year and he never had a bad year. Pu Duma said that even when other people or farmers had a bad year, Pu Hanga always had a good year. Pu Duma further said that during his ten years of working in the farm, no bad years came to them. They were never worried about importing food or any other foodstuff because they had abundance of rice and various kinds of crops.

The rivulet known as 'Limnghate Lui' or 'Luite' provided useful irrigation. "It was very useful in many ways and for the people of the farm it was as precious as The River Nile" (144). It was this rivulet which made the land fertile and

productive. Rice grown in the farm became very productive because of the rivulet. The land irrigated with the rivulet covered a vast area of the farm and, with the help of favourable weather, yielded a good crop. Besides, the rivulet provided drinking water and household uses. Houses were built beside the rivulet, so there was no problem regarding water supply. Again, the rivulet abounded with fish and crabs. Cattle rearing was an important part of their occupations. These cattle were used for cultivation of lands and their milk was an important food item. Besides, cow dung was also used as fertilizer of land.

The above mentioned points made the small community of Pu Hanga's Farm self-sufficient. The farm provided the basic needs of the people and they were never afraid of any shortage of food. Money was made with their production and they were paid enough money for their living by their respected employer, Pu Hanga, the owner of the farm. And with that money they could easily buy other needs from the market of Zolawn. Self-sufficiency made them stable in that farm and they were never eager to move to other places.

Simple and Contented Life:

The people of Pu Hanga's Farm lived a simple life. All of them were of humble origin, and they lived under poor conditions as compared with the people outside. Pu Hanga the poor, the pitiful and the low-minded, and he employed them as regular workers in his farm. Those people lived as separate families in cottages near the rivulet. The few characters who appeared in the fiction represented the whole community of the Farm. Only four characters appeared - Pu Duma, Pu Haka, Nguri and her younger brother Chuma. None of them was a great character. But the author made these characters the citizens of his ideal but small utopia.

Pu Duma and Pu Haka did not have normal level of intelligence, so their thoughts and sayings were also very simple. They did not have much knowledge and they were short of understanding. Pu Haka did not know his real name, his nickname survived while his real name was lost. They were not sharp even in thinking and imagination, and it was difficult for them to think rationally. According to them, the reason of the prosperity of Pu Hanga was that an airplane flew over him. An airplane was known to them as 'Iraplen.' Nguri and Chuma, on the other hand, were from unfortunate family. After they lost their parents, they lived in the Farm as regular employees. Chuma was blind from birth and he used to beg at Zolawn market on shopping days. However, all these characters as well as other people of the farm lived a happy and peaceful life in spite of their simplicity. They could find rest in their daily work and they also enjoyed their evening pastimes. They had everything they needed; the fruit of their work gave them pleasure and happiness. Pu Duma said that he was very happy with his pay because his master told him that his pay would be increased from eight to ten per month. He further said how he felt comfortable in the farm because the farm was a pleasant place where he could live with his family, and there was abundance of food, and their master was a very good man who let his employees live according to their own will. Besides, both Pu Duma and Pu Haka thought that they were very fortunate to have Nguri as their fellow worker in the farm. Nguri, a beautiful girl, proved to be a blessing for them and she was their earthly joy.

Rice and crops of various varieties were the comfort of the people. Vegetables were abundant throughout the year. During the rainy seasons, all kinds of crops especially maize, cucumber, pumpkin and creeping plants were in their heydays. Parents were not tired walking along the paddy area and watching them.

Every people living in the farm was very active in his or her duty and none had an idle time. In this way, people enjoy life by working diligently, and they found joy and contentedness in their works. To their ears every singing of birds was beautiful, and they took delight in hearing the grunting of swines, the lowing of cattle and the barking of dogs. They also took delight in the sight of different kinds of flora and fauna like cicadas, crows, doves, fishes, crabs, trees and flowers. Being simple people, they held everything in high regard, and nature was always in bloom for them. The travelers who went through the farm and other passersby always noticed the ideal life and good fellowship of that small community and they took comfort in seeing and hearing them in their natural moods.

Social Conscience:

In the fiction of *Pu Hanga Leilet Veng*, social conscience played an important role in forming an ideal community. There was no place for any evil in the mind of everyone. On the other hand, they loved each other and there was good understanding among them. They were ever ready to render any help to those in need. Although they had simple hearts and lived simple lives they knew how to make a good society, so they formed a small utopian community in which they lived in harmony. The owner of the farm, Pu Hanga, was a good and kind man. There was a good relationship between him and his employees who occupied the farm. It was certain from the talks between Pu Duma and Pu Haka that Pu Hanga selected for employment those people who were poor or pitiful. For example, when Nguri and her younger brother Chuma became parentless and were in a miserable condition, he not only bought their house spot with more than the normal price, but also helped them by giving them regular employment in his farm.

Because of his generosity and kindness Pu Hanga was loved and held in a high regard by his employees.

The people of the farm always showed sympathy towards others in misfortune. Nguri and Chuma, who often needed their help, lived among them. Chuma was a blind boy who used to visit the town on shopping days and sat there as a beggar. Nguri, who was about eighteen, was a good and beautiful girl. She was loved by all children and she was always anxious to pacify tearful babies and children. These two children were loved by all and all the people took sympathy on them. Pu Duma and Pu Haka thought that they were fortunate to live with Nguri in the farm and worked with her everyday, they wished all the best for her and hoped for her to marry a good and rich man. On an evening, a tiger killed a cow belonging to Nguri who hurriedly reported to Pu Duma and Pu Haka. Then the two men comforted her with deep sympathies in their hearts, and they both set out to claim the cow from the tiger. They did not have any gun with them, but they feared nothing to help their beloved one, and were ready to sacrifice themselves for her.

From the above study it is clear that the three works of C. |huamluaia - *Sialton Official*, *Leitlang Dingdi* and *Pu Hanga Leilet Veng* have many essential elements of utopia. The utopian nature of these fictions was mainly based on setting and life. The author chose ideal places as the settings of his fictions and he often set his fictions in parallel worlds. Besides, life portrayed in his fictions was an ideal one. It is an ideal community and an ideal personal life which make the settings of |huamluaia's fiction utopias.

CHAPTER - IV
 UTOPIAN ELEMENTS IN C. |HUAMLUAIA'S NOVEL -
ENGTIN AWM TA ZEL ANG MAW?

The novel of C. |huamluaia, *Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang Maw?* was written in 1945 in Calcutta. The place and date - 'Calcutta, 11 October 1945' - was written at the end of the novel; therefore, the mentioned place and date was believed to be the writing place and the finishing date. During this year, |huamluaia was staying in Calcutta studying I.A. (Intermediate Arts, which equivalent to Higher Secondary, i.e. Class XI & XII). He always felt very lonely in those days and he usually spent most of his time in the College Library (Lalthangliana, *Kaphleia* 95). Under that melancholic mood, |huamluaia wrote the novel which turned a new chapter in Mizo fiction.

Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang Maw? was a utopian novel which paved the way for utopian fiction in Mizo novel. The setting of the story follows such utopian fiction as *The Lost Horizon* by James Hilton, *New Atlantis* by Francis Bacon, *Islandia* by Austin Tappan Wright, *Erewhon* by Samuel Butler and *Island* by Aldous Huxley. Like any other utopian fictional settings of place, this novel also had a unique and unexplored region which existed in isolation somewhere on this earth. But, unlike Thomas More's *Utopia* which covered a big island, the setting of this novel 'Kantu

khua' (Kantu village) covered only a small area and the people were not many in number.

As this chapter is going to deal with the utopian elements appearing in this novel, it is necessary to put forward a brief summary of the story, and this will help us a lot in finding such utopian elements. Besides, the summary will make the novel easier to understand.

As the title suggested, *Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang Maw?* was an open-ended story: how the story might continue is left to the imagination of the readers. The main characters in this novel were Allana and Jama, and the story dealt with both these young men and their misadventures. They were bosom friends and care-free young fellows who used to spend their time for no point. Both of them belonged to Leytlangpooy, a town whose name appears to be a modified form of 'Lunglei,' a real town in the southern part of Mizoram. Although they were not rich, the good condition of their families gave them an opportunity to live a simple life of adventure and hunting.

One day, before the coming of Christmas, Old Lama who belonged to Lungsang village invited Jama to pay a visit to them and thereby attend his son Bona's marriage to a girl (the name of the bride was not mentioned). Jama made his journey alone as his bosom friend Allana refused his invitation to go with him. Allana had a 'mystic fortune teller,' a small book used as a dice that was believed to be a fortune teller. As the dice was cast, Allana got the letter 'j' which was equal in number to 10, and the mystic fortune teller said, "The person who possesses this number will make a long journey, and there he..." The last parts of the words could not be read; therefore, the fate and future of Allana was not clear before the story further revealed it.

Jama reached and stayed at Lungsang village. At the same time, his friend Allana was at home with a lonely heart. One evening, he decided to go for hunting in the east, a place he had never gone before. He then went the way trodden before by Jama and some strangers. Three days later, he reached Bangla village (a village where bungalow of government was built) and boarded with one family. The next day he went with his host to the deep forest for hunting. On the second day of hunting, Allana was determined on success, and he went further and further away from the other hunters. At last, he lost the way.

Allana was attacked by a leopard and was injured on his knee. He managed to go any further and built a poor shelter. While staying there, he lived on fruits and water; and suffered pain and a high fever. He believed that the hut was some thirty miles away from Bangla village.

While in Lungsang village, Old Hluia told Jama and Parlawmi the historical past of two villages - Langthei and Thinghnawk. The narration disclosed the reason of the enmity between the two villages and the way how they fought a bloody war. It was a long story of the origin of Kantu, a big village. The war was won by Langthei villagers and the celebration of their victory lasted seven days. The two villages were thus amalgamated and formed a bigger village in which the two hostile villagers lived. Thus, the defeated villagers organized a rebellion against the victorious villagers, and the rebellion lasted for three days and nights. As a result, a huge amount of blood was shed and large numbers of people were dead.

It was very amazing that Old Hluia died suddenly with the story unfinished when he was about to tell the relation between the rebellion and the origin of Kantu village. This showed us that the utopia, Kantu village, had a secret and sacred story, the telling of which bring death.

When Jama was back home at Lunglei, he was told that Allana was lost and had been thoroughly sought for some days but not found yet. Jama was deeply shocked by the news; therefore, he decided to go out looking for his best friend Allana. A friend in need was a friend indeed - Jama set out alone and followed the way Jama had taken and was determined to find him. At last, Jama fortunately found his friend alive but with a high fever, lying inside the shelter he made. Jama nursed him till Allana recovered from both his injury and his illness.

Allana was well now and had regained his strength. Jama suggested they should go home now because they had been away in the forest for many days and the people would be much worried about him as they could not find him. But Allana, strongly fascinated by the sight of the valley and the big river which they could see from the hut, desired to make an adventure in that beautiful valley. One of the reasons why he desired to go there was this: before the coming of his friend Jama, Allana had an odd dream in which he saw a big village located at the spring of the big river. He also saw in his dream an envelope that contained a letter on which was written 'January (Kantu)' and was delivered to him by a bird. The dream worried him a lot and he would not be happy if they went home without exploring that valley. Jama, at last, agreed with him to have an adventure.

Leaving the leaf shelter, they now turned towards the valley. They were surprised to see and walk on a valley because Mizoram was a hilly state and no big valley and plain could be found anywhere. They were also very happy because they saw the big river running along the valley. While staying beside the river, an eagle came and stole the handkerchief of Allana. The two friends caught the eagle when he came for the second time and kept it in a cage. Later they discovered that the

owner of the eagle was January, a young maiden who had no parents or family, now living in Kantu, a big village at the spring of the river. January reported to the chief that her eagle was lost. The chief then immediately sent a search party to look for the lost eagle that very night. Coming downriver, the search party found nothing at night. But in the morning, they found the eagle called 'Badi' and his keeper Jama was carried away to Kantu while Allana was away hunting somewhere else. They left behind some footprints which told what had happened there.

As mentioned before, Kantu village and its location were the mysterious. It was a civilized society isolated from any other village. Kantu was not known by outside or neighbouring societies, and therefore was never explored by outsiders. The political system, administration, economy, occupations, and the scenery of the natural surroundings were very unique.

When Allana returned from hunting, he found that Jama was lost and taken captive by some enemies. Allana, therefore, quickly moved out to look for his lost friend. As he was walking on the outskirts of Kantu area, the bird's meat he had eaten made him fall unconscious in a paddy field. Two people came, man and woman, who have recently been married and now were taking an evening walk on that paddy field. They found him lying unconscious and carried him home, but no one saw them doing such deed. Allana was nursed by that merciful couple, but no other villagers knew that another stranger was in their village.

The next day, Allana was completely recovered from his illness. He now realized that January, the name he had known from his dream, was a real maiden living in Kantu village. He, therefore, secretly visited her in her house. They loved each other very much at their first meeting. Allana tried his level best to rescue his friend Jama who was now in prison. January was already engaged to Kokea, the

son of Kantu chief. Allana was later seen by other villagers and reported to Kokea who sent his men to capture and bring him out from Khawliana's house where he was now staying. The men came and captured Allana and put him in prison with Jama. They were happy because of their reunion, and they were ready to face every problem happily.

The judgment of the chief and the village official elders was the execution of the two friends - Allana and Jama. When they were ready to be hanged, they were given a chance to deliver a speech before their death. Jama retold the story he heard from Old Hluia about the origin of Kantu village. Just after, the village of Kokea, which was located at the far spring of the river, rose in rebellion against Kantu villagers because Kokea had deceived the daughter of the most respectable official elder of his village by having slept with that village elder's daughter with the promise of marriage and, when the maiden became pregnant, broke his promise. His dishonesty made the villagers furious with Kokea and declared war against Kantu.

The war gave the three people Allana, Jama and January an opportunity to have their freedom. Allana fought with Kokea and defeated him. Kokea's life was spared at the request of January. The two friends took January to the river bank; there a boat was ready for them to make homeward journey. They were helped by three useful friends - Khawliana, Ringi and Buati. Then, after bidding a fond farewell, the three people left Kantu in a small boat downstream. The story thus ended with an open-ending style; how the war will be going on and how the three people will make their homeward adventure has to be imagined by the readers of the novel.

From the above summary we can see that *Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang Maw?* is a novel on the utopian model. The novel is divided broadly into two parts. The first part which contains nine chapters deals with non-utopian setting and the story does not lead us to *Kantu* before the second part begins. There are ten chapters in the second part covering Chapter X to XIX. In the second part titled 'Part II - January Kantu,' the two friends Allana and Jama made their adventure to the land of Kantu, and when the story ends, they were leaving Kantu village with January. Like other utopian novels, this novel also had a number of utopian elements. This chapter points out and elaborates various utopian elements regarding the setting of time, place, plot, political and administrative system, occupational practices and some mystery possessed by this novel.

The setting of this novel could be broadly divided into two worlds - the fictional and the real. Both these settings are confined to Mizoram in pre-independent India. Like his other fictions, there are some real places like Lunglei/Leitlangpooy, Lunglawn and Chanmari in this novel. 'Leitlangpui' is how Lunglei is fondly called by its dwellers, but here in this novel the spelling was modified as 'Leitlangpooy,' the Anglicized word. Lunglawn and Chanmari are the names of streets which exist till today.

Lunglei was the place where some of major characters like Allana, Jama and Nina lived. The early part of the story was set in Lunglei. The family lives of both Jama and Allana were depicted and we came across the relationship between the two friends. Though the two families were not rich, they were not poor either. Therefore, the two friends were free to behave according to their will and they lived a simple but pleasant life. As Lunglei and its surroundings were abundant with fauna, hunters had good hunting and the two friends used to spend their time

hunting birds. They had guns which most of the common people could not afford at that time. The ideal setting of Lunglei bred an adventurous spirit in both the two friends which was an important element in the plot to lead us to utopia, an ideal but imaginary place. It was Lunglei whereto the three major characters were to come at the end of the story. But just after getting onto a boat and were about to move towards Lunglei, the story ended.

But, the main and most important settings of the novel were the fictional ones which did not exist in reality. As was invited, Jama made his travel to Lungsang, the setting of which had some significance in the novel. His travel was meant to attend the marriage of Bona, his cousin. He stayed there for many days, and many parts of the story contained his friendly relation with Old Hluia and Parlawmi, a beautiful girl who was in her teens. Lungsang village was an important setting because it was the living place of Old Hluia who sowed the seed of the utopian adventure. In this village Jama and Old Hluia met and became friends. Jama and Parlawmi often visited Old Hluia who lived alone and did not have any relative or family in that village. It was from this old man that we heard the story of the origin of Kantu village. The story, in the form of a historical event, contained the enmity between two villages, Thinghnawk and Langthei. The two villages waged a war in which a lot of blood was shed and a number of people died. The war, according to Old Hluia, was the origin of Kantu.

‘Kantu’ was the name of a big village created in this novel and ‘Kantu ram’ signified the area of Kantu village including big river, valley, paddy fields and forests. Kantu *ram* or the land of Kantu was a mysterious one having the hilly lands of Mizoram as its neighbouring area. Regarding the geographical location, ‘*Shangri-La*’ in *The Lost Horizon* by James Hilton and ‘*Kantu*’ in *Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang*

Maw? had similarity. Both were not isolated by sea as *Utopia* by Thomas More and other utopias. *Shangri-La*'s "verdant valley and mountaintop lamasery were just as effectively isolated by mountains" (Zubrycki 276). *Kantu*, like *Shangri-La*, was also isolated by hilly areas surrounding it. Again, *Erewhon* by Samuel Butler depicted a hidden utopia in the mountains of New Zealand. But *Kantu* was a hidden plain located among the hills, and unlike *Shangri-La*, it was not located on the mountain or hill. It was not a big river which made the land of *Kantu* isolated; but it was simply a hidden area beyond civilized communities. Amazingly, until the two friends set foot on the soil of that land and village, it was not explored by any outsider who might never know its existence. As the land in its productive nature or quality made them self-sufficient in economy, they did not have any intention to shift themselves to another land. The attractive nature of the land bound them to that land. Besides, the people did not have an adventurous spirit in order to have an exploration of other areas and thereby break their isolation. Therefore, they remained isolated since a long time ago, and they did not have any relation with outsiders who, too, did not come or even know them.

The fictional setting of *Kantu-land* was within the real geographical confines of Mizoram. It was located near the state or international boundary with Myanmar. Both Allana and Jama made their adventurous travels to an utopian land, some twenty miles away from Bangla (a fictional village), located in south-east Mizoram. The beauty and uniqueness of the land fascinated those who never saw and knew that land before. After Allana was found and joined by Jama, the two friends from their leaf-hut often took a look at the great valley and the big river running along with it; during their stay for two weeks, they often watched it with amazement at their leisure times. It was, therefore, obvious that the look of *Kantu-land*, like

those of other utopian places, fascinated the onlookers because of its amazing look and dream like panorama.

Below are some descriptions of Kantu village:

The country looked old and permanent. Being on the valley, it befitted for the people to establish a well-planned village. The streets and main ways were lying straight. Beautiful houses were built, and the rich people had good flower gardens fenced properly. By enjoying a good environment, the people were healthy and sound, and they had fair complexions. (129)

Unlike Thomas More's *Utopia*, details were not given about planning of village, construction of houses, and gardens. But, it was clear that the village was a big one, having civilized and advanced form of living. It was clear from the above presentation that the village had well planned streets and main ways, which was not common in pre-colonial state of Mizoram. A clear description of house buildings was not found in the novel; but, houses were 'beautiful.' The term 'beautiful' meant that the houses of Kantu village were far better than the houses in the contemporary parallel world, because the pre-colonial houses of Mizo were made of bamboos and saplings, the buildings of which were not usually good-looking in the eyes of post-colonial people, though many poor families belonging to villages still lived in that kind of house. The main reason was that since the coming of the first Christian Missionaries (J.H.Lorrain and F.W.Savidge), the Mizo people began to know how to build different types of houses like Assam-type buildings and reinforced concrete buildings, which resulted in the contempt for primitive style of Mizo buildings.

|huamluaia also portrayed a pastime enjoyed by Kantu people:

The peasants were coming home in groups with their tools from their cultivated fields, they were dressed in working dresses. Some were driving home their cattle. While at the same time some people including young men, maidens, children and adults, and even married men were enjoying their pastimes by taking a walk in the meadow beside cultivated fields (129).

The Mizos of pre-colonial state seldom had leisure for enjoyment; their everyday time was full of works and they did not have many leisure activities. Therefore, Ihuamluaia created a fictional country which was economically rich and therefore had enough pastimes in their everyday life. The pastimes eased them of their physical tiredness and mental tensions overwhelming them, and therefore were healthy and they had fair complexions. The element of leisure and pastime, lacked by pre-colonial Mizo people, made Kantu village a utopian place.

Regarding the time setting of the novel, there was a combination of two periods of Mizoram. Simply speaking, the first period may be termed as 'old period' which was pre-colonial, i.e. before the coming of British to Mizoram. The second period can be termed as 'modern period' which covers both colonial and post-colonial periods of Mizoram. One of the characters, Old Hluia narrated a long story of war between Langthei and Thinghnawk, the two villages. The war, according to Hluia, paved the way for the emergence of a new village called 'Kantu.' The people of Kantu, like those of Mitthi Khua in R.Zuala's short story titled *Rauthlaleng*, still lived in the old period while all outsiders lived in modern period. Khuma, the main character of *Rauthlaleng* made his journey to the underworld called 'Thuahriathnuai' in which he met and talked to the people living in an old period. Likewise, Allana and Jama, who were living in modern period

made their adventure (or misadventure) to Kantu which was still in the old age. Everything and every people they saw belonged to an old period and the cultures of the two worlds were very different. By this time setting of the novel, the author gave himself an opportunity to create an ideal community for the people belonging both to old and modern periods.

Secrecy often plays an important role in utopian fiction. For instance, some well-known utopias like *Shangri-La* (The Lost Horizon), *Bensalem* (New Atlantis) and *Erewhon* (Erewhon) had some secrets hidden from the outside people. Exploration was the key to reveal those secrets. Being located in isolation, Kantu, a utopian village also had an amazing secret regarding its origin apart from many other hidden facts. The secret of Kantu origin was not revealed by its founder elder people who knew it. They did not dare reveal even to the younger generations belonging to that village. Amazingly, some secrets were revealed in the novel while the others remain unrevealed.

While staying at Lungsang village attending marriage ceremonial function of Bona, Jama met Old Hluia who knew the secret of Kantu origin. His narration of the story concerning the origin of Kantu village was a long one and it covered a number of pages in the novel. From his narration, it was known that Mizoram at the time of the childhood of Old Hluia, who was very old and had grey hair, was completely different from the modern days when he narrated the story. In those past years great and powerful chiefs ruled over their villages; they treated their subjects very harshly, almost even like slaves. Among those villages, there were two big villages namely Langthei and Thinghnawk, which were hostile to each other. Both grew and grew and became larger and larger. Both had determination to dominate the other, for which purpose they even made their journey to other

smaller villages inviting people to migrate to their villages. Enmity grew between them and both of them began having a secret plan to invade the other. The chief of Langthei village, Zotudawla, who was very cruel, was more responsible for the outbreak of war since he initiated an invasion against his opponent village, Thinghnawk.

As mentioned earlier, war was inevitable because of Zotudawla's invasion. An invasion was carried out after a careful and well-planned warfare. The invaders belonging to Zotudawla's village became victorious and they celebrated their victory for seven days. The amalgamation of the two villages caused a bloody rebellion as the defeated people belonging to Thinghnawk village made a secret plot to take vengeance against the victorious people. The rebellion lasted for three days and night which resulted in the death of a large number of people. The narration of Old Hluia ended before he made a clear revelation of the origin of Kantu village. As he was about to reveal it, he mysteriously died suddenly leaving the narration unfinished.

In fact, the secret was hidden to those who never knew it. As Dongenga, one of the village elders of Kantu, said: "Our village, Kantu, is not an old one. My parents once told me about it, but now it is forbidden to tell. Therefore, you younger generations do not know about the history of our village. Only elders know it." (131-132) When Valria-a asked him why the secret was concealed, Dongenga replied that the reason was to make the younger generations believe that the village was old and stable and was occupied by their forefathers. But, the fact was that their forefathers belonged to Langthei village which did not exist anymore since the bloody rebellion. No one was free to speak of the origin and history of

Kantu village. The secret had a deadly curse which was feared by all. It was because of this curse that Old Hluia died suddenly before completing his narration.

As most of the secret were concealed forever, it was impossible to know how Kantu village was established. Even though the history was known through the narration of Old Hluia, the settlement and establishment of Kantu was not mentioned in the novel. It is unbelievable that, after the rebellion ended, the people of Langthei established a utopian village in a utopian place. “The young men were very surprised to know that Kantu village, including beautiful plains, pleasant cultivated fields, surrounding trees and beautiful flowers around them were not inherited from their forefathers, but were of recent times” (132). This showed that Kantu had an amazing origin. It was desirable to know how the village with all its surroundings originated. Kantu village was established as was done not only in Mizoram but also in every part of the world; therefore, it was not amazing to establish a village. The amazing part was that they could establish a utopian or civilized village as compared to the pre-colonial villages. (Comparison was made with “pre-colonial” villages because it belonged in time and place to the pre-colonial state of Mizoram, although post-colonial state confined it).

Besides, it was also amazing that the utopian area of land also originated recently; it was not inherited from their forefathers. The way they made their settlement in Kantu was uncertain. It was also uncertain whether they migrated to Kantu area or Kantu itself existed recently with some magical powers. The narration of Dongenga is not clear regarding the existence of the village. It seems that the sentence “...not inherited from their forefathers, but they were of recent times” means the utopian place called ‘Kantu’ existed recently. This was the uniqueness of the setting of this novel as compared to other fictional settings.

Kantu area was completely different from that of its surrounding places. The area covered plains, valley and a big river. On the other hand, its surrounding places were all hilly. Allana and Jama saw a number of sea-birds in the river which had a wide channel. A valley also stretched along the river. Again, the people of Kantu had boats for sailing. All this showed that the river was a big one and it would be much bigger than the big rivers of real Mizoram. The valley and the river were rich in flora and fauna. There were a number of monkeys along the river which had strange characters; they hid their faces with their arms whenever Jama and Allana pretended aiming at them with their guns. All these were not seen or experienced in any other parts of Mizoram. Everything was new and interesting to the two friends; and they stayed in Kantu area for some time because of its attractive nature.

The mysterious area of the fictional setting of Kantu was of unknown origin. But, it was true that it existed recently. It was not mentioned in the text how it came into being. One theory was that such ideal place might be evolved out of hilly areas by means of natural calamities like volcanic eruption, flood, etc. The author told us that the land of Kantu was a very young one; therefore, it is argued in this paper that such a young portion of land could not exist among the old ones unless it was formed by natural calamities. The theory was also suggested by the uniqueness of the land as mentioned earlier. Such a unique and mysterious land could not exist without any cause in the narrative; it was the author who created it the secret of which was not revealed in the novel. The evolution theory of the emergence of Kantu was also suggested by the idea that such a utopian land would earlier be explored and occupied by people. It is clear from the text that Kantu was not far away from hilly villages like Langthei and Thinghnawk. Therefore, it

was clear that it could be easily explored by people belonging to Langthei, Thinghnawk or any other villages and it should have attracted those people who might compete one another for its occupation. As we have seen and known in the history of Mizo, the Mizo people often shifted their village from one place to another, and in order to have a better land there were often enmity or war between villages. Besides, they also covered a long distance for hunting animals or searching for food items. Therefore, if Kantu already existed at the time of the war between Langthei and Thinghnawk, it was strongly believed that they would not have waged war only for glory but for Kantu, a utopian land.

There was another secret in Kantu which was vaguely revealed by the author of the novel. Many of the utopias could not be explored by personal will without divine intervention or some other means. In *The Lost Horizon*, the Tibetan *Shangri-La* was a hidden utopia on a mountain. Conway and his few friends accidentally came to that place just because of high-jacking and air-crash. On the other hand, shipwreck led Will Farnaby to enter a utopian island in Aldous Huxley's novel *Island*, and became an accidental explorer of the island.

Kantu, a utopian and amazing land, could not be explored by those who did not belong to the same. They could explore somehow with other force, but not by their own will. The proof was shown through the two friends, Jama and Allana. Both entered the village not by their might or will, but by the force of Kantu people. While Allana was away hunting for animals or birds, Jama was captured by a group of people sent by the chief of Kantu. The people came to the river because they were searching for a wise eagle named 'Badi-a.' The eagle belonged to January, a beautiful maiden, who had been betrothed to the chief of Kantu. The two friends, Allana and Jama captured it on his second coming because he stole a

white handkerchief of Allana on his first coming. And now they caught him and put him in a cage. The search party came to the river bank and saw Jama and the caught eagle. They brought by force Jama to their village, made him a captive, and kept him in prison for later execution. It was notable that he did not enter the utopian village not by his personal will but by a force against which he could not resist.

The case was also similar to Allana who, too, could not enter the Kantu village by his might and will. On his return he found that his friend Jama was no more to be seen in their leaf-hut on the river bank. He stood in despair beside the hut, but soon found on the sand a number of footprints, and the eagle was also gone. He therefore knew that some enemies captured his friend and took him away to their abodes. He sprang up to his feet and moved out to look for his friend. He thought that there was a village at the spring of the river; before the coming of Jama in search of him he had a dream in which he saw a big village beside the river, and now every incident made him strongly believe that a village would be there somewhere near the river.

On his way Allana shot a bird and ate it after having roasted it on fire. The meat of that bird soon made him ill before he entered the village, and he fell to the ground unconscious. The place where he fell was a cultivated paddy field belonging to Khawlana; it was “about some four miles away” (139) from the village. Unfortunately, the newly-wed couple made their walk for enjoyment to that field, and they saw Allana who was lying unconscious. The two persons were very kind as compared to other villagers of Kantu. They did not give a report to anybody including their chief. They carried him home and nursed on him till he recovered completely. Here, we have to note that Allana, who had a will to enter

the village, could not fulfill his desire by his might. He could enter Kantu only because he was brought into that village by the new couple. From the cases of both Jama and Allana, it was clear that Kantu was unexplorable by any other people who did not belong to that village. In fact, the consent of Kantu people was also needed to set foot on that soil.

Although there was no clear description of political and social administration of Kantu like that of Thomas More's *Utopia*, we see that there were some specific and elaborate administrations which were different from that of the pre-colonial villages of Mizoram. There was another village the name of which was not mentioned in the novel; from the words of Khawlana we came to know that the people of Kantu village called it by its kenning form, *Village of Spring*, because it was located somewhere on upriver bank. The village was confined to the land or area of Kantu. The chief of Kantu ruled over that village indirectly. But all the local administrations of the Village of Spring were mainly controlled by village elders. Among the elders Lianggura was the leader, but he was subordinate to the Kantu chief. The chief's son, known as Kokea, ruled over that village and he represented his father, the chief. Kokea, who had nothing much to do in the administration, often visited the village, stayed there for some days and then returned to Kantu as a routine.

Like the supremacy of king, the chief of Kantu also had supremacy over his subjects; he was the supreme authority in both the villages and every word spoken by him was respected and fulfilled by his subjects. As the chief himself mentioned, his word was law. If there was no existing law for any judicial case, he immediately made law when and where needed, and his new law should be effective there and then. The chief was assisted by the village elders who were

selected by the chief himself. The village elders gave him advice on special issues, but the chief was decision maker. Like the local administration of pre-colonial villages of Mizoram, Kantu village also had political or social ranking systems. Under the chief were the village elders who held the highest position in the society next to the chief. The chief and village elders often had beautiful and majestic clothes far superior to that of the common people (193). Unlike those of the real villages, there were some soldiers who had important status in the local administration. These soldiers had guns which were shot on special occasion such as execution of criminals (193).

Village crier, like those in Mizo villages, occupied an important place in the society. In the novel, we see that the village crier often made announcements in the streets and let the people know some issues concerning village affairs. He made all his announcements according to the command and order of the chief and the elders. The chief and some important people had paid-servants for their private or official purposes. For example, we see a servant standing beside the door of the chief's house. He was always ready for any errand, and he also served as a guide for the chief's visitors including the local people. January, who was to become the wife of the chief's son Kokea, also kept in her house a maid servant named Buati. Besides, she was also attended by Ringi, the wife of Khawlana. Ringi was both a cleaner of clothes and a gardener. It was clear from the story that these servants rendered their services by profession and they spent much of their time in their services. The common people generally consisted peasants or farmers since there was no other profession other than the above said professions.

Thomas More, in his Book Two of *Utopia*, mentioned the marriage customs of the people living in Utopia. They were detailed customs followed by the people

and those who offended against the customs were punished. The customs included careful choosing of marriage partners, choosing of mates, practice of monogamy, divorce systems, and punishments of premarital intercourse and adulteries (Adams 60-62). |huamluaia also highlighted some of the marriage customs of the people of Kantu. The people followed, like those in the Mizo society, the system of monogamy. Even well-to-do people including the chief could marry one woman. For the unmarried sons of the chief, it was their custom to make engagement to one of the most beautiful maidens of the village. Since the people of Kantu and the Village of Spring did not have any connection with other people living outside their boundaries, people belonging to that land usually married.

The celebration of marriage was a majestic one as compared to the pre-colonial custom of Mizo society. From the words of the village crier we see how the marriage of Kokea and January would be officially celebrated. The village crier told the people how to prepare themselves for the upcoming marriage between Kokea and January. He also told them how the marriage function would be carried out. Each family had to contribute five pots of rice beer for the appointed day. Any other food items like bread, maize-tea and meat were also to be served on that day and these would be enough for people to eat. Like in the modern days, there would be special entertainments on the marriage day in order to glorify the new couple and entertain all those who attend the function. Besides, there would be a solemn preparation for that marriage, and the duration of preparation period would last for four days during which everyone had to show happy faces.

The customs of Utopia and Kantu had one similarity. Both were against premarital intercourse and they had definite forms of punishment. In Utopia, if premarital intercourse was discovered and proved, “the guilty parties are

forbidden to marry during their whole lives, unless the prince, by his pardon, alleviates the sentence” (Adams 60). The people of Kantu also stood against premarital intercourse. When the chief’s son, Kokea, broke their custom by having sexual intercourse with the daughter of Lianggura who belonged to Village of Spring with false promise, they became very angry and made a rebellion against the royal family and the people of Kantu. There was no way to punish the royal family for their fault, but their punishment was in the form of rebellion.

Thomas More, in his *Utopia*, wrote about the legal procedures of Utopian country. The procedures were meant for judicial administration or court judgement. The novel of |huamluaia also mentioned some aspects of judicial administration and some legal procedures. In Chapter XVI, Jama, who had been accused of theft, was at the chief’s court for the settlement of his case. The common people were allowed to hear and see how judgement was carried out; but they were not allowed to be present inside the court, they had to stay outside. The official judges included the chief and village elders, and some witnesses were also to be there. All the officials sat in circle while settling the criminal cases. If there was no existing law and order for any case, the chief could make law instantaneously in the court and the new law would be effective there and then. Every word of the chief, whether right or wrong, was law. And the words or decisions of the chief should be accepted by village elders (167). The decisions of the officials were publicly announced by village crier in every street; this was an important means of public information.

The legal procedures of Kantu village appearing in the novel were mainly concerning

theft. The procedures in this novel included both customary laws and the new laws made by the chief. Lianga, one of the village elders, mentioned a customary law concerning theft:

From hundreds of years ago our forefathers had the custom of giving severe punishment to thieves. Someone who stole any property of the chief had to be publicly disgraced by letting him stand before the people, and according to the decision of the chief and village elders he had to be executed by hanging him or burning him alive (167).

It was the custom of Kantu people and officials to put criminals in prison or jail before their execution. Every punishment was severe, disgraceful or even intolerable for the criminals. Death penalty was the biggest punishment which was commonly given to criminal. But, the criminal could be somehow saved by any other person who could show or reveal that the former was innocent (195).

Kantu had a formal execution system which was deliberately mentioned through the accusation and trial of Jama and Allana. The execution was mainly carried by two means - hanging or burning alive (167). The criminals were kept in prison before execution. It was the custom of the Kantu people to show respect and kindness to prisoners, and a delicious food was served to them on the morning of execution. No one ill-treat them; they never kick them, nor spit on them, nor beat them with a stick, but instead talked to them politely and bid them a good farewell (192). Allana and Jama were very convinced of this good treatment. Before coming to the gallows, the two friends were served a delicious food with boiled meat of two hens. Besides, the criminals were given an opportunity to deliver a speech on the gallows before execution. But the chief had supreme authority whether to grant them freedom of speech or not.

The execution of the criminals was done in the gallows. Like some of the medieval European countries, Kantu also had gallows on which was carried out execution. But their gallows was temporary; they made a new gallows every time when there would be an execution. On the eve of execution, the gallows was made in an amphitheater style by the joint work of the society known as *hnatlang*. They used bamboos and saplings as the materials of gallows. Rows of bamboo-seats were arranged on a steep slope and the front parts of the seats were meant or reserved for high officials and well-to-do people. Before the seats was a stage where the criminal was to be hanged. The stage was artfully constructed. There was a wall under the stage. This was meant for the people who would watch an execution. The wall would hide the victims of execution after hanging and the people would not be able to see the criminals suffering and dying. There was no mention of how and when and where other criminals were burned alive even though we know that burning alive, from hundreds of years ago, was another capital punishment.

As in Mizo society, Kantu people also had social obligations to the welfare of the community. The chief and village elders gave to the people law and order which should be respected and carried out by everyone living in the community. Every citizen knew his or her duty to which he or she was obliged. Regarding joint works for special or definite tasks, the village crier made public information by announcing loudly and clearly in the streets. Such information made the people ready for joint works to be done the next day or any other day to come. In the novel of C. |huamluaia, we see that the people of Kantu, according to the information of village crier, built a good and systematic gallows for the execution of the two friends, Allana and Jama. All citizens were informed to take part in this

joint work. Again, for the upcoming marriage of Kokea and January, all were informed to make good preparation, and each family should prepare five pots of rice-bear for the appointed day.

The uniqueness of Kantu also lies in the form of occupational practices. As mentioned earlier, the land of Kantu was a flat one. Being located near a big river and valley, the soil of the land was fertile and productive. Cultivation was the main occupation of the people. Near the village stretched a vast area of cultivated land which was suitable for evening walk and pastime. It is believed that there would be surplus of production from cultivation and this would be the main cause of their advancement. Mizoram, a hilly state, is not suitable for productive cultivation as compared to the plains. Therefore, people of the past had to spend most of their time for unproductive cultivation. This was a big obstacle to advancement or civilization. But the people of Kantu had plenty of time for thinking and doing many other useful things apart from their agricultural occupation. As a result, they had good buildings, well-planned streets and an advanced village. Again, productive cultivation gave them a lot of opportunities to set their minds for enjoyment, and they took many days to enjoy even only one occasion.

Animal husbandry occupied an important place in the occupation of Kantu people. In Chapter XIII, we see that some people were driving home their cattle. Only after the coming of British and Indians to Mizoram that cattle were commonly known to the people of Mizo. It seems that Buffalo and mithun were only known to them among the cattle family. Amazingly, the people of Kantu bred cattle on purpose; this could be accepted as one of their occupations. Chicken was also seen in village of Kantu. Besides, they kept a wise eagle called 'Badi-a' who was an old

one and was inherited from their forefathers. The eagle played an important role in times of war in the past as he could be sent as a messenger for bringing or giving important messages. All this shows that the people of Kantu had the knowledge of animal husbandry and the author used cattle breeding as an element for the advancement of Kantu village.

Like other Mizo villages, we see rice-beer in Kantu village. From the announcement of the crier we see that people had to prepare five pots of rice-beer for the marriage of Kokea and January. Rice-beer was an important food item of the villagers and people had enough to drink in times of special occasion. It served as refreshment for the people. There was also enough bread to be served on the marriage day. The author used the word 'chhang' for bread in the novel. As 'chhang' in the pre-colonial Mizo society denoted bread made of rice, the bread in Kantu was believed to be made of the same. We know, from the public information of the village crier, that there would be abundant meat on the marriage day for public consumption. This shows that there were plenty of animals in the village and animal husbandry was an important occupation in Kantu. It was amazing that the people had a special tea called 'zing mim.' This was made of maize, and it was served as tea in the morning. The pre-colonial people of Mizo, who did not know tea or coffee, usually drank rice-beer instead of tea. But many of them did not drink rice-beer everyday because it took a lot of time to prepare it. So, they usually drank on special occasions like marriage, death, celebration of victory in wars or raids, festivals and at the times of fatigue and strong desire for drinking. Therefore, 'zing mim' could be counted as an important element of the advancement of Kantu, a utopian village or land.

The pre-colonial people of Mizo did not have any alphabet for writing or reading. It was the first two Christian missionaries J.H.Lorrain and F.W.Savidge who made the Mizo alphabet in 1894 according to the Roman script. It was the civilization of the people of Kantu, who had been living in isolation, to have the knowledge of alphabet. Although it was not mentioned about their writing forms, they could read the writings of modern Mizo. There were some letters on Allana's handkerchief stitched by Nina. As the handkerchief was stolen by an eagle and came to the hands of January, Buati was requested to read the words written on that handkerchief. Buati said, "I believe I can read them, but I will not understand them." As she said, she could hardly read the words written in English: "With love to my darling brother Allan - From Nina." It is strongly believed that if the words were written in Mizo, they would understand them. English was Greek to them, and it was impossible for them to understand those foreign words.

Since they had the knowledge of Mizo alphabet, it was believed that they could read or write. As mentioned before, they belonged to an old period in which no alphabetical system was known by the Mizo people. Notwithstanding their complete isolation and no communication with outside world, they, like any other people belonging to advanced countries, had the knowledge of alphabetical system. It was certain that they had the same alphabetical system as that of ours who belong to modern days since Buati could read the words written in modern alphabet of Mizo. This, therefore, shows that Kantu was a civilized village as compared to other villages of its period.

In Thomas More's *Utopia*, the people did not like war and "they thought nothing so inglorious as the glory won in battle" (Adams 66). However, they were often involved in war for revenge as well as for self-protection. As a result, both

men and women had military training and special warfare was often conducted for any possible war. In *Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang Maw?* also, war and warfare were important elements of the novel. Before the mythical existence of Kantu, there were both war and rebellion undertaken by the forefathers of Kantu people. From the narration of Old Hluia we see that the raiders belonging to Langthei had a systematic warfare against their enemy village called Thinghnawk. The raiders were divided into many groups all of which had different roles to play. They also had the knowledge of espionage system, a very effective system of war. Systematic warfare let the raiders become victorious in the war and they became ancestors of Kantu people.

According to Kim Daley and Suzanne Gaulocher, simplicity is an important element of utopia (Daley 6). By simplicity, they mean simple life and simple thinking, but with contentedness. The two major characters of the novel, Jama and Allana, by their misadventure, entered the utopian land of Kantu. Everything they saw was a miracle to them. They enjoyed the sight of beautiful and wonderful nature like big river, valley, flora and fauna of the utopian area. When they reached the river they made a leaf-hut on the river-bank, and after this they swam the river. Then they went along the river-bank downstream about three miles away from their hut, they thought their opposite side was more comfortable, and they also noticed that the river became bigger and bigger as it ran along (Lalthangliana 122). Below is the way of life enjoyed by the two friends on the river-bank:

They peacefully spent their night time in an unknown place. They lit fire on that river-bank and while sitting and talking on the rock and making themselves warm with fire they joyfully watched their surrounding and the river channel and stars on the sky... When they

woke up in the morning they delightfully ran along the river-bank.

Jama, who felt more comfortable, said with delight, “Taju (Allan),
how comfortable the river-bank is! I think all Mizos will enjoy it...”

(123)

Being interested in hunting, they enjoyed hunting animals living and grazing there.

Although they had been away from home for many days and were being the worry
of people at home, they peacefully spent their time there with no haste.

CHAPTER - V

The previous chapters are clearly indicative of the fact that the fictions of C. |huamluaia occupy an important place not only in Mizo literature in a general but also in utopian literature in particular. This dissertation mainly concentrates on the study of |huamluaia's fictional works bearing on utopian elements; but his prose works are also coloured by utopian thought. In this Chapter V we will summarize the major findings of this dissertation as a conclusion.

In Chapter I we see that C. |huamluaia was an important figure in Mizo literature, and his name and works deserve to be mentioned in the trends and development of Mizo fiction. He has to be included among the 'Four Wheels of Mizo Fiction,' because he was not only among the first four of Mizo fiction writers, but also was a major influential writer. Each of the Four Wheels turned a new chapter in Mizo fiction through his writings. For example, L. Biakliana was the first writer of fiction, both novel and short story. His fictions are not based upon any historical event or existing stories, but are purely original and creative. He was therefore called the "Father of Mizo Fiction." Kaphleia, a friend of Biakliana, introduced historical novel with his 'Chhingpuii.' With the coming of Lalzuithanga, two genres of fiction such as Gothic fiction and Detective fiction were introduced in Mizo literature. C. |huamluaia, the only one among the Four who belonged to

the southern part of Mizoram, also turned a new chapter in fiction with his introduction of utopian fiction.

In this study, it is found that C. |huamluaia wrote just three fictional works, but six in all. B.Lalthangliana in his *Kaphleia Leh C. |huamluaia Hnuhma* writes that the fictions of |huamluaia number three only, and many writers also exclude the other three works from his fictions. In addition to *Leitlang Dingdi*, *Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang Maw?* and *Sialton Official*, three other works such as *Pu Hanga Leilet Veng*, *The Disaster* and *The Days That Followed* are also to be included in fiction. The last two are written in English and the stories are set in Shillong.

There are a number of elements in utopian literature which may vary from one literature to another. Some literary pieces which are not regarded as utopian literature can also have utopian elements. For example, some of C. |huamluaia's fictional works such as *Leitlang Dingdi* and *Sialton Official* are not written as complete utopian fictions. But, these two fictions contain a number of important utopian elements like ideal settings, advanced societies and ideal communities. Again, as mentioned before, one of his essays titled *Zoram Nipui* also contains ideal perspectives on the physical features of Mizoram as is seen in summer days.

On the other hand, *Pu Hanga Leilet Veng* and *Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang Maw?* are purely utopian fiction after the fashion of European utopian writers. The former has been regarded as an essay because it does not have a good plot. But this research argues that *Pu Hanga Leilet Veng* is a short story as it is composed of basic elements of fiction such as setting, character, diction, plot and narration. It has a short plot and the major part of the story is based upon narration and dialogue between two characters - Pu Haka and Pu Duma. From the narration and the dialogues we gather ingredients of utopian fiction. The general appearance of

natural surroundings, the relationship between characters and the general view on the farm described in the story show that the farm is an ideal place for human living. The farm, being small in size, has a small number of families living an ideal community.

The most famous fictional work of C. Jhuamluaia is *Sialton Official*, a short story set in two parallel worlds. The story contains utopian elements confined mainly to ideal way of life and idealized setting. Life portrayed in this fiction is beautiful and idealized. The people of Zolawn enjoyed an ideal community where they were bound by love, unity and compassion. There is no mention of any bad side of the community or town. The author and his family shared the good life of the Zolawn people who were kind to them and it was the people who helped in the narrator's moral transformation at the end of the story. In addition to the ideal community life, the author also portrays an ideal life in the form of romance. We see the love relationship between the narrator and a Khasi girl named Dorothy, and between the former and a Mizo girl called Nguri. The former relation is idealized romance which ends in a sad farewell. The setting of the story, Shillong, became an ideal place for the narrator because Dorothy lived there. They loved each other and they often had a date when life was beautiful to them. As the narrator could not marry Dorothy, he married Nguri after he returned to his homeland, Mizoram. It was Nguri and his little two children who made him happy and forget his sad past life. The life of the narrator's family, as portrayed in the story before a terrible disaster, is an ideal one. Therefore, the narrator, the narrator's family and Zolawn community enjoyed earthly bliss of an ideal way of life.

Regarding the setting of *Sialton Official*, the author creates an ideal town, Zolawn which is located between Aizawl and Champhai. The town, ruled by a chief as a representative of government of India, is depicted as a civilized and advanced one. The author uses the establishment of good hotels as a means to depict Zolawn as a civilized town. The landscape of the town is not clearly mentioned, while the author, through the narrator's words, lets us know that it is an ideal, pleasant and advanced town. It is the life of the community which makes Zolawn a utopian setting. |huamluaia uses Zolawn town in his two fictions - *Sialton Official* and *Pu Hanga Leilet Veng*. The farm village of Pu Hanga is situated within the jurisdiction of Zolawn town.

Leitlang Dingdi is a story of the narrator's dream which passes through six stages. The utopian nature of the story is depicted in the form of a dream in which the narrator saw a beautiful girl who made the setting of the story a Paradise for him. The story can be regarded as a travel to a dream land where we see some ideal settings - 'Street X,' an imaginary beautiful and advanced street; a pleasant meadow beside a breezy cliff where two Mizo wild flowers *dingdi* and *chawnpui* grow; the house of a rich man wherein people sat and sang community songs in harmony. The beauties of Darpuii (who is known in the story as 'Leitlang Dingdi') and Chawngpuii are emphatically mentioned in the story and their beauties paint the settings of the story as beautiful or pleasant places. The narrator could not set his eyes on other things except upon the beauty of Darpuii with whom he had a ride in his nice car. As utopian fiction demands ideal setting and ideal character, *Leitlang Dingdi* can be said to have utopian elements.

The novel of C. |huamluaia, *Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang Maw?* is a utopian fiction having the nature of Western utopian novels. A number of utopian elements are

contained in this novel. Like many other utopian novels, this novel is a travel story in which the two major characters had their adventure in a hidden utopia known as 'Kantu.' This utopia is set somewhere in the eastern part of Mizoram and it covers a wide area including a big river and a valley. The people of Kantu were ignorant of the world beyond and they enjoyed an isolated culture. The culture of Kantu people is a civilized but it is confined to pre-colonial Mizo culture. A number of utopian elements such as ideal setting, mystery or secrecy, advanced village administration, elaborate customs and traditions, enforcement of law and order, formal execution system, military system, advanced occupational practices, knowledge of alphabet, and simple but contented way of life. In this way, the author creates an imaginary ideal land and village. But, unlike Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis*, the end of this utopia (Kantu) is left to the imagination of the readers. The origin of Kantu is vaguely mentioned in this novel, and the author tries to let the readers believe that Kantu is ended by a civil war that broke out at the end of the story; but as the novel is written in an open-ended style, the eventual extinction of Kantu and its citizens is left to the imagination of the readers.

C. |huamluaia's utopian thought makes his literary works interesting to read. As he spent much of his time reading English literature while he was studying outside Mizoram, the influence of utopian literature and utopian thought is seen in his literary works. He was the person who could see the positive aspects of everything rather than the negative ones. For example, many people do not think of Mizoram as a pleasant and beautiful place because they compare it to other countries or places. But, in the eyes of C. |huamluaia, like that of Rokunga the poet, Mizoram was a beautiful and pleasant place. As the proverb says, "There is no place like home," Mizoram is an ideal place for him even though he went to and

saw other beautiful places outside Mizoram. He was charmed by the beauty of Mizoram, and even the crags, hills and mountains were dear to him. He was also charmed by the spring season in Mizoram which, according to him, was a good time when everything was in bloom and happiness and contentedness were to be found in everything that could be heard or seen. Therefore, |huamluaia found himself living in an ideal place.

English or European utopian literature is often a political satire or an attempt to improve upon an existing political order, while the utopia of |huamluaia was based mainly on literary purpose. No satirical element is evident in his works as a means to denounce the political condition of Mizoram at the author's time. On the other hand, he wrote his fictional works in order to give pleasure to his readers, and for this purpose he created idyllic places where he formed ideal communities and isolated cultures. He tried to let his readers know that there can be utopian society or utopian place in Mizoram; but it depends upon the will of those who live in it.

The utopian elements of |huamluaia's fictions can be broadly divided into utopia of geographical setting and utopia of culture. The first part signifies imaginary ideal places such as Kantu (*Engtin Awm Ta Zel Ang Maw?*), the farm village of Pu Hanga (*Pu Hanga Leilet Veng*), Zolawn town (*Sialton Official*) and a dream land of the narrator (*Leitlang Dingdi*). The utopia of |huamluaia mainly depends upon ideal geographical settings which are usually set in parallel worlds. There is a combination of real and fictional place in his fiction, and the main focus is on the fictional ones. Like other European utopian fictions, most of |huamluaia's fictions are set in isolated places. Isolation plays an important role in making the settings of his fictions utopian because it makes isolated cultures wherein people

live a different way of life. But the farm village of Pu Hanga, although isolated in some way, has some connections with outside town called Zolawn. But, Zolawn in *Sialton Official* is not isolated at all; on the other hand, it is one of the towns of Mizoram as is seen in the fiction. The utopias of |huamluaia are not isolated by sea but by forest, river and hills. Among the studied four fictions, only Kantu is set in a hidden place. It remained unexplored till Allana and Jama set foot on the soil of that mysterious land.

The second part, utopia of culture, is a picture of ideal life and ideal community. The society of Kantu is well-organized and every citizen is bound by social obligations and customs. In this way, the societies of |huamluaia's Kantu and Thomas More's Utopia have some resemblances. In these two utopian communities people are chained by rules and regulations, but they live a happy and contented life. We see an ideal community life in the farm village of Pu Hanga in *Pu Hanga Leilet Veng* and Zolawn in *Sialton Official*. People love one another. Everyone is willing to help others in times of need. The ideal communities in |huamluaia's fictions are made by ideal people living in those communities. And, ideal culture and ideal setting go hand in hand in his fictions.

Utopian thought has many significant connections with the human mind. In addition to giving an impetus for making progress in human life, it gives pleasure to human beings. If a person does not have utopian thought, his life will be suffocating, dark and not progressive. Some people who have strong belief in religious utopia make their walk in life meaningful. At the same time, other people who are not religious also need comfort and joy during their lifetime. It is believed that |huamluaia wrote his fictional works not for the purpose of escapism as he was a positivist in his thinking and could see the better side of the existing

condition of his time. At the same time, he wanted to uplift the existing condition of Mizoram and make it a better place. He was an ex-MLA in political platform and a founder President of Mizo Cultural Organization (MCO) in cultural movement. Therefore, it was certain that political as well as cultural uplift of Mizoram was the dream of |huamluaia and this dream was realized in the form of fiction.

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APPENDICES

NAME OF CANDIDATE : LALNUNPUIA

DEGREE : M.PHIL

DEPARTMENT : MIZO

TITLE OF DISSERTATION : UTOPIAN ELEMENTS IN THE
FICTION OF C. | HUAMLUAIA

DATE OF PAYMENT OF ADMISSION : 14/07/2011

APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL :

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2. SCHOOL BOARD : 02/08/2012
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