REPRESENTATION OF MIZO ETHNICITY IN FICTIONAL NARRATIVES: COLONIAL TO CONTEMPORARY TIMES

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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REPRESENTATION OF MIZO ETHNICITY IN FICTIONAL
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled **"Representation of Mizo Ethnicity in Fictional Narratives: Colonial to Contemporary Times"** submitted by Albert Vanlalruata in fulfillment of Doctor of Philosophy in history is an original work and has not been submitted elsewhere for other degree. It is recommended that this thesis be placed before examiners for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Dated: 16/07/2020
Place : Aizawl

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DECLARATION

I, Albert Vanlalruata, hereby declare that the subject matter of the thesis entitled, "Representation of Mizo Ethnicity in Fictional Narratives: Colonial to Contemporary Times" is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form any basis for the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in other University/Institute.

This is being submitted to Mizoram University for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

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Most of all, I thank the Almighty for his immense blessings.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAPA	: American Association of Physical Anthropologists
ADC	: Autonomous District Council
BNLF	: Bru National Liberation Front
CIPC	: Chhinlung Israel People's Convention
HPC (D)	: Hmar Peoples' Convention (Democratic)
HPC	: Hmar Peoples' Convention
IPO	: Indigenous Peoples' Organisation
LIO	: Luz Israel Organisation
MBDPF	: Mizoram Bru Displaced People's Forum (MBDPF)
MNA	: Mizo National Army
MNF	: Mizo National Front
MNFF	: Mizo National Famine Front
MPO	: Mizoram Paite Organisation
MSA	: Mizoram State Archives
MU	: Mizo Union
PNC	: Paite National Council
RDCP	: Reang Democratic Convention Party
SPCK	: Society for Promotion of Christian Knowledge
ST	: Scheduled Tribe
TAD	: Tribal Affairs Department
UMFO	: United Mizo Freedom Organisation
UNESCO	: United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNWGIP	: United Nations Working Group of Indigenous People
YLA	: Young Lushai Association
YMA	: Young Mizo Association
ZORO	: Zo Reunification Organisation

GLOSSARY

Bawi	: a person who took refuge in the chief's house for protection
Bawlpu	: a priest who performed sacred healing, a witch doctor
Chhiah	: levy, tax
Chhungkua	: family, relatives, kith and kin
Chi	: kinfolk, clan, tribe
Duhlian	: a dialect of Lusei group
Hawrawp	: alphabet
Hlamzuih	: infant dying shortly after birth
Hnam	: clan, tribe, nation
Hnamchawm	: the common people
Huan	: a vegetable garden
Kawl	: a Myanmarese/Burmese
Kawr	: a Bengali
Khawchhak Mi	: people of the east
Khawnbawl/upa	: an elder or advisor to the chief
Khawtlang	: community, the social order
Khua	: a deity/spirit believed to be custodian of nature
Khuangchawi	: community feast given by chiefs and affluent families
Khuarel	: natural order of existence
Kuang Ur	: disposal of dead body in a sealed wooden coffin that was kept near a fire until the flesh decomposed and the bones were left for possession
Kut	: a feast or festival, a celebration
Lal	: a chief, a chieftain or chieftainess/chieftess
Lawm	: reciprocal assistance given especially in manual works
Len	: a net, fishing net
Lo	: a cultivation site or plot

|	
Ma	: to divorce one's wife
Manding Sap	: a colonial military officer in command
Mau Tam	: a periodical die down of bamboos followed by a plaque of rats and caused famine, which occurs about every fifty years
Mitthi Khua	: abode of departed spirits entered by those who did not achieved the status of *Thangchhuah* (see below)
Pa	: a father
Pasaltha	: a heroic warrior and hunter
Pialral	: abode of departed spirits entered by persons who achieved the status of *Thangchhuah* (see below)
Puithiam	: common name for a priest
Ram	: a land, a forest, a territory, a domain
Ram Leilung Fa	: son of soil
Ramhual	: a privilege person who chose a cultivation plot before the common people
Ramri	: boundary, border line, frontier
Sadawt	: a priest who performed obligatory ceremonial rites
Sal	: a slave, a captive
Sap	: a white person, a European
Saphun	: to adopt the belief and practices of another, to change one's belief system and tribe affiliation
Sial	: a domesticated buffalo (*Bibos frontalis*)
Thangchhuah	: a title given to a man (with his wife) who distinguished himself by killing a certain number of animals in the chase or giving a number of public feasts
Thirdeng	: a blacksmith
Tlangau	: a village crier, a public informant who make known the chief's order
Vai	: a foreigner, an alien (now specifically refers to plains Indians)
Vantlang	: same as *Khawtlang*

Zalen : privilege group that chose cultivation plot before the common people

Zau Dawh : raised platform built outside the house by a man who performed more than three *Khuangchawi*

MAP OF MIZORAM
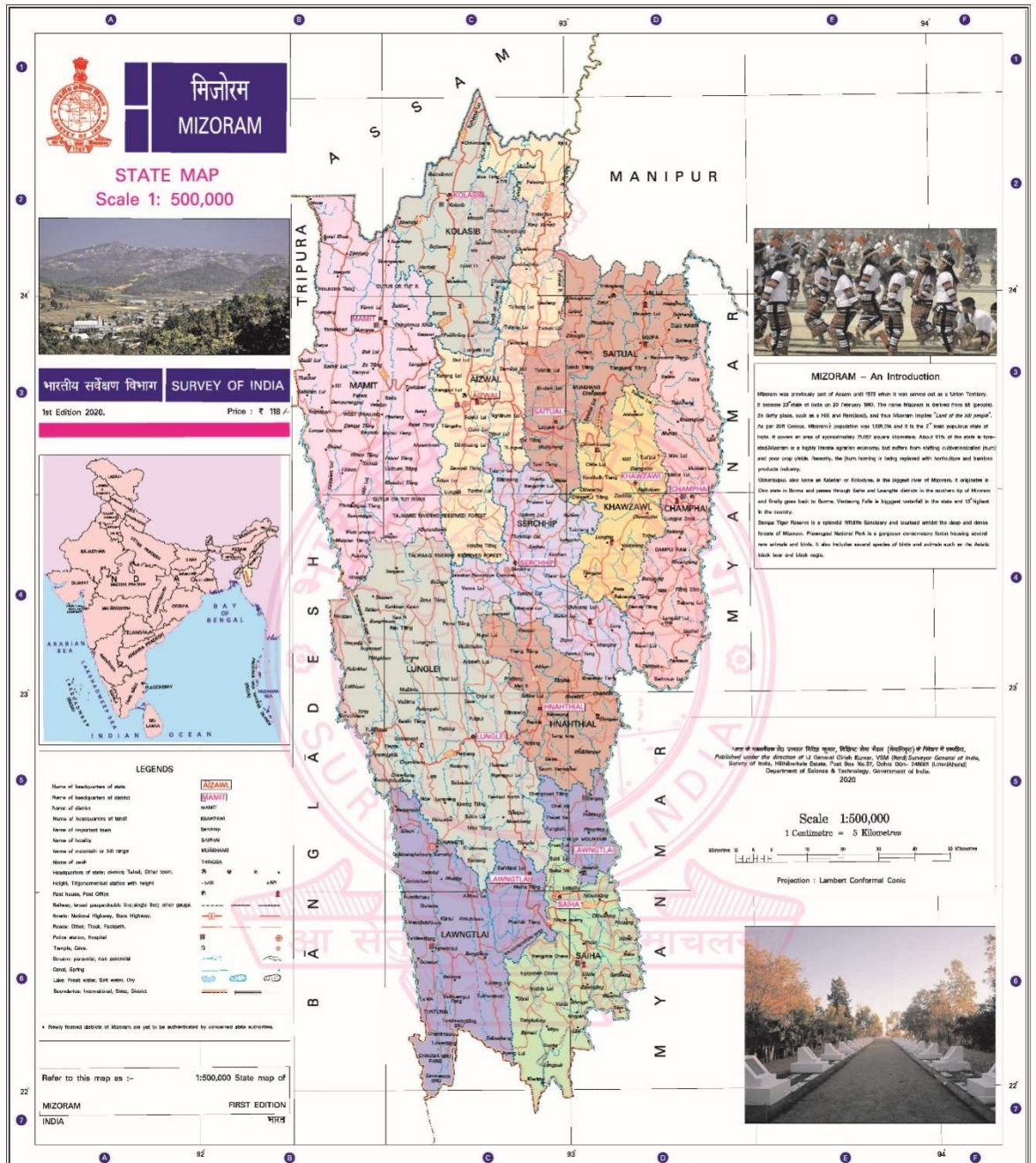
ETHNIC MAP OF MIZORAM
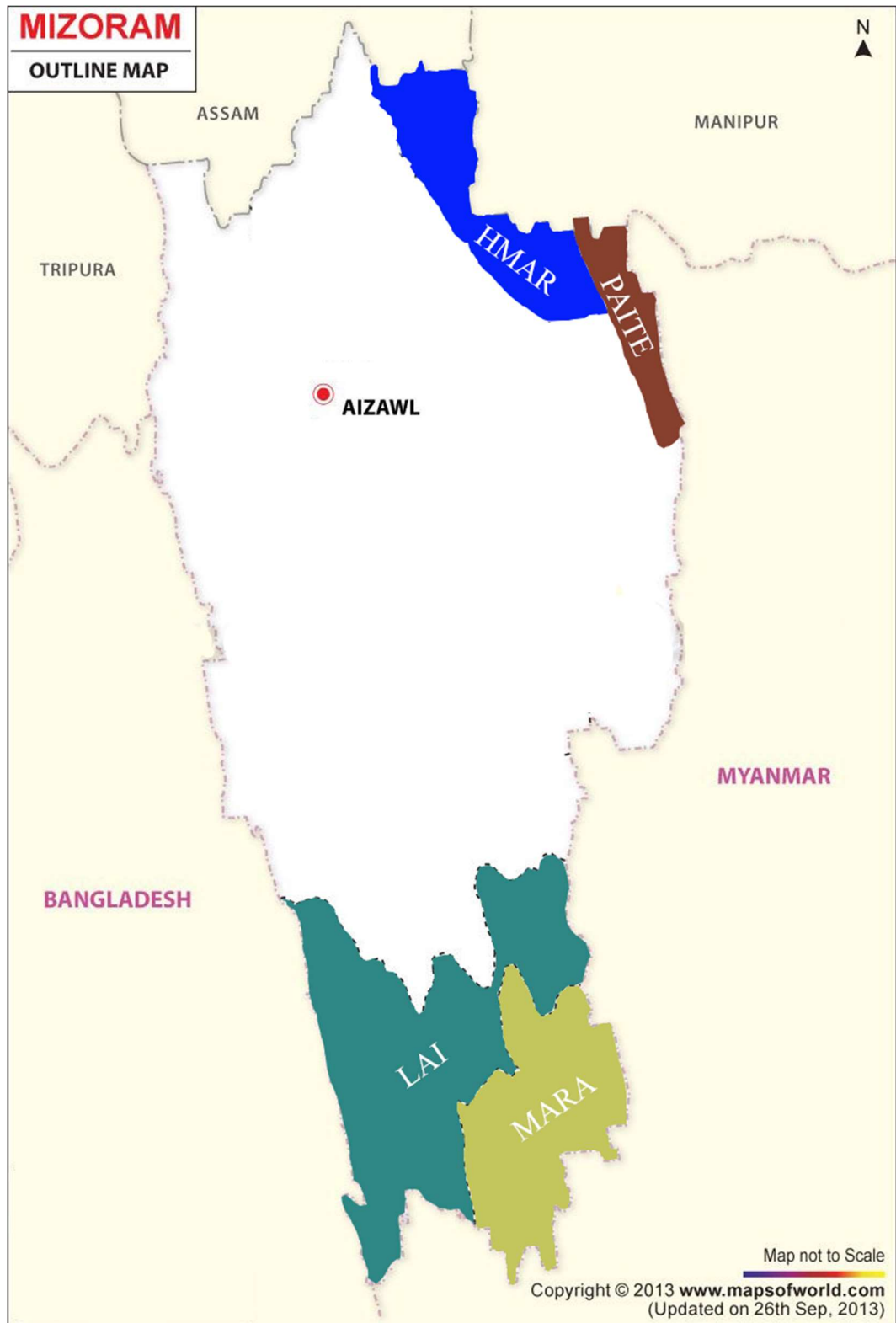
CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH RATIONALE

Mizoram is a geo-political entity within the nation-state of India that became the twenty-third state of the Indian Union by the enactment of the fifty-third Constitutional Amendment Act on 7 August 1986 and the State of Mizoram Act, 1986 by the Parliament of India.[1] It was mapped out during the British colonisation of the entire Indian sub-continent and was named Lushai Hills District Council that was administered under Assam province. When India attained independence from the British rule on 15 August 1947, the area was placed under the administration of Assam state having its own Advisory Council. It was declared Autonomous District Council in 1952 wherein the name was changed to Mizo Hills District Council in 1954. It was then upgraded to the status of Union Territory in 1972 from which the name Mizoram came into being. The administrative area attained the status of statehood on 20 February 1987.[2]

1.1   Physiography

Mizoram extends from 21°58'N to 24°35'N and 92°15'E to 93°29'E. It has a total area of 21,081 km^2 and shares 722 kilometres international borders with Myanmar (404 km) and Bangladesh (318 km), and 284 kilometres domestic borders with Assam (123 km), Tripura (66 km) and Manipur (95 km). The maximum north-south distance is 277 km, while maximum east-west stretch is 121 km and the tropic of cancer runs through the middle of the state.[3]

The terrain of Mizoram is mountainous that is characterised by north-south running ridges with valleys and perennial river courses in between. The eastern hills situate at a higher altitude than the western hills with an average height of 1,000 metres (3,300 ft) from the west that gradually increases to 1,300 metres (4,300 ft) to the east.

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[1] 'Mizoram at a glance', in *Mizoram Portal: State Portal of Mizoram*, [website], https://mizoram.gov.in, (accessed 30 July 2018).

[2] 'History of Mizoram', in *Governor Online*, [website], https://rajbhavan.mizoram.gov.in, (accessed accessed 30 July 2018).

[3] *Statistical Handbook, Mizoram 2014*, Aizawl, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Government of Mizoram, 2014, p. xxi.

The highest point, Phawngpui (Blue Mountain) locates at an altitude of 2165 meters (7103.018 ft) above sea level. The topography is variegated and the hills are steep and rugged.

Sandstone, shale, silt stone, clay stone and slates are the rocks mainly found in Mizoram and the soils are young, immature and sandy. The rock system being weak and unstable is prone to seismic force.[4] The forest types found in Mizoram are Tropical Wet Evergreen Forest, Montane sub-tropical Forest, Temperate Forests, Bamboo Forests, Quercus Forests and Jhumland.[5]

The landscape of Mizoram has a deep correlation with the identity of the people. Mizos have strong ideas about the significance of their mountainous topography since the earliest times. The shared identity of Mizos is rooted in the land provided by the hilly landscape. Settlements were made on hill tops for strategic reason in the early days. The sense of their belonging to high terrain has always been a strong definitional point against the plain dwellers. Moreover, many of the traditions and cultural ideas and practices are shaped by these natural factors.

1.2   Climate

Though traversed by the Tropic of Cancer, Mizoram has a mild climate because of its high altitude. The climate ranges from moist tropical to moist subtropical; therefore the place does not experience extreme temperature during summer and winter seasons. During summer, the temperature varies from 18℃ to 29℃ and in winter, it varies between 11℃ to 24℃. As the landmass locates near the Bay of Bengal, it is regularly visited by monsoon rain and experiences heavy rainfall from May to September with an average annual rainfall ranging from 2,160 mm to 3,500 mm.[6] Monsoon rains cause the perennial rivers often raise during the season.

The valleys of Mizoram are warm and moist during summer but in the upper reaches, the temperature becomes cooler. Due to sufficient rainfall and hilly landscape,

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[4] 'Mizoram at a glance', in *Mizoram Portal: State Portal of Mizoram*.
[5] 'Forest Types', in *Department of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Government of Mizoram*, [website], https://forest.mizoram.gov.in, (accessed 16 January 2019).
[6] 'Forest and Tree Resources in States and Union territories', *India State of Forest Report, 2015* [website], http://fsi.nic.in, p.125, (accessed 15 January 2019).

Mizoram is not prone to drought or flood. However, the area experiences frequent occurrences of violent storms and landslides. As the hillsides are steep, underground water retention is minimal thereby causing perennial water sources to dry up during non-monsoon seasons.[7]

This typical climate shapes the culture and practice of the Mizos. The environs bestowed by the climate affected their way of life to suitably adapt to it. This has formed nuance and subtle identity that is often difficult to be plainly distinguished.

1.3   Ethnic composition and migration

Majority of Mizoram's population consisted of several tribes who are historically, culturally or linguistically linked. These ethnic groups are collectively known as 'Mizos' and they belong to numerous tribes. Within 'Mizo' are six major groups, viz. Lusei, Lai (Pawi), Hmar, Paite, Ralte and Mara (Lakher) having their predominant areas of settlement. Besides, there are numerous smaller groups and these are further divided into sub-groups to the smallest unit. Each smaller sub-group has its affiliation or lineage to the larger groups.

Mizo authors such as Lalthanliana and Hrangthiauva classified 'Mizo' from the hair knot of men. Hrangthiauva categorised Mizo into three groups, viz. *Duhlians* (hair knot at the nape of the neck), *Hrumtungs* (hair knot at the head top) and *Taichengs* (braided hair).[8] Lalthanliana's classification is slightly different from Hrangthiauva's classification. Like Hrangthiauva, he divided Mizo into three groups from the hairdo of men. The first were the group who tied their hair at the nape of their neck known as *'hmar zial'*. *'Pawi zial'*, the second tied their hair at the top of their head while the third tied at the side.[9]

The ancestors of Mizo can be divided into two large groups based on the hairdo of men – *Pawis* and *Hmars*. For instance, *Pawi* connoted the groups who tied their hair

[7] 'Mizoram State Action Plan on Climate Change', *Directorate of Science & Technology, Government of Mizoram*, [website], www.moef.nic.in, p. 1, (accessed 15 January 2019).
[8] Hrangthiauva, *Mizo History (Mizo hnam hrang hrangte chanchin)*, Aizawl, C. Chhuanvawra & Sons, 2015, p. 7.
[9] Lalthanliana, *Mizo Chanchin (Kum 1900 Hma Lam)*, Aizawl, Vanlalhmuaka & Vanlalhruaii, 2000, pp. 31-32.

at the nape as *Hmar* and the *Hmar* called them *Pawi* vice versa. From these two groups emerged smaller groups experiencing ethnogenesis from the parent groups. In this work, the two groups are analysed so as to give a fresh view to reinforce or even negate the existing theories.

GROUP CATEGORIZATION BASED ON MEN'S HAIRKNOT

HMAR ZIAL

Lusei, Ralte, Thado, Vaiphei, Pang, etc.

Sizang

Sukte

Centre parting nape knot.

Side parting nape knot.

No parting nape knot.

PAWI ZIAL

Lai, Mara, Bawm, Tlanglau, etc.

Fanai

No parting forehead knot.

Middle parting forehead knot and lower long hair back.
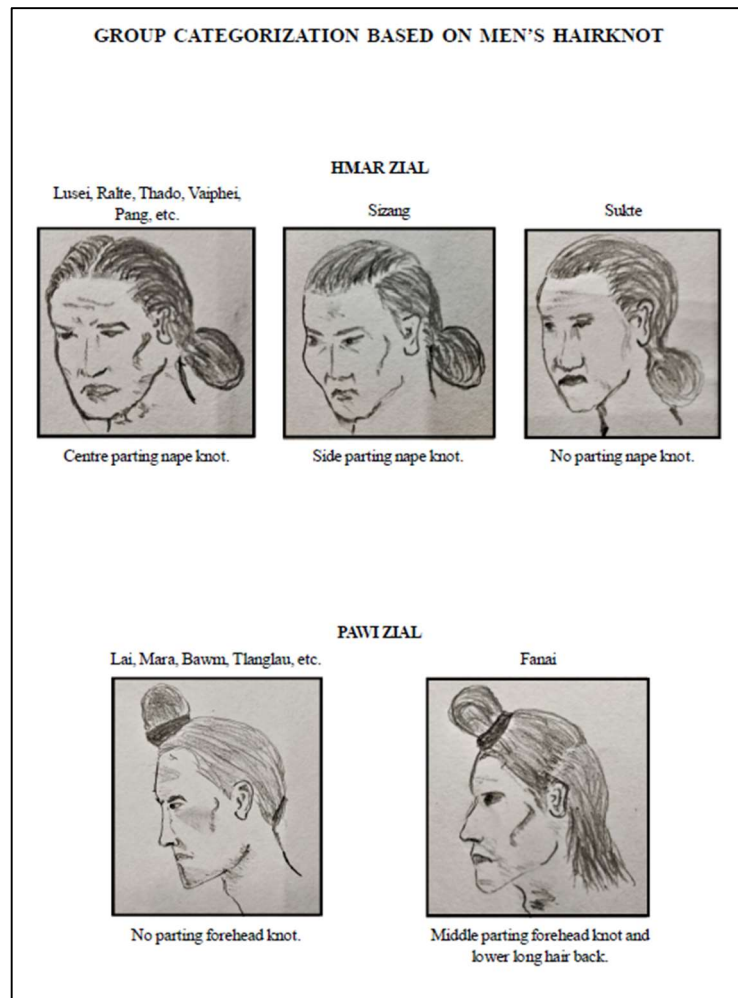
From the *Hmar* surfaced separate groups such as the Lusei, Ralte, Paite, Thahdo, Vaiphei, etc. These groups occupied the northern part of what the colonialists termed as the Chin-Lushai land. While the Lusei, Ralte, Paite, Thahdo, Vaiphei, etc. eventually became as separate ethnic groups, some of the remaining tribes inherited the original *Hmar* appellation;[10] thus the Hmar of today appeared with numerous sub-groups and divisions.

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[10] Liangkhaia stated that the ethnic appellation of modern Hmar stemmed from their settlement north of the Luseis, thereby giving importance to locality and placing Lusei settlement as a referent point.

This view can be substantiated by the fact that many of the ancient sites and monuments in Mizoram are associated with the Hmar tribe till today.[11] As mentioned above, the claim may be because of the early migration of several groups of original *Hmar* who had not then formed proper ethnic group formation by the time they moved into the present-day India's northeast and the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh.

The *Pawi* group included Tlaisun Falam, Zahau, Halkha, Thlantlang, Zahniat, Zotlang Fanai, Mara, etc. This group called themselves *Lai* or *Lai mi*. Majority of ethnic groups of the Pawi today retained their *Pawi* originality except the Maras who were also known as the Lakhers. NE Parry mentioned that the Maras were originally Pawi[12] who experienced ethnogenesis from the parent group. He stated that during his own days, some villages were in a transitional stage of 'ethnic transformation' from Pawi to Mara.[13]

The Maras from the early days settled in a land that was surrounded by the Kolodyne or river Beino and the Phawngpui mountain range. This strategic geographical settlement can be construed as one contributing factor for the rise of the Mara tribe. However, this does not imply that the explanation is a sufficient cause for the rise of the Maras as a separate ethnic group.

Robert Carneiro in his studies on ancient state formation preferred coercive theories over voluntaristic theories of state formation.[14] Carneiro believed that though warfare was a prime mover for the origin of state, other mechanisms and conditions contributed as well. With that view, he presented his renowned 'circumscription

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See Liangkhaia, *Mizo Chanchin*, 6th Edition, Aizawl, LTL Publications, 2011, p.22. This view has been subscribed by later scholars; however, Lalthanliana negated this view. Lalthanliana argued not only the view of northern settlement from the Luseis, but also contradicted another view that cites the origin of Hmar from their apical ancestor. He put forward his view that holds that Hmar derived from the style of hairknot. See, Lalthanliana, *Mizo Chanchin (Kum 1900 Hma Lam)*, p. 329.

[11] Example of old Hmar settlements that exist till today with certain archaeological remains and their connected oral tradition include Zote, Ngur, Khawbung, Vankal, Darngawn, Khawzawl, Biate, Thiak, etc. See Liangkhai, *Mizo Chanchin*, p. 22.

[12] NE Parry, *The Lakhers*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1932 (Reprint 2009), p. 1.

[13] Parry, *The Lakhers*, p.3.

[14] Robert L. Carneiro, 'A Theory of the Origin of the State', [website], http://www.anthonyflood.com, (accessed 8 February 2019).

theory'.[15] We could not, however, literally borrow his theory as he dealt with state formation. Nevertheless, his idea helps us to theorise that the ethnic origin of the Maras and their further state of isolation from other larger groups have connection with their geographic circumscription.

With frequent internecine warfare, the Maras had to remain cut off especially from the aggressive force of the Pawis and Luseis. In order to safeguard their existence, they strategically circumscribed their domain by the river Kolodyne and the Phawngpui hills. Naturally having closer contact with the southern tribes like Matu, Khumi and Khiang, they slowly accommodated new cultural traits while retaining their *Pawi* origin.

Thus, the cognate tribes of the ancestors of Mizos gradually split up into several ethnic groups based on lineage, kinship and chieftainship. This was given another identity construction by the British that has made Mizo identity formation very complex up to these days. It is, therefore, a common problem to address the psychological and sociological questions on 'becoming Mizo' and 'being Mizo'.

There are several theories regarding the migration of the Mizos to their present settlement. One of the most accepted theories is that the ancestors of Mizos had their earliest settlement somewhere in China, in a placed called Chhinlung. From there, they moved southward to northern Myanmar, then to Kabaw Valley and the Chin Hills subsequently.[16] However, Chhinlung origin remains a myth as no scientific proof can be substantiated. Therefore, the earliest known settlement of the Mizos can be situated around the banks of Chindwin River of Myanmar.

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[15] Carneiro affirms that circumscription theory explains the origin of state "as a response to certain specific cultural, demographic, and ecological conditions. Thus, it helps to elucidate what was undoubtedly the most important single step ever taken in the political evolution of mankind".

[16] This view is supported by most of the prominent Mizo history writers including Liangkhaia, VL Siama, K. Zawla, Hrangthiauva, B. Lalthangliana, Lalthanliana, etc.

SETTLEMENT OF HMAR AND PAWI PARENT GROUP

Legend:
- Lungphu and lungdawh culture of Hmar people.
- Pura/Phura culture of Pawi.
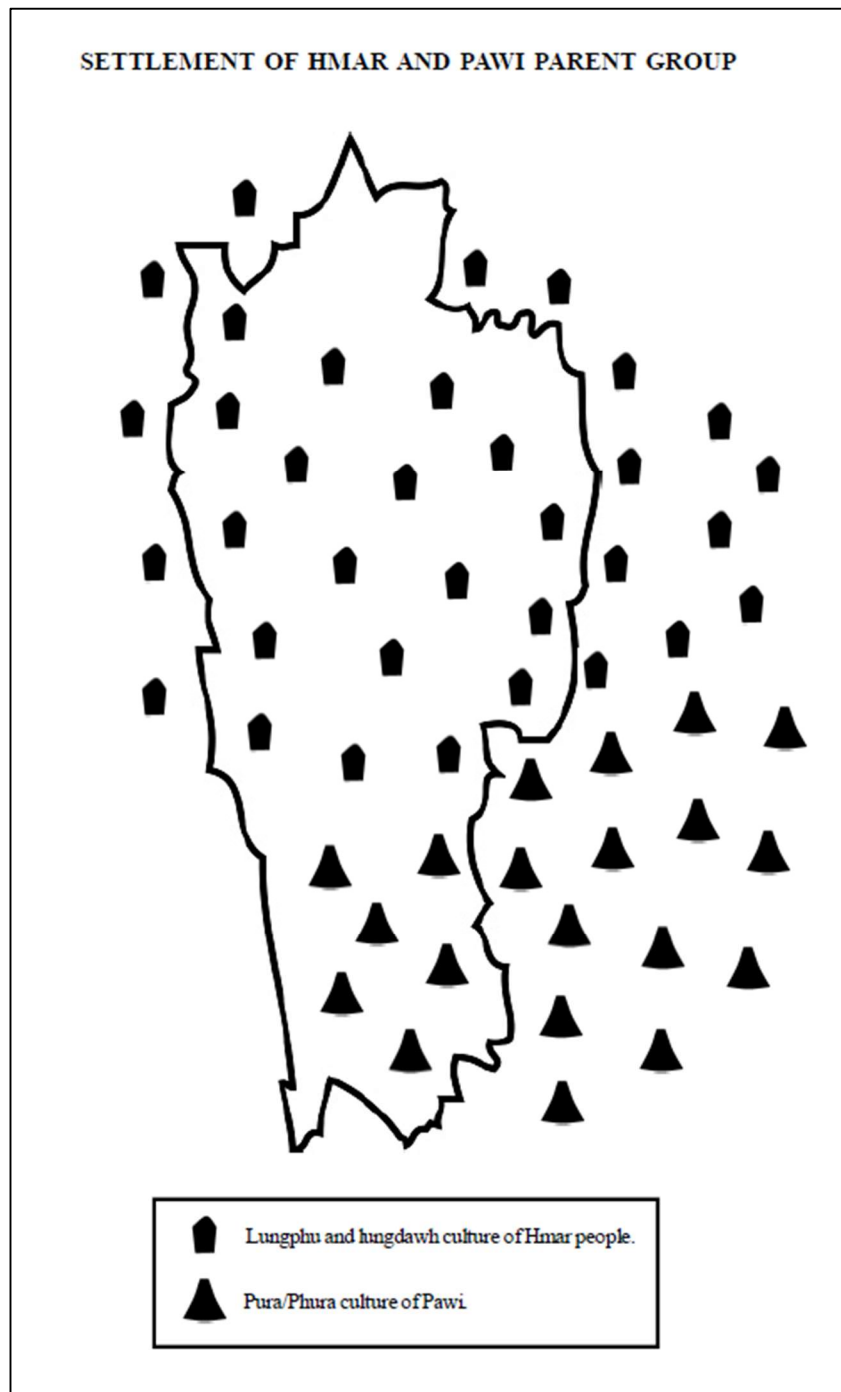
B. Lalthangliana mentioned that the Mongol invasion of Burma in 1283 AD created an opportunity for the T'ais (Shans) to move southward to Burma. This T'ai movement pushed the ancestors of Mizos to flee to the Kawbaw valley seeking new settlements to the west and south of the valley. While a few moved southward, majority of the people moved to the west entering the present Chin Hills in around

the early 14 century AD.[17] Against this view, James Scott developed state-induced mass migration and suggested that people living outside the confines of state deliberately fled to the uplands.[18] This, however, can be argued as certain ethnic groups of 'Zomia' such as Chakmas, Magh, Asho, etc. dwelled around lowland valleys. Mass migration of ethnic groups among the Mizos was not always deliberate as they were at times driven off by wars and were also looking for a new fertile land. The preference for uplands was strategic and mostly it was not state-induced, but attributable to internecine tribal feuds.

It is believed that ethnic groups within Mizo began surfacing during their stay in the foothills of Len Tlang (Len Mountain) or the Run Lui (Manipur River) bank of the Chin Hills. From the Chin Hills, majority of the groups made their westward migration in successive waves to the present day northeast Indian states and Bangladesh, while several groups remained in the Chin Hills. Due to the practice of shifting cultivation and frequent raids, the early Mizos lived a nomadic life and the migratory nature of the Mizos was only ended by the British after the introduction of land settlement in 1901.[19]

What has been called as 'Mizos' today may not be the first settlers of the present-day Mizoram. Even before Mizo ethnic groups entered the territory several groups had already settled and moved out. This can be known from the archaeological remains of the ethnic groups. The most well-known of the people who once settled in Mizoram were the Meiteis of Manipur and the Rongmei Nagas.[20] Several sites bear the name of these ethnic groups and various archaeological remnants are claimed as belonging to these people.[21]

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[17] B. Lalthangliana, *History of Mizo in Burma*, Aizawl, Zawlbuk Agencies, 1977, pp. 13-14.
[18] James Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*, Yale, Yale University Press, 2009, p. 8.
[19] Robert Reid, *History of the Frontier Areas Bordering on Assam for the year 1883-1941*, New Delhi, Eastern Book Publishing House, 1983 (Reprint), p. 44
[20] Liangkhaia, pp. 19-20. Also see Lalthanliana, *Mizo Chanchin (Kum 1900 Hma Lam),* pp.16-17.
[21] Sites like 'Kawrlungtuk' (waterhole) at Zawngin, Aizawl District and 'Meitei zo' near Aiduzawl, Champhai District is claimed by Liangkhaia as connected with the Meiteis and menhirs at Vankal hill, Lungphunlian and Selam (all in Champhai District) to be erected by the Rongmeis. See, Liangkhaia, pp. 19-20. This explanation is endorsed by other writers including VL Siama and Lalthanliana.

The first group of people to migrate after the Meiteis and Rongmeis into the surrounding areas of the Bengalis, Tripuris and Meiteis were known as 'Kuki' as far back as the early 15th century AD.[22] These hill people were called by the British as 'Old Kuki' that included Hrangkhawl, Biate, Ranglong, Halam, Aimol, Anal, Chiru, Chawhte, Kom, Vaiphei, etc.[23] The 'Old Kuki' were followed by the 'New Kuki'. The name was given because they were seen as belonging to the same collection. The 'New Kuki' included Thado, Paite, Sukte, Sizang, etc.[24]

FLOW CHART OF ETHNOGENISIS FROM HMAR-PAWI PARENT GROUP
(based on the hair knot of men)

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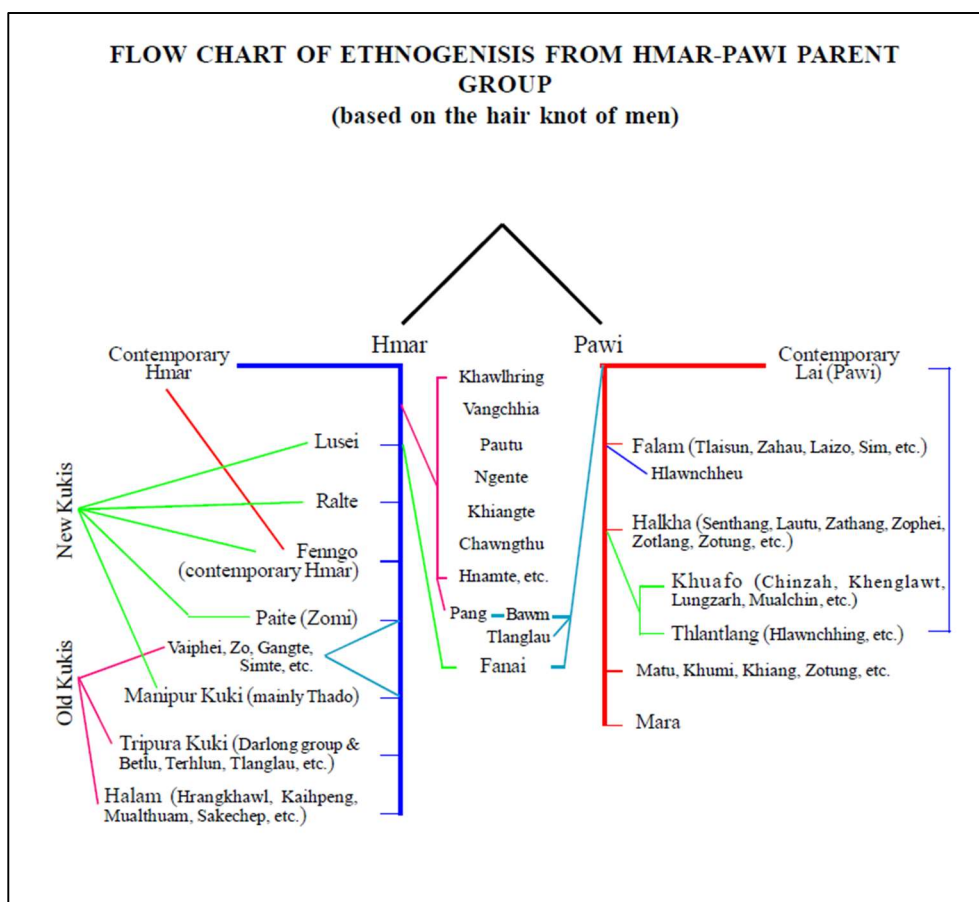
[22] 'Kuki' is a Bengali or Assamese word denoting hill people. See, GA Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. III: Tibeto-Burman Family, Part III (Specimens of the Kuki-Chin and Burma Groups)*, Delhi, Sundarlal Jain, 1967 (Reprint) p. 1. *Sri Rajmala*, the chronicle of Tripura dynasty from prehistoric to to the mid 15th century mentioned 'Kuki' several times. The earliest mention was during the reign of Dharma Manikya (1431-62 AD) wherein Shiva/Mahadeva kept a Kuki woman in his shrine, whom his wife Parvati found out and caught her by the hair and trampled her. It resulted in the split of her throat and since then, Kuki women have a low voice. See, *Sri Rajmala, Vol – I to IV*, Agartala, Tribal Research Institute, 2013, p. 38.
[23] Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. III: Tibeto-Burman Family, Part III (Specimens of the Kuki-Chin and Burma Groups)*, p. 1-3. Also see J. Shakespear, *The Lushei-Kuki Clan*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2008 (3rd Reprint), p. 147.
[24] Grierson, p. 2. Also see Shakespear, *The Lushei-Kuki Clan*, p. 187-89.

Previous to the Lushai Hills Expedition of 1871-72 and the period following it, 'Kuki' was a nomenclature used for settlers inhabiting an area neighbouring Tripura, Cachar and Manipur. It was after comprehensive survey that the British began to use 'Lushai' for the common name. And it was after the annexation of Upper Burma in 1885 that the people living to the west of Kolodyne River and Tiau River were closely contacted and were called 'Chin'.[25]

Groups moving out of Mizoram and establishing their final settlement in other parts and groups remaining in Burma are regarded by many Mizo scholars as belonging to Mizo group. However, since ethnic identity is a fluid concept and is liable to change according to historical, geo-political and cultural contexts, several groups dissociated themselves from Mizo identity and they can not be explicitly categorized as 'Mizo'. Even though these groups had the same collective memories, customs, traditions and cultural practices, colonialism and modern politics rendered them different identities. Nevertheless, cultural and historical scholarship has explored the closeness of these groups.

1.4   Polity, society, economy and belief system

In order to condense the work, history of the Lusei tribe is studied as they were the strongest rulers and their culture the most dominant on the advent of British colonialism and the mapping out of Lushai Hills.

1.4.1 The rise and fall of chieftainship and modern politics

The early Mizo history writers like Liangkhaia,[26] Vanchhunga,[27] VL Siama[28] and K. Zawla[29] mentioned that Lusei chieftainship began from a person named Zahmuaka. Zahmuaka was stated by these writers as requested by the Hnamte group to act as their protector from the frequent wars on condition that his family would be contributed portions of cultivated paddy and chased wild animals or slaughtered

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[25] AS Reid, *Chin-Lushai Land*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2008 (Reprint), pp. 5-6.
[26] Liangkhaia, p. 34.
[27] Vanchhunga, *Lusei Leh A Vela Hnam Dang Chengte*, Department of Art & Culture, Government of Mizoram, Aizawl, 1994 (Reprint), p. 131.
[28] VL Siama, *Mizo History*, 6th Edition, Aizawl, Lengchhawn Press, 2009, p. 11.
[29] K. Zawla, *Mizo Pipute leh an Thlahte Chanchin*, 5th Edition, Aizawl, Lengchhawn Press, 2011, p. 189.

domesticated animals in return. Thus, Zahmuaka's rule initiated the institution of chieftainship from which Zadeng, Palian, Thangluah, Thangur (Sailo), Rivung and Rokhum chiefs emerged.[30]

The 'state of nature' or the condition of Mizos before chieftainship was how Hobbes called 'war of every man against every man',[31] in which there was a constant violent competition regardless of others' interest in the context of group existence. Analogous to Hobbes' explanation of the condition wherein individuals transferred their natural rights to the absolute sovereignty or Leviathan and came into 'social contract' to enter civil society,[32] the institution of Lusei chieftainship emerged so as to protect the entire group on the will of the people.

The authority of the chief was sovereign and all-encompassing in the matters of all the village affairs and his subjects were under his mercy. The chief was central in dealing with the administration, customary laws, economic affairs, etc.[33] As several chiefs had their own respective domains with absolute authority, despotic chiefs were often fled by their subjects that restricted them from unnecessary tyranny, thus forming invisible competition among the chiefs for the welfare of their subjects. [34] Chieftainship was hereditary following the law of *ultimogeniture.* Nonetheless*,* the elder sons established their own villages within the domain of the chiefs.[35]

The main factor that disrupted the sovereignty of the Mizo chiefs was the advent of colonialism. The acquisition of Chittagong in 1760 and the annexation of Cachar in 1832 by the East India Company opened an opportunity for the contact of the British and the Mizos. The territorial expansion of the British Empire was seen by the Mizos as an intervention in their sphere of influence. As such, antagonism surfaced between

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[30] Lalzama Sailo & Ngurliana, *Kan Ram* (Revised & Enlarged), Aizawl, L. Sanglura Sailo, 2018, p. 15-16.
[31] Garrath Williams, 'Thomas Hobbes: Moral and Political Philosophy', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ISSN 2161-0002, [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 11 February 2019).
[32] Williams, 'Thomas Hobbes: Moral and Political Philosophy'.
[33] Siama, *Mizo History*, p. 19.
[34] James Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, 2nd Edition, Aizawl, Hmingthanpuii, 2008, p. 148.
[35] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung,* p. 148.

the two that led to the Lushai expeditions of 1871-72[36] and 1889-90[37] subsequently. In 1895, the Lushai Hills was formally declared as part of the British Empire and was placed under the Assam Province after the amalgamation of North Lushai Hills and South Lushai Hills on 1 April 1898.[38] During the course of annexation of the Lushai Hills, many chiefs were subdued and a colonial government was imposed with the chiefs retaining their power limitedly.

With India gaining independence from the British, transfer of power was made from the British crown to the hands of Indian leaders. Following it, the Lushai Hills District was adapted to Lushai Hills District Council in 1952 with autonomy to administer their state of affairs under Indian democracy.[39] The name of Lushai Hills District Council was changed to Mizo District Council by the 'Change of Name Act, 1954' on 29 April 1954.[40] As the first Mizo political party the Mizo Union constantly raised its voice against chieftainship, it culminated to the abolition of chieftainship right from 1 April 1955 by the Lushai Hills (Acquisition of Chiefs' Rights) Act, 1954,[41] thus leading to the closing chapter of Mizo chieftainship eventually.

1.4.2 Society

The early Mizo society was a tribal society in which social relations based on kinship ties were predominant. The society was divided into groups and was not completely egalitarian. The village society was under the rule of the *lal* (chief) who was assisted by his councillors (*khawnbawl upa* or simply *upa*). There were *ramhuals, zalen* and *hautla* who could choose their agricultural plots before the *hnamchawm* (common

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[36] For detail, see Alexander Mackenzie, *The North-East Frontier of India*, New Delhi, Mittal Publication, 2016, pp. 310-17.

[37] For detail, see Reid, *The Chin Lushai Land,* 2008.

[38] Robert Reid, *The Lushai Hills: Culled From History of the Frontier Areas Bordering on Assam from 1883-1941*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1978 (Reprint), pp. 52-61. This was done under the provisions of the Assam Frontier Tracts Regulation 1880 and notifications were issued under the provisions of this Act and the Scheduled District Act, 1874. See AG McCall, *The Lushai Hills District Cover*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2008 (Reprint), p. 1.

[39] Chaltuahkhuma, *Political History of Mizoram*, 2nd Edition, Aizawl, Vanthangi, 2001, p. 143.

[40] No. LTL 21/54/30, dated the 30th April, 1954. 'The Lushai Hills District (change of name)'. MSA.

[41] Assam Act XVIII of 1955 the Assam-Mizo District (Acquisition of Chiefs Rights) (Amendment) Act 1955.

people).[42] The *tlangau* acted as public informant for the chief[43] and the *thirdeng* was the blacksmith, who was contributed paddy and portions of killed animals by the villagers for his service.[44] The *sadawt* (sacrificial priest) and *bawlpu* (priest doctor) were other specific social groups.[45]

Besides, there were *bawi* and *sal*. While *sal* were captives of war, *bawi* were persons who surrendered themselves at the mercy of the *lal* who became dependents. On the reasons of giving in, there were three categories of *bawi*. The first were *Inpui chhung bawi* who joined the *lal* due to poverty for shelter. *Chemsen bawi* were persons who took refuge in the *lal*'s house for protection from their wrongdoings, especially murder. *Tuk luh bawi* were the third category who changed their allegiance to the *lal* from another *lal* in order to save their lives due to defeat in wars.[46] The status of *bawi* was inherited; however, their bondage could be liberated by paying ransoms that was mostly a *gayal* (domesticated buffalo) or its equivalent.[47]

The basic social unit was the patriarchal family (*chhungkua*) headed by the *pa* (father). The family was nuclear in nature and the married sons started their own family sooner or later. It was probably the basic unit of socialization, production and consumption. The tribe was referred to as *hnam*, the largest unit and identity was based on *hnam*, but village (*khua*) identity was stronger. *Hnam* was further divided into *chi* or clan, which was more or less synonymously used with *hnam*. Inter-tribal conflicts were frequent and were related to loots and plunders. The *lal* and his *pasaltha* (hunter-warriors) were protectors of the tribe. The importance of kinship was large not only to serve the social structure, but also restricted splits within the community.

The status of women in early Mizo society was complex. Women played an important part in the productive process such as agricultural activities and weaving.

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[42] HS Luaia, *Hman lai Mizo Khawsak Dan & Mizoram Buai Lai Thu*, Lunglei, H. Lalzoliana, 2004, pp. 24-25.
[43] Dokhuma, p. 158.
[44] C. Lianthanga, *Hmanlai Mizo Nun*, Aizawl, Mizoram Publication Board, 1999, p. 93.
[45] Challiana, *Pi Pu Nun*, Aizawl, Lalrinliana & Sons, 1986, pp. 36-44.
[46] AG McCall, *Lushai Chrysalis*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2015 (Reprint), p. 121-22.
[47] McCall, *Lushai Chrysalis*, p. 124.

Besides, household chores were reserved for them.[48] The birth of sons and daughters were not differentiated; however, women rarely occupied the highest positions of authority and prestige—those of chiefs and priests.

One distinct social status was that of *thangchhuah*. This was an acheived status and was not ascribed at birth. There were two types of *thangchhuah*. One was called *ram lama thangchhuah* in which one attained the status of distinguished hunter and warrior. For achieving the status, one had to kill a barking deer, a bear, a stag, a wild boar and a gaur (wild buffalo) along with a king cobra and a hawk. The other was known as *in lama thangchhuah*. In order to achieve the status, the person should provide a grand feast for the whole village with sufficient meat and liquor.[49]

The ceremony was known as *khuangchawi* and *thangchhuah* persons were respected in the society and were regarded as possessing the permit to enter *pialral* or paradise after death. If a person could perform *khuangchawi* for three times, it was called *zau dawh* where the person was allowed to raise a floor or dais enclosed his/her house signifying the greatest achievement.[50] This social status had significance not only in their mundane existence, but had connection with their belief in life after death.

Pasttime activities included festivals, community feast, dance and different games of adults and children. Nonetheless, community feasts and dances had ceremonial significance that was associated with the belief system. Among the grandest festivals were the *Chapchar Kut, Mim Kut* and *Pawl Kut* celebrated by the Lusei and Ralte tribes, *Favang Kut* and *Sikpui Roui* of the Hmar tribe, *Khawdo* and *Jaikal* festivals celebrated by the Paite tribe, *Lyuva Khutla* and *Sahria Ku* of the the Mara tribe and *Hlukhla Kut* and *Pualtlawh Kut* celebrated by the Lai tribe.[51]

The common dances included *Cheraw, Sarlamkai, Solakia, Chai, Chawnglaizawn, Sikpui Lam, Pawhlohtlawh, Zangta Lam*, etc.[52] and the popular games were *inbuan*

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[48] Dokhuma, p. 314.
[49] Challiana, *Pi Pu Nun*, p. 33.
[50] Challiana, pp. 40-42.
[51] For detail, see Lalthasanga, 'Festivals of Mizo: Revisiting Pre-Colonial Mizo Society and its repercussions on the Sectarian Faith of Mizo Christianity', in *Historical Journal of Mizoram, Vol. XVII*, Aizawl, Mizo History Association, 2016, pp. 16-35.
[52] See _____, *Mizo Lam Thenkhatte*, 2nd Edition, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2008.

(wrestling), *insuk nawr* (pestle thrust), *inhrui pawh* (tug-of-war), *suk khawh* (pestle throw), *lung den* (shot put), etc. for adult males and *lung invawmsiak* (competition in stone throwing), *inarpa sual* (cock fighting), *inse sik* (*gayal* fighting), spinning top, etc. for boys and *inbah* (creeper bean game), invawr (pebble game), etc. for girls.[53]

There was a gradual change after the establishment of the British rule that led to economic class stratification into the privileged, middle and underprivileged classes. However, the stratification has been nominal as compared to Hindu caste system and western capitalist society. Many of the traditional values and practices had been replaced and fused with the western cultural values and practices, thereby leading to the development of a new Mizo socio-cultural way of life that has both traditional and western characters.

1.4.3 Economy

The early Mizo society appears to have been primarily subsistence tillage.[54] *Tlang lo* or cultivation plots were looked after by each family. *Buh* or rice was the main staple crop and abundant harvesters were respected in the society. Surplus production of rice or other items were few and trade with other ethnic community was predominantly barter system. No other grains were cultivated except *buhtun* (millet). *Buhtun*, *bal* (edible arum bulb) and *bahra* (yam) were often used as substitutes of *buh* in times of scarcity. *La* (cotton) was also cultivated for making textile or cloth.[55] Besides these agricultural products, *thelret* (natural rubber) and *sai ngho* (ivory) were used as barter items.[56]

Pastoral economy was inevident and animals were reared for family consumption and sacrificial offerings. *Sial* or *gayal* was the most valued domesticated animal and not all members of the community had equal possession of *sial* that symbolized one's affluence. Other domesticated animals included fowls, dogs, pigs and goats.[57]

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[53] Lianhmingthanga, *Material Culture of the Mizos*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1998, pp. 16-24.
[54] Dokhuma, p. 9.
[55] Lianthanga, pp. 46-47.
[56] Lianthanga, p. 55.
[57] Dokhuma, p. 360.

The evidence regarding agriculture is large and it had relative importance. Time or the annual temporal counting of days was based on the agricultural activities. Iron was imported and forged that was supported with stone tools, wooden and bamboo implements. Fire was used to burn down forest cover after clearing for shifting agriculture. The land was monsoon fed and the alluvial soils were not cultivated on a permanent basis. The tools on the agricultural operations were fairly simple. These included *chempui* (knife), *tuthlawh* (hoe), *chem kawm* (bill-hook) and *hrei* (axe).[58]

Individual land ownership in the *tlang lo* was unknown as all the land belonged to the chief who alloted the same to the households according to custom. Cultivation was undertaken by the family unit as there were no hired labourers. Instead, *lawm* was carried out, which was the customary practice to assist each other in any kind of work in exchange for similar assistance received.[59] *Lal chhiah* or tribute was given to the chief that generally included *fathang* (paddy tax), *sa chhiah* (meat tax), and *khuai chhiah* (honey tax).[60]

Apart from the practice of shifting cultivation, hunting was another source of procuring food. Deer, wild goat, boar, etc. were killed using snares, pitfalls, traps, etc. and were also hunted down by spear, knife, bow and arrow and guns.[61] Fishing was another activity to obtain food supplement. The implements included fishing nets known as *lenpui*, *lenfang*, *lensuah* and *lenkhang*. Aside from fish netting (*len den*), *sangha vuak* or poisoning of fish using herbal plants and the bark and fruits of certain trees was practiced. When the whole community participated, it was known as *sangha tlang vuak*. *Ngha fuan ven* was one fishing game in which the community catched a shoal of fish particularly *nghalim*. *Ngawi dawh*, wherein the community built a lined bamboo trap was another form of fishing game.[62]

Craft specialisation was relatively sparse. *Thirdeng* (blacksmith) was the most significant specialist. Other craft and textile products were prepared in the house for familial use. Weaving appears to have been a domestic craft under the control of

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[58] Lianhmingthanga, *Material Culture of the Mizos*, p. 12.
[59] Dokhuma, p. 182.
[60] Dokhuma, pp. 169-71.
[61] Lianhmingthanga, pp. 36-46.
[62] Lianhmingthanga, pp. 54-63.

women in the household. In case of pottery, red and black earthenwares were used for cooking, brewing and storing rice beer[63] and also as urns for storing remains of *hlamzuih*[64] and performers of *kuang ur*[65] who were generally the chief's family.[66]

The coming of the British introduced new occupations for a small group who were trained to serve and assist the British. The newly hired individuals to perform survey and record works, clerical works and teaching jobs under the colonial government or Christian mission were the few literate persons. Besides, traders and businesspersons began to flourish in small quantity during the colonial period. However, majority of the people continued to practice subsistence cultivation.

In the mid 1970s, the entire area of Mizoram was notified as backward area and was categorised under 'No Industry District'. After the attainment of statehood, the State Industrial Policy of 1989 initiated few modern small-scale industries. Besides, the state has not located major mineral deposits. This may be the factor behind the economic dependence of the state on agricultural and traditional industries.[67]

With a number of literates increasing after 1947, service sector job or government job began to boom. The principle source of income for majority of the population has been primary economy or the traditional *lo* products. However, from the sectoral performance of Mizoram economy, it is comprehensible that the tertiary or service sector contributed the highest share of about 43% of the total Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP), while the agriculture and allied sector contributed 32% and the industry sector contributed around 25% of the GSDP.[68]

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[63] Lianhmingthanga, p. 33.
[64] Infants dying at birth or shortly after it.
[65] "To dispose of a dead body by placing it in a sealed coffin made out of a hollowed-out tree and keeping it in the house close to a constantly burning fire until the flesh has all decayed and only the bones remain. This was still a common practice among the ruling chiefs and the wealthier classes in the earlier days of British rule in the Lushai Hills." See, JH Lorrain, *Dictionary of the Lushai Language*, Kolkata, The Asiatic Society, 1940 (4th Reprint 2008), pp. 274-75.
[66] Lianthanga, p. 20.
[67] 'Mid Term Assessment (MTA) Report on New Land Use Policy, Government of Mizoram (2012-2013)', submitted by NABARD Consultancy Services Ltd (NABCONS), [website], https://nlup.mizoram.gov.in, (accessed 1 April 2019).
[68] 'Mizoram Economic Survey 2017-18', Planning & Programme Implementation Department (Research & Development Branch), Government of Mizoram, [website], http://14.139.60.153, (accessed 1 April 2019).

1.4.4 Belief system

The early Mizos believed in the existence of spirits that resided in natural objects. They had no control over the forces and invested them with divinity. They believed in two forms of spirits—*active* and *inactive* spirits. The active spirits were regarded as having constant contact with humans and were responsible for ill health and sufferings. For that reason, individual or familial involuntary sacrifices were performed irregularly in response to their unfavourable condition with the *bawlpu* or priest doctor to appease the spirits.[69] The active spirits included *Huai, Tau, Chawm, Phung, Hmuithla, Khawmu, Khawhring, Maimi, Tulum, Chhawihfa, Hmuithla, Dengsur,* etc.[70]

The inactive spirits were volutarily invoked by the community on two rites known as *kawngpui siam* and *fano dawi*. Both were performed by the *sadawt* or community priest. *Kawngpui siam* was a ritual that was observed in order to achieve fortune in wars and huntings,[71] while *fano dawi* was a kind of fertility ritual observed for prosperity in agricultural activities.[72]

The inactive spirits included *Sa, Khaltu, Pathian, Khuanu, Khuavang, Lasi and Pheichham.*[73] *Pathian* was attributed masculinity while *Khuanu* and *Lasi* were attributed with femininity. *Sa, Khaltu, Khuavang* and *Pheichham* were gender neutral and all these inactive spirits were seen as patrons of human beings.

The belief in life after death was present. While the common people were believe to reside in *mitthi khua* or abode of the deceased and still had to work for subsistence,[74] *thangchhuah* persons were believed to enter *pialral* or paradise free from manual labour.[75] Deities were neither worshipped for spiritual upliftment of the people nor for any other abstract philosophical concept and subjective psychological benefit, and the belief system was fundamentally materialistic in perspective.

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[69] Challiana, p. 33.
[70] Zairema, *Pipute Biak Hi*, Aizawl, Zorun Community, 2009, p. 3.
[71] Zaliana, *Mizo Sakhua (Kumpinu Rorel Hma)*, 2nd Edition, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2013, p. 93.
[72] Zaliana, *Mizo Sakhua (Kumpinu Rorel Hma)*, p. 98.
[73] Zairema, *Pipute Biak Hi*, p. 3.
[74] Luaia, *Hman lai Mizo Khawsak Dan & Mizoram Buai Lai Thu*, pp. 33-35.
[75] Luaia, pp. 35-36.

The advent of British colonialism was followed by Christian mission work. After four decades following the arrival of the first missionaries in the early 1890s, Christian population in the hills increased from zero to 64.21% in the decadal 1941[76] census before the final stage of colonialism. While most Mizos generally affiliated to the different churches or denominations, several non-Mizo residents of Mizoram adhered to other faiths such as Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and other religions. As per 2011 decadal census report, Christian numbered 87.16% followed by Buddhist (8.51%), Hindu (2.75%), and Muslim (1.35%) while other faiths added up to less than 1% of the total population.[77]

1.5   Review of literature

1.5.1 Mizo literature

Siamkima Khawlhring's work *Zalenna Ram* is one of the first works pertinent to literary criticism in the history of Mizo literature. While the work contains few essays and articles written by the author himself, the book comments on the meaning and nature of literature and turns his focus on Mizo literature using criticism as his tool of analysis. The book has its own way of approach by using both content analysis and comparative study of Mizo prose and poetry.[78]

History of Mizo Literature written by B. Lalthangliana is one of the few books working on the history and development of Mizo literature. The author breaks the history of Mizo literature into four periods, viz. Oral Literature (1200-1893), Missionary Period (1894-1919), Middle Period (1920-1965) and Modern Period (1966-2000). Lalthangliana critically examines the production of poetry and prose by analyzing the works of literary persons during the specific periods.[79]

Thuhlaril by Laltluangliana Khiangte (ed.) traces the history of literature, literary trends and literary criticism, generally focusing on western English literature in the

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[76] Lalhmuaka, *Zoram Zirna Lama Chhinchhiahna (The Records of Zoram Education)*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1981, p. 86.
[77] 'Mizoram Religion Census 2011', [website], https://www.census2011.co.in, (accessed 1 April 2019).
[78] Siamkima Khawlhring, *Zalenna Ram*, Aizawl, MC Lalrinthanga, 1986.
[79] B. Lalthangliana, *History of Mizo Literature*, Second Edition, Aizawl, Author, 2004.

first section. The second section begins with periodisation of Mizo literature and continues to briefly classify the development of Mizo literature by exploring and describing Mizo literary works on prose, poetry and drama.[80]

C. Lalawmpuia Vanchiau's work *Tapchhak Theory – Essays & Criticism* contains sections on literary criticism, thematic writing and poetry. A collection of works on essays and criticism in Mizo literature and cultural studies, the book ushers in a new field of literary criticism using English literary theories and other academic paradigms. The work focuses on Mizo writings and uses both fictional and non-fictional narratives. Providing analytical studies on Mizo literature, history, culture and ideas, the book contributes a new tool for reading Mizo narratives.[81]

A Study of Mizo Novel by Laltluangliana Khiangte (ed.) is an anthology comprising eight works in English and five works in Mizo primarily focusing on the study of Mizo fictional narratives. The authors deal with selected novels on various themes including historiography of Mizo novels, folktales, memory, women, psychoanalysis, genre studies, etc. Each author has his/her own unique way of approaching Mizo novels by applying literary theories and textual analysis.[82]

Zoramdinthara in his book *Mizo fiction: Emergence and development* covers a systemic study of Mizo fictions that were produced from 1936 to 2000. The author studies the development of Mizo fictions theoretically using historical and sociological approaches. By tracing the development and change in ideas, the author attempts to show the underlying system of thoughts that led to production of Mizo fictional narratives.[83]

In *Mizo Language and Literature: Emergence and Development*, Lalzama examines the development of writings in Mizo and considers the work of Christian missionaries as an essential factor. He illustrates the introduction of Mizo alphabet

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[80] Laltluangliana Khiangte (ed.), *Thuhlaril: Literary Trends & Mizo Literature*, 4th Edition, Aizawl, College Text Book (Mizo) Editorial Borad Publications, 2006.
[81] C. Lalawmpuia Vanchiau, *Tapchhak Theory – Essays & Criticism*, Aizawl, Sabereka Khuangkaih Publication, 2011.
[82] Laltluangliana Khiangte (ed.), *A Study of Mizo novel*, Delhi, ISPCK, 2014.
[83] Zoramdinthara, *Mizo fiction: Emergence and development*, Delhi, Ruby Press & Co, 2013.

and the standardization of Mizo through schools and various literary works by the missionaries. The book fundamentally emphasizes the contributions made by the missionaries as the main reason for the development of Mizo literature.[84]

1.5.2 Ethnohistory of Mizo

Liangkhaia's book *Mizo Chanchin* is a pioneer historical narrative that draws his account from mainly oral sources. The work begins with a theory on the origin of Mizo ethnic group and further mentions the various groups within Mizo categorically. The book focuses on the history of Mizos during the pre colonial and colonial period. In doing so, it narrates the westward migration of the Mizos, the intervention made by the British and the influences made by the colonial administrators and missionaries.[85]

Mizo History by VL Siama gives a succinct account on the history of Mizo that was initially produced for primary and middle school syllabi. It mentions the first settlers of the present day Mizoram and states the migration and settlement made by the Mizos in the hills. Early traditions and culture of the Mizos is presented along with political history. It describes the conditions of the Mizos under the rule of the British and also briefly mentions the post independence conditions of the Mizos.[86]

Vanchhunga made a study of Lusei history in *Lusei leh A Vela Hnam Dangte Chanchin* wherein he gives description on other tribes that were in contact with the Lusei tribe. He traces the location of Chhinlung and mentions the time before the crossing of Run River, the period of their settlement between Run River and Tiau River and the rise of Sailo clan to their establishment beyond the Tiau River. He then explains the rule of Sailo in Mizoram and concludes with the advent of the British.[87]

Mizo Pipute leh an Thlahte Chanchin written by K. Zawla gives an account on the ethnic, cultural, literary and political history of the Mizos. The book describes

[84] Lalzama, *Mizo Language and Literature: Emergence and Development (Contribution of Christian Missionaries from 1897-1947)*, Aizawl, KL Offset Printers, 2017.
[85] Liangkhaia, *Mizo Chanchin*.
[86] Siama, *Mizo History*.
[87] Vanchhunga, *Lusei leh A Vela Hnam Dangte Chanchin*.

prominent figures and events in the history of the Mizos. Oral tradition serves the main source of the book that narrates the history of Mizos from the earliest of time, largely focusing on the period before the arrival of the British.[88]

Hrangthiauva in *Mizo History* produces a comprehensive account of the history of Mizo. The book classifies Mizo into three groups based on the practice of their hairdo. According to the book, the first group called the Duhlians knotted their hair at the back of their head. Next are the Taichengs who plaited their hair and the third group are the people who tied their hair at the top of their head, called the Hrumtungs. The author further discusses the classification of the three major groups into several smaller groups.[89]

In *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, James Dokhuma presents the traditions and cultural history of Mizos. The book describes the settlement process, belief system and rituals, festivals and holidays, chieftainship, life of youths, marriage, community work, societal norms, warfare and other traditional knowledge and practices. It highlights the early social structure and cultural system of the Mizos comprehensively.[90]

Zofate Chanchin published by Hualngo Literature and Cultural Association gives an outline of Zofate (Zo ethnic group) history. The book dates back the history of Zofate from China and mentions their migration from Shinlung to Kale-Kabaw Valley (*Kawlphai*) and states the various 'tribes' of Zo ethnic group. It highlights the history of Seifate or Lusei and cognate tribes and their movement to the present day Mizoram. The book further gives detail account of the Zofate who made their settlement in the Chin Hills of Myanmar. It also discusses the socio-cultural practices and traditions and administrative affairs of Zofate.[91]

Zatluanga in *Mizo Chanchin* provides detail information on the different 'tribes' of Mizo. He then traces the original homeland of the group and tries to expose the

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[88] Zawla, *Mizo Pipute leh an Thlahte Chanchin.*
[89] Hrangthiauva, *Mizo History (Mizo hnam hrang hrangte chanchin).*
[90] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung.*
[91] *Zofate Chanchin*, Tahan-Kalemyo, Hualngo Literature and Cultural Association, 1995.

ethnogenesis of Mizo. The book further explores the traditions and practices of Mizo ethnic group in a broad approach and continues to illustrate the oral tradition using folk songs. Moreover, the book describes the westward migration of several tribes to Mizoram and their initial establishment in the hills.[92]

Hmanlai Mizo Nun, written by C. Lianthanga gives a detail account of Mizo cultural history. He traces the early history of Mizo from Chhinlung or Sinlung that he describes as located in China. The book mentions about the settlement of the Mizos with other ethnic groups such as the Burmese proper, Shans and mainland Indians (*vai*). Lianthanga's narrates Mizos' migration to Chin Hills and the present day Mizoram and classifies Mizo into two groups, viz. '*Seifate*' (groups who tied their hair at the back of their head) and '*Laifate*' (groups who tied their hair at the top of their head).[93]

Mizo Chanchin (1900 Hma Lam) is a voluminous work by Lalthanliana that traces the history of Mizos from the earliest of times up to 1900. Disregarding the modern geo-political boundary, the book mentions the entire geographical span of the 'Zo' people stretching from western Myanmar through eastern Bangladesh and the present day Mizoram, southern Manipur, eastern Tripura and southern Assam. The book categorizes 'Zo' people from the style of their hair knot – *Hmar* (hair knot at the back of the head) and *Pawi* (hair knot at the top of the head). Lalthangliana traces the movement of the 'Zo' people and shows the migration of several groups to present day Mizoram, Manipur, Tripura and Bangladesh (Chittagong Hill Tract) and the settlement made by other groups in the western part of Burma (Chin Hills).[94]

C. Vanlalhruaia in *Pipute Rammutna* argues the validity of 'Lusei' as a panoramic coverage and gives a brief account on the word 'Mizo', 'Kuki' and 'Chin' and smaller ethnic groups such as Thadou and Paite in order to clarify that 'Mizo' as an ethnic banner has historically been a fluid terminology. Holding a broad paradigm, the book traces the historical and cultural affinities of 'Mizos' with other ethnic and

[92] Zatluanga, *Mizo Chanchin*, Aizawl, Mizoram Publication Board, 1996.
[93] Lianthanga, *Hmanlai Mizo Nun*.
[94] Lalthanliana, *Mizo Chanchin (Kum 1900 Hma Lam)*.

linguistic groups such as Tibet-Chinese, Tibeto-Burman, Siamese Chinese, Garos, Tripuris, Meiteis, Nagas and Cacharis.[95]

Mizo Chanchin by B. Lalthangliana throws light on the history of Mizo from pre-colonial to post independence period. The book traces the early history of Mizos from China. Accordingly, it makes a comparative study with small ethnic groups of China. Discussing the settlement of Mizos in Kawbaw Valley *(Kawl Phai)*, the book describes the dispersal and migration of the different Mizo ethnic groups and continues to depict the history particularly about the present day settlers of Mizoram.[96]

In 'Mizo Identity: Tlang Thlirna (Mizo Identity: An Overview)', L. Keivom traces the ontology of being Mizo employing theoretical paradigms. By analysing the criteria for being Mizo, origin, language, political classification and culture, and comes to the conclusion that Mizo identity is not something that is given. Drawing the instrumentalist paradigm, he suggests the unending development of Mizo identity that has to be shaped by historians and scholars with positive nationalistic sentiments.[97]

Khup Za Go discusses in 'Mizo Identity' about harmony of existence. In doing so, he studies the geographical span, tribe/clan names, way of life, adherence to Christianity, uniform script, origin myth, exonym and endonym, etc. After cautious observation, he surmises that the different groups under Kuki-Chin-Mizo should endorse 'unity in diversity' and live a 'rainbow society' so as to form a peaceful co-existence of *Zofate* (Zo people).[98]

Joy Pachuau's *Being Mizo* explores how the national discourse excludes Mizo from mainstream narratives. In doing so, the book attempts to show how Mizos created their own sense of identity from their marginalized state of being using 'Mizo

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[95] C. Vanlalhruaia, *Pipute Rammutna: A Socio-Cultural Innovation*, Aizawl, Author, 2001.
[96] B. Lalthangliana, *Mizo Chanchin (A Short Account & Easy Reference of Mizo History)*, Second Edition, Aizawl, Author, 2016.
[97] L. Keivom, 'Mizo Identity: Tlang Thlirna (Mizo Identity: An Overview)', in *Seminar & Important Papers*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2008, pp. 1-7.
[98] Khup Za Go. 'Mizo Identity', in *Seminar & Important Papers*, pp. 8-13.

Christianity' and the death ritual in a *veng* or locality. Joy Pachuau demonstrates the status of the Mizos as a 'borderline ethnic group', a 'tribe' or 'tribal', being ignored from the social structure of India. The book states the formation of Mizo identity based on space and territoriality owing to colonial and post-colonial Indian ascription of identity using geo-political boundaries. Identity characterized by structural differentiation on binaries is underlined in the work.[99]

1.5.3 Theories of ethnicity and representation

In *Ethnicity (Key Concepts)*, Fenton argues that ethnicity should not be regarded as concrete but rather as fluid in nature. He further states that one cannot provide a simple theory of ethnicity but a sociological research for ethnic identity formation. By tracing the ontology and etymology of the concept, Fenton gives an in depth study with its interconnection with 'race' and 'nation' and provides the demise of 'race science' that has influenced the notion of primordialism. Showing the fluidity of ethnicity, the book explores the reality of group formation or the construction of ethnic identity relating to social, economic and political contexts.[100]

Paul Brass in *Ethnicity and Nationalism* argues that both ethnicity and nationalism are not ontologically 'givens' but are epistemic (social and political) constructions. He further maintains that they are created by elites so as to protect their political and economic interests. Brass sees ethnicity and nationalism as modern phenomena that have deep connection with the activities of modern nation-state.[101]

In *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, TH Eriksen maintains his stance against ethnicity and nationalism as a given and static group formation by emphasizing the fluidity of social relationships. Using a broad perspective that he draws from anthropology and sociology, he explores the relationship of ethnicity with other social groups such as gender, class and nation with current issues of racism, multiculturalism and

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[99] Joy Pachuau, *Being Mizo: Identity and belongingness in northeast India*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2015.
[100] Steve Fenton, *Ethnicty (Key Concepts)*, Second Edition, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2010.
[101] Paul R. Brass, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison*, New Delhi, Sage, 1991.

globalisation. Eriksen holds the constructive and fluid nature of ethnicity and nationalism and demonstrates that both are aspects of social relationships.[102]

Anthony D. Smith in *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* argues that ethnicity and nations are not new phenomena. He holds that both ethnicity and nationalism have a long history which he calls as *ethnie*. Smith speaks from the middle ground between the two competing views of primordialist and modernist, slightly closer to the primordialists. He puts emphasis on the element of ethnic consciousness that he finds in the "myths, memories, values and the symbols" pertinent to certain historical periods. Smith's approach or the ethno-symbolist approach fused nation and state and asserts its root on *ethnie*.[103]

Richard Jenkins' *Rethinking Ethnicity* re-examines the concept of ethnicity and locates social categorization and power relations in the process of ethnic group formations. He stresses the failure of established paradigms to draw on the cultural content of ethnicity and maintains that though ethnicity appears as a social construct, the effects are more real than imaginary. The book deals with issues like the notions of difference posted by postmodernism, the discourse of plural society and the relationship of ethnicity with other concepts and ideologies such as race and nationalism.[104]

In *Representation*, Stuart Hall explores the production of meaning and how it is internalised. He argues that messages have no meaning in or of themselves unless meaning is produced. The book shows how various instruments like language, culture, gender, etc. act as agents in changing the concept of representation and gives how language acts in the production of meaning and mass reception.[105]

Orientalism, a book by Edward Said traces the attitude of the West (Occident) on the East (Orient) looking on history and culture. Said regards 'Orientalism' as a grand

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[102] Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives (Anthropology, Culture and Society)*, 2nd Edition, London, Pluto Press, 2002.
[103] Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Reprint edition, New Jersey, Wiley-Blackwell, 1991.
[104] Richard Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity*, California, Sage Publications Ltd, 2008.
[105] Stuart Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices*, London, Open University Press, 1997.

ideological creation of Europeans, that has the 'power' for colonial ethnographers, writers, historians and philosophers to produce a 'discourse' on 'otherness'. This 'discourse', he argues, is based on Eurocentric worldview against the Orients and he further examines the imaginative depictions of the East from Homer to recent events in the Middle East.[106]

1.6   <u>Statement of the problem</u>

The major focus of the work is to trace the development of Mizo 'ethnicity' and to construct a relevant understanding of Mizo identity formation by reading fictional narratives. Conventional writings on Mizo ethnicity primarily outlined the history and identity of Mizo based on oral tradition and colonial ethnography. The work partly attempts to broaden the historical study of Mizo 'ethnicity' and its emergent and changes using relevant paradigms and conceptual framework. In doing so, the work addresses the changing nature of Mizo 'ethnicity' by analysing fictional narratives and tries to find out the underlying ideas within certain historical periods.

Mizo scholars and laypersons have produced numerous works on Mizo 'ethnicity' drawing on historical accounts, ethnographic discourse, oral tradition and memories. Periodisation and classification have been carried out to a certain extent that attempts to provide scientific explanation on Mizo 'ethnicity'. Nevertheless, many of the works are directed by western epistemic discourse in their ontic presentation of Mizo 'ethnicity'. Besides, works that base their groundings on oral tradition, oral history and experiential knowledge as a result of in-group participation failed to explain broad characteristics of Mizo 'ethnicity' in a systematic manner. Owing to that, historical study relating to Mizo 'ethnicity' and the changes it underwent necessitate proper research.

In many of the works, Mizo writers hardly reflected what motivated them to write. This narrowly gives scope to discuss the thematic concerns of Mizo ethnicity or ethnic identity. It is therefore difficult to ascertain an in-depth understanding of Mizo ethnicity. Moreover, the colonial ethnographies had left vivid accounts of Mizos and

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[106] Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, New Delhi, Penguin Books India Pvt. Ltd, 2001.

were not fully sufficient to condense Mizo ethnicity. Therefore, the first problem that the thesis addresses is the ethnohistory of Mizo using different historical information and theoretical paradigms, and how the idea of Mizo changes through time.

So far, works exploring the idea of Mizo and Mizo ethnicity using fictional narratives are few. These works are narrow in approach and are only sections of the larger texts without much theoretical examination. The second problem, therefore, engages analysis of Mizo fictions in their representation of Mizo ethnicity. Major focus is given to find the unconscious expression and symbolisation of Mizo ethnicity; thus, conscious writing of Mizo identity is not the principle enquiry. This has been regarded as a serious academic challenge because writers/persons are the product of their age and they cannot escape the dominant idea of their age. Even if they reject the dominant discourse, they produce counter discourse or alternate view, which can be studied critically.

Partly dealing with colonialism and knowledge production, 'colonial epistemic influence' and 'epistemological rupture' is the third problem that is dealt with in the work. The shifting worldview made by colonialism and its legacy is more realistic than theoretical. In the case of ethnic identity, the mental map transformed significantly among the groups within Mizoram and its peripheral territorial space since the advent of colonialism and the period following it. This epistemic change has a deep impact on contemporary idea thereby providing research gap to be probed afresh.

1.7   **Area of study**

The study deals with the production of literature within Mizoram that was called as the Lushai Hills during the colonial period. Special interest is given on Mizo fictional narratives from colonial to contemporary times. Moreover, the ethnohistory of Mizo is examined in parallel with the purpose of interpreting the texts under study in context.

For the purpose of this study and to exhibit more clearly the forces, trends and institutions that have shaped Mizo historical development, periodisation of Mizo

history is divided into Pre-Colonial, Colonial, Post-Colonial and Contemporary periods. Even though history implies the existence of written records and the introduction of Mizo script dated back only in the last decade of the nineteenth century, oral tradition has been employed to trace the early history of Mizo since the culture per se had been a good depository of oral narratives. This period is classified as *Pre-Colonial period*.

With the introduction of script beside the administrative change from chieftainship to colonial administration, the period gradually began to experience transformation in the socio-political structure. However, there was never a complete break but certain old institutions ceased to exist while others started acquiring new shapes. This new stage is categorized as *Colonial period*.

In the case of Mizoram, the formation of Lushai Hills District Council in 1952 can be used as a point of periodisation from which the *Post-Colonial period* began. This was the year following India's independence and the allocation of regional administrative responsibility at the hands of the elected representatives. During this period, the political status of Mizoram experienced its promotion to both District Council in 1952 and Union Territory in 1972. The movement of Mizo National Front from 1966 to 1986 had a huge impact on Mizo history, therefore this is employed as a watershed for periodising Mizo history in this work. Signing of the 'peace accord' in 1986 followed by the attainment of statehood in 1987 is used as the beginning of *Contemporary period* and it extends to the present day.

1.8 <u>Objectives</u>

The objectives of the thesis are:

• To trace the history of Mizo literature, specifically the narratives

• To examine the relationship between history and literature

• To study the various theories of ethnicity

• To explore the relationship between the Mizo ethnicity and fictional narratives

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• To study the representation of gender relationships in Mizo fiction

• To explore the perception of nature in Mizo fictional narratives and its relationship with ethnicity

1.9 Methodology

As the work focuses on the study of representation of Mizo ethnicity in fictional narratives, qualitative technique or content analysis is employed for interpreting the selected primary texts/fictional narratives using relevant concepts and theories. The thesis falls under the field of intellectual history and draws method generally practiced in New Historicism. Therefore, both non fictional and fictional narratives are read and analysed to extract the fundamental ideas in the emergent of Mizo ethnicity. Hence, after careful examination of Mizo ethnohistory,[107] Mizo literature and fictional narratives and selected primary texts (fictions) are analysed side by side with non fictional works using relevant theoretical paradigms. Accordingly, both manifest and latent parts of the texts are read and analysed.

1.10 Chapterisation

This thesis is divided into eight chapters including the introduction and conclusion.

Chapter 1: *General Introduction and Research Rationale*

This chapter deals with the fundamental approaches and methods of the thesis. It contains sections including purpose of the study, methodology, area of study, periodisation of Mizo history, statement of the problem, review of literature, objectives of the study and structure of the thesis. It introduces the thesis by giving general information on Mizo history, society, culture, geography and politics.

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[107] 'Ethnohistory' is an interdisciplinary approach and remains an interdisciplinary pursuit rather than a discipline in itself. Merging the approaches of history, cultural anthropology, and archaeology, it intends to reconstruct the history of non-European peoples, including their experiences of colonization and resistance. For details, see Pauline Turner Strong, 'Ethnohistory', in James D. Wright (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sicences, Vol. 8*, 2nd Edition, New York, Elsevier, 2015, pp.192-197.

Chapter 2: *History, literature and representation*

In this chapter, attempt is made to outline the meaning of literature by giving brief description on various literary theories. It also examines the nature of history by tracing the development of historiography. While exploring the logic of representation, the relationship between historical and fictional narratives is also dealt with in the chapter.

Chapter 3: *Theoretical and conceptual framework*

The chapter contains discussions on various theories and paradigms on the idea of 'ethnicity', 'race' and 'nation'. By drawing previous studies from different disciplines, the development of ideas is examined along with the diverse objective expressions.

Chapter 4: *Ethnohistory of Mizo*

The focal aim of the chapter is to give a critical analysis on the history of Mizo ethnicity. Accordingly, Mizo identity is investigated from pre colonial period and the new characteristics it gained during the colonial period and the period following it. Largely, the chapter explores the changes and development of Mizo ethnicity.

Chapter 5: *History of Mizo literature*

In this chapter, the history of Mizo literature from the stage of orality to literacy is explored. The introduction of alphabets and writings from the colonial period and the production of literature are explored. Special interest is given on the development of Mizo fictional narratives from 1936 to 2010.

Chapter 6: *Mizo ethnicity: Fiction and representation*

In order to expose how the idea of Mizo ethnicity is represented in fictional narratives, four fictions are selected for analysis. The novels are singled out to identify ideas during their particular historical periods, viz. the colonial period (1936-

1947), the post independence period (1947-1966), the MNF period (1966-1987) and post statehood or contemporary period (1987-2010).

Chapter 7: *Representation of nature and gender in Mizo novels*

This chapter studies Mizo perception of nature by attempting to explain Mizo's view on nature and how it influences the way they express the relationship between nature and Mizo identity. It also outlines Mizo's view on gender and how it is manifested. Purposely, two novels are selected, each dealing on nature and gender respectively.

Chapter 8: *Conclusion*

The final chapter of the thesis presents the major findings of the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORY, LITERATURE AND REPRESENTATION

'History' and 'fiction' share a common fundamental nature in their purpose to present the human psyche and the process in which human being interact with nature and society. Nevertheless, the method of their study and their style of depiction differ. While history inquires for facts of the past and attempts to interprete objectively, fiction is free to discuss imagination with aesthetic substance. However, the factuality of history has been blurred by poststructuralist and postmodernist scholars who practically equated history with fiction. In order to find the relationship between history and fiction that both use narrative as a mode of representation, a brief assessment on the meaning of literature and fiction, the nature of history and the implication of narrative will be contended with.

2.1   Understanding literary theory and historiography

'Literature' is derived from Latin *literatura/litteratura* "learning, writing, grammar," which originally stemmed from *litera/littera* "alphabetic letter". In English, it originally means 'book learning'. The meaning "activity of a writer, the profession of a literary writer" is first attested in 1779 in Johnson's "Lives of the English Poets" and that of "literary productions as a whole, body of writings from a period or people" is first recorded in 1812.[108]

In general sense, 'literature' consists of any written works, regardless of its contents, forms or styles. Although it is often used to accredit the artistic, aesthetic, enduring, moral merit written works, and has acquired the status of a kind of universal resource of formal and ethical models for humankind, this view alone would not be given exclusive validity in the work. Literature here will be employed as a neutral discursive capacity, or to represent the undifferentiated body of writing which is

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[108] 'Literature', in *Online Etymology Dictionary*, [website], https://www.etymonline.com, (accessed 27 February 2019).

'literary' in the sense, writing as opposed to other, more casual forms of written communication.[109] Specific interest would be given to 'fictional narratives'.

Throughout the history of literary study, the overwhelming majority of interest to critics has been the meaning of 'fiction' and 'narrative'. Indeed, the terms 'fiction' and 'narrative' seem often to be used as synonym. Yet, the concept of 'fiction', when it has been a topic of reflection, has remained problematic. During the past century, theories differing widely both in details and broad direction have been offered to explain it. Moreover, since some narratives are non-fictional, it is clear that the synonymous usage of the terms causes difficulties. In any case, a related problem that has recently attracted attention is that of the indications of 'fictionality'.[110]

In a general sense, 'fiction' is any literary narrative, whether in prose or verse, which is invented instead of being a description of accurate events that in fact happened. In a narrower sense, however, fiction denotes only narratives that are written in prose, and sometimes is used simply as a synonym for the novel. Both philosophers and literary critics have concerned themselves with the logical analysis of the types of sentences that constitute a fictional text, and especially with the question of their truth, or what is sometimes called their 'truth-value'. That is, whether, or in just what way, they are subject to the criterion of truth or falsity.[111]

Some thinkers asserted that 'fictional sentences' should be regarded as referring to a special world 'created' by the author or writer, which is in correspondence to the real world, but possesses its own setting, beings, and mode of coherence. Others have held that fiction is a form of 'emotive language' composed of pseudo-statements. Whereas a statement in 'referential language' is justified by its truth, i.e., its correspondence with the fact to which it describes, a pseudo-statement is justified entirely by its effect in effecting our feelings.[112]

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[109] Peter Widdowson, *Literature*, London, Routledge, 1999, p. 4-5.
[110] David Gorman, 'Theories of Fiction', in David Herman Manfred Jahn and Marie-Laure Ryan (eds), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, London, Routledge, 2005, p. 163.
[111] MH Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 7th Edition, Mumbai, Prism, 2003, p. 94.
[112] Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, p. 95.

However, another version holds that fictive sentences are meaningful in accordance with principles implicitly shared by the author and reader of a work of fiction. They are not put forward as assertions of fact, and therefore are not subject to the criterion of truth or falsity that applies to sentences in nonfictional discourse.[113] Theories of fiction usually approach the question of what fiction is and how it can be understood through either pragmatics[114] or semantics.[115]

Literary discourse always reflects a particular ideological, institutional, cultural, and historical background. 'Literary criticism' derived its central term 'interpretation' from two areas—magic or religious realm and legal discourse—of textual study. The *exegesis* (a critical explanation of a text) of religious and legal texts was based on the assumption that the meaning of a text could only be retrieved through the act of interpretation.[116]

While literary criticism is mostly interested in the analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of primary sources, 'literary theory' tries to shed light on the very methods used in these readings of primary texts. Literary theory thus functions as the theoretical and philosophical consciousness of textual studies, constantly reflecting on its own development and methodology.[117]

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[113] Abrams, p. 95.

[114] Pragmatic approaches focus on the production and reception of fiction—that is, on the activity of fiction-making, including the intentions and conventions involved, and the social role that fiction plays. Pragmatic approach to literature is influenced by 'pragmatism', "a philosophical movement that includes those who claim that an ideology or proposition is true if it works satisfactorily, that the meaning of a proposition is to be found in the practical consequences of accepting it, and that unpractical idea are to be rejected." Douglas McDermid, 'Pragmatism', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ISSN 2161-0002. [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 5 March 2019).

[115] Semantic approaches look for something distinctive in the content of fictional discourse, such as the use of proper names, reference or truth in fiction, and the nature of fictional entities.

[116] Mario Klarer, *An Introduction to Literary Studies*, London, Routledge, 2004, pp. 71-72.

[117] Klarer, *An Introduction to Literary Studies*, pp. 72-73.

2.1.1 Literary theories

The major schools of literary study include: Formalism; Structuralism; Psychoanalysis; Marxism; Post-Structuralism; Historicism, New Historicism, Cultural Materialism; Post-Colonial; Gender Studies; etc.[118]

'Formalism' is an approach that underlines the study of literary text by analysing the quality of techniques, devices and motifs of literary works. As such, the author or context was not significant for the Formalists. The narrative techniques and content are examined through objective and scientific analysis.[119]

Like the Formalists, advocates of 'New Criticism' emphasized the close reading of literary text. They regarded literary work as an aesthetic entity independent of historical and cultural context. To them, work of literature reflected the unified sentiment of the artist.[120]

Marxist literary theory follows 'Marxism' by enquiring social, economic and political condition by recognising that culture is interlaced with class struggle and 'ideology'.[121] The aesthetic quality of literary work is not underlined and more interest is given to its social and political meanings. It highlights the representation of class conflict and distinction by reading literary works.

The best exponent of Marxism as a literary theory is the Frankfurt School, known as Critical Theory. These theorists differentiated the high cultural heritage and the mass culture that emerged as a result of capitalism in western society by introducing humanist philosophy on Marxism.[122] Mass culture was seen as an instrument of domination that ranged from music, literature and movies to advertisements. Imposition of ideology by the elite class was seen as reacted with opposition by the

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[118] Michael Ryan, *Literary Theory: A practical Introduction*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1999, pp. v-vii.
[119] Vincent Brewton, 'Literary Theory', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 19 March 2019).
[120] Brewton, 'Literary Theory', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
[121] Andrew Edgar, 'Marxism', in Andrew Edgar and Peter Sedgwick (ed.), *Cultural Theory: The Key Concepts*, London, Routledge, 2008, p. 148-49.
[122] Claudio Corradetti, 'The Frankfurt School and Critical Theory', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 19 March 2019).

subordinate class that resulted in negotiation, thus culture becoming as a site of class struggle.[123]

Borrowed from the idea of Sigmund Freud, psychoanalysis is both theoretical and clinical. Freud described the psyche as having three components—*id*, *ego* and *superego*.[124] If the pleasure drive of the *id* and the moral sanction of the *superego* conflicted in the inner self, defence mechanisms like repression, sublimation, fixation and regression occured. Repression pushed the pleasure drive into the unconscious, while sublimation channelled the pleasure drive into positive functions such as art, poetry, science, etc.[125]

In literary theory, it aims to expose the 'literary unconsciousness' of the writer/author and the reader embedded in the text. It also undertakes to distinguish the relationship between the person and the collective unconscious while examining the fluidity of identity borders, and the construction and imposition of identities.[126]

A method introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure, 'Structuralism' influenced literary studies by highlighting the importance of structure against historical and cultural content. Signification was categorised into *signifier* (words or symbols) and *signified* wherein the signifier was seen as arbitrary and independent of the signified or concept. The notion of *binary opposition* was put forward that maintained the construction of meaning as determined by the relationship of opposites.[127]

As an extension and supercession of structuralism, 'Poststructuralism' achieved 'epistemological break' by supporting multiple/plural interpretation of text against

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[123] Corradetti, 'The Frankfurt School and Critical Theory', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

[124] The *id* is instinctual in characteristic in which the sexual drive or pleasure seeking principle needs satisfaction. The *superego* is the part of the psyche which can be called as 'conscience', socially predisposed through enculturation that is internalised. The *ego* acts as a reconciliatory drive of the conflicts and requirements of both the *id* and the *superego*, and operates as consciousness. See Stephen P. Thornton, 'Sigmund Freud', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 20 March 2019).

[125] Thornton, 'Sigmund Freud', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

[126] Nasrullah Mambrol, 'Freudian Psychoanalysis', in *Literary Theory and Criticism* [website], https://literariness.org, (accessed 21 March 2019).

[127] Victor Gijsbers, 'Structuralism, language and world', in *The Philosophy of Science*, 27 September, 2017, [online video], www.youtube.com, (accesed 19 March 2019).

objective studies. Poststructuralist theorists upheld 'decentering' of text that claimed the loss of reference and argued that meaning has no final signifier of end point. In other words, they advocated the endless deferral of meaning. They argued that 'truth' and 'knowledge' is constructed through 'discourse' and 'ideology' of the dominant group or underlying structure of thought.[128]

'New Historicism' and 'Cultural Materialism' both share common technique in their attempt to comprehend literary text historically and culturally by ignoring earlier literary studies. Both schools emphasized on historical and cultural reading of literary works rather than the aesthetic nature of literary texts. They hold that human expression are embedded in their material conditions of culture and pulled down the distinction between high and low literature and fiction and non-fictional works. To them, every piece of writing accounts for analysis in order to trace socio-historical and ideological effects of meaning and its construction.[129]

Postcolonial theorists in the main evaluate historical and cultural discourse written from the viewpoint of colonial authorities. The theory overturns the dichotomous centre-margin and coloniser-colonised representation of history and culture. It regards that the consciousness of colonised subject as shaped by colonial knowledge production. Postcolonial theorists argued that colonialism produced a course of 'internalisation' that initiated and established a sense of political, economic, cultural and mental inferiority on colonial subjects.[130]

Beginning first as feminist theory, gender theory includes studies of all gender and sexual categories and identities afterwards. Arguing that gender categories reflect social reality, gender studies asserts the social construct of gender and challenges the paradigms of western epistemology with an activist standpoint to change social order. Biological categorisation of man and woman into binary opposites is criticised along with male-dominated of western discourse.[131]

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[128] Christopher Norris, 'Post-structuralism', in Edgar and Sedgwick (ed.), *Cultural Theory: The Key Concepts*, pp. 199-202.
[129] Brewton, 'Literary Theory'.
[130] Peter Sedgwick, 'Post-colonialism', in Edgar and Sedgwick (ed.), pp. 194-96.
[131] Brewton, 'Literary Theory'.

2.1.2 A brief history of history writing

'History' is borrowed from Old French *estoire* "story; chronicle, history", which is in turn taken from Latin *historia* "narrative of past events, account, tale, story," that is derived from Greek *historia* "a learning or knowing by inquiry; an account of one's inquiries, history, record, narrative," from *historein* "inquire," from *histor* "wise man, judge."[132]

History as a form of writing was first practised by the ancient Greeks. It was Herodotus who compiled his contemporaneous events in *The Histories*. He relied on first hand information of his own observations, eyewitness accounts of both sides and oral tradition while admitting trivial incidental causes, personal and supernatural factors.[133] Thucydides was another pioneer by establishing a rationalistic element in history writing by carefully investigating the reliability of historical sources. By giving accurate account and rationalisitic explanation, he ignored divine interpretation of causation in history.[134]

The Romans followed the Greeks but introduced geography and ethnography in describing history and popularised biographical history.[135] Medieval European history writing was dictated by Christian theme that was teleological in nature.[136] Religious interpretation of history was rejected by the Enlightenment thinkers. They introduced their own conception on historical writing by suggesting the idea of teleological progress. Highlighting the value of humanity, they held that humanity progressed to a better existence that can be studied through the history of civilization.[137]

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[132] 'History', in *Online Etymology Dictionary*, [website], https://www.etymonline.com, (accessed 27 February 2019).

[133] 'Herodotus', in *Encyclopedia of World Biography*, [website], https://www.encyclopedia.com, (accessed 7 March 2019).

[134] Richard T. Vann, 'Historiography', in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, [website], https://www.britannica.com, (accessed 7 March 2019).

[135] 'History: Western Historiography', in *The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia*, 6th ed., Columbia, Columbia University Press, [website], https://www.infoplease.com, (accessed on 7 March 2019).

[136] 'History: Western Historiography', in *The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia*.

[137] Daniel Little, 'Philosophy of History', in Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, [website], https://plato.stanford.edu, (accessed on 7 March 2019).

'Modern history' writing is said to begun from Edward Gibbon's six-volume work, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776) that used primary sources heavily and aimed at objectivity.[138] Leopold von Ranke's contribution to history is large as his endeavour set aside history as a separate academic discipline. He emphasised heavy reliance on primary sources and narrative history while rejecting speculations. In *The History of the Latin and Teutonic People* (1824), he used wide ranging sources incuding "memoirs, diaries, letters, diplomatic reports and original narratives of eye witnesses.[139] He was an empiricist[140] and defended the use of historical documents with objective presentation. This view was collaborated by positivism[141] put forward by Auguste Comte.

Georg Freidrich Hegel was another influential thinker who had an intense influence on the nature and philosophy of history. To Hegel, history or the development of human existence and thought is guided by what he called 'Geist' that means 'spirit' or the underlying structure of thought. This common structural reason, Hegel believed, gives birth to teleological historiography. The concrete/thesis breeds the abstract/antithesis and finally the absolute/synthesis. The absolute/synthesis becomes the concrete/thesis and produces the abstract/antitheisis and the absolute/synthesis in a continual succession.[142] This progressive and dialectical method of seeing historical development influenced Karl Marx and other thinkers later on.

Marx theory of history, called historical materialsm, discussed human and societal development in the form of dialectical conflict between the oppressors and the

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[138] Vann, 'Historiography', in *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

[139] Arthur Marwick, *What History is and Why it is Important*, Buckinghamshire, Open University Press, 1970, p. 43.

[140] Contradictory to the view that knowledge begins with innate ideas, empiricism emphasizes the importance of experience and evidence in the formation of ideas. Carol King, 'Empiricism', in Robert Arp (ed)., *1001 Ideas That Changed The Way We Think*, New Delhi, Hachette Book Publishing India Pvt. Ltd., 2016, p. 384.

[141] Positivism was developed by Auguste Comte in reaction against German speculative and metaphysical philosophy. He laid stress on observation and experimentation and mentioned the three historical stages of knowledge—the theological, the metaphysical and the positive—and claimed the positivist stage that confines to the study of experimental facts as the highest stage. Janey Fisher, 'Positivism', in Arp (ed)., *1001 Ideas That Changed The Way We Think*, p. 470.

[142] Victor Gijsbers, 'Hegel, the logic of history' in *The Philosophy of Science*, 27 September, 2017, [online video], https://www.youtube.com, (accessed 10 March 2019). Also see David A. Duquette, 'Hegel: Social and Political Thought', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ISSN 2161-0002. [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 7 March 2019).

oppressed in their productive power. Marx believed historical process as going through necessary modes of production in the form of class conflict that culminated in communism or 'the end of history'.[143]

In his essay "The Function of General Laws in History" (1942), Carl Hempel proposed general law of scientific explanation and argued that all scientific explanations required inclusion under his proposed general laws.[144] According to Hempel, historical explanation as well must allign with the general law, and claimed that historical explanations must invoke general laws for scientific authenticity.[145] Thus, to him, there is no human agency in historical narrative.

In reaction to positivism and empiricism, RG Collingwood held that history could not be studied as per natural science because historical process and events could not be perceived physically and directly. Rather, he claimed that historian has to 'reconstruct' history by using 'historical imagination' and 're-enact' the minds of historical persons relying on historical sources.[146] He also stated that a historian 'interrogates' his sources, and thus has to be conscious of his biases when corroborating statements in his 'reconstruction' of history.[147]

The nature of 'history' continued to be debated in Britain by EH Carr and Geoffrey Elton in the mid twentieth century. EH Carr took his position between the empirical/positivist historians and the non-empirical historians. He argued empiricist/positivist historians' 'cult of facts' by showing the flaw in the attempt to present accurate and objective history, [148] as he observed historians' selection of 'facts of the past' to become 'historical facts'.[149] At the same time, he argued the non-empiricist/idealist historians' view of history as merely based on the discourse constructed by a historian.[150] He instead suggested that a historian should follow a

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[143] Jonathan Wolff, 'Karl Marx', in Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, [website], https://plato.stanford.edu, (accessed 8 March 2019).
[144] Daniel Little, 'Philosophy of History', in Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
[145] Little, 'Philosophy of History'.
[146] RG Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, Oxford, OUP, 1946, p. 215.
[147] Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, p. 215.
[148] EH Carr, *What is History*, Cambridge, CUP, 1961, pp. 7-11.
[149] Carr, *What is History*, pp. 11-13.
[150] Carr, p. 29.

middle path and presents his/her interpretation in parallel with his/her facts.[151] Contrary to Carr, a positivist historian Geoffrey Elton in *The Practice of History* established that historical facts are independent of the observer and historians did not construct a new world from their subjective bias.[152]

Michel Foucault labelled his own historical method as an investigation of truth production. His earlier works were characterised by what he termed as 'archaeology'. By this, he rejected the singularity and fixity of meaning and asserted the transmogrification of meaning through space and time.[153] His later work superseded his archaeological method and was characterized as 'genealogy'. This method attempted to study the past in relation to the present and explored how the current institutions emerged from a play of power-discourses produced from the past.[154]

Keith Jenkins in his contentious work *Rethinking History* claimed that history is pluralistic rather than monolithic and can have different versions.[155] He further commented that history and the past as a different thing by stating while the past had already happened, history is a discourse that presents the constructed past.[156] Jenkins maintained that the past is an event and account about the past could not represent the truth about it, therefore presupposition of the historian involved by what he termed as 'epistemological fragility'.[157] To put it short, Jenkins described history as relying on the ideology of the historian.[158]

Against the postmodernists' agenda, Richard Evans produced *In Defence of History* in which he attempted to negate the intellectual discourse that criticized history as nearer to fiction than science. He aimed to write against 'intellectual barbarians' including semioticians, poststructuralist, Foucauldians, New Historicists, etc.[159] Following the footsteps of conventional historiographers, Evans advocated the use of

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[151] Carr, pp. 29-30.
[152] Jonathan Haslam, *The Vices of Integrity: E.H. Carr, 1892-1982*, London, Verso, 2000, p. 204
[153] Mark Kelly, 'Michel Foucault (1926–1984)', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 8 March 2019).
[154] Kelly, 'Michel Foucault (1926–1984)'.
[155] Keith Jenkins, *Rethinking History*, London, Routledge, 2003, p. 3
[156] Jenkins, *Rethinking History*, pp. 6-7.
[157] Jenkins, p. 11.
[158] Jenkins, p. 12.
[159] Richard Evans, *In Defence of History*, London, Granta Books, 1997, pp. 8-9.

primary sources such as archival sources to achieve objective history and emphasized 'a return of scholar humility'.[160] According to him, historical interpretation can be made through contact with the real historical world indirectly. The real historical world has gone, but the real world has left documents that a historian must use to present the real past.[161]

2.3 Historical and fictional narratives

'Narrative' stemmed from Middle French *narratif* that means "a tale, story" that in turn is derived from Late Latin *narrativus* meaning "suited to narration",[162] from Latin *narrare* "to tell, relate, recount, explain".[163] To simply put, a narrative is an account of story and events that can be either factual or fictional.

In *Narrative Discourse*, Gerard Gennete put forth five major characteristics of narrative. First, narrative consists of 'events in order' or 'chronology' that is followed by the second characteristic expressing 'the duration and time of events'. The third includes 'the recurrence or frequency of events', and 'mood' or the 'narrator's point of view' following it. The fifth is the 'voice of the narrative'.[164] For Gennete, narrative means the relationship between events and a particular discourse and that of discourse and narration.[165] Thus, narrative does not simply imply an account of events, but a discourse that underlines certain events as more significant in the act of narration.

Narrative is a fundamental approach of arranging human experience and an instrument for constructing models of reality. It creates and transmits cultural traditions, and builds the values and beliefs that define cultural identities and is a

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[160] Evans, *In Defence of History*, p. 201.
[161] Evans, p. 112.
[162] 'Narrative', in *Online Etymology Dictionary*, [website], https://www.etymonline.com, (accessed 25 March 2019).
[163] 'Narration', in *Online Etymology Dictionary*, [website], https://www.etymonline.com, (accessed 25 March 2019).
[164] 'Narrative', in Julian Wolfreys, Ruth Robbins and Kenneth Womack, *Key Concepts in Literary Theory*, Second Edition, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2006, p. 70.
[165] 'Narrative', in Wolfreys, Robbins and Womack, *Key Concepts in Literary Theory*, p. 70.

vehicle of dominant ideologies and an instrument of 'power'.[166] It acts as cultural framings, cultural paradigms and ideologies and presents authenticity to the accounts that are recounted.

In short, narrative can be summarised as having three core components: an event, the sequence and the meaning attached to it. The combination of these components provides individual and collective meanings and connects the past with the present with organised structure.

The reaction of the postmodernist scholars against the modernist project of positivism problematised the nature of history and its meaning. Similar with poststructuralist and postmodernist thinkers, RG Collingwood and EH Carr had before then advocated human agency in history writing against the empiricist historians. They both stated the subjective interpretation of the past by a historian and questioned the objectivity of historical narratives.

Postmodernism and poststructuralism ignore the idea that literary texts have singular purpose or meaning. On the contrary, they hold that every individual reader constructs an individual purpose and meaning from a signifier and claim that a signified is subjective. Against structuralism's notion of meaning independent from culture, poststructuralism perceive culture and meaning as inseperable and announces subjective and multiple interpretation of texts.[167] This system that favours that there is no fixed meaning has a great impact on the study of history and historiography. According to this view, historical sources and data have no meaning without the narrative produced by a historian. Thus, history is not an objective discovery of the past, but an invention or construction produced by a historian like fiction writing. There is no singular interpretation of history and that there could be multiple interpretations in which every historian's view is as good as another's.

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[166] Marie-Laure Ryan, 'Narrative', in Jahn and Ryan, *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, p.345.
[167] Christopher Norris, 'Post-structuralism', Edgar and Sedgwick (ed.), pp. 199-202.

Hayden White initiated a 'linguistic turn' in historiography by claiming that history and literature share a fundamental essence.[168] In his analysis of the structures and strategies of historical accounts in *Meta-History: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (1979), he concluded that history is like fiction in which the narratives choices made by the historian is inevitable.[169] According to White, historians follow four-fold logic of emplotment like fiction writers in relation to the way they perceived the subject matter—romance, tragedy, comedy or satire. This is guided by their inclination of different political ideologies, viz. anarchism, radicalism, conservatism or liberalism by using different rhetorical and literary tools like metaphor, metonym, synechdoche or irony.[170]

White's argument contains certain logical truth as history is not purely a collection of facts. It is the historian who outlined a plot, added ontological structure and connected the data with narrative composition. It is by this narrative structure that a historian ordered the selected facts while ignoring certain facts. Mere exposition of raw facts is not achieved by a historian without any clear connections. A historian therefore employed a narrative structure with a comprehensible beginning, middle and end. This, he stated, is guided by anarchic, radical, conservatist or liberal political ideologies making use of literary genres such as romantic, comic, tragic or satirical plots.

Seeing historical writing as a great endeavour to study philosophy in general, Frank Ankersmit produced certain works on the nature of historical writing. The philosophy of history presented by Ankersmit is dichotomous. His first interest is to distinguish 'historical research' and 'historical writing' by which he suggested that 'historical research' addresses on the establishment of historical facts while 'historical writing' focuses on the best way to give details of the past using generally accepted facts. For him, 'historical writing' is more important as he believed that in

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[168] Brewton, 'Literary Theory'.
[169] Victor Gijsbers, 'Hayden White, the story of history' in *The Philosophy of Science*, 27 September, 2017, [online video], https://www.youtube.com, (accesed 26 March 2019).
[170] Brewton, 'Literary Theory'.

order to contribute in contemporary philosophy, historical writing must be focused since it contains wide-ranging rationality unknown to the sciences.[171]

Ankersmit differentiated description and historical representation. He mentioned that while historical writing described isolated facts of the past, historical writing incorporated the results of historical research in its historical representation. This means that descriptive sentences made reference to past events, whereas a representation is a combination of descriptive statements 'about' specific part of past reality.[172] By this, he meant that though both have connection with reality, a description refers to reality while a representation says 'about' reality. This *aboutness* or *being about* should not be taken naively. Instead, it should be understood as essentially unstable and unfixed as it is differently defined by the descriptions contained by the text of each representation.[173]

Ankersmit attempted to find a middle ground or *juste milieu* between literary and empiricist explanation by showing that historical representation has aesthetic quality but at the same time has an adequacy to be rationally and scientifically examined. He defended the reduction of history as purely created by a historian and instead gave explanation for the importance and uniqueness of historical writing from philosophy of science or literary theory.

The overlapping of 'historical narrative' and 'fictional narrative' is repeatedly emphasised by poststructuralist and postmodernist scholars who went as far as diminishing the factuality of history as mere invention. Even if history contains subjective ideas of a historian, the writer is restricted to go beyond historical information without check by other documents or historians. In contrast, although fictional narratives often expressed factual statements, the writer is free to romanticize the facts without scrutiny as he has the liberty to do so. When both literary fiction and history focus on a historical situation, a historian's truth is bound

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[171] Marek Tamm and Eugen Zeleňák, 'In a Parallel World: An Introduction to Frank Ankersmit's Philosophy of History' in *Journal of the philosophy of history 12 (2018)*, pp. 330-31, [website], https://www.researchgate.net, (accessed 27 March 2019).
[172] Tamm and Zeleňák, 'In a Parallel World: An Introduction to Frank Ankersmit's Philosophy of History', p. 331.
[173] Tamm and Zeleňák, p. 333.

to be more factual than an artist, just as an artist's is bound to be more figurative than a historian.

2.4 <u>The idea of Representation</u>

'Representation' has emerged as an important concept in cultural studies. The concept contains the subject of 'meaning' and its connection with culture. The process by which an object or idea acquires meaning, and the production, reception, and interpretation of meaning by members of a culture is at the heart of the concept. Question concerning the construction of 'knowledge', in relation to the matter of 'power' situates within the epistemic core of 'representation'.

Major dictionaries give numerous meanings of the word 'representation'. This implies the range of usages depending on the type of discourse in which the concept emerges. [174] In aesthetics [175] and semiotics, [176] 'representation' has been the foundational idea since ancient times.[177] One noticeable question that comes into view in contemporary theories of 'representation' is the question of things that 'stand for' other things.

Primarily, representation is an essential part of the process by which members of a culture produced and exchanged meaning between them and relates language and meaning to culture.[178] Definitions differ in accordance with the cultural context and ideological standpoints from which it intends to discuss.

The English noun 'representation' originated from an old French *representacion* (14c.). The word implies 'image, likeness', which is directly derived from Latin *Representation em*, stem of *repraesentare,* which means 'bring

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[174] renée c. hoogland, 'Representation', in William A. Darity Jr. (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Volume 7*, 2nd Edition, Michigan, MacMillan Reference USA, 2008, p. 172.

[175] General theory of the arts.

[176] General theory of signs.

[177] Frank Lentricchia & Thomas McLaughlin (ed.), *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, Second Edition, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1995, p. 11.

[178] Stuart Hall, Jessica Evans & Sean Nixon, *Representation*, Second Edition, London, SAGE Publications Ltd, 2013, p. 1.

before, exhibit'. [179] The word 'representation', therefore, can be interpreted as containing the idea of a symbol or sign that stands for or instead of an object or a concept.

The *Merriam-Webster Learner's Dictionary* presents two relevant implications of the word within the realm of socio-cultural studies:

1. A 'representation' is something (such as a picture or symbol)
   that stands for something.
2. 'Representation' is the act of presenting or describing a person
   or thing in a particular way.[180]

Both meanings put forward that 'representations' actually substitute something or someone else—it literally 're-present' by presenting something or someone a second time. [181] 'Representation' can be conceived of as the depiction of thoughts in language, or the linguistic 'representation' of the world of empirical experience. The view that language rather than simply reflects reality, but functions in constructing it is an important one in this connection. Relating to the context of discourses on 'knowledge', the function of 'representation' can also be questioned."[182]

'Representation' has shaded meanings in social terms. A group can be represented in a way that may be considered as a stereotype. In this context, 'representation' may be described as misrepresentation: as the construction of identity. Such constructions of identity may be strongly associated with matters of 'ideology' and 'power' and to the types of 'discourse' imposed in the processes whereby such images are created.[183]

Stuart Hall articulated that 'representation' constitutes the connection between concepts and language that allows us to refer to objects and events in the 'real'

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[179] 'Representation', in *Online Etymology Dictionary*, [website], https://www.etymonline.com, (accessed 25 April 2016). Also see, 'Representation', in *Oxford Dictionaries: Language matters*, [website], https://www.oxforddictionaries.com, (accessed on 25 April 2016).
[180] 'Representation', in *Merriam-Webster Learner's Dictionary*, [website], http://www.learnersdictionary.com, (accessed 28 April 2016).
[181] hoogland, 'Representation', in Darity Jr. (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Volume 7*, 2nd Edition, p. 172.
[182] hoogland, p. 172.
[183] Peter Sedgwick, 'Representation', in Edgar and Sedgwick, p. 294.

world, or to imaginary worlds of unreal objects and events (as in literary texts).[184] Corresponding to the idea, 'representation' do not reflect the underlying reality, or re-represent the original object. In fact, it brings into being which it supposedly refers.[185]

The idea of 'representation' holds a constructive quality since there is no inherent and stable meaning in the *signifier*.[186] 'Representation', according to Dani Cavallaro, therefore, necessitates interpretation of the suggested *signified*.[187] Reality is minimally experienced through the mediation of texts and discourses, and therefore, 'representations' are never directly and unambiguously connected with an underlying reality.[188]

In line with WJT Mitchell, 'representation' obstructs, fragments, and negates our knowledge.[189] This indicates that 'representation' does not simply stand instead of an entity, but performs as an active process and entails 'power' relation. Different sorts of 'representations' are produced and valued due to dominant 'ideology' where other forms of 'representations' are marginalised and suppressed. For that reason, 'representation' can be conceived to express the dominant belief system of a culture. Rather than objectively reflecting the referent [190] as it is, 'representation' thus

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[184] Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices*, p. 17.
[185] hoogland, p. 171.
[186] Signifier/signified - Saussure advocated that a word or image (the sign) consists of two parts. He termed the sound it makes (or its graphic equivalent) as the `signifier', and the mental image that the sound or graphic equivalent produces in the reader/viewer as the 'signified'. The relationship between signifier and signified is entirely arbitrary and conventional; it is however impossible to take apart the two. Moreover, the connection between the sign in its constituent parts of signifier/signified and its referent (the real object to which it refers) is also arbitrary. In other words, signified and referent are not identical terms for Saussure. See Wolfreys, Robbins & Womack, p. 92.
[187] Dani Cavallaro, *Critical and Cultural Theory: Thematic Variations*, London, Athlone, 2001, p. 4.
[188] hoogland, p. 171.
[189] WJT Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1994, p. 188.
[190] In Saussurean linguistics, the *referent* is that to which the word or sign refers. The real object in the real world for the word or sign is an arbitrary and conventional signal. Wolfreys, Robbins & Womack, p. 86.

constructs subjective realities, as they are perceived through diverse ideologically informed mediator.[191]

Generally, there are three approaches to the study of 'representation'—its meaning and how it works through language. There is the *reflective approach*, which believes that language reflects and mirrors reality. The second approach, the *intentional approach* considers the authority of the writer or speaker in imposing his or her meaning through language. The third approach regards meaning as a construction using the representational system, therefore known as the *constructivist* or *constructionist approach*.

The philosophical scholarship of 'representation' dates back to the ancient Greeks. The Greeks applied the concept of *mimesis*[192] in giving explanation on the function of language and arts in mirroring and reflecting the natural world. Plato and Aristotle were the foremost figures, whose viewpoints on the subject of *mimesis* however were in contrary.

According to Plato, reality lies with the 'Idea'. The 'Form' a person confronts in the tangible world is a copy of that universal everlasting Idea. Thus, the 'representation' is a copy of this copy. The artist does not imitate the reality, but the sense object that he confronts. Hence, it is only a copy of a copy.[193] Therefore, Plato regarded *mimesis* as a latent danger, creating illusionary world that would direct one away from 'real things.'

Aristotle first discussed *mimesis* as a theory of art. He observed the concept of *mimesis* as an aesthetic theory of art and considers imitation in terms of the form in which it is embodied'. [194] By imitation, he meant something analogous to 'representation' through which *mimesis* turns out to be the equivalent of artistic and

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[191] hoogland, p. 172.

[192] *Mimesis* (from the Greek *mimos*, a mime) refers to the imitation or 'representation' of reality in art. Wolfreys, Robbins & Womack, p. 65.

[193] Lillie Smith, 'Plato Aesthetics', [website], https://www.rowan.edu, (accessed 29 April 2016).

[194] RA Dutton, *Introduction to Literary Criticism*, CUP, Cambridge, 1985, p. 22.

aesthetic activity.[195] Unlike Plato, Aristotle argued that *mimesis* is not morally destructive since reason precedes art.

In his book *The Mirror and the Lamp* MH Abrams argued that the Aristotelian idea of 'representation' in term of *mimesis* (the assumption that the mind and its products reflect reality) governed the western thoughts toward 'representation' up to the eighteenth century. According to this perspective, 'representation', in Shakespeare's phrase, held "a mirror up to nature" and authentically recorded an objectively real world, independent of observer.[196] This view on 'representation' regards language or signs as reflecting or imitating the reality that is already in existence and fixed in nature. It put forward a direct and apparent relationship of imitation or reflection connecting words (signs) and things.

Reflective theories of 'representation' and language are true to a certain degree. Signs do contain association to the form and appearance of the objects that they represent. Nonetheless, various signs that we completely comprehend are fictional and refer to worlds that are unreal in a sense.[197]

The intentional approach or the 'authorial intent' considers the author or artist as imposing his or her unique meaning through language. It advocates the idea that words mean what the author intend they should mean.[198] The intentional theory reduces 'representation' to the intentions of its author or subject,[199] thereby authorizing exclusive meaning to the writer's intention in interpreting a text. It maintains that the meaning or message that the artist intended to communicate through their work is the mere substantial aspect of the work.

However, with reference to the 'intentional fallacy' postulated by William K. Wimsatt, Jr., and Monroe Beardsley, in literary criticism, it is not necessary or desirable to comprehend what an author intended.[200] It propounds that whether the

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[195] N. Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1957, pp. 65-67.
[196] hoogland, p. 171.
[197] Hall, Evans & Nixon, *Representation*, p. 10.
[198] Hall, Evans & Nixon, p. 10.
[199] Hall, Evans & Nixon, p. 20.
[200] Mark Theoharis & Barry Stone, 'The Intentional Fallacy', in Arp (ed.), p. 718.

author stated his or her intention in commenting on his work, or whether his or her intention is simply inferred from the work itself, the intention is irrelevant, because the meaning and value locates in the actual text, which is the completed and freestanding work per se.[201]

In his theory of the 'death of the author', Roland Barthes contended that a writer's intentions and the context in which his/her work was produced do not necessitate to be taken into account in interpreting a text for that interpretation to be valid.[202] Barthes argued that no single interpretation of a text can claim to be more authentic than any other else construed.[203]

Philosophers and scientists took the initiatives in challenging received opinions about objective knowledge. Albert Einstein, for instance, declared that it is our theory that makes decisions on what we can observe.[204] Arthur Schopenhauer argued the world as representation.[205] Friedrich Nietzsche, from the deep epistemological suspicion considered that facts are not facts until they have been interpreted.[206] John Dewey, for instance, claimed that human beings created reality, that each person represents his or her world out of the encounter between 'self' and environment.[207] William James held the same opinion that psychological interests help to construct the truth which they affirm.[208]

Plato's doubt about signification becomes a fundamental concern in twentieth century to both Structuralism and Poststructuralism that asserted that words hold no etymological connection to their meanings, but are arbitrarily imposed.[209] Neither

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[201] Abrams, p. 83.
[202] Jannete Poulton, 'The Death of the Author: Roland Barthes', in Arp (ed.), p. 815.
[203] Poulton, 'The Death of the Author: Roland Barthes', p. 815.
[204] Peter Burke, *What is Cultural History*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge, Polity, 2008, p. 78.
[205] Mary Troxell, 'Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860)', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 30 April 2016).
[206] Dale Wilkerson, 'Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 30 April 2016).
[207] Richard Field, 'John Dewey (1859-1952)', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 30 April 2016).
[208] Wayne P. Pomerleau, 'William James (1842-1910)', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 30 April 2016).
[209] Burke, *What is Cultural History*, p. 815.

things-in-themselves nor the users of words can formulate meaning in language. Things do not plainly signify, but meaning is constructed using representational systems—signs and concepts.[210]

Ferdinand de Saussure argued that the relationship between *signifier* and *signified* is truly arbitrary. In view of that, meaning is not the product of an essential correspondence connecting signifiers and signified—it is relatively the result of difference and relationship. In other words, Saussure suggested a relational theory of language. Meaning does not emerge through a one-to-one relation to things in the world, but by constructing difference.[211]

According to Jacques Derrida, there is neither transcendental signifier nor transcendental signified to fix the system of meaning.[212] Derrida remarked that the loss of reference produces a continual deferral of meaning that has no final point or final signifier to make possible other signifiers to hold their meaning.[213] He asserted that it is only when located in a 'discourse' and read in context that there is a temporary discontinuity to nonstop play of signifier-to-signifier. He, thus, advocated a kind of theory pointing out a free play of signification in which no fixed, established meaning is attainable.[214]

Michel Foucault shifted the attention from language to 'discourse' and regarded 'discourse' as a system of 'representation'; in which, he considered, meaning and meaningful practice is constructed within 'discourse'.[215] Things meant something and were 'true', he argues, only within a specific historical context.[216] According to Foucault, discourses produce 'knowledge' and 'knowledge' is always weapon of 'power.' He argued that 'power' produces reality; through discourses, it produces the

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[210] Hall, Evans & Nixon, p. 11.

[211] John Storey, *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction*, Sixth Edition, New Delhi, Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd., 2012, p. 113.

[212] Adam Sharman, 'Jacques Derrida', in Jon Simons (ed.), *Contemporary Critical Theorists: From Lacan to Said*, New Delhi, Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, 2004, p. 90.

[213] Jack Reynolds, 'Jacques Derrida (1930-2004)', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 30 April 2016).

[214] Reynolds, 'Jacques Derrida (1930-2004)', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

[215] Hall, Evans & Nixon, p. 29.

[216] Hall, Evans & Nixon, p. 31.

'truth'.[217] For Foucault, the production of 'knowledge' is always followed by the question of 'power'; and this seriously enlarges the scope of what is involved in 'representation'.[218]

In *Orientalism*, Edward Said's main argument is with the Western 'representations' of the Orient and the forms of 'knowledge', which they constructed. He recognized the 'representation' of the Orient as a 'system of ideological fiction',[219] which entails the question of 'power'. Said argued that, "The Orient was almost a European invention,"[220] thereby affirming his thesis by showing how the Occident, using 'discourse' and 'representation' as an instrument has constructed a 'knowledge' about the Orient in the interest of the 'power' of the West.

The importance of the relation between 'knowledge', 'power' and 'discourse' marked a significant development in the constructionist approach to 'representation', which liberated 'representation' from the rule of an exclusively formal theory and gave it a historical and practical context of operation.[221] Core in the idea of the constructionist theory of meaning and 'representation' is that though material things and actions exist, they only take on meaning and become objects of knowledge within 'discourse'.

What can be construed is the relative intellectual plane that history and literature (particularly fiction) engage with. Even though both their methods and techniques are at variance, they attempt to reflect, represent and even construct the 'truth' of human beings' existence in nature and culture. For this, narrative tool and content are both employed by historical and literary writers to communicate the discourse they intended to convey.

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[217] Storey, *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction*, p. 132.
[218] Hall, Evans & Nixon, p. 36.
[219] Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, p. 321.
[220] Said, p. 1.
[221] Hall, Evans & Nixon, p. 32.

CHAPTER THREE

ETHNICITY, RACE AND NATIONALISM

The chapter attempts to give a concise discourse on the idea of 'ethnicity' and the varied paradigms used for studying ethnicity. In order to demonstrate the concept of ethnicity more clearly, its associated notions of 'race' and 'nation' are also briefly discussed.

3.1 Mapping the concept of Ethnicity

The consciousness of group solidarity and common culture parallels historical records, however, the term 'ethnicity' is of recent invention. Communities possessing 'ethnic' characteristics have been existed throughout every period in human civilizations, which contributed a significant function in all societies. It stays alive in everyday 'discourse', and develops as an instrument to the politics of group differentiation and advantage in culturally diverse societies. Ethnicity is a form of group cohesion, which is contingent in structure and variable in status in particular contexts or at particular times. Ethnic identity is often correlated with conflict engendered by political consciousness; nevertheless, there is no necessary relation between the two.

3.1.1 Defining Ethnicity

The term 'ethnicity' first came into use in the English language in the 1950s. The *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1953 gives the first recorded usage of the word, which stemmed from the much older term and more commonly used adjective 'ethnic'.[222] Ethnicity, nevertheless, is a term still vague and ambiguous to the majority of ordinary speakers of English. The term invites continual definitional argument among those specialized scholars who think that they know, or ought to know what it means. [223] Despite definitional disagreements, there is general judgment that a

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[222] John Hutchinson & Anthony D. Smith, 'Theories of Ethnicity: Introduction', in John Hutchinson & Anthony D. Smith (eds.), *Ethnicity*, Oxford, OUP, 1996, p.4.

[223] Elisabeth Tonkin, Mayron McDonald and Malcolm Chapman, 'History and Ethnicity', in Hutchinson & Smith (eds.), *Ethnicity*, p.19.

number of characteristics appear as traits of ethnicity, not all of them will be located in every case, but many will be.[224]

Bulmer suggested one of the most widely established sociological definitions of ethnicity as "a collectivity within a larger population having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared past, and a cultural focus upon one or more symbolic elements which define the groups' identity, such as kinship, religion, language, shared territory, nationality or physical appearance."[225]

In cultural theory, 'ethnic' groups are generally identified as being minorities, who possess different range of attitudes or traditions to the ones held and followed by the majority. In turn, ethnicity denotes the self-awareness on the part of a particular community of its own cultural uniqueness. The issue turns upon who actively designates one particular social grouping as 'ethnic' since to be defined as 'ethnic' and to assert one's own as 'ethnicity' are two very different things. In both cases, issue of 'power' appears. In the former case, one's ethnicity is being defined by the majority opinion, and as such may be an oppressive manifestation of the power of the more dominant forces and interests within a society. In the latter, the affirmation of ethnicity can be understood as an assertion of one's own identity in the face of social status quo.[226]

Examining the etymology, the term ethnicity comes from the Greek word *ethnos*, and continues, as a literally intellectual word in modern French *ethnie*, with the associated adjective *ethnique*. The French adjective of *ethnique* is used in modern English as 'ethnic', with a suffix added to give *ethnicity*. However, the problem is that the concrete noun—*ethnos* or *ethnie*—from which 'ethnicity' derived does not exist in modern English.[227]

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[224] Richard D Alba, 'Ethnicity', in Edgar F. Borgatta and Rhonda JV Montgomery (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Sociology*, Vol 2, Second Edition, New York, Macmillan Reference USA, 2000, p.841.

[225] M. Bulmer, 'The ethnic group question in the 1991 census of population', in J. Coleman & J. Salt (eds), *Ethnicity in the 1991 Census, Vol. 1*, London, HMSO, 1996, p.35.

[226] Peter Sedgwick, 'Ethnic/Ethnicity', in Edgar and Sedgwick (ed.), p.114-15.

[227] Tonkin, McDonald and Chapman, 'History and Ethnicity', p.19.

The usage of the term *ethnos* by the ancient Greeks was wide-ranging. Homer used *ethnos hetairon* (a band of friends), *ethnos Lukion* (a tribe of Lycians), and *ethnos melisson* or *ornithon* (a swarm of bees or birds.) The Persians were called by Aeschylus as *ethnos*, Pindar spoke of the *ethnos aneron* or *gunaikon* (a race of men or women), Herodotus of to *Medikon ethnos* (the Median people), and Plato of *ethnos kerukikon* (a caste of heralds).[228] Aristotle used for foreign or barbarous nations, as opposed to Greek, *genos Hellenon*. The term co-existed with *genos*, commonly used by Greeks for themselves. Later, in New Testament Greek, *ethnos* came to be employed to denote non-Christian and non-Jewish, an attempt to render the Hebrew *goyim*. After the Reformation, and the English vernacular rendering of the Bible, it was as 'gentile', not 'ethnic', that the term appeared.[229] The early usages held a common concept of a group of people or a collection of animals sharing some cultural or biological traits, which live and act as one. Nevertheless, these usages referred to 'others' belonging to some group unlike one's own.[230]

In general sense, 'ethnicity' appears as a trouble-free concept, however it is in fact subject to different interpretations. Ethnicity has subjective characteristics since it is the product of human sentiments and attitudes implying a matter of identification and a sense of belonging to an ethnic group. Alternatively, it has an objective quality since it must be supported by some objective criteria constructed by societal forces and power relations basically free of subjective individuals' inclinations. Having both sides considered, ethnicity is the product of subjective consciousness based on some objective attributes such as common descent and cultural affinities.

The term 'ethnicity' is often employed synonymously with that of 'ethnic group'. However, there is a slight degree of variation between the two closely related concepts. 'Ethnic group' is essentially a social group defining its essence based on common descent or national origin. Nevertheless, 'ethnicity' signifies the ethnic group affiliation or identification of an individual or communities.

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[228] Hutchinson & Smith, 'Theories of Ethnicity: Introduction', p.4.
[229] Tonkin, McDonald and Chapman, pp.19-20.
[230] Hutchinson & Smith, p.4.

Psychological and sociological approaches have dealt with identity formation in their respective way. While psychological approach specifically deals with individual identity formation, sociological approach inspects the formation of collective social identity. An individual's cognitive and moral connection with a larger community, category, practice, and institution, which may be rather imagined than experienced directly, can be broadly taken as collective identity.[231] It is simply a kind of collective identity where an individual has a sense of belonging to a particular group for specific rationale.

The relevance of ethnicity is often in a situation of relativities and differences, and it is a process of identification, which however often culminates to concrete status.[232] Though ethnic groups may appear to be socially defined, they are differentiated both from *inside* and *outside* the group based on cultural criteria. The defining characteristics of a particular ethnicity have usually depended upon the various purposes for which the group has been identified.[233] Moreover, both ethnicity and its components are relative to time and place and are dynamic and variable.[234] Ideas of similarity and difference are essential to the way in which one realizes a sense of identity and social belonging. Identities, therefore, have some aspect of exclusivity of the 'others'.

Fredrick Barth maintained that ethnicity exists when people claim a certain identity for themselves and are regarded by 'others' as having that identity.[235] Barth's central point is not the cultural characteristics within ethnic groups but relationships of cultural differentiation, and contact between groups that differentiated—'us' and 'them.'[236] TH Eriksen considered that ethnicity refers to aspects of relations between groups, which regard themselves as, and are held by 'others' as being culturally

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[231] Francesca Polletta and JM Jasper, 'Collective Identity and Social Movements', in *Annual Review of Sociology, Vol. 27*, pp.283-305.

[232] Tonkin, McDonald and Chapman, p.23.

[233] No ethnic group will contain the essential defining traits; however, all will exhibit different components to different degrees. See, 'Ethnography', in Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, London, Routledge, 2009, pp.80-81.

[234] 'Ethnography', in Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, p.81.

[235] Conrad Phillip Kottak, *Anthropology: The Exploration of Human Diversity*, 10th Edition, New York, McGraw Hill, 2004, pp.367-68.

[236] Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity: Arguments and Explorations,* p.12.

distinctive. [237] Everett Hughes held that ethnicity requires relations, and ethnic relations oblige at least two collective groups—the *outs* and the *ins*. [238] The consciousness of ethnic identity is thus, generally in the context of 'other' ethnic groups.

Several scholars demonstrate the significance of 'others' in the construction of an ethnic identity repeatedly. The most prominent contemporary use of the notion 'other' is perhaps, established by Edward Said. The 'other' may be designated as a form of cultural projection of concepts. This projection constructs the identities of cultural beings through a relationship of 'power' in which the 'other' is the subjugated being.[239] In post-colonial theory, the 'other' refer to the colonized 'others' who are marginalized by the colonial discourse and thus identified by their difference from the centre. The colonized subjects were typified as 'other' through 'discourses' such as 'primitivism' and 'cannibalism', as a means of establishing the binary dissection of the colonizer and colonized and asserting the legitimacy and primacy of the colonizing culture and worldview.[240] However, articulating in neutral term, the 'other' is anyone who is different from one's self. The existence of 'others' is substantial in locating one's own existence in the world.

3.1.2 Theoretical approaches to ethnic studies

Ethnicity has an ontological existence before scholars produced the epistemic discourse on the concept. Undoubtedly, colonial ethnographers and administrators produced large number of ethnographic works describing the people whom they encountered and eventually colonized. However, none of the pioneers of sociology and social anthropology had given much attention to ethnicity with the partial exclusion of Max Weber.[241]

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[237] For further details, see Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, p.3.
[238] Richard Jenkins, p.11.
[239] Peter Sedgwick, 'Other', in Edgar and Sedgwick (ed.), p.235.
[240] Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, p.169-70.
[241] Eriksen, p.4.

One of the earliest works that mentioned ethnic groups can be found in the work of Max Weber entitled *Economy and Society* (1922).[242] Unless utilized subjectively by the group themselves, Weber maintained that descent relations because of physical similarities, customs or memories and migrations, are by no means an objective tie for identity and group formation.[243] Weber postulated that ethnic membership only facilitates group formation and does not constitute a group, particularly in the political sphere.[244] Therefore, Weber advocated that the belief in common ethnicity in all probability is a *consequence* of political action rather than its *cause*.[245]

Departing from the attempt to define ethnic group as an entity in itself, theoretical approaches to ethnic studies have been demonstrated repeatedly by several scholars. Since ethnicity constitutes intricate equations, straightforward explanations do not suffice in describing its complexity. Ethnicity as a theoretical tool for understanding social relationship and political formation draws equal attention of both scholars from social sciences and humanities. The various theoretical approaches may be grouped into three schools of thought, namely, *primordialism*, *constructionism* and *instrumentalism*. Apart from these three paradigms, there are other attempts to theoretically answer the fundamental questions in ethnic studies.

Three arguments are at the core of the primordial school of thought. First, ethnicity is accepted as an ascribed identity or an assigned status that is thought to be inherited from one's forebears. Second, ethnicity is believed to be fixed or immutable and static. Finally, ethnicity is considered to be determined by descent or common ancestry based on common biological and cultural origin. The term 'primordialism' is attached to this school of thought since it emphasizes the role of primordial factors such as lineage and cultural bonds in determining ethnicity. According to this

[242] Richard Jenkins, p.10.

[243] Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (eds.), University of California Press, Berkeley, 1978, p.389.

[244] Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, p.389.

[245] Richard Jenkins, p.10.

framework, the main cause that gives rise to and sustains ethnicity is the primordial bonds.[246]

The term 'primordial' was first used by Edward Shils in 1957. Influenced by his readings in the sociology of religion, he attempted to differentiate certain kinds of social bond—personal, primordial, sacred, and civil ties—and to demonstrate how the other kinds of social bonding persisted even in modern societies.[247] This idea was employed by Clifford Geertz in 1963.

The primordialist paradigm can be divided into at least two standpoints: the *culturalist* perspective, which highlights the significance of a common culture in the formation of ethnic group membership, represented by Clifford Geertz and the *socio-biological* perspective represented by Pierre van den Berghe, which emphasizes socio-biological factor as a determinant of ethnic identity.[248]

Geertz elucidated the 'primordial attachment' as a 'given' or the assumed 'given' of social existence. This 'given' identity is an immediate contiguity and mainly kin relation. However, beyond that, being born into a particular religious group, speaking a specific language or a dialect, and practicing particular social customs weighs much. And these are seen to be indefinable, and at times overpowering and coercive in and of themselves.[249] According to Geertz, primordial traits such as assumed blood ties, language, region, religion and custom generally entailed in sync many a times at cross-purposes with one another.[250]

Within the primordialist paradigm, the socio-biological view presented by Pierre van den Berghe stressed the importance of socio-biological factor on shaping ethnicity. Berghe regarded ethnicity as an expansion of kinship wherein ethnic affiliation

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[246] Philip Q. Yang, *Ethnic Studies: Issues and Approaches*, New York, State University of New York Press, 2000, p.42.
[247] Hutchinson & Smith, p.8.
[248] Yang, *Ethnic Studies: Issues and Approaches*, pp.42-3.
[249] Clifford Geertz, 'The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States', in Clifford Geertz (ed.), *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*, New York, Free Press, 1963, pp.109-10.
[250] Geertz, 'The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States', pp.111-3.

begins from membership in a nuclear family to an extended family and to ethnic group eventually.[251] He explained that ethnicity is an all-inclusive form of natural selection and kinship connections, having a primordial instinctive inclination that continues to subsist even in the most industrialised mass societies of contemporary age.[252]

Berghe stated that all social organisms are biologically determined to be nepotistic because altruistic investment in unrelated organisms is biologically wasted and could not evolve. Moreover, the more distant the biological relationship between two individuals, the more diluted the benefits of nepotism become.[253] The key argument of this view is that ethnicity develops and endures due to common ancestral bonds of group members and will never lapse because kinship always exists.

The primordialist school was the dominant paradigm in ethnic studies until the 1970s to which many people are still accustomed till today. From the 1970s began to ascend the constructionist school that challenged the 'given' status of ethnicity accentuated by the primordialists.[254] The constructionists put forward three major arguments: First, it accepts ethnicity as a socially constructed identity and something that is created. Second, it believes that ethnic boundaries are flexible or changeable through time and space and that ethnicity is dynamic. Lastly, ethnic identification or affiliation is determined or constructed by society and ethnicity is a response to changing social environments.[255]

William Yancey (et.al.) in 1976 suggested an 'emergent ethnicity' in contrast to the traditional monolithic explanation of ethnicity on the inherited cultural heritage as the chief antecedent and defining characteristic of ethnic groups, advocating that the

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[251] Yang, p.42.
[252] Pierre Van den Berghe, *The Ethnic Phenomenon*, New York, Elsevier, 1981, p.35.
[253] Pierre Van den Berghe, 'Does Race Matter', in Hutchinson & Smith (eds.), pp.57-59.
[254] Naysan Adiparvar and Mariz Tadros, "The Evolution of Ethnicity Theory: Intersectionality, Geopolitics and Development" in Alia Aghajanian and Jeremy Allouche (ed.), Development Studies - Past, Present and Future", Volume 47, Number 2, May 2016, Brighton, Institute of Development Studies, p.124.
[255] Yang, pp.43-44.

development and persistence of ethnicity is dependent upon structural conditions.[256] Ethnicity, defined in terms of regular patterns of association and identification with common origins is materialized under conditions which reinforce the continuation of kinship and friendship networks. These are common occupational locations, residential permanence and concentration, and dependence on common institutions and services.[257]

Another view known as 'symbolic ethnicity' was put forward by Herbert J. Gans. According to this view, ethnicity is typified by a nostalgic allegiance towards the culture of the immigrant generation or that of the former homeland, which is complemented by a love for and pride in the tradition that can be felt without having to be incorporated in everyday behaviour.[258] All of the cultural patterns which are converted into symbols are themselves directed by a common pragmatic imperative. They must be observable and comprehensible in meaning to large numbers of third generations' ethnics, and they must be straightforwardly exposed and felt without requiring excessive interference in other aspects of life.[259] To put it simply, it is 'feeling ethnic' rather than 'being ethnic'.[260]

The later explanation of social constructionist paradigm underlines the social construction of ethnicity and the dynamism of ethnic formation. For instance, Werner Sollars advocated the idea of 'the invention of ethnicity' by arguing the primordialist postulation that ethnicity is an unreasonable form of cultural attachment. Sollars contended that ethnic identity is established in tradition, which is constructed and sustained by people.[261] Joane Nagel challenged that ethnicity is socially constructed

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[256] William L. Yancey, Eugene P. Ericksen and Richard N. Juliani, 'Emergent Ethnicity: A Review and Reformulation', in *American Sociological Review, Vol. 41, No. 3* (Jun., 1976), American Sociological Association, p. 391, [website], http://www.jstor.org/stable/2094249, (accessed 14 October 2016).

[257] Yancey, Ericksen and Juliani, 'Emergent Ethnicity: A Review and Reformulation', p.392.

[258] Herbert J. Gans, 'Symbolic Ethnicity', in Hutchinson & Smith (eds.), p.146.

[259] Gans, 'Symbolic Ethnicity, pp.146-47.

[260] Yang, p.45.

[261] Yang, p.45.

and reconstructed by internal forces and external forces and that ethnicity is dynamic, persistently shifting possessions of individual identity and group organization.[262]

Core in the paradigm of the constructionist school is the primacy of social construction in the formation of ethnicity. It underscores the historical influence and structural force that construct and uphold ethnicity. With the emphasis of the school being on social construction of ethnicity, it is aptly labelled the name 'constructionism'.

Unlike the primordialists' and the constructionists' explanations on ethnicity, the instrumentalists see ethnicity as an instrument or strategic tool for achieving their ends and are therefore attached 'instrumentalist' as a label to this school. The theoretical framework of 'instrumentalism' supposes that people become ethnic and remain ethnic when their ethnicity renders beneficial returns to them. This school of thought is also sometimes referred to as 'situationalist/circumstantialist' or 'transactionalist' perspectives since it underlines plasticity in maintaining group boundaries of ethnicity and emphasize the malleability of ethnic identity. It postulates the change of ethnic membership in accordance with the transacting situations in pursuit of advantages and power.

Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan argued that 'cultural pluralism' revived group formation. This recreated ethnic communities and generated ethnic activity and communal politics. This resuscitated ethnic relationships and transformed them into political interest groups as a means of political mobilization for upholding group interests.[263] Daniel Bell held forth that the revival of ethnic bonds is not simply the result of 'plural society', but the association of ethnicity with material interests, competition between the plural groups and the salient nature of interest-group rivalry within the political arena.[264]

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[262] Yang, p.45.
[263] Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, 'Beyond the Melting Pot', in Hutchinson & Smith (eds.), pp.135-38.
[264] Daniel Bell, 'Ethnicity and Social Change', in Hutchinson & Smith (eds.), pp.138-39.

In order to observe the formation and sustenance of ethnicity, Fredrick Barth situated "the focus of investigation from internal constitution and history of separate ethnic groups to ethnic boundaries and boundary maintenance."[265] His central point is not upon the cultural characteristics within ethnic groups but upon relationships of cultural differentiation, and explicitly upon the 'transaction' or contact between different groups—'us' and 'them.'[266] According to Barth, ethnic groups must be regarded as units of ascription where social boundaries secured the continuity of the group. He asserted that it is not the cultural aggregation circumscribed by the boundary, but the boundary itself and the symbolic 'border guards' (food, dress, language, etc.) that perpetuate the community.[267]

Abner Cohen maintained that contemporary ethnicity is the product of intensive contact between ethnic groupings and not the result of complete separatism. He argued the 'glue theory of tribalism' which endorses that the colonial powers had acted as 'glue' in amalgamating different groups within the framework of the newly constructed artificial identity revolving around centralized states, and that after the glue started to collapse, the artificial cohesions relapsed to its original states.[268] Cohen defined that ethnicity should be interpreted as a type of political resource for competing interest groups and are functional and effective for the achievement of individual and collective goals.[269]

Paul Brass asserted that ethnic communities are created and transformed by elites in modernizing post-industrial societies going through rapid social change. This process, according to his view regularly engages struggle for political power, economic benefits, and social status between competing elite, leadership groups and class both within and among different ethnic groups.[270] Brass argued that inequality between different ethnic groups or culturally separate regions does not itself impel the development of ethnic or national consciousness. Instead, he considered that if

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[265] Fredrik Barth, 'Ethnic Groups and Boundaries', in Hutchinson & Smith (eds.), p.75.
[266] Richard Jenkins, p.12.
[267] Hutchinson & Smith, p.9.
[268] Abner Cohen, 'Ethnicity and Politics', in Hutchinson & Smith (eds.), p.83.
[269] Hutchinson & Smith, p.33.
[270] Brass, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison*, p.25.

there is some disagreement either between local and external elites or between local elites, ethnic self-consciousness, ethnically based demands and ethnic conflict can only arise.[271]

Another formulation of instrumentalism is the 'rational choice theory'. Applying this social theory to ethnic identity, it assumes that ethnic affiliation is based on the rational reckoning of the costs and benefits of ethnic association. For the theorists, ethnicity is a choice. People opt for one ethnicity over another or prevent association with an ethnic group because of the benefit or cost of such affiliation. Some people support an ethnic affiliation because it is favourable, while other people conceal or reject an ethnic identity because it will have negative aspects.[272]

Michael Hetcher considered individual behaviour to be a function of the structural constraints and the autonomous preferences of individuals. The structure first predetermines, to a greater or lesser extent, the constraints under which individuals decide. Within these constraints, individuals come across various viable options of action. The course of action finally chosen is selected rationally in such a way as to approach the most efficient way of achieving them. [273] According to Hetcher, individuals agree to surrender certain freedoms to organizations to secure their objectives of prestige and power. Ethnic organizations contribute an important function in monitoring and controlling information to their members, who will join them provided that they appear to provide individual benefits.[274]

Michael Banton argued that ethnicity is described at the micro-level by the methods we use to study it. For that reason, he investigated individual ethnic preferences and employed a version of game theory, the prisoner's dilemma to conclude the circumstances in which individuals choose whether to side themselves with their ethnic kin rather than aligning on class, communal, or gender identities.[275]

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[271] Brass, p.25.

[272] Yang, p.47.

[273] Michael Hetcher, 'Ethnicity and Rational Choice Theory', in Hutchinson & Smith (eds.), p.90.

[274] Hutchinson & Smith, p.33.

[275] Hutchinson & Smith, pp.33-34.

From the different paradigms, it can be concluded that ethnicity is socially constructed because of shared ancestry or presumed ancestry and cultural affinity to a certain extent. The construction of identity inclines towards ethnic group's interest, which determines ethnic affiliation to a degree, and although ethnic boundaries undergo elasticity at times, they are relatively maintained largely.

3.2 The notion of race and nation

'Race', 'nation', and 'ethnicity' are arbitrary concepts since they are continually in a state of flux and are often used interchangeably. The problem with the definitions of 'race', 'nation', and 'ethnicity' is that the borders that give form and meaning to these concepts alter over historical period, located within 'discourse' and require specific contexts. They are socially constructed concepts. The characteristics supposed as relevant to the definitions are rooted in cultural and societal values. The ideas of 'race', 'nation', and 'ethnicity' are social constructions because their meanings originated from arbitrary characteristics that a given society considers essential. They are social products derived from cultural values, and not scientific facts.

3.2.1 Race: Institutionalizing identities on colour line

WEB Du Bois stated "the problem of the colour line" as a critical issue for the twentieth century.[276] In the late twentieth century, genetic studies rebutted the existence of biogenetically distinct races, and majority of scholars today argue that 'race' is a cultural construct reflecting specific attitudes and beliefs that was imposed on different populations from European conquests that began in the fifteenth century.[277] Until at least the mid twentieth century, people of European descent generally presupposed that such racial demarcations revealed natural white superiority. The colour line was seen as having been destined by God or biology.[278]

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[276] WEB Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folks*, New York, McClurg, 1903, p.1.

[277] 'Constructivism', in 'Scientific Racism', in Ansell, *Race and Ethnicity: The Key Concepts,* pp. 49-50.

[278] Anthony W. Marx, *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa*, The United States, and Brazil, Cambridge, CUP, 1998, p.3.

This shows the assumption that there is one scientifically valid way of using the word.[279]

Defining simply, 'race' is the idea of dividing the human species into distinctive groups based on inherited physical and behavioural differences. The English word 'race' is derived from the French word *race* and the older French *rasse*, which is equivalent of the Italian *razza* and Portuguese *raça*.[280] The first usage of *'race'* in the English language as a categorizing term referring to common stock of people or a class of people was in the late sixteenth century. Until the 18th century, it had a generalized meaning parallel to other classifying terms such as *type*, *sort*, or *kind*.[281] By the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, it had turned out to be the key terminology in scientific discourse of classifying humankind into physically defined races, generally considered the basis of differences in ability, intelligence and temperament in a worldwide racial hierarchy.[282] However, after challenges to the science of race in the early twentieth century, the dominant implication of race was in retreat by the 1950s. The 1986 Oxford Reference Dictionary stated that the concept of 'race as a rigid classificatory system or system of genetics has largely been abandoned.'[283]

Race consciousness and its articulation in theories of race, is for the most part a modern phenomenon. When European explorers in the new world encountered people who appeared different from themselves, it then raised questions challenging the existing conceptions of the origins of human species.[284] The growth in scientific knowledge in American and European cultures overlapped the development of the idea and ideology of 'race'. In any case, the central meaning appending to 'race' was

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[279] Michael Banton, 'Race—as classification', in Ellis Cashmore (ed.), *Dictionary of Race and Ethnic Relations*, 4th Edition, London, Routledge, 2003, p.294.
[280] Fenton, *Ethnicity*, p.18.
[281] 'Race', in *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, [website], https://www.britannica.com/topic/race-human, (accessed 17 May 2016).
[282] Fenton, p.18.
[283] Fenton, p.18.
[284] Michael Omi and Howard Winant, 'Racial Formations', in Charles A. Gallagher, *Rethinking the Colour Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*, Second Edition, New York, McGraw Hill, 2004, p.10.

that of descent since people acquire beliefs about 'race' as they hold beliefs about 'nationality', 'ethnicity', and 'class' as resources for cultivating group identities.[285]

The work of the naturalists and systematists influenced the practice of classifying all peoples into natural or biological groupings, in a similar way with flora and fauna. In publications issued from 1735 to 1759, Carolus Linnaeus classified all the then known animal forms. He introduced the still current scientific name or the human species *Homo sapiens*. He categorised four major subdivisions of the human species *H. africanus*, *H. europaeus*, *H. americanus* and *H. asiaticus*. Johann Friedrich Blumenbach divided humankind into five 'varieties' that included Caucasian, American, Mongolian, Malay, and Ethiopian.[286] These classifications not only represented human groups as part of nature but also conferred them rigidity and permanence. Cultural behaviour and physical characteristics reveals the ethnocentric view and the limited scientific knowledge of the age.

After the challenges to the science of race in the early part of the twentieth century, the term 'race' was in retreat by the 1950s.[287] The work of Charles Darwin demonstrated that no forms in nature were stable. Subsequent research proposed that classifications based on phenotypical variation are of very narrow significance and that it is of more use to conclude the frequency with which various genes occur in different populations.[288]

Following to the rediscovery of Gregor Mendel's experiments on heredity in 1900, scientists gave more research on genes and chromosomes. Franz Boas and the early anthropologists began to promote the separation of 'race'—from behaviour and language—as purely a biological phenomenon, denying a relationship between physical traits and the languages and cultures that people carry.[289] Boas affirmed that arguments about racially differential mental faculties could be reduced to environmental factors. He challenged one measure of racial distinction, and even

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[285] Banton, 'Race—as classification', p.294.
[286] 'Scientific Racism', in Ansell, *Race and Ethnicity: The Key Concepts,* pp. 138-39.
[287] Fenton, pp.18-19.
[288] Banton, p.296.
[289] 'Race' in *Encyclopædia Britannica Online.*

though he did not discard the concept of biological race wholly itself, he influenced anthropologists to restructure their focal point from putatively fixed biological traits to apparently mutable cultural characteristics with the purpose of understanding differences among human groups.[290]

Julian Huxley and AC Hadon in 1935 upheld that the groups in Europe generally called 'races' would be better identified 'ethnic groups'. They argued that, "it is very desirable that the term race as applied to human groups should be dropped from the vocabulary of science…. In what follows the word race will be deliberately avoided and the term *(ethnic) group or people* employed."[291]

Ashley Montagu (1905-1999) put a more influential anthropological refutation of the biological conception of race forward. Basing on the data of modern experimental genetics, Montagu strongly claimed that the anthropological notion of race depended on grouping together similar and dissimilar observable physical traits, while genes determined biological evolution among populations at a much advanced level. He disagreed that the traits related with races cannot be attributed to discrete lines of genetic descent since genetic evolution can happen through both the mixture of different genes and the mutation of that same gene through generations. Montagu's attempts finally resulted in the publication of an official statement rebuffing the biological foundations of race by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in 1950.[292]

By the 1960s and 1970s, scientists were writing about racial groups as populations that differed from one another not in absolute features but in the frequencies of expression of genes that all populations share.[293] Later, the 1986 Oxford Reference Dictionary stated that the notion of 'race as a rigid classificatory system or system of genetics has largely been abandoned'.[294] After a decade, the American Association of

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[290] Michael James, 'Race', in Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2016 Edition)*, [website], http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/race, (accessed 23 September 2016).

[291] Banton, p.296.

[292] 'Scientific Racism', in Ansell, p. 140.

[293] 'Race' in *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*.

[294] Fanton, p.19.

Physical Anthropologists (AAPA) published a document denying biological determinism in 1996 that progressively led to the banishment of 'race' from the domain of natural scientific discourse,[295] but the concept still continues to exist as a way of understanding and interpreting difference through intelligible markers.[296] Even though physical characteristics (such as skin colour and eye and hair formation) clustered in particular populations, the effort to arrive at concluding classifications of races has largely been abandoned.[297]

This plainly exposes that 'race' can be treated through discourse analysis as a *signifier*, whose meaning are made possible only by the appliance of rules and codes. This entails that the meaning of race are encoded and may be decoded only within the parameters of discourse.[298] The definition of 'race' requires justification as it has been a changing signifier at different historical phases that has divergent meanings to different people. How subjects decode, read and interpret the signifier 'race' is known as *signified* and this too is made possible only through appeal to discursive rules.[299]

In the United States of America, for instance, 'race' was perceived as being biologically or genetically based. However, in Latin America, race may acquire bloodlines as a referent, but there were other aspects for 'racial classification': such as, class, physical type, and ethnic background.[300] This explains that 'race' or 'racial paradigm' differs from culture to culture, equally with the meaning of the term itself. Moreover, it puts forward the significance of historical events, developments or context in determining 'race'.[301]

Contemporary philosophical discourse divides the ontological status of race into three valid competing schools of thoughts in conjunction with the discarded

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[295] James, 'Race', in Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2016 Edition)*.
[296] Ellis Cashmore, 'Race—as signifier', in Ellis Cashmore (ed.), *Dictionary of Race and Ethnic Relations*, 4th Edition, 2003, p.300.
[297] Fanton, p.20.
[298] Cashmore, 'Race—as signifier', p.298.
[299] Cashmore, p.298.
[300] Clara E. Rodriguez and Hector Cordero-Guzman, 'Placing Race in Context', in Gallagher, *Rethinking the Colour Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*, p.60.
[301] Rodriguez and Cordero-Guzman, 'Placing Race in Context', p.60.

biological conception—*racial naturalism.* While almost all scholars have agreed against racial naturalism, the probable ontological status of a different notion of race has been offered. [302] Ron Mallon classified the different approaches into three metaphysical schools—*racial scepticism, racial constructivism*, and *racial population naturalism.* He further divided into two normative schools—*eliminativism* and *conservationism.*[303]

Racial sceptics affirms that 'race' do not exist by stating that as bio-behavioural racial essences do not exist, there is nothing for the term 'race' to signify.[304] Racial sceptics like Anthony Appiah and Naomi Zack challenged that the term 'race' cannot refer to anything real in the world, since the one thing in the world to which the term could uniquely refer—discrete, essentialist, biological races—have been established not to exist. [305] They support normative racial *eliminativism,* which advocates discarding the concept of race entirely because of its logical incoherence.

Racial constructivism holds that 'race' is a social construction and thus exists as a social, rather than a natural kind. It corresponds that there are no racialised essences though recognizes race as a social kind and notices value in racial discourse. Racial constructionists regard 'race' as a societal concept, which plays a critical role in establishing, maintaining and developing a group's identity.[306] Racial theorist such as Ron Mallon admitted the sceptics' dismissal of biological race but argue that the term still meaningfully indicates to the conventional grouping of individuals into diverse categories by society, often by the very member of such racial ascription. He normatively argued that the notion of race must be conserved as society labels people along with racial lines that generate race-based differences in resources, opportunities, and well-being.[307]

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[302] James, 'Race'.

[303] James*,* 'Race'.

[304] Cynthia Nielsen, 'Race and the Social Construction of Subjectivities', [website], http://percaritatem.com/tag/racial-skepticism/, (accessed on 25 September 2016).

[305] James, 'Race'.

[306] 'Constructivism', in Ansell, pp. 49-50.

[307] James, 'Race'.

Racial population naturalism similarly rejects racial naturalism/essentialism. However, it claims that races may exist as biologically significant populations, while they have no biologically determined social significance once attributed to them.[308] This school recommends that although racial naturalism falsely attributed cultural, intellectual and physical traits to different groups, it is possible that biological categorizations could exist that would value the term 'race'.[309] Since the biological species theory remains epistemologically practical, the scholars employ it to defend a racial ontology that is "biologically informed, but non-essentialist".[310]

'Race', therefore, can be said as ontologically subjective, but epistemologically objective. It has an ontologically subjective existence in that the construction of it is contingent on social groups, their collective acceptance, and the change of racial discourse. Although it does not have ontological existence in the world, it is nonetheless valid for social category. However, it should be acknowledged that we cannot have any objective understanding about race.[311]

3.2.2 The idea and realism of Nationalism

Ernest Gellner articulated that, "Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist."[312] If in the words of Gellner that 'nationalism' precedes 'nation', a parallel study of 'nation' is required to justly expose the idea of 'nationalism'.

The English noun 'nation' stemmed from old French (c. 1300) *nacion* meaning "birth, rank; descendants, relatives; country, homeland." *Nacion* itself derived directly from Latin *nationem*, which means "birth, origin; breed, stock, kind, species; race of people, tribe," literally "that which has been born," which originated from *natus*, past participle of *nasci*, meaning "be born."[313] Though the political sense of

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[308] Nielsen, 'Race and the Social Construction of Subjectivities'.
[309] James, 'Race'.
[310] James, 'Race'.
[311] 'Race as a Social Construct', [website], https://anthropology.net2008/10/01/race-as-a-social-construct, (accessed on 25 September 2016).
[312] Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change*, London, Weidenfield & Nicholson, 1964, p.169.
[313] 'Nation', in www.etymonline.com, [website], (accessed 1 October 2016).

'nation' has gradually predominated, the earliest English examples inclined toward the racial meaning, "large group of people with common ancestry."[314]

The proper and original implication of 'nation' may mean no matter which, since the term means fairly altered in its modern usage. The modern and basically political sense of the concept is historically very young.[315] In 1908, the *New English Dictionary* mentioned that the old meaning of 'nation' visualized mainly the ethnic unit, but the recent usage accentuated 'the notion of political unity and independence'.[316]

The contemporary popular term *nation* now signifies a broad community of individuals whose members regard their linkage on the basis of shared long-standing cultural practices, ethnicity, history, memories, or traditions who are characteristically associated with a particular geographical homeland, and who are inclined to make political claims of autonomy, sovereignty, or other assertions of rights on the basis of their membership. Even though nations may be abstractions, in practice they are quite real to those who believe they belong to one. The idea that nations are real and reasonable forms of social organization is a fundamental postulation in ideologies of nationalism and national self-determination.[317]

The term 'nationalism' itself is quite modern. Its earliest recorded use goes back to the end of eighteenth century where Johann Gottfried Herder and Augustin de Barruel exploited the notion on recognizably social and political sense. It was not often used in the early nineteenth century. In English, its first usage in 1836 gives the impression to be the theological, the doctrine that certain nations are divinely elected. From then on, it inclined to be equated with national egotism, but typically other

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[314] 'Nation', in www.etymonline.com.
[315] EJ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Second Edition, Cambridge, CUP, 2003, pp.17-18.
[316] *Oxford English Dictionary, Vol. VII*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, p.30 cited in EJ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, p.18.
[317] Mark Ashley, 'Nation', in William A. Darity Jr. (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Volume 5, 2nd Edition*, Detroit, Thomson Gale, 2008, p. 378.

terms, such as 'nationality' and 'nationalness', with meanings of national feeling or national individuality.[318]

The basic debates that divide the question of 'nationalism' fall into four main paradigms — primordialism, perennialism, modernism and ethno-symbolism. These approaches posit their theoretical explanations and discussions pertaining to the origin and fundamental nature of 'nationalism'.

'Primordialism' has its starting point in Jean Jacque Rousseau who urged to escape urban corruption and return to 'nature' to recuperate a missing innocence. This kind of 'naturalizing' discourse paved the way for the essentialist and organic forms of nationalism that can be labelled as 'organic nationalists'. [319] Primordialism presupposes that group identity is a given and that certain primordial, irrational attachments based on blood, religion, language etc. exist in all societies. They consider that group identity is deeply embedded in the historical experience of human beings to the direction of being practically a given. Socio-biologists take this viewpoint a step further and claim the biological disposition of nationalism.[320]

Among the primordialists, two approaches proffer a vaguely dissimilar explanation on nationalism. The first version endorses that nations emerge sustaining on attachments to the 'cultural givens' of social existence. Edward Shils and Clifford Geertz explained how 'primordial' ties continued alongside the secular, civil ties, even in industrial societies.[321] Edward Shils (1957) was the first to reason this idea when he stated that in family attachments there is a considerable 'relational quality' because of an ineffable significant attributed to the ties of blood that can only be called 'primordial'.[322]

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[318] Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History,* Cambridge, Polity Press, 2005, p.5.
[319] Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History,* p.51.
[320] Joseph R. Llobera, 'Recent Theories of Nationalism', Barcelona, Institut de Ciencies Politiques i Socials, 1999, p.3.
[321] Smith, pp.52-53.
[322] Llobera, 'Recent Theories of Nationalism'*,* p.3.

In the words of Clifford Geertz (1973), these ties are ineffable and yet coercive ties, which are a long course of crystallisation.[323] These primordial attachments, in accordance with Geertz situated on beliefs and perceptions, and which makes them 'given' and coercive is not the intrinsic nature of these attachments. Rather, it is human beings who believe these ties as givens, and attribute them an overwhelming coerciveness.[324]

Another version of primordialism edifies that nations can be examined to the underlying genetic reproductive drives of individuals and their exploitation of strategies of 'nepotism' and 'inclusive fitness' to maximize their gene pools.[325] Pierre van den Berghe (1981) demonstrated how human sociality locates on the mechanism of biological relatedness which manifests itself in nepotistic behaviour. Van den Berghe did not mean that kin always adhere mutually and presupposes that the probability of conflict or cooperation can be foreseen by reference to how closely related people are. In the absence of kinship ties, he regarded that mutual aid materializes when all parties can profit from a transaction. As to coercion, which involves the potential or actual exercise of force, it is universal to most human societies, but it augments with the emergence of the state.[326]

Improving the primordialists' belief that nations are natural, *perennialist* scholars appeared in the mid twentieth century to explain the robustness of nations without dependence on nature. Perennialists put forward that nations may have originated in the past, rooted in unique cultural practices and traditions that could be described as *ethnic*. Nevertheless, once instituted, these attributes of the nation become established to the point of permanence, perennially reiterated in succeeding generations. Tales of 'golden ages' or ancient battles with other groups are

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[323] Llobera, p.3.

[324] Adiparvar and Tadros, 'The Evolution of Ethnicity Theory: Intersectionality, Geopolitics and Development', p.124.

[325] Smith, p.52.

[326] Llobera, pp.4-5.

transmitted to younger generations, told and reiterated to reinforce the new generations' ties with its past.[327]

Perennialism and the naturalist conception of the nation—which is the centre of modern 'primordialism'—should be distinguished since perennialists may or may not subscribe to a 'primordial' conception of nation. What matters the most for the perennialists is their empirical observation that nations—or at least some nations—have a long historical existence. Approaches of the perennialists fall into two major forms, 'continuous perennialism' and 'recurrent perennialism'.

According to 'continuous perennialism', particular nations have a long, continuous history that can be traced to their origins during a particular period of time. The emphasis here is the *continuity* of the existence of nation. Although ruptures and discontinuities are not disregarded, emphasis is given on the slow rhythm of collective identity.[328] 'Recurrent perennialism' makes a much general assertion with reference to the antiquity of nations. They regard that particular nations are historical that changes with time. For instance, Ernest Renan stated that, "they (nations) had their beginnings, and they will end'.[329]

At present, modernism represents the dominant paradigmatic discourse in nationalism. Most theorists of nationalism stress the modern character of the phenomenon and explicate for its emergence and development by reference to a number of factors associated with modernity. In most cases, modernization theories hold that nationalism surfaces consequently in the course of transition from traditional to modern society. Some of these theories focus on the expansion of industrialization and on the political, socio-economic and cultural conditions functionally correlated with it as the key reason for the development of nationalism.[330]

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[327] Ashley, 'Nation', in Darity Jr. (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Volume 5, 2nd Edition,* p.378.
[328] Smith, p.50.
[329] Smith, pp.50-1.
[330] Llobera, p.10.

Modernist paradigm cannot be unified under a single theoretical discourse. Depending on the theorists, a range of versions are offered in explaining the relation of nationalism with modernity. Therefore, modernist scholars do not fall straightforwardly into rigid categorization. Following Anthony D. Smith's classification practically, the modernists will be, therefore, distinguished into four versions—socio-economic, socio-cultural, politico-ideological, and constructionist.[331]

Socio-economic version describes nationalism and nations as deriving from the new economic and social factors as industrial capitalism, regional disparity and class conflict. [332] Michael Hechter (1975) highlighted the uneven development of industrialism within states and advocated that in each country, there is a region which is privileged by capitalist development while subordinating the others. Hetcher proposed that in place of national culture, there exists a core culture that dominates over others by creating boundaries based on ethnic lines.[333] Correspondingly, Tom Nair (1977) maintained that nationalism can be identified only by noticing on the negative and contradictory effects of uneven growth. Nairn affirmed that nationalist phenomena are given real force by economic factors.[334]

In line with the version put forward by the socio-cultural approach, largely represented by Ernest Gellner (1983), "nationalism is primarily a political principle that holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent".[335] According to him, the specific origins of nationalism are located in the distinctive structural constraints of industrial society.[336] He underlined that it is only in the context of the impact of industrialization that nationalism could be identified.

Gellner perceived nationality and culture as closely related. In this situation, through the educational institution and discourse, the state could provide the official language

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[331] Smith, pp.47-48.
[332] Smith, p.47.
[333] Christophe Jaffrelot, 'For a theory of nationalism', [website], hal-sciencepo.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01065058, (accessed 4 August 2018), p.7.
[334] Jaffrelot, 'For a theory of nationalism', p.18.
[335] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, New York, Cornell University Press, 1983, p.1.
[336] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p.31.

and the 'high cultured' persons required by the process of industrialization and modernization. The uneven upshot of industrialization and modernization engendered a new system of social stratification or class system, which was received to be undesirable because of its illegitimacy. If this coincides with cultural differences, national secessionist movement can happen by the coalition of the dominated masses and the culturally displaced intellectuals.[337]

For theorists who can be categorized as supporting politico-ideological version like John Breuilly, Anthony Giddens, Paul Brass and Michael Mann, modern state is the best predictor of nations and nationalism[338] and they give the prominent role to the state in the development of nationalism in modernity.[339] Anthony Giddens (1981) defined nationalism as a notion where the existence of symbols and beliefs is evident. He stated that these symbols and beliefs are either constructed or propagated by the elite, or held by several members of linguistic, ethnic or regional groups.[340] Paul Brass (1991) put emphasis on the constructed character of nationalism. He argued that the elites who formulate cultures using raw materials from different groups to construct nations and *ethnies*. The aim of the elites, Brass asserted is to enhance their political or economic advantages. Modern nationalism, therefore, emerges out of specific types of interactions between leaders of centralizing states and elites from non-dominant groups.[341]

Constructionists essentially accentuate the socially constructed character of nationalism. Eric Hobsbawm (1990) argued that nationalism comes before nations; that nations do not make states and nationalism but the other way round.[342] Hobsbawm upheld the idea of 'invented traditions', which are products of social

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[337] Jaffrelot, p.13.
[338] Smith, p.48.
[339] Llobera, pp.18-20.
[340] Anthony Giddens, *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism. Vol. 1: Power, Property and the State*, London, Macmillan, 1981, p.190-91.
[341] Brass, p.25.
[342] Hobsbawm, p.10

construction and are fashioned to serve the interests of ruling elites by controlling the ideology of the masses.[343]

Benedict Anderson (1983), perhaps the most famous representative constructivist school, argued that nations were "imagined political communities"—imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign—in which individuals came to believe that they were connected through cultural and political attachments to others whom they had never encountered.[344] As argued by Anderson, these beliefs were disseminated as an offshoot of modern inventions such as the printing press in tandem with the capitalist desire to sell printed products that facilitated language standardization and dissemination of information from corner to corner within limited territories. 'Print-capitalism' enhanced the extent of communities, and defined their boundaries as well. Once information circulated, images of both the in-group and the out-group were constructed.[345]

Ethno-symbolism began out of dissatisfaction with the explanations of the perennialist and modernist paradigms, and the failure of primordialism. Ethno-symbolism recounts national identities to prior ethnic ties and explains the influence of subjective dimensions of shared symbols, memories and myths and relates the continuing influence of modern nations over numerous people till the present day.[346] According to ethno-symbolists, although nationalism is a modern ideology, thriving nations are raised upon pre-modern heritage and it is apparent to identify a nation before the onset of modernity.[347]

John Hutchinson dealt with the function played by the past in both pre-modern ethnic resuscitations and modern nationalism, and the manner in which pre-modern cultural collections of memories, myths and symbols can be 'carried' by institutions into the modern period.[348] Anthony D. Smith attempted to expose the nature and role of

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[343] Smith, p.48.

[344] Benedict Anderson, Imagined *Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso, 2006, p.6.

[345] Jaffrelot, pp.9-12.

[346] Smith, pp.59-60.

[347] Atsuko Ichijo and Gordana Uzelac (ed.)*, When is the Nation?*, London, Routledge, 2005, p.3.

[348] Smith, p.60.

nations in history explicitly. While admitting the modernity of nationalism, the ideology, symbolism, movement, and the recent formation of most nations, Smith believed in the possibility of nations prior to nationalism.[349] Overall, his approach centres on the way that prior pre-modern ethnic ties and *ethnies* have influenced and often built the foundation for subsequent nations and nationalisms.[350]

A complex view on 'nation' is given by a postconial theorist Homi Bhabha who argued nation as a narrative strategy. He argued the way that the categories such as sexuality, class, difference, etc. enter this narrative as it is constructed to be so and challenges the complex temporality of the nation. He pointed out that the idea of a nation is constructed through discourses in which the people are both constructed by the discourses about/of the nation and are, as well, active participants in the construction of nation.[351]

Apart from the mentioned paradigms, 'postnationalism' has emerged recently. 'Postnational' according to the Oxford English Dictionary means, "Of or relating to a time or society in which national identity has become less important." [352] Postnationalism principally critiques the concept of nation as the central organizing law of modern government and political identity. The postnationalists hold that the category of the nation is no longer satisfactory to explain the fundamentals of political identity or nation-state. [353] The postnational interpretation announces the necessity to transcend the idea that a homogeneous national identity is the centripetal force of modern political community. Moreover, postnationalism argues the belief that the sovereign nation-state is essential for international order and the existence of the domestic rule of law.[354]

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[349] Smith, p.60.
[350] Smith, p.60.
[351] For details, see Homi Bhabha, 'DissemiNation: Time, narrative and the margins of the modern nation', in *The Location of Culture*, New York, Routledge, 1994, pp.139-170.
[352] *Oxford English Dictionary*, [website], https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/postnational, (accessed 8 August 2018).
[353] 'Postnationalism', in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, [website], http://www.encyclopedia.com, (accessed 8 August 2018).
[354] 'Postnationalism', in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*.

Ghia Nodia argued the French Revolution was a landmark for the rise of nationalism that was spearheaded by the 'liberal' who fought against the established *ancien regime*. The 'liberals', however, subsequently became the 'conservatives' after establishment of nation and supported the growth of nationalism. The Great Wars of the twentieth century again spawned a new 'liberals' who reassessed nationalism and expressed its demise with the rise of globalization. However, he maintained that nationalism became in vogue again in the decade following 2010 with such movement as the Brexit and the rise of Donald Trump in the USA.[355]

Nouriel Roubini advocated the rise of nationalism in the twenty first century because of economic insecurity. He argued that the aftermath of the 2008 global economic recession breeds a new nationalism that takes different economic forms like trade barriers, policies supporting domestic workers and firms, anti-immigration measures, resource nationalism, etc. In the political sphere, he mentioned the rise of populism, anti-immigration and anti-globalisation or the right nationalist.[356]

George Friedman stated that immigration issue has been dominant in the post 2008 global economic recession. He maintained that this focuses not only trade related issue, but also of the preservation of nation and culture as excessive immigration hits the nation and its culture. Thus, he argued that the nation-state stands against globalism to preserve its sense of self against the immigrants.[357]

Even though the rise of globalisation has been interpreted as an anti-thesis of nationalism by arguing that globalisation traverses transnational boundaries and creates a homogeneous global culture, the same phenomenon has been the cause of the emergence of nationalism in the twenty first century. In other words, the idea of multiculturalism has become a threat for cultures having protectionist attitude. Samuel Huntington's thesis regarding the dictating cause of conflict in the twenty

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[355] Ghia Nodia, 'The End of the Post National Illussion' in *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 28, No. 2, April 2017, 7 National Endowment for Democracy and Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017, [website], https://www.journalofdemocracy.org., (accessed on 8 August 2018).

[356] 'Economic insecurity and the rise of nationalism', in *The Guardian*, 2 June 2014, [website], www.theguardian.com, (accessed on: 3 October 2018).

[357] George Friedman, 'How 2008 Changed Everything', in *Geopolitical Futures*, [website], https://geopoliticalfutures.com, (accessed 3 October 2018).

first century to be cultural[358] has come true. Currently, nation-states retain their authorities in world affairs, and the principal conflict of global politics occurs between nations and groups of different people.

To draw a clearcut distinction between race, nation and ethnicity is practically complex to a certain extent. 'Race' implies the visible and physical, 'nationalism' entails the imaginary and ideological, and 'ethnicity' involves affiliation and cultural. However, the three concepts overlapped each other in certain situations as genetics and inheritance effect cultural traits, and at the same time, individual phenotype can be culturally transformed in accordance with cultural values. In this juncture, political and economic ideologies can construct specific group feelings using both cultural traits and descent together.

The relationship particularly between nationalism and ethnicity is complex. Both are important modern instruments invoked by elites and participants in political and social actions. Nationalism remains the dominant rhetoric to separate political communities and legitimate rule by pointing towards the people of a territory. Ethnic identities are most often claimed where groups do not look for 'national' sovereignty but rather recognition internal to cultural boundaries. Nevertheless, both the categorical identities are often called upon in analogous manners. As such, the development of collective identity takes various features and facets and defines and redefines boundaries.

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[358] Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?', [website], https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/1993-06-01/clash-civilizations, (accessed 25 April 2017).

CHAPTER FOUR

ETHNOHISTORY OF MIZO

Studies on Mizo ethnicity encompass quite an array of fields and have a long historiographical tradition. Being a 'primary oral culture' before *Duhlian*[359] was reduced into writing, knowledge among the different tribes within Mizo ethnic groups was shared and passed on by way of oral tradition through succeeding generations. Group identity had its own unique characteristics before the introduction of western epistemic power. The ontological existence of identity formation was altered with the intervention of colonial discourse. Even post-colonial identity within the nation-state and the 'global village' has its root in history; therefore, avoiding relevancy of the past is erroneous to a certain extent.

Quantity of literatures are provided on the study of ethnic identity of 'Chin', 'Kuki', 'Mizo', 'Zomi', 'Zo' and so forth. Since they did not possess the technical knowhow of reducing their language into written form, the historiography of these ethnic groups and the early ethnographic accounts talking about them were typically 'externalist' and Eurocentric[360] or of foreign descriptions. Exotic narratives directed the interpretation of ethnicity in an unknown land, or in the words of the colonial officer AS Reid, 'terra incognita'.[361] This explicates that the colonial writers were equivocal in their writings, ambiguous in their conception and confused regarding the people whom they were dealing with. The initial historiographical tradition lacked earlier historiography against which to define itself. Stereotyping was the usual way of describing their observation, thus categorizing and labelling the ethnic groups in line with their attitude situating behind.

The colonialists apprehended 'the law of Southeast Asian inertia': unless acted upon by external forces, 'native' societies remained at rest.[362] It may be for this reason that

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[359] The language of the Luseis, one of the divisions of Mizo. The later status of Duhlian becoming as Mizo language is described in the text.

[360] Victor Lieberman, *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800-1830, Volume 1: Integration on the Mainland,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p.8.

[361] Reid, *Chin-Lushai Land.* p.1.

[362] Lieberman, *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800-1830, Volume 1: Integration on the Mainland,* p.8.

the British were busy intervening in every single aspects of the Mizo cultural existence. They clarified their reflections from Eurocentric observation; judging the life of the subjugates with prejudice; accordingly attempting to change and alter the 'natives' in accordance with their justified 'civilization'.

4.1. <u>Colonial ethnography</u>

Looking deeply on the entire development of Mizo ethnic studies, colonial ethnography has been the prior foundational point of reference since writing system was introduced by the colonialists. Collective identity before the arrival of colonialism was based on kinship and consanguinity. Their worldview of cohesion was restricted to their families, clans, and villages. Even though collective identity consciousness had its existence earlier than colonial interference, categorization of ethnic groups had its beginning following the introduction of western conceptual knowledge. Organized ethnic identity consciousness like 'nationalism' is a by-product of 18th century European movement and philosophy that was diffused along with colonialism.[363]

James C. Scott argued that 'civilizational discourses' has represented about 'barbarian', the 'savage', and the 'primitive' as basically meaning ungoverned, not-yet-incorporated. It never admits the preference of people voluntarily going over to the 'barbarians', hence such statuses are debased. [364] The colonialists therefore labeled any ethnic groups as 'uncivilized' through their doctrine of 'universalism', which did not subsist in parallel with their justified 'civilization'. Hence imposing their cultural value and colonial practices to the groups they encountered.

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[363] This mainly focuses on Peace of Westphalia, 1648, a concept of nation-state sovereignty based on two doctrines: territoriality and the exclusion of external actors from domestic authority structures. The Peace is considered to have checked attempts at the enforcement of any supranational authority on Europe. The Westphalian principle of states as independent actors was sustained by the rise in 19th century idea of nationalism, under which legitimate states were presumed to correspond to nations.

[364] Scott considers that hill peoples can be understood as been escaping the dominations of state-making projects in the valleys—slavery, conscription, taxes, corveelabour, epidemics, and warfare. Most of the areas in which they settle may be appropriately called shatter zones or zones of refuge. Virtually everything about these people's livelihoods, social organization, ideologies can be read as strategic positioning designed to keep the state arm's length. See Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, p.ix-xi.

The colonialists needed to know more about the people and in the initial stage, they began detailed analyses of their culture and society in order to understand how best to rule them. The territorial space inhabited by the Mizos was seen as 'terra incognita' and 'terra nullius'. By these, the colonialists regarded the spatial uncertainty of the terrain that was 'unmapped' and 'ungoverned'; thus perceiving it as a field to be explored, mapped and governed. Their first obligation was that the colonized subject was a 'body' to be known and ruled. Therefore, apart from ethnography, reports on administration, botany, geography, philology etc. were employed and they sent explorers and surveyors to various parts of the territory.

For the purpose of the study, colonial ethnography is further divided into four categories based on the subject matter of their contents. John Rawlins (1794) 'On the Manners, Religion, and Laws of the Cuci's or Mountaineers of Tipra'[365] was one of the first persons who had written an account of a group called by him as *Cuci* who dwelt on the uplands of Tripura. Although Rawlins gave a description on the cultural practices and characters of the group, it was rather a general report that lacked participatory observation and methodological interpretation.

Francis Buchanan-Hamilton (1798)[366] noted down about the ethnic groups inhabiting the erstwhile Chittagong Hill Tracts and the vicinity around eastern Burma. After his trip in the region, he wrote 'An account of a Journey undertaken by Order of the Board of Trade through the provinces of Chittagong and Tiperah, in order to look out for the places most proper for the cultivation of Spices'[367] describing about the

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[365] John Rawlins, 'On the Manners, Religion, and Laws of the Cuci's or Mountaineers of Tipra', in *Asiatic Researches, Vol. II, No. XII*, 1794, pp.141-146.

[366] East India Company surgeon, surveyor and botanist who published works on the geography, flora and fauna of India, where he lived and explored from the end of the 18th century until 1815. 'Global Plants: Buchanan-Hamilton, Francis (1762-1829)', [website], http://plants.jstor.org, (accessed 11 March 2016).

[367] Willem Van Schendel, 'The Invention of Jummas: State Formation and Ethnicity in Souteastern Bangladesh', in *Modern Asian Studies*, 26, I, 1992, p.98. Schendel mentions that the groups whom Buchanan encountered were the Marama (Marma), the Saksa (Chakma), the Moroo-sa (Mru), the Bon-zu (Bawm), the Zou (Zo), the Thaek (Sak), the Doingnak (Mrung), and the Tippera, apart from the whom he regarded as neither practicing swidden cultivation nor permanent residents, the Bengalis, the Baruas, and the Arakanese.

The text of Buchanan's manuscript is published by permission of the British Library Board in 1992 by Willem Van Schendel. For reference see, William Van Schendel (ed.), *Francis Buchanan in*

people he encountered with. He conducted interviews with the people with the purpose of identifying their group affiliation. In the subsequent year, in 1799, Buchanan published another work, 'A Comparative Vocabulary of Some of the Languages Spoken in the Burma Empire'.[368] This work occupied a pioneering survey of the languages of the ethnic groups living in Burma and its adjacent areas, providing important information on the ethno-cultural identities of the different groups.

Another pioneering work carried out by John MacRae (1801) 'Account of the Kookies or Lunctas'[369] talked about the *Kookies* living to the east of Bengal. Though MacRae employed the term 'Kuki' or its equivalent names in his work, the usage of 'Lunctas' was atypical and was not followed by other colonial ethnographers later.

These earlier works had a deep significance on the succeeding writings by performing as referent sources. They provided information for the subsequent administrators and colonial officials that were further enriched by creating a separate Mizo ethnographic literature. However, these works cannot be truly categorized as ethnographic text since they were rather general descriptions that were produced for imperative understanding.

An outstanding colonial officer contributing a good deal of Mizo ethnographic writings was TH Lewin. His books, *The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers Therein* (1869)[370] and *Progressive Colloquial Exercises of the Lushai Dialects* (1874)[371] were the first major works in details describing the different ethnic groups

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Southeast Bengal (1798): His Journey to Chittagong, the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Noakhali, and Comilla, Dhaka, University Press Limited, 1992.

[368] Francis Buchanan, 'A Comparative Vocabulary of Some of the Languages Spoken in the Burma Empire', in *SOAS Bulletin of Burma Research, Vol. 1, No., 1, Spring 2003.* The original article was published in 1799, in the fifth volume of *Asiatic Researches* and is reproduced in its entirety, with slight modifications by *SBBR*.

[369] John MacRae, 'Account of the Kookies or Lunctas', in *Asiatick Researches, Vol. 8, No. 5*, 1801, pp.183-198.

[370] TH Lewin, *The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers Therein,* Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1869.

[371] TH Lewin, *The Progressive Colloquial Exercises in the Lushai Dialect of the 'Dzo' or Kuki Language, with Vocabularies and Popular Tales,* Calcutta, Calcutta Central Press Company Limited, 1874.

of Mizo. Interrogating the people he encountered, Lewin accounted the socio-politics and culture of the ethnic groups. With his vague knowledge of the people's past, he attempted an arduous task in narrating the ethnic composition of the groups he came across at the Chittagong Hill Tracts, the Arakan Hills and the Lushai hills, which was a vast area inhabited by different ethnic groups on the borderland between mainland India and Burma. His personal experiences and his close association with the people directed him to gain knowledge of the *Duhlian* language, enabling him to acquire deeper information of the culture of the Lusei group and its cognate ethnic groups. For instance, Lewin in his conclusion in *The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers Therein* critically announced the negative impact of colonialism on the people whom they came upon. It was in some way, an apologetic narrative articulated by a colonial agent writing against the structure he served for. His works turned out to be a prerequisite for other colonialists following him.

Along with these works, *The Burmese Empire* (1783) by Sangermano,[372] *The Eastern Frontier of India* by RB Pemberton (1835)[373], *An Outline Grammar of Rangkhol-Lushai Language and A Comparison of Lushai with other Dialects* (1893)[374] by CA Soppit, and *History of Burma* (1893)[375] by Arthur Phayer is worth mentioning. Although these works lack a deep methodological analysis of the ethnic groups they encountered with, they however shed light on the tradition and culture of the groups and their attempts to classify and describe the people is helpful to a certain extent.

The second category of writing deals with military operations and the final occupation of Lushai Hills, written primarily by military officers. For giving an insight to colonial administrators and officials following what was known as the First

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[372] Vincenzo Sangermano, *The Burmese Empire: A Hundred Years Ago as Described by Father Sangermano,* Bangkok, White Orchid Press, 1995.

[373] RG Pemberton, *The Eastern Frontier of India*, New Delhi, Mittal Publications, 2015.

[374] CA Soppit, *A Short Account of the Kuki-Lushai Tribes on the North-East Frontier (Districts Cachar, Sylhet, Naga Hills, etc. and the North Cachar Hills) with An Outline Grammar of the Rangkhol-Lushai Language and A Comparison of Lushai with other Dialects*, 1st Edition, Kolkata, Firma KLM Private Ltd. on behalf of Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1976 (Reprint).

[375] Arthur P. Phayre, *History of Burma*, New York, Augustus M. Kelly, 1967.

Lushai Expedition, *Looshais and Munnipoorees* (1870), [376] RG Woodthorpe's *The Lushai Expedition, 1871-72* (1872), [377] *Foreign Department Report on Eastern Boundary of Hill Tippera* (1874), [378] *The Lushais: 1878-1889* (1889) [379] and Alexander Mackenzie's *The North-East Frontier of Bengal* (1884)[380] were in print. With the Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1888-89, *Foreign Department Report on Chin Lushai Hills September, 1892* (1892), [381] AS Reid's *Chin-Lushai Land* (1893), [382] *Military Report on Chin-Lushai Country* (1893)[383] written by EB Elly, Bertram S. Carey's and HN Tuck's *The Chin Hills,* Volumes 1 & 2 (1896) [384] and LW Shakespear's *History of Assam Rifles* (1929)[385] were published. In relation to that, *History of Operations in Northern Arakan and the Yawdin Chin Hills 1896-97* (1897)[386] by GC Rigby was produced. OA Chambers' *Hand Book of the Lushai Country* (1899)[387] was another important book.

Careful examination of these works reflects the agenda of colonialism and the imposition of white's supremacy over their colonized territories. Political conquest, coupled with administrative exploitation marginalized the 'natives' and the accounts are occupied with 'racist' narrative by depicting the 'natives' as people who needed to be administered and 'civilized'. The subject matter of the writings mainly concerned reports on geographic survey, ethnic description, social and political

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[376] *Relations Between Looshais and Munnipoories (Foreign Department: Political – A, 1870)*, Kolkata, Firma KLM Privated Limited on behalf of Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1979.

[377] RG Woodthorpe, *The Lushai Expedition*, Kolkata, Firma KLM Privated Limited on behalf of Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1978.

[378] *Foreign and Political Department Report 1874 on Eastern Boundary of Hill Tippera*, Kolkata, Firma KLM Privated Limited on behalf of Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1980.

[379] *The Lushais: 1878-1889*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2008.

[380] Mackenzie, *The North-East Frontier of India*.

[381] *Foreign and Political Department Report on Chin Lushai Hills September, 1892*, Kolkata, Firma KLM Privated Limited on behalf of Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1980.

[382] Reid, *Chin-Lushai Land*.

[383] EB Elly, *Military Report on Chin-Lushai Country,* Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1978.

[384] Bertram S Carey & HN Tuck, *The Chin Hills, Vol.1&2*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2008.

[385] LW Shakespear, *History of Assam Rifles*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1977.

[386] GC Rigby, *History of Operations in Northern Arakan and the Yawdin Chin Hills 1896-97*, Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, 2000.

[387] OA Chambers, *Hand Book of the Lushai Country,* Kolkata, Firma KLM Privated Limited on behalf of Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2005.

organization of the indigenous, military report and the final occupation of the territory.

However, in these narratives, 'cultural technologies of colonial rule' surfaced and apart from the military, political and economic power, as prominent scholars like Edward Said, Bernard S. Cohn, Nicholas Dirks, etc. underlined the 'power of knowledge', these colonial writings were a project that controlled the colonized subjects with the knowledge they produced.[388] Thus, these works lack accuracy and misrepresentation dictated the discourse.

The third category of writings is in subsequent to the establishment of British administration. GA Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India, III, 3* (1904), [389] John Shakespear's *The Lushai-Kuki Clans* (1912)[390] and William Shaw's *Notes on Thado Kukis* (1929)[391] presented the blueprint for this. Robert Reid's *The Lushai Hills* (1942),[392] NE Parry's *A Monograph on Lushai Customs and Ceremonies* (1927)[393] and *The Lakhers* (1932), [394] and AG McCall's *The Lushai Hills District Cover* (1948)[395] and *Lushai Chrysalis* (1949)[396] represented the writing.

With a more permanent establishment, writings within this category attempted to map out the ethnic origin of Mizos while searching the most appropriate ethnic categorization. For this, oral narratives, tradition and culture were systematically studied in order to produce reliable accounts. Core in the writings were the 'rearrangement' of Mizo socio-cultural values and practices by means of colonial law and government.

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[388] Phillip B Wagoner, 'Precolonial Intellectuals and the Production of Colonial Knowledge', in *Comparative Studies in Societies and Histories*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (Oct., 2003), p.783, [website], https://www.jstor.org/stable/3879496, (accessed 11 March 2016).

[389] Grierson.

[390] Shakespear.

[391] William Shaw, *Notes on the Thadou Kukis*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1979.

[392] Reid, *The Lushai Hills*.

[393] NE Parry, *A Monograph on Lushai Customs and Ceremonies,* Kolkata, Firma KLM Privated Limited on behalf of Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1976.

[394] Parry, *The Lakhers*.

[395] McCall, *The Lushai Hills District Cover*.

[396] McCall, *Lushai Chrysalis*.

In this context, Bernard S. Cohn suggested that the census, with its hierarchized and objectified categorizations, formalized identity in new ways.[397] It was in the initiative of J. Shakespear that the first census in colonial Lushai Hills was carried out that attempted to classify the population on ethnic lines. This census with other existing literatures helped Shakespear in producing *The Lushei-Kuki Clan*, which was the most detailed account on 'Lushei' and 'non-Lushei' group within the Lushai Hills. Here, Shakespear defined the difference between 'Lushai' and 'Lushei' and categorized identity into tribes and clans, which was followed formally in several works since then.

Urged by the necessity to communicate their teachings, works of missionaries were probably significant and is therefore categorised as the fourth type of colonial literature. *Five Years in an Unknown Jungle* (1912)[398] by RA Lorrain, *The Story of Our Foreign Mission* (1930)[399] by John Hughes Morris and *Pioneer Trails, Trials and Triumphs* (1927)[400] by Laura Hardin Carson fall under this category. These writings, though based on the parallel secular ethnographic literatures, observed Mizo ethnicity on their own lines as in-depth knowledge about the people was a prior required information to proselytize the Gospel.

However, these works lacked *emic*[401] approach and rather, *etic*[402] approach was more recurrent. The 'power' of the British allowed them to assert their mastery of local cultural forms and enabled the invasion and conquest of indigenous' cultural, geographic, and epistemic space. Their 'epistemic violence' represented Mizo as 'barbarous', 'superstitious' 'savages', 'uncivilized', etc. Since many of their

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[397] Bernard S. Cohn, *An anthropologist among the historians and other essays*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990, p.250.

[398] RA Lorrain, *Five Years in the Unknown Jungles*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2012 (Reprint).

[399] John Hughes Morris, *The Story of Our Foreign Mission (Presbyterian Church of Wales)*, Aizawl, Synod Publication Board, 1990.

[400] Laura Hardin Carson, *Pioneer Trails, Trials and Triumphs,* Kolkata, Firma KLM Privated Limited on behalf of Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1997.

[401] The *emic* approach examines the way local people think, perceive and categorize the world. Conrad Philip Kottak, *Mirror for Humanity*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 2006, p.47.

[402] The *etic* approach moves away from local observations, categories, explanations, and interpretations and the ethnographer underlines what he/she considers important. See Kottak, *Mirror for Humanity*, p.47.

informants were not members of the ethnic groups, their categorization of them was incomplete and inaccurate. Furthermore, the targeted audiences were the 'occidents' rather than the 'orients', which served as a means for the colonialists to justify their 'civilizing mission'.

These works were carried out barely for imperialism and further works after decolonization were rare. In his pioneering work on Southeast Asian studies, DGE Hall stated in *A History of South-East Asia* that he produced a plain data and a generalised study on Southeast Asian historiography.[403] His main argument was that Southeast Asia is not just an extension of India or China, but a political and geographical entity of its own that is worthy of study distinctly.[404] This introduced a new direction of scholarship and it later changed the focus and methodology on the studies of Southeast Asia encompassing the entire Northeast India and Mizoram.

Similarly, accounts on Mizo beginning from colonial ethnography were largely written as an appendix to either India or Myanmar. As these accounts were mostly intended for administrative convenience and general knowledge, they appeared as little narratives within a grand narrative. However, this discourse has begun to change and Mizo studies have been recently a growing field of study attracting prominent scholars nowadays.

4.2. <u>Ethnogenesis of Mizo</u>

Geo-politics often constructed identity of an ethnic group largely. Within what the British often recognized as the Kuki-Chin-Lushai land, separate ethnic identity appeared slowly. In essence, the groups were conscious of their historical and cultural connection; however, the politics of time and space disconnected them steadily. This spatial division of population gradually detached one group from the other cognate groups. Without any respect, the colonialists prepared geographical boundaries and natural geographic terrain and cultural limits that had long been in place were disregarded. In view of that, with the passage of time, 'Mizo' identity was nurtured in the subterranean within the Lushai Hills District.

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[403] DGE Hall, *A History of South-East Asia*, London, The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1981, p.v.
[404] Hall, *A History of South-East Asia*.

The homogeneous placement of tribes in spatial segments may be a result of social history of contact, confrontation and contestation between ethnically differentiated groups and between them and the 'others'. The historical process of the traditional habitat, which originated from common descent, determines this primeval homogeneity.[405] In the case of Mizo territorial space, colonialism acted as the agent of objective author of the territory they inhabited.

In the initial phase of their contact with the tribes beyond the Chittagong Hill tracts or the northeastern frontier of India, the British acknowledged the ethnic groups as 'Kuki'[406] and as 'Chin'[407] in line to the west of the Burmans proper. When the British came into closer contact with the people of the western tribe, specifically the northern hills, they came to know that majority of the people called themselves 'Lushai'.[408] The colonialists thus imposed 'Lushai' as the name for the ethnic group populating the adjacent territory bounded by Chittagong Hills Tracts, Hill Tipperah, Cachar and Manipur. Using Kolodyne River as a line of demarcation, in contrast, they adopted 'Chin' to designate the people inhibiting the terrain west of Burma;[409] accordingly splitting up into 'objective' division of Lushai Hills and Chin Hills respectively.

The British colonialists, as according to AS Reid (1893) theorized, "…the Chins and Lushais are practically one race."[410] Carey and Tuck (1895) "reasonably accept the theory that the Kukis of Manipur, the Lushais of Bengal and Assam, and the Chins…are of one and the same stock."[411] With that knowledge, the British sent military forces all directed in overpowering the Chin-Lushai chiefs. Consequently,

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[405] Aijzuddin Ahmad, *Social Geography,* New Delhi, Rawat Publications, 2002, p.16.
[406] The British recognized 'Kuki' as the ethnic name of the people when they came into contact with them, since the Bengali called the eastern 'hill people' by that name. For example, see B. Lalthangliana, 'Mizo Identity', in *Seminar & Important Papers*, p.16.
[407] 'Chin' is a Burmese word which denoted various hill tribes living in the country between Burma and the provinces of Assam and Bengal. See Sing Khaw Khai, *Zo People and their Culture: A historical, cultural study and critical analysis of Zo and its ethnic tribes*, Churachandpur, Khampu Hatzaw, 1995, p.1.
[408] 'Lushai' was an anglicized corrupted word which was literally re-inscribed from Lusei.
[409] See AS Reid, p.5.
[410] AS Reid, p.6.
[411] Carey, & Tuck, *The Chin Hills, Vol.1*, p.2.

the Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1889-90 was conducted, which affected the course of history of the people contended with by the British. The objectives of the expedition were not just "to punitively visit certain tribes, to subjugate them by force of circumstances, to explore the partly known country between Burma and Chittagong," but as well "to establish semi-permanent posts in the regions visited so as to ensure complete pacification and recognition of the British power."[412]

Subsequent to the submission of the Chin-Lushai chiefs in the course of the Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1889-90, the Chin-Lushai Hills Conference was convened at Calcutta on 29 January 1892 for considering civil and military affairs concerned with the control of the newly acquired territory. The final recommendation of the conference was that North and South Lushai Hills with a portion of the Chittagong Hill Tracts should be placed under Assam, and that the transfer of South Lushai Hills from Bengal should be made as early as possible—whichever was then placed under the Government of Bengal. With regard to the Chin Hills, the region was to remain under Burma. [413] On 27 January 1898, the Government of India accorded its authorization to the transfer of South Lushai Hills to Assam and consequently, the entire Lushai country came under the charge of the administration of Assam with effect from 1st April of that year. Nevertheless, the Chin Hills was yet to remain with Burma.[414]

It is explicit that maps and mapping/cartography were dominant practices of colonialism. Exploration and consolidation of the colonialists were often reinforced by the construction of maps as a means of textualizing the spatial reality of the 'other', renaming spaces in a symbolic and literal act of mastery and control.[415]

Thongchai Wanichakul argued that space, sovereignty and boundaries were legitimized by colonial official maps, and considered European cartography/map

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[412] Robert Reid, p.14.

[413] Resolutions passed by the "Chin-Lushai Conference, 1892". For more information, for example, see Khup Za Go, *Zo Chronicles: A Documentary Study of History and Culture of the Kuki-Chin-Lushai Tribe*, New Delhi, Mittal Publications, 2008, pp.59-60.

[414] Robert Reid, pp.59-61.

[415] Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, pp.31-32.

making as a powerful 'metasign'. [416] This objective signification restricted and restructured the people's contact with the 'others', thus constructed a new spatial identity within a confined 'geo-body'. Truly, the geographic partition of the entire area occupied by Chin-Kuki-Mizo groups into two distinct political administrations or the bifurcation of the region—which formerly was trifurcated—was significant enough in fostering a rise of different ethnic identities.

Even before J. Shakespear, many colonial officials gave ethnic categorization, using such nomenclatures as 'Kuki', 'Chin' and 'Lushai'. This ethnic naming went in tandem with colonial cartography creating geo-political identity. The mapping out of territorial political entity influenced ethnographic writing, thus ethnonym had correlation with the political boundary.

Prior to the advent of the colonialists, most of the groups were not conscious of collective identity and their worldview of cohesion was restricted to their families, clans, and villages. Shakespear mentioned that before the arrival of the British, each village was a separate state that was ruled by its own *lal* (chief), bringing about the existence of inter-clan rivalry amongst them. However, the rise of the Thangur chiefs—more appropriately the Sailo chiefs[417]—either ejected or absorbed into their communities the other inhabitants of the country. Before the Sailo chiefs had risen to predominant position, there were many cognate communities generally christened by an eponym scattered over the hills, living under headmen of their own and each using a dialect of its own. Nevertheless, the advent of the British discontinued in certain

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[416] Thongchai Wanichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation*, Honolulu, University of Hawaii, 1994, p.138. The key stance in Wanichakul's argument is that space and territoriality are not given entities and essential a priori categories. He held that spatial boundaries are planned and administered for legitimisation and the technology is employed as a strategic process that sustains binary power relationships and is a systemic set of signs or a discourse. See Wanichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation*, p.18.

[417] Legend have it that chieftainship of the Lusei clan began since Zahmuaka's headship; who procreated six sons, namely—Zadenga, Paliana, Thangluaha, Ṭhangura, Rivunga and Rokhuma. The brothers inherited their father's chieftainship establishing settlements at different villages. Conflicts successively broke out amongst these lineages, which ultimately ended in the supremacy of Ṭhangura's lineage. Sailoa, grandson of Ṭhangura further strengthened the dominance of his lineage and his name is lastingly christened for the lineage's appellation. For example, see Liangkhaia, pp.61-74.

cases to that process of absorption.[418] Even so, it is perceived that without the intervention of the British, a sense of solidarity began to intensify under the rule of the Sailo chiefs.

Organized populations within 'Lushai' were basically descent groups, whose members believed they had common ancestors. Within the ethnic groups were lineages or clans.[419] This, however, was not the exclusive basis of their identity.

This gives the impression why the attempt of listing clans, families and branches during the census of 1901 ended in a failure. "The causes of the failure," as Shakespear mentioned, "were the ignorance of the people themselves as to what clan or family they belonged to…." Yet, it seems that the descendants of certain powerful chiefs were sometimes collectively spoken of by the ancestor's name, showing how those clan, family, and branch names had arisen.[420]

Colonial objectified categorizations of ethnicity formalized a new Mizo identity. A kind of group identity, *hnam* was deeply intertwined with their belief system or *sakhua*. The word *hnam* or the equivalent Mizo word may well comprehend both the definitions of clan and lineage. A particular *sakhua* was practiced by each *hnam*, performed under each particular *puithiam* or priest, generally called as *sadawt*. So, when a 'change' of *hnam* was made, it inevitably meant a shift in the *sakhua* or vice versa. The practice is termed as *saphun*.[421]

What made the recognition of group categorization very confusing was definitely the arbitrary nature of one's *sakhua* that resulted in the ability of initiating one's own *hnam* by a man completing matrimonial rites by the process known as *sakung* or

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[418] J. Shakespear, pp. 40-42.

[419] Common to both the believes is that members descended from the same *apical ancestor*. That person stands at the apex, or top, of common genealogy. The difference, however is that a lineage uses *demonstrated descent*. Members can recite the names of their forbears in each generation from the apical ancestor through the present (this does not mean their recitations are accurate; only that lineage members think they are). On the other hand, clans use *stipulated descent*. Clan members merely say they descend from the apical ancestor. They do not try to trace the genealogical links between themselves and the ancestors. For further discussion, see Kottak, *Anthropology: The Exploration of Human Diversity*, pp.497-98.

[420] J. Shakespear, p.41.

[421] Liangkhaia, p.45.

sakung phun.[422] One of the most important markers of one's ethnic identity was a relationship known as '*dawi sa kilpui theih'*. This means that it was against the custom for a family having different *sakhua* to dine together for the animal's flesh used in the performance of their sacred rites, and that only who affiliated as sharing similar *hnam* and *sakhua* were accepted as one's own kin.[423] However, a larger identity, transcending mere kinship bond was loosely maintained under the headship of the chief for the sake of the village, thus developing a kind of spatial unison.

This collective identity was distorted by the introduction of a more rigid categorization based on lineage or clan through census. Mizo belief system was gradually replaced with western religion that dislocated the fundamental nature of ethnic affiliation. The introduction of western knowledge of group categorization, therefore, created a new discourse on Mizo ethnicity that spawned a larger collective identity, transcending lineage and village identity.

The exact period of the earliest usage of the word 'Mizo' is contentious. A folksong reciting an outstanding Mizo man of the east hunting down countless wild creatures with bamboo spear may be the earliest known.

> *"Chhaktiang Mizo pa,*
> *Phelraw chawiin sa tin leng kap e."*[424]

C. Vanlallawma (2007) and B. Lalthangliana (2008) are at variance in their interpretation as regards the period of the song's composition. Vanlallawma assumed the period in the course of their journey between the Run Rriver and the Len foothill,[425] which is a little earlier. In contrast, Lalthangliana claimed that the song originated more lately, subsequent to their crossing of Ṭiau River,[426] which is to the west of Run River. It is known that certain tribes of the ethnic group followed

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[422] Dokhuma, p.32.

[423] James Dokhuma, *Tawng Un Hrilhfiahna*, Third Edition, Aizawl, Mizoram Publication Board, 2007, p.32.

[424] C. Vanlallawma, 'Mizo Identity: Mizoram leh Mizo Hnam Humhalh Nan', in *Laisuih*, Aizawl, MC Lalrinthanga, 2007, p.2.

[425] Vanlallawma, 'Mizo Identity: Mizoram leh Mizo Hnam Humhalh Nan', p.2.

[426] Lalthangliana, 'Mizo Identity', p.18.

westward migratory direction. Hence, it can be carefully concluded that the usage of 'Mizo' was hitherto unknown at the east of Run Lui.

Whatever the application of 'Mizo' was at the earlier period, it is explicit from the census of 1901 that 'Mizo' had not been achieved as a generic name for the people. The British, who considered the need to categorize ethnic groups for convenience in administration and its associated constituents, initiated instituting the name. In 1898, *Mizo Chanchin Laishuih* journal was published. A monthly journal *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Lehkhabu* was subsequently published in 1902.[427] Zosapthara (Edwin Rowlands) further established the word by addressing the general populace through his song *'Mizo kan nih lawm ilangin'* (1903) whereby he made an effort to inculcate and boost the psyche of being 'Mizo'.[428]

It thus appears that the word 'Mizo' is of recent origin. Even though some scholars believed the word to be of primal derivation, it seems not. As mentioned, a common ethnic name—be it an *ethnonym* or *exonym*—acknowledged and accepted by the entire Kuki-Chin-Mizo ethnic group was not maintained nor is evident. The Lushai Hills, carved out because of the Chin-Lushai Hills Conference became the breeding ground of 'Mizo' identity. As stated previously, absorption into the Lusei clan during the Sailo chiefs made the synthesis of clans long lasting. Among the many clans inhabiting the geographic area, the Lusei clan speaking *Duhlian* dialect had been the dominant group. The existence of common language is a vital factor in upholding the rise of 'Mizo' ethnic identity.

Lewin recorded that, "The dialect of the Lushai tribes is common to, and understood by all, being the clan tongue of the great family from which all the chiefs are said to have sprung. The Lushai dialect is in fact the *lingua franca* of the country."[429] Shakespear too commented that, "Lushai or Dulien, which is the dialect of the Lushei clan, modified, doubtless, by contact with those of other clans, is now the *lingua*

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[427] Laltluangliana Khiangte, 'Origin and Development of Mizo Language and Literature (Early Period)', in K. Robin, (Ed.), *Chin: History, Culture & Identity*. New Delhi, Dominant Publishers and Distributors, 2009, p.106.

[428] See Lalthangliana, 'Mizo Identity', p.18.

[429] Lewin, *Progressive Colloquial Exercises of the Lushai Dialect of the 'Dzo' or Kuki Language, with Vocabularies and Popular Tales (Notated)*, p.3.

franca of the whole Lushai Hills, and is understood in many parts of the adjoining district."[430] JH Lorrain and FW Savidge, the Christian missionaries who settled amongst them in January 1894 wrote that the language, "with a few slight emendations adopted since, is still used throughout the tribe with eminently satisfactory results."[431]

With the introduction of Mizo script, formal teachings were initiated and literature increasingly began to develop. The codification of Lusei/Duhlian language and publications of primers, Christian and secular literatures resulted in firming up of the language as *lingua franca* for the entire Lushai Hills[432] with the exception of the Mara, who were under the British rule only after 1924.[433]

After careful study of the different dialects of the Kuki-Chin-Mizo ethnic group, Vumson concluded that, "Of all Zo dialects, the Lusei or Duhlian dialect is the most widely spoken. Therefore, if there should be a common language for the Zo people, the Lusei dialect is the ultimate choice."[434] Using Lusei dialect as the nucleus, L. Keivom postulated that Mizo language is being instituted as a common language.[435]

It thus gives the impression that the ethnic name 'Mizo' had a deep correlation with the blending of several dialects, where Lusei/Duhlian dialect outweighs the lexis and language structure. For that reason, and since Lusei language could not be used in its original form, it is generally mentioned as Mizo Tawng or Mizo language. At the same time, the different clans reservedly sustained their dialects while using Mizo as a channel of interaction. The emergence of a common language undeniably generated a sense of unity and a common identity. But this same matter performed to be the chief agent in dividing the different dialect-groups when persons speaking Lusei/Duhlian as their first language imprudently uphold their predominance by exhibiting an *exclusionary domination*.

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[430] J. Shakespear, p.112.

[431] Lorrain, *Dictionary of the Lushai Language*, (v).

[432] Khiangte, 'Origin and Development of Mizo Language and Literature (Early Period)', p.105.

[433] Parry, *The Lakhers*, p.12.

[434] Vumson, *Zo History: With an Introduction to Zo culture, economy, religion and their Status as an ethnic Minority in India, Burma, and Bangladesh*, Aizawl, Author, 1986, pp.20-21.

[435] Keivom, 'Mizo Identity: An Overview', p.2.

The Lushai Hills, under the administration of Assam was declared as "backward tract" in accordance with the Government of India Act, 1919.[436] The Government of India Act, 1935 then again created "Excluded Areas" where Lushai Hills was included.[437] Since the British were resisted, the Government seemed to be convinced in following a policy of reconciliation towards the hill tribes. This special treatment to the hill tribes appears as a policy of the British Indian Government to detach the tribes from the mainland Indian political movements. In the meantime, it furnished a sense of exclusivity while paradoxically breeding a sense of coherence within the Lushai Hills territory.

The idea of modern political consciousness had already taken roots early in 1920s. The common people suspected NE Parry's re-institutionalization of *zawlbuk* in 1926 that many chiefs had abandoned. This caused agitation against his action—the people sensed the continuation of the traditional chieftainship. The outside influence also engendered the upswing of political awakening. Some leaders who left for Shillong studying the prospect of joining the Assam Legislative Assembly were all detained. Their documents were seized and they were imprisoned on 22 October 1926. Up until 1946, the district authorities then totally banned political activities.[438]

By 1946, the authorities permitted the commoners to form a political party. Accordingly, the first political party called the Mizo Commoner Peoples' Union, later named as Mizo Union was formed on 11 April 1946.[439] The Mizo Union submitted a memorandum to the Government of India on 26 April 1947 "for the right of territorial unity and solidarity and self-determination within the province of Assam in free India."[440] The memorandum declares that only 'Mizo', and not 'Kuki' or

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[436]As mentioned by the act, only laws suited to the area could be applied in the Lushai Hills. For details, see Sangkima, *Essay on the History of the Mizos*, Guwahati, Spectrum Publications, 2004.

[437] The Act defined the tribal areas as "The Tracts of India along the border or in Baluchistan, which are not a part of British India, or of British Burma or of any Indian states or of any foreign states." *Government of India Act, 1935, Section 311(1),* [website], http://www.legislation.gov.uk, (accessed 1 April 2015).

[438] Sangkima, *Essay on the History of the Mizos*, p.265.

[439] Sangkima, p.266.

[440] 'Memorandum Submitted to His Majesty's Government, Government of India and its Constituent Assembly through the Advisory Sub-Committee by the Mizo Union–26th April 1947'. For further

'Chin' "stands for the whole group of them."[441] The result was the establishment of Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Pawl, women voluntary society bearing 'Mizo' in July 1946.[442] Young Lushai Association (YLA), formed on 15 June 1935 was changed to Young Mizo Association (YMA) on 17 October 1947 to have a "more panoramic coverage."[443]

The most vibrant upshot, however, was the formation of a political party on 5 July 1947 called the United Mizo Freedom Organization (UMFO).[444] Here again, not bearing in mind the political concern, the usage of 'Mizo' is perceived over again. It had come to be a common parlance in covering the different clans.

The partition of Burma from India in 1937 inherited the boundaries made during the Chin-Lushai Hills Conference of 1892, which was effectively completed by the transfer of power to India by the British Crown in 1947. The Lushai Hills was incorporated within the state of Assam under the Government of India. The first District Council of the Lushai Hills was inaugurated on 26 April 1952 and became an accomplished entity.[445] The Lushai Hills District Council was changed to the Mizo Hills District Council where a new political entity dawned under the name 'Mizo' that was signed by representatives of different clans in 1954.[446] Thus, the political endeavour made by Mizo Union accomplished a new territory for their constructed 'Mizo' with authorization for the first time. Hence, the constructed 'Mizo' identity became acceptable by the general community since it carried a primordial element.

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information, see Go, *Zo Chronicles: A Documentary Study of History and Culture of the Kuki-Chin-Lushai Tribe*, pp.137-142.

[441] Go, pp.137-142.

[442] Sangkima, p.195.

[443] 'Young Mizo Association', [website], http://www.centralyma.org.in., (accessed 1 April 2015).

[444] Sangkima, p.273.

[445] Sangkima, p.279.

[446] 'The Lusei Hill District (Change of Name) Act 1954 (Act 18 0f 1954)'. As per the provision of the Act, the name of the District was changed to 'Mizo District' with effect from 29 April 1954. See Chawnglienthang Changsan, 'Mizo Chin-Kuki-Mizo-Ethnic Dilemma: Search for Appropriate Identity', in *Laisuih*, p.12.

4.3. <u>Locating ethnic identity through difference</u>

Defining one's identity entails the presence/existence of 'others'. This pertains to either or both individual and ethnic identity. This ontic presence of the 'others' often engenders identity consciousness by constructing it or resuscitating it. Ethnic identity and 'othering' traverse space and time and they have contextualized relevant definitional point between them—us.

Ethnicity is not exclusively generated by self-consciousness and the awareness that one remains distinctively the way they are. The 'self' exists only in relation to the 'other', and vice versa. The sense of difference or the knowledge of different 'other' cohesively deepens the feeling of an ethnic group. General customs and beliefs, spatial existence and socio-politics functions as a substantial coalescent force. Nonetheless, the existence of 'other' is essential in defining one's group and locating one's own place. The 'othering' or of the 'alterity' of 'epistemic other' has generally been based on the imaginary spatial, racial and cultural differences.

Studies of earlier Mizo culture give us an idea about their contacts with the 'other' community inhabiting their immediate environs, which they labelled as different and unfamiliar from their daily existence. The consciousness of ethnic and cultural similitude given by the differing cultures encountered and the parallel perception of closeness between the various groups—against the 'others'—is observable. This consciousness had shaped the ideas about the group to which 'they' belonged and how 'they' want to be perceived by 'others'.

'Otherness' in the context of earlier Mizo culture is impartial in sense, recounting relative 'differences' between two or more entities without constructing 'power' relationship nor the opposite being pejoratively marginalized. Beyond doubt, *ethnocentrism* markedly expressed, subsequently spawning—*prejudice* and *stereotype*—over the 'others' and their culture. However, evidence for imposing their culture as universally and exclusively true is not decidedly marked.

As for appellation, specific words exist designating the 'others' in Mizo language; such as, *Vai, Kâwl*, *Kawr*, *Sap,* and so forth. These words, in the early period were

primarily applied for christening what they regarded as outsiders and foreigners to them. Evidently, the 'others' called them 'Kuki' or 'Chin', and thus identified them as a separate ethnic group at the same time based on their cultural tie. *Vai, Kâwl, Kawr*, and *Sap* were the most significant 'others' in generating Mizo identity formation.

History has shown that the MNF movement had augmented the othering of '*vais*' that was always the prior ontic 'others' of Mizo self-consciousness. Geo-political trajectory, however, reshaped ethnic identity and 'otherness' recently shifted to Chakmas, Brus and Gorkhas.

TH Lewin (1874) in *Progressive Colloquial Exercises in the Lushai Dialect of the 'Dzo' or Kuki Language* put the word '*vai*' as 'foreign'.[447] JH Lorrain (1940) transcribed the implication of '*vai*' as:-

> "a foreigner, foreigners (excluding Europeans, and latterly the better known neighbouring tribes as well); the foreign settlement or bazaar, or a place where the foreigners live."[448]

On studying the Chin ethnic group, Lehman (1963) mentioned that the word '*vai*':-

> "is used for the Burmans and their culture, which is more widespread in the Northern Chin area than is *kâwl*. *Vai,* but not *kâwl* is used in ritual formulas and in poetical language in Haka, and is undoubtedly an older and more fundamental way of referring to Burma."[449]

Semantic analysis of the word shows the contemporary usage of '*vai*' as "non-Mizo Indians, particularly plains people, and foreigners in general."[450] It is intelligible however, that semantic shift occurred as regards the word '*vai*' in tandem with their

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[447] Lewin, *Progressive Colloquial Exercises of the Lushai Dialect of the 'Dzo' or Kuki Language with Vocabularies and Popular Tales (Notated)*, p.xvi.
[448] Lorrain, *Dictionary of the Lushai Language*, p.539.
[449] FK Lehman, *The Structure of Chin Society*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1963, p.29.
[450] JT Vanlalngheta, *The BritAm Pocket Dictionary of Mizo*, Aizawl, Hlawndo Publishing House, 2013, p.584.

migration and settlement and the ethnic groups they encountered in the course of their expansion.

The *vai* kings, mentioned in the folktales of *Mauruangi*[451] and *Tualvungi and Zawlpala*[452] seem most likely the *vais* living east of their territory. The general conception with reference to the old usage of *vai* in the earlier times pointed mostly the inhabitants of the cultural and geographical space, whom they regarded as culturally different from theirs, occupying the plain areas. It was a connotation applied against any ethnic groups whom they considered as virtually unrelated to their daily existence. Moreover, in that matter, the *vais* were mainly the ethnic Bamar (Burman proper), mostly occupying the eastern sphere of their settlement.

'*Kâwl*', according to Lorrain included "the Burmese, a Burman."[453] Lehman opined that '*Kâwl*' seemed to be used by the Haka, Lushai, Lakher, and related areas in referring the Burman as a person and to the country he/she inhabited.[454] The noticeable fact is that *Kâwl* was used explicitly to identify the Burmans proper and their culture.

While gradually making westward migration, they encountered another group of people whom they considered as different to them; they dubbed the new ethnic group as '*Kawr*' or '*Kawl*' in dialect having retention of /r/ sound. TH Lewin incorporated

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[451] In the folktale, Mauruangi married a *vai* king. The material culture represented oriented more towards the plain Bamars than the plain Bengalis; for instance, the mention of *kawlhnam* (Bamar sword) and the practice of *puantah* or weaving related objects, the material of which is more related to the eastern culture. See, RL Thanmawia, *Mizo Hnahthlak Thawnthu, Vol.3*, Aizawl, Din Din Heaven, 2012, pp.99-118.

[452] Phuntiha, a *vai* king is introduced in the folktale paying a profuse nuptial price for Tualvungi, the wife of Zawlpala on Zawlpala's demand for falsely avowing his spouse as his sister. When Phuntiha's couriers came into sight, meeting the terms of their conditions, Tualvungi sadly burst out that they splendidly came crossing the Tuichang river. Legend has it that Tualvungi's burial ground where she went back to Zawlpala's domicile is in the region of the present Thenzawl town, situating to the west of Tuichang river. It seems plausible that the *vai* king refer to in the folktale approached from the eastern region. See, RL Thanmawia, *Mizo Hnahthlak Thawnthu, Vol.2*, Aizawl, Din Din Heaven, 2009, pp.63-73.

[453] Lorrain, *Dictionary of the Lushai Language*, p.233.

[454] Lehman, *The Structure of Chin Society*, p.28.

'*Korh*' in his collected vocabularies, meaning "a Bengalee or a coat wearing person."[455] JH Lorain recorded '*Kawr*' and '*Kawrmi*' as "a Bengali, the Bengalis".[456]

We find the tradition of using *kawr*, *thlangkâwr*, *kawrvai,* or *thlangkawrvai* in certain folksongs,[457] referring to the Bengalis or other ethnic communities living to their north, generally in the plain areas. The typical application of '*Kawr*' implied the plains people living to their north, of which they regarded them as outsiders, differing from their culture.

'*Sap*', as Lorrain defined was "a sahib, a white-man, a government or other official."[458] The contemporary application labeled '*Sap*' as "a sahib; English; European; white-man."[459] Mention may be made that indigenous inhabitants of the then Lushai Hills coined the armed expeditions made by the British during 1871-2 and that of 1889-90 as *vai lian*.[460] This simplifies that *vai* was applied to any outsiders—including the Europeans—since the composition of the armed forces was a mixture of different ethnic communities.

It seems probable that after realizing the eminence of the British, they used '*Sap*' in referring to the white colonialists in specific, following the tradition within the militia. '*Sap*' was a corrupted word *sahib*, used especially among the 'native' inhabitants of colonial India when addressing or speaking of a European of some social or official status.[461]

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[455] Lewin, *Progressive Colloquial Exercises of the Lushai Dialect of the 'Dzo' or Kuki Language with Vocabularies and Popular Tales (Notated)*, p.viii.

[456] Lorrain, *Dictionary of the Lushai Language*, p.240.

[457] For example, Hmuaki romanticize that even if her flesh decays, she yearned for her songs to overshadow the rulers of *Thlangkawr mi* or—perhaps—the Bengalis. See, RL Thanmawia, *Mizo Hla Hlui (Mizo Folk Songs)*, Aizawl, Din Din Heaven, 2012, p.217.

[458] Lorrain, *Dictionary of the Lushai Language*, p.404.

[459] Vanlalngheta, *The BritAm Pocket Dictionary of Mizo*, p.440.

[460] See Liangkhaia, pp.118&139. Also, see Siama, pp.92-102.

[461] 'Sahib', in *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, [website], http://www.merriam-webster.com, (accessed 12 November 2015). *Sahib* is derived from Hindi or Urdu, *sahib* meaning, 'master, lord'; which comes from Arabic *sahib*, originally 'friend, companion'; from *sahiba*, meaning, 'he accompanied.' Female form ('European lady') is *memsahib*. See, 'Sahib', in Online Etymology, http://www.etymonline.com, (accessed 16 November 2015).

The discussion explains that the general word for designating any foreigners was *Vai*. Inhabiting a higher elevation on hilly terrain, the 'alterity' of communities dwelling in the plains was observed. The ethnic groups occupying east of their settings were usually labeled as *Kâwl* or sometimes as *Kâwl vai*. These ethnic groups called them 'Chin' as well. Because of the westward migration and a wider settlement, the ethnic groups dwelling in the northern part of their settlement were commonly identified as *Kawr* or *Kawr vai*. 'Kuki' was the name applied to them by these *Kawr* or *Kawr vai* at the same time.

Mizo identity formation was reshaped by the colonialists' partition of their geographic space and imposing their political rule over their state of affairs. Besides, mass scale conversion to a new religion introduced to them was significant in reinforcing a sense of identity. Being a common subject of the British Empire, embracing the same religion, and a broadened communication within the territory fostered a newer identity. British administration in the Lushai Hills and the subsequent political autonomy attained by the territory under the Indian Union bolstered Mizo identity. The impact of this geo-political circumscription introduced a new Mizo identity in 'othering' what they considered as differing ethnic groups.

The mapping out of the Lushai Hills by the colonialists contained the dominant clan of Lusei, using Duhlian dialect as the language of communication. The first group of new modern elites that appeared during the colonial period mainly composed of Duhlian speaking commoners. These members mostly received formal education in the schools established by the Christian missionaries and they were affiliated to the Church. Even though the composition contained diverse tribes, Christianity provided a substituting space for tribe specific *sakhua* that was intertwined with the concept of *hnam*. Accordingly, one's identity as a tribe was no longer relevant and thus began creating a more coherent collective identity.[462]

History was subsequently reconstructed and a larger space for Mizo identity was proliferated. The cultural intimacy and commonality of the people, markedly

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[462] Joy Pachuau, 'The Creation of Mizo Identity: From Colonial to Post-Colonial Times'. Unpublished M.Phil Dissertation submitted to Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford, 2006, p.66.

'different' from 'others'—especially the Indian *vai*—was asserted through print media. The Young Mizo Association (YMA), in collaboration with the Church initiated *Chanchintha dak* programme through which literatures written in Lusei language were sent to the Chin Hills attempting to break the language barrier by popularizing Lusei language. [463] On the formation of Mizo Union, the union considered it necessary to use 'Mizo' as to integrate all the "children of Chhinlung".[464]

As a result, the semantic symbol of *Vai* newly represented general plain Indians differing in phenotype, culture, language, and religion. Under the government of the Indian Union, and especially because of the propaganda of the MNF movement against *Vai* and the consequent psychological trauma, *Vai* became the most prominent concept of 'other' against which 'Mizo' defined its identity. As formerly mentioned, the contemporary popular concept of *Vai* usually means non-Mizo Indians, particularly plains people. It substituted *Kawr*, the usage of which is almost limited to only poetry and songs.

'*Sap*' initially signified a white colonizer who settled for the interim, then departed. Even their short intervention had left an immense impact on Mizo sense of building their identity against them. Their Orientalist discourse on 'civilization' had deposited 'hegemony' of their cultural practices and values, thus persisting to perform as a standard of identity maker for which 'Mizo' constantly defined their existence.

The current usage of *Kâwl* retains its primeval root and it still means "the Myanmarese; people living in Myanmar."[465] However, in Mizo speaking group, whether *Kâwl* refers to the Burmans proper, or any citizens of Myanmar including the 'Chins'—which is often used in synonymous with *'khawchhak mi'*, meaning 'people of the east'—is not certain since the usage of *Kâwl* in popular parlance often overlaps in reference to the modern political state Myanmarese and the Burmans proper. Even if the impact of colonial cartography or geo-political division is

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[463] R. Vanlawma, *YMA History (1935-1995)*, Aizawl, CYMA, 1995, p.33.
[464] R. Vanlawma, *Ka Ram leh Kei*, Third Edition, Aizawl, Lengchawn Press, 1989, p.80.
[465] Vanlalngheta, p.249.

experienced, corresponding to the etymological essence, the politically correct meaning of *Kâwl* refers generally to the Burmans proper, occupying the plain areas.

Generalizing the concept of 'others', it is acceptable to surmise that Mizos had a feeling of relatedness in 'othering' the certain ethnic groups which they had encountered. The shared memories they retained, the close cultural practices they observed, the mutually intelligible language they verbalized, the hilly terrain they occupied, and the similar phenotypic appearances they possessed were all important in the 'alterity' of the *Vai*, *Kâwl*, *Kawr*, and *Sap*; thus maintaining a sense of oneness to a certain degree.

The various ethnic groups within Mizo applied different appellations to the 'others'. However, they did not denote the tribes or clans within their cognate areas as *Vai, Kâwl, Kawr,* or *Sap*. Instead, they identified themselves in clans, lineages, or villages. These terminologies contain a long history and they are/were employed as words against who they regarded as not belonging with them—i.e. the 'others'.

4.4. <u>Post-colonial identity</u>

Nationalism, together with politics of identity has been a popular ideological movement throughout the entire history of modern global politics. What is apparent is the deep historical traverse of political establishment. Within the context of India's northeastern region, the impact of colonialism can be perceived to the contemporary age. Pertinent to 'glue theory of tribalism', colonial government acted as a transitory centripetal force. However, with the demise of colonialism, various ethnic groups within and beyond their inherited geo-political entities have sensed the ensuing nation-state as an interventionist. The political disorder during the early years of post-independence India engendered a kind of 'anomie' of the whole socio-political system creating a space for a new politics of identity. The Mizo National Front (MNF) movement was such kind of political movement propagating an ideology for self-determination of Mizo 'nation'.

The legacy of colonialism generates a number of causes of nationalist movements. Colonial cartography produced during the periods of colonialist rule provides

examples of how colonialism inspired ethnic cleavages that consequently form the foundation of independence movements built upon ethnic nationalism. As movements of self-determination gained momentum globally, colonialist regimes became observed as exercising illegitimate power over the indigenous inhabitants. Accordingly, nationalist movements of autonomy recurrently adopted an ethnic character, often in contrast to colonialist ethnic identities.

Even though the movement of self-determination by MNF was unique to a particular period in history, the ideology of their cause and the identity that they had shaped has an epistemic presence to date. For that reason, contemporary issues pertaining to the concept of 'Mizo' per se have their connexion with the ideology propagated by the MNF beforehand.

When India was at the final stage of independence, Mizo political leaders of then Lushai Hills were in a byzantine situation. At that time, two political parties, viz. Mizo Union and United Mizo Freedom Organisation (UMFO) had already emerged on the political scenario. Both parties were conscious of the politics of the days, nonetheless with different determination. The division of India into two dominions by the Indian Independence Act of 1947 left Lushai Hills in the middle of three nation-states, viz. India, erstwhile East Pakistan (Bangladesh) and Burma. The people of the Lushai Hills presumed that they were in a position to opt for certain alternatives: one was to merge with either India or Burma and the other was either to attain independent status or to exist as a Crown Colony under Britain.[466]

With populist propaganda of campaigning for legal dissolution of chieftainship, the new Mizo Union leaders by then had decided to merge with India albeit the original founders were pro-nationalists in support of self-determination of some kind. The leader of UMFO, in contrast, opted in favour of fitting together with Burma. Such was the political conditions of the period.[467] Though both Mizo Union and UMFO advocated dissimilar standing, they shared one attitude: that of Mizo identity and its integration.

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[466] C. Hermana, *Zoram Politics Thli Tleh Dan – Vol. I*, Aizawl, Author, 1999, p.21.
[467] Chaltuahkhuma, *Political History of Mizoram*, p.101-02.

During 21-23 November 1946, an important Mizo Conference was convened by Mizo Union at Lakhipur in Cachar District, which was attended by 'Mizo' representatives from Lushai Hills, Manipur, Tripura and Cachar. The representatives unanimously resolved that all areas inhabited by 'Mizos' in India, Burma and Chittagong Hills Tract be amalgamated to form a greater state for Mizo people.[468] Reflecting the issue deliberated by these frontrunners right from the time of India's independence, geo-political and cultural reunification of 'Mizo' was evident.

As a result, Mizo Union in 1947 submitted a memorandum to 'His Majesty's Government and the Government of India and its Constituent Assembly through the Advisory Sub-Committee for Assam partially Excluded Areas and Excluded Areas'. The memorandum begged for full self-determination of 'Mizo' population within the province of Assam. It demanded the territorial unity and solidarity of the whole 'Mizo' population to be known as 'Mizos' and 'Mizoram' for 'Lushai' and 'Lushai Hills' respectively.[469] The demand was in part realized where Lushai Hills was granted the status of Autonomous District Council under the government of Assam and was changed to Mizo Hills District Council.[470] However, the Mizo National Front and other ethnic based political associations disclaimed this partial achievement of Mizo Union shortly.

Following the British ethnic categorization of the tribes of colonial Assam province in Northeast India, *The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950* categorized various hill people under "any Lushai" and "any Kuki" tribes in Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura. After the publication of the order, the Backward Classes Commission under the chairmanship of Kaka Kalelkar visited the north-eastern states in 1953 and it received as many as 132 memoranda mostly against the order.[471] In accordance with the finding, the Scheduled Tribes lists were revised in

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[468] L. Keivom, 'Zo Reunification Process', in Priyadarshni M. Gangte, *Why Must We Be Mizo?*, Guwahati, Spectrum Publications, 2006, p.148.

[469] 'Memorandum Submitted to His Majesty's Government and its Constituent Assembly through the Advisory Sub-Committee by the Mizo Union'.

[470] 'Memorandum Submitted to His Majesty's Government and its Constituent Assembly through the Advisory Sub-Committee by the Mizo Union'.

[471] H. Kham Khan Suan, *Identities, Autonomy and Patriotism: Asymmetric Federalism in North-East India*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, New Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2009, p.96.

1956. There is uniformity in enlisting "any Lushai (Mizo)" in the five states of Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura where no separate tribe listing is filed under it. Tribes of Mizoram in the list of 'Statistical Profile List of Schedules Tribes in India, 2013' as per the amendment of Scheduled Tribe list of 1956 include fifteen groups.[472] This constitutional listing of tribes was and has been disregarded in the local conception of 'Mizo' from its inception to the present days.

In 'The Rise of Self-Assertion and Self-Determination of the Ethnic Tribe of the Mizo (1945-1965)', Rosanga highlighted the politics of identity among the ethnic groups of 'Mizo' by specifically tracing the post independence political scenario of Mizoram.[473] He mentioned the failure of the administration of the Mizo District Council as the root cause for the rise of self assertion among the ethnic groups of Mizo by stating that the District administration "was always short sighted, and could not always bear to see development works in the periphery of Mizoram". [474] Therefore, the Maras, the Lais, the Paites and the Hmars developed 'minority crisis' and began to protect their language and culture, and were struggling to improve their economic conditions using politics of identity as an instrument.[475] Rosanga stated that with such condition, the MNF's propaganda of uniting the whole ethnic groups was popular since the inception of their movement.[476]

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[472] 'Statistical Profile List of Schedules Tribes in India, 2013', p.377-78, [website], https://tribal.nic.in, (accessed 12 December 2016) includes the following tribes in Mizoram:
1. Chakma 2. Dimasa (Kachari) 3. Garo 4. Hajong 5. Hmar 6. Khasi and Jaintia, (Including Khasi, Synteng or Pnar, War, Bhoi or Lyngngam) 7. Any Kuki tribes, including: - *(i) Baite or Beite (ii) Changsan (iii) Chongloi (iv) Doungel (v) Gamalhou (vi) Gangte (vii) Guite (viii) Hanneng (ix) Haokip or Haupit (x) Haolai (xi) Hengna (xii) Hongsungh (xiii) Hrangkhwal or Rangkhol (xiv) Jongbe (xv) Khawchung (xvi) Khawathlang or Khothalong (xvii) Khelma (xviii) Kholhou (xix) Kipgen (xx) Kuki (xxi) Lengthang (xxii) Lhangum (xxiii) Lhoujem (xxiv) Lhouvun (xxv) Lupheng (xxvi) Mangjel (xxvii) Missao (xxviii) Riang (xxix) Siarhem (xxx) Selnam (xxxi) Singson (xxxii) Sitlhou (xxxiii) Sukte (xxxiv) Thado (xxxv) Thangngeu (xxxvi) Uibuh (xxxvii) Vaiphei* 8. Lakher 9. Man (Tai-speaking)10. Any Mizo (Lushai) tribes 11. Mikir 12. Any Naga tribes 13. Pawi 14. Synteng 15. Paite
[473] O. Rosanga, 'The Rise of Self-Assertion and Self-Determination of the Ethnic Tribe of the Mizo (1945-1965)', in *Laisuih (Ram leh Hnam Humhalhna)*, pp.288-308.
[474] Rosanga, 'The Rise of Self-Assertion and Self-Determination of the Ethnic Tribe of the Mizo (1945-1965)', p.290.
[475] Rosanga, p.290. With this development, the Mara Freedom Party was formed in 1962, the Chin National Front covered Mizoram from Myanmar since 1964, Hmar National Union was formed in 1960 and the Paite Federation was revived in 1960.
[476] Rosanga, p.302.

The idea of establishing 'Mizo' identity by the Mizo Union and the creation of Mizo District Council acted as an agent that bred smaller ethnic movement. It was not directly the casting of 'Mizo', but the bringing into being of Regional Council for the Pawi-Lakher communities that inspired other groups such as the Paites and the Hmars to make effort for their respective administrative units based on ethnic line. This was detested by the Mizo Union leaders who attempted to unite the smaller groups. The challenge put forth by the Mizo Union was soon after undertaken by the MNF with different motive halting the aspiration of smaller tribes for while but was resuscitated after their agreement with the Government of India.

The period of decolonisation already witnessed ethnic consciousnes among some groups within the Lushai Hills. The Pawis and the Lakhers were among the groups that could not admit themselves properly as 'Mizo' and seek for separate political administration at the start. Their aspiration was galvanised by the arrival of the Sub-Committee on North East Frontier (Assam) Tribunal and Excluded Areas (also called the Bordoloi Commission as it was headed by Gopinath Bordoloi) in 1947 that was set up by the Constituent Assembly. [477] In this Commission, Saprawnga and Khawtinkhuma (both members of Mizo Union) were made co-opted members who stood for the cause of 'Mizo' within one administrative territory.[478] However, their stance was not accepted by the Lakhers and the Pawis.

Even before the independence of India, Mara chiefs convened a conference on 4 January 1945 to have their own separate administration by submitting a memorandum to the Additional Superintendant of Lushai Hills. [479] After independence, an Advisory Council was constituted in the Lushai Hills on 10 November 1947 that comprised of representatives of the chiefs and commoners.[480] The commoners held election on 15 April 1948 in which Z. Hengmanga of Sangau Circle (representing the Pawis) and Vako of Zawngling Circle (representing the

[477] KM Zakhuma, *Political Development in Mizoram from 1946 to 1989 (A study with special reference to political Parties in Mizoram*, Aizawl, Sangkungi, 2001, p.133.
[478] Zakhu Hlychho, *Mara-te Tobul*, Aizawl, Author, 2009, p. 176.
[479] Memo No. ACAD.3/67/120 dt.15.5.1967. 'Report submitted by the Addl. Deputy Commissioner, Lungleh to the Deputy Commissioner, Mizo District, Aizawl'. (MSA).
[480] Memo No.G. 11044 of 27.11.1947. 'Hriattirna: 10.11.1947 nia Shillong a Governor ina Mizorama Advisory Council siam tur thua Mizo Lalte leh Hnamchawmte inremna thu chhuah'. (MSA).

Lakhers) were elected.[481] The two elected representatives put great effort to persuade the Bordoloi Commission for the establishment of a separate administrative unit for the two tribes. With such situation, the Pawi and the Lakher leaders negotiated to press for one administrative council.

Following it, Pawi-Lakher Convention was organised at Lawngtlai in 1948 to discuss the matter.[482] The convention was attended by Dengthuama and Khawma of Mizo Union who were against the establishment of a separate council for Pawi-Lakher and no decision was made.[483] However, on 25 November 1950, Pawi and Lakher leaders met in Maubawk and resolved to institute a political party called Pawi-Lakher Tribal Union to give more effort for the establishment of a regional council.[484] It was negotiated in the meeting that the headship of the council was to be occupied alternately by both the tribes.[485] Thus, due to their undertaking, when the Lushai Hills was granted the status of District Council under Assam, Pawi-Lakher Regional Council was established within the Lushai Hills District as per Para 2(6) of the 6th Schedule of the Indian Constitution on 20 May 1952 that was inaugurated on 23 April 1953.[486]

Soon after the functioning of the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council, there was a clash of interest within the two groups on subjects such as leadership, appointment and employment issues. As Pawi influence was stronger, the Maras shortly felt that they would be a minority against the Pawis. Hence, in order to promote their cause they met at Zawngling on 16 December 1963 and founded the Mara Freedom Party (MFP) that led to the dissolution of the Pawi-Lakher Tribal Union.[487] With the initiative taken by the party, a memorandum for the creation of Mara Autonomous

[481] V. Lalchhawna, *Autonomy Movement in Mizoram (with special reference to Maraland)*, Aizawl, Author, 2014, p.65.
[482] Hlychho, *Mara-te Tobul*, p.180.
[483] Hlychho, p.180.
[484] Zakhuma, *Political Development in Mizoram from 1946 to 1989 (A study with special reference to political Parties in Mizoram*, p.112.
[485] Hlychho, p.180.
[486] Order No. TAD/R/3/52/15 dt.20th May, 1952. 'Pawi-Lakher Regional Council (Constitution of the Regional Council) Rules, 1952'. (MSA).
[487] Hlychho, p.185.

District Council was sent on 28 August 1964 to the Government of Assam.[488] Knowing the intention of the MFP, the Chin National Front (CNF) was established to fight for the cause of Pawi people in 1963[489] and a memorandum was submitted to the Deputy Commissioner of Aizawl on 20 September 1964 stating their desire.[490]

With tussle rising between the two groups, the MFP decided to boycott the third Pawi-Lakher Regional Council election of 1965 which they did.[491] However, in 1970, the MFP resolved to participate in the fourth Pawi-Lakher Regional Council election as they considered joining the Regional Council as an easier gateway for their cause to attain a District Council.[492] The joint effort given by Pawi-Lakher leaders was materialised on 29 April 1972 when both the region were given the status of Autonomous District Council separately.[493] However, before that, Pawi-Lakher Regional Council was trifurcated into three areas (viz. Pawi, Lakher and Chakma Regional Councils) on 1 April 1972 that led to the creation of Chakma Autonomous District Council along with Pawi Autonomous District Council and Lakher Autonomous District Council.[494]

Apart from the Pawis and Lakhers, the Paite people formed the Paite Federation in 1952 and submitted a memorandum for a separate Regional Council in 1953 to the Prime Minister of India during his visit to Aizawl. This shortlived federation was soon absorbed in the Mizo Union and UMFO. However, the spirit was revived in 1963 by the formation of the Paite National Council (PNC). In the same year, the PNC submitted a memorandum for the establishment of a Paite Regional Council to the Chief Minister of Assam.[495] This was soon brought to an end by the rise of the MNF movement.

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[488] 'Memorandum submitted to the Chief Minister of Assam, Shillong by the Mara Freedom Party on the 28th Aug.1964'. (MSA).
[489] HC Thanhranga, *District Council in the Mizo Hills (Updated)*, Aizawl, Author, 2007, p.49.
[490] Memo No. CNF.1/64/3 Dated Saiha, the 20th September, 1964. 'Memorandum submitted by Chin National Front to the Deputy Commissioner, Mizo District'. (MSA).
[491] Lalchhawna, *Autonomy Movement in Mizoram (with special reference to Maraland)*, p.107.
[492] Lalchhawna, p.120.
[493] Thanhranga, *District Council in the Mizo Hills (Updated)*, p.44.
[494] Thanhranga, p.43.
[495] No. SA/371/Chur.16616-17 dated 30.9.63. 'Memorandum submitted to Shri B.P. Chaliha, Chief Minister, Govt. of Assam by the Paite National Council for Constitution of Paite Regional Council'. (MSA).

Two decades later, the Mizoram Paite Organisation (MPO) was established on 10 April 1980 to fight for recognition of Paite in the Scheduled Tribe list of the Indian Constitution.[496] As the organisation was ineffective, Mizoram Paite National Council (PNC) was set up on 6-9 March 1991, and on 28 August 1991, the PNC in Mizoram submitted a memorandum pleading the formation of a separate District Council for the Paites in Mizoram.[497] The struggle did not become intensified as expected. However, with joint effort in the company of other allied Paite associations, the PNC in 2003 achieved its erstwhile aim of making Paite to the tribe list in the amendment of the Constitutional (Scheduled Tribes) Orders, 1950.[498]

Resentment arouse among some elite of Hmar people that led to the formation of Hmar National Congress (HNC) in 1954 by Rochunga Pudaite.[499] The movement of the HNC seek for preservation of Hmar identity and a separate administrative unit. With the rise of the MNF, HNC formed alliance with Mizo Union of Manipur and formed the Hmar National Union in 1958.[500] The aim of HNC was eclipsed by the MNF's idea of 'Greater Mizoram' which however turned out to their dismay when the MNF was unable to attain its objective.

After a peace accord was signed between the Indian Government and the MNF, the Hmar Peoples' Convention (HPC) was formed in 1986 to fight for separate administrative unit. Between 1987-1988, memoranda were submitted by the the HPC to the Chief Minister of Mizoram, the Governor of Mizoram and the Prime Minister of India for granting Autonomous District Council in Mizoram.[501] Hmar militancy appeared that was soon followed by the signing of a Memorandum of Settlement (Mos) between the HPC and the Government of Mizoram on 27 July 1994 that brought to the formation of Sinlung Hills Development Council.[502] Dissatisfied with

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[496] 'Mizoram Paite Organisation', [website], mizohelpline.com/mizoram-paite-chanchin., (accessed 3 October 2018).
[497] 'Mizoram Paite Organisation', [website].
[498] 'Mizoram Paite Organisation', [website].
[499] Rosanga, p.502.
[500] Lalsiamhnuna, *Political Problems of Mizoram: A Study of Ethnic Politics with Special Reference to the Hmar People's Movement*, Saitual, Rose Pari, 2011, p.124.
[501] Lalremlien Neitham, 'Hmar Struggles for Autonomy in Mizoram, India', [website], https://www.ritimo.org, (accessed on 18 January 2020).
[502] Neitham, 'Hmar Struggles for Autonomy in Mizoram, India', [website].

the MoS, faction of the HPC set up HPC (Democracy) in 1995 to gain greater autonomy for the people. [503] After decades of tension, the HPC (D) and the Government of Mizoram signed an accord on 2 April 2018 and led to the government in constituting Sinlung Hills Council with greater autonomy on 9 July 2018.[504]

The historical condition of the early post independence period put on view that 'Mizo' was already popularised to integrate several tribes with political sanction. Nonetheless, tribes such as Lai, Mara, Paite, Hmar, etc. perceived themselves as distinct communities and could not fully accept existence under 'Mizo' coverage. This was further increased by the District Council administration which they thought neglected the periphery of Aizawl. While the granting of Pawi-Lakher Regional Council was seen as the Paites and Hmars as asymmetrical, the Pawi-Lakher as well desired to alter their status quo by bifurcating into two separate administrative units with higher status. Thus, the post-independence scenario witnessed ethnic movements within the nascent 'Mizo' that continued up till the post-statehood days.

The precursor of MNF had its origin as the Mizo Cultural Society formed in 1955,[505] which endeavoured to instil a sense of Mizo nationalism in the minds of the people.[506] The objective behind the Society was to imbue nationalism in tandem with self-determination swathed under the banner of culture. The Society convened several public meetings and one such instance was on the eve of the *mau tam*[507] famine of 1959. With the arrival of WA Sangma, then Tribal Affairs Department minister of Assam, mass procession voicing their complaints against the government of Assam with regard to the famine was demonstrated in Aizawl. This led to the

[503] 'Hmar People's Convention–Democracy', [website], www.satp.org, (accessed on 3 October 2018).
[504] 'Mizoram govt issues notification constituting Sinlung Hills', [website], www.business-standard.com, (accessed on 2 October 2018).
[505] CG Verghese and RL Thanzawna, *A History of the Mizos: Volume II*, New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, 1997, p.8.
[506] Vanlawma, *Ka Ram leh Kei*, p.257.
[507] A cyclic ecological phenomenon, the 'death of bamboo' or *mautam* occurs every 50 years in Mizoram. It involves rat boom causing a widespread famine in the areas.

removal of several leaders of the Society from government offices. Consequently, the Society dispensed with their activities and became non-operational.[508]

However, Mizo National Famine Front (MNFF) was set up in 1960 from the legacy of Mizo Cultural Society as an organization working to relieve the people from the disparity caused by the famine.[509] The MNFF utilized the famine as a mechanism for proclaiming their grievances against the government of its failure in administering and nourishing its citizens. When MNFF turned political and was changed to MNF in due course, 'self-determination' was adopted as the objective of the party.[510] It is evident from their objective that the idea of MNF's 'nationalism' pursued to achieve (or sustain) 'autonomy': which was identified as involving having a full nation-state with complete authority over domestic and foreign affairs.

Conspicuous from the name itself was the manifestation of their identity as being 'Mizo', and their cause for 'nationalism'. On 30 October 1965, the MNF General Headquarters of Aizawl submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister of India[511] stating their, "claim of full self-determination," from the government of India. The memorandum cautioned that the government of India's choice was, "whether the Mizo Nation should shed her tears in joy to establish firm and lasting friendship with India in war and peace or in sorrow or anger…."

As mentioned, the Mizo Union, the ruling political party in Mizo Hills District Council adopted a policy for attaining the status of statehood under the constitution of India. The MNF leaders were against such policy as they regarded that the prospect of reclaiming the rights of Mizo chiefs before the advent of colonialism was achievable.[512] With such credence, 'self-determination' was equated with the concept of 'lost freedom' that was to regain. This ideology behind MNF's struggle for 'self-determination' can be best analysed by rereading their memorandum, in which they

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[508] Vanlawma, p.257-58.

[509] Verghese and Thanzawna, *A History of the Mizos: Volume II*, pp.11-12.

[510] R. Zamawia, *Zofate Zinkawngah (Zalenna Mei a Mit Tur a Ni Lo)*, Aizawl, Author, 2012, p.169.

[511] 'Memorandum Submitted to the Prime Minister of India by the Mizo National Front General Headquarters, Aizawl, Mizoram on October 30, 1965.'

[512] Hermana, *Zoram Politics Thli Tleh Dan – Vol. I*, pp.66-67.

un/consciously articulated their idea of 'being Mizo' and their cause for independence.

The MNF leaders validated their assertion by legitimizing their stance through history by stressing that, "The Mizos, from time immemorial lived in complete independence without foreign interference." They accepted the given nature of 'Mizo' identity, thus holding a 'primordial' standpoint of 'nationalism' being in continuation at all times of human history. They emphasized their claim of the 'primordiality' of 'Mizo' nation by stating, "…the Mizo people are inseparably knitted together by their strong bond of tradition, custom, culture, language, social life and religion wherever they are." It was Clifford Geertz, who held this view by mentioning that ties of blood, language and culture are seen by actors to be profound and essential, that they are seen as natural. [513]

The memorandum underlined the socio-biological interpretations of 'nation' determined by genetic, cultural and geographical factors. It acknowledged that nations have historical roots that go back centuries, strictly taken to the beginning of human civilization and points to the organic development of ethnic groups into nations. It offered an evolutionary construction of human societies by mentioning the existence of 'Mizo' from primeval point in time, circumscribed by the geographical terrain generating a close cultural attachment that provided a common identity. Kinship bonds and cultural attachments reigned supreme and governed the social and political actions.

Proclaiming the ancient existence of a coherent national entity, the memorandum avowed that, "The Mizos stood as a separate nation even before the advent of the British…" and challenged the geo-political partitioning of their spatial identity by colonial power because of their 'primordial' tie. Along the lines of Anthony D. Smith,[514] Mizo nation was seen as having birth moment in the past, rooted in unique cultural traditions and practices that could be expressed as 'ethnic'. After its

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[513] Clifford Geertz, 'The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States', in Clifford Geertz (ed.), *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*, , New York, Free Press, 1963, pp.109-10.
[514] Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History,* p.60.

subsequent establishment, these characteristics of Mizo nation become deep-rooted to the point of permanence, perennially reiterated in successive generations.

The ethno-nationalism described in the memorandum embraced religious explanation of "Mizo" identity, which was, "…created, moulded, and nurtured by God and Nature." It reproached the Government of India that if it, "…brings exploitative and suppressive measures into operation, employing military might against the Mizo people…which God forbid," it would be pointless, "…for a soul cannot be destroyed by weapons." The 'God' referred in both the passages signified the monotheistic deity Christianity, which symbolized the Supreme Being for Mizo nation.

The MNF proclaimed a slogan 'For God and our nation'[515] employed to plead their case in the minds of the people. After the first General Assembly of the MNF held during 2-3 April 1962, three objectives of the party were put down on paper. One of the objectives was 'To defend Christianity'. [516] The method behind MNF's nationalism was the recurring utilization of religion to exert a pull on the masses, of which majority followed Christian values and teachings.

Omer and Springs posited that when political and religious objectives are conflated and interwoven, 'religious nationalism' is exhibited. They further coined the term 'ethno-religious nationalism', which put difficulties in the definition of this difficult concept by the affixion of 'ethnicity'. 'Nation' and 'religion' has turned out to be entwined and since the two became so much enlaced, it became complicated to envisage 'nationalism' without 'faith'; therefore, 'religious nationalism' cannot be disregarded. [517] The memorandum pronounced the religious identity of Mizo Christians against the Government of India that they considered as promoting Hindu religion, which was against the principle of secularism.

They reiterated the allegation in the 'Declaration of Independence' proclaimed on 1 March 1966,[518] stating that the government of India had been, "…pursuing a policy

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[515] A literal translation of 'Pathian leh kan Ram Tan'.
[516] A literal translation of 'Kristian Sakhua Humhim Tlat'.
[517] Atalia Omer and Jason A Springs, Religious Nationalism: A Reference Handbook, CA, ABC-Clio, Santa Barbara, 2013, pp.14-15.
[518] 'Declaration of Independence by the Mizo National Front'.

of exploitative measures in their attempt to wipe out Christianity, our sole religion, and no consideration has been paid to our national way of life." This is marked from the fact that, "…religious assimilation and Hindu indoctrination," was judged as an, "evil and selfish design," of the government of India.

'Mizo nation', which they regarded as surviving from the ancient past, incited the feeling of disconnection from the mainland 'Indian nation'. This tendency of their separatist ideology obliged them, "refused to occupy a place within India…." With the restoration of "nationalism and patriotism inspired by the political consciousness," the memorandum announced that they "has now reached its maturity and the cry for political self-determination…" or their political aspiration, "…is the creation of Mizoram."

It is to be noted that immediately after the First Lushai Expedition of 1871-2 and the virtual defeat of several Mizo chiefs by the British force, the British government accordingly adopted the policy of protecting the eastern frontier under its governance. A regulation was enacted under Section 2 of the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873, which determined conditions for people of the plains if they were to enter the hills of frontier areas. The regulation can be seen as intensifying the hills—plains dichotomy.

Through the enactment of the Scheduled Districts Act 1874 (Act 14 of 1874), the Lushai Hills was declared as 'Scheduled District'.[519] In accordance with the Government of India Act 1919, the Governor-General in Council declared Lushai Hills as 'backward tract'. This implies that, "any Act of the Indian Legislature shall not apply to the territory…to such exceptions or modifications as the Governor-General thinks fit."[520] The Government of India Act, 1935 declared the Lushai Hills under 'Excluded Areas'.[521] Under this act, they were therefore, not represented in the

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[519] J. Zorema, *Indirect Rule in Mizoram 1890-1954*, New Delhi, Mittal Publications, 2007, p.50.
[520] Zorema, *Indirect Rule in Mizoram 1890-1954*, p.50.
[521] McCall, *Lushai Chrysalis*, p.238.

legislature of Assam and were administered by the Governor-in-Council as 'reserved jurisdiction'.[522]

Interpreting the British government's policy towards the Lushai Hills, the MNF in their memorandum enunciated Mizo nationality as, "…distinct and separate from that of India." They claimed that since the British government recognized the distinct nationality of the Mizo people, they decided to exclude them from the purview of the new constitution of India, and thus were accordingly classed as an 'Excluded Area'. That was why the memorandum proclaimed that, "…the Mizos has never been under Indian Government and never had any connection with the politics and the polities of the various groups of Indian opinion." It can thus be interpreted that 'Mizo' identity had been reshaped against the *'Vai'*.

The semantic representation of *Vai* symbolized general plain Indians differing in phenotype, culture, language, and religion as the relevance of ethnic identity is often in a situation of relativities and differences, and it is a process of identification, which often culminates to concrete status. People coming under the total or partial domination undergo experiences of deprivation and are often materially deprived, culturally denuded, or politically neutered. After they become conscious of their common quandary, the familiar reaction is to generate solidity, sustenance, and reassure among others who go through similar experiences. The case was with the MNF movement.

In view of that, they considered that, "During the fifteen years of close contact and association with India, the Mizo people had not been able to feel at home with Indians or in India, nor have they been able to feel that their joys and sorrows have really been shared by India." They plainly proclaimed that, "They do not, therefore, feel Indian." The consciousness of Mizo identity propagated by the MNF was thus, generally in the context of 'other' groups—the Indian *Vais*.

Mizo Union voiced the idea of an exclusive 'Mizo' identity beforehand in their memorandum on 26 April 1947. It cited that, "The Mizos have nothing in common

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[522] McCall, *Lushai Chrysalis*, p.238.

with the plains nor with the Naga or Manipur etc." of India. The territorial inhabitation, mentioned in Mizo Union's memorandum extended from the then Lushai Hills, far beyond Manipur state, Cachar, Tripura state, Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh and the Chin Hills of Myanmar.

The memorandum of the MNF was not completely original as it reproduced or improved some ideas from the memorandum of the Mizo Union. For instance, clans recognized under 'Mizo' ethnic group was more or less adopted, who could communicate in a mutually intelligible language with close cultural affinities. The territorial inhabitation stated in Mizo Union's memorandum was employed as the boundary of 'greater Mizoram' by the MNF.

The memorandum mentioned that back in the days, "Chiefs of different clans ruled over separate hills and valleys with supreme authority…." In this context, George W. White argued that though scholars identify the intimate connection of place and nation, the real geographic components of nation have not been agreeably recognized. He perceived the geographic space that has come to represent the nation often impelled them to defend the lands. [523] The kind of 'territorial nationalism' embraced by the MNF owed attachment to the hills that they felt it necessary to defend from the onslaught of 'others'. The topography of Mizo settlements had always been linked with hilly nature of the terrain and the territorialisation of their identity was often the hills. Generally, this generated the hills—plains dichotomy defining 'Mizo' identity against the plains '*Vai*'.[524] When a map of 'greater Mizoram' was sketched out, it represented the people of the Mizo District, some parts of Manipur, northeastern Tripura, southern Assam, the Chittagong hill tracts of Bangladesh, and the Chin hills and Arakan Hills of Burma.

Mere common territory by itself is not enough for the construction of common identity. There must as well be present, a complex set of other factors that physically, socially, and especially psychologically link the people who live in that common territory. The sense of territory has a deep correlation with the consciousness of

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[523] George W. White, *Nationalism and Territory: Constructing Group Identity in Southeastern Europe*, Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999.
[524] Pachuau, *Being Mizo: Identity and Belonging in Northeast India*, p.10.

ethnic nationalism. Location of tribes in different territorial spaces may be an upshot of social history of contact, confrontation, and contestation between dissimilar groups and between them or the 'others'. The historical development of the traditional locale, which originated from common descent, regulates this primeval homogeneity. The notion of Mizo identity was thus correlated to landscape symbolized by hills against plains.

Benedict Anderson argues that nations were 'imagined political communities', in which individuals experienced to accept as true that they were attached through cultural and political links to others whom they had never met, even the deceased or not yet born.[525] According to Anderson, these beliefs were disseminated as an offshoot of modern inventions such as the printing press, which helped standardize language and information diffusion across extensive areas. Print-capitalism enhanced the extent of communities, but also defined their boundaries. As information spread, images of both the in-group and the out-group were constructed.[526]

Though the idea of 'primordial' view on 'nation' by rereading MNF's memorandum has been exposed in this writing, traces of 'instrumentalist' view on 'nation' can be distinguished from the events occurring then. The first Secretary General of MNF, Mr. R. Vanlawma circulated *Zalenna* (literally meaning freedom) to propagate the idea of MNF's 'nationalism' through print media. This was a deliberate attempt to revitalize and popularize the ideology endorsed by the MNF. With the intention of augmenting the voice, another pamphlet *Zalenna Thuchah* (literally, message of freedom) was published by the MNF as an organ to disseminate their ideas. Diverse newspapers, tabloids, journals, and periodicals as well intervened in the political scenario of the era.[527] Besides these transmissions of ideas by means of the print media, patriotic songs infused Mizo minds furthermore through the popular poems and songs that became in vogue during the period. Poets and songwriters such as Rokunga, Laltanpuia, Dozinga, Laisiama, Chhawntluanga and the rest composed inspiring poems and songs to support the MNF cause of Mizo nationalism.

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[525] Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, p.6.
[526] Anderson, p.6.
[527] Zamawia, *Zofate Zinkawngah (Zalenna Mei a Mit Tur a Ni Lo)*, p.170.

The common ethnonym popularized by Mizo Union continued to influence MNF's conceptualization of 'Mizo'. They attempted to transform the structural conditions of the society in order to create a space for (their) Mizo nationalism to exist. Unsatisfied with the political status asserted by the Mizo Union, the result was a new movement carried out by the MNF, spawning a situation of 'anomie' that disordered 'Mizo' identity. This resulted in a situation of reinterpreting 'Mizo' identity, maintaining elements that were considered acceptable and eliminating elements considered unacceptable in order to create an independent unified 'Mizo nation'.

The mounting discontent with the government of India was not the main motive behind MNF's secessionist movement. Their ideology was overtly against the Mizo Union's limited demand for separate state within India. The principal objective of the MNF was not merely to establish a sovereign Christian nation-state for the 'Mizos', but to reclaim their original autonomy that they considered was surrendered at the hands of 'others'.

The idea of 'Mizo' was accepted as a given identity, 'primordial' and 'perennial' in nature. The phenotypic trait, cultural practices, religious and political ideas and institutions against which the MNF defined 'Mizo' identity were plains (Indian) '*Vai*'. In order to uphold their constructed 'Mizo' identity from the different 'others', they therefore demanded an autonomous spatial entity, attested by the historical territorialisation of hilly terrains. This conceptualization of 'Mizo-ness' has a lingering epistemic presence in continuation to the contemporary times, defining the ontological existence of 'Mizo'.

The MNF's idea of 'greater Mizoram' has been continued immediately after the attainment of statehood in 1987 as some individuals believed the accord with the Government of India as a failure. As a result, Zo Reunification Organisation (ZORO) was formed in 1988. The ZORO takes into account the validity of the Chin-Lushai Conference held at Fort William, Calcutta on 29 January 1892 and utilised it as the basis of its movement. It stresses that the British divided the geo-political boundary of the Zo people into three nation states (viz. India, Myanmar and Bangladesh), which they failed to reunite after having resolved to achieve. Memoranda were sent

to two Prime Ministers of India in 1991 and 1992 stating its claim to reunite the Zo people.[528]

Resolution 2 of the Atlantic Charter has been cited that says "those colonized countries or people should have the right to self-determination", and stressed that the Zo people should get their right to self-determination as per the Charter. The organisation therefore implored the American President Bill Clinton to take initiative as regard the matter in 1994. With the help of UN-based Indigenous Peoples' Organization (IPO), ZORO partakes at international forums under United Nations Working Group of Indigenous Peoples (UNWGIP) and since 2001 the organisation sends representatives to different international forums to discuss their idea of Zo reunification.[529]

There is a unique ethno-religious identity movement among the Mizos that claimed their origin to Israel, thus regarded themselves as descendents of the Jews. Most of the adherents of the claim are from Mizoram and Manipur. The movement has been started since 1951 when Challianchhunga of Buallawn received a vision from God telling him that his people must return to Israel, the Promised Land.[530]

Tracing back their history from Israel and confirming their final settlement in their present territory, the Mizo-Jews claimed the similarity of many of their cultural traits with that of the Israelites. In the course of their research, they met Rabbi Eliyahu Avichail, the person who founded Amishav (My People Returns) in 1975 for the dispersed Israelites. Ever since his knowledge about the people, Avichail visited northeast India frequently to prove the claims made by the adherents of Judaism. With his help, intense research and historical documentation were carried out. Rabbi Eliyahu Avichail named them 'Bnei Menashe' because he was convinced that the legendary Mizo ancestor Manmasi to be Manasseh, son of Joseph.[531] With the

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[528] Lal Dena, 'Impact of The Bombing of Aizawl and ZORO Movement', [website], www.inpui.com, (accessed 2 October 2018).
[529] Dena, 'Impact of The Bombing of Aizawl and ZORO Movement'.
[530] Stephen Epstein, 'A Long-Lost Tribe is Ready to Come Home', [website], www.bneimenashe.com/history.html, (accessed 2 October 2018).
[531] 'The long journey home', [website], https://shavei.org/the-long-journey-home/, (accessed 2 October 2018).

assistance given by Amishav, adherents of the Bnei Menashe have started making their *aliyah*[532] to Israel since the early decade of 1980.

Another agency, the Shavei Israel, founded by Michael Freund in 2002 rendered its support of *aliyah* by descendants of the lost tribes. The organization provided Jewish education for the Bnei Menashe in Aizawl, Mizoram and Imphal, Manipur. The Shavei Israel built its first community centre for the Bnei Menashe in Israel in 2005. Subsequently, the agency built several synagogues in India and constructed *mikveh* (ritual bath) in Mizoram and shortly in Manipur. They have been the sole agency after the Amishav that rendered assistance to the Bnei Menashe in making *aliyah* to Israel.[533]

The interpretation of Mizo historical discourse against the conventional discourse of tracing Mizo ancestry back to Israeli ethnic roots is the main factor on the rise of Mizo-Israel identity. The syncretism of Christianity and Judaism amongst certain groups engendered a millenarian leaning waiting for the messianic era to come. The Judeo-Christian Bible's reiteration of Jews as 'the chosen nation' inculcated a feeling of reverence of the Jews and are envious of their prominence in the end day's prophecy mentioned in biblical narrative. This feeling generated a deeper search of identity spawning a situation that disordered one's identity. This resulted in the re-interpretation of the unsecured Mizo/Kuki identity substituted by the identity that they envy—the Jewish. Though the political and economic conditions of the Bnei Menashe could be another factor for them leaving Mizoram and Manipur towards a more advanced nation-state, the materialistic inclination is eclipsed by their desire to fit into the biblical Israel identity.

Another noteworthy identity movement is led by the Luz Israel Organisation (LIO), previously called Chhinlung Israel People's Convention (CIPC).[534] The idea of the

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[532] *Aliyah* is the migration of the diasporic Jews back to Israel. 'What is Aliyah?', [website], www.nbn.org.il/what-is-aliyah/., (accessed 2 October 2018).

[533] 'Bnei Menashe', [website], https://shavei.org/communities/bnei-menashe/, (accessed 2 October 2018).

[534] On 5 April 2012, the General Meeting unitedly resolved the change of Chhinlung Israel People Convention (CIPC) by Luz Israel Organization. The reason according them was "because the CIPC is only based on Convention. At the same time, the aims and objectives is known to the world that the Mizos are the descendants of Manasseh and Ephraim. So previously Chhinlung was not known to the

LIO is not novel. It adeptly blends the assertions put forward by ZORO and advocates of Mizo-Israel identity.

Similar to ZORO, LIO charged the British colonialism in dividing Mizo nation under three nation-states as a result of the Chin-Lushai Conference of 1892 and sincerely upheld the UNO Declaration of Human Rights as their privilege.[535] By stating the Atlantic Charter that states that "no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned", LIO expressed its idea of reunification appealing to the UNO through a memorandum on 10 February 1998.[536] In the same manner as the Bnei Menashe, the LIO affirms the ancestry of Mizos to Israel by claiming their roots to biblical Manashe and Ephraim.[537]

The LIO, like the Bnei Menashe traced the ancestry of Mizo to Jewish identity but differed from them in that they made no attempt to migrate to Israel. In order to reinforce the identity of its members and sustain their continued existence, it adopted the politics of ZORO aiming to unify the Mizo ethnic groups in their present land seeking greater geo-political boundary with self-government.

Group identity of Mizos can be classified under the strand of *ethnonationalism* or *ethno-religious nationalism* as against *civic nationalism* since genophilia or elements of common ancestry, shared culture and language have been endorsed. Consequently, constitutional patriotism, shared citizenship under one political entity and shared institution under the monolithic Indian nationalism could not be yet totally internalised. This can however be briefly examined more critically.

Mizo nation or nationalism has its origin within India that too faces national unity or consolidation of nation following the withdrawal of the British Raj. This problem of national integration or the integration of Indian people as a political community has

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world, but Luz Israel was known to the British Government as well as India and other nations. The word Mizo is known to other parts of the world after 1950s." See, C. Vanlalawmpuia, 'Chhinlung Israel People Convention into Luz Israel Organisation', [website], https://sites.google.com/site/cipchqtrsaizawl, (accessed 2 October 2018).

[535] 'Identity Referandum of CIPC'.

[536] 'CIPC Memorandum to the United Nations'.

[537] 'Identity Referendum of CIPC'.

been one of the biggest challenges that India experienced since 1947.[538] In order to expound the idea of Indian nationhood, broad simplication is made in this work by sorting out two views that differently aim to build the idea of 'India' or Indian nationhood.

From the time of India's struggle against the Britsh rule, Mahatma Gandhi endeavoured to bring communal harmony through non-violence that wanted Indians to be tolerant of each other.[539] In the same way, Jawahar Lal Nehru stated the need to see India's diversity and the prudence to avoid strong regiment of India into a single pattern.[540] Nehru considered India's emotional or psychological integration as more essential than its economic development.[541] This has become the traditional view of Indian nation that transcends cultural or religious difference.

Against this view, VD Savarkar expounded his idea of 'Hindutva' or Hindu nationalism as cultural nationalism.[542] National identity formation based on Hindu culture and homogenisation of people who regarded India as their holy land as a political community was central to his idea.[543] Savarkar's idea of Hindutva was adapted by KV Hedgewar by establishing Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in 1925 with a more objective focus. The scheme endorsed by the RSS is to protect the interest of Hindus through a strong institutionalised organisation. [544] As direct political participation is circumvented, it mainly functions as a cultural organisation to mobilise the Hindus to bring unity and coherence for protecting their interests.[545]

From the discussion, we can observe that both Gandhian and Nehruvian views on India is a multicultural or multinational state where 'unity in diversity' is the essence. In contrast, the ideology of 'Hindutva' is fundamentally Hindu nationalism that seeks

[538] Bipan Chandra, Mridula Mukherjee and Aditya Mukherjee, *India Since Independence*, Gurgaon, Pengin Books, 2008, p.107.
[539] Pavan K. Varma, *Being Indian*, Gurgaon, Penguin Books, 2004, pp.2-3.
[540] Chandra, Mukherjee and Mukherjee, *India Since Independence*, p.108.
[541] Chandra, Mukherjee and Mukherjee, p.107.
[542] VD Savarkar, *Essentials of Hindutva*, [website], http://savarkar.org, (accessed 18 January 2020).
[543] Savarkar, *Essentials of Hindutva*, [website].
[544] 'Vision and Mission of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh', [website], http://rss.org, (accessed 18 January 2020).
[545] 'Vision and Mission of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh', [website].

to build a 'nation-state' based on western model with homogenisation as the central philosophy. The fundamental nature of India as a country thus becomes contentious.

Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan introduced the concept of 'state nation' as opposed to 'nation-state' who argued that 'nation-state' entailed cultural homogeneity within a particular territory, a strong sense of shared history and the aspiration to build such 'nation-state' without challenging inclusive democracy.[546] While 18th century France, 19th century nation-states built out of consolidated states, contemporary Sweden, the Netherlands, Japan, Portugal, Germany and Australia are close to successful nation-states, they argued that attempt made by using state policies in the 20th century encountered difficulties and often entailed violence and oppression.[547]

In this connection, Yogendra Yadav epitomized India as a 'state nation' built upon the ideas of Tagore, Gandhi and Nehru that acclaimed 'unity in diversity' as India is a multinational or multicultural state.[548] He argued that assymetrical federalism of Indian constitutional value accepts more than one cultural identity of various regional states, and that such 'state nation' does not believe cultural and political boundaries are necessarily to be coincided.[549] He accentuated that 'nation-state' is a European model that does not correspond to the multinational composition of India, since the project of building an Indian nation-state will turn out to be harmful for the deep social and cultural diversities.[550]

As a consequence of the multinational and multicultural character of India, there is a space for the upkeep of Mizo nationalism under the canopy of Indian nationalism. Thus, Mizos have maintained their distinct identity within the state-nation of India by emanating a different and distinct enthnocultural character, which is often expressed against the project of Indian nationalism.

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[546] Juan J. Linz, Alfred Stepan and Yogendra Yadav, "'Nation State' or 'State Nation'?: Conceptual Reflections and Some Spanish, Belgian and Indian Data", Human Development Report Office, United Nations Development Programme, Background paper for HDR 2004, pp.2-3.
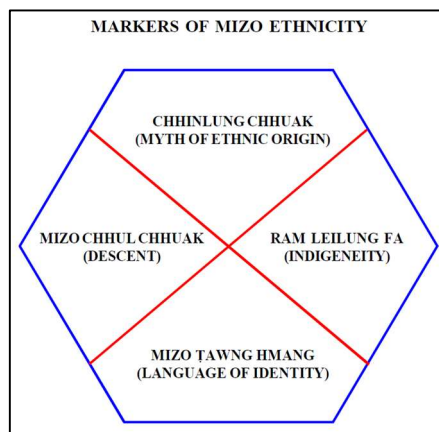[547] Linz, Stepan and Yadav, "'Nation State' or 'State Nation'?: Conceptual Reflections and Some Spanish, Belgian and Indian Data", pp.2-3.
[548] Yogendra Yadav, 'India is a State-Nation, not a Nation-State', [website], www.forbesindia.com, (accessed 19 January 2020).
[549] Yadav, 'India is a State-Nation, not a Nation-State'.
[550] Yadav.

'Mizo' in line with the ethno-symbolist school of thought, is a constructed concept grounding its foundation on collective past memory and myth. This, however, is not the sole basis of 'Mizo' identity. Besides linguistic and cultural connections, ethnic identity markers of Mizo entail other important markers such as '*Chhinlung chhuak*', '*Mizo chhul chhuak*' and '*ram leilung fa*', which often appear as in the case against the Chakmas and Brus as 'otherness' recently shifted to the Chakmas and Brus. These days, Chakmas and Brus fill the vacuum of post-statehood 'otherness' and it is not surprising that 'being Mizo' signifies defending the identity given by Chakma and Brus–others.

MARKERS OF MIZO ETHNICITY

CHHINLUNG CHHUAK
(MYTH OF ETHNIC ORIGIN)

MIZO CHHUL CHHUAK
(DESCENT)

RAM LEILUNG FA
(INDIGENEITY)

MIZO TAWNG HMANG
(LANGUAGE OF IDENTITY)

'*Chhinlung chhuak*' simply means 'people coming out from *Chhinlung.*' All of the ethnic groups within 'Mizo' regarded *Chhinlung* or its equivalent names as their origin. The established imagination for the Mizos believes *Chhinlung* to be a hole in the ground, covered with a stone. It was believed that all the tribes of the Mizos emerged from this hole. This myth of origin has been one of the strongest points in defining the sense of 'Mizo-ness' and marginalizing the 'others'. '*Mizo chhul chhuak*' is another identity marker as claimed by the Mizos. Here, tracing and proving one's parents and ancestors within the lineage of Mizo ethnic groups is required. Asserting the ownership and belongingness to a particular territory raised '*ram leilung fa*' as another marker. This underlines 'indigeneity', and ethnic groups with distinct cultural and linguistic traits entering Mizo inhabited areas after colonialism are rejected their assertion as 'being Mizo'. Accordingly, it can be pronounced that 'Mizo-ness' is reinforced using these historical traits.

CHAPTER FIVE

EMERGENCE OF WRITINGS IN MIZO: THE DEVELOPMENT OF FICTIONAL NARRATIVES

This work focuses on Mizo language literature rather than the literature of Mizoram, and it includes writers as well as literature in Mizo from outside the political territory. It does not take account of literature written in the other languages of Mizoram or works written in English by Mizos.

The Mizo language has developed over the course of more than 100 years since its reduction to written form. As mentioned in the previous chapter, 'Mizo' as a language is dominated by the syntactical structure and lexis of Dulian language. Duhlian language was the first language to be codified among the different languages and dialects as the Sailo chiefs secured the normative use of it. With Lusei emerging as a dominant culture, the development of Mizo identity goes in tandem with the establishment of Lusei language as the common and official language and is popularly labelled as Mizo language. The vocabularies of Lusei language is supplemented by the languages of Lai, Hmar, Paite, Ralte and other languages. In particular, ceremonial chants were sung in Hmar and warrior's songs were recited in Pawi languages respectively.

Modern Mizo language began to thrive from the last decade of the nineteenth century with the invention of alphabet and the introduction of printing press in the first decade of the twentieth century. Through the influence of the school education and translated Christian literatures, Mizo language has become the established *lingua franca* and an ethnic marker for Mizo people.

As colonial authority dominated Mizo society until the attainment of independence from the British Raj in 1947, few elites dominated not only the administration, but ideas and writings too. The relationship of colonial administration *vis-a-vis* Christian missionaries was tremendous. The early written works were predominantly Christian in subject where colonial supremacy outweighed the theme. The early Mizo writers worked under the shadow of the colonialists who controlled the 'power'

relationship—the manifestation of which had a remarkable impact on literature. The Mizos were the 'others' and their identity was subjugated and interpreted by the esteemed *Sap*. *Lack of covert self-esteem* was imposed upon them individually, which manifested in form of 'cultural cringe' in the whole psycho-cultural system.

This was exactly how Mizo literature by native writers began to initiate. JF Laldailova stated that the minor citizens received the Christian missionaries. Conversely, with the introduction of Christian teachings and education, they steadily inculcated in the mind of the Mizos, a sense of whites' superiority whereby the whites were revered in return. Besides, he maintained that the whites were ambitious in suppressing Mizo culture and everything Mizo to uphold their superiority.[551]

The Christian missionaries commenced the initiative of 'literating' the Mizos since it was necessary for propagating their faith. Resistance and negative response hampered their escalation since the 'natives' still adhered to their tradition, culture and identity. It was for this reason that the ethnicity and culture of the Mizos received an attempt for alteration together with political command. Consequently, the colonialists began suppressing the very foundation of Mizo culture thereby imposing whites' superiority, eliminating the tribal ethos for generation that followed.

5.1 Transition from orality to literacy

Human society earliest existence was preserved by word of mouth, began practicing writing late in its history, and at first only in some small groups. Although *Homo sapiens* have been in continuation for between 30,000 and 50,000 years, the earliest script dates from only 6000 years ago.[552] Diachronic study of 'orality' and 'literacy' makes understandable not only oral culture and succeeding writing culture, but the print culture that brings writing to a new plane as well.[553]

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[551] JF Laldailova, *Bible Thlirna*, Aizawl, R. Lalrawna, 2012 (Reprint), pp. 4-5.
[552] Walter J.Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, London, Routledge, 2002, p.2.
[553] Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, p.2.

According to the definition given by the *Oxford English Dictionary* 'orality' is "the quality of being verbally communicated" or is a "preference for or tendency to use spoken forms of language."[554]

The first definition describes 'orality' as a medium or is a means through which human beings communicate. On the other hand, the second definition practically problematised the way the term 'orality' is used, both in media studies and in the everyday world: as existing in competition with other media forms. Relating 'orality' as a *preference* or *tendency*, reassures its position within the paradigm of the printed and spoken word, and advocates a single-sensory conception of media. It points that orality is in a dialectical relationship with literacy, and that the eye and the ear competes as a medium of communication.[555]

Harold Innis, Eric Havelock, Marshall McLuhan and Walter Ong of the Toronto School of Communication most prominently advocated this comparative mode of communication. For the School, (alphabetic) writing is crucial for evolutionary progress. And that literacy is "absolutely necessary for the development not only of science but also of history, philosophy, explicative understanding of literature and of any art, and indeed for the explanation of language itself."[556] Contrariwise, 'orality' is the indicator of 'tribal man'.[557]

Mizo society before the advent of the British was what Walter Ong called 'primary orality'.[558] All form of knowledge was received, preserved and transmitted orally from one generation to another succeeding generation. It was transmitted verbally through speech or song including folktales, folksongs and folklores in prose or

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[554] 'Orality', in *The Oxford English Dictionary*, [wesite], https://en.oxforddictionaries.com, (accessed 18 May 2017).

[555] Courtney MacNeil Winter, 'Orality', [website], http://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/orality.htm, (accessed 18 May 2017).

[556] Ong, p.15.

[557] Marshall McLuhan, 'The Playboy Interview', [website], https://www.nextnature.net/2009/12/the-playboy-interview-marshall-mcluhan, (accessed 21 May 2017).

[558] Ong defined and differentiated between 'primary orality' and 'secondary orality' noticeably in his seminal work: "I style the orality of a culture totally untouched by any knowledge of writing or print, 'primary orality.' It is 'primary' by contrast with the 'secondary orality' of present-day high-technology culture, in which a new orality is sustained by telephone, radio, television, and other electronic devices that depend for their existence and functioning on writing and print." See Ong, p.11.

verses. Knowledge was transmitted across generations without a writing system in this manner.

The introduction of writing by the colonialists transformed the essence of Mizo culture to a new form of existence. The process of transmitting ideas, values and practices was disturbed that had held together the culture's identity since long. Collective memories were replaced with colonial documents and writings that invaded the epistemic space.

Colonial discourse presented Mizo as a society and culture without history that needed a new narration, thus reproducing historical and cultural discourse obscuring the traditional oral narrative. However, the transition of Mizo culture from orality to literacy had made possible the Mizos in relating discourse that brought to light a new methodical narrative.

5.1.1 Reducing Mizo language

As far as reducing Mizo language into written form is concerned, TH Lewin was the person to make the first move. In his *Progressive Colloquial Exercises in the Lushai Dialect*, he thus stated:-

> "The 'Dzo' language has hitherto existed only in the form of speech;
> it has never been reduced to writing…. In reducing this language to
> writing, I have, as far as possible, followed the transliteration system
> of Sir Wm. Jones as adopted by the Indian Government."[559]

Lewin carefully studied the vowel and consonant sounds with the language structure or syntax but he confessed, "I have not attempted (nor, indeed, have I the ability) to construct a grammar of the language…"[560] However, he had provided ninety exercises of Mizo sentences into English and purposely adopted a free mode of

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[559] Lewin, *Progressive Colloquial Exercises of the Lushai Dialect of the 'Dzo' or Kuki Language, with Vocabularies and Popular Tales (Notated)*, p.3.
[560] Lewin, *Progressive Colloquial Exercises of the Lushai Dialect of the 'Dzo' or Kuki Language, with Vocabularies and Popular Tales (Notated)*, p.3.

translation in Jonesian or Hunterian system of transliteration. [561] Three Mizo folktales, viz. Chemtatrawta, Lalruanga and Kungawrhi were noted down in Mizo. Here, he gave vocabulary footnotes explanation with detail commentary, information and critical analysis at the end of each story, employing both local and western comprehension. Vocabularies of all the words used in both the exercises and stories were appended at the end of the book comprising 1256 English-Mizo and 1105 Mizo-English lexicons. Numeric value from one to nine was as well listed.

Before the publication of *Progressive Colloquial Exercises in the Lushai Dialect,* Lewin had already put *The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers Therein* to print in 1869. The book was one of the first pieces writing an account of Mizo in detail. Almost 186 vocabularies of Mizo was appended in the book containing numerical value from one to hundred. [562]

A decade had passed after Lewin, Assistant Surgeon in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Brojo Nath Shaha brought out *A Grammar of Lushai Language* in 1884.[563] Shaha articulated that:-

> "Close and frequent communications with the Zau people, coupled with a patient enquiry as to the roots, orthography, derivation, and pronunciation of the words the comparative and differential construction of sentences, and lastly the analogy of the language and its construction with respect to certain other languages, led me eventually to shape the work as it stands."[564]

Shaha mentioned that his own knowledge on European and Indian languages and the ground-breaking work made by Lewin encouraged him to carry out further

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[561] Lewin, *Progressive Colloquial Exercises of the Lushai Dialect of the 'Dzo' or Kuki Language, with Vocabularies and Popular Tales (Notated)*, p.4
[562] Lewin, *The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers Therein with Comparative Vocubalry of the Hill Dialects*, pp.210-18.
[563] Brojo Nath Shaha, *A Grammar of Lushai Language to which are appended A Few Illustrations of the Zau on Lushai Popular Songs and Translations from Æesop's Fable,* Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, 1884.
[564] Shaha, *A Grammar of Lushai Language to which are appended A Few Illustrations of the Zau on Lushai Popular Songs and Translations from Æesop's Fable,* p.iii.

researches in the language.[565] The whole book is divided into three parts that are further sub-divided into several sub-sections. Part I deals with orthography, part II with etymology, and syntax is dealt with in part III. Three appendices are affixed encompassing *Zai* (Lushai Popular Songs)*, Vai Than Thu* (Foreign Fables) and *Thu-Sha* (A dialougue). Shaha attempted in classifying the different genres of *zai*, which was the first known effort. He recounted eight fables of Aesop in Mizo language namely *Mihring le Khuavang milem, Naopang le aru, Chouak leh kar bel, Nula le sakei, Tar-pa le mi-sual fa-te, Mihring le nopui pahnit, Zang le fa-pa-te*, and *Sebang le kel*. The ending segment of the book contains a dialogue between two friends in Mizo with parallel translations in English.

CA Soppit was also among the first persons to work relating to Mizo language in his book *A Short Account of the Kuki-Lushai Tribes* in 1885.[566] The book is divided into two parts wherein anthropological and ethnographic reports are dealt with in the first part. Soppit called himself a 'compiler' in part two where he made an attempt in demonstrating 'Rangkhol-Kuki-Lushai Grammar' principally centering on Rangkhol dialect, in which he believed that he was well acquainted with.[567] Sixty four Mizo vocabularies were listed with Arabic/Hindu numerals from one to ten in Mizo. Fourteen Mizo sentences translated into English was written down as well.

In the *Handbook of the Lushai Country* published in 1889, OA Chambers reported 171 English vocabularies in parallel with Mizo and Shendu language. Here, numeric value greater than ten had been put down, viz. eleven, twelve, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty and hundred.[568]

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[565] Shaha, p.iii.

[566] Soppit, *A Short Account of the Kuki-Lushai Tribes on the North-East Frontier (Districts Cachar, Sylhet, Naga Hills, etc. and the North Cachar Hills) with An Outline Grammar of the Rangkhol-Lushai Language and A Comparison of Lushai with other Dialects.* Preface for the first part was written in 1887 and the second part in 1885. Though the year of publication was 1893, the year in which the work was completed is used here to maintain chronology in the early works pertaining to Mizo language.

[567] Soppit, p.28.

[568] Chambers, *Handbook of the Lushai*, pp.126-29.

5.1.2 The invention of Mizo alphabet

Even though attempts were already made in reducing Mizo into written script, JH Lorrain and FW Savidge's contribution stood paramount. It is undeniable that they first learnt basic Mizo language from pre existing sources before they entered the Lushai Hills. Lorrain in his letter to Lewin on 25 April 1899 wrote that they had come across *The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers Therein* by Lewin while they stayed in Chittagong and *Progressive Colloquial Exercises* in Cachar. He further cited that while in Silchar, Brojo Nath Shaha's *A Grammar of Lushai Language* gave some help too. [569] JM Llyod recorded that:-

> "It was fortunate that one of the first achievements of Lorrain and Savidge was to invent an alphabet which was highly suitable. No doubt they had been working on this even during the time when they were waiting for permission to enter Mizoram (1893). At all events they seem to have been testing the alphabet to see how suitable it was before the end of 1894."[570]

This explains that before their arrival in the Lushai Hills, Lorrain and Savidge had already prepared Mizo alphabet from the works containing Mizo language that they had 'learnt by heart' while staying in Silchar. Lorrain's letter to Rev. GO Newport on 19 August 1893 expressed that they (Lorrain and Savidge) "know sufficient of the language to make ourselves understood, but it may be sometime ere we can tell out the Gospel story."[571] It is thus, reasonable to accept that Lorrain and Savidge arrived in the Hills with Mizo alphabet invented beforehand.

Lorrain stated:-

> "When we first came into contact with the Lushais at Kassalong in
> the Chittagong Hill Tracts in 1892, and settled amongst them at Fort

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[569] See TH Lewin, *A Fly on the Wheel or How I Helped to Govern India*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2005 (Reprinted), p.316.

[570] JM Llyod, *History of the Church in Mizoram (Harvest in the Hills)*, Aizawl, Synod Publication Board, 1991, pp.262-63.

[571] *The Harvest Field, A Missionary Magazine*, July 1893 – December 1894, Madras, Methodist Episcopal Publishing House, 1895, p.241 cited in Lahruaitluanga Ralte, *Zoram Vartian: Chanchintha leh Thuziak khaw var tan dan*, Aizwl, Fineprints, 2008, p.209.

Aijal in January, 1894, the tribe had no written language. Years before—in 1874—Lt. Col. (then Capt.) Thomas Herbert Lewin, Deputy Commissioner of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, had published his 'Progressive Colloquial Exercises in the Lushai Dialect', and in 1884 Assistant Surgeon Brojo Nath Shaha, Civil Medical Officer of the same district, had published his 'Grammar of the Lushai Language', both of which were found extremely useful in our earliest efforts to learn words and phrases. Neither of these works, however, pretended to suggest a mode of literation which could be taught to the Lushais."[572]

However, this does not discredit them to be the first persons to introduce systematic writing techniques for the Mizos. Lorrain and Savidge after months of sincere study of the available works were able to construct Mizo alphabet in an organized structure. Lorrain further stated:-

"It therefore fell to our lot to reduce the language to writing in such a way that our system could be readily adopted by the people themselves. For this purpose we chose the simple Roman script, with a phonetic form of spelling based on the well-known Hunterian system…."[573]

DE Jones and Edwin Rowlands continued the work of Lorrain and Savidge in the North Lushai Hills and taught many Mizos to read and write. They shortly found out some problems in the existing alphabet and made a slight alteration. When Lorrain and Savidge were transferred to South Lushai Hills, a conference was held with the Welsh missionaries in the North as regards the matter. Lorrain and Savidge were able to see the necessity of making an alteration of the original system and agreed the proposal.[574] By 1910, Mizo alphabet was firmed up, which remains the same to the contemporary times.

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[572] Lorrain, p.(v).
[573] Lorrain, p.(v).
[574] Lorrain, p.(viii).

5.1.3 The first written works

Shortly after the invention of Mizo alphabet, the first book was produced and came into print on 22 October, 1895.[575] *Mi-zo Zir-tir Bu* (*A Lushai Primer)* in Mizo language was published by the Assam Government for basic learning of Mizo language. This was followed soon by the translations of three books from the *New Testament Bible* viz. St. Luke's Gospel, St. John's and the Act of the Apostles published by British and Foreign Bible Society, London.[576] The first two books were published in 1898 and the third book subsequently in 1899.[577]

Another book that opened up for the emergence of Mizo language and literature was *Grammar and Dictionary of the Lushai Language* prepared by Lorrain and Savidge. In the preface of his *Dictionary of the Lushai Language* Lorrain stated:-

> "In 1898—four years after our settling in the North Lushai Hills—we
> had our 'Grammar and Dictionary of the Lushai Language (long since
> out of print) published by the Assam Government. I was personally
> responsible for the dictionary section of that work, and it therefore
> forms the nucleus around which this new Dictionary of mine has
> grown to its present proportions."[578]

The book was published outside the Lushai Hills since by then there was no printing machine inside the Hills. It was divided into four parts, wherein part one dealt with grammar and syntactic description of Mizo; part two contained sentence transliteration from English to Mizo consisting of daily conversations; part three

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[575] Llyod, *History of the Church in Mizoram (Harvest in the Hills)*, p.29. Also see Lalthangliana, *Mizo Literature (Mizo Thu leh Hla)*, p.97.
[576] See Lalthangliana, *Mizo Literature (Mizo Thu leh Hla)*, pp.107-08. Also see Morris, *The Story of Our Foreign Mission (Presbyterian Church of Wales)*, p.81. The latter manuscripts were handed over to the office of the Bible Society in Calcutta as Lorrain and Savidge headed for United Kingdom at the beginning of 1898. However, the manuscripts were returned to Aizawl after some month's delay regretting that the manuscripts could not be published in Calcutta. D.E. Jones, who received them in Aizawl sent them on to London where they were eventually published. Lloyd, p.30.
[577] Lalthangliana, *Mizo Literature (Mizo Thu leh Hla)*, pp.108.
[578] Lorrain, p.(v).

comprised the core focus dealing Mizo to English lexicons and part four included English to Mizo lexicons.[579]

Meanwhile, Lorrain in his letter to Lewin on 25 April 1899 mentioned that the first newspaper in Mizo called *Mizo Chanchin Laishuih (The Highlander's News)*, written by a Mizo was circulated by the Government of Assam.[580] It delivered the news of different villages, and conveyed the orders of Government to various chiefs.[581] It was hand written and only two issues have been retrieved that were published on 24 August 1898 (*Laishuih No.2*) and 16 January 1899. The first day of circulation, interval of issuing, number of copies and the writers are still unknown.[582] This was shortly followed by *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu*, a monthly journal published by J. Shakespear in 1902, which was printed at Dina Nath Press, Sylhet.

Mi-zo Zir Tir Bu (A Lushai Primer) was reproduced in 1901 followed by *Zirtan Bu* in 1915 prepared by DE Jones. The two books were incorporated in the school curriculum where *Zirtan Bu* was used by beginners followed by the more advance *Zir Tir Bu*. A book on Arithmetic called *Chhiarkawpna Bu II* was produced in 1903 followed by *Chhiarkawpna Bu III* in 1906, which were compiled into one book in 1925. The year 1907 saw the publication of two books, *India Chanchin* and *English First Reader (Zo Tawng Le-Lin-Na)*, the latter prepared by Edwin Rowlands. Rowlands brought out another book known as *Bu-lai II* in 1909 for middle school students.[583] *Thu-Ro-Bu (The Treasury, An Advanced Reader for Lushai Schools etc.)* prepared by DE Jones and Edwin Rowlands was another book put in print in 1914.[584]

5.2 Apparatus for literacy: The pioneering schools

It can be pronounced that the process of colonization entails one nation taking control of, or subjugating another territory through aggressive means. As a by-

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[579] Lalthangliana, *Mizo Literature (Mizo Thu leh Hla)*, pp.120-22. Lorrain continued to add to this work and when the publication of a complete dictionary containing around 33,000 words was materialized, it was published by the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Kolkata in 1940—the year of Lorrain's death.
[580] Lewin, *A Fly on the Wheel*, p.317.
[581] Lewin, *A Fly on the Wheel*, p.317.
[582] Lalthangliana, *Mizo Literature (Mizo Thu leh Hla)*, pp.120-22.
[583] Lalthangliana, *Mizo Literature (Mizo Thu leh Hla)*, p.105.
[584] Lalthangliana, *Mizo Literature (Mizo Thu leh Hla)*, pp.98-104.

product of colonialism, the colonial power employed its own form of knowledge or epistemology through education within their colonies. What lies behind colonial education was the idea of cultural assimilation. Cultural assimilation involves the exploitation of ideological space with a new form of cultural ideology. The colonized subjects were persuaded to conform to the norms and cultures of the colonizers.

Controlling of the minds was implemented through a central intellectual agency or the 'Ideological State Apparatus' discussed about by Louis Althusser.[585] Indigenous learning system was disregarded or labelled 'uncivilized' in order to drag the colonized subjects toward the system of the colonizers. Schools served as institutions that manufactured ideology of white supremacy.

Curricula were prepared to support colonial administration and restricted the indigenous learners to the position of pawn in the colonial game. Given that communicating in vernacular language implied cultural appropriateness and since colonial relationship necessitated a space for knowledge production, the establishment of schools was an obligation for the colonialists.

5.2.1 Secular Government Schools

One of the first institutions initiated by the colonial government after they consolidated their stay in the Lushai Hills was the school. The first school in Lushai Hills was established at the village of Lalluaua in 1890, but was defunct shortly.[586] One of Lalluauva's villages, Bualpui is believed to be the place where the first school was instituted since there is evidence of a site holding remnants of an old school.[587] Chief Lalluauva used to receive and assist British troops at Tlabung during the course of the Second Lushai Hills Expedition. In return for his cordial cooperation,

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[585] Althusser reiterated that Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) is not to be confused with 'Repressive State Apparatus' (RSA). He stated that while there is one RSA, there is plurality of ISA. While RSA is unified and entirely belongs to public domain, large part of the ISA is of private domain. Churches, Parties, Trade Unions, families, some schools, most newspapers, cultural ventures, etc, are private. For further detail, see Loius Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards Investigation)', [website], https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm. (accessed 11 May 2017).

[586] Lalhmuaka, *Zoram Zirna Lam Chhinchhiahna (The Records of Zoram Education)*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1981, p.1.

[587] Lalhruaitluanga Ralte, 'Mizorama Sikul Hmasa Pathumte', in *MZP Chanchinbu, Vol.23, No.50, June 2016*, Aizawl, MZP General Headquarters, p.14.

the British provided him a medical doctor, established school at his village and exempted his people from impressed labour.[588] It was instructed in Bengali and the script was known as *hawrawp*. The first person to learn the *hawrawp* reiterated the word so much so that his son was nicknamed as Hawrawpa.[589] The school was run by a Bengali teacher, Nobin Chandra who was employed when the school was relocated to Lunglei in 1894. He was again engaged by JH Lorrain and FW Savidge when they initiated Baptist mission school at Serkawn in 1903.[590] As stated previously, the school was shut down after a short time due to diffident reception from the part of the people.

The second school instituted was in one of the locality of Aizawl at Dawrpui in November of 1893.[591] The school was set up principally for the purpose of educating the children of defence forces serving the British Raj. The medium of instruction was Hindi and students enrolled in the initial years were chiefly non Mizos, which was later attended by Mizo students.[592] When the building of Dawrpui Presbyterian Church was constructed, the school was then relocated to Babu Tlang at Zarkawt in 1973. Primary level education was extended by inserting middle section in 1914 and the school was named Bengali Boys ME School. The school was again renamed as Government Combined Middle School and it has been the oldest school in function since its foundation in 1893.[593] Similarly, two other schools for children of military police were set up at Lunglei and Tlabung in 1894. The schools were funded on contributions made by the militaries along with allocation of Rs. 100 from Chittagong Hill Tracts Primary Education Fund.[594]

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[588] Lalhmuaka, *Zoram Zirna Lam Chhinchhiahna (The Records of Zoram Education)*, p.1.
[589] Hawrawpa recalled that his father used to teach his fellow villagers. An old villager doubted the new knowledge and defied its applicability. They requested to stay him at one point and a boy at another point. After the boy left, the man was requested to convey a verbal message that was penned down on a sheet of paper. The boy was then handed the paper who correctly articulated the message of the man. In the end, the man then believed that alphabets worked effectively in transmitting messages. Lalhmuaka, p.1.
[590] Ralte, 'Mizorama Sikul Hmasa Pathumte', p.14.
[591] C. Lianzuala, *Mizoram School Hmasate*, Aizawl, C. Lallianpuii, 2005, p.25.
[592] Lianzuala, *Mizoram School Hmasate*, p.25.
[593] Ralte, p.15.
[594] Lianzuala, p.25.

On 21 August 1897, following the proposal of A. Porteous, then Political Officer of North Lushai Hills, a school for Mizo students was established under the tutorage of Kalijoy Kavyatirtha.[595] Another school was instituted at Khawngbawk in 1901 and Nobin Chandra Barua was hired to teach. However, from 1904, government schools were entrusted under the administration of the missionaries with the exception of two schools instructed in Bengali at Aizawl and Lunglei respectively for children of Bengali government servants.[596]

Secular government schools were instituted largely to serve the need of the armed forces for schooling their children. The indigenous people, in the initial years, did not fall under the educational policy of the colonial government and efforts were not taken to come within the reach of the Mizos since language was by then a barrier.

5.2.2 Christian Mission Schools

The pioneer mission school, and the first school instructed in Roman script was opened on 2 April 1894 at Mcdonald Hill, Aizawl.[597] The school was set up on the initiative of JH Lorrain and FW Savidge. No more than its status as the first mission school, the significance of the school was but the use of the newly formulated alphabets in Duhlian/Lusei dialect[598] that developed to become the foundation of Mizo literature. The earliest learners of the script were Suaka and Thangphunga, who became the chiefs of Durtlang and Chaltlang respectively, followed by Khamliana and Khuma (Lalliankhuma).[599] Since reducing Mizo into written script was a prerequisite for their proselytizing mission to communicate the Gospel, the school was launched provisionally to establish a more intimate relation with the Mizos. However, the school was closed before long in October 1897 when the two missionaries moved to Mission Veng.[600]

Four months before Lorrain and Savidge left the Lushai Hills on 31 December 1897, DE Jones arrived in the Hills on 31st August. After their departure, he continued the

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[595] Lianzuala, p.25.
[596] Lianzuala, p.26
[597] JH Lorrain, *Log Book*.
[598] Lianzuala, p.10.
[599] Lorrain, *Log Book*.
[600] Ralte, p.17.

educational undertaking without delay by establishing a new school on 15 February 1898 at Mission Veng.[601] A Khasi couple, Mr and Mrs Rai Bahadur assisted DE Jones.[602] Biblical studies were included in the curriculum and English tutorage was introduced later for outstanding students to prevent them from enrolling into secular government schools.[603] Jones was joined in 1898 by Edwin Rowlands, who was assigned to deliberate more on educational mission,[604] and both enthusiastically worked to 'educate' their students.

Between the years from 1899 to 1903, provisional schools were set up in various villages, namely, Chhingchhip, Khawrihnim, Phulpui, Sesawng and Muallungthu and moreover, in certain localities within Aizawl such as Naga Veng, Maubawk and Venghlui. Thanga, Chawnga and Tawka were employed to teach at Khawrihnim, Phulpui and Chhingchhip respectively.[605] Schools exclusively for girls were established at Hriangmual (Mission Veng), Thakthing and Venghlui. Nu-i (Hriangmual), Saii (Thakthing) and Pawngi (Venghlui) were engaged as teachers of the girls' school.[606]

In July 1903 at Khandaih (now called Phullen), permanent school for village was set up for the first time[607] with Hrangsaipuia as the teacher.[608] Along with that, other schools were opened in eight different villages, viz. Khawrihnim (Dohleia), Phulpui (Dorikhuma), Zukbual (Thanghrima and Ngurthangvunga), Maite (Chhunruma), Lungtan (Lalhuta), Biate (Chawnga), Khawreng (Bawiha and Dokhama) and Hmunpui (Tawka).[609] In the same year, the first examination for Lower Primary was conducted where all the thirteen students of mission schools who appeared passed

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[601] DE Jones, *A Missionaries' Autobiography: 1897-1926,* Aizawl, Lengchhawn Press, 1999, p.12.
[602] Lalhmuaka, p.16.
[603] Lianzuala, p.13.
[604] JV Hluna, 'Mizoram Welsh Missionary-te Chanchin', in *Gospel Centenary Series No. 8*, Aizawl, Synod Publication Board, 1993, p.36.
[605] Lianzuala, pp.18-20.
[606] Lianzuala, p.20.
[607] Siama, p.61.
[608] Lianzuala, p.23.
[609] Lianzuala, pp.23-24. Respective teacher of each village is placed within parenthesis.

the examination while only six out of fourteen government school students passed the examination.[610]

In February of 1904, Sir Bampfylde Fuller, then Chief Commissioner of Assam visited Lushai Hills District and had an inspection of both government school and mission school at Aizawl. Recognizing the status of the mission school as more standard than government school, he discussed the merger of the two schools with Major J. Shakespear, then Superintendent of the Lushai Hills District. Henceforth, formal education was carried out by the missionaries supported by the government up till 1952.[611]

5.2.3 Education under the state

From 1895 to 1952, the Christian mission looked after elementary education in Mizoram through Honarary Inspector of Scools. After India's attainment of independence, the management of elementary education was carried out by the District Council. When Mizoram was upgraded to the status of Union Territory in 1972, the Directorate of Education was established to take up the administration and management of elementary education i.e. primary and middle school level education. After the upgrading of Mizoram to statehood, the department was trifurcated into three directorates in 1989, viz. School Education, Higher & Technical Education and Art & Culture. In 2008, the State Council of Educational Research & Training (SCERT) and District Institute of Education & Training (DIET) were amalgamated to become a separate department.[612]

Subsequent to the trifurcation of Education Department in 1989, Department of Higher & Technical Education carried out administration of higher and technical education.[613] The Higher Secondary Schools was started from 1996 when the pre-university class (equivalent to Class XI and XII) was transferred from colleges to

[610] KL Rokhuma, *Mizoram Zirnaa Mission leh Kohhran Rawngbawlna*, Aizawl, The Communication Department, Baptist Church of Mizoram, 2000, p.135.
[611] Hluna, 'Mizoram Welsh Missionary-te Chanchin', p.81.
[612] 'Profile of Directorate of School Education, Govt. of Mizoram', [website], https://schooleducation.mizoram.gov.in/page/profile, (accessed 2 April 2019).
[613] 'Profile of Directorate of Higher and Technical Education', [website], https://dhte.mizoram.gov.in/page/directorate-of-higher-and-technical-education, (accessed 2 April 2019).

schools.[614] The first college was established on 15 August 1958 which was then known as Aijal College. It was a private institute managed by some Mizo elders one of them being Pachhunga, the chief benefactor from whose name Aijal College was changed to Pachhunga Memorial College after his death. The college was provincialised by Assam Government in 1965 and was renamed Pachhunga College in 1977. On 19 April 1979, the North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) adopted and upgraded the college to become a pace-setting institution. With the establishment of the first university in the state in July 2001, the entire management was handed over to the newly established Mizoram University.[615]

5.3 Printing press and the production of Mizo literature

Print, language and literature have been regarded as important space for propagation of dominant ideas and contests over power, and for shaping identities in the modern world. In the colonial period, missionaries and administrators significantly made use of print and press to disseminate their ideas among the colonised. These also turned out to be vital means for imparting, mobilising and consolidating colonial agenda.

Apart from the scriptures, the first books in Mizo were printed in the Government Press at Shillong. Subsequently they were sent to presses in Sylhet, Dhaka, Kolkata, Allahabad and Madras.[616] The new works were sent to various places because sending proofs to and fro from Aizawl took a very long time.[617] However, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) Press and the Christian Literature Society kindly allowed the use of their school textbooks in translation that proved very suitable for Mizo students.[618] School text books and others were sent

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[614] 'Profile of Directorate of School Education, Govt. of Mizoram'.
[615] 'About Pachhunga University College', [website], https://pucollege.edu.in/page/about-the-college, (accessed 2 April 2019).
[616] Lloyd, pp.79-80.
[617] At that time, mail system was slow. Bridle-path from Silchar to Aizawl was used to transfer mail bags at the small *dak* bungalow where runners carried it within three days. The system fundamentally existed for governmental purpose and hardly suited business and commercial purpose. Heavy goods were transported by country-boats as far as Sairang that was uncertain and sank several times. Silchar lies 14 miles away from Aizawl and was connected through ox cart. This was the transport network up to the Second World War. See Lloyd, p.134.
[618] Lloyd, pp.79-80. He mentioned that as literacy grew among the Mizos, the circulation and purchase of books augmented tremendously.

away for about fifteen years since there was no printing press within the borders of Lushai Hills. A press set up in the Hills became a necessity.

DE Jones and Edwin Rowlands' visit to the Khasi Hills with Khuma and Khara in 1899 stayed in Gauhati at the local mission station where the American Baptist Mission stationed for some years. The ownership of a printing press by the mission gave Jones the idea of possessing such machine since he thought it secured the support from the boys who attended the school. However, the project of having a press was expensive and no fund was available to meet the needs. The reason was that the mission budget in Aizawl was then constantly small.[619]

It also seemed that the mission Directors had the idea that Aizawl was not the mission hub of the whole country, but merely a minor station. There were other stations in other hills and on the plains. It was apparent that Aizawl was considered as one among the many stations and the youngest at that. The mission map appropriately demonstrated that stance wherein the Lushai Hills located at the corner[620] and was just a part of the terrain under the colonial sphere of influence.

The production of literature was as well neglected apart from Bible translation in the initial stage. It appeared that those who controlled mission policy solely functioned for religious rationale. Literacy project was carried out to meet the gospel works whereby the classical missionary activities of 'teaching, preaching and healing' were performed to proselytise the colonised.

The first printing machine in Lushai Hills was a small hand-press presented to Dr Peter Fraser in 1908, which was named as the 'Lushai Christian Press'. This was used for the publication of a booklet *Kros Thu* (1910) for the first time in Mizo.[621] The machine was particularly used to print scripture verses on labels fixed on bottles of medicine along with dosage of instruction. The arrival of Fraser's hand-press in

[619] Lloyd, p.134-5.
[620] Lloyd, p.135.
[621] F. Lalsangliana, 'Kum 100 chhunga Presbyterian Communications chanchin tlangpui (1911-2011)', in *Presbyterian Communications (Synod Press & Bookroom)*, Aizawl, Presbyterian Communications, 2011, p. 3.

Aizawl led to the publication of a monthly church magazine called the *Krista Tlangau* in October 1911.[622]

However, when Frazer left the Hills, he took the hand-press with him in 1912. With no machine for printing when Frazer left, DE Jones and his associates faced quandaries in publicising their mission works. Knowing that, Lt Col. GH Loch, Commandant of Military Police, Lushai Hills in June 1914 donated 100 pounds for the purchase of treadle printing operated machine. This machine was dubbed 'Loch Printing Press' in 1915 by the Welsh Mission after the name of the donor.[623] The press operated up till 1973 where the name was changed to Synod Press.[624]

The Baptist Mission of south Lushai Hills was presented a treadle printing press by Mr Sadler, a friend of FJ Raper, which began to operate on 17 February 1938.[625] Before long, a friend of Rev. HW Carter donated a hand operated printing machine. Making use of the two machines, the mission in south Lushai Hills produced several literatures, the contents of which were mostly religious. Until 1961, the press was managed by the missionaries at Serkawn and it was finally entrusted to the Baptist Church of Mizoram.[626]

Missionaries were the first to extensively use printing in Mizoram to spread Christianity. They produced in Mizo and transformed the language to a certain extent. They created an apparatus: dictionaries, grammar, school text books, periodicals and other translated works. In this context, Cohn argued in his essay 'The Command of Language and the Language of Command', the production of these texts began the establishment of discursive formation, defined the epistemic space,

[622] Lalsangliana, 'Kum 100 chhunga Presbyterian Communications chanchin tlangpui (1911-2011)', p. 3. *Krista Tlangau* was renamed as *Kristian Tlangau* afterwards.
[623] C. Lalsangzuala, 'Zorama thu leh hla rawngbawlna Synod Press leh Bookroom hnathawh', in *Presbyterian Communications (Synod Press & Bookroom)*, pp. 44.
[624] Lalsangzuala, 'Zorama thu leh hla rawngbawlna Synod Press leh Bookroom hnathawh', p. 44.
[625] 'Baptist Literature & Printing Department', [website], http://www.mizobaptist.org/baptist-literature-service/, (accessed 23 January 2018).
[626] 'Baptist Literature & Printing Department'.

constructed an (Orientalist) discourse, and had the effect of converting traditional indigenous forms of knowledge into European objects.[627]

Colonial administrators and missionaries compiled vernacular vocabularies and produced the equivalent English word along with translations of texts. However, since the worldview was different, significations and concepts differed that led to conceptual clarification in European ideas. For easy printing and writing, scripts were rationalised and systematised to meet the requirements. The attempt to use the Bengali script ended in failure that was followed by the immediately successful Roman alphabet based on Hunterian system of orthography. The new script was easily adapted for printing and English typewriters were used to produce vernacular texts that proved advantageous.

The growth in literacy and the introduction of printing engendered an emergent middle class. This new class acted as an agent of colonial discourse by articulating western epistemic influenced ideas through periodicals such as *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu* and *Krista Tlangau*. Apart from coloniser-colonised dichotomy, the cultural space brought about by printing created conflicts within Mizo social structure as it became a platform for establishing one's social identity, or a medium to assert one's status and representation, shaping a new identity formation.

Mission print industry was followed by Pastor Thangkunga Press or PT Press, a hand press that was moved from Lunglei to Aizawl by Buchhawna. This was followed by Mizo Press jointly ran by Thangbuaia, Lalthlamuana and R. Thanhlira. Another was Liankhuma Press, a hand press owned by Liankhuma. These were in function in the 1940s.[628] The post-independence witnessed the launching of press for political purpose. In 1950 Zoram Printing Press was started in Aizawl by United Mizo Freedom Organisation (UMFO) that they brought in 1948. This was used to circulate their political agenda. Shortly, J. Buana installed a printing press in 1952 for disseminating UMFO's propaganda in southern Mizoram. Around the same year H.

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[627] Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, New Jersey Princeton University Press, 1996, p.21.

[628] Lalhruaitluanga Ralte, 'History of printing leh Press leh Bookroom-a thu ngaihnawmte', in *Presbyterian Communications (Synod Press & Bookroom)*, p. 185-86.

Khuma Press was set up by Rohmingliana in Aizawl while Ziki Press was ran by Thanthuama.[629] The power of printing was employed for the MNF movement when R. Vanlawma started his own press in 1961 to propagate MNF's ideology through their organ called *Zalenna*.[630]

With the introduction of printing, literary forms developed extensively. One such example was history writing. Orally transmitted historical narrative transformed into new mode that began to trace the origin of Mizo as a 'nation' and its place in world historical timeline transcending the limited geographical space. Along with this, fictional works emerged on the printing scene that continues to develop to the contemporary times.

5.4 History of Mizo Fictional Narratives

Before exploring the emergence of Mizo fictional narratives, a brief discussion on folklore or folk narratives is necessary in order to map out the tradition of narrative in Mizo culture. It is clearly evident that the ancestors of Mizos had the tradition of narrating stories, which were handed down to succeeding generations through verbal communication and communal memory. These folk narratives include myths, legends, folktales, riddles, phrases, etc.

Like in other cultures, Mizo myths or creations myths built up through oral tradition, having multiple versions and are symbolic narratives describing account of the beginning and formation of the earth with all its life forms and other non living components.[631] Mizo oral narratives also contain stories describing extraordinary persons and human actions within human history exhibiting the cultural values and practice that holds a trait of verisimilitude,[632] which can fall under conventional understanding of legend. Majority of Mizo folk narratives are the fictitious or factitious folktales with variant genres. The historicity of these folktales may be

[629] Ralte, 'History of printing leh Press leh Bookroom-a thu ngaihnawmte', pp. 186-87.
[630] Ralte, 'History of printing leh Press leh Bookroom-a thu ngaihnawmte', pp. 187.
[631] Mari Womack, *Symbols and Meaning: A Concise Introduction*, Lanham, AltaMira Press, 2005, p.81.
[632] Robert Georges and Michael Owen, *Folkloristics*, Indiana, Indiana University Press, 1995, p.7.

questionable, but they bear certain traits of verisimilitude and served as imaginary connexion within the community because of the shared cultural discourse.

Refusal of including the oral tradition may seem bias. For that reason, the history of Mizo Literature can be classified starting from oral tradition, which was followed by the use of written alphabets. Even though systematic Mizo alphabet was constructed and produced around May 1894, written Mizo literature can be said to begin since the publication of *Progressive Colloquial Exercises in the Lushai Dialect* by Thomas Herbert Lewin in 1874.[633]

5.4.1 Emergence of fictional narratives

Four decade had passed since the introduction of writings in Mizo to the dawn of the first fictional narratives written by Mizo in 1936. L. Biakliana wrote *Hawilopari* subsequently followed by *Lali* in 1937. In 1938, Kaphleia wrote *Chhingpuii* followed by Lalzuithanga's *Thlahrang* in *a*1940-41 and *Phira leh Ngurthanpari* in 1950.[634] Lalzuithanga penned down several fictional narratives as well; namely, *Char Huai I Hlau Lawm Ni?* (1941), *Aukhawk Lasi* (1950)*, Khawfing Chat* (1950)*, Eng Dan Nge Ni?* (1950) and *Eng nge Pawi?* (1950).[635]Another writer who produced one of the first novels was C. Thuamluaia; who wrote *Engtin awm ta zel ang maw?* in 1945 and two other fictions shortly, viz. *Leitlang Dingdi* (1952-58) and *Sialton Official* (1952-58).[636]

These were the first four writers who had brought fictional narratives into existence in the early period. These Mizo fictions were produced by citizens of Lushai Hills District Council or the present Mizoram state. Another writer, C. Khuma was a resident of Chin Hills of Burma. In 1950, C. Khuma put *Maymyo Sanapui* in writing. His other works include *In In Chu Ka In A Ni, Hmangaih Thiamna, Fahrah Nun, Phu Loh Zun Leng* and *Chhingkhual Lungdi*.[637] Lalsiama, another writer produced

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[633] Khiangte (ed)., *Thuhlaril: Literary Trends & Mizo Literature,* pp. 118-19.
[634] Zoramdinthara, *Mizo Fiction: Emergence and Development*, p.25.
[635] Zoramdinthara, pp.60-65.
[636] Zoramdinthara, pp.79-82.
[637] KC Vannghaka, 'Mizo Thawnthu (Story of Fiction)', in *History of Mizo Literature*, Aizawl, Department of Mizo, Mizoram University, 2013, p.214.

Tlanthangi leh Lianhnuna in 1947 and *Lalruati leh Tlanzara* in 1970 (both unpublished).[638] In the last decade of 1950, KC Lalvunga wrote *Silverthangi* in 1958, followed by *Kraws Bulah Chuan, Hostel Awmtu* in 1959 respectively and *CC Coy No. 27* in 1963.[639]

Around the same period, *Lungtawii leh Parchuailova* (1961) and *Lungngaihna Virthli* (1962) was written by RL Rina of Chin Hills, Burma.[640] In 1964, *Chawngpui, a ti vawl vawl* by Vanlalropuia and *Harlen Irene-i leh James Mellory* by L. Zokhuma were produced. After these was written *Senhripari* by HC Sapthankhuma in 1967.[641]

The growth of fictional narratives lapsed during the heyday of the MNF movement up till the attainment of the status of Union Territory by Mizoram. The period between 1966 and 1972 has been called by some scholars of Mizo literature as a 'dark age' since the production of literature almost ceased. However, this does not mean that there was disjunction between the years mentioned since continuity of literary works in small amount was marked.

5.4.2 Problematising the first novel

Conventional Mizo literary historiographical discourse regarding the status of earlier fictional narratives is opened to question if another paradigm is employed. What has been claimed as the first four novels were published long years after the actual year in which they were written—*Lali* and *Chhingpuii* in 1963, *Thlahrang* in 1977 and *Hawilopari* in 1983.[642] Even though they deserve accrediting for their pioneering position, their significance could not be explored since their consequences could only have ensued after their publications.

The years of writing these works is not argued here. Nevertheless, in order to trace their significance in the history of Mizo fictional narratives, their association with the

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[638] Vannghaka, 'Mizo Thawnthu (Story of Fiction)', p.215.
[639] Lalthangliana, *Mizo Literature (Mizo Thu leh Hla)*, p.319.
[640] Lal Rinawma, 'Mizo Novel Lo Chhuah leh Than Zel Dan', in *Thu leh Hla, January 2012*, Aizawl, Mizo Academy of Letters, p.22.
[641] Vannghaka, p.216.
[642] Lalthangliana, *Mizo Literature (Mizo Thu leh Hla)*, pp. 306-16. Also, see Khiangte (ed)., pp. 154-61.

public through print media and their influence for the development of other later works is doubtful. Pertinent to historical categorization of the works in which they were written, *Hawilopari, Lali, Chhingpuii* and *Thlahrang* can be arranged chronologically in sequence. However, in the field of Mizo fictional narratives and its development, these works had no fundamental significance since their years of publicity were late.

The first Mizo fictional narrative published for general public was *Maymyo Sanapui* by C. Khuma in 1950. As mentioned above, the book was published in Burma, indicating that Mizo fictional narrative was first produced outside Mizoram. Even the two succeeding novels, *Lungtiawii leh Parchuailova* (1961) and *Lungngaihna Virthli* (1962), both written by RL Rina were published in Burma. Using the year of publication as a criterion, these were in fact the first three novels in Mizo. Here, employing the paradigm of novel written in Mizo language that is published, *Hawilopari, Lali* and *Chhingpuii* cannot be incorporated in the list of the first novels. However, if one takes into account the year of writing, the end result conforms to the conventional historiography of Mizo fictional narratives.

Another result can be concluded when it comes to confining one's studies within the boundary of Mizoram in applying the paradigm of books that are published. At this stance, the first published works of fiction in Mizoram are *Lali* and *Chhingpuii* in 1963, followed by *Chawngpui a ti vawl vawl thin* in 1964 by Vanlalropuia and *Senhripar* in 1967 by HC Sapthankhuma.

'Discourse', which connects power-knowledge, has to be dealt with in this regard. It can be said that the one's having power have control of what is known and the way it is known, and the one's having such knowledge has power over those who do not.[643] This conforms to the Foucauldian view of discourse in that a discourse is a means of both producing and organizing meaning in a given context.[644]

Considering the historiographical discourse of Mizo novels, it is an established fact within the discourse that *Hawilopari, Lali* and *Chhingpuii* are the first three Mizo

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[643] 'Discourse', in Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, pp.62-64.
[644] Peter Sedgwick, 'Discourse', in Edgar and Sedgwick (ed.), pp.78-80.

fictional narratives without much argument. One counter discourse against this is seen in the work of Lal Rinawma.[645] Rinawma in his article nullified the works that were not published and put forward another paradigm shifting view in the field of history of Mizo novels.

In what can be called as the dominant discourse, Laltluangliana Khiangte, B. Lalthangliana, Zoramdinthara and other scholars acclaimed the pioneering position of *Hawilopari, Lali* and *Chhingpuii* in the history of Mizo novels. The academic profession and intellectual status of these scholars and the production of knowledge through print media (especially text books) constructed the 'fact' in this discourse. This, however, fall short of a more stringent criterion and this has been the main argument put forward in this work.

5.4.3 The production of fictional narratives after 1972 to 1989

The production of Mizo fictional narratives after 1972 augmented due to two reasons. The first reason being the repression of the MNF movement and the other was the attainment of Union Territory status by Mizoram. The changing political and administrative status of Mizoram resulted to a more autonomous responsibility in administering its own affairs. With this, Social Education Wing under Education Department published several fictional narratives along with other non-fictional works. The growth of fiction production and the revival of literary psyche had finally materialized in granting a prestigious 'Book of the Year' award in 1989 by Mizo Academy of Letters (MAL), established in 1964. Since the introduction of this award, quite a lot of novels have been honoured and this has a significant impact for the growth of Mizo fiction production.

Some of the works published around this period were *Pathian Samsuih* (1970) and *Inneih Hunah Le!* (1973) by VZK (Zokima), *Dam Takin* (1973) and *I Tan A Nih Loh Chuan* (1975) by Lalthankhuma, *Rauthla leng* (1974) and *Khawfing Chahlai* (1975) by R. Zuala, *Kawlkil Bung Huai* (1975) by Darhlira, *Khuarei Ram Zopui* (1977) by Selet Thanga, *Khawnglung Run* (1977) by R. Lalrawna, *Zu Um a Keh Ta* (1978) by

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[645] Rinawma, 'Mizo Novel Lo Chhuah leh Than Zel Dan', pp.19-35.

K. Saibela, *Ma Thanite* by R. Lalchungnunga and *Wayne Cole* by Joe Ngurdawla.[646] The most significant works during this decade were *Thla Hleinga Zan* (1977) by James Dokhuma and two other fictions by Khawlkungi in 1978–*Sangi Rinawmna* and *A Tlai Lutuk Ta*.

The post 1970 witnessed a boom in Mizo fiction production. James Dokhuma had one of most outstanding contributions during this period. His works such as *Thla Hleinga Zan* (1970), *Rinawmin* (1970), *Tumpangchal Nge Saithangpuii* (1981), *Hmangaihna Thuchah* (1982), *Irrawady Lui kamah* (1982), *Goodbye Lushai Brigade* (1983) and *Kimoto Syonora* (1984)[647] provided considerable outcome in the field of Mizo novel production. Khawlkungi was another prominent literary figure who in spite of her few works had produced a significant contribution. Her works, *Zawlpala Thlan Tlangah* (1977), *Sangi Rinawmna* (1978), *A Tlai Lutuk Ta* (1979), *Pasal Duhthlan* (1982)[648] and were renowned in the period.

One remarkable practice during the two decades of 1970 and 1980 was the production of translated works form English in cyclostyle format. Most of the works were fictional 'cowboy' accounts and compilation of love stories (mainly *Mills & Boon*) in series translated by different persons.[649]

During the period from 1980 to 1989, more than sixty fictional narratives were in print.[650] Among the most reputed novel was *Nunna Kawngthuam Puiah* written by Zikpuii Pa in 1989[651] that is regarded by many scholars of Mizo fictions and readers as one of the best Mizo novels of all time. Apart from this, fictions such as *Hmangaihna Tluantling* (1982) by H. Tlangkunga, *Lallianvunga Vanglai* (1983) by H. Thangkhuma, *Zanlai Thlifim* (1984) by SR Thangvela, *Hringnun Vol. I* (1984) by PC Lalbiakthanga, *Bungkhaw Run Thu I* (1985) and *Bungkhaw Run Thu II* (1987) by K. Chhawnthuama, *Rinawmna Rah* (1985) by Vanlalchhuanga, *Bombay In Leng* (1985) by VL Zaikima, *Honey Moon* (1985), *Eternal Bliss* (1987) and *Never Alone*

[646] Vannghaka, p.217. For details, see Zoramdinthara, pp.113, 160-77.
[647] Zoramdinthara, pp.126-31.
[648] Zoramdinthara, pp.140-43.
[649] Vannghaka, p.218.
[650] Vannghaka, p.221.
[651] Lalthangliana, *Mizo Literature (Mizo Thu leh Hla)*, pp.321-22.

(1987) by Lalengmawia who had written nine other fictions, *Mangtha Ka Ti Phal Lo Che* (1986) by K. Laldawngliani, *Bar Thla Eng* (1987) by K. Lalawmpuia, *Ka Thi Pek Che Kha* (1987) by RL Thanmawia, *Tluangtei Te Pafa* and *Pastor Nupui* (1988) by H. Kaphlira and *I Nu Thu Mi Hrilh Kha* (1989) by SR Lalkailuaia were published.[652]

5.4.4 Development from post 1990 to contemporary times

The signing of peace accord between the Indian government and Mizo National Front on 30 June 1986 brought peace in Mizoram and the subsequent attainment of the status of statehood by Mizoram on 20 February 1987 facilitated Mizoram government to promote its own state interests. In consequence of that, literary production in Mizoram enlarged further.

During the mentioned period, one of the most prolific novelists was C. Laizawna who had written twenty three literary pieces. His most noteworthy works were *Hmangaihzuali* (1990) and *Anita* (1998) that were both selected 'Book of the Year' by MAL in 1990 and 1998.[653] James Dokhuma published *Silaimu Ngaihawm* in 1992.[654] Fiction writers in the period between 1990 to 2000 includes persons such as Romawia, Lalzuia Colney, C. Remtluanga, Lalhmingliana Saiawi, Lalhriata, Dr H. Lallungmuana, HP Lalremtluanga, B. Pawlthanga (Zothansangi Pa) and R. Rozika. Among them, *Thangthar Taitesena* (1992) by Romawia, *Ram leh I Tan Chauh* (1995) by Dr H. Lallungmuana and *Chawngmawii leh Hrangchhuana* (2000) by R. Rozika were awarded 'Book of the Year' by MAL.[655] One of the most noted novelists during the period was Lalhmingliana Saiawi who penned several well known novels such as *Lungrang Laiawrha, Lungrang Hmangaihna, Keimah Unionliana, Nukawki* and *Nukawki Fanu*. From 1990 to 2000, around eighty novels were in print for public readership.[656]

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[652] Vannghaka, pp.220-21. Also, see Zoramdinthara, pp.174-77.
[653] Khiangte (ed)., p.179.
[654] Zoramdinthara, p.132.
[655] Vannghaka, p.222.
[656] Vannghaka, p.224.

During the decade of 2001 to 2010, around ninety fictional narratives were produced.[657] Among the several writers, notable novelists were H. Lalngurliana, Lalhriata, C. Lalnunchanga, Lalrammawia Ngente and Samson Thanruma. *Zorinpari* (2004) by H. Lalngurliana, *Damlai Thlipui* (2005) and *Chun Chawi Loh* (2008) by Lalhriata, *Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung* (2006) by Lalnunchanga, *Rintei Zungleng* (2009) by Lalrammawia Ngente and *Beiseina Mittui* (2010) by Samson Thanruma were selected by MAL as awardees of 'Book of the Year'.[658]

5.5 A brief assessment of Mizo fictional narratives

Because of the early establishment of schools and a printing press, and the occupancy by pioneer missionaries, Aizawl have often been acknowledged as the centre of early Mizo literature. However, schools had been instituted at certain villages and Lunglei especially was a centre that hosted schools, a printing machine and missionaries in the early period as well. During the colonial period, both Aizawl and Lunglei were the main centres of literary production as both were the centres of colonial government within the Hills.

The axial of earlier Mizo fictions can be seen as nostalgia of the nation's past. It can be noted that what had been regarded as primordial Mizo culture, tradition and ethnic identity is the idea that directed the writers. The desirable quality of human nature such as virtue, truthfulness, modesty, and courtesy were represented as the integral trait of Mizo distinctiveness.

'Ambivalence' had already emerged during the period because of the 'hybridity' of Mizo knowledge system and cultural practices with that of the colonizers. Period before British colonisation of the Hills was regarded as pristine in characteristics, which was ethical and honourable. Conversely, 'colonial hangover' directed the writing trend as well where Mizo identity was contrasted with the colonialists. The comparison gives us an idea that Mizo identity was already debased to an inferior position that had to be refined with western practices.

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[657] Vannghaka, p.224.
[658] 'Mizo Academy of Letters Book of the Year list', [website], https://dcserchhip.mizoram.gov.in, (accessed 25 July 2018).

The Mizo National Front movement (1966-1986) intensified Mizo identity that claimed for autonomous political status. Along it emerged the sensation of deviation from the mainland Indians that may be largely attributable to the traumatic experience of the movement. Prominent writers coming after the MNF movement and the attainment of the status of Union Territory (1972) began to resuscitate the consciousness of pre-colonial Mizo ethnicity and simultaneously attempted to put forward the motive for unity of the various Mizo ethnic groups.

Many of the novels produced during the post Union Territory days still had their base on pre-colonial Mizo culture and society and contained ethical lessons. Alongside Mizo cultural past, Christian identity was incorporated in the writings. The appearance of structural changes in politics, economy, society and the worldview as a whole can be distinguished in the works.

With the attainment of statehood from 1986, trends in literature specifically of the fictional narratives gradually began to alter. The preceding Mizo fictional narratives were preponderated by romantic themes, which were adored by the popular culture; since then, writers began to eulogise Mizos's past while aligning with tradition of the earlier trends.

CHAPTER SIX

MIZO ETHNICITY: FICTION AND REPRESENTATION

Mizo identity and ethnicity have been studied in academics, albeit specific approach from fictional narratives is rare. Sincere examination of Mizo fictions shows traces of Mizo identity that situates within the writings. Mizo writers have been aware of their ethnic identity, therefore it is difficult for them to stay away from this. Hence, it is an interesting, and at the same time, a demanding challenge to reach what is deposited within.

This work selected four fictional narratives in accordance with the periodisation of Mizo history presented in the preceding chapter, one work representing each particular period. However, as the study area excludes pre-colonial period in principle, it focuses on works from colonial period to contemporary times and excludes pre-colonial period, two novels representing modern period.

Hawilopari, written in 1936 by L. Biakliana is dealt with in an attempt to extract ideas of Mizo identity during the colonial period stretching back to pre-colonial identity. *CC Coy No.27* by Zikpuii Pa (KC Lalvunga) written in 1963 is explored with the intention of situating Mizo identity after the colonisation by European power. With the reshaping of Mizo identity starting from the MNF movement, post MNF movement identity is specifically traced from the work of James Dokhuma's *Silaimu Ngaihawm*, produced in 1992. Lalnunchanga's novel, *Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung*, published in 2006 is studied to identify the ethnicity of Mizos in contemporary times.

6.1 <u>Hawilopari (1936)</u>

6.1.1 *The life of L. Biakliana*

Hawilopari, recognised as the first Mizo novel in the conventional historiographical discourse of Mizo literature was written in 1936 by L. Biakliana. However, as mentioned earlier, the work was lately made public. Following *Hawilopari*, Biakliana accomplished his second fiction in 1937 called *Lali*. This work won the

first Mizo fiction writing competition organised by Mizo Student Association in the same year. With the exception of his two fictions, Biakliana had more than twenty poems in his name that includes some translated works.[659]

L. Biakliana was born on 26 August 1918 in Mission Veng, Aizawl. He was the eldest child of Rev. Liangkhaia and Ngurchhuani. His father was a pastor serving Mizoram Presbyterian Church while his mother was the daughter of Chief Dorawta Sailo. It is said that Biakliana was a prodigy. He lost his mother in 1923 at the age of five but was fostered well. By the time his father served as a pastor, he joined his elementary education in 1922-23 at Saitual and finished his Lower Primary in 1928 at the age of ten and Middle English in 1931 at the age of fourteen. He completed his matriculation under Calcutta University in 1936 and did his higher studies in Shillong. Subsequently, he joined Intermediate Arts at Cotton College, Gauhati.[660]

In that juncture, he underwent his struggle with tuberculosis and returned to Mizoram for medic and was quarantined with Kaphleia in a small ward within the campus of Durtlang hospital on 17 September 1937.[661] After recuperation, he joined Cherra Theological College in February 1941 but relapsed shortly. He was then hospitalised at Robert Hospital, Shillong where he breathed his last in the hospital bed on 19 October 1941.[662]

6.1.2 Summary of Hawilopari

Hawilopari can be categorised both as a historical novel and a love story where the axial of story sets during the First Lushai Hills Expedition of 1871-72 and draws attention to the love affairs between the central characters, Hminga and Hawilopari. The fiction runs in third person narration describing about a story taking place six decades back that shows example of Mizo oral culture. The fiction contains other characters—Zema, Liana, Chhana, Ngaihi and Mawii—wherein Zema characterises the minor leading role.

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[659] Zoramdinthara, pp.26-27.
[660] Khiangte (ed.), p.154.
[661] Laltluangliana Khiangte, *Biakliana Robawm*, Aizawl, LTL Publications, 2013, pp.13-14.
[662] Khiangte, *Biakliana Robawm*, pp.79-80.

The fiction recounts the story of two close friends. When both got married, one begot a son Hminga, and the other a daughter Hawilopari. The narrative revolves around the story of the two. As the story begins, Hminga and his brother Liana lost their mother at a young age. This compelled their father to marry another woman for the family as all feminine chores were performed with the support of their female friends. The entry of a new woman to the family was a menace for Hminga and his brother as she was awful to her step sons.

The cold-blooded conduct of their step mother obliged both the brothers to abscond her. With the arrangement and guidance of the much older acquaintance Zema and accompanied by the chief's son Chhana, the brothers decided to finally move out. Before they departed, their secret plan was disclosed to their beloved girl friends with the deal to conceal until they returned.

The four comrades arrived in Hringchar (Silchar) and were employed by the colonial British armed force. After almost a decade when the four comrades left, they had a chance to return to their hills. Their inclusion in the expedition team to Lushai Hills had provided them the opportunity. When the expedition was completed, their request to revisit their village was permitted by the General.

The girls at their village stayed faithfully for almost a decade waiting for their loved ones. As the four comrades entered the village, they witnessed the burial of Hminga and Liana's father and affectionately met their step mother. The younger brother Liana and Mawii and the chief's son Chhana and Ngaihi got married but Hawilopari had left for another village.

Hminga ventured after Hawilopari's family while Zema tracked him and arrived at the village of Hawilopari that had been raided by the Pawis. The Pawis took the remaining villagers as captives including Hawilopari's family. With the intellect and valour of Zema, Hawilopari and the villagers were finally rescued. However, Zema was severely injured during their clash with the Pawis. In accomplishment of his final wish, Hminga and Hawilopari tied the knot in the end.

6.1.3 Traces of Mizo ethnicity in Hawilopari

Hawilopari, believed to be completed in 1936[663] gives us an outline of what Mizo ethnicity was perceived during the period. It was the period when colonial establishment reached its higher stage in Mizoram. The government was firmly established having the authority to redefine customary laws and to enforce western legal system. The church became more influential to sanction both religious and cultural norms. These were supported by the education system that embraced the monolithic colonial agenda.

Much before the period of Biakliana, the colonial power had already attempted to coin an ethnic name for the people in what they termed as the 'Lushai Hills'. As mentioned before, objectified categorisation of ethnic name corresponded to western epistemic practice of classifying groups of people into 'nations' started from the eighteenth century Europe.

Biakliana's work shows that the attempt to use 'Mizo' as the common name had become familiar during the period. The ethnic name 'Mizo' is used several times in the work. For instance, when he narrates about the picture of Hawilopari's village, he writes:

> *"Engpawh ni se, Mizo khuate hi chu a bengchhen ber lai*
> *pawhin bengchheng tih tham a ni lutuk lo reng reng."*[664]

> The translation runs as follows -

> "In any case, Mizo villages are certainly not deafening even
> at their loudest moment in time."

It is not beyond historical evidence as regards the usage of 'Mizo' in the work, in view of the fact that the colonial government had before then employed 'Mizo' as a panoramic term as mentioned before. The first periodicals in vernacular language were named *Mizo Chanchin Laisuih* (1898) and *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin* (1902).

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[663] L. Biakliana, 'Hawilopari', in Khiangte, pp.26-67.
[664] Biakliana, 'Hawilopari', p.266.

When Biakliana used the term 'Mizo', it is convincing that he had chosen the term consciously. One of the first non fictional accounts on the history of Mizo written by a local scholar used the term 'Mizo' to signify the ethnic groups within the Lushai Hills/Mizoram. Although the book was published in 1938 the author stated in the introductory note that he had completed his writings in 1926.[665] It can be considered that appellation of the ethnic name as 'Mizo' had been established loosely before Biakliana's work.

The story recites that as Zema revealed himself to Pari's father when they were captured by the raiders, he raised to his surprise, "Who are you? Are you a Mizo?"[666] Here, individual identity along with ethnic identity is perceived. The identification of the 'self' and the ethnic relationship of that 'self' with a feeling of inclusivity were expressed by Pari's father. He then continued with the question that required no response. The delightful feeling of belongingness to 'Mizo' or the same ethnicity with the encountered person was manifested, exposing the reassured affiliation to 'Mizo' against the 'others'.

The 'others' as represented in the novel calls much attention. The setting of the story falls around the first Lushai Hills Expedition of 1871-72, mentioning the territorial space outside the Lushai Hills from which the expedition was despatched. The four Mizo comrades left the Lushai Hills to Hringchar and were recruited in the colonial force.

The armed force consisted mainly of the plains Indians called the *vais* in the novel, commanded by British officers called the *saps*. Within the mixed ethnic composition, the four comrades associated their identity as distinct from the 'apparent others'.[667] The stricture of identifying 'otherness' from the *vais* and *saps* contains not only historical and cultural connections, but of phenotypic difference.

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[665] Liangkhaia, p.3.

[666] Biakliana, p.322.

[667] I employed the term 'apparent others' to categorise 'otherness' in terms of Mizo identity. Apart from the 'apparent others', there exists 'cognate others' that the Mizos had closer contact, and shared with them similar historical experiences and cultural traits.

Biakliana's period had already distinguished the connotation of *vais* and *saps* noticeably. As already discussed, *vai* was a general term for signifying any outsider or a foreigner. And as mentioned, the entry of white Europeans with their authority made them the esteemed *sahibs*. *Sahib* was modified to *sap* insinuating white Europeans with absolute power. And the *saps*, along with the *vais* were the 'apparent others'.

The fiction mentions both *vais* and *sap* several times with different implications. One instance was when Hminga made an effort to convince the officers when he was excluded from the expedition team to the Lushai Hills.

> *"An Sap in ata lungni lo zet chuan Hminga chuan an Vai hotupa in lam chu a zuk pan leh a; chutah pawh chuan a hma ang bawk khan, 'Thupek chu i awih tur a ni,' tih leh hnawh bo chauh mai bawk lo chu engmah dang a hmu lo a. Chutah pawh chuan a bei a la tidawng duh lo a, a thinrim chuan an Sap hotu ber in lam chu a zuk pan a."*[668]

> The translation runs as follows -

> "With dismay, Hminga left the *sap's* quarters and again made his way towards the *vai* officer. He got the same response, 'You have to follow orders', and was scolded off. He still was not despaired and irately headed for the *sap* General's residence."

The above lines contain not only the military hierarchy, but the existence of two different identities in the mind of Hminga. The lines clarify that the British armed force was in its nature, a mixture of several ethnic groups. However, the apex position was held by the British *sap*, who was approached by Hminga as a last resort after he met the *vai* officer. If there was no ethnic distinction, Biakliana could have mentioned no more than the military ranks. However, he employed both *sap* and *vai* differently in order to express the two 'apparent others' for Hminga.

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[668] Biakliana, p.231.

Apart from 'apparent others', the existence of 'cognate others'[669] can be seen in the novel. Biakliana's period can be regarded as the surfacing of 'Mizo' identity with ethnic affiliation upheld on Lusei headship. His work mentions one 'cognate others'—the Pawis. The Pawis were pronounced several times in the novels against the 'Mizos' or the Luseis or the *Seifate*.[670]

The fiction interchangeably employs 'Mizo' and Lusei or *Seifate* several times. It is perceptible that the idea of 'Mizo' often incorporated the Luseis exclusively. One clear example in the text is when the intruding British army were waylaid by the inhabitants.

> *"Pawl hmasaho chuan Seifate lo awmna lai a ni nge ni lo*
> *pawh ngaihtuah tawh lem lovin, an hotupa thupek zawmna*
> *atan vaukam vei lam hawi chuan an han tipuak ve tuar tuar*
> *a, mahse Lusei pasalthahovin an lo kahna atang chuan, fing*
> *hnih emaw dawn laia hla a lo ni tawh a. Mizo tlangvalho*
> *thawm a reh tak avangin Vai sipaiho pawh chuan an silai*
> *kah chu an chawl leh ta a. An hotupa chuan hnung lama*
> *tawlh kir veka a hmun remchang deuha riah hmun siam turin*
> *thu a pe ta a."*[671]

The translation runs as follows -

> "Without thinking the exact position of the *Seifate*, the
> advance guard with the order of the commander fired
> randomly, but the Lusei warriors were by then at about 0.25

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[669] I used 'cognate others' so as to make distinction with the 'apparent others'. The 'otherness' here is more ambiguous as Mizo shared common historical and cultural traits with the 'cognate others'. What provided 'otherness' was the absence of the concept of 'nationalism' since identity was based on lineage and clanship.

[670] *Seifate* is a common ethnic appellation that is sometimes used instead of Lusei, which means the Lusei family. Some scholars like Lianthanga classified the whole Mizo into two groups: *Seifate* and *Laifate*. The earlier group is composed of the clans who knotted their hair on the nape of their head that included the Lusei as the dominant family. The latter group consisted of clans with the hair knotted on top of the head wherein the Pawis were considered as the dominant family. See Lianthanga, p.4.

[671] Biakliana, p.273.

miles away. As Mizo warriors ceased their firing, the *vai* army did the same. The commander ordered them to retreat and prepare encampment."

The usage of *Seifate*, Lusei and Mizo is noticed in the text. When Biakliana speaks about Lusei, he means 'Mizo' and vice versa. The interplay of these two appellations confirms the fact that 'Mizo' was an exclusive signification to a particular clan or in a broader sense, to a specific linguistic community using Duhlian language. Parallel reading of earlier 'Mizo' descriptions presented the same concept.

In *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Lehkhabu* of June 1905, Zo Sapthara (Edwin Rowlands) noted an account on 'Mizo Chanchin' (History of Mizos) wherein he talked about the different ethnic groups within the 'yellow race' (*mi engho*) and separately categorised Mizo with the Pawis, Mirawngs (Rongmei Nagas), Khasis and the Nepalis.[672] Likewise, Liangkhaia in *Mizo Chanchin* more or less represented Mizo identity as Lusei identity.

Liangkhaia claimed the closeness of 'Mizos' with the neighbouring hill tribes. He stated:

> *"Heng kan kiang hnaia tlang mi, Pawi ho te, Matu ho te, Paihte ho te, Thahdo ho te, Hmar te, Kawm te, Zo ho te, Chiru te, Aimawl te, Khawl te, Tarau te, Anal te, Purum te, Tikhup te, Rangte te, Vaiphei te, Lakher te, Langrawng te, Chawrai te, Bawng te, Mualthuam te, Kaihpen te, Pangkhua te, Tlanglau te, Biate te, Hrangkhawl te, Bawmzo te, Miria te, Dawn te, Takam te, Kumi te, Darlawngte ho nen phei hi chuan kan lo inhlat lo tih chiang tak taka hriatna tur a la tam a ni."*[673]

The translation runs as follows -

[672] Zo Sapthara, 'Mizo Chanchin', in *MiZo leh Vai Chanchin Lekhabu, Lekha VI, June 1905*, pp.5-6, Digital Library of India, [website], https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in, (accessed 23 April 2018).
[673] Liangkhaia, p.17.

"With these hill tribes living in proximity to us: Pawis, Matus, Paihtes, Thahdos, Hmars, Kawms, Zos, Chirus, Aimawls, Khawls, Taraus, Anals, Purums, Tikhups, Rangtes, Vaipheis, Lakhers, Langrawngs, Chawrais, Bawngs, Mualthuams, Kaihpens, Dawns, Takams, Kumis and Darlawngs, there are lucid evidences that we are not so much different."

Liangkhai mentioned the different 'Mizo' tribes and categorised into Lusei, Ralte, Hmar, Pawih, and Paihte giving the different groups. He separately categorised 'the other tribes' and included Khawlhring, Khiangte, Chawngthu, Chawhte, Ngente, Renthlei, Tlau, Pautu, Rawite, Zawngte, Vangchhia and Punte.[674]

This explains that the idea of 'Mizo' was nascent and more ambiguous during the colonial period. It can be said that 'Mizo' identity from the earliest period had developed using Lusei (supported by Ralte) as its basis. This was because the largest ruling family (the Sailos) in the Lushai Hills claimed their affiliation to Lusei group and used the Duhlian/Lusei tongue, and the Ralte tribe adopted the culture of Lusei under the protection of the Sailo chiefs.[675]

This exclusive 'Mizo' identity is seen in the fiction several times in which the ending section deals with the Lusei/Mizo encountering with the Pawis. Pari's new village was raided by the Pawis, several killed and the remains taken as captives. Zema followed the Pawis and acted as one of them. His secret escape plan at mid night was disseminated among the captives that awakened "all the Mizos who were watching the guards."[676] The third person raconteur of the novel narrates about the state of affairs:

"Tu nge maw ni dawn chu aw! Pawite ni si a, chuti khawpa
Mizote a hmangaih mai chu. A, Pawite pawh ni se, mihring

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[674] Liangkhaia, pp.24-42.
[675] See Lalthanliana, pp.337-38.
[676] Biakliana, p.323.

an ni ve bawk a, mi khawngaih thei tak tak takte pawh han

awm ve bawk awm a ni reng a ni."[677]

The translation runs as follows -

"Who could he be? Though he was a Pawi, he was deeply affectionate to the Mizos. Why not? Even some Pawis could exhibit love since they too are human being after all."

The fiction represents the Pawis as 'others' for the 'Mizos'. However, the story itself contains that some Luseis and Pawis had lived together because Zema himself was a Pawi living among the Luseis. This can be perceived when Zema joined the Pawi raiders without any recognition and uttered, "I now get the chance to make use of the Pawi in me."[678] This conforms to the 'cognate others' idea in that phenotypic similarity and lingo-cultural connection had concealed the true ethnic affiliation of Zema.

Excluding the Pawis form 'Mizo' is evident in non fictional works wherein Liangkhaia commented that the "Mizos were afraid of the Pawis during those days,"[679] when he described the period before the establishment of chieftainship by the Sailo family. This sort of exclusive Mizo identity was what Biakliana exactly characterised in his fictional narrative.

The work contains linguistic identity that has correlation with ethnic identity. The novelist narrates about the dialogue between some men (Hminga and friends) after the encounter with the colonial force:

"A then chu an tawng nak nak a. Chung an tawng han hriat

theihte chu Mizo tawng ngei a ni tlat mai."[680]

The translation runs as follows -

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[677] Biakliana, p.324.
[678] Biakliana, p.321.
[679] Liangkhaia, p.57.
[680] Biakliana, p.275.

"Some of them were conversing. And the tongue they used

was obviously Mizo."

The friends amidst the colonial army were easily identified from the language they used. They were with the 'apparent others'. The narrator comments that the military uniform and haircut made it difficult to distinguish the friends. However, the language they used eased him to identify them as they were speaking in 'Mizo' language.

The 'Mizo' language the author means in the text is Duhlian language. It is obvious that with the 'apparent others' the language could refer to linguistic identity having ethnic differentiation. However, he continues the usage of 'Mizo' language against the 'cognate others' of 'Mizo' in the novel, or in other words, the Pawis. In an instance when Zema reached the place where Pari family were tied up by the raiders, Zema asked Pari's father with a "plain Mizo language."[681]

Pari's family were captured by the Pawis who spoke different tongue. The author's conception of 'Mizo' bases language as the factor and excluded the Pawis as not only using Duhlian/Lusei language, but totally excluded the ethnic affiliation of the Pawis from 'Mizo'.

This, as remarked in the previous chapter is a strong reason of exclusive 'Mizo' identity that established its root on linguistic identity. Although Lusei/Duhlian language has been institutionalised as the language of 'Mizos' and has operated as a strong uniting force among the users, the same performs as a factor of producing disaffiliation from 'Mizo' identity among the users of 'Mizo' language as second language or uncomfortable users of the language since centre-margin relation consequently surfaced.

Territoriality correlates with identity as human culture is shaped by nature.[682] This phenomenon of nature moulding culture generates ethnic groups to possess the

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[681] Biakliana, p.322.
[682] Studies in the evolutionary development of humans suggest that culture is part and parcel of the ecological niche within which human species thrived, thus rendering culture a chapter in the

feeling of belongingness to the land that they inhabit. When the Lushai Hills Expedition force navigated their way through the Tlawng/Dhaleshwari River, they were attacked by warriors shouting:

> *"Kan ram leh hnam tan, Mizo tlangval kan ni ngai e."*[683]

> The translation runs as follows -

> "For the land and the people, we are the Mizo warriors."

The concept of land and the extent may not be marked distinctly during their early contact with the 'others'. However, the already explored and inhabited land called for protection against any intruders. This was the reason why inhabitants of the hills of north eastern frontier of British India valiantly fought against colonial expedition to their hills.

This suggests that territorial identity is often seen in the context of ethnicity. What Wanichakul termed the 'geo-body' has a deep connection with the identity of individuals and group of people. Many wars in history arouse because of territorial dispute. Controlling a territory often signifies its ownership and thus historical attestation of the guardianship.

Biakliana's use of the phrase delineates the idea of 'Mizoram' during his period. The official/gazetted usage of 'Mizoram' was in 1972 when the Mizo Hills District Council was granted the status of Union Territory. It is to be noted that the novel preceded the term 'Mizoram' officially used since 1972. The novel narrates:

> *"Chutianga khua an rama mite chu an tlanchhia a, Mizoram*
> *lal ropui fet pakhat Tlawng phaia mi hnenah zualkovin an*
> *tlan ta a. Chu lal chuan a ram chu chan hlauhawmin a awm*
> *tih a hriat veleh, a tlangvalte a tir ta a."*[684]

> The translation runs as follows -

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biological development of a species. See Andrea Borghini, 'The Nature-Culture Divide', [website], https://www.thoughtco.com, (accessed 25 April 2018).
[683] Biakliana, p.273.
[684] Biakliana, p.272.

"Dwellers of the devastated village then fled to a great chief of Mizoram to tell him their burden in Tlawng valley. The chief on knowing the impeding danger of his land despatched his warriors."

The appearance of 'Mizoram' in the fictional narrative is questionable. When juxtaposed with the preceding historical narrative by Liangkhaia first written in 1926, 'Mizoram' is the preference. This calls to question the interpolation made by the later editors by replacing 'Lushai Hills' by 'Mizoram'. In the introductory note of the re-publisher of Liangkhaia's book, Laltluangliana Khiangte, who also purchased its copyright, asserted that the book was revised by Mizo Academy of Letters in 1976.[685] He continued to claim that the text remains intact since his ownership.[686] As regards *Hawilopari*, the publisher of *Biakliana Robawm* that contains the novel, Laltluangliana Khiangte mentioned that Biakliana's original manuscript was reproduced manually by Biakliana's friend Lalhmuaka, which was handed to him.[687]

If such is the case on both the works, the use of 'Mizo' and 'Mizoram' in the works could not be regarded as indicator of the presence of the idea of 'Mizo' and 'Mizoram' as it is used after 1972.

6.2 CC Coy No. 27 (1963)

6.2.1 Brief biography of KC Lalvunga

The fiction *CC Coy No. 27* was written by KC Lalvunga, more renowned by his nom de plume, 'Zikpuii Pa' in 1963. Zikpuii Pa wrote six fictional narrative viz. *Silverthangi* (1958), *Kraws Bulah Chuan* (1959), *Hostel Awmtu* (1959), *CC Coy No. 27* (1963), *Lalramliana* (1950-1993) and *Nunna Kawngthuam Puiah* (1986). Moreover, Zikpuii Pa had more than forty three essays and seventeen poems in his name. Recognising his prolific contribution in Mizo literature, the Mizo Academy of

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[685] Liangkhaia, p.11.
[686] Liangkhaia, p.11.
[687] Khiangte, p.6.

Letters awarded him the prestigious Academy Award in 1995 and 'Writer of the Century' award in 2000 by the Government of Mizoram, both posthumously.[688]

Son of Hrawva, the ex-chief of Aizawl, KC Lalvunga was born on 27 December 1927 in Aizawl. He studied in the state up till matriculation in 1948 and graduated in Shillong in 1953. After his graduation, he held the post of editor (1954-56) of *Zoram Thupuan* newspaper and Mizo Zirlai Pawl (students' union) president (1954-55). He served as a sub-inspector of schools (1955) and high school headmaster in Champhai (1956-59) and Saitual (1959-62). During his tenure as a high school headmaster, he was elected to legislative body of Mizo District Council for one term (1957-1962). He finally joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1962 and retired in 1990. He died on 10 October 1994 at his residence in Venghlui, Aizawl due to heart attack.[689]

6.2.2 Summary of CC Coy No.27

CC Coy No.27 was written at Nasik, Maharashtra in 1963. The fiction depicts the period of transition from colonial to independence India with the life story of the protagonist, Ralkapzauva in first person narrative. The work is a good repository for mapping out 'colonial mentality' of the Mizos.

Ralkapzauva, as the fiction depicts, was an underprivileged person from far eastern Mizoram. He was the son of a labour soldier serving the British Empire during the First World War. He finished his lower primary education in his village and then went to Aizawl to pursue middle school education. On his way to Aizawl with his father, they met a *babu* whom he regarded as very authoritative. The confrontation encouraged him to excel in his studies and attained the title of '*babu*' or even the revered '*sap*'. With great toil, he secured the first position in the final middle school examination that made possible for him to avail financial aid for higher studies. On his arrival in Shillong bus station, he encountered many porters ('coolies') to carry his belongings. He opted for an old porter, called Bahadur who put on a badge 'CC Coy No.27' form which the title of the fiction derived. He soon realised that the

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[688] Zoramdinthara, pp.99-107.
[689] Zoramdinthara, pp.99-100. Also see Lalthangliana, *Mizo Literature*, p.271.

porter was a war veteran like his father who had both gone to France during the World War I.

When Ralkapzauva joined Shillong Govt. High School, he was ridiculed and assaulted by his own senior Mizo kinfolks. However, he was fortunate to have Bahadur to stand by him in every circumstance. Due to his good academic performance, he met a new non Mizo friend named Chawdhuri who was cordial to him in every manner. Besides, the school Principal and staff were in favour with him because of his sincerity in his studies. His Principal convinced him to join Boy Scout in which he attained Honorary Aide-de-Camp to the Governor of Assam. He topped his high school examination with hard work.

After his matriculation, he joined the King's Commission Officer. He outshined the other trainees during his training period at Dehradun Military Academy and was awarded Best Cadet Sword. He began his service as a Second Lieutenant and returned to his village before entering the World War II against the Japanese force. He was warmly received by the Government in his hills but was critically admired by his people because of his new status as a non white '*sap*'. He felt alienated from his own people. When the Great War was over, he served in Burma for awhile and was then transferred to Assam Rifles. Shortly, India attained independence and his post of King's Commissioned Officer was renamed to Indian Commissioned Officer.

He returned to Shillong to join his service and eagerly waited to see Mr Bahadur with a thirty rupee note for him. After a long wait, a young Gorkhali porter approached him to his surprise. As the porter asked him for the luggage, he politely declined that it was reserved for 'CC Coy No. 27'. The porter replied that he was the son of Bahadur and he inherited his father's number. As the transfer of power from the British to India had already taken place, the porter's plate bore 'Assam State Transport No. 27'. Ralkapzauva asked him to carry his luggage and handed him the thirty rupee note. As they parted, he wondered whether the young porter realised how big his father was in the heart of an Indian Army Officer from Mizoram.

6.2.3 Mapping out Mizo identity from CC Coy No.27

CC Coy No.27 was produced during post-colonial or post-independence India. The period experienced the formation of Lushai Hills District Council in 1952, which was changed to Mizo Hills District Council in 1954, albeit the political status remained intact. The British political officials had disappeared from the administration. However, the Christian missionaries hitherto remained in the hills until they finally left in 1968.[690]

The institution of education and medic during the period thus far remained under the guardianship of the white missionaries. The presence of the *saps* was till then powerful and influential in commanding the cultural attitude of the period. This was coupled with the epistemic presence of colonialism in the form of what postcolonial scholarship terms 'colonial mentality'.[691] Even though the story centres on the life story of Ralzapzauva, it exposes how western education 'civilised' the Mizos from their 'primitive' worldview. It narrates the worth of education that acts as an instrument to achieve higher status in the society by describing how the protagonist ventured for higher studies that ultimately led him to the esteemed position of *sap*.

The first person narrator, Ralkapzauva begins by recounting the condition of his village that was then under their chief, Dolura. His father, a war veteran who took part in the World War I was a good orator who used to give an account of his experience in France during the war. The chief's house was the usual place of gathering where *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Lehkhabu* newspaper was read out loud by the literate teacher of the village, Zakiamlova. Ralkapzauva reveals:

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[690] Miss Joyce Horner, Durtlang Hospital staff and Miss Gwen Roberts were the last to leave in March 1968 following Miss Angharad Roberts, headmistress of the Girls, Middle English School and Miss May Bounds, Sister in Dutlang Hospital who left on 15 January 1968. For detail, see Lloyd, pp.359-61.

[691] Colonial mentality can be defined as the perception of ethnic and cultural inferiority and a form of internalized racial oppression as a result of colonisation. The concept examines the trans-generational end products of colonialism that exist in the mental disposition of former colonised states following decolonization. See, Ashley M. Decena, 'Identity, colonial mentality, and decolonizing the mind: exploring narratives and examining mental health implications for Filipino Americans', in *Theses, Dissertations, and Projects*, [website], Smith College, 2014, https://scholarworks.smith.edu, (accessed 7 May 2018).

"Khi-ah khi-ah, kawlvalenchham, khawchhak Tuipui ralah, mawlna chhumpui karah khian a zuih ral chho ve a, chu chu ka lo pian chhuah vena ram leh hmun chu a ni. Ram mawl takah mipui mawl tak zingah, nu leh pa mawl tak karah ka lo piang a."[692]

The translation runs as follows -

"Far away beyond the horizon, to the east of the Tuipui River, it evanesces amidst the cloud of idiocy, the place where I was born. In a countryside swathed with irrationality, inhabited by silly people, I was raised up by dim-witted parents."

VL Siama's *Mizo History* produced in 1953 for Middle School textbook contains the same discourse of seeing Mizos as 'uncultured', who according to Victor Lieberman's 'law of Southeast Asian inertia' were only 'cultured' and 'civilised' by the colonizers. The view postulates that 'civilization' or 'development' was brought in by the British, or in other words, Mizos would not be 'civilised' without the British.

"British sawkarin min awp ta hi kawng engkimah hmasawnna leh finna te min zirtir avangin kan lo bengvarin kan lo thang ve tial tial chauh a ni."[693]

The translation runs as follows -

"Owing to the colonisation of the British, we are developing in every way as they enlightened us with wisdom and knowledge."

The binary opposition of placing colonisers with colonised and the ensuing act of marginalising the latter was established in colonial discourse. This inculcated in the

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[692] Zikpuii Pa, *CC Coy. No. 27*, Aizawl, MCL Publications, 2017, p.15.
[693] Siama, p.57.

psyche of the Mizos, a self-debasing mentality against the superior whites by seeing their culture as 'uncivilised'. Colonial education was an apparatus or a 'patronage' for inserting whites' supremacy in the minds of the Mizos. School text books were the most powerful tools for such schema. For instance, school text book produced by Zosaphluia (DE Jones) in 1921 contains such message:

> *"4. Mihring hnam nga an awm a—mi dum te mi sen te mi buang te mi eng te mi ngo te*
>
> *5. Nimah sela chi khat kan nia mi eng an tam ber a mi ngo an fing ber a an lal ber bawk a."*[694]
>
> The translation runs as follows -
>
> "4. There are five human races—black race, red race, brown race, yellow race, white race.
>
> 5. We however belong to one species. The whites are the most intelligent and powerful."

This was one significant reason for the Mizos in internalising whites' superiority thereby accordingly were pervaded with what Frantz Fanon labels 'internalisation of inferiority complex' or 'epidermalisation'. [695] The fiction illustrates this deep-rooted 'colonial mentality' when Ralkapzauva debased and humiliated his own place of origin, his people and even his parents. Zikpuii Pa represented the Mizos as 'uncivilized' that required colonial intervention to liberate them from their unrefined existence to a new realm of 'civilization'. The idea is recurrently seen in his fiction whereby the state of being 'Mizo' is signified as being 'inferior' to the whites.

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[694] DE Jones (Zosaphluia), *Duh-lian Zir tirh-bu Zo sap siam: A Lushai Primer (Duh lian dialect)*, Madras, SPCK Press, 1921, p.32.

[695] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, New York, Grove Press, 2008, p.11. According to Fanon, 'epidermalization of inferiority' implies the way in which ideas of personhood in a racist world are basically directed by white supremacist perceptions of human experience. It produced an alienating internalisation of 'otherness' together with the imposition to act according to what is considered normal. Straightforwardly, it pertains to a psychic switch, wherein the minority 'other' learns a figurative 'white mask'. See Rob Peach, 'Epidermalization of inferiority', [website], https://hiphopmatrix.wordpress.com, (accessed 16 May 2018).

When Ralkapzauva and his father were on their way to Aizawl for enrolment in middle school, they met a *babu*[696] along the way. Seeing the superior status of the *babu*, Ralkapkauva queried his father that the man was a *babu* or a *manding sap*.[697] Here, different socio-political status is highlighted: a bureaucrat *babu* and and a military personnel *manding sap*. His father replied that the man was a *varsiar babu*.[698] The man they encountered was an Indian officer who imitated/mimicked the behaviour of white *saps*. He was more authoritative than the one Ralkapzauva had met, whom he called *tlangsam babu*[699] and a Mizo *babu* who inspected their school. Filled with questions, he continuously questioned his father:

> " 'Ka pa, babu nge lal zawk ang sap?'
>
> Ka pa chu a nui huk a, 'Sap le,' a ti a. Sap chu eng anga lal nge ni ang aw, ka ti rilru a.
>
> Kei chuan, 'Ka pa, sap a nih ve theih em?' ka ti a. Ka pa chuan beidawng hmel takin min an en a, 'Ka hre lo le!' a ti a.
>
> 'A nih ka pa, mihang sapa tang an awm em?' ka ti a.

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[696] The OED defines *babu* as "a respectful title or form of address for a man, especially an educated one; an office worker." See 'Babu' in *The Oxford English Dictionary*, [website], https://en.oxforddictionaries.com, (accessed 8 May 2018). According to the Collins Dictionary, *babu* "in India is a title equivalent to Mr. or sir used in addressing a man who is a Hindu; an indigenous clerk who can write English." 'Babu', in *Collins Dictionary*, [website], https://www.collinsdictionary.com, (accessed 8 May 2018). Both the sources mention the origin of the word to Hindi *babu*, which literally means 'father'. *Babus* were English literate Indians during the colonial period who were mostly office clerks and were respected in the society.

[697] A Commandant or a military officer in command. See Lorrain, p.307. The administration of the Lushai Hills was under the Superintendent or *Bawrhsap*, assisted by *Sapte* (Assistant to the Superintendent) in Aizawl and *Sapte* (Sub-Divsional Officer) in Lunglei. The army was headed by the Commandant or *manding sap*, assisted by *sikin sap* or Second Commandant. See Siama, pp.58-59.

[698] *Var* means white, and *siar*, according to Lorrain means "copy or resemblance that refers more to behaviour and character rather than physical resemblance". See Lorrain, p.417. Thus, *varsiar babu* would mean white resembling *babu* or Indian clerk.

[699] In accordance with Lorrain, a *tlangsam babu* is "a land-surveyor (especially one in charge of such work). Lorrain differentiates *tlangsam babu* with *tlangsam sap* who is "a land-surveyor (especially a higher official in charge of such work). See Lorrain, p.512.

We can see that a *babu* and a *sap* signified two different positions or socio-political standings. *Babu* connotes Indian government officials who were subordinate to white *sap* government officials. This explains that lower positions were held by the Indians whereas the colonialists secured higher positions in the government.

'Awm pawh an awm ang, mahse chute ang chu ka la hmu lo,'
a ti a.

'A nih ka ka, babu chu a nih ve theih ang em?' ka han ti leh
a.

Ka pa chuan, 'Theih pawh a theih mai theih a ni. Lehkha han
zir phawt la, a theih leh theih loh chu Pathian thu thu a ni
ang chu,' a ti a.[700]

The translation runs as follows -

"'Dad, who is more authoritative: a *babu* or a *sap*?'

My dad sniggered and said, '*Sap*, of course.' And I wondered
how authoritative would be a *sap*.

I then asked, 'Dad, can I be a *sap*?' With dismay, my father
replied,

'I'm not sure.'

'Daddy, is there any case of a dark skin guy becoming a
sap?'

'There may be. But I've never seen such,' he replied.

'Can I be a *babu*, dad?'

And my dad answered, 'May be. But first you've to study.
The rest is on God's hands.'"

The Mizo-*sap* dichotomy is highlighted by Zikpuii Pa. He shows that Mizos were
envious of the *sap* and desired to move from their subordinate position to a higher
one. Zikpuii Pa portrays Ralkapzauva as ambitious in 'liberating' his true self and
unsatisfied on his identity as a 'Mizo'. We can see from his work that the protagonist
was determined to shift his identity by ascending to the level of the *sap*. The

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[700] Pa, *CC Coy. No. 27*, pp.21-22.

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mentality of Mizos vis-à-vis the colonialists after the process of decolonisation is clearly reflected in the fiction: that Mizos, in the words of Fanon, needed to become 'a human being' [701] in every possible way as they internalised the Eurocentric 'hierarchy of being'.

Following his formal induction as the King's Commissioned Officer, Ralkapzauva returned to his land. He was given a warm welcome by the *Bawrhsap* (Superintendant) of the Lushai Hills as he was the first King's Commissioned Officer from Mizo Hills. All inspection bungalows were evacuated by the other *saps* for him on his way back to his village. He narrates:

> *"Hman laia, kan naupan laia Aizawl kan kal hmasak ber*
> *tuma ka awh phak loh leh nih chak ber chu sap nihna chu*
> *tunah chuan ka chang ta. Vun erawh ngo chuang kher lo mah*
> *se, anmahni sapho pawhin anmahni tlukah min pawm a, kan*
> *mite leh mipui leh lalho pawhin sap tlukah tho min pawm a,*
> *ka duh leh ka tum chu a hlawhtling ta a ni."*[702]

> The translation runs as follows -

> "When I went to Aizawl for the first time back in the days, the one thing I was envious of and aspired to be was a *sap*, that now I have achieved. Although my skin has not become white, even the *saps* looked me equally as them, also my kith and kin, the chief and his subjects regarded me the same. I truly accomplished my dream."

Ralkapzauva inclined to enter a different sociological position as opposed to ontological position by climbing the socio-political ladder rather than aiming what he could not transform. He was able to achieve becoming a socio-political *sap* using education as the ladder; however, he considered that the idea of becoming an ontological *sap* was not given and could not be achieved. Ralkapzauva fits

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[701] Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, p.106.
[702] Pa, p.97.

Macaulay's 1835 minute to the Parliament of England that wanted to raise "a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, opinions, in morals and in intellect."[703] Macaulay's conception of 'a learned native' was of a person "familiar with the poetry of Milton, the metaphysics of Locke, and the physics of Newton", i.e. a native only in phenotypic traits, but for all intellectual and practical purposes acquainted with English literature, philosophy and science [704]—in fact western epistemic discourse.

Ralkapzauva after having received the colonial education joined the white *sap* community and was trained to act as them. Homi Bhabha labelled the process as 'mimicry'[705] wherein colonised subject is reproduced as "almost the same, but not quite".[706] He impersonated the *sap*, dressed like a *sap*, acted like a *sap* and even used his thinking like a *sap* because of his new governmental position and social standing.

However, his new position and status was not how he had idealised in reality. He expresses his exact position and feelings as a *sap*:

> *"Sap nih te hi khuavang thawnthua hlimna zawng zawng neih kimna tur ang chi emaw kan lo ti erawh chu thil kan lo hmu sual deuh a ni. Sap ka han ni chiah chu ka buai tan chauh a lo ni a…commissioned officer ka han kai chu hman laia ka thianteho reng reng khan thinlung takin min kawm hlei thei lo a, lalho lah chuan min tih dui mai si a, a khawharthlakzia a lo lang ta a: khawvelah hian a eng ber hi nge nuam tih pawh ka hre thei ta lo."*[707]

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[703] 'Minute by the Hon'ble T. B. Macaulay, dated the 2nd February 1835', [website], http://www.columbia.edu, (accessed 17 May 2018).

[704] 'Minute by the Hon'ble T. B. Macaulay, dated the 2nd February 1835'.

[705] Bhabha argues that colonial agenda intended the reproduction of colonial subjects to value colonial ideas, practices and objects but not exact replicas of the colonisers. He, however, sees that the process entails the colonial subject whose "mimicry" is very analogous to mockery since this very process produces the subject to be in a state of "ambivalence", thus his/her attitude becoming uncertain and fluctuating. See 'Ambivalence', in Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, pp.10-11.

[706] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, p.86. However, Bhabha continues to argue that mimicry "is at once resemblance and menace." See Bhabha, p.86.

[707] Pa, pp.97-98.

The translation runs as follows -

"We were totally wrong when we thought that becoming a *sap* means having all the joy as in a fairy tale. The moment I become a *sap* is the moment I fall into a tight spot…being a commissioned officer, all my old friends now could not honestly talk with me, our chief reveres me, and the solitude thus appears: I do not know what on earth is contentment now."

Being an official *sap*, Ralkapzauva wretchedly uttered that he was being alienated by his own people.[708] The dream of becoming a *sap* was attained by the protagonist with 'ambivalence'[709] of being a proud official simultaneously losing his sense of belongingness among his own people. The 'double consciousness'[710] he had after his 'promotion' to *sap* made him proud as a member of the white community; however, the same position 'alienated' him from his own people that made him even questioned the 'contentment in life'. In the end, his accomplishment did not bestow him satisfaction as his attachment with his people depreciated. His identity as a Mizo was regarded by him as being attenuated and he lately realised that being true to one's ethnicity was contentment in societal existence.

6.3 Silaimu Ngaihawm (1992)

6.3.1 Life story of James Dokhuma

The author of *Silaimu Ngaihawm*, James Dokhuma, born on 15 June 1932 was the youngest child of Hrangchina and Kapkungi. When his mother conceived him, he was believed to be still born. When he was about to be buried under their house, he

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[708] Pa, p.98.

[709] In line with Homi Bhabha, 'ambivalence' is the complex mix of absorption and resistance that describes the relationship between coloniser and colonised. The relationship is mixed as the colonised subject is never simply and totally opposed to the coloniser. See 'Ambivalence', in Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, pp.10-11.

[710] 'Double consciousness' is a term employed by WEB De Bois in describing inward 'twoness' possessed by inviduals when they have more than one ethnic affiliation. It is a "sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others". For details, see John P. Pittman, 'Double Consciousness', in Zalta (ed.), (accessed 24 May 2018).

miraculously breathed at some stage in their attempt to place in his body inside an earthen pot.[711]

James Dokhuma finished his primary education securing first division and ended his formal education after his Class V. From 1947 to 1952, he joined the Indian Army and was well acquainted with Hindi during his service that promoted him to Education Instructor. After his retirement from military service, he joined St. Paul's Higher Secondary School, Aizawl as Hindi & Vernacular teacher. After his teaching service, he joined Aijal Community Development Block as a Sanitary Inspector. During the period, he was influenced by evangelism and he travelled the length and breadth of Mizoram. His oratory skill was recognised from this period.[712]

His nationalistic sentiment was aroused by the formation of Mizo National Front and he joined the Front form its initial year in 1961. When the declaration of independence from the Indian Union was made by the MNF, he was one of the signatories and thus took active part during the MNF movement. He was jailed twice at Nowgong Special Jail and Gauhati Jail, Assam for three years and it was during his stay as a war prisoner that his three pioneering works were completed—*Rinawmin, Khawhar In* and *Thla Hleinga Zan*.[713]

During the MNF movement, he joined Mizo People's Party in 1975 and Zoram Nationalist Party in 1998. After his health deteriorated, he detached himself from active politics and finally demised on 10 March 2007.[714]

Dokhuma was a prolific writer who published more than forty books, both fiction and non-fictional narratives in Mizo language. In fact, he is sometimes known as a poet, novelist, historian, biographer, essayist, lexicographer, playwright and orator. His Mizo lexicographic work *Tawng Un Hrilhfiahna* maked him being dubbed as 'Father of Mizo Lexicography' by Zikpuii Pa (KC Lalvunga). His novels include *Rinawmin* (1970), *Khawhar In* (1970), *Thla Hleinga Zan* (1975), *Tumpangchal nge*

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[711] Dokhuma, *Tawng Un Hrilhfiahna*, p.xii.

[712] Dokhuma, *Tawng Un Hrilhfiahna*, p.xiii.

[713] Dokhuma, *Tawng Un Hrilhfiahna*, p.xiii.

[714] Dokhuma, *Tawng Un Hrilhfiahna*, p.xvii-xix.

Saithangpuii (1981), *Hmangaihna Thuchah* (1982), *Irrawady Lui Kamah* (1982), *Good Bye, Lushai Brigade* (1983), *Silaimu Ngaihawm* (1992) etc.[715] Many of his works are studied in schools and colleges.

Due to his great contribution in Mizo literature he was awarded Academy Award in 1983 by Mizo Academy of Letters (MAL) and the Padma Shri Award in 1985. He was conferred Doctor of Philosophy degree by the International University, California, USA in 1997 and was awarded the Bhasa Samman 1997 Award.[716]

6.3.2 Summary of Silaimu Ngaihawm

Silaimu Ngaihawm, written in 1992 is a post MNF movement fictional narrative that was influenced by the MNF movement. While the story narrates the incidents and atmosphere during MNF movement, it simultaneously relates the love affairs of one underground MNF personnel, Lieutenant Lalsanglura and a civilian Lalramliani.

The post independence Indian political scenario was unique as formation of Mizo political party was at its incipient stage. The Mizo Union, established in 1946 was the principal political party as its opponent United Mizo Freedom Organisation was unable to persuade the minds of the voters. Mizo Union, supporting merger into Indian union dominated the political arena and they were able to remove chieftainship from Mizoram. MNF, formed in 1961 was its second opponent with different ideology, that of seeking independence from Indian union. *Silaimu Ngaihawm* describes this ideological conflict between Mizo Union and the MNF.

The protagonist Sanglura and Zaikima were players in that ideological clash. Both friends were advised to stay away from the MNF movement by their families. Zaikima's father was an ardent supporter of Mizo Union and he despised the MNF of their propaganda. He totally believed that the MNF movement would never achieve its ambition of attaining independence from the Indian union. Hence, he did not allow his son to join the Mizo National Army at any cost. However, he was unable to

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[715] Dokhuma, *Tawng Un Hrilhfiahna*, p.xv-xvii.
[716] Dokhuma, *Tawng Un Hrilhfiahna*, p.xv.

convince his son, as Zaikima was fanatical to join his comrades who he regarded were fighting for their motherland.

Zaikima and Rinmawia finally joined their brothers and moved underground. As they were both literate, they secured the leading posts. Rinmawia was appointed a Battalion Sergeant Clerk while Zaikima was assigned as a Sergeant. Zaikima met Sanglura in their platoon and became companions since then. As the MNF employed guerrilla tactic of warfare, they camped in the jungle. They occasionally visited the most convenient settlement to get their requirements.

One day, Sanglura and Zaikima happened to visit Hualtu, the village of Lalramliani. During their stay, Sanglura and Lalramliani fell in love and promised to marry after peace ensued. However, Sanglura had to move into the jungle leaving Laramliani to wait for him. Lalramliani thus remained faithful to Sanglura's words after they parted.

When Lt. Sanglura and his troops were on their way to Lungpho, they suddenly encountered the Indian Army and exchanged bullets. Unfortunately, Sanglura was hit by a bullet and succumbed to the shot. He pulled out the bullet from his chest and requested Zaikima to hand over the bullet to Lalramliani as a souvenir and breathed his last. Zaikima draped the bullet with a piece of cloth covered with blood and accomplished his friend's final wish.

Ever since Lalramliani received the bullet and its wrap, her health gradually deteriorated. Unable to recover from her traumatic experience, she died unmarried having the bullet as her paradoxical comforter and reminder of her beloved martyr.

6.3.3 Situating Mizo identity from Silaimu Ngaihawm

The MNF movement and its ideology was a strong factor that generated ideological conflict in the post independence Mizo society. As mentioned before, the Mizo Union was by then the major political party that favoured merger with the Indian union by establishing democracy while removing the Mizo chiefs. The MNF's struggle to achieve independence from India was seen as impractical by adherents of

Mizo Union. They also believed that joining the independence struggle was not nationalistic.

When Zaikima and his father were arguing, one Mizo Union Councillor visited their house and joined their discussion. He rebuked Zaikima not to follow his plan of joining the MNF. Zaikima refused to take his words that made the councillor irritated and said:

> *"India sipai tlazar hnuai atangin ramhnuaimi misual tlan bo ho chu i do kan duhsak zawk che a ni. MNF volunteer-a kal te zawng a sawi pawh sawi rintlak a ni lo. Hei ang hruai suala awm, Mizo Union an hrim hrim vanga relh bo, hnam tichhetu leh Mizo hmelmaa insiam zingah te zawng kal reng reng suh…. Nang i tlan bo vaih chuan i pa hming pawh i tichhe lutukin i pa pawhin India sipai leh kan hotute rin pawh a kai na'ng. Engti kawng maha hlawhtling hlei lo turah intibuai duh reng reng suh, i thi ve reu reu ang," a ti a."*[717]

The translation runs as follows -

> "We want you to shoot the runaway roguish underground under the protection of the Indian army. The MNF volunteers are fly-by-night. They are indoctrinated by false consciousness and go underground as they abhorred the Mizo Union. Never take side with such destructive agent of a nation and an enemy of the Mizos. If you go underground, you will disgrace your father's name and he will not be trusted by the Indian army and our leaders anymore. Do not partake in what will not be achieved, lest you shall die."

The Mizo Union leaders regarded the MNF as betrayer of 'Mizo' nation. Their notion of 'nationalism' was well fitted in the idea of India and observed the MNF as a disturbing agent of Mizo identity. On the other hand, the ideology of MNF was self

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[717] James Dokhuma, *Silaimu Ngaihawm*, Aizawl, JD Press, 1992, p.21.

determination and refused to accept 'Indianness' from their idea of the 'self'. This was detested by the Mizo Union who sensed that being Indian did not infer the lost of being Mizo. Their idea of Mizo was more liberal and they had no apprehension in admittance of Indian nationhood. Here, the author understands ethnicity as an instrument used by individuals and groups to mobilize populations to achieve larger goals. The goal is seen as political in nature and includes the demands for self-autonomy, control of resources and power and safeguarding group identity and culture.

C. Hermana articulated the ideological conflict of the day distinctly. After the MNF established their office formally, and their preparation for the movement intensified, the then Mizo Union President Ch. Chhunga arranged a meeting with the MNF leaders on 14 February 1966. Laldenga made the opening dialogue:

> *"Thu sawi hmasaah tangin Pu Laldenga chuan Mizo Union hruaitute chu inkawmna hun tha tak an lo buatsaih avangin lawmthu a han hrilh hmasa a. Chumi zawhah chuan India leh Assam sorkarin Mizote min enkawl dan lungawi thlak a tih loh dan te, kum 1947 a Mizo hnam aiawh mi 50 kalkhawmin Memorandum an thehluha kum 10 hnua duh dan sawi leh thei tura an thu indelhkilhna India sorkarin hnialna engmah a sawi rik loh thute sawi langin an thil tuma hnungtawlh thei an nih tawh loh thu a han hrilh a…. An pawm thei lo a nih pawha kawng dal lo turin a ngen nghal a.*
>
> *Mizo Union ai awha thu han sawi ve-in Pu Pahlira chuan buaina siam a awlsam anga remna siam a awlsam loh dante leh…MNF te chu ralthuam chelek lova Mizoram tana Mizote State an sualna thlawp zawk turin a han ngen ve thung a.*

An han sawi fe hnu-ah pawh ngaihdan an sawhsawn theih tak loh tawn ve ve avangin thu tlukna nei lovin inkhawm chu an tiltiak ta ringawt mai a ni."[718]

The translation runs as follows -

"Mr. Laldenga began the discussion and extended his gratitude to the Mizo Union leaders for arranging a meeting at first. After that, he pointed out his disappointment as regards Assam Government treatment of the Mizos, how the Indian Government did not decline the proposal made by 50 Mizo representatives in 1947 regarding the accord to state their wish after ten years, and that they could not back away from their objective…. If they could not accept, he urged them not to obstruct their way.

Speaking for the Mizo Union, Mr. Pahlira asserted that while inciting violence is easy, making peace is easier said than done…and requested the MNF to lay down their arms and join them in their struggle for Mizoram State.

After a long dialogue, both sides could not change their positions; therefore they adjourned the meeting agreeing to disagree with each other."

As Zaikima and his friend Rinmawia joined the MNF underground, their goal was then achieved to a degree. Since they were both literates, Rinmawia was assigned as a Battalion Sergeant Clerk and Zaikima as a Platoon Sergeant.

"Tichuan, an chak ngawih ngawih, ram tana thih huama dotu hnam sipai, Mizoram tana zalenna famkim chauh lo thil

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[718] Hermana, p.99.

dang engmah lungawina nei lo MNF sipai 'Mizo Army' an
tihah chuan mi pawimawh an ni ta."[719]

The translation runs as follows -

"So, their dream of becoming national militias willing to die
for the motherland, aspiring nothing than attaining self
determination for Mizoram was achieved and they became
prominent members of MNF army also called Mizo Army."

Before they approached the MNF underground, Rinmawia and Zaikima could not
feel comfortable to hang about in their town as all their friends had volunteered for
the MNF's cause. They considered joining the underground army as an act of
nationalism wherein the volunteers were held as fighting for their land—Mizoram.

"Kima, hmana kan sawi dun kha nang engting nge i ngaih
tak? Kei chu Aizawla hetia awm tlaw reng hi ka tui tawh lo.
Kan thiante zawng zawng ram tan an chhuak zo tawh a."[720]

The translation runs as follows -

"Kima, what is your opinion about the things that we had
discussed? I do not feel easy staying in Aizawl at this instant.
All our friends have gone underground for our land."

The geo-political boundary where Mizo nationalism was bred obliged self
determination from Indian union. Thus, fighting for the cause was believed as
fighting for one's territory. The Mizo Hills District or Mizoram was regarded as the
sacred 'geo-body' of the Mizos and it required to be liberated from the possession of
what they deemed as 'others'.

"Thenkhatte erawh chuan he kan chenna Mizoram tan hian
an thisen an leih baw tawh thungin an nunna hlu tak chu kan

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[719] Dokhuma, *Silaimu Ngaihawm*, p.25.
[720] Dokhuma, *Silaimu Ngaihawm,* p.23.

ram tan hian an hlan tawhin an la hlan zel dawn ni pawhin a
lang."[721]

The translation runs as follows -

"Some shed their blood for our land Mizoram and sacrifice
their precious life for our land, which they will continue to do
so."

Territory deeply interlaced with identity was perceived in this passage. Being Mizo is often regarded as defending the territory inhabited by Mizos against any emergent aggressor. The demarcated 'geo-body' has often been conceptualised in tandem with the individual body. Therefore, defining sacrificing of one's body as an act of willing victim for one's territory.

Territorial identity was strongly supported with religious identity. The MNF volunteers not only fought for their territory, but for their religion as well. When Lt. Sanglura was about to die, he stated his last word assuredly:

"Kei zawng Kima, ka hunin mual a liam ve dawn ta a nih hi.
Pathian leh kan ram tan rinawm takin ka thisen kalkawng hi
in rawn chhui zel dawn a nia."[722]

The translation runs as follows -

"Kima, my time is going to end shortly. You venture to track
on my blood trail staunchly for God and our land."

Sacrificing the 'body' in favour of the 'geo-body' was believed as a spirit of true nationalism. In one correspondence between MNF personnel, the letter stated, "A

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[721] Dokhuma, *Silaimu Ngaihawm*, p.43-44.
[722] Dokhuma, *Silaimu Ngaihawm*, p.54.

great combatant, Mr. Lalhmingthanga sacrificed his life for God and our Land with his police uniform while on duty".[723]

C. Hermana described the same slogan of the MNF in his work and asserted:

> *"Ram awpna tur Danpui (Constitution) pawh an thiam ang leh an theih ang tawka thain an ruahman ve a. Danpui innghahna atan chuan Bible (Thuthlung Thar) hi an hmang a. Sorkar thupui ber (motto) atan PATHIAN LEH KAN RAM TAN tih leh MIZORAM MIZO TA tih an thlang a."*[724]

The translation runs as follows -

> "For the fundamental structure of their governance, they prepared a Constitution as good as they could. They used the Bible (New Testament) as the basis of it. They selected FOR GOD AND OUR LAND and MIZOS OWN MIZORAM as the principle motto of the Government."

Christianity has been a trait of Mizo identity since its introduction. The Christian God is often mentioned when the definition of being Mizo is expressed. It was not only the MNF volunteers who fought for God, the idea was embedded in the heart of females who extended their support from their domestic state of existence. Ramliani sent a letter to her beloved MNF underground personnel wherein she inscribed:

> *"Pathian leh kan ram tan chauh ni lo, ... tan pawh ka rinawm reng e."*[725]

The translation runs as follows -

> "I stay faithful not only for God and our country, but for ...... as well."

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[723] "Pathian leh kan Ram tana a police uniform dik tak ha in duty lai mek pasal tha Pu Lalhmingthanga chuan a nunna a pe ta." D/27(A)/59 of dated December 4, 1967. *The Frontier Despatch, Volume 2, Issue 42*, 8 December 2017, p.19.
[724] Hermana, p.97.
[725] Dokhuma, *Silaimu Ngaihawm*, p.47.

The MNF regarded themselves as pro-nationalist and for them Mizo nation was their main concern. They did not accept their identity being submerged by the spirit of Indian nationalism and they were totally against the Indian nation. Hence, the epistemic 'others' for them was everything Indian and the ontic 'others' were the plains Indians or the *vais*.

> *"India sipai hrohrang a nat sawt em avang chuan Mizo Army*
> *tan pawh chet a khirh sawt hle mai a."*[726]

The translation runs as follows -

"As the pressure of the Indian Army intensified, it was difficult to take steps for the Mizo Army."

For the MNF, their struggle was against the Indian Government or in other words, the nation state of India. They judged that the existence of Mizo nation under the nation state of India was wrong, therefore fighting for self-determination was necessary in order to liberate Mizo nation from the rule of the Indian Government.

> *"India sipai chi hrang hrang chu Mizoram dung leh vangah*
> *hian an khat a ni ta ber e. An dah khawmna khua lah chu*
> *mipui thaa hungtirin mahni hna pawh thawk hman lovin an*
> *sal chhawr chiam chiam a, ei tur an pe thei si lo. Chu avang*
> *chuan kum 1968 phei kha chu Mizoram tam azawngah tam*
> *nat ber kum a ni ta hial ang."*[727]

The translation runs as follows -

"The different battalions of the Indian Army filled the length and breadth of Mizoram. The sites of relocation of villages were fenced by people's labour who left their daily works and were exploited as slaves without providing enough food.

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[726] Dokhuma, *Silaimu Ngaihawm*, p.27.
[727] Dokhuma, *Silaimu Ngaihawm*, p.43.

For this reason, the year 1968 seemed the most terrible in the famine history of Mizoram."

Publicity Branch, Mizo National Front General Headquarters, Mizoram issued a statement entitled '*Choak arawn-chang tawn*' (The crow with the peacock's feather) wherein it critiqued the move made by Congress to win the favour of the Central Indian Government. It alleged that the Congress members were a crow (Mizo) putting on a peacock's (Indian Government) feather. It asserted that neither the *Vai* government welcomed the Mizo Congress delegates nor the Mizo Government admired their move. The MNF labelled the Congress as trading Mizo identity to the *vais* and called them a traitor as the crow that puts the peacock's feather.[728]

Since confrontation between the Mizo Army and Indian Army was relentless, the Indian Army personnel were cruel towards the people of Mizoram. The environment generated the hatred of mainland Indians or *vais* in the minds of the people. This hatred thus shaped the ethnic identity of Mizo as an ontic opposition against the *vais*.

In one letter, the MNF listed two casualties into two categories— '*vai man*' or 'seized by *vai*' and '*vai kah hlum*' or 'shot dead by *vai*'.[729] *Vai* was the principle 'others' for the Mizo community so much so that according to Zakhuma, the two leading parties, the Mizo Union and the Mizo National Front were antagonistic to the Congress party that was seen as having connection with the *vais* or in other words, an alien party.[730] He also argued that cultural and ethnic contradiction contributed a major factor that generated a strong bond of ethnicity and cultural isolation from mainland Indian culture and identity.[731] Thus, the very idea of staying isolated and protecting their identity (especially from the *vais*) was one of the strongest points undertaken by the MNF.

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[728] D/86-16. *The Frontier Despatch*, *Volume 2, Issue 18*, 23 June 2017, p.24.

[729] D/1-9. Eleven MNF volunteers of 6th Battalion are listed as seized by *vai* and eight MNF volunteers are listed as killed by *vais*. *The Frontier Despatch, Volume 2, Issue 17*, 16 June 2017, p.24.

[730] Zakhuma, p.85.

[731] Zakhuma, p.84.

6.4 <u>Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung (2006)</u>

6.4.1 Brief biographical sketch of C. Lalnunchanga

Son of Lalchawimawia, C. Lalnunchanga was born on 3 May 1970. He is one of the best known contemporary novelists who is awarded MAL Book of the Year twice (along with C. Laizawna and Lalhriata, who were the other persons awarded twice)[732] for his two novels *Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung* (2006) and *Kawlkil Piah Lamtluang* (2015). Lalnunchanga did his formal education up to 8th standard. He currently resides at Bawngkawn, Aizawl.[733]

Lalnunchanga has seven novels in his name and has written 100 articles and essays. He produces one historical narrative, twenty four short stories and eight short plays, and has composed 10 songs/poems.

His published books includes, *Partei* (1999), *Hmangaihna leh Huatna* (2004), *Ka Mi Huaisen leh Ka Pasaltha* (2005), *Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung* (2006), *An Tia Lawm, Vol 1 – Vol V* (2006, 2007, 2007, 2008, 2010), *Ruam Rai Thuruk* (2007), *Lunglenna Thawveng* (2008), *Indona leh Hmangaihna* (2010), *Delh loh Sakei Huai* (2011), *Vutduk Kara Meisi* (2011), *Ka Pi Thawnthu Min Hrilh Chu* (2012), *Zoram Mi Hrangte An Vanglai* (2013) and *Kawlkil Piah Lamtluang* (2015).[734]

6.4.2 Summary of Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung

Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung (The Last Days of the Warriors) is a sequel of *Ka Mi Huaisen leh Ka Pasalthate* (2002) written in 2006. Both the novels can be categorised as postcolonial novels which have their settings during the expedition and the initial colonisation carried out by the British in the territory occupied by the Mizos.

The story begins from the year following the internal conflict between the Sailo chiefs. The conflict between the eastern and western chiefs was ended by the bamboo

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[732] C. Laizawna for *Hmangaihzuali* (1990) and *Anita* (1998), Lalhriata for *Damlai Thlipui* (2005) and *Chun Chawi Loh* (2008).
[733] Interview with C. Lalnunchanga on 23 June 2018.
[734] Interview with C. Lalnunchanga.

famine of 1880. Due to the severe affliction underwent by the people, there were mayhems in several villages. However, the chiefs were able to hold back their influences in their respective realms.

The fiction bases on the story of Puilura, the descendant of Vankalluaia and the chief of Khiangzo village, located at Zawlsang hill range. Soon after their settlement in Khiangzo, Puilura came upon territorial dispute with Sangburha, the descendant of Lalturha and the chief of Tumhnawk. The violent incursion carried out by Sangburha was retaliated by Puilura. There was a deep abhorrence between Puilura and the descendants of Lalturha. On one occasion, Puilura's men were unexpectedly ambushed by Lalturha's descendants on their way to raid Tumhnawk. After the unsuccessful raid, Sangburha sent an emissary to Puilura, which was declined by the latter. The territorial dispute was unsettled in which Puilura continue to ransack Vuakdup village.

The quarrel continued wherein Puilura decided to move first when he heard that Sangburha had an intention of raiding his village. When Sangburha's men drew together in Parsum to attack Khiangzo, Puilura attacked them all at once. Sangburha ultimately persuaded Puilura to make a duel that would end their perpetual disagreement. They promised to present their ten best warriors to combat one on one on a log diagonally placed over a ditch. The winning side would eventually become the victor wherein no further aggression would be carried out by the losing party. The combat finished with the triumph of Puilura.

After the battle, tension between Puilura and Sangburha dwindled for a short period that was resuscitated when Puilura's men were captured by Sangburha's village where one person was killed. Infuriated by Sangburha's action, Puilura planned to retaliate by conspiring Sangburha to make a pact. Sangburha in response decided to meet Puilura at Parsum without arms. Puilura then seized Sangburha and continued to ravage his village. The action made by Puilura was decisive enough to disparage Sangburha.

During the internal conflict between Puilura and Sangburha, there was a great tension between the other Mizo chiefs and the colonial government of British India. The

Mizo chiefs raided and plundered the British colonial subjects in parts of Cachar, Tripura and Bengal. As a result of that, the British sent the Lushai Expedition Force in 1888 to punish Chief Hausata who killed Lt Stewart. Another larger mission known as the Chin-Lushai Expedition was despatched in 1889 that was intended to colonise the Mizo chiefs.

During the course of the struggle, Manga's descendants, the western chiefs killed Captain Browne at Changsil on his way back to Silchar. Changsil Fort and Fort Aizawl were encircled subsequently. Lt Tyler and Lt Swinton were despatched with 200 men from Silchar after hearing the news. Lt Swinton was shot dead after an encounter in Serzawl. However, due to advancement in weaponry, the British were able to force back the Mizos and they soon retreated from Changsil Fort. After Changsil, Lt Cole and Lt Tyler rescued Fort Aizawl and finally pushed the Mizos back. Some men of Puilura partook in the attack of Fort Aizawl. Following the policy of 'scorched earth', the British burned down several Mizo villages during the course of the expedition.

Capt Browne was replaced by Mc Cabe as the Political Officer of North Lushai Hills. His mission was to pacify the Mizo chiefs. He soon suppressed Kalkhama, Liankunga, Lalhrima, Sailianpuia and Thanghulha soon. He captured Lianphunga but his brother Thanruma escaped to Burma. He decisively subdued the western chiefs by suppressing Lianphunga and Kalkhama who were the main instigators.

Mc Cabe's next move was to crush the eastern chiefs, the descendants of Vanhnuailiana. He first employed conciliatory policy to subjugate the chiefs, that was however futile. Puilura was captured and confined in a prison; nonetheless he refused to admit defeat at the hands of the British. He finally died at the prison.

In retaliation, Puilura's son, Saingura attacked one military outpost at Hailakandi, looted and captured some captives. During the same period the British and Mizo chiefs led by Lalburha fought at Sesawng. The British almost lost the battle. However, due to disadvantage in arms and men power, the Mizos had to retreat.

To get revenge of Saingura's raid, Lt Tyler with his men headed to Saingura's village. Lt Tyler planned to appease the Mizos. Conversely, Saingura's men attacked them suddenly and overwhelmed them. Lt Tyler escaped the incident luckily. In the incident, thirty-two armed personnel and eleven porters were killed and eight taken as captives. Meanwhile, Mc Cabe was replaced by AW Davies.

Lt Tyler was ordered to burn the village of Saingura for a second time. However, they suddenly encountered the Mizos and were encircled at Hrangchiauva's village and were at the edge of defeat. They were at last rescued by Davies and Capt Loch. The Mizos retreated to the woods and encamped for the night. At dawn, they were unexpectedly attacked by the British which compelled the remaining to flee. Chief Saingura was captured by the British while Lt Platt was captured by the Mizos during the incident.

Chief Saingura, rejecting to bow before the British was imprisoned to death. Lt Platt was however cared by the Mizos. Both the parties requested to return their captives as a deal. The British, knowing the death of their captive chief could not act in confidence. The Mizos handed back Lt Platt faithfully while the British failed to achieve the deal. Knowing that their chief had died, the Mizos began to shoot the British over again. Their advantage in weaponry made the British to push the Mizos away who retreated back to their village. The Mizos waited for them to attack them at their village. However, the British decided to place some few men as an advanced guard just to threaten the Mizos.

Saingura's village gradually began to decline. Many villagers moved to other villages leaving the chieftess and her warriors behind. Thus, the British finally annexed the Lushai Hills and great warriors lived their last days desolately.

6.4.3 Mizo ethnicity in Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung

In his introductory note, C. Lalnunchanga described his intent for writing the novel. He argued how 'colonial mentality' possessed by the Mizos directed to represent themselves as inferior to the colonialists. He held the idea that the ancestors of Mizos were not brutal and inhumane. He intended to retrieve the past glory of Mizo

ancestors in order to imbue the feeling of reverence in the consciousness of the younger generations. In fact, the work is fundamentally a counter-discourse[735] of the dominant colonial discourse, advocating pre-colonial and post-colonial cultural pride of the Mizos.

The author clearly discussed the early period of colonial encounter by narrating an imbalance power relationship between the colonial force and the 'natives'. He revealed the valour and heroism of the Mizo chiefs and warriors and the social order and civic moral code maintained under the rule of the chiefs based on their culture. It can be seen from the novel that the chiefs were independent and sovereign in the own rights and that each village was administered in order and the social system was properly organised. This state of condition was interrupted by colonial intervention by reducing the whole structure into the state of 'anomie' that was attempted to be cured by western knowledge and practice. One of the main ideas behind the work is the honour given back to the ancestor of Mizos who were intentionally excluded from the colonial discourse, which has been the dominant discourse even after the process of decolonisation.

C. Lalnunchanga persistently reflected Mizo tribal life before and after the coming of colonialism. The novel disregards the noticeable appeal of depicting pre-colonial life as a kind of ideal society. As an alternative, he portrayed a world in which violence, war, and suffering exist. That however were balanced by a strong sense of ethnicity, tradition, ritual, and social coherence. When Vuakdup community was attacked by

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[735] "The term is coined by Richard Terdiman to characterize the theory and practice of symbolic resistance. As a practice within postcolonialism, counter-discourse has been theorized less in terms of historical processes and literary movements than through challenges posed to particular texts, and thus to imperial ideologies inculcated, stabilized and specifically maintained through texts employed in colonialist education systems. The concept of counter-discourse within post-colonialism thus also raises the issue of the subversion of canonical texts and their inevitable re-inscription in this process of subversion. But Terdiman's general address to this problem is also useful here, in that an examination of the ways in which these operate as naturalized controls exposes their 'contingency and permeability'. Thus, such challenges are not simply mounted against the texts as such but address the whole of that discursive colonialist field within which imperial texts—whether anthropological, historical, literary or legal—function in colonized contexts." See 'Counter-discourse', in Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, p.50.

Puilura's village Chief Saingura and the chieftain of Vuakdup, Lalkuri had a deep dialogue talking about their ethnicity and expressed:

> *"Sailo chi khat khua leh tui leh nangni leh keini inkarah hian*
> *zahngaihna nei teh, chu chu i ropuina tur zawk a ni. Halkha*
> *leh Thlantlang mite angin tihmawh lul suh, anni chu an nun a*
> *rawng si a."*[736]

The translation runs as follows -

> "For your dignity, have mercy upon the people of Sailo
> family, between you and us. Do not be obstinate like pitiless
> people of Halkha and Thlantlang."

Familial identity is expressed in the lines in which Sailo or Lusei family is articulated as belonging to one group. On the contrary, two other groups of Pawi family are separately mentioned in comparison.[737] Here, no word is stated on 'Mizo' identity. It is however perceived that familial or lineal group identity is taken as a serious marker wherein Sailo or Lusei identity is placed at the centre in the discourse.

The author viewed ethnicity as an inherited biological traits and cultural similarities practiced for a long time. He perceived ethnic identity as distinctive in robustness and as an existential characteristic defining individual identification of the 'self' and communal exclusivity.

B. Lalthangliana mentioned that the period of their stay between the foothills of Len hills and the Tiau River in the Chin Hills was beginning of village wars.[738] He elaborated that their sense of belongingness to one ancestry was stronger in the Kabaw Valley but as they gradually moved westwards into different regions, wars

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[736] C. Lalnunchanga, *Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung,* Aizawl, Mizoram Publication Board, 2006, p.58.

[737] Ethnic identification during the days was often indefinite. As mentioned, the Pawis in the novel are represented as 'cognate others' having a close cultural connection with the Luseis. The period witnessed internecine violent aggression between certain groups; therefore, exhibiting such antagonistic attitude against other groups did not ascertain differences in historical and cultural aspects.

[738] Lalthangliana, *Mizo Chanchin (A Short Account of Mizo History)*, p.33.

were fought between lineage groups and villages.[739] Lalthanliana also argued that no immense conflict was fought during their stay in the Len hills.[740] These enable to surmise that lineage and inter ethnic wars were fought more heavily when different groups claimed certain territories under their chiefs for their specific groups. For instance:

> *"Zakapa erawh chuan phurna reng reng a nei ve lo a. Heng mite hi a chipuite an ni a…a lainat a ni."*[741]

> The translation runs as follows -

> "Zakapa has no enthusiasm. These are the people from his lineage…he has sympathy for them."

Here, the deep ethnic bond based on kinship is exposed. Even though their political motive had compelled them to fight for their identity based on their territory and their chief, kinship tie had been an unconscious factor that often resuscitated their feeling of consanguinity.[742] This same feeling is perceived when the western chiefs were in confrontation with the British. Rohmingliana thus stated:

> *"Khawthlangho nen hian in-mu leh arin, intai chang te chu nei thin mah ila; kan chipui te, kan unaute an ni a..."*[743]

> The translation runs as follows -

> "Although we are in quarrel and often clashed with the western people, they are our own family, and our brothers…"

When the British expeditionary forces were about to enter the Mizo hills, Puilura, who was a conscious believer of anti-colonial rule asserted his ethnic attachment for

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[739] Lalthangliana, *Mizo Chanchin (A Short Account of Mizo History)*, p.33.
[740] Lalthanliana, pp.109-11.
[741] Lalnunchanga, *Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung,* p.174.
[742] The state of having common origin and cultural characteristics was deeply ingrained in the souls of the Mizo ancestors. Even though the identity to their respective chiefs was strong, there was a deeper consciousness that perpetually reminded them of their intimacy as common descent.
[743] Lalnunchanga, p.189.

his territory by avowing how the Mizos paid their blood for the territory.[744] He was approached by Mc Cabe who tried to make overture with him. In that instant, Puilura bluntly replied that it was their ancestors who guided their way to their territory and they respected their spirits.[745] Saingura sadly uttered that he respected the spirit of their ancestors if they lost their territory to the British and propounded:

> *"Min thlahtute thlarau kha lui leh tlangahte hian an la vak vel a, mahse he ram hian a chakna leh thathonate a hloh zo ta. Mimkut thla a lo de leh thin ang a, kan chhungte thlarau kha mitthi khua atangin kan thlaichhiahte phur turin an lo kal leh ang a, an va hrilhhai dawn em!"*[746]

The translation runs as follows -

"The spirits of our ancestors still wanders in the rivers and in the hills, but this land has lost its strength and vigour. The month of *Mimkut* shall arrive and when the spirit of our deceased relatives return from their abode to take our offerings, how bewilder they will be!"

The ethnicity of Mizo is attested by their territorial space which they bought with difficult effort implying the defence of it from any intruders. The passage to the destined land for the nation was held to be opened up by their ancestors who they believed still resided with them in spirit. Losing the land not only implied the present generation, but the spirits of the ancestors as well who were believed to dwell in the territory. This sense of belonging generated the connection of their ethnicity and the hills they had occupied for centuries.

Liangkhaia asserted that the belief system of Mizo ancestors went in tandem with their westward migration. As a result of their temporary mode of settlement, they had to evacuate their ancestral lands at irregular intervals. When they made their

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[744] "*He ram hi thisena kan sual chhuah a ni.*" Lalnunchanga, p.201.

[745] "*He kan ram min hruai luttu kan thlahtute thlarau kha ka zah a, anni chuan thu an sawi reng a.*" Lalnunchanga, p.217.

[746] Lalnunchanga, p.293.

incantations, they cited the places of their old settlements in sequence from the most recent to the earliest known.[747] This tradition of citing the older settlements was performed because of the attachment of their identity to the territorial space they had occupied. The territories believed to be occupied in the past by their ancestors were sacredly venerated. Therefore, these places were traditionally incorporated in their sacred incantations. This attachment or sense of belonging had shaped their territorial identity.

B. Lalthangliana argued that Mizo chiefs took a shrewd strategy in defence of their territory by first attacking the British and their subjects as they critically considered the expansion of tea estate by the British as an encroachment into their territory.[748] In accordance with Lalthanliana, the Mizo chiefs decided to drive out any intruders in defence of their territory.[749] C. Vanlalhruaia mentioned the hunting of elephants (*kheda* system) carried out by the British in their territories as the central reason for their aggression.[750] Like Vanlalhruaia aptly titled his book as *Pipute Rammutna (Our Ancestors' Camp)*, the Mizos believed the territorial space they occupied as bought by the blood of their forbearers. The tangible and intangible heritage left by their ancestors in their sacred territorial space rooted their identity to the land and they were willing to struggle for its honour.

This very idea also places in the notion of 'aboriginality'[751] and 'indigeneity'.[752] The whites were seen as intruders of their land. It was the ancestors of Mizos who had lived in the area before the arrival of the colonial regime. It was them who had continuous historical connection to the societies prior to the advent of colonialism and considered themselves as separate from other cultures. Their ethnic identity shaped the existence of the people as one unit that was coherent with their own

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[747] Liangkhaia, p.45.

[748] Lalthangliana, *Mizo Chanchin (A Short Account of Mizo History)*, p.131.

[749] Lalthanliana, *Zalen Nana British Do*, Aizawl, Mizoram Publication Board, 2000, p.25.

[750] Vanlalhruaia, *Pipute Rammutna: A Socio-Cultural Innovation*, p.58.

[751] "Inhabiting or existing in a land from the earliest times or from before the arrival of colonists; indigenous." 'Aboriginality', in Oxford English Dictionary, [website], https://en.oxforddictionaries.com, (accessed 25 July 2018).

[752] "The fact of originating or occurring naturally in a particular place." 'Indigeneity', in Oxford English Dictionary, [website], https://en.oxforddictionaries.com, (accessed 25 July 2018).

culture, tradition, society and legal systems. They were the groups who made their settlement before the arrival of the colonialists, thus driving them out was obligatory in order to cleanse their land contaminated by the new settlers.

Lalnunchanga attempted to counter the debasing and false narrative of the Mizos produced by Eurocentric presentations. This presentation described the Mizos as 'savage', 'wild', 'uncivilized', etc. He therefore tried to re-construct Mizos past glory by contradicting colonial discourse.

The author described the conflict between the colonialists, and the Mizos wherein he ardently devoted to liberate the Mizos of their subjugated psyche and identity from the colonial epistemic hegemony. Lalnunchanga illustrated the organised culture and orderly tradition of the pre-colonial Mizo society and their reasonable resistance to the colonialists without fear and a sensation of defeat. In the story was the pride and arrogance of the Mizo chiefs, having no feeling of subordination to the colonizers.

Before Lt Platt attacked Saingura's village, he first had in mind to appease Saingura and made an agreement with him. When Lt Platt's messengers met Saingura and talked about the terms, he sarcastically replied:

> *"Chu! Ngai teh u, Mingote hian min en hnuaihnung hle emaw ka ti a, an Bawrhsap Hmuihmulduma chuan thu thlenna tlakah min lo ngai reng a nih chu! Thu lawmawm tak zuk ni reng a."*[753]
>
> The translation runs as follows -
>
> "Ah! Pin your ears back; I thought the Whites demean us, but Mr. Black Moustache officer considers us worthy of having a dialogue! Such a good news!"

The messengers felt the humiliation exhibited by Saingura. The Mizo chiefs did not regard their ethnicity as inferior to the Whites or any 'others'. They refused not only to lay down their arms peacefully, but also refused to make any unequal treaty. Even

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[753] Lalnunchanga, *Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung,* p.287.

after Saingura's confinement in the hands of the British, he did not beg for forgiveness nor had any will of submitting before the British. He answered Davies ingenuously:

> *"Nangni Mingo leh keini Sailo chu lal chi, lal thisen kai kan ni a, kei aiin i chungnung lo. He ramah hian kan sakhua leh nunphungte kan chherchhuan a, thuk takah, in hriat phak lohva thukah; tumahin min tihchhiatsak lo vang. Thlarau tam takte chuan thlan khur atangin thu min la chah reng a, chuvangin nangni vun varte nena chen ni chakna ka nei lo. In lak tawh khuate ka hmu a, tlang tina lalte hi keimahnia ro inrel turin min chhuahsan rawh u."*[754]

The translation runs as follows -

"You Whites and we the Sailos are regal, having royal blood, and you are not superior to me. We based our belief system and culture deeply in our land, so deep that you would not comprehend its depth; and no one would destroy that. Countless spirits still speak to us, and I never wish to dwell with you Whites. I have seen the villages you have conquered. Leave every chief of the hills to govern by our own."

Lalhruaitluanga Ralte mentioned an instance when TH Lewin took twenty seven Mizo chiefs to Calcutta in December 1873. In Calcutta, they met the Lieutenant Governor but they did not regard him as their superior, refused to salute him and gave him a simple formal greeting. They were not in awe of the grandeur of Calcutta and did not appreciate the house of the Governor General.[755] In fact, they lowered themselves under no circumstances.

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[754] Lalnunchanga, *Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung,* p.317.
[755] Ralte, *Zoram Vartian*, p.110.

The Mizo chiefs had pride in themselves and they never judged themselves as inferior to anyone and they were the symbol of their people's identity. This same attitude was exhibited when they came into contact with the Whites. The chiefs of different hills reigned supreme in their spheres of influence and the British found it difficult to deal with them.[756] B. Lalthangliana stated that "Mizo chiefs never admitted defeat and claimed themselves as 'reigning between the sun and the moon'. They had absolute power over their subjects and even had the power over life and death. Even after the British carried out certain expeditions against them, they could not subdue several chiefs who fought for their sovereignty. The strong British force was resisted by the chiefs and most of them fought to the end defending their territory, while some died in the prison."[757]

During the period of their conflict with the British, many Mizo chiefs were punished and imprisoned. The British made an effort to persuade them to submit on condition that they ruled under the British. However, Mizo chiefs refused to admit defeat and instead of surrendering their freedom to the British, for instance, a dowager Ropuiliani died at Rangamati jail[758] in 1893 and Chief Lianphunga and Kalkhama hanged themselves at Hazaribagh jail in 1891.[759] This sense of heroism was embedded in their ethnicity.

Saingura's village gradually lost its glory after their fight with the British. Some of the subjects began to leave for other villages that were in peace with the British. As the village was steadily desolated, Cheiftess Lenbuangi had a serious discourse with her warriors. She sadly stated that many Mizo chiefs instead of fighting the British sold their sovereignty to them and served them to their humiliation. She did not regard herself as inferior to the British.[760]

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[756] Lalthanliana, *Zalen Nana British Do*, p.40.
[757] Lalthangliana, *Mizo Chanchin (A Short Account of Mizo History)*, p.177.
[758] Lalthanliana, *Mizo Chanchin (Kum 1900 Hma Lam)*, p.423.
[759] Lalthanliana, *Mizo Chanchin (Kum 1900 Hma Lam)*, p.452.
[760] Lalnunchanga, p.343.

One of her warriors, Rohmingliana replied and stated:

"Hnam dangin kan tha leh zungte chhatin kan khawsak phung an tipherh ta vek a. Hunbi thar a lo chhuak a, Mingote hi kan chungah inluling eng ang mah se, kan hnam lungphum chu a pangngai reng a ni. Mingo kut hnung bal liaka nawmsakna tinreng silh ai chuan keimahni inrelbawl dan anga zalen hi a zahawm zawk a ni."[761]

The translation runs as follows -

"Other people have torn down our vigour and de-structure our state of existence. A new era is coming. Even though the Whites ruled over us, our cultural foundation remains intact. Rather than getting pleasure by serving the Whites, following our own administration is worthy, and to follow our path is more respectable than living life as a slave."

After the military defeat, the monolithic authority of the chief was annihilated who was the unifying symbolic embodiment of their identity. The political and administrative set up was restructured and a new legal system commanded their conduct. However, several persons refused to accept the new system introduced by the Whites and instead sustained Mizo system in many spheres. The author identified this and tactically held in the highest regard. He asserted that the structural and systemic existence of Mizo culture was not inferior to the British. He indirectly condemned the chiefs who supported the British and promoted the idea that being Mizo implies the upholding of one's culture and tradition. He noticed that human history has witnessed the decline of weaker ethnic groups; therefore, defending the land, culture and identity is a prerequisite.

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[761] Lalnunchanga, p.343.

CHAPTER SEVEN

NATURE AND GENDER IN MIZO FICTIONS

In this chapter, two fictional works are used in which one novel traces perception of nature and the other studies representation of gender. Both attempts to communicate the relation of these concepts with Mizo ethnicity. Each section separately deals with the two different concepts using different analytical tool and approach.

7.1 <u>Defining nature</u>

The word 'nature' is derived from a Latin word *natura*, which means "course of things; natural character, constitution, quality; the universe". It literally means 'birth' which is taken from *natus* meaning 'born'.[762] The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines nature as "The phenomena of the physical world collectively, including plants, animals, the landscape, and other features and products of the earth, as opposed to humans or human creations" and "The physical force regarded as causing and regulating the phenomena of the world."[763] The *Cambridge Dictionary* as well defines nature as, "all the animals, plants, rocks, etc. in the world and all the features, forces, and processes that happen or exist independently of people, such as the weather, the sea, mountains, the production of young animals or plants, and growth" and "the force that is responsible for physical life and that is sometimes spoken of as a person."[764]

'Nature' can therefore be defined as a material or physical world/universe that has its origin and change without human involvement. Human being is as a part of nature that can only have the idea of it and intervene in its process. It can be said from the above definition that nature includes the whole system of existence, from the infinitesimal organism to the largest galaxy. Regarding the earth, it encompasses all the living beings/biotic and non living things/abiotic components. The existence of nature is thus spontaneous and independent of the intervention of human beings.

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[762] 'Nature', in *Online Etymology*, [website], https://www.etymonline.com, (accessed 9 August 2018).
[763] 'Nature', in *Oxford Dictionary*, [website], https://www.etymonline.com, (accessed 9 August 2018).
[764] 'Nature', in *Cambridge Dictionary*, [website], https://dictionary.cambridge.org, (accessed 9 August 2018).

7.2 <u>Human being's relationship with nature</u>

The dependency of human being on nature right from his/her existence is irrefutable. There has been a deep connection between human and nature as human has endeavoured his sustenance from nature and has struggled in order to survive the challenges that nature gives. Stephan Kaplan emphasised human beings' relationship with nature by stating that the early human beings were part of nature and completely dependent on nature.[765]

The early human existence was controlled by nature so much so that almost every mythology of different cultures have deep connection with nature and their existence were thought of as owned by the natural order. Animistic and pantheistic worldview was dominant and the deities were often regarded as the forces of nature that provided meaning to their daily existence.[766] This convinced Raymond William to proclaim that "God is the first absolute, but nature is His minister and deputy."[767]

However, according to Lynn White, Jr., the scientific revolution that began in Europe during the sixteenth century and the industrial revolution of eighteenth century changed the innate human perspective that inclined not only to define nature, but to discover the underlying law that governs nature with the intention of manipulating the process of natural order of existence.[768] Ever since the setting up of industry after the industrial revolution, human connection with nature has been deteriorating. Dependency of man on nature weakened and became more and more dependent on industrial products; thus, human being began slowly alienated from nature.

This, he argued, was preceded by the (occidental) Judeo-Christian worldview that is the most anthropocentric religion.[769] The Abrahamic religions including Judaism,

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[765] Stephan Kaplan, 'The Restorative Environment', in Relf Diane (ed.), *The Role of Horticulture in Human Well-being and Social Development*, Portland, Timber Press, 1992, p.134.
[766] Davood Mohammadi Moghadam, Hardev Kaur, Jujar Singh and Wan Roselezam Wan Yahya, 'A Brief Discussion on Human/Nature Relationship', in *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Vol. 5, No. 6; June 2015*, p.90, [website], http://www.ijhssnet.com, (accessed 4 September 2018).
[767] Raymond Williams, *Culture and Materialism: Selected Essays*, London, Verso, 2005, p.69.
[768] See Lynn White Jr., 'The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis' in *Science, New Series, Vol. 155, No. 3767* (March 10,1967), pp.1204-05.
[769] White Jr., 'The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis', pp.1204-05.

Christianity and Islam endowed human beings the stewardship of nature that promotes anthropocentric view while the far eastern religions like Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism, etc. are more integrative with nature.[770]

Studies help us gain better that human belief system and scientific advancement have deep connection with their perception of nature. Lynn Whites' historical analysis of man-nature relationship suggested that technological and scientific development will not solve the modern-day ecological crisis wherein human beings deplete nature, but the foundation of 'new religion' or to 'rethink our old one' as the only way out.[771] In fact, the core essence in man-nature relationship is the perspective of the rational human being towards the natural world.

7.3 <u>Mizo worldview on nature</u>

The early Mizos were intimately intertwined with nature, where their existence was adhered to the environment. They reflected the mechanism of natural law. They continually sought for answers beyond any dimensions, even transcending their mundane realm of existence into the spiritual sphere outside of their sense perception. To them, their daily live was central for which they endeavoured to negotiate any force that was able to suspend the tranquility of their existence.

The early Mizos perceived human beings as part of the natural order of existence and their consciousness of existence itself was not of anthropocentrism. Negotiation with nature was the tradition. Existence itself was perceived as monistic, which vastly directed their worldview. In accordance with their view, the cosmos consisted of the corporeal world and the intangible world of spirits in a single system or unit. The corporeal world included human beings and all the animated life forms, which they believed as possessing spirits of their own. The unanimated objects including rocks and earth were regarded as dwellings of the animated beings that they considered as lacking spiritual entities. They conceived that the animated world was sustained by

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[770] Gicu-Gabriel Arsene, 'The human-nature relationship: The emergence of environmental ethics', p.4, [website], https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org, (accessed 7 September 2018).
[771] White Jr., p.1206.

the spirits residing in the heavens, in the subterranean world, hills and mountains, caves and springs.[772]

The Mizo word equivalent of nature is *khuarel* or *khawrel*, which literally means 'creation of *khua*'. Sing Khaw Khai affirmed that the idea of *khua* is related with the atmospheric world or material world, as well as the secular world being spirited with somewhat like cosmic energy. Moreover, this cosmic energy was deified as *Khuazing*, which was considered the controller of the world under heaven.[773] Thus, *Khuazing* was believed as the controller of earthly things.[774] Along the lines of T. Gougin, *Khozing* was a God that commanded over "climates-causing plagues and misfortunes."[775] The being was related to nature and was inferred as a natural cause and effect.

FK Lehman stated that the general category of spiritual beings among the Chins of Myanmar was composed in one of the significations of *khua*.[776] He further stated that in Haka, there is *Khuazing*, who was not worshiped, but was believed to rule over nature.[777] This same deity is also known as *Khuavang* in Lusei language. *Khua*, according to Zairema connoted 'nature' as in the expression *"Khua a tha/chhia"* meaning "the weather is fine/bad", but which literally describes the order of nature itself.[778]

One can perceive the sacredness of the land or village and its connection to communal identity by studying the words '*khawtlang*' and '*vangtlang*' or '*vantlang*' that are used synonymously till the present days. Both the words can be translated as community or society, but it has a deeper connotation. *Tlang* in both the words refer to the topographic settlement of the people, or in other words, the hilly nature of the terrain. It can also mean the trait of communal/societal union. Both the words had its origin from *Khuavang* or simply *Khua*. *Khaw* in *khawtlang* is a modified form of

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[772] Zairema, p.1.

[773] Khai, *Zo People and their Culture: A historical, cultural study and critical analysis of Zo and its ethnic tribes*, p.106.

[774] Khai, p.106.

[775] T. Gougin, *History of Zomi*, Churachandpur, Author, 1984, p.17.

[776] Lehman, p.174.

[777] Lehman, p.174.

[778] Zairema, *Thukhawchang Mi Pekte Hi*, Aizawl, Zorun Community, 2009, p.199.

Khua or the spirit that was believed to be the guardian of the entire village or community. *Vang* in *vangtlang* refers to the *Vang* morpheme of *Khuavang*. So, when a person identified his sense of belonging as a member of *khawtlang* or *vangtlang*, it had both sacred and territorial attachment.

Khua is differentiated from *ram/ramhnuai* and *lo/huan*. *Ram* is the human uninhabited space or the wilderness, inhabited by the flora and fauna. *Lo/huan* is the place of agricultural activities exploited by human beings. However, as the belief system advocated the monism of all the life forms with the unanimated entities, the total existence was seen as one process of natural existence wherein existence itself was perceived as a sacred unit.

The early Mizos moved their settlements at regular intervals primarily because of the practice of shifting cultivation. When they were to shift the village (known as *ram zuan*), surveyors were sent in advance to explore the condition of the land in order to ensure that the new place would be hygienic and healthy enough to make a living. For that purpose, they brought a cock and spent a night. If the cock did not crow at the break of dawn, the place was regarded as unhealthy. But if it crowed, they would move to that place subsequently.[779] The chirping of birds was also regarded as a sign of a fine environment.[780] Apart from this, water source was carefully explored and they thoroughly checked the natural landscape.[781] They underwent the sacred processes as they believed that human beings had to follow natural order of existence and based their dependency on nature.

Early Mizo worldview did not have a kind of sacred—profane dichotomy posited by French sociologist Émile Durkheim, who considered it to be the 'core feature of religion'. According to him, "Whether simple or complex, all known religious beliefs display a common feature: they presuppose a classification of the real or ideal things that men conceive of into two classes—two opposite genera—that are widely designated by two distinct terms, which the words profane and sacred translate fairly well. The division of the world into two domains, one containing all that is sacred

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[779] Lianthanga, p.95.
[780] Luaia, p.35.
[781] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, p.9.

and the other all that is profane—such is the distinctive trait of religious thought."[782] It is in the light of this view that belief systems are often dichotomized to the sacred realm and profane realm, thus differentiating mundane existence from the sacred. The worldview of the Mizos, however, made no attempt to separate their mundane existence from their rituality as they viewed their whole system of existence as a single unit.

It was not only before occupying the settlements the Mizos followed certain rituals, but before using the *lo* (agricultural land) as well. As agriculture was their principle source of livelihood, they were hesitant to own a land that was cursed by nature. For that reason, two different rites were performed, namely *lo thiang hman* and *thiang lo hman*.[783] *Lo thiang hman* was a sacred ceremony performed as a symbol of their thankfulness when they sensed nature was in favour with them. Contrary to that, *thiang lo hman* was as a symbol of appeasement performed when they experienced the bane of nature.[784]

Mizos had a deep awe to transgress against nature after their agricultural lands were burnt up. For this, they ritually mourned (*hrilh*)[785] the animals and plants that were killed by the fire and observed an appeasement rite with a foul known as *kang ralna*.[786] At times when wild animals were hunted down, ritual proceedings were initially performed[787] as they regarded the animals as an intrinsic part of nature.

The tradition of shifting of *lo* along with villages began to end since 1898 when Major Shakespear introduced the system of land settlement in the Lushai Hills by

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[782] Emile Durkheim, *The elementary forms of Religious Life* (ed. and trans. by Karen E. Fields), New York , The Free Press, 1995, p.34.

[783] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, p.85. Lorrrain transcribed *thiang* as "to be ceremonially clean; to be lawful, right, permissible, legitimate, not unlucky, not inauspicious, not tabooed, not ill-omened, not sacred, not interdicted, not prohibited; to be free (no longer under prohibition); to be not implicated or involved, to be innocent (of a crime, etc.)" and *thiang lo* as "to be unlawful, wrong, unlucky, inauspicious, ill-omened, tabooed, sacred, interdicted, forbidden, prohibited, ceremonially unclean. *Thiang lo* originally carried with it the idea of misfortune or even death being likely to follow any act, etc, so designated." See Lorrain, pp.459-60.

[784] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, p.85.

[785] Lorrain put *hrilh* as "to solemnize (such events as unnatural or untimely death, the burning of a house, etc.) by abstaining from going to the jhoom, etc. (the Lushais believe that those who fail to do this will be laible to have the same calamity come upon themselves); to keep (as Sabbath)." See Lorrain, pp.183.

[786] Lianthanga, p.206.

[787] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, p.139.

amalgamating north and south Lushai Hills. As per the system, Lushai Hills was divided into eighteen circles wherein each chief was granted a circle. The chiefs were prohibited to migrate beyond their circles and the people were permitted to migrate only after they acquired *ramri lehkha* (permission letter) from the authority.[788] In the last days of colonial Lushai Hills, the Assam Administrative Report 1947-48 did not contain any mention of the Lushai Hills even if it contained forest reports within Assam province. [789] As majority of the population yet relied on subsistence agricultural economy, it can thus be said that the colonial government made no major watershed in the management of land in the Lushai Hills. The remarkable impact was the change in religious worldview that consequently had an impact on how the Mizos perceived nature.

A portion of forest areas adjoining the Cachar District of Assam (known as the 509 square mile) was formed as Inner Line Forest Reserve Forest under the Assam Forest Department in 1930 and was under the jurisdiction of the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar District, Assam. However, forest areas in Mizo Hills District Council were overseen by the District Council since 1952. With the attainment of Union Territory and statehood in 1987, the government of Mizoram continues to administer the forest areas under its own jurisdiction.[790]

In subsequent, the Mizoram Forest Act, 1995 that has its genesis as the Mizoram Forest Act, 1955 has been affected that maintains and regulates matters pertaining to forests of Mizoram supplemented by other acts and rules including Wildlife Protection Act of 1972, Forest Conservation Act of 1980, State Biological Diversity Rules of 2010, Forest Rights Act of 2016, etc.[791]

Even though service sector has grown engaging 25% of the total population, agriculture/primary sector has been the major economic activity contributing around

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[788] Robert Reid, *History of the Frontier Areas Bordering on Assam for the year 1883-1941*, New Delhi, Eastern Book Publishing House, 1983 (Reprint), p.44.
[789] 'Administrative Report of Lushai Hill for the Year 1947-48', cited in Robert Lalremtluanga Ralte, 'Colonialism and Forest History: Discourse on 'Colonial Watershed' in Lushai Hills', in *Historical Journal Mizoram, Vol.XVII, November 2016*, p.138.
[790] Department of Environment, Forests & Cilmate Change, Government of Mizoram, [website], https://forest.mizoram.gov.in, (accessed 9 September 2018).
[791] Department of Environment, Forests & Cilmate Change, Government of Mizoram, [website].

60% of the total work force. This clearly states that the Mizos still continue to practice shifting cultivation in large quantity. However, nature and particularly land is seen as personal and family asset and ritual practice in relation to nature and land has come to end. Also, hunting wild animals is still active in certain places for food and leisure activities. The difference as compared to the past is that many urban locales seen hunting as a game and rituals are not observed any more even by the rural hunters who killed them for food. The change in their perception is the alteration of their worldview to anthropocentrism that is accredited to Christianity in general.

It can however be stated that the early Mizos were no better than modern day Mizos in their relationship to their environment or nature. Even though the belief system of the early Mizos emphasized harmony with nature, this worldview did not avoid destruction of the environment or the use of destructive tools. Even if the population was lower in density, direct dependence upon nature may make harmony with nature impracticable. The modern day Mizos, although partly removed from direct contact with nature, perceive the natural world as a precious resource and are most aware of the impacts of environmental pollution. The remedies of environmental pollution are to be located not by revisiting the primitive harmony with nature, but in the awareness of the current population to leave in an environment that is unpolluted and conserved.

7.4 Summary of 'Ka Mi Huaisen leh Ka Pasaltha'

Lalnunchanga produced *Ka Mi Huaisen leh Ka Pasaltha* in 2005 that was followed by its sequel *Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung* in 2006. All characters in the novels are the same as *Ka Mi Huaisen leh Ka Pasaltha* that was written as a prelude for *Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung.*

Written in the form of historical novel, the story is set during the period when there arouse a great tension between the eastern and the western Sailo chiefs starting from 1871 to 1881. The cause of the conflict, according to Lalthanliana was territorial

dispute between the two conferences, which was ended after a decade by the famine of 1881.[792]

The story begins with the attack of Puilura's village, Vangsen in 1876 by the Sukte tribe of the Chin Hills of Myanmar. The Sukte raiders were then chased back and the advanced team of Puilura's warriors ventured to catch them up before they crossed the Tiau river. Knowing the terrain much better than the Suktes, Puilura's men bypassed them through one alternative route and set in position to waylay the Suktes. The Suktes were ambushed, sixteen killed and the leader Vungzapauva, the son of Sukte chief was taken as a captive waiting for his father's ransom.

As tension between the eastern and western Sailo chiefs began to accrue, Chief Vankalluia summoned his elder son Lalngheta and his younger brother Dopawnga to discuss the state of affairs. Saingurpuia, the younger son and the heir of Vankalluia was with them. Vankalluia recounted the story of their lineage and disclosed that they were the progenies of the illegitimate child alleged to be the son of Rohnaa, the apical ancestor of the Sailo chiefs. He maintained that they had to be impartial since they could be left out after the conflict as all the other Sailo chiefs were legitimate rulers.

Nghalthianga, a warrior had a courtship with one of the prettiest lady among his Mizo contemporaneity named Chalromawii. There was another damsel named Ainawni who was in love with Nghalthianga. When Chief Vankalluia gave a public feast, all the unmarried bachelors and ladies of his village attended the great feast except Chalromawii. Hautuka was given the greatest honour *nopui* drink for his sham bravery that no one accepted. As everybody was drunk, Nghalthianga had an intimate relationship with Aimawii.

Shortly after that, Aimawii and Nghalthianga had an infamous case that made public that Nghalthianga boasted his sexual relationship with Ainawni. A case was called against Nghalthianga by Aimawii's father at the chief's house. Nghalthianga loosely

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[792] Lalthanliana, *Mizo Chanchin*, p.532.

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denied that the story between them was just a rumour. Subsequently, the chief rescinded the case against Nghalthianga.

Zakapa and Nghalthianga's party went out for hunting. Unfortunately, they were unsuccessful. But they heard the event of the conflict between the eastern and western chiefs during their expedition. Meanwhile, Ainawni conceived a child and it was known that the father was Nghalthianga. The chief then irately summoned Nghalthianga to his court wherein Nghalthianga explained that he did not mention that he had no sexual relationship with Ainawni. The only thing he said was that the case was a rumour because he did not boast himself of his act. The chief dismissed him without sentence.

Puilura's village were aware that the tension between the eastern and western chiefs became stronger as tragic incidents of raids and counter raids were reported. The western chiefs gradually made an eastward movement that accordingly left Puilura's village on the western flank and were prone to the attack of the western tribes beyond Tiau River.

Sukte tribe attacked Puilura's subjects who were in the forest collecting fire woods. Hautuka, honoured for his valiance betrayed his friends who were severely injured by the Suktes. The Suktes captured Chalromawii and her friend Meni and retreated hurriedly. Nghalthianga and Rohmingliana were informed by Hautuka about the incident and the former rushed to the site. The Suktes killed Hlawnpianga but Saizinga was still alive. He bluntly informed that Hautuka cowardly run away.

Nghalthianga and Rohmingliana tracked the Suktes who were determined to assail them before the women were molested. The Suktes were three in numbers, headed by Vungzapauva. Nghalthianga and Rohmingliana located the Suktes, killed them when Vungzapauva attempted to rape Romawii and finally rescued Romawii and Meni.

7.5 Mizo perception of nature in *Ka Mi Huaisen leh Ka Pasaltha*

As mentioned before, the traditional Mizo worldview negotiated with the laws of nature. They felt themselves as dependent beings in the grand system of nature. The

author reflects this worldview adeptly as he narrates the story. With the reliance of their way of life on nature, their worldview exists in accordance with the phenomena of nature.

It is seen in the novel that Mizo conception of time corresponded to the natural world. Time itself was perceived as cyclical in which progressivity was disregarded. This conception of time is contrary to the view of time as linear and progressive. When the flow of time is perceived to be linear or one-way, it is conceived of as having a beginning and an end. This view suggests that from observation of historical phenomena, there has been progress in history and life on this planet. This theory holds apparent progress in the unconscious and conscious existence of beings on earth. They relied on the observation of recurrences in nature and the observation of the annual cycle of the seasons and its effect on the agricultural activities. As they observed that nature revolved at regular intervals, their consciousness and actions were directed by it.

Having perceived the relationship of the cyclical existence of nature and time, the habitats of Vangsen village read the motion of nature to reckon their time. Thus, seasonal change was seen as time keeper.

> *"Pawl a tla a, ramtuk thla vahsan lak a lo hun a. Mipa fa,*
> *ram tang thei chin chu ringthar tur lo vatin ramah an riak lut*
> *duak a.''*[793]

> The translation runs as follows -

> "Harvesting has finished and the time has arrived to prepare
> for the new agricultural land. All males, old enough to work
> to sustain for the present year left to spend their days and
> nights in the field."

The whole village prepared for the annual cultivation. Nghalthianga and other men could not keep away from the arduous task as the Mizos maintained their life,

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[793] C. Lalnunchanga, *Ka Mi Huaisen leh Ka Pasaltha*, Aizawl, Mizoram Publication Board, 2005, p.71.

especially their agricultural activity in accordance with the season. The month of February was considered as the commencement of their cyclical year from which preparation for the *lo* was started. February was called *Ram tuk thla* meaning the month of clearing agricultural land. Occasionally, harvesting was finished in the month of December known as the *Pawl tlak thla*. This was followed by the harvest festival *pawl kut*, thus the month was named *Pawl kut thla*, which is January.

For the Mizos, the significance of the monsoon rain is large. Therefore, their cultivation depended primarily on the rain falling from around *Nikir thla* or June through *Mim kut thla* or September. After they cut down the vegetation for *lo*, they left the *lo* sun dried for burning. During this period, a spring festival known as *Chapchar Kut* was celebrated in *Vau thla* or March (*vau* derived from the flower *vaube* or *Bauhina variegate*).[794] Haze began to roll amidst the time as a sign that spring was approaching. Seasonal flowers and plants began to open out all acting as an indication of a new season.

> *"Romeiin tlang a bawh paw leh ta chuai a, hnah thar chhuahin thing tin a chawr no hlep hlep a. Lusei fate lunglen tham tho turin tlangah leh ruamah te, mual pangper ram chhiaahte chuan vaube leh fartuah an lo vul leh ta dul mai a. Nula leh tlangvalte chuan chapchar awllen an chen a, hna tul an neih loh avangin an duhzawng an tihna hun tha a ni a, Tlumtea thlir taka an thlir chapchar kut pawh a lo hnai leh ta."*[795]

The translation runs as follows -

"The haze fuzzily covered the hills and new leaves came into bud. To stir the emotion of the Luseis, *vaube* and *fartuah*[796] flowers abundantly blossomed on the hills and valleys and on the hill slopes. Young men and girls enjoyed their leisure

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[794] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, pp.9-17.
[795] Lalnunchanga, *Ka Mi Huaisen leh Ka Pasaltha*, p.78.
[796] Scientific name - *Erythrina stricta.*

days of *chapchar* and they had no laborious work to do. Their

impatiently awaited *chapchar* festival is approaching."

The village of Vangsen having finished the cutting down of vegetations dried up their fields and enjoyed the jubilant festival. The budding and blooming of flowers and plants were seen as custodian of time and were presaged of the arrival of a new routine.

After the festival, they burned the *lo* and seeds were sown in *nikir thla* or April waiting for the *fur ruah* or monsoon rain. In *Tomir thla* or May weeds were cleared which was known as *hnuhlak* or *hnuhkhawih*. For the second time in *Nikir thla* (retreating of the sun or summer solstice) called June, weeds were cleared again which was called *hnuhhram*. During *Vawkhniakzawn thla* or June, *Thitin thla* or August and *Mim kut thla* or September, crops began to sprout. During this period they carried out the final clearing known as *pawh chhiat* or *thual* in September.[797]

> *"Furpui hlo thlawh hun a lo ni a, thlado lerah chawnpui a*
> *chawng bawr leh ta luah a."*[798]

> The translation runs as follows -

> "The rainy season has arrived for weed clearance and
> *chawnpui* flower blossomed atop of the *thlado*[799] tree."

When their time-honoured calendar was about to change, they read the sign given by nature. In this way, they could maintain constancy in their activities. They noted the law of nature and embraced the same as folk adages for succeeding generations. There were sayings such as 'In the year of chestnut bloom, paddies flourished', 'When cinnamom flies come in vast swarms, famine follows', 'When the waxing moon slanted, rain will be abundant', etc.[800]

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[797] Lianthanga, pp.51-52.
[798] Lalnunchanga, p.128-29.
[799] The *jarul* or *jharul* tree (*Lagerstroemia speciosa*). The flowers on this tree are called *chawnpui*.
[800] Lianthanga, p.65.

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As the animal world was believed to be intertwined with the natural system, the cry, chatter and call of animal, bird and insect were keenly mulled over as cautions of the order of existence. Nothing in nature was demeaned as insignificant. When some men went out for big game hunting, Nghalthianga did not join the party having his personal alleged reason. Seeing Nghalthianga, Ainawni questioned him:

> *'Thianga, engati nge sai ram chhuahnaah i kal ve loh?'*

> *Ani chuan, 'Ka u Laiveta a kal alawm,' a lo ti a.*

> *Ainawni chuan, 'An chhuah dawn khan ramhnuai lam hawiin*
> *bawngpui kha a hram lauh lauh a, ka ngaih a tha lo riau mai*
> *a ti a.'*[801]

The translation runs as follows -

> "'Thianga, why did you not set out for the elephant hunting?'

> 'My elder Laiveta went there,' he replied.

> Ainawni said, 'When they were to leave, the cow bellowed
> facing towards the forest that made me felt comfortable.''

The early Mizos negotiated deeply with the order of nature so much so that they believed that animals had an intrinsic acumen to foretell events connected to the actions of human beings. The sense that animals possessed was often thought of as a prediction of their activities.

At one instance when Nghalthianga and Zakapa hunted a *gaur* (wild buffalo) and were at the point of a shooting range, a nearby deer made a movement that made both of them very uneasy as they thought the *gaur* would become aware of them.

> *"Hnung lamah a tawlh let leh hret a. Nghalthianga nena an*
> *inkar hmawng kung chhak deuhva sakhi lo ding chu a hmu a,*
> *a tlan phet ang a, an sial veh lai chu a hnawt ang tih a hlau*

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[801] Lalnunchanga, pp.57-58.

hle a. Sakhi te hian an ralkhelh chuan huk dan riau hi an nei
a. Zakpa chuan a rilruin, 'Huk suh, huk suh,' a ti mawlh
mawlh a. Sakhi chuan Zakapa leh Nghalthianga chu a en
tawn a, a hawi valh valh a; muangchangin tumpang awm
lohna lamah a tawlh liam ta a. Zakapa chu a thaw huai a.''[802]

The literal translation runs as follows -

"He drew back a spot. He saw a deer near a fig tree between him and Nghalthianga. He feared that if it suddenly loped, the gaur might be warned off. Deers often barked alarming call when they sensed they were in danger. Zakapa repeatedly said to himself, 'Do not bark, do not bark.' The deer glanced at both Zakapa and Nghalthianga and turned its head quickly to both of them. It slowly moved away in the opposite course of the gaur and disappeared. Zakapa sighed."

As noted in the text of the fiction, Zakapa was familiar with the 'alarm signal'[803] made by deers and was critical that the deer might bark a discrete call, which would act as a warning sign for the gaur that there was imminent danger. The early Mizos had the habit of exploring the wild that made them acquainted with the nature of the animal world. Animals were believed as the original inhabitants of the natural wild and their actions were judged as messages for the receivers to escape source of dangers.

The story mentions that at one instance, the village of Vangsen was threatened by a tiger that haunted the outskirt of the village. One night, a tiger devoured a pig and consequently killed a *gayal* (domesticated buffalo). The entire village was in danger. Just before the tiger wildly attacked the domesticated animals, one old woman expressed:

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[802] Lalnunchanga, p.98-99.
[803] Alarm signal is regarded as a ritualized mode of communicating a danger or threat by animals. See 'Alarm Signal (zoology)', [website], https://www.britannica.com, (accessed 25 September 2018).

> *"Ka ngaih a tha thei lo, nizan khawvar dawn hnaih khan daiah hauhuk a hualreu vak vak a, chhiatna a lo thleng dawn a ni ang, tupawh fimkhur rawh u."*[804]

The translation runs as follows -

> "I am not at ease. Last night at the break of dawn, a hoolock gibbon discretely cried at the outskirt. I sensed we are about to meet some misfortune. Everyone has to be cautious."

A hillock gibbon was seen as a sign of bad luck especially when it cried at night.[805] Besides, the discrete sound of animals was not only perceived as a communication of danger in the animal world, but was also considered as a signal from animals to forecast impending phenomena for human beings. As such, the Mizos had innocent taboo as regards the animal world. There were taboos such as 'One should not torture a slow-paced lemur', 'one should not afflict or kill a swallow', 'one should not batter a toad',[806] 'tormenter of animals spawned disabled child',[807] etc.

The flora and fauna were an integral component in the belief system. As such, rituals were performed for the life of plants and animals that were killed in the burning of *lo*. For them, the animated world including plants and animals possessed their own souls.[808] It was for this very reason that the departed souls of plants and animals were treated with ritual observations and ceremonies.

> *"Khawlaiah chuan meivap leh la mu a inchap nuai a. Lo an hal dawn hian hmeichhiain tual an phiat a, an chap rawh a kan that theih nan la mu an theh darh a. Lo an hal tukah meiin a kan hlum nungchate ral nan an hrilh a, awmni an kham thin a ni.*"[809]

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[804] Lalnunchanga, p.48.
[805] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, p.143.
[806] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, pp.345-46.
[807] Lianthanga, p.58.
[808] Zairema, *Pipute Biak Hi*, p.1.
[809] Lalnunchanga, p.47.

The translation runs as follows -

"Ashes and cotton seeds scattered in the street. Before they burned the *lo,* women swept the streets and cotton seeds were dispersed in order that the flame blazed well. The following day, they observed *hrilh* ritual for the lost plants and animals, and observed it as a rest day."

As dualism was irrelevant in the worldview of the Mizos, the natural world was revered as part of the whole system of existence. Devoid of anthropocentrism, all living beings were respected with great awe. The mourning of lost animals and plants known as *hrilh* was a ritual that was seriously observed. When the animals and plants were reduced to ashes as a result of their burning of *lo,* they regarded their action as a grave misdeed. As such, it obliged appeasement of nature that was to be performed under the sacred guidance of a priest who was called *puithiam.* At the newly constructed *thlam* or farm house, a ceremony was performed by killing a pair of fowl. In case the owner of such *lo* performed the ceremony without the *puithiam,* a ritual incantation would be recited while performing the ceremony.[810]

Mizos' attitude to nature intended to maintain a relationship of mutual obligation with nature. The early Mizos believed that everything—animal, plant, rock, tree, mountain, and river—has a soul. Therefore, all of nature must be treated with respect and honoured. Animals were respected as equal in essence to human beings. Obviously animals were hunted, but only for food, and the hunter sacredly hunted with consciousness. The land was vital for life therefore it should be treated with respect. Lives were ordered around cycle of nature.

However, after colonial intervention, the traditional worldview of the early Mizos was altered by the introduction of western worldview which distinguished the animate from the inanimate, the physical from the metaphysical, the sacred from the secular, and the natural from the supernatural. The Mizos believed that the supernatural powers can influence the natural order, but the belief in supernatural

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[810] Lianthanga, p.206.

power was annihilated by Christian teachings along with western scientific thinking.

Their worldview and traditions encouraging the view that humans were part of the natural world, rather than its masters was reversed. The earlier interpretation of the world in sacred languages was replaced by western concepts. This, however, does not mean that the early Mizos had no interest in natural causes. They recognized supernatural powers beyond the phenomenal world in the arrival of seasonal rains and instinctive animal behaviour. Thus, in their perception, the effect of the supernatural in nature is relative to the intricacy of the phenomenon.

7.6 The concept of gender

The English word 'gender' has its origin from old French *gendre, genre* meaning "kind, sort, class, class or kind of persons or tings sharing certain traits" that comes from Latin *genus* (genitive generis) meaning "race, stock, family; kind, rank, order; species," also "(male or female) sex," which again derived from Proto-Indo-European (PIE) root *gene* that means "kind, species; character; gender".[811] The male-female sex sense began to be used in English from the early fifteenth century. However, as the word 'sex' connotes erotic qualities in the twentieth century, gender was used as a word that denotes "sex of human being". Since the decade of 1960s from the work of feminist scholars, gender began to be used to refer to social qualities as much as biological attributes.[812]

The *Oxford Living Dictionary* defines 'gender' as "Either of the two sexes (male and female), especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones. The term is also used more broadly to denote a range of identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male and female." [813] Similarly, the Collins Dictionary puts 'gender' as "the state of being male or female

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[811] 'Gender', in *Online Etymology Dictionary*, [website], https://www.etymonline.com, (accessed 12 September 2018).
[812] 'Gender', in *Online Etymology Dictionary*.
[813] 'Gender', in *Oxford Living Dictionary*, [website], https://en.oxforddictionaries.com, (accessed 12 September 2018).

in relation to the social and cultural roles that are considered appropriate for men and women."[814]

Gender, therefore can be explained as the pattern of learned behaviour and action by male and female in the process of socialization and enculturation. Fundamentally, it is different from biologically determined 'sex'. What determines a person as male or female grounded in the laws of nature and is universal while the expression of femininity and masculinity is local that vary in different society and culture.[815] The concept of 'gender' differs from 'sex' in a matter that 'sex' relates to biological aspect (female/male) while 'gender' falls under socio-cultural aspect (feminine/masculine).

Gender theory as a distinct branch of studies of academy emerged in the west during the mid twentieth century as a paradigm for gender scholarship. The fundamental focus of the theory is to explain masculinity and femininity as constructed characteristics that shape the lives of men and women. It argues the idea that biological determinant of human dichotomous existence into male and female and the notion of masculinity and femininity in the historical discourse.[816] To put it plainly, it attempts to remove the aspect of biology from these categories in order to make a new historical discourse. Many often regarded 'gender studies' as particularly 'women studies', but other scholars aim to include both men and women in the discourse.[817]

In her seminal work *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (1935), Margaret Mead argued the fixity of gender behaviours and roles and claimed that temperament even if it is primarily shaped by sex, it is largely determined by the process of socialization and enculturation.[818] She substantiated her stance by

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[814] 'Gender', in *Collins Dictionary*, [website], https://www.collinsdictionary.com, (accessed 12 September 2018).
[815] Andrew Edgar, 'Gender', in Edgar and Sedgwick (ed.), p.106.
[816] Bonnie G. Smith, 'Gender Theory', in *Encyclopedia.com*, [website], http://www.encyclopedia.com, (accessed 12 September 2018).
[817] Bonnie G. Smith, 'Gender Theory'.
[818] Margaret Mead, *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*, New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2001, cited in 'Sexism and Science―Feminism: Fighting sexism by knowledge', [website], https://antisexism.wordpress.com, (accessed 13 September 2018).

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providing three ethnic groups of New Guinea (viz. Arapesh, Mundugumor and Chambuli) wherein masculine and feminine roles performed by male and female were different as compared to western societies;[819] thus, nullifying the biologically determined gender roles.

After Mead, Simon de Beauvior published *The Second Sex* (1949) that further opened a new thinking for gender scholars. Beauvior, an existentialist thinker asserted that the binary existence of men and women oppressed women and regulate to the 'Other'.[820] Man, according her is the Subject and the Absolute and woman acted in accordance with the view of man, who defined himself as the Self. She therefore held that woman lived an inauthentic life and internalized male images of them as their individuality.[821]

Psychoanalytic theory, mainly extracted from Sigmund Freud's work contributed much to gender theory. Freud judged that sexual identity developed relationally and this relativity informed masculine and feminine psyches. Freud's work interpreted female psychosexual development as depended on girl's imaginings the male phallus and female genitalia as a 'lack' of the phallus—advocating 'phallocentrism'.[822] Subsequently, the girl regarded her 'lack' and that of her mother as a depreciation of femininity and obliged her to value male superiority. On the contrary, boys feared that they might become castrated like their mothers 'lacking' phalli and constructed an ego identifying masculinity with accomplishment.[823]

Luce Irigaray argued that women have been correlated with nature and irrationality; on the other hand, men are correlated with culture and subjectivity. Irigaray considered that women are not regarded as full subjects wherein she asserted that in western culture male is the only subject that exists.[824] She maintained that as a result of masculine universalism, men are the subjects (rational, self-conscious, etc.) and

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[819] Mead, *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*.
[820] Shannon Mussett, 'Simone de Beauvoir', in *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: A Peer-Reviewed Academic Resource*, [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 13 September 2018).
[821] Shannon Mussett, 'Simone de Beauvoir'.
[822] Smith, 'Gender Theory'.
[823] Smith, 'Gender Theory'.
[824] Sarah K. Donovan, 'Luce Irigaray', in *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: A Peer-Reviewed Academic Resource*, [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 13 September 2018).

women are 'the other' of men/subjects (eg. the non-subjective, the supporting being, the lack, etc.). She put forth a suggestion on how women can start to reconstruct their identity in order that one sex does not exist at the expense of the other. Nevertheless, she did not prescribe a new identity as she wanted women to define themselves.[825]

Foucault's works have been an influential reference for feminist scholars. Even though he rarely talked about gender issue in his works, his studies on the relations between the 'body' and 'sexuality' with 'power' has provided insightful ideas for feminist scholars. Foucault argued that the body and sexuality are not natural phenomena, but are cultural constructs. This critique of essentialism has been utilized by gender theorists largely.[826]

By producing two critically acclaimed books, *Gender Trouble* (1990) and *Bodies That Matter* (1993), Judith Butler spoke against the assertion of essential womanhood when talking about femininity. Butler underlined human action as iteration of social norms and rules instead of stating in terms of behaviour of a conscious subject. In maintaining that, she argued the discourse of gender as constructed and that of the 'body' or 'sex' as determined by biology, therefore more 'real'.[827] Offering a poststructuralist interpretation, Butler rejected the foundation of 'sex' for 'the construction of gender' and instead put forward that 'sex' is as constructed as 'gender' by claiming that the construction of 'sex' as being more or fundamental 'real' than 'gender'.[828]

The study of 'gender' calls forth various scholars providing different theories from history, anthropology, sociology, psychology, literature and philosophy. In fact, gender studies itself has become an independent discipline focusing on its own speciality. It mainly focuses on gender roles, binary existence of gender based on sex, female consciousness from her relationship to male, representation in the form of discourse and the amalgamation and criticism of the whole approaches. However,

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[825] Sarah K. Donovan, 'Luce Irigaray'.
[826] Aurelia Armstrong, 'Michel Foucault: Feminism', in *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: A Peer-Reviewed Academic Resource*, [website], https://www.iep.utm.edu, (accessed 14 September 2018).
[827] Smith, 'Gender Theory'.
[828] Smith, 'Gender Theory'.

multiple gender theories have been influential for conventional academic discourse by turning to rethink historiography and women's studies giving richer conceptual framework and new ways of correlating historical topics to contemporary larger issues.

7.7 <u>Gender in Mizo society</u>

7.7.1 The pre colonial Mizo women

In pre-colonial Mizo society, gender differentiation was large. The aspect of gender existence promoted patriarchy and the devaluation of the status of women. Women were regarded as a 'lower creature' and were treated as inferior to men.

The birth of a male and female child was received with the same bliss in the early Mizo society. Male was greeted to be a brave hunter and warrior while female was reserved to be beautiful and to have the prospect of profiting her family with her bride price.[829] There was however a tradition that assigned both the sexes with different roles. When the mother delivered a child, the community used to ask whether it was a spear or a hoe. The spear symbolized a son who was expected to be a great warrior, while the hoe symbolized a daughter who was beforehand ascribed with the role of tending *lo*.[830]

In their adage was such statement as '*hmeichhia leh chakaiin sakhua an nei lo*' (Women and crabs have no religion). This statement implies the cultural 'gaze' that women had no autonomy to initiate or fixed adherence to the worship of *sakhua* (belief system) and were not regarded as holder of *hnam* (ethnic) formation. It was man who initiated the sacred process of initiating one's *sakhua* and *hnam*. They were to change their *sakhua* and *hnam* following their husband.[831] Instead, women were obliged to be excluded in sacred ceremonies and rituals as it was to be performed

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[829] Lianthanga, p.13.
[830] Lianthanga, p.13.
[831] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, p.313.

solely by men. They were allowed to attend the ceremonies to serve *zu* (alcoholic drink) and other insignificant services.[832]

Mizos perception on membership of ethnic group based on gender can be delineated by analyzing marriage. However, marriage per se does not require to be dissected. For this, exogamy or interethnic marriage will suffice as the patriarchic norms and attitude skewed the cultural paradigm of Mizo society.

Whereas marriage of Mizo men with non-Mizo women is seen as simply a marriage of Mizo and non-Mizo wherein Mizo lineage continued to be regarded as 'uncontaminated', marriage of Mizo women with that of non-Mizo men is considered as dilution of Mizo lineage in which descent, as a cultural rule, is to be reckoned grounding on non-Mizo male line due to the patrilineal character of Mizo society. Thus, gender differentiation is overtly expressed. It is capable of being said that men's marriage with non-Mizo has no noticeable effect, while women's marriage with non-Mizo men is widely accepted as tantamount to betrayal of Mizo ethnicity.

This can be substantiated by referring 'The Mizo Customary Law' notified in the official gazette. In section 74 of the law, marriage with non-Mizos is mentioned. It declares that marriage of Mizo men is to strictly follow the law as it has future connection regarding property rights and law of inheritance. However, women's marriage is disregarded as she is construed as joining the family of other *hnam*.[833]

Women were considered as an irrational and unthinking being by mentioning that *'hmeichhe finin tuikhur ral a kai lo'* (Women's wisdom does not reach beyond the village springs). As household chores were put in the hands of women and activities such as hunting, raiding and *lo* preparation were carried out by men, the opinions of women were respected under no circumstances in almost all important affairs.[834] It was men who were involved in all the important decision makings[835] and females

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[832] Lalfakzuali, *Changing Position of Mizo Women*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2010, p.7.
[833] Section 74, 'The Mizoram Customary Law', in *The Mizoram Gazette Extra Ordinary*, No. H. 12018/119/03 – LJD/62 dt. 04.04.2005.
[834] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, p.313.
[835] Lalfakzuali, *Changing Position of Mizo Women*, p.3.

were to serve the male members by performing household chores and caring the family.

During the pre colonial period and prior to the abolition of chieftainship in Mizoram, there were certain cheiftainess who administered their own villages and were the apex agencies in decision making and administration. Lalhlupuii the grandmother of Chief Lalhleia, Laltheri the sister of Chief Vanhnuailiana, Darbilhi the daughter of Chief Zahuata, Ropuiliani the wife of Chief Vandula, Darsuakpuii the daughter in law of Chief Vandula, Sangkungi the granddaughter in law of Chief Vandula, Suaki the daughter in law of Chief Vandula, Darhnuni the wife of Chief Hrangphunga, Sumkungi the daughter in law of Chief Vandula, Neihpuithangi the wife of Chief Vuttaia, Pakunga Rani (Pakunga's wife) the widow of Chief Pakunga, Pi Buki the wife of Chief Manga Sailo, Vanhnuaitangi the daughter of Chief Manga Sailo, Rothangpuii the daughter of Chief Manga Sailo, and Thawmi the neice of Chief Rothangpuia became the head of villages.[836] Nevertheless, in most cases, they occupied their roles due to the demise of their husbands and had no right of legitimate heirship by birth.[837]

As regards the right of succession, the male lineage was accorded the privilege position. Women had no right to inherit properties and in the case of inheritance of any movable and immovable properties and assets, *ultimogeniture/ postremogeniture* (the practice of inheritance in which the right of succession belongs to the youngest son) was practiced. If married couples were divorced, children were taken over by the father. Even if a widow lived with her children, the father's family were the actual owner of the children in marriage affairs.[838] In case when a widow had a minor son, one of the father's relative had to take over the family properties and land.[839]

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[836] For details, see Irene Colbert, 'Participation of Mizo Women in Chiefship, District Conference and District Advisory Council', in Lalzuiliana (ed.), *Modern Trend of Women Leadership in Mizoram*, Guwahati, Assam Book Hive, 2004, pp.50-69.

[837] Colbert, 'Participation of Mizo Women in Chiefship, District Conference and District Advisory Council', pp.50-69.

[838] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, p.314.

[839] Lalfakzuali, p.4.

The Mizo custom permitted divorced women to claim back her personal belongings that she brought at the time of marriage known as *thuam*, but was restricted to touch other items belonging to her husband. Women were treated differently in the case of adultery by prohibiting them to claim even the *thuam* and the bride price had to be returned. Conversely, in the case when the husband had promiscuity with other women, no punitive action was taken against him.[840]

Women performed laborious tasks in certain occasions accompanying men in cultivation apart from the cutting down or clearing of vegetation called *lo vah*. Besides, she had to stitch, mend worn clothes and performed all household chores. In order to carry on those female roles, young girls were trained from their early age and would assist their mothers while young boys would refrain from those domestic roles.[841]

With all the ascendancy enjoyed by male members in the patriarchal set up, men however did not exercise oppressive dominance over woman. There was mutual existence between the two sexes and both had appreciation of their positions and roles. Without the consciousness of gender equality irrespective of biological attributes, women did not suffer major discriminatory treatment as compared to other societies.

7.7.2 Status of women during the colonial period

The introduction of Christianity can be seen as an ambivalent experience as regards gender issue. Christianity with aspect of western patriarchal values did not eradicate the established patriarchy. However, with different worldview, the status and role of women altered far more as compared to men. This changing status and the new gender roles continue with negligible change to the post independence Mizo society.

The most functional apparatus for the changing status of women was education. When DE Jones opened a school on 15 February 1898, about thirty boys and girls

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[840] Lalfakzuali, p.9.
[841] Lalfakzuali, pp.3-4.

attended the school in irregular interval.[842] In 1900, out of sixty six students in Aizawl, eleven were girls and three of them were later appointed as teachers.[843] Majority of the female pupils studied elementary subjects rather than advanced subjects.[844] In 1901, in spite of the irregular attendance of girls, Nuii and Saii attended classes regularly who made excellent progress in their studies.[845]

By the year 1903, emphasis was given to girls' education. Accordingly, three temporary schools principally for girls were opened at Hriangmual (Mission Veng), Thakthing and Rahsi Veng (Venghlui). Women themselves then began to teach and three former students, Nuii, Saii and Pawngi taught in these new schools.[846] Hriangmual, later renamed as Mission Veng became the locus of girls' school. The school was administered by Ms Jones in the initial years and was shifted at the same locality in 1939. It was later changed to Presbyterian Church Girls' School which is still in existence.[847]

When girls' schools were opened by the missionaries, some men opposed it as they questioned the need for women's education.[848] However, under the care of Mrs Margaret Sandy, the wife of Mr FJ Sandy, the girls' schools in Aizawl gradually developed and gained acceptance among the Mizos. Nevertheless, many were yet unconvinced regarding the value of educating girls.[849]

In 1920, three students of the girls' school attained distinct results in the Middle School examination that enabled them to pursue further education in the Welsh Mission High School in Shillong. The same year witnessed two boys from the Boys Middle English School in Aizawl joining the Government High School in Shillong and other two boys went to Allahabad to further their studies. While boys had

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[842] Lloyd, p.42.
[843] VS Lalrinawma, *Mizo Ethos: Changes and Challenges*, Aizawl, Mizoram Publication Board, 2005, p.309.
[844] Edwin Rowlands, 'Report for 1900', cited in Lalzama, *Mizo Language and Literature: Emergence and Development [Contribution of Christian Missionries from 1897-1947]*, p.82.
[845] Edwin Rowlands, 'Report for 1901', cited in Lalzama, p.82-83.
[846] DE Jones & Edwin Rowlands, 'Report for 1903', cited in Lalzama, pp.83-84.
[847]Lalchhuanliana, *Mizoram Presbyterian Kohhran Chanchin*, Aizawl, Synod Literature & Publication Board, 2007, p.251.
[848] Lalrinawma, *Mizo Ethos: Changes and Challenges*, p.308.
[849] Lloyd, p.207.

advantages over girls in educational opportunities, some scholarships then began to be availed by girls that indicated the new progression of girls.[850]

With such development, the first women to finish matriculation Varhlunchhungi passed in the year 1929. Lalsangpuii attained the first Bachelor's degree in general course (Bachelor of Arts) in 1942 followed by the first Master's degree holder in general course (Master of Arts), Rita Neihpuii in 1952. Engineer Jeeni Chawngthu became the first women to be awarded Doctorate (Hindi) in 1974. The first Bachelor's degree holder in technical course, Lalengi Khiangte finished MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery) in 1964, followed by Lalthanpuii Hnamte to finish Doctorate degree in technical course in MD (Physiology) in 1990.[851]

In 1979, L. Tochhawng became the first to enter Indian Administrative Service (IAS) succeeding Lalhmangaihpari, the first women to enter the Central or All Indian Service by joining Indian Revenue Service (IRS) in 1967. Boichhingpuii during 1994-2010 was the first woman head of government body in the Department of Art & Culture. In 1987, Nuchhungi was awarded the Padma Shri award in the field of literature.[852]

In politics, Lalziki Sailo and Maria Christina Hmingliani served as Members of District Council holding nominated seats. Saptawni was appointed as the first women to be a Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) during Union Territory (UT), followed by K. Thansiami and Rokungi. L. Thanmawii and K. Thansiami were the first woman to be elected as MLA during UT. After statehood Lalhlimpuii was the first elected woman to become a Minister in the State legislature (Minister of State) during 1987-88,[853] followed by Vanlalawmpuii Chawngthu from 2016 to 2018. Until now, no women have occupied the post of Cabinet Minister, Chief Minister and Members of Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha. However, women were often elected as

[850] Lloyd, p.207.
[851] Lalfakzuali, p.37.
[852] Lalfakzuali, p.38-39.
[853] Vanlalthlani, 'Lack of Women's Participation—Gender Issues and Concerns (Problem and Barriers): Regional Context' in Lalzuiliana (ed.), *Modern Trend of Women Leadership in Mizoram*, p.39.

members of local bodies (Village Council/Local Council) where some of them held the apex position even before the introduction of separate seat for women candidates in 2015.

Lalhriatpuii in her book *Economic Participation of Women in Mizoram* stated that of all the total work force in Mizoram, 53.80% are men and 43.98% are women (who constitute 49% of the total population as per her field survey conducted in 2006).[854] From her studies, she found out that only 25.29% worked in organised sectors and 70.75% earned their livings in unorganised sectors.[855] The Department of Economics and Statistics report on filled-in posts and vacant post of state government (as on 1.4.2006) indicated that among the five regularised groups of employees' hierarchical structure (i.e. Group A, B Gazetted, B Non Gazetted, C, D) and two temporary posts (i.e. Muster Roll and Work Charge), out of the total 11505, majority of women (4633) occupied Group C post. The highest post (i.e. Group A) is held by 579 female officials against 2369 male officials. Group B Gazetted, the next highest post engaged 314 women against 677 men.[856] The statistics exposed that Mizo women still lagged behind men in terms of economic security and attainment of top official occupancy.

Several Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Societies were established to promote the cause of women that had its beginning since the formation of Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual (MHT) in 1946. The association was reinstated in 1974 as Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP) in 1974. Another association pertinent to women was formed in 1976 called Puitu Hmeichhe Pawl (PHP) and the Young Women Christian Association (YWCA) was started in 1985.[857] All these associations have the prime objective of upholding women's condition and their activities contributed much for the development of Mizo women. Apart from these associations, Mizo females took active part in other large organisation such as the

[854] Lalhriatpuii, *Economic Participation of Women in Mizoram,* New Delhi, Concept Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd., 2010, p.120.
[855] Lalhriatpuii, *Economic Participation of Women in Mizoram,* p.129.
[856] 'Employees Census of Different Organization in Mizoram–2005', [website], http://desmizo.nic.in, (accessed 21 September 2018).
[857] Lalfakzuali, pp.66-67.

Young Mizo Association (YMA) where some of them were even elected to hold the top post.

In the organisational set up of the church, women played vital roles. Right from the incipient stage of the establishment of the church, the Report of 1914-15 mentioned that elderly women were larger in number than old men as women had an inclination to accept the gospel more willingly than the men and they actively partook in the church activities. [858] In 1913, the Presbyterian Church started their women department known as Kohhran Hmeichhia. The Baptist Church of Mizoram also began their women wing called Baptist Kohhran Hmeichhe Pawl in 1965. Similarly, other church denominations initiated their own women units.[859]

Female church members have been active attendants of church services and contributed largely in encouraging the revival movements in Mizoram. Several women achieved theological degree and many worked as missionaries to preach the gospel. These achievements as compared to men stand on the same level. [860] Churches like the Salvation Army and the Baptist Church have no difficulty in ordination of women as church leaders, viz. Officer in the Salvation Army and Church Elder/*Upa* in the Baptist Church. However, denominations such as the Presbyterian Church, the United Pentecostal Church, etc. still struggle with the ordination of women to the post of *upa*.[861]

Most of the denominations has made official sanction making the women to preach in church services and are also appointed as members in different committees under the organisation of the church. However, ordination of woman as a Pastor or its equivalent position in the hierarchical structure of churches in Mizoram has not been fully accepted until the present days. The only women ordained as a pastor is RL Hnuni who was formally sworn in by the Baptist Church of Mizoram in 2012.

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[858] Rohmingmawii, 'Christianity and Society in Mizoram', in Malsawmdawngliana and Rohmingmawii (eds), *Mizo Narratives: accounts from Mizoram*, Guwahati, Scientific Book Centre, 2013, p.200-01.
[859] 'Mizo Minute Kohhranah leh Khawtlangah', in RL Rinawma and Tlanghmingthanga (eds), *Kum 100 Kristian Zofate Hmabak*, Second Edition (Revised), Bangalore, The Bangalore Mizo Christian Fellowship, 1994, p.219.
[860] 'Mizo Minute Kohhranah leh Khawtlangah', p.220.
[861] 'Mizo Minute Kohhranah leh Khawtlangah', p.221.

Nevertheless, she is not sanctioned to administer pastorate as her male counterparts.[862]

7.7.3 Women's right: Legislation and the empowerment of women

The MHIP has been campaigning for the empowerment of women not only culturally, but through legislation since its establishment. Apart form the MHIP, the All Mizoram Women Federation (AWMF) endeavoured for the same objective. It was the result of such undertakings that major legislative acts related to women's right were enacted by the State government in the second decade of the twenty first century.

First is the amendment of local bodies acts for reservation of women's seats. In 2014, 'The Lushai Hills District (Village Councils) (Amendment) Act, 2014'[863] was passed. It was newly inserted in Chapter II, Section 3 of the act that seat reservation for women shall be one in Village Councils having three seats and five seats, two in Village Councils having seven seats, and three in Village Councils having nine seats.[864] Similarly, in the Mizoram Municipalities Act amended in 2015, one seat is reserved for women having five seats, and two seats are reserved for women having seven seats.[865] In the same Act, not less than one-third of the total number of seats to be filled is reserved for women and is allotted by rotation to different constituencies in the Aizawl Municipal Corporation (AMC).[866] Thus, among the nineteen AMC wards, six are reserved for women.

The second important landmark for women's right was the enactment made in 2014 that altered women's right reflected in the Mizo customary law related to property rights of women in case of divorce. 'The Mizo Marriage, Divorce, and Inheritance of

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[862] 'Women to be ordained, but not made priest in patriarchal Mizoram', in *Daily News and Analysis, 20 February 2013*, [website], https://www.dnaindia.com, (accessed 23 September 2018).

[863] 'The Lushai Hills District (Village Councils) (Amendment) Act, 2014', in *The Mizoram Gazette Extra Ordinary*, No.H. 12018/28/98-LJD, the 4th December, 2014.

[864] Section 3(2)(i)-(iv), 'The Lushai Hills District (Village Councils) (Amendment) Act, 2014'

[865] Section 13(8), *The Mizoram Municipalities Act, 2007 (As amended in 2015)*, Aizawl, Aizawl Municipal Corporation, 2015, p. 12.

[866] Section 13(9), *The Mizoram Municipalities Act, 2007 (As amended in 2015)*.

Property Act, 2014'[867] was approved that attempted to level women's property rights with that of men under the patriarchic set up of the society.

Previously, the existing customary law of Mizo upheld that when the husband divorced (*ma/mak*) his wife, the wife could only take home her personal property that she brought during the time of the marriage.[868] In case when the husband brought home another woman and divorced his wife (i.e., *kawngka sula mak*), apart form her personal property, the wife could take one-third of their acquired property.[869] In the event of the wife commiting adultery, she had to leave her husband bare handed.[870]

In the new act, in case of *mak* (including *kawngka sula mak*), excepting adultery or deprivation of the husband's conjugal right, the divorced wife will have a share not exceeding fifty percent over any acquired properties, and her personal property shall also not to be disturbed.[871] In case of *mak* on the ground of adultery or deprivation of the husband's conjugal right due to health, she will have a share not exceeding twenty five percent over the acquired properties and her personal property.[872]

The interplay between legal rights and customary law has been complicated when it comes to the status of women in Mizo society. Patriarchic dominance has been reluctant to give way for women's right that can equal the status of men. However, disrespect of women is not encouraged as women are seen as beings with different roles due to their biological make up.

While reservation of electoral seats is regarded as upliftment of women, some estimation interpreted it as confining women in their own comfort zone, as they felt this opportunity hindered them to compete with men. Correspondingly, their new share in the property rights empowered their status as it protected them from men's domination over her personal pride and social dignity.

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[867] 'The Mizo Marriage, Divorce and Inheritance of Property Act, 2014', in *The Mizoram Gazette Extra Ordinary*, No.H. 12018/233/2013-LJD, the 4th December, 2014.
[868] Section 75, 'The Mizoram Customary Law'.
[869] Section 79, 'The Mizoram Customary Law'.
[870] Section 80, 'The Mizoram Customary Law'.
[871] Section 26 (1) and Section 27 (1), 'The Mizo Marriage, Divorce and Inheritance of Property Act, 2014'.
[872] Section 26 (2), 'The Mizo Marriage, Divorce and Inheritance of Property Act, 2014'.

7.8 <u>Summary of Lali</u>

Lali is a fictional narrative that can be categorized as a short story. It was written in 1937 by L. Biakliana for a competition organised by Mizo Student Association using the status of Mizo women as the theme. With the fiction, Biakliana won the first prize.[873] As per the decadal census of 1931, the total population of Mizoram was 124,404 where Christians comprised of 59,123 (47.52%).[874] The work intricately attempted to uplift the condition of Mizo women by questioning her role in the family, her place in the society and her freedom of choice in her existence. Therefore, it is obvious that Christian ideals and principles had already influenced the Mizos view on the issue of gender.

The story relates the days when many Mizos had embraced Christianity. The village of the protagonist Lali was one such example where most of them adhered to the new religion. Even so, Lali's father was reluctant to give up the traditional belief system. Biakliana portrays him as a roguish husband and father, influenced by alcohol and also cruel to his family.

Lali is depicted as a young girl with a modest character who was the only daughter of their family. She was a good Christian who devoted her free time to church activities. However, her main role was to perform household chores for her family, spending most of her time helping her family. As she was the only daughter, all the burden of feminine works fell upon her. She sincerely dedicated her time for church activities especially on Sunday as she was a teacher in the Sunday school. With such situation, she never failed to perform her responsibilities. Above all, she warmly received who used to woo her at night.

Lali had a close friend named Biakmawia whom she partnered right from her childhood. They were friends though no sign of romantic feelings were shown by each other. One day, Lali had a suitor named Rozika, who was the single son of an affluent family in the village. Being a rich family, Lali's father thought Rozika to be suitable for his daughter and compelled her to accept the marriage. Lali's voice was

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[873] Khiangte (ed.), *Biakliana Robawm*, p.28.
[874] Liangkhaia, p.173.

disregarded by her father bluntly. Even her mother and her maternal uncle Manga wanted her to marry him because they thought Rozika as an eligible bachelor. Lali expressed all her thoughts as regards her attitudes towards Rozika whom she thought was an immoral man. Both her mother and uncle were convinced by her words that led to his uncle apprising to his father the reason of her refusal. Lali's father however declined their stance and threatened her daughter to marry Rozika. Her father's decision disheartened Lali who could only wait for the wedding half-heartedly.

Lali's father continued to harass his daughter who was defended by her mother. The father ordered Lali's younger brother Zuala to go to his uncle's house and called him up as he wanted to carry on the marriage talk. Zuala refused to promptly leave the house as he complained that he had a headache. The father exasperated by Zuala's behaviour hit the latter with a fire wood. The mother rebuked her husband that made her to be divorced at one instance. Zuala could not recover the entire night that coerced his father to call his wife back. Lali was requested to call her mother who was accompanied by Biakmawia on his own will. At that instance, the two realized that there was love between them that attached them deeply.

Zuala's condition became worst day by day. To their aid, Biakmawia rendered his service faithfully throughout their suffering. As the young boy approached his end days, he queried his father with three serios questions: about post death existence, whether he would go to heaven and whether his father would join him in heaven. The father was shocked and stunned as he never thought about those questions. To reassure Zuala, Biakmawia replied him that he would not die. Zuala illness continued for four days then finally went to meet his maker. Zuala's death had a profound effect on his father that led to his conversion to Christianity.

When the appointed day of Lali's marriage was approaching, it was found out that Rozika had a sexual relation with Zami and were excommunicated by the church leading to the cancellation of Lali and Rozika's marriage. By then, Lali's father already apprehended the righteousness of Biakmawia and his commitment for their family in the hours of their need. A year passed, Lali and Biakmawia's childhood friendship was united with a marriage.

7.9 Lali and the representation of gender

The fiction *Lali* centres its narrative on the story of Lali, an ideal Mizo woman constructed by the author. Having contained a short discourse on the life of his father, whom the author describes as a symbol of adherent of the old belief system and his conversion to the Christian faith, the story is a true example of narrative on Mizo gender—succinct and sincere.

The story begins with Lali talking her need to draw water as she requested her mother to continue her work. Lali was then weaving a blanket for her family. When Lali was about to leave, her father came home, intoxicated with *zu* (liquor). He ordered Zovi, Lali's mother to quickly prepare a meal for him. When Zovi told her that she would serve him after she finished her weaving, Lali's father was incensed as he regarded his wife's reply as a decline. The father then cruelly beat the mother[875] which was sometimes called as *nupui velh* (beating one's wife).

Lali then left her house with Thani for the village's fountain to fetch water. On their way, both the friends talked about the status of women in their families. The story in third person narration recounts:

> *"An chan hrehawmzia leh awl lai an neih lohzia leh hmeichhiate reng reng chan hrehawmzia ngaihtuah zawm ta zel ni awm tak hian, ngawi rengin an kal ta a….Lali chu a thil ngaihtuah khan a rilru a la tingui zel ni awm tak hian, 'Kei chu kan tih tur pawh ka en ve hauh lo mai. Junior zirlai bu ka la nei ve si lo va, chu lo rengah kan sawi tawh bawk chhiarna hun ka nei hlawl lo a ni. Naktuk Chawlhni a ni mai tawh si a, zanin inkhawm banah tal tui ka chawi leh loh chuan ka la ngah lo hle si a. Buh den tur lah a awm bawk a, ka u in buhfai a phur zo vek a, ka deng chawp zel a ni miau mai a. Nang ka thian tui chawi i la duh em?'"[876]*

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[875] L. Biakliana, 'Lali', in Khiangte (ed.), *Biakliana Robawm*, p.161-62.
[876] Biakliana, 'Lali', p.163.

The translation runs as follows -

"Seeming as they were thinking about their wretched status, their lack of leisure time and the miserable condition of women as a whole, they silently paced…. Appearing that Lali continued to be depressed by her thoughts she said, 'I did not read for tomorrow's class. I do not have the junior text book. And as we have said, I do not have enough time to read it through. Tomorrow is Sunday and if I do not draw water after the church service tonight, we won't have enough water. There are paddies yet to be pounded. My elder brother had stockpiled them all and I have to pound as the need arises. Do you still need to fetch water, friend?"

All the household chores were regarded to be practically done by females. Females had no leisure time almost throughout the entire day. At dawn, they set the hearth to fire, drew water, pounded and cleaned paddies, and prepared meal. After meal, they cleaned up the dishes, prepared for *lo* and worked for the whole day. After the long day work at the *lo*, they went home and prepared dinner. After cleaning up the dishes, they cooked pig's swill and finally ginned cotton and wove yarn while males were courting them.[877] This is confirmed by J. Shakespeare who mentioned that Mizo women had no leisure time so as to serve their families.[878] This performance of household chores and minor roles attached to femininity apart from laborious works gave them 'double burden'[879] in their daily existence.

> *"Lali chuan chaw a ei sawk sawk a, buh a hak a lawk a, sumhmunah a chawi chhuak a, a nu chu thleng a sengpui sawk sawk a, buh chu a deng ta a."*[880]

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[877] Lianthanga, pp.37-38.
[878] Shakespear, p.16.
[879] Also known as *double day, second shift*, and *double duty*, 'double burden' is a term used to describe the workload of male and female gender where female often spend more time than male on household chores and caring work of the family.
[880] Biakliana, p.163.

The translation runs as follows -

"Lali hastily dined the meal, took out unhusked rice from the fire-shelf to the front veranda, hurriedly helped her mother clearing the dishes and pounded the unhusked rice."

The author clearly reflects the division of labour in Mizo society wherein women contributed to the family's livelihood. They kept the home and performed all the domestic roles. As mentioned before, the Mizo society was a patriarchal set up where men were assigned with the task of *ram* or role outside the home and the village, and made the household items or wares.

Femininity was seen as something that required sexual attraction for men. While fine-looking males were not so much praise as compared to their physical strength, the 'body' of women were 'gazed' to combine attractiveness in both facial beauty and physical exactness.

"A san lam chu nula vantlang zet, fit nga leh inchi hnih vel a ni a, a pianzia chu chawm lam ai chuan ria lam a pawl zawk deuh mah a, mahse riaa sawi tur zawng a ni lem lo. Hmai tung deuh ret rawt, Mizo nulaah chuan hnar ngul sang deuh, mit meng fel tak, ha sin deuh, rual tak, sam buk lo, mahse sei deuh tak a ni.

"Tin, a hmel chu Mizo nulaah chuan a vantlang a ni mai ang chu, mahse ngo mang lo tak a ni. A bak chu a kir sa deuh hle avangin tunlai bak sam anga han siam danglam teh chiam loh pawhin put theih mai mai tawk tak a ni. A hmelah chuan mi khumna vak awm mah suh se, a nungchang leh a chet dan hre chiang tawh chuan a hmel thleng pawhin an fak nasa hle thin."[881]

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[881] Biakliana, p.164.

The literal translation runs as follows -

"Her height is normal, with around five feet and two inches. Her body is more slender than chubby, but is not to be said as slim. Her face is oval in shape, with higher nose ridge than her Mizo female counterparts, crystal eyes, small and even teeth, less bushy but long hair.

"In fact, her looks is average among the Mizo girls, but her skin is not so fair. Her temple hairs are naturally curly, which makes her to put it without any extra grooming not as the style in vogue. Even though her appearance does not outshine the others, those who already knew her character and behaviour complimented even her looks."

Here we can see traces of 'sexual objectification'.[882] The appearance of Lali is minutely given in which the author unconsciously articulates men's sense of attraction by showing the bodily appearance of Mizo women that seems 'beautiful and attractive' in the 'male gaze'.[883] When the author points about the physical type of Lali as average in comparison to other girls, he unconsciously presents his ideal Mizo women body—fair skin and normal stature with regular proportion. Even if he praises Lali of her character and behaviour, he nonetheless speaks that her body was not better than other females. This entails the 'male gaze' towards female 'body' that contains her femininity and sexual attractiveness.

Opposite to femininity and bodily appearance, hints of masculinity can be extracted from the novel. The author gives details of Biakmawia's physique by stating his figure both consciously and unconsciously leaving his attitude as regards the quality of masculinity attributed to gender.

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[882] Female sexual objectification means a woman being seen largely as an object of male sexual desire, rather than as a person. For details, see Dawn M. Szymanski, Lauren B. Moffitt and Erika R. Carr, 'Sexual objectification of women: advances to theory and research', in *The Counseling Psychologist, Vol.39, Issue 1, January 2011*, Sage, pp.6–38.
[883] The male gaze is the act of seeing women by the male viewers as sexual objects for pleasure. For details, see Carolyn Korsmeyer, 'Feminist Aesthetics', in Zalta (ed.), [website], https://plato.stanford.edu, (accessed 1 October 2018).

"Tlangval ngo pawl tak a ni a. Rethei te mah ni se, a uluk peih avangin a kawrte chu a fai var reng a, a kete pawh hi hmeichhia ang main a ngun phei a. San lamah chuan Lali ai chuan a sang tam pui lo hle, mahse Mizo tlangvalah zawng patling lo tih tur zawng a ni lo.

"A hmai a sin deuh leh a lu a tet deuh avangin mi pawhin an zuam sual fo reng thin a, a taksa chu rin aiin a lian zawk a, chak lamah pawh vantlang chunga leng deuh a ni zel tih tur a ni."[884]

The translation runs as follows -

"His skin is fair among the males. Although poor, his clothes are always clean as he cared after them; his feet are as slender as girls'. He is not so much taller than Lali, but among the Mizo males, he cannot be less considered as an adult man.

"Because of his slim face and his small head, many often get the wrong impression about him. His body is much bigger than seen and his strength is above the average men."

Biakmawia is represented as feminine in phenotypic trait possessing fair skin, small and slender body. The author indicates his neatness when he considers the situations of his fellow males. He mentions that Biakmawia was often misjudged from his slim face and small head. Here, masculinity is taken as having rough and robust traits, as opposed to mild and soft traits of femininity. Nevertheless, Biakmawia is stated as possessing physical strength, which was above ordinary men. This means that strength and muscularity is the symbol of masculinity among the Mizos who are considered to perform physical functions.

When it comes to marriage, the young man and woman were the most important if both their families agreed with their marriage. However, there were numerous cases

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[884] Biakliana, p.166.

when the parents of the young woman forced her to marry against her consent. Particularly in the case of females, their parents often decided for their husbands against their will.[885] As the marriage price of women could involve huge capital, affluent families were often chosen by their parents even if their daughter refused to marry. It was for this reason that the saying goes "To hoe yam with the lover is more gratifying than to give a grand community feast."[886]

In the story, the author states that women were treated like properties and were sold and traded like commodities as it describes the situation when Lali was forced to marry an affluent person without any courtship by her father. The author comments with grief the deprived condition of many Mizo women in marriage affairs.

> *"Nupui/pasal inneih thu, Sapte anga mahni hmangaih zawng leh duh zawng thlanga dam chhunga intanpui leh inhnem tawn tur ni awm reng a, duh taka inneih te hi chu khawvela thil chakawm ber pakhat chu ni fo awm a ni a.*

> *"Mahse hnam dang kan ni lova, Mizo kan nih miau avangin, Mizo hmeichhia, kan farnute tam tak tan chuan hetiang hun lo thleng hi thil huphurhawm ber mai, mittui tla leh lungchhe chunga hman a ni fo thin. Bawng te ang mai bawkin kan hralh a, ran leituin a ran lei tur chak lo awm leh awm lo a en ang main a taima leh a tha kan en a, a neitu, a nu leh pa, a u leh naute lah chuan a man pe tam thei thei kan leitir mai a. Bungrua ang main kan hralh a, kan innep a, kan lei hnu pawhin "Hmeichhia leh palchhia chu thlak theih alawm" te kan ti a. Kan duh leh kan vel a, kan duh leh kan ma a."*[887]

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[885] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, p.191.
[886] Lianthanga, p.133.
[887] Biakliana, pp.171-72.

The translation runs as follows -

"In case of marriage, choosing partners with love and caressing each other for the rest of life like the Whites is the ideal, and the most desirous thing in the world is to marry one's choice.

"But we are not the others. We are Mizos and Mizo women and many of our sisters have to face this anxious situation, spending their days with tears and anguish. They are sold like cattle. Like the buyer of cattle who looked for the strong and healthy, we also do look for their productive capacities and their appearances are judged. The owner, her mother and father, and her brothers sold them to the one who could furnish the highest marriage price. We traded them like properties, bargained for their price and even if we bought them, we still said 'women and old fences can always be replaced'. We beat them when we wish and divorce them as we desire."

It is also seen in the text about gender differentiation relating to divorce. When men changed their wives, they simply said *'hmeichhia leh pal chhia chu thlak dan'* (Women and old fences can always be replaced). The customary law allowed men to *ma* (to divorce one's wife by the husband) their wives and women to *sum chhuah* (to return one's marriage price by the wife to divorce her husband) their husbands. However, women leaving their husbands were rare except in special cases, but men divorcing their spouses for new wives were frequent. For that reason, the saying was often expressed by men to acquit themselves.[888]

The structure of Mizo society restricted the right of women in decision making process from household to economic matters, from familial to societal subjects, from religious to political issues—in fact in almost every affair. In the story, Lali realised

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[888] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, p.313.

her subordinate status in her family not only because she was a child for her parents, but also she was a daughter. Males were more or less had the liberty to decide their wife as compared to females.[889] Even the mothers were not given any right to resolved issues unless the fathers allowed them. Lali's mother was compassionate with her daughter but she avoided convincing her husband as she knew that her voice would be plainly rebuffed.

> *"Eng pawh ni se, hmeichhia hi zawngin thu an nei ve ngam*
> *mang hlei law."*[890]

> The translation runs as follows -

> "In any case, women have no nerve to take part in decision making."

The roles assigned to femininity was limited that entailed the concept of 'glass ceiling' wherein women were expected to attached to the hearth and all important sacred rites and decision making was exclusively reserved for men. Women could not ascend beyond the ascribed roles and positions as the patriarchal establishment did not allow them to achieve such roles and positions. As such, women were 'interpellated' to accept their position without remonstration.

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[889] Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, p.191.
[890] Biakliana, p.174.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

Ethnic studies though becoming in vogue in academic studies faces challenges both from academic and non-academic works recently. The reason for the emerging arguments appears to be the end result of ethnic formation and the quandaries it brought into existence against the establishment. However, ethnicity has also resulted favourable outcome that provides cohesion for the benefit of a particular society. Though the academic sub-discipline of ethnic studies underlines contemporary social or cultural situations and current political state of affairs, historical scholarship cannot be disregarded as it serves the foundational instrument for comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

Literary works describe ethnicity and its attributes in a number of ways both consciously and unconsciously. Whereas most non fictional works provided conscious investigation and analysis of ethnic identity using proper research methodology, fictional works often express the same content covertly. The focus of the research inclines towards the latter work. Nevertheless, in order to identify the unconscious representation of Mizo ethnicity, discourse on Mizo ethnohistory and literary historiography are carefully examined so as to isolate conscious discourse on Mizo ethnicity.

Different approaches to the study of ethnicity have their respective ways of defining the concept. As it has connection with both race and nation, it has often been used interchangeably although dissimilarities have to be considered. The primordialist interpretation of ethnicity as existing to a very early time in history is true to a great degree. However, explicating ethnicity as solely determined by common descent and socio-biological factors is incomplete as argued by the constructivist and instrumentalist scholars.

Against the primordialist interpretation of ethnicity as predominated by kinship bond and cultural attachment, the constructivists argued ethnicity as a social construct that emerged lately in human history, which in not given and static but is experienced,

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learned and shared. This view is accentuated by the instrumentalist scholars who perceived ethnicity as a transactional apparatus, tactically manipulated by elite for their interests. The notion of ethnicity as explained by the constructionist/instrumentist lacked definite rationale because ethnicity ofttimes entails collective sense of belonging that is validated by recognition of the group members.

Ethno-symbolism has been the mostly coherent paradigm, which began out of the discontent with the explanations of both primordialism and constructivism. Ethno-symbolism communicates ethnic identity with subjective dimensions of shared symbols, memories and myths while it underlines the continuing influence of modern ideas on ethnicity at the same time. This can be substantiated by the fact that even though ethnic identity is a modern ideology and phenomenon, cohesive ethnic communities are built upon historical and cultural heritage as ethnic group formation was evident before the onset of modernity.

Mizo ethnicity and identity formation has a long history that precedes the coming of western modernity and politics. Fundamentally, the feeling of collective affiliation was based on kinship tie. Consanguineous and affinal relationship was strongly maintained that was reinforced by the belief system defining ethnic membership. Appellation that derived from hairknot of males was generally followed during their stay in the foothills of Chin Hills. The Pawis who tied their hair atop of the head occupied the central and southern territories where some smaller groups made their migration to the present southern Mizoram and the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Hmars with hairknot at the nape of the neck settled north of the Pawis. Internecine warfare was rampant leading to stronger kinship and village-based identity.

The generic classification into Hmar and Pawi was followed in order to differentiate each other in the early days. However, this was in-group classification as they already had contact with the 'others'. Both the groups recognized each other as 'cognate other' since they shared a number of similar cultural traits. For them, outsiders or out-group members were generally known as *vai*. The *vais* residing east of them were called *Kawl* or *Kawlvai*, and they were known as Chin to the Kawl

people. These people were mostly ethnic Bamars and the Shans. Likewise, the *vais* to the west and north of them were called *Kawr* or *Kawrvai*, who named them Kuki. Later, the arrival of Europeans introduced a new 'other' called *Sap*. Principally, *Kawl*, *Kawr* and *Sap* consisted the 'apparent others'. As explained earlier, 'cognate other' and 'apparent other' are developed newly in the work so as to make clear difference within the general concept of 'other'. Both concepts are employed to differentiate the relationship of 'others' vis-à-vis the Mizos.

The original Hmar group further separated into discrete units as a result of ethnogenesis. From it emerged tribes such as Lusei, Ralte, Paite, Thado, Vaiphei, etc. All these tribes formed themselves into different lineage groups with their own belief system. While the process of ethnic group formation came about from the original Hmar group, several of the remaining clans retained Hmar appellation. These remaining groups gradually assimilated themselves into Hmar people, gradually losing the original Hmar identity. Contemporary Mizo ethnicity faces a great challenge from this recent Hmar identity that has its root from the original Hmar group.

The Pawi group has another complex identity division. Although majority of the original Pawi group retain their original identity, Lai replaced the word Pawi as a more politically correct term. Within the Pawi group, Mara tribe surfaced as a separate group with their own group identity. The reason for Mara becoming as a distinct tribe can be attributed to the geographical circumscription of their strategic settlement within the confine of Kolodyne River and Phawngpui Hills.

Mizo identity formation began from Sailo chieftainship. Founding their rule on the heritage of Lusei culture, Sailo ascendancy standardized beliefs and practices significantly. Lusei culture, thus, became an instrument of uniformity ranging from language to belief system. However, there has been a blend of different cultural traits that enriches Lusei culture and tradition from the initial process in the emergent of Mizo identity.

Though the political supremacy of Luseis was ended by the colonial power, their culture was further developed by colonial administrators to homogenize the people

they were dealing with. Using cartography as a tool to strategically rule the people, political map was prepared. Similarly, ethnographic works was produced and census was conducted in order to classify the people into ethnic lines. Using Lusei as the base, 'Lushai' was used as the ethnonym while the cultural practices and language of the Luseis were codified as the standard within the new political entity.

The nascent 'Mizo' identity that emerged at the outset of the twentieth century had Lusei culture and language at its foundation while Christianity began to substitute the traditional belief system. With universalisation of the belief system, a monolithic identity under the banner of Christianity began to emerge. Meanwhile, absorption of different tribes and clans into 'Mizo' gradually began under one political entity of colonial administration through experiences of uniform law, education system, cultural values and practices, social norms and others. Later, 'Mizo' gradually replaced Lushai. However, the formation of Mizo identity had deep historical connection with Lusei so much so that Mizo identity has often been equated as Lusei identity up till recently.

The post-independence identity became more complicated. Having inherited colonial characteristics, identity formation experienced other new elements. The inclusion of the Lushai Hills District under the Indian Union resuscitated a new spirit of Mizo nationalism. This new nationalism not only defined Mizo identity based on primordial tie, but against general Indians. This period also witnessed the solidification of Mizo and separatism from Mizo contradictorily. Socio-economic and political conditions of the District Council administration coupled with ethnic consciousness of smaller tribes shuddered the nation building process of Mizo.

The new characteristic of Mizo ethnic identity during the period reiterated the ancestral relationship of different tribes of Mizo, their cultural affinities, their sovereignty and the necessity to protect their identity from the general Indians. Pre-colonial sovereignty of Mizo ancestors was emphasised by declaring that self-rule had been the status quo prior to the advent of colonial power. As such, it was asserted that the Indian Union had no legitimate authority to restrain the natural rights of Mizos. Common ancestry and culture of the different tribes of Mizo was

maintained. The alterity of *vais* and the call for unity of all Mizos populating dispersed territories was encouraged. The defining characteristics of 'being Mizo' was against *vais*, thus advocating unison against mainland Indians.

The post-statehood ethnicity of Mizo began to search and redefine the status of being Mizo. From this point, historical scholarship began to trace the origin of Mizo methodically. Along with this, the past glory of Mizo ancestors has been the primary topic of discourse. Although the admiration of colonial *saps* exists, discourse against colonialism and the negative impact it had on Mizo identity has been put forth largely. The post-statehood period witnesses the resuscitiation of self-assertion within or not in favour of 'Mizo' that has its root on early post-independence period. The MNF movement prevented ethnic movements within Mizoram for awhile but the peace accord it signed with the Government of India did not satisfy the interest of the lesser tribes. As a result, smaller ethnic movements have been experienced uptil today demanding special status by particular groups.

On the contrary, a pan Mizo movement to unite the different cognate tribes under Mizo or Zo has been campaigned by various groups. Moreover, group identity based on religious worldview alongwith ethnic line that relates the ancestry of Mizos to ancient Israel appears. The emergent 'Mizo' identity, therefore, faces challenges within itself and 'being Mizo' reverses anew to 'becoming Mizo'.

As shared history, common ancestry and shared culture become the definitional stricture of defining group identity, Mizo identity can be described as *ethnonationalism* or *ethno-religious nationalism*. This produced an ideology wherein *civic nationalism* under India is often seen as a threat to their identity as nation building process in India has been going on since independence wherein the fundamental nature of Indian nationhood is distrusted.

The objective markers of Mizo ethnicity put forward in the work can not be asserted as immutable. However, after careful analysis, *Chhinlung chhuak*, *ram leilung fa*, *Mizo chhul chhuak* and language can be considered as important objective markers of Mizo ethnicity. *Chhinlung chhuak* refers to the mythical opening of earth from where the ancestors of Mizo originated. Using *Chhinlung chhuak* as a criterion for

establishing common descent, the concept is employed to refuse ethnic membership. A claim for belonging in the terra firma entails the assertion of *ram leilung fa*. This claim of indigeneity draws on pre-colonial inhabitation of Mizoram and its surrounding hills ruling out late dwellers since the colonial period into Mizo community. Natal lineage of Mizo parents is regularly used to exclude individuals from Mizo ethnicity. This claim of being *Mizo chhul chhuak* insists principally the father or on occasion the mother to be Mizo by birth. Language is one of the most important markers of Mizo ethnicity. Lusei/Duhlian dialect, having historical significance as the language of Sailo chiefs and the first language to be scripted has become both a unifying factor and the cause of apprehension. People who do not use what came to be known as Mizo language as their first language often expressed their exclusion from Mizo using language as a pretext. Nevertheless, as homogeneity requires one dominant culture to unite the segments in any case, Lusei language and culture performed the monolithic coalescence of various Mizo tribes.

The advent of colonialism brought in a new development apart from ethnic homogenization. Language, which was hitherto communicated orally, was finally reduced to writing in the early 1890s using Lusei/Duhlian dialect. Written language required printing machine for dissemination that was introduced in 1903. Even before the introduction of printing, publications were done outside the Lushai Hills. The first book in Mizo was produced in 1895 followed by biblical translation and the first newspaper in 1898. School textbooks were produced and the first school instructed in Mizo using Roman script was opened in 1894. In 1903, permanent schools were set up for villages and the first examination for Lower Primary was conducted. Political supremacy together with command of language and control of knowledge through print culture and (secular and religious) educational apparatus shaped a new thought, which continued to change afterwards consistent with the spirit of the age.

It was the introduction of writing and western education that led to the production of fictional narratives in Mizo. Consistent with the year of publication *Maymyo Sanapui* (1950) by C. Khuma, *Lungtiawii leh Parchuailova* (1961) and *Lungngaihna Virthli* (1962) both written by RL Rina were the first three novels. These three early works

were published in Burma. Taking into account the year of writing, *Hawilopari* (1936) and *Lali* (1937) both composed by L. Biakliana and *Chhingpuii* (1938) by Kaphleia were the first three fictions. However, these three early works were published lately—*Hawilopari* in 1983 and *Lali* and *Chhingpuii* in 1963. The proposed paradigm in this work challenges the dominant historiographical discourse on Mizo fictional narratives. Thus, contrary to placing *Hawilopari*, *Lali* and *Chhingpuii* as the first three fictional narratives, the work endorses *Maymyo Sanapui*, *Lungtiawii leh Parchuailova* and *Lungngaihna Virthli* as the first three fictional narratives considering the impact they had on the development of Mizo fictions.

In many of Mizo fictional narratives, nostalgia of pre-colonial Mizo society and culture is perceived. The nature of existence before colonialism was regarded as prisitine and the people as 'noble savage'. Although internecine tribal conflict was refered to, kinship bond and reciprocal altruism were admired. This existence was often seen as corrupted by colonial establishment and western modernity. However, western education and Christianity were considered as 'liberator' from 'wildness' to 'civilization'. Accordingly, *saps* were the definitional point of their identity that degraded their consciousness as inferior being. The monolithic regime of colonialism that quietly homogenised group formation produced ideas discussing their existence against larger collection of people.

Being administered by the Union of India after independence, Indic culture influenced Mizos gradually. This was seen by several Mizo leaders as a threat. Besides, sovereignty was claimed using armed struggle against *vais*. Scores of Mizo fictions contain this ideology of ethnic nationalism. The traumatic experiences during the struggle resuscitated the kinship tie of Mizos that was emphatically expressed in many fictions during and after the MNF movement.

The post-statehood fictional content has a distinctive quality in that it blends all the preceding thoughts while significantly honouring the disposition of being Mizo. Several writers articulate the spaciousness of Mizo identity with limited liberal historical and cultural narrative that campaigns for becoming Mizo. It is liberal and inclusive by being incorporating all the cognate tribes of Mizo, but limited and

exclusive by ruling out tribes that have no historical or cultural connection. At the same time, critique of colonialism and western culture is recurrently pronounced so as to uphold the approbation of being Mizo.

In Biakliana's *Hawilopari*, the idea of 'Mizo' is characterised as a distinct emergent identity, instituted on Lusei beliefs and practices. It is discernible that 'Mizo' was in its nascent stage of formation as it was the colonial rule that attempted to homegenize different tribes with a common ethnonym. 'Mizo' was used several times in the novel synonymously with Lusei and Seifate. The rationale for this was the equivalent usage of 'Mizo' and 'Lushai' by the British. Also, non-fictional work such as *Mizo Chanchin* by Liangkhaia already chose 'Mizo' for the nomenclature. However, the idea of 'Mizo' was vague as Lusei headship happened to be the dominant definitional element. It was for this reason that 'otherness' in terms of Mizos' relation with their neighbouring groups was narrowly exemplified.

One group which is included as a rule within Mizo was differently placed outside of it. Biakliana excluded the Pawis from Mizo when he mentioned the aggression of the Pawis and the retaliation made by the Mizos. Territorial attachment was another defining character of Mizo identity. The idea of defending one's land from aggressive intruders was seen in the novel. Furthermore, the fiction accepted Lusei/Duhlian dialect as exclusively Mizo language while it regarded the dialect used by Pawis as non-Mizo language.

It can thus be stated that colonialism acted as a monolithic agent that homogenize group formation that was significant in the emergent of Mizo ethnicity. It performed as a glue that brought together different tribes under the banner of Mizo. However, it can also be explained that the idea of Mizo was exclusive since its inception as it has been instituted largely on the beliefs and practices of Lusei tribe.

Post-independence Mizo identity is illustrated by Zikpuii Pa in *CC Coy No.27*. The fiction depicts the self-debasing mentality of the Mizos using Ralzapzauva as the protagonist. The protagonist endeavoured to become a *sap* knowing their socio-political and ontological status. The superiority of *saps* was internalised in the minds

of the Mizos so much so that the novel describes the need of colonial intervention to liberate Mizos from their unrefined existence.

Mizos were envious of the *saps* and their internalised Eurocentric 'hierarchy of being' conducted their mentality that being a *sap* was becoming 'a human being'. It was for this reason that the protagonist struggled for his socio-political ladder and thus become a *sap*. However, the impossibility of ontic transformation was accepted by the protagonist, thus he acted as *sap* through the process of 'mimicry'. He dressed, acted and used his thinking as a *sap*. In the end, the protagonist was in the state of 'ambivalence' as a result of his 'double consciousness' of being a Mizo and a *sap* losing his sense of belonging among his own people.

The fiction thus represents 'colonial mentality' vividly wherein Mizos defined themselves against the *saps* with a feeling of inferiority. Reverence and imitation of the Whites is announced with 'hybridity' leading to 'ambivalence' and the origin of incompleteness in the psyche of Mizos.

The emergent Mizo ethnicity experienced a deep crisis within itself following the post-independence period. James Dokhuma revealed this in *Silaimu Ngaihawm*. There was disagreement between the Mizo Union and the MNF in their understanding of Mizo nationalism. While Mizo Union accepted their continuation under the Indian Union, MNF regarded the independence of Mizo chiefs before the advent of colonialism and they endeavoured to regain the 'lost freedom'.

It was in this situation that Zaikima and Rinmawia joined the MNF movement by ignoring the criticism made by the Mizo Union adherents. Both Zaikima and Rinmawia could not feel easy staying safely in town as they aspired to fight for their land—Mizoram. Mizo identity for them demanded a fight for the cause of the 'geo-body' wherein Mizo identity was bred and liberation from the possession of Indian Union was felt indispensable. The 'geo-body' was equated with individual 'body' in which sacrificing one's body was regarded as an honourable act.

For that, protection of Christianity was called for as they considered the movement as a 'holy war' against Hindu religion. Every action was embraced as a struggle for

Christian God and Mizo land. Equally, *vais* were the ontic 'others' and everything *vai* was the epistemic 'other'. As the operation was against the Indian Government in order to achieve autonomy, MNF movement and the period following it positioned *vai* as a point for defining Mizo ethnicity.

C. Lalnunchanga's *Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung* represents contemporary thought on Mizo ethnicity with heavy elements of postcolonialism. The novel brings to mind the tribal life of Mizos and the coming of British power. Lalnunchanga described that familial identity or kinship was the basis of ethnicity earlier. Biological traits and cultural similarities were thus underlined. It is emphasized in the novel that though the different cognate tribes of Mizo had hostilities, they considered their common ancestry and fraternity.

The spirits of their ancestors were revered who were regarded as the ones that guided their way to their present territory. When the Mizos encountered with the British in the novel, respect for their ancestors' land was described extensively. Thus, defending the land of their ancestors was glorfied.

The novel attempts to argue against the narrative produced by Europeans wherein the past glory of Mizos was highly praised. Rather than indicating Mizo chiefs and their people as inferior to the colonialists, Lalnunchanga cites that Mizos treated them with a proud attitude and that they were hesitant to admit defeat. Instead, they would die for their land fighting both physical and psychological war. Chief Puilura and Chief Saingura were portrayed as dying at the hands of the British owing to their denial to lay down their arms and were both imprisoned to death.

Holding the idea similar to many postcolonial scholars, the novelist represents Mizos as a valiant tribe with no feeling of inferiority against other people or the Whites in particular. The dominant discourse that debased Mizo culture and identity is challenged by posting pre-colonial Mizo society as well organised and self sufficient in many spheres. It highlights the characteristics of Mizo ethnicity in comparison with the colonialist with respect to civility and humanity in which Mizos were represented as more humane and sensible than the Europeans in their encounter.

Mizo perception of nature is plainly depicted by C. Lalnunchanga in *Ka Mi Huaisen leh Ka Pasaltha.* The novel reflects Mizo worldview and its negotiation with the laws of nature. Nature was seen as the custodian of time and time itself was seen as cyclical. Their economic activities were carried out following the seasonal change. Seasonal flowers and plants were used as an indication of a new season and were regarded as prelude of a new routine. Apart from it, festivals were also celebrated in accordance with the change of season that directed their economic activities.

The fiction relates that animals were seen as having an intrinsic acumen to forecast incidents related to human affairs. Alarm signal made by animals was often seen as mode of communication between animals to indicate dangers from human beings. At the same time, it was also regarded as an omen communicated to human beings.

For that reasons, rituals were performed for the animals and plants that were killed in the burning of *lo*, known as *hrilh*. Such were performed as the flora and fauna were regarded as vital constituents in the whole system of existence. Rather than anthropocentric worldview, their belief system was dictated by monism wherein human being was a part of the sacred unit.

It was Christianity that brought in a new worldview of anthropocentrism. This anthropocentric worlview escalated the sacred exploitation of nature to a large extent. The early worldview of Mizos negotiated with nature but the gradual rise in population led to limited land resource and human induced degradation of environment. However, colonial legislation and its legacy established human control over nature and the responsibility of human to protect and conserve nature. Moreover, contemporary Mizos are more willingly incline to preserve nature and its resources for a more sustainable future due to awareness as regards the need to safeguard their environment.

Gender in Mizo ethnicity has a subtle status. Using the protagonist's name as the title of his fictional work, Biakliana visibly presented the state of gender in Mizo society through the life of Lali. The fiction gives a picture that women were assigned all household chores apart from their normal economic activities which gave them

'double burden'. The society favoured men as it was patriarchal wherein men mostly worked away from home and defended the village in times of war and danger.

The novel depicts women as 'sexual object' and their 'body' often 'gazed' by males. Though it praises Lali of her good conduct and character, it superfluously expresses her face, figure and complexion. The author describes his ideal Mizo women as fair skin and normal stature with regular proportion. In contrast to femininity, masculinity was symbolised with strength and muscularity to perform hard and physically powerful functions.

While men were demonstrated as autonomous in case of marriage affairs, women were stated as forced by their parents against their consent in certain cases. The fiction also mentions the restraint position of women in decision making process in almost every affair, pointing out their limited role to domestic works while important duties were exclusively reserved for men.

It was the introduction of education and structural change in Mizo society given by colonialism and Christianity that changed the position of women gradually. Education and social agencies related to women elevated their status in the society to a certain degree in economic, political and religious affairs. Even though Mizo society maintains its patriarchal structure up to these days, gender role differentiation has become blurred and the social status of women has become better as compared to other highly patriarchal societies.

However, in case of marriage, while marriage of Mizo men with non-Mizo women are seen as normal and could be accepted by the society, marriage of Mizo women with non-Mizo men is mostly considered as betrayal to Mizo community as men are regarded as carrier of Mizo lineage.

To conclude, examination on the ethnohistory of Mizo and its representation in fictional narratives provides a new field of knowledge in historical research. Drawing on both empirical and theoretical approaches on the study of a single subject matter enriches the current discourse as it leads to a new point of view. It is established in the work that Mizo ethnicity has been emerging since earlier times that was

augmented by colonial authority. The process of the developing ethnicity has experienced different turn in different periods of history consistent with the socio-political context. Each historical period had a structure of thought that influenced individuals and the authors/novelists consciously and unconsciously represented Mizo ethnicity in accordance with the dominant idea of the particular age they belonged to.

The status of 'being Mizo' is not static and the contemporary period comes across a challenging mission of putting in order the process of 'becoming Mizo' to a more concrete Mizo ethnicity as marginal communities make an effort to break out from Mizo collectivity. Groups can choose their distinct characteristics and claim separate existence since socio-cultural meanings are dynamic to change. If the sense of commonality is unmarked, the net result is dissension within the larger group effectuating further fragmentation into lesser groups. With an attitude of maximizing homogeneity and minimizing separatism, the key to promote ethnic unanimity is attainable. As the different tribes or clans have historical ties and cultural traits that are more connatural than dissimilar, it is to be accepted that slight variations are insignificant given that unity does not need to be uniformity in all aspects.

Appendix – A

PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH C. LALNUNCHANGA ON 23.06.2018

1. **Name** :

2. **Father's name** :

3. **Date of birth** :

4. **Address** :

5. **Qualification** :

6. **No. works in literary field** :

7. **No. of published novels** :

8. **Awards and accolades** :

Appendix – B

CHIN-LUSHAI CONFERENCE

Fort William, the 29th January 1892

At the final meeting of the Chin-Lushai Conference held at Fort William, on 29th January 1892.

PRESENTS

The Hon'ble Sir Charles Alfred Elliot, K.C.S.I.,
Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal
His Excellency Lieutenant-General of the Hon'ble Sir J.C. Dormer, K.C.B.,
Commander-in-Chief, Madras
Sir Alexander Maekenzie, K.C.S.I., Chief Commissioner of Burma
W.E. Ward Esger, C.S.I., Chief Commissioner of Assam
Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, K.C.I.K., C.S.I.
Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department.
Major-General Sir James Browne, K.C.S.I., C.B., R.E.,
Quarter Master General in India

The following Resolutions were passed:

1. The majority of the Conference are of opinion that it is very desirable that the whole tract of country known as the Chin-Lushai Hills should be brought under one Administrative head as soon as this can be done. They also consider it advisable that the new Administration should be subordinate to the Chief Commissioner of Assam.

2. The Conference is not prepared to assert that this step can be taken immediately.

3. The first thing to be done for the control of this tract is to improve the communications between the important places such as Cachar and Aijal, Aiujat and Lungleh, Aijal and Manipur.

4. The Conference is of opinion that the boundaries of the new administrative area should be, generally speaking, the boundaries of the tract occupied by the savages newly brought under British control.

5. The Conference is agreed that North and South Lushai, with such portions of the Arracan Hill Tracts as may hereafter be determined, should be placed under Assam at once on the condition that:

[A] complete transport and commissariat equipment for supplies from Chittagong to South Lushai, and from Cachar to North Lushai, and provided;
[B] funds are granted for road and telegraph from Aijal to Lungleh.

(Signed) C.A. ELLIOTT.   (Signed) J.C. DORMER,Lieut.-Genl.
(Signed) A. MACKENZIE.   (Signed) W. E. WARD.
(Signed) H. M. DURAND.   (Signed) E. H. H. COLLEN.
(Signed) JAMES BROWNE, Maj.-Genl.

Appendix – C

MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED TO HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND ITS CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY THROUGH THE ADVISORY SUB-COMMITTEE BY THE MIZO UNION

MIZO MEMORANDUM

Memorandum of the case of the Mizo people for the right of territorial unity and solidarity and self-determination within the province of Assam in free India submitted to His Majesty's Government and the Government of India and its constituent Assembly through the Advisory Sub-Committee for Assam and fully excluded areas and partially excluded areas.

Pursuant to the resolution passed by the General Assembly of the Mizo Union at Aijal in September 1946 subsequently supported by the Mizo Conference at Lakhipur (Cachar) in November 1946 this memorandum prepared by the Mizo Union and supported by the Mizos outside the Lushai Hills –Manipur State, Cachar, Tripura and the Chittagong Hill Tracts, etc.

The memorandum seeks to represent the case of Mizo people for territorial unity and integrity of the whole Mizo population and full self-determination within the province of Assam for the realization of which an appeal is made to His Majesty's Government, the Government of India and its constituent Assembly to make a special financial provision from year to year for a period of ten years or until such time as the Mizos shall assert that they can maintain their self determination without this financial provision.

THE PEOPLE AND THE LAND

The Mizos are a numerous family of tribes, closely knitted together by common tradition, custom, culture, mode of living, language and rites. They are spread over a wider area extending far beyond Manipur State, Cachar, Tripura State, Chittagong Hill Tracts and Burma contiguous with the boundaries of the present Lushai-Hills District which was carved out arbitrarily for administrative purpose.

The Mizo people have been known under different names. They were wrongly identified as Kukis during the time of Lord Warren Hastings when Administrator of Chittagong sought help of the British against the Kuki raiders, and it continued to be applied to the whole group until 1871 when it was supplanted by the term Lushai as a result of the active and prominent part taken by the Lushai, sub-tribe of Mizo race, against the British Expedition known as the First Lushai Expedition. The present Lushai-Hills District was thus curved out of the Mizoland for administrative convenience and the Mizo people living within the District came to be known as Lushais while the other Mizos left out of the Lushai Hills District and annexed to the surrounding Districts, continued to be known as Kuki without their consent. However, the solidarity of the Mizo people as a race and a distinct block is testified by the name of places, mountains, and ranges of the Lushai Hills, Cachar, Manipur, Tripura, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Burma, known and called after the names of them. Shakespeare, Stevenson, Liangkhaia, Shaw, Kingdonward and Kim of the Statesman are some of the authorities on this.

The Mizos have nothing in common with the plains nor with the Naga or Manipuri, etc. They are distinct block. The areas now under their occupation are mostly hilly except the eastern portion of Cachar district extending to the Barial range in the North Cachar Hills. Wherever they go and wherever they are, they carry with them their primitive customs, cultures and mode of living in its purest origin, always calling and identifying themselves as Mizo.

The nomenclature of the word 'KUKI'was and is known to the Mizos; it was a name merely given to them by the neighbouring foreigners.

Again, it was wrong that the word Lushai should be used as covering all the Mizo tribes since it is misrending of the Lusei, only sub-tribe of the Mizo race. Hence though perhaps, not originally intended, it has created a division. Only the word 'Mizo' stand for the whole group of them all : Lusei, Hmar, Ralte, Paite, Zo, Darlawng, Kawm, Pawi, Thado, Chiru, Aimol, Khawl, Tarau, Anal, Puram, Tikhup, Vaiphei, Lakher, Langrawng, Chawrai; Bawng, Baite, Mualthuam, Kaihpen, Pangkhua, Tlangau, Hrangkhawl, Bawmzo, Miria, Dawn, Kumi, Khiangte, Khiang, Pangte, Khawlhring, Chawngthu, Vanchiau, Chawhte, Ngente, Renthlei, Hnamte, Tlau, Pautu, Pawite, Vangchhia, Zawngte, Fanai, etc, all closely related to one another culturally, socially, economically and physically thus forming a distinct ethnical units.

TRADITIONAL ORIGIN

Traditionally Mizos claim descent from Sinlung, a mythical rock north of the Shan state. Migration by tribal group seems to have taken place about the beginning of the 5th century, halting at several locations from longer or lesser periods through the Shan state, Chindwin Valley and Chin Hills until they finally came to settle in their present occupied areas and the villages claimed by the various Mizo tribes, wherever their present habitat may be, as their original homes are within or close to the border of the present Falam Sub-Division.

THE MIZO POPULATION

[A] The Mizo people in the Lushai Hills alone number 1,46,900 with an area of 8,143 square miles according to the census of 1941.

[B] The Mizo population of Manipur State contiguous to the Lushai Hills again comes to about 70,000 with an area of about 3,500 square miles.

[C] The Mizo in the Cachar District contiguous to the Lushai Hills, the Mizo again number approximately 9,000 with an area of about 300 square miles.

[D] In Tripura state contiguous to the Lushai Hills, the Mizo again number approximately 7,000 with an area of about 250 square miles.

[E] In the Chittagong Hill Tracts, contiguous to the Lushai Hills, the Mizo population is generally approximated to be about 15,000 with an area of about 3,000 square miles.

[F] In the Chin Hills (Burma) also contiguous to the Lushai Hills who are now commonly known and termed as the Chins, number not less than 90,000 with an area of about 3,800 square miles occupied by them.

The total Mizo population of the contiguous area alone thus comes roughly 3,38,400 and the areas about 18,993 square miles.

It is a great injustice that the Mizos having one and the same culture, speaking one and the same language, professing one and the same religion, and knit together by common customs and traditions should have been called and known by different names and thrown among different people with their homeland sliced out and given to others.

The whole contiguous area of the Mizo population as detailed above occupies the middle and the most important portion of India's Eastern Frontiers. It is, therefore, the more imperative that His Majesty's Government, the Government of India and its constituent Assembly should do the just and proper thing and grant the Mizos their just demand for TERRITORIAL UNITY AND SOLIDARITY.

MIZO HISTORY AND BRITISH CONNECTION

The Mizo people were independent, each village forming an independent unity, and their country was never subjugated by the Maharajas of Manipur, Tripura and Chittagong nor by the Kacharis. However, there had been frontier clashes between the Mizos and the neighbouring people which ultimately brought the British to the scene in 1871. The Mizo country was subsequently annexed to the British territory in 1890, when a little less than half of the country was carved out for the Mizo people and named Lushai Hills while the rest have been parcelled out of the adjoining districts. Since the Mizos have remained loyal, friendly and peaceful. At all time, whenever the British needed help as World War I, Abhor Expedition., Houkip Rebellion, and World War II, the willing services of the Mizo people were readily available.

The Mizos have an efficient system of administration and discipline. Being a distinct block they retain to a considerable degree their ancient and traditional laws, and customs and organizations, beginning from village under the guidance of the Chief and the Elders, while young and old have their respective leaders in all walks of life.

Except in Cachar, the Mizo people are excluded from the Government of India's Act and the areas inhabited by them are kept as a special responsibility of the Governor of the province in his capacity as the Crown Representative and the Legislature have no influence whatsoever. In other words, the Mizos have never been under the Indian Government and never had any connection with the policies and politics of the various groups of Indian opinion.

Now that the British are quitting these Mizos who have never been under the Indian government and whose ways are all different from others, cannot be thrown on a common platform with the rest of India. It is therefore, important to the highest degree that the Mizos be given self-determination in its fullest form.

THE PRESENT GENERAL CONDITIONS OF THE COUNTRY

As stated in the foregoing paragraphs, the Mizo areas are mostly excluded. The political officer is supreme in every respect. The Education is mostly carried on by the Christian Missionary groups. The general communication of the country is extremely poor. The land is extremely hilly without good roads; and the people poor and simple, primitive and divided

into tribes and clans. The highest education is mostly derived from outside the district; but in mass literacy the Mizo people is highest in Assam. The people are mostly intelligent and as such given equal terms they always outshine their fellow-workers of other community in the fields at home. They are born strategist. Their greatest short-coming is lack of finance as a result of their trade and commerce and limited scope open for them. Their areas stretch from north to south parallel with the Burma border line for defence along the eastern border of India.

This being the background, it is all the more imperative that the Mizoram be given special financial provision by the Central from year to year while allowing them their territorial integrity as anything short of this will be detrimental to their upbringing. In other words, the Centre shall grant financial provision from year to year for the purpose of development of the country while the district shall join autonomous Assam through legislature with adequate representation and be also eligible to the provincial service with due reservations at the same time retaining their territorial integrity and self-determination : as otherwise thrown among forty crores of Indians the 3,38,400 Mizos with their unique systems of life will be wiped out of existence.

OUR CASE

In the light of the facts stated in the foregoing paragraphs and in view of geographical position and the strategical importance of the Mizoram for the defence of India and taking into consideration the unique characteristics of Mizo polity and compact block of Mizoland – this Memorandum is placed with the authority for –

[1] Territorial unity and solidarity of; the whole Mizo population to be known henceforth as Mizo and Mizoram for Lushai and Lushai Hills District, retaining the sole proprietary right over the land.

[2] Full self-determination with the province of Assam:

[A] With the National Council having the supreme legislative authority and executive body and judiciary within the district the composition and function of which will be prescribed by rules.

[B] Any concurrent subjects in which the district may be connected with the autonomous province of Assam or India as a whole shall be by negotiation with the national councils which will be set up; according to wishes of the general public, any legislation may be applied to the district only with sanction of the national council with any modification.

[C] Special financial provision by the Centre from year to year until such time as the Mizos shall assert that they are able to maintain their territorial integrity and self-determination without this financial provision.
ALL ABOVE ITEMS SHALL BE SUBJECT TO REVISION ACCORDING TO THE FUTURE TREND OF EVENTS TO THE EXTENT OF SECEEDING AFTER TEN YEARS.

For this end it is to be understood that the democratic system of Government in its purest form shall at the very outset be introduced. Passed and approved by the Mizo Union representatives conferences at Aijal, Lushai Hills, Assam on 22nd April, 1947.

26-4-1947

Sd/- KHAWTINKHUMA
President

Sd/- VANTHUAMA
General Secretary
The Mizo Union, Aijal,
Lushai Hills,
ASSAM

Appendix – D

THE CONSTITUTION (SCHEDULED TRIBES) ORDER, 1950

1. Chakma

2. Dimasa (Kachari)

3. Garo

4. Hajong

5. Hmar

6. Khasi and Jaintia, (Including Khasi, Synteng or Pnar, War, Bhoi or Lyngngam)

7. Any Kuki tribes, including: - *(i) Baite or Beite (ii) Changsan (iii) Chongloi (iv) Doungel (v) Gamalhou (vi) Gangte (vii) Guite (viii) Hanneng (ix) Haokip or Haupit (x) Haolai (xi) Hengna (xii) Hongsungh (xiii) Hrangkhwal or Rangkhol (xiv) Jongbe (xv) Khawchung (xvi) Khawathlang or Khothalong (xvii) Khelma (xviii) Kholhou (xix) Kipgen (xx) Kuki (xxi) Lengthang (xxii) Lhangum (xxiii) Lhoujem (xxiv) Lhouvun (xxv) Lupheng (xxvi) Mangjel (xxvii) Missao (xxviii) Riang (xxix) Siarhem (xxx) Selnam (xxxi) Singson (xxxii) Sitlhou (xxxiii) Sukte (xxxiv) Thado (xxxv) Thangngeu (xxxvi) Uibuh (xxxvii) Vaiphei*

8. Lakher

9. Man (Tai-speaking)

10. Any Mizo (Lushai) tribes

11. Mikir

12. Any Naga tribes

13. Pawi

14. Synteng

15. Paite

Appendix – E

MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA BY THE MIZO NATIONAL FRONT GENERAL HEADQUARTERS, AIZAWL, MIZORAM ON OCTOBER 30, 1965

This memorandum seeks to represent the case of the Mizo people for freedom and independence, for the right of territorial unity and solidarity, and for the realization of which a fervent appeal is submitted to the Government of India.

The Mizos, from time immemorial lived in complete independence without foreign interference. Chiefs of difference clans ruled over separate hills and valleys with supreme authority and their administration were much like that of the Greek City-States of the past. There territory or any part there of had never been conquered or subjugated by their neighbouring states. However, there had been border disputes and frontier clashes with their neighbouring people which ultimately brought the British Government to the scene in 1844. The Mizo country was subsequently brought under the British political control in February, 1890 when a little more than half of the country was arbitrarily carved out and named Lushai Hills (now Mizo District) and the rest of their land was parcelled out of their hands to the adjoining people for the sole purpose of administrative convenience without obtaining their will or consent. Scattered as they are divided, the Mizo people are inseparably knitted together by their strong bond of tradition, custom, culture, language, social life and religion wherever they are. The Mizo stood as a separate nation even before the advent of the British Government having a nationality distinct and separate from that of India. In a nutshell, they are a distinct nation, created, moulded and nurtured by God and nature.

When British India was given a status by promulgation of Government of India Act of 1935, the British Government, having fully realized in the district and separate nationality of Mizo people decided that they should exclude from the purview of the new constitution and they were accordingly classed as an EXCLUDED AREA in terms of the Government Order, 1936. Their land was then kept under the special responsibility of the Governor General-in-Council in his capacity of the Crown Representative; and the legislature of the British India had no influence whatsoever.

In other words, the Mizos had never been under the Indian Government and never had any connection with the politics of the various groups of Indian opinion. When India was in the threshold of Independence, the relation of the Mizos with the British Government and also with the British India was fully realized by the Indian National Congress leaders. Their top leaders and spokesman Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru released a press statement on the 19th August, 1946 and stated : 'the Tribal areas are defined as being those along the frontier of India which are neither part of India, nor of Burma, nor of any Indian State, nor of any foreign power'. He further stated: 'The areas are subsidized and the Governor General's relation with the inhabitants are regulated by sanads, custom or usage. In the matter of internal administration, the areas are largely left to themselves'. Expressing the view of the Indian National Congress, he continued, 'Although the tribal areas are technically under the sovereignty of His Majesty's Government, their status, when a new Constitution comes into

force in India, will be different from that of Aden over which the Governor-General no longer has executive authority. Owing to their inaccessibility and their importance to India in its defence strategy, their retention as British possession is most unlikely. One view is that with the end of sovereignty in India, the new Government of India (i.e. Independent Government of India) will enter into the same relations with the tribal areas as the Governor-General maintains now, unless the people of these areas choose to seek integration with India.'

From the foregoing statement made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the Government of India Act of 1935, it is quite clear that the British Government left the Mizo Nation free and independent with the right to decide their future political destiny.

Due solely to their political immaturity, ignorance and lack of consciousness of their fate, representatives of the Mizo Union, the largest political organization of that that time and the Fifty Accredited Mizo Leaders representing all political organizations including representatives of religious denominations and social organizations that were in existence submitted their demand and choose integration with free India imposing condition, inter alia, "THAT THE LUSHAIS WILL BE ALLOWED TO OPT OUT OF INDIAN UNION WHEN WISH TO DO SO SUBJECT TO A MINIMUM PERIOD OF TEN YEARS".

The political immaturity and ignorance which lead the Mizo people to the misguided choice of integration with India was a direct result of the banning by the British Government of any kind of political organization till April 1946 within Mizo land which was declared 'a political area'

During the fifteen years of close contact and association with India, the Mizo people had not been able to feel at home with Indians or in India nor have they been able to feel that their joys and sorrows have really ever been shared by India. They do not therefore, feel Indian. Being created a separate nation they cannot go against the nature to cross the barriers of nationality. They refused to occupy a place within India as they consider it to be unworthy of their prosperity. Nationalism and patriotism inspired by the political consciousness has now reached its maturity and the cry for political self-determination is the only wish and inspiration of the people, ne plus ultra, the only final and perfect embodiment of social living for them. The only aspiration and political cry is the creation of MIZORAM, a free and sovereign state to govern herself, to work out her own destiny and to formulate her own foreign policy. To them Independence is not even a problem or subject of controversy; there cannot be dispute over the subject nor could there be any difference of opinion in the matter. It is only a recognition of human rights and to let others live in the dignity of human person.

While the present word is strongly committed to freedom and self-determination of all nations, large or small, and to promotion of Fundamental Human Rights, and while the Indian leaders are strongly wedded to that principle – taking initiative for and championing the cause of Afro-Asian countries, even before the World body, particularly deploring domination and colonization of the weaker nations by the stronger, old and new, and advocating peaceful co-existence, settlement of international disputes of any kind through the medium of non-violence and in condemning weapons that can destroy the world, and in general wishing of goodwill towards mankind, the Mizo people firmly believed that the Government of India and their leaders will remain true to their policy and that they shall take

into practice what they advocate, blessing the Mizo people with their aspiration for freedom and independence per principle that no one is good enough to govern another man without that man's consent.

Though known as head-hunters and a martial race, the Mizos commit themselves to a policy of non-violence in their struggle and have no intention of employing any other means to achieve their political demand. If, on the other hand, the Government of India brings exploitative and suppressive measures into operation, employing military might against the Mizo people as is done in the case of Nagas, which God forbid, it would be equally erroneous and futile for both the parties for a soul cannot be destroyed by weapons.

For this end, it is in goodwill and understanding that the Mizo Union voices her rightful and legitimate claim of full self-determination through this memorandum. The Government of India, in their turn and in conformity with the unchangeable truth expressed and resolved among the text of HUMAN RIGHTS by the United Nations in its august assembly that in order to maintain peace and tranquillity to formulate her own foreign policy, among mankind every nation, large or small, may of right be free to work out her own destiny, to formulate her own internal and external policies and shall accept and recognize her political independence. Would it not be a selfish motive and design of India, and would it not amount to an act of offence against humanity if the Government of India claim Mizoram as part of their territory and try to retain her as their possession against the national will of the Mizo people simply because their land is important for India's defence strategy?

Whether the Mizo nation should shed her tears in joy to establish firm and lasting friendship with India in war and in peace or sorrow and anger, is upto the Government of India to decide.

Sd/- LALDENGA
President
Mizo National Front

Sd/- LIANZUALA
General Secretary
Mizo National Front

Appendix – F

**MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED TO PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON OF AMERICA
BY LEADERS OF THE ZO RE-UNIFICATION ORGANISTION (ZORO)
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS : MIZORAM, AIZAWL (INDIA)**

This memorandum seeks to clarify and represent the case of all the Mizo/Zomi ethnic origin living now in India, Burma and Bangladesh for the rights to Re-unification under one Administrative unit in the spirit of the Chin-Lushai Conference 1892.

1. The chin-Lushais, popularly known as Mizo/Zomi or Zo for short, are a tribe of the Mongoloid hill men. The ancestral homeland of the Zo people was somewhere in the neighbourhood of South-Eastern Tibet and Western China. they speak a common language belonging to Assam-Burma branch of Tibeto-Burmese family having affinity with Filipino, Brunei, Malaysia, Thai, etc. both in the language and culture.

2. The forefathers of Mizos/Zomi hailed from place to place called SINLUNG between 300 BC to 200 BC and came to Chin-Lushai Land to settle there between 2nd Century to 7th Century Anno Domino. The Chin-Lushai land, hereinafter referred to as Zoram or Zoland is situated between 92 ° and 95 ° longitude (East) and between 20 ° and 25 ° latitude North of Equator. The whole area is roughly about 91,000 square miles with a population of about 5 millions in 1991. The Zo dynasty or Zo Kingdom was built sometime between 200 AD and 700 AD.

3. The administrative system of the Zo kingdom was simple but efficient. The people had a king under whom there were chiefs in villages. The king and the Chiefs were assisted by Elders. The village administration headed by a village chief was assisted also by village priests, warriors, artisans and youth leaders of the village community.

4. The social and cultural life of the Zo people in the past was an independent and a peaceful one. They lived freely and happily for about 1200 to 1500 years till the advent of the British Expeditions in 1777, 1824, 1849, and between 1871-1782 and 1888-1890.

5. The British had annexed the whole of MIZORAM and brought it under its rule in 1890. They divided the country into three separate regions and placed them under three administrative units. Accordingly, the eastern and southern part of MIZORAM including the present Chin Hills and Arakan were put under the Chief Commissioner of Burma; the central and Northern part of the country comprising of the present Mizoram state and part of Assam, Manipur and Tripura states which are contiguous to Mizoram fell under the administration of the Chief Commissioner of Assam while the western area of ZORAM including the Chittagong Hill Tracts was under the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

6. The division of ZORAM and separation of the Zo people under the administrative units of Burma, India and Bengal in 1890 was imposed against the expressed wishes of the Zo ethnic group of people to whom ZORAM was their inseparable homeland since time immemorial.

7. The British rulers had considered it very desirable to put the whole tract of the acquired Chin Lushai country under one administrative head. The Chin-Lushai Conference held at Fort William in Calcutta on January 29, 1892 had adopted a resolution to this effect.

8. The Government of India Act, 1935 came into force, the Act Sec. 311(1) defined 'Tribal Areas' as "the area along the frontiers of India or in Baluchistan which are not part of British India or Burma or of any Indian State or of any foreign state." On the basis of the Act, the EXCLUDED AREA Order was issued on March 3, 1936 from the Court of Buckingham Palace.

9. The tribal areas including Zoram, was then placed under the executive authority of the Governor-General of India. The Governor of Assam was directed to act as agent of the Governor-General in respect of political control of the trans-border tribes.

10. His Excellency Sir Robert Reid, the Governor of Assam and High Commissioner of British India had visited Aizawl (now Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram) in 1940. Representatives of Zo people submitted to the visiting Sir Robert Reid, a fresh representation urging him to take step for territorial re-unification of ZORAM in the spirit of the chin-Lushai Conference in 1892.

11. Sir Robert Reid in 1941 made a proposal for re-unification of the Chin-Lushai country under one administrative head. The late Sir Winston Churchill, then a Prime Minister of Britain, had approved Sir Robert Reid's plan in principle. But the Labour party which came to power after World War II did not take up the matter.

12. On April 3, 1942, the Chiefs of Lushai Hills had separately and independently declared war against the invading forces and resolved to fight the war side by side with the Allied forces. The Chiefs made this independent declaration because of the fact that Lushai Hills as other parts of the Chin-Lushai country, was EXCLUDED AREA. The Chin Hills also made an independent declaration of war in favour of the Allied Forces. In recognition, the Burmese constitution had provided the people of Chin Hills and other frontier hill tracts with the right of secession after 10 years.

13. The late Prime Minister of Great Britain, Sir Winston Churchill and the late President Roosevelt of America had an important meeting in August 1941. The two world leaders make a joint declaration which said, among others, that they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned. This point is deemed to be relevant in case of the then Chin-Lushai people which had formed part of the allied forces as in the case of other colonial Countries like India, Burma, Ceylon, etc.

14. The first political party of then Lushai Hills (now Mizoram) the Mizo Union, had submitted a memorandum to his Majesty's government, the Government of India, on April 26, 1947 seeking to represent the case of Mizos for territorial unity and integrity of the whole Mizo (Zo) population and full self-determination and territorial integrity.

15. The 50 accredited leaders of Lushai Hills representing Chiefs and commoners, under the Chairmanship of the then Superintendent of Lushai Hills, Mr.L.L.Peters, had submitted a memorandum to the Adviser to His Excellency, the Governor of Assam, demanding, among

others, that the Lushais be allowed to opt out of the Indian Union when they wish to do so subject to a minimum period of ten years.

16. A memorandum was submitted to the Prime Minister of India by the Mizo National Front (MNF) under the leadership of Mr. Laldenga(L) on October 30, 1965 demanding full self-determination and territorial integration for Mizo people.

17. The Mizo National Front had launched its first armed offensive on midnight of February 28, 1966 against the Republic of India for securing territorial Independence for the same ethnic group of Mizo people. But the armed insurgency came to an end after 20 years.

18. The First World Zomi Convention was convened at Champhai, Mizoram on May 1921, 1988. The Convention had adopted a Charter of Agreement on the issue of Reunification of all Zo ethnic groups of people under one Administrative unit. Also, the Zo Reunification Organisation (ZORO) was formed during the session of the Champhai Convention. This Organisation (ZORO) have already represented the case of the Zo ethnic origin either in the form of memorandum or letter to the President of India, Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma; Mr V.P.Singh, the former Prime Minister of India; the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr.John Major, and others.

Now those changes have taken place in various part of the world. The world today has witnessed the break up of nation states along ethnic and religious lines. Re-unification on the basis of the common ethnic stock is world-wide phenomena. It is the birth right of every human being. This memorandum seeks to point out that the late President Roosevelt of America was one of the world leaders who had evolved the historic Atlantic Charter, and accordingly begs to draw the attention of President Bill Clinton of the United States of America, and the people of America, as to their support to the just cause for Re-unification of the old Chin-Lushai Country (Zoland) in the Chin-Lushai Conference, 1892 and the provisions of the Atlantic Charter. The urge to unify all the Zo ethnic origin under one Administrative head reasserts itself more intensively through the passages of time.

SIGNED
(R.THANGMAWIA)
Chairman

(H.THANGLAWRA)
Secretary-General
ZO RE-UNIFICATION ORGANISATION (ZORO) HQRS., AIZAWL
DATED AIZAWL, MAY 20, 1993

Appendix – G

IDENTITY REFERENDUM

First World Identity Referendum of the Chin-Lushai-Kuki/Chhinlungchhuak/Mizo Identity referendum declaration and charter of agreement of the Chhinlung Israel- the lost tribes of Israel scattered in Myanrmar, Bangladesh and India under a Non-Religious. Non-Political, Organisation a forum called Chhinlung lsrael People Convention.

A. Declaration:

1. We the people of Chin-Lushai-Kuki/Chhinlung chhuak ethic group inhabitants of the Chin Hills, the Matu areas, Mire areas, Khumi areas and the Arakan areas of Myanmar. The Chittagong Hill Tracts and Plains in Bangladesh. The Mizoram State and the adjacent areas in Manipur, Assam and Tripura State of lndia, are the descendants of one ancestor. Our culture, tradition and Social custom practice and languages are clear evidence of our ethnological facts. Father, our historical records and footprints of our ancestor both written and unwriten in the dust and send of time testify to the truth of our common ancestry.

2. Much against the interest for preservation, consolidation and promotion of our ethnic identity The British rulers after subjugating us during the later part of the l9th Century exercising the Policy of divide and rule. As a result our ancestral home-land was divided. So were the population of the Chhinlung chhuak was parcel out like animal sold separated.

3. Adding grave insult to injury. The Emergence of the sovereign State of lndia, Myanmar and Pakistan now called Bangladesh in the 1940's Had the administrative fragmentations aggravated and give birth to deeper agonies of separation for Constitutional law of respective countries and so divide the Chin-Lushai Kuki/Chhhinlung chhuak ethnic Origin into different nationalities.

4. For better part of the century largely because of our ignorance and limited outlooks both in term of our identity historical and politically. The gravity of our uncertain situation and the danger for our ethnological demise received no meaningful political historical and identity response. So, the genocide thread of new-colonialism against our Chhinlung chhuak ethnic identity survival still remain unredeemed up till now.

5. Now with historical, political and identity consciousness gaining momentum and the spirit of identity nationalism awakening us comes the fuller realisation of our basic human right and of our lost historical, political and identity prerogatives. We cannot but fell burdened with the paramount importance of the Chin-Kuki Lushai/Chhinlung chhuak Re-Unification and solidarity and identity preservation for the existence of our ethnic identity

6. Therefore we pledge our faith and confidence in the committee and code of the United Nations in the proclamation of our basic human right in conformity with the Charter the United Nations for this identity Referandum today We the Chin-Kuki Lushai/Chhinlung

chhuak as recorded in historical book a Chin in Myanmar, Lushai in Bangladesh and Mizo in India are the direct decendant of the Biblical tribes in the Northern Kingdom of Israel of the tribe of Manashe and Ephraim sons of Joseph born in Egypt through his Egyptian wife Asthani, convince that the time has come to declare our true identity that we the Chhinlung chhuak are the lost tribes of Israel to the world. Henceforth to be called Chhinlung Israel People.

7. We further united to uphold to dig the root of our old religious true practice and customs of our ancestor to the last breadth of our life.

8. We the united lost tribes under the banner and forum of the Chhinlung Israel People Convention-General Headquarters, Aizawl, Mizoram declare today on this alter of Identity Referendum, the 28th days of October, 1999. Upon the alter of our hearts for the re-unification and our true identity Proclamation and so adopt the Charter of Agreement for the Chhinlung Israel People, the lost tribes of Israel.

B. Charter of Agreement:

1. We the Chhinlung chhuak - the lost tribes of Israel henceforth now called by our true identity the Chhinlung lsrael People. Affirm the truth upon the alter of this Identity Referendum that each members of the Chhinlung Israel People now living in Myanmar, Bangladesh and India are the people of common ancestry speaking and blessed with a common language, social, culture and religious background and destined to a common historical, political and identity of fate and destiny.

2. We, with all our heart and sincerity pledged and affirm, solidarity and integration to take on the just struggle under the Universal human right for our historical, political Identity and Re-unification right under. one administrative umbrella in conformity with the historical resolution of the Chin-Lushai Conference held at Forth William, Calcutta on 29th January 1892.

3. We firmly uphold the Universal truth of the United Nations, Universal human right with regards to our historical, political and identity rights, regardless of international boundaries constraints, imposed to us by way of divide and rule policy against our freely express wish. We firmly adopt the Principle of Non-violence for attaining our goal from each place where we are now scattered.

4. We sincerely appeal to the conscience of all heads of state and Government under whom the Chhinlung chhuak now called Chhinlung Israel People are citizens respectively, and to recognise and acknowledge the rightful claim of the Chhinlung Israel People. Further we appeal to all believing in the Universal human right declarations to lend support to our just struggle for the recognisation of our historical, political and identity rights at all level and at different stages at all time.

C. Organisation:

In order to promote the just struggle for our historical, political and identity right for the Chhinlung lsrael People:-

1. We solemnly affirm and resolved that a non-political organisation, a forum called Chhinlung Israel People Convention was forrned on the 7th July, 1994 with its general Headquarters at Aizawl, Mizoram, India. Further we resolved that the Chhinlung Israel People Convention to be a forum covering all political parties, churches, organisation and willing individuals :-

    (a) Acknowledge the right claim of the Chhinlung Israel People Convention.
    (b) Accepting the paramount and the importance of the Chhinlung Israel People Convention.
    (c) Willing to subscribe to the ideas and views as may be developed time to time through the forum Chhinlung Israel People Convention.

2. We affirm and resolve that-
    (a) Chhinlung lsrael People Convention, as a forum shall not interfered in any local or national political Programmes and activities of any constituent political parties.
    (b) No constituent units of the Chhinlung Israel People Convention without the knowledge of the Chhinlung Israel People Convention, General Headquarters, shall organised any political parties of its country, but should not bring the policity of this party to the Chhinlung Israel People Convention as it may adversely affect the objects of the Chhinlung Israel People Convention.
    (c) Any political parties, churches, organisation and individual involving and perticipating in Chhinlung Israel People Convention shall enjoy the privilege of exercising certain discrelation, primarily for promotion of the just struggle of the Chhinlung Israel People Convention.
    (d) The Chhinlung Israel People Convention as a forum shall normally finalised importance policy decision in matter related directly or indirectly to the just struggle for the Chhinlung Israel People Convention in conformity with the Universal Human Right declaration. We, the undersigned today the 28th October, 1999 solemnly affirm and resolve for and on behalf of the Chhinlung Israel People living and children yet to be born, look to God in prayer- An seal this document with our signature upon the alter of Universal Human rights Declaration on this Identity Referendum of the Chhinlung Israel People.

Long live Chhinlung Israel People Convention.

Sincerely,

Sd/- Rampeng   Sd/- Lalchhanhima Sailo   Sd/- Lalhmachhuana
President   President   President
CIPC Hqrs, Myanmar   CIPC Gen. Hqrs   CIPC Hqrs, Bangladesh

Sd/- Thangchungnunga   Sd/- Neihchhung   Sd/- Lianmang
President   President   President
CIPC Hqrs, Tripura   CIPC Hqrs, Assam   CIPC Hqrs, Manipur

Forwarded by

(F. Lala)
General Secretary
CIPC Gen. Hqtrs, Aizawl , Mizoram

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1. Departmental Research Committee	:	05.04.2013
2. Board of Studies	:	15.04.2013
3. School Board	:	22.04.2013
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ABSTRACT

REPRESENTATION OF MIZO ETHNICITY IN FICTIONAL NARRATIVES: COLONIAL TO CONTEMPORARY TIMES

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY & ETHNOGRAPHY

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

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I. Introduction:

Ethnic studies though becoming in vogue in academic studies faces challenges both from academic and non-academic works recently. The reason for the emerging arguments appears to be the end result of ethnic formation and the quandaries it brought into existence against the establishment. However, ethnicity has also resulted favourable outcome that provides cohesion for the benefit of a particular society. Though ethnic studies underlines contemporary social or cultural situations and current political state of affairs, historical scholarship cannot be disregarded as it serves the foundational instrument for comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

Literary works describe ethnicity and its attributes in a number of ways both consciously and unconsciously. Whereas most non fictional works provided conscious investigation and analysis of ethnic identity, fictional works often express the same content covertly. The focus of the research inclines towards the latter work. Nevertheless, in order to identify the unconscious representation of Mizo ethnicity, discourse on Mizo ethnohistory and literary historiography are carefully examined so as to isolate conscious discourse on Mizo ethnicity.

The major focus of the work is to trace the development of Mizo 'ethnicity' and construct a relevant understanding of Mizo identity formation by reading fictional narratives. Conventional writings on Mizo ethnicity primarily outlined the history and identity of Mizo based on oral tradition and colonial ethnography. The work partly attempts to broaden the systematic historical study of Mizo 'ethnicity' and its emergent and changes using relevant paradigms and conceptual framework. In doing so, the work addresses the changing nature of Mizo 'ethnicity' by analysing fictional narratives and tries to find out the underlying ideas within certain historical periods.

II. Review of literature

Siamkima Khawlhring's work *Zalenna Ram* is one of the first works pertinent to literary criticism in the history of Mizo literature. While the work contains few essays and articles written by the author himself, the book comments on the meaning and nature of literature and turns his focus on Mizo

literature using criticism as his tool of analysis. The book has its own way of approach by using both content analysis and comparative study of Mizo prose and poetry.[1]

History of Mizo Literature written by B. Lalthangliana is one of the few books working on the history and development of Mizo literature. The author breaks the history of Mizo literature into four periods, viz. Oral Literature (1200-1893), Missionary Period (1894-1919), Middle Period (1920-1965) and Modern Period (1966-2000). Lalthangliana critically examines the production of poetry and prose by analyzing the works of literary persons during the specific periods.[2]

Thuhlaril by Laltluangliana Khiangte (ed.) traces the history of literature, literary trends and literary criticism, generally focusing on western English literature in the first section. The second section begins with periodisation of Mizo literature and continues to briefly classify the development of Mizo literature by exploring and describing Mizo literary works on prose, poetry and drama.[3]

C. Lalawmpuia Vanchiau's work *Tapchhak Theory – Essays & Criticism* contains sections on literary criticism, thematic writing and poetry. A collection of works on essays and criticism in Mizo literature and cultural studies, the book ushers in a new field of literary criticism using English literary theories and other academic paradigms. The work focuses on Mizo writings and uses both fictional and non-fictional narratives. Providing analytical studies on Mizo literature, history, culture and ideas, the book contributes a new tool for reading Mizo narratives.[4]

A Study of Mizo Novel by Laltluangliana Khiangte (ed.) is an anthology comprising eight works in English and five works in Mizo primarily focusing on the study of Mizo fictional narratives. The authors deal with selected novels on various themes including historiography of Mizo novels, folktales, memory, women, psychoanalysis, genre studies, etc. Each author has his/her own unique way of approaching Mizo novels by applying literary theories and textual analysis.[5]

Zoramdinthara in his book *Mizo fiction: Emergence and development* covers a systemic study of Mizo fictions that were produced from 1936 to 2000. The author studies the development of Mizo fictions

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[1] Siamkima Khawlhring, *Zalenna Ram*, Aizawl, MC Lalrinthanga, 1986.
[2] B. Lalthangliana, *History of Mizo Literature*, Second Edition, Aizawl, Author, 2004.
[3] Laltluangliana Khiangte (ed.), *Thuhlaril: Literary Trends & Mizo Literature*, 4th Edition, Aizawl, College Text Book (Mizo) Editorial Borad Publications, 2006.
[4] C. Lalawmpuia Vanchiau, *Tapchhak Theory – Essays & Criticism*, Aizawl, Sabereka Khuangkaih Publication, 2011.
[5] Laltluangliana Khiangte (ed.), *A Study of Mizo novel*, Delhi, ISPCK, 2014.

theoretically using historical and sociological approaches. By tracing the development and change in ideas, the author attempts to show the underlying system of thoughts that led to production of Mizo fictional narratives.[6]

In *Mizo Language and Literature: Emergence and Development*, Lalzama examines the development of writings in Mizo and considers the work of Christian missionaries as an essential factor. He illustrates the introduction of Mizo alphabet and the standardization of Mizo through schools and various literary works by the missionaries. The book fundamentally emphasizes the contributions made by the missionaries as the main reason for the development of Mizo literature.[7]

Liangkhaia's book *Mizo Chanchin* is a pioneer historical narrative that draws his account from mainly oral sources. The work begins with a theory on the origin of Mizo ethnic group and further mentions the various groups within Mizo categorically. The book focuses on the history of Mizos during the pre colonial and colonial period. In doing so, it narrates the westward migration of the Mizos, the intervention made by the British and the influences made by the colonial administrators and missionaries.[8]

Mizo History by VL Siama gives a succinct account on the history of Mizo that was initially produced for primary and middle school syllabi. It mentions the first settlers of the present day Mizoram and states the migration and settlement made by the Mizos in the hills. Early traditions and culture of the Mizos is presented along with political history. It describes the conditions of the Mizos under the rule of the British and also briefly mentions the post independence conditions of the Mizos.[9]

Vanchhunga made a study of Lusei history in *Lusei leh A Vela Hnam Dangte Chanchin* wherein he gives description on other tribes that were in contact with the Lusei tribe. He traces the location of Chhinlung and mentions the time before the crossing of Run River, the period of their settlement

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[6] Zoramdinthara, *Mizo fiction: Emergence and development*, Delhi, Ruby Press & Co, 2013.
[7] Lalzama, *Mizo Language and Literature: Emergence and Development (Contribution of Christian Missionaries from 1897-1947)*, Aizawl, KL Offset Printers, 2017.
[8] Liangkhaia, *Mizo Chanchin*.
[9] VL Siama, *Mizo History*.

between Run River and Tiau River and the rise of Sailo clan to their establishment beyond the Tiau River. He then explains the rule of Sailo in Mizoram and concludes with the advent of the British.[10]

Mizo Pipute leh an Thlahte Chanchin written by K. Zawla gives an account on the ethnic, cultural, literary and political history of the Mizos. The book describes prominent figures and events in the history of the Mizos. Oral tradition serves the main source of the book that narrates the history of Mizos from the earliest of time, largely focusing on the period before the arrival of the British.[11]

Hrangthiauva in *Mizo History* produces a comprehensive account of the history of Mizo. The book classifies Mizo into three groups based on the practice of their hairdo. According to the book, the first group called the Duhlians knotted their hair at the back of their head. Next are the Taichengs who plaited their hair and the third group are the people who tied their hair at the top of their head, called the Hrumtungs. The author further discusses the classification of the three major groups into several smaller groups.[12]

In *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, James Dokhuma presents the traditions and cultural history of Mizos. The book describes the settlement process, belief system and rituals, festivals and holidays, chieftainship, life of youths, marriage, community work, societal norms, warfare and other traditional knowledge and practices. It highlights the early social structure and cultural system of the Mizos comprehensively.[13]

Zofate Chanchin published by Hualngo Literature and Cultural Association gives an outline of Zofate (Zo ethnic group) history. The book dates back the history of Zofate from China and mentions their migration from Shinlung to Kale-Kabaw Valley (*Kawlphai*) and states the various 'tribes' of Zo ethnic group. It highlights the history of Seifate or Lusei and cognate tribes and their movement to the present day Mizoram. The book further gives detail account of the Zofate who made their settlement in the Chin Hills of Myanmar. It also discusses the socio-cultural practices and traditions and administrative affairs of of Zofate.[14]

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[10] Vanchhunga, *Lusei leh A Vela Hnam Dangte Chanchin*, Aizawl, Department of Art & Culture, 1955 (Reprinted in 1994).

[11] K. Zawla, *Mizo Pipute leh an Thlahte Chanchin*.

[12] Hrangthiauva, *Mizo History (Mizo hnam hrang hrangte chanchin)*.

[13] James Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*.

[14] *Zofate Chanchin*, Tahan-Kalemyo, Hualngo Literature and Cultural Association, 1995.

Zatluanga in *Mizo Chanchin* provides detail information on the different 'tribes' of Mizo. He then traces the original homeland of the group and tries to expose the ethnogenesis of Mizo. The book further explores the traditions and practices of Mizo ethnic group in a broad approach and continues to illustrate the oral tradition using folk songs. Moreover, the book describes the westward migration of several tribes to Mizoram and their initial establishment in the hills.[15]

Hmanlai Mizo Nun, written by C. Lianthanga gives a detail account of Mizo cultural history. He traces the early history of Mizo from Chhinlung or Shinlung that he describes as located in China. The book mentions about the settlement of the Mizos with other ethnic groups such as the Burmese proper, Shans and mainland Indians (*vai*). Lianthanga's narrates Mizos' migration to Chin Hills and the present day Mizoram and classifies Mizo into two groups, viz. '*Seifate*' (groups who tied their hair at the back of their head) and '*Laifate*' (groups who tied their hair at the top of their head).[16]

Mizo Chanchin (1900 Hma Lam) is a voluminous work by Lalthanliana that traces the history of Mizos from the earliest of times up to 1900. Disregarding the modern geo-political boundary, the book mentions the entire geographical span of the 'Zo' people stretching from western Myanmar through eastern Bangladesh and the present day Mizoram, southern Manipur, eastern Tripura and southern Assam. The book categorizes 'Zo' people from the style of their hair knot – *Hmar* (hair knot at the back of the head) and *Pawi* (hair knot at the top of the head). Lalthangliana traces the movement of the 'Zo' people and shows the migration of several groups to present day Mizoram, Manipur, Tripura and Bangladesh (Chittagong Hill Tract) and the settlement made by other groups in the western part of Burma (Chin Hills).[17]

C. Vanlalhruaia in *Pipute Rammutna* argues the validity of 'Lusei' as a panoramic coverage and gives a brief account on the word 'Mizo', 'Kuki' and 'Chin' and smaller ethnic groups such as Thadou and Paite in order to clarify that 'Mizo' as an ethnic banner has historically been a fluid terminology. Holding a broad paradigm, the book traces the historical and cultural affinities of 'Mizos' with other ethnic and linguistic groups such as Tibet-Chinese, Tibeto-Burman, Siamese Chinese, Garos, Tripuris, Meitieis, Nagas and Cacharis.[18]

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[15] Zatluanga, *Mizo Chanchin*, Aizawl, Mizoram Publication Board, 1996.
[16] C. Lianthanga, *Hmanlai Mizo Nun*.
[17] Lalthanliana, *Mizo Chanchin (Kum 1900 Hma Lam)*.
[18] C. Vanlalhruaia, *Pipute Rammutna: A Socio-Cultural Innovation*, Aizawl, Author, 2001.

Mizo Chanchin by B. Lalthangliana throws light on the history of Mizo from pre-colonial to post independence period. The book traces the early history of Mizos from China. Accordingly, it makes a comparative study with small ethnic groups of China. Discussing the settlement of Mizos in Kawbaw Valley *(Kawl Phai)*, the book describes the dispersal and migration of the different Mizo ethnic groups and continues to depict the history particularly about the present day settlers of Mizoram.[19]

In 'Mizo Identity: Tlang Thlirna (Mizo Identity: An Overview)', L. Keivom traces the ontology of being Mizo employing theoretical paradigms. By analysing the criteria for being Mizo, origin, language, political classification and culture, and comes to the conclusion that Mizo identity is not something that is given. Drawing the instrumentalist paradigm, he suggests the unending development of Mizo identity that has to be shaped by historians and scholars with positive nationalistic sentiments.[20]

Khup Za Go discusses in 'Mizo Identity' about harmony of existence. In doing so, he studies the geographical span, tribe/clan names, way of life, adherence of Christianity, uniform script, origin myth, exonym and endonym, etc. After cautious observation, he surmises that the different groups under Kuki-Chin-Mizo should endorse 'unity in diversity' and live a 'rainbow society' so as to form a peaceful co-existence of *Zofate* (Zo people).[21]

Joy Pachuau's *Being Mizo* explores how the national discourse excludes Mizo from mainstream narratives. In doing so, the book attempts to show how Mizos created their own sense of identity from their marginalized state of being using 'Mizo Christianity' and the ritual pertaining death in a *veng* or locality. Joy Pachuau demonstrates the status of the Mizos as a 'borderline ethnic group', a 'tribe' or 'tribal', being ignored from the social structure of India. The book states the formation of Mizo identity based on space and territoriality owing to colonial and post-colonial Indian ascription of identity using geo-political boundaries. Identity characterized by structural differentiation on binaries is underlined in the work.[22]

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[19] B. Lalthangliana, *Mizo Chanchin (A Short Account & Easy Reference of Mizo History)*, Second Edition, Aizawl, Author, 2016.
[20] L. Keivom, 'Mizo Identity: Tlang Thlirna (Mizo Identity: An Overview)', in *Seminar & Important Papers*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2008, pp. 1-7.
[21] Khup Za Go. 'Mizo Identity', in *Seminar & Important Papers*, pp. 8-13.
[22] Joy Pachuau, *Being Mizo: Identity and belongingness in northeast India*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2015.

In *Ethnicity (Key Concepts)*, Fenton argues that ethnicity should not be regarded concrete but rather as a fluid in nature. He further states that one cannot provide a simple theory of ethnicity but a sociological research for ethnic identity formation. By tracing the ontology and etymology of the concept, Fenton gives an in depth study with its interconnection with 'race' and 'nation' and provides the demise of 'race science' that has influenced the notion of primordialism. Showing the fluidity of ethnicity, the book explores the reality of group formation or the construction of ethnic identity relating to social, economic and political contexts.[23]

Paul Brass in *Ethnicity and Nationalism* argues that both ethnicity and nationalism are not ontologically 'givens' but are epistemic (social and political) constructions. He further maintains that they are created by elites so as to protect their political and economic interests. Brass sees ethnicity and nationalism as modern phenomena that have deep connection with the activities of modern nation-state.[24]

In *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, TH Eriksen maintains his stance against ethnicity and nationalism as a given and static group formation by emphasizing the fluidity of social relationships. Using a broad perspective that he draws from anthropology and sociology, he explores the relationship of ethnicity with other social groups such as gender, class and nation with current issues of racism, multiculturalism and globalisation. Eriksen holds the constructive and fluid nature of ethnicity and nationalism and demonstrates that both are aspects of social relationships.[25]

Anthony D. Smith in *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* argues that ethnicity and nations are not new phenomena. He holds that both ethnicity and nationalism have a long history which he calls as *ethnie*. Smith speaks from the middle ground between the two competing views of primordialist and modernist, slightly closer to the primordialists. He puts emphasis on the element of ethnic consciousness that he finds in the "myths, memories, values and the symbols" pertinent to certain historical periods. Smith's approach or the ethno-symbolist approach fused nation and state and asserts its root on *ethnie*.[26]

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[23] Steve Fenton, *Ethnicty (Key Concepts)*, Second Edition, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2010.
[24] Paul R. Brass, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison*, New Delhi, Sage, 1991.
[25] Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives (Anthropology, Culture and Society)*, 2nd Edition, London, Pluto Press, 2002.
[26] Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Reprint edition, New Jersey, Wiley-Blackwell, 1991.

Richard Jenkins' *Rethinking Ethnicity* re-examines the concept of ethnicity and locates social categorization and power relations in the process of ethnic group formations. He stresses the failure of established paradigms to draw on the cultural content of ethnicity and maintains that though ethnicity appears as a social construct, the effects are more real than imaginary. The book deals with issues like the notions of difference posted by postmodernism, the discourse of plural society and the relationship of ethnicity with other concepts and ideologies such as race and nationalism.[27]

In *Representation*, Stuart Hall explores the production of meaning and how it is internalised. He argues that messages have no meaning in or of themselves unless meaning is produced. The book shows how various instruments like language, culture, gender, etc. act as agents in changing the concept of representation and gives how language acts in the production of meaning and mass reception.[28]

Orientalism, a book by Edward Said traces the attitude of the West (Occident) on the East (Orient) looking on history and culture. Said regards 'Orientalism' as a grand ideological creation of Europeans, that has the 'power' for colonial ethnographers, writers, historians and philosophers to produce a 'discourse' on 'otherness. This 'discourse', he argues, is based on Eurocentric worldview against the orients and he further examines the imaginative depictions of the East from Homer to recent events in the Middle East.[29]

III. Statement of the problem

Mizo scholars and laypersons have produced numerous works on Mizo 'ethnicity' drawing on historical accounts, ethnographic discourse, oral tradition and memories. Periodisation and classification have been carried out to a certain extent that attempts to provide scientific explanation on Mizo 'ethnicity'. Nevertheless, many of the works are directed by western epistemic discourse in their ontic presentation of Mizo 'ethnicity'. Besides, works that base their groundings on oral tradition, oral history and experiential knowledge as a result of in-group participation failed to explain broad characteristics of Mizo 'ethnicity' in a systematic manner. Owing to that, historical study relating to Mizo 'ethnicity' and the changes it underwent necessitate proper research.

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[27] Richard Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity*, California, Sage Publications Ltd, 2008.
[28] Stuart Hall, Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices, London, Open University Press, 1997.
[29] Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, New Delhi, Penguin Books India Pvt. Ltd, 2001.

In many of the works, Mizo writers hardly reflected what motivated them to write. This narrowly gives scope to discuss the thematic concerns of Mizo ethnicity or ethnic identity. It is therefore difficult to ascertain an in-depth understanding of Mizo ethnicity. Moreover, the colonial ethnographies had left vivid accounts of Mizos and were not fully sufficient to condense Mizo ethnicity. Therefore, the first problem that the thesis addresses is the ethnohistory of Mizo using different historical information and theoretical paradigms, and how the idea of Mizo changes through time.

So far, works exploring the idea of Mizo and Mizo ethnicity using fictional narratives are few. These works are narrow in approach and are only sections of the larger texts without much theoretical examination. The second problem, therefore, engages analysis of Mizo fictions in their representation of Mizo ethnicity. Major focus is given to find the unconscious expression and symbolisation of Mizo ethnicity; thus, conscious writing of Mizo identity is not the principle enquiry. This has been regarded as a serious academic challenge because writers/persons are the product of their age and they cannot escape the dominant idea of their age. Even if they reject the dominant discourse, they produce counter discourse or alternate view, which can be studied critically.

Partly dealing with colonialism and knowledge production, 'colonial epistemic influence' and 'epistemic rupture' is the third problem that is dealt with in the work. The shifting worldview made by colonialism and its legacy is more realistic than theoretical. In the case of ethnic identity, the mental map transformed significantly among the groups within Mizoram and its peripheral territorial space since the advent of colonialism and the period following it. This epistemic change has a deep impact on contemporary idea thereby providing research gap to be probed afresh.

IV. Area of Study

The study deals with the production of literature within Mizoram that was called as the Lushai Hills during the colonial period. Special interest is given on Mizo fictional narratives from colonial to contemporary times. Moreover, the ethnohistory of Mizo is examined in parallel with the purpose of interpreting the texts under study in context.

For the purpose of this study and to exhibit more clearly the forces, trends and institutions that have shaped Mizo historical development, periodisation of Mizo history is divided into Pre-Colonial,

Colonial, Modern and Contemporary periods. Even though history implies the existence of written records and the introduction of Mizo script dated back only in the last decade of the nineteenth century, oral tradition has been employed to trace the early history of Mizo since the culture per se had been a good depository of oral narratives. This period is classified as *Pre-Colonial period*.

With the introduction of script beside the administrative change from chieftainship to colonial administration, the period gradually began to experience transformation in the socio-political structure. However, there was never a complete break but certain old institutions ceased to exist while others started acquiring new shapes. This new stage is categorized as *Colonial period*.

Similarly, the formation of Lushai Hills District Council in 1952 can be used as a point of periodisation from which the *Modern period* began. This was the year following India's independence and the allocation of regional administrative responsibility at the hands of the elected representatives. During this period, the political status of Mizoram experienced its promotion to both District Council in 1952 and Union Territory in 1972. The movement of Mizo National Front from 1966 to 1986 had a huge impact on Mizo history, therefore this is employed as a watershed for periodising Mizo history in this work. Signing of the 'peace accord' in 1986 followed by the attainment of statehood in 1987 is used as the beginning of *Contemporary period* and it extends to the present day.

V.   Objectives

The objectives of the thesis are:

• To trace the history of Mizo literature, specifically the narratives

• To examine the relationship between history and literature

• To study the various theories of ethnicity

• To explore the relationship between the Mizo ethnicity and fictional narratives

• To study the representation of gender relationships in Mizo fiction

• To explore the perception of nature in Mizo fictional narratives and its relationship with ethnicity

VI. Methodology

As the work focuses on the study of representation of Mizo ethnicity in fictional narratives, qualitative technique or content analysis is employed for interpreting the selected primary texts/fictional narratives using relevant concepts and theories. The thesis falls under the field of intellectual history and draws method generally practiced in New Historicism; hence, both non fictional and fictional narratives are read and analysed to extract the fundamental ideas in the emergent of Mizo ethnicity. Hence, after careful examination of Mizo ethnohistory,[30] Mizo literature and fictional narratives and selected primary texts (fictions) are analysed side by side with non fictional works using relevant theoretical paradigms. Accordingly, both manifest and latent parts of the texts are read and analysed.

VII. Chapterisation

This thesis is divided into eight chapters including the introduction and conclusion.

Chapter 1: *General Introduction and Research Rationale*

This chapter deals with the fundamental approaches and methods of the thesis. It contains sections including purpose of the study, methodology, area of study, periodisation of Mizo history, statement of the problem, review of literature, objectives of the study and structure of the thesis. It introduces the thesis by giving general information on Mizo history, society, culture, geography and politics.

Chapter 2: *History, literature and representation*

In this chapter, attempt is made to outline the meaning of literature by giving brief description on various literary theories. It also examines the nature of history by tracing the development of historiography. While exploring the logic of representation, the relationship between historical and fictional narratives is also dealt with in the chapter.

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[30] 'Ethnohistory' is an interdisciplinary approach and remains an interdisciplinary pursuit rather than a discipline in itself. Merging the approaches of history, cultural anthropology, and archaeology, it intends to reconstruct the history of non-European peoples, including their experiences of colonization and resistance. For details, see Pauline Turner Strong, 'Ethnohistory', in James D. Wright (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sicences, Vol. 8*, 2nd Edition, New York, Elsevier, 2015, pp.192-197.

Chapter 3: *Theoretical and conceptual framework*

The chapter contains discussions on various theories and paradigms on the idea of 'ethnicity', 'race' and 'nation'. By drawing previous studies from different disciplines, the development of ideas is examined along with the diverse objective expressions.

Chapter 4: *Ethnohistory of Mizo*

The focal aim of the chapter is to give a critical analysis on the history of Mizo ethnicity. Accordingly, Mizo identity is investigated from pre colonial period and the new characteristics it gained during the colonial period and the period following it. Largely, the chapter explores the changes and development of Mizo ethnicity.

Chapter 5: *History of Mizo literature*

In this chapter, the history of Mizo literature from the stage of orality to literacy is explored. The introduction of alphabets and writings from the colonial period and the production of literature are explored. Special interest is given on the development of Mizo fictional narratives from 1936 to 2010.

Chapter 6: *Mizo ethnicity: Fiction and representation*

In order to expose how the idea of Mizo ethnicity is represented in fictional narratives, four fictions are selected for analysis. The novels are singled out to identify ideas during their particular historical periods, viz. the colonial period (1936-1947), the post independence period (1947-1966), the MNF period (1966-1987) and post statehood or contemporary period (1987-2010).

Chapter 7: *Representation of nature and gender in Mizo novels*

This chapter studies Mizo perception of nature by attempting to explain Mizo view on nature and how it influences the way they express the relationship between nature and Mizo identity. It also outlines Mizo view on gender and how it is manifested. Purposely, two novels are selected, each dealing on nature and gender respectively.

Chapter 8: *Conclusion*

The final chapter of the thesis presents the major findings of the thesis.

VIII. Findings of the research work

Different approaches to the study of ethnicity have their respective ways of defining the concept. As it has connection with both race and nation, it has often been used interchangeably although dissimilarities have to be considered. The primordialist interpretation of ethnicity as existing to a very early time in history is true to a great degree. However, explicating ethnicity as solely determined by common descent and socio-biological factors is incomplete as argued by the constructivist and instrumentalist scholars.

Against the primordialist interpretation of ethnicity as predominated by kinship bond and cultural attachment, the constructivists argued ethnicity as a social construct that emerged lately in human history, which in not given and static but is experienced, learned and shared. This view is accentuated by the instrumentalist scholars who perceived ethnicity as a transactional apparatus, tactically manipulated by elite for their interests. The notion of ethnicity as explained by the constructionist/instrumentist lacked definite rationale because ethnicity ofttimes entails collective sense of belonging that is validated by recognition of the group members.

Ethno-symbolism has been the mostly coherent paradigm, which began out of the discontent with the explanations of both primordialism and constructivism. Ethno-symbolism communicates ethnic identity with subjective dimensions of shared symbols, memories and myths while it underlines the continuing influence of modern ideas on ethnicity at the same time. This can be substantiated by the fact that even though ethnic identity is a modern ideology and phenomenon, cohesive ethnic communities are built upon historical and cultural heritage as ethnic group formation was evident before the onset of modernity.

Mizo ethnicity and identity formation has a long history that precedes the coming of western modernity and politics. Fundamentally, the feeling of collective affiliation was based on kinship tie. Consanguineous and affinal relationship was strongly maintained that was reinforced by the belief system defining ethnic membership. Appellation that derived from hairknot of males was generally followed during their stay in the foothills of Chin Hills. The Pawis who tied their hair atop of the head

occupied the central and southern territories where some smaller groups made their migration to the present southern Mizoram and the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Hmars with hairknot at the nape of the neck settled north of the Pawis. Internecine warfare was rampant leading to stronger kinship and village based identity.

The generic classification into Hmar and Pawi was followed in order to differentiate each other in the early days. However, this was in-group classification as they already had contact with the 'others'. Both the groups recognized each other as 'relative other' since they shared a number of similar cultural traits. For them, outsiders or out-group members were generally known as *vai*. The *vais* residing east of them were called *Kawl* or *Kawlvai*, and they were known as Chin to the Kawl people. These people were mostly ethnic Bamars and the Shans. Likewise, the *vais* to the west and north of them were called *Kawr* or *Kawrvai*, who named them Kuki. Later, the arrival of Europeans introduced a new 'other' called *Sap*. Principally, *Kawl*, *Kawr* and *Sap* consisted the 'apparent others'. As explained earlier, 'relative other' and 'apparent other' are developed newly in the work so as to make clear difference within the general concept of 'other'. Both concepts are employed to differentiate the relationship of 'others' vis-à-vis the Mizos.

The original Hmar group further separated into discrete units as a result of ethnogenesis. From it emerged tribes such as Lusei, Ralte, Paite, Thado, Vaiphei, etc. All these tribes formed themselves into different lineage groups with their own belief system. While the process of ethnic group formation came about from the original Hmar group, several of the remaining clans retained Hmar appellation. These remaining groups gradually assimilated themselves into Hmar people, gradually losing the original Hmar identity. Contemporary Mizo ethnicity faces a great challenge from this recent Hmar identity that has its root from the original Hmar group.

The Pawi group has another complex identity division. Although majority of the original Pawi group retain their original identity, Lai replaced the word Pawi as a more politically correct term. Within the Pawi group, Mara tribe surfaced as a separate group with their own group identity. The reason for Mara becoming as a distinct tribe can be attributed to the geographical circumscription of their strategic settlement within the confine of Kolodyne River.

Mizo identity formation began from Sailo chieftainship. Founding their rule on the heritage of Lusei culture, Sailo ascendancy standardized beliefs and practices significantly. Lusei culture, thus, became

an instrument of uniformity ranging from language to belief system. However, there has been a blend of different cultural traits that enriches Lusei culture and tradition from the initial process in the emergent of Mizo identity.

Though the political supremacy of Luseis was ended by the colonial power, their culture was further developed by colonial administrators to homogenize the people they were dealing with. Using cartography as a tool to strategically rule the people, political map was prepared. Similarly, ethnographic works was produced and census was conducted in order to classify the people into ethnic lines. Using Lusei as the base, 'Lushai' was used as the ethnonym while the cultural practices and language of the Luseis were codified as the standard within the new political entity.

The nascent 'Mizo' identity that emerged at the outset of the twentieth century had Lusei culture and language at its foundation while Christianity began to substitute the traditional belief system. With universalisation of the belief system, a monolithic identity under the banner of Christianity began to emerge. Meanwhile, absorption of different tribes and clans into 'Mizo' gradually began under one political entity of colonial administration through experiences of uniform law, education system, cultural values and practices, social norms and others. Later, 'Mizo' gradually replaced Lushai. However, the formation of Mizo identity had deep historical connection with Lusei so much so that Mizo identity has often been equated as Lusei identity up till recently.

The post-independence identity became more complicated. Having inherited colonial characteristics, identity formation experienced other new elements. The inclusion of the Lushai Hills District under the Indian Union resuscitated a new spirit of Mizo nationalism. This new nationalism not only defined Mizo identity based on primordial tie, but against general Indians. The new characteristic reiterated the ancestral relationship of the different tribes of Mizo, their cultural affinities, their sovereignty and the necessity to protect their identity from the general Indians.

Pre-colonial sovereignty of Mizo ancestors was emphasised by declaring that self-rule had been the status quo prior to the advent of colonial power. As such, it was asserted that the Indian Union had no legitimate authority to restrain the natural rights of Mizos. Common ancestry and culture of the different tribes of Mizo was maintained. The alterity of *vais* and the call for unity of all 'Mizos' populating dispersed territories was encouraged. The defining characteristics of 'being Mizo' was against *vais*, thus advocating unison against mainland Indians.

The post-statehood ethnicity of Mizo began to search and redefine the status of being Mizo. From this point, historical scholarship began to trace the origin of Mizo methodically. Along with this, the past glory of Mizo ancestors has been the primary topic of discourse. Although the admiration of colonial *saps* exists, discourse against colonialism and the negative impact it had on Mizo identity has been put forth largely. The post-statehood period witnesses the rise of self-assertion within or not in favour of 'Mizo' that has its root on MNF's nationalism. The MNF movement provided the prototypic disruption against the establishment. As a result, smaller ethnic movements have been experienced uptil today demanding special status by particular groups. On the contrary, a pan Mizo movement to unite the different cognate tribes under Mizo or Zo has been campaigned by various groups. Moreover, group identity based on religious worldview alongwith ethnic line that relates the ancestry of Mizos to ancient Israel appears. The emergent 'Mizo' identity, therefore, faces challenges within itself and 'being Mizo' reverses anew to 'becoming Mizo'.

As shared history, common ancestry and shared culture become the definitional stricture of defining group identity, Mizo identity can be described as *ethnonationalism* or *ethno-religious nationalism*. This produced an ideology wherein *civic nationalism* under Indian nation-state is often seen as a threat to their identity. Along with this, shared values and institutions under the Indian constitution could not be explicitly received.

The objective markers of Mizo ethnicity put forward in the work cannot be asserted as immutable. However, after careful analysis, *Chhinlung chhuak*, *ram leilung fa*, *Mizo chhul chhuak* and language can be considered as important objective markers of Mizo ethnicity. *Chhinlung chhuak* refers to the mythical opening of earth from where the ancestors of Mizo originated. Using *Chhinlung chhuak* as a criterion for establishing common descent, the concept is employed to refuse ethnic membership. A claim for belonging in the terra firma entails the assertion of *ram leilung fa*. This claim of indigeneity draws on pre-colonial inhabitation of Mizoram and its surrounding hills ruling out late dwellers since the colonial period into Mizo community. Natal lineage of Mizo parents is regularly used to exclude individuals from Mizo ethnicity. This claim of being *Mizo chhul chhuak* insists principally the father or on occasion the mother to be Mizo by birth. Language is one of the most important markers of Mizo ethnicity. Lusei/Duhlian dialect, having historical significance as the language of Sailo chiefs and the first language to be scripted has become both a unifying factor and the cause of apprehension. People who do not use what came to be known as Mizo language as their first language often

expressed their exclusion from Mizo using language as a pretext. Nevertheless, as homogeneity requires one dominant culture to unite the segments in any case, Lusei language and culture performed the monolithic coalescence of various Mizo tribes.

The advent of colonialism brought in a new development for ethnic homogenization. Language, which was hitherto communicated orally, was finally reduced to writing in the early 1890s using Lusei/Duhlian dialect. Written language required printing machine for dissemination that was introduced in 1903. Even before the introduction of printing, publications were done outside the Lushai Hills. The first book in Mizo was produced in 1895 followed by biblical translation and the first newspaper in 1898. School textbooks were produced and the first school instructed in Mizo using Roman script was opened in 1894. In 1903, permanent schools were set up for villages and the first examination for Lower Primary was conducted. Political supremacy together with command of language and control of knowledge through print culture and (secular and religious) educational apparatus shaped a new thought, which continued to change afterwards consistent with the spirit of the age.

It was the introduction of writing and western education that led to the production of fictional narratives in Mizo. Consistent with the year of publication *Maymyo Sanapui* (1950) by C. Khuma, *Lungtiawii leh Parchuailova* (1961) and *Lungngaihna Virthli* (1962) both written by RL Rina were the first three novels. These three early works were published in Burma. Taking into account the year of writing, *Hawilopari* (1936) and *Lali* (1937) both composed by L. Biakliana and *Chhingpuii* (1938) by Kaphleia were the first three fictions. However, these three early works were published lately—*Hawilopari* in 1983 and *Lali* and *Chhingpuii* in 1963. The proposed paradigm in this work challenges the dominant historiographical discourse on Mizo fictional narratives. Thus, contrary to placing *Hawilopari*, *Lali* and *Chhingpuii* as the first three fictional narratives, the work endorses *Maymyo Sanapui*, *Lungtiawii leh Parchuailova* and *Lungngaihna Virthli* as the first three fictional narratives considering the impact they had on the development of Mizo fictions.

In many of Mizo fictional narratives, nostalgia of pre-colonial Mizo society and culture is perceived. The nature of existence before colonialism was regarded as pristine, and the people as 'noble savage'. Although internecine tribal conflict was referred to, kinship bond and reciprocal altruism were admired. This existence was often seen as corrupted by colonial establishment and western modernity.

However, western education and Christianity were considered as 'liberator' from 'wildness' to 'civilization'. Accordingly, *saps* were the definitional point of their identity that degraded their consciousness as inferior being. The monolithic regime of colonialism that quietly homogenised group formation produced ideas discussing their existence against larger collection of people.

Being administered by the Union of India after independence, Indic culture influenced Mizos gradually. This was seen by several Mizo leaders as a threat. Besides, sovereignty was claimed using arms struggle against *vais*. Scores of Mizo fictions contain this ideology of ethnic nationalism. The traumatic experiences during the struggle resuscitated the kinship tie of Mizos that was emphatically expressed in many fictions during and after the MNF movement.

The post-statehood fictional content has a distinctive quality in that it blends all the preceding thoughts while significantly honouring the disposition of being Mizo. Several writers articulate the spaciousness of Mizo identity with limited liberal historical and cultural narrative that campaigns for becoming Mizo. It is liberal and inclusive by being incorporating all the cognate tribes of Mizo, but limited and exclusive by ruling out tribes that have no historical or cultural connection. At the same time, critique of colonialism and western culture is recurrently pronounced so as to uphold the approbation of being Mizo.

In Biakliana's *Hawilopari*, the idea of 'Mizo' is characterised as a distinct emergent identity, instituted on Lusei beliefs and practices. It is discernible that 'Mizo' was in its nascent stage of formation as it was the colonial rule that attempted to homogenise different tribes with a common ethnonym. 'Mizo' was used several times in the novel synonymously with Lusei and Seifate. The rationale for this was the equivalent usage of 'Mizo' and 'Lushai' by the British. Also, non-fictional work such as *Mizo Chanchin* by Liangkhaia already chose 'Mizo' for the nomenclature. However, the idea of 'Mizo' was vague as Lusei headship happened to be the dominant definitional element. It was for this reason that 'otherness' in terms of Mizos' relation with their neighbouring groups was narrowly exemplified.

One group which is included as a rule within Mizo was differently placed outside of it. Biakliana excluded the Pawis from Mizo when he mentioned the aggression of the Pawis and the retaliation made by the Mizos. Territorial attachment was another defining character of Mizo identity. The idea of defending one's land from aggressive intruders was seen in the novel. Furthermore, the fiction

accepted Lusei/Duhlian dialect as exclusively Mizo language while it regarded the dialect used by Pawis as non-Mizo language.

It can thus be stated that colonialism acted as a monolithic agent that homogenize group formation that was significant in the emergent of Mizo ethnicity. It performed as a glue that brought together different tribes under the banner of Mizo. However, it can also be explained that the idea of Mizo was exclusive since its inception as it has been instituted largely on the beliefs and practices of Lusei tribe.

Post-independence Mizo identity is illustrated by Zikpuii Pa in *CC Coy No.27*. The fiction depicts the self-debasing mentality of the Mizo using Ralzapzauva as the protagonist. The protagonist endeavoured to become a *sap* knowing their socio-political and ontological status. The superiority of *saps* was internalised in the minds of the Mizos so much so that the novel describes the need of colonial intervention to liberate Mizos from their unrefined existence.

Mizos were envious of the *saps* and their internalised Eurocentric 'hierarchy of being' conducted their mentality that being a *sap* was becoming 'a human being'. It was for this reason that the protagonist struggled for his socio-political ladder and thus become a *sap*. However, the impossibility of ontic transformation was accepted by the protagonist, thus he acted as *sap* through the process of 'mimicry'. He dressed, acted and used his thinking as a *sap*. In the end, the protagonist was in the state of 'ambivalence' as a result of his 'double consciousness' of being a Mizo and a *sap* losing his sense of belonging among his own people.

The fiction thus represents 'colonial mentality' vividly wherein Mizos defined themselves against the *saps* with a feeling of inferiority. Reverence and imitation of the Whites is announced with 'hybridity' leading to 'ambivalence' and the origin of incompleteness in the psyche of Mizos.

The emergent Mizo ethnicity experienced a deep crisis within itself following the post-independence period. James Dokhuma revealed this in *Silaimu Ngaihawm*. There was disagreement between Mizo Union and MNF in their understanding of Mizo nationalism. While Mizo Union accepted their continuation under the Indian Union, MNF regarded the independence of Mizo chiefs before the advent of colonialism and they endeavoured to regain the 'lost freedom'.

It was in this situation that Zaikima and Rinmawia joined the MNF movement by ignoring the criticism of Mizo Union adherents. Both Zaikima and Rinmawia could not feel easy staying safely in

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town as they aspired to fight for their land—Mizoram. Mizo identity for them demanded a fight for the cause of the 'geo-body' wherein Mizo identity was bred and liberation from the possession of Indian Union was felt indispensable. The 'geo-body' was equated with individual 'body' in which sacrificing one's body was regarded as an honourable act.

For that, protection of Christianity was called for as they considered the movement as a 'holy war' against Hindu religion. Every action was embraced as a struggle for Christian God and Mizo land. Equally, *vais* were the ontic 'others' and everything *vai* was the epistemic 'other'. As the operation was against the Indian Government in order to achieve autonomy, MNF movement and the period following it positioned *vai* as a point for defining Mizo ethnicity.

C. Lalnunchanga's *Pasalthate Ni Hnuhnung* represents contemporary thought on Mizo ethnicity with heavy elements of postcolonialism. The novel brings to mind the tribal life of Mizos and the coming of British power. Lalnunchanga described that familial identity or kinship was the basis of ethnicity earlier. Biological traits and cultural similarities were thus underlined. It is emphasized in the novel that though the different cognate tribes of Mizo had hostilities, they considered their common ancestry and fraternity.

The spirits of their ancestors were revered who were regarded as the ones that guided their way to their present territory. When the Mizos encountered with the British in the novel, respect for their ancestors' land was described extensively. Thus, defending the land of their ancestors was glorified.

The novel attempts to argue against the narrative produced by Europeans wherein the past glory of Mizos was highly praised. Rather than indicating Mizo chiefs and their people as inferior to the colonialists, Lalnunchanga cites that Mizos treated them with a proud attitude and that they were hesitant to admit defeat. Instead, they would die for their land fighting both physical and psychological war. Chief Puilura and Chief Saingura were portrayed as dying at the hands of the British owing to their denial to lay down their arms and were both imprisoned to death.

Holding the idea similar to many postcolonial scholars, the novelist represents Mizos as a valiant tribe with no feeling of inferiority against other people or the Whites in particular. The dominant discourse that debased Mizo culture and identity is challenged by posting pre-colonial Mizo society as well organised and self sufficient in many spheres. It highlights the characteristics of Mizo ethnicity in

comparison with the colonialist with respect to civility and humanity in which Mizos were represented as more humane and sensible than the Europeans in their encounter.

Mizo perception of nature is plainly depicted by C. Lalnunchanga in *Ka Mi Huaisen leh Ka Pasaltha*. The novel reflects Mizo worldview and its negotiation with the laws of nature. Nature was seen as the custodian of time and time itself was seen as cyclical. Their economic activities were carried out following the seasonal change. Seasonal flowers and plants were used as an indication of a new season and were regarded as prelude of a new routine. Apart from it, festivals were also celebrated in accordance with the change of season that directed their economic activities.

The fiction relates that animals were seen as having an intrinsic acumen to forecast incidents related to human affairs. Alarm signal made by animals was often seen as mode of communication between animals to indicate dangers from human beings. At the same time, it was also regarded as an omen communicated to human beings.

For that reasons, rituals were performed for the animals and plants that were killed in the burning of *lo*, known as *hrilh*. Such were performed as the flora and fauna were regarded as vital constituents in the whole system of existence. Rather than anthropocentric worldview, their belief system was dictated by monism wherein human being was a part of the sacred unit.

It was Christianity that brought in a new worldview of anthropocentrism. This anthropocentric worlview escalated the sacred exploitation of nature to a large extent. The early worldview of Mizos negotiated with nature but the gradual rise in population led to limited land resource and human induced degradation of environment. However, colonial legistlation and its legacy established human control over nature and the responsibility of human to protect and conserve nature. Moreover, contemporary Mizos are more willingly incline to preserve nature and its resources for a more sustainable future due to awareness as regards the need to safeguard their environment.

Gender in Mizo ethnicity has a subtle status. Using the protagonist's name as the title of his fictional work, Biakliana visibly presented the state of gender in Mizo society through the life of Lali. The fiction gives a picture that women were assigned all household chores apart from their normal economic activities which gave them 'double burden'. The society favoured men as it was patriarchal wherein men mostly worked away from home and defended the village in times of war and danger.

The novel depicts women as 'sexual object' and their 'body' often 'gazed' by males. Though it praises Lali of her good conduct and character, it superfluously expresses her face, figure and complexion. The author describes his ideal Mizo women as fair skin and normal stature with regular proportion. In contrast to femininity, masculinity was symbolised with strength and muscularity to perform hard and physically powerful functions.

While men were demonstrated as autonomous in case of marriage affairs, women were stated as forced by their parents against their consent in certain cases. The fiction also mentions the restraint position of women in decision making process in almost every affair, pointing out their limited role to domestic works while important duties were exclusively reserved for men.

It was the introduction of education and structural change in Mizo society given by colonialism and Christianity that changed the position of women gradually. Education and social agencies related to women elevated their status in the society to a certain degree in economic, political and religious affairs. Even though Mizo society maintains its patriarchal structure up to these days, gender role differentiation has become blurred and the social status of women has become better as compared to other highly patriarchal societies.

However, in case of marriage, while marriage of Mizo men with non-Mizo women are seen as normal and could be accepted by the society, marriage of Mizo women with non-Mizo men is mostly considered as betrayal to Mizo community as men are regarded as carrier of Mizo lineage.

To surmise, examination on the ethnohistory of Mizo and its representation in fictional narratives provides a new field of knowledge in historical research. Drawing on both empirical and theoretical approaches on the study of a single subject matter enriches the current discourse as it leads to a new point of view. It is established in the work that Mizo ethnicity has been emerging since earlier times that was augmented by colonial authority. The process of the developing ethnicity has experienced different turn in different periods of history consistent with the socio-political context. Each historical period had a structure of thought that influenced individuals and the authors/novelists consciously and unconsciously represented Mizo ethnicity in accordance with the dominant idea of the particular age they belonged to.