

A STUDY OF COLONIAL RESISTANCE IN THE PLAYS OF
LALTHANGFALA SAILO

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**A Study of Colonial Resistance in the Plays of Lalthangfala Sailo**” is the bonafide research conducted by V. Lalberkhawpuimawia under my supervisor. V. Lalberkhawpuimawia worked methodically for his thesis being submitted for the degree of Master of Philosophy in the Department of Mizo, Mizoram University.

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

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DECLARATION

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

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

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Chapter – 1

Introduction

In human nature, to get a superior power and thirst for imperial expansion has made several world histories between different countries. Many countries of Europe had established their colonies outside of their centre; they controlled or ruled over their colonies. When Vasco-dagama discovered sea-route to India, Portugal had to establish its colonies in India. Subsequently, France and England came to establish their colonies in India.

Colonialism is defined as control by one country over a dependent area or people in different ways. There are many definitions of colonialism in different way. The word colonialism, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, comes from the Roman ‘colonia’ which meant ‘farm’ or ‘settlement’ and referred to Romans who settled in other lands but still retained their citizenship. (Lombo 7) Jamila Osman define “colonialism is when one country violently invades and takes control of another country, claims the land as its own, and sends people – settlers to live on that land.” (Osman) Bhaivab Gosh also defines colonialism as “When a country conquers another country and imposes its supremacy on that conquered country, it is known as colonialism”. (Gosh)

Besides, the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy uses the term colonialism is “to describe the process of European settlement and political control over the rest of the world, including the Americas, Australia, and parts of Africa and Asia”. (Kohn and Reddy) Collins English Dictionary defines “Colonialism is the practice by which a powerful country directly controls less powerful countries and uses their resources to increase its own power and wealth.” (“Colonialism”) Colonialism can be used mostly to describe the European control of the formations of governance and defeat. It implements a systematic administration over

territories in different regions in the world. This structure of supremacy was opposed by the native people in many ways, and they strategize ways to put up resistance from the colonizer.

The term 'resistance' means to reject and fight against something that is undesirable to a particular cause or group of people, and the attempt to reverse or change it to a more desirable state. Human beings are each equipped with the ability to have preferences and non-preferences, and that state of being does not necessarily change when they are grouped as a collective, such as in societies. When a phenomenon arises that seeks to threaten the values of a particular group as a collective, they need to fight back and resist arose.

Resistance from a political perspective is often thought of as the property of the left. The resistance concept is introduced by Edmund Burke in social science in the eighteenth century, who argued for the necessity of resisting revolutionary progress. (Darity 208) According to Mikael Bazz, "Resistance has often been connected with antisocial attitudes, destructiveness, reactionary or revolutionary ideologies, unusual and sudden explosions of violence, and emotional outbursts. (Bazz, 137) The most important concept of resistance is to stand against, entered the social sciences primarily from political affairs and society. It is really resistance in a critical politico-cultural sense that has had the greatest impact in the field.

The Indian trade relations with Europe started through sea route only after the arrival of Vasco-da-Gama in Calicut, India on May 20, 1498. "The Portuguese had already started trading in Goa as early as 1510, and later founded three other colonies on the west coast in Diu, Bassein, and Mangalore". ("Gateway for India")

Britain had been trading in India since about the year of 1600, but it did not begin to seize large sections of land until 1757, after the Battle of Plassey. In the Battle of Plassey which occurred in 1754, they pitted three thousand soldiers of the British East India

Company against the five thousand-strong armies of the young Nawab of Bengal, Siraj ud Daulah, and his French East India Company allies. “The Nawab lost at least five hundred troops, while Britain lost only twenty-two soldiers in the battle. Britain seized the modern equivalent of about five million dollars from the Bengali treasury and used it to finance the further expansion of their empire. (Kallie) The Moghul Empire collapsed after this battle and solidified India as one of the colonized countries by the British Empire.

“From the initial stage, though the Company’s intention seemed in favour of securing its trade with India, what gradually manifested was its ambition of monopolizing the trade. The company’s officials searched for new lands where they could establish settlements and factories, thus, aspired for political supremacy”. (Hosana 31) The East India Company was under the control of the British centre that is England. In India, the Governor-General is the superior in-charge who resided in Calcutta. His function was to control trade, administration and politics as it pleases the Imperial administrations.

Many Indians were distressed by the rapid cultural and life changes caused by the British colonialism. They were troubled that Hindus and Muslims in India would be Christianized. They also suffered in multiple ways in their homeland; and they eventually tried to break through from the British. On 10th May 1857, the Indian Revolt began, with Bengali Muslim troops marching to Delhi and pledging their support to the Mughal emperor. However, after a year-long struggle, the rebels surrendered on June 20, 1858.

Many historians called this First War of Independence as a ‘Sepoy Mutiny’ of 1857. For them, it was just a group of Indian soldiers who had mutinied and failed. They largely fail to recognize the involvement of a vast section of Indian society that took part in this struggle. Peasants and nobles all were involved in this futile attempt to regain not only their independence but their dignity. Lack of planning and co-ordination amongst the people who

took part in this struggle resulted in the defeat of the mutiny. Many innocent people were killed on both sides.

After 1858, India officially became a British colony as the British crown took control of India from the East India Company. The name 'East India Company' was dissolved by the British parliament in 1859. The British crown put a Secretary of State for India in a change of India. An Indian Council with only advisory powers was to aid him. India was then divided into three administrative zones like Bengal, Madras and Bombay. A number of administrative and legal changes were introduced at that time. On 1st January 1877, Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India at a *Durbar* (assembly of notables and princes) in Delhi. The Viceroy Lord Lytton represented the Sovereign who incidentally never visited her Indian Empire during her rule. In 1905, the colonial government divided Bengal into Hindu and Muslim sections although this division was revoked after strong protests. Britain also encouraged the formation of the Muslim League of India in 1907. (Kallie)

The Partition of Bengal created a massive eruption of public anger against British rule. Intellectual people as well as the common man during this period took part in mass agitation to gain freedom from the colony. An Indian well-known poet Rabindranath Tagore also actively supported the movement. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's '*Bande Matram*' was taken up as the soul-stirring slogan. Several groups of revolutionaries started operating in Bengal. Aurobindo Ghosh, Rasbihari Bose, and Jatindranath Mukherjee were some of the important leaders of these revolutionary groups. These rising independence movements from the British rule were finally led and India got independent in 15th August 1947.

The term Mizo is a collective name for the people inhabiting Mizoram, "the word Mizo is a compound of '*Mi*' and '*Zo*' and is generally translated as hill people." (Lalrinawma ix) According to some Mizo historian, they are descendants of the Mongolian tribe Tibetan-

Burma and they had descended from China and had migrated to the present place through Burma. (Lalzama 12) But, it is difficult to pinpoint the exact origins of the Mizos as there are no written accounts from their early ancestors. One of the Welsh missionary, J.M Lloyd depict that from the early Mizo historian thought,

Since they possessed no written records it is difficult to tell the origin of the Mizos and there are various stories about their past. Contemporary historians point to the Khampat area in the Kabaw valley as the earliest known home of the Mizo. Mizo planted a banyan tree at that palace site before they were driven out of the Kabaw valley in the 13th century by the powerful Shans. It seems that after this many settled in the piece of land in the Chin Hills between Tiddim and Falam and came to regard it as their ancestral home. (2)

According to Mizo folklore, the Mizos came from *chhinlung*, which implies a stone with a covering. All the descendants of the Mizo clans are supposedly from this place. Some historians have debated that *chinlung* of folklore is, in fact, a place called Sinlung or Xinlong which is situated in China bordering. “In the beginning of eighteen century the Lushais started moving westward from Burma to India. The diminishing jhum area for the growing population was the main reason for migration.” (Ray 23)

The early Mizo society was an independent body with different villages under the village chief. The village chief was the head of the village and the supreme leader of their village who controls all administrations and the land in his territory also belonged to him. It is difficult to pinpoint the exact origin of chieftainship in Mizo society, although it has originated through physical ability and intellectual power to provide security to the people. Raids between villages were very common in the early Mizo society. There were fights to protect their own village against external enemies from other villages and also from the wild

animals. In that manner, the *Pasaltha*, meaning warriors is one of the important societal figures in the early Mizo societal construct. They were the heroes and protectors of the common man from their enemies.

The chief was assisted by elder men known as *upa(s)* in the village administrative level. They settled and discussed all kinds of disputes connected with the villagers at the village chief's residence presided by the chief where the Chief had a veto power to make the final decision in any affair in his territory. He had high admiration and respect from the villagers under his protection. *Upas* were appointed by the chief and the chief can also be dismissed by them. Every household in the village had to pay different kinds of dues to their village chief. The main due was *fathang*, which came in the form of their harvest in the paddy field, but the quantity is not fixed and they may be paid in proportion to their family condition or wages and also from the demand of the Chief. The Mizo chief also played an important role in maintaining peace and harmony in the village with their neighboring villages. Brothers or sons of the chiefs were given the right to set up new villages or chieftainships in other places.

According to their tradition, Mizo villages were created and situated in mountain ridges for their safety from their enemies. "Each village was self-contained, self-governing and had to be self-sufficient. Its territory extended over a wide area. Within this, the village would choose a fresh hillside every year for cultivation." (3) Chieftainship among the Mizos came to gain more stature and power with the migration of the tribe. There is no record on the origin of the chieftainship institution in the Mizo society but a story of how chieftainship came up among the Lushais speaks of one *Zahmuaka* as their first chief.

The main important institutional structure of early Mizo village is called the *Zawlbuk*, a bachelor dormitory. It is always the largest building in a Mizo village wherein a big village

sometimes has more than one zawlbuk. It is usually built near the chief's house in the middle of the village and is constructed by the villagers. The Zawlbuk is a command centre in case of emergency in enemy or wild animal attacks and also an information centre of the village. The other important function of Zawlbuk is that it is a social administrative centre for the young men and a place of social institution. N Chatterji said that "Zawlbuk being located centrally with all the able-bodied young person's easily available at the beck and call of the Chief for any collective works in times of necessity and emergency and the inmate's force to 'Tlawmngaihna'. (Zawlbuk 16)

The Mizos are different sub-tribes closely knitted together by common traditions, customs, culture, and modes of living, language and rites. (Lalrinawma 20) They lived in simple ways and had minimum requirements in the early days. The concept called *tlawmngaihna* plays an important role in the early Mizo society which is a bit equivalent to the English word 'chivalry' but the *Mizo Tlawmngaihna* encompasses more than chivalry. It is difficult to explain in theory as it does not have an equivalent in any other language; it is a practical life character. One of the pioneers Missionary in Mizoram who makes Mizo alphabet, JH Lorrain defines *tlawmngaihna* as many vocabularies, "self-sacrificing, unselfish, self-denying, preserving, stoical....To refuse to give in, give way, or are conquered" (qtd. In Rinawma 125, 126) "*History of the Church in Mizoram*" by J Meirion Lloyd also states the virtues and values of the Mizo as,

Honesty, courage, self-discipline, mutual help, a readiness to organize and be organized were all highly appreciated and it fact were largely summed up in the untranslatable word, 'tlawmngaihna'. This virtue was and is- highly prized, and has certain elements in common and courtesy and chivalry. (4)

In traditional Mizo society, there existed ‘*Bawi*’ or dependants of the village chief, however hardly owned by the common people except by the chiefs. James Dokhuma stated, “...the defeated enemies from the invasion were at first taken as ‘*sal*’ (slave or retainer) and then eventually become ‘*bawi*’. Serving as an attendant and performing all the duties, they had to obey his/her master in every possible way and were completely under the dominance of their masters.” (Dokhuma, 273) There were three types of *bawi*, named differently based on how they had become so. They were: *Tukluh bawi* – the defeated ones taken from the invasion of the enemies and their rivals were named *Tukluh bawi*; *Chemsen bawi* – when one committed murder and surrendered himself to the chief for his crime, he was then called *Chemsen bawi*; *Inchhungpui bawi* – those who gave themselves in to the chiefs because of poverty or lack of near relatives were called *Inchhungpui bawi*. *Bawi(s)* were completely under the authority of the chief, serving the chief and his family was their main duty and responsibility. The *bawi(s)* were but able to bail themselves from their masters and in that case, the chief could ask for anything in exchange for them. In general, they would cost one female-bison and after the availability of the currency notes they could bail themselves out for forty (40) rupees.

Mizoram the then Lushai Hill became one of the colonized states in the British Colony from the year 1890. However, the Mizos raided those working people employed by the British rules; because of which result in the destruction of their hunting grounds and also to deprivation of commodities from them. The British Empire had taken all the nearby Chittagong and Burma but had little or no interest in the tribes or their hilly land that is Mizoram, which they referred to as Lushai hills.

Lalremsiama stated that the first interface between the Mizos and the British was held in 1776. At that time, a group of Kukis (as they were called at that time) visit Charles Croftes of Jafarabad and had also performed some traditional dances for him. (Lalremsiama 62) It

may be the earliest recorded of the Mizos with the British as can be seen. Also, In 1777 April 10, one of Chittagong area chief sent a letter of complaint to Governor-General of Bengal, Warren Hasting about a tribal called Ramu Khan, who refused to pay revenue to the British, along with the Kukis. The Kukis continued to create trouble in the British area of the Chittagong Hill Tracts and because of this, the chief of Chittagong ordered 22nd Battalion of sepoy with Captain Ellesker for the protection of the inhabitants in the British area against the harassment and assault of the Kukis. (63) “The first recorded raid on the British territory by the Lushais occurred in September, 1826...” (Malsawmdawngliana et al. 93) VH Khuma also assumed that, in the year 1826, the Lushai-Kukis raid a party of woodcutters from Syhlet in British Territory, from this incident, the British recorded as the Mizos were made trouble till they colonized. (Khuma 10)

On 16, April 1844, *Palian* chief Lalsuthlaa of Saithah village with his companies around 200 men raided Kachubari village at Manipur region of the British territory in order to avenge his father’s death. It was said that Lalrihua asked his son to bury his dead body along with the heads of their enemies. Therefore they killed 29 men and captured six including a Manipuri girl. This incident incited the anger of the British rulers and compelled them to take the first-ever reprisal of the Mizo chiefs. (Zoram Vartian 19) In retaliation, the first-ever British expeditionary force was sent into the Lushai Hills area. Captain Blackwood with four Light Infantry Company captured Lalsuthlaa in December of the same year. Lalsuthla was convicted as a prisoner till his death, and it is the first persecution of the Mizos by the British. (21)

From this moment, the Mizo people began to mistrust the Britishers. As this was a major meeting between the two groups, it had an immense effect. Lalsuthlaa approached Capt. Blackwood and relayed a message through his envoys. The message was that he was ready to receive him in his village and would surrender at his dormitory (Mizo Chanchin 495)

but Blackwood was afraid of trusting him and he urged him to come out on the outskirts and meet him. Lalsuthlaa sent another envoy, his elders to persuade him but Blackwood demanded his first request or else he would burn down his village and his food grains too. After hearing this threat, Lalsuthlaa finally surrendered and he was taken down to Syhlet. Even though Blackwood promised to plead for him and would spare his life from imprisonment (496) after being tried in Sylhlet District Court was pronounced to serve life imprisonment for having committed murder. As soon as the Mizo folk heard of this news their distrust for the Britishers grew and created tensions among them. Zorema said that,

Blackwood's expedition for the first time established the existence of Lushais as a distinct tribe. It was now relatively certain that tribal movements had occasioned the raid upon British territory. Transportation of Lalsuthlaa, in spite of the promise pardon, had greatly annoyed the sentiments and feelings of the Lushais, who lost confidence in the English and their methods. The result was that the Lushai history up to the last decade of the nineteenth century was marked by frequent raids of the Lushais on the British frontier territories and the retaliatory expeditions. (Indirect Rule in Mizoram, 20)

The last tribe driven out of the Mizo Hills by the Lushais was the Thado tribe. Around the 1840s, the Thados began to settle at a place about 15 km south of Silchar, headquarters of Cachar district where they became the company's ryots. But the Lushais located them and in 1849 attacked them. The reason for this attack was traced to a feud between the Thados and the Lushais in the Sengtlang village which was earlier raided by Capt. Blackwood. The chief of Sengtlang drove away from the Thados from his area and they settled down in Cachar. Chief Ngursailova of Sengtlang village also claimed that the Thados while fleeing had taken away two sets of gongs belonging to the Lushais.

At about the same time, the Lushais also attacked some villages in Sylhet and Manipur. It was the first time that the British administration in Cachar heard of the word Lusei or Lushais. They were reported to be a very powerful militant people who were well-armed and independent and lived in the south of Cachar. A report of Colonel Lister, a Commissioner of Cachar in 1853 said,

For many years back, and long before we obtained possession of the province, the inhabitants of the plains to the south were in constant alarm, and dread of the tribes of Kukis who used to come down and attack the villages in the plains, massacre the inhabitants, take their heads and loot and burn their houses. (qtd. in Ray 27)

To prevent further raids in the British territory in the future, the British Government decided to send an expeditionary force into the Mizo Hills. The commander was Lt. Col. Lister, Political Agent of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, who had earned an excellent reputation in dealing with the tribes of Assam. In January 1850, Col. Lister proceeded into the Mizo Hills with forces from Sylhet Light Infantry. On January 14, they reached Ngura's Sentlang village of about 150 km inside the hills. This village had about 1,000 houses with an abundant supply of grain and cotton. The trained, armed men were away when Col. Lister arrived. He thus took the village by surprise and burnt it. Immediately thereafter, he made a hasty retreat. When they returned and make a report to their headquarters by Lister, he mentions the bravery of Mizos and he also suggested that the best way to solve their troubles was to make a friendly relationship with them. (Vanlalruaia 67)

In 1850, the influential Lusei chiefs and Suakpuilala made an agreement on the communal harmonies between Mizo and the British at the boundaries of the Silchar Superintendent's office in the presence of Colonel Lister. (Lalthangliana 500) As a result of

these deals and also occur in an internal clash between north and south of the different Mizo chieftain, there is no recorded raid on the British subject during 1850-1860. (501)

From the year of Colonel Lyster's expedition in 1850, the frontiers of Sylhlet-Cachar were for some years tolerably free from disturbance; but early in 1862 a series of aggressions occurred in Sylet, terminating with one known as the Adampur (or Adampore) massacre, and from that time raids occurred almost annually in both districts. (Elly 3) An increasing raids of the British frontiers by the Mizos between the 1860s to '70s. In January 1871, one of the Mizo chief Bengkhuaia and his companion raided Alexandrapur tea garden in Chittagong area and killed a British man James Winchester and his daughter Marry Winchester was also taken prisoners and caused extensive damage on the plantations. The British government decided to send a huge military expedition to the Lushai Hills during the winter of 1871-72. (Zorema 24) Their main objectives of this expedition can be described in the *'Military Reports of the Chin-Lushai Country'* as follow-

- i) To locate an officer in the Lushai Hills for the purpose of entering into an engagement with the chief.
- ii) To require them to refer to him for adjustments all disputes between themselves and the village on the frontier.
- iii) To demand from them a nominal tribute, and generally to place our intercourse with them on a sound and improved basis. (4)

On the 22nd March 1872, the first Lushai expedition was done satisfactorily from the two corners in Chittagong and Cachar. Many Lushai Chiefs were submitted and assured to make peace with the British. A captive from Alexandrapur garden, Mary Winchester and many confined British subjects were also released in this expedition.

After 1872, the Mizos did not raid any of the nearby British settlement. As reported by B. Lalthangliana, in the years 1873 to 1886 there were no reports of raids on British

colonies and subject by the Mizos. He explained the reasons being that there were clashes and tensions among the Mizo Chieftains, and also that they wanted to uphold their peace treaty with the British. (Lalthangliana 518)

In 1888, the British Military department sent a survey party under Lt. Steward and his team. They surveyed Rangmati up to Saichal terrains. “Lieutenant Steward was accompanied by two men of his own regiment –Lance Corporal McCormick and Private Owen- to assist in the survey operations and he had as escort one naick and ten sepoy (Gurkhas) of the border police” (Reid 39) They went from Rangmati to Saichal terrain. Before reaching Saichal hills they made camp and they were killed by Pawi Chief Hausata and his followers; according to Lalthanliana, the fight happened on the morning of 3rd February of 1888 (Lalthanliana 98). Hausata and his followers killed five of them, two *sepoy*s and three Britishers and took their heads as prizes (99). B. Lalthangliana also states, “Between the years 1888-1889 Mizo folks raided foreigners/Indians eight times” (Lalthangliana 518).

As a result, the British Government started occupying lands by force as before. The Lushai Expedition (1889) was initiated in January 1889, and its mission was to capture Pawi Chief Hausata and his followers. Between the years 1889-1890, after the completion of their mission, it was termed as Chin Lushai Expedition. “They came in two columns, namely ‘Chittagong column’ and ‘Cachar column’, and orders were given to start the expedition on 11th September 1889” (520). After this, the war began and raged on between the Mizo and the Britishers. There were many casualties on both sides. In the year 1890 February, the British made camp at Aizawl and settled permanently. From hence, the Britishers occupied and enforced their rule and supremacy.

The Lushai Expedition or *Vailen* took place was that of those invasions of the British folks; the same is what has been heard of in history. As has already been observed, the Mizo

people were said to have passed across the Tiau river in general at around AD 1700 in terms of their migration movement from the east, and the earlier ones to have had already reached Chittagong and Tiperrah (Tripura) at around AD 1750. (Lalthanliana 1) Many of the chiefs and villages could not help but move further towards the west since they continuously moved from one place to the other, there the interactions with other communities seemed to take place as well. “The presence of the early fore-settlers had already been witnessed in around the year 1700 in the eastern regions of Chittagong.” (Vanlalruaia 55)

The Mizos had a huge encounter with the British during the colonial period. They considered that the British tea garden as their territory, and it greatly annoyed them as it was taken to be an encroachment upon their right. The Mizos tried to protect their land and showed aggression as hard as possible in many ways. Thus, the main reason for aggression between the British and Mizos was due to land protection and enlarge supremacy. But, colonial understanding can be different from an account of an interpreter. The early account of the Mizos and their practices were from the works of British administrators and the Christian missionaries. Mizos were treated like headhunters, living like a barbaric society in their descriptions. A conflict between the Mizos and the British was also witnessed through written records in terms of their ideology and colonial thinking.

Thomas Herbert Lewin stated that the Mizos “...continually to raid(ed) into the Hill Tract, attacking and plundering the inhabitants, burning the villages, slaying the men, and carrying off women and children into slavery.” (Lewin 190) Colonel AS Raid also considered Mizos as “wild tribes which has been in the habit of raiding North Eastern Frontier” (Malsawmdawngliana et al. 84) Also, before the Welsh mission occupied the Mizos, an account of Welsh mission story by John Hughes Morris stated that, “The inhabitants [of the Lushai Hills] were regarded by the few European then residing in Bengal as the fiercest and most barbarous of all the Hill tribe within the province, notorious for their head-hunting

expedition to the neighboring plains.” (84) From the British point of view, the Mizos and their practices like their invading practices and their headhunting were testified as insignificant. Everyone who faced and resisted their so-called civilized ideas was treated with shame and contempt.

There may be several factors for their conflicts between the Mizos and the British. The more significant points detect several points of tension in the relationship were-

Firstly, when different sections of society come together, there often arise problems in the matters of administrations and conflicts over land. From the year 1754, India was under the dominance of the British Empire, over the passing years, territories were widened and conflicts with Mizo people started taking place. Tea estates began to be set up in Assam from the year 1835; in the year 1865, one of the Mizo chiefs named Vanpuilala even extended his disappointment through delegates to the Commissioner of Cachar regarding their advancement into his land. (Lalthanliana 15) Since they always aggressively but heroically confronted each other for ownership of their respective lands, more of the disagreements seemed to occur then.

The land had been utilized by the British mainly for the purpose of Elephant-hunting. *Khedah* (Elephant-hunting Group) is an important organization under the British authority; their main task was to provide the elephants which were required for facilitating their works and advancement over their enemies. Similarly, hunting of elephants and their tusks occupied a significant yet valuable place in the former life of the Mizo people. Elephants were one of the necessary wild animals to be shot in order to accomplish *Thangchhuah*, and the tusks were used in various valuable ornaments as well. In addition to what has already been mentioned, previous to the availability of the currency notes, elephants' tusks were mainly used in the exchange system. Smaller head chiefs under the rule of the bigger chiefs also used

these tusks as payment of valuable taxes. For that reason, fighting against each other over land for the activity of hunting seemed to take place increasingly.

Secondly, revenge is a significant factor in their conflicts between the Mizos and the British. The former Mizo chiefs used to collect certain taxes from their nearby communities for the advancement of their domain, that was for the use of their land or to show that they were under their headship. The Mizo chiefs then used to collect taxes also from those villages which were under the British domain. If those villages failed to or were late to pay the taxes within the allotted time, the Mizo chiefs would then simply take revenge on them. In addition to that, the Mizo chiefs often attacked the nearby small villages in order to show their disappointment and contempt towards the British. Vuttaia's attack of the British people at the bank of river Singla in the year 1826 was also said to be because the latter had neglected the yearly tax they had to pay. Lalsutthlaa's team invaded Kochabari, Manipur in the year 1844 for the same reason for revenge. (Lalthanliana, 17)

In the Mizo way of life, once an invasion occurred, the defeated ones were always taken as slaves - to work for them or to get something worthy in exchange for them. They could easily get any kind of material or other valuable things as much as they want from the villages they had defeated. The invasion in want of slaves and materials often took place and their main motive was to extract as much loot as possible from the hands of the native dwellers. Yet another remarkable matter was that of taking the heads of their enemies, bringing home the heads of the rivals was a sign of noble victory in the earlier Mizo community. Kaimaru in Tiperra was invaded in the year 1853 and the year 1860 Rothangpuia's village had invaded more than fifteen villages in Tippera, 150 people got killed and 22 more were taken home for slaves. The British Government even named this expedition "The Great Kuki Invasion". (18)

The first and great Lushai expedition occurred in 1871, the last and fourth expedition named 'The Chin-Lushai Expedition' was held in 1889-90 and British ruled over Mizoram in 1890. These expeditions were opposed by some Mizo chiefs and their companions with utmost strength. Their resisting actions and their faithfulness to the Mizo land were mentioned in some Mizo literary works including drama. The work will make an attempt to study the reason behind the Mizos resisting British colonialism by analyzing from selected Mizo dramas of *Thangliana Len* and *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga* by Lalthangfala Sailo.

The origin of drama in world literature comes from the religious instincts of Greek imitation. In the same manner, Mizo drama also originated from religious inclination in the early Mizo society, and they are often known as folk-theater. When they are performed for a religious purpose, they were accompanied by dance, disguise and performed in a way that is most sanctimonious to the purpose. Laltluangliana Khiantge also pointed out that "Fear, sympathy and curiosity appear to have prompted the beginning of drama in its origins. Hope came later in the process." (Khiantge 31) In Mizo early society, some ritual and community practices like *Ral-lu lam* (Head dance), *salu lam* (animal head dance), *kawngpui siam*, *fano dawi* etc. were also performed.

"The root of the Mizo drama began to grow with the celebration of the grandest Christian festival in the land, Christmas." (33) On December 25 of 1912, the Missionaries and some Mizos celebrate Christmas with some entertainment programme. In the evening of that day, the first-ever dramatic performance was held in Thakthing Veng, Aizawl. This important event was reported by Lianhmingthanga, who attended in that function, in *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu* (a monthly journal of Lushai Hills) on January 1913 issue. Their main item proceeds like plays in that function were *Sap mi khual leh tawng let lingtu* (English stranger and interpreters), *Krismas hria leh hre lo* (Christmas Dialogue), *Kristian leh Kristian lo inbiakna* (Christian and non-christian dialogue), *Sap putar leh Mosolman putar inbiakna* (Old

English man and Old Mosolman man dialogue), *Khasi Dialoch* (Dialogue between Khasis), *Borsap lem leh thu chhia neitu 2 leh rahsi lem chang te* (Superintendent's Court scene).

Laltluangliana Khiangte said that "The most memorable show was...*Borsap lem, leh a thu chhia nei tu 2 leh rasi lem chang te* (Superintendent's Court scene). This particular item may be recorded as the first short play ever staged in Mizoram. It was not simply a combination of dialogue and action, but it has a plot, a short story to portray, hence a play." (Mizo Drama 35). This is a story about a goat robber and his neighbor, in the Superintendent court. The *Rahsi* (Circle Interpreter) was hired as a lawyer by the robber. But, when the Superintendent decided the issues, the real owner was defeated. The lawyer, *Rahsi* was disappointed and helplessly asked to return his money.

After this event, Christmas was organized with plays and after two or three years, the dramatic performance was shown in the church occasionally. As the Church grew, so did the congregation, the year 1919 saw a spiritual revival in Mizoram. This revival brought happiness and merriment among the people who practiced the faith. Christmas was to be spent with singing and sharing, and drama loses its prominence.

Later in 1925, Drama was instituted by the Boys Middle English school students and teachers and important persons like Ch. Pasena, Chawngzika and Lalkailuaia were the chief members and leaders of this group. On 1940, October 3rd, Zosap Missionary Samuel Davies organized a drama competition. This drama competition 'Zosiami Cup' was held in honour of Mr. Davies's daughter Zosiami. Many participated happily and the participants represented their localities and clubs. "In order to view the drama competition entry fees were collected, it generated an amount of seventy rupees. It was sent to the British empire as a war fund to help in the world war." (HML 144)

The first Mizo Drama was published and printed in Mizoram in the year 1963. The name of the play was 'Sangi Inleng' written by Lalthangfala Sailo. Many other dramas were soon published as a result of this. Prominent dramatists after the publication of the first Mizo drama were - Chawngzika, Liansailova, Lalthangfala Sailo, Lalhmuaka, Laltluangliana Khiantge, James Dokhuma, Kawlkungi, K. Saibela and others.

In 1990, Mizoram witnessed its first 'Mizoram Open Drama Writing Competition', and Laltluangliana Khiantge's drama 'Lalnu Ropuiliani' won the first prize, and it was the second book to be published in Mizoram. His second drama 'Lemchan Khawvel 2- Pasaltha Khuangchera' was published in the year 1997. This play won the 1997 'Book of the Year' which was organized annually by Mizo Academy of Letters. (117)

Lalthangfala Sailo was born on 16th July 1933 at West Lungdar village of Northern Mizoram. His father, Dohleia Sailo is Chief of Lungdar and his mother Thanseii Sailo is also a daughter of Hranga, chief of Phulpui village. He graduated from St. Xavier's College, Calcutta in the year of 1959. He is an educationist, short story writer, playwright, and former president of the Mizo Academy of Letters (MAL) from 1988 to 2018. He is also a former Deputy Registrar at the Mizoram campus of the North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) in the year between 1985-1996.

Lalthangfala has written several articles and plays in the Mizo language and has published several books including *Lunglai Hnemtui*, *Ral hlauhawm chu* (Short stories), *Zo Kalsiam*, *Liandova te Unau leh Sangi ingleng* (plays), and *Kan ram A Ni* (A compilation of three plays). His play *Sangi Inleng*, published in 1963 and is the first Mizo drama published in book form. *Sangi Inleng*, literally means Sangi's suitor is romantic love between Sangi and Muana. Lalthangfala Sailo wrote about ten plays. His plays were compiled as a collection, published as an anthology and also as a single book. His writings contributed much and he

was a pioneer and a source of ingenuity. His writings are part of the educational curriculum in Mizoram. Laltluangliana Khiangte had said, “In the field of drama, he was a rich source and a pioneer among the Mizo’s, he rightly earns the title ‘The Premier Playwright’.” (156).

He received many awards at the regional and national levels for his contribution to literature and social works. In 2009, the Government of India awarded him the fourth highest Civilian Honor of the Padma Shri in Education and Literature. He has been awarded national level awards like *Sageet Natak Akademy Award (Playwriting)* in 2017 and *Bharat Adhivasi Drama Award* in 2012 for his precious contributions to Mizo drama as well as Mizo literature.

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Chapter-2

Identity Perception and Resistance in *Thangliana Len*

Thangliana Len is a historical play based on the historical events that occurred during the years 1871-1872. This period is commonly known as *Vailen Vawi khatna*, meaning the first advent of the British in the Mizo territory because of the end of the disrupting elements occurring in the region. Chieftainship was prevalent among the Mizo folk during this time and they had their own lands. Many chieftains were related and many were brothers. The stronger Chiefs would place their sons as Chiefs over smaller villages. Although there being many inter-village quarrels and warfare due to grievances yet many villages lived solitary and peaceful lives, co-existing in harmony until their existence was threatened by the British. The infamous Expedition known as *Vailen Vawi khatna* or First Expedition was waded by the actions of some Mizo warriors who raided and plundered a few British settlers in the region. This play highlights the expedition and exploits of the British Southern Column and how the Mizo Chiefs and their warriors responded to their advances meeting them with valor and courage.

The title *Thangliana Len* was given by the playwright due to the above stated reasons in his forwarding-

The reason why the title of the play is '*Thangliana Len*' is because the coming of First expedition in 1871-72 from the south was termed by our elders as '*Thangliana Len*'. During this time, we saw the incursion of foreigners from the south (Chhim) and the north (Hmar), those coming from the south were known as Southern Column and those of the north as Northern Column. The Southern Column was headed by General C.H

Brownlow and the Northern Column was headed by General G. Brouchier. In the south, Captain T.H. Lewin is the only Civil Officer present who knew how to speak the native tongue. Since he knew how to speak the native tongue, he was known by many Mizo folks and received more recognition than General Brownlow. So, it is because of this the foreign incursion from the south was termed "*Thangliana Len*" by the elders. This term set by the elders is therefore used as the title of the play. (Kan Ram 2)

One of the main important characters of this play is Thangliana (T.H Lewin). However, that being so, his character is overshadowed by the other elements and historical portrayal of the characterization in the play. While this is so, the British General Brownlow received far better portrayal and mature characterization because of his pivotal image and authority witnessed at the forefront of the expedition. Nevertheless, it is evidently clear that behind every noble action, good or bad, it was Thangliana actions and decisions that are noteworthy and commendable as far as the plot is concerned.

Thangliana (TH Lewin) is the first Britisher to enter Mizoram in 1865 (Ray 21). He was born on 1st April 1839 in Kent, United State of America. He arrived in India in September 1857 as an East India company military. "Until the appointment of T.H Lewin [Thangliana] (1839-1916) as Deputy Commissioner of Hill Tract, the British had little knowledge on the details of the Mizos and their culture. TH Lewin was appointed to confront the problem of how to come to terms with the Mizo (Lusei and Mara) chiefs who were constantly "hostile" to the British." (Vanlalhruaia 75) He was very friendly with the tribesmen and was considered as the white friend of the Mizos. The work of T.H Lewin has been described as seen in Mizo literature as well as Mizo society in a straightforward manner. Vanlalhruaia also said "Thangliana has been often portrayed as a paternalist figure of Mizo society." (73)

The play, *Thangliana Len* consists of four acts with varying numbers of scenes in every act. Act one consists of six scenes, Act two consists of eight scenes (a clerical mistake was made in the book which indicates seven scenes. The second scenes of Act two is divided into two scenes, thereby making it eight scenes), Act three consists of four scenes and Act four consists of one scene. Altogether, there are nineteen scenes; Act two has the most amount of scenes whilst Act four has the least amount.

The setting of the play in Act-one is Tlabung. Important British Army officials are introduced at the onset of the play. Through the words of General Brownlow, the reason for their incursion into the tribal region and their plans on how to tackle the tribal folks can be known. The play introduced Thangluah Lal (Chieftain), Rothangpuia of Lungsen village to whom the British can confide their trust and it is made known that he would act as their emissary. But due to his feud with a Sailo Chief Savunga, Rothangpuia sent two elders to relay and advocate the wishes of the British officials to the Sailo chieftains.

Savunga, a Sailo Chief and his followers, having known that the two elders who came as emissaries were being sent by Rothangpuia who was working in collaboration with the British officials spat their company. Their message that the British army and their officials would not be shot and be given safe passage to pass through their villages was disliked at first. Savunga, having put aside his enmity for the sake of general good decision to have a meeting but due to the misinformation related by Rothangpuia and his elders, hostility grew between the two parties. All along, Rothangpuia wanted the demise of Savunga and his followers thereby instigated a plan for the two parties to shoot each other. When the General heard of this news, he immediately dispatched other emissaries but trust was not gained and it was decided that they settle the problem by shooting each other.

Lalzika, son of Savunga ambushed British supply boats and having killed many of them they took their guns. The British officials and soldiers responded by raiding Lalzika's village and other villages that stood against them. The Sailo Chiefs tried repelling their attacks as hard and bravely as they could but they were no match against the more equipped British soldiers and their guns. Many more villages were burnt down. The women and children had to flee to the forest to avoid rape and certain death. Savunga's village too was besieged and they had to flee from their village but he would not submit nor yield to the British.

The adverse actions of the British soldiers instilled fear among the tribal chieftains and villagers that none but few dares opposed them. They surrendered their prisoner Mary Winchester (Zoluti) to the hands of the British officials. Haulawng Chiefs secretly sent for Rothangliana to make peace with the British. Soon after Haulawng and Sailo Chiefs made agreements with the British officials and peace was restored.

The element of conflict; how it started and its effects make a book or a play an interesting read. In order to gain the reader's interest, a great play should possess the element of rising action – a tide of conflict(s); it should determine with a subtle art the cause of the conflict and arouse interest and curiosity among the readers. Tonya Thompson defines, “Conflict is part of the narrative arc and does much to connect readers to a story or a story's characters. It involves problems or obstacles that arise within a story—both internal (or in a character's mind) and external (caused by other characters or forces)” (“ServiceScape”). The resistances of the British in this play are also prepared from the formation of conflict between the two states.

As mentioned earlier, this drama is based on a sound and factual historical event commonly known as *Vailen vawi khatna* (First Expedition) comes from 1871-1872. It

showcased the cause and effect of the Expedition. The characters are also based entirely on the time of the incident. The writer's ability to draw out events and descriptions of it is fairly commendable.

In the beginning, the reader is introduced to the British characters such as General Brownlow and his men, Thangluah chieftain Rothangpuia who was already coaxed into joining the Britishers by Thangliana. Rothangpuia is the antagonist who was responsible for the cause of conflict between the Mizo Chiefs and the British. General Brownlow and Thangliana (TH Lewin) were uneager to tread narrow waters. They wanted to resolve peacefully their differences with Savunga and his men who posed as a threat to their advancement. They wanted to pass through their village unscathed and to put an end to their shootings. Rothangpuia's chieftainship makes him a reliable candidate as an emissary to advocate their desires to the Sailo Chieftains. The General, therefore, agreed to send him with his message but Rothangpuia due to fear insisted that it would be better to shoot them. This is because Rothangpuia and Savunga cultivated a deep enmity for each other in the past. It was finally agreed upon to send two elders as messengers to Savunga's village. The message was delivered but Savunga and his men did not easily comply with the General's terms and conditions. He stated that he was not afraid of the British and would eagerly defend his people and his land at all costs. But after much deliberation he listened to the advice of his elders: "Inbiak rem a tha, Kumkhuaa inthenawm tur kan ni a, innghirngho reng ai chuan inbiak rema, tawngkam thaa inthlah a tha.... Thangliana chu hrilh rawh u....mi dang ka be dawn lo, amah nen ka'n bia ang ti rawh u" (1.3, 17) (It is good to talk and make peace. They are our neighbors, instead of having a grudge against them, it is better to meet, talk and part ways in peace... Tell Thangliana... we wish to speak only with him and no other). Their reply was adulterated to suit Rothangpuia's interest. General Brownlow and Thangliana were presented with a false message.

The message brought back by the two messengers; adulterated by Rothangpuia was not trusted by the General and Thangliana in its entirety. But Rothangpuia's scheme, which was, the surrender of the Sailo Chiefs went along until they started shooting each other as he wanted. The treacherous Rothangpuia and his two elders in their deliberate adulteration of Savunga's reply sparked hostility between the two parties.

Even before the dispatched of the two messengers, Rothangpuia's enmity and his wish to wreck havoc upon Savunga and his men could be witnessed through his words, "Sipaiin min zui sela, sipai min pe bawk ula, kan han kapang e" (1.1, 8) (Let your soldiers escort me, give me soldiers, we shall shoot them). The reason for enmity as accounted by Thangliana was, "... Hmanah Rothangpuia hian Savunga hi a lo bum tawh a, a ngam si lova, a hlau zek zek tawh mai ni" (1.1, 10) (...In the past, Rothangpuia had cheated Savunga, he dared not challenge him, ever since he feared him). It was because of this account that makes him unreliable. Therefore, they agreed to send two elders. On their return, Rothangpuia coaxed them and managed to adulterate the message; claimed that Savunga did not want to talk to them and if they insist that he would shoot them without any hesitation.

While the British wanted to pass through without having to shoot each other but the adulteration of the message brought back by the messengers caused friction and hostility between them. The British officials sent a second messenger Lianggura but when Savunga and his men found out that Lianggura's wife was held by Rothangpuia in compliance with the British trust failed and they agreed to shoot each other. Furthermore, the Sailo Chieftains' contempt for Rothangpuia and his allegiance to the Britishers fueled their already bitter hatred towards him. Lalhera, a Sailo Chieftain spoke of him as, "Hnam dang phena mi beih tum, kan ram runtute lo tanpuia, hamthat tum mi, hetiang mi pelhle hi keini chuan kan duh lo" (1.4, 27) (Making plans to attack whilst hiding behind other tribesmen, helping our enemies, trying to gain from them, we do not want such fickle-minded people). Patiala even

compared him to a bat, as having thought cunningly only for himself. Such reasons made the British all the more untrustworthy in the eyes of the Sailo Chiefs.

Due to the shortcomings of the meeting and the messages, trouble sparked, and when the Mizo folk started ambushing their ration supply the spark of enmity turned into a flame that resulted in a full scale invasion.

Identity perception between the Mizo and British is one of the important sources of resistance from this play. There were many important reasons for the coming of the Britishers. The play provides evident cause and effect of why and how the Britishers attacked the Mizo folk. It also delves into the mind of the British persona, the reasons and execution of the *Vailen vawi khatna*, the first expedition and the different ways of how the Mizo Chieftains were dealt with. TH Lewin said in his book *A fly on the Wheel*, “These Lushais were the standing problem which embarrassed all local administration; they continually raided into the Hill Tracts, attacking and plundering the inhabitants, burning the villages, slaying the men, and carrying off the women and children into slavery.” (189, 190) There are many reasons behind the Mizo continuously raid the British territory. From the British point of view, the Mizo as an uncivilized and savage people. These types of different perceptions bring a clash between them.

The British point-of-view regarding the Mizo can be first witnessed in the uttering of Captain Brownlow, the leader of the Southern Column, who called them as ‘hmelma’ (enemy) and his description of the Mizo folk were “Tun hi hmelma ramria kan inhmukkhawmna hmasa ber a ni” (1.1, 6) (Now is the first time where we shall meet here in our enemies’ border) and “Sailo-ho hi rallhrat leh beih har tak an ni ang” (Sailo tribe is a warring tribe, they are fierce and will be hard to dealt with). Such are the reviews of the British towards the Mizos. Supposedly, few contributing factors to such ascribed description

are because of the wild and horrid actions taken by the Mizo folk upon the British helpers and upon the British themselves. These few assorted reasons are as such, the Mizo folk had raided Alexandrapore Tea estate in 1871, killed Winchester and many estate workers (Ralte 29). They captured Mary Winchester and have her imprisoned as a slave. They even raided and killed those within the boundary of the British Raj and carried off any survivors as slaves.

Apart from the mentioned reasons, the following dialogue further stated as thus;

GEN. BROWNLOW . . . Heng hnam â leh kawlhse tak tak te hi British sorkar chuan inkap lova, kan kuta inpe turin a duh a ni. An ram laka awp hi kan tum a ni lo. British khua leh tuite an that a, salah an man bawk a. Heng thil tha lo tak tak an tih thin hi an sim theih nan leh hetiang thil sual an tih chuan khawiah pawh awm se, kan hrem thei. An khua kan tichhe thei tih leh, kan duh phei chuan kan that teuh thei tih an hria a, tun hnua min tihbuai tawh loh nan a ni kan ram kan run dawn ni. (1.2 p 6)

(...these uncivilized and savage are expected to avoid shooting and to surrender to the British Raj. It is not our intent to raid and occupy their land. They have killed British citizens, imprisoned them as slaves. Therefore, in order to stop them from committing such savagery and if found wanting having committed such acts will be punished wherever they maybe. They know that we have the power to raid their lands and even kill a whole lot of them, so in order that they will never trouble us again we shall raid their lands.)

Such words of General Brownlow are considered to be the main abstract from which the theme of the British narrative is concentrated and extracted. Furthermore, it can be

considered as the main theme of the play because it provides the reason as to why the British incurred their prowess over the Mizo folk.

Further inspection of the words of General Brownlow sheds light on two dictates. The first is that the Mizo are crude and uncivilized people both culturally and in their way of thinking. They were frowned upon as mere savages who hunt and raid people even beyond their territorial boundaries. The second is that the Mizos were seen by the British as warriors and performed feats of courage and valor whilst fighting. The words of General Brownlow “...khawiah pawh awm se, kan hrem thei bawk” (...will be punished wherever they may be.) dictates their pride and sense of higher status, claiming that they can punish the Mizos (regarded as having lower status) if they were to ever commit wrongs even if they are not their territorial subjects. It states how they regarded themselves in terms of being the powerful tutor, judge and jury. This audacious feeling arose out of the fact that they were, at the time, colonizers of many countries, thus, General Brownlow felt passionately inclined to state such words and to teach the Mizos never to raid their people and territories again.

Another element is evident in these words, “an ram laka awp hi kan tum a ni lo” (It is not our intent to raid and occupy their land). It states to show that the Britishers did not want to create havoc upon the land rather they wanted peace between the Mizos and themselves. The other intention being to teach a lesson for which they would never trouble them again. “In the year 1850, Colonel Lister, a political agent unintentionally raided Lalngura’s village, Sentlang after having raided Triperra” (Lalthangliana 497). Before this raid, the Mizo Chieftain Lalsuthlaa was the first to have received a reprimand from the British. Colonel Lister accounted for many things which he saw regarding the Mizos. After few battles with some Mizo Chiefs, he reported his headquarter in Bengal. In his report, he stated the ingenuity of Mizo warfare, acquired many guns and ammunition from their previous exploits and that it was best and wise to form a mutual alliance with their chieftains before warring

against them. (Vanlalruaia 66) On account of this report, in the year 1851, the Governor-General Lord Cuning proposed the Policy of Consolidation for mutual understanding and coherence between the Britishers and the Mizo folk. (Lalthanliana 8). But, this policy was neglected over the years and many raids occurred, one such raids on the Alexandrapore Tea estate in 1871 ushered in the infamous First Expedition. The First Expedition is regarded by some as the 'Forward Policy' which was taken by the British Government to strengthen the Policy of Consolidation. Hence, this play draws its plot from the historical occurrence of 1871-1872 wherein the words and acts of General Brownlow which represented the British Empire states the power of rule dictated upon the Mizo folk. This dictate was refused by the Mizo Chieftains. The retaliation of the British was met by the Mizo folks and resulted in the burning and pillaging of villages and the death of many.

Captain Brownlow having coaxed and recruited Rothangpuia, sent him to advocate his wish for peace and along with this message to acclaim the power and magnificence of the British Empire as stated in the words,

Kumpinu sipai tam tak an lo kal a, an tamzia chu hneh rual an ni lo. Silai tam tak leh laipui pawh an nei. Lo kap suh u. Anni pawhin an kap lovang che u. In rama an lo kal tlang phalsak ula, tin, an mahni nen in inbe dawn nia han ti rawh u. An hotupa pawh lal tak a ni. General sap an ti a, Thangliana pawh a lo tel ve a, General sap leh Thangliana inbe dawn nia' han ti rawh." (1.1, 8)

(A great many soldiers of the Empire will dawn upon you, their sheer size makes them undefeatable. They are equipped with many guns and cannons. Shoot them not. For they shall refrain shooting you. Allow them to pass through your lands and tell them not to refrain from talking with them. Even

their General is a man of high status. They call him General sap, beside him, is Thangliana, tell them to call upon General sap and Thangliana).

The stated words hint of ego and pride. It shows the British urge for peace and understanding in order to avoid needless war. It can also be seen that the General believed that Savunga and his followers would heed his message and come to terms with him.

Regarding measures taken against provoking needless war, the General having a suspicion of the authenticity of the messages relayed to and fro by the two elders dispatched by Rothangpuia adamantly obliged that they sent another envoy to deliver his message “Savunga hnenah chuan mi dang kan tirh leh a ngai a ni. Kan tlai thiang lovang.” (1.3, 24) (Another messenger should be sent at once to Savunga. We cannot afford to be late). Therefore, to avoid war, Lianggura, the second messenger was dispatched to deliver the same message of peace, acceptance of the British as a great empire and to pass through their lands unscathed. Lianggura is portrayed as having a close relationship with Savunga. Also, having been married to Savunga’s younger sister, the General believed that his message will be received well and be more effective.

The British knew that consumption of intoxicating drinks such as Zu (alcohol) was inherent in the Mizo culture. They used this element to divide, conquer and rule. Rothangpuia, his elders and his villages were all kept under the control and in compliance with the Britishers as they were provided Zu. The Britishers knew their weakness and attacked accordingly. They destroyed their food/grain stores, attacked their most respected Chiefs in order to control the Mizo folk.

In Act two of scene two, the plays show how General Brownlow’s initiative to attack the Sailo Chiefs and to put an end to Savunga’s raiding party who, earlier in the play had ambushed the British soldiers’ ration supply at Burkhal Kurung. His words were, “Tunah

chuan Sailo ho nena inkap lo tura theihtawp kan chhuahna chuan awmzia a nei ta lo... Kan beih vat loh chuan kan tuar kan tuar mai dawn a ni... A rang thei ang bera Savunga ho hi kan chhut chhiat a ngai” (2.2, 30, 31) (It is now clear that we have to face the inevitable and the idea of not shooting between the Sailo Chief and us does not hold weight... we cannot afford to remain silent lest we suffer more and more... it is utmost time that we attack and strike down Savunga and his men). This clearly shows that peace was only but a dream and so accordingly, the Britishers started their advances by countering any resistance from the Sailo Chiefs. Though the Mizos fought valiantly their efforts were halted by well-trained and better equipped British soldiers. Their guns and cannons were no match against the crude and old-fashioned guns of the Mizo folk. They captured and burnt many villages. Savunga and many others escaped to the forest.

Scene one of Act three presents the victory of General Brownlow over the much-anticipated defeat of Savunga, a Sailo Chieftain. He rejoiced thus, “Tunah chuan kan hmabak hmasa ber chu kan hlen ta. Sailo Savunga ho chu kan tichhe ta vek a. An in leh lo kan tihchhiat sak a, an ran leh arva tam tak kan rawtsawt belhchhah tur kan la bawk. Mihring pawh kan hloh tam lo, kan hloh let tam tak anni lam kan that a ni” (3.1, 52) (We have now finally achieved our first priority. We have defeated Sailo Savunga. We have destroyed their houses and their fields, we have captured many of their animals and chickens for food. We had few casualties as compared to the Mizo folk who were killed by them). His commendable actions were awarded by the Viceroy and in this wake disclosed statements of his wish that the British Empire will be feared and respected by all due to their victory against Savunga and his men, he states: “Hei hi a hmahruai atan chuan tha tak a ni. Mi dangte zirtirna a ni. Kan hlauhawmzia an hriatna tur a ni” (3.1, 53) (This act shall set an example and pave a path. It will be a lesson to others. Through this act they shall fear us all). Through this, it can know that the defeat of Savunga and his supporters were to be a hard task as he was one of the most

respected and chivalrous leaders among the Sailo chieftains. Because of this victory, they believed that their path ahead would be much less difficult as their victory over Savunga would instill fear among the Mizo folk. At the same time, they were on guard and prepared to face any opposition.

In the latter scene, words are exchanged between Thangliana and a messenger by his bedside. It is found that Thangliana followed the messenger and made an agreement with Sangvunga, a Haulawng Chief at Tuldung river-side. The agreement was that they should not shoot at each other. Many Sailo Chiefs, with resentment and fear, surrendered without a fight and wanted to make peace because of the General's victory over Savunga and his men. Sangvunga's words, "Kan unau Haulawng lal dangte nen kan inbia ang a, kan duh dan chu a inang vek ang" (I will have words with my Haulawng brothers, our intentions will be unanimous.) dictates their wish for peace with the General. An important revelation as per the play is that the Haulawng Chiefs placement of trust in Thangliana and not the General shall digress this element of trust later. Thangliana advocated the wishes and intentions of the British officials in these words:

Kan duh dan chu hei hi a ni. In sal man zawng zawng inchhuah vek tur a ni.
 Hetah kan hnenah in rawn dah ang. In ramah duh hun hunah, kan duhna
 apiangah kan lo kal inphal tur a ni. Tun hnuah Kumpinu ram inrun tawh ngai
 lovang tih intiam bawk tur a ni. Heng hi Haulawng lal in inkhmukhawm ang
 a, in intiam ang a. Kan General in rinawma a hriat che u chuan kan kap
 lovang che u. In khua pawh kan hal lo vang. Heng hi in intiam a ngai. In
 intiam lova, in sal mante in chhuah loh chuan kan kap ngei ngei ang che u.
 (3.3, 58, 59)

(Our wish is this. Release all whom you have enslaved. Give them to us. Agree to allow us to visit your lands whenever and wherever we wish. From now onwards, swear that you will never raid any British territory again. Haulawng chiefs should meet and decide to accept and swear upon this request. If our General finds your pledges as trustworthy then we shall not shoot you. We shall not burn your villages. You will have to solemnly swear upon these requests. If you do not oblige and release your slaves then we will surely shoot you.)

After the surrender of the Haulawng Chiefs, the General stated these words:

In thil min pekte hi kan lawm khawp mai. Zoluti inrawn chhuah a, in salman Kumpinu ram chhunga mi in man zawng zawng inchhuah vek tur a ni. Tun hnuah pawh in ram chhungah kan duh ang anga kan duhna apianga kan kal inremti tur a ni. Tin, tun hnuah chuan Kumpinu khua leh tui reng reng in run tur a ni lo. Run tawh lo turin thu intiam tur a ni. Kumpinu, ram ni nitla seng lova roreltu chu in aia lal leh thianah inpawm vek tur a ni. (3.4, 64)

(We are grateful for what we have received. You have released Zoluti, all the slaves who belonged to the British must be released. From now on, you must allow us to enter and pass through your lands however and wherever we wish. Also, you are prohibited from raiding British settlements. Pledge that you shall never again raid them. Accept that the British Empire is a greater ruler and a friend).

The above statement presents the reasons behind the attacks against the Mizo folk and the intentions of the General. These reasons being – the ability to move about peacefully through the lands, that they refrain from raiding British settlements and that they may release

their slaves, especially, Mary Winchester. These three reasons were the main policy of the expedition. Even after the agreement and signing of surrender by the Chieftains, they maintained the same three policies. These points were written in the agreement signed by the Chieftains after their surrender:

Kan sal man zawng zawng British khua leh tuite chu a duh apiang kan chhuah ang. Kumpinu ram kan run tawh lovang. Kan ram chhungah min hriattir chuan an duh angin kal kan phalsak ang. Kumpinu (British) sorkar chu kan thian a ni. (We shall release all our slaves who are British settlers, that is, if they are willing to be released. We shall not raid British settlements within the British territories. Given notice, we shall allow them passage across our lands. The British Empire is our friend.) (3.4, 66)

On further study of these points, one can determine certain aspects of the agreement that even though they agreed to set their slaves free, a clause “*a duh apiang*” meaning the slaves must be willing to go of their own accord, should be considered. This is because many slaves had already been married and wanted to remain as part of the community while those who wanted to be free were not hindered in any way. The third point of the agreement states ‘...min hriattir chuan...’ (..if given notice...) and thus determine the power that the chieftains held over their lands and subjects are noticed and respected by the Britishers and that they would not barge in without any notice whatsoever. The Britishers showed tremendous respect for the Chiefs and stated that they would always notify them of their comings.

Lastly, in the first Scene of Act four, the fact that Captain Brownlow had tremendous respect for the Mizo folk and particularly of Savunga can be seen in his statement:

GENERAL BROWNLOW. Tunah chuan kan tum kan hlen thei ta. Haulawng lalho pawh an hmin vek anga ngaih theih a ni e... An sal mante pawh an chhuah

bawk si. An sal man, a mantute nena an han inthen tur chu an tap nasa hle mai. An sal mante hi an enkawl tha a. A tirah sal ni mah se, nikhua a lo reiah chuan an hlim tlangin chhungkhat tak takah an inseam thin hlawm a nih chu...

Sailo Savunga a inlan ve duh lo va...tun thleng hian amah a inlan duh lo. Hetiang mi rilru lian leh luhlul tak hi lo ni hlawm seng chuan, an beih a khirkhan hle ang. Thil enkim a hriatchhuah chuan a upate a rawn tir a, inthianna thu an tiam kha. Thangliana pheii chuan Lalngura (Savunga fapa) pawh a hmu a, inthian tawn tur leh inpui tawn zel turin an intiam a ni. Anniho hian kan kut an tuar nasa em em a, an tan dinchhuah leh a har ang. Mi rilru nghet hetiang hi thian tlak a ni. Mi ngaihsanawm, mahni ram chhan nana engpawh huamte hi, keini British sorkar chuan kan mi ngaihsan ber te an ni. Thian atan pawh an that avangin tunhnu zelah pawh kan hre reng dawn nia... (4.1, 69)

(We have now achieved our objective. Every Haulawng chieftain has finally surrendered... they have released their slaves. The sight of their separation with teary eyes between the owner and the slaves showed how well they were cared for. Even though they were treated as slaves in the beginning, as time elapsed they were made part of the community.

Sailo Savunga did not want to reveal himself... till now he is adamant not to surrender. If they all were as courageous as him then it would have been a difficult battle. After considerable knowledge of his defeat, he immediately sent his elders and made peace. Thangliana even met Lalngura (Savunga's son) and forged friendship and alliance with them.

We have dealt them a tremendous blow and will not easily recover from it. It is good to befriend such loyal people. We the British admire such remarkable people who are ready to give up anything for their motherland. As friends, they will forever be remembered by us...)

These lines in the play marked the end of the fight between the British and the Mizo. It also showcased the memorable words of praise by the Captain. The expedition saw death and surrender but it also showcased the courage and faithfulness of the Mizo folk, notable among was Savunga, whom the General praised above all else. In the eyes of the British, the Mizos exerted exemplary feats of courage and determination. The Britishers adored such qualities as they too were citizens of the great British Empire having conquered and stretched far and wide.

From this play, the relationship with regards to identity perception between the Mizo and British can be drawn out. Earlier, readers can see how the British perceived the identity of the Mizo folk. The Mizo folk saw the British as having better fighting types of equipment, guns, cannons and as physically bigger in stature and thus possessing greater stamina. This perception was confirmed by Savunga, who said, “Hmannia kan pasaltha zuk enthlature khan silai keng sangkhat aia tam daih niin an sawi. An hotute chu lal pui pui, Thangliana aia lal zawk, ngo per pur an ni hlawmin an sawi. Sai te, lawng te, silai lian pui pui, laipui ti mai ila, chutiang te pawh chu anrawn keng an tih chu” (1.3, 13) (Our warriors’ reconnaissance report states that they are more than one thousand riflemen. They have great leaders who have surpassed Thangliana’s greatness and have a very white skin colour. They brought with them elephants, boats and big guns called cannons). This shows that the Mizo have a clear perception that the Britishers are greater in terms of weapons and human strength.

The Mizos saw that the British were unfaithful in their eagerness to gain control over them. The Mizo are faithful in their beliefs and are inquisitive of things. “Suakpuilala is the Mizo Chief, who was the first surrendered to the Britishers regarding territorial disputes” (Ralte 28). As accounted by Vunghnuna, Savunga’s elderman in *Thanliana Len*, the Britishers would intentionally spread diseases in the villages in order to prevent the chieftains from warring against them. This is the reason why, though he used to raid British territories in the past he stopped raiding them. Though many elders would think of this account as a tall tale, yet, their minds were not at ease. Their words “Heng vai leh mingote hi rin ngam pawh an ni lo” (1.3, 16) (These Indians and Britishers cannot be trusted) echoed the distrust and doubt they have towards the British folk. They termed the Britishers as ‘kawr daidukho’ (wearing false skin) which showcased their disbelief in anything that they have to offer.

In Act-I, Scene-II Lalngura identified Rothangpuia as such, “...Kawrvaiho hnaiah a awm rei tawh a, a rilru pawh anmahni ang chiah a ni alawm. Sailo rilru nen zawng a rilru a inang lo. Keinin kan khua leh tuite tan kan ti a, ani chuan ama tanghma hlril alawm a hai...” (1.3, 15). (...having lived among the Britishers for a long period of time, he shares the same mindset as theirs. His thoughts and that of the Sailo’s are way different. We think in terms of the general goodness of the land and its people while he thinks and works only to his benefit). Through this one can come to know that, Rothangpuia’s mind is thought of to be corrupt just as the mind of the British is. The British thought only of themselves and their greed knows no bounds which makes them unreliable and untrustworthy.

We are introduced to the story of Lalsuthlaa in Act-I Scene-IV in this play. “He was the first Mizo Chieftain who received punishment from the British” (Ralte 21). Zorema also said “Transportation of Lalsuthlaa, in spite of the promised pardon, had greatly annoyed the sentiments and feelings of the Lushais, who lost confidence in the English and their

methods.” (1.4, 20) The reason being, after the death of Lalrihua, his father, he wanted a slave to be buried alongside him (Lalremsiama 71).

Captain Blackwood decided to spare his life but was captured in 1844 wherein Syhlet court sentenced him to life imprisonment. This was one of the reasons that created suspicion and unreliability towards the Britishers. One of the Sailo Chieftain, Vanhnuna stated, “Savunga chuan inbiak pawh a duh tawh kher lovang. Hmanah Lalsuthlaa pawh inbe turin an ko va, an man a, damchung an tan tir a, a tang bo ta a nia. Heng mi rinawm loho nen hian inbiak chi pawh a ni love...” (1.4, 27) (Savunga would not consider taking to them anymore. In the past, they coaxed Lalsuthlaa to meet with them, wherein he was captured, sentenced for life and imprisoned in jail. It is absurd to meet those untrustworthy men). The Mizo folk, especially Savunga and his men feared meeting them lest they too might meet Lalsuthlaa’s fate. These words “mi rinawm lo ho” (those untrustworthy men) sums up the view they held on the British and served as a reminder of the treacherous false promise of the British in the past. In addition, the adulterated message sent by Rothangpuia through his messengers and the capture of Lianggura’s wife furthermore added to the fear of capture and imprisonment of Savunga, thus, narrowing further the already flicker of trust they had with the Britishers.

In Act-II, Scene-III, the Britishers having captured Lalsavunga and his sons’ lands set fire upon their villages and their food grains. Lalsavunga and his followers planned to counter attack the Britishers for their cruel acts. The words of Lalngura, Savunga’s son gave a description of the Britishers horrendous acts and because of this, they were viewed as cunning, fearsome, cruel men. His words were, “... Kan buh leh bal leh eitur dang kan thar ang ang pawh vaiho hian an hal zel mai a ni a, an tih dan hi an rawng em mai. Khua an hal a, ran vulh an hmuh apiang an kap a, buh in an hal zel bawk. Chunga pathianin kan phuba min la lak sak ang” (2.3, 41) (...they burnt all our crops, grains and other food that we have harvested, sown and stored, these are acts of cruelty. They set our villages on fire, shoot whatever livestock

they come across and burnt down food storages. Our god will surely have his revenge). The word ‘rawng’ (cruel) is used to describe the British. According to the Mizo folk, the actions of the British were harsh and cruel. Because of such actions they believed that the Britishers were willing to leave them for death with nothing to eat. Their consolation was ‘chung pathian’ (heavenly father/deity) who they believe would be saved them and inflict suffering upon the cruel Britishers.

The British and their abettors were seen as cunning and unpredictable. In Act-II, Scene-V Patiala, an elder accused the British abettor Thangliana and his men of giving false reports to their British superiors. In a meeting held between Savunga and his elders, Patiala said, “Thangliana ho verther zia chu! Hmanni khan Lianggura khua te kan hmu a, an khaw halte kha Lalzika halah zuk puha maw le. An hotute hnena an sawi dan chuan, Sailo lalho chuan an khua kan luh hmain an hal kang zo vek zel zuk ti a...” (2.5, 45) (How cunning Thangliana and his men are! Recently, we saw Lianggura’s village being burnt by them, and they put the blame on Lalzika. They gave a false report to their superiors saying that the Sailo Chieftains would burn their villages even before they arrived). Thus, the Mizo chieftains believed that the British and their abettors (helpers) were untrustworthy and that they care only for their image neglecting the sufferings and needs of the others.

But after the British column attacked and sacked Savunga’s villages the Haulawng Chiefs were filled with fear. They wanted to make peace and therefore decided to place their trust only in Thangliana (TH Lewin). Through him, they made peace and settled their affairs through an agreement. Their views regarding the issues on mistrust, unreliability which they considered the British of possessing did not change, yet, the Chieftains submitted to them because they knew that the British had better equipment and training.

Such is the case in the past when the Mizo society and its values are pervaded by the British. Many social and political reforms established by the British intervened with the Mizo cultures and customs to the point where social resistance becomes inevitable. First of all, the mentality of the Mizo folk is that the British are far superior to them in terms of man-power and war equipments. Savunga himself stated, “Hmani kan pasaltha zuk enthlathute khan Silai keng pawh sangkhat aia tam daih niin an sawi. An hotute pawh lal tak tak an ni hlawm... Sai te, lawng te, silai lian pui pui, laipui timai ila chutiangte pawh chu an rawn keng an tih chu” (1.3, 13) (Our warriors’ reconnaissance report states that they are more than one thousand riflemen. They have great leaders that surpassed Thangliana’s greatness and have a very white skin colour. They brought with them elephants, boats and big guns called cannons). This estimate of ‘Silai keng pawh sangkhat aia tam’ (more than one thousand riflemen) suggests that there seem to be about one thousand five hundred riflemen and along with those carrying explosives and cannons their number would be much higher (Lalthanliana 77). General Brownlow’s column exact similar strength as that of General Bouchier of Cachar column as stated: “The Troops selected for this column were 2nd and 4th Gurkhas and the 27th Punjab Infantry with half mountain battery and a company of Sappers and Minners-a force precisely the same in composition and character as that with General Bouchier” (Reid 30).

From this play, it can find that there were many decisions and follow-up actions to repel the British invasion. First, they tried to make a peace between them. The play clearly shows that the Mizo folk wanted to meet and make peace with the Britishers in order to check their advancement. The British sent Rothangpuia’s messengers and they met Savunga and his men but Savunga wanted to meet with Thangliana. It is also evidently clear that Savunga and his men would not heed the message sent by the British. Patiala, a Sailo Chief expressed his distrust against Rothangpuia’s messengers and that it was a mistake to have sent them on such an important task concerning both the parties. His words were, “Haw ula, Thangliana

chu kan lal nen, Lalingura leh Lalzika ten bia se la, mi dang thei apiangin kan lo tawiawm ang” (1.3, 16) (Go back, Thangliana and our chieftain (Savunga), Lalingura and Lalzika shall meet, any who are able from our side will try to be there as well). As the Mizo proverb “Tawngkam thain sial a man” (Good words catches the bull) to maintain peace and advocate cooperation between them, Savunga himself expressed his desire to meet Thangliana: “Mi dang ka be dawn lo, amah ka bia ang...” (1.3, 17) (I will meet no one, except him...).

The priority of the British was that of the General’s plan to get an audience with the Mizo Chiefs and establish peace between them. He even told Rothangpuia before sending his messengers, “Anmahni pawh Thangliana nen kan hmu duh a ni. Min rawn hmu rawh se” (1.1, 8) (Thangliana and I would also like to meet them. Tell them to meet us). Rothangpuia of Thangluah Chief expressed his desire of not entertaining any audience with the Mizo Chief and that they should shoot them. This was because he had a dispute with Savunga in the past and that he was scared to meet him; he, therefore, sent two elders of his as messengers. Savunga and his men did not trust the messengers. Their reply in good faith ‘Thangliana nena inbiakna neih’ (a meeting with Thangliana) was adulterated by Rothangpuia and turned to waste, the second messengers sent to meet Savunga and his men were not trusted even more than the first messengers thus led to the start of a fight between them. The play points out the importance of having a trustworthy advocate.

One of the important reasons for the coming of the British was to put an end to the raids done by the Mizo Chief and to force them to release their slaves from captivity. The Mizo chieftains were adamantly against such reasons. Lalsavunga’s words expressed their strong disagreement, “Keini Sailo lal, ni leh thla kara piangte hian kan khua leh tuite leh an thil neihte leh kan ram hi hnamdangin an duh duh a, an duh hun huna an sawisak kan remti lo. Chuti tak chuan min chungtlak suh se, muvanlai lo chu ka chungaleng an awm lo. Kan rem tihna nilova hnam dang kan rama lo kal chu kan kap ngei ngei ang...” (1.3, 14,15) (We

the Sailo Chiefs, born between the sun and the moon will never allow our villages and our people and their possessions and our lands to be treated by the foreigners in any they wish and however they want. They should never dare to have command above us, only the eagle hovers above me. We will shoot any foreigners who enter our land without our approval).

The Mizo Chiefs occupy a high prestige and enjoy power in their own villages. They are the law-givers and also act as judges. Because of their positions, they are revered and respected everywhere. ‘Muvanlai lo chu ka chung a leng an awm lo’ (only the eagle hovers above me) shows that they do not accept nor expect anyone to have power above them. This domineering sense of being the most powerful among all else is a contributing factor to the cause of the fight between the Mizo folk and the Britishers. Much like the Mizo Chieftains, the British too had a huge sense of pride, in turn, they both could not surrender without a fight when words of negotiation failed.

The second messenger was Lianggura, a brother of Rothangpuia and also a Thangluah Chief. He was caught off guard by the Britishers who then captured his village (1.4, 24). Lianggura’s wife Ronguri being Savunga’s daughter, the British thought that Savunga would heed his words better than those of Rothangpuia’s messengers. Ronguri was put under house arrest by the British and sent Lianggura to do their bidding. After reaching Belkhai village, Lianggura informed Savunga’s sons of the situation. The news angered them a great deal and they decided to decline the proposed meeting with Thangliana. They hated Rothangpuia and the British actions. This hate and mistrust caused the shooting, burning of houses, fear and hopelessness of the masses.

In this play, the Sailo Chiefs were the ones who first exerted brute force against the British. At *Burukhal kurung* they carried out a successful ambush on the boat carrying British’s ration supply along with the ones guarding it. They also took their guns and

ammunitions and their boat sunk in the river. (2.1 28-30) As stated by Captain Brownlow, as many as fifty soldiers and forty *kulies* died. Several *Kuli's* ran away as well and they lost all their ration supply.

After this incident, Captain Brownlow said, “Tunah chuan Sailo ho nena inkap lo tura theihtawp kan chhuah chuan awmzia a nei ta lo.... A rang thei ang bera Savunga ho hi kan chhutchiat a ngai a ni” (2.1, 31) (It is now clear that we have to face the inevitable and the idea of not shooting between the Sailo Chief and us does not hold weight... we cannot afford to remain silent lest we suffer more and more... it is utmost time that we attack and strike down Savunga and his men). Soon after, they attacked Belkhai village whose chieftain was Vunghnuna, one of Savunga’s men. The British were guided by Rothangpuia’s men. They were once members of Belkhai village. Though they resented the idea, since they were given wine, other gifts and Rothangpuia being their chieftain they had to obey his command (2.1, 33).

In Act two of scene two, the play presented the first retaliation of the British. They raided Belkhai village and the villagers panicked and were fearful. There were many deaths and all the houses were set on fire. The play also presented the courage and valor of the Mizo folk who fought back even though they were out-matched and out-manned. In order to prevent attacks from raiding parties, many Mizo villages are situated on a hillock and have well-barricaded walls. Also, they would fight their enemies in places that prove advantageous for them. The most used weapon in their fights was ‘*sahbuak*’. They would mount rocks, the log of woods, and others on top of a steep hill, and they then would cut the ropes as soon as their enemies approached them. In the play, they planted and used this weapon in five places and when the fight started it resulted in a great loss of life and gave a considerable amount of blow to the Britishers.

The Mizo warriors also used guns in their battles. They possessed such guns from their raids of British folks. They also used spears and machetes in their battle (2.2, 37). They would give up their lives as a show of courage even after they had exhausted their guns of bullets they would continue their fights with a machete.

In Act two, scene two the war between the British and the Mizo ensued bitterly, after hours of firing at each other Rothangpuia's men alluringly shouted that they lay down their arms and surrender:

LIANRUMA. Lalhrang, nang han chhang teh. Kir leh mai rawh u. Kan inpe dawn lo, kan ram leh kan khua a ni ti rawh. (Lalhrang, do answer them. We will not go back. Tell them that we will not surrender, for this is our land.)

LALHRANGA . (Ring takin) Kir vat rawh u. Kan inpe dawn lo. Kan ram leh kan khua chu thih ral raih thlengin kan hum dawn. Kir leh nghal rawh u. [An rawn kap leh a, Lianruma awmah an kap a] (Loudly- Go back home. We will not surrender. We will fight till our last breath. Go back now. [soon after shots were fired again and Lianruma caught a bullet in his chest)

LIANRUMA. Lalhrang, kei chu bei let thei ka awm ta lo. (Lalhranga'n a kuah a) Min kuah duh suh. Kap let zawk rawh. Kan lal leh mipui kha lo hrilh la. "Kan ram leh khawtlang chhan nan, theih tawpin ka nun tawp thlengin ka tang e" i ti dawn nia. (A chat thla a). "Kan ram leh khawtlang chhan nan, theih tawpin ka nun tawp thlengin ka tang e" [Lalhrang, I am done for. (Lalhranga embraced him) Do not embrace me. Rather, shoot them back. Tell our chieftain and our people. For the safety of our land and

our community, I will give my all till the end. [with these words he soon passed away]

LALHRANGA. Kan val upa a thi ta si a, amah hi kan entawn tur a ni. Zam reng reng suh u. Tlangva 20 rual dang kulh sir veilamah hian kal ula, kulh hma lama lo kalte saw va pawmchilh rawh u. (Tlangval 20 dang an chhuak a) [Our elder has passed away, we should follow his example. Do not be disheartened. 20 of you warriors go over to the side and run after those who are approaching us. (20 warriors got up and went as instructed]

TLANGVALHO (Young Warriors) Keini pawh kan thihchilh ang. Pakhatin pahnih zel tal [We too are ready to die. Each one of us we shall take two of them.] (2.2, 32)

The above dialogue shows the intensity of the fight. It presents the mentality of the Mizo folk; their courage and fortitude to not surrender to the British, their love for their land and their community, in addition they are a patriot. Their courage to die for their land and their community even in the face of a powerful adversary is commendable and glorious.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines patriotism as love for or devotion to one's country, ('patriotism'). According to Igor Primoratz, "patriotism can be defined as love of one's country, identification with it, and special concern for its well-being and that of compatriots." (204) Stephen Nathanson defines patriotism as involving the following points- "Special affection for one's own country, a sense of personal identification with the country, special concern for the well-being of the country and willingness to sacrifice to promote the country's good." (Primoratz)

In the old Mizo period, the meaning of the term “Patriotism” and its concerns are rather complicated. However, the emergence and arrival of the so-called Non-Mizos (British/*Vai*) gave rise to devotion, love and patriotic feelings of the Mizos towards our land. As mentioned earlier, Savunga and his people often fought against each other, village against other village, clans clashed against other clans, and there were different motives behind these battles but it is anticipated that the root cause of these lied upon their love and loyalty towards each of their own village and their people.

As mentioned earlier, the Britishers wanted to exert their power and might over the Mizo Chiefs, and also to put an end to their raids upon the British folks. Even though Savunga and his men fought valiantly they ended up losing the fight. After his defeat, he lost his village to the British. He abandoned and fled to the forest.

Savunga’s actions as seen in the end clearly points out his reasons and intents, according to him his actions were justified. After burning his village the Britishers went after him still and many of his people migrated to other villages. He had no village to go home to. Finally, he and his family along with few other villagers decided to migrate and pledge themselves to another chieftain. Savunga remained the main protagonist who received the worst fate in the story. Even though he said these words, “Ka tu leh fate, ka khua leh tui min tichhe hle a ni” (My grandchildren and children, my village and people have been destroyed) he never regretted and praised his warriors and people who have fought valiantly till the end. “Kan ram runtu dolet ngam lova a tlawna lo tlawn ai chuan chhiat thak pawh hi ka duh a, ka chhiah phah tar eng bawk a” (4.2, 70). (Instead of coaxing them for not having the courage to face them, I’d rather be destroyed by them) said Savunga and that “inchhirna tur reng reng ka nei lo” (I have no reason to regret). (71)

Through Savunga's words, readers come to know that how much he despised and detested the other Chiefs. He praised the Britishers for their courage in defending their territory. Even Captain Brownlow said in the beginning, 'mi rinawm, thiana siam tlak'(a faithful man, one that deserves friendship). Captain Brownlow also referred that Savunga's service and dedication for his land and his people is glorious (4.1, 69).

Savunga was seen as the main leader among the Haulawng Chiefs and along with him, Bengkhuaia shared the same level of regard. They seek a peace agreement with the British, and Thangliana played a major role in this regard. This treaty shows that the Haulawng Chiefs made it clear that they would never bow nor be under their rule. The agreement was that the Mizo people would never invade British territory again, that they forge a friendship between them and that the Britishers be allowed to pass through their territories. The Mizo people did not regret their past action of terrorizing the British tea plantation settlement; Savunga and his men merely believed that they were punishing them for occupying their territory (3.4, 66). Bengkhuaia even ordered that the Britishers should refrain from occupying Mizo territory.

The words and actions of the Mizo Chiefs showed that they cared dearly for their land and that they were ready to fight and shoot anyone who would try to occupy their lands. Bengkhuaia words, "Kan ram lak tum ni ula chuan tunah pawh hian kan kap ang che u" (3.4, 65) (If you were to take our land, we would shoot you even now) clearly shows that the agreement between the British and the Chiefs was made solely because they did not come to take their land away from them. All these instances showed the Mizo chieftains' love for their homeland and the actions taken to defend their lands could be seen in the acts of Savunga and the Haulawng chieftains and also as a result of the acts of Rothangpuia.

Through the play *Thanliana Len*, the conflicts that happen between the Mizo chiefs and the British oppressors were taken into consideration for the study. Since Thangliana is one of the important characters in the play, readers can see his pivotal role not only as a character but as an advisor to their Captain and the Mizo chiefs as well.

One of the most notable characters in the play is Savunga. The harsh treatment of his people and his village under the British rule is clearly seen. Not only did he receive harsh conflict under the British rule, he was also severely ridiculed for opposing their rule. He had been a great chief but when he started voicing his opposition against the foreign rule, he was forced to fled out of the village with his few followers and they had to brave thirst and hunger in the wilderness. Readers can see these acts as their absolute determination and fight against the oppressor, the British. The play also documents that to avoid conflict and war, other Chiefs made agreements with the foreign invaders. It can also come to the conclusion that the Chiefs who opposed the British did so with all their resources and can be seen in this way, that they all did not readily bow and give in to the invader's law and authority.

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Chapter-3

Empire and Patriotism in *Kalkhama Leh Lianphunga*

In this chapter, the study elaborates how The Chin Lushai Expedition in the year 1890, and how the British then dominated Mizoram and, the latter's various attempts and efforts to confront and deal with that dominance based on the play of *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga*. This play is a narrative based further on accounts of what the Mizo people called *Vailen Vawihnihna*, the further advancement of the British into Mizoram and their struggles in order to dominate the land.

According to the playwright preface, "At first I meant to trace the history than plotting the drama, however, I changed my mind over to drama and then I wrote it instead," (Kan Ram A Ni 73) and he also said, "Many are left unnoticed, who are yet worthy of remembrance for their valuable services and for even sacrificing their lives standing up for protecting Mizoram and Mizo people. So, I would like to contribute this piece in commemoration of all those people," (73) he further commented on his motive to write this play.

In addition to the hardships undergone by the Mizo people during the violent confrontation between the British and the Mizo, the heroic dedications made by the Mizo people and the various strategies of the British are the main points highlighted by the playwright. The main reasons why the Mizo people strongly wanted to chase the British out from their land as written in the preface are as follows:

First, they were against paying taxes to the foreigners who settled in their own land. Secondly, They were against contributing *Kuli* from their townsmen for the foreigners who settled in their own land. Thirdly, They were against the British attempt to prohibit them from hunting in their own land. (74)

The playwright also stated that the Mizo people opposed the advancement of the British with all their might because of the reasons mentioned above. Since it is a play, there may be some directions and adjustments to be made, therefore, regarding the conversations between two distinct language speakers, even the British people converse in Mizo language however, it is clearly mentioned that there is an interpreter there. The dialogues then simply take place without mentioning the interpreter.

The earlier conflicts and disputes between the British and the Mizo people and most of their consequences are already mentioned in the earlier part of the study. From the historical evidence, after the Lushai Expedition, 1871-1872, many of the Mizo Chiefs are faithful to the pledge that they made to the British quite well. But at the same time, some of them took some revengeful actions to the British dominated lands.

During the year 1877-1880, the so called – '*Chhak leh Thlang Indo*', the famous and significant war between the Chiefs of Mizo took place. (Lalthangliana 518) This war had largely resulted in decreasing the invasions of foreign lands and also reduced their actions to do so. The internal conflicts among the Chiefs made them unable to mind the external warfare. Further elaborate study on the '*Chhak leh Thlang Indo*' highlights the conflicts.

There are two main reasons said to be the root causes of this famous war; conflict over the maiden for the wives of the chiefs' sons and blaming each other for not keeping up the promises are the two main reasons. (323) The eastern Chiefs comprised of Lalsavunga and his clans whereas on the western side there were Mangpawra and Vuta's clans. The war was said to be ceased by the famine named, *Thingtam* that took place in the year 1880 as they faced a shortage of food stock and could no longer indulge themselves in any kind of war. (Liangkhaia 37)

“On 8 January 1888 Lianphunga and Zahrawka invaded Chengri valley, killed 101 civilians and captured 91 more alive for slavery. This invasion had been said to have a huge impact on the British government”. (Lalthangliana 337) Again on 3 February the same year

one of the Chiefs from southern parts of Mizoram Hausata ambushed Lieutenant Steward and his group of people near *Saichal* village. (Lalremsiana 128) Steward and two *sepoys* from his group were killed in this incidence, another one Indian man was also killed on the spot; they were workers in the Survey Party under the British government. In the month of December in the same year, Kalkhama invaded Pakuma Rani Village in Tripura, and he had killed many inhabitants including even the chieftess in this invasion. In early 1889, Lianphunga and his group of troops invaded numbers of Tuikuk villages in the Chittagong Hill track; apart from killing many inhabitants they also captured more than 200 men for slavery. (Lalthangliana 338) These are the most remarkable and major invasion before the year 1890.

Due to all these incidents, the Mizo Chiefs were trying to punished by the British government and in addition, to govern and control over them the British government seemed to make new efforts to colonized the entire region. They then started making their advancement towards Mizoram in several groups or sections in the year 1890. Colonel Tregar and his group, coming from the southern region in the month of December 1889 were recorded as ‘The Expedition 1889’ (519) after them, another group entered the land by the name ‘The Chin-Lushai Expedition’ during the year 1889-90 from the Cachar and Chittagong Column. “Colonel Tregar observed and directed the Chittagong group which was further split into two groups; the other team was led by Col. GJ Skinner. In the Cachar Column, Commandant Daly was their main supervisor”. (Lalthanliana 112)

From the historical record, Kalkhama was the son of Suakpuilala, and as already mentioned in the earlier chapter Suakpuilala was one of the earlier Mizo chiefs who made a peace agreement with the British government regarding the boundary disputes. He was the Chief of Sentlang village, he was one of the most famous and powerful chiefs. He was also the main leader and the forerunner to oppose when the British tried to made an agreement with the Mizo Chiefs in the year 1980. (Lalthangliana 554) His objection was also mentioned in this story and some of the reasons for his resistance include paying taxes and offering of

kulis or *coolies*. He was strongly against submitting himself to the British government and he seemed never to surrender to the British till his last breath.

Sentlang village was attacked by the British forces on 17 November 1890 and the whole village was burnt down. In the time following that event, not allowing his people to suffer anymore, he surrendered himself to the British on 1st December, life-time imprisonment was posed on him and he was sent to the Hazaribagh jail. On 11 September 1891 he then died in the same prison where he was detained. (555)

Lianphunga was the third son of Suakpuilala and he was next to Kalkhama. He was the Chief of Lungtian and he was one of the strongest confronters of the British government. When the British began to set foot in Mizoram, it was Kalkhama and Lianphunga that they took their first actions against and those who attacked them first as well. On 11 February, 1890 his village was attacked and fired massively. He was captured alive on 9 December, 1890 and he was sent to Hazaribagh jail along with his elder brother Kalkhama. On 11 September, 1891 he too was died in the same prison where they were detained. (555)

In the play of *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga*, the steps and actions were taken by the British government towards the Mizo people and how the Mizo Chiefs and their village people had suffered are vividly presented. The first appearance is Sentlang Chief Kalkhama's residence with other Chieftains (his brothers) Lianphunga and Zahrawka beside him. They are seen to be discussing the entrance of people coming from another country into the lands of Chengri which they claimed to be theirs since the time of their father Suakpuilala. They discussed the distaste they felt about it and how they even sent their ministers to inform them to leave. They also discussed how they wanted to invade them if they still did not make a move as they had been warned. They made an arrangement to fulfill their plan and as can be seen in the later parts, they had carried out the invasion as well.

It is seen that at Lianphunga's village in Lungtian, the warriors and the people danced the victory dance with great pomp for the heads they had collected, and there were also a good number of slaves captured by them during the raids. One of the captured slaves

committed suicide by hanging himself to death but the chief and his ministers did hide the truth. They rather declared that he was killed for denying the orders, spreading the fake news so that the slaves would have the fear of the consequences of not obeying the chief and his ministers. In the meantime, a *Jemadar* came from the land of *Reng*, who was also believed to come from the *Reng* region they had invaded. This *Jemadar* reported that the Chengri valley was claimed to be theirs by the British government and he also said that he would like to claim the slaves out; however, he did not bring the required amount of money, he asked the Chief and his ministers to lend him some sum of money promising that he would pay back with all the interest. The Chief and his ministers at first did not allow him for so but they then had a thought that it would be a great investment with all the interests if he could pay them back in time, so they let him leave with three slaves. However, he had gone off and we do not see him coming back to pay his debt.

Succeeding to this incident, the British government began to appear on the scene, a person in authority to appear first was Police Commander named Daly. The main aim of the British government's entrance was to set all the slaves free, most of the Mizo Chiefs even allowed to release their slaves, but at the same time, some of the slaves were said to decide not to leave as they had already got married where they were. Other British soldiers Colonel Skinner and Captain Brown came into sight and the disputes between the two over the regions of Chengri valley as both had claimed the region to be theirs can be seen. The play also shows the infliction of punishment and the actions of persuading the Mizo Chiefs to submit themselves to the British government or forcing them to do so. The Mizo Chiefs did not want to abide by the detailed proposal made by the British government to create a peaceful agreement and on top of that they would not surrender on any account since they were strongly against yielding to the British government. This resulted in more unwelcome and difficult situations, an exchange of violent confrontation and lack of mutual trust soon led to worse and unfavorable results.

Mizo Chiefs in the meantime started planning to take actions against the British government as they hated the latter's proud achievement and advancement in their lands. So, they ambushed them and shot Capt. Brown, who later died due to his wound from the shot. The outskirts of Changsil and Aizawl were attacked massively which had caused the British government to feel anxious and troubled at a time. However, sending in more troops, for their leader Captain McCabe was also appointed to be Civil Officer, it is also mentioned how he gained his experiences and how he framed his name in Nagaland. McCabe, right from his arrival, started his mission to fight against the Mizo Chiefs; his methods and techniques were also much worse and brutal. Burning down the villages with all their food stocks and set up the duty post in the village itself were his way of actions which he believed to be the most effective method to take the Mizo Chiefs down. Being likely to be the most powerful and strongest, Kalkhama and Lianphunga were his main straight aims. However, the Mizo Chiefs were nowhere willing to surrender to the British government yet they rather fled to the forest in every possible manner they could.

Their bootlickers from the Mizo community were sent by the British government to the Chiefs to invite them for the formal discussion or negotiation. Kalkhama was then captured by the British government for acting dishonestly. The British government continued to outwit the chiefs and then captured both Lianphunga and Thanghulha. Most of the troubles and worries seemed to vanish as the three chiefs were eventually sent away. In the prison where they were detained, Kalkhama and Lianphunga were even poisoned to death, however, the truth was not known by the mass which rather was secretly planned by the Jail warden and the Superintendent. Subsequently, Thanghulha was released from the prison and, the play ends there.

The setting place of this play is quite wide-ranging. The early appearance of places varied from Kalkhama's village Sentlang to Lianphunga's village Lungtian and Changsil, and, Aizawl camp to Hazaribagh's prison. Readers are also transported to the settings in the forest – some caves, *Kurung* cliffs, the banks of river Tlawng and also the entryway of the

villages. This play is set in these various locations and spots, Lianphunga's village and Aizawl are the most significant ones in this play.

Regarding the time of the events, as mentioned earlier, this play is the story of what had happened in the year 1890, which was known by the Mizo people as the *Vailen Vawihnihna* and since then the Mizo chiefs were under the British government. It is also seen that by the end of the play, it was already the year 1980 (142). As mentioned earlier, is based on historical facts, the name of particular places, the names of the British government's leaders and many incidents were what had really taken place in the past.

There are sixteen main characters mentioned here in this play, furthermore, some other names of Mizo chiefs and warriors are also mentioned. Among the main characters whose names had been mentioned, nine of them are of Mizo chiefs whereas the other nine are of the British *sepoy's* leaders.

Among all these different characters, besides Kalkhama and Lianphunga, after whom this particular play has been titled, Zahrawka and Thanghulha are the most remarkable names among the Mizo chiefs in this play. Among the British servicemen Captain Brown, Colonel Skinner, Daly and McCabe are also among the significant ones. As mentioned in the earlier parts, this play is based on historical facts, all the important names of the person mentioned in the play are factual and not fictitious, not only the names of these dramatic personas but their personality and ways of living are all proved to be in accordance with facts as we can see from the historical records.

The point at the time which the conflicts began and how it started to develop has always been a significant thing in a play. In this particular play of *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga* as well, the breaking out of their conflicts, how it had been developed over time, the consequences it had brought and all the events of the plot are seen to be properly arranged in a particular sequence. The main reason we can see from the play for the advancement of the British in Mizoram was the invasion of Chengri valley by the Mizo Chiefs. However, from their dialogues, it is seen that the Mizo Chiefs strongly claimed the regions to be their lands

far from the times of their parents where they had control over. In the first scene of the play, in the very first dialogue, they are seen discussing the issues as follows:

KALKHAMA. Ka naute pahnih, Lianphunga leh Zahrawka ka'n chahna chhan che u chu, - Chengri phai ruam, kan pa Suakpuilala hun lai atanga Mizoram ni kumkhua, tuna hnam dangin an zuan vak mai hi tha kan ti lo. He hmunah hian Savunga pawhin khawper a siam tawh kha. Hei hi Mizoram a ni tawh thin a, a la ni reng tih a entir, engtin nge kan tih ang. Zahrawka khan chhuahsan turin i hrilh tawh a ni lawm ni kha?

(The reason I had called on you two Lianphunga and Zahrawka, my younger brothers is that we have a strong aversion to the matter that these people from foreign lands started to settle in the Chengri regions, which had always been parts of Mizoram since the times of our father Suakpuilala all the time. Savunga once even built sub-village at that place which clearly conveys that it had always been our land and it still continues to be so till today, what are we supposed to do about it. Have you, Zahrawka, already informed them to leave the place?

LIANPHUNGA. Hrilh tawh e, Zahrawka nen kan unauin upa kan tir a, "Kan ram a ni a, chhuak vat rawh u. Kan sapelna ram in tiseu zo dawn. In chhuah loh chuan kan rawn run dawn che u a ni. In awm a chin hi ramsa pawh an tiau zo dawn ta main a lang. Chhuak vat rawh u" tiin an zu hrilh a. Kan upa fel tak tak hemi thu sawi hian an zu kal alawm, an kalna pawh thla hnih aiin a rei tawh. (1.2, 77)

(Yes we did. I and Zahrawka together sent our minister to inform them, "This is our land so, leave immediately. You are starting to destroy our lands of hunting. We are going to raid you unless you make your move out soon.

Even the wild animals started to vanish since you came here. Get out immediately!” The reliable ministers of us went there and delivered our messages, it has already been more than two months since they came back.)

From the above conversation, it can be seen that the conflicts have begun and have become the exposition of the story. Chengri valley was strongly claimed to be the lands of Mizoram by Kalkhama and his brothers, they also stood up for it. The people residing inside the area (Riang or Chakma) were asked to leave but they refused to do so. Because of their resistance to leaving and also because of the previous warning, “We are going to raid you unless you make your move out soon,” that they had given to them, they started to make preparations for the raid. It is seen that they successfully raided and at Lianphunga’s village in Lungtian, the warriors and the people dance the victory dance with great pomp for the heads they had collected, and there were also a good number of slaves captured by them during the raids.

In the time previous to this particular event it is seen from the words of Kalkhama that they did not intend to cause troubles to the British people. Even if they carry out the raid he carefully told his warriors not to reach the land of the British, this was mainly because of the fact that he wanted his young warriors to respect the agreement that his father Suakpuilala had made with the British and to carry on the agreement as well. He wanted them to keep going along with that in mind, not to cause troubles for the British people but to chase all the foreign people settling inside the lands which they claimed to belong to Mizo Chiefs. Kalkhama gave his advice to his young warriors –

KALKHAMA. ...Zahrawk i hovin zu run rawh u. Lianphunga pasaltha leh hi pasaltha tam tawk deuh zu hruai la, zuk tudai vak rawh khai. Hei erawh chu hria ula, kan pa Suakpuilala khan Mingo saui a lo tanpui a nih kha. A thutlungah khan “Inrun tawh loh tur” an ti a, an intiam a

nih kha. Chuvangin, Chengri ruam bak chu pel lo ula, chuti lo chuan ka pa saui tanpui sapho pawl kan khawih hlauh dah a nge. (78)

(...Zahrawk, go and raid under your supervision. Bring Lianphunga's warriors and more warriors of yours, let them all be softened and beaten. But do remember our late father's accord with those white people. They had stated "No More Raids" in their accord and they had also promised to do so. That is why; do not go beyond the Chengri valley or we might offend the people our father had made the agreement with.)

The region of Chengri valley was included to their dominated lands by the British but the Mizo Chiefs did the same, they both claimed the area to be theirs. The British people reacted very soon when the Mizo Chiefs raided the region. Such misunderstandings going on between the two seemed to start a spark for their conflicts and then the more serious disagreement in the story began to take place.

In addition to that Kalkhama and other Mizo chiefs were seemed to have felt a bit of hatred for the words and manners of Colonel Skinner, a leader of British *sepoy*. Lianphunga was forced to surrender, forewarned him to firing and burning of his village. He said to the ministers of Kalkhama, "Your chief is so small to me. He has to be under my control completely. You, big fools, obey me like these wild animals. If not, will torture severely..." (93) and the message was definitely delivered by the ministers. It was not able to be believed and totally unacceptable for the Chief of Sailo clan, said to be one of the greatest and most powerful chiefs of the time. This had soon led to worse matters and even the firings took place. Besides this incident, another remarkable thing we see is that Captain Browne's death had filled the British *sepoys* with anger and which also caused make the scenes worse.

According to the Mizo traditional customs and lifestyles, the chief of a village was the authority figure who had complete control over the administration of the community. Among

the chiefs, the fearless and the brave with an abundance of subjects owned a vast range of lands and they possessed full power over their conquered lands. Since the Mizo people were mostly farmers who engaged in jhum cultivation annually, the lands which they were supposed to utilize were decided by the chief with an assist from his council of advisers, elders and *Ramhual*. In the Mizo community, much importance and attention are given to lands and forests as it is the main source of livelihood for the families. Due to this factor, the Mizo people took precautionary steps for preventing their lands from disasters such as forest fires. On the subject of how the Mizos encounter forest fires James Dokhuma wrote -

In order to prevent damage and disasters caused to lands due to the burning of jhum, firstly, they prepared "*mei-lam*" on the border of the jhum where the fire was heading. If the fire was still burning, the whole community worked together to put it out. Since extinguishing a fire caused dehydration and thirst for water, the young women brought bottles of water for the firefighters. The reason for their reluctance to lose their lands was mainly because of using their lands for jhum cultivation.

This clearly shows the necessity of lands and the conservation of lands by the Mizo people. If the lands or forests were degraded or if there were no lands for cultivation or an outbreak of plague and famine occurred, the people then migrated to other areas in search of fertile lands and soil.
(Dokhuma 159)

Apart from this, the Mizos used their lands mainly for hunting. The animals they hunted down were then taken for food and besides, these wild animals were the ones who consumed and destroyed their rice and other foodstuffs. Even the assumed the first most songs of the Mizos known as *Hlado* was a type of a hunter's chant sung in celebration of the animals they hunted down, (Lalthangliana 232) Similarly, *Salu aih* a form of rejoicing over

by sacrificing animals/feast had an important role in the lifestyles of the Mizos. (Zawla 39) There was an abundance of game to hunt in the forests and a hunter gained respect and reputation depending on the number of animals he had killed. According to their beliefs, a hunter who had slaughtered numerous games was called *Thangchhuah* and had the privilege to enter *Pialral* (Paradise) where he would enjoy the luxury of having able to eat without working (*faisa*) after his death. For this purpose of hunting, they require good areas of lands and forests and thus the hunters explored their territories and hunted in groups or separately.

It is seen in the story that those among the Mizo Chiefs who did not aim to surrender themselves and their land to the British had caused a fight against the British and which appeared to be the central key of this play as well. In Act four of scene four of this play, the dialogue between Kalkhama and McCabe is seen which appears to give a brief statement of the main points of the whole play.

McCABE. Kalkhama, misual, i lo kal maw? I thil tih sual hi i hria em?

Engvangin nge min kah? Engvangin nge Captain Brown leh Lieut. Swinton-a in thah? Nang hi i sual em vangin mi tam tak an thi; khua pawh tam tak a kang. Nangmah vang vek a ni.

(Kalkhama, a rebel, you came? Do you know you're wrongdoings? Why did you shoot at us? Why did you kill Captain Brown and Lieut. Swinton? Many have died because you are so evil; many villages also burnt. This is all your faults.)

KALKHAMA. Sapa, engmah chhan dang a awm love. A chhan chu i hre reng lawm ni? Kan ramah engah nge in lo kal? Kan ramah engah nge chhiah khhawn in tum? Engah nge kan khua leh tuite tihluinnaa kuli-a chhawr in tum? Kan ram aṅang hian chhuak vek ula, kan intibuai lo a ni mai. (4.4, 131)

(*Sapa*, there is no other causes. Have you not already known it all? For what reasons have you come into our land? Why have you tried to collect taxes in our land? Why have you ever tried to forcefully use my village men for *kuli*? You make your move out of our land, all will be settled then.)

It is clearly seen from this conversation that there are huge differences in the perspectives of the Mizo Chiefs and the British, they both may even be correct from their own point of views. The British, being the predominant and most powerful country in the world, always tries to show and let their supremacy known to the world. It is seen in the same scene that McCabe has said, “Nangni mi â hian keini sorkar ropui tak, tuifinriat ral thlenga rorel te hi engti kawng mahin min ngam dawn lo. Kalkhama a lo kal loh chuan kan that vek dawn che u a ni” (4.4, 130) (You unwise and silly people will never defeat us, the greatest regime, who even rules beyond every ocean, ever. You will all be executed by us unless Kalkhama showed himself up.) Capt. Brown even further adds, “The chief of the lands of *Sap*, *kumpinu* is so magnificent. It is her dominions, on which the sun never sets.” (3.1, 103) How proud they are of their majesty and their power can be seen from this scene.

In a similar way, the Sailo chiefs regarded themselves noble and great, also considering themselves the most powerful and having complete authority within their territory. In Act three scene-one the dialogue between Capt. Brown and Lianphunga are seen, Lianphunga said, “...Sailo ni leh thla kara piang hi kan ram runtute hnenah bawkkhupin kan inpe thei lo...” (3.1, 106) (... I, a Sailo, who had his birth between the Sun and the Moon, cannot surrender at the hands of the invaders of our land...) In this way, a Sailo chief never finds anything at all above him except for the Sun and the Moon. That is also the reason why they felt intense offended when they were tried to be ruled by some other people who think themselves superior and more powerful, and, it is also seen that eventually, they had started a fight against them.

The play also details how the Mizo Chiefs and the British government heard about each other for the first time. This is what had caused the conflicts in the play and, what had put out the ego or self-worth that they both held in their hearts, as mentioned earlier. To look at the first words of the British and how they had spoken of the Mizo people: In the Second Act, several words like ‘enemy’ (91), ‘criminals’ (92), “mindless, just like wild animals” (93) are seen in the words of Col. Skinner to refer to the Mizos. In Act-IV scene four, Mc Cabe is also seen using the word “fools” three times referring to the Mizos. The plan and the proposal that McCabe has when he first appeared in the play also indicates that he already had already known the Mizo people and their status quite well. In Act four of scene two,

Mc CABE. Kan hmabak hmasa ber leh pawimawh ber chu Kalkhama leh a khuate chhutchhiat a ni. Chutah Kalkhama leh Lianphunga kan man ang...(Khaw 12) Heng khuatate hi kan hal vek a, an khua kan ram hnuah thlam te, buh in te, buh dinglai lova mite kan tichhe bawk.... Hengho hi an khua kan halsak a, kirsan leh mai chu thil tangkai vak a ni lo tih kan hmuchhuak tawh. Kar lovah in an sa leh mai a, hmarua lah tuak a awl lutuk si. Hengho hi thil kawng khat chiah zirtir dan a awm. An khua halsak hnuin buk khuar tur a ni. An khuua awmchilh a, an bungraw thuhruk leh buhte tihchiat sak a, sa anga an mahni pawh pel zel tur. Chutia kan tih chuan eng chen pawh kan umzui thei tih an hriat chuan, rilṭama thih emaw, ntiamkamna awm miah lova inpek emaw, a eng emaw zawk zawk an thlan a ngai dawn a ni.

Sakei kah nan bepui mu a hmantlak loh va, awle ka pawh kutlawnga zen mai chi a ni lo. Lainatna leh ngilneihna lantir chu hengho hian mi dawizepte tih turah an ruat. An vir zia leh zawh zia lah chu... Chuvangin ngilneihna leh lainatna nei miah lova, a na thei ang ber nghaisak a, rilṭama ramhnuaiia tlukhlum nge an duh inpek tawp mai.

Engdang mah, hemite pahnih bak hi thlang thei mia lo turin siam a ngai.

(4.2, 124)

(The first and foremost task for us is to pull down and demolish Kalkhama and his village people. After that Kalkhama and Lianphunga will be captured... (12 villages) These villages will all be put into fire and after tearing down their villages, their farm houses, their granaries and even their ongoing rice fields will all be destroyed. It has been lately discovered that simply leaving after burning down their villages is not much effective for these people. They reconstructed their houses in no time and it is very easy for them to access the necessary tools. There is only a single way to give lessons to this people. Safe hideouts have to be set up after burning down their villages. After staying in their own village, all their rice stocks and their hidden tools should all be destroyed and the villagers themselves should also be hunted down no other than animals. It will be known to them that we could chase them at every corner; at that point it would be inevitable for them to decide whether to give in without any assurance or to die from hunger.

A seed of a bean is of no use to hunt a tiger and never is to place a hand inside the mouth of a crocodile. Showing a feeling of kindness and sympathy is just a sign of weakness and a coward for them. How pathetic their gluttony and their thirst for hunger are..! That is why it is required to torture them in the most painful manner without any compassion and pity; let them decide whether to fall into their death in the forest because of hunger or to surrender, not giving them an option other than these two. (4.2, 124)

The above statement is a vivid presentation of the British policy and their way of action, the mindset of the Mizo people can also be drawn apart from that. During the period of time preceding the appearance of Mc Cabe, in their conversation Lt. Swinton said to Lt. Tytler that McCabe was from the Indian Civil Service and he was a newly recruited Political Officer. It is also seen that since Mc Cabe was found to have some experiences in the Naga expedition, he was trusted enough by the Chief Commissioner to carry out the invasion of these Mizo people. (4.1, 122) McCabe considered attacking the Mizo people in the most brutal way possible was the best technique to counter them, but without any pity and kindness; he was found acting up the exact way without any doubt. His brutal actions and strategies could be said to win over the Mizo chiefs. They were found fighting back the British with all their might, however, could not help but give themselves in since the measures taken up by the British were beyond brutal for the Mizo community and their manner of living.

It is seen from the earlier confrontation of the British by the Mizo chiefs that they had a peaceful negotiation and objectives. From scene one of Act two, one can start to see the appearance of the British people, here we see Daly, who is a leader of the Silchar Police. In the conversation between Daly and Lianphunga, they are seen to be neither enemies nor rivals who are about to carry out any conflict. Daly said that he had come to convey the message that what Lianphunga and his brothers did back in Chengri region, their invasion of the region, did not please the British government; and, he came to release the slaves they had captured from the raids. Lianphunga said to him that Chengri region truly belonged to them and regarding the slaves, he said that he permitted them to leave if they wanted to. It is a peaceful agreement under a proper and respectful discussion was what Lianphunga had wanted in the first place. From the words of Daly it is seen that Col Skinner will be appearing soon; who will be more likely to be in-charge and all the negotiations should be done with him instead. Even Lianphunga himself sent his message to Daly, "In Jornel Kinara (Col.

Skinner a sawina) hnenah chuan ka pa thiante in nih avangin sal pawh ka chhuah a ni tih sawi la. A lo kal hunah pawh tha takin kan lo bia ang. Kah pawh kan kap lovang. A tha apiang a tha e. Tha takin kan inbia ang, Upain ‘tawngkam thain sial a man’ an tia lawm. Tawngkam thain kan lo be dawn nia” (89) (To your Jornel Kinara (Col. Skinner), tell him that I set all the slaves free because he was a friend of my late father. He will be well received and we will do the talk rightly. We will not shoot at them. All that is well is well. We will talk positively, as the elders said, ‘a good word is worth a bison.’ We will talk to him with finest words.)

To put into perspective the later words of Lianphunga, the expectation and objectives of the Mizo Chiefs may be clearly seen – “Zu kha lo zuk teh u. Mingoho, ka pa thiante chu kei pawh ka thian an ni e. Inhuat loh a tha. Anni hi an duham deuh va. Kan ramte min chuhpui a, min chhuhsak an tum a ni a. Mahse, kan inbe zel ang a, thu thain kan intin ang chu le.” (2.1, 90) (The white people, the friends of my father are also my friends. It is better not to hate each other. They are a bit avaricious. They are even competing and trying to take our land from us. However, we will have a talk and we shall end up with a righteous talk.) After careful looking at this conversation between Daly and Lianphunga it can be assumed that it was something which could be settled without bigger or more serious conflicts.

The British people with whom Lianphunga’s late father Suakpuilala had made an agreement with could be said to be received broad-mindedly and peacefully by Lianphunga, he was also seen fairly ready to make a peace agreement with them as well. However, at the same time, it could also be because of the fact that Daly had not reported the more important policy of the British that Lianphunga and other Mizo chiefs were being detestably tried.

There is a change in the course of action after Col. Skinner entered into the scene. The ministers of Lianphunga delivered the message of their chief, “Ka pa thian mingoho chu tha takin kan bia ang, kah pawh kan kap lovang” (We will speak very well with the white

people the friends of my father, and we shall not even shoot at them.) (2.2, 91) They also reported that the slaves were already let leave feely with Daly and also that they were sent to receive and welcome him (Col Skinner). However, Skinner replied, “In lal chu keimahni thian a ni lo, mi 103 in that a, 91 salah man bawk. Kan thian ni lo, thian nise run lovang; salah pawh man lovang. Nangmah lal chu keima hmelma a ni, lo kal rawh se. Ka hnenah lo inpe rawh se...” (Your chief is not a friend of mine; you killed 103 people and captured 91 more for slaves. Not my friend, if he is he will not invade; nor capture slaves. Your chief is my enemy. Tell him to come here. Let him come and surrender...) (2.2) He even insisted that if he fails to do so, his village will be burnt down and he himself would also be captured without fail. It is seen that they were told so many things and were let went back home after beating them up.

It can be said that after this incident the search for ways of peaceful conversation and agreement came to stop. The Mizo Chiefs had nothing more to expect from the British, and also as mentioned before they still remembered how the British would like to act in the past, they dared not sending their Chief for they had a fear that their former Chief was put to an end by the British. The British had arrived when Lianphunga was about to make his way out. It is seen in scene three that their village was put into the fire and the firing began to take place. In the conversation of Lianphunga and his ministers previous to the firing –

LIANPHUNGA. Ka khua a kan chhiat vek a, kan tuar vek ai chuan ka va inpe ang e. Dam hun a awm a, thih hun a awm alawm. Khua leh tui chhan nan chuan tuar a hun leh kan tuar ang a, thih a hun leh kan thu tur a lawm. Ka insiam ang a, ka va kal ang e. Suakhnuna te nufa hi in lo buaipui dawn nia. Mipa tan leh lal tan khua leh tui chhhan nana inpek tluka hlu eng dang nge awm ang? (a tho va, a insiam dawn a) [I will give myself in than letting my village people suffer and my village burn down. There is a time for fife and there is a time for death. If comes the time to

suffer for my people, we have to and, if comes the time to die for them, we just have to go with it. I shall get myself ready and shall proceed. You do take a good care of Suakhnuna and his mother. For a man and a king, what else could be more worthy than giving oneself in for the sake of his people? (he rise up, getting himself ready)]

TAWNPHUNGA LEH UPA. Lalpa, i kal kan phal lo. An sap hotupa chu sual tak a ni. I kal pawhin i khua leh tuite hi eng angin nge min ngaihsak a tum kan hre lo. (An lal an dawm a) [We cannot let you go, Chief. Their *sap* leader was so terrible. Even if we let you go, it is not known to us how they would torture us, your people. (they were holding on to him)]

In the same scene, it is witnessed that even his wife begged him not to go. Lianphunga nevertheless insisted that giving him in and sacrificing for his people was the highest price he could pay. When he was about to leave, there was some noise coming from the Daido local area, the sounds of the burning of the houses and firing of guns followed then. Following this, the Mizo Chiefs also started to respond in a violent mean involving the exchange of weapons.

Resistance can be performed by way without violence, also called civil resistance. This form of resistance highlights the desires of an individual or group that feels that something needs to change to improve the current condition of the resisting person or group. In the conflict between the British and the Mizo people, from the British point of view, the first to take out violent means, to invade their lands and to capture slaves were the Mizos. It is documented that the main reason of their advancement was to take revenge for the Mizo people's deeds. Likewise, the Mizo people also saw the British as greedy and selfish people who went beyond their jurisdiction. They did not believe that their actions would be

consequential to their law or the British regime. This mutual misunderstanding can be said to be the core of the conflict between them.

In the play *Kalkhama leh Lianphuga*, there can be a number of interpretations on how the Mizo Chiefs had confronted the British. As mentioned earlier, they were trying to make a peaceful pact through proper negotiations without violence; they were cautious and their thoughts were also quite wise. It was also highly remarkable how Lianphunga had sent his ministers to receive and talk to Col. Skinner, how they planned to execute Captain Brown and also how they had always put their people in the first place.

The first scene of a violent confrontation is seen in Act-2 of scene-three. When Lianphunga was about to give himself in for the sake of his people, their village had already been attacked and burned up by the British people and the villagers had fled into the forest. Lianphunga had said during this time, “A tha ber chu keimah ka va inpek a ni a, mahse inpek theih pawh a ni ta lo, an chet dan saw thu tha reng reng a leng dawn ta love. Anrawn pheknawr a nih mai saw” (2.3, 96) [The best thing was to surrender myself. But their actions do not make it even possible anymore to talk in peace. They are just attacking in all possible around.] It is seen that not only the young men of the village, but all their domestic animals were hit by the British. This situation as we see from the play is, “Nunau an ṭap chuah chuah a, an tlan dul dul a, Tlangau a rawn au lauh lauh a...” (The kids are shedding bitter tears in pain, fleeing in groups for safety, the village-crier was also announcing...) (97) The masses, in fear and fright, started proceeding to the forest as per the guidance of their chief and the warriors.

It is further seen that Lianphunga and his ministers resolved not to fight back but rather hide somewhere safe. When his ministers insisted to fire them back, Lianphunga said to them, “An tam ngang chuan lo kap mah ila, a sawt dawn em ni? Keini nunau nen kan ni si a, anni puahtuah khai hlir an nih si chuan...” (Would it make sense if we fight back when they are plenty of them? We are with the kids and all when they are all the ready-to-fight ones...) Tawnphunga, one of the chief’s ministers, also said, “There are many of them, those

who carry guns are even of thousands...” (2.3, 96). They concluded to fall back instead of firing back. This incident had a very painful impact on Lianphunga and his people as the British people still pursue them even in the forest.

Lianphunga and his ministers are seen in the forest where they fled, having a discussion –

LIANPHUNGA. Vaiho chu kan khuaah chuan an lo kal em?... Ramhnuaiah lehzel an lo kal a, nunau thlaphang reng renga an sawn siam dawn chuan chakai pawh a kaw tawpah chuan a țang an tia lawm. Inkah pumpelh kan duh a, kan insaseng lawm lawm a; chumi bak pela an lo kal zel chuan nunau thlavang chu kan hauh ang chu le... (2.4 p 99)

[Have those non-Mizo people come to my village...? If they chase us even here in the forest and continue threatening our people, even a crab is said to maintain its stance at the end of the hole. We were trying to avoid the firing and made our leave; however if they still chase us after that we have but to stand up for our people...]

A group of sixty warriors was sent to confront the *vai* sepoy, to fire at them and also to cause sliding of rocks to them. This was carried out by the warriors with success, stopping those who tried to attack them and also left them wounded. However, the chief and the warriors found it really difficult to understand why they had been chased even after they had already fled from their village.

After this incident took place, Capt Brown summoned all the Mizo chiefs in the Aizawl camp. Apart from Kalkhama, Lianphunga and his brothers who were also Chiefs, their ministers were also gathered in this assembly. From the words of the Mizo Chiefs, how they stood up for their land, how they were against the British and, their general arguments are put

into perspective. This turned out to be a remarkable event and the main root of the birth of bigger conflicts.

Another factor why the Mizo Chiefs resist the British was because they did not want to be reigned over and ruled by the white men. They were against the idea of the British forces that could degrade their power and devalue them. From this play that has mentioned it can certainly be seen that the Mizo Chiefs were disinclined to degrading their authorities and were hostile towards the idea of being governed by the British and would do anything to show this hostility even if it meant losing their chieftains or their lives.

The Mizo Chiefs in the olden times, as that have been noted before enjoyed full authority over their conquered lands, they even had a say on matters of life and death of their people. Unlike today, there were no written laws but there were unwritten laws that were uniformly followed by each. (Dokhuma 146) Even though the Mizo Chiefs acted as legislators and enforcers of the laws, there were certain laws that even the Chief could not make any amendments on it. (18) The responsibility of the chief was to look after the wellbeing of his people and to protect them. So, he received help from his advisors such as *Upa Min or Mualkil upa*. The people of the village Chief also had duties they needed to perform for the Chief. It is believed that taxes had existed in the distant past and had a crucial part in the lifestyles of the Mizo tribe (163). Aside from representing respect and honour for the citizens; it somehow portrayed the status of the Chief as grand and priceless.

Due to these circumstances, the Mizo chiefs strongly oppose the rule of the British over them which could belittle their power and authority. This struggle for power seemed to be the obvious reason why the Mizo chiefs clashed against each other and against other minor Mizo clans. At first, since the British did not seem like they posed a threat to their chieftains and oppressed their leaderships, certain terms of agreements were even made between the chiefs and the British.

In Act III of Scene I, Captain Brown started the assembly by giving his introductory speech, extending his gratitude to them for coming there. He also said that they were being called for a peace agreement and also told them about how they had planned to stay in Aizawl for permanent. He said that it would be a better opportunity for the Mizo chiefs to be under the administration of the British. Here, the reasons why they had been confronting the British and their positions were clearly revealed by Kalkhama's response.

KALKHAMA. Kumpinu chu lal ropui tak a ni tih kan hria. Ka pa Suakpuilala pawh lal ropui tak a ni. Kuminu hote nen pawh saui an tan. Inrun tawn lo turin thu an tiam. Mahse kan ram Chengri phai ruam chu mi inchuhpui a, kan ram inrawn ti thar a. Kan ram a ni si a. Chuvangin kan thu a buai a nih hi. Kumpinu ram chu nise run kan tum awzawng lo. Kan thu lova kan ram luahtute kan umchhuak mai alawm. Kan run hma hian chhuak turin kan hrilh a, an chhuak lova, chuvangin kan pasaltha ten an run a ni. Hemi thuah hian kan thiam. Mahse nangnin kan khua leh tui an ni e in tihltat avangin, remna kan duh a. Dal Sap (Daly) hnenah sal kan man pawh kan chhuah vek. Hei hi inrem taka awm kan duh vang liau liau a ni. Chuti chung pawhin ka nau Lianphunga khua in run a... Engah nge thutiam bawhchhiaa kan ram inrawn run?...Nangni mingoho hian thutiam inbawhchhia a ni. Tunah pawh kan rama awmhlen intum a, kan phal hleinem. Haw leh rawh u. Hei hi kan ram a ni... (3.1, 104)

[We knew that *kumpinu* is a very majestic ruler. My father Suakpuilala also was a great chief. They made an agreement as well. They had promised not to raid each other. However, you started the fight over Chengri valley, claiming that the land is yours, which is but ours. That has caused us these troubles then. We would never bother if it ever belonged to *kumpinu*. We just chased the settlers in our land without our permission.

They were foretold to leave before we invaded them, but they did not move, so my warriors had invaded them. We are blameless in this matter. But we decided to make an agreement since you started claiming they were yours. All the captured slaves were also set free to *Dal Sap* (Daly). This was true because of the fact that we wanted peace and harmony. But still, you invaded my brother Lianphunga... Why did you ever break your promise and invade them? You the white people had failed to keep the promise. Now, you are even trying to stay in our land for permanent, we do not allow you so. Go back home to your land. This is our land only...]

Many other significant points can also be drawn from this mentioned speech of Kalkhama. *Kumpinu* (Queen Victoria) and their late father Suakpuilala were compared as great rulers of their times, this vividly presented how great and marvelous the Sailo chiefs were considering themselves in their territories. Furthermore, Kalkhama is seen to have a deep respect for the agreement that their father had made with the British to not invade each other again and he also seemed trying to keep this promise. The reason he said for invading the Chengri valley region was that they had stood up for what they claimed to be “their land” only. Another remarkable yet unusual thing that can be seen is that they had given proper information and cautioning to the settlers of Chengri valley that they were going to invade them if they did not move out as soon as possible. In the former Mizo tradition, when they carried out a raid, they normally invaded each other as confidential and secret as possible, mostly in midnight or dawn, or they executed their rivals in the forest as well. However, they had given out a proper warning to the Chengri settlers before invading them which truly is an unusual and surprising act.

The main reason why Kalkhama and his brothers had attended that gathering was that they wanted only peace and they had wanted what would be the best for their people. However, their warriors did not have a chance of winning due to their much more

incompetent weaponry. They had already set their slaves free for a peaceful agreement. The British were seen to be the ones who violated the rules of the cease-fire and at fault for advancing over their lands. Being the elder one among them, Kalkhama was their main leader and often spoke for all of them. The chiefs of Mizo had strongly against the British to dominate Mizoram and Kalkhama even said to Capt Brown, a British *sepoy*, “Since this is given unto us by God, we too are living between the Sun and the Moon. We forbid you to stay permanently in our land. Go back home.” (3.1, 104)

Captain Brown said, “We are going to stay here in your land for permanent, if you do obey us we will not do any harm to you...” (105) However, they were strongly against by Kalkhama and Lianphunga. After that Capt. Brown declared that peace agreement would be made and he proceeded to read out the peace accord. He further added, “All that I have read out are to establish the peace agreement between us. We all have agreed to it.” Cambridge English Dictionary defines ‘Agreement’ as “a decision or arrangement, often formal and written, between two or more groups or people.” (“agreement”) The consent of both parties is the most vital or mandatory to have an accord but is not seen in this case. It is seen in the words of Kalkhama and his brother, Lianphunga did not completely agree with that accord and that they did not want to be in agreement with the British. Kalkhama and Lianphunga said, “We did not agree with that. We are not the members of the white people...” (110) This has clearly revealed that the peace agreement that the British had planned exactly was a forceful and assertive agreement.

Apart from Kalkhama and Lianphunga, after whom the narrative is named, Thanghulha was also captured. Regarding the arrest of Kalkhama, he came out of hiding as his ministers were being tortured. Taking that as an advantage, Lianphunga and Thanghulha were deceived and captured by using one Mizo *Tirhkah* (interpreter). Here, the wily cleverness of McCabe can be seen and his use of trickery is also another means for the Mizo people to find out the dishonesty of the British as well.

After the death of Capt. Brown, McCabe declared his new plan, “Kalkhama and his two partners Lianphunga and Thanghulha will soon be captured. Kalkhama will be attacked in the first place...” (4.2, 126) He also said that all other chiefs were expected to be frightened after capturing Kalkhama and it would be easier for them to win them over.

It is seen in Act-IV scene-five that McCabe’s main aim was to put Kalkhama and his brothers under his dominance and to make a peaceful accord with them. However, all these chiefs were only saying how they hated the British people doing whatever they pleased inside the Mizo land and the plans they had made, and also that they were never going to give in. Kalkhama even questioned them, “How could we ever say ‘You are our village people’ to the people coming to our land from overseas?” (4.5, 138) Lianphunga also responded, “How avaricious you *Sap* people are? Do you not have anything to eat in your land? We have nothing to promise.” (139) Thanghulha even responded by using violent means, he grabbed McCabe in his throat but he was saved by some other *sepoys*. When McCabe tried to talk about the peace agreement, he even responded, “You coward, go back to your country. I don’t even want to see your face.” McCabe, keeping all these responses in his mind, started finding reasons to send them to Hazaribagh prison and he did so as well. He thought that sending their chiefs away would be a good idea to stop others from being rebellious and to win them over; he also said that it was his plan to threaten and intimidate other chiefs.

The death of Kalkhama and Lianphunga is a mournful and regretful one as seen in the story. But at the same time, according to the Jail Superintendent and the Jail Warden, Kalkhama and Lianphunga had still continued their chieftainship in the prison, continuing to act like chiefs and even the jail workers were afraid of them. The Superintendent said, “They will continue to be detained in this prison until they are demoralized. But they do not seem to be defeated that easy...they ain’t leaving that soon, how exasperating they are! The government officials would also be happier if they are not existing anymore,” (5.1, 147) and

he seems to suggest a new plan to the Warden. One of the wardens is seen saying his new plan to ‘eliminate’ Kalkhama and Lianphunga –

WARDEN 1 . . .Kalkhama leh Lianphunga hi zu leh sa tha tawh kan pe ang a...
 zu chu an pek ang ang an in zawh thu chaw petuin a sawi sawi bawk. An
 zuin turah tur kan phul sak ang a. An thih velah hruizenin an *room
 ventilation bar* atangin kan khai ang a, an awkhlum a ni mai alawm. *Jail
 Doctor* pawh hrilhlawk ila, *postmortem* hunah pawh ‘awkhlum’ tiin *certify*
 mai se.” (5.1, 148) [Kalkhama and Lianphunga will be given some wine
 and meats of the finest brand...the feeder also reported that they had
 finished all the wine given to them. The wine will be poisoned before
 handed to them. After they died they will be hung up by some ropes in the
 bars of their room ventilation, making it seem like they had hung
 themselves. Let the Jail Doctor also be foretold to certify them as ‘hung’ in
 the post-mortem report.]

The Jail Warden (British) had approved this plan and he told them to proceed as they wish, even assuring them that their plan would please the Inspector General. In this incident, though the Wardens were the ones who took out the actions, the British people were there involved in the plan and detailed proposal; which clearly show how the British people tend to act to those who against them and those they could not dominate. Thanghulha, who was also captured along with them, was detained in another ward and he was later released. This is the end of the story and it is seen that even when their village people were under the dominance of the British, Kalkhama and Lianphunga still revolted against the British which eventually lead to their own death.

The play of *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga* is written to highlight the grounds of disputes and conflicts that happened between the British and the Mizo people. At the core of this play lie the accounts of the Mizo warriors who had sacrificed themselves for their land and people.

In addition to the devotion to their land, the sacrifice that these warriors had made is the most remarkable point presented by the playwright. There are many incidents and events in regard to how the British eventually dominated Mizoram; apart from that some dialogues and events are also made up by the playwright.

Kalkhama and Lianphunga though they were great and brave Chiefs had not just attacked the British forcefully. They had been looking for a peaceful agreement and the means for avoiding any violent conflict. However, they had to take part in violent confrontations since the British started to use their power and control over them by the use or threat of violence. Although they were physically defeated and dominated, it can be clearly seen that their hearts and minds had never been won over.

The various actions of the British army leaders have shown how devoted they were to their own country, which was seen as a result of their determination to be the most powerful and the greatest political power in the world. To achieve their objectives, they are documented to have various unscrupulous and unfair means to their cause. They disrespected and despised the power and self-esteem of the Mizo Chiefs. For them, honour that was so important to the Mizos was just an unimportant impediment for the path to absolute power and they were not afraid to brutally stamp out any opposition.

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Chapter-4

Conclusion

According to Mizo historical records, the Mizo people came from the North, that is, China and then moved south towards Burma. Later, after many years they migrated and finally settled on the hills of Mizoram in India. History also provides detailed chronicles regarding their migration and settlements. They composed their stories and songs which corroborated their cultural practices and beliefs. These stories and songs provide information which is vital in the perception and understanding of the Mizo cultural history.

The structure of the Mizo tribal society is made up of many clans. It is a tribe that consists of clans and sub-clans. Among the many clans, the larger clans occupy a higher level of superiority and dominance. They have a proper system of governance. Management of the community was regulated by the chiefs and elders that promoted the well-being and security of the community. Each community or village followed the same or similar governance and management. The Mizo Chieftains and the villagers fought hard to check and tried hard to push back the British invaders. From the historical account, the Mizo Chiefs also tried to make an accord between them and also formed an alliance and signed treaties with few Mizo Chiefs as well. These treaties/accords were upheld by the Mizo chieftains but falter and broke down under forces of non-mutual ideas, imbalance of power and responsibilities. Furthermore, the British were enlarging their territory as well as tea estate for trading. It created plenty of animosity between the British and Mizo.

The Mizo community is a closed-knit community. There are many villages and every village has a chieftain who looks after the welfare of the community. Therefore, it was very difficult to make peace with all of them - much less conquer and gain control over them.

Though they manage to make peace and form alliance with some of them yet they were frequently raided by other Chiefs as well. This shows that the Mizo Chieftains wanted autonomous and independent authority over their subjects. They preferred to be their own masters rather than be subjected under the British rule.

In 1889, as the British forces were on the march to attain complete subjugation of the Mizo chiefs, many of them gave themselves willingly without a fight and few even helped and solicited with them. However, many Mizo chieftains and their followers opposed them because they did not want to be under the British rule. They fought them with guns and other weapons to keep them at bay. The resistances and power struggle between the Mizo chiefs and the British are the main focus of study from the two plays- *Thangliana Len* and *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga*. There are different reasons of the Mizo resistances to the British colonialism. The two plays *Thangliana Len* and *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga*, highlight the various constant conflicts between the Mizos and the British.

The study finds out that the Mizo Chief tried to extend and safeguard their land from the British. Lands had a significant role in the community and culture of the Mizos, they strived and put all their efforts into broadening their territories and preserving them to a great extent. As a result of this, many Mizo Chiefs started raiding other tribes and clans such as those of Cachar, Manipur, Tripura and Chittagong in order to extend and safeguard their territory.

In the play “Thangliana Len”, Savunga said, “It is our land. It is not the land of the plains people or the white men. It is our land. Those who came to our land must be chased out.” (2.4, 46) Savunga announced in many occasions how much he defended his land. When Thangliana (TH Lewin), declared that the Queen (*Kumpinu*) was the greatest ruler, Bengkhuaia boldly said to General Brownlow, “For you, she is mightier than us. But in our

land, she is not the supreme leader. Our land belongs to us...If you try and take our land, we will shoot you right now.” (3.4, 65)

In this scene, the British summoned the Mizo chiefs to make an accord and terms of agreement were also pointed out. When the Mizo chiefs were given an order not to attack the British lands anymore, Sangvunga replied -

SANGVUNGA. We will not raid the British lands that we sure are belong to the British and the lands which we accepted as the British lands. We haven't attacked such lands in the past as well. In the lands where we used to hunt, where our forefathers lived, Zoluti and her father and others made a garden yard in it and those are the ones we attacked. Why wouldn't we shoot intruders who entered into our lands without our permission? Even you white man, wouldn't you shoot the foreigners who tried to occupy your lands without your authority?

BROWNLOW. You are right. But you must know that the lands we occupied are ours.

LALBURHA LEH BENGKHUAIA . Do forbid your citizens to settle on our lands from now on. (Act III. Sc-IV. 66)

From this conversation, it is now crystal clear as to why the Mizo Chiefs strongly lay claims to their lands and justified their raids on the Non - Mizo (*Vai*) tribes. They could not tolerate the actions of the white men and their councils who tried to settle in the lands they thought it belonged to them.

In the second play, “Kalkhama leh Lianphunga”, the motive of the Mizo Chiefs behind the attacks on the plains was mainly their wish to protect their lands. The British had come to discipline and govern the Mizo Chiefs because of their actions against the non –

Mizos in the plains of Chengri. According to different speeches by Liangphunga in the story, the Mizos only attacked Chengri valley because they had firm claims on the lands. He addressed the first Mr. Daly they encountered as, “Chengri valley is our land. Our warriors fought for the protection of our land. We dared to be decapitated and loss our lives for it....” (Act-II, Sc-I, 85) Tawnphunga’s elder Lianphunga mentioned to Capt. Skinner, “My land, our land since a long time ago; they decided to make Chengri valley a village without acknowledgement from the chiefs...” thus explaining the reasons for his raids on the plains.

Lianphunga’s elder brother, Kalkhama also mentioned to Capt. Brown the reason for conflict between them and the British was the dispute on lands.

KALKHAMA . *Kumpinu* is a great ruler we believe. My father Suakpuilala is also a great ruler. They even perform sacrificial ceremony of *sa ui tan* for their accord. They agreed not to invade each other anymore. But you contend with us our Chengri valley, claiming it is yours. It is our land. So, we have this dispute. If it belongs to the Queen, we have no intention of raiding it at all.... (Act III. Sc-I.104)

From the above examples that have been shown and from many other sources, it can be concluded that the Mizo chiefs firmly preserved their claims on lands which eventually led to *Vairun* in Mizoram.

The study reveals that the Mizo Chiefs opposed the British were because they did not want to be reigned over and ruled by the British. They were against the idea of the British forces that could degrade their power and devalue them. From the play *Thangliana Len*, readers can see that some of the Mizo Chiefs were resistant to the British long before the two sides made a pact as depicted in the play. When Thangliana sent for the elders of Rothangpuia as representatives or ambassadors to Savunga, Savunga answered, “We the

Sailo chiefs, who were born between the sun and the moon do not allow our people, their belongings and their lands to be abused by foreigners however and whenever they wanted to. Let them not disparage us in such a manner. No one soars above me than the eagle.” (1.3, 15) The Mizo Chiefs held highly of themselves and their chieftain and could not tolerate such degradation, not one bit. As a consequence of such an attitude, Savunga’s village was burned to ashes and was left with no proper subjects at the end of the story.

It is presumable that the other Mizo Chiefs after learning of the superiority and advancement of the British and their weapons signed a treaty with their rivals. Again, from this treaty, it can be noticed that the Mizo Chiefs hesitated to put the British and their Queen above their status. As Bengkhuaia had mentioned earlier, “If you try and take away our land, we will shoot you right now.” (3.4, 65) “We are the supreme rulers of our country” and as Sangvunga had said, “No one is above us in our land” (66) all denote the fact that the Mizo Chiefs took pride in their statuses and their intentions of defending it.

Kalkhama leh Lianphunga play depicted the killing of Captain Brownlow and its aftermaths by the Mizo chiefs as an action in order to defend their chieftain and their refusal to being governed by the British. When McCabe persuaded them to submit to the British, they replied, “How can we say to foreigners and outsiders who came from other countries that we are their subjects? Why would we impose taxes on our people for foreigners?... White man, this is our land.” (4.5, 138) They delivered a message to their people, “For the struggles against foreigners and conquerors who sought to reign over Mizoram, they gave their time and their lives” (4.6, 145) and then sacrificed themselves for the cause of the motherland.

The study also finds out that patriotism is one of the important reasons for the resistance of colonialism by the Mizo. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the Mizo people often fought against each other, village against other village, clans clashed against other clans, and there were different motives behind these battles but it is anticipated that the

root cause of these laid upon their love and loyalty towards each of their own village and their people, also called patriotic.

There are many instances that showed the patriotic characteristics of the Mizos from the sayings of various Mizo Chiefs in *Thangliana Len* here are a few – Sangvunga said, “In defense of our land, we dare to be decapitated....”(1.3, 17) Lianruma’s warrior Lalhranga dared to stand up against the British sepoy in the battlefield and declared, “We will not surrender. We will protect our land and our village till we die. Go back right away.”(2.2, 37) Similarly, Savunga’s son in this battle encouraged his brave warriors –“...If you have fired all your ammos, slain them with your swords. Let us sacrifice and die for the community and the motherland. Come! Let’s fight...”(43) During the discussion of the treaty between Bengkhuaia and Gen. Brownlow, Bengkhuaia said, “We are the rulers of our land whatsoever. And after we die, our corpses will be buried in our land. If you try and take our land, we will shoot you right now.” (65) For his attempts to save his subjects and his villages, the people of Savunga migrated to different areas and he was left with no proper village in the end.

The Mizo Chiefs’s devotion to their lands was unconditional as shown in the play of *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga*. Lianphunga mentioned about Chengri valley as, “We must preserve a land left to us by our mothers, fathers, our ancestors.” (78) Till the moment he departed he believed, “We must endure, suffer and die at the right time for the sake and protection of the people.” Besides, Kalkhama also said, “If we are about to pursue and chase away foreigners, we must have the courage to lose our lives as well. We will shoot....we will defeat.” (113) Even when the time he was captured by McCabe, he fearlessly uttered, “You filth, even if you arrested me and impounded, you will never be able to defeat Kalkhama’s heart.” His last words for his people to inscribe on his tombstone went like – “They had given their time and days for their battle against foreigners who sought to conquer our lands.” All

these instances convey the patriotic qualities of the Mizo chiefs and that love gave them the strength to fight off the British.

The dissertation finds that the key reason for the Mizos raiding and attacking the plains was due to their wish to acquire tools and other commodities. In matters concerning tools and lifestyles, the Mizo forefathers lived a much more primitive lifestyle as compared to other tribes of their vicinities. These stolen items were new to them and were very much crucial for them. In the play *Thangliana Len*, Act II, Scene I, Lalzika and other hundred warriors ambushed the British who were transporting food and killed many of them, looting their guns. However, the food drifted away by the boat along the water (31) Macpherson spoke about this incident as – “When they ambushed our food suppliers yesterday, they dropped one gun on the way. We do not know whether this was because they were in a rush or because of the fact that they had taken away 50 guns from our soldiers....”(32) We also came across Lalzika who had asked his warriors to take away the enemies’ guns and their ammos (30) However, though the Mizo people started using money only after conquer of the British, they had come across the system of using money through their raids on the Non-Mizos (*Vai*) and the aforementioned bazaars.

The play *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga* also told us about an incident of how the Mizos demanded ‘*Tangka za*’ as a ransom for each captive they had taken by the time they invaded Chengri valley from Reng chief of *Jemadar*. Since the *Jemadar* were short of their demands, he even borrowed money from the chiefs and his elders which was to be paid back with interests. This showed that among the chiefs and the elders, there were some who had saved the money and had become acquainted with money through their raids and attacks and they had been using them in a variety of ways.

There were captives and slaves in the tradition and culture of the Mizo people. *Sal* were the captives who were taken as prisoners of wars. *Bawih* were owned only by the chiefs,

slaves taken in matters concerning wars were *sal* and as time went by, these *sal* then become *bawih*. These *sal* and *bawih* need to obey and act according to their owners. They believed that if they captured and enslaved a person, their reputation would improve and also they would own a servant to do all the works and moreover they can sell the servant in exchange for money and other valuable commodities.

Similarly, such instances can be observed from the two plays. Capturing and enslaving their enemies was another important reason why the Mizos keep on attacking and raiding their vicinities. Since, *sal* belonged to his/her capturer and under the master's control, they served and relieved their masters from much hard manual labour. Furthermore, the ransom money paid for their *sal* became useful means for improving their livelihood.

Captain Brownlow had asked his messengers to tell Savunga to free all the slaves they had captured. This could be another factor why they had come to Mizoram. The subject was initially discussed when they had come to meet with the chiefs of Haulawng. Bengkhuaia also announced that he had freed Zoluti and was willing to let the others go if they so wished.

BENGGHUAIA. We will liberate all those captured slaves who wished to go.

Women who got married would not necessarily desire to be released. But we will have to try and find those slaves for at least four or five days. (64)

From these events, it can be seen that there were many women slaves who had gotten married to the clan of their captors. Such occurrence is also seen in the other play "Kalkhama and Lianphunga". By the time Kalkhama and his brother were told to liberate the slaves they captured from Chengri valley and other areas, Kalkhama mentioned that there were some women who had already gotten married.

It has been found that the British people had been counter-attacked by the Mizo people. They had also been found to have searched for the possible ways regarding their

weapons and their techniques. They had also found different ways of gathering weapons and enhancing their techniques. However, at the same time, the lack of integrity among the Mizo people in their way of counter-attacking the British people could be seen and that further had a deep impact on them. Some of them were found to be on the side of the British while some had been fighting with all their wills. From these selected plays, the possible reasons for this lack of integrity among the Mizo people could be discussed as below-

In the early Mizo society, a large group of families was clubbed together in one village under, ruled by the same Chief. The Mizo Chiefs were said to have complete and full authority in their own village. Some stronger Chiefs also used to create new villages for their sons and siblings, all to be under the same chieftainship. This kind of power and authority that the chiefs had in their own respective villages and also villages being grouped into one chieftainship made it difficult for the Mizo Chiefs to be in complete unison.

It has been found from these two plays that some of the Mizo chiefs were doing all the possible ways they found to drive the British back while some of them easily surrendered themselves into the hands of them, some were even found to be on the side of the British by helping them. One of the biggest reasons for this was that the Mizo Chiefs had supreme authority in their respective villages, different chiefs with several ideas in different villages made it difficult to have a common belief and a spirit of integrity. In *Thangliana Len*, it can be seen that the Chiefs of Haulawng simply made an agreement with the British without any resistance while the Chiefs of Sailo counter attacked the British with all their might. In the time of Kalkhama as well, all other Chiefs and their people, except for Kalkhama and his brothers, agreed to give themselves in to the British, which had largely hindered the actions of other Chiefs.

The study evidence that one thing worthy of being noted in the earlier life of the Mizo people was the conflict and the hatred between the different clans. Many of the civil wars that have taken place among the Mizo people can be traced back to conflicts fought between different clans. The war between the east and the west and the war between the south and the north were some instances of the conflict between groups of siblings and certain clans. This kind of segregation among each group had a very deep impact on their lives and made it impossible to have a sense of integrity.

This had a huge impact on their lives and further resulted in a lack of integrity. In the first play as well, Rothangpuia, the Chief of Thangluah is found to have conflicts with Savunga, the Chief of Sailo and the reason behind their conflict was due to some differences of opinion among the two in their earlier times. Rothangpuia had been found doing many things to help the British attack Savunga and his associates. The successors of Rolura were also found helping the British to attack the village of Lianphunga since they knew the routes better and also the required techniques. They made it so much easier for the British to win with such help.

Among the Mizo Chiefs, some were more powerful and influential while some were inconsequential with very few subjects. While some Chiefs had lots of warriors and champions in their villages, there were also some villages with chiefs who did not have such warriors. Challenging and fighting back the British people then became quite a difficult task for them. The first targets of the British were mainly the most powerful and influential ones, the actions of the British people to such villages made the smaller Chiefs frightened and rid them of enough courage to even fight back.

In *Thangliana Len*, Savunga and his brothers were said to be the most influential ones during their times in the southern region and knowing this they were targeted by Captain

Brownlow in the first place. After they got being fired with the guns, the Chiefs of lesser populated Haulawng villages were found to simply seek a way to make an agreement. In *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga*, Kalkhama and his brothers were the most influential leader figures with a large number of villages but at the same time, many Chiefs were found with not enough courage or manpower to stand up against the British. This huge difference in the hierarchy and their dedication to counter-attack the British were one of their biggest obstacles.

Among the Mizo people there were some who tended to be on the side of the British hoping that their standard of living would be uplifted and their conditions be made better, those were one of the biggest hindrance for the Mizo chiefs in their way of fighting back. In *Thangliana Len*, when the two ministers of Rothangpuia were sent to Savunga as delegates, they were won over by the British by bribes in the form of liquor and blankets. Similarly, the same was done to some men from the village who knew the routes and the paths to the village of Savunga. In *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga*, Act IV, scene-five as well, Lianphunga and Thanghulha got caught because they had been tricked by a Mizo man (Tirhkah/servant). Lianphunga and Thanghulha were lured out with lies as the message of Kalkhama, "Let my brothers Lianphunga and Thanghulha come and let us have a proper talk," he persuaded them to follow him and he even let them captured. It can also be seen that McCabe had promised to make him a chief. From these instances, the poor standard of living and their desire to have a better condition of living could be clearly found.

The study also finds that the Mizo Chiefs found it demeaning to be under the British rule. It was disgraceful and belittling that they had to give up their power and status. So, it could suggest that the reason why the Mizo Chieftains fought the British forces was in order to stop them from taking away their power and status. Apart from fighting to keep their

power and status, they also fought for the land and community. They fought them because they would not concede their land which they had inherited from their forefathers.

The Mizo Chieftains and the Mizo folks also found it difficult to accept them as their leaders. They who had held power over their subjects prior to the British rule were now subjected to the same rules as the commoners. They had to follow rules dictated by the Britishers. This new way of life was seen as abrasive and inhumane as it restricted from them the exercise of their powers which had been handed down generations after generations. So, this was the reason why they fought the British forces – to fend off their authoritative rule.

The Mizo Chiefs believed that the British forces could be defeated and they tried hard to unify their ranks into one single alliance. Yet, their plans of unification were foiled because the Britishers used the ‘Divide and Rule Policy’ against the Mizo Chiefs. They understood the minds of the Mizo Chiefs and their people. They would persuade and entrust them with powers and positions. This clever policy barred the Mizo chiefs and warriors from unification and victory.

Between the Mizo chiefs, while there were many who wanted to join the British forces yet few decided to fight them till the end. They have sacrificed their lives in order to protect and safeguard the Mizo people; their culture, heritage and land. Even those who fought and lived suffered greatly as their lands were confiscated; their bodies were disfigured due to injuries and many others. The Mizo people should forever be grateful and held them in high esteem for their acts of bravery and sacrifices. Although the story doesn’t depict or chronicled the singular lives of the many brave men after their loss yet it ascertained the British as the cause of the death of many Mizo folks. The British were afraid of another rebellion if they were to let go of the prisoners so they killed the chiefs and those who fought against them.

In the expedition during 1888-89 and the Chin-Lushai expedition 1889-90 the further administrative arrangements in the Lushai Hills were formulated. The necessity to post a civil administrator who would be able to feel his way among the people and gradually accustom them to the control of the British Government was felt. On September 6, 1895, the Lushai Hills was formally included in British India under the proclamations by the Governor-General of India of the Foreign Department. They introduced a land settlement system and circle administrative system in Mizo community, maintained through extensive contact between the government administrator and the village chief.

The cultural conflicts between the colonizers and the natives continues to leave an indelible mark that remains highly noticeable even in the modern Mizo society. The subjugation that was endured in the hands of the British had almost been forgotten and that had paved the way for the modern Mizos to be in awe of them instead because of the advent of Christianity. Perhaps that is why, as a culture, the Mizo people continue to suffer from 'Anglophilia' in larger proportions as opposed to our neighboring states. To this date, much of the Mizo cultural habits and lifestyles seem to imitate that of the British. The development they incurred upon the lands remains largely exaggerated even in the modern narrative.

The arrival of the Christian missionaries alongside the colonizers plays a huge part in the British influence upon our cultures. The official colonial administration begins in 1890 and just four years later on 11th January 1894, two British missionaries FW Savidge and JH Lorrain arrive on the scene. This conduct in a new wave of religious reformation has left an innumerable impact on the Mizo culture. As the new religion steadily prevails over the old order, Christian philosophies, teachings, and values slowly become the norm of society. A rejection or rather, resistance to this new order is largely frowned upon, capable of rendering the unwilling ones to the status of social pariahs. This rhetoric further suggests the magnitude of British influence.

The Zosap missionaries were the backbone of Mizo literature responsible for bringing massive educational changes that subsequently contributed to the cultural onslaught of the Mizo culture. They developed the new alphabetical script for the Mizo language and opened schools. Their presence loomed large on the educational institutions and their general functioning. New teachings were imposed, new songs were composed that shunned the previous Mizo lifestyles, and a new school of thought and values was introduced. The resistance against Christian reforms was prevalent in many forms of past literature such as in poems, songs, and writings. The more prominent ones include the notorious 'Kaihlek hla' and 'Puma Zai'. These songs attempt to subvert the teachings of Christianity and they even managed to hold the evolution and growth of Christianity in stalemate for a good while.

The passions of past glories continue to instigate a strong sense of nationalism and patriotism within the Mizo community and the need to cherish Mizos traditions and cultures in its purest forms, prior to its dilution by the British influence are newly instigated to the people. Those who seek to preserve the Mizos core cultures and values will be rewarded with validation. The dormant patriotic flames that remains embedded within past literary works are again unraveled within contemporary Mizo society and the forces that launched the fierce cultural resistance against the British influence will become more renowned than ever.

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ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF COLONIAL RESISTANCE IN THE PLAYS OF
LALTHANGFALA SAILO

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN MIZO

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A Study of Colonial Resistance in the Plays of Lalthangfala Sailo

(Abstract)

This research study the plays of Lalthangfala Sailo which depicted resistances of colonialism in Mizoram also known as Lushai Hill. The British were on the march to attain complete subjugation of the Mizo chiefs, many of them gave themselves willingly without a fight and few even helped and solicited with them. However, many Mizo chieftains and their followers opposed them because they did not want to be under the British rule. They fought them with guns and other weapons to keep them at bay. The resistances and power struggle between the Mizo chiefs and the British are the main focus of study from the two plays- *Thangliana Len* and *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga*.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The first chapter of the dissertation provides a brief introduction of colonialism in India and Mizoram as well. It also attempts to highlight a brief history of Mizo drama and the short biography of Lalthangfala Sailo.

Colonialism is defined as control by one country over a dependent area or people in different ways. There are many definitions of colonialism in different way. Jamila Osman define “colonialism is when one country violently invades and takes control of another country, claims the land as its own, and sends people – settlers to live on that land.” (Osman) Bhaivab Gosh also defines colonialism as “When a country conquers another country and imposes its supremacy on that conquered country, it is known as colonialism”. (Gosh)

The advent of colonialism changed the faces of many continents as smaller communities had to change their traditions and cultural practices to accommodate the more

powerful colonizers. Many traditional practices are no longer in effect due to the more 'civilized' practices that these colonizers introduced.

Resistance from a political perspective is often thought of as the property of the left. The resistance concept is introduced by Edmund Burke in social science in eighteenth century, who argued for the necessity of resisting revolutionary progress. (Darity, 208) The term resistance means to reject and fight against something that is undesirable to a particular cause or group of people, and the attempt to reverse or change it to a more desirable state. Human beings are each equipped with the ability to have preferences and non-preferences, and that state of being does not necessarily change when they are grouped as a collective, such as in societies. When a phenomenon arises that seeks to threaten the values of a particular group as a collective, they need to fight back and resist arose. The most important concept of resistance is to stand against, entered the social sciences primarily from political affairs and society.

The Indian trade relations with Europe started through sea route only after the arrival of Vasco-da-Gama in Calicut, India on May 20, 1498. The Moghul Empire collapsed after the Battle of Plassey 1757 and solidified India as one of the colonized country by the British Empire. Many Indians were distressed by the rapid cultural and life changes caused by the British colonialism. They also suffered in multiple ways in their own homeland; and they eventually tried to break through from the British. Many historians called this First War of Independence as a 'Sepoy Mutiny' of 1857. After 1858, India officially became a British colony as the British crown took control of India from the East India Company. The name 'East India Company' was dissolved by the British parliament in 1859.

Mizoram the then Lushai Hill also became one of the colonized states in the British Colony from the year 1890. However, the Mizos raided the British territory; because of which result in the destruction of their hunting grounds and also to deprivation of

commodities from them. The British Empire had taken all the nearby Chittagong and Burma but had little or no interest in the tribes or their hilly land that is Mizoram, which they referred to as Lushai hills.

An increasing raids of the British frontiers by the Mizos between 1860's to 70's. The British government decided to send a huge military expedition to the Lushai Hills during the winter of 1871-72. On the 22nd March 1872, the first Lushai expedition was done satisfactory from the two corners in Chittagong and Cachar. Many Lusei Chief were submitted and assured to make peace with the British. A captive from Alexandrapur garden, Mary Winchester and many confined British subjects were also released in this expedition. After 1872, the Mizos did not raid any of the nearby British settlement.

In 1888, the British Military department sent a survey party under Lt. Steward and his team. They surveyed Rangmati up to Saichal terrains and they were killed by Pawi Chief Hausata and his followers; according to Lalthanliana, the fight happened on the morning of 3rd February of 1888. (98) As a result, the British Government started occupying lands by force as before. The Lushai Expedition (1889) was initiated in January 1889, and their mission was to capture Pawi Chief Hausata and his followers. Between the years 1889-1890, after the completion of their mission, it was termed as Chin Lushai Expedition. In the year 1890 February, the British made camp at Aizawl and settled permanently. From hence, the Britishers occupied and enforced their rule and supremacy.

The origin of drama in literature comes from the religious instincts of Greek imitation. In the same manner, Mizo drama also originated from religious inclination in the early Mizo society, and they are often known as folk-theater. When they are performed for a religious purpose, they were accompanied by dance, disguise and performed in a way that is most sanctimonious to the purpose. In Mizo early society, some ritual and community practices like *Ral-lu lam* (Head dance), *salu lam* (animal head dance), *kawngpui siam*, *fano dawi* etc.

were performed. “The root of the Mizo drama began to grow with the celebration of the grandest Christian festival in the land, Christmas.” (Khangte 33) In December 25 of 1912, the Missionaries and some Mizos celebrate Christmas with some entertainment programme. In the evening of that day, the first ever dramatic performance was held in Thakthing Veng, Aizawl. This important event was reported by Lianhmingthanga, who attended that function, in *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu* (a monthly journal of Lushai Hills) on January 1913 issue.

Lalthangfala Sailo was born on 16th July 1933 at West Lungdar village of Northern Mizoram. His father, Dohleia Sailo was the Chief of Lungdar and his mother Thanseii Sailo is also a daughter of Hranga, chief of Phulpui village. He graduated from St. Xavier’s College, Calcutta in the year of 1959. He is a former President of the Mizo Academy of Letters (MAL) from 1988 to 2018. He is also a former Deputy Registrar at the Mizoram campus of the North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) in the year between 1985-1996.

Lalthangfala has written several articles and plays in the Mizo language and has published several books including *Lunglai Hnemtu*, *Ral hlauhawm chu* (Short stories), *Zo Kalsiam*, *Liandova te Unau leh Sangi ingleng* (plays), and *Kan ram A Ni* (A compilation of three plays). His play *Sangi Inleng*, published in 1963 and it is the first Mizo drama published in book form.

He received many awards at regional and national levels for his contribution to literature and social works. In 2009, the Government of India awarded him the fourth highest Civilian Honor of the Padma Shri in Education and Literature, and he has been awarded national level awards like *Sageet Natak Akademy Award (Playwriting)* in 2017 and *Bharat Adhivasi Drama Award* in 2012 for his precious contributions to Mizo drama as well as Mizo literature.

Chapter-2 : Identity Perception and Resistances in *Thangliana Len*

Thangliana Len is a historical play based on the historical events that occurred during the years 1871-1872. This period is commonly known as *Vailen Vawi khatna*, meaning the first expedition of the British in the Mizo territory because of the end of the disrupting elements occurring in the region. The play highlights the expedition and exploits of the British Southern Column and how the Mizo warriors responded to their advances meeting them with valor and courage.

The title *Thangliana Len* was given by the playwright due to the above stated reasons in his forwarding –

The reason why the title of the play is *Thangliana Len* is because the coming of First expedition in 1871-72 from the south was termed by our elders as *Thangliana Len*. . . Captain T.H. Lewin (popularly called Thangliana by the natives) was the only Civil Officer present who knew how to speak the native tongue; and was known by many Mizo folk and received more recognition than the General Brownlow. So, it is because of this, the foreign incursion from the south was termed *Thangliana Len* by the elders. This term set by the elders is therefore used as the title of the play. (Kan Ram 2)

Thangliana (TH Lewin) is the first Britisher to enter Mizoram in 1865 (Ray 21). He was born on 1st April 1839 in Kent, United State of America. He arrived in India in September 1857 as an East India company military. “Until the appointment of T.H Lewin [Thangliana] (1839-1916) as Deputy Commissioner of Hill Tract, the British had little knowledge on the details of the Mizos and their culture.

Through the play, *Thangliana Len*, the conflicts that had to happen between the Mizo chiefs and the British oppressors are taken into consideration for the study. Since Thangliana is one of the most important characters of the play, readers can see his pivotal role not only as a character but as an advisor to General Brownlow and the Mizo chiefs as well.

One of the notable characters in the play is Savunga. The harsh treatment of his people and his village under the British rule is clearly seen. He receive harsh conflict under the British rule and was also severely ridiculed for opposing their rule. He had been a great chief but when he started voicing his opposition against the foreign rule, Savunga was forced to flee out of the village with his few followers. They have to strive through thirst and hunger in the wilderness. Readers can see these acts as their absolute determination and fight against the oppressor, the Britishers.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines patriotism as ‘love for or devotion to one's country’. (‘patriotism’) According to Igor Primoratz, “patriotism can be defined as love of one's country, identification with it, and special concern for its well-being and that of compatriots.” (204) In the old Mizo period, the meaning of the term “patriotism” and its concerns are rather complicated. However, the emergence and arrival of the so-called Non-Mizos (British/*Vai*) gave rise to devotion, love and patriotic feelings of the Mizos towards their land. Before the advent of the Britishers, Savunga and his people often fought against each other, village against other village, clans clashed against other clans, and there were different motives behind these battles but it is anticipated that the root cause of these lied upon their love and loyalty towards each of their own village and their subject. In this play, the Mizo warriors also used guns in their battles. They possessed such guns from their raids of British folks. They also used spears and machetes in their battle (37). They fought with the utmost strength as a show of courage even after they had exhausted their guns of bullets they would continue fights with a machete.

In *Thangliana Len*, there are many decisions and follow-up action to repel the British invasion by the Mizo Chiefs. First, they tried to make a memorandum of peace between them. The play clearly shows that the Mizo folk wanted to meet and make peace with the Britishers in order to check their advancement. The British sent Rothangpuia's messengers and they met Savunga and his men but Savunga wanted to meet with Thangliana. It is also evidently clear that Savunga and his men would not heed the message sent by the British. Patiala, a Sailo

Chief expressed his distrust against Rothangpuia's messengers and that it was a mistake to have sent them on such an important task concerning both the parties. Savunga and his men did not trust the messengers as well.

Identity perception between the Mizo and British is one of the important sources of resistance from this play. There were many important reasons for the coming of the Britishers. The play provides evident cause and effect of why and how the Britishers attacked the Mizo folk. It also delves into the mind of the British persona, the reasons and execution of the *Vailen vawi khatna*, the first expedition and the different ways of how the Mizo Chieftains were dealt with. From the British point of view, the Mizo as an uncivilized and savage people. These types of different perceptions bring a clash between them.

The Mizo folk saw that the British in their eagerness to gain control over them were faithless. However, the Mizo folk were faithful to their beliefs and were inquisitive of things. As accounted by Vunghnuna, Savunga's elderman in *Thanliana Len*, the Britishers would intentionally spread diseases in the villages in order to prevent the chieftains from warring against them. Their words "Heng vai leh mingote hi rin ngam pawh an ni lo" (16) (These Indians and Britishers cannot be trusted) echoes the distrust and doubt they have towards the British folk. This is the reason why, though he used to raid British territories in the past he stopped raiding them. Zorema also said "Transportation of Lalsuthlaa, in spite of the promise pardon, had greatly annoyed the sentiments and feelings of the Lushais, who lost confidence in the English and their methods." (20) This was one of the reasons that created doubts and unreliability towards the Britishers.

The events in the play highlight the main reason why the Mizo chiefs were not unified in their opposition to the British rule. However, readers can also come to the conclusion that the Chiefs who opposed the Britishers did so with all their might and resources, and can be seen in this way, that they all did not readily bow down and easily surrender to the invader's law and authority.

Chapter-3: Empire and Decolonization in *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga*

In this chapter, the study elaborates on how The Chin Lushai Expedition in the year 1890, and how the British then dominated Mizoram and, the latter's various attempts and efforts to confront and deal with that dominance based on the play of *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga*. This play is a narrative based on the accounts known as *Vailen Vawi hnihna* by the Mizo people, the further advancement of the British into Mizoram, and their struggles in order to dominate the land.

In addition to the hardships faced by the Mizo people during the violent confrontation between the British and the Mizo, the heroic dedications made by the Mizo people and the various strategies of the British are the main points highlighted by the playwright.

After the Lushai Expedition 1871-1872, many of the Mizo chiefs were faithful to the pledge that they made to the British quite well. But at the same time, there were some of them who took some revengeful actions to the British dominated lands. The Mizo chief invaded British territory many time during 1880's. They also killed Lt. Steward and his party in 1888. Due to the incidents, the British government started making their advancement over Mizoram in several groups or sections in the year 1890. Colonel Tregar and his group, coming from the southern region in the month of December 1889 were recorded as 'The Expedition 1889' (Lalthangliana 519) after them, another group entered the land by the name 'The Chin-Lushai Expedition' during the year 1889-90 from the Cachar and Chittagong Column.

From the historical records, Kalkhama was the son of Suakpuilala, and he was the Chief of Sentlang village, Lianphunga was the third son of Suakpuilala and he was next to Kalkhama. He was the Chief of Lungtian and he was also one of the strongest confronter of the British government. They are the most famous and powerful chiefs and also the main leaders and the forerunner to oppose when the British tried to made an agreement with the Mizo chiefs in the year 1880. When the British began to set foot in Mizoram, it was Kalkhama and Lianphunga that they took their first actions against those who attacked them

first as well. On 11 September 1891 they died in the same prison where they were detained. (Lalthangliana 555)

In *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga* play, the steps and actions were taken by the British government towards the Mizo people and how the Mizo Chiefs and their village people had suffered are vividly presented. The play also shows the infliction of punishment and the actions of persuading the Mizo chiefs to submit themselves to the British government or forcing them to do so. The Mizo chiefs did not want to abide by the detailed proposal made by the British government to create a peaceful agreement and on top of that they would not surrender on any account since they were strongly against yielding to the British government. This resulted in more unwelcome and difficult situations, an exchange of violent confrontation and lack of mutual trust soon led to worse and unfavourable results. At the core of this play lie the accounts of the Mizo warriors who had sacrificed themselves for their land and people. In addition to the devotion to their land, the sacrifice that these warriors had made is the most remarkable point presented by the playwright.

Kalkhama and Lianphunga though they were great and brave chiefs had not just heedlessly attacked the British without intermediate warning. They had been looking for a peaceful agreement and the means for avoiding any violent conflict. However, they had to take part in violent confrontations since the British started to use their power and control over them by the use or threat of violence. Although they were physically defeated and dominated, it can be clearly seen that their hearts and minds had never been won over.

The main reason for the advancement of the British in Mizoram was the invasion of Chengri valley by the Mizo Chiefs. Chengri regions were strongly claimed to be the lands of Mizoram by Kalkhama and his brothers, they also stood up for it. The Chengri valley was claimed by the British but the Mizo Chiefs also claimed to be theirs. The British reacted very soon when the Mizo chiefs raided the region. Such misunderstandings going on between the

two seemed to start a spark for their conflicts and then the more serious disagreement in the story began to take place. In Act-IV Scene-IV of this play the dialogue between Kalkhama and McCabe is seen which appears to give a brief statement of the main points of the whole play. This conversation clearly shows that there is huge differences in the perspectives of the Mizo chiefs and the British, they both may even be correct from their own point of views.

Resistance can be formed by way without violence, also called as civil resistances. This form of resistance highlights the desires of an individual or group that feels that something needs to change to improve the current condition of the resisting person or group. In the conflict between the British and the Mizo people, from the British point of view, the first to take out violent means, to invade their lands and to capture slaves were the Mizo people. There is documentation that the main reason of their advancement was to take revenge for the Mizo people's deeds. Likewise, the Mizo people also saw the British as greedy and selfish people who went beyond their jurisdiction. They did not believe that their actions would be consequential to their law or the British regime. This mutual misunderstanding can be said to be the core of the conflict between them.

In the play *Kalkhama leh Lianphuga*, there can be a number of interpretations on how the Mizo chiefs had confronted the British. They were trying to make a peaceful pact through proper negotiations without violence; they were cautious and their thoughts were also quite wise. It was also highly remarkable how Lianphunga had sent his ministers to receive and talk to Col. Skinner which shows how they planned to execute Captain Brown and also shows how welfare of the people had always been foremost in their minds.

Another reason why the Mizo Chiefs resisted the British was because they did not want to be reigned over and ruled by the British. They were against the idea of the British forces that could degrade their power and devalue them. From this play that have mentioned it can certainly be seen that the Mizo Chiefs were disinclined to degrading their authorities and were hostile towards the idea of being governed by the British and would do anything to

show this hostility even if it meant losing their chieftains or their lives. Due to these circumstances, the Mizo Chiefs strongly oppose the rule of the British over them which could belittle their power and authority. This struggle for power seemed to be the obvious reason why the Mizo Chiefs clashed against each other and against other minor Mizo clans. At first, since the British did not seem like they posed a threat to their chieftainship and oppressed their leaderships, certain terms of agreements were even made between the Chiefs and the British.

The British, being the predominant and one of the most powerful country in the world, always tries to show and let their supremacy known to the world. They pride of their majesty and their power can be seen from this scene. To achieve their objectives, they are documented to have various unscrupulous and unfair means to their cause. They disrespected the power structure of the Mizo Chiefs. For them, honour that was so important to the Mizos was just an unimportant impediment for the path to absolute power and they were not afraid to brutally stamp out any opposition. In a similar way, the Sailo Chiefs regarded themselves noble and great, also considering themselves the most powerful and having complete authority within their territory. This is also the reason why they felt offended when other people who think themselves superior and more powerful tried to rule over them, and the reason they started the fight against them.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

This chapter sums up the various aspects and critical views in the previous chapters and presents the general observation and findings of the study. It highlights the formation and causes of resistance in the plays of Lalthangfala Sailo selected for the study.

Lands had a significant role in the community and culture of the Mizos, they strived and put all their efforts into broadening their territories and preserving them to a great extent. The study reveals that many Mizo Chiefs started raiding other tribes and clans such as those of Cachar, Manipur, Tripura and Chittagong in order to extend and safeguard their territory. In the play *Thangliana Len*, Savunga said, “It is our land. It is not the land of the plains people or the white men. It is our land. Those who came to our land must be chased out.” (2.4, 46) Savunga announced on many occasions how much he defended his land. The Mizo Chiefs strongly lay claims to their lands and justified their raids on the non-Mizo (*Vai*) tribes. They could not tolerate the actions of the British who tried to settle in the lands they thought it belonged to them.

In the second play, *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga*, the motive of the Mizo chiefs behind the attacks on the plains was mainly their wish to protect their lands. The British had come to discipline and govern the Mizo chiefs because of their actions against the non – Mizos in Chengri valley. According to different speeches made by Liangphunga in the play, the Mizos only attacked Chengri valley because they had firm claims on the lands.

The study reveals that the Mizo chiefs opposed the British were because they did not want to be reigned over and ruled by the British. They were against the idea of the British forces that could degrade their power and devalue them. As a consequence of such an attitude, Savunga’s village was burned to ashes and was left with no proper subjects at the end of the story.

It is presumable that the other Mizo chiefs after learning of the superiority and advancement of the British and their weapons signed a treaty with their rivals. Again, from this treaty, it can be noticed that the Mizo chiefs hesitated to put the British and their Queen above their status. As Bengkhuaia had mentioned, “If you try and take away our land, we will shoot you right now.” (3.4, 65) “We are the supreme rulers of our country” and as Sangvunga had said, “No one is above us in our land” (66) all denote the fact that the Mizo chiefs took pride in their statuses and their intentions of defending it.

The study finds out that patriotism is one of the important reasons for the resistance of colonialism by the Mizo. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the Mizo people often fought against each other, village against other village, clans clashed against other clans, and there were different motives behind these battles but it is anticipated that the root cause of these laid upon their love and loyalty towards each of their own village and their people, also called patriotic.

Many instances showed the patriotic characteristics of the Mizos from the sayings of various Mizo Chiefs in the play *Thangliana Len* here are a few – Lalhranga dared to stand up against the British sepoy on the battlefield and declared, “We will not surrender. We will protect our land and our village till we die. Go back right away.”(2.2, 37) Similarly, Savunga’s son in this battle encouraged his brave warriors –“...If you have fired all your ammo, slain them with your swords. Let us sacrifice and die for the community and the motherland. Come! Let’s fight...”(2.4, 43) During the discussion of the treaty between Bengkhuaia and Gen. Brownlow, Bengkhuaia said, “We are the rulers of our land whatsoever. And after we die, our corpses will be buried in our land. If you try and take our land, we will shoot you right now.” (3.4, 65) For his attempts to save his subjects and his villages, the people of Savunga migrated to different areas and he was left with no proper village in the end.

The Mizo Chiefs' devotion to their lands was unconditional as shown in the play of *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga*. Lianphunga mentioned about Chengri valley as, "We must preserve a land left to us by our mothers, fathers, our ancestors." (1.1, 78) Till the moment he departed he believed, "We must endure, suffer and die at the right time for the sake and protection of the people." (1.1, 78) All these instances convey the patriotic qualities of the Mizo chiefs and that love gave them the strength to fight off the British.

There were captives and slaves in the tradition and culture of the Mizo people. *Sal* were the captives who were taken as prisoners of wars. *Bawih* were owned only by the Chiefs, slaves taken in matters concerning wars were *sal* and as time went by, these *sal* then become *bawih*. Capturing and enslaving their enemies was another important reason why the Mizos keep on attacking and raiding their vicinities. Since, *sal* belonged to his/her capturer and under the master's control, they served and relieved their masters from much hard manual labour. Furthermore, the ransom money paid for their *sal* became useful means for improving their livelihood.

In matters concerning tools and lifestyles, the Mizo forefathers lived a much more primitive lifestyle as compared to other tribes of their vicinities. So, the study finds out that the key reason for the Mizos raiding and attacking the plains was due to their wish to acquire tools and other commodities. These stolen items were new to them and were very much crucial for them.

It has been found that the British people had been counter-attacked by the Mizo people. They had also found different ways of gathering weapons and enhancing their techniques. However, at the same time, the lack of integrity among the Mizo people in their way of counter-attacking the British people could be seen, and that further had a deep impact on them. Some of them were found to be on the side of the British while some had been fighting with all their wills. In the early Mizo society, a large group of families was clubbed

together in one village under, ruled by the same Chief. The Mizo Chiefs were said to have complete and full authority in their own village. Some stronger chiefs also used to create new villages for their sons and siblings, all to be under the same chieftainship. This kind of power and authority that the Chiefs had in their own respective villages and also villages being grouped into one chieftainship made it difficult for the Mizo Chiefs to be in complete unison.

In the two plays selected for study, some of the Mizo Chiefs were doing all the possible ways they found to drive the British back while some of them easily surrendered themselves into the hands of the British, some were even found to be on the side of the British by helping them. One of the biggest reasons for this was that the Mizo Chiefs had supreme authority in their respective villages, different chiefs with several ideas in different villages made it difficult to have a common belief and a spirit of integrity. In the play *Thangliana Len* it can be seen that the Chiefs of Haulawng simply made an agreement with the British without any resistance while the Chiefs of Sailo counter-attacked the British with all their might. During Kalkhama's time as well, all other chiefs and their people, except for Kalkhama and his brothers, agreed to give themselves into the British, which largely hindered the actions of other Chiefs.

One thing worthy of being noted in the earlier life of the Mizo people was the conflict and the hatred between the different clans. Many of the civil wars that took place among the Mizo people can be traced back to conflicts fought between different clans. This had a huge impact on their lives and further resulted in a lack of integrity. In *Thangliana Len*, Rothangpuia, the Chief of Thangluah is found to have conflicts with Savunga, the Chief of Sailo and the reason behind their conflict was due to some differences of opinion in their past.

Among the Mizo chiefs, some were more powerful and influential while some were inconsequential with very few subjects. Challenging and fighting back the British people then

became quite a difficult task for them. The first targets of the British were mainly the most powerful and influential ones, the actions of the British to such villages made the smaller Chiefs frightened and rid them of enough courage to even fight back. In the play, *Thangliana Len*, Savunga and his brothers were said to be the most influential ones during their times in the southern region, and knowing this they were targeted by Brownlow in the first place. After they got fired with the guns, the Chiefs of lesser populated Haulawng villages were found to simply seek a way to make an agreement. In *Kalkhama leh Lianphunga*, Kalkhama and his brothers were the most influential leader figures with a large number of villages but at the same time, many Chiefs were found with not enough courage or manpower to stand up against the British. This huge difference in the hierarchy and their dedication to counter-attack the British were one of their biggest obstacles.

The study finds that Mizo chiefs found it demeaning to be under British rule. It was disgraceful and belittling that they had to give up their power and status. So, it can suggest that the reason why the Mizo Chieftains fought the British forces was in order to stop them from taking away their power and status. Apart from fighting to keep their power and status, they also fought for their land and community. They fought them because they would not concede the land which they had inherited from their forefathers.

The cultural conflicts between the colonizers and the natives make an indelible mark that remains highly noticeable even in the modern Mizo society. The subjugation that was endured in the hands of the British had almost been forgotten and that had paved the way for the modern Mizos to be in awe of them instead because of the advent of Christianity.

The arrival of the Christian missionaries alongside the colonizers plays an important role in the British influence upon Mizo cultures. The colonial administration begins in 1890 and just four years later on 11th January 1894, two British missionaries FW Savidge and JH Lorrain arrive on the scene. This conduct in a new wave of religious reformation has left an

innumerable impact on the Mizo culture. As the new religion steadily prevails over the old order, Christian philosophies, teachings, and values slowly become the norm of society. A rejection or rather, resistance to this new order is largely frowned upon, capable of rendering the unwilling ones to the status of social pariahs. This rhetoric further suggests the magnitude of British influence.

The Zosap missionaries were the backbone of Mizo literature responsible for bringing massive educational changes that subsequently contributed to the cultural onslaught of the Mizo culture. They developed the new alphabetical script for the Mizo language and opened schools. Their presence loomed large on the educational institutions and their general functioning. New teachings were introduced, new songs were composed that shunned the previous Mizo lifestyles, and a new school of thought and values was introduced. The resistance against the new Christian reformations was prevalent in many forms of past literature.

The passions of past glories continue to instigate a strong sense of nationalism and patriotism within the Mizo community and the need to cherish Mizos traditions and cultures in their purest forms, prior to its dilution by the British influence are newly taught to the new generations. The dormant patriotic flames that remain embedded within past literary works are again unraveled within contemporary Mizo society and the forces that launched the fierce cultural resistance against the British influence will become more renowned than ever.

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