

**A STUDY OF TRICKSTER TALES IN
MIZO FOLK NARRATIVES**

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A thesis

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DECLARATION

I, H.Lalbiakzuali, hereby declare that the subject matter of this dissertation, “A Study of Trickster Tales in Mizo Folk Narratives” is the result of the work done by me, that the contents of this dissertation did not form the basis for the award of any degree to me or to anybody else to the best of my knowledge, and that the dissertation has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University or Institute.

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(H. LALBIAKZUALI)

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CHAPTER -1

INTRODUCTION

Mizoram lies in the north east end of India. It is situated between 21.58 to 24.35 degrees north latitude and 92.15 to 93.29 degrees east longitude, extending over a land area of 21,081 square kilometers. The Tropic of Cancer passes through the middle of the State. The length of the State from north to south is 277 km. At the broadest from east to west, is 121 km. The State of Mizoram is surrounded by the Burma in the east, Manipur and Cachar District of Assam in the north, Tripura and Bangladesh in the west and again, Burma in the south. It has a long inter-state boundary with Assam (123 km), Tripura (66 km) and Manipur (95 km). Besides, Mizoram shares international borders from three sides, with Burma in the east and south (404 km) and Bangladesh in the west (318 km) (Statistical Handbook Mizoram 2010).

“Mizos belonged to Mongoloid stock or a mixture of Sak or Hun from Central Asia is not disputed. That they came to Mizoram from Chin Hill of Burma and that their ancestors had lived for some years in Kabaw Valley” (C. G. Verghese & R. L. Thanzawna 80). The people inhabiting Mizoram were known as *Mizos* and the word Mizo means ‘hill men` or ‘highlanders`. According to Mizo traditional beliefs, the Mizos came from *chhinlung* meaning a covering rock. As Lalnithanga remarks, “ In the opinion of some people, *Chhinlung* is a place called silung which is situated in China bordering, the Shan State of Burma” (Emergence of Mizoram 3). It is believed that the Mizos have moved along with the earlier colonists Shans and other tribes from central China, and settled in the Shan State in Burma after they left *Chhinlung*. According to Lalrimawia, “The first known settlement of the Mizos was in the Shan State in Burma. The Mizos seemed to have had enjoyed a time of prosperity, success and peace when they entered and settled in Shan State. It seem the Mizos great festivals were connected with their civilization. The next known settlement of the Mizos was in the Kabaw valley in Burma” (Mizoram History and Cultural Identity 13). The Mizos were compelled to leave Khampat

because they could no longer tolerate the defective rule of their rulers. However, the Mizos planted a banyan tree before they left Khampat. They expressed their desires to come back when the spreading branches of the banyan tree touched earth.

“From Khampat, the Mizos moved toward the north and northwest in search of a convenient settlement. Finally, they came into the unoccupied areas of Chin Hill. They established villages and still in existence till today; they are, Seipui, Suaipui, Saihmun etc” (14). S.N.Singh also pointed out the movement of Mizos, “ During the mid 16th century A.D. the first batch of the Mizo crossed Tiau river and settled in the area of present day Mizoram” (30). The main reason for the migration is in search of better and adequate land for cultivation. The other causes can be the fear of insecurity which felt during their habitation. The frequent inter-tribal disputes and pressure from the powerful tribes compelled them to migrate to the safer places. The Tibeto-Burman tribes living in the Lushai Hills, hill areas of Tripura and Manipur were all earlier as Kukis known by outsiders. As T.H.Lewin remarks, “The Lhoosai, commonly called the Kookies, are a powerful and independent people, who touch upon the borders of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. They extend in numberless borders, north and north-east, until they reach Cachar on the one hand, and frontiers of Burma on the other. They cannot be considered as a nation, for they have no coherence of government or policy, but, with slight differences, they speak one language and follow the same customs. They are known to the Bengallees by the name of Kookie” (138). The Kukis are tribal people and they first came to India from central Asia. “It is said that their first settlement was Central Asia and thereafter, moved toward the south by entering in the Shan state of Burma in which they were known as Chins. The Kukis and the Chins are the same people and they are called Chins in Burma and Kukis in India” (Brig C. G. Verghese & R. Thanzawna 80). When they came to the Mizoram area, the term ‘Kuki` was given to them by the Bengalees. According to Grierson, “The word Kuki was used to denote the various tribes who were successively driven from the Chin Hills and Lushai Hills into the surrounding country to the north and west” (Lalrimawia 14). The villages built by these

people in Mizoram are still in existence under the same name, i.e. Khawbung, Zote, Biate, Khelte, Darngawn, Leiri, Lungtau.

In the move to the present Mizoram, it is said that the earlier settlers were defeated and driven out of the north to Manipur and Cachar and to the west to Tripura. "The northwest movement was due to the pressure of other tribes like the Pawis, Fanais and Lakhers. The Lushais (Mizos) during 1706-1730 A.D. had started their migration to Lushai Hills due to hostilities with stronger and better equipped tribes" (S. N. Singh 29). The people inhabiting Mizoram were known as *Mizos* and it consists of several clans such as Lusei, Hmar, Paihte, Ralte and Pawi. The stature and power of the chieftainship began to gain momentum with the migration because such movement involved unforeseen difficulties and fight with other tribes and occupation of territories for which people had to be united under chiefs of the tribes leading them to the new land. The Sailo clans proved to be the best for the challenge and they became the chiefs on the move and ruled most of the villages with a few exceptions here and there. Lakhers and Chakmas also inhabiting the southernmost part of Mizoram.

Mizos, by nature, are simple, leading a quiet happy life. They are contented with their lot and the society therefore is a close knit one especially in villages where people live a rather large family life. This is possible because of the homogeneity of their profession, which is jhuming, all are engaged themselves. Another reason was the rule of the chief and the chief was the guardian of the society. Each village was a separate state, ruled over by its own chief. The chief role as the administrator, the protector and guardian of his village. One custom which has prevailed in the Mizo society is the spirit of what is called 'Tlawmngaihna'. Tlawmngaihna is a concept of ultimate altruism marked by self sacrifice for others without seeking reward. Under this spirit, everyone is required to be courteous and considerate in relation to others and be prepared to help irrespective of one's convenience. There is no class distinction of class in the society. Only chiefs of villages and the elders who assisted the chiefs in the administration of the village welfare were looked upon as leaders by the village people because of their

responsibility in the days of the chiefs. People had trust in one another and fear of theft was almost unknown in the days of the chieftainship. As Lewin remarks, "Crime is rare among them. Theft in a man's own village is unknown, but they will sometimes steal if visiting another clan. On such a theft being discovered, the Chief, in whose village it has been committed, sends and makes a formal complaint to the Chief under whom the Chief is living. The goods stolen are, if discovered, given up, and the offender is fined. Should a man be fined so heavily that he is unable to pay, he becomes the slave of his Chief" (143). L.B.Thanga also pointed out the life of Mizos and said, "we have earlier read that theft was unknown to them. Anyone committing this crime was considered to be abnormal and it was believed that this disease was heritable. Such a person found it difficult, practically impossible to get a wife or husband as the case might be" (The Mizos 11). The Chief was regarded as the owner of the village and the surrounding land. He was entitled to receive certain shares which, it appears had their origin in the willing and voluntary contribution of the people. However he could ask the people of the village to furnish him with what he required.

Story telling has been an integral ingredient of the cultures of all societies. The art of storytelling and listening has been an eternal instinct of the Mizos. In most of the cases, the small children are the listeners and grandparents are the story teller. The grandparents teach moral lessons to their grand children on the pretext of telling stories. The stories have been passed down orally from generations through verbal telling, often mixture of fact and fancy. The telling of stories, singing a song, riddles and moral fables were the central focus of their social life. Mizos are sociable and closely knit society, normally the grandmother tell the tales after dark around the fire and the children sit beside her. In Mizo society, it is said that the newly brides were expected to tell the stories to the children. In these way, the story has been handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. Folk stories are simple tales about simple people, folk characters are transparent and simple to understand. It is easy to love them because the ideas are clear and straightforward. The same story is often repeated but does not lose its interest. This is because the satisfaction that our basic curiosity finds in

the folktales. The why and wherefore of the primitive mind tried to seek an answer in the surrounding animal and plant. Roy Chaudhury remarks the folktales as, “The day-to-day life of the common man finds its full depiction in the folktales. Parental love, family happiness, adventurous habits, love and fear of the unknown, greed etc are some of the usual themes of folktales” (8). The common man dreams of riches, princes, kingdom etc which he cannot usually look for but finds satisfaction in fantasy. The folktales reflect the day-to-day life, the joys and sorrows of the common man. Kaarle Krohn also observed that, “All events, including every day experiences, which are preserved in the folk memory are of little significance to folklore. Of course, a selection of memorable occurrences has impressed the folk” (Folklore Methodology 24). From the above observation, it is seen that the folktales reflects the life and experiences of the folk and it is attested in the folk memory. One of the purposes of the good teller of folktales is to see that wickedness is properly punished. They usually desires to impress the listeners with the fact that she is bringing them something that has the stamp of good authority. The story teller tried to inculcates this element to the listeners besides it is one of the chief form of entertainment. Folk stories also represent the common values of the people.

The history of the Mizo beyond the land relies mainly on folklore. Early oral Mizo literature was formed by mythology, folklore, legend and poetry. The oral literature contained migration of clans, wars and victories, society and institution, economic undertakings and historical incidents with coverage of the ancestor`s activities. Hunting, raids, parental love, family life, adventure, greed, love, etc form the theme of early oral Mizo literature. It also dealt with religious beliefs and customs, food habits, superstitious and mode of dress. Thus, the early Mizo literature reflected the entire culture complex of the area and its inhabitants. The life of early Mizo society greatly portrayed in their oral tradition. The telling of legends and stories, singing of a fresh song, riddles and moral fables, merry festival days singing and dancing days and night were the central focus of their social life. There are legends and myths pointing to a

common knowledge of events like creation, universal darkness, dispersion of races and languages, as well as giants and superhuman, giant snakes and birds, ghost, magic and witchcraft etc.

The word 'folk' comes from the German word 'volk' meaning 'people'. A folk story is a tale that originated from a particular cultural group in a distant time and place. The word folk actually suggested plain or simple people who have the best and worst traits of a culture but lack education. According to Alan Dundes, "The folk were contrasted on the one hand with civilization-they were the uncivilized element in a civilized society-but on the other hand, they were also contrasted with the so-called savage or primitive society, which were considered even lower on the evolutionary ladder" (Interpreting folklore 2). Folk as an old-fashioned segment living on the margins of civilization. Islam also remarks about the folks in his book, "Folk generally means the ordinary and non-literate people like the village farmers, the labourers, the tribal, the backward and so on" (Folklore 6). The knowledge and beliefs embedded in a folk culture come intuitively from the heart and from the accumulated experience of a group of people. As Dundes remarks, " A goodly portion of folklore is fantasy, collective or collectivized fantasy" (34). The localization of fantasy is empirically demonstrable. However, the particular folklore possessed by a particular folk varies from culture to culture. The folklore of all cultural groups deals with nature and natural remedies for physical and psychological conditions and reveals practical knowledge that is useful in daily life. The identities of the authors have usually been lost through time, but the stories live through repeated telling, they are passed down from one generation to the next to illustrate a lesson, moral value belief or custom that is considered extremely important by a particular folk culture. We may view folklore as the product of oral traditions handed down from generation to generation. So folklore have passed the test of time, and are transmitted again and again.

Folklore is significant to explain and understand societies in the context of preserving cultural diversity and protecting minority cultures. It is an important element

of the cultural heritage of every tribe and nation. So folklore is a living and still developing tradition, rather than just a memory of the past, particularly with the growth of ethnic crises in recent times. The word 'folklore' was first used by the English antiquarian, William Thoms, in a letter published in the London Journal *The Athenaeum* in 1846 and began as a study of antiquities. The concept of folklore emerged in the late 18th century as a part of unified vision of language, culture, literature and ideology in the service of romantic nationalism. Abrams defined folklore as, "Since the mid 19th century, the term has been the collective name applied to sayings, verbal compositions, and social customs that have been handed down solely, or at least primarily, by word of mouth and example rather than in written form" (A Handbook of Literary Terms 112). By folklore is generally meant the traditions, beliefs, legends, saying stories and customs current among the common people. A. Taylor – eminent American folklorist also defined folklore as, "Folklore is the material that is handed on by tradition either by words or mouth or by custom and practice. It may be folk songs, folktales, riddles, proverbs or other materials preserved in words. It may be traditional tools and physical objects like fences or knots, hot cross buns or Easter eggs, traditional ornamentation like the walls of troy, or traditional symbols like the swastika. It may be traditional procedures like throwing salt over one's shoulder or knocking on wood. It may be traditional beliefs like the notion that elder is good for the ailments of the eye. All of these are folklore" (Islam 12). His definition seems more rational than all others. The stories are told to children by grandparents to inculcate in children moral values. It also serves to give artistic expression and furnishing education to human beings. It is a rich treasure of human experiences. This treasure which is handed down to us traditionally is capable of attracting not only the minds of the illiterate folks but of the minds of educated people. This is true if we considered folklore as an academic discipline and became increasingly important with the emergence of a global information society in recent years. Folklore developed and continues even now, in communities where people can read or write. It also continues to flourish among literate population, in the forms of oral jokes, stories and wordplay. Folklore can contain religious or mythic

element, it equally concerns itself with the sometimes mundane traditions of everyday life. It also consists of legends, superstition, riddles, music, oral history, proverbs, jokes, popular belief, fairy tales and forms of drama which are performed at holidays or social gatherings.

Four broad sectors of folklore studies have been outlined by the folklorists to be accepted globally:

1. Oral Literature: oral literature also called verbal art, is spoken, sung and voiced in the form of traditional utterances. This can be divided into different parts namely, oral narrative, oral poetry or folk poetry, proverbs or riddles, legend, animal tale, romantic tale, folktale, myth etc.
2. Material culture: material culture or folk life responds to techniques, skills, recipes and formulas transmitted across the generations. Material Culture includes all artifacts and other technology that man acquired and developed from their habit which are modified and innovated according to their basic and survival needs.
3. Social folk Custom and festivals: In social folk custom, the emphasis is on group interaction rather than on individual performance and skills. Marriage, death, festivals, celebration, ceremony all kinds of rituals observed, etc can be included under social folk custom.
4. Performing folk art: It concerns with traditional music, drama and dance passed on to the succeeding generations by ear and performed by memory rather than by written. Many dances are associated with festivals, ceremonies and other social activities like war and hunting. Folk music is an embodiment of the common experience of inhabitants of the locale to promote self-esteem, self-preservation.

Folktales is one of the important genres of folklore. It is the general term for different varieties of traditional narrative. Since folktale are basically oral, there are various alterations in the course of retellings. The telling of stories appears to be a cultural universal, common to basic and complex societies alike. Abrams defined folktale as “The folktales are a short stories in prose of unknown authorship which has been transmitted orally; many of these tales eventually achieve written form.” (112). Folktales usually have no identified author, but they mirror the values and culture of the society from which they originated. However, the term folktale is often extended to include stories invented by a known author. Islam rightly observed, “Folklore is the product of oral as well as written traditions handed down from generation to generation” (Folklore 5). Folktales are found among peoples everywhere in the world. Even the forms folktales takes are certainly similar from culture to culture, and comparative studies of themes and narratives ways have been successful in showing these relationships. However, in modern usages, folklore is an academic discipline, the subject comprises the sum total of traditionally derived or orally transmitted literature, material culture and customs within literate and advance societies.

The important characteristic of folk literature is the fact that it is oral. Handoo rightly observed the oral tale that, “An oral tale originates in the mind and is preserved by memory, carried by memory by skilled narrators in traditional language” (Current Trends in Folklore 21). Both tradition as well as individual talents have bearing upon the style of folk narratives. So parents tell the stories and passed down again to their children. They inculcated the tales in their hearts and it will not fade even after so many years. Folktales are popular community or village stories that have been passed down orally from generations through verbal telling, often mixture of fact and fancy, allegory and myth, legend and symbolism, conveying lessons about life, character and conduct. B.B. Kumar clearly pointed out that, “The folktales reflect back-ground of the people, their mind, character, religion, culture, superstition and taboos. Many folktales and myths are woven around them” (Folk-lore & Folk-lore Motifs 8). There are good and bad characters as well. There are hero and heroine, the weak and strong persons, the

poor and the rich, women of renowned beauty. Some of the tales displaying great human qualities while others displaying wickedness and jealousy. In many folktales, the weak takes revenge from the strong by wit and cunningness. In fact, the tales are closely inter-woven with a conflict of good and evil. This symbolizes the human nature.

In a folktale, goodness is always rewarded. Heroes and heroines live happily ever after while the villains are suitably punished. The story may change from tale to tale but its core remains the same. "A large of number of folktales show their literary origin and impact of mythology and great tradition, value orientation and time and tradition depth" (45). Folktales usually have no identified author but it is the mirror of the culture of the society. Reading a folktales provides a glimpse into world culture, allowing the reader to gain insight into the values and customs of the society that produced the particular oral tales. Children and adults all over the world continue to enjoy reading and listening to folktales because such stories spark the imagination and transport their audiences to distant lands. Folktales have been one of the chief forms of entertainment for all the members of society, young and old. It serve to give artistic expression to the imagination and to bring amusement and excitement to the readers. It will continue to be one of the chief means of furnishing education and solace to unlettered

The cultural setting of the folktales are same as in human society. In many tales, spirits, snakes, deer etc go for jhuming in the same way as human beings do. There are rich and poor in the land of dead, competition and conflict among animals, marriage between animal and human being, supernatural beings etc. Even in the world of tribal folklore in North-East India, we have cruel step mothers, loving fathers. Most of the old ladies play helping roles. The inferior and weak are disadvantaged, but they become mostly triumphant at the end. In most folktales, orphans are hero such as, in Mizo tales Liandova, Naga folktale Sokutsu, Tripuri folktale Talking Ring etc. A large number of folktales show their literary origin and impact of mythology and tradition depth.

A folktale is a type of traditional story that tries to explain or understand the world. Such stories were orally passed down through the generations and reveals

practical knowledge that is useful in daily life to illustrate a lesson, moral value, belief or customs that is considered extremely important in a folk culture. The oral tales have served to preserve tradition and history and have been vehicles for education. The stories teach by example and have one or more of the following features:

Setting:

Most folktales setting remove the tale from the real world, taking us to a time and place where animals talk, witches and wizards and magic spells are common place. In most folktales, the time is set in the introduction with the words, 'long long ago or once upon a time', this established a time that is undetermined or unspecified. Place is usually generalized as one village or a certain forest.

Plot:

Plots are generally simple and short than in other genres of literature. Repetitious are found, suggesting the ritual nature of folktales and perhaps to aid the story teller in memorization. The action is concentrated, no lengthy explanations and description. Conflicts are quickly established and events move swiftly to their conclusion. The actions never slow down and the endings are almost always happy.

Theme and motif:

Themes in folk literature are usually quite simple but serious and powerful. The themes espouse goodness and hold up a mirror to the live of the folk. We may say that love is the most commonly featured in folktales. The themes which we have seen in Mizo folktales are selfishness, betrayal, revenge, love, sex, violence etc. Motifs of character include the brave handsome hero, the cruel stepmother, the poor stepchild, the orphan, the beautiful daughter of the chief, forest, the poor suitor with some magical power, food, journeys, separation and reunion, romance etc.

Customs, traditions and beliefs:

Folk stories remind people of their cultural origin. The custom, tradition and belief expressed in folktales link people to their history and root them in their past. And, thus, these cultural components are passed on through the generations in the retelling of the tales.

Moral:

Folk stories always contain a moral. In other words, they teach an important lesson about human nature that is clear and convincing. It is the moral lessons they teach that make them live through the centuries. Parents use them to teach their children important lessons that will prepare them to live well with a deeper understanding with their fellows. It is the expression of love, morality, bravery and humour in the life of the people. There was no law or rules but within their conscience they know that it was not the right things to do. The other moral lesson we have seen in this story is about the source of problem, who is responsible and who is going to blame. They are very practical about finding the sources of the problems and the person responsible for it. This story teaches an important lesson to the readers about human nature in a simple way.

The word “trickster” first appeared in the Oxford English Dictionary in the 18th century, where it was defined as “one who cheats or deceives”. M.H.Abrams defines trickster as, “ A trickster is a character in a story who persistently uses his wiliness, and gift of gab, to achieve his ends by outmaneuvering or outwitting other characters” (17). Thus trickster is a characters who play tricks or otherwise disobeys normal rules and conventional behavior, who typically make up for physical weakness with cunning and subversive humour. Chambers 21st Century Dictionary defined a trickster as “someone who deceives, cheat or play tricks”. Certainly, trickster stories are told for fun and laughs, trickster stories also have something to say about how culture gets created, and about the nature of intelligence. Trickster represents a certain flexibility of mind and

spirit, a willingness to defy authority and invent clever solutions that keeps cultures from becoming too stagnant. Normally, tricksters employ their tricks for good reasons such as escape, rescue or survival from their situation. Human mind is full of envy, hate, jealousy and this shadow appeared in Mizo folk narratives. So the tricksters employed the tricks with the motive of deceiving and exploiting others for self-seeking reasons. But some Mizo folktales also highlighted humorous trickster. In whatever way they are told and retold, the folktales come alive with comic narrative. However, the protagonists are having an interesting character and the people are very fond of telling the foolish or stupid adventures of their trickster. The adventure of the trickster are the result of his stupidity, and about the overcoming his enemies through cleverness. There are stories of the captive who tricks his captor into giving him a long respite, so that he is able to escape. Trickster tales exist all over the world and it seemed that trickster tale is the principal centre of interest and the most incidents makes the readers very happy. The trickster stories spark the imagination and transport their audiences to distant lands.

The trickster tales are usually simple and brief and are always humorous and entertaining. The tale of Chhurbura and Nahaia, the most famous of all the heroes and depicted how the trickster played a trick with a good reason and how they survive from their situation. One day, Nahaia wanted to find out who his true friends were. He lay down on the jhum-path feigning death. All the passer by saw him but no one bothered to help him. When Chhura came and saw him, he was filled with grief and cried bitterly and carried him home. When they reached home, Nahaia stood up and said calmly, 'Now, I know that it is my brother who is my true friend who, in times of need, have not hesitated to sacrifice his time and strength.' From that day onward, Nahaia decided to treat his younger brother with love and compassion. In this story, Nahaia played the trick to survive from his problems. Chhura was the silliest of all the simpletons and the cleverest of all the wise men, all his actions by which he was called foolish were in fact all due to his love and affection for his elder brother Nahaia. Let us

take another tale of Samdala to show how they played the tricks to escape from their difficult position.

Once in a village, there was a very lazy man named Samdala. One day he went to the jungle and saw some ripe fruits of fig high up in the tree. As he felt climbing up the tree would be an arduous task, he lay on the ground keeping open his mouth so that the fruit would fall in. Even when it fell into the mouth he still feels to be labourous and tiresome to take the task of chewing the fruit. After sometimes, he somehow chewed and at last swallowed. Meanwhile an old tiger came by. Samdala said, ' Oh, dear tiger, will you please carry me up on the top of the hill and you will eat me up there?' With the thought of having a delicious food, the tiger eagerly took him up the hill top. "I have taken you to the place where you want and now I'll eat you," said the tiger. On the pretext of having something to do before being eaten Samdala said to the tiger, "Please let me go there for a while and then you will start eating me." As the tiger allowed, Samdala went somewhere nearby and picked up a red fig fruit which he tucked in his buttock. When he returned he asked the tiger to eat him. Then the tiger haphazardly intended to eat him. But when the tiger saw the very red fruit in the back of Samdala, it got frightened screaming, "What is that?" "What is that?" Samdala replied, "This is the thing that always devours wild beasts and human beings". Being so much afraid of the red fruit, the tiger fled. From behind, Samdala threatened by throwing stone and shouting at the tiger, "The red thing is running after you."

In this story, Samdala employed the tricks to escape from his difficult situations. It is clear that Samdala was a clever trickster and he know when to played the tricks, he can threatened the tiger with the fruit only. He deceived the tiger with the motive of exploiting others for selfishness.

Chhurbura is the unchallenged hero of Mizo folktales and his tales reflect various aspect of the native Mizo character. He played the roles from brother, husband, trickster to culture hero in both positive and negative traits. He is sometimes a fool, a coward and a clever hero, sometimes, he can be extraordinary brave. Let us take up one tale to show how he was a fool, brave and trickster hero,

One day he proposed to visit a village the people of which didn't have rectum. So he went to that village. In the morning, children saw him passing his stools. "Hey, hey" expressed their sheer wonder, and reported what they had seen to their parents. The curious parents gathered together round him and asked him how he had a rectum. "My God, you all don't have rectum. How do you pass your stools? I will make rectum for your children," he said. They all agreed and on the appointed morning, they brought all their children to him. He made an iron rod and when it became red-hot, he just thrushes the rod into the bottom of the children making a hissing sound, and dumped them into the pit and closed the lid to be inquired only after a few days. So many children with new rectum were dumped into the pit with their parents eagerly waiting to pull them up when the right time came. After two days, they expectedly opened the lid, but alas. They were stinking corpses. The villagers were searching Chhura in anger but his where about was not known. He had already left. The villager crier made a war-cry and in no time all the able bodied men gathered together with daos and spears and made a hot chase of Chhura.

This story reveals that Chhura was a clever trickster and clever hero. He made enemies in *Mawngping khua* and they tried to get caught of him, but he manages to outwit them and escape again by playing a tricks. He hides inside a hollow log, then climbs top on a tree. When they caught and cage him inside a bamboo basket and hung over a deep river. He outwitted the Pawi man and can manage to get out from the cage. These tales demonstrates what a clever trickster he is even though it has a humorous elements.

The Mizo tribe has a rich culture with abundant tales and the trickster tales are an important element in Mizo folk narratives. Among these, Chhurbura is the most popular tale, which contains the trickster element. Chhurbura was considered to be the real hero of Mizo folk tales possessing an interesting character. He was the silliest and on the other hand, he was the cleverest of all the wise men. Many of his adventures offer humorous situations and he is an entertaining figure of a numbskull. His brother, Nahaia, personifies the figure of a human trickster who is always taking advantage of his brother's trusting nature. Let us take one tales to show how Nahaia becomes the figure of human trickster.

Chhura and Nahaia had their own houses in the same locality. Chhura's house was nicely built where as Naa's house was not properly built. Nahaia came to Chhura and suggested to exchange their houses, but Chhura did not want to exchange their houses. But Nahaia tried to convince him and said, "I've made the holes so that I can observe the stars while sleeping." In no time Chhura tempted to observe the stars and he had completely forgotten the impending hailstorm and rain. So they exchanged their houses as Nahaia suggested. Chhura could not see the stars from the first night due to cloudy weather. In fact, due to rain, Chhura could not sleep the next night while Nahaia slept comfortably in his new house. So Chhura had to work very hard to repair the roof hole and he was compelled not to leave any holes for watching the stars while sleeping.

Besides the human tricksters, there are many animal tales having the trickster element in Mizo folktales. The Monkey is the common trickster. Through its wit and cunning, the monkey tends to get the better of some other animals. But in the end, the Monkey is often required to pay the price with the same coins. The story of Zawng leh Savawm (monkey and bear) featuring the monkey trickster.

When the Monkey swings merrily in the air, a big bear appeared near the swing, and asked the Monkey to let him sit on the swing. But the monkey climbed to the top and secretly gnawed the rope so that the swing ropes would not stand much weight. The Monkey thinks that the Bear will surely kill himself and he will make a very sweet meat out of him, so he started to prepare a big meal for himself. When he heard the Bear falling he raced to the swing thinking of the meal he hoped to have very shortly. When he got there, he found the Bear very furious and angry but tried to hide his own feelings. However, the Bear has seen through the Monkey's wicked device and tried to kill him. Chased by the bear, the Monkey had to climb up to the tree top and waited there while the Bear ate up the carefully prepared meal the monkey had intended for himself.

Although the monkey was able to escape from the angry bear, the Monkey had to pay the price of his cunning attitude in the end by hungrily watching the bear eating the meal. This tale carrying a moral and a lesson for prosperity that crafty schemes to benefit from other's misfortunes never get the pay.

In Mizo folktales, we find the female character usually beautiful daughter and how their beauty attracted their suitors. It is their beauty that lies at the center of the plot. The story of *Kawrdumbela* depicted this elements.

In this story, Kawrdumbela was very ugly and no one wanted to marry him. One day, he caught a small bird which turned out to be very gifted. The bird told him to go near the Chief's house at night for three nights and cry out that should Kawrdumbela not marry his beautiful daughter, the Chief would face a disaster. Kawrdumbela carried out the instruction of the bird and subsequently married the Chief daughter and live very happily. But his wife was far from happy, and find all sort of excuses to stay out of the house. One day, Kawrdumbela went to the river and caught a small fish which turned out to be an enchanted one. On the advice of the fish, he rubbed himself with a smooth stone and was transformed into a handsome man. When he returned home, his wife did not recognize him, but when she realizes the truth, she became mightily pleased. When the Chief heard the good fortune of Kawrdumbela, he too longed to be handsome. He also went to the river and caught the same fish, the fish then told him to rub himself with a rough stone. But the Chief had been changed for the worse. Kawrdumbela and his wife lived happily ever after.

This story reveals that the Mizos favored beautiful and placed at the centre in their heart. A beautiful princess agrees to marry the ugliest man in the village in order to save her family. The beauty of the female character lies at the center of the plot. The beautiful daughter and the poor suitors is commonly appear in Mizo folktales.

Different groups of the Mizo who are living in different part of India and in Myanmar or Bangladesh have the same folktales which indicated that they have the same origin and ancestors. It is clear that the Mizo folktales have some connections with the folktales of others parts of India. The Lusei clan has the story of 'chhura', the same story was called 'sura' by the hmar clan, paite called this story 'benglam'. Garo called this types of story; 'bongpa'. The similarities of these folktales can have a great impact in the tasks of building integration of the country and a better's relation. Regarding the tricksters tales, the monkeys usually plays the role of a tricksters in Mizo folktales where

as the Assamese folktales reflected the fox as one possessing the tricksters element and the monkey also takes on the role of a trickster in Manipuri folktales. The Mizo has a tale of 'chemtatrawta' which is one of the most well-versed till today, it has the spirit of fun and amusement, highlighting many of the Mizo way of life. The Assamese also have this types of story entitled 'The ant and the frog'. This indicated that the same imagination and emotions are shared by people from different cultures

Trickster tale is a story featuring a protagonist who has magical powers and is characterized as a compendium of opposites. Simultaneously, an omniscient creator and an innocent fool and a childlike prankster. The trickster hero serve as a scapegoat out which are projected the fears, failures and unattained ideals of the source culture. The trickster is incarnated as a clever, mischievous man or creature, who tries to survive the dangers and challenges of the world using trickery and deceit as a defense. He may teach the humans the skills of survivals, such as how to make fire, catch or raise food usually through negatives examples. Frequently, he is accompanied by a companion who either serves as a stooge or ultimately tricks the trickster. The tricksters break the rules of god or natures, sometimes maliciously, but usually unintentionally, with ultimately positives effects. Often, the breaking of rules takes the form of tricks or thievery. A trickster can be either cunning or foolish or both. They are often funny even when considered performing important cultures tasks. In many cultures, there is a combination of the trickster and the culture hero. He is more of a cultures hero than a trickster in many ways but impart the skills of survival to the readers.

Trickster`s actions and personality may seem ridiculous or extreme but they serve as an important purpose in traditional and contemporary narratives. Trickster may work as a kind of outlet for strong emotions or actions in which human cannot indulge. These actions are at the margin of social morality and normal behavior, so human can express and feel things through the trickster that would be unsafe to express or experience outside the stories. In this sense, the trickster is a kind of 'escape value' for a society. The tricksters often represent the introduction of good things to society as well.

Trickster tales are very common in every culture and such tales heroes are tricksters. They show the wit and intelligence in getting rid of their adversaries, but at the same time behave foolishly in many matters. Trickster is very humorous and people laugh with they or silly actions, such laughter can lift one's spirit, but might also reinforce social morals and correct behavior. Trickster's humorous and silly actions may liberate or heal listeners through laughter.

It is difficult to pin down the trickster to any fixed set of characteristics or given forms because sometimes, the trickster appears as human, sometimes as animals, but it served to preserve tradition and history and have been vehicles for education. The characteristics of trickster tales can be summarized as follows:

Selfish:

we find the tales which contain trickster element with characters who employ tricks with the aims of deceiving and exploiting others because of their selfishness. In animals' tales, the Monkey is the most common trickster. Through its cunning and selfishness, he usually pays the price of his cunning with the same coin in the end.

Strong appetites:

We find the tales which reflecting the strong appetites for food and sexuality in folk narrative. We find this element in animal and human trickster tales. The tricksters employ the trick due to their strong appetites for food and sex.

Footloose:

The important element which we have seen in most of the folktales is footloose. The characters we have seen usually not hampered by any ties. They are free to do anything whatever they want and free to go to anywhere.

Callous:

One of the important characteristic we have seen in folktales is the element of callous. The characters in folktales usually unconcerned for the feelings of others but they are loveable on the other hand. They are careless and thoughtless if we analyzed their characters. These story reveals the callous element, but those who are having this element illustrate a lesson, moral value to the readers.

Foolish and Clever:

Another characteristic we can see in folktales is the element of foolish and clever. Most of the protagonists we have seen in the folktales are having foolish and clever character. They are often funny even when they are overcoming their enemies through cleverness.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

As Thompson remarks, “ The essential of all folklore study is collecting and attempting to understand that which has been collected.” So collecting a folktale is an important task to begin the study of folk narratives. The Mizo tribe has a rich culture with abundant tales, but these tales are passed down through the words of mouth. Many of the Mizo folktales have no doubt will disappear with the passing of the last tradition bearers familiar with them. T. H. Lewin’s great interest in the language resulted in the publication of books included some Mizo folktales. This boo may be considered as the first written record of Mizo tales. After that, *Mizo leh Vai Thawnthu* appeared in 1898 containing ten Mizo tales. Mizo folktales depicting the different aspect and characteristics of Mizo life. However, the in-depth study of trickster tales in Mizo folk narratives is the aims of this research and it is an important instrument which can contributes to a better understanding and reflection of the Mizo society. It represents the social and individual life of the early days of the Mizo and a critical study of the trickster tales will be an interesting and adventurous one. Trickster tales are important in keeping our tradition and culture alive, so the importance of this element cannot be

stressed enough. Knowing the importance of having Mizo folktales in written document, writers like, P.S Dahrawka, Nuchhungi, C. Vanlallawma, R.L Thanmawia, B. Lalthangliana, etc collected a good number of Mizo folktales. All of these writers mentioned the trickster story in their books but have not defined and elaborated the meaning of 'trickster' and its importance in the society. For instance, P.S Dahrawka, *Mizo Thawnthu*, published in 1964, collected 42 tales and only touches upon the popular tales. The writer had include these tales believing them to be a part of Mizo tales and follow the general traits of the Mizo folktale in their structure. He divided the stories into three chapters and the first chapter touched upon the popular tales, the second chapter contained the Mizo love stories. The third chapter mentioned the tales of Chhurbura. He only highlighted the popular Mizo folktales and also touched upon the trickster story, but did not mention the importance of the trickster element in Mizo society and how it reflects the various aspects of the native character. Nuchhungi & Zirtiri *Serkawn Graded Reader* deals with the famous Mizo folktales. The collection contain a total of 38 tales. This collection was primarily aimed at children and using language considered fit for children. She classified the stories into four sections, but ignored how the trickster tales can convey a lesson about life to the reader or listeners. B Lalthangliana, *Pi Pu Zunleng* (2007) traced the Mizo culture including 54 folktales which contains a number of information about the history of Mizo society. The trickster element is included in these stories but he did not mention how the trickster tales reveal the motifs of early Mizo society and its meaning and significance. R.L Thanmawia also explored the Mizo stories in his *Mizo Hnahthlak Thawnthu*. It is observed that he simply mentioned the Mizo folktales but ignored the trickster element. He classified the Mizo stories into Myth and Animal tales in Vol-1. Vol-2 explored Mizo romantic tales. We can see the trickster element in these stories but he also ignored the importance of trickster tales in Mizo society and how it carried out the role in human life. Tribal Research Institute, Mizoram also collected 26 Mizo folktales and documented it in a book called *Mizo Thawnthu* (2008). This book did not mention the meaning or even the introduction and the significance of the trickster element in Mizo folktales. This book touched upon the

famous Mizo folktales only and it is very useful for the next generation if they keep in written document. But this book also did not mention the importance of trickster element and how it developed the traditional knowledge and the importance in Mizo society.

Dr.Lalruanga, in his book, *Mizo Thawnthu Zirzauna* (2000 ed) has mentioned about the study of Mizo folk narratives from different angles. The author explores the field of academic study in folk narratives with a view to applying principles found in Mizo folktale. It mentioned about the myth, legends and folktales of the Mizo and highlights the importance folk narratives in the study of Mizo culture and how it become the real mirror of life in the early days. He also writes that most of the Mizo folktales are fables having good moral teaching for the readers. The author also mentioned that the importance of having the knowledge of culture for the new generations so as to understand their roots and tradition of the past. In this book, the author mentioned the trickster element but not in details. He ignored the significance and meaning of trickster element in Mizo society and how much it has a moral lesson for the readers. He concludes his works with a challenge to researchers to delve deeper into the field of folktale study. *Folktales of Mizoram* was published by Laltluangliana Kiangte in 1997. His work contains a collection of 68 tales and the first section is devoted to Chhurbura. It reveals inaccuracy for the study of tricksters in Mizo folk narratives, it touches upon the structure only. Tribal Research Institute of Mizoram had also taken up the work of collecting Mizo folktales published in 1992, this book attempt to document Mizo tales and preserve for the younger generations. There are 26 tales in this collection but not touches the systematic study of Mizo folktales. Margaret L.Pachau published her book *Handpicked Tales From Mizoram* in 2008. This collection of select folktales and short stories from Mizoram has been intended to trace the rich culture as well as the colourful history of the state and its people. Her intention in creating this compilation has been to bring the forefront, the richness and the uniqueness of the literature of the Mizos. She included 8 short stories composed by the more predominantly contemporary

generation of Mizo writers besides 14 Mizo folktales. But she did not depicted the meaning and importance of trickster tales in her works.

From the above discussion, it is clear that research work in the field of trickster element in Mizo Folk Narrative is needed and is believed that this work will undoubtedly pave a new ground towards the understanding and development of Mizo folktales. In all the earlier presentation of traditional material, the principal motive was to give the readers what would entertain him. However, every story has a means of entertainment or for giving aesthetic pleasure and have their own effects. But, serious investigation of trickster stories is an important part of human culture in today's world. So it is needed to have a research work in the field of folktales especially in trickster stories to have a better understanding and development in Mizo folktales. These documented sources will serve as the foundation for the present study into the life, character of Mizo folktales.

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CHAPTER- 2

THEMES AND MOTIFS IN MIZO TRICKSTER TALES

A memorable legendary stories among any people is made up of a simple tales, sometimes of human beings and sometimes of animals and consisting of themes and motifs. A favourite theme is found in oral tales, is foolish acts in which the remedy is worse than the disease to be cured. A large number of simple tales told by story teller everywhere concern fools and their absurdities. Misunderstanding may result in appropriate and absurd actions on the part of the numskull. Sometimes the interest is in the contrast between a clever and foolish person. The Mizo tribes also has a rich culture with abundant tales and the trickster tales plays an important role in folk narratives. It acts as an important instrument in carrying social values and keeping the Mizo tradition alive. Trickster stories may be told for amusement but the protagonists may impart the skills of survival to the readers. It reflects the way of life and emotion of the early people. Sometimes it is a mixture of fact and fancy but it conveys lessons about life and characters.

Theme is an idea that is often repeated in a work of art or in literature. According to Abrams, "Theme is sometimes used interchangeably with motif, but the term is more usefully applied to a general concept or doctrine, whether implicit or asserted, which an imaginative work is designed to involve and make persuasive to the reader"(179). Theme can be said to be an important idea runs through any field. Jadav pointed out the importance of the theme as, "It is the chief structural element for providing unity or focus is no longer plot- and sometimes neither plot nor character- but theme"(127). It represent a general principles in folk narratives and the themes are closely linked to one another, mutually interwoven. Chambers 21st Century Dictionary defined the theme as, " A repeated or recurring image or idea in literature or art". The themes that we have seen in Mizo trickster tales are: selfishness, unselfishness, corruption, separation, betrayal, revenge, faithfulness, meeting the supernatural,

oppression of the poor, love, sex, justice, reward of good, violence, horror, superstition, after life, survival, fool.

Motif has been defined as a situation, incident, idea, image or character type that is found in many different literary works, folktales or myths. The term motif also refers to frequent repetition within a single work of a significant verbal or musical phrase, a set description, or complex of images. "A motif is a conspicuous element, such as a type of event, device, reference or formula, which occurs frequently in works of literature" (Abrams 178). It is a repeated figure or design in architecture or decoration. Kishore Jadav defines motif as, "one of the dominant ideas in a work of literature; a part of the main theme. It may consist of a character; a recurrent image or a verbal pattern" (122). Motifs are recurring structures, contrasts, or literary devices that can help to develop and inform the text's major themes. Motifs conveys an understanding of a distinctive element of designs, ideas and messages which can be seen like in the valuable clothes, ornaments and jewellerys used by the people.

V. Propp remarks about the theme in his work, *Morphology of the Folktale*, "Theme are very closely related to each other. In order to determine where one theme and its variants end and another begins" (9). We often find thematic motif where we have theme as motifs. The terms are interchangeable and are sometimes even used synonymously. Theme of the tales are so closely linked to one another, and are so mutually interwoven. The cruelty of step-mother is both theme and motif of a folktale. According to Veselovskij, "A motif is, even by its origin, more primary than the theme" (Propp 13). From this statement we realize that theme and motif are so closely linked to one another. From this we realize that motifs played an important role in structuring the tales, it is an important devices and its functions is to decorates the main themes. The term motif also refers to frequent repetition within a single work of a significant verbal or a set description, complex of images. Motifs occur frequently in myths. Myths are universal, every community has its own distinctive mythology that may be reflected in its legends, folklore and ideology. So common are myths that similar motifs or themes

may be found among many different mythologies. Creation myths to explain the existence of the earth, the sun the sky and living beings including man, are universally found among all peoples and all cultures. In mythology people find answers to the most fundamental questions of their existence, and these answers form an essential part of their world view. Popular themes which we have seen in Mizo trickster tales are, unselfishness, selfishness, betrayal, revenge, faithful friend, oppression of the poor, love, sex, reward of good, violence, after life, humour, greedy, laziness, cruelty by step-mother, want of possession. Though a majority of Mizo trickster tales are short, it is possible to get many motifs in them.

Motif in literature term that denotes the recurrent presence of certain character types, objects, settings, or situations in diverse genres and periods of folklore and literature. Stith Thompson has published Motif Index of Folk-Literature in 1955-58 and has based his work on original works of A. Aarne (Jadav 123). With the help of this study, classification is made in the Mizo folktales. The motifs within the tale may qualify to be mentioned along with tales of another class even though their identified themes may be different. Some important folk-motifs as per Thompsonian concept index are extensively identified with a slight alterations. Some major folk-motifs in Mizo folktales are wicked step-mother, tricks, supernatural beings, journey, magical objects, fool, foods, beautiful princess, transformation of man to animal or plant, wicked ogre, forests, oppression of the poor, illness, water, fire, secret overheard, knowledge of animal language, talking animals, scapegoats, false bride, race won by deception, orphan hero, seduction by stealing clothes of bathing girl, princess given to man who can heal her, animal perform task for man, helpful animals, victory, separation and reunions etc.

Themes differ from motifs, in that themes are ideas conveyed by a text, while motifs are repeated symbols that represent those ideas. The classification now covers both folktales and folktale variants with more than one number. This shows that the tale or its variant is made up of several motifs one after another in the plot. As V. Propp

remarks, “ we observed that in the past it was always examined from the point of view of theme, but since no single, generally accepted, interpretation of the word theme exists, and may define this concept in our own way” (Morphology of the Folktale 113). The entire contents of a tales, all subjects, objects and other parts of the sentence define the theme. Thompson pointed out about the motifs of folktales that, “ A motif is the smallest element in a tale having a power to persist. In order to have this power it must have something unusual and striking about it” (The Folktale 415). The protagonist in a tale- something unusual like marvelous creature like fairies, ogre and human character like the cruel step-mother is needed to appear in a folktale. On looking into this terms, it becomes clear that all these element which Thompson terms as motifs are items, characters, events, objects etc which occur in tales. For e.g., a mother is not a motif. A cruel mother becomes a motif because she is at least thought to be unusual. The Mizo folktales depicted the early life of Mizo society and also highlighted how the step-mother treated the faithful stepdaughters . It is their quality that lies at the centre of the plot and that this quality placed them in the higher status in the society. It is their faithfulness and braveness that attract the readers or listeners.

The cruelty of step-mother is both theme and motif of a folktale as we said before, and the cruel stepmother is the common motif in Mizo folk tales as well as in many folktales of the world. As Goswami remarks, “The well-known Cinderella class of tales has as its chief motif the ill-treatment of a motherless girl by her stepmother and the receipt of magical aid” (Essays on the Folklore and Culture of N.E India 89). Regarding this motif, every folktale of the world has the ill-treatment of a motherless girl. *Mauruangi* tale depict the element of cruel stepmother in Mizo folktales. Her step-mother treated her well but as time passed she showed her true colours and began to ill-treat her. She make her do all the hard work, make her wear tattered clothes. Her jealous stepmother tried to killed her by pouring boiling water over her even after she married the Raja. *Thailungi* tale also depict the cruel step-mother element. Thailungi was sold to the Pawi man as the price of the iron ball by her step-mother.

Theme of oppression of the poor is also highlighted in Mizo folk narratives and this element can be seen in the tales of *Liandova and his brother* and *Duhmanga and Dardini*. In the story, Liandova and his brother were orphans and they were very poor. They had no other relatives. Liandova was offered cooked potato as his wages. When he built a swing on the jhum-path, and the villagers would stop to take rest and enjoy swinging even when they are not allowed to sit on the swing. When the villagers killed the python on a community hunt, they are not allowed to give them any meat but the worst share and told the two brothers to wash it further downstream so that the water of the river was not polluted. They did not expressed their kindness to the two brothers. They gave the two brothers a log of wood which is washed with the blood of meats. The tale of Duhmanga and Dardini also portray this element. Duhmanga, the chief's son fell in love with Dardini, daughter of a widow. Duhmanga's parents disfavoured their courtship since Dardini was from a poor family. But Duhmanga had made up his mind and married Dardini against the wishes of his parents. During Duhmanga's absence on hunting, his parents had Dardini divorced and instead of her they got him married to the beautiful daughter of a neighbouring chief. Duhmanga's parents punished her only because of she was the daughter of a poor widow. It seemed Dardini was a beautiful and a passive women, submissive and obedient person. She meekly obeyed her husband and his parents' wishes and no sign of protest from her side. These tales portrays the early Mizo way of life and even the dark sides.

Themes of romance and relationship are common in Mizo folktales. Romances are tales wherein enchantments and impossible tasks separate lovers and magic may reunite them. The tale of *Chawngmawii and Hrangchhuana* reveals the theme of love and romance in Mizo folktales.

In the story, Hrangchhuana, a brave handsome young man and Chawngmawii, a beautiful maiden. But, there is inter village fued between them and Hrangchhuana secretly visit to Chawngmawii's village and he even abducted some young child from the

village. Hrangchhuana was a very clever and tricky person and misguided the defence party of the village. At long last, he could no longer take enough care for his secret visit and he was nabbed by the sentry of the village entrance. They tied him with a rope and kept him in the street and beat him to find out who was his clandestine loved one. Chawngmawii could no longer tolerate when the other beat him and embraced him before every one. With this incident, the villagers found out their love affairs and killed Hrangchhuana, hanged his head in the tree. The two lovers enjoyed love for a short while on earth but their spirit went to the sky, transformed into the stars.

In this tale of romance, the story revolves around the love story of the two protagonists. The hero and the heroine died in the end and we can class this tale a tale of romance because, from the beginning the story was full of romances till the end. The common motifs which reveals in this tales are tricks, transformation of human into the stars, journey, handsome hero and beautiful heroine. The main theme is love and the motifs we seen here weaves beautifully with a beautiful designs. It is due to love that the hero was killed at his lovers village and the heroine was killed because of love itself. We find lovers sacrificing their lives on the altar of love. Hrangchhuana played a witty tricks when he visited his lovers village. All these motifs decorated the theme. It also shows that the early Mizo people believed in reincarnation and their cultures are greatly depends on the nature. The mention of village defence party is significant for its importance in the life Mizo villager. During that time, there is village feud and they tried to kill their enemy as much as they could. So constitutes a village defence party was needed. The four motifs- trickster figure, transformation into another object, journey to his lovers village and brave handsome hero- carried out by Hrangchhuana in this tale.

In Mizo folktales, there are stories of transformation into another objects and it is a popular motifs in all cultures. The tale of *Tualvungi and Zawlpala* also can be cited to reveals this element. The protagonist Zawlpala was a very handsome man and he had a beautiful wife called Tualvungi and her beauty surpassed all reports. When Phuntiha came and saw Tualvungi, he was stunned and overwhelmed with her beauty. He asked Zawlpala who she was with a view to ask her hand in marriage. So Tualvungi had to go

with her new husband to his village after Phuntiha paid all the prices he demand for Tualvungi. Phuntiha planned to take away Zawlpala's life and tell his wife to asked his brother to visit them. So Phuntiha poisoned him while Tualvungi was away. He just managed to reach his home before he expired. His last request was to inform Tualvungi that he had died peacefully at his home. At last, Tualvungi reached the grave of Zawlpala, sat down and wept and wept. An old woman helped her in putting an end to her own life. In his new life, Zawlpala had turned a butterfly; and Tualvungi also became a butterfly in answer to her prayer, and joined Zawlpala. When Phuntiha returned home and found his wife gone, and he followed her immediately. He was greatly enraged and he began to dig open the grave and grind all their bones into powder. While he was thus busy, Zawlpala and Tualvungi, in the form of a beautiful pair of butterflies, fluttered around him, making love as they flew. At this Phuntiha was so irritated that he asked the old woman to kill him. After he was death, Phuntiha also turned into a butterfly. This type of motifs is well-known to different cultures of the world. In Tripuri folktale, once upon a time, there was Nagurai and Nakhapili, they were very much in love but Nagurai's mother did not wanted Nakhapili for her daughter-in-law. So they tried to jump into the steep cliff, but before they reach the ground, they are floated towards heaven and turned into lightning. A significant element in the love motif is the unusual marriages. This element is seen in Tualvungi and Zawlpala tale and Chawngmawii and Hrangchhuana tales. Their happiness did not last longer on the Earth. But their spirits were turned into another objects and still enjoyed their loves even after death. However their spirits of love between them stay alive till today. These stories involves the motifs of transformation into the objects, the butterfly and the lightning has symbolic significances till today.

There are stories of the journey as a motif to the underworld or to the upper world. In '*Kungawrhi*' tale, we find the journey to the underworld, the heroine Kungawrhi was caught by the *Khuavang* and ran off with her beneath the ground when Phawthira and Hrangchala tried to rescued her from the tiger-man. We find Phawthira climbing out from the *Khuavang* village into the upper world on the vine of the

Kawihroi creeper. A well-known English fairy tale –that of Jack and the Beanstalk is almost similar with this tale. We also find this pattern in the tale of Vanchungnula, the heroine Vanchungnula, a lady of renowned beauty residing in the heaven has a suitors from the earth by seven brothers. The youngest Tlumtea, the handsomest of all the brothers marry the beautiful lady residing in the heaven. A popular tale from Thai, almost similar with Mizo tale *Sichangneii*. In Thai tale, a seven beautiful ladies residing in heaven take a bath in a river. The youngest one Manora is caught by Bun and gave her to the prince for his wife. We find the motif of journey to under the sea in the tale of Ngaitei. The similar pattern is seen in the Manipuri folktale called ‘*The girl and her Snake Father*’. North Pacific Coast tale also having the motif of journey to under the sea. while a man fishing for halibut catches a strange fish. when his wife washes her hand in the sea and is pulled down by a whale who takes her down to his home under the sea.

The tale of Kungawrhi is a popular tale among the Mizos, having a number of motifs. The birth of Kungawrhi itself is an incredulous event. She was born out of her father’s thumb which had become pregnant after he cut it while splitting bamboo. From the swelling thumb of her father was born a tiny girl who came to be known as Kungawrhi. The birth of a tiny baby from peculiar sources is a common motif in folktales but a baby born out of a thumb cut is unique in every folktale of the world. Another motif which we have seen in this tale is supernatural being, the adventure to rescue a beautiful heroine. Kungawrhi needs to be rescued from her Keimi husband is a motif of character. Another interesting characters are Kungawrhi’s rescuer, Phawthira and Hrangchala. In this tale occurs the use of magic when the *Keimi* wraps the sandy imprints of Kungawrhi’s feet and places the parcel atop the house fire. Such an act can cause illness in the person whose prints are stored. It is a kind of black magical art used by *keimi*, in his attempt to win Kungawrhi’s hand in marriage. Neither Kungawrhi nor her father who had given her away, were aware of her husband’s dual personality. He immediately promised her hand in marriage to whoever could rescue her from him. The rescuers take with them seeds of water, fire, thorns and rocks which come under the motif of magical objects which is also popular in folktales around the world. Towards the

end of the tale, we find Phawthira climbing out from the underworld, from the *Khuavang* village into the upper world on the vine of the *Kawihrui* creeper he had planted before. We also have the motif of the helpful animal in the figure of the cat that was left to watch the house after Kungawrhi escaped with her brothers. This is an incident of talking animal, a cat that could respond intelligently after the heroine and the rescuers left. This is also another important motif in Mizo folktales.

We find that Hrangchala was the weaker-hearted of the two and actually Phawthira who bravely took the initiative in their rescue mission. While Hrangchala had successfully guarded the party from the attack of the *khuavang* spirits, Hrangchala's cowardice had resulted in the spirits carrying Kungawrhi away. The brothers raided the *khuavang* village in the underworld to get Kungawrhi back and as they were climbing back to the upper world. Hrangchala cunningly cut the creeper before his brother could come up and he was stuck in the *khuavang* village till he found other means of escape. Hrangchala took Kungawrhi home and married her taking all the credit until Phawthira managed to escape from the underworld. But in the end, Phawthira claimed the price for which he had set out on a mission.

Tales of rescued heroines and her marriage to the rescuer are common motifs of folktales of the world. The plot structure and the central theme in this tale may be similar across cultures but every culture suit its own needs. Mizo believed in the existence of spirits, both helpful and harmful. Many tales feature creatures from the heavens but more powerful and probably more attractive. These creatures are prominent in tales of romance where they embody the ideal of beauty. This tale also expressed the low and wretched position of women in traditional Mizo society. Kungawrhi, who was famed for her beauty has no say whatsoever in the choice of her husband. She married the *Keimi*, Hrangchala and Phawthira, following her father's wishes. She did not open her mouth regarding the misconception that it was Hrangchala who had rescued her and at that she seems to have married him without any objections. It also showed that the traditional Mizo society was a patriarchal society and the female

had nothing to say in the family affairs. This tale reminds me the Russian folktale, retold by R.L.Thanmawia, one woman cuts her finger when she prepared a cabbages. From her cuts finger a tiny boy was born, and he can speak soon after he was born (Lung min Lentu- 267).

The tale of Rimenhawii expressed that the brave handsome hero, and it lies at the centre of the plot and it is an important motifs of every culture. The Mizo people honour the brave men and those who defeated their enemy without fear for their women folk occupied the heart of the people. Most of the Mizo folktales portrayed this element and it is clear that the human being needed the faithful and reliable person when we faced the hardships. Their handsomeness not only attracted the readers, but their braveness that really attracted the readers or listeners. In the early Mizo society, all the men folk are expected to be brave from their childhood. From this point of view, it is believed that the brave men occupy an important placed in the heart of Mizos till today. The motif of clever heroine and trickster are a common pattern in Mizo folktales which we find in this tale. The chief servants tricks her by giving the tempting fruit from the roof. Rimenhawii could no longer resist and when she raised her hand, one of the servant caught her and took her to the chief. But she played a witty tricks and left a massages for her husband and leave a thread for him to follow. With the help of these, her husband can killed all of them and took his wife back with him. we usually find where female characters are usually flat and presented as weak and pitiable in Mizo folk narratives.

Animals play a large role in every popular tales and they appear in myths and legends also. There are many animal tales having the trickster element and it is one of the important motif in Mizo folk narratives. They are designed usually to show the cleverness of one animal and the stupidity of another, and their interest usually lies in the humour of the deceptions. They are easily remembered and universally liked, so that they travel with great ease. The Monkey is the most common trickster in Mizo folk narratives. Through its wit and cunning, the monkey tends to get the better of some

other animals. But in the end, the Monkey is often required to pay the price. Let us take up one story about the Monkey to display how he played the tricks.

In the story of Satel leh Zawng (the tortoise and the monkey), a tortoise went to a village to buy some salt. On his way back, he saw some Monkeys in a big tree eating the fruits. He asked them to throw some fruits down for him. After he ate all the fruits, he still felt hungry and the Monkeys refused to give some more. They offer a helping hand for the Tortoise and took him up and kept him in the forked trunk of the tree, they left the tree leaving behind the Tortoise. The Monkeys did not only leave the Tortoise there helplessly but extorted all the salt which he brought from the village. The Tortoise sit on the tree helplessly waiting for possible help from anyone and wept bitterly. At last, the Elephant came and help him to get down from the tree but unfortunately, the Elephant died as the hard shell edge of the falling Tortoise struck the spine. Before he left the dead body of Elephant, he ate all the flesh. Then he went to the Monkey's place and left his excrement, when the Monkeys found the Tortoise's dung, they thought it was meat and ate up all. When the Tortoise found the Monkeys eating his stool, in disgust he said to the Monkeys, " You didn't like to help me to get down from the tree, now you are eating my stool." At this, the Monkeys were very angry and went nearby the Tortoise house and laid their dung and hide themselves in a basket to see reaction of the Tortoise. The Tortoise was furious and search the Monkeys, immediately he tied the basket with a rope and dropped it over a steep cliff.

In this story, the buying of salt from town by the tortoise is the first motif of interest. The character of the tortoise is humanized by ascribing to it the act of going to town to shop for salt. Another motif are tricks played by the group of monkey who trick the tortoise by leaving him on a tree and running away with his pocket of salt. The monkey cried so hard and his tears formed a small pool of water at the foot of the tree. The other animals make an appearance at this point- a deer and elephant. The purpose of their appearance here is to offer a means of escape to the tortoise and they all offer to hold him on their backs if he could jump down from the tree. But the tortoise choosing to jump only at the elephant's offer,. The elephant's death due to the impact of the tortoise's fall is a motif which opens a way for the tortoise to get his revenge on the

monkeys. The Tortoise pays them back by making them eat his stool. When the Monkeys make an attempt to do the same to the Tortoise, their plans backfires and they end up rolling down a steep cliff and die except only one pregnant monkey. This story carrying a moral and a lesson to the readers not to take benefits of others misfortunes.

A group of monkeys and the tortoise here display traits of the trickster figure. A trickster is a complex character who takes advantage of others for his own advantage and sometimes even for just a fun. The tortoise personifies a trait of the trickster as small and physically weaker than his opponents. This is a trait of the trickster that often makes the character that we tend to identify with the position of a weaker player who gains advantage over stronger forces. Moreover, an innocent elephant died as an indirect consequence of their trick on the tortoise. The trickster sometimes behaves in a helpful manner at times in response to the needs of his companion. The monkeys were helpful to the tortoise who wanted to eat the fruits of the tree they had climbed. Seen in this light, the trick appeared harmless and can be considered an innocent prank. The tale imparts lessons about moral values in society while being entertaining. Besides it gave us entertainment, we are taught that bad behavior is not acceptable. Through folktales, Mizos taught social values to their children and these lessons remained with them through life. The young Mizo was warned to stay clear of bad behavior through the tales.

Another story that expressed the motif of trickster is 'Zawng leh Savawm` (monkey and bear). On a sunny day, a bear came across a pool of clear water. He determined to preserve it for himself and set a monkey in charge of it to warn everyone else away. Then the bear went off to the jungle in search of food. While he was away, a deer came and beg to drink the pool water to the monkey, the monkey replied, " It is Daddy Bear's pool. If you are daring enough to drink what belongs to him, you may do so." The deer was very frightened and run away very quickly. The monkey told everyone who tried to drink the pool water that who the owner is. They left the pool when they knew the right owner. At last, a tiger came and asked if he might drink the water. The monkey replied him as he had said to the others. But the tiger was not afraid and began

to drink the clear pool water. At that very moment, the monkey cried aloud informing the daddy bear that the tiger was drinking his clear water. Then the bear came back with the food and was very angry when he saw the tiger drinking his precious water. So the two big fearful animal fought fiercely, neither being able to kill the other. After fighting for a long time, they got near the edge of a steep cliff over which they both rolled down. The monkey satisfied himself with the clear water and the food which the Bear had thought of enjoying.

In this story, the monkey takes on the role of trickster, he cried out aloud with the thought of the bear would surely angry to the tiger. He hope to get the benefit from them, so he take advantage of the situation and making them fall into their own traps.

Tricks are very common motif in every culture. Such tales heroes are tricksters. They show the wit and intelligence in getting rid of their adversaries, but at the same time behave foolishly in many ways. The characters are either good or bad, strong or weak, wise or foolish. The tales are closely inter-woven with a conflict of good and evil even the forms certainly similar from culture to culture. A Naga tale *Beautiful Damsel* is a trickster tale. *Tenton* tales in Assam are very popular and differ little in themes, motifs from area to area. Among the Angami, the trickster is known as Matsuo and he is of the same type with Tentan. The rabbit is a trickster around the world because of his small size he must use his cunning to outwit the larger opponents. Coyote and Raven are tricksters in North American culture. In Europe and Central America the trickster can be fox or wolf. However every story has a means of entertainment or for giving aesthetic pleasure and have their own effects.

“In folktales, we find thematic motifs where we have themes as motifs. The cruelty of step-mother is both theme and motif of a folktale” (Kumar 47). We have the tales of the ill-behaviour of the step-mother in *Thailungi* and *Mauruangi* tales. One of the theme which we have seen in Mizo folk narratives is the character of cruel stepmother and how they behave towards their stepchild. These story reflected the aspects of the native Mizo character and it act as an important instrument in carrying social values. Besides this, it conveying a lesson about life and character and the

expression of human life. In these stories, the stepmother usually played the trickster role because they wanted to disposed of their stepchild.

In the story of *Thailungi*, her stepmother tricked her when the Pawi men came and tried to exchange her with scrap iron. It is not that she really wanted that scrap iron but she wanted to disposed her stepchild. Thailungi did not dare to protest her stepmother because she afraid of her when she asked to fetch water. The Pawi travelers captured her quickly when they saw her and took her to their land. A short while later, her younger brother came home and asked his mother where his sister were. His mother tell a lie and did not wanted to tell the truth. After he asked her again and again where his sister were, her stepmother tell the truth, the little boy was saddened and he wept endlessly. He wanted to go out in search of his sister, but his mother not allowed to go out. He started to find his sister when his mother agreed to go, on his way, he saw an old women and old man asked her where his sister is. But they could not tell him. After he had gone some distance, he saw a man, leading a gayal and asked him again. They reached the village with this man and at last, he can see his sister again. Now Thailungi became a beautiful lady and married the son of the king. Thailungi's brother go back to their mother and killed her. They lived happily ever after.

From this story, it is clear that the culprits always becomes the victims in the end. Usually the cruel stepmother took advantages of their good situation but they are drowning themselves in their own trap in the end. We may say that in reality, the cruel stepmother attitudes are the reflection of our dark side in the society but it conveying a lessons to the readers or listeners not to practice injustices. Mauruangi's tale also can be cited as a motif of cruel step-mother. Mauruangi is portrayed as the ideal type of young woman for she is hard-working, kind- hearted, obedient and never gave her opinion even when mistreated.

Chawngvungi and Sawngkhara, a tale of romance expressed motifs that commonly feature in folktales- that of the beautiful and well-born heroine and the ugly and humble hero. The story revolves around the love story of the two protagonists and the plot development involves a use of magic and its effects. The uniqueness of this tale

is that of the hostile mother-in-law who is jealous of her own daughter. The motif of magical object, *Zawlaidi* is important in the tale for the rest of the action. Sawngkhara also applies his magical object on Chawngvungi's mother because she was a great obstacles to fulfill his desires, and she too fall in love with the hero. The theme of love we have seen in this tales and its motifs of magical object weaves beautifully and decorated the theme from the beginning till the end of the story. The story pattern is like that of the Beauty and the Beast which is a popular tales in the world.

The Mizo tales appear to have originated as accounts of real incidents, most of them have features on the magical objects. The predominant theme of the tale is the victory of the underdog. The ugly hero, Kawrdumbela wins out in the end. This is the common theme among folktales around the world even the incidents and motifs within the tale differ in different cultures. The character of the protagonist Kawrdumbela is a hero of the underdog. He was a ugly man and ordinary villager but he marries a princess through his intelligence. Vazuntei and Nghanjai who spoke freely to the hero completely turning his life around. The advice from vazuntei was for the protagonist to threaten the chief with bad consequences if he do not allow his daughter in marriage to Kawrdumbela. The real victory for him came after he fulfilled the Nghanjai advice to bathe in the river and rub himself with a smooth stone. There is a complete transformation of Kawrdumbela's appearance. Even his wife could not recognize him on his return and love him from the first moment she saw him. This is a common pattern in folktales of the western culture where an ugly creature is transformed into a beautiful or a handsome one. Example, beauty and the beast, the frog princess etc. The jealous father-in-law is another important motif in this tale. The Chief also wanted the good fortune for himself and asked how he himself would become a handsome man. But his plan backfired and instead of catching the same fish, he caught *Nghahrah* who advised him to rub himself with a rough stone. When the chief did so. He lost his previously smooth skin and became very ugly and frightened off all who saw him. The motifs- magic, oppression of the poor, beautiful princess, talking animals, animal perform task for man, helpful animal, victory activities was seen in this tale.

The fear of the spirits was strong in the heart of Mizos and could not simply neglect the voice and its warning. Shakespeare also writes that the Lushais are an extremely superstitious race, "Any unusual occurrence is considered as portending some evil result" (100). Mizo chief's real concerns are also thus expressed in this tale. Folktales serve as vehicles of instruction in most cultures. An important elements we have seen in this tale is love and patriotism. This is seen in the character of the princess. Even though she hated the idea of marrying Kawrdumbela, she brought herself to do so for the sake of her village. This is a valuable moral lesson, imparted in the heart of young Mizo who hear the tales. At the end of the tale, it reveals the love between the princess and Kawrdumbela who started their relationship again with a happy ending.

Chhurbura is a legendary hero who displays traits of the wise fool and that of the trickster figure in folktales. His silliness often exposes the foolishness of those who consider themselves much wiser. This happen with Chhura too, especially in his adventures with his brother Nahaia who always take advantage of him. Nahaia employed a lot of tricks and Chhura falls to some of his brother's most cunning schemes. But this does not mean that Chhura is free from devising some clever tricks of his own. He can prove to be very wily even when he is helpful to others, especially to his brother in times of need. The folktale is a form of entertainment and its motifs are derived from the reservoirs of dream and vision, therefore the tales of Chhura carrying a form of entertainment or amusement but carrying a moral lessons to the hearers. The tale of *Chhura* and *Nahaia* has many theme like betrayal, love, revenge, reward of good. We find the brothers exchanging their fields , Chhura victory over Phungpuinu who is associated with evil spirit and greatly feared. There are a few events which serve as motif for the tale. The Phungpuinu appears as a motif making a reference to the existence harmful spirits all around human beings. Nahaia is coward who immediately resorted to tricking Chhura into an exchange of jhums when the Phungpuinu angrily cried on her house being thrown with stones. Then Chhura roasting the Phungpuinu's baby over the fire. This violent act may have been Chhura's way of teaching the Phungpuinu a lesson. Now the Phungpuinu so scared of Chhura that she would not even

approach his swings while he is around. Chhura proves to be wiser than his brother when he would not stop pelting the hollow even after the evil cry of warning.

The foolish wise man manages to win a powerful magical object called *sekibuhchhuak*. Chhura was a successful trickster when he developed a plan to catch the Phungpuinu without too much effort. He made a swing for himself in his farm hut and appears to be enjoying himself greatly and pretended to have gone home in the evening but hid himself on the roof. After sometime, the Phungpuinu approached the hut and sat on the swing thinking that Chhura had gone home and singing a mourning song. Meanwhile Chhura immediately seized her. Now she was terrified of Chhura and he even threatening to take her home for the pleasure of the village children. She desperately looked for something to buy her freedom with the *sekibuhchhuak*, a magic horn. It is one of the most powerful objects of magic, that it could produce delicious food from one end and meat from the other end without human effort. This power has associations with the early Mizo 's ultimate fantasy of enjoying ready meals in *Pialral*, a paradise. The magical object itself is believed to have been the horn of a mithun, a domesticated animal greatly treasured by the people for its immense significance in the ceremonies and sacrificial rites. The Phungpuinu also attempted to deceive Chhura but he is too wise for her schemes and he succeeds in getting the real *sekibuhchhuak*.

The tales of Chhurbura are the most commonly told and popular of all Mizo folktales. They are inexhaustible for the telling of one story usually generates another of his adventures. In many of his tales, we find evidences of the kind of life that the folk lived in the early days and they are important in their roles as carriers of tradition. Margaret Ch. Zama observed the character of Chhura as "So Chhura as trickster and clever hero is seen as unbeatable in his display of wit, resourcefulness, deceit, impudence and sense of humour" (Tribal Literature of N.E India 213). Sometimes his actions are extremely aggressive and forbidden but we witness he was a witty trickster and he was able to persuade his enemy, making them fall into their own traps. On the other hand we see a reflection of our dark side in him. His simple tale reflecting some

basic qualities most admired not only by the Mizo but all cultures like his bravery. He is not afraid of the ogress and finally she ransoms herself with her precious magic horn. He know what to do in times of trouble, this is seen in the manner in which he devises his plan to capture the ogress and threatened her to let the village children make fun of her. It had her begging for mercy and talking of ransom in no time.

Some of his tales reveals his foolishness but which has made him the lovable, bumbling fool. Let us take up one tale which tells his foolishness.

Once he sell earthen pots to neighbouring village. The load he carried on his shoulders soon proved too heavy, so he considered changing sides to ease the burden. He instead did a full turn and headed back to his village thinking all the while that he had changed shoulders. When he reached his own village he stayed as a guest in one of his neighbour's house, and when his children called him, he thought, 'What civil, polite children'. When his wife inquired what he was doing at the neighbour's and asked him to come home, he thought, 'That woman is probably in love with me'.

Chhurbura has many interesting adventures and beautifully display the complex character. He is a legendary hero who plays traits of the wise fool and trickster figure in folk narratives. Most of his tales often exposes the foolishness. This happen especially in his adventures with his cunning brother Nahaia who always take advantages of his trusting nature. It seems Chhura was all the time in the know of things but played the role of fool in order to avoid trouble in the family and to avoid shame for his brother. He often appears to play the victim and tolerated enough but strike back and teaches Nahaia a lessons in the end. Most of his tales are the reflective of various aspect of the native Mizo character. "His actions represent a way of getting around, or evading social taboos and other restrictions without actually upsetting the social order" (213). The Mizo folk narratives act as an important instrument in carrying social values and keeping the Mizo tradition alive. It is also useful in propagating societal rules and serve to preserve the Mizo traditions.

Barman remarks in the introduction of his book about the motifs, “The monstrous, irrational and unnatural motifs of folktale and myth are derived from the reservoirs of dream and vision” (Folktales of Northeast India). This is true in cases of Mizo folk narratives. The folk narratives reflects background of the people their mind, character and culture. Many folktales and myths are woven around them. Goswami rightly pointed out that, “ The human mind is endowed with imagination and this imagination it is which has made a creator, the creator of a myth or a folktale or even a theory based on facts” (87). Folktales are some of the earliest creations of man. They may be highly imaginative and fanciful, but it is clear that all these folk narratives are tell from their experiences, based on observation but made attractive by allowing imagination to play on them.

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CHAPTER - 3

ANIMAL TRICKSTERS TALES

Animals play a large role in all popular tales. They appear in myths, legends and folktales and they may be conceived of as acting and thinking like a man or even on occasion of having human shape. They are given special quality in most tales is their ability to speak and this is a universal features of animal tales around the world. The folktales are designed usually to show the cleverness of one animal and the stupidity of another, and their interest usually lies in the humor of the deception. They are easily remembered and universally liked so that they travel with great ease. Many animals tales expressed the relationship between animals and animals, animals and human beings. Sometimes animals have ability to change form so that they sometimes appear in their natural form and sometimes as human beings. In folktales everywhere, the human world and the animal world lie close together. What interests us regarding the relations of humans and animals in the story who usually considered as husband and wife lies in their family and in their sexual associations. There are many stories of the marriage of human beings to animals.

Mizo animal tales are non-mythological in that they do not feature animals that are culture heroes responsible for the good or bad in their life. The tale of *Chawngchilhi* holds that the snake settled itself in a cave. The village known today as ‘Rulchawm’ is believed to have sprung from the settlement around the snake’s cave. To quote from Laltluangliana’s work, *Folktales of Mizoram*, “Chhurbura was considered as one of the creators of this world, he was still alive in the 14th century AD, living in eastern part of Mizoram, where most of his legendary monuments have been preserved and can still be seen till today” (15). Some of his legendary places can be seen till today. Mizo folktales also having the tales of marriage of human beings to animals like *Chawngchilhi, a girl and a monkey, Kungawrhi*. In these tales the human was impregnated by animals and they gave birth to animals. We may say that the world of the human and the animal are never far apart. Competition and a trial between animals

is also found among animal tales. They may even choose their own leaders and rally behind them in a war against a rival force as we find in *war of birds and animals*. Many animal tales in different part of the world contain element of a trickster and the Monkey, tortoise, rabbit, fox, spider is the common trickster. In Mizo folktales also, Monkey is the most common trickster and the other animals which commonly appeared in Mizo folktales are the snake, the tortoise, the deer, the bear and the tiger. According to Lalruanga, “ There is a lot of tricks in animal tales, through the wit and cunning, the tricksters often required to pay the prices of his cunning” (Mizo Thawnthu Zirzauna 30). Animal trickster stories may be told for amusement but it is an important instrument for reflecting the society and culture of the folk life but conveying lessons about life and character. Animal tales serve to give artistic expression and to bring amusement and excitement to life. They are reflective of various aspects of the native Mizo character and they are an expression of the human skills. R.L.Thanmawia rightly observed that, “ It is amazing how the mizos can express the life of human beings through animal tales” (Lung Min Lentu 258). We can observed that Mizo animal tales reveals their desires, fears, skills, courage and their social values.

The animal trickster tales in folklore appears in some form in every culture, and many examples are available. This indicated the same imagination and emotions are shared by people from different countries. The trickster-hero serves as a sort of scapegoat onto which are projected the fears, failures and unattained ideals of the source culture. The monkey usually plays the role of trickster in Mizo folktales, highlighting the tales with characters who employ tricks with the motive of exploiting others for selfishness. whereas the Assamese folktales expressed the fox as one possessing the trickster element, the monkey takes the role of a trickster even in Manipur folktales. It may be told for amusement but the protagonists responds with knavery, stupidity, gluttony and meets a violent or ludicrous end. But they may teach human a lesson of survival through negative examples. Coyote is the most widely known indigenous North American trickster. He may appear in a clever deceiver or the numbskull. The rabbit is the common trickster in Africa and the tales share many

features of traditional African trickster stories. The trickster is an underdog, smaller in stature but normally much cleverer than his opponents. The trickster of West Africa is Spider. In most stories, the spider is a cunning trickster who makes life more enjoyable for himself by fooling human beings. Japan's Kitsune is a trickster fox renowned for his mischievous metamorphic abilities. He is regarded as the messenger who ensures that farmers pay their offerings to the rice god. Buddhist stories cast the fox as an evil agent of possession. From these different trickster tales, it is found that the same types of tale and narrative motifs are found scattered all over the world. Stories may differ in subject from place to place. The conditions and purposes of tale telling may change as we move from land to land. It satisfies the curiosity about the past and supply the history of its folk. The study of trickster tales can bring the readers closer to an understanding of the nature of human culture.

Mizo animal tales are normally short and simple. One story is told at a time, no attempt is made to secure variety. The ideas are clear and straightforward. The characters are either good or bad, strong or weak, wise or foolish. It is easy to love them because characters are transparent and simple to understand. That is why the children of Mizo or every country admired these animal tales. Many animal tales contain elements of a trickster and monkey is very common and has an interesting character. Through his wit and cunning, gets the better of some other animal, but in the end he has to pay the price with the same coin. The monkey employed the tricks as a means to achieve the need such as escape, survival and selfishness. Monkey is also famous in other culture as a trickster. In one story, the crocodile offers to take monkey on his back to the island where the fruit trees grow. Crocodile then tries to drown monkey and eat him. Monkey tells crocodile that it's too bad he did not bring his heart with him. When the monkey reassures crocodile that his heart is the tastiest part of him, crocodile swims back toward land. The crocodile tried to deceive monkey but he outwitted the crocodile, he conceded that monkey is more clever than him. The monkey plays the role of trickster uses wit and cunning, tricking the crocodile to achieve his goal.

Let us take up the tales of *Tortoise and the Monkey*, *Porcupine and the Deer*, *Tiger and the Frog*, *Deer and the Tortoise*, the *war between the creatures of the Air and the creatures of the Land*, to understand the relationship between animals and animals that reflects the trickster elements in Mizo folk narratives.

In the story of *Satel leh Zawng* (the tortoise and the monkey), it is a group of monkey that takes on the role of trickster. They tricked a tortoise into climbing a tree and leave it there while they run off with the salt the tortoise had brought from town. The tortoise pays them back by making them eat his stool. When the monkeys make an attempt to do the same to the tortoise, their plan backfires and they end up rolling down a steep cliff and die. This story carrying a moral lesson for prosperity. We may said that, sometimes the monkeys played the role of trickster with the motives of exploiting others for selfishness, not only for his survival. In another story, *Nula leh Zawng* (a girl and a monkey).

A girl went out to draw water in a river, she felt like taking bath and stripping off all her clothes, she jumped into the water. Meanwhile a male monkey came and took the clothes. The monkey play the role of trickster and do not wanted to give the girl clothes unless they make an agreement. The monkey asked the girl to marry him and the girl agreed because of she did not wanted to go home without any clothes. The girl pays back the monkey by killing his mother and tell a lie then she runaway from her husband. The monkey take advantage of the girl situation and gets the better but in the end, he lose all his belonging even his beloved wife. we can observed that the tricksters sometimes employed the tricks of his own expenses. The monkey then took the girl home, and the girl asked the monkey how he would feed her and the monkey said that he will go out and steal the rice and vegetables from the jhum of human beings.

The monkey forced the girl to marry him by hiding her clothes and take advantages of her situations. Sometimes the trickster can be friendly and helpful to achieve a particular goal. The monkey took care of the girl in this story and tried to please her but he take care of himself first. This is one of the important motifs of tricksters in folk narratives.

As we have mentioned above, the monkey always played the role of trickster but in the end, he was usually drowned himself in his own trap. The monkey had to pay back with the same coins. But sometimes the monkey trickster reveals the element of innocent comedy. This is true if we take up the story of *Satel leh Zawng* (Tortoise and the Monkey),

Once upon a time, a monkey and a tortoise were very good friends. One day the monkey told the tortoise, "Friend, let us pluck some figs." The tortoise agreed but he told the monkey that he could not climb up the tree. Despite this, they set off together. The monkey climbed up the tree and he was very agile. The tortoise could not climb up the tree and the monkey suggested to bite the end of his tail so that they could climb up together. The tortoise bit the end of the monkey's tail and they both clambered up the tree. The tortoise became very amused at the thought of climbing up a tree while biting the tail of his friend. He was laughing so hard and he nearly fell so they could not reach the top of the tree. The element of tricks is not appeared but this tales could be described as humorous, it merely amuse the listeners.

The tortoise plays an important role in the study of trickster tales not only in Mizo folktales but also in other culture of the world because he used to encourages the readers or listeners to use their brain. Here is tale of tortoise which was told in Amazon area.

The tortoise, Jabuti plays a wonderful flute and vulture is envious of him. The birds are going to the King of Heaven to sing for him, and Jabuti wants to play for him. Vulture offers to carry him to the heavens, and invites Jabuti to climb on his back. When they are nearly there, vulture veers to the side and dumps Jabuti off his back. Jabuti falls to the earth with a crash and his beautiful shell is broken. The birds come down from heaven and patch Jabuti's shell back together. Where the birds touched Jabuti, they each took on a new colour. This is how tortoise got his patchwork shell. Vulture stayed the same dull colour and he still can't sing.

On another day, the tortoise invited the monkey to go fishing with him. As they reached the lake, the tortoise began to catch plenty of fish, but the monkey stood by helplessly. The tortoise suggested to catch hold of his shell and he will carry the monkey into the water. The monkey did as he was told. They both plunged into the water and the monkey began gasping for air. The tortoise thought that his friend was happy in the water but the monkey was died a little while later. The tortoise did not know that the monkey was died and he tried to give him his share. He thought that the monkey was frozen when there was no response from the monkey, the tortoise handed over all the fish to the monkey. In this story we did not see the trickster element but it depicted innocent comedy. The monkey in this story did not deceived the tortoise because they are good friend and did not play the tricks on him. This story reveals the imagination and the way of life, the Mizo code of selfless service to others as they always helped those who helped them. Mizo folktales are told and retold and come alive with lightning flashes of comic narrative about sensible fools. Sometimes the protagonists was too weak to or are not destined to performed successfully. Such different kinds of tales act as an important instrument in carrying social values, reflected the imagination of the people.

Besides the monkey trickster tales, there are many animal tales which are having the trickster elements. They have an interesting character and among these animals the deer, the tiger, the tortoise are commonly appear in animal trickster tales. The reason why they employed tricks was envied, hated, jealousy, self seeking and sometimes they need to escape or survival from their enemies. The story of *the Porcupine and the Deer* can be cited to reveals the animal trickster in animal tales.

One day, a porcupine and a deer were cutting their jhums, when they burnt their jhums, the porcupine's jhum burnt very well, for he had worked hard, but the deer who had been careless and lazy. The deer claimed the porcupine's ground and put his seed into the porcupine's ground, the porcupine asked the deer why he had put the seed in his ground. They argued for a long time while until the deer said, 'it is no use quarrelling like this; let us wrestle and the good jhum shall go to the winner.' After they wrestled

again and again, the porcupine won but the deer refused to let him have the jhum. They made another agreement, to call all their friends to support them. The porcupine could only call the bees to help him but on the deer's side there were many animals- elephants, mithun, tigers, bears, monkey, and tortoise. The porcupine played the role of trickster and challenged the deer and his friends to come and fight him inside his house, but he asked them all to have some beer first. He invited them to come inside to his house, one by one he asked them to drink the beer. He put many bees inside the beer pot, and when they tried to drink the beer; the bees flew out and stung them so hard that they all die.

In this story, the porcupine employed the tricks so that he could win from the battle. The way porcupine was able to persuade his enemies into letting him come inside the house was amazing and the porcupine knew that the two of them will not win the battle with the bees only, so he played the witty tricks. The trickster normally employ the tricks not only for self seeking but also to survive from their difficult positions. Sometimes they had to outwit their opponent to escape from their problems, sometimes the trickster employ tricks with the motive of exploiting others for selfishness. Sometimes the trickster breaks the rules of nature but usually unintentionally, with ultimately positive effects.

The story of *Sakei leh Utawk* (the tiger and the frog) demonstrated what a clever trickster the frog is. The frog was very much smaller than the tiger, but the frog outwit the tiger in the competition. The tiger tried to prove that he is much stronger and swifter than the frog so they agreed to a race. The tiger was very sure that he would easily be the winner and like to show his strength. When they began to run, the tiny frog at once jumped upon the back of the tiger. The frog was so small that he was unnoticed by the tiger. Just before the tiger reach the goal, the frog jumped to the ground, hopped in before the great tiger and was proclaimed the winner. The tiger was very much surprised and declared that he had never seen such a thing in all his life.

The tiger again challenged the frog to a 'stone throwing competition' and the frog agreed to try his cleverness with the tiger. The tiger threw the stone as far as he

could and the frog stepped up to the line and threw a stone into a dove's nest. The dove flew off with the stone on its back far away and high up in the sky, where it looked just like the stone which the frog had thrown. At this time also the frog was declared the winner. It is obvious that the frog can never compete the tiger in strength and swiftness, but the tiger did not outlive the frog in cleverness. The frog did not admit that tiger was either swifter or stronger than he. But the tiger unexpectedly finds the frog was declared the winner. Therefore, the frog outwitted the tiger and defeated so the frog became very famous among other animals. Normally, the trickster tales showed that the weak could conquer the strong and represent the underdog who uses skill and cunning to outwit a superior.

The tales of *Sazuk leh Satel* (the deer and the tortoise) picked the element of animal trickster which are designed to show the cleverness of one animal and the stupidity of another.

In the story, the tortoise who was keeping guard over the egg of a serpent. A deer passed by and invited the tortoise to a high jump competition over the eggs of the serpent. The tortoise said it is impossible for him and he was too slow and will not be able to jump high over the egg and might break the egg. However the deer persisted and tell him even if he crushed the eggs he shall protect him and there is no need to fear. Therefore, they started the competition, the deer jump over the eggs with ease but the tortoise could not do it and landed on the egg and broke them all. The deer also really afraid of the serpent and advised the tortoise to run away as soon as possible for his safety. The tortoise could not run very fast and began tumbling down the hill as fast as he could. He crashed into the houses of several animals and beg protection. They all afraid to protect him but at last, the eagle agreed to save him and spread his wings, encircled him in the wings. The serpent asked every animals about the tortoise but no one could tell his whereabouts. When the serpent reached the house of the eagle, the serpent was full of suspicion and asked the eagle to spread his wings. Finally the eagle spread out the left wing, the serpent could see the end of the tortoise's tail from the right wings. At that, the serpent flew into a rage and declared war between the creatures of the air and the creatures of the land. Due to the tricks played by the deer,

there is war between the two creatures. The deer tricks a tortoise fall into his traps, making sure the tortoise would break the serpent's eggs. The tortoise also agreed only after the deer promised there was nothing to fear and will give him protections. The tortoise must have thought that the deer might have set a trap for him. Although the tortoise afraid he himself might not jump high enough, he agreed to have a competition. But the deer told a lie and advised him to run away for his safety instead of giving protections. The tortoise is sheltered by eagle and that is why they declared war between the creatures of the air and the creatures of the land. They began the war with the snake and the eagle as leaders on the two opposing sides.

The war between *Chungleng leh Hnuaileng* (creatures of the air and the creatures of the land) is the most interesting story among the animal tales in Mizo folktales. It expressed the imagination of human beings and revealing how the Mizos hated unfaithfulness in the society. This story teaches a moral lesson about the penalties of misbehavior.

In the story, the serpent was very furious when he knew the tortoise was protected by the eagle and declared war between them. All the creatures of the land came together and began their preparation for the war. The creatures of the air also rallied together and they gathered in the Banyan tree. The serpent then whipped the branch of the Banyan tree and it shattered to the ground. The creatures of the land were overjoyed and they raised loud cries in enthusiasm. Then the creatures of the air were very unhappy. When the bat saw the creatures of the land was much stronger, he wanted to join them. He flew down to where the creatures of the land were and said, "Hey... look at me... and look at my head and my teeth. You can be sure that I am a creature of the land." So he remained with them. The battle was going on and on and fighting very hard in full force. Then the eagle began to attack the serpent, the creatures of the air were thrilled and began to raise loud cries in order to cheer the eagle. As soon as the bat noticed this, he became insecure and decided to join the creature of the air. So, he flew up and pleaded, 'look at me, I do not belong to the creatures of the land for I even have wings.' After a long battle, the eagle mustered all his strength and pecked furiously at the serpent's backbone and broke it into many pieces. That was the end of the battle and this signaled victory for the creatures of the air.

After sometime, both parties became friends once again. However as the bat has displayed cowardice during the war, he could not find an ally among them. Then he fled and hid and he did not even dare to go out during daylight. And because of this, the bat wanders out only in the darkness of the night to this day. The bat played the role of trickster during the battle with the motives to survive from dangers. But in the end, he had to pay the price of his cunning attitudes and could not find any ally among them. This story expressed the imagination of the Mizos and reflecting the way of life and emotion of the people. This simple and short tales reflecting some basic qualities most admired not only by the Mizo but by all cultures i.e. faithfulness. It conveying lessons about life and character in a better way to the readers.

Besides the relationship between animals and animals, there is relationship between animals and human beings in Mizo folktales. The folktales today in every culture as well as among the primitive tribes, the world of the human and of the animal are never far apart. Mizo folktales also reflects the story of trickster heroes, who are conceived of sometimes as men and sometimes animals. Most of these folktales is the reflective of trickster element which is an important instrument for a better understanding of imagination of the people. It is also useful for conveying folk wisdom and to help us understand human nature and human behavior. Animals were at par with human beings and both could communicate freely in Mizo folktales which indicated they are closely related in their life. Sometimes it is a mixture of fact and fancy but conveying lessons about life and character. Folktales are expression of the state of mind or imagination of the people of that time. It really depicts and reflects the way of life and emotion of the people of a particular time. So the careful study of Mizo folk narrative is useful for a better understanding of Mizo culture.

Let us highlights the stories of *Chawngchilhi*, *Samdala*, *Chemtatrawta*, *nula leh Zawng* (a girl and monkey), the tale of *Kungawrhi* contains the elements of relationship between animals and human beings which depicts the element of tricksters.

The tale of *Chawngchilhi* supposedly explains the existence of sex between animals and human beings in Mizo folktales. We are interest in the sexual relations of a women with some animals. Chawngchilhi had a snake for a lover and when Chawngchilhi's father found out about their affair from her younger sister, he was outraged by the incidents and killed the snake. When Chawngchilhi found out that her father killed her lover, she was very displeased and took home the snake meat. Her father was very angry when he found out this incident and killed his own daughter. But she was already carrying the snake's babies and her father killed all the snakes except one which managed to escape. The one which escaped grew into a large snake and ultimately brings destruction to the village by eating chicken and even the children in the village. Nobody in the village knew of its whereabouts except for an old woman. This old woman offered to tell them of its hideout in exchange for better parts of the meat to be received by her if they can kill the snake. When the villagers killed the snake, they gave the head only to the old lady but it saved her from a massive earthquake. From this story, we can see that there is a close relation between animals and human beings in Mizo folktales. Chawngchilhi's father employed tricks with the motive of exploiting his daughter life to get what he wanted. Animals were at par with human beings and can communicate each other at this time. It is believed that the reason why this tales attracted the readers or listeners was the existence of sexuality between human and animal. Chawngchilhi had a snake for a lover and when her father found out about their affair, he was very angry and wanted to kill his own daughter and the snake. Chawngchilhi's father portrays Mizo society is a patriarchal society, mother and daughter were silent in the family. This story also depicted the low status of women in the family and in the society. When Chawngchilhi's father killed her lover, she did not said anything against her father will. The father felt that he had the right to do anything in the family without the consent of other family members. The story highlighting the low status of women in a patriarchal society in which they are not given credit for the work they have done in the family. The heroines in Mizo folk tales had always been expected to be silent. Father is the head of the family and have the right to act

accordingly. Women are often victims of domestic violence. It is not understandable for father the unnatural relationship with the animal. That is why he killed his own daughter and the snake, besides he done it for the safety of the whole village. The trickster represented the introduction of good things to society. This element is seen in this tales when Chawngchilhi's father killed his own daughter when he feels the worst performances from his daughter. Beside this, his action was for the safety of the whole village. It is obvious that while Chawngchilhi's father expected the normal behaviors from his daughter, the love between the snake and his daughter outraged him. So he made his own decision and decided to killed both of them. This story reveals that animals cannot be outsmart human beings in cleverness. It is designed to show the cleverness of human beings and the stupidity of animals and the quality of human beings. This story also indicated that it is unsafe to express or experience outside the normal behaviours.

Let us take up the story of *Samdala* to depict the humorous trickster between the animals and human beings. Samdala was a very lazy young man. The most popular stories about lazy man are concerned with absurd cases of extreme laziness.

One day Samdala went out hunting and saw some ripe figs. He wanted to eat them but he was too lazy to pluck them from them from the tree. He lay down beneath the bough of ripe figs and waited for one to drop into his mouth. He chewed and swallowed with great determination when a fig fell into his mouth. Just then, an old tiger came by and Samdala offered himself for food if the tiger carry him to the hill top. The tiger carried him atop the hill and said, "I will eat you now." Samdala went behind a bush, and came out with a red berry on his back. After that he told the tiger, " you may eat me now." But when the tiger saw the red berry, he was curious to know what it was. Samdala told him that it is something that consumes men and beasts alike. The tiger quickly ran away in fear, Samdala throwing stones after him. After that, Samdala would spend almost all his time merely lying amongst the dry leaves. At that time a barking deer approached him and he was greatly amused and he kept laughing at the sight. As he was watching, a wild pig came by and he too began to laugh when he saw Samdala. Likewise several other animals gathered together and all of them were very amused. At last, a tortoise

came by and the other animals asked who the person was. But the tortoise was afraid to say the person's name, but they promised him to give a shelter. The tortoise said, 'He is the incorrigibly lazy Samdala!!'. At once, Samdala pursued him in a fit of anger and chased away all the animals in the process. The most popular stories about lazy are concerned with absurd cases of extreme laziness.

From this story, we can see that Samdala employed the tricks, deceiving the tiger because of his laziness. Sometimes the trickster showed that the weaker could conquer the strong. Samdala's character was a sensible fool that could bring amusement to the readers. Therefore, this story reveals the relationship between the animals and human beings, there is no demarcation between them. They can communicate freely and no enmity existed between them, they all live happily together. It also reflects how the Mizos despises laziness, even other creatures derided Samdala when he lying among the leaves. The Mizos were very industrious, tried their best to produced their own need and what they hated most was laziness. This element is weave beautifully in this tales. In spite of these, it is clear that the animals cannot outwitted human beings and always become superior to animals. This story revealed the opinion of the Mizos towards animals and how they treated them. The theme of cleverness and laziness is what we have seen in this tales. Samdalas was a clever trickster to get what he wanted and did not care what materials was needed to win. Usually the trickster is a clever or mischievous man who tries to survive from dangers using trickery and deceit as a defense. Tales of cleverness with their lessons in wisdom and tales with joy enjoyed by the people and have become an essential part of their folk narratives.

The story of *Chemtatrawta* also reveals the relation between animals and human beings and how they shares their life during that time. It seemed a folktales is about an animal or person who engage in trickery, violence and magic.

Once upon a time, there was a man called Chemtatrawta. He went down to the river and sharpening his dao on the bank of a river. But he had not been there long before, he felt a terrific pain and he found that a lobster had pinched up one of his testicles. He became so furious and he at once cut a big bamboo nearby, up which a Khaum creeper

was climbing. The Khaum was furious and in turn, he landed atop the spine of the jungle fowl below. The jungle fowl was very annoyed and in turn, it scattered the nest of the large ants. The large ants in turn, bit the testicles of the wild pig. The wild pig turned livid and it scattered the wild plantains where the bats nested. The bat was furious and it flew up the elephant's trunk. The elephant in turn destroyed the house of an old woman nearby. The old woman was incensed and she defecated by the mouth of the village well. This angered the entire village and the villagers began to rally in great rage. They asked the old woman the reason why she defecated at the mouth of the village well. She said, " why did the elephant destroy my home?" They tried to find out the reason and asked the questions to elephant, bat, wild pig, fowl, khaum, Chemtatrawta and lastly to the lobster. They realized that he had no excuses and found himself in a awkward position and so he merely said, "ih, ih, ih if you roast me in the fire I will turn a fiery red, much to the delight of the children, and if you drop me in the water I will turn pale and white". So they roasted him in the fire and he turned a fiery red, then they took him out of the fire and placed him in the water and he turned pale and white. But soon he regained consciousness in the water and he declared, ' Ah.....nothing compares to the home of one's parents'. He glided away to freedom and swam inside a cave.

This story has the spirit of pure fun and amusement but highlighting many Mizo way of life. When the people captured the lobster and decided to punish him, the lobster employed the tricks with the motive of escape, survive and deceiving others but having the comic narrative. He thought every way to escape from their punishment and told them to roast him in the fire. He played the witty tricks and make a clever decision, if he had a chance to swim inside the cave he surely knew he will survive. So he told to placed him in the water and become pale to make the children amused. The lobster giving the people a long respite so that he is able to escape. Usually the weaker character will play a trick in trickster tales. This story depicted how the Mizos keep utmost importance to cleanliness and healthy environment. Their main concerned was with the public health within the community. They were also particular about finding the source of the problem and the person responsible for it. It also depicted the unity and support of the community as a whole. From the tale of Chemtatrawta, it is learned that the folk

narrative can be useful in tracing the Mizo way of life. It help us to understand human nature and human behavior of that time.

The story of “ Nula leh Zawng”(a girl and a monkey) reflects the element of sexuality between the animal and human being. Trickster tales are great favourites in many culture. They represent the underdog who uses skill and cunning to outwit a superior. This is an interesting story and the motif which we have seen in this tale is seduction by stealing clothes of bathing girl. Stealing clothes is an important motif and alter the structure of the story till the end.

In the story, a girl went out to draw water in a river. On reaching the river, she felt like taking a bath and she stripped off all her clothes, jumped into the river. Meanwhile a male monkey came and took all her clothes and kept on the river bank. The girl came out of the river and crying and beg the monkey to give back her clothes. The monkey said, “ I’ll give you back the clothes on condition that you promise to marry me”. The girl told him that she will never marry him. He did not wanted to give her back the clothes unless she agreed to marry him. The girl was feeling helpless and imagine her fate of returning home completely naked. At last she accepted to marry him and he took her home. But all the time, the girl being so restless, thought how to run away from her husband. One day while her husband monkey was out, the girl killed her mother-in-law. Taking the skin of her slain mother-in-law, the girl put it on. When the monkey husband came home and asked where his wife where about. The girl imitating her mother-in-law’s character and reply, “My dear son, I don’t know the where about of your wife, perhaps she ran away.” The monkey told her it will be better if she too ran away. Taking advantage of this, the girl then ran away. When she reached home, her relatives were very angry and intended to take revenge. Meanwhile their sister conscious of being pregnant, gave birth to a monkey child. At last the mother and son left the village for the jungle to search and trace out the father of the monkey son.

“In folktales everywhere the human world and the animal world lie close together” (Thompson 353). In Mizo folk tales also, the human world and the animal world lie close together, expressed the relationship between the animal and human being. It also

expressed the theme of trickster tales like love, sex, revenge, humour etc. we have seen the love between the girl and the monkey, and their sex relationship between them. According Mazharul Islam, "The current folklore study is greatly enforced with the advent of psychoanalytical theory propounded and developed by Freud, Abraham, Jones, Jung, Campbell, Dollard, Roheim and many others" (Folklore 129). With the help of this theory, there are elements of interpretation which proves the hidden sexual impulse of men and women since ancient time. As Handoo remarks, "the symbol figures told a story of sexual hunger, guilt and shame" (current trends in folklore 9). The characters portrays this element in the story of "Khuangchera", the tricksters employed tricks to achieves their sex desire while her husband Khuangchera working in a smithy. It is said that folktales is the expression of dreams, it expressed the desire of human beings even sexual elements. The dream expressed the infantile desire of one human being. "Mechanisms transform the childish and half forgotten sexual urges into some objects and images of the daily life" (9). Sometimes the symbol figures told a story of sexual hunger, guilt and shame. The tales of Khuangchera told a story of sexual hunger, the trickster dreams of having sex with the hero's wife while her husband was working. They thought that they could have a chance if they deceived Khuangchera.

The tales of the monkey and the girl also expressed the motif of revenge, when the girl's brothers find out why she married the monkey, they wanted to take revenge upon the monkey and tried to kill him. But before they could kill him, their sister conscious of being pregnant and gave birth to a monkey child. We have seen the motif of humour in this story, it is difficult to understand why the girl wanted to marry the monkey as her husband even she knew he is an animal. Is it a revelation of sexual hunger which is hidden in the human mind? She does things that are apparently wrong in obviously stupid or foolish way. It make the readers or listeners laugh with her stupid or silly acts and can lift one's spirit. The traditional tale is even today one of the principal form of entertainment. The story depicted the unnatural love between the animal and human being but this situation is not understandable from the minds of Mizos. That is why her brothers intended to kill the new born monkey child, but just before they kill

him, their sister pleaded and requested them to keep off their hands on her child. At last, the mother and son left the village for the jungle to search and trace out the father of the monkey son. It is clear that if the girl was not in love with the monkey, she will not go to the jungle in search of the father of her child. It seemed the reason why we loved this type of tales is in their sexual associations. It serve the purpose of various folklore theorist who wish to find some hidden meaning in the tales. It is interesting to know that that trickster expressed deep human imagination. It conveys folk wisdom and help us to understand human nature.

Kungawrhi folktale reflects the element of relation between the animals and human being. There are many stories of the marriages of human beings to animals. Mizo tales also having the stories of heroes who are conceived of sometimes as men and sometimes as animals.

In the story, tiger- man was fell in love with Kungawrhi and wanted her for a wife. Many men came to seek her hand in marriage and a tiger man was succeeded at last to get her. An old woman who was in the forest collecting firewood came to report that as the bride and bridegroom left the village, the bridegroom turned into a tiger and it carried this woman on its back. Her father got alarmed. Her daughter must be rescued from the tiger man. The two young men Phawthira and Hrangchala volunteered to do that hard task. When they reached the village where she lived, her husband was absent. They told her their mission and she hid them on a shelf. When her husband, the tiger-man came home, he was drunk. On the day Kungawrhi and her rescuers escaped, the tiger-man came back home only to find the door locked. In his rage, he proceeded to carry out his threat of killing Kungawrhi. She had with her some grass seeds. When she thrown out, grass grew with such suddenness and to such thickness that the tiger-man had great difficulty in passing through the forest of grass. They thrown some water seeds again, a sea was created between the pursuer and the created that caused much delay of the tiger. The tiger-man close again and they thrown the fire seeds between them, that caused much delay and they can reached the house safely for the night. The tiger-man went round the house and it gave a chance to Hrangchala to take his bow and arrow and killed the tiger-man.

This story reveals Mizo society is a patriarchal society, we find the women in Mizo folktales to be unnaturally silent. Kungawrhi did not protest when she was given in marriage to the tiger-man, she obeyed without protest. On the way to her husband's village, when he instructed her to hold onto his tail as he helped her swim across the flooded river and there was no sign of protest from her side. It seemed that the heroines in Mizo folktales are always expected to be silent onlookers. In this tales, we have seen the themes of love, revenge and humour. The tiger-man was in love with Kungawrhi and employed the tricks to get her for his wife, pretending that he was a tiger-man. When her father found out that the bridegroom was a tiger-man, he wanted to rescue her from him. He thought that her safety was threatened by her marriage to half human and seen as the enemy capable of killing humans. So he called for the action of rescuing her beloved daughter from the enemy. The two volunteered Hrangchala and Phawthira found her and took away from her husband. The tiger-man tried to take revenge on them and began chasing them. The non-human side of his nature was portrayed as uncontrollable and tried to kill even his wife. But the rescuer employed tricks by using seeds of fire, water, thorns to keep the tiger away for a short period of time. Sometimes the trickster breaks the rules of gods or nature with positive effects. In the tales we see how they break the rule of nature when they use fire seeds, water seeds and thorn seeds. But it is very useful to survive from enemies. Trickster can be cunning or foolish or both, they are often funny even when they try to survive from dangers while using trickery.

Trickster tales exist all over the world and it is associated with the people's societal values, and these values are embedded in their culture. The trickster tales are popular throughout the world, but in different cultures, they tend to follow different patterns. Certainly the stories are told because they are funny and entertaining. In every trickster tale, the trickster often represents the introduction of good things to society. Let us take up the Igbo (Nigeria) tale to show how every folktales associated with the people's societal values and represents the good things within their society. In Igbo

folktales, the tortoise is generally recognized as the wisest of all animals because of his clever tricks and wits. His tricks are so apt and clever that they confound the wits of other animals. While the hare is considered as one of the most stupid of all animals.

In the tale, the animals of the forest decided they would build a palace for their King and began to contribute money for construction. They appoint a rat as a treasurer to safeguard the money because the rat had a big hole by the hillside. The rat collected a great deal of money and dragged it into his hole. One day the tortoise called the animals together and said that they have to knelt down to pray to God to help them build the palace successfully. He said that they should close their eyes and ears very tight and will not open until the hand of God touches them. Then he signaled all the animals to kneel down, they knelt, closing their eyes and ears. without delay the tortoise left the praying ground, rushed to the rat hole and remove all the money. As soon as he came back, he collected a large quantity of sand and threw it into the air. The sand fell on the back of the animals. They all rose up and opened their eyes and ears. The tortoise said they should all go home and wait for God to take a decision. After that the rat told them that the money he had kept in his hole was missing. The tortoise wept loudly, complaining that the money was lost because the animals must have failed to say their prayers properly. He suggested that they all contribute some more money and pray again. The wren was then appointed the new treasurer. He carried the money bag up to his roost on a tall tree. The tortoise began to climb the tree while all the animals to kneel and pray. He slipped, crashed to the ground and broke his covering to pieces.

From this story, it is clear that the people respects the God and wanted to do whatever they can to build a palace for their God. The tortoise employed the tricks to have all the money they contributed. All the animals wholly dependent on the tortoise to build the palace for the King. But a dishonest person who defrauds other by trickery always pay the price in the same coin in the end. This element is also appeared in every trickster tales. The tortoise employ tricks with the motive of exploiting others for selfishness and self-seeking. Tricksters actions and personality may seem ridiculous or extreme, beyond normal behavior but it often represents good things in the society. They teaches a moral lesson about the penalty or punishment of greedy persons or misbehaviors. So human

can express and feel things through the tricksters what they wanted to express or hide what they wanted, but still conveying lesson about life. They are often funny even when performing important cultural tasks.

The rabbit is a trickster around the world because of his small size he must use his cunning to outwit the larger opponents. Rabbit tales are humorous tales and uses his wit and courage to survive. The tales encouraged the readers or the listeners to be brave. In a famous pour quoi story from the Kickapoo and Shawnee nations, rabbit is running through the field, when bobcat sneaks up behind him. Rabbit jumps inside a hollow log but finds he is trapped. Rabbit scrambles for a way to escape. Rabbit says he give up and bobcat should build a fire because rabbit is proud and wants to be the best dinner ever. When the fire is built up, rabbit tossed out two acorns telling bobcat they are his eyes. When bobcat turns to find them, rabbit kicks hot ash on bobcat and burns his fur. The functions of the folktales is primarily to entertain the readers, and the next is to convey lessons. The rabbit using his cleverness tricking them and achieve his purpose. The tricksters often greedy, selfish and even nasty, sometimes they appear to be clumsy or foolish, although they usually possess amazing power of survival.

The animal tales also highlights the existence of a relationship between animals and human beings. It is wonderful to know that the folktales reflected the human characters through animals. The Eskimo tale, *The Fox- Woman* depicts the marriage of animal and human being. In the story, A man finds his house put in order by a mysterious housekeeper. He discovers that the housekeeper is sometimes a woman and sometimes a fox. They marry and are happy until one day he makes mention of her origin as a fox and she leaves him in anger. Mizos also has this type of story called “Kungawrhi”. In the tale the heroine is Kungawrhi, her husband was a tiger-man who could transform into a tiger. But he fell in love with Kungawrhi. He came out with a plan to get her married to him. He took Kungawrhi’s footprint from the mud and heated it on the shelf over the fire. She began to fall sick and could not recover. When her father declared that he would give her hand in marriage to any man who could heal her. The

tiger-man took the footprint off from the shelf and she recovered immediately. she obeyed without protest what her father promised to the healer and they married immediately. This story has uniqueness, Kungawrhi was emerged from a swollen and sore wound in her father's thumb when he had injured himself during an attempt to split a bamboo for tying purposes. Russian also has this type of tales, a women cut her finger when he prepared cabbage for meal. From that wound, a boy was emerged and he was called Tiny. The boy can speak and can help his father even when he was a little boy.

A story of whale husband tale is popular on the North Pacific Coast that depicts the relationship between animals and human beings. A man fishing catches a strange fish which his wife cleans and cuts up. She washes her hands in the sea and is pulled below by a killer whale who takes her down to his home as a wife under the sea. The husband follows her and with the help of shark, finds that she is working as a slave in the killer whale's house. Shark by trickery extinguishes the light in the killer whale's house and steal the woman back for her husband. The tricksters figure usually take the form of animals, although they also have some human qualities and may appear human if it suits their purposes.

Sometimes the tricksters was funny, sly and subversive, they create a world , both real and imagined that largely shape the way we human lives. They are usually very human-acting animals or even having the ability to switch between animal and human form. One of the Indonesian tales that expressed the element of relationship between animal and human being. In the story, there was Raden Dugging and pee in the leaves, the boar drunk the urine and became pregnant. She gave birth to female baby and called her Siti. When Siti was grown up, her father found her in the jungle and take her home. Siti married a dog as a husband and gave birth a son. In Mizo folk tales, if a women married an animals, they gave birth to an animal. But in Indonesian folk tales, the women gave birth to human being. One of the strange things that happened in animals tales and in a tales of marriage between animal and human being is one of

them usually managed to escape. In the tale of Chawngchilhi, her father killed all the baby snakes except one which manages to escape and which ultimately brings destruction to the village. In story of monkey and the tortoise, the tortoise found the monkeys in a basket. He tied the basket with a rope and dropped it over a precipice. All the monkeys except a pregnant one died at the hand of the tortoise. In Manipuri folktale Hanuba Hanubi, a married couple was deceived by the monkeys, they tried to kill all the monkeys but one monkey was managed to escaped.

The trickster figure is found all over the world. Almost all cultures tell stories featuring specific tricksters. For example, Coyote and Raven are tricksters in North American culture. In Europe and central America the trickster can be Fox or Wolf. China has its Monkey King. In West Africa, the trickster is the spider. In Indonesia, the popular trickster is buffalo. Mizo and Manipuri folktales featuring monkey is popular, sly and deceiver. In Assamese folktales, they reflects fox and monkey as the common trickster. The tale of *The monkey and the fox* from Assamese folktales reflects the trickster element. In the story, monkey and fox were great friend and steal banana, milk, sugar cane etc and run off with their booty to the jungle. But monkey played a sly tricks and not allowed to give anything to the fox, but the fox taking revenges and pay back with the same coins. Goswami pointed out the importance of trickster tales in his book "Trickster tales are widely spread in Assam also and would seem to be a mongoloid contribution to the state's composite culture" (Essays on the Folklore and Culture of North-Eastern India 9). It is observed that every culture in different part of the world having animal trickster whether they are tribal or western people. They have been one of the chief forms of entertainment for all members of society, that is why they are fond of telling about the foolish or stupid adventures of their trickster. There are also animal trickster- the monkey, the jackal or fox, the hare and the bat in Arunachal Pradesh. Monkey is also popular in Arunachal Pradesh folktales. Let us take up one tales from Adis of Arunachal Pradesh.

In the early days, human and monkeys lived together. In those days even the monkeys were good in using dao, bow and arrow like human beings. They hunted birds and

animals, they could even speak better than humans. However, they were not able to live together for long. Man was blessed with intelligence, so he tried to find out a way to get rid of the monkeys. One day while passing through the bank of a river, the men found all the monkeys engaged in fishing. Taking advantage of their situations, they collected all the bows and arrows. When the monkeys were back after fishing, they found their bows and arrows strung up in the tree. The men started to hack them to death. They become helpless and even could not think of confronting human. But they continued to live in the village. The men were waiting for an opportunity to bring them to their side. A meeting was convened and decisions were taken that all monkeys should abandon the village and retreat to the forest to avoid any sort of harassment. The monkeys agreed and left for forest. As soon as they left, all their houses in the village were set on fire reducing them to ashes. The man did not leave it there, the monkeys were invited to a feast with a plot to eliminate all of them. The feast was arranged nearby a very big tree that was withered and hollow. It was so big that it could accommodate all the monkeys at a time. The monkeys were told to go inside the hollow of the tree to enjoy the feast. All of them went inside the tree and started feasting and music. Suddenly, the entrance of the hollow was closed and the tree was set on fire. All of them were burnt to death. Only one female monkey survived, but her face and hands were blackened due to burn.

It is said that even today, the face and hands of the monkey appear black. Unlike other tales, the monkeys were deceived by human and killed all of them except one. It seemed this story was designed to show the cleverness of human beings and the stupidity of animals. Humans are designed to become superior to animals, this element is shown in almost all the animal tales. Usually trickster tales feature a small animal or character that employs its cunning to protect itself against more powerful animals. Trickster is also very humorous, they often do things that are wrong or acts in obviously stupid or foolish ways. However, every story has a means of entertainment or for giving aesthetic pleasure and have their own effects. The trickster employ their tricks as a means to achieve the need of escape and survival.

The why and wherefore of the Mizo mind tried to seek an answer in the surrounding animals and it seemed they have no other sources. They had learned from

animals life and expressed their imagination through the folktales. As Roy Chaudhury observed, “Animals are grouped into different categories according to their intelligence and other habits. The fox is always sly while the cow is gentle. The lion and the tiger have a majestic air while the horse is swift, sleek and intelligent. The slow going elephant does not forget its attendant. Monkeys are very close to man. The peacock is gay while the crow is shrewd. The tortoise is slow-going but sure-footed. The hare is swift but apt to laze on the road” (Folktales of Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura & Mizoram 7). These characteristics of the animals are acceptable even today. Trickster tales attest to the truth that the relation of power between the strong and the weak. The characters in animal tales often childish, greedy, nasty but the tricksters can also be friendly, helpful, clever and wise. Sometimes they appear to be clumsy, or foolish although they usually possess amazing power of survival. In Mizo folk narratives, if a woman married animals, divorce usually happened between them. Their marriages were only for a short period of time. Folktales tell the period of that time, life and it is an important instrument to join the two worlds: the olden times and modern times. Stories of heroes and heroines of our ancestors boost the ego of one’s community. So the trickster tales played a significant role in preserving our ethnicity. The animal trickster stories also teach a moral lesson about the penalties of misbehavior and the punishment that may come from being greedy. We find animal tales in which one animal tries to outwit another. They show how a powerless creature can win over a mighty one but teaches a different lesson. The study of folk narratives can lead to a better understanding of their nature and role in human life. According to Lalruanga, “It is clear from animal tales that how Mizos favour faithfulness and how they despised unfaithfulness” (Mizo Thawnthu Zirzauna 31). We can summarize the animal trickster tales with the word “punishments may come from misbehavior”.

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CHAPTER- 4

HUMAN TRICKSTER TALES

Trickster tales are great favourites in many culture because they represents the underdog who uses skills and cunning to outwit a superior. Trickster tales are short narrative but helps us to understand human nature and behavior. They showed that the weak could conquer the strong. Every story has a means of entertainment or for giving aesthetics pleasure, it present a challenging problems in social history and at the same time furnishes help towards the solution of that problems. Humorous tales involve silly stories about character who do ridiculous things and make funny mistakes. The human trickster are clever, mischievous persons who achieves his ends through the use of trickery. Tales of cleverness with their lessons in wisdom and tales with joy have been greatly enjoyed by the people and have become an essential part of their folklore. They could be character who are physically weak trying to survive in a dangerous world. The tricksters alternate between cleverness and stupidity, kindness and cruelty, breaker of taboos and creator of culture. Tricksters are often mischievous troublemakers who try to manipulate others to get what they want. Some of the tales displaying great human qualities while others displaying wickedness and jealousy. In fact, the tales are closely inter-woven with a conflict of good and evil. The tricksters employed the tricks with the motive of deceiving and exploiting others for selfishness. The protagonists who are having an interesting character and the people are very fond of telling about the foolish or stupid adventure of their tricksters. Human trickster tales is exist all over the world and it seems it is the principal centre of interest, enjoyed by the readers or listeners. It is an important instrument for reflecting the society and culture of the folk life and conveying lessons about life and character.

In many cultures, the trickster and the culture hero often combined. He is more of a culture hero than a trickster. The trickster is clever, mischievous man who tries to survive the dangers by using trickery and deceit as a defense. The Mizo tribe has

a rich culture with abundant tales and the human trickster tales are the important element in Mizo folk narratives. On the whole, Mizo folktales are plain and simple but they have deep moral values. There are good and bad character, heroes and heroines, weak and strong, poor and the rich, and women of renowned beauty. Some tales displaying great human qualities while others display wickedness and selfishness. In fact, the tales are closely related with a conflict of good and evil. But this symbolized human nature. Chhurbura is the most popular tale and was considered to be the real hero of Mizo folktales. which contains the trickster element. Birendranath Datta remarks about Chhura “ It is noteworthy that the principal character of a great many Mizo tales is Chhura who is something like a Mizo culture-hero and who figures in a number of etiological legends (A handbook of Folklore material of N E India 47). Chhurbura was considered to be the real hero of Mizo folktales possessing an interesting character. He appeared in myth, legend and folktales. Many of his adventure offered humorous stories and he is an entertaining figure of a numbskull. His character reflected the various aspects of the native Mizo character. According to Lalruanga “The adventure of Chhura in a trickster tales portrays how he was a clever trickster and the nature of his intelligence” (Mizo Thawnthu Zirzauna 37). He is sometimes a clever trickster on the other hand he could be considered as a foolish person, sometimes he can also be extraordinarily brave. As Thompson remarks, “The adventures of tricksters, even when considered by themselves, are inconsistent. Part of the tales are result of his stupidity, and about an equal number show him overcoming his enemies through cleverness” (The Folktale 319). This is true if we look up the tales of Chhura, some of his tale display how he was a clever trickster, on the other hand, others display how he was a foolish man. One of the important characteristics of human tricksters is the sense of humour, and Chhurbura’s tales having this element. The reading of Mizo folktales would be incomplete if his name were left out. His brother, Nahaia personifies the figure of a human trickster who is always taking advantage of his brother’s trusting nature. The trickster stories spark the imagination of the readers and transport them into the distant land. The tales of Chhurbura involves silly stories about character who do

ridiculous things and make funny mistakes but that silly things spark the imagination of the listeners. The adventure of Chhurbura are the result of his stupidity and about an equal number show him overcoming his enemies through cleverness. "Sometimes the interest is in the contrast between a clever and a foolish person, with the main interest in the latter"(189). Sometimes the foolish tales attracted the readers or listeners than the clever tales because the people are fond of telling about the foolish or stupid adventure of their tricksters. It seemed traditional tales is even today one of the principal form of entertainment. Each episode of his story is rather short and crisp but it has a moral lessons to the readers.

The theme of Mizo trickster tales includes, love, revenge, sex, humour, greedy, laziness, selfishness, possessiveness, betrayal etc. Let us take up the tales of Chhurbura that depicted these themes. We can see the love for his elder brother, and his brother took advantage of his trusting nature. His adventure also revealed the element of humour and sometimes we see our dark side in his character. L.B.Thanga rightly observed that, " According to one view, he was the silliest of all the simpletons. According to the other view, he was the cleverest of all the wise men and all his actions and behaviours by which he was called foolish were in fact all due to his abiding love and affection for his elder brother, Nahaia" (49).

On a certain sunny day Chhura and Nahaia went to the jungle in search of wild-potatoes. Naa was too lazy to dig out good ones, chhura selected only full grown ones. On their way home, Naa suggested that it would be good to clean their potatoes in the stream. So they washed their potato, Naa upstream and Chhura downstream. Naa said that some of his potatoes washed down by the current and take away the best and better potatoes from Chhura. However, Chhura made no complaint at the time and he took home whatever Naa gave him. On the next occasion when Naa invited Chhura to go to the jungle in search of wild potatoes, Chhura refused and tell him that it would be better if he go alone. Naa remained silent knowing that to dig wild-potatoes without Chhura would be a great failure.

From this tales we can see that he is the silliest and simpleton in his character, on the other hand he could be considered as the cleverest of all wise men. He surely knew that Naa played the tricks when they clean the potatoes in the stream but he remained silent even on their way home. The reason is the loved for his elder brother. He did not wanted to expressed how lazy his brother was and instead he remained silent . We may say that he is a foolish and coward but this showed that he was a clever hero, but conveys a moral lessons to the readers. He can have all the good and better potatoes by himself but his consciences not allowed him to take all the good ones. Naa employed the tricks because of his laziness, did not wanted to dig deep to collect the good ones although he wanted to take home the best ones to his family. The loved for his elder brother allowed Naa to select the better potatoes. This story clearly expressed how Chhura become a clever hero and unbeatable in his display of wits. To reveal the goodness of Chhura, there is Nahaia in the tales, but this two person created the story makes interesting. Nahaia was very lazy and always deceived his brother to grab the best things from his brother. Because of his brother, Chhura always played the role of stupid in order to avoid trouble in the family. Chhura was brave, laborious and did not care what other thinks of him, and always facing difficulties in family affairs. So Chhura's life indicated faithful, sacrifices for others, on the other hand Nahaia life indicated wickedness, sin, deceitfulness. Therefore, we sympathize Chhura and despised Nahaia, but they teaches a moral lessons to the readers.

In another story, Chhura and his family had become very poor. They determined to sell their only valuable vessel in order to buy rice. The next morning after they decided, Chhura prepared to set off to the nearest village. Before he left, his wife warned him to be very careful with the vessel and told him that he was not to put it on the ground at all. But when he was tired of carrying it on one shoulder he was going to change it to the other. Chhura went off very early, carrying the huge vessel on his right shoulder. So he went on and on and he became very tired, his right shoulder began to ache and he decided to make a change. He remembered what his wife had told him not to put the pot on the ground. He wondered how he could get it to the other side without putting it on the ground. After thinking for sometimes, he turned himself round and thought that

the pot is on the other side now. He did not realized that he was going back to his own village. When the sun was setting he got back to his own village, but he thought it was the place towards which he set out in the morning. When he reached his own village he stayed as a guest in one of his neighbour's house, and when his children seeing him called out to him, he thought, "What civil, polite children." When his wife inquired what he was doing at the neighbour's and asked him to come home, he thought, "That woman is probably in love with me."

In this story, Chhura may be considered as silliest of all simpletons because he agreed all his wife told him without any doubt. He had no idea of his own how to change his shoulder even he was tired of carrying the pot. This tale expressed Chhura's foolishness but created a lovable fool. The Mizos are fond of telling about the foolish or stupid adventures and it is clear from the tale we transmitted till today especially Chhura tales. One of his story may shows how stupid he is but another story shows how a clever trickster he is. "The adventures of the trickster, even when considered by themselves, are inconsistent. Part are the result of his stupidity, and about an equal number show him overcoming his enemies through cleverness." (Thompson 319). This statement is true if we look up the tales of Chhurbura, part of his tales shows how he is a stupid or foolish person but the other part shows how he overcome his enemies through cleverness. We find that this mixture of concept is continually present, so that any series of adventures is likely to be a succession of clever tricks and foolish mishaps.

One day, Chhura saw *chengkek* fruits and became very pleased, he came up to the tree and pulled down the branches. He could have easily plucked and eaten the fruit, but somehow in his mind the idea of plucking the fruit could not be dissociated from climbing the tree itself. So he kept pulling down the branches but not plucking the fruit. While pulling the branches up and down, Chhura said to himself that if only Nahaia, his companion were there he would so easily be able to tackle the problem that baffled him completely. So he never ate the fruit. He said to himself, 'If only was Nahaia was here, how easily he would have solved this problem. But me, not for me, not for me, I despair'. So he never plucked the fruit and he left the place without

eating it. We may believe that Chhura was a fool for not plucking the fruits but on the other hand, we know that it is very easy for him to pluck the tree. The tree normally does not grow very tall and it is not difficult for any person to pluck the fruits. Was he really unable to pluck it? As Dahrawka remarks, “ His sympathy and love for his brother Nahaia, made him fool for others till today” (Mizo Thawnthu 230). Chhura was not a fool but he might take an opportunity to show of loves and respect for his brother Nahaia. We may say that this episode unfold the cleverness of Chhura and we sympathized him while we despised his cunning brother. Chhura played the role of fool but he always saved and helped Nahaia whenever he can, to avoid shame for his brother. Chhura clearly knew that if he despised his own brother, no one will never applauded him. That is why he never refused him even when he employed the tricks on him, he remained silent. Instead he usually played the role of fool and stupid in order to avoid the problems. In times of trouble Chhura always know what to do and did not afraid of anything even an ogress. The story of magic horn highlighted the positive qualities of Chhura.

Chhura and Nahaia had their jhum cultivation each other at a far distance from the village. At the bottom of Naa’s plot there was a big hollow tree where many birds used to come and rest for a night. The ogress used the hollow tree as a shelter for her young ones. When Nahaia discovered that an ogress had made her home in a hollow tree, he suggested to Chhura that they exchange their plots but did not mentioned about the ogress. All he told him was that if he throw a stone at the hollow tree, the birds would fly out from it. When they exchanged their plots, Chhura went to his new plot the next day. As told by Naa, he saw the tree and started to throw stones at them. The ogress reacted quickly and warned him to stop throwing stones. Chhura did not heed the warning and attacked the tree by throwing some more stones. He forced the young ones to swallow hot ash one by one and killed all of them. He devices a clever plan to capture her. He made a swing in his farm hut and pretended to go home in the evening but hid himself in the roof. After sometime, the ogress approached and sat on the swing and began singing a mourning song. Chhura immediately seized the hair of the ogress threatening to take her home for the pleasure of the village children. The ogress begged

him not to be so cruel and promised him to give a valuable things she had owned if he freed her. Finally she ransoms herself with her precious magic horn. It can produced delicious food from one end and boiled meats from the other end without human efforts. When Nahaia came to know about the horn, he was filled with jealousy and plan carefully how he could have the magic horn from Chhura. He fired Chhura's house and shouted to come out quickly with his horn. Chhura missed his steps and fell down, throwing his horn and picked up quickly by Nahaia.

The best quality admired by most of the Mizo is bravery, this is a characteristic most admired by all cultures. Capturing the ogress was a big matter when we consider ogress is the enemy of human beings. This episode reveals that Chhura was a clever trickster, he can played a tricks on evil everyone afraid of. Unlike his brother, he is not afraid of the ogress. He attacked the tree where the ogress was present, he killed all the young ones and plan to capture the ogress. This tale showing that the weak could conquer the great one. Chhura was not afraid of the evil spirit and threatening her to let the village children will make fun of her. It will be a nightmare for her if Chhura bring her home. As a result, the ogress begging for mercy, and promised him to give the precious magic horn if he freed her. So Chhura can possess a valuable object from her due to his cleverness. With the precious horn, Chhura and his family now stopped working and enjoyed the life. But he has to go through many difficult tasks to attained this precious horn, putting his own life at risk when confronting the evil. To expressed how he was a clever trickster, he devices his plan to capture the ogress without fear. In the end, he outwitted the ogress and make the ogress in the position of begging mercy for her freedom. We may imagine Chhura was a foolish person when he agreed to exchange the plot of cultivation with Nahaia. But this incident expressed how he loved his coward brother, and fully sacrificed for him. The character of Chhura reflecting the best quality in Mizo life, that is why we admired by all the Mizos even it is a simple tales. His selfless service to his brother without expectations of return makes him admired by the readers or listeners. we sympathized Chhura while we despised his brother Nahaia who always

take advantage of his brother trusting nature. We may considered Chhura as a trickster and clever hero in his display of wits but some of his tale displays his aggressiveness.

One day, he proposed to visit a village called *Mawngping Khua*, the people of which did not have rectum. So he went to that village. In the morning, children saw him passing his stools. "hey, hey" expressed their wonder and reported what they had seen to their parents. The parents gathered together around him and asked him how he had a rectum. The people requested Chhura to perform operation on their children. They brought their children to him in the morning. He made an iron rod and when it became hot, he just thrushes the rod into the bottom of the children. He dumped them into the pit and close the lid to be enquired only after two days. The parents eagerly waiting to pull them up when the right time came. They found that all the children had died except one. The only survivor, who could hardly move his hands was caught from every side by the mothers and he died too. They were very angry and tried to take revenge. But he had already left. He hid himself inside the hollow of a big tree near the path. The pursuers came and took rest under the shade of tree. They expressed their anger, grinning their teeth and twisting their lips. Hearing this, Chhura was frightened and he shouted out from his hiding place. They surrounded the tree and pulled him out. As they were all trying to pounce on him, 'you are so many, all of you can't touch me. So please catch hold of me only in my elbow and in my knees because running out from you is out of question for me' he pleaded. They obeyed and when they did, he made a violent struggle and run out. Chhura climbed up a big banyan tree. His pursuers waited for him under the banyan tree and decided to fell the tree. He said to them that they should wait for him and he will helped them to cut the tree. So they waited and he made good escape once again. But they overtook him again and made a big basket of bamboo, put him inside and hang him by the rope in the middle of the bridge. They left him to die of hunger and thirst. After sometime, a pawia traveler was crossing the bridge. He was very happy to see him. " ah! Pawia come and release me, or I'll beat you", he shouted at him. The man released him but Chhura put him inside the basket and hang him as was done to him. He took all his precious things and was heading to the same village back. When he reached the village, he told a lie and all the men in the village rushed to the river in search of fortunes. But they all died in the river. He poured water into their hearth and

extinguished all the fire. When womenfolk returned home no fire was to be found. In the meantime, they saw Chhura enjoying himself at the fireside. They begged him for fire but rejected them all but urging all women to sleep with him.

In this tale, we find the different themes of trickster like liar, humour, revenge, sex, greedy etc. Sometimes, Chhura employed tricks with the motive of deceiving and exploiting others to escape and survive from his problems. Sometime, Chhura's action are often extremely aggressive and forbidden. This element is expressed when he traveled to *Mawngpingkhua*. He just thrushes the iron rod into the bottom of the children and all of them died in the morning. The villagers tried to take revenges on him and chased him, after sometimes the people capture him and decided to punished him, they hanged Chhura by the rope in the middle of the river. The element of greediness is also seen in this tale. When he was escaped from the river, he went to the village again and told a lie to the village men about the valuable goods he was carrying. With the hope of getting the same wealth, the village men rushed to the river in search of fortunes. But they all died because of their greedy. It is clear that they should drown with vessels tied round their waist. It is not only their stupidity but also greediness that brought them into the river. It is funny and amazing when Chhura deceived all the village men by himself and he tricked all his enemies into drowning themselves in the river. Wonderfully, he was able to persuade his enemies to rushed to the river in search of fortunes. He played a witty tricks and this showed how Chhura a clever trickster in time of needs. He outwitted his enemies and can escaped from their traps , instead, making them all fall into their own traps. He also told a lie to the village women and took advantage of their problems urging all women to sleep with him. Chhura was enjoying himself at the fireside when the womenfolk was coming back from deeply grieved at the loss of their husbands, tired and wet. He employed a witty tricks with the motive of getting the womenfolk into his bed. They begged him for fire but he rejected them all. They slept with him for just a spark of fire. We find sexual elements in Mizo trickster tales and highlighted the existence of unusual sexual relationship. It is no doubt that there is sexual desires and sometimes a pervert mind in human mind and this

shadows is appeared in the folktales. As Lalruanga remarks, “ There are so many sexual element in Mizo trickster tales”(37). This episode highlighting besides the sexual elements, it also reflecting the various aspects of the Mizo character of its time.

Chhura had elder brother named Nahaia who was noted for his cleverness. On the death of their father they had to divide the household properties between them. After taking their due shares, one mithun was still left. They did not know how to divide it into two. At last, they thought out a plan. One should own the head portion and the other the bottom portion. Nahaia chose the head portion. Every morning Nahaia asked Chhura to clean the shed full of dung. One day the mithun gave birth to a beautiful calf. Chhura was very happy thinking that he had the rightfuk claim to it. The mithun was licking the calf clean. Nahaia said to Chhura, “Look, the calf did not come out from the bottom side, but from the mouth”. Chhura was dumbstruck. So the calf belonged to Nahaia. Meanwhile the calf was looking for the mother’s breast. But Chhura prevented it from sucking the breast since the breast was at the bottom side. Nahaia was in trouble. So he proposed to exchange sides. Chhura owned the head portion. Whenever the mithun gave birth, the calf belonged to Nahaia. One day, Chhura tied the mithun by the neck and was dragging it home. “Why are you taking our mithun to your home?” cried Nahaia. “Sharing is no profit to me, I’m taking my portion,” he replied. At this, they agreed to share the mithun equally.

Let us take up another story to reveals Nahaia became the clever and lazy trickster. Nahaia was very lazy and his house was in bad shape with the roof leaking all over. So he thought out a plan to exchange his house with Chhura.

One day, he went to Chhura’s house. He looked at the roof made of thick thatch and he really coveted it. “O Chhura! you are still a bad workman. You don’t know how to make thatch roof. Why do you make it so thick? As to my roof. I made it in such a way that we used to count stars with my wife and children while lying on our bed. We enjoyed the heavenly bodies every night. If you desire, I have no objection to exchange our houses” he said casually. Chhura readily agreed. So chhura shifted to the new house with all enthusiasm. As long as there was no rain, all was well. One night there was a heavy

downpour of rains. They rushed out of their home and took shelter at the porch of Nahaia under heavy rain. So Chhura had to work very hard to repair the holes right from the second night of his stay in his new house. And he compelled not to leave any holes for watching the beautiful stars while sleeping.

The tales reveals how Nahaia was a cunning trickster who makes life more enjoyable for himself by fooling his brother. He was often using his cleverness to achieve his purposes. He always take advantage of his brother's trusting nature. His characters and actions are greedy and nasty towards his brother, but Chhura was silent, played the role of a fool in order to avoid trouble in the family. Sometimes, Chhura appeared as a clumsy or foolish person although he usually possess amazing power of survival. Human trickster tales depicted how human mind is full of envy, hate jealousy. Nahaia also envied his brother when he has a better house. He employed tricks with the motive of deceiving for selfishness and self-seeking, so he thought out a plan to exchange his house with Chhura. One of the amazing things in this tales was Chhura's wife, who was silent in the incidents. It is clear that his wife would not allowed to exchanged their house but she didn't said anything and remain silent. This tales is the reflection of human life and Mizo society and highlighting the low status of women in a patriarchal society. They are not given credit for the work they have done in the family. So they shifted to their new house which was much damaged than their own house. Even when they shared the mithun the women didn't said anything. With the hope of getting better shares, Nahaia chosed the head portion. He did not wanted to clean the shed full of dung but he jealous of Chhura when he had the beautiful calf. So he proposed to exchange their portion. Chhura followed his brother wishes and never protest but when Chhura did put his foot down, Nahaia could do nothing about it. when Chhura thought that sharing a mithun is no profit to him, he tied the mithun by the neck and was dragging it home. Nahaia could do nothing about it and at last they made agreement to share mithun equally. These tales depicted the theme of greedy and laziness, Nahaia deceived his brother due to his greedy, so he proposed to exchange their portion of mithun. The task of cleaning the shed full of dung every morning was a difficult tasks for

Nahaia but he was fully jealous of his brother's possession and claimed the calf even his portion was the head. The protagonists in the human trickster tales are having an interesting character and the people are very fond of telling about the foolish or stupid adventure of trickster and about an overcoming his enemies through cleverness. "They have been one of the chief forms of entertainment for all members of society young and old" (Thompson 461). This statement is really true even today because it gives artistic expression and it is an important instrument to bring amusement to the young and old from the remote corner of primitive men to the western world. They will long continue to be one of the chief means of amusement to the readers. Let us have taken up one tale of Chhura which demonstrates the elements of humour.

One day, Chhura's wife went to the jhum and entrusted Chhura with the household chores. She instructed that he should start cooking when the rays from the sinking sun fell on the main branch of the big banyan tree that stood near their house. In the evening when the sun's beam fell on the main branch of the tree, Chhura, with a heavy load of utensils started climbing the tree to cook the food on the main branch of the tree. He met with an accident and fell down badly. In another tale, Chhura's grandfather was died and he brought the corpse to be placed at the cave. On his way he sat down to rest and put the corpse against a tree in a sitting posture. At this moment a cowherd with three mithuns approached the spot. Chhura shouted to him, "If your mithuns knock dead my grandfather who is sleeping here, I will fine you one of the mithuns." Before the cowherd could control the mithun, one of them knocked down the grandfather. The cowherd gave a male mithun to Chhura as compensation.

Every story has a means of entertainment and the traditional tales is even today one of the principal form of entertainment. One of the purposes of folktales is to see that wickedness is properly punished. If a person is naturally kind, such power will be only a strength, but if he is overbearing and unkind, it will certainly bring about his downfall. This element is seen in the tale of *Nuchhimi*.

One day her mother told her that she must go to her aunt's house and give her some pork. Nuchhimi replied, "I do not know the way to my aunt's house". Her mother told her the way and warned her carefully not to go to the house of Hmuichukchuriduninu. Unknown to them, Hmuichukchuriduninu was listening carefully to the entire conversation, so she ran home and cleared up the path that led to her house. She piled up all the dirt along the path that led to Nuchhimi's aunt's house. After a time, Nuchhimi and her younger brother set off towards their aunt's house. They followed her mother instructions but they came to the path which was neat and clean, they finally reached the house of Hmuichukchuriduninu and delivered the pork to her. Nuchhimi became suspicious but Hmuichukchuriduninu was very cunning and she spoke well to them, treated them just as their own aunt would. At night she told Nuchhimi, "I will cradle your little brother in my arms at night and you can sleep by yourself in the corner." She killed the little boy and ate up all his body. She laid the bones in a trivet. When the dawn broke, she rasped to Nuchhimi, "Go and light a fire at once". She saw the bones of her younger brother and began to weep. She caught Nuchhimi and strapped her inside a basket and tied her to the cross beams of the house, went off to her jhum. The mouse helped her and she was able to flee to her own home. When her parents heard about the incident, they tried to take revenge. They went to her house while she was still away at the jhum. They hid an egg inside the hearth and placed white ants inside her blanket, a snake inside her water jug. After that they placed a number of tiny red ants inside her oil can they smeared her bedpost with all kinds of filth and grime. By the opposite end of the door they placed a wooden pestle, a huge dog under her ladder. The mouse responded when she called out Nuchhimi and she broke open the door in fury. She began to light the fire to warm herself. As soon as she did, the egg burst in her eye. She rushed to get water from the water jar but the snake bit her hard. When she pulled the blanket over herself and the white ants bit her all over her body. She grabbed hold of the bed post in a bid to escape, only to smear dirt all over herself. And as she ran out the large wooden pestle hit hard against her. And she began to jump about in painful frenzy. Soon the platform gave way under her weight. The dog began to bite her viciously. A little later Hmuichukchuriduninu died, much to the delight of Nuchhimi and her family, who headed for home and lived happily ever after.

A trickster in a human trickster tales does not follow rules, and tricks other people to get what they want. They can be good or bad, clever or unintelligent, strong or weak, kind or unkind. Tricksters are often mischievous troublemakers who try to manipulate others to get what they want. In the tale of *Nuchhimi*, Hmuichukchuriduninu played the role of trickster, she outwitted Nuchhimi and her younger brother, making them fall into her traps. But her unkind manner certainly bring about her downfall in the end. As we have mentioned above, the purposes of a good folktales is to see that wickedness is properly punished. Like this, Hmuichukchuriduninu pay back what she has done to Nuchhimi and her brother with the same coins. In this tales we have seen the theme like revenge, selfishness, betrayal, violence etc. This tale shows that the dark side of the Mizo early life but it is useful to understand human nature. It reveals real human nature through short and simple tale with their characters. The motifs which we found in this tale are wicked ogre, oppression of the poor, death, helpful animals etc. Through the tales we can observe how cowardice and selfishness of Hmuichukchuriduninu to get the meat. She piled up all the dirt along the path that led to Nuchhimi's aunt. She got what she wanted but Nuchhimi constantly showed her courage and skills even when the wicked ogre strapped her inside a basket. At last she was able to flee to her own house with the help of the mouse. The wicked ogre oppressed the poor children, she ate the younger one and strapped Nuchhimi inside a basket. But Nuchhimi's parents thought up of a plan to torture her. Courage and perseverance were rewarded in the end with victory over the enemy. The element of desire for possession and greedy was seen in this tales. The reason why the wicked ogre cheated Nuchhimi and her brother was desire for possessions. She wanted to get their pork meat when she heard the entire conversation and played a witty tricks. The character of Hmuichukchuriduninu is overbearing and unkind, and certainly bring about her downfall. This short and simple tales reveals the purposes of folktales, that is to see that wickedness is properly punished.

A story of *Lengkawia* expressed the human trickster element in Mizo folktale. It depicted the nature of tricks while he discomfiture the ogress by making

them eating their own friend's intestine. He was not only afraid of the ogress, he also pulled out the tongue and left her for dead.

Once upon a time there lived a man named Lengkawia. One day, he set a snare in the jungle bordering the jhum. One morning he realizes that an ogress had been caught in the snare. In great delight he washed the intestines of the ogress by the river. While he was doing that another ogress came by and asked Lengkawia, "What are you doing?" Lengkawia lied and replied, "I am washing the intestines of a chicken." However the ogress did not believe him. After a while another ogress came by and asked what he was doing. As usual Lengkawia refused to disclose that it was the intestine of an ogress and lied again. At last, he told that he was washing the intestines of bamboo rat and it was actually a delicacy that the ogress and her friends craved for, so they began to eat. While they were busy, he climbed up in a nearby tree. From the tree he told that they ate the intestines of their friends. So the ogress rushed across to Lengkawia in a bid to kill him, but they could not do so because he had poured oil all over the tree. Finally the entire group left to fetch the axe and Lengkawia clambered down the tree and thrashed the ogress. He then pulled out her tongue and left her for dead and ran away.

The story of Chawngmawii and Hrangchhuana can be cited to reflect the human trickster and the theme of love in Mizo folktales. Many romantic tales highlight the relationship between the daughter of the chief and the poor suitors, the love between a beautiful lady residing in the heaven and human beings, the love between beautiful lady and culture hero. Beauty becomes focus of the male gaze in Mizo folktales and women in Mizo folktales were expected to be a faithful woman, beautiful, submissive and obedient in all aspects of life. All these elements are found in this story.

Once upon a time there was a very beautiful girl named Chawngmawii in one village and very handsome young man named Hrangchhuana in another village. After sometime, hostility broke out between these two villages. Hrangchhuana used to visit stealthily Chawngmawii's village at night and he became greedy and started to kill some villagers each time he visited the village. One night they seized Hrangchhuana and killed him brutally. To trace out the secret lover of Hrangchhuana, the village chief directed that each young woman should work over the dead body. When it was Chawngmawii's turn,

she came forward and fell down on the body and embraced him. When the villagers got to know the details of their relationship, they killed her brutally. The two lovers enjoyed love for a short while on earth, but their spirits went to the sky, transformed into the stars: Chawngmawii became venus and Hrangchhuana became Jupiter. It is believed by the Mizos that one's love effort would be crowned with unmitigated success if these stars were very near together in the sky.

Generally, in a folktales, goodness is always rewarded and heroes and heroines live happily ever after. But this story has uniqueness, the hero and heroine was killed but the story was not end in it. Their spirits went to the sky. Hrangchhuana could not control his feeling towards her and need to be with her even they are enemy. He came across many difficulties to be with her, employed a clever tricks. But he gradually took less care of his secret visit and abducted some young child from that village. The chief and the villagers takes very good care of the village safety and protection and finally find out who was the killer. The villagers also killed Chawngmawii. Even after they are perished in this world their spirit was transformed into big and bright stars in the sky and it is said that they still love each other even when they changed into the stars, they come in contact and still make love in the sky. We have seen great romance in this tale, that may superseded the love of Romeo and Juliet. The villagers were raged upon them when they found out about their relationship and it is not understandable for them the love between the village feud. Chawngmawii could not hide her love when the villagers beat and tortured him. She just embraced fondly and cover him with her cloth and wept bitterly. Chawngmawii felt too much pity on his lover but could not do anything to save her. He asked her to take his head to his parents if the villagers were kill him. The reason why she appreciated his last words was because of her endless love upon him. She reached his parents home with his head as he requested her before he died. As folktales is the reflection of human life, it depicts the lives of Mizo culture and society at large and the status of women in the society. We can observed from this tale that Mizo society was a strong patriarchal society in which women have nothing to say in the works of defences of the villages. Chawngmawii also could not do anything when the

villagers beat and tortured his lover and silently watched him. The women folks were expected to be silent and obedience in the family and in the society. It is clear that it would be punishable for the villagers when Chawngmawii's attitudes towards their enemy. Chawngmawii portrayed as the ideal type of young women kind, loveable, faithful, obedient, beautiful. Hrangchhuana also represents the ideal type of Mizo young men, having the qualities of courage, skills, perseverance, resilience. He managed to escape when he secretly visited his lovers village even they made a barricade of fencing around their village. He was a very clever and tricky person and misguided the defence party, often cheated the villagers. Although he expressed courage and perseverance in the face of danger because of his beloved, they did not showed kindness upon him and killed him brutally. However the spirit of love between them stay alive till today. This story reveals that the Mizo people believed life after death. A favourite theme of love is found in this tale and allowing the readers to gain insight into the values and customs of the society.

The tale of Chhura depicts the element of trickster as well as desire of sex in Mizo folktales.

In the story, Chhura and his mother-in-law set out to catch crab in a stream. Chhura caught a lot of crabs but his mother-in-law wanted him to catch big ones. Chhura tried his best to catch and dig the hole of the crab with his dao. While trying to catch the biggest one Chhura was suddenly tempted to fulfill his desire with his mother-in-law. Sometimes his actions are often extremely aggressive and forbidden. He told her that the crab has bitten him and asked her to go and inquire from the goddess of the stream behind the big rock how to solve the problem. While she went to the big rock, Chhura ran to the other side of the big rock and responded with a gentle voice saying, 'To sleep with the mother-in-law is the only remedy'. Chhura came back to the spot and tucked his hand again into the hole as quickly as possible. He played a clever tricks to get what he wanted from his mother-in-law. The mother was quiet reluctant to fulfill the suggestion but she promised to obey chhura and had no other choice. Then Chhura convinced her to sleep with him.

He devices a clever plan to sleep with him and succeeded through his clever tricks. Blinded by his sex desire, he persuaded even his mother-in-law to sleep with him and reveals his own shortcoming. His extreme sexual appetite is also seen in another story when he tricked all his enemies into drowning themselves in the river. Their wife returns to the village with tired and cold, but Chhura doused all the fire of every house. In the meantime, they saw Chhura enjoying himself at the fire side. They begged him for fire but rejected them all unless they agreed to sleep with him. He was a clever trickster and unbeatable in his display of wits but reflects the dark side of human beings. It is said that folktales is the expression of dreams, it expressed the desire of human beings even sexual element. as Thompson remarks, "To the unlettered story-teller and listener, as well as the writer of literary tales, there has always been a greater interest in deceptions connected with sex conduct than any other" (The Folktale 202). In folktales everywhere there is sexual element and Mizo folktales also expressed this element, but conveying lessons to the readers or listeners to have a good behaviours.

Human trickster stories are simple tales about simple people. The characters are either good or bad, strong or weak, wise or foolish. Folk characters are transparent and simple to understand, that is why parents use them to teach their children important lessons through folktales. It display great human qualities while others display wickedness and jealousy. The telling of stories appears to be a cultural universal, common to basic complex societies alike. Even the forms are certainly similar from culture to culture. Let us highlights the features of some trickster tales of different cultures. Cheating is a distinctive features of a large number of the tales of Assam. In Assamese, various cheating tales told of wily rouge Tentan. Tentan tales are also found among the Kachari and Mikirs. A character of the Tentan type is also seen in Apfuho in some Lhota Naga tales. The incidents in this group in Naga tales do not seem to be found in either Kachari, Mikir, Meitei or Assamese trickster tales, but there is no doubt that Tentan and Apfuho are kins. To illustrate, Apfuho once places a dead dog near some oil seed and persuaded the owner of the seed- an old woman- that the dog has

died at her beating. He then frighten her saying that the dog's owner is coming up with a large number of men, and he purchases his aid in this difficult situation by parting with her pig.

Among the Angami, the trickster is known as Matsuo and he is of the same type with Tentan. Matsuo secures a lot of hide, hang them on a tree and makes a fire underneath to dry them. Some thieves come and divide their spoil by the fire. The hides fall and scare them away. So Matsuo secures the money. His fellow villagers are told that he has secured the money by selling the hides of his cattle. So they slay their cattle and try to sell the hides but with no profits. They burn Matsuo's house. He put the ashes under his saddle, and when he is requested to lend his horse to a man and his mother, he says, 'If your mother rides on this horse all my rupees will turn to ash'. On their promising that ample recompense will be made if that happens the horse is lent. When the old woman gets up on the horse the ashes fly out and Matsuo has to given a large sum. The villagers are told that he has sold the ash of his burnt house. They are deceived as before when they try to emulate his example. They tie him up in order to throw him into the river. But being left alone for a while he sing attractively and persuades a cowherd to set him free so that he can sing better. He then tied up the unfortunate cowherd and makes his escaped. The villagers throw the cowherd into the river. The tale has a close parallel in Asamese as well in Mikir. In the Mikir tales, it is a fatherless lad who tricks his malicious maternal uncles.

The tale of 'Three thieves` of Adis of Arunachal Pradesh depicts the element of human trickster.

In the story, there lived three young men. They were lazy and not ready to engage in farming or any other activities to earn their livelihood. In the beginning, all the three were stealing household items, later they started to steal paddy, cattle etc from the village. Those three become a nuisance to the villagers. Thus the three thieves were driven out from their village and took shelter in a nearby forest. One day they stole everything they could from the village, they could easily escape from the village because it was noontime. They were on the way back to their camp in the forest, they were tired

and feeling thirsty. So the youngest among them was sent to bring water. When he was away, the two planned to eliminate him so that the booty can be shared by them. They waited for his return and when they saw him coming back, one of them struck him and he succumbed to his injuries. The two proceeded further with the booty and they were very hungry. So one of them stayed back with the booty while the other went to a nearby village to collect food. So he wanted to make it his own. He mixed poison in the food that he was carrying for his fellowman. On the other side, the other fellow was thinking how to make the entire booty his own. He saw the other man coming with food. He hid himself behind a huge tree so that he could strike him without his notice. As soon as he reached near the tree, he stopped him to death. Since he was very hungry, he gulped down the food. Within minutes, he breathed his last. "They paid for their misdeeds".

Let me take up an interesting folktale from Burma which demonstrated the human trickster.

In the story, Khun San Law was adopted as her son by a rich widow and he grew up into a handsome young man, the young ladies of the village fell in love with him and dreamed of marrying him. But Khun San Law remained uninterested in any of them. When he strolled along a street and saw a beautiful girl, he passionately in love with her. He introduced himself and asked her to marry him. The next day, Khun San Law and the beautiful girl Nan Oo Pyin married. Khun San Law was very happy with his young wife, but after a few weeks he felt that it was his duty to go home and inform his mother of his marriage. On arrival there, he broke the news to her mother. Although shaking with anger, she pretended to be pleased. But she told him to go to the plantation site and supervise the worker for a few days before he go back to his wife. His mother sent secret instructions to her workers to delay his return by pretending to quarrel and fight with each other. His wife could not wait any longer and travelled to his village. On arrival at his house, his mother received her with a warm welcome but tried to get rid of her. As days passed and Nan Oo Pyin remained patient but his mother lost her temper and beat her many times. Humiliated and shamed in front of her friends, Nan Oo Pyin journey back to her own village. On the way, she gave birth to her child, who, however, soon died. She leaved her child on the fork of yonder tree so that

the father will see it when he comes after her. Nan Oo Pyin arrived safely back to her house, but she was sick and died. When Khun San Law reached his beloved wife's house she was already dead. He killed himself and their spirit appeared as twin stars in the sky.

Human trickster tales are widely spread all over the world and these tales attest the truth of the relation between the strong and the weak. The human mind which is full of envy, hate and jealousy, due to these reasons the tricksters are found employing tricks with the motive of deceiving and exploiting others for self-seeking. Each of these tales are told just for enjoyment, but some of its motifs are seen to be common to one or another. Nagas have a tale which relates in a way to the Assamese. Similarly, the Mizos have a tale which relates in a way to Burma. The folktale of Burma then explains how they believed reincarnation and this element is found in the tale of Khun San Law and Nan Oo Pyin which I mentioned above. This element is also found in the tale of Chawngmawii and Hrangchhuana. These tales portrayed their protagonists spirit was transformed into a star in the sky. The lovers enjoyed love for a short while on earth, but their spirits went to the sky transformed into the stars. Transformation of person into natural object is a widespread folklore feature and found among every culture. In the Angami tale 'Hunchbili' a wife thrown into the water then turns into a bamboo plants. Similarly, in the Assamese tale 'Tejimala' when the girl is killed and buried, a gourd creeper springs up. The trickster sort of symbolizes the pleasure which is felt when a clever person inflicts discomfitures on dupes and fools and thus causes laughter. Sometimes the trickster is without his assistant, apparently weak and helpless.

In Manipur folktale, Khamba and Thoibi is a lovely romantic tale. Thoibi was the niece of the king and Khamba was a down-and-out prince. Thoibi happens to see him while fishing and fall in love with him. Thoibi's desire to get Khamba is foiled by the jealousy of Kongyamba, the king's strongest fighter. The king is pleased at the heroism of the young lad and wants to give Thoiba to him. But in the way is the villainous Kongyamba. Khamba is beaten up and tied to the leg of an elephant. He is half dead in the forest. Thoibi learns of this from a dream sent by the goddess Panthoibi and rushes to the aid of her lover. Even then the lovers cannot unite in wedlock, for the girl is sent into exile

by her father. The king then declares that he will give her to anyone who can capture a particular tiger. Kongyamba is torn to pieces by the tiger while Khamba is able to slay it with his spear. The lovers get united at long last. Their happiness, however does not last. Khamba becomes suspicious of his wife and while trying to test her fidelity, gets accidentally speared by her.

The story ends in tragedy. This type of tale is seen in Kungawrhi tale. Her father declares that he will give her to anyone who could rescue her from the tiger. It is found that the same tale type and motifs are found scattered all over the world. Even though the stories may differ in subject from place to place and the conditions and purposes of tale telling may change, it provides the same basic social and individual needs

The human mind is endowed with imagination and this imagination it is which has made man a creator, the creator of a folktale or even a theory based on facts. Folktales are some of the earliest creations of man. They may be highly imaginative and fanciful, they may as well be based on observation but made attractive by allowing imagination to play on them. According to R.L.Thanmawia, “ Mizo folktales indicated the character in human being, and it is interesting for the young and old” (Chuailo 193). So humans can express through human trickster tales that could be unsafe to express or safe to express. In this sense, the trickster is a kind of escape value for a society, and often represents the introduction of good things to society. They also represent the underdog who uses skills and cunning to outwit a superior. From the above observations, it is learn that the folk narratives can be useful in tracing the way of life. It helps us to understand human nature and human behavior of that time.

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CHAPTER-5

CONCLUSION

The term Folklore applies to unwritten, orally transmitted folk-literature of a people. It is a wide-ranging expression of archaic culture of great wealth and complexities. By folklore is a generally meant the traditions, beliefs, legends, telling stories among the common people. It represents the ancient thought of mankind, the feelings and world view and artistic manifestation. The folklore is a vital element in a living culture. Each group of people has handled its folk literature in its own way and its origin and evolution can be explicitly spoken of. The continued existence of oral literature depends upon memory. Folklore is significant to explain and understand societies in the context of preserving cultural diversity. It is an important element of the cultural heritage of every nation. It is also a living tradition rather than just a memory of the past.

A folktale is a story which has been transmitted orally from generation to generation through the lips of the common people. It evolved off the nature of man to tell and listen to tales. It is a widespread tale and appears in different forms in different countries. Folktales are the earliest form of traditional imaginative literature. They enlighten us on the human imagination in its childhood; the attempts of our ancestors to convey their understanding of the world, their ideas and their beliefs, their customs and manner of living. B.B.Kumar comment about the folktales in his book, “The folktale also reflect back-ground of the people, their mind, character, religion, culture, superstition and taboos. Many folktales and myths are woven around them”(8). The human mind is full of imagination and this imagination it is which has made man a creator, the creator of a myth or a folktale. As Lalruanga remarks, “Folktale is fictitious, and the principal characters is sometimes human or non-human” (29). They may be highly imaginative and fanciful as well as based on observation but made attractive by allowing imagination to play on them.

The present study of Trickster tales in Mizo folk narratives shows that the Mizo led a very simple and happy life. But they have a recognizably similar form across advanced societies and this shows that they have highly imaginations and experiences. It is believed that they should never contact with other societies, but they have similar form with them. They are contented with their lot and the society is a close knit one because they practiced the same profession that is jhuming. The life of early Mizo society greatly portrayed in their oral literature. Mizo tribe has a rich culture with abundant tales and the trickster is an important elements in Mizo folk narratives, but they have deep moral values and warns youngsters not to practices injustices. Oxford Reference Dictionary defined trickster as, “ A person who cheats or deceives people”. Certainly, the tricksters employed the tricks with the motive of deceiving and exploiting others for selfishness. Some tales displaying great human qualities while others displaying wickedness and selfishness. Trickster tales are widely spread in all culture and all kinds of animals and human tricksters are found. As Stith Thompson remarks, “ The trickster tales tend to emphasized their cleverness rather than their stupidity” (326). On the whole, the tricksters tend to emphasized their cleverness and usually shows the weaker could conquer the strong ones. This elements is seen in Chhurbura’s tales, he was the silliest of all the simpletons and on the other hand, he was the cleverest of all the wise men. In reality, his tales reveal what a clever trickster he is. He makes fools of his enemies and overcome his enemies through cleverness, and making them fall into their own traps. As Dahrawka remarks , “ It is obvious that his enemies approached him in order to caught him by the neck but it seemed he was not afraid of them. He had make them caught him whenever he wanted but usually ran out of them by playing a clever tricks” (236). Chhura is by far the most commonly featured human trickster and made the number of appearance in Mizo trickster tales. The same story is often repeated but does not lose its interest. This is due to the satisfaction that our basic curiosity finds in his tale. He is the unchallenged hero of Mizo folktales.

Human sentiments also find in Mizo folk narratives. Love, self-sacrifice, bravery, hate, anger, revenge and jealousy find full expression in the same. This is seen in a human trickster tales. Some of the tales displaying great human qualities while others displaying wickedness and jealousy. The story of *Chawngmawii and Hrangchhuana* can be cited to portray the theme of love and romance in Mizo folk narratives. We find lovers sacrificing their lives for the sake of love. The story also portray theme of jealousy and revenge in the tale .They could not enjoy their love on earth but their spirit went to the sky and transformed into the stars and continued their loves in the sky. It is said that the two stars love each other and sometimes they are coming closer and closer, when they come in contact, it is said they make love. This type of tale is also seen in the tale of *Tualvungi and Zawlpala*. They also sacrificed their lives for the sake of love. They enjoyed their love even after their spirit was transformed into a butterfly, making love as they flew.

Psycho-analytical school provides the non-formalistic folk-loristic theory based on interpretation of folk-lore using sexual symbolism discovered by Sigmund Freud. According to this theory, B.B.Kumar remarks that, "The unilinear relation is the product of sick and pervert mind and hence the feeling of shame and incest" (35) . Mizo folktales also highlighted the existence of unusual sexual relationship between animals and human beings. It is observed that the tales are a mixture of fact and fancy but it is the expressions of the states of mind or the imagination of the people of that time. It is no doubt that there is sexual desires and sometimes a pervert mind in human mind and this shadows is also appeared in Mizo folk narratives. "There are multiple ways leading to human creativity. Sex is one of them. Hence, the self denial of sex for higher creativity in society. The folk-lore is full of example" (35). There are diverse man and woman relations with diverse feelings and sentiments. These multidimensional relations- such as relation of a man with his wife, mother and sister are the image of diverse relations. As folktale is the image of human beings, it seemed these diverse feelings and sentiments is appeared in the Mizo folktales. The tale of marriage to animal is seen in Nula leh Zawng and Chawngchilhi's tale. In the first tale, the monkey

saw the girl while she was bathing in the river and he took all her clothes. The monkey did not want to give back her clothes unless she agreed to marry him. Then the girl married the monkey and gave birth to male monkey. In Chawngchilhi's tale, she was in love with the snake and impregnated by the snake. As R.L.Thanmawia remarks, "In Mizo folktales if a woman married animals, they usually gave birth to an animal" (Lung Min Lentu 259). Mizo folk narratives show the marriage of women to animals but the marriage of men to animals is not appeared. Meanwhile, the Indonesian folktale also expressed the sexual relationship between human being and animal. But the woman gave birth to human being unlike Mizo folktales. A tale of a whale husband is popular on the North Pacific Coast. If a woman married animals in Mizo folktale, divorce usually happened between them. Their marriages were only for a short period of time.

The study reveals that the basic foundation of Mizo folk narratives was jhum- the system of multi-productive shifting cultivation.. The shifting cultivation has co-mingled with the Mizo life. All religious ceremonies were centered on the jhum cultivation and the people, irrespective of men and women, busied themselves in jhum cultivation and the jhum-related thoughts naturally permeated the folklore. This element is seen in Chhura's tales and who is one of the most popular characters amongst the Mizos. The tale of exchanging their jhum with his brother Nahaia was a popular tale, and this tale has the jhum as foundation. Nahaia found that there was a she-ghost in the hollow of a big tree at the lower end of his jhum. Chhura agreed without raising any question when his brother suggested to exchange their jhum. He is not afraid of the she-ghost and caught her. Chhura would not let her go unless she paid him a suitable ransom. The she-ghost tried to give him an axe which can prepare the jhum. The reason why she tried to give an axe was she knew it is an important instrument to earn their living during that time. This shows that jhum cultivation is the important foundation of Mizo folk narratives. The tale of *Liandova and his brother* also expressed this element. They were orphan and they were very poor, they did not even have a dao to prepare for a jhum and had to borrow from others. Once Liandova was employed to look after a granary. While doing so, he made pellets for killing birds. As he

was making them, he put a grain inside each to be used as seed later for his jhum. With the help of the old witch, they reap more grains in their jhum. From these tales it is clear that the jhum played an important role in Mizo folk narratives and shows it is the basic foundation in many tales.

The animal tale of '*Sakuh leh Sazuk*' (the porcupine and the deer) also shows how the Mizo tales has the jhum as its foundation. The tale tells about the two cutting their jhum and how much their jhum meant to them. *Mauruangi's* tale also shows the jhum is the basic foundation of Mizo folk narratives. Mauruang's father had two separate jhums, one for Mauruangi and another for Bingtaii. The protagonist, Mauruangi portray as the ideal image of a woman was that of a passive, industrious caretaker who took care of the house and the jhum field. Through her jhum field, she can meet the servants of a wealthy Raja who become so impressed with her kindness and beauty that they asked her to become their queen. This incident change her life and in the end, they lives happily with her husband. In *Chawngchilhi's* tale, we find Chawngchilhi and her sister working at the jhum field and this jhum field was the beginning of her unnatural relationship with the snake. From the above tales, we can see that the jhum played an important role in laying the foundation of Mizo folk narratives.

The Mizo folk narratives also express universal values and attitudes. So they talk of universal experience, struggle and desires through their creative imagination. It also have universal theme that have clean, spare outlines and this support interpretation without being completely distorted out of shape. The folk create stories about a universe where anything can happen. The tales about an attempt to make ladder between earth and heaven are seen in *Lasiri leh Lasari, Thangsira leh Thangzaia's* tale. Lasiri and Lasari were two sisters both dwelt in the sky fell in love with Thangsira and Thangzaia who resided on the earth, they used magical ropes as ladder and happily spent the time together and after that the two brothers usually went back down to the earth. Every folktales of the world portray the sky and the earth can be

easily communicate each other. This element is seen in Mizo folktales also and they imagined there was another villages in the sky and they believed that the commander is 'Pu Vana'. They thought that the people residing in this place were more beautiful and rich as compare to them. The Mizo folk narratives depict marriage with super-human beings origin of the sky, and this particular pattern is seen in the story of *Vanchungnula* and *Sichangneii*. *Vanchungnula*, a lady of renowned beauty residing in the heaven is courted by seven brothers, Tlumtea the youngest of whom is the hero. In *Sichangneii* tale, the hero had captured a beautiful supernatural being who came from the sky, he wanted to marry and proceeded to do so by removing her wings along with the feathers of her tail. She had no other option but to marry him. In this manner, she became humanized and without her wings, she was transformed into an ordinary woman. Without her wings she was an ordinary women but with them, she became a supernatural being. It is observes that beauty becomes a focus of the male gaze in Mizo folktales.

Mizo trickster tales have served as a means of instructing the younger generation about values which the society hold dear. They tell us of characters who are rewarded for kindness, goodness and steadfastness and they also tell of characters that are punished for their wickedness, selfishness and other unapproved behavioural traits. This element is seen in the tale of Chawngchilhi, her behavior was unapproved by the society and the result is destruction of the village by causing a massive earthquake to occur at the end of the tale. These trickster are a pursuit of leisure even while they are instrumental in passing along the values and morals of an entire culture. Unnatural things was happened in many trickster tales but children and adults all over the world continue to enjoy reading and listening to these trickster tales because such stories spark their imagination. The trickster tales sow the seeds of curiosity to the readers and they are motivated into action by these tales to seek out facts about the life of his ancestors, to learn of things that were important to him and to build on the social precepts that have been the foundation of the entire society. The tales of *Mauruangi* and *Hmuichukchuriduninu* warn youngsters against cruelty while tales of loves like that

of *Chawngmawii* and *Hrangchhuana* and tale of *Tualvungi* and *Zawlpala* encourage young lovers in difficult circumstances that true love will win out in the end. A Mizo youth, on hearing the stories of brave man like Phawthira cannot help but be motivated towards gallantry, and on hearing of tricksters like Chhura and Nahaia, will undoubtedly refrain from attempts to take advantage of the innocent.

The Mizo folk narratives portrayed that they are based on magico-transformational motifs such as transformation of man into animal, insect, fairy into human being etc. In the tale of *Kungawrhi*, the hero who could transform into a tiger was fell in love with the heroine Kungawrhi. *Tualvungi* and *Zawlpala's* spirit also transformed into butterfly who flattered around Phuntiha while he dig open Zawlpal's grave. In *Mauruangi* tale, we find that the heroine's mother is changed into a fish after her husband throws her into a flowing river. Transformation takes allow us to escape from our every day, logical, practical world into a world of enchantment, a world in which animals becomes human and poor people become royalty. *Rahtea* also transform into a dragon fly when his stepmother tried to persuade him to come back. The tale of *Chawngmawii* and *Hrangchhuana* also based on magico-transformational motif. They could not enjoyed their love on this earth because of inter village feud. Their enemies killed them but their spirit was transformed into a bright and beautiful stars, still enjoys their love in the sky. Tales of transformation and shape shifting occur in nearly every culture. They sometimes personify our fear of change and they also fill us with hope that we can change and end up happily transformed.

The study of Mizo folk narratives portray there is interaction of human beings with spirits such as fairies and ghost etc. The interaction with ghost is seen in the tale of *Chhura*. one day Nahaia found that there was a 'Phungpuinu' in the hallow of a big tree at the lower end of his jhum. He was afraid and suggested to Chhura to exchange his field. But Chhura did not afraid of the she-ghost and cheated her by pretending to leave the jhum but hiding. He suddenly sprang upon her and caught her.

She pleaded with Chhura to let her go but Chhura would not unless she paid him a suitable ransom. Finally, the ghost offered a magic horn of a deer. The tale of *Tumchhingi and Raldawna* also portray the interaction with the ghost. The hero and the heroine run away from her parents. After a long walk Tumchhingi recollected that she had forgotten her copper comb. Raldawna went back to the village to collect the comb, before he go, prepared a place on the top of a tree for Tumchhingi. While he was going, *Phungpuinu* (female spirit) is appeared just below her. The greedy Phungpui jealous of her rings and necklaces felt like eating Tumchhingi. Finally, the spirit at once swallowed Tumchhingi in one gulp. After sometime the spirit expelled Tumchhingi and threw her among the waste. In the end of the tale Tumchhingi killed the spirit, since then the two lived a happy life.

The tale of Chawngtinleri portray there is interaction of man with the *lasi*. The heroine Chawngtinleri's brother Lianchea could not resist the offer of wealth and fame offered to him by the *lasi* in exchange for the hand of his sister in marriage to their king. The myth of Chawngtinleri evolved to represent her as queen of all animals and brave hunters tried to gain her favour. We also seen this interaction in the tale of *Liandova and his brother*. They were orphans and they were very poor, they never had a full meal. Liandova and his brother always found cooked food at their jhum-house whenever they came in at noon for midday meals which was prepared by Lasi Pitar. She revealed that the snake they had saved before was her child and as a token of her gratitude, she prepare their midday meals. She also helped them when they harvest their grains and even when they select a mithun from Lersia, the famous chief. These folk narratives exhibit the human behavior and the impact of great traditions. The exhibition of love, hatred, cunningness, deception, helpfulness, self-sacrifice deals with the folk-motifs.

The hero acquires the use of a magical objects is appeared in Mizo folk narratives. Objects possessing a magical power which are directly given to the hero have the power of transformation. It is possible to observe that a sudden appearance of a

magical object are most often encountered without the slightest preparation. The employment of a magical objects follows its receipt by the hero, its help is directly put to use on the command of the hero. With this the hero outwardly loses all significance; he himself does nothing, while his helper accomplished everything. This element is seen in the tales of *Chhura*, *Kungawrhi*, *Rairahtea* and *Maurawkela*. The magic object which we seen in the tale of *Chhura*, and he got it from the Phungpuinu, can produced cooked meat from one end and cooked rice from the other end. This magical object is directly given to the hero. Chhura did not try to get this magical object but immediately supplied to him for helping to reach the goals of a tale. After he got the magical object, chhura had nothing to do but enjoying his object. *Kungawrhi* tale also possess this elements, Kungawrhi, Phawthira and Hrangchala taking along with them seeds of fire, water, thorns and stones when they intends to escaped from her husband. This magical objects is an important helpers while the tiger-man approached them and the god told them to throw the fire seeds, so they throw down the fire seeds immediately. When they did so the tiger-man could no longer reach them, then the god told them to throw the water seed, and it took the tiger the same amount of time to catch up with them. So they throw thorns and stone seeds when the tiger-man began to gain on them. The tale did not tell us where and how they get the seeds but its plays an important role in approaching the goals of the tale and can transport their audiences to distant lands. Trickster tales is a story featuring a protagonist who has magical powers and is characterized as a compendium of opposites but through their magical objects they may teaches human the skills of survival. In *Rairahtea* tale, we find a powerful magical object called *Bahhnukte* with which the hero was able to achieve a variety of impossible tasks like to untie the ships, bringing back to life his dead father and building a palace of gold within a single night. Rairahtea's magic object was actually given on loan to him by a Rulpui as a show of gratitude for sheltering him from the enemy. The powerful magical object seen in *Maurawkela* tale called *Zawngkhuang*, with which Maurawkela was able to do a difficult tasks like the magical object which is seen in Rairahtea's tale. He got it from the monkeys while he went to the jungle with his dog. Maurawkela was able to

transform all the trees and bamboos in the jungle to human beings and created a great village and he became the great chief. From these magical objects mentioned above, it expressed the early Mizo life, their dreams and imaginations. They dreams of riches and comforts, kingdoms, the common cannot usually look for but they finds satisfactions in stories and fantasies. Sometimes the heroes of folk narratives succeed through cleverness or they get the help they need simply because they are good or steadfast. Sometimes, they can be simply lucky, but they are what they are from the beginning of the story to the end.

From the study of Mizo folk narratives, it is clear that there is no mutual relationship between folktales and religion. Lalruanga rightly observed that, “ There is no relationship between folktales and religious rites and ceremonies” (Mizo Thawnthu Zirzauna 29). It is one of the opinion that they believed in reincarnation. Influenced of Buddhist culture and literature on folktales is unmistakable. Much of their folktales plots, themes and motifs owe their origin to Buddhist culture. This is seen in the tales of *Chawngmawii* and *Hrangchhuana*, *Tualvungi* and *Zawlpala*, *Tlingi* and *Ngama*, *Mauruangi*, *Ngaitai* etc. Their spirits were transformed into another objects after their died.

In many trickster tales, the weak takes revenges from the strong by wit and cunning. They show the wit and intelligence in getting rid of their adversaries, but at the same time behave foolishly in many matters. This elements is seen in the trickster tale of Chhura and he demonstrated what a clever trickster he is. He is pursued by his enemies, get caught, manages to outwit them and escape again. The animal trickster tales also depict this element, the monkey is the common trickster in Mizo folktales, he outwit enemy but in the end he had to pay the price of his cunning.

Motifs conveys an understanding of a distinctive element of designs which can be seen in valuable folktales. Motifs are either the same or very similar in animals and human trickster tales. In animal trickster tales, the motifs we have found are; fool, tricks, wicked stepmother, chivalry, journey, floods, water, fire, illness, secret

over heard, talking animals, scapegoats, race won by deception, seduction by stealing clothes of bathing girl, animal perform task for men, helpful animal, victory. Major motifs we find in human trickster are; wicked stepmother, tricks, supernatural being, journey, magical object, magic, fool, flood, beautiful princess, transformation of man to animal or plants, wicked ogre, oppression of the poor, illness, water, fire, secret over heard, knowledge of animal language, talking animals, scapegoat, false bride, orphan hero, seduction by stealing clothes of bathing animal, princess given to man who can heal her, animal perform task for men, helpful animal, victory. From the above mentioned motifs of human and animal trickster, we can see that the motifs are either same or very similar. But some of the motifs we find in animal tales are missing in human trickster tales. This shows that all motifs of human trickster tales are not applicable to the animal trickster tales. This is due to the differences of their nature. The motifs like wicked stepmother, wicked ogre, orphan hero, princess given to men who can heal her etc cannot applied to the animal trickster tales. From the study of trickster tales, it is observed that these tales are designed to show the cleverness of human beings and the stupidity of animals.

The last sources of the folktales is human society itself. The day-to-day life of the common man finds its full depiction in the folktales. The common man yearns for riches and comforts he cannot usually look for but finds satisfaction in stories and fantasy. They reflects their desires and fantasy, day-to-day life, the joys and sorrows of the common man in the folktales. The very fact that the folktales have woven man, nature, animal and plant creation together shows the great imagination and development of human mind. The folktales hold a mirror to human nature in their themes and satisfy our sense of justice and morality, with good usually rewarded while evil is punished.

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GLOSSARY

Bahhnukte: A powerful magical object, with which the owner was able to achieve a variety of impossible tasks.

Chengkek: The name of a tree with very sour edible fruit.

Chhinlung: A legendary cave from which the mizos believed themselves to be originated.

Nghahrah: The name of a flat fish.

Kawihru: A thick woody creeper.

Keimi: A mythical tiger-man, a person possessing the magic power of changing himself into a tiger, and back again into a human being.

Khaum: The name of a climbing plant and its fruit. The outside rind of the edible seeds is very bitter.

Khuanu: God of love and blessing.

Khuavang: The name of a guardian spirit.

Lasi: A lady fairy who is believed to be guardian of animals.

Maurawkela Zawngkhuang: A powerful magical object, with which the owner was able to do a difficult tasks.

Mawngping khua: A village whose inhabitants have no rectum.

Mizos: The people inhabiting Mizoram.

Pialral: A paradise.

Phungpuinu: An ogress, a hobgoblin.

Sekibuhchhuak: A fabled horn from which the owner could obtain anything he desired

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APPENDICES

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DEGREE : M.PHIL

DEPARTMENT : MIZO

TITLE OF DISSERTATION : A STUDY OF TRICKSTER TALES
IN MIZO FOLK NARRATIVES

DATE OF PAYMENT OF ADMISSION : 13/07/2011

APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL :

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