

## CHAPTER - 1

**An Overview of Mizo Fiction, especially those dedicated to Women.**

Mizos had no fictional writing before the coming of Christianity in Mizoram. *Hawilopari* written by a Mizo appeared in 1936. L.Biakliana wrote two fictions; one is a novel, the other a short story. Kaphleia wrote *Chhingpuii*, followed by Lalzuithanga's *Thlahrang, Phira and Ngurthanpari, Aukhawk Lasi* and some interesting stories. C.Khuma of Burma wrote a very interesting story, *Maymyo Sanapui*. Other story writers, C.Thuamluaia, K.C.Lalvunga, James Dokhuma and others appeared in the literary world. The work of these fiction writers prepared the long passage for birth and development of Mizo fiction.

1. L.Biakliana (1918-1941):

L.Biakliana, son of Pastor Liangkhaia was born in 1918 at Mission Veng, Aizawl, he completed matriculation under the Calcutta University (Board) in 1936, and he was placed in First division. While he was studying Intermediate Arts, he suffered from a dreadful disease i.e. T.B., which was considered fatal in those days. Unable to continue his studies, he came back to be treated at home. He was admitted at Durtlang Hospital and looked after at home. After a bit of recovery, he studied Theology at Cherra Theological College in 1941. There too, the same illness troubled him. He again took medical treatment in Robert's Hospital, Shillong. He died on 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1941 and was buried in the cemetery of Robert's Hospital, Shillong.

*Hawilopari* is the first Mizo novel. Pre-Christian era of Mizoram was used as the background. The love story is about three pairs of lovers, Hminga and Pari (*Hawilopari*), Liana and Mawii, Chhana (the Chief's son) and Ngaihi with their leader Zema. The

important characters of the story are Hminga, Pari, the step-mother of Hminga, and the villain Zema.

A story perspective: Hminga's mother expired and their father remarried. Hminga and his brother planned to abscond from their house because of the ill treatment of their step-mother; Zema, who sympathized with the poor orphan brothers, supported the decision of the siblings. So, Zema made an arrangement and decided to follow them wherever they go. One day, they met their friends, Pari (Hawilopari) Ngaihi and Mawii carrying fire-wood and bade them good bye, conding them not to tell anybody the direction they were to go. So, Zema and his friends went away. Their girl-friends at home kept the secret of those four boys. The villagers searched for the four men but they did not find them. Four years after their abscondence from home, they enrolled in the army. They came back home (village) after 10 years of abscondence.

Pari and friends whom they parted from home were very lonely. Nevertheless, they pulled on faithfully. But Pari was loved by Khualluta, the son of the Chief council. He even sent intermediary to the parents of Pari for bethrothing her. But Pari rejected the proposal. In anger, Khualluta raped Pari. The parents of the victim lodged a case to the chief. However, Khualluta was acquitted of the case on the ground of his being the son of the Chief council. With painful heart, Pari's family left the village on the night just before Hminga and his friends reached at the village.

The four friends, as they were about to enter the village, met Mawii and Ngaihi who were carrying fire-wood from the forest who told the news of Pari. Hminga's father died on the night when they arrived in the village. Their step-mother was no longer rude to them, thus living a happy family life. Chhana and Ngaihi were married; Mawii also married Liana, the brother of Hminga.

Hminga was in distress not seeing Pari. He ventured out of the village without the knowledge of his family and friends to meet Pari at her village. Soon after Pari and family's arrival at the village they shifted to, enemies raided them and set fire to all the houses. Pari and family members were taken captives. When Hminga reached the village of Pari, he saw the situation. Meanwhile, Zema was followed Hminga from when Hminga set out. Zema was Pawi by tribe. Zema met Pari as he was following Hminga. He rescued Pari by taking advantage of his being Pawi. As soon as Hminga arrived, Zema married them as he had already asked Pari's father for the hands of Pari for Hminga. However, Zema died of serious injury he sustained from the enemies.

The second story, *Lali* written by L.Biakliana is based on the exposition of the position (status) of Mizo women. Around 1930-1940, a writing competition on "Mizo Hmeichhe chan" (The Fate of Mizo Women) was organized by Mizo Zirlai Pawl (Mizo Student Association). The story *Lali* bagged the first prize in this writing competition. The setting of time was during 1920-1940. Biakliana used the name of the character as a title in both stories i.e. *Hawilopari* and *Lali*.

*Lali* is a Christian love story. In the story, Lali, the main character lived in a rural village which can be considered as Christian village. But a good number of people were wine drinkers. The father of Lali was an alcoholic. Lali was a good Christian maiden who was also a Sunday school teacher. She was attached to her co-worker, Biakmawia and they became friends.

In the meantime, Rozika, the son of wealthy man of the same village sent an intermediary to marry her. Lali's father readily agreed to the proposal because of their wealth, but Lali flatly refused the proposal. Lali's refusal of the marriage proposal enraged her father and thrashed his wife and son Zuala who happened to support Lali. The

mother of Lali fled away to avoid further physical infliction and Zuala became seriously ill. Lali's mother had to come back because, Zuala repeatedly called her as his ailment became worse.

Zuala, the brother of Lali died. Lali's father repented his sin and converted to Christianity because of the question Zuala often asked his father before he died: "Dad, will you come heaven?" and the sermon of the leader of Zuala's friends who came to pay their last homage to Zuala. The marriage of Lali and Biakmawia was concluded in a very happy atmosphere and the story ended happily.

As early as 1936 –1937, Biakliana had written such good novels. It is very commendable. In the art of Mizo story writing, he is the pioneer and guide who had left valuable works during his short span of life of only 23 years.

## 2. Kaphleia (1910 – 1940).

The second writer of Mizo novel was born on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1910 at |hiak village. His mother was Chuailovi and Chhingvunga was his father. They shifted to Tachhip in 1927 because of his father's post and settled there for good. In regard to studies, after completing Middle School at Sialsuk, he passed matriculate at Govt. High School, Shillong in the year of 1935. He continued his studies from 1935-1939 at Scottish Church College, Calcutta. While he was pursuing in I.A. he suffered from T.B. which was considered fatal and incurable disease those days. In August, 1937 he returned to Mizoram. With L.Biakliana, who was another victim of the same disease, they were treated together in Durtlang Hospital for a long time. They were not allowed to be visited by anyone because it was a dreadful and

contagious disease. They were confined in a small ventilated house which was constructed especially for them. These two who lived together wrote and composed a song. They published a manuscript magazine what they called *Chhura Chanchin* (Story of Chhura) regularly up to 20 volumes. He was discharged from Durtlang Hospital on 31-12-1939 and he returned to Tachhip and was confined in a small house constructed for him. He died there on 13<sup>th</sup> November 1940 at the age of 30.

Kaphleia was the first writer of Essay in Mizo. He started writing *Thlirtu* (The Onlooker) on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 1939 and finished it on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1939. He composed many songs and translated them too. The third Mizo fiction called *Chhingpuii* was written in 1938-1939. It was based on Mizo history.

*Chhingpuii* is very interesting. The author used the woman's name as the title in his story book like L.Biakliana. Kaptluanga, the strong and selfless youngman of Buangtheuva village killed an elephant with his friends after four days of hunting. When they reached the village, Chhingpuii, who was in love with Kaptluanga, was there to welcome the proud hunter. Kaptluanga was a famous hunter in whose house wine and meat were enjoyed regularly. But, they who envied him poisoned him by means of magical power and could not recover since then. No one visited his house as regularly as the days when he used to kill wild animals. But Chhingpuii sympathized with him and paid visits without being seen by other. She used to comb his hair. Chhingpuii did not like to work in the jhoom with friends lest she may hurt Kaptluanga's feeling. So she worked with her brother's friends. One morning, all the jhoom-goers but, Chhingpuii, disliking taking rest with them, went ahead with an old man. Tachhip warriors who were in ambush at the side of jhoom-path shot at Chhingpuii. She ran for fear of being killed but her enemies cut her shoulder and cut her to

death. When Kaptluanga heard the news of Chhingpuii's death, he flared up but he could do nothing as he was weak and sick. He shot himself to death thinking life had no meaning.

Kaphleia was well-versed in composing and story writing. Although he had only one novel to his credit in Mizo literature, its sweet taste of interest and the act of unearthing the core of human life make his novel precious.

### 3. Lalzuithanga (1916-1950)

The third writer of Mizo fiction, Lalzuithanga, the eldest son of Deacon Chawngnuaia and Zachhungi was born on 16<sup>th</sup> April, 1916 at Kulikawn. He was a talented man and had various works in art and literature. After he completed Class-VIII Lalzuithanga had different jobs – drawing instructor in Aizawl Middle School and then enrolled in the army in 1940 and fought in WWII as Assistant Commander in the Labour Corps. From 1944 to 1947 he was an armourer in the Royal Indian Air Force. During the year 1949-1950, he worked as Agriculture Demonstrator. He died of heart-failure on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 1950 in Cachar District Monachera Tea Estate at the place called Kunchunpore.

Lalzuithanga composed 14 songs so far discovered, and wrote 20 short stories and drama. He also wrote two novels, *Thlahrang* and *Phira leh Ngurthanpari*. *Aukhawk Lasi* is one story written by Lalzuithanga.

*Thlahrang* is an interesting detective story. It begins with peculiar and dreary dream. The main character Tawia found the corpse of young woman at the site of a tree he cut down in the jungle. He reported to the police but was found no corpse when the police went to the spot to enquire. Tawia was tediously searching for the missing corpse. It was by this time, a

gigantic man with white hair appeared in different places of Aizawl, frightening people. The dead body found at Sairang was also stolen. The dead body of Parmawii who was murdered by unidentified culprit was also believed to be stolen from hospital by the same demon. People arrested Tawia for homicide and accused him as the impersonator of the spirit who steals corpse.

Kawla, a retired army man who was expert in preparing Myanmarese medicine and business man of medicine confessed his crime in written to the superintendent. He was hanged to death and Tawia was acquitted and released from Jail.

The other novel, the story of *Phira leh Ngurthanpari* is a historical novel about a century ago, that is, before 1890's history, when one village raided another village and killed each other. The beginning of this story began with the constant fighting of the terrorists of those days. It is very interesting from the beginning. Phira, the warrior of Lalhuapa's village was the son of the lower-class widow and Ngurthanpari Sailo, the beautiful maiden was the daughter of Lalbuta of Sangkhaw village Chief whose love story is tragic.

Warriors of Lalbuta's village set out under the command of Hrangchina; at the same time, warriors of Lalhuapa's village went to hunt in the jungle of the same area. One night, Hrangchina's men suddenly attacked Phira and his men. Phira alone was the survivor of the attack. Phira killed Lalphunga, the Chief's son and he also killed the messenger Bawiha sent by Hrangchina, and set fire on the village of Lalbuta. He entered the village of Lalhrima, the brother of Lalbuta as a messenger as it was the enemy's village. At the same time Lalbuta's daughter Ngurthanpari arrived to stay for sometime with her uncle, Lalhrima because her village was gutted by fire. As soon as Ngurthanpari and Phira met, love blossomed between them. When Lalhrima came to know that Phira was the killer of Lalphunga and who set fire to Lalbuta's village, he attempted to kill him but Ngurthanpari set him free secretly.

As Phira knew that Hrangchina intended to set fire to their village, he hurriedly went to his village. As soon as he reached the village, he told his chief all that happened to him and how Lalhrima's village was set on fire, and in retaliation, Lalhrima's on his way to set fire to their village.

He ambushed Hrangchina and captured him. He proudly shouted saying, "I am the killer of Lalphunga and Bawiha; I set on fire Lalbuata's village; I am the beloved of Ngurthanpari who freed me secretly and presented me a cloth". Hrangchina was kept in the Zawlbuk to be killed the following day. About dawn Luta, the son of Buati set Hrangchina free. Phira chased him because he thought of Ngurthanpari. The Queen Lalpuui could save Ngurthanpari. In the meantime, Phira and Ngurthanpari met. Phira said, "From now onwards remember me, I too will forget you; our love is only a misery for us," saying this he left her.

A few days after Phira left Ngurthanpari; her condition changed and became abnormal. At the last moment of their weariness, according to the advice of Lalpuui, Phira paid a visit to Pari and then she became well. The villagers came to know soon about the recovery of Pari. Lalbuta also came to know about the love affairs between Ngurthanpari and Phira. As a result, he in anger decided to kill Pari. Pari fled with her mother to Lalhrima's village as suggested by Lalpuui; it was the last time to see Ngurthanpari and her mother. Lalpuui told Lalbuta about the incident happened between Phira and Ngurthanpari. Lalbuta changed his mind after knowing the truth but it was too late. Phira intended to marry Khumi. But Phira's mother and Khumi were captured by Pawi raiders. However, Phira rescued them on the way to their home; they rested inside a cave where they unearthed lots of treasures. While inside the cave, they were buried by an earthquake.

Lalzuithanga was a prominent writer of detective and gothic fiction in Mizo literature. He was well-versed in the writing of story and composing songs. He was also remembering

as a Mizo dramatist. As mentioned by *Thuhlaril*, his plays were *The Black Corner of Aijal in 1999*, *Horrible*, *Westerners*, *Hawaiian Fantasy*. His works will always occupy an important place in Mizo Literature.

#### 4. Capt. C.Khuma (1914-1990)

Capt. C.Khuma was born at Reiek village on the 17<sup>th</sup> March, 1914. He completed Middle English and joined the British Army at the age of 20 in 1934. He continued further studies at Maymyo City in Burma and passed Class-X in 1938. During his active service of 37 years he received different military decorations. He retired after 37 years of service in 1971 and died on the 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1990. He was buried in Rangoon.

Capt. C.Khuma was an expert story writer. His story *Maymyo Sanapui* was published in 1950. His second novel *Chhingkhual Lungdi* was published after his death in 1991. The novel, *I In chu ka in a ni si a*, is the third novel written around 1946 and his last novel was written in 1963.

The outline story – *Chhingkhual Lungdi*, Chala, and the leading character is a soldier and Lali is the heroine. One day, Chala, as he was strolling along the road to visit his friend's shop at Lunglei, happened to see teenager who was talking with her father and brother at a shop and the sight captivated his eyes. The eyes of the girl and the onlooker, Chala's eyes met. The heart of Chala was pierced through with an arrow of momentary love. The girl and her companion went toward the direction of the north and, Chala looked on till they were out of sight. For Chala, the girl was unknown. In the meantime, some youngsters of Chala's village enrolled in the Burmese army came home on leave. Chala had intention to enroll in the army. Since money was needed for becoming sepoy, he went to Silchar and

bought goods to run a business. After making money he went to Mandalay with an aim at enrolling in the army and after three months he got a chance to become a sepoy. He made a new friend, Liana in whose album Lali's photograph was kept and seen by Chala who renewed the thinking of Lali. So with the help of Liana, Chala and Lali started writing letters to each other and shared their feelings with one another.

One day, Lali accompanied her father who travelled to Madras. During their travel of her father, Lali waited for his return in Calcutta. Chala asked his commander for a leave so as to go to Calcutta and meet Lali. Lali and Chala met face to face for the first time. Lali and her father went back home. On returning home, the news of World War-II shook the world. Sepoy Chala could not have a time to spend with Lali. Chala came back home alive but he never met Lali again.

## 5. Lalruali (1924-2001)

Lalruali, whose works occupy an important place in Mizo literature, was born at Sihfa on 13<sup>th</sup> February, 1924. When she was reading in Class-III osteoarthritis disease befell her. She stayed in Durtlang Hospital most of the time like her home. Lalruali's songs and stories had a pride of works. Her first song is 'Ka chenna ram thlaler a ni, Lalpa', composed in 1958. She wrote two novels – *Ka Hmangaih Tlat Che* (1991) and *Nula Vanduai Sumchani* (1992)

In the novels of Lalruali, women are very popular. In the fiction of *Sumchani* the main heroine was Sumchani whose pitiable life was focused, it's a historical novel. Sumchani was the slave of Tualbung village chief. She was charming and very attractive whose beauty and prettiness was the talk of the dormitory of Tualbung Village. She was so

occupied with the household chores of her master due to which she seldom mingle with friends. She was cared and pitied by the villagers. One day, Dokunga and Sumchani fell in love. Dokunga begged the hands of Sumchani but the chief refused, and accused him as the evil possessor. He was turned out of the village and no one knew of him any more afterwards.

## 6. K.C.Lalvunga (1929-1994)

K.C.Lalvunga (Zikpuii Pa) was the first person among the Mizos who joined the Indian Foreign Service (in 1962). He was born between the famous song composer Hrawva and Lalluii at Aizawl in the month of December, 1929. He attended the Boys Middle School and passed Matriculate in 1948 and he completed B.A. from St. Anthony's College, Shillong. K.C.Lalvunga used the pen-name 'Zikpuii Pa' in all his writings. The Mizo Academy of Letters awarded him the Academy Award on 13<sup>th</sup> December, 1995 for his contributions in Mizo Prose and Poetry. He was a poet, an essayist and fiction writer. He was selected the Writer of the Century i.e. 1900-2000 for his precious works.

Zikpuii Pa had contributed a lot of fictions. *Silvarthangi* was the first work and it was written in 1954 and it was published along with *Hostel Awmtu* in 1991. *Kraws Bulah chuan* was written when he was the headmaster of Saitual High School and it was published in 1986. He wrote *Hostel Awmtu* in 1959 when he was at Gauhati. *C.C. Coy No.27* was written in 1963 and published in 1986. He also wrote a book called *Lalramliani*. The outline story- *Silvarthangi*. In this story the leading character is Silvarthangi, a beautiful damsel of Saithah village who was envy of all women. Due to the early demise of her parents, she lived at the house of her grand parents. She was harassed by the wife of her uncle. Her grandma who was

her protector too passed away. After the death of her grandma, her aunty harassed her more and more. In spite of living in misery yet, Thangi were adorned with beauty and charms. She was liked by every man of that village. An Overseer “babu” whose name was Sanglura came to Thangi’s village, and he too was charmed by the beauty of Thangi.

Every night, she had a good number of wooers among whom, Mangluaia, the son of the chief was one of them. Mangluaia loved Thangi very much, but Thangi disliked him. She preferred jumping from the cliff to marrying Mangluaia. At that time, a person by the name of Havildar Lalhnuna, Aizawl, visited the village to spend his leave. He too wooed Thangi. Thangi also liked him. When Mangluaia asked the hands of Thangi the latter eloped with Lalhnuna to escape from Mangluaia. After a month, Thangi came to know the truth about her husband, Lalhnuna, who was none but an unpaid Lance Naik working as store-keeper. He ran away because he sold several blankets and while absconding he married Thangi. He was sent to the unit from where he was discharged on court martial. On his way to Mizoram he stole Rs.1000 from a Mizo businessman. He raped a maiden at Kolasib due to which the police chased and arrested him at his home.

Silvarthangi and her mother returned to Saithah. Her stepmother, Laithangpuii harassed her as before. She freed herself from the miserable condition and went to the village of her maternal aunty, only to find them Thangchhungi her aunt had already died. Although Thangchhungi was no more, her husband and his new wife and children were living together happily. In that very village, Thangi and Sanglura (Overseer) met again and married at Aizawl.

The story *Kraws Bulah Chuan* is the second novel of Zikpuii Pa. The hero in this story, Lalsawma was a man of good learning and his father Pastor Tlangkhuma was a revered person. After he passed matriculate, Lalsawma desired to become a King’s Commissioned

Officer but his father wished him to become a doctor. When he came on vacation in Mizoram he fell in love with Thanchhingi. Thanchhingi was the most beautiful damsel in their village whom Lalsawma liked very much. Unfortunately, Thanchhingi's father forcibly wedded her with Lalzarliana of a wealthy family.

After the completing MBBS, Lalsawma served as a Medical Officer at Aizawl. One day, Lalsawma's eyes fell on a peculiar type of girl among his patients. She was a Class-X student, by the name of Hmingthansiami, the daughter of a Pastor Laltawna. Lalsawma fell in love with Hmingthansiami and finally they got married. While living happily with his family, Lalsawma was transferred to a remote area of Mizoram. In his new place he met Thanchhingi again. Thanchhingi was widowed after the death of her husband, Lalzarliana who was killed in the Kashmir War. Thanchhingi and Lalsawma fell in love again. The news of Thanchhingi and Lalsawma spread rapidly throughout the village and this severely upset his family. His wife Hmingthansiami was very angry and she left him with her daughter Lalduhkimi. Owing to illness of diphtheria Lalduhkimi was hospitalized where she succumbed to her illness. After a few days, the couple, Lalsawma and Hmingthansiami met by the grave of their daughter and got reunited there again.

## 7. Khawlkungi (1927- 2015)

The first woman novelist among Mizo women, Khawlkungi was born at Aizawl on 14th September, 1927. After she passed Class VI she worked in what they called First Lushai Company (now known as Bharat Scout & Guide) in 1941. During World War-II, she joined the Women Auxilliary Corp. In 1944 she served as Air Force Clerk and resigned in 1947, but worked as PWD Clerk till her pension on 30<sup>th</sup> September, 1991. Khawlkungi was

awarded Padma Shree for her good contribution to Mizo literature in 1987. In 1991, 'Distinguished in Letter Award' was given to her. For her good service in Girl Guide, she received a Special Star Medal in 1998. She was also awarded Academy Award in 1998. Khawlungi had contributed much to Mizo literature. She wrote 37 plays, 26 fictions and translated 38 books from English in Mizo.

Among her stories, *Zawlpala Thlan Tlangah*, a Christian love story is very popular. The heroine was Vanlalremi (Remi) and Malsawma the hero. When Remi's father was about to breath his last, his last words to his daughter were to preserve her prestige and not to marry a wine-drinker. After the death of her father, Remi lived alone. Later on, she lived with her uncle, Rochhinga. Remi was not so happy at Rochhinga's house. Rochhinga kept insisting on Remi to marry the alcoholic Lalmuana. Remi, secretly, asconded from Rochhinga's house and went to the Pastor of Sialsuk with the hope of getting help. Unfortunately, the Pastor had been away from home. However, the sister of Pastor, Biakkungi received Remi with hospitality. She was glad to meet Remi. With the help of Biakkungi, Remi stayed with Pi Zaii. She learnt how to read and write trained in tailoring and learnt how to look after baby. She lived there to do all the necessary works.

Due to World War-II, Remi left Pi Zaii for Reiek intending to approach her maternal uncle, Pu Kawla, who was a local church elder at Reiek village. In the mean time, Malsawma was appointed the Headmaster at Reiek School. Remi and Malsawma met in a hut before reaching Reiek when Malsawma was bitten by a snake. Remi looked after him. At Reiek Remi and Malsawma fell in love and made a secret engagement.

At the same time, Lalkhawthangi (Thangi), a beautiful damsel of Reiek village determined to marry Malsawma at any cost. Her family encouraged her intention. But Malsawma did not show any sign of love to Thangi, because of which Thangi was very

disappointed with Malsawma. Thangi turned secretly to Sepoy Naik Vanthanga and they had an affair. Thangi's brother, Lalhnuna accused the baby in Thangi's womb to be Malsawma's. Malsawma strongly defended himself against the false accusation. Lalhnuna brought a case against Malsawma to the chief. By this time Remi and Malsawma were arranging for the marriage. By the order of the Mission, Malsawma was suspended from the headmastership. Since he had no particular job, the marriage they arranged was called off. Malsawma became a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant after a short time. After his training was over he took leave and married Remi.

In the story *A Tlai Lutuk Ta* Thanpari of Zote village, the daughter of a widow is the heroine. Her mother let her stay at the house of her paternal aunt at Aizawl. Once she went to Chite River with Lalhmingthanga, the brother of her aunty's husband to weed the vegetables garden. Unexpectedly Lalhmingthanga raped Thanpari and she became pregnant. When Lalhmingthanga came to know that Pari was pregnant, he sent her back to her village. Pari begot a son whom she called Riangleia. After a year, her son died of pneumonia. Later on, Pari went to Rovi of Hmuifang village to look after the cattles. Fortunately, nobody knew about her past. At that time, the Agriculture Officer Biakmawia (B.Sc Agri.) visited Sialsuk and its surrounding villages. Pari and Biakmawia met accidentally and fell in love and marriage ceremony followed in the mean time. On the first night before they went to sleep, Pari told him of her past life. On hearing her past life, Biakmawia was shocked, so he preferred to sleep in a separate room.

When it was dawn, Biakmawia left a letter for Pari telling her about his going to Mysore for training and would be back after completing the training. Pari got back to her mother. Her mother died soon after. Pari had to spend her days in penury. Once Pari went to Biakmawia's house in the hope of getting help from his parents according to the advice

given by Biakmawia. She had no courage to show her face before her mother-in-law when she overheard the conversation of her mother-in-law and her neighbor talking about her. At that time, she met Lalhmingthanga at a tea stall and Pari went to her aunty's house where she settled and decided to marry him as she did not know anything about her husband, Biakmawia. Biakmawia came back home and found the absence of Pari from home. So he went out to search for Pari and found her at Bilkhawthlir. As soon as Pari saw Biakmawia she cried loudly saying, "Go away, go away, it's too late." Biakmawia did not proceed farther in despair. Pari followed Biakmawia. When Lalhmingthanga heard what had happened, he chased and overtook them. He abused her and saying "You adulteress," after which he left them. Biakmawia requested Pari to patch up and to start a new life with him. But Pari argued and flatly refused and left him.

#### 8. James Dokhuma (1932-2007)

James Dokhuma who made a great contribution to Mizo literature was born at Sialsuk, youngest son of Hrangchina and Kapkungi on 15<sup>th</sup> June, 1932. Brothers and sisters were born in good number among whom Romani was known as poetess and Laltanpuia too was popularly known as a good composer of songs. James Read upto Class V, and passed Class V from the Middle Anglo-Vernacular School, Sialsuk in 1944. After passing Class V, he enrolled in the 1<sup>st</sup> Assam Rifles at the age of 15 and served from 1947-1952. During his service, he learnt Hindi, English and Nepali languages well. After his retirement, he became a teacher in St.Paul's High School, Aizawl, and later at Hualtu Middle School in 1960. When he was teaching there in 1961 he published his first works – translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe, in the magazine of Mizo Zirlai Pawl.

Most of his books are fictions. He wrote four plays, one Hlahril bu, three biographies. He composed 42 poems, and also wrote more than 500 articles. For his writings, he was given the Padma Shree Award on 18<sup>th</sup> March, 1985, an Academy Award from Mizo Academy of Letters in the month of December, 1985. The International University, USA, offered him Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) on 16<sup>th</sup> April, 1997 as a token of his penmanship and contributive works. He was also awarded Bhasha Samman Award by Sahitya Academy on 10<sup>th</sup> September, 1998.

James Dokhuma wrote 15 fictions which are: *Rinawmin* (1970), *Khawhar In* (1970), *Thla Hleinga Zan* (1970), *Ni leh Thla Kara Leng* (1978), *Arsi Thawnthu* (1979), *Tumpangchal Nge Saithangpuii* (1981), *Ka Inpuanna* (1982), *Hmangaihna Thuchah* (1982), *Irrawady Lui Kamah* (1982), *Good Bye, Lushai Brigade* (1983), *Kimoto Syonora* (1984), *Gabbatha* (1989), *Lonesome Cowboy* (1990), *Silaimu Ngaihawm* (1995), *Thla Hleinga Zan Part-II* (1999) and *Khamkar Senhri* (2005). In these stories, women take pivotal roles. He shows great command over Mizo language in his these works.

## 9. Lalhmingliana Saiawi (1937- )

Lalhmingliana Saiawi was born at Kawlkulh village on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 1937. He passed matriculation from Mizo High School in 1956 and B.A. (Economics Honours) from Cotton College, Gauhati in 1961. He was a young man of excellence in learning; he passed all the examination in First Division. He joined IAS in 1961 and retired in 1993.

He wrote a good number of essays and articles and also a few novels. Novels he wrote are *Lungrang Laiawrha* (1993), *Lungrang Hmangaihna* (1995), *Nukawki Fanu* (1998), *ANa Lua* (2002), *Tawitawkawn Chemangi* (2006), *Makpa Atan* (2011), *Chutiang*

*Pawh A Ni Lo Ka Nu* (2013). The Mizo Academy of Letters had declared the novel, *Lungrang Hmangaihna* ‘Book of the Year 1995’.

In the novels of Lalhmingliana Saiawi – women characters are popular in *Lungrang Laiawrha*, *Nukawki Fanu* and *Keimah Unionliana*. In the novel of *Lungrang Laiawrha*, the beginning of the story being the genesis of Laiawrha, Chhuahi, the mother of Laiawrha; she was the active and beautiful young woman of Saihum village who conceived a baby to the great amazement of the villagers and neighbours because they did not know whom she loved. Darkhuma, of Lungrang clan of Serkawt village was the man whose child Chhuahi conceived. Everyone was astonished when they came to know the truth. After the death of Darkhuma, Chhuahi gave birth to a child in whose neck umbilical cord was tied for which the child’s name was therefore, called Laiawrha. Laiawrha grew up under the care of his mother. There was a peculiar type of girl by the name of Sakawlhi. One day Laiawrha dashed her to the ground and struck on her belly so Sakawlhi was defeated. Sakawlhi was the bravest of all the children of her age. She resembled her father in physical size but her mother was shrewd and unassailable.

Sakawlhi and Laiawrha together turned into young man and woman. Sakawlhi was exceptionally tall. No youngman of the village liked her. She did not mix with friends because of her fierceness. Youngmen seldom wooed her. However, unexpectedly Laiawrha, at the invitation of Rokhawla, once went to woo her. Sakawlhi was very shy and did not even have the courage to look at him and talk to him. Laiawrha made love to her. Normal unmarried girls were afraid to conceive bastards whereas Sakawlhi liked to have one from a man whom she loved. Laiawrha loved Laleni, the beauty and the pride of the village. According to the opinion of the village society, Laleni was suspected to be already indulged in sex with someone. When she came to know that Laiawrha was going to marry another

woman, she ambushed Laiawrha who was strolling. She called him out of the place and slept together only to show that she was a virgin. But Laiawrha married Sakawlhi. The love of Sakawlhi for her husband, Laiawrha was very deep and great. Because of her love of Laiawrha, she shed tears even in normal condition. She was a woman whose heart was full of love. She was a woman who had good respect for the husband. She was brave and intelligent who was more efficient than her husband in many respects.

In *Keimah Unionliana*, the heroine Ruati was a person who did not care less about defamation, and agreed to sleep with Unionliana. Besides this, she took the place of Chhunruaii, the wife of Unionliana, without compunction. She married with Unionliana, she being a wise woman could care for herself and championed her idea, ruled over the domestic affairs and children without paying much respect to her husband and father-in-law and mother-in-law. Since she came from an ordinary family background, her brothers were anti-social who always fought others. Ruati herself was also stubborn and bold who always did what she intended to do. Liana and his parents did not like to criticize Ruati knowing her stubbornness and lion-heartness. If and whenever she was criticized or argued, Liana and Ruati had to stay apart. Ruati not only feared Liana but also disrespected him. Whenever she was rebuked by her husband, she would chase him out of the house with knife. Once Liana and her brother were at fight, Ruati did not hesitate to help her husband with a knife. She cared for her step-children in their education and their dresses. She could admit her children to school out of Mizoram which her husband could not do. When Liana's father was ill, the father wanted to be escorted by Ruati more than by any other family member. The family relied on her solely.

In *A Na Lua*, the lifestyle of Hazeli crossed the limit of the conventional life of Mizo women. She married Darchhuana not because of love for him but because she wanted to be

the wife of a rich man and to spend money lavishly. Even after her marriage, she still acted like an unmarried woman. She was always sorry for not enjoying life enough in her youth. Indulgence in life always remained in her; as a result of which she committed adultery with the worker of her husband who was a non-Mizo. She conceived a girl child, her husband divorced her and she married the man with whom she committed adultery. Unfortunately, she was burnt to death by the family of her husband.

In *Nukawki*, Nukawki loved Lianhnawla very much. She hoped for Lianhnawla even after she became estranged with him and he shifted to Aizawl. Lianhnawla's sister, Zorinpari (Zopari) was the friend of Nukawki. Whenever Nukawki visited their house (Zorinpari's house) she would let roam her eyes in the hope of seeing Lianhnawla. She told Zopari how she loved Lianhnawla. At last they were married. When her husband was in jail, she looked after the business of her husband and brought her brother-in-law together. After the death of Zorinpari and her husband, she looked after their children lovingly. Her step-children loved her more than their biological mother.

#### 10. H.Lallungmuana (1944- )

H.Lallungmuana was born at Biate village on 9<sup>th</sup> February, 1944. He passed Class-X in 1964 at Biate School. He completed Pre-University in Shillong College in 1965. In order to study B.A., he filled up the admission form, but could not continue his education because of Mizoram Political agitation. He graduated in 1968 in jail. In 1972, he passed M.A. in Gauhaty University and Doctor of Philosophy from NEHU in 1989. In 1998 he was elected Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) from Mizoram Constituency. He was the Principal of Pachhunga University from 2004 and retired in 2008. H.Lallungmuana had contributed

essays and fictions to Mizo literature. He wrote three fictions, *Ram leh I tan chauh* in (1995) for which Mizo Academy Book of the Year Award was conferred to him. The other is *Hmangaih Zoramthangi* in (1996) and *Hara Kima* in (2007). In his work *Hmangaih Zoramthangi* the character of woman is very important. The pitiable woman Zoramthangi's (Thangi) parents were killed in motor accident. Thangi did not know where to go and how to live. So she stayed at the house of her maternal uncle. To her bad luck, her aunty died. So she was under the care of her maternal uncle. But her uncle raped the innocent virgin girl due to which incident Thangi deserted her uncle and went to Aizawl. After she came to Aizawl, Siamteii tried to persuade her to become a prostitute. Thangi was at the house of Chhuana as a maid as invited by Chhuana's mother. Thangi and Chhuana were in love and even proposed a marriage. However, it was transient happiness and Thangi is reminded of her past. Chhuana too comes to know of Thangi's past. She blames herself and she secretly left Chhuana. Later she met Rosanga, a first class contractor of Aizawl. But Rosanga sold Thangi to a hotel in Gauhati. At last, Chhuana rescued her through diverse difficulties and they were married.

#### 11. C.Laizawna (1959 - )

In 1959, in the month of January, 10<sup>th</sup>, the son of Malvela and Lalduhi, C.Laizawna was born at Tualpui village. In the line of learning, he passed PUC. In 1982, only at the age of 23 years he began writing books. Till date, he wrote 27 novels of which two books have selected, Book of the Year by Mizo Academy of Letters. He wrote books on feminine characters— *Hmangaihzuali* (1990) and *Anita* (1993). His other novels are *Remi leh Ruata* (1984), *Thuruk* (1985), *Hmangaihziri* (1985), *Lei Theih Loh Ruali* (1985), *Hmaithinghawng* (1985), *I Ta Ka Ni Si a* (1985), *Honneymoon* (1985), *Inthen Tawh Lo Turin* (1987), *Pari Zun*

(1987), *Chhelna Rah* (1987), *Mittui Nen* (1988), *Duh Luat Vang in*(1989), *A Thlawn Mai Maw?*(1990), *Zizyphus* (1990), *Ka Phal Lo* (1991), *K.S. Min Ti Maw* (1992), *Ka Thlang Zawk* (1993), *Kan tiam tawh si* (1996). The fictional works of C.Laizawna are mostly love stories.

*Hmangaihzuali* is very interesting love story about a beautiful maiden, Hmangaihzuali (Zuali) of Champhai who was in love with Laldingliana (Dinga). Dinga, being a businessman travelled between Calcutta and Rangoon to and fro. Dinga courted Dawngi, another young maiden. Dawngi liked Dinga very much for her husband. But Dinga loved Zuali more than Dawngi. During his stay at Tahan, he was snared in the trap set by Dawngi. Sawma, her friend and Dawngi invited Dinga to dine at hotel. After their meal Sawma and Dawngi drank wine at the house where Dinga put up. Dinga retired early. Dokulha, the father of Dawngi came to search for his daughter. When Sawma heard the voice of Dokulha, he escaped from there. When Dokulha saw the situation contrary to his expectation, he accused Dinga of raping his daughter, Dawngi by making her drunk. Dokulha intended to level a rape case against Dinga if he did not marry Dawngi. Dinga sent a letter to Zuali and informed her about the situation. In the meantime, Lalhmingliana, the rich man from Aizawl who came to Champhai for campaign liked Zuali very much. He pursued her by letter even after he returned to Aizawl. But this time, Hminga's attempt failed. A good young man, Rinawma MCS officer also tried to marry Zuali and even send an emissary for Zuali. Her parents thought that Rinawma might be best for her. Her love for Dinga was very strongly and she declined Rinawma's proposal.

Zuali passed her matriculate with good result. As requested by Dinga she was at Aizawl going to college. Dinga and Zuali were in the same institution. One day Zuali saw Dinga walking happily with a maiden. Zuali starts losing trust on Dinga and she turned to

Hminga. At the Hotel, Zuali was drugged by Hminga and here Zuali lost her virginity to Hminga. Zuali was very much distressed and told everything to Rinawma and Dinga that she was no longer virgin. Rinawma had no scruple about it and married her. When Rinawma and Zuali became wedded couple, Rinawma drank wine heavily and divorced Zuali. Zuali again stayed at Aizawl to look after her brother who was going to school. Dinga and Zuali met again and they started a new life.

## 12. Lalngurliani (1951- )

Lalngurliani who was born in 1951 contributed immensely to Mizo fictions. She wrote as many as 11 Fictions. Amongst her works *Zorinpari* (2004) was selected as Book of the Year, 2005. The others are the *Mangtha mai aw, Mama* (1994), *Mary Lanzas* (1996), *Lungawina Kim*(1998), *Thian Rinawm* (1998), *Inneih Thilpek* (1999), *Rinawmna Rah* (1999), *Zirtirtu Tha* (1999), *Thisena Thutiam Ziak* (2002), *Silai aiah Hmangaihna* (2003), *Thudik leh Silaimu a Nget Lo* (2009). Like other novelists, women's suffering is highlighted.

In *Mary Lanzas*, the heroine Mary Lanzas was brought up in a poor Christian family. Her father passed away when he was studying in Class VIII. She got through MBBS entrance test after her completion of PUC (Science). Mary was exceedingly glad for her success. The reason being she thought that her late father would also be happy with her success. Mary Lanzas studied MBBS at Ladakh Medical College. Right from the beginning she studied hard and tried her best. During that time, she fell in love with a Muslim boy by the name of Jee Ena. After a short span of time they got married under the Christian Marriage Act without consultation of their respective parents. Mary and her husband were not happy with one another and consequently they were divorced. Her husband left her for

his second wife. Mary gave birth to a twin. Mary was diagnosed with a kidney failure and she died shortly. Jee Ena and his second wife repented after the demise of Mary. Spalzini, the second wife of Jee Ena confessed her conspiracy against Mary with remorse. At last Jee Ena and Spalzini became Christians.

### 13. Lalhriata (1948- )

Lalhriata, author of *Chun Chawi Loh* (2008), recipient of Book of the Year 2008, was born in Chhippui Village on 18<sup>th</sup>, August 1948. He passed class X in 2<sup>nd</sup> division in 1975. After his completion of P.U.C, he became a teacher in the Synod School, Salem Boarding School in 1982. He graduated in 1985. In 2007 he was transferred to the Synod office and retired in 2008. Lalhriata has contributed a number of fictions to Mizo literature. His best works are *Khualzin Nula* (MALBook of the Year top 3, 1996), *Hmangaihna Zungzam* (1999), *Damlai Thlipui* (MAL Book of the Year 2005), and *Chun Chawi Loh* (MAL Book of the Year 2008).

Lalhriata published his first novel *Khualzin Nula* in 1996. In this neovel, *Khualzin Nula*, he dwelt upon the life of the heroine Jane Lalrinthangi who is the daughter of the village Church Elder Saingura. A nurse had exchanged the female baby of the twin with the dead baby of her relatives at their birth. The twins were brought up in different atmosphere and background. Their nature and character were very different. Due to the wickedness of someone, others have to suffer. At last, the entire problems were solved. Jane Lalrinthangi (Thangi) was active in every service of the Church and everyone in the village was really proud of her. She falls in love with Lalnunmawia, who is a Deputy Speaker of Gospel Witness Team. But Nunmawia accused her of having another boyfriend and also he believes

that she is one of the prostitutes arrested by the police displayed in the newspaper. For this reason he stopped their relationship. After several days, Thangi fell in love with Biakmawia from her locality. Mawia observed that Thangi was a fiancée of his friend Zauva. This really infuriated Mawia and like Nunmawia, he too breaks his relationship. After a year, Thangi served as a part time Christian Missionary in Tripura under Synod Mission field. At that time Biakmawia left his job and he also served as a Christian Missionary. After several days, it was proved that all the accusations on Thangi were totally false. Later Thangi was transferred to Arunachal Pradesh. But, she was captured by a group of goondas. She was rescued by Nunmawia and they got married happily.

In *Chun Chawi Loh*, the heroine Rohlupuii (Marovi) has been shown as a maltreated orphan. The infant (Marovi) was given for adoption to Mr.Rala. A woman abandoned the infant on account of hardship and poverty. Mr.Rala brought up Marovi with love and care. In the meantime, Mr.Thana presumed Marovi to be the daughter of his friend. So, he often asked Mr.Rala to allow him to adopt Marovi. However, the wish of Mr.Thana could not be fulfilled. Marovi and Biakmawia were in love. At that time Lalliana, constable (MAP) disguised himself and entered Marovi's room to rape her. Marovi being a strong and expert boxer, Lalliana could not rape her. Marovi participated in the All India School Boxing Competition on behalf of Mizoram and won a Silver Medal in the category of 50-53 kg. In the midst of celebration in Mizoram for her feat, a woman claimed herself the mother of Marovi. Marovi was stunned to learn the news.

The coming of the Missionaries in the village of Marovi revived her. Marovi was smitten with one of the missionaries, a counsellor Lalbiakhluna. She went to Champhai, the village of Lalbiakhluna with her friend and stayed there for a month. Lalbiakhluna's mother was adorable. Marovi, a girl who was a born again and jolly person, discontinued her studies

after passing matriculation. As time rolled by, she started complaining about her health. On consulting doctors, she was diagnosed with AIDS infection.

Marovi was so worried that she left a letter for her grandfather. It was about an infection and how she got infection because of the rape while travelling to Silchar with a divorcee, who was a friend of her grandfather. She also mentioned not to take the trouble to trace her since she did not want to reveal where she was heading to. After arriving Saikhalh village she just vanished. Marovi lived in the house of Chhingpuii in Saikhalh village. During that time, Biakmawia visited the same village to visit his paternal aunty and met each other. But, Marovi did not reveal her identity. So, Biakmawia also treated her as a stranger. But Biakmawia did not give up, and continued contact with Marovi. Consequently, Marovi revealed her infection of AIDS, and all her stories to Biakmawia. Marovi became weaker and weaker and ultimately passed away. Biakmawia was agrieved with the death of Marovi and became like a mad man. After the demise of Marovi, her biological parents visited her graveyard and went to meet Mr.Rala with great remorse and asked for his forgiveness.

#### 14. C. Hermana (1937- )

Subedar Pakunga's son C.Hermana was born on 18 May, 1937 at Mission Veng. He did his Primary schooling at Sikul Sen, Mission Veng. He studied CI-X in 1960 but could not complete it. The following year they formed Mizo National Front (MNF) in 1961. He joined the MNF in 1961 and in 1969; he joined the Indian National Congress. He became the first Mizo District Youth Congress Committee Member. He was very active in Co-operative Society. "Hermana was not only a novelist but also a critic, historian and prose writer"

(Zoramdinthara 240). The following are among the popular works of Hermana:

*Vangkhawmawii* (1999), *Bahsamseihniangi* (1997) and *Country Girl Lalhniangi* (2009).

In *Country Girl Lalhniangi*, Lalhniangi was the daughter of Hmuntlang Village Council Member, Khualdawla. Lalhniangi learned the women's chores from a good girl, Rempuii. And she was expert in it. Being a young kind-hearted girl, she was liked by young men who courted her elder sister. The young teenage, Lalhniangi secretly liked and loved Tlangmuanpuia. At last, they fell in love with each other. Lalhniangi was not only beautiful but of physique good. She was also the best performer in *Cheraw* bamboo dance and *Kawikah*. She was awarded many times and her villagers were proud of her. One morning, Lalhniangi along with her friend went to Mualnuam village to sell commodities and saw a motor vehicle for the first time. While watching them, a rich shopkeeper's son Rongheta from Aizawl saw Lalhniangi and her friend with whom he drank tea together. After a few days, Rongheta came to Lalhniangi's village and invited her to come to Aizawl along with him. With the permission of Lalhniangi's parents she accompanied Rongheta to Aizawl. Since she had never traveled by vehicles, she had serious travel sickness.

On reaching Rongheta's house, she could not feel at home there. Rongheta's family looked down upon her. The bedroom material, cleaning materials and the way of eating food was different there. But, she was very proud of her clothes, woven by her. She was not happy in the house of Rongheta and returned with an acquaintance that was on his way to her village. After that incident, as per the decision made by her Village Council, the villagers left for Aizawl to celebrate Chapchar Kut. Lalhniangi stood 1<sup>st</sup> in *Kawikah* competition. Her swinging of hands at the time of bamboo dance was so spectacular that she was requested to perform alone promising to give her Rs.5000. She was also selected as the

Chapchar Kut Idol. She was even given police escort to protect her from the crowd. She returned home in grandeur.

The Mizo Academy of Letters (MAL) has been selecting Book of The Year every year since 1989. The first selected book of the year was *Hmangaihzuali* written by C.Laizawna. Among the 24 books selected from 1989 to 2013, fictional book had occupied 14 places. This proves the growth of fiction and plays a vital role in the field of Mizo Literature.

## CHAPTER – 2

### Status of Women in Mizo Society in history: an overview of its Treatment in Mizo Literature.

Mizos are of Mongoloid stock, speaking a variety of Tibeto-Burman language. There are different sub-tribes (clans) in Mizo among which Lusei, Pawi, Paite, Hmar and Mara are majority sub-tribes. Mizos lived and worked together in group in close association with and in goodwill towards one another. During the occasion of festival and grand feast of fame, men and women freely associated with one another. Their social life was very free, that was why the life of youngmen and women was pleasant, and it enabled them to work in a group with one accord. Though the women play an important role in the society, the status of women is low and unempowered. R.Vanhnuaitanga, in his book, *Zalenna Thurin leh Mizo Hmeichhiate*, cited the writings of Plato: “Evil men will be reincarnated as women”, and Aristotle: “Women are the mistakes of the creator.” (42)

Apart from all these writings, the status of women is no better in other society due to patriarchal system. Back in the olden days women were often compared by Mizos to a crab as the saying goes – ‘Hmeichhia leh chakaiin sakhua an neilo’, which means women and crab do not have a religion. The main reason being women have to follow and worship in her husband’s religion and denomination. Another saying goes – ‘Hmeichhia leh pal chhia chu thlak theih a ni e’, which means women and broken fence can be replaced. Men also felt free to change their wives any time they find them not upto the mark. In times of formal discussions, women were often told, “Lo tawng ve suh, hmeichhia i nih kha”, which means

‘Do not speak, you are woman’. This reflects the low status of women in Mizo society because they were not allowed to express their ideas and opinions. Another saying goes – ‘Hmeichhe finin tuikhur ral a kai lo’, which means the wisdom of women do not go beyond the water point. Another saying goes: ‘Hmeichhia leh uipui chu lo rum lungawi ve mai mai rawh se’, which means, Let angry woman and the bitch growl. The anger of women was considered like the growl of the bitch which growls to please itself. So, men paid no heed to the anger of woman. It is a word of disrespect of women’s status. Another saying goes: ‘Hmeichhia leh uite chu a chul nel peih peih’, which means woman and puppy fawn upon who pampers them. Women love whoever cared for them just as the puppy likes its fondler. Female dominated family was looked down upon by the society. The Moyon Naga of Manipur also placed the status of their women very low. The opinions of women were not taken into consideration because the women have no real identity. It is the concept of the Moyon Naga.

According to Farida Sherfuddin,

In the pre-Islamic society of Assam status of women in the Assamese - Muslim society was very low. Women were tortured and treated like chattels. Female babies were killed as soon as they are born (S.L.Baruah.1).

Female babies of Assamese - Hindu were not approbated at their birth because of the heavy burden of dowry in the marriage. They were considered as heavy burden. In Arunachal Pradesh, a female baby is warmly welcomed to the family at her birth because she would be the begetter of warrior sons and increase the population (B.Sangkhumi 111).

In the land of Meghalaya, Khasi, Jaintia and Garo rejoiced at the birth of female baby, particularly, Jaintia. Jaintia placed women in important position because of their small population. Among Nagas, men were approbated much more than women right from their birth. Similarly, in Mizo society too, male babies received warmer welcome to the family than female counterparts. If and when female baby was born in the family, she was blessed to be beautiful and to be costly (bride price). So, the baby was regarded as expensive bride. In the olden days, mithun was the most valuable animal in their live-stocks.

There was a thinking that girl can be exchanged with the most valuable animal.

Parents wished their male-babies to become brave, good hunter, highly regarded person and to be glorious in the society (T.Vanlalrani 20).

If and when a male-baby was born, “He would be the thrower of grand feast of fame” (Dr N. Chatterji 17)

The reason why girls were approbated in Assam tribal society is because girls assisted their mother’s right from their childhood. Also in Arunachal, tribal people rejoiced because a girl was to beget the warrior sons. Besides, she was to be an assistant to her mother in domestic works. Mizo girls began to learn from their childhood what were to be done when they are grown up, such as carrying a baby on their back, collecting firewood and fetching water. They sifted the dust in bamboo-tray outside the house and under the house. That’s the game of how to winnow rice. They joined loose threads and wove cloth with them as a lesson in weaving clothes. When they grow up, they looked after their young ones.

As parents were at work all the day long, the girls cooked for the evening meal, fed the pigs and kept the fowls in the coop. When a girl could carry two water containers, she began to fetch water from nearby spring. As she grows up, her water containers increase in

number. Firewood was collected in the forenoon. They were very useful at domestic affair/household chores. When girls grew up, they pounded rice under the guidance of elders. They worked at home and in the jhoom assisting their mothers. Thus, girls were useful in the family at home right from their childhood. On the contrary, boys went to dormitory as they attained the age youth to sleep there and to be controlled by the bachelors of the village.

A girl had to wake up early in the morning, fetch water, pound rice and cook food if necessary. After finishing preparation of morning food, she served and washed dishes. She swept the floor, packed the food for mid-day meal in the jhoom; after she did all these she went to the jhoom and worked with her family. If by chance she did not have to go to work in the jhoom, she collected firewood, wove cloth in loin-loom. If not weaving cloth, she ginned the cotton pod or scutches cotton or cooked the yarn with rice and dried it in the sun. Although she did all these household chores, she would say, "I do nothing, I am just idling away." A young woman, who was to be married, must have woven a Mizo quilt long before her marriage.

In the afternoon, she prepared for the evening meal and after meal, cooked and fed pigs and hen, cooked all others which were to be cooked. While watching her cooking, she spinned the threads, twisted and reeled it. As parents liked nicotined water, she smoked the tobacco by a lady's pipe. Young women were the main makers of family dresses and clothing. She who dressed brothers with a new cloth earned contribution of brothers. The young women were washers of dirty clothes. They can be said as the doer of all domestic works in the family.

As to comparing the social life of Hindu and Muslim, it seems the life of young men and girls in Mizo social life are very free, having association with one another in different

kinds of work in a group. A young woman engaged her male and female friends to work in her jhoom in exchange of assistance at work or took turn to in helping one another. The way of jhoom was convenient for young men and young women to have fellowship with one another. On arriving jhoom-house, the young women (owner of the jhoom-house) takes the working-dress of the young men and food wrapped in leaf out of her basket and sweeps the floor and proceed with their work after a brief rest. The host should follow immediately after friends lest she might not find friends to work with. When returning home, young women carry vegetable and working dress of her friends while young men walk leisurely. If any girl or boy works separately in different jhoom, fresh vegetable and amaranthus leaf are placed at the fork of the path to indicate to friends that one has gone home. This was only done in the case of very dear friend and sweetheart as we see in this song:

She placed a fresh cucumber for me,  
 Though it's not mature, I would like to sow as seed,  
 By luck, it may sprout (B.Lalthangliana 126).

To pay attention with leafy twig,  
 I placed amaranthus flower for my sweetheart,  
 Those who longed for me withered like the leaves (126).

If the twisted sungrass was placed, it was the sign of who were really in love. In any case, twig kept at the branch path leading to jhoom is never touched or destroyed.

Working in jhoom turn by turn was convenient for young men and young women for courting. It was more convenient for those who were already in closeness. It was a mode of expression in Mizo social life that if a young man says, "You are my lawmnu." It means the young woman is the one with whom he regularly worked together in the jhoom. The

expression *lawmnu* is a fond name for one's sweetheart. However, all those who work together were not necessarily in love. There were some people who loved each other because of having working together for a long time. Women worked together mainly during weeding season. Besides, they assisted each other in setting up yarn for weaving clothes.

Young women and young men of Mizo used to augur their future marriage by different things among which a locust with love hind-leg, a creeper and tossing hoe in the air were popular. 'Zawlzawng' is one kind of locust. If a young man or young woman catches it, a song is chanted in order to know whether he or she would be married in other village or their own village.

The flying locust which I release

It clings to the hair of beautiful damsel (Siali)

Don't meet with the catching bird (R. Chaldailova 225)

Chanting this song they let fly the locust. If the locust flew across the opposite bank of the brook, it was believed that the soothsayer would marry outside the village. If the locust perched on the leaf of a plant or on the leaf of the paddy, she or he was thought to be married in the local village. They wished that the locust be perched on the reed of the paddy-plant because it's believed that it's assign of bumper harvest. If the locust was caught by bird, they would be sad because it was thought as an omen to lose wife or husband in death.

Mizo young men pay a visit to girl's house to court them. Just after the evening meal, they would go to the 'Zawlbuk' and then come out to woo young women. A young woman, as soon as she sees her visitors speaks to them gently. She would extend her hospitality to them, saying, "Please come in." She would point the place where they should sit and speak

to them courteously. The young woman would spin yarn; sit on the fender seat facing towards the lower direction watching the feed of the pigs she cooks in the hearth. Her wooers would sit around her and chit-chatted. Her visitors should be well-treated. She would roll tobacco with a paper for their smoking. Some young women would tie the rolled tobacco with their hair for their lovers and offer whatever eatables available. A wise-young woman won't show any sign towards her lover in case if he was with other visitors. She would seldom show any gesture and would treat equally with smiling face and polite speech so that nobody could suspect her. When the cock crows late at night, all the visitors depart from the young woman's house and would go to sleep in the dormitory. Even if some visitors wooed her for longer duration, she wouldn't show any sign that she is tired of them and would continue to speak with them gently.

In order to get a young man for husband, the beauty of young woman alone is not enough. She has to manage to prepare everything to be praiseworthy. A daughter, when young lived under the protection of parents and brothers. She would live in fear of parents and brothers. To get married with good husband, the woman has to be of nice conduct, industrious, amiable and wise and live under the control and wishes of the husband. A young woman is expected to speak gently with her lover. A young woman who has lot of wooers is valuable and greatness of damsels and it's an important factor of young man's worth. Parents of the young woman would go to sleep even if they are not feeling sleepy because it is not polite sit by the side of the young men who have come to woo their daughter.

If the visitors of their daughter were numerous they would count they or young men would count themselves. They would check if the visitors comprised of 10 clans. It meant that even if the visitors were 30 in number, there has to be visitors comprising of different clans like Ralte, Hnamte and Chhange etc. If 10 clans are to be present

among the visitor, the parents of the damsel would offer them rice-beer to drink (B.Lalthangliana 152).

The young men are expected to maintain decency in front of the young women's parents. Some young man, who courted their women in seclusion and if overheard by young woman's parents, the father, shows his displeasure, would spit nicotine water from his mouth from his bed or would clear his throat.

Some young women had numerous visitors and because of the congestion of the place some visitors did not get seat to sit. We can know from this song:

Damsel, what I got at your home,

The ladle of the pig's feed struck my cheek when I turned around.

The door of kennel is visible when I straightened my leg (B.Lalthangliana 152)

Though a young woman may be virtuous and beautiful, if anyone from her family displeased any young man, the leader would call them to the dormitory and hear their complaints.

According to the statement and situation of the parents, the woman and her family could be punished. He could forbid everybody from visiting their house and boycott them. No youngman would pay a visit to such house. Even if any young men dismantle their ladder, the parent's/owner would not dare hate them. It is a shame for a young woman to be boycotted by young men. That's why no damsel talk rudely, fearing their displeasure.

"In those remotest days, young women smoked nicotine water in lady's pipe and young men smoked in pipe" (James Dokhuma 180). A young woman would give live embers to the visitors to light the tobacco pipes. Her mind could be read from the way she gives the live embers. When live ember was given the young men would say, "I do not need." And if live embers was given but failed to light the pipe it had to be given again. The reason behind

this was that the damsel could be beside her lover for a little more time in the midst of many of her visitors. We have seen in the story, “Ngurthanpari pulled down the pipe of Phira. Even after she put live embers thrice the fire died out when she was about to give the pipe to Phira” (Lalzuithanga 28).

Young women are very careful with their visitors. If anyone sits beside her, she would move away adroitly. To avoid physical contact with visitor’s arm or hand while spinning yarn, young women keep aloof from men. Sometimes, young men help in reeling yarn. While doing so, they aimed at knocking the breast of young women with their elbow when the young women swing their arms above. Some young men succeed sometimes. Wise damsels normally sit carefully in order to avoid such intention of men. Young men usually lie down resting their heads on the fenderseat of the hearth as pillow. Sometimes, lovers sit near as in the Short story of *Chhingpuii*.

Kaptluanga also lay on the fenderseat. Chhingpuii brought the firewood and put them to the fire. She sat on her seat and moved a bit closer toward Kaptluanga’s head. By the time, she took firewood for the third time she was close enough to him so that he could sit on the hem of her cloth (Kaphleia 72).

When parent’s of damsels sleep, young men would freely say anything they like. Those who were seated in the dark would come to the light and would assist the young woman in whatever she would be doing. Some young men crack jokes to test their women to see how they take it. The young men always observe the behaviour of damsels. Young women were cautious and tried to conceal their true feelings, as they know that they were being eyed. Damsels seldom fart in front of young man. Even if she is on the verge to fart, she would control it. If any damsel farts accidentally, young men would keep on talking as though nothing happened. To support this, a song goes:

Damsel, your buttock crows like a cock,

The permeated odour smell, I, young man endure it (B.Lalthangliana 151)

When the cock crows in the late night, the young men would be ready to disperse. But the damsel would politely say, “It is still early, be seated, it is a cock-crow for comfortable sitting,” and held them back. If any young men slumbered, she won’t wake him up nor even leave him and go to sleep. When the slumberer gets up she would say, “It is still early, be seated,” and saying this she would bid them good night. During festival and at social gathering, young women and young men mixed up.

As mentioned above, Mizo young men used to visit the young women’s house to court them. But young women never enter into youngmen’s house except in case of important things. It was improper for a girl to enter into a young man’s house. In such a way, damsels are wary of young men and very cautious of possible public defamation. They were even cautious with their lovers and seldom expose their feelings. Young men usually try to have sex with young women. In spite of long courtship, all they could achieve was to touch the hem of their clothes. The reason why young women were cautious of young man was because a young woman who has been sexually violated lost her prestige and it remained as an incurable scar. Young men boasted of his being a person who could have sex with damsels. This caused difficulty on the part of damsels to find husbands. Therefore, young women must be very careful.

To have sex with a woman was not only important for his lifetime but also was very much important in the after life. Pawla stood on the way to the abode of the dead. He shot his pellet with his gigantic bow at the young man who had not slept with women. The wound of his shot did not easily cure and would last three years. Everyone wanted to escape

from such a dangerous fate. Everybody wanted to avoid it. And a young man who had sex with numerous damsels was the main cause of boasting and the glory over other young men.

I, young man, Diriallo seldom woo without reason,  
 There are many whom I copulated as many as tree and bamboo  
 Whom I did not win their heart.

Diriallova boasted of the numerous young women with whom he had sex to Awithangpa. In olden days, Mizo young men's competition was mainly to have sex with as many women as they could. Therefore, a young man would always try to get secluded with his lover. Young women were very cautious as far as possible because of the sexual advancement of young men who at all times aimed at having sex with them. In olden time, people were very careful in choosing wife and husband. They did not like pilferers, evil-possessors, deformed and disease carriers. A damsel who could be easily sexually manipulated could not get husband easily. A damsel who delivered a bastard and a divorced women's bride's price are decreased at the time of matrimony. Young men seldom marry such type of women. Due to these reasons damsels were cautious, faithful and virgin until their marriage.

Since long time back, women were married through the arrangement of intermediary. Priests would kill "fowl of negotiation." The bride-groom family would pay the bride price and was received by the family of the bride. The woman would be conducted as bride to the bride-groom's house. The priest would knot together the hair of man and the woman. They would then be married by killing a hen or cock. Assamese Hindu girl does not have bride price and no dresses or other property is taken along with her. Rather, the bridegroom's family offers golden ornaments, dresses and different gifts. And the family of the bride also

offers gold, utensil and other gift. Arunachal women have brideprice; which is, in cash, mithun and different animals and different dresses. Sometimes, if dowry is not fully paid at once, it is paid at acceptable intervals. Among the Manipur Muslim, the bride groom would incur marriage expenditure, and give cash and ornaments instead of giving bride price. To avoid the demand by the bridegroom, the bride's family would give ornaments and utensils. There is no bride price and dowry among the Khasi – Jaintia society. The bride's family would give dresses, ornaments and land. Among the Naga tribe of Angami and Mao there is no bride price. Different items are given to the bride groom. Some other tribes have bride price and are paid according to the agreement between the two families. The Sema Naga women's bride price is higher than that of any other tribe.

The bride-price of Mizo prior to fixation of coin was properties such as beads of high quality, brass-gong, gun or mithun was used as the bride price of the women.

According to common or general acceptance of the value of the domestic animal (cattle) in times, the matured mithun was called 'Sial' and young mithun was called 'Tlai'. That was the half of grown up mithun. When Mizos began to use coins, the general calculation of mithun was equal to Rs. 40; Tlai or young mithun was equal to Rs.20. In Mizo society, the sub-tribe women's price was fixed between 4-5 mithuns. But Sailo women's price was 10 mithuns, even for the chieftain (K.Zawla 104).

In Mizo customary law, ex-married woman's price was not equal to a damsel. The price was fixed at 1 mithun. The price of the bride was divided among the persons who are related in blood, named as different subsidiary portions of the price. The principal portion of the marriage price would go to her parents. The price received by the father or brother is called 'Manpui', means principal portion of the bride price. Other subsidiary portions of the marriage price was called 'Mantang, namely, sumfang to brother, pusum to maternal uncle,

Palal to the adoptive father, 'nu man' to mother, 'ni ar' to paternal aunt and 'naupuakpuan' to cousin or real elder sister.

The following are what to be taken to the groom's house when married: Mizo quilt, bamboo basket, wooden box or trunk, the material of loin loom and 'Zawlkenpuan'. To weave a quilt was a tough work. It could not be finished within a year. It takes 3 years to complete. In case a marrying woman did not have Mizo quilt (Pawnpui), and if it was woven at the house of one's husband, the bride price would decrease to 'tlai sial', a mithun. It was mandatory for a married woman to take ordinary cloth at marriage. This custom had come into practice since time immemorial. Young women used to weave as many cloths as they could to be taken to the husband's house at the time of marriage. So, they would be busy in preparing the cloth since they did not know when marriage could take place. If the receivers of the subsidiary bride price (mantang) helped she could have enough quantity of cloth which she had been weaving. The cloths taken to the husband's house are given to bridegroom's relatives. The number of cloths to be taken by the bride was not fixed.

In the matter of marriage, the girl in Mizo society had no voice; it was entirely left at the hand of the parents. Among the Assam tribals, a woman could choose the man whom she liked for husband. In time of their grand festival, Porang and Bihu, they choose their husbands. In Meitei community, parents arrange for the marriage of their daughters. Mizo damsels should not at all make known to others that they have lovers. If it was revealed, defamation would soon spread out. Young men and married men or divorcee had the freedom of courting young women but young women should not woo young men. They should neither visit young men's house nor approach where young men stay or sit. The man and the family members who liked the woman for their daughter-in-law asked her hand by sending *palai* (intermediary). The question or any requests of the intermediary were to be

replied by the parents. If the parents liked the proposal, they take the decision by themselves without consulting or taking the opinion of the daughter. Irrespective of whether a girl likes it or not if intermediary is sent and liked by the parents, the daughter should give in. One Mizo novel of L. Biakliana has clearly shown in the story of *Lali* about the fate of young women,

For being Mizo and Mizo women, for most of our sister, to face such time is the most difficult time. It's the time they spend in fear and great sorrow. We sell them as if they are calves. Like the animal's customer who check the animals to make sure if they will be strong or not. Likewise, we check if she will be industrious and good wife. For the owner; the parents, the brothers and sister, would sell it to that would pay more. We sell them as if they are goods and we bargain even after purchasing them. We say 'Women and broken fence can be changed'. We beat them whenever we like and we divorce them if we wish. In the olden times, the one most famous way of cursing was by asking, 'Can he work?', 'Are they strong?' It may be completely not to correct to say that our women are treated like slaves. However, it may be correct upto some extent... Oh Zoram! Is there no one to set her free? (L.Biakliana 93)

It was clearly mentioned that some young women did not marry whom they loved or liked. The life of young women was not free. To remain spinster and not to get husband was a shameful condition because of which young women had to be very determined to be favourite of husband's family. In spite of getting married in accordance with the wishes of parents yet, they never forget their ex-lovers. Even after they had husband, the love remained for their ex-lovers. Since such was the mentality of Mizo, when married women went to jhoom in group, they collected leafy vegetables for the men. The bundle of the vegetables meant for their ex-lovers were made bigger. They favoured their ex-lovers more than any other men.

When a man and a woman get married the woman would be called *mo thar*. Afterwards, she confronted all hard works. She would be expected to discharge her works happily. It was legitimate on the part of married men to go with friends. Husbands who always sit beside their wives would be made abutt of jokes. In order to avoid such treatment, they wooed damsels and continued to sleep in Zawlbuk. The newly-wedded had to endure the shyness, loneliness and tiredness silently. She should not grumble and she would be expected not to have any complaint. The condition of a new bride was not all pleasant even if married to the person she loved at her will. It was more miserable if a new-bride was to be married against her will. In such houses, new-brides had to be very cautious for fear of a bad reputation and criticism. Neighbours would watch the conduct of the new bride, if she is industrious or not. How much she would carry firewood and what not. The in-laws of the new-bride eagerly wait to let her work. A new-bride frequently had to take insufficient food because of hectic schedules and exhaustion. Even if she longed to visit her parental home, frequent visits was improper. In the event of having left-over food in her parents' house when she cannot restrain hunger, she would get a bad reputation and criticism.

Mizo women would be very scared of dying of child birth called *Raicheha thi*. They would fetch water and carry firewood soon after birth of a baby. Having done all these works, if one dies due to different disease, the cause of the death would not be considered as dying in child birth. In the administration of family, everything would be in the hand of mothers (wives). According to J.Shakespear in his work, *The Lushei Kuki Clans*,

A Lushai woman has to rise early, fill her empty bamboo tubes and trudge off before daylight to the spring, which is general some way down the hill. Having conveyed her basketful to the house, she has to work cleaning the rice for the day. The breakfast of rice has then to be cooked and by the time it is ready, her husband is awake (J.Shakespeare 32)

This shows that the husband has never helped his wife in the domestic chores. The petty house-hold chores such as pounding rice, drawing water, feeding pig, cooking, weaving cloth, carrying firewood and spinning yarn were the job of the women. At night, men would go to Zawlbuk just after the evening meal. Whereas, the women combined the works of cooking pigs feed and spinning cotton and lullabying babies by carrying them at their backs. She would sleep fearing lest she rise up late in the morning. In the morning she would be busy with the drawing of water and cooking food while, the husband would be sitting on fender seat, the wife would be pounding rice carrying her child on her back. In the meantime, the cooking pot overflowed but the husband scolds and says, “Your pot overboils,” and would not even like to touch it. (James Dokhuma 314). Even on the way to jhoom women (wives) would carry packs of food and other things. While returning home, the wives would carry firewood, vegetable and leaves for pig’s feed. But the husbands would return home without carrying anything. Men considered all these works to be the works of women; hence they would not assist their wives.

Mizos expect a housewife to be meek, kind, amiable and a person who should never back-bite. She should be careful in the matter of the quest for husband and wife. A tracing of wife’s ancestors was customary. It was believed that furious mother begets furious daughter. We have seen in *Lungrang Laiawrha* how Vungkhami was a shrewd woman who often fight with others and had cases against her. Her daughter was very brave who inherited her mother’s trait. There had been no boys of her age whom she could not fight with. She did not get any visitor and lover till her maturity because everybody feared her. Mizos believe that good and bad reputation of the family rest in the hand of the women. The blame goes to a wife if the family’s clothing and dress are defective, shortage of firewood and water and if

rice husk is not removed properly. But if there is defect in basket and plaited band of cane used for carrying basket and the shame was put on the husband.

Assamese Hindu women adopt the caste/title of their fathers and their women had no right to inherit property prior to India's independence. They work in the agricultural land and look after domestic affairs. Though they had voices in the running of the daily domestic chores, they had no right in matters of importance, money and belongings. Arunachal Pradesh tribes are patriarchal, the women do not have right to inherit. Sons inherited the property of parents. If there is no male issue, the son of the nearest relative inherited the properties. In Khasi-Jaintia society, the youngest daughter inherits the property of her parents. If she gets married, the husband has to live in her house. Daughters who had not inherited properties stay near parents' house after they get married. In case the youngest daughter does not marry or have no daughter, the property would be inherited by her sister's daughter. According to the Khasi customary law, it is not allowed to re-marry before the completion of one year of her husband's death. If it is violated, the daughter won't be allowed to inherit the property. In most of Naga tribes, women cannot possess lands in their names nor inherit the property of their parents or husbands. In case of Sema Naga, a wife has the right to take out some household property. Though there is no right to inherit the property, yet she could use the products of her labour. Most of the tribal women of Tripura cannot possess lands in their name nor can they inherit their parents' property.

For Mizo women, prior to their marriage, there is nothing to acquire as the result of their labour as long as they live in their parents' house. All the property belong to the parents. At the time of marriage, few clothes, 'Thul' with a conical lid and 'Hnam'. With these she would enter her husband's house. The husband and wife of Arunachal tribe can divorce easily. Without any difficulty, a husband could marry another woman by divorcing

his wife. If a woman divorces her husband, the bride-price must be given back to her husband. Like other tribal people of N.E, divorce in Mizo society is very common and easy. If a man says, “Ka ma a che, chhuak rawh,” husband and wife would be separated. The wife would go back to her parents’ house. A wife can divorce her husband by returning the bride-price, which is called ‘Sumchhuah’. However, the woman who wishes to divorce should take the consent of the persons who had received marriage-price and her parents because the marriage price has to be returned to the husband. In the customary law of fore-fathers, a married man was not considered to be an adulterer though he sleeps with another woman. But if a married woman sleeps with another man she commits adultery, she is invariably divorced by the husband. The wife must leave her husband’s house only with what she puts on at the time. According to the concept of Mizo fore-fathers, the adultery of woman was a great crime and it was the highest sin for a woman. This sort of sin was abhorrent to Mizo, and a woman who committed adultery was bound to be killed by a tiger. If a Mizo couple divorced, the children belong to the man.

Mizo women, like any other women of North East India, have limited accountability in the field of religions. The women of Arunachal Pradesh have very limited responsibility in religious matter. The work of priest is the responsibility of men. In Buddhism and Hinduism, women have the freedom to take part in various religious ritual and performance. In Buddhist religion, some people don’t have priests rather a priestess does all the rituals. Among the Khasi – Jaintia and Garo tribes, the religious rituals has to be performed by priests only. Women are prohibited from taking part in the sacrificial ceremony; rather they are responsible for acquiring all the material necessary for the ritual. Naga women cannot hold important position in the matter of religious matters. Among Mao tribe, celebration of Harvest festival, which is normally organized by women, is not desired to be seen by their

men. In the Mizo religious matter, there is rarely any indication to support that women have ever hold an important position in the capacity of priestess. Therefore, women are not allowed to take part in the sacrificial ceremony performed due to sickness or for family matters. Women do not take part even in the sacrificial ceremony for the well-being of community and in seeking blessing. In spite of non-participation of women in important position in religious matter, the Mizo forefathers believed that the female supernatural beings.

Among the supernatural female beings, the followings are often mentioned: Khuanu, Vanchungnula and Lasi. Khuanu is believed to be “the protector and God of village, who has the supernatural power like God and lived among people” (Mizo Sakhua, 125). Khuanu is believed to be the giver of all blessings to human beings and protector of village. She is also believed to be decider of the fate of human beings. Couples who are congenial are believed to be the blessed of ‘Khuanu’ and compatible couples are called ‘Khuanu Samsuih’ and ‘Khuanu Tuahrem’. “Khuanu will protect me”, used to be spoken popularly. ‘Vanchung nula’ would be the authority over rain; rain would be showered over ground and spilled whenever people need it. We become happy as we need not draw water from spring due to rain. Lasi is thought to be young women who are believed to stay alone or stay in group. “Lasi is extremely beautiful damsel who is never claimed to be old or young” (T.Lalngakliana 9). “Lasi are believed by Mizo to be the protectors and owners of wild animals and domestic animals” (10). “Lasi is the creator and the keeper of wild animals who can be controlled according to her wills” (V.L.Siama 66). Although Lasi is believed to be omni-present, “They are believed to live among hills” (K.Zawla 52). “Lasi liked to watch famous hunter who stand against their gun and spend their night nearby a stream or river. They keep on watching the hunters and love them very much” (V.L.Siama 66).

The reason why Mizo considered *Lasi* as very important is because they are believed to be the source of blessing for hunting. The famous hunters were believed to be 'Lasi zawl' (Lover of Lasi or Possessor of Lasi spirit). It is also said that Lasi being damsels used to watch men going for hunting and fall in love with them.

For the Lasi damsels, watching handsome young men holding gun, hanging satchel, with their heads covered by turban and rattling and leaping on top of a rock along the course of a stream make them charmed easily is often told (67).

Hunters who can be charmed to love by Lasi are given favour in helping them in killing animals. Hunters who could shoot more animals are believed to be 'Lasi zawl' (Lover or possessor of Lasi spirit). For Mizo, these *Lasi* are very important in bestowing fame to hunters by killing certain animals. They were considered great not only in their lifetime, but also in paradise. Mizos believed that distinguished hunters who were honoured and respected during their lifetime are favorites. They are also expected to get the same treatment even after their death.

"Therefore, in the matter of worshipping, women are not deprived of being follower or worshipper although they seldom were leader" (T.Vanlaltlani 61). In the matter of Mizo religious matter, the importance of women can be seen in these words, "let the husband live with his wife and children and let his first obligation be to slaughter a male pig, which is known as Sakung phun. It implies Women do not have their own religion" (B.Lalthangliana 226). Since the family followed in a 'Sakung phun', they thought that is the perfection of human when they had a life partner. "Therefore, without women, Mizo men could not worship their religion" (T.Vanlaltlani 71). In the book *Mizo Sakhua*, "A Lushai man who had children, if separated from parental home, what he had to do first in religious matter is to

slaughter a male pig that is called Sakung phun. And then he had religion of his own” (Trial Research Institute 21).

Women were not only not limited in their participation in religious matter, they also took part in community gathering, harvest festival, feast thrown by the village chief and community sports. On the first day of ‘Chapchar Kut’ (Lushai spring festival), elders would drink rice-beer the whole day.

Married women, young women and young men drink wine, but seldom get drunk. In the evening, married men, married women, young men and young women would gather in front of the chief’s compound and dance by swinging their arm. On the beginning of Kut (festival) young men and young women stay awake the whole night (B.Lalthangliana 97).

“Young women would wear the best cloth, put on headdress and wear necklace” (98).

Women were not excluded even during the celebration of sacrifice and feast to ensure entrance to paradise.

When the rice fermented for beer is sweet (matured)..... young men and young women are called together to carry firewood for the host (Chawngpa)..... packs of rice are carried and a pig is slaughtered. Rice-beer is supplied to the young men and maidens who husk rice for the Chawng feast (27). On the night of Chawng (feast) young men and maidens dance the whole night in the house of host Chawngpa (28).

Young men and maidens sit on the floor in parallel rows, each between the legs of the young man. In the middle, one person would dance and they sing together.

After long interval, they would say, “It is time to change,” and the young girls would change their partners. When young man sits too close or become mischievous, she would cry out and the drum was placed between them. This incident can make the young man embarrassed till the next day. Therefore, young men are very cautious (34).

Women do not engage in hunting and raiding expedition, but they would meet the raiders/hunters if they returned home successfully in their expeditions.

The maidens adorned those brave men by tying *arkeziak* on their wrist. The queen would decorate the braves by hanging on their neck amber necklace, cornelian bead and a small bead of various colours instead of plumes (92).

Rice-beer is given. After having the morning meal, the brave warriors would dance for having taken the heads of enemy in the raid. The brave warriors would be completely equipped with arms and clothing. In order to decorate them, around ten maidens would accompany the brave warrior to the place where they dance.

They rejoiced for the enemy's and guns kept on firing. They danced in circle not far away from where the enemy's head was kept. The maidens would be following after them swaying their bamboo tubes carrying on their backs (94).

When rain falls, Mizo women would become happy. They would say, "The young woman, Vanchungnula draws water," and they would rejoice. Although, drawing water from well/springs may not be arduous work, but the way it has to be done is quiet arduous because they face scarcity of water during dry season. We can understand the situation and say that the reason why people wish to depend on cleaned rice in paradise is due to the hardship and difficulty in pounding rice.

Some Mizo women were accused to have 'Khawhring'. 'Khawhring' is one of the evil spirits. "They are believed to enter the abdomen and cause colic-like pains to its victim. Priest could cure the pain and it is not fatal" (K.Zawla 53). They are believed to be evil-spirits. They enter the abdomen of victims and would speak out what they want and wish to say through the victim. Therefore, a person who is possessed by such spirit would be asked

by the parents, “Who are you?” “What do you want?” The wishes and wants would be spoken out through the victim.

“I am such and such. I want such and such things.” If the wishes are fulfilled, the spirit would be satisfied and leave the victim (B.Lalthangliana 193).

Mizo fore-fathers were more afraid of Khawhring than any other greedy or evil spirit. Prior to the eating in jungle, by saying, ‘Khua Tlai,’ few rice and curry would be thrown/given and the same is believed to be eaten by Khawhring (R.Chaldailova 143).

The victims of evil-eye would not know that they are possessed. They speak out when the spirit inflicts pain. For example, “Siami, the young woman from the edge of the village was suffering from abdominal pain and was with in pain on the floor. The priest asked, “Tell me who are you?” Siami answered, “I am Mawii, and I want chicken.” Mawii, the reputed young woman from the lower part of the village was accused of possessing Khawhring. Mizo fore-fathers were very scared of people who are possessed by this spirit. If any person is possessed by Khawhring, he/she is rejected for husband or wife. The evil-eye possessor’s family has to face lots of difficulties. The situation could not be clarified. People stay aloof/avoid them for fear of infection and do not even fall in love with them. No one would like to stay near them in places like, drawing water and carrying firewoods. The carrying chords used by them are avoided.

The chief and the elders would decide their fate. If they are not put to death, they would be banished from the village. They would be thoroughly interrogated and checked as to know what type of persons they could be. There is nowhere for them to be happy (142). Beautiful young woman of a village is usually accused of being possessed by Khawhring out of jealousy. Therefore, some people, out of coveting and wanting to defame would accuse a girl

of possessing Khawhring. The Superintendent of the Northern area, A.W. Davis says –  
Accusing of Khawhring possession was banned (B.Lalthangliana 194).

It is difficult to define the status of Mizo women and young women and their importance and usefulness for the family life.

Hardworksrequiring physical strength constructing house, working in jhoom, sharpening of different tools like axe, hoe, sickle and dao are men's prerogative. And making different bamboo baskets are all the works of men. The duties of the women were taking care of children, rearing animals, cooking, make clothing, carrying firewoods, winnowing or rice, cleaning house and keeping utensils clean (B.Lalthangliana 21).

In the life of Mizo fore-fatheres the duties of men and women were separated and women were protected well. If the family's clothes and dress, firewood for fuel, are not kept in order, it would be the responsibility of the women. Women would be responsible if there is insufficient pounded rice, less water stored at home and insufficient feed for animals. The responsibility of men is repairing the house, sharpening instrument, a making tools, etc.

### CHAPTER-3

#### **Treatment of Women in MizoFictions as a literary backdrop to the works of James Dokhuma in fiction.**

Stories not only tell about a race or nationality but rather expose the life and culture of one's nationality (tribe) and how they laid a firm notion in an individual's life and shape their opinions. In Mizo stories, we have seen the status of women and are given insight on how they are treated in the society. It would be good to think if such notion about women still exists or not. Women play important roles in the family, human relationship and livelihood. Irrespective of whether it is Mizo story or story of other tribes, in stories the beauty and good physique of characters are normally exaggeratingly praised.

Different conditions of Mizo women are shown in the fictions of James Dokhuma. Women learn how to execute household chores right from their childhood. They learn how to cook food and prepare tea to relieve their mother and older siblings. In *Thla Hleinga Zan*, written by James Dokhuma, Chhingpuii who was the only maiden among her siblings had to execute all the women's works long before she could be considered a young woman.

Because of being the only daughter she is expert in drawing water, doing household chores, spinning cotton, pounding rice and also very useful in the house. She is very expert for she has been working since her childhood.(James Dokhuma 180).

*Khawhar In*, Rovi's younger sister Lalthlengi was often entrusted to prepare tea which made Rovi feel relieved. "Thlengi, you prepare tea" (155). In the Short Story, *Silvarthangi* written by Zikpuii Pa, Silvarthangi (Thangi) had to work and learn women's

duties ever since her childhood. At the young age, she had to carry firewood thrice a day and on reaching home her mother would say, “Feed the pig” (81) and she would immediately feed pigs carrying her younger sibling on her back.

In Mizo fiction the inter relationship between young women and young man are very prominent. One of the most important features in Mizo society in this regards is young women and young men carrying firewood together, goes to bereaved family together, celebrating special occasion together and goes to jhoom together. James Dokhuma too has shown very well about them. Young men would accompany maidens while carrying firewood. For lovers, it would be convenient time to exchange their love. In the story, *Thla Hleinga Zan*, Rozami and Kapthuama were told by the mother of Rozami to carry firewood once they arrived. “You strong young man, as you are here, go along with Zami and fell the tree and carry it.....the tree which we find difficulty in felling recently” (332). Rozami and Kapthuama went out together to carry the firewood. Rozami’s firewood was made ready to be carried and propped up. After cutting two logs to be carried home by Kapthuama, they spread leaves and tobacco pipe was prepared and sat together exchanging words of love. Rozami said, “Thuama, I love you, and like you very much. Would you really not be discontented of my being a divorced woman?” (335). Kapthuama said, “My beloved beauty, I am not discontented with you..... Let me see the discontented part of your heart, I’ll cure it” (335). Saying these words he kissed Rozami. Rozami said, “Thank you; I am the sweetheart, for you have applied the right medicine in the right spot. So do I.....” saying this she kissed him. Kapthuama hugged her tighter. Then Rozami said, “I wish we could spend the whole of our life like this” (336). We have also seen young men and damsels carry firewood together in other stories too. We have seen in the story of Silvarthangi: “Silvarthangi and

Lianchhungi carried firewood together and as usual three young men accompanied them.”

(104)

We see young men and damsels carrying firewood together in the novel *Hawilopari*, written by L.Biakliana. Zema being the eldest among the friends said,

Pari, as you do not know where firewood can be gathered..... I know a place where there are lots of oak trees; I'll take you tomorrow there where we can gather lots of it”

(Laltluangliana Khiangte 121).

As told by Zema, Pari with her three friends and Hmingi along with his brother Liana carried the firewood together. Although Pari and Hmingi were not matured yet, their mentality was almost matured. Even though they could not properly express their feeling through words yet, in that secluded place of gathering firewoods, they gave it through gesture. Pari quietly called out, “Hminga” (123). Hminga understood well and walked towards her and said, “Pari, it's no matter how long I stay away from home” (123). On hearing these words, Pari's eyes were full of tears and spoke out, “Hminga” (123). Hminga hugged her until they heard a voice from below.

Mizo women would go to jhoom daily during the weeding season to weed jhoom. It is not done only by lovers but helped by friends who will be paid the same service (inlawm) at later date. We have also seen in *Thla Hleinga Zan*, “Thuambawih, you should not go to jhoom today, our grandmother has passed away. We must stay at home and hurriedly give the message to your friends” (3). Rozami, Thanthuami and Pianmawii were young women who were very close friends. They worked for each other in turn throughout the year. That was a year with a weedy jhoom. One day, the friends went to Rozami's jhoom. In the meantime, a cicada makes a cry from the bottom of the jhoom. A Rengchal (cicada) is a sign to go home. Thanthuami says, “Ah..... that Rengchal (cicada) has cried” (23). Shee also said, “Mawii, I

have seen a *Laksang* (spider), you take it and check to see what kind of complexion your future man would have?" (24). She walked straight to where the spiders were seen.

Thanthuami picked up first. She picked a small dark and energetic spider and felt happy and started laughing. Rozami also picked up one and it was a big whitish spider. By seeing this, Thanthuami said, "I can know it," and started poking fun.

Young women and young men seldom exchange their jhoom work. They go to their respective jhoom and while returning home they place a leaf or bunch of flowers at the fork of the path to give sign that one's sweetheart had passed or gone home. We have also seen in *Thla Hleinga Zan* that although Kapthuama and Rozami do not live together in the same village, yet, Kapthuama pays a visit to Rozami's village as Rozami's paternal aunt was sick and he went there to help her. Rozami and Kapthuama used to go to jhoom together. However, as they have to go to different jhooms, at the point where they have to go separate ways, Kapthuama would say, "Let's place a thatching grass tied in a weaver's knot on top of this rock as a sign of 'inchhawlthuai'" (179).

On arriving at the main road on top of the hill, at the road side rock, friends and lovers would place ripe and unripe cucumber. Initials of names of the owners of cucumbers would be written. Thatching grass tied in a weaver's knot as per vow for Chhawlthuai are never lost as they could be seen while passing through them on the way home (28).

Young women are wooed by young men. Beautiful damsels are valuable and have numerous wooers. A damsel would roll tobacco for her wooer and would offer any available eatables. Even in the *Khawhar In Liani* was a beautiful damsel who had lots of wooers. Muana came to Liani's house intending to court her. On reaching there, immediately the local young men also entered the house. "Just after we took our seats, local young men also entered the house." (83). Liani rolled tobacco for them. "Liani, rolls our tobacco and prepares

tea for us. After meeting together happily, we departed.” (101). Even in *Thla Hleinga Zan*, Rozami was a beautiful damsel in her village, whose beauty was the pride of her village. She loved Kapthuama who was from a different village, Kapthuama who visited Rozami’s village to court her.

Kapthuama pays a visit to Rozami’s house after the evening Church service. However, he could not discuss anything with her due to the presence of numerous wooers who were already there (99).

Kapthuama sent intermediary but could not succeed. “Rozami made known to every one that she would not marry anyone other than Kapthuama. But being a young woman and of good nature, she was not short of wooers” (149). Rozami became a divorced woman after her husband married another woman. But she remained very beautiful. Even Thanthuama’s father says, “I could realize the beauty of Zami only after she got divorced” (266). There are many people who claimed that Zami has become more beautiful as a divorced woman than when she was a damsel. She had more wooers than most of the damsels. “Till now she has more wooers than any beautiful damsels in her village. She is not short of young men who woo her from distant villages including Aizawl. But she did not give in” (268). This is what Thanthuami told Kapthuama.

Even in *Chhingpuii*, Chhingpuii was a fine and good natured damsel who had lots of wooers. “On that moonlit night, numerous young men visited her. Chhingpuii sat near the hearth and the visitors sat in a circle a little away from the hearth” (64). The visitors smoked vaibel (man’s pipe) and Chhingpuii asked, “Do you want fire?” and passed live ember. (68). In *Silvarthangi* by Zikpuii Pa, Silvarthangi was a beautiful maiden alike wooed by young men and divorcees. She had lots of visitors.

Normally, the young men and divorcees of Saithah Village would visit Thangi's house every night and sound of laughter would be heard. But Thangi did not have intention to love anyone among the visitors (88).

She had numerous visitors even after she became a divorced woman. Whenever she quarreled with her mother her father would interfere and beat her sometimes. In spite of this fact, the young men and divorcees of Saithah Village would woo her every night. "The house of Lianchhunga and Laithangpuii, although very uncomfortable, become the most frequented by visitors in Saithah Village." (99)

In the Novel, *Lungrang Laiawrha*, Chhuahi was a beautiful damsel of Saihum Village. The young men of the village were fond of cutting jokes. They would even cut dirty jokes with close acquaintances but no one dared to cut such joke on Chhuahi. Visitors who could not get space to sit nearby, but seated beside pig feed pot would say, "Only one person has to marry, but we visitors are quiet numerous." (8) By saying this they would laugh away. On hearing this words, Chhuahi, in spite of knowing the lack of space, "What did you say, Chawngchung? Come and sit closer by my side, I want to laugh too" (8).

A young woman is expected to speak warmly with her visitors. Apart from her, even her parents are expected to do the same. Failing to extend hospitality to visitors will result in boycott. In the story *Khawhar In*, Chalkhumi is a very beautiful damsel but not very intelligent, Muana used to woo her and he found opportunity. "Even without sharing loving words, I could do things anyway. As she was like this, just to make her sure I wooed her time to time. I had sex course with her everytime I got a chance." (127) One fateful night, Muana wooed Chalkhumi. Chalkhumi's mother says, "Muana, you've stayed long. You won't expect your bed." (128) Muana got very angry on hearing these words. He reported his grief

to his fellow-mates. The bachelor gathered the young men and they decided on, “No one should woo Chalkhumi anymore” (128).

Young men would brag about having sex with young women. For young women it is very shameful and become a stumbling block in getting good husband. That’s why they are very cautious. But if the name of a damsel is defamed by wrong accusation, she can sue the young man before the chief and elders. In *Khawhar In*, Chalkhumi had pre- marital sex with Muana several times. Muana was humiliated by Khumi’s mother because of whom he was very enraged. Even after the young men prohibited him from visiting Chalkhumi, he was still holding a grudge against her. He eventually submitted in writing to the church that he and Chalkhumi had sinned in the eyes of God.

I and Chalkhumi, the daughter of Rotlinga are not in favour in the eyes of God. We had sinned not only once but sinned in the house and jungle. Therefore, as we’ve sinned against God, we are unworthy of being in the Church fellowship. I am informing the Church (133).

On the day Muana submitted the letter to the Church, there was the entire village. The following Wednesday during the church service, Muana and Chalkhumi were suspended from the Church fellowship.

In the novel *Nukawki* by Lalhmingliana Saiawi, Nukawki was the damsel of Mualnuam village who was very beautiful and admired and respected by people. She had sexualintercourse with a young man of her village. He was a quarrelsome character by the name of Chhungbuluka. One day after school was over, Nukawki was told to come out after the children came out of the rooms. She was scared of Chhungbuluka and would not come out to face him. Chhungbulukna dragged her out in the sight of children who had not gone far from there. He defamed her. “This damsel is highly respected. Don’t you respect her? I have slept with her. Her thighs are beautiful!” (82) By saying these words he tried to pull up her

gown. Nukawki tried her best to cover her thighs. Chhungbuluka could not succeed in stripping Nukawki as she tried very hard to protect her chastity.

Women go to jhoom daily. During their leisure time and when not weeding, they would be weaving cloth or set up yarn for weaving. Young women would prepare necessities to be taken of marriage. A damsel would not be in a position to get married until cloths for marriage are sufficiently ready or prepared. In the story of *Khawhar In*, Liani stayed awake the whole night in the house of bereavement. We have read that she wove cloth instead of going to jhum. “We took bath after digging the grave. We went to Liani’s house along with our friend Laia. Liani was weaving cloth.” (83) Even in the novel *Thla Hleinga Zan*, Liankhuma wooed Thankimi while she was weaving cloth. “It was during the time when jhooms were cut. I went to woo Thankimi while she was weaving cloth.” (126) Rozami was setting up yarn for weaving with Thankumi instead of going to jhum. Kapthuama who killed a tiger was waiting on memorial platform. “As it was the same day when Rozami along with Thanthuami was setting up yarn for meeting, Rozami could be relieved by Thanthuami”(337). In the novel *Tumpang Chal Nge Saithangpuii*, Saithangpuii, the daughter of a chief was in love with the village great hunter Fehtea. Fehtea’s paternal aunt asked Saithangpuii, “My dear, as you are setting up yarn, whom would you set up with? I won’t be able to assist you. My sight is not very good” (105). She helped Fehtea’s aunt in setting up yarn. “Thangpui, there is no one to guard our house. Do you wish to set up yarn at your house? Shall we set up the yarn in my house?” (105). So taking the yarn to be set up in a basket they went to Fehtea’s aunt house.

In *Thla Hleinga Zan* Kapthuama proposed to Rozami for marriage but Rozami was not ready. “I’m not yet equipped with what to be taken to husband’s house as per the norm of Mizo woman. I don’t even have a preferable cloth to be given as gift. In case of blanket, I am

intending to set up yarn for weaving in the spring this year” (62). With these words Rozami tells why she is not ready for the marriage.

In the earlier Mizo society, young women were very cautious and watchful against men. They were much afraid of defamation and criticism. Rovi and Vantlangmuana (Muana) loved each other in the novel *Khawhar In*. Young men who loved Rovi were jealous of Muana. They threatened him through letter. But Rovi and Muana carried on their love affair. One night, Rovi and Muana attended celebration of success in examination. On their way home, the young men beat up Muana. Muana speaks out after his defeat.

I am not doubtful about your intention to kill me; I know it's because of Lalrovi. If she is your girl, tell me. She is right here. If she can be subjected to your agreement, go ahead and do it. I shall move out. I shall move out immediately (35).

At the same time, Rovi says, “You shameless! Have you even touched the edge of my cloth? Such type of people should not even visit my house” (35). Young women seldom reveal the information about lover. As far as possible it is concealed. Rovi reported to Police as if she does not love Muana. “Rovi on the other hand said that we were in love.” (51) In *Thla Hleinga Zan Liankhuma* separated with his fiancé for not concealing their love affair.

In spite of loving me and being mature damsel, she would tell about me all the time to everyone around which is very embarrassing. Other damsels would conceal their love affair. But she would keep on revealing. Although she is not revealing about me in negative way still then it's silly on her part. “Good damsel's lover cannot be known.” She is far from this maxim. Therefore, I've decided to leave her for good.” (77)

Wise damsels know how to conceal their love affairs and their lovers are hard to know. They would treat equally all their visitors.

Even in the novel *Thla Hleinga Zan*, Rozami and Kapthuama met on the balcony of Thanthuami which was their first meeting in a secluded place. Rozami says, “If our meeting is to be known by people, it will be defamation for me. However, I won’t mind defamation for love.”(51) Thankimi and her family have to stay in the jhum as the time to carry paddy to granary. On Sunday, Thankimi went to the bottom part of the jhoom to pray secludedly. Liankhuma arrived at the place while she was praying. After Thankimi finished her prayer she said to Liankhuma, “I’ll pray for you” (108). And after the prayer both walked towards the hut. On reaching the hut many people were gathered there. They went home the following next week. Two church elders visited Thankimi’s house on Sunday just before evening meal was taken. The church elders had visited her because of the incident of the previous Sunday of which someone had reported, taken in a bad way. The church elder told her,

You being a trusted and the most glorified damsel for us, it can defame you easily for just petty reasons. It is easier to be defamed in the case of young man and young woman. People like to talk such thing. Even now, people do not think you to be a bad person. However, as there was a rumour we have just visited by a way of rest (10).

Young women guarded themselves very well against men. They feel bad when men misbehaved with them. Liankhuma wooed Thankimi, “Her breast was rubbed unexpectedly. It was not her thinking at all” (117). Even in the novel *Khawhar In*, Liani was in love with Muana. They loved each other very much. One day, while dating, Muana attempted to have pre-marital sex with her.

She rubs my hands as any normal lovers would do. However, I was not satisfied with that alone. I suddenly pulled her down on her bed to lie on her back and attempted to make love with her. She does not like that act at all. I could not execute what I’d extremely wished to do.

I could not succeed inspite of the fact that I've sent intermediary to show my wish to marry her on having evidence that she too loved me" (122).

Liani speaks nicely to Muana and says, "I do not like such act until we are married. I would accept/allow anything after marriage. However, I can't allow you to do such act prior to our marriage" (122).

In the novel *Rinteei Zunleng* by Lalrammawia Ngente, the leading characters Vawra and Rinteei loved each other and even wished to get married. However, Vawra being from a broken family and non-religious person was not accepted by Rinteei's family who were affluent and religious. Vawra felt very uncomfortable but he did not stop meeting her. One day, while Vawra was sitting together with Rinteei he attempted to have sex with her. "I hold her all of a sudden and threw her down on my bed. I was about to start the act... There is no other option than this I asked, if that was all right" (315). Rinteei spoke out her unwillingness and was grieved. She weeps bitterly and says,

Vawra, understand me. I wish to have you as my husband but I can't sin against God. Vawra, do undersand me. If we commit this act my heart would bleed throughout my life, and I would feel guilty of myself. I love you but such act is not possible (316).

In the novel *Hmangaihzuali*, written by C.Laizawna, Dinga and Zuali were deeply in love with each other. Dinga attempted to have pre-marital sex with Zuali by hugging her. "Be my wife. Let's get married" (269). By saying this he pulled her on the bed. He kissed her to his heart's content and even Zuali kissed him back. They hugged each other on the bed. Dinga intended to reach the final destination. He started wrestling with Zuali. Dinga attempted to remove her petticoat. Zuali says, "We are saving it for nuptial night" (269). Zuali bites the hands of Dinga. Dinga did not want to remove his grip. He removed his grip only when he got pain. Zuali put on her cloths properly and says, "Dinga, it won't be good to

have sex before our marriage. I shall be very ashamed with you. I won't be valuable for you and I would be scared that you might not even like to marry me" (269).

In the case of love affair between young men and young women, young men in order to show their liking for young women would entrust someone to convey their feelings by saying, "Give my regards." Even in the *Thla Hleinga Zan*, Kapthuama told Rozami's friend Pianmawii, "I am falling in love with your friend. You give my regards to her tonight." (47)

A wise damsel would conceal her lover. A lover won't even show indication in their behaviour before others. A person who secretly loves someone would by the help of friend express his feeling. In *Thla Hleinga Zan*, Thankimi liked Liankhuma very much ever since her teenage but she seldom shows any sign. One day she confided, "Khuma, I saw you in my dream on Wednesday night. I missed you a lot. In my dream, I saw your eyes as well. It is said that if someone's eyes are seen in a dream, even the beholder of the eyes would see me. Did you not see me in your dream?" (79). On hearing this dream, Liankhuma started watching her and consequently fell in love and married Thankimi. In the novel *Lungrang Laiawrha*, Laleni loved Laiawrha secretly. Although Laiawrha wooed her every night, he could not make out that Laleni loved him. "I know someone who loves you deeply. It's my friend Laleni." (150)

In Mizo society, a young woman admired a young man who is a warrior, brave and good hunter. Great warriors are desirable for damsels. A beautiful damsel from the same village is usually loved by a great warrior. In the novel *Khawhar In*, the leading character Liani was a beautiful damsel from the same village. She fell in love with Muana who was from another village. One of the reasons why Liani fell in love with Muana was because of his bravery. Liani asked Muana, "It was recently shown in the newspaper: A tiger wounded a young man and the victim's friend saved the young man by chopping the tiger to death. Did

you know that incident? It happened in your village” (75). Muana asked Liani why she was asking. Liani says, “He being a brave and selfless person, give my regards to him. If he is an unmarried man, I would have sent a letter to him saying, ‘you have done great!’ ” (76). The brave young man was none other than Muana. In the story of *Chhingpuii*, the leading character was in love in with Kaptluanga, a very brave young man who was also a great hunter and a warrior. In Lalzuithanga’s novel *Phira leh Ngurthanpari*, Phira was a commoner and the son of a widow. In the opinion of the society, he can’t expect to be loved by a chief’s daughter. But he being a great warrior and a brave man, he could win the heart of Ngurthanpari, the daughter of the village chief. Although Phira burnt her village, killed her brother and Bawiha of her village, she still loved her. She let him escape secretly. “Phira, they know you. I know you. I know that you burnt down our village and killed my brother. Let this cloth be my souvenir, this knife is for your defence on the way. I’ll see you off till the outskirts of the village” (35). On reaching the outskirts of the village, Ngurthanpari says, “You run fast without slowing down. If they come to know, the consequence will be bad for you and me. You must not tell to anyone about this thing” (35). By saying this Ngurthanpari set him free secretly.

In the novel *Tumpang Chal nge Saithangpuii*, Fehtea was the son of a commoner. In Mizo society there is a huge gap between the Sailo clan and commoners. There cannot be inter-clan marriage between them. However, Fehtea could marry a Sailo chief’s daughter because he was a great warrior. Saithangpuii’s father says, “People compared Saithangpuii and Sihhuaia. If any unmarried young man who could shoot Sihhuaia (Bibos gauros) I shall give my Saithangpuii’s hand to him in marriage” (73). Fehtea shot Sihhuaia (Bibos gauros). Having seen Saithangpuii’s favourable sign and following the chief’s promise, Fehtea sent intermediary. As Saithangpuii accepted the proposal the chief agreed to their marriage.

We see in the novel *Thla Hleinga Zan*, that intermediary is sent to make agreement for a marriage. The story has clearly highlighted that young women do not have any right in choosing their husbands. Kapthuama was in love with Rozami, the leading character. They loved each other very much. They could not meet each other regularly because they did not live in the same village. Rozami was very beautiful. “She is the most beautiful damsel in our village.” (James Dokhuma 45) She got proposals for marriage time to time. Her father was an elder to the chief who wished to marry off her daughter to a wealthy person. Although Rozami argued with her father, she was warned by beating because of which the only thing she could do was weep quietly. “If you dare to talk, I shall beat you black and blue” (142). Rozami’s marriage agreement through the intermediary could not be finalized on her excuse that she was not ready for it and she was not equipped with the materials to be taken to the husband’s home. Later on, Rozami had another marriage proposal. Her father liked it very much because the proposal was from one of the most prominent persons of his own village, Ngurhnema’s son Thanseia, a Naik by rank. Thanseia liked Rozami since long time back. Rozami did not wish to marry him. She even intended to run away but her father, having known her mind, let her to be guarded. “I make my mind to run away. I intended to run away on the wedding night. But as I planned, I could not execute it as I was guarded” (242). Rozami’s father’s authority upon her clearly highlighted the life of Mizo society. We have also seen in other stories the absence of right to choose husband for young women.

In the novel *Kross Bulah chuan*, Lalmalsawma and Thangchhingi were in love since their teen age. Their love affair was known to everybody in their village. Thangchhingi had another suitor who was liked by her father. Thangchhingi on the other hand did not want to marry. She even told the intermediary the reason for her refusal. For Lalsawma was told by his father to pursue medical studies and as he was to study on he could not get married.

Thangchhingi was very distressed. Her father stood firm on the decision to marry her off with Lalzarliana. He advised his daughter. “You will not find a person like Zarliana even if you live for a hundred year. We cannot reject a person like him who is a fine young man and rich. Aren’t you ashamed?” (129)

Thanchhingi’s mother could not help her, rather she advised her daughter to obey her father’s command and not to expect Lalmalsawma anymore. Thangchhingi’s father says, “Don’t tell about him. I just don’t like him. His father whom I know all the times is a proud man who is said to be good outwardly but bad inwardly though a Pastor” (129). By saying this he scolded his daughter. The meeting of Thangchhingi and Lalsawma was put to a stop by guarding his daughter. Thangchhingi was married to Sepoy Lalzarliana.

In *Lali*, written by L.Biakliana, the heroine, Lalawmpuii (Lali) was a Christian damsel who intended not to marry a non-christian young man. But Rozika a non-christian from her village who was the son of a wealthy man proposed to Lali for marriage. Lali did not want to marry him at all. Rozika was a bad young man who used to drink alcohol. Lali’s father felt happy and considered him lucky to be visited by a handsome young man and son of good man. Therefore, he secretly nurtured his daughter’s marriage with him. He advised his daughter, “You won’t find a husband like him who is a good young man and wealthy and who belongs to our own village” (96). Lali’s mother knowing the unwillingness of Lali’s marriage championed her cause. Her mother says, “It is not good to enforce her if she does not like. Besides, he is a very wicked. ....” But it enraged Lali’s father more. “How could you say that? Can’t they get married? You consider him wicked. Is there anyone worse than you? You even do not know how lucky we are. They’ll definitely get married. I will surely marry her off. You don’t know your own benefit” (97).

Similar problem is seen in *Silvarthangi* written by Zikpuii Pa. Mangluaia the son of their village chief who genuinely loved Silvarthangi attempted to rape her. Mangluaia was an insignificant young man. Thangi did not consider him as a lover because he was an alcoholic and was very proud. One day, Thangi, along with her friend Tlani carried firewood together. While Tlani was gathering firewood on the other side of the hill, Mangluaia suddenly appeared. He held a gun and there was a smell of liquor on him. He attempted to rape Thangi. Thangi shouted the name of her friend. Mangluaia threatened to shoot her if she did not stop shouting. Thangi became unconscious and in the meantime, Tlani also arrived. They informed the incident to Thangi's parents. Mangluaia's father asked for forgiveness and also proposed the hands of Thangi for his son. Thangi was reluctant to marry Mangluaia. But her father was secretly intending for the marriage. "You must definitely marry him. Mangluaia is very suitable for you. Don't you feel ashamed for rejecting him? You unworthy woman, you should be happy for he likes you. You have to say, 'Yes, yes, yes', if rich people like you, don't you know how to do that? Don't say anything more." Saying this, he threatened his daughter" (94).

Mizo women do not have the right to choose husbands according to their liking. Women who had been forced to marry by parents would renew their past if they meet their ex-lovers inspite of having husband. They feel lonely and regret whenever they meet their ex-flames. In the novel *Thla Hleinga Zan*, Rozami was forcefully married off. She was guarded till the night of her wedding for fear of running away and she was consequently married off. One day, Rozami met Kapthuama, her ex-flame whom she could not marry, at the place where she was carrying firewood. Rozami became speechless when she met him. She shiveringly says, "Thuama, I thought you to be someone else. So it's you, you make me feel so lonesome.....forgive me..... I may be a person who cannot be hoped for, but I am so

miserable because our promises proved vain.....have a very very sweet dream” (292). After Kapthuama left, Rozami sat down under a Khiang (Chilauni) tree shade and kept on holding the tree.

Even in the short story, *Kross Bulah Chuan*, Lalsawma and Thanchhingi were in love since their teenage. Their love affair was known to everybody in their village. Lalzarliana, an ideal son-in-law for Thanchhingi’s father sent intermediary for whom Thanchhingi’s father tried to make it possible. Thanchhingi argued with her father but her father did not even allow her to go out and she was guarded. And consequently her father married her off. Thanchhingi outlived her husband. She had a child who was kept in an orphanage. In the meantime, Lalmalsawma completed his medical studies and started working as a doctor. He was married and had children. He was transferred to a different village because of which he left his wife and children to be in his new posting. He met Thanchhingi in the same village where he was posted. Their eyes met. “They shake hands and could not let go their hands. It was their first meeting after their tearful separation after a long time” (151). Even in Thanchhing’s mind there was nothing else. She did not know what to say. She did not weep in a normal way. But it was deeper than weeping. Her suffering and loneliness which has been kent up for so long exploded.

We have seen in *Thla Hleinga Zan* that young woman and young man who loved deeply but could not get married and had married someone else would still love and favour one’s ex-lover. Kapthuama married Hminglovi. They visited Rozami’s village as Thanthuami’s mother invited them. Kapthuama shot a deer on the way. When he went to chop deer meat with other people, Rozami also came. Kapthuama let Rozami hold the hind leg (Sazuk bawp). While he was preparing meat for her share, Pianmawii’s father said, “I’ll cut the flesh carefully for the old friend. She could not be jealous. There won’t be any other

chance to favour her like now.” (273) Rozami’s face reddened. In the novel *Khawhar In*, the heroine Biakliani (Liani) and Vantlangmuana (Muana) were deeply in love but could not get married. Muana showed his care for Liani even after they both married someone else. Once when Liani’s daughter came to Aizawl, Muana gave a cloth from his shop. ‘Are you Biakliani’s daughter?’ I said. “I don’t see any reason to love you less than my children…… I asked her to select the cloth she liked most. I gave her cloths more than she need. I also gave ornament and packed something interesting for her mother too” (166).

And in the story, *Kross Bulah Chuan*, Thanchhingi and Lalsawma were in love since their teenage but they did not marry. Thanchhingi married a sepoy Lalzarliana because her father forced her. Lalmalsawma also married Hmingthansiami, a pastor’s daughter after he completed his medical studies. Thanchhingi outlived her husband and after that she met Lalmalsawma. They met in the office of Lalsawma when Thanchhingi went to hospital to purchase medicine. Lalsawma invited Thanchhingi to his house and offered her tea and the best cake available in the village. Thanchhingi intended to go home after drinking the tea but Lalsawma did not allow her to go. He says, “Stay back, let’s kill a chicken” (153). And Thanchhingi stayed back and took meal.

Mizo people believed that it is already fixed by Khuanu (Mother Nature) for a young man and young woman if they would marry and be compatible with each other. It is also believed to be ordained by God as partner in wedlock. In the novel *Khawhar In*, Muana sent intermediary to Biakliana to ask her hand in marriage. Liani’s father says, “Biakliani has been getting marriage proposal time to time from person whom we do not deserve. She never wanted to go to anywhere…… At least this time, she is not arguing. May be it’s been fixed by God” (118). We have seen even in the novel *Thla Hleinga Zan* that Kapthuama was not

liked by Rozami's family because of which Rozami's mother argued over the invitation of having meal. Since Rozami did not want to be unsuccessful in inviting Kapthuama, she says,

In the past, Chhingpuii got lost. We could not even bury her body, but it was you who found it out and we could at least have her dead body. And now, you have saved Rozami from death. And Rozami's father does not deny this. Even this morning her father said, "At least for now, we cannot turn to other village. If Rozami recovers like this we must look for the first convenient time. Beyond this it is "Khuanu's and God's will." Inform Kapthuama, it will be good to go ahead with it. (264)

We have seen in the novel *Thla Hleinga Zan* that Mizo women and men have to settle agreement through intermediary prior to their marriage. Rozami and Kapthuama got married through an agreement settled by intermediary. Kapthuama entrusted his own relative Sanghleia, the son of his paternal aunt and another from Rozami's village, the father-in-law of Rozami's paternal aunt were sent as intermediaries to ask the hand of Rozami in marriage. Rozami's father responded positively. "Shoulder the responsibility with regard to Rozami's marriage..... Let it be up to Rozami. I would wish her as her father to let her do what she likes most" (380).By saying this he accepted the marriage proposal. In *Kross Bulah Chuan* written by Zikpuii pa, Hmingthansiami and Lalsawma also got married through the agreement settled by the intermediary. Pastor Tlangkhuma, father of Lalsawma sent intermediary to Pastor Laltawna, father of Hmingthansiami. "Please give me your daughter, Hmingthansiami. I want her very much for my son, Lalsawma" (146).The intermediary said so in a convincing way. Pastor Laltawna and his wife were so happy to know that their daughter was genuinely liked by Lalsawma. So, even their daughter did not reject the marriage proposal and the agreement outcome was conveyed.

We have already seen in the novel *Thla Hleinga Zan* that there is involvement of bride's price in the social life of Mizo. The intermediary of Kapthuama made the proposal to Rozami's father and they settled the agreement of bride price. Rozami's father says, "There's no reason to marry off without paying bride price..... As she is a divorced woman, you pay Rs.200 and provide a mithun for marriage feast. And I shall send her off by providing a mithun" (381). On the night when bride price was given out, the beneficiaries told Rozami not to be present because of which she spent time with Kapthuama at the back of their house. Even in the story *Lungrang Laiawrha*, the way Sakawli's father expect the bride price was, "Whatsoever bride price you offer, we shall accept. However, as she being an unmarried damsel, as per the rules laid down by the Superintendent you can pay what is under your disposal and the rest will remain due" (163). They negotiated in a very humble way.

When there is serious misunderstanding between husband and wife, the wife would abscond. Some couple separated for good. There are various reasons of separation. Some separated because of extra-marital affair of their husbands and for some their husband's committing adultery. In the novel *Khawhar In*, written by James Dokhuma, Lalrovi was very distressed due to her husband Vantlangmuana's (Muana) continuous anger. Rovi says, "I am very distressed." These very words was hated by her husband and said, "If you are not happy inside my house, you get out." Rovi replied, "Does that mean you want to divorce me?" Her husband Muana said, "Yes, I do. You get out quickly" (154). Rovi cried bitterly. Muana's father stopped his daughter-in-law, Rovi from going away. He said, "Rovi, don't go out, I won't allow you to go out. If you go, we the parents of Muana would disown him..... Rovi, you should not go" (154). However, Rovi had to leave and went to her parental home as her husband himself insisted on her getting out. Later on, Muana regretted and sent his friend and brother-in-law to call back his wife. But, they met Rovi on the way as she was coming to take

her belongings. Consequently, Rovi returned to her husband's house without taking her belongings. And in the novel *Thla Hleinga Zan*, Rozami's husband Thanseia was a bit flirtatious and wandered about in love with a damsel. The damsel followed him inspite his resistance. Therefore, Rozami was divorced by her husband from distant place. And consequently, they separated for good.

In the *Kross Bulah Chuan* written by Zikpuii pa, Lalsawma told his wife Hmingthansiami, "Get out, I don't like you, I am tired of you.....Get out before I beat you..... I am not divorcing you because I am drunk" (162). Lalsawma chased out his wife. Silvarthangi was told by her husband Lahnuna, "Silvarthang, from now onwards, you are no more my wife. You can go back" (98). He said these words while divorcing his wife. We have seen in the novel *Dan Rual Loh Hmangaihna*, written by Lalrammawia Ngente, Biakthanga told his wife Rengpuii, "Get out immediately. Nothing is left in this house for you to do. I divorce you. You get out! Are you not getting out? Are you waiting for my beating? I am telling you to get out immediately" (9). Rengpuii and her two children went out. After sometime, Biakthanga married a divorced woman who had a child.

In the novel *Lungrang Laiawrha*, written by Lalhmingliana Saiawi, we have seen that not men only divorce their wives. Lianawka and his wife Thangtinchhuahi quarrelled.

Lianawka said,

"Stop talking." But his wife kept on talking. Lianawka got enraged and slapped her. Thangi was not intimidated at all and she spoke out openly, "You dare slap me, Lianawka. My family considered you to be a nice person. They forced me to marry you although I did not like you. You turned out to be worthless. I am going to return the bride price" (99).

She packed her belongings and left. The following morning, Thangtinchhuahi and her parents came to Lianawka's house to return the bride price. "As advised by Chhuahi's

mother, we pondered for a night. Our daughter (Thangtinchhuahi) insisted on returning the bride price. We've come to return the bride price eventhough we had wished to settle it" (101). Lianawka's mother tried to convince Thangi by saying that her staying away even for a night has made her worried. She also told her daughter-in-law that anger can flare up sometimes in a family, but she should not take it seriously. The father of Thangi also spoke out, "Our advice and opinions are never considered. We have to return the bride price. We have brought the entire amount which was paid to us. If you wish, you may gather your relatives at the time of returning the bride price" (102). In this way, the bride price given by Lianawka to Thangtinchhuahi at the time of the marriage was returned by Thangi's family and divorce took place. This is called 'Sumchhuah'.

In the novel *Chutiang Pawh A Ni lo Ka Nu*, one of the prominent characters, Dokapa married Aizingi. Dokapa being the only son, his parents desired for a grandson very much. But, Aizingi had miscarried three times. She returned to her parental home despite the resistance of her husband just because she respected her in-laws. Dokapa decided to call back his wife but his mother could not be convinced. "As she was not called back, his wife returned the bride price, and took back all the belongings which she brought to her husband's house" (95).

We have seen in the novel *Thla Hleinga Zan* that Mizo women draw water a lot. They draw every morning. They feel very happy when there is rainfall. During spring, they have to wait for the spring to be filled. They have lot of work to be done but waiting for water wasted time. A physically big woman and a divorced woman quarreled at the spring by pointing fingers at each other. The quarrel was due to dispute about laying claim to who should draw water from the spring first. It is known through the usage of words used while quarrelling that the real reason behind it is not because of water. The woman said, "I reached the spring

before you. How dare you try to draw before me? Even our fore-fathers used to draw water in turn, you shameless woman. You'd even called my husband to catch fish with net in the night. I feel like inserting the handle of the water can in your vagina" (286). The other woman said, "As per the Mizo norm, I am not ashamed even a little bit before a person who tries to lay claim in drawing water. You libidinous woman" (287). The divorced woman said,

As far as who arrived first is concerned, I've gone earlier than you. I had stayed back to pee when I was about to reach and you overtook me. Don't keep on telling lies. Your husband has been wooing me every night with an expectation from me. Is your husband not getting a proper satisfaction on the bed? I don't know if it is because of his flirtation. Don't you feel ashamed of yourself to abuse like that? You monkey, don't you dare talk to me like that. I'll definitely draw the water (287).

She scolded like this while drawing the water. We have also seen in Lalhmingliana Saiawi's *Lungrang Lalawrha*, the characters, Sakawlhi's mother Vungkhami and Kawlsiami draw water during a quite noon time. Vungkhami was coming hurriedly from westward at the same time; Kawlsiami was also coming hurriedly from the opposite way. They ran towards the spring in a race to reach first. Kawlsiami was the first to reach the spring; she put down her basket and took out the bamboo tube. In the meantime, Vungkhami also reached there. She held her bamboo tube with her left hand and a mug on her right hand. On reaching the spring, without putting down her basket she started drawing the water. Kawlsiami being the first to reach expected to draw first therefore, she was not in hurry. But due to the action of Vungkhami, they started quarrelling, using abusive words, "Kawlsiam, you libidinous woman" (94). Saying this she pulled her by the hair and pulled her down on the ground. Vungkhami could not defeat Kawlsiami.

## CHAPTER 4

**Treatment of Women in James Dokhuma's novels, *Khawhar In* and *Thla hleinga Zan*.**

*Khawhar In* by James Dokhuma was completed on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1970 while he was imprisoned in the Gauhati District Jail. He had joined the MNF Party when it was founded in 1961, and he was one of the signatories when MNF declared independence in 1966. After wandering in the jungle for two years, on March 13, 1968 while coming from Tuivawl hill to Serlui, he was wounded in an army ambush and laid on hard ground for two nights and a day without anyone to care. Subsequently he was arrested and imprisoned. He was transferred from Aizawl prison to Nowgong Special Jail and Gauhati District Jail where he was imprisoned for three years. He wrote three fictions viz, *Rinawmin*, *Khawhar In* and *Thla Hleinga Zan* while he was imprisoned in these jails. He was released from jail on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 1971.

The summary of the story, *Khawhar In* is like this. The hero of the story, Vantlangmuana was born in 1930 in Sialsuk village. While he was studying in a Middle School in Aizawl he fell in love with Rinpuii who was his class-mate and neighbor. The love affair was not like the affair of a mature persons, rather it was an infatuation. Unfortunately, Rinpuii died suddenly for which Muana was bereaved. His mind was always pre-occupied by "Bereaved House". It was difficult on his part to fall in love again. After a long time, on Republic Day, he went with his friend to watch the parade of armed contingent where he met a girl from another village and fell in love with her. The girl resembled Rinpuii whom he loved dearly while he was a teenage. The teenage damsel disappeared even before he spoke to her. The girl remained always in the heart of Muana and he loved her from the bottom of his heart. Meanwhile Muana fell in love with Lalrovi who hailed from the same village and the same school.

Liansiama, an ASI who also loved Lalrovi, was jealous of Muana because of which Muana was accused of murdering Lalthlengi, Rovi's sister and he was arrested and put in a lock-up. After Muana was found not guilty, he travelled around in connection with his business. One day, Muana travelled to Lungpho village with his friend to sell medicine. On the night they arrived in the village, they went to a house of bereaved family where the dead body had to be kept at home the whole night. There he saw a very beautiful girl, the same girl from another village whom he saw on the Republic Day. He came to know that the damsel's name was Biakliani. Since Muana loved Liani very much he wanted to do away with the distance between them. Biakliani also had known about Muana through news paper – Muana, a brave youngman who chopped to death a tiger to save his friend. She liked him immediately when she came to know that it was Muana because she had been admiring him although they are from distant villages. Eventually, Liani and Muana fell in love with each other. He therefore, decided to marry her as soon as possible. Muana sent intermediary to Biakliani who wished to tie the knot the following year. As it was secretly feared by Muana, Rovi came to know that Muana had sent intermediary to Biakliani. Rovi did not show her anger to Muana and she treated him well and kept on continuing her love affair with him. Unfortunately, prior to the marriage of Biakliani and Muana, Rovi and became pregnant by him. Since Muana loved Biakliani so much, Rovi became a big problem for Muana and tried to find a way of sending her off. But Rovi was very much liked by Muana's parents because of which she was not allowed to go back. Muana's father spoke with Rovi's parents and Rovi and Muana were married. Biakliani was so worried and hurt with the outcome. She got married with a school teacher from Chawngtlai village who happened to be the first marriage proposer after her separation with Muana.

We have seen in the introduction that the story, *Thla Hleinga Zan Part-I* was completed by James Dokhuma on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 1971 and Part-II was completed on 9<sup>th</sup> March, 1999. In this novel, the love stories of four individuals are mentioned. The story dealt with the hero Kapthuama and the heroine Rozami who lived in different villages and the novel also dealt with the love story of Liankhuma and Thankimi. Rozami had already seen the photograph of Kapthuama in her friend, Thanthuami's house before she saw Kapthuama in person. There was a Presbytery Conference in Rozami's village which Kapthuama also attended. They met at the Conference Ground on Sunday evening and exchanged their loves on the last night of the Conference and full moon night. Rozami and Kapthuama wished to get married therefore, Kapthuama sent intermediary to Rozami's parents. Kapthuama could not fulfill his wish because Rozami's father flatly refused the marriage proposal. Unfortunately, Rozami was seriously ill that it appeared as if she was about to die. Rozami kept on calling out the name of Kapthuama from her sick bed therefore, Kapthuama was summoned. Kapthuama nursed Rozami and surprisingly she recovered from her sickness.

Rozami's father changed his mind and consent Rozami and Kapthuama's to get marriage. Kapthuama decided to marry Rozami after clearing the jhum. However, he was seriously injured while clearing the jungle for jhum. He was taken care of by Rozami. During that time, Rozami's mother died due to sickness. There was no convenient time for Rozami and Kapthuama to tie the knot. It was during the World War-II, Kapthuama and his friend went to Tuikhiang, Burma to take weapons abandoned in the battlefield. However, Thuama was captured by Japanese soldiers and his friends escaped and hurriedly returned home. They informed that Kapthuama had been shot dead by the Japanese soldiers. The news was heart-breaking and Rozami was heart-broken. Rozami got married with Thanseia, a Havildar of the Indian Army because her father forced her to marry Thanseia.

Just after the marriage of Rozami, Kapthuama returned home alive. Kapthuama was helpless after he came to know about the marriage of Rozami. The following year, he married Hmingdailovi. He repented and became a born again Christian through his wife. Likewise, even Thuama's friend, Liankhuma also became a born again Christian through his lover, Thankimi. At the end, Liankhuma and Thankimi got married and lived happily.

Rozami divorced her husband Thanseia from a distant place because of her husband, Thanseia's extra-marital affair with another woman. She went back to her parental home in spite of her pregnancy. Unfortunately, a daughter born to her born died after some days. Rozami became more attractive after she divorced her husband. She could not forget Kapthuama. Unluckily, Thuama's wife, Hmingdailovi committed adultery with Challengenga because of which they divorced. At the end Thuama married Rozami.

Biakliani, the heroine in the story *Khawhar In*, was a beautiful damsel from Lungpho village. She was brought up in a normal family background. "All the creations of the world are imperfect before her beauty" (73). Although, she was not highly educated, yet she was literate and had good intelligence. She was a person of good manner, was respectable, sociable and selfless. Even in the matter of choosing her suitor, she was very cautious even though her parents gave the liberty to choose her life partner. She being a much sought damsel had many suitors.

Biakliani has been wooed time to time by suitors with whom we are not worthy of. But she seldom goes anywhere. We are disheartened and we feel ashamed. At least now, Biakliani herself does not reject (118).

She was a damsel who bore a good conduct. Her lover Muana attempted to have sexual intercourse after a marriage with her was fixed through the intermediary, but he could

not succeed. “I suddenly pressed her by the shoulder on her bed and attempted to have sex. She absolutely did not like it. Although I put my best effort, I could not succeed (122).

Lalrovi is one of the prominent characters in the novel *Khawhar In*. She was a matriculate hailing from Aizawl. She was a very extrovert damsel. She was born and brought up in a prosperous but humble family. She was a damsel of average look who went to school with Vantlangmuana. “Her look is not so bad. She is intelligent as well as good in studies. She is wealthy whose house is comfortable. For me, she is more beautiful than Liani” (141). Muana was in love with Rovi’s friend, Zothani who made Rovi to assist him in courting. Zothani’s message was conveyed to Muana, but Muana did not like Zothani. Muana and Rovi were close friends. Muana felt at ease and felt at home in the house of Rovi. Consequently, Muana and Rovi fell in love with each other. In the absence of any obstruction from Rovi’s family, Muana could make his presence in Rovi’s house whenever he wished. Lalrovi dearly loved Muana. But Muana did not really love her from his heart. He used to leave her time to time even while they were in love.

As Lalrovi and Muana are of the same village, they went to the same school and were very close friends. One of the reasons why Muana was very close was because Rovi’s family treated him well and that made him feel at home at her house. It was during that time that Rovi was secretly in love with Muana. Rovi had concealed her feelings from Muana. But the admirers of Rovi sent letters to Muana and threatened him. Muana suggested to Rovi that they should stop accompanying for a while. Muana came to know from Rovi’s utterance that she loved him. “The letter senders know me better than you do. They do not know you well as I know about you.” (20). When Muana came to know that Rovi liked him, he also began to love her although he did not love her from the depth of his heart. Muana did this for the following reasons. For him as a young man, Rovi’s parents treated him well, Rovi was

beautiful and he had no other girlfriend. Even Rovi was doubtful of Muana's revelation of love for her. "If you truly love me, you would not keep mum. Don't you have anything to utter?" (24). Since Muana does not want to speak out the truth, he told her that as long as he is studying, he wishes not to carry on with a serious love affair. After having observed the behaviour and gesture of Rovi, Muana assumed that Rovi wishes to have a physical relationship with him; therefore, he attempted to have sex with her. "It's ill-mannered of you! You have not loved me for long to have such a consequence" (26). Since Muana did not have any damsel other than Rovi, he was confident.

Rovi's father was a Subedar in the Royal Indian Army Service Corps (RIASC) who got re-employment in the State government after his resignation from the army. He was a kind-hearted and inoffensive person praised by everyone. Rovi and Muana frequently followed one another because of which people used to make joke as "You couple". The parents of Rovi did not scold their daughter inspite of the fact that Rovi was made fun of by people. Rovi was authoritative in her house and her family treated Muana well. Since Rovi was never advised, she appeared to be easy-going and clumsy even in front of Muana and her father although she never realized her awkward behaviour.

Once, Rovi and I went together to a pineapple garden to eat oranges. Rovi put her big thigh across my legs. In the meantime, Rovi's father saw us....even then; Rovi did not put her thigh down. Her father went away without scolding her (38).

The parents of Rovi were not jealous of their daughter. Once, while Rovi's parents stayed away in Durtlang Hospital, Rovi and Muana attended a wedding and Rovi's sister, Lalthengi looked after the house. While Muana was drinking wine with his friend, he received a letter from his elder brother, Vankhuma (Jemadar) who had come home. Muana was informed to return home hurriedly and that his brother would be waiting for him at

Rovi's house. Muana left hurriedly without informing Rovi. On reaching Rovi's house, Muana did not see his elder brother; instead he saw Lalthlengi tortured, unconscious and covered with blood, abandoned by a miscreant. Muana was arrested by ASI Liansiama. Muana was released from custody when Lalthlengi became conscious and accused Robuanga of tormenting her. Muana could not even appear for his examination because of his imprisonment. Rovi's father knew that Muana could not appear his examination because of them; therefore, he suggested and promised to assist Muana if he wishes to continue his studies. Muana did not love Rovi from the depth of his heart. Since Rovi's parents were so good to him and Rovi loved him dearly, he could not reject Rovi whenever he sees her face although he loved and wished to marry Liani.

Just for my sake, they differentiated me from the others and treated me differently. To have such caring people for me, I highly respected them. As they are respectable, I frequently speak to Rovi in a more solacing manner than before. It is hard for me to separate from Rovi but I love Liani more than her (105).

Since Rovi didn't conceal her love for Muana from her father, Rovi's father allowed them to get married after Muana's completion of matriculation.

Rovi was grieved when she came to know that Muana had sent intermediary to Biakliani intending to marry her. Rovi did not want to show her anger towards Muana for his unfaithfulness. She could not stop loving Muana.

He never speaks to me with the intention of making me angry. He speaks to me politely and deliberately tries to make me lonesome. He deliberately gives me company but without him (120).

Rovi became pregnant. She informed Muana about her pregnancy and her wish to get married without being disgraced. Rovi went to Muana for fear of losing him. With due submission and humility she seeks Muana's consideration.

Muan, don't blame I can't separate from you. I have come without bothering about my shame and bad reputation, assuming if it can enable me to marry you..... I am all yours; do not leave me (137).

Since Muana decided to marry Liani, he tried to send Rovi back by making different excuses and let her stay in someone else's house away from him. But Rovi refused to do so. She insisted, "I haven't come to live in someone else's house. Even if you do not like me, I shall still live in your house" (133). Rovi was liked by the parents of Muana. "What Rovi makes me very surprised about is that she could convince my parents in a single night" (146). Rovi lived with Muana as his wife as she made her in-laws very happy. Muana's father went to Aizawl and settled the marriage with Rovi's parents.

Rovi was good and knew how to build a rapport with Muana's family. She was industrious and expert in doing household chores. She knew how to take care of Muana's parents and siblings and they were very fond of her. Muana could not forget Liani and he usually spoke out in his sleep, "Liani, I can't forget you." For Rovi, it was the most disappointing moment but instead of getting angry, she would speak gently, "You miss Liani, I even do so" (149). By saying this she would somehow stay patiently and amiably.

Since Muana had made a decision to marry Liani, he planned to make Rovi angry and leave him. However,

My wife does not want to get angry. My parents are fond of her, patient and not jealous. Although I wish to divorce, I cannot due to the fondness of my parents (153).

Once Muana misunderstood Rovi when she said, "I feel very miserable." Muana said, "If you don't feel comfortable in our house you may get out." On hearing these words, Rovi went to her parent's house even though Muana's father tried to stop her from going away. The intermediary sent by Muana met Rovi on the way while she was coming to the village to return the bride's price. Muana asked for forgiveness and consequently he and Rovi were reunited. Since Muana could not marry Liani, he was contented with his wife, Rovi. Muana sometimes thought of Liani but, he could endure because of the love of Rovi. Even Muana started loving Rovi more and more.

I trusted her intelligence more than a shield. Her kindness, patience and good temper are the flowers to make me happy as long as I live (163).

When Liani came to Aizawl for her husband's pension, Rovi told Muana to give company to Liani to the office and they had tea together.

Chalkhumi was one of the characters in the novel *Khawhar In* who was a very unlucky damsel. "She is very beautiful damsel but not wise at all" (127). She migrated to Sialsuk village. She being a very beautiful damsel, even Muana had courted her. Chalkhumi might have loved Muana one-sidedly. Muana used to woo Chalkhumi time to time after he had sex with her. He did this act just to let her feel that he cared. Muana would have sex with Chalkhumi whenever he had chance to do so.

In the novel *Thla Hleinga Zan*, Rozami, Thankimi and Hmingdailovi were the prominent characters. Rozami was a very beautiful damsel. Except for the young men whom she liked, she was very cautious in not allowing herself to be in the company of ordinary young men in a secluded place.

Being a popular damsel, she had many suitors, Rozami's father desired that would be husband of Rozami should be rich and propertied and he would pressurize her to give in to his wish. Rozami told the nature of her father to Kapthuama,

He is conscious of his being an adviser to the chief. I can know from the way he speaks out that he will not allow me to get married with someone who is not wealthy. He does not give any importance to love. If he comes across any businessman or government employee, he would try to sell me off after getting drunk. He prided me as if I am goods. Although he cares for me, he seldom thinks about my liking for a husband (95).

Rozami was a very faithful lover who placed love above money and wealth.

I don't wish to marry anyone other than whom I love. Your choice forme is like leading me to the path of death. I cannot go on the path which is even more unpreferable to the path of death (141).

Inspite of her father's refusal, she insisted on marrying Kapthuama after considering her justification.

Eventhough we both wish to marry honourably before the people, since our situation does not permit us, I shall definitely come to you by facing bad reputation and humiliation. You send intermediary this spring and if he rejects, we shall elope (195).

By saying this she was even ready to elope and face bad reputation. Even when Kapthuama's intermediary was unsuccessful and dejected, it gave her hope. Her behaviour and action was praised by the people. Her fame spread to even other village. Thankimi was a very religious damsel.

A damsel of average size, firmly built, dark and charming, having almost round face and almost squint eye, dimpled on cheeks and almost double chins, not quiet beautiful but have charming face (85).

She was doubly beautified because of her being religious. She being a respectable damsel, young men dare not tease her. However, they enjoyed her company whenever they visited her. She could not be taken for granted like any other girl. Therefore, even her lover Liankhuma had a high regard for her and could not tease her the way he teased other damsels.

She was a damsel of patience and could conceal her secrets. She would not show any hint even if she had lover of her choice. She attempted to lead Liankhuma, whom she liked since her teenage, to God. She did not surrender her feelings to Liankhuma until she could fulfil her intentions. She used to take advice from her maternal aunt's husband, a church elder, whenever she faced difficulty concerning Liankhuma. Liankhuma was always told about the words of God and ultimately, they got married as born again Christians.

Hmingdailovi was a beautiful, bold, religious and sociable damsel. She looked like Rozami but bigger than her. Before the eyes of a Paite businessman, Rozami and Hmingdailovi were very much alike,

Rozami is very beautiful and looks very similar to Hmingdailovi whom we wooed in a village..... however, last night at the time of welcoming of new bride, [I found] Rozami's physique was smaller than Hmingdailovi (244).

Hmingdailovi was a very brave damsel. Once while she was exchanging work in the jhoom with Salkungi, she went to Salkungi's jhum. Salkungi went down towards the bottom of her jhoom to draw water. While she was filling her container without turning her head anywhere, suddenly, there was an unusual rising in the stream. Hmingdailovi came to know that her

friend had been carried away by the stream. Without taking anyone's help, she went in search of her friend. She took only a digging hoe and went through rocky stream where women could not possibly go. But she did not give up the hope of finding her friend. At last, she found her friend lying unconscious. She became unconscious herself out of grief. When she regained consciousness, Saikungi too became conscious by then. The flood overflowed and fell between a rock and Sialkungi got stuck, somehow, and Hmingdailovi dragged her out. In time, the rescue team from the village went out to search for them and found Hmingdailovi and Sialkungi. The year when Hmingdailovi rescued her friend was the same year when Kapthuama found Chhingpuii who was carried away by a malignant spirit. Her feat was spread far and wide. People from distant places admired her and craved to meet her. Kapthuama, who escaped from the captivity of Japanese soldiers, was sick. Hmingdailovi nursed him and later married him.

The heroines of the novels of James Dokhuma are usually beautiful, very intelligent and admired by many. They are good natured women who are highly admired by the society. Their family backgrounds were alike. Lalrovi's case was a good example. They were obedient to their parents but they faced misfortune they could not avoid. Biakliani and Vangtlangmuana met each other in Lungpho village at the house of mourning. Prior to her meeting with Muana, Biakliani had already heard about the bravery of Muana.

A young man who had been attacked by a tiger was recently flashed in the newspaper. Do you know the friend who had hacked the tiger to death in order to save his friend, since he is from your village? Give my regards to him for his bravery and selflessness. I would even send a letter if he is still an unmarried young man (76).

After knowing that the brave young man was none other than Muana, and since she liked him, they opened their hearts each other. "Just like me, he told me that he too fell in

love with me at first sight” (122). Muana even sent intermediary to fulfill their love for each other. However, Biakliani’s father wanted her to get married the following year because her elder brother had just got married recently and they had to observe a religious rite. Liani obeyed her father’s instruction. Since she loved Muana very much she was very disappointed by the hurdle that had cropped up on the way of her marriage. She made up her mind that if her marriage is not settled by the following year, she would think of alternative ways. “If our marriage is not settled even by next year, then I would be ready to get married in whatever possible manner” (119).

Biakliani was disheartened when she learnt that Lalrovi had conceived a child by Muana but she can’t stop loving Muana.

I wish your child to be brought up between mother and father, but as I have already given my love to you..... not as your own siblings, I can forgive you although your deed is not acceptable (143).

Muana had to marry Rovi because Rovi had come into Muana’s house intending to marry her. Muana could not stop loving Liani. Although his wife, Rovi was good and very patient, he made up a mind to divorce his wife and marry Liani. Muana told Liani that he was still in love with her and that he had to marry Rovi because she had walked into his house to be married and also Rovi’s father pressurized her. Liani, being a mature woman, replied with self-control:

You have married whom you like. I used to tell you that if you truly love me then you must be very faithful. I can no longer have hope from the one whom I love most. Muana, have you loved me just to distress me? (151).

Muana told Liani that he would divorce his wife and propose to marry her. But Liani did not want to take the place of someone's wife and told Muana not to divorce his wife. She wished him a blessed marriage life. Muana told Liani that even if she does not like him, he would still divorce his wife and search for someone whom he can love. Liani said,

I would be jealous if you marry someone but don't you divorce your wife..... Why did you marry someone else? Muana, I am very distressed, I don't think I'll be able to get another young man whom I can love as I have loved you (152).

Muana divorced his wife and went to Lungpho village intending to marry Liani. But the arrival day of Muana was co-incidental with the wedding day of Biakliani. When Muana arrived in the night, he sent a damsel, Hmingpuii to Liani,

I have come after having made all the preparation. I have come to seek your compassion..... You have not vowed before the pastor and therefore, you are not even a couple. There is still a chance if you like. I have come with all preparations (158).

Hmingpuii conveyed Muana's message to Liani. Liani said,

I am afraid of my parents. Should I send back Muana in despair? However, he is a bit late. It would have been better had he reached yesterday..... Oh, I am so helpless (158).

Since it was the right age and time for Biakliani to get married, she was married with the first suitor, a teacher from Chawngtlai village. But misfortune befell her. Her husband died at the hands of non-Mizo during the Insurgency. She even had a child. Liani did not forget and stop loving Muana even after her marriage. Liani's father and daughter visited Muana's shop in Aizawl. They were told to buy their choice, if available. Liani invited Muana when she came to Aizawl to settle her husband's pension. She became very lonesome

after discussing their past life with Muana. Biakliani told Muana how she felt the night of her wedding.

Muana, I could not sleep at all that night. I looked at the song book you bought for me. With full of tear, I watched all the letters you sent to me..... Had you come to take me that time, I would have gone with you even if it was at night (174)

In the village of Rozami, Kapthuama's cousin sisters, Thanthuami and Pianmawii lived. As it was told, when Kapthuama's mother passed away, the parents of Thanthuami mourned the death. Eversince, Rozami saw the photograph of Kapthuama, her heart had been stolen just by seeing the photograph. It was during the autumn of that year, the conference of Presbytery was held at Rozami's village. Rozami and Kapthuama met each other on Sunday at the place of the conference. When Rozami saw Kapthuama in person his look in the picture seemed to be insignificant. "Rozami's heart is where many young men had lost their hopes. Kapthuama's charm has quickly won her heart completely. The depth of her heart is firmly woven by the love of Kapthuama" (40). Even Kapthuama liked Rozami instantly. Thanthuami and Pianmawii assisted Thuama and Rozami to have a meeting. In order to do that, Rozami was made to enter intentionally late in the gathering of singing and prayer meeting. Therefore, they could not get any vacant seat.

Without any interference from anyone, on Sunday, the last day of the conference which was also the full moon night, they declared their love for each other. Their love for each other grew. Kapthuama decided to send intermediary to negotiate his marriage proposal. Rozami's father did not like Kapthuama at all. Rozami's father wanted a rich man for his daughter; the reason why he did not want Kapthuama was because in the past when he was a young man, the mother of Kapthuama, a very beautiful damsel, Zodinpuui was wooed by him and Kapthuama's father. Rozami's father could not win the heart of Zodinpuui therefore, it is

assumed that he still had a grudge and did not want Kapthuama to marry Rozami. Chhingpuii (Rozami's paternal uncle's daughter) was abducted by a malignant spirit in what is known as 'Khawmu chawi'. Kapthuama was the one who found Chhingpuii. But Rozami's father did not allow Thuama to marry his daughter although he would praise Thuama for his good work.

Thankimi being a pious damsel, young men could not get close to her. She secretly had a heart for a young man, Liankhuma who was not religious and did not follow the rules of the church, drank wine and was a casual young man. Since, Liankhuma was such a person, Thankimi had kept distance. "I have loved Liankhuma since my teenage. Since, my condition is like this and Liankhuma's like that, I therefore, behave as if I don't love him" (87). When Thankimi shared what she saw in her dream to Liankhuma, it remained in Liankhuma's mind. Although Liankhuma was not a born again Christian and seldom attend church he started attending church just for the sake of Thankimi. He loved Thankimi very dearly and was crazy for her. Even Thankimi was happy to be loved by Liankhuma and thinking that it was fixed by God to be her husband, she made up her mind to lead him towards God. When she came to realize that she could not implement her plan, she consulted her maternal aunt's husband who was a church elder who advised her.

Things which cannot be done by the church, you should do with your maidenhood and consider that God has sent you as Christ's ambassador. You spend your time for God and not for yourself. God will give you what you need (89).

Even Liankhuma had high regards for Thankimioverother damsels. He could have slept with her had it been some other damsel when Thankimi was praying all alone at the bottom of her jhum. It was those days when Thankimi was staying at the jhum hut to gather paddy. However, Liankhuma dared not have such kind of intention toward Thankimi.

Thankimi placed her hand on top of Liankhuma's head and prayed. On reaching the hut after the prayer, they were seen by someone who suspected them of doing something bad and reported to the church authority. The church elders had an explanation call with Thankimi. Thankimi had humbly clarified the false accusation and told the reality before the church elders. We have seen a good quality of Christian life through Thankimi. Liankhuma was also questioned by Thankimi's father. He said that had it been any other damsel, he would have definitely slept with her where people could not see in such a secluded place. However, he respected Thankimi.

If I like any damsel, I don't leave them without touching them. However, as far as Thankimi is concerned, I have high regards for her. I feel very ordinary when I am beside her. However, I dare not touch her even by the tip of my fingers. Her religiousness has bound my arm behind my back (144).

Thankimi took great care of her life. She loved Liankhuma very dearly. She was very cautious before Liankhuma and never gave a chance to be taken for granted.

She was about to share the word of God. She started uttering; I just rubbed against her breast when she was not aware. Although my act was not to her liking, she said she'll pray for me (117).

Liankhuma had proposed to her in marriage, but Thankimi had refused on the ground that Liankhuma must be born again.

If you want me to be your wife, you must obey God and then you can marry me. If you are in a hurry to marry me, you must search God hurriedly and then you can marry me. This is the only way for you (124).

Liankhuma tried to convince Thankimi to marry him by taking advantage of her situation because she was being interrogated by the church about her conduct. However, Thankimi was very faithful to God. “Even if the church and society may think that I am no more sacred for you, I won’t care if I am sacred before the eyes of God” (131). Thankimi became very disheartened due to such pressures from Liankhuma. Therefore, she consulted her father who was very understanding. Her father advised her to be very patient. Very soon, Liankhuma became a born again Christian and ultimately married Thankimi.

Hmingdailovi was the wife of Kapthuama. Kapthuama married her after Rozami married someone else when she learnt that Kapthuama had been killed by Japanese soldiers. Like Thankimi, Hmingdailovi was a religious person who was very reluctant to be parted by the church when she got married. The church recommended in her transfer letter to continue to give a share of duties in their church. Like Kapthuama and Liankhuma, even their wives, Hmingdailovi and Thankimi were very intimate friends. Thankimi, along with her husband and Hmingdailovi tried to lead Kapthuama to the right path and they succeeded in making him a born again Christian. Kapthuama loved Rozami very dearly. It was very difficult for him to forget her in spite of marrying Hmingdailovi and became born again. Whenever he thought about the vow they made in the full moon night, he cannot stop but think of Rozami. Pianmawii and Thanthuami told the message of Rozami to Thuama:

Rozami said, ‘Let Thuama visit me so that I could take care of him as my brother.’ The night after the burial of her daughter, while singing song at the time, she started crying a lot. She could not stay inside and jumped outside the platform at the back of her house. We immediately followed her with Pianmawii. Rozami was sobbing and said she did not know why she felt like crying so much. I and Pianmawii have come to know that you are not dead at all in the bottom of her heart. We could know that she cried for the dead as well as for you (268).

Kapthuama and Hmingdailovi visited Kapthuama's paternal aunt (Thanthuami's mother) as they were invited because she wanted to see Hmingdailovi. On the way, Kapthuama shot a deer. Kapthuama gave the hind leg of the deer to Rozami. In the evening, Rozami went to participate in the celebration of killing the animal. Hmingdailovi found Rozami very beautiful at first sight. As she could not control her jealousy toward Rozami, she just said, "So, this is Rozami. Since you are extremely beautiful we are so troubled" (275). Rozami answered, "I thank you for your flattering. However, don't you worry for my beauty" (275). Later on, it was known from a fellow villager, Sawikunga that she had accompanied Kapthuama who had gone to Aizawl to buy goods to sell.

I have learnt that you had gone to Aizawl with your lover, Rozami after you had pre-planned. I have also learnt that you went together. Last time you had given her the hind leg of the deer inspite of lots of people who were worthy of it. If you don't forget Rozami, and if things go on like this, it is very distressful for me. I think you are not giving your priority to me because we don't have children.... (289)

By saying these words, she spoke out her distress. Kapthuama said,

My anger against her has not died away till today because of her marrying someone else without waiting for me. Since we could not get married, I gave the hind leg to her as a gesture to remain as a good friend (290).

With these words he tried to console his wife.

There was justification of Hmingdailovi's extreme jealousy to some extent because she did not have any progeny. Besides Rozami's beauty, she knew that her husband still like Rozami from his behaviour. Therefore, she was often angry with her husband. "When I watch Rozami's movement, I could make out that when she looked at you, she is assuming that she could use you as she wishes" (289). Whatever is said by Hmingdailovi was correct.

When Rozami met Kapthuama after her divorce with her husband in a very casual way, and the way the 'sazuk bawp' (deer's hind leg) was given to Rozami by her husband, it was very clear to Hmingdailovi that Kapthuama looked at Rozami with love from the heart. Besides, her husband was very good towards Rozami. He even had gone to Aizawl along with Rozami of which Hmingdailovi came to know later on. Her condition was pitiable for she had a feeling from the bottom of her heart that her husband did not truly love her. Besides, she did not have any progeny. Hmingdailovi was scared. She begged Kapthuama not to divorce her.

Why can't I feel jealous? I have heard all your past lives of both of you. For Rozami is extremely beautiful and sociable. Since we don't have progeny to strengthen the knot of our bond, it is very insecure on my part. Thuama, please don't divorce me, never divorce me (290).

To remain Kapthuama's wife inspite of Kapthuama loving Rozami had shown that Hmingdailovi had never got the entire love from her husband. She could not make her husband forget his past life. Her husband's longing for Rozami justified her jealousy towards Rozami. Had Kapthuama respected the love of Hmingdailovi and removed Rozami from his heart, then they would have been a happy couple, and Hmingdailovi would have been optimistic and had firm faith in her husband. But it did not turn out as it should have, for Rozami had made her presence felt time to time. Hmingdailovi could not have stable mind and since Chalngenga liked her very much she had to follow him who really loved her.

Hmingdailovi's unrestrained jealousy often caused disgrace to the family. Kapthuama's family went for the thanks giving programme organized by Thanthuami's father. But Kapthuama did not go there because he won't be able to meet Rozami for he was scared that his wife will be jealous. Even Rozami took charge as the woman of the house and could not take part in the programme except for feast. After the Sunday afternoon service,

while Rozami was on the way to join the singing and prayer gathering and stood by the courtyard of Thanthuami, Hmingdailovi started scolding Rozami before the people,

Rozam, why did you go to Aizawl with my husband? Don't you feel ashamed? You tried to take away my husband from me and decided to go all the way together. You must be a flirtatious woman (305).

For this, Kapthuama had a mind to divorce her but his father stopped him and championed Hmingdailovi to prevent her from getting frightened. Even Kapthuama admitted that it was justified on the part of his wife to feel jealous of Rozami whenever he pondered. Had she known how much he loved Rozami, she would never have considered him fit for her husband. Hmingdailovi also felt that it was not right on her part to show her jealousy towards Rozami in front of the people. Hmingdailovi and her husband would quarrel often over petty reasons and in the meantime, Rozami would keep on sending letter to Kapthuama and in this manner she was dragging Kapthuama towards her closer and closer. One day a senior bachelor by the name of Chalngenga visited Hmingdailovi's village. Hmingdailovi and Thankimi were fond of this person. He even used to take meal at Hmingdailovi's house. Although Kapthuama knew that his wife had been captivated by the charm of Chalngenga, he pretended as if he was not aware.

But Hmingdailovi's father-in-law took it seriously and scolded her when he learnt that his daughter-in-law used to go out every night. Kapthuama also started stopping his wife from going out every night. However, in spite of the scolding, Hmingdailovi would go to Chalngenga to pray for her. Chalngenga's prayer was very effective. For Chalngenga desired to take away Hmingdailovi from her husband, Kapthuama. He had already secretly investigated the past life of Kapthuama. He had also learnt secretly from Rozami of their past lives and their relation after Rozami divorced her husband. Ever since, Chalngenga prayed for

Hmingdailovi, she felt that Kapthuama has become “dark” and Chalngenga has become ‘light’ for her. She felt that she was staying with someone who was a non-believer. It became harder for her to stay with her husband. She felt more comfortable beside Chalngenga. But as Thuama was afraid of humiliation, he took Hmingdailovi to Aizawl to change her mind so that people would not think that he was ignoring his wife’s behaviour. Kapthuama took Hmingdailovi to the house where he usually stayed over. There the landlady’s way of talking made Hmingdailovi very angry. “How could you fool such a beautiful damsel like her? She looks similar to the one you accompanied earlier.”(343) Hmingdailovi scolded her husband and defamed him in her jealousy. On returning to her village from Aizawl, she went to follow Chalngenga’s worship programme even though she was requested by the church elders not to participate in the programme. Even Kapthuama did not stop his wife from going for he believed that it could be the beginning of his dream’s fulfillment.

Our blacksmith’s daughter, a faithful and beautiful woman was made to cry and scolded by you in jealousy. After that you scolded Rozami. And you cried before Mrs.Thangi in Aizawl and humiliated me out of jealousy... You can leave on Monday and go to your village. If you wish to return the bride price, you can do so. If your behaviour changes, I shall come and take you back (349).

Hmingdailovi went back to her parental’s home. Kapthuama, in order to watch Hmingdailovi’s behaviour, entrusted Satinkhuaia of his wife’s village. Hmingdailovi was followed by Chalngenga when she arrived in the village. Chalngenga was staying in the neighbouring village in order to take careful measure. One day, when Satinkhuaia went to the neighbouring village to purchase a piglet, Chalngenga sent a letter for Hmingdailovi through him. He read the letter before handing it to Hmingdailovi. It was clearly written in the letter that Chalngenga and Hmingdailovi definitely had a physical relation.

The way God had given us the time to spend together may be sin and unholy before the law of church and the people. However, I as the messenger of Christ had slept with you as you being my beloved daughter in the spiritual sense. I had also told you that our marriage is being fixed by God (361).

Satinkhuaia did not give the letter to Hmingdailovi but gave it to Kapthuama.

Kapthuama after seeing the letter showed it to church elders and the same letter was carefully sent to Hmingdailovi's village church elders. By the time the letter reached the hands of Hmingdailovi's church elders, Hmingdailovi and Chalngenga had already eloped.

Chalkhumi can be considered a wicked woman in the Mizo society. One night when Muana wooed Chalkhumi, her mother rejected Muana and said, "Muana, you have visited us for too long. You are not worthy of Chalkhumi"(128). Chalkhumi was not even ashamed of herself. Chalkhumi was wooed by a soldier of Assam Regiment who was on leave. Chalkhumi's mother wanted the soldier for her daughter; therefore, she boastfully spoke with Muana. Muana could not forget the bragging of Chalkhumi's mother. Therefore, he told his friends and thereby they informed the head-bachelor who gathered the young men of the dormitory and they said, "No one should woo Chalkhumi," and they restricted the young men from wooing her. But as, the soldier wooed Chalkhumi vary often, he was warned by the bachelors not to woo her anymore.

Chalkhumi's mother was a beautiful woman with a blend of reddish and whitish complexion. She was lazy and very loudmouthed who seldom praise any damsel other than her daughter. She was not ashamed when Chalkhumi was boycotted by the young men. She said, "Chalkhumi is so beautiful that no one will really stop liking her" (129). The bragging of Chalkhumi's mother was taken seriously by Muana; he therefore, decided to take revenge, although he thought of leaving Chalkhumi. Muana by chance met Chalkhumi carrying grain

and made love to her to his heart's content inside the granary and bragged to her.

“Chalkhum, we will know whose image will be disgraced. In order to disgrace your mother, our young men do not like to woo you. I will act to disgrace you” (130). By saying these words angrily, he scolded her. Muana could take his revenge against Chalkhumi. In his letter to the church he declared,

Chalkhumi, the daughter of Rallinga and I are not favored before the eyes of God. Not only once, but in the house and jungle, we had acted against the will of God. Therefore, I declare before the church that since we acted against the will of god, we are not fit to be inr the communion of the church (133).

The church took immediate action and they were suspended from the church's communion in the Wednesday night service of the church. Chalkhumi's parents sent intermediaries to Muana, but Muana spoke with the intermediaries with disrespect, he did not want to speak the truth and made fun of them. Therefore, the intermediaries went back angrily.

These are the divergent conditions of women in the novels written by James Dokhuma. The damsels are usually beautiful. At the same time, their family backgrounds are different. Biakliani, Lalrovi and Hmingdailovi were given the liberty to choose their life partners by the head of the family. In case of Thankimi, under the guidance of her maternal aunt's husband she could marry the person she loved since her teenage. On the other hand, Rozami had to face opposition from her father. Rozami told Kapthuama when she met him at the house of Thanthuami's paternal uncle: “You are the reason of my life. Even in the last breath and hour of my life, the utterance of your love will call back my soul” (98). As if Fate's reply, Rozami got sick because of Kapthuama. Therefore, her father had to let her marry Kapthuama. Kapthuama got injured while clearing jhum, therefore, he could not send

intermediary. When Rozami came to know that Thuama was injured, she went to visit him and nursed him without anyone's help. At that time, Rozami was called back home as her mother was sick. Rozami's mother died due to dysentery the same year co-inciding with her time of marriage. Therefore, the wedding day was postponed. In the meantime, Kapthuama and his friends travelled to the land of Paihte (Burma) to gather abandoned weapons in the war. The friends of Kapthuama who returned home reported that Kapthuama had been shot dead by Japanese soldiers. Rozami was so bereaved and did not even like to adorn herself. After the death of Thuama, she would think about the past she had spent with Thuama and she felt very lonely. Despite the lapse of several months, there was no news of Thuama. At that time, Rozami had a suitor, Thanseia, who was a young man and an Indian Army Havilder. Rozami's father wanted her to marry Thanseia, but Rozami flatly refused. Kapthuama arrived home just after the marriage of Rozami. Rozami felt restless when she came to know the arrival of Thuama.

Kapthuama's returning home was celebrated by slaughtering a pig by Thanthuami's family. Kapthuama and Rozami met each other on the occasion. Kapthuama said, "Is your husband fine." The word "your husband" hurt Rozami. Rozami would watch Thuama whenever he strolled around. Whenever Thuama spoke with her in a normal way, she felt uncomfortable but tried to look as if she was not in pain. The night when she heard Thuama singing, she woke up, listened and fainted because it hurt her feeling. When she became conscious, her body was very cold and felt dizzy, still she was gazing at Thanthuama's house from where Thuama was singing, but there was no one to be seen.

Since Kapthuama could not possess the person whom he loved the most, he married Hmingdailovi. Unfortunately, Rozami had to divorce her husband because her husband had an extra-marital act with a damsel with whom he eloped. In this way, Rozami became a

divorced woman. She returned to her village pregnant. She blamed her father for the consequence and both the father and daughter had a quarrel. Rozami spent her time with remorse and distress. She was more worried, thinking about the past than future. She used to think, "I did not raise my protest properly when my father compelled me. It was just because I did not know and I was at fault" (288). She took the photograph of Thuama from Thanthuami and would speak with it while looking and sometime asked for his forgiveness. Later on she felt that there was no point in thinking about Thuama all the time.

There are plenty like me who are poor and unfortunate. I am not even an aged woman.

Kapthuama is not the only man available. My daughter will be big enough within three years and I shall definitely get a husband by then (290).

She consoled herself with that word. During the autumn season of that year, Thuama visited Rozami's village while returning to his village. Thuama met Rozami carrying firewood and he spoke with her. After seeing Thuama, Rozami was transformed instantly and she started shaking inwardly and said,

Oh Thuama..... you made me so lonely! Don't be surprised of me and forgive me for I am very distressed. For my condition is like this,....like we vowed, "At least for the sake of the "Full Moon Night"..... as we had vowed..... Goodbye (292).

She did not get any response from Thuama. Rozami sat under the shade of Chilauni tree and leaned her bowed head in her hands. She never thought of getting married again,

Since I cannot select any from among the pretentious suitors, I prefer to wait for my death instead of marriage. Even if I tie knot with anyone, I know that the pain in my heart will not go. Besides, my daughter will be a double burden for me (252).

She used to face discontentment because of self-compassion and problems that cropped up in her. “It is hurting to waste my prime time like this, for I have only one maidenhood” (252). Unfortunately, her daughter who soothed her loneliness was no more. Her friends consoled her but she said that she was not only feeling lonesome because of mourning her daughter. “I may be consoled from the longing for my daughter. However, my longing for Kapthuama won’t be lessened as long as live” (259).

Rozami, after her becoming a divorcee became very beautiful. Even Thanthuami’s father said, “I have seen the extreme beauty of Rozami only after she became a divorcee” (266). She was sociable and therefore had many visitors. Sabuta, a mentally retarded person loved her. Rozami knew how to make him happy and made good use of him. Even Kapthuama came to know everything about Rozami from Thanthuami.

Thanthuami’s mother wanted to meet Kapthuama and his wife. Therefore, she sent message to Kapthuama to visit her. Thuama and his wife paid a visit. On the way, Thuama shot a deer. The following day, he went to chop the deer and gave the hind-leg to Rozami. In the feast held to celebrate the killing of deer and to dine on the head, Rozami went to the house where Thuama was a guest. Thuama’s wife Hmingdailovi said, “So you are Rozami. For you are very beautiful, we are so trauble” (275). Although she was put to shame yet, she did not want to give up. She was intelligent and did not want to behave as being shamed. Rozami answered Hmingdailovi, “I am glad for your flattering. Don’t you worry for my beauty” (275.) She refused to stay for long and left. As per social convention, Rozami cannot hope for Thuama. But since Rozami loved Thuama very much, she could not afford to have pride against Thuama. To love someone else’s husband is humiliating to normal woman. But in the heart of Rozami, the love for Thuama remained alive.

Rozami met Thuama accidentally at Aizawl. Thuama took Rozami to the house where he was staying and they both gave company to each other for the whole night. Rozami poured out all her minds to Thuama.

Since I can't marry you, even if I get suitor, I have decided not to marry. I shall be following the rough road till the end through out my life and always love you. If you are not going to be my husband, my love for you will be wandering with you the day I die.... Thuama, I shall miss you very much. Thuama, I don't want to be separated (284).

Thuama did not want to speak out his love, and missed Rozami. But in order to let her feel good, he told his dream to Rozami,

In my dream, I and my wife saw you all alone and feeling very lonely. You were calling with your hand to come to your direction. There was a big river flowing between us. Since you kept on calling me with your hand, I tried to jump into the river and go towards you but my wife did not allow me to do so. At that very moment, a bachelor was coming towards us from the source of the river. But before he reaches our place, my wife left me and went towards the bachelor. In the meantime, I moved towards the river to jump in and ultimately, I somehow could reach towards your side (283).

Thuama encouraged Rozami that if she really loved him, she must have hope and patience. After Rozami poured her heart to Thuama during their companionship, she thought her heart's suffocation was completely relieved but her longing became more than before.

Rozami also had a dream just after Thuama's dream was related. Her friends' interpretation made her very hopeful. Rozami was scolded by her father because Thanthuami's father held a thanks giving of God's feast where the families of Thuama was present. Hmingdailovi scolded Rozami before the people who were about to go for singing and prayer gathering.

Rozam, for what reason did you go with my husband to Aizawl? Don't you feel ashamed of yourself? You had tried to take away my husband from me. You both had agreed to go together to Aizawl. You are a flirtatious divorced woman" (297).

The scolding was heard by Rozami's father and he scolded his daughter. Rozami's father scolded Rozami that it was very shameful to have a love affair with a married man. Rozami also replied her father and she were kicked out from her house because of the anger of her father. Rozami stayed at the house of Thanthuami. Her elder brother, Hnuna scolded his father and called her back home. Rozami did not conceal any secret before Thuama. She sent all the letters to Thuama, the letters of Thanthuami's husband, letters for Thuama and all the letters from the young men who liked her. She sent a letter to Thuama that she loved him very dearly and even if they could not tie the knot, if only Thuama loved her, she would be satisfied. "Even if I am blameworthy before you, if you could love me from your heart with that heart of yours, I can live with it till my old age without a husband" (325). Rozami had a suitor whose name was Naik Zatluanga of Assam Regiment. For having a suitor of officer rank, Rozami's father insisted on Rozami to marry Zatluanga. Rozami could not be convinced by her father to marry. Therefore, she was no more afraid of her father and she herself decided not to marry.

Even if you push me out with your walking stick and force to marry, I would rather die. I shall never sleep beside Zatluanga. To obey you is to become poor and distressed. You forced me to get married with Thanseia, which is why I am still in distress till now (320).

Saying so, she scolded her father. Later on, news was heard that Zatluanga had sent intermediaries to ask for the hand in marriage of a damsel from his village. However, the damsel did not accept him. Therefore he tried to shoot her in the head. Rozami went to her cousin sister's village in order to avoid Zatluanga. Kapthuama was selling cloths in the same

house where Rozami came to stay. They both concealed their love affair, the love for each other since their youth till then. He never attempted to have sex with her prior to his marriage. He even protected Rozami from humiliation after she became a divorcee. “I am going to marry you. However, in order to avoid your defamation as my wife, God will arrange the right time” (334). Since Kapthuama expected his dream to turn into reality, he did not stop his wife, Hmingdailovi from having affairs with Challengenga. He scolded his wife only when his neighbours started blaming him. But by then, Hmingdailovi had deeply fallen in love with Challengenga. Therefore she could not be controlled. Hmingdailovi was sent back home and on reaching home, she told everything about themselves to Rozami. Rozami became very happy on hearing the news. Unlike other days, she started going to singing and prayer gathering and her happy face could be seen by people. After Hmingdailovi and Challengenga had eloped, Thuama made a proposal to Rozami in marriage. Rozami’s father said to the intermediaries, “I no longer have authority on Rozami. I had sent her away as I liked and now she is like this. Let it be according to the will of Rozami” (380). On the very night of Full Moon of October, the bride price was given and they were married the following day.

In the novel of James Dokhuma, one of the characteristics of women is that they who face opposition from their own families did not necessarily have to endure. The people who could lessen their distress were usually the families of their lovers. They build a good rapport with their lover’s families. When they face problems from their families, they felt lonely and felt distressed, they would cancel their feelings before their own families and public and they’d rather use their lover’s families as their comforter.

Rozami’s friends, Thanthuami and Pianmawii are the cousin sisters of Rozami’s lover, Kapthuama. Even the main meeting place of Rozami and Kapthuama were at the back

side of Thanthuama's house. They even used to insert their letters in the letter box of Thanthuami's and Pianmawii's families. The cousin sisters of Kapthuama were the one to whom Rozami would pour her heart out whenever she felt lonesome and faced distress because of her father. On account of this reason, it saved them from defamation from the public in many ways. Apart from this, Rozami and Kapthuama could marry mainly because of Kapthuama's cousin sisters.

The one reason behind the possibility of Lalrovi to get married with Vantlangmuana was because of the help of Muana's parents. Lalrovi entered the house of Muana of her own accord because she was pregnant. But Muana on the other hand intended to marry Biakliani. Therefore, Rovi searched for ways to stop him. However, since Muana's parents liked Rovi very much, Muana's father spoke with Rovi's father to settle the marriage.

Biakliani, Rozami and Thankimi received the innermost love from their lovers. Apart from liking their looks, their lovers rather wanted to make a relation which can help them in fulfilling their loves. Although Kapthuama married Hmingdailovi, it was just because Rozami had left him to marry someone else and she looked like Rozami. In the case of Lalrovi and Hmingdailovi, they did not receive genuine love. For Vantlangmuana, Lalrovi was just a merry-maker while wooing and just a namesake lover. She received love from exterior only. However, due to her patience, humility and restraint, she in the later part of her life could get true love and led a very happy life. In the case of Hmingdailovi, her husband who had been in love with Rozami since his youth could not leave Rozami; therefore, she did not enjoy a happy married life and love and ultimately committed adultery and left her husband. The heroine, Biakliani of *Khawhar In* novel and the heroine, Rozami of *Thla Hleinga Zan* novel had their lovers who did not live in the same village and were unknown to

them but had fallen in love with them at first sight. However, their love did not bloom. In case of Rozami, she could marry her love but only after they had become divorcees.

## CHAPTER-V

### Conclusion

James Dokhuma's contribution to Mizo Literature is considerable. We have shown in the previous chapters the range of his numerous works in fiction. He was one of the most noted fiction writers among Mizo. In this chapter, we will summarize the major findings of this dissertation as a conclusion.

Some scholars of Mizo fictions have expressed vehemently the status of women based on these stories. In most of Mizo fictions, women play prominent roles; hence, the title of the novels are in women's name. As we have seen in Chapter-1, the first writer of Mizo fiction, L. Biakliana had used the name of a woman, Hawilopari as the title of his story. He also used the name of a woman, Lali as the title of his second fiction. Women play prominent roles in these fictions. In *Hawilopari*, women are the cause of conflicts and they are the ones who face hardship the most. *Lali* is a good example of exposition of the status of Mizo women. Surprisingly, the third Mizo fiction written by Kaphleia also had taken the name of a woman, Chhingpuii as the title of his story. The women characters shown in these fictions are not types but distinct individuals with distinct manners of talking, behaviour, mode of living, nature and the way of tackling hardships. These women face hardships and the main plots of the stories are also based on their turbulent lives. Some are pitifully subjected to defeat owing to their lack of strength, and the chief characters usually come through the trials briefly owing to their personal strength and bravery.

Irrespective of whether it is Mizo stories or stories of other communities, the beauty and good physique of heroines are expressed exaggeratedly. Since the heroines are extremely

beautiful, young men liked them and usually left no stone unturned in order to marry them. Apart from their beauty, the extremely beautiful Mizo women are kind, very intelligent and have plentiful wooers, cautious of men and praised by the society. All these qualities are attributed to the beauty of damsels. Rozami and Biakliani are two beautiful damsels who have wooers and are intelligent and admired by the society. They have a lot of suitors. For a Mizo woman, even if one is beautiful, if she is not intelligent and could be seduced easily, she will be deprived of good reputation. Even though Chalkhumi is a beautiful damsel yet, she is unintelligent and could be easily seduced and her parents being not so intelligent, has to face extreme humiliation. The women who are capable of doing things and who ambitiously wish to do things according to their will and their antagonists are normally the cause of conflicts in the stories. It has been presented that Chalkhumi's mother is a beautiful woman, mixed of reddish and whitish complexion, outspoken and a lazy. She wants a sepoy of Assam Regiment for her daughter's husband and did not like Muana to woo her daughter to the extent of scolding him. Muana got angry and the young men of the dormitory unanimously decided to boycott Chalkhumi and banned everyone from visiting her house. When Chalkhumi's mother responded by telling her daughter that her beauty is difficult to reject by man. Muana took it seriously and disgraced Khumi before the church and the society. In the case of Mizo women, those who are unkind and possessed by malicious spirit are sometimes humbled by having sex with them.

Muana used to make love with Chalkhumi. Muana was not satisfied with this only since he was angry with Chalkhumi's mother; he submitted a confessional letter to the church informing that he and Chalkhumi are no more favoured in the eyes of God. In this way, Muana disgraced Chalkhumi.

As we have already discussed in the previous chapters that Mizo society being a patriarchal system, the patriarch is the decision maker in choosing husband for a woman. In *Thla Hleinga Zan*, even Rozami's father married off Rozami to the one of his choice without giving any importance to Rozami's sentiment. He gave the hands of his daughter to a person of his choice who was rich. He chose an unkind person for his daughter only to be divorced again. Rozami's father still did not change his choice even when his daughter had suitors after her divorce. He pressurized her to give in to his materialistic views. However, Rozami was no more afraid of her father and argued to show her absolute disagreement. They also came to know that the suitor was an unkind person. When Kapthuama proposed to Rozami for his wife, Rozami's father gave his daughter the right to make the final decision because he had made several mistakes in the past. We can say that Thankimi could get married with the husband of her choice because of her being a true Christian. Thankimi, under the guidance of her uncle (maternal aunt's husband) who was a church elder could marry with Liankhuma after he became a born again Christian as she desired. Liani, the heroine of *Khawhar In* was given the liberty to choose her husband because her family was straight forwardly Christian in principles. Rovi also was given the liberty in choosing her husband. We can say that the reason is because her father was a good-tempered man and she was an educated person.

As depicted in these novels, Mizo women were very cautious of men. Since young men usually tried to have sex with maidens, they would be cautious of men even if they are their lovers; for a wise damsel should act as such. The condition of Chalkhumi was very pitiable. She was not so intelligent damsel. Muana found her beautiful who used to woo her without loving her and he would sleep with her whenever time permitted. One night, Khumi's mother scolded Muana while wooing Khumi because of which he became very

angry. In the Mizo society, if a damsel or her parents do not extend hospitality towards the young men visitors, the young men can be hostile. Therefore, even Muana reported to his fellow young men when he was scolded by Chalkhumi's mother. The young men were displeased with Chalkhumi's mother, therefore the bachelors banned anyone from visiting Chalkhumi's house. Khumi had to suffer for no fault of hers. It is only because Muana took the speech of Khumi's mother seriously and that is why he acted like this. It shows how virginity is regarded highly in the Mizo society and shows how men prided before damsels with whom they had had sex. Chalkhumi could have sued against Muana for his accusation before the chief and elders but she dared not do so.

Men could disgrace damsels after having sex with them if they are offended and they usually disgraced them. Khumi's condition is very pitiable. Even if she is to have sex with a young man for love, before the eyes of the society it is wrong and she will be at fault and would not dare to sue. True to it, she dared not sue him. Mizo society being a patriarchal system, the culture and social life are deeply dependent on men. Irrespective of good or bad, right or wrong, appropriate or inappropriate, they are all judged by men. Therefore, when Khumi expressed her love to Muana by having sex with Muana, it was a sin because she was considered a loose character before the Mizo society, and she had to lose her reputation for expressing her love to Muana. Khumi did not command any respect as a human being. She being a not so intelligent damsel, Muana took advantage and used to enjoy her whenever he found opportunity. Since Chalkhumi's mother wanted her daughter to marry a sepoy, she failed to see the consequences of her scolding Muana without sufficient justification.

The heroines in James Dokhuma's novel are presented in different characters in the previous chapters. They are women of good intelligence and have love in abundance. The writer clearly sees the essential value of women and has a considerable understanding about

women; and we can say that the writer has revealed them as he saw through his stories. Through this fact, we have seen that the writer does not place women lowly. The leading characters in *Thla Hleinga Zan* and *Khawhar In* are women. In the stories, if the male characters failed to uphold the faithfulness of their love, it was the women who uphold the trust from the beginning till the end through hard trials. The damsels were much sought after therefore, they often faced temptations. Suitors sent their marriage proposal to them. Even when the male characters in the stories failed to keep the trust, these women are the one who preserve it.

The heroines in these stories are beautiful damsels, desirable, well-off, intelligent and patient and who could make prompt decision at the time of hardship and who could also humble themselves if necessary. They are also trustworthy, bold, and self-confident and have the qualities of what men desired in women. Rozami, Thankimi and Lalrovi tried their level best bravely in order to get married with the ones they truly love. Rozami nursed Thuama after her father allowed her to marry Thuama. In the Mizo society, it is inappropriate for a damsel to visit one's lover's house; however, Rozami did not care for the unfavourable opinion of the society after she got the freedom from her father, and hence, she nursed Thuama who was sick. After Rozami made a mistake in obeying her father, she no longer was afraid of her father and she bravely argued with him to get married with Thuama as she was very determined and ultimately, her father had to give in. Thankimi also tried her best to marry Liankhuma. Nevertheless she faced despair many times. She even stood in a very unpleasant position because of the suspicion the church had on her. She liked Liankhuma upto the extent that she would take the advice from her maternal aunt's husband whenever she was in despair. She could marry Liankhuma just because of her uncle who made her strong at the time of despair and who gave good advice and new hope to her. Lalrovi, in order

to get married with Muana walked into the house of Muana intending to be his wife. This act was most shameful for a woman in Mizo society. Even the parents of Lalrovi understood her mind and they were so good to Muana. In case of Rozami, the cousin sisters of Thuama liked Zami for their cousin brother, Thuama and therefore, they tried their best in helping Thuama and that's why Zami and Thuama could get married. One of the reasons for the fulfillment of Zami's desire was because of the cousin sisters of Thuama.

James Dokhuma has placed the love between men and women highly. He placed love higher than wealth. In his stories, the heroes and heroines tend to love at first sight. They went along the rugged road of love for their love and attraction for each other and to live together throughout their life. Although their love for each other did not come to fruition yet, and had to go through marriages with the wrong person, they never let go their love for each other. In the case of Rozami, she married after she became a divorcee. Although James Dokhuma advocated love at first sight yet, to let it happen in reality, he did not regard it highly. It appears that he wanted an understanding to be had between lovers and a genuine love for each other in order for a couple to be united. Biakliani and Muana fall in love at first sight. They knew each other very well long before they loved each other. Rozami and Kapthuama belonged to different villages. They both tried to bring their love to fruition but they could not marry. They could get married only after they both became divorcees and found their love for each other enduring.

---

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Primary Sources

Dokhuma, James. *Khawhar In*. Aizawl, James Dokhuma, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2000. Print.

---. *Thla Hleinga Zan*. Aizawl, James Dokhuma, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. 2001. Print.

### Secondary Sources.

Works in Mizo:

Dokhuma, James *Tawng Un Hrilhfiahna*. Aizawl: R. Lalrawna, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2002. Print.

---. *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*. Aizawl: Hmingthanpuii, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2008. Print.

---. *Rinawmin*. Aizawl: R. Lalrawna, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2005. Print.

---. *Silaimu Ngaihawm*. Aizawl: R. Lalrawna, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2012. Print.

---. *Tumpangchal nge Saithangpuii*. Aizawl: R. Lalrawna, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. 2009. Print.

Khiangte, Dr Laltluangliana. *Biakliana Robawm*. Aizawl: L.T.L. Publication, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1996.  
Print.

---. Ed., *Khawlkungi leh a Kutchhuak*, Aizawl: L.T.L Publication, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2007.

Print.

---. Ed, *Thuhlaril*. Aizawl: C.T.B.E.B. Publications, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. 2006. Print.

Lalzuithanga, *Phira leh Ngurthanpari*. Aizawl: Gilgal Press, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. 2004. Print.

Lalthangliana, B. Ed., *Kaphleia leh C. Thuamluaia Hnuhma*. Aizawl: B. Lalthangliana & Mizoram Publication Board, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2006. Print.

---. *Mizo Culture*. Aizawl: F. Vanlalringa, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2013. Print.

---. *Pi Pu Zunleng*. Aizawl: B. Lalthlengliana, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2007. Print.

Khuma, Captain C. *Chhingkhual Lungdi*. Aizawl: Hauhnar Brothers, 1991. Print.

Lalruali. *Nula Vanduai Sumchani*. Aizawl: Synod Publication Board, 1991. Print.

Pa, Zikpuii. *Silvarthangi*. Aizawl: MCL Publication, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1999 Print.

---. *Kraws Bulah Chuan*. Aizawl: MCL Publications, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1999 Print.

Khawlkungi. *Zawlpala ThlanTlangah*. Aizawl: Khawlkungi, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2001 Print.

Saiawi, Lalhmingliana. *Lungrang Laiawrha*. Kawlkulh: P.S.L. Hlunsanga, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1998 Print.

---. *A Na Lua*. Aizawl: T. Lalhmingliani, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2003 Print.

---. *Keimah Unionliana*. Aizawl: Lalrinliana & Sons, 1997. Print.

---. *Lungrang Hmangaihna*. Aizawl: Lalrinliana & Sons, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2000 Print.

---. *Nukawki & Nukawki Fanu*. Mumbai: Ramzaua Saiawi, 2011. Print.

Lallungmuana, H. *Hmangaih Zoramthangi*. Aizawl: L.T.L Publications, 1996. Print.

Laizawna, C. *Hmangaihzuali*. Aizawl: Hauhlira Offset Press, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2003. Print.

Lalngurliani, H. *Marry Lanzes*. Aizawl: Synod Literature & Publication Board, 1996. Print.

Lalhriata. *Chun Chawi Loh*. Aizawl: Synod Literature & Publication Board, 2008. Print.

---. *Khualzin Nula*. Aizawl: Synod Literature & Publication Board, 2008. Print.

Hermana, C. *Country Girl Lalhniangi*. Aizawl: C. Hermana, 2009. Print.

Ngente, Lalrammawia. *Dan rual loh Hmangaihna*. Aizawl: H.C.Lalthasangi, 2008. Print.

---. *Rinteei Zunleng*. Aizawl: H.C.Lalthasangi, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2009. Print.

Vanhnuaitanga, R. *Zalenna Thurin leh Mizo Hmeichhiate*. Aizawl: R. Vanhnuaitanga, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2011. Print.

Liangkhaia, Rev. *Mizo Chanchin*. Aizawl: L.T.L Publications, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. 2011. Print.

Chaldailova, R. *Mizo Pi Pute Khawvel*. Aizawl: Vanlalnghaki, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2011. Print.

Vanlaltlani, T. *Mizo Hmeichhiate Kawngzawh*. Aizawl: Mizoram Publication Board, 2005. Print.

Hrangbana College. *Mizo Novel (Golden Jubilee 1937-1987)*. Aizawl: Hrangbana College, 1987. Print.

Vannghaka, Dr. K.C. *Literature Kawngpui*. Aizawl: Vanhlupuii, 2010. Print.

Tribal Research Institute. *Mizo Thawnthu*. Aizawl: Tribal Research Institute, Department of Art & Culture Aizawl, Mizoram. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2008. Print.

Sangkhumi, B. *India Hmeichhiate Dinmun*. Aizawl: B. Sangkhumi Chaltlang, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1999. Print.

Lianthanga, C. *Hmanlai Mizo Nun*. Aizawl: Mizoram Publication Board, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1999. Print.

Lalthanliana, Dr. *Mizo Chanchin (Kum 1900 Hma Lam)*. Aizawl: Mizoram Publication Board, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2000. Print

Thanmawia, R.L. *Mizo Hla Hlui*. Aizawl: Mizoram Publication, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2012. Print.

WORKS IN ENGLISH:

Abrams, M.H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Macmillan India Limited, New Delhi, 2007. Print.

Hudson, William Henry. *An Introduction to the Study of Literature*, New Delhi: Kalyani Publishers. 9<sup>th</sup> ed. 1996. Print.

Pradhan, Ram Prakash. *The Woman in the Novels of Saul Bellow*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2006. Print.

Barad, Dilipsingh P. *The Women Characters in the Novels of Thomas Hardy*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers & Distributors (P) LTD. 2009. Print.

Parry, N.E. *A Monograph On Lushai Customs and Ceremonies*: Tribal Research Institute, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 1988. Print.

Sangkima. *A Modern History of Mizoram*. Guwahati: Spectrum Publications, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2004. Print.

Ralte, Benjamin and Malsawmliana. *Social Economic and Political History of the Mizo*. Guwahati, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2011 Print.

Lalneihzovi. *Changing Status of Women in North – Eastern States*. Guwahati: A Mittal Publication, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2009. Print.

Chatterjee, Dr Suhas. *Mizoram Encyclopedia*. Bombay: Jaico Publishing House. 1<sup>st</sup> ed.1990. Print.

Sharma, Raj Pruthi Bela Rani. *Women and Marxism*. Anmol Publication, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1995. Print.

Upreti, Mandini. *Women and Problems of Gender Discrimination*. Pointers Publishers, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2000 Print.

Manohar, Christian. *Women's Issues and Reflections*. Delhi: Rev. Dr. Ashish Amos (ISPCK), 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2012 Print.

Chatterji, Dr N. *The Earlier Mizo Society*. Kolkata: Firma KLM Private Limited, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2008. Print.

Zehol, Dr Lucy. *Women in Naga Society*. New Delhi: Regency Publication, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1998. Print.

Ovung, Athungo. *Social Stratification in Naga Society*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2012. Print.

Gurdon, P.R.T. *The Khasis*. New Delhi: Akansha Publishing House, 2012. Print.

Baruah, S.L. *Status of Women in Assam*. New Delhi: Omsons Publications, 1992. Print.

Zoramdinthara, Dr. *Mizo Fiction: Emergence and Development*. New Delhi: Ruby Press & Co, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2013. Print.

Vannghaka, Dr K.C. *Influence of Christianity in Mizo Fiction*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis.

## APPENDICES

## Appendix - I

**Glossary:**

1. **Chawngchen** –Chawng feast and festival.
2. **Cheraw**- *Cheraw Kan* dance using pairs of bamboos.
3. **Hnam**- A plaited band of cane which passes over the top of the head and, with its attached ropes, used to carry load on the back; also the above band with its attached ropes.
4. **Inchhawluai/Chhawluai**- To indicate to (a friend) that one has passed or gone on home by placing a leafy branch or twig or a bunch of leaves at the fork of the path leading to his or her jhoom. This is only done in the case of very dear friend or sweethearts. Sometimes flowers and cucumber etc are used in place of leafy branch or twig.
5. **Inlawm**- To take turns at helping one another in any kind of work and occupation; to do anything together by turn for mutual advantage or pleasure.
6. **Kawikah/Inkawibah**-The kawi bean game as played by girls.
7. **Khawmu chawi**- Abduction by a malignant spirit.
8. **Khawhring**- The name of a magnilant spirit which so closely approximates to what in English is known as the evil- eye.
9. **Khuangchawi** – The name of a public feast given by chiefs and other well-to-do Lushai.
10. **Laksang**- The name of a spider which frequents roadside banks, etc where it's platform-like web may be seen terminating in a dark tunnel in which the creature lies in wait for its prey.

11. **Lasi**-Tha fabled guardian of animals.
12. **Lasi zawl**- A man who has received a sign in a dream from Lasi, the spirit of hunting, and has thenceforward become such a skilled hunter that he is looked upon as being possessed of that Spirit.
13. **Mantang**- The subsidiary portions of a girl's bride price or dowry.
14. **Naupuakpuan**- The subsidiary portion of a girl's bride price which goes to her elder sister or anyone else whom she adopts as her 'U'.
15. **Ni ar**- The subsidiary portion of a girl's bride price payable to her paternal aunt.
16. **Nu man**- The subsidiary portion of a girl's bride price payable to her biological mother.
17. **Palal**- The subsidiary portion of a girl's bride price which goes to a male relative of her father or to anyone whom she may adopt as her palal.
18. **Pawnpui** – Lushai blanket
19. **Pu sum**- A subsidiary portion of a girl's bride price which goes to maternal uncle or maternal grandfather, or to anyone whom she may adopt as her *Pu* in their place.
20. **Rengchal**- The name of a cicada or *Thereng*.
21. **Sumchhuah**- To pay back one's bride price (as a wife does when she divorces her husband) to divorce a husband.
22. **Sum fang**- The subsidiary portion of a girl's bride price payable to her father or brother.
23. **Thul**- The name of a large basket with a close-fitting conical lid or cover.
24. **Tlai sial**- A domesticated gayal or mithan of the size valued at twenty rupees.
25. **Tumpang/Sihhuaia**- The name of one of the two main species of *sele* or wild gayal.
26. **Vanchungnula**- Mythical girl of the sky.

27. **Zawbuk-** The large house in a Lushai village where all the young men of the community sleep at night.
28. **Zawlkenpuan/ Zawlpuan** – The name given to a cloth- generally black –which a bride brings to her husband’s house upon marriage.