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Lalzuitluanga

DECLARATION

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

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

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Partial fulfilment of the requirement for
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1. Definition of Folktale

A folktale is a story which has been handed down from generation to generation, and the original author of folktales could not be known because, every traditional tales are generally transmitted orally from the earlier generations. According to the British writer Burke, "Every culture of the world has its own folktales, and a large number of these stories have never been written down. So, the story we read or listen to today may be quite different from the original. Very often we have no idea who the original author was," (vi).

According to Propp, "The folktale, the tale told by the folk, is a folk narrative genre characterised by the form of its function in society. It is a story passed on from generation to generation by oral transmission alone" (16).

Barman wrote, "A folktale is a story which has been transmitted orally from generation to generation through the lips of the common people of any land, and a true folktale is by nature anonymous, because, no one wrote it, evolved off the nature of man to tell and listen to tales" (x).

Amos also wrote, "Myth (from Greek mythos) is believed to be true, legend (from Latin legenda) purports to be true, and folktale is inherently untrue - only fiction and fantasy" (255).

Joseph Campbell also stated that, “. . . the folk tale is for entertainment. The myth is for spiritual instruction”(81).

From the above definitions it the folktales can be described as the following

-

- Folktale is orally told through generations
- The author is unknown
- Folktale is fictional
- Folktale is for entertainment
- Folktale exists wherever there are people in a culture.

The Mizos also have many folktales and these folktales are for entertainment and for moral educations. In the Mizo society children learns folktales from their parents. Learning folktales is important because folktales gives entertainment and served as educational tools for the preliterate societies. It is also used to preserve history and to preserve tradition and culture of the ancient Mizos. The Mizos in the earlier times did not have a place of learning and the youth had no form of entertainment. The folktales served as entertainment and education to the young in terms of moral principles and how they would be in a society as the folktales reflect human life that can be useful for adulthood of the children. A child can learn adult life and basic moral principles from the folktales.

1.2. Origin and Migration of the Mizo

The exact origin of the Mizo remains unknown or hasn't been clarified. Even researchers do not or cannot have the clear information on the origin of the Mizo

people. Liangkhaia, a Mizo history writer suggest that the origin of the Mizos started in the bible as the descendants of Japheth, one of the sons of Noah ascended to one of the Mongolian race and the Tibeto - Burmans (13) This is considered to be one of the farthest ancestral study on the origins of the Mizos.

One of the Mizo myths *Chhinlung* tells the origin of the Mizo people.

A long time ago the earth was dark, then suddenly thim zing came and humans turned to stars and animals. Seeing all the changes, Khuazingnu, the creator of humans was not pleased and took the humans by gender and made them couples. Then, she kept the couples in a cave and covered it with a large stone which was called, 'Chhinlung'.

As time went Khuazingnu believed that man has multiplied and decided to open the Chhinlung. As she opened the cave, she saw that man has multiplied massively and came out of the cave in great numbers. The Raltes came out who were many and loud and Khuazingnu could not bear them and said, "They are too many, it is better to close the cave" as she closed the Chhinlung and many were left and did not come out the Chhinlung. So, Because of the closing of Chhinlung the Mizos were lesser in numbers than they were supposed to be. (my trans.)

According to some researcher, the story of *Chhinlung* cannot be acceptable because it is impossible for man to come out of the cave for their origin. They

describe the story of Chhinlung in many ways. One of the versions is that during the reign of the first Emperor of China Shih Huangti in 228 B.C, The Great wall of China was started construction and the work was hard and tough. The construction resulted in the death of many peasants. The workers wanted to leave the construction of great wall but were guarded by soldiers. But the emperor died before the end of construction and the empire was left with no ruler and chaos was ensued. This left with no continuation of construction. So the workers were scattered and escaped from the empire. Some scattered to Shanghai and elsewhere. So it is believed that among them are the ancestors of the Mizos, because to escape from the empire the workers had to make a hole in the great wall, making a cave suggested to be the, *Chhinlung* (Zawla 6-7).

One of the Mizo Historian Siana also stated the origin of the Mizo, “Our ancestors can be traced to the northern people of China, They were scattered to India and Tibet and moved to Burma and from there they finally settled to Mizoram. This is why we were called the descendants of the Tibeto-Burmans” (7).

The origin of the Mizos as described by several Mizo writers had the same patterns and are similar to one another. They all believed that the Mizos first settled in China and Tibet. So, Mizos are considered to be one of the mongoloids and were living among the Chinese in earlier times.

It is not clear that the reason of why the Mizos migrated from the east to the west. Mizo historians believed that the migration from east to west can be many reasons. May be there are enemies who were stronger than the Mizos, or there

areeconomic problems. One of the Mizo myths *Zofate Zinkawng* tells how the Mizo people migrated from east to west. Thanmawia translated *Zofate Zinkawng* into English in the book of *Mizo Folktales*. Here is the summary of the story of *The Path Ethnic Chhinlung People Followed*

All the people who came out of Chhinlung lived together in one place and they did not have a particular leader or king. They spoke the same language and lived the same way of life. But they felt that the area they were occupying was unsafe and they decided to move towards the west. They divided into two groups. The first group told the second group before they left, "On our way, we shall severe tree trunks and carve signs so that you can detect and follow the direction we shall take. We shall also clear the bushes and make clearings on our path so that you can follow us." So the first batch began their march towards the west. Just as they said they made marks on the trunks of trees and cleared bushes on their way. After sometime they came to area which was full of plantains. They cut down the plantains and make clearings just as they said. Next they came to an area with patch of Muk trees growing and they made signs on the tree trunks.

The second group was larger in number. Some of them were women and children and some had met an accident on their way. So they travelled very slowly. The second batch reached the area of plantains, the plantains that the first batch cut down began to grow fresh shoot and long leaves grew again. When they saw the grown up leaves, they thought, "The leaves of the

plantains have grown big again; our people must have left this place since for a long time. There is no way that we can keep their pace.”

Next, they reached the place where Muk trees were growing. Muk tree is severed it soon becomes darkish in colour. The second batch did not understand this. They thought that the marks on the bark of the trees must have been made a long time ago. So they did not make the attempt to keep following the first batch of the people. Even the first batch of people slowly disintegrated and sought different paths. Some kept marching on westward, some proceeded toward the south. Some proceeded toward the north. This is how the people of Chhinlung origin scattered around different areas to settle in different areas that they now occupy at present.(35-37)

According to the study of Mizo historian and some of the Mizo myths, the earlier Mizo people lived in the east and from there they migrated to the west. But when they wandered from place to place some of them kept marched westward and some marched towards the north and south. So, the Mizos who were living in the boundary of Mizoram were not only the Mizos but also some of the neighbouring countries were the Mizos in origin.

1.3. Structure of Mizo Society

The folktales gives an idea on how the people lived with each other on the society. It also enables to have an inside on how the society was formed. The folktales imitate the society from which it was originated. The characters in the tales show how the humans interact and live together. Situations are seen in the

tales and the characters react to it just as how a normal human will react. Thus, the animal tales are an imitation of the human society. Other than these, the idea on how the society of the Mizos originated is portrayed through the tales and how Mizos lived together as social beings are imitated.

The Mizo myths of *Chhinlung* and *Khampat* tell that all the Mizo people lived together in one place but they did not have particular leader. But, the story of *Thlanrawkapa Khuangchawi* tells that Thlanrawkapa was a great and respected man and he was made a chief of the people. The story of *Thlanrawkapa Khuangchawi* is considered to be the farthest story that the Mizo people have a chief. According to the Mizo writers like Liangkhaia, Lalthangliana and Lalbiaknema, the man called Zahmuaka, son of Chhuahlawma is the first Mizo chief. Lalthangliana believed that this is the period of about 1600 to 1650 A.D. (29) The chief, in the Mizo society was very important in his village and all administration was in the hands of the chief. Every village has its own chief and the chief was assisted by the village elders in administering and these elders build their houses around the chief's house. These elders who assisted the chief were known as *Khawnbawl upa*.

There is a *Zawlbuk* near the house of the chief. *Zawlbuk* was a hall for young boys and the village men and it can be called as centre of information, home of instructions for young boys, and a hangout place and camp for young men. It also served as a place for entertainment among the young men. They learned the Mizo way while doing tasks made by their elders. Wrestling was a favourite sport among

the men. The youths were educated in the field of obedience, bravery, strength and respect to elders. The young men slept overnight in the *Zawlbuk* to stay alert of wild animals and invaders. They slept here so as to work together in situations without having to assemble from their homes.

The Mizo society is a peaceful community where people lived in harmony and the people try to live a respected life with honour. Injustice is hated among the Mizos and Laziness is also not an option among the Mizos. Hard work and activeness is expected for the young men and young women are expected to be polite and respectful to men.

Mizo society is a patriarchal society. The father is the head of the family and has an important role in taking care of his family. Work on the land cultivation is rough and tough, so it is the responsibility of the male. But, men do not take responsibility in the house work, it is maintained and looked after by the women. Respect is shown to the parents and children even after adulthood do not question their parents in arguments and decision making.

Tlawmngaihna is one of the most valued characteristics of the Mizo society. *Tlawmngaihna* means self-sacrifice and self denial for the sake of others. The men who had these qualities are highly valued and respected in the society. Bravery is also considered a good quality for men. When there was work in the jhum the young men and women helped each other (*inlawm*) and this was a good way of interaction between the young men and women.

The beautiful and clever young women in the Mizo society were highly valued. During the night time the young men used to go to the young women's home to court them and show interest in her. The young women are expected to be polite and should not show discrimination to all her courters. If she can treat all her courters equally even if she had a particular interest in one of her courters, she is considered to be having a good quality and clever.

It is not wrong to say that life in the Mizo society was pleasant and peaceful in the community. However, there was a huge gap between the rich and the poor in terms of marriage. The love between a rich and a poor usually ends in tragedy as illustrated in the Mizo tales. In one of the Mizo tales Laltheri was the daughter of the chief and Chalthanga was the son of a widow. They loved and courted each other but the chief and his family did not want Chalthanga to be with his daughter. Chalthanga knew this and thought it was a danger for him and he escaped the village. But, he was tricked into getting back to the village for Laltheri and killed by Laltheri's family. In another similar tale to this, Lianchhiari was a daughter of the village chief who fell in love with Chawngfianga, the son of a widow. Chawngfianga wanted to marry Lianchhiari and he sent delegates to the chief to ask for her hand. The chief was a kind man and he allowed for Chawngfianga to marry Lianchhiari. The delegates were jealous of Chawngfianga and told him a lie that the chief did not allowed for him to marry Lianchhiari and he was driven out of the village. Because of this lie Chawngfianga left the village forever because of the lie of the delegates who were jealous of him because he was poor and do not

see him fit for the chief's daughter. These two tales implies that the wealthy people discriminated the poor especially the widows in terms of marriage.

Several tales also elaborated the portrayal of rudeness of life when it comes to orphans and children who are having stepparents. The story of Liandova te unau illustrates how the orphans were treated badly by the other children and adults alike. Their earlier life was not pleasant as after their father died their mother remarried and left them on their own until they met their fortune and the story ends happily for them. The tale of Mauruangi also portrays the life of children under a stepmother, after Mauruangi's mother died, her father remarried but the stepmother of Mauruangi treated her very badly and did not want to give her food. Her dead mother was transformed into a giant catfish and she used to go to her mother for comfort.

The stories aforementioned indicates the rudeness and cruelty of not only the Mizo society but the society of humans as a whole. It tells the audience about the truth of life that the wealthy people and only entitled people are shown respect. But, amidst all the darkness there is a silver lining in these tales which shows hope for humanity.

Wars and disputes often happened between villages. Invasion of villages often happened. When villages are invaded heads are taken as a trophy and women and children are taken as slaves for the invaders. After a successful invasion a ceremony is held and they celebrated with songs (Bawh hla). The warriors who killed the most are considered to be heroes and respected among the tribes. The

legend of Khuangchera, Chawngbawla, Lianchia, Hrangkhupa and Chhuanvawra shows that wars often took place between villages and foreign invaders.

In the story of *Chala and Thangi* their village was invaded by another village and the invaders took Thangi as a slave and Chala went to the invaders village and rescued her. Lianchia who was famed for his handsome appearance among the Mizos was killed by invaders during his sleep when he was on guard of his village. The invaders took his head to their village and it was displayed at the Chief's compound on a *sahlam*.

The Mizo folktales of *Chhurbura leh Nahaia*, *Liandova leh Tuaisiala*, *Tumchhingi leh Raldawna*, *Tlingi leh Ngama* and *Mauruangi* shows that the Mizos practised agriculture since ancient times. Agriculture was the main occupation of the Mizos. Rice was the main cultivation along with vegetables for self consumption. Rice was the main diet of the Mizos and every family cultivated Rice for self reliability. There was no currency and every family had their own livestock of animals for consumption. Pigs and hens were the main animals kept for consumption. There was no medium of exchange and taxes were given to the village chief by means of rice produce (fathang). When wild animals were hunted, the hunter also had to give a part of the limb of the animal to the chief. Since the Mizos were self reliant they did not have to buy or exchange within the society and rarely happened.

The origin of cultivation of rice is shown in one of the Mizo myths Vanhrikpa asked the people if they wanted Buhchangrum or Buhkirirum. The people replied

Buhchangrum. But, Buhchangrum was on the other side of Tuihriam and was very difficult to get there. Only the sand-bear (Phivawk) and the rat (Sazu) could get there. So they send them on the other side of Tuihriam river and they took back the seed of Buhchangrum (rice) to the village. So the villagers planted the seed and rice was planted ever since. It became the main course of the Mizo diet.

The Mizos have three types of festivals. They are Chapchar Kut, Mim Kut and Pawl Kut. They were celebrated by all the Mizo villages. Since, the Mizos did not keep time these festivals are held when they feel the time is right. Here are the origins and how the festivals are celebrated.

Chapchar Kut : Chapchar kut is the biggest festival of the Mizos. The Mizos followed jhum cultivation. The land is cleared for agriculture and then burned for plantation later. Chapchar kut is celebrated during the period when the land is cleared and before burning the land. It is the festival of celebrations and entertainment.

The origin of chapchar kut is depicted in one of the Mizo legends. Once, when the land was cleared and the villagers were free from work. The hunters went out to hunt for meat but returned empty handed. They were in grief. So, the chief of the village tried to comfort them by giving a whole head for them and the other villagers also followed the chief by giving what they had. Some gave rice wine and meat. So, they had a joyous time together and they put their arms around each other dancing on the field. This is how, '*Chai*' a new traditional dance was born.

Due to the joyful event, the villagers decided that the celebration should be held the following year and since then Chapchar kut was celebrated widely by all the other villages. This is how Chapchar kut festival came to be celebrated by the Mizos.

Mim Kut: Mim kut is a festival observed for the dead. Its origins is based on the story of *Tlingi and Ngama*. Tlingi and Ngama were a couple who truly love each other. When Tlingi died, Ngama found a way to visit Tlingi in the land of the dead(Mitthi khua) He saw that Tlingi was very thin and asked her why she was thin. Tlingi told Ngama that she did not have good food to eat and requested Ngama to put the best crops from their harvest on her grave. Ngama went back to the land of the living and do as Tlingi requested and after that he went back to the land of the dead and so that Tlingi was not thin anymore and look healthier. So, this is how Mim kut was originated and during this festival the villagers used to keep their best produce to their departed families grave.

Pawl Kut: Pawl Kut is the second biggest festivals of the Mizos. It is celebrated after harvestation of crops is finish. It is celebrated with food and dances and celebrated by all the Mizo villages. The origin of how Pawl Kut was celebrated is said to be when the Mizos were in Khampat.

Once there was a huge famine (Thingpui tam \am) and the people were living in poverty and shortage of food. But after the famine the food production was greatly increased and the men set traps for meat to celebrate the successful harvest. The chief also donated livestocks for the occasion. So the villagers

celebrated all day without work with their food and dances. This is how Pawl kut was celebrated among the Mizos.

This festival is a joyous occasion celebrated among all the Mizo villages. Since this occasion is celebrated after harvestation (Pawltlak). It is called Pawl kut.

The early Mizos believed in good and bad spirits. According to their beliefs the good spirits stayed in the sky and was a blessing for the humans. This is shown in Mizo myths. The good spirits in Mizo myths are Pu Vana, Vanchung nula and Vanhrikpa. Pu Vana watches over the humans from the sky and gave what the humans needed. When there was rain. People believed that Pu Vana thought that the humans needed water so he asked Vanchung nula to fetch water and he poured them from the sky. Vanhrikpa is also considered to be a giver of knowledge to the humans.

Bad spirits are also seen in the Mizo myths in the stories of Ngaiteii and Chhunthanga. The bad spirit in early Mizo was known as *Huai*. The *Huai* can be classified according to their location such as *Tuihuai (Water demon)*, *Tlanghuai (Mountain demon)*, *Sihhuai (Morass demon)* and *Ramhuai (Forest demon)*.

1.4. Meaning of Folklore and Folk Literature

The term 'folklore' was coined in 1946 by William John Thoms (Dorson 281)It was to denote the unwritten stories, beliefs, and customs of the European peasant as opposed to the 'sophisticated' traditions of the educated elite (Haviland 337).Folklore is comprised of two words, 'folk' and 'lore'. The English

word 'folk' comes from the German word 'volk' meaning people (*New Webster's Dictionary* 379), and the word 'lore' means 'learning' or 'Knowledge' and the term folklore literally means 'learning of the people.' According to some scholars, folklore is defined as the knowledge of a group of people (Patnaik 6).

Folk Literature is the oral literature of a culture. It is a part of folklore. It exists before the written language and passed down orally from one generation to another generation. The authors of the traditional literature are usually unknown or unidentifiable. Major forms of folk literature include the folk song, ballad, folktale, riddle, proverb and charm. (*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* 861) The Mizos are rich in folk literature. Mizo folk songs and tales are wide and many which can be studied.

Even though the Mizos were illiterate and no form of written scripts were kept. The traditional stories were passed down to generations and were well kept through years. This became the main source of Mizo written literature today. If the Mizos had the Mizo alphabet (A,AW,B) earlier, there would be more folk stories and songs preserved than what we can find today. Due to tales being passed down orally, it is believed that many other tales may be lost with time.

Folk Literature can be classified into both prose form and verse form (Lalruanga 3) Prose form includes folktales, myths and legends, whereas, verse form includes folk songs, sayings, proverbs and riddles. The prose form of Folk Literature is also known as Folk Narratives. As it is said, folk narratives are mainly classified into three parts, such as myths, legends and folktales.

Myths, legends and folktales may be orally passed down but the stories have different patterns and are not same. According to Amos, folktale is fictional and fantasy and is untrue. The same cannot be said about myths and legends.

Myths: Myths are the tales in which the setting, time and place, theme and the characters are of ancient times. The characters can be human, spirits, spirit-humans and animals. The place of setting of the story is also not in earth itself, but before the creation of earth in a godly world. Haviland stated, "The myth is basically religious, in that its subject matter is the ultimates of human existence: where we and the things in our world came from, why we are here, and where we are going" (337). It is the story of creation of earth, beings and nature. The stories dealt with early times and origins.

Mizos also have myths about the origin and creation of earth and humans in the story of *Chhinlung*, *Tlang leh Phai Zawl leh Tui Awm |an Dan*, *Lei Awm |an Dan*.

Legends deals with heroes and bravery of man and the story is always based on earth. It also consists of historical personages and events. According to Encyclopaedia Americana legend is, ". . . a traditional narrative, frequently involving kings, heroes, or other important persons and presented as true. Legends are not historical records, but they may include historical personages and facts" (169).

Lalruanga gave five major characteristics of legends which are:-

The stories are told as facts

They are not only of early times but of recent past

The location of the story is earth

They are not of religious beliefs, beliefs and practices are not involved

The principal characters are mostly humans (16)

Some of the examples of Mizo legends are *Lalruanga*, *Pi Hmuaki*, *Lianchia* and *Buizova*.

Folktales are basically fictional. It does not have a religious aspect and do not always find a basis in historical truth. The characters in the story can be man or animal (non-human). It does not deal with administration and laws. It could be stories of ancient times or later times (29). The place of the story is not important in folktales comparing with myths and legends.

1.5. Review of Folk Literature

The Mizos did not have their own alphabet till the late 19th century. In 1894 J.H.Lorrain (Pu Buanga) and F.W.Savidge (Sap Upa) created the Mizo alphabet (A,AW,B) for the Mizos. Since then the oral tales were now written and preserved. But, the early Mizo folktales were written in other languages. The Mizo stories was first written by Thomas Herbert Lewin (Thangliana) in 1874 called, *Progressive Colloquial Exercises in the Lushai Dialects of Dzo of Kuki Languages*

with Vocabularies and Popular Tales. In this book three Mizo tales were kept that were *Chemtatrawta*, *Lalruanga* and *Kungawrhi*. This was the first written Mizo folktale (Khangte 126-128). This was before Mizos had their own alphabet.

In his article *Mizo Nu Ropui Nuchhungi*, Thanmawia said that Major Shakespear wrote *Mizo leh Vai thawnthu* in 1898 after 24 years of Thangliana's book *Progressive Colloquial Exercises in the Lushai Dialects of Dzo of Kuki Languages with Vocabularies and Popular Tales* was written (Preface, *Serkawn Graded Readers* vi), and after this Major Shakespear published *Folktales of the Lushais and their neighbours* in 1909 (Thanmawia, *Mizo Hnahthlak* 9).

Lal Rinawma, in his article *Mizo Thawnthu (folktale) ziak than dan zirchianna* stated that the folktale which were written down in the book of *Mizo leh Vai thawnthu* were

Thlangpasaisira leh Nuhlupi

Tlumtea te unau

Zaia khualzin

Zaia mihring sa eitu khuaa zin thu

Sichangneii

Chhura thu I

Chhura thu II

Liandova te unau thu

Khena leh Rama te unau thu

Pa fa hruai bo thu. (102)

F.J. Sandy, Welsh missionary also published a book on his collections of Mizo folktale called *Legends of Old Lushai* in 1919 and Nuchhungi published *Serkawn Graded Readers* in the year 1938 (Thanmawia, Preface vi)

But, Lal Rinawma said that The Welsh Mission Bookroom, Aijal published the *Mizo Thawnthu* which included 28 stories from Mizo folk. The date of publication of the book was unknown and the second publication was in 1946 and because of this it is believed that it was published before *Serkawn Graded Reader I, II, III* by Nuchhungi (103).

A.G.McCall also wrote *Lushai Chrysalis* in 1949 (104-105).

In 1964 P.S Dahrawka wrote *Mizo Thawnthu*.

In 1966 there was an insurgency in Mizoram and between the year 1966 and 1990, the Mizo folktales books were not found. But, after 1990, several books on Mizo traditional tale were published both in English and Mizo languages. Now many books based on Mizo traditional stories can be found.

The Mizo folktale writers and their publication year after 1990 in Mizoram were under the following:

Tribal Research Institute published *Mizo Thawnthu* in 1992 and also published *The Mizo Folk Tales* in 2006.

In 1977, Lalitluangliana Kiangte wrote *Folklore 1: Folktales of Mizoram* and in 2002, he published *Mizo Songs and Folk Tales*, and in 2008 he published *Mizos of North East India*. He also published *Mizo Folklore: Folktales of Mizoram* in 2018.

In 2006-2013 Lalhmachhuana Zofa published seven volumes of *Mizo Thawnthu*.

B.Lalthangliana also published *Culture and Folklore of Mizoram* in 2005 and *Pi Pu Zunleng* in 2007. In this book he gives many Mizo folktales but the book itself is not dedicated to Mizo folktales.

In 2008, Margaret L.Pachau wrote *Hand-Picked Tales From Mizoram* and also wrote *Folklore From Mizoram* in 2013.

R.L.Thanmawia wrote *Mizo Hnahthlak Thawnthu Vol I*, in the year 2009, *Mizo Hnahthlak Thawnthu Vol II* in the year 2009 and *Mizo Hnahthlak Thawnthu Vol III* in the year 2011. In English R.L.Thanmawia and Rualzakhumi Ralte also wrote a book *Mizo Folktales* in 2017.

C.Vanlallawma wrote *Hmanlai Hian Mawm* in 1992.

C.Laizawna wrote *Mizo Thawnthu Hlun* in 2012.

Lal Rinawma wrote *Thawnthu Un* in 2013.

1.5.1. Books based on the study of Mizo folktales

Even though many books based on Mizo traditional stories were published, only a few books based on the study of these folktales are available. In 2000

Lalruanga wrote *MizoThawnthu Zirzauna*, it was the first book based on the study of Mizo folktales. In 2016 K.C.Vannghaka wrote *Folk Literature. Literature Lamtluang* was published by H.Laldinmawia in 2015. These books were based on the study and in depth look of the Mizo traditional stories. Government Hrangbana College also published a seminar paper on Mizo folktale called *Mizo Thawnthu Thlirzauna*. R.L Thanmawia also wrote *Mizo Hnahthlak Thawnthu Vol I, II & III* in the year 2009 and 2012 in which he gave detail description of the book in the first introductory pages and R.L Thanmawia also wrote articles on the study of Mizo folktales in his books, *Lung Min Lentu* and *Chuailo - 3*. These were useful for in depth study of the traditional stories. Other than these mention book no other studies of the traditional tales are yet written.

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CHAPTER 2

Nature of Animal Tales

2.1. Definition of Animal Tales

Animal tales constitute one part of the folktales. Folktales are classified into six categories, such as, animal tales, tales of supernatural beliefs, jokes and humorous tales, trickster tales, cumulative tales and romantic tales (Lalruanga 30). Animal tales are usually very short, simple and easy to understand. In animal tales, animals are the major character and play an important role in the story (Thanmawia 21). There are also animal characters in other tales such as myths and

other genres of folktales, but it could not be considered as animal tales because the theme and the tone of the story are different.

The Mizo animal tales are usually said in the third person narrative and the place and time of the story is never clarified. Like other folktales they are said to be from 'a very long time ago' or 'once upon a time.' There are common characters depicted in these tales and the audience can specify the good and the bad characters and the good always wins. The Mizo folktales usually ends with 'anti alawm' which means they were narrated and spoken of by the earlier people.

Many cultures of the world have their own animal tales. Usually animals are like human, they can talk, be cunning and act like humans. Some of the animal tales has only animal character but some tale has both animal and human characters. In the book *The Types of The Folktales*, Aarne classified animal tales into seven sections such as wild animals, wild animals and domestic animals, man and wild animals, domestic animals, birds, fish, other animals and objects (19).

Mizo animal tales also consist of wild animals, domestic animals, birds and man. But, the tale of fish is rare and uncommon. In the story of *Mauruangi*, Mauruangi's mother died and was transformed into a large catfish (Thai-chhawni-nu). In the story of *Luipui Lal Nula*, the two daughters of the god were transformed into fish for their beloved fisherman. But these two tales are not considered to be animal tales because Mauruangi's mother transformed into a large catfish only after death and in this story there were no other animal characters so it is not an animal tale but a tale of Mauruangi's struggle and love of

a mother even after death, her catfish mother still cared and fed Mauruangi. The story of Luipui lal nula is also not considered to be animal tale because as it is seen in the story the vanchung nula were not born fishes but transform themselves into fishes because they fell in love with the fishermen brothers and when they were fishes, they led themselves to be caught by the brothers in the river so they can be with them. This tale is not an animal tale but a tale of love and transformation.

Some of the Mizo animal tale has only animal characters, but some tale has both, animal and human characters. For example, the tale of *Sakei leh Dawngthlek (The Tiger and the Frog)* and *Sakuh leh Sakhi Lo Inchuh (The Porcupine and the Barking Deer Fighting over a Jhum)* which has no human character in the story. The story of *Samdala* and *Mura* has the character of both human and animal.

Domestic animals like dogs, goats, pigs, mithuns and hens are also found in Mizo animal tales. But, humans are shown to be more interact with wild animals especially monkeys. Domestic animals do not have too much major part in the tales. The Mizo animal tales which include domestic animals are the tales of *Sanghar, Arpui leh Artui (A Wild-cat, a Hen and an Egg)*, *Ui leh Kel (A Dog and a Goat)*, *Vawkpui leh Uipui (The Mother-Pig and the Bitch)* and *Dullai Sial leh Vankal Sial (The Dullai Mithun and the Vankal Mithun)*. Mizo domestic animals like cat and cow were also found in the tale of *Thlanrawkpa Khuangchawi (Thlanrawkpa's Grand Feast)* and dog was also found in tale of *Savun Lehkha (The Scroll of Animal Skin)*. But, these tales were myths in nature and it cannot be considered as animal tales.

Usually, animal tales are full of fighting between good and evil. The evil character usually start a fight and create a problem for the good character; but, evil characters in the end, destroyed themselves and always causes deterioration for themselves. This convey the message that good is stronger than evil to its audience. Thanmawia also said that “. . . the main theme of animal tales is that evil deedscauses death” (*Mizo Hnahthlak* 25). This can influence man to accept good deeds for him to survive in the society.

In Mizo animal tales, animal can talk and act like humans. Sometimes they play tricks with others, and sometimes they are helping others. Some of them are good and some of them are bad. In Mizo animal tales, animal who are bad character always play tricks. Lalruanga also stated that, “Trickery is very common in Mizo animal tales. But, sometimes trickery character always causes destruction for themselves,” (30).

2.2. Important Characteristics of Mizo Animal Tales

Animal tales play a significant role in folktales as they show the nature of man. Though they may seem simple and short but it is a good portrayal of humanity. There is similarity among the features of Mizo animal tales and folktales of other cultures of the world. But the following characteristics are found in Mizo animal tales

The main characteristics of Mizo animal tales are :-

Simplicity: Mizo animal tales are usually short and simple. They do not deal with complicated story and are easy to remember and understand. The tale of *Vawkpui leh Uipuiis* very short and simple, but interesting because this tale shows the importance of intelligence. Uipui (The Bitch) is more intelligent than Vawkpui (Mother-Pig) and she lived in close relation to human beings.

Here is the story of *A Mother-Pig and a Bitch*:

Once upon a time a mother pig and a bitch were made to work at the jhum together. They were told, “Whoever is found more illustrious and does more work shall be allowed to live inside the house among human beings.”

Thus they were left together at the jhum.

The mother-pig worked illustriously at the jhum and finished her work. While the mother-pig worked very hard, the bitch sat under the shade of a tree and licked and licked herself.

As soon as the mother-pig finished the whole work, the bitch leaped up and ran around the finished and cleaned area. Ultimately, there were more footprints of the bitch than that of the pig's. When the humans came to see the finished work, they saw more footprints of the bitch's than that of the pig's. They thought that the bitch must have done more work than the pig. This is why the dog is made to live inside the house with humans.

(Thanmawia 134)

The tales of *Ui leh Kel* and *Sanghar leh Arpui leh Artuiare* also short. Even when a child heard it for the first time, he can memorize it easily. This is because animal tales are short and simple and it does not use difficult and complexed languages.

Trickery : Mizo folktales involve a lot of trickery. A lot of dispute and misunderstanding is caused by trickery in the tales. It can be said that trickery appeared in almost all the Mizo animal tales. Trickery character always quarrelled and play trick to other animals. They always break the laws and suffered their deeds. In one of the Mizo tale, the herd of monkeys fool the tortoise and robbed him. But the tortoise killed them all in the end.

Humour : The real value of the folktale lies in its humour. They are always pleasant to hear and remember. Folktale is often described as for entertainment and humour. The tales of humour has always entertained the people. The Mizo tales of *Zawngte pipu uai (Monkey Swinging on a Swing)*, *Zawngte Phenglawng Tum (Monkey blowing his Flute)*, *Satel leh Zawng Rual (The Tortoise and the Group of Monkeys)* and the tales of *Samdala* can be described as the tales of humour. Besides the moral lesson, these tales can make the people laugh and happy.

Good versus Evil : In Mizo animal tales there is always good character and bad character. There is an enmity and an argument between these two characters. The Mizo tales of *Zawngte Pipu Uai*, monkey has an evil nature and he tried to kill the bear. But the plan was failed and there is an enmity between them.

Justice :One of the important features in folktale of the world is the 'happy ending' for the main and good characters. This means the good character should get rewarded for the good deeds and the bad characters are always punished for their actions. In Mizo animal tales, the bad character always start a dispute or create nuisance for the good character. But, bad characters are usually punished and pay for their evil deeds and good character always wins in the end and live happily. The tales of the *Sakuh leh Sakhi Lo Inchuh* is one of the most important examples of this definition. According to the tales, the Barking Deer, an evil character who was greedy and lazy with strong allies tried to claim the jhum of the hard working Porcupine was destroyed in the end, whereas the Porcupine got victory with the help of the bees.

2.3. Classification of Mizo Animal Tales

The Mizo animal tales has different characteristics. As it is said some of the animal tales has animal characters only and some tales has both animal and human characters. Cleverness and trickery is very common in Mizo animal tales. Sometimes animals cheated other animals and sometimes animal and human cheated each other. Some of the animal tale do not display trickery and is just humorous.

In the Mizo animal tales, one of the common elements is love and friendship. A good relationship can be seen between animals and animal and humans. After a careful study on the different characteristics in Mizo animal tales, the tales can be classified into seven categories, such as,

Tales of friendship and love

Tales of humour

Tales of transformation

Tales of cleverness and trickery

Tales of dispute between animals

Tales of dispute between animals and humans,

Tales of sexual relationship between animal and human

2.4. Difference between Animal tales and Fables

Animal tales are regarded as similar to fables. But it differentiates from fables. According to The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, the definitions of fables are, "Narrative form, usually featuring animals that behave and speak as human beings, told in order to highlight human follies and weakness. A moral or lesson for behaviour - is woven into the story and often explicitly formulated at the end" (648).

From this definition it can be said that the character of fables are always animal characters and whose purpose is to give a moral lesson. One of the world best known fables is Aesop's fables and some of the Aesop's fables in which animal plays a large role are *The Crab and the Fox*, *The Lion and the Bull*, *The Lion who was afraid of a Mouse*, and *the Fox*, and *The Fox and the Monkey Dispute Their Nobility*.

Example: *The Lion and the Bull*

A lion wanted to hunt down a bull, so he decided to use trick to try to get hold of him. He told him that he had sacrificed a sheep and he invited the bull to the feast, his intention being to kill him when he was reclining on his side to eat. The bull accepted the invitation but, seeing the huge spits and the giant cauldrons - but no sheep - he departed without saying a word. The lion reproached him as to why, having suffered no harm, he left without reason.

‘Oh, I have my reasons,’ said the bull. ‘I see no sign of your having slaughtered a sheep but I do see, very plainly, that you have made every preparation for dining on beef.’

This fable shows that you should trust your own eyes rather than sweet words and reassurances. (Aesop211)

The main purpose of these fables is to give a moral lesson. But it is not the main purpose to give a moral lesson in animal tales. Moral teaching is just one theme of animal tales. In his book *The Folktale*, Thompson stated that, “The moral purpose is the essential quality which distinguishes the fable from the other animal tales” (10).

The moral lesson is not always the main theme in animal tales they are intriguing and funny for entertainment to its audience. They are full of wit and fun but sometimes carry the society in which it belongs and portrays it with humour.

They entertain with its short narrative and easy to understand but one can get an idea of its moral message in the short tale.

2.5. Common characters in Animal Tales

In many cultures animal tales have a more commonly depicted character. Mizo animal tales also have characters which are commonly depicted in folktales. Monkeys and Tigers are very common not only in Mizo tales but also in North East Indian tales and other cultures of the world. Generally monkeys are considered as a clever animal whereas tigers are not. Lalruanga also stated that monkey was very popular in Mizo animal tales and its nature are cunning and defraud (31). In some tales of north east India and Albania and Tibetan, tigers are considered as foolish animals. Another common character in Mizo folktales is the bear. It is portrayed as strong and powerful but not a too clever animal, but is not shown in a negative way.

Usually animals which were small and weak were portrayed as more intelligent than animals which are strong and big. This can be seen in Mizo tales, for example, a Monkey is more clever than a Bear in the tale of *Zawngte Pipu Uai*, and a Frog is more clever than a Tiger in the tale of *Sakei leh Dawngthlek*. In Naga tale of *The Tiger and the Monkey*, Monkeys and Fox are clever than Tiger. (Barman 218-220) In Tripuri tale of *The Story of a Tiger and a Fox*, a Fox is more cleverer than a Tiger. (258-264) In Tibetan tale, a Frog is more clever than a Tiger. (Shelton 5-8) In Santal folktales the Fox (Jackal) is cleverer than a Tiger. (*Santal Folk Tales* 35-6)

Fox is also very common in North East Indian culture and other cultures of the world. It appeared as a clever animal. Sometimes it is called as Jackal (Aarne 21). In Khasi folktale *The Old Fox and the Tiger*, the Fox cheated Tiger and killed him and then he married the Tigress as his wife (*Khasi* 154-58). Tripuri also has the tales of *The Story of a Tiger and a Fox*. According to the stories, the Fox was clever and he killed the Tiger. After that he lived with the Tigress and her cubs (Barman 258-64).

In Santal folktale the Fox is considered as clever animal. This can be seen from one of their folktales *The Story of a Tiger*. As they told, the Tiger fell down into the quagmire and he cried to the people for help. The men pulled the Tiger out from the quagmire. After reaching the earth, the Tiger tried to kill and eat the men. The men asked the tree in the forest and the cow to help them from the Tiger. The tree and the cow did not want to help the men. At last, they saw the jackal (Fox) and asked him for help and the jackal agreed. So, the jackal asked the Tiger how he fell and to show him where the quagmire was? The Tiger told the jackal how he fell down to the quagmire and he leaped into the quagmire again. The jackal turned to the men and told them to pelt the Tiger with stone (*Santal* 35-36).

The Fox is not common in other Mizo written folktales, but Rinawma wrote *Thawnthu Un* in 2013 and in this book there were two tales about the Fox. The names of these two tales were *Dawithiam leh Sihal Chimawm (Magicians and a Naughty Fox)* and *Sihal leh Sihhuai (The Fox and the Spirit of Morass)*. The Mizo

also have the tale of *Sazaltepa and Bakvawmtepu*. According to the story, Sazaltepa is a clever and cunning animal and he has a wild character. He also desires to eat smaller animals like rat, fowl, tlumpui (civet cat) and pig. He plays tricks to Bakvawmtepu and other animals. The character of Sazaltepa is similar to the Fox in the tales of *Dawithiam leh Sihal Chimawm* and *Sihal leh Sihhuai* and also similar to the Fox in north east India and other cultures of the world. So, it can be considered as a Fox.

The Tortoise is also common animal in folktales of many cultures. In some cultures the tortoise plays a major part in their mythology. In the Mizo tradition the tortoise is an important animal in myths and common animal in folktales. The tortoise, according to Mizo mythology can be regarded as a big animal because the tortoise carries the earth on his back and when he moves a little bit, the earth was shaking. This was called an earthquake.

Some folktales of the Mizo portrayed tortoise as a kind and gentle character. But, sometimes, he used to take revenge on his enemies. *Satel leh Zawng (The Tortoise and the Monkey)* is the tale which portrayed the tortoise as a kind, selfless and gentle character. In the tales of *The Tortoise and the Monkey*, the two animals (Tortoise and Monkey) are friends. They loved and helped each other. One day the Tortoise asked the Monkey to catch fish in the river but the Monkey replied that he could not swim into the river. But the Tortoise said that he can help his friend in the water. Then they went to the river. Though the monkey was holding the shell of the tortoise in the water, he died as they went under the

water as monkeys cannot breathe underwater. When they reach the river's shore the Tortoise divided fish into two shares. But the Monkey remained silent and the Tortoise did not know that his friend was dead. He thinks the Monkey was not pleased with the shares and put all of the shares near the dead Monkey and went away to catch another fish (Khangte 190).

The tale of *Satel leh Zawng rual (The Tortoise and the herd of Monkeys)* also described the tortoise as an animal who used to take revenge on his enemies because the Tortoise took revenge on Monkeys who were cruel and tortured him before.

Bear and snake are also common in Mizo animal tales. The Mizo folktale portrayed bear not having the quality of intelligence, but portrayed as strong and brave among the animals. The Mizo folktale shows a snake as a monster. This can be seen in the stories of *Chungleng leh hnuaileng indo (War between flying creatures and land animals)*, *Rulpui leh Hmeithai (The Giant Snake and the Widow)*, *Palak Dil lo chhuah dan (The Origin of Palak Lake)*. But in the story of *Kelchawngi*, the snake and Kelchawngi loved each other and have sexual relationship.

2.6. Parallel Tales

Besides the character parallelism of folktales in different cultures of the world, there is always a similar tales among different cultures. This can show that folktales are told orally and handed down from generation to generation and carried by migrating tribes from one place to another.

The Mizo tale *Sakei leh Dawngthlek* (*The Tiger and the Frog*) is similar to the Tibetan tales of *Tiger and Frog*. Here is the summary of the Mizotale *Sakei leh Dawngthlek*.

Once upon a time, a Frog challenged the Tiger saying, “Pu Kei, even though we are unmatched in size, I dare you to a competition of strength.” The Tiger replied, “In what way shall we have the contest of strength?” The Frog said, “I shall roll this rock and you will try to obstruct it?” The Tiger replied. “It is too huge, I don’t think I can obstruct it.” The Frog said, “I think I can do so. Do you want to see me do it? Roll this rock and I shall obstruct it down there.” So, the frog went down the hill and crouch on the flat river bank. He knew that even if the rock would roll down the hill it would stay still in the flat river valley.

The tiger rolled down the rock and stood on the river bank. As soon as the rock it stop rolling the frog hopped on the rock and declared to the tiger, “It happened exactly as I said it would. Did you not see me stop the rock?” The tiger said, “If you can do it. I too can certainly do it.” So, they exchanged places and the frog rolled down a very huge rock from the hill. The tiger tried to obstruct the rock, but, it was too huge and heavy and he can not obstruct it. He rolled down with the rock and landed with it inside the river. He came out of the water with wounds all over his body.

The frog then challenged the tiger in a race and the tiger agreed. As soon as the tiger began to run, the frog jumped upon his back. The frog was tiny and light so the tiger did not notice him. When they almost reach their goal, the frog leaped

as far as he could and of course he could be swifter than the tiger. The tiger was really surprised because he did not know what the frog had tricked him.

The frog challenged the tiger again saying, "Now let us have a vomiting contest." The tiger replied, "You vomit first." So the frog vomited out the tiger's fur because he ate tiger's fur while he was sitting on tiger's back and he said to the tiger, "This is the fur of your uncle I ate this morning. Next will be your fur." Hearing the words of the frog, the tiger feared the frog and ran away. The Tiger met a monkey on the way and the monkey asked the tiger what had happened and the Tiger told the monkey what was happening. But the monkey cannot believe what the Tiger had told him. He asked the Tiger, "Where is he? I want to see him myself." Then they went towards the frog together.

When they reach the cave, the monkey got inside the cave. When he reached the corner of the cave, making a loud sound with his throat, the frog jumped aiming for the lips of the monkey. The frightened monkey ran out of the cave as fast as he could. When the tiger saw the fleeing monkey, he too ran with the monkey and met the porcupine. They told the porcupine about the dangerous frog and the porcupine asked, "Let me go, I am not afraid of it." So, they went back towards the cave where the frog was hiding. The frog had heard their conversation and made plan to frighten the porcupine. His plan is to jump on the porcupine's lips.

As soon as the porcupine went inside the cave, the frog jump and aimed for the porcupines lips. Unfortunately he missed his aims and landed on the spikes of

the porcupine. The sharp spikes of the porcupine poked through the body of the frog and it died immediately. The porcupine who was unwary of what had happened to the frog was sorely frightened by the dangerous sound made by the frog. Hearing the sound too, the tiger fled first, followed by the monkey. The porcupine followed behind.

After running a long distance they reached a safe place and the porcupine prepared to go inside a barrow. When he tried to go inside, the body of the frog fell down on the ground. Seeing the dead body of the frog all heaved a sigh of relieve and all went away peacefully on their different ways (Thanmawia123-126).

Here is the summary of the story of *Tiger and Frog*, according to Tibetan.

Once upon a time, a Tiger tried to kill and eat a Frog. But the Frog is clever than Tiger. He challenged Tiger to leap across the river. Then, the Tiger accepts the challenge. But when the Tiger leaped, the Frog jumped up to the Tiger and reached the bank across the river when the Tiger reached the other side. The Tiger was surprised to see the Frog because he did not know what the Frog had tricked him.

The Frog challenged the Tiger again to try another. Their competition was trying to vomit. The Tiger could throw up only a little water. But, the Frog spit up some Tiger hair. The Tiger asked to the Frog, "How can you do that?" The Frog replied, "I killed and ate a Tiger yesterday and these are a few of the hairs,"

Then the Tiger feared the Frog and ran away. The Tiger met a Fox on the way and the Fox asked to the Tiger, "Why are you running so fast?" The Tiger told the Fox what was happening. But the Fox cannot believe what the Tiger had told him. He said to Tiger, "Let's go again," But the Tiger think the Fox played a trick so he asked the Fox to tie their tails in knots and go again.

The Frog saw them and thinks of what he was to say to them. When tiger and Frog were approaching, the Frog said to the Fox, "Are You bringing me the Tiger for my dinner?" When the Tiger heard the Frog speaking, he turned and run as fast as he could and dragging the poor Fox(Shelton 5-8).

The Mizo tales of *Chungleng leh Hnuaileng indo* (*The war between flying animals and land animals*) is also similar to Tripuri tales of *Tortoise and the Doe*. According to the Mizos, the origin the war is the Tortoise and the Deer. The Deer asked Tortoise to jump over the egg of the snake. But the Tortoise could not jump and broke the eggs of the Snake. The angry Snake tried to kill the tortoise and chased him. The Tortoise was defended by an eagle. Then the war was begun between the flying animals and land animals family.

According to Tripuri tales, the Doe asked the Tortoise to jump over the valley. The Tortoise refused. But the Doe asked again and again. Then the Tortoise jump and he could not jump over the valley and he fell down to the eggs of the Snake and broke it.

The snake chased him and the Tortoise was defended by an Eagle. The angry Snake abused the Eagle family and there was a war between the flying creatures and the land creature family(Maurasingh 114-116).

The Mizo animal tale *Tlauva leh Zawngruah (Tlauva and a Group of Monkeys)* is similar to the Tripuri tale of *The story of Monkeys and a couple* and Assamese tale of *The Old Man, the Old Woman and the Fox*.

According to the Mizos, Tlauva and his wife were tricked by a herd of monkeys. But Tlauva and his wife recognize that they were intrigued by monkeys and tried to take revenge. They play a trick on the herd of monkeys and kill them all except one who escaped.

In the tales of Tripuri, *The story of Monkeys and a couple*, a couple planted a boiled potato according to the advice of monkeys for successful produce. But, the couple were tricked and the boiled potatoes were eaten by the herd of monkeys. After this, the couple knew that they were tricked and they were angry. So, they took revenge and killed all the monkeys except one who escaped. But the escape monkey took revenge against the couple and killed their baby and the couple were drowned while chasing the monkey. (Barman 281-284)

The tale of Assam, *The Old Man, the Old Woman and the Fox* is similar to these two tales. But in Assam folktales, the animals who cheated the couple are the group of foxes. The group of foxes advised the old man to plant the boiled arum for successful produce than planted in raw. As they advice the old man planted, but the boiled arums were eaten by the foxes. The group of foxes were greedy and

were trying to eat the old women. But the old women play trick and said, “Before you eat me up, I will sing and dance.” Then the old women sang and called a couple of her dogs by their names. Then the dogs ran and chased the group of foxes (Borooah 62-66).

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CHAPTER 3

Analysis on Animal Tales according to Their Categories and Characters

3.1. Tales of friendship and love

In these tales, love and friendship between animals and between animal and human are shown. Animals are shown to be friendly, giving and loving to each other. Some animals show kindness to humans and help them.

The tales of friendship and love can be divided into two parts which are friendship and love between animals and friendship and love between animals and humans.

The tales of a friendship and love includes, *Zawngte leh Satel inkawm (The Monkey and the Tortoise)*, *Kawlhawk leh Naupang (A Flock of Hornbills and a Child)*, *Zawng Rual Ngilnei (The Kind Bunch of Monkeys)*, *Rairahtea* and *Sai Thilphal (A Generous Elephant)*.

In the tale of *Zawngte leh Satel*, the monkey and the tortoise were best friends and decided to go fishing together even though the monkey could not swim. The monkey rode on the back of the tortoise. The tortoise went inside the water but did not know that the monkey was drowning. When they get enough fish they went to the shore to divide the fish. The tortoise asked the monkey if the share of the fish was enough. But the monkey did not reply as he was already dead. The tortoise thought that the monkey was not happy with his share and gave him all the fishes and walked away from the dead monkey to fish for more.

The tale of *Zawngte leh Satel* shows the friendship between the monkey and the turtle. In this tale, the selflessness of the turtle is projected to the audience. The monkey is not shown to do much in the tale but was a friend of the turtle. The turtle did all of the work but there was a miscommunication that led to the death

of the monkey as they were fishing. The turtle was still unaware of this when they were on dry land and thought the monkey was unhappy with his share but still gave him all of his share even though the monkey did not contribute anything. The story tells of selflessness and being a good friend. However, an indepth study of the characters reveals some traits of humanity. The turtle represents a simple minded but good at heart people who try to do their best for everyone but are naive to know the consequences of their actions because of their simple thinking and the monkey is the victim. These type of people are found in real life too, they do their best for everyone and never think of themselves but sometimes their good deed brings problem for others as they do without thinking the harm it may bring to others just like the turtle.

These tales also show good relations between humans and animals like in the stories of *Zawng Rual Ngilnei*, *Rairahtea* and *Kawlhawk leh Naupang*. However if humans have a wicked mindset in the story they also end up tragically for their actions.

In the story of *Zawng Rual Ngilnei*, the monkeys show pity and kindness to humans. But a man took advantage of their kindness but met a fatal end. The tale mirrors the society of the Mizos and the principles of *tlawmngaihna* (selflessness). The group of monkeys represent the Mizo society and the weary fisherman represent a man in need or trouble. After seeing the man, the monkeys step in to help the man and finish his work for him without him knowing which is the portrayal of the Mizo way of selflessness and modesty. They even carried him to

his village when they thought him to be dead which is another important characteristic of Mizo society who respect the dead and come together in tragic times in times of need. The other man who tried to take advantage of the kindness of the monkeys met a tragic end because he was treated as dead to the monkeys and were shocked that they dropped him to fall and die in the cliff. Just like the boy who cried wolf, the man also portrays that people who take advantage of other people's kindness tend to meet tragic ends. The tale shows that when human show cunning and evil mind they also meet a bad end.

3.2. Tales of Humour

These tales are humorous and show animal characters and humans in a comic way. The characters mannerism and dialogues are shown in a humorous way. The tales of humour includes, *Samdala*, *Chemtatrawta*, and *Thlanrawkpa Khuangchawi (Thlanrawkpa's Grand Feast)*

In the story of *Samdala*, Samdala was a lazy and not a hardworking man but feared by the animals. One day he was sleeping with leaves covering all his body. The animals were amused and wondered what it was. Only the Tortoise knew who it was but was afraid of Samdala. The animals were very curious to know and asked the Tortoise and told him he did not have to fear anything for they will save him. So the tortoise told them, 'That is Samdal-thatchhe-zawrkawia,' When Samdala woke up he heard what the tortoise called him and chased all the animals angrily away from the forest.

The tale of Samdala clearly shows that lazy people were not respected or taken seriously. The Mizos were hardworking and busy people. Laziness is considered to be a bad character not wanted in the society. The tale is funny and shows humour by mocking laziness.

The story of *Chemtatrawta* is considered to be a cumulative tale. According to Lalruanga, the main characteristic of a cumulative tale was fun and humour, and the tale was depend upon chain events leading characters affecting each another through the events(40).But the story shows a lot of interaction between animals and humans so it can also be considered as one of the most famous Mizo folk animal tales. This story shows a lot of animal characters and portrays humour. So, it is said to be a tale of humour.

Thlanrawkpa Khuangchawi is considered to be a myth as it deals with earlier stories. All the characters in the story are animals and is a funny and witty story. Due to its comedic value it can be said to be a tale of humour.

3.3. Tales of Transformation

Tales of transformation is the tale in which animals turned into other animals or humans turned into animals or other forms of nature. In the Mizo folktales there are several tales of transformation as seen in the stories of *Thimzin*, *Mauruangi*, *Tualvungi leh Zawlpala* and *Arsi Thawnthu*. But, *Zawlpala leh Tualvungi*, *Mauruangi* and *Arsi Thawnthu* are not animal tales because the characters are humans. They are mythical in nature.

The story of *Thimzin* also can be considered mythical. But, the characters are animals and humans. Here is the story of *Thimzin*(also known as *Thimzing*) according to Thanmawia:

Once eclipse happened, which happened to take longer than usual. The Sun was swallowed away from early morning till night time. No one could see each other and whoever made any movement seem to collide with someone. No one even attempted to do any work.

While the world was in complete darkness, all of a sudden strange things happened. Everyone became different. Some turned into monkeys. Some turned into chimpanzees. The chief and his council members turned into *vakul* birds. The honoured brave *Thangchhuah* men who were adorned in their traditional *Thangchhuah puan* wearing their respected turban all turned into tigers.

The young men who were wearing a having a mock wrestling contest all turned into bears. Young men and women who had formed *lawm* groups turned into *koro* and *vazir* birds.

Those who had gone to the jhum with fire lights turned into glow worms or *Taumeichherchhi*.

Members of the Chawngthu tribe turned into monkeys. The Vanchhe tribes turned into elephants. The Paite and vuite tribes turned into squirrels, and the Ralte tribes turned into *chepchep*.

The domesticated animals were not spared either. They all turned into some wild beast or other, especially bears. This is called *Thimzing*, which means 'amidst the darkness'. (*Mizo Folktales* 26)

In the story there was *thimzin* and darkness was everywhere and humans transformed into animals and animals also transformed into other animals. But, animals do not turned into humans. The story focuses mainly on the animals so it is considered as animal tales.

3.4. Tales of Cleverness and Trickery

The tales of cleverness and trickery includes, *Sangharleh Arpui leh Artui thawnthu* (A Wild Cat, a Hen and an Egg), *Satel leh Zawng rual* (The Tortoise and the group of Monkeys), *Zawngte pipu uai* (Monkey Swinging on a Swing), *Zawngte phenglawng tum* (Monkey Blowing his flute), *Vawkpui leh Uipui* (The Mother-Pig and the Bitch), *Sazaltepa leh Bakvawmtepu* (Sazaltepa and Bakvawmtepu), *Sakei leh Zukchal* (The Tiger and the Bull Stag), *Sakei leh Dawngthlek* (The Tiger and the Frog), *Runginu leh Thialtea* (Runginu and Thialtea), *Ui leh Kel* (The Dog and the Goat).

In these tales, there is a conflict between the two characters, an intelligent and foolish character. An intelligent or clever character defrauds others by trickery. This trickery can be classified into three, such as, trickery in order to get something, trickery for self-defence and trickery of evil. The tales of *Sanghar leh Arpui leh Artui*, *Sakei leh Zukchal* and *Sakei leh Dawngthlek* can be said as trickery for self-defence. The tales of *Satel leh Zawng rual*, *Sazaltepa leh*

Bakvawmtepu, Vawkpui leh Uipui, Zawngte Pipu Uai, Runginu leh Thialteacan be said as trickery of evil. The tales of *Zawngte Phenglawng Tum, Ui leh Kelcan* be said as trickery in order to get something.

Trickery in order to get something: In these tales an animal is found wanting the possession of other animals and it think of a way to get what he wants without using force and strength. It tricks the other animal in ways to get the possession from it and usually get what he wants.

In the tale of *Zawngte Phenglawng Tum*, a monkey used to play a flute and a quail heard him play and wanted to get the flute from the monkey and tried to trick him out of the flute. But the monkey was also clever and the quail could not get the flute. But at last the quail was able to trick the monkey and get his flute.

In the tale of *Ui leh Kel*, a dog had a horn once but the horn used to get in the way when it was trying to chew a bone. So he took off his horn to chew the bone and the goat saw this and wanted the horn for himself. He asked the dog if he could wear the horn for a little while. The dog was unaware of the goat's intentions and he allowed for the goat to wear the horn. As soon as the goat wore the horn he ran away and the dog was not fast enough to catch him and he never got the horn back from the goat.

In these tales, the characters portray possessiveness and the greed of humanity. In real life also some people are materialistic and very possessive of their property. Then, there are people who are greedy and want to take from

people without living back. They will do everything and anything to get what they want from others. These tales clearly shows these type of people.

Trickery for self-defence: In these tales a smaller and weaker animal is shown to trick a larger and more ferocious animal than himself just to defend and protect itself from harm. In the story of *Sanghar leh Arpui leh Artui*, a mother hen used to lie to a wild cat to stop him from trying to eat her. But the wild cat was resilient and did not give up trying to eat the hen and was successful at last. After he ate the hen the egg hatched and found that his mother was eaten by the wild cat and he asked help from the other animals to avenge his mother and they killed the wild cat.

In the tale of *Sakei leh Zukchal*, the stag knew that the tiger would eat him and because of this he tried to intimidate the tiger by showing him how powerful and mighty he was. The stag showed off his horns between the bamboos in the forest trying to show his might to the tiger but his horn got stuck in the bamboos and the tiger asked what he was doing, the stag told him that he was learning to use his horn. The tiger got intimidated and walk away. The stag could not get his horns out of the bamboos and the bamboos grew taller and the stag died as they grew. After many days the tiger returned to the same place and remembered the place where he saw the stag. The stag was still dead high up in the bamboos and his weight was too much for the bamboos and they broke letting the stag to fall on the tiger hitting his chest as he fell with his horn killing the tiger.

In the tale of *Sakei leh Dawngthlek*, the frog was afraid that the tiger would eat him as the tiger was a much larger animal than the frog. So, it tricks the tiger into thinking that he was a fearsome and dangerous animal. It challenges the tiger to do things and tricks him to thinking that he was a tiger eater and the tiger was afraid and run away from him in fear. The other animals were also afraid of the frog now and in the end the frog died when scaring the porcupine, killed himself when he leaped at the spikes of the porcupine.

The aforementioned tales show weaker and smaller animals using their intelligence to get out of harm in order to protect themselves from the bigger threats. These tales indicates that the 'pen is mightier than the sword' as they used their intelligence and were bold enough to stand against the larger animals. Even though they themselves may die in doing so, the larger animals always get what they deserve and these smaller animals get their payback. This teaches the audience to stand up and fight for their own right to be respectful even when it comes to large and intimidating obstacles and defending at all cost will lead to satisfying results. The bullies always pay for what they do to others.

Trickery of evil: In these tales animals are shown to trick other weaker and innocent animals just to intimidate and show their might and for no reason. They do not gain anything from these and are a nuisance for others. But they always end up in tragedy.

In the tale of *Satel leh Zawng Rual*, the herd of monkeys were very cruel to the tortoise and they put him in a tree. The tortoise found a way to get down from

the tree and took revenge by putting the monkeys in a box and throwing the box on the cliff killing the monkeys.

In the story of *Zawngte Pipu Uai*, a monkey made a swing on a tree and a bear came and wanted to take a ride on the swing. The monkey made a evil plan to kill the bear by loosening the vines on the swing. The bear fell from the swing hitting itself hard on the ground. He got angry at the monkey and the monkey ran away in fear.

In the tale of *Sazaltepa leh Bakvawmtepu*, Sazaltepa was cunning and used to trick Bakvawmtepu and made a fool of him many times. But in the end Bakvawmtepu found out that Sazaltepa had been tricking him. Sazaltepa got killed in the hands of Bakvawmtepu in the end.

In the story of *Runginu leh Thialtea*, Thialtea asked Runginu to pick fruits from the jungle and promised her that he would give her some of the fruits. But when they got the fruits Thialtea got greedy and did not give any of the fruits to Runginu because Thialtea was cunning. Runginu was afraid of Thialtea and she told the tiger about Thialtea. The tiger told Runginu to scold Thialtea and if Thialtea try to bring harm to her it would come in her aid. So, Runginu scolded Thialtea, Thialtea got down from the tree and try to beat Runginu. The tiger saw this and come out to save Runginu. Thialtea died at the hands of the Tiger as he was bitten to death.

These tales portray the wickedness and evil thinking of animals by tricking others just for self-amusement. They do not have a motif but were mischievous

and a nuisance for others. The tales display these characters meeting a tragic end as the victim will take revenge for their actions. It tells the audience that the random evilness and wickedness can bring the demise of one. The wickedness of these characters brings harm to others and the victims are affected by their evil deeds. Their deeds will make the other character turn bitter and others as well which will be tragic for the evil characters. These tales are an important moral lesson and a reason not to do evil for its audience.

3.5. Tales of Dispute between Animals

Animal tales show the battle between good and evil. But in the tales, the character who are mischievous and trouble makers always met fatal and drastic endings. This shows that evil deed causes death. Though animal tales is not fable, but it teaches a lesson. (Thompson 387)

The tales of dispute between animals includes, *Sakuh leh Sakhi lo inchuh*, *Chungleng leh Hnuaileng Indo*, *Pu Vawma tui (Pu Vawma's Water)* and *Dullai sial leh Vankal sial (Dullai Mithun and Vankal Mithun)*.

The reasons of dispute between animals in Mizo animal tales are greediness, wickedness and hatred. The fight between the animals usually ends up with the negative character and evil doer having a bad end. In the story of *Dullai Sial leh Vankal Sial*, The Dullai mithun used to get salt water from the *chi khur*. One day, the Vankal mithun came to get salt water from the same *chi khur* and the Dullai mithun did not allowed for the Vankal mithun to get the salt so it fought with it and beat the Vankal mithun and the vankal mithun ran away. After a long time the

Vankal mithun came back stronger and fought again with the Dullai mithun and defeated it and killed it.

In the story of *Chungleng leh Hnuaileng Indo*, there was a dispute between the flying and the land animals. But it was very hard to say who was correct. The main reason for the dispute was the deer. The deer asked the tortoise to jump over the snake's egg. But the tortoise could not jump over the egg and broke them. The deer was afraid of the snake and asked the tortoise to run away. The tortoise ran away and was saved by an eagle from the snake. And a dispute started between the eagle and the snake. The eagle gathered all the flying animals and the snake gathered all the land animals and a war started. The snake got killed in the end.

In this story the flying animals were dominant over the land animals. However, the story tells how an evil and mischievous mindset of the deer created a problem for the other animals and started a war.

In the story of *Pu Vawma Tui*, Pu Vawma had a *tuikhur* (well) and did not allowed any other animal to drink from it and let the monkey guard the *tuikhur*. But the tiger drink from it and the monkey was too afraid to do anything. Pu Vawma got angry with the tiger and fought with him. As they fought they both fell down from the hill and died. This story tells that conflict can turn to tragedy.

3.6. Tales of Dispute between Animal and Human

In folktales animals are always shown to be the starter of conflicts with humans. The folktales show dominance of man over animals as they are shown to be the victor in the end. But, there are also tales of humans to be negative as portrayed in the tale of *Sai Thilphal (A Generous Elephants)* and *Zawng Rual Ngilnei (The Kind Bunch of Monkeys)*.

The tales of dispute between animal and human includes, *Tlauva leh Zawng Rual (Tlauva and Monkeys)*, *Rulpui leh Hmeithai (The Big Snake and the Widow)*, *Mura (Giant Eagle)*, *Hmeichhia leh Zawng (The Girl and the Monkey)*. These tales deal with dispute and fight between humans and animals. In these stories the animals are a problem for humans. Humans usually ends up being the victor.

In the story of *Mura*, Mura was a giant eagle and was a menace for humans and used to attack them. He captured Chera and Thauva for his food. Chera was clever and found a way to trick Mura. He told Mura that he was too thin to eat and Thauva was fat so Mura should eat him first and when it was time to eat him he would get fat for Mura to eat. Mura believed him and ate Thauva first. After eating Thauva, Mura was too full that he felt asleep. Chera took advantage of his sleep and killed Mura while he was still asleep and escaped.

In the story of *Tlauva leh Zawng Rual*. Tlauva and his wife were planting sweet potatoes on the jhum. The monkeys saw this and they wanted sweet potatoes for themselves. But, they could not eat it raw so they decided to trick Tlauva. The elderly monkey went to Tlauva and told him that he knew a better way to plant the sweet potatoes and promised successful produce of the sweet

potatoes. Tlauva was intrigued and decided to listen to the elderly monkey. The monkey told him that he had to cook the sweet potatoes first before planting in the soil. Tlauva decided to listen to him and do as he was told. So, him and his wife cooked the sweet potatoes and planted them. The herd of monkeys saw this and by night they took all the sweet potatoes from the ground and ate them happily. By morning Tlauva and his wife saw that all their sweet potatoes were gone and found out that the monkeys had tricked them. They were angry and decided to take revenge. Tlauva's wife found out a good way to trick the monkeys and kill them. So, Tlauva acted as dead and his wife put *bekang* around him so he smell like a corpse and she cried for the monkey to hear. When the monkeys hear her cry they went inside the house and wept for him. Tlauva's wife told them that he asked for his spear to be by his side when he was dead. When she kept the spear near Tlauva she closed the door. Tlauva got up and killed all the monkeys with his spear except a little monkey who escaped through the hole in the floor.

In the story of *Rulpui leh Hmeithai*, there was a giant snake that was very dangerous and cruel to the villagers nearby. The villagers were scared of the snake and sacrificed one of their own in turns to the snake to eat. The time came for the widow's son to sacrifice for the snake. But a brave man took the boy's place and went to the snake secretly carrying a knife. When he got to the snake he killed it with his knife. The villagers celebrated and ate the meat of the snake. But an earthquake came and killed all the villagers except the widow.

All these tales clearly indicated that there was a dispute between animals and humans which mirrors the human society. Throughout the history of humanity there has been wars and disputes between two different groups. This disputes often occur because of the wrongful doing of the other party. Eventually, revenge is taken and the wrong doer always pay for his crime and justice is served for the good.

3.7. Tales of Sexual Relationship between Animal and Human

Mizo folktales consist of sexual relationship between animal and human which can be found in the stories of *Chawngchilhi* and *Hmeichhia leh Zawng*. This type of sexual relationship between opposites can be found often in folktales.

In one of the Mizo myth *Thlanrawkpa* was born of a human and a demon and in another *Ngaiteii* was also born of human and *khuavang*. The mating of humans and supernatural beings result in a human offspring but in the case of intercourse between animals and humans they result in an animal offspring.

Relationship between animals and humans can also be found in other cultures. But unlike Mizo tales the intercourse between animals and humans result in a human offspring. According to Thanmawia in his book *Mizo Hnahthlak Thawnthu*, “In an Indonesian tale a human and animal had an intercourse which resulted in a human offspring but in Mizo tales intercourse between animal and human result in an animal offspring” (22).

In an Albanian folktale *The Snake and the King's Daughter*, it tells the story of a man who was a snake during day time and a human by night. He fell in love with a princess and got married to her (Elsie 46-49). Similar to a Mizo folktale *Chawngchilhi* but in this Mizo tale the snake do not have a human form.

3.7. Classification of Characters

The animal characters in Mizo animal tales can be divided into different groups mainly - trickster characters, foolish characters and human characters.

3.7.1. Trickster character - Trickery character is very common the tales of many cultures of the world. Tricksters are usually unfaithful and break the rules. But, the role they played is very entertaining and their role is important in the story. C.Sims also said, "Tricksters' antics are entertaining - we laugh at their mistakes and the way they fool or confuse others, and in the process and we may learn to see ourselves and our societies more clearly" (153).

There are many tales of trickery in Mizo animal tales. The strange thing is that larger animals like tigers and bears tend to be tricked by the smaller and weaker animals such as frogs, monkeys and stags. They are portrayed as being more clever by tricking the more aggressive and bigger counterparts. In Mizo tales, trickery character are considered as bad character, but, according to Vladimir Propp, trickery was not blameworthy it is just one form of the struggle for existence. (*Russian* 298)

The Trickery characters in Mizo Folktales are :-

Zawng (Monkeys) - Monkeys are found in many Mizo folktales. They are portrayed as being cunning, clever and mischievous. In folktales such as, *Satel leh Zawng*, *Zawngte Pi pu Uai*, *Tlauva leh Zawng Rual* and *Zawngte Phenglawng Tum*, monkeys are shown to be clever with skills of trickery. These tales show the evil genius of monkeys, starting a problem but be the one to end badly or the unlucky one. But in, *Zawngte Phenglawng Tum*, the monkey is not shown to be bad but is possessive of the flute because it was afraid that the quail will take it away from him.

In the tale of, *Zawngte Pipu Uai*, the monkey made a swing and one day as he was swinging a bear saw the swing and wanted to take a ride on his swing and asked the monkey for it. The monkey allowed for the bear to swing but made an evil plan to kill the bear and loosen the vines of swing so the bear to fall and die. But, though the bear fell from the swing he did not die and was very angry at the monkey and the monkey ran away in fear. In the story of *Satel leh Zawng* and *Zawng Rual Ngilnei*, monkeys are shown to be helpful and not mischievous.

Dawngthlek (Tree frog) - Dawngthlek, a type of tree frog is not shown too often in folktales but are portrayed as cunning and clever. Once it tricked a tiger and for this the tiger was afraid of it. It is shown to trick monkeys and though it may be small it is more clever and cunning than larger animals

Zukchal (Stag) - Stags are also not found often in Mizo folktales. It is also shown to be mischievous. It challenged a tiger and the tiger was afraid of it as it knew of its intelligence and cunning. But the stag met a bitter end with death because of its trickery

Arpui (Hen) - In the tale of, *Sanghar leh Arpui leh Artui*, the hen is not shown to be a bad or negative character rather it relied on trickery to protect its eggs from the wild cat (Sanghar) , The hen lies to the wild cat every time it tries to steal its eggs but the wild cat was resilient and never gave up and learnt the the hen was lying and took all her eggs and killed the hen in the end.

Ui (Dogs) - In one folktale, *Vawkpui leh Uipui (The Mother-Pig and the Bitch)*, dogs are shown to be mischievous and clever. In this story, a Dog and a Pig were made to clear a land for plantation by their owners and the more hardworking and the one who cleared more land will live inside the home of their owner. The Pig cleared more land than the Dog but was less intelligent than the dog. The dog ran over all the cleared land that the Pig made and the owners thought that all the land was cleared by the dog upon seeing the footmark of the dog on the land. So, the dog lived among the humans.

Kel (Goat) - Goats are not found so often in Mizo folktales. In one of the folktales it is shown to trick others.

Once upon a time, a dog had a horn on his head. A woman was butchering a meat and pieces of meat fell and the dog wanted to eat them but his horns were trouble and made it hard to eat the meat. So, he kept his horns

away for a while and ate the meat. Soon after a Goat came and saw the dog's horn and thought it was a beauty and asked the dog if it could wear it and the dog allowed for it. As, the goat wore the horn it suddenly made a run and took the horn away from the dog and the dog ran after it but it was too fast and never got back the horn. This is why goats have horns till today (my trans.).

Bak (Bat) - The bat is uncommon in Mizo folktales. But, it is seen in the tale of *Chungleng leh Hnuaileng indo* (War between flying creatures and land animals) and the bat is portrayed as having the quality of cunning and a fraud. This story, according to Lal Dena, clearly exposed the real nature of the bat,

In the story, the real nature of the bat is clearly exposed. When the chance of winning the war was very bright for the walking creatures, he claimed that he was a walking creature having ears and teeth and joined them. But towards the end when the flying creatures won the war, he defected again, saying "Brothers, I am one of you. I can fly like you." But the flying creatures no longer trusted him and charged that he was a betrayer and a traitor. In societies and among men too, we come across many unprincipled and opportunistic people who keep double standards. To gain anything, they don't mind changing sides. They always want to be on the side of the rich and the powers that be. Sometimes they speak the truth like the bat but for their selfish ends only. For them the greatest interest is their self and personal interest. Beware of such people! (193)

3.7.2. Foolish Characters - The foolish characters in Mizo folktales are the characters who ends up being fooled by clever and mischievous characters. The foolish characters are usually larger and more powerful in strength but tends to be fooled by smaller intelligent characters. Their ending is not always a happy one and some end up in death. The more popular foolish characters in Mizo Folktales are Tiger and Bear.

Tiger (Sakei) - Tigers are one of the fierce and powerful predators in the animal kingdom. But in folklore, they are shown to be not so clever and lack certain skills so they tend to be tricked easily even by smaller and weaker animals. So, At times they would flee in fear by trickery. Tigers are shown to be victims of trickery in tales like *Pu Vawma Tui*, *Sakei leh Dawngthlek*, *Sakei leh Zukchal* and *Samdala*. In, *Pu Vawma Tui* the tiger in the tale is not tricked but died due to a fight with a bear. In other tales tigers are shown to be easily fooled and tricked.

Bear (Savawm) - Bears are also portrayed to be one of the strongest and bravest of all the animals but lacks intelligence and due to this it usually ends up being fooled. In the tale of *Zawngte Pipu uai*, it was tricked by the monkey twice.

Vawkpui (Mother-Pig) - A Mother-Pig is found in the tale of *Vawkpui leh Uipui (The Mother-Pig and the Bitch)* and in this tale, the Mother-Pig is shown as having the quality of foolish character, but very hard working. In order to live with human beings, the Mother-Pig and a Bitch were ordered to clear the jhum and whoever worked more shall be allowed to live with humans in the house. At

this competition, the Mother-Pig was hard working than the Bitch, but, the Bitch, who is having an intelligent quality played trick and is selected to live with human beings.

Satel (Tortoise) -Tortoise is very common not only in Mizo animal tales but also in Mizo myths like *Lirngning Awm |an Dan (How Earthquake Began)* and *Thlanrawkpa Khuangchawi*. The character of Tortoise was found in the tales of *Chungleng leh Hnuaileng Indo (War between flying creatures and land animals)*, *Zawngte leh Satel Inkawm (The Monkey and the Tortoise)*, *Satel leh Zawng Rual (The Tortoise and the Monkeys)* and *Samdala*. These tales show tortoise as a foolish character. In the tale of *War between Flying Creatures and Land Animals*, it was cheated by the deer and in the tale of *The Tortoise and the Monkeys*, it was cheated by the herd of monkeys.

3.7.3. Violent Characters - Violent characters are the character who used to terrorize and bring harm to other animals and human beings without any reason by using his or her strength and is feared by others.

Mura (Giant Eagle) - Mizo folktales portrayed Mura as a giant and energetic animal. The character of Mura can be seen in the tales of *Chungleng leh Hnuaileng indo (andMura*. In the tale *War Between Flying Creatures and Land Animals*, Mura is the leader of the flying creatures and killed the big snake. But in this tale Mura is considered as a kind animal due to helping the poor tortoise from the snake. But, in the tale of *Mura*, Mura is considered as an evil character because of attacking humans and other domestic animals. It is a giant animal and

always catches domestic animals and human. Due to his terrible behaviour it can be considered as a violent character.

Rul (Snake) - The snake is found in Mizo animal tales and the tales shows the snake as a giant and strong animal. In the tale of *War between Flying Creatures and Land Animals*, the angry snake chased the tortoise and no animals defended the tortoise because they feared the snake. An eagle is the only animal who can defend the tortoise without fear. In the tale of *Rulpui leh Hmeithai*, the giant snake used to catch and eat humans and was feared by all the villagers. Due to its terrible character the giant snake can be considered as a violent character.

3.7.4. Human - human characters are also found in Mizo animal folk tales like *Mura*, *Samdala*, *Chemtatrawta*, *Hmeichhia leh Zawng*, *Runginu leh Thialtea*, *Kawlhawk leh Naupang*, *Rulpui leh Hmeithai*, *Zawng Rual Ngilnei*, *Tlauva leh Zawng Rual*, and *Sai Thilphal*. These tales tell the story of man and animal living together. Sometimes they show how man and animal help each other and other tales show man and animal fights.

Samdala - The tale of Samdala is considered to be of comedic attribute and the animal characters in the story are mostly comic characters. Samdala is lazy and not a hardworking man but feared by the animals except the tiger but does not match the intelligence of Samdala and is usually tricked. Samdala tricked the tiger and the tiger flees thinking that he does not challenge the intelligence of Samdala.

Chemtatrawta - Chemtatrawta is also considered a humorous tale. Though, no trickery is found in the tale. It shows the tale of taking out anger on others even if they are not the cause. The main cause of the problem in the first place was a lobster who grabbed Chemtatrawta's penis while sharpening his sword in the river.

Runginu leh Thialtea - Runginu leh Thialtea shows how the monkey was clever than the human. Thialtea the monkey invited Runginu to pick some fruits from a tree and promised to give fruits to Runginu but didn't give the fruits as promised. So, Runginu cried and the other animals told him to scold Thialtea and they would save him. But the other animals feared Thialtea and did not aid Runginu and in the end the tiger came in aid of Runginu and killed Thialtea.

Chera leh Thauva - In the tale of *Mura*, the two characters Chera and Thauva were captured by Mura. Thauva got eaten by Mura but Chera was clever and intelligent and he killed Mura.

Tlauvate Nupa leh Zawng Rual - In this tale a herd of monkeys tricked Tlauva and his wife and they were angered by the trickery they in return tricked the monkeys and killed the monkeys.

Rulpui leh Hmeithai - In the tale of *Rulpui leh Hmeithai*, there was a giant snake and it used to terrorize the village and the villagers used to give one of their own to feed and appease the snake as they feared it so much. When it was the time of the widow's young son to be fed to the snake, they got very sad and

feared. One man took up the place of the widow's son and went to be fed to the snake but took a knife with him and he was able to kill the snake.

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CHAPTER 4

Animal Tales as a Reflection of Human Nature, Society and Culture

There is a close relation between literature and the nature of humans because literature comes from the thoughts of humans. Man thinks of his surroundings and situations around him. His thoughts are made visible through his speech and writing. What he sees and hear are reflected in forms of stories, songs and poetry. When he sees a bad thing he can condemn it through writings or sing praises of the beauty he sees in songs.

Thomas in his book *Narrative The Basics* stated that, “. . . narrative imitates life, but life also imitates narrative, meaning that our sense of the world we live in and our idea of ourselves is shaped by this narrativising process” (4). Blackburn in his book *Himalayan Tribal Tales* also said,

. . . oral stories do not simply represent a ‘slice of life’; the actions and attitudes they describe are not raw data nor necessarily a record of social facts. Instead, oral stories are a culture’s reflection on itself, a commentary that has been abstracted from everyday life, passed down over time and shaped according to local narrative and linguistic conventions, social rules and cultural concepts. (4-5)

Human nature and society goes together. This is why stories and tales are often a reflection of what is happening around society and surroundings which the interpreter sees and hears. Myths are also born because of the thoughts of earlier people as he sees the mountains, rivers and plains. The earlier people see their surroundings and notice the beauty and wonder how they came about. What he sees are portrayed as in his thoughts and reflects in form of stories and tales.

The folktales also imitate the everyday actions and interactions of the people using the unusual and unique characters. The human nature in reacting to certain situations are mirrored in the folktales. They give the audience the imaginations and let them wonder on the creation and origin of things. Man is known to fabricate and exaggerate on things and happenings. Literary words and stories reflect life in a beautiful and unique way. What the normal person sees, to the literary person is something wholly different experience which are exaggerated through writings. The folktales in the same manner, seem to be originated on some events and happening, which the ancestors exaggerated or fabricate with these wild tales narrated through time.

Since the earlier people had no form of writing it was passed down to generations orally and the stories spread out and may have change through time. Even though the folktales are wild and strange for a mere person to believe and indulge in, they give the idea that these stories are actual events and may have been fabricated with the wild imaginations of the early people.

The beliefs and livelihood of the early people are told orally through generations which later on were written and preserved. Folktales show not only the good sides of society but also reflect the dark side of human society. For example, in the story of Liandova leh Tuaisiala, it shows how orphans were treated unequally in the society as they were looked down by others. Animal tales show a lot of trickery not only in Mizo folktales but also in other tales of Khasi, Naga and Assamese. Because these folktales show the different sides of society they are considered to be an important source to study the society and nature of the

culture who originated the folktale. A.K.Ramanujan in his book *Folktales from India* said, “Anyone studying the culture of India need to study not only its written classics but its oral traditions, of which folklore is an important part.” (xiii) So, folktales mirror the culture of which it is originated.

4.1. How Animal Tales Represent Human Nature

There is a diversity of animal characters in folktales. These animal characters show human characteristics. They can talk, work, interact with humans, help each other and dispute with each other. But, these animal characters aim to show human characteristics and the nature of humans living in a society. The evil animal characters show the dark side of human nature. The good -doers and positive animal characters portray the good sides of human nature.

As mentioned before the animal characters in animal tales mirrors and portray human beings. Their mannerisms and speech are all of human. They represent humanity and humans. The traits of a certain people are found in these animal characters and their social behaviour. The good animals imitate the good human characteristics which results favourably for them. Whereas, the negative characters represent the dark side of humanity. These negative characters always pay for their evil deeds.

From the study of animal tales from many cultures, it is seen that the earlier people had a high sense of morality. They try to let their audience know that humanity prevails overall and how one should live in a society as a human being. They also try to teach their audience how to act and live in a society to

promote peace and wisdom to its audience. This is also found in almost all the religions and they teach society to do good and act on evil.

From the folktales it is known that there is a dark side to humanity. More importantly, there is a good side to it which always prevails. These folktales have an important message other than the ridiculous nature, it imposes wisdom, wit and optimism of human nature to its audience.

4.1.1. Dark Side of Human Nature

In Mizo folktales, negative mannerisms in animal characters include greed, trickery, lies, selfishness, laziness and rudeness. In the tale of *Satel leh Zawng Rual (The Tortoise and the Group of Monkeys)* and *Tlauva leh Zawng Rual (Tlauva and the Monkeys)*, monkeys portray the evil, greed and trickery side of humans and how this problem of human nature caused problem in the society. The story of Samdala show that the tortoise made fun of Samdala who was a lazy man showing the Mizo culture did not liked laziness. The story of *Chungleng leh Hnuaileng indo (War between Flying Creatures and Land Animals)* show how being two faced and indecisiveness lead to shame as portrayed by the bat.

In the tale of *Sazaltepa and Bakvawmtepu*, it shows how the habit of trickery led to the demise of Sazaltepa. Similarly, in the story of *Sai Thilphal (A Generous Elephant)* and *Zawng Rual Ngilnei (The Kind Bunch of Monkeys)* shows how greed and evil thinking leads to fatality of the character. In these tales, it can be seen that trickery, greed, evil thinking and lies are found in early Mizo culture and society. The Mizos use monkeys in the tales to portray the dark side and

mischievous nature of humans. Though Sazaltepa is not found in many tales, he is famous for having an evil mind and trickery, which is thought to be prevailing in the Mizo society about people who would do bad things to others for their own gain and amusement.

In the story of *Sazaltepa and Bakvawmtepu*, Sazaltepa was greedy and cunning. Once, the animals in the jungle had a meeting and decided that they should keep and maintain the path in the jungle clean without any mess from the animals. Sazaltepa along with the other animals were assigned to keep the path clean and it was agreed that whoever kept the path dirty and messy will be eaten. One day a Tlumpui was lying on the path and Sazaltepa saw it as it was fat and looked like a good meal for Sazaltepa. So, Sazaltepa decided to have an evil plan to mess up the path and blame it on the Tlumpui and did it so. He told this to the other animals and the other animals did not believe him. The other animals knew that it was him who messed up the path just so he could eat Tlumpui. The animals decided to punish him for his actions by eating him. Sazaltepa ran away from them and went to Bakvawmtepu for protection.

He stayed with Bakvawmtepu and look after his baby when he was not at home. While he was gone he used to devour Bakvawmtepu's livestock day by day and when Bakvawmtepu came home he blame it on the baby and lied to him. Bakvawmtepu could not be angry at the baby and believed Sazaltepa until one day Sazaltepa ate the baby itself and ran away. Bakvawmtepu came home that day and found that the baby was gone and did not find Sazaltepa and found out that it was

Sazaltepa who ate the livestock and the baby all along. He became furious and searched for Sazaltepa.

Sazaltepa had a jhum and Bakvawmtepu found out that he was there and decided to ambush him in his *thlam* (jhum house). But Sazaltepa was cunning and clever and knew that Bakvawmtepu would come after him for what he did and found a way to trick Bakvawmtepu as he knew he would be in the *thlam*. He said in a loud audible voice, "I will call my *thlam* and if there is no one it would answer." So he called his *thlam* and Bakvawmtepu heard what he said and answered the call of Sazaltepa. Then Sazaltepa knew that Bakvawmtepu was there so he went away.

The next day Bakvawmtepu came again to the *thlam*. Sazaltepa suspecting that Bakvawmtepu was there said again in loud voice. "I will call my *thlam* and if it does not answer it means that no one is there." So he called his *thlam* and Bakvawmtepu did not answer. Sazaltepa knew that Bakvawmtepu was there again and went away. Bakvawmtepu was resilient and did not give up easily and decided a new plan to get revenge on Sazaltepa. He transformed into a rat and dug a hole near the *thlam* of Sazaltepa. When Sazaltepa came back to the *thlam* believing that Bakvawmtepu was not there he saw the hole near his *thlam*. Sazaltepa being gluttonous saw the hole and believed that there was a rat he could eat. He put his hands in the hole and search for the rat. Bakvawmtepu in his rat form bit Sazaltepa and killed him and finally took his revenge (*Mizo Hnahthlak*163-165).

This story shows how the Mizos hated evil doers and liars who do evil things for their own gain. In the story, the communal nature of the Mizos during the time

can be known as seen in the beginning of the story the animals meeting and deciding to clean the path in the jungle. The story also shows the avenging nature of humans when bad things are done by others. In the case of Bakvawmtepu he gave protection to Sazaltepa but was returned with loss of his baby's life. In real life there is also a lot of revenge stories. Though, Sazaltepa did many evil things he met his end in the hands of Bakvawmtepu who seemed like a kind and good person. The story shows how evil breeds evil. Sazaltepa's evil mind and deeds led to the other characters in their worse behaviour as they were angry for the actions performed by him. Humans also have the tendency to be at their worst when driven to the point that they have to take revenge on whatever drive them to this state. This results in one bad deed to another which may seem like justice but it never ends as evil breeds evil.

In the story of Sakuh leh Sakhi lo inchuh, the porcupine and the deer both had a jhum. The deer was lazy and did not work hard in jhum. So, his jhum was also bad but the porcupine was hardworking and he had a good jhum. The deer was envious and wanted to take the jhum from the porcupine. The deer wanted to claim the jhum of the porcupine and thought of a way and he made his friends the elephant, gaur, tiger, bear, monkey and the tortoise his allies and challenge the porcupine but the porcupine had no other allies than the bees. But, the porcupine wins in the end.

The deer in this tale represents laziness and its effect. A lazy person tends to live off other people's hardwork and even try to claim other people's hard earned

work. The story shows the evil nature of humanity. The story teaches that laziness and untruthfulness can lead to a demise of one and truth always wins over evil.

In the tale of *Runginu leh Thialtea*, Thialtea asked Runginu to go pick for fruits in the jungle and promised her to give her some of the fruits as Runginu could not climb trees. When Thialtea picked the fruits from the trees. He did not want to share the fruits with Runginu. Runginu cried and a tiger came by to see her crying. The tiger felt pity on her and asked her what happened. Runginu told her the story and upon hearing the tiger asked her to confront Thialtea and if Thialtea try to do anything to her he would come in her aid. Runginu confronted Thialtea and Thialtea got angry. Thialtea got down from the tree to beat Runginu. As he was trying to beat her the tiger came and killed Thialtea.

The story tells the lying nature of humanity and not doing as promised can lead to disappointment for others. It can be seen from this story that there were liars and evil doers in the Mizo society and how much the Mizos hated lies. The story tries to tell that lying to others and not doing as promised is a fatal sin and the victim can be saddened and revenge comes with the aid of others showing the communal nature of the Mizos when it comes to injustice prevailing in the society.

4.1.2. Good Side of Human Nature

Mizo animal tales also shows the good nature of humanity. The good nature shown in these tales are kindness, truthfulness, faithfulness, selflessness, cleverness, bravery, generosity and sense of justice. These good characters went through trickery and evil of others. They seem to lose and fail in the beginning but

because of their will power they always win or get payback in the end, victorious and wins over evil.

For example, in the story of *Sakuh leh Sakhi Lo Inchuh (The Porcupine and the Barking Deer Fighting over a Jhum)*, the porcupine was righteous even though he had lesser allies than the deer. He won over the greedy deer who tried to take a part of his land. This story teaches its audience about hardwork and justice because the porcupine was hardworking and he had a good jhum and the envious deer was lazy and wanted to claim his land. The truthful porcupine wins in the end under the hard circumstances he was put under by the deer even when he has lesser allies. This shows the fighting spirit of humanity against injustice.

In the tale of *Dullai Sial and Vankal Sial (Dullai Mithun and Vankal Mithun)*, the Dullai mithun attack the Vankal mithun because of hatred. But the Vankal mithun later defeated the Dullai mithun showing that hatred and jealousy can end up in death. The story teaches the audience not to discriminate people or hate for no reason. Humans tend to change and develop themselves like the vankal mithun who was beaten by dullai mithun before. The vankal mithun came back stronger and beat the dullai mithun. It is an example of how humans can also change to beat the circumstances or fight evil itself.

In the story of *Kawlhawk leh Naupang (A Flock of Hornbills and a Child)*, a group of hornbills were shown helping an abandon girl in the jungle and helping her find her sister by giving a part of their feathers to the girl so she can fly and

they all live together happily in the end. This shows the generous and helping nature of the Mizos and how it can lead to a harmonious society.

These tales show that the Mizo society despised evil and they believed that evil doers though they may flourish in the beginning always end up badly. They also believed that goodwill and kindness to others is always rewarding even if they seem like failure in the beginning according to the interpretation through these animal tales.

In the story of *Mura (Giant Eagle)*, it is seen that the early Mizos highly valued cleverness. In this story, Chera and Thauva were captured by Mura, Chera was clever and knew what to do in the situation, when Mura tried to eat him he said to him, "I am too thin now, eat Thauva first and while you eat him, I will eat to get fat then you can eat me later," Mura agreed and eat Thauva first. When he was finish eating Mura got full and sleepy and he slept. Chera took advantage of his sleep and stabbed him with a knife while he was sleeping. The villagers heard this and were happy with Chera.

The story shows how using intelligence during dire situations is useful in case of Chera. If one uses his intelligence for great deeds he helps not only himself but others. As seen in the story Chera did not only saved himself but the whole village when he tricked and killed Mura who was a menace to his village.

In the story of *Rulpui leh Hmeithai (The Giant Snake and the Widow)*, there was a giant snake who used to terrorize the village and to appease him the villagers sacrificed one of their own for the snake to eat. The time came for the

widow's son for the sacrifice. The widow was sad as the boy was her only family. A brave man felt pity for the widow and took the boy's place for the sacrifice. The brave man went to the snake with a knife. As the snake try to consume him, he struck the snake with his knife several times and killed it. The villagers were very happy with the brave man who saved his village from the giant snake.

The story tells that the Mizos highly valued and respected bravery in the society. It also shows how selflessness and performing deeds for weaker people can saved the society. This story tells a lot about the Mizo nature of selflessness (tlawmngaihna) and bravery. It also shows how the society treats widows and tried to help and be kind to widows in the society.

In the story of *Zawng Rual Ngilnei (The Kind Bunch of Monkeys)*, a group of monkeys is shown to be feeling pity for the tiring fisherman who was at the river sleeping. The monkeys caught crabs for him and when the man was sleeping deeply the monkeys thought he was dead and carried him to his village instead of letting him die in that place. The villagers were amused by the kind act of the monkeys and it became the talk of the village.

The story shows the good communal nature of the Mizos. It shows how Mizos were helpful and kind to the needy. It also shows that people during the time valued the helping hand of the community.

4.2. How Animal Tales Represent Social Life and Culture

In the Mizo animal tales, it can be seen that Mizos were agriculturists and kept jhums in the stories of *Sakuh leh Sakhi Lo Inchuh (The Porcupine and the*

Barking Deer Fighting over a Jhum), *Vawkpui leh Uipui (The Mother-Pig and the Bitch)*, *Artui leh Hmawlhthe inlawm (An Egg and a Twig Sharing Mutual Work)*, *Tlauva leh Zawng rual (Tlauva and the Monkeys)*, *Sai Thilphal (A Generous Elephant)* and *Sazaltepa leh Bakvawmtepu*. These stories show that the Mizos kept jhum and they depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. It also shows that the Mizos used to help each other in the agricultural work (inlawm) in the story of *Artui leh hmawlhthe inlawm (An Egg and a Twig Sharing Mutual Work)*. Thanmawia interpreted the story like this:

Once upon a time, an Egg and a Twig decided to share mutual work in their jhum cultivation. On the day they worked at the jhum of the Egg. They happily weeded together. When it was time for mid-day meal, they trod towards the shack for resting.

When they reach the shack they opened their lunches which were bounded by leaves. When they opened their lunch, they realized that they had carried only rice with them without any culinary to accomplish their rice. Both felt desolated.

The Twig asked the Egg, “My friend what shall we eat with our rice?”

The Egg replied, “My friend! Do not worry. Let me go and find something to eat with our rice.”

She thus went out. On the other side of the hill on top of a heated rock, she cracked herself and hardened her contents. She went back to the

shack taking back her hardened contents. So they ate their rice with a tasty culinary and were fully satisfied over their mid-day meal.

The next day the Egg and the Twig worked at the Twig's jhum. That day it rained and the weather was very cold indeed. When the time came for their mid-day meal, they proceeded towards the Twig's shack. The Egg feeling very cold shivered and shivered. So they thought of lighting a fire at the fire place but found that there was neither twig nor bamboo to kindle the fire.

The Egg said to the Twig, "My friend! It is so cold. What shall we do?"

The Twig replied, "Wait for a while, my friend. Let me go out and see what can be done."

She then proceeded towards the other side of the hill and lit herself. With herself as torch she went back to kindle the fire at the fire place. It is said that they could light a fire to warm themselves. (*Mizo Folktales* 100-101)

This tale shows how the Mizos helped and shared the jhum work with the community and also shows how giving and selfless the Mizo society was.

In the story of *Pu Vawma Tui (Pu Vawma's Water)*, the monkey made a flute out of the bones of the bear and the tiger. In another story of *Zawngte Phenglawng*

Tum (Monkey Blowing his Flute), the monkey the quail fought over for a flute. This shows the love of music by the Mizo society.

In the stories of *Chemtatrawta* and *Pu Vawma Tui (Pu Vawma's Water)*, wells (tuikhur) are shown. In the tale of *Pu Vawma Tui*, Pu Vawma dug a well and did not allow anyone else to drink from the well but a tiger came and drank from the well without Pu Vawma's permission. Pu Vawma got angry and fought with the tiger. They fought each other to the death.

In the story of *Chemtatrawta*, the old lady excreted at the source of the water supply and the villagers had a problem because of this. This is the summary of Chemtatrawta's story:

Once upon a time, Chemtatrawta sharpening his dao near the river. While sharpening his dao the lobster came and nipped at the testicles of Chemtatrawta. Due to the painful testicles Chemtatrawta lost his self-control and he cut the bamboo where Kha-um creeper was climbing. The falling Kha-um creeper fruit struck the wild fowl. The angry wild fowl scattered the ants' nest with his foot. The angry ants' bit the testicles of wild boar. The angry wild boar attacked and destroyed the plantain where the bat lives. The bat was looking for another place to live and finally flew inside the nose of an elephant. The elephant was angry and trampled the old women's house. The old woman was filled with anger but she did not know where to take revenge. So, she excreted at the source of the village water supply.

The evil deeds of the old woman disturbed the villagers. The villagers were angry and asked the old woman why she was doing this. The old woman answered, "Why did the elephant destroy my house?" The villagers asked the elephant, "Why are you destroying the old woman's house?" The elephant answered, "Why did the bat fly inside my nose?" So the villagers came and asked the bat, the bat condemned the boar and the villagers asked the boar, the ant, the wild fowl, Kha-um and Chemtatrawta. At last they reach the lobster and asked, "Why did you nip the testicles of Chemtatrawta. The lobster did not know how to make an excuse and said, "Uh... uh... uh... if you put me into the fire, I will turn into red for the pleasure of children and if you put me into the water, I will become dark."

The people did not want to put into the fire because they do not want him to be red for the pleasure of children. They put him inside the water and as soon as he reached the water, he glided quickly into his rock cave (*Mizo Hnahthlak*171-173).

In the story of *Chemtatrawta*, it can be seen that water is very important to the Mizos and it can be seen that the villagers search for the problem just because the old lady excreted in their water source which created problem for all the villagers and began investigating the problem and got to the source which was the lobster. They tried to give punishment to the lobster but was too clever and escaped the wrath of the people. In her article *A Critical Focus on Mizo Folktales: Chemtatrawta and Chemteii as a Reflection of the Mizo Society*, Lalremruati stated, "The Mizo's were very particular about the source of the

problem, who is responsible and who is to take the blame. They were very practical in adopting the legal system of finding the offender.” (185-186)

The tales of *Chemtatrawta* and *Pu Vawma Tui* shows the importance of water sources for the Mizos and how they cared for the maintenance of it.

In the story of *Zawng Rual Ngilnei (The Kind Bunch of Monkeys)*, a man is shown to fish for crabs in the river and in the story of *Satel leh Zawng Inkawm (The Tortoise and the Monkey)* the tortoise and the monkey were fishing in the river. These stories show that the Mizos relied for food in the river and fishing was common.

In the story of *Sai Thilphal (A Generous Elephant)*, a young man was making traps to catch meat and how the young man met the generous elephant who gave him a piece of his own flesh for the young man to eat. This shows that the early Mizos were hunters and got meat from the forest resources.

In the story of *Sanghar, Arpui leh Artui (A Wild-Cat, a Hen and an Egg)*, the wild-cat ate the hen and the egg hatched and took revenge for its mother with the help of his friends the wind, the mouse trap, the grinder, the ant, the rice-chaff and the knife and they killed the wild cat.

This story tells how working together is very important in the society and shows unity is strength.

4.3. Mizo Animal Tales as Criticism of Human Life

As mentioned before animal characters portrayed human behaviour and nature. These animals have human characteristics such as fight between good and evil. The good doers always come out as the victor in the end which is the belief and mindset of the Mizos for a long time. This shows that animal tales try to show moral reformation to its audience.

Till modern times animal characters are used to portray humans and are used to reflect real situations and happenings around the world. George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* in 1945. In his story animal characters are shown to portray the real life and events of the Russian (Bolshevik) Revolution of 1917. George Orwell uses these animal characters to condemn and criticize the people and leaders who were involved in the Russian Revolution and showed the suffering of the victims. Modern stories and movies show a lot of animal characters acting like humans which is done to show human nature and society. *The Jungle Book* written by Rudyard Kipling and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* written by C.S. Lewis also included animal characters in the stories and these animal characters portrayed human nature.

In many Mizo animal tales situations are seen which can be related to real life situations. There are negative mannerisms in the characters that tend to lie and cheat out of getting what they want or just to annoy others which is also prevalent till today among societies. The characters of Sazaltepa, monkeys, mura, tigers and many others represent the dark sides of human nature which shows them to the over powering the weaker characters or be mischievous. They represent such people who are dominant and are entitled so they make the lives of

other people miserable whereas, the characters of the frog, tortoise, porcupine, elephant and others teaches the audience to fight and stand up against them. They also represent the wisdom and positive traits which are useful to fight evil. The good nature of man though, may seem to be taken advantage of by evil, in the end always prevails.

It is seen by their story that the early people condemned the evil in humanity and always let the villain pay for their evil deeds and they also try to let the audience know that there is victory and prize for the good deed. Evil does always end in tragedy and good deed and kindness result favourably for those with the good nature.

Every culture have its own negative and positive trait prevailing in their own respective society. There is good and evil found in every societies. Even though there are a lot of good qualities and nature in the Mizo society, there are still some unfavourable traits and practices within the society. This is why like George Orwell the earlier Mizos condemned the bad nature of human nature through the animal tales. The animal tales show that the Mizos have a high regard for moral reformation and used these stories to tell its audience to do good and hate evil. This is one of the important morals of the folktales.

Even though folktales are ridiculous and impossible to believe, they carry an important message to the audience. The animals which are featured in the folktale act and behave like humans and they represent the society in which evil is prevalent. The wild stories tells of friendship, love, wisdom, wit and cleverness

which are needed for man to be able to cope in a society and also, the folktales tell of trickery, lies, cruelty and rudeness which are to avoid in living together in human society. It gives entertainment to children and adults alike, the strange stories are simple and easy to remember. Other than all these, it serves a very important message and are not just for mere entertainment to its audience but gives moral instructions.

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CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

Every culture have their own tales and stories which are orally passed from generation to generation. These tales show the culture of where the story was

originated. The folktales tells who the Mizos were as a society and a culture and serve as an important source for the study of earlier Mizo. Animal tales is one part of the folktale. In animal tale, animals are the major character and play an important role in the story (Thanmawia 21).The animal tales give entertainment and a moral lesson to its audience. Other than these, the animal tales are an important source for the knowledge of Mizo culture.

Mizo animal tales are comprised of short tales in which the animal characters can talk and behave like humans similar to folktales of other cultures. Besides, it is short, the language is also simple. So, it is easy to memorize. Though most animal tales contain only animal characters, there are also human characters in the animal tales. As it is said in the second chapter, Mizo animal tales also consist of domestic animals like dog, pig, goat, mithun and hen. But, they are not portrayed to be more interact with human. Human are shown to be more interact with wild animals than domestic animals. A lot of trickery is involved in the Mizo animal tales and the trickster characters usually have a bad ending.

Jokes and humour are also found in Mizo animal tales. Humour depends on the gestures of the character and the languages of the character in the story. In some tales, there are humorous character and these characters are usually cheaters and they are not brave. They always play tricks and always contempt others, but, they always have a bad result in the end.

Usually, Mizo animal tales are full of fighting and dispute. There is always good character and bad character in the story and there is an enmity and an

argument between these two characters. In the tale of *Zawngte Pipu Uai (Monkey Swinging on a Swing)*, monkey has a bad nature and he tried to kill the bear. But the plan was failed and there is an enmity between them. The bad characters always disturb and dispute the good character. But, bad characters are usually punished and the good character always wins in the end and live happily.

There are commonly depicted characters in the Mizo animal tales which are monkeys, tortoise, tiger and bear. Tigers and bears are depicted as being strong but not having too much intelligence as they are often tricked by smaller and weaker animals. Tortoises are also depicted as not having an intelligent quality, it is kind and gentle but usually ends up being tricked by other animals. Monkeys are also a very common character in the Mizo animal tale they are depicted as a clever and a cunning character who is mischievous and a trickster character, tend to trick other animal characters in order to get something and self-amusement. But, because of its evil mindset and cunning, it always meet a bad end.

Mizo animal tales also have unknown and unspecified characters which are Sazaltepa and Bakvawmtepu. Sazaltepa is not specified on what animal or being it is but it has a characteristics of a fox depicted in tales of northeast India and other cultures. In a Tripuri tale, *The Story a Tiger and a Fox*, the fox was depicted as a cunning and clever animal, it was also very gluttonous. Also in a Khasi tale *The Old Fox and the Tiger*, the fox was a cunning and a gluttonous character. Sazaltepa has a characteristic similar to the fox depicted in the north east tales and it can be indicated that Sazaltepa is a fox.

The tale of *Sazaltepa and Bakvawmtepu* portrays Bakvawmtepu as not having too much intelligence. But, is depicted as brave and strong which gives the idea that Bakvawmtepu is a bear due to its characteristics of a bear portrayed in other Mizo animal tales.

In some northeast Indian folktales, monkeys and foxes are depicted as a clever and a cunning character which Mizo animal tales also shows monkeys and foxes having similar characteristics like the tales of north east India.

The Mizo animal tales also consist of violent character in the tale. The violent characters are the giant snake and the giant eagle. This can be seen in the stories of *Rulpui leh Hmeithai (The Giant Snake and the Widow)* and *Mura(Giant Eagle)*. These two characters are portrayed as a monster. But, they were destroyed by human. This shows that human are more intelligent than animal.

The Mizo animal tale of *War Between Flying Creatures and Land Animals* and the Tripuri tale, *The Deer and the Dao* are closely related. Also, the Mizo animal tale *The Tiger and the Frog* and Tibetan folktale *A Tiger and a Frog* are also very similar. The Mizo tale *Tlauva and the Monkeys* and Tripuri tale *A couple and a Monkeys* and Assamese tale *The Old Man the Old Woman and the Fox* also share similar plot and story.

These tales are parallel and related to one another which suggest that these tales were scattered with the scattering and migration of humans in different places and the tales changed and evolved through time and places of the culture in

different parts of the world. The animal tales show the connection and relativity of different cultures having the tales.

Mizo animal tales share some characteristics with other animal tales from different cultures. Truth triumphs over evil is a common characteristic of folktales of the world. In the Mizo animal tales the trickster characters usually end up bad and the good characters always wins over evil. As it is mentioned in the third chapter, some of the animal characters have an evil characteristics and they play tricks to other weaker and innocent animals just to intimidate and show their might for no reason, some characters are greedy and always tell lies. These characters can be seen in the tales of *Satel leh Zawng Rual*, *Runginu leh Thialtea* and *Sakuh leh Sakhi Lo Inchuh*.

Wisdom is also found commonly in folktales. In many cultures the folktales show that the smaller and weaker characters have wisdom and intelligence and they escape death and harm from larger and stronger character through their intelligence. These types of tales are found in Mizo animal tales where the smaller and weaker characters are shown superior due to their cleverness than the bigger and stronger characters. This shows how they had highly valued intelligence and wisdom.

Folktale is important to know the social life and culture of the nation. Keding also said that the study of folktales can gives a better understanding of another nation and its people. Keding stated,

As people read and hear the stories of another country, they not only gain a better understanding of its people, they also understand their own people and past as well. What better way to learn about another nation, another people than through the folktales they have kept alive through countless generations. (xvi)

The Mizo animal tales may be confusing and hard to understand for other culture. But to the Mizo people they give an idea of the past and can learn the ancestry from these tales. They led and remind the Mizo people who they were. Not only in the Mizo folktales but also the folktales of other society also enlighten the people of their past from the narrative told through the generations.

The Mizo animal tale is also important to learn the nature of the Mizo people and the Mizo society. The different categories of Mizo animal tales also showed the life of the primitive society of the Mizos in different ways. The tales of friendship and love shows how kindness, faithfulness, generosity and helping other cause a happy life and how good deed makes other happy. The tales of humour shows what kind of human nature is despicable and ridiculous in the society and what kind of person they admire in the society. The tales of cleverness and trickery displayed that how trickery is a bad thing. The tales of transformation also describe the idea of ancient Mizos about transformation. Tales of cleverness and trickery display how the Mizo people hated trickery and also display the superiority of intelligence than foolishness.

The tales of dispute between animals and dispute between animals and humans shows that evil things causes death because the character who are mischievous and trouble makers always met fatal and drastic endings in the tales. But, it also shows truthfulness and faithfulness are the good nature of human which can lead to a good result. Relationship between animals and humans can also be seen in the Mizo animal tales which suggest that there was a wide gap between different societies among the Mizos and how marriages and relationships between them create problems and hardships.

Mizo animal tales is an important source for the study of earlier Mizo culture and society. From the animal tales, the society, economy, culture and morality of the earlier Mizos are reflected. They show how the earlier Mizos hated evil practices prevailing in the society and how people should work together to stop these evil.

One of the most obvious element in Mizo animal tales is the hate for evil. The animal characters in the tale portray human nature, the dark side of humanity such as greed, trickery, lies, laziness, evil thinking, selfishness and rudeness. The animals which are found to be having these negative characteristics are portrayed not to live happily in the end whereas the animals with good characteristics like hardworking, faithfulness, selflessness, kindness, generosity, truthfulness and loving are shown to be happy and well in the end.

It is clear from the study of Mizo animal tales that the earlier Mizos made these tales to bring about social reformation and tell the audience to hate evil and

do good. But, as mentioned before the tales are mainly meant for children, which is for the parents to narrate to them. This is why there is humour and fun in the tales so its audience can be entertained with a moral lesson that can lead to adulthood for a good society.

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APPENDIX I

Notes

1. Chhinlung - the name of the mythical rock from beneath which the progenitors of most of the present human race are said to have issued after the thimzing darkness.
2. Zawlbuk - the large house in a Lushai village where all the unmarried young men of the community sleep at night.
3. Bawh hla - the warriors' chant or cry; the chant or cry raised by warriors when returning from a successful raid.
4. Sahlam - a tree from which a human head is suspended.
5. Chai - the name of a dance in which young men and young women form a circle round a man who serves out beer , and others who play a drum and beat the horn of a gayal.
6. Vakul - drongo bird
7. Thangchhuah - the title given to a man who has distinguished himself by killing a certain number of different animals in the chase, or by giving a certain number of public feasts.
8. Thangchhuah puan - the name of a cloth worn as a mark of distinction by one who has the coveted title of thangchhuah.
9. Koro - the name of two species of birds the white crested laughing thrush
10. |aumeichherchhi - spirit carrying a torch.
11. Chepchep - the name of a small cicada.
12. Chikhur - a salt spring

13. Khuavang - the name of the spirit.

14. Bekang - the name of an edible bean, the seeds only of which are eaten.

APPENDIX II

BIO-DATA

NAME OF THE CANDIDATE	: LALZUITLUANGA
DEGREE	: M.PHIL
DEPARTMENT	: MIZO
TITLE OF DISSERTATION	: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF ANIMAL TALES IN MIZO FOLK NARRATIVES
SUPERVISOR	: PROF. R.L. THANMAWIA
DATE OF ADMISSION	: 8 th August, 2016
APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL BY	
1. BOARD OF STUDIES	: 27 th April, 2017
2. SCHOOL BOARD	: 26 th May, 2017
REGISTRATION NO & DATE	: MZU/M.PHIL/382 of dt. 26.5. 2017
DATE OF SUBMISSION	: 31 st July, 2018

