

WOMEN IN MIZO HISTORY: CHANGING ROLES, STATUS AND PARTICIPATION FROM 18th to 20th CENTURY

**A Thesis submitted during 2010 to the University of Hyderabad in partial
fulfillment of the Award of a Ph.D Degree in Department of History, School
of Social Sciences**

by

HMINGTHANZUALI



**Department of History
School of Social Sciences
University of Hyderabad
(P.O) Central University, Gachibowli
Hyderabad-500046
Andhra Pradesh
India**

WOMEN IN MIZO HISTORY: CHANGING ROLES, STATUS AND PARTICIPATION FROM 18th to 20th CENTURY

**A Thesis submitted during 2010 to the University of Hyderabad in partial
fulfillment of the Award of a Ph.D Degree in Department of History, School
of Social Sciences**

by

HMINGTHANZUALI



**Department of History
School of Social Sciences
University of Hyderabad
(P.O) Central University, Gachibowli
Hyderabad-500046
Andhra Pradesh
India**



CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled *Women in Mizo History: Changing Roles, Status and Participation from 18th to 20th Century* submitted by Hmingthanzuali bearing Regd. No. 03SHPH05 in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in History is a bonafide work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance.

The thesis has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

Prof. Rekha Pande
Supervisor
Professor, Department of History
University of Hyderabad

Prof. R.L Hangloo
Head of Department
Department of History
School of Social Sciences
University of Hyderabad

Prof. G. Nancharaiah
Dean
School of Social Sciences
University of Hyderabad

DECLARATION

I Hmingthanzuali hereby declare that this thesis entitled “*Women in Mizo History: Changing Roles, Status and Participation from 18th to 20th Century*” submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of Professor Rekha Pande is a bonafide research work. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this University or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

Date:

Name: HMINGTHANZUALI

Signature of Student:

Regd.No: 03SHPH05

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I owe my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Rekha Pande. She provided me unflinching encouragement and support in various ways. This thesis would not have been possible had it not been because of her patient guidance.

I would also like to convey my gratitude to Prof. R.L Hangloo, Head of Department, Department of History for his ever ready willingness to provide help and support. It was only because of his help that I was able to procure a seat in the University and pursue my Ph.D.

Thanks to my doctoral committee members Dr. M.N Rajesh and Dr. Sanjay Subodh for providing me with constant suggestions and to all faculties in the Department of History for their supports and encouragements. To the office staff members of the Department of History – Mr. Das, Mr. Ravi, Mrs. Usha Florence, Mr Dilip and Mr. Balakrishna for their valuable assistance.

I gratefully thank University Grants Commission (UGC) for rendering financial assistance i.e. Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship (RGNF) during the period of my study.

My deepest gratitude to my friend Mr. H. Vanlalhrauaia for his constant encouragement, patience and commitment for sharing new ideas, rare materials and furthermore sparing his precious time to read this thesis and give critical comments.

My junior Babie Lalsangzeli, Department of English, University of Hyderabad for spending her precious free time in reading and editing my chapters to the best of her abilities.

To my uncle Rev. Dr. H. Sangkhuma and his family from Maesteg, Wales, U.K for providing me with a laptop which has greatly eased the progression of my work.

At Mizoram State Archive I particularly thank Mr. Lalmachhuana and Mr. Lalmuanpuia for their invaluable assistance in searching documents. I also gratefully acknowledge the helpful staff of Baptist Archive, Serkawn, Lunglei, ATC Archive, Durtlang and Synod Archive Aizawl, Mizoram.

I would also like to acknowledge Mrs. B. Vanlalzari, Mr. C. Zama, Mrs. C. Biakchhingi, Dr JV Hluna (Pachhunga University College), Dr. Sangkima (Principal, Aizawl West College), Dr. B. Lalrinchhiani (JB College, Lunglei), Mrs. Zomuani (ATC, Durtlang), Dr Lalbiakdiki Hnamte (Mizoram University), Ms. Lalrindiki Ralte (Lecturer ATC) and Dr. T. Vanlaltlani (Lecturer ATC) giving me their much prized books and research materials for free. I also deeply thank Mrs. Ethel Sailo d/o Mrs. Lalziki Sailo and Mrs. Rebeki for providing me with rare photographs. It goes without saying that their books and photographs have been of great value and assistance to me in the analysis of my work. For their encouragement and enthusiasm to share their knowledge and for all their prayers I also deeply appreciate Mr. C. Rokhuma (A-Pu) and Rev Dr Lalngurauva Ralte.

Many thanks to my friends Zamtei, Nunui, Sawmtea, Zara, Achhuana, Khrieto, Pusa, Venusa, Hannah, Mami (JNU) and Somya (Assistant professor, IIT Guwahati) for discussions regarding my topic and for providing me with research materials. Mahruaia, Tlinga, Thanpuia, Robert, Harish, Shivaji, Lisha and Yasser for their friendship and making my life on campus worthwhile. For their prayers and moral support I owe my deep appreciation to my friends Pinky, Chhantei and Catherine. I am also deeply grateful to Saidingliana Sailo for assisting me and providing his computer skills during my field work in Aizawl.

I am greatly indebted to my family for their constant support and faith in me and for all their prayers that have gotten me through rough times. My abiding sorrows will always be the sudden demise of my grandmother Vanrumi, my aunt C. Lalthlamuani and my uncle C. Lalmangaiha who took keen interest in my research and gave me constant support.

Above all, the Almighty God who has blessed me with good health and the strength to complete this work.

ABBREVIATIONS

AJWS:	Asian Journal of Women's Studies
ATC:	Aizawl Theological College
BKHP:	Baptist Kohhran Hmeichhe Pawl
BMS:	Baptist Missionary Society
CKHC:	Central Kohhran Hmeichhe Committee
EPW:	Economic and Political Weekly
FKPL:	Firma KLM Private Limited
ISPCK:	Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge
M.A.L:	Mizo Academy of Letters
MHA:	Mizo History Association
MHT:	Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual
MNF:	Mizo National Front
MU:	Mizo Union
NEHU:	North Eastern Hill University
NEIHA:	Northeast India History Association
TRI:	Tribal Research Institute
ZNOC:	Zoram Ni Organising Committee.
MPCC:	Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee.

CONTENTS

Certificate:	I
Declaration:	II
Acknowledgement:	III-V
Abbreviations:	V
Map:	VI
Chapter-I: INTRODUCTION	1-33
1.1 Why do we need to study Women's History?	2
1.2 Problems of Women's History in Northeast India.	5
1.3 Importance of Women's History in Mizoram.	8
1.4 Historical Transition and the Problem of Periodization in Mizoram.	10
1.5 Thesis Approach.	14
1.6 Terms and Conceptual Definitions.	17
1.7 Review of Literatures.	18
1.8 Sources.	24
1.9 Chapterization.	27
Chapter-II: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	34-67
2.1 Origin of the Mizos.	35
2.2 The Rise of Sailo Ruling Chiefs.	37
2.3 " <i>Vailen</i> ": Colonial Expansion.	47
2.4 Emergence of Christianity.	48
2.5 Colonialism, Christianity and Social Reforms.	49
2.6 Rise of Ethnic Nationalism during the Post Colonial Period.	56
2.7 Insurgency Movement (1960's to 1980's).	59

Chapter-III: CULTURE, TRADITION AND WOMEN IN THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD	68-109
3.1 Women's Life in the Family.	70
3.2 'Mizo Culture' vis-à-vis Masculine and Feminine Identity.	78
3.3 "Circulation" of Women.	84
3.4 Sexual Code and Female Chastity.	90
3.5 Location of Women's Roles, Power and Knowledge.	92
Chapter-IV: WARS, COLONIAL EXPANSION AND WOMEN.	110-142
4.1 Placing Women in the Pre Colonial Political Space.	112
4.2 "Vailen" The Colonial Expedition.	115
4.3 Colonial Administration: Repression of Women and their Political Rights.	134
Chapter-V: WOMEN AND SOCIAL CHANGE.	143-188
5.1 Views of Colonizers and the Missionaries on the Position of Mizo Women.	145
5.2 Education.	147
5.3 The Women Question during the Colonial Period.	161
5.4 Reforms of Mizo Customs under the Colonial Government.	169
5.5 Christian Modernity and the Native Women's Agency.	175
Chapter-VI ETHNIC-NATIONALISM AND INSURGENCY IN POST COLONIAL PERIOD.	189-241
6.1 Contextualizing Insurgency from a Woman Perspective.	192
6.2 Women's Responses to Ethnic Nationalist Movement of 1946 to 1962.	193
6.3 Patriarchal Ideology in the Insurgency Movement (1966-1986).	200
6.4 History From Below: Recovering Women's Agency.	215
Chapter- VII CONCLUSION.	242-252
GLOSSARY:	253-258
BIBLIOGRAPHY:	259-283

APPENDICES:	284-302
Appendix: I- List of Mizo Chieftainesses and their Villages.	285
Appendix: II- Proceeding of the Meeting of the Accredited Leaders , Lushai Hills .	286
Appendix: III- Memorandum Submitted to the Prime Minister of India by the Mizo National Front General Headquarter, Aizawl, Mizoram , 30 th Oct, 1965.	288
Appendix: IV- Declaration of Independence, 5 th March, 1966.	291
Appendix: V- List of Women Volunteers During the Insurgency Movement in Mizo Hills.	294
Appendix: VI- Agreement Between the Indian National Congress (I) and the Mizo National Front, Mizoram. 25 th June, 1986.	296
Appendix: VII- Mizoram Accord, 1986. Memorandum of Settlement (Between the Government of India and Mizo National Front), 18 th June, 1986.	297
Appendix: VIII- List of Illustrations.	300-302

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

The present thesis titled, “Women in Mizo History: Changing roles, status and participation from 18th Century to 20th Century” analyses the least known subject in the historical writing of the Mizos by unraveling the past experiences and contributions of women in the making of history.

Mizoram is situated on the North Eastern corner of India surrounded by two foreign countries, (Bangladesh and Myanmar) and three states (Tripura, Assam and Manipur) in India. The Mizo society has several distinctive features in the course of its evolution and historical development from the “Indian civilization”. Mizoram was known as Lushai Hills in colonial period (1890-1947). In the Post-colonial period it was given the name Mizo Hills District by an Act of Parliament in 1954. In 1971 Mizo District was upgraded into a Union Territory and renamed as Mizoram subsequently becoming the 27th state of the Indian Union in 1987.

The post-independence studies have incorporated the Mizo society as a section of Indian society. However, the regional specificity of North East India in general and Mizoram in particular had been ignored by the academic community for a long time. Hence, Mizo history continued to suffer from historiographical exclusion in Indian academy. The recent era has witnessed the growing interest in the reconstruction of North East Indian history in response to Indian history in the larger context. Despite the various attempts made by scholars, women and their role in the making of history have been excluded from the historical narratives. The problem is more pertinent in the context of Mizo history, where a deep investigation has been done neither in the empirical nor the theoretical level. Therefore, the present thesis attempts to recover the status of women, their experiences, their roles, contributions and their voices in the changing historical time and space.

1. 1 WHY DO WE NEED TO STUDY WOMEN’S HISTORY?

History has been largely defined as “a record of the past experiences of people” or, according to E.H Carr’s idea of constructing the past as “an unending dialogue between the past and the present with a view to understanding the present and the future”.¹ For many scholars this definition of history has dominated and governed their historical writings. However, the course of human history has been changing in its space and time. Within the discourses of many scholars the very notion of what history is, is a subject to controversy.

Historians of all disciplines have attempted to understand its totality. So many efforts have been made by scholars to re-write, reinterpret, reconstruct, reconstitute, deconstruct and re-invent the earlier historical writing. Recently in order to reclaim totality in history, scholarly work had started to scrutinize the 'marginality' in history. The reason for this is "history is, and has always been selective and represents a very narrow account of human past in terms of time, space and numbers".² This was again constructed by the narrow accounts of elites which marginalized the lives and achievements of the majority of people in the political and economic realms. As long as historians (men) held on to this traditional view that only the transmission and exercise of power were worthy of their interest, women were always ignored.³

For the scholars in the field of women's studies, it is difficult to agree with the earlier definition of history "where the concept or idea of "her-story" as distinct from history did not find a place in it".⁴ As a result of the revitalized women's movement of the 1960's the catalyst for the study of women's history began to emerge in the west. Even in India, as a result of the United Nations' declaration of the year 1975 as the International Women's Year, some historians also began to pay their interest on women's past. Several historians began to analyze the past with the aim of revealing the hidden and untold stories of women's experiences in history. Hitherto both within and outside the academe the most significant development during recent decades has been the rise of women's history.

A common question when examining the issue of women in history is 'why do we need to study women's history?' The striking fact about the historiography of women is the general neglect of the subject by the historians.⁵ As mentioned above women are hidden from history in the same way as the lives of men of the poor are obscured, because of their class. But they are also hidden as a sex, and it takes an especially feminist consciousness to come to terms with the full extent of this.⁶ If this is so, what is the main reason behind the invisibility of women in history? The main reason for women to be hidden in available historiography is attributed to the fact that due to the patriarchal domination men held power and women appeared not to have had the power to write themselves in.⁷ As a result, all historical traditions have been written and recorded by male writers and have been shaped by male perspectives. Recently Jasmine Saikia wrote, "History is present in all communities. Even powerless and unknown groups have their histories".⁸ More specifically, Gerda Lerner, an American pioneer in the field

of women's history argues, "women have a history; women are in history". According to her, all the earlier historical writings described men as actors and active agents in the scene of history, therefore it is important to give back women their history.

If women played crucial roles in the historical event, can they be ignored? This is another general notion when surveying the role of women in historical events. One cannot deny the fact that women also received some attention, but the narrative of the authors of the traditional histories reflected more of the contemporary prejudices about the female rather than the historical evidence of women past.⁹ This approach focused mainly on their role and position in the family or on their social status; the identity of women have been constructed for the thousand years as weak, passive, emotional, intuitive and sometimes mysterious, quarrelsome etc.

The only accounts of women which have been recorded in the earlier or traditional approach are mainly the accounts and biographies of 'notable women' or women of the elite class. However, such approach was condemned by the western feminists as they believed that the history of notable history does not describe the experiences and history of the mass of women. Also women of different classes have different historical experiences.¹⁰ From this perspective it is assumed that history at it best should be a recounting of how members of a particular society lived and not merely a designation of who was important in that society. Women's history along with other studies of the powerless groups of the past is based on that assumption.¹¹

Another general question when writing women's past is that only women writers are entitled to write women's history. Such an assumption could lead to gender bias in history by minimizing the entire purpose of bringing women back into history. To quote Sheila Rowbotham:

"What is of importance therefore is not who is writing history, but the perspective from which it is written and the kind of research that has been done to unravel the developments in the past, and finally the attempts made to present a total history with as little of gender bias as possible".¹²

Likewise, the isolation of women from men has little effect in the historical development and in the attempts to discover the significance of sex roles in the society. In the field of women's history, the contribution and role of women in making history and a result of their interactions with the rest of history are subjects of the study.

In short, women's history attempts to include women in the historical record in order to adopt new ideas about their historical significance. "The writing of women into history necessarily involves redefining and enlarging traditional notions of historical significance, to encompass personal, subjective experiences as well as public and political activities of history".¹³ Such kind of historical reconstruction would focus on the complete history of a society not only by enquiring about the contribution or the subjection of women; but also by endeavoring to understand the significance of both the sexes as well as by observing their contribution towards social changes. Thus, social historians like Joan Wallach Scott writes, "It requires analysis not only of the relationship between the male and female experience in the past, but also the connection between the past history and current historical experience".¹⁴ Therefore, it would not be an exaggeration to suggest that study of women's history "implies not only a new history of women, but also a new history".¹⁵

1.2. PROBLEMS OF WOMEN'S HISTORY IN NORTHEAST INDIA.

In the context of the Northeast India (comprising seven states of Assam, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh) historical writing is far from adequate. Despite the pre-colonial historical traditions of the Ahoms Buranji of Assam, Tripura Rajamala, Manipur Official Chronicles and the collective memory of hill tribals, the colonizers were the first historians who exposed the history of North East India to the outside world. However, comprehensive history of the region on modern historiographical lines began to emerge only in the post-colonial era.

There are consistent exclusions and dissimilarities to the history of mainland India which have been contested by historians of this region. The post-independent to recent historical discourses mostly revolve around the insurgency and development problem which have been explicitly entered to the agenda of India's nationalism. This trend has ignored the

diverse natures of society and historians failed to emphasize the overall historical development of North East India in a larger context.

Since a recent decade, there has been a renewing interest in reconstructing comprehensive history of North East India at a popular level. The historiographical trend has been problematized by North East regional historians such as Sajal Nag, Manorama Sharma, David Syemlieh and JB.Bhattacharjee. To them, a historiographical problem lies within the sources, materials and official bias. Thus, most of North East historians failed to escape the colonial influences, religious bias, lack of proper methodology and lack of understanding tribal lore. To Sajal Nag, North East Indian communities are marginalized not only in the developmental process of India but also in the historical writing of India.¹⁶ He proposed that in order to develop a true national history, historians should include all aspects of the regional contribution to Indian history.¹⁷

Surprisingly, despite the numerous cry for short coming in North East Indian history, historians have consistently neglected gender aspect in the historical process of North East India. Until very recently, those who have attempted to recover the hidden history of women still comprise of small academic community. Monorama Sharma calls for the need of including feminist agenda in history as she has argued, “If history is the progress and advancement of civilization, then it is absolutely impossible that progress could have been achieved without the equal participation of the women who form about half the society”.¹⁸

Two years before the publication of Sharma’s work, a trained theologian Frederick S Downs focused on several historiographical problems in the context of the Christian impact on the status of women in North East India. On the methodological levels, women historians confronted several problems; most notable is the nature of historical sources. He wrote:

“The sources that have been thus far consulted, and which probably constitute the major types of sources available on the subject, consist in [of] missionary records of various kinds (produced by both men and women), administrative materials (produced exclusively by men), and the writings of social scientists (mainly men but more recently including some women). Only a few of the more recent publications are written from a woman’s perspective, fewer still from tribal perspective and least of all from a tribal woman’s perspective”.¹⁹

Down's skepticism is due to earlier scholars such as L.B Varma, M.P Jagirdar, N.Chaterjee, P.K Bhattacharya, M.Das Gupta and K. Mishra, who have been in fancy of "women status approach" to the various communities of North east India.²⁰ This trend has been continued and expanded by anthropologists in the recent period.

Another problem of historical writing in North East India is deeply embedded in the diverse nature of society. The geo-politically condition of plains and hills is inhabited by hundreds of ethnic groups with their own distinctive cultural practices. Various forms of social and religious institutions; brahmanical, tribal patriarchal and matriarchal societies are found in this region. In such societies, historical generalizations on the various experiences of women under one umbrella often end up in miscalculation. Therefore, comparative and regional study is a prerequisite for understanding the various historical experiences of women of North East India.

The introduction of a new historiographical perspective in 1980's by a group of North Eastern Tribal Christian Feminists is a significant chapter in the writing of women's history of the region. Earlier writers focused more on changes in the status of women concentrated on society in general, while the theologically trained feminists focused on the Christian Missionary works and Church, on its teaching and administrative structure. Feminist theologians are more inclined to 'postcolonial approach' when they raised new issues and challenged the historical writing that often attributed colonialism and Christian Missionaries as the only agent of historical change in tribal hills of North East India. According to them, early scholars tended to ignore social changes during the pre-colonial period.

A feminist theologian Lalrinawmi has contested that "social change" during the colonial and Christian missionary period did not necessarily indicate changes in the position of women; rather it institutionalized "a new form of patriarchy".²¹ Further, she has proposed that the position of women was degraded in the Colonial and Missionary period. Most of the scholars have focused on the processes of social changes only from a narrow aspect or at a superficial level rather than a broader perspective. Such form of writing ignored an in depth study of the unchanging structure of 'tribal patriarchy' and its impact on women's position.

1.3 IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN'S HISTORY IN MIZORAM.

In Mizoram, records of written documents had been found and textualized only from the British intervention in the late nineteenth century. These records are available in the form of military reports, ethnography, travelers' accounts, letters, diaries, government reports, medical report and Christian missionary reports. Since the late nineteenth century, study on Mizo cultural practices had been initiated by the colonial military officers such as T. H Lewin (1870), C.A Soppitt (1887), R.G Woodthorpe (1873), Pemberton, Major MacDonald, Caption Tanner and Caption Badley (1872–1873), A.Z Mackenzie (1884), A.S Reid (1893), J. Shakespear (1912), N.E Parry (1928), A.G McCall (1949) etc. However, these works were largely confined to semantic studies of language, folktales, geographical and political conditions and rarely touched upon the Mizo history in a larger context.

From the early twentieth century, new trend of writing emerged from the Christian missionaries. Some of the famous ones among them were R.A Lorrain (1912), F.J Raper (1944), J.M Lloyd (1957) etc. These records were mostly concerned with the changes and transformations of earlier customs and practices initiated by the colonial officials and Christian missionaries. In these writings, few records on women are found but only as part of the 'subjects' to represent the achievement of their "civilizing mission" in Lushai Hills.

Since the third decade of the twentieth century the works of history writing began to emerge from the educated native male writers. The earliest and most prominent among them were Liangkhaia (1938), Challiana (1949), Vanchhunga (1955) VL Siama (1953) and K. Zawla (1964), Zatluanga (1966) etc. These writings mainly dealt with the socio-economic, religious and political life of the Mizos. The main limitation of the above writers is that their historical writings were mainly recollected from the oral records based on the perspective of 'Lusei patriarchy' and also gave importance and exaggerated the British and European Christian Missionary created institutional structure and no gender structure was found in their writings. Until today the researchers and writers of Mizo History mostly rely on the writings of the above writers.

Between 1960's and 1970 there were some breaks in the growth of historical literature in Mizoram due to the insurgency problem in the region.²² Since, the 1970's there have been

increasing numbers of local writers, scholars as well as the non-indigenous scholars until the present decades. Some of the well known writers emerged such as R. Vanlawma (1965), Chaltuahkhuma (1981), A. Thanglura (1983), C. Hermana (1999), R. Zamawia (2007) who all had political background in one way or the other. All of them focused on the growth of ethnic consciousness in the mid 1940's -1950's and the insurgency problem of 1960's -1980's from ethnic political parties' point of view. In addition, other scholars like JV Hluna (1985) R.N Prasad (1973), G.E Varghese, R.M Agarwal (1974), Nirmal Nibedon (1980), Amit Kumar Nag (1984) also began to pay their interest in the political history of Mizoram in academic discipline. On the one hand the political upheaval of the 1960's led to the emergence of new perspective among the scholars. Most of the scholars began to give their attention on the Mizo's identity and nationalism, where women have been portrayed only as victims but no records on their contribution in these political movements.

During these periods, apart from the political history, several scholars also began to make sustained and systematic studies in social, cultural and religious changes during the post colonial period. The notable scholarly studies among them were the works of notable theologians such as, C.L Hminga (1987) and Mangkhosat Kipgen (1996) etc, regional historians like Sangkima (1992, 2005), J.V Hluna (1985), B. Lalthangliana (2001, 2004, 2006) etc. In the studies of the above scholars though women were not the main theme of their writing, the scholars had briefly demonstrated on how much the status of women had been improved since the introduction of Christianity. They concentrated more on description and documentation rather than locating the problem of gender relations in Mizo society. Following the tradition of Colonial and Missionaries' perspectives, these scholars also looked at the status of women to glorify the work of colonial officials and Christian missionaries and ignored the contributions of women in the larger cultural process of Mizo society.

Since the last two decades, a study on the impact of Christianity on the Mizo women became one of the focuses of the emerging feminist theologians such as, R.L Hnuni, T. Vanlaltlani, P.S Lalhmingthangi and Lalnghakthuami.²³ Despite their determining focus on the contemporary issue of gender hierarchical order in the church, their writings mainly trapped within the reproduction of the Missionary thoughts. They failed to give an in depth estimation on the intersection between the Europeans and the natives. More importantly the Mizo women's perspectives have been left out in their writings.

Like in the west and mainstream India, the year 1975 opened a new chapter for the Mizo women. In this year the Tribal Research Institute in Mizoram for the first time introduced women as one of their research subjects when they published a booklet titled, '*Position and Status of Mizo women in the earlier Mizo Society*', prepared by N. Chatterjee, a senior research officer in the Tribal Research Institute of Mizoram. After more than a decade the Tribal Research Institute published another booklet titled, '*Mizo Women Today*' in 1991. However, like earlier literary works on Mizoram, the authors relied only on the colonial records and missionaries' reports and collected information without proper analysis on gender and systematic research. Apart from these two works, no work has been done on women's studies under the Tribal Research Institute.

Until today, there are no histories of women in Mizoram. Majority of the literatures concerning history of the Mizos are typically narrow and are generally devoid of interpretation where the concept of 'gender' or 'woman' as a category in historical analysis do not find a place in it. In these writings women are either dismissed or portrayed as secondary in the society that demeaned their agency in history. *Gerda Lerner* expressed her view on western historical writing in her book, '*The Creation of Patriarchy*'. Her ideas would be applicable to the context of the existing Mizo history which would imply that history of the Mizo is '*Pre-history*'²⁴ for the Mizo women.

1.4 HISTORICAL TRANSITIONS AND THE PROBLEM OF PERIODIZATION IN MIZORAM.

Periodization is one of the most elusive tasks of historical writing. World history, developed in European academic experience is based on ancient, medieval, and modern history. These categories, derived from European experience have been applied gauchely at best to the histories of China, India, Africa, the Islamic world, or the Western hemisphere—quite apart from the increasingly recognized fact that they do not even apply very well to European history.²⁵ In India, history has been divided into Hindu, Muslim and the British period as James Mill formulated in his work '*The History of British India*' in the early 19th century. These preconceptions have governed routine history focusing on chronology and the narrative of dynasties. Indian historians, by and large have continued to follow this routine. Romila Thapar stated that borrowed from European historical periodization most of the historians have

accepted the colonial periodization and changed the nomenclature to ancient, medieval and modern and thought to be more secular, although the markers remained the same. Thus, there was no effective change in periodization.²⁶

The problem is more complex in the regional context particularly in the North East India. The histories of various ethnic groups are diversely intricate from the mainland India. Nevertheless, in the context of Mizoram the problems of periodization still remain unquestioned among the historians. Following the categories of mainstream Indian periodization is a problem in this region for it does not implicate socio-cultural realities. In addition, there exists historical overlapping between the periods. As history is an unfolding story of change and emergence, a historian has to locate and examine the transitions which lead to change in historical processes. However changes occurred at different points of time in different situations as there are not linear and equivalent changes all over the sub-continent. Romilla Thapar then suggested that it is possible to see a particular form which dominated and provided a context to the others.²⁷ As far as it can be traced, in the context of Mizo history political transition is central to the study of historical process.

Given the occurrence of new political structure from the late nineteenth century, most of the writers have seen 'Colonialism' as the harbinger of historical transition in Mizoram. Thus, periodization in the form of 'historical colonialism' has proved tenacious in Mizo history. Accordingly, most of the Mizo history writers have categorized the historical period into three phases- Pre Colonial period as a synonym to traditional period, Colonial period as synonym to the transitional period that was the period after the consolidation of the Colonial supremacy in Lushai hills until the British left the country in the middle of the twentieth century. The period after the British left the region is commonly periodized as the Post Colonial period or Post-Independence period.

One important question concerning 'colonial transitional society' is 'transition to what context?' If we look at the transition regarding social, cultural and religious system, more initiatives had been taken by the Christian missionaries rather than the Colonial administrators. Hence, for many writers, Christianity did not seem to represent the essence of Colonialism as the missionaries and colonial administrators entered the region with different missions. For some writers, especially theologians, Christianity therefore, served as the indicator of social

transitions and followed historical periodization in terms of Christian era by categorizing the period into- Pre- Christian and Christian era.

Colonialism therefore, itself is a problem in the context of Mizoram particularly when we compare with the perception of liberal Marxist historians such as Bipan Chandra and A. R. Desai who studied colonial transition of the mainstream Indian history in terms of world capitalist economy apart from its political dominational aspect.²⁸ Economic interest was not the main reason of the colonial intervention in the context of Mizoram, but colonial state was introduced as part of colonial system, which later resulted to the outbreak of political upheavals in the middle of the twentieth century.

As part of colonization, the strategy the British followed in the region was to allow the missionaries to build their medical, religious and educational institutions and used them as agencies of integrating the hill tribals with the west. In this context, F.S Downs also says, ‘The main agent of change was the Government itself. The Christian missions and the small Christian communities that soon grew up as a result of their work did not have sufficient resources to initiate major changes. But they were able to play an important accumulative role’.²⁹

Overall a great deal of social transition occurred during this period as various Mizo practices of religion, gender norms, popular culture, social status and even basic concepts of identity began to face new challenges. The post independence era brought another important chapter in the history of the Mizos. The transfer of power from the colonial to Independent government had several impacts in the Mizo hills. Identity crisis and formation of ethnic political parties was developed rapidly. The name Lushai Hills was changed to Mizo district in 1954. The colonial institution of tribal chieftainship was abolished in 1955.

Another crisis, a devastating famine occurred between 1958 and 1960. This was soon followed by insurgency movement in Mizo Hills which had outrageous impact on the Mizo society, particularly on women. Despite the unsolved problem of the concept of ‘colonialism,’ the present thesis followed periodization in the form of historical colonialism and tries to locate women in the process of socio-political transition from chiefdoms to colonial state, traditional religion to Christianity under the colonial rule and from colonial state to independent state.

Given that the periods which historians have commonly regarded as turning points for all historical developments are not necessarily the same for men as for women, problems of periodization and transition become more plentiful in the writing of women's history.³⁰ This problem was questioned by a socialist feminist, Joan Kelly-Gadol when she challenges how periodization in conventional world history fails to imply the experiences of women in history in her paper, "*Did women have a Renaissance?*"³¹

Recently, this assumption on periodization was confirmed by American historians such as Linda Kaber and a feminist historian Gerda Lerner. In her paper '*Placing Women in History*' Gerda Lerner argues, "All the conceptual models of history hitherto developed have only limited usefulness for women's history, since all are based on the silent assumptions of a patriarchal ordering of values".³² So she has suggested a new method for the study of different stages in 'transitional history'. This includes the study of women's status and roles, women's culture and consciousness, women's effort to attain autonomy and emancipation etc, which was followed by a synthesis: a history of dialectic, the tensions between male and female culture that would be based on the comparative study of men and women in given periods. According to Lerner, only after a series of such detailed studies one may define the new universal history.³³

Thus, the major concern for studying women in the different stages of historical transitions in Mizo society is tracing changes in the roles and status of women. In the context of colonial India, Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid argue, "Both tradition and modernity have been carriers of patriarchies....and are eminently patriarchal construct...change has continued to occur; we need to see how women and womanhood are inserted into and affected by social change, and how change is made to appear as continuity".³⁴

As the present study focuses on the historical transitions from the 18th Century to 20th Century, the question must be: Was women's status always the same? What was women's status when compared to men in the historical process? How far did the historical transition affect their life? What roles did the Mizo women play in the development of the society? Lastly, to disclose women's effort to access 'public' sphere, their autonomy and to recover their unheard voices in the historical process was the main intention of the present study.

1.5 THESIS APPROACH.

From the light of the above discussions, the study of women's lives in Mizo history requires new historical approach and methodology both at empirical and theoretical levels. By using "gender" and "women" as the central of analysis the present thesis suggests: the use of alternative sources, rereading of conventional sources and recovering women's agency through non conventional sources. Thus, the present study focuses on a number of historical topics by 'restoring the voices of marginal groups', which have been left out in the master historical narratives.³⁵

One way of restoring the marginal/subaltern voices is to practice alternative reading of history through the 'oral tradition (folklores, legends, myths, proverbs and songs etc) and oral history' (personal experiences, narratives, family stories, memoirs etc).³⁶ The use of oral tradition and oral history is accompanied by the anxieties 'about the contamination of both archival history and disciplinary empiricism', as it is well characterized in Jacques Derrida's work on "archive fever".³⁷ The Indian subaltern studies series initiated by Ranajit Guha and others have proved beyond doubt that the "Subalterns" have no archives and that "orality" is their only power.³⁸ Italian historian, A Portelli has pointed out that the value of oral history is in the "construction of suppressed memories" of non-hegemonic groups.³⁹

The increasing acceptance of non-conventional sources (autobiography, folklore, oral tradition, oral history, personal narratives and memoirs) among the feminist historians in the last two decades have pointed out that things were changed for the better. They incorporated the use of oral histories in their subject, so those groups who were marginalized in conventional history can be given a voice and problematize the narratives in historical context. After all, feminist theory is grounded on women's lives and aimed at analyzing the role and meaning of gender in those lives and in society, women's personal narratives are essential primary documents for feminist research.⁴⁰

By using non-conventional sources such as oral testimony, autobiography, photographs, diaries, and memoirs from the western feminists' approach the Indian feminist scholars like Ritu Menon, Kamla Bhasin, Urvashi Butalia, Malavika Karlekar and Geraldine Forbes⁴¹ have attempted to recover the experiences of Indian women. Unfortunately the "fiercely empirical

historians” who assess the fallacies of memory as the pitfall of oral history have resented such kind of historical recollection.⁴² However, it is also accepted that conventional sources suffer from similar problems. Antoinette Burtons brought out new questions in this context: “what is history, who writes history and for whose consumption?” According to Burton, modern South Asian history, dependent as it is on the colonial archive, is additionally biased by Anglo-Americanism. Collected predominantly by white middleclass men for the production of knowledge in imperial administration, such archives reflect power relations between the ruler and the ruled and consequently have little to offer us in capturing the life experiences of South Asian women.⁴³

Contrary to such perspective Helene Cixous asserts that as subject for history woman however occur simultaneously in several archival documents. To support this theory Betty Joseph argues, “Women are everywhere in colonial archive, albeit in a fragmented and dispersed way”.⁴⁴ Thus, there is a need of change in handling the sources. In this context rereading and contextualizing the representation of women in conventional archives exemplify the conditions that made it possible for the women to appear in the official record. When she discusses the problem of reading colonial archives for the feminist historical subject in her essay on the Rani of Sirmur, Gayatri Spivak demonstrates the “consolidation” of colonial power, which prevented the Rani to assert agency. However, her study gave Rani a status of performing resistance against patriarchal power. In the context of the pre colonial and colonial period, rereading of colonial and missionary archive is therefore necessary.

To reconstruct the pre-colonial oral based Mizo society, the historians are still dependent upon the colonial and missionary sources, who utilized knowledge and information on the Mizos’ past mostly from the native male informants. Further this approach is supported by the transcription of oral information to reveal women’s agency that are made to remain silent in mainstream accounts. For instance, with a view to recover their agency deciphering of the women’s voices in oral tradition (songs, folk tales, myths and legends), which are available in colonial ethnographies and available transcribed text of oral information. Rereading of oral tradition particularly proverbs that conspicuously contained a lot about the women’s issue also reinterprets the status of pre-colonial Mizo women. Such form of approach not merely chronicles the past; it also exposes the buried historical contents in order to enlarge the historical text.

Although it has been regarded redundant by some feminist writers, the traditional women's history approach of 'adding women'⁴⁵ or "compensatory history"⁴⁶ and "celebratory history" cannot be fully ignored in Mizo history where the writing of women's history is still in an embryonic stage. Within this approach, comparison between conventional and alternative sources locates and reinterprets the misrepresentation of those notable women in archival records. In the context of colonial and post colonial period, this approach not only discovers the omitted lives and experiences of women; it recovers the voices and consciousness of women and adds it to history. This approach would enable us to understand that "women shared a sexual identity and whatever they did adds substance to their history".⁴⁷ After all it is argued, "In woman, personal history blends together with the history of all women, as well as national and world history".⁴⁸

Majority of Mizo historical writings in post colonial period dealt with the ethnic movements, when/where women were/are portrayed only as victims. As in the words of Gerda Lerner, treating women as mere victims of oppression merely places them in a male defined conceptual framework that reflected male's experiences not the female. Thus to challenge the dominated "victimizing narratives" it is pertinent to raise several questions. Did women give response to the patriarchal power beyond their victimization in the political and ethnic movement? Was women's definition of ethnic nationalism similar to men's? What were the conditions that made it possible for them to emerge in the movement? Where were the hidden women volunteers and 'victims' of the political movement?

In Mizoram, there are abundant literatures on MNF movement/independent movement written by both native and non-native writers as the academic discourse during the insurgency period and the following era mostly revolved around contestation of power between ethnic state and larger nation state. The theme of the study has been expanded in a recent decade, but women's experiences and consciousness in the movement are largely neglected. Currently, there is no primary historical work on women's role in the MNF Movement. Archives and libraries contain little information relating to the experience of women in the MNF Movement and few other sources (political parties/NGO/Research Centre/individual library) portrayed them as individuals in their own right. Women, it may be argued, are 'twice hidden' from traditional to contemporary Mizo history.

Thus, women's lives and experiences need to be captured through the use of individual oral testimonies/personal narratives to construct Mizo social history. Due to the recurring representation of "consolidation" for patriarchal power, the voices of women either as actors or as "victims" could not be heard in conventional archives. From the perspective of Urvashi Butalia on the study of Partition of India in 1947 Mizo women were focused simultaneously as agents and victims of the ethnic movement in the post independent scenario. In the meantime, their voices were recovered through the critical examination between alternative sources (personal memoirs and narratives, oral testimonies, autobiographies etc) and government accounts.

From the above approaches, the present study interprets the past in a way that women are not only visibilised but that their roles are more fully understood as actors and agents in Mizo history.⁴⁹ While tracing their changing status during the periods of transition the present study explored women's agency through the aspects of consciousness, perspective, aspiration, worldview, assertion and resistance. Drawn from the definition of Padma Anagol who suggests the use of this conception for the study of colonial India, women's agency was uncovered from the individual and collective will and assertion of women to act in conscious forms of resistance against certain kinds of oppression.⁵⁰ Thus retrieving women's agency in history has also meant recovering strong, outspoken, powerful women who could then form part of the struggle in changing social and political condition".⁵¹

1.6 TERMS AND CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS.

Several terms and conceptual terminologies used in this study need clarification: Though many of the terms are used as synonyms with the concepts of current academic discourses, some of the terms are used purposefully in the Mizo context.

The term 'Lusei Patriarchy' is repeatedly used throughout this thesis. 'Lusei Patriarchy' is largely used in the pre-colonial context and it denotes the male defined Lusei cultural system with a customary law and social norms under the patronage of Sailo chiefdoms.

Regarding the periodization century paradigm is followed rather than year based chronology. Although 18th Century to first half of the 19th Century indicates the indigenous

society without the interference of the external powers, the term pre-colonial is also used to identify the period before the invention of the British. As such the last decade of 19th Century to the middle of the 20th century indicate the colonial and missionary period, whereas the term post colonial identifies the period after the Indian independence of 1947 up till the year 1986.

The concept of agency is of course complex and has been debated and defined variously. In the present study, it is used to define the existence of women's conscious awareness (i.e. perspective, aspiration, and worldview) of socio-political condition and of being subordinate to patriarchy accompanied by assertion and resistance. In some senses, it is used as a synonym of women's contributing knowledge and labour that effectively brought the social and political life. Agency is not a homogenous analytical category. Women of different social classes (both individually and collectively) had different experiences. So this thesis proposes that a collection of such diverse women's experiences and their perspective formed "agency".

1.7 REVIEW OF LITERATURES.

As indicated before, the earliest works about the Mizos were taken almost exclusively by the outsiders mainly, the colonial officials whose writing on the Mizos did not directly concern the lives of women. Besides the oral traditions, the present thesis uses a variety of colonials' and missionaries' accounts in writing the history of pre-colonial and colonial scenario. The earliest account on the lives of women in Mizo family was represented by a Deputy Commissioner of a Chittagong Hill Tracts, T. H Lewin in his book *Wild Races of South Eastern India* in 1870 who observed the Mizo women as occupying a privileged position in the family. Ever since the British colonized the hills, few accounts on the degrading lives of women had been illustrated by the colonial officers.

In contrast to Lewin's observation, J. Shakespear in 1903 demonstrated the timid lives of Mizo women in the traditional society in his book '*The Lusei-Kuki Clans*'. Amongst the colonial works, N.E. Parry's, '*A Monograph on Lushai Customs and Ceremonies*' (1928) was one of the detailed accounts which shed light on the lives of Mizo women. This book documented account of the earlier Lusei customs and traditions, which included the issues of divorce, marriage customs, sexual offences and the law of inheritance.

A.G. McCall, the Superintendent of the Lushai hills from 1931 to 1943 gave a detailed account of the history of the Lusei clan by tracing their origin in his book, '*The Lushai Chrysalis*'. Though women were not the main focus of this book, A.G. McCall provided some information on women's lives during the colonial period by saying that "the Lushai (Lusei) has little sense of any great chivalry towards women". By pointing at the gender division of labour he also gave a good account of daily life of women in which he describes women as industrious and hard labours in jhumming. He also focused on the political history from 18th century till the mid of 20th century in which he gave good account of the history of village wars and the Mizo's encounters with the British. Despite his concern about the position of women his discussions of wars and village administrations neglected women's role and activities.

A Presbyterian missionary JM Lloyd, who served in Mizoram from 1944-1964, made extensive studies of the early history of the Mizo church in his books "*High on the hills*" and '*The History of the Church in Mizoram; Harvest in the hills*', which give some information for the present study. On the basis of his studies, JM Lloyd described the status of women that were strictly circumscribed and stated that the emancipation of women came surely but slowly through Christian influence. The same perspective is followed by C.L Hminga a native Baptist Church's theologian. In his book, '*The life and witnesses of the churches in Mizoram*', Hminga concluded the impacts and achievements of Christianity in the Lushai hills with the improving position of women.

For a detailed description on the lives of women in Mizo society during the colonial and missionary period, the writings of women missionaries, mostly in the form of autobiography have provided valuable information. The most notable works are E.M Chapman and M. Clark's '*Mizo Miracle*' and Gwen Rees Roberts's '*Memories of Mizoram: Reflections and Recollections*'. E.M Chapman and M. Clark dealt with the Baptist Missions' activities in the Southern part of Mizoram whereas Gwen Rees Roberts work mostly concerned with the Welsh women's missionary works in the Northern Mizoram. In their books, both these missionaries focused on women's education as the main conduit for the emancipation of Mizo women. To reveal the successful work on women's education, Chapman and Clark highlighted the stories of few educated women and their contribution for their missions in improving the condition of Mizo women.

For a more detailed account on the report of women's work on medicine, Welsh Presbyterian Missionaries May Bounds and Gladys M Evans' *'Medical Missions in Mizoram: Personal Experiences'* and Imogen Roberts' unpublished book, *'Mawii's Story in 1950'* also provided some information. From their personal experiences, the women missionaries highlighted the contributing efforts of the native (Mizo) women for the success of medicinal missions in Lushai hills. Yet, being served as Christian Missionaries, these missionaries also emphasized the Christian missionaries' work particularly female education as the main factor for the women's emancipation in Mizoram.

Apart from the colonials' and missionaries' works, there are growing numbers of literatures that focused on the British administration; however there are few works that focus on women. Amongst these are Suhash Chatterjee's books *'Mizo Chief and chieftoms'* and *Mizo Under the British Rule* have provided few aspects for the study of the role women in pre-colonial political administration and their roles as political agents in the colonial political scenario. Though *Mizo Chief and Chieftoms* mainly dealt with the traditional Mizo village life under the chief, the author gave biographies of Mizo chiefs in the last chapter of his book that also included some female chieftainess. However, the main lacuna of these books is that the author mainly depends on the British documents and fully ignores the indigenous oral sources. Due to this, the author has committed a number of mistakes with regards to the name of these chief/chieftainesses, which made the book unreliable in some instances.

To understand the position of Mizo women in pre-colonial society N Chatterjee has briefly studied family life, marriage customs and social customs in her work *'Position and Status of Mizo women in the earlier Mizo Society'* in 1975. In her attempt to understand the position of Mizo women in traditional or Pre-colonial society she has merely followed N.E Parry's *'A Monograph on Lushai Customs and Ceremonies'* without giving proper analysis on the history of Mizo society. Without re-examining the colonial accounts she has drawn a conclusion by saying "...the status of women in their society was in no way inferior to that of man and she suffered none of those derogatory and discriminatory treatments as may be found in some of the more advance societies".

However, by comparing the position of women in a Hindu society to that of tribal women cannot be accurate as they were in completely different worlds in terms of materialisms and ideology. The absence of the *Sati* or *dowry* systems does not imply that the position of

women in Mizo pre-colonial society was better than those of caste Hindu women. Her study on the Mizo women informed us that the position of Mizo women needs reconsideration and reconstruction in its own context.

After more than a decade the Tribal Research Institute published another booklet titled, '*Mizo Women Today*' that deals with the position of Mizo women since the traditional period to the modern times. For the present research the book has provided a brief report on the position of women as well as their contribution as active participants in the social, religious and economic realms by identifying education with Christianity as the main reason for the improving status of women.

The growing consciousness amongst the feminist theologians in a recent period resulted to the emergent publications on the studies of Mizo women. Zomuani's and Lalrinawmi Ralte's recent works have presented information on the role of women in the Church for the fifth chapter. Mostly based on the missionaries' accounts, Zomuani has given a detailed account on the roles of Mizo women for the growth of Presbyterian Church from 1904- 2004 in her book '*Kum Za Chhung a Kohhran Hmeichhe Chanchin*'.

While acknowledging female education that enabled the native women to contribute for the Church she has credited the women missionaries as liberating force for Mizo women. On the other hand in her book titled '*Bible Women te Nghilhlohnan*' Lalrinawmi Ralte has provided a detailed a biographical accounts on the Bible women from 1913-1962 to recover the hidden agency of the Mizo women. The book has discovered the 22 women, who served as important agents not only for the growth of the Church, but also for the medicinal works of the missions in the villages for the wellbeing of the society.

Another feminist theologian T Vanlaltlani has focused on a detailed account on the movement of Mizo women from private sphere to public sphere in her book '*Mizo Hmeichhiate Kawngzawh*'. To reveal women's efforts to access public sphere she has given detailed information of the development of Women's groups in the church and other Mizo Women's Non Governmental Organizations. The book is divided into three parts- Women's position during the Pre- Modern period, Church Women's groups in different denominations and Women's Organizations. Her study reveals that though women gave lots of contributions

in the society, the structure of patriarchy still dominates the society which made women in an inferior position.

'Emergent Women; Mizo Women's Perspective' is one of the most recent books, which deals with the Mizo women. In this book, the author Bonita Aleaz has illustrated the perception of Mizo women about their emergent situation in the process of social transformation. Through the traditions, patriarchy, education and religion, she studied how women tried to access 'public sphere'. In order to reveal their real problems in this emergent situation; she unravels the voices of women's organizations and feminist theologians which are completely different from the problems faced by the mainland Indian women. To express the slow progress of these organizations she compares their efforts with the Indian women by saying 'The women were very conscious of their difference in the nature of their demands from those expressed by the women of the plains...yet, on the other hand, the slow and tortuous route taken by the women of the plains to establish their independent spheres of action seemed to be making its way in the hills as way'. Her study reveals that though women began to enter public spaces, still their position is very limited in the customary laws and women's ordination. Pointing at the religion she argues that male hierarchy in the church is the main reason for the slow progress of women as it is the same hierarchy that controls both the religious and socio-political sectors.

To draw women out of obscurity and repair the historical construction to some extent, Lalsangzuali Sailo made an effort in the form of biographical writings in her books *'Sakhming Chullo'* and *'Tlawm Ve Lo Lalnu Ropuiliani'*. The former is a collection of some biographies on women poetesses and their songs composed since the earliest times to the present days. The later has focused on an individual character of a woman chieftainess Ropuiliani who bravely resisted against and refused to surrender to the British. Though the author has mainly dealt with biographies of notable or worthy woman, it exposed the previously unknown excellence and capability of women to enter the space of village administrations during the Pre-colonial period.

To supplement these, an edited volume on the *'Role of Ropuiliani in the Freedom Struggle'*, a collection of nine empirical essays on a woman chieftainess Ropuiliani has a valuable contribution for the study of the history of Mizo women's resistance against colonial military powers. In their attempt of emphasizing the "oppressive" and "repressive" nature of the British colonialism, almost all the authors however failed to reconstruct history of

resistance from a feminist's perspective. Due to the strong dependence on colonial accounts, their construction is strongly influenced by the colonial prejudice that merely defined women as passive and subsidiary inferiors.

Unfortunately there is no particular book that focused on Mizo women and ethnic nationalism in the post colonial period despite the fact that the post colonial political scenario witnessed the movement of women from the "private" to "public" sphere. There are very few works on women's experiences in Northeast India with regard to various forms of unrest, conflict and violence. Preeti Gill's recent work on 'Troubled Zones: Women's Voices from North-East India', Rita Manchanda's 'Women, War and Peace in South Asia: Beyond Victimhood to Agency' and Ava darshan Shrestha and Rita Thapa's edited works on 'The impact of Armed Conflict on Women in South Asia' are based on interviews and first person's accounts. They also turned their attention to women as active agents, both in the violence of conflict and in movements for peace.⁵² In such a scenario of mainstream representation, the real subaltern voices remained silent. The patriarchal values however are reinforced and democratic spaces for women are diminished. Surprisingly, there is no mention of Mizo women in these books.

For many years, stories about the Mizo freedom movement had been gender biased towards males and no one had given thought to the contributions women had made for the MNF's cause. Recently in their attempt to reconstruct the history "from below" ethnic writers began to recover the lost voices and hidden roles of marginalized section of the society, mostly in the form of novel and biographical writings. Amongst these works, C. Zama's "*Zoram a Tap*" has included a few narratives on the roles and voices of women. The limitation of this work however is that the author has failed to recover the real agency of women for his main interest has been limited on the question of victimization.

The first writing on ethnic insurgency movement by the women is "*Zawlkhawpui Sen Mei Chan Ni*" (The Day the City of Aizawl Went up in Flames). The article was first published in 1980 in the '*MZP Chanchinchu*' (Magazine of Mizo Students' Union). Recently J.V Hluna the then editor of the magazine has included the same in his book "*Zawlkhawpui Sen Mei Channi*" (which is after the title of this article). In this article the author Laltanpuui has recollected her experiences of the day i.e. 5th March of 1966, when the Indian government fought Aizawl, the capital of Mizo hill district with powerful fighters. From her traumatic

reminisces Laltanpuui has clearly portrayed how the innocent civilians suffered the oppressive instruments of the nation state. Amongst these were also innocent women and young girls. Furthermore through a story of her friend Kimteii who died on that day Laltanpuui recovered conscious patriotic zeal and voices of Mizo women for the Mizo nation.

Given that the conventional archives and ethnic writings on the post colonial independence movement seldom include women and their voices, “*Hnehna chu Lalpa Ta a ni*” an unpublished autobiography of B. Vanlalzari gives a valuable source for the present study on ethnic insurgency movement. From her prison diaries Vanlalzari has narrated her five years experiences as a political prisoner in prisons between 1975 and 1980. In her work, she has also identified the name of other women who were confined in jails due to the insurgency problems and given detail information on the mainstream patriarchal attitude and oppressive nature of the Indian army officers towards the ethnic women in prison. Beside the author has also repeatedly mentioned how she resisted against the repressive nature of the Indian armies against her nation. Through her writing, she has expressed her patriotic and nationalist feelings as a Mizo and also voiced her desire and aspiration for Mizo nationhood.

Apart from the above mentioned books, there are also few books that provided sources for the study of women’s history in Mizoram. However their account of women, are overwhelmingly descriptions of lifestyle rather than the analysis of women’s position in a historical context. This is mainly due to lack of theoretical approaches as a result of which no serious consideration was given to the study of women.

1.8 SOURCES.

Historical sources on women studies in Mizoram are fragmented. They are neither properly collected nor devotedly organized. The present thesis therefore depends on the following sources:

Colonial accounts (1890-1947): (Documented exclusively by men) consisted of administrative reports, travelers’ accounts, letters, diaries etc. Various administrative reports were published during the colonial period. (*Gazetteer of Bengal and North East India, Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol-III etc).

During the post-independence era, various documents were accumulated and stored in State Archive under the guidance of Department of Art and Culture, Government of Mizoram. The materials in the Mizoram state archive are divided into several categories and have been indexed, though did not arranged chronologically and alphabetically. But these records are mostly in the form of general information on administrative report, census report, health report, education report on Mizoram. Very few of them reflected the women's lives in particular.

A large number of documents are also found in Assam Archive and Bengal Archive Kolkata. Some of these documents were collected and re-published in recent decade by individuals and Tribal Research Institute, Government of Mizoram. (These include C.Chawngkunga; *Important Document of Mizoram*, published by Art And Culture Department, Mizoram, Aizawl, 1998; Report of the Administration of North East India (1921-22) Mittal Publication, 1984; *The Lushais 1878-1889*, TRI (1978)).

One of the most important sources of women history is newspaper such as *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu* (1901-1940's), which was published during the colonial time. This newspaper contained valuable information on writings on Mizo women by the Colonial Government, Christian missionaries and earlier Mizo writers.

Missionaries' Reports (1894-1966): The Welsh Presbyterian Missionary society and London Baptist Mission Society were the first missionaries in Mizoram. Since literature played a leading role in the mission works, enormous materials were produced by missionaries and native writers. The most important sources are extracted from the records of Presbyterian Church of Mizoram and Baptist Church of Mizoram. These records are found in Synod archive, Aizawl and Baptist Archive, Serkawn, Lunglei District. Other important documents had been accumulated by theologians, which are found in the libraries of Aizawl Theological College (Presbyterian) and Academy of Integrated Christian Studies (Baptist). Records found in London and Wales were collected by theologians and re-published in recent years. Many important documents are still left uncovered.

For the purpose of women missionaries' work on Mizo women, the accounts of women missionaries, which are in the form of autobiographies such as Baptist missionaries E.M Chapman and Clarks's '*God's Miracle in Mizoram*' and Presbyterian missionaries May

Bounds and Gwladys M Evans's '*Medical Mission in Mizoram: Personal Experiences*' and Gwen Rees Roberts's '*Memories of Mizoram*' give us some information. Besides these, a collection of women missionaries' reports titled, '*Set On A Hill Light on The Lushai Hills After Forty Years Report of Women's Work*' published by Baptist Church of Mizoram also provided a valuable source for the study of missionaries works for the development of women in South Lushai hills.

Other important sources contained newspapers/magazines introduced by Christian Missionaries such as *Kristian Tlangau*, started by Presbyterian Church in 1911. This newspaper acted as a platform among the early educated people where a number of women issues were raised and discussed.

Women's Organizational Records: There was one women's organization i.e. *Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Pawl* in Mizoram during the period under study. Some of their important documents are available in their respective General headquarters in Aizawl and sub-headquarters in different districts. The personal papers of women activists also constitute an essential category of historical sources.

Church Records: The contemporary churches' documents after India's Independence also give important sources for the present study. These include Presbytery reports, Baptist Assembly reports and the reports of Women's wing (*Central Kohhran Hmeichhe Committee (CKHC)*, *Mizoram Baptist Kohhran Hmeichhe Pawl (BKHP)*) such as minutes, newsletters, pamphlets and souvenirs etc, which contain valuable information for the present research.

Government of Mizoram Records: These records include reports prepared by various government bodies of Mizoram since the birth of Mizo Hill District Council. Besides, *Statistical Handbook Mizoram* published annually by Directorate of Economics & Statistics and *Mizoram District Gazetteers*, published by the Director of Art & Culture (1989) provide extensive information on Mizoram.

Oral History: Interviews of the women activists in the political movements and churches and students of Mission Girls' Schools contribute important source of data for this research, which included background information of respondents and their personal experiences.

Oral Traditions: These include songs, myths, legends, proverbs and folk tales of the region, which provide valuable source for the history of the Mizos. These oral traditions are carried on from one generation to another. While few of them are documented by the colonizers, many of them are literally recorded in recent period.

Additional Sources: Additional sources consist of books, articles and essays on Mizoram, unpublished seminar papers, theological works on women, theoretical readings of gender and women etc. Numerous minor collections of local books and copies of documents are scattered throughout Mizoram in Private Libraries and NGO libraries.

1.9. CHAPTERIZATION.

The present study is divided into seven chapters.

Chapter I: Scrutinized in the first chapter is the women's historiography and importance of women's history in the Northeastern part of India and the need for the reconstruction of Mizo history from the women's perspectives are highlighted. The aims of the study, approaches, sources and methodologies, problems of periodization and review of literature that threw some light on the history of Mizo women are also included in this chapter.

Chapter II: Divided into three phases, the second chapter seeks to trace the historical background of the present study for a better understanding of the roles and status of women in the changing historical space and time. It critically examines social transitions from the traditional religion to Christianity and political transition from Chiefdoms to Colonial states and then the political transition from Mizo District Council to the formation of Statehood.

In the first phase of the chapter genealogy, political administrations, village planning, tribal wars, social life, religious practices, social customs and manners etc of the Mizos from their migration from Burma till the British administration are highlighted. The second phase deals with the historical transitions brought about by the British Government and the Christian missionaries. The socio-political changes brought about by the two new factors under the colonial state are critically examined up till the middle of the twentieth century. Since the

British left the country the Lushai hills entered a new phase of political transition, the last phase of the chapter therefore demonstrated on the birth of ethnic political parties, ethnic nationalism and insurgency movement until the formation of statehood during the late period of the twentieth century.

Chapter III: The third chapter maps the social and cultural space of the Pre-colonial period in which the women were located. From oral tradition such as proverbs, songs and folk tales it critically analyzes women's life under the 'Lusei Patriarchy'. In order to challenge the available historical writings, it also seeks to represent the important roles women played in the social and cultural tradition of the pre-colonial period and their voices of resistance against the 'Lusei patriarchy' as well.

Chapter IV: The fourth chapter locates the women's agency during the colonial encounter of Lushai hills by rereading and recovering the hidden story of women in colonial text. The early history of the Mizos was mainly in the form of colonial military expansion in the hills. During the course of struggle between the Mizo chiefs and colonizers substantial amount of knowledge on Mizo history was generated. Several women emerged in colonial text as important agents, however recent historiography of colonial expansion failed to see women as important historical agents in the struggle against colonialism in Lushai hills.

Chapter V: The fifth chapter discusses the changing position and status of women in the society during this transitional period from the late nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century (i.e. up till the period before the missionaries left the region due to the ethnic nationalist movement in 1960's). The chapter begins with the reformist ideas established by the colonizers and the Christian missionaries and focuses on the questions of women's position raised by native male intelligentsias. Situating education as the main indicator of social change, it demonstrates how female education changed the lives of women and enabled them to take part in public sphere.

By re-examining the colonials' and missionaries' accounts, the chapter critically studies the contributions of the colonizers and the missionaries for the liberation of women from the bondage of "savage" customs. In order to challenge the ideas, which only situated women as subjects of social change and to place them in the position of important agents for social change; it rereads the women missionaries' reports and native women's accounts of their lives.

Chapter VI: The transition from colonialism to post colonial state is an important part of Mizo history. The period witnessed rapid transition from ‘tribalism’ to ‘ethnnic-nationalism, which went hand in hand with political and identity crisis. The growth of ethnic-politics in post colonial state had a significant impact on the position of women. The first women’s organization was formed with the aim of women’s participation in ethnic politics to address the issue of women’s life in Mizo customary law.

The participation of women in social and political reform movement also marked a significant shift from private to public sphere. However, this was short lived as a result of the formation of new ethnic political party (Mizo National Front) in 1965. The war between Mizo National Front and the Indian nation state had intense impact on Mizo women. Women’s active participation of any form in politics experienced severe deterioration and the erasure of the role of women began in Mizo history. Hence, the sixth chapter traced the development of ethnic nationalist movement and its impact on Mizo women. The main objective is to recover the lost voices of women and their agency in the historical process of insurgency war in Mizo hills.

Chapter VII: The last chapter is the Conclusion where the thesis is summarized and broad conclusions are drawn from the other chapters.

Endnotes and References.

¹ E.H Carr, *What is History*, New York, 1967.p.35.

² Kirit K. Shah (ed), *History and Gender, Some Explorations*, Rawat Publication, 2005. p.5.

³ Gerda Lerner, 'New Approaches to the Study of Women in American History: Theoretical and Critical Essays', in Bernice A. Carroll (ed), *Liberating Women's History: Theoretical and Critical Essays*, University Of Illinois, Chicago, 1976. p. 350.

⁴ Kirit K.Shah, op.cit., p. 1.

⁵ Gerda Lerner (1976(a)), op.cit., Ibid.

⁶ Sheila Rowbotham, *Hidden From History*, New York, 1974. p. xxxi.

⁷ Kirit K. Shah, op.cit., p. 5.

⁸ Yasmin Saikia, *Fragmented Memories: Struggling to be Tai-Ahom in India*, Duke University Press, 2004. p. 1.

⁹ Judith P. Zinsser, *History and Feminism, A Glass Half Full*, Twanye Publishers, Newyork, 1993. p. 6.

¹⁰ Gerda Lerner, 'Placing Women in History: A 1975 Perspective', in Bernice A. Carroll, op.cit., p. 357.

¹¹ Ibid. p. 369.

¹² Sheila Rowbotham, op.cit., p. 55.

¹³ Ann D. Gordon, Mari Jo Buhle & Nancy Shrom Dye, 'The Problem of Women's History', in Bernice A. Carroll, op.cit., p. 89.

¹⁴ Joan Wallach Scott, 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', in Joan Wallach Scott (ed), *Feminism and History*, Oxford University Press, 1996. p. 155.

¹⁵ Ann D. Gordon, Mari Jo Buhle & Nancy Shrom Dye, op.cit., Ibid.

¹⁶ For further details please see Sajal Nag, *Contesting Marginality: Ethnicity, Insurgency and Separatism in North east india. Sajal Nag; India and North east India*, Regency Publications, New Delhi, 1998.

¹⁷ Sajal Nag, 'Aspects of Historiography of North East India', *Proceedings of North East India History Association, 17th Session*, Government College, Aizawl, 1997. pp. 66-74.

¹⁸ Manorama Sharma, *History and History Writing in North East India*, Regency Publication, New Delhi, 1998. P.49. Please also see, Manorama Sharma, 'Writing History: The feminist Debate' in *Proceedings of North East India History Association, 17th Session*, Government Aizawl College, Aizawl, 1997.

¹⁹ Frederick S. Downs, *The Christian Impact On the Women in North East India*, North East Hill University Publication, Shillong, Meghalaya, 1996. p. 2.

²⁰ For further details please see L.B Varma, 'Problem of Historically Determining the Status of women of Manipur', in *Proceedings of North East India History Association, 9th Session*, Guwahati 1988. M.P Jagirdar; 'Status of Women: A Case Study with Special Reference to North-eastern Region,' in JP Singh; N.N.Vyas & RS Ram (eds), *Tribal Women and development*, Jaipur, 1988. N.Chaterjee, *Status of Women in Earlier Mizo Society*, TRI, Aizawl, 1975. M. Das Gupta, *Status of Tribal Women in Tripura*, Vikas Publication, New Delhi, 1993. K. Mishra, *Women in Tribal community: A study of Arunachal Pradesh*, New Delhi, Vikash Publishing House, 1991.

²¹ Lalrinawmi Ralte, *Crabs Theology: A Critique of Patriarchy-Cultural Degradation and Empowerment of Mizo Women*, Unpublished D.Min Dissertation, Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A, 1993.

²² B. Lalthangliana, *Mizo Literature*, Aizawl, 1993. p. 413.

²³ For example, please see R.L. Hnuni, *Women in the context of the Bible and Mizoram- Toward a Tribal Theology: The Mizo Perspectives*, Jorhat, MTC, 1989. T. Vanlaltlani, *From Bondage to Liberation*, Unpublished B.D Thesis, Serampore Theological College, 1983. P.S. Lalhmingthangi, *The Status and Role of Women under the Baptist Church of Mizoram*, Unpublished B.D Thesis, Serampore Theological College, 2006. Lalnghakthuami, 'Quest for Women's Identity from a Mizo Women's Perspective', in *Mizoram Theological Journal*, Vol. VI, January – March, 2005, Durtlang, Aizawl.

²⁴ Gerda Lerner, *The Creation Of Patriarchy*, Oxford University Press, 1986. p. 226. Gerda Lerner said that Men and women have entered historical process under different conditions and have passed through it at different rates of speed. If recording, defining, and interpreting the past marks man's entry into history, this occurred for males in the third millennium B.C. It occurred for women (and only some of them) with a few notable exceptions in the nineteenth century. Until then, all history was for women pre-history.

²⁵ Dietrich Gerhard, *Old Europe; A Study of Continuity, 1000- 1800*, New York, 1981. C. Warren Hollister, "The Phases of European History and the Nonexistence of the Middle Ages," in *Pacific Historical Review*, 61, 1992. pp. 1-22.

²⁶ Romilla Thapar, 'Decolonizing the Past: Historical Writing in the Time of Sachin – and Beyond', in *EPW* April 2, 2005. pp. 1442-1448.

²⁷ Romilla Thapar, 'A Paradigm Shift: An interview', in *Frontline* Vol. 14, No. 16, Aug. pp. 9-22, 1997.

²⁸ Bipan Chandra, 'Colonialism, Stages of Colonialism and the Colonial State', in *Essays on Indian History and Culture (Felicitation Volume in Honour of Professor B. Sheikh Ali)*, Mittal Publication, 1990. pp. 151-159. Please also see Bipan Chandra, 'Colonialism and Modernization', in *Proceedings of Indian History Congress, Jabalpur, 1970*.

²⁹ Frederick S. Downs, *Christianity in Northeast India*, ISPCK, 1983, p. 196.

³⁰ Gerda Lerner (1976 (b)), op.cit., p. 362.

³¹ Joan Kelly, *Women, History and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly* Chicago, 1984, pp19-50. For further studies please see, Joan Kelly-Gadol, 'Did Women Have a Renaissance?' in Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz & Susan Stuard (eds), *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1977. Dietrich Gerhard; *Old Europe: A Study of Continuity, 1000- 1800*, op.cit.,

³² Gerda Lerner (1976(b)), op.cit., Ibid.

³³ Ibid. p. 365.

³⁴ Kumkum Sangari & Sudesh Vaid, *Recasting Women*, Kali for Women, 1989. p. 17.

³⁵ Sirka Ahonen, 'Politics of Identity through History Curriculum: Narratives of the past for social exclusion-or inclusion?' in *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 2001. [http:// www.tandf.co.uk/journals](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals).

³⁶ Some of the influential historical works on oral history are Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition: A study in Historical Methodology*, Chicago, Aldine, 1965. John Miles Foley, *The Theory of Oral composition: History and Methodolog*, Indiana University Press, 1988. Oral history is a systematic collection of living people's testimony about their own experiences. Oral history can be defined at many levels including historiographical, epistemological and methodological perspectives. The most common one is the methodological perspective, which is understood as a source of history that needs to be handled with extreme care as oral history is different from written sources of history. Oral historians attempt to verify their findings, analyze them and place them in an accurate historical context. Oral

historians are also concerned with storage of their findings for use by later scholars. In oral history, an interviewee recalls an event for an interviewer who records the recollections and creates a historical record.

³⁷For detail see, J. Derrida, *Archive Fever*, University of Chicago Press, 1995.

³⁸Ranajit Guha (ed), *Subaltern Studies 1: Writings on South Asian History and Studies*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1982.

³⁹A. Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastalli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History*, SUNY Press, Newyork, 1991.

⁴⁰The Personal Narrative Group (eds), *Interpreting women's Lives*, Indiana University Press, 1989. p. 4. There are other important works such as Mary Nash, *Defying Male Civilization: Women in Spanish Civil War*, Arden Press, Denver, 1995. S.S Gluck & D Patai (eds), *Women's World: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, Routledge, London, 1991. Kathleen Weiler & Sue Middleton (eds), *Telling Women's Lives: Narratives Inquiries in the History of Women's Education*, Open University Press, 1999. Selma Leydesdorff, *Gender and the Categories of Experienced History*, in *Gender and History*, Volume 11, No 3, 1999. pp. 597-611.

⁴¹ Ritu Menon & Kamla Bhasin (eds), *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*, New Brunswick, N.J Rutgers University Press, 1998. Please also see Urvashi Butalia, *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1998. Geraldine Forbes, *Women in Colonial India: Essays on Politics, Medicine, and Historiography*, D.C Publication, Delhi, 2005.

⁴² Kanta Kaur Marriott, 'Reviews on Antoinette Burton's *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home and History in Late Colonial India*', in *Journal of the Oxford University History Society*, 2006.

⁴³Antoinette Burton, *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home and History in Late Colonial India*, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 2003. p. 138, Cited in Kanta Kaur Marriott, *Ibid*.

⁴⁴Betty Joseph, *Reading the East India Company, 1720-1840: Colonial Currencies of Gender*, Orient Longman, 2006. p. 3.

⁴⁵Sandra Harding(ed), *'Is there a Feminist Method?' Feminism and Methodology*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1986. p. 4. According to Sandra Harding there were three kinds of women who appeared as obvious candidates for this process: Women social scientists, Women who contributed to the public social life and women who had been victims of the most egregious forms of male dominance.

⁴⁶"Compensatory histories" are those which add women in a mechanical fashion to male histories.

⁴⁷Ann D. Gordon, Mari Jo Buhle & Nancy Shrom Dye, op.cit., p. 85.

⁴⁸ Helene Cixous, 'Laugh of Medusa', in Isabelle de Courtivron, *French Feminism: An Anthology*, Schocken Books, New York, 1981, pp. 245-264. Cited in Betty Joseph, op.cit., p 4.

⁴⁹This approach is borrowed from the works of Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 'Can Women's Voices be recovered from the Past? Grappling with the Absence of Women's Voices in Pre-Colonial History of Zimbabwe', in *Wagadu*, Vol 2, Summer, 2005. pp.1-19.

⁵⁰Padma Anagol, *The Emergence of Feminism in India (1850-1920)*, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005, p. 9.

⁵¹Urvashi Butalia, 'Community, State and Gender: On Women's Agency during Partition', in *EPW*, Vol. 28, No 17, April 24, 1993. pp. WS12-WS24.

⁵²Preeti Gill, *Troubled Zones: Women's Voices from North-East India*, Zubaan, New Delhi, 2009. Rita Manchanda (ed), *Women, War and Peace in South Asia: Beyond Victimhood to Agency*, Sage Publication, 2001. Shrestha, Ava Darshan & Rita Thapa (eds), *The Impact of Armed Conflict on Women in South Asia*, Manohar, 2007.

CHAPTER-II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 ORIGIN OF THE MIZOS.

Historians and scholars have attempted to trace the origin of the Mizos. Various theories have been suggested regarding the origin of Mizos. Some say that the Mizos came from Tibet via Burma to Mizoram. Others suggest that the Mizo could be the lost tribe of Israel who had dispersed thousands of years ago.¹ Till recently, these attempts to trace their origin have led to mere confusion as no historian has been able to precisely trace out how and why the Mizos came to settle in Mizoram. Despite this confusion, majority of scholars and historians have argued that the Mizos belong to Mongoloid or Tibeto-Burman family whose origin is somewhere in China.

According to oral tradition, the Mizos claimed *Chhinlung* to have been their ancient homeland, which is believed to be located in the province of Szechwan in China.² As a semi-nomadic society, they migrated from place to place in search of land. This compulsion initiated their migration westwards and they entered Burma. During the 14th century, after leaving *Chhinlung* they settled in the *Shan* State of Burma.³ They would not settle permanently unless they found suitable land for cultivation. Lack of communication amongst the tribes' people, tribal wars and lack of arable land in the country that was chosen as their home caused people to lose their racial harmony. In the early period, each sub-tribes or clans identified themselves with a group, name or a family name. They did not bother to identify themselves as a race or as united groups.

Group or clan migration occurred towards the southwest and west. During the first part of the 15th century, an earlier group of settlers had already reached Tripura, Manipur and Chittangong Hill tract. Others made their permanent settlement in the Chin Hills (Burma) areas. This nature of migration led to the conflict amongst various clans, increasing tribal wars. Tribal warfare in turn resulted in the dispersal of kin-groups into different places. The weaker kin-group or clans usually advanced westward. This constant dispersal prevented the Mizos from identifying themselves as a nation. They were known by different names to neighbouring people; for instance, they were known as *Chin* in Burma, *Kuki* in Tripura, Chittangong Hill Tract, *Lushai* in Mizoram; *Hmar* in Cachar and Manipur.

However, in postcolonial times these titles given to them by the neighbouring people are no longer accepted. They call themselves by their own dialect such as *Mizo* in Mizoram, *Zomi* in Burma and Manipur, *Kuki* in Tripura, *Zo* or *Jo* in Chittangong Hill tract. A number of them have also retained their own kin or clan name. Based on the cultural evidence, these groups definitely have a single origin. According to Sing Khaw Khai, “No matter how far its territory extends and how small its population might have been, Zo society bears the characteristic features of State like Greek-City State where men are equal before divine law”⁴ However, till recently there has been no common name to identify the whole group. Colonial linguist G. Grierson in 1904 wrote, “...there being no proper name comprising all these tribes”.⁵ Rev. S. Prim Vaiphei also wrote in this context, “The Chin-Kuki belong to one ethnic group and one origin, they do not have a common name to identify the whole groups”.⁶

During the first half of the 16th century, there were constant wars among the various tribal groups inhabiting the land between the *Run* and *Tiau* river due to a dispute over territory. Massive famine occurred in the areas of *Shan* (Burma), which increased the hardships of the people. This period thus initiated massive migration of different kin groups or clans and groups of Mizos from Chin Hills (Burma) to the present Mizoram. It is said that the *Hmars* were the first to migrate to present Mizoram from Burma. *Lusei* chief's *Palian*, *Thangluah*, *Zadeng*, *Rokhum*, *Rokual* then followed. Other chiefs such as *Paite*, *Hualngo*, *Fanai* and several other common clans such as *Ralte* also made their move towards Mizoram. The period also witnessed the migration of the chiefs of *Lais* and *Maras* from Burma towards the southern pre-colonial Mizoram.

By the early 18th century, all these ruling chiefs had entered the present Mizoram and had established village territory in different places at various times. Initially, the *Lusei* ruling chiefs of *Palian*, *Rivung*, *Thangluah* established village territory in north western and southwestern part of Mizoram adjacent to Tripura and the Chittagong hill tract. In the southeastern part of Mizoram, this period also initiated the rise of the *Mara* ruling villages under the banner of nine territorial group's *Tlosai*, *Hawthai*, *Chapi-Ngiaphia*, *Vytu*, *Zyhno*, *Lochei*, *Heima*, *Lialai* and *Lytu*.⁷ Another village territories under the *Lai* chiefs such as *Chinzah*, *Zathang*, *Khenglawt*, *Thangchhawn*, *Hnialum*, *Hlawancheu* and *Hlawnychung* rose in

the southwestern part of pre-colonial Mizoram.⁸ During this period, *Fanai* Chiefs also soon dominated the middle of south eastern Mizoram adjacent to Chin Hills.

Despite all these territories, lesser chiefs or common chiefs were found across pre-colonial Mizoram. However, they were under the control and protection of stronger chiefs. They were bound to pay tribute and assistance to these stronger chiefs whenever found necessary. Among the ruling chiefs of the Mizos, *Lusei* chiefs were dominant and usually subordinated other ruling chiefs. The weaker chiefs usually migrated further towards the western part of present Cachar, Manipur, Chittangong Hill tract and Tripura. In the early period, a number of chiefs such as *Hmar*, *Paite* and *Thado* (*New Kuki*) were further pushed towards the present Cachar and Manipur areas.

2.2 THE RISE OF SAILO RULING CHIEFS.

During the early phase of the 18th century after the emergence of the latest *Lusei* immigrants, the previous composition of political life under the rule of the *Sailo* chiefs in pre-colonial Mizoram was changed.⁹ The *Sailo* ruling chiefs successfully conquered and subjugated all other chiefs from northern to upper southern pre-colonial Mizoram. During the first half of the 18th century, *Sailo* ruling chiefs became the dominating ruling clan in the western and upper southern Mizo hills whereas the independent territory of *Lai* and *Mara* extended to the far southern part. The *Sailos* now occupied three of the four portion of the geographical area in pre-colonial Mizoram. *Paite* and *Hmar* chiefs also occupied the northeastern side of Cachar and Manipur border areas. The rest of the other common ruling chiefs and clans were more or less under the control of the ruling *Sailo* chiefs.

A cultural revival took place during the *Sailo* period. They absorbed a number of other clans in pre-colonial Mizoram. It is said that various Mizo customaries of oral constitution evolved as a result of the *Sailo* rule in pre-colonial Mizoram. Linguistically, the modern Mizo dialect (*Duhlian* dialect) was nurtured as a common language especially in western pre-colonial Mizoram. It also thus evidently helped the growth of the oral traditions. However, *Paite*, *Mara*, *Hmar* and *Lai* retained their dialect. Increase of their political hegemony also directly introduced the development of social stratification in the pre-colonial Mizo society.

The period of the *Sailos* witnessed the growth of a significant population that led to a greater demand of agricultural land.

As a result, several tribal wars broke out on the question of ownership of land. The occasional repression of their cognate powerful tribes from Chin Hills of Burma also affected their economy. Trade activities with Chin Hills of Burma were at a standstill due to the supremacy of their cognate tribes in Chin Hills. The Mizos at those times were always in need of avoiding external danger. Tributes given to other stronger chiefs by weaker chiefs also destabilized the economy during the period of the *Sailo* rule in pre-colonial Mizoram. Lastly, the rise and infiltration of the powerful Mizo ruling clan of the *Sailo* chiefs in Mizoram marked the formation of a new social hierarchy in the form of clans and families. To understand the status of women in pre-colonial period, it is necessary to re-examine the socio-economic and political life of the Mizos under the *Sailo* hierarchy. The pre-colonial scenario therefore mostly dealt with the customs and practices of the *Luseis*' and other clans like *Pawihs* or *Lais*, *Paihtes*, *Raltes* and the *Hmars*', who have been influenced but not completely absorbed by the *Luseis*.

2.2.1 Political Condition.

During the pre-colonial period, there were constant wars and conflicts. As in other parts of the world, land became very important for the civilization to survive resulting in inter-village conflicts amongst the Mizos to establish domination over one other. The occasional repression by their cognate powerful tribes from Chin Hills of Burma also affected the Mizo economy. Since the early period the Mizos frequently changed their settlement due to the practice of Jhumming cultivation. The Mizos of those times were always in need of avoiding external danger. Tributes to superior chiefs by vanquished chiefs' weakened the economic position of many villages. Increase in the population also resulted in the expansion towards the northern and western areas creating a shortage in cultivable land. The clan wars led to difficulties in maintaining Jhum land.

During the second half of the 19th century, this unending struggle for supremacy exhausted Mizo economy. All Mizo Chiefs were in need of income to regain their position. The easiest substitution they could get was from the plain areas. Faced with scarcity, Mizo

warriors would go to the plain areas to seek economic gains and household necessities. This ultimately initiated the Mizo chiefs' invasions of the neighbouring territories of Cachar, Manipur, Chittangong Hill Tract and Tripura. As such, the Mizos earned their reputation to the outside world as being "savage", "barbarian" and "head hunters".

The Mizo political administrative unit was based on an independent village system. Each village was self contained, self-governed and self-sufficient.¹⁰ Throughout the pre-colonial period, all Mizo chiefs or *Lal* were theoretically despotic and had absolute authority with the judicial and administrative powers in the dispensation of justice. The weaker chief ruled over mostly one village to three villages while stronger chief ruled over five to ten villages including the hamlets. Despite this, stronger chiefs had enormous influence over the lesser chiefs. The chief's words were law in his own territory and all that was in the village belonged to him. However, the supreme powers of the chiefs were only in theory, in practice he ruled according to the traditional customs, which had been formed by their ancestors throughout the ages in dealing with various cases.

One of the colonial officers NE Parry stated that "the chief was the father of his people; he helped them when they were in distress and in all their crises, and the people helped the chief in return".¹¹ The chief appointed his council of elders or *Upas*. The posts of elders of council were not hereditary and the chief could dissolve their power at any time. The chief and his council tried both civil and criminal cases; all disputes were heard and disposed of in the chief's house. The main duty of the chief and his council or elders was to look after the villagers. The main concern was the safety of villagers, each year's cultivable land and various issues relating to people's lives within their village. In case of Lusei and Dapzar Paite, apart from the Chiefs' court, all the public discussions were heard in the bachelors' house or '*Zawlbuk*'. This council of elders was exclusively composed of men like in any other tribal society and not even a single woman participated in its activities.

Besides this, there were also the other village officials like the *Ramhual* who were experts in selection of the areas chosen for cultivation. Another important post was known as *Zalen* or men of possessors, who were obliged to help the chiefs in time of difficulty.¹² There were other officials such as blacksmith known as *Thirdeng* who supplied tools to the villagers,

and the village priest known as *Puithiam* by *Lusei*.¹³ The lowest official was village crier known as *Tlangau* by *Luseis* who announced the chief's orders.¹⁴ This is how the hierarchical structure had been developed in Mizo society. All village administration was based on customs, which may differ from village to village and kin to kin group. To quote Parry, "*In dealing with the cases the chief and Upas are guided entirely by (Lusei) Customs*".¹⁵

2.2.2 The Social Structure.

Early literatures vividly emphasize that Mizo society was a close-knit society in which division of society was absent. However, recent studies have proven that no society is homogenous - civilized or otherwise. Even in the Mizo society, division clearly existed though it was neither based on caste nor class. The nature of society did not permit division based on caste and class, which extensively exists in the mainland India. Distinction rather than division existed mainly based on political power, economic wealth, clans, families, dialects and rituals. These distinctions were reflected in the pattern of houses, dresses and even in marriage prices. Throughout the pre-colonial period, restrictions on social observances were imposed on every individual. For instance, *Thangchhuah diar* or noble headdress could be possessed only when a villager achieved title called *Thangchhuah* by organizing expensive community feast. In another instance, villagers could not even open a small window in their houses unless they achieved certain social obligations. In case of *Lusei*, only the chief could have a backdoor verandah in his house.

Social hierarchy was basically based on local customs. Custom was neither written nor documented but orally handed down from generation to generation. Custom, thus, acted as their constitution and it was the duty of every individual to follow the customary laws. Crossing the boundary of custom was regarded as a sin or curse. Custom thus acted as the guardian of society in which the highest and the lowest position was directly related. Despite this, there were local arrangements, which differed from place to place. Throughout the period under review, the unbending custom practically did not change as far as gender relations were concerned.

According to the social orders, the chiefs' families were the highest group in the society followed by the family member of the council of elders. The chief was the owner of the village and the rest of the villagers were bestowed the right to use the land. The council of elders enjoyed the right to select Jhum land before the common villagers. Other officials like the blacksmith and the village crier composed another social group. The professional priest occupied a place of more importance than other villagers. *Valupa* (village elder) was another important title in social life of *Lusei*. Theoretically, no political and social authority was given with this title but practically had very much influence on villagers. *Pasaltha* (Warrior and good hunter) also held an important place in the social life of Mizos and were highly respected by the villagers. Elders were also respected in the society. The commoners formed the last group. Even, among the common villagers, distinction existed in which the position of widows and orphans was much lower than the common villagers.

The lowest rung in society was *Bawih* or bonded labourer and captives of wars or *Sal*. More often, widows and orphans composed the bonded labour. They did not have any rights but had to live according to the will of their masters. Under this system, only a chief could possess a *Bawi*, who surrendered himself to the chief for protection due to various reasons. According to *Lusei* custom, there were three kinds of *Bawi*, *Inpuichhungbawi*, *Chemsen Bawi* and *Tukluh Bawi*. The *Inpuichhung Bawi* consisted of those who sought and took refuge in the chief's house in the case of poverty, sickness and distress. Widows, orphans and others who were unable to support themselves and had no relatives formed the bulk of this group.¹⁶ This group became a part of the chief's family who gave them food and shelter and in return they had to provide endless service to the chiefs.

The *Chemsen Bawi* was a criminal who became a *bawi* after taking refuge in the chief's house in order to avoid punishment. Under this system, the *Bawi* did not live in the chief's house or work for him but remained *Bawi* for his/her lifetime. A person from the defeated party during the war formed the *Tuklut Bawi*. In this case, a person deserted the losing side and promised along with his family to be *Bawi* of the victor's side for the rest of his lifetime. However, in this case, the *Bawi* was permitted to live in a separate house and the custom provided his freedom with the payment of *Mithun* or any payment equivalent to it to the chief. Some writers have often misinterpreted the term *Bawi* as 'slave'. In the context of Mizo

history, their position and status was quite different from the European or mainland Indian context. In truth, the *bawi* may be termed as the domesticated servant of the chief. However due to some evil designs in the system, it became partly similar to that of “bonded labour” which had been practiced throughout the Indian history.¹⁷

Apart from the custom of *Bawiship*, *Sal* or captives also existed in traditional Mizo society. *Sals* were captured in wars and raids. They became the personal property of their captors and their position was different from that of any *Bawi*. Unlike *Bawi*, every family was allowed to keep as many *sals* as they desired. It is said that, when the British first contacted the eastern Mizos, they exchanged their *Sals* or captives with the British guns in order to compete with the western Mizos who were already using the guns in the Hills. The captives were mostly children and marriageable women.¹⁸ As a rule, *sals* could buy their freedom by paying a huge amount as demanded by their master.

In case of *Lusei* and *Dapzar Paite* apart from the chief’s house, *Zawlbuk* or the bachelors’ dormitory formed the place for village administration. Here, the administration with regards to all Village affairs, wars and defenses were planned. In most of the writings of colonial officials, indigenous as well as non-indigenous writers *Zawlbuk* have been glorified as an important social or educational institution. For instance, Sangkima argues:

“*Zawlbuk* fostered and nurtured a pure and uncorrupted life and its contribution for the good of the society was creditably immense...a very powerful institution which exercised the greatest sway in establishing social norms and customs among the Mizo people”.¹⁹

Mangokhosat Kipgen also writes the functions of *Zawlbuk* as “the information centre for the village. Young as well as old gathered there at the end of the day to share with one another the news of the day about things seen and heard, activities that merited either appreciation or criticism and any other matters of interest. Information was given and received pertaining to the affairs of the village as well as of other villages brought to travellers. These travellers, if they were men, usually boarded at the *zawlbuk*. The news was then spread throughout the village”.²⁰

Through acts of assembly and dialogue, the *zawlbuk* generated opinions and attitudes which served to affirm or guide the affairs of village. In its ideal term *zawlbuk* served as the source of public opinion as it was made up of village men gathered together as a public, who articulated the needs of society. The customs and traditions were orally constructed from folk tales, songs, legends, proverbs and numerous old sayings, which formed an important means to form social and cultural life of the people. In this context, Kipgen states, “One of the main ways in which the customs and social values of the Zo people was transmitted from one generation to the next was through story telling...it was in *zawlbuk* that the most important story telling was done. Though the young people enjoyed telling stories, it was the elders who told the purposeful stories in the *Zawlbuks*. They told stories about their experiences as well as the stories that had been passed on to them from previous generations”.²¹ Hence, *Zawlbuk* emerged as one of the centres of knowledge that formed the basis of customs and traditions of that period.

2.2.3 The Economic Condition.

In the early times, the Mizos lived more or less self-subsistent life. The Mizos practiced different types of occupation to sustain themselves and lived on a marginal economy.²² Division of labour was minimal (*except blacksmith and professional priest*) in which villagers had to produce their needs. Mizoram is a rugged hilly mountainous area without significant plain areas. Therefore, Jhumming was the only method of cultivation in which the agricultural field was shifted every year where the soil lost its fertility. Every year the chiefs distributed land amongst the villagers in which selection was organized based on social hierarchical order. The rest of the villagers selected their desired land only after the chiefs and their council of elders had selected their choice. Among the crops, paddy was the principal crop grown in the Jhums. Beside this, maize, cotton, tobacco, ginger, spinach, beans, cucumber, vegetables and other cash crop were also grown. The production was usually for one-year's consumption. The surplus production was spent for ceremonies and festivals connected to birth, marriage, illness, death and other important occasions.

The Mizos also domesticated animals like pigs, chickens, goats, *mithuns*, dogs etc. The domestic animals were not kept only for the sources of food, but also as a form of wealth, for sacrifice, for marriage ceremonies, birth and death, sickness and for consumption during festivals and feasts. Among the domesticated animals, *mithun* occupied a dominant place in the Mizo economy. Some writers have remarked that the Mizo culture was the “*Mithun* culture”.²³ They measured the wealthy man in terms of the number of *mithun* he possessed. Due to the absence of currency and the practice of the barter system, *mithun* was the highest medium of exchange in the indigenous Mizo economy. Barter systems were commonly practiced, as money economy was not known. In early period, salt, iron, metal ornament, hairpins, and the round metal gongs were imported from Chin Hills of Burma.²⁴

During the last part of 19th century, a small trade existed between the Mizos and the neighbouring people particularly the Bengali and Manipuri traders.²⁵ Various bones, skins of tigers, wax, ivories, rubbers, cottons and timbers were sold in neighbouring plain areas. The Mizo chiefs welcomed foreign traders as friends because they got sulphur, brass pots, guns and flint glasses from them. During the colonial expansion, there was imbalance in trade with the neighbouring areas because the Mizos still practiced barter system while the neighbouring traders of Assam, Manipur and Tripura practiced money economy. The neighbouring traders soon deceived the Mizo chiefs by taking advantage of their ignorance. These situations considerably caused tension between the Mizo chiefs and the neighbouring traders. Thus, the Mizo chiefs, instead of organizing peaceful trade resorted to raids on the neighbouring area.

2.2.4 Religious System.

The religion practiced by the Mizos was quite elaborate. They believed in the existence of one Supreme God.²⁶ Although, the origin of the idea of one supreme God is unknown, it is said that, it originated from the time before they migrated from China. In 8th century AD, Christianity and Judaism, seems to have already entered China. Therefore, the idea (one supreme God) could have been, probably, adopted from the time the Mizos were living in China.²⁷ The Mizos had a vague idea of God, who was powerful and benevolent. However, he never interfered in human affairs. The Mizos called him as *Pathian*. They also believed that God lived beyond the sky as such they called him as *Chung Pathian* (God above us).

Like in Chinese Confucians society, there was also existence of ‘worship of ancestors’ in Mizo’s society. The Mizos practiced such custom, as their belief was that, the ancestors, who were constantly present in the family, blessed their descendents. The worship of ancestors was performed through the ceremonies of the feast called ‘*Mitthirawplam*’. In this feast, in order to represent their deceased relatives, they made effigies, attired in fine cloths and adorned with the best necklaces, and were then carried around the village with much shouting. It is evident that these effigies were carried to please their ancestors and were able to influence them for good or bad.

The Mizos also believed that the whole world was inhabited by a number of spirits who could at any moment lead to a man’s advantage and disadvantage in his fate. They therefore, believed that these spirits or, demons inhabited objects like trees, caves, hills, mountains etc.²⁸ These demons or spirits were generally termed as *Huai*. Those who were believed to inhabit water were called *Tuihuai* while those who lived on land were called *Ramhuai*. It was believed that there was a large number of *huai* or evil spirits like *Tau*, *chawm*, *phung*, *khawhring*, *hmuithla*, *dilhuai*, *sihhuai* etc Therefore, the Mizos were constantly in fear of these evil spirits who they believed could cause them harm. In order to appease them, they frequently offered sacrifices to the evil spirits. According to Saiaithanga, “*the Mizo religion is simply the worship of demons*”.²⁹ However, it is also observed that, these evil spirits were not worshiped by the Mizos. They only wanted to propitiate them, as they were believed to be causes of their illness and injuries.³⁰ Besides these evil spirits, there were also another group of benevolent spirits and deities known as *Lasi*- the guardians of wild animals, who appeared to male hunters in the form of a beautiful lady and *Pheichham*- a single legged male deity, who possessed the power of giving wealth to those who could catch him.

In addition to these spirits and *Pathian*, there was a special Spirit, which presided over its destitute. This Spirit was known as *Sakhua*. The term *Sakhua* is the compound of two words. Literally ‘*Sa*’ means ‘meat’ and ‘*Khua*’ means ‘village’. According to some writers the term *Sa* and *Khua* signified God or *Pathian*. While others felt that it had a much deeper religious connotation. The *Sa* stood for the god worshipped and *Khua* for the nature or creation. Originally both in concept and the practice of worship, the two words were separated.

A pig or boar (*Vawkpa sutnghak*) was sacrificed for the worship of 'Sa'; *mithun* was sacrificed for that of 'Khua'. The worship of *Sa* was exclusively for the family and clan and the worship of *Khua* was a public affair for the whole village.³¹ Each clan had their own *Sakhua* and the method of worship varied from one another. The *Sakhua* of *Ralte* and the other clans was called *Hnuaipui*, which was worshipped by the killing of a pig. *Sumtawng* was the *Sakhua* of *Khelte* and *Paihte*, which was worshipped with the killing of a pig and hen. *Nutar* was the *Sakhua* of *Lai*, by which they worshipped tiger by killing a pig. Another one was the *Lalak* the *Sakhua* of the *Hnamte*, in which a white fowl was sacrificed.³²

With the worship of so many spirits both benevolent and malevolent, *inthawina* or sacrifices and appeasement became important. The *Puithiam* (priest) of the village naturally occupied an important place in the village for only he could perform sacrifices. In case of *Lusei*, there were two types of *Puithiams*, whose functionaries were different from each other. The *Bawlpu* (a medicine man), performed the sacrifices on behalf of the sick. In Mizo society, there were many sacrifices offered to the evil spirits in the case of one's ill health and misfortunes.

Of these sacrifices the most important was *Khal*, depending on certain animals used for the sacrifice these were different kinds of *khal*- *Arkhal*, *Vawkte Khal*, *Kel Khal*, *Vanchungkhal*, *khal Chuang* etc. while performing such sacrifices, the family members could not speak to strangers.³³ Another form of sacrifice offered to the evil spirit was *daibawl*, which was performed outside the village. Besides these there were other sacrifices offered to the family or clan gods, which could be performed only by the *Puithiam* called *Sadawt*. Every clan had their own *Sadawt*, however among the *Luseis* the *Sadawt* of the chief's clan functioned as the official *sadawt* and as such was responsible for performing all the religious functions of the village community as a whole.³⁴ For the performance of the sacrifices, the Mizos had different kinds of materials called 'Bawhlo'. Among the *Sailo* clans, these *Bawlhlo*'s were wooden plates, where they kept food and sacrificial meat, *Fenthilir* (a wooden spoon), *Lenglep*, an altar (*Maicham*). Besides these they were rice pot, meat pot and mat etc. among the *Sailo* clans, altar was used only at the time of sacrifices on behalf of the sick person.³⁵

The Mizos also believed in a life after death. They generally accepted the theory of two places of abodes known as *Mithi Khua* (dead-man village) and *Pialral* (paradise). *Mithikhua* was meant for the commoners. JM Lloyd compared this place with the Hebrew concept of Sheol, 'a shadowy colourless underworld'.³⁶ However, it is believed that they had to continue their work during their lifetime.³⁷ *Pialral* was a place where there would be escape from work, and where they could enjoy a plentiful supply of rice, meat and rice beer, hunting was not required, and it was mainly for rich men called *thangchhuah*.³⁸ Hence, it was the aim of every one to become *Thangchhuah* during their lifetime. There was also another group of people who were privileged to enter *Pialral*. The first of these was *Hlamzuih* or still born infants. A young man who had sexual relations with at least three girls or seven women was guaranteed entrance. However, women who remained virgins until their death could also enter *Pialral*.

2.3 'VAILEN' - COLONIAL EXPANSION.

Since, 1826 most of the North Eastern parts were under the British. The British soon established tea gardens in the neighbouring areas of Cachar. The Mizos extensively claimed the new tea gardens in Cachar as their hunting ground, a land from which they had already driven out their enemies, the previous inhabitants. To protect the encroachment of their land by the colonial government, the Mizo chiefs frequently attacked them during the middle of 19th century. The colonial government thus sent the first expedition against northern Mizoram in 1850 under Colonel Lister. Lister invaded one village *Sentlang* in northern area, but soon withdrew from the hills. The Mizo chiefs also continued their invasion in their neighbouring territories. In the coldest month of January 1871, the Mizos under the leadership of Chief *Bengkhuai* invaded the tea garden of Cachar.³⁹ This resulted in the killing of tea garden manager James Winchester and his daughter Mary Winchester was taken captive. This led the colonial government to send another expedition (1871-1872) in Mizoram. This expedition put many Mizo chiefs under the control of the British. However, the hills finally fell under the British government in 1890.⁴⁰ This expedition put many Mizo chiefs under the control of the British. However, the hills finally fell under the British government in 1890.⁴¹

The first part of British expansion in Hills initiated the rise of many Mizo women chiefs who fought bravely against the British Government. At this particular period, many

Mizo female chiefs emerged to forefront in resisting the entry of the external powers in the hills. Politically, this period could be regarded as a phase of ups and downs as far as women were concerned. They opposed the British with some success but once the British occupied the hills, their activities were restricted.

2.4 EMERGENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

In fact, the British administration did not concern itself with religion, yet it is generally stated that their administration had paved the unproblematic entrance for the Christian missionaries in Mizoram. The missionaries of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Foreign Mission Society (WCMRMS) were given permission to work in the North Lushai Hills, the Baptist Missionary Society of London (BMS) in South Lushai hills and the Lakher Pioneer Mission in Mara land.

The first Christian missionary who firstly entered the region was Rev William Williams of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist foreign missionary working at Shella in the Khasi hills on 20th march 1891. On 17th April, he left Aizawl for Khasi hills from where he immediately sent an urgent appeal to the home board of mission in Liverpool to undertake a mission among the Mizos.⁴² After getting approval from the British officials in Assam, the board formally adopted Mizoram as the field of their mission under the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church in 1892.⁴³

In the meantime, unaware of the plans being made by the Welsh Foreign Mission, two Baptist missionaries of the newly founded Arthington aborigines Mission, J.H Lorrain and F. W Savidge also decided to undertake their mission in the Lushai hills. Before the Welsh Mission Board started their mission work, these two young men reached the hills on 11th January 1894.⁴⁴ While Lorrain and Savidge were starting their mission, the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Foreign Mission Board continued their mission to send their own members to the Lushai hills. An understanding was made and Arthington's agent in India officially handed over the field to the Welsh Mission Board. Accordingly Welsh Mission sent D.E Jones to continue the earlier mission of Arthington's missionary and he reached the hills on 30th August 1897. By the end of the year Lorrain and Savidge left the hills, but D.E Jones was later joined by Edwin Rowlands on December 1898.⁴⁵ But an arrangement was made for the southern half

of the hills to be occupied by the London Baptist Missionary Society. Hence the former Arthington's missionaries J.H Lorrain and F.W Savidge reached the southern hills to start their 'missionising' project in South Lushai hills on 13th March 1903.⁴⁶ Within a short span of time, R.A Lorrain, J.H Lorrain's brother founded the Lakher Pioneer Mission in 1905 and arrived at Mara area to start a new mission on 26th September 1907.

2.5 COLONIALISM, CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIAL REFORMS.

Between the later part of the 19th century and first half of the 20th century there was a conflicting interest in the Mizo society. This was mainly because of the interference of the British administrators and Christian Missionaries in the cultural life of the Mizos. Initially, restrictions and prescriptions became the order of the day. Meanwhile the traditional elites also intended to retain the old practices and rituals. However the traditional ideas were in no match with the new ideologies, which ultimately initiated the gradual downfall of the traditional socio-economic, politics and religious practices of the Mizos. Several reforms including new roads, newspapers, dispensaries and written customary laws were introduced. Meanwhile some of the traditional customs and beliefs, which were regarded as "barbaric" or "savage" cultures were abolished. In short, the period can be called the 'Age/Period of Social Reform' in Mizoram.

Though 'Colonialism' was the first important agent for social change, for many writers Christianity was the main indicator of social reform. This was mainly because most of the earlier scholars were trained theologians and their sources had been extracted from the accounts of the missionaries. Hence, to glorify missionaries' contribution for social reform, the earlier writer often used the term "from head hunting to soul hunting" to classify this transitional period. On the other hand, Frederick Downs observes:

"The main agent of the change was the Government itself. The Christian missions and the small communities that soon grew up as a result of their work did not have sufficient sources to initiate major changes. But they were able to play an important acculturative role."⁴⁷

Accordingly, Hrangkhuma argues, “The reasons for varied interpretations lie mostly in different concepts of the writers on what constitute a major or minor cultural change and the writer’s bias”.⁴⁸ Anyhow, since the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Mizos had encountered two external powerful agents. The colonizers used their hegemonic power by enforcing law and order, while the missionaries aimed at conversion to Christianity.⁴⁹ Hence, both the two external agents concentrated mainly on their respective work and applied different strategies to complete their mission.

2.5.1 Administrative Reforms under the Colonizers.

In the 1890’s when a colonial state - Lushai Hills was formed, the Lushai hills were under the supervision of the Superintendents, which continued till 1952. Colonel J.Shakespear (a folklorist and ethnographer) became the first superintendent of the hills. Initially, J.Shakespear initiated territorial adjustment of all Mizo chiefs. In 1901-2, he introduced a new system of circle administration under which the whole district was divided into eighteen circles, 11 in Aijal (Aizawl) Sub-Division, seven in Lungleh (Lunglei) sub-Division.⁵⁰ In each circle, one interpreter was appointed as the link between the colonizers and the chiefs.⁵¹

The most significant outcome of the British administration was the gradual weakening of the position and powers of the chiefs. Every Chief began to hold a boundary paper from Government vesting his land in him and on the death of a chief his name was removed from this paper and his successor’s name entered instead. Mizo chiefs remained the head of village only under the strict guidance of British government. Chiefs who opposed the British government lost their title. This initiated the rise of minor chiefs who did not belong to traditional hereditary chiefly clans. On the issue of succession of chieftainship, the government regarded the eldest son as the rightful heir in the case of Sailos and the youngest in the case of others under the approval of the superintendent.⁵² The chiefs now acted as Zamindars who were responsible for the collection of tax from villagers. The people now had to pay tax not only to their chiefs but also the British government. Their hardship increased when British government introduced forced labour. The introduction of new officials- circle interpreter or *Rahsi* caused tension in society. This was mainly because they often cheated the villagers in the name of the British government.

2.5.2 Written customary law.

One of the foremost outcomes of colonial administration in Lushai hills was the introduction of oral based traditional customs and laws into written form. Though the traditional customs as well as traditional chiefs suffered severely under colonial government, they were not totally destroyed and eventually the colonial powers used them. Realizing the importance of the value of existing social system and customs in order to maintain law and order the colonizers acknowledged the traditional structures instead of rooting them out. Consequently, after consulting Mizo Chiefs and other indigenous people N.E Parry, the then Superintendent of the hills compiled a pamphlet entitled, '*A Monograph on Lushai Customs and Ceremonies*,' the first printed document on the customary laws of the Mizos in the year 1928 that marked the passage of British colonial rule in Lushai hills. Mostly drawn from the practices of the Luseis, it redefined the chieftainship and village administration, marriage customs, divorce, inheritance, sexual offences etc and ceremonies such as funeral ceremonies, sacrifices and feasts, but for the efficiency of the colonial government.

Though it was compiled from the knowledge of the native chiefs, it was partly a colonial edition as few modifications were made for the efficiency of colonial administration. The practices that were regarded as "savage" customs from European worldview were prohibited and liable fines were also fixed that had to be paid in cash or in kind for some cases. In an introduction Parry also cites his reason for writing the monograph:

"When I first came to the district I found it extremely difficult in trying cases to ascertain the correct custom. The customs had never been recorded and it was very difficult to get unbiased information. As far as it can be ascertained the customs now recorded are correct. It is in the hope that it will be of use of officers and chiefs engaged in the administration of justice in the district that this record of the customs now in use has been compiled".⁵³

To authenticate the record and few modifications he also states, " The chiefs and others consulted agree that the customs described and the fines laid down for the breach thereof are those which are now generally in vogue and which are admitted to be fair and reasonable".⁵⁴

Consequently, the Lusei Customary law was used as an instrument for colonizing the hills. In her work on the Colonial law and Inheritance in East Africa Patricia Kameri-Mbote states:

“One can appreciate the frustration of the colonizers who felt that their authority over the colonized was threatened by the existence of norms of customary law which they as outsiders could not understand. Given the role of law in ordering societies, the easier thing to do would have been to replace customary law with the colonizers’ law and this was attempted in the quest to modernise the perceived antiquated customary law”.⁵⁵

This argument is applicable for an in depth study on Government’s compilation of written Mizo customs and hence it would be more relevant to regard the new written customs and laws as ‘Colonial customary Law’.

2.5.3 Introduction of western education.

Introduction of education was the first important indicator of social reforms in the Lushai hills. To impart education, there were two agencies one was the colonial administration and the other was the Christian missionaries. In Mizoram, the first school was started at Aizawl in November 1893. But, in the beginning it was meant for the Children of Sepoys and the medium of instruction was in Hindi. Similar schools were also opened at Lunglei and Demagiri.⁵⁶ Despite the formal education which was introduced by the colonial officials, little attention had been given to education. As A. Porteuos, the Political officer, northern Mizoram in 1896 stated in a despatch, “I desire to point out that, although it is now seven years since Aizawl was occupied, nothing whatever has yet been done by the government in the way of commencing to educate the Lushais”.⁵⁷

For the first time in 1896, he submitted a proposal to the Chief Commissioner of Assam for sanctioning a grant for the establishment of one school for the benefit of Mizo children.⁵⁸ The language to be taught would be Bengali for he felt that very soon Bengali would make its way into use as the language of trade and official intercourse. He therefore recommended that

“the initial step of starting a Government school to teach in the first instance, and later English, should be taken as soon as possible”.⁵⁹

As a result the government left the job of imparting education to the Christian missionaries. However, Arthington’s missionaries J.H Lorrain and F.W Savidge had already transformed the language into written form by introducing Mizo alphabet in the Roman script with a phonetic form of spelling known as Hunterian system in 1894.⁶⁰ In this context, C.L Hminga observes, “these two pioneer missionaries arrived exactly at a time when the British Government, for its own convenience, was intending to impose the Bengali language on the Mizos as a court language”.⁶¹

The missionaries’ main purpose was not to reform the society, but to convert the people to Christianity. J.V Hluna states:

“From their experience, the missionaries of Mizoram learnt that mere religious preaching would not bear much fruit nor could it take a deep root in the mind of the Mizo. Unless they had education, these ignorant and primitive people could not understand or appreciate the facts, evidences and doctrines of the scriptures. This factor would always stand as an obstacle to win them over to Christ...Educational activities by the Christian missionaries gave easy access to the people to preach them. It was easier to influence the mind of the young through education”.⁶²

When Lorrain and Savidge opened the first missionary school in 1894 at Aizawl, it is stated that they paid much attention to schooling for Bible reading. The introduction of education thus formed an easy access for conversion among the Mizos.

2.5.4 Introduction of news paper.

Before the introduction of education, there were no accounts on the history and life of the Mizo’s written by the indigenous people. Thus, one of the first important impacts of the education was the emergence of the voices of the Mizos in a written form. The first Mizo

newspaper, '*Mizo Chanchin Laisuih*' a hand written copy was published in 1898, but it was distributed among the chiefs and officials. Consequently a monthly newspaper '*Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu*', which covered the whole Lushai hills was published in November 1902.⁶³ In the beginning, it was under the hands of the colonial administrators J. Shakespeare and A.R Giles. Later, the responsibility was taken over by an educated indigenous man Makthanga.

By the year 1911, the Mizos began their own Christian periodical journal *Krista Tlangau*, named later as *Kristian Tlangau*. The contents of both the papers was very vast, the *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu* covered many essays on the history of the Mizos, which were orally recorded by their elders. Most of the records included the earlier conflicts between the Mizo chiefs, the wars between the Mizos and their territorial states. As a result of the introduction of western education it also contained histories of other countries and the instructions on health and sanitations etc. Furthermore alongside the Christian teachings and Biblical stories, *Kristian Tlangau* also covered many important issues of the society. Given the unavailability of literary works on the earlier records of the Mizos, these two newspapers served as important informative sources and agencies of social reform until the first half of the twentieth century in the Lushai hills.

2.5.5 Abolition of Sal and Bawi System (Slavery).

An important social change that took place during the colonial period was the abolition of *Bawi* system. The question of *Bawi* system has been an unending debate amongst the contemporary writers and scholars. Sangkima stated that it was the British administration which paved the way for the abolition of slavery as the missionaries believed that the system would disappear with the growing of public conscience.⁶⁴ Given the government's reluctance to deal with it or to recognize it as slavery Kipgen on the other hand argues that the abolition of the *Bawi* /*Sal* system was an era of social change in which Christians took the leading part.⁶⁵ It was only after the Missionary Conference held in 1904 at Aizawl, the question of *bawi* and *Sal* system emerged as one of the subjects of the discourses between the colonizers and the missionaries. They appealed to the District administration. The responding letter of J. Shakespeare, the Superintendent on the other hand revealed that the colonizers were in favour of the system as it upheld the power of the Mizo Chiefs.

Hence the colonial government made a suggestion to the conference to introduce modifications into the system without diminishing the chief's prestige. The issue became more controversial when Khawvelthanga, a young Christian chief freed all his slaves in 1909. For the time being, the government won the case and Khawvelthanga was also fined and his guns were seized.⁶⁶ In the mean while, Frazer a Christian missionary who raised the question on bawi/ sal system was also called on, either to leave the hills or sign an agreement to confine himself entirely on the work of medical mission and not to interfere in the matters of government. Frazer flatly refused to sign, so he was suspended and temporarily expelled from Mizoram. However, the issue became a subject of interest both to the Government of Assam and India. In 1927, the government of Assam replaced the word *bawi* by a new term *chhungte* or *awmpui* meaning inmates of the house. The term *bawi* itself was no longer to be used. Frazer again submitted a petition to discuss the question of *Bawi* in the British parliament. The parliament then discussed the problem and finally passed the matter in favour of the abolition of *bawis* in Mizoram. Thus the system came to an end in 1927.⁶⁷

2.5.6. Abolition of Zawlbuk.

As early as the twentieth century, there were condemnations against and tendency to eliminate this institution among the Mizos. The first important factor for the decline of *Zawlbuk* was the decreasing powers of the chiefs. Since the chiefs were made mere figureheads the discipline in *Zawlbuk* administration was apparently deteriorated. Though its existence was recognized but its place was seriously undermined by the people. Besides this, the first sign of the erosion of its position came as a result of the introduction of educational institutions. Failing to see the disadvantages it created for the emerging society however, there was an intention to retain the institution amongst the Colonizers and the missionaries. In 1926, when Parry assumed office as the Superintendent of the then Lushai hills, the *Zawlbuk* was already abandoned. Deeply inspired by the beneficent role it played in the society, he insisted that *Zawlbuk* be maintained as a living institution. He noted, "I have noticed that in a few villages the *Zawlbuk* is no longer maintained. All the chiefs are hereby informed that every Lushai must keep up a *Zawlbuk*. Circle interpreters will report to me any villages that have no *Zawlbuk*."⁶⁸

In the meantime, Christian missionaries in Southern Lushai hills made efforts to revive the institution. In contrast to these efforts, the concept of *Zawlbuk* was dying out in the minds of the Mizos themselves. By the time when A.G Mc Call succeeded, Parry as Superintendent in 1932, the majority of the Mizos firmly believed that *Zawlbuk* was only a hindrance to their pursuit of progress. In order to evolve a definite and concrete policy by hearing public view in regard to *Zawlbuk* Mc Call convened a public meeting on 1st January 1938 at Aizawl. In the meeting, majority favoured the idea of abandoning this institution. Thus Mc Call decided to revoke Parry's order.

2.6 RISE OF ETHNIC NATIONALISM DURING THE POST-COLONIAL PERIOD.

In the middle of the twentieth century, when the movement of independence from the British loomed large in the mainstream politics, the spirit of “nationalism” also reached the Lushai Hills and indicated the end of the old order in the region. Due to the influence of Christianity and western education, a new group of Mizo intelligentsia arose with the new ideas of freedom and democracy, which later inspired bitter antagonism between the commoners and the ruling chiefs particularly the Sailos.

First of all their main target was to put an end to the institution of Chieftainship as the people were anxious to put an end to the privileges of chiefs.⁶⁹ Beside this, as a result of ethnic movement on the Indian side, the feeling of ethnic and racial difference had been growing among the people more rapidly after the Second World War. This was indeed the decisive factor for one major group to launch a defensive guerilla war.⁷⁰ Nirmal Nibedon has also rightly observed;

“Christianity they would embrace and education they would pursue. Yet deep in the Mizo psyche there persisted a sense of unfulfilment, a silent and sincere search for their identity and an effort to bring the tremendous talent energy of their people back to a level of dignity and equality they had known before the invaders had come. The Mizo spirit was irrepressible; it was like a volcano waiting to erupt”.⁷¹

2.6.1. Birth of Political Parties.

With the permission from A. MacDonald, the superintendent of the hills, first political party in the Lushai hills came into existence on 9th April 1946, when the political future of the hills was being decided. It was first named as Mizo Common People Union, but was later called the Mizo Commoners Union. Mc Donald allowed them to join the Durbar, which was then renamed as 'District Conference with McDonald as its president. In the beginning as the party attempted to settle the issue of equal voting rights between the Chiefs and the commoners in the election of District Conference, it quickly gained popularity. However, the chiefs and the elites, who were greatly obsessed with their status refused to join the party as it was the Commoners' Union. Therefore, to obtain the support of the chiefs the elites, the party was readily renamed as the 'Mizo Union Party'. Since the party could not win the support of the Chiefs' council, it remained as a party of the common people, which later created a political rivalry between the two groups.⁷²

On 25th may 1946, the first conference of the party was held at Aizawl where the election of its five office bearers was held. In this meeting the objectives of the party was also drafted. It is interesting to note that one of its objectives was 'to improve the status and position of women in Mizo society'.⁷³ Shortly after the formation of Mizo Union, few educated women and wives of Mizo Union Leaders formed the first Mizo Women's Organization on 16th July 1946 called 'Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Pawl,' with an aim to get involved in politics to promote the status of women in the society.

In their first general assembly held at Aizawl in September 1947, the Mizo Union demanded for the replacement of *upas* appointed by the chief with elected members by the people. In their resolution, they requested the superintendent to have two thirds of the District Conference representatives elected by the common people and the rest by the chiefs, instead of equal representation of the people and the chief.⁷⁴ In the general Assembly held on 24th to 26th December 1947, a resolution was passed:

“In the event of India attaining a complete and complete and unqualified independence the Mizos is also to be included in it, within the province of Assam. The Mizos are opposed to the retention of their district as a political area under Independent India, but wish to be included in the Provincial Legislature. Excepting on the concurrent subjects, no legislation of the provincial legislature should apply directly to the hills and they reserve all rights and privileges of their internal administration with a Local Legislative and Executive Body”.⁷⁵

Meanwhile, as the independence was drawing near, the political movement took a new turn. The Commoners-Chiefs antagonism took an extreme form of enmity. Under such circumstances, some leading citizens then felt that a new party was necessary to forge a forum wherein the commoners and Chiefs could be united. This resulted in the creation of a new political party called ‘The united Mizo Freedom Organization’ (UMFO) commonly known as *Zalen* on 5th July 1947. It came up with a new motive to join Burma, which was ultimately supported by the Chiefs. With the formation of UMFO the Lushai hills were sharply divided into two radical groups: The abolitionists with a tendency to join India and the traditionalists with an inclination towards joining Burma.⁷⁶

2.6.2. Formation of District Council.

The first important political development in the Lushai hills during the Post –Colonial era was the inauguration of the District Council. In accordance with the provisions to the sixth schedule of the constitution of India, a District Council with executive, legislative and judicial powers on certain matters was established at Aizawl in 1952. Election to the council was held in the same year. The Mizo Union and the UMFO contested the election and the Mizo Union won the election. The District Council was inaugurated on 23rd April 1952.⁷⁷ The District Council was vested with wide range of powers including the authority to make laws on various subjects for the whole district.

A year later a council called Pawi-Lakher District Council having power almost similar to that of the District with its headquarters at Saiha was also inaugurated on 23rd April 1953.⁷⁸ For a long time, it had been felt by a great majority of the people that to call the hills, “Lushai Hills” was incorrect. “Lushai” is not the name given originally used by the inhabitants of the

District for their common identity. Since the word is only a derivation from the word Lusei which compriseded of one of the clans the inhabitants usually called themselves Mizo. So at the request of the people the name “Lushai hills District” was changed into Mizo District with effect from 1st September 1954.

2.6.3. Abolition of Chieftainship.

With the District Council and the Regional Council having been fully established, the existence of chiefs as administrative agents was no longer deemed necessary. When the first session of the Mizo District council was convened on 23rd June 1952, the majority of the members showed a revengeful attitude towards the chiefs and expressed their views in favour of the abolition of chieftainship. The council however had to seek the prior permission of the Governor of Assam before introducing the proposed bill. Accordingly, its first piece of legislation called the Lushai Hills (Chiefship Abolition) Act was passed by the District Council with effect from January, 1953, which was valid only within the jurisdiction of the District Council.

The chiefs were now reduced to mere figureheads in the Mizo Society. Though they retained their title, their status was much diminished. They were no longer looked upon as absolute rulers by the people. With the enactment of the Act, the people, after their struggle to throw off the yoke of chieftains for ten long years, were finally freed from bondage to follow their independent lives.

2.7 INSURGENCY MOVEMENT (1960's to 1980's).

From 1958 onwards, the previous situation of politics began to change due to the breaking out of “Mautam tam” or Bamboo famine in the district. Some disgruntled elements including dissidents from the Mizo union formed a Mizo National Famine Front (MNFF) apparently for organising relief work but in fact to start a new party in 1959.⁷⁹ When the famine relief work was over, the organization converted itself as the Mizo National Front (MNF) on 28th October 1961⁸⁰ with Laldenga as its President and S. Lianzuala as General Secretary. They also submitted a memorandum to the Government of India seeking to

represent the case of Mizos for freedom and independence.⁸¹ They came up with various objectives which were as follows:

1. To serve the highest sovereignty and to unite all the Mizos (and their inhabited areas) to live under one political boundary.
2. To uplift the Mizo position and to develop it to the highest extent.
3. To preserve and safeguard Christianity.⁸²

The party first raised the slogan of the United Mizoram comprising the area inhabited by the Mizos in Assam, Manipur Tripura and Burma⁸³ and raised the demand for “Sovereign independence of Greater Mizoram” and then sent its leader and activists to East Pakistan, where they came in touch with the agents of East Pakistan and the Naga hostiles and drew up the plan for an insurrection. The Pakistani agents assured Laldenga of all help of training his volunteers to revolt against the established government of India.⁸⁴ Though it was an era when a number of Mizo youths went out of the hills for higher studies but there were no sufficient jobs in the districts for them. Thus, the MNF reinforced the discontent by raising the slogan of deprivation of jobs for the Mizos. Under this condition, the MNF had established units in every village to recruit volunteers to intensify their activities. Consequently the MNF was gaining ground and many Mizos both young men and women volunteered to join the party.

2.7.1 Outbreak of the MNF Insurgency Movement.

In December 1965 and 1966, the MNF had organized a massive fund collecting drive in most towns and villages. In February 1966, the MNF had intensified its activities and the party decided to start an armed revolt. The attack on the Aizawl Treasury began at midnight on 28th February, 1966 and the Lungleh Treasury was also attacked on the same day.⁸⁵ Thus, the MNF started an armed rising by declaring independence and overrunning most of the areas of the 3.134 square miles of Mizoram. Immediately the district was declared a ‘disturbed area’ under the Assam Disturbed areas Act 1955. This act along with the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Power Act, 1958 was also enforced in the area. The Government of India entrusted the responsibility of enforcement of law and order in Mizoram to the Army and issued a strict instruction that the Army was to function in war time but strictly in aid of the

civil power.⁸⁶ When the troops moved into the district, the Mizo National Front volunteers along with their leader went underground and escaped to East Pakistan.

2.7.2. Village Grouping, atrocities and Reign of terror.

To facilitate effective military operation against the underground elements the Government of India launched the operation called “Operation Security” in January and February 1967 by grouping the villages by force. A population of fifty thousand from hundred villages was regrouped in 18 grouping centres.⁸⁷ In every grouping centre there was a military unit to control them. The grouping centre was categorised into two- The first of which were called ‘Protected Progressive Villages (PPV)’. The number of persons moved into the PPV centres was 50,000 from 106 villages.⁸⁸ In the meantime, early in 1968 the Governor of Assam promulgated an ordinance known as ‘The Assam Maintenance of Public Order’ (AMPO), which was to be used as the legal base for the continued grouping of villages by force, in preference to the application of the Defence of Indian Rules.⁸⁹ In spite of the grouping of villages in most parts, the intensity of the insurgency did not come to an end. In this context, J.V Hluna rightly remarks;

“The grouping operation has only caused untold sufferings and miseries to the general public resulting in total ruin of the village economy. Many people had to undergo psychological sufferings and physical tortures when they were ordered to shift from their permanent settlements. As a result of this, there was a feeling among the general Mizo public that they were treated as aliens and even worse than the enemies”.⁹⁰

In this way, the Indian army showed a merciless and active operation clearing the towns and villages of hostiles and relieved the beleaguered posts. They resorted to killing, arresting and torturing of those who had been suspected and found to have connections with the Mizo National Front in one way or the other. Tlangchhuaka, in his book entitled “Mizoram Politics” has also stated;

“...There is no limit over their act of atrocities. The men were driven away towards the jails not given any chance to mention their rights. Many were threatened to death, hung upside down and they suffered all kinds of tortures...They called the general meetings in the churches and used them for torturing and killing the inmates...They even raped some girls inside the churches and in some churches they did not allow them to come out from their meetings”.⁹¹

The MNF also countered the Indian army movements and activities. In short, as Lalrimawia has stated there had been a reign of terror and the situation was extremely dark and had become as worse as it possibly could have been especially in the interior.⁹²

2.7.3 Peace Committees and the Continued Outrages.

To bring security amongst the people and to restore peace between the MNF and the Indian government, the two major churches Presbyterian and the Baptist formed a common Committee called Christian Peace Committee. In March 1966, they for the first step issued a pamphlet through which they expressed that the church condemned the violent activities in Mizoram.⁹³ Henceforth, they continuously stated that the method used by the MNF would not succeed. Because of the standpoints of the church, the MNF began to have negative attitudes towards the church.⁹⁴ Despite all the attempts made by the church the insurgency continued with occasional breaks. In the last part of 1974, the Mizoram Peace advisory Board was formed to restore peace and normalcy. It represented church denominations, students, youth and other organizations. Before anything concrete could be achieved, the rebels issued a warning to all “vai” or non Mizos to quit the region by a certain deadline on January 1975. Public sentiment was roused in Aizawl and for the first time it was recorded that the Mizo leaders including Churchmen, students and young men condemned anti-vai campaign⁹⁵

2.7.4 Settlement of Peace.

Earnest efforts were made from all sides to bring about an end to the insurgency problems. Towards the beginning of 1976, the Government of India and the MNF leaders

began their negotiations for a lasting peace. An agreement was reached between the representatives of the Government of India and the MNF on 1st July 1976 at New Delhi which brought a halt to the hardships and sufferings wrought by the outbreak of hostilities since 1st march 1966. In 1984, the congress ministry under the leadership of Lalthanhawla began to initiate the possibility of resumed peace talks between the Government of India and the MNF. Peace talks between the Government of India and the Mizo National Front (MNF) were resumed after Laldenga, on behalf of the MNF, accepted the pre-condition of cessation of violence by MNF and holding of talks within the framework of the constitution of India.

The peace talk started on 17th December, 1984. In order to facilitate the settlement, operations by the MNF insurgents and the security forces remained suspended. After a series of discussions on various issues, the historic memorandum of settlement was signed between the Government of India and the MNF on 30th June 1986 to ensure permanent peace and harmony in Mizoram. As part of fulfilment of the Memorandum of settlement, Mizoram was upgraded to the status of statehood on august 7, 1986.

Thus the present Mizo society is a product of several transitional stage of history. There were three major factors contributed to the Mizo socio-political life namely, colonial administration, the Christian missions and the Indian political independence. In all these historical transition the position and status of Mizo Women in historical change is closely intertwined and determined by historical process from one stage to the next. Hence, with this background in view the present thesis tries to locate on the changing status, contributions and roles of women concentrating on the pre-colonial period, the British period and Post- Colonial Period.

End Notes and References.

- ¹ This is mainly due to extensive influence of Christianity since the early 20th century. However, so far there could not evolve any solid evidence to prove their claim. The earliest writers, who promote this idea is Zaithanchhungi, author of *Mizo Israel Identity* in which she study the cultural and belief system of the Mizos in connection with Jews traditions. Dr Shalomon in his book *History of Mizo Israel* also proposed the same argument that the Mizos are among the ten lost tribe of Israel.
- ² Sangkima, *Mizos: Society and Social Change*, Spectrum Publications, Gawahati, Delhi, 1992.p. 12.
- ³ Ibid. pp. 15-17.
- ⁴ Sing Khaw Khai, *Zo people and their Culture: A historical, Cultural Study and critical analysis of Zo and their ethnic tribes*, Khampu Hatzaw, New Lamka-G, Churachanpur, Manipur. p. 142.
- ⁵ G. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, Voll-III, Part-III, Motilal Banarsidass, 1976. p. 1.
- ⁶ Rev. S. Prim Vaiphei, 'Who we are/ Who are We?' *In search Of Identity*, Kuki-Chin Baptist Union, Manipur,, March 1986. p. 17.
- ⁷ Laiu Fachhai, *The Maras, Evangelical Church of Maraland Mission*, Siaha, Mizoram, 1994. pp. 1-13.
- ⁸ Lalthanliana, *Mizo Chanchin (Kum 1900 Hma lam)*, Vangbuangi Gas Agency, Aizawl, 2000. p. 390. Several chiefly clans and other common clans compose *Lai* clans.
- ⁹ K. Zawla, *Pi Pute Leh An Thlahte Chanchin*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1976. p. 14. B.Lalthangliana, *Mizo Chanchin: History of Culture of Mizos in India, Burma & Bangladesh*, Aizawl, 2001. p. 215. K. Zawla suggested this date of migration. B. Lalthangliana more accurately dated back the period of *Lusei* ruling chiefs' migration between 1650 and 1700.
- ¹⁰ Traditionally, the Mizos were very peculiar about the place. The village was generally perched on the top of a hill in order to get a good defensive position, as Mizos were in constant conflicts. The Mizos had practiced well-planned village and organized with orderly designs. In the village, none was allowed to construct a house above the chief's house, which was constructed at the center of the village. The Mizos were so systematic in their constructions of house. They arranged their houses in two rows with a broad space in between. The size of the Mizo villages varied from three hundred to three thousand houses. JM Lloyd, *History of The Church In Mizoram, (Harvest in the Hills)*, Synod Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1991. p. 3.
- ¹¹ N. E Parry, *A Monograph of Lushai Customs and Ceremonies*, TRI, Aizawl, 1998. p. 1.
- ¹² *Pawi Chanchin*, TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1988. pp. 83-84. *Paite in Mizoram*, TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1987. pp. 31-41. N. E Parry, *The Lakhers*, TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1976. p. 245.
- ¹³ N. E Parry (1998), op. cit., pp. 6-7.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Ibid. p. 1.
- ¹⁶ J. Shakespear, *The Lushei Kuki Clans*, TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1988. pp. 45-49.
- ¹⁷ Sangkima, 'Bawi and Sal as an Important Economic Factor in Early Mizo Society with Special Reference to Chief', in *Mizoram Historical Journal*, Vol-II, Issue-II, M.H.A. July 2001. p. 9.
- ¹⁸ J. Shakespear, op.cit., p. 49.

-
- ¹⁹ Sangkima (1992) op.cit., pp 38-39.
- ²⁰ Mangkhosat Kipgen, *Christianity and Mizo Culture*, The Eastern Theological College, Jorhat, 1996. pp. 62-63.
- ²¹ Ibid. p. 83.
- ²² In a marginal economy, one group of the people practice different type of occupation at one time for livelihood. Vityarhi, *Tribal Culture of India*, Delhi, 1976. p. 99.
- ²³ Zochungnunga, 'Survey of the Pre- Colonial Mizo Economy' in *Pialral: Historical Journal of Mizoram*, M.H.A, Vol-V, December 1995. p. 35.
- ²⁴ F.K Lehman, *The Structure of Chin Society*, FKPL, TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1978. p. 167.
- ²⁵ Lalrimawia, 'Economy of Mizos (1840-1947)', in J.B Bhattacharjee, *Studies in History of North-East India, Essays in honour of Professor H.K Barpuraji*, N.E.H.U Publication with North Eastern History Association, 1986. p. 167.
- ²⁶ J.M Llyod, *History of the Church in Mizoram, (Harvest in the Hills)*, Synod Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1991. p. 11.
- ²⁷ Lalthanliana, op.cit., p. 227.
- ²⁸ Lalremsiamia, 'The traditional religious belief of the Mizos', in *Historical Journal Mizoram*, Vol-1, Issue-1, p. 2.
- ²⁹ Saiaithanga, *Mizo Sakhua*, Lengchhawn Press, Aizawl, Mizoram 1994. p. 1,
- ³⁰ J.V Hluna, 'Pre-Christian Religion of the Mizos' in *International Seminars on the Studies on the Minority and Nationalities of NE India: The Mizos*, Aizawl April 7-9, 1992. p. 34.
- ³¹ Mangkhosat Kipgen, op.cit., pp 112-113.
- ³² K. Zawla, op. cit., pp. 78-80.
- ³³ JV Hluna (1992 (a)), op.cit., p. 36.
- ³⁴ Mangkhosat Kipgen, op.cit., p. 112.
- ³⁵ Ibid. pp. 230-231.
- ³⁶ J.M Lloyd (1991), op.cit, p. 14.
- ³⁷ Lalthanliana, op.cit., p. 232.
- ³⁸ *Thangchhuah* was a title given to a man who killed a number of wild animals and performed a number of public feast.
- ³⁹ C. Chawngkunga, *Important Document of Mizoram*, Art And Culture Department, Mizoram, Aizawl, 1998. pp. 249-251.
- ⁴⁰ For a detailed account of this expedition see R.G Woodthorpe, *The Lushai Expedition 1871-1872*, FKPL on behalf of TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1978.
- ⁴¹ Lalrimawia, 'Lushai Rising', in *proceedings of N.E.I.H.A*, Sixth Session, Agartala, 1985. pp. 255-260.
- ⁴² 'The Report of the Lushai hills, 1896', in K. Thanzaupa; *Reports of the Foreign Mission of the Presbyterian Church of Wales on Mizoram, 1894-1957*, Synod Literature and Publication Board Mizoram, 1997. pp.1-2. Please also see Mangkhosat Kipgen, op.cit., p. 191.
- ⁴³ Mangkhosat Kipgen, Ibid. p. 192.

-
- ⁴⁴ J.H. Lorrain & F.W. Savidge, 'Among the Head-Hunters of Lushai', in *The World-Wide Magazine*, Vol IV, No 20, November 1899, pp 376-377 Cited in J.V. Hluna,, *Education and Missionaries in Mizoram*, Spectrum, 1992, p. 42.
- ⁴⁵ 'The Report of the Lushai Hills, 1897', in K. Thanzauva, op.cit., p. 2.
- ⁴⁶ J. H Lorrain's and F.W Savidge's 'Reports for 1903', in *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society (B.M.S)1901-1938*, The Mizoram Gospel Centenary Committee Baptist Church of Mizoram, Serkawn, Mizoram, 1993. pp. 6-7.
- ⁴⁷ Frederick Downs, *Christianity in North East India*, Delhi, ISPCK, 1983. p. 196.
- ⁴⁸ F. Hrangkhuma, 'Christianity among the Mizo in Mizoram', in F. Hrangkhuma (ed), *Christianity in India: Search For Liberation and Identity*, ISPCK, Delhi, 1998. p. 269.
- ⁴⁹ A.G Mc Call, *Lushai Chrysallis*, FKPL, TRI, 1977 (Reprinted). p. 197.
- ⁵⁰ *Mizoram District Gazetteers*, Mizoram, Directorate of Art and culture, Government of Mizoram, 1989. p.47.
- ⁵¹ Robert Reid, *The Lushai Hills: Culled From History of the Frontiers Areas of Bordering on Assam, From 1883-1941*, FKPL, T.R.I, 1978. p. 61.
- ⁵² Rules regulating the succession of sailo chiefs and clans, 1936, section 1. Cited from Sangkima (1992), op.cit., p. 117.
- ⁵³ N.E Parry (1998), op.cit., p. i.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵⁵ Patricia komeri-Mbote, *Gender dimension of Law, Colonialism and Inheritance in East Africa; Kenyan Women's experience*, International Environmental Research Law Centre, Switzerland, 2002. p. 11.
- ⁵⁶ Sangkima (1992) op.cit., p. 85.
- ⁵⁷ From Porteuos, Political officer to the Secretary of the Chief Commissioner of Assam, dated fort Aijal 28th January 1897, Letter No 677, cited in Sangkima (1992), Ibid.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid.
- ⁶⁰ J.H Lorrain, *Dictionary of the Lushai Language*, The Asiatic society, 1975.p. V, Also see, J.H Lorrain's & F.W Savidge's Reports for 1903, in *Reports by Missionaries of the Baptist Missionary Society (B.M.S) 1901-1938*, op.cit., pp. 6-7.
- ⁶¹ C.L.Hminga, *The Life and Witness of the Churches in Mizoram*, unpublished D. Miss thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1976, p. 47.
- ⁶² J.V Hluna (1992 (b)), op.cit., p. 48.
- ⁶³ *Mizoram District Gazetteers*, op.cit., p. 48.
- ⁶⁴ Sangkima (1992), op.cit., p. 126.
- ⁶⁵ Mangkhosat Kipgen, op.cit., p. 153.
- ⁶⁶ R. Vanlawma, *Ka Ram leh kei*, p. 43-44.
- ⁶⁷ Lalrimawia, 'Bawi custom in Lushai Hills', in *Seminar on Socio-Political Development in Mizoram*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 28-29 October 1982. pp. 5-6.

-
- ⁶⁸ J.V Hluna (1992), op.cit., p. 49.
- ⁶⁹ Lalrimawia, *Mizoram: History and Cultural Identity*, Spectrum, Delhi, 1995. p.107.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 108.
- ⁷¹ Nirmal Nibedon, *Mizoram: The Dagger Brigade*, New Delhi, 1980. p. 23.
- ⁷² K.M Zakhuma, *Political Development in Mizoram From 1946 to 1989; A Study with Special Reference to Political Parties in Mizoram*, Mizoram Publication Board, 2001. p. 57.
- ⁷³ R. Vanlawma, *The Mizo Union*, L.O Press, Aijal, 1946. pp 1-2.
- ⁷⁴ Aminesh Ray, *India-The Land And The People: Mizoram*, National Book Trust, 1993. p. 152.
- ⁷⁵ Contents of the resolution passed in the first general Assembly of the Mizo Union held from 24th to 26th December. Cited Aminesh Ray (1993), Ibid. Please also see, K.M. Zakhuma, op.cit., pp. 58-59.
- ⁷⁶ Sangkima, *History of the Mizos*, Spectrum, 2004. p. 273.
- ⁷⁷ *Mizoram District Gazeteers*, op.cit., p. 54.
- ⁷⁸ Ibid.
- ⁷⁹ Lalrimawia (1995), op.cit., p. 134.
- ⁸⁰ R. Vanlawma; *Ka Ram leh Kei*, op.cit., p. 196.
- ⁸¹ Memorandum submitted by the MNF General Headquarters, Aizawl, on 30th October 1965.
- ⁸² J.V Hluna, *Church and Political Upheavals in Mizoram*, M.H.A, Aizawl, Mizoram 1985. p. 88.
- ⁸³ *Mizoram District Gazeeters*, op. cit., p. 55.
- ⁸⁴ Lalrimawia (1995), op.cit., p. 134.
- ⁸⁵ Lalkhawliana, General Report No 12 MG (F)/ MIN/66 dated 10th November 1966.
- ⁸⁶ Aminesh Ray, *Mizoram Dynamics of Change*, Pearl Publishers, Calcutta, 1982, p. 154.
- ⁸⁷ J.V Hluna (1985), op.cit., p. 98.
- ⁸⁸ V.V. Rao, *A century of Tribal Politics of Northeast India*, ,Delhi, 1976. p. 510.
- ⁸⁹ J.V Hluna (1985), op.cit, p. 99.
- ⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 101.
- ⁹¹ Tlangchhuaka (ed), *Mizoram Politics*, Aizawl, Mizoram,1974. p. 19.
- ⁹² Lalrimawia (1995), op.cit.,p. 136.
- ⁹³ Church Pamphlet on the Issue of Trouble in Mizoram, dated 12-3-1966.
- ⁹⁴ Lalsawma, 'Mission of the Church during the MNF Movement', in *Raltiang*, the 7th Annual Magazine of 2005-2006, T. Romana College, Aizawl, pp 107-108.
- ⁹⁵ Lalrimawia (1995), op.cit., p. 139.

CHAPTER-III

CULTURE, TRADITION AND WOMEN IN THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD

As mentioned earlier, written documents of the past in Mizoram had been found only after the British intervention in the late nineteenth century. All the histories prior to the British intervention were documented through the transmission of traditional belief, folktales, mythology, and proverbs. For the very first time these oral traditions were permitted into the written form by the British officials followed by Christian missionaries, who made historical conclusions according to their own interpretations and understandings. From the early twentieth century new trends of writings have emerged from indigenous male writers who recollected 'historical past' and 'historical knowledge' through oral traditions. Though this new form of writing extensively gives us new ideas and more detailed information about the past of the Mizos, there are some limitations and distortions in reconstructing the past due to their methodological dependence on colonial ethnography and strong tribal patriarchal perception.

Despite this, a historical conclusion has been drawn mostly from the combination of the ideas of colonial officials and indigenous male writers in an indefinite form. To borrow Uma Chakravarti's words in the context of ancient India and apply it to the Pre-colonial Mizo society, "It is such a medley of ideas that forms the basis of our understanding of the status of Mizo women in the traditional times".¹ As the observations of the past have been frequently reconstructed and re-interpreted, it is also important to re-write and contextualize the Mizos' folklores, cultural traditions and colonial documents from a new perspective to recollect the Mizo women's past. Therefore, this chapter attempts to demonstrate the life and contributions of women under the 'Mizo or Lusei patriarchy' during the Pre-British period by re-interpreting and reinventing the oral traditions, colonial sources, missionaries' reports and contemporary sources.

The colonial ethnographers, indigenous writers and non-indigenous scholars generally studied traditional Mizo society as a homogeneous society, where there was no social division. Compared with caste base societies of mainstream India, every individual was said to enjoy certain prerogatives to perform in different social functions and activities. But it is generally accepted that due to patriarchal dominance, there was a limitation and greater restriction on the mobility of women than men. Despite this, the women also participated and made contributions to the social life but this has been generally ignored by the scholars. Tribal patriarchy was re-invented after the *Sailos* became the ruling clan amongst the *Lusei* clans, the present chapter therefore mostly deals with the customs and practices of the *Luseis*' and other

clans like *Pawihs* or *Lais*, *Paihtes*, *Raltes* and the *Hmars*', who have been influenced but not completely absorbed by the *Luseis*.

3.1 WOMEN'S LIFE IN THE FAMILY.

To borrow Engel's term a Mizo family can be defined as '...the organization of a number of persons, bond and free, into a family under the paternal power of the head of the family'.² Given the absence of educational institution, a Mizo family in the olden days in another sense was also an important institution for all the members of the family, where each person learnt social customs and manners as well as religious rites. When he studied the origin of Patriarchy in the European society, Friedrich Engel stated that the establishment of the exclusive supremacy of man showed its effects first in the family.³ As the Mizo society during the Pre-British period was formed by a strong patriarchal structure the following observations may give us an impression that patriarchy had a deep root in the Mizo family.

3.1.1 The concept of *Thaibawih*.

One unique feature that was strongly applied to the Mizo patriarchal structure was the men's obsession with possessing a 'manly' character, they dreaded being labeled as *thaibawih* or henpecked, which they regarded as a complete loss of honour and prestige for a man. According to the Mizos, a man was called *thaibawih* if he could not control his wife or did what was considered a woman's work. Hence, the main intention of every man was to dominate his woman and never involve himself in domestic chores. This perception of a 'manly' image was first applied in the family, which created a clear gap in the relationship between a husband and a wife as well as in the gender division of labour in the family. Through this notion men had the power and considered themselves strong enough to rule and reinforced patriarchy in the family. In this social concept of *thaibawih* the women automatically became the first victims to suffer under the strict dominance of men in the family.

3.1.2 Reconstruction of women's life in the family from the old sayings and proverbs.

According to Heda Jason proverbs constitute a very convenient vehicle for the study of traditional history because “all the connotations of a traditional expression are well known and the risk of being misunderstood is reduced. Still more important is the circumstance that the opinions expressed by the proverb, the message it carries, are traditionally sanctioned and the user can in a doubtful case hide behind this traditional sanction from public censure”.⁴ Although proverbs and old sayings in Mizo cultures in general and their social functions in particular have been well documented and discussed in colonial ethnographies⁵ and recent folklore studies, little attention has been given to the interrelationship between proverbs and social change and more specifically on how proverbs as discourse portray women's status and men's perceptions in modern patriarchal Mizo society. A study on proverbs is therefore crucial to reveal the reality of Mizo women's lives under the ideals of traditional patriarchal society.

According to oral tradition, these attitudes towards women are found in the history of the different clans of the Mizo. As it portrayed women as holding an inferior place in the society – passive, un-knower, and faithful housewives to their husbands and sometimes as bearing extreme or brutal character - that prohibited her right of self-expression or to explore her knowledge in public, it formed the basis for the study of women's subordination by the colonial ethnographers or officials, missionaries and some native writers.⁶ Even today it is being constantly used as a reminder for women to maintain her role and cultural stability. As a result of the re-interpretation of historical observation, different perspectives emerged from the native writers and hence it consequently became a contentious issue within the contemporary social discourses.

The patriarchal attitudes of Mizo proverbs have been repeatedly challenged by the indigenous feminists. Lalrinawmi Ralte has argued, ‘these proverbs reveal the inferior position of women in both the religious and social system of the Mizos’.⁷ At the same time T. Vanlaltlani has also stated, ‘though these proverbs reveal men's perceptions on women's subordinate position there was not even a single woman who could stand against these proverbs. As they believed that following a man's word would give them a better position, women un-hesitantly regarded themselves as inferior beings.’⁸ This was mainly because a woman was not seen as having anything important to contribute as it was believed that she had no knowledge about the outside world. Her worldview was seen as very limited and there is a

proverb that says, “*Hmeichhe finin tuikhur ral a kai lo*”, which means the wisdom of women does not reach beyond the village stream.

On the other hand, the traditionalist point of view remained strong and tenacious among some male writers, who tried to glorify women’s life in the traditional patriarchal society of the Mizos. Amongst them is B. Lalthangliana, a famous Mizo historian who argues, “these proverbs cannot be used as the basis of Mizos’ perceptions on women during the traditional times...they gave complete safeguard to their womenfolk as they knew that women were the weaker sex”.⁹ Though he accepts women’s subordinate position in the family, C. Rokhuma also shares the same observation for he argues, “the Mizo proverbs show the Mizos’ attitudes for the safeguard of their women”.¹⁰ However, if men showed their concern for the safeguard of their women, how could they express such kind of negative attitudes towards women in their proverbs?

These proverbs clearly spell out the existing world view attitudes towards woman, for she was always seen as an inferior, a subordinate and not as equal with men, as myth which was created later on. The Mizos had numerous proverbs; out of which some were related to negative generalizations concerning women, but negative sayings towards men did not exist. These proverbs had a deep connection with women’s status in the family, religion and political fields. Hence, it cannot be omitted from the study of women’s life during the Pre-British period, “but must be regarded not as accurate renderings but rather as tantalizing shadows of the culture which spawned them”.¹¹ After all it is also said, “Proverbs are the daughters of experiences”.¹²

Referring to these proverbs, one can reconstruct the life of a woman under a patriarchal dominance in a family. The unfortunate and insecure position of a woman in the olden days could be read from the Luseis’ old proverb, “*Hmeichia leh Palchhia chu thlak theih a ni*”, which means Worn out fencing and women could be replaced. This reveals one unique feature of the Lusei custom that a man could divorce his wife anytime he wished to. ‘*Uire*’ or adultery was considered as a disgrace for women. An adulterous woman was driven out from her home and could not even claim her property. On the other hand, if a man committed adultery, it was seen as being manly and was not taken as a serious offence. According to the Lusei custom, a man was allowed to divorce his wife and vice versa by returning all the bride price to the wife. However, the case of men who divorced their wives was more common than women who left

their husbands. In his book *Lushei- Kuki Clan*, a colonial official Col. J. Shakespeare has also mentioned this timid situation of a married life for a Lusei woman by stating that the Vuite men objected to give their girls to the Luseis on account of Lusei husbands' tendency to discard their wives on the slightest excuse.¹³ As Marc Bloch has stated in the context of the European feudal society about a woman's relationship to her husband, "the wife only half belonged to the family in which her destiny placed her, perhaps not for very long".¹⁴ The same was true of the Mizo women who could be thrown out of the family anytime depending on the wishes of her husband.

Despite his vindication to the women's hard labour as mentioned above, in the late nineteenth century, T.H Lewin in his book '*Wild Races of South Eastern India*' has mentioned that women were generally held in consideration among the Luseis. Their advices were considered, they had much influence and after the death of her husband, a wife could become the head of the family.¹⁵ While accepting male supremacy over women in the earlier society Mangkhosat Kipgen has also argued, "the old proverbs did not apply to women's role in the family. At home in the family she was important if not more important than the man. There she exercised more influence upon the men folk than the latter were prepared to admit".¹⁶ On the other hand a woman's voice in the family was seemingly not seen as an important voice for a proverb says, "*Hmeichhe tawng menah thlak suh; hmeichhia leh uipui chu lo rum lungawi mai mai rawh se*" which means don't pay heed to what a woman says; Let a woman and a dog bark as they please. So, her voices could best be ignored.

To supplement this, another proverb says "*Hmeichhe thu thu ni suh, chakai sa sa ni suh*" or Flesh of the crab is no meat; words of a woman are no words. Here, her male counterpart compared a woman to a crab, which the Mizos did not regard as an animal like other animals, as it has no ears, head, liver, stomach etc. Therefore, they did not regard the meat of a crab as real meat as there was nothing even inside its body. C.Rokhuma said that this proverb shows the male supremacy in the family¹⁷ and on the other hand the disregard for women's opinion in the family administration. According to tradition, James Dokhuma also wrote, "if a woman had any substantial authority in family affairs, no one would respect that family".¹⁸ To accept the aforementioned observations we may argue that a woman had limited voices and power in the family under the strict patriarchal dominance.

Another proverb reads, “*Hmeichhia leh chakaiin Sakhua an nei lo*” or women and Crabs do not have religious rites.¹⁹ Why was it that the Mizos often compared women with the crabs? It is said that the Mizos considered all the animals as part of their *sakhua*.²⁰ For this reason, they never used the insolent words when they went for ngawidawh or fishing and hunting Sakei or tiger. However, unlike the other animals, the Mizos did not perform all these punctilious religious observances in regards to crabs and did not even regard it as a part of their *sakhua*.²¹ It has been orally recollected that the Mizos believed that unlike other animals, crabs did not have anyone to protect them and were not created by anyone. Therefore, it was very free and easy to catch a crab. Likewise woman was freely chosen and had to follow the *sakhua* of her husband, who caught her.²² This quote undoubtedly translates the saying to mean ‘women (and crabs) had no god to protect them’. As her husband freely chose her, it was her duty to follow him in all respects, even in the case of religious rites. Even after sharing her husband’s *sakhua* she was not given the right to perform the religious rites. Thus, the Mizos trivialized woman by comparing her with a crab, which was more insignificant when compared to other animals.

B. Lalthangliana said that the Mizos used this proverb to show the dominating role of ‘a father’ in the patriarchal family.²³ In the traditional Mizo society, each clan had its own *sakhua* and no one was allowed to share the *sakhua* of other clans. In the family, the owner of *sakhua* was the father, and all other members of the family shared the *sakhua* of the father. Anyone other than the family members could not attend their sacrificial ceremonies. Therefore, if a girl from other clans married a man of different clans or family she could not attend the sacrificial ceremonies and eat the sacrificial meat.²⁴ However, the religious view was different in the case of a woman. For her, she had to follow the *sakhua* of her husband for she could not create her own *Sakhua* and in the process she had to share all the religious status acquired by her husband. It was only after this that a woman was allowed to attend rituals and was allowed to take sacrificial meat.²⁵

When studying the earlier Mizo family, most of the writers rarely mentioned the existence of domestic violence. However, one proverb says “*Hmeichhia leh Vau vau loh chu an pawng tual tual*”, which means unthreatened wife and unthreatened grass of the field are both unbearable, indicates the presence of domestic violence amongst the Lusei family. If a wife refused anything or went against her husband’s words, he often resorted to beating. The men who could not or would not beat their wives were scorned at by their friends as cowards

and *thaibawih*. It was quite natural for the Luseis, as they believed that, a husband was worthless if he could not control his wife. Therefore, they tried to dominate them. In this context James Dokhuma argues, “This proverb became a popular saying among the men in order to justify themselves”.²⁶ As Frederick Engels stated a Lusei family then appeared as a patriarchal institution of enslavement and oppression of women in essence.²⁷

In spite of a limited conclusion drawn by the traditionalist writers, the proverbs reveal how the Mizos’ portrayed the ‘image’ of an ideal woman under the patriarchal dominance. To obey and listen to the man’s word in the family was a rule for her in the family. In this context, most of the traditionalist writers also agreed with the existence of patriarchal system, but could not accept the demeaning roles and inferior status of a woman under patriarchal dominance. For instance B. Lalthangliana assumes that this ‘image’ of a woman and her subordinated position was a divine nature of a woman in the patriarchal society.²⁸ Like Karl Barth, the originator of Neo-Orthodox theology, the traditionalists therefore authenticated that man did not enjoy any privilege or advantage over woman, but he was a man and superior in relation to woman as a result of patriarchal order.²⁹ For them, as Gerda Lerner argued, patriarchy had survived because it was best and that it should stay as that way.³⁰ Due to the absence of traditional text, proverbs or old sayings emerged as the discourse of patriarchal knowledge through which men wielded power over women. In this way a woman was gradually placed under patriarchal control and her inferior position was therefore defined as an innate phenomenon.

3.1.3 Division of Labour.

In every society, sexual division of labour came to exist, which determined male and female identities, spaces, and works. For the Mizos, a kind of gender division of labour was evident from their welcoming words of the newborn babies, which clearly defined an individual’s duties and responsibilities in the family. When the Mizos settled in the Kabaw Valley, instead of guns they used spears and shields during wars. As such, they would ask about a newborn baby by saying, “*Fei nge Tuthlawh?*” which means “*Spear or Sickle?*”³¹ Here, the Mizos by referring spear meant a boy and sickle a girl. This means that the Mizos expected men to go out for wars while their expectation of women was confined only to jhumming cultivation and other household activities. Due to the constant village wars, only men were involved in wars. Besides this, they concentrated on defending the village and hunting etc.

Most of the time, they engaged themselves outside the house, while the duties of women remained confined to the household.

Friedrich Engels characterized the sexual division of labour as the outcome of the natural division of labour which gradually came to be used against women.³² But for the feminists of the late twentieth century, the first division of labour between men and women was at the same time the first formation of oppressor (man) and oppressed (woman).³³ When they studied socio-economic life of the Mizos during the traditional times, most of the writers pointed at the division of labour to depict women's life in the society.³⁴ When he visited Lusei villages in the late nineteenth century, T. H Lewin also vindicated the subordinate position of women in the division of labour as he remarked,

“Upon the women, however, falls the whole burden of the bodily labour by which life is supported. They fetch water, hew wood, cultivate and help to reap the crop, besides spinning, cooking and brewing. The men employ themselves chiefly in making forays upon weaker tribes, or in hunting. Of home work, they only clear the ground and help to carry the harvest; they also built the house. The men are generally to be seen lounging about, cleaning their arms, drinking or smoking”.³⁵

From his description of women's life, men seemed to get more free time than women in the family. Therefore, the Mizo women were busy from early morning till bedtime late at night. However, in these arduous tasks, men were not supposed to lift a finger to help their wives in the household work. This is due to the fact that, according to the custom and tradition, it was not manly for a man to do a woman's work and they were also afraid of being insulted by others as *thaibawih*.³⁶ For this reason, it was the duty and responsibility of a wife to look after the household affairs, but without being given any authority.

Thus, the division of labour was such that the women could not claim leisure at all. Even during her pregnancy all the household activities rested solely on her and she had to perform all her ordinary household activities, the very day after her delivery. This practice had a deep relation with their traditional belief that women were afraid of *Raicheh*.³⁷ Due to her responsibilities in the household work, she did not have enough time to look after her baby especially in the case of the first baby. They seldom expected the first child to remain alive.

The first child was *thianglo* or misfortune for the Mizos. In some cases, it is also recorded that if a woman died of *Raicheh* a baby was buried alive with the mother as it was considered unlucky for another woman to bring up the child.³⁸ It might be because of this that there were lots of infanticides during the olden days.

In the context of the division of labour, B. Lalthangliana again argued that the Mizo men did not oppress and discriminate their women. As they engaged themselves in the protection of their villages, it was natural for men not to engage themselves in household duties.³⁹ From his argument, men did not seem to regard women's labour equally important as men's. They therefore regarded women's hard labour as natural and eternal to justify their power and authority at the expense of women. But from the feminist perspective there was nothing natural about women being confined to the household.⁴⁰ With regard to division of labour T. H Lewin depicted a strange Lusei custom as he says, "...when a man either through laziness, cowardice, or bodily incapacity is unable to do his work, he is dressed in women's cloths and consorts and works with the women. I have seen instances of this in several villages."⁴¹ This instance of a Lusei custom on the other hand reveals a stereotypical image of a woman's labour in the Mizo's concept of sexual division of labour.

3.1.4 Inheritance and the Rights of women in the family.

Leela Dube, in her studies of Women and Kinship in South and Southeast Asia states, "Nature assigned unequal roles to the two sexes in procreation. Although the mother-child bond is emphasized in the final analysis a woman is only receptacle, an instrument for the perpetuation of the line of her child's father. Thus, the mother's role is explicated in a manner that excludes her from the line of shares of blood and property."⁴² This social view on women is found throughout patrilineal societies. Even in the Mizo family, all the lines of descent were patrilineal and children also adopted the name of the father's clan. All the matters of succession and inheritance were traced through the male lineage. The father's entire property was distributed among the sons. Even in the case of absence of male children, the nearest male relative would inherit the father's property. N.E Parry clearly summed up the inheritance rights of Mizo women:

"As a rule no woman can inherit property but if no other heirs are available a woman might inherit. Thus, if a man dies without any other heirs his widow or his

daughter might inherit his estate. A man's daughter might inherit before his widow. A daughter or widow would inherit before a mere fellow tribesman".⁴³

In spite of her contribution to the family enterprises, a woman's hard labours therefore remained invisible or unrecognized and she had no voice regarding the distribution of her family's material good. Mangkhosat Kipgen argues, "It was an area in which women were discriminated against".⁴⁴ In another sense the customary law of inheritance institutionalized patriarchal hegemony in the family; it created men's power, but limited women's rights and power in the family.

3.2 'MIZO CULTURE' VIS-À-VIS MASCULINE AND FEMININE IDENTITY.

The dichotomy between public and private has been one of the primary concerns and a target of thoroughgoing feminist critique. For them, historically it was social norms as well as (customary) law that defined the line between the home /family as private and the rest of political society as public in which the line was clearly gendered. As a result social and feminist historians have recently begun to emphasize that the notions of private and public must be historicized by linking them to the hierarchies of power and social relations in which they are embedded.⁴⁵ A critique on the Pre-colonial Mizo cultural space has seldom received attention in the academic discourse despite the fact that there were some restrictions for social mobility as a result of social division and hierarchy between clans, families and gender. Men and women were destined to occupy different space. Due to patriarchal dominance, there was a greater restriction on the mobility of women than men.

3.2.1 *Zawlbuk*: Construction of Men's space.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, *Zawlbuk*, the only information centre, social and educational institution for the formation of social structure and customs was as Shakespeare stated in Lusei-Kuki Clan, "the particular property of the unmarried men of the village, who gathered there in the evening".⁴⁶ Since women were not allowed to enter *Zawlbuk*, the only existing cultural institution was a 'space' that solely belonged to men and a centre of patriarchal discourse. In this way the social structure, customs, traditions, knowledge and wars

etc were wholly created and constructed from patriarchal minds and men used those patriarchal knowledge as tools to dominate women for the complete formation of male-constructed culture. Its immediate impact was a clear distinction of 'space' between gender i.e. men as public and women as domestic, which created and institutionalized the Mizo's perception on male-female identity.

Rather than contextualizing the discrimination it had created for women most of the scholars and writers have welcomed women's exclusion. For instance Chatterji has stated:

“ Their (women) accepted place in the society was in the home to rear children, perform various domestic tasks and offer such physical assistance to the male folks as demanded by them in their jhum cultivation. Under no circumstances could a woman, young or old visit a *zawlbuk*. They were neither expected to offer guidance or direction for the society's growth and development, nor did they themselves look for any more prominent place than what they enjoyed in their society. Theirs was subservient role and their acceptance of the same without any question prevented cracks in their social organization”.⁴⁷

Thus, she strongly supports and agrees with the exclusion of women as the main example for significant of women's exclusion in all activities of village administration and its administration. While glorifying women's exclusion and their position in the society, Chatterji fails to locate a distinct space and identity of gender created by *zawlbuk*.

One of the proverbs, “*Hmeichhe finin tuikhur ral a kailo*” or ‘Wisdom of women does not reach the village stream’ might also be correlated with *Zawlbuk*. When they used this proverb, Rualkhuma has observed that the Mizos meant to explain women's duties and the limitation of her 'space' and knowledge within the family that never reached beyond village stream.⁴⁸ Being the only place where women as a group could gather together, shared and exchanged their knowledge, *tuikhur* or village stream could be regarded as the centre of women's discourse, but the society neither regarded as knowledge nor listened to their voices. Instead, this derogatory proverb was used to identify her feminine role and the limitation of her space to enter *zawlbuk*. Socially and politically a woman was therefore regarded her as passive and un-knower; she was always expected to hold and maintain her feminine responsibilities and concerns as fixed by patriarchal discourse.

3.2.2 Hunting: A masculine culture and identity.

Hunting was part of an important culture of the Mizos and in its heyday intertwined with economic, social and religious reasons. As important as hunting being a part of a Mizo culture is to re-examining its aspects, purposes and impacts from gender perspective. Economic purpose as a result of shifting cultivation was of course one of the main reasons, but the importance and popularity of hunting lied on the social and religious context.

First of all it created 'space' between genders in which men's contribution was highly recognized. Due to the division of labour between the sexes, the job of hunting fell on the hands of men. Accordingly, hunting became a big game for men that promoted the idea of patriarchal culture and male bonding. The striking fact about the popularity of hunting was that it had symbolized men's power in the society. A good hunter for the Mizos was a synonym with a brave man, one of the important steps to win the title of '*Pasaltha*'. A man who possessed the title of '*Pasaltha*' (Hero or Warrior) was highly respected not only by the villagers, but also favoured by the chiefs. Thus, men could achieve honour and prestige through hunting. Hence while the Mizo society glorified men's labour, women's labour had remained invisible and unrecognized.

The most important purpose of hunting was its correlation with the religious reason i.e. to be a man of *Ram lama Thangchhuah*, through which a man could achieve honour in life after death. To get this title a man was required to kill a prescribed number of animals including barking deer, sambhur, bear, wild boar and wild mithun. A man who could achieve this title would certainly become one of the *khawnbawl upa* or elders of the chief;⁴⁹ and was entitled to wear *Thangchhuah Puan*. He was not only highly respected in the society but was believed to be accompanied by the spirit of all animals he had killed on his way to *Pialral* or paradise. There was no separate strategy for a woman to become *thangchhuah*, but she became *Thangchhuahnu* by sharing the title of her husband.⁵⁰

3.2.3 War and Head hunting: Man's Space and the construction of Masculine Identity.

A Mizo contemporary theologian Lalthuanawma argued that war for the Mizos was almost synonymous with head-hunting and *vice versa*.⁵¹ If this be so, from another viewpoint war for the Mizos was a time and place for men to exemplify their masculine value in the

public. To support the proposition of war as a place for men a good reference is made by a Christian missionary J.M Lloyd who opined that head hunting had the further importance of being one of the means by which a Lushai (Mizo) youth could prove that he was a man.⁵² However, while making this assumption the question arises as to how and why a man showed his masculine value through head hunting. When he studied the history of tribal and inter-tribal war and head hunting practices of the Mizos, a contemporary historian Lalremsiama also linked one of the main reasons behind the practice of head-hunting with the veneration and honour of men's prestige in the society.⁵³

Like hunting, the custom of head -hunting had a deep correlation with the Mizos' percept on a *Pasaltha*. Among the Luseis a man who won this title by taking his enemies' heads could wear a head gear particularly meant for a brave man called *Chhawn*. As a result, it was the intention of everyman to become a man who could wear *Chhawn* by killing his enemies and take their heads off.⁵⁴ Zairema, an indigenous theologian stated that heads provided good trophies for those whose courage was questionable in other circumstances.⁵⁵ Meanwhile it is also noted that a man carried away his enemies' heads to prove that he was a warrior and he deserved it for exhibition as trophies either in the *Sahlam* (a tree, where the head of the enemies was placed) or *Zawlbuk*.⁵⁶

When the warriors came back from their battlefield they placed the heads of their enemies on *Sahlam* in the centre of the village. The victory of war was always accompanied by ceremonies as the warriors had to *ai* rituals or celebrated their victories with public feast where the chief honoured him with *Huaizu No* (A cup of rice beer for a brave man) Beside this he could wear *vakul chang* when he died. Accordingly, a man who had brought home his enemy's head was thought more highly than the one who could not. To prove his bravery in front of the whole communities a man had to bring home his enemies' heads. Thus, head-hunting expedition for the Mizos was an important activity through which masculinity was formed.

To assume head-hunting and war as a place for men, a critical study on the reasons behind women's invisibility is therefore seen necessary. The main reason would be due to the Mizos' attitude of gender discrimination in the society. One of the welcoming words of the Mizo parents at the birth of a child signified this perception of the Mizos. If it was male, the parents would say, "Ah! He will become a brave hunter and warrior and will kill wild animals and enemies."⁵⁷ Beside this, when the *ai* rituals was performed, it was a custom to hit the heads

of their enemy. At that time, all the boys were given dao or weapon to hit the heads with.⁵⁸ From childhood a boy was sent to *zawlbuk* and was trained to be a good warrior by listening to the stories of wars from village elders and brave men. But for the women, her home was the only institution and she was trained to maintain her feminine image through her beauty and her ability in performing domestic chores. In fact, given the limitation of their space, women had no chance to participate in war and thence, head hunting could be identified as a space for men and the glorification of a masculine power in history.

3.2.4 Concept of *Tlawmngaihna*: Construction of masculine and feminine identity.

One of the most important elements, which had reflected and upheld Mizo culture was, *Tlawmngaihna*, a ‘code of Mizo ethic’ or ‘a spirit of chivalry.’ From the various definitions of earlier writings and records, the meaning of *tlawmngaihna* may be summed up as - honesty, bravery, unselfishness, self-sacrifice, courteousness, zealousness, hospitality and perseverance etc, which was expressed both in individual and communal enterprises.⁵⁹

Despite the numerous studies or references on the contribution of *tlawmngaihna* for the formation of Mizo culture, a critical study from a gender perspective is almost absent. Though this concept demanded the participation from the side of both men and women, in reality its meanings, origin and components had remained mostly within masculine realm. In this context, the question of *tlawmngaihna* falls within an ‘individual *tlawmngaihna*.’ The traditional stories, folktales and earlier writings had given much emphasis on men’s *tlawmngaihna* that were generally expressed by individuals within hunting as well as head-hunting expeditions in which women’s contributions were generally left out. Meanwhile a person who practiced the precepts of *tlawmngaihna* was highly respected in the community.⁶⁰

This observation may be correlated with the existence of *zawlbuk* and the concept of *Pasaltha*. It is generally stated that *tlawmngaihna* was the outcome of *zawlbuk*, where *valupa* or village elders especially those reputed as *pasaltha*, through deeds of *tlawmngaihna* narrated to the young boys about the myths of *tlawmngai* persons or heroes of the village.⁶¹ The ideals thus received from the *valupa* found practical expressions in the various activities of the *zawlbuk*, helping the aspirants to demonstrate their worth as *pasaltha*. The chief in his turn would uphold the ideals of *tlawmngaihna* by patronizing the *zawlbuk* and by giving incentives to the proven *pasaltha*.⁶²

Exclusion of women's *tlawmngaihna* in earlier historical traditions however, does not mean that women did not have a spirit of *tlawmngaihna*. Challiana who amongst the first scholars to question the concept of *tlawmngaihna* and women states, "By the time a girl can carry two bamboo-water-tubes on her back that is, about seven or eight years of age, the mother will begin teaching her the ways of *tlawmngaihna* which includes all aspects of household chores and even more..."⁶³ Thus, a separate space between gender emerged i.e. *zawlbuk* as men's and home as women's space. A woman's *tlawmngaihna* was observed within domestic sphere, courteousness to men in jhumming and in the custom of courting without receiving due recognition from the society.

According to the *Lusei* custom, if the girl and her parents showed any displeasing behavior to her suitors, all the inmates of the *zawlbuk* could take revenge by breaking into their house. On such an occasion, even the village chief could not say anything and the girl's father was expected to produce a big vase of *Zu* or rice as a way of apologizing to those *Zawlbuk* inmates.⁶⁴ On the other hand, through *tlawmngaihna*, a man was trained to become a hero and his *tlawmngaihna* was recognized and honoured in the *zawlbuk* and the *Tlawmngai No* or *Taima no* or *Huai zu No* (a cup of rice beer) was institutionalized for him by the chief at special feasts and ceremonies.

Thus, through hunting, head-hunting and *tlawmngaihna*, man became a 'hero' or *Pasaltha* to achieve respect and privilege not only during his life time, but even after his life after death. As patriarchal minds molded their bearing and place in society, women also saw a man who possessed such qualities as more virile and thus highly desirable as lovers, husbands and potential fathers. In this way, patriarchal culture controlled a woman and structured her space through her feminine identity- her roles in domestic chores, physical appearance and productive capacity without getting social privilege, but her identity was assessed in relation to her husband's or father's identity. In short, to accept colonialists and earlier writers' definition of *Zawlbuk* as an important social institution, women who formed at least half of the communities were excluded from the society. Instead it formed the main structure of 'Mizo culture' through which a 'masculinity' was made and glorified by placing feminine responsibilities only as supporting role for cultural formation.

3.3 “CIRCULATION” OF WOMEN.

The question on the nature and origin of women’s subordination in the formation of culture has been a long rumination amongst the feminists in their study of women in history in which different alternative explanations had been yielded. While patriarchal dominance has been recognized as the genesis of women’s subordination, for Levi Strauss, “the exchange of women” marks the beginning and the cause of women’s subordination, which in turn reinforces a sexual division of labour by instituting male dominance.⁶⁵ For some feminists this theory offers one alternative explanation for the study of patriarchal oppression within the circulation of women in a male dominated culture. If it was male’s hegemony in the family and male’s constructed culture that dominated Mizo women, the circulation of women in the form of marriage, raids and institution of slavery may also give us some explanation to understand patriarchal hegemony and women’s oppression in the formation of Mizo culture.

3.3.1 Marriage.

Marriages, according to Levi Strauss are the most basic form of ‘gift’ exchange, which constitutes male bonds in which women are the most precious of gifts and culture depends upon that tie.⁶⁶ From his androcentric analysis, some feminist anthropologists have pointed out the centrality of the woman as the desired object to secure male bonds instead of forging male-female relation. Others have not looked so much at the woman in this system of exchange, but at the male bonds it establishes.⁶⁷ Given to the diverse forms of marriage amongst the different clans and families, a closer look at the marriage systems – transaction of bride wealth i.e. bride price, dowry and the marriage alliances amongst the ruling clans the present study attempts to look at the structure of exchanges which characterized patriarchal ties and supremacy within the formation of Mizo culture.

Bride price has been customarily prevalent among patrilineal tribal societies and in India it is still practiced even among the middle and lower castes of the non-tribal population.⁶⁸ Amongst all the Mizo clans, marriages were also mediated through the transaction of ‘*man*’ or bride price. The price differed according to the clans. *Mithun* was the most valuable items of bride price and there was no fixed amount with regard to the number of *mithun*. Sometimes, it was also paid in terms of articles like gongs, guns, beads and *Puan* or

loincloth. It was from 19th century, when the Sailos consolidated their power in Dungtlang village that bride price was properly given in terms of *mithun* as most of the historical evidences of bride price in the early 18th century were mainly in the form of these articles.⁶⁹

The Mizo's custom of *Man* or bride price has been one of the controversial issues amongst the writers and scholars. Chatterji says, "The institution of marriage in the Mizo society, with all its inner details of agreement, etc also goes to establish a significant place for the woman in the Mizo society...In fact the marriage price may well be looked upon as the prestige value rather than the sole price of commodity."⁷⁰ Like Chatterji, in their attempt to study women's status in marriage system many scholars have simply drawn vague conclusion by glorifying bride price as the symbol of women's high status; but failed to observe the enhancement of patriarchal hegemony and control over women within this custom. Firstly, patriarchal legitimacy had been emerged in the arrangement of marriage and distribution of *man*. Before the settlement of *man*, both the families had to make negotiation and the initiative was firstly taken from the boy's side by sending *Palai* or negotiators particularly men, to the girl's family.⁷¹

Man was divided into *Manpui* and *Mantang*. The main price or *Manpui* went to the bride's father. Only during the absence of the father and nearest male relatives or if the girl was born outside wedlock, a mother was authorized to claim *Manpui*. The subsidiary price known as *Mantang* was distributed between firstly to the bride's paternal uncle (*Palal*) and maternal uncle (*Pusum*) and then to the girl's paternal aunt (*Ni Ar*) and her elder sister (*Naupuakpuan*). The recipient of *Palal* was an adopted trustee, who was expected to protect her in her future. Besides, the recipient of *Pusum* had the great responsibilities in the house of the newly married couple and they could not perform ceremonies like *Khuangchawi* and *Chawn* without him.⁷² For this reason, Kipgen also agreed with Chatterji to assume the bride price as a prestige value for the women.

Similarly, Dokhuma also argued that the distribution of subsidiary prices or *Mantang* shows that a woman was not dehumanized and sold as a commodity as the price stand only for a marriage price, not for a woman's price.⁷³ Though it was her parents who received the negotiators as well as the price, all the final decisions and settlement were made by the father and other male members in the family. They (men) fixed the price and received the large share of the bride price. The first gender-defined role for women was to be those who were

exchanged in marriage transactions. The observed gender role for men was to be those who did the exchanging or who defined the terms of the exchanges.⁷⁴ Henceforth the custom of bride price defined gender role and insured male hegemony in the family to confirm that women belonged to men, needed to be protected and controlled by men.

The famous Mizos' welcoming word of a newborn female child says, "Oh! She will become a beautiful maid and would bring a handsome price."⁷⁵ This old saying reveals the obscured economic reason and gender division of labour in the 'circulation of women' in bride price. Accordingly, a number of scholars and writers have elaborated this position to signify women's lower position in the Mizo society and for this reason Vanlalhlani observed that a girl was by and large taken as an economic asset or a moveable commodity and sold like the most valuable domesticated animals at the cost of her parents.⁷⁶ Here, a society's demand on women's productive labour emerged. Perhaps due to the communities' dependency on jhumming cultivation along with gender division of labour, first importance was given to productive labour in the selection of the wife.

Generally a woman was assessed through her contribution to jhumming, her ability in weaving and other domestic works.⁷⁷ This observed fact has led to the assumption that a woman's productive labour was one of the objects in the custom of bride price. Economically, marriage then appears as a benefit for the bridegroom's family, but a great loss for the bride's family. Hence, economic needs of the family fostered and made a woman equivalent with *Mithun*, so she was 'given' and 'received' reciprocally by the two families in her marriage. In this context, bride price appears as a compensation given to the bride's family from the bridegroom's family. Perhaps, being equivalent to domesticated animal, as H. S. Luaia has commented, a woman was called '*Ran ngo*' or fairer domesticated animal.⁷⁸ Consequently she was exchanged or bought to be controlled by her new owner without having any rights over her own economic production for the completion of patriarchal power.

The position in a clan hierarchy and position in a marriage system were also intimately linked, which resulted to the transaction of *man*. Amongst all the clans the chief's daughter fetched the highest price. It is generally believed that the bride price had its good side, as the higher price would make the position of the wife more secure and marriage more permanent. Accordingly, Dr Lipi Mukhopadaya also remarks, "*It certainly enhances the social status of a*

woman for whom a higher bride price is given.”⁷⁹ Apparently, the position of *Lai* and *Mara* women in the family was much more secure than the *Lusei* women.

On the other hand, to constitute bride price as the sign of a woman’s status would be a fallacy as it only signified her higher status compared to women of other clans and families, but not to men. In spite of the higher price they had to pay, every man intended to marry a woman from the higher clan/sub-clan. This custom was commonly practice among the *Lai*.⁸⁰ This custom had a deep connection with their sacrificial ceremonies. For instance, in the Sacrificial ceremonies of *Sechhun*, performed by the *Lais*, a sacrificial animal ‘*mithun*’ was tied with a rope known as *sehrui*; and it was only a man of ‘*hnamtha nei*’, (who married a girl from the respectable clan) who could hold *sehrui*. Meanwhile a man of ‘*hnamchhe nei*’ (those who married a girl from the lower or inferior clan) was not allowed to touch *sehrui*.⁸¹ This social practice then reveals that, women were exchanged with her equivalent prices in marriage not only to signify men’s status in the society but to reinforce hierarchical formation as well.

The impact of social hierarchy on the other hand is that bride price along with dowry also differed according to clans and families. There were higher prices among the *Lai*, *Mara* and the *Paite* comparing to the *Luseis*. Amongst all the clans the chief’s daughter fetched the highest price. Generally price differed according to a number of *mithun* they had to pay. Being the owner of family’s property/production, payment of *mithun* and other articles for a bride price depended upon the economic status of men. It is also stated that the daughter of the chief also brought a number of female slaves with her on the day of her wedding. We have a good example with regards to this. According to the historical record, the *Lusei* chief *Suakpuilala* raided Adampore in the Cachar area and procured 32 Bengalee women to accompany his sister *Vanhnuaitangi* to her husband’s house in 1865.⁸² In this form of marriage, exchange of women emerged as an initial step or a strategy to expose men’s economic power to the other groups of men.

A ‘gift’ or exchange of women in marriage for the Mizos also somehow emerged with political alliances to establish the purity of lineage and power relations as well. As in the words of a feminist anthropologist Gayle Rubin the result of a gift of women was more profound than the result of other gift transactions, because the relationship thus established was not just one of reciprocity, but one of kinship.⁸³ An important custom that was commonly connected with marriage and lineage system was the examination of the family history. This

was because they believed that physical appearance and all the characters could be inherited by their descendants.⁸⁴

The chief's family was more careful in this regard. For instance, in the case of the *Sailo* ruling clan, if a chief's son searched for a wife in another village, the prospective wife was placed on a bed enclosed by a curtain by the mother and the girl would stand only with her skirt to be examined by the chief's son.⁸⁵ J. Shakespeare stated that among the chiefs the desire to marry another chief's daughter limited the young man's choice and marriage among first cousins was more frequent than among the commoners.⁸⁶ Therefore, the marriage between the common man and the chief's daughter was very rare. It is also said that if a common man fell in love with the chief's daughter, it could endanger his life.⁸⁷

As a result of constant wars amongst the different clans many chiefs also carried out matrimonial alliances as a means to strengthen their political linkages - to consolidate their relationship with other ruling clans and to make peace with their neighboring enemies. There are a number of evidences in Mizo history to prove the existence of such practice. The best documented case was – in the middle of the nineteenth century the greatest *Sailo* chief *Lallula's* son, *Mangpera* married *Pi Buki* a daughter of a *Palian* chief, *Lalrihua*. In the beginning, there was a constant hostility between the *Palian* and *Sailo* chiefs. But this matrimonial alliance brought peace between these two clans.⁸⁸

In another sense, the custom of concubinage and the exchange of women as 'gift' had some relations. When a chief or a wealthy man chose to take a concubine he was required to pay a price to her family equal to the bride price. But as in the case of a real wife the whole amount was rarely given especially when it was the chief that desired a concubine. Often than not the chief could get away with paying some favors and small gifts to the girl's father. Fathers gave their daughters willingly at this concession because being associated had its advantages for him.⁸⁹

Marriages for the Mizos formed not only an important means for the formation of social hierarchy but also the patriarchal alliance and power. An alliance was made not only between the two families, "but between the two groups of men in which a woman was figured as one of the objects in the exchange"⁹⁰ to consolidate men's social, economic and political power between the two groups.

3.3.2 Wars.

A study on wars amongst the different tribes of the Mizos revealed that while the wars were mostly waged by men most of victims of the inter-tribal wars were the women and children. Given that dawn attack or ambush was the common form of warfare, the women who went to the jhum were sometimes kidnapped for wars that placed women in a vulnerable group. J. Shakespeare states, 'as a rule only marriageable women were taken captive, and were disposed of in marriage, the lucky captor acting in *loco parentis* and taking the marriage price.'⁹¹ Not only this, chiefs' wives and daughters were also taken as captives during the wars.

It is stated that in earlier period, it was not a custom among the Mizos to carry the heads of the women off, but it is stated that it became constant practice in due course and it was a great advantage for the enemy to kill a woman who happened to be pregnant, for it was considered as taking two heads at a time. Thus he acquired honour and celebrity amongst his tribe as the killer of two enemies at a time.⁹² In 1800, M. Boucheseiche, translated the report of J Rennel the Chief Engineer of Bengal about the custom of Lushai-kuki who dwelled n the border of Tipperah mountain;

"The Cucis (kuki) formerly were not in the habit of killing all women found by them in the dwellings of their adversaries. The origin of the present barbarous custom is, indeed, singular enough. A woman, who was engaged working in the fields, asked another why she had come so late to sowing. She replied that her husband having just started on the war-path, she had been detained in preparing his food and other necessary arrangements... He bethought himself, also, that if the women did not take care of the house and prepare their husbands' food when going on the war-path, there would be considerable inconvenience accruing. Since then, the cucis always cut off the heads of the women of vanquished enemies; more especially are they murderously disposed to any who may be with child. A Cuci, who, in surprising a villain can kill a woman with big child, and obtain both her head and that of the unborn infant, is thought to have committed a most meritorious act, as with one blow his has destroyed two enemies."⁹³

In the last part of this statement, women's victimization was connected with her contribution in biological reproduction. A French Anthropologist, Claude Meillassoux's statement may be applicable as he argues, "Women's biological vulnerability in childbirth led tribes to procure more women from other groups, and that this tendency toward the theft of women led to constant intertribal warfare. In the process, a warrior culture emerged".⁹⁴

Historical evidence of the mortality rates of the twentieth century also support Meillassoux model, which was approved by D.E Jones, a Christian missionary. J.M Lloyd wrote: "D.E was appalled at the mortality of babies at birth, about 50% according to one chief's information. Many mother died at childbirth and D.E also discovered a fact which no one else seems to have noted, viz. that this was often the reason why Mizos "raided" the plains. They were on wife-hunting expeditions rather than head-hunting. An old man also told him (D.E Jones) that the wars among the Mizos were of comparatively recent origin. They used to be a very peace loving people." ⁹⁵

Early colonial reports also give numerous accounts on women-hunting in tribal wars. For instance, the colonial surveys of the Lushais (Mizo) in 1871-1872 under Major Macdonald and Captain Badgley reported that Mizos made raids among themselves, as well as on Manipur for arms, women and heads.⁹⁶ Captain O.A Chambers in 1871-1872 also reported that Mizo chief attacked Cacharipara of British territory in which several women were carried away.⁹⁷ Thus, capturing women's reproductive capacity was one of the main intentions of the warriors. Though war for the Mizos was subjective and an important strategy to glorify men's power, but a woman became one of the important 'objects' to be circulated to complete the formation of Mizo culture.

3.4 SEXUAL CODE AND FEMALE CHASTITY.

Many writers and scholars who focused on Mizo customs from the sources of colonial texts seldom failed to mention the cases of sexual abuses as a popular practice within the pre-colonial Mizo custom. The custom of free mixing society, particularly the custom of courting was generally correlated as a 'site' where the Mizo women often lost their prestige and reputation. A colonial official A.G McCall also states, "Pre- marital chastity among young Lushai daughters of social climbers was of a high standard, in that a girl lost her value

practically if she became pregnant before marriage.”⁹⁸ Though the custom of courting was a ‘site’ for women to show *tlawmngaihna* or courtesy, the earlier observation reflected the repression of women’s *tlawmngaihna* through men’s sexual power. Hence, the present study attempts to locate this custom with male-defined customs and the objectification of women’s body for patriarchal social relations.

Regarding the sexual code enforced on men Chatterji has stated, “...the various types of offences connected with the intimate relationship between man and woman, both married and unmarried is to show how the woman enjoyed not only equal treatment with man but was given by the society the highest measure of security and respect for free will.”⁹⁹ The women were indeed safeguarded through sexual code but, if their positions were equal with men, what do we account for the cases of sexual abuse suffered by women while the society expected her to maintain her chastity? Therefore, what is important here is the reflection of social reality, men’s sexual attitude and power over women through the sexual code. Although it was an offence, one of the popular sayings was “*hmeichhe hnute dehin lei a kuailo*” or “there is not much harm done in touching a woman’s breast” that seems to be emerged out of men’s language.

Perhaps sexual code had safeguarded women, but through their language men already had sexually oppressed women and defined their power over women’s body. Accordingly it may be observed that a woman’s body was a site of patriarchal authority in order to create a properly discipline society. For instance, if a woman was found to have a bad reputation, a group of village men would carry her to the jungle and would try to rape her. This custom was called *Zawn*. Likewise, if a female visitor who came to the village was thought to have a loose character, then those village men also did the same to her.¹⁰⁰ In spite of the enforced sexual laws, there was no offence against the custom of *zawn*. But it was men who regulated customs and laws and accordingly “culture had created men’s mind to exercise absolute power both with kindness and cruelty in the body of women.”¹⁰¹

Another patriarchal nation that inhibited and controlled the lives of women was the religious perception on female chastity. B. Lalthangliana, when he reviewed the Mizo’s concept on female chastity stated that while a father taught his daughter to maintain her chastity he advised his sons to sleep with girls.¹⁰² This custom had a deep connection with the religious belief as it was believed that a man who could defeat at least three unmarried women

and seven married women during his lifetime would not be shot by a man called, *Pu Pawla* before entering *Pialral* or paradise; a girl on the other hand should remain chaste in order to escape the pellet of this man.¹⁰³ Accordingly, the society respected and honoured female chastity and it was the aim of everyman to marry a virgin girl. And if a spinster died, a special grave was prepared for her in order to show respect and honour to her.¹⁰⁴ In spite of this much appreciation and honour had been given to the men who could defeat women during their lifetime. For instance, if a man could defeat a chief's daughter, he would be adorned with *Vakul Chang* (feather of a hornbill) after his death.

Generally, they used to hide it under his body for it was very dangerous to fall in love with the Chief's daughter. Likewise, if he defeated two sisters he was entitled to wear two feathers of cock's tail and if he could win mother and daughter, he would wear a feather of black hen.¹⁰⁵ Thus, there was a very contradictory expectation from a man and a woman as far as sexual relationship was concerned. However, this religious belief had created a drawback for women as it had given more power to men over women. An access to the heavenly abode after death was not an easy task for a Mizo woman. While she had to maintain her chastity, her male folk always tried to defeat her and often insulted her from behind

3.5 LOCATION OF WOMEN'S ROLES, POWER AND KNOWLEDGE.

In spite of the patriarchal cultural control and power over women, it would be a fallacious to portray women as powerless in the making of history. As Whyte says, "in a given social society women can be dominant in some respects at the same time as they are subordinate in others."¹⁰⁶ Women had their own means of exercising power through social and religious rites. Despite the rare open revolts against masculine power, women's roles and power could be analyzed through their resistance against social and gender hierarchy of that period. Thus, "naming, identifying and measuring women's presence in places, situations and roles which were theirs..."¹⁰⁷ seems to be necessary to escape from the concept of male domination/female oppression. This perspective would somehow explain the reason behind men's cultural power and control over women.

3.5.1 Women's economic roles and knowledge on environment.

Gender studies have generally accepted that women and men have historically had different roles in production relative to the environment. As producers and reproducers of life, women had been incessantly interacted with the environment. They significantly contributed to the management and use of natural resources such as, agriculture, plants, animals and forests. They contributed time, energy, skills and personal knowledge to sustain the economic production of their villages, which simultaneously made them an invaluable source of knowledge.

Since time immemorial, agriculture had been the backbone of Mizo economy. During the traditional period, all the members of the community were involved in Jhum cultivation. The method of jhum cultivation demanded strenuous labour on the part of men and women in the field. According to one of the Mizo mythological stories, a woman named Lalmanga nu knew that 21st or 22nd June was the longest day in a year so she would arrange for her villagers to work on her jhum on that day in order to get as much out of them as possible. The Mizos then named the lunar month as “*Lalmanga Nu Lawm/Hlawh Rawih Thla*”. Since then, it had been the intention of most of the families to get jhum partners or *lawm* on that day. *Lalmanga Nu* is one such example of women who possessed a deep ecological knowledge that was not known to many in those days.

Home-based production required a variety of crafts and skills. It was mainly the responsibility of men to produce household materials for the family. But, women were also engaged in these productions through the art of pottery. Pottery was done by hand alone and the sizes of pots varied according to the purpose for which they were intended. Women alone did this work. Besides this, women also showed their great skills and knowledge in the art of weaving and dyeing. The cotton grown in their jhumland was collected carefully, ginned and spun out with the help of a spinning machine to produce yarn. For dyeing they used the leaves of indigo fera called ‘*ting*’. They boiled *ting* leaf in water and after some time threw away the *ting* leaf and then the water that was used to boil the leaf in was used again to boil yarn. After they finished the process of dyeing, they stored it in a bamboo basket called ‘*ting thul*’ and weaved it according to the needs of the family.

Though men and women jointly did most of the work, division of labour between the sexes was firmly established. While men mostly did the selection of the cultivation site, women accompanied them in the harvesting, burning and clearing of the forests. In the areas of seed collection, handling and storage, the Mizo women played a very important role. It was the women who preserved and germinated seeds besides sowing and weeding of the seeds right from the clearing of the cultivation sites. To preserve small seeds, they used dry gourds or a piece of cloth and stored them on planks in a fireplace called '*thehhlan*', while large quantities of paddy seeds were kept in a bamboo basket known as '*pareng*' instead of big tins or containers to avoid moisture. The intricate knowledge involved in performing this task had been transmitted from mothers to daughters, from sister to sister, mothers-in-law to daughters-in-law or from one village sister to another.

3.5.2 Image of Women in Traditional Belief Systems.

In every society, the position of women has always been determined by the prevailing social customs, Institutions and other practices; and it was religion, which united and bonded together these to form formidable cultures. None the less religion was use to justify commandments directed only at women. Religion then provides the ideology that formed the lives of women. As indicated before one old Mizo saying states, "*Hmeichhia leh chakaiin Sakhua an nei lo*". Or Women and crab do not have religious rites. Though this old proverb mainly indicates the position of women in the religious rites of the family, it is generally apply to the justification of women's inferior position that created their duties and image from the traditional religious aspect. Many of the early scholars then tried to interpret the position of Mizo women *vis a vis* religion.

The religion practiced by the Mizos was quite elaborate. They believed that the whole world was inhabited by a number of spirits who, at any moment may lead to human's advantage and disadvantages. In the view of the Mizo traditional belief, there are some spirits whom they considered as benevolent, those who never harmed them. They also believed that these spirits could become the giver of blessings during their lifetime. The most popular benevolent deities were- *Pheichham*, *Maimi*, *Tau* and *Lasi*. Out of these, *Lasis* were considered as Female spiritual deities. The Mizos considered the *Lasis* as invisible spirits, who lived in the jungle and they did not regard them as demons. They also described them as beautiful ladies, who lived in the jungle in large groups. The *Lasis* seemed to be concerned only with wild

animals over whom they had complete control. They also possessed power of bestowing hunters with the ability of shooting animals. Men who received sign from the *Lasis* and fell in love with them were called by the *Lusei* as '*Lasi zawl*,' and they became such skilled hunters that they were looked upon as being possessed of her spirit. Although the *Lasis* were not considered as demons or divinities, yet this seemed an appropriate place/time to deal with them.¹⁰⁸ The Mizos believed them to be supreme over all other benevolent *Ramhuai* or spirits, who lived in *Lurh* and *Tan* precipices.¹⁰⁹ The most famous *Lasis* in the *Lusei*'s folk tales was *Chawngtinleri*. According to the Mizo belief, she was the leader of all *Lasis*, who had the authority of all animals and was their guardian. She was also often called as '*Chieftainess of all the animals*'.¹¹⁰

Despite the accepted theory of unrecognized female goddesses, there were some supernatural beings that could be recognized as female and had more or less the same characteristics as *Pathian*. This concept of the females in the traditional Mizo religious represented their perception of women's characters and roles in the society. For instance, in the *Lusei* religious belief, '*sa*' and '*khua*' were believed to be the first God. In the generic terms though '*sa*' means meat, yet in the religious rites it signified their birthplace and heritage as well as the worship of their ancestor.¹¹¹

Meanwhile, the term '*khua*' stands for village or nature. As they also called '*khua*' as '*khua nu*' in their religious worship, it was believed to be a female.¹¹² Though she has often been described as a mere spiritual deity, in actual practice, they worshipped her like a Goddess. She was believed to be a benevolent protector and guardian of the whole village and thus it would be wiser to call her the '*mother of the nature*' or '*mother of the village*' instead of a mere spiritual deity. Though *Khuanu* was believed to be a female, she had the same power as '*Pathian*'. Her character and role could be compared with a human mother who has tender relationship with her children. They depend upon her for their very life and sustenance. They cannot grow properly without her. It is because of this protective role in rearing the human race that the institution of motherhood has been look upon with reverence even by other civilizations, religions and ages.¹¹³

Apart from these spirits, another name often mentioned in the *Lusei* history in regards to crops and paddy was believed to be a female. This lady was named '*Pi Kawli*', also known as '*Kawldangi*'. Though *Khuannu* and *Khuavang* had been regarded as the Mothers of Blessing

in all respect, *Pi Kawli* was believed to be a creator of Paddy.¹¹⁴ But, unlike these female deities, she was never recognized as a spirit, yet she was addressed as an old lady in the performance of '*Buh Thai*' during the ceremonies of *Chawng* Sacrifices.¹¹⁵ Aside from the creator of paddy, the other roles of *Pi Kawli* as well as her responsibilities in regards to the religion have never been mentioned in the historical and traditional folk tales. And unlike other deities, she was never recognized as a spirit or Goddess worshipped by the Mizos. In spite of this fact, she played a part of creator that could assign her to the status of a mother of fertility like other deities. Her role was more or less the same with ancient Roman goddesses, *Ceres* and *Demeter*.¹¹⁶ At the same time the worship of *Khuachultenu* was practiced among the *Darlawng* of *Hmar* clan and is often mentioned as '*Zawngawrhtenu*'. She was believed to be the creator of the earth and sometimes considered as being equal with God. Sacrifices were also offered to her in order to appease her.¹¹⁷

The spiritual deities and goddesses described above, signifies a belief in the supremacy of female deities in the traditional religious belief. In addition, among these deities majority were identified as female out of whom *Khuannu*, *Tlanglaunu*, *Khuavang*, *Pi Kawli* and *Khuachultenu* have more or less characteristics that can be compared to a goddess. Their roles and characters were more to do with blessings and were more merciful than *Pathian*. However they seemed to live under the control of the Supreme God or *Pathian*. Therefore it is also noted that these Goddesses served as potential mediators between God and human being. Besides this notion, different opinions also arose in regards to the identification of *Khuannu* and *Khuavang*. Some people used these two terms as synonyms with *Pathian* and often mentioned *Khuannu* while worshipping *Pathian*.

Besides this, the traditional Mizo religion also believed in the existence of the evil spirits which were also identified as women. The famous female demons were- *Phung* and *Chawm*. Apart from these evil spirits the Mizos also believed in the existence of some spirits, which had a deep connection with woman. A kind of evil spirit, which had the power of entering another person's body and causing severe stomach pain that sometimes resulted in death, was called by the *Luseis* as *Khawhring*. One of the first Christian missionaries, J.H Lorrain portrays *Khawhring* as "a malignant spirit which is so closely approximates to what in English known as the 'evil eye' that it may be well called by that name"¹¹⁸ Generally those who possessed such a spirit were women. Those possessed of *Khawhring* were most disgusting people and no one wanted to marry a girl with *Khawhring* spirit as it would surely lead to her

death.¹¹⁹ Unlike other spirit, any sexual identification had not been given to it. However, certain people, especially beautiful women were said to have possessed such a spirit.¹²⁰ As anyone who possessed this spirit was believed to be unclean, no one was willing to touch the properties of the possessors of this spirit.

Mizos associated their deities and spirits with women who sometimes appeared as good spirits and also as evil spirits revealed their influential forces over all the creatures. Thus, the Mizo traditional religious beliefs reflected the characteristics of female as having dual character- both bestower and aggressive. Beside this, it is also observed that, in the traditional Mizo religious perspectives, the characters and roles of women had been taken into extreme. Herein, therefore a cardinal distinction was existed between the sexes. Thus, extremism was the chief character of feminine in the traditional Mizo religion. On the other hand, it is also said, "Extremist though she be, women is always consistent in her extremes; hence her power for good and for evil".¹²¹

3.5.3 Women in Wars.

When the colonial officials documented history, they generally described the Mizos in a derogatory term as 'nomads', 'warlike' 'head hunters' and 'wild savages' etc. Based on the colonial monographs and oral tradition, scholars and writers then usually described the constant clan rivalries and the inter-tribal wars as the common features of either politics or economic and religious rites in which the position and role of women had been made invisible or irrelevant. In these forms of historical writing experiences and contributions of women were marginalized by the hegemonic masculinity of the social and political world, associated with male dominance and power which portrayed men as the main actors in tribal wars. To make a new history for women in the history of the Mizos, the available records on tribal wars therefore call for the need to reveal the contribution of women both as an individual and a group in tribal war to make Mizo history.

In a society where there was a sharp gender division of labour, it would be partial to place the role of one sex as inferior or secondary. In fact, both the sexes performed their own duties and played active role in their own place for the success and completion of war and headhunting. Gerda Lerner argues, "no one would seriously maintain that any war in history could have been won without the supporting activities of women, but because no focus is made

on them, they were lost from the historical records”.¹²² By making this assumption, it would be worthwhile to add the “actively” supporting role of women for the glorification of men’s courage in the custom of head-hunting in tribal war. On starting for a raid, the old men and women of the village accompanied the party an hour’s journey on their way, carried the provisions and then left them with loud wishes for their success. “May you be unhurt, and bring home many heads,” was the chant made by the women. This is when open hostilities have commenced with some other clan.¹²³

As almost all the men were involved in these war expeditions, it was a woman who took the charge of a father in the family and of all the family administrations during the absence of her husband. On their return from the battlefield, those warriors were welcomed by young women who put *arkeziak* (a white long yarn), on their arm, ankles and neck in order to honor their bravery. Moreover, to the brave men with who came home with their enemies’ head the wives of the chiefs and some rich women would give necklaces and beads instead of *arkeziak*.¹²⁴ In this way, women’s contribution was needed for the complete formation of wars and head-hunting tradition.

During the war between *Lusei* and *Thlanrawn Pawi* in the later period of the 18th century the evident of women’s role in head hunting was orally recorded. It is said that, knowing that her husband was not about to kill even a single enemy a woman cheated one man from her enemies by hiding him from her villagers inside her house, during the absence of her husband. However, on the return of her husband from a war, she offered this man to her husband to kill him.¹²⁵ Meantime, the wife of a brave man of *Thlanrawn Pawi* was said to force her husband to take at least five heads of *Luseis* during the same war that strongly inspired her husband.¹²⁶

These two evidences show women’s capability beyond their space to perform in war. Though the name of these two women were left out in oral records, it would not be wrong to argue that they (women) were also the real actors in wars, but due to male hegemonic influence it was the men folk who became village warriors and it was men’s action which received central attention of the historians who thereby excluded women’s contribution for the successful raids in wars.

Given to its importance as an information centre, *zawlbuk* also served as an important source of historical writing. When he studied the importance of folk stories for the studies of customs and social values of the Mizos Kipgen states, 'it was the elders who told the purposeful stories in the *zawlbuk*. They told about their own experiences as well as retelling the stories that had been passed on to them from previous generations. These latter stories had been handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. In the process a rich heritage of folktales has accumulated and the men-folk delighted both in telling and listening to them.'¹²⁷ When the colonial officials reached the region, they interacted with the village elders and chiefs in the *Zawlbuk* and got the historical information from there. Thus, there were no chances for women to be included in the history of head hunting or war.

3.5.4 Women and Folk Songs.

The character of the traditional Mizo culture was reflected not only in its social institution, but also in folk songs.¹²⁸ Despite their difficult lives and subordinate position under the strict patriarchal dominance, the contributions of women in the society were reflected in folk songs. It is significant to know that among the well-known Mizo poets or song composers, majority of them were women. These women became very popular because of their songs and especially for those whose lives were tragic.¹²⁹ These folk songs contained a rich resource for an understanding of the Mizo culture and were sung during special occasions and festivals. In addition, the ideas and world-view in some of the songs seem to reflect epochs of an earlier, pre-colonial Mizo society when hierarchical social structures and values were pre-eminent.

The first and famous Mizo poet in a historical record was a woman by the name of Pi Hmuaki. The period of Pi Hmuaki could be traced back to the early 17th century and she was believed to have settled in *Ngente* village of Chin hills in Burma. As most of her songs reflected the community life of *Ngente* Village, the Mizos called Pi Hmuaki's song 'Ngente Zai'. According to oral tradition she constantly composed songs, which resulted in the jealousy of men who did not have talent to compose songs. In order to stop her from composing more songs, she was buried alive because it was feared that no songs would be left for the future generation to be composed. The oral source says that when she was about to be buried alive, she was still composing a song to request the young men to bury her properly.¹³⁰ Her song signified that even at the verge of her death, she bravely composed a song despite the circumstances she was in. Thus, from the story of *Pi Hmuaki's* life, we can see that since the

earliest times men felt threatened by women's abilities which they successfully suppressed using excuses that even led to death. Mangkhosan Kipgen also argued, "Pi Hmuaki's ability to compose songs and the way in which she was put to death indicate both the cultural contribution possible by a woman of her time and the male chauvinism that feared such a role"¹³¹ Before they settled in the present hills, another famous woman poetess was *Thailungi*, a *Ralte* (one sub-clan of the Mizo) woman. According to oral tradition, she composed a song which became the first *Chai* songs in Mizoram, between 1600 and 1620 A.D.¹³²

Since the eighteenth century, when the Mizo started to settle in the present region, numerous women poetesses began to emerge. Despite the social and gender hierarchy there were no direct resistances that stood equality in the society. However, it may be observed it was women who used songs as the 'agent' of their resistance against the gender and social hierarchies of that period. The most famous among them were *Lianchhiari*, *Laltheri*, *Darpawngi* and *Saikuti*. Among them *Lianchhiari* and *Laltheri* were the chief's daughters. Though both of them were famous for the songs of their undying love for their lovers, their songs replicated social hierarchy, which created problem of marriage between the chief's families and commoners.

The period of *Lianchhiari* could be traced back to the as early as the 1700 A.D. It is recorded that she was a daughter of *Dungtlang's* chief, *Vanhnuaitanga*.¹³³ According to oral tradition she fell in love with a commoner, *Chawngfianga*, whom she could not marry due to the disloyalty of *Chawngfianga's palai* or negotiator. She composed of many songs that spoke of her unending love with *Chawngfianga*, one of her songs relates to her voice to break gender gap of that period.

According to oral tradition, one day some men from another village asked the direction to the chief's house (her father's house). Without knowing that she was the chief's daughter, in passing, they teased her by commenting at her beauty. Being the daughter of the chief, she was angered by the words of those men and she composed a song- '*Amin tluang peng min ti, Lian lai chhung keimahni. Cherbelah ningzu Kan dawn, Lianchhung Kan chi hrim e....Kan tawng a uang em ni? Tlangin lo ngai rawh u, Zova siahthing ril khi, A din chhung keimahni*'.¹³⁴ Translated this song means, 'though people think that i am a commoner, I belonged to the chief's family. As long as the tree in the jungle is there; the glory of my family would not end.' It would not be wrong to say that she was the first Mizo woman who responded to the

disrespectable attitudes of men towards women. We can also assume that she expressed her resistance against men's attitude by using her father's name. While the account on her relationship with a common man reveals her resistance on social hierarchy, in this context she used song and her social status as a means of her resistance against patriarchy.

As mentioned earlier, there was social distinction between the *Lalthlah* (higher clans) and *Hnamcawm* (commoners), which had often created difficulties in matrimonial alliances. In the middle of the nineteenth century *Laltheri*, daughter of a *Sailo* chief *Lalsavunga* fell in love with a commoner by name, *Chalthanga*. Due to the division in the society, they could not marry and later on her brothers killed *Chalthanga*. Therefore, to lament the death of her lover, *Laltheri* composed song, in which she bravely urged the *Sailos* to change their ways- '*Sailo Ngurpui Suihlung in mawl lua e, Kan sum tualah Thadang thlunglu hawihten in ban le,*'¹³⁵ which means, 'O great *Sailo* rulers, how heartless can you be. Look at how cruelty have you hung my beloved head upon our courtyard.' After her brothers killed her lover, *Laltheri* bravely rose against her family. She lamented the death of her lover through her songs as well as through her actions. She refused to wear clothes and she also avoided eating foods. In the above song, she pointed out the conservative thinking of the *Sailo* ruling clan. Thus, due to the bravery of *Laltheri*, her brothers also changed their mind and it is also said that the deep gaps between the chiefs and the commoners that sometimes led to cases of murders also decreased.¹³⁶

Regarding the social hierarchy, another woman named *Darpawngi* also raised her resistance through her song in the late nineteenth century. She was known for her songs that reflected her tragic life like other women. However, compared to other women poetesses, her life was miserable, as she was a *bawi* or bonded labour. One of her song that was called '*Thinrim Zai*' or '*Song of anger*' had a deep significance in the history of Mizoram. This song says, '*Keimah Chhimtlang, Khuallian chalneng intai angin dengpui ka tai dawn e*' '*Chhimtlang ka liam dawn e, Khuazanghin nu'n biathu tum thing. Laiah in tan lo ve*'¹³⁷ She composed this song to express ill treatment she suffered from the village elders with regards to her goat and for no fault of hers she was found guilty.¹³⁸ This song explained how the chiefs and wealthy families oppressed the commoners. In spite of the discrimination between the rich and the poor no one had ever dared to question the authority of the village administration, but among the commoners it was only *Darpawngi* who raised her voice for the justice in the village court and against the authority of the village chief.

Between the late nineteenth and twentieth century, there was another woman poetess called *Saikuti*. Though this woman was also famous for being the song composer, she bravely resisted against *Zawlbuk* men's negative behavior towards women.¹³⁹ She called a meeting for the women and made settlement in order to take revenge on their men folk, which angered the latter. Hence, men also planned to take revenge against *Saikuti* and arranged plots not to render help to her in times of trouble and no one was allowed to talk to her. However, *Saikuti* did not care about these plots; she bravely composed a song to ridicule them- '*Chhakah Za thang ral zal lo Vala, min phiar vel e, lawhleng run kaiah. Min phiar vel e, leido za ral angin, lawhleng Siali suihlung phang lovin*'.¹⁴⁰ This song talks about how she disregarded the men's plots against her and this further infuriated men. Due to this, men sabotaged her house still *Saikuti* continued to compose the songs to annoy them. Her songs finally convinced the men who were forced into an agreement of peace with her.

Thus, song became an important agent for women to resist social hierarchy and gender hierarchy under patriarchal control. On the other hand it also reflected women's contribution in shaping the Mizo society and its culture and traditions that played an important role in Pre-Colonial Mizo history.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

The present study relocates women in the social and cultural space of Mizos in the pre-colonial period. Given the scarcity of available literature on women, it reexamines the earliest sources i.e. colonial accounts by contextualizing oral traditions such as proverbs, songs, legends and folk tales. Though the present study agrees with the general assumption that placed women under the patriarchal oppression, it emphasized that women played significant roles in the formations of Mizo cultures and societies.

As the Sailos dominated the region, all the other Lusei clans and their dominated clans followed the patterns of Sailos' customs, practices and ceremonies, which were structured within the male centric society. It is said that it was during the consolidation of Sailos' rule that the negative sayings about women were introduced.¹⁴¹ It would therefore not be wrong to argue that the traditional system of patriarchal Mizo society was centered on the perceptions

and paradigm of 'Sailo or Lusei Patriarchy.' It was men, who constructed the structure of culture through their knowledge and defined women's space within the domestic sphere, but without authority. She had to remain in the domestic sphere under the dominance of men. To control women and to exclude them from public space culture had given men the power to use their knowledge.

Men expressed their knowledge through proverbs or common sayings, folk tales and stories, which was apply both within and outside the domestic realm. In this way, men controlled women for the complete formation of patriarchal culture. On the other hand, it would be wrong to conclude this chapter in portraying women only as victims under patriarchal control as social hierarchy resulted to the emergence of women, through which the women got chances to participate in political administration. They were also few women who had contribution in the formation of culture and shown their resistance of gender hierarchy through songs. In short, it may be concluded that the patriarchy did not completely controlled women; instead it often created a space for them to resist against patriarchal hierarchy.

End Notes and References.

- ¹ Uma Chakravarti, 'Whatever happened to the Vedic Dasi: Orientalism, Nationalism, and a script for the past', in Kumkum Sangari & Sudesh Vaid (eds), *Recasting Women : Essays in Colonial History*, Zubaan, 2006. p. 27.
- ² Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Progress Publishers, Moscow 1977. p. 57.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Heda Jason, 'Proverbs in Society: The Problem of Meaning and Function', in *Proverbium*, Vol. 17, 1971. pp. 617-622.
- ⁵ J. Shakespear & T. C. Hodson, 'Folk-Tales of the Lushais and Their Neighbours', in *Folklore*, Vol. 20, No. 4, Dec. 30, 1909. pp. 388-420.
- ⁶ A.G McCall, *Lushai Chrysalis*, TRI, Aizawl, 1977. p. 26, J.M Llyod, *History of the Church in Mizoram; Harvest in the Hills*, Synod Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1991. p. 109.
- ⁷ Lalrinawmi Ralte, *Bible Women te Nghilhlohnan*, Shalom Publication, Bangalore, 2004. p. 15.
- ⁸ T Vanlaltlani, *Mizo Hmeichhiate Kawngzawh*, Mizoram Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2005. p.38.
- ⁹ B. Lalthangliana, *Chawnpui: Essays on Mizo History, Culture, Literature and Letters*, Mizoram Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2004. p. 224.
- ¹⁰ Hmingthanzuali, *Status of Women in Mizo History (From Late Medieval Period to Early 20th Century)*, Unpublished MPhil Dissertation, University Of Hyderabad, 2004. p.71.
- ¹¹ Sheila K. Webster, 'Women, Sex, and Marriage in Moroccan Proverbs', in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 2, May, 1982. pp.197-184.
- ¹² Charlotte H. Bruner, 'Proverbial Wisdom about Women (Reviewed Works): Source of All Evil: African Proverbs and Sayings on Women by Mineke Schipper' in '*Callaloo*', Vol. 15, No. 4, Autumn, 1992. pp.1805-1086.
- ¹³ J. Shakespeare, *Lushei-Kuki Clan*, TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1988. p. 141. The Vuites were one of the Mizos clans, who were partly influenced by the Lusei customs.
- ¹⁴ Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961. p. 136.
- ¹⁵ T.H. Lewin, *Wild Races of South-Eastern India*, FKPL, T.R.I, Aizawl 1978. p. 134.
- ¹⁶ Mangkhosat Kipgen, *Christianity and Mizo Culture*, Eastern Theological College, 1996. p. 81.
- ¹⁷ Hmingthanzuali, op.cit., p.76.
- ¹⁸ James Dokhuma, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, J.D Press Publication, Mizoram, 1992. p. 244.
- ¹⁹ *Mizo Women Today*, T.R.I, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1991. p. 36. Generally this proverb has been translated, as 'Women and crab do not have religion'. As the proverb was translated in the modern term, most of the researchers assumed and misinterpret that Mizo women did not have religion during the traditional times.
- ²⁰ This Mizo proverb had been evolved from the religious view of the Luseis, which was later on followed by the other clans. This is because; the word *Sakhua* is a *Lusei-Duhlian* dialect, commonly used by the Luseis and their dominated clans. The term is taken from the combination of the two words 'sa' and 'khua' that signify God whom they offered sacrifices. In the beginning, it did not denote the word, religion. They first worshipped 'sa' and 'khua' as their God by offering sacrifices to them, and later on they used the combination of the two words to

signify the Mizo traditional religion. K.Zawla, *Mizo Pi Pute leh An Thlahte Chanchin*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1976. p. 78

²¹ Hmingthanzuali, op.cit., p.109.

²² Ibid.

²³ B. Lalthangliana (2004), op.cit., p. 253.

²⁴ For instance, if a *Ralte* girl married a man from *Lusei* clan, she could not eat the sacrificial meat in the ceremonies of her husband's family sacrifices. But if her father-in-law wanted her to have the meat, he would say 'give some meat to a dog (female)'. After this, she could take the sacrificial meat.

²⁵ On this sacrificial ceremony, a man had to kill *Vawkpa sutnghak* or a hog and the *Sadawt* or family priest performed all the sacrificial worship. After he completed this religious step, a man had become the owner of *sakhua*.

²⁶ James Dokhuma, op.cit., p. 242.

²⁷ *Marxist Philosophy: An Introduction*, New Vistas Publication, 2002. p. 145.

²⁸ B.Lalthangliana, (2004), op.cit., p. 226.

²⁹ Elizabeth Clark & Herbert Richardson, *Women and Religion; A feminist Source Book of Christian Thought*, Harper & Row Publishers, London, 1977. p. 254.

³⁰ Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, Oxford University Press, 1986. p. 16

³¹ C. Lianthanga, *Hmanlai Mizo Nun*, Mizoram Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1999. p. 13.

³² V. Geetha, *Theorizing Women*, Stree, Kolkata, 2002. p. 99.

³³ J. Ann Lane, 'Women in Society: A Critique of Frederick Engels', in Bernice A. Carroll (ed), *Liberating Women's History: Theoretical and Critical Essays*, Illinois University Press, 1976. p.13.

³⁴ For further details please see, J. Shakespeare (1988), op.cit., K. Zawla, op.cit, James Dokhuma, op.cit.

³⁵ T.H Lewin, op.cit., p. 134.

³⁶ James Dokhuma, op.cit., p. 242.

³⁷ A belief that if a woman died during delivery, her dead soul would come back to the villagers and would scare them.

³⁸ J. Shakespeare (1988), op.cit., p. 82.

³⁹ B. Lalthangliana (2004), op.cit., p. 260.

⁴⁰ V. Geetha, op.cit., p. 99.

⁴¹ T.H. Lewin, *The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers therein*, T.R.I, 2004. pp. 142-143.

⁴² Leela Dube, *Women and Kinship: Comparative Perspective on Gender In South and South East Asia*, United Nations University Press, 1997. p. 77.

⁴³ N.E Parry, *A Monograph on Lushai Customs and Ceremonies*. T.R.I. Aizawl, 1998. p. 88

⁴⁴ Mangkhosat Kipgen, op.cit., p. 82.

⁴⁵ Tracy E. Higgins, 'Reviving The Public/Private Distinction in Feminist Theorizing', in *Chicago- Kent Law Review*, Vol 76, 2000. pp. 847-848.

⁴⁶ J. Shakespeare (1988), op.cit., p. 21.

⁴⁷ N. Chatterji, *The Earlier Mizo Society*, FKPL, TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2008. p. 82.

⁴⁸ B. Lalthangliana, *India, Burma leh Bangladesh- Mizo Chanchin*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2001. p. 385.

-
- ⁴⁹ James Dokhuma, op.cit., p. 40.
- ⁵⁰ Mangkhosat Kipgen, op.cit., p. 120.
- ⁵¹ Vanlalchhuanawma, *Christianity and Subaltern Culture*, ISPCCK, 2006. p. 30.
- ⁵² J.M.Lloyd, *On every high hill*. Synod Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1984. p. 16.
- ⁵³ F. Lalremsiama, *Milu lak leh vai run chanchin*, MCL Publication, 1997. pp 14-15.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid. p. 14.
- ⁵⁵ Zairema, *God's Miracle in Mizoram: A Glimpse of Christian Work Among the Head Hunters*, Synod Press, 1978. p. 1.
- ⁵⁶ Sangkima, *Mizos: Society and Social Change*, Spectrum Publication, Guwahati: New Delhi, 1992. p. 65.
- ⁵⁷ H.W Carter (ed), *Chhimbial Kohhran Chanchin (History of South Mizo Church)* South Lushai Mission Press, Lungleh, 1945. p. 2. Cited in C.L. Hminga, *The life and Witness of the Churches in Mizoram*, Literature Committee, Baptist Church of Mizoram, 1987. pp. 26-27.
- ⁵⁸ K. Zawla, op.cit., p. 85.
- ⁵⁹ Mangkhosat Kipgen, op.cit., p.65, McCall, *Lushai Crysalis*, op.cit., p. 97, K. Thanzauva, *Theology of Community: Tribal Theology in the Making*, Mizo Theological Conference, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1997. Vanlalchhuanawma, op.cit., p. 55-59, Vanupa Zathang, *A philosophy of tlawmngaihna, a greatest Mizo culture*, Manipur, 1999.
- ⁶⁰ K.Thanzauva, Ibid. p. 123.
- ⁶¹ Mangkhosat Kipgen, op.cit., pp. 69-70, K. Thanzauva, Ibid. p. 138.
- ⁶² Mangkhosat Kipgen, Ibid. p. 70.
- ⁶³ Challiana, *Pi Pu Nun*, 1979. p. 18.
- ⁶⁴ Ibid. p. 23.
- ⁶⁵ Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, Boston, 1969. p. 489 Cited in Gerda Lerner, op.cit., p. 24.
- ⁶⁶ Gayle Rubin, 'The Traffic in women', in J. W Scott (ed), *Feminism and History*, Oxford University Press, 1996. p. 116.
- ⁶⁷ Karen Newman, 'Portia's Ring: Unruly Women and Structures of Exchange in The Merchant of Venice', in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 1, Spring, 1987. pp. 19-33.
- ⁶⁸ Pruthi, Raj & Sharma, Bela Rani (eds), *Encyclopedia of Women, Society and Culture*, Anmol Publication, New Delhi, 1994. p. 138.
- ⁶⁹ Z. T Sangkhuma, 'Mizo Hmeichhia Leh Inneihna', in Zohmangaiha(ed), *Hmeichhiate leh Mizo Hnam Dan (Seminar Papers on Women and Mizo customary Law, 6th May, 1999)*, Valcolm Publication, 2000. pp. 31-36. Firstly, The story of *Chawngvungi* and her husband *Sawngkhara*, who paid *Dar huai* a kind of gong for *Chawngvungi's* price during 1700 A.D. Secondly, the history of *Lalpuiliana*, a *Sailo* chief who gave beads for the price of his wife *Khuangtiali* before 1760 A.D. Lastly, The traditional folk tale of *Zawlpala* and *Tualvungi* around 1760 A.D. From here, we have the evidence of *Mithun*, spear, beads and *Puan* as bride price given to *Zawlpala* when a Raja married his wife.
- ⁷⁰ N. Chatterji, *Status of Women in the Earlier Mizo Society*, TRI, 1975. p. 8.
- ⁷¹ Mangkhosat Kipgen, op.cit., p. 79.

-
- ⁷² K. Zawla, op.cit., p. 95.
- ⁷³ James Dokhuma, op.cit., p. 144.
- ⁷⁴ Gerda Lerner, op.cit., p. 214.
- ⁷⁵ H.W. Carter, op.cit., pp. 26-27.
- ⁷⁶ T. Vanlaltlani, op.cit., p. 20.
- ⁷⁷ C. Lianthanga, op.cit., p. 137. F. Rongenga, *Zofate lo khawsak choh dan*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2000. pp. 53-65.
- ⁷⁸ Rev. Dr. H.S Luaia, Personal Interview, Dated: 19th January 2006, Serkawn, Mizoram.
- ⁷⁹ Lipi Mukhopadaya, *Tribal Women in Development*, Publications Division, New Delhi, 2002. p. 51.
- ⁸⁰ *Pawi Chanchin*, T.R.I, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1988, p. 142.
- ⁸¹ Ibid. p. 106.
- ⁸² Suhash Chatterjee, *Mizo Chiefs and Chieftdom*, M.D Publication, Delhi, 2000. p. 82.
- ⁸³ Gayle Rubin, op.cit., p. 117.
- ⁸⁴ K.Zawla, op. cit., p. 93.
- ⁸⁵ Ibid. p.94.
- ⁸⁶ J. Shakespear (1988), op.cit., p. 49.
- ⁸⁷ K. Zawla, op.cit., p. 265. For instance, during the early 19th century, a chief's daughter *Laltheri* fell in love with *Chalthanga*, a common man. But she could not marry him and later on her brothers' men killed *Chalthanga*.
- ⁸⁸ Lalthanliana, *Mizo Chanchin (1900 Hma Lam)*, Vanbuangi Gas Agency, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2000. p. 440.
- ⁸⁹ N.E. Parry (1998), op.cit., p. 38.
- ⁹⁰ Gerda Lerner, op.cit., p. 47. Levi Strauss said, "The total relationship of exchange which constitutes marriage is not established between a man and a woman...but between two groups of men, and the woman figures only as one of the objects in the exchange, not as one of the partners".
- ⁹¹ J. Shakespear (1988), op.cit., p. 49.
- ⁹² Sangkima (1992), op.cit., p. 65.
- ⁹³ From the French of M. Boucheseiche, who translated the original from the English of J.Rennel, Chief Engineer of Bengal upon the religion, the manners, laws, and the customs of the Cucis, or the inhabitants of the Tiperrah Mountains, Published at Leipsic in 1800. Cited in T. H Lewin (1978), op.cit., p. 144.
- ⁹⁴ Claude Meillassoux, 'From Reproduction to Production: A Marxist Approach to Economic Anthropology', in *Economy and Society*, No. 1, 1972. pp. 93-105 Cited in, Gerda lerner, op.cit., p.49.
- ⁹⁵ J. M Lloyd (1991), op.cit., p. 81.
- ⁹⁶ Major Macdonald, Captain Tanner & Captain Badley, 'The Lushai Expedition: From the Report of Surveyors' in *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, Vol, 17, No. 1 (1872-1873) pp. 42- 55.
- ⁹⁷ O.A Chambers, *Handbook of the Lushai Country*, (The Superintendent of Government Printing India, Calcutta 1899), (Reprinted) FKPL, TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2005. p. 80.
- ⁹⁸ A.G. McCall, op. cit., p. 209.
- ⁹⁹ N. Chatterji (1975), op.cit., p. 31.
- ¹⁰⁰ F. Rongenga, op.cit., p. 62.
- ¹⁰¹ Susan Griffin, *Pornography and Silence*, Haper and Row, Newyork, 1981. p.141.
- ¹⁰² B. Lalthangliana, *Zotui; Studies in Mizo Literature, Language, Culture and History*, Aizawl, 2006. p. 128.

-
- ¹⁰³ K. Zawla, op. cit., p. 138.
- ¹⁰⁴ Sangkima (1992), op. cit., p. 301.
- ¹⁰⁵ James Dokhuma, op. cit., p. 196.
- ¹⁰⁶ Vicky Randall, *Women and Politics*, MacMillan Education Limited, Hong Kong, 1986. p. 15.
- ¹⁰⁷ Cecile Dauphin & Arlette Farge, 'Women's Culture and Women's Power: Issues in French History', in J.W Scott (1996), op.cit., p. 571.
- ¹⁰⁸ J. Shakespear (1988), op. cit., p. 67.
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁰ Lalrinawmi Ralte, 'Chawngtinleri' in *Chhinglung Magazine*, Vol X, 1996-1997, Bangalore Mizo Association, 1997. p.11. According to the *Lusei* folk tales, she was captured by a group of *lasis*, for their leader *Lalchungnunga* and later she became the leader of all the animals.
- ¹¹¹ J. Malsawma, *Vanglai (Autobiography)*, Macdonald Hill, Zarkawt, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1995. p. 157.
- ¹¹² Liangkhaia, *Mizo Mi leh Thil Hmingthangte leh Mizo Sakhua*, M.A.L, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1973. p. 61. In Mizo Language, the term '*nu*' signifies female (adjective) or mother (noun).
- ¹¹³ V. P Gupta & Mohini Gupta, *Mother Goddess- A Global Perspective*, AMBE Books, Delhi, 1999. p. 1.
- ¹¹⁴ N.E. Parry (1998), op.cit., p. 96.
- ¹¹⁵ *Mizo Sakhua (Kumpinu Rorel Hma)*, op. cit., p. 30. *Chawng* is a sacrificial ceremony performed by the *Lusei* chiefs and well to do families in order to become *Thangchhuah*, an important step to reach *Pialral* (Paradise) after death. In this ceremony, In order to show the abundant wealth of the '*Chawngpa*' (Sacrificer of *Chawng*) four or five men called '*Thai parual*' trampled the paddy, who were then followed by a group of young men and girls. Meanwhile some men blew on bamboo whistle (*Tumphit*) and they scolded *Pi Kawli* by singing a rather rude little song with the refrain '*Pi Kawli chu zep chu zep, Kawldangi chu zep*'. Also see N.E Parry (1998), op. cit., p. 96.
- ¹¹⁶ V.P. Gupta & Mohini Gupta, op.cit., p. 44. Ceres was Roman goddess of corn and harvest. Demeter, another goddess of harvest and cereals, was considered of the same entity.
- ¹¹⁷ C. Chawngkunga, *Mizo Sakhua*, T.R.I, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1997. p. 17.
- ¹¹⁸ James Herbert Lorrain, op.cit., p. 253.
- ¹¹⁹ J.Shakespear (1988), op. cit., p. 111.
- ¹²⁰ B. Lalthangliana, *Pipu Chhuhaltlang*, Hrangbana College, Aizawl, 1998. p. 166.
- ¹²¹ S.S Shashi (ed), *Encyclopedia of World Women*, Sudeep Prakashan, New Delhi, 1989. pp. vii-viii.
- ¹²² Gerda Lerner, 'The challenges of Women's History' in Maithreyi Krishna Raj (ed), *Women's studies in India*. Bombay Popular Prakashan, 1986. p. 88, S.N.D.T. University, Bombay, 1983.
- ¹²³ T.H Lewin (1978), op.cit., p. 139.
- ¹²⁴ K. Zawla, op.cit., p. 83.
- ¹²⁵ B. Lalthangliana (ed), *Mizo Lal Ropuite*, T.R.I, Aizawl, 1989. p. 14.
- ¹²⁶ Ibid. p. 15.
- ¹²⁷ Mangkhosat Kipgen, op.cit., p. 83.
- ¹²⁸ Ibid. p. 94.
- ¹²⁹ Ibid. p. 101.
- ¹³⁰ Lalsangzuali Sailo, *Sakhming Chullo*, AJBM Publication, Bungkawn, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1995. p. 4.

¹³¹ Mangkhosat Kipgen, op.cit., p. 97.

¹³² *Chai* is one of the Mizo dances, performed during the special ceremonies and festivals. K. Zawla, op. cit., p. 255.

¹³³ Lalsangzuali Sailo, op. cit., p. 19.

¹³⁴ Ibid. p. 20.

¹³⁵ K. Zawla, op. cit., p. 268.

¹³⁶ B. Lalhangliana, *Mizo Literature*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1993. p. 50.

¹³⁷ Lalsangzuali Sailo, op. cit., p. 67.

¹³⁸ According to the oral source, *Darpawngi* and the elder had goats. One day *Darpawngi*'s goat had given a birth that was claimed by one of the village elder. Thus, the village council passed a settlement that both of them had to tie their own goat in their respective house and the infant goat would be freed in the center of the village. Thus, the infant goat used to go to *Darpawngi*'s place and sucked the milk of its mother. However, the village elders decided to give the infant goat to the elder. As the goat always searched for its mother for the milk, later on the elder killed it. Thus, to express her anger to the chiefs and the elders as well as to show how she concern for her goat she started to compose this song.

¹³⁹ Lalsangzuali Sailo, op.cit., pp. 83-84. During that time the men had to carry *Vaibel* (tobacco pipe), *Dumbawm* (tobacco box) and *Tuibur Um* (a gourd used for carrying nicotine water) inside their jhumming bag. One day, some men decided to let women carrying *Tuibur um* for the men. When men's decision reached to *Saikuti*, she called the meeting of the women and made the settlement that if they did not hear the sound of gun; they would not kindling fire for smoking the pipe. Knowing that was impossible, the men withdrew their settlement. After this, this group of men made another settlement in *Zawlbuk* not to help women more than thrice in spinning when they went for courting. *Saikuti*, however in turn again called the meeting for women and they decided to stop providing *tuibur al* (Nicotine water) for men not more than thrice a day.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Lalrinawmi Ralte, *Crabs Theology: A Critique of Patriarchy-Cultural Degradation and Empowerment of Mizo Women*, Unpublished D.Min Dissertation, Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A, 1993 cited from Frederick S Downs; *The Christian Impact on the Status of Women in North-East India*, NEHU Publication, Shillong, 1996. p.24.

CHAPTER-IV

WARS, COLONIAL EXPANSION AND WOMEN

Though the colonizers used the term “raid”, for the Mizos it was a war associated with heroism, courage and bravery.¹ Besides, it occupied a prominent space for the Mizos to procure slaves, guns and human heads, which were the fundamental parts of their economy and religious practice. Thus, due to the compelling economic and religious necessity for the accumulation of wealth and prestige of the villages, the Mizo chiefs had to organise “raids” against their neighbouring territories that troubled their political relations with the Colonial government and their “protected areas”.² Ever since the first expedition of 1850, the colonial accounts mainly dealt with the expedition to the villages of powerful Mizo chiefs who had been raiding and advancing towards the British territories of Cachar, Manipur, Sylhet, Chittagong, hill Tipperah and their neighbouring villages. From the eyes of European rational thinking, the government eventually began to view tribal war “irrational” and termed it as “raid” that were generally regarded as “savage” activities. Accordingly, to stop tribal “raids” the colonial government eventually sent the expeditions in Lushai hills to meet the powerful chiefs who disturbed or raided their “protected areas” and their subjects.

The encounter between the Mizo chiefs and the British took almost sixty years. The history of colonial expansion in Lushai hills have been extensively carried out by scholars and writers. Due to the domination of traditional masculine culture, the historical literatures and writings on the nineteenth century encounters are reluctant in placing the women as historical subjects or as part of the totality of colonial political power.

In contrast to such generalizations, the present study argues that the history of colonial expansion in Lushai hills had opened a new chapter for women in Mizo history. In order to challenge the conventional sources in history that are constructively enriched with the story of men, the analysis of women’s agency in the past is important. To relocate women’s agency the present chapter therefore re-reads and re-examines various sites of colonial texts to make woman into a subject of history-as someone who “occurs simultaneously in several places”.³

The question on the representation of women in colonial archive has been an important subject amongst the feminist scholars who are committed to documenting the experiences of South Asian women and the dynamics of gender construction and performance.⁴ The women historians like Antoinette Burton, Lata Mani and Post colonial scholar Gayatri Spivak,⁵ who have extensively re-examined the problem of reading women historiography in colonial archive, believed that the archive itself was heavily gendered. Despite this salutary initiative,

women's history remains marginal in the region of "Northeast India" where the project of history writing is not only relatively recent, but also informed by the ideological interests that privilege male representations. The problem is more pertinent in the regional history of Lushai hills (Mizoram), which experienced a different phrase of history from the other parts of India. The indigenous writers and scholars, without posing questions on colonial sources simply reproduced the colonizers' narratives, however by marginalizing the roles of women in historical accounts. Thus, re-examination on the questions of colonial representation of women from a gender perspective is required to read the political space of women in Mizo history.

By presenting the role of women in Pre-colonial and colonial political space the present chapter investigates the intersection between imperial policies and women in Lushai hills from the middle of the nineteenth century until the early two decades of the 20th century. In order to challenge post colonial historical writings it also explores "the possibility of recovering female voices and subjectivities from thin and scattered available documents in colonial archives".⁶

4.1 PLACING WOMEN IN THE PRE-COLONIAL POLITICAL SPACE.

Given to the strong influence of colonial prejudice and restriction of women voices by the power of patriarchy it is difficult to recover the experiences of women in the pre-colonial political space. As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has argued, the search for Mizo women's experiences in the archive is equivalent to being 'in the shadow of shadows'.⁷ Hence Mizo historians generally argue that until the colonial period Mizo women played little role in the development of politics and wrongly define Mizo women as passive and subsidiary inferiors. The oral-based law of inheritance during Pre-colonial period as it had been recorded on the other hand seemed to accept women's contribution and their presence in political institution.

In theory, the office of Chieftainship based its structure on the patriarchy as only men were selected to rule. The polities were characterized by hereditary chieftainship and ranked kin groups. The chief was helped by his council of elders or Upa, which exclusively composed of men such as *Zalen*, *Ramhual* (the official in charge of jhum cultivation), *Tlangau* (the messenger), *Thirdeng* (the blacksmith) , *Puithiam* (Priest) and *Sadawt* (medicine man). Apart from the chief's house, *Zawlbuk* or the bachelors' dormitory

formed the place for village administration. Here, the administration with regard to all village affairs, wars and defenses were planned. Given that *Zawlbuk* formed an important space that was entirely meant for men, the customs theoretically excluded women from the village administration. As per the rights of inheritance in the family the succession of chieftainship also went through the male lineage. As a rule the eldest son was declared as the legitimate heir. Even if the eldest child was a female, she could not be declared as the legitimate heir. Hence, customarily women had no place in the political system.

In spite of the limited rights of succession, both the oral and colonial sources give the instances when women became rulers in different parts of the hills to make their own remarkable history. However, the right of succession for women was very limited as they could claim the succession only when the ruling chief died. Though women usually did not assume the reigns of the village, they could assume full control of the administration of the village as regents on behalf of their minor sons when they were too young to occupy the vacant throne.⁸ Until the incorporation of the whole Lushai hills under the British rule, the present study discovers fifteen (15) Mizo women, who occupied the place of chieftainship until the establishment of British administration.⁹ However, these female chiefs' privileged status in political institution and their roles have been subordinated to their gendered identity either as mothers of future heir or widows of the deceased rulers in colonial sources.¹⁰

Rather than contextualizing or re-examining the colonial sources, many scholars and writers uncritically accepted the colonial's framework and pathetically misspelled the names of Mizo chiefs in their historical text. For instance, during the middle of the 19th century the colonial documents often mentioned the villages occupied by Lalhlupuii, but misspelled her name as Impanee or Impanu and widow of Ngura or regent of her son Vanpuilala.¹¹ Amongst the scholars who extensively focused on the Mizo chiefdom, Suhash Chatterjee is heavily influenced by the colonial frame work.¹² In his documentation of the biographies of the Mizo chiefs, he has identified one of the female chiefs Vanhnuaithangi from the line of her male relatives:

“The daughter of Mungpira, Rani Banaithangi was the principal wife of Raja Murchuilal...she was the sister of Raja Sukpial the most powerful Lushai chief of the western Lushai hills”.¹³

Other researches on the other hand unearthed that the oral-based customary law of Pre colonial period often placed women in political institution to independently rule over villages. Given that matrimonial alliance was part of the political institution, it enhanced the place of women in the institution of chieftainship. From the colonial records and oral traditions, Suhash Chatterji carried out the instances of women, who got independent villages from their husbands as part of the *man* or bride price.

In the early 19th century, the western Lusei chief Mangpawrha bequeathed a part of his village to his wife Pi Buki for her bride price, as he could not pay the bride price to his father-in-law at the time of the marriage. Before his marriage, Mangpawrha was an ordinary chief. Pi Buki being an intelligent woman helped her husband and after her marriage the strength and prosperity of Mangpawrha began to grow rapidly.¹⁴ The Eastern Lusei chief Vuta also gave a part of his estate to his wife Neihpuithangi.¹⁵ In another case, Lalchawngpuii popularly known as Laltheri, the daughter of Lalsavunga, one of the greatest Sailo chiefs¹⁶ was given territory in Darlawng village by her brothers after her marriage to a common man.¹⁷ These women were said to have ruled as independent chieftainesses while their husbands were still alive.

In some cases daughters of the chiefs sometimes inherited the estates of their father. For instance, Pi Buki, wife of western chief Mangpawrha after the death of her husband bequeathed the estates to her daughters Rothangpuii and Vanhnuaithangi.¹⁸ Both the daughters were allowed to set up their own independent village with them as chieftainesses. Likewise, Laltheri's half sister Thangpuii also inherited Zatezo village after the death of her mother Pawngi.¹⁹ The case of Thangpuii and her mother revealed that the traditional oral based customary law also bequeathed authorities to the concubines of the chiefs to rule over the villages. Besides these, in the late 19th century, we also come across another case in the village of Kancherra and Betcherra in hill Tipperah (Tripura), where a woman named Zawlchuaii occupied the place of her brother-in-law Sutthlaha, a Palian chief during his absence.²⁰

The oral sources as well as the re-examination of colonial sources reveal that these female chiefs were neither mere regents nor widows, but they actively supervised and guided the villages and were better off than male chiefs in many cases. Evidence of female rulers who had more privileged economic and social status could be read from both colonial and oral sources. In his uncritical documentation of Mizo Chiefs and their Chiefdoms from colonial source, Suhash Chatterjee mentions Vanhnuaithangi and glorifies her a village chieftainess

who surpassed her husband as an administrator. Her husband, Ngursailova was bounded by so many legal, political and economic problems that he became entirely dependent on his wife who managed his decaying estate intelligently. Even her husband's nobles gradually fell under her command and became obedient to her more than Ngursailova. After she divorced her husband, Edgar noted that Vanhnuaithangi established her own village near the village of her brother Suakpuilala during the period of 1860's,²¹ where she was assisted by her husband's noble men who left his chiefdom to live under the chiefdom of Vanhnuaithangi. Besides, she also declined to rule her husband's estate as a regent of her son.²²

Another evidence had been unearthed by an indigenous woman writer Lalsangzuali Sailo from the oral reconstruction of the village administration under Laltheri (Lalchawngpuui). According to the oral sources Laltheri was said to have ruled over the village with her husband, where she excelled over her brothers as an administrator. Her ability as a chief was better than the chiefs of the neighboring villages because of which people migrated from their villages and settled in her village. Those who migrated to her village also composed songs comparing the village with the earlier one where they underwent tremendous sufferings because of their cruel chiefs.²³

4.2 “VAILEN”²⁴-THE COLONIAL EXPEDITIONS.

During the Pre-colonial times, Mizo chiefs maintained their contact with the plain areas of Assam, Bengal and Manipur by means of barter trade and occasional tribal raids. In times of conflicts, Mizo chiefs retaliated with successful “raids” and took heads as trophies of war. The relationship between Mizo chiefs and the neighbouring empires became more intense when the British occupied the plain areas of Assam in 1826 followed by the kingdom of Tripura and Manipur as their protected state. In due course, colonialism expanded to the foot hill areas of the Mizo chiefs' territories. Colonial officers soon witnessed “tribal raids, plundering and captivities” in the plain areas. Colonial Zamindars who fell trees in the foothills and the *Khedas* (elephant catchers) were most targeted since failing to recognize Mizo chiefs' territory was regarded a serious offence. Mizo chiefs and their forest ecology were so closely inter related that they were indistinguishable from one another. Later on, it was found that the newly created commercial tea plantation in Cachar district was the main

target on the grounds that the tea plantation set up by the colonial government of Assam had destroyed their hunting area.

In order to “punish” the tribals, the colonial government repeatedly sent military operations to the hill areas.²⁵ The colonial government sent the first expedition against northern Lushai Hills in 1850 under Colonel Lister. Lister invaded a village named *Sentlang* in northern Mizoram, but soon withdrew from the hills.²⁶ More frequently, the Mizo chiefs continued their invasion in their colonial territories. In the coldest month of January 1871, the Mizos under chief Bengkhuaia invaded the tea garden of Cachar. This resulted in the killing of James Winchester, the manager of the tea garden and his daughter Mary Winchester was taken captive. As a result the colonial government sent another expedition (1871-1872) in Lushai Hills.²⁷ The expedition crushed a number of Mizo chiefs, but the remaining Mizo chiefs continued their resistance and frequently invaded British territories. The colonial Government was in dilemma and finally proposed to assimilate the tribes into their imperial empire. Colonial government subsequently transformed their punitive expeditions to wars of conquest as they realized that the tribal “raids” would not cease unless they were totally conquered and placed under the “civilized” administration of the British.²⁸

Since the expedition of 1871-1872 the whole Lushai hills had remained silent from tribal “raids”, however anti-colonial resistance continued to occur in southern hills when Lt Stewart was attacked by a southern chief Hausata near Rangamati in the Chittagong Hill Tracts on 3rd February 1888, where the other chiefs Dokulha and Vantura were also indirectly involved.²⁹ Later, the colonial accounts show that on 13th December, 1888, the three Sailo chiefs Kairuma, Nikhuma and Lungliana attacked the village of Pakuma Rani 6 km from Demagiri on the Chittagong hill tracts. The chieftainess who was an ally of the British and 21 men were killed, 13 heads were taken and 15 captives were carried off.³⁰ Consequently the colonial government, without recognizing the meaning of “raids” for the Mizos, reinforced another military operation, popularly known as Chin-Lushai Expedition in 1889-1890 on a larger scale in two columns- northern and southern to suppress “savage” activities. Apart from the punishment of the chiefs concerned in the above incidents, the expedition was carried out with the intention of further territorial expansion of South East Asia, as the main objectives of the expedition were:

- (1) To prevent further raiding, to maintain communication by means of a road from Demagiri.
- (2) To construct a telegraph line between Chittagong and Rangamati to Demagiri, to explore the unknown part of the country between Burma and Chittagong.
- (3) To establish semi-permanent posts to ensure complete pacification and recognition of the British colonial power etc.³¹

The expedition consequently led to the establishment of four permanent posts. The southern column established posts at Fort Lunglei and Fort Tregear (at Darzo) and the northern column established posts at Aizawl and Changsil. So the hills came under the supremacy of the British colonial government in 1890.

During these periods of colonial expansion in Lushai hills there were various moments of “women’s appearance”³², which required the exploration of the condition that made the possibility of female subjectivity in their records. The colonial’s description of Lushai expeditions however created complexity with regard to the question of agency in which few records on women have been emerged not only for the representation of imperialism but also for the account of anti-colonialism.

4.2.1 Women and the Production of Colonial Knowledge.

The production of colonial knowledge on indigenous society has been the most central theme of post colonial discourse. The most influential works of Edward Said, Ronald Inden, Bernard Cohn and Nicholas Dirks³³ have demonstrated that colonial conquest was dependent not just upon superior military, political and economic power, but also upon the power of knowledge. “Colonial knowledge was thus produced through a complex form of collaboration between colonizers and colonized, and an attendant process of epistemic confrontation and adjustment between European and indigenous knowledge systems”.³⁴ Colonial knowledge can be generated only through the raw data provided by the indigenous social and cultural forms of the colonized society. From the light of the above arguments, the present study firstly questions the unexplored silences and absences within the colonial archive by recovering female subjectivities for colonial production of knowledge from scattered documents of colonial, post colonial and oral records.³⁵

For the commercial and territorial expansion, the colonial government had to set up ethnographical and anthropological studies to study an “unexplored area” and the society for better administration in the hills.³⁶ Based on their ethnographic observations, tribal identity was constructed from time to time that described the Mizos as wild tribes, head hunters, bloody savages, cruel butchers, marauders, murderous race and barbarians. Colonial government soon needed to generate knowledge on “savage predators” that continuously attacked their commercial activities in plain areas. Initially, it was observed that the cause of “tribal raids” was nothing more than savage activities that consisted of plundering and burning villages, carrying off the enemies’ heads and kidnapping the inhabitants as captives amongst themselves and their neighbouring territories.³⁷ However, such distance observation was limited and further inquiry in the hills was required. Such inquiry could not be achieved without the help of native informants. Thus to defend or validate their position from the eyes of all “civilized” and enlightened nations various attempts were made- firstly to acquire knowledge from the surrounding tribes, about who conducted “raids” in British territory, and secondly, to acquire geographical condition of the hills for the purpose of mapping an “unexplored borderland”.³⁸

In the process of their investigation, colonial government found out that escaped captive slaves could be used as agents of information on Lushai hills. Since the occurrence of “raid” at the Manipuri area in Sylhet frontier in 1844 under a Mizo chief Lalsutthlaha (Lal Chokla) and other “raids” in 1847 and 1849, the colonial government thus focused their attention on the capture of *Sal* or slaves in “savage raids” under Mizo chiefs. Colonel Lister’s Report on the first colonial military expedition in 1850 also extracted that 429 captives were freed from Sentlang, the village of a Sailo chief Ngura.³⁹ While generating more information from the occupants of the conquered neighbouring territories more knowledge on the “savage raids” were therefore initially gathered from the freed and escaped slaves from Lushai hills that comprised of men, women and children. From the testimonies of these *Sal* or slave informants the colonizers therefore learnt that the fixed image of “savage” activities had been performed in the Lushai hills in which the innocent lives were forfeited or tortured.

Given that procuring of women for economic and biological reproduction was one of the principal causes of “raids” in the Lushai hills, the colonial accounts demonstrated that majority of the captives in Mizo villages were women.⁴⁰ Thus a site of knowledge emerged from the slave women that produced colonial’s understanding on the nature of slavery and its

functions in Mizo society. The present study demonstrates that of all the knowledge from the slave informants, the colonizers emphasized and gave more interests on the condition of women *sals* as it had a deep impact on the economic and political institution of Mizo chieftainship. An instance can be taken from the ethnographical record of AG McCall Superintendent of Lushai hills in 1931-1943 that documented a testimony of a redeemed woman slave who was captured by Lusei “raiders” during the earlier colonial encounter with the Mizos. From her testimony, the colonizers generated some knowledge on the Mizos’ family religious rites and they also learnt that slaves, particularly women were the first victims of the “savage raids” who had to serve as domestic servants and concubines to increase the power and status of the village chiefs. Her testimony also revealed that a few women captives committed suicide by hanging.⁴¹ Accordingly, the colonial’s sympathetic knowledge on slavery provided a good reason for the needs of British power to save the slave victims from the “savage raids” and their imperial rights to control over the Lushai hills.

The question of slavery therefore became an important subject in the colonial discourses and consequently the restoration or liberation of those captives for *Sal* from the bondage of Mizo chiefs became one of the objectives of Colonial military expedition in Lushai hills⁴² Hence to prevent further “raiding” and open up “friendly negotiations”, instructions had been given to the Mizo chief to inflict all possible punishment upon them in the event of their refusal to submit and surrender all captives and refugees.⁴³

In the course of colonial expansion, the *Sals* or slaves also enabled the colonizers to proceed against the “savage raiders”. Even in this context, slave women appeared in colonial documents as important agencies to identify the “violent” chiefs who had been performing “raids” amongst themselves and against the protected areas of colonial government. In 1862, when the first “raiding” against the colonial territories after the expedition of 1850 occurred in Sylhet frontier (commonly known as Adampore massacre), the government was able to identify the responsible four Mizo chiefs- Ngursailova, Suakpuilala, Runphunga and Lalhuliana- from the statements of four escaped captive women in April 1863. The testimonials of these women also indicated that many people were taken as captives in the villages of the above-named chiefs.⁴⁴ Though the government did not consent to the Sylhet Authorities’ urge for the sending of expedition against them, to some extent the women slaves’ statements subsequently made possible the government’s first peaceful negotiation with Suakpuilala in 1864 who ultimately became an important ally of the British.⁴⁵

When the second expedition was sent in two columns under General Nuthall and Major Stephenson in 1869, some chiefs agreed to cease their hostilities. But in 1871, “raids” occurred again in Cachar, Sylhet, Hill Tipperah and Manipur that urged the government to issue continual instructions to local officers impressing on them the necessity of exerting themselves to obtain further information of the movements and doings of the hill tribes, and especially to collect evidence as to those implicated in the raids committed.⁴⁶ To identify the raiders the government acquired evidences from women slaves. Firstly, an escaped woman who was taken as captive in the raid on Manipur identified the names of Vanhnuailiana and his sons, Vanpuilala and Pawibawia, Lenkhama and Lalhlupuii. Secondly a ransomed Lusei women belonging to the village of Vanhnuailiana’s brother gave similar information, adding that the others were under the guidance of both Suakpuilala’s and Vanpuilala’s people. Their information led to the conclusion that the sons of Vanhnuailiana, certain of the Haulawng chiefs and certain of the Sailo chiefs, acting in concert, committed the raids in Cachar. Furthermore, information on the evidence of “raids” in Sylhet that accused the people of Suakpuilala, two of his sons and some people of his sister Vanhnuaitangi was confirmed by an escaped woman captive from hill Tipperah.⁴⁷

The above mentioned chiefs particularly Suakpuilala, Lalhlupuii and her son Vanpuilala had already shown their friendly conversations with the frontier officers and agreed to cease their hostilities in the previous expeditions. Thus, knowledge on the occurrence of the “raids” and identity of the “raiders” generated from slave women informants was very doubtful but it attracted the most earnest attention of the government. It alarmed the government that efforts of friendship by frontier officers and the policy of conciliation proved to be powerless and insufficient to protect the British frontier from outrage by the remoter tribes.⁴⁸

Consequently after a long discussion, the government passed the resolutions on 11th July, 1871 that decided to send an armed expedition in Lushai hills in two columns-Chachar and Chittagong. While insisting on the restoration of the captives, the main objectives of the expedition of 1871 were: “to show those savages that they are completely in colonial’s power; to establish friendly relations of permanent character with them; to make the promise to receive in their villages from time to time, native agents of the government; to make traveling in their districts safe to all; to show them the advantages of trade and commerce; and to demonstrate to

them effectually that they have nothing to gain and everything to lose by placing themselves in a hostile position towards the British government".⁴⁹

In the colonial records, the expeditions appeared to be the first successful operations. While the three powerful Sailo chiefs were subdued in Cachar column, the expedition led to the submission of fourteen (14) Sailo Chiefs thirteen (13) Haulawng chiefs in the Chittagong Column who came to terms with the Capt. Brownlow.⁵⁰ Thus, slavery became a site of colonial production of knowledge in which women appeared as important agency that made the first step of imperialists' design of subduing the powerful chiefs possible for the colonial military officers.

In the process of colonial expansion it was increasingly apparent that the colonizing mission of the British could not be completed without interdependency between the government and colonized subjects. Thus, a site of slavery was not enough for generating knowledge and accordingly to improve their position, it was indispensable for the colonial government to have a further site of knowledge for a deeper understanding on the geographical and political condition of the people.⁵¹ By taking an advantage of outrages between the Mizo chiefs, the government intended to achieve negotiation and acquired the ability of "punishing" Mizo raiders as many of them had been inclined to make an alliance to strengthen their chiefdoms against their rival clans. Subsequently, friendly negotiation with the subdued chiefs had been used as a privileged site of the production of legitimate geographical and political knowledge.⁵² Throughout the encounters, the flexible oral-based law of inheritance compelled the colonial officers to recognize the voices of the female chiefs, who were alternatively integrated and located within this site.

Edgar's report on his tour amongst the Lushais (Mizos) in 1870-1871 had evidently demonstrated the colonial's utilization of political and geographical knowledge from the women. According to the colonial account, Edgar was sent to Lushai country by the end of 1869 to interview Suakpuilala and some of the Lushai chiefs as per the government's policy of bringing about better understanding with the Lushai (Mizo) Chiefs and was accompanied by Major MacDonald, a Superintendent of Revenue survey to define southern boundary of Cachar district and to obtain some topographical knowledge of the country beyond. With an objective of settling boundary from the borders of Manipur to Hill Tipperah and other territorial and political measures with Suakpuilala or some of his people, Edgar revisited the hills during the

cold weather of 1870-1871.⁵³ Before the settlement, he got information about a series of “outrages” in the Chittagong District and the intended “raids” against other Colonial subjects from the Mizo chiefs, who had been more or less subdued by the government.

Amongst the informants of the above incidents were the chieftainesses Pi Buki and Lalhlupuii. Pi Buki was one of the earliest Mizo chiefs to have an inclination of supporting the British force. Though Suakpuilala’s name had been frequently mentioned in the colonial documents, Pi Buki, as a chieftainess and a mother of Suakpuila seemed to play an important role behind the affairs of government and her son. Accordingly when Edgar proceeded towards to hills during his second tour, she had been supportive to him As Edgar had stated when he reached Changsil in the month of January, “A messenger came in from Pi Buk, whose village was south-east of Changsil, to inform me that a party, five hundred strong led by Lenkom (Lenkhama)son of Vanolet (Vanhnuailiana), were on the east side of the Sonai with a declared intention of attacking Bengallee villages, but that the chiefs were trying to get them back...At the time I heard the news I was anxious to get the Lushais to guide me to Sonai by the route which we followed eventually, and I thought they appeared unwillingly”.⁵⁴

During this critical situation, Pi Buki and her son Suakpuilala then sent their *Upas* (muntries) or Minister to accompany Edgar’s party to the Sonai. Besides, during the course of his tour, Lalhlupuii’s cooperative role to government could also read that she sent her *upa* or minister to inform the critical political condition of the Eastern Sonai and from the statement of her people the government were also able to confirm “outrages” had been taken in Cachar and three British subjects were captives in Vanhnuailiana’s Village⁵⁵. During this tour Edgar was unable to approve the proposed political and geographical measures due to continuous “raids”, Pi Buki and Lalhlupuii on the other hand enabled him and his party to learn the political situation of the Mizos and surveyed the geographical condition as well that enabled them to locate the Mizo chiefs and their villages in the mappings of colonial territory.

4.2.2 “Civilized” Political Agency of Female Rulers.

To show the imperial power over the hills, the government adopted a policy of retaliation with an objective of establishing friendly relations with the Mizos and impressing them that they had nothing to gain, but a lot to lose by resisting against the colonial government.⁵⁶ The Civil officer with the Cachar Column of the Lushai Expeditionary Force, J.

W Edgar's report in April 1872 stated, "If these people should prove friendly, the utmost care should be taken to protect them from any kind of injury or annoyance".⁵⁷ For the completion of its policy, the government required new "civilized" political agents from the natives to support British sovereign power and their subjects. In the mean time to protect the villages from their clans' enemies and government's act of vengeance, the village chiefs eventually had to fall under the government's policy and forcibly had to act as agents to consolidate imperial power. Henceforth the reversal of agency had been emerged in the space of political activities from tribal war or "raids" to a "civilized" form of peaceful negotiation with the colonial government. Given the traditional responsibility of the Mizo chiefs, almost all the female chiefs emerged out as having an inclination to make friendship with the government in due course. By reading a "civilized" form of colonial policy as a place where female chiefs appeared in colonial texts, diverse conditions emerged for the women to assert various sorts of agency during the colonial expeditions in the late nineteenth century.

One could say that a woman's power as a mother or a widow during the absence of male heads in the chieftainship institution proved to be very useful when it came to negotiation. The female chiefs who appeared in the colonial text emerged out from the powerful ruling clans who strongly resisted against the colonial government. In this context the female chiefs however appeared either as widows to the deceased rulers or agents to the government who persuaded younger chiefs to consolidate the imperial power. In Edgar's report of the expedition in 1872, Lalhlupuii appeared as keeping on good terms with the government and having a great influence over her son Vanpuilala by restraining him from his strong resistance against the government and the Manipuris.⁵⁸ During the colonial expedition of 1869 she had already sent her messengers with presents to the forces under Major Stephenson to announce the death of Vanpuilala and to assure them that his tribes had not been engaged in any of the late raids.⁵⁹ It is also recorded that in the 1870's A.D, the men of Khawlian village shot the Bengal army who were under Capt. Robert who came to their village to spend Christmas. Though Lalhlupuii ruled independently in Darlawn village, she gave an order to the men to hold their guns. Thus the village men stopped shooting at the Bengal army.⁶⁰

Meanwhile, as mentioned earlier Pi Buki who ruled over Muthi and Durtlang villages was also recorded as having good relations with the colonial government. After the death of her husband, Suhash Chatterji stated that after she realized the strength of the British Pi Buki advised her son Suakpuilala not to antagonize the government. Her role in colonial history

appeared through her influence over her son Suakpuilala who served as an important agent to the Colonial Government. Her daughter Vanhnuaithangi was also reported as following her after the latter's death. After the death of Suakpuila, the role of his wife also appeared as a widow when she sent her sons to receive Major Boyd, the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar in her Zawlbuk in 1881.⁶¹ Darbilhi a Fanai chieftainess at Darzo village in the southern part of the hills was one of the last women rulers who submitted and made peaceful negotiation with the colonial government after she succeeded her husband Nochhuma. It is reported that she received the British force under Capt Shakespear on the 4th February 1890 in which she played an instrumental role in making negotiation between the southern chiefs and the British.⁶²

Instead of procuring economic needs of the village through the "raiding" of the government's "protected areas", friendly negotiation thus emerged as the only means to uphold the political prestige and economic prosperity of the village. Thus the Mizo chiefs including the chieftainesses seemed to befriend the government superficially to protect their villages. For instance, when Pi Buki personally met the British officials after the death of her husband, she demanded aid from the local authorities of Cachar in her feuds against the eastern and southern Luseis with her son.⁶³ And subsequently in July 1877, her daughter Vanhnuaithangi sent an elephant tusk to the Cachar hill tract in order to get aid by furnishing arms and ammunition to punish her enemies Lengkhama and Pawibawia.⁶⁴

The Lushai Expedition had seriously affected the Mizo's economy. At this particular time, famine broke out in the hills. Hence, Mizo chiefs had to stand for their own villages and surrender their arms for economic support from the government.⁶⁵ In January 1875, Vanhnuaithangi along with her brother Suakpuilala sent their *Upas* or *mantries* to Cachar with a tusk to ask the government to send up rice to their village as their crops had been eaten by rats. The Deputy Commissioner made them a present of rice and also asked and obtained the Chief Commissioner's permission to establish a rice bazaar at either Pakwamukh or Guturmukh.⁶⁶

The most important consequence of the expedition had been the establishment of 12 marts (bazaars) - six in north Lushai hills and six in south Lushai hills. Changsil in the north and Kasalong in the south were the famous trade marts. The trade marts were leased out by the Lushai chiefs to the colonial government in return for an annual rent and sales tax to be paid in cash by the Bangalee and Manipuri traders. Those bazaars were owned by the Mizo chiefs who

gained prosperity of their village economy.⁶⁷ But in 1878-79, Changsil bazaar was looted and at this particular time, Vanhnuaithangi sent her *Upa* to persuade the traders to get the bazaar shift to Guturmukh and to beg for the reopening of the bazaar and also paid Rs.100 out of the fine imposed by the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar district. Consequently after the death of her brother Suakpuilala at the end of 1880, she had got a share in the responsibility and profits of the Changsil Bazaar and her share was fixed at 7 ½ seers of salt and 30 tobacco leaves per shop, per month in 1885.⁶⁸

As Spivak has emphasized in her studies of “Rani of Sirmur” in the archive of the East India Company, the chieftainess of the Mizos were in great demand “for the product of territorial interest of the colonialism” in Lushai hills⁶⁹ that could be achieved through friendly negotiation. An instance can be taken from the case of a Fanai Chieftainess Darbilhi, whose cooperation was needed for colonial policy of the construction of communications between Burma and Chittagong during the expedition of 1889-90. A Royal Engineer, Lieutenant F.R.F Boileau in his report on the proposed cart-road to connect Lushai hills with Haka in 1893 gave the advantages of Darbilhi’s route over the other routes in southern hills as follows:

- (1) It was the shortest and most direct route.
- (2) It was central and could easily be connected with villages north and south by mule tracks.
- (3) Except the Kolodyne and Mat, there were no rivers requiring large bridges.
- (4) The slopes of the hills along which the road would run were gentle.
- (5) The soil was mostly loamy clay and therefore cheaper in construction.⁷⁰

To achieve the above proposal, the government had to deal Darbilhi, who had the control over the Fanai villages in southern part that included- Muallianpui, Darzo, Lungpuitlang, Vanlaiphai and Lungleng. Though it is not reported in detail about the negotiation between Darbilhi and the Government, it is reported in an oral document that when the British force, proceeded towards Darbilhi’s village, she already advised her people not to shoot at the British force and she peacefully received Major J. Shakespear in her village at Darzo and agreed friendly negotiation with him at her own house.⁷¹ The negotiation subsequently became an instrument to the completion of a path to Haka for the connection of India with Burma and a Military post (Fort Tregear) was established at Darzo (Darbili’s village). Two large rivers, the Mat and Kolodyne, were also bridged.⁷²

To ensure the policy of colonial supremacy, a female chief on one hand seemed to attain the status of a “civilized” or a wise and powerful ruler who discovered the strength of the colonial power. A widow of Vanhnuailiana, (whose real name has not yet properly identified) powerful chief of Champhai was reported as having a tendency to befriend the government as it is reported in the *Pioneer* on the 7th May 1872, “... the widow of Vanolel (Vanhnuailiana) herself a powerful and wise old woman, who had in vain urged her sons to submission. From her a fine was levied of war-gongs, oxen, goats and such like which she did not refuse to pay”.⁷³

In the case of Pi Buki, her famous word that says, “We have the hills and the hill men but the white Sahibs have the guns. The Burra Sahib’s (DC Cachar) guns can destroy our villages and granaries”,⁷⁴ had often been quoted to show her wisdom of being a friend to the government. Following the colonial forms of writing, indigenous scholars such as Sangkima has also epitomized a Fainai chieftainess from the southern hills Darbilhi, as “a great and wise ruler” for rendering cordial relations and assistance to the colonial officers during the Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1889-1890, while some other chiefs in the south vigorously resisted against the British.⁷⁵

Thus, different sorts of women’s agency subsequently emerged amongst the female chiefs who represented political abilities of women before the colonial government by breaking the traditional patriarchal hegemony in Mizo culture. For the colonizers, these women made significant contribution to their annexation of Lushai hills as they had initiative in bringing an end to the Lusei patriarchal resistance against the colonials. According to the report of the Commissioner of Assam, it had been reported that when Mr Boyd, the Deputy Commissioner made an extensive tour of Lushai hills during the months of January-February 1881, Vanhnuaitangi had a brief meeting with him in her *Zawlbuk*.⁷⁶ Thus, to assert colonial protection for her chiefdoms, the Vanhnuaitangi crossed beyond the Lusei Patriarchal boundary by entering the traditional men’s space *Zawlbuk*. From her conversation with the Deputy Commissioner, the colonial accounts recognized her intelligence that later inspired the Post colonial writers to portray her as an accomplished and legendary woman.

On the other hand as a result of hegemonic account of the Lusei and colonial patriarchy, “the voice and political agency of the women had been repressed from official

historical discourse and representation”.⁷⁷ Women’s performance of *thlahual* or widow penance and strict observations of a widow’s ritual have been emphasized in various texts of both colonial and Post colonial archives. For instance, the report of Vanhnuaithangi’s meeting with Mr Boyd and Hari Chran Sharma was supplemented with her dress of white saris that signified her performance of widow penance like a Hindu widow. At the same time, it is reported that a widow of Suakpuilala also accepted to meet Mr. Boyd, but instead of meeting him personally, she sent her sons as she was undergoing the penance for her dead husband. Thus, the Lusei patriarchal construction of the female subjects the within the Mizo religious custom and British constitution of a widow as a passive victim, repressed the appearance of social and political agency of the female chiefs in their accounts

4.2.3 “Native” Agency and Resistance; the Case of Ropuiliani.

The British annexation of the hills in 1890 did not lead to the capitulation of all the Mizo chiefs. In the southern hills it in turn witnessed the emergence of a new sort of political agency with a form of resistance in which the two chieftainesses Ropuiliani and Neihpuithangi actively involved in the movement. While Neihpuithangi who supported her son Kairuma in the resistance against the expedition of 1889-90, she finally surrendered to the government with 20 guns and coolies in the expedition of 1895. Ropuiliani however refused to submit in the hands of the British and thus appeared as the only woman who asserted her political rights with an act of resistance against the colonial patriarchy without complete submission.

Ropuiliani was the wife of Vandula the most powerful Chief of Haulawng villages in the southern hills who had been constantly resisted the British colonial forces from the expeditions of 1871-72 until the expedition of 1888-1889. She replaced her husband as the regent of her son Lalthuama after the latter’s death in 1889, later she independently ruled over the village of Denlung. Officially her name had eventually appeared in colonial documents from the incidences concerning the Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1889-90.

Emerging with the strong anti-colonial ideology from the diverse strands of political, economic and territorial issues there are many circumstances that made Ropuiliani to occur in various colonial texts as an important historical subject in anti-colonial resistance in Lushai hills. Initially, she attracted the attention of the British as a result of the incident at Rangamati in December 1888 on the killing of Lt. Stewart. Though the Government identified the

responsible chief, her son Lalthuama was also accused as having been involved in the incident by harbouring one of the attackers.⁷⁸ In the month of May 1888, the government also accused Lalthuama as giving guides to Shendus (Mara) who killed the bugler.⁷⁹ In these incidents Ropuiliani, was suspected to be the conspirator behind the incident as a regent to her son. Thus, in the expedition in 1889-90 Ropuiliani was one of the targets to be captured by the British colonial force that was sent to take actions against the chiefs whom they considered responsible for the above incidents to confirm the imperial power.

Ever since she occupied the throne, Ropuiliani had persistently resisted against the British. As a result of the early demise of her four sons, their respective widows acted as regents on behalf of their minor sons.⁸⁰ Though Lalthuama was the only male heir who according to the Lusei custom had the rightful authority throughout his father's territories, the widows seemed to rule under the guidance of Ropuiliani. J. Shakespear the Superintendent of Lushai hills in 1893 thus stated, "Lalthuama is virtually chief of all these villages. Lalthuama is a Youngman but with force of character where as Ropuilieni is a very strong minded woman and consequently she really rules all these villages".⁸¹ As a result of her great influence over the southern hills, she was often called as "*Chhim Lalnu*" or Queen of the Southern hills.⁸²

Treating the British as the major enemy of her chiefdoms, Ropuiliani along with her descendants and a few other southern chiefs refused to surrender before the government in the expedition of 1889-90. However a military expedition under Hutchinson between December 1892 and January 1893 resulted to the submission of other Haulawng chiefs and their collaborators in which about 500 guns were surrendered before the British.⁸³ Under the guidance of Ropuiliani her descendants however collectively and persistently resisted against the new political administrative policy adopted by the government. J. Shakespear, the Superintendent of South Lushai hills reported that whenever the British officials called the Chief meeting (Chief *Durbar*), Ropuiliani refused to attend. On 3rd April, 1889 when the British Political Officer, Mr Lyall and Bengal Police officer C.S Murray called the *Chief Durbar*, Ropuiliani and her sons declined to attend the meeting. January 1892, when Col. Shakespeare, the Superintendent of the South Lushai Hill called the Chief *Durbar*, 19 representatives attended the meeting. Even though her son Lalthuama and his allies also attended Ropuiliani did not want to be present there and she sent her representative (Karbarie).⁸⁴ In his report J. Shakespear also cited:

“Her influence is distinctly hostile to us...Since her husband’s death she has seen his brothers becoming more and more friendly with us and increasing their prestige by virtue of this alliance. She has held steadily aloof from us keeping entirely in the background”.⁸⁵

Throughout the period of her chieftdom, Ropuiliani unrelentingly asserted her political rights with a strong ‘Lusei political ideology’ by resisting against the colonial interests on territorial expansion of the hills. As per the objective of the Chin-Lushai expedition of 1889-90, the colonial government intended to construct a road from Chittagong Hill tract to pass through Ropuiliani’s territories to Chin Hills of Burma. By showing her position as the owner of her controlled villages, she strongly opposed the construction of the road through her territories and refused to pay taxes and supply labourers to the government.

According to the oral documents, in such occasion Ropuiliani used to say, “Let them be kings in their own lands; this has been our land since the time of our ancestors, they should not come here and trouble us”.⁸⁶ Regarding the imposition of tax and “forced labour” as documented by oral sources Ropuiliani often responded to the government by saying, “Our citizens would never contribute to any labour or tax to foreigners. We are the owners of the land and we will drive the foreigners away from our territory”.⁸⁷ Her response to the colonial administrative policy therefore created problems for the expansion of colonial power as Shakespear again stated: “All the villages belonging to this group have been more or less troublesome, not actively hostile but passingly obstructive. It has always been difficult to get tribute or labour from them”.⁸⁸

In short, as a result of Ropuiliani’s resistance against the “civilized” nature of the territorial construction or expansion of the British colonial government a new site of female subject has emerged in colonial discourses. Either as an “enemy” of the government or “conspirator” of her descendants and other chiefs, Ropuiliani’s reluctant encounter with the government had subsequently prevented the process of an absolute British imperialism. For the government, to capture Ropuiliani thus appeared as the only means for the complete consolidation of their power. Consequently the military expedition was sent under Capt J. Shakespear who finally brought her capture with her son Lalthuama on 8th August 1893 and later convicted her with the case of ‘murder’ and sentenced to transportation of life.⁸⁹ However, she failed to submit herself until she died in the Chittagong Jail on 3rd January, 1895.

The capture of Ropuiliani had important consequences as it became easier for the English to subdue the remaining chiefs. Sir Robert Reid stated in this context:

“She was evidently a focus of discontent and her capture led to the surrender of her son and another man, Loncheyva, who was wanted for murder. The woman and her son were dealt with under Regulation III and confined in Chittagong Jail, where Ropuilieni died of old age in January 1895”.⁹⁰

L.W Shakespear also noted:

“...Surprise was complete, Lalthuama and his intriguing mother were captured and their people rapidly disarmed, their weapons being confiscated. At the same time messages were sent to all neighbouring villages to come in at once with all their guns, to which they complied... The village of Thulthang also has a rapid visitation and its teeth drawn by seizure of all weapons...Lalthuama and his mother were deported, and their village duly paid up the fines levied on them”.

Thus capture of Ropuiliani witnessed the beginning of British paramouncy in Lushai Hills that immediately reached the ears of the Government of Bengal. The Lieutenant governor of Bengal also sent a compliment to the Commissioner of Chittagong District to congratulate J. Shakespear for his successful expedition.⁹¹

To read the case of Ropuiliani as part of a historical agency, there is little recognition amongst the colonial officers in her presence of political resistance against the colonial movement. Superficially they recognized her political rights and agreed with her status. As Betty Joseph challenges the archive of the East India Company in the case of Rani of Burdwan, the present thesis reads Ropuiliani as someone who tried to retain her status quo when a foreign power had appeared in her territory.⁹² In this context, an indigenous woman writer Lalsangzuali Sailo has quoted an illustrious oral documentation of Ropuiliani’s conscious resistance against colonial patriarchy to assert her political status on the event of her capture in 1893:

“One can only imagine Capt J. Shakespear’s smug look when the soldiers took Ropuiliani and her son Lalthuama as prisoners. They were then to be taken to Lungleh. From what our ancestors tell, the doughty Ropuiliani refused to comply with the British saying, “*I am a queen. I will not go on foot*” and stubbornly sat down. As it was necessary that she be taken to Lungleh, the British therefore had no option but to carry her in a litter”.⁹³

Even after she was confined in Lungleh, as the state prisoner under Regulation III of 1818 with her son Ropuiliani strongly stood on her own standpoint. The colonial record also mentioned, “The presence of the two persons in the hills is mischievous, even in confinement”.⁹⁴ Then it was decided to send her to Chittagong Jail. The contradicting point therefore emerged on the case of her conviction between the opinions of colonial officials. Amongst them was W.B Oldham the Commissioner of Chittagong district. His proposal to the Government of Bengal with regard to the shifting of Ropuiliani from Lunglei guard room to Chittagong jail in one way addressed the colonial’s response to Ropuiliani’s urge for her political status when he said:

“Ropuilieni should in my opinion be kept in the Chittagong jail where her loyal kinsmen, some of whom have often expressed a wish to come to Chittagong can visit her. The accommodation is sufficient for a state prisoner of her rank and class and she would be frequently allowed to go outside the jail to see the local sights”.⁹⁵

Besides, Oldham’s order in the visitor’s book of Chittagong jail on 21st February, 1894 again remarked, “ Ropuilieni should be placed in the European ward when it is vacant and when it is occupied in some of the outside premises partly occupied now by an Assistant Jailer and Civil Hospital Assistant”.⁹⁶ Thus, the strong ideological standpoint of Ropuiliani eventually seemed to erase the colonials’ discrimination against the colonized. While J. Shakespear convicted her with the case of ‘murder’ during the time of her capture, the official in charge of the Chittagong Jail therefore reportedly not only considered her fit to occupy the vacant European ward and decided not to treat her as a criminal and promised to repair the outside premises as well for Ropuiliani. The costs for this were taken from the South Lushai Political funds.⁹⁷ In addition, she was given a separate female interpreter.⁹⁸

One cannot deny a respectful treatment given to Ropuiliani as a state prisoner that had been repeatedly mentioned in the colonial record. However, the “repressive” nature of colonial patriarchy on women could also be read from the erasure of the complete resistance of Ropuiliani from the colonial texts. In this context, it is tempting to re-read the report of her life and her death in Chittagong Jail. The information of the death of Ropuiliani from R.W Murray, the Superintendent of Chittagong Jail on 3rd January 1893 stated:

“Ropuilieni Lushai chieftainess died on the 3rd (January 1895) instant of sheer old age. Her alleged age was 60 yrs, but she looked anything over 70 and was very infirm on admission on the 18th April last. Since that time her health gradually failed until her death. She was attacked with dysentery for a few days in a mild form in the month of August. This weakened her very much and no doubt tended to fasten her end, although she had quite recovered from the actual attack.”⁹⁹

Recently, the above government’s report has been challenged by Lalsangzuali Sailo who has blamed British government of her death and argued, “Can one readily accept the cause for her death to be “sheer old age” as reported in his letter? Perhaps if Ropuiliani had lived peacefully in her village and not been later imprisoned by the British, she might have lived much longer”.¹⁰⁰ To agree with the above argument, it is important to rethink the available accounts on the government’s consideration given to Ropuiliani prior to her death. According to oral record, during the time of her imprisonment Ropuiliani declined to submit herself when she was repeatedly beseeched to surrender like other chiefs. To show her resistance, she performed fasting that later affected her health and also advised her son Lalthuama to throw his meals at the jail authorities whenever he refused to eat.¹⁰¹ Realizing her feeble condition as a result of her fasting and the importance of protecting the name of the government, the authorities of the jail had been alarmed at her age within a year of her capture that was never an interest of the government before. Hence by obscuring her persistent fasting, R. W Murray, the Superintendent of Chittagong jail thus wrote to the Commissioner of Chittagong District for her release on:

“She is very old and feeble. It is evident that she is slowly dying in the Chittagong Jail. In consultation with Capt. J. Shakespear I now recommend that she be released from the detention under Regulation III of 1818. On her

release she would be conveyed back to Lungleh and detained there in as much comfort and freedom as is possible. Her age and infirmity preclude all ideas of her escaping”.¹⁰²

Consequent upon her death, the Chittagong Commissioner wrote to the Chittagong Magistrate on 18th January, 1895, asking for her release under Regulation III of 1818. Hence to obscure her persistent resistance and erase her death as a martyr for her land in the hands of the British, Ropuiliani’s death was declared as an instant old age when she was only 60 yrs.

For the colonial officers, Ropuiliani’s strong rebellious nature and resisting activities was in contrast with the well defined nature and position of a “savage” woman from a western patriarchal thought. However, instead of understanding the insight meaning of Ropuiliani’s resistance, her political agency as a woman had been subjugated by the construction of colonial patriarchal hegemony. Therefore regarding her patriotic consciousness, J. Shakespear, a Superintendent of Lushai hill in 1893 also cited: “As is only natural when it is considered that she is the daughter of one great chief who always opposed us and the widow of another”.¹⁰³ Following the colonial record, indigenous scholars who have been focusing on the patriotic zeal and anti-colonial feelings of Ropuiliani failed to question the repressive ideological construction of a colonial patriarchy that constricted and limited their discourses on the ground of narrow colonial archival sources.

An instance can be drawn from the argument of a woman scholar Lalneihzovi. Being trapped between the colonial and post colonial patriarchal perspective she has recently emphasized the reputation of Ropuiliani’s patrilineal ancestors and relatives-her father Lalsavunga one of the greatest Sailo chiefs, her husband Vandula who was a descendant of Rolura and the powerful Haulawng chief of the south and her brothers Vanhnuailiana, Lalphunga and Thawmvunga who were the other powerful Sailo chiefs- as the source of her anti-colonial consciousness. Therefore she has argued, “Such was her personality and powerful influence that she was involved indirectly in almost all the armed-conflicts with the British during the Chin-Lushai Expedition 1889-90 launched by the British to subjugate the Mizo land”.¹⁰⁴

Lastly, Ropuiliani’s political ideology of resistance had been repressed as an act of a ‘violent savage woman’. From the eyes of the colonial patriarchy she therefore appeared in the

historical accounts as J. Shakespear recorded in his report, “a bitter enemy of the British”¹⁰⁵ who was the main obstacle for the expansion of colonial territories and communications to Chittagong. In this context it is important to rethink the encounter between the two important political figures. Both Ropuiliani and J. Shakespear emerged as political agency from a different space to retain the power of each motherland with a diverse political ideology. While the encounter was for J. Shakespear the only means for the consolidation of the British imperial power in Lushai hills, from the side of Ropuiliani, it was her duty to protect her subjects and retain the power of Mizo chiefdoms from the exploitation of a foreign power.

However, during the encounter between the two, the voice of a woman (Ropuiliani) was repressed, while the interpretation or narrative of a man (J. Shakespear) was counted as an authentic source that gave the image of Ropuiliani’s resistance to foreign power as an act of a “murderer” and “savage” activities. The encounter brought out only the name of J. Shakespear, to appear as a ‘hero’ who initiated the consolidation of British supremacy. Meanwhile instead of portraying Ropuiliani as a freedom fighter she eventually disappeared in the historical accounts as a feeble chieftainess who died and lost her power because of her stubbornness or “savage” political ideology.

4.3 COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION: REPRESSION OF WOMEN AND THEIR POLITICAL RIGHTS.

The downfall of *Ropuiliani* witnessed the beginning of British paramouncy in Lushai Hills and the immediate result of colonialism in Lushai Hills was the loss of political position and power for Mizo women. British colonial administrators soon assumed that women were incapable of political leadership which provided political roles for men only. ¹⁰⁶ Since the creation of the administration under the colonial government of Assam in 1891, a new customary law had been reinstituted as part of colonization, which eventually led to diverse changes not only in the cultural life, but also in the political life of the whole Lushai hills.

Theoretically, the colonial government followed non-interference in the local matters as Mizo chiefs retained their position as zamindari chiefs under the watchful supervision of the colonial military officer. Chiefs who opposed colonial authority were removed and several new

chiefs were appointed. Traditional authorities and its structures suffered seriously under colonialism. However they were never totally destructed and were eventually used by the colonial powers. To maintain law and order in the hills, the government acknowledged both the customary structure and its legal system, which consequently led to the compilation on the Monograph of Lushai Customs and Ceremonies by a colonial officer, N.E Parry in 1923.

When he compiled the monograph Parry had stated that Mizo chiefs of different clans such as *Sailo* and those of *Zahau*, *Hualngo*, *Fanai* and *Hnamchawm* (appointed chiefs) chiefs, who commonly followed *Sailos'* customs, were consulted before the compilation of the pamphlet. Out of the fifty six chiefs he consulted, there were no female chiefs and more than half of the chiefs belonged to *Sailo* clan.¹⁰⁷ Thus, the traditional customs, laws and ceremonies mentioned in the monograph were mostly based on *Sailos'* or *Luseis'* tradition compiled from the definition and interpretation of men that did not reflect women's voices. Along with the exclusion of women's voices, traditional patriarchal law was re-instituted or confirmed in a written form. Accordingly administration of the hills was dominated by colonial and *Lusei* or *Sailo* patriarchal thought.

At the very outset, the colonizers excluded women in the "public" space as the monograph was compiled for the use of colonial officers and Mizo chiefs composed of men engaged in the administration of justice.¹⁰⁸ To administer the region, the colonizers needed the assistance of these indigenous people and hence they also appointed new government officials such a Circle Interpreter and village writer or *Khawchhiar*. However, these posts were meant only for men, which did not open any place for women in the administration under colonial government. For that reason, colonialism can be regarded as the genesis of women's suppression that initiated women's disappearance and enhanced men's place in "public" spaces.

Due to the transformation of oral based customs into a written form, traditional laws were strongly re-instituted under the dominance of colonizers that had created disadvantages particularly for women. With regard to chieftainship land were traditionally hereditary that belonged to the chiefs and it was the eldest son who got the right heir and succeeded to the village and lands on his father's death. However, according to the colonial law lands were subjected to the confirmation or approval of the Superintendent when a succession took place.¹⁰⁹ In spite of the continuity of old customs, colonizers imposed their power over

chieftainship and without giving chances to the women to become successors as the law stated, “When a chief dies his eldest son succeeds him, subject to the superintendent’s approval. If the eldest son is an obvious idiot or incompetent he is not allowed to succeed and the next son succeeds him.”¹¹⁰

Thus, compared to colonial law, oral-based traditional law was more flexible with regard to inheritance of chieftainship. Within this flexibility due recognition were given to women. During the Pre-colonial period and the periods of the colonial expeditions, there were some women who became independent chiefs as indicated above. Even after the advent of colonization, these women continued to rule over their villages under the supervision of the colonial officers. In the Haulawng villages in Lushai hills, J. Shakespeare reported that out of eight villages, four villages were under Ropuiliani and her three daughters-in-law.¹¹¹ In the Northern Mizoram (*Lushai Hills*), R.B McCabe, 1890-1892, recorded three female rulers- Lalthangthluaii (Pawihbawiha Nu), who ruled *Saitual* village, Buangtheuva Nu, the ruler of *Hualtu* village and Neihpuithangi (Kairuma Nu), out of 25 village rulers.¹¹² According to oral documents, a Fanai Chieftainess Darbilhi was also recorded to rule over Darzo village until her death in 1907.¹¹³

Given that the chiefs’ daughters happened to rule over hamlets and smaller villages usually at the time of her marriage during the Pre-British period, the tradition became impossible as it was not allowed to sub-divide the land or form a hamlet without the Superintendent’s approval.¹¹⁴ Accordingly after the re-institution of customary law in a written form a number of chieftainess had been decreased.

For instance, when the Mizo district council made an order for the abolishment of Chieftainship in 1953 there were more than two hundred Mizo chiefs who had been ruling in different villages from the colonial period, out of these only six villages were ruled over by women such as Saichhungi, Roteii, Danveli, Saizingi, Dapuiliani and Darchawngpuii.¹¹⁵ Out of the 62 chiefs who ruled over villages with more than 140 houses, there was only one female chief known as Roteii, chieftainess of Lungno village with 149 houses.¹¹⁶ Besides, the new law did not legally /particularly opened chances for women to rule over the villages neither as regents nor widow to the deceased ruler. The report of the District Council revealed that there were few instances when a rightful heir was a minor. In such cases either his paternal uncle or

the village *Upa* (Minister) was usually appointed as regent. If a mother was appointed, she had to act as a regent under the guidance of the village *Upa*.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

To conclude, as Indrani Chatterji has argued in the context of South Asia, it is certainly difficult to agree that women completely remained invisible in the colonial archive. The problem first exists within the indigenous historical records from oral based traditions which seldom created the visibility of women. The second problem is making sense of the immense visibility and audibility of the women by post colonial writers.¹¹⁷ Various chances occurred for women during colonial expansion in Lushai hills as “complex sites of negotiations”,¹¹⁸ i.e. as “civilized” and “native” agencies.

By presenting women from the two social status, i.e. captive women and noble women (chieftainesses) the colonial’s demand of the woman as a site of knowledge production and peaceful alliance discloses “civilized” agency to support the political and territorial interest of the emerging British colonial government. On the other hand as “native” agency, the present study reveals the roles of a female ruler who resisted the colonial military forces for the economic and political prestige of the village.

From the study of women’s agency as a “native” it is apparently observed that without subduing women’s power, colonialism could not be achieved as discussed in the case of Ropuiliani, whose imprisonment led to the final supremacy of the Colonial administration. Since then the new written customary law and political administration under the colonial Government were deeply gendered that completely ignored the female subjects. Accordingly along with the death of Ropuiliani, the stories of other female rulers have also gradually disappeared from the colonial political texts. Though the victimization of slave women was one of the subjects of the colonial expansion, the government lost its interest in the question of slavery when the Christian missionary Dr Frazer urged for its abolishment and was in support of its continuity. Finally it may be concluded that “the women emerged only when they were needed in the space of colonial production” and disappeared when they were not useful to the interest of the colonial government.

End Notes and References.

-
- ¹ Suhash Chatterjee, *Mizo Chiefs and Chiefdoms*, M.D. Publications, New Delhi. 1995. p. 11.
- ² Ibid, Please also see, O. Rosanga, 'British Policy Towards the Mizo till 1890' in *Historical Journal Mizoram*, Vol-III, Issue-I, M.H.A, July 2002. p. 7.
- ³ Betty Joseph, *Reading the East India Company, 1720-1840: Colonial Currencies of Gender*, Orient Longman, 2006. p. 30.
- ⁴ Tony Ballantine, 'Archive, Discipline, State: Power and Knowledge in South Asian Historiography', in *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* Vol. 3, No. 1, June, 2000. pp. 87-105.
- ⁵ Further details, please see Antoinette Burton, *Dwelling in Archive: Women Writing House, Home and History in Late Colonial India*, Oxford University Press, 2003, Spivak, Gayatri, The 'Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives', in *History and Theory*, Vol. 24, No. 3, Oct., 1985. pp. 247-272. Lata Mani, 'Production of an official discourse on sati in early nineteenth century Bengal' in *EPW*, Vol. 21, No. 17 Apr. 26, 1986, pp. WS32-WS40. Ritu Menon & Kamla Bhasin, *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*, New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1998. Urvashi Butalia, *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1998. Susie Tharu and K. Lalita (eds), *Women writing in India: 600 BC to the early 20th century*, London, 1991.
- ⁶ Tony Ballantine, op.cit., p. 89
- ⁷ Gayatri Spivak, op.cit., p. 265.
- ⁸ Sangkima, 'Women and Politics Through The Ages', in *Historical Journal of Mizoram*, Vol III, Issue 1, Aizawl, Mizoram, July 2002. p. 23.
- ⁹ Please see Appendix-I
- ¹⁰ Stephen Morton, *Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak*, Routledge, 2003. p. 60.
- ¹¹ 'Mr Edgar's Notes on his tour among the Lushais in 1871' in A.Z Mackenzie, *The Northeast Frontier of India*, Mittal Publication, New Delhi, 2003 (reprinted) p. 425. (Original publication: *History of Relations of the Government with the Hills Tribes of the North-East Frontier of Bengal*, Calcutta, 1884).
- ¹² Suhash Chatterjee, op.cit., pp. xii-xiii. In his preface Chatterjee mentions that he consulted government records and oral traditions, but he finds the government record more dependable rather than other sources.
- ¹³ Ibid. p. 81.
- ¹⁴ Ibid. pp. 140-141.
- ¹⁵ Ibid. p. 138.
- ¹⁶ *Lalsavunga* was the grandson of *Lallula*, the greatest chief among the *Sailo* clan.
- ¹⁷ Further details please see K. Zawla, *Mizo Pipute Leh an Thlahte Chanchin*, Aizawl, 1976.
- ¹⁸ Suhash Chatterji, op.cit., p.141.
- ¹⁹ Lalsangzuali Sailo, *Sakhming Chullo*, J.B.M. Publications, Aizawl 1995. p. 47. *Pawngi* was a concubine of *Sailo* Chief *Lalsavunga*.
- ²⁰ Zairemthanga, *Tripura Mizo History*, Aizawl, Mizoram. 1992. p. 22. *Sutthlaha* was one of the greatest chiefs of *Palian* ruling clan who migrated to the hill Tipperah. According to the historical record, during his reign he constantly waged wars against his neighbouring state like Sylhet and Manipur that really disturbed the Raja of Tipperah, who later reported to the British army. Hence, in 1841 Captain *Blackwood* and some British army made

a secret expedition against *Lalsutthlaha*. In order to escape from the British, *Sutthlaha* left his villages. It was during this time, *Zawlchuaui* acted as a ruler. It is said that *Sutthlaha* was sent to Hyderabad Jail on 4 December 1884 for the life imprisonment. Being an intelligent woman, *Zawlchuaui* therefore ruled the villages after they captured *Sutthlaha*. Even today, the *Darlawng* clan called *Kancherra* and *Betcherra* in Tripura(Tiperrah) as 'Zawlchuaui khua' or *Zawlchuaui's* village'.

²¹ 'Edgar's Notes on the Lushai and Other Kukies, 20th March 1871 Part II' in A.Z Mackenzie, op.cit., p. 428.

²² Suhash Chatterjee, op.cit., pp. 82-84.

²³ Lalsangzuali Sailo (1995), op.cit., p. 42.

²⁴ *Vailen* is a Mizo term for Colonial Expansion in the hills.

²⁵ *The Observer*, 11th February, 1871.

²⁶ C. Chawngkunga, *Important Document of Mizoram*, Art And Culture Department, Mizoram, Aizawl, 1998. pp. 249-251.

²⁷ For further details please see R.G Woodthorpe, *The Lushai Expedition 1871-1872*, FKPL, TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1978. A.Campbell, 'On the Looshais' in *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol.3, 1874, pp.57-65. Major MacDonald, Caption Tanner & Caption Badley; 'The Lushai Expedition From the Report of Surveyors' in *Proceeding of the Royal geographical Society of London*, Vol.17, No.1, 1872-1873. pp. 42-55.

²⁸ Sajal Nag, *Pied Pipers in Northeast India: Bamboo-flowers, Rat-famine and the Politics of Philanthropy (1881-2007)*, Manohar, 2008. p. 60.

²⁹ Lt. J.F Stewart belonged to the 1st Battalion, Leinster Regiment. He dispatched to the *Rangamati* in the Chittagong Hill Tract in order to have a land survey. *Hausata* was one of the chiefs in South Lushai hills.

³⁰ Robert Reid, *The Lushai Hills: Culled From History of the Frontiers Areas of Bordering on Assam, From 1883-1941*, FKPL, TRI, (reprinted) 1978. p. 8.

³¹ Ibid. pp. 9-14, Please also see *The observer*, op.cit., ibid.

³² Betty Joseph, op.cit., p. 26.

³³ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, Vintage, Newyork, 1978. Ronald B. Inden, *Imagining India*, Blackwell publishers, 1990. Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and its form of Knowledge: The British in India*, Princeton University Press, 1996. Nicholas B. Dirks, *Castes of Mind: colonialism and the Making of Modern India*, Princeton University, 2001.

³⁴ Phillip B. Wagoner, 'Pre Colonial intellectuals and the production of colonial knowledge', in *Society for Comparative Study of Society and History*, 2003. p. 783.

³⁵ Tony Ballantine, *Archive, Discipline, State: Power and Knowledge in South Asian Historiography*, op., cit, p. 89.

³⁶ Major MacDonald, Caption Tanner & Caption Badley, op.cit.,

³⁷ R.G Woodthorpe, op.cit., p. 1.

³⁸ Major MacDonald, Caption Tanner & Caption Badley, op.cit., p.42.

³⁹ AZ Mackenzie, op.cit., p. 293.

⁴⁰ A.G. McCall, *Lushai Chrysallis*, T.R.I, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1977. p. 55. Major MacDonald, Caption Tanner, & Caption Badley, op.cit., p. 52. Please also see 'Report of the Political Officer With the Left Column Of The

Lushai Expedition From J. W Edgar, Esq., Civil Officer with the Cachar Column of the Lushai Expeditionary Force, to the Commissioner of Circuit, Dacca Division, -No 548, dated Cachar, the 3rd April 1872', in AZ Mackenzie, op.cit., p. 450.

⁴¹ A.G McCall, op.cit., p. 55. Sajal Nag, op.cit, p. 59.

⁴² AZ Mackenzie, op.cit., pp.287-292.

⁴³ Ibid. p. 301

⁴⁴ 'Judicial Proceedings, April 1863, Nos. 374 to 379', in Ibid. p. 298.

⁴⁵ Ibid. After identifying Suakpuilal of his "raiding" activities in Adamapore massacre, the Lieutenant- Governor realized his friendly communications with the Cachar authorities in 1849. Before sending force, he then directed the Deputy Commisiner of Cachar to endeavor to induce Suakpuilala to give up the captive in his possession, to undertake the protectin of the frontier restraining his people from committing raids, and by refusing countenance and encouragement to other chiefs in any like attempt. Consequently negotiation was made between the two in 1864.

⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 308.

⁴⁷ Ibid. pp. 308-309& 435.

⁴⁸ Ibid. p.309.

⁴⁹ Ibid. p. 311.

⁵⁰ Ibid. pp. 314-316.

⁵¹ *The Observer*, op.cit., Ibid.

⁵² For instance, Suakpuilala was one of the first chiefs to negotiate the British political officers. From his statements during his negotiation with Colonel Lister in 1850- 51, the government characterized Mizo chieftainship as hereditary that was not depending simply on the power of the individual exercising it. Besides it also gave an apparent knowledge on navigation to reach Lushai country by rivers and the military strength of some Mizo chiefs. A Z Mackenzie, op.cit., p. 396.

⁵³ Ibid. p. 304.

⁵⁴ 'Edgar's Notes on his tours amongst the Lushais in 1871', in A.Z Mackenzie, Ibid. p. 415.

⁵⁵ Ibid. 418-419

⁵⁶ Aminesh Ray, *India-The Land and the People: Mizoram*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1993. pp. 35-36.

⁵⁷ 'Report of the Political Officer With the Left Column Of The Lushai Expedition From J. W Edgar, Esq., Civil Officer with the Cachar Column of the Lushai Expeditionary Force, to the Commissioner of Circuit, Dacca Division, -No 548, dated Cachar, the 3rd April 1872', In A.Z Mackenzie, op.cit., p. 450.

⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 444.

⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 302. Also see, Lalthanliana, *Mizo Chanchin (Kum 1900 Hma Lam)*, Vanbuangi Gas Agency, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2000. p. 508.

⁶⁰ Lalzama Sailo & Brig Ngurliana, *Kan Ram*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1987. p. 43.

⁶¹ Suhash Chatterjee, op.cit., p. 48.

⁶² A.S Reid, *Chin Lushai Land*, FKPL, T.R.I, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1976. p. 197.

⁶³ Suhash Chatterjee, op.cit., p. 141.

⁶⁴ *The Lushais (1878-1889)*, FKPL, T.R.I, 1978. p. 109.

-
- ⁶⁵ Sajal Nag, op.cit., p. 61.
- ⁶⁶ Ibid.
- ⁶⁷ Suhash Chatterjee, op.cit., p.14.
- ⁶⁸ *The Lushais (1878-1889)*, op.cit., Ibid.
- ⁶⁹ Gayatri Chakravarti Spivak, op.cit., Ibid.
- ⁷⁰ Report by the Lieutenant F.R.F Boileau, On the Proposed Cart-Road to connect the Lushai hills with Haka, RawalPindi, dated 27th April, 1893.p. 2. CB-2, Pol-19, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ⁷¹ K. Lianhminga, *S. Vanlaiphai KHaw History*, K. Lalmanmawia, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2000. pp.15-16.
- ⁷² A.G MacCall, op.cit., p. 55, Lalrimawia, *Mizoram-History and Cultural Identity (1890-1947)*, Spectrum, Gawahati, 1995. p. 39, Amimesh Ray, op.cit., p. 40.
- ⁷³ *The Pioneer*, 7th May, 1872, in A. Z Mackenzie, op.cit., pp. 578-580.
- ⁷⁴ Suhash Chatterjee, op. cit., p. 141.
- ⁷⁵ Sangkima, 'Women and Politics Through The Ages', in *Historical Journal Mizoram*, Vol. III, Issue 1, M.H.A, Aizawl, Mizoram, p. 24., Pease also see, A.S Reid, op.cit., p. 196.
- ⁷⁶ Political Proceeding of Bengal (B), No 4. Report of Boyd to the Chief Commissioner of Assam.
- ⁷⁷ Stephen Morton, op.cit., p. 64.
- ⁷⁸ A.S Reid, op.cit., p. 192.
- ⁷⁹ N.E Parry, *The Lakhers*, T.R.I, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1976. p. 5. *Shendus* were the *Lais* and the *Maras*. According to N.E Parry the term '*Shendu*' identified *Poi (Lai)* as well as purely *Lakher (Mara)* tribes.
- ⁸⁰ Shakespear's letter on Report Concerning Ropuiliani Widow of Vandula and Her Son Lalthuama at Present Prisoners in Lungleh,. Memo No. 1032 G, D/Lungleh the 13th October 1893. Exihibit List: Serial No 28; Mizoram State Archive. Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ⁸¹ Ibid.
- ⁸² Lalsangzuali Sailo, *Tlawm Ve Lo Lalnu Ropuiliani*, Hnamte Press, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2001 , p. 89.
- ⁸³ Robert Reid, *The Lushai Hills: Culled From History of the Frontiers Areas of Bordering on Assam, From 1883-1941*, FKPL, TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram. 1978. p.48.
- ⁸⁴ Shakespeare's Diary: 2.1.1892. (Karbarie *Muaia*), cited in Lalsangzuali Sailo (2001), op. cit.,p. 100.
- ⁸⁵ Shakespear's letter on Report Concerning Ropuiliani Widow of Vandula and Her Son Lalthuama at Present Prisoners in Lungleh, op.cit.,
- ⁸⁶ Lalsangzuali Sailo, 'The Indomitable Chieftainess Ropuiliani (1829-1895)', in Lalneihzovi (ed); *Role of Ropuiliani in the Freedom Struggle*, Gilzom Offset, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2005. p. 70
- ⁸⁷ J.V Hluna, 'Ropuiliani: The Mizo Lady Freedom fighter', in Lalneihzovi, Ibid, p. 38.
- ⁸⁸ Shakespear's letter on Report Concerning Ropuiliani Widow of Vandula and Her Son Lalthuama at Present Prisoners in Lungleh, op.cit.,
- ⁸⁹ Letter to the Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department from H.J.S Cotton, Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Dated 31st January, 1894, Political Department No. 445. P.
- ⁹⁰ Robert Reid, op.cit., Ibid.

-
- ⁹¹ Letter from H.J.S Cotton, Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the Commissioner of Chittagong, Dated Darjeeling, 12th sept, 1893, Political Department, Political Branch, No 45 P.D, C.B. -2, Pol-19, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ⁹² Betty Joseph, op.cit, p. 127.
- ⁹³ Lalsangzuali, 'The indomitable Chieftainess Ropuiliani', in Lalneihzovi, op.cit, p. 74.
- ⁹⁴ Letter to The Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal from W. B Oldham, Commisioner of the Chittagong Division, 26th October'1893. No. 1702 L, CB-2, Politics- 12, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ⁹⁵ Ibid.
- ⁹⁶ Letter to the Magistrate of Chittagong, Dated, 24th June 1894, No 376L, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ⁹⁷ Ibid.
- ⁹⁸ Letter to the Magistrate of Chittagong from the Superintendent of Chittagong Jail, dated 5th January, 1895.
- ⁹⁹ Letter to the Magistrate of Chittagong from the Superintendent of the Chittagong jail on 6th January, 1895.
- ¹⁰⁰ Lalsangzuali, 'The indomitable Chieftainess Ropuiliani', in Lalneihzovi, op.cit, Ibid, p. 79.
- ¹⁰¹ Laltluangliana Khiangte, 'Ropuiliani: The (Lady) Mizo Patriot', in Lalneihzovi, op.cit, p. 101, Vanlalvuana Sailo, *Mizoram Humhaltu Lal Vandula Lalnu Ropuiliani*, L.V. Art, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1999. p. 94.
- ¹⁰² Robert Reid, op.cit., Ibid.
- ¹⁰³ Shakespear's letter on Report Concerning Ropuiliani Widow of Vandula and Her Son Lalthuama at Present Prisoners in Lungleh, op., cit.
- ¹⁰⁴ Lalneihzovi, 'Role of Ropuiliani in the Freedom Struggle: A Historical Study', in Lalneihzovi, op.cit., p. 56.
- ¹⁰⁵ Shakespear letter on Report Concerning Ropuiliani Widow of Vandula and Her Son Lalthuama at Present Prisoners in Lungleh, op.cit.,
- ¹⁰⁶ H. Vanlalhraia & Hmingthanzuali, 'Women and Resistance in Colonial Lushai hills', in K.N Sethi (ed); *Resistance Against Colonialism Life and Times of Veer Surendra Sai*: Shivalik Publishers, 2009. p.65.
- ¹⁰⁷ N.E Parry, *A monograph of Lushai Customs and Ceremonies*, TRI, Aizawl, 1998.p. ii
- ¹⁰⁸ Ibid. p. 3.
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid
- ¹¹⁰ Ibid. p. 4.
- ¹¹¹ B.Lalthangliana, *India, Burma Leh Bangladesh-a Mizo Chanchin*, RTM Press, Aizawl, 2001. pp.. 281-282. J. Shakespeare's Diary, 6-18 August 1893.
- ¹¹² Liangkhaia, *Mizo Chanchin*, M.A.L, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1976. pp. 147-148.
- ¹¹³ K. Lianhminga, op.cit., pp.15-16.
- ¹¹⁴ N. E Parry (1998), op. cit, p. 4.
- ¹¹⁵ *Mizo Lalte leh an Lalna Khaw Hmingte*, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ¹¹⁶ C. Hermana, *Zoram Politics Thli tleh dan*, Vol 1, Aizawl, 1999. pp. 49-41.
- ¹¹⁷ Indrani Chatterjee, 'Archives and Sources: Testing the Local against the Colonial Archive', In *History Workshop Journal*, Issue 44, 1997, pp. 215-224.
- ¹¹⁸ Betty Josesh, op.cit., p. 125.

CHAPTER-IV

WOMEN AND SOCIAL CHANGE

The last decade of the 19th century in Lushai hills was the beginning of social change as the period witnessed the establishment of a foreign rule that introduced two new forces in the field of politics and religion. The repercussions of the establishment of the colonial states on the administration, law and order and the process of social and religious transformation under Christianity were the backdrops of a new historical construction in the hills. Writing history of the Mizos in a colonial setting therefore presents a new chapter in the study of Mizo women's life.

Like other British colonial states, aforementioned agents were generally regarded as the agents of social change or "social reform." However, similar to literature on the history of Christian missions in India, particularly that which missionary societies themselves produced, literature of protestant Christian churches assumes that western missionaries were agents of change. In particular, this literature takes for granted that missionaries were a force of positive change with regard to "women's issues".¹ "Social reform" in the context of Mizoram was therefore particularly linked with Christianity and hence earlier writers and scholars have particularly glorified the civilizing missions of the Christian missionaries as liberating Mizo women from the "primitive" culture and custom of the Mizo society. For instance, Zairema states, "If Christianity brings freedom to the men, it does more to the women".² Likewise C. L Hminga argues, "In Pre Christian days, the place of women was very low indeed...Mizo women have been liberated by Christianity".³

This assumption, for many years had been uncritically accepted by scholars but recently, few questions on social change and Christianity in the context of the status of women have been brought out by scholars like Frederick S Downs in his book "The Christian impact on the status of women in North-East India" and Lalrinawmi Ralte, a feminist theologian, in her thesis titled, "Crabs Theology: A Critique of Patriarchy-Cultural Degradation and Empowerment of Mizo Women".⁴ Unfortunately, apart from these two works there have been no works that critically focus on the impact of colonialism and Christianity on women in Mizoram. Therefore, it is time to move away from the earlier assumption of social change concerning the question of the extent British Colonialism and Christianity changed and influenced the life of the Mizo women by saying that it brought about a new life for Mizo women by re-interpreting oral tradition, Mizo women's narrative, colonial records, Missionaries' report and contemporary works of indigenous scholars.

5.1 VIEWS OF COLONIZERS AND MISSIONARIES ON THE POSITION OF MIZO WOMEN.

In European societies, the nineteenth century was a time when great upheavals were taking place in the field of politics, social and scientific technology as a result of British colonial expansion. The British regarded their domination of the sub-continent as proof of their moral superiority. For the best rule of their colonial subjects in India, they focused their interests on the ideal relationship between men and women and it became the central question in nineteenth century British India. Indian religions, culture and society were condemned by the influential British writers for their oppressed rules and customs against women.⁵

Despite the little accounts of their contribution for the liberation of women, like the British India, the colonizers also applied the same ideology to a certain extent and their interest on the subject of women's emancipation as an important step to colonize the Lushai hills could be read from their writings. Throughout their writings, Mizo women were generally defined in terms of "familial role" and characterized as "being naturally domestic, if not domesticated".⁶ By assuming the condition of the Mizos from the sphere of European material culture associated with stereotypes of primitive technology they focused their interest on the pitiful condition of women compared to men in terms of domestic labour. Take for example, before the annexation of the hills in his book, 'Wild Races of South-Eastern Asia,' T.H Lewin stated:

"Women are generally held in consideration among the Lushai; their advice is taken and they have much influence. Should the father of a house die, his wife becomes the head of the family. Upon the women, however, falls the whole burden of the bodily labour by which life is supported. They fetch water, hew wood, cultivate and help to reap the crop, besides spinning, cooking and brewing. The men employ themselves chiefly in making forays upon weaker tribes, or in hunting. Of home work, they only clear the ground and help to carry the harvest; they also built the house. The men are generally to be seen lounging about, cleaning their arms, drinking or smoking".⁷

After the annexation of the hills, J. Shakespeare the first superintendent of the hills also stated in his book Lusei-Kuki Clans:

“A Lushai woman has to rise early, fill her basket with empty bamboo tubes, and trudge off before daylight down to the spring, which is generally some way down the hill, and the supply of water is frequently so scanty that it takes her sometime to fill her bamboos. Having conveyed her basketful to the house, she has to set to work cleaning the rice for the day. The necessary amount of unhusked rice has been dried the previous day on the shelf of the hearth, and this she now proceeds to pound in a mortar in the front verandah and winnow on an oval bamboo tray till it clean enough for use. The breakfast of rice has then to be cooked, and by the time it is ready her husband is awake. After the meal the real work of the day begins. In the cold weather the women settle themselves to some of the operations connected with cloth making, while the men prepare to pass a day of complete enjoyment, lying in the sun and smoking...”⁸

Likewise in 1905, another colonial official Cole also gave the same observation as he stated:

“The lushai methods of agriculture are very primitive. The work is done almost entirely by the women. The men are very lazy. Single young men hardly ever do any work. There was once some excuse for arrangement. The men watch lest their enemies should come upon them unexpectedly, and the women worked in the fields. Though there is no such necessity now, the men do not work in their fields as they should”.⁹

In spite of their diverse ventures in the hills, the colonizers’ perception was reinforced by the missionaries, who shared the same ideologies on the societies from which the colonizers came. Alongside the colonial paradigm the missionaries emerged with a new ideology. They turned their focus on the relationship between men and women in the society in terms of power. For instance, Baptist women missionaries E. Chapman and Clark recollected the status of Mizo women at the time of their arrival in 1919:

“The worst feature in the life of the South Mizo District at that time was the treatment of the women. A woman had no rights at all. Body, mind and spirit, she belonged from her birth to death to her father, her brother, her husband. Her men folk could treat her as they like and a man who did not beat his wife was scorned by his friends as a coward. A woman possessed nothing-not even the few clothes she wore. She was not allowed to wear anything new. Her clothes had first to be worn by her men folk. The women did most of the work of the village. ...Daily we watched the women with their heavy loads staggering uphill, and should men be with them they would often be empty-handed”.¹⁰

In this way the colonizers and missionaries condemned the traditions of the Mizos and their views on the position of Mizo women give us an impression that women were completely oppressed by traditional Mizo patriarchy. However, at another level, it reveals the European’s concept on gender space, which limited and reinforced women’s space into domestic sphere. Hence, women’s life and contribution beyond the domestic space or the possibility of women as active agents in the traditional society were completely absent in their writings. They simply drew the position of Mizo women from a fixed image of degraded Indian women already well established in indological discourses from Haled to Charles Grant and James Mill.¹¹

To complete their mission women were thus firstly represented as victims under “primitive” customs who then became one of the “objects” to be saved. To validate the triumph of their project, they (particularly the missionaries) have portrayed themselves as the saviour of Mizo women. Welsh Presbyterian missionary J.M Lloyd’s observation on the emancipation of Mizo women reflects to throw light on this as he argues, “This (Emancipation of women) came surely, but slowly through Christian influence.”¹² Until recently the shape of this ideology has been retained by the Mizos.

5.2 EDUCATION.

The introduction of education in the Lushai hills was one of the first important steps taken by the Christian missionaries. One cannot leave the subject of the missionaries’ contribution to education without a reference to what was done for education of women and it

has been considered as the harbinger of Mizo women's liberation. Given that colonizers' negligence of education particularly for women, missionaries' contribution associated with education has been regarded as a source of many benefits for women. There is a general agreement that missionary education imparted equal knowledge to women with their men folk and saved them from their traditional limited space of their society. Accordingly the extensive studies on the history of education and Christianity that have been carried out in particular by indigenous scholars, male writers and other literatures concerning the changing position of Mizo women have been measured around this perspective without any questions particularly at gender and power relations. This generalization on the missionary movement discloses the need to re-examine the subjection of women in the missionaries' education and the ideology behind the female education for the liberation of women in Lushai hills.

5.2.1 Transition from Orality to Literacy: Re-institution of Social and Gender hierarchy (1894-1899).

Traditionally education for the Mizos was based on orality and it was meant only for men, as *Zawlbuk*, the only existing oral institution did not provide a space for women. At the initial period of the colonial administration, no recognition was given to the importance of education. Eventually, the introduction of new social hierarchy made the colonizers realize that education was a primary mechanism for their government. The first formal educational institution opened at Aijal (Aizawl), Lungleh (Lunglei) and Demagiri (Tlabung) in 1893 however were meant only for the children of Sepoys and the medium of instruction was Hindi.

At this particular time the first two Arthington missionaries J.H Lorrain and F. W Savidge emerged who introduced a Mizo alphabet. Thus, schooling became a necessary part of missionaries' activities to inculcate new phase of culture or learning based on the ability to read the Christian Scripture. New historical transition thus began to emerge in the formation of knowledge from orality to literacy. At the very outset, there was continuity in the traditional and colonial's negligence on women's knowledge and the creation of new knowledge had been transmitted around and centred on the men.

Despite, the separate schools established by the government and missionaries, the colonizers used the introduction of new alphabet as an instrument for the reconstruction of new social hierarchy, which instantly reinforced gender hierarchy. As such, J.H Lorrain in his letter

on 15th March 1903 stated that the government lent them the services of best chaprasis or interpreter Suaka and Thangphunga to whom they instructed a new alphabet.¹³ They were later joined by Khamliana Sailo, chief of Lungleng village and Babua, Colonial chaprasi.¹⁴ For the missionaries, Suaka and Thangphunga served as source of knowledge by helping them in translation of St Luke's Gospel, St John's and the Acts of Apostles in the Bible and in the compilation of Grammar and Dictionary of the Lushai languages. Despite their contribution, converting these first students was not an easy task for the missionaries, they remained obstinately against Christianity. But they were later converted and became important local agents for evangelizing the hills. The government appointed Suaka as the chief of Durtlang village and Thangphunga as the chief of Chaltlang village.¹⁵

As per the recommendation of A. Porteous the then Political Officer in 1896, colonial government established a school for the Mizos on 21st August in 1897 that was meant only for the boys.¹⁶ For the convenience of their government Bengali was initially regarded as the medium of instruction and they also recommended on the instruction of English as soon as possible. It was believed that Bengali would make its way into use as the language of trade and official intercourse, enable them to read newspapers in Bengali to have an idea of the civilized world.¹⁷ Given that colonialism required trained local bureaucrat, colonizers had to educate local officials and for this purpose due favour was given to the chiefs, their sons and their representatives, but by ignoring women.

In the meantime Lorrain and Savidge were replaced by a Welsh Presbyterian missionary D.E Jones in 1897. With the help of the evangelist Rai Bahadur, a new mission school was opened in the month of February 1898 but the pupils were chiefly boys.¹⁸ According to the statistical report of missionary movement submitted by D.E Jones at the end of 1899, 56 students had been registered in the mission school out of which only 6 were girls.¹⁹ Lorrain's letter to Colonel T. H Lewin on 25th April 1899 reflected the negligence of female education as a result of new social hierarchy introduced by the Colonial Government:

“...Meanwhile we began to teach the young and children to read and write, adopting Sir William Hunter's system of transliteration, and they proved most intelligent pupils, soon beginning to teach others, so that the new, strange and wonderful art of reading and writing spread over the whole of the Northern Hill country. The Government officers always stood by us in our efforts to

benefit the people, and after a time, the Political Officer, Major Shakespear, opened a school for the Lushai people. Little houses were built near the Fort, and every chief who came to learn was provided with board and lodging free for three months. This plan worked well and considerable number of chiefs and influential men became learners”.²⁰

Until the first half of the twentieth century the colonial formations of social hierarchy strong hold. The importance of education for the chiefs and their sons had been repeated in a newspaper *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu*, published by the colonial government.²¹ Regarding the chieftainships as the important agents for their ventures not only the colonial government, but also the missionaries emphasized the education for chiefs’ sons. In 1937, when A.G Mc Call the Superintendent of Lushai hills submitted financial proposal for the education of the chiefs’ sons to the Government of Assam, he mentioned the importance of giving special attention to the failing chiefs as he foresaw that they would soon witness a serious disintegration.²²

The Baptist Missionary Society Report of the 1938 also stated that one of the interesting features of the boys’ school in south Lushai hills was the large number of chiefs’ sons receiving Middle school education and residing in Serkawn boys’ hostel. Out of 54 boys in the hostel, 17 were chief’s sons, many of whom would in time become the rulers of their fathers’ villages. According to the report this was believed to be one of the most fruitful ways in which the mission attempted to influence the future well being of the country.²³

In the meantime Colonial education constituted a new formation of social identity. However this identity was characterized by a patriarchal attitude and the work of the missionaries and formed the basis of the educational policy. The chiefs, their sons and other groups of new government officials such as *chaprasis* or circle interpreters in turn became the new local agents for the colonization and evangelization of the hills. Accordingly, both the external agents regarded few groups of men from new social classes as active local agents. Through what the colonizers and their local male representatives “knew” and “saw”, the traditions, customs and language of the Mizos were thus constructed and recorded in missionaries’ official documents. In the initial period, traditional male-centred ‘oral education’ was transmitted to a new mode of the formation of male-centred knowledge or formal education and this continued to have an influence on education for future.

5.2.2 Early Initiatives on Female Education (1898-1919).

Given their particular interest of administrative power and the requirement of few literate Mizo men without highly qualified education, the colonial government did not concern itself much with female education. But for the missionaries, their project of conversion to Christianity could not be achieved without either education that would enable them to understand scriptures or even further the liberation of women. The fixed image of the Mizo women's position from the European rational thinking considered education as an essential instrument for "women's liberation" and social change. For the missionaries, to impart education to the life of the Mizo women was one of the subjects in their own projects of conversion and cultural transformation.

An educational sensitivity to the Mizo women's position under Lusei patriarchy found expression only after a Welsh Presbyterian missionary, Edwin Rowlands entered the hills in 1898. Enunciating the virtue of European societies from the high position they awarded to women, Edwin Rowlands insistently pronounced the low position of Mizo women and persistently encouraged female education as a necessary condition for social advancement. It was he who firstly articulated the importance of female education in the hills, which had been repeatedly mentioned in the colonial newspaper *Mizo Leh Vai Chanchinbu*. Therefore it would not be wrong to regard him as the pioneer of female education in the hills. After his arrival, the Welsh Presbyterian mission's report began to show their concern for female education. It is generally believed that patriarchal notion on women's space led not only men to oppose women's entry to school, but the women who had internalized these values also strongly opposed education for women. The reports of the missions by Edwin Rowlands on the other hand revealed the slow progress of girl's school, the capability and desire for education amongst few women.

Rowlands's reports to their Headquarter at Liverpool exemplify the slow progress of girls and their attendance in school and the efforts of missionaries for the education of women in the hills. When he re-opened a temporary school in 1900, it was reported that only eight or nine girls attended. So in order to encourage female education, Edwin Rowlands, with the help of donations from his friend, gave clothing to those girls who came to school. His particular interest in improving the status of women turned the colonials' attention to the female education and following this, presents were distributed by Mrs Shakespear. It is reported that

Mr Shakespear, the Superintendent of the hills who accompanied his wife also noted the presence of girls in the school in his report.²⁴ In 1901 his report states, “The attendance of the girls was part of the time especially encouraging, but it gradually fell off and became irregular. Two girls, Nui and Saii however came very regularly and made distinct progress”. His report in 1902 also cited the progress but irregular attendance of female students and the mission ideology of education for women in the process as he mentioned,

“For part of the year we had over 40 females on the Register, but they have ceased coming to a great extent, the parents being indifferent. The school, however, has a fair proportion of this element –some ten of various ages attending tolerably regularly, and the progress of some of them is very pleasing, and we look for good service for them in the future”.²⁵

His financial support for the education of the two slave girls Ziki and Pawngi showed his personal interest on the education for women. It is significant to note that Rowlands’s report in the year 1902 regarding the advanced learning of a girl named Nui and liberation of two slave girls –Ziki and Pawngi in the same year also revealed women’s aspiration and capability for learning.

The year 1903 was an important period for the history of female education. This year initiated the first Lower Primary Examination in Lushai hills on 25th June and for the very first time the Government scholarship was offered to two girls Nui and Saii who excelled at the said examination. Saii won the medal of the Chief Commissioner of Assam, Sir Bampton Fuller’s award.²⁶ In the same year, separate schools for girls were established in the North Lushai Hills at Hriangmual, Thakthing and Chaprasis villages.²⁷ However the average of the attendance of girls’ school in this year was very low when compared to boys’ school.²⁸ Despite this, girls’ school produced excellent students and began to expose women’s capability for education. In the Lower Primary Examination of 1904, two girls Pawngi and Vanhnuaithangi secured first division and Pawngi scored high enough to secure government scholarship.²⁹

In the Southern Mizoram (*Lushai Hills*), a boarding school for women was opened in 1907 at Serkawn. According to the BMS Report, the mission of this girls’ school was tried in 1903 when Lorrain and Savidge returned to the hills as the missionaries under Baptist Missionary Society of London. But prejudice against female education prevented the Girls’

school from enrolling large numbers and hence 7 students were enrolled in the register, and their teacher was a young Mizo woman Thangi who passed Lower Primary Examination at Aijal (North Lushai Hills) in 1904. All the students and their teachers were Christian and were under the supervision of senior evangelist and his wife.³⁰ In 1910 a new hostel and schoolroom for girls was constructed. In 1913, there were only 3 students in girls' school while the boys' school had enrolled 57 students.³¹ The number of girls' enrolment was increased only to 6 in 1914 out of 175 students enrolled in the register.³²

Despite the introduction of girls' school, the progress of female education grew slowly. According to the census records of the three decades i.e. from 1901 to 1921 female literacy was below 2 percent as given below:

Year	Literate Persons	Female Literacy	Percentage
1901	295	14	0.14
1911	472	34	0.34
1921	743	106	1.06

Source: Mizo Women Today, Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1991. p. 22.

For the introduction of female education, *Lusei Patriarchy* was the first hindrance as it had always denied access to women to go beyond the domestic sphere. Between 1907 and 1909 traditionalists' cultural responses to social change arose in the whole Lushai hills particularly amongst the chiefs and these were termed by the missionaries as Anti- Christian Movement. At this particular time, one of the traditional forms of song called *Puma Zai* flared up out of the blue.³³ Resistance to social change was expressed through the form of this song and this in turn became an instrument of patriarchal attitudes to insult girls who attended the school. The song stated:

“Ziaam fengin Sikul kai a mawi nem maw,
Lehkha Zital an chawi e,
*Nun dang Lengleri, Lengleri”,*³⁴

which means,

To go to school for a girl is inappropriate,
She wears a skirt;
With books in hand,
That is not how it should be.

Gender division of labour also created stagnancy for the growth of girls' school. In his report of 1913 Savidge also highlighted domestic demands as the setback of girls' school when he wrote:

“Female education in South Lushai hill is a problem which has yet to be solved. A Lushai girl from the time she is about four years of age begins to help her mother. This she does first by minding the baby, and later on by also carrying small loads of firewood from the forest, or bamboo tubes of water from the spring. While her brothers of twice and thrice her age are spending their days playing in the village streets or snaring birds in the jungle, she is constantly busy and is so useful to her poor hard-worked mother that she cannot possibly be spared to come to school. This is the chief reason why we have been able to get so few girl boarders.”³⁵

The limited demand of highly educated natives also gave a setback to girls' school. Given that the colonial government provided limited jobs for the new social classes and the missionaries' requirement of literate natives did not seem to open 'space' for the women. Few women passed Lower Primary Examinations, but were employed only as voluntary teachers in the Mission girls' school. Accordingly, female education had been questioning in terms of economic production as they observed that literate women used their education only for writing love letters and their literacy had no productive value. The first women missionaries in South Lushai hills Chapman and Clark also recollected the Mizos' resistance against female education in terms of economic production for women as they stated:

“They did not see what sense there was in sending boys to school, let alone girls. Boys did sometimes get jobs for the Government or under the mission because they could read and write, but no one expected girls to be able to do that, so it was far better for them to remain at home. The young men still said they would not marry girls who had been to school”.³⁶

The ignorance of colonial government at another stance could be posited as the problem to the development of girls' school. To encourage education among the Mizos, the Superintendent of Lushai hills granted *Kuliawl* or exemption from impressed labour to the parents of the boys who passed Upper Primary Examination. However, in 1913 when the Baptist missionary, Lorrain recommended to the Superintendent of Lushai hills to grant *Kuliawl* to the parents who sent their daughters to school, Colonel Cole, the then Superintendent and Sub-Divisional Officer were not in favour of his petition.³⁷ While their requisition for few educated men made them aware of education for boys, women's knowledge seemed unnecessary to assist their colonizing mission. Hence, their introduction of new social classes resulted in the gender discrimination in the administration and accordingly the introduction of compulsory female education was beyond the scope of the colonial government. On the other hand, the missionaries' insistent question on female education had gradually made them realize the importance of female education. But, during the early phase, the notion of a new feudal system or social hierarchy limited their concern and hence in 1909 Cole supported only the chiefs' daughters boarded in Presbyterian Mission Girls' school in North Lushai hills.³⁸

5.2.3 Curriculum: Women Missionaries and Ideologies of female education.

The insistent patriarchal resistance to female education had never changed the efforts of missionaries; instead it encouraged them to apply a new venture that would convince patriarchal attitude through their educational policy. In response to this ideology, the meaning of women's space and their domestic duties had to be reinforced in girls' school. The missionaries' enterprises therefore insisted the labour of women missionaries to perform the new project at girls' schools. Like the previous Christian mission projects in other colonial states in India the missionaries therefore had to apply "a well-established British domestic ideology influenced by evangelical understanding of proper gender relations, which delineated separate spheres for the sexes and assigned new social significance to the role of women in the domestic sphere".³⁹ When the first girls' school was opened in the South Lushai hills in 1907 Lorrain also cited in his report, "We don't want the school to unfit these girls for the duties which will be theirs as soon as they return to their homes or are married".⁴⁰

Before the opening of separate schools for girls the wives of missionaries and evangelists undertook to provide simple schooling for a few young girls and women in the vicinity of mission stations. They taught them new techniques of duties such as spinning, weaving, stitching, child care, health and sanitation. For the very first time, a new space of learning domestic duties for women began to open in 1899 under the Welsh Presbyterian mission and the work was performed by the wife of Rai Bahadur, the evangelist from Khasi hills at her house in the North Lushai hills.⁴¹ However, patriarchal notions on gender division of labour, knowledge and space indeed limited the Mizo parents' decision to send their daughters and wives and their attendance was very irregular.

After the establishment of separate schools for girls, domestic works were firstly taught under the guidance of the wives of missionaries accompanied by the evangelists' wives. Before the arrival of single women missionaries the works were performed by the wives of D.E Jones and F.J Sandy in north Lushai hills and the wives of Savidge and Lorrain in South Lushai hills. Similar to the condition of the wives of missionaries in colonial India, these women performed their duties under the domination of their husbands and were inspired by Victorian notions of womanhood which considered women "guardians" of the home and subordinated them to their husbands as "helpmates".⁴²

In 1914, J.H Lorrain stated in the Baptist mission's report, "There is need however for the mothering care of a woman worker from Britain to help bring about that transformation in the Christian homes which we long to see".⁴³ Though the missionaries' wives had been active in the work of women's issues, being the "helpmates" of their husband they were frequently interrupted by family responsibilities. From the mission wives' point of view there arose the notion on the importance of single women's recruitment. Thus the formulation of domestic ideology in female education or the elevation of mission wives to be "helpmates" for male missionaries created demand for the subsequent recruitment of single trained women missionaries.⁴⁴

In 1912, D.E Jones's wife, K.E Jones applied to the Welsh Mission District Committee at Shillong for a woman teacher to look after girls' school.⁴⁵ The first lady teachers E. Chapman arrived in 1919 and Alice Catherine Mastyn Lewis (Kitty Lewis) in 1922 to take over the mission girls' school in the South and North Lushai hills respectively. Henceforth, new single women had been recruited to look after girls' school. Besides the girls' schools, the

missions handed over evangelical issues related to women and the missionaries' wives gave those voluntary help in co-curricular activities.⁴⁶

With the combination of western patriarchal ideology and orientalist's critique on "savage" culture, trained women missionaries entered the "heathen" society with an objective of saving the women and girls. Associated with their evangelical notion on gender relations they were strongly attached to the "Victorian conceptions of gendered separated spheres"⁴⁷ to reinstitute the social meaning of "public" and "private" spaces. At the time of her arrival in South Lushai hills E. Chapman also envisaged the importance of reinforcing the women's space to domestic chores in education as she said, "We had made a mental note that when schools for girls started in Mizo District, the work and lessons must be done out-of-doors, and life must not spoil them for village work. It must be planned as to make girls more useful in their homes and villages than they were without it".⁴⁸

The curriculum of girls' school included all the ordinary school subjects such as Arithmetic, English, Geography, Scripture and Singing. To impart the new ideology, a separate curriculum had to be set up for girls' schools, which was explicitly domestic. Before the emergence of single trained women teachers, K.E Jones the wife of D.E Jones who had already been working in Sylhet for seven years proposed the first curriculum for girls' school in Northern hills to the Superintendent of Lushai hill in 1916:

1. All subjects included in the primary courses- scripture and singing.
2. Needlework which included plain sewing by hand and machine, cutting out and making up of garments, shirts, pants, coats, frocks etc and also thread work and crochet.
3. Hygiene including care of infants and young children and cleanliness.
4. Cooking with practical demonstration, teaching the value of local foodstuffs and the best way to use them, especially cooking for the sick and weakly.⁴⁹

It is believed that K.E Jones formulated the curriculum for female education that was different from those laid down for the girls in the plains.⁵⁰ In contrast to this general perspective the present study surmises that she apparently borrowed the same ideology from her previous mission in Sylhet district, which was formulated according to the conception of women's role in traditional 'Lusei Patriarchy'. Through the curriculum, she promoted female education to a symbol or centre to uphold gender division in the society as she felt that

curriculum for female education should be different from those of boys' school and the examination should be conducted separately from boys' school.⁵¹

Female education has been thought to be the harbinger of "modernizing women". From another standpoint it may however be surmised that a separate curriculum for girls' school was introduced to "recast" Mizo traditional concept of domesticity in women's life and to introduce the "idea of the "proper" home as the best way to "civilize" the Mizos by reorganizing the gender division of labour within the household".⁵² The domestic chores that were thought to be the traditional duties of women were included in curriculum. For this purpose, the women missionaries had to go round the villages to find out what a girl needed to know to become a good house wife. For instance, Chapman the first Baptist woman missionary in south Lushai hills stated that when they went round the villages, they found that the art of traditional weaving was dying out.

It recorded that the arrival of Bengali in the hills made the younger Mizo women dissatisfied with their stout, homespun cloth when they compared them with Bengali women Saris. So they decided to train every girl in mission schools to be a good weaver. Within a short span of time the Baptist girls' school at Serkawn had its fame for weaving and its products led to the fashion.⁵³ Even in 1926, when a Girl Guide company was formed in Northern hills, it was decided to adopt the usual Lushai dress and the girls were encouraged to make their own clothes, Mrs. Parry the wife of Superintendent of the hills offered a price of Rs. 20 for the best costume.⁵⁴ In view of that, female education in one sense can be regarded as a site of revitalizing the Mizo costumes through women.

From the beginning the report on Mission Girls' Schools in north and south Lushai hills emphasized their effort on the reinforcement of traditional pattern of weaving and introduction of needle works in female education. The girls' schools verandahs were fixed or constructed with the equipment of weaving, sewing, spinning and few areas of the school compounds were reserved for the practical work of jhumming in which the girls grew rice, vegetables and fruits. New equipment and apparatus were introduced, but were ascertained to be provided and used in the villages.⁵⁵ The girls seemed to take weaving instead of geometry as while geometry was a compulsory subject for boys, Hmingliani, the only girl who passed Upper Primary Examination in 1930 in South Lushai hills had to opt for weaving instead of geometry.⁵⁶ In South Lushai hills, an emphasis was laid on a practical instruction on child care with the

equipments that could be found or made in Mizo villages,⁵⁷ and in north Lushai hills the girls helped the missionaries in weighing the babies.⁵⁸ Beside this, knitting cooking, health and sanitation were also introduced. It is also interesting to note that a book of domestic science based on the notes made by the first school girls was published in north Lushai hills, which was later, included in the syllabus of both Baptist and Welsh Mission Girls' schools.⁵⁹

In 1938 Katie Hughes along with Mrs McCall (wife of Major A.G. Mc Call the superintendent of Lushai hills from 1931-1943) introduced cotton project in Middle English Department in Welsh Mission Girls' School in north Lushai hills. Through this project, the girls learnt the traditional duties of Mizo women such as growing, ginning and weaving of cotton. In her report of the progress of Welsh mission girls' school in 1938-39, Katie Hughes reported that the girls wrote letters to their mothers to get information on how to grow cotton from their indigenous knowledge and copied it into their project books. In this way they learnt to read and write letters. The other syllabus such as arithmetic, history, geography were covered to understand the measurement, calculation, cost of cotton or weaved rugs, to read about other countries that also grew cotton and to trace routes from Aijal to Calcutta and London on maps.

The main venture of the project was to teach girls how to weave rug at home with their own cotton, sell them and in this way help them with their families.⁶⁰ In one sense cotton projects revealed the importance of women's indigenous knowledge and their labour for the economic production of the society given that as many as the products of this project were exported.⁶¹ They continued the same project when a new missionary teacher Gwen Rees Roberts took the charge of Welsh Mission Girls' school in 1945 with other projects including health project and garden project etc.⁶²

In the Post Colonial period, Baptist mission Girls' school in south Lushai hills was closed down, but girls' school in the north continued to run under the Welsh mission society. As the education department of Assam stressed the importance of Domestic Science in education, the subject was still offered in Middle English Department in Welsh mission Girls' School and it could be taught only in the women missionaries' bungalow. As a result of an emphasis on domestic science rather than geometry, complaints emerged from the people. But the school strongly asserted that domestic realm was female as Gwen Rees Roberts, a lady teacher of that period also stated that the mission was firmly believed in educating a girl to be a

good housewife and mother in their future. The subject dealt with the cleanliness and order, but was “far from suitable, being too western”.⁶³

In short, the mission girls’ schools appeared as a “site” where socio-sexual division of labour was reinforced to place Mizo women in the domestic sphere. The ideology of domesticity that the mission school introduced revived the traditional household duties of women and thus created home and family matters as “private” or the centre of women’s life. Subsequently, female education became a powerful institution that regulated and reinforced feminine identity in the society.

5.2.4 Responses from the Colonial Government.

For the proper functioning of female education, the colonial government initially never showed much interest. Government’s negligence to the schools for girls could be related with its opposition to the entry of women missionary teachers. In 1912, when the Welsh Mission Centre in Liverpool appointed Miss Francis to look after Welsh mission girls’ school, the government could not approve the appointment and cancelled her entry.⁶⁴

The situation was changed when J. Hezlet became the Superintendent of Lushai hills. The curriculum for girls’ school drafted by K.E Jones immediately impressed him and he was disappointed with the government’s resolution. In 1916, he wrote a letter to the Commissioner, Surma Valley and Hill District stating that female education in Mizoram was not seriously taken into consideration.⁶⁵ In response to the earlier proposal of K.E Jones, F.B. Wilkins, Inspector of Schools, Surma Valley and Hill Districts also proposed to the D.P.I Assam in 1915 for the entry of a woman missionary to the Lushai hills. He said, “I suggest, now, that if there is no objection to encouraging the development of female education in the Lushai hills, the authorities of the Welsh Mission might be given to understand that the sending of a lady to Aijal for this school would be welcomed”.⁶⁶ As a result, the Government finally granted the permission for the entry of women missionaries into the hills in 1916.

The Government’s positive response and supportive roles to female education reflected the concept of femininity and gender roles in colonial setting. In the concept of femininity they re-imposed the missionaries’ perspective and limited their concentration on domesticity as Hezlett also said, “the object of female education should be to enable them to perform their

domestic duties more efficiently, with greater comfort to their families and to themselves, and at the same time to give them a broader outlook in life so that they might lead happier and more useful lives".⁶⁷ His letter to the Commissioner of Surma Valley on 12th May 1916 replicated the Colonials' perception on the limited liberation of savage women through education, which emphasized practical lessons of domestic work. Reading and writing were only given secondary importance.

Despite the lack of funds for the school buildings and other equipments, the government was very supportive when it came to the subject of domesticity. It provided a loom for the schools and awarded scholarship to two girls for further studies of embroidery and weaving in Industrial School at Kalimpong.⁶⁸ In 1920, Welsh Mission Girls' School students Chawngthuami and Rosiami who passed Middle English School were awarded Government scholarship to join high school at Shillong. Two other girls were also sent there to study nursing.⁶⁹ Unlike the boys, the restriction on further jobs for women in the government limited scopes for the girls. Hezlett again suggested in his letter to K.E Jones on 16th May, 1916 that medical profession and teachings should be the only jobs that should be encouraged for women.⁷⁰ The Superintendent of the hills from 1931-1943, A.G. Mc Call also stated in his report to the Commissioner of Surma Valley in 1937, "the main purpose of schools for girls is to learn cooking, weaving, hygiene, early welfare and house work generally. At the age of 14 or 15 they have to return to their homes to start the normal life of a girl".⁷¹ Along with the revitalization of traditional Mizo/Lusei patriarchy, the colonizers used education as a site of empowering European patriarchy by incorporating the Victorian notion of womanhood in the Mizo family.

5.3 THE WOMEN QUESTION DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD.

When they entered the hills, the British and missionaries viewed the traditions of the Mizos from the concept of European "rational" thinking and regarded the indigenous customs and culture as "irrational." To prove the superiority of the European "rational" thinking they used women's inferior position as an indicator of the "primitive" customs of the Mizos. Accordingly, either to condemn the old tradition or to confirm the reformed tradition under their missions both the colonizers and the missionaries expressed their sympathy of the oppressed traditional Mizo womanhood in their writings and official records. Therefore,

colonial histories have narrated the civilizing mission of the colonial officials as rescuing Indian women from their own culture and society.⁷² However, in the context of Mizoram, it was the Christian missionaries who first applied the ‘women question’ as one of the important strategies for the achievement of their mission. Though the colonial administrators were the first and only outsiders who administered the region, it was only after the coming of the Christian Missionaries that the question of women’s position practically found a place in their administration.

5.3.1 Edwin Rowlands (Zosaphara) and the Emancipation of Women.

It was as early as the twentieth century that reformist ideology emerged with regard to the position of Mizo women. Amongst the missionaries, a Welsh Presbyterian missionary, Edwin Rowland who came to Lushai Hills in December, 1898, fondly called Zosaphara by the Mizos, was regarded as the pioneer of Mizo women’s liberation.⁷³ His voices for the rights and emancipation of women were focused in the Colonial newspaper *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Lehkhabu*. Firstly, by deriving the progress of the advanced European societies from the high position of women Edwin Rowland stated that “irrespective of the nation, wherever the worth of a woman is realized-that gives beauty to any community. Look at the Mizo women, how hardworking are they!”⁷⁴

Secondly, he encouraged female’s education and urged for the equal participation of both the sexes in educational institutions. In 1903, in his writing ‘*Ramdang Thu*’ Edwin Rowland indicated that, amongst advance societies in European countries women received equal education with men and he also pointed out that there were institutions for girls in higher studies.⁷⁵ Thirdly, while condemning men for the ‘pitiful’ condition of women in the Mizo customs, his article ‘*Mizo Hmeichhia Chan*’ addressed the life of a married woman and raised questions on the relationship between a bride and her in-laws and the oppressed position of women through the custom of bride price, property rights and divorce as he argued:

“Though young Mizo ladies are very good in nature, hardworking and courteous, they have to serve as slaves as soon as they get married...These women are our mothers, daughters and sisters, who provided much harder labour than us (men) ...it is our duty to love them, give them protection and more freedom but not to let them live a miserable life”.⁷⁶

The Mizos were fond of singing; Edwin Rowlands therefore, believed that this would be an implement to persuade men to change their attitude towards women. He then composed a mother's song, '*Chunnu Hla*'. This song reflected the importance and dignity of a woman as a mother, comforter and teacher, the song goes like this:

‘Who took care of me in my infancy?
My mother, my dear mother;
...When I'd get sick, by my side she'd be,
When I cried, she'd always be there for me
Whether she was tired or weak,
My mother, my dear mother...

It melts my heart when I think of all that she's done,
My mother, my dear mother!
How I wish to repay her!
I'll please her through my deeds,
I'll work for her to give her rest,
My mother- she's to be respected the most;
My mother, my dear mother!⁷⁷

Edwin Rowlands derived the “uncivilized” culture of the Mizos from the inferior position of their women. During his short stay in Mizoram he condemned the traditional Mizo patriarchal attitude and old sayings towards women. Earlier Mizo writer, V. Hawla said, “this (males’) attitude was something which Zosaphara (Edwin Rowlands) resented deeply. Had he remained in the country it would certainly have speeded up the emancipation of Mizo women”.⁷⁸

5.3.2 Responses from the Native Male Agents.

Unlike the reform movement of the colonial India, there are no records of women's active movement. However, newspapers of that period replicated that the first native agents were mainly the converted literate chiefs and few educated men who, inspired and influenced by Christianity and education, gave responses to missionaries' issues on the women's position

and saw female emancipation as the first step towards cultural progress. Their reformatory consciousness had a formative relationship with the European concept of womanhood that was repeated in the colonial newspaper, *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu* and the first Mizo Christian periodical journal *Kristian Tlangau* echoed the resonances of their voices for the emancipation of women.

In the first decade of the nineteenth century, as Geraldine Forbes described the picture of the social reform movement in India, Mizo women were to be pitied.⁷⁹ Hence most of the questions remained mostly on the women's miserable condition in the domestic sphere associated with the issues on customs relating to women particularly on marriage systems and the importance of female education. Amongst the Mizos, the first issue on the position of women was addressed by Vanchhunga one of the first Mizo itinerant evangelists, in 1903 with his article titled, '*Mizo Dan*' in '*Mizo Leh Vai Chanchinbu*' where he condemned Mizo customs that were humiliating for women. From the eyes of European culture, he questioned the sufferings of women in the domestic sphere and condemned men's attitude over women in the gender division of labour. He particularly condemned the practice of the custom of *Zawn* (Raping of women by a group of young men) and suggested for the abolition of evil customs and practices.⁸⁰ His writing reveals that he was effusively influenced by the missionaries and colonizers and denounced the customs he regarded as "savage" or uncivilized culture.

The same issue was addressed by Dala and Thangbura Sailo, Chief of Biate village in the later years. With his article titled, '*Zo Dan te*', in 1904, Dala condemned traditional patriarchal attitude imbibed within Mizo customs and cultures. He wrote of the unrecognized contribution women had made in the domestic sphere and the miserable condition they suffered as a result of the custom of property rights. By assuming women's productive labour, he firstly addressed the importance of equal contribution of labour from both the sexes and blamed men's attitude to women as he berated the men in his article:

"We men often say, 'we are the stronger sex, we're above the women,' often belittling their efforts and achievements; yet in reality we are nothing if the women do not do it for us. We keep on boasting about how we're better than them, then why can't we at least be half as productive and effective as they are? It's only because we are proud and conceited...Why are the women always looked down upon despite the fact that they are the weaker sex and

also the ones who cook, clean and do everything for us? Is it because we feel that this attitude would uplift our culture?”⁸¹

In 1905, Thangbura Sailo also argued in his article ‘*In Zilhna*’ that women’s lives remained mostly at household duties that debarred their participation in the public places as he addressed:

“Dear friends and brothers, Can’t you see our evil customs and how do we enslave our women? They do all the domestic works...They work in the Jhum, collect woods, carry water, and clothe us. We men are exalted only because of women. Let us see to it that we make their life easier”.⁸²

Alongside the domestic sphere, Dala also addressed the customs of marriage and property rights that trivialized women in the family when he said:

“If a woman has problems with her husband or if she gets divorced, normally she would be left empty handed. The only thing she would have in her possession are the clothes she’s wearing. Despite this, we still look down upon them”.⁸³

According to Dala, it was the men who had additional responsibility for the advancement of the society, hence he also argued:

“Whatever the case may be, it is the men who are in the wrong, so how can we expect the women to be otherwise...Men are the one’s to blame because it is in their desperate attempt to assert their superiority that they have ignored the beauty of their culture”.⁸⁴

During the 1920’s the question on the notion of ‘traditional masculinity’ loomed large when the main reason behind men’s attitude in the domestic sphere had been debated from the concept of *thaibawi* or henpecked husband in the *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu*. The issue on the concept of *thaibawi* was first raised by Makthanga the editor of this journal during that period who critically addressed the ill-treatment of women in the family associated with this custom with his article, ‘*Thaibawi*.’ The custom of *thaibawi* according to Makthanga was the most

atrocious custom of the Mizos. Above all he regarded this custom as the mirror or reflection of men's laziness that should be promptly discarded by the Mizos. By assuming this custom as the feature of unenlightened culture Makthanga also believed that men's reluctance to be a *thaibawi* had enslaved the women like domesticated animals and he stressed on the importance of equal contribution of labour in the domestic sphere from both the sexes towards the progress of the society.⁸⁵

Within a short span of time Makthanga's persuasive arguments received responses from a few educated Mizo men such as H. Durra and R. Buchhawna from Cotton College in Guwahati. In his article '*Chakna Mawi Lai*' H. Durra dealt with the custom of *thaibawi* and the traditional Mizos' percept on *Pasaltha* or a brave man and *tlawmngaihna* (a code of Mizo ethics).⁸⁶ The custom of *thaibawi* according to Durra, 'sowed it seeds in the man's mind from his childhood'.⁸⁷ In his writing, Durra addressed the disadvantages and prejudices of *tlawmngaihna* against women, which had been applied only at a superficial level that never reached the domestic sphere. To him, men's passion for becoming a *pasaltha* or *tlawmngai* man was the main reason of their reluctance to do a domestic work. By suggesting for the inclusion of domestic work and reconstruction of the concept of *tlawmngaihna* he redefined the meaning of a *Pasaltha* when he addressed the men and said, "It is those men with brave hearts who bow down to their wives".⁸⁸ He also assumed that it was from a family that emerged slaves (women) and their masters (men) and the degrading position of women under the custom of *thaibawih* and *tlawmngaihna* was the culture of "uncivilized" people that had to be changed:

"Let us see for a good society by leaving the old customs. Don't ever consider yourself as a *tlawmngai* man when you ignore or abuse and look down upon the women who cook and prepare clothes for you. Despite the awareness of this shameful attitude, many of us do not want to leave this custom due to the reluctance of abandoning this old tradition. A brave man who does not possess the potentialities of helping the weaker group would be a brave man of a different kind. There wouldn't be any man of an advanced thinking other than a man who is enthusiastic to learn new culture".⁸⁹

Durra's argument was soon responded by R. Buchhawna, in his article *Thaibawi Thu*. He agreed with Durra's ideas on the link between the culture of *thaibawi* and men's laziness and

hence he argued, “Women are the vanquisher of the brave men”.⁹⁰ For the beauty of the Mizo society he suggested all the men not to hesitate to become a *thaibawi*⁹¹

The early decade of the twentieth century was a critical period for the Mizos with reformist ideas. Given the traditional patriarchal attitude and biased gender division of labour, the discourse on female education became a debatable subject in the whole region. While the traditional notion of women’s complete devotion to household duties remained strong amongst the men, the first generation of literate and educated men advocated female education for the liberation of women. As early as 1904, Dala already believed in the meaning of female education for the society’s advancement when he argued, “Though we are against women who are admitted to schools, we may change our attitudes in the years to come”.⁹² To eradicate the negative notion on *thaibawih* Durra also supported women’s education as he stated, “if education is given to a man, it goes no further, but on the other hand, if you educate a woman you educate a whole family.”⁹³

The importance of female education was directly addressed by Ch. Pasena with his article, ‘*Hmeichhe Lehkha Zirna*’ in *Kristian Tlangau* in 1915. In his campaign for female education, Pasena was greatly influenced by the social reform movements in India and other countries. To begin with, he compared the Mizo society with other patriarchal societies like Britain and Bengal (in India) whose societies at that time began to include women as part of the subjects of social reformation. Education according to him was the most crucial requirement for the liberation of women and for the development of Mizo society. He therefore, encouraged the Mizo Christian parents to send their daughters to school. He emphasized the importance of women’s education by saying that “education is more important for women than for men”.⁹⁴

These men with new ideas on social reform had in one way the same perspective with the reformers of the nineteenth century Bengal reform movement on their views on women as one of the subjects to be changed. Throughout the colonial period, many issues on the women’s position stressed the bias gender division of labour within the domestic sphere and it had been regarded as a traditional culture that was opposed to the advanced or progressive characteristics of the west.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, women’s position beyond the family sphere remained unquestioned in their campaigns. Their principal concern was to reform gender relationship in

the family and their campaigns focussed primarily on what Sumit Sarkar has called, “limited and controlled emancipation” of their womenfolk.⁹⁶

5.3.3 New Model of Mizo Womanhood.

The emergence of the two powerful external agents indicated new gender relations. While the reforms under colonial government gave new power to men, the missionaries’ reforms emerged with the new ideology on womanhood to teach woman to be fit into the new patriarchy.

The missionaries at the foremost introduced this ideology within female education. Given that prejudice against female education limited the men’s choice to marry educated girls, Baptist women missionaries Chapman and Clark also stated, “We want them (school girls) to have an understanding of Christian standards of womanhood, wifehood and motherhood”.⁹⁷ At the same time in her report on the establishment of hostel for Girls’ school Eleanor Bowser, Women’s work Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society states, “ Sixty girls between the ages of the few days and sixteen to eighteen years are here being trained for healthy, happy Christian womanhood”.⁹⁸ The content of the Girls’ school curriculum was seen as important instructions for an ‘ideal’ woman. To strengthen the Christian ideology on the femininity the missions opened Mothers’ School for the women and older girls, who could not attend day schools, where the women learnt scriptures and instructed ‘feminine curriculum’ that was introduced in Mission Girls’ School.

Even the advocates of women’s liberation felt that school should teach women to be better assistants to theirs husbands and their children. Amongst them was Ch. Pasena who firmly believed that education brought a ‘new woman’ i.e. a new housewife as he observed that an educated housewife would learn how to take care of her children even during the absence of her husband, she would learn manners on how to welcome their visitors, and she would also be very good in educating her children and have knowledge on health and sanitation.⁹⁹ Within a decade of the introduction of female education there had been a change in men’s attitude. However, their perspective was influenced by the European concept of a “Victorian notion of Womanhood”. They preferred female education only to train the women with the knowledge of domesticity, child care, sanitation and health etc and regarded them as their “helpmates” or an ideal partner for a Christian family.

5.4 REFORMS OF MIZO CUSTOMS UNDER THE COLONIAL GOVERNMENT.

A central element in the ideological justification of the British Colonial rule in India was the criticism of the “degenerate and barbaric” social customs of the Indian people. The task of criticizing the colonial discourse and women’s issue in Colonial India has been repeatedly questioned by Post colonial writers and feminist scholars. Partha Chaterjee has argued that in order to identify the Indian tradition as “degenerate and barbaric,” colonialists’ critics repeated a long list of atrocities perpetrated on Indian women and condemned the oppressed position of women that was seen as a tradition to sanctify barbarous customs.¹⁰⁰

In spite of this to validate the meaning of their administrative power or their mission, the colonizers also intended to retain the tradition of the colonized people in which reforms that seemed to concern women’s position were also included. For that reason, as Geraldine Forbes has stated that colonial histories have narrated the civilizing mission of the British as rescuing Indian women from their own culture and society.¹⁰¹ A similar critical assumption could be useful in analyzing the subjection of women into a new form of government and its process in colonizers’ and missionaries’ discourses for the completion of their respective missions in the Lushai hills.

5.1 Discourses and Criticism against “Barbaric” or “Savage” customs.

The prominent colonial discourses that could be related to women’s issue in the Lushai hills were the prohibition of the burial a live infant along with the mother’s dead body,¹⁰² the custom of *zawn* or the gang rape of a reputedly loose woman by the group of young men and defaming others as possessing *Khawhring* Spirit,¹⁰³ the slitting of the nose and ears by the grieved husbands of the paramour of his unfaithful wife.¹⁰⁴ These customs were declared illegal and were made punishable with imprisonment of the more serious cases, and fines for the others.¹⁰⁵

After the prohibition, the care for motherless babies began in 1897 under the wife of Shakespear the Superintendent and the work was continued under the auspices of women

missionaries both in the north and south.¹⁰⁶ Thus, in the earlier missionaries' reports mention had constantly been made to the Colonial Government's prohibition of burying alive the baby along with a dead mother, and how the missionaries took the initiative to take care of a baby who was then handed over to the missionaries by their relatives. J.H Lorrain's report of Baptist missionaries' work in 1905 noted:

“This custom has been prohibited by the government, but the ones generally die a lingering death, as the people have no idea how to bring them up by hand. Last year Mrs Savidge took compassion on one of these poor little creatures who was in a most pitiful condition when brought to her. He is now a fine stalwart little fellow and his fame spread far and wide. In April last another motherless babe of three days old was brought to my wife...Ever since the baby has been brought down daily to my wife for its supply of food, and is thriving splendidly”.¹⁰⁷

In the early years of the 20th Century, Baptist women missionaries E. Chapman's and M. Clark's reports on their achievement of their works also dealt with the narration of the live of an orphan handed over to them by the chief whose wife had died. An example could be drawn from the narration of their experiences with an orphan girl Lalziki who in spite of the Mizos' superstitious belief became a healthy girl as they stated:

“Fortunately she was a particularly intelligent child, and soon showed that she had not a cow's brain! They watched us bathing her; they watched us playing with her; they saw how the baby loved us and how she preferred us to them. When we are able to go out into the district and take her with us, not only was she a great attraction, we could teach the people much from her. More than all else, perhaps, the people saw how much we loved her-and that helped them to realize that we had already come to that country because we loved them”.¹⁰⁸

Lalziki was an intelligent girl who then became one of the first educated women in Lushai hills. While narrating the progress of Lalziki in the field of education, they depicted the improvement of the condition of women along with changes in the society as Chapman and Clark stated, “To realize all that this means is to realize afresh how rapidly the Mizo people have developed”.¹⁰⁹ To specify their progressive work, the missionaries accordingly used this

case as one of the subjects of their discourses in the glorification of their movement vis-à-vis women's liberation in the hills.

With regard to the "Age of Consent" controversy in Colonial India, Bengali feminist scholar Himani Bannerji has argued that the reforming impulse of the British colonial state in India had little to do with the protection of women and girls though initiated in their names.¹¹⁰ Her argument becomes evident in the context of British colonial administration in Lushai hills as the issues concerning women were hardly discussed in the colonial documents. Nevertheless, humiliating issues regarding women were addressed which they considered as part of a "savage" culture and were prohibited. An example could be given from process of the prohibition of defaming others as being possessed by *Khawhring* spirit.

This practice, according to both colonizers and missionaries was a strange custom from the eyes of European rational thinking as J.Shakespear, the first superintendent of the Lushai hills also stated, "A missionary described to me a weird scene of excitement which he once saw, the object being to exorcise a *Khawhring* which had possessed a girl".¹¹¹ Though the colonial government did not relate itself with the religious matters they therefore took initiative by making an order that if anyone accused a woman of being possess *khawhring* and was unable to prove it he was to be fined Rs. 40.¹¹² Though the government did not show much concern for the women's position, they however were more concerned with portraying themselves as the saviour of Mizo women. In this context, J.Shakespear said, "The unfortunate women who were accused of being possessed by such a spirit have good reason to be grateful that the control of the country has passed into our hands".¹¹³

On the other hand, the process on the prohibition of *zawn* (raping of women by a group of men), one of the most humiliating actions of men against women discloses the colonizers' limited concern for the women's emancipation. Although the colonial government declared the practice of this custom illegal, it was still in practice in some villages as Parry also cites, "This disgusting custom has been stopped for many years but it sometimes happens that a woman comes in and says that she has been *zawned*."¹¹⁴ In spite of this, there was no particular punishment or fines against the person who practiced this custom. Within the colonial discourses, to compare the issue of *zawn* with the case related to the belief in *khawhring*, more interest was given to the latter. Though Christianity and Colonialism emerged with divergent missions, the colonizers shared the same religious aspect with the missionaries to eradicate the

custom, which was not in accordance with the Christian doctrine. Hence, it may be presupposed that colonizers initiated the women's liberation in a limited way, but only to suit the efficiency of their administration in the hills.

5.4.2 Written customary law and Re-institution of Patriarchal law.

Prior to the independence movement the first women's organization called *Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual (MHT)* posed questions on Mizo women's position and addressed the issues within the customary law. In a recent period, one of the biggest women's organizations, *Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP)*, founded in 1976 also addressed the problems in the customary law. The need to rethink and reconstruct customary law has become an insistent subject with the realization that most aspects of women's lives continue to be governed by these laws. Few studies, seminars and workshops have also been carried out by scholars, writers and Mizo feminists on customary law and tribal women of Northeast India as well as Mizo women in particular. Most of the issues concerning women in their studies involve inheritance rights for women, marriage customs and divorce.¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, there is no particular study on the historical evolution of the re-institution of patriarchal law within the 'Colonial customary law.' Most of the studies and discourses on customary law have generally located its evolution within the progress of colonial administration under N.E Parry in 1920's, but have failed to place the problem to the reconstruction of patriarchal power and the problems and disadvantages it had created for women.

Initially, to have a better government for the completion of their colonizing mission, native chiefs' support was deemed necessary. To persuade and win the confidence of the chiefs, colonizers firstly reinforced the traditional authority of the chiefs through the fixation of bride price. J Shakespear, the first Superintendent of the hills also cited that after the colonial intervention, *Man* or bride price established the chiefs' power.¹¹⁶ Take for example, the *Sailo* who held the highest price as the price of a bride was worth *Sesawm* or ten bisons. For other ruling clans such as *Zadeng*, *Thangluah*, *Palian* and *Rivung* the price was fixed at *Seriat* or eight bisons and the price was fixed between *Sesarih* or seven bisons and *seruk* or six bisons amongst the commoners.¹¹⁷ The immediate impact of the Colonial's fixation of bride price was the reinforcement of social or clan hierarchy. With the support of colonial power, the *Sailos* and other ruling clans therefore continued to preserve their authority through the "the exchange

of women” in marriage. The colonizers in turn used bride price as one of the hegemonic instruments for the colonial legitimacy.

In many cases the colonial government also retained certain rights and protection for women given by the traditional laws. But the present study hypothesizes that along with their protection women’s suppression in the “private sphere” was re-instituted by giving more power to men. With regard to the rights of inheritance, a few rights were given to a widow. Firstly, when a man died leaving adult sons, his widow was entitled to hold up the estate that could not be divided without her consent. However, the sons could object and divide the estate amongst themselves if the mother proceeded to waste and dissipate the estate.¹¹⁸ Secondly, for a widow with small children, right was given to claim the estate on behalf of her infant sons, but she had to get her husband’s brother to take over the estate and look after her and her children. He now had the right to buy wives for her sons and received the marriage prices for her daughters. In such circumstances, a widow was expected to work and assist the household to the best of her ability.¹¹⁹ In this way, while giving certain rights to women the traditional patriarchal power of men over women was again endorsed and reinforced in a written form without giving independent rights to women at decision making level in the family.

In a “Monograph on Lushai Customs and Ceremonies” N.E Parry mentioned various cases of sexual abuses, which were prevailed in the early period. Given that a colonial officer did not include the interpretation of women when he compiled the first written records on Mizo custom, sexuality, interpreted by men portrayed woman as a mere “sexual body”. Rather than ruling out the customs that was regarded earlier as “irrational” from European’s perspective, they only re-defined the traditional meaning of sexual practices and offences. Instead of locating the women’s problem within these practices, they simply defined this custom as a form of traditional sexual relationship that was regarded as “natural” between men and women in which a woman was portrayed to be deliberately involved in the offences. Take for an example, with regard to the case of *hnute deh* or touching the women’s breast, it stated in the monograph: “Young men frequently do this to a girl with whom they are friendly, to see how far they can go and as a rule the girls do not object.”¹²⁰

From indigenous men’s perspective new liable fines in kind or in cash against those practices were introduced. On the other hand, through the distribution of the fines, the traditional patriarchal power was reinforced and the rights of a woman were still premised in

her relationship with men in the society. For instance, if a married woman was defamed of having committed any sexual offences, the fine went to her brothers. At the same time, if a man was fined for the offences of *Lawithlem*, *Thlim*, *Zen*, *Puanfenzar* or *Hnute Deh*¹²¹ against a married woman, her brothers received the fine.¹²²

If the colonizers had a particular interest in liberating Mizo women from traditional social disorders, the introduction or reconstruction of written customary law could indeed serve as a form of mechanism. But only limited rights were given to the women while giving more rights to the men that officially redefined the positions of traditional men's power in colonial text. From the rational thinking of the colonial government, gender, particularly femininity was used as a discipline that produced bodies and identities. Power operated as an effective form of social control. This marks the emergence of a new form of rule in exercising power for the colonial government.¹²³ Parry on the other hand cited in his book:

“The chiefs and others consulted agree that the customs describes and the fines laid down for the breach thereof are those which are now generally in vogue and which are admitted to be fair and reasonable...It is in the hope that it will be of use of officers and chiefs engaged in the administration of justice in the district”.¹²⁴

Hence, the introduction of ‘colonial customary law’ in Lushai hills can be regarded as a patriarchal project as it had authenticated only men's power, women then emerged as “subject” of control and “object” of suppression under the colonial authority .

5.4.3 Abolition of Zawlbuk.

As discussed earlier, *Zawlbuk* formed one of the most important cultural institution in which the gender space and identity were constructed by limiting a woman's space in the home. After the First World War, there was a growing tendency of eliminating *Zawlbuk* institution amongst the native men, who took part in the war as it was seen as a hindrance to the progress of society. The colonizers and the missionaries however realized that *Zawlbuk* turned out to be an institution for imparting their missions and hence rather than ruling out the institution, they intended to revive it with a view of retaining the social discipline of the past that would go parallel to their projects. Hence orders were given to chiefs and Circle

Interpreters to rebuild *Zawlbuk* in every village in 1926. In order to support the Government, missionaries also made efforts as Rev. F.J Raper, Baptist missionary and District Commissioner for Boy Scouts in South Lushai hills also provided material assistance to *Zawlbuk* for indoor games as the institution presented a ‘space’ for mobilizing young boys to participate in Boys Scout movement.¹²⁵

Despite their superficial concerns for women’s position in the “private” sphere, the colonizers and the missionaries ignored to situate the problem of gender relations within the *Zawlbuk* institution. While emphasizing the validity of formal school to replace the *Zawlbuk* the native leaders then located the question of gender relation within the custom of *Zawlbuk* institution. Situating the custom of *Zawn* (raping of women by a group of men) and the prevalent sexual offences with the tradition of *Zawlbuk* institution, one of the local church elders Telela stated, “When we see the hardship of women often created by a group of young men who reside in *Zawlbuk* it has been realized that this institution is in no match with the present society.”¹²⁶ Along with this, different points of the disadvantages of *Zawlbuk* were carried out by the Mizo leaders and finally it was abolished in January 1938.

Eventually, one of the Mizo cultural practices that constructed gender space, identity and created humiliating actions against women was eventually eliminated. Alongside the desire to retain this bachelors’ house, the colonizers and missionaries looked for a new form of institution to replace *Zawlbuk* that gradually strengthened the Young Lushai Association (YLA), which was previously founded in 1935. Despite introducing a new “space” for the women in “public”, the Young Lushai Association (YLA) recognized women’s participation only under the dominance of men. Until recently, this organization that was renamed as Young Mizo Association (YMA) has been functioning under the leadership of men. Thus, the abolition of the *Zawlbuk* did not completely eradicate the exclusion of women in “public space”.

5.5 CHRISTIAN MODERNITY AND THE NATIVE WOMEN’S AGENCY.

The three powerful institutions- education, medicine and church, which were initiated by the missionaries were regarded as instruments to social change in the Lushai hills where the discourse of gender had been reinstituted and regulated. To establish a firm “Christian faith,

attitudes and habits”¹²⁷ their mission had to reach the women and the women missionaries were employed to deal with issues related to women in the above areas. The documents and literature on the history of Christian missions in Mizoram produced by the London Baptist Missionary Society and Presbyterian Church of Wales gave an extensive report on female education, women’s health, and evangelism.

Through these reports the women missionaries placed themselves as the ‘saviour’ of Mizo women. Amongst the women missionaries’ writings, the various measures and activities undertaken for the Mizo women in the field of education, medicine and evangelism were mentioned either in the form of personal narratives or memoirs. Their writings on one hand revealed the contributions of Mizo women without whose help, Christian “modernity” could not have been achieved. However, these personal narratives or memoirs of the Mizo women also unearthed both the recorded and undocumented activities of indigenous women. This portrayed Mizo women not only as mere “subjects” or passive recipients but as “actors” or active agents in making the history of social and cultural transformation in the Lushai hills.

To impart evangelism, the missionaries required the production of knowledge from the natives. As mentioned earlier, women missionaries also learnt that revitalization of traditional women culture was a must and had to follow the constructed ideology of the men missionaries, i.e. “Christians must be Lushais of the Lushais”.¹²⁸ Initially they had to identify the rich knowledge of native women that could be reinforced within the female education. Given that weaving was firstly recognized as women’s traditional duty it is recorded that a Baptist woman missionary, Chapman sought out the best weavers among the older Mizo women who later helped the missionaries in introducing the exquisitely fine fancy borders and stripes which adorned the Mizo cloths or coats of the girls. Subsequently, the Baptist Mission Girls’ School attained fame for new designs of weaving.¹²⁹

Likewise other subjects including pottery and knitting were introduced along with the help of a widow and her daughter. Chapman cited the name of a Mizo lady, Chani from whom the missionaries realized the importance of knitting. From her the missionaries learnt the native women’s knowledge of dyeing and knitting with needles made from bamboo and later included the same method in the school curriculum.¹³⁰ At the same time they also realized that clay pots were used for cooking in villages and it was the women who engaged in the production of pottery. Thus, a woman with the knowledge of the art of pottery was required and it was

introduced with the help of Chani's mother.¹³¹ The missionaries therefore provided a "mission of domesticity" to fulfill the traditional roles as "providers of conjugal comfort and homemakers"¹³² according to the needs of the heathen nature and environment. But in the process women acquired agency.

The significance of women's knowledge was also explored through the compilation of school text books. For example the contribution of Chani's sister seemed to be the first participant of indigenous women in this context. Chapman, her missionary teacher said that she had a gift of prose and poetic writing in her own Mizo language, which enabled her to give invaluable assistance in the preparation of the Graded Readers and Home Science Readers.¹³³ The Serkawn Graded Readers that was included in the curriculum of Primary school was also compiled by a Mizo woman teacher Nuchhungi. It comprised of thirty one Mizo folk tales, recollected by Nuchhungi and her friend from the year 1938.¹³⁴ In one sense it may be assumed that while the traditional repression of women's knowledge was re-imposed by colonial patriarchy, Missions' education promoted and recognized the knowledge of indigenous women.

Before the arrival of single women missionaries, there was an extensive requirement of philanthropic labour from native women. Few girls and women were given training to take care of girl students in formal classes and domestic classes. In north Lushai hills when the first separate schools for girls were established in 1903 the Welsh Mission appointed three girl students Nui, Saii and a liberated slave girl Pawngi to initiate the programme. According to the missionaries' report, Mrs K.E Jones was assisted by the wife of an evangelist Raj Bahadur. However, she also seemed to learn the traditional technique of weaving from Darlianchhungi and later trained her with a new skill of stitching as early as the first decade of the twentieth century. Sapbawii who used to be a student of Mission Girls' School and a daughter of Darlianchhungi said that her mother assisted K.E Jones in weaving, stitching and other household works and was later hired by the wife of Superintendent Mrs. Hazlett in Sylhett in the year 1918.¹³⁵ Zokhumi, who also used to be a student said that Darlianchhungi still served as a handwork teacher in 1930's and it was from her that the students learnt to cut and stitch their own clothes.¹³⁶

Owing to the extension of educational missions, the assistance of labour from the native women was highly required even after the missions employed women missionaries in girls'

schools. Thus, the missions sent older girls for teachers' training and later hired them. While acknowledging the contribution of women missionaries in female education, Khawlkungi who secured highest rank in the Lower Primary Examination of 1937 from Welsh Mission Girls' School credited her knowledge of English to her Mizo lady teacher Nuteii and her achievement to another woman Thangvungi as she cites, "It was the effort of Thangvungi that helped me to secure the highest rank and get a scholarship".¹³⁷

According to the Baptist Mission Report of 1929 there was a growing demand for girls' schools and teachers amongst the Pawis in the southern district. Five years later, Chani who was once a student of Baptist Mission Girls' school opened Girls' School at her house. In the village of *Changpui*, the chief's wife who had also been a student and trained as a teacher also started a school in her house.¹³⁸ Similarly, Lizi nu (mother of Lizi) also organised mothers' school at her house, where she called a 'missionary sewing meeting' in her village and got the women to make garments for the people of border tribes.¹³⁹

Apart from education missionaries used medicine as an important tool for "civilizing" the Lushai hills. As a result of the positive responses from the heathen Mizos the missionaries realized that medical care would be a powerful means of conversion. An important medical practice that the missionary focused on was the issue of women's health particularly, midwifery. Though the European knowledge of child care and health and sanitation were also introduced in education, the unhygienic condition of women and children eventually brought forth the need of women nurses or doctors from Britain.¹⁴⁰ The first missionary nurse Oliver Dick arrived in 1919 to work under the Baptist Mission and Winifred Margareth Jones, the first nurse for Welsh Mission reached the hills in 1928.¹⁴¹

The increase in the demand of medical care in dispensaries eventually led to the requirement of medical assistance from the natives. Though few men were also engaged, the missions as well as the government insisted on medical work from the native women. When the Missions selected Kapthuami to learn nursing in Shillong in 1926 Miss Kattie Hughes, a missionary teacher in Welsh Mission Girls' school said, "She is in great demand in Aijal and the surrounding districts. The people here are grateful to the Mission for allowing them to have a trained nurse".¹⁴² So other girls who completed their schooling were given training in nursing that later motivated the institutionalization of nursing at Welsh Mission Hospital in Durtlang with the arrival of a lady doctor Gwyneth Parul Robert. To organize their medical mission to

reach remote areas and villages, the importance of women in medical reforms was recognized. Welsh missionary nurse Eiryls Williams also stated in the report, “the only way in which we can reach the outlying villages is through bringing their girls here for training”.¹⁴³ Fortunately, the trained nurses had already shown a great success. An instance can be taken from the achievement of Lalsiami, the first trained nurse from South Lushai hills cited by Oliver Dicks in 1925:

“A great cause for thanksgiving is the report on the work of our nurse Lalsiami...She left us in March for one of the largest villages in south Lushai, two days journey away from here, and the record of her first six months there is most encouraging. The chiefs and elders of the village speak highly of her and of all she is doing for them; she has been able to give real help in several difficult midwifery cases...This makes us look forward more than ever to the time when there will be a trained Lushai nurse in each of the big villages at least”.¹⁴⁴

The medical mission was also carried out in villages or by the opening of health centres in different districts that again insisted the indigenous nursing assistance. Until the establishment of the District council in the post independence period, the demand of labours from the natives had been increased in medicinal missions. When she pictured the missionizing works in the villages a Welsh missionary nurse Gwladys Evans said:

“Our policy is to train the Lushais to take as much as responsibility as possible; but to train people, one needs teacher-not only here in the hospital, but in their own villages. The need for village dispensaries and teaching the laws of hygiene is great and urgent, and we are delighted at the prospect of the first dispensary being established in the near future. We trust that there will be sisters ready to come out, so that this work may be well established as soon as possible”.¹⁴⁵

Gwladys Evans again represented the response from the native women in her book when she narrated the contribution of a Mizo nurse Chhanhimi at health centre in Sihfa village in 1953:

“Sister Chhanhimi was wonderfully patient and kind. She always prayed for them and told them the love of God and the healing ministry of Jesus Christ and his disciples. She nearly always won them over to accept the medicine and many patients who had been critically ill were restored to health. The news spread and more and more patients came for treatment”.¹⁴⁶

It is worthwhile to mention the contribution of the native women for the growth of mission Church. As a result of the responsibility that had been given to the women missionaries the projects of Sunday school required native labours from women. In Aijal, the teachers and older pupils of the girls’ school led and taught the primary department that had been imitated by the neighbouring villages. Kattie Hughes also reported that the missionizing projects of Sunday school had been spread, but only through the hard labour of the pupils of girls’ school who organized a primary department in their own villages after they left the school.¹⁴⁷

Few women were trained in midwifery, Bible classes, child care, health and sanitation to assist the missionaries and pastors in the area of evangelism. These women were called Bible women who assisted the missionaries in Sunday services. They traveled in different districts and villages for preaching and helping the villagers with medicinal activities. From 1913, the Bible women started their evangelical mission that had been continued till 1959.¹⁴⁸ They were selected from different villages by the District meetings.

Due to the lack of funds from the Missions, Church women’s fellowship supported them by the collection of rice. Despite their hard labour for the church, these women were often insulted by others. Kawli, a Bible woman in 1920 said that when she became a Bible woman, the villagers followed her with offensive words. Some people insulted her by saying, “Being a mere woman, aren’t you ashamed to go about preaching the Gospel?”¹⁴⁹ Under this critical situation the Bible women had to assist the missionizing project of the missionaries. Nevertheless their contribution was evangelistic in nature, yet the European missionaries and the mission church neither treated their labours equal with men nor ordained them as pastors and elders.

The missionaries’ reforms could not be achieved without the active support of the Mizo women’s labour and knowledge. One of the significant strategies followed by the colonizers

and the missionaries for their missions was to regard themselves as superior races than the uncivilized Mizos. The immediate impact was reflected on the Mizos' perception of 'white men,' whom they regarded as superior than the Mizos. Initially they applied this concept to the converted people who were given education and trained to be the agents of their mission. Due to their concept on the superior image of the colonizers and the missionaries, the roles of these indigenous women as agents in social change have been ignored in the historical writings. But the fact remains that in this process the Mizo women also acquired some agency.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Since Colonialism and Christianity made inroads into the Lushai hills in the last decade of the 19th Century with a project of civilizing mission, they applied the same ideology of the condemnation on the native customs by focusing one of their interests on the position of women like they did in other parts of the colonized states. Hence, all the colonials' and missionaries' writings on Mizo society in the pre-colonial times emphasized the pathetic condition of Mizo women. Introducing Christian Education and administrative action of the Colonial as their as the liberating force, they declared themselves as saviours of the Mizo women. To challenge such form of documentation, the present chapter rereads the portrayal of women in both colonials' and missionaries' archival records of the social transitions of Lushai hills from the late 19th century to the middle of the 20th century.

Despite the undeniable transition of social condition and liberating position of the women in the colonial Lushai hills, the present study concludes that- Firstly, social reform initiated by colonial reform indeed liberated women from the bondage of "barbaric" custom, but the colonial state's introduction of written customary law institutionalized men's power over women. Secondly, while regarding education as an indicator of social changes, it had limited impacts on the perspective of educated men towards women. Though it made them aware of questioning the pitiful position of women and the importance of female education, their perspective was limited within the Victorian notion of motherhood. Thirdly, female education was indeed the harbinger of women's liberating position, yet the female missionaries needed the native women agents to complete their missionizing works in educating the women and girls. They were the product of the knowledge and labour of the Mizo women. In short, as

a result of the introduction of new social and material culture, the period witnessed a remarkable change in the women's position under the new patriarchal structure of the society.

End Notes and References.

-
- ¹ Chad M Bauman, 'Redeeming Indian "Christian" Womanhood: Missionaries, Dalits, and Agency in Colonial India', in *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 24th February, 2008. pp. 5-27.
- ² Zairema, *God's Miracle in Mizoram (A Glimpse of Christian Work Among the Head Hunters)*, Synod Press & Bookroom, Mizoram, 1978.
- ³ C.L Hminga, *The Life and Witnesses of the Churches in Mizoram*, Literature Committee, Baptist Church of Mizoram, 1987. p. 296.
- ⁴ Lalrinawmi Ralte, *Crabs Theology: A Critique of Patriarchy-Cultural Degradation and Empowerment of Mizo Women*, D.Min Dissertation, Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A, 1993.
- ⁵ Geraldine Forbes, *Women in Modern India*, Cambridge University Press, 2004. pp. 12 -13.
- ⁶ Kumkum Roy, 'Recent writings on Gender Relations in Early India', in Kirit K Shah (ed), *History and Gender; Some Explorations*, Rawat Publication, Delhi, 2005. p. 70.
- ⁷ T.H. Lewin, *Wild Races of South-Eastern India*, FKPL,T.R.I, Aizawl 1978. p. 134.
- ⁸ J. Shakespear, *The Lushei Kuki Clans*, TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1988. pp. 16-17.
- ⁹ 'An interview with Major Cole, DSO', in Thanzauva, *Reports of the Foreign Mission of The Presbyterian Church of Wales on Mizoram 1894-1957*, The Synod Literature and Publication Boards,Aizawl, Mizoram, 1997. p. 35. Please also see A.G. McCall, *Lushai Chrysallis*, T.R.I, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1977. pp. 172-173.
- ¹⁰ E. Chapman & M. Clark, *Mizo Miracle*, The Christian literature Society, Madras, 1968. pp. 13-14.
- ¹¹ David W Savidge, 'Missionaries and the Development of a Colonial Ideology of Female Education in India', in *Gender & History*, Vol.9 No.2 August 1997. pp. 201-221. Please also see, Jim Jose, 'Contesting Patrilineal Descent in Political Theory: James Mill and Nineteenth-Century Feminism', in *Hypatia*, Vol. 15, No. 1, Winter, 2000. pp. 151-174.
- ¹² J.M. Lloyd, *History of the Church in Mizoram*, Synod Publication Board, Mizoram, 1991. p. 109.
- ¹³ K.L. Rokhuma, 'Contribution of the Missionaries in Mizoram Education', in *B.C.M Compendium: In Honor of BMS Mission in Mizoram 1903-2003*, Baptist Church of Mizoram, Serkawn, Lunglei, Mizoram, 2003. pp.106-107.
- ¹⁴ B. Lalthangliana, *India, Burma leh Bangladesh-a Mizo Chanchin*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2001. pp. 551-552.
- ¹⁵ J.M Lloyd (1991), op.cit., p 30. K.L Rokhuma, *Mizoram Zirna: Mission Leh Kohhran Rawngbawlina*, The Communication Department, Baptist Church of Mizoram, 1998, p.57. B. Lalthangliana, *Mizo Literature (Mizo Thu leh Hla)*, M.C Lalrinthanga, Aizawl, 1993. pp. 90-101.
- ¹⁶ From Kalijoy Kavyathirtha to the Political Officer, Dt 5th April, 1898. Cited in J.V. Hluna (1992), op.cit., p. 58.
- ¹⁷ Ibid. p. 57
- ¹⁸ J.M Lloyd, *On Every High Hill*, Synod Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1984. p. 30. Also see 'D. E Jones's Report on the Lushai hills, 1898-1899', in Thanzauva,op. cit., p. 3.
- ¹⁹ 'The Report of Lushai Hills 1899-1900 from Edwin Rowlands', in Thanzauva, Ibid. p. 7.
- ²⁰ Lorrain's letter to Col. Th. Lewin, dated, 25th April, 1899. Cited in T.H Lewin, *A Fly on the Wheel: How I helped to govern India*, FKPL, TRI 1977. p. 317.
- ²¹ Lalzama Sailo, 'Lal Fa te Lekhazir Pawimawhzia', in *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu*, October 1924. pp. 239-240, Lalzama Sailo, 'Lal Fa te Lekhazir Pawimawhzia' in *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu* November 1924. pp. 252-255.
- ²² A.G. Mc Call's Letter to the Commisioner of Surma Valley and Hill Division, Silchar. Letter No. Mise/66Ed dated Aijal, the 13th November 1937.

-
- ²³ 'South Lushai Hills: Report for 1938', in *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society 1901-1938, Mizoram Gospel Centenary Committee*, Baptist Church of Mizoram Serkawn, Mizoram, 1993. p. 369.
- ²⁴ 'The Report of the Lushai hills 1900-1901', in Thanzauva, op.cit., pp. 10-11.
- ²⁵ 'The Report of the Lushai Hills 1902-1903', in Thanzauva, Ibid. pp. 17-18.
- ²⁶ J.M. Lloyd (1991), op., cit, p. 67.
- ²⁷ 'The Report of the Lushai Hills 1903-1904', in Thanzauva, op.cit., pp. 19-20.
- ²⁸ *Mizo Leh Vai Chanchinbu*, 1904, pp. 19-20.
- ²⁹ 'The Report of the Lushai Hills 1904-1905', in Thanzauva, op.cit., p. 22.
- ³⁰ 'Arthington Mission to the Lushai Tribe (B.M.S) Report for 1907' in *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society*, op.cit., p. 42, K.L. Rokhuma (1998), op.cit., p. 118.
- ³¹ 'After Ten Years: Report for 1913 of the B.M.S Mission in the Mission in the South Lushai Hills, Assam', in *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society*, Ibid. p. 105.
- ³² 'A Year of Conflict: Report for 1914 of the B.M.S Mission in the South Lushai Hills, Assam, India', in *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society*, Ibid. p. 119.
- ³³ Vanlalchhuanawma, *Christianity and Subaltern Culture*, ISPCK, 2006. p. 180.
- ³⁴ K.L. Rokhuma (1998), op.cit., p. 120.
- ³⁵ 'After Ten Years: Report for 1913 of the B.M.S Mission in the Mission in the South Lushai Hills, Assam', in *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society*, op.cit., pp 105-106.
- ³⁶ E. Chapman & M. Clark, op.cit., p. 38.
- ³⁷ J.V.Hluna (1992), op.cit., p. 156.
- ³⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁹ David W. Savidge, op.cit., p. 201.
- ⁴⁰ 'Arthington Mission To the Lushai Tribe (B.M.S) Report for 1907', in *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society*, op.cit., p. 42.
- ⁴¹ 'The Report of the Lushai Hills, 1899-1900', in Thanzauva, op.cit., pp. 6 & 11.
- ⁴² Chad M Bauman, op.cit., Please also see George H. Endfield & David J.Nash, '*Happy is the bride the rain falls on*': climate, health and 'the woman question' in nineteenth-century missionary documentation, Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, Volume 30, Number 3, September, 2005. pp. 368-386.
- ⁴³ 'A Year of Conflict: Report for 1914 of the B.M.S Mission in the South Lushai Hills, Assam, India', in *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society*, op.cit., p. 117.
- ⁴⁴ Patricia Grimshaw, 'Missions, Colonialism and the Politics of Gender', in Amanda Barry, Joanna Cruickshank, Andrew Brown-May & Patricia Grimshaw (eds), *Evangelists of Empire?: Missionaries in Colonial History*, University of Melbourne eScholarship Research Centre, 2008. Also see, Geraldine Forbes, 'In Search of the 'Pure Heathen': Missionary Women in Nineteenth Century India', in *EPW*, Vol XXI, No. 17, Review of Women's Studies, April 26, 1986. pp. WS2-WS8..
- ⁴⁵ J.V Hluna (1992), op.cit., p. 155.
- ⁴⁶ Gwen Rees Roberts, *Memories of Mizoram: Recollections and Reflections*, The Mission Board, Presbyterian Church of Wales, 2001. p. 55.

-
- ⁴⁷ Mary Hancock, 'Home Science and Nationalization of Domesticity in Colonial India', in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol 35, No 4, October 2001. pp. 871-903.
- ⁴⁸ E. Chapman & M. Clark, op.cit., p. 6.
- ⁴⁹ 'Letter from Mrs K.E Jones to the Superintendent of Lushai hills, 4th May, 1916', Cited in J.V. Hluna (1992), op.cit., p. 157.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid.
- ⁵¹ Ibid. pp.157-158.
- ⁵² Samuel S. Thomas, 'Transforming the Gospel of Domesticity: Luhya Girls and the Friends Africa Mission 1917-1926', in *African Studies Review*, Vol. 43, No. 2. Sep., 2000. pp. 1-27. An intriguing portrait or demonstration of colonial's attempt to "recast" the Tswana live their lives and saw the world around them in Africa offered by Jean and John Camaroff.
- ⁵³ E. Chapman & M. Clark, op.cit., pp. 39 & 49, Dorothy Glover, 'Set On a Hill: The Record of Fifty Years in the Lushai Country', in *Serkawn Today*, Gospel Centenary Committee, Baptist Church of Mizoram, Serkawn, 1993. p. 24.
- ⁵⁴ 'Miss Kattie Hughes's Reports on Girls' School and Dispensary, Aijal, 1926-1927', in Thanzauva, op.cit., p. 83.
- ⁵⁵ E. Chapman & M. Clark, op.cit., p. 40, 'Reports on the Girls' School, Aijal by Kitty Lewis and Miss Kattie Hughes, 1924-25', in Thanzauva, Ibid. p. 72.
- ⁵⁶ 'Results of Upper Primary Examination, 1930', in *Serkawn Mission School Examination Results 1904-1952*, Baptist Archive, Serkawn, Mizoram.
- ⁵⁷ E. Chapman & M. Clark, op.cit., p. 41, 'The Sound Increases: The 1927 Report of the Baptist Mission, South Lushai Hills', in *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society*, op.cit., p. 235
- ⁵⁸ 'Eiryls Williams's Report on the Lushai Medical Mission, 1934-1935', in Thanzauva, op.cit., p. 126
- ⁵⁹ E. Chapman & M. Clark, op.cit., p. 103.
- ⁶⁰ 'Kattie Hughes's Report on the Girls' Scholl and Women's Work, The Report Of North Lushai Hills, 1938-39', in Thanzauva, op.cit., p. 157.
- ⁶¹ Liani, 'Kan Sulhnu', in *Hmeichhe Sikul (Presbyterian Church Girls' School) Centenary, 2003-2003 Souvenir*, 2003. p. 95.
- ⁶² Gwen Rees Roberts, op.cit., p. 94.
- ⁶³ Ibid. pp. 92-93.
- ⁶⁴ J.V. Hluna (1992), op.cit., pp. 154-155.
- ⁶⁵ Letter from J. Hezzlett, Superintendent of Lushai Hills to the Commisioner, Sumra Valley and Hill District, Silchar, 12th May 1916. Cited in J.V Hluna (1992), Ibid. p. 155.
- ⁶⁶ Letter from the Inspector of Schools, Surma Valley and Hill Districts, Silchar to the D.P.I., Assam, Shillong, 10.12.1915. Cited in J.V Hluna (1992), Ibid. p. 155.
- ⁶⁷ Cited in J.V Hluna (1992), Ibid. p. 158.
- ⁶⁸ L. Malsawmi, *Mizo Kohhran Hmeichhiate Chanchin*, Synod Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1973. p.5
- ⁶⁹ 'The Report of the North Lushai hills 1920-21', in Thanzauva, op.cit., p. 64.
- ⁷⁰ Letter from Superintendent of Lushai hills to Mrs K.E. Jones, 16th May, 1916, cited from J.V. Hluna (1992), op.cit., p. 159.
- ⁷¹ A.G Mc. Call letter to The Commissioner of Surma Valley and Hill Division, Silchar, 6th October, 1937.

-
- ⁷² Geraldine Forbes (2004), op.cit., p. 2.
- ⁷³ J.M.Lloyd (1991), op.cit., p. 109.
- ⁷⁴ Zosapthara, 'Mizo Naupang Thihna te', in *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Leikhabu*, January, 1904.
- ⁷⁵ Zosapthara, 'Ramdang Thu', in *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Leikhabu*, August 1903.
- ⁷⁶ *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Leikhabu*, March 1904, pp.2 & 3.
- ⁷⁷ *A Lai Bu*, Synod Bookroom, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1978 (26th Edition), p. 23.
- ⁷⁸ J.M Lloyd (1991), op.cit., p. 109.
- ⁷⁹ Ibid. p.15.
- ⁸⁰ Vanchhunga, 'Mizo Dan Shual Zia', in *Mizo Leh Vai Chanchin Leikhabu*, February, 1903. p. 7.
- ⁸¹ Dala, 'Zo Dan te', in *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Leikhabu*, February 1904. pp. 14-15.
- ⁸² Thangbura Sailo, 'In zilh na', in *Mizo Leh Vai Chanchin Leikhabu*, March 1905. p16.
- ⁸³ Ibid.
- ⁸⁴ Ibid.
- ⁸⁵ Makthanga, 'Thaibawi', in *Mizo Leh Vai Chanchinbu*, November, 1924. p. 242-243 , Makthanga, 'Thaibawi thu', *Mizo Leh Vai Chanchinbu*, January, 1926. pp. 12-15.
- ⁸⁶ Meaning and the context of tlawmngaihna has already been discussed in the third chapter.
- ⁸⁷ H. Durra, 'Chakna Mawi Lai', in *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu*, March, 1925. p. 54.
- ⁸⁸ Ibid, p 56.
- ⁸⁹ Ibid
- ⁹⁰ R. Buchhawna, 'Thawibawi Thu', in *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu*, May, 1925. p. 109
- ⁹¹ Ibid. p. 111.
- ⁹² Ibid. p. 16.
- ⁹³ H. Durra, 'Chakna Mawi Lai', in *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu*, op.cit., p. 57.
- ⁹⁴ Ch Pasena, 'Hmeichhe Leikha Zirna', in *Kristian Tlangau*, September, 1915.
- ⁹⁵ Himani Banerji, *Inventing subjects; Studies in Hegemony, Patriarchy and Colonialism*, Tulika Books, 2001. P. 55.
- ⁹⁶ Sumit Sarkar, 'The Women's Question in nineteenth century Bengal', in Sangari, Kumkum & Vaid, Sudesh (eds), *Women and Culture*, Bombay Research Centre for Women's Studies, 1994. p. 106. Please also see Geraldine Forbes (2004), op.cit., p. 27.
- ⁹⁷ E. M Chapman and M. Clark, 'South Lushai Hills Baptist Missionary society coming - Of -Age Report of Women's Work 1919-1914', in *Serkawn Today*, Baptist Church of Mizoram, Serkawn, Mizoram, 1993. p. 47.
- ⁹⁸ M. Eleanor Bowser, 'Light on the Lushai Hills: The Story of a Dream that Came True', in *Serkawn Today*, op. cit., 1993, p.13.
- ⁹⁹ Ch. Pasena, op.cit.,
- ¹⁰⁰ Partha Chatterjee, 'Colonialism, Nationalism and Colonized Women: The Contest in India', in *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 16, No. 4. Nov., 1989. pp. 622-633.
- ¹⁰¹ Geraldine Forbes (2004), op.cit., p. 2.
- ¹⁰² 'Arthington Mission To the Lushai Tribe (B.M.S) Report for 1907', in *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society*, op.cit., p. 53.
- ¹⁰³ Liangkhaia, *Mizo Chanchin*, M.A.L, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1976. p. 100. B. Lalthangliana (2001), op.cit., p. 481.

-
- ¹⁰⁴ N.E Parry (1998), op.cit., pp. 52-53.
- ¹⁰⁵ Mangkhosat Kipgen, *Christianity and Mizo Culture*, Eastern Theological Conference, Assam, 1996.pp. 152-153.
- ¹⁰⁶ Vanlalchhuanawma, op.cit., p.144.
- ¹⁰⁷ 'South Lushai 1905' in *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society*, op.cit., p. 20.
- ¹⁰⁸ E. Chapman & M. Clark, op.cit., pp.30-31.
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid. p. 38.
- ¹¹⁰ Himani Bannerji, op.cit., p. 77.
- ¹¹¹ J.Shakespear, *The Lusei-Kuki Clan*, TRI, 1988 p. 111.
- ¹¹² N.E Parry (1998), op.cit., p. 18.
- ¹¹³ J. Shakespear (1988), op.cit., p. 110.
- ¹¹⁴ Ibid. p. 54.
- ¹¹⁵ For detail please see Shibani Roy, *Tribal Customary Law of North East India*, B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi, 1990, Varalakshmi Janapathy, *Isolated Land and Their Gentle Women*, Spectrum Publication, New Delhi, 1995, Zohmangaiha (ed), *Hmeichhiate leh Mizo Hnam Dan (Seminars Papers on Women and Mizo Customary law)*, Valcolm Publication, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2000, Walter Ferdandes, *The Indigenous issue and Women's Status in Northeast India*, Indigenous Rights in Common Wealth Project, South and Southeast Asia Regional Expert meeting, Indian Conference on Indigenous Tribal Peoples (ICITP) India International Centre, New Delhi, India, 2002.
- ¹¹⁶ J. Shakespear, *The Lusei-Kuki Clan*, op.cit., pp. 49-50.
- ¹¹⁷ C. Lianthanga, *Hmanlai Mizo Chanchin*, Mizoram Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1999. p.137. Also see N.E Parry (1998), op.cit., p. 26.
- ¹¹⁸ N.E Parry, Ibid. p. 84.
- ¹¹⁹ Ibid. pp. 82-84.
- ¹²⁰ Ibid. p. 54.
- ¹²¹ Common Sexual offences during the traditional period.
- ¹²² N.E Parry (1998), op.cit., p. 39.
- ¹²³ This argument is taken from the views of Foucauldian feminists, who expose female body to exemplify Foucault's notion of power. For further details see, Angela King; 'The prisoner of gender: Foucault and the Disciplining of the Female Body', in *Journal Of International Women's Studies*, March 01, 2004. Mc Nay, Lois; *Foucault and Feminism: Power, Gender and the Self*, Polity Press, Blackwell Publishers, 1992.
- ¹²⁴ N.E Parry (1998), op.cit., See the introduction.
- ¹²⁵ Sangkima, *Mizos: Society and Social Change*, Spectrum, Gawahati, 1992.p. 131.
- ¹²⁶ Zatluanga, *Mizo Chanchin*, Directorate of Art & Culture, Government of Mizoram, 1996. p. 114.
- ¹²⁷ Geraldine Forbes (1986), op.cit.,
- ¹²⁸ Dorothy Glover, 'Set On a Hill: The Record of Fifty Years in the Lushai Country', in *Serkawn Today*, op.cit., p. 22.
- ¹²⁹ E. Chapman & M. Clark, op.cit., p. 49. Also see Dorothy Glover, Ibid. p. 24.
- ¹³⁰ E. Chapman & M. Clark, Ibid. pp. 55-56.
- ¹³¹ Ibid. p. 54.
- ¹³² Georginia H. Endfield & David J. Nash, op.cit., p. 371.

-
- ¹³³ E. Chapman & M. Clark, op.cit., p. 160.
- ¹³⁴ Nuchhungi & Zirtiri (eds), *Serkawn Graded Readers: Mizo Thawnthu*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2003, p. V.
- ¹³⁵ Sapbawii, 'Ka Sikul Kal Lai: Hmeichhe Sikul ah', in *Hmeichhe Sikul (Presbyterian Church Girls' School) Centenary*, op.cit., p. 111. Personal Interview with Sapbawii, 10th January, 2009, Aizawl, Mizoram. Mrs Sapbawii was a student of Welsh Mission Girls' School from 1937-1945 and worked as a teacher in the same school from 1955 to 1995.
- ¹³⁶ Personal Interview with Zokhumi, 5th January, 2009, Aizawl, Mizoram. Zokhumi was also a student of Welsh Mission Girls' School who stood topper in the Middle English Examination of Lushai hills, in 1943.
- ¹³⁷ Personal Interview with Khawlkungi, 26th December, 2008, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ¹³⁸ E. M Chapman & M. Clark, 'South Lushai Hills Baptist Missionary society coming - Of -Age Report of Women's Work. 1919-1914' in *Serkawn Today*, op.cit., pp. 1-2, Also see, 'South Lushai Hills 1934', in *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society*, op.cit., p. 314.
- ¹³⁹ E.Chapman & M. Clark, op.cit., p. 162.
- ¹⁴⁰ 'A Year of Conflict: Report for 1914 of the B.M.S Mission in the South Lushai Hills, Assam, India', in *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society*, op.cit., p.117.
- ¹⁴¹ V. Hawla, *Hmarchan Zosapte Chanchin (Welsh Missionaries) 1897-1968*, Mizoram Publication Board, 1980. p. 59.
- ¹⁴² 'Kattie Hughes's Report on Dispensary and Girls' School in the Welsh Mission Annual Report of North Lushai Hills, 1926-1927', in *Thanzauva*, op.cit., p.83.
- ¹⁴³ 'Eiryls Williams's Report on the work in Durtlang Hospital in the Report of North Lushai hills 1937-1938', in *Thanzauva*, op.cit., p. 148.
- ¹⁴⁴ 'Shadows & Sunshine: B.M.S Mission South Lushai Hills, Assam India, Report for 1925', in *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society*, op.cit., p.218.
- ¹⁴⁵ 'The Report of North Lushai Hills, 1952-53', in *Thanzauva*, op.cit., p. 218.
- ¹⁴⁶ May Bounds & Gwladys M. Evans, *Medical Mission in Mizoram: Personal Experiences*, The Synod Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1987. pp. 143-144.
- ¹⁴⁷ 'Report of the North Lushai Hills, 1935-36', in *Thanzauva*, op.cit., p. 135.
- ¹⁴⁸ Lalrinawmi Ralte, *Bible Women-te Nghilloh Nan*, Shalom Publication, Bangalore, 2004. p. 19.
- ¹⁴⁹ L. Malsawmi, *Mizo Kohhran Hmeichhiate Chanchin*, op.cit., p. 10.

CHAPTER -VI

ETHNIC-NATIONALISM AND INSURGENCY IN POST COLONIAL PERIOD

“They (women) joined the marches, the demonstrations, the campaigns, the underground groups, the militant left. They fought, as much as any man, for a non-exploiting, non-alienating future. But what happened? In the groups or organizations they joined, they discovered that they were just as much a second sex as in the society they wanted to overturn.”

- Simone De Beauvoir¹

Ever since the withdrawal of the British from India in 1947, there have been ethnic rivalries against the nation state in North East India. Evidently, insurgency movement has almost become a synonym for the region that attracted the interest of many scholars from both outside and mainstream India. Accordingly the study on insurgency and the ethnic conflict situation is the richest literature produced in the history of North East India.² The questions of nationality, sub-nationality, separatism, ethnic conflict, tribal violence, identity crisis pertaining to North Eastern states have been generated, discussed and represented over and over again in India, ranging from the media to political circles and public to academic circles. Within the official discourse, Jairam Ramesh has identified five different projection paradigms, the first of which is the 'exotic cultural paradigm', followed by the 'security paradigm', then the 'integration paradigm', the 'politics paradigm', and lastly, the 'economic package paradigm' which is currently the most dominant.³ Yet, there are other works which are particularly drawn from various methodologies such as conflict resolution, counter perspective and ethnic narratives which were produced in the recent decade. However, the region remains known to the outside world as a "troubled zone" mainly due to a very obvious lack of understanding.⁴ In fact, Indian historians have not applied adequate attention to these "troubled regions" until recently. Under these critical circumstances, women are more or less excluded in such discourses.

Relatively, studies on women connected to the insurgency and ethnic conflict in North East India by international agencies and social scientists is a recent phenomenon. Most of these studies are generally confined to the impact of insurgency violence on women that portrayed them as victims.⁵ While some studies largely focus on women combatants in insurgency war,⁶ most of the works limit women's agency to the role of women's organizations (mostly composed of elite women) as "peacemakers."⁷ These approaches narrow down the woman's purpose to just that of the need to bargain between ethnic insurgency groups and the Nation State. Such studies leave us with only a partial picture of women's experiences in insurgency wars. Few that do mention women's participation in ethnic movements have largely excluded their contributions. The gap is still made wider by the fact that a good proportion of issues are far from being meant to address the real condition of women in the region mainly because there is hardly any literary work that covers insurgency history from a feminine perspective. This evidently raises serious questions in regards to the roles of women in the formation of ethnic

nationalism are. How exactly does ethnic nationalism impact the gender relations in the region? Can ethnic nationalism mean 'gender equality' (at least in terms of equal opportunities)? How do ethnic groups place their women? What do 'ethnic nationalism' and 'insurgency' mean to a woman?

The history of women in Mizo insurgency is critical due to a number of reasons. Ironically, it is because of the insurgency movements that women of Mizoram occupy a prominent place in the peace and conflict discourse. Otherwise, 'her stories' have no place in mainstream feminist discourse in India. In the regional context, numerous tales of struggle, pain and sacrifices of many women, and more importantly, their contributions, are hidden in the background. Secondly, patriarchy reasserts itself very strongly during times of conflict. Thirdly, women were used as physical tools for patriarchal bargains with the Nation State. Lastly, it marked a radical transformation of women and politics in Mizoram. In other words, the removal of a woman's agency began. Post insurgency, reconstruction of women's needs and participation are more often than not, ignored and cast aside.

The objective of this chapter is to trace women's roles as well as their aspirations in the ethnic politics of the Mizo hills from 1946 to 1986. The first section traces the development of ethnic nationalism from a woman's perspective. A number of women were active in the formation of ethnic nationalism in pre-insurgency (1947-1966) and their participation provided them an opportunity to declare their desire for a public voice as well as inclusion within the male-dominated realm of activity and public life. The next section throws light on the women's narrative of insurgency in the same hills. The dialogue between conventional history and alternative sources as well as the recognition of a patriarchal historiography on insurgency are both vital.

6.1 CONTEXTUALIZING “INSURGENCY” FROM A WOMAN PERSPECTIVE.

Different generations of scholars have addressed the ethnic movement from a myriad of theoretical and political perspectives. While a number of frameworks exist in the examination of insurgency, very little attention has been directed toward its conceptualization in relation to women. This is mainly due to the fact that the history of insurgency in Mizo hills has always been dominated by the ‘official’ history or the history of ethnic patriarchy so to speak, who lead various political movements. The categories of “insurgency” and “ethnic nationalism” require unpacking because each constitutes ‘patriarchy’ without acknowledging ‘women space’.

The term ‘insurgency’ comes from a Latin word ‘insurgere’ which means to ‘rise up’. In English lexicon, the word can refer to either a ‘rebel’ or a ‘revolutionary’. From the academic perspective Bard O’Neil defines insurgency as “a struggle between a non-ranking group and ruling authorities in which the former consciously employs political resources and instruments of violence to establish legitimacy for some aspect of the political system it considers illegitimate”.⁸ In the context of North East India, several terms have been applied such as “ethnic insurgency”, “political insurgency”, or “arms insurgency” to state a few. Moreover, there is hardly any work that covered insurgency from the ethnic perspective. For instance, the insurgency movement from 1966-1986 has been locally referred as “*zalenna sual*” which literally means freedom movement. Apparently, in the North East context, the term has been generated and applied mainly from two perspectives such as Secessionist and “Revolutionary”, whereas other forms of insurgencies such “Restorational”, “Reactionary”, “Conservative” and “Reformist” may also be present. There is a general agreement among scholars that insurgency is a form of political violence and is a means to achieve any of the above mentioned ends. Insurgency may break out against a particular regime, particular persons of a regime, particular structures and salient values a regime upholds, or particular policies or biases of a regime. In all such possible cases, the prime objective of insurgents would be to capture power and replace the political community.⁹

What then, does ethnic insurgency mean from a woman’s perspective? Warfare and military service have played key roles in national histories and mythologies and in the fashioning

of gender identities. Despite the fact that women, war and conflict are very rich in recent feminist scholarship, 'political insurgency' remains marginal in feminist theory. The works of Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Spivak focus on 'insurgency' as a crucial point of departure in the rethinking of women exclusion in insurgency politics of colonial India. Ranajit Guha attempted to understand "insurgency" from the peasant point of view in the context of the colonial Indian. He theorised insurgency as the "site where the two mutually contradictory tendencies within this still imperfect, almost embryonic, theoretical consciousness -- that is, a conservative tendency made up of the inherited and uncritically absorbed material of the ruling culture and a radical one oriented towards a practical transformation of the rebel's conditions of existence -- met for a decisive trial of strength".¹⁰ Eventually Ranajit Guha used "the word "insurgency" in his text as a name of that consciousness which informs the activity of the rural masses known as revolt, uprising, etc or to use their Indian designation – "dhing", "bidroha", "ulgulan", "hool", "fitura" and so on."¹¹ However, such generalizations fail to cover the entire complexity of the subaltern struggle in colonial India. Gayatri Spivak critically challenged Guha's over-generalisation of peasant insurgency that obscures the subaltern women's voice. She argued that the subaltern women's insurgency is rarely accompanied by any substantial historical research mainly because of colonial archive and historical records of subaltern insurgency keeps male dominant. Further, she argued that subaltern women were subjected to three main domination systems - class, ethnicity and gender.¹² Spivak's study thus provided how insurgency has been problematic because it equates with a masculine story of political evolution, marginalizing aspects of women in history.

6.2 WOMEN'S RESPONSES TO THE ETHNIC NATIONALIST MOVEMENT OF 1946 TO 1962.

The last part of colonialism in Lushai hills was a period of transition from the socio-political point of view. Firstly, this political transition was correlated with the new political ideas and civilizational experiences of the young Mizo youths who served in the Second World War.¹³ Secondly, following the accounts of colonial officer A.G Mc Call the rise of new political ideology had also been linked with the rise of Mizo middle class family facilitated by colonial government and Christian missionary education.¹⁴ From this new social class a small group of

educated men emerged to learn an upsurge of freedom movement. The new social class began to question the colonial political apparatus thereby manipulating the commoners that subsequently led to the emergence of rivalry between the *Hnamchawm* or commoners and the chiefs. Later on, the transfer of power from the colonial to Independent government had several political and social impacts in the hills. Identity crisis and new political consciousness was developed rapidly followed by the formation of ethnic political parties.

Despite the available account on the emergence of new social class and its immediate outcome on the ethnic political ideology, the historiography of ethnic nationalism failed to include the rise of consciousness among the 'new Mizo women'. The emergence of these new women could be characterized as a movement from private to public sphere.¹⁵ It was during the course of the Second World War that a few Mizo women started to make their first inroads into the male dominated space of the society. However, the bias historical writing has obscured the participation of women by emphasizing a lot about Mizo men's entry into the wider arena of the world through their participation in the world war against Japanese invasion.

Recently an indigenous writer Lalhlira has accounted more than four hundred young Mizos who joined allied forces of the Assam and Gurkha Regiment during the Second World War out of which twenty nine were women. Amongst these women, six of them joined Auxiliary Nursing Service (ANS) while another twenty three were employed in the Women Auxiliary Corps of India (WAC (I)). After the end of the war some of these women were employed in the civil service of Lushai hills and few of them served as civil officers until their retirement.¹⁶ A well known writer Khawlkungi has narrated that it was her experiences in the war under WAC (I) that gave her confidence and enabled her work under the civil service.¹⁷ Though there were no further records of their participation in the hills politics, these women accessed an opportunity of participation beyond the domestic space and their capability of representing the nation to the outside world through the Second World War.

In the meantime, the 'new Mizo women' emerged from a few educated and middle class women with conscious effort of rethinking the question of the Mizo women's position. The three women Lalthanzami, Hmingliani and Kapthluaii came to the forefront. When Lalthanzami shared her knowledge of Women's Organization in Bengal during the time of her stay in

Calcutta as a Health Visitor, Kapthluaii and Hmingliani were enthusiastic to form a Mizo women's organization that would speak for the betterment of the Mizo women. Thus, to learn more about the functions of women's organizations in other countries the three women firstly sought the companionship of the wives of missionaries and colonial officers who favorably responded to their aspiration. Under the guidance of the European women, the first meeting with a small group of educated women and wives of the native middle class men i.e. pastors and government officers was held on 14th July 1946. The first Mizo Women's Organization known as '*Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual*' (MHT) was finally formed at Aizawl on July 16, 1946 with Lalthanzami as its first president.¹⁸

Initially the MHT posed question on gender relation in the family. When the first Mizo women's conference was held on 26th -28th January 1948 at Aizawl they located and defined the traditional 'Mizo patriarchy' and the problems of women's issue within the customary law. Akin to their contemporary Indian women's organizations the MHT was also formed with a view to construct an image of a "new Mizo woman" based on missionary education as "a companion and help-mate to man and an ideal mother".¹⁹ In the first general assembly of the MHT that was held on 12th March 1949 new issues on health, sanitation, child rearing and the reformation of domestic sphere were thus taken up along with the issues on the customary law.²⁰ Nevertheless, the ethnic political condition dominated by the Mizo Union party and the forthcoming District Council encouraged the MHT to step out of the domestic space. By utilizing the organization as "a medium for the expression of their opinion"²¹ they envisaged ethnic politics as an important platform to raise the women's issue. When the meeting was held shortly after the declaration of Independence for India on 23rd August 1947, the organization had already passed a resolution that stated, "*He pawl hian a tul a tih apiangin politics a khawih thei ang*", which means "This organization will take part in politics whenever it deems fit".²²

Since the declaration of Independence for India, political movement had been emerged with the question of the future Mizo identity. From the very outset of the movement the MHT therefore gave an immediate response to the ethnic nationalism and pressured the Mizo Union party to sensitize women's issue at the political stage. It is also interesting to note that the

authorities and the political leaders also gave due recognition to women's political interest. When a meeting of the accredited Mizo (Lushai) leaders to discuss the future condition of the hills after the India's independence was held under the chairmanship of L.L Peters, the last Superintendent of Lushai hills on 14th August 1947 (a day before India's independence from the British Government) the three women Lalthanzami, Kapthluai and Biaki represented the MHT.²³ The first ethnic political demands for the Mizos (if the Lushai hill was to enter the Indian Union) to the Government of Assam were therefore framed with the presence of women. When the Bardoloi Sub- Committee visited Mizoram on the 17th and 18th of April, 1947 with an objective of formulating what kind of autonomy would be given to the Mizos under the Indian Union after the departure of the British from the country the leaders of MHT also met the sub-committee to discuss the women's issue. The outcomes and recommendation of the Bardoloi sub-committee that assured the formation of the District council anticipated the leaders of MHT to have a council that would listen to the women's voices and integrate their issues within the ethnic political agenda.²⁴ As a result of their aspiration for the women's rights, the organization completely focused their interest on an ethnic politics.

With a view of including the women's issue within political agenda /constitutional reforms of the forthcoming District council, the MHT decided to send a proposal for the reconstruction of Mizo customary law on the questions of bride price, divorce, inheritance, adultery etc during their first conference in 1948. Regarding "*man*" or bride price they passed the resolution for the submission of its eradication to the district council as it often created problems for the women in the family.²⁵ Within the Mizo Union party's nationalist ideology on a "Greater Mizoram",²⁶ the MHT had a desire for the formation of District council with a certain provision for the future expansion of its membership by bringing women together from the Mizos living in Cachar and Manipur areas.²⁷ When the conference on the issue of "Greater Mizoram" was organized in 1948 at Sevawn in Manipur area, the leaders of MHT Varziki and Thangpuii also attended the conference with the Union leaders.²⁸ To represent the women's issue before the council, the organization was conscious of creating a new space for the Mizo women in the new ethnic political agenda. Hence they began to voice their desire for women's political rights in the society. Since its establishment the organization had been repeatedly demanded for the inclusion

of women representatives in the forthcoming District Council²⁹ who would speak on behalf of the Mizo women.

Since its inception, the ethnic political party therefore began to open a new but limited space for women. When the Government of Assam formed an advisory council known as “Lushai Hills District Advisory Council” during an interim period, Lalsangpuii and Remthangi were nominated to represent the women.³⁰ Before the complete establishment of the District Council, the MHT organized general assembly on 7-9 February, 1951 where the members selected the three women- Hmingliani, Thankimi and Varziki as possible candidates for the forthcoming District Council.³¹ However, when the District Council was inaugurated on 26th April, 1952, the authorities unexpectedly nominated Lalziki Sailo who was neither a member nor elected nominees of the MHT, as a representative for women. The appointment of Lalziki caused dissatisfaction amongst the women leaders. Sangkima has argued that being brought up by the missionaries her mother tongue was English that handicapped her to speak in the council debate.³² Hence she failed as a representative of Mizo women. On the other hand it would not be wrong to observe that the male domination over the council also disabled her to bring the women’s issue before the council. However, a continuous struggle brought a new development and a new chapter in the history of Mizo women had been opened since the nomination of Hmingliani, the president of the MHT as the member in the second election of the District Council in 1957. Her presence in the district council had opened new inheritance rights for the Mizo women by “Will” if properly executed with witnesses.³³

Despite the previous strong interest in the hill politics, the MHT eventually declared itself as an independent association from the third election of the District Council in 1962. In her letter to the Chief Minister of Assam with regard to the representation of women in the District Council on the 11th April 1962, Biaksiami, the General Secretary of MHT states,

“It is in the main a social organization devoting itself to the progress and development of the country with special reference to the social welfare of the tribal women of our district. It is moreover, an independent body, not affiliated to any political party”.³⁴

Since then, the organization continued to focus their interest on the issues of social welfare and other philanthropic works.

The interdependency of both the Mizo Union and MHT need to be re-examined to elucidate the ceasing interest of the MHT in the hill politics. Given that both the leaders of MHT and Mizo Union emerged from the same social background it could be observed that these women won their confidence to participate in ethnic politics.³⁵ In his article, “*Mizo Women and Politics through the ages*” Sangkima has also argued that the close intimacy between the two organizations encouraged the leaders of MHT to participate in politics. The impact of this intimacy in the MHT could be read from the occurrence of *Mautam* or Famine from the late 1950’s and its repercussion on transitioning the ethnic political ideology.³⁶ Though it is not officially recorded, the critical condition of the hill politics and the conflict between their male supporters from the Mizo Union seemed to have a deep impact on the functions of MHT and its interests. Nevertheless by utilizing ethnic politics as a reforming tool, these emerging ‘New Mizo women’ and their organization indirectly used Mizo Union leaders as an instrument for sensitizing the women’s issue at political level. Its hidden impact could be located within the objectives of Mizo Union that consisted of women’s issue as a part of their ethnic political issues that was not included in the objectives or agendas of other political parties.

Shortly after the incorporation of Lushai hills into Assam state under the provision of the sixth schedule the women’s question was included in the hill politics along with the establishment of a District council. Dominated by the Mizo Union party, a District council was inaugurated on 25th April 1952 and it was empowered to reform constitutional laws and orders. As soon as its establishment, the assembly was formed with an aspect of various constitutional reforms. Moreover the question of ethnic political identity became the main discourse of the

society that had been reflected in the revision of the existing Mizo Customary laws framed by the colonial government.

Despite the inclusion of women's issue within their objective and aspiration of the MHT in an ethnic political ideology, the Mizo Union party leaders failed to concern the problems of Mizo women after the functioning of a District council. Instead they put together women as mere subjects and objects of discourses either for the deployment of colonial law or preservation of ethnic identity and culture. An instance can be taken from the assembly's long debate on the question of bride price.³⁷ When the question of bride price fixed by the colonial government was put forward before the assembly, it was firstly observed as a symbol of dehumanizing culture and it was suggested for redefinition of its meaning to a '*lawmmman*' or 'reward'.³⁸ At the outset women therefore appeared as the subject of victims under the dominance of the two patriarchies and the object to be saved from the colonial patriarchal law.

In contrast to their earlier observation majority of the assembly members however urged for their anxious of losing men's traditional power when one of the members Tuikhurliana argued, "whenever there is a *man* we the men are the owners, but if *man* is eradicated, we will lose our authority, though women's rights will be limited".³⁹ The discussions and debates of the assembly therefore reflected the ethnic patriarchal thought. Finally, the suggestion of bride price eradication was declined and the assembly supported to its continuity for the protection of ethnic culture by strengthening Mizo patriarchal power. When it was amended in 1960, the customary law therefore stated, "in all the marriages the practice of bride price has to be decided between the two families. If the marriage is mediated through bride price, the father will be the main recipient. If the bride has no father, the price will go to her brother and her nearest male relative respectively."⁴⁰ With the exception of the limited new inheritance rights, the ethnic politics failed to legitimate the women's rights and the district council was very skeptical about gender equality albeit the presence of representative from the women. Thus, the MHT could no longer depend on the District council and the complexity of the ethnic political movement necessitated its inclination of leaving ethnic politics.

6.3 PATRIARCHAL IDEOLOGY IN THE INSURGENCY MOVEMENT (1966-1986).

The most striking commonality among the ethnic insurgent/conflict regions is the patriarchal dominance of society that assumes only masculine experience as “substantive and valid experience”.⁴¹ In the Mizo insurgency movement, the patriarchal political ideology of MNF did not only erase women’s agency from the official documents of Mizo history, “it also obfuscated the ideological possibility of redefining women’s role and status in the larger social context”.⁴² In such an overarching masculinist ideological framework women appeared only as the object to be saved from and the subject of negotiating discourses between the two patriarchal powers (i.e. ethnic /insurgent group and the nation-state). In the light of this observation, the present study seeks the foremost ethnic masculine structures and common bargaining patriarchal discourses that ultimately silenced the active presence of women from the dominant narratives on the history of MNF movement.

6.3.1 Masculine Politics and the Marginalization/Downfall of *Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Pawl* (MHT).

Since the initial period of its formation, the dominating ideology of masculinity in the MNF party consistently perceived women as secondary to men, erased their experiences, ignored their issues from the ethnic nationalist agenda and made the women’s efforts and contribution invalidated. In his recent work Sangkima has also related the formation of Mizo National Movement (MNF) and its outcome of the insurgency movement in 1966 as the main reason that made the *Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual* to lose its position in representing women in the society.⁴³ But he failed to mention the marginalization or erasure of women’s experiences by the dominating masculine ideology of new ethnic nationalism.

The first erasure of women from ethnic politics could be located back to the famine of 1959 that has been generally regarded as the background of Mizo ethnic insurgency movement. Given that insufficient relief measures from the Assam government infuriated the ethnic political

leaders, the new nationalist ideology had been generated around the famine,⁴⁴ which eventually created ideological contestation between the ethnic political parties particularly Mizo Union and the MNF party. At this critical stage, the MHT's intimacy with Mizo union party therefore brought an intricate position for the MHT in an ethnic politics and placed women's agency in vain before the eyes of a new ethnic patriarchy- i.e. the MNF party. When the critical condition of the agricultural and food production of the hills and its requirement of local agencies led to the formation of the two organizations, *Tam Do Pawl* (Anti-Famine Organization) and the Mizo National Famine Front (MNFF), the *Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual* (MHT) also organized relief works both in rural areas and towns. They distributed medicinal articles such as vitamins, ghee, rubber hot water bottles, enema syringes and rubber sheets to women and children.⁴⁵

However, the political situation brought the Mizo National Famine Front (MNFF) into forefront that was later converted as political party known as Mizo National Front (MNF) with an ethnic nationalist discourse partly framed from the line of political ideology behind the famine without acknowledging other local agencies. Consequently while the active works of *Tam Do Pawl* gradually lost due recognition, the entire contributions of the MHT were completely erased from the history of famine and it was Laldenga, the leaders of MNF party who received all the credits. Thus, the height of MHT's activity was indeed degraded when the Mizo union had lost its popularity and image alongside the reputation made by the MNF in the post-famine politics.

As noted earlier, the insurgency politics finally resulted to the removal of the MHT's interest from the ethnic politics. Nevertheless the MHT inconspicuously entered the movement as an indigenous agency in order to relieve a disturbed condition of the society. Given that economic hardships caused by the insurgents' revolt affected pregnant women and children resulted to an increasing rate of orphans, the MHT opened an orphanage at Aizawl in 1969.⁴⁶ While the new ethnic patriarchy always validated men's experiences, it also concealed and failed to recognize the above philanthropic contribution of MHT. Almost all the available historical accounts and essays on the history of famine and insurgency movement are conspicuously silent about the MHT and its contributing relief work against the famine calamity and insurgency movement.

By and large the failure to acknowledge the MHT consequently led to the marginalization of women, their opinions and their voices as well. Compared to the political movement of the independence period “the disease of gender blindness”⁴⁷ remained stronger amongst the MNF party leaders that provided no access for the women to voice their desire within the new Mizo ethnic nationalist discourse. The political ideology, agenda and motto of the MNF were framed only from the patriarchal perspective. Subsequently when the MNF declared an independence of Mizo hills from the Indian union on 5th March 1966, a memorandum demanding sovereign independence for Mizoram was submitted to the Government of India that was drafted and made only by 61 male signatories.⁴⁸ Accordingly, the ethnic politics had been increasingly moving towards masculine nationalism and the previous sensitizing women’s issue of the pre-independence movement was completely erased in the political ideology of the MNF.

6.3.2 Ethnic Patriotism; Invention of Femininity and Masculinity.

One of the foremost structures of Mizo insurgency movement was “the masculinization of the definition of nationalism and patriotism”⁴⁹ that had been historically, politically and culturally constituted. Thus to claim about the Mizo nation ethnic leaders needed a historical foundation of ethno-national identity that simultaneously called for the revival of ethnic consciousness from the patriotic task of ‘ethnic-heroes’ of the past. In due course, the ethnic leaders drew their patriotic inspiration from the traditional Mizo *Pasaltha* (brave men/warriors) such as *Zampuimanga*, *Chawngbawla*, *Taitesena*, *Vanapa*, *Saizahawla*, *Khuangchera*, *Lalphunga* and *Lamlira* whose names were later incorporated in the MNF standing troops as a symbol of ‘ethnic patriotism’.⁵⁰ However, not even a single woman’s name was included despite the fact that one of the bravest and also amongst the last standing Mizo Chiefs, who consciously resisted the foreign power (i.e. the British forces) in Lushai Hills was a female chief named Ropuiliani. The meaning of “ethnic patriotism” however did not include her, denied and erased women’s agency in the formation of the Mizo nation.

Initially when the ethnic leaders called for MNF volunteers in 1963, they did not seem to include women as it was formed only for the selected men from town areas. But after the news reached villages and rural areas, it was decided to cover all the people who were willing to join the movement.⁵¹ Gradually many young women registered their names and signed a similar oath of allegiance for the Mizo nations with their men folks to join the underground.⁵² Unlike the traditional times, the post colonial Mizo insurgent war in one hand alerted the need for a greater political participation of women outside the home. Since the concept of *Pasaltha* denoted the traditional notion of men's space and identity, the masculine aspect of patriotism firstly reinforced the meaning of Mizo femininity – “their subordination and relegation to the domestic sphere”.⁵³ Eventually the MNF military structure followed pre-colonial notion of masculine traditions with restrictive gender roles that placed women and men in an opposite and separate sphere i.e. “battlefields and sheltered fields”.⁵⁴ Women were largely confined to “sheltered fields”. While a few of women were employed for typing the party's official works, majority of them performed maternal roles such as looking after the wounded armies, cooking and washing the clothes of the armies.⁵⁵

An Ex- MNA, Lalrawnlana's narrative on his experiences during his early days of the movement in 1967 has clearly reflected the defined gender space within the masculine structure of the MNF insurgent groups:

“May be the leaders of the MNF did not think much of us when it came to warfare...I was indeed not very skilled when it came down to it. My position was mainly to act as the leader of the women and a guard. It wasn't a really difficult job as we were not made to handle any guns...being appointed the leader /guardian of the young women, hiding in the deepest parts of the forest seemed to be the safest option!....The young women were very easy to get along with; While I thought that being their leader was a good enough job for me, I was suddenly called for the position of the Army Headquarters' Guard Commander. Convincing myself that it was all part of my service for my country, I left behind my troop and started on my way”.⁵⁶

The above patriarchal narrative clearly shows the underestimated roles of the female volunteers from a masculine perception. Out of more than 70 volunteers, only a few women were seen as capable for combat and a medical sergeant Hrangzovi was the only woman volunteer who was sent to East Pakistan for the Non-Commission Officers' training for the method of guerrilla war in 1969.⁵⁷ Even in 1967, the two women volunteers Rebecki and Darnghilhlovi were selected for signal training in East Pakistan but they had to halt at Rangmati as women were rejected to go for the training. The ideology of hegemonic masculinity thus constituted "major barrier to their involvement in non-domestic political action such as guerrilla struggle".⁵⁸ It may also be argued that the masculine political ideology of the MNF party encouraged the women to join the movement "not as leaders, but as followers, not on their own terms, but on terms defined by the male leadership".⁵⁹

Given that the traditional concept of patriotism in war symbolized the physical superiority of men that held men to protect women, "women also derived their identities from feminine role and accepted patriarchal hierarchies for the sake of nationalism".⁶⁰ Thus many women subscribed and were subsumed under ethnic patriarchy as Hrangzovi an underground medical sergeant in East Pakistan also said, "Being the weaker sex, we often created burdens on our male counterpart. So, it was our duty to take care of them".⁶¹ At the same time Tinsangi another female medical sergeant was fully indoctrinated in a male defined structure of political hierarchy and contented at her role of giving medical assistance to the wounded armies and the protection that women received from men during the MNF insurgency wars in East Pakistan.⁶² Accordingly the gender defined roles of patriotism somehow persuaded women to remain in an unpatriotic action that led only men to acquire power over men and women in order to become 'ethnic heroic nationalists'. While incorporating and glorifying masculine action to the status of ethnic heroes and nationalists, the feminine roles were excluded and regarded as secondary within the ideology of ethnic patriotism.

It might also be argued that "ethnic patriotism" promoted the violent masculinity by justifying violent "barbaric" behaviour in the name of the nation's cause.⁶³ In this context it is tempting to challenge the 'ethnic nationalists' discourse' and the available literatures on insurgency movements. In the historiography of MNF insurgency movement 'ethnic nationalists'

discourse' by and large have focused and concentrated on the individual heroes to validate ethnic nationalism. The ideology of ethnic patriotism within this discourse was indeed drawn from the patriarchal experiences of elite group. This called for the glorification of either the diplomatic roles of the MNF leaders, ethnic patriarchal ideology of Mizo nationalism and the masculine action of the MNF army officers. For many years, diplomatic role of the ethnic leaders with their ideology on Mizo nationalism dominated 'ethnic nationalists' discourses' that commonly portrayed the image of ethnic-nationalists from an ethnic fatherly figure, which had subsequently portrayed Laldenga the president of MNF as the "Father of Mizo Nation".

In order to challenge such historical writing, few writers have been emerged with an idea of recollecting ethnic memories and recovering the history of Mizo insurgency "from below".⁶⁴ In the beginning such kinds of memoirs recollection are generally written in the form of biographical narrative, which merely "reflected the achievement and self-dedication of the MNF armies in their struggle for an independent Mizoram".⁶⁵ Without rethinking the gender defined space, biographical form of narratives have generally drawn the ideology of "ethnic patriotism" from the muscular form of patriotic action of the male volunteers/armies who died viciously in "battlefields". Simultaneously men were portrayed as the protectors of the "sheltered fields". To emphasize the meaning of patriotic identity, some writers gave patriotic symbols to some ethnic heroes. Instances can be taken from the works of C Zama who has symbolized Thangrehlova as *Chhim Keite* or Southern Leopard and Lalhleia as *Mi Huaisen* or an Ethnic Warrior.

In such a form of narrative, masculine action has been the paradigmatic instance of ethnic patriotism, which neither included the voices of women nor reflected the extent of female participation in the construction of ethnic patriotism.⁶⁶ Indeed such reconstructions of history in ethnic insurgency movement remained androcentric. While favouring masculine action and using man standards to measure the patriotic zeal of the Mizos, they failed to incorporate the feminine roles within the reconstruction of an ethnic ideology on *Mizo Pasaltha* or Mizo Warriors.⁶⁷ Feminine roles have been acknowledged only as mere duties and seldom honoured the achievement of the "sheltered fields" as patriotic action. Accordingly, women's agency has been erased from the construction of ethnic patriotic ideology. Majority of the narratives on "Ethnic warriors" have therefore reinforced the subjugation of feminine roles that reduced women to be

seen as –weaker sex- to be protected and the mothers, wives and sisters whose duty was to support the heroes. The narratives in which these roles were embedded are written primarily by men, for men, and about men that designed women only as supporting actors whose roles reflected masculine notions of femininity and of women’s proper place.⁶⁸ Despite the portrayal of women as being part of nationalism, patriotism was mainly reserved for men. Accordingly when both men and women died in their own spheres men died as warriors, whereas women died as victims.

The reinforcement of “ethnic masculinity” however does not mean that recent constructions of ethnic nationalism and patriotism have completely ignored women. Along with question of ‘Ethnic warrior’, an increasing ethnic consciousness eventually turned the writers’ focus on the appreciation of the “values of sacrifice, martyrdom and heroism” ⁶⁹of the marginalized group. In one hand, such form of historical writing has also revealed the possibility of integrating the supportive roles of both the non-combatant volunteers and the civilians into the construction of ethnic nationalism. A constricted space of women’s participation thus began to gain due recognition and has been restored within the discourses of ethnic patriotism. Nevertheless it is challenging to reread the conditions that made the new entry of women’s participation possible in the ethnic patriotic construction on nationalism.

Despite the improper records of the female participation during the encounters, the death of a woman volunteer Darhmingthangi seemed to be officially recorded in the available MNF documents.⁷⁰ From the case of Darhmingthangi, it is apparent that in certain conditions female participation was recognized in terms of their social status and relationship with men. It is recorded that Darhmingthangi, along with other six men volunteers including the MNF party General Secretary and Deputy Secretary was shot dead when the East Pakistani armies ambushed their boat near Rangamati on 2nd May 1971. ⁷¹ As the encounter was an important incident to signify the patriotic zeal of the MNF leaders and armies, it has been repeatedly narrated by the writers within the recent discourses on ethnic patriotism. A chance of incorporating the female participation within the construction of ethnic patriotism thus began to emerge. On the other hand if she was not a wife of Captain Lallawta (Commanding Officer of Saizahawla Battalion) she could have remained invisible together with her fellow women. Besides, her last word to the

MNF armies, “*Tang fan fan rawh u*”⁷² (“Don’t back down” or “Be resilient”) was never recognized as a patriotic word but merely as a supportive word to the ethnic heroic nationalists.

It is apparently observed that re-examining the sources of such historical reconstruction has revealed patriarchal and partial representation of marginalized sections of the MNF volunteers or sub-ordinate group of the society. Despite the recent purpose of recovering the lost history “from below”, the gender bias in the memoirs recollection has consigned the real women’s agency to remain invisible. The names of a few individual women have been short listed merely as ‘bargaining subjects’ against the ‘ethnic nationalists’ and their “discourses” and the nation- state as well. While the writing of “total history” has given a chance of expressing the roles and voices for the marginalized section of men, the voices of women still remained marginalized because of their sex. Compared to the feminine roles, the writers have always portrayed the masculine action as dominant and placed the women “more deeply in shadow”⁷³. Gradually the appearance of women’s real agency was prevented in the chapters of MNF insurgency movement.

6.3.3 Question of Victimization.

The most prominent outcome of an overarching masculinists ideological framework in ethnic insurgency movement was the transformation of a conflict into a form that can only be expressed through the use of violence.⁷⁴ Owing to the response of the Indian Government to the MNF through a brutal Armed Forces Power act the sub-ordinate group of the society i.e. innocent villagers and civilians became victims. Within this, women became the main target of suppression. They suffered as ethnic, mothers, wives, and as sisters, but most frequently they had been victimized because of their sex. Superficially women thus experienced war either as the direct victims of political violence or as indirect victims of physical violence, economic violence and cultural violence.⁷⁵ Despite the centrality of women, discourses or historical writings on insurgency movement therefore merely placed women in the stereotypical image of victims without exemplifying the real patriarchal political ideology behind the women victimization.

In the MNF insurgency movement, sexual violence or abuse was the most extensive document recorded on the victimization of women. In spite of the society's general observation that regarded women to be less threatened by the armed security forces, the official reports revealed that from the very outset of the movement, Indian Security forces used females' body as an insulting instrument, "a territory to be conquered"⁷⁶ or a symbol of asserting their supremacy over the Mizos. Women and young girls ostensibly appeared as the objects of the sexual violence and there was an increased in a number of Mizo women and young girls who had been sexually assaulted by the Indian security forces. They used the gang rape, molestation, harassment and killing of women etc "as weapons to physically, spiritually, emotionally and above all mentally scar them"⁷⁷ and thus suppressed the people. Women were violated in public spaces, in sacred spaces (Churches), or in their homes.⁷⁸

In her oral testimonies, a rape victim Lalthansangi recollected that she was sexually assaulted by five armies of Sikh regiment in 1966 throughout a day at her home. She then escaped through the window and ran into forest, crying for help and nobody heard her. She also saw her father being beaten and tortured by the armies, who succumbed to the injuries in the following day.⁷⁹ From the records of Assam Visiting Team in Mizo District from 30th March 1966 to 2nd April 1966 the army did not even spare the pregnant women. Standley D.D Nichols Roy, mentioned an incident where a pregnant woman from Kolasib who was raped five times and also two lady teachers who were raped in broad daylight by a group of Sikh Regiment, probably on 26th or 27th of March 1966.⁸⁰ In his official letter to Laldenga the President of MNF, Lalnunmawia, the Vice President also reported that the wife of Col. Ralliantawna, the MNF volunteer was gang raped by ten army personnel of the Sikh Regiment. Until the month of April, there had been a number of fifty cases.⁸¹

For the MNF volunteers, the incessant sexual violence on the Mizo women on the other hand motivated their ethnic patriotic zeal to fight for the Mizo nations. From the reminiscences and diaries of the participants, few writers have documented and reconstructed the ways in which the 'sexual victimization' against the women strengthened the notion of "ethnic patriotism". Instances can be taken from the incidence of the encounters between "Ch" Battation and the Mahratha Light Infantry (posted at Ruallung) on the 13th of March 1968; and between 'L' Battalion and the 9th Bihar Regiment on the 25th of April 1968 near the Security post at Ngopa

village. It is recorded that the intense brutal act of Major Deswal, Commander of Bihar Regiment and Major Pritam Singh Commander of Mahratha Light Infantry annoyed the residents of the surrounding villages of the Security Posts. Of all the cruel activities, the villagers extremely detested their violent behaviour against the women that later stimulated the Mizo armies to kill them.⁸² Regarding the case of Major Deswal it had been continuously reported that the commander frequently sent his forces to different villages of Ngopa circle to fetch him beautiful young girls and women and sent them back to their own villages after he brutally raped them.⁸³ The 'L' Battalion's and 'Ch' Battalion's⁸⁴ armies subsequently attacked these two regiments in which Mizo armies successfully won their goals by assassinating the two violent Indian Armies' Commanders.

In his diary on March 1968 Lt. Corporal Malsawma mentioned his enthusiastic zeal to assassinate Mr Deswal when he heard the miserable condition of a beautiful young girl who had been repetitively sent to him. To tear down this insulting weapon of the Indian armies he made a decision to take revenge for his womenfolk and for the Mizo nations and he wrote, "Even if our Commanders could not agree with me, I would definitely kill him".⁸⁵ When they had a meeting on the 19th of April 1968 the 'L' Battalion officers passed an order to send their armies for the assassination of Major Deswal with a resolution, "Owing to his brutal action against our womenfolk we passed a resolution to kill Major Deswal."⁸⁶ As Urvashi Butalia⁸⁷ has rightly argued in the context of communal conflict in India, hereto the honour of the community and of the Mizo nation was seen to inhere in the female bodies; the violation of their bodies therefore was tantamount to a violation of the body of the Mizo nation. However, from these incidents men overwhelmingly were seen as the perpetrators, while women suffered severe forms of violence.⁸⁸

As the female's body represented the site of a 'battleground' between the two patriarchies, women became the subjects of political discourses and were portrayed as 'victims' to be saved and protected from the violent patriarchal ideology and power battle. On the 21st March of 1966, S. Lianzuala, a Secretary of the MNF Publicity Department accordingly mentioned in the announcement letter of the (Provincial) Government of Mizoram:

“The Indian Army would mercilessly massacre the villages and torture the people brutally for the sake of pleasure...They would exploit the women and force themselves on them without any consideration of whether they were married or single women. These inhumane actions of theirs portray what little respect they must have for God. The kind of Government that has no respect or consideration for God or their fellow humans is the worst and most disgusting Government”.⁸⁹

Again in June 1966 he quoted in an MNF pamphlet:

“So far my knowledge goes only in North Mizo District, the Indian Army burnt down 21 villages and gutted 2133 houses, they raped 54 women, out of which 2 adult women and a minor girl died due to excessive copulation by a number of soldiers...They cursed those bewildered women and children saying that, “We do not care if you all die, we don’t need you, what we want is our land”. They treated the innocent Mizo people with fearsome manners and as cruel as possible”.⁹⁰

Throughout the debates and discussions of the Assam Legislative Assembly the rape of women had been used as one of the symbols to make it clear that Government did not regard the Mizos as citizens of India. On the 5th of April, 1966, when Standley D.D Nichols Roy, a Khasi MLA of Assam Assembly moved the motion of the Mizo Insurgency problem from the records of the visiting team before the Assam Legislative Assembly, he said:

“The most inhuman act, the act of raping of defenseless women by the Army personnel, even a girl of 14 or 15 was raped. We are shocked to learn these things. I am ashamed, Sir, that this was not done as a stray case by some body, in the middle of the night, one or two here and there as might be expected, but even in open broad daylight these things took place. Sir, these raping are taking place, at night and at day time and at all times. This is the greatest fear of the people particularly of the women, the taking out of their husbands and uncles at gun-point out in the ground and raping the women at their respective home...”⁹¹

Regarding the conflict situation in Mizo District, the two ethnic leaders repeatedly mentioned the issue of 'sexual victimization' to signify ethnic political ideology of the MNF party and to condemn the negligent Government of India that simultaneously declared India as the most exploitative Government. In an announcement letter of the (provincial) Government of Mizoram on 21st March 1966, S. Lianzuala therefore concluded:

“Although the Indian Government has tried its level best to cover up its wrongdoings and injustice towards the Mizo nation and her people, the world cannot but come to realize the truth. This corrupt and manipulative government will eventually be condemned by the world. A government that forcefully oppresses people less fortunate than themselves will be overthrown someday, for freedom is a birthright that has been granted by God to everyone”.⁹²

In spite of all these, the Indian Government always determined to conceal the misbehaviour of the Security Forces. B.P Chaliha the Chief Minister of Assam also believed that the security forces created a sense of confidence amongst the people. In his public speech at Aizawl on the 14th of May 1966, he firmly stated that the security forces would remain in the district unless the MNF were liquidated and until a complete normalcy was restored in the district.⁹³ On 15th August 1966, when R. Natarajan a Deputy Commissioner of Mizo District had a peace talk in the celebration of India's Independence Day, he then blamed the MNF for the suffering of innocent civilians in the violent situation. Yet he overlooked the sexual abuse that the Mizo women suffered from the Indian armies.⁹⁴ In the meeting of Assam Legislative Assembly on 5th April 1966 Nichols Roy had already contested the ignorance of the Government and mentioned that the Deputy Commissioner of Assam did not pay attention to the official reports on several statements and failed to take actions against the misuse of the Armed Forces Act.⁹⁵

The sufferings of the innocent civilians eventually reached the ears of Central authorities. In his letter to A. N Kidwai, Chief Secretary of Assam on the 25th of September, 1966, Prime Minister's Secretary K. Natwar Singh wrote;

“...Contrary to their expectation, the Security forces surprise them by ruthlessly driving all the male adults to one place, beat them up and threaten them to death. Sometimes inflicting severe hurt, resulting in even stray cases of death and often incapacitating persons from work and burning of their houses...”⁹⁶

In response to this letter, the state government of Assam suggested:

“...We are therefore anxiously waiting for your helping hands to deliver us from this realm of misery where we are simply watching the arrest, beating, force labours without wages, killing, kidnapping and torture that our own loyal friends and brothers are painfully suffering”.⁹⁷

Despite the concerning efforts to save the innocent civilians, “the disease of gender blindness” prevented the Government Authorities to accept the reports on the sexual violence against the Mizo women committed by the Indian security forces. The aforementioned letters also reveal that, while the Indian government regarded and recognized the sufferings of Mizo men, it neither regarded the Mizo women as the Indian citizens nor intended to take action against the sexual torturing.

Another bargaining aspect of sexual violence relates to negotiating discourses on the Peace settlement. Given that the church felt the need to bring mutual understanding between the MNF and the Security forces the Church leaders were intervened in the movement since the formation of Aizawl Citizen’s Committee on the 13th of March 1966 and the Christian Peace Committee on the 14th of July 1966. Like the aforesaid political discourses, the sufferings of innocent civilians had frequently been mentioned throughout the peace process. Rev. Lalngurauva Ralte, the founder of Aizawl Citizen’s Committee and one of the leaders of Christian Peace Committee has stated, “Of all the sufferings of innocent civilians, it was painful to hear about the sexual torturing of women. To prevent these violent actions it was indispensable to restore peace and security for the innocent victims”.⁹⁸ Though, not officially included in the agenda of the peace resolution, the peace committee members and the MNF

members alternately used the sexual violation of the Mizo women to symbolize the sufferings of the innocent civilians.

From the ground of Christianity, the Church leaders blamed the prevalent atrocities. For the sake of innocent victims Rev. Zairema, one of the members of the Peace committee wrote a letter to Laldenga, President of the MNF on 6th September 1966. In this letter the President was requested to withdraw violent political strategies of the MNF as the Peace Committee related the sufferings of innocent men, women and children to the responsibilities of MNF. The letter on the other hand did not specifically mention about the raping of Mizo women by the Indian Security Forces.⁹⁹ However, when a meeting was held on issues of the peace settlement on 3rd November 1966, Laldenga the President of the MNF strongly challenged the Church's protesting statement against violent action of the MNF. He then chalked out some points that illustrated the ignorant attitude of the Indian Government and the brutal behaviour of the Security forces including the raping of Mizo women by the Indian security forces, which had always been hidden by the Indian Government.¹⁰⁰

Eventually when the three members of the Peace Committee, Rev Lalngurauva, Rev. Zairema and Rev H. S Luaia met Y.B Chavan, the Union Home Minister in Delhi on the 13th of May 1967 for a peace talk, the question on the women's suffering was used to justify the violent situation. To show his reluctant attitude of withdrawing the Indian Security Forces from Mizo District the Home Minister said "If my son misbehaves, I should reprimand him. I would even hit him if necessary". In response to his adverse reaction Rev. H.S Luaia then replied, "Would you hit your daughter because of a son who misbehaves?"¹⁰¹ Though the main agenda did not include in the peace resolution, the 'question of victimization' was repeatedly use to settle the conflict between the two patriarchies where sexual violence of women was the central subjects.

Until the peace settlement, Mizo insurgency movement had been a war of power contestation between the two patriarchies (i.e. ethnic leaders and nation state i.e.Indian Government). Initially in order to counteract the Indian government and to justify their own position the ethnic leaders carried out the ethnic question on the raping of Mizo women. This compelled them to stand firm in their own political ideology. In due course the gradual

inclination of the MNF leaders for the Peace talk with a tendency of settling new political powers erased the question of women's victimization from the ethnic political discourses. With the diplomatic understanding of powers, a peace accord was finally signed between the MNF and the Indian Government on the 30th of June 1986.

The real meaning of female subjectivity in the 'discourses of victimization' was revealed with the declaration of the Peace Resolution and memorandum of settlement dominated by the new patriarchal ideology. The ethnic patriarchal power and male political hierarchy was reinforced amongst the elite group of MNF leaders, which placed the President of the MNF Laldenga as the Chief Minister of a new state and other leaders to enjoy new political power.¹⁰² The peace memorandum indeed showed the Government's concern to the marginalized section by agreeing the payment of ex-gratia grant to the insurgent victims' family; yet it disregarded the previous ethnic interest on female victimization and no compensation was officially mentioned for women, the passive victims of sexual violence.¹⁰³

Throughout the movement, questions on the sexual sufferings of women were represented by the Peace Committee members (dominated by an elite group of men) and the ethnic leaders before the Indian Government. Given that women had a constricted space to voice their experiences, 'the real voices of women couldn't be heard or read through such discourses of an elite group of men'.¹⁰⁴ In her oral testimonies, Lalthansangi a rape victim of the Indian security forces in 1966 said that she never wanted to share her experience with anyone including her husband. She preferred to remain silent as it was shameful for her to talk about her sexual sufferings before the community.¹⁰⁵ Accordingly recovering the real voices of passive victims of violent patriarchies has been a difficult task as ethnic patriarchal codes of moral conduct silenced the women's voices. Nevertheless, the official documents and the recent historical writings of Mizo insurgency have included the issues of rape only to demonstrate the sacrifices that the Mizo nation made for a nationalist cause, while the actual victims remained "faceless and voiceless". Moreover it may be argued that women emerged in a limited space of ethnic politics but only as a bargaining instrument for the restoration of ethnic patriarchal power.

6.4 HISTORY FROM BELOW: RECOVERING WOMEN'S AGENCY.

Owing to the dominance of ethnic elitists group that was patriarchal in ideology and masculine in action, there has been an incomplete historical documentation on ethnic nationalism and insurgency. Despite the challenging recent historical writings against ethnic elites' history, a "total history" of Mizo insurgency movement has not yet been achieved due to the absence of the real agency of women. Women were described as "also there",¹⁰⁶ however, their participation was seldom considered as an essential role in the history of insurgency movement. Given that the female subjectivity in such writings merely related to the question of victimization, women had a constricted space to emerge as conscious agents.

To challenge these partial historical writings and documentation, a further excavation is needed to recover the hidden agency of women that remain largely untouched. By considering the interaction between conventional history and alternative sources the present study attempts to recover women's agency including- consciousness, aspiration, assertion and resistance from the shared experiences of different social class of women such as MNF volunteers, Government employees, wives of the MNF leaders and civilians (particularly rural women) From an unpublished autobiography, written memoirs and reminisces (that were recently published in newspapers), oral interviews of the participants and lastly critical examination of government documents, the present study uses women's personal narratives as an alternative form of reading insurgency.

6.4.1 'Ethnic Nationalist Thought' and Women.

At the outset, the ideology of Mizo nationalism was drawn from the construction of the MNF elite group who invented the new political, religious, economic and territorial aspiration of the Mizos for their own political interest. By representing themselves as political agency of the Mizo nations, they repeatedly brought forward this ethnic patriarchal ideology on Mizo nationalism to the Indian Government and declared independence for the Mizo nation on 1st March 1966. Nonetheless, as mentioned earlier, either as an individual or as a group, a woman could not appear agent to the construction of Mizo nationalist thought. Their voices and

aspirations were neither recognized nor incorporated in the ethnic political ideology on Mizo nationalism and women seemingly had no political agency. However, women who were repeatedly described in the history of nationalist movement as being “also there” and “victims” of violent ideology and action also had a distinct and common perspective with men on Mizo nationalism. Moreover, they indeed experienced the movement as women, as ethnic and as victims. In conjecture with conventional sources, women’s nationalist thought needs to be analyzed for the completion of the meaning of Mizo nationalism. Though these women were different in their social class, the fragmented narratives and reminiscences of individual women shared some commonalities in the construction of Mizo nationalism, as there is no privileged narrative of the Nation, to borrow Homi Baba’s words.¹⁰⁷

In her thesis titled “Mizo women’s response to forced migration during the Mizo insurgency movement”, Denise Adele Segor has illustrated the shared definition of Mizo nations from the perspectives of the rural women, “The women’s characterizations of themselves as Mizos, in contrast to outsiders, speak to their understanding of themselves as a distinct culture—a bedrock nation which always has been and always will be. In describing their relationships, they spoke to their sense of solidarity, common culture, historically common territory, and national consciousness as a fourth world/ bedrock nation”.¹⁰⁸ By imagining Mizos as others to the Indian nation, they (particularly the women volunteers) agreed with their male counterpart by distinguishing cultural and religious entity to identify the ethnic nations. While agreeing with this patriarchal ideology, in the world view of the women only three nations seemed to exist i.e. Mizo, *Vai* (Indians) and *Sap* (White people) and viewed the two later nations as ‘others’ from the Mizo nation.

The oral testimonies have illustrated that the women acquiescently subscribed ethnic patriarchal ideology on Mizo nationhood. However, in the cases of women’s participants different reasons were attributed to their consciousness, which reveal that women were not mere supporters of male-constructed ideology. Due to the gendered divide between public and private that characterized ethnic national structure, the contribution and narratives of women were ignored into the public formation of the Mizo nation. However the gendered divided spaces had given limited chance for domestic space to emerge as an important site for the construction of

nationalist thought. Being confined within the domestic space the women attributed family as a place where they learnt the spirit of nationalism and the meaning of Mizo nation. In contrast to the MNF leaders, who laid their interest mainly on the political entity with territorial integration, the women therefore privileged family- “Our family was deeply influenced by the independent movement, and then I joined the movement” was a common testimony shared by almost all the women volunteers. Denise Seagor has also located family politics as the most immediate and important political site in which women played the role of political agent.¹⁰⁹ Thus, the woman’s role as a nation builder emerged within the domestic sphere. When she narrated her experiences in the MNF insurgency movement, Rebecki has recollected that even before the MNF emerged she was already conscious of Mizo nationalism and it was her mother who prepared her to become an ethnic nationalist as she recounted:

“My mother sowed the seeds of nationalism in our hearts ever since we were children. She even pronounced 15th August as a day of mourning and would start crying from the night before saying, "This is the day we Mizos were forced into slavery". My father would often scold her but to no avail. These incidents left a deep impact on me so much so that serving my nation became the biggest thing on my mind since I was in 4th class. So I joined the movement in 1966”.¹¹⁰

At the same time, Tinsangi also shared that being the government employee she was suspected as assisting the MNF armies and the Indian armies had been searching for her. Finally she volunteered herself as a nurse as her mother persistently encouraged her to enter the insurgent field for the Mizo nation.¹¹¹ Despite her keen desire for participating in the freedom struggle, B. Vanlalzari could not join the insurgent groups as she had to look after her mother and her family, however she later credited her mother for her constant encouragement. It was the words of her mother, “I have never been ashamed of being your mother just because you have been imprisoned for defending your nation”,¹¹² which strengthened her to tolerate everything for the nations during her arrest as a political prisoner from January 1975 to December 1980.

Another aspect of women’s struggle for Mizo nations can be associated with the fifth point of MNF’s ethnic ideology that was declared on 1st March 1966: “They (Indian officers)

have established a multitude of offices and sent hitherto swarms of Indian officers, who lead immoral life cruelly appealing our womenfolk to commit immorality with them by taking advantages of their official capacity and of the position they occupy in the administrative machinery”.¹¹³ This framework of patriarchal ideology simultaneously addressed women either as the victims of repressive patriarchal action of the nation state or the custodians of Mizo cultural identity within the question of assimilation.

Despite their marginalizing voices in the MNF political ideology, some of the women participants expressed their conscious zeal for the cause of resistance against the oppressive patriarchal nature of the nation-state through their memoirs and reminiscences. The oral testimonies of Chawngpari and Lalthansangi have exemplified that several women joined the underground in order escape from the abuse they had felt. Nevertheless the present study apparently observes that regarding their body as a territory of the nation these women joined the movement for the cause of protecting the boundaries of Mizo nation from the repressive action of nation-state. When she recollected her experiences, Chawngpari has stated:

“As the officers of the 11th Gurkha Regiment got settled and familiarized themselves to their surroundings, they would organize parties at night where they would invite the young Mizo women that they fancied. Even I often got asked to attend their parties, but I would always decline because I felt as a Mizo woman and as a Christian it was below my dignity to serve as an object pleasure for these *Vai* (Indian or Non Mizo) officers. Since we felt that further harm would come to our family, I decided that it was best to leave the village to join the MNF”.¹¹⁴

In her oral testimonies of her experience as a volunteer Lalthansangi has also recalled, “Rather than seeking the further means of protection, I chose to join the undergrounds for my motherland in 1967...and I always decided that I would rather die for my nation than being abused or raped by the Indian armies”.¹¹⁵ Combined with the feelings of nationalism their experiences as victims simultaneously strengthened their sense of injustice power of the mainstream patriarchy and resistance against *Vai* that later engendered them to support MNF nationalist ideology

Though these women seemingly had assorted different reasons to support MNF ideology, they ostensibly shared “for the love of Mizo nation” as their foremost nationalist thought, which motivated them to stand still and support the movement. Even after they joined the undergrounds, they could tolerate all the hardship along with their men folk. When she recollected her underground experience in East Pakistan from 1967 to 1971, C. Lalthlamuani, the only woman posted as a Deputy Secretary of the MNF Government also said, “After a week of having had any proper food, it was starting to get difficult to walk straight but we would never succumb. Instead we kept telling ourselves that it was all for our motherland”.¹¹⁶

While asserting Christianity as parts of the Mizo’s identity they all shared “Fighting for God and the Motherland” as the foremost inspiration to achieve their aspiration. For example Tinsangi recalled that she had been consciously sharpened with the words, “The name of Jesus be glorified in all of Mizoram” throughout her underground experiences from 1966 to 1972.¹¹⁷ Like their fellow men their aspiration for Mizo nationalism also ended with the secession of Mizoram from the dominance of the Indian Government. An instance in this context was Nikhumi’s response to an Indian army officer who threatened her to give up her nationalist zeal for an uncertain demand of achieving independence during her arrest in 1968, as she replied, “If even the Indians could achieve an independent government from the British, why couldn’t we?”

118

6.4.2 Reallocation of Gender Roles.

Regarding the women’s participation R. Zamawia, a Secretary of the Ministry of Defence during the Provincial Government of Mizoram said, “As the Mizo society had been functioning as a family, which required the participation of both men and women, the MNF underground movement would have been incomplete without the presence of women”.¹¹⁹ This perception has reflected the requirement of women’s agency for the survival of ethnic patriarchal power. The reminisces of women volunteers have evidently demonstrated that there was a great demand of the women’s labour from the MNF party as most of the women volunteers recollected that they received frequent invitation from the male volunteers. Before they joined the movement, most of

the women volunteers shared that they secretly helped the volunteers by providing them with food and shelter and by acting as messengers.

Though the roles of women volunteers had been confined within domestic chores, it is indeed apparent that while subscribing male hegemonic role, “except for some biological differences, they (women) felt as capable as men”,¹²⁰ and were also competent to enter “battle fields”. A female sergeant Hrangzovi said that she participated as a combatant in a conflict between the Burma armies and the MNF armies near the border of Burma in 1968 and even shared her capability of fighting in combats by injuring some of their opponents.¹²¹ A Company Medical in charge Vanlalringa also recalled that when he accompanied the women volunteer towards East Pakistan in 1968 that Rebecki, C. Lalthlamuani and Thanhurangi were very capable of playing the masculine roles and were dressed with the army uniforms. While Rebecki held a sten gun, each of them was carrying a dagger. Vanlalringa has again stated, “Though they were women, it never showed that they were weaker sex.”¹²²

The oral recollections of women’s experiences reveal that due to the defined gender space, gender roles were often reallocated and women could acquire chances for playing the role of protectors (regarded as masculine role) heroically in their own space. Knowing that it was her duty to protect her fellow men, one late night in 1967 a female volunteer Lalrinsangi protected C. Zama one of the MNF armies from the Indian armies and escorted him to the jungle. Later, she used to supply some medicine when they hid him in a cave in Muthi village. When she recounted her experience, Lalrinsangi said that even the young ladies never felt scared as they always felt that those were all did only for the sake of the nation.¹²³

In an encounter between the 18th Assam Rifles and “Ch” Battalion Company at Ruallung village on 4th November 1967, a woman volunteer Rangthuami was shot dead by the Assam Rifles.¹²⁴ Though, not officially recorded, it has been orally stated that in her attempt to protect her ill brother from the Assam rifles who tried to shoot him, the armies shot off Rangthuami when the armies raided the house to trace the possessions of the MNF armies.¹²⁵ On the same evening, a civilian Lalliana was also shot dead by the Assam Rifles on his way back from Jhum. Saillianpuui the widow of Lalliana has testified that the armies again created nuisances at her

house and tried to kill the villagers who came to console her. She stood against the armies and urged, “Why would you kill the innocent civilians?” The armies then put down their guns and left the place.¹²⁶

On 23rd May 1979 a conflict broke out between the Mizo prisoners (both criminal and political prisoners) and the CRPF. While 55 Mizo prisoners were wounded, 1 MRP constable and 4 CRPFs died on the spot. When the wounded victims were shifted to the hospital, the 55 Mizo prisoners were kept in a general ward without ventilating the room. Even the hospital staffs, including nurses and doctors were not allowed to enter the room. One of the staff nurses K. Thansiami resisted this oppressive action of the nation state and when the CRPF stopped her from entering the room, she reacted and blamed the CRPF for abusing the law. The Commander gave an order to shoot at her, she then replied, “You can injure me with you bullets if you want, I am not the least bit scared. Is it your aim to kill off all of the injured?” She then valiantly entered and opened all the windows of the room.¹²⁷ J. Lalhmuliana, one of wounded MNF volunteers also recollected that all of them could survive only because of K. Thansiami and they were very proud to have such a brave young woman.¹²⁸ The women’s oral representations of the past therefore reveal that women also zealously played their defined roles within their limited space. However, the ethnic patriarchal hegemonic ideology seldom incorporated those experiences within the construction of ‘ethnic nationalism’ and “ethnic patriotism”.

6.4.3 Prison -A Site of Women’s Ethnic Political Experiences.

Besides sexual torturing, the confinement of women within the four walls of prison forms another important aspect of the study of women’s experiences. At the foremost prison emerged as an important site for utilizing the oppressive power and repressive ideology of the nation-state over the ethnic nations. As such, the imprisonment of women had and has frequently been used as one of the victimizing subjects to counter the violent nature of the nation-state by the ethnic patriarchy. Albeit the emerging interest on the recovery of women’s experiences in prison, the ethnic male hegemonic ideology have seldom recuperated the real voices of women. Therefore they failed to recover the real agency of women in the freedom struggle. While addressing the patriarchal violent nature of the nation-state, recoveries of the women’s prison memories through

their oral testimonies, biographical and autobiographical accounts however dispelled both the nation state and ethnic patriarchal “stereotypes about women as subordinate, weak and docile”.¹²⁹

As soon as the nation state applied the Armed Forces Power Act of 1958, both women and men became the targets of the nation state and the Indian armies had always been searching for the volunteers, threatening their relatives and villages. They arrested the suspected volunteers and a number of non-volunteered civilians who had been suspected as having connection with the MNF volunteers with one way or the other. Even if the armies could not arrest the volunteers, particularly the ethnic leaders they instead arrested their wives and relatives. Between 1966-1970's a number of women from different social classes- Government employees and civilians suspected as MNF supporters, MNF volunteers and wives of the volunteers were sent to different jails at Aizawl, Silchar, Nowgong, Jorhat, Haribagh and Tejpur. Thus, the women of different aged groups including small children and infants who accompanied their mothers were forced to enter jails. The duration of their imprisonment ranged from a week to 5 years. Prison became a site where women experienced and sharpened the “feelings of pride, resentment, honour, humiliation” and victimization as well, which somehow proved that women often shared “common experiences with their fellow men in the public sphere”.¹³⁰ Women's ethnic political experiences in prisons can be classified in two categories; the prison as a site of female victimization and as Saruchi Thapar has termed in her study of gender and colonial jail – “a site of female community and resistance”.¹³¹

Though a few numbers of volunteers were politically convicted in most of the cases women were arrested without appropriate reason. At the beginning almost all of them particularly the wives of ethnic leaders have recalled that they entered the prisons with silent questions on the ground of their arrests. Zachhingi the wife of Zailiana, a Commissioner and Sikulthangi the wife of Sainghaka, Home Minister of the MNF recalled the same memories that the armies arrested them in the month of April 1966 when they were on their way to shift to another village. Until their release they could not find any reasons behind their arrest, except that they were the wives of the MNF officials.¹³² In the month of May 1967 Thangrikhumi, Kapkimi and Mawii the wives of other ethnic leaders were ordered from Aizawl Police Station to meet the

Bawrhsap (a District Commissioner). However instead of sending them to the office of *Bawrhsap* they were detained in lock up for a night and separated the next day. While Kapkimi and Mawii were confined in Aizawl Jail, Thangrikhumi a pregnant woman was sent to Silchar jail with another arrested young lady Hmangaihi.¹³³

The conspicuous recollection of the imprisoned women was indeed their memories of traumatic lives during their confinement. Though some of them were not undeviatingly tortured, the nation state used prison as a site to threaten the ethnic women by boasting the act of violent power. Recounting her painful experience, B. Thanpuii who was a young lady of 14 yrs old during her imprisonment said:

“It was a terrible ordeal to have to go through to see the young Mizo men being beaten, kicked and hit mercilessly by the Indian armies. I could not bear to watch so with tears streaming down my face I kept my eyes on the ground. I saw that my friends did the same thing when I looked over to their side. But the soldiers took us by our hairs and forced us to look up and watch the young men being tortured saying, ‘Look at your MNF leaders being tortured or else we’ll do the same to you’”.¹³⁴

When they recounted their prisons experiences, all the women shared the negligence of jail authorities regarding the inappropriate supply of food, medicine and the dispassion of sanitation and hygienic condition of prison rooms. The situation was observably more complicated for the wives of ethnic leaders due to the nation state’s negligence about the health of their children and infant babies. Sikulthangi has recalled:

“When we were in Aizawl jail the authorities provided only three blankets for the five inmates. The lack of proper food and sanitation affected our health for breast feeding, Zachhingi’s daughter who was only 9 months old used to cry the whole night. After the two weeks of our confinement in Aizawl jail, we were shifted to Silchar. When we reached Vairengte the armies threw away all the food we received from the villagers”.¹³⁵

What made the situation more difficult was the improper classification of prisoners as Zachhingi has also recollected:

“In Silchar jail, we were confined in a small dark room with other inmates. We hardly had proper sleep as we had to protect our children from other inmates particularly those who had the problem of NCL (Non Criminal Lunatic)”.¹³⁶

Additionally the pregnant women had to struggle with more complex situations and their experiences reveal the negligence of the nation state's concern on the health problems of women prisoners. When she was 7 months pregnant Thangrikhumi the wife of Lalkhawliana, Finance Minister of the MNF party had been shifted three times from Silchar to Haribagh jail, then to Nowgong and Shillong jail. While getting permission to be admitted in Nazareth hospital in the month of August 1967, she got an order to return to a small cell within a week of her delivery in Shillong jail.¹³⁷ At the same time Zokhumi, the wife of Ngurkunga Minister of Information and Publicity of the MNF party also had a painful experience on 25th December 1967 in Jorhat jail when and where she had to hold her one year and nine months old son while she was in labour with the help of another pregnant inmate K Thansiami.¹³⁸ Amongst the pregnant women Neihthangi a female warder of Aizawl Jail seemed to suffer most as she was tortured by the electric current on 15th July 1975.¹³⁹

Compared to the wives of the ethnic leaders, the nation state was more oppressive to the women who were suspected as volunteers and supporters of the MNF as in the case of B. Vanlalzari who was imprisoned for almost six years. When she was arrested in January 1975, B. Vanlalzari was working as a typist in the Inspector General of Police (IGP) office at Aizawl. She was arrested with the suspected involvement in the murdering of G. S. Arya the Inspector General of Police, B. Sewa the Deputy Inspector General of Police and K. Panchapakasen, the Superintendent of Police in the office chamber of the Inspector General of Office (IGP) on 13th January 1975. Besides, she was also accused of betraying the nation state and concealing the truth about the MNF etc and was convicted for life imprisonment for committing offences with other three male volunteers- Zoramthanga, Kapkima and Kapchhunga.¹⁴⁰ After more than a year of her confinement in a darkroom at Aizawl Jail, she was imprisoned in Tejpur jail for four years

and had been handcuffed for two years. Unlike other women prisoners, she had been separately confined in a small and dark room. In her written memoirs of the second day of her confinement at Mt. Brigade, the post of 9th Jak Battalion in Aizawl on 26th January 1975 B. Vanlalzari recounted:

“They ordered me to remove my shawl then they told me to remove my sweater which I did. Finally they told me to take off my clothes, they harshly put my hands behind my back before I could even finish saying ‘I don’t want to’. They covered my whole face with a wet towel and started pouring water on me. I started to gag and it was very difficult to breathe....Later, that day I wasn’t allowed to be given any food”.¹⁴¹

She continued to narrate her sufferings on the 27th January 1975,

“Blood started pouring of my mouth since I was constantly hit on my face. The captain would keep wiping the blood from my mouth but I never even tried to wipe it myself nor did I even flinch whether I fell or not. And not even once did I even take my eyes off his face”.¹⁴²

In her oral reminisces she also stated that it was mostly the army officers who tortured her while she was in jail and every time she would fall ill the doctors would dismiss it as a mere excuses she cooked up because of her desire to go home.¹⁴³

Women’s recollections of their prison memories evidently prove that the nation-state reinforced the oppressive patriarchal power over the ethnic nation through the ethnic women in prison. In one hand it emerged as Mary Jane Treacy remarks, “a site of battle for political control where authorities and prisoners were engaged in struggles to get or hide information”¹⁴⁴ about their knowledge on the movements of the MNF volunteers. Speaking about the first night of her confinement on 25th January 1975 B. Vanlalzari stated that the army officers started interrogation to reveal the “truth” of her involvement in ethnic politics and more information about other accused volunteers Kapkima and Kapchhunga, and to confirm the identity of the pictures of the four unknown persons. If she could not give the right answers, her words “I don’t know” was

then generally followed by physical assault.¹⁴⁵ Thus the tiny cells of prison became “stages”¹⁴⁶ of interrogation where a woman had to sharpen her mind against the loss of control over her voice. B. Vanlalzari again said, “My biggest fear during that time was that somebody would get tortured or beaten up because of something that I had said or done”.¹⁴⁷

In the cases of the wives and relatives of ethnic leaders and suspected women volunteer the nation state was keen to harass them in reprisal of the ethnic patriarchy. They were often verbally abused by the jail authorities who had constantly been threatening them to give information about the whereabouts of their husbands. Zachhingi recalled, “Although the armies repeatedly said, ‘you will be released only when you devolve your husbands in our hands’, we always replied them that we didn’t know where our husbands were”.¹⁴⁸ In their attempts to protect the men folk women mostly refused to produce the right answers. At the same time they generally did not merely refuse to reveal the “truth” as many of them had little knowledge to give. Nikhumi a female clerk at Headquarter office of the MNF recalled that her detention in quarter guard at Sateek village was the worst experience as she was persistently interrogated and threatened to reveal the truth about the MNF. She also noted that since she was arrested shortly after she joined the MNF she had no knowledge to give the detail information about the underground administration in the jungle.¹⁴⁹ Recollecting about the prison interrogation both Zachhingi and Sikulthangi stated that their husbands seldom shared with them their whereabouts and the MNF political ideology.¹⁵⁰

Despite the women’s attempt to control their voices it was the nation state that had more advantages in winning over the battle by interpreting the victims’ confessional statement. Given the nation state’s power that was reinforced through physical assault and intimidation women were made to speak against themselves. In the month of July 1975 B. Vanlalzari noted that she was threatened to be killed and intimidated to give her confessional statement before the magistrate as stated by the officers. Thus when she was brought before the magistrate the authorities did not give her a chance of speaking. It was a police officer named Punetha who gave and interpreted her statement, which was therefore officially recorded by the Magistrate.¹⁵¹ As Graziano Frank has noted in the context of Latin America, the words of women were

“appropriated and translated into the power that destroyed them...Whatever response the victims managed to articulate was subordinated before it was uttered”.¹⁵²

To supplement the said sufferings, the authorities enforced strict rules and regulations that made the prison as a site of sorrow and separation from the family. Thus, the women prisoners similarly experienced the confined lives in the small cells of prison and had restricted contact with the outside world. In most of the jails they were not allowed to read or write, but had limited access to receive letters from their family. For many of them, Prison therefore became a site of bereavement. Zachhingi and Sikulthangi shared their sorrowful experience in Nowgong Jail on the 3rd May of 1968, when they opened a telegram from Mizoram with a hope of receiving their release order, they unfortunately heard about the death of Zailiana, the husband of Zachhingi.¹⁵³ In Silchar jail B. Thanpuii a young lady also received the information that her father Biaksanga was shot dead by the Indian armies in the same year.¹⁵⁴

Even though imprisonment created for them a new site of suffering, women prisoners emerged as “determined individuals in their own right, with a strong nationalist consciousness”.¹⁵⁵ Locating all her sufferings for the sake of the Mizo nation, B. Vanlalzari sates, “Today I can say without a doubt that despite all the pain and sufferings that I had to go through, not a single one of those memories have left me emotionally scarred”.¹⁵⁶ Recollecting her nationalist zeal Sikulthangi also said that when a letter from her husband in Tihar Jail, which encouraged her to remain strong for a minimum of twenty years of imprisonment reached her in Shillong jail, she already had made up her mind to meet further afflictions and always felt that her sufferings in jail was her only gift for the Mizo nation.¹⁵⁷

Thus the victimizing tools of the nation state evidently became a challenging indicator that strengthened women’s feelings of pride and honour before the nation state. In the memoirs of her imprisoned experiences B. Vanlalzari proudly mentions:

“I often heard the sounds of these words, ‘She is a patriot, she is a brave girl’ from the Commanding Officers. In the month of February 1975 when he gave an order to the jail staffs in Aizawl jail the Guard Commander said, ‘This woman is not only clever, but also

bold and very experienced, so make sure you chain her hands and feet. Also make sure to erect at least 1 ½ inches of wooden bar at the windows or else she might take your guns from you and shoot you all', Never in my lifetime have I met anyone who's shown that much admiration for me, I could not even think about the danger ahead of me, I just kept smiling to myself".¹⁵⁸

To sum up her feelings of five years imprisonment she recollects,

"It's such a wonder looking back at how scared they were of me! I was cuffed and tied up even inside the court house. It was difficult to part with my precious cuff. It had become so much a part of me and I could even see my reflection just as clearly as I would in a mirror".¹⁵⁹

Within the dehumanizing structures, a new form of both individual and collective resistance therefore simultaneously emerged in prisons. Due to the defined gender space that limited the chances for expressing their feelings; the victimizing experiences therefore sharpened the women's resistant attitude and created a new site of resistance against the nation state according to their shared political beliefs in prison. In order to protect the dignity of their fellow men and prestige of the Mizo nation they often verbally reacted against the offending words of the army officers and jail authorities. For instance Zachhingi recollects, "When we were detained in Aizawl jail the captain of the Assam Rifles pointed at the burned buildings of Aizawl Market and told me that it was burned down by the party of our husbands. He then angrily smacked the table when I replied to him that it was not done by our husbands".¹⁶⁰ Recalling her argument with the authorities of Aizawl jail in 1975, B. Vanlalzari states:

"The main reason for our argument was because of how they despised our land and its people. I even scolded them saying, 'you have only been here a very short time, who are you to talk like that? You have been sent to protect the people, not to talk bad about them. If you keep this up, you are going to jeopardize your relations with the public'.¹⁶¹

Due to the ignorance of the authorities, many prisoners remained confined in the jails for two to four years without appealing their cases before the court. Despite many attempts they had made, the authorities did not pay heed to their voices. Sharing the same difficult situation they had faced, a collective form of resistance therefore emerged amongst the groups of women with their fellow male inmates in the form of hunger strike at Nowgong jail and Silchar jail respectively in 1968 and 1970. Though they could not achieve their demands, in this context the present study evidently proves that compared to their men folk women remained stronger in their stand point. In the beginning their fellow male inmates suggested and assured their support for demanding the authorities to disclose the credible answers of their arrest, however it was only a group of women who organized hunger strike for seven days in the month of April 1968 in Nowgong jail.¹⁶² In April 1970, when the male and female prisoners of Silchar jail organized hunger strike for demanding the same, the male inmates renounced the strike in between. To persuade the women, the jail authorities therefore asked them to follow the male prisoners. Nevertheless Lalrinsangi who acted as a leader of the women replied that they would give up their hunger strike only if the government considered their request.¹⁶³ The jail authorities then suddenly poured sour water into her mouth, forced her to swallow it and gave an order to stop their hunger strike to her fellow women.¹⁶⁴

Historically singing formed one of the most important cultural aspects of the society and had been used as alternative strategies for expressing one's own desire to reconstruct an incomplete structure of the social and political administration. Since the emergence of ethnic nationalist consciousness in the 1940's it had been extensively appropriated and employed into the political space mostly as an act of protest. When an ethnic nationalist movement of the MNF broke out, numerous songs were composed as a binding source of inspiration for the Mizo nationalism and to express the resisted and asphyxiated feelings of the Mizos against the oppressive nature of the nation state. Accordingly, as we have seen in the pre-colonial period, song became an act of both individual and collective form of resistance for the women as it provided them a site to express their restricted voices against their suffocated lives in prison.

In their oral reminisces and memoirs women prisoners have recounted a range of resisting experiences through song. A female clerk of the MNF Headquarter, Nikhumi

recollected that the main reason of her confinement in Aizawl Quarter guard was her presentation of a resisting song against the nation state in September 1968. Knowing that she was one of the best singers in her village, the captain of the Assam Rifles forced her to sing in quarter guard at Sateek circle. Taking this advantage site for expressing the Mizo nationalist zeal, her fellow inmate Biakchhingi then consciously hinted her to sing the ‘*MNF Army Hla*’ (Anthem of the MNF Army). As the Indian armies had little knowledge about the Mizo language, Biakchhingi fearlessly translated the song. One of the stanzas of the song-“*Assamese Cho el loh Zofa leng in, Lakchhuah kan tum che India Vai hnuai a ta*”, (We the undefeated Mizo people, undaunted even by the Assamese will surely free you (Mizoram) from the clutch of the Indians). Deeply infuriated, the Captain pointed at her with his rifle and screamed, “You stubborn and disrespectful women, you dare to sing such a song in our presence? Why I ought to skin you alive!”¹⁶⁵ Nevertheless Nikhumi and other female inmates still remained stubborn and neither felt scared nor panic when they were immediately transferred to Aizawl quarter guard the next day.

Within a site of interrogation song thus emerged as an act or inspirational force of resistance. Beside verbal threatening and physical torturing the interrogations were often accompanied by inducements in order to convince the prisoners. B. Vanlalzari mentioned that in their attempt to persuade her mind, the authorities repeatedly promised her with incentive gifts. One of the instances was- if she could present at least one Mizo soldier before the armies, she would be awarded with Rs. 25000/-, a good house, vehicles, government jobs for her relatives etc. Nonetheless she recollected that at this particular moment she instantly sang these two songs, “*Thamna tangka rothangpui leng aiin, khaidiat hnuaia tan in kawngzawng huam in...*” (I would rather stay in prison and be bound by chains than succumb to the bribe of these people) and “*Tuna I ropuina let sangsawmthumin an rawn thlem ang che, Kan Pi Pu Ro, Kan ram mawi tak hi chawisang la, I hnehna puanzar leh I lu lo thinsan mai rawh*” (They’ll keep coming back to tempt you, each time offering more than before. But always remember to glorify our nation and the traditions of our ancestors. And in remembering all this, having the courage to refuse) in her mind, which greatly inspired her to resist the persuading ideology of the nation state.¹⁶⁶

The oral reminiscences of the inmates of Silchar jail evidently proved that prison became a site where a small community of the Mizo women began to learn the discriminating social structure of the nation state against the ethnic nation. Their collective ethnic consciousness had been aroused by the partial treatment between the ethnic women and the *Vainus* or Indian women by the jail authorities. Besides hunger strike songs therefore emerged as tools to express their collective feelings against the repressive and bias nature of the nation state. Since the female wards were occupied by the women of different ethnic communities, ethnic conflicts often emerged within jails. Speaking about one of the incidents of their conflict with the *Vainus* in 1968, the female inmates of Silchar jail remembered that the jail authorities punished only the Mizo women by locking them together in a small room for three days despite the fact that the conflict was started due to the aggressive behaviour of one of the *Vainus*. Resisting against this unfair means of jail administration, the Mizo women valiantly sang together this song, “*Harh la, harh la, Zoram I tlai ang e, Harh la, harh la, hun tha a liam ang e*” ¹⁶⁷(Awake and Rise Up Mizoram, awake and rise up before time passes you by).

CONCLUSION.

The foregoing chapter demonstrates the political transition from the colonial state to the ethnic state (Mizo District Council) and the growth of ethnic political consciousness amongst the Mizo women. The present study concludes that the period witnessed the movement of women from private to public space under the control of the three patriarchies i.e. Mizo union, MNF and the Nation state. The ethnic political movement of 1940’s witnessed the emergence of a small group of women from the middle class family who formed the MHT, the first Mizo women’s Organization and used the ethnic politics as platform to address the women’s issue before the new ethnic state. Given the effort of these ‘new Mizo women’, the new ethnic state began to include the voices, aspiration and desire of women in ethnic political agenda.

The Mizo Insurgency that broke out after the first women’s movement was initiated in the post-colonial period. Ethnic nationalism could on the one hand be emancipator but on the other hand could act as a reactionary force for the subjugation for women. Since its inception, Insurgency organisation (Mizo National Front) was entirely dominated by men. Despite these,

many women embraced ethnic nationalism and participated in the insurgency movements, though the actual practice of ethno-nationalism had been reserved for men. Women were manipulated, and they themselves internalized patriarchal thinking within a politics of over-determined ethnic nationalism.¹⁶⁸ Recent history of insurgency movements has largely dismissed their contributions. Insurgency in Mizo hill thus, appears as a patriarchal war against the larger National State for the restoration of ethnic patriarchal order in the society. Women were subsumed under the category of 'Mizo Nationalism'; and this had ambiguous effects not only on the status of women by confining them as mothers in the home, but it also seldom acknowledged women's issues as significant. It also reaffirmed the boundaries of culturally acceptable feminine conduct and exerted pressure on women to articulate their gender interests within the terms of reference set by ethnic nationalist discourse.

End Notes:

¹ John Gerassi (interview), "Simone de Beauvoir: The second sex 25 years later", in *Humanities, Social Sciences and Law*, Vol.13, No. 2, January, 1976. pp. 79-85.

² Some of the most influential works on insurgency are Sajal Nag, *Contesting Marginality: Ethnicity, Insurgency and Sub-nationalism In North East India*, Manohar, New Delhi 2002. Sanjib Baruah, *India Against Itself: Assam and Politics of Nationality*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999. Monirul Hussain (ed), *Coming Out of Violence: Essays On Ethnicity, Conflict Resolution and Peace Process in North-East India*, Regency Publications, New Delhi, 2005. Sanjoy Hazarika, *Strangers of the Mist: Tales of War and Peace from India's North East*, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 1995. B.G Verghese, *India's Northeast Resurgent: Ethnicity, Insurgency, Governance, Development*, Konark Publishers, Delhi, 1996. Sajal Nag, *Roots of Ethnic Conflict: Nationalities Question in Northeast India* Manohar, Delhi, 1990. Subhir Bhaumik, *Insurgent Crossfire: Northeast India*, Lancers, Delhi, 1990). Nirmal Nibedon, *Mizoram: The Dagger Brigade*, Lancers, Delhi, 1983.

³ Jairam Ramesh, *Northeast India in a new Asia*, online-www.india-seminar.com, 2005. Retrived on 15 November 2007.

⁴ H.Vanlalhruaia, 'Reimagining the Unknown Region: North East India in South Asian Discourses', *The South Asia conference, Modernity, Identity and Resistance in South Asia: Negotiating Subjectivity amidst changing Solidarities* (18-20 February, 2010) University of Mumbai, Department of Sociology In collaboration with Human Rights Law Network, New Delhi & ICSSR Western Regional Centre, Mumbai. pp.1-10.

⁵ Binalakshmi Nepram & Mentschel (eds), *Armed Conflict, Small Arms Proliferation and Women's Responses to Armed Violence in India's Northeast*, Working Paper No. 33, December 2007, South Asia Institute, Department of Political Science, University of Heidelberg. Online <http://www.sai.uni-heidelberg.de/SAPOL/HPSACP.htm>, Retrieved on 5.8. 2009. *North East Network*, Women in Armed Conflict Situations.North East Network, New Delhi, 2005. Monisha Behal; *Women Suffer Most: Armed conflict and Women's Rights in North East India*, North East Network, Guwahati, India, www.northeastnetwork.org. L. Anna Pinto, *Women's Rights in the Context of Insurgency: A Report from Northeast India*, Human Rights Dialogue (1994-2005) Series 2, No. 3 (Summer 2000): Silence Breakin: The Women's Dimension of the Human Rights Box, August 6, 2000. Mandy Turner & Binalakshmi Nepram, *The impact of armed violence in Northeast India: A mini case study for the Armed Violence and Poverty Initiative*, Centre for International Cooperation and Security, University of Bradford, November 2004. pp.1-39

⁶ Ava Darshan Shrestha & Rita Thapa (eds), *The Impact of Armed Conflicts on Women in South Asia*, New Delhi, Manohar, 2007. The book exposes that even armed militant women choose to respond to violence with violence. On the other side militants mothers respond to violence with non-violent means of political agitation.

⁷ Rita Manchanda (eds), *Women, War and Peace in South Asia Beyond Victimhood to Agency*, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 2001. Anuradha Dutta & Ratna Bhuyan, *Women and Peace: Chapters from Northeast India*, Akansha, New Delhi, 2008. Please also see, Binalakshmi Nepram, 'Women Taking Action to Stop Gun Violence, UN Commission on the Status of Women 2008, ' *IANSA Women's Network and UN Office for Disarmament Affairs Joint event: 'The impact of guns on women's lives*, 3rd March 2008 .pp.1-6.

⁸ E. O'Neill, Bart, William R. Heaton & Donald J. Alberts (eds), *Insurgency in Modern World*, Westview Press, Colorado, 1980. p. 1.

⁹ Sajal Nag, *A Comparative Analysis of Naga, Mizo and Meitei Insurgencies*, Institute for Conflict Management (ICM). online- <http://www.satp.org/>, retrived on 2, November 2009.

¹⁰ Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in colonial India*. Oxford, Delhi, 1983. p. 11

¹¹ Ranajit Guha, 'Introduction from elementary aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India' in Linda Alcoff & Eduardo Mendieta, *Identities: race, class, gender, and nationality*, Blackwell Publishing, 2003. p. 140.

¹² Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in C. Nelson & L. Crossberg (eds); *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1988. pp. 281& 308.

¹³ R. Uphadhyay, *Mizoram-From Insurgence to Resurgence*, south Asia Analysis Group, Paper No 1665, Online <http://www.southasiananalysis.org/%5cpapers17%Cpaper1665.html>. Retrieved on 2nd November 2009. Aminesh Ray, *India – The Land and the People: Mizoram*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1993. p.p.150-151, K.

Laldinpuii, 'The Mizo Non- Cooperation Movement, 1948-49', *Proceedings of North East India History Association*, Seventieth Session, Government College Aizawl, p. 355. S.K Barpujari, 'Bamboo-Flowing in Mizoram: A Historical Review', *Proceedings of North East India History Association*, Seventieth Session, Government College Aizawl, Mizoram. p. 336.

¹⁴ A.G Mc Call, *Lushai Chrysallis*, T.R.I, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1977. p. 199. Lalrimawia, *Mizoram: History and Cultural Identity*, Spectrum, New Delhi, 1995. p. 107. Subir Bhaumik, *Insurgent Crossfire: North-East India*, Lancer Publishers, India, 1996. pp. 70-71. M. Sajjad Hassan, *Understanding the breakdown in North-East India: Explorations in state-society relations*, Development Studies Institute, London School of Economics, London, 2007. pp. 9, 14-15.

¹⁵ Judith E Walsh, 'What Women Learnt When Men Gave Them Advice: Rewriting Patriarchy in Late Nineteenth-Century Bengal', in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 56, No. 3, Aug 1997. pp 641-677.

¹⁶ Lalhlira, 'Mizo te Sipai lamah', in *Mizoram Kum 100:Kum100 chhunga Mizote Awm Dan*, Synod Publication Board, 1996. p. 276.

¹⁷ Khawlkungi, Personal Interview, 26th December, 2008, Aizawl, Mizoram.

¹⁸ *Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Golden Jubilee, 16.7.1946-16.7.1996 (Mizoram a Hmeichhe Pawl (Voluntary Organisation Ding Hmasa ber)*, Issued by Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Pawl, Aizawl, Mizoram, pp 1-2. Please also see, C. Chawngkungi, 'Alpha of Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual, Unpublished Manuscript.

¹⁹ Geraldine Forbes, *Women in Modern India*, Cambridge University Press, 2004. p. 65.

²⁰ Hmingliani, 'Mizo Hmeichhe Dinmun: Hman atanga tun hun', in *Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Souvenir*, Aizawl, 1986. pp. 7-9.

²¹ Geraldine Forbes (2004), op.cit., p.64.

²² The Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Minute No 1. of 23rd August, 1947 cited in Sangkima, 'Women and Politics in Mizoram through the Ages', in *Historical Journal of Mizoram*, Vol-III, Issue-1, M.H.A, July 2002. p. 37.

²³ C. Hermana, *Zoram Politics Thli Tleh Dan Vol -I*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1999. pp. 21-22. Please also See Appendix No. 2.

²⁴ *Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Golden Jubilee, 16.7.1946-16.7.1996*, op.cit., p. 2.

²⁵ Biaksiami, *Mizorama Hmeichhe Tangrual Pawl Ding Hmasa Ber MIZO HMEICHHE TANGRUAL PAWL*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1982. pp. 3-4.

²⁶ The Mizo Union's ideology of Greater Mizoram was submitted to the Constitution Sub-Committee in 1947. It demanded the integration of 7,500 sq km of Mizo-inhabited areas situated in Manipur, Assam, Tripura and the Chin Hills and justified its claim on the basis of the fact that before the advent of the British, the Mizos were spread over these areas and they lost control over them as a result of a series of punitive expeditions launched against them by the British. See, Malabika Das Gupta, 'Greater Mizoram Issue and Tripura', in *EPW*, Vol. 21, No. 37, Sep. 13, 1986, p. 1629.

²⁷ The MHT minute of 19th August, 1948, cited in Sangkima; 'Women and Politics Through The Ages', op.cit., p. 30.

²⁸ Lalbuaia, *Zoram Hmel Ti Danglamtute*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2002. p. 40.

²⁹Sangkima (2002), op.cit., p. 28.

³⁰ Chaltuahkhuma, *Political History of Mizoram*, LB Press, Aizawl, 1981. pp. 61-63, C. Hermana(1999), op.cit., pp. 24-25. R. Zamawia, *Zofate Zinkawngah- Zalenna Mei a mit tur a ni lo*, Aizawl, 2007. p. 133.

³¹ Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Minute of 7th -9th February, 1951. Cited in Sangkima (2002), op.cit., p. 30

³² Sangkima (2002), Ibid. p.31.

³³ Hmingliani (1986), op.cit., pp 12-13.

³⁴ Letter to the Chief Minister, Government of Assam, Shillong from Miss Biaksiami, General Secretary, Mizo Women's Union, Aijal. No. MHT/3 Dated the 11th April 1962. CB No; 97, G- 1188. Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

³⁵ Lalthanzami, Hmingliani, Lalngeni and Biaki were the wives of the leaders of the Union Party

³⁶ Poor handling of famine and inadequate relief measure followed by imposition of Assamese as official language in the State resulted to the withdrawal of Mizo Union from the Assam Congress Legislature Party. Besides, as a result of ideological conflict between them some leaders of the Mizo Union left their party. R. Upadhyay, 'Mizoram: From Insurgence to Resurgence', *Manipur Online*, Febuary 26, 2006. http://www.manipuronline.com/North-East/February2006/mizoram26_1.htm, K.M Zakhuma, *Political Development in Mizoram From 1945 to 1989: A Study With Special Reference to Political Parties in Mizoram*, Mizoram Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2001. pp. 74-75.

³⁷ '8th Assembly of Mizoram District Council', in *Zoram Hriattirna (District Information)* Aijal, June 15, 1955. pp. 1-3.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ M.C Awia, *Mizo Hnam Dan 1956*, Arbee Publication, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1996. p. 13. Please also see, '8th Sitting Mizoram District Council June (Session), 14. 6.1955' in *Zoram Hriattirna*, (District Information) November, 15, 1955. p. 2.

⁴¹ Seema Kazi, *Between Democracy and Nation: Gender and Militarization in Kashmir*, Women Unlimited, New Delhi, 2009. p. xvii.

⁴² Mallarika Sinha Roy, 'Speaking Silence: Narrative of Gender in the Historiography of the Naxalbari Movement in West Bengal (1967-75)', in *Journal of South Asian Development*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2006. pp. 205-232.

⁴³ Sangkima (2002), op.cit., p. 32 Please also see, Sangkima, 'Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual: A Study in Perspective', *Proceedings of NEIHA*, Seventieth Session, Government of Aizawl College, Aizawl, Mizoram, p. 370.

⁴⁴ Sajal Nag, *Pied Piper in North-East India, Bamboo-Flowers, Rat famine and the Politics of Philanthropy* (1881-2007), Manohar, 2008. p. 226.

⁴⁵ Biaksiami (1982), op.cit., pp. 18-19, Letter to the Chief Minister, Government of Assam, Shillong from Biaksiami, General Secretary, Mizo Women's Union, Aijal. No. MHT/3 Dated the 11th April 1962, CB No; 97, G- 1188, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

⁴⁶ Biaksiami (1982), Ibid. p. 23. Please also see Sangkima, 'Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual: A Study in Perspective', op.cit., p. 376.

⁴⁷ Swapan Chakravorty, Suzana Milevska & Tani E. Barlow (eds), *Conversations with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*, Seagull Books, 2006. p. 62. I simply borrowed the term to exemplify the failure of the ethnic political party in acknowledging gender sensitivity in the society.

⁴⁸ Please see Appendix No 4.

⁴⁹ Ava Darshan Shrestha & Rita Thapa, op.cit., p. 15

⁵⁰ H. Vanlalhraia, *Reading Insurgency from Below: The Works of C.Zama*, Unpublished Manuscript, 2010.

⁵¹ Lalrawnlia, *Zoramin Zalenna a Sual*, Vol 1, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1995. p. 29.

⁵² Please see Appendix-5.

⁵³ Linda L. Reif, 'Women in Latin American Guerrilla Movements: A Comparative Perspective', in *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 18, No. 2, Jan., 1986. pp. 147-169.

⁵⁴ Zarana Papic, 'Nationalism, Patriarchy and War in Ex-Yugoslavia', in *Women's History Review*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1994. pp. 115-117. In this paper the term "Battlefield" is used to denote a sphere of the combatants, particularly the Mizo National Armies and whereas "sheltered field" is used to exemplify a sphere that was always seen as more secure and less patriotic zone than battlefields. The present study used both the two terms only to identify the gender spaces of the volunteers who joined the underground fields.

⁵⁵ Confessional Statement of an MNF volunteer Tawnluia, Dated, and 11.1.1967. MNF Document Vol III, College Archive, ATC, Aizawl, Mizoram. Please also see, Superintendent of Police, DSB, Mizo District, Aijal letter to the Deputy Commissioner, Mizo District, Subject:-Detention Order of a surrendered girl volunteer Nelziki of Durtlang. Detention order No. 1129 Dt. 23.8.67. Memo No. MSB/7149/V/4/E/67, Aijal, 22nd September, 1967.

⁵⁶ Lalrawnlia, *Zoramin Zalenna a Sual Vol 5*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1998. pp. 18-19.

⁵⁷ Hrangzovi, Personal Interview, 29th March 2005, Saitual, Mizoram.

⁵⁸ Linda L. Reif, op.cit., Ibid.

⁵⁹ Indra Munshi Saldanha, 'Tribal Movement in the Warli Revolt: 1945-47 'Class' and Gender in the Left Perspective', in *EPW*, Vol XXI, No 17, April 26, 1986, pp. WS41-WS52.

⁶⁰ Anuradha M Chenoy, op.cit., p. 210

⁶¹ Hrangzovi, op.cit.,

⁶² Tinsangi, Personal Interview, 27th February 2007, Aizawl, Mizoram.

⁶³ Zarana Papic, op.cit., p. 115.

⁶⁴ H. Vanlalhraia(2010), op.cit., Some of the books written by the members of EX-MNA are C. Zama, *Mizo Pasalthate Part I*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1989. C. Zama, *Mizo Pasalthate Part II*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1990. C. Zama, *Chhim keite a fam ta, Thangrehlova chanchin*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1990. C.Zama, *Mi huaissen Capt. Lalhleia chanchin*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1991. Vanlalringa Sailo, *Chengrang Chawilai nite*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2008. K. Laldawla, *Vanglainite Hnam Tan (A True Story on Patriotism)*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2006.

⁶⁵ H. Vanlalhraia (2010), op.cit., Ibid.

⁶⁶ J. Butler, 'Afrikaner Women and the Creation of Ethnicity in a Small South African Town, 1902-1950' in L. Vail (ed), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, London, James Currey, and Berkeley, University California

Press, 1989. P.56. Cited from Marijke Du Toit, 'The Domesticity of Afrikaner Nationalism: Volksmoeders and the ACVV, 1904–1929', in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 29, No.1, March, 2003. p. 155-176.

⁶⁷ C. Zama(1989), op.cit, C. Zama(1990), op.cit.,

⁶⁸ Joane Nagel, 'Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations', in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2, March., 1998. pp.242-269.

⁶⁹ Ranajit Guha, 'The Small Voice of History', in Shahid Amin & Dipesh Chakrabarty (eds), *Subaltern Studies IX: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Oxford University Press, 1996. p. 8.

⁷⁰ *Mizo National Armies' Registration Book*, Mizo Hnam Run, Aizawl, Mizoram.

⁷¹ R. Zamawia (2007), op.cit., pp. 762 -763. Lalrawnliana, *Zoram in Zalenna a Sual Vol- VIII*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2000.pp. 76-77. K. Laldawla, op.cit., pp. 150-151. K. Hawlla Sailo, *Mizo Ngaihdan Dek Che Tham (Hmangaitute leh Hmangaihte Inthenna)*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2001. pp. 172-173.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, op.cit., p.287

⁷⁴ Ava Darshan Shrestha & Rita Thapa, op.cit., p. 15

⁷⁵ Rita Manchanda, 'Where are the Women in South Asian Conflicts', In Rita Manchanda, op.cit., p. 23.

⁷⁶ Paola Bacchetta, 'Reinterrogating Partition Violence: Voices of Women/Children/ Dalits in India's Partition', in *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3, 2000. pp. 566-585.

⁷⁷ T. Arenla Ao, 'A Theological Reflection On Atrocities of Naga Women in Armed Conflict', in Limatula Longkumer (ed), *No more Sorrow in God's Garden of Justice: Tribal women Doing Theology*, Women's Study Department, Eastern Theological College, Jorhat, Assam, 2007. p. 24.

⁷⁸ The form of women's sexual violation was performed in the same categories with the women's violation in the communal riots during the period of India's partition. For further details See, Paola Bacchetta, op. cit., p. 571.

⁷⁹ Roshmi Goswami, M.G Sreelaka & Meghna Goswami (eds), *Women in Armed Conflict Situation (A Study by North East Network)* North East Network, Gawahati, Assam, 2005. p. 36.

⁸⁰ Nichols Roy's Speech quoted from the Assembly House on 5th April, 1966 in J.V Hluna, *Assam Legislative Assembly: Debates on Mizo Problems on Insurgencies With Special Reference to the contributions of Mr. Stanley D.D. Nichols Roy, MLA & Mr Hoover H. Hynniewta, MLA*, Aizawl, November 2006 p. 17.

⁸¹ Letter to Pu Laldenga, President, Mizo National Front GHQ, Camp E.P (East Pakistan) From Pu Lalnunmawia, Vice President, Mizo National Front GHQ, Aizawl, Mizoram, No. MN P-I 'V-P)/66/7, Tahrik Aizawl, April 14, 1966. MNF Document Vol. II, Aizawl Theological College Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

⁸² R. Zamawia (2007), op.cit., p. 610. C. Zama, (2006), op.cit., p. 129.

⁸³ C. Zama(2008), Ibid. pp. 125.

⁸⁴ 'L' Battalion was named after the male traditional heroes Lamliira and Lalvunga.

⁸⁵ C. Zama(2008), op.cit., p. 130

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Urvashi Butalia; 'Women and Communal Conflict: New Challenges for the Women's Movement in India', in Caroline O. N Moser & Fiona C. Clark (eds), *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence*, Zubaan, New Delhi, 2005. p. 103.

⁸⁸ Ibid. p. 8.

⁸⁹ S. Lianzuala, Secretary, Ministry of Information, Broadcasting and Publicity (MNF), Government of Mizoram; India hi Bumhmang, Suamhmang leh Rukru Sawrkar a ni (India is the most exploitative and Corrupt Government), Thupuan, D/86-13, 21st March 1966, MNF Document, Vol III, ATC Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

⁹⁰ S. Lianzuala, Secretary, Ministry of Information, Broadcasting and Publicity (MNF), Government of Mizoram, Pamphlet, June, 1966. Cited from J.V Hluna; *Church and Political Upheavals in Mizoram*, M.H.A, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1985, p. 101.

⁹¹ Nichols Roy's Speech quoted from the Assembly House on 5th April, 1966. Cited from J.V Hluna (2006), op.cit, pp. 9-10.

⁹² S. Lianzuala, op.cit., Ibid.

⁹³ A note on the Present Situation in the Mizo Hills District, Aijal, Dated 30.6.1966. CB-115, G-1399, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl Mizoram

⁹⁴ Speech of Shri R. Natarajan, IAS, Deputy Commissioner, Mizo District on the occasion of the Independence Day, 15th August, 1966., CB-115, G-1393 Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

⁹⁵ Nichols Roy's Speech quoted from the Assembly House on 5th April, 1966. Cited from J.V Hluna (2006), op. cit., p. 10.

⁹⁶ Copy of the letter from K. Natwar Singh Prime Minister's Secretariat, New Delhi-11 to A. N Kidwai, Chief Secretary, Government of Assam. No. PMS-20696, Dated. 25th September, 1966. Mizoram State Archive, CB-115, General 1393.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Rev. Dr. Lalngurauva Ralte, Personal Interview, 6th September, 2008, Aizawl. Mizoram.

⁹⁹ Rev. Zairema's Letter to Laldenga, President, Government of Mizoram, Camp: Mobile, Dated; 6.9.1966. cited from J.V Hluna(1985), op.cit., p. 110.

¹⁰⁰ Section II of the Report of the meeting between Church Delegation and Mr. Laldenga, President of Mizoram MNF Document Vol II, College Archive, ATC, Aizawl, Mizoram.

¹⁰¹ Zairema, 'Rambuaia Kohhran Ban Phar', in *Remna Thuthlung(Documentary Souvenir)*, 20th Remna ni Committee, MPCC, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2006. p. 67.

¹⁰² Agreement between the Indian National Congress (I) and the Mizo National Front, Mizoram. For detail please see Appendix- 6.

¹⁰³ Memorandum of Settlement, 30th June, 1986. Please See Appendix-7.

¹⁰⁴ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, op.cit., p. 308.

¹⁰⁵ Roshmi Goswami, M.G Sreelaka & Meghna Goswami, op.cit., p. 36.

¹⁰⁶ Gerda Lerner, 'Placing Women in History', in Bernice A. Carroll, *Liberating Women's History: Theoretical and Critical Essays*, University of Illinois Press, 1976. p. 358.

-
- ¹⁰⁷ For a comprehensive study on women's narrative on nationalism that challenges the male dominated narratives on Nation please see, Anne McClintok, 'No longer in a future Heaven': Women and Nationalism in South Africa', in *Transition*, No. 51, 1991. pp. 105-123.
- ¹⁰⁸ Denise Adele Segor, *Tracing the Persistent Impulse of a Bedrock Nation To Survive within the State of India: Mizo Women's Response to War and Forced Migration*, Unpublished Doctoral Thesis in Human and Organizational System, Fielding Graduate University, 2006. P.157.
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid. p. 347.
- ¹¹⁰ Rebeki, Personal Interview, 23rd June 2007, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ¹¹¹ Tinsangi, op.cit.,
- ¹¹² B. Vanlalzari, Personal interview, 16th August 2006, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ¹¹³ Memorandum of the Declaration of Independence, 5th March, 1966, Please See Appendix No. 4.
- ¹¹⁴ Chawngpari, Personal Interview, 23rd March 2007, Champhai, Mizoram.
- ¹¹⁵ Lalthansangi, Personal Interview, 19th September 2008, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ¹¹⁶ C. Lalthlamuani, 'Long Leave without Pay', in *Zozam Weekly Magazine*, Aizawl, Mizoram, June 29, 2009.
- ¹¹⁷ Tinsangi, op.cit.,
- ¹¹⁸ Nikhumi, Personal Interview, 18th September, 2008, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ¹¹⁹ R. Zamawia, Personal Interview, 15th September, 2008, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ¹²⁰ Anuradha M Chenoy, op.cit., p. 194.
- ¹²¹ Hrangzovi, op.cit.,
- ¹²² Vanlalringa Sailo, *Chengrang Chawilai nite*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2008. p. 240.
- ¹²³ Lalrinsangi, Personal Interview, 8th September 2008, Durtlang, Mizoram. C. Zama, Personal Interview, 16th September, 2008, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ¹²⁴ *Army Enrolment list*, MNF Hnam Run, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ¹²⁵ Sailianpuui, Personal Interview, 15th March 2007, Ruallung, Mizoram.
- ¹²⁶ Ibid.
- ¹²⁷ C. Zama(2008), op.cit., p. 434
- ¹²⁸ Ibid. p. 435.
- ¹²⁹ Suruchi Thapar-Bjokert, 'Gender, Nationalism and the Colonial Jail: A Study of women's Activists in Uttar Pradesh', in *Women's History Review*, Vol. 7, No. 4, 1998. pp. 583-615.
- ¹³⁰ Ibid.
- ¹³¹ Ibid. p. 601
- ¹³² Zachhingi, Personal Interview, 15th February, 2007, Aizawl, Mizoram. Sikulthangi, Personal Interview, 1st March 2007 Aizawl Mizoram. Zachhingi was the sister in law of Sikulthangi. When the armies arrested them they were accompanied by their mother and their children. While Sikulthangi's son Christopher aged only one year, Zachhingi was accompanied by her 9months old daughter Laldinpuui.
- ¹³³ C. Zama (2008), op.cit., p. 409.
- ¹³⁴ Ibid. p. 415.

-
- ¹³⁵ Sikulthangi, op.cit.,
- ¹³⁶ Zachhingi, op.cit.,
- ¹³⁷ C. Zama (2008), op.cit., p. 409.
- ¹³⁸ Ibid. p. 410.
- ¹³⁹ Vanlalzari, *Hnehna chu Lalpa Ta a ni*, Unpublished Autobiography, p. 33.
- ¹⁴⁰ B. Vanlalzari, Personal Interview, 16th August 2006, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ¹⁴¹ B. Vanlalzari, *Hnehna chu Lalpa Ta a ni*, op.cit., p. 9
- ¹⁴² Ibid. p. 10
- ¹⁴³ B. Vanlalzari (2006), op.,cit.
- ¹⁴⁴ Mary Jane Treacy, 'Double Binds: Latin American Women's Prison Memories', in *Hypatia*, Vol. 11, No. 4, Autumn, 1996. pp. 130-145. Please also see, Michel Foucault, *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*, Vintage, New York, 1979.
- ¹⁴⁵ Vanlalzari, *Hnehna chu Lalpa Ta a ni*, op.cit., pp. 6 -10.
- ¹⁴⁶ Mary Jane Treacy, op.cit., P. 132.
- ¹⁴⁷ B. Vanlalzari, Personal Interview, 19th September, 2008, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ¹⁴⁸ Zachhingi, op.cit.,
- ¹⁴⁹ Nikhumi, op.cit.,
- ¹⁵⁰ Sikulthangi, op.cit.,
- ¹⁵¹ B. Vanlalzari, *Hnehna chu Lalpa Ta a ni*, op.cit., pp. 31-32.
- ¹⁵² Frank Graziano, *Divine violence: Spectacle, psychosexuality and radical Christianity in the Argentine "Dirty War"*, Westview Press, 1992. p. 103. Mary Jane Treacy, op.cit.,
- ¹⁵³ Zachhingi, op.cit.,
- ¹⁵⁴ C. Zama(2008), op.cit., p. 416.
- ¹⁵⁵ Suruchi Thapar-Bjokert, op.cit., p. 584.
- ¹⁵⁶ B. Vanlalzari, *Hnehna chu Lalpa ta a ni*, op.cit., p. 101
- ¹⁵⁷ Sikulthangi, op.cit.,
- ¹⁵⁸ B. Vanlalzari, *Hnehna chu Lalpa ta a ni*, op.cit, p. 23.
- ¹⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 85.
- ¹⁶⁰ Zachhingi, op.cit.,
- ¹⁶¹ B. Vanlalzari, Unpublished Autobiography, p. 16.
- ¹⁶² Sikulthangi, op.cit, Zachhingi, op.cit.,
- ¹⁶³ Lalrinsangi, op.cit.,
- ¹⁶⁴ C. Zama(2008), op.cit., pp. 422-423.
- ¹⁶⁵ Nikhumi, op.cit.,
- ¹⁶⁶ B. Vanlalzari, *Hnehna Chu Lalpa ta ani*, op.cit., p. 22.
- ¹⁶⁷ C.Zama(2008), op.cit., p. 418.

¹⁶⁸ Neluka Silva; *The Gendered Nation: Contemporary Writings from South Asia*, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 2004.

CHAPTER-VII

CONCLUSION

By placing women at the central of analysis, the present thesis analyzes the changing status, roles and participation of women in Mizo history from the 18th to 20th Century. A number of post colonial feminists in recent period argue that women's voices are silent in conventional archives. Similarly, the present thesis initially locates historiographical problem in relation to Mizo women by proposing that a woman has never been focused on as an important historical agent in a larger framework of Mizo historiography. This is mainly due to the patriarchal projection of history as well as the orthodoxy of dominant historical discourse. To overcome such conservative framework the present thesis suggests- Firstly, to change the outlook of a historian's approach in the historical methodology that has been taken for granted. Secondly, to eliminate the sullenness of women in Mizo history by enlarging historical sources of both written (autobiography, memoirs) and non-written records (oral tradition) that are generally located far beyond the archival space. Thirdly, to enlarge theoretical orientation in history by incorporating not just of the women's experience, but more importantly inserting Mizo women's perspective in historical agenda.

Making women as historical subjects and actors, this thesis reveals the inadequacy of conventional archives; secondly, it places women to the status of historical agent in the development of Mizo society on the contrary to recent historiography which portrays Mizo women as silent and inactive in history. Thirdly, it locates 'women's agency' in Mizo history by recovering a wide spectrum of alternative sources. Fourthly, women's narratives articulate the experiences of women in diverse ways which also reveal their contribution in the making of Mizo history.

Mizo society in pre-colonial period was virtually oral based when 'history' was remembered through oral traditions of legend, songs, folk tales, myth and proverbs. These oral traditions were initially utilized by the colonial ethnographers for the production of imperial administration in the second half of the 19th century. Apparently, throughout the process of collecting oral sources, men informants were favoured more than women. Besides, the transcription was narrowly confined within the 19th century European ethnographical framework which was also highly gendered. Although many of the oral traditions reflected the voices of the two genders, majority of recent studies have only validated men's voices.

The period between the 18th century and the second half of the 20th century witnessed rapid transitional stages from social and political point of view. The rise of Sailo Chieftdom in

the 18th century brought the introduction of new gender space with the institutionalization of traditional Lusei patriarchy. Gender space was constructed in both theory and practice. At the theoretical level, 'Mizo culture' favoured men's role with the glorification of 'traditional masculinity'. While the space of women remained within the domestic and jhumming, men prominently occupied *zawlbuk* (bachelors' dormitory), village administration, war and hunting. Within a male defined structure of customary law, the power of men was strengthened through the rights of inheritance and marriage custom. Besides empowering the 'Lusei patriarchy', the transaction of '*man*' or bride price resulted to the existence of social hierarchy based on kinship. Furthermore, to have a disciplined society, men had control over a woman's body through the customary law. Her body was stereotypically labeled as a 'site' of presenting 'kindness' (as in the case of sexual abuse on married women) and 'cruelty' (as in the case of *Zawn*) before the community. Whereas the 'Lusei patriarchy' gained the authenticity of its power, women were made to remain silent and accept the order of the society that was constructed from a customary law.

The ideological assumption behind the gender division and patriarchal source of power was identified by placing proverbs and old sayings as analytical category of historical investigation for pre-colonial Mizo cultural scenario. Apparently, Mizo patriarchal ideology was rested on the invention of proverbs in which "gender became a persistent and recurrent way of enabling the signification of power".¹ Being a site of social construction these 'patriarchal proverbs' directly situated women in a stereotypical manner.

Although, 'Lusei patriarchy' customarily overpowered women, many women frequently superseded men. Their role in the local economy is particularly noteworthy. Their extensive experiences made them an invaluable source of knowledge production in terms of weaving, pottery, cooking, medicine, dyeing and home-based production. Even colonial and missionary accounts repeatedly showed that women worked harder than men. The religious belief system also widely recognized feminine roles. Practically the roles of goddesses and female deities either as benevolent or malevolent molded the religious belief of the whole community. The Mizo conceptualized a male god '*Pathian*' who never interfered in human affairs. However, female divinities acted as mediators between human and natures and a source of blessing for all the communities in terms of health and socio-economic condition.

An earlier generation of Mizo historians who concerned themselves with pre-colonial social and political structure generally argued that women in pre-colonial period were assigned to peripheral roles in the political institution. Customarily, women had no right to rule as rightful heirs in the political system as succession went to the chiefs' sons. However, the present thesis reveals that such view was not always the case. From several case studies on female chiefs, the present thesis argues that the pre-colonial Mizo women were much more advanced than what recent historians have imagined. In fact, pre-colonial Mizos were more unrestricted and co-dependent than the structured inequality imposed by colonialism in the first half of the 20th century. The gendered space indeed largely placed men as the protectors of the community, but we find many women who showed their capability in occupying the place of chieftainship and politically played the roles of protectors for their clans and villages. Colonial texts even show that there were several female chiefs who had been unrecognized and their names when recorded were identified through their husbands or their sons. For instance Ropuiliani was better known as the widow of Vandula and Lalpuitthluaii was usually referred to as 'Pawibawiha's mother'.

Their contestation against patriarchal hegemony is noteworthy. For instance, majority of the song composers were women of different social groups, who used song as a 'site' of contestation against social and gender inequality. Women's songs thus reflected different purposes from social reform to political injustice and for the restoration of the rights of commoners (*hnamchawm*) and women. While the 'Lusei patriarchy' merely widened the gap between gender relations, women's voices replicated the desire for equality in the society and of course between men and women.

The intervention of colonialism in the 19th century brought another historical chapter when women were projected as agents of knowledge production on Mizo history. Since 1832, the British colonial power established their control in the surrounding plain of Mizo inhabitant areas. Native forests as well as the Mizo hunting grounds were destroyed for the purpose of commercial activities. Thus, the Mizo chiefs frequently plundered and captured captive slaves on the British territory. Colonizers were soon left in a dilemma and they realized generating knowledge on "savage predators" from "unknown tract of land" was prerequisite. Several efforts were made to enquire the condition of the hills and its inhabitant "savage tribe" who continuously disturbed their commercial activities in plain areas. In this critical situation, several women's names emerged in the colonial archive.

The present thesis locates two classes of women and their agencies throughout the colonial investigation on the hills. The first groups were composed of fugitive slaves from the Mizo chieftdom. Captives and slaves were extensively interviewed and knowledge was gathered. From their information, the names of Mizo chiefs who conducted raids in British territory were identified. When the British attempted to negotiate with the Mizo chiefs, many of them surprisingly were females. Some female chiefs constantly resisted the colonizers while some were in favour of making an alliance with the British in order to protect their subjects. Although, women were not customarily allowed to enter *Zawlbuk*, one of the female chiefs negotiated with the colonial officers in the *Zawlbuk*. This clearly shows that Mizo women never remained in the patriarchal construction of gender roles. Their interaction with the female chiefs provided several illustration of women's agency in the second half of the 19th century.

Soon after the colonial government acquired some knowledge, the first series of 'punitive expeditions' was launched in 1840, which continued up to the end of the 19th century. Although, colonial successive military campaigns subdued many Mizo chiefs, resistances from the female chiefs were an immense obstacle in obtaining colonial supremacy. Apparently, resistance of native female chiefs humiliated the colonial patriarchy that the archives repeatedly portrayed them as evil characters that needed to be conquered as soon as possible. Then "the British subsequently transformed their punitive expeditions to wars of conquest as "the tribal raids would not cease unless they were totally conquered and placed under 'civilized' administration of the British and culturally transformed through the quietening influence of Christianity".² In 1890, the British finally inaugurated their administration in Aijal (Aizawl), the present capital of Mizoram (Lushai Hills). However, a formidable female chief Ropuiliani and her allies continued their stiff resistance against colonialism. Finally, she was captured in 1893 which ultimately brought the complete surrender of the whole Lushai hills.

The 20th century began with ascendancy of colonial power in Lushai hills. Colonial state formation in 1890 had a number of immediate effects. The new government inherited pre-colonial structures that neither traditional chieftainship institution nor customary laws ever abolished. Initially, colonial patriarchy operated at two levels, restoration of 'tribal patriarchy' through the institution of chieftainship, secondly the re-invention of *Lusei* customary law that

perpetuated new gender complexities. The impact of written customary law on women was particularly devastating for all the native female chiefs. Contrary to the traditional customary law, the rights of inheritance for women in Chieftainship institution initially restricted, latter on was totally wiped out.

The colonial ideas of the appropriate social role for women differed greatly from the traditional role of women in indigenous Mizo societies. The ideas of the colonizers resembled the patriarchal European assumption that women belonged to the home, engaged in child rearing (an exclusively female responsibility) and other domestic chores. The colonizers expected Mizo society to consider women as subordinate to men because Europeans considered women subordinate to men. From a pre-conceived notion of the European patriarchal ideology, colonizers forcibly projected the Mizo women as mere victims who needed to be saved from “savage” customs through their “civilizing missions”. Hence, condemnations of the traditional customs in relation to gender were repeatedly addressed through the publication of newspapers in the early decade of the 20th Century. Throughout the colonial period, colonizers reinforced systems of social inequality and oppressive forms of gender stratification. As a result, women became more dependent on men that also led to gender conflict in the social lives.³ Although women labour was increasingly exploited, their role in politics was degraded day by day.

Colonialism was soon followed by the European Christian missionaries who were much more active in a number of philanthropic works on the position of Mizo women. Initially, restriction and prescription was a part and parcel of the missionary reform movement. Education, the “civilizing” tool of the missionaries produced reform-minded native men from the emerging new Mizo middle class (that comprised of educated young men and converted Mizo chiefs). The European worldview was imposed upon these native men to question the position of women under the “savage” customs and “irrational” worldview of the Mizos. During the first three decades of the 20th Century, the main social discourse was thus confined to the question on the position of the Mizo women.

Meanwhile the question on women’s issue always occupied an important subject of missionary agenda. The main social reform discourses focused on the pitiful condition of the Mizo women in domestic sphere. Despite the unsupportive articulated ideology on female education, the native reform-minded men addressed the need of education for women.

Eventually the missionaries achieved their project on female education with a well-established Victorian domestic ideology. Girls' schools therefore appeared as a "site" of reinforcing the "European ideal of womanhood". Reports on the female education emerged as an indicator for the successive project of the missionaries. While the colonial's reforms institutionalized the power of men in the family through the customary law, the missionaries' reforms reproduced 'a new Mizo woman' who was domestically trained to fit into the paradigm of new patriarchy. Similar to Partha Chatterjee's argument on colonial Bengal, female education in Lushai Hills emerged as a new social form of "disciplining" the society according to the new economic and social conditions set by the external forces.⁴

The accounts of the missionaries' work on education and medicine supplemented the success of colonialism, which later placed the two external agents to the status of indicators for social change. Hence the Mizos were "intellectually, morally and physically assumed to be inferior" who were implicitly dependent upon the knowledge, labours and resources of the colonizers and the missionaries. Nonetheless for the complete achievement of their project, the missionaries required "missionizing" and "civilizing" agents from the natives. Since its inception, there was an incessant demand for the native women's assistance in female education. From the indigenous domestic knowledge and labours of the Mizo women, the missionaries instantly enforced domestic ideology and enriched girls' schools' curriculum. The personal narratives and memoirs of the native boarders of Mission Girls' schools have also repeatedly credited the roles of these Mizo women in imparting knowledge on domesticity amongst the pupils.

For the further expansion of their project there was a growing demand for native women professionals in teaching and medicines. A number of new trained educated women emerged. These women stepped out of private sphere to spread the civilizing knowledge by contributing labours such as- teaching at schools and initiating the establishment of Sunday schools in villages; initiating the establishment of clinics in remote areas apart from their nursing assistance in the hospitals. Within the medical missions, the Mizo women outnumbered both their fellow men and the missionaries and surpassed them in many ways. Additionally in the field of evangelizing mission both the individual and collective labours of the Mizo women were excessively necessitated. Besides achieving the practice of medicinal care as an evangelizing tool the roles of Bible women showed the women's capability for preaching the gospel albeit the strict defined gender hierarchical order in the Church.

Moreover, despite the lack of funds from the mission centres in Wales and London, the persistent financial support of Women's Fellowship instigated the growth of the Church. Apparently the successful project of female education, medicines and evangelism were the product of the labour and the indigenous and "civilizing" knowledge of the Mizo women.

Theoretically, colonizers and missionaries promoted an egalitarian society. Their reform movement on the other hand produced new social hierarchical order, which simultaneously created a new gender space. Rather than bringing equality and bridging power relations in terms of gender, the authority of the "new Mizo patriarchy" was institutionalized both at the social and political level. At the conspicuous level, women were prepared to accept both European and 'Lusei patriarchy'. Hence, women acquired a limited access of higher rank under the domination of the 'two patriarchies' (i.e. Lusei and European patriarchies). Both external agents exploited Mizo women for the production of their respective mission. However, their sponsored new gender space did not allow women to become either Chief (in case of colonialism) or high ranking Church officials (in case of Christianity). To some extent, women acquired new social and material culture.

The last part of colonialism to the first half of post Indian independence witnessed ethnic political consciousness and identity crisis in the hills, which ultimately led to the birth of ethnic political party in 1946. Initially, the new political party failed to incorporate women's issues in their agenda. This also gave rise to consciousness amongst new educated middle class. The first women organization called *Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual (MHT)* was formed in the same year with the aim of inserting women's issues in ethnic politics. Moreover, education exposed their views on the modernizing aspect of women's organizational agencies in other part of India. By locating the unchanging gender relations within the 'colonial customary law' the organization used ethnic politics as an instrument to represent the Mizo women's issue. The continual effort of the organization successfully inserted the women's issue within the space of a 'new public' i.e. Mizo District Council.

At the very first stance, the organization achieved the two foremost goals i.e. Seat reservation for women in the District council and the inheritance rights for women, but only by "will" in 1962. Thus, the period between 1946 and 1962 has been a remarkable phase in the history of Mizo women. It was an era when the Mizo women asserted their issues with a proper ideological framework and their voices reached the ears of the public space. However, the

flourishing women's movement was diverted by the devastating bamboo famine which occurred in 1959. The famine had devastating impact especially on children and women. The *MHT* entirely focused their attention on the relief works affected by famine.

Towards the end of this famine epidemic, another development of ethnic politics took place. Lack of government relief work fuelled an angry young man to form armed rebels' organization called Mizo National Front in 1965. Right from the beginning of its inception, the structure as well as the framework of the organization was strongly based on masculine ideology exclusively dominated by men. In 1966, the organization contested against their marginality by the Indian nation state. The violent responding instrument of the nation state to the ethnic nation represented the body of a woman as a "site of battleground" for the two patriarchies. In the meanwhile, the ethnic patriarchal codes of moral conduct forced the women to remain silent and "faceless" before the community. Thus, a 'site of humiliation' created by the patriarchal war obstructed the voices of the 'passive' women in the Mizo insurgency history.

Despite the hypermasculine construction of ethnic nationalism, the women acquired several sites to move beyond the domestic space. Unlike the previous movement, women from different social classes emerged. The conventional documents also supported that the ideology of ethnic nationalism attracted the interest of many women. At the same time it ostensibly revealed the significance of the two gender roles and perspectives for the completion of ethnic nationalism. While reinforcing the traditional masculine roles within the structure of an insurgent militarism, the frequent relocation of gender labours and space placed the women to patriotically defend the ethnic nation both at the private and public space. In view of these, it is apparent that if the ethnic ideology placed more numbers of women in combat, the women volunteers would indubitably share the same capacity with their fellow men to achieve the required norms of ethnic patriotism.

Excluding some of the insurgent volunteers, most of the women (suspected volunteers and supporters, wives and relatives of the ethnic leaders) experienced the oppressive patriarchal nature of the nation-state. Nevertheless the use of alternative readings evidently prove that though many of the women suffered as women and as ethnic and were labeled as 'victims', they were not totally devoid of agency. Contrary to the dominant narratives on the enduring repression, these women by no means labeled themselves as victims. In many cases,

they used their bodies as a “site of resistance” against the nation state patriarchy, which rather supplemented the feelings of “pride, honour and resentment” and sharpened their feelings of ethnic consciousness. Accordingly within ‘a shared site of female victimization’ i.e. prison, women adopted different forms of agency. While they defensively represented the ethnic nation in ‘hiding’ secrets and information, most of these women entered a “site of battle” against the nation-state’s patriarchy to protect the ethnic men. Additionally, they individually and collectively reinforced songs as a means of expression for the ethnic aspiration and their resistance against the continuing oppressive power of the nation-state.

Whereas many of the women consciously and unconsciously shared the ethnic patriarchal ideology against the nation state, their oral testimonies exemplify the different definition of ethnic nationalism. The Mizo women’s definition of “nationalism” was far more inclusive and deeper by emphasizing on the importance of family and community as the foundation of the nation. Whereas ethnic leaders’ definition of nationalism remained within the ethnic territorial boundary (i.e. greater Mizoram) and attaining mere political power (i.e. independent ethnic State). Thus, the ethnic patriarchal project overlooked the women. Furthermore, women’s aspirations and desires were completely ignored within the settlement of power between the ethnic and the nation state. The peace accord signed between the MNF and the Indian Government in 1986 did not mention any single provision for women. In due course, the conscious efforts, roles and perspectives of the women vanished in the Mizo insurgency history. Thus, insurgency movement in the Mizo hills was far more important to the Mizo women as it radically transformed the women’s space into a discriminated space or the insurgency movement pushed the women back from public to private realm.

Each of the chapter in this thesis epitomizes the moments of women’s appearance, their status and their agency by mapping the social and political forces, which resulted to different transitional stages in Mizo history. Each transitional stage formed a kind of “consolidation” for patriarchal powers on the one hand, adjusted and resisted by women on the other hand. Women could never share equality with men and their agency remained unrecognized. Nevertheless besides the ‘successive re-invention of ‘Mizo patriarchies’ each epoch also witnessed the emergence of ‘new Mizo women’. The continual struggles of women and their conscious agenda within the successive stages in Mizo history deserve more recognition. Thus, not only re-reading of conventional archives, but more importantly, the use of alternative sources provides rich sources of women’s agency in Mizo history.

Endnotes and References.

¹ Joan Wallach Scott, Gender: A Useful Category in Historical Analysis, in Joan Wallach Scott (ed), *Feminism and History*, Oxford University Press, 1996. p. 169.

² Sajal Nag, *Pied Pipers in North East-India, Bamboo-Flowers, Rat-Famine and the Politics of Philanthropy* (1881-2007), Monohar, New Delhi, 2008. p.60

³ Several case studies of adultery between sexes were provided by colonial ethnographer A.G McCall in his book *Lushai Chrysalis*.

⁴ Partha Chatterjee, *The Partha Chatterjee Omnibus*, Oxford University Press, 1999. pp.129-130.

GLOSSARY

- ❑ *Ai*: A sacrificial ceremony offered as a result of good rice harvest or a wild creature killed in hunting or a foe killed in fighting.
- ❑ *Arkeziak*: A white long yarn
- ❑ *Bahzar*: An enclosed verandah at back of the house.
- ❑ *Bawi*: In *Lusei*, it means a bonded labourer who was usually owned by *Lusei* Chiefs. In case of *Lai*, it's mean "Lord" of high rank or Chiefs.
- ❑ *Buh thai*: The trampling of paddy performed during *chawng* sacrifice.
- ❑ *Buhfai tham*: A handful of rice collected by women's fellowship in the Church.
- ❑ *Bawlpu*: Medicine man
- ❑ *Chawng*: Sacrifice or feast performed by the *Lusei* chief in order to become *thangchhuah*, an important step to reach *Pialral*.
- ❑ *Chawngpa*: One who organized the *chawng* sacrifice or ceremony.
- ❑ *Chawngnu*: The wife of *chawngpa*.
- ❑ *Chawm or Chawmnu*: A malevolent deity or female demon.
- ❑ *Chhawn*: A tuft of goats' hair dyed red, generally worn suspended round the neck as an ornament, but on special occasions worn as a head plume by men who had taken heads.
- ❑ *Chhim*: Sacrifice performed for the barren *Lusei* women.
- ❑ *Chhungpuinu*: The legitimate wife.
- ❑ *Dan*: Customs.
- ❑ *Dawi*: Magic or witchcraft.
- ❑ *Dawithiam*: Wizard.
- ❑ *Fathang*: Rice due payable to *Lusei* chief.
- ❑ *Hmei*: Concubine.
- ❑ *Hmui*: A spindle.
- ❑ *Hnamchawm*: Commoners.
- ❑ *Inthen*: Divorce.
- ❑ *Kel khal*: Sacrifice of a goat performed by the *Luseis*.

- ❑ *Khawrum chhiat*: A sacrifice performed by *Lai* to get blessings for crops. Synonymous with *Mual hawng* and *Lo chhiat*.
- ❑ *Khawzing Pathian*: The *Lai* word denoting God.
- ❑ *Khawhring*: The name of a malignant spirit which closely approximates to what in English is known as the “evil eye”. The same is referred to as *Ahmaw* by the *Maras*.
- ❑ *Kisetna*: A rite performed by a *Paite* widow on the death of her husband, which spanned for a period of 3 lunar months.
- ❑ *Khuangchawi*: An elaborate feast given by the chiefs and well-to-do *Luseis*.
- ❑ *Khuavang*: An invisible benevolent female deity who sometimes appeared as an old woman.
- ❑ *Khuachultenu*: A female deity worshiped by the *Darlawng* clan of *Hmar*.
- ❑ *Khuanu*: Mother Goddess or spiritual deity. A benevolent deity and guardian of the village.
- ❑ *Khuavang zawl*: A person who was possessed by or who communicated with *khuavang* spirit.
- ❑ *Kuli awl*: Exemption from an impressed labour.
- ❑ *Kut*: Festival.
- ❑ *Lal*: *Lusei* chief.
- ❑ *Lawm*: An exchange of labour. *Lawmpa* refers to the male and *Lawmnu* to the female that constitute the partners of this exchange of labour especially in Jhum cultivation.
- ❑ *Lasi*: A beautiful spirit maiden who had complete control over wild animals.
- ❑ *Maimi*: The name of the spirit said to be responsible for a kind of paralysis without loss of consciousness.
- ❑ *Man*: Bride price.
- ❑ *Manpui*: Principal portion of a bride price.
- ❑ *Mantang*: Subsidiary portions of a bride price.
- ❑ *Meizial*: Mizo cigarette.

- ❑ *Mithun or sial*: Domestic bison. During the pre-colonial period it was the highest mode of exchange; a man's wealth was measured in terms of the number of *mithun/sial* that he possessed. It was also used as bride price and in sacrifices.
- ❑ *Mithirawplam*: The dance of the dead.
- ❑ *Mitthi Khua*: The home or village of the dead.
- ❑ *Ngawidawh*: Fishing, Occasionally this was organized as a community activity.
- ❑ *Nu*: Mother in noun, female in adjective.
- ❑ *Nula*: Young girl (unmarried).
- ❑ *Nula Rim*: Custom of courting girls.
- ❑ *Pa*: Father (*noun*), male (*adjective*).
- ❑ *Pasaltha*: Warrior or Brave man.
- ❑ *Pathian*: God in traditional Mizo belief
- ❑ *Pawnpui*: Quilt or a blanket of un-spun cotton.
- ❑ *Puithiam*: Traditional priest.
- ❑ *Pheichham*: A one-legged male deity who possessed the power of granting the wishes of those who could catch him.
- ❑ *Phung*: A giant female spirit or hobgoblin.
- ❑ *Pialral*: *Lusei* concept of a Paradise.
- ❑ *Pinu*: A *Lai* version of female demon.
- ❑ *Puan*: Loin cloth.
- ❑ *Puithiam*: A *Lusei* priest.
- ❑ *Raicheh*: To die in childbirth.
- ❑ *Ramhuai*: A demon or evil spirit.
- ❑ *Rokhawm*: Inheritance.
- ❑ *Sakhua*: An object of worship, a god or religion. Later it was used to signify the Mizo traditional religion.
- ❑ *Sadawt*: Official priest.

- ❑ *Sal*: Captive of wars.
- ❑ *Sakhua*: Religious rites.
- ❑ *Suntawng biak*: One of the most important traditional rituals of the *Paite* clan.
- ❑ *Sedawi*: The name of two of the series of sacrificial public feasts given by the aspirant of the distinction of *thangchhuah*.
- ❑ *Sechhun*: The sacrifice of mithun or bison performed by *Lais* and *Luseis*.
- ❑ *Sehrui*: The rope tethers the mithun or bison that symbolized bond between two groups.
- ❑ *Sepui*: A full-grown mithun or bison.
- ❑ *Sawn*: Illegitimate child.
- ❑ *Tau*: Malignant jungle spirit.
- ❑ *Tawlhloh puan*: A loin cloth used to honour a brave man.
- ❑ *Thangchhuahpa*: A person, especially chiefs or wealthy men who performed the ceremony of public feast.
- ❑ *Thangchhuahnu*: Wife of *Thangchhuahpa*.
- ❑ *Thangchhuahpuan*: Loin cloth possessed by *Thangchhuahpa*.
- ❑ *Thangchhuah Diar*: Headdress of *Thangchhuahpa*.
- ❑ *Thaibawih*: A henpecked husband.
- ❑ *Thai Parual*: A group of men (four or five) who trampled on the paddy during the *chawng* sacrifice.
- ❑ *Thiang lo*: Unlawful, taboo or misfortune
- ❑ *Thirdeng*: Blacksmith
- ❑ *Thival*: A necklace made of three straps of beads.
- ❑ *Thlaichhiah*: A rite performed by a *Lusei* widow on the death of her husband that spanned the period of 3 lunar months.
- ❑ *Thuam*: Dowry
- ❑ *Thul*: A basket used to keep clothing.

- ❑ *Tlang huai*: The spirit of a hill or a mountain.
- ❑ *Tuibur al*: Tobacco water. This tobacco water was looked upon as a great luxury, and when a traditional Mizo meets a friend, he offers it to him as a mark of courtesy.
- ❑ *Tui huai*: The spirit of a stream or a river.
- ❑ *Uire*: Adultery.
- ❑ *Upa*: Lusei chief's council of elders.
- ❑ *Vailen*: A Mizo term for colonial Expansion in their hills.
- ❑ *Val upa*: Village elders.
- ❑ *Vakul chang*: A head dress made of long tail feathers of hornbill.
- ❑ *Vawkpa*: A domesticated hog.
- ❑ *Vawkpa Sutnghak*: A hog which has been dedicated for ritual and sacrifice.
- ❑ *Zawl*: To be possessed or communicated by a spirit.
- ❑ *Zawn*: A punishment for women generally in the form of public rape.
- ❑ *Zawlbuk*: Bachelor's dormitory.
- ❑ *Zu*: Grain beer.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. PRIMARY SOURCES:

1.1 Colonial Accounts:

1.1.1 Colonial Documents: - (a) Letters, Reports & Diaries.

A.G. Mc Call's Letter to the Commissioner of Surma Valley and Hill Division, Silchar. Letter No. Mise/66Ed dated Aijal, the 13th November 1937, General Department, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Letter from H.J.S Cotton, Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the Commissioner of Chittagong, Dated Darjeeling, 12th sept, 1893, Political Department, Political Branch, No 45 P.D, C.B. -2, Pol-19, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Letter to The Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal from W. B Oldham, Commissioner of the Chittagong Division. No. 1702 L, CB-2, Pol-12, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Letter to the Magistrate of Chittagong from the Supt of the Chittagong jail on 6th January, 1895, Political Department, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Letter to the Magistrate of Chittagong, Dated, 24th June 1894, No 376L, Political Department, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Report by the Lieutenant F.R.F Boileau, On the Proposed Cart-Road to connect the Lushai hills with Haka, Rawalpindi, dated 27th April, 1893, CB-2, Pol-19, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Report of the Chin- Lushai Conference held at Lungleh in December, 1896, CB-1, G-3, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Shakespeare's letter on Report Concerning Ropuiliani Widow of Vandula and Her Son Lalthuama at Present Prisoners in Lungleh,. Memo No. 1032 G, D/Lungleh the 13th October 1893, Exhibit List: Serial No 28, Mizoram State Archive.

Shakespeare's Diary: 2.1.1892.

1.1.1 (b) COLONIAL NEWSPAPERS (English):

The Observer, 11th February, 1871.

The Pioneer, the 7th May, 1872.

1.1.1 (c) COLONIAL NEWSPAPERS (MIZO):

Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu, May, 1925. Printed by B.C Das at the Dina Nath Press, Sylhet and Published by Mr. A.R Giles Lushai Hills. Centenary Archives, Synod Office, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Lehkhabu, February 1904. Printed by B.C Das at the Dina Nath Press Sylhet and Published by Mr. A.R Giles Lushai Hills. Centenary Archives, Synod Office, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu, March, 1925. Printed by B.C Das at the Dina Nath Press Sylhet and Published by Mr. A.R Giles Lushai Hills. Centenary Archives, Synod Office, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Mizo Leh Vai chanchinbu, November, 1924. Printed by B.C Das at the Dina Nath Press Sylhet and Published by Mr. A.R Giles Lushai Hills. Centenary Archives, Synod Office, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Mizo Leh Vai Chanchin Lehkhabu, March 1905. Printed by B.C Das at the Dina Nath Press Sylhet and Published by Mr. A.R Giles Lushai Hills. Centenary Archives, Synod Office, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Mizo Leh Vai Chanchin Lehkhabu, February, 1903. Printed by B.C Das at the Dina Nath Press Sylhet and Published by Mr. A.R Giles Lushai Hills. Centenary Archives, Synod Office, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Lehkhabu, January, 1904. Printed by B.C Das at the Dina Nath Press Sylhet and Published by Mr. A.R Giles Lushai Hills. Centenary Archives, Synod Office, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Lehkhabu, August 1903. Printed by B.C Das at the Dina Nath Press Sylhet and Published by Mr. A.R Giles Lushai Hills. Centenary Archives, Synod Office, Aizawl, Mizoram.

1.1.2 Military Reports and Colonial Ethnographies.

Lewin, T.H ; *A Fly on the Wheel: How I helped to govern India*, FKPL, TRI, Aizawl, (Reprinted) 1977.

Lewin, T.H; *Wild Races of South-Eastern India*, FKPL, TRI, Aizawl, (Reprinted)1978.

Mackenzie, A.Z; *History of Relations of the Government with the Hills Tribes of the North-East Frontier of Bengal* , Calcutta, 1884.

McCall, A.G; *The Lushai Chrysalis*, (Luzac & Co., London 1949), FKPL, Calcutta on behalf of TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1977.

Parry, N.E; *A Monograph of Lushai Customs and Ceremonies*, TRI, Aizawl, 1998.

Reid, A.S; *Chin-Lushai Land*, FKLM on behalf of TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1976.

Reid, Robert; *The Lushai Hills: Culled From History of the Frontiers Areas of Bordering on Assam, From 1883-1941*, FKPL on behalf of TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1978.

Woodthorpe, R.G; *Lushai Expedition (1871-1872)*, (London, 1873), FKPL on behalf of TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1978.

1.2 Christian Missionary and Church Accounts - Church Reports, News paper, Women's Writings

Bounds, May & Gwladys M. Evan; *Medical Mission in Mizoram: Personal Experiences*, The Synod Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1987.

Chapman, E & Clark, M; *Mizo Miracle*, The Christian literature Society, Madras, 1968.

Pasena, Ch; 'Hmeichhe Lehkha Zirna', In *Kristian Tlangau*, September, 1915.

Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society 1901-1938, Mizoram Gospel Centenary Committee, Baptist Church of Mizoram, 1993.

Reports of the Foreign Mission of The Presbyterian Church of Wales on Mizoram 1894-1957, Compiled by Thanzauva, K, The Synod Literature and Publication Boards, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1997.

Roberts, Gwen Rees; *Memories of Mizoram: Recollections and Reflections*, The Mission Board, Presbyterian Church of Wales, 2001.

Serkawn Mission School Exmination Results 1904-1952, Baptist Archive, Serkawn Mizoram.

1.3 Government of Mizoram records, Memorandum, Pamphlets, Letters and Newspapers:

'8th Sitting of Mizoram District Council June (Session), 14. 6.1955', in *Zoram Hriattirna*, (District Information) November, 15, 1955.

A note on the Present Situation in the Mizo Hills District, Aijal, Dated 30.6.1966. CB-115, G-1399, Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl Mizoram.

Chawngkunga, C; *Important Document of Mizoram*, Art And Culture Department, Mizoram, Aizawl, 1998.

Confessional Statement of an MNF volunteer Tawnluia, Dated, and 11.1.1967. MNF Document Vol.III, College Archive, ATC, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Copy of the letter from K. Natwar Singh Prime Minister's Secretariat, New Delhi-11 to A. N Kidwai, Chief Secretary, Government of Assam. No. PMS-20696, Dated. 25th September, 1966, CB-115, G-1393, Mizoram State Archive.

Letter to Pu Laldenga, President, Mizo National Front GHQ, Camp E.P (East Pakistan) From Pu Lalnunmawia, Vice President, Mizo National Front GHQ, Aizawl, Mizoram, No. MN P-I 'V-P)/66/7, Tahrik Aizawl, April 14, 1966. MNF Document Vol II, College Archive, A.T.C, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Lianzuala, S; Secretary, Ministry of Information, Broadcasting and Publicity (MNF), Government of Mizoram; India hi Bumhmang, Suamhmang leh Rukru Sawrkar a ni (India is the most exploitative and Corrupt Government), Thupuan, D/86-13, 21st March 1966, MNF Document, Vol III, ATC Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Lianzuala, S; Secretary, Ministry of Information, Broadcasting and Publicity (MNF), Government of Mizoram, Pamphlet, June, 1966.

List of Lushai Chiefs, CB-77, No: 897 (1), Mizoram State Archives, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Lushai Chief Council Members, CB-77, No: 897 (2), Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram, Memorandum submitted by the MNF General Headquarters, Aizawl, on 30th October 1965.

Proceedings of the Meeting of the Accredited Leaders of Lushai hills held at Aijal on 14th August, 1947.

Section II of the Report of the meeting between Church Delegation and Mr. Laldenga, President of Mizoram MNF Document Vol.II, College Archive, ATC, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Speech of Shri R. Natarajan, IAS, Deputy Commissioner, Mizo District on the occasion of the Independence Day, 15th August, 1966., CB-115, G-1393 Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

1.4 Women's Organizational Records, minutes, reports & Letters.

Letter to the Chief Minister, Government of Assam, Shillong from Miss Biaksiami, General Secretary, Mizo Women's Union, Aijal. No. MHT/3 Dated the 11th April 1962. CB No; 97, G-1188. Mizoram State Archive, Aizawl, Mizoram.

The Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Minutes of 7th -9th February, 1951.

The Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Minutes No 1 of 23rd August, 1947.

The Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Minutes of 19th August, 1948.

1.5 Unpublished Autobiographies:

Roberts, Imogen; *Mawii's Story in 1940's* (Received from Rev Dr. H. Sangkhuma Presbyterian Church of Wales, Wales, UK in 2005).

Vanlalzari, B; *Hnehna chu Lalpa ta ani*, Unpublished Autobiography (Received from the author in 2008).

1.5 Personal Interviews:

Chawngpari- A female volunteer during the post colonial insurgency movement. Date of interview: 23rd March 2007, Champhai, Mizoram.

Hrangzovi- A female medical sergeant who was selected for guerilla war tactic during the post-colonial insurgency movement. Date of interview: 29th March 2005 in Saitual, Mizoram.

Khawlkungi- Student of Welsh Mission Girls' School from 1933-1941, who later joined Women Auxiliary Corps during the Second World War in Calcutta. Date of interview: 26th December, 2008, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Lalngurauva (Rev, Dr)- Chairman of Aizawl Citizen's Committee and a member of Peace Committee during the post-colonial insurgency movement. Date of Interview: 6th September, 2008, Aizawl. Mizoram.

Lalrinsangi- One of the female volunteers during the insurgency movement, who was imprisoned in Silchar Jail. Date of interview: 8th September, 2008. Durtlang, Mizoram.

Lalthansangi- A female medical sergeant of the Mizo National Army. Date of interview: 19th September 2008.

Lalthlamuani- A female volunteer of the MNF. Date of interview: 15th September, 2008, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Lalthlamuani, C (Late)- She was the only woman volunteer who was posted as a Deputy Secretary to the Government of (Provincial) Mizoram during the insurgency period. Date of interview: 7th March, 2005.

Luaia, H.S (Rev, Dr); One of the members of the Christian Peace Committee during the insurgency movement. Date of interview: 19th January, 2006, Serkawn, Lunglei, Mizoram.

Nikhumi- A female volunteer during the insurgency movement. Date of interview: 19th September, 2008.

Rebeki- One of the women who entered East Pakistan as an MNF volunteers during the insurgency movement. Date of interview: 23rd June 2007, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Rohliri- Student of Welsh Mission Girls' School, Date of Interview: 29th December 2008, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Saillianpuui - Daughter of a Sailo Chief Lalrumruta Sailo. Date of interview: 15th March 2007, Rulchawm, Mizoram.

Sapbawii- Student of Welsh Mission Girls' School from 1937-1945, who became a teacher at the same school from 1955 to 1995. Date of interview, 10th January, 2009, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Sikulthangi- Wife of the MNF Home Minister, Sainghaka. She was imprisoned with her sister-in-law Zachhingi, her mother and her infant son in 1966. Date of interview: 1st March, 2007.

Tinsangi- A female volunteer who joined the MNF insurgency movement as a nurse. An interview was held at Aizawl on 27th February 2007.

Vanlalzari, B- A typist in the IGP office at Aizawl. She was suspected to be involved in the killing of an IGP in 1975. She was detained in Aizawl, Silchar and Tejpur jail from 1975 to 1980. Dates of interviews: 16th August, 2006, 19th September, 2008, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Zachhingi- Wife of Zailiana one of the MNF leaders. She was detained in Aizawl, Silchar, Tejpur and Nowgong jail with her 9 months old daughter in 1966. Date of interview: 15th February, 2007, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Zama, C; Author of *Zoram a Tap* and one of the MNF insurgent volunteers who was detained in Silchar jail for a year. Date of interview: 16th September 2008, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Zamawia, R- Author of *Zofate Zinkawngah Zalenna mei a mit tur a ni lo* and a Secretary, Ministry of Defence during the provincial Government of Mizoram. Date of interview: 5th September, 2008, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Zokhumi- Student of Welsh Mission Girls' School who got first rank in Middle English Examination of Lushai hills in 1943. Date of interview: 5th January, 2009, Aizawl, Mizoram.

2. SECONDARY SOURCES:

2.1 Books (Mizo):

A Lai Bu, Synod Bookroom, Aizawl, Mizoram, (26th Edition), 1978.

Awia, M.C; *Mizo Hnam Dan 1956*, Arbee Publication, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1996.

Biaksiami; *Mizorama Hmeichhe Tangrual Pawl Ding Hmasa Ber Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Pawl (MHTP)*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1982.

Carter, H.W. (ed); *Chhimbial Kohhran Chanchin (History of South Mizo Church)*, South Lushai Mission Press, Lungleh, 1945.

Challiana; *Pi Pu Nun*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1987.

Chaltuakhuma; *Poilitical History of Mizoram*, LB Press, Aizawl, 1981.

Chawngkunga, C; *Mizo Sakhua*, T.R.I, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1997.

Dahrawka, P.S; *Mizo Thawnthu*, Chhing Veng, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1994.

Dokhuma, James; *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphung*, J.D Press Publication, Mizoram, 1992.

- Hawla, V; *Hmarchan Zosapte Chanchin (Welsh Missionaries) 1897-1968*, Mizoram Publication Board, 1980.
- Hermana, C; *Zoram Politics Thli Tleh Dan, Vol I*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1999.
- Hermana, C; *Zoram Politics Thli Tleh Dan, Vol-II (1972-1999)*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1999.
- Hluna, J.V (ed); *Zawlkhawpui Senmei Channi*, ZNOC, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2005.
- Lalbiaknema, C; *Mizote Khawsak Dan*, Mizoram Publication Board, 2000.
- Lalbuaia; *Zoram Hmel Ti Danglamtute*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2002.
- Laldawla, K; *Vanglainite Hnam Tan (A True Story on Patriotism)*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2006.
- Lalhlera; *Mizo te Sipai lamah, Mizoram Kum 100:Kum100 chhunga Mizote Awm Dan*, Synod Publication Board, 1996.
- Lalngurauva; *Mizoram Buai Leh Kohhran*, Mizoram Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2008.
- Lalrawnliana; *Zoramin Zalenna a Sual Vol V*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1998.
- Lalrawnliana; *Zoramin Zalenna a Sual Vol- VIII*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2000.
- Lalrawnliana; *Zoramin Zalenna a Sual, Vol 1*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1995.
- Lalremsiama, F, *Milu lak leh vai run chanchin*, MCL Publication, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1997.
- Lalrinawma, H; *Hmasang Zofate Chanchin*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2000.
- Lalsawia; *Zoram Hming-Hmel*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1996.
- Lalthangliana, B (ed); *Mizo Lal Ropuite Volume-I*, T.R.I, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1989.
- Lalthangliana, B; *Chawnpui: Essays on Mizo History, Culture, Literature and Letters*, Mizoram Publication Board, 2004.
- Lalthangliana, B; *India, Burma Leh Bangladesh- Mizo Chanchin*, R.T.M. Press, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2001.
- Lalthangliana, B; *Mizo Literature*, M.C. Lalrinthanga, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1993.
- Lalthangliana, B; *Pi Pu Chhualhtlang*; Hrangbana College Aizawl, Mizoram, 1998.
- Lalthangliana, B; *Zotui; Studies in Mizo Literature, language, culture and history*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2006.
- Lalthanliana; *Mizo Chanchin (Kum 1900 Hma Lam)*, Vanbuangi Gas Agency, Aizawl Mizoram, 2000.

- Liangkhaia; *Mizo Chanchin*, M.A.L, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1976.
- Liangkhaia; *Mizo Mi leh Thil Hmingthangte leh Mizo Sakhua*, M.A.L, Aizawl, Mizoram. 1973.
- Lianhminga, K; S. *Vanlaiphai Khaw History*, Lalmanmawia, K, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2000.
- Lianthanga, C; *Hmanlai Mizo Nun*, Mizoram Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1999.
- Lunghnema, V; *Mizo Chanchin (B.C. 300-1929 A.D)*, Nongrim Hills Shillong, Meghalaya, 2000.
- Malsawma, J, *Vanglai (Autobiography)*, Macdonald Hill, Zarkawt, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1995.
- Malsawma, J; *Vanglai (Autobiography)*, Macdonald Hill, Zarkawt Aizawl, 1995.
- Malsawma, J; *Zonun*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1980.
- Malsawmi, L; *Mizo Kohhran Hmeichhiate Chanchin*, Aizawl, 1973.
- Mizo Hnam Dan (Customary Law)* 1956, Enforced with effect from 1956 vide Mizo Hnam Dan (Operation Order), 1957 as amended in 1960, 1996.
- Mizo Sakhua (Kumpinu Rorel Hma)*; T.R.I, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1983.
- Mizo Ziarang*; M.A.L, Aizawl, 1975.
- Mizoram District Gazetteers*, Published by Art & Culture, Government of Mizoram, Education and Human Resources Department, Aizawl, 1989.
- Mizoram Kum 100: Kum100 chhunga Mizote Awm Dan*, Synod Publication Board, 1996.
- Nuchhungi & Zirtiri (eds), *Serkawn Graded Readers: Mizo Thawnthu*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2003.
- Pawi Chanchin*; TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1988.
- Pi Pu Chhuahtlang*; Farkawn Souvenir, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1998.
- Ralte, Lalrinawmi; *Bible Women-te Nghilloh Nan*, Shalom Publication, Bangalore, 2004.
- Rokhuma, K. L; *Mizoram Zirna: Mission Leh Kohhran Rawngbawlina*, The Communication Department, Baptist Church Of Mizoram, 1998.
- Rongenga, F; *Zofate Lo Khawsak Chhoh Dan*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2000.
- Saiaithanga, *Mizo Sakhua*, Lengchhawn Press, Aizawl, Mizoram 1994.
- Sailo, K. Hawlla; *Mizo Ngaihdaan Dek Che Tham (Hmangaitute leh Hmangaihte Inthenna)*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2001.

- Sailo, Lalsangzuali; *Sakhming Chullo*, AJBM Publication, Bungkawn Nursery, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1995.
- Sailo, Lalsangzuali; *Tlawm Ve Lo Lalnu Ropuiliani*, Hnamte Press, Mizoram, 2001.
- Sailo, Lalzama & Ngurliana, Brig; *Kan Ram*, Aizawl, Mizoram. 1987.
- Sailo, Vanlalringa; *Chengrang Chawilai nite*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2008.
- Sailo, Vanlalvuana; *Mizoram Humhaltu Lal Vandula Lalnu Ropuiliani*, L.V. Art, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1999.
- Sangkhuma, Z.T; *Missionary Te Hnuhma*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1995.
- Sangkhuma, Z.T; *Mizo Hnam Inneihna*, Aizawl, 2002.
- Shalomon; *History of Mizo Israel*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1994.
- Thanga (Laithangpuia); *Hmanlai Mizo Awm Dan*, Lalsangpuui, Chandmari Aizawl. Mizoram 1992.
- Vanlaltlani, T; *Mizo Hmeichhiate Kawngzawh*, Mizoram Publication Board, 2005.
- Vanlawma, R; *The Mizo Union*, L.O Press, Aijal (Aizawl), Mizoram, 1946.
- Zairema, Rev; *Pi Pute Biak Hi*, Zorun Community, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2009.
- Zairemthanga; *Tripura Mizo History*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1992.
- Zaithanchhungi; *Mizo Israel Identity*, Benjamin Press, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1974.
- Zama, C; *Chengrang A Au Ve!*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2008.
- Zama, C; *Mizo Pasalthate Part II*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1990.
- Zama, C; *Mizo Pasalthate Part-I*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1989.
- Zama, C; *Zoram A Tap*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2008.
- Zamawia, R; *Zofate Zinkawngah- Zalenna Mei a mit tur a ni lo*, Aizawl, 2007.
- Zatluanga; *Mizo Chanchin*, Directorate of Art & Culture, Government of Mizoram, 1996.
- Zawla, K; *Mizo Pi Pute leh An Thlahte Chanchin*, Aizawl, 1976.
- Zomuani; *Kum Za Chhung Kohhran Hmeichhe Chanchin (1904-2004)*, CKHC, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2004.

2.2 Books in English:

Alcoff, Linda & Eduardo Mendieta; *Identities: race, class, gender, and nationality*, Blackwell Publishing, 2003.

Amin, Shahid & Dipesh Chakrabarty (eds); *Subaltern Studies IX: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Oxford University Press, 1996.

Anagol, Padma; *The Emergence of Feminism in India (1850-1920)*, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005.

Banerji, Himani; *Inventing subjects; Studies in Hegemony, Patriarchy and Colonialism*, Tulika Books, 2001.

Baruah, Sanjib; *India Against Itself: Assam and Politics of Nationality*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999.

Bhattacharjee, J. B; *Studies in History of North-East India*, Essay in honour of Professor H.K Barpuraji, N.E.H.U Publication with NEIHA, 1986.

Bhaumik, Subhir; *Insurgent Crossfire: Northeast India*, Delhi, Lancers, 1990.

Bloch, Marc; *Feudal Society*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961.

Bose, Purnima; *Organizing Empire: Individualism, Collective Agency and India*, Zubaan (An imprint of Kali for Women), 2006.

Bridenthal, Renace, Claudia Koonz & Stuard, Susan (eds.); *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1977.

Burton, Antoinette; *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home and History in Late Colonial India*, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 2003.

Butalia, Urvashi; *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1998.

Carroll, Bernice A.; *Liberating Women's History: Theoretical and Critical Essays*, University of Illinois Press, 1976.

Carr, E. H: *What is History?* New York, 1967.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh; *Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the Wake of Subaltern Studies*, Permanent Black, India, 2006.

Chakravarti, Uma; *Everyday Lives, Everyday Histories: Beyond the Kings and Brahmanas of 'Ancient' India*, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2007.

Chakravarti, Uma; *Rewriting History: The Life and Times of Pandita Ramabai*, Zubaan, 2006.

Chakravorty, Swapan, Suzana Milevska & Tani E Barlow; *Conversations with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*, Seagull Books, 2006.

Chambers, O.A; *Handbook of the Lushai Country*, (The Superintendent of Government Printing India, Calcutta 1899), FKPL, Kolkota, 2005.

Chatterjee, Partha; *The Partha Chatterjee Omnibus*, Oxford University Press, 1999.

Chatterjee, Suhash; *Mizo Chiefs and Chiefdom*, M.D Publication, Delhi, 2000.

Chatterjee, Suhash; *Mizoram under the British Rule, Mizoram*, Mittal Publications, Delhi, 1985.

Chatterji, N; *Status of Women in the Earlier Mizo Society*, TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1975.

Chatterji, N; *The Earlier Mizo Society*, TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram 2008.

Clark, Elizabeth & Herbert Richardson; *Women and Religion; A feminist Source Book of Christian Thought*, Harper & Row Publishers, London, 1977.

Cohn, Bernard S; *Colonialism and its form of Knowledge: The British in India*, Princeton University Press, 1996.

De Mel, Neloufer & Selvy Thiruchandran; *At the Cutting Edge: Essays in Honour of Kumari Jayawardena*, Women Unlimited (Kali for women), New Delhi, 2007.

Derrida, J; *Archive Fever*, University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Devy, G.N; *Indigeneity: Culture and Representation*, Orient Blackswan, 2009.

Dirks, Nicholas B; *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India*, Princeton University, 2001.

Downs, Frederick S.; *The Christian Impact On the Women in North East India*, North East Hill University Publication, Shillong, 1996.

Downs, Frederick S; *Christianity in Northeast India*, ISPCK, 1983.

Dube, Leela; *Women and Kinship (Comparative Perspective on Gender In South and South East Asia)*, United Nations University Press, 1997.

Dutta, Anuradha & Ratna Bhuyan; *Women and Peace: Chapters from Northeast India*, New Delhi, Akansha, 2008.

E. O'Neill, Bart, William R. Heaton & Donald J. Alberts (eds.); *Insurgency in Modern World*, Westview Press, Colorado, 1980.

Engels, Friedrich; *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977.

- Fachhai, Laiu; *The Maras*, Evangelical Church of Maraland Mission, Siaha, Mizoram, 1994.
- Fisch, Jorg (translated by Rekha Kamath Rajan); *Immolating Women: A Global History of Widow Burning from Ancient to the Present*, Permanent Black, 2006.
- Forbes, Geraldine; *Women in Colonial India: Essays on Politics, Medicine, and Historiography*, D.C Publication, Delhi, 2005.
- Forbes, Geraldine; *Women in Modern India*, Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Foucault, Michel; *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*, Vintage, New York, 1979.
- Gcrhard, Dietrich; *Old Europe: A Study of Continuity, 1000- 1800* New York, 1981.
- Geetha, V; *Theorizing Women*, Stree, Kolkota, 2002.
- Gill, Preeti; *Troubled Zones: Women's Voices from North-East India*, Zubaan, New Delhi, 2009.
- Gluck, S.S & D Patai (eds): *Women's World: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, Routledge, London, 1991.
- Graziano, Frank; *Divine violence: Spectacle, psychosexuality and radical Christianity in the Argentine "Dirty War" Boulder*, Westview Press, 1992.
- Grierson, G; *Linguistic Survey of India*, Voll-III, Part-III, Motilal Banarsidass, (Reprinted), 1976.
- Griffin, Susan; *Pornography and Silence*, Haper and Row, Newyork, 1981.
- Guha, Ranajit (ed); *Subaltern Studies 1: Writings on South Asian history and Studies*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1982.
- Gupta, V.P. & Mohini Gupta; *Mother Goddess- A Global Perspective*, AMBE Books, Delhi, 1999.
- Harding, Sandra (ed); *Feminism and Methodology*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1986.
- Hazarika, Sanjoy; *Strangers of the Mist: Tales of War and Peace from India's North East*, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 1995.
- Hluna, J.V; *Church and Political Upheavals in Mizoram*, MHA, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1985.
- Hluna, JV; *Education and Missionaries in Mizoram*, Spectrum, New Delhi, 1992.
- Hminga, C. L; *The life and Witness of the Churches in Mizoram*, Literature Committee, Baptist Church of Mizoram, 1987.

Hrangkhuma, F (ed); *Christianity in India: Search For Liberation and Identity*, CMS/ISPCK, New Delhi, 1998.

Hussain, Monirul (ed); *Coming Out of Violence: Essays On Ethnicity, Conflict Resolution and Peace Process in North-East India*, Regency Publications, New Delhi, 2005.

Inden, Ronald B; *Imagining India*, Blackwell publishers, 1990.

Janapathy, Varalakshmi; *Isolated Land and Their Gentle Women*, Spectrum Publication, New Delhi, 1995.

Joseph, Betty; *Reading the East India Company, 1720-1840: Colonial Currencies of Gender*, Orient Longman, 2006.

Kazi, Seema; *Between Democracy and Nation: Gender and Militarization in Kashmir*, Women Unlimited (An Associate of Kali for Women) New Delhi, 2009.

Kelly, Joan; *Women, History and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly*, Chicago, 1984.

Kipgen, Mangkhosat; *Christianity and Mizo Culture*, The Eastern Theological College, Jorhat, 1996.

Lalneihzovi (ed); *Role of Ropuiliani in the Freedom Struggle*, Gilzom Offset, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2005.

Lalrimawia; *Mizoram: History and Cultural Identity*, Spectrum, New Delhi, 1995.

Lehman, F.K; *The Structure of Chin Society*, FKPL on behalf of TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1978.

Lerner, Gerda; *The Creation Of Patriarchy*, Oxford University Press, 1986.

Levi-Strauss, Claude; *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, Boston, 1969.

Lloyd, J. M; *On every high hill*, Synod Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1984.

Lloyd, J.M; *History of the Church in Mizoram, (Harvest in the Hills)*, Synod Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1991.

Longkumer, Limatula (ed); *No more Sorrow in God's Garden of Justice: Tribal women Doing Theology*, Women's Study Department, Eastern Theological College, Jorhat, Assam, 2007.

Lorrain, J.H ; *Dictionary of the Lushai Language*, The Asiatic society, 1975.

Manchanda, Rita (ed) *Women, War and Peace in South Asia: Beyond Victimhood to Agency*, Sage Publication, 2001.

Marxist Philosophy: An Introduction, New Vistas Publication, 2002.

Mc Nay, Lois; *Foucault and Feminism: Power, Gender and the Self*, Polity Press in association with Blackwell Publishers, 1992.

- Menon, Ritu & Kamla Bhasin; *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*, New Brunswick, N.J Rutgers University Press, 1998.
- Morton, Stephen; *Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak*, Routledge, 2003.
- Mukhopadaya, Lipi; *Tribal Women in Development*, Publications Division, New Delhi, 2002.
- Nag, Sajal; *Contesting Marginality: Ethnicity, Insurgency and Sub-nationalism In North East India*, Manohar, New Delhi, 2002.
- Nag, Sajal; *Roots of Ethnic Conflict: Nationalities Question in Northeast India*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1990.
- Nash, Mary; *Defying Male Civilization: Women in Spanish Civil War*, Arden Press, Denver, 1995.
- Nelson, C & Crossberg, L (eds); *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1988.
- Nibedon, Nirmal; *Mizoram: The Dagger Brigade*, Lancers, Delhi, 1983.
- Oliver, Kelly; *Women as Weapons of War: Iraq, Sex and the Media*, Seagull, Culcutta, 2008.
- Phadke, Sindhu; *Women's Status in North East India*, Decent Books, New Delhi, 2008.
- Portelli, A; *The Death of Luigi Trastalli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History*, SUNY Press, New York, 1991.
- Raj, Maithreyi Krishna (ed), *Women's studies in India*. Bombay Popular Prakashan, 1986.
- Randall, Vicky; *Women And Politics*, MacMillan Education Limited, Hong Kong, 1986.
- Rao, V.V; *A Century of Tribal Politics of Northeast India*, Delhi, 1976.
- Ray, Aminesh, *India-The Land and the People: Mizoram*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1993.
- Ray, Aminesh; *Mizoram Dynamics of Change*, Pearl Publishers, Calcutta, 1982.
- Rowbotham, Sheila; *Hidden From History*, New York, 1974.
- Roy, Kumkum(ed); *Readings in Early Indian History: Women in Early Indian Societies*, Manohar, 2005.
- Roy, Shibani; *Tribal Customary Law of North East India*, B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi, 1990.
- Said, Edward; *Orientalism*, Vintage, Newyork, 1978.

- Saikia, Yasmin; *Fragmented Memories: Struggling to be Tai-Ahom in India*, Duke University Press, 2004.
- Sajjad, Hassan. M; *Understanding the breakdown in North-East India: Explorations in state-society relations*, Development Studies Institute, London School of Economics, London, 2007.
- Sangari, Kumkum and Vaid, Sudesh; *Recasting Women*, Kali for Women, 1989.
- Sangkima, *Mizos: Society and Social Change*, Spectrum Publications, Guwahati, 1992.
- Sangkima; *History of the Mizos*, Spectrum, Guwahati, 2004.
- Scott, Joan Wallach (ed); *Feminism and History*, Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Sen, Indrani; *Woman and Empire: Representations in the Writings of British India (1858-1900)*, Orient Longman, 2002.
- Shah, Kirit K(ed); *History and Gender, Some Explorations*, Rawat Publication, Jaipur, 2005.
- Shakespeare, J; *The Lushei Kuki Clans*, TRI, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1988.
- Sharma, Manorama; *History and History Writing in North East India*, Regency Publication, New Delhi, 1998.
- Shrestha, Ava Darshan & Rita Thapa (eds); *The Impact of Armed Conflict on Women in South Asia*, Manohar, 2007.
- Singh, Ralph (ed); *Changing the Terrorist Mind-Bringing Sustainable Peace to Mizoram: A blue print to end the terror that grips the world*, Gobind Sadan Institute, 2005.
- Silva, Neluka; *The Gendered Nation: Contemporary Writings from South Asia*, Sage Publication, 2005.
- Tharu, Susie & K Lalita (eds); *Women writing in India: 600 BC to the early 20th century*, London, 1991.
- The Personal Narrative Group (eds); *Interpreting women's Lives*, Indiana University Press, 1989.
- Vanlalchhuanawma; *Christianity and Subaltern Culture, Revival Movement as a Cultural Response to Westernization in Mizoram*. ISPCK, 2006.
- Vansina, Jan; *Oral Tradition: A study in Historical Methodology*, Chicago, Aldine, 1965.
- Verghese, B.G; *India's Northeast Resurgent: Ethnicity, Insurgency, Governance, Development*, Konark Publishers, Delhi, 1996.
- Vityarthi; *Tribal Culture of India*, Delhi, 1976.

Weiler, Kathleen and Middleton, Sue (eds); *Telling Women's Lives: Narratives Inquiries in the History of Women's Education*, Open University Press, 1999.

Wilson, Fiona & Bodil Folke Frederiksen; *Ethnicity, Gender and the Subversion of Nationalism*, Frank Cass, London, 1995.

Zairema; *God's Miracle in Mizoram: A Glimpse of Christian Work Among the Head Hunters*, Synod Press&Book Room, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1978.

Zakhuma, K.M; *Political Development in Mizoram from 1946 to 1989; A Study with Special Reference to Political Parties in Mizoram*, Mizoram Publication Board, 2001.

Zathang, Vanupa; *A Philosophy of Tlawmngaihna, a greatest Mizo culture*, Manipur, 1999.

Zinsser, Judith P; *History and Feminism; A Glass Half Full*, Twanye Publishers, New York, 1993.

2.3. Articles in English Journals:

Bacchetta, Paola; 'Reinterrogating Partition Violence: Voices of Women/Children/ Dalits in India's Partition', *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3, 2000.

Ballantine, Tony; 'Archive, Discipline, State: Power and Knowledge in South Asian Historiography', *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1, June, 2001.

Banerjee, Sikata; 'Armed masculinity, Hindu nationalism and female political participation in India', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Vol.8, No. 1, March, 2006.

Bauman, Chad, M; 'Redeeming Indian "Christian" Womanhood: Missionaries, Dalits, and Agency in Colonial India', *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, Vol. 24. No.2, 2008.

Bruner, Charlotte H; 'Proverbial Wisdom about Women (Reviewed Works): Source of All Evil: African Proverbs and Sayings on Women by Mineke Schipper', *Callaloo*, Vol. 15, No. 4, Autumn, 1992.

Burton, Antoinette; 'History Practice: Finding Women in Archive', *Journal of Women's History*, Vol. 20 No. 1, 2008.

Butalia, Urvashi; 'Community, State and Gender: On Women's Agency during Partition', *EPW*, Vol. 28, No 17, April 24, 1993.

Campbell, A; 'On the Looshais', *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol.3, 1874.

Chatterjee, Indrani; 'Archives and Sources: Testing the Local against the Colonial Archive', *History Workshop Journal*, Issue 44, 1997.

Chatterjee, Partha; 'Colonialism, Nationalism and Colonized Women: The Contest in India', *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 16, No. 4. November, 1989.

Endfield, Georgina, H & Nash J, David; '*Happy is the bride the rain falls on*': climate, health and 'the woman question' in nineteenth-century missionary documentation, Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, Volume 30, Number 3, September, 2005.

Forbes, Geraldine; 'In Search of the 'Pure Heathen': Missionary Women in Nineteenth Century India', *EPW*, Vol XXI, No. 17, April 26, 1986.

Gerassi, John (interview); 'Simone de Beauvoir: The second sex 25 years later', *Humanities, Social Sciences and Law*, Vol.13, No. 2, January, 1976.

Gupta, Malabika Das; 'Greater Mizoram Issue and Tripura', *EPW*, Vol. 21, No. 37, September 13, 1986.

Hancock, Mary; 'Home Science and Nationalization of Domesticity in Colonial India', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 35, No 4, October, 2001.

Higgins, Tracy E; 'Reviving the Public/Private Distinction in Feminist Theorizing', *Chicago-Kent Law Review*, Vol .75, 2000.

Hodson, T. C; 'Head Hunting Among the Hill Tribes of Assam', *Folklore*, Vol.20, No. 2 June 30, 1909.

Hollister C. Warren, 'The Phases of European History and the Nonexistence of the Middle Ages,' *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 61, 1992.

Hutton, J.H; 'The Significance of Head Hunting in Assam', *The journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 58, July- December 1928.

Jason, Heda; 'Proverbs in Society: The Problem of Meaning and Function', *Proverbium*, Vol. 17, 1971.

Jose, Jim; 'Contesting Patrilineal Descent in Political Theory: James Mill and Nineteenth-Century Feminism', *Hypatia*, Vol. 15, No. 1, Winter, 2000.

King, Angela; 'The prisoner of gender: Foucault and the Disciplining of the Female Body', *Journal Of International Women's Studies*, March 01, 2004.

Kosambi, Meera; 'Indian Response to Christianity, Church and Colonialism: Case of Pandita Ramabai', *EPW*, Vol. 27, No. 43/44, October 24-31, 1992.

Lalngakthuami; 'Quest for Women's Identity from a Mizo Women's Perspective', *Mizoram Theological Journal*, Vol. VI, January – March, 2005.

Lalremsiama; 'The traditional religious belief of the Mizos', *Historical Journal Mizoram*, Vol-1, Issue-1.

Leydesdorff, Selma; 'Gender and the Categories of Experienced History', *Gender and History*, Vol.11, No 3, 1999.

- Loo, Tina; 'Of Moose and Men: Hunting for Masculinities in British Columbia 1880-1939', *Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol.32, Autumn, 2001.
- Lynn Chun Ink; 'Remaking Identity, Unmaking Nation: Historical Recovery and the Reconstruction of Community in the Time of the Butterflies and the Farming of Bones', *Callaloo* Vol. 27, No. 3, 2004.
- Mani, Lata; 'Production of an official discourse on sati in early nineteenth century Bengal', *EPW*, Vol. 21, No. 17 April 26, 1986.
- Marijke Du Toit; 'The Domesticity of Afrikaner Nationalism: Volksmoeders and the ACVV, 1904-1929', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol.29, No.1, March, 2003.
- Marriott, Kanta Kaur; "Reviews on Antoinette Burton's Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home and History in Late Colonial India", *Journal of the Oxford University History Society*, 2006.
- Meillassoux, Claude, 'From Reproduction to Production: A Marxist Approach to Economic Anthropology', *Economy and Society*, No. 1, 1972.
- Muller, Jean-Claude; 'Intertribal Hunting un Rukuba', *Ethnology*, Vol.21, No. 3, July, 1982.
- Nagel, Joane; 'Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 1998.
- Newman, Karen; 'Portia's Ring: Unruly Women and Structures of Exchange in The Merchant of Venice', In *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Spring), 1987.
- Padmini Swaminathan; 'Women's Education in Colonial Tamil Nadu, 1900-1930: The Coalescence of Patriarchy and Colonialism', In *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1999.
- Papic, Zarana; 'Nationalism, Patriarchy and War in Ex-Yugoslavia', *Women's History Review*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1994.
- Reif, Linda L; 'Women in Latin American Guerrilla Movements: A Comparative Perspective', *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 18, No. 2, January, 1986.
- Rosanga, O; British Policy Towards the Mizo till 1890, *Historical Journal Mizoram*, Vol-III, Issue-I, M.H.A, July 2002.
- Roy, Mallarika Sinha; 'Speaking Silence: Narrative of Gender in the Historiography of the Naxalbari Movement in West Bengal (1967-75)', *Journal of South Asian Development* Vol. 1, No. 2, 2006.
- Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni; 'Can Women's Voices be recovered from the Past? Grappling with the Absence of Women's Voices in Pre-Colonial History of Zimbabwe', *Wagadu*, Vol. 2, Summer, 2005.

Saldanha, Indra Munshi; 'Tribal Movement in the Warli Revolt: 1945-47 'Class' and Gender in the Left Perspective', *EPW*, Vol. XXI, No.17, April 26, 1986.

Sanford, Victoria; 'From I, Rigoberta to the Commissioning of Truth: Maya Women and the Reshaping of Guatemalan History', *Cultural Critique*, No. 47. Winter, 2001.

Sangkima; 'Bawi and Sal as an Important Economic Factor in Early Mizo Society with Special Reference to Chief', *Mizoram Historical Journal*, Vol-II, Issue-II, M.H.A. July 2001.

Sangkima; 'Women and Politics in Mizoram Through the Ages', *Historical Journal Mizoram*, Vol-III, Issue-1, MHA, July, 2002.

Savidge, David W; 'Missionaries and the Development of a Colonial Ideology of Female Education in India', *Gender & History*, Vol.9 No.2 August, 1997.

Shakespear, J & Hodson, T. C; 'Folk-Tales of the Lushais and Their Neighbours', *Folklore*, Vol. 20, No. 4, December 30, 1909.

Singh, Maina Chawla; 'Philanthropy, Voluntarism, and Women's Education in Colonial India: A Study of Bethune School Calcutta', *AJWS*, Vol. 6, No 3, 2000.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty; 'The Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives', *History and Theory*, Vol. 24, No. 3, October, 1985.

Thapar, Romila; 'Decolonizing the Past: Historical Writing in the Time of Sachin – and Beyond', *EPW*, April 2, 2005.

Thapar, Romilla; 'A Paradigm Shift: An interview', *Frontline*, Vol. 14, No. 16, August 9-22, 1997.

Thomas, Samuel S; 'Transforming the Gospel of Domesticity: Luhya Girls and the Friends Africa Mission, 1917-1926', *African Studies Review*, Vol. 43, No. 2. September, 2000.

Treacy, Mary Jane; 'Double Binds: Latin American Women's Prison Memories', *Hypatia*, Vol. 11, No. 4, Autumn, 1996.

Wagoner, Phillip B; Pre Colonial intellectuals and the production of colonial knowledge, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 45, No.4, 2003.

Walsh, Judith E; 'What Women Learnt When Men Gave Them Advice: Rewriting Patriarchy in Late Nineteenth- Century Bengal', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 56, No. 3, August, 1997.

Webster, Sheila K; 'Women, Sex, and Marriage in Moroccan Proverbs', In *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 2, May, 1982.

Wendy Urban-Mead; Sitshokupi Sibanda: 'Bible Woman or Evangelist? Ways of Naming and Remembering Female Leadership in a Mission Church of Colonial Zimbabwe', *Women's History Review*, Vol.17, No. 4, September, 2008.

Zochungnunga; 'Survey of the Pre- Colonial Mizo Economy', *Pialral* (Historical Journal of Mizoram), M.H.A, Vol. V, December 1995.

2.4 Mizo Articles in Books:

Kawlani, Lalzuia; 'Mizoram Education', *Mizoram Kum 100: Kum 100 Chhunga Mizote Awm Dan*, Synod Publication Board, 1996.

Lahlira; 'Mizo te Sipai lamah', *Mizoram Kum 100: Kum100 chhunga Mizote Awm Dan*, Synod Publication Board, 1996.

Laltanpuui; 'Zawlkhawpui Sen Mei a Chan ni kha: Khi te khian Aizawl a bomb an ti, Kei erawh a rang ka lo vai e,' Hluna, J.V (ed); *Zawlkhawpui Senmei Channi*, ZNOC, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2005. (Originally published in *MZP Chanchinbu*, 1975).

Lalthanliana; 'Rambuai laia Civil Hosital leh Sipai Doctor-te', J.V. Hluna (ed); *Zawlkhawpui Senmei Channi*, ZNOC, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2005.

2.5 English Articles in Books:

Ao, T. Arenla; 'A Theological Reflection On Atrocities of Naga Women in Armed Conflict', in Longkumer, Limatula (ed); *No more Sorrow in God's Garden of Justice: Tribal women Doing Theology*, Women's Study Department, Eastern Theological College, Jorhat, Assam, 2007.

Arnot, Madeleine; 'Male Hegemony, Social class and Women's education', in Stones, Lynda; *The Education Feminism Reader*, Routledge publication, 1993.

Butalia, Urvashi; 'Women and Communal Conflict: New Challenges for the Women's Movement in India', in Caroline O. N Moser & Fiona C Clark (eds); *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence*, Zubaan, New Delhi, 2005.

Butler, J; 'Afrikaner Women and the Creation of Ethnicity in a Small South African Town, 1902–1950', in L. Vail (ed), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, London, James Currey, and Berkeley, University California Press, 1989.

Chandra, Bipan; 'Colonialism, Stages of Colonialism and the colonial state', in *Essays on Indian History and Culture (Felicitation Volume in Honour of Professor B. Sheikh Ali)*, Mittal Publication, 1990.

Chakravarti Uma; 'The 'Burdens' of Nationalism: Some Thoughts on South Asian Feminists and the Nation State', in Neloufer de Mel & Selvy Thiruchandran; *At the Cutting Edge: Essays in Honour of Kumari Jayawardena*, Women Unlimited (Kali for women), 2007.

Chakravarti Uma; 'Whatever Happened to the Vedic *Dasi*? Orientalism, Nationalism and a Script for the Past', in Kumkum Sangari & Sudesh Vaid; *Recasting Women: Essays in Colonial History*, 1989.

Chenoy, Anuradha M; 'Resources or Symbols? Women and Armed Conflict in India', in Ava Darshan Shrestha & Rita Thapa, (eds); *The Impact of Armed Conflict on Women in South Asia*, Manohar, New Delhi, 2007.

Guha, Ranajit; 'The Small Voice of History', in Shahid Amin & Dipesh Chakrabarty (eds); *Subaltern Studies IX: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Oxford University Press, 1996.

Hluna, J.V; 'Ropuiliani: The Mizo Lady Freedom fighter', in Lalneihzovi (ed): *Role of Ropuiliani in the Freedom Struggle*, Gilzom Offset, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2005.

Hrangkhuma, F; 'Christianity among the Mizos in Mizoram', in Hrangkhuma, F (ed); *Christianity in India: Search For Liberation and Identity*, CMS/ISPCK, New Delhi, 1998.

Khiangte, Laltluangliana; 'Ropuiliani: The (Lady) Mizo Patriot', in Lalneihzovi (ed) *Role of Ropuiliani in the Freedom Struggle*, Gilzom Offset, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2005.

Lalrimawia; 'Economy of Mizos (1840-1947)', in J.B Bhattacharjee; *Studies in History of North-East India, Essays in honour of Professor H.K Barpuraji*, N.E.H.U Publication with North Eastern History Association, 1986.

Lane, J. Ann; 'Women in Society: A Critique of Frederick Engels', in Bernice A Carroll (ed); *Liberating Women's History: Theoretical and Critical Essays*, Illinois University Press, 1976.

Lerner, Gerda; 'Placing Women in History: A 1975 Perspective', in Bernice A Carroll; *Liberating Women's History: Theoretical and Critical Essays*, University of Illinois Press, 1976.

Lerner, Gerda; 'The challenges of Women's History', in Maithreyi Krishna Raj (ed); *Women's studies in India*. Bombay Popular Prakashan, 1986.

Sailo, Lalsangzuali; 'The Indomitable Chieftainess Ropuiliani (1829-1895)', in Lalneihzovi (ed); *Role of Ropuiliani in the Freedom Struggle*, Gilzom Offset, Aizawl, Mizorma 2005.

Scott, Joan Wallach; 'Gender: A Useful Category in Historical Analysis', in Joan Wallach Scott (ed); *Feminism and History*, Oxford University Press, 1996.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty; 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in C. Nelson & L. Crossberg (eds); *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1988.

Vanlalhruaia, H & Hmingthanzuali; Women and Resistance in Colonial Lushai hills, in K.N. Sethi (ed); *Resistance Against Colonialism: Life and Times of Veer Surendra Sai*, Shivalik Publishers, 2009.

2.6. Proceedings:

Barpujari, S.K; 'Bamboo-Flowing in Mizoram: A Historical Review', *Proceedings of North East India History Association*, Seventieth Session, Government College Aizawl, Mizoram.

Laldinpuii, K; 'The Mizo Non- Cooperation Movement, 1948-49', *Proceedings of N.E.I.H.A*, Seventieth Session, Government College Aizawl, Mizoram.

Lalrimawia; 'Lushai Rising', *Proceedings of N.E.I.H.A*, Sixth Session, Agartala, Tripura.

MacDonald, Major, Caption Tanner & Caption Badley; 'The Lushai Expedition', *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, Vol, 17, No. 1, 1872-1873.

Sangkima; 'Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual: A Study in Perspective', *Proceedings of N.E.I.H.A*, Seventieth Session, Government of Aizawl College, Aizawl, Mizoram.

2.7. Seminar Papers:

Hluna, J.V; 'Pre-Christian Religion of the Mizos', *International Seminar on the Studies on the Minority and Nationalities of NE India, The Mizos*, Aizawl, Mizoram, April 7-9, 1992.

Lalrimawia; 'Bawi custom in Lushai Hills', *Seminar on Socio-Political Development in Mizoram*, Aizawl, Mizoram, 28-29 October 1982.

Vanlalhrauaia, H; 'Reimagining the Unknown Region: North East India in South Asian Discourses', *The South Asia conference, Modernity, Identity and Resistance in South Asia: Negotiating Subjectivity amidst changing Solidarities*, 18-20 February, 2010, University of Mumbai, Department of Sociology In collaboration with Human Rights Law Network, New Delhi & ICSSR Western Regional Centre, Mumbai.

Zohmangaiha (ed) Hmeichhiate leh Mizo Hnam Dan (*Seminars Papers on Women and Mizo Customary law*, 6th May 1996), Valcolm Publication, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2000.

2.8. Mizo and English Articles in Magazines (Annual or weekly, Monthly), Souvenirs:

Hmingliani; 'Mizo Hmeichhe Dinmun: Hman atanga tun hun', *Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Souvenir*, Aizawl, 1986.

Lalsawma; 'Mission of the Church During the MNF Movement', *Raltiang*, the 7th Annual Magazine of 2005-2006, T. Romana College, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Lalthlamuani, C; 'Long Leave without Pay', *Zozam Weekly Magazine*, Aizawl, Mizoram, June 29, 2009.

Liani; 'Kan Sulhnu', *Hmeichhe Sikul (Presbyterian Church Girls' School) Centenary, 2003-2003 Souvenir*, 2003.

Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual Golden Jubilee Souvenir, 16.7.1946-16.7.1996.

Sapbawii; 'Ka Sikul Kal Lai: Hmeichhe Sikul ah', *Hmeichhe Sikul (Presbyterian Church Girls' School) Centenary, 1903-2003, Souvenir*, 2003.

Souvenir on Democratic Pioneers in Mizoram, Mizoram Ex- Councilors Association, 1998.

Vanrumi; 'Hmeichhe Sikul-a ka kal ve dan', *Hmeichhe Sikul (Presbyterian Church Girls' School) Centenary, 1903-2003, Souvenir*, 2003.

Zairema; 'Rambuaia Kohhran Ban Phar', *Remna Thuthlung(Documentary Souvenir)*, 20th Remna ni Committee, MPCC, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2006.

2.9. Unpublished Private articles:

Chawngkungi, C; '*Alpha of Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual*. (Received from C. Biakchhingi, The President of the *Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual*, Aizawl, Mizoram in 2008).

Chawngpari, C; *Mizoram rambuai in ka nun a nghawng dan*, 2007 (Received from the author).

Vanlalhruaia, H; *Reading Insurgency from below: The works of C. Zama*, 2010 (Received from the author).

2.10. Thesis and Dissertations:

Hminga, C.L; *The Life and Witness of the Churches in Mizoram*, D. Miss thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1976.

Hmingthanzuali; *Status of Women in Mizo History (From Late Medieval Period to Early 20th Century)*, MPhil Dissertation, University Of Hyderabad, 2004.

Lalhmingthangi, P.S; *The Status and Role of of Women under the Baptist Church of Mizoram*, B.D Thesis, Serampore Theological College (University), Jorhat, Assam, February, 2006.

Ralte, Lalrinawmi; *Crabs Theology: A Critique of Patriarchy-Cultural Degradation and Empowerment of Mizo Women*, D.Min Dissertation, Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A, 1993.

Segor, Denise Adele; *Tracing the Persistent Impulse of a Bedrock Nation To Survive within the State of India: Mizo Women's Response to War and Forced Migration*, Doctoral Thesis in Human and Organizational System, Fielding Graduate University, 2006.

Vanlaltlani, T; *From Bondage to Liberation*, B.D Thesis, Serampore Theological College, 1983.

2.11. Working Papers:

Ferdandes, Walter; *The Indigenous issue and Women's Status in Northeast India*, Indigenous Rights in Common Wealth Project, South and Southeast Asia Regional Expert meeting, Indian conference on Indigenous Tribal Peoples (ICITP) India International Centre, New Delhi, India, 2002.

Goswami, Roshmi, Sreelaka, M.G & Goswami, Meghna; *Women in Armed Conflict Situation (A Study by North East Network)* North East Network, Gawahati, Assam, 2005.

Patricia komeri-Mbote; *Gender dimension of Law, Colonialism and Inheritance in East Africa: Kenyan Women's experience*, International Environmental Research Law Centre (IERLC), Working Paper No.1, Geneva, 2001.

Pinto, L. Anna ; *Women's Rights in the Context of Insurgency: A Report from Northeast India, Human Rights Dialogue (1994-2005)* Series 2, No. 3 (Summer 2000): Silence Breaking: The Women's Dimension of the Human Rights Box, August 6, 2000.

Turner, Mandy & Nepram, Binalakshmi; *The impact of armed violence in Northeast India: A mini case study for the Armed Violence and Poverty Initiative*, Centre for International Cooperation and Security, University of Bradford, November, 2004.

2.12. Encyclopedia;

Chatterjee, Suhash; *Mizoram Encyclopedia*, Vol 2, Jaico Books, 1990.

Pruthi, Raj & Bela Rani Sharma (eds), *Encyclopedia of Women, Society and Culture*, Anmol Publication, New Delhi, 1994.

Shashi, S.S (ed); *Encyclopedia of World Women*, Sudeep Prakashan, New Delhi, 1989.

2.13. Webbliography:

Ahonen, Sirka; 'Politics of Identity Through History Curriculum: Narratives of the past for social exclusion-or inclusion?' *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 2001.
[http:// www.tandf.co.uk/journals](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals).

Amanda Barry, Joanna Cruickshank, Andrew Brown-May & Patricia Grimshaw; *Evangelists of Empire?:Missionaries in Colonial History*, Melbourne: University of Melbourne eScholarship Research Centre, 2008.
<http://msp.esrc.unimelb.edu.au/shs/missions>. Retrieved, 5.May 2009.

Behal, Monisha; *Women Suffer Most: Armed conflict and Women's Rights in North East India*, North East Network, Guwahati, India, www.northeastnetwork.org Retrieved on 5th June 2009.

Binalakshmi Nepram & Mentschel, *Armed Conflict, Small Arms Proliferation and Women's Responses to Armed Violence in India's Northeast*, Working Paper No. 33, December 2007, South Asia Institute, Department of Political Science, University of Heidelberg.
<http://www.sai.uni-heidelberg.de/SAPOL/HPSACP.html>, Retrieved on 5.8. 2009.

Uphadhyay, R; *Mizoram-From Insurgence to Resurgence*, south Asia Analysis Group, Paper.No.166. <http://www.southasiananalysis.org/%5cpapers17%Cpaper1665.html>. Retrieved on 2nd November 2009.

Vanlalhruaia, H; *Contextualizing Insurgency: In Search of Women's Perspective*.
<http://www.thangtharculture.blogspot.com>. Retrieved on 22nd February 2010.

APPENDICES

Appendix- I.

LIST OF MIZO CHIEFTAINNESSES AND THEIR VILLAGES.

Chieftainesses	Villages
<i>Pi Buki</i>	<i>Durtlang & Muthi</i>
<i>Lalhlupuii</i>	<i>Darlawn</i>
<i>Rothangpuii</i>	<i>Muthi.</i>
<i>Vanhnuaithangi</i>	<i>Thilthek</i>
<i>Laltheri</i>	<i>Darlawng</i>
<i>Darbilhi</i>	<i>Thingsai</i>
<i>Ropuiliani</i>	<i>Denlung</i>
<i>Neihpuithangi</i>	
<i>Lalpuithluaii(Pawibawia's mother)</i>	<i>Saitual</i>
<i>Pakuma Rani (Pi Liani nu)</i>	<i>Demagiri (Tlabung)</i>
<i>Pi Dari</i>	<i>Kawrthah</i>
<i>Thangpuii</i>	<i>Zatezo</i>
<i>Zawlchuaai</i>	<i>Kancherra & Betcherra in Hill Tiperrah</i>

Appendix-II

PROCEEDINGS OF MEETING OF THE ACCREDITED LEADERS LUSHAI HILLS

HELD AT AIJAL ON 14TH AUGUST, 1947

Chairman: Mr. L. L. Peters, Superintendent, Lushai Hills (Elected)

PRESENTS:

KHAWTINKHUMA R.	THANHLIRAM, B.A.
VANTHUAMA	PASTOR CHHUAHKHAMA
BRIG. KHAWLKHUMA, (SA)	KHUAM
LALBUAIA	HRANGAIA
MUKA	ROSIAMA
VANCHUANGA	CHAWNNGHNUAIA
PHILLIPA	CAPT. NGURLIANA (SA)
PACHHUNGA	VANLAWMA
VANKHUMA	LAIHNUNA
CHHUNRUMA	PASTOR ZAIREMA, B.Sc.,
RINA	B.D
SENA	ZAWLA
LALUPA	ROSEMA
SAIAITHANGA	LALHEMA
LALBIAKTHANGA	PASTOR LIANGKHAIA
SUAKA	LALROPUA
LALANA	HMINGLIANA
PASENA	LIANHNUNA
LALBUANGA, CHIEF	LIANSILOVA, CHIEF
LAMHLIARA, CHIEF	LIANZUALA, CHIEF
CH. NGURA, CHIEF	KAMLOVA
KAPTHLUAI	ZAMI (MRS.
LALRONGENGA (Ex-Sub.)	KHAWTINKHUMA)
R. ZUALA (Ex-Jemadar)	BIAKVELI (MRS.
KAPTHIANGA	BUCHHAWNA)
	THANSEIA (Ex-Sub.)
	DAHRAWKA, V.A.S.
	SAIHLIRA, B.A.

1. Resolved that owing to the unexpected acceleration of the date of transfer of power by the British Government and as the Lushais have not as yet been definitely informed in the details as to what is to be the proposed future constitution and form of administration of the district and as section (7) sub-section (2) of; the Indian Independence Bill does not clarify the situation, it is accordingly thought that His Excellency the Governor of Assam should kindly inform them in writing as to what these are to be, also whether Lushais are at this stage allowed the option of joining any other dominion, i.e. Pakistan or Burma. Resolved further that Superintendent, Lushai Hills, should kindly communicate above request of the Lushais to the Adviser to His Excellency, the Governor of Assam in order to clarify these points.

2. Resolved that if the Lushais are to enter Indian Union their main demands are:

- (i) that the existing safeguards of their Customary Laws and land tenure, etc, should be remained.
- (ii) that Chin Hills Regulation, 1896, and Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873 should be retained until such time as the Lushai themselves through their District Council or other District authority, declared that this can be abrogated.
- (iii) that the Lushais will be allowed to opt out of the Indian Union, when they wish to do so subjected to a minimum period of ten years.

Sd/- L.L. PETERS
4-8-1947

No. 69237-76 G of 21-8-47

Copy forwarded to all the leaders who took part in the proceedings.

Sd/- L.L. PETERS
Superintendent,
Lushai Hills

Appendix-III

MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA BY THE MIZO NATIONAL FRONT GENERAL HEADQUARTERS, AIZAWL, MIZORAM ON THE 30TH OCTOBER 1965

This memorandum seeks to represent the case of the Mizo people for freedom and independence, for the right of territorial unity and solidarity; and for the realisation of which a fervent appeal is submitted to the Government of India. The Mizos, from time immemorial lived in complete independence without foreign interference. Chiefs of different clans ruled over separate hills and valleys with supreme authority and their administration was much like that of the Greek City-State of the past. Their territory or any part thereof had never been conquered or subjugated by their neighbouring states. However, there had been border disputes and frontier clashes with their neighbouring people which ultimately brought the British Government to the scene in 1844. The Mizo country was subsequently brought under the British political control in February, 1890 when a little more than half of the country was arbitrarily carved out and named Lushai Hills (now Mizo District) and the rest of their land was parceled out of their hands to the adjoining people for the sole purpose of administrative convenience without obtaining their will or consent. Scattered as they are divided, the Mizo people inseparably knitted together by their strong bond of tradition, custom, culture, language, social life and religion wherever they are. The Mizo stood as a separated nation even before the advent of the British Government having a nationally distinct and separate from that of India. In a nutshell, they are a distinct nation, created, moulded and nurtured by God and Nature.

When British India was given a status by promulgation of Government of India Act of 1935, the British Government, having fully realized in the distinct and separate nationality of Mizo people, decided that they should exclude from the purview of the new constitution and they were accordingly classed as an EXCLUDED AREA in terms of the Government Order, 1936. Their land was then kept under the special responsibility of the Governor-General-in-Council in his capacity of the Crown Representative; and the legislature of the British India had no influence whatsoever. In other words, the Mizos had never been under the Indian Government and never had any connection with politics of the various groups of Indian opinion. When India was in the threshold of Independence, the relation of the Mizos with the British Government and also with the British India were fully realised by the Indian National Congress leaders. Their top leader and spokesman Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru released a press statement on the 19th August 1946 and stated : 'the tribal areas are defined as being those along the frontier of India which are neither part off India, nor of Burma, nor of any Indian State, nor of any foreign power'. He further stated: 'The areas are subsidized and the Governor-General's relation with the inhabitants are regulated by sands, custom or usage. In the matter of internal administration, the areas are largely left to themselves'. Expressing the view of the Indian National Congress, he continued, 'Although the tribal areas are technically under the sovereignty of His Majesty's Government, their status, when a new Constitution comes into force in India, will be different from that of Aden over which the Governor-General no longer has executive authority. Owing to their inaccessibility and their importance to India in its defense strategy, their retention as British possession is most unlikely. One view is that with the end of sovereignty in India, the new Government of India (i.e. Independent

Government of India) will enter into the same relations with the tribal areas as the Governor-General maintains now, unless the people of these areas choose to seek integration with India’.

From the foregoing statement made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the Government of India Act of 1935, it is quite clear that the British Government left the Mizo Nation free and Independent with the right to decide their future political destiny. Due solely to their political immaturity, ignorance and lack of consciousness of their fate, representatives of the Mizo Union, the largest political organization at that time and Fifty accredited Mizo leaders representing all political organizations including representatives of religious denominations and social organizations that were in existence submitted their demand and choose integration with free India imposing condition, inter alia. “THAT THE LUSHAIS WILL BE ALLOWED TO OPT OUT OF INDIAN UNION WHEN THEY WISE TO DO SO SUBJECT TO A MINIMUM PERIOD OF TEN YEARS”.

The political immaturity and ignorance which lead the Mizo people to the misguided choice of integration with India was a direct result of the banning by the British Government of any kind of political organization till April 1946 within Mizoland which was declared ‘a political area’.

During the fifteen years of close contact and association with India, the Mizo people had not been able to feel that their joys and sorrows have really ever been shared by India. They do not, therefore, feel Indian. Being created a separate nation they cannot go against the nature to cross the barriers of nationality. They refused to occupy a place within India as they consider it to be unworthy of their prosperity. Nationalism and patriotism inspired by the political consciousness has now reached its maturity and the cry for political self-determination is the only wish and inspiration of the people, ne plus ultra, the only final and perfect embodiment of social living for them. The only aspiration and political cry is the creation of MIZORAM, a free and sovereign state to govern herself, to work out her own destiny and to formulate her own foreign policy.

To them Independence is not even a problem or subject of controversy: there cannot be dispute over the subject nor could there be any different of opinion in the matter. It is only a recognition of human rights and to let others live in the dignity of human person. While the present world is strongly committed to freedom and self-determination of all nations, large or small, and to promotion of Fundamental Human Rights, and while the Indian leaders are strongly wedded to that principle – taking initiative for and championing the cause of Afro-Asian countries, even before the World body, particularly deploring domination and colonization of the weaker nations by the stronger, old and new, and advocating peaceful co-existence, settlement of international disputes of kind through the medium of non-violence and in condemning weapons mankind, the Mizo people firmly believed that the Government of India and their leaders will remain true to their policy and that they shall take into practice what they advocate, blessing the Mizo people with their aspiration for freedom and independence per principle that no one is good enough to govern another man without that man’s consent.

Though known as head-hunters and a martial race, the Mizos commit themselves to a policy of non-violence in their struggle and have no intention of employing any other means to achieve their political demand. If, on the other hand, the Government of India brings exploitative and suppressive measures into operation, employing military might against the

Mizo people as id done in the case of Nagas, which God forbid, it would be equally erroneous and futile for both the parties for a soul cannot be destroyed by weapons.

For this end, it is in goodwill and understanding that the Mizo Nation voices her rightful and legitimate claim of full self-determination through this memorandum. The Government of India, in their turn and in conformity with the unchangeable truth expressed and resolved among the text of HUMAN RIGHTS by the United Nations in its august assembly that in order to maintain peace and tranquility among mankind every nation, large or small, may of right be free to work out her own destiny, to formulate her own internal and external policies and shall accept and recognize her political independence. Would it not be a selfish motive and design of India, and would it not amount to an act of offence against humanity if the Government of India claim Mizoram as part their territory and try to retain her as their possession against the national will of the Mizo people simple because their land is important for India's defense strategy? Whether the Mizo Nation should shed her tears in joy to establish firm and lasting friendship with India in war in peace or sorrow and anger, is up to the Government of India to decide.

Sd/- S. LIANZUALA

General Secretary,

Sd/- LALDENG A

President

Mizo National Front, Mizoram

DATED AIZAWL THE 30th OCTOBER 1965

Appendix-IV

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

5th March, 1966.

In the course of human history it becomes invariable necessary for mankind to assume their social, economic and political status to which the Law of Nature's God entitle them. We hold this truth to be self evident that all men are created equal, and that they are endowed with inalienable fundamental human rights. Governments are instituted among men deriving their just power from the consent of the governed and whenever any form of government becomes destructive of this end, it is the right of the people to alter, change, modify and abolish it, and to institute a new government laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing it power in such forms as to them shall seem most likely to effect their right and dignity. The Mizos, created and moulded into nation and nurtured as such, by Natures' God have been intolerably dominated by the people of India in contravention of the Law of nature.

The Leaders of Mizo nation, had many a time, verbally and in writing, put forward to the Government of India, their desire of self determination for the creation of free and independent Mizoram for bringing about protection of Human Rights and Dignity, which the Mizo, by nature ought to have; but the Government of India violating the Charter of the United Nations and its Universal Declaration of Human Rights re-affirmed in the Principles of the Bandung Conference, have ignored the voice of the Mizo people and are determined to continue domination and colonization ruling over us with tyranny and despotism by instituting self-designed administrative machinery with which they endeavour to mislead the world to win their confidence.

Our people are despised, persecuted, tortured, manhandled murdered without displaying justice while they preach and profess before us and throughout the world that they have instituted for us a separate administrative set up in conformity with the principles of Democracy. To conceal their evil and selfish design, religious assimilation and Hindu indoctrination, they preach to have established which we cannot accept as it leads to suppression of Christianity.

To prove this, let facts be submitted to the candid world that:

1. They have instituted government to rule over us in our own country without any respects for Human Rights and Dignity even in the face of the present candid world, which is committed to these rights and dignity.
2. They have been pursuing a policy of exploitative measures in their attempt to wipe out Christianity, our sole religion, and no consideration has even been paid to our national way of life.
3. They have been preaching throughout the world as if they have instituted separate administrative machinery in conformity with the principles of Democracy to conceal their policy of generation of our national morality and of assimilation while what has been instituted for us is a pattern of colonial administration.
4. They refuse not only to procure supply of food and arrange other forms of assistance in times of famine, but also prohibited us from seeking and receiving assistance from friendly countries, which resulted in the death of many people.

5. They have established a multitude of Offices and sent hitherto swarms of Indian Officers, who lead an immoral life cruelly appealing our womenfolk to commit immorality with them by taking advantages of their official capacity and of the position they occupy in the administrative machinery.
6. Taking the advantage of economic frustration of the people they subject us to economic slavery and force us to enter into the door of poverty.
7. Curbing freedom of expression, our patriots are arrested and kept in jails without displaying any form of justice.
8. The export facilities which we used to enjoy during the pre- Indian domination, has been totally closed.
9. Without exploring our country's economic resources in agriculture, industries and mining and giving no consideration for their development, they maintain suppressive measure against our economic rights.
10. Realizing the importance of our country to India in its defense strategy, the Government of India is establishing military bases throughout our country and thereby creating an atmosphere of cold war while nothing is done for its economic and social development
11. In spite of our repeated appeal for peaceful settlement of our rightful and legitimate demand for full self-determination, the Government of India is bringing explosive and suppressive measures employing their military might and waging war against us as done in the case of the Nagas and the Kashmiris.
12. Owing to the absence of Medical facilities in our country, our people died without having medical treatment and attention.

For these and all other innumerable causes, we declared to the candid world that India is unworthy and unfit to rule over the civilized Mizo people who are created and moulded into a Nation and nurtured as such as endowed with territorial integrity by Nature and Natures' God.

We, therefore, the Representatives of Mizo people, meeting on this day, the first of March, in the year of our Lord, 1966 appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, in the name and by the authority of the good people of this country, solemnly publish and declare, that Mizoram is and of rights out to be free and independent; that they are absolved from all allegiance to India and its Parliament and all Political connections between them and to the Government of India is and ought to be dissolved and that as free and independent state, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, Independent State may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, we mutually pledge to each other with a firm reliance on the Protection of Devine Providence, our Lives, our Fortunes and our Secret Honour. We appeal to all freedom loving nations and individuals to uphold Human Rights and Dignity and to extend help to the Mizo people for realization of our rightful and legitimate demand for self-determination. We appeal also, to all independent countries to give recognition to the Independence of Mizoram.

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Laldenga | 3. Lianzuala | 4. Sainghaka |
| 2. Lalnunmawia | 6. Thangkima | 7. Lalhmingthanga |
| 5. Lalkhawliana | 9. Ngurkunga | 10. Bualhranga |
| 8. Zamawia | 12. Lalchawna | 13. Lalhmuaka |
| 11. Sakhawliana | 15. Ngunhulha | 16. Lallianzuala |
| 14. Saikunga | 18. Tlangchhuaka | 19. Vanmawia |
| 17. Malsawma | | |

20. Ngurchhina
23. Chaurokunga
26. Thangzika
29. Chhonzawna
32. Dokhuma
35. Hnuna
38. Thanghuaia
41. Vansiamia
44. Lalchhawna
47. Challiana
50. Rochhinga I
53. Rohmingthanga
56. Rangkhuma
59. Zanenga

21. Hrangchhinga
24. V.L. Nghaka
27. Kawlremthanga
30. Vala
33. Rosanga
36. Thangbuaia
39. Lalluta
42. Thatthiauva
45. Vanlalzika
48. Pachhunga
51. Rochhinga II
54. Vanlalliana
57. Lalhruaia
60. Lalnundawta

22. Thangmaiwa
25. Zoramthanga
28. Hlunsanga
31. Thanghluta
34. Thangkhuma
37. Lamputa
40. Lalchuanga
43. Vanhnuaithanga
46. Kapthanga
49. Zamanthanga
52. Vankunga
55. Thanglawra
58. Duma
61. Lalkhawhena

APPENDIX- V

LIST OF WOMEN VOLUNTEERS DURING THE INSURGENCY MOVEMENT IN MIZO HILLS

Sl. No	Name	Village	Date of joining	Battalion
1.	Vanthuami	Lunglei, Zotlang	1. 01. 1967	T. Battalion
2.	Lalmangaihi	Aizawl, Republic	18.12.1968	Z. Battalion
3.	Lahlupuii	Thenzawl	1.01. 1967	T. Battalion
4.	Darchhingpuii	Thenzawl	1.01.1967	T. Battalion
5.	Chhungi	----NA----	----NA-----	T. Battalion
6.	Sapzari	Darzo	6.06.1967	T. Battalion
7.	Darzikpuii	Hmuntlang	10.06.1967	T. Battalion
8.	Ronghaki	Chhippui	----NA----	Z Battalion
9.	Lalzopuii	Chhippui	----NA----	Z. Battalion
10.	Rebeki	Republic, Aizawl	30.03.1968	T. Battalion
11.	Darngihllovi	Thenzawl	30.03.1968	T. Battalion
12.	Parkungi	Sialsuk	----NA----	Z Battalion
13.	Lallawmi	Sialsuk	----NA----	Z Battalion
14.	Chuhthangi	Sialsuk	----NA----	Z. Battalion
15.	Biakkungi	Sialsuk	----NA----	Z. Battalion
16.	Darhmingthangi	Champhai	20.12.1969	T. Battalion
17.	Thangthuami	Ngopa	----NA----	L Battalion
18.	Biakliani	Ngopa	----NA----	L Battalion
19.	Vanrammawii	Ngopa	----NA----	L Battalion
20.	Romani	Luangpawm	----NA----	L Battalion
21.	Lalchhawmi	Ngopa	----NA----	L Battalion
22.	Dengziki	Ngopa	----NA----	L Battalion
23.	Rinpuii	Luangpawm	----NA----	L. Battalion
24.	Thanhrangi	Mualcheng	----NA----	L Battalion
25.	Hmangaihzuali (Sergeant)	Zuchhip	Oct, 1968	L. Battalion
26.	Sanghliri	Aiduzawl	Sept, 1968	L. Battalion
27.	Thanzami	Hliappui	Dec 1968	L Battalion
28.	Lalawmpuii	Hliappui	Dec. 1968	L Battalion
29.	Ramlani (nurse)	Sialhawk	1.01.1967	S. Battalion
30.	Vanmawii	Thekte	1.06.1967	S. Battalion
31.	Chawngpari	Champhai	----NA----	L. Battalion
32.	Rozami	----NA----	1.01.1967	S. Battalion
33.	L. Thansangi (Brigade Sergeant)	Puilo	----NA----	L. Battalion
34.	Thangmawii (Nurse)	Ratu	----NA----	V/L. Battalion
35.	Rinthangi	Chhippui	----NA----	L. Battalion
36.	Lalziki	Durtlang	01.01. 1967	V. Battalion
37.	Lalsangpuii	Durtlang	01.01.1967	V. Battalion
38.	Kapzawmi	Durtlang	01.01.1967	V. Battalion

39.	Nelziki	Durtlang	01.01.1967	V. Battalion
40.	Vari	Sihphir	01.01.1967	V. Battalion
41.	Saichhingi	Sihphir	01.01.1967	V. Battalion
42.	Sangthangi	Sihphir	01.01.1967	V. Battalion
43.	C. Engzami	Chhawrtui	May, 1967	Ch. Battalion
44.	H. Rozami	Chhawrtui	01.01.1967	Ch. Battalion
45.	Chalnguri	Mualcheng	01.01.1967	Ch. Battalion
46.	Hrangzovi (Brigade Sergeant)	Sihfa	01.01.1967	Ch. Battalion
47.	Saithangi	Durtlang	----NA----	V. Battalion
48.	Biakthangi	Saitual	----NA----	V. Battalion
49.	Lalbuangi	N. Kawnpui	01.01.1967	Ch. Battalion
50.	Lalliani	Chhingchhip	30.08. 1967	Ch. Battalion
51.	Saichhungi	S. Khawbel	----NA----	Ch. Battalion
52.	Dartluangi	S. Khawbel	----NA----	Ch. Battalion
53.	Lalchhungi	S. Khawbel	----NA----	Ch. Battalion
54.	Rangthuami	Ruallung	----NA----	Ch. Battalion
55.	Lalbiakliani	Lunglei Bazar	05.03.1969	K. Battalion
56.	C. Lalthlamuani (Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of Mizoram)	Sihphir	1966	
57.	Saizingi	----NA---	1964.	
58.	Lalpianthangi	Thenzawl	----NA----	
59.	Lalthlamuani	Champhai		
60.	Tinsangi (Nurse)	---NA---	1967	
61.	Tlangdailovi	Maite		
62.	Nikhumi	----NA-----	1967	
63.	Councilthangi			
64.	Chalmawii			
65.	Suakthuami	Champhai		
66.	Biaksangi	Hualtu		
67.	Thangmawii	Hualtu		
68.	Hmingliani	Theiriat		
69.	Tialchuangi	Thingkah		
70.	Parchini	Mampui		
71.	Sangpuui	Darngawn		

APPENDIX - VI

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (I) AND THE MIZO NATIONAL FRONT, MIZORAM 25th June, 1986.

The Government of India under the leadership of the Prime Minister Shri. Rajiv Gandhi has brought about a situation wherein the long years of disturbed conditions in Mizoram are being brought to an end. The Memorandum of Settlement is being signed between the Government of Indian and Shri Laldenga, President of Mizo National Front to give shape to this effort to usher peace and prosperity in Mizoram within the framework of the Indian Constitution. Shri Laldenga has pledged to bring the MNF into the mainstream of the Indian polity and irrevocably commit it to strive for a strong and United India.

In order to further strengthen this resolve and to enable a smooth and orderly transition, the Indian National Congress (I) and the MNF headed by Shri Laldenga agree to form a coalition Government. This decision shall be implemented in the following manner soon after the members of the MNF who are underground lay down their arms and join the National mainstream.

1. On a date agreed to between Shri Laldenga and the Government of India, Shri Lal Thanhawla the present Congress (I) Chief Minister will submit his resignation and Shri Laldenga will be elected the leader of the Government of Mizoram and be sworn in as the Chief Minister there.
2. Shri Lal Thanhawla the present Chief Minister will be sworn in as the Dy. Chief Minister.
3. In addition to the Chief Minister, four members of the Congress (I) Party shall be made Ministers of the New Government.
4. In addition to the Chief Minister, three members from the MNF will be made Ministers.
5. The name of the ministers will be nominated by the respective Political parties and the Chief Minister will propose them to the Lt. Governor.
6. All issues concerning the formation and induction of this new Government will be decided mutually by the Chief Minister and the Dy. Chief Minister.
7. In order to smoothen the function of the coalition Government, a coordination committee will be constituted consisting of the following:-
 - (a) Shri Laldenga - Chairman
 - (b) Shri Lal Thanhawla - Vice Chairman
 - (c) Two members of the Congress Party
 - (d) Two members of the MNF Party

This committee will take part into consideration all matters concerning the Party and the /government which either of the Political parties may deem necessary to bring for its consideration in order to help smooth functioning of the Government and to bring better co-ordination between the Congress (I) and the MNF.

8. This coalition Government will continue to function till such date when the President is satisfied that normalcy has returned and the holding of elections has become feasible.
9. In the event of any difference arising between the two parties in the functioning of the Government or relationship between the parties they would seek the help of the Hon'ble Prime Minister to resolve the same.

Sd/- Laldenga
President
Mizo National Front

Sd/- Arjun Singh
Vice- President
Indian National Congress (I)

25th June, 1986.

APPENDIX – VII

Mizoram Accord, 1986

MEMORANDUM OF SETTLEMENT (BETWEEN GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND MIZO NATIONAL FRONT) Dated: 18th June, 1986

PREAMBLE:

1. Government of India have all along been making earnest efforts to bring about an end to the disturbed conditions in Mizoram and to restore peace and harmony.
2. Towards this end, initiative was taken by the late Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi on the acceptance by Shri. Laldenga on behalf of the Mizo National Front (MNF) of the two conditions namely, cessation of violence by MNF and holding of talks within the framework of the Constitution of India. A series of discussions were held with Shri. Laldenga. Settlement on various issues reached during the course of the talks is incorporated in the following paragraphs.

RESTORATION OF NORMALCY.

3.1 With a view to restoring peace and normalcy in Mizoram the MNF Party, on their part-takes within the agreed time-frame, to take all necessary steps to end all underground activities, to bring out all underground personnel of the MNF with their arms, ammunition and equipment to ensure their to civil life, to abjure violence and generally to help in the process of restoration of normalcy. The modalities of bringing out all underground personnel and the deposit of arms, ammunitions and equipments will be worked out. The implementation of the foregoing will be under the supervision of the Central Government.

3.2 The MNF Party will take immediate steps to amend its Articles of Association so as to make them conform to the provision of law.

3.3 The Central Government will take steps for the resettlement and rehabilitation of underground MNF personnel coming overground after considering the schemes proposed in this regard by the Government of Mizoram.

3.4 The MNF will not undertake to extend any support to the Tripura/Tribal National Volunteers (TNV) Peoples Liberation Army of Manipur (PLA) and any other such groups, by way of training, supply of arms or providing protection or any other matters.

LEGAL ADMINISTRATIVE AND OTHER STEPS.

4.1 With a view to satisfying the desires and aspirations of all sections of the people of Mizoram, the Government will initiate measures to confer statehood on the Union Territory of Mizoram, subject to the other stipulations contained in this Memorandum of Settlement.

4.2 To give effect to the above, the necessary legislative and administrative measure will be undertaken including those for the enactment of Bills for the amendments of the Constitution and other laws for the conferment of Statehood as aforesaid, to come into effect on a date to be notified by the Central Government.

4.3 The amendments aforesaid shall provide, among other things, for the following :-

(1) The Territory of Mizoram shall consist of the territory specified in Section 6 of the North Eastern Area (Re-organisation) Act, 1971.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Constitution, no act of Parliament in respect of :-

(a) Religious or social practices of the Mizos

(b) Mizo customary law or procedure

(c) Administration of civil and criminal justice involving decision according to Mizo Customary law.

(d) Ownership and transfer of land, shall apply to the State of Mizoram unless the Legislative of Mizoram, by a resolution so decides. Provided that nothing in this clause shall apply to any central Act in force in Mizoram immediately before the appointed day

(3) Article 170, clause (1) shall, in relation to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, have effect as if for the ‘ Sixty’ the word ‘forty’ has been substituted.

5. Soon after the Bill for conferment of Statehood becomes law, and when the President is satisfied that normalcy has returned and that conditions conducive to the holding of free and fair elections exist, the process of holding elections to the Legislative Assembly will be initiated.

6. (a) The Centre will transfer resources to the new Government keeping in view the change in status from a Union Territory to the State and this will include resources to cover the revenue gap for the year.

(b) Central assistance for plan will be fixed taking note of any residuary gap in resources so as to sustain the Approved Plan outlay and the Pattern of assistance will be as in the case of Special Category State.

7. Border trade in locally produced or grown agricultural commodities could be allowed under a scheme to be formulated by the Central Government, subject to international arrangement with neighbouring countries.

8. The Inner Line Regulations, as now enforce in Mizoram will not be amended or repealed without consulting the State Government.

OTHER MATTERS.

9. The rights and privileges of the minorities in Mizoram as envisaged in the Constitution, shall continue to be preserved and protected and their social and economic advancement shall be ensured.

10. Steps will be taken by the Government of Mizoram at the earliest to review and codify the existing customs, practices, laws or other usages relating to the matters specified in clauses (a) to (d) off para 4.3. (II of the Memorandum, keeping in view that the individual Mizo may prefer to be governed by Acts of Parliament dealing with such matters and which are of general application.

11. The question of the unification of Mizo inhabited areas of other States of form one administrative unit was raised by the MNF delegation. It was pointed out of them, on behalf of the Government of India, that Article 3 of the Constitution of India prescribes the procedure in this regard but that the Government cannot make any commitment this respect.

12. It was pointed out on behalf of the Government that as soon as Mizoram becomes a State.

(i) The provisions of the part XVII of the Constitution will apply and the State will be at liberty to adopt any one or more of the languages in use in the State as the language to be used for all or any of the official purposes of the State.

(ii) It is open to the State to move for the establishment of a separated University in the State in accordance with the prescribed procedure.

(iii) In the light of the Prime Minister's statement at the joint conference of the Chief Justice, Chief Minister and Law Minister held at New Delhi on 31st August 1985, Mizoram will be entitled to have a High Court of its own, if it so wishes.

13. (a) It was noted that there is already a scheme in force for payment of ex-gratia amount to heirs/dependants of persons who were killed during disturbances in 1966 and thereafter in the Union Territory of Mizoram. Arrangements will be made to expeditiously disburse payment to those eligible persons who had already applied but who had not been made such payments so far.

(b) It was noted that consequence on verification done by a joint team of officers, the Government of India had already made arrangements for payment of compensation in respect of damage to crops, building destroyed/damaged during the action in Mizoram; and rental charges of buildings and lands occupied by the Security Forces claims will be settled. These pending claims will be settled expeditiously. Arrangements will also be made for payment of pending claims of rental charges for lands, buildings occupied by the Security Forces.

Sd/ LALDENG
On behalf of
Mizo National Front

Sd/- R.D. PRADHAN
Home Secretary
Government of India

Sd/- LALKHAMA
Chief Secretary
Government of Mizoram
Dated: 18th June, 1986
Place: New Delhi.

Appendix- VIII

(List of Illustrations)



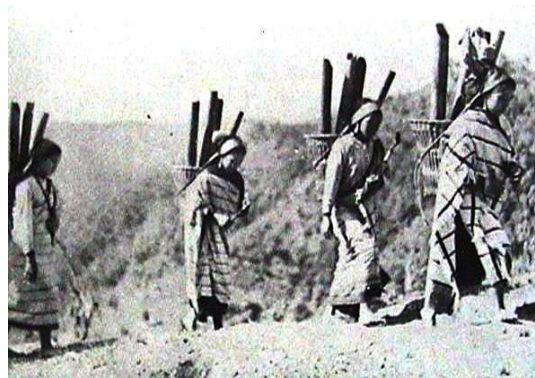
I. Darbilhi, A Fanai Chieftainess from South Lushai Hills. Courtesy: J. Shakespear; T. C. Hodson; Folk-Tales of the Lushais and Their Neighbours, *Folklore*, Vol. 20, No. 4. (Dec. 30, 1909), pp. 388-420.



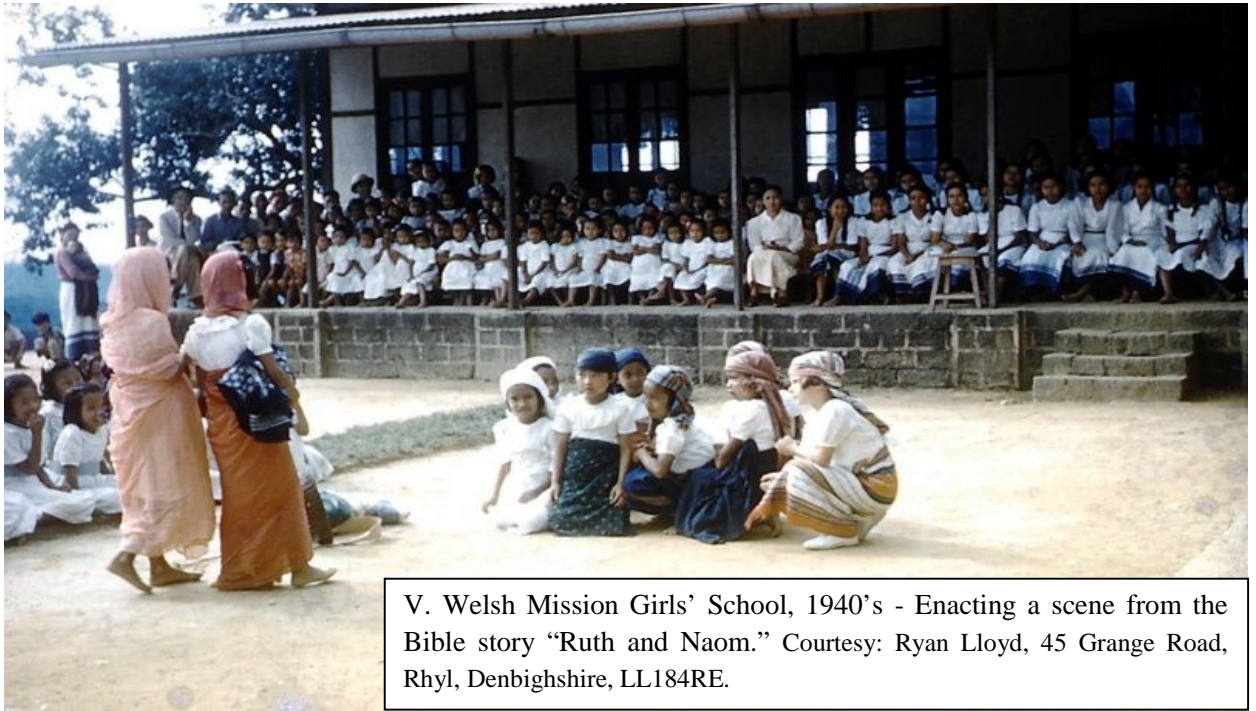
II. An early 20th century Mizo woman holding a book titled 'Modern Woman' representing colonial and missionary modernity. Courtesy: A.G. McCall; Lushai Chrysalis, FKPL, TRI Mizoram, 1977. p.113.



III. A traditional Mizo woman weaving in her home smoking a traditional Mizo pipe. Courtesy: A.G. McCall; Lushai Chrysalis, FKPL, TRI Mizoram, 1977. p. 160.

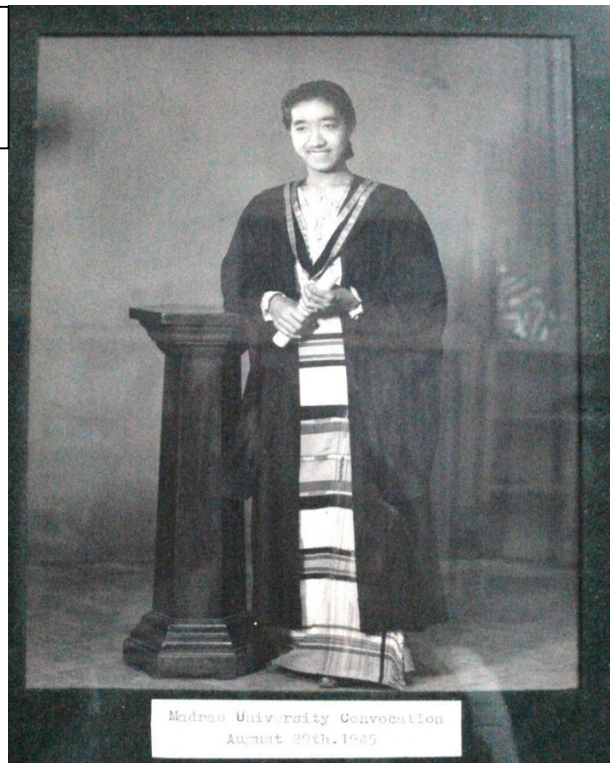


IV. Collecting water with bamboo tubes - a task left entirely in the hands of women. Courtesy: A.G. McCall; Lushai Chrysalis, FKPL, TRI Mizoram, 1977. p. 108.



V. Welsh Mission Girls' School, 1940's - Enacting a scene from the Bible story "Ruth and Naom." Courtesy: Ryan Lloyd, 45 Grange Road, Rhyl, Denbighshire, LL184RE.

VI. Lalziki Sailo, the first Mizo woman member of the Mizo District Council in 1952. Courtesy: Lalziki Sailo.



Madras University Convocation
August 29th, 1945



VII. Welsh Mission Girls' School, Aijal during the 1940's. Courtesy: Ryan Lloyd, 45 Grange Road, Rhyl, Denbighshire, LL184RE.



9. Hrangzovi, the only Mizo woman to have been sent to East Pakistan for combat training from the Mizo National Front. Courtesy: Hrangzovi



10. Young girl volunteers for the Mizo National Movement in 1966. Courtesy: K. Hawlla Sailo; Mizo Ngaihlan Dek Che Tham, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2001.

8. B. Vanlalzari, one of the Mizo women captives during the insurgency movement. This picture was taken during her tenure in jail. Courtesy: C. Zama; Zoram a Tap, Aizawl, Mizoram, 2008.



11. Two Mizo women who served in Mizo National Front Movement. C. Lalthlamuani (right) was the only woman to have reached the high rank of Deputy Secretary in the Mizo National Front. Location: East Pakistan, 1968. Courtesy: C. Lalthlamuani.