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The aim of this journal is to function as a mode of information and guidance for the scholars, researchers and historians and also to provide a medium for the exchange of ideas in Mizo history.

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EDITORIAL

During the last twenty eight years of its existence the Mizo History Association has been playing an important part in the life of the people of Mizoram by serving them through its annual seminar held with a theme selected by the Executive Committee meeting of the Association.

The theme of the seminar 2007 was **Biographical sketch of the Mizo Chiefs**. The aim of the theme is to study the history of the Mizo from below. This is an important aspect of any history. The basic foundations of any history are the chronology and the polity of the ruling clans. In order to know and unearth the foundations what is primarily important is to study these two historical aspects. With this aim in view, the theme was selected.

The basic problem with this aspect of Mizo history being faced by the paper writers is lack of material, to substantiate his/her writings. But this is the beginning in this aspect. Hence, it is a fact that each paper is not upto the mark, and therefore they are all liable subject to criticism and review. So any criticism is well received and accepted. Of course, this part of the history is taken as a challenge and the remaining chiefs who were not attempted in 2007 seminar shall be taken up in the seminar of 2008. The aim of the association in this respect is to make a complete and comprehensive study of the Mizo chiefs and if possible to publish it in a book form

Meanwhile, the Editorial Board would like to thank all the scholars for their valuable contributions for the success of the seminar The Board also would like to express its gratefulness to the Department of Art and Culture, Govt of Mizoram, for financial support extended to the association. The Board also extends its sincere indebtedness to the staff of St. Joseph's Press, Tlangnuam, Aizawl for their efforts which enabled the association to have copies of the journal in time.

ORIGIN OF CHIEFTAINSHIP IN EARLY MIZO SOCIETY

Sangkima

Although it is not known for sure when chieftainship was first emerged as a social and then as a political institution in early Mizo society, one thing is definitely known that the institution had become an accomplished fact in course of time. Since its inception and until it was then abolished by an Act in 1955¹, chieftainship was a significant entity in the history of the Mizo. Considered as one of the oldest institutions in the emerging society chieftainship, even after it was abolished, is a subject that has been discussed in many studies.

A close examination of these studies has, however, revealed that much scope for investigation still remains particularly with its traditional accounts. To deal with this aspect, the processes through which chieftainship had emerged and developed in the society from primitive period will be traced and discussed. In this regard the role of tradition and myth has to be delineated. In support of this hypothesis, a brief review on the different stages of social and polity formation will be taken into account.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

This study is not a study of social or state formation as such. It is a fact that there is not a definite explanation of the process of formation of the states and as such 'we do not know how many early states have existed in world history, so that the sampling level remains unknown'². With this statement, attempt has been made here to conceptualize chieftainship as the early state. However, in this discourse, we mean 'early state' as the earliest forms of the state system evolved and developed under the chiefs in early Mizo society.

It is a common knowledge that chieftainship cannot be equated with the concept of modern state because in all certainties it lacked some elements of modern state but definitely it had certain characteristics of the early state. According to R.S. Sharma the early state had four essential characteristics. First, the earliest means of subsistence was the fruits and roots of trees. During this period man should have lived as a food-gatherer and not as a food producer. This period is otherwise known as palaeolithic age³. Engles called it as *savagery*⁴. Second, probably there was no the institution of family based on the supremacy of man over woman⁵ which Engles called *Consanguine* family⁶. It developed out of the original condition of promiscuous intercourse. Third, the early state lacked the division of the people into social classes⁷. Fourth, in the early state of human society there developed no private property⁸. In short, in earliest state of the man's life the institutions of private property, family and class or caste are hardly to be found. In the absence of these institutions, the state also did not exist.

When people were in a stateless society they were not leaderless and they had disputes which were settled among themselves by their leaders. In maintaining order and social control in a society their leaders- chiefs or household heads- played a very important role. They exercised coercive authority if needed and possessed in the words of K. Roberts "...the power of life and death over his subject"⁹

In the light of the statement made above, now we will examine the origin of chieftainship. But before that, the role of tradition, myth etc may be highlighted so as to understand the part played by them in the formation of a state in early period.

Role of Tradition and Myth

Tradition and myth are somewhat interrelated and difficult to separate into their respective connotations. Tradition is the handing down of knowledge or the passing on of a doctrine or

a technique¹⁰. The story based on rituals, morals and cults which explain some natural phenomena or religious problem is a myth¹¹. Myths cannot be used as a descriptive sources on the past but their analysis can reveal the more about a society¹². Meanwhile, culture is a behaviour patterns socially acquired and socially transmitted by means of symbols and its continuity is generally related to traditions. Furthermore, culture in relation to tradition links the past to the present¹³

R.G Collingwood is of the view that there are two kinds of quasi-history : *theocratic history* and *myth*. Theocratic history is not a history proper “ but a statement of known facts for the information of persons to whom they are not known, but who, as worshippers of the god in question, ought to know the deeds whereby he has made himself manifest”¹⁴. Hence, theocratic history is primarily concerned with human actions. Myth, on the contrary, is mainly concerned with divine actions that are recorded as having occurred in the past “but in a dateless past which is so remote that nobody knows when it was. It is outside all our time – reckonings and called ‘the beginning of things’ “¹⁵

There are two sources of information on the past : the historical and the traditional. Here we are more concerned with the latter. At the same time, Carlo Antoni says, “...history contained some means of distinguishing between a true vision of reality and a purely imaginary one”¹⁶. The Vedic literature called *Puranas*, collected between 500 B.C. and A.D. 500, are not entirely mythical but they also contain references to historical events¹⁷. These historical accounts may now be justified by connecting them with the traditional ones.

Tradition says that the first king of India was *Manu Svayambhu*. Directly born of the god *Brahma*, Manu was a hermaphrodite who from the male half of his body bore two

The Tripuri are believed to have been in the Kapili Valley (Nowgong-now Nagoan) of Assam before they finally reached to present Tripura. During their sojourn there were some periods of confusion when the people were without a Raja. Then they prayed to Lord Siva for a chief and they were blessed with one²⁵. This may therefore be considered as the beginning when the wandering Tripuris had a common leadership in community.

Like other states the formation of the Jaintia State from its indigenous ethnic base passed through different stages and the tradition of the emergence of the state has two versions : the tribal and non-tribal versions. B. Pakem says :

The tribal version referred to the miraculous mermaid called *Ka Li Dakha* who was captured by a Jaintia gentleman called *U Luh Ryandi* from *Ka Lwai Syiem* or a royal lake at a distance of about one kilometer west of the present day Sutnga village. The Sutnga Dynasty then came out of a union of *Ka Li Dakha* and *Luh Ryandi*. Their eldest son U Chyngklein-Am ruled Jaintia State from Sutnga...

The non-tribal version, however, simply indicated the Brahmanical influence in Jaintia state. It referred to a mythical fish legend where *Thakur Rani* was involved. According to this version, a certain Garo gentleman, Landahvar by name, married a Sutnga mermaid princess called Mutchodduvee. Their son Burra Gohain or U Bor (or Mar) Kuhain in local usage, was the first ruler of Jaintia State²⁶.

These two versions of the origin of the Jaintia State may be considered as divine origin of the state.

The rise of the first ruler of Sutnga has yet another version. The story current among the plains people is quoted from J.B. Bhattacharjee :

“...he was asleep on a flat stone under a tree on a hot day. As the sun changed its position the ray fell directly on his head. A black cobra then raised its hood and protected the boy from the Sun. A *Daloi* (possibly of Sutnga) who was passing by saw this and became convinced that the child was of Holy birth. He felt that this boy should be made the king of the hills. He took out blood from his own chest and put a mark (raj-tilak) on the forehead of the boy. This *Daloi* was instrumental in making the boy the first Syiem Sutnga²⁷.

R. Buragohain writing on state formation in the early Tai-Ahom state says that the Tai-Ahom rulers claimed descent from heavenly ancestor Lengdon and writes :

All the Tai-Ahom rulers throughout their six hundred years of rule claimed descent from their heavenly ancestor Lengdon, the Supreme ruler of heaven and his two grandsons Khun Lung and Khun Lai who were sent down to rule over the wide earth....Then in presence of other nobles, Lengdon finally decided to send down his two grandsons to rule over the anarchic wide earth. Lengdon dictated a ‘code of conduct’ to them which became the basis of Tai-Ahom gentile constitution²⁸.

According to him the consultation of his counselors by Lengdon before sending his grandsons became a convention among the Tai-Ahom rulers to consult others before taking major decisions:

Meanwhile, A.L. Basham is of the view that from the days of Plato and Aristotle European thought has turned its attention to such questions as the origin of the state, the ideal form of government and the basis of law²⁹. India also thought about such questions. In India the earliest legend about the origin of kingship occurs in one of the later Vedic texts – *Aitareya*

Brahmana – perhaps of the 8th or 7th century B.C.³⁰. The legend tells how the gods and demons were at war and how the gods were badly beaten by their enemies. Consequently, the gods met together and decided that they needed a *raja* to lead them in battle. Then they appointed *Soma*³¹ as their king. This legend suggests that in the earliest times kingship was thought to be based upon human need and military necessity and that the king's first duty was to lead his subjects in times of war³². The story is repeated by the *Taittiriya Upanisad* in a little later but in a significant altered form.

The studies thus made above have suggested that both the tradition and myth could be a strong factor in accelerating the process of the emergence of chieftainship as an early state.

Origin of Chieftainship

Chieftainship was an integral part of the social as well as the political life of the early Mizo. In the beginning it was an evolution but in course of time it became hereditary. A large majority of the chiefs belonged to the Sailo lineage of Thangur clan of the Lushei tribe³³. Other tribes like Fanai, Pawi, Paihte and Hualngo also formed chieftainship but only in a smaller number and they were subordinates to the Sailo chiefs. In the meantime, there were some independent Pawi and Lakher chiefs in southern part of the erstwhile Lushai Hills. It may also be mentioned that when the British occupied the Hills the authorities appointed some government employees as chiefs in place of those chiefs who were deposed of for various reasons.

Ruled by its own chief in early period each village was an independent entity. In theory the chief was a despot within his own realm and his words were law. He enjoyed power to impose even death penalty. 'On the war-path or in the council I am

chief, and my words are obeyed; behavior like that would be punished by death'³⁴. The chief was very careful in exercising his powers mainly because the subjects of a chief could transfer their allegiance to another chief at will and it became common among the Sailo chiefs.

As noted before, theoretically the chief was absolute and for this reason, it is natural that the people flocked under the fittest ruler who could give them protection from their adversaries. Hence, Lewin records, 'The *Lal* directs in war; he is the last in the advance, and the rearmost in retreat'³⁵. As to the evolution of the powers of the chief Vanlalruata Rengsi says :

These powers of the chief did not come overnight. It took centuries of rigor, trials and tribulations to build up. The career of the Mizo chiefs wound up with the development of their villages through their tortuous meandering and hazardous sojourn from the Chin Hills. While they all prevailed on more or less the same ecological-technological considerations, their location at times either enhanced or threatened their existence. In all these, the scope was open to human endeavor, resilience, ingenuity and resourcefulness³⁶.

With this outlined statement the structure of chieftainship is exposed and with this background, we may now turn to the main text of the study.

All societies have traditions about how they and the rest of mankind came into being. The Mizo, too, have the *Chhinlung* tradition which claims that *Chhinglung*, believed to be the original habitat of the Mizo, is said to be located somewhere in Southern China. From there they migrated to Burma now

Myanmar. According to folk tradition they prevailed in the Chin Hills of Burma and there they settled down for centuries. It is popularly believed that chieftainship emerged among the Mizo when they settled in the hill ranges commonly known as *Lentlang* now in Myanmar.

In those early days feuds and conflicts amongst the people themselves for various reasons were common occurrences. Raids and plunders caused by blood feuds were the common forms of warfare³⁷. Generally, raids and wars were undertaken by a tribe or clan in the pretext of revenge and were generally committed in a party consisting of as many number as the attacking party needed and in a family when a head was needed for a family purpose³⁸. Besides, they were constantly harassed by the other neighbours whom they commonly called *Pawi*. In short, during those days people did not live peacefully due to inter-clan tribal feuds. What they needed most by then was a valiant and heroic chief who could give them protection from the enemies. Under such circumstances they were unable to eke out a living. Even people working on jhums needed protections. Even after coming to the present Mizoram then known as Lushai Hills warrings continued amongst themselves and these resulted in the dicimation of many villages. Again, under such circumstances each clan was compelled to have its own chief.

Tradition has it that by the times when our forefathers were wandering in the vicinities Chhinlunga had two sons Chawngthua and Chawngzova. The former had two sons named Chawngvawma and Ralhloha and Chawngvawma begot Dongula and Thahdova. It is also said that Dongula was fathered by Nova (not the man who was connected with the floods in the Bible)³⁹. Dongula begot one Niguite whose birth is narrated in the form of folktale. According to it, Dongula had illicit sex with his own sister Lalnemi by name who then conceived a son

named Niguite. He was so called because the child was born due to the rays coming from the sun. Hence, literally, *ni* means 'sun' and *guite* is taken as 'to burn' or 'to scorch'⁴⁰ and hence the name Niguite. Dongula insisted that his subjects should not know anything about the pregnancy of his sister. Ashamed of what he did, so Dongula tried to convince the people by deceit and wisely devised a trick by putting an egg inside a tree trunk at his nearby house. Then he told them about the possibility of a child being born from the egg. One day when the child was born he was then placed inside the trunk pretending that the child was born of egg. To make the people believe what was going on with the birth Dongula then broke the egg and informed the people about the birth of the child. Niguite had two male issues whom he named them as Ngekguka and Bawklua from whom the Paihte tribe and the Lusei tribe of Sailo clan claim decent from them respectively.

Tradition also tells that Bawklua married to Lakiri⁴¹, and a son named Sihsinga was born to them. When he grew up Sihsinga told his parents of his dream in which his penis was cut off and chopped it into pieces and the pieces were then strewn over every hill. This dream may be taken as a prophecy that once the offsprings of Shisinga would have been great rulers spreading over every hill. Sihsinga fathered a son Ralna who begot one Chhuahlawma, father of Zahmuaka who, with his wife Lawileri by name, had seven sons but one died in infancy⁴². Chhuahlawma was a slave captured by the Lusei tribe but fostered by the Chhakchhuak tribe at Seipui village. The seven sons according to seniority were Zadenga, Paliana, Thangluaha, Thangura, Rivunga and Rokhuma. They are said to have been the progenitors of the different tribes of modern Mizo.

It has already been pointed out that at the times when the tribes settled in the hill ranges of *Lentlang* in Myanmar that the different groups of the tribes had lived separately with their

own leaders. But nothing is definitely known about them. Only *Hnamte* group is known as having their own chief or ruler. The *Hnamte* group is said to have congregated themselves at *Tlangkhua* and *Khawrua* vicinities. Unfortunately, their chief *Thlanpiala/Chhanpiala*, by name died of unnatural death. Hence they looked for a successor but they could not find any because no one was willing to be the leader due to its onerous duty and the fearful onslaught of other tribes⁴³. Having found no suitable successor among themselves the *Hnamte* approached *Zahmuaka*, a Lusei tribe of Seipui khur and requested him to be their chief. The invitation was extended to him with one condition that no *Hnamte* be taken as slave by the chiefs⁴⁴. In short, *Zahmuaka* accepted the offer of becoming a chief after the insistence of his wife *Lawileri*. It is said that in the beginning *Zahmuaka* refused the offer because a leadership devoid of any privileges was meaningless. But the *Hnamte* agreed to confer upon him a privilege of getting *paddy due* then known as *fathang*. He was badly needed because along with his six sons he would be able to engage himself actively in case of inter-clan feuds. In this way, *Zahmuaka* became the first Lusei chief whose rule was prosperous and from whom sprang the six Lusei ruling clans.

Traditionally, the rise and prosperity of *Zahmuaka* and his descendants is told like this : One day a seer came to *Zahmuaka*'s village. He first entered into the house of a *Hnamte* clan asking for a halt at night. But the head of the family declined the request saying, '*Lolak ka hmang mek a, ka thiang lo ve*'.⁴⁵ meaning "as I am engaging myself with *Lolak* sacrifice, so I am forbidden from receiving any guest'. The guest was then invited by *Thangura* to come to his house which he willingly did. As the augur was hardly talked *Thangura*'s wife was suspicious but *Thangura* treated him well by offering him *zu* (rice-beer) and he also prepared a delicious food for him. When everything was ready *Thangura* asked the *oracle* to

partake the meal at his stomach's full but he refused to take it at the first instance. But when he was insisted to do so, then he ate the meal. When the meal was over the soothsayer blessed the couples with these words : '*Nangni nupa hi Belrawhmual kilin, buhchhun leh sachhiah eiin lo awm tawh ang che u*'⁴⁶. The English translation goes like this : 'You, the couples, from now on you will enjoy the privilege of being recipients of *buhchhun* and *sachhiah* dues'. The fortune-teller walked away.

So, after Zahmuaka was installed as successor of *Thlanpialal/Chhanpiala*, his sons were also made chiefs over the scattered villages. Thus, chieftainship had firmly been established in Burma before the Mizo moved down to the present Mizoram formerly known as Lushai Hills. Thangura the fourth son of Zahmuaka had two sons. They were Chawnglula and Thangmanga. Thangmanga begot Sailova from whom the present Sailo family claim their origins. Like other cases in India here also the traditional and the historical events are chronicled.

Concluding Remarks

We may now conclude our study by saying once again that the emergence of chieftainship was a very significant event in the society through the ages. The discussion on the concept of the state is intended to explain the meaning of a state but as the nature of the state is hard to grasp it is therefore difficult to conceptualise the state because it is yet difficult to demarcate between state and society. The fact is that even if the institution of chieftainship is said to have certain features of the state but it cannot be equated with the concept of modern state. In short, from the study it is found that like the case in Indian history as already highlighted above with regard to the emergence of chieftainship among the Mizo the traditional part can be

connected with the historical part. This is the objective of this study. After all, the study is not a study of social or state formation but a study merely undertaken to show that tradition has a crucial part to play in the origin of chieftainship in early Mizo society.

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ZAHMUAKA

- *Lahmingliani Ralte*

The institution of chieftainship had strongly been embedded in the early history of the Mizo people. Studies into this feature reveal that the Sailo clan more or less dominates the entire system of chieftainship. Some writers trace the beginnings of the Sailo chieftainship to the 17th century¹ when the Mizo people emigrated from Burma and moved westwards, the ancestor of the clan being Zahmuaka.

Mizo writers have traced the beginnings of Zahmuaka to a man called Sihsinga and it is agreed that Zahmuaka is indeed the progenitor of the Sailo chiefs. However, writers have differed in their opinions regarding the exact relation of Sihsinga and Zahmuaka.

One group of writers believes that Ngalna, the son of Sihsinga, was in fact the other name of Zahmuaka.² These writers say that the warriors of a village called Seipui went on a hunting expedition, and while on the banks of the river Run, they found a boy and took him back to Seipui. He was given to the Chhakchhuak chief of the village who adopted him as his son and changed his name Ngalna to Zahmuaka. Zahmuaka grew up in the house of the chief and on maturity, got married to a woman named Lawileri from the Hmar tribe. As was the practice of the day, Zahmuaka moved out of his adoptive parents' house when he had a child and started his own home.

Zahmuaka and his wife were blessed with six sons namely Zadenga, Paliana, Thangluaha, Thangura, Rivunga and Rokhuma³. Zahmuaka earned his living as the gatekeeper of the village fort, a job continued by his sons. Meanwhile, the

Hnamte tribe lived in Tlangkhua and Khawrun and their chief was Sanpuala. On the death of this chief, the people started looking for someone to take his place and they even went to the neighbouring Seipui village and invited the chief to become the chief of Tlangkhua. However the Seipui chief advised the people to invite the sons of Zahmuaka to be their chief. On being approached by the villagers, the sons accepted, and along with their mother, Zahmuaka having died by then, they proceeded towards Tlangkhua. According to this group of writers, of the six sons of Zahmuaka, Zadenga, the first born, was the first chief⁴. Zahmuaka's other sons like Paliana and Rokhuma too started their own villages. Even after becoming the chiefs of Tlangkhua and its neighbouring villages, the sons of Zahmuaka continued with their previous work of keeping the gates of the village fort and received payment for it. This payment, in course of time, became a due paid to the chief.

Another group of writers believe that Zahmuaka was the great-grandson of Sihsinga⁵. They say that Zahmuaka was the son of Chhhuahlawma, who was the son of Ralna, the son of Sihsinga. "The birth of Zahmuaka was as follows: The first Lusei settlers at Seipuihur were of the Chhakchhuak clan. This clan was at war with the Paites, who were then living on the right bank of the Chindwin. In the fight, one Chhuahlawma, the son of a Paite warrior called Ralna, was captured by the Chhakchhuak people and carried off as a slave. They later adopted him as their son. When he grew up and got married, his first son was named Zahmuaka by his wife"⁶.

Zahmuaka grew up to be a handsome man and he married the most beautiful woman of the village, Lawilero. They had six sons Zadenga, Paliana, Thangluaha, Thangura, Rivunga and Rokhuma.

Zahmuaka and his wife were poor and were not respected by the people. In fact, the names given to their sons were more or less connected with their social status! "Their house was built below the main path in the village.....and whoever passed along the path used to throw stones at their house. When their first son was born, he was named Zadenga.....*za* means a hundred and *deng* means to throw. Thus, Zadenga means a man on whose house stones were thrown by hundreds of people"⁷. But by the time the sixth son was born, "Zahmuaka and his wife now felt that with six healthy and strong boys, they could proudly regard themselves richer than anyone else"⁸. The son was therefore named Rokhuma. *Ro* means either wealth or property and *khum* means to exceed or to cross.

The situation in the villages was such that the people lived in constant fear of invasion from neighbouring villages, and a strict vigil had to be kept so that the enemies would not take the villagers unaware. So the people requested the sons of Zahmuaka to act as the village watchmen and they, in turn, would give them paddy to last them a year, and a portion of whatever meat was trapped or shot would also be given to them.⁹ This is the account of C.Lalbiaknema. However, Lal Biak Thanga states that the neighbouring village approached Zahmuaka to be their chief, an onerous duty that he accepted.¹⁰

The absence of written records has led to speculations among the different writers as can be seen from the above discussion. There is no consensus among the various writers of Mizo history regarding Zahmuaka, whether it is his relation with Sihsinga, Ralna and Chhuahlawma, nor in the circumstances leading to his election as a chief. However, what is generally accepted and agreed upon is that, he is the ancestor of the chiefs as all the chief's clans are descended from his sons and are called Zadeng, Palian, Thangluah, Rivung and Rokhum. The name *Sailo* comes from the name of his grandson

Sailova, son of his fourth son Thangura. "In course of time, the Sailos became the most powerful chiefs and they ruled practically the entire Mizo country at the time of the advent of the British".¹¹

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A STUDY OF THE THANGUR CHIEFS: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO LALLULA

- *Malsawmliana*

Introduction

When we look into the institution of the Lusei chieftainship, it seems that the existence of the institutions was much later than other Mizo clans. Oral history tells us that some of the Mizo sub-clans such as Hnamte clan and the Kawlni clan already had a chief prior to the existence of chieftainship among the Lusei. K. Zawla asserted that the Kawlni chiefs were already in position and ruled for many years before the Lusei chiefs.¹ However, although the emergence of the Lusei chieftainship was much later than other Mizo clan, they later became the dominant and stronger chief.

An attempt is made to trace back the emergence of chieftainship among the Lusei clans particularly the *Thangur* chiefs. The Thangur chiefs, who later called themselves as Sailo chiefs were dominant and stronger; and they were said to have absorbed many of the villages of other chief's clan when they reached the present state of Mizoram.

Among the Thangur or Sailo chiefs, Lallula was one of the most popular and powerful. He was considered a 'strong and greatest among the Lusei chiefs'. In this paper, an attempt is made to highlight the personalities and contribution of Lallula towards the Mizo tribe.

Institution of Chieftainship

The institution of Lusei Chieftainship can be traced back to the period when the Lusei clans were settled in the Chin Hills (in Burma) during the first half of the 17th century AD.

As we are told that the Hnamte clan approached Zahmuaka to be their chief due to the death of their leader, Thlanpiala, but he refused. Later, under the pressure meted by his wife Lawilero, Zahmuaka accepted the offer and became a chief in the village of Tlangkhua. It is thus said that, the kingship or chieftainship, which had firmly been established in Burma became a system when they reached the Lushai hills.² Therefore, Zahmuaka was regarded to be the first Lusei chief and subsequently as ancestor of the chiefs of the Lusei clan.³ The *Tlangkhua* was located between Khiangrawn and Ngaltui in the present Chin Hills of Burma.⁴ According to Vanlalringa, 'since Zahmuaka came into the picture, the leadership system ceased to exist and a new leadership appeared in the form of chieftainship in Mizo society'.⁵ The acceptance of chieftainship by Zahmuaka in Tlangkhua can be traced back to the first half of the 17th century AD. The so-called first Lusei chiefs, Zahmuaka had six sons – Zadenga, Paliana, Thangluaha, Thangura, Rivunga and Rokhuma.

After the death of Zahmuaka, his eldest son Zadenga inherited the chieftainship at Tlangkhua while his brothers Rokhuma and Paliana were also ruled over the village of Khawrua and Khuanglung respectively. Subsequently, each of their names converted into the name of the sub-clan and for instances, the descendants of Paliana called themselves as *Palian* clan and so on. The descendants of Thangura were later became the single largest chief clans of the Lusei. Shakespeare also appraise that 'from Thangura, the pedigree of all the living chief is fairly accurately established'.⁶

As far as Thangura is concerned, he is the fourth eldest son of Zahmuaka. He looked handsome and young energetic; and he is named Thangura after his physical appearances.⁷ Regarding the year on which Thangura lived, Lalsanga, chief

of Ngur gave his lineage as far as Niguite putting himself being the seventeenth generation in 1934 when AG Mc Call, the then Superintendent of the Lushai hills, convened a *darbar* of the Chiefs.⁸ Accordingly, he (Niguite) was assessing to live between 1450 and 1475 AD, and that Thangura had lived sometime during 1625-1659 AD taking 25 years as generation.⁹ On the other hand, Shakespeare believed that Thangura lived about 1604 AD while Sangkima put it 1580 AD.¹⁰ Thangura later became famous and energetic chief among his brothers and the descendants of his two brothers Zadenga and Paliana preferred to call themselves as 'Thangur's clan'.¹¹ He had two sons Thangmanga and Chawnglula while Thangmanga bears only one son, Sailova. Sailova became a wise and famous chief among the descendants of Thangura. Being popular and powerful chief, the Sailova's group or clan eventually came to be known as 'Sailo'. Therefore, the descendants of Thangura preferred to call themselves as 'Sailo clan' instead of 'Thangur's clan'. Subsequently, Sailo became the chief clan of the Lusei and ruled almost over three hundred years in Lushai hills until the abolition of Chieftainship in 1954.

The ancestor of Sailova may be traced back as early as the first half of the 16th century AD, which were shown below:¹²

Niguitea	:	Ngeknguka and Sihsinga
Sihsinga	:	Ralna
Ralna	:	Chhuahlawma
Chhuahlawma	:	Zahmuaka
Zahmuaka	:	Zadenga, Paliana, Thangluaha, Thangura, Rivunga and Rokhuma
Thangura	:	Thangmanga and Chawnglula
Thangmanga	:	Sailova
Sailova	:	Chungnunga, Lianlula and Chenkuala

Pattern of Migration into the Lushai Hills

The various clans of the Mizo were said to have entered the present Mizoram at three different points of time. The first group to migrate from the Chin hills were the so-called 'Old Kuki Group' while the second group were 'New Kuki Group'. They were believed to have come from the same routes followed by the first group i.e the Old-Kuki. They are said to have arrived in the land during 14th -15th century AD.¹³

The third and the last batch of migration, identified as the Lusei and the dominating clan, were said to have enter Mizoram approximately by the second half of the 17th century AD.¹⁴ The Lusei comprised of many clans out of which the Sailo clans are the most prominent. The migration of various Lusei clans into the present Mizoram may be in different point of time at different phases. The Palian clans are the first group and were said to have enter during the first half of the 17th century AD.¹⁵ Subsequently, the Zadeng, Thangluah, Rivung and the Sailo clan were also migrated to Mizoram following the routes of the Palian clans. The Sailo clans, the last groups of the Lusei clans were believed to have migrated to Mizoram from the second half of the 17th Century AD till the beginning of the 19th century AD.¹⁶ Mc Call has firmly believed that Lallula, the great Sailo chief, had already occupied the present Mizoram around 1810 AD.¹⁷ To supplement the assertion made by AG Mc Call, Lallula already occupied the present Mizoram by the end of the 18th century AD and he was died in 1807 AD.¹⁸

According to Sangkima, the migration from Chin hills to the present habitation has two reasons- *firstly*, the constant pressures of the Pawi tribes as the main cause, and *secondly*, decreasing extent of jhumming land under their control could no longer sustain them prompted to moved westwards.¹⁹ Therefore, due to the fear of the Pawis, who were more numerous and better organized, coupled with the need for better jhumland finally led them to migrate farther

west across the Tiau river. Shakespeare also agreed the aggressive nature of the eastern clans which finally led them (i.e. the Lusei clan) to move westward, as follows;

'..to the north the country was occupied by the Sakte, Paihte and Thado clans. These appear to have been firmly established under regular chiefs; but to the west the hills appear to have been inhabited by small communities formed largely of blood relations and probably each at feud with its neighbours. Therefore when want of good jhumming land and the aggressions of the eastern clans made it necessary for the Thangur(Sailo) to move, they naturally went westward.'²⁰

As stated earlier, the Lusei already had a chief prior to their coming into the present Mizoram and it is learnt that the weaker chiefs and their subjects had cross the river Tiau first as they were afraid of the stronger chiefs.²¹ After arriving Mizoram, they further established their villages almost on top of the hills and then gradually spread out all over the present Mizoram. In the early part of the 18th century AD, majority of the Mizo tribes were already settled in Mizoram and some of them like Palian and Zadeng clan were continued to migrate westward up to the present Tripura and Bangladesh.

After reaching the Lushai hills, the Sailo chiefs were scattered throughout the hills for a short period of time, but due to the fear of the aggressive nature of the Pawi, they were managed to settled in one villages ie. Selesih during the mid-18th century AD(c.1740-1750 AD). This measure was effective in checking the Pawi from further acts of depredations. The village was comprised of about 7,000 houses with seven Sailo chiefs namely Pukawlha, Darpuiliana,

Darliankuala, Rohnaa, Lalchera, Thangphunga and Lalsailova.²² Pukawilha took over the charge of leadership among them. Here, there arise divergent views on the person who took over the charge of leadership. AG Mc Call asserted that the 'Selesih Confederacy' was headed by Chungnunga, a son of Sailova and the supremacy of Sailo chiefs was build up under his leadership at Selesih.²³ But, the former view was commonly accepted among the Mizo. The village was popularly known in Mizo history as '*Selesih Sangsarih*' (7,000).

The 'Selesih confederacy' set a great landmark in the history of the Mizo, as it was said and known to be the first well - established and well-administered village having a model code of administration. The villages was known for its unity and solidarity although it comprised of several clans under seven chiefs, its contribution to developed language ie. Duhlian dialect; and the confederacy also sow the seeds for the emergence of Mizo customary laws and practices in a good form.

By the second half of the 18th century AD, the so-called *Selesih Sangsarih* began to disperse as the chiefs were desire for more powers of their own which later fuelled by disputes over marriages, lands, plunders etc. Most of them were moving westwards and settled in different parts of the north Lushai hills. In this particular sense, Mc Call has made a remarkable view as 'had they perceived the possibilities that lay in unity and consolidation, history might well have taken a very different course. But internecine wars over marriages, lands or plunders induced lack of control and strength which later precipitated clashes with the inhabitants of neighbouring district.....'²⁴

However, the Sailo chiefs became more powerful and crushed all of their rivals, and they later developed such a talent for governing that they hold undisputed sway over representatives of all sorts of

clans, almost over the whole of the north Lushai hills. Therefore, Sangkima claimed that the Sailo have consolidated their supremacy almost over the whole of Mizoram.²⁵ Although different tribes or clans had their own chiefs but majority of them belonged to the Sailo family who claimed to be descended from Sailova, the progenitor of Sailo group. According to LB Thanga, the Sailos tended to become arrogant, cruel and tyrannical due to the absence of any rival chiefs.²⁶ In fact, that the entire hills were occupied by small communities of having no power of cohesion when the Sailo clans were arrived and it is due to the fact that the greater part of the hills were easily absorbed by the Sailo chiefs. LB Thanga further states that none could accumulate wealth and became rich under the Sailo chief as their properties were escheated by the chiefs.²⁷

Prominent Chiefs among the Sailo Clan

The best known chief of the Sailo clan was Lallula. He was the only son of Rohnaa, a great grandson of Sailova. B. Lalthangliana asserted that he was born in 1730 AD and when the so-called Selesih confederacy has reach its zenith he was already about 20 years of age.²⁸ He was genuine and responsible person; and when he became the chief, his desire was to make the Lushai hills into a well-knit land and much aware of his responsibility to defend and protect the land and the people as a chief.²⁹ He was ambitious and energetic ruler, a brave and a man of good command. He also possessed the character of honesty and tolerance in him. He was short and fair-skin, and handsome.³⁰

As stated above, he was the only son of Rohna, one of the seven chief of Selesih, and he was surely to become a chief after his father. It is said that when he was only a child, his father Rohnaa had performed *Khuangchawi*, one of the series of a feasts of merit among the Mizo. The villagers, who prepared a feast, asked him to give water, and suddenly Lallula had given the entire water

container (tuithawl) by throwing away through the window which led broken into pieces. Later, he was asked again to give a pot (bel) to them, and he repeated by the same way. His father Rohnaa secretly watched this entire incident, instead of feeling angry, the character of his son convinced him much. Rohnaa firmly believed that his son had possessed all of the characters which were necessary to become a chief; and he proudly says '*nang hi chuan belrawh mual zawnng I la kil theih dawn hi*' to him.

By 1750 AD, he was allotted the village site at Zopui (presently Samthang in Champhai District) by Pukawlha, the chief of Selesih, to begin his career as a chief. Thus, Lallula has taken over a full responsibility to rule his village as a chief. He was said to be a wise, sympathetic and benevolent ruler, and soon his personality has attracted many of the people migrating to his village and during a short while, Zopui village has a large number of about 500 house, even the settlers of Selesih also accompanied him.

Lallula has set a great historical landmark while living in Zopui by making a fierce attack of the Thlanrawn Pawih i.e *Thlanrawn Rawt*, in which about 300 Pawih were massacred. It is due to the fact that the Pawi chiefs, in an apparent attempt to establish sovereignty over the whole tribe, pursued the Lusei and continued to harass them with demands of tribute. Refusal entailed bloodshed, looting, captivity of chiefs and slavery for able bodied people. To ransom those taken was a costly affair.³¹ The Thlanrawn Pawih were collecting a tribute towards Zopui and its neighbouring villages without achieving any agreement in this regards with them. One lyric has been composed which may depict the aggressive nature of the Thlanrawn Pawih towards the Lusei villages;

*'I lal lua e, Phunthanga,
Khawtinah chhiah lawr e;
Sat mai zel e aw.*

(Phunthang, you are too tyrannical, you collect tributes in every village; and chopping follows promptly)³²

Therefore, in order to stop the force and unlawful collection of tributes by the Pawih, Lallula has arranged how to tackle and defend themselves, with his neighbouring chiefs. So, Lallula wisely invited Thanchhuma, the chiefs of Thlanrawn to proudly says '*nang hi chuan belrawh mual zawng I la kil theih dawn hi*' to him.

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Therefore, in order to stop the force and unlawful collection of tributes by the Pawih, Lallula has arranged how to tackle and defend themselves, with his neighbouring chiefs. So, Lallula wisely invited Thanchhuma, the chiefs of Thlanrawn to under their control. As a result, the massacre finally put into stop the forceful collection of tribute by the foreigner. Thus, he was deserved to be called a 'patriotic leader'. *Secondly*, he was a well-known administrator. He regarded his subjects as children while they regarded him as a father in the family; and he was much concerned with their interest and much devoted himself for the welfare of his peoples.

Thirdly, the village comprised of various sub-clans like Ralte, Khawlhiring, Fanai etc. with different dialect. But the Lusei dialect was used as a medium of administration which later paved the way for the development and popularity of the Lusei dialect.

Fourthly, one may consider Lallula as a 'man of unity and solidarity'. He strongly propagated the concept of unity and solidarity among the peoples which resulted different sub-clans living in the village become more cooperatives and united.

Fifthly, Lallula regularly performs and celebrate various Mizo festivals like Chapchar Kut, Pawl Kut, Mim Kut, Chawng etc. in every year in order to preserve the Mizo traditions and customs. Therefore, Lallula made a lot of contributions towards the preservation of the Mizo traditions and customs.

Lastly, he was a great fond of music and song and he himself composed various numbers of songs. When after the Thlanrawn massacre, many of his villagers left him for safety places towards different directions due to the fear of the reprisal; he then composed the following song;

*'Chhimtiang hmartiang sa ang tlan zo ve,
Zopuah hnutiang ka dal nang e'
(All are moving towards north and south,
But, I will be the last to move)*

When he reaches Sabual, he was given a land to re-settle his chieftainship, by Laltuaka, he then composed a famous song reflecting his past experience, as –

*'Hrum sawm pui khi tu chawi mahin a dang zo awm lo ve'
Ka vah nan lampui a sei e, tlawngtui ralah;
Thlangvai ang ngur lal leh i'*

He was also said to be the composer of a famous *Darlung zai*, while living in Darlung during the later half of the 18th century AD (c.1793-1798 AD).⁴¹ The songs were later known widely as *Darlung Zai*, which were occasionally sung while performing *Chai* dance; some of them were –

*'Han thlir ing e chhaktiang kan awmkhua,
Chumchi leng romei a kai chia i e;*

*Min chuan ve u Darlung kan awmkhua,
Laldang run in laiah zam ruai e.
Laldang run in laiah zam ruai e,
Ni tin tiandar a ri chiar nghian e.*

*Darlung kan awmkhua,
Awmlai leh kawlkei hrang lo se.*

*Sabual in thuum ang mi do lo u,
Darlungah phun bung ka sai ngai lo.*

*Darlung zathum leng zawng in laiah,
Mual ang chungnung Tuahdang ka lungdi*

*Chawnglul, zadengi lo ngai rawh u,
Ka chungah turni chang leng rawh se'*

Concluding Remarks

As we already mentioned that the Thangur chiefs were later called themselves as Sailo chiefs, particularly after reaching the present Mizoram. Many of the prominent and greatest chief among the Mizo were mostly the Sailo chiefs. It has been rightly claimed that almost the whole of the North Lushai hills were put under the suzerainty of the Sailo chiefs. They claimed that there was no one above them except the sun and the moon. A lyric has been composed indicating their greatness –

'We, the Sailo chiefs- we rule, we are great;
We the Sailo chiefs –we shake our hands,
We wave our hands, we stamp the earth,
We, the Sailo chiefs'⁴²

As far as Lallula is concerned, his contribution towards the Mizo tribes as a whole and in particular for the stability of the Sailo chieftainship may consider as a 'great and huge' and could not be measure by any perimeter. As mention before, Lallula showed his love and affection towards his peoples which in return makes them much trusted in him and showed respect to him. Being a sympathetic ruler, many of the villagers loves him and accompanied wherever he wanders from one place to another. Therefore, in short, being a great and powerful chief, Lallula had made a lot which should not be forgotten by the Mizo people.

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LALLULA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROCESS OF MIZO SOCIAL EVOLUTION

Lalrinnunga Hmar

When the British came to the present Mizoram scene they noted the Sailo chiefs predominated in the area that is now called Mizoram.¹ However, beyond this point there is no clear knowledge of the process through which the Sailo had come into preponderance. What constitutes the larger part of Mizoram today has been evinced out of the villages ruled by Sailo chiefs. And, in this connection, the role played by the Sailo Chief Lallula is highly significant. He greatly helped in integrating the divided sub-tribes and clans and brought about a composite society that compounds the general population known as Mizo today. This short paper is rendered to emphasise the contribution of Lallula towards the political, cultural, and social evolution of the Mizo.

Before going into the specifics of the achievement of Lallula, a brief mention of the concept of the chief is essential. The chief is a political leader of a social group, such as a band, tribe or confederacy of tribes . Among many peoples, chiefs have very little coercive authority and depend on community consensus for implementing recommendations; often a number of recognized chiefs form a tribal chiefs' council. Among more advanced preliterate societies, there may be a single paramount tribal chief with coercive authority.²

In the context of the evolution of the Mizo chief, a social contract theory propounded by Locke is important in order to understand the nature of the early Mizo chiefs. In Lockean theory man existed in a 'state of nature', in which the rights of life and property were generally recognized under natural law, with the

chief constituted to settle conflicts that arose out of the social insecurity in the enforcement of those individual rights. However, while obliged to obey civil government under this 'social contract' on their part, their surrender of their 'natural rights' was conditional upon the protection not only of the person but also of private property. If a sovereign violated these terms, he could be justifiably overthrown.³

Mizo oral tradition alludes that the first Mizo chief was Zahmuaka. He was insistently invited by the people of Tlangkhua and Khawrua, he reluctantly accepted the offer. But after a short while, Zahmuaka was not happy and decided to go back to Seipui. But the Hnamte then persuaded him to stay on promising some amount of rice (*Fathang*) as a due to be provided to him.⁴ The probable date of this period was a short period after about 1580.

This condition under which the first Mizo chief prevailed set the main tenor in defining the relationship between the chief and the denizens of a village. The natural conditions that impinged on both the chief and the denizens of the village provided the safeguard of this condition. With villages having to shift due to the agricultural method no permanence could be evinced. This put a check on the power of the chief. It guaranteed the denizens' mobility and they could freely migrate from one village to another, or even form their own, at their will. So, the villagers could not be rendered as subject of the chief in the true sense of the term. In this fluid environmental- ecological condition it was a challenge for the chief to increase the population of the village. This was the main way in which he could enhance his power. It was on this that the success and failure of a chief duly rested. Those who could recognize this and who could skillfully direct their attention and skills on the essential inputs to guarantee security while displaying magnimity to the denizens became naturally, the most successful chiefs. In this, a line

of the chiefs that sprang from Zahmuaka seem to have been most adroit. And among them, the most recognized is Lallula⁵.

Lallula was the fourth generation of the line of chiefs counting from Sailova (Zahmuaka great grandson) from whom the clan got its name. Within the time that spanned between Sailova and Lallula there had been a steady increase in the population of the people and a profusion of villages that accompanied. At the same time there was a general westward movement from the Lentlang range to present Mizoram. Sailova's descendants crossed Tiau River (present boundary line of Mizoram and Burma) and as scattered villages, occupied the territory that falls roughly the present northeast region of Mizoram. They were not alone. In their vicinity there were others, some of them with chiefs who also sprang from Zahmuaka such as the Palian, Zadeng, Chenkual and Rivung. They were also clans (or tribes) such as the Pawi, the Hmar, and Ralte etc. At this time, despite the animosity between villages that prompted war even between close kin groups, the main dangers for the Sailo villages were the Pawi from the other side of Tiau River they incessantly harassed the Sailo villages. This danger enabled the Sailo chiefs to temporarily set aside their own squabbles and manage a big conglomeration to stem the Pawi incursion. They formed a large settlement at Selesih under the leadership of Pu Kawlha. They claimed to be 7000 household. This was around 1740-1750.⁶

The Selesih conglomeration did last long. The underlying forces (technological-environmental) exerted on the society could not be averted,⁷ Selesih had to disintegrate into smaller villages tenable to the needs of people for jhum sites within walking distance from the village. Shifting cultivation economy demands an extensive land area; it has been estimated that people who depend on such methods must have available a

very large area of arable land. Generally, the Mizo tribes never cultivate the same plot twice. Because of this the tribes were habituated to move their villages. This happened generally at intervals of six to seven years. Therefore due to agricultural method and local environmental conditions permanent villages or towns were rarely possible. The group is forced to move whenever the local supply of good arable land was exhausted. Following from this possession were limited to what could be carried from one camp to another, and housing usually consists of simple huts. Though the desire was to build as big a village as possible, the condition necessitated for the group to split up with the terrain unable to sustain large conglomerations for long periods.⁸ Most of the people who formed the Selesih conglomeration made a gradual shift westward and formed different villages. By then villages were not only composed of single clans (though some clans may predominate) but were also starting to have a composite character.

Unlike the general wave, Lallula moved eastward. He occupied a village, Zopui located southeast of Selesih, on the present site of Samthang bordering Vaphai. The village was inhabited by Chuauhang. According to Mizo tradition Lallula made this move as he was assigned the village by Pu Kawlh. He had a close ally in Rorehlova, Fanai to whom he assigned a particular locality in the village. From here, Lallula began the task of consolidating his chiefship here and set out to build a large fighting force in order to defend his village. A number of people from Kawlni clan from Khawzawl, a nearby village, joined up with Lallula at Zopui. The Kawlni requested Lallula to invite the Siakeng, (a close relation of the Kawlni) who were located on the other side of the Run River.⁹ This suited Lallula's plans to push forward his ambition to establish a large village. However, Mangula, a noted warrior of the Siakeng was recalcitrant to follow the Kawlni. This made Lallula to use intimidation. Lallula sent men led by Kawlkawlha with instructions of negotiating a peaceful entry for the Siakeng but revuttal to be dealt

with force. Mangngula chose to fight. In the event Mangngula and many others were killed while those remaining Siakêng clansmen were brought to Zopui. This victory which Lallula had over Mangngula was panegyricized in folk tradition. This followed the composition prevalent in those days, as a short couplet.

*"Zokhaw val hnamchem kan chawi,
Mangngul a rang kan sahna, Run kuamah aw e." 10*

We young men of Zopui young men raised our swords,
Slaughtered Mangngul on the side of Run River.

Thus Siakêng people were brought from the other side of the Run River and made to settle in Lallula's village. Subsequently, a number of people from Khawhhring clan in fear of the Halkha Pawi also joined Zopui. From this conglomeration the village boasted as having as many as 500 houses.¹¹ On his side, though has achieved his main objective, Lallula took pains to promote goodwill and industry in his village. Rather than bask on having established an awesome village he urged the village to abjure indolence and to work hard. Through these efforts made by the ambitious chief Zopui became noted for its prosperity. Not only were the villagers able to regularly celebrate the seasonal festivals even the poorest and widows joined in the celebrations. Many songs composed then survive to this day to remind succeeding generations of the celebrative mood and conviviality at Zopui. One such song runs thus:-

*Kutpui kan ur, khuangruah chiah nghian e.
Chappui rawh lovin a tul ngai lo
Chappui rawh lohvin a tul ngai lo,
Ka chung chhawrthla a vanglai lo Maw?¹²*

*While we prepare for the festival, it's rainy,
We need not worry yet for weeding,*

*Work will come, but only later,
Is the moon in the sky at its fullest?*

However, though the people of Zopui rejoiced in their prosperity, they were obliged to pay tribute to the Pawi who were then on the other side of Tiau River. They regularly exacted prestige items such as of clothes, dye, tusk, beads and gongs, and livestock.¹³ Failure to comply was mercilessly dealt with. The victim could be killed outright or even taken away into slavery.

This is testified by the verse:

*"Ka changlalin Tiaupui dung a zui,
Hrum sawm dala laithli kan nul"*¹⁴

*My mithun crossed over Tiau River,
We wept at the outskirts of Pawi village"*

Lallula was not ready for confrontation but began to hatch to rid the Pawih menace. He married off his eldest son Lalpuiliana to a Zahau chief's daughter named Khuangtiali. This stopped the Zahau from making forays and exacting tribute from Zopui. But the Thlanrawn Pawi continued their harassment and demands upon the Sailo Villages including Zopui. In this Lallula decided to use force. After having made all the preparations for an ambush, he sent a messenger to Thanchhuma, a Thlanrawn Pawi chief, to invite him on the rewards that followed upon the good harvest that Zopui had that year. There would be a feast upon his arrival and whomever he brought along with him would also be rewarded with abundant gifts. The unsuspecting Pawi chief came with an entourage of about 300 men. On the fixed night, following the festivity that was really conducted, the Pawih were slaughtered in their sleep. Only the chief Thanchhuma and his noted warrior Cherkanga were kept alive for ransom. The chief was later redeemed with very good quality Thihna

(amber beads made in necklace and very prized by the Mizo.) The T̄ihna was given the name Thanchhuma. It was inherited by Lallula's descendents on the line of Manga and became a family heirloom.¹⁵ Cherkanga was also redeemed with three guns. A celebrative song was composed to mark this occasion for posterity.

*“Tui ralah Cherkan, Phunthang a lo lian e,
Milai ban kaih raldanga sakhming chhalna
Vanni a salna rengah, Vanni a sal e,
Cherkanga'n hrenthir a bun
Tlanna rengah, Meithal chawi thum a hlan e”*¹⁶

“Cherkana and Phungthanga came from other side of river (T̄iau)
As famed warriors and the most powerful on earth;
But Cherkanga was handcuffed. Redeemd with three guns”

At this time, the usual price for redemption for an ordinary person was a mithun. There were other goods which were also acceptable but were measured against the value of this animal. The ransom for a chief was ten mithuns or goods equal value.¹⁷ Through his planning and successful execution of this massacre Lallula became a celebrated hero throughout the length and breadth of the country. Because of this incident the name of Zopui was superseded by Samthang in which name it came to be called thenceforth. The incident may be placed as somewhere in the latter half of the 18th century.

After the flush of victory waned following the Pawih massacre at Zopui a foreboding gloom began to creep in settle. In fear of retribution from the Pawih the neighbouring villagers, from Lurh to Champhai started to move away and migrate to scatter south, north and westward. Within a short while, Zopui became a lone village. Ultimately, knowing full well that he could not

contain the Pawih alone, and with Rorehlova decided to shift towards the west. Almost in constant motion, from Bawktlang (near North Vanlaiphai) he moved to Lungchhuan and then further to Piler. Here Lallula and Rorehlova parted company. Lallula wanted to continue moving west while Rorehlova preferred to move back towards the east. He hoped being a Fanai-Pawi his fellow Pawi will show sympathy. When the two were east about to part they performed a Fanai-Pawi his fellow Pawi will show symatahy. When the two were about to part they performed a ritual called *sekhuang/mitthi rawp lam* (farewell ritual for the dead) by killing young mithun feeling that they may not be together again except in mitthi khua (place of the dead).

From Piler, Lallula moved to Bawngchawm for a while, after that he settled at Serchhip. Moving further towards the west he settled again at Diarkhai near Sialsuk. There his youngest son Vuttaia was born probably in the year 1776¹⁸. He again shifted to Samlukhai. A new village was established at Zawngtah for Lalsavunga. This was around A.D.1784 Contemporary to this time his cousin (son of his father's brother) Laltuaka was settled at the present South Sabual with 500 households. Lallula joined his cousin. Lallula again proposed for the massacre of Pawi but Laltuaka objected it. For this Laltuaka became unpopular with the other chief who reviled him for his cowardice. In their disgust they stigmatized his descent by using the word *no* against the proper word *thlah*. From here the word "*Tuaka no*" came into existence. Lallula formed a new settlement at Darlung where he was rejoined by many from his old villagers at Zopui. From Darlung he threatened the Zadeng chief by composing a song (couplet) which still bears the name Darlung Zai".

*"Chawnglul, Zadengi lo ngai rawh u,
Ka chungah turni chang leng rawh se"*¹⁹

**“Cawnglul, Zadengi listen to me,
None is above me but the Sun”**

Heeding his threats the Zadeng chiefs were obliged to flit the vicinity. Finally, in Hreichhuk, where he established his last village, his journey came to an end. He died a natural death somewhere at the end of the 18th century and died there.

Most of Lallula’s descendants became chief of their own villages. They predominated in northern part of present Mizoram. Except for them there were villages of little significance only as those of the Zahau, Hualngo, Ralte and Hmar. The total number of Lallula’s descendant reached one hundred villages,²⁰ which show the administrative ability, bearing testimony to the greatness of this chief.

Within the torrid state of affairs that encapsulated the Mizo tribes in pre-colonial times there was hardly a possibility to evince any permanence. However, within the given constraints the achievements of Lallula are noteworthy. His ability to rally people and to cohere diverse tribes and clans under one banner was unequalled. In this regard he was able to integrate various groups and popularized the use of a dialect for all these clans and sub-tribes. To him is credited the use of the Suhlian dialect which is the standard and common dialect which the better number of these tribes speak and write today. His efforts to direct and channelize the spirit and vigour of youth towards tangible and meaningful ends are unparalleled. Aside from these traits he had a strong love for nature and is remembered for the many songs that he composed and also inspired to be composed through his deeds and character. In all, as a chief, he manifested the desired spirit of those times when life was closely related to the law of the jungle or the “survival of the fittest.” While feared by enemies he was considerate to the poor and the infirm. Within the harsh

environment rife with tribal feuds and vendettas, he was a pillar of succor. It is due to his outstanding figure that he was able to engender a trust from the other clans a place of chieftainship not only for his own progenies but also the general Sailo. It was from the villages ruled by Sailo chiefs that most of today's Mizoram was evinced.

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LALLULA

K. Laldinpuii

Lallula is said to be one of the greatest Sailo chiefs. This paper is an attempt to introduce this great Sailo chief to future Mizo scholars and historians. It is quite difficult to build a tree of Sailo descendance as the very few sources available to us differ in the numbers of offsprings and their chronological order. Besides, the first written records available were prepared by the British who could not pronounce or write names of chiefs or villages correctly. However, it is a high time to interpret these valuable sources in correct spellings and pronunciations. Here is a few among many examples of such British writings:-

British writings Correct spelling / pronunciations

Lalool	-	Lallula
Lallingvhoom	-	Lallianvunga
Mongpir	-	Mangpawrha
Vanole	-	Vanhnuailiana
Lalpitang	-	Lalpuithanga
Benkuia	-	Bengkhuaia etc.etc.

It is certainly clear that the Lushais, now Mizo migrated from the East to their present land, moving village by village or clan by clan under their respective chiefs in several waves and directions. It may be mentioned here that in the past, one chief normally ruled over a village, but in case of powerful chiefs-three or four villages. While writing the Mizo history, these migration movements have considerable influence. The river *Tiau* which is now the natural boundary between North-East India and Burma is crossed by all these migrating tribe and the crossing of this river determines the classification of time and dates of events in Mizo history. We often come across the '*Tiau lui kan hma*' (before crossing the *Tiau* river) and '*Tiau lui kan*

hnu' (after crossing the *Tiau* river). The pre and post crossing of this river divides the Mizo history into two periods. Those who migrated and crossed the *Tiau* river earlier than other groups of Lushais moved up to Tripura and Cachar district of Assam in later part of the 18th century where they were called and known as '*Kuki*' (wild man in Bengali) by their neighbouring Bengali people.

Lallula was the only son of *Rohnaa*, an early *Sailo* chief. The tree of descent of *Sailo* chiefs is prepared and attached herewith in this paper. The great grand fathers of *Lallula* had already assumed their status as ruling clan while they were in modern *Chin* state of Burma. We have information that *Zahmuaka*, the early *Sailo* chief had ruled over a village called '*Tlangkhua*' now in *Chin* state of Burma.¹ It is difficult to give the exact year of *Lallula*'s birth-one earlier work has put the year of his birth at about AD.1730.²

It is said that *Lallula* possessed a very peculiar character right from his childhood. In an established patriarchal society, *Lallula* was said to be reluctant to obey his elder sister's request to pick up her '*dawhkih*' (hair-pin which was also used to smoothen weaving by women) which she accidentally dropped. While playing with peer group *Lallula* always manifested his strong personality and courage. He was never stingy and shared with friends whatever eatables he had with him. It is said that while playing '*Se chhun lem*' with his friends, *Lallula* asked his friends to beat him with all their strengths. Being a chief's only son, his companion did not dare to beat him and *Lallula* used to request *Rorehlova*, an orphan adopted by his parents, whom he treated as his real brother to beat him harshly. As *Rorehlova* did so, *Lallula* seemed to be happy. Noticing his son's behaviour *Lallula*'s father *Rohnaa* was said to remark "when this son of mine grow up, we would not longer keep on running for fear of *Pawis*". In those days, there were always inter-village or inter-

clan feuds among themselves characterised by raids. It is also said that when *Lallula* was a young teenager, his father performed '*khuangchawi*'³ which involved great feast and dance. When the '*Tufa ho*'⁴ asked *Lallula* to give them '*Tuium*'⁵ and '*Sachhumna bel*' (big earthen pot for cooking meat) through the window because the house was already packed he threw out those utensils through the window and broken everything. The '*Tufa ho*' stood in awe with apprehension of his father's rage, but rather, *Rohnaa* exclaimed "you would surely have '*Belrawh mual*'⁶ one day. Thus, right from his childhood, *Lallula* seemed to have all character needed to be a powerful chief of those days - peculiarity, stubbornness, bravery, perseverance, solidity in principle – in short – courage.

Around AD. 1747⁷ the descendants of *Sailova* decided to group themselves together so as to counter '*Pawi ral*' (the *Pawi* clan who frequently raided *Lusei* villages) at a place called *Selesih* which was at a distance of one mile to the present *Khawbung 'S'* in *Champhai* district. The town at its peak sheltered 7000 inhabitants that it was the first town in *Mizo* history. It is said that three chiefs from *Sailova*'s lineage and four chiefs including *Rohnaa*, father of *Lallula* grouped together, distributing among themselves local areas in the town. At this time *Lallula* was in his adolescence. Getting married while living in *Selesih*, *Lallula* now wanted to have '*Belrawh mual*' for himself.

After some deliberations, the eldest of the *Selesih* chiefs, *Pu Kawlha* gave him a near by village called '*Zopui*' which was in the South-east of *Selesih* town. Thus, *Lallula* became independent chief of *Zopui* by about AD. 1750⁸. His adopted brother *Rorehlova* accompanied him to his new village and *Lallula* put him in charge of a small strip of *Zopui* village in a status of '*Sa ngal khawng hrang*' (enjoying somewhat an autonomy).

In those days, the size of a village and its population depended on the wisdom, diplomatic skill and victories in raids of the chief. As *Lallula* had such qualities, many families from *Selesih* joined him when he started his own village at *Zopui* because they had confidence in him for their safety. Also by about AD.1752 ⁹ a *Kawlni* (sub-clan of *Ralte*) clan of quite number of families from '*Khawzawl*' village voluntarily came to *Zopui* to become *Lallula*'s subjects. It is to be mentioned here that in those days, families or clans often changed their allegiance to stronger chiefs for their safety. *Lallula* must have had such power and fame that people from such far off village came to him. Those '*Kawlni*' clan suggested to their new chief to invite their cousin clan of '*Siakeng*' who were in the valley of '*Run*' river. An expansionist by nature, *Lallula* took great interest in their advice. He therefore sent his men under the command of his brave '*Pasaltha*' (warrior) *Khawkawlha* to the *Siakeng* village. It was planned that at first they would try to win over the *Siakeng* people without using force. There was apprehension on *Lallula*'s mind that the '*Siakeng*' village had a warrior chief named '*Mangngula*' who might not be easily intimidated. When *Lallula*'s men reached near the *Siakeng* village they sent messengers to inform their intention. As was apprehended, *Mangngula* replied the messengers that he and his men would fight to the end instead of being subjugated. So in AD 1750 *Lallula*'s men raided the '*Siakeng*' village. *Lallula* had instructed his men to capture *Mangngula* alive if possible and to spare the lives of anyone or any family who were willing to come to *Zopui* village. After terrible fighting with many casualties, *Mangngula* was killed and *Lallula*'s men came out a victorious.

Those who were spared were taken to *Zopui* village with all their belongings. This victory was sung by *Lallula*'s people while dancing for their victory thus –

“ *Zokhaw val hnamchem kan chawi,
Manggul ar ang kan sahna,
Run kuamah Aw E*”. Which may mean

“We warriors of Zo village lifted our daos,
With which we chopped ‘*Manggul*’ like a chick,
In the valley of ‘*Run*’ river”.

By about AD1756 a group of *Khawlhiring* (one of *Lusei* clans) families, seeking protection from ‘*Halkha Pawi*’ also joined *Lallula*. This added and enlarged *Lallula*’s *Zopui* village with a population of about 5000 inhabitants. *Lallula* now became the strongest chief among those *Sailo* chiefs who scattered from the grouped *Selesih* town.

As long as the *Lusei* villages grouped themselves together at *Selesih* town, their eastern neighbours – the *Pawis* dared not disturb them. But now they scattered again, occupying scattered villages, they had to suffer frequent *Pawi* raids again. *Lallula* knew quite well that the safety of his subjects was his ultimate duty and subsequent survival of his domain. It appears that at this time, the *Lusei* villages under their *Sailo* chiefs were always fearful of their neighbouring *Pawi* clans who frequently raided their villages, taking away whatever they wanted of the *Lusei* possessions. Many times, these *Pawis* went to *Lusei* villages, collecting tributaries by force. We have many verses of lamentative songs of the *Lusei* people for the losses of their wealth like gayals, beads of neck-laces, dyed yarns, poultry, etc. at the hands of the people. *Lallula* could no longer tolerate the atrocities. His mind could not rest until he could stop this menace. He kept in his mind that unless his village was self-sufficient abundantly, he could not take any action against the *Pawi* which might need long drawn raids and fights. Besides his people should have pride in their abundant wealth i.e. surplus harvest of crops. He, therefore, secretly prepared his subjects, instructing them to work hard and be self-reliant so that they would survive in times of adversities. It is said that he used to urge anyone doing nothing during working hours to work the next day. The result was that his village reaped great harvests. Now *Lallula* wanted to make his folks happy and organised grand celebrations of the two *Lusei* festivals –

Chapchar kut and *Pawlkut* with pomps, dancing, singing and feasting wherein everyone, rich or poor took parts. This made his villagers contented, confident and well-organised and obedient. They felt safe and sufficient now.

After such happiness and contentment of *Zopui* village, *Lallula* then contemplated to crush the *Thlanrawn Pawi* (the *Pawi* clan living in *Thlanrawn* village) forever. He knew that *Thlanrawn Pawis* were no match for him in direct confrontation and that they could only be crushed through proper planning and intrigues. One morning, he sent out his *Tlangau*¹⁰ to call upon his adopted brother *Rorehlova* and all his *Khawnbawl Upa*¹¹ to assemble in his house. When they all came, *Lallula* informed them of his secret plan. As was the custom, they drank *Zing Zu* (a *Lusei* beer) and listened intently to *Lallula*'s plan. The plan was thus the neighbouring *Lusei* chiefs would be invited and be informed them of the plan. If they agreed upon the plan, *Lallula* would invite the *Thlanrawn Pawis* with their powerful chief *Thanchhuma* to come to *Zopui* and witness the grand celebration of their successes in harvests and hunting expeditions. They would offer chief *Thanchhuma* a good collection of tributes including ivory and other valuables. That they could come to *Zopui* at their convenient time and the *Lusei* chiefs would collect whatever wealth they had for the guests. They would also invite them to come as many as possible and that that would be their pleasure. *Lallula* should request the *Pawi* chief *Thanchhuma* to inform him his visit well in advance so that everything could be prepared for him. *Rorehlova* and all the elders endorsed the plan happily and praised *Lallula* for his wisdom. It was unanimously agreed to send a messenger to the chief of *Thlanrawn* village. The neighbouring *Lusei* chiefs were also informed of the plan. They all had suffered so much at the

hands of the *Pawi* and they readily accepted the invitation and to conform *Lallula's* intriguing plan. *Lallula* and his elders instructed all families in *Zopui* to treat their respective guests when they came with fervent hospitality and give them treats with meats and *Zu* everyday so that there would be no suspicions from their guests. Pretending to bring ivory for their guests, *Zopui* villagers should bring home from their jhum *changel laimu*¹² and peeled off the branches of *Beltur*¹³ tree and women folk should carry home large barks of trees in pretension to bring gongs.

The chief of *Thlanrawn* village, when he received the invitation, happily accepted it with no suspicion and apparently informed *Lallula* the time of impending visit. *Lallula* and his elders assigned themselves of hosting their *Pawi* counterparts. The chief's order was passed on to each and every family in *Zopui* village that when they heard the sound of *Darkhuang* (a large gong) from the chief's house, every family must kill its respective *Pawi* guests. The *Thlanrawn Pawi*, looking forward their bounties, with their chief *Thanchhuma* came much more than *Lallula* had expected. So, he secretly sent messengers to his neighbouring *Lusei* villages urging to come as many as possible and that otherwise the plan would be a total failure. Since the *Lusei* villages had suffered enough at the hands of the *Pawi*, they willingly came in large numbers. As already planned, the neighbouring folks brought what looked like ivory and other items. They arrived at *Zopui* at dusk when visibility was not clear. Each and every family already had their *Pawi* guests, so *Lallula's* boys carefully distributed their fellow *Lusei* guests, placing two or three of them in a house where there were more *Pawi* guests.

The day came for the grand celebration. On the chief *Lallula's* compound, a great dancing and singing, supported by abundant drinks was in full swing and a large number of animals were killed for the feast. The *Lusei* participants carefully pretended to drink the

beer but poured out most of their shares secretly while their *Pawi* guests enjoyed the drinks as much as possible. When the celebration was finished by night, they dispersed to their respective shelters. Around midnight *Lallula* all at once shouted to his two guests – the *Thlanrawn* chief *Thanchhuma* and elder *Phunthanga* that as they had been so cruel to the *Lusei* people and as their behaviour had been so bitter to the *Lusei* people, they were being captured. With that, the readily available boy – guests from *Vanlung* village bound chief *Thanchhuma* and instantly killed elder *Phunthanga*. As was planned, the big gong (*Darmang*) was sounded through the entire village. Each family at once attacked and killed their respective guests. They were instructed earlier to pour water to wet the gun barrels of their guests. Women and children had already took shelter in the nearby jungles. All these could be done without the knowledge of their drunkened guests. Thus, a horrible bloodshed filled *Zopui* village. Only three men out of about three hundred *Pawi* guests were able to escape. The hated chief of *Thlanrawn* Village *Thanchhuma* was now a prisoner at the mercy of *Lallula* whose dream was fulfilled. This so called '*Thlanrawn rawt*' happened around the year AD 1760¹⁴

The *Thlanrawn rawt* made *Lallula* famous and a much feared and powerful *Sailo* chief. However, his neighbouring villages started moving westwards in fear of the *Pawi* revenge to be away from the latter's reach. At last *Lallula* and his adopted brother *Rorehlova* were left in the vicinity of the *Pawi* clan. But there was no such *Pawi* revenge in the near future as was apprehended. The *Lusei* clan were now free and *Lallula's* fame spread throughout the *Lusei* villages and everyone talked about the chief's greatness that the name of his *Zopui* village was called *Samthang* which may mean 'the famous talk of everybody'.

After three or four years of the famous *Thlanrawn rawt* only *Lallula's* village now remained near the *Pawis*. Knowing his position

and the constant danger of *Pawi* revenge, *Lallula* decided to follow other migrating *Lusei* chiefs without whom he could not resist the impending danger. It is said that *Lallula* was reluctant to move because he would not be able to take along all his possessions, specially his flocks of cocks which he had reared for so long. He disposed most of his favoured cocks and took along only one best singing cock with him.

On his way to westward migration, *Lallula* was said to have defeated a great *Thado* chief named *Mangkhaia* at *Champhai*. But it appears that *Lallula* did not stay there. The first known stop of *Lallula* is said to be a hill called *Bawktlang* near *N. Vanlaiphai* which still bears its name today. *Lallula* and his folks appear to stay there for two or three years. As it was still near to the *Pawi* settlement, *Lallula* and his folk moved in south-west direction and halted at *Lungchhuan*. From *Lungchhuan* they shifted to the nearby *Piler* hill. Here *Rorehlova* who was with him all along decided to part and moved east-ward. *Lallula*, in a superior tone told his adopted brother to light a fire on top of a hill if the latter had to face *Pawi* revenge so that he could come to help. *Rorehlova* seemed to settle well since no such much message was not seen for quite sometime. From *Piler* *Lallula* shifted to *Bawngchawm* hill but he did not stay there for long. From *Bawngchawm* he moved to the nearby *Serchhip* hill from where he still moved on westward to *Darkhai* hill near *Siatsuk* village. From *Darkhai* he moved to *Samlukhai*. At this time *Lallula's* cousin brother chief *Laltuaka* had already settled at the nearby *Sabual* village. After staying sometime at *Samlukhai*, *Lallula* joined his cousin brother, still intending to move further. However, his cousin brother convinced him to stay around and assured him that he was far enough from the danger of *Pawi* revenge and that even if such thing happened, they would face together. *Laltuaka* then shifted his village to *Bawlte* sparing *Sabual* hill for *Lallula*. *Lallula* now had a village of his own. From *Sabual* he

shifted his village to *Darlung* hill where he started to rule at peace. Here, knowing that their former great chief was at peace again, many families who had left him after *Thlanrawn rawt* and scattered to various villages for fear of *Pawi* revenge, now returned to him. His village was now enlarged again. From *Darlung* he shifted his village to *Kanghmun* and from there he shifted to *Hreichuk* where he spent his last days at a very old age. He died in the year AD 1807¹⁵ at *Hreichuk*.

Lallula may be placed among the greatest chiefs of the *Mizos*. In deed, he was the greatest and most famous among his contemporary *Sailo* chiefs. He was the only chief at that time who dared to stand against the much feared *Pawi* atrocities who frequently terrorized *Lusei* villages, capturing and enslaving and forcibly taking whatever they wanted from them. In fact he was the ancestor of almost all powerful *Sailo* chiefs of later days. His son and grand sons were the *Lushai* chiefs who had relations with the British, in good or bad terms. Mr R. G. Woodthorpe, Leutenant, Royal Engineers in his account of the *Lushai* expedition of 1871-1872 remarks "The *Lushais* first appeared on the scene about the year 1840, the first chief of whom we had any knowledge being *Lalal (Lallula)*; from whom are descended the chiefs who have lately been the cause of so much anxiety to the Indian Government"¹⁶

As already mentioned earlier, *Lallula* seemed to possess the character needed to survive and become powerful chief of the nomadic tribe at a time when 'survival of the fittest' was the only key to success. As they were constantly warring among themselves, only a courageous chief could sustain his folks who always jumped over and changed their allegiance to successful chiefs for protection. All through his westward movements, many of his subjects in *Zopui* village did not abandon *Lallula*. They followed him all along, traversing hills and rivers right from *Zopui* in the eastern corner to

his last settlement *Hreichuk* in the north-west of Mizoram today. It is said that in his last days when *Lallula* and his wife were ailing, many of his descendant chiefs, scattered in almost all parts of Northern *Lushai* Hills respectfully paid visits to him with all sorts of gifts.

Lallula seemed to be an ambitious chief who always tried to expand his domain. When he settled peacefully at *Samlukhai* after wandering for many years, *Lallula* soon directed his attention to oust the greatest of his neighbouring chiefs named *PuBuara*, the chief of the adjoining *Saithah* village. However, *PuBuara* moved and shifted his village to further western hills in his own accord to avoid direct encounter with *Lallula*. In this way, many chiefs around him kept aside and moved away from him. We have no record of any resistance or objection from other *Lusei* chiefs during all his westward migration. J. Ware Edger in his notes remarks "When the *Looshai* chief *Lalul* began to push towards the north and west, the hills east of the *Dullessur* (*Tlawng* river) were occupied by villages under a family of *Poitoo* chiefs, the most influential of whom was named *Laroo*"¹⁷.

It may be said that *Lallula* was well advanced in diplomacy. Wherever he went and settled, he was able to assemble around him the neighbouring *Lusei* chiefs and enjoyed their confidence and hospitalities. This is evident from the fact that during all the years of his constant migration, he met no hostilities from other *Lusei* chiefs whom he came across. Rather, the *Lusei* chiefs who had already settled in *Lushai* hills - received him warmly wherever he went. But *Lallula* was never content at being guest of other chiefs until he settled himself as an independent powerful chief. While in *Zopui* village, he had won the confidence of other *Lusei* clans even from far off villages eg., the *Kawlai* clan joined him from *Khawzawl* which was about a week journey by foot. Many families also joined him from his previous hometown of *Selesih*. Those who could not

be persuaded were crushed. We have such an incident when *Lallula* sent his men to *Siakeng* village in *Run* valley under its warrior *Khawkawlha* to persuade this clan to join him. The *Siakeng* refusal led to the almost extinction of the entire village by *Lallula's* men. Here also, *Lallula* was said to have instructed his men to spare the lives of those who were willing to come to *Zopui* village. It may also be mentioned here that at *Thlanrawn rawt* *Lallula* was able to assemble all the nearby *Lusei* chiefs in conformity.

Another special character of *Lallula* was his never ending ambition. Settled peacefully at *Samlukhai* village, *Lallula* invited many of his relatives and chiefs to attend the ceremony of memorial stone erection for his only daughter *Ridawpi* who had died there. The chiefs who came to the function were :-

- | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-----------|---------|
| 1. Laltuaka | chief of | Bawlte | village |
| 2. Lalchungnunga | chief of | Rallen | village |
| 3. Chawngchhunga | chief of | Bawngthah | village |
| 4. Savunga | chief of | Dengsur | village |
| 5. Lalziaha | chief of | Rawpui | village |
| 6. Hmawngphunga | chief of | Chhiphir | village |
| 7. Tlutpawrha | chief of | Chemtum | village |
| 8. Lallianvunga | chief of | Sawnggek | village |
| 9. Lalsavunga | chief of | Zawngtah | village |

It is said that when all his guests arrived at his house. *Lallula* again expressed his intention to crush the *Pawis* as he had done to the people of *Thlanrawn* many years ago. When he shared his intention and plans, inviting his guests to join him that the *Lusei* and *Sailo* hegemony would then be established forever, he was obstructed by his cousin chief *Laltuaka*. *Lallula* could never forget the cruelty they had endured while in the east at the hands of the more powerful and ferocious *Pawis*. It is to be noted here that in those days, the stronger clan or village always showed their might upon the weaker ones. As there was a strong opposition from *Laltuaka*, *Lallula's* plan of crushing the *Pawi* clan was not fulfilled. Being a stubborn

warrior, *Lallula* on his death bed still gave a counsel to his brave and favourite grandson *Lalsavunga* to defeat the *Zadeng* and *Chawnglul* clans with force and not to trust anyone too much.

Concluding Remarks :

Lallula might seem to be an over ambitious, even cruel in his dealing with his enemies, but the other side of his character depicts him a benevolent chief and very advanced of his age. It is said that he loved to listen to his many cocks crowing in the dark and that he used to listen to them solemnly, sitting on top of a small hill near his house. He was a composer and in fact many events of his career can be traced through his songs. His victories over the *Stakeng* village, his crushing defeat of the *Thlanrawn Pawis*, his places of halts during his westward migration, the great festivities etc., are mentioned in those songs. We have *Zopul zal*, *Darlung Zai*, etc., commemorating his victories, festivities, sentiments and memories of their past settlements etc. Also, the patch below *Lungchhuan* village still bears its name '*Artahkawn*' as it was a place where *Lallula* was said to lament the lonely crowing of his only cock, perhaps sharing the cock's loneliness. It is also said that *Lallula* always paid attention to the well-being of his subjects. While in *Zopui* village, he took great care to include every villager, rich and poor, to take part in *Chapchar Kut* and *Pawl Kut*. Everyone appeared to be content and safe under him. Such a great, ambitious and courageous chief was bound to have great descendants.

NOTES AND REFERENCES:

1. Mizo Lal Ropuite – Tribal Research Institute, Govt. of Mizoram, 1996, p.1
2. Ibid.
3. Khuangchawi :- A public feast given by chiefs and well-to-do Lushais to obtain title and prestige.

4. Tufa ho :- Usually men who prepared everything for the grand feasts and functions.
5. Tui um :- A bamboo tube for carrying water in, or for holding water.
6. Belrawh mual :- A place where earthen pots are fired or baked outside the village which could be owned only by a chief or his son to show autonomy or even independence.
7. K. Zawla – Mizo Pipute Leh An Thlahte Chanchin Zomi Book Agency, Aizawl, 1993, p.199.
8. Mizo Lal Ropuite op.cit. p. 6.
9. K. Zawla, op.cit. p. 200.
10. *Tlangau*; Village crier who always remain at the chief's disposal.
11. *Khawnbawl Upa* :- A mantri, one who acted as an adviser or elder to the chief.
12. Changel :- The generic name for wild plantains – the inner part of which is white. Changel laimu – Inner plantains.
13. Beltur :- the name of a tree whose generic name is *Ostodespaniculata* when peeled off looks like white stick.
14. Mizo Lal Ropuite; op.cit. p.21. However, the year 1755 is regarded by Col. V. Lunghnema as the year of Thlanrawn Rawt – Mizo Chronicles; Churachanpur, Manipur, 1993, p.95
15. Ibid. p. 30.
16. R.G. Woodthorpe; *The Lushai Expedition 1871-1872*, Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, (Reprint) 1978, p. 10.
17. J. Ware Edgar – 'Notes on my tour among the Looshais – Part – II Dt 20th March 1872 p.2.

DOKULHA : THE FREEDOM FIGHTER

Vanlalringa Bawitlung.

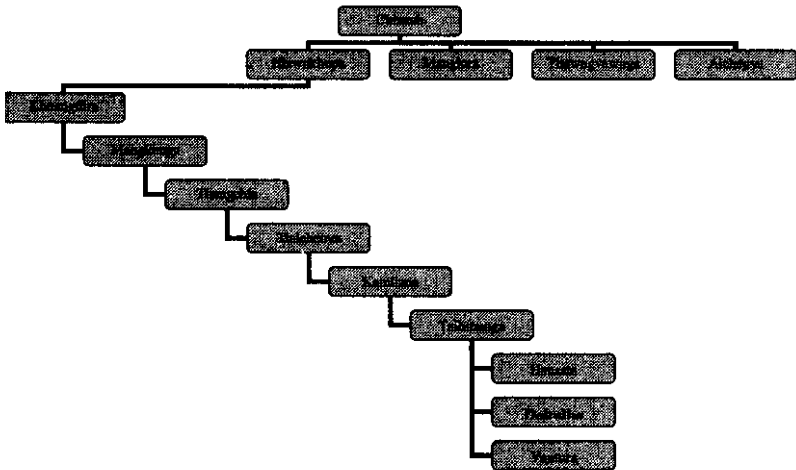
Introduction

Dokulha was the most powerful Lai chief in Mizoram especially at the time of the British incursion. He also seemed to be the least known freedom fighter whose resistance against British imperialism was second to none among Mizo chiefs. Dokulha was the Chinzah chief who happened to be a powerful chief at the time of British intervention in Mizoram. He conducted a successful raid on the British when the latter started their incursion in 1888. However he could not stand long against the British so they annexed his land under their dominion. But as an independent ruler he found it difficult to accept British suzerainty even after his chieftainship fell into their hands. In fact, it seems that he could not adjust himself to be a good and obedient chief under the British administration. So he continued to disobey the British authority by creating problems for the Colonial administration. That is why he had problems with the British throughout his life. Their confrontation and raids eventually led to the British southern Lushai campaign popularly known as *Chin-Lushai expedition of 1889-1890*.¹ He had been a formidable hurdle for the British penetration particularly in the south Mizoram. Moreover, he often refused to follow the British administration. So he sacrificed his life for his country and that his struggle for freedom from the British domination was even recognised by the government of India. They regarded him as a martyr and his name was included among the Indian martyrs in the book called '*Who's Who of Indian Martyrs*'

published by the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare Government of India.² Therefore, it may not be an exaggeration to say that Dokulha was one of the greatest freedom fighters among Mizos whose struggle for freedom finally took his own life. It is however difficult to discuss about the life of Dokulha and his struggle for freedom without mentioning his brother's name because they were firmly united and carried on raid together until his brother's death. So prior to the death of his brothers, he did not have significant venture which might be attributed as his own individual undertaking. On account of his brother's premature death without an heir, he inherited his village Lungtian so he became chief of two villages Fungkal and Lungtian. But no longer had he ruled this village, he was captured and at last convicted and sent to Andaman Jail for lifetime imprisonment.

His Background

Dokulha was the second son of the Chinzah chief Taihmunga whose ancestors hailed from the Chin Hills of Burma in the last part of the 19th Century. According to S.R.Chinzah, the progenitor of Chinzah clan was named Chinzah from whom the Chinzahs of today traced their descent. Chinzah had four sons namely Hlawkhupa, Manglura, Thawngvawnga and Aicheuva. Hlawkhupa had a son Khuangtlira. Khuangtlira had Mangkunga. Mangkunga had Thangchia who had Tialcheuva. Tialcheuva had Kamliana who was father of Taihmunga. Taihmunga had three sons, Hausata, Dokulha and Vantura.³ A Geneological table may be drawn as follows to show how Dokulha came into existence.



Ancestors of Dokulha hailed from one of the major groups of the Lai tribe popularly known as *Lungzarh-Khuafo* who lived in the places near Halkha (Burma). In around 1820 this group of people moved into Mizoram from Dawn (Burma) by crossing Tiau river near Farkawn and settled in different places before they finally settled in the present habitat.⁴ C. Laitanga however observes that this people moved into present Mizoram near Champhai.⁵ After a careful study of their migration routes and settlements it appears that ancestors of Dokulha entered into Mizoram near Farkawn.⁶ After entering into Mizoram they settled firstly in a place called Bunglemun near present Khuangthing and then to Bungzung, Sialhawk, North Vanlaiphai, Lungkawlh, Zote, Pukpui, Khuanghlum, Perilung, Puruntlang and Cherhlun. Taihmunga was chief when they lived in Cherhlun which is believed to have been around 1850-1868. A.D.⁷ He died in about 1865 and his memorial stone is still preserved.⁸ Dokulha, the second son of Taihmunga was born at Cherhlun in 1851.⁹ During their stay here there was a great famine called *Mautam* (Flowering of bamboo) which was usually followed by famine in Mizoram. Interestingly, Cherhlun was spared in this famine and a number of people came here to buy and acquire rice.¹⁰

His Chieftainship

Barely three years had passed since their father's death they started to move from Cherhlun towards further south and finally settled in the mountain ranges of Phawngpui (Blue Mountain). They established a village at Lungtian near Phawngpui in 1872.¹¹ Hausata, being the eldest brother became the chief of Lungtian. The younger brother Dokulha moved farther south to establish his own village at Fungkah a few miles away from Lungtian in 1887.¹² So Dokulha and his brothers were able to establish their own chieftainship which came to be a vast and strong chieftainship at the time of the British intervention. They were firmly united against their enemies and that seems to have been the main reason why they were in a position to establish a strong Chinzah chieftainship in the southern part of Mizoram. Unfortunately however Hausata died in 1889 without a son to succeed him. So his chieftainship was inherited by his youngest brother Vantura who also died a few years later without a son to succeed him as he was killed by the Lakhers in 1891.¹³ Due to this premature death of his brothers Dokulha inherited their village thus became chief of these two villages, Lungtian and Fungkah in 1891.¹⁴ Dokulha was not an ordinary chief but a benevolent and powerful chief who could rule two villages efficiently. Because of his courage and strong personality together with his exploits his subjects had security and confidence in his chieftainship.¹⁵ So he was able to draw people around him in his village.

His Exploits

(a) Raid on Lalchheuva's village

Dokulha and his brothers carried a successful raid on Lalchheuva's village in January 1882. They returned to their villages with a good quantity of booty and 92 captives.¹⁶ As a

matter of fact, it was the time when each chief aspired to have success in wars or raids against the other chiefs. Dokulha and his brothers learnt that Thangluah chief Lalchheuva had strained relations with the neighbouring Sailo chiefs for certain reasons.¹⁷ So taking advantage of this fluid situation they conducted a raid knowing that Lalchheuva would not have supporters. As regards Sailos, Chinzah chiefs maintained cordial relations with them long before Dokulha came into power. It is said that before Chinzah moved into present habitat the great Sailo chief Lallula came to know about their courage when he invaded Siakeng in the valley of Run. So he invited them to move and settle down along with him.¹⁸ Moreover, he married his son Lalpuiliana to Tuantiali or Khuangtiali daughter of Chinzah chief.¹⁹ This matrimonial alliance might also be the reason why there was no confrontation or war between them at a time when Sailo chiefs and some Pawi chiefs were at daggers' drawn. Dokulha and his company were confident that their raid on Lalchheuva's village would not enrage neighbouring Sailo chiefs with whom they had been maintaining friendly relations. Thus their successful raid on Lalchheuva's village made them stronger and more powerful in the eyes of their subjects in particular and in the eyes of the people around them in general.

(b) Attack on British Survey Party

Dokulha was the leader of the invading party when they attacked the British Survey party under Lt. Steward who were then moving into Saichal range. On the 3rd February 1888, they ambushed them at a place called Belaisury Tom which was situated about 18 kms away from Rangamati. They killed Lt. Steward, two British soldiers, six Indian soldiers and two porters totalling 11 men.²⁰ This seems to be the first British army ever killed in present Mizoram.²¹ They took away five rifles, a pistol, knife etc. Dokulha and his brothers were said to have carried raid on the British survey party to get Whiteman's head

to call back Hausata's wife. It is further said that Hausata was married to a daughter of Thlantlang chief Zahuata. But his wife returned to her father due to friction between husband and wife. Hausata approached Zahuata in order to settle their dispute and to take back his wife. But to his dismay, his father-in-law demanded the Whiteman's head for the settlement of their dispute.²² It was so important for Hausata not to disappoint such a powerful chief in his neighbour for his existence as separate chief largely depended upon him. Incidentally, it was the time when the British penetration started in the western side of their land. So, they came to know about the British penetration and moved to confront them for two purposes. Firstly to take a Whiteman's head and second, to defend their land. B.Lalthangliana also maintains that the attack on the British survey party under Lt.Steward was not merely to kill the Whiteman and take his head for calling back Hausata's wife but also to defend their boundary. He further maintains that Chinzah chiefs laid their western boundary as far as Chandragon which the British encroached several times.²³ It is also clear that Dokulha and his brothers did not welcome British penetration into their claimed land so they wanted to get rid of them. They also thought that after killing Lt.Steward and his party they would be free from British incursion or intervention.²⁴

The British Intervention

In accordance with the Simla conference, Brig.Gen.Tregear was sent to conduct the southern campaign popularly known as *Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1889-1890* especially to bring Hausata into justice as well as to punish his brothers Dokulha and Vantura who were also responsible for the murder of Lt.Steward. The southern Lushai campaign was thus carried out under Brig.Gen.Tregear with 1,250 soldiers moving towards Lungtian (Hausata's village).²⁵ Capt. J. Shakespear who was an Intelligence officer under Brig.Gen.Tregear came to learn with the help of chieftainess Darbilhi

of Darzo that Hausata against whom this campaign was directed had already died. Thus in March 15, 1889, Brig.Gen.Tregear marched towards Lungtian, and ordered to unearth his grave in order to prove whether he was really died. After digging his grave, they found the gun of Lt.Steward along Hausata's body. Thus they confirmed that the main culprit behind the killing of Lt.Steward and two other British soldiers was undoubtedly died.²⁶ Dokulha, being a brother of Hausata could not escape suspicion of the British authority since they confirmed Hausata as the killer of Lt.Steward. As a matter of fact, they were equally responsible in this act.

(a) Dokulha was captured

In fact, Dokulha and his brothers were able to rule almost the whole of undivided Chhimtuipui District before the British advent. They were collecting tributes from the chiefs in the said region even prior to British advent. In 1891, Vantura tried to collect tributes in Maraland. He was advised by his Upas that he better waited for sometime because tributes had been collected by his late brother as well as his wife a few days back. He moved against their advice but failed to get tribute from them that out of rage, he captured two men from Serkawr village for he was not paid. Maras learnt that Vantura captured two of their villagers simply because they could not pay tribute as demanded. They conducted an ambush and fatally wounded him. Vantura succumbed to his injury after few days²⁷ Dokulha, brother of Vantura got angry with this attack. But it was the time when British became the supreme authority in the land. Therefore he asked permission from the British authority to kill two Lakhers in order to avenge his brother's death. Dokulha killed two villagers from Serkawr village inspite of the fact that he was not given permission by the British government. He was thus found responsible for the death of two British subjects. Moreover,

Capt. J. Shakespear, the then SDO, Lunglei learned that Dokulha was also responsible for the killing of Lt. Steward not to talk of the two Maras. So as soon as he learnt about the killing he moved to Dokulha's village Fungkah and captured him by treachery on the 20th February 1892.²⁸ He was tried and convicted awarding him a murder case for killing two Lakhers. Dokulha vehemently complained that the government's decision to convict him as murderer of two Lakhers was a sheer injustice as well as partial judgement on the part of the government on the ground that the Lakhers who had killed his brother went scot free whereas he was convicted in the same deed. So he was able to convince Capt. J. Shakespear, and converted his criminal case into political case so that he would be sent to Hazaribagh Jail (Bihar) instead of hanging.²⁹ Hence it seems that Dokulha developed antipathy towards the British. He did not think of coming back alive if he was sent to such far away land. So he tried to kill Police who escorted him on his way to Aizawl. They found him to be a dangerous man thus handcuffed and transported him to Hazaribagh Jail in haste. But during his imprisonment, his subjects frequently approached Superintendent for his release. J. Shakespear was also convinced after he visited Dokulha's villages that he was a great chief with whom the subjects could do business and depend upon. So he tried to get him release from prison with a view to have a better administrative convenience by reinstating him. He wrote a letter to the Commissioner of Chittagong Hill Tracts requesting him to release chief Dokulha provided that his village submits 40 guns to the British authority. Dokulha's subjects submitted the required amount of guns and got his release on the 6th February 1896³⁰

(b) *Convicted to be hanged*

Even a year had passed since he was released from prison, Dokulha was convicted again for killing a Muslim fakir who had incidentally come to his village. A Muslim wanderer or fakir

named C.C.Rahgi unexpectedly came to Dokulha's village Lungtian and since he could not speak other than Hindi Dokulha was the only person who could talk to him thus entertained him in his house. It is believed that Dokulha could somehow understand Hindi while he was in Hazaribagh jail. A fakir stayed two days in his village and on his third day he started to move. Dokulha asked him where he would be going. A fakir said that he would proceed on to China or Chin but he did not know the way or how to reach there. Dokulha asked him to return to his native land but a fakir was determined to move on. Dokulha and Vakkama accompanied him upto the village fountain. This Muslim fakir was later found dead within his jurisdiction. Since then Dokulha became the prime suspect for this murder.³¹ But, he was not convicted unless and until his son-in-law Zaliana reported to Drake Brockman SDO Lunglei that Dokulha was the real killer of the Muslim fakir. The main reason behind this report was that the reporter Zaliana had been deeply hurt by Dokulha for confiscating his mithun and slaughtered in his Khuangchawi. In fact, Zaliana was husband of Hausata's daughter named Suitangi. So Dokulha was his father-in-law called 'Pu' in Lai. Being a near relative Dokulha asked him to contribute his mithun for his Khuangchawi but it was declined by Zaliana. Dokulha was enraged by Zaliana's non-cooperation inspite of the fact that he should co-operate him following customary practices. So he confiscated his mithun for he disrespected and disobeyed his 'Pu'.³² But Zaliana dared not lay his hands on him thus waited for opportune moment to take revenge. So he claimed and reported to the British that Dokulha was the main culprit behind the murder of a fakir.³³ Brockman conveyed the matter to J. Shakespear, the Superintendent of Lushai Hills and to the Chief Commissioner of Assam. Brockman also sent Police Inspector Bhagwan Singh to take inquiry and book the culprit at Lungtian. But Bhagwan Singh was of the view that to capture Dokulha in his village would be dangerous for he was a courageous and

powerful chief and his record to this effect was wellknown to them. So he played another card to move him at Lunglei by concealing the fact that the reason behind drawing him at Lunglei was to make him offguard and capture him without giving him a chance to resist. So Brockman summoned the six suspects including Dokulha to appear before him at Lunglei. Although the six suspects claimed that Dokulha was innocent in this case. Still, Brockman convicted and put him in Lunglei Jail. But he did not feel safe to keep him in Lunglei sent to Aizawl with handcuff in May 1901.³⁴ But Dokulha was not a man who could be easily dealt with. Besides he was furious over the British partial judgement on his case so, he created problems by trying to commit suicide or hurt Police who escorted him. The escort party was sometimes at a loss to take him alive at Aizawl so they just carried him along. J. Shakespear, the Superintendent of Lushai Hills announced the judgement order that Dokulha was to be hanged.³⁵ But Dokulha submitted his complaint letters containing his handwritten six full pages. He asked the British government to reconsider their judgement on his case and firmly stuck to his claim that he was innocent. It seems that Dokulha wrote his complaint letter by himself. It is interesting to see how Dokulha could write his complaint impressively. It is believed that Dokulha acquired the knowledge of how to read and write from Hazaribagh Jail thus it seems that he was the first among the Lais who could read and write³⁶

(c) Towards Andaman Jail

Dokulha vehemently complained the charges framed against him as the killer of a Muslim fakir. He condemned the judgement meted out to him as purely baseless and fabricated because they possessed no proof or witness against him. So he submitted petitions repeatedly to reconsider their judgement. He firmly stood in his claim of not guilty over their charges. His case was therefore reconsidered

by HJS. Cotton the chief commissioner of Assam and showing mercy he sent him to Andaman Jail for lifetime imprisonment instead of hanging for lack of evidence.³⁷ Although it is a fact that Dokulha was never happy with the British but it appears that this judgement deeply hurt him that he firmly resolved to antagonise them in every possible ways. In Andaman Jail, he was joined by his friend Hnawncheuva who was also convicted for life imprisonment on account of the murder of Satinkhara, the British Interpreter who came to Chieftainess Ropuiliani's village. Even in Andaman Jail Dokulha used to show that he was still a chief by abstaining from work. When the British India celebrated its Golden Jubilee a number of prisoners were set free. Dokulha and Hnawncheuva were amongst those set free prisoners. When they were about to move home Dokulha proposed to his friend that they would show to the British their undaunted spirit by killing the British or their subjects before going home. Hnawncheuva however preferred to go home without creating any more problems. Thus when they were to depart, Dokulha told his friend that he was determined to kill the British subjects before going home. So if he did not come home that would be a clear indication that he was successful in his mission.³⁸ As such the last thing known about him was that he did not return to his people to be their chief again for he fought the British to his last breath.

A Freedom Fighter

Dokulha was no doubt a freedom fighter who never accepted the British suzerainty in the Hills. He did not stop fighting the British who imposed their authority upon them. So he was hostiled to the British authority throughout his life. But he was fully aware of the fact that he was no match to the British power especially after the British had shown their power. Still, he did not fail to show the British that he was a chief who should not be easily submitted to them. It seems that the British also developed hostile attitude towards him for his

role in the attack of the British Survey party. In fact, the British developed a deep hatred towards Hausata and his brothers since they killed Lt. Steward and they did not bother to conceal their hatred in black and white as well. N.E. Parry also wrote in his book, *The Lakhers*, that the body of Hausata, the main culprit for killing Lt. Steward was eaten by pigs.³⁹ This never was true but purely a fiction created by the British themselves to show their antipathy and hostile attitude towards them. The British were vengeful and prompt to punish the chiefs who dared to oppose and stand against them.

Concluding Remarks

Dokulha was no doubt a great and powerful chief who was able to make all his five sons chiefs in different villages. He had five sons and five daughters from his first wife and two daughters from his second wife as well as one illegitimate daughter. All his sons became chiefs in different villages after his death. He struggled undauntedly for freedom but British were no match to his power. Still however he never stopped creating problems for the penetrators. So he was captured and convicted for his struggle for freedom. When he was about to be moved from Lunglei after his conviction, he made his will to Thanghleia who came from his village Lungtian to see and get advice from him on behalf of his family. He said, *we have tried our level best to defend our land but we were defeated by the British and we have to accept the fact that we were no match to them. Now I am going to far away land for lifetime imprisonment and I don't think I return again from such far away place. Tell my children about my will and help them to materialise. My eldest son Ngunlinga should establish his village at Bualpui. Tumirha should move west to Rulkual to establish his own village and he will be in a position to collect tributes from Matupui upto Akyab. Tialcheuva should inherit my village Lungtian. Suichhuma should move to south and establish his*

village at Tuipang and from there he will be able to collect tributes in the whole Maraland. (But Suichhuma established his village at Lungpher and it was Hramchhuma son of Ngunlinga who established his village at Tuipang) My youngest son Vanlinga should inherit my village Fungkah.⁴⁰ His will was successfully materialised and his descendants ruled about eight villages. Moreover, Dokulha was a powerful chief who was able to put a vast area under his control so he received tributes from a number of villages other than directly ruled by him and his descendants. Thus there were about 15,000 people under Chinzah chiefs in 1912⁴¹

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HAULAWNG : A BRIEF STUDY

O.Rosanga

The Haulawng were recorded in 1861 by Captain Graham who estimated their number to 12,600.¹ One may question as to why the southern Mizo were commonly called Haulawng by the colonial ethnographers. There was a village called Haulawng that was commonly inhabited by the Sailo clans and from then onwards, the British ethnographers adopted the term Haulawngs to identify those clans who settled in and near that village. In fact, the village exists till today. The Haulawng chiefs were those who ruled between Serchhip to south Lunglei, and the east of Lunglei. Those chiefs such as Lalpuithanga, Bengkhuaia and others who ruled between Serchhip and Lunglei were commonly known as the Northern Haulawng and those to the east and south of Lunglei, such as Rothangpuia and sons as southern Haulawng. Mention is also made in C.U. Atchinson's reports, the then Secretary to the Government of India. In his report to the Government of Bengal, the Haulawng chiefs such as Sibuta, Mawngpira, and Seipuia had committed raids in the Cachar.² He also mentioned Rothangpuia and other Haulawng chiefs, who were ready to avenge the death of their brothers killed by the white imperialists during the expedition of 1870.³

In the beginning, the colonialists were not really interested in occupying all the hills, especially a 'large tract occupied by the Syloos and Haulawngs, over which appears to His excellency in Council impolite to attempt to extend our direct jurisdiction'.⁴ It was reported that 'the Howlongs(Haulawng) were led by Savoong(Sangvunga or Savunga), who was going out for heads on account of his father Lalpitang(Lalpuithanga)'.⁵ In the event of affairs it is clear from Edgar's notes that Savunga or Sangvunga

was not the son of Lalpuithanga. It was also learnt that the Haulawng leader's name was Sangvunga who was the son of Lalpuithanga.⁶ In fact the colonialists had never expected that the Haulawng would attack them.

To the south of Maite hills were the Haulawng chiefs, among whom the most aggressive were Vandula and the son of his cousin, Lalpuithanga.⁷ Formerly the 'forest near the village of the Haulongs(Haulawng) and Sailo were described as of far greater extent than those of the north' hills.⁸ It was noted that 'none of our people had even been in there. We had not the slightest information about the hills beyond Suakpuilala's village and all I knew about the position of the Hoalong or the Syloo villages had been learnt from Suakpuilal's people'.⁹ It was further stated that '...we believed that the villages of the Howlong chiefs, who were known to be the worse offenders on the Chittagong side, are situated considerably to the east of the Syloos'.¹⁰ Even Suakpuilal was afraid of the Haulawng.

In fact the Haulawng were one of the offshoots of the Sailo clan. They were commonly known as the Haulawng Sailo group or Sailo of the Haulawng group.¹¹ According to T.H.Lewin, the then political officer, Lushai Civil Officer Right Column, Lushai Field Force, stated in his diary that the Haulawng village was about 200 houses. The village belonged to Vanhoya or (Vanawia) and his two brothers.¹² The Haulawng were in charge of Mary Winchester who was captured during the Alexandrapur tea garden raid.

The year 1870-71 was the opening of a new chapter in the history of Mizo encounter with the British. They strongly felt that their ancestral land would soon be in the hands of foreigners, if it was not protected. Though most chiefs were economically interested, they now had to fight for political survival. Keeping this in mind they started to form a strong combination of confederacy of chiefs in the

north. Thus, series of raids were made, the most serious according to the British Raj was the killing of their white brother at the raid committed at Alexander tea garden in south Cachar under a chief named Bengkhuaia. Apart from this, a five year old white girl (Mary Winchester) and a number of planters were taken as captives and several guns were taken away. The same year the eastern chief, Lalburha of Vancheng village raided the plains of Cachar killing many British subjects and as many as thirteen guns were carried away.¹³

As a consequence of this event, the imperialists invaded the Haulawng villages on 9th December, 1871. As mentioned above it was to recover a white girl who was captured by the Haulawng. The operation was first directed against the Haulawng chiefs Savunga, and Bengkhuaia, the two Haulawng chiefs who were responsible for the Cachar raids and who had captured Mary Winchester.

It was Rothangpuia , the Thangluah chief that the British had entrusted to inform all the Haulawng that a white flag was 'a universal sign of a desire for peace, and that any persons bearing such a flag would be respected and allowed safe conduct' through the British line of control.¹⁴This was successful and the colonialists started opening communications with the Haulawng. After this, chief after chief came and expressed their desire to make peace with the colonial government of Bengal. The terms of peace upon the Haulawng chiefs were all alike such as - surrender of all captives who were captured during the raids made at the British border areas; enjoyment on their part (Mizos) to live for the future or terms of peace; amity with all British subjects from Manipur to Arrakan including Tripura with free right to access to British subjects throughout their whole country.¹⁵

After concluding peace with the northern Haulawng chiefs, the imperialist now turned towards the southern Haulawng. No difficulty was made in dealing with the chiefs. Cordial relationships had existed between Rothangpuia and several other leading chiefs.

According to report, after ten days of operation, the whole of the southern chiefs made their submission on the same terms as had been previously imposed on the northern Haulawng.¹⁶

It was Saipua or Sailianpua or Seipua nearest to the Haulawng village on the Tlabung river-side to negotiate with the British.¹⁷ Further it was reported that Bengkhuaia was the head of the northern Haulawng.¹⁸ It was also stated that Bengkhuaia, Savunga and Chawngmama made an agreement with the British. According to their agreement: the Haulawng agreed to give up all the captives in their possession; to assist the British in obtaining the release of any other captives who might be in other villages; in future the British subjects were to have full access to the Haulawng country; the Haulawng were now never to attack the British territory.¹⁹

However, during the Chin- Lushai expeditions, the Haulawng chiefs were quite active at the border areas. This mass-scale invasion is commonly known by the white imperialists as the Chin-Lushai Expedition, 1889-90. The invasion was completed in March 1892. It resulted in the occupation of Mizoram by the British imperialists. The most serious was the killing of Lieutenant Stewart in the hills. According to Poji(Punji) Ram Dubhasi(Dabhasi) who was deputed to Saipua's village 'Hausata and Jahoota(Zahuata) were the two chiefs concerned in the raid on Lieutenant Stewart.'²⁰ There is also a clear statement that Saipua took Paji Ram aside in his house, allowing no one, not even Paji Ramn's karbari(trader or interpreter) to be present.²¹ It was in fact a surprise as to how the two communicated with each other without any interpreter. One wonders whether the Lushai chiefs were either well versed in foreign languages or the Paji himself was an expert in tribal languages.

In the event of the affairs, the southern Haulawng had allied themselves with the other Sailo clans against the northern Haulawng.

According to report, the southern Haulawng were also friendly to the British and had promised to help the latter against the so-called Hindus.²² Again we hear of Sailianpuia's name at the time when Kalkhama, son of Suakpuilala was accused by the British of raiding Pachima Rani village. Sailianpuia was the brother of Kalkhama.²³ After the death of Suakpuilala, Kalkhama's brother Sailianpuia married Dowsungi(Dochhungi) the daughter of Lalingura son of Savunga.²⁴ In fact Khamliana was Suakpuilala's wife's elder brother.²⁵ Sailianpuia married the sister of Khamliana and so they were related.

Sailianpuia was the son of the late Suakpuilala. By 1889 Sailianpuia lived not far from Changsil bazaar to the south of Raik(Reiek) pahar(hills). There were about five to six hundred houses in Sailianpuia's house.²⁶ It was the same Saipuia or Sailianpuia who was contacted in Dec 1888 by the British as an ally against the so-called Shendus. Evidence shows that Sailianpuia played a great role as an ally of the British and had shown full cooperation to the imperialists.²⁷

It may be noted that as Mizo authors had hardly mentioned about the Haulawng chiefs or about the southern Sailo, it is quite difficult to give definite backgrounds of each chief as also their relationships with other chiefs. Much of the source materials had to be borrowed from the colonial ethnographer's diaries and their reports. At least this would help scholars of Mizoram history to start a beginning in developing and constructing the history of the Haulawng.

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CHIEF ROTHANGPUIA THANGLUAH : A FAITHFUL BRITISH ALLY

Dr. J. Zorema

Rothangpuia was a descendent of Thangluaha, the youngest son of Zahmuaka, progenitor of the Mizo chiefs.¹ The Thangluah clan, numerically weaker than their Sailo² brethren during the inter-clan warfare, moved westward from Chawngtui and settled around Thoring *slang*.³ Rothangpuia first settled himself at Lungsen and during the Lushai Expedition of 1871-72 his village was shifted to Lungno in the Ulphum range, six miles east of Tlabung (Demagiri).⁴ After the conclusion of this expedition he moved to Tiante and thence to Muallianpui West and died at Kanghmun in 1876. On lamenting his death Major Anthony Gilchrist Mc Call remarked thus; "Rothangpuia Thangluah chief, who played such an important part in affairs in the Hills of South Lushai, died in 1876 and it is to be hoped his memory will be honourably preserved to mark the very important part that he took to encourage harmonious relations with the British."⁵

Rothangpuia had two sons - Lalchheuva and a concubine son, Thailala. During the lifetime of his father, Lalchheuva had set up an independent village at Rangte and thence to Hruzam. His son Sangkhuma had also set up a separate village at Belkhai. Suakhnuna, the son of Thailala, had also established himself at Sirte.⁶

Rothangpuia was a small, dark, athletic man with a melancholy cast of countenance with large stern eyes.⁷ According to John Whitehead, he was a square, doggy face with heavy lidded eyes and usually for a Mizo, a moustache.⁸ He wore no ornament or insignia of his rank but his mantle was of a finer texture than the ordinary homespun worn by other Mizo. A white cloth is usually wrapped round his head to form an untidy turban and wears a chunky necklace.⁹ His house, as defined by Lewin,

was a barn-like structure, a hundred and fifty feet long by forty broad and lines of animal skulls adorned the entrance.¹⁰

The first Anglo-Mizo contact started as a result of the latter's constant raids on the former's frontier territories in Cachar, Chittagong, Manipur and Tripura. The first recorded raid was in September 1826.¹¹ Since then the period, upto the last decade of the 19th century, was marked by frequent raids of the Mizo on the British frontier territories and the retaliatory expeditions made by the latter. As the British Government did not wish to occupy the transfrontier tribes, military actions normally took the form of punitive expeditions followed by withdrawal. This was known irreverently as the "Butcher and Bolt" policy.¹²

The first contact of Rothangpuia and the British started in January 1860 as a result of the daring and fierce raid carried out by this chief on the Tripura border. The raid as described by the Observer runs as follow – "In January 1860, five hundred Lushais under Rothangpuia, swept across the north of our hill tracts, butchered 185 British subjects and carried captives of 100 souls..."¹³ In order to punish him a punitive expedition was sent under the command of Captain Raban.¹⁴ Having felt the heavy hands of the British power, Rothangpuia had sought to keep on the right side of the British authority by acting as a informer which marked his subsequent relationship with the latter.

In pursuance of the Government's appeasement policy and due to the need for more forward headquarters, in July 1860, a Superintendent was appointed to take the charge of the Chittagong Hill Tracts.¹⁵ The newly appointed Superintendent was told that his first duty would be to gain as much information as possible to facilitate the advance of a military expedition to punish the offending tribes.

At length in September 1861, Rothangpuia, who had more than once made overtures of friendship with the English, tendered a complete submission.¹⁶ Having felt the heavy hands of British power, he realized the folly of provoking an armed contest with them. Wherever there is imperial expansion it is not unusual that there were traditional rulers, although inherently hostile to the alien order, which soon concluded that discretion was the better part of valour or the only sensible course for an intelligent man to pursue. They were categorized as 'Door openers', 'the alternates' and 'the canny'¹⁷ Rothangpuia was one among them.

Since then, Rothangpuia had attached himself to the British interests and offered his aid in any attempt made by the latter to reach the tribes/chiefs beyond him. He had given information from time to time of raids contemplated by his neighbours and each time steps were taken immediately to defend the frontiers. In the beginning he dare not render more active help owing to the exigencies of his own position. The above action alone on his part had created a very strong feeling against him among the independent tribes beyond him and his position was rendered delicate by the fact that he was related by marriage to certain chiefs who were numerically far stronger than his own. Yet, naturally enough he does not scruple to intrigue in order to maintain his advantage as the sole medium of communication between the British and the tribes near him.¹⁸

On 20 January 1863, Sir Cecil Beadon, Lieutenant Governor of Bengal took up the question of the frontier policy to consult that the Superintendent of Chittagong Hill Tracts should meet the chiefs of the unfriendly tribes at some spot, equally convenient to both parties and then to enter into written engagements for the future maintenance of peace on the border.¹⁹ In this, advantage was taken to Rothangpuia's friendship that

he and other nine leading chiefs entered into binding engagements to keep the peace.²⁰ Messengers were sent from his village to the Howlongs,²¹ brought back a document signed by their principal chiefs Vandula and his brother, and three other chiefs in which they agreed to keep quiet and to meet the superintendent at Kassalong. As a result, the following payments half in money and half in kind, were sanctioned- Rothangpuia's tribe Rs. 400.00, the Sailos Rs. 800.00 and the Howlongs Rs. 800.00.²²

In March 1866, Captain Thomas Herbert Lewin was appointed to be the third Hill Superintendent.²³ His first duty was to gain information about the neighbouring tribes and to try to befriend with them. It was with this task in hand that the local officer made constant efforts in bringing Rothangpuia into amicable relations and to secure his good will. As a further step towards increasing his influence he was granted permission to move his headquarters forty miles further up the Karnafuli to Rangamati and to push forward the line of police posts nearer to the Mizos.²⁴ In Rothangpuia, Lewin had made a firm friend to whom in the years to come he was to owe a great deal.

On 9th July 1866 raid was committed in which three villages were cut up and 80 captives taken. On this, Rothangpuia informed the Superintendent that the raiders were his neighbouring Howlong chiefs. At this, he was very much disturbed between his wish to keep friends with the British for the profit thereof and his unwillingness to break with his brother-in-law, Vandula. In order to send a punitive expedition the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal called for all information and sites for line of post to be selected.²⁵ But the information obtained was, however, so scanty that he did not feel himself justified in proposing expedition.²⁶

The early part of 1867 was much disturbed by raids and rumours of raids. Towards the close of January a marauding party

appeared, cut up several villages in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. At the same time there was rumours of an impending raid on the Sangoo valley. However, with a warning from Rothangpuia, the posts were strengthened and patrols dispatched. As a result, the attack was diverted to the Arracan. A band of 500 Howlongs was about this time induced by Rothangpuia to turn back enroute for British territory and to direct their attack to Hill Tipperah. For this service he was rewarded rupees 500/- The raid on hill Tipperah was also frustrated.²⁷

In December 1867, the annual '*Mela*'²⁸ held at Kassalong was attended by 17 chiefs and their deputies. In the meeting the chiefs offered friendship and allegiance with the British authorities.²⁹ After the meeting, Captain Lewin set out for Rothangpuia's village to meet the neighbouring chiefs. Arriving there, he succeeded, after some negotiations, in exacting a solemn oath of frienship with 14 chiefs, which was ratified by the sacrifice of a *Sial* or *mithun*³⁰ feasting and sealed by infinite potations.³¹ Lewin, on his part, had given lump sums of money as presents to each chief, and it was settled that this should be in lieu of all annual payment. Early in February 1868, 11 chiefs sent representatives to Kassalong with presents and entered into similar arrangements.³²

In all respects, other than the outrage that he had committed in a British village in the Chittangong Hill Tracts in the early 1868,³³ Rothangpuia continued to be friendly and he often evinced his good disposition towards the British by giving timely information of war parties sent out to raid the British subjects. However, his alliance with the government had created him enemies among the powerful savage tribes by whom he was surrounded. As a result, he applied for a guard to be stationed at his village. Accordingly, a guard of 40 men under Sub-Inspector of Police was placed for several weeks, the responsibility of housing and provisioning the men being at his own expense.³⁴ To this, as a temporary arrangement, the

government of India raised no objection, but adhered to its view of the policy advisable as regards this frontier generally.³⁵

Till then, the government policy was of laying down a fixed limit for its regular jurisdiction and dealing with the tribes beyond by a friendly visit of government officials while maintaining advanced posts to repel aggression. But the system was soon found to be ineffective as a number of Mizo raids were committed. It was under this situation the Government of India was compelled to sanction a military expedition during the winter of 1871-72. Expeditionary forces were set out in two columns on 18th November 1871 from Cachar and Chittagong.³⁶ The Cachar Column or the Left Wing was headed by General Bouchier while the Chittagong Unit or the Right Wing was headed by General Brownlow.³⁷

Rothangpuia played a very important role in helping out the Right Column and served loyally, accompanying the force personally with a contingent of his own villagers and afterwards going out urging the chiefs the desirability of submission. This action on his part had created a very strong feeling against him amongst the independent tribe.³⁸ Even then he remained a faithful British ally. This is obvious from the remark made by the Deputy Commissioner³⁹ of the Chittagong Hill Tracts thus : "He has now given us his entire confidence, and lends the utmost assistance personally and otherwise to carry out the end of the government."⁴⁰ He had, for a number of occasions, undertaken journeys into the neighbouring chiefs' land with a view to recovering captives and promoting some reproachment with the British. In this he was quite successful.

In course of the expedition, Rothangpuia was sent out accompanied by Subahdar Mohamed Azim of the police. He was instructed to inform all the tribes that a white flag was a universal sign of a desire for peace and that any person bearing such a flag would be respected. This mission was very fruitful that chief after

chief came in and made peace with the British. By January 1872, Rothangpuia was successful in inducing the Sailo chiefs to surrender Mary Winchester, the child of a planter, who had been captured in the raid on Alexandrapur in 1871.⁴¹

At the close of the expedition, a guard of 100 men (police was left at Rothangpuia's village for his protection, pending the final order of government on the subject and to make his sense of the chief's loyal co-operation and valuable assistance, General Brownlow presented him with Rupees 1,000/- as an instant token of appreciation.⁴² His immediate followers who had rendered special services or had suffered loss by the British Expeditions also received minor reward. On the occasion of the British establishing a post at Sirte *tlang*, Rothangpuia had sent 500 of his men and built a large house in traditional fashion for the Superintendent, apart from assisting in collection of building materials.⁴³

Even then he contrived to be the chief agent in all negotiations and whenever there was any dealings his personal co-operation was forthcoming. Quietly and with every show of apparent good will he had opposed the government's policy, which were pursued towards the Sailos.⁴⁴ As such the local officers were by no means sure yet as to the course planned by the chief. In view of this, Lewin, Superintendent of Chitagong Hill Tracts, recommended the policy to be adopted thus : "scrupulous faith and fidelity in our dealing with the chief... that a misunderstanding may be tortured by his suspicious nature into a breach of faith. I would bind him to us, moreover by ties of personal profit, give him a permanent interest in our success by connecting with his own, while at the same time we should prepare ourselves slowly to step from his ever-pursuing aid, and learn to stand alone and act for ourselves upon the frontier."⁴⁵ The British relationship with the chief is clearly revealed by the same local

officer thus : "...that as long as I remained in the hills I would loyally perform my part of the compact, and would help Rutton Poia (Rothangpuia) and his clan against their savage neighbours, as far as lay in my power. I must add that they too, on their side, did faithfully observe their engagements, and to the last day of my service in the Hills they remained true to the alliance we had contracted."⁴⁶

Rothangpuia was a clever man. He applied to be considered as a government ryot, an application which he personally renewed and pressed on the Commissioner of Chittagong. In this the chief was assured that as long as he continued to be faithful his *jhooming* land within the British territory shall be protected and every possible consideration should be shown and all reasonable concession be made to him.⁴⁷ Apart from this, Rothangpuia had acted quite cunningly while maintaining friendship with the British. By his own unassisted effort he had, for more than a decade, succeeded in preventing the government officer of the Hill Tracts from opening any effective communication with the other independent chiefs, save through him as a medium.⁴⁸ However, the Expedition of 1871-72 had materially altered his position. It had beaten down his wiles and razed the walls of doubt and suspicion that he by apt misrepresentation between the government and other chief had then recognized the necessity of a new role and thrown himself into the British arm.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The Mizo were first known as the Kookies or the Lushais. The Lushai Hills, now the state of Mizoram, was inhabited by a number of tribes and sub-tribes speaking different dialects of

- the same language. All these were actually now known by the generic name 'Mizo'.
2. The Sailos were the ruling clan of Mizoram who were dominating the land on the eve of and during the advent of the British.
 3. C.S Zawna, *Chhimlam Lalte*. In **Lunglei Centenary Souvenir**. 1990. p. 182.
 4. F&PEAP April 1874, No 396 Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong Hill Tracts to the Commissioner Chittagong Division. Dated 28th April 1873. Rothangpuia's present village is situated on Uiphum tlang at a distance of about 6 miles from Demagiri, his village contains about 300 houses. He had also 4 subordinate villages.
 5. A.G. Mc Call, *Lushai Chrysalis*, New Delhi, Reprint, 1977, p. 49.
 6. C.S.Zawma, *op.cit.* pp 184-86.
 7. T.H. Lewin, *A Fly on the Wheel or How I Helped to Govern India*. New Delhi, Reprint, 2005. p.197.
 8. John Whitehead, *Thangliena : A Life of T.H. Lewin*, Sterlingshire, 1992, pp.160-61
 9. **Ibid**
 10. T.H. Lewin, *op.cit.*
 11. C.U. Aitchison, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*. Vol XII (Calcutta 1909, Delhi Reprint 1983). p. 94.
 12. E. Thompson, et.al; *Rise and fulfillment of British rule in India*. (Allahabad, 1973) p.502.
 13. *Observer*. 11th February 1871. Appended in Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the Relations of the Government with the Hill Tribes of the North East Frontier of Bengal* (Calcutta, 1884. New Delhi, Reprint 2003). P. 568.
 14. BJP. Dec. 1874. No. 418.

15. B.C. Chakravorty; *British Relations with the Hill Tribes of Assam since 1858*. (Calcutta 1964). pp. 49-50.
16. A. Mackenzie, **op.cit.** p.346.
17. D.A.Low, *Lion Rampant*, (London, 1973). p.92
18. *Observer* 11th Feb. 1871. **op.cit.**
19. A. Mackenzie, **op.cit.** p.346.
20. **Ibid.**
21. The Howlongs, as they were termed by the British, were the ruling chiefs of South Lushai Hills. They were a cognate branch of the Sailo clan.
22. A. Mackenzie, **op.cit.** p347
23. T.H. Lewin, **op.cit.** p. 186 Besides being promoted to a Captaincy in the 104th Regiment of Bengal Fusiliers, he had been appointed officiating Superintendent of Tribes in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. He took charge of his new appointment on 15th April 1866, being vested with the full power of a magistrate in criminal works and of civil and revenue cases.
24. John Whithead, **op.cit.** pp. 182-183. The police barrack, *Cutchery*, treasury and *bazaar* were transferred to the new site, so that soon Rangamati became a flourishing little township boasting both a school and a mission house.
25. BJP. November 1866. Nos. 97-112.
26. A. Mackenzie, **op.cit.** p.351
27. BJP. January 1867 Nos. 150-156.
28. *Mela* was the annual winter gathering of the chiefs at a certain point arranged by the Superintendent where they received their allowances for good behaviour and where they paid homage and token tribute to the British government.
29. A. Mackenzie, **op.cit.** p. 355.

30. 'Sial or 'Mithun' is a large bovine animal domesticated by the Mizos. It is used in sacrifices and as currency of high value to purchase things.
31. Lewin, *op.cit.* p.203.
32. A Muckenzie, *op.cit.* pp. 356-358.
33. *Ibid.* The village was plundered and the 3 sons of one Lalkhan, who was formerly a subject of Rothangpuia, but left him in 1866, were forcibly carried off. Rothangpuia was informed that for the outrage he had committed, Rupees 100/- would be deducted from his allowance for the year and that if all the properties taken were not returned within a month, his allowance for the year would be altogether withheld.
34. *Ibid.* pp. 358-359.
35. BJP. September 1870. Nos. 190-191.
36. E.B. Elly, *Military Report on the Chin-Lushai Country.* (Simla 1893). pp1-2.
37. FEAP. Aug. 1890 Nos 221-227.
38. FEAP. April 1874 No. 396, Deputy Commissioner of the Chittagong Hill Tracts to the Commissioner of Chittangong Division. Dated 28th April 1873.
39. Lewin's appointment as Officiating Superintendent of Chittagong Hills Tracts was later on confirmed and he was designated the Deputy Commissioner of the Chittagong Hill Tracts on an increased salary.
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Frontier and Overseas Expedition from India.* Vol.-IV. North East Frontier Tribes. (New Delhi, 1983). p.246. See also Lewin, *op.cit.* p. 276. Lewin described his meeting with Rothangpuia at Buarpu, a village of chief Savunga Sailo, during the course of the Expedition thus : "Here I was met by the glad tidings that my ambassador, Rutton Poia (Rothangpuia) had affected the release of Mary Winchester, and he had delivered the child into the keeping of Colonel Tytler of the 4th Gurkhas,

who commanded at Demagree, by whom she had been dispatched to Calcutta via Chittagong”.

42. Report of the Political Officer with the Right Column of Bengal. No. 22. Dated 26th March 1872. Appended in Mackenzie, op-cit.. p 465.
43. F&PEAP. April 1874, No.396.
44. **Ibid.**
45. **Ibid.**
46. Lewin, op-cit. p. 204.
47. F&PEAP. Jan. 1874. No. 44. Secretary to the Government of India to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal
48. F&PEAP. April 1874.

A BRIEF STUDY OF THE THANGLUAH CHIEF, ROTHANGPUIA

Zothanpuii

Rothangpuia was one of the most prominent chiefs among the Thangluah clan was the Thangluah being one of the offshoots of Zahmuaka from whom originated the Mizo ruling families such as Zadeng, Pallan, Thangluah, Rivung and Rokhum. The Thangluah clan mostly settled in the villages of Thenzawl, Sialsuk and further to the west of the hills. Finally, between 1840-50, one branch of the clan under the chieftainship of Lalpuihluta, father of Rothangpuia permanently settled between the river Tut and Mat in and around the Thorang hills in the western part of Mizoram.¹ Other Thangluah chiefs scattered in Bnghmun and Dampui regions.

Rothangpuia is said to have descended from Zahmuaka's son Thangluaha who had two sons – Lalhrilha and Khawchhiaha. Lalhrilha further had three sons namely Lalthlura, Lalthiana and Zahuapa. One of the three sons namely Zahuapa then had a son called Ropuiliana who further had a son called Lalpuihluta. Lalpuihluta then had a son i.e. Rothangpuia.² However, according to J. Shakespear's report, the genealogy of Rothangpuia can be traced no further than Lalhneiha.³ Lalhneiha had two sons namely Lalthlura and Zahuapa. One of the sons, i.e. Lalthlura then had a son called Lalpuihluta who was the father of Rothangpuia.⁴

Some of Rothangpuia's exploits has been highlighted in T.H. Lewin's works *A Fly on the Wheel or How I Helped to Govern India* and from Alexander Mackenzie's work on *The North-East Frontier of India*. A few archival sources are also available. However, nothing much about Rothangpuia's early career

is known until he came into contact with the British .After the death of his father, Lalpuihluta, around the year 1850, Rothangpuia became the most important chief amongst the Thangluah clan. It was also around this time that he permanently settled in and around the area now called Tlabung.⁵ Captain Graham in 1861, had estimated the population of Rothangpuia's villages to 2,580.⁶ Similar evidences are found in Alexander Mackenzie's work which gave the same number.⁷

Rothangpuia was highly regarded by the colonial ethnographers. Mackenzie in fact described him as ' an independent , warlike and aggressive' person.⁸ In fact, amongst the Southern chiefs, he was the first chief to come into contact with the British. Several times in the 1850's, the Mizo used to raid the Chittagong Hill Tracts lying at their border areas. In 1860, a series of raids were made by the Mizo which is commonly known by the foreign aggressors as the 'Great Kookie Invasion'.⁹ According to the British ethnographers, the hill men who had penetrated into Tripura hills were reported to be the followers of Rothangpuia who lived in and around the Fenny and the Karnaphuli river.¹⁰ This proved to be a serious problem for the British in their administration of the hills. Therefore, in 1860-61, the British undertook a retaliatory expedition under Major Raban on Rothangpuia's village which was the nearest village bordering the Chittagong Hills. His village was burnt by the imperialists, and since then, relationship between the two powers became quite strained. ¹¹

However in Sept. 1861, Rothangpuia made overtures of friendship with the British as he was convinced that the British forces were quite formidable for a simple tribe and that it would be futile to resist the much more powerful aggressors. He also accepted suggestions made by Lewin i.e. the visit of his village by the latter for the sole purpose of maintaining cordial relationships

between them. By 1862-63 Rothangpuia and nine other leading chiefs of the Lenchew range entered into binding engagements to keep the peace at the border areas.¹² As a result, the amount of Rs 400/- for the payments- half in money and in kind -were sanctioned to chief Rothangpuia.¹³ On the other hand, Rothangpuia was also anxious to maintain friendly relations through trade.¹⁴

As an outcome of the meeting, Rothangpuia demanded the following - (i) a written guarantee from the Lieutenant-Governor of the undisturbed possession of his present territory with succession to his heirs; (ii) aid, if attacked by independent tribes;(iii) powder(gun powder) and permission to purchase muskets for his own use. He also stated his great wish to visit Calcutta to receive the written guarantee. In return Rothangpuia promised: (i) to recognize the paternal authority of the British Government; (ii) to give every assistance possible in peace or war; (iii) to furnish unpaid labour; which, in the word of T.H. Lewin was, ' the principle mark of submission to authority throughout the savage world';¹⁵ (iv) to give his best aid for the recovery of captives(who were captured by the other Mizo chiefs) and the acquisition of information for the same.¹⁶ Lewin solicited the approval of the Government for his policy and after deliberation, an agreement was made with Rothangpuia, where recognized and indefinite areas for cultivation was granted to the latter. It was therefore, through Rothangpuia that communications were made with the other ruling chiefs of the southern hills. Apart from these, Rothangpuia along with six other chiefs visited Calcutta in 1873 with the invitation of T.H.Lewin..

Thereby, Rothangpuia was to acknowledge all persons living in the hills and plains who were regarded as British subjects; traders from the plains shall have access to the hills and shall be carefully protected by the chief's villagers; the Mizo shall have access to the

markets of Kessalong and Rangamati (Bangladesh) and their parties shall only carry *daos*; all those Mizo who were living in British land shall pay the same revenue to the government as done by other hill tribes; all cases and disputes arising between them shall be appealed to the Superintendent and abide by his demand; in January of every year, meeting of chiefs and the Superintendent shall be held at which the chiefs shall receive such presents in money or in kind as may be determined by the Government, the Mizo shall not buy gun powder or muskets from the border markets.¹⁷

After a few years of maintaining peace, between 1869-1870, series of raids were made at the borders by the Mizo, under a chief named Bengkhuaia, the most serious of which was the killing of James Winchester, a white planter of the Alexandrapur tea garden, a few kilometers from the northern border of the Mizo land. The Mizo also took home with them his daughter, a five year old girl named Mary Winchester and a number of British subjects and several guns. With the request of the British during the expeditions of 1871-72, Rothangpuia visited the British post at Barkal, in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and promised to assist the imperialists in contacting the other Mizo chiefs.¹⁸ Further, Rothangpuia was also used by the British to deal with the Haulawng in order to induce them to give up the captives who were captured during their raids at the border areas.¹⁹

In retaliation, the imperialists advanced towards the Haulawng village on 9th December, 1871. As mentioned above, it was to recover a white girl and other captives who were captured by the Haulawng. The operation was first directed against the Haulawng chiefs Savunga, and Bengkhuaia, the only two Haulawng chiefs who were positively known to have been involved in the Cachar raids and who were in possession of Mary Winchester. Accordingly, Mary Winchester was recovered from them in 1872. Rothangpuia in fact became quite popular as an important mediator between the British and the Mizo of the southern hills.

According to T.H.Lewin, the then political officer of the Hills, Chief Rothangpuia had sought the help of the British in order to make or alleviate himself as chief of all tribes. To fulfill his desire, he asked for the stationing of a permanent guard to his village, and also requested the British to subdue other rival chiefs. Though guards were posted, and promises were made to protect his village, the British however felt that Rothangpuia should be able to protect himself from external danger.²⁰

It is clear from the above statement that Rothangpuia was a tool to the British to further their gains and possession in the tribal areas. Through strategic policies, Rothangpuia was induced to communicate with other chiefs. McCall asserted that 'Rothangpuia, Thangluah chief, who played such an important part in the affairs of the Hills of south Lushai, died in 1876, and it is to be hoped his memory will be honorably preserved to mark the very important part that he took to encourage harmonious relations with the British'.²¹ It is however to be noted that for other contemporary chiefs, many of Rothangpuia's action may not be welcomed by all.

Nevertheless, in spite of all these, one should not forget the importance of Rothangpuia as one of the most eminent chieftains among the Mizo and especially among his clans, the Thangluah. In fact, Rothangpuia may have fully known that he was a mere pawn or puppet in the hands of the British. However, his concern for his people and the critical situation that they were in, wherein there seems to be no possible hope of survival against the much more powerful imperialists probably made him to follow such policies.

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2. Lalsakeia, a Thangluah chief who wrote in the newspaper *Mizo and Vai Chanchinbu* ,1934 as cited in Lalthanliana, **Zoram Chanchin**, p. 363.
3. J.Shakespear in 1900; Memo No. 531 G, Major Shakespear, Superintendent Lushai Hills, dated 3 Sept. 1900
4. **Ibid.**
5. **op.cit.** Lalthanliana, p. 364
6. T.H.Lewin , *Wild Races of South-Eastern India* 1st Ed., London, 1870.Rept. Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1978, p. 130
7. Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the Relations of the Government With the Hill tribes of the North-East Frontier of Bengal*, 1884 Reproduced under the title *The North east Frontier of India* , New Delhi, Mittal, 2001, p. 331.
8. **Ibid.**
9. **Ibid.** p. 342.
10. **Ibid.** p. 344
11. Thomas H.Lewin, *A Fly on The Wheel or How I helped to govern India*,1912.Repr.Tribal Research Institute, Government of India, 2005. p.190
12. **op.cit** Alexander Mackenzie, p. 347
13. **Ibid.**
14. **op.cit** Thomas H.Lewin, p. 193
15. *Fom Pol.* June 1873 ,Nos. 507-512, From Bengal Government No.1371, dated 5th April, 1873.Policy to be pursued towards Rutton Pooea or Rothangpuia (Government of India)
16. **op.cit** Alexander Mackenzie, p.347

17. **Ibid. p. 348**
18. **Captain O.A. Chambers, Royal Warwickshire Regiment Attache, *Hand Book of the Lushai Country*, 1st print, Superintendent of Government Printing, 1899, India. Rept. Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2005, p. 84**
19. **Ibid. p. 86**
20. **Pol. A. August 1872, Nos. 1-60 Diary of Civil Officer, Right Column, Looshai Field Force 22 & 23 Nov. 1871 p. 11.**
21. **A.G. McCall, *Lushai Chrysalis*, 1st Ed. 1949, Rept. Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 2005, p.50.**

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF SIATHYU (SENTUNGA): THE MARA WARRIOR CHIEF

Dr.K.Robin

Dearth of historical sources has kept us ignorant with regard to the great historical events that took place amongst the Maras prior to the advent of the Europeans into the Lushai Hills. However, herein comes the role played by oral history in the reconstruction of the history of preliterate societies, like those of the Maras. In this context, the history of pre-colonial Maras, hitherto shrouded in mystery, could also be unveiled to a great extent. It is in this background that an attempt is made in this paper to project into the limelight the significance of the emergence of SIATHYU, the Mara Chief, whose biography has never assumed substance before.

Tradition has it that the valley south of the Chin Hills and North-East of the present Mara region was covered by thickly impenetrable woodlands where different species of animals particularly the elephants meander in their kingly existence. The jungle was dense, virgin and very much attractive for settlement, and therefore different people at different times contested repeatedly to occupy the same. However, the presence of large numbers of elephants was an obstacle and as a result not possible to make an inroad into this valley. What became evident was the fact that until and unless these giant mammals were turned out, settlement of any sorts was impossible.¹ It was for this reasons that the various contesting Mara chiefs had failed to carve out areas of settlement in this immense open expanse.

However, by the second half of the 17th century, when the Khuhly clan appears on the scene, the prevailing state of affairs immediately started to alter. They were daring to try their luck and

thus moved towards the impenetrable terrain. Swiftly they approached the herd of elephants, with enormous audacity and adroitness, they were ultimately triumphant in driving, hitherto, impermeable gigantic elephants. Therefore, to commit to memory this exciting venture, one of their descendents was named SIATHYU¹ (SIA=Elephant and THYU= EXPEL), who later on became the most successful ruler among the entire Mara tribes.

Siathyu, son of Tolai, was the ruler of one of the biggest villages in Lava valley, near river Lali in the Chin Hills.³ At the time when Siathyu entered the present Mara area, there were also many other rival groups who were bent on making inroad into these area as well. Thus, critical contest ensued among various tribes in the form of inter tribal war, an exertion to build their hegemony, became a very common phenomena. It is to be noted that the warring tribes were Khumi, Khiang*, Tlanglawn etc. (It appears that Khiang and Maras migrated to these part of the region around the same period) It was with these groups that Siathyu waged frequent wars and ultimately prevailed over them and the famous phrase, '*Khumi, Khiang (Khaime) eima pahnie ha e*' meaning that 'we have prevailed over the Khumi, Khiang'.⁴

With the subjugation of Khumi, Khiang and others, Siathyu's next attention was drawn towards the Mirawng. Next to no time, he was successful in establishing his suzerainty over them and soon enough his sphere of influence stretches in the North bordering the areas of the Fanai and the Zadeng. Arakan Hills in the South, Chin hills in the East and the Chittagong hill Tracts in the west and almost reaching the shores of the Bay of Bengal. It was in this background that the warrior chief Siathyu declared himself as the conqueror of tribes and for this reason among one of his descendants was named '*Rala*' meaning, Conqueror.

It may be pointed out that Siathyu and his men would run down heavily on the inhabitants of the Arakan Hills and the Chittagong hill Tracts, and virtually these tribes were obliged to pay a tribute or tax and remain ever loyal to him. It has been stated that since Siathyu and his men would be away on expeditions for long extent, they would be utterly homesick and on several occasions, they would lament their solitude in phrase and songs;

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| | The English translation runs like this; |
| 1) <i>Awsi tlana ry rah lia</i>
<i>Nori kaw pazawhta rianai</i>
<i>Eisia na la ko kaw tlo ma</i> | 1) <i>From the vista where the star falls</i>
<i>I let fly the rays of my tender kisses</i>
<i>Would it ever reach my adorable princess</i> |
| 2) <i>Ary Matu la eizu no ta</i>
<i>Lypi cholia ngalaino hawta</i>
<i>Rah na vyti na chathlei khei</i> | 2) <i>My sojourn while amongst the Rakhein</i>
<i>(Arakanese)</i>
<i>Like the Big Cat-Fish whirling in the</i>
<i>open sea</i>
<i>I am being tossed to and fro by the urge</i>
<i>to win more</i> |
| 3) <i>Awsi tlana ry rah lia</i>
<i>Eisia nama tha ngiata</i>
<i>Raithah Bothah taochhei laih na</i> | 3) <i>From the vista where the star falls</i>
<i>Yearning for my charming and</i>
<i>delightful princess</i>
<i>Had though blinded me to oversight my</i>
<i>instinct</i> |

The above turn of phrase clearly exhibits close attachment to their settings and in this manner would air out their nostalgia frequently while they were away on warring expeditions.

What may be noted is the fact that warfare and headhunting was considered as the theme of their culture, and mainspring of their lives. It would seem that this daring exercise gave strength and a sense to their lives. In this regard, the stone walls and palisades, village gates decorated with human heads, feast of merit, firing of guns, blowing trumpets, beating gongs, dances and songs, all these symbolic of headhunting are intimately bound up with this basic activity.⁵

At this point in time, it is clearly evident that the Maras were becoming a threat to their neighbours, so much so that failure to comply with their dictum meant immediate retribution from their warlike chief Siathyu. At any point, if their realm showed signs of capriciousness, Siathyu would run them down and bring home the heads of their slain foes as trophies.

The Maras led by their chief Siathyu were relentless in their bid to exercise hegemony over their rivals, and soon enough became a symbol of fear amongst their flanking tribes. The Khumi tribes in particular dreaded Siathyu so much that a mere reference of his name Sentu (corruption of the name Siathyu by the Khumi) would send them shivering through their spines and same was the case with the Rakhein or Matu who feared and called him as Sendu; on the other hand, the Lusei knew him as Sentunga. Finally, when the British appears on the scene, they mistakenly referred the entire Mara tribes as Shendoos by means of the corrupted name of their chief Siathyu /Setung/ Sentunga/ Sendu.⁶

The advent of the British with its concomitant force Christianity was an important event, thereby opening a new chapter in the history of the Maras. The new setting let loose by alien forces completely altered the prevailing situations, now that the traditional elites represented by the Chiefs gradually went into oblivion. It is for this same reason that even for the warrior chief Siathyu/Sentunga who, with a long history of incessant belligerent struggle, could not rise to the occasion enough to cope with the new phenomena unleashed by the hitherto unknown elements.

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- * Khiang/Khyang are identified today as Kiangte of Mizoram. It would seem that large number of them had moved further down and are believed to inhabit the areas around the vicinity of Kaptai Dam in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh.
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TEVO BOHIA: THE FAMOUS CHIEF OF MARAS

Dr. Chawngkhuma Chawngthu

Introduction

Originally the Maras belonged to Mongoloid stocks. Their language is different from their neighbouring tribes. They inhabited the south eastern corner part of Mizoram. The total area of their land is 1445 square kilometre. Except the small area of northern part, the Mara land is encircled by the famous river of Chhimitulpul.¹

The Maras consist of five ethnic groups such as Tlosai, Zyhno, Hawthai, Chapi and Vytu. These five groups are further sub-divided into various clans. The highest clan is royal clan, the second is the noble clan and the third is plebeian clan. Each of the group has its own royal clan. The royal clan of Tlosai is Hlychho, the Zyhno royal clan is Bohia, the Chapi royal clan is Chozah and the Vytu royal clan is Zawtha.

Right from the beginning of their entry to the present land, each of the Mara group has its own dialect, but they can all understand each other. And all the groups recognize that they are Mara.²

Among the five groups of the Maras, Zyhnos are very famous and Popularly known by their neighbouring tribes because of their warlike nature. In the olden days the Zyhnos used to raid some of the villages under the British occupation as well as the Kurnis of Arakan Hill Tribe. In retaliation for their constant raids, the British Government launched four time expeditions to punish the Chief of Zyhnos. The first expedition took place under the leadership of Colonel Cole and Colonel

Loch in 1907. The second expedition took place in 1918, the third in 1922 and the last in 1924. From the year of 1924 that all the Mara groups were administered by the British Government. And the Mara land was included in the South Lushai Hills District in 1931.³

After the annexation of the Zyhnos by the British Government the Zyhnos warriors could not continue their age old practices of head-hunting and they felt very lonely for head-hunting. They, therefore used to sing the following song: "Government has taken over all our country, we shall always have to work for government, it were better had we never been born" or Government had hemmed us in, on the north, on the south, on the east, on the west. Henceforth none of our young warriors will drink of the waters of the Saly river where we always used to raid.⁴

Tevo Bohia, Chief of Zyhnos:

Tevo Bohia was one of the greatest chiefs of Zyhnos. His father was Khaino, and his mother was Zeipa Vytuchho. Right from the beginning of his childhood, Tevo Bohia has good quality in administrative works. He used to give good advices to the Chief in critical situations.

As the Chief Zyhnos Hmolai has no son, Tevo Bohia was appointed as the successor of Chief Hmolai in 1917. The period of Tevo Bohia, i.e. 1917-1931 occupied an important epoch in the Mara history. His policies may be divided into the following heads:

Home Policy:

As soon as he became the Chief, Tevo Bohia tried his level best to strengthen his home policy. The first step which he has taken in respect of home policy was to establish good and mutual relationship between the Chief and his villagers. In

fulfillment of his policy, he used to visit every member of his villagers. He therefore, personally acquainted his people. Sometimes he used to organize social gathering programme for boys and girls. In this way he established good and mutual relationship among his people. He therefore, received good cooperation and mutual help from the villagers.

Economic Policy:

One of the foremost objectives of Tevo Bohia was "economic self sufficiency". In doing this objective, he personally worked very hard in the paddy field. Every year he used to look after large area of paddy field and used to stay at jhum hut like ordinary men. Besides these, he used to visit boys and girls in their respective houses and asking them to work hard for daily food. Owing to his hard labour, the Zyhnos used to harvest large quantity of paddy every year. Sometime they used to give their paddy to their neighbouring village.

Policy on Defence:

In the olden days the Maras used to raid their neighbouring tribes as well as themselves. As part of defence policy from enemy. Tevo Bohia constructed strong fort around his village. Besides these he used to detail sentries to the main gate of fort so that the enemies may be seen easily. In this way his people led a peaceful life.

War policy:

As soon as he became the Chief of Savang Village, Tevo Bohia sent his men to raid the Tybu village of Arakan Hill Tribe in 1917. In this raid, the Zyhnos killd 18 people and brought 13 captives, out of which 10 were women and 3 were children. Besides these, they brought home two guns from their enemies. In the same year, men of Tevo Bohia arrested one woman of Kiasie village and brought her home as slave.

Hunting Policy:

As part of entertainment for his people, Tevo Bohia used to arrange hunting programme. The programme usually took place for the period of one week. There were some hunting experts in his village. One of the famous experts was Hmokhaw. This man used to kill at least 100 elephants and 100 rhinos. Besides these large quantity of wild animals have been killed by Hmokhaw. It has been said that, the head of wild mithun which has been hanged in the Office Chamber of Deputy Commissioner at Aizawl was killed by Hmokhaw of Zyhnos. The head of wild mithun has been taken by N.E. Parry, the then Superintendent of Lushai Hills in 1924-1928.

Foreign Policy:

Before the year of 1924, Tevo Bohia tried his level best to oppose the British government. He, therefore, used to raid some of the villages under the British occupation and large number of the people were made captives. However, from the year of 1924 that Tevo Bohia has changed his policy in respect of British government. He, thus, clearly realized that he would never be captured the British troops. He therefore, would like to make good relationship with the British. In 1924 N.E. Parry visited him and Tevo Bohia surrendered himself and his land to the British government. After surrendering to the British government, good and mutual relationship have been maintained between the Maras and the British Officers.⁵

In 1925 all the Mara chiefs went to Lunglei, for some official matters and had a meeting with the British authority. In the meeting Teva Bohia had played an important role in contributing good and informative points for discussion. It has been said that he used to treat the British officers as his fellow chiefs. Sometime, Tevo Bohia demanded at least ten labourers

to carry him back up to his village which was seven days journey from Lunglei. The British Official, therefore, detailed their labourers to carry Tevo Bohia up to Tuipang village. In taking an opportunity to this incident, the Zyhno boys and girls used to sing the following song:

“you the Chief of Heima used to say that I am great, but you goes on foot always. However, our Chief Tevo Bohia used the government labourers like a horse to carry him up to Tuipang village”⁶

Conclusion:

During the short period of his time, Tevo Bohia did many good things. The first thing which his son Hnochai became the Chief. The second village which he established was Khopai in which his son Siaro became the Chief. The third village was Laikei in which his son Vachai became the Chief. In this way he used to extend his powers and influences to another villages.

The second thing which Tevo Bohia has done for the Maras was the reformation of Mara custom in respect of marriage practices. Tevo Bohia tried his level best for making systematic practices in respect of marriage prices. Owing to his constant effort, the marriage prices among the Maras were very high and very complicated in comparison to their neighbouring tribes. It can thus be said that Tevo Bohia Chief of Zyhno occupied an important place in the reformation of the modern Mara marriage system. His name would be known among the Maras for a long time.⁷

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