CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
A. Objectives of the Study:

The following broad objectives of this research are viz;

(i) to know about the traditional institutions of the Mizos,
(ii) to trace the traditional religious beliefs of the Mizos;
(iii) to reveal the changes in the social institutions in the post-British period and
(iv) to show the impact of Christianity on the social life and religious beliefs of the Mizos.

B. The Land and The People:

The Land:

Mizoram, the 23rd state of the Indian Union was formerly known as the Lushai Hills. It was occupied by the British in 1890 and was administered by a political officer with his headquarters at Aizawl. It was elevated to the status of an Autonomous District in 1952 and was renamed as Mizo District in 1954 by Legislation. It was granted the status of a Union territory under its present name, Mizoram in 1971 by the North Eastern Reorganisation Act. By an act of Parliament, it was elevated to the status of statehood in 1986.

The state of Mizoram is situated in the southern corner of North East India and lies between latitudes 21° and 24° North and longitudes 92° and 94° east.\(^1\) It covers an area of 21,087 sq. km. and 630 km. long international boundary. It is bounded on the north by the Cachar District of Assam and by the State of Manipur, on the east by Manipur state and the Chin Hills of Burma; on the south by the Arakan Hill Tracts of

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\(^1\) A.S. Reid: *Chin Lushai Land*, Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, Mizoram, Reprint 1976. p. 4
Burma and Bangladesh and on the west by the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh and Tripura state of India.

**Physical features:**

The entire Mizoram almost consists of small ranges of hills, running towards north south direction in Parallel series, separated from one another by ridge and furrow. The general level of these ranges are about 3000 feet in the west and slowly rises as one goes east ward where there are ranges over 6000 feet high and the climate accordingly becomes cooler. The highest mountain in Mizoram is the Phawngpui also known as the Blue Mountain, situated in the south Mizoram which is 7100 feet high.

**Climate:**

Mizoram, lying on the Tropic of Cancer has a very pleasant climate, with a cool summer and not very cold winter. The temperature varies from 11° C to 29° C. Mizoram being in a Monsoon belt gets the southwest monsoon with heavy rainfall from May to September. The average rainfall is 208 cm (80 inches) in the north and 350 cm (131 inches) in the south. The annual average rainfall of the state is 250 cm. The cyclones from Bangladesh has often hit the southern portion of the state. It has rain free and very pleasant winter months.

**Flora and Fauna:**

Mizoram is blessed with a rich and beautiful flora and fauna. Almost all kinds of tropical trees and plants are found in Mizoram and the hills are clothed for most part with a dense evergreen forests. Different kinds of bamboos and trees grow abundantly everywhere. A number of medical plants are also found in the state. Orchids of different

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kinds and wild flowers which added the beauty of the Hills are also found in abundance in the state.

In the past, different kinds of animals and birds are found in the forest of Mizoram. Wild animals like Tiger, elephant, leopards, bears, wild Mithun, deer, wild pigs and many other animals are found in large number. At the same time, different kinds of birds like hornbills, pigeons, sparrows, crows, mynahs and many others are plentiful in Mizoram and they are all game for both men and boys. But these days, it is hard to find some of these birds and animals in Mizoram. The reason for the non-availability of these birds and animals in the forests of Mizoram may be due to the devastation of forests for jhuming and indiscriminate killing of such animals and birds for meat and for fun.4

Rivers:

There are innumerable rivers, streams and brooks in Mizoram which are fed by monsoon rains. As such, these rivers swell rapidly during the rains and dry up quickly during the winter. Some of the important rivers in the state are- Longai or Langai river, Pakwas Nadi or Teirei Lui, Dhaleswar or Tlawng river, Sonai or Tuirial river, Tuivai or Tipui river, Karnaphuli river, Kaladan or Tuipui river, Gutur or Tut river, Tuichang river, Mat river, etc.5 Of the many rivers, only the Tlawng, the Tuirial, the Karnaphuli and the Tut rivers are navigable for boats throughout the years. The Tlawng river provides navigation for country boats throughout the year from Sairang to Silchar and it was the only route used by the British to enter into the Hills from the North. This route was used for commercial purposes too. The Karnaphuli river was used to enter into the

5 Ibid. pp.5-6
south from Bangladesh or East Pakistan. The rivers of Mizoram flow either to the directions of the North or the West or the South.

**Forests:**

Mizoram is very rich in forest wealth. There are three types of forest found in Mizoram such as tropical wet evergreen, tropical semi-evergreen and mountainne subtropical and as such most part of the Hills are covered with forests of different magnitudes. However, due to the practice of Jhum cultivation, many of the forests have been destroyed every year without any attention to plantation which resulted in the depletion of the forest wealth. The table below reveals the position of reserved forests in Mizoram before 1966.⁶

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Forests</th>
<th>Area in Acres</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reserved Forests</td>
<td>1,38,880</td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protected area</td>
<td>7,680</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassed forests</td>
<td>48,38,360</td>
<td>92.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total area under forests</strong></td>
<td><strong>49,84,920</strong></td>
<td><strong>95.65</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total geographical area</strong></td>
<td><strong>54,11,520</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, in late years, the government of Mizoram has taken up efforts for new plantations and started growing good varieties of teak, wood, rose wood, pine trees, eucalyptus and many other species of trees.

**The Mizo:**

The word 'Mizo' is a generic term applied to all the Mizos living in Mizoram and its adjoining areas of Tripura, Manipur Chin Hills and the Chittagong Hills tracts

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and Assam as well. They have a similar culture, traditions, dialects etc. The word ‘Mizo’ literally means (Mi = People, Zo = High land) ‘highlander’ an apt term to describe the short stocky, muscular people who with great physical vigour, easily climb the steep hills. They were known as Kuki by the Bengalis. They were known as Chin in Burma, Kuki in the Chittagong Hills Tracts and parts of Manipur, Nagaland and Assam and Lushai in the Lushai Hills. In due course, they chose to call themselves by the nomenclature, Mizo. Now, the word ‘Mizo’ is used to mean all the Mizos living in India, Chin Hills, Bangladesh and elsewhere in the world. However, the Chakmas and the Rianges, who lived in Mizoram and belongs to a different tribe were not included in the Mizo. A military Report of 1930 recorded 15 sub-tribes which are as follows:

(1) Lushai  (2) Khawhirng  (3) Khiangte
(4) Roite   (5) Darlong   (6) Punte
(7) Renthelei (8) Chawngthu (9) Ralte
(10) Ngente (11) Poi (Pawi) (12) Lakher
(13) Paihnte (14) Hmar  (15) Thado

Zatluanga, a Mizo historian added another 4 more sub-tribes such as Pautu, Tlau, Zawngte and Vangchhia to the list recorded in the military report of 1930. Another

Mizo historian, Rev. Liangkhaia also added some more sub-tribes like Mirawng, Darlawng, Bawng, Biate, Hrangkhawl, Dawn, Tlanglau and Mualthuam to the list.\(^{11}\)

Most of these clans were merged with the dominant Lushai clan and they even lost their own language and started using Lushai language or Duhlian language, which was later known as the Mizo language. Even though some class like Maras, Paihte and Hmar retained their clan identity, they began speaking Lushai language and outside Mizoram, they frequently identified themselves as Mizos and not of their own clan.

Ethnologically, the Mizons are of Mongoloid origin.\(^{12}\) T.H. Lewin described the hill tribes (Mizons) with whom he dealt as having Mongoloid origin. He writes, “The general Physique of the hill tribes is strongly Mongolian. They are, as a rule, short in stature... Their faces are broad, the nose flat, with no perceptible bridge; the eyes narrow, and set obliquely in the head, high check-bones, and no beard or moustache”\(^{13}\)

**Language:**

The Mizons belonged to the Mongoloid stock of the Kuki-Chin group. Their language belongs to the Assam-Burman branch of the Tibeto-Burmese family of languages.\(^{14}\) It had same family with the Burmese languages which suggests that their forefathers lived together in a common land in the long past. The following given words will illustrate it.\(^{15}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mizo</th>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sa ngha</td>
<td>Nga</td>
<td>Fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kun</td>
<td>Kun</td>
<td>To bend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmui</td>
<td>Hmui</td>
<td>Sweet smell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kam</td>
<td>Kam</td>
<td>bank (of a river)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kha</td>
<td>Kha</td>
<td>bitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mei</td>
<td>Mic</td>
<td>tail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mei</td>
<td>Mi</td>
<td>fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meikhu</td>
<td>Mikhu</td>
<td>smoke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mit</td>
<td>Miet</td>
<td>eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>San</td>
<td>Hair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That</td>
<td>Tat</td>
<td>to kill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thla</td>
<td>Lah</td>
<td>Moon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ui</td>
<td>Khui</td>
<td>dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vawk</td>
<td>Wawk</td>
<td>pig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Za</td>
<td>Ya</td>
<td>hundred</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Occupation:**

The main occupation of the Mizos was agriculture. From time immemorial, the method of cultivation practiced by the people was slash and burn shifting cultivation known as jhuming. From a suitable plot of land selected, all the grass, trees and bamboos are felled and the large tree were left out and the branches are cut down. Land covered with bamboos was considered most suitable, as bamboo ash was a good fertilizer.\(^{16}\) After all are cut down, they were left to dry in the sun and then burnt in March or April after which it was ready for growing seeds. As the primitive method of jhuming is destructive, laborious and uneconomical, the government is making efforts

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to bring the cultivators to change over to permanent system of cultivation. But due to lack of flat areas suitable for terrace cultivation, in most parts of the state, permanent system of cultivation cannot be carried out. Some of the agricultural products of the state are rice, ginger, sugar-cane, orange, bananas, maize, etc. As jhuming cultivation was practiced in most parts of the state, Mizoram was not self sufficient in food production. She had to import from other states to feed the population of the state.

Essential commodities procured from outside the state of Mizoram through Silchar in 1991 were as under:\textsuperscript{17}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice commodities</td>
<td>86,855 metric tonnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atta/Wheat</td>
<td>13,930 metric tonnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>3,373 metric tonnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrol</td>
<td>5,837 Kilo litres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diesel</td>
<td>4,657 Kilo litres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerosene Oil</td>
<td>20,648 Kilo litres</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Besides cultivation, the people also set up some small-scale industries based on agricultural and forest products. These includes fruit preservation, food processing, lumbering, tea, coffee and rubber plantations; rearing cocoon for silk and bee-keeping.\textsuperscript{18}

\textbf{Origin of the MIZOS:}

All societies have their theory of origin. The Mizos too, have their traditional theory of origin. According to their tradition, the Mizos came out of a very big stone cave called Sinlung or Chhinlung which literally translated means "Closed-stone". The

Mizos believed that their fore-fathers came out of this cave one by one and when a
Ralte sub-tribe couple came out, they talked so much and made such loud noise that the
guardian god of the cave fearing that the human population had grown too large, closed
the cave with a stone, and thereby prevented any further exist of human being on the
earth.\(^19\) However, it is hard to believe as fact and it may be absurd to accept as reality
that man came out of a very big cave which can be closed at any time in this modern
age. But, Mizo folklore and folk songs throw some light which depicts that they come
out from Chhinlung, one of which runs;

\[
\text{Kan Siengna Sinlung ram hmingthang}
\]
\[
\text{Ka nu ram ka pa ram ngai,}
\]
\[
\text{Chawngzil ang kokir thei Changsien}
\]
\[
\text{Ka nu ram ka pa ram ngai.}
\]

which means;

\[
\text{My mother land, famous Sinlung,}
\]
\[
\text{Home of my own ancestors,}
\]
\[
\text{Could it be called back like Chawngzil}
\]
\[
\text{Home of my own ancestors.}^{20}
\]

This song clearly describes the feeling of the Mizos on Chhinlung after they left
it. It says that they were proud of it and they had a deep attachment to the place and
wished to go back there if they could.


It is very difficult to identify the exact location of Sinlung (Chhinlung) and what it was. According to Hranglien Songate, Chhinlung is the present Tailing or Silung in Southwest China. Speculation has also been made that this Sinlung might have been Sining in central China. Another possible theory advocates that Chhinlung might be the Chinese Emperor, Chhinlung or Chien Lung and believed that the Mizos were his descendants. It is believed that taking the name of this Chinese Emperor, the Mizos called themselves Chhinlung Chhuak or originated from Chhinlung. However, the Chinese Emperor, Chien Lung was born in 1711 A.D. and became Emperor in 1735 A.D. and ruled till 1795 A.D. During this period, the Mizos had already crossed Tiau river and had settled in the present Mizoram. Therefore, it is too illogical to believe that the Chinese Emperor, Chien Lung was the ancestor of the Mizos.

Some writers think that the Mizos left Chhinlung due to their inability to repulse their enemies. Still some writers think that they left the place to avoid severe punishment from their cruel rulers like Cheng better known as Shih Hwang-Ti. It is believed that this Chinese Emperor followed a repressive policy and forced the ancestors of the Mizos and other tribes to rigorous labour in constructing the Great Wall of China which is about 2500 miles in length. As a result of this repressive policy followed by the Chinese Emperor, the Mizos wanted to leave the place but they could not because they were guarded by the army. But after the death of the Emperor, there

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21 Ibid. p. 21
was no proper ruler and at that period, the Mizos hurriedly left that place. A song which throw some light on how the Mizos hurriedly left the place; which runs;

Khaw Sinlung-ah
Kawt siel ang ka zuong suok a;
Mi le nel lo tam a e,
Hriemi hrai a.

Meaning;

Out of city Sinlung
I jumped out like a siel (Mithun)
Innumerable were the encounters,
With the Children of men25

From this stanza, we can conclude that the Mizos hurriedly left Chhinlung like a Mithun (siel) jumping out of the cage. It is believed that as the Mizos came out of this Great Wall of China after the death of the Emperor, they called themselves Chhinlung Chhuak or originated from Chhinlung. However, it is hard to believe that the Mizos came out from the Great Wall of China like a Mithun jumping out of the cage because it was too early for the Mizos to have their identity at that time.26 If the Mizos have their separate identity during that time, their population during this time will be much more than their present population.

Some writers think that the Chinese had built a big village called Chhinlung at Aupatawng or Awksatlang. A Chinese Emperor Chhinlung was ruling over it. After the

25 Rochunga Pudaite: Op. Cit. p. 21
death of the ruler, the villagers moved out of the village. The Mizos were one of the groups and called themselves Chhinlung Chhuak. But this cannot be true as there was nothing to be found at Awksatlang to prove that there was an ancient city built in the place.

Some others believe that Chhinlung might be ‘Chinlung’ which was near ‘Bhamo’ city which was in Kachin state in Burma. Near Bhamo city, there was a village called Seinlung Kaba. However, it is hard to believe that the Mizos originated from this place because it is not an old village. At the same time, Shan language is spoken and they called it as Luai Sang Lung, meaning a mountain which is big like an elephant (Luai=Tlang=mountain; Sang=Sai=elephant and Lung=Lian=big). It is hard to believe that Chhinlung is Seinlung Kaba which is near Bhamo.

Thus, even though some writers think that Chhinlung might be the Chinese Emperor, Chien Lung or the Great Wall of China or the Chinese Emperor ruling at Awksatlang or Sienlung Kaba, there is no source material to reach at a decisive conclusion. However, one thing is clear that by this Chhinlung tradition, we can conclude that the Mizos ancestors knew something about their life in the Caves in the early times and as a result of it, this Chhinlung theory of the Mizo’s origin became widely disseminated.

Traditional Home of the Mizos:

The traditional home of the Mizos is not definitely known and is still shrouded in obscenity. Scholars have sub-divided Tibeto Chinese family into sub-group and sub-sub groups and the Mizos are grouped as Tibeto-Burma family which speaks the

Tibeto-Burman language. The original home of these people is not definitely known but somewhere between Kansu in South China and Burma is believed to be their earliest known home.\textsuperscript{29} According to Hall,\textsuperscript{30} the earliest known home of the Tibeto-Burmese speaking peoples was somewhere between Gobi desert and North east of Tibet also possibly Kansu. This region forms part of Southern China where the tribal people are found and distributed widely over the mountainous area of Kweichow, Szechwan and Yunnan. The Mizos, who were also a tribal people lived with other tribes in these areas. Thus, the Southern China between Kansu and Burma may be considered as the original homes of the tribal peoples including the Mizos. Prof. J.N. Phukan writes, “The connections of the Mizos with the Burmese and the Shans in many of their cultural elements and civilization bring us to the theory that their late home of migration was Southern China bordering Myanmar where even today many tribes lead their traditional life”.\textsuperscript{31} Thus, in all probabilities, the Southern part of China, particularly Szechwan, Yunnan and Kweichow provinces and in wider context, the entire fringed of eastern perimeter of the plateau between Kansu and Burma may be considered as the traditional home of the Mizos and the tribes now numerousely found in northeast India.\textsuperscript{32} From Southern China the Mizos moved southward and entered Burma. They did not remain long at any place on their southward migration till they reached the Kabaw valley where they lived for a long period.

\textsuperscript{29} Mizoram College Teacher Association (MCTA) Souvenir, published by MCTA Headquarters, Aizawl, 2003. p. 11/
\textsuperscript{31} Prof. J.N. Phukan: The Late Home of Migration of the Mizos, paper presented at the International Seminar on Studies on the Minority Nationalities of the North East India: The Mizos, from April 7-9, 1992
The Kabaw Valley Or Shan State Settlement:

The Mizos tradition does not go much beyond their settlement in Burma. It appeared that the Mizos came to the Kabaw Valley in about the 8th century A.D. While living in the Kabaw Valley, the Mizos might have had a free social intercourse with the Burmese. This was proved by the similarity between many of the Mizos earlier games, musical instruments, dresses and customs with those of the Burmese for example throwing of quoits, gauntlet, wrestling, etc. Besides, it is believed that the Mizos learnt the art of cultivating crops from the Burmese.

It is believed that the Mizos had a very highly developed social life while living in the Kabaw valley. On the basis of their folksongs, it is learnt that there was a big settlement in the Kabow valley extending up to Khamti area in the north and as far as Kale in the South. From the folksong itself, it can be known that this big settlement was ruled by three Mizo chiefs. Luopui (Luahpuia) who planted a banyan tree ruled the town known as Khampat, Lersia, another chief ruled at Kale town which is now identify as Kalimyo and Zinthloh, another chief ruled in the north which is believed to be Khamti area.

The verse below bears witness to these accounts;

Sima Lersia, hmara Zinthloh,

Khawna Laiah Luopui,

Luopui in Lenbuanga phun,

Thlanga pualrang in tlan e.\textsuperscript{33}

Meaning;


15
Lersia in the South, Zingthloh in the North,

And in the midst Luopui ruled,

Luopui planted a banyan tree,

Whereon hornbills from the west feed.

The northern part of the Kabaw valley was occupied by the Shans who came to that place as early as the 6th Century A.D. There was constant fighting between them and the Mizos. The folksongs sung by the Mizos suggested the fight between them. The song which relates to such feuds runs thus;

Ka pa lamtlak a tha’n dang,

Sinlung lamtlak aw a tha’n dang;

Shan khuoah thapo in vang.

Tuoichawnginhranlu a tfunna,

Thomu sieka kemin hril,

Zainghawngah hranlu bah kan sal.

Meaning,

My father’s steps were remarkably good,

Sinlung’s steps were, indeed, remarkably good;

Few are the good man in Shan state.

Where Tuoichawng brought the enemy’s head;

You talked of tips with eagle’s paws, (meaning war)

And we hang the heads high with ropes.

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34 Padmeswar Gogoi: *The Tai and the Tai Kingdoms*, Guwahati University, 1968. p. 40
In the fight between the Mizos and the Shans, the Mizos were victorious. The victorious songs composed by the Mizos over their enemies runs thus;

Shan khuo thlangfa pu tling tleng e,
I do thlunglu bakin salh;
Sa sawmfa thlaw ka laimi tha,
Thal khat in lan ei de ning.

Meaning;

Sons of western shan state look lovable,
But you sounded out only war;
With our abundant harvest and men of war,
We will make of you a springtime Festival.36

The Mizos had learnt many things like economic self-sufficiency and the adoption of new festivals as in the springtime because of their contact with the Shans. The Mizos, perhaps, acquired the system of chieftainship from the Shans which had its origin from their Kabow valley settlement. They also learnt how to drink tea in this settlement.37

The Mizos had lived in the Kabow valley for about 200 years but they had to leave their settlement perhaps, due to the outbreak of a severe famine which is known to them as Thingpui Tam38 (Tea famine) in which they suffered immensely. Their sad plight is expressed in the following verse.

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Shan khuoa lenpur a tlak in,
Mi raza tlan their a e;
Chung pathien in shan suk siem e,
Shan khuo lung ang ngir na e.\textsuperscript{39}

Meaning:
Shan village, built by God,
Stood like a rock;
Then on came a famine,
From Shan people fled.

From this verse, we learn that even though famine occurred and people fled from the afflicted areas, the Shan village stood like a rock. It is believed that in this famine, many of the Shans suffered greatly as this famine ravaged the area inhabited by the Shans.

Tradition says that the Mizos, before their dispersal from the Kabaw valley, planted a banyan tree at Khampat known to them as Khampat Bungpui, to commemorate their dispersal with a promise to come back to that place for resettlement when the spreading branches of the banyan tree touched the earth.

This promise made by the Mizos was fulfilled in 1916 when the branches of the Banyan tree touched the ground and in the same year, Sainguuaua and his friends reached the Kabow valley from Mizoram to settle in the area.\textsuperscript{40} From the Kabow valley, the Mizos moved to the Chin Hills where they lived for centuries.

\textsuperscript{39} Hranglieng Songate: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 86
\textsuperscript{40} B. Lalthangliana: \textit{Mizo Chanchin, Op. Cit.} p. 58
Chin Hills Settlement:

Down from the Kabow valley, the Mizos moved to the present Chin Hills, in groups, tribes after tribes at different times from different directions, seeking food and warmth. K. Zawla, a Mizo Historian believed that after settling for 500 years, the Mizos left the Kabow valley settlement and moved to the present Chin Hills due to the outbreak of a severe famine which spread over their country in which thousands of people died.\(^{41}\) At the same time, the Mizos also could not tolerate the defective autocratic rule of their ruler. According to B. Lalthangliana, though many reasons can be given for the Mizos leaving the Kabow valley settlement, the most accepted reason would be the ‘Shan’ invasion.\(^{42}\) Thus, the Mizos left the Kabow valley settlement in groups, tribe after tribe due to the Shan invasion who were better in war and larger in number and completed their migration to the Chin Hills by 1200 A.D.

In the Chin Hills, as the Mizos had no chief to control them, they established villages and settled down clan wise and thus gave clan names to their villages. Accordingly, the Lusei were at Seipui and Khawkawk, Kawlni at Suaipui and Saihmun, Chawngthu at Sanzawl and Bochung, Khiangte at Pelpawk, Belmual and Lungchhuan, Hauhnar, Chuaungo and Chuauhang at Hauhnar Tlang and Ngente, Parte and Punte were at Chawnghawih and Siallan.\(^{43}\)

In the Chin Hills, due to the nature of the Hill ranges, the Mizos lived in at scattered villages and could not build a big town like Khampat. However, their population greatly increased due to increasing prosperity and comparative peace despite

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\(^{41}\) K. Zawla: *Op. Cit.* p. 10  
\(^{43}\) K. Zawla: *Op. Cit.* pp. 11-12
inter clan feuds. But their settlement at scattered villages encouraged the growth of
clanism or separatism, leading to disunity among the Mizos.  

Rev. Liangkhaia believes that the Mizos lived in the Chin Hills for 200 year. However, Pu Vanchhunga thinks that the Mizos lived in the Chin Hills for not less than 300 years but not more than 400 years. What is not disputed is the time of their migration further to the west of Lentlang and into the present Mizoram. All Mizo historians placed this between 1700 A.D. and 1730 A.D. In the absence of any written record, more accurate dating is not possible but thirty years is reasonable for a migration of a people which could have been only in a series of movements. Thus, from their Chin Hills settlement, the Mizos once again moved in groups at different times to Mizoram.

Mizoram Settlement:

It is believed by some writers that the Mizos entered the present Mizoram in three different waves of Migration and accordingly they were known by three different names. Those who came first were called ‘Old Kuki’, followed by the ‘New Kuki’ and last came the Lushai (Mizo). The coming of the ‘Old Kuki’ to the present Mizoram could not be later than the 15th century A.D. or the beginning of the 16th century A.D. for they find mention in the account of the Tipperah Raja Chachag, who ruled at the beginning of the 16th century A.D. C.A. Soppitt brings the date of the old Kuki’s settlement in Mizoram to the middle of the 16th century A.D.

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44 Dr. Sangkima: Op. Cit. p. 18,
46 Lalbiakthanga: Op. Cit. p. 4
47 Vanchhunga: Op. Cit. p.77
The first to migrate from the Chin Hills to the present Mizoram were the old Kuki which includes the Hrangkhawl, Biate, Langrawng, Pangkhua and Mawk. They first entered Mizoram at an unknown date and were driven out from Mizoram by the second batch i.e. the New Kuki and than proceeded to the Chittagong Hill Tracts (now in Bangladesh)\(^48\) and from there to the North Cachar Hills. The next group to entered Mizoram were the ‘New Kuki’ which includes the Changsen, Thado and some others. They settled in Mizoram after driving out the ‘Old Kuki’ but in course of time, they too were driven out from Mizoram by the Lushai and they directly went to the present Tripura. But after some time, most of them went to North Cachar after being pushed back by Colonel Lister for creating troubles in the British frontiers.\(^49\)

The last immigrants from the Chin Hills to the present Mizoram were the Lushai. They came to the present habitat in the beginning of the 18\(^{th}\) century A.D. by driving out the ‘New Kuki’ and other tribes. They were composed of various clans; the most prominent being the Sailo clan, whose origin can be traced back to Thangura, one of the six sons of Zahmuaka.

The Mizos migrated from Chin Hills to the present Mizoram may be due to two reasons. The first reason may be the constant pressure of the Pawi tribes like Zahau, Hualngo, etc. To with stand the attacks by the Pawis, seven villages with seven Sailo chiefs in the eastern part of Mizoram jointly decided to found a large town which was established at Selesih in about 1740 A.D. One of them, Pu Kawlha was recognised by the others as a sole ruler over seven thousand houses of the town. The founding of the town was important in checking the Pawis from further acts of depredation on the Sailo

\(^48\) Ibid
\(^49\) Dr. Sangkima: *Op. Cit.* p. 19
chiefs.\textsuperscript{50} Secondly, want of food jhuming land forced the Sailo chiefs to move westwards to find better place to settle down.

Among the descendants of Thangura, the Zadeng clan was the first to enter Mizoram, followed by Palian clan. The Sailo clan was the last to enter Mizoram but they successfully crushed all their rivals. They developed such a talent for governing that they held undisputed way over representatives of all sorts of clans and covered nearly the whole of the present Mizoram.\textsuperscript{51} It was this great clan which came into contact with the British since 1826 and after this the British started sending military expeditions to subdue them. Finally, they were subdued in 1890 and Mizoram was occupied by the British.

The British government met with some skirmishes to subdue the Sailo chiefs. After occupying the hills, the British brought many new factors to the people which led to social change in the Mizo society. Thus, the British occupation of the Hills brought social, religious and cultural changes and in a word, it led to 'Social transformation' in the Mizo society.

\textsuperscript{50} Mangkhoat Kipgen: \textit{Christianity and Mizo Culture}, The Mizo Theological Conference, Mizoram, Assam, 1996 p.44.
\textsuperscript{51} Lalrimawia: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 15