CHAPTER – III

TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS BELIEFS
A. **Introduction:**

'Sakhua' is the Mizo word for religion. The early Mizos believed in their premival religion. But most early writers described the Mizo religion as animism. A.G. Mc Call said; "Before the occupation of their land by the British, the Lushais were wholly animists.\(^1\) They believed that the whole world is thickly populated by invisible evil spirits which could be appeased only by sacrifices. They believed that objects like very big trees, caves, water, rocks, mountains, etc. are inhabited by various spirits and lived in terrible fear, always afraid to anger the evil spirits which might harm them. They, therefore, offered sacrifices very frequently to the evil spirits to avert their anger. However, it must be understood that the Mizos did not worship these evil spirits or demons. They only wanted to propitiate them as they were believed to be the cause of their illness and injuries.\(^2\) Grace R. Lewis in his book; "The Lushai Hills" said, "Lushai religious energies are centred on propitiating the evil spirit, and the sorcerer’s magic is in demand to determine what animal should be sacrificed to appease the genius which sends the calamity and sickness.\(^3\)

B. **Origin of the Mizo Religion:**

The social life of the primitive Mizos was chiefly dominated by their religious beliefs. But due to lack of written records and other evidences except oral and tradition, it is impossible to give a correct account of the origin of their religion. The origin of

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\(^3\) Grace R. Lewis: *The Lushai Hills*, Baptist Missionary Society, London, 1907. p. 29
their religion is veiled in obscurity. As such, to trace the origin and development of their religion, one has to rely on traditions, folk songs, etc.\(^4\)

The real origin of the primitive Mizo religion cannot be exactly traced. The furthest to which it can be traced is the period during their habitation between Run and Tiau, which is between 1300-1700 A.D.\(^5\) Before this, they may have also worshipped some God, being or animate or in animate things but they could not remember those earlier beliefs if they existed. According to Rev. Liangkhaia, what the Mizo elders knew was the time they inhabited the Run Tlang (Mountain). During this time, they lived clan wise, the Lusei are at Seipui and Khawkawk, the Ralte at Suaipui and Saihmun, Chawngthu at Sanzawl and Bochung, the Khiangte at Pelpawl, Belmual and Lungchhuan, the Ngente Punte and the Parte were at Chawngthawih and Sialam.\(^6\) At that time, they were in helpless conditions when sorrows, sufferings and miseries reigned upon them. Their anxiety knew no bounds and needed comforts and solace.\(^7\) At such conditions, they believed that there must be something which can give them comfort and solace which cannot be seen. At last, they reasoned that their forefathers must have worshipped in some form and on the strength of that belief, they started saying; Pi biakin lo chhang ang che’, ‘Pu biakin lo chhang ang che’, meaning ‘Answer me whom our grandmothers worship’, ‘Answer me whom our grandfathers worship’. So, with these simple incantations, the primitive Mizo religion came into existence.


\(^7\) Dr. Sangkima: *Op. Cit.* p. 51

\(^8\) Rev. Liangkhaia: *Op. Cit.* p. 45
As time passed, the primitive Mizos shifted their villages and moved towards the south and lived in different ranges and mentioned the names of their old villages and mountain ranges in their chants. It is believed that the Lusei who lived at Seipui were the one who started the Mizo religion. Among the Lusei at Seipui village, the Hualngo’s are the one who first started the Mizo religion known as Sakung. It can also be known from their chants that the Hualngo’s mentioned the names of places at Seipui and around only.

Imitating what the Hualngo’s had done, other Lusei also done Sakung phun in their own village. Slowly and gradually, it spread to many places and even when the early Mizos entered Mizoram, they also done Sakung and mentioned the names of the places where they lived up to Seipui in their chants.

Thus, the Mizo religion which first started at Seipui and spread at different places is very difficult to define. As time went on, the forefathers of the Mizo even when they entered Mizoram, continued to recited the names of the places where they had lived in their chants, which were in the Chin Hills.

C. Mizo’s Concept of God:

The primitive Mizos believed in the existence of one ‘Supreme Being’ whom they called Pathian, who created the universe and is a beneficent being but has little concern with men. It is believed that he lived somewhere above and as such called him ‘Chung Pathian’, which means ‘God of Above’. He was a good God, never caused harm to human beings and as such sacrifices were not offered to him to obtain peace or redemption. When they were blessed with good fortunes, they uttered ‘Pathian

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9 Mizo Sakhua, Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1983. p. 4
a thā' which means 'God is Good' and when they were in a state of fear, they said 'Pathian in zah a ngai ang chu' meaning 'God will have mercy upon us'. When misfortunes befall on them, they said 'Pathian a thin a ur' which means 'God is angry'. Again if a couple enjoyed a happy married life, it is called Pathian samsuih which means 'God's appointed partners'. In short, their idea about God was not the same as that of the Christian today as the early Mizos did not have a clear conception of God's personality as the Christians have today.\footnote{Dr. Sangkima: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 52}

The early Mizos also believed in the existence of numerous subordinate good spirits who belonged to the family of Pathian who dwelt in the high heaven with Pathian. They were Pu Vana, khua nu, Vanchung Nula, Khuavang, Lasi and Vanhrika.\footnote{C.R. Nag: \textit{The Mizo Society in Transition}, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1993. p. 47} They offered sacrifices to these spirits to invoke abundant blessings from them. These good spirits who were believed to live either in heaven or below the earth were given different names in their relation with human being and were assigned with different functions to perform towards men. For example, Pu Vana was believed to be the God of nature with power over thunder and lightning.\footnote{Lalbiakthanga: \textit{The Mizos: A Study in Racial Personality}, United Publishers, Gauhati, Assam, 1978. p. 26} In the same way, other spirits like Khuau a was believed to be the goddess who always blessed mankind as a mother does, Vanchung Nula was regarded as the goddess of rain and water.\footnote{C.R. Nag: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 47} Vanhrika was regarded as the God of Science and learning,\footnote{Lalbiakthanga: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 27} Khuavang was believed to be the creator of all humanity, the spirit of kindness and greatness\footnote{C.R. Nag: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 48} and Lasi seems to be concerned with
the wild animals. These good spirits performed their duties faithfully to man and as such they were regarded as benevolent to man. They believed that these spirits could not be seen with naked eyes but only when they were in a state of trance. Only Lasi could be seen either when awaken or in a trance. Since the early Mizos did not know where these good spirits dwelt, they worshipped trees, stones, mountains, water, etc. Where they believed, the spirits dwelt.

The early Mizos also believed in the existence of numerous evil spirits known as Huais who were believed to cause all human sufferings, misery and misfortunes. These Huais were again classed into two group- Ramhuai and Tuihuai. Those residing on land were known as Ramhuai and those inhabiting the water are called Tui huai.

(1) **Ramhuai:**

The Ramhuais were again divided into two – (a) Good Ramhuai and (b) Bad Ramhuai.

(a) **Good Ramhuai:** There are good number of good Ramhuai like Maimi, Khuavang, Pheichham, Lasi, etc. They never do any harm to human beings. Instead they are just like the friends of human beings. It is also believed that these Ramhuais does many good things for man.

(b) **Bad Ramhuai:** Just like the good Ramhuais, there are numerous bad Ramhuais like Tau, Tulum, Khawhring, Khawmu, Phung, Chawm, Hmuithla, Tlanghuai, etc. They thought that these bad Ramhuais were the source of illness and

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19 Dr. Sangkima: *Op. Cit.* p. 52
misfortunes. They were terribly afraid of these evil spirits and took utmost care to satisfy and appease these evil Ramhuais and not to anger them. They believed that even if they displease them, unknowingly and unintentionally misfortunes and illness would be their lot. They, therefore, took every possible means to please and satisfy them. As such, the primitive Mizos dared not go to some places on land in high hills, mountains, caves, rocks, caverns in the earth and some large trees for they believed that those places were the abodes of the evil spirits.  

(2) **Tuihuai:**

The primitive Mizos also believed in the existence of evil known as Tuihuais. They were not known by name. It was only when anyone faced troubles or some sort of ills in and around water, it is believed that the same happened owing to the annoyance of a Tuihuai. As such, the Mizos abstained from going to a Dil (lake) between the southern border of the Lushai Hills and the Arakan Hill tracts which was believed to be the abode of many Tuihuais.

Thus, the primitive Mizos believed in the existence of many good and evil spirits. They also believed that those evil spirits could take any form and as such they had a concrete idea that the spirits could not be killed or harmed. Though these evil spirits were much inferior to God, they are very dangerous for man and as such they should keep these evil spirits happy all the time to avoid misfortunes and sufferings.

D. **Mizo’s Concept Of Life After Death:**

The early Mizos believed in life after death and the presence of Mithi khua (dead’s men village) and Pialral (paradise) somewhere beyond the Pial river which

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flowed between the two. It was believed that the human soul would go to either of the two after death. They believed that Mitthikhua was a resting place for ordinary and common people who could not fulfill certain sacrifices to be performed during their lifetime on earth. The Mitthikhua was believed to be beneath the earth. Life there was full of misery and anxiety and they still felt pains and hurts and they desire for something better.

The early Mizos also believed that there were two levels of Mitthikhua—one higher and the other lower. The higher level of Mitthikhua was supposed to be the resting place of the spirit of those people who led normal life on earth and persons who could not enjoy sexual life due to impotency and also for those who could not perform Thangchhuah. They could not escape from this place and were condemned to stay there eternally. In the lower level of Mitthikhua, it is believed that the souls of those men who committed crimes or offences, or those who led anti-social life would go where they will suffer eternally.

The early Mizos also believed that the final resting place of the dead souls was Pialral which was not far from the Mitthikhua. Just beyond the Mitthikhua, there was Pial Lui (river) and opposite to Pial Lui, there was Pialral which was full of comforts and luxury and was regarded as Mizo heaven or Mizo Paradise. Since it was opposite to Pial Lui, it was known as Pialral. In this place, only Thangchhuah persons and those who died of HlamZuih will go. Just like the Mitthikhua, it was also believed that

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27 Dr. Sangkima: *Op. Cit.* p. 54
Pialral also had two levels—lower and higher. The lower Pialral was supposed to have located in a place opposite to the Mitthikhua. Life there did not attain complete bliss but life was far better than in Mitthikhua. The higher Pialral was the last and most pleasant resting place for a dead men’s soul. There life attained complete bliss. They could enjoy anything they like without any labour. The soul lived a completely free life and no longer desired for anything.\(^{30}\)

The early Mizos believed that when a man died, his soul left him from the top of his head. It followed the Tungchaw (bed post) and followed the Liang (a wall plate) and from there left the house and went up to Rih Dil.\(^{31}\) From Rih Dil, the spirit returned and stayed in the vicinity of the village for three months. During this period, his usual seat at the family meals was kept vacant and some food was set aside.\(^{32}\) After three months, a ceremony called Thitin, meaning bidding farewell to the dead was performed.\(^{33}\) After this ceremony it was believed that the spirit left this world forever and went towards Rih dil to go to Mitthikhua or Pialral.\(^{34}\)

In its journey to Mitthikhua or Pialral, the soul had to pass through different stages. After passing through Rih Dil, the soul reached a place called Thlanpial.\(^{35}\) Then, the soul reached a very lovely and beautiful mountain known as Hringlangtlang from where the soul would look back to the world left behind and began weeping as it longs for it. Hence it went forward with heavy heart and looked back at the human world every now and than and could not make much progress. But the soul became happy

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\(^{30}\) Dr. Sangkima: *Op. Cit.* p. 54
\(^{31}\) *Ibid.* p. 55
\(^{33}\) Lalbiakthanga: *Op. Cit.* p. 28
\(^{34}\) Mizo Sakhu: *Op. Cit.* p. 17

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again as it reached the place where the most beautiful flowers of different species blossomed at the range of Hringlangtlang and one of the flower is Hawilopar, meaning flower of no turning back. This flower is a special kind of flower which blossomed at all seasons and every soul which went on this way plucked the flower and put it on its hair, it forgot all its desires and longing for the world. Then, the soul came across a very clear stream known as Lunglohtui which means lonesome no more water and drinks the water of that stream. After drinking that water, the soul completely forgot all about the world. It strengthened the soul and with renewed vigour, it started its journey for the final abode. Now the soul was filled with a desire to reach the Mitthikhua or Pialral soon. Mysteriously, the soul forgot all about human being.\textsuperscript{36}

On the way to Mitthikhua, there was a very important place called Zingvawnzawl\textsuperscript{37} at which the roads leading to the Mitthikhua met. Zing means Mitthikhua and Vunzawl means valley.\textsuperscript{38} Hence Zingvawnzawl means valley of the dead’s men village. All the dead soul should cross this place to go to either Mitthikhua or Pialral. This place was guarded by a certain man called Pawla and his wife Sanui (Sainui). The man clearly examined all the soul which passed by and shot his pellets which is as big as an egg at every soul except those who died of HlamZuith, Thangchhuah and also young man who had enjoyed three virgins or one who had enjoyed seven different women even if they were not virgins but he always shot at women.\textsuperscript{39} Pawla could easily identify such people. Thus, the song runs like this”,

\textsuperscript{36} Dr. Sangkima: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 55
\textsuperscript{37} B. Lalthangliana: \textit{Mizo Chan chin, Op. Cit.} p. 325
\textsuperscript{39} J. V. Hluna: \textit{Education and Missionaries, Op. Cit.} p. 19

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Di nei lo Pawla'n a sai an ti,
Fam mah ila min sai bil tawh hlei lawng e,
Ka nemrang puan tial ka di zawnna.⁴⁰

Meaning:

He who has not loved is shot by Pawla, they say;
I'd never be shot by him though I die now,
My checkered Puan had I shared with my love.

It is said that those whom Pawla's pellets shot at would develop an abscess which would remain for three years and they would go to Mitthikhua. This Pawl's pellet was the most feared on the way to Mitthikhua.

After the soul had crossed Zingvawnzawl, in no time, the soul reached a place called Mitthikhua where the soul is supposed to go. Just beyond the Mitthikhua was Pialral, the final resting place of the good souls. In this Pialral, the Thangchhuah entered with all his wealth and glory including all his animals if he was an Inlama Thangchhuah and if he was a Ram lama Thangchhuah, he rode on the back of a stag with a cobra coiled around its horns and a hook flying over them, followed by the other animals which he killed while living on earth. Thus, with such glory, they reached Pialral.⁴¹ At Pialral, they did not work any more and could obtain food and drink without any labour. Thus, the main aim of the early Mizos was to go to Pialral by becoming an In lama Thangchhuahpa or a Ramlam Thangchhuahpa and tried their level best to become any one of the two.

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⁴⁰ Pastor Challiana: Op. Cit. p. 34
⁴¹ Dr. Sangkima: Op. Cit. p. 56
E. Different Means and Stages to Reach Pialral:

Only a Thangchhuah person can go to Pialral. There are two kinds of Thangchhuah- In lama Thangchhuah and Ram lama Thangchhuah. To be a Thangchhuah, a person has to give a number of feasts which takes many years for a man to complete the whole series. It is not an easy task to be a Thangchhuah for a man whether it is an In lama Thangchhuah or a Ram Lama Thangchhuah. It needs wealth, bravery and good health. So, for a poor and unhealthy man, it was an impossible task to perform either of the two.  

(1) In Lam-Thangchhuah:

To be an In lama Thangchhuah, one must perform a ceremony known as Khuangchawii. One must have enough wealth and also possess enough domestic animals to perform a number of feasts to become a Khuangchawipia. One must perform the following ceremonies to become an In lama Thangchhuah.

(a) Sakung: This is the first ceremony performed by a man who was going to have a separate house with his family. What he had to do first was to kill the only boar or male pig which he reared for religious ceremony and that is known as Sakung Phun which means he have his own religion. Some called it as Vawkpa Sutngihak and some other called it Vawkpa Bengleh. Previously, he used to worship his father’s religion but after killing the biggest boar reared or the only boar reared also known as Vawkpa Sutngihak, he no longer worship his father’s religion but his own. It is the beginning of religious ceremony.

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42 Ibid
Sakung ceremony was performed by killing the biggest male pig (Vawkpa Sutngghak). The early Lushai’s never killed male pig simply but only for Sakung Phun. They used to kill the pig at sunset and then waited for a star to be seemed. There are also some who did not wait for the star to be seen. It depended upon the priest. The pig which they were to kill was tied by its legs and the priest would recite the chants and after that he would pierced the right armpit of the boar with a specially made for that which is made of bamboo\(^{45}\) and killed the boar. Then the meat of the boar was prepared and cooked. After it was prepared, everybody can take the meat and there was no restriction of taking it. They also invited their neighbours to have the meat.\(^{46}\) The priest also will keep some parts of the meat specially from the head skin.

When Sakung ceremony was performed, it had to be observed for three days. During these days, entertaining guests or receiving guests and talking to them, working, eating sour fruits and going for condolence was not permitted. After three days, in the morning the same priest can clear all these taboos which had been observed with a chant and that is known as Tukthen.\(^{47}\) Without the priest, they themselves cannot do it. After the priest had finished all these, there was no more restriction which they observed and they can lead their usual life as before. This was the beginning of the worship of Mizo religion.\(^{48}\)

(b) **Chawng:** The second ceremony to be performed by a man to become an Inlama Thangchhuah was to perform Chawng. It is also known as

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\(^{46}\) *Ibid.* p. 23


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‘Chawngfang’ and ‘Chawngchen’. 49 It required the killing of three pigs—two boards and a sow. The sow was for the children which is known as ‘Sabe buh’ 50 while the two boars were for the main sacrifice. Those who are wealthy can even killed a Mithun. 51 It lasted for 4 days during which the people were fed with Zu. As such, it needs a large quantity of Zu, at least 40 pots minimum. 52 As for preparation of Zu, Chawngpa (person performing the sacrifice) invites all the young men and girls of the village for husking of paddy for Zu. It is known as ‘Chawngbuh den’. 53 The Chawngpa had to give out 14 pots of Zu to the young men and girls as a reward for their service which is known as ‘Sumdeng Zu’. Whatever they had husked at night were cooked on the next day which is known as Ngan awm. 54 All the Ngan awm were kept at the pots for Zu which is known as Zu bilh but since it needs a large quantity of Zu, pots were not enough and they used to make something like a basket with bamboo which is known as Bawmrang, to ferment the Ngan awm into Zu.

When all the Zu Bilh were ready, they could start the Chawng. The first day is known as In chhe siam ni, meaning repairing of damaged house. On this first morning, all the female children of the area were gathered and they used to go to each and every house and at their doors, they used to said, “In chhe siam ah ka sawm a che u”, 55 meaning we invited you for repairing the damaged house. On this day, the house of the Chawngpa was repaired and strengthened with additional beams and posts to enable it to bear the total weight of the crowd of guests invited. The members of the Chawngpa’s

49 Pastor Challiana:  
50 Mizo Sakhua:  
51 Pastor Challiana:  
52 Mizo Sakhua:  
53 Thanga: Hmanlai Mizu Awm Dan Published by Lalsangpuii, Aizawl, 1992, p.30  
54 Ibid.  
55 K. Zawla:  

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family go off to collect bamboo tubes for holding water and leaves of various trees as plates and cups for the feast on this day itself. Other women, who are friends of the house are employed to collect and cook Kochus for the boys and girls to eat while working. The Chawngipa also invited the young men and girls to carry firewood for cooking Chawng meat and rice which is known as ‘Chawng Thingphurh’ on this day. For this, the Chawngipa provided at least 5 pots of Zu known as ‘Thing ek Zu’ to the young men and girls. However, the young men and girls did not want to drink that Zu but the Val Upa requested some of them and with those who stayed he drank the Zu. During that time, the Val Upa gave advice to the young men how to behave during the Chawng and because of that, in some village that Zu is known as ‘Chawngzilh Zu’. Thus, all the workers on this day got a portion of Zu and altogether about 15 pots of Zu are required.

The first night is known as ‘Thingfar zan. At night, the young men and girls danced the whole night and that dance is known as ‘Chawng chen’. Dance here meant that the men sits in a ring on the floor of the Chawngipa’s house each with a girl between his knees and one man dances in the middle. Those girls who sits between the men’s knees were known as Ngai. It is also known as Chawi. Throughout the night, the young men and girls sing-together at the Chawngipa’s house and there occurs an exchange of partners twice or thrice but there was no misbehaviour caused by this exchange. When all of them were seated, they started singing. What they sang most was

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56 *Tun Hma Mizo Nuaphang*, Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, 1992, p. 49
58 N.E. Parry: *A Monograph on Lushai Customs and Ceremonies*, Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, Reprint, 1988, p. 95
Chawngchen Zai Hla (Chawng chen song). When they started singing, the Chawngpa first danced at the middle and after him, the Val Upas started dancing. They also beat a drum.62

On this night, the Chawngpa gave out 7 pots of Zu as Sumdeng Zu to the young people. The eldest sister of the Chawngpa also gave 6 pots of Zu to them. That Sumdeng Zu was first given to the most brave and Tlawmngai men of the village which is known as ‘Nopui’ or ‘Huai No’.63 If he was not there at that time, they used to search for him and no one was allowed to drink the Zu before he drank it. That makes the Sumdeng Zu very precious. The first night was spent in drinking of Zu in the Chawngpa’s house. No one goes to sleep that night, everybody has to keep awake and if anyone goes to sleep, it is Thianglo or unlucky.64

The second day of the feast was known as Zupui ni, meaning ‘great drinking day’. It is also known as ‘Pu Zu ni’.65 On this day, everybody who attended the feast drinks Zu and the day was for feasting and drinking of Zu. As it was the main sacrifice day, they killed all the animals for the sacrifice and threw a grand feast. In the morning, a female pig was killed with which a feast for the boys was prepared which is known as Sabebuh. Later on, two boars are killed and were primarily used as offerings of sacrifices to the spirits – One to the house hold spirit and the other to the spirit of the village.66

As it was also known as ‘Pu Zu ni’ Pu (father-in-law) from mother side and Pu from father side used to give 4(four) pots each of Zu. One pot of Zu each to be Zu fang.

62 Ibid. p. 336
63 N. E. Parry: Op. Cit. p. 95
64 Mizo Women Today, Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, 1991, p. 36
This can be drunk only by those who have performed the Khuangchawi feast. The next pot of Zu was meat specially for those who have performed Zankhuang. The third pot was for those who have done Sedawi Chhun and the last pots were for those who have done Chawng or Chawngfang. Before these people drink it, no one is allowed to drink any kind of Zu on that day.

On this day, feast was given to all the villagers with the meat of the two boars. They invite all their neighbours and relative and all the people of the village joined in the feast. In the evening, the boys who were known as ‘Thingnawi fawm’ with their leader came from the Zawlbuk to ask for Sabebuh and pelted the house of the Chawngpa’s with stones. As soon as the Sabebuh was given out, the stoning was stopped. At night, the boys again came with their leader and asked again Sabebuh and started shaking the house of the Chawngpa. They were again given Sabebuh at night. The meat of the female pig was also distributed among the relatives and friends of the Chawngpa.

At night, just like the first night of the Chawng, the young people throw feast. The second sister of the Chawngpa gave 5 pots of Zu to the young people and with a small quantity of Zu of the Chawngpa, they used to dance the whole night.

The third day is known as ‘Zuthing ni’ also known as ‘Sarukkawl cheuh ni’. Different villages have different ways of ceremony. Some villages celebrates this day as the main feast day. However, Nag and Parry called this day as Ruai pui ni, meaning

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67 Mizo Sakhua, Op. Cit. p. 28  
68 K. Zawla: Op. Cit. p. 28  
69 Tun Hma Mizo Nunphung: Op. Cit. p. 50  
70 N.E. Parry: Op. Cit. p. 97  
great feast day. But in some villages, it is not as popular as the second day and even the young men did not join it. However, in some villages, besides celebrating as the main feast day, they also performed one of the most important Chawngchen known as ‘Chawng Buhthai’, which meant scraping of paddy. In the evening, the grandfather of the Chawngpa and grandfather of Chawng nu (Chawngpa’s wife) held Chawng Buhthai. If the Chawngpa grandfather scraped three hlan (1 ½ baskets) the Chawng nu grandfather scraped 5 hlan (2 ½ baskets). If the Chawngpa grandfather scraped 5 hlan, the Chawngnu grandfather scraped 7 hlan. The Chawngpa grandfather scraped on the floor of the Chawngpa the Chawngnu grandfather scraped outside the verandah. This is done to show the richness and generosity of the Chawngpa. As the grandfather of the Chawngpa scraped the paddy on the floor, it falls through the floor and the village boys stand below the house and catch the paddy as it falls into their cloths, which they hold out for the purpose. Three men blow on bamboo whistles and one beats a drum and they sing a rather rude little song with the refrain ‘Pi Kawli chhu zep, chhu zep, Kawldangi chhu zep chu zep’, Pi Kawli is the creator of Paddy and Kawldangi is another name for her. This song is untranslatable and refers to Pi Kawli in unpleasing terms.

On this day the quantity of Zu offered was so much that everybody in the feast get drunk. At night, the youngest sister of the Chawngpa will give 4 pots of Zu and those who ever wish can drink for the whole night.

The fourth day is known as Chawndoni. It is also known as Rual ni. On this day, friends and relatives of the Chawngpa will bring contributions of meat, rice, drinks and

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71 Tun Hma Mizo Nunphung: Op. Cit. p. 51
73 N.E. Parry: Op. Cit. p. 96
74 Mizo Sakhua, Op. Cit. p. 31
other eatables to the Chawngpa’s house and will hold a feast which is known as Chawndo. At night, young boys and girls were invited to a drink party arranged in the house of the Chawngpa known as Sumdeng Zu. Thus, Chawng feast was concluded with the performance of Sumdeng Zu on the fourth night of the feast.

However, in some villages, the celebration lasted for 5 days. In those villages which had lasted for 5 days, they called the 5th day as Tual Phiah ni. For the fifth day, they kept 4 pots of Zu to be drunk. Just like in Chawndoni, friends and relatives of the Chawngpa contributed meat, rice and eatables and hold feast. As was known as Tualphiah ni, they, used to clean the Chawngpa house and its surrounding on this day. In the evening, after the feast, they left the Chawngpa’s house and went to their own house. Thus, ended the Chawng ceremony.

After the performance of Chawng, the Chawngpa was entitled to put a beam on his verandah and a shelf at the end of the bed.

(c) **Dawino Chhui**: It is also known as ‘Dawino Kaib theh’. It is very difficult to give its exact definition. It can be best understood by explaining how they practice it. There are five different types in Dawino Chhui. Hnuaite, Lasi, Chung, Vansen and Hnuaipui. All the five have to be done in order with not much gap between them. Since the primitive Mizos have to perform all the five types in order without much gap and no other sacrifices in between them, it may be known as ‘Dawino Chhui’. ‘Dawino’ means a very important thing which can not be left out in religious

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76 C.R. Nag: *Op. Cit.* p. 73  
77 Dr. Sangkima: *Op. Cit.* p. 56
performance and ‘Chhui’ or ‘Kaib theh’ means a religious ceremony performed from
the beginning till the end with not much gap in between them.78

(i) **Hnuaithe:** In Hnuaithe sacrifice, a piglet is used. In it, what they
worship was the one which can bless them which was in and around the house and also
on the earth. In this sacrifice, the priest will utter the chants and after that he will pierce
the piglet at the right armpit and kill the piglet. Then, they will prepare the meat and
cooked it. After it was cooked all the family members of the one who performed the
sacrifice can take the meat.79

(ii) **Lasi:** In this sacrifice, it seems that they are asking blessing
from Lasi to catch animals. In it, they used again a piglet. This sacrifice is as the same
as Hnuaithe sacrifice. Its difference is only its chant. When the chants in this sacrifice are
clearly examined, it is clear that the one who performed the sacrifice are asking for
good health in the future instead of asking to catch animals.80

(iii) **Chung:** In this sacrifice, it is very difficult to understand what
they worship. But from their chants, it can be said that they tried to appease the one who
gave blessing from sun and also the one who make rainfall possible.81 In this sacrifice,
y they again used a piglet. The priest will recite the chants and after that he will pierced
and killed it. They will prepare the meat at the courtyard where they killed the piglet
and after it was cooked, the family members of the Chawngpa will eat the meal at that
very place. After they ate even if here left over, they will leave it at that very place
where it was cooked and the next day they will eat again.

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81 F. Lianhmingthanga and B. Lalthangliana: *Op. Cit.* p. 120

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When they made this sacrifice, they had to observe it for three days. During these days, they were not allowed to eat sour fruits, entertaining guests was prohibited, and they were also not allowed to visit the house where a person had died. After three days, the priest will perform another ceremony with a chant and after that they can lead their usual life.\textsuperscript{82}

(iv) \textbf{Vansen:} It is a sacrifice made to the one whom they believed to be in between the dark sky and the red sky who can bless them. In it, a red cock was used.\textsuperscript{83} Before killing the cock, the priest will utter the chants and after that he kills the cock. He will kill it near the place where they kept Tuium (bamboo pipe) and at that very place they will prepare the meat and prepared a place to cook it. After it was cooked, they would eat at that very spot.

(v) \textbf{Huaipui:} This sacrifice is to be made with a pig. The primitive Mizos believed that the earth had around ten layers and in its layers they can be blessed.\textsuperscript{84} When they made this sacrifice, they were asking blessing in and around the house and also from every layer of the earth. Since this sacrifice is the last one to be performed in Dawino Chhui, they have to spend a lot. Before they made this sacrifice, the priest will recite the chants and after that he will pierced the pig (sow) and killed it. After it was killed, they will prepared the meat and cooked it. When it was cooked, they will give the ‘Sa Serh’ which was kept under the earth after it was dug. After this, they will take the meat inside the house and eat it. They have to take/eat the meat with in three days. After three days, even if there was leftover, they should throw away. While

\textsuperscript{83} Mizo Sakhua: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 43
\textsuperscript{84} \textit{Ibid.} p. 44
\textsuperscript{84} \textit{Ibid.} pp. 44-45
making this sacrifice, they have to observe it for three days and during these days, they
were not allow to eat sour fruits, and talking and entertaining guest is prohibited. After
three days, the priest will recite the chant and clean what they observe. Then they can
lead their usual life again.\footnote{Ibid. p. 46}

After performing Dawino chhui, the one who performed this ceremony was
allowed to perform Sedawi chhun ceremony.

(d) Sedawi/Sedawi Chhun: It is also known as ‘Sedawi Chhun’. It was
the first time a Mithun was killed to become a Thangchhuhah and as such the name
Sedawi\footnote{Ibid. p. 48} was given. It could only be performed by those who have already given the
feast of Chawng. The animals necessary for the feast includes one Mithun, one boar and
two small pigs.\footnote{Zu in Mizo Society (Past and Present), Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, 1983. p. 22} The Sechhuntu also should possess a large quantity of Zu, at least 40

Before the Sedawi chhun ceremony was perform, Sechhuntu (one who
performed the sacrifice) had to engage young boys and girls for pounding paddy which
was mainly for preparation of rice beer.\footnote{N.E. Parry: Op. Cit. p. 99} The Sechhuntu also employed a group of
local experts to make Seluphan, a forked pole of Chestnut tree well in advance of the
date of the ceremony for placing the Mithun’s skull on the day of the feast. Those group
headed by the priest were provided with a cock and enough rice beer to make the
Seluphan in the jungle. When they found the type of tree they like, they cut it down and
after that they killed the cock at that place and cooked it and take the meat with rice and
Zu. A separate date was fixed for the Seluphan to be carried to the house of the feast

\footnote{Zu in Mizo Society (Past and Present), Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, 1983. p. 22}
giver by a group of people in which rice beer was again compulsory. This feast lasted for three days.

The first day is known as In Chhesiam ni, meaning house repairing day. On this day, the house of Sechhuntu was repaired and strengthened by the villagers so as to bear the total weight of the mass gathering of the invited guests.

Sechhuntu also requested the young men and girls of the village to carry firewood from the jungle for cooking the meat. When those people reached home, they were served with Zu known as Thing Ek Zu. On this very day, they will also carry Seluphan from the jungle and in the evening, the Seluphan was erected in front of the Sechhuntu’s house. The Seluphan is a forked pole and on the lower point of the fork an egg is fixed by means of a pinewood pin, which is run through it on to the Seluphan. This is done to guard against evil eye. This first night in which the Seluphan is erected is known as Sechallumen Zan and all those taking part must keep awake. This night is also known as Thingfar zan. The Sechhuntu also supply good quantity of Zu known as ‘Sumdeng Zu’ to the young people who danced throughout the night as was done in Chawng. Again, in this night, the most brave Tlawmngai man was selected in the village and was honoured by offering a special kind of Zu known as No Pu and only after he drinks it, the rest of the people could start drinking.

In the evening, the grand fathers from both mother and father side with one helper will drink Zu and make Zuvazo chant. After this was over, they will be joined by the Sechhuntu and his wife and will drink Zu thrice after which the rest can drink Zu. They will keep aside small quantity of Zu for Hnuapui, Hnuaite, Lasi, Chung and

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Vansen as was done in Dawino Chhui. Then the priest will make ‘Thla Hual’ of the Sechhuntu’s family one by one, starting from the oldest to the youngest. The priest will also make Thahpawh of the Sechhuntu’s family one by one to know whether fortune or misfortunes lies in their future on this same night.\textsuperscript{93}

The second day is known as \textit{Sech\textsuperscript{h}un-ni} meaning Mithun slaughter day. In the morning the Sechhuntu and the Puithiam (priest) go outside the village to make ‘Se thlah chhuah’ meaning release of the spirit of Mithun. For this, they take with them, some white cock’s feathers, millet, job’s tears, a spear and a fairly large gourd used for holding Zu. Then they built a model stone house line it with plantain leaves and placed the millet and other things inside.\textsuperscript{94} The priest than sings a chant and released the Mithun’s spirit. After performing all these, they returned to the village and will enter directly the Sechhuntupa’s house. During these period, the Mithun to be used for the feast was deliberately exhausted by making it the object of excessive game and fun by the village youths. Then the Mithun was held tightly into the Seluphan at the court yard of the Sechhuntupa. The Sechhuntupa with the priest, then came out of the house with a spear. On the occasion the priest recited incantation and when it was over, the Sechhuntupa would pierce the Mithun with a spear and entered the house straight in silence and without looking backward.\textsuperscript{95} The Mithun was then killed with an axe in no time after it was pierced by the Sechhuntupa. After Mithun was killed, three pigs were also killed. Of the sacrificed pigs, the first one was an offer of sacrifice to a spirit called Hnuaithe, the second to Pathian whom they believed was in heaven and the one who

\textsuperscript{93} Dr. Sangkima: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 56
\textsuperscript{94} N.E. Parry: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 99
\textsuperscript{95} Dr. Sangkima: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 56
made everything and called it Pathian sa and the third to a spirit called Lasi. After the performance of the sacrifices, the sacrificed animals meat were distributed to the relatives and friends of the Sechhuntpu and with the remaining portions of the sacrificed animals a feast was held. Everyone in the village except children were able to partake of the feast meat and rice beer. If there is enough Zu, the feasting will be held throughout the night but it is not necessary for everyone to remain awake.

The third day is known as Sarucheuni. On this day, the same ceremonies are performed as was done on the Chawndoni of Chawng.

Sedawi chhun was observed for seven days. During these period, the Sechhuntpu was forbidden to go to the house where a dead body was laid out. He was also forbidden to eat sour fruits and to entertain guests. However, after seven days, these taboos were lifted and the Sechhuntpu could lead his usual life.

Three months after the Sedawi chhun, they again make ‘Se thla Khung which means the recalling of Mithun’s spirit and ‘Se lu lawk’ meaning bringing down of Mithun’s head. In the morning of this day, the priest and the Sechhuntpu will go to the place where they released the Mithun’s spirit before the Sedawi chhun and the priest recited the chants and make the Sethla Khung that means recalling the Mithun’s spirit which they released when the Sedawi chhun was to be performed. Then, they returned to the village and make a small feast known as ‘Chuk phawk Sarep with the meat which they dried up during the Sedawi Chhun. On this day, they also take down the Mithun’s head from the Seluphan and called it ‘Se Lu Lawh. For this, they killed a boar.

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Before bringing down the Mihun’s head, the priest will recite the chants again and after
that the Mihun’s head was taken down of the Seluphan by some close relation or son-
in-law of the Sechhuntupa. After that, the head of the Mihun was kept in a basket by
the wife of Sechhuntupa and then placed at the place where the skulls of other animals
were kept. Then Sedawi chhun was over and they can make the feast of Sakhuu. This
sacrifice entitled the Sechhuntupa to make shelf over the Khumai, the sleeping place.¹⁰⁰

(e) Sekhuan (Sekhuang) Mitthirawplam: Sekhuan and Mitthirawplam
are one and the same. Some called it as Sekhuan while others called it as
Mitthirawplam.¹⁰¹ It means that during Sekhuan feast, Mitthi rawplam, a feast and
dance in honour of the spirits of a man’s ancestors was also performed. The preparation
for this ceremony was identical with that of Chawng and Sedawi Chhun.¹⁰² To observe
this occasion, a Mihun, a boar and two piglets are compulsorily offered.

Before the actual feast took place, young men and girls of the village went to the
jungle, cut firewood and then left it to dry to be used in cooking the meat when Mitthi
rawplam is actually performed. A cane is stretched along from tree to tree beside one of
the main approaches to the village for some 500 yards and against this on alternate sides
are rested the billets so that they may be thoroughly dry by the time they all needed.¹⁰³
This erection of firewood is known as Sathingzar. As a reward for their work, the young
people were fed with the meat of one he-goat and a sow with 7 pots of Zu. The he-goat
is known as Kelkhawthang and its head is hung on the Seluphan which was erected on
the same day as was done in other former feasts and its hair was divided among the

¹⁰⁰ Dr. Sangkima: Op. Cit. p. 56
¹⁰² Dr. Sangkima: Op. Cit. p. 57

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men. The head of the sow and the Zu cup made of bamboo are placed at the end of the Sathingzar, to show a stranger coming to the village that Mitthirawp lam is in progress. Though the young people involved in the community work are fed with the meat and Zu, most of them do not want to partake of the meat and Zu and try to escape to show their Tlawmngaihna. But some of them are specially requested by the Valupa to partake of the meat and the Zu which is known as Thingek Zu. This Sathingzar day is known as Inchhe siamni which means day of repairing the damaged house. On this day, the house of the Sekhuantupa (one who performed the sacrifice) was repaired by putting additional beams and posts so that it could hold all those who gathered when the feast was held. Those who repaired the house were also given at least 5 pots of Zu which is known as Inchhesiam Zu. The Sekhuantupa also asked three person to collect bamboo pipes from the jungles for fetching water and storing it during the feast which is known as Tuium. Those who engaged in collecting the Tuium were also given a separate Zu known as ‘Um la Zu’ which is 3 pots of Zu. Further, a group of ladies known as Rual bacho were engaged to collect arum bulbs from the jungle jhum land of the Sekhuantupa which were to be cooked for those young people who dance over the night on the Thingfar zan. To this Rual bacho’s, a separate Zu was given which was 3 pots. Except the Sathingzar, other works were done on the eve of the feast.104

As the Sekhuan feast needs lots of Zu, the Sekhuantupa should prepare at least 70 pots of Zu. For this, he requested the young men and girls of the village to pound the paddy for Zu from the time they made Sathingzar.

Three months after the Sathingzar, all the firewood became dry and the rice beer were also ready to be used. Then, feast could commence. The first day is known as

Inchhe siam ni. As they have repaired the house of the Sekhuantupa on the Sathing zar
day, they need not to repair it again. But collecting of bamboo pipes was done on this
day. Besides, the sisters of the Sekhuantupa fetch dry bamboos to be used as lamps in
the evening. These bamboos are known as Farthing.105

The first night is known as Thingfar zan.106 Before it is dark, they killed a
female pig (sow) specially for the children. At night, from the Zawlbuk, they came to
the house of the Sekhuantupa and started pulling the house asking for meat. As soon as
they started asking for meat, the Sekhuantupa’s sister came out of the house and
distributed the meat among the children and after that the children left the place.

On this Thingfar night, the Sekhuantupa and his wife requested the young men
and girls to dance at night. The Sekhuantupa than provided at least 15-20107 pots of Zu
known as Sumdeng Zu to them. Just like the first night of the Chawng feast, they made
a special type of Zu known as ‘Nopui’ which was given to the most brave and
Tlawmngai young men of the village. Before he drinks it, no one is allow to drink any
Zu and only after he drank it, others were allowed to drink Zu. On this night too, the
young men and girls dance all night and everyone must keep awake.

The second day is known as Zupui ni. In the morning, one of the Sekhuantupa’s
sons-in-law goes to the end of the Sathingzar and fires off a gun which proclaims the
starts of the feast.108 As soon as they hear the report of the gun, all the young men and
girls of the village go off to carry up the wood from the Sathing zar to cook the meat
and food for the feast. To attend the Mitthirawplam, relatives of the Sekhuantupa in
other villages are also invited. The main work of this day was the preparation of images of the dead. Images of all the deceased family members in the long past and one image of Thlahpa who was supposed to be their ancestor were made. The images are made out of two pieces of wood tied in the shape of across and its head is made of cotton seeds and decorated with the best clothes with necklaces, bangles and earrings. The images are placed together in a row to signify all the deceased family members including one Thlahpa who was put at the centre which was some what larger and taller figure than other images in a square bamboo platform with railings or stretcher called Khuanglang.  

When all the images are placed on the Khuanglang, they are placed inside the house of the Sekhuantupa and the villagers came to see them. People who have recently lost their relatives were much affected at the sight of the images and often weep, specially the women folk. People engaged in making the images and Khuanglang were given feast with a sow and two large pots of Zu. With these works the second day came to an end.

The third day is known as Ruaipui ni, meaning main feast day. The animals killed on this day includes a Mithun, a boar and two piglets one after another in the morning and the sacrifices are performed in exactly the same as was at Sedawi Chhun. In the evening, they took out all the idols in the public with a stretcher or Khuanglang specially made for the occasion and dance in honour of the dead, the Mitthirawplam takes place. The dance took place in front of the Sekhuantupa’s house and if he had buy the Lalmual (Chief’s montain), the dance was performed at the Lalmual. Before the images were taken out in public, the oldest living member of the

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111 Ibid.
clan then comes slowly from his house, bringing with him a gourd of Zu and gives its effigy in turn a little Zu, muttering a chant as he does so, he reached his own father’s effigy last and when he has muttered his chant and given it the Zu, he dashes the gourd down on the ground and bursting into tears, rushes into his house, where he remained confined for a month after the event.\textsuperscript{112} One of the effigy/image of the deceased must have a man’s skull on it and if no skull is available, some one must stand with the images on the platform/Khuanglang. During the dance, they lifted up and down the stretcher 3 times and withdrawn again. On this day, a big feast is held for the villagers and Zu is drunk all day. At the end of the day, the head of the goat which was put on the Seluphan on the day of Sathingzar was taken down from the Seluphan and the head of the Mithun is hung up.\textsuperscript{113} After the Mitthirawplam is performed, the official ceremony comes to an end.

The fourth and last day is known as Chawndoni. On this day, images of the deceased were taken down from their platform and Arthlahual\textsuperscript{114} is performed. The Mithun’s head which was put on the Seluphan remains on it for three months and after that it was taken down from the Seluphan which is known as Selulawh. On this day, a boar is killed.

After this ceremony was performed, the couple were entitled to wear a striped clothes and turbans, Vakul Chang (a headdress made of long tail feathers of bhamaraj) and he could also open windows in the house and could make Bahzar (a back verandah).\textsuperscript{115}

\textsuperscript{112} J. Shakespear: \textit{Op. Cit.} pp. 88-89
\textsuperscript{113} N.E. Parry: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 105
\textsuperscript{114} \textit{Ibid.} p. 106
\textsuperscript{115} Dr. Sangkima: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 57
After the Mithirawplam, the feast giver had to perform the feast of Sedawi Chhun again before he was able to perform Khuangchawi, the final feast for the attainment of a Thangchhuah status.\textsuperscript{116}

On this occasion, they will sing Chawngchen song and Mitthi ngaih song. The last known person who performed Mitthirawplam was Hrangchina of Chauleng village, who performed this feast just before the Japan Ral i.e. the Second World War.\textsuperscript{117}

**(f) Khuangchawi:** The feast of Khuangchawi was the greatest and the final stage in the series of feasts for Thangchhuah. It was held usually in the month of August, September and October.\textsuperscript{118} However, C. Nunthara write that this feast was usually held in the month of October and hence the traditional name of the month Khuangchawi thla (the month of Khuangchawi ceremony).\textsuperscript{119} The preparations for this ceremony were exactly the same with other feasts but in this ceremony they killed more animals and more Zu was served to the people and at the same time they were also more serious in every aspects of the ceremony as compared to that in earlier feasts.

To celebrate this feast, it needs at least three (3) grown up male Mithuns, one boar and two young pigs with one grown up female Mithun which was to be used as Tlangphal.\textsuperscript{120} Tlangphal means the meat of the female Mithun which is cooked and served specially to the children.

The first Mithun killed is used for feast for all those who have performed Khungchawi in the village and is held into the house of the man who last performed the

\textsuperscript{117} L.K. Liana: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 154
\textsuperscript{118} C. La lua: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 56
\textsuperscript{120} Pastor Challiana: \textit{Op. Cit.} p.40
ceremony. Half the stomach of the Mithun, its head and one foreleg of the first Mithun, killed was taken by the Khuangchawitupa (who performed the sacrifice) for a feast in his own house, his wife's sister's husband gets its liver and heart and the rest is used for the feast for the people who have already performed Khuangchawi, which is known as Hausa-sa which meant rich men's meat. Those who have already performed Khungchawi must contribute one large pot of Zu each for the feast.  

Before celebrating this ceremony, the first thing the Khuangchawitupa should do was that he must kill a sow in the chief's house and give the chief and his Upas a feast with pork and Zu to get prior permission to hold the feast of Khuangchawi from the chief of the village who was the sole owner of the ground where dance was to be held during the feast. This is called Mualleina sa. However, if the Khuangchawipa had done Sekhuan in the same village, he need not to kill again the Mualleina sa as he had already got permission earlier when he had performed Sekhuan.

As the feast of Khuangchawi is the greatest and the last in the ceremonies, the preparations begin early. Usually, the preparations starts with Sathingzar which was done in the month of August. As was done in Mitthirawplam, Sathingzar was performed by youngmen and girls of the village in the jungle. Participants in the Sathingzar were entertained with the meat of a Mithun and a goat. From the time they made Sathingzar, they also started husking paddy for rice beer/Zu and for this purpose,

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121 Ibid. p. 106  
122 Ibid.  
the young men and girls of the village were employed. This feast required 100 pots of Zu. They also did ‘Umla’ ‘Rualbacho’ much more than they did in Sekhuan.

When Khuangchawi feast was to be perform the Khuangchawitupa sent one of his sons-in-law with a forked piece of bamboo to which white cock’s feathers and pieces of ginger are attached to the house of the Nupa, who is the father or brother of Khuangchawipa’s (one who performed the feast) wife and places it in the wall of the house to invite him to perform dance in the ceremony/feast. This is called Thingthiah. While going from the Khuangchawipa’s house to his father-in-law’s house, silence must be observed, to speak is Thianglo and after he had placed the pieces of ginger on the wall, he is allowed to speak. After the forked piece of bamboo has been fixed, the Khuangchawitupa father-in-law or brother-in-law should give Zu and also kill a pig for that person. Which is called Thingtuuih and that day is known as Thingthiah ni.

After he was invited to dance on the day of the feast, the father-in-law of the Khuangchawipa started practicing dance known as Khuallam. For this purpose, he requested some of the young men of the village and practiced dances. On the day of the feast, they dressed in their traditional dress and went to the village where the feast was held. Just before reaching the village, to intimate the villagers that they were coming, they fired guns. As soon as the villagers heard it, they went ot meet them. Before they meet it, they started dancing in Khuallam and as they go on, they also did Vakawllen lam. The dance performed on this day is known as Khuallam because it was a dance performed by man from other village and the dancer were known as Thingdim.

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Those Thingdim had a good earning. The dance leader earned Rs.5/-, next to the
dance leader earned Rs.4/-, and next to him earned Rs.3/- and the other earned Rs.2/-
each. The one who organized the dance earned Rs.20/-.

Usually, Khuangchawi ceremony lasted for 4 days which were ‘In Chhe siam
ni’, ‘Zupui ni’, ‘Ruai ni’ and ‘Chawndo ni’. On the In chhe siam ni which means
repairing of damage house, the house of the Khuangchawipa was again strengthened to
enable it to bear the weight of the crowd of guests invited. Sathingzar or firewood was
collected from the jungle by young people of the village and when they reached home,
they were served with Zu known as Thing Ek Zu. This day is also used for erecting
Seluphan according to the number of Mithums to be killed. Making of platform for the
feast was also done on this day and they were offered a feast with a sow. The first night
is again known as ‘Thingfar zan’. Young men and girls of the village dance the whole
night as was done in Chawng and the Khungchawipa gave 20-30\textsuperscript{128} pots of Sumdeng Zu
to those people. However, no one can take the Zu until the most industrious and brave
young men of the village received the Zu. On this night Thlahpawh was done by the
priest and the Khuangchawipa and everyone who joined, it must keep awake all night
and sleeping is Thiango or unlucky. Making of platform for Khuangchawi feast was
also done on this day and those who did the work were offered a feast with a sow.\textsuperscript{129}

The second day is known as Zupui ni and much Zu was served to the people on
this day. The day was spent in drinking Zu. The Zawlbuk boys tied rope round the neck

\textsuperscript{127} K. Zawla: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 33
\textsuperscript{128} Mizo Sakhua: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 84
\textsuperscript{129} C.R. Nag: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 78
of the Mithun and chased it about, shouting which is known as Chaib on this day. At night, no dance was performed.\textsuperscript{130}

The third day is known as Ruaini, meaning feast day. On this day, all the animals used for the ceremony were killed and a feast was thrown for the whole villager with the meat of the two male Mithun killed and the female Mithun was used for the children which was known as Tlangphal. Of the two piglets, one was a sacrifice to a spirit called Hnuaithe and the other to Pathian.\textsuperscript{131} Relatives of the Khuangchawipa who came from other village were put up in one house and they were given a haunch of Mithun and half of its stomach for their feast which is known as Khualdawl.

On this special day, those who prepared and cooked the meat of the animals killed were very busy. They have to distribute Zu the whole day at the same time. Before feast was given to the whole villagers, the Zawlbuk boys began to ask for Tlangphal. At around 3:00 P.m. the Thingdim party started performing a dance to the noise of gongs and drums which constituted the most unique and colourful features of the feast.\textsuperscript{132} The evening after the feast was also colourful because at this time, the Khuangchawipa family including the Khuangchawipa himself and some of the elders of the village sits on a stretcher which was specially made for this and others attending the feast lifted up the stretcher and carried to the Lalmual. The stretcher was lifted up and down and at the third time, the one who bring gun shot it.\textsuperscript{133} After the gun was shot, the couple throw cottons, hens, brass pots, clothes, money and sometimes they also includes

\textsuperscript{130} N.E. Parry: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 107
\textsuperscript{131} C.R. Nag: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 78
\textsuperscript{132} Mizo Sakhua: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 85
\textsuperscript{133} Zatluanga: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 85

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guns and gongs. People scrambled for these gifts.\textsuperscript{134} With these rituals, the third day which is known as Ruaini came to an end.

The fourth day is known as Chawndoni. It is also known as Saruh Cheuhi. On this day, the preparation for the ceremonies are the same as the earlier feast as on the Chawndoni. The elders of the village will drink Zu and have feast and the Thingdim party will dance again.\textsuperscript{135} The rewards to the Thingdim or dancers were also paid on this day. The Zawlbuk boys are again given Sabebuh on this day too.\textsuperscript{136} At night, the young people will dance again and on the next day, the official ceremony came to an end. The Lukhawng of a man who performed Khuangchawi will now be Rs.10/-.\textsuperscript{137}

After Khuangchawi feast is over, the Khuangchawipa had to observe for 7 days. During these days, they were not allowed to go to the house of a dead person, eating of sour fruits is restricted and entertaining and talking to guest were not allow. But after 7 days, they were allowed to led their usual life.

Three months after the Khuangchawi feast, they take down the skulls of the Mithun from the Seluphan which was known as ‘Selulawh’. With this, they also done ‘Sethla Khung’ meaning recalling of the Mithun’s spirit which they released when they are to perform Khuangchawi feast. This Selulawh was performed by killing a boar. After Khuangchawi feast was over, the Khuangchawipa had to perform the feast of Sedawi chhun again.\textsuperscript{138}

After performing Khuangchawi ceremony, the Khuangchawipa was known as Thangchhuahpa and his wife as Thangchhuah nu. Then, he was dubbed as ‘Zawhzawzo’

\textsuperscript{134} Dr. Sangkima: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 58  
\textsuperscript{135} Lalbiakhanga: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 45  
\textsuperscript{136} N.E. Parry: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 108  
\textsuperscript{137} \textit{Ibid}  
\textsuperscript{138} Mizo Sakhua: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 88
meaning one who had completed everything. He could now open windows as wide as he liked and build his house with Verandah or Vanlung and could make Bahzar (a back verandah). He can also wear striped clothes known as Thangchhuah puan and wear a striped turbans. He was regarded as a distinguished person in the society and was welcomed with special cup of rice beer wherever he go. After his death, Pialral will virtually be his abode. With all his wealth and glory, followed by all the spirits of the animals he killed during his life time will go towards Mitthikhua and will cross the gate of Pawla who dare to shoot and will enter Pialral which was the main aim of the early Mizos in their religious belief.

Many of the early Mizos have done the Khuangchawi ceremony. The last known person who performed this ceremony was Thansavung of Khawpuichhip village, who performed this ceremony in 1963.

(g) **Zankhuang:** The feast of Zankhuang was a prototype of Khuangchawi, in which a Mithun, a boar and a small pig was killed. In it, large quantity of Zu was served. They also made one Seluphan on which the head of the Mithun was to be placed. It was done by those who have performed other feast but could not perform Khuangchawi feast. It is just like Khuangchawi but its difference was that it need less animals to be sacrificed, the stretcher was taken out at night and there was no Thingdim party to dance during day time.

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139 Dr. Sangkima: *Op. Cit.* p. 58
143 Zathuang: *Op. Cit.* p. 78
144 Mizo Sakhua: *Op. Cit.* p. 95
In this feast, they also made stretcher during day time. On that stretcher, the family members of the one who performed the sacrifice (Zankhuangtupa) were made to sit and was taken out and then to the Lalmual (Chief’s mountain) at night and as such it was known as Zankhuang.\textsuperscript{145} They also throw hens and brass pots.

Those who can performed Zankhuang feast were known as Chhuahkhel\textsuperscript{146} and after this, the Zankhuangtupa was entitled to open a window about six inches square, he could wear a striped cloth and could also used a turban. It is believed that after they, die, their abode will be Pialral where Thangchhuah persons were to stay. Those who performed this feast was also respected by other. Before three years pass after the Zankhuang feast, the Zankhunrgtupa had to perform the feast of Sedawi chhun again which is known as Zankhuangtlip.\textsuperscript{147}

(h) Zaudawh: The feast of Zaudawh did not account for much importance in the religious ceremonies performed by a man with a view to attaining Pialral. It was an additional ceremonial feast performed as a means of Thangchhuah extra, to show the performer’s greatness and unlimited wealth to his fellow villagers as source of multiplying his social standing to the people.\textsuperscript{148}

Zaudawh was performed after the performer had given three consecutive Khuangchawi feasts.\textsuperscript{149} After the first Khuangchawi feast the performer had to perform the feast of Sedawi chhun which was followed by Dawino chhui. After performing these two sacrifices, the performer will perform again the feast of Khuangchawi for the second Khuangchawi. Then, the performer will again make Khuangchawi feast for the

\textsuperscript{145} K. Zawla: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 31
\textsuperscript{146} Pastor Challiana: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 38
\textsuperscript{147} L.K. Liana: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 149
\textsuperscript{148} C. Nuuthara: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 100
\textsuperscript{149} Dr. Sangkima: \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 59
third time. A man who performed Khuangchawi ceremonies thrice in his lifetime was called Zaudawh. Zau means a small hut built with number of widows around it. Such small hut built by those who performed Khuangchawi ceremonies thrice was called Zaudawh.

To perform Zaudawh ceremony, it needs 14 Mithuns and 13 boars at the minimum. Besides it also required 1,000 pots of Zu. As it needs lots of Zu and a large number of animals to be sacrifice, it can be perform only by few chiefs and wealthy persons.

As is was very difficult to perform the feast of Khuangchawi thrice to make Zaudawh, there were very few person who perform this ceremony in the history of the Mizos. The only known person who performed this ceremonial feast was Vuttaia, a Sailo chief. After a person had performed this feast, he can used a head turban known as Zawngchal which can be used only by a brave man. It is made of the fur of a he goat.

Thus, after a man had performed all the necessary ceremonial feasts for an In Lama Thangchhuah, he was known as Thangchhuahpa. He became a ‘Zawh Zaw Zo’ which means one who had completed everything. He was entitled to wear a special kind of cloth and turban and could now open window and built his house with Verandah which were signs of superior status. He was now entitled to go to Pialral after his death which was the main aim of the early Mizos.

(2) Ram Lama Thangchhuah:

The alternative way of attaining the bliss of Pialral was to perform another type of Thangchhuah called Ram Lama Thangchhuah which involved the killing of

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prescribed wild animals such as Savawm (bear), Sakhi (barking deer), Sele (wild gayed) Sazuk (sambar deer) and Sanghal (wild boar). Besides these animals, a man should also kill a Viper (Rulngan) and a hawk (mu vanlai). One may kill over a hundred animals but unless he killed all the above mentioned animals he cannot earn the title. Only after killing all the above mentioned animals, he qualified himself for the Thangchhuah title and was known as Ram Lama Thangchhuah pa. He had a passport to go direct to Pialral to enjoy life there eternally. On the way to Pialral, he rode on the back of a stag with a cobra coiled around its horn and a hawk flying over them, followed by other animals which he killed while living on earth and reached Pialral. On the way to Pialral, Pawla would not shoot him and he would thus reached Pialral without receiving, Pawla’s pellets.

The early Mizos tried to earn the Thangchhuah title mainly for 3 reasons:

1. To enter Pialral after death and enjoy life there eternally;
2. To escape from being shot by Pawla on the way to Mitthikhua and
3. To be honour and respect by others during their life time.

Thus, in the early Mizo society, to earn the Thangchhuah title was the most coveted goals and the highest possible achievement and honour a man can attain and thereby their whole endeavour throughout life centred in trying to achieve this goal. This titled also suggests the Mizo’s concern for life beyond the grave.

153 Dr. Sangkima: Op. Cit. p. 56