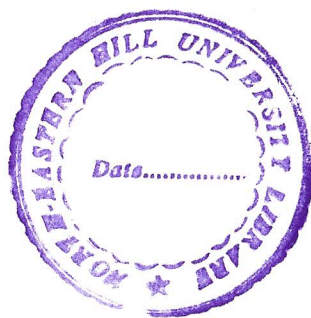


**MIZO
MIGRATION
AND
GENDER RELATIONS:
A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS**

**A
Thesis
Submitted in fulfillment for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
In History**

B.LALRINCHHANI

**To
Department of History
School of Social Sciences
North Eastern Hill University
Shillong
2008**



NORTH EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY
APRIL 2008

I, B.Lalrinchhani declared that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by me and that the contents of this thesis did not form the basis of the award of any previous degree to me, or to the best of my knowledge, to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University.

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgement

Introduction

1. Chapter I: Introducing Patriarchy and Gender History
2. Chapter II: Mizo before Migration: A brief history of the Zo
3. Chapter III: Looking for a new homeland: Mizo in the process of Migration
4. Chapter IV: Beginning of a new life in Mizoram: Economic, society and gender relations
5. Chapter V: What happened to the Zo society in Burma? An enquiry into the economy, society and gender relations among the Lai-Zo
6. Chapter VI: Tracing patriarchy in Mizo society: Genesis and growth of patriarchy
7. Chapter VII: Gender relations among the Mizo and Lai-Zo: A comparative analysis
8. Chapter VIII: Epilogue

APPENDICES

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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I am also grateful to my family members and friends for their moral and physical support.

Dated Shillong the 3rd April 2008

B.Lalrinchhani
B.Lalrinchhani

**LOCATION
OF
MIZORAM**

CHINA



R. IRAWADI

**BURMA
(MYANMAR)**

R. CHINDWIN

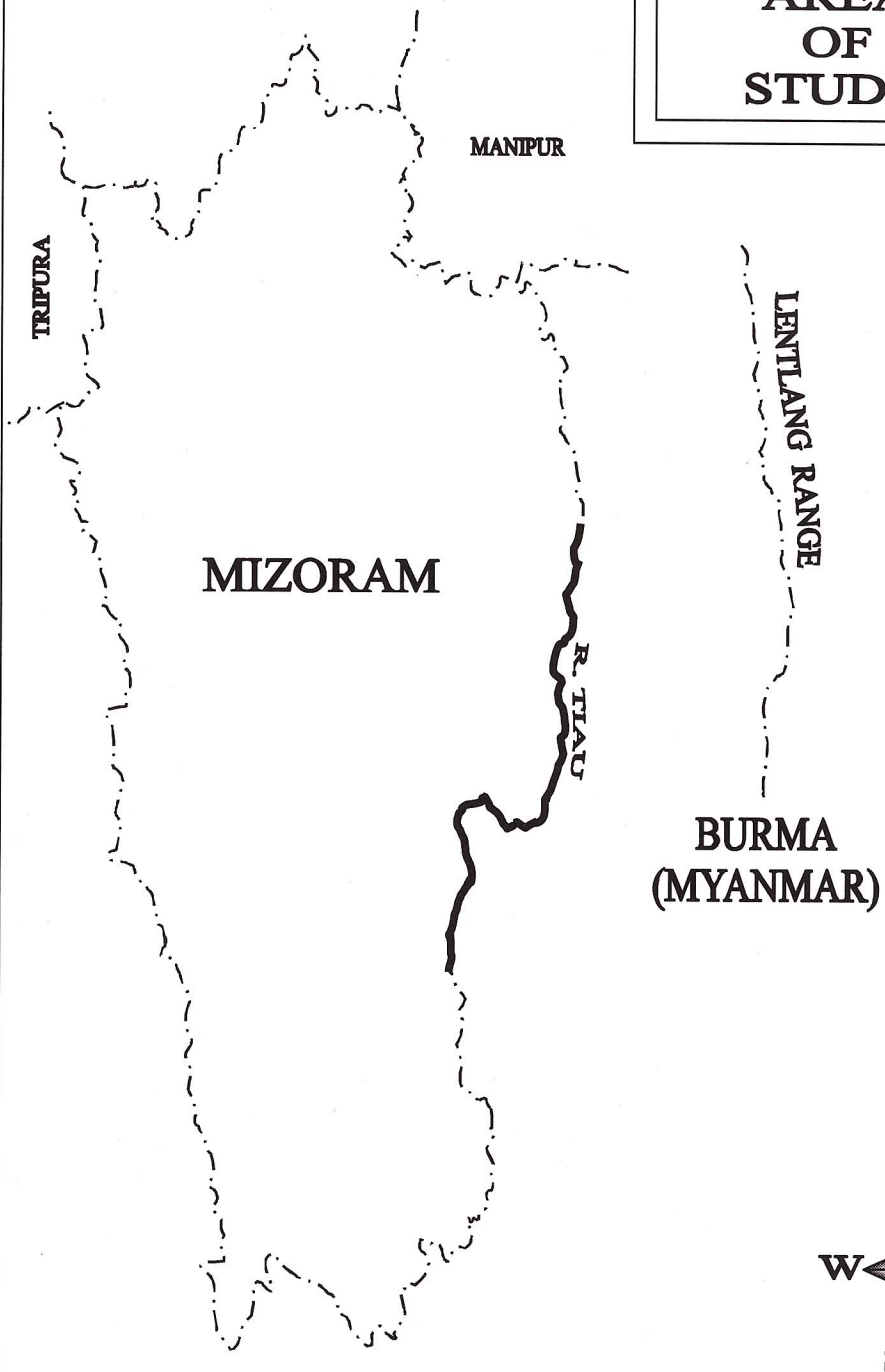
MANIPUR

MIZORAM

TRIPURA

MAP NO.1

**AREA
OF
STUDY**



MAP NO.2

Introduction

The world has always been shared by men and women. They have lived together, worked together and have participated in the making of history. However, in the recorded history, women's actions and their active role in history were not recorded by the historians. Thus, the recorded history was always dominated by men. What women have experienced and have done were ignored and marginalized in the recordings of history.¹ There were of course some women who found their place in the recordings but these were mainly women whose achievements were noteworthy by male standards. Thus women, their lives, aspirations and achievements were removed from the recordings of history.

The main reason for women to be hidden in history was the domination of patriarchal thoughts and values. In patriarchy, men are considered superior to women in almost all spheres of life. These ideas had affected the psychology of men and women and had also influenced different cultures all over the world. These same ideas had also influenced the minds of most historians both male and female. Until the most recent past, historians have been primarily men and so all their works and interpretations of history have reflected male value systems as they have written it from the perspective of the men. Hence, it was always the men who have selected the events to be recorded and interpreted it according to their choice. They have called this 'History and claimed Universality'² for it. Thus it was due to patriarchy and patriarchal values that women were marginalized in the recordings and writings of history.

¹ Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (New York, 1986), p.5

² *ibid.*, p.4

The patriarchal thought which envelopes the different societies have also set assumptions about gender and gender relations. According to Gerda Lerner, “gender is the cultural definition of behavior defined as appropriate to the sexes in a given time.”³ It is therefore clear that though men and women are different biologically, yet, the different roles they are required to play and the values and systems based on the difference is the result of the ideology of gender. So gender is socially constructed.

However, women slowly began to question the difference and also their own status in the society. This became more prominent after the World War II even though there were some women who fought against discrimination even in the 18th century. Women from different parts of the world began to realize that they were forced to be a subordinate group and that they have suffered many wrongs. During the French Revolution women felt that the principles of the Enlightenment should be applied to them too, and that political rights belonged to them as much as to men. Inspired by this idea Olympe de Gouges wrote *Declaration of the Rights of Women* in 1790. This influenced Mary Wollstonecraft too and her pathbreaking work *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* was published in 1792.⁴ She wrote that women should have equal status with men with respect to education, work and politics. Her work and the impact it had was often regarded to be the origin of the Women’s Movement. These ideas grew into political movements in Britain and the United States. There started different programmes and campaigns by women in which there was a demand for reform of divorce and child custody laws, for women to have the

³ *ibid.* p.238

⁴ Sheila Ruth, *Issues in Feminism* (California, 1995), p.19

access to education and employment and right to own property.⁵ The first Woman's Rights Convention in history was held in Seneca Falls in New York in 1848 under the leadership of Elizabeth Cady Stanton.⁶ The convention issued a Declaration modeled on the 1776 Declaration of Independence and demanded the rights of women to vote, to property, to education, to employment and to public participation in politics and the church. This convention is regarded as the beginning of the movement for women suffrage in the world and also the beginning of the organized Woman's Movement. Feminist consciousness began to develop all over the world and this resulted in an interest in the study of the lives of women and of gender biased systems.

Gender studies became more popular and important as it gradually came to be realized that various institutions of society like kinship, marriage, caste and village structure have traditionally been male oriented. There was no critical consideration of what this has meant for women's lives and of what is necessary to maintain more women friendly gender relations. Hence, writing of history has been largely carried out without examining how life conditions could have changed for different persons according to the prevailing gender relations. It is therefore important to study gender relations as it helps us to know the place or the position of the sexes in a society and also to understand how women got to be marginalized in history writing. This would also enable us to have a holistic approach to history. However, when studying gender relations, it is important to realize that there cannot be generalizations of such relations for different cultures or societies as gender

⁵ *ibid.*, p.38

⁶ Sudhir Varma, *Women's Struggle for Political Space* (New Delhi, 1997) p.27

relations can be different in different societies. However, the values and the principles of patriarchy are the same all over the world. It should also be noted that the level of discrimination against women can also be different in different societies. Moreover, the workings of patriarchy also have not been constant in all periods of history.

As gender studies became more popular, more scholars especially women began to take interest in studying gender relations. The status of women in India also came to be studied with interest. This had its effect in North East India too. Studies on women of the tribal society of North East were taken up by many scholars.⁷ Mizo women also began to question their status and studies began to be undertaken on these lines. But these studies were mainly taken up by Mizo women theologians such as Dr. R.L.Hnuni⁸, Dr. Lalrinawmi⁹ and Dr. T. Vanlaltlani¹⁰. These Mizo women theologians realised that though they were theologically qualified, the church would not ordain them due to their sex. So they began to study with interest the status of Mizo women and realised that they were not given the posts of ordained ministers due to patriarchal values.¹¹

The term Mizo literally means Zo people and is a generalised name for the people living in Mizoram having the same origin and a common way of life. So, Mizo could cover all ethnic Zo people. It should be noted that the name *Zo* was not

⁷ To name just a few refer to:

Lucy Zehol (ed) *Women in Naga Society* (New Delhi, 1998)

Chie Nakane, *Garo and Khasi: A Comparative Study in Matrilineal System* (Paris, 1967)

Manju Chaki Sircar, *Feminism in a Traditional Society: A Study of Manipur* (New Delhi, 1982)

⁸ R.L.Hnuni (ed), *Transforming Theology for Empowering Women* (Jorhat, 1999)

⁹ Lalrinawmi, "Crab Theology: A Critique of Patriarchy – Cultural Degradation and Empowerment of Mizo women" D.Min dissertation, Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge. 1993.

¹⁰ T.Vanlaltlani, *Mizo Hmeichhiate Kawngzawh* (Aizawl, 2005)

¹¹ B.Lalrinchani, "Christianity and Women in Mizoram: A Study of the Impact of Christianity on Women in Lunglei District" Unpublished M.Phil Dissertation, Deptt of History, NEHU, 1998

of recent origin and this could be seen in the records of the British administrators. T.H.Lewin the first British to enter present Mizoram had written that he came to know in the Lushai expedition of 1871-72 that “the generic name of the whole nation is Dzo”.¹² Grierson also wrote that the people living in the country between Burma and the then Assam and Bengal provinces called themselves “zo” and variantly “yo” or “sho”.¹³ The name Zo could also be seen in many of the village names in Mizoram and in the Chin Hills such as Zokhua, Zopui, Zobawk, Zotlang etc. So, it can be seen that the so called Chin-Kuki-Lushai generic name was Zo. Once Zo is accepted to be the generic name, the problem of adding *mi* as a prefix or suffix is not very important as *mi* means people. Hence whether we call *Mizo* or *Zomi*, the meaning is just the same. When the British administered present Mizoram, they identified the people living in it as Lushais and the land was called Lushai Hills District. Since there were other clans of the same origin other than the Lusei, the *Mizo Union* Party submitted a memorandum demanding the change of the name Lushai Hills to Mizo Hills. The Government of India accepted the demand and in 1954 changed it accordingly. After Mizo Hills attained the status of Union Territory in 1972, it became known as Mizoram.

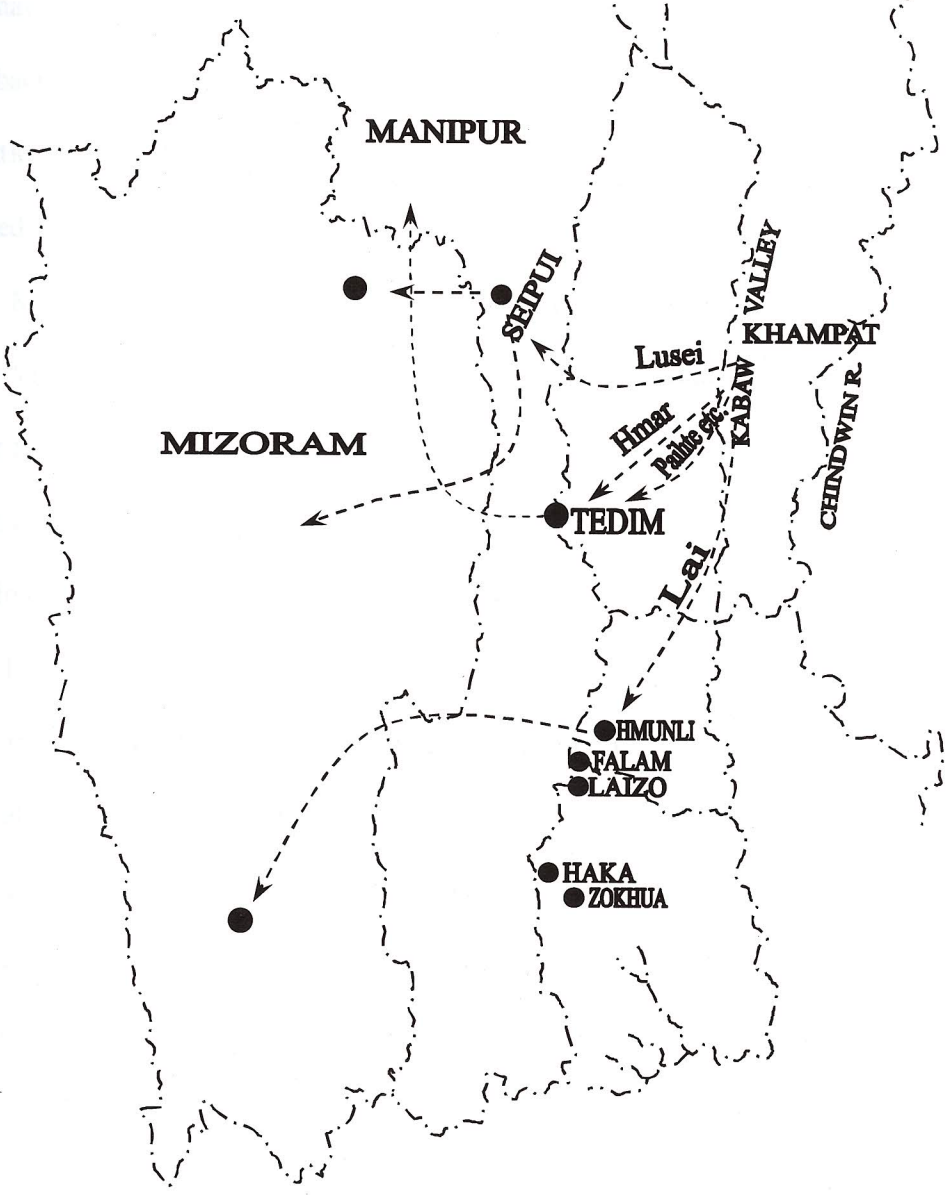
The history of the Mizo had been written by many historians and other writers. They have all written that Mizo tradition regarded Chhinlung to be the name of their origin. However, opinion differed on what Chhinlung was. In the traditional myth, Chhinlung was a big cave. Some writers claimed it as a name of a place while others have regarded it as a name which other neighbouring people used for them.¹⁴

¹² T.H.Lewin, *A Fly on the Wheel, or How I helped to Govern India* (Aizawl, reprint,) p.246

¹³ G.A.Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol III, Part III (Delhi, reprint, 1967) p.2

¹⁴ K.Zawla, *Mizo Pi Pute leh An Thlahte* (Aizawl, 1976) pp.5-6

**MIGRATION ROUTE
OF
LAI, PAIHITE, LUSEI**



MAP NO.3

Regardless of the differences of opinion on this there however seems to be a consensus that the early Mizo people inhabited some parts of China. Since they were nomadic and due to the fear of the Chinese, they moved to Chindwin Valley of Myanmar. It is important to note that most of the oral traditions available till date relate back to the settlement period in Myanmar and not China. However they did not settle here for a long time and moved to the Kabaw Valley. Their settlement stretched from Khampat in the north to Pandaung Hills in the south. It was believed by the Mizo historians that it was from this later part of their settlement in the Kabaw Valley that the different tribes of Mizo began to group themselves according to their tribes. Most of the tribes moved westward to Lentlang, a mountain range in present Chin Hills. In this mountain range, the people of these different tribes lived according to their clans. Thus the tribes began to differentiate themselves from each other. The Hmars, Thados, Pangs etc continued their westward movement and settled in the Indo-Burman border. The Lusei settled around Seipui and the Lai settled at Hmunli. The Lai then spread to Thlantlang, Zokhua, Zotung and Haka in Burma and some settled in the southern portion of present Mizoram.¹⁵ Meanwhile the Lusei also moved west, drove out the earlier settlers and soon spread their settlement under the Sailo chiefs. The Hmars and other tribes then moved towards Manipur and the Cachar areas. Thus the different Zo groups began to live in different areas. (See Map No. 3 for details of these migration routes). This study however is not mainly concerned with the origin of the Mizo or the route they took in their migration process but it tries to see how gender relations would have been changed

¹⁵ This information has been collected from Vumson, *Zo History* (Aizawl, 1976) p.52

in the migration process. So the origin and migration process has been basically drawn from studies which were earlier carried out by other historians.

Mizo society is a strictly patriarchal society. The lineage and heredity pass through the male line only. But all the domestic chores and major works in the fields were done by women. However although women worked a lot for the family, “custom has not sanctioned ownership of property by women, except on a very special and limited account.”¹⁶ These and other related issues are the main subject matter of this work.

When the Christian missionaries entered Mizoram, they opened schools for boys and later for girls. Education enabled the Mizo to acquire professions other than agriculture. It also helped some women to become economically independent. Though women have come out of the traditional mould, yet the patriarchal attitude towards women has not changed. An instance of this would be seen in the church where women are not yet allowed to be ordained as ministers.¹⁷

There are a number of works which have been done on various aspects of the Mizo society but these works did not study indepth about the gender relations in the society. It thus becomes necessary to study the gender systems from the perspective of a woman. For this purpose, it would be of interest to study the three major clans – Lai (Pawi), Lusei and Mara (Lakher). These three are the majority tribes in present Mizoram as the others such as the Ralte are mostly absorbed into Lusei. Moreover they are all intermixed and are scattered all over Mizoram. Since all of them have the same origin and being intermixed for a long time they follow more or less the same

¹⁶ A.G.McCall, *Lushai Chrysalis* (Aizawl, reprint, 1977) p.106

¹⁷ B.Lalrinchhani, *op. cit.*

culture. There are little differences between them. So when speaking of the culture and society of the Mizo, these three tribes can be taken as representative of the society in general. When some dissimilarity is observed among them the point of difference and the name of the tribe such as Lusei, Lai and Mara have been mentioned in the course of this work.

It would also be interesting to study the Lai-Zo in Burma. However it should be noted that not only the Lai-Zo tribe (who are within the Falam area) but the people of other Lai in Burma such as the Haka have also been included. This has been done because studying only the Lai-Zo would be quite limited and as the other Lai tribes are also in close connection with Lai-Zo, they have therefore also been included in the present study. Moreover, they are the ones who did not migrate to present Mizoram but had stayed back in Burma (Myanmar). In this study the Mizo tribes of Myanmar have been mentioned as Zo since Zo is accepted by all different tribes such as the Lai from Falam and Haka; and Paihte from Tiddim region as their original name.¹⁸ Hence the Baptist organisation of the above mentioned different hill tribes in Myanmar have adopted the name as Zomi Baptist Convention¹⁹ and was later changed to Zo Baptist Convention. **Moreover in this study, referring to the people from Mizoram as Mizo and those in Burma (Myanmar) as Zo has been done in order to easily distinguish them when studying and making a comparison.** Since the Zo and the Mizo in Mizoram had the same origin, a comparative study between them has also been undertaken in order to examine whether the process of migration had affected the gender relations in the society or

¹⁸ Sukte.T.Hau Go in Sing Khaw Khai, *Zo People and Their Culture* (Churachandpur, 1995) p.70

¹⁹ *ibid*

otherwise. Studying the Lai-Zo was also helpful in understanding to some extent the origin of patriarchy in the Mizo society and to assess whether there had ever been any mother rights in the early Mizo society and whether the settlement in different eco-geographical areas and exposure to different social and political systems brought about any major changes in gender relations amongst the Mizo.

Studying the Mizo and the Lai-Zo would also give a picture of the gender relations in the early Mizo society. It would also be interesting to see whether gender relations are constant in patriarchal societies or do they differ in relations to the exposure to different forms of changes like culture, religion and political system. In other words, how is patriarchy altered or reconstituted after migration has been a major concern of this work. Moreover, it would also be useful to see how gender systems can differ in different periods of time.

Review of Literature

There are a number of works done on the status of women since the issue is studied with interest by many scholars. They try to know the reasons for the many problems faced by women in relation to their livelihood, political voice and their own lives. Thus studies on women and gender relations have been gradually producing a lot of literature.

In the broader context, a number of works exist which reflect this situation. Mary Wollstonecraft in her work *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*²⁰ focussed on the status of women and said that patriarchy is man made and is the cause for the subordination of women. She studied how women were denied of their rights and wanted women to gain those rights. Wollstonecraft's work in fact is a pioneering

²⁰ Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (London, reprint, 1922)

work in the studies on women's rights. Gerda Lerner in her works, *The Creation of Patriarchy*²¹ and *The Creation of Feminist Consciousness*²² studied the historical origin of patriarchy and also how some women tried to free their minds from patriarchal thought to achieve feminist consciousness. There are also works on how women took part in the process of history but were hidden in the recordings or writings of history. Some of these works would be discussed very briefly. Mary R. Beard in *Women and Force in History*²³ studied how women took part in all the events of history despite several legal disadvantages. Sheila Rowbotham's *Hidden from History*²⁴ examines the situation of women in contemporary capitalism and how class affected women. Judith P.Zinsser *History and Feminism*²⁵ studied the androcentric nature of history and also studied how despite several changes in today's world, women's history is still marginalised. Studies has also been done to assess the different feminist theories. Some of these works can be seen in the edited work of Nancy Mandell, *Feminist Issue*²⁶ in which she studied about the various feminist theories. Alison M.Jagger in her work *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*²⁷ studied and compared the various feminist theories – Liberal Feminism, Marxism, Radical Feminism and Socialist Feminism. She has made a critical assessment of the use and utility of the different theories of feminism. Alice W.Clark in her edited work, *Gender and Political Economy*²⁸ focussed on historical and contemporary issues in the lives of women and it also explored theories of

²¹ Gerda Lerner, *op.cit.*,

²² Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Feminist Consciousness* (New York, 1993)

²³ Mary R.Beard, *Women as Force in History* (New York, 1962)

²⁴ Sheila Rowbotham, *Hidden from History* (New York, 1974)

²⁵ Judith P.Zinsser, *History and Feminism* (New York, 1993)

²⁶ Nancy Mandell (ed), *Feminist Issues* (Ontario, 1995)

²⁷ Alison M. Jagger, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature* (USA, 1983)

²⁸ Alice W. Clark(ed), *Gender and Political Economy* (New Delhi, 1993)

gender relations in a South Asian context. Frederick Engels in his book *Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*²⁹ deals with the issue of women's subordination which he believed began with the development of private property. There are also works in which the authors tried to assess how women struggled and were often denied political space. The edited work of Barbara Nelson and Najma Chowdhury *Women and Politics Worldwide*³⁰ studied the level of participation of women in politics in different countries. All these works are educative in examining the obliteration of women in the writings of history and give us an insight into the perceptions about women. Since many of them also studied the various Feminist Theories, they have helped in developing a theoretical structure for the present study.

In India studies on women, gender relations and women's rights have shown considerable development in the last few decades. A few of the works are reviewed here to give an indication of the nature of the works done on India. Geraldine Forbes in her work *Women in Modern India*³¹ made a comprehensive study of Indian women from the 19th century to the 20th century. Kiran Devandra's work *Status and Position of Women in India*³² studied about the status of women before and after independence. Susheela Kaushik in her edited work *Women's Participation in Politics*³³ examined the level of women's participation in politics while Vijay Agnew's *Elite Women in Indian Politics*³⁴ focused on the women who took part in Indian politics. M.Indu Menon in *Status of Muslim Women in India*³⁵ examined the

²⁹ Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (Moscow, reprint, 1977)

³⁰ Barbara Nelson & Najma Chowdhury (ed) *Women and Politics Worldwide* (Delhi, 1997)

³¹ Geraldine Forbes, *Women in Modern India* (New Delhi, 1998)

³² Kiran Devandra, *Status and Position of Women in India* (Delhi, 1985)

³³ Susheela Kaushik(ed), *Women's Participation in Politics* (New Delhi, 1993)

³⁴ Vijay Agnew, *Elite Women in Indian Politics* (Delhi, 1979)

³⁵ M. Indu Menon, *Status of Muslim Women in India* (New Delhi, 1981)

share of education in raising the status of Muslim women in Kerala. The edited work of J. Krishnamurthy *Women in Colonial India*³⁶ deals with women's issues and their role in Indian social and economic history. Virginius Xaxa his article "Women and Gender in the Study of Tribes in India" in *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*³⁷ examined women and gender and critically assessed the bride price which exist among various tribes of India. Bina Agarwal's *A Field of One's Own*³⁸ studied land rights for women and how women were denied this right which led to their subordination in economic, social and political fields. She then tries to give some suggestions as to how women could be freed from this subordination. All the works which have been mentioned above enable us to know about the general status of women in India and have been helpful in dealing with the present study. However these works do not include any studies on the tribal societies of North East India (except Bina Agarwal who had written about the Garos, Khasis and Lalungs to show women's land rights in traditionally matrilineal societies) especially Mizo society and this gap in the existing literature on women in India needs to be taken seriously.

In trying to understand the various dimensions of the problems of migration certain works have been helpful. For instance, works like. T.V.Sekher's, *Migration and Social Change*³⁹, edited works of Paul White and Robert Woods *The Geographical Impact of Migration*⁴⁰, John Connell et al, *Migration from Rural*

provide

³⁶ J. Krishnamurthy (ed), *Women in Colonial India* (New Delhi, 1989)

³⁷ Virginius Xaxa, "Women and Gender in the Study of Tribes in India" in *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol II, No.3. September – December 2004, New Delhi

³⁸ Bina Agarwal, *A Field of One's Own* (New Delhi, reprint, 1998)

³⁹ T.V.Sekhar, *Migration and Social Change* (New Delhi, 1997)

⁴⁰ Paul White & Robert Woods (ed), *The Geographical Impact of Migration* (London, 1980)

*Areas*⁴¹ and Kevin R. Cox *Man, Location and Behavior*⁴² have provided some insight into migration theories. They have also studied the impact of migration on the economy and society of the people. Since the present study is on the change of gender relations in the migration process, the above mentioned works are useful to see how and why people used to migrate in the primitive and even in modern age though they do not directly deal with changing gender relations.

There are works done on women of North East India. In S.L. Baruah's edited work *Status of Women in Assam*⁴³ we get some glimpses into the status that Assamese women have in the society. It deals with the position of women in relation to economic, social and religious life. Deepti Sharma's *Assamese Women in the Freedom Struggle*⁴⁴ looks into the role played by the women of Assam in different phases of the freedom movement of India from 1921 to 1947. G.K. Ghosh and Shukla Ghosh in *Women of Manipur*⁴⁵ and Manju Chaki Sircar in *Feminism in a Traditional Society: A Study of Manipur*⁴⁶ discuss about the Manipuri (Meitei) women. Sircar in her book studied about the patriarchal society of the Meitei and when assessing it, she saw an expression of feminism in the Meitei culture which "encourages women to be individually self-reliant and collectively powerful without necessarily involving a sex war". Lucy Zehol's edited work *Women in Naga Society*⁴⁷ studies the Naga society from the traditional to modern scenario which provides vital information on the Naga women. In this book the different women of

⁴¹ John Connell, et al, *Migration from Rural Areas*

⁴² Kevin R. Cox, *Man, Location & Behaviour-An Introduction to Human Geography* (USA, 1972)

⁴³ S.L. Baruah (ed), *Status of Women in Assam* (New Delhi, 1992)

⁴⁴ Deepti Sharma, *Assamese Women in the Freedom Struggle* (Calcutta, 1993)

⁴⁵ G.K. Ghosh & Shukla Ghosh, *Women of Manipur* (New Delhi, 1997)

⁴⁶ Manju Chaki Sircar, *op. cit.*

⁴⁷ Lucy Zehol (ed), *op. cit.*

Naga society are studied and it showed how the level of patriarchy has been different in the different society. The edited work of Soumen Sen, *Women in Meghalaya*⁴⁸ also studies about the role of women in a matrilineal society of Meghalaya. All the works mentioned above enabled us to have an idea about the status of women in North East India and also of some of the tribal societies. Apurba K.Baruah and Manorama Sharma have also studied and questioned about “Matriliny, Land Rights and Political Power in Khasi Society” in *Indian Journal of Human Rights, Volume III*⁴⁹. Frederick S.Downs in *The Christian Impact on the Status of Women in North East India*⁵⁰ discusses the women of Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Mizoram in the light of the impact of Christianity on the women of Nagaland and Mizoram. He concluded that Christianity contributed towards the progress of women mainly through education and the work of women for women but the church in North East India was a patriarchal church and hence paved the way for the process of patriarchalization.

Mission: To understand the history of the Zo in Burma it was necessary to look into works on the history of Burma which would provide information about the people living in that country. Nicholas Tarling’s edited work of *The Cambridge History of South East Asia*⁵¹; W.S.Desai’s *A Pageant of Burmese History*⁵²; F.S.Donnison’s *Burma*⁵³; G.E.Harvey’s *History of Burma*⁵⁴; Reginald Le May’s *The Culture of*

the woman

⁴⁸ Soumen Sen (ed), *Women in Meghalaya* (Delhi, 1992)

⁴⁹ Apurba Baruah & Manorama Sharma, “Matriliny, Land Rights and Political Power in Khasi Society” in G. Haragopal (ed), *Indian Journal of Human Rights*, Vol.III. Hyderabad, 1999

⁵⁰ Frederick S.Downs, *The Christian Impact on the Status of Women in North East India* (Shillong, 1996)

⁵¹ Nicholas Tarling (ed), *The Cambridge History of South East Asia Vol II* (Cambridge, 1992)

⁵² W. S. Desai, *A Pageant of Burmese History* (Calcutta, 1961)

⁵³ F.S. Donnison, *Burma* (London, 1970)

⁵⁴ G.E. Harvey, *History of Burma* (London, 1925)

*South East Asia*⁵⁵ and Arthur d. Phyre's *History of Burma*⁵⁶ provide a lot of information on the origin and culture of the people who have lived and are still living in Burma. These works mainly deal with the history of Burma and have less information on the Chin Hills. F.K.Lehman's *The Structure of Chin Society*⁵⁷ studied the people inhabiting the Chin Hills in Burma. Carey and Tuck's *The Chin Hills Vol I*⁵⁸ dealt with the entry of British government in the Chin Hills and also information on the people living in the Hills. All these works throw some light on the origin of the Mizo. H.N.C. Stevenson's work *The Economics of the Central Chin Tribes*⁵⁹ deals with the Lai of Burma. Stevenson studied in detail about the socio-economic condition of the different tribes of the Chin Hills and also the impact of western culture on the economy of the people. Sing Khaw Khai's work *Zo People and their Culture*⁶⁰ studied about the origin and cultural life of the Zo. These works give us a view of the Lai-Zo in Burma and have been helpful for the present study. Maung Shwe Wa's book *Burma Baptist Chronicle*⁶¹ deals with the American Baptist Missionaries work in Burma and it also included the mission's work among the Zo of Burma. It is therefore an important source to know how the mission work had tried to evangelize the people through education and medical works. The major aspect missing in these works is the gender analysis but the information available in them has definitely helped in looking at the historical process from the perspective of the woman.

⁵⁵ Reginald Le May, *The Culture of South East Asia* (London, revised, 1956)

⁵⁶ Arthur D. Phyre, *History of Burma* (London, 1983)

⁵⁷ F.K.Lehman, *The Structure of Chin Society* (Aizawl, reprint, 1980)

⁵⁸ Bertram S. Carey & H.N.Tuck, *The Chin Hills Vol I* (Aizawl, reprint, 1976)

⁵⁹ H.N.C.Stevenson, *The Economics of the Central Chin Tribes* (Aizawl, reprint, 1986)

⁶⁰ Sing Khaw Khai, *Zo People and their Culture* (Churachanpur, 1995)

⁶¹ Maung Shwe Wa, *Burma Baptist Chronicle* (Rangoon, 1963)



work There are also a number of works both in English and the vernacular in regard to the history of the Mizo. A.G. McCall's *Lushai Chrysalis*⁶²; Alexander Mackenzie's *The North East Frontier of India*⁶³, A.S. Reid's *Chin Lushai Land*⁶⁴, T.H. Lewin's *Wild Races of South Eastern India*⁶⁵ and *A Fly on the Wheel* are the most popularly referred works on the Mizo and all of them provide information not only about the various British expeditions into the land but they also discuss about the culture of the people. But they do not have specific discussion on gender though some of them have descriptions about the activities of Mizo women. J. Shakespeare in *The Lushei Kuki Clans*⁶⁶ and N.E. Parry in *A Monograph of Lushai Customs and Ceremonies* and *The Lakhers*⁶⁷ throw light on the customs of different clans of Lusei and about the tradition and culture of the Lakher (Mara). Mrs.N.Chatterji in her work *Status of Women in Earlier Mizo Society*⁶⁸ studied Mizo women before their exposure to Christianity. She gave a rosy picture of the status of the Mizo women and claimed that the Mizo women's position and status were much better than the women of other tribes. She however did not make an indepth study of the Mizo women as she emphasised only on the customs of the traditional society and did not compare the women's status with that of the men. The same author also wrote *Zawlbuk as a Social Institution in Mizo Society*⁶⁹ in which she studied the *zawlbuk* (bachelor's dormitory) and in a way eulogised its importance in the society but the

⁶² A.G.McCall, *op.cit*

⁶³ Alexander Mackenzie, *The North East Frontier of India* (New Delhi, reprint, 1999)

⁶⁴ A.S.Reid, *Chin Lushai Land* (Aizawl, reprint, 1976)

⁶⁵ T.H. Lewin, *Wild Races of South Eastern India* (Aizawl, reprint, 1977) and *A Fly on the Wheel or How I helped to Govern India* (Aizawl, reprint, 1977)

⁶⁶ J. Shakespeare, *The Lushei Kuki Clans* (Aizawl, reprint, 1988)

⁶⁷ N.E.Parry, *A Monograph of Lusshai Customs and Ceremonies* (Aizawl, reprint, 1988)
The Lakhers (Aizawl, reprint, 1976)

⁶⁸ Mrs. N.Chatterji, *Status of Women in Earlier Mizo Society* (Aizawl, 1975)

⁶⁹ Mrs. N. Chatterji, *Zawlbuk as a Social Institution in the Mizo Society* (Aizawl, 1975)

work had no gender dimensions in it. Sangkima's *Mizo Society and Social Change*⁷⁰, Animesh Ray's *Mizoram*⁷¹, Lalrinmawia's *Mizoram-History and Cultural Identity*⁷², C.Nunthara's *Mizoram – Society and Polity*⁷³ have thrown some light on Mizoram and the various changes in the society though gender relations do not form a part of their analysis. There are also some works on the Christian missionaries in Mizoram. Zairema, *God's Miracle in Mizoram*⁷⁴, C.L.Hminga's *The Life and Witness of the Churches in Mizoram*⁷⁵, J.M.Lloyd's *History of the Church in Mizoram*⁷⁶ discuss how the missionaries entered and worked in Mizoram. They also wrote about the impact Christianity had on education and the people. J.V.Hluna's *Church and Political Upheaval in Mizoram*⁷⁷ studies the impact of Christianity on the political development in Mizoram. All these works are helpful to know about the Mizo society and the various changes in it but practically none of them have laid any emphasis on women and gender relations.

In the vernacular also, not much emphasis was placed on the lives of women. B.Lalthangliana, *Mizo Chanchin*⁷⁸; L.K.Liana, *Zofate Thu Hla*⁷⁹; K.Zawla, *Mizo Pi Pute leh an Thlahte Chanchin*⁸⁰; H.L.C.A. *Zofate Chanchin*⁸¹; V.L.Siama, *Mizo History*⁸²; Lalthanliana *Mizo Chanchin*⁸³ and H.Lalrinawma *Hmasang Zofate*

⁷⁰ Sangkima, *Mizo Society and Social Change* (Delhi, 1993)

⁷¹ Animesh Ray, *Mizoram* (New Delhi, 1993)

⁷² Lalrinmawia, *Mizoram-History and Cultural Identity* (Guwahati, 1995)

⁷³ C. Nunthara, *Mizoram-Society and Polity* (New Delhi, 1996)

⁷⁴ Zairema, *God's Miracle in Mizoram* (Aizawl, 1976)

⁷⁵ C.L.Hminga, *The Life and Witness of the Churches in Mizoram* (Serkawn, 1987)

⁷⁶ J.M.Lloyd, *History of the Church in Mizoram* (Aizawl, reprint, 1991)

⁷⁷ J.V.Hluna, *Church and Political Upheaval in Mizoram* (Aizawl, 1985)

⁷⁸ B.Lalthangliana, *Mizo Chanchin* (Aizawl, 2001)

⁷⁹ L.K.Liana, *Zofate Thu Hla* (Aizawl, 1994)

⁸⁰ K. Zawla, *op.cit.*

⁸¹ H.L.C.A, *Zofate Chanchin* (Tahan Kalemyo, 1995)

⁸² V.L.Siama, *Mizo History* (Aizawl, 1953)

⁸³ Lalthanliana, *Mizo Chanchin* (Aizawl, 2000)

*Chanchin*⁸⁴, Liangkhaia's work *Mizo Chanchin*⁸⁵ and Remkunga's *Mizo Pi Pute Khawsak Dan Tlangpui*⁸⁶ have all narrated from their own perspectives the history of the Mizo, their culture and traditions and some of them have also focussed on the British administration in Mizoram. Duh Cung Nung's *Lai Nunphung*⁸⁷ deals with the Lai (Zo) of Myanmar. One major problem with most of these works is that they have not indicated the source of their various kinds of information. The information contained in such works therefore needs to be used with caution and after due corroborations. These male writers of Mizo history have not written anything specific on women though some of them have some sections on women. They also have not made a comparative study of the Mizo in Mizoram and of the Lai-Zo in Myanmar. However a re-interpretation of these works from the perspective of gender relations can provide a lot of information for the present study. To understand the Mizo society and also the changes which could have occurred during the process of migration one needs to study the Mizo history not only from the male perspective but also from the perspective of women. There are also works done on women by Mizo women theologians. T.Vanlaltlani *Mizo Hmeichhiate Kawngzawh*⁸⁸ and P.C.Laltlani *Kohhran Hmeichhe Chanchin*⁸⁹ wrote on the status of Mizo women. However their main emphasis was on women's contribution and position in the church. Though their works are important to know about the status of women and their role in the church yet their works did not go back to discuss the gender relations in the process of migration. Lalsangzuali Sailo in her work *Tlawm ve lo Lalnu*

⁸⁴ H.Lalrinawma, *Hmasang Zofate Chanchin* (Aizawl, 2000)

⁸⁵ Liangkhaia, *Mizo Chanchin* (Aizawl, 4th edition, 1976)

⁸⁶ Remkunga, *Mizo Pi Pute Khawsak Dan Tlangpui* (Aizawl, 1977)

⁸⁷ Duh Cung Nung, *Lai Nunphung* (Falam, 2001)

⁸⁸ T.Vanlaltlani, *Mizo Hmeichhiate Kawngzawh* (Aizawl, 2005)

⁸⁹ P.C.Laltlani, *Kohhran Hmeichhe Chanchin* (Aizawl, 2003)

*Ropuiliani*⁹⁰ had done an extensive research on the life of a woman chief Ropuiliani. This book is useful to know about the life of this woman chief. However she deals only with the life of Ropuiliani and has not tried to place her in the larger context of gender relations in Mizoram. Thus it becomes clear that most of the writers of Mizo history have not written anything specific on women and also have not made a comparative study of the Mizo in Mizoram and of the Lai-Zo in Myanmar. However a re-interpretation of many of these works from the perspective of gender relations provided a lot of information. To understand the Mizo society and also the changes which could have occurred during the process of migration one needs to study the Mizo history not only from the male perspective but also from the perspective of the women.

Thus we see that the study of Mizo women and the change of gender relations in the process of migration continued to be an area less explored by social scientists. The primary objective of this research therefore has been to study the evolution of patriarchy in Mizo society by tracing the migration process of the Mizo and the subsequent developments particularly in the context of gender relations. (However it should be noted that this work is not a study of the history of migration.) It also makes a comparative study of the Lusei, Lai and Mara in Mizoram and the Lai-Zo in Myanmar to ascertain whether exposure to different forms of changes like culture, religion and political system brought about any major changes in gender relations and whether patriarchy has remained constant or does it vary in different periods of time.

⁹⁰ Lalsangzuali Sailo, *Tlawm Ve Lo Lalnu Ropuiliani* (Aizawl, 1999)

This kind of a study has been done by adopting the methodology of qualitative analysis and a re-interpretation of the sources and a comparative study of the tribes mentioned in lines with gender history. The theoretical framework is based on the Socialist Feminist approach and the analysis has been made on the lines of additive gender history in which available sources are re-examined from the perspective of a woman to know the contributions and roles of women.

Why have we used this socialist theoretical framework?

These Sharp class differentiations in Mizo society have not really crystallized and are still confined to a very small section of the population. So, social differentiations are at a very low level. Though there are slight variations in the status of the wives of the chiefs and the educated women, yet cutting across all classes are the patriarchal norms which allot women a subordinate status in all sections of the society. Therefore a theoretical framework was required which would combine both the class and feminist perspective and socialist feminism provides that.

history The data is collected from primary and secondary sources. The primary source includes relevant government reports, gazetteers and church papers. To corroborate and add to the data, oral history sources have also been tapped. The secondary sources include published works and unpublished works of some researchers. Articles appearing in newspapers have also been used. Various websites from the internet which are relevant for the study are also used. So from the data collected from the primary and secondary sources gender relations in the Mizo society during the process of the migration has been analysed.