

Origin and early migration of the mizo

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Abstract

The origin of the Mizo, like those of many other tribes in the North Eastern India is shrouded in mystery. The generally accepted as part of a great Mongoloid wave of migration from China and later moved out to India to their present habitat. The Mizo claimed that came from Chhinlung located. As they did not have written records, their migration stories are presumed to in line with the Tibeto-Burman groups. They first settled in the Shan State and moved on to Kabaw Valley to Khampat and then to the Chin Hills in the middle of the 16th century. The earliest Mizo who migrated to India were known as Kukis, the second batch of immigrants was called New Kuki. The Lushai were the last of the Mizo tribes migrate to India.

Keywords: migration, origin, China, chhinlung, tibeto-burman, kabaw valley, khampat

Introduction

The word 'Mizo' in the present context may be understood normally to designate the main population of Mizoram who trace back their lineage to a common ancestor. They have cognate clans/sub-tribes/tribes that are outside of the political map of Mizoram such as in the neighbouring states of Manipur, Tripura, Assam, and those outside of India's political boundary namely Bangladesh and Myanmar. The term 'Mizo' became officially used to designate these people in 1952 when the Lushai Hill was changed to Mizo Hill District. In earlier time, outsiders had given different names for them. They are known as Chin in Myanmar, Mizo and Kuki in India.

All societies have always had ways of explaining the origins of the earth and the emergence of humanity. In industrial nations, the scientific ethos is so profound that all non-scientific explanations for the development of humankind are dismissed as myth and legend. Accounts of migration, however, are a crucial part of the indigenous world view and reflect the deep and profound understanding of aborigines or tribal peoples have of their relationship with the natural environment. (Ken S. Coates, P.22). These accounts of human origins vary widely across cultures around the world. The origin of the people in the earth is one of the most remarkable human experiences, and yet we know very little about this expansion. Over many centuries, human beings found their way into virtually all of the inhabitable areas of the world. Tribal people have clear and consistent explanations for their emergence in their homelands, ideas and explanation which often conflict with arguments advanced by western science. Archaeologists, now joined by biologist, linguists, geneticists, and other have been painstakingly attempting to reconstruct one of the world's great mysteries. (Wikipedia.com, The free encyclopedia, *aborigine theory*). How, when, and why did human beings spread out across the globe? This great migration played a crucial role in shaping human history, and is obvious at the

foundation of any attempt to understand the emergence of aboriginal and tribal societies.

When we look at the Aborigines Dreamtime story, their account of creation, at the point of creation, the earth lacked distinctive features. There was no night or daytime. All that marked the earth were small hallows, or waterholes. The earth contained all things- the stars, sky, sun, moon, and all forms of life-but everything was asleep. Then, at the Dreamtime, time divided into sleeping and walking time. Life erupted from the earth. The sun burst forth and warmed the earth, bringing more life to the waterholes. Under the waterholes, the ancestors gave birth to their children, which made up all living things, from plants to animals. As the ancestor arose from the earth, mud fell from their eyes and they saw what each had created.

There are hundreds of comparable accounts, each rooted in the geographical location of the specific tribal group and each reflecting the strong relationship between the creative force, the local environment, and the indigenous culture. Among the Hopi, for example creation originated in caves deep under the earth and was instigated by two brothers who brought humans to the surface. Indigenous groups attribute the creation of the world to the Raven, Eagle, Turtle, the Wind, the Creator, or other mysterious spiritual forces. Ken S. Coates says, "The creation stories are typically rich in detail, tying critical events in the evolution of the physical and natural world to specific aspects of the local ecosystem. Operating without written sacred texts, indigenous people had a rich understanding of creation and history, available to them through a reading and awareness of their natural setting." (Ken S Coates, p.25).

Mizo Tradition of their Origin: Chhinlung

An important point of the Mizo, in their attempt to trace and account their origin is Chhinlung. Chhinlung story is a lively tradition of the people which has served, to some extent, to convey a sense of common origin of the Mizo and cognate tribes. This feeling is invoked by the phrase *Chhinlung Chhuak*, meaning 'originated from Chhinlung'. Sometimes the name for 'Chhinlung' differs, depending on

the dialect group. For example, in referring to the same tradition the 'Old Kuki' clans - Aimol, Anal, Chawthe, Chiru, Kolhen, Kom, Lamgang, Purum, Tikhup and Vaiphei all assert that they are descended from a couple who issued out of 'Khurpui' or cave. (B. Lalhangliana, p.37). However, though the central theme is of issuance from the ground, sometimes there are other meanings conveyed along this central theme. Let us first look at the Ralte version of this tradition, translated in 1912 by J. Shakespear, which goes as follows: Once upon a time when the great darkness called Thimzing fell upon the world, many awful things happened. Everything except the skulls of animals killed in the chase became alive, dry wood revived, even stones become alive and produced leaves, so men had nothing to burn. The successful hunters who had accumulated large stocks of trophies of their skills were able to live using them as fuel. After this terrible catastrophe, Thimzing, the world was again re-peopled by men and women issuing from the hole of the earth called Chhinlung. Let us contrast this to the version given by the Lusei. Here it is interesting to note the little but significant twist given to it. According to the Lusei version of Chhinlung, as they came out one by one a Ralte couple came out; they talked so much and made such loud noise that the guardian-god of the cave fearing the human population had grown too large, closed the cave with a stone preventing any further human beings to issue from the cave. From this reference and remark that the Lusei give to the Ralte, it is interesting to note the Mara version. The same tradition as handed down among the Mara group of the Mizo was recorded by N.E. Parry in 1932. According to this narrative "Long ago, before the great darkness called Khazanghra fell upon the world, men all came out of the hole below the earth. As the founder of each Mara group came out of the earth he calls his name. Tlongsai called out, 'I am Tlongsai'; Zeuhnang called out, 'I am Zeuhnang'...Accordingly god thought that a very large number of Mara had come out and stopped the way. When the Lushai came out of the hole, however, only the first one to come out called out, 'I am Lushai', and all the rest came out silently. God, only hearing one man announce his arrival, thought that only one Lushai had come out, and gave them a much longer time, during which Lushai were pouring out of the hole silently in great numbers. It is for this reason that Lushais to this day are more numerous than Maras. After all men had come out of the hole in the earth, God made their languages different, and they remain so to this day. (NE Parry, p.4)

These slight variations in the content tell another story. It may be assumed that the same story was added on or modified in the process of their migration from the Chin Hills. Different clans, when at the height of their dominance abridged and restructure the order of importance given to each. As such, against the simple and straightforward version of the Ralte, the Lusei version which mentions the Ralte clan as loud and talkative must have been a change affected after Lentlang. The version shows their annoyance of the clan and attempt to degrade the Ralte through this story. Accordingly, the Mara story clearly reveals the Lusei were more numerous in numbers than them. This version must have also been composed sometime after the Lusei dominated following the Lentlang phase. The importance of this story is that it is the only living oral tradition of these people and thus, serves to help all the Mizo sub-tribes to have a sense of common origin and work towards

maintaining their ethnic homogeneity in times of need. All the sub-tribes readily accept themselves as *Chhinlung Chhuak*, meaning 'people from Chhinlung'

Chhinlung and Mizo roots in China

The Chhinlung story has been expanded by certain enthusiasts and scholars to a wider dimension beyond the simple idea it conveys as giving issuance of people from the bowels of the earth. Of these, the writing of the first Mizo writers on Mizo tradition may be brought to the fore. Liangkhaia, who published his work in 1938 suggested that Chhinlung was the name of a Chinese prince and that this prince, due to a difference with his father, moved out from China and arrived at Awksatlang in Burma at 750 A.D. (Liangkhaia, p.12) Following upon this VL Siama brought out a book in 1952 and gave a reference to Chhinlung in much the same way as proposed earlier by Liangkhaia. On the other hand, J. Ginzatuang, assume that Chhinlung is a place in Tibet to which the progenies of the Mizo moved from central China. Here, their hiding in caves from enemies led to the tradition that 'they are born of Chhinlung'. Later writers also followed upon this track. Noteworthy among them are those of Vanchhunga, Zatluanga and K. Zawla (K. Zawla, p.57). Among these, K Zawla went a step further by making the proposition that Chhinlung could have been the name of the Chinese emperor, Ch'ienlung. Lunghnema suggests this migration to have started in 500B.C. in the Chinese north-western border of Tibet. (V. Lunghnema, p.29). On this Sangkima gives a measured observation that the striking affinity of the Mizo with the people of the southern part of China may suggest a common ancestor with the Mizo. (Sangkima, p.35). He held that the southern part of China particularly Sze-chwan, Yunnan, Kwei-chow provinces, in a wider sense the entire fringes of the eastern perimeter of the plateau between Kansu and Burma may be considered as the original home of the Mizo and other tribes of North East India as a whole. He also makes an observation that Chhinlung may refer to the first Emperor of China, the builder of the Great Wall of China.

As clearly indicated by the writing of these scholars, there has been a strong tendency to placate Mizo ancestry with China. In their attempt to contextualize Chhinlung, some of them seem to have ventilated outright figments of imagination while others have. In the absence of any real authentic texts these ideas have gained a certain amount of popularity. They have also evoked response from various writers who have interjected on these suggestions. Remarking on the suggestion that Chhinlung is the Great Wall itself, Vanlalchhuanawma, in expressing his doubt, states that the most feasible interpretation of the theory may be that it represents a hole as a passage at the Great Wall of China through which the oppressed sections of the society left the country in secret. However, the writer does not try to contradict the idea that China was the original home of the Mizo.

As presented above, following upon the belief of the historicity of Chhinlung, many local writers have made a projection of a migration of the Mizo ancestors and that the migration started from China. However, disappointingly, beyond this point, they have had nothing to show. Most important is the fact that they have not established any tangible linkage of the Mizo with China. On the contrary, as with the interest that this matter has evoked, it may be

worthwhile to make a deeper investigation of this supposition and try to relate their ideas within the framework of authentic historical texts.

Historical evidence abounds with China being the source of human population and their exit from there to other hinterlands. These movements of people from China from very early times must have been propelled for different reasons at different times. However, the memories of having suffered from the efforts of Shih Huangdi in empire building lingered with some people. Fitz Gerald observes the living memory of the terror of that forced labour as follows

“If the Scholars of succeeding century have cursed the name of the first Emperor for burning the books, popular tradition has held this memory in undying hatred for building the Wall. Even today, after more than 2000 years the people repeat that a million men perished at the task, and every stone cost a human life.” (Fitz Gerald, p.140).

The memory of the terror of the event for the building of the Great Wall seems to have been shared by the fleeing people into Southeast Asia. In Burma, the tale of that forced labour is still kept alive and retold as if it had happened locally (Than Tun, p.145). Thus is on this that the ancestors of the Mizo have close affinity with their close neighbours. The Mizo folklore of Chhinlung as already mentioned is believed by many, to be a hazy memory of disruption in the distant past. Tagged to this is a tendency to assume that Chhinlung is in some way related to the Great Wall of China. If we accept this premise, the folk memory of the Mizo would take back its ancestry as far back as the beginning of the Chin Dynasty in China.

However, within the context of the present ethnic identity ascribed to them, and in the framework of literature, the history of the Mizo can hardly be traced back beyond a few hundred years. The problems arise due to the difficulty or impossibility of establishing a connection with any group of people who figure in the earlier centuries in chronicles. On account of this, in order to reach back to a somewhat tangible past, it would be by placating them with the broader group they are related to. Scholars have classified and put the Mizo and their cognate clans under the Tibeto-Burman tribe in terms of linguistic affiliation. As a Tibeto-Burman tribe, the history of the Burman in general was related to Tibet. Therefore, the earliest historical migration of the Mizo ancestors may be studied against the distant but distinctive landscape on the canvas depicting the beginning, migration, and branching out and dispersion of the Tibeto-Burman. In following with this, we can configure the rough contours of the distant past of the progenitors of the Mizo and the long process of migration that brought them to the Chin Hills in Burma.

The Tibeto-Burman comprises one of the largest groups of people who were obliged to move out of China in historical times. In the process of their migration there was a constant process of branching and forming of new groups. The initial process may be presented as stated below:

The Tibeto-Burman stream left the Yangtze and Hwang-Ho basins in the westerly direction, breaking into several branches of which one reached Tibet, and another turned south and overran Burma in three main streams, Kuki-Chin, Pyu-Burmese and Lolo. The Kuki-Chin stream taking the line of the Irrawaddy and Chindwin, eventually distributed itself along the mountains down the whole length of Indo-Burma border areas and of Burma on its western side. The Lolo took the Mekong and Salween routes, and were found

principally in China; and it had entered only the extreme eastern edge of what is now called Burma, being represented down the northeast frontier by scattered communities of Lisu, Lahu, Kawi, Kaw and Ako. The major part of the Tibeto-Burman waves, however, took the central or Irrawaddy route during the early part of Christian era (GM Enriques, p. 9).

As far as the reason for these migrations is concerned, the underlying cause has been beautifully conceptualized by Eric Wolfe. According to him –

“The advance of irrigation agriculture in eastern and southern Asia displaced people employing less intensive modes of cultivation. Intensive cultivation in India pressed against hill tribes engaged in slash and burn agriculture, such as the Mundas and the Araons of Bihar. In China the Han people assumed their historical identity as their irrigation-based political economy developed after 700 B.C. To the south of them were “non-barbarians” –Mong (Miao), Yu Mien (Yao), and Tai speakers. As the Han advanced across the Yangtze River into “barbarian” territory, they incorporated some of the groups with agricultural and political patterns similar to their own, while pushing back the slash and burn cultivators into more mountainous or inhospitable regions. Elsewhere the migratory cultivators withdrew to inaccessible hinterlands” (Eric Wolfe, p.30).

From eastern Tibet, Tibeto-Burman people followed several rivers like Brahmaputra, Yangtze, Irrawaddy and Chindwin inside Burma, Salween and Mekong in the Yunnan province. According to F.K. Lehman, among the Tibeto-Burman, the ancestors of the Mizo, moved south-westward on the line of Irrawaddy and Chindwin and disbursed along the mountainous regions of Indo-Burma and of Burma on its western side. And while entering the region they came from the north to the southern valley areas of Chindwin River and then stopped by the Bay of Bengal before turning to the north again. (Frayer, p.13). When they reached present day Burma, the Chin-Mizo-Kuki groups were separated from the proper Burman. Here again we quote Lehman:

“Ethnic and linguistic differentiation certainly existed at an early period. The ancestors of the Chin and of the Burmans must have been distinct from each other even before they first appeared in Burma. Undoubtedly, these various ancestral groups were descended in part from groups immigrating into Burma, starting about the Christian era. But it is also probable that some of these groups were in Burma in the remote past, long before the date indicated by any historical evidence” (FK Lehman, p.12).

Settlement in Kabaw Valley of Burma

According to F.K. Lehman, among the Tibeto-Burman, the ancestors of the Mizo, Kuki-Chin moved south-westward on the line of Irrawaddy and Chindwin by around 8th century A.D. and disbursed along the mountainous regions of Indo-Burma and of Burma on its western side. It is very likely that from the Chindwin plain the ancestors of the Mizo migrated westward towards the Kabaw Valley of Burma. It is located in the Sagaing Division of western Burma and within it there are Kalembo and Tamu townships in which there are still sizeable numbers of the Mizo in the present day. It is apparent that, while living in Kabaw Valley, the Mizo had a close relation with the Burmese. This is clearly indicated by the similarities between many games, musical instruments, dresses and customs such as throwing of quoits, gauntlet, wrestling. *Kawl* is a Mizo word for

Burmese and this word occurs in many goods and use items of the Mizo tribes. Some food items which refers to Burmese are *kawlbahra* (sweet yam), *kawlhai* (a type of mango), *kawlthei*, (guava) *kawlsinhlu* (a variant of Indian fig). Use items which carry the word are *kawlkhuan* (a kind of drum), *kawlchhuak* (designating goods of foreign product), *kawlhnam* (sword), *kawlhre* (a kind of axe), *kawltu* (a type of hoe) *kawlfung*, *kawlhren*, *kawlper*, etc. (Lalrinmawia, p.46).

It is important to note that the prefixing of many words with *Kawl* clearly indicates that while living close to the Burmese, the ancestors of the Mizo were set apart from the Burmese. The work *Kawl* as indicating Burmese is shared by the many tribes in the surrounding areas outside the boundary of the state of Mizoram today. This and the fact that these neighbouring tribes have very close linguistic and cultural traits and traditions with the Mizo indicate that they had a common origin. As an example of the shared cultural baggage, folk stories that are traced back to the Kabaw valley settlement are retained by these groups till today. Stories such as *Liandova Unau*, *Tlingi leh Ngama*, *Tuilet leh Ngaitei*, *Thlanrawkpa Khuangchawi*, *Chhura*, *Chawngchilhi*, *Mura*, are a prime example of this shared tradition (Dr. Lalthanliana, p.95).

Hmar tradition also tells about settlement in the Kabaw Valley – when they entered into Kabaw Valley a banyan tree was planted by the chief, Luopui. There was a *Reng lal* called Chonhmang, he choose to administer the southern, northern and central areas. Chiefs Lersia was assigned to rule the south, Zingthloa in the north and Luopuia in the central. The settlement was memorized in one folksong:

Sima Lersi, hmarah Zingthlo,
Khawma laia Luaopui;
Luopuiin lenboun a phun,
Thlanga pualrangin tlan e. (Hranglien Songate, p. 36)

In the south is Lersi, in the north is Zingthlo
 In the centre is Luopui
 Luopui planted lenbuong (a tree)
 Birds eat the fruit.

Ecology of Burma circa 1283-1700

There are various narrations in Mizo tradition of their departure from the Kabaw valley. Inference of these traditions suggests that the ancestors of the Mizo did not form a single or cohesive group at that time. Departure from this place seems to have been prompted at different times arising generally out of the political unrest due to the tussle between the Burmans, the Shan, Chinese and the Manipuri kings. A brief account of these conflicts may be given here. After the Mongol invasion of Burma in 1283 A.D. many wars were fought between the Chinese and the Burmese for possession of the Pong Kingdom. In 1339 the era of war with China and the Pong was started in which the Chinese were defeated by the Pong rulers in 1343 and 1393 while the reverse happened in 1462 and 1448 when the Chinese were victorious. In 1562 king of Pegu defeated the Mongu (Pong) kingdom. In 1582 the Chinese invaded Mungmau (Pong) and in 1604 China conquered it permanently. Manipur chronicle also mentions the war between the Shan and several Manipur kings for the possession of Kabaw Valley. In 1565 Mungyamba, king of Manipur, invaded the eastern part of Kabaw valley resulting in the capture of the

Shan ruler of Mungyang along with five chiefs including two Sawbwa, several guns, and a golden statue of a rooster. During the reign of Khagemba (1597-1652), several Shan principalities in Kabaw-Samjok, Kyang, and Khambat (Khampat) were annexed. Khagemba followed through with a series of invasions-the Shan state of Kyang (in 1602) where 177 prisoners were captured; Kyang in 1624 and 1647AD, in 1607 Samsok, and Thangdut and captured 60 prisoners, Kyang in 1614 resulting in the capture of a white horse called Maramba; in 1628 Shan principality and took booty of cattle and buffalo. On the other hand, it is recorded that during the last part of his reign there were two invasion from Burma made on the eastern part of Kabaw valley. During his reign, Garibaniwaza (1709-1748), also led many military expeditions against Kabaw valley and against the surrounding hill tribes. He sacked Sagain (Ava) in 1738. Such was the state of affairs that Kabaw valley was the battled field among the Burmese, Chinese and the Meitei (Singkhokai, p. 124).

Departure from Kabaw Valley

Different clan legends tell different stories relating to the cause of migration from the plains. The following are the main traditions that folk tradition has maintained in so far as they were related to this place is concerned.

The Khampat tradition

In order to understand the Mizo Migration into the hills from the plains of Burma, it is imperative to give the political development in the Kabaw valley which played a significant role to the Mizo migration. We may conceptualize from the words of James Scott, he says, "Expanding kingdoms have forced threatened population to chose between absorption and resistance. When the threatened population was itself organized into state form, resistance might well take the shape of military confrontation. If defeated, the vanquished are absorbed or migrate elsewhere. Where the population under threat is stateless, its choices typically boil down to absorption or flight, the latter often accompanied by rearguard skirmishes and raids" (James C, Scott, p.130)

After the Mongol retreat from Burma in 1301, the Shans overran the whole north of upper Burma, east and west of Irrawaddy down to the walls of Myedu on the upper Mu and Tagaung on the Irrawaddy. In 1364, they sacked the twin capitals of Sagaing and Pinya. Regarding this case, Luce states that the power contest between the Ava house and the Shans must have broken up the peace of Chindwin Valley and forced the Zos (Mizo) to take refuge in the Chin Hills.(GH Luce, p.26). The dispersal from the Kabaw Valley was not concerted effort rather it happened at various period of time by different groups. The approximate date of their arrival at the Chin Hills of Burma may be put as early 14th century A.D because they had been found in the Tripura kingdom during the reign of Raja Chachag at the beginning of the 16th century. They were the advanced groups commonly called the Old Kuki by the British administrators. Then the sixteenth century A.D. appears to be the most likely date of the Tedim of Zo (present dwellers of Chin Hills of Burma) migration to the present hills and is found to coincide with the genealogy of Ciimnuai capital (Singhawkai, p.16). Even Soppitt brings the date to the middle of the 16th century. Professor Luce estimates the Zo migration during the sixteenth century.

In the context of Mizo migration from the Kabaw Valley, the Mizo insistently claim that Khampat, some forty miles to the north of the present Kalemyo, was once their capital. According to the tradition they were compelled to leave Khampat due to two reasons; cruelty of the chief and famine. At this time, a great famine over-ran the country and thousands of people died. Then a cruel chief ruled over them; and this precipitated their decision to leave the land. Before they left, they planted a banyan sapling at Khampat and took a pledge in front of their Burmese neighbours that they would return to Khampat, their permanent home, when the sapling had grown into a tree and its hanging roots had turned into new stems (LB Thanga, p.3). Tradition alludes that they emigrated from Kabaw Valley of Khampat into two groups; one went north and the other south-west, through which they entered into India.

The circumstances under which the Mizo ancestors left Khampat could be related to the incident that befell this place as narrated in the Pong Chronicle. Khampat town was an important Shan district headquarter and a vassal seat. The Pong chronicle recorded the destruction of Khampat town and the flight of the chief and the inhabitants who were dependents or subjects of the Pong kingdom. According to this chronicle, Soohoongkhum, king of Pong, sent an embassy headed by a Shan nobleman called Chonglanghiee to the reigning prince of Manipur, Kyamba, in the year 1474 A.D., requesting a daughter in marriage. In the following year, the Manipur princess left Manipur for Pong, escorted by Chowlanghiee. On reaching Sekmo hill, the convoy was attacked, and the princess was carried off by the Raja of Khampat, who had been lying in wait at the foot of the hill for this purpose, which a chosen band of followers. The Pong noble, Chowlanghiee managed to escape, and on reaching Mongmaorong he related the fate of the princess to the king. Measures were taken immediately. The king of Pong crossed the Chindwin River with a considerable force, entering the Kabaw valley, and they were joined by the Manipuri chief with his men. They besieged Khampat fort, which, taken after an obstinate defense, forcing the Khampat Rajah to flee southward on a spotted elephant. The same story is corroborated by the Manipur Chronicle. It goes as follows:

“About 1475 AD. The strength and influence of Manipur state increased to a considerable extent. The ruler of Pong prepared to marry a daughter of the king of Manipur. On her way to Pong, she was carried off by the Raja forces of Pong and Manipur.” (J. Roy, p.29)

Mizo tradition speaks about an old song described how they planted a banyan tree at Khampat before they left the town and how they longed to have opportunity of gathering again under that tree in future. The song goes;

*Kan phun Bungpi ai kan san na,
Mi khawihloh, sa khawih loh tein;
Thangin lian la, I tang zar piallel a zam tikah,
Seifaten vangkhua rawn din leh nang e* (LB Thanga, p.134).

Our banyan tree stands for our prophecy,
Without inflicting harm on it by men and animal,
Grown up under the protection of the Supreme Being;
Wait until earth is touched by your branches,
That shall be the time to restore our principal town of the past.

From this song, it is clear that the Mizo did not leave Khampat of their own choosing, rather, they were forced to leave. The song expresses the dearness they held for the town and their formal and solemn commitment to return to this homeland – even be it till the banyan tree, which they planted in solemn oath, grew and spread branches that touched the ground. According to K.Zawla, this departure from Khampat town has been dated - 1463, which is very close to the year 1475, when the Meithei under Raja Kyamba combined with the Pong (Shan) of Mogaung fought and overthrew the Shan Sawbwa of Khampat.

The Mizo tradition which mentions Khampat as populated by them needs a careful investigation. The tradition has been fostered by the Mizo as handed to them by Buddhist monks in Burma at a recent date. ‘Khampat’ is not a Mizo word. The literal meaning of the term is derived from two ‘Shan’ or ‘Tai-Chinese’ words, (‘Kham’ is gold and ‘Pat’ is necklace) so ‘Khampat’ means gold-necklace. It is difficult as to the exact nature of association that the Mizo ancestors had with this place. It is likely that the Mizo were the subject of the Pong/Shan king in the Khampat areas. However, some credibility may be given to this tradition as the planting of banyan tree was a practice of Mizo traditional society. The banyan tree, is very closely associated with Mizo culture, and Mizo were very proud to have evergreen banyan trees growing on their ritual grounds or located near a ‘*thlan*’ or memorial stone.

The dispersal from the Kabaw Valley towards the present Mizoram does not seem to have been concerted or in unison, rather it was a dispersal of different groups and seemingly a random scattering in different directions, and at different times. Thus, the second half of the 14th century may be considered as the period when the ancestors of the Mizo began their migration from Kabaw valley. Little can be gleaned of their life in the Kabaw Valley, from the little information we have so far, we can only infer that the Mizo, while in Burma enjoyed some of the fringe benefits of the Burmese civilization without being assimilated by it. While some process of integration with the Burmese was ongoing the series of chain reaction resulting from Shan, Burman, Meitei, military expeditions must have made these tribes leave Burma.

In conclusion, the Mizo story of Chhinlung has pointed their early antecedents inside China. Since the term. Mizo’ came in a very late period, it is not possible to find out reference of their name in the early period. By observing the general migration route of the Tibeto-Burman group and the general ecology of China and Burma in historical times, they were migrated from China via Burma to the present Mizoram of India.

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