

Gender and Memoirs: Sources for Women's History in Mizoram

Hmingthanzuali

Assistant Professor of History & Ethnography, Mizoram University

Abstract: *Historical texts in Mizoram primarily focus on the British encounter with the Mizos in the late 19th century, the social and cultural changes brought by colonizers and Christian missionaries, and the socio-political history during the post-colonial period known as Rambuai. Authors rely on official sources from archives, newspapers, letters, and texts from colonizers, missionaries, and ethnic leaders (for Rambuai history), as well as secondary sources by indigenous and mainstream Indian male writers. However, there is a lack of published texts by women, with many of their texts and memories remaining undocumented. This paper aims to examine diaries and written manuscripts of women as sources of evidence for studying women's agency in Mizoram's historical epochs. Through these memoirs, the paper captures women's voices and perspectives on the 'civilizing' projects of Christian missionaries during the colonial period and the history of Rambuai in the post-colonial periods, which are dominant topics in Mizo's historical discourse.*

Keywords: Memoirs, Diaries, "Natives", "Civilized", Women's Agency

Women's history as an established area of discourse concerns the recovery of history writings about and by women. Feminist historians have also attempted to showcase what women contributed as active agents in the making of history. However, the lack of easily accessible written records by women presents a challenge for historians studying women's lives in the past. To address this issue, feminist historians have proposed including texts and testimonies by women as historical sources to promote discourse on women's history.¹

While it is often assumed that women were less active in producing historical records than men, there are a few surviving texts written by women that record their experiences as witnesses of important historical events. To conduct a more gendered historical analysis, personal records such as diaries, autobiographies, and memoirs have been examined as

sources for the study of women in history. In this paper, I argue that we can use such personal documents as sources for the history of women and gender in Mizoram.

Historical texts in Mizoram primarily focus on the British encounter with the Mizos from the late 19th to the early 20th centuries, the social and cultural changes brought by colonizers and Christian missionaries, and the socio-political history during the post-colonial period known as *Rambuai*.² Authors rely on official sources from archives, newspapers, letters, and texts produced by British colonizers, missionaries, and elite male political leaders (for *Rambuai* history), as well as secondary sources by 'native' and other Indian writers. However, these sources are predominantly written by men and provide limited information about women's issues and facts. Texts and documents produced by women are rarely consulted. This paper aims to examine diaries and written memoirs of women i.e. Mawii's Story in the 1950's written by Imogen Roberts and prison diaries and notebooks of B. Vanlalzari (hereafter Zari). Zari's writings were compiled and published recently, but Imogen's work has remained unpublished. Through these memoirs, my paper captures women's voices, contributions and perspectives during the colonial period and the history of *Rambuai* in the post-colonial period, the two dominant discussed themes and events in Mizo historical discourse.

Missionary Writings in Mizoram

Historical writing of Mizoram remains incomplete without referring to the works of the British authors as it was only from the colonial intervention that the Mizos began to have written documents of their past. While the records of military expeditions, administrative plans and ethnographical reports are mainly produced by the colonizers, the missionaries' available works mainly consist of reports on medicines and the health care system, education and the growth of the church. Given that the 'act of writing' in Lushai hills³ (the then Mizoram), as elsewhere, was used as an important tool for colonization, the majority of the earlier published texts were produced by British colonial officers. All these officers were white males, some of whom were often accompanied by their wives during their tenures as administrative officials. However, the written texts or memoirs of these women have not yet been explored; leading us to assume that they have not documented their experiences. There is a widely held belief that the expansion of European imperialism, particularly in Asia and Africa, during the nineteenth century was closely linked to the Protestant missionary project. The mission aimed to save the 'heathens' of these regions by convincing them to embrace the 'redeeming' message of the gospel.⁴ In fact the missionaries were often regarded as agents of colonial government for converting the heathen to Christianity, which had come to be regarded as an imperialist religion and for the common interest they had shared in

providing western education and medicine to the 'natives.' In the case of Lushai Hills, these two projects were mostly carried on by the missionaries and hence their Christianizing mission was inextricably intertwined with the colonial civilizing mission. This project enabled missionaries to present themselves as 'saviours' of the 'natives' and made their 'civilizing' project more favourable than the customs and practices of the latter. This perception is projected in the first year's work report of Rev. DE Jones, the Welsh Presbyterian missionary who worked in the field in northern Lushai Hills:

'...By means of schools, three of which have already been established in the country, we hope that many will be able to read by the time the translations of the Gospels and Acts arrive...The white man is received with enthusiasm in the distant villages, and scores of young people come out to meet him... Wherever we go, and the more we hear of the customs, habits and lives of the people, the more are we convinced of their need of the saviour.'⁵

Unlike the colonial enterprises, the missionizing projects of the two missionary societies in the Lushai Hills i.e. London Baptist Missionary Society and Presbyterian Church of Wales did not completely remain male-centred. While the majority of the missionaries were married couples, single lady missionaries were employed to look after female education and medicinal works. Hence, missionaries' reports consist of a number of mission reports given by these female missionaries. These missionaries during their stay in or after they left the country produced written pieces of their mission experiences in the form of diaries, reports, letters, memoirs, histories, ethnographies, grammar and dictionaries. While many of these texts were published in England, most of them were republished by the Baptist Church of Mizoram and Synod Publication Board in Mizoram and the Asiatic Society of Bengal. Interestingly, there are almost an equal number of published memoirs on experiences by males and females. However, the majority of secondary texts created by local writers and scholars have largely disregarded the works authored by women. Most cited texts are the works of J.H Lorrain (Baptist Missionary Society in South Lushai Hills), J. M Lloyd (Welsh Presbyterian Church in North Lushai Hills) and R.A Lorrain (Lakher Pioneer Mission in Maryland). Whether it is in the form of official reports or published texts, 'these texts became the foundational and influential part of the 'imperial archive.'⁶

So far there are five published texts written by female missionaries such as - E Chapman's & M Clark's *Mizo Miracle*, May Bounds's & Gwladys M. Evan's *Medical Mission to Mizoram: The story of two nursing sister in third world Christian hospital*, Dorothy Glover's *Set on a High Hill*, Gwen Rees Roberts's *Memories of Mizoram: Recollections and Reflections*; Margret Jones's *It Came, To Pass: An autobiography*. Excluding the autobiography of Margaret Jones, all the above-mentioned authors are single lady missionaries employed as

teachers and nurses in Lushai Hills whose works were then republished in India. Even though the published church records i.e., *Reports by Missionaries of Baptist Missionary Society 1901-1938* (published by Mizoram Gospel Centenary Committee, Baptist Church of Mizoram in 1993) and *Reports of the Foreign Mission of The Presbyterian Church of Wales on Mizoram 1894-1957*, consist of a few reports given by female missionaries, the published memoirs of female missionaries provided more detailed reports on their missions concerning female education, women and health care system and the contributions made by the female missionaries as well as the native women. Unlike male missionaries whose writings merely represent 'white men saving brown women from brown men,'⁷ female missionary writings hardly ever fail to represent 'native' women's agency in 'civilizing' the Lushai Hills.

Imogen Roberts's *Mawii's Story In the 1950's*

Imogen Roberts, also known as Dorothy Imogen Puleston Roberts, worked as a missionary nurse at Durtlang Hospital in the Lushai Hills from 1947 to 1952 under the Wales Presbyterian Mission Field. During her time there, she was given the Mizo name Pi Rovi. Imogen received nursing training in Bradford and studied theology at the Bible College in Birkenhead.⁸

In her manuscript, Imogen recounts her experiences as a missionary nurse through the story of Mawii, a young Mizo girl from Chungpui village. Mawii attended nursing school at the Welsh Presbyterian Hospital in Durtlang during the 1950s. Imogen wrote this memoir by drawing from the bedtime story that she used to tell her two sons, John (4 years old) and Peter (2 years old), presumably in the late 1950s. Afterwards, she compiled the story and finished the manuscript in May 2003. The manuscript was divided into 15 chapters, with each chapter containing 3 to 5 pages on A4 size paper.

Why Don't They Leave Us Alone? - Imperial Projects of the Missionaries

At the beginning of the story, Imogen brings up the Western notion of 'civilizing' nature by promoting cleanliness in medical missions. Mawii, a young Mizo village girl, experienced this new and unfamiliar lifestyle during her nursing school days at Durtlang. Despite being taught that cleaning was an essential part of nursing hygiene, Mawii often questioned its relevance to her training. Cleaning duties such as dusting, sweeping, and preparing sterile trays for instruments were the first tasks assigned to students at the nursing school.⁹ While Mawii was aware that cleaning was often mentioned in the nursing lecture on hygiene, Imogen notes that she would frequently mutter to herself, wondering 'What 'cleaning' has to do with nursing training?' and 'Why don't they leave us alone?'¹⁰ According to Imogen, the book's goal is to address Mawii's persistent doubt about why the missionaries did not leave them alone, as she wrote, 'It takes most of this story to answer her question... As you read this story, you will learn how

Mawii found the answer to that question.¹¹ Based on the answer she provided to Mawii's question Imogen explains the validation of the imperial missionary project.

Mawii's Story: Information on Mizo women's life and experiences

The 'imperial archive' often utilizes images of Mizo women to justify their 'civilizing project,' essentializing them alongside other colonized women as being confined to a 'pitiful' position in the domestic realm due to their traditional customs. Hence, like other colonial texts on women, 'the centrality of the private sphere'¹² to women's lives is reflected in *Mawii's Story*. In this story, Imogen also depicts the busy task of Mizo women in domestic space:

Each morning the girls went down a narrow path through the bushes, each with a bamboo basket, supported by a band across her forehead. They were on their way to collect wood for the cooking fires... Little by little, year by year, all their baskets would be filled more and more with thicker and longer pieces of wood...Then up the mountain path, they went back to their homes, only to return down the slopes to fill their bamboo containers with water...They were happy girls, chattering, laughing and usually full of hope for their future. None complained!¹³

Mentions have often been made in most of the official reports when schools for girls were introduced in the hills in the first decade of the 20th century that Mizo parents were reluctant to send their girl child in sending to schools. Not only did men oppose women's entry to school, but some women also strongly opposed female education. The four decades since then however seemed to have seen the changing patriarchal attitude as the chief of Chungpui village and his elders in *Mawii's Story* were very supportive in establishing schools for girls in their village. Unlike other imperial writers, whose central focus is on women and their 'pitiful' lives, Imogen's book portrays the trajectory and processes of changes in women's life and their outlooks. Though women and girls were always premised to have blindly internalized patriarchal attitudes, the story also reflected the desires and aspirations of women and girls in accessing educational knowledge as illustrated in the second chapter:

Mawii's friends often said: "Yes, our greatest desire is that we shall go to school and for that to happen a SCHOOL must come to CHUNGPUI"-they all agreed, and in the fourth chapter it is mentioned that Mawii had no other desire apart from her longing to learn reading and writing.

At the same time, the conversation between Mawii and her friends also tells us their aspiration to challenge patriarchal domination as the story goes:

'If only there was a school in the village! The girls did not consider who would do it or how the wood and the water would be carried to their homes. "The boys could do it", one girl said.'

The story reflects the significant role of women in the private sphere,

offering valuable insights into motherhood, marriage, domestic life, childrearing, and more. It also highlights how the societal emphasis on traditional notions of womanhood was deeply ingrained in women themselves as the story continues:

At night, tucked in her little bed, she thought of HOME. How were her sisters managing with the getting of wood and water without her help?! Who would help her mother with the baby? Was her mother able to make the 'Puan' she had left unfinished, which was to be an everyday Puan, green and white? But what about her Wedding-Puan, she wished she had completed it. Was she right to have left Chungpui and come away like this? She had only been home once on holiday. Her training was taking a long time, longer than she had thought in fact. She worried but tried not to. How else could she achieve her ambition?

But for the Mizo woman, receiving educational knowledge provided by the missionaries saved her from the difficult tasks of domestic responsibilities as:

'She decided at the end of each time of worrying that she had done the best thing by coming to Durtlang Hospital to train as a nurse.'

Mawii's Story, written by a missionary nurse, primarily explores the medical missions conducted by missionary nurses and a lady doctor named Gwyneth Roberts (Pi Puii) for the people of Mizoram. This aspect of their work is seldom found in other missionary literature. During the early 20th century, tuberculosis (TB) was considered the most infectious and incurable disease in the Lushai hills. So the story also consists of the account of the medical tour through which an important discovery of TB was made at some distant villages. She specifically cited the speedy recovery of the two female patients Rovi and Chawli from TB, which tells us that missionaries could rapidly win the hearts of the natives through their faith in miracles performed by the women medical missionaries:

'...people asked when having heard a rumour that TB was curable, they arrived in Durtlang hospital. "How is it?" they asked each other. Sometimes, when on their way to Aizawl travellers made it their business to stop for a while in Durtlang to talk to those who knew the truth about the good news of TB treatment. "It is the medicine they were given, as well as the Open air treatment that is curing them", they said. "Wonderful, a miracle!" was agreed by all.'¹⁴

Here, the legitimization of the civilizing project of the missionaries is also reflected as the story goes:

"Good' said Mawii, deciding that perhaps this nursing of TB by the missionaries by the pale one might be part of the answer to her question, Why don't they leave us alone?'¹⁵

However, in all the medical tours, missionary doctors and nurses were always accompanied by trained Mizo nurses. When the whole village gathered to welcome them, men, women, children and babies carried by

their mothers to receive medical treatment from the missionaries, the story informs us that Mawii, who assisted the missionaries, was not surprised because;

'She knew something of the great need in her country therefore she felt so glad to accompany the missionary nursing sister-the Pale One-on this occasion and on every other time she had been asked to help in this way.'¹⁶

Alongside the medical assistance, *Mawii's story* also reflects the active role student nurses played in giving the messages of the Gospel through the account of an orphan boy named Lama who was hospitalized at Durtlang. The boy was given a picture book about the life of Jesus Christ. Mawii and the other two nurses explained to Lama the story of Jesus given in the picture book and met together to pray for him so that God would grant His Holy Spirit to touch him.¹⁷

In short, Mawii's story depicts the figure of a 'new Mizo woman' who was enlightened to enter a 'civilized' world. It was through the gospel of Jesus Christ that she received the wisdom and knowledge that enabled her to achieve her desire to provide medical care and impart educational knowledge to her own village. This, in turn, answers her question, 'Why did the missionaries not leave them alone?' that in fact, reveals the successful Christianizing mission of the Welsh missionaries in the Lushai hills.

Additionally, the story also showcases how 'native' women responded to the missionaries' efforts to 'civilize' and Christianize the people of the Lushai Hills. In contrast to the male missionaries' accounts that primarily highlight their success in saving the 'heathens', particularly 'native' women, from traditional 'savage' practices, the story reveals that the 'native' women were not mere bystanders in the missionizing project. Instead, they actively participated in assisting the missionaries, contributing to the successful implementation of the medical and Christian missions in the Lushai Hills.

Gender And History Writing in Post-Colonial Times

After the colonizers left the country, Mizoram, like another part of India's North Eastern region, experienced a long twenty years of troubles (*Rambuai*) or conflict with the Indian nation-state. As a result, the majority of historical writings produced in Mizoram during the post-colonial period dealt with the history of nationalist movements fought by the Mizo National Front (MNF) party. Most of these writings focus on the experiences of the MNF leaders and a few members of the Mizo national army in the guerilla struggle, and the role of the church leaders in the peace process. Aside from these, most of the texts have discussed atrocities committed by the Indian security forces such as village groupings, killings of innocent civilians raping of women and girls, and so on. Moreover, writings on *Rambuai* for many years relied on personal accounts of the MNF leaders and official documents recorded by the government and the church. For this reason, *Rambuai* literature by and large has consisted of 'elite male stories' whereas

little is known about the contribution, voices and life stories of other groups of people involved in the war.

Denoting the urgent need to recollect oral materials in revisiting *Rambuai* history, Willem van Schendel considers that anyone over 40 years of age will have memories of that period as the war ended only some three decades ago.¹⁸ The utilization of oral interviews and written memoirs in scholarly research has produced a new genre of writings in the recovery of disregarded voices in *Rambuai* history. While certain attention has been given to the condition of women and the role they played in the war, this new scholarly approach still underplays the real voices of many women.

The striking unevenness in the archives and literature of *Rambuai* is 'their gendered nature and the relative absence of female-produced texts'.¹⁹ The majority of the produced texts on *Rambuai* have been written by MNF (male) leaders and ex-(male) volunteers. Until today, only a few women volunteers produced their memoirs on the *Rambuai* period in published texts. The most recent published work by women is B. Vanlalzari's *Zari Jail Diary* (2022). Unlike other writers, B. Vanlalzari (hereafter Zari) preserved her memories based on a daily log of her experiences and various documents related to her case. It has provided us an intimate archive of women's personal accounts and memories which are less likely to appear in official discourse on *Rambuai*.

Zari's Diaries & Prison Notebook

During the *Rambuai* period, Zari was the sole female prisoner who received a life sentence. She was accused of being involved in the conspiracy to assassinate the Inspector General of Police (IGP) in Aizawl on 13th January 1975. Zari was sentenced to life imprisonment under Sections 121/121A/122/123 and 120B/302/109/34 of the Indian Penal Code.²⁰ Despite the limited number of recovered diaries related to the *Rambuai*, Zari was one among the few prisoners who diligently maintained diaries to detail her incarcerated life in different jails at Aizawl (Mizoram), Tezpur and Guwahati in Assam.

Zari's first notebook served as an autobiographical account, while her second notebook functioned as a supplementary diary, allowing her to record in-depth details of her daily life and experiences that couldn't be accommodated in her smaller diaries.²¹ In addition to these two notebooks, she consistently maintained her diaries from January 17, 1977, when she departed Aizawl for Tezpur Jail, until January 8, 1980.

In 1980, the Mizo Students' Union, Shillong published a text titled *Hnam Lungphum* which consisted of a few notes on Zari and her incarcerated life.²² Again in 1981, a cyclostyled copy of Zari's prison writings was published by the Mizo Students' Union in Shillong, Meghalaya. It was titled *Zari Diary*. Derived from her initial notebook, the publication was released in two volumes, each consisting of slightly over 10 pages. Eventually, she was

forgotten and her story had been only retold through rumours. Hardly anyone remembers the existence of the two volumes.²³ Excluding the first notebook, Zari had never shared the original copies of her prison diaries and her second notebook. In 2017, she was invited to contribute her writings on her experiences about *Rambuai* in *Documents of Mizo National Front: Documentary of Mizoram War of Independence 1966-1986*. In this article, Zari briefly wrote about the tragic lives she had gone through during her incarceration. This was the first published written piece of Zari after thirty-five years of the cyclostyled Mizo Students' Union publication. After a long wait of forty years, 'The Prison Writings of Zari' was made accessible for public reading with the publication of B. Vanlalzari's *Zari Jail Diary* in July 2022, which I jointly edited with C. Lalawmpuia Vanchiau. It was only from this publication that Zari is now again recognized by her people not merely as a 'victim' but also as a political actor during the *Rambuai* period.

Diaries and notebooks as historical sources for Mizo women:

Atrocities and resistance are the main themes generally focused on in *Rambuai* history. Studies on atrocities mainly deal with the sufferings of innocent civilians particularly the sexual victimization of women under the Armed Forces Special Power Act of 1958. There is a common belief that imprisoned women are at least three times more likely than imprisoned men to report experiencing physical or sexual abuse before their incarceration.²⁴ The traumatic memories of physical and mental abuse also remain central in Zari's prison writings. Her first diary entry in prison as well as her first notes on prison manuscript mainly dealt with the physical torture she had suffered on the first night of her imprisonment:

After arriving at Mt Brigade where the 9th JAK Battalion was stationed, I was confined to a dimly lit room where I waited for interrogations. The questions were always asked in an aggressive manner, and no matter what response I gave, it was met with a forceful slap...They would even go as far as pointing their guns at me and using them to make me turn around...²⁵

Zari's diaries and notebooks not only document her personal experiences in jail but also shed light on the hardships faced by other female inmates who were imprisoned under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA). In Notebook 1, Zari narrates an incident from her memoirs about the torture of a pregnant woman named Neihthangi, a Jail warder by electric shock in Aizawl Jail on July 15, 1975.²⁶

According to feminist historians like Gerda Lerner, 'essentially treating women as mere victims of oppression merely places them in a male-defined conceptual framework: oppressed, victimized by standards and experiences established by men.' Zari's writings also extend beyond narratives of victimization. Instead, her diaries and notebooks reflect her response to being labelled as a sexual 'victim' within the jail by her community. In Notebook 2, dated November 29, 1976, Zari courageously challenges these 'community lies' by stating :

'The physical torture, including bloodshed, constant chaining, and starvation as punishment, along with the life imprisonment, has been incredibly painful. However, what has hurt me the most is the false accusations of sexual promiscuity between me and the prison guards.'²⁷

Zari did not view herself as a victim despite enduring physical assaults. Rather, she saw herself as an 'actor' whom the security officers both respected and feared during her time in jail.²⁸ In her first notebook, Zari concluded by portraying herself as a 'victor' who, with the guidance of God, had emerged triumphant in the battle waged between Mizo and *Vai* (Mainstream Indians) within the confines of the jails; Let the blood spilt of our kinsmen be not in vain but lead the way to harmony among us.

Victory belongs to God! The reason I, a mere woman, have been able to overcome the tremendous torture and resist the lure of temptation is because of the Lord! Praise the Lord.²⁹

The true history of women is the history of their ongoing functioning in the male-male-defined world in their terms.³⁰ Exploring what women did and their agency in the past would only reveal the real history of women. Despite conventional history's failure to acknowledge women's agency, Zari's memoirs reveal the autonomy of women's consciousness and action during the *Rambuai* period. In Notebook 1, she wrote;

'At the age of ten, I had yet to grasp the concept of politics, but I proudly proclaimed that I would become a politician once I completed my education. The deep-seated sentiments and desire to protect our land and nation were always a part of me...I was willing to sacrifice my body and soul for this cause. Fortunately, God deemed me and my family worthy of enduring hardships for the sake of our land and nation.'³¹

Furthermore, Zari often references the significant influence her mother had in instilling a sense of nationalism within her during her time in prison. It was her mother who provided constant encouragement and reminded her that she had been chosen by God for a great responsibility, one that she had not actively sought out.³² To put it briefly, Zari's writings indicate that women during the *Rambuai* era had a nationalist awareness that did not stem from male elite politics but rather existed on its own.

According to feminist historians, simply incorporating women into the existing historical narrative is insufficient to create a meaningful and equitable history.³³ A new methodology that provides alternative sources and approaches is necessary, as the conventional archive is inadequate in addressing the differences between the historical experiences and realities of women and men. In fact, uncovering documents about women is almost impossible using conventional archival methods.

Documents authored by and of women are typically found in private and family archival repositories. I was fortunate enough to obtain these memoirs during my PhD program. While I was able to acquire Imogen's unpublished manuscript from my parents, who visited Wales in 2005, I

obtained Zari's first prison notebook during my doctoral research, and her second notebook and diaries after I joined the university as a teaching faculty. Utilizing the memoirs of these women from two distinct historical periods not only provides new sources for women but also 'guides me through conventional sources.'³⁴ Through Mawii's Story, I was able to verify records on medical tours provided by Reports of the Foreign Mission of the Presbyterian Church of Wales. Zari's diaries allowed me to cross-check the government's report on the assassination of the IGP, DIGP, and SP (CID) dated January 13, 1975, which I obtained from Aizawl DC Record Room. In summary, these memoirs validate the agency of Mizo women who were not peripheral but rather integral to the history of Mizoram.

Notes and References (End Notes)

- 1 Verene Shepherd, Bridget Brereton & Barbara Bailey, *Engendering History: Caribbean Women in Historical Perspective*, Palgrave Macmillan, 1995. p. xi.
- 2 The Mizo National Front (MNF) fought a war of independence against the Indian nation state, which caused political turmoil and chaos in the hills of Mizoram. This conflict lasted for two decades, from 1966 to 1986, and its length and intensity affected almost the entire population. As a result, the region entered a 'period of troubles' which the Mizo people referred to as Rambuai.
- 3 Lusei is a prominent clan within the Mizo community. During the colonial era, the British referred to them as "Lushais". As the Lusei clan was dominant, the term "Lusei/Lushai" was often used interchangeably with "Mizo" in historical records from earlier times. The Lushai Hills region encompassed the present-day state of Mizoram.
- 4 Ian Copland, 'Christianity As An Arm Of An Empire: The Ambiguous Case of India Under the Company, 1813-1858,' *The Historical journal*, 49 (4), 2006. pp 1025-1054.
- 5 *Reports of the Foreign Mission of the Presbyterian Church of Wales on Mizoram 1894-1957*, compiled by Thanzaava, The Synod Literature and Publication Board, 1997, pp. 3-4.
- 6 Anna Johnston, *Missionary Writings and Empire, 1800-1860*, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 3
- 7 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*, eds. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman, Routledge, 2013 p. 93
- 8 D. Ben Rees, *Vehicles of Grace and Hope, (Welsh Missionaries in India 1800 - 1970)*, Willam Carey Library, 2002, pp. 190-191.
- 9 Imogen Roberts, *Mawii's Story in 1950's*, Unpublished Manuscript, 2003. p. 2
- 10 Ibid, p. 2. In this story the 'they' refers to the medical missionaries in Lushai hills.
- 11 Ibid, p. 3.

- 12 Bridget Brereton, 'Gendered Testimonies: Autobiographies, Diaries and Letters by Women as Sources for Caribbean History' *Feminist Review*, 59, 1998, pp. 143-163
- 13 Imogen Roberts, *Mawii's Story in 1950's*, p. 7
- 14 Ibid, p. 46
- 15 Ibid, p. 48
- 16 Ibid, p. 42
- 17 Ibid, p. 35
- 18 William Van Schendel, 'Visual Narratives of the Troubled Times: Mizoram (India) between 1966 and 1986.' in Lalhlimpuii Pachuau & Rosie Vanlalruati Ralte, *Revisiting Rambuai*, LBS Publication, 2019, p. 244.
- 19 Tony Ballantyne, 'Archive, Discipline, State: Power and Knowledge in South Asian Historiography', *New Zealand journal of Asian Studies* 8(1), 2001, pp. 87-105.
- 20 Confidential Report on the assassination of the IGP, DIGP and SP (CID) dated 13th January 1975, Government Record on MNF activities, January, 1975, Aizawl DC Record Room.
- 21 Hmingthanzuali, *Voices Behind Bars: A Mizo Woman's Prison Writings*, Zubaan books, 2021, p. 12
- 22 C. Lalawmpuia Vanchiau & Hmingthanzuali (eds) B. Vanlalzari, *Zari Jail Diary*, Zo Pum Publication, 2022, p. xviii.
- 23 Hmingthanzuali (2021) op.cit, p. 28.
- 24 Margaret Severson, Judy L. Postmus & Marianne Berry, 'Women's Experiences of Victimization and Survival', *The Journal of Sociology and Welfare*, Western Michigan University, 36 (2) 2009, 145-167 pp.
- 25 Hmingthanzuali, 2012, op.cit., p. 19
- 26 C. Lalawmpuia Vanchiau & Hmingthanzuali (eds) B. Vanlalzari, *Zari Jail Diary*, p.25
- 27 Hmingthanzuali, Ibid, p. 18
- 28 Hmingthanzuali, Ibid, p. 26.
- 29 Ibid, p.27
- 30 Gerda Lerner, 'Placing Women in History: Definitions and Challenges,' *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 3 (1/2), 1975, pp. 5-14
- 31 Hmingthanzuali, 2021, op.cit., p. 15
- 32 C. Lalawmpuia Vanchiau & Hmingthanzuali (eds) B. Vanlalzari: *Zari Jail Diary*, Zopum Publication, 2022, p. 21
- 33 Verene Shepherd, Bridget Brereton & Barbara Bailey, 1995. op.cit, p. xii.
- 34 Geraldine Forbes, 'Locating and Preserving Documents: The First Step in Writing Women's History', *Journal of Women's History* 14.4, 2003, pp. 169-178