



Colonized by the Dark Whites Freed by Grace: An Analysis of the First Two Mizo Written Narratives

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Abstract

This paper attempts to study the colonial influence that destroyed the balance between the lives of Mizo men and women – the people who made their entry into the forested mountainous regions of Northeast India, later known as Mizoram in the late 17th century– through the narratives of L. Biakliana (1918-1941), author of the first Mizo novel *Hawilopari* (1936) and the first Mizo short story “Lali” (1937). The life of a Mizo woman was more burdensome in the last decade of the 19th century and first three decades of the 20th century than at any given point of time. The acuteness of their sufferings in the early 20th century under patriarchal society is clearly described in “Lali”, wherein they are likened to slaves and commodities that can be bargained and sold. However, a very different picture is depicted in *Hawilopari*, where there does not seem to be any differentiation in terms of gender. Women felt secure under the men’s guidance before the appearance of the white men, who, with better weapons ruled the land prohibiting raiding and head-hunting whereas they themselves practiced it. For a short time even the emergence of the Missionaries was a great pain to the men because they had to put away their paganistic ritualistic practices. Men who were not used to performing household chores were at a loss and could not cope with the new peaceful life as they were fresh from battlefields.

Keywords: Mizo, dark whites, patriarchy, colonial influence, Christianity.

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