

HIGHER AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTE, MIZORAM



Department of History

Know Your History *Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia, Mizoram*

5th - 9th December 2022

SECOND BATCH: 2020-2023

Editors

Lalhminghlua
A. Lalremtluangi
Lalruathlui Khiangte

Linda Chongthu
Zosangzuali Hrahse
Benjamin Lalnunfima

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Know Your History: Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia, Mizoram

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From the Principal's Desk

I am elated to write this preface on the educational field trip of the Department of History 2022-23. The Higher and Technical Institute, Mizoram (HATIM) sent out students of the Department of History, under the supervision of faculties for the first time in the history of the College on an educational field study to explore, confirm, discover, and may be rewrite whatever necessary, the history of those who had earlier trodden and settled in the area around Vangchhia. Although students could not spend a much longer time of field study, it was exciting to get positive feedback from them on various aspects.

Though quite a few historians and researchers have come up to certain theories of our ancestors, the history of the present day so called “Mizo” is still as clear as mud. There is, therefore, an immense felt need to dig deeper into the subject through archaeological discoveries and evidences; so that vague theories of the ancestors of the Mizos and / or the early dwellers of the land may be unclouded.

I congratulate the students and faculties of the Department of History on their successful trip that lasted for about a week where they had new found joy, experiences, enthusiasm, and ambitions. This field study would remain worth reminiscing in the history of HATIM!



Vuansanga Vanchhawng

Message from the Head of Department

*“A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots” – **Marcus Garvey**.*



Benjamin Lalnunfima

I am very glad to write about the wonderful activities of the Department of History, HATIM, Lunglei, at the village of Vangchhia, Champhai district, Mizoram.

Amongst the various plans made by the Department of History, one of the most important and challenging task to sharpen the minds and knowledge of the final year History students, apart from their syllabi, is to organise a study tour. With a theme “***Know Your History – Archaeological Field Study***”, the programme was conducted during 5th – 9th December, 2022 at Vangchhia, Champhai District, Mizoram.

The village of Vangchhia is one of the most important historical sites to trace the history of our forefathers particularly for the archaeological field study. A large number of menhirs (*lungphun*) gives us valuable information about the lifestyle of the Mizo's since time immemorial. Knowing the importance of this place, the Government had declared the site as *the state's first protected archaeological site* in Mizoram.

The Department of History, HATIM was blessed with the visit of this archaeological site. Out of thirteen (13) final year History students, twelve (12) students have visited the place and submitted their study reports and findings. Due unforeseen circumstances, an arrangement was made to one student to visit the District Museum, Lunglei and the study reports and findings is also included in this book. I wish and hope that the reports and findings in this book will be one step to broaden and amplify the knowledge

of Mizo history to the readers and gives us more enthusiasm to explore more and more for the future.

On behalf of the Department of History, I would like to give an immense thanks to the Director (EE) – Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi; Superintending Archaeologist – Aizawl Circle, Archaeological Survey of India; Director – Department of Art & Culture, Aizawl, Mizoram; Principal, HATIM for your consent to visit the site of Vangchhia.

I also express my heartfelt gratitude to my colleagues – Teaching Faculties and Non-Teaching Staff; all the students, HATIM; the village people of Vangchhia; and all those who had rendered your ceaseless efforts and valuable services for the success and achievement of the long awaited and challenging task of this study tour at Vangchhia.

Long Live.... Department of History, HATIM!!

Vangchhia Field Study: A Departmental Report

Introduction: The archaeological site of Vangchhia has gained interest and attracts scholars from various parts of the globe. It is a site that creates perplexing and thought provoking phenomena to the visitors. Located on a stretch on roughly horizontal landscape on the side of a mountain, the site has become an enigmatic center of cross connection with ancient pathways converging at *Kawtchhuahropui*. It is no doubt passed by many peoples in the past.



The call for archaeological works finally culminated with the first excavation in 2015-16. This led to further works by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and has remained continuously in their register. With the site taken up by the ASI, it is only clear that more extensive works would be undertaken in the future.

Knowing of the potential and what the site holds for the future of Mizoram history, the Department of History, Higher and Technical Institute, Mizoram has decided to venture out and learn history in the field. This was undertaken with a proper plan that finally culminates with the departure for Vangchhia on 5th December 2022 until returning back on 9th December 2022. For this Field Study, the Fifth Semester Students of History were selected and they were accompanied by six faculties. Among the faculties, the Field Study was joined by Miss Ludi Lalneihpuii of Department of Philosophy.

Archaeological report

Vangchhia is famous for its menhirs and the way they are arranged, that is in the avenue form. Not all megalithic sites of India have arrangement of menhirs in this manner with some sites that may be seen in South India such as Hanamsagar, Vibuthihalli and others. But these are of astronomical significance. So, they have different function and purpose. The other case of avenue form can be seen in Lianpui village where menhirs are also arranged in a similar manner. These two villages, being adjacent to one another may also raise some questions on the nature of their arrangement. Beside these menhirs, there are also other archaeological localities which will be outlined as well.

Kawtchhuahropui: As far as the numbering goes for the menhirs of *Kawtchhuahropui* (N23.20105°, E93.3416556°) located at an elevation of 1583m above mean sea level, the ASI has counted them to be 207 in numbers. Some of the menhirs are large while others appears to have been re-erected based on the nature of the breakage. So, not all of the menhirs are original in their location. What is truly intriguing is that they have been carved making sure that they are in relief form. This is not a technique of making art on rocks especially with limited time, resources, and other factors. So, from a technical point of view, they are petroglyphic, just that they are made on menhirs rather than natural rocks and boulders. The engravings are meticulously detailed to the extent that one can clearly observe even the chisel marks of the carvers. Although it is not possible to identify all chisel marks but some menhirs show clear marks with varying tips such as straight to slightly inverted crescent shape to narrow pointed edges ranging from 0.8 to 1.5cm. The relief form is further smoothened which shows that time and resources at the least were properly dedicated to the creation of these menhirs. The height, width, and breadth of these menhirs vary from one another although their purpose can be summarized more or less as the same. What may be called as incision on relief, i.e. incision marks on the relief form were clearly observed when the carvers wanted to depict features of adornment such as bead necklace. Except for

the case of Menhir 204 where there appears to be double relief (Fig 1), the rest of the menhirs do not show double relief but prefer to depict any other material culture in an incision manner (Fig 2). Perhaps, double, triple or multiple reliefs were not something that was feasible during those time or that it was not durable. May be they just opted for the easier method.



Fig 1: Menhir 204



Fig 2: Menhir 18

What appears to be central in their representation is the depiction of a prominent figure that outsize any other figures. Be it of various depictions such as various human heads, human head with busts; various animals such as mithun, stag, deer, birds; material culture such as spear, knives, shields; and various other unidentifiable figures, the prominent figure appears to be thematically and theoretically at the center for which the meaning may be sought only through the prominent figure. Such is the way that they have thought of in designing how representation should be executed. It appears that the menhir depictions are to be seen through the eyes of the prominent figure and the reality that surrounds him (based on ethnography and if be true in the past). Local ethnography shows a patriarchal society and the similarity of material and cultural depictions on the menhirs points towards a past and present that may be analogically connected. If such is the case, then, one can straightforwardly think that the prominent figure be of a male, perhaps head of families, abled persons, or prominent persons of society for whom these menhirs were erected, and the figures that are depicted along

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with him are all part of his reality. So, the menhirs are the representation of someone and his achievements, qualities etc.



Fig 3: Menhir 201



Fig 4: Menhir 204



Fig 5: Menhir 09



Fig 6: Menhir 17



Fig 7: Menhir 18



Fig 8: Menhir 45



Fig 9: Menhir 58



Fig10: Menhir 66

Some close up photographs of some depictions are laid out as follows.



Fig 11



Fig 12



Fig 13

Fig 11-13: Unmarked menhir lying on the ground



Fig 14



Fig 15



Fig 16

Fig 14-16: Menhir 18



Fig 16: Menhir 50



Fig 17: Menhir 50



Fig 18



Fig 19



Fig 20

Fig 18-20: Menhir 61



Fig 21: Menhir 180



Fig 22: Menhir 204



Fig 23: Unmarked broken menhir

Observation of the menhirs shows that they are of sedimentary stones, some of thinly bedded grayish to brown sandstone which most likely belong to Barail Formation. At a lower level from *Kawtchhuahropui*, there are areas

where exposed rock formation shows similarity with those erected. This shows that the stones are most likely of local source.



Fig 24: *Kawtchhuahropui*

Ralven Pûk: At a higher level and slightly off from the menhirs, there are five caves which have been puzzling to the visitors. Carved out of brown sandstone, these caves have survived weathering for such a long time that some of the ceilings have started showing chemical weathering (leaching). The ASI has taken a proper step of creating a roof structure with water channel to keep it dry as much as possible. The dimensions of the caves are as follows:

Cave No.	Length (m)	Depth (m)	Height (m)
1	2.26	1.80	1.37
2	2.10	0.95	1.10
3	2.28	2.25	1.8
4	2.17	1.28	0.85
5	1.85	1.22	0.97

Table 1: Dimensions of *Ralven Pûk*

Observation of the caves has also shown that there was the use of chisel which is most likely of metal. The caves are located in such a direction that it overlooks the Tiau River dividing India and Myanmar. The caves have a wide angle of view (approximately 120-130 degrees of view) and majorly

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it has a clear view of Myanmar side. The total length covered by the caves is approximately 17m. As per locals, they may have been used as a watch station, a place where they can observe who is near their vicinity. It could have some sort of military or strategic utility.



Fig 25: *Ralven Pûk*



Fig 26: Cave 1



Fig 27: Cave 2



Fig 28: Cave 3



Fig 29: Cave 4



Fig 30: Cave 5

Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang: This is a locality which is of importance not from the perspective of material culture but of landscape approach where importance has been given as a viewpoint. As per local saying, there was a man named Laituma who was attracted to the ladies so much that he was

able to have carnal relations with them. Such a thing was not socially restricted as the early Mizo society counts the pride and success of a man by the number of physical relations with the ladies. So, when the chief heard of his success, he asked him to drop a piece of *Fangra* inside the basket of the ladies returning from the field. To his surprise, the chief found out that not even his wife was safe from him. As a result, the chief announced communal fishing in which Laituma was stoned to death. Missing for his beloved son, Laituma's mother would come to this place looking down the valley where his son was murdered. This is how this place came to be known as *Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang*. Presently, a shed has been constructed with railing to prevent falls. The location has a good view of *Lên Tlâng*.



Fig 31



Fig 32

***Lungdawhsei*:** A structure arranged out of stones that has always been part and integral in understanding Mizo society is *Lungdawh*. Meaning stone structure, made at the entrance of villages, they have served as a resting place for travelers and people who are returning from their fields. Moreover, it also serves as a place for the performance of *Chhawnghnawh*, where during Mîm Festival, people feed one another. Such a structure (N23.19891°, E93.34569°) was documented along the ancient pathway where the stone structure measures 63m in length (approx.), width 4.7m, and height of 1.23m located above 1509m mean sea level. The platform structure is made of arrangement of smaller stones ranging in size of thickness from 5cms and above. It was covered with vegetation which was cleared before documentation. At the edge towards Tiau River, there are some remains of ancient pathways marked by the arrangement of stone slabs. This pathway goes down all the way across Tiau River according to

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the locals. The structure is NW-SE direction straight from the view point of *Ralven Pâk*.



Fig 33



Fig 34



Fig 35



Fig 36

Fig 35: Remnants of ancient pathway

Fig 36: *Ralven Pâk* view from *Lungdawhsei*

Potshards

Traversing through the thick vegetation, few potshards were found. Observation has shown that they are of handmade, cord impressed, and poor

firing belonging to Red Ware. The thickness of the vegetation has impeded in visiting the masonry structures which would have been ideal.

Looking into the present day Vangchhia

The present day Vangchhia has a lot to offer in the explanation and understanding of the archaeological site and material culture. Filled with various depictions ranging from various materials to animals, the menhirs are best understood in relation to the present day culture where parallels can be drawn through analogical reasoning. However, this was exercised only after judging that there are similarities and that it is possible to do so.

A simple observation of the present day Vangchhia clearly shows that the economy is heavily agriculture based where seasonal cultivation of crops form the base. Judging from the landscape, it is possible to think that the past and present society would not extremely divulge in the manner of occupation. Assessment of the landscape has shown that there have been no transformation of land in the past (at least in the present knowledge). The vegetation have been utilized in various possible manners for food and constructions etc. The various crops grown includes rice, beans, bananas, and various other seasonal plants. Vegetables are grown both in the field and home gardens.



Fig 37



Fig 38

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Domestication of animals played an important role in the present day economy where animals such as swine and mithun form a source of lump income at the end of the day. Almost all homes have domestic animals such as pigs, chicken, cats, dogs, and mithuns. The nature of mithun domestication may be termed as semi-domesticated animal as they are not kept within the vicinity of the houses like cats and dogs. Animal rearing is not extensively undertaken due to which piglets have been imported from the neighbouring Myanmar villages such as Dawihkhel, Saṭawm etc. Moreover, these villages supplied piglets to other districts such as Lunglei, Champhai and various parts of Mizoram. The import of edibles includes *kawlpurun*, areca nut, onions and others.



Fig 39



Fig 40



Fig 41

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Ethnographically, there are no extreme distinction between the two sides of *Tiau River* which shows that culturally, the two sides are similar in origin. Differences can be observed in the nature of political set up, housing, and currency etc. Overall, people are of the same group. This cultural similarity can also be seen in the way jhum cultivation are undertaken, ownership of mithuns, funeral practices, and various other cultural practices. In certain case, it may be stated that the Myanmar side still practiced culture in a more traditional manner.

Looking at the present day material cultures that have been passed on from the past, there are many similarities that can be drawn with engravings on menhirs. The depictions of headgear, adornments, weapons, and various animals shows that the people of the past are not that different than present. This positively helps in explaining what may have been the case in the past. Display of animal heads on the walls of houses that matches with the animals displayed on the menhirs shows the similarity of game animals of the present and past.

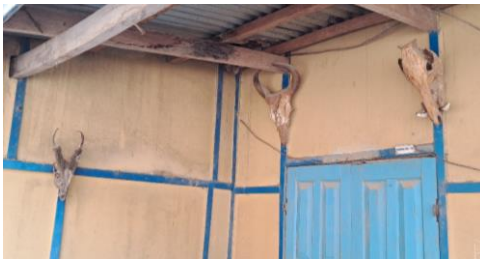


Fig 42



Fig 43

The current people that resides in the village are not of one single clan although one may assume the possibility of such a case as it was re-settled by the Sailo clan. In the year 1885 CE, Thawmpuia Sailo along with Liansuaka and Neihchungnunga came to re-settle. The term re-settle has been used only for the fact that by the time of their arrival, they know that previously the Hmar clan of Vangchhia (Vangsia) have settled before. By the time of Thawmpuia, the menhirs have stood up although none knows who the authors of the menhirs were. Perhaps, it will be shrouded in mystery.

Outside Vangchhia

The Field Study was organized at the very border village along the Indo-Myanmar line. Hence, it was only after passing through other villages that one finally enters Vangchhia. This becomes a good chance to explore and make stops at some places which have archaeological sites and localities.

One such first stop was made at **East Lungdar** where *Lungvando* (N23.22461, E93.10177, Elvation 1168m amsl) was adjacent to the road. It only took some time to document. This is a monolith that was 6m in height at the time of erection but presently broken. The site has been undertaken by the Art & Culture Department.



Fig 44

On the way back from Vangchhia, as the route passes through **Dungtlang** which has historicity, it was visited where old settlements, menhirs etc. were observed and photographed. As this was visited on the way back, it was not possible to make detailed study. However, the team saw and observed the various layout of the site.



Fig 45



Fig 46

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At a lower level, the famous site of *Lianchhiari Lunglen Tlang* was also visited. This is a famous place through the length and breadth of the state. It is presumed to be the place where Lianchhiari would sit and look out for her lover who moved to the neighboring village. An arrangement of stone called *Lianchhiari Puan Tahna* was also documented. Beside this, *Zokhua*, a traditional settlement model has been set up displaying the various kinds of houses and materials that were practiced in the past.



Fig 47



Fig 48



Fig 49

Khawbung, a village where the Block Development Office has been put up by the state government is another place which has to offer sites and archaeological monuments. Due to time constraint, it was not possible to explore but only visit *Hlakungpui Mual* and *Hlakungpui Robawm*. Here, at *Hlakungpui Mual*, the memorial monuments of various Mizo writers and composers have been erected. It is a well maintained location and has a pleasant aesthetic view. It is adjacent to the Tourist Lodge which makes it ideal for tourists. Within this compound, *Hlakungpui Robawm* has been housing the various details and materials of the famous Mizo composers. There are booklets that can be bought from the counter itself. At the lower level, there is a small museum which houses many material cultures that are no longer in circulation in the present day. It is also well maintained which shows the dedication and sincerity of the villagers.

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Fig 50



Fig 51



Fig 52



Fig 53

Observation and remarks

As a scope for learning the past in the midst of monuments and other archaeological materials that form the very fabric of Mizoram history, it is an extremely positive field study for both the faculties and students. It was a learning experience right from the planning to execution which entails all the various hard works of faculties and students. Without the vigour and determination, it would not have been possible to undertake such a field study. It is truly a positive experience in various aspects such as living among the locals even just for few days, interacting and learning from them, learning the art of conducting field work, documentation, field drawing,

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how to observe in the field, and most importantly, cooperation without which this would have never happened.

The various places that were visited provides an important idea into the geographical span of Mizoram history which is still in severe lacuna of extensive research. Perhaps, the students may in the future take up further academic works.

Outside of academic activities, an outreach activity was conducted where students were asked to distribute food materials to the needy families. This outreach was of great help to the families and a great lesson for the students. It helped in making a better connection with the locals and also serves as a way of reciprocating their affectionate actions towards the team.

Acknowledgement

The grace of God was the reason for which we were able to go and conduct Departmental field study. It is the exhibition of God's power and grace. We thank Thee for the wonderful field study.

The Department of History would like to thank the Principal of the College for allowing such endeavor that is outside of the academic curriculum. Further, the financial and material aids provided by the College have been extremely helpful in the realization the field study. The Department would also like to thank the property in-charge of the Residences for allowing us to use some of the cooking materials which were costly to procure at free of cost.

Financial contribution of Dr. John C. Laldusaka cannot go unmentioned. Despite being an outsider of the Department, his generosity truly helps in the execution of the Departmental field study. It is with such a positive heart that he has contributed to the Department fund raising.

The generosity and helpfulness of the Village Council of Vangchhia for allowing us use of their communal building, water, and electricity is overwhelming. Similar gratitude goes to the Young Mizo Association of

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Vangchhia for facilitating us with various cooking utensils some of which were even borrowed for us by them. We truly remained grateful to them. The friendly people of Vangchhia and their generous hospitality would remain a truly an unforgettable memory.

No field study is ever complete without the acknowledgement and permission from the concerned authority. Our gratitude goes to the Archaeological Survey of India for their acceptance of our application to undertake our field study. Similarly, we are also thankful to the Department of Art & Culture, Government of Mizoram for allowing us access to various historical places and sites. Without the permission of these two authorities, the Departmental field study would have faced serious hindrances. We profusely thank them for granting us permission.

The Department would also like to thank the College driver Mr. C. Lalbiakzauva for his careful and safe driving. It would also not be complete without mentioning the Heritage Society of Dungtlang, especially Mr. Danny Lalremruata for the cooperation and guidance while visiting the various places in Dungtlang. The same gratitude is also extended to Khawbung *Hlakungpui Mual* caretakers who without any hesitation allowed us to visit and explore the area. Moreover, we are thankful to Mrs. Chawngthanzami, Tourist Lodge of Khawbung for preparing a wonderful dinner even on a short notice. We are also extremely grateful to Mr. Lalchhanhima and his wife Mrs. Laltlankimi for their assistance in procuring vegetables without which we would have run short of food.

The cooperation, contribution, and team spirit of the Department cannot be missed out. Without the vigor and will, it would not have been possible to undertake such field study. Everyone has taken part and contributed in however ways they can. It is truly remarkable and wonderful for everyone's contribution.

A Report ‘Know Your History’ (Archaeological Field Study)

Introduction: From 5th to 9th December, twelve students along with six Asst. Professors of the Department of History went on a field study to Vangchhia located at Champhai District. As mentioned above in the topic the main aim was to study and learn history from the archaeological site of Vangchhia.



Fig 1: Onward to Vangchhia

Present Day Socio-Economic Culture

Vangchhia was inhabited by earlier settlers who later deserted prior to 1855. In 1885, Pu Thawmpuia and his followers resettled and rebuilt the village again. The village is called Vangchhia because the Vangchhia tribe were thought to be the first settlers.

According to 2011 census, there are 150 houses and approximately 837 people. There are four schools in Vangchhia, i.e., Presbyterian English School, Government Primary School, Government Middle School, and Government High School. Five churches were established as of today which

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includes Presbyterian, Salvation Army, *Isua Krista Kohhran*, Seventh Day Adventist Church and United Pentecostal Church. Also, there are approximately four languages spoken in the village which are Duhlian, Hmar, Lai and Paite.



Fig 2: Vangchhia village



Fig 3: Street view



Fig 4: Government Primary School



Fig 5: Government High School

Agriculture is the main occupation taken up by the people of Vangchhia both outside and inside the village. Most of the local people plant different kinds of vegetables beside their house or in front of their house. Many of them have rice field of their own. Mr. KC Doliana has made a record in Mizoram by harvesting around 2000 buckets of rice. Beekeeping was also observed in the village. Bamboos are rarely seen in Vangchhia, so, the local people mostly use wood for cooking, for their gate and usually there are a large stack of wood beside each and every household. There are three water tanks situated in different parts of the village and the local people receive water from these water tanks. There is one football field and one volleyball court present in the village.

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Fig 6



Fig 7



Fig 8

Fig 6: Home garden

Fig 7: Sty adjacent to house

Fig 8: Sty, house, & garden



Fig 9: Beekeeping



Fig 10: Stack of firewood (*Thingkhawn*)

As Vangchhia is situated on the border of Mizoram and Burma, a bike known as ‘one two five’ imported from Burma are largely used by the local people and they issue their own number plate. The relationship between Burma and the local people of Vangchhia is very good. Burma and Vangchhia villagers can easily access and get through one another. Cross border marriages between the two places as well as condolence meetings of the bereaved family often take place. Vangchhia had taken in many refugees from Burma but in the present day there is only one refugee house in Vangchhia. The villagers near the border usually grow tobacco, onion and chillies. Also, Burma has been exporting pigs to Mizoram. The local people often go for hunting in the nearby forest and in some houses evidences of animal skulls can be seen. Since Vangchhia is a historical site there are many visitors in the dry season. Many traditional practices can be seen in the village such as the building of their house and masonry works. The houses are mainly built in Assam- type.

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Fig 11: Burmese bike with Vangchhia local registration number (left)
Fig 12 (middle) & 13 (right): housing and masonry

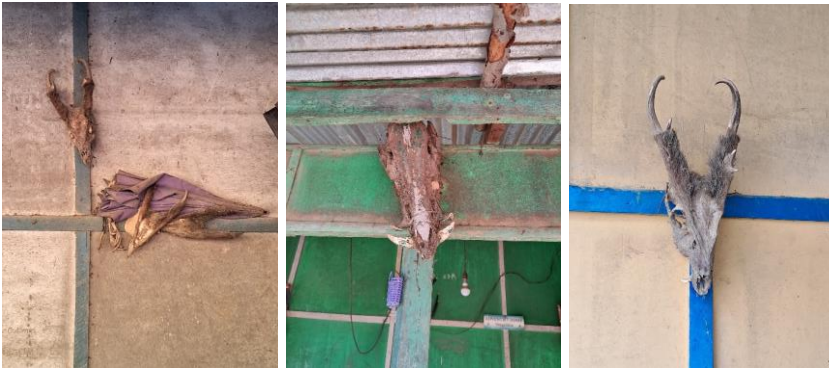


Fig 14

Fig 15

Fig 16

Fig 14-16: Animal heads displayed on house walls

Archaeological Report

The ASI has site-office in Vangchhia and one of the most important historical site in Mizoram, which is the *Kawtchhuahropui*, an area protected by ASI. The menhirs from *Kawtchhuahropui* were taken away by the locals villagers till around 1990 proving that the early settlers of the village did not treasure the tangible heritage. But as time passed by they learned the importance of treasuring the cultural heritage and took measures to protect the archaeological site. The following are the various archaeological monuments which were documented.

***Kawtchhuahropui*:** At *Kawtchhuahropui*, there are approximately 207 menhirs present. The menhirs are of different size and shape, carved out of

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sedimentary rocks. Most of the stones were carved only on one side and there is only one stone carved on both side. The carving on the stone was relief in technique. The pictures imprinted on the menhirs are of shield, bead necklace, earring, material culture, pot, and flying bird etc. Some of the menhirs were lying on the ground and there are some menhirs that have been broken. The broken pieces were later re- erected/ set up.



Fig 17



Fig 18



Fig 19



Fig 20



Fig 21



Fig 22

Fig 17-22: *Kawtchhuahropui*

Ralven Pûk: Above the *Kawtchhuahropui*, there is a place called *Ralven Pûk* which was used by the early settlers as a watch house to protect themselves from enemies. It was carved like a shallow cave out of brown sandstone. The *Ralven Pûk* has five caves. From the chisel mark found in this *Pûk*, it can be said that there was a metal technology present during the time. The source for this technology may likely be from Bangladesh or Burma.



Fig 23



Fig 24



Fig 25

Fig 23-25: *Ralven Pûk*

Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang: At some distance away from *Ralven Pûk* was a place called *Laituma Nu lunglen tlang*. According to a local, there used to be a man called Laituma who was very handsome and attractive and that all women fell for him. It was said that he could have any women he wanted and have a sexual relationship with them. In the village is a cave where Laituma had an affair with women. When the chief realised that his wife was also involved, he ordered Laituma to be stoned to death. After Laituma died, his mother missed her son so much that she often went to this place to watch where her son was killed. So, the people called this place as *Laituma Nu lunglen Tlang*.



Fig 26: *Laituma pûk*

Lungdawhsei: At a lower level from *Kawtchhuah Ropui* lies the stone structure called Lungdawhsei. It is an arrangement of a stone. The *Lungdawhsei* is approximately 63m. Observation has shown the evidence of yellow sandstone. *Lungdawhsei* holds a very important place in the life of earlier settlers. It was used as a waiting shed or resting place on their way to the paddy fields or hunting, or on their way home.



Fig 27: *Lungdawhsei*

Water Pavillion: The ASI called it *Water Pavillion* where water was stored by the earlier settlers, but till today its purpose and uses have not been ascertained. There is saying that these may be *postholes* where they used to build their houses. But these theories remained unproven.

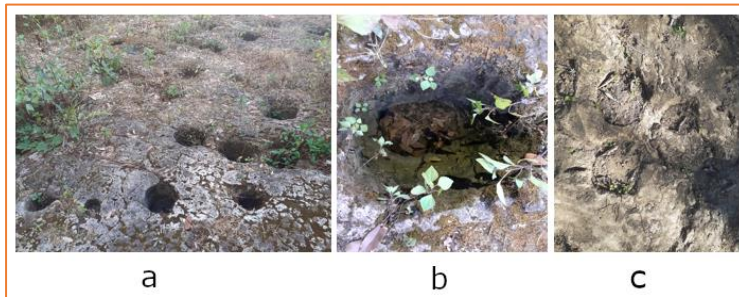


Fig 28

***Tianhrang Thlân*:** The early Mizo people buried their dead in a grave called *Tianhrang Thlân*. In different parts of the village, five of these graves were found out of which two graves still stands today.



Fig 29: *Tianhrang thlân*

Know Your History: Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia

Also, in different parts of the village pieces of potshards were found. From this findings, it is evident that the settlement of the early Mizo in Vangchhia was very wide. The potshards found were cord impressed pottery.

Places visited along the route

Apart from Vangchhia village, there were also other villages which were visited having archaeological monuments and places. The following are the places that were visited apart from Vangchhia.

Dungtlang village

Lianchhiari Lunglen Tlang

It is a famous view point located in the district of Champhai, Mizoram. It is the legendary location where the lovers Lianchhiari use to look-out for her besot Chawngfianga who live in another village. Near the cliff is her *Puantahna* of Lianchhiari where she use to weave cloths. Lianchhiari's grave can also be seen near the cliff.



Fig 30



Fig 31



Fig 32

Khawbung village

Khawbung is another village that is worth visiting. There are various landmarks such as *Mizo Hlakungpui Mual* (Mizo Poet's Square) designed to commemorate the various Mizo writers. Set up in 1986, within the vicinity, *Halkungpui Robawm* has also been serving as a center for displaying the various details of writers as well as museum.

Mizo Hla Kungpui Mual

It is a place with monuments to commemorate Mizo poets and writers. It was set up in 1986 at the southern edge of Khawbung village, Mizoram state. Here, the monuments of Mizo laureate poets and writers are erected at interval of 10 years.



Fig 33

Hlakungpui Robawm

It is located near *Mizo Hlakungpui Mual*. In another words, we can also call it a museum. Inside *Hlakungpui Robawm* there are instruments and photos, while some are musical instruments, some are of daily use instruments, these are pot (*bêl*) , *herâwt* etc.



Fig 35



Fig 36



Fig 37

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Remark: The field study was successful and we believed that our objective was achieved. It was beneficial for us as we learned many things. The hospitality was great and the people of the village are very welcoming, approachable and generous.

Acknowledgement: We are very grateful to our respected Principal Mr. Vuansanga Vanchhawng, for granting us the permission, for supporting us financially and also for providing us a free transportation. The success of our field study was partly due to him. We had a successful field study with the good co-operation, sincerity and hard work of our Assistant Professors and my fellow classmates. We also give thanks to Dr. John C. Laldusaka for contributing Rs. 2,0000 for our field study.

We also give our heartfelt gratitude to F. Malsawmtluanga, VCP of Vangchhia, for providing us a place to stay and for supplying our needs during our stay. We are also thankful to Mr. C. Vanlalchhuanga for guiding us despite his busy schedule. Also, we are very grateful to Mr. K.C. Khuma for sharing and imparting us his knowledge.

A Report on Archaeological field study at Vangchhia



B. Vanlalkhawngaihsanga
1923BA002

Introduction

The Department of History, Higher and Technical Institute, Mizoram (HATIM) organized a Field Study in Vangchhia from 5th – to 9th December 2022 for the 5th Semester students. Vangchhia is located in Champhai District at a distance of 238 km from Lunglei.

The main purpose for this field study is to have a better understanding of our history, how things were conducted in the past - economy, culture, tradition and belief.

Vangsia, which later came to be known as Vangchhia is one of the small village in Mizoram, lying on the Indo-Myanmar border. The village is famous for its menhir. There are 207 menhirs of different shapes and sizes in this village with various carvings. The village became Mizoram's first protected Archaeological site in 2012.



Fig 1: Department of History

Present day society

According to 2011 census, there are 150 houses and 837 people living in Vangchhia. There are 5 schools in Vangchhia, i.e., Presbyterian English

Know Your History: Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia

School, Primary School, Middle School and High School. There are 5 different churches located in this area. It is belief that, there are approximately four languages spoken in Vangchhia which are Duhlian, Hmar, Lai, and Paite. Five graves known as *Tianhrang thlân* were found in Vangchhia.

Agriculture is the main occupation of the people. Many of them had rice field of their own. Mr. K.C Doliana has made a report in Mizoram by cultivating about 2000 buckets of rice. Home gardening is practiced by the people growing various kinds of plants such as mustard, chillies, beans, tobacco, onions of various kinds, stinky beans, and plants with local names such as *phuihnam*, *kawhtebel*, *anthur*, *behlawi*, *chhawhchhi*, *balhla* etc.

The practice of filtering ash called *chingal thlawr* which is a Mizo traditional practice was observed. Several animal traps of different kinds with big and small that was used to catch animals were documented. The phenomenon of hanging animal heads of the walls of houses is still practiced. There are various schools and a place of prayer which they called Bethel. In this Bethel there are several postholes which were from ancient times, no one knows the purpose of these postholes so far.

Three water tanks are situated in different parts of the village for water distribution in the morning and evening. There are football and volleyball court in the village. Vangchhia is situated near the border of Mizoram and Myanmar, many Burmese bike known as 125 are used by the local people and they even gave their own number plate. Many refugees Myanmar came to Vangchhia but now there is only 1 refugee house present in the village. The local people often went hunting in the forest and in several houses some animal's head (*sa lu*) were seen being displayed. Since Vangchhia is a historical site there are many visitors in the dry season. Also, there are ruins of masonry structures and monuments. The Archeological Survey of India (ASI) has site office in Vangchhia.

Since it is a rural area their way of life differed as compared to the people living in towns and cities. In several houses animal heads are hung which was Mizo traditional practice to show that they are a hunter.



Fig 2 – Present day Vangchhia

Archaeological Findings

Kawtchhuahropui

There are 207 menhirs of different sizes in this place. These menhirs are fully carved and embossed with different figures. Rows of human figures, heads of mithun, deer, and other animals, circles probably gongs, weapons and other designs are engraved in these menhirs. Among the human figures the prominent figure is generally depicted holding a spear and wearing a head dress, locally known as ‘*Chhawndawl*’. These are supposed to be worn only by those persons who have killed enemies. This figure is depicted along with animals, human-beings, and head of animals which might have been killed by him. There are also other figures such as geometric circles, spears, shield, and various other implements/tools. As per local beliefs, legends and myths, these menhirs are raised as memorial stones wherein have been depicted along with animals and human-beings that have been killed during the life time of the person.

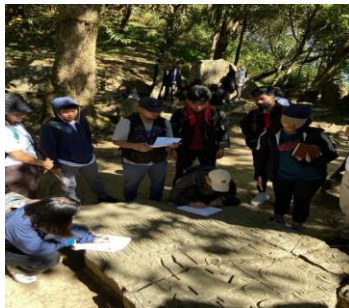


Figure 3: Menhir study



Figure 4: *Kawtchhuahropui* menhir

Ralven Pûk

Ralven Pûk is located above the menhirs and these five caves which are said to be used by the early settlers to protect their village from their enemies. *Ralven Pûk* is a shallow cave carved out of brown sand stone. From this ‘*Pûk*’, it can be said that there is a metal technology present during this time based on the visible chisel marks.



Figure 5: *Ralven Pûk*



Fig 6: *Ralven Pûk*

Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang

Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang is located on the Northeastern side of *Kawtchhuahropui* which is some distance away from “*Ralven Pûk*”. The people used to say that there used to be a man called Laituma who was very handsome and attractive and all the women fell for him. It was said that he can have any sexual relationship with any woman. When the chief realized came to know of his story, he asked him to drop a vegetable locally called as *fangra* in the baskets of the returning women from the field. He was surprised and angry to find that he dropped it in his wife’s basket as well. He ordered Laituma be stoned to death. After Laituma died, his mother missed him so much that she often went to this place where she can see the place where her son was killed. So, the people called this place as ‘*Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang*’.

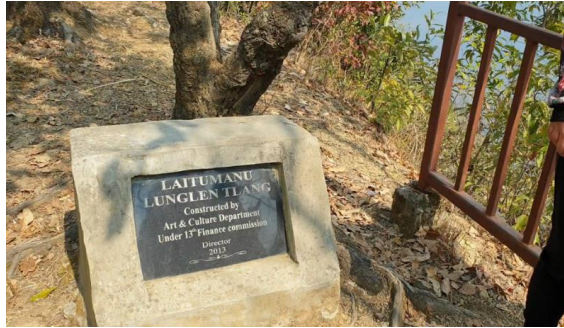


Figure 6: Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang

Lungdawhsei: At some distance and at a lower level from *Kawtchhuahropui* where the old pathways ran, an old stone platform can be seen which is still in a good shape. The length of the platform is approximately 63m, 4.7m in breadth, and 1.23m in height. Traditionally, such kind of structures were used as resting place before entering the village as well as the performance of *Chhawngnawh* during *Mim Kut* festival.



Figure 7: *Lungdawhsei*

Tiau River

Tiau River a 159 km long river which forms part of the international boundary between India and Myanmar. It rises near Khuangphah village of Champhai district in Mizoram, India. It ultimately merges with the Tuipui River. Zokhawthar is located on the Indian side of the river. Though it is international boundary, river *Tiau* is used for fishing etc. by people of nearby village on either country freely. There is no any hindrance from either side of the country. The river enters Myanmar in the district of

Know Your History: Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia

Champhai in the North-Eastern state of Mizoram. The site has been the main place for border crossing from both sides. It has now developed into a commercial centre, where all kinds of imported goods are available. Tourists and locals alike visit the place to enjoy the scenic sights, the site has to offer and to buy goods that come across the border from Myanmar. Geological specimens such as stones of various types all belonging to sedimentary type were collected. Geologically, the drainage area belongs to Barail Formation. The stones would be put up in the museum of HATIM.



Figure 8: *Tiau River*

Other Places Visited

Apart from Vangchhia, there were also other places which were visited as follows.

Dungtlang village

Lianchhiari Lungleng tlang is a famous landmark with a cliff that projects out of the rugged mountain where Lianchhiari used to sit looking out for her Chawngfianga. With keen sense of beauty, be it of the lore or nature where the environment with its soothing greenery as well as the vast landscape that can be viewed from this spot makes it an ideal place. It is located approximately 64kms in the southern part of Champhai.

Know Your History: Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia

Few kilometers away from this place lies an old settlement. There are remains of settlement structures and stone erections etc. showing its historicity.



Fig 9: *Lianchhiari Lunglen Tlang*

Khawbung

Khawbung is another village that is worth visiting. There are various landmarks such as *Mizo Hlakungpui Mual* (Mizo Poet's Square) designed to commemorate the various Mizo writers. Set up in 1986, within the vicinity, *Halkungpui Robawm* has also been serving as a center for displaying the various details of writers as well as museum.



Figure 10 (left) & Fig 11 (right): *Mizo Hlakungpui Mual*

Remarks

Our Department of History students and faculties went to Vangchhia for Archaeological Field Study to study the historical materials which still exists like *Kawtchhuahropui* menhirs, study and record the present day village society. This field study gave us better ways to understand the history of those who once lived at Vangchhia. It is enriching and a practical way of learning history.

Acknowledgment

We thank our respected Principal Mr. Vuansanga Vanchhawng for supporting and allowing us for this field study at Vangchhia. The success of our field study was partly due to him. We also give a heartfelt gratitude to the Y.M.A of Vangchhia for providing us a place to stay and for supplying us for our needs during our stay. We can't forget to mention our deepest sense of appreciation to the teachers, the staff and the bus driver for their enormous contribution to the field study.

A Report on Archaeological Field Study

Introduction

On October 2022, Department of History planned to have a field study at Vangchhia village which is located at Champhai district under Khawbung RD block. The distance of Vangchhia from Lunglei is approximately 239km. The journey started on 5th December 2022, from Lunglei around 6:30 AM under the guidance of our respected teachers - Miss Lalruathlui Khiangte, Miss Zosangzuali Hrahse, Miss Linda Chongthu, Dr. Lalhminghlu, Miss A. Lalremtluangi and Miss Ludi Lalneihpuii (Department of Philosophy). The number of students' participants in the field trip were 12 students. The main theme of the field study is "Know Your History", an archaeological field study.



Biakthansanga Chhangte
2023BA003



Fig 1: Onward to Vangchhia

Society of Vangchhia

According to 2011 census, there were 150 family in Vangchhia, which probably increased in 2022. Their houses are mainly Assam type and

Know Your History: Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia

we saw some RCC building as well. Vangchhia village is located near Myanmar, and this can be proved as Myanmar bikes can be seen in numbers on the streets. In Vangchhia there are five (5) schools, most of them are Government aided schools – Gov't. Primary school, Gov't. Middle school and Gov't. High school and one church funded school – Presbyterian English School and there are different denominations like Presbyterian Church of India, Salvation Army, *Isua Krista Kohhran*, Seventh Day Adventist and United Pentecostal Church.



Fig 2: High school



Fig 3: *Isua Krista Kohhran*



Fig 4: Middle School



Fig 5: Myanmar 125 bike

Winter and summer are the best time to visit Vangchhia because the place is more beautiful as the weather is clear and gives a colourful ambience.

Economy of Vangchhia

Their main occupation is farming, which means most of the villagers are engaged in agriculture and hunting activities. Apart from those farmers, there are some government job holders, most of them are in teaching

Know Your History: Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia

profession at schools. There are variety of plantations at Vangchhia such as stinkybeans (*zawngtah*), plum (*theite*), cabbage (*zikhlum*), scallions (*kawlpurun*), mustards (*anṭam*), pumpkin (*mai*) and others. In Vangchhia we can see rodent traps like *Vaithang*, *Thangthleng*; etc.



Fig 6: Sun drying chilies



Fig 7: Cactus



Fig 8: Mustard

Archaeological findings

On the first day at Vangchhia, *Kawtchhuahropui* was visited, where field study was conducted on menhirs. Menhir's engravings were photographed and free hand drawing were done for the purpose of recording as well as mental image retention. Currently, *Kawtchhuahropui* is protected by Archaeological Survey of India. At *Kawtchhuahropui*, there are multiple menhirs - 207 in numbers. The engravings on menhirs included human figures, animals, tools, weapons and certain accessories.



Fig 9: Zofate Thlangtlak Gate

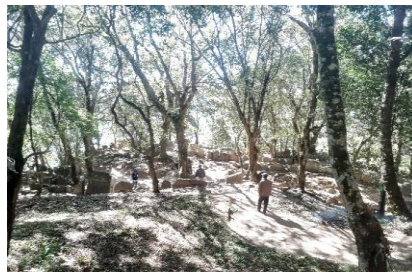


Fig 10: *Kawtchhuahropui*



Fig 11 (left) & Fig 12 (right): *Kawtchhuahropui* menhirs

Next, *Ralven Pûk* not far from *Kawtchhuahropui* was visited, where there are five shallow caves. These caves were used as watch house/watchtower to observe and stay protected from their enemies.

At some distance, there is another location called “*Laituma nu lunglen tlang*”. According to locals, Laituma was a young and a handsome boy who can get and pick any woman he like. Testing him as a lucky person, the chief of the village asked Laituma to drop *Fangra* in the bamboo basket of any woman whoever he slept with, and there he dropped even on the chief wife’s basket. The chief felt frustrated and decided to stone him to death at Tiau River. Within the village, *Tianhrang thlân* were also observed which shows the traditional system of village set up.



Fig 13: *Laituma nu Lunglen tlang*

Know Your History: Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia

At night an informative interaction was held with Pu KC.Khuma, a knowledgeable local of Vangchhia.

On 7th December 2022, *Lungdawhsei*, a 63m (approx.) long stone structure was visited. According to oral tradition, there would be *Talhkhuang* at *Lungdawhsei* which would have been used as musical entertainment.



Fig 14: *Lungdawhsei*

Ṭiau River was visited on 8th December, 2022 as part of geological study, where rocks were collected for College Museum.



Fig 15: *Ṭiau river*



Fig 16: *Ṭiau River*

Remarks

It was indeed a very enlightening and refreshing trip. Vangchhia in comparison to other cities and towns, is not so advanced and developed but due to many historical sites present in the village, it attracts lot of visitors. The people of Vangchhia welcomed us with hospitality and great humour. This field study has enriched and widen our knowledge about our ancestral history

Acknowledgement

This archaeological study and report writing could not have been done without the support of the principal of HATIM, Mr. Vuansanga Vanchhawng for allowing us to experience co-curricular activity at Vangchhia along with a sum of Rs. 20000/- and for providing us free transportation. I also express my heartfelt gratitude to the VCP and YMA for giving us a place to stay during our field study and also to the local guide for their guidance and enlightenment. We are immensely grateful to our department teachers for their continuous contributions and their unconditional love for us. I appreciate Dr. John C.Lalduhsaka's cash contribution and Miss Ludi Lalneihpuii (Department of Philosophy) for joining us in our field study. Last not but the least, I am most thankful to my classmates who made the trip successful and without you this trip would be meaningless. Thank you for the memories we made.

A Report on Mizo Historical Monuments



Introduction: The final year students of the Department of History, HATIM went for a field study in Vangchhia on 5th December 2022. Vangchhia is a village in the Champhai district of Mizoram; which is located 238 km from Lunglei and the students of History Department were 13 and out of 13 one was unable to attend the field study due to some family problems. We were accompanied by five Asst. Professors and one driver, and twelve students were able to participate in our field study and we set off from Lunglei at 6:50 a.m. and reach our destination at 11:00 p.m.



Fig 1: On the way to Vangchhia

The main purpose of this field study is to know more about Mizo History and the main aim is to visit archaeological site and to know more about how things were in the past, their economy, culture, tradition and religion.

Socio-Economic Report

From the year 2011 there are about 150 houses and 837 people living in Vangchhia. In Vangchhia there were five schools: Presbyterian English School, Primary School, Middle School and High School. There were also five different churches located in Vangchhia i.e. Presbyterian Church of India, Salvation Army, *Isua Krista Kohhran*, Seventh Day Adventist, and

Know Your History: Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia

United Pentecostal Church. There are approximately four languages spoken in Vangchhia which are Duhlian, Paite, Hmar, and Lai. Their main occupation is agriculture. They grow vegetables such as brinjal, tomato, garlic, onion, and cabbage etc. Many of them have their own rice field. Mr. K.C Doliana has made a record in Mizoram by cultivating about 2000 buckets of rice. In Vangchhia there are three water tank which is situated in different parts of the village and they used to supply water every morning and every evening and they have one volleyball court and one football playground. Vangchhia is near the border of Mizoram and Burma/Myanmar. In Vangchhia there were many Burma 125cc bikes used by the local people and they give their own number plate. Many refugees came to Vangchhia but now there are only one house left now. The local people often went hunting in the near forest and in several houses there were some animals head (*sa lu*). Observation on their cultivation shows that there are fruits and some agriculture items produced in the field like *Zawngtah*, *Chhawhchi* and *Balhla* etc. Since it is a rural area their life is simple compared to the people living in towns and cities. In several houses some animal heads were seen and some houses were built with concrete while some people were living in bamboo house.



Fig 2 (left) & 3 (right): Vangchhia village

There is *Chingal thlawr bel* which the mizo used to make a brine water in ancient days. There were several traps of different kinds – big and small which are used for catching animals. There are various places to visit in the village such as schools and prayer place which is called *Bethel*. In this bethel place there were some postholes which were from ancient times, no one knows the purpose of this postholes so far.

Archaeological Report

Vangchhia is an archaeological site and in the dry season there are many visitors. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Aizawl Circle has a site office.

Kawtchhuahropui is Mizoram's first protected archaeological site in Mizoram. There are 207 menhirs. It measures about 45sq km in area. The menhirs contain carvings which are in different shape and size depicting human and animal figures etc. in relief technique. The largest menhir measures 1.5m (width) 0.3 m (thickness).



Fig 4 (left) & 5 (right): *Kawtchhuahropui*

Ralven Pûk is located just a few meters above *Kawtchhuahropui*. There are five caves which are said to be used by the early settlers to protect their village from invaders. The caves are carved out of brown sand stone.



Fig 6 (left) & 7 (right): *Ralven Pûk*

Laitumanu lunglen tlang is close to *Ralven Pûk*. Laituma was well known for being handsome and charming as well as being a womanizer in his days. He would sleep with any women he wanted. It is also said that he even slept with their chieftainess of their village. When the Chief knew about that, he planned to kill Laituma and told the villagers to go for communal fishing where he was stoned to death. Since then, Laituma's mom frequented this place and stared at the *Ṭiau River* where her son was killed. This is the reason why they call this place *Laitumanu lunglen tlang*.

Lungdawhsei traditionally it is a place where they used to perform *Chhawngnawh*. It was an important traditional practice and also used as a resting place for travelers and people returning from their jhum cultivation.



Fig 8: *Lungdawhsei*

Ṭiau River is about 159km long and this river divides India and Myanmar. It originates near Khuangphah village of Champhai district in Mizoram, India. Zokhawthar is located on the Indian side of the river and the *Ṭiau* Khawmawi village located on the Burmese side. This river was visited for obtaining geological samples and geological study.



Fig 9: *Ṭiau River*

Apart from Vangchhia, there are also adjacent villages which have historicity with material cultures that are still available in various forms such as ancient settlement and stone erections. The following are villages that were visited as they on the route of the Field Study.

Dungtlang: The site of *Lianchhiari Lunglen Tlang* is a famous view point located in the district of Champhai in the North-east state of Mizoram. Lianchhiari was a powerful chieftain's daughter and she fell in love with Chawngfianga who was from a poor family and the son of a widow. They could not get married and Chawngfianga after moving away, Lianchhiari would look out for him from this location.



Fig 10: *Lianchhiari Lunglen Tlang* Fig 11: *Lianchhiari Puan Tahna*

A little mile away from Lianchhiari Lunglen tlang there is an old settlement where remnants of ancient structures and burial were observed.

Khawbung: This village is famous for *Mizo Hla Kungpui Mual* (Mizo Poets Square), a monument to commemorate Mizo writers. It was set up in 1986 at the southern edge of Khawbung Village. After entering the gate on the right side there is a Museum called *Khawbung Robawm*. There are some Mizo materials like *Herâwt*, *Thûl*, *Talhkhuang*, and *Bêl* etc.

East Lungdar: *Lungvando* was documented while travelling towards Vangchhia. It is located on the roadside and protected by Art & Culture Department. It is a cylindrical monolith pillar and currently broken into parts.

Remarks

We are very fortunate to experience a refreshing and enlightening field study. Amongst villages of Mizoram, due to the present of archaeological

Know Your History: Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia

sites, the village attracts lots of visitors. The people have shown hospitality and welcomed, providing various needs and requirements.

Acknowledgement

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our Principal Mr. Vuansanga Vanchhawng for allowing us to have archaeological field study and for contributing a sum of Rs. 20,000 and providing us free transportation. We also convey our gratitude to Dr. John Laldusaka (Department of Philosophy) for contributing Rs. 2000 for our field study programme.

We further extend our heartfelt gratitude to the VCP of Vangchhia for providing us a place to stay during our field study and supply us with water and electric services. We also thank the Young Mizo Association for allowing us to borrow the kitchen utensils and also to the locals for their guidance and enlightenment.

A Report on Mizo Historical Monuments

Introduction: On 5th December 2022, the 5th Semester students of History Department departed for Vangchhia to undertake archaeological field study, which is located at Champhai District of Mizoram in India. There are 19 team members i.e. 12 students, 6 teachers and 1 college bus driver. The aim of the field study is to visit and study the archaeological site of Vangchhia.



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2023BA014

Present Day Vangchhia: Vangchhia is a village in Champhai district of Mizoram, India. It is located in the Khawbung R.D. Block. Due to several reasons the earlier settlers left this village. In 1885, Chief (*Lal*) Thompaliana re-established and settled in the present day location. Vangchhia is famous for menhir stones and became Mizoram's first protected archaeological site in 2012. The archaeological survey of India (ASI) has a site office in Vangchhia and *Kawtchhuahropui* came under the protection of the ASI.



Fig 1: Vangchhia

Socio-Economy: According to the 2011 census, there are 150 houses and 837 people living in Vangchhia. There are four schools: Presbyterian English School, Government Primary School, Government Middle School and Government High School. There are five different churches. Most people in Vangchhia village speak four different languages: Duhlian, Hmar,

Know Your History: Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia

Lai, and Paite. Hunting is a common practice and there are several animal heads displayed on the house walls. In this village, water is distributed every day in the morning and evening to all the households. Since it is a historical site, there are many visitors especially in the summer and autumn season. Mostly, for transportation, Burmese imported bike of 125cc is commonly used. Agriculture is their main occupation. Other occupation includes sand mining from *Tiau River*, shop keeping, hunting, and animal husbandry. The *Tiau River* acts as a geographical and political boundary between India and Myanmar. It originates near Khuangphah village of Champhai district in Mizoram, India. It ultimately merges with the Tuipui River. Zokhawthar is located on the Indian side of the river. The *Tiau Khawmawi* village is located on the Burmese side. In the local language, the river is also known as Ciau River or Ciau Guun “Guun” meaning River.



Fig 2: *Tiau River*

Economic production of food item called *Chingal* and its production tool called *Chingal thlawrna bêl* where they used it as brine solution. There is a prayer mountain called Bethel, where the locals go for their prayers. In this place there are some holes on the ground, none of them know the reason for their creation and purpose.

Archaeological findings: The various archaeological findings are outlined as follows.



Fig 3: Zofate Thlangtlakna Gate

Kawtchhuahropui: *Kawtchhuahropui* (literally meaning the great entranceway) is Mizoram's first site under the protected monuments of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). It measures about 45 sq. km in area and has yielded petroglyph on over 100 large stone slabs (menhirs), depicting human, and animal figures. Remains of an ancient water pavilion as identified by ASI exist, among other artefacts.



Fig. 4: *Kawtchhuahropui*



Fig 5: Engraving study

Ralven Pûk: *Ralven Pûk* has five outpost caves and is located not too far from the menhirs. It is said that these caves were used by the early settlers as outposts to protect their village from their enemies.



Fig 6: *Ralven Pûk*

Laitumanu lunglen tlang

Laituma is the main reason why this '*Laitumanu lunglen tlang* ' is named. Laituma is a handsome and charming man during his days. So, he can date any woman he wants and used to sleep with them. So, the Chief suspected him and asked to do one thing i.e. to keep '*Fangra*' in each of the women's '*êm*' with whom he slept with. In this way the Chief came to find out that he even slept with the Chieftainess. This enraged the Chief and was murdered in the Tiau River. As a result of this, Laituma's mom used to go up the hill and stare at the river where his beloved son was murdered. So, in this way the hill is called *Laitumanu lunglen tlang*.



Fig 7: *Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang*

Lungdawhsei is located near a village and is a place where the people used to rest while travelling and on their way back from jhum cultivation. This *Lungdawhsei* maybe the longest *Lungdawhsei* in Mizoram. Traditionally,

Know Your History: Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia

they would keep 'Talhkhuang' in the past, so that anyone can beat it for amusement purpose. They also used this place for 'chhawngghnawh'.



Fig 8: *Lungdawh sei*

Other Places Visited: Apart from Vangchhia, along the route, there are some villages with historicity which were visited. The following are the various places visited.

Dungtlang Village

Lianchhiari lunglen tlang:

This is a rocky ledge over a high cliff where love-smitten Lianchhiari used to sit to watch the distant village where her lover, Chawngfianga had migrated. With its tip projecting and commanding a good view of the surrounding hills, it is situated at Dungtlang village, about 56 kilometres from Champhai. The story goes that Lianchhiari, a beautiful daughter of Vahnuaithanga, the great chief of Dungtlang, fell in love with Chawngfianga, son of a common citizen. Their romance blossomed and became the talk of the village. So, by force Chawngfianga and his family quietly migrated to Chhingzawl village to the east of Dungtlang. This came as a great shock to Lianchhiari who became heartbroken and went up the hill to sit on the precarious ledge from which she could see the village where her lover had gone to live.

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Fig 9: *Lianchhiari Lunglen Tlang*

Khawbung Village

Mizo Hlakungpui Mual: This is a monumental landmark to commemorate Mizo writers, set up in 1986 at the southern edge of the village.



Fig 10 (left) & 11 (right): *Mizo Hlakungpui Mual*

Hlakungpui Robawm: Within the vicinity of *Hlakung Mual*, there is a building named *Hlakungpui Robawm* which stores the various details of Mizo writers including a museum.



Fig 10: *Hlakungpui Robawm*

Acknowledgment

We are very grateful to our Principal Vuansanga Vanchhawng for allowing this field study, contributing a sum of Rs. 20,000/- and for providing us free transportation. We are also thankful to Dr. John C. Laldusaka (Department of Philosophy) for his donation to the department Field Study.

We expressed our heartfelt gratitude to the local people of Vangchhia especially to the VCP of Vangchhia for providing us a place to stay during our stay and to the local guides for their guidance and enlightenment.

Report Writing On Field Study on Vangchhia Field Study

Introduction: The field study of the Department of History, Higher and Technical Institute, Mizoram was organized from 5th-9th December, 2022. The theme of this field study was named as 'Know Your History' at Vangchhia, Champhai District. The journey started on 5th December, 2022. Vangchhia is situated near the border of Indo-Burma region which is recognized as one of the most prestigious archaeological site in Mizoram.



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Fig 1: Onward to Vangchhia

Archaeological Report

Vangchhia archaeological site of Mizoram is located in the Eastern part of Mizoram. It grabs the attention of the tourist and most importantly the archaeologist were very fond of visiting this early civilization situated in Mizoram. The Great Gateway in Vangchhia village in Champhai District has been revered by the locals for many generations. It was discovered by

the Archaeological Survey of India in the year 2015. There were over 201 Menhirs, the technique of curving was relief and incision as well. The Menhirs are tall and upright stone erected by human for various purposes as per their cultural and traditional. In Vangchhia, the largest menhirs is measured 1.5m in width and 30cm in thickness. Menhirs were found all around the world, it mostly symbolizes important aspect of the society. It deals mostly rituals. The menhirs in Vangchhia indicated images of human, various animals and weapon. On each of these menhirs is one main figure of human with or without head-dress. The locals believed that the folktale of the primitive make them realized that the head-dress on the menhirs might be of a warrior. The folktales make us to believe that the brave warrior who killed enemies and various animals, they were considered as a brave man. So, in order to honour them, the stone were erected and the depiction can be considered as the animals he had killed throughout his life, materials that were possessed and owned.



Fig 2: *Kawtchhuahropui*

Moreover near the menhirs there are five caves renowned as ***Ralven Pûk***, and according to locals, it is a watch post. It was used as the safe guard from the enemies. Unlike the heavily carved of menhirs, this rock has no such

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work of art whatsoever. A stone paved walkway that leads to Tiau River is one of the most important river in Mizoram. As this river connect to Burma, people were traversing this place and used as a trade route. The heritage site holds numerous artefacts and rocks which may lead to the finding of the early settlement of the region. The unearthed items include ancient iron artefacts and old pots, both broken and whole stone blocks, structure water pavilions, ancient graves which shed lights on the lifestyles of the ancient settlers in the area. There was also *Lungdawh* [reddish brown sand stone] at the outskirts of the village. According to tradition, it is the place where people rests.

Inside the village, there are five ancient graves which is known as *Tianhrang thlân* [tomb]. On the upper roadside of the village, there is a cave which was credited to be where Laituma slept with different women. There is a folk saying that Laituma was a handsome young flirty man who easily lured women with his sweet word.

There is a water pavilion and strategically drilled holes across-spread over several areas which drew attention of the archaeologists.



Fig 3

Socio-Economic Report

The village of Vangchhia is located in Champhai District near the border of Indo-Burma, and is under the control of Khawbung R.D Block. According to 2011 census the total population of Vangchhia was around 837 and also according to the 2011, Vangchhia has around 153 household. The literacy rate was around 96.8%. Though it was not a populated village, the people are quite good with interaction with the outsiders. The house was built most commonly Assam type but some of the high standard people built their house in a good manner i.e. concrete. The most common language is *Duhlian*, as it was a diverse group of people living, some of the linguistic was also used namely Lai, Hmar, Paite language. In Vangchhia there were some refugees from Burma, so there were a few 125cc motor cycle. In the present day, the village has one volley court and one football playground. Agriculture is their main source of occupation. Pigs are imported to Vangchhia from Myanmar village mainly from Saṭawm, Dawihkhel and Chawnghoih and these pigs were exported by the villagers of Vangchhia to another places of Mizoram. One of the villagers Mr. K.C.Doliana had reaped 2000 bucket of rice from his paddy field. The present day condition of their education, religions and others was quite pleasurable. In Vangchhia bamboos are very rare.

In 1885, Sailo Chief Thawmpuia renamed the village as Vangchhia .The main reason why it is called Vangchhia is that in the ancient days of Mizoram, Vangchhia was inhabited by Vangchhia clans so it was named as Vangchhia village. There are many churches inside the village. The churches are: *Isua Krista Kohhran*, United Pentecostal Church, Salvation Army, Presbyterian Church of India and Seventh Day Adventist. Though there are so many church Baptist was not established yet. As the population of the village was not a great number so the members of different churches cannot increase as well.



Fig 4

There are five schools: two primary, one middle and two high school. These schools played a significant role in educating the children.

Other places visited

On the way back home *Lianchhiari Lunglen Tlang*, Dungtlang Sangsarih was also being visited. According to folklore, Lianchhiari often used to look out for her besot Chawngfianga. It was the legendary cliff protruding perilously far outside the rugged mountain. The legend goes that the daughter Lianchhiari of the chief Dungtlang village fell in love with a commoner called Chawngfianga. Their love could not flourish and Chawngfianga was forced to leave the village. Heartbroken Lianchhiari would sit at the tip of the cliff and watch the distant village to where her lover had migrated. The legendary folk says that in the mid-18th Century

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Dungtlang which is around 1750 AD, father of Lianchhiari, Vahnuaithanga and his friend Thangluaha and his brother Vanpuia cross the Tiau River and settled in Dungtlang. During this time many clan were also inhabited Dungtlang especially Hualhang, Hualngo and Pawi clan. Approximately during 1790 the settlement collapsed and some of them went to Burma, and some of them went to southern part of Mizoram.

Mizo Hlakungpui Mual is situated in South Khawbung which is often regarded as Mizo Poet's Square. It is a monument to commemorate Mizo poets. It was set up in 1986 at the southern edge of Khawbung village, Mizoram state. The local people decided to include all the Mizo poets and writers who deserved recognition for their contribution to Mizo literature.



Fig 5

Remarks

The field trip at Vangchhia was really pleasurable for the students and the faculties as it help to co-operate with one another. It even help students to work different kind of activities which was never done in the household. It also help to improve the knowledge of the student. This kind of activities help the day's scholars and the residence dwellers to have more brotherhood and sisterhood.

Acknowledgement

We are thankful to our Principal for allowing this field study to Vangchhia, providing financial assistance and college bus. Moreover the faculties of Department of History played an important role for the success of this field study, each and every one of them played their role with compassion. Dr. John C. Laldusaka who is the Head of Department from Philosophy Department had contributed Rs. 2000 for this field study as well. Most importantly Vangchhia Village Council provided a place for us to stay and various other needs. Vangchhia Y.M.A also played a significant role for the success of this field study by allowing the use of various utensils and a bench. Moreover the locals were also very generous to them as well they even gave us some vegetables to cook.

Report On Vangchhia Field Study

Introduction

Vangchhia is said to be occupied in the year 1888 by Thawmpuia Sailo, Liansuaka and his younger brother Ngeihchungnunga Fanai. It is said that the village is named Vangchhia, because it was an old settlement of Vangchhia clan. It is a village in Champhai district of Mizoram, India located in Khawbung RD Block. Vangchhia is known to be a popular village due to the historical monuments present in it, there are some RCC buildings to be found but most of the houses in Vangchhia are Assam type. The village is located near *Tiau* river i.e. a border between India and Myanmar. The present day Vangchhia people mainly use Duhlian language, only a few population use Lai language, who mainly are older people. Some also use Hmar and Paite language but these people seems to be immigrants from Myanmar. It is said that, earlier in Vangchhia the people mostly use Lai language.



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2023BA032



Fig 1: Vangchhia village

Present day Vangchhia

Till today, the people have adopted the style and instrument of the past, some are: *Sekawtrawlh* (Fig 2), tap (Fig 3), *thangchep*, *chingal thlawrna*

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and their ways of arranging stones, etc. can still be seen in the present day village. Some people till today display the head of animals (Fig 4) on the wall of their houses, which is a common practice among the tribal in different parts of the world.



Fig 2



Fig 3



Fig 4

The Vangchhe people also practice planting different kinds of flowers, vegetables and other edible things near their house. These are mainly Silver berry (*sarzuk*), tomato, brinjal (*bawkbawn*), corn (*vaimim*), stinky beans (*zawngtah*) (Fig 5), plum (*theite*), mustard (*antam*), banana (*balhla*), pumpkin (*mai*), mango (*theihai*), chili (*hmarcha*) (Fig 6), potato (*alu*) *kumtluang par*, *senhri*, cactus (Fig 7), rose, etc.



Fig 5



Fig 6



Fig 7

As the village is located near Myanmar, many Myanmar products like Myanmar bike (Kenbo, Canda) (Fig 8), herbs and edible products can be found in the village. For the Myanmar bike Vangchhe people made their own number plate. Cross boundary marriage is practiced in the present day society.



Fig 8

Vangchhe people and the neighbouring Myanmar people are in a very good relationship, just like the people of Vangchhia their main income comes from agriculture. In the far Northern side of Chin State, Myanmar, as rice is not too suitable for the land, people mainly grow corn and peas for consumption, unlike rice there is a mass production of red onion (*purun sen*) and garlic (*purun var*), they generate their income by selling it. These products are also sold out in different parts of Mizoram. The people of Vangchhia and the neighbouring villages in Myanmar also help each other in hard times, this shows how good the relationships are between the villages

As a small village Vangchhia has four schools, most of them are under government, these are Primary (Fig 9-10), Middle, Presbyterian English School and High School. After high school most of the parents send out their children to bigger cities for further studies. Despite being a small village there are different denominations like Presbyterian, Salvation Army, *Isua Krista Kohhran*, Seventh Day Adventist School and United Pentecostal Church (UPC) (Fig 11).



Fig 9



Fig 10



Fig 11

Archaeological Findings

Vangchhia is archaeologically rich village where various kinds of archaeological monuments can be found. Based on the field study, the following are the various findings from Vangchhia.

Kawtchhuahropui: *Kawtchhuahropui* (The Great Entrance) is one of the most popular place in Vangchhia that attracts people from different parts of the world. It is called ‘The Great Entrance’ because it is one of the place where the Mizo people entered from Myanmar. Inside *Kawtchhuahropui* are menhirs (standing stones), engraved by the early settlers of Vangchhia. There are 207 menhirs found in this place. These menhirs are fully carved and embossed with different forms. Rows of human figures, heads of mithun, deer, tiger, circles and other unknown engravings can be found. The prominent figure which is probably of the person for whom or because of whom the menhir was erected wearing head gears and holding a materials such spear can also be seen in the carvings. The chisel marks shows different shaped instrument used for carving.



Fig 12

Fig 13

Fig 14

Above the menhir site is a *Ralven Pûk* used as watch tower. There are five caves facing toward the Myanmar side. From the chisel marks one can say that these caves are human-made with metal tools. The caves are in close

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proximity measuring 17 m from the first cave to the last cave ranging from different sizes.



Fig 15



Fig 16

Lungdawhsei: Below *Kawtchhuahropui* is *Lungdawhsei*, which is an arrangement of stone slabs, bigger than modern bricks. It looks like a wall but it is very wide to be a wall, it measures 63m (length) approximately 4.7m (breadth) and 1.23m (height). The stones use in *Lungdawhsei* are mostly yellow sand stones. It is said that *Lungdawhsei* was used by early settlers to rest on their way back from paddy field, hunting or on their way home. A music instrument named *Talhkhuang* would have been kept in this *Lungdawhsei*, which can be played by anyone who rests in the place. They would sing with the instrument while resting. This place is also used for (*Chhawngnawh*), where our ancestors would feed something to each other by surprise, especially egg. This was practiced mainly during *Mîm Kût*.



Fig 17



Fig 18

Ṭiau River: This River is 15km far from Vangchhia is located between India and Myanmar. This river acts as a border between the two countries. There are different kinds of rock specimen found in the river, all of them

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being sedimentary rocks. The geology of the area belongs to Barail formation. Some specimens were also collected for study purpose.



Fig 19



Fig 20

Places visited along the route

Apart from Vangchhia village, there were also other villages which were visited having archaeological monuments and places as outlined.

Dungtlang village

Lianchhiari Lunglen Tlang: It is a famous view point located in the district of Champhai, Mizoram. It is a legendary location where the lovers Lianchhiari use to look-out for her besot Chawngfianga who lived in another village. Near the cliff is her *Puantahna* where she use to weave cloths. Lianchhiari's grave can also be seen near the cliff.



Fig 21



Fig 22



Fig 23

Khawbung village

Mizo Hla Kungpui Mual: It is a place with monuments to commemorate Mizo poets and writers. It was set up in 1986 at the southern edge of Khawbung village, Mizoram state. Here, the monuments of poets and writers are erected at an interval of 10 years.



Fig 23



Fig 24

Hlakungpui Robawm: It is located near *Mizo Hlakungpui Mual*. Inside *Hlakungpui Robawm* there are instruments and photos, of which some are musical instruments, some are of daily use; *bel* (pot), *laher khawl* (cotton spinner) etc.



Fig 25



Fig 26



Fig 27

Remark

The Field Study has given us an in-depth study of Vangchhia village where various aspects of a society, both of the past and the present. It is a village with potential for further research as well as tourist spot. The various engravings, caves, platforms is of potential interest from academic perspective.

Acknowledgment

The students of History Department, Higher and Technical Institute, Mizoram (5th Semester) would like to thank our respected Principal, Mr. Vuansanga Vanchhawng for allowing us to have Field Study. We are also thankful to Dr. John C. Laldusaka, Department of Philosophy for donating Rs. 2000 for our field study. The Vangchhia community were kind to us. The VCP and YMA provided us with all our needs and hospitality. We thank the people of Vangchhia for making our study trip more memorable.

A Report on Archaeological Field Study



Introduction

On 5th December, 2022 the department of History 5th semester organised a field trip to Vangchhia, which is located in Champhai District of Mizoram in India, boarder of Myanmar. The students were twelve in number, accompanied by six teachers and one driver. The purpose for this field trip was to visit the archaeological site for study purpose. We departed on 5th December 2022 at 6:52am from Lunglei and we reached Vangchhia at 9:52pm and we resided at VC house.



Fig 1: Field trip bus with student and faculty (left)



Fig 2: Vangchhia village (right)

Present day Vangchhia (Socio-Economy)

Vangchhia is a village in Champhai District of Mizoram, India. It is located in Khawbung RD Block. The 207 menhir in the village became Mizoram's first protected site in 2012. Their houses are mainly Assam type and some RCC buildings. The people mostly spoke Duhlian, Hmar, Lai and Paite. Vangchhia village is not so far away from Myanmar border. In the village some of the wealthy people were usually teachers who works under the Government of Mizoram.

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Fig 3: Primary School



Fig 4: Presbyterian Church

Currently, there are Govt. Primary School, Govt. Middle School and Govt. High School and different denominations like Presbyterian, Salvation Army, *Isua Krista Kohhran*, Seventh Day Adventist and United Pentecostal Church. People often visit Vangchhia during summer and winter due to its historical background.

In Vangchhia, there are people using some of the materials that had been used by early settlers such as rodent trap, *chingal thlawrna bel* etc. Some of the plantation that can be seen in Vangchhia were Stinky beans (Zawngtah), Plum (*Theite*), Cabbage (*Zikhlum*), Scallions (*Kawlpurun*), Mustard (*Antam*), *Kawhte bel*, Pumpkin leaf (*Mai an*), *Saisu*, Mango (*Theihai*), *Aidu*, stinky beans, banana (*balhla*), *phuihnam*, Cactus, lady's fingers (*bawrhsaibe*), tomato, Sesame (*Chhawhchhi*), *anthur*, figs (*Theipui*), Silver berry (*sarzuk*), brinjal (*bawkbawn*), *ṭawkte*, *anhling*, *kumtluang par*, *faisa* etc.



Fig 6: Banana



Fig 7: Flower



Fig 8: Drying chilli in the sun



Fig 9: Potted plants

Archaeological Report

Ralven Pûk is located right above the menhirs. In *Ralven Puk* there are five caves about 5.5 ft each. The first and the last cave measures 17.m approximately. The stone were carved out of brown sand stone .



Fig 10: *Ralven Pûk*

Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang is a few walk from *Ralven Puk*. According to local traditions, Laituma was a very attractive man and many women liked him. He could pick any women he liked and had his own cave where he used to have a secret affairs with women. The Chieftain's wife also fell for him because of that the Chief got angry and was executed. His mother Mangthluaii felt so lonely after his son died that she often went to the hill above the village to stare at the *Tiau River* where her son was murdered. Therefore they called this place '*Laituma Nu lunglen Tlang*'.



Fig 11: *Laituma nu lunglen tlang*

Kawtchhuahropui is situated on the Indo-Myanmar border. *Kawtchhuahropui* (the great entranceway) has been revered by locals for many generations. Menhirs, rising almost 15 feet tall, stands at the excavation site holds numerous artefacts and rocks which leads to findings of early settlements of the region. It measures about 45 sq.km and has

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yielded pictographs on over 100 large stone slabs, depicting humans and animals. Remains of ancient water pavillion exist, among other artefacts.



Fig 12: Menhirs



Fig 13: *Kawtchhuahropui*

Lungdawhsei is located next to *Kawtchhuahropui*. The length is 63m, width 4.7m, height 1.23m. Structure such as this kind of platform traditionally was the resting place for people who returned back from their cultivation as well as for travellers. Traditionally, a wooden musical instrument called *Talhkhuang* must have been used for amusement.



Fig 14: *Lungdawhsei*

Tiau River is a legendary river between the international boundary of India and Myanmar. The river being the junction between two international places offers a wide variety of imported goods. It has now developed into a commercial centre where all kinds of imported goods are available. Tourists and locals like to visit the place to enjoy the view.



Fig 15: Myanmar



Fig 16: Tiau river

Other villages visited along the Field Study route

Dungtlang village

Lianchhiari lunglen tlang is a stunningly picturesque cliff situated at a distance of 64km from Champhai District in Dungtlang village of Mizoram. The cliff has a rocky projection jutting out to a dangerous distance.

The cliff gets its name from a famous love story. According to legend, Lianchhiari, the daughter of the Chief of Dungtlang village fell in love with a commoner, called Chawngfianga. Their love could not flourish, and the boy was forced to leave the village. Heartbroken, Lianchhiari would sit at the tip of the cliff and watch the distant village to where her lover had migrated. The cliff truly inspires art and poetry, and it is no wonder that Lianchhiari composed many a rueful songs of love sitting on this cliff.



Fig 17: *Lianchhiari lunglen tlang*

Khawbung village

Mizo Hlakungpui Mual is a monument to commemorate Mizo poets. It was set up in 1986 at the southern edge of Khawbung Village, Mizoram. The origin of these monuments sprang from the village people of Khawbung in

Know Your History: Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia

1983, when the Executive Committee of Khawbung Branch YMA resolved to commemorate the two laureate poets, Patea and Damhauhva. In time, the local people decided to include all the Mizo Poets and writers who deserved recognition for their contributions to Mizo literature. The Committee agreed, and the selection procedures goes as Writers who have produced at least 3-4 books, and have had a prolonged influence on Mizo literature would be selected while Poets whose songs and poems have exceptional literary value would also be included. Writers and poets may also be included in *Hlakungpui Mual* five years after their death.



Fig 18: *Mizo hlakungpui mual gate*



Fig 19: *Hlakungpui mual*



Fig 20: *Hlakungpui mual*

Hlakungpui Robawm is a place where the Mizo poet's belongings - clothes, musical instruments and some of their handwritten poets were stored. There is a museum in this building as well.



Fig 21: *Hlakungpui robawm*

Acknowledgment

We expressed our gratitude to the local people and the VC of Vangchhia for providing us a place to stay. Our field study is only possible through the hard work and good cooperation of the teachers and my fellow students.

We are very grateful to the Principal Vuansanga Vanchhawng for contributing the sum amount of Rs 20000 and we also got Rs 2000 from Dr. John C. Laldusaka. Were it not for our college, we might not have an opportunity to visit these places. I think it is important to know and learn about Mizo historical places because it is our duty to cherish and protect our cultural treasure.

Vangchhia Field Study

Introduction: The final year student of HATIM, History department had field study in Vangchhia, Champhai District which is located 238 km from Lunglei. Out of 13 students only one was not able to attend the journey due to some problems. The team comprised of five teachers and one driver.



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Fig 1: Onward to Vangchhia

The main purpose for this field study is to have a better understanding of Mizo history, how things were conducted in the past, economy, culture, tradition, and belief by studying and observing the local people and archaeological remains.

Vangsia which later came to be known as Vangchhia is a small village in Mizoram, lying on the Indo-Myanmar Border. The village is famous for its menhir and is the largest historical site in North East India. There are around 207 menhirs of different shapes and sizes in this village that are fully carved. The village became Mizoram's first protected archaeological site in 2012.

Archaeological Report

The various archaeological localities visited are outlined as follows.

Kawtchhuahropui

Kawtchhuahropui contain 207 menhirs having one side of carving which comes along with carvings of different shapes and sizes. The stones are generally upright. However, some stones are standing approximately 50, 74 and 76 degrees inclination. Also, there are few menhirs lying on the ground. Observation of the carvings shows the existence of metal technology in the past, which are believed to be imported mainly from Burma. The various engravings show high end smoothened finishing.



Fig 2: *Kawtchhuahropui*

The largest menhir is 1.5m (width) x 0.3m (thickness). These menhirs are fully carved and embossed with different forms. Rows of human figures, heads of mithun, deer, spear, bovidae, bead necklace, *chirawt lung*, *feikibar*, ladle, tiger, smoking pipe, *kingkawt*, fish, shield, silver disk earring, aquatic long neck bird (?). There are also several unknown figures which are not identifiable due to the poor condition of the stone. These menhirs tell the story of the early settlers and focuses largely on eminent person or kings. Among the human figures, the main one is holding spear and wearing a head dress, locally known as *Chhawndawl* and *Arke-Ziak*. These are believed to be worn only by those persons who have killed enemies in war. This figure is depicted along with animals, human beings, heads of mithun, deer which might have been killed by him. As per local beliefs, legends and myths, these menhirs are raised as memorial stones wherein prominent figures have been depicted along with animals and human beings that have been killed during the life time of the person.



Fig 4: *Kawtchhuahropui* menhir

Ralven Pûk

Ralven Pûk located right above the menhirs is a rock caves facing directly towards the Myanmar Border. There are five caves, about 1.7m (approx.) each in dimension. The distance between the first and the last cave is 17m approximately.



Fig 5: *Ralven Pûk*

Examination of the caves shows they are carved out of brown sand stone and functioned as watch tower. Due to natural weathering the rock shelter is in poor condition.

Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang

Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang is a place located at some distance from the menhirs. Similar to that of *Ralven Pûk* this place also have a clear view

Know Your History: Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia

towards the Myanmar Border. This place get its name from Laituma who is a famous and handsome man.

The legend have that the king of the village once asked Laituma to keep *fangra* (plant) in the bamboo basket of women he had slept with. However, the flower is found even in the bamboo basket of the chief's wife. The chief then decided to stone him to death in Tiau River.

The mother of Laituma had a mental breakdown and often went to the hills to have a view of the river. The hill later came to be known as “*Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang*”.



Fig 6: *Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang*

Lungdawhsei

Masonry structure at a lower level from *Kawtchhuahropui* called *Lungdawhsei* is covered in thick vegetation, and the team had to pave the way through the thick grasses and leaves. Clearing was required before starting the documentation.

Like the name suggest the place has is an elongated construction of stone slabs measuring 63m approximately in length. It is probably one of the longest in Mizoram. By taking the size and the length to account, one can tell that the village is quite populated and is belief to be one of the greatest village during their times. The rocks are belief to be taken from the surrounding areas.



Fig 7: *Lungdawhsei*

Potsherd finding

Taking a different path on the way back from *Kawtchhuahropui*, and since Vangchhia is home to earlier settlers, there are different signs that gives clear picture of an old settlement through the evidence of potsherds. Based on simple surface exploration, some potsherds were retrieved for demonstration. There are also two ancient burial that have remained unexcavated but disturbed to some extent.



Fig 8: Exposed section showing evidence of potsherds

Ṭiau River

It is a 159 km long river which forms part of the international boundary between India and Myanmar. River Ṭiau is used for fishing, swimming and picnic by people of nearby village on either country freely. It is also used as

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a source for sand mining. There is no any hindrance from either side of the country. The river have deep roots in the Mizo lores and tales.



Fig 9: *Tiau River*

From the river bank, rocks that have a unique colour, looks and shape were collected. Some of the rocks are small in size about the size of a palm and some are much bigger in size. The main purpose for these collection of rocks is to understand the geological setting of the area.

Present day Vangchhia: Socio-Economy

Going round the village gives a clear picture of the present day society. Domestic animals like pig, cat, dog, and chicken were high in number. Pigs are mainly imported from Saṭawm. Saṭawm also export pigs to towns like Lunglei and Aizawl. Some pig owners used car tyre as a plate to give food.



Fig 10: Sty

Most of the people have gardens in front of their house. They mainly grew *Dawl*, *Zikhlum*, *Zamzo*, *Japan zawngtah*, *bawrhsaiabe*, *Zo tomato*, *bawkbawn*, *ṭawkte*, *theite*, *antam*, *phuihnam*, *saisu*, *ṭawkpui*, banana etc. Unlike the other part of Mizoram, Vangchhia have limited supply of bamboo, so the people used tree branches as a fence to surround their house.

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Fig 11



Fig 12



Fig 13

The main source of income is agriculture and some of the wealthy family have terraces. Most of the houses are built using woods and tin; there are few concrete building. Schools such as Presbyterian English School, Government Primary School, Government Middle School, and Government High School are present in Vangchhia. There are five churches such as Presbyterian Church of India, Salvation Army, *Isua Krista Kohhran*, Seventh Day Adventist and United Pentecostal Church. Regarding language Duhlian is commonly spoken along with a small number of Hmar, Lai, Paite speakers.



Fig 14



Fig 15



Fig 16

Fig 14-16: Churches in Vangchhia

ASI has site office in the village. The village contain tanks and from these the water are distributed throughout the village. During the dry season, the village is visited by many people and the site is under the protection of Archaeological Survey of India. Another interesting thing about Vangchhia is that the surrounding village support each other in times of trouble and death, “*tlawmngaihna*” still exist among the people.

Acknowledgment

We give our thanks to our respected Principal Vuansanga Vangchawng for allowing Rs. 20,000 from the College. It is through him we are able to experience a wonderful journey. Our field study to Vangchhia is possible through the hard work of the teachers and my fellow student. We also got a huge support from our faculties and even got Rs 2,000 cash from Dr. John C. Laldusaka. We give our thanks to Vangchhia Village Council for taking care of us and let us borrow dekchi, spoon, plate and many others. We are also grateful to Mr. KC Khuma for sharing his knowledge. We are treated well by the local people and they played a great role in imparting local knowledge.

A Report on Archaeological Field Study at Vangchhia



Introduction: From 5th to 9th December, twelve students with six Asst. Professors of the Department of History and Philosophy went on a field study to Vangchhia located at Champhai District. The main aim of this trip was to visit the archaeological site of Vangchhia in order to have a further knowledge of Mizo history.



Fig 1: Onward to Vangchhia



Fig 2: Vangchhia

Vangchhia

Vangchhia is a village in Champhai district of Mizoram, India. It is located in Khawbung R.D. Block. The 207 menhirs in the village became Mizoram's first protected archaeological site in 2012. The name of the village "Vangchhia" is derived from one of the Hmar clan name "Vangchhia".

According to the 2011 census of India, Vangchhia has 153 households. The effective literacy rate (i.e. the literacy rate of population excluding children aged 6 and below) is 96.87 %.)

Present Day Socio-Economic Condition

According to 2011 census, there are 153 houses and approximately 837 people. There are 4 schools in Vangchhia, i.e., Presbyterian English School, Primary School, Middle School, and High School. Five churches were established as of today which includes Presbyterian Church of India, Salvation Army, *Isua Krista Kohhran*, Seventh Day Adventist and United Pentecostal Church. Also, there are approximately four languages used in Vangchhia which are Duhlian, Hmar, Lai and Paite. Agriculture is the main occupation took up by the people of Vangchhia. Most of the local people are planting different kinds of vegetables beside their house or in front of their house. Mr. KC Doliana has made a record in Mizoram by harvesting around 2000 buckets of rice. The local people mostly used wood for cooking and usually there are a large stack of wood beside each and every of the household. Three tanks are situated in different parts of the village and the local people received water from these tanks. There is one football field and one volleyball court present in this village.

As Vangchhia is situated on the border of Mizoram and Burma, many bikes known as 125 which were made in Burma are largely used by the local people and they even give their own number plate. The relationship between Burma and the local people of Vangchhia is very good. Burma and Vangchhia village are easily accessible to one another. Cross border marriage between the two villages as well as condolence meeting of the bereaved family often take place. Vangchhia had taken in several refugees from Burma but in the present day there is only one refugee's house in Vangchhia. The villagers near the border usually grow tobacco, onion and chillies. Also, Burma had exported many pigs to Mizoram. The local people often went hunting in the near forest and in some houses the skull of an animals were seen. Since Vangchhia is a historical site there are many visitors in the dry season. Many traditional practices were seen in the village such as the building of their house and the way the stone walls were stacked and also their house were mainly Assam- type.

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Fig 3



Fig 4



Fig 5



Fig 6



Fig 7



Fig 8



Fig 9



Fig 10



Fig 11



Fig 12

Archaeological Report

Kawtchhuahropui: There are approximately 207 menhirs of different shapes and sizes. Rows of human figures, heads of mithun, deers, other animals, circles probably gongs, weapons and other designs are engraved in these menhirs. Among the human figures, the prominent figure is holding a spear and wearing a head dress, these are supposed to be worn only by those persons who have killed enemies in the war. This figure is depicted along with animals, human beings, heads of mithun, deer which might have been killed by him. Sometimes, the prominent human figure is shown without any headgear. As per local beliefs, legends and myths, these menhirs were raised as memorial stones where they have been depicted along with animals and human beings that have been killed during their life time of their greatest achievement.



Fig 13



Fig 14



Fig 15



Fig 16

Fig 13-16: *Kawtchhuahropui*

Ralven Pûk: Besides, there are caves upside of the menhir called “*Ralven Pûk*” facing Myanmar. It has five openings. It is heavily weathered and it was probably used as watch station. It is completely devoid of any depiction inside or outside. *Ralven Pûk* was probably a watch station in which the brave men from the village watch out for their enemies. It was carved out of brown sand stone. Chisel marks from the caves point towards evidence of metal technology.



Fig 17: *Ralven Pûk*

Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang: *Laituma Nu lunglen Tlang* was located at some distance away from the “*Ralven Pûk*”. There is a saying that there once was a man called Laituma who was handsome and who attracted all the females of the village and have carnal relations with them. When the chief realised that his wife was among one of the women, he ordered Laituma to be stoned to death. After the death of Laituma, longing for him, his mother frequented this place and came to be called as *Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang*.



Fig 18: *Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang*

Water Pavillion

The ASI called it as *Water Pavillion*, where a water was stored by the earlier people, but till today there is no evidence to prove it. Another suggestion states that they may be *post – holes* for building their houses.



Fig 19

Tianhrang Thlân: *Tianhrang Thlân* originally got its name from the Mizo chief Tianhranga who was killed by the enemy when his village was raided, his people who were still alive decided to bury him in a special way, since then it was called “*Tianhrang Thlân*”. The early Mizo people buried the dead body in this grave called *Tianhrang Thlân*. In different parts of the village, five of these grave are found in which two graves can still be seen today and three had already been destroyed.



Fig 20: Ancient burial (*Tianhrang Thlan*)

Geological study of *Tiau River* for understanding the landscape and specimen collection for display at HATIM Museum was undertaken.



Fig 21: Geological observation and specimen collection

The village being historical and archaeological in nature, potshards were observed in different parts of the village. This shows that the settlement of the early settlers in Vangchhia was very wide. The pottery shard found were cord impressed pottery.

Other Places Visited

Apart from Vangchhia, some of the Mizo historical places were visited along the way such as:

1. *Lianchhiari Lunglen tlang* (Dungtlang village)
2. *Lianchhiari puantahna* (Dungtlang village)
3. The old settlement of Dungtlang (Dungtlang village)
4. *Mizo hlakungpui mual* (Khawbung village)

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Fig 22



Fig 23



Fig 24



Fig 25



Fig 26

Remarks

The whole field study was very interesting and adventurous at the same time as Vangchhia plays an important role in tracing the history of the Mizo. From this field study we learned many things such as the life style of the

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rural areas, the old ways of our ancestors which is still practiced by them today. We also learned that government job is not the only source of livelihood as majority of the villagers relied on agriculture, rearing of cattle etc.

Acknowledgement

We are very grateful to our Principal Vuansanga Vanchhawng, for granting us the permission to have this field study, including financial and transportation assistance. The success of our field study was partly due to him. We also give a heartfelt gratitude to Professor Dr. John C. Laldusaka for his financial donation.

And we cannot forget to mention our sincere appreciation to the VCP of Vangchhia and YMA for providing us a place to stay and for supplying us our needs during our stay. We also thank our department Assistant Professors Miss Lalruathlui Khiantge, Miss Zosangzuali Hrahsel, Miss Linda Chawngthu, Sir Benjamin Lalnunfima, Sir Dr Lalhminghlua and Miss Ludi Lalneihpuii, Assistant Professor from Department of Philosophy and the bus driver, C. Lalbiakzauva for their enormous contribution to the Field Study.

Report on Vangchhia Field Study



Introduction

Vangchhia is famous for the archaeological site of *Kawtchhuahropui*. The village was established long ago. Due to several reasons the early settlers left Vangchhia village. In 1885 Chief Thompaliana re-established Vangchhia and settled there. The aim of this field study was to visit the archaeological site for study purpose.

The duration of the Trip was from 5th to 9th December 2022. Departing from Lunglei around 6:30 a.m. on 5th December 2022 and the team came back on 9th December 2022.



Fig 1: Vangchhia

Present day Socio-Economic Report

Vangchhia is a village in the Champhai District of Mizoram, India. It is located in Khawbung RD Block. The 207 menhir stones in the village became Mizoram's first protected site in 2012. Their houses are mainly Assam type and there are some RCC buildings and their main languages are Duhlian, Hmar, Lai and Paite. Vangchhia village is adjacent to Myanmar

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border. In the village, some of the wealthy people were usually teachers who worked under the Government of Mizoram.

There are Presbyterian English School, Primary School, Government Middle school and Government High School and there are different denominations like Presbyterian Church of India, Salvation Army, *Isua Krista Kohhran*, Seventh Day Adventist and United Pentecostal Church. People often visit during summer and winter due to their historical background. In 2021 there were some refugee who migrated in Vangchhia but due to the village poor economy they were unable to take care of these refugee. Because of this, some refugees from Myanmar stayed here for few months but due to their economic conditions, they went to other places.



Fig 2



Fig 3

In Vangchhia the village people still used some of the material in their daily life that has been used by the early settlers which most of the young generation might not even know how to use it. This showed that the people of Vangchhia still cherish and appreciate it. Some of the things that were still used by the people were rodent trap, *chingal thlawrna* bel etc. Some of the plantation that can be seen in Vangchhia were stinky beans (*zawngtah*), plum (*theite*), cabbage (*zikhlum*), scallions (*kawlpurun*), mustard (*antam*), *kawhte bel*, pumpkin leaf (*mai an*), *saisu*, mango (*theihai*), *aidu*, stinky beans, banana (*balhla*), *phuihnam*, cactus, lady's fingers (*bawrhsaibe*), tomato, sesame (*chhawhchhi*), *anthur*, figs (*theipui*), silver berry (*sarzuk*), brinjal (*bawkbawn*), *ṭawkte*, *anhling*, *kumtluang par*, *faisa*.

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Fig 4



Fig 5



Fig 6



Fig 7

Archaeological Report

Kawtchhuahropui is Mizoram's first protected site under the Archeological survey of India (ASI). There are 207 menhirs. It measures about 45sq kms in area. The menhirs contain various carvings such as human, animal, geometric, and unidentifiable figures. The largest menhir is 1.5m (width) x 0.3m (thickness). These menhirs are fully carved and embossed with different forms.



Fig 8



Fig 9

Ralven Pûk was located above the menhirs. In *Ralven Pûk* there are five caves which are said to be used as watch station.



Fig 10: *Ralven Pûk*

Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang is also at some distance from *Ralven Pûk*. Laituma was well known for being handsome and charming as well as being a womanizer in his days. He would sleep with any women he wants. It is also said that he even slept with their Chieftainess of their village. The enraged chief made a plan and he killed during *Tlang Sangha Vuak*, which was a mass catching of fish practiced by the community. After the dead of Laituma, his mother miss him desperately. She often went to this location to stare at the Tiau River where her son was murdered. Eventually, this hill was called *Laituma Nu Lunglen Tlang*.



Fig 11



Fig 12

Lungdawhsei which is in Vangchhia might be the longest *Lungdawh* in Mizoram. It was located at a lower level from *Kawtchhuahropui*. The length was approximately 63m with a width of 4.7m and a height of 1.23m. It was used as a resting place by travelers and when returning from their

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cultivation. Traditionally, in such structure they would keep an instrument named ‘*Talhkhuang*’. While taking rest, some would beat it to amuse themselves.



Fig 13: *Lungdawhsei*

Ṭiau River is a 159 km long river which forms part of the international boundary between India and Myanmar. It rises near Khuangphah village of Champhai district in Mizoram, India. It ultimately merges with the Tuipui River. Zokhawthar is located on the Indian side of the river. Ṭiau River is used for fishing by people of nearby village on either country freely. There is no hindrance from either side of the country. The river enters Myanmar at the district of Champhai in the North-Eastern state of Mizoram. The site has been the main place for border crossing from both sides. It has now developed into a commercial centre, where all kinds of imported goods are available. Tourists and locals alike visit the place to enjoy the scenic sights and to buy goods that come across the border from Myanmar.



Fig 14: *Ṭiau River*

Other Places Visited

The following are the various places visited outside of Vangchhia.

Lianchhiari Lunglen Tlang

Lianchhiari Lunglen Tlang is a famous view point located in the district of Champhai in the North-Eastern state of Mizoram. This is the legendary cliff with its projection protruding perilously far outside the rugged mountain where the lover Lianchhiari used to look-out for her besot Chawngfianga. No wonder that this idyllic view should find natural response to the romantic tribal population, enthusing them to weave out sweet love lores around it. This is 64 kms South of Champhai town on the way to Khawbung.

A little mile away from Lianchhiari Lunglentlang lies an ancient settlement remnants of stone structures and burial were observed.

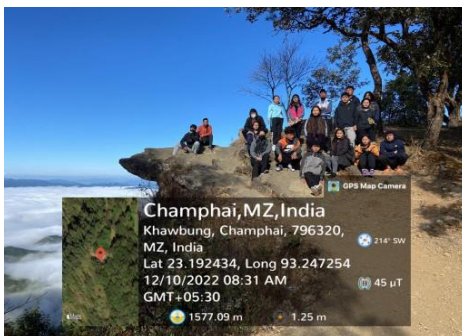


Fig 15: *Lianchhiari Lunglen Tlang*

Mizo Hla Kungpui Mual

Mizo Hlakungpui Mual (Mizo Poets' Square) is a monument to commemorate Mizo writers. It was set up in 1986 at the southern edge of Khawbung Village.

After entering the gate on the right side, there is a Museum called *Hlakungpui Robawm*. It is a place where the Mizo Poet's belongings like their clothes, musical instruments and some of their handwritten poets and diaries were stored.

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Fig 16



Fig 17



Fig 18

Remarks

It is indeed a very enlightening and refreshing trip. The people of Vangchhia welcomed us with hospitality and great humour. This trip has enriched and widen our knowledge about our ancestral history.

Acknowledgement

We convey our heartfelt gratitude to our Principal Vuansanga Vanchhawng for allowing us to have this exposure programme and for contributing the sum amount of Rs. 20000 and also for providing us free transportation.

We are grateful to the local people of Vangchhia especially to the VCP of Vangchhia for providing us a place to stay during our stay and to the local guides for their guidance and enlightenment.

Report On Lunglei District Museum



Vanlalbiakfeli
2023BA045

Meaning of Museum

A museum is a permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, employment, reflection and knowledge sharing. Depending on the administration, museums may take entry fees. There are different kinds of museums which are sometimes established with specific purposes. Ownership may also vary from private to government.

For the purpose Departmental activity, Lunglei Museum has been selected for documentation and study.



Fig 1: Museum entrance



Fig 2: Inside the Museum

Structure and setup

The District Museum of Lunglei is the first district museum in Mizoram, well known for its store house of the ethnic culture and tradition of the state. It was established on the first floor of Saikuti Hall located at Venglai

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Lunglei in the heart of the town. It was officially inaugurated on 3rd August 2006. The building is a simple concrete building and had only one entry. Twenty numbers of beautiful showcases and eight numbers of dioramas were installed in the museum.

The diorama show cases were beautified with 19 numbers of statues with background painting. More than 200 numbers of rare and valuable artifacts and eco-facts of different variety were displayed in the show cases. All the displays have artificial lighting system.

The Museum is headed by District Research Officer with few lower functionaries. It is functioning as one of the sections of District Art & Culture Office, Lunglei under Department of Art & Culture, Government of Mizoram.



Fig 3: Display set up

Classification of display

Majority of the displays were of material culture including clothes, ornaments, textile production, kitchen materials, and musical instruments etc. Other displays include elephant skull, bamboo flower and bamboo fruit, scapula, peacock feather etc. There are also personal displays of Nuchhungi, Lalsangzuali, Chhuahkhama, Zadingi, Lalzova, Roliana Ralte, and Captain Lalhleia. Many of these items are displayed in cabinets which are as follows:

Display 1

The first cabinet displayed two types of baskets namely ‘*Thul chhip zum*’ and ‘*Thul chhip bial*’. They were made out of bamboo. Women used to keep their belongings, cloths and valuable properties in it.



Fig 4: Display 1



Fig 5: *Thul chhip zum* Fig 6: *Thul chhip bial*

Display 2

The next cabinet shows different type of baskets used for different purpose. The first one is called *Em pai* [Fig 7] made from bamboo and used for carrying rice and other things. The second is *Tlam em* [Fig 8] which is also made from bamboo and used for carrying harvest products. The last one is called *Paikawng* [Fig 9] mainly used for carrying fire woods and water tubes by women.



Fig 7: *Em pai*



Fig 8: *Tlam em*



Fig 9: *Pai kawng*

Display 3

In the next showcase there are bamboo products. *Kho* [Fig 11] is used for measuring cleaned rice from its container. *Fairel bel* [Fig 12] is used as a container to store clean rice. *Bawm em* [Fig13] is also another kind of basket and *Aiawt*, a trap for crabs. *Faikhiat* is a kind of basket in the shape of a container (Fid 14). *Fawng* [Fig 15] a small flat shallow basket. *Paihper* [Fig 16] flat shaped basket used for holding seeds while sowing.



Fig 10: Display 3



Fig 11: *Kho*

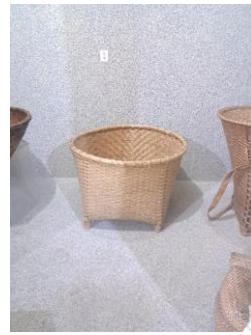


Fig 12: *Fairel Bel*

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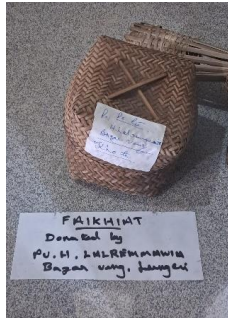


Fig 13: *Bawm em, Aiawt* Fig 14: *Faikhiat*

Fig 15: *Fawng*

Fig 16: *Paihper*

Display 4

In the next showcase you will see *Arbawm pang hawn* and *Arbawn chhip hawn* [Fig 18] which are plaited bamboo chicken coops. *Arâwt* [Fig 19] is a loosely plaited basket for carrying fowls.



Fig 17: Display 4

Fig 18: *Arbawm pang hawn*, *Arbawm chhip hawn*



Fig 19: *Aiâwt*

Fig 20: *Fawng*

Fig 21: *Arâwt*

Display 5

Another bamboo work are laid out in the next showcase. *Chhihrì* [Fig 23] is a sieve which has many holes in it to separate the husked grain from the small broken pieces. *Chingal thlawrna* [Fig 24] made of bamboo is used for leaching funnel for making potash or lye from wood ashes. *Sisep* [Fig 25] is used for winnowing grains. *Tui ûm* [Fig 26] is a bamboo tube used for carrying water.



Fig 22: Display 5



Fig 23: *Chhihrì*



Fig 24: *Chingal Thlawrna*



Fig 25: *Sisep, Kho te*



Fig 26: *Tui Um*

Display 6

The next showcase display various household implements and other articles. *Thlanvawng thlêng* [Fig 28] is a wooden plate. *Tuibûr* [Fig 29] is a

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lady's smoking pipe made of bamboo container, small silver pipe and earthen container at the top for holding tobacco. *Vaibêl* [Fig 29] is also a men's smoking pipe. *Darmeitalh bawm* [Fig 30] is a small brass box in which men used to keep flint stone, store with the handle and tinder which is obtained from a kind of palm tree. *Mau fïanpui* [Fig 31] large bamboo spoon, *Saum bûr* [Fig 32] gourd used for storing fermented pig's fat.



Fig 27: Display 6



Fig 28: *Thlanvawng Thing Thleng*



Fig 29: Smoking pipes



Fig 30: *Meitalh Bawm*



Fig 31: Domestic materials



Fig 32: *Rawtthleng & a fung*

Display 7

In this cabinet various materials which have connection with rice beer are displayed. *Dâwnkâwn* is a siphon like bent pipe made of brass which is used for sucking rice beer from the earthen pot. *Huntung zubêl*, *Ralchâ bel* and *Ngânkhat bêl* were an earthen pot used for brewing and keeping rice beer. *Zupui no* and *Seki no* are used for drinking rice beer.

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Fig 33: Display 7



Fig 37: *Dawnkawn*



Fig 36: *Huntung zibel*



Fig 35: *Ralcha bel*



Fig 34: *Ngankhat*



Fig 38: *Zu nopui*

Display 8

The next cabinet is the ethnographical items which displayed various traditional weaving implements of the Mizo. *Tinduang* is a hank or a skein of cotton yarn dyed with local indigo dye. *Berhbû* is a bowl made of brass used to hold water for damping the interlaced yarn with a brush while weaving. *Chawnzial* is a small bamboo mat used for wrapping cardings of cotton while awaiting spinning. *Suvêl* is a cotton winding machine made of bamboo. *Hmui* is a spinning jenny made of wood and cane. *Herâwt* is used for separating seed from raw cotton. *Thembû* is a set of weaving equipment consisting about fifteen items.

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Fig 39: Display 8 Fig 41: *Tingduang, Berh bu* Fig 40: *Chawnzial*



Fig 45: *Suvêl* Fig 42: *Thembu* Fig 44: *Hmui* Fig 43: *Herâwt*

Display 9

In this cabinet we find *Laldiar*, a white turban belonging to Lai community worn by men on special occasion and festival. *Thungip* is a satchel like bag belonging to Paite community. *Ipte chei* are the bags of a well to do men in the past normally slung over the shoulder. *Siapsuap* are the earliest known wear of women and men of the Mizo. Both are made from bark of a flowering tree locally called *vaiza* and are later substituted by a fringe of twisted strands of cotton.



Fig 46: Display 9

Fig 51: *Lal Diar*

Fig 47: *Thungip*



Fig 48: *Ipte Chei*



Fig 50: *Siap Suap*



Fig 49: *Liandula Suit*

Display 10

This cabinet displayed Capt. Lalhleia's trouser, pen and socks. He is a brave and famous soldier of Mizo National Front during insurgency. Besides that there is the jacket of Roliana Ralte, a famous Mizo song composer and a writer. *Puanak* is a full sleeves cotton blouse worn by women. *Kaohrei* is a sleeveless colourful blouse worn by Mara women. *Lai kawr* is an embroidered blouse worn by Lai women. *Rinai* is a hand woven black color cloth of Rieng community. *Pasal puanak zem* is a white striped woven long shirt of Paite community.



Fig 50: Capt. Lalhleia's trouser Display 10 (left)



Fig 51: Fig 58: Jacket of Roliana Ralte (middle)



Fig 52: Paite mipa kawr *Puanak* Socks and pen (right)



Fig 53: Paite hmeichhe kawr



Fig 54: *Pasal puanak zem*

Display 11

Niksan is a colourful embroidery cloth worn by women of Paihte community on festival occasions. *Biarpi* is a finely woven small cloth worn by men of Zahau Pawi clan.



Fig 55: *Niksan*



Fig 56: *Biarpi*

Display 12

In the next cabinet there displayed *Tangchin* which is a white cloth interwoven with red colour worn by man of Paihte community. Thangsuo is a shawl striped with variety of colours worn by man of Hmar community. Paite *puandum* is a black cloth with red and yellow

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stripes, worn by Paite men and women. *Puanlaisan* is a men's shawl worn by Paite community. Chyaa is a Lai or Mara shawl worn only on special occasions



Fig 57: Display 12



Fig 58: *Tangchin*



Fig 59: *Thangsuo Puan*



Fig 60: *Paite Puandum*

Display 13

This cabinet displays the clothes of Lalsangzuali Sailo, a famous Mizo song composer and a singer. It also displays the clothes and writings of Nuchhungi.



Fig 61: Display 13

Display 14

This cabinet contains textile objects. *Khutho* is a head gear made with beads and brass and worn by chiefs of Mara and Lai. *Vakiria* is a beautiful head gear of the Mizo made of cane and porcupine quills with long tails of parrot. *Iausan* is a bracelet of Riang women made of brass. *Benggi* is a silver anklet of Riang women. *Ngen Ngun* is a Mizo bracelet made of brass. *Riahpawpachhi* is a crescent shaped necklace made of single piece of brass, worn by warriors of Mara or Lai tribe. *Tar* is an arm let of Riang tribe made of brass. *Saiha bengbeh* is an earring of Mizo women. *Rangbauh sana* is a Bru necklace made of coins. *Nabauh* is a silver earrings of the Riang women. *Chhâwn* is a head plume made of a tuff of goat hair dyed red about five inches with a suitable pointed holder. Only persons who have taken enemy's head in raid or war would wear it. *Hrokei* is a hair pin made of brass used by menfolk.

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Fig 62: Display 14



Fig 63: *Thimkul*



Fig 64: *Rangbauh sana*



Fig 65: *Riahpawpachhi*



Fig 66: *Benggi, Chhawn*



Fig 68: *Khutho*



Fig 69: *Iausan*



Fig 70: *Nabauh*



Fig 71: *Saiha bengbeh*



Fig 72: *Ngen ngun*



Fig 73: *Vakiria*

Display 15

The next cabinet shows spectacular designs of necklaces belonging to different communities. *Ṭhiuk* is a women's necklace made of brown beads. *Ṭhipui* is also an amber beads necklace. *Rialṭhi* is a white transparent beads necklace called hailstone like necklace.



Fig 74: Display 15



Fig 78: *Elkin ṭhi*



Fig 79: *Lai Pumṭek ṭhi*



Fig 80: *Ṭhiṭek*



Fig 81: *Darzai ṭhi*



Fig 82: *Milu ṭhi*



Fig 83: *Ṭhihna sen*



Fig 84: *Ṭhihna hring*

Display 16

This cabinet display different designs of belts belonging to different communities. *Chinchik* is a women's belt of Mara and Lai community. *Kharvar* is also a brass belt used for fastening long cloth or petticoat worn around the waist by women of Lai and Mara.



Fig 85: Display 16



Fig 86: *Darzaikawngchilh*



Fig 87: *Kharvar*



Fig 88: *Chumchi*

Display 17

This cabinet display various traditional musical instrument of Mizo. Most of them were made of bamboo and wood, *Bur ɰingtang* is made of a hallow gourd in which bamboo shaft is fixed for holding its string. *Rawchhèm* is a

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handmade musical pipe fixed with nine bamboo tubes of different lengths and sizes into dried gourd.



Fig 89: *Bur Tingtang*



Fig 90: *Rawchhem*

Display 18

In this cabinet different kinds of gongs are displayed. *Darmang* is the smallest type of gong made of brass. *Darkhuang* is a big brass gong. *Darbenthek* is a pair of thin gongs of proportionate sizes. *Darbu* is a set of three medium gongs having different notes of sound.



Fig 91: Display 18



Fig 92: *Darkhuang*



Fig 93: *Darbu*



Fig 94: *Darmang*

Display 19

This cabinet display various weaponry. *Fungki* is a container of gun powder made of mithun's horn. *Muzuk fei* is a spear used for hunting animals and an important weapon in times of war. *Rawnzaw* is another type of a gun powder flask.



Fig 96: *Feikibar*



Fig 97: *Zenchawng*



Fig 95: *Fungki*

Display 20

This cabinet displayed various kind of stones and bamboo products. *Lungtât* is a hone or grind stone used for sharpening knives and other implements by the Mizo. *Lunghriam* is a stone used as billhook, hoe, and adze etc. in ancient times. *Saingho* is an ivory. An ivory was one of the most valuable property among the Mizo. *Tuikep* is a beautifully

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decorated white mollusc shell used as a kind of ornaments. *Lal dawhkillh* is a hairpin made of a shell or bones of animals used by the Lai community. *Mau samkhuih* is a hand comb made of bamboo.



Fig 96: Display 20



Fig 97: *Lungtât*



Fig 98: *Lunghriam* (Celt)



Fig 99: *Mau samkhuih*



Fig: 100: *Lungthleng*

Dioramas: Within the Museum displays, there is another form of display that utilizes the entire setting, background of the display case in the form of

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diorama. Such displays create an aesthetic sense that binds the entire showcase as one single functioning work of art and material culture.

Diorama 1



Fig 101: Mara chief couple

Diorama 2



Fig 102: The Paite women carrying firewood towards the village from the forest accompanied by her husband

Diorama 3



Fig 103: The young couple carrying an unhusk rice from the cultivation field towards their village

Diorama 4



Fig 104: Young couple who were clearing their jhum in the traditional method of the Mizo cultivation

Diorama 5



Fig 105: Chakma couple sitting in front of their house

Diorama 6



Fig 106: A woman who is holding her loom is being courted by a man inside the house

Diorama 7



Fig 107: Two women pounding a rice in a wooden mortar while a girl winnowing their husked rice beside them

Diorama 8



Fig 108: The Mizo boys and girls performing a Cheraw in an open space of the village

Open Displays

Within the museum display, there are also displays that are not encased. The following are such case of Open Displays.

Sai lu ruh: An elephant's skull. It is known that this elephant had killed at least two persons in the forest. Some hunters had killed her in the forest in Lunglei District.



Fig 109: Elephant skull

Photograph of early Christian: A group photograph of early Christians who were expelled by the chief of Pukpui from his village. The photograph was taken in 1902.



Fig 110: Photograph of early Christian

Photograph of Mrs. Zadingi: Mrs. Zadingi of Buarpui village who received **Bravery Award** from the President of India on 3rd July 1978 for killing a wild tiger on self-defense with her simple axe in the nearby forest of Buarpui village.



Fig 111: Mrs.Zadingi

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Fig 112: Lalzova tombstone



Fig 113: *Sial lu*



Fig 114: Early Mizo kitchen



Fig 115: Nuchhungi



Fig 116: Rev. Chhuahkhama



Fig 117: Numismatics

Remarks

Through my observation I have found that the museum was indeed a very important place for the Mizo community and for outsiders. Lunglei District museum holds so many precious materials which are very interesting. However, what I want to point out is that the type of showcase that they used is very simple, plain and are all of the same design. If they could display a more color or creative paintings according to the item which they have displayed inside each showcase that would make the display and materials more interesting. The museum presently have no proper prevention measure from fire hazard. The current location of Lunglei

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District museum is in Saikuti Hall Venglai Lunglei but it would soon be located to Sazaikawn with better facilities and more item would be displayed there at the new building.

Acknowledgment

First of all I would like to give thanks to the Lord for giving me good health to write this report. Secondly, I would like to thank our Principal and our Department faculties for their constant support throughout this report. Moreover I would like to thank Mr. Awmtea for allowing me to have my research freely inside the museum for this report writing. Finally I would like to thank my family for their never ending support till the end.

A Report on Field Study at Vangchhia

Introduction

On 5th December 2022 the students of Department of History, 5th Semester visited Vangchhia in Champhai District of Mizoram. It is famous for its archaeological site. After being deserted, the village was re-established by Thompuia In 1885.



Fig 1

Socio-Economic Report

As per 2011 census there were 150 houses and 837 people living in Vangchhia and most of the house are of Assam type. The common language spoken are Duhlian and Lai languages. There are four schools in Vangchhia i.e., Presbyterian English School, Primary school, Middle school and High school. It also includes five different churches; Salvation Army, Isua Krista Kohhran, Presbytarian, Seventh Day Adventist and United Pentecostal Church.

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Fig 2



Fig 3



Fig 3

Vangchhia has many agricultural crops, some of them are rice, beans, tomato, potato, cabbage, pineapple etc. and domestic animal like pig and poultry etc. They have one football field and a volleyball court. A common vehicle in Vangchhia is the Burmese motor cycle which is known as 125. Many refugees from Burma came to Vangchhia but there is only one refugee left. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) had site office in Vangchhia from 2010.



Fig 4



Fig 5

Archeological Report

Kawtchhuahropui contains 207 large stone slabs (menhirs) depicting human, animal, and various other carvings. The archaeological potential area measures about 45 square km. The largest menhirs is 1.5 m (width) x 30 cm (thickness). These menhirs are carved with different forms i.e. rows of human figures, heads of mithun, deer, sphere, smoking pipe, bovidae, bead necklace, pestle, spear, tiger, ladle, shield, silver earrings, probably aquatic long neck bird and some unidentifiable engravings.



Fig 6



Fig 7

Ralven Pûk was located above *Kawtchhuahropui*. There are five caves which are said to be used by the early settlers. The length of the cave area is 17 meters.



Fig 8

Laitumanu lunglen tlang is not far from *Ralven Pûk*. According to locals, Laituma was a handsome and famous man in there village. He was chased by many women and can sleep with any women. He even slept with the chieftainess of their village. This enraged the chief and a plot was hatched to kill him. After the death of Laituma his mother missed his son desperately and used to sit in this location staring at Tiau River where her son was murdered. Due to this the hill is called *Laitumanu lunglen tlang*.



Fig 9

Other Places outside Vangchhia

The following are the various places visited outside of Vangchhia.

Dungtlang Village

Lianchhiari Lunglen tlang is famous due to its excellent view point located in the district of Champhai in the northern state of Mizoram in India. This is the legendary cliff with its projection protruding perilously far outside the rugged mountain where the lovers Lianchhiari use to look out for her lover Chawngfianga. The view from *Lianchhiari Lunglen Tlang* is really beautiful and mesmerizing and a great view point.



Fig 10

Khawbung Village

Mizo Hlakungpui Mual (Mizo Poet Square) is a monument to commemorate mizo poets. It was set up in the year 1986 at the southern edge of Khawbung Village.



Fig 11

Hla Kungpui Robawm is located on the right side after entering the gate of *Mizo Hlakungpui Mual*. It is a place where mizo poets and writer's belongings like clothes, musical instruments and some of the handwritten poets and diaries are kept. The building also houses a museum which has various collection of Mizo material culture.



Fig 12



Fig 13



Fig 14



Fig 15

Acknowledgment

We are grateful to our respected Principal Vuansanga Vanchawng for giving us opportunity and for contributing the sum of Rs. 20,000/- and also providing us free transportation. The same gratitude goes to Dr. John C. Laldusaka (Department of Philosophy) for his financial contribution.

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