

The Making of an Identity Marker: A Case Study of Mizo Puanchei

GRID Heritage Project Online Workshop, India
Rethinking Heritage and Marginality Today: Craft, Threads and Echoes
New Researchers' Panel
February 18, 2022

Presenter:
Cindy Z. Tlau
Research Scholar
Visual Studies, SAA, JNU
Jawaharlal Nehru University



A mannequin from the
‘Tribal Lifestyle of North-East India’
section in National Museum, Delhi
The headpiece worn by the mannequin is a distorted
and poor copy of the ‘Vakiria’ which was a
coveted status piece in precolonial Mizoram and
continues to be part of the ‘cultural costume’ today.

Photo credit: Cindy Z. Tlau, 2019.



The Indian contingent led by Abhinav Bindra with the Indian flag. The girl
wearing the Mizo dress, was incorrectly captioned by TOI as: “All the
teams were led out by girls wearing saris in different styles, except for the
Indian team, which was heralded by a girl in a **Naga** dress.”

Photo credit: The Guardian, October 2010



“Nowadays, they weave it however they wish to, panchei changed so much from when we used to weave it. This particular panchei you brought is not that modified. But here’s the difference, back in the days, we kept two motifs on the left and ...”

Photo credit: Cindy Z. Tlau, 2019



Source: Maps of India



Figure 2.8: Portraits of Lushai, Paite and Lai (Poi) men (watercolour by R. G. Woodthorpe, 1872).

Source: 'The Camera as Witness' by Joy L.K. Pahcuau & Willem Van Schendel (2015)



Source: 'The Lushai Expedition' by Robert Woodthorpe (1873)



Khamliana Sailo, the chief of Lungleng, with other chiefs dressed in a 'chiefs' uniform', composed of dark coloured handwoven cloth (likely *Thangchhuah puan* or its variations), with *Vakul chang* or greater racket-tailed drongo's feathers tucked in Diarṭial (striped turban), n.d. (1910s approx.).

Source: Endangered Archives Programme (EAP) , British Library



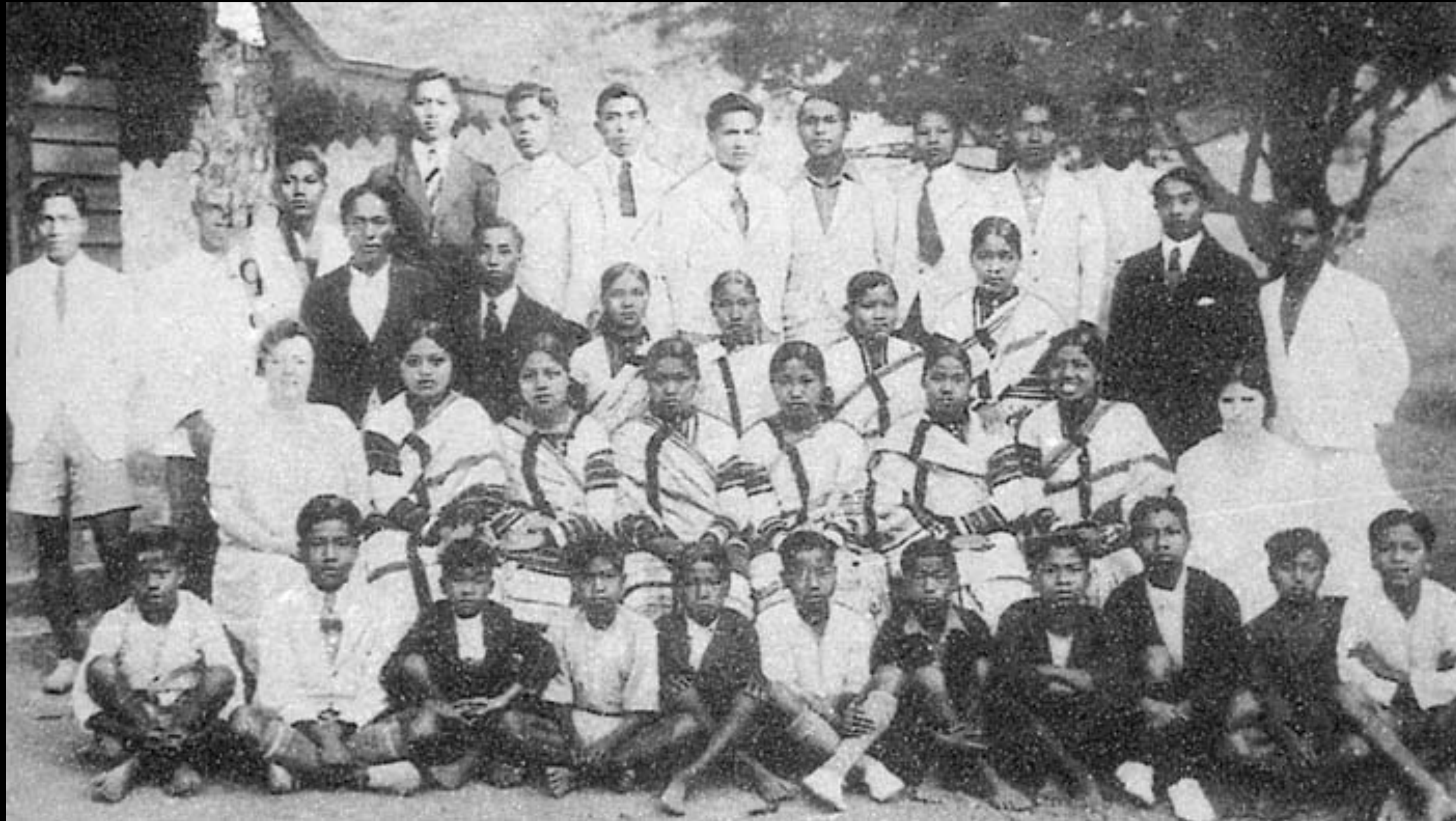
The first missionary of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church or Presbyterian Church, D.E Jones & wife K.E. Williams with Rev. Liangkhaia and other fellow Mizo evangelists/reformers (1919).

Source: EAP, British Library



LUSHAI WOMAN WEAVING.

Source: Helen Williams, Pinterest



First Mizo choir to tour North India in 1929.

Source: 'History of the Church in Mizoram: Harvest in the Hills' by J. Meirion Lloyd (1991)

“Wedding - Vanhnuaithanga s/o
Khamliana (Chief of Lungleng)
with Lalnuntluangi”
(cropped)
Source: Lalengliani collection
(1917 - 1956)
EAP, British Library

A photograph of evangelists who visited the villages to preach.
The women in the front row are Bible Women.

Source: EAP, British Library



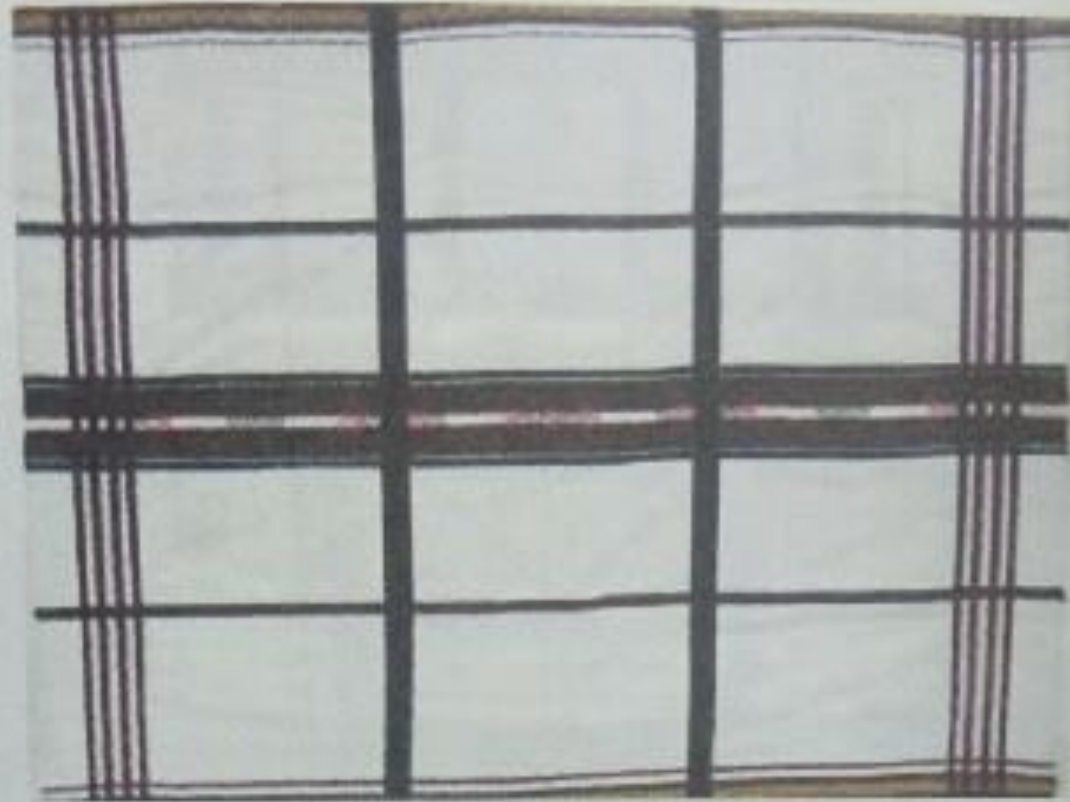


Fig. 9.45: Puanlaisen



Fig. 9.46: Puanlaisen 1926: Chawnglali M/o Lalhmuaka Hrahsel tah



Fig. 9.47: Puanlaisen



Fig. 9.48: Puanlaisen Mangpuan(tal: Thuamlioni W/o Lalkailuia Sailo tah (1945)



Fig. 9.49: Puanlaisen Mangpuan(tal: Vani W/o RD. I.eta tah (1948)



Fig. 9.52: Puanchei Sakeizangze tel: Thangkimi M/o Author tah (1962)

Source: Boichhingpuii 'Mizo La deh leh ze thlan' (2016)



Fig. 12.13: Fanghmamu Thiang



Fig. 12.14: Fanghmamu Meng/De



Fig. 12.15: Fanghmamu Rual



Fig. 12.2: Halkha



Fig. 12.3: Halkha De/Meng



Fig. 12.4: Halkha Phel



Fig. 12.9: Semit

Source: Boichhingpuii 'Mizo La deh leh ze thlan' (2016)

Kawkpuzikzial



Disul



Lenbuangthum



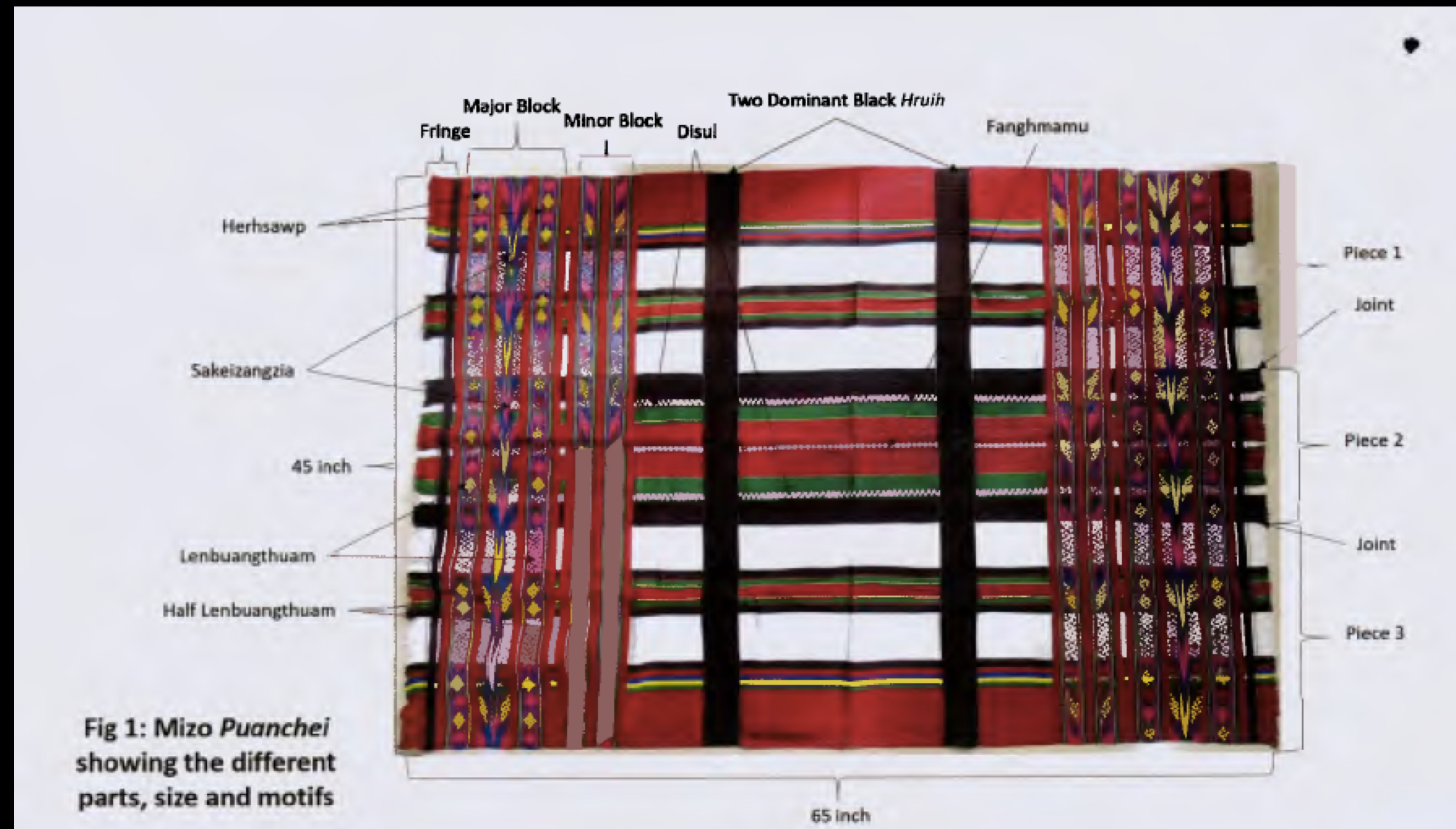
Fig. 9.7: Hmarâm a zethlante

Source: Boichhingpuii 'Mizo La deh leh ze thlan' (2016)



Fig. 9.49: Puanlaisen Mangpuanṭial: Vâni W/o R.D. Lêta tah (1948)

Source: Boichhingpuii 'Mizo La deh leh ze thlan' (2016)



Source: <https://search.ipindia.gov.in/GIRPublic/Application/ViewDocument>
(2018)



Pi Te-i hova cheraw kan lai, a sira mi hi school dar a ni, 1959

P.C. Girls School students with Welsh Presbyterian Missionary Gwen Roberts (Pi Tei) doing *cheraw* (bamboo dance) in 1959

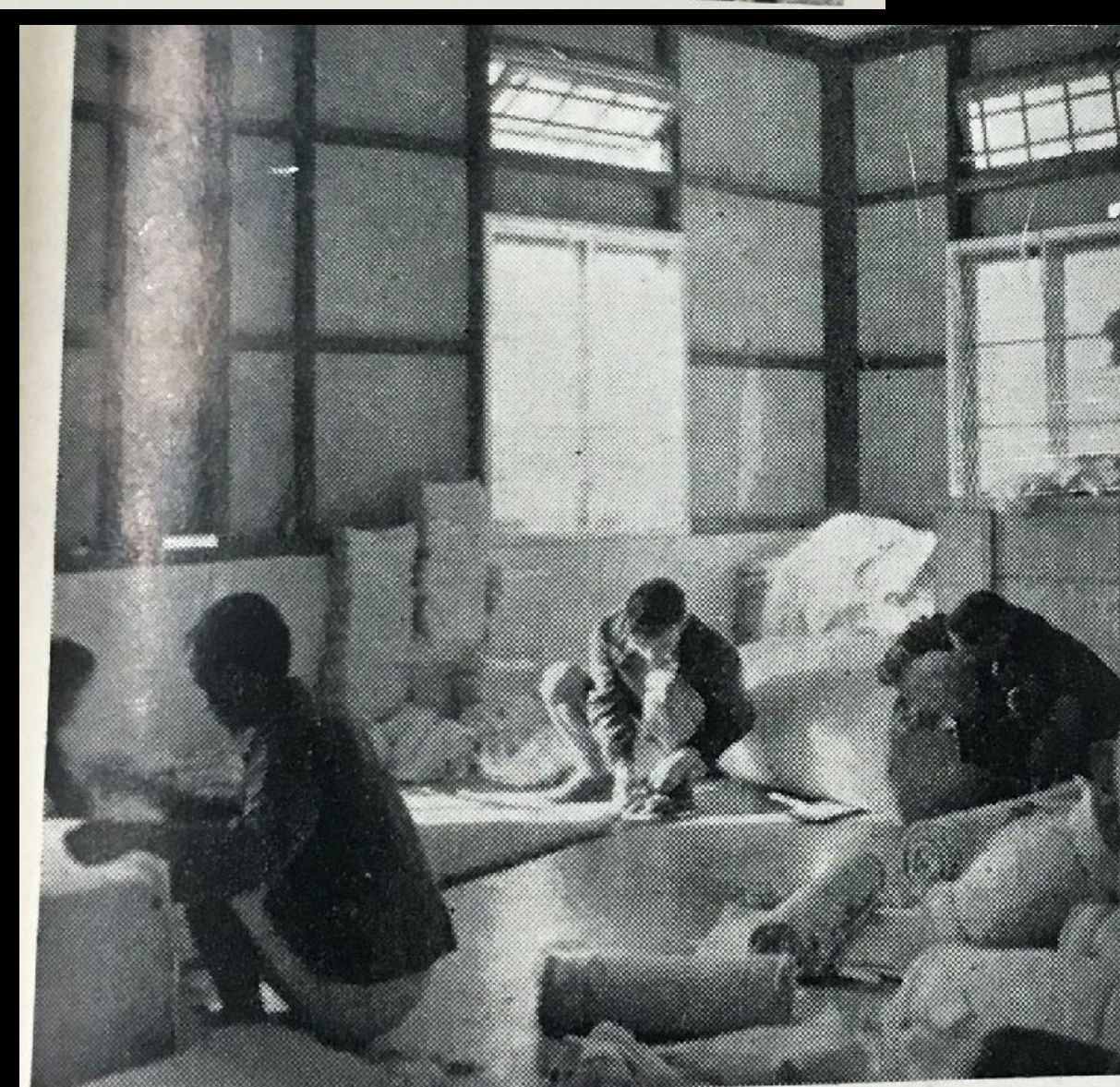
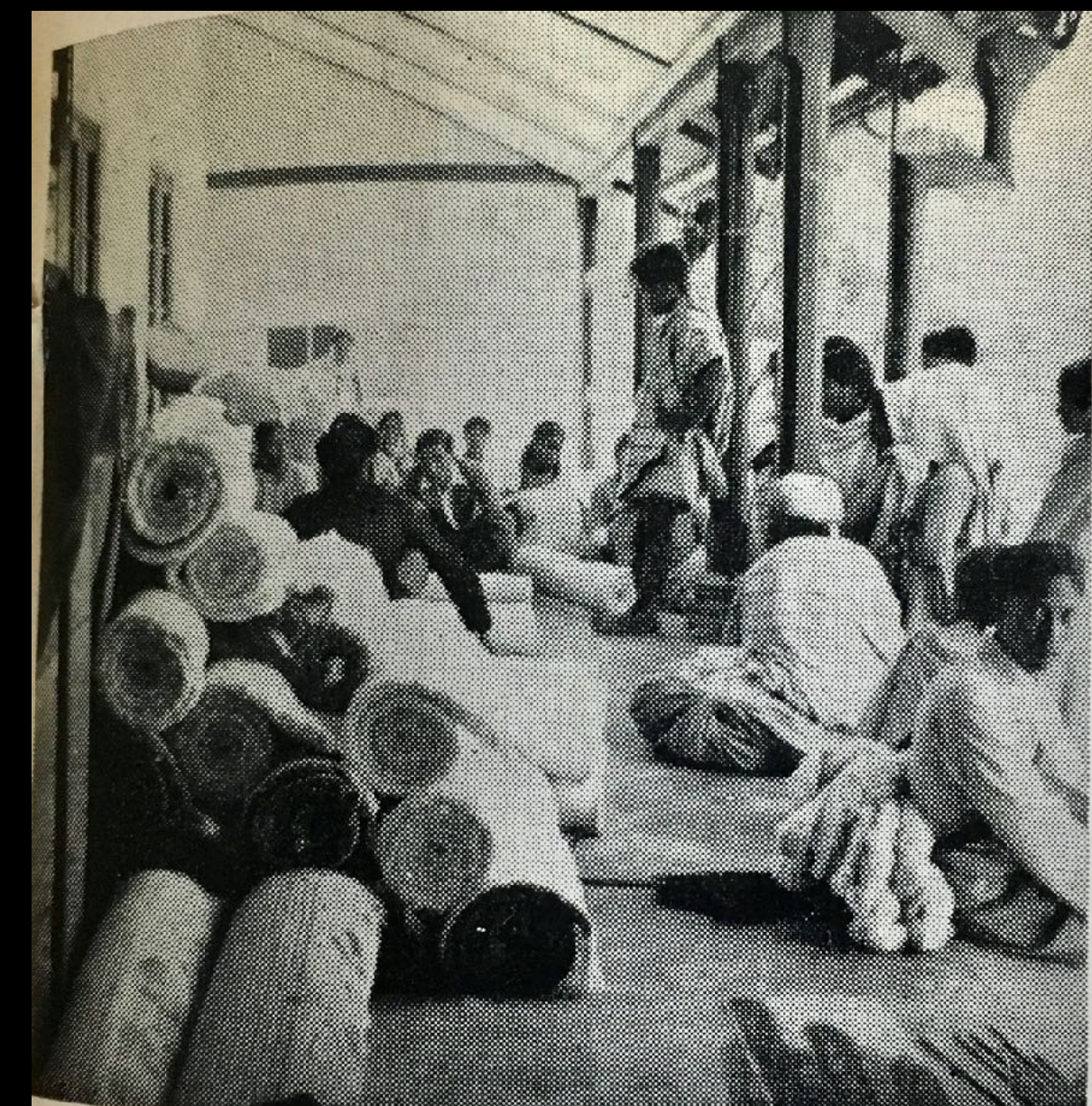
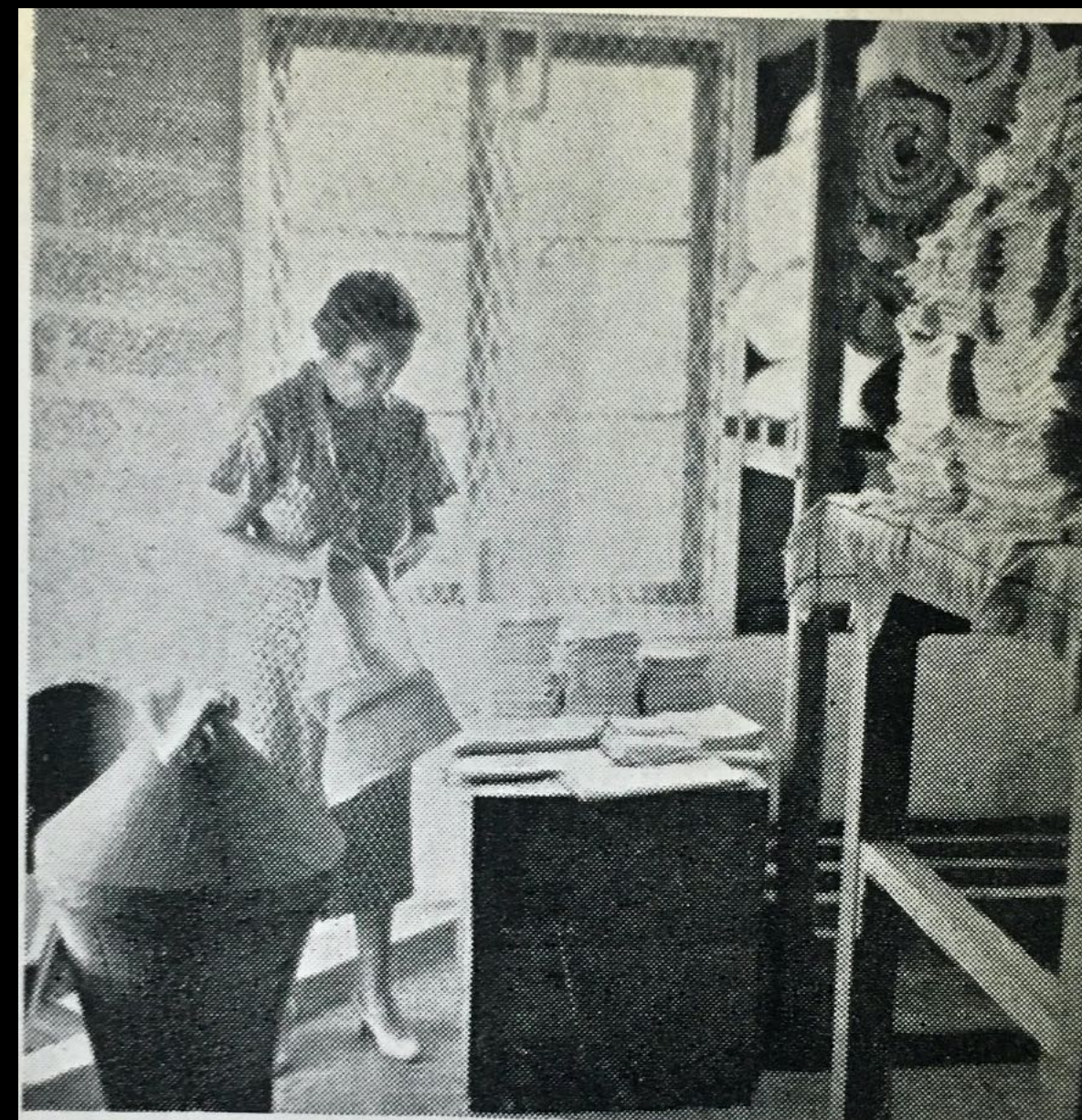
Source: ATC archive, Aizawl



Not captioned & n.d.

They appear to be Mizo female trainees and an orphan with Baptist Missionaries from the nursery branch under the girls' school set up by E. Chapman and M. Clark in Southern Mizoram (1919 onwards).

Source: Baptist Archive, Lunglei



Pawnpui, a woven blanket
used in every Mizo household

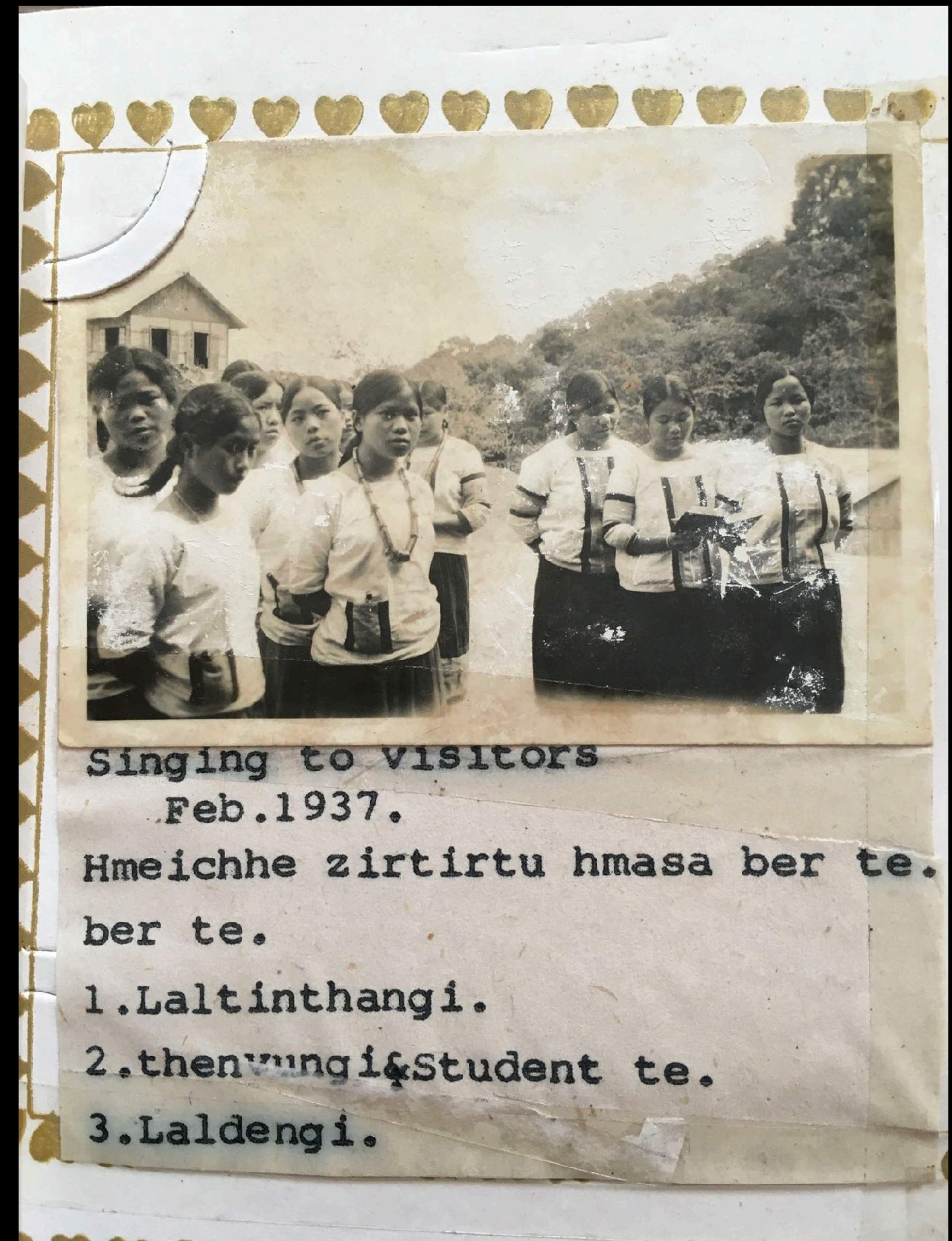
Source: Facebook

Lushai Hills Cottage Industries or Pawnpuitein was a colonial project in which Pawnpui (blanket) is turned into a rug and processed meticulously for export. Other accessories were produced and bought from the Mizo in return for cash.

Source: 'Lushai Chrysalis' by A.G. McCall (1949)



E.M Chapman at E.M Oliver's garden in 1920s at Serkawn
Source: Baptist Archive, Lunglei



Teachers at Serkawn in 1937

Source: Baptist Archive, Lunglei



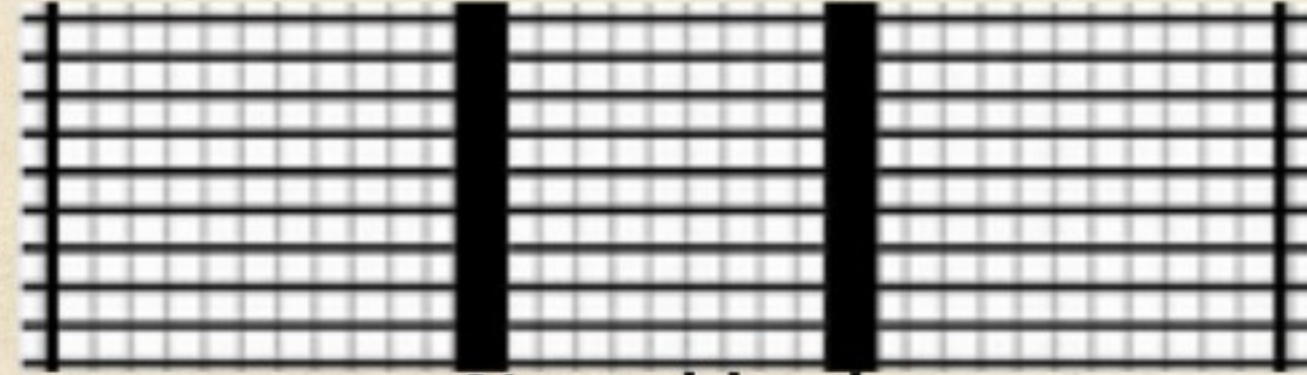
During Nehru's visit to Aizawl in 1953, the process of weaving and collecting of firewood were demonstrated by the Mizo women among other cultural displays. Nehru joined in spinning the cotton thread as captured by the camera.

Source: ATC archive, Aizawl

GI Tags of Mizoram



Mizo Puanchei



Ngotekherh



Tawlhlohpuan



Hmaram



Pawndum



Mizo Chilli



from the pens of IPHolics

www.theippress.com

To get an insight, no need to **GOOGLE**, do **The IP Press**



Mizoram float at the 61st Republic Day Parade (2010)

Source: The Hindu Source: The Hindu



Source: www.flickr.com (2010)



Miss India Mizoram 2017
Rody H. Vanlalhriatpuii

Source: 'Femina Miss India 2017: Sub Contest Ceremony',
[news18.com](https://www.news18.com), June 21, 2017

Miss Mizoram 2017 crowned by
Femina Miss India World 2016 Priyadarshini Chatterjee

Source: 'Miss Mizoram Crowning', Youtube, March 19, 2017



THANK YOU