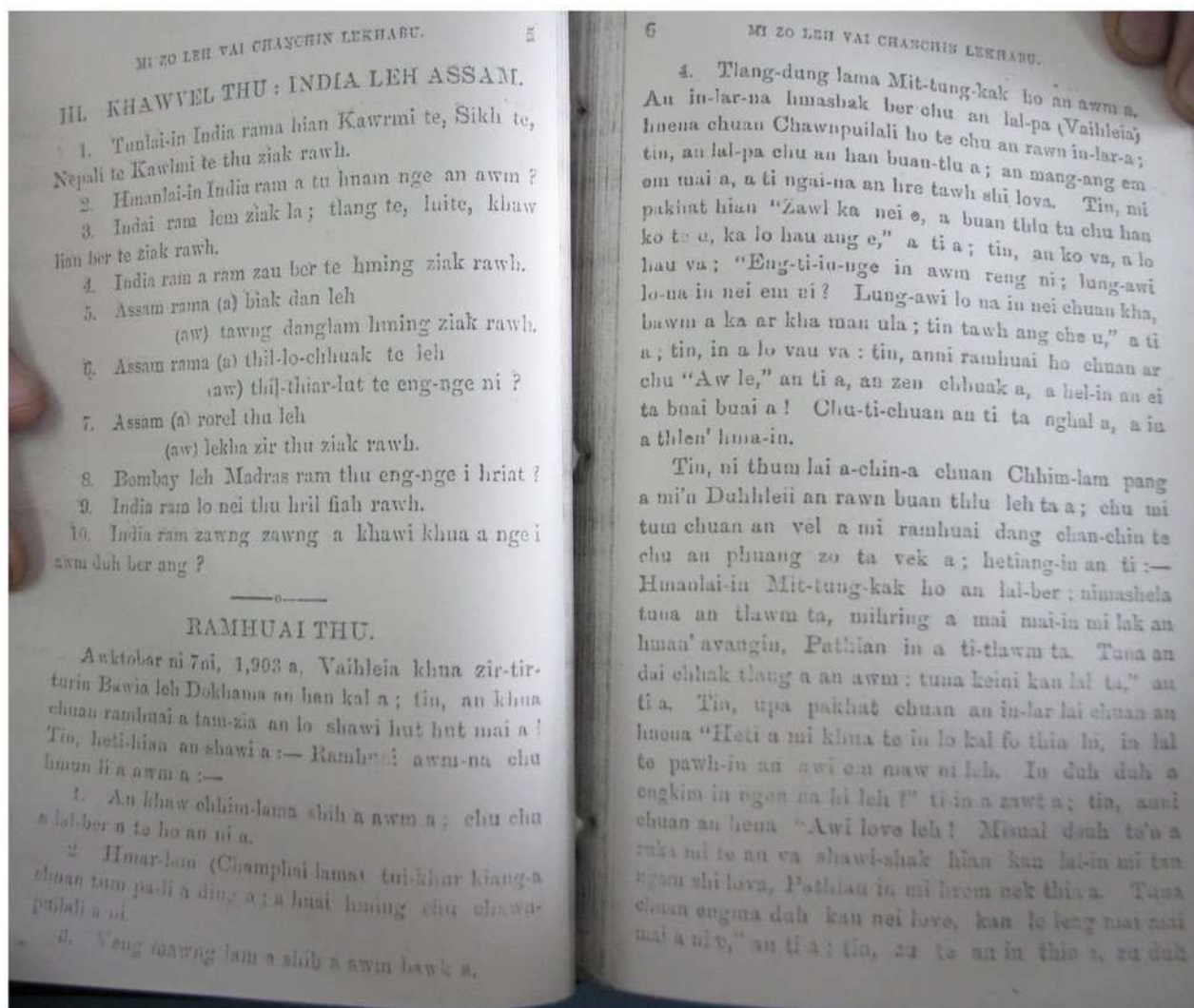
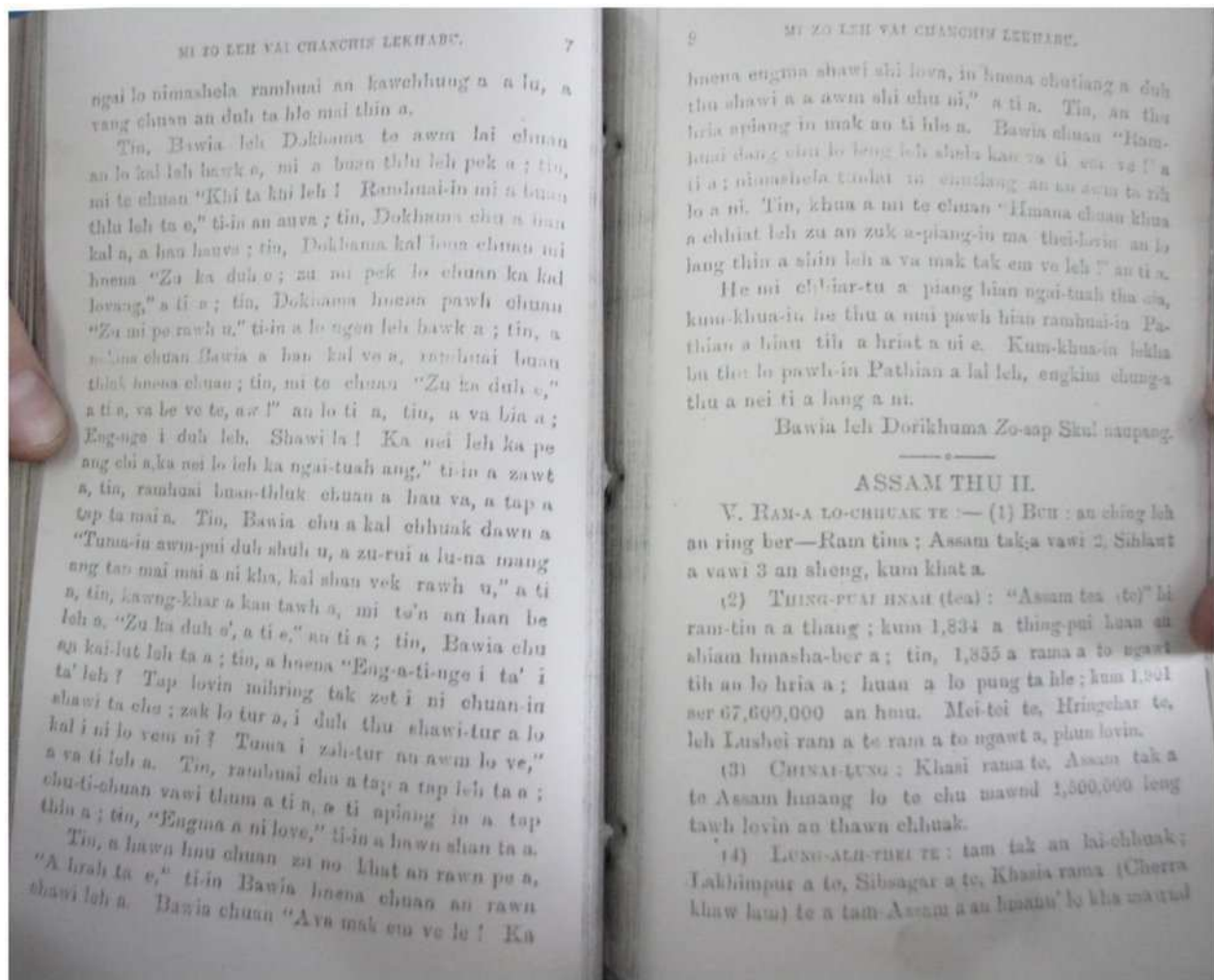


Bawia leh Dorikhuma Zo-sap Skul naupang [*'Mission students Bawia and Dorikhuma'*], *'Ramhuai thu'* [*'Regarding ramhuai'*], *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Bu*, May 1904, pp. 5-8. Trans. Tetei Fanai and Lalzarzoa.





Translation into English:

On 7 October 1903, Bawia and Dokhama went to Vaihleia's village to educate them. There was a rumour going around the village that there were lots of ramhuai about. The rumour went as follows. There were four places where the ramhuai resided:

1. On the southern side of the village there was a sih¹ where the ramhuai chiefs stay.
2. On the northern (Champhai² side) near a pond there are 4 tum³ trees and one of the ramhuais of this place is called 'Chawnpuilali'.

¹ A spring in the jungle.

² A major village and plain, today in the eastern region of the Indian state of Mizoram.

³ Sago palm.

3. At the bottom of the village where there is a spring.
4. Near the mountains are where the ramhuai who have vertical eyes reside.

Three ramhuai first showed themselves to the village chief, Vanhleia. It was Chawnpuilali and party who came. They wrestled the chief and the villagers were frightened and didn't know what to do. Then one person said 'I am possessed: call the one who wrestled the chief and I will rebuke it'. They did as they were told and the person asked the ramhuai, 'Why are you here? What do you want? If you need food, then take the chicken from the fowl house and leave us'. The ramhuai agreed and took the chicken and ate it raw!

Then on the third day, Duhhleii was also wrestled by those ramhuai who had come from the southern side and on this occasion all the information about the ramhuai was revealed. Before, the vertical-eyed ramhuai were the chiefs among them, but they use to take humans for no reason at all and Pathian⁴ was not pleased with them. Pathian weakened the vertical-eyed ramhuai, and now the ramhuai from the southern side of the human village are the ones in power. While an old man was having this vision, he asked whether their ramhuai chief allowed such constant visitation of the villages [by ramhuai] and the demand of different things. They answered 'Of course not. When the naughty ones bully humans, Pathian used to punish them and our chief would not dare say a word against Pathian. We come now with no demand but only for a friendly visit'. The ramhuai used to drink zu⁵, so even if a person does not drink in normal life, he will be very fond of zu if a ramhuai enters his body.

The ramhuai came while Bawia and Dokhama were still there and wrestled one person again. When they heard this, people started shouting that the ramhuai have come again and Dokhama went and rebuked the spirit. Before Dokhama went there the ramhuai had demanded zu and wouldn't leave a person's body unless they carried out the ramhuais'

⁴ An upland high god. By this time, the name had also been adopted by missionaries and the small population of Mizo converts to refer the Christian god, Jehovah.

⁵ Rice beer.

demands. Bawia also came and asked the seized⁶ man to say what he wanted to say and the man started crying. Bawia was about to leave, saying that it was just a waste of time and that the man was probably only drunk when the people urged him back. Bawia asked the man three more times but the man continued to cry only. So Bawia left. After Bawia left, they gave the man a cup of zu. When they conveyed the news to Bawia, he found it strange that the ramhuai had not spoken to him.

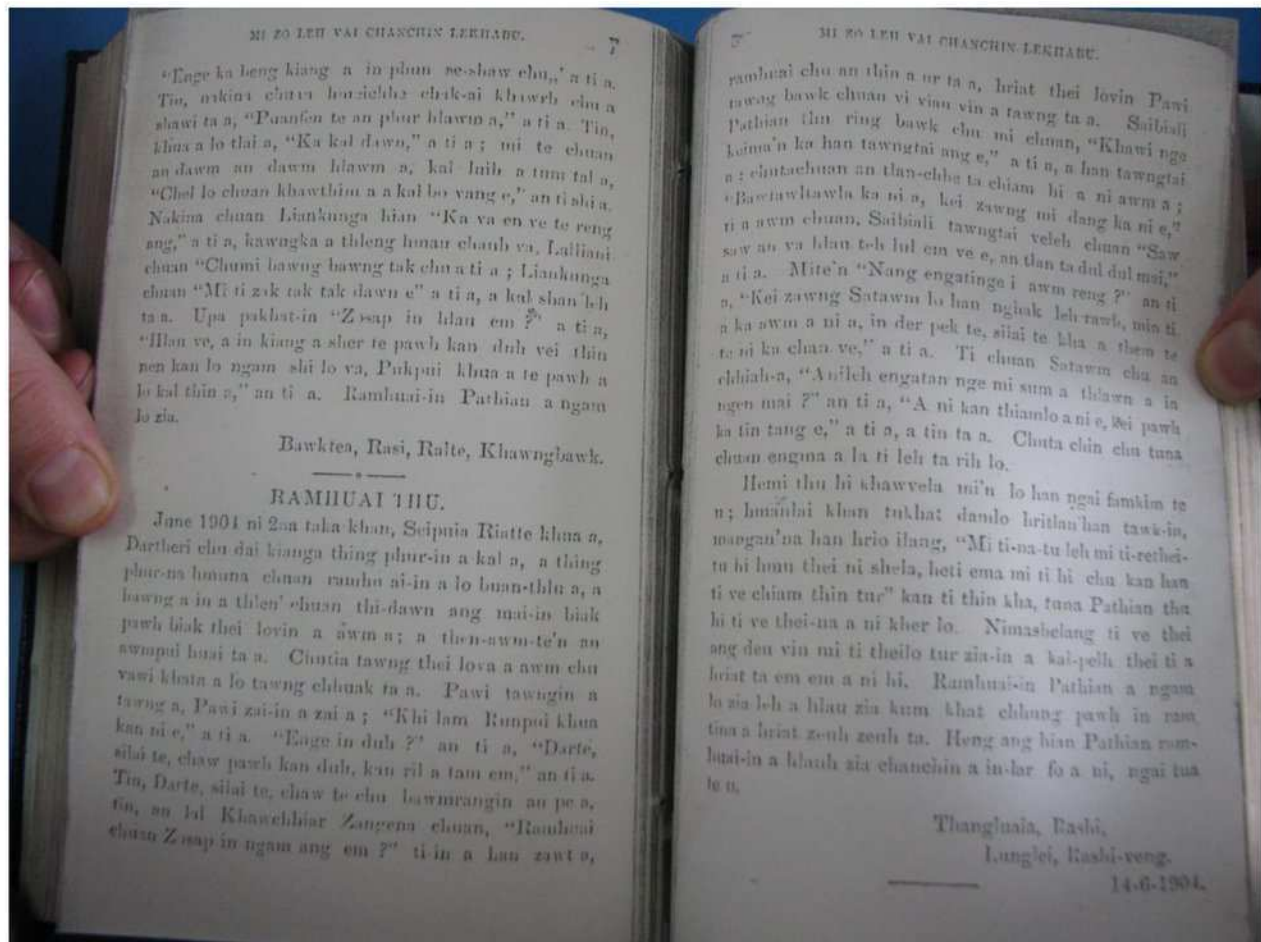
Such things don't happen anymore these days. According to the villagers, before, whenever there was bad weather and the drinking of zu, surely the ramhuai would show themselves. It is somehow strange that the ramhuai don't do that anymore. Whoever reads this story will surely know that ramhuai are scared of Pathian. It clearly shows that, even if it is not in writing, Pathian will forever be the ruler of everything.

Bawia and Dorikhuma, students of the Zo-sap⁷ school

⁶ Seized, taken or 'possessed' by ramhuai.

⁷ 'Zosap' refers to Christian missionaries.

Thangluaia, 'Ramhuai thu' ('Regarding ramhuai'), *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Bu*, October 1904, pp. 7-8. Trans. Tetei Fanai and Lalzarzoa.



Translation into English:

On 2 June 1904, Dartheri of Seipua Riatte village went to the forest to collect wood and she became possessed there. When she reached home, she was unable to talk and looked as if she was about to die. The neighbours looked after her. All of a sudden, she started talking and singing in Pawi⁸ dialect and the ramhuai in her said that they were from 'Runpui' village. When the people asked what the ramhuai wanted, they demanded guns and bells, as well as food (as they were hungry). They gave these. The chief of the

⁸ The terms *pawi* (as well as *Poi* and *Chin*) were used by British administrators to denote a group of people today known by the endonym *Lai*.

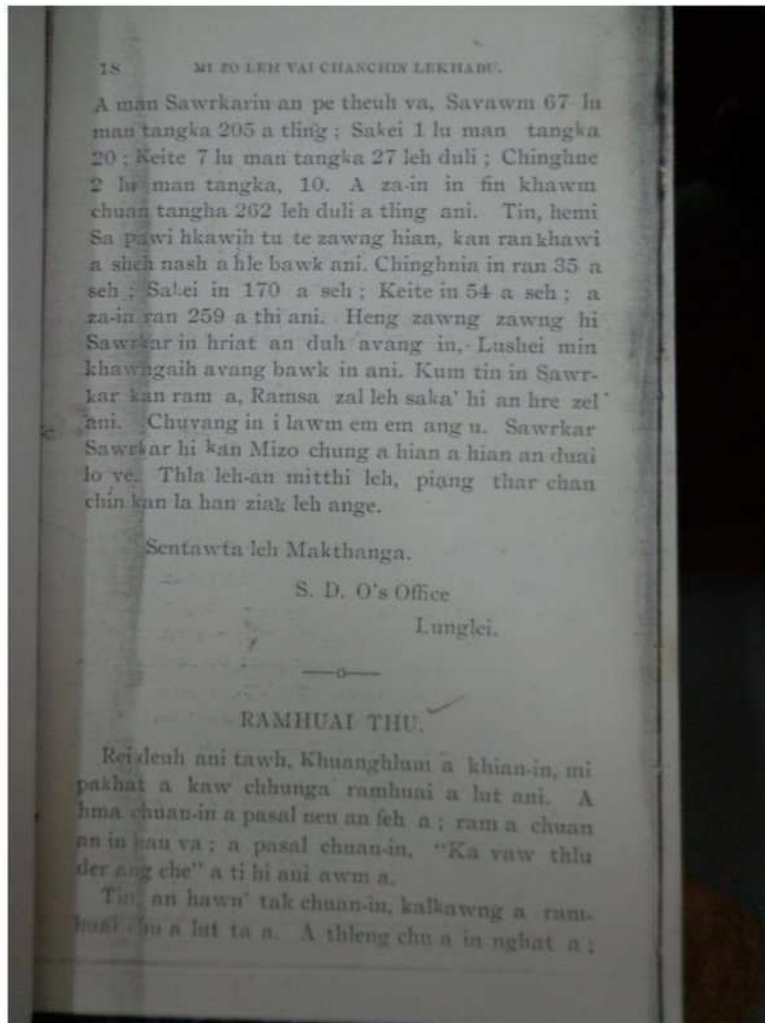
village Zangena asked if they were afraid of Zosap or not. Then the demons became angry and started cursing in Pawi. Saibiali, a believer of Pathian⁹, was there and decided to pray. As she prayed the demons started to run away and asked for forgiveness.

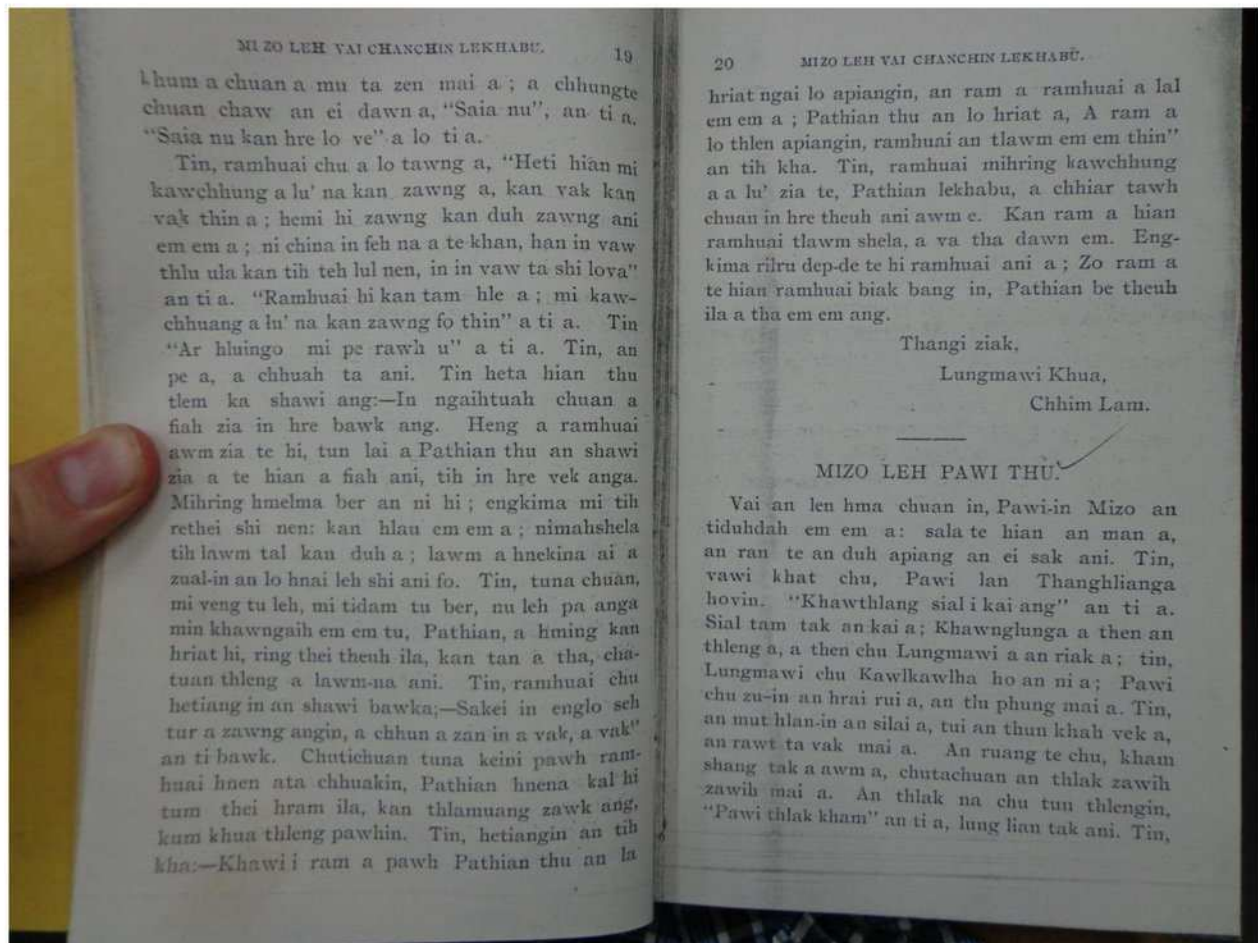
Before, when we would catch a cold or suffer because of something, we used to say, 'If only I could see the thing that hurt me so much, I would surely strike back'. Now, Pathian's words does not allow us to have that ability; however, it is similar to that, as it it protects and help us to overcome obstacles. Even in only a year, we hear from different sources how afraid the ramhuai are of Pathian. Think about that.

Thangluaia, Rahsi,
Lunglei, Rahsi veng,
14-6-1904

⁹ The local name of a prominent hill deity, then sometimes also used to denote the Christian god.

Thangi, Lungmawi Khua ['Thangi from Lungmawi village'], 'Ramhuai thu' [Regarding ramhuai], *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Bu*, February 1906, pp. 18-20. Trans. Rodi Lalrammawii and Lalzarzoa.





Translation into English:

A long time back, in the village of Khuanghlum, a woman was troubled by a ramhuai. On the previous day she and her husband had gone to their fields. They quarreled with each other. It seems that her husband was angry and said, 'I will strike you'.

The spirit entered her body after they had come back from the fields. When they reached home, she took some rest at the bed; her family members wanted to have dinner and called her 'Saia nu'.¹⁰ She replied, 'We do not know who "Saia nu" is'.

The ramhuai used this woman as its mouthpiece, saying that the ramhuai were everywhere, lurking around to find a suitable body to enter. The ramhuai said, 'We like this woman very much. When you [her husband] wanted to smash her down in the field,

¹⁰ 'Mother of Saia'.

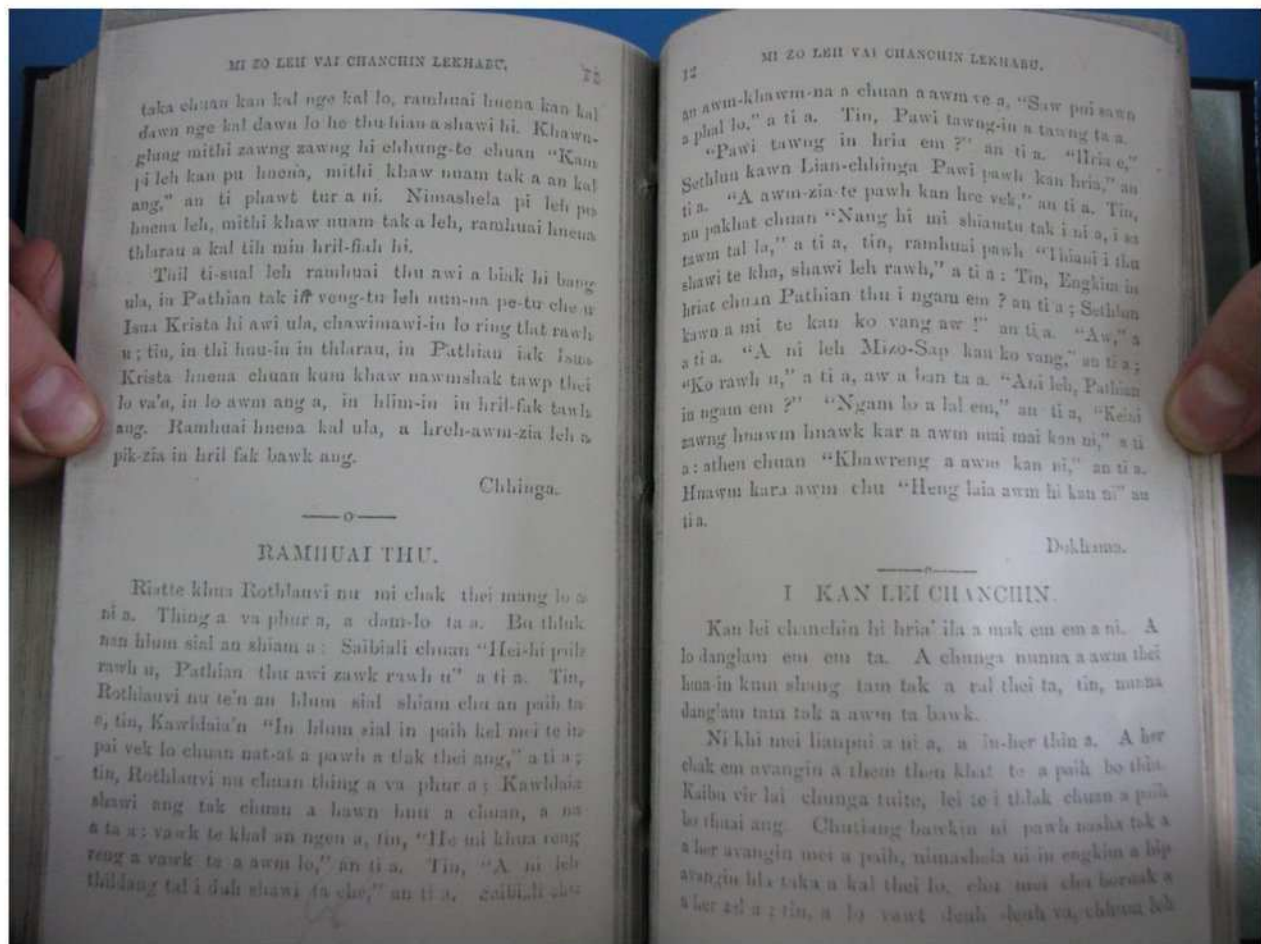
we are so anxious to see it happen, but you did not do it'. The ramhuai continued: 'We ramhuai are many, lurking around to find a suitable body to enter'. It also demanded a chicken to be given¹¹ to it. After they did it the spirit then fled.

I wanted to say few words, and if you consider these with care you will know the truth. You will know that these instances are proved by the preaching of the gospel in recent times. Ramhuai are the main enemies of humans: they all make all the troubles; we are extremely fearful of them, and want to give them what they want. When we appease them, they are not grateful or satisfied. Rather, they only make more appearances. Nowadays, let us believe his name that we know: Pathian, our guide, our healer, the one who cares for us like a parent. It is good to be believe in him. He will give us everlasting joy. Besides, they say that 'like a tiger searching for someone to bite, so also are ramhuai wandering here and there in the day and night'. Likewise, let us try to walk away from the ramhuai. Let us try to come to God, which will be more peaceful and will last forever. They say that in those places that the gospel has not yet reached, ramhuai are more powerful. But when the gospel reached the lands, ramhuai are driven out by the gospel. Those who read Bible will know about how the lurking ramhuai may enter human bodies. In our land, if the ramhuai are suppressed, it will be good. **Unreliable people in every walk of life are like ramhuai**; it will be good if we stop the appeasement of ramhuai in Zo ram and let us worship only Pathian.

Written by Thangi,
Lungmawi village,
Southern area

¹¹ The ramhuai here is demanding meat for its sustenance; the active Mizo responses in such situations were often characterized as 'sacrifices' by local missionaries.

Dokhama, 'Ramhuai thu' ('Regarding Ramhuai'), *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Bu*, September 1904, pp. 11-12. Trans. Tetei Fanai and Lalzarzoa.



Translation into English:

Rothlauvi's mother at Riatte village was an unhealthy woman. She went to collect woods in the forest and became sick. They decided to offer a clay elephant as peace offering but Saibiali asked them to throw away their paraphernalia used in negotiating with ramhuai and to believe in Pathian instead. Rothlauvi's mother decided to believe what

Saibiali had said. Kawldaia came and warned them that if the paraphernalia¹² were not properly disposed of, it may cause problems. Now, as Rothlauvi's mother went to collect wood, she became sick and possessed by ramhuai, just as Kawldaia had warned. The ramhuai demanded a piglet's kidney to eat, but the villagers answered that there were no piglets in the village, and asked the ramhuai to demand something else. Now, Saibiali was also in the gathering and the possessed woman said that Saibiali would not allow her to make the demands, and started talking in the Pawi dialect.

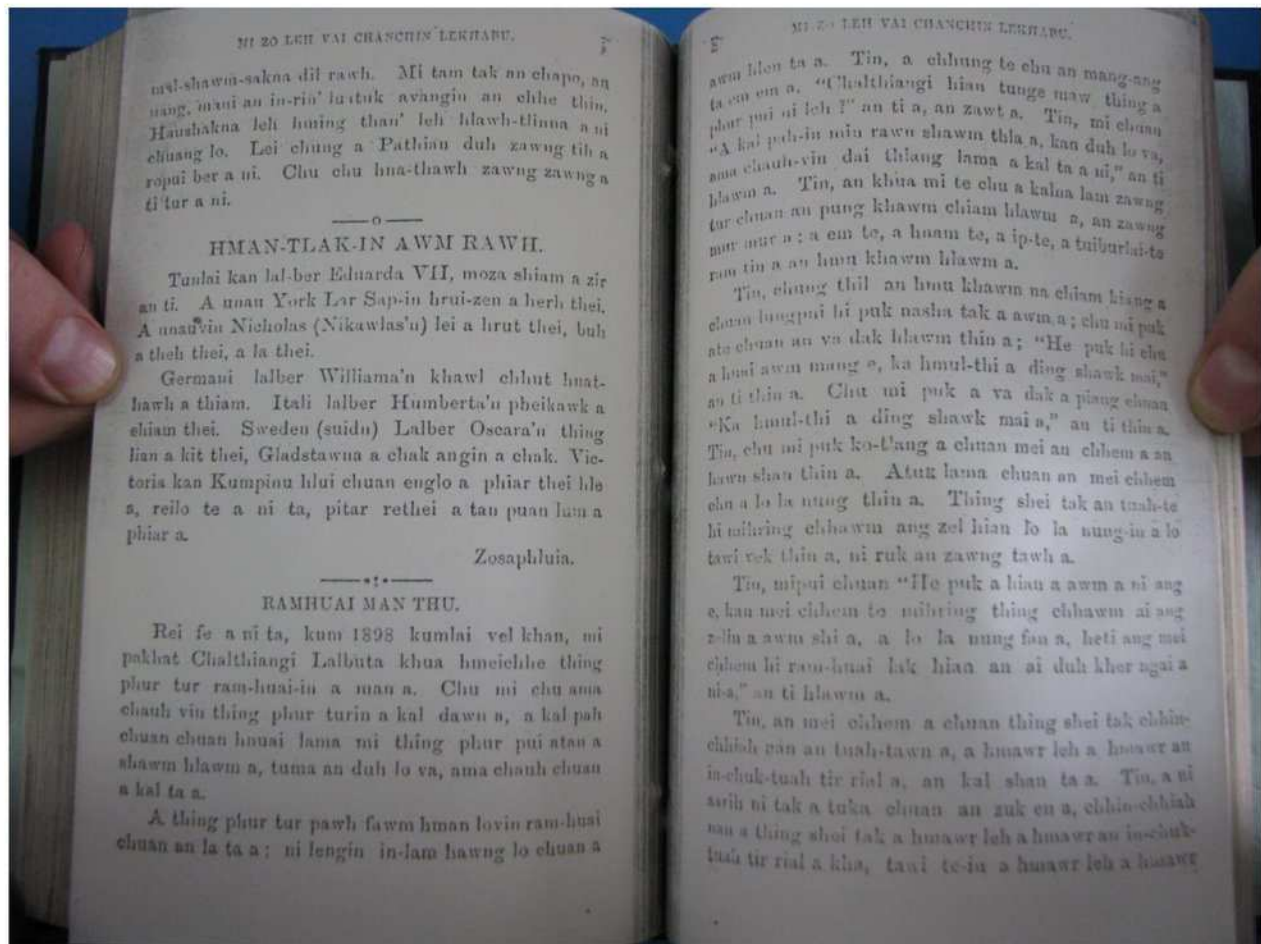
When the villagers asked if he (the ramhuai) knew the Pawi language, he answered, 'Yes'. One woman said, 'You are the one who made us', and the demon asked her to repeat what she had said. Then they asked if he knew about everything. They asked also whether the ramhuai were afraid of God's words. They also said that they would call people from Sethlun¹³, and asked the ramhuai if he could challenge them. The demon said, 'Yes'. They asked, 'Shall we call Mizo-sap?' And the demon asked them to be called as well. Again they questioned, 'Do you dare challenge Pathian?' And he answered, 'No, he is too great, and we are only from dirty places'.

Dokhama

¹² Here, Kawldaia refers specifically to the clay animals and the 'kel mei'—a necklace constructed partly of goat's hair, and wearable as an effective ramhuai repellent.

¹³ Sethlun was a village then known as Pathian Khua ('God's village) for its unique preponderance of first generation Christian converts. The villagers of Riatte are here trying to figure out hierarchies of power.

Chhinga, 'Ramhuai man thu' ('Possessed by ramhuai'), *Mizo leh Vai*, September 1904, 7-11. Trans. Tetei Fanai and Lalzarzoa.



e'u a lo la lo-chuk-tuah rial mai a. "He mi puk a hian a awm awi hi maw leh," an ti a. Tin, mi-te a ko tlang a chuan an awm tui mai a. Tin, mi-pa-khat Liaubawnga a va lut a, a lo awm ngei a, a hreipui a va la ehuak a, a hreipui chu a thi-shen lau mai a. "An ehe'lium-na a ni ang e," an ti hlawm a, an ring theuh va. Chu mi hmeichhia chuan nau a pai a, a nau pai chu an hme'chak shak a, chu mi thi-shen chu a lo ni a. Tin, a han lut a chuan "A ra'ba' a ni a ka lak," a ti a, mi te chuan an awi lo va a thi an ring theuh va.

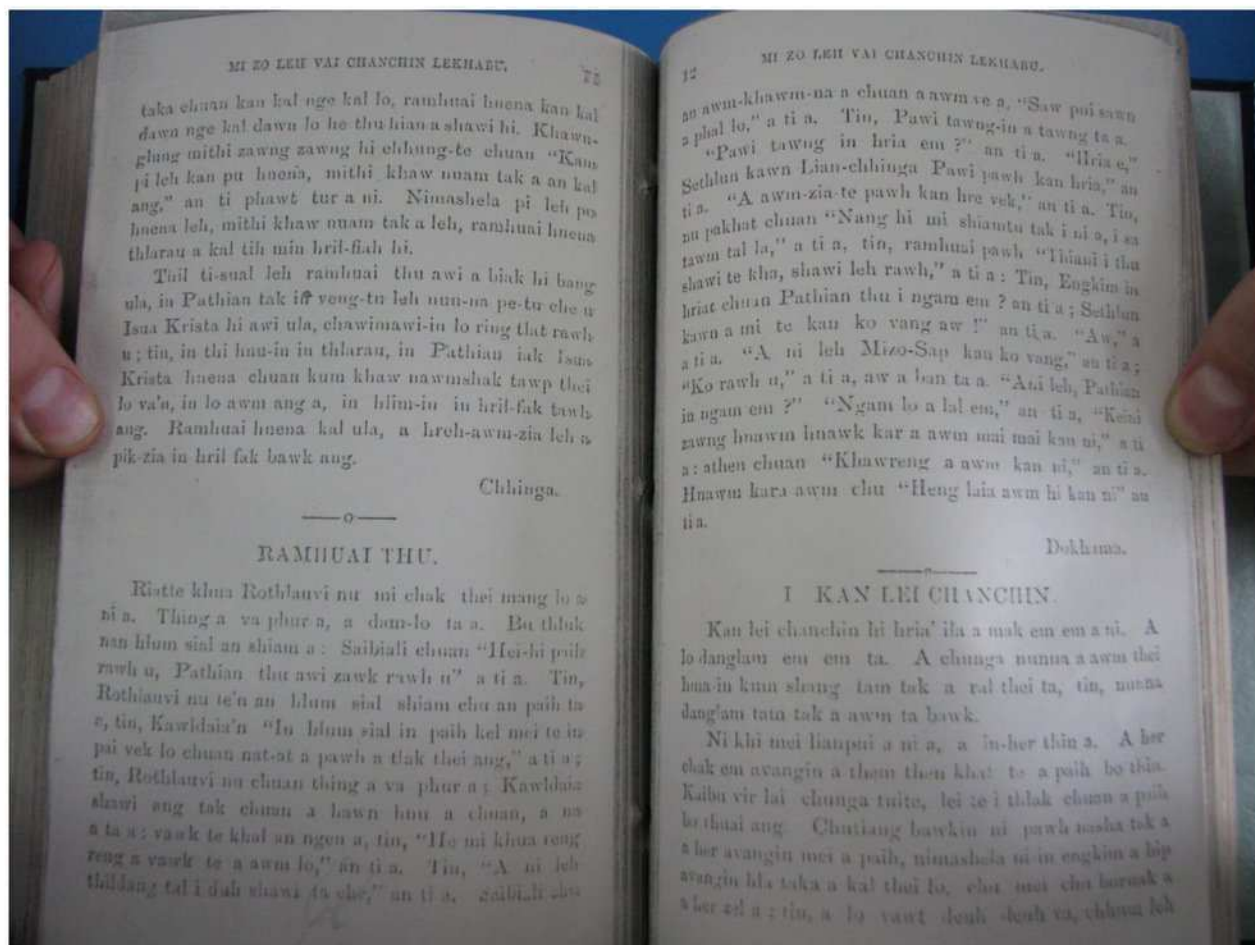
Chu mi hau an Leichhuma a va lut leh a, puk kila chuan hmeichhia chu a lo ding a, a han man dawn a, "Min tawh shoh, ramhuai ka ni e," a lo ti a. A ni chuan "Ni mah la ka huuk ehuak dawn a che, Chalthiangi i ni a, ka hriat nak nak, eng pawh ni shela ka huuk ehuak tho tho che," a ti a, a huuk ehuak ta a. Tin, an hau' ehuak' chuan a ko-tlang a thi ang der-in a zawi huop mai a, an paw' haw ta a. Chu chu dai-haw-in an thawi a, chu mi avang emaw, a tawng dawn reng emaw ni a lo tawng ehuak ta a. Thu to chu a shawi a. "Min zawn' lai-to khan-in in mei ehlam kha ka lo ni thin a, ngawi reng-in lo hawng ula zawn' min hau mai tur, in lo sha mur mur thin a, chu mi veleh ramhuai-in 'Tlan rawh, tlan rawh, min ti a, kei chu puk a min nam lut a anni ho chu lui ding a an tlan bo thin a," a ti a.

Chu mi chuan chuan a tawng tha leh thei ta lo va, "Ei! Ei!" ti tel zel-in a tawng thin a. Hethiang-in 'Thime' ti dawn shela, 'Thime' a ti ang. 'Chente'

ti dawn shela, 'Chomei' a ti ang. Chuthiangin a thu shawi-na spiang a, 'Ei' a telh zel thin a. Chuti vel lai chuan ramhuai a kaw-chlung a a lo awm reng a ni a. Tin, a kawchlung ramhuai chu Khawnglung kham huai huena a zuk kal a ni awm a, a lo hawn leh chuan chu mi kawchlung a vek chuan a awm leh a, thu a shawi a.

"Khawnglung khua a mihring thi zawn zawn kha chu, ni thi khua a an la kal hawl lo mai; Khawnglung kham huai huena an awm mur mur mai," a ti a. Lalhuta khua a Khawnglung lo pen lut a-te chuan "An hming han shawi leh, i hre hlawm em!" an ti a, an khaw mithi hming zawn zawn chu a shawi ta vek mai a. "Ava mak em! Chalthiangi hian kan khua pawh a huan ngai shi lo va, kan khaw mithi hming zawn zawn a hre vek mai," an ti a. Mi-te chuan "A ramhuai in a hria a ni hi" an ti a. Chu mi chuan mihring thi, an thi-na zin te, a ti-hlam-ta hui, lung-ki a pawh leh pawh lo-te a shawi vek mai thin a," an ti a. Chu mi chu a pasal-in a la nei reng a, fa pawh hmeichhia pawh an nei tawh a," an ti a.

Nau ta u, ho mi a tawp lamx thu tlem te hi lo ngai turh ngun te u. Mizo fa tawh phawt hi chuan Thil ti-sual ila leh Pathian thu awi lo ila, kan thi hou-in kan thlaran ramhuai huena a kal chuang lo yang, kan pi leh kan pu pawh ramhuai huena an kal lo, mithi in khaw nuan tak an nei, kan pi leh kan pu awm-na a awm ka duh ve zawk, mithi a piang Ri-a an kal a, mithi khaw nuan taka an awm thin, tin, Pathian thu hual an kan hmaog thin. Thil ti-sual leh Pathian thu awi loxin thi ila mithi khaw nuan



Translation into English:

It has been a long time: back in 1898, a woman from Lalbuta's village called Chalthiangi who had gone to the forest to collect woods was possessed by a ramhuai. The woman was about to go to the forest alone, and searched for others to go along with her, but no-one wanted to go and she went alone to the forest.

Before she even started collecting wood, she was taken by the ramhuai. When she did not return home, her family got worried and wondered if anyone had gone along with her. When they asked around, people answered that they did see her and she had asked them to go along with her, but they had all refused. Then the people of the village decided to go in search of her. They found her bag, pipe and *em*¹⁴ in different places.

¹⁴ A basket of woven bamboo.

Near the place where they found her things, there was a big stone cave. Anyone who peered inside it was terrified, and their hair would stand on end. They built a huge fire near the cave and went home. When they returned the next day, they found the fire still burning. The fire appeared to have been tended to, as the long logs that had been left in the fire were all shortened and the fire was still ablaze. This went on for six days. Then the people began to suspect that the person they were searching for was inside the cave, as the fires were always tended to by what appeared to be human hands, and such things used to happen, for when people are possessed they like to be near fires. In order to find out if a person had really tended the fire, they put two very long logs parallel to each other and left. On the seventh day they went back and found the two logs much shortened, but still laying side by side. The people saw this as confirmation that the woman was inside the cave. A man called Lianbawnga went inside the cave with an axe. When he returned, the axe was splattered in blood and everyone thought that he had killed the woman although he denied it. The fact of the matter was that the woman was pregnant and they had aborted it for her—hence the blood.

After that, Lalchhuma went into the cave and found the woman standing in a corner and when he tried to catch her, she threatened him and warned, 'Do not touch me; I am a ramhuai', but the man was not afraid and replied that he knew who she was and even if she was not the person they were looking for, he was still going to drag her out. Outside the cave, the woman appeared lifeless and they carried her home. In the village they performed dai bawl¹⁵ for her. Maybe it was because of this or perhaps she was about to talk anyway, but she started talking. She said that while they were searching for her, she kept watch over the fire. She said that if those searching for her had not made any noise they could have easily found her, for whenever the ramhuai heard their sound, they would urge her to run inside the cave, while they themselves would run to the banks of the rivers to hide. After saying this, she was unable to talk properly again for it was that the ramhuai were still inside her.

¹⁵ An offering of meat, left on a platform to feed the ramhuai, usually to secure the release and thus health of someone sick.

It seems that the ramhuai inside her had gone to visit a ramhuai at Khawnglung, for after his return he said many things about the place. He said that all the people who had died in Khawnglung village¹⁶ had not gone on to afterlife. Rather, they were all with the ramhuai near the village cliff and there were many of them. Now, there were people in Lalbuta's village that had migrated from Khawnglung. They asked the ramhuai to tell them the names of those who had died, and he was able to name each and every one of them. They were amazed by it. They exclaimed, 'This woman Chalthiangi had never been to our village and yet she is able to name all the deceased'. Not only this, the demon could even say the nature of their deaths and what ramhuai had killed him or her, as well as many other things.

My brothers, I want you to think very carefully on these last few words. All we Mizo people think that if we commit sin or do something against Pathian's will, when we die, our spirit will not go to the ramhuai. We think, 'Even our forefathers' spirits went to Rih lake and then stayed in a beautiful place'. We say these words to counter Pathian's words words. If we die of sin and rebel against Pathian's words, the answer as to whether we go to the ramhuai or to be in a wonderful place is clearly shown in the story I have just told you. The people of Khawnglung probably think that their loved ones had gone to be with their forefathers but the demon had clearly stated where they are.

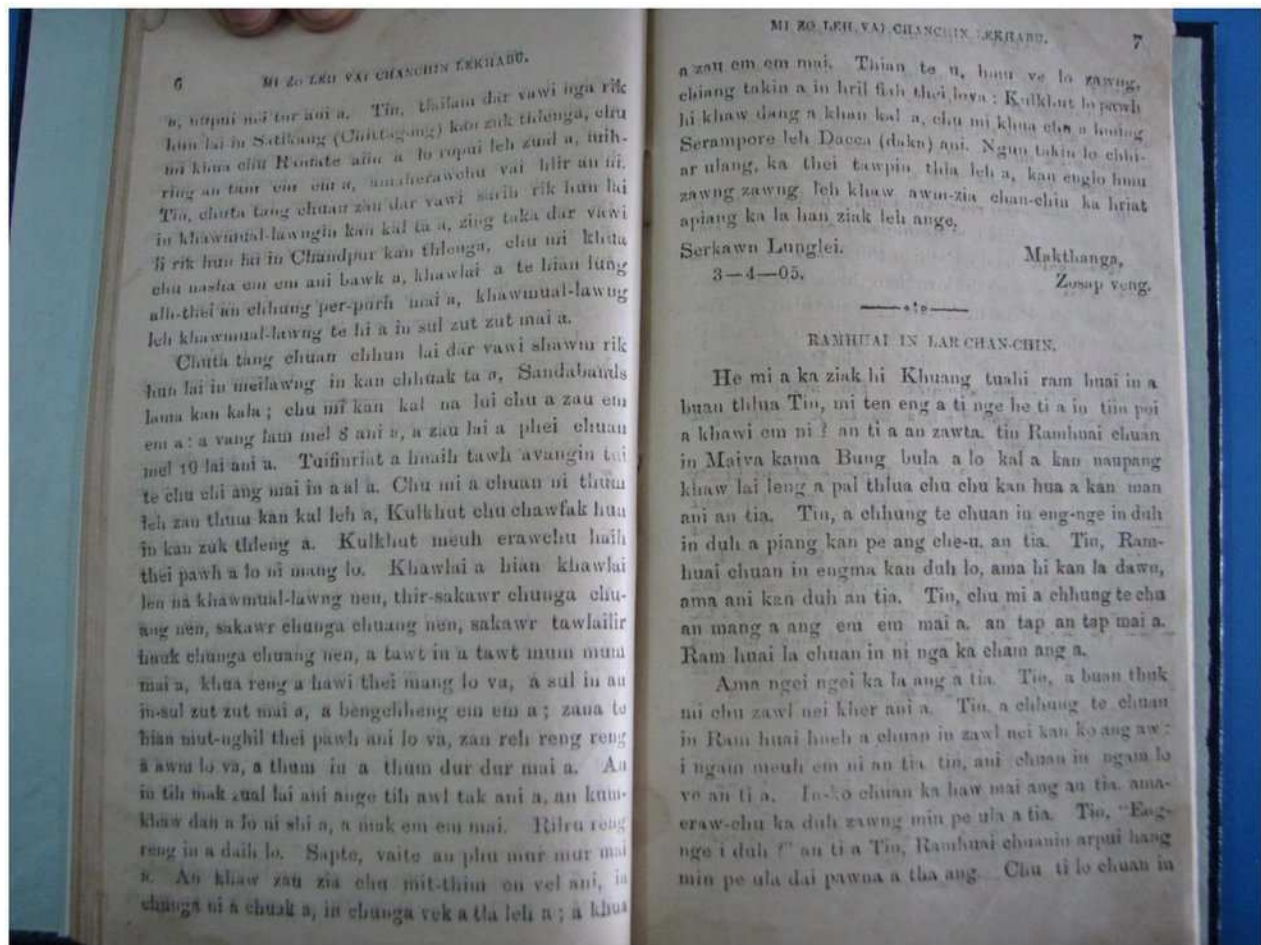
Forsake your evil ways and quit your loyalty to the ramhuai. Believe in the one who can protect your house and give you life: that is Isua Krista.¹⁷ Praise him and believe in him. With Isua Krista who is the true Pathian, at the end of this life you will have an everlasting life of happiness. And if you choose the side of the ramhuai, you will know its miseries and embarrassments.

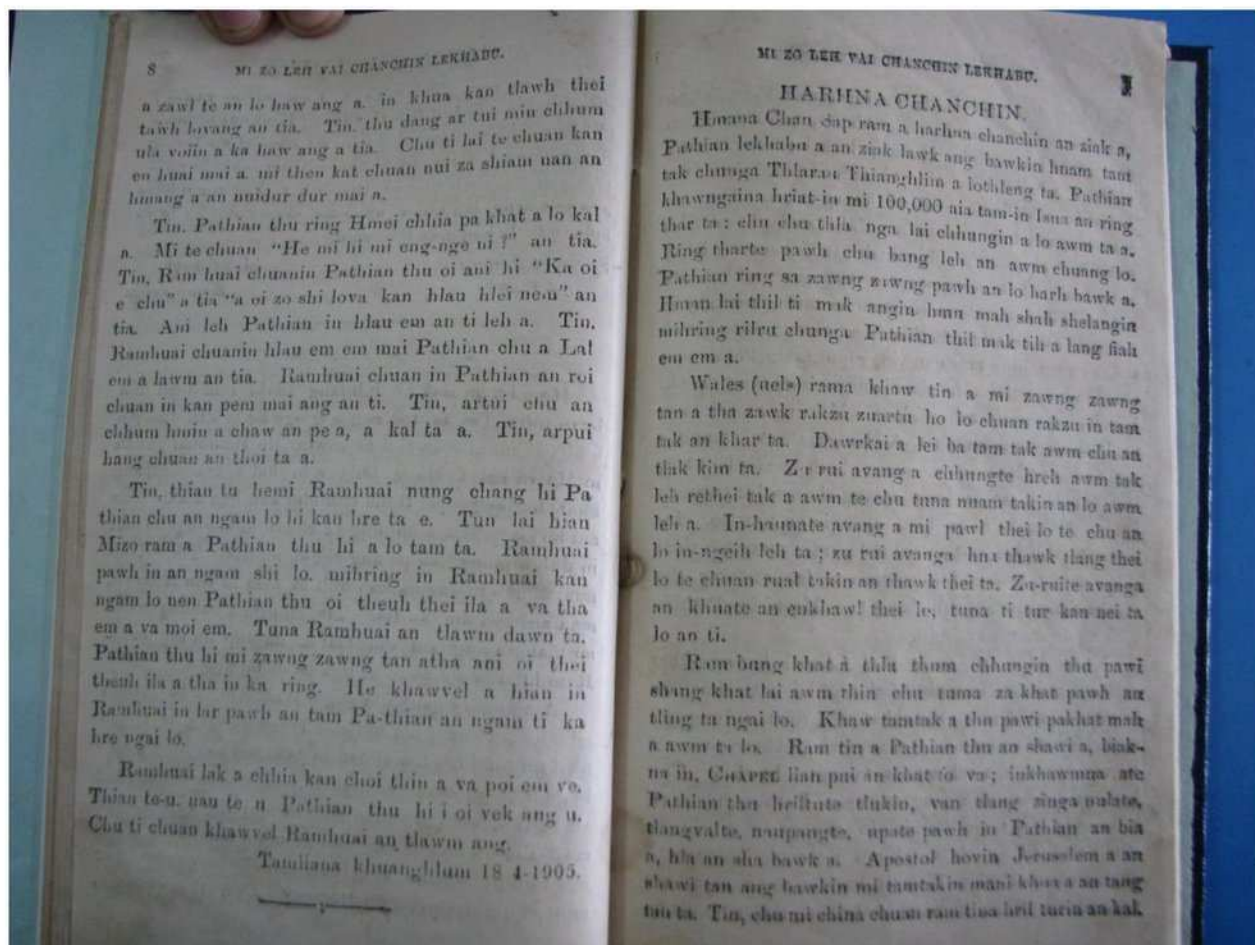
Chhinga

¹⁶ This was an allusion to an infamous inter-village feud and attendant massacres that happened at Kawnglung between 1856 and 1859.

¹⁷ Meaning, 'Jesus Christ'.

Tamlana, Khuanglum ('Tamlana from Khuanglum village'), 'Ramhuai inlar chanchin' ('Story about the ramhuai showing itself'), *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Bu*, May 1905, pp. 7-8. Trans. Tetei Fanai and Lalzarzoa.





Translation into English:

This is a story about Khuangtuahi who was possessed by a ramhuai. When they asked the ramhuai why they had caught her, and if she had committed any crime, the ramhuai said that the woman had made their child fall down near a bunyan tree, and that was her crime. The woman's family asked what the ramhuai wanted, and said they would offer whatever was demanded. The ramhuai replied that they wanted nothing but the woman. The family was very worried, and could do nothing but weep. The ramhuai said if they want her back they would have to get a zawl nei¹⁸ and when asked if the ramhuai dare challenge her, the ramhuai said that he dared not and that he would go home if she came but that they would have to give the ramhuai his desire. When they asked what he

¹⁸ A female seer or foreteller.

wanted, he said that he wanted chicken soup and a boiled egg, and that if they supplied these, that he would go home that very day.

A woman who believed in Pathian's words came and people asked the ramhuai who the woman was. It replied that she was a believer and continued, saying, "She says she believes but she does not do so in full, so I am not afraid of her". Then, they asked whether the ramhuai was afraid of Pathian or not. The ramhuai answered that he was very afraid of Pathian because he has such authority. When they talked about Pathian, the ramhuai decided to leave and the people gave him the chicken as he left.

From the behaviour of this ramhuai, it is very clear that the ramhuai are afraid of Pathian. These days, in Mizoram the word of Pathian is in abundance. Since we are afraid of the ramhuai, and the ramhuai are in turn are afraid of Pathian, it is very good that we believe in him. The ramhuai are about to give up. If we all believe in Pathian it will be a very good thing. There are many ramhuai in this world and we never hear of them defeating Pathian. We use to give things to the ramhuai and this is a bad thing. My friends and brothers, let us all believe in Pathian and the ramhuai will be defeated.

Tamlana from Khuanglum village 18 4-1905
