



**Clusters of Storytellers and Author Functions: The Dispersion of Mizo
Folktale *Mauruangi* in the Digital Sphere**

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Abstract:

The syncretism of the archaic folktale and the new apparatus of storytelling in the digital ecologies creates a new symbiosis for the popular Mizo indigenous tale, *Mauruangi*. Multiple variants of *Mauruangi* emerge with new interpretations, signs and syntax that encompass and emphasise the medium of its circulation and play an important part in the formation of a new variant of the tale. Moreover, this systematic dispersion by storytellers in their own democratised digital space led to the formation of a new hypertext for the tale. The formation of multiple variants of the tale through multiple platforms raises the question of authority over the discourse of *Mauruangi* and its author-function in the digital sphere.

Keywords: Mauruangi, Digital, Hypertext, Author function.

Introduction

In the repertoire of Mizo folk discourse, “Unau thawnthu sawi dan mah a dang e” (“Even the same tale told by siblings tends to differ” Khiangte 169) is an expression in terms of the nature of storytelling in Mizo oral culture. This set phrase allocates the canonical attribute of folk cultures and their oral narrative experience. The dissemination of folk stories, in particular, inherently produces variant tales and adds to the rich narratives of the function of folklore. Since Mizo folk culture undeniably adheres to its oral culture and practices, oral tradition plays an important part in disseminating stories with its canonical phrase “Hmanlai hian maw/mawm” (Once upon a time). In the formation of indigenous Mizo sensibility, orality is the crux of Mizo customs and traditions for its amalgamation. Indeed, the creation of the Mizo volkgeist undeniably depends upon oral culture from its poetic past (Thirumal et al. 5). Under the rubric of orality, folklore in its dispersal through storytelling in Mizo oral culture became the praxis for Alan Dundes’s famous notion of folklore as a “principal means by which an individual and a group discovers or establishes identity” (“Defining Identity” 51). Folk stories have been passed down through generations and have become one of the main repositories for preserving Mizo indigenous cultural heritage. In the realm of Mizo historicity, writings and scripts brought by colonial modernity in the latter half of the 19th century ushered a drastic change in the indigenous knowledge and perspectives. Script and literacy among the mass population provide a different trajectory towards the culmination of the indigenous identity. The formation of a new “speech economy” within the Mizo community and the establishment of the new Mizo sensibility became the new base for carving the nature of the Mizo ethos (Thirumal et al.15). Moreover, the church became an institution that holds absolute authority over the Mizo “body, mind, and soul” (14), acts as the “centre for the preservation and perpetuation of a specific cultural identity” (Pachau

155). Furthermore, the sudden and abrupt dissemination of the social digital sphere in the 21st century also stipulates a different form of Mizo ethos in its dissemination of folk discourse. Therefore, the essence of orality and the dispersion of folk stories are presented in a diametrically opposed paradigm from the traditional poetic past in the digital ecosystem.

Hence, this paper focuses on the dispersion of the variants of *Mauruangi*, a Mizo popular folktale, which is presented in the digital sphere by three select storytellers. They are Alyssa Pachuau, Malsawmi Jacob and a YouTube channel named Pc Hras- Mizo. These storytellers disseminate their version of the tale on specific platforms and synthesise the story, and their method of dissemination varies according to the mode and structure of their platforms. This framework of delineation is underscored by McLuhan's famous dictum of the medium as the message of a work (*Understanding Media* 16). The dispersion of *Mauruangi* on different channels in the digital ecosystems also stipulates that Foucault's author functions as these storytellers foreground 'authorship' or perhaps a sense of ownership of the text on their platforms. The synthesis of the archaic *Mauruangi* with digital apparatuses also evokes Carl Wilhelm von Sydow's abstraction of active traditional bearers in folklore studies. Additionally, Gerard Genette's conceptualisation of hypertext facilitates the cohesion between the creation of *Mauruangi* from the Mizo oral poetic past to the digital ecologies, creating a new form of storytellers or perhaps active traditional carriers and establishes a new form of author function in the amalgamation of the discourse of *Mauruangi* in Mizo folk culture.

***Mauruangi*: An Indigenous Canonised Tale**

In the seminal essay "Folklore as a Special Form of Creativity" (1929), Roman Jakobson and Peter Bogatyrev propound that the "fundamental principle" in folklore studies depends on the "preventive censure of the community" in the creation of folklore in a particular community

(7). This explication gives importance to the authority of a community in canonising a story or a tale in its attainment of the status as an indigenous folk heritage. Jakobson and Bogatyrev also illustrate that a literary work is immediately born after it is written by an author on paper; however, it can only be acknowledged as folklore after it is acknowledged and appropriated by a community (8). In other words, although they disclaimed the existence of folklore as a collective creation within a community, the genesis of a particular tale as folklore does not start when an individual creates a story; the story transforms into folklore only when it is widely accepted by the community.

If we cross now from the field of linguistics to that of folklore, here we encounter parallel phenomena. An item of folklore, per se begins its existence only after it has been adopted by a given community, and only in those of its aspects which the community has accepted. (4-5)

They also delineated their hypothesis based on Ferdinand Saussure's idea of *langue* and *parole* in the theory of the creation of folklore. *Parole* functions as the code of 'individual creativity' for the creation of an individual literary work and often adheres to the exigencies of the *langue* for its communal acceptance. Diarmuid Ó Giolláin also further adds that the element of folkloric nature is never a collective folk mind, but rather the transmission of traditional culture and its essence created through individual gifts by the collective (51). John D. Niles also cogently gives emphasis to interconnectedness between the "individual and the community" in his discussion on folklore studies (179). However, he also implies that "creative acts" depend upon individual volition, who maintain their personal characteristics irrespective of their correlation towards their community. (173)

Simultaneously, each variant of *Mauruangi* from its oral precursors to its writing posterities is considered as an individual *parole* of *Mauruangi*. However, these mini narratives of *Mauruangi* always adhere to the *langue* of the canonical *Mauruangi* from the Mizo oral poetic past. Moreover, they contribute to the larger tapestry of the *Mauruangi*'s "oral textual universe" (Hanko 67). The *langue* of folklore is discerned with Richard Bauman's lens of "shared identity" (32); furthermore, it is also analysed under Alan Dundes' declaration of folklore as "principal means by which an individual and group discovers or establishes identity" ("Folklore" 151). This feature stipulates the social nature of folklore, embodying Jakobson and Bogatyrev's paradigm of *langue* and *parole*. Concurrently, the tale of *Mauruangi* as an "embodied narrative" of the Mizo oral poetic past and its reflection on the "*sensus communis*" (Thirumal et al. 21) inferred the communal acceptance of *Mauruangi* as "an autobiographical ethnography". (Dundes, "Defining Identity" 471)

The canonised tale of *Mauruangi* commenced with the popular phrase "Hmanlai hian maw" (Once upon a time) and possessed the characteristics of popular folktale archetypes like the evil stepmother and the tragic orphan protagonist. In the tale, *Mauruangi*'s tragedy starts when her father pushes her mother off a bridge into the river, and she turns into *thaichhawninu* (catfish). Then, he married their widowed neighbour, who had a daughter about *Mauruangi*'s age named Bingtaii. *Mauruangi* was treated harshly by her stepmother to the point where she became extremely malnourished. Her fate altered when she visited the river and found out about her mother's transformation into a catfish. The catfish often gave her rice and meat, and *Mauruangi* became healthy again. However, when her stepmother found out about the *Mauruangi* and her mother, she persuaded her husband and other villagers to catch the catfish. With great difficulty due to *Mauruangi*, the giant catfish was finally caught by the villagers. The villagers feast on the

giant catfish. Mauruangi was very devastated, she was given the heart of the catfish, which she buried in the ground. The heart of the fish grows and turns into a *phunchawng* (silk-cotton tree). The *phunchawng* gives nourishment again to Mauruangi through her nectar, which her stepmother orders to cut down. As time passed, Mauruangi and Bingtaii became of age when they could have their own jhum. The stepmother gave expired seeds to Mauruangi, whereas she bestowed Bingtaii with the best quality. But Mauruangi's spirit does not falter, and she works very hard to cultivate her crops. Bingtaii, on the other hand, roasts some of her maize seeds and spends her days idly. One day, the tired servants of Vai Lalpa (Lord of the plain's people) stumbled upon Mauruangi's jhum and asked for cucumbers. Mauruangi generously gave them the best produce, which immensely impressed them, and the servants decided that she would be a great fit as their master's wife. However, Mauruangi knew that her stepmother would not allow her to be married, so she told them to pretend to ask for Bingtaii's hand in marriage. The servants followed Mauruangi's instructions, and the stepmother was very pleased with the presumed good news. She admonished Mauruangi on how she could not find a husband for herself and asked Mauruangi to see off her stepsister. When they reached the end of the village, the servants dropped Bingtaii and carried Mauruangi off to their master, Vai Lalpa. Vai Lalpa was extremely happy with his new bride. After some time, the stepmother, fueled with revenge, asked Mauruangi amicably to come home and celebrate her marriage by slaughtering a pig for her. However, she killed Mauruangi when she came home and sent Bingtaii back as Mauruangi. Vai Lalpa's household was very skeptical about the sudden changes in their mistress. Bingtaii kept on pretending to be Mauruangi with difficulty. Meanwhile, the body of Mauruangi was revived by a *Saza*(serow), and in return for his help, Mauruangi took care of the child of the *Saza*. One day, while the servants of Vai Lalpa were hunting in a forest, they heard a familiar voice, and

they discovered that it was their old mistress, Mauruangi. They brought her back by bribing the Saza with a bunch of bananas. When they got back to their master's house, they settled the dilemma through a duel between Bingtaii and Mauruangi. They gave Mauruangi a sharp sword wrapped in a thick cloth, whereas Bingtaii had a blunt sword wrapped in a thin cloth. Ultimately, Mauruangi kills Bingtaii and lives happily ever after with Vai Lalpa.

The narrative above briefly presents the collectively accepted outline of the tale that establishes the discourse of *Mauruangi* from its oral narratives. It also expounds on the nature of folklore and its synthesis as an “organic phenomenon” (Ben-Amos, “Towards” 4). The tale also became a basis for storytellers who told the story of Mauruangi, and it became the source for adaptation. This aspect is studied under the lens of Jakobson and Bogatyrev's outlook on creation in folklore; they opined that an individual storyteller depends on the ability to “improvise” within the communal conventions along with the capacity to select appropriate tales (20). Additionally, their comparison of the amalgamation of oral poetry to the medieval auctor or scribes also indicates folklore as something that could be “reshaped” by a storyteller (Giolláin 47). The storytellers of *Mauruangi* in the digital sphere indeed reshaped and adapted the *langue* of *Mauruangi* and created their own *parole* according to their “situational circumstances” in their dissemination of the tale (Ben-Amos, “Seven Strands” 119). In other words, these storytellers altered and restructured the tale according to the characteristics of their platforms.

Storytellers as Active Traditional-Bearers in the Digital Sphere

In folkloristics studies, Swedish folklorist Carl Wilhelm von Sydow's canonical conceptualisation of the active bearers and passive traditional carriers incorporates a refined postulation on the creation of folklore (180). These two binary-opposed models are delineated as interdependent dualities and bifurcate into the systemic network in the amalgamation of folklore.

Additionally, the folk “bearer” must have two important traits: the ability to recall a tale and the capacity to articulate a tale. The folk who can present a folk narrative through artistic verbal performance are called active traditional bearers. Passive traditional carriers, on the other hand, also often listened to a tale multiple times and possessed the ability to recall a tale; however, they did not acquire the capacity of being an artistic verbal performer (Dundes, “Folklore” 174). Although his classification is ideally more relevant in the categories of narrative like tales, songs and epics instead of other folk discourse, the postulation of active traditional bearer and passive traditional carrier by Syndow is beneficial for novice folklorists seeking primary sources in the scholarly sphere. (174)

John D. Niles expands on von Syndow’s paradigm and further elaborates the two dual binaries; the position of an active traditional bearer is not always static, as the active bearer may be passive in certain repertoires. He also indicates that the active bearer certainly cannot be active at all times; sometimes the active bearer also listens to other active bearers and becomes a passive carrier in different circumstances. Additionally, the active bearer may pass his/her stewardship to a passive carrier who has already fundamentally absorbed the narratives of the predecessors as a passive traditional carrier (177-178). Niles also outlined traits following his case study of a Scottish folk singer and storyteller, Duncan Williamson; they are “(1) engagement, (2) retentiveness, (3) acquisitiveness, (4) a high degree of critical consciousness, and (5) at least a shake or two of showmanship” (180). Another important aspect of the strong tradition-bearer implied by Niles is that strong tradition-bearers are “good listeners” and have the gift to “absorb whole narratives and internalise them when other people hear them and forget them” (185). Duncan Williamson, in his interview with John D. Niles, states,

Every good story has a start, a middle, and an end. That's all you need. You can do what you want in between. If you want to add a little to the plot, it's a good thing. Who knows, if Ah told you a story today and you know the start, the middle, and the end, that's all you need tae know. The rest is left to you. Don't worry, 'Am I gaunnae do it the way the [other] people done it? Is this right? That's got nothin tae do with it. Your version might be better than mine! (185-186)

The active carriers of *Mauruangi* in the digital sphere indeed possessed the traits of the traditional bearers initiated by von Syndow and Niles. Moreover, they have the capacity to remediate the essence of the tale as a storyteller and a “partial mastery” to imitate the *langue* of *Mauruangi* in their platforms (Genette 6). These select active traditional bearers consist of a writer, a folk illustrator and a YouTuber. The first active traditional carrier for *Mauruangi* for this study is Malsawmi Jacob, who retold her version of *Mauruangi* in a blog called *Mizo Writings in English*, curated by Zuateii Ponte. She is a writer and a novelist who published the first Mizo novel in English called *Zorami: A Redemption Song* in 2015. She disseminates the tale as “Mauruangi, Ideal Woman of Mizo Folklore” (2008) and facilitates her own identity, personality, and syntax in reshaping the tale. The dispersal of *Mauruangi* in a blog post certainly creates an accessible, democratized space for posterity to procure the tale. Moreover, perhaps the creation of a digital space for *Mauruangi* will become an inspiration to create another active traditional bearer. Another active traditional bearer for *Mauruangi* is a folk illustrator named Alyssa Pachuau, who is based in New York. She illustrates various folktales from North-East India and presents her own stories through colourful and intricate illustrations on her website. In the aspect of *Mauruangi*, Pachuau portrayed four artworks to supplement her own writings of the tale on her website. Her dissemination of *Mauruangi* through her website, along with her

exquisite artworks, elevated her to the position of active traditional bearer. Another active tradition bearer of *Mauruangi* in the digital space is a YouTube channel called ‘Pc Hras – Mizo’, and the name of the YouTuber is Vanlalhrauaia. In his channel, Vanlalhrauaia uploads multiple Mizo folktales and sketches animations to enhance his storytelling technique. He also narrates the stories and employs several narrators for female characters. In his video for *Mauruangi*, his illustrations and his calming narration provide a space for the passive traditional carrier to listen to the story within their own terms. This aspect of digital storytelling also revives the pristine oral tradition of storytelling and further elevates him to be the active bearer of *Mauruangi* in the digital sphere. Indeed, the active traditional bearers of *Mauruangi* in the digital ecosystem “refashion” or “remediate” the traditional *langue* of *Mauruangi* (Bolter and Grusin 15). John D. Niles’ viewpoint on strong tradition-bearers undeniably reflects the nature and characteristics of the traditional-bearers of *Mauruangi* in their digital platforms.

Strong tradition-bearers keep an oral culture in movement. By impressing their personal character and values on the elements that they so readily absorb from others, as well as by articulating the wisdom that has long been accepted in their community, they shape oral narratives into new forms and endow them with dimensions of meaning that help keep them alive for future generations. (193)

Hypertextuality of *Mauruangi*

The dissemination of the canonised tale by these storytellers on their platforms in the digital sphere is situated with Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan’s formulation of media for disseminating a story; she opines that it “shapes the narration, the text and even the story” (160). Marie-Laure Ryan’s explication of media as a “material means of expression” also foregrounds the characteristics of these platforms and the nature of their dispersal as these platforms “truly

make a difference in what stories can be evoked or told, how they are presented, why they are communicated, and how they are experienced” (18). The dispersal of these stories on new media stipulates a new form of *Mauruangi* by these storytellers. In other words, the transformation of the tale due to its storyteller and different platforms synthesises a new form of *Mauruangi*. This feature of shaping the narratives of *Mauruangi* allocates Gerard Genette’s *Palimpsests* (1997) formulation of hypertextuality from the discourse of literary studies. Hypertextuality provides a paradigm for creating a hypothesis on the variants of *Mauruangi*. Expanding on Julia Kristeva’s formulation of intertextuality, Genette’s analogous inference on hypertextuality created a systemic connection among variant texts, particularly in the study of variant folk narrative as a collective corpus accepted by a community.

By hypertextuality I mean any relationship uniting a text B (which I shall call the hypertext) to an earlier text A (I shall, of course, call it the hypotext), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary... It may yet be of another kind, such as text B not speaking of text A at all but being unable to exist, as such, without A, from which it originates through a process I shall provisionally call transformation, and which it consequently evokes more or less perceptibly without necessarily speaking of it or citing it. (5)

Genette also further comment on the nature of hypertext from its preceding text and states,

What I call hypertext, then, is any text derived from a previous text either through simple transformation, which I shall simply call from now on transformation, or through indirect transformation, which I shall label imitation. (7)

Through Genette’s formulation of hypertext, the variant of *Mauruangi* performed by the active traditional bearers on their platforms can be postulated as hypertext. The preceding

hypertext is procured from the main discourse of *Mauruangi*. Although there is no direct chain of references or allusions among these traditional bearers in their dissemination of the tale on their platform, it is imperative to acknowledge that these variants cannot exist without their preceding hypertext. The active-traditional bearers procured and imitate it from the pre-existing hypertext and added their own interpretations and versions to the text. For instance, the three storytellers augmented a new *Mauruangi* hypertext solely due to the components of a medium and its functions in the production of their digital hypertext. Moreover, due to the apparatus in the digital sphere, the platform for the dispersion of *Mauruagi* adds nuances to the story and coalesces into a communally accepted hypertext.

For instance, although Malsawmi Jacob's hypertext comprises scripts only in the digital sphere, its elements undoubtedly differ from the production of *Mauruangi* variant on physical paper. Moreover, unlike publications in physical books or magazines, the hypertext is published on a blog in English, opening the gates for other non-Mizo communities to access the tale easily. Conversely, the essence of the digital space synthesises a new mode of reading for the receptor outside the Mizo community, along with the passive traditional carrier inside the community. Unlike Malsawmi Jacob, Alyssa Pachuau supplements four illustrations to her script, even though the essence of the script is similar to that of Malsawmi Jacob; her illustrations synthesise a new form of hypertext in the digital sphere. Moreover, even though these illustrations can be produced in the form of a book, the dissemination in the digital sphere also presented a new form of hypertext that is easily accessible by the passive traditional carriers or perhaps influenced future generations of active traditional bearers.

Unlike Malsawmi Jacob and Alyssa Pachuau, Pc Hras- Mizo does not utilise scripts in the presentation of his hypertext. He illustrates the tale by creating a storyboard and augmented

the hypertext further with his narration. His inclusion of female narrators who sang verses to supplement the narration became an apparatus for creating a new hypertext. Similar to Alyssa Pachuau, his artworks add more nuances to his storytelling as he animates his storyboard of Mauruangi according to his narrations.

Author-Functions of the Storyteller in the Digital Sphere

Although Roman Jakobson and Peter Bogatyrev repudiate situating literary authorship with the role of the performer of folk narrative, as these “interperformances” of hypertexts are procured from the *langue* of a corpus of communally accepted discourse(10; Haring 372). However, these hypertexts of Mauruangi were augmented and transmodalised by the traditional bearers in the digital sphere, explicating a sense of authority or authorship over the hypertext in their dissemination of the tale. Diarmuid Ó Giolláin also commented on the cohesion between folklore and authorship,

It is rare to identify authorship in traditional culture, from the folktale to vernacular furniture. Still, the personality of the craftsman lives on in the *súgân* chair, in the mark of the tool on the wood. It indicates a technique that may also be evident in other examples, and the wood can be dated. But the name or identity was not especially important to the community; households often made their own furniture since they were poor. Traditional culture has been compared to the commons, to which much of the land belonged. Farmers shared their seeds, singers shared their songs, and storytellers shared their tales. (49)

The disseminator of traditional culture establishes their own hypertext in their dispersion of folk culture. They also presented their individual personality and identity in their dispersals, which resulted in the creation of a new hypertext. The establishment of author-function with traditional bearer certainly does not indicate these storytellers as the originator; it implies that the

dissemination of *Mauruangi* hypertexts in different channels inferred a systematic authority and control over the structure and conduits of the tale. Therefore, the postulation of media authorship by Cynthia Chris and David A. Gerstner, and the regulation of authorship in media studies, is regarded as a “contested terrain rather than a stable designation” (11). This foregrounds the utilisation of author functions in terms of locating authorship in folk hypertexts.

Michel Foucault’s seminal essay, “What is an Author?” promulgates the system of the author function; moreover, his trajectory of authorship differs from Barthes’s as Foucault made a contention of the name of the author in relation to his texts, as it provides a “classificatory function” (107). The author function plays an important “characteristics of the mode of existence, circulation, and functioning of certain discourses within a society” (108). Foucault also denounces the existence of the “universal idea of authorship; rather, each epoch has its own variant of the ‘author-function,’ shaped by specific cultural expectations and rules concerning what constitutes an author” (Potts 8). Though Foucault does not make any acknowledgement towards Barthes on the premise of the genesis of a text, similar to Barthes, Foucault does not believe in the Romantic notion of a “spontaneous” birth to a text. He implied that the author is not the source, as the author is merely constructed “in relation to the text’s position within a particular culture” (Bennett 25). Indeed, it is inherently clear that these storytellers are not the originators of *Mauruangi*; however, irrespective of this indication, these storytellers possessed a sense of authorship or ownership of their hypertext on their platforms. This allocation is utilised according to the exposition of their author function in relation to their hypertext of *Mauruangi*.

Firstly, his explication of author function “is linked to the juridical and institutional system, that encompasses, determines, and articulates the universe of discourses” (113). This feature of the author function differs in each storyteller in their production of *Mauruangi*’s

hypertext. For instance, there is a sense of ownership for Pc Hras- Mizo for his video on *Mauruangi*, as there are revenues and monetisation for his viewership. It indicates that the hypertext of *Mauruangi* created by Pc Hras- Mizo has ownership of his creation. Likewise, although Alyssa Pachuau and Malsawmi Jacob do not have the systematic revenue like Pc Hras- Mizo, their hypertexts of *Mauruangi* are still protected by copyright law created by the “juridical and institutional system”.

The second point of the author-function by Foucault is that “it does not affect all discourses in the same way at all times and in all types of civilization” (113). Bennett also comments on the characteristics of the 2nd author-function and said, “Rather than affecting all discourses in a ‘universal and constant way’, the author-function is historically, culturally, economically, institutionally specific” (113). Furthermore, Foucault’s construction of the importance of the vital distinction that exists between authorship in different eras must be taken into consideration. For instance, the position of the storytellers in the creation of *Mauruangi* during the Mizo oral poetic past undeniably differs from that in the creation of *Mauruangi* after the advent of script in Mizo culture. Simultaneously, it is inherently clear that the author function of the active bearer of *Mauruangi* from the Mizo oral ethos will have a different author function from these three active traditional bearers in the digital sphere.

The third form of the author function is that “it is not defined by the spontaneous attribution of a discourse to its producer, but rather by a series of specific and complex operations” (113). Aligning and concurring with the 2nd author- function, it is always the “series of specific and complex operations” that create a text, discourse, and the author. In other words, the producer or perhaps the “implied” author in the terms of Wayne Booth’s *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961) does not facilitate a text or a discourse on its own (211). The specific and

complex operations are attributed to the medium of channels through the hypertext of *Mauruangi*. Depending on the platform, the author function of these storytellers is designated and labelled differently. For instance, Pc Hras – Mizo is called a YouTuber or a content creator, Alyssa Pachuau is labelled as an illustrator, and Malsawmi Jacob is labelled as a blogger due to the nature of their platforms.

The fourth author-function is the impetus for Foucault's "founder of discursivity"; it implied that it "does not refer purely and simply to a real individual, since it can give rise simultaneously to several selves, to several subjects – positions that can be occupied by different classes of individuals" (Foucault 113). This assertion cogently delineates the construction of folklore discourse and its ownership among a community. Foucault's notion of "plurality of self" (112) in a text foregrounds the elements of the communally accepted folk discourse produced by the active traditional bearers to their posterity. The author functions in folklore, and its amalgamation of a variant hypertext always pertains to the "several selves" and "several subjects" of a community. Simultaneously, the construction and transformation of the discourse or perhaps the *langue* of *Mauruangi* aligned cordially with "plurality of self". Hence, the creation of the hypertexts of *Mauruangi* by these storytellers always stems from the realm of a larger discourse of *Mauruangi* accepted by the Mizo folk community. Naturally, the discourse of *Mauruangi* and its creation of new hypertext by future active traditional bearers will always adhere to Mizo folk culture.

Conclusion

The culmination of this study explicates towards Jakobson and Bogatyrev's notion of "folkloristic science", in which they state,

What is important for folkloristic science is not the origin and existence of sources, which lie outside of folklore, but the function of borrowing and the selection and transformation of the borrowed materials (12-13).

Undoubtedly, the transformation of the “borrowed materials” of *Mauruangi* by these storytellers on their platforms highlights the nature of folk culture. Moreover, the nature of authority and the author function of these storytellers delineate a larger understanding of the position of these traditional bearers in the ethos of Mizo folk culture. These anointed active traditional bearers of the *langue* of *Mauruangi* carried this valuable heritage to the future progeny of the Mizo community and may have led to the germination of a new generation of active traditional bearers. The production of the hypertexts of *Mauruangi* by these storytellers contributes to the rich tapestry of Mizo culture. They revive the essence of the Mizo indigenous ethos and transpose it into the digital sphere.

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