

A Historical Study on Indigenous Beliefs, Rituals and Practices of the Adis tribe of Arunachal Pradesh

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Abstract: Every tribe has their own religious beliefs and practices and their religion is mainly concerned with the worship of God and Spirits. Arunachal Pradesh is a land of numerous tribes having different ethnic and linguistic background. Among this tribe, Adis is a major tribe of the Tani group of Arunachal Pradesh having their unique history of the indigenous religion, rituals and practices from generation to generation. In fact the lack of indigenous written records and scriptures among Adi people had great barrier in the reconstruction of their history. The Adis had their own rich traditional beliefs and practices called Donyi-Polo or Donyi-Polosim religion. In the simple literary term 'Donyi' means the sun and 'Polo' means the moon. The Adis society has a faith and belief on Donyi-Polo (the supreme being of the universe) since the birth of human being. They believe that Donyi-Polo is the planner, creator, and preserver of all beings including planets of the universe. Further Adis indigenous rituals practices like animals sacrifice, role of miri (priest), Rogum (ritual to cure bad omen and dream), Riddin Punam (ritual to tied sacred thread to hair or wrist of a person), Motum-moyeng (sacrifice of domestic animal at the gate to protect evil spirit), Ipak (ritual practices for curing sickness), etc., had play a key role for the indigenous rituals ceremonies to cure the ailing person without meditation and pray for them had great significant.

With this background, the present study makes an attempt to highlight the indigenous religious, ritual and practices through historical study of the Adis of Arunachal Pradesh. Further, it endeavors to give a historical account on religion ceremonies of the Adis community which practices from their generation.

Keywords: Donyi-Polo, Miri, Ceremonies, ritual practices.

Introduction

Every tribe has their own religious beliefs and practices and their religion is mainly concerned with the worship of God and Spirits. Arunachal Pradesh is a land of numerous tribes having different ethnic and linguistic background. Among this tribe, Adis is a major tribe of the Tani group of Arunachal Pradesh having their unique history of the indigenous religion and rituals practices from generation to generation. Thus, despite religious ceremonies of the Adis, nothing concrete has so far been written. The early writers on the Adis seem to have failed the depth penetrate into their indigenous religious and rituals ceremonies. It is perhaps, natural for the early writers to dwell on the periphery of this aspect of the Adis life since there is no written scripture of this faith nor do the Adis have a definite form of worship easily visible to the foreigners. One of the universal features of the tribal faiths in India is that all beings are supported to be endowed with a living spirit, and this holds true for the indigenous faiths of the Adis also. Animals, plants, rivers and mountains are no exception to this rule. Thus, animism and supernaturalism came to be basic ingredients of Adis religion.

Like religion of many people in the world, the origin of the religion of the Adis too is shrouded in numerous myths and tradition of the tribe which are as old as the tribe itself. From the rational point of view, however, it appears that the origin of the faiths, beliefs and practices of the Adis lies in their constant attempts to adjust themselves with the environments which surrounded them and in which they live. Because of their place of origin, the routes of migration and their present habitat lie in one of the most difficult regions of the world. For them, nature appears forever hostile and ill disposed towards them. Hence, they tried to adjust themselves with the nature and wanted to live in peace and free from disease, suffering and misfortune. However, the natural phenomenon remained always mysterious to them. Their curiosity to know the creator and controller of the phenomena of the nature led them to invent a number of explanations in the form of myths which are embodied in the ballads called *Aabangs* by the Adis. Thus, out of such curiosities and explanations the Adis religion originated.

Objectives

This study makes an attempt to

1. Provide a historical study on the indigenous religion of the Adis.
2. Provide a historical study on the different social rituals ceremonies of the Adis.

Research Methodology

The study is basically empirical in nature, during field survey the historical data have been collected from both the primary and secondary sources to utilize for the preparation of present research work. The secondary sources in the form of published materials like books, monographs, ethnographic report, articles, essays, survey report, research reports, field diaries, etc., had been consulted extensively. To collect primary sources, different archives have been surveyed. To corroborate the archival sources, extensive field work were conducted at different Adis inhabited villages. Research tools like interview and participant observation methods were employed to collect relevant data particularly on myths, legends, oral history, etc. knowledgeable person's viz. *miri*, orators, singers, *kebang Abu* (Goan Buras), panchayat leaders, and educated people of the Adis community have been selected as informants. Emphasis also been given in the observation which made during the time of indigenous rituals and religious function. Apart from these, some preliminary information were also collected from oral records folk songs and proverbs, which definitely help in analyzing the different aspect of indigenous rituals and religious life. Besides that modern research tools and gadgets like mobile phone, video camera has been used in field survey in documentation of field data.

Discussion

Many communities have beliefs and practices that can be grouped under the term religion. The beliefs and practices, i.e., rites and rituals, vary from one culture to another, but every where they relate to supernatural powers. In simple term, religion can be define as any set of attitudes, beliefs and practices performed to supernatural powers, whether those powers be forces, gods, spirits, ghosts or demons.¹ Like culture, religion has been a universal experience of mankind. Human responses to the forces of unknown have been remarkably similar in space and time. Belief in the existence of superhuman or supernatural powers is almost universal. Experiences of certain day to day sudden happenings, of suffering, death and the unexplainable, have led tribal people into believing in other than the material visible world i.e. in the invisible spirit world or supernatural power. They have established a kind of close relationship with it in two ways, first by controlling or overpowering the spirit by enchanting or practicing some techniques and canalizing the power, for good or bad and secondly, by offering rituals or worship to propitiate the superhuman power for acquisition of the thing or object desired.² We call the former, magic, and the later, religion. Among the tribal's magic is actually an integral part of the religion and magical practices may be included as a method of propitiation.

A. Indigenous Religion

The Adis had their own traditional beliefs and practices called *Donyi-Polo* or *Donyi-Polosim* religion. In the simple literary term '*Donyi*' means the sun and '*Polo*' means the moon. The Adis society has a faith and belief on *Donyi-Polo* (the supreme being of the universe) since the birth of human being. They believe that *Donyi-Polo* is the preserver, planner and creator of all beings including planets of the universe. They also believe that *Donyi-Polo* is the ever vigilant power which is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. This power of *Donyi-polo* has been shown to living being by *Donyi-Polo* himself by many practical proofs according to Adis myths. Thereafter, they believed that there is no place to hide from the powerful eyes of *Donyi-polo* and if someone commits any mischief *Donyi-polo* will punish the person. Thus, there was fear of committing mischief. This firm belief and faith prevented the people from committing murder, thief, deception and dacoits in the society.³

Therefore, there was a practice in Adis society an early day that they never kept their houses and granaries with lock and key. Simply was shut down with a stick and rope. If somebody found a thing of high values, it would be announced in the village so that the things get its owner immediately. Then if any dispute takes place, the disputing parties would invoke *Donyi-Polo* to settle the dispute with practical proof through various means that are particularly mentioned in the performance of challenge for truth and justice. Thus, there

¹ A. C. Bhagabati, *Indigenous Faiths and Customs: some observations*, M. C. Behera and S. K. Choudhury (ed), *Indigenous Faiths and Practices of the Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh*, Himalayan Publishers, Itanagar, 1998, p.1.

² L. P. Vidyarthi and B. K. Rai, *The Tribal Culture of India*, concept publishing house, New Delhi, Reprint, 1976, p.236.

³ An extract interview with Kaling Borang (Public) of Pasighat. 18.02.2019.

was peace, tranquility and mutual understanding and confidence in the society. Besides this sole belief and faith on *Donyi-Polo*, there are various aspects of *Donyi-Polo* faith in the Adis society. They accepted all gods, goddesses, spirits and deities as representatives of *Donyi-Polo* and worship them to get peace, strength and prosperity in seasonal festivals. They think that if the god and goddesses are not properly worshipped and appeased, human being will face miseries and worries. And regarding domestic animals the Adis respect *mithun* as the sole representative of *Donyi-Polo*. That is why they offer *mithun* as living proof for truth and justice in dispute. Therefore, the Adis consider the *mithun* as a sacred animal as well as their cultural symbol. The Adis belief cook as the sole representative of all living being which convinced the sun and moon to rise up again when they stop rising. They also belief dog is the representative of mankind which brought seed of food grain from the land of *kine-Nane*- the mother of earth, among wild beast snake is believed second to *Donyi-Polo* which bites a person who disobey the social restricted norms in festival, in telling a lie in the challenge of truth and justice. The tiger is also regarded as a representative of *Donyi-Polo*, who attacks a sinner and man of violent character. So, in this way, the Adis believe that *Donyi-Polo* sends his representatives in various forms to play role of action on behalf of him. This network of vigilant action of *Donyi-Polo* proves that *Donyi-Polo* is omnipotent.

As a matter of fact, the term *Donyi-Polo* has a wider connotation. It has three meaning; it is used to refer to the Almighty God. It also used to denote the 'sun' and 'moon'. Further, it is the name given to the traditional belief system of the people. So, the present context, *Donyi-Polo* is neither a God nor the two celestial objects nor an object of worship but the spiritual, ideological and philosophical aspiration to lead the peaceful and meaningful life on this earth. In other words, the faith on the supreme power God that is manifested in the form of the sun and the moon, and the practices associated with the worship of this absolute power is called *Donyi-Polo*. In the words of Talom Rukbo, 'in the spiritual aspects, *Donyi-Polo* means the synthetic form of the sun and moon that is the power which is absolute that governs the universe scientifically and eternally i.e. heat, light, air, water, life and death. Therefore, its virtues are social discipline, devotion to work, hospitality, kindness and truth. And thus, the Adis believe that *Donyi-Polo* is spiritual power which guided us to lead the truth.

B. Indigenous Rituals Practice

1. Miri

The core of the Adis religion is formed by an attitude of awe and reverence towards enumerable intangible and non-material spiritual beings which are not under man's control. Thus, these supernatural forces are to be propitiated regularly lest they do any harm, and in order to seek help. Propitiating the spirits is not an ordinary task to be done by an ordinary man. Hence, some supermen are born to make divine communication with the almighty God and with other benevolent and malevolent spirits. Such men are regarded as the priest. The priest is term locally as '*miri*', is a person of immense status in Adis society. They are born with the inherent divine qualities and talent. From the very childhood they are capable of fore telling future cautions and phenomena, and narrating the mythical story of the creation of the universe as well as life on the earth. The term '*miri*' comes from '*mi*' meaning man and '*ri*' meaning ritual expert, thus, *miri* is a ritual specialist to cure man from illness. And as far as their role is concerned, he is a doctor as well. By performing various tests for prediction, he detects the reasons of illness and determines the sacrifice to be offered to the attacking devilish lord.⁴ The priest therefore acts as a messenger in invoking the gods like *Donyi-polo*, *Dadi-Botte* (god of domestic animal) and angelic lords *Hili Hidong* (god of water), *Eme uyu* (god of fire), etc. He also predicts the reasons of illness of a person. Invoking gods, angelic lords, devilish lords and evil spirits, the *Miri/Nyibo* recites the incantations. A good priest is a spiritual guide also and the people hold him in reverence. Some of the priests claim to have mystic powers and practice magic in different fields like curing, healing and ritual ceremony. Because of magic and sorcery, some of them are held in great awe. The priests also wear protective wears to safeguard against the attack of demons and devils. These wears are known as *Dumling*, *legin* and *lakjin*. *Dumling* is a magical thread tied as a necklace or on the hair of a person by a *miri*. *Lejin* is a magical thread tied on the leg of a person by the *miri*. *Lakjin* is a magical necklace made of beads and thread given by a *miri*.⁵ In other words, a *miri* is a person performing religious, medical and predictor functions. Sometimes a person knows the job and yet does not practice it. A *miri* may be a man or a woman. A *miri* need not observe any special code of conduct.⁶ The *miri* are paid in cash and kind. Formerly, they were paid in kind only. Even nowadays the cash is generally symbolic to evaluate the price of the articles given to *miri*. They are paid in the form of meat, *apong*, clothes, bracelets or small ornaments.

⁴. An extract interviews with Bani Danggen (public leader) of Yingkiong town. 25.02.2018.

⁵. Ibid.

⁶. Tayi Taggu (Director of Indigenous Faith) of Itanagar. 30.05.2019.

The position of the *Miri/Nyibo* is not hereditary. Sons of *miri* should not be a *miri* without having this mysterious power.⁷ In this regard, neither election nor selection plays any role in ascribing a person as a village priest. Of course, there are a few persons used to have undergone training and a close association with the *miri* in his religious actions, which can perform a few rituals and some common prognostic test, they are called as *Jitgur* (subordinate of Priest).⁸ Some of the *jitgur* become very much expert by his own talent, wisdom and experience. Even then their status is one step lower than that of a *miri*. However, a *miri* does not enjoy any special privileges in his community. He leads a very simple and common lifestyle with his co-villagers. Apparently one cannot make any difference by only seeing a priest and a common villager. But difference is there in the mind of the villagers. People used to venerate him as a divine communicator and a spiritual guide. He is considered as the celestial guardian of the people since he is the man who can detect the tormenting spirits and can mollify them in order to salvage the people from their anguish and misfortune.⁹

The hymns or the incantations recited by *miri* are unwritten. They are transmitted from generation to generation. Their tone, pronunciation and style depend on the *miri*. All the incantation starts from the origin of the *Donyi-Polo*, angelical lords, the Adis and the devilish lords. In addition, *miri* with sharp brain and wisdom carry on with additions and omission to suit the invocations at particular times. The description of the origin of the universe and the controlling lords is the same for all rituals. In addition, such incantations are added by the *miri* in all invocation relating to prosperity and cure of disease.¹⁰ The order and length of stanzas differ from invocation to invocation. Sometimes the *miri* emphasized a particular point and keep on repeating it many times.

The central post of the house of the *miri* is considered as the central 'power house' for transmitting and receiving information to and from all the spirits. If the *miri* desires to call the spirit, he asks him to come down to the central pole or post, and then strikes the pole with the blunt edge of his sword.¹¹ He offers rice, *apong*, ginger, fish or egg to the spirit who takes it as an invitation and comes down to the central pole of the house and talks to the *miri*. The diagnosis by the *miri* may not always be correct. It is more or less a trial and error method. If the patient does not recover by offering sacrifice to one spirit, the *miri* offers sacrifice to other spirits and ultimately may hit upon the spirit responsible for causing the disease. The patient may also recover in the meantime. Thus an endless chain of offerings and sacrifices goes on in the family and not an inconsiderable resource of the family is spent on sacrifices. The important causes of the sickness and disease are offending the spirits, evils directed by spirits, and the insatiable desires of the spirits to cause harm.¹² Almost all the sufferings are explained in this way. The main method of cure is propitiating the spirits and offering them the requisite sacrifices.¹³ Without *miri*, the disease can also be diagnosed and cured with the help of the magic, whose functions have already been discussed. His main method is divination by *lime monam*. He also tells the nature of sacrifice to be offered and which of the *miri* would be able to cure the sick.

It is interesting to note that ginger is an essential ingredient in all the offerings and sacrifices. It is believed that the spirits like its smell. Sacrifices can be kept in abeyance in the name of the spirit by throwing rice grains over the intended sacrificial animal and thus committing it to the spirits. It is usually done in heavy working season to avoid observing taboos on going out to the cultivation fields.

A considerable part of the time and resources of the family is spent on the various ritual occasions and observances which keep the family members occupied. They are always afraid of the malevolent spirits and take every care to ward off such calamities as may be bestowed by them. Egg and fowls are used mostly for sacrificial purposes and not a small share from the stock of the cattle goes towards appeasing these spirits. Rituals and sacrifices are as important and inevitable as any social or economic activity, and one has its bearing on the other. All these aspects of the family life are intertwined together. A priest among the Adis has to do multifarious jobs. He performs all sorts of religious rites and ceremonies; he prognosticates the important event of social and economic significance; and over and above, as a doctor he identifies the spirits responsible for causing diseases and prescribes the nature of sacrifices to be made upon. As a spiritual guide, an Adis priest secures blessing of the spirits by invoking them time to time. In the olden days, the priests were paid in kind, in the form of meat, beer, vegetable beads and ornaments; for their services. At present, they are paid in both cash and kind; along with the meat and beer, sometimes cash is also given to the priest which is considered as the symbolic token of reverence.

⁷. Ibid.

⁸. An extract interviews with Tapor Tatin (Gaon Burah) of Pareng Village on 12th march 2020.

⁹. Ibid.

¹⁰. Ibid.

¹¹. An extract interview with Taket Jerang (priest) of Ngorlung village on 30th may 2019.

¹². Ibid.

¹³. Ibid.

2. Rogum

The *Rogum* is an important role played by the *miri* (priest) with old men of the clan members. The main motive behind the *rogum* ritual is to cure and relieve the person who had bad omen and dream. Dream plays an important part in the religious beliefs and practices of the family of the Adis society.¹⁴ It is interpreted as the temporary departure of the soul of the dreamer. It is also interpreted as warning given by the spirits against any misfortune about to befall the family. It also indicates the steps to be taken to counteract the bad effects of a dream. To perform the *rogum* ritual, generally the *Ayit Miri* (soul priest) hired by the family and to be hired *Ayit Miri*, family must possess available *Tale* (silver plate) and *Tadok* (beads) in their hand. In such cases a leading priest should be invited and called in with a payment of valuable *Tadok Dokhan/Dokpun* (costly Beads) as per number required.¹⁵ It should be fixed or tied in his hair along with a bunch of *Riddin* (thread made from creeper plant) as *Dumling* so that the priest can lead the soul journey without fear and hesitation.¹⁶ Next morning the priest performs ritual work to make *pandalin* in front of the house and/or sometimes *pandal* will be made outside of the village, it depends on the demand of the evil spirit. And animals were sacrificed inside their *pandal* to pray for good health and relief from the bad omen of the person.

According to Srivastava “dreaming of a certain figure of spirit destroying the crops puts the dreamer on guard, and the next morning he makes an image exactly like the one he saw in his dream and hangs the same in his agricultural field for everyone to see and take precaution. He offers sacrifice of an egg or a fowl to the make believe image,”¹⁷ another dream is that during night hour had saw the *Nipong Taleng Urom* (evil spirits) attacking him, in that case ritual offering is done by the man to sacrifice mithun, pig, fowls, etc. to protect from the evil spirits.¹⁸ Hence, dream plays an important part in religious beliefs and practices of the Adis.

3. Uyu Biya Sinam

The words ‘*Uyu Biya Sinam*’ are combination of words which signifies ‘*Uyu*’ is evil spirits and ‘*Biya Sinam*’ means give a demand of unknown spirits which cause sickness. The animal sacrifice plays a key role in the religious life of the Adis. The Adis do not believe in human sacrifice to appease the supernatural powers. They offer domestic animals like mithun, cow, pig, fowl, etc. to sacrifice for evil spirits with the help of *miri* to cure the sickness. While invoking supernatural powers, it is not compulsory to sacrifice the animals. Sacrifice is resorted to only when it is predicted by *Ayin kana* (liver divination) and *Lime Mona* (stone divination). Some of the angelic lords do not expect invocation. Such lords are *Gumin-Hoyin*, *Pidem-yodang* and *Agung-Agam* (the lords of house hold and domestic animals). Many angelic lords can be invoked only by rich people. Even if they are not invoked they do not harm people.¹⁹

The mystery of nature in the form of high mountains, steep, rock climbs, heavy snowfalls, torrential rains, unaffordable rivulets, slashing landslides, violent earthquakes, abundance of dangerous animals and poisonous creatures, damage to crops due to fire, excessive rains and wildlife, loss of human life prematurely due to disease and suffering originated a feeling of the existence of supernatural forces in the mind of the forefather of the Adis. Each generation inherited a long list of gods, angelical lords, demons, devils and evil spirits and the faith in them kept on increasing. The Adis were a people living in the midst of nature and the fear of supernatural powers always haunted them.²⁰ They had no alternative but to ask the help of supernatural forces. Their faith in the existence of supernatural powers enabled them to survive. The Adis had started appeasing the supernatural forces with animal sacrifice.

The purpose of sacrifice was twofold. Initially it sought assistance of all supernatural forces. Then it took the form of invocation. Assistance or help could be asked only after the invocation and the best way was to invoke with the assistance of animal sacrifice. Invocation is performed for a number of purposes like good luck in the jungles, increase in health, wealth and prosperity, bumper crops and cattle wealth, trade and other economic dealings. The sacrificial rituals like *Ipak*, *Rogum*, *Leyo-goknam*, *Motum-Moyeng*, etc. also came under animal sacrificial rituals to offer evil spirit as well as the angelical lords.

¹⁴. L. R. N. Srivastava, Social Organisation of the Minyong, Directorate of Research, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar. P.102.

¹⁵. An extract interviews with Tokbom Borang (Priest of Damroh Donyi-Polo Ganging) on 12th February 2020.

¹⁶. Ibid.

¹⁷. L. R. N. Srivastava, op.cit., p.102.

¹⁸. Ibid.

¹⁹. An extract interview with Tapon Tasing (Gaon Bura) of Riga village. 05.01.2020.

²⁰. Ibid.

Secondly, sacrificial rituals are resorted to detect disease and to free the person from disease, misery and sorrow due to ailments.²¹ The different devilish lords and evil spirits are to be offered invocations to leave a particular person so that he may be free from disease. The incantations in all *Uyu menam/ uyu ipak* (appeasement of devilish lords for the cure of disease) are pronounced with this purpose. The devil is requested to leave the patient and accept an animal in his place.²²

Thirdly, the sacrificial rituals are performed to avenge a wrong done or to retaliate and the help of supernatural forces is sought after. This type of sacrifice is different from those offered for spiritual and materialistic gains. Closely related to the sacrifice offered for revenge is the sacrifice offered as a part of sorcery and witchcraft. Belief in sorcery and witchcraft among the Adis is derived from Tibetan evil spirits were all magicians who detected the culprits who committed thieves and other offences.²³ They were therefore killed. After their death the souls of these magicians have become evil spirits. They are offered sacrifices so that they may not harm anyone.

4. Epak

The term '**Epak**' denote the meaning ghost should be remove from the ailing person. This, ritual practices is performed by the priest called *Ipak Miri* with old men of the clan's member to cure sickness. When a person falls sick, the priest is called. He puts his hands on the body of the patients, sings an invocatory song and finds out with the help of his guardian spirit, the evil responsible for the sickness.²⁴ Before chanting of song the priest starts with *Pidem-Yodang*, the deities of House hold. He again sings and invocatory song at night-sometimes sitting and sometimes standing near the fire place inside the house to performed dance. The assembled villagers men and women, young and old sing a refrain in chorus. The dress of the *Ipak Miri* is similar to that of the *Miri* in the *Etlong* dance but purposed of the rituals work is different. The priest gets possessed occasionally by his guardian spirit, when he falls into a trace. The guardian spirit helps him in tracing and in persuading the evil spirit to give up its possession of the patient for effecting recovery. The dance movement is the same as that performed by the *Miri* of the *Solung Ponung* dance. The priest performs the necessary rites in the next morning according to the demand of evil spirit; they sacrificed the animals like mithun, pig and fowl.²⁵ In case the person sick for long period of times their recovery is impossible, in that case the sacrificial is heavy and at least mithun and pig will be done sacrificed. During sacrificial all the clan members help the priest and rituals work will also take parts in members assembled.

The *Ipak Miri* takes remuneration in cash, kind or labour. The remuneration varies from priest to priest. Some priests fix the remuneration themselves while some priests are happy with whatever the patient's family can offer.²⁶ The priest may be a woman or man, if the patient has effective recovery, the priest gets respect from the society as well as his/her reputation is high in the society.

5. Motum-Moyeng

The term '*Motum-Moyeng*' denotes two word '*motum*' means stop, where as '*moyeng*' means protect from evil spirit. It is also strong ritual beliefs and practices system of Adis to to save their life from evil spirits. When, unfortunate signal like entering of wild creature, big snake, mithun, birds, etc., inside their house of family is considered as bad omen.²⁷ in such case the deities like *Doying-Bote, Kine-Nane* and ancestral deities may have been displeased with the family and might have send this creatures and animals to signaling the destruction of the family.²⁸ So, in that case Adis had done *motum-moyeng/Motor-sinam* to remedial method of the destruction, they have to propitiate the deities offering ransom sacrifices. This ritual is called *motum-moyeng*. in this rituals *Lime* (stone divination), *Tagir* (bamboo divination) and *Ayin kanam* (liver divination) plays a important role to which spirit and deities are sent such types of bad signaling to the family is detects, after that the actual ritual is done by *miri* or old man of the village to performed. This ritual is done as per demand of the spirits.

Another ritual practices is that when epidemic is started in neighboring village, all the villagers gather at *Dere/Mushup* to discuss remedial and protect of the motor to such dangerous epidemic in the village. In such

²¹. Ibid.

²². Ibid.

²³. Ibid.

²⁴. Niranjan Sarkar, *Dances of Arunachal Pradesh*, Directorate of Research, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar, 1974, p.73.

²⁵. An extract interview with Tatak Mize (Ayin priest) of forest colony pasighat on 18th may 2019.

²⁶. Ibid.

²⁷. Bani Danggen, op.cit. interview.

²⁸. Ibid.

case the village *Kebang* with elder brother to decide to ready for make *Pator* (ritual gate on the way to entry point) outside at the village and sacrifice the dog to hang at the gate. In *Eki pator* (sacrifice of dog) at gate is called *motum-moyeng/motor-sinam* is constructed at the entrance of the village. It is beliefs that such ritual could protect the epidemic at village. Bows and arrows, snakes made of bamboo, spears and bamboo shaving are used at the gate to make it appear fearsome. Sometimes *beru* (temporary road that bypass the village) is made for the travelers. Under such conditions people are not allowed to bring fish and meat in the village to prevent the spread of epidemics. The main purpose to make motor gate (A gate construction for protection of epidemic) is to prevent the entry of evil spirit called *doli talam* (Adangerous epidemic) at the village. After that one day taboo is observed at the village to restrict the working of field and washing clothes.

6. Ridin Punam

Literally term of '*Riddin*' means a sacred thread made from creeper plant and '*punam*' means tied the riddin to wrist or hair of a person. This process is called *Dumling punam* or *riddin punam*. To quote from *Bani Danggen*, 'when *tani* returned from war expedition of *Banji-Banmang* country after subjugating them, the *Engo-Takars* sisters led by *Karpung-Mimi* tied '*Riddin*' on the hairs of the *Tani* as a well-coming gesture.'²⁹ *Riddin* is a bunch of thread made from creeper plant, after making *riddin* it is believed to be done sacred power to transform out of the evil spirit and having power to lead the guardian spirit of the *miri* called *Dumling* (bunch of thread made from creeper plants to use sacred purpose) during *kipir Tabu* (priest lyrical song during rituals ceremony). They tied the *Riddin* in such a way that the extending ends of the *Riddin* would cover the face of *Tani*. In order to hide him from the recognition of *Banji-Banmang*, *medeng-Sene*, *Ranji Kosi Mime*, they also covered him with cloth. As the descendents of *Tani*, the *Adi* inherit this ritual practice from *Abotani* the ancestor of *Tani*. If someone returns from a jungle killing a tiger in the jungle, his maternal uncles and aunties receive him at the entrance of the village, tying *Riddin* with a piece of beads. They put a bunch of *tadok* around his neck and covered him with cloths conformed the tradition of covering *Tani*, to hide him from recognition of *Banji Banmang*. In these way, *Adis* beliefs that *Riddin* had sacred ritual power to protect the evil spirits to save the human life. Hence, now a day *Riddin* are used for *Rogum* ceremony, *Epak* Ceremony, sacred purpose, emergency case like accident and even *Donyi polo Gangging* are used *Riddin* as sacred thread to wrap the *Riddin* for all devotees.

Conclusion

After careful study of the different narration from the above conclusion, *Adis* of Arunachal Pradesh had rich unique cultural heritage. However, there are no written records and documentation of their history related to indigenous rituals and religion as comparison to the most of other communities of the world. Basically, they are depending on practices of ritual ceremonies, animals sacrifice, beliefs, customs and traditions to maintain their past glorious. Thus, we have seen that at present, the religion of the *Adis* is not unified body of beliefs and practices. Significantly, changes are seen in their overall religious life. Further, *Adis* of Arunachal Pradesh is deeply beliefs in the indigenous ritual ceremonies and traditional divination power. Even though the belief in role of priest, ceremonies and animal sacrificed to deity have been slightly change, yet there is a certain degree of beliefs which are based on superstitious perspective in interpretation of dreams, taking of omens to undertake any kinds of work, identity of clans on the basis of ghosts of men and life after death are still exists in the minds of the people of *Adis*.

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