

PRIEST AS A HEALER: A CASE STUDY AMONG THE APATANI TRIBE OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

The priest as a healer in the Apatani community plays a very important role in the society. Like modern doctors, priest in the Apatani society also perform various rituals and rites to heal the patients. Before performing any rituals and rites, they also have to verify the causes of ailment through egg and chicken liver. There are some healing rituals which are dangerous for priest, where even death is a possibility if it is not performed well. They even engaged themselves for a month sleepless while performing certain major rituals. Sometimes they even lose weight for not consuming food in time. So therefore, it is important to explore about the role of priest as a healer and for their selfless services.

Keywords: Priest as a healer

Introduction

The Apatanis are one of the major tribes among the 26 major tribes and more than 100 sub-tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. They settled originally in Ziro valley of Lower Subansiri District of Arunachal Pradesh. They are variously named by British visitors as *Onka Miri*, *Ankas*, *Apatanang* and *Tanang*. In early 1944-45, C.V.F. Haimendorf, an anthropologist employed by the colonial state to visit known them as 'Apa-Tanii'. It was from that time, the Apatanis have been named as 'Apatani'.ⁱ

In every human society there is a person who mediates between humans and unseen spirits, who guides and supplement the religious practices of others. Such persons are also seen to be highly skilled in contacting and influencing supernatural beings and manipulating supernatural force. Such individuals are known as shaman or priest. So the main objective of this paper is to study the priest as a medicine man among the Apatanis of Arunachal Pradesh based on both primary and secondary sources.

The word shaman originally referred to a magico-religious specialist, or spiritual guide among the Tungus and other Siberian pastoral nomads with animist beliefs. By means of various techniques such as fasting drumming, chanting or dancing as well as use of hallucinogenic mushrooms, these Siberian shamans enter into a trance or an altered state of consciousness.

While in this waking dream state, they experience visions of an alternate reality inhabited by beings such as guardian animal spirits that may assist in the healing.ⁱⁱ The term Shaman has become popular in recent decades that any non-Western local priest, healer, or divine is often loosely to as one.ⁱⁱⁱ On the other hand priest have role of guiding religious practices and influencing the supernatural. Priests are the socially initiated, ceremonial inducted member of a recognized religious organization.^{iv}

The core meaning of the term priest in the western usage is-(i) the priests perform a sacrificial ritual, usually at a fixed location such as an altar (ii) the priest does so as a specialist on behalf of a community or congregation.^v In the cross-cultural and non-western use the term 'priest' as any religious specialist acting ritually for or on behalf of a community.^{vi}

Among the Apatani tribe of Arunachal Pradesh, they have their own priests for performing of religious rituals as well as sacrifices known as *Nyibu*. The priest plays a very significant role in the society. His advice or guidance is sought before making a long journey, after construction of house, sowing in the field, sending out on hunting expedition and matters related to conducting of rituals concerning birth, naming of new born child, marriage and death.

When they summoned in case of sickness, temporal distress etc., they consult the omen through chicken liver or egg in order to determine the nature of the misfortune that has befallen, the necessary sacrifices to be performed and the spirits to whom it to be offered.^{vii}

Priest in the Apatani Society

Among the Apatani society, a person who mediates between human and the unseen spirits is known as *Nyibu*. Regarding the *Nyibu*, Radhe Yampi (2012) in book *Religion and Syncretism in the Apatani Society* states that:

Nyibu is combines the function of both priest and shaman because *Nyibu* like the priest derive their knowledge of ritual performance by learning *Miji* or oral literatures related to religion from older *Nyibu* and do not fall into trance for spirit mediumship. *Nyibu* can be regarded as an institutional functionary for they undertake institutionalized rituals and ritual manipulating symbolic objects with prescribed gesture during ritual performances which have permanence in that they are culturally transmitted. However, *Nyibu* cannot be treated as priest similar to priesthood of the either organized religion since the institution is not hereditary and like shaman they are not restricted to religious services but are able to pursue any other economic activities just like ordinary members of the society. Therefore, person who mediates between man and unseen spirit can be referred by

the term *Nyibu*, because neither of the words ‘Shaman’ nor ‘priest’ is entirely satisfactory for this religious institution.^{viii}

Similarly, Stuart Blackburn (2008) in book his *Himalayan Tribal Tales: Oral Tradition and Culture in the Apatani Valley* rituals states that:

Nyibus resemble ritualistic specialists in other Himalayan, Central Asian North and North Asian societies who are often known as ‘Shamans’. For instance, the priest leaves their body and travel to the land of spirits, to whom they speak in a special language in order to negotiate with them. In other fundamental respects, however, *Nyibu* are unlike the classic Siberian shaman. However, the Apatani *Nyibus* are not shaman, because they does not have a ‘familiar’ spirit or mastery over spirits; he does not go into ‘trance’ or display other behavioral signs of ecstatic experience. He is not involuntarily (or voluntarily) ‘known as’ to his craft by a ‘shamanic illness’ or vision. Nor does he cure illness by retrieving a fugitive soul. This is because the Apatanis explains that illness and accidental or premature death is not as ‘soul loss’ but as intrusion of harmful spirit. In other words, the *Nyibus* is not possessed by spirits; his client. The Apatani use diagnosis of illness but not as prominently as in ‘Shamanistic’ culture. Finally, the *Nyibu* is the sole ritual specialist in his culture. He alone is able to see the invisible spirits and speak with them”.^{ix}

So, among the Apatanis, for the person who mediates between man and unseen spirits, the term *Nyibu* would be used more appropriately.

Eligibility of a *Nyibu*

The priest in the world’s various traditions can be divided into two categories-a) hereditary priesthood and b) vocational priesthood.^x Among the *Nyibus* of Apatani community are believed to be the gift of God *Charung* and destiny, enabled by the blessing of all the existing Gods or Goddess known as *Jillo Lyayu*. They are neither inherit the skills, nor are elected, nor are imparted any formal training. The ability to be in touch with god and spirits is not acquired by accident.^{xi}It is believed that a person destined to be *Nyibu* only becomes a *Nyibu*. Even if a person is blessed to acquire *Miji* or proficiency in oral literature related to ritual performances by God *Charung* may not become *Nyibu* unless he or she gets blessings of all the existing Gods and Goddess known as *Jilo Lyayu*. Thus a person cannot become *Nyibu* by simply being proficient in *Miji* but he or she has to be blessed by *Jilo Lyayu* the very supernatural aspects of this institution.^{xii}

They are naturally born and having inherent qualities to become a *Nyibu*. They do not belong to any special class of people, but any person with inborn ability can acquire the skills of invoking gods and spirits. This is usually done by apprenticing himself to an experienced *Nyibu* and by assisting him in the performance of rituals and sacrifices. C.V.F.Haimendorf writual about it thus:

There passes no day in the Apatani valley without one or another priest approaching gods and spirit on behalf of the individuals who seek help in their personal crisis, be it an illness or in enterprises such as the construction of a house, appeasement of spirit after a fire accident in a village. Indeed, it is common to find priests dressed in ceremonial robe reciting incantation on *Lapang* (public wooden platform) or to hear their monotonous chants resounding in the interior of dwelling house.^{xiii}

Hage Naku also states that a person must fulfill a few critualria to attain the priesthood, as it is very difficult to become perfect priest. The critualria's are as follows:

- 1) He should have capacity to memorize the sacred hymns and understand the concept, since common men cannot understand the spiritual verses.
- 2) He has to acquire vast knowledge and ideas about the supernatural being.
- 3) He should be able to name the ancestor of Apatanis in a sequence (sic) manner and the myths regarding the creation of universe and origin and migration of Apatanis since in almost all the sacred verses, these are essential.
- 4) He should be capable of distinguishing the diseases caused by the different spirits and deities.
- 5) He should have blessing of the spirit like *Ato Charung*, *Hulu Lyayu*, *Tapyu Tabyo* and *Are Amyo*, *Zillo Lyayu* who are responsible for showering spiritual knowledge, confidence and encouragement.
- 6) Priesthood should be approved by an omen testing from eggs and chicken liver, though it is not mandatory. In order to have all the spiritual knowledge and sacred verses, a lengthy process of training and hard labor is required by listening carefully to the recital of every socio-religious ceremony. Oral history and social memory are living contract (sic) with past. In the Apatani society there is no written record hence these spiritual verses are passed through oral from generation to generations.^{xiv}

Thus, to be a perfect *Nyibu* is not an easy task as he has to learn and memorize the chants, and acquire knowledge about supernatural power world right from the childhood. Moreover, he should be capable of narrating the tales of the spirit of their ancestors too, right from the time of *Abotani*. He should be able to distinguish between different diseases caused by different malevolent spirits. After acquiring knowledge of the spiritual realm he is confident to become a perfect *Nyibu*.

Even if one has acquired vast sacred knowledge and is capable of pointing out the mistakes of the priest, yet he could not become a priest, if he is not able to narrate the tales of the spirits of their ancestors and distinguish the version of chants relevant to healing a particular disease and spirits. Besides, they also deeply believe that an imperfect *Nyibu* may bring a short life to himself and to his family members.^{xv} It is also believed that they may not become rich and remain in penury if they do not follow the norms. He himself is afraid to become *Nyibu* though he might possess a vast corpus of sacred knowledge and other ideas. This is because he fears that he may commit mistake at the time of chanting or performing any rituals. In order to become a perfect priest, he has to work hard, attend every ceremonial occasion listening carefully to chants from an old experienced *Nyibu* and memorize it. Thus, the *Nyibu* gets his position by special spiritual gifts showered on him by the *Charung* as they believe.^{xvi}

Like other communities of Arunachal Pradesh, the Apatanis also consider *Nyibu* as a healer, mediator, negotiator and reliever from the attributions of malevolent spirits. Haimendorf refers to the Apatani *Nyibu* as repository of the tribe's sacred lore, and must be able to recite and chant for hours invoking multitudes of Gods and recalling mythological events, relevant to the nature of the rituals he is performing.^{xvii}

In the Apatani society, basically there are two types of *Nyibus*, viz., *Bhuru* and *Buho*. The main *Nyibu* who performs lots of rituals both major and minor rituals are known as *Bhuru Nyibu*. The assistant *Nyibu* is known as *Buho Nyibu* or *Uie Bariii Nii* in Hija village are known as *Miira* in Hong village.^{xviii} The assistant *Nyibus* are not selected on a regular basis and any elderly person of the community can accomplish the work. They just follow and repeat the sacred hymns of *Buho Nyibu*, main *Nyibu* and help him in constructing altar during the healing rituals especially *Myole*, and *Kharung* rituals etc. However, any person who knows the basic skills also can construct altar.

They are limited to four to five in number in every village. However, there is no restriction to the number of the priest in the village or the clan. A clan may have a number of priests but a sibling or immediate brothers cannot become priest in their clan, nor both the father and the son. The younger brother and son must wait till the death or retirement of their brother or father, if they

are interested to become a priest. It is believed that if they become priest in their clan, either their lives may become short or their family may suffer in the future.^{xix}

Until very recently, there were general perceptions that women do not become *Nyibu* although it is believed that women can be quite proficient in *Miji* and mythologically they trace the origin of *Nyibus* to *Doliyang Chanjyang* a female. However, this perception is gradually changing with the emergence of a female *Nyibu* Nending Diming of Hari village in the recent past. But unfortunately, she died a few years back. However, a female *Nyibu* still does not command a respectful position in the society as a male *Nyibu* enjoys. Nevertheless, the acceptance of Nending Diming reflects that female *Nyibus* is started being accepted or provided space in the institution of *Nyibu*, but now, she is also no more.^{xx}

Functions of a *Nyibu*

The *Nyibus* of the Apatanis being a healer or medicine plays a very important role in the society. It will also include the process of appeasement to spirits to heal the ailment and also in resolving various other queries. He performs all sort of religious rituals and ceremonies on behalf of the individual and community which are, reflected in their involvement right from the birth to death. They are upholder of the body of knowledge known as *Miji*.^{xxi} He is like mouthpiece of the people to communicate their grievances and sufferings to the spirits. He verifies the spirits through various divinations offers sacrifices to spirits and invokes blessing of the spirits on behalf of the people. In order to know about the *Nyibu* as a medicine man or healer in more detail, it can be discussed with reference to his involvement in the activities pertaining to healing rituals.

***Nyibu* as a Healer**

Most of the time priests spent their time in religious activities performing a number of rituals throughout the day and night in the patient's house. *Nyibu* consider themselves to be born to heal the suffering of mankind and therefore refrain from immoral thoughts and acts and try to serve people as much as possible. Therefore, they never refuse when they are solicited for any religious work.

Hence, the *Nyibu* as a healer first attends to the patient and enquires about the problem he has been summoned to deal with. Then he begins to ascertain the spirits, which is causing the person to ailment. For any treatment of ailment through various rituals, the *Nyibu* starts with different forms of diagnosis called *Yallang binii*, *Papu pinii* and *pahin konii*.

Further the *Nyibu* starts inquiring the spirits responsible for the ailments. In this chant he states that as there is no wise person in this world who could have vision over the past, present and

future. Therefore, gods of wisdom like *Bopi popi*, *La Sarming*, *Jinii popi* and *Danii Sarming* are asked to reveal the fact and provide clues towards the spirits responsible for ailment through various forms of divination. He also asks the spirit which captures the soul of the patient to reveal what it seeks as for appeasement in chicken, eggs, fowl, altars etc. He also seeks direction that an egg or chicken liver may show the right omen and the spirit responsible for ailment.^{xxii}

The simplest form of diagnosis is known as *Yallang Binii*. *Yallang binii* is one form of examination to find out which spirit responsible for a particular ailment. In this case, an egg is put inside a small basket made up of bamboo strips known as *Yalang Piuro*. The *Yalang Piuro* containing an egg is placed on the right or left thumb while invoking the various names of spirit while chanting a long spiritual hymn over it. For instance, if the ailment is caused by *Kharung* spirit, then the *Yalang Piuro* containing egg will automatically swing with force. If it does not swing with force then it means the *Kharung* spirit is not responsible for it. They continue to invoke the name of other spirits and use the same strategy to ascertain its presence.

For further confirmation a priest takes an egg and chants another spiritual verse known as *Papu Pinii*. After chanting over the egg, it is boiled in a pot. After the egg is fully boiled, it is cut into half with a single strand of hair. The yolk reveals various forms which signifies failure or success of the ritual and indicates the kind of animals to be offered to propitiate the spirits. In the middle of the yolk, there is a small lobe like an eye known as *Mipu*.^{xxiii} If the lobe is shallow, it indicates that an egg is not good or the spirit which is enquired for is not responsible for the ailment. In priestly language this reading is known as *Jama*. If there is a cut mark on the egg, it indicates death of a person from among members of the family or clan. Such an indication is known as *Kaming Tatii*.^{xxiv} Apart from examining the circle within the yolk, there is another indication read known as *Gombii* or a small line within the yolk. If this small line within the yolk goes towards thickerside of albumen (egg white or cover of boiled egg), it indicates that egg is not good and the spirit which is inquired for is not responsible for the cause of ailment. But if the *Gombii* goes towards the thinner side of the albumen (egg white or cover of boiled egg) it indicates a good sign, which means the particular spirit responsible for ailment and *Uie* too has accepted the appeasement.^{xxv} If there is a white circle known as *rapu* within the egg yolk, it indicates minor obstacles in life for which some rituals have to be performed. If there is reddish circle on the yolk of an egg, it indicates major obstacles in life.

Another way to find out about the spirit responsible for ailments is *Pahing konii* and *Bedu Nii*. In *Pahing Konii*, the priest chants for half an hour over the chicken and the liver of chicken is examined properly. There are various lines, cut marks, spots and lobes known as *Nyibo Palo*, *Gali-Diido* (both these are thin line and cut marks in the lobes of chicken liver), *Ajing* (red spot), *Aper* (gall bladder), *Kortii pyokung* (a thin line and cut marks in chicken on the lobes of chicken

liver) in priestly language.^{xxvi} From these lines and marks details about the cause of suffering and any difficulty likely to occur in the future is seen in the chicken liver.^{xxvii} If the *Nyibo Palo* and *Gali Diido*, a very thin line stretches up from *aper* (gall bladder) to *Pagan Piiding* (extreme end of right lobe of chicken liver), it indicates the healing will be successful which indicates that the spirit is responsible for the diseases that which *Nyibu* is enquiring for. If the *Gali* (a common bile duct of chicken liver) is broken, it indicates that the healing ritual will be unsuccessful or the disease will not be healed. If the *Gali* is broken near its root, it indicates that the patient may die.^{xxviii} If there is a *Kortii Pyakung* (a thin line or cut marks) on either side of the lobes of liver, it indicates that the spirit is responsible for the diseases and ready to relieve the ill person from the grip of the diseases that which *Nyibu* is imploring for.^{xxix} If there is an *Ajing* (red spot) on the lobes of the liver, it indicates that the person may not feel happy. If the *Apper* (gall bladder) is long, it indicates healthy life. If the *Apper* is short, it indicates that the suffering will not be healed. If the *Apper* is bound by thread like substance, it indicates that the person is protected by divine forces and it is known as *Alla Biinii*.^{xxx}

After the confirmation through the above discussed verification of egg and chicken liver, there is another step known as *Bedu Nii*. It is like advanced intimation to the particular spirit that the person will perform rituals if the pain is relieved within a day or two. In this kind of divination, the priest informs as well as promises that if the pains of the person are not relieved within the specified day, the person will not perform rituals or else rituals will be offered according to the omen and nature of the ritual. However, if the pain is relieved within a day or two after the *Bedu Nii*, the person has to perform the main ritual.^{xxxi}

Among the Apatanis, there is another person who possesses power to negotiate between humans and supernatural powers.^{xxxii} They are known as *Mikhii-Runii* or *Uie-Inii*.^{xxxiii} They do not have any formal training and do not perform any rituals and ritual, but can fall into a trance and in the induced state of trance they are able to enter *Nelli / Talii Myoko* (ancestral abode).^{xxxiv} In a state of trance they acquire the personality of spirits which possess them and speak in first person in a language, different from ordinary language in either male or female voices. If a woman in state of trance spoke in a male voice then it is assumed that she had been possessed by male spirit and vice-versa.^{xxxv}

In the entire Apatani valley, there are only a few *Mikhii Runii* who fall into a trance and in the induced state of trance they are able to enter *Nelli / Talii Myoko*. It is believed that a spirit who is courageous only can enter into the world of humans by possessing living bodies. It is also believed that living men who were chosen to be married or were already married to a spirit in the unseen spirit world become *Mikhii-Runii* or *Uie-Inii*. For instance Mrs. Lod Empu, daughter-in-law of Lod Alo was believed to be married to her tutelary spirit *Garlang Ajin*.

However, a man can also be possessed by male spirit by virtue of his friendship. People would put various queries for all kind of problems of life which may be related to health or any other specific problem before the *Mikhii Runii* and whatever responses they get, were assumed as answers from the spirit, which were effective suggestions. Thus, these spirits had no negative intention to harm human beings. In fact, they help sick persons through the *Mikhii Runii* to identify the spirit responsible for their suffering or whether their souls were captured or bound by the spirit, which has delayed healing. This journey to spirit world is known as *Uie-Inii*. It is done in secrecy of their homes and was rarely observed in public, but they do not perform rituals like *Nyibus*. People approach the *Mikhii-Runii* when there is no option after having performed various healing rituals. Thus in this way *Mikhii-Runii* or *Uie-Inii* helps sick person to find out the spirit that responsible for the ailment.

Now a days as the landscape is subject to alterations due to development, these spirits not longer possess the living anymore.^{xxxvi} The function of a *Nyibu* and *Uie-Inii* do not seem to be exclusive, as some *Nyibus* have the power to put themselves into trance and in that state set out to trace the whereabouts of a straying soul (*yalo*). They prevail upon the *Uie* holding the *Yalo* in their power to release their victim and enable it to return to its material body. While the *Nyibu* usually performs in public, normally holding the sacrificial rituals in the *Lapang*, *Uie-Inii* operates in the secrecy of their house and is hence not easily observed.^{xxxvii} Thus, it is believed that, the wrath of supernatural power is a danger to humans; hence the presence of the *Nyibu* is sought for every activity from minor ailments to death. It is only the presence of *Nyibu* is required to appease and propitiate such powers, so that they may not interfere in the life of human being.

Taboos observed by the *Nyibus*

Taboo is Polynesian word, said to mean “strongly marked”; though the word is Polynesian, but the institution is universal.^{xxxviii} In other words, taboo is considered as religious observance, everything belonging to or connected with a spirit is forbidden or taboo to man.^{xxxix}

The *Nyibu*, as a healer, also has to observe and follow an obligation after performance of rituals and rite. They also oversee the observance of taboos among the initiators families and the entire village. Breaking a taboo is treated as socially unacceptable. They are restrained from taking and touching certain edible and non-edible things. Generally, *Nyibus* should not take the meat of reptiles like snake and other ferocious animals till their death. Taking of sacrificial blood of domestic boar is also restricted. However, some villages do not impose any restriction on it. There are certain rites and rituals in which priests also equally observe the taboo. Such observances of taboos by the priest vary from village to village according to their beliefs.^{xi}

It is believed that if a *Nyibu* takes the meat of those creatures tabooed to them, they may lose their power to communicate with the spirit of those creatures and would not be able to make the spirits listen to them while performing rituals. They refrain from taking vegetables like pumpkin because it may cause cough and cold, potato and onion because corns may come out in the body. Apart from above mentioned taboos, the other restrictions are also to be observed by *Nyibu* according to the nature or type of ritual he has attended. For example, after funeral is attended they are restricted to visit those houses where any kind of ritual is performed in same day; they can visit the next day only.^{xli}

In case of major rituals particularly *Subu* and *Murung*, *Nyibus* have to undergo through very strict and lengthy phases of observing taboos. For *Subu* ceremonies taboos are observed for three to four months that is from January to May. In case of *Murung*, the taboo is observed is longer that is six to eight month. The taboos of *Murung* observed by the *Nyibus* are completed after consuming fried grain known as *Empi Diiche Nii*. It is believed that the success and failure of rituals and ceremonies also depends on the strict observance of prescribed taboo by both the *Nyibu* and the solemnizer. Therefore, they strictly follow and observe the taboos of any rituals and ceremonies.^{xliii}

Conclusion

The whole discourse on the role of the priest as a healer in ritual aspects of the Apatani society reveals that how priest plays an important role in the Apatani society. Being a healer he has to make many sacrifices. He can be summoned at any time to intervene between humans and spirits while he too has to observe the taboos too. Some healing rituals are dangerous like *Assang Mikhii* where even death is a possibility if it is not performed well. They even engaged themselves for a month sleepless while performing certain rituals like *Subu*, *Murung* and *Myoko*. Sometimes they even lose weight for not consuming food in time. Today in modern age this priesthood in the Apatani society is declining due to impact of many aspects like education, influence of new forms of religion that people, got converted, and due to impact of science and technology.

Notes and References

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ⁱⁱⁱ Haviland, et.al.,.....,p.498.

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- ^{viii} Radhe Yampi, *Religion and Syncretism in Apatani Society*, Directorate of Research, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar, 2012, pp.37-38.
- ^{ix} Stuart Blackburn, *Himalayan Tribal Tales: Oral Tradition and Culture in the Apatani Valley*, Leiden, Boston, 2008, p.161
- ^x Ashan Riddi, *The Tagins of Arunachal Pradesh: A Study of Continuity and Change*..... p.205
- ^{xi} C.V.F. Haimendorf, *A Himlayan Tribe: Castle to Cash*, Vikas Publishing House, Ghaziabad, 1980, p.150.
- ^{xii} Radhe Yampi, *Religion and Syncretism in Apatani Society*,..... p.38.
- ^{xiii} Haimendorf, *A Himlayan Tribe: Castle to Cash*,..... p.150
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- ^{xv} An extract from an interview with Mr. Habung Chilyang, age 74, priest, held at Reru village on 06/03/2016
- ^{xvi} Takhe Kani, *The Advancing Apatanis of the Arunachal Pradesh*, Purbadesh Mudran, Rehabari, Guwahati, 1993. Pp.130-131.
- ^{xvii} Haimendorf, *A Himlayan Tribe: Castle to Cash*,.....p.172
- ^{xviii} An extract from an interview with Mrs. Dani Yallung, farmer, held at Hija Villge on 17/03/2015.
- ^{xix} Takhe Kani, *The Advancing Apatanis of the Arunachal Pradesh*,.....p.133.
- ^{xx} Radhe Yampi, *Religion and Syncretism in Apatani Society*.....,p 39.
- ^{xxi} Radhe Yampi, *Religion and Syncretism in the Apatani Society*,.....p.37
- ^{xxii} Interpreted by Mr. Mihin Kani, age 58, Vice-Principal of Govt. Higher Secondary School, Ziro.
- ^{xxiii} Extract from an interview with Mrs. Dani Yallung, age 62, farmer, held at Hija Villge on 24/10/2015.
- ^{xxiv} Mihin Kanning, *Spiritual Inquiry System of the Apatani*, Arindam Offset and Imagine System, Rajgarh, Guwhati, 2011, p.106.
- ^{xxv} An extract from an interview with Mr. Tasso Gyayu, age 70, priest, held at Naharlagun on 24/10/2015.
- ^{xxvi} An extract from an interview with Mr. Khoda Tajo, age 68, village elder, held at Tajang village on 12/10/2015.
- ^{xxvii} Data collected from fieldwork while participating in rituals in Mr. Kago kano's house at Nenchangliya, on 17/07/2015.
- ^{xxviii} An extract from an interview with Mr. Tasso Gyayu, age 70, priest, held at Naharlagun on 24/10/2015.
- ^{xxix} An extract from an interview with Mr. Khoda Tajo, age 68, village elder, held at Tajang village on 12/10/2015.
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- ^{xxxi} An extract from an interview with Mr. Dani Marpu, age 72, priest, held at Hija Village on 7/03/2015.
- ^{xxxii} Haimendorf, *A Himalayan Tribe: Castle to Cash*..... p.173.

^{xxxiii}An extract from an interview with Mr. Tasso Gyayu, age 70, priest of Hari village, held at Naharlagun, on 19/01/2017

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^{xxxviii}Frank Byron Jevons, *The History of Religion*, Orient Publications, Delhi, 1904, p.59.

^{xxxix}Frank Byron,p.82.

^{xl}Takhe Kani, *The Advancing Apatanis of Arunachal Pradesh*,p.138.

^{xli}An extract from an interview with Mr. Pura Chatung, age 70, priest, held at Hija village on 5/03/2015.

^{xlii}Extract from an interview with Mr.Tasso Grayu, age 70, priest, held at Naharlagun on 21/02/2016.