A STUDY ON THE FUNDAMENTAL COMPONENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF MIZO TRADITIONAL FESTIVALS

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INTRODUCTION

According to some historians, Mizo is a part of the great wave of the Mongolian race which spilled over into Eastern and Southern India centuries ago. They temporarily stay in western Myanmar and come down to the place where they are now, i.e. Mizoram in the 17th century.

The traditional Mizo was enriched with a decent oral practice. This oral practice has kept the way of life of individuals alive. They had rich folktales, songs, and chants, which fill in as a composed record of the family fortunes and deeds of ability, and a portion of their practices could be followed precisely from the chants utilized when a family offered penances.

Mizo had three yearly celebrations called Kut stamping three distinct phases of the farming cycle. This was on the grounds that Mizo has consistently been shifting agriculturists. The three principle celebrations are Chapchar Kut (celebration of spring), Mim Kut (celebration performed when the yields other than paddy is first procured), and Pawl Kut (celebration of harvest). The Mizo adored social gathering and bustles, and likewise, Kut was a typical element of their public activity. Here we will look at into what the traditional Mizo had thought about fundamental components for festivity of their celebrations.

Keywords: Mizo, Zu (rice beer), Dance, Public feast, Song, Kut.

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ABSTRACT

The traditional Mizo had various community feasts and celebrations, which were performed at specific time and period of the year. The three principle celebrations are Chapchar Kut (celebration of spring), Mim Kut (celebration performed when the yields other than paddy is first procured), and Pawl Kut (celebration of harvest). The Mizo adored social gathering and bustles, and likewise, Kut was a typical element of their public activity. Here we will look at into what the traditional Mizo had thought about fundamental components for festivity of their celebrations.

Mizo had three yearly celebrations called Kut stamping three distinct phases of the farming cycle. This was on the grounds that Mizo has consistently been shifting agriculturists. The three principle celebrations are Chapchar Kut or spring celebration which is considered as the most significant and most fantastic celebration of the Mizo as it is the tie for joyful making and happiness for all. It went on for 3 days and three evenings, during which drinking, feasting, and dancing proceed all through. The subsequent celebration is the Mim Kut which was commenced with solemnity, out of appreciation for the dead. It is the fall celebration and the primary products of the yields were offered to the dead. It was accepted that the soul of the family members would return to their home during this specific Kut. The Pawl Kut was held after the paddy reaps and it was the oldest among the three Kut. It was a sort of thanks-giving celebration just as a kind of much obliged giving celebration for the local area.

There are a few components without which a customary Mizo celebration is deficient. These are:

ZU (RICE BEER)

Zu was focal in the social existence of the Mizos, and it was professed to be a piece of Mizo culture, particularly before the coming of Christianity i.e. before 1894. The social, religious, and political lives cannot move without the presence of Zu [1].

Zu was generally drunk on the events of Chapchar Kut, Mim Kut, Pawl Kut celebrations, penances, and ceremonial functions. Young fellows and ladies drank Zu just on some special occasions. In the former times, however, Zu was free for the grown-up individuals at this point none of them at any point drank unreasonably to lose his discretion. Individuals denounced and disdain crying and swaying in the road because of inebriation. None of them jumped at the chance to be reproved and to be disdain by the general population and attempted to stay away from it to the furthest extent that they could. If not really, a gathering of young fellows would beat the addicts and lushes under the cover of darkness [1]. In this way, youngsters barely drank Zu besides on the events of the festival of celebrations. Consequently, we may infer that in the pre-colonial period drinking of Zu was normal and was associated with the festival of celebrations and other various events.

LAM (DANCE)

In the Mizo society, one of the significant public activities was Lam. The Mizos have various social and local area dance, which were acquired from one age to another. In the olden days, dances were performed uniquely on specific events and they were head stimulations in the village. Here is a portion of the normal dance of the olden days, for example, Chai, Salei Lu Lam, Khual Lam, Cheraw, Rai Lu Lam, and Chhere Lam. Each has its own significant in the existence of the Mizos. As Chai dance was identified with celebrations of Chapchar Kut unique discussion will be given.

Chai is a dance performed distinctly in the festival of Chapchar Kut festivals [2]. Along these lines, Chai dance had a nearby association with Chapchar Kut. In this dance, people stand in a circle, with the ladies clutching the waist of the men, and the men to the ladies’ shoulder. At the centre are the performers who play the drum and the gong. The artists sway back and forth and keeping in mind that the drummer and the gong man beat their instruments. Chai melody is sung with the musical influencing of the artists and sway from one side to the other, as per the beat of the drum. Depending on the nuance followed the Chai Lam has four versions – Chai Lamthai – I, Chai Lamthai – II, Chai Lamthai – III, and Chai Lamthai – IV [2]. Chai Lam is the most significant items in the Chapchar Kut festivity and subsequently, the dance ought to be performed for the duration of the evening, particularly on the primary evening failing which would banish them from dancing for the remainder of the Chapchar Kut celebration.

HLA (SONG)

Before going to their current homeland, Mizo while living in Burma had composed various types of folk tunes. These incorporate Dar Hla, Bawh Hla, Chai Hla, Chawngchen Zai, Naupang Hla, Nawawh Hla,
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Sakhu, and Intahawina Hla [3].” Chai Hla is a melody sung during the festival of Chapchar Kut celebration. As indicated by Zatluanga, there are nine diverse Chai melodies, to be specific Kawnthi Chai Hla, Thaylangi Zai, Mangkhaia Zai, Lailuka (Zopui) Zai, Neihkai Zai, Lera Zai, Chhim Zai, Darlung Zai, and Lalvanga Zai [4]. These melodies were the most famous tune, which individuals sung along with the dancing at the time of Chapchar Kut festivity.

Mizo loved to sing and they sang on all joy and sad event. They have sung at the hour of festivity of Chapchar Kut with dance. They have sung at the bereaved family during the festival of Mim Kut. “The Mizo conventional tunes are exceptionally delicate and delicate that they can sing the entire night without getting worn out,” said R.L. Thangmawia [5]. He further says, “The Mizo in the early period were very close to nature and that music was the tune of their life [5].”

KHUANG (DRUM)

Khuang is one of the Mizo native instruments from the former times. It assumed a significant part in the social and religious existence of individuals. It is an absolute necessity on all events. It was basic for singing and dancing around the zu pot in their homes, during festivities and feast of various types. It is significant that Khuangchawi, the banquet that put the performer with the desired Thangchhual title, gotten its name from Khuang, the zo articulation for drum.

All things considered, it is generally inferred that the Mizo ancestors began utilizing the drum as right time as when they began singing and creating melodies. Lianhmingthanga accepts that Mizo got drum from the Chinese civilization through social dispersion. The interaction of that social dispersion may have gone through the Burmese with whom the Mizo had a nearby social contact, which occurred from the center of the ninth century AD until the end of Pagan period at the end of thirteenth century AD [6]. As per R.L. Thanhmawia, Khuang is the lone Mizo customary instrument that is prevalently utilized in the 20th and 21st century [5]. In this manner, Khuang is vital in the Mizo society. There is one well known saying, “Khuang loa chai ang” which signifies “celebration without a drum” shows that for the Mizo existence without drum was a day to day existence inadequate [5].

RUAI (PUBLIC FEAST)

One of the attributes of the traditional celebrations was the public feasts, which had associated both social and religious practices. In the days of yore, the rich families would give a progression of public feasts, which they believed would assist them in reaching their ancestors. The feasts, wearing of customary dress, dancing in all forms, and happiness in all villages in Mizoram. The fundamental components such as the Zu, songs, dance, and the community feast show that traditional Mizo society was an affectionate society.

Individuals energetically anticipate Kut in light of the fact that all segments of the general public, regardless of whether poor or rich had a good time on such events. There was no differentiation between the rich and the poor during the celebrations. Also, in these celebrations, the poor profited by the more extravagant individuals who contributed Zu and meat for the feast. Therefore, as per M. Lalmanzuala, the celebrations are the “focal point of the Mizo culture” [10].

To specify a portion of the festival, such as dating and drinking of Zu in the feasts, wearing of customary dress, dancing in a several forms, and so on, were totally done in such a way as the public activity of the local area. Co-activity of numerous individuals represented social solidarity and trustworthiness. Fruitful finishing of celebrations, consistently, shows the bond together strength and dependability of the local area. Celebrations, along these lines, gave individuals their social practices and standard duties and connection.

FUNCTION OF THE FESTIVAL

In the Mizo society, the village chief assumed a significant part. He was the sole authority of the land. Truth be told, the arrangements of the date for the celebrations were for the most part the duty of the chief and his Upas (council of elders) [11]. People join hands with them as faithful loyalists. Just the assigned people such as Sadawt (Priest) can play out the significant religious rites [11]. The general population can take an interest in the dance. And still, after all that individuals were glad to take part in the celebrations as an indication of honor to their rulers and furthermore to reinforce their adherence to custom and culture. In this way, the image of political solidarity was showed directly from the hour of arrangement till the end of the celebrations' festival.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, we may say that the life of the Mizo in the olden days was loaded with festivities. They celebrated these three principle celebrations, Chapchar Kut, Mim Kut, and Pawl Kut with gaiety and happiness in all villages in Mizoram. The fundamental components such as the Zu, songs, dance, and the community feast show that traditional Mizo society was an affectionate society.

Aside from these three celebrations in every one of the social services among the Mizos, Ruai (community feast) was set as huge, fundamental, and turned out to be an integral part of the general public. Rich and poor, youngsters and grown-ups, people would participate in the fabulous banquet with no separation. Nobody attempted to get alone except for shared his abundance to other people.

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