

## Plight of the *igus*: notes on shamanism among the Idu Mishmis of Arunachal Pradesh, India

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“The problem of religion in NEFA is a complex one, for the sudden impact and rapid development to which the people have been exposed is without precedent, and it is thus not easy to predict what their reactions will be.” (Elwin 1999/1957: 207)

“... tribal religion gives the people the power to reconcile themselves to the eternal emergencies of life”. (*ibid*: 214)

### Locating the Idu Mishmis

Idus Mishmis are considered to be one of the major tribes of Arunachal Pradesh though their total number only amounts to 57,543 persons (as per 2001 Census, Govt. of India) located in the Upper Dibang Valley and Lower Dibang Valley districts of Arunachal Pradesh. They are sometimes included as part of the larger constellation of the Mishmi group, which also includes Digaru and Miju Mishmis.<sup>2</sup> Culturally speaking, Idus are to a large extent distinct from the other two which is reflected in various aspects of their day-to-day life and social structure as well as their system of values. Idu Mishmis are commonly known as Chulikata Mishmis because of their distinct hair style and perhaps this nomenclature was given by the people of the plains with whom Idus used to do trade (Bhattacharjee 1983:13). In a few colonial documents, some Idus were wrongly identified as a separate tribe called Bebejiya who were negatively portrayed (Needham 1900, Allen 1905, Cooper [1873] 1995).<sup>3</sup> Dalton (1872:

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<sup>2</sup> The Miju Mishmis are now commonly known as Kamans, whereas Digaru Mishmis are called Taraons. One distinguishing feature of the Mishmis is their hairstyle (Dutta Chaudhuri, 1978).

<sup>3</sup> The Intelligence Branch of the Division of the Chief of the Staff, Army Headquarters, India, reported (1907:181) that the Chulikattas are the largest and

18) reported them as being Midhi people and mentioned that they were intensely detested and mistrusted by their neighbours, the Abors and Tanis, and they were much dreaded by the Saudiya<sup>4</sup> population due to the sneaky expeditions they made to kidnap women and children.

Bhattacharjee (1983) and Baruah (1960:13-33) tried to textualise their origin and migration on the basis of various elements of oral narrative, while in his recent publications (2003-2004, 2005) Blackburn touched upon this area and critically discussed their memories of migration and their journey compared to some of the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh.

Traditionally, an *igu* represents the central icon in the arena of religious beliefs and practices in Idu society. Almost every major aspect of Idu life revolves around their *igus* and its importance is reflected even beyond the sacred boundary, since they are involved in profane activities. For them, the key concept of spirit (*khinyu*) rules the world of the unknown, which may be benevolent or malevolent, while nourishing the concept of a Supreme Creator known as Inni.

“The Supreme God Inni, embodies the highest ethical conception reached by the Idus. Besides being the Supreme Creator of all things, he is the impersonal principle of justice, and the upholder of the moral order of creation” (Baruah 1960: 69). According to Bhattacharjee (1983: 117), “An Idu is constantly haunted by the spirits (*khinyu*) who abound in jungles, hills, shadowy recesses, rivers, gorges, cliffs as well as in the house and the village. They are dreaded as no one knows when and where one may fall into the trap. The spirits are the real masters of their fate. Any calamity-befalling them is attributed to spirits”.

Idu mythology reflects this syndrome. Since the origins of the universe, man and spirits have been the progeny of the same forefathers. According to their beliefs, even in the world of the unknown, hierarchy still exists among the variegated deities who were responsible for the creation and the survival of the moral order of things (Linggi and Miso 2000: 23). It is the *igu* or shaman who works as the mediator between the Idus and their world of the unknown by performing various rituals, magic-

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boldest tribe, while the Bebejias, occupying more remote areas, are known to be the least civilized and the source of violence in the plains.

<sup>4</sup> During the colonial period, Saudia was a famous trade centre in the plains of Assam near the Brahmaputra River. This was the place where hill tribes of NEFA (North-East Frontier Agency) used to come down along distinct trade routes to barter, sell or exchange their indigenous products with the people of the plains. During the return journey they used to take back whatever they needed, such as salt, beads, clothes, iron implements etc. Most annual administrative reports from Assam during the colonial period contain detailed accounts of such trade activities which British administrators encouraged and for which they had to draw up a distinct policy regarding trade in Saudia.

religious acts and most importantly, by a unique dance assisted by some team members. The *igu* has such pervasive influence in the whole social system that even today when their society is undergoing a transformation process most people still have a strong cognitive perception of the divine power of the *igus*; an institution which has fallen into gradual decline.



Fig. 1 Healing dance (S. Chaudhuri)

#### Concept of the shaman

According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2000: 1176), a shaman is a person in some religions and societies who is believed to be able to contact good and evil spirits and cure people of illness. In general parlance, shamanism implies power possessed by medicine men and sorcerers who are used to controlling or manipulating spiritual forces for human ends. Eliade (1964: 3) contested such a notion and said that if the word "shaman" is taken to mean any magician, sorcerer, medicine man, or ecstatic found throughout the history of religions and religious ethnology, we arrive at a notion at once extremely complex and extremely vague. He did not deny that a shaman is also a medicine man or magician but he emphasized that beyond that, a shaman is a psychopomp and he may be a priest, mystic or poet (*ibid*: 4). According to him, shamanism in the strict sense of the word is pre-eminently a religious phenomenon which

originated in Siberia and Central Asia, and the very word came from Russian, from the Tungusic saman (*ibid*:4).

In the context of North-East India, the rise of *shakticism* or *tantrism* out of the local shamanistic religions of the Indo-Mongoloids has been widely acknowledged by scholars (Bhagabati 1998: 1). According to Stirn and Van Ham (2000: 95), "By instituting the shaman, the peoples of Northeast India created an expert who is able to establish direct contact with spiritual beings. This becomes necessary when an imbalance arise in the world. Such shamanistic insight into the world's interrelations and the ability to make direct contact with these forces distinguishes man from his fellow earthly creatures". In the context of Arunachal Pradesh, which is an excellent example of religious syncretism, shamanism still plays a very important role among most non-Buddhist tribes even though Christianity is gradually becoming a dominant reality in this Indian frontier region. Every tribe has its own nomenclature for religious specialists, though many scholars do not distinguish them in terms of priest or shaman.<sup>5</sup> But if we look at the functional aspects, then undoubtedly most of them can be conceptualized as shaman. This paper attempts to understand this very phenomenon of shamanism in the life of Idu Mishmis and the plight of such shamans commonly called *igu* in the contemporary context where society as such is undergoing a transition phase. They perform different types of ritual starting with life-cycle rituals, rituals related to health and sickness, for a good harvest, for successful hunting, for the construction of a traditional house and even to settle disputes, and especially with the aim of identifying the guilty person.

The origin of the *igu* shaman is linked to the myth of the emergence of humankind itself. In short, a person called Inni Asili Mili gave birth to powerful priests, namely Sineru, Lomo Asili Mili, Lunjuru, etc., who are considered to be the masters of the different activities described below. According to Baruah (1988: 72), "All sacrificial ritual is conducted by priests, of whom the Idus recognize two classes, the Igu or Igu Meme and the Igu-A. The former is a person of experience and dignity who officiates at a wide variety of ceremonies. The Igu-a is a trainee, not yet fully qualified, who is concerned with lesser rituals such as ascertaining the cause and cure of diseases. He is simply a medicine man, but capable of falling into trance. In Igu-A can become an Igu, if by his association with other experienced Igu or, through initiation by the spirits, he gains

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<sup>5</sup> Chaudhury and Duarah (2004:19-34) briefly reviewed the institution of priesthood in relation to the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh where they have given tribe-specific nomenclatures for priests or shamans. The People of India volume, which deals with Arunachal Pradesh, gives a brief ethnographic account of the tribes where one gets a basic idea about religious specialists (Dutta and Ahmad, 1995).

sufficient knowledge and proves himself capable of dealing with the powerful and malicious spirits".<sup>6</sup>

It is believed that each *igu* has a tutelary spirit known as *drawn* who guides him or her while diagnosing disease or performing various rituals. And it is this tutelary spirit whom *igu* invokes while in a trance to guide him or her in the proper direction. Baruah mentions (ibid:73), "I have been told that the tutelary spirit of a male priest is generally male, but occasionally, he may have a female tutelary also. Rukhu Meme of Aonli village, for example, told me that his tutelary spirit was female, who visited him in trance when he presided over the more important sacrifices. A female shaman on the other hand always has a male tutelary spirit".

In former times one was always careful while visiting the house of an *igu* to ensure that the *igu* was not disturbed as he or she may have been involved in spiritual acts or may even have been holding a dialogue with the supernatural powers. People avoided visiting such a house early in the morning.<sup>7</sup>

### **Some popular stories about igus**

Pai Miou once went out to hunt with four villagers in the jungle. They hunted a big wild buffalo but they did not have any matches with them to light a fire to roast the meat. Pai Miou noticed smoke coming from a mountain. So he sent his friends one after another to trace it but no one came back. He waited for a long time then he himself went to the mountain where smoke was coming out. He saw that a demon was roasting all his friends in a pan. Fuming with rage, he asked him to meet in five days' time. However, in the meantime he could not control his anger and he destroyed that mountain which led to the death of the demon.

There is another such story about the priest Gomti Alapro. Once he visited his cousin, also a priest, who challenged him and flew away carrying a pig on his back. Then Gomti Alapro also demonstrated his power by making a hole in a stone, placing it on his fingers and using the stone as a fan.

Arati Melon, a great priest from Anini, is said to have crossed the Dre River by walking along a fine thread.

Sondo Umpo is remembered for having flown from Kroling through Alapa around 2 a.m. in the dark to reach Mehao Lake.

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<sup>6</sup> See also Bhattacharjee (1983:121-122)

<sup>7</sup> The situation is now far less rigid as I managed to visit many *igu* houses at different periods of the day and interacted with *igus* freely. Some of them allowed me to see and touch their costumes and even allowed me to take photographs.

Rano Mihi is reported to have travelled back to his village, a distance of ten kilometres in one month; he had to erect special obstacles (*laro*), everywhere to deter the spirit from accompanying him to the village. Although the Idus believe that those who have drowned in rivers are claimed by a water snake, it is also said that Rano Mihi was able to drag the snake out of the water with a tremendous pull. In fact, people affirm that once he pulled out a thin black thread, which represented such a snake, from the Dri River near Ahunli village when a man accidentally slipped in and died.



Fig. 2 Rano Mihi, one of the famous *igu* from Anini circle (S. Chaudhuri)

### Becoming an *igu*

In Idu Mishmi society, *igus* do not have any gender bias though the majority of *igus* belong to the male group. There is awareness of hierarchy among the *igus* and it is generally believed that female *igus*, who are actually much fewer, are quite powerful and even more powerful than their male counterparts.

No one can become an *igu* by virtue of a wish. Such spiritual power is transmitted as a gift of god, which may be reflected by some symptoms; mostly through abnormal activities. So a son or daughter of an *igu* does not automatically become an *igu*. On the other hand, a son of a non-*igu* (*minga*) may become a powerful *igu* by the grace of god. The hymns which an *igu* chants cannot be understood by common Idus except for a few

elderly people, as well as those who have assisted *igus* for a long period of time while dancing or performing other rituals. Idus believe that if any *igu* tries to teach such sacred hymns to his or her offspring against the wish of God to make him or her an *igu*, then the trainee may even die.

The process of becoming an *igu* is quite varied and many popular beliefs can be traced back to describing unusual events, such as sleeping on tree leaves, consuming human excreta and many other such acts. Apa Mega of Arenli village in the Desali circle recounts, "I started playing the role of *igu* in 1973 when Mr. Das was Circle Officer at Desali. It was my sincerest wish to become an *igu*. I used to chant again and again even when I was working. My friends also encouraged me to become an *igu*."

It is a matter of destiny as to who will become an *igu* and with what status and to what degree. The Idu strongly believe that such a plight is determined while an individual is in their mother's womb. It is generally perceived that by pervasive training one cannot simply become an *igu* by divine power. The very first instance of an *igu* undergoing divination in his or her life is reflected in some abnormal acts which are beyond the comprehension of an Idu, such as wholeheartedly eating human excreta and instructing others to do so, lifting huge baskets containing 5 to 10 bags of paddy etc. Such a situation may last a few hours and this period of divine transition is called *atombo*. Only then does one become *igu* and is empowered to act as a mediator between human society and the Gods, Goddesses and spirits who control the world of the unknown. Indeed, Baruah (1988: 74) writes:

Not everyone can be a priest. A man so destined should be born with certain signs, such as the umbilical chord around his neck at birth. Sometimes, the mother gets a prediction in her dreams that her child will be an important priest. A pregnant woman, who dreams of caressing a child lying in a basket which is hung in the *egamba* or *iu-amba* tree expects that her child will be a priest. So does a woman who dreams of the bird *praerru* making its nest on the roof of the house. In such cases, when the child attains maturity, or sometimes even at an earlier age, he falls into a trance, and his soul travels to the spirit-world. There it becomes acquainted with the spirits and lives with them for a long time, thus becoming capable of conducting various ceremonies. Very often a man destined to be priest leaves his home at the beginning of a long trance, and stays in the jungle for several days till his soul comes back to him. At this stage he loses his senses and does unusual things. He may eat human excreta and regard the most delicious food as dirt.

While narrating his experience of becoming *igu*, Yango Mow of the Angrim Valley said that when his mother fell ill, instead of calling the *igu*, he took a *kalih* (herbal medicine/root used by an *igu*) and sat outside his house on the verandah and began chanting hymns very quietly. As he chanted, many passers-by asked him what was he muttering about. As

they came nearer, he hid the *kalih* on his lap. In doing so, he performed *aanyongo* (see below) and cured his mother. It was because of God's wish that he became an *igu*. But after this incident he made no further attempt to act as an *igu* because he felt that if anyone heard him they would laugh at him. Once he went with friends to build a house. After the house was built, when an *igu* was needed, his friends told the owner that he was an *igu*. On hearing this, the owner asked him to perform the *thruh* ritual (protection of a new house by sacrificing a hen). He was very nervous as well as shy, and was sure that he would be laughed at. He suddenly began in a very loud voice that startled everybody; they all burst into laughter. After a few minutes everything carried on smoothly. He was not even aware of what he was saying. At the end of the ritual everyone applauded him for his hymns. In this way he became a professional *igu*.

Similarly, Buchu Tacho of Etabe village said that he became an *igu* thanks to the blessings of the Almighty. He had no teacher. He learnt the chanting on hearing the *igus* during rituals. During these rituals he was only a follower and he gradually developed *igu* behaviour as well as learnt the art of chanting. He began as an *igu* with the *meshala* ritual performed in the case of murder or disputes where a heavy fine is imposed. Indeed he was the person called upon to settle his own uncle's murder case. As he could not find an *igu* to conduct *meshala*, he did it himself. Then he performed death rituals such as *broacha* and *yah* numerous times.

Smti Imuno Linggi from Anini narrated her experience of becoming an *igu*. Her father was a renowned *igu*, but he never encouraged his daughter to become an *igu*, though villagers talked to her father about her *igu*-like behaviour. When she came to stay with her husband, she began to develop some peculiar habits such as eating mud from the toilet, which is a sign that one is becoming an *igu*. Seeing this, her husband's grand-mother, herself a powerful *igu*, encouraged her to become an *igu*. Her grandmother started taking an interest in her but she didn't teach her any hymns or chanting because she herself had developed the spiritual power to chant the hymns. The chanting of hymns came to her spontaneously. She believed that self-acquired power and wisdom is worthier than learning it from a senior *igu*. Her husband's grandmother made her an *igu* by making her perform the *amraseh* ritual to protect all the family members of the house and grant them peace for the first time at their home. Her next performance was when she acted as *rehguh* during the *reh* festival. She was nervous because it would be her first major ritual, which she had never imagined herself performing, and she was aware that many great *igus* would be assembled to hear her. The one she feared most was an *igu*, known as Towshi Miuli, who said that she would not be capable of chanting hymns, especially the *shacha*, the hymns that are chanted when a *mithun* or *sha* (*Bos frontalis*) is to be sacrificed. These hymns about the



origin of the *mithun* are chanted while leading the soul of the *mithun* to its place of origin.

On her way to the village, she was so nervous that her hands trembled. She could not properly cut the bamboo which an *igu* carries to perform *reh*. She was unable to speak or look at the face of her followers. Then when she proceeded with the ritual and started chanting hymns they were all amazed. After listening to her hymns, Towshi Miuli showered her with praise regarding the fact that she knew all the hymns and rules for chanting during the *reh* ritual. Hence she performed 23 *rehgus* and 15 *yahs*.

Odah Miwu of Maruli village revealed his experience of becoming an *igu*. Since his boyhood he had always wanted to become an *igu*. He took an interest in *igus* and attended every ritual though he understood nothing. Even with his friends he never played any other game than dancing like an *igu* with undecipherable hymns that he had heard. He and his friends made the *igu* costume by collecting the dried bones of monkeys and other animals. They also collected bamboo roots to carve into tiger jaws. After preparing this costume they would dance for hours. As he was well and truly an adolescent by then and his friends and relatives asked him to think seriously about becoming an *igu* and advised him to train under some senior *igus*. But he was not sure of his own capabilities or even of what he actually chanted while dancing.

Once it happened that a neighbour was suffering from *aya-thu* (food poisoning) and his friends forced him to perform *aanyongo*. He began chanting whatever came to mind. To his utter surprise, the man was cured. This was at the age of 18. After this he had a dream. Then after a few days there was an invitation from another village to perform *ayiih* (a ritual conducted to cure illness) for somebody who was suffering from *apomother* (a kind of illness where part of the body swells then starts itching and develops wounds which could be very dangerous). He was nervous because he did not know what to say. It was not like *aanyongo*, where one has to chant for only 20 to 30 minutes and no one actually hears it. For *aayih*, an *igu* has to sit and chant for 12 hours. Moreover, there would be many people within earshot. On that occasion as well he chanted whatever came to mind and the patient was cured. He then began believing in himself and felt that he could really become an *igu*.

Apparently, although ideally shamanism is perceived as a gift of God, a few Idus have achieved the same aim by their sustained interest. It is even reported that one may become an *igu* by assisting powerful *igus* over a long period of time. However, Idus believe that generally speaking such *igus* are less powerful and cannot perform all the necessary rituals. Bhattacharjee (1983: 121) reported, "Not anyone can become a shaman even if he tries to be so. He must show some indication of being possessed by spirits and some definite sign of communication and understanding

with the supernatural elements, which dominate the world of the Idu. He should also be well conversant with legends and history of the tribe from the beginning of creation and should name detailed knowledge of various ceremonial rites, otherwise his standing as an *igu* will be held in ridicule”.

### ***Igu* costume**

In most tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, priests or shamans wear a special costume by which they are immediately distinguishable from the rest of the community. According to myth, the first *igus* wanted special ceremonial clothes for ritual performances because they needed to acquire power and adopt different outlooks, which could only be done by wearing different clothes from those of commoners. The Almighty would send down power if they wore a special hairband and other items making up the *igu* costume. Moreover, such a costume would protect an *igu* from evil spirits. It is believed that *igus* do not remain a common human being while performing rituals. By chanting hymns and tying the tail of a yak to his/her hairband, an *igu* asks God to endow him or her with the power of the mountains where such animals are reared. Moreover, that is the place where the souls of the dead are believed to be taken.

The costume which an *igu* wears during major ritual performances is composed of eleven items collectively known as *amralapoh*. It is the most sacred possession for an *igu* and does not differ according to gender. Of course, some variations are to be noted in the size and shape of the costume's different components. This costume is kept outside the house in a hand-made basket, which is placed on wooden poles or hung near the entrance door, or stored inside the storehouse. On seeing such baskets, one immediately recognises the house as belonging to an *igu*. Sometimes the drum, *gerembo*, beaten during the *igu* dance by his or her assistants, is also kept hanging near the entrance of the house and symbolizes the presence of an *igu* in that house.

Of the eleven components constituting the *igu* costume, three of them, namely *etobih*, *etotih* and *athomambra*, are woven with a waist loom. The first and second garments are sleeveless coats. The third one, *athomambra*, is worn like a skirt but is completely different from traditional Idu skirt. Special skills are required to weave it though no ritual is required before or after completion of such special textiles.

Traditionally, *igus* are not supposed to wear these garments unless an occasion for ritual performance and chanting actually arises, and no one can touch them. This is still considered to be completely taboo by most powerful *igus*, though a few are not so strict about such taboos with regard to wearing the costume.

When an *igu* dies, such clothing is rarely buried with him or her; it is sometimes sold with other items of the costume. It may be kept within the family in case a possible *igu* may emerge in the future. In fact, many *igus* get such costumes from other *igus*. Before dying, they may decide what is to become of their costumes, and may even decide to donate them to some organizations for their preservation. For instance, Rano Mihi of Mihundo village decided to donate his costume to the *Idu Cultural and Literary Society* which has been set up to promote and preserve the Idu cultural heritage.



Fig. 3 component of *igu*'s costume hung from neck or *igu*'s garland used during ritual dance (S. Chaudhuri)

#### *Igu*'s day-to-day life

Traditionally, an *igu* is supposed to undergo various restrictions throughout his/her life. Before performing any major ritual, an *igu* has to restrain from sexual intercourse for a few days. He or she is banned from entering a house where people are engaged in dyeing cloth or yarn. An *igu* is not allowed to drink rice beer prepared by a woman who has her period. In case of symptoms like epilepsy where an *igu* may fall suddenly unconscious during ritual performance, he or she is not supposed to eat chillies, onion, garlic, wash clothes or even sleep with his/her spouse. Similar restrictions over a more or less long period are applicable when performing *broacha*, *ekularuma reh* or *yah* rituals. To perform *impeh* which is a ritual for sunshine, an *igu* has to avoid drinking cold water and for *aayih* just a one-day ban is enforced on eating chillies; for *yuh-maru-yh*, i.e. to pray to the god of property and prosperity, a ten-day ban is observed

on washing clothes, eating onion, garlic, fried vegetables, chillies and even sleeping with one's partner.

An *igu* does not enjoy any special privilege in terms of economic activities, as he or she has to manage just like the other Idus. They need to cultivate their own land, *jhum* or irrigated, and join in some other related economic activities such as hunting, gathering, trapping, etc. This is reflected in their day-to-day lifestyle as well as their traditional house structure. However, with modernisation and exposure to broader economic opportunities, a few *igus* (only four in Dibang Valley district<sup>8</sup>) now work in government jobs.

Yet, ritual performance also has an economic dimension, since after completing a rite an *igu* is supposed to obtain his or her share of sacrificial meat with some other food items as well as money from the house owner. The remuneration depends on many criteria, including the economic situation of the person at whose house the ritual is performed. However, it has undergone some standardisation for the various kinds of rituals.

*Igus* in former times were much more rigid and whatever they demanded for worship or sacrifice, etc. had to be arranged by the family or individual concerned. Imuno Linggi (85 years), one of the oldest female *igu*, mentioned that she got a big *dao* knife and a pig as remuneration. If she got money she would distribute it among her followers and she would even give away the pig on the spot where the *reh* festival was performed. She had received sums ranging from one paisa to 100 rupees in payment throughout her lifetime. For performing *yah*, she received 50 to 60 rupees out of which she kept 10 to 20 rupees and the other 40 to 50 rupees she distributed to her assistants. During her early life, she could buy enough household articles and food items with one rupee. There was an ongoing stream of people at her home. Even when she was working in fields, villagers would come with her husband to invite her to conduct a ritual. It happened that she had to leave her agricultural work to attend to the ritual. She received a lot of encouragement from her husband.

Regarding the social or economic privileges, she mentioned that she received a lot of help from her family with household tasks though farm work was left to her. She added that she did not receive any special privileges from society or from her family. Though people accepted her as a great *igu*, that did not make her life very different. The government as well as Idu society has not formulated any privileges for *igus*. Moreover, she does not welcome any interference in their society from outsiders because she feels that the government is only poking its nose in rather

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<sup>8</sup> Their names are Dindru Miri of Upper Dibang Valley and Rembu Linggi of Cheta village, Loda Meto of Mayu and Andro Elapra of Asali village. They work as peons in government offices.

than helping them out. This is the reason why she has never caste her vote during elections. The only privilege that she enjoyed as an *igu* was the remuneration that she received on conducting rituals.

On the other hand, Natu Prawe, a very elderly *igu*, disclosed that by performing *broacha* in bygone days he used to get 300 to 400 rupees but that it has now increased to 3,000 to 4,000 rupees. By performing *amrasey igus* get 1,500 rupees, *yah* — 3,000 to 5,000 rupees and *reh* just one pig.

Idus represent a patriarchal, patrilineal society where polygyny was quite normal practice. Wealthy Idus have remained polygamous. If an *igu* or non-*igu* wishes to marry he can do so as much he likes. *Igus*, especially famous or powerful ones, are sought-after-grooms because of the high esteem society holds them in and of the spiritual power they possess as a mediator between human beings and the unseen powers. Many male *igus* had a good number of wives who also earned money for their husband by weaving, collecting *Coptis teeta* (popularly known as Mishmi teeta),<sup>9</sup> rearing animals as well as doing their farm work. For each wife, they used to have a separate room in their traditional long house, a unique feature of their material culture that is fading out rapidly. Indeed, there is a general trend towards forming nuclear families and monogamy is emerging as the rule of the day. With exposure to education and other modern influences there is a new generation, which prefers new economic opportunities rather than their traditional mode of agriculture. And *igus* are no exception to this.

### Life-Cycle and Well-Being Rituals

#### *Birth rituals of a newly born child*

According to Idu mythology there was a man on earth called Anome Liwu who married a lady named Asili Mili. None of their issue were still alive, even though they had had many children. The priest advised both of them to arrange a ritual called *ah-tayeh* in which immediately after the baby's birth a name should be given to request that the almighty Nanyi-Intya-Maselo-Jinu provide protection to the newborn (Linggi and Miso 2000: 29). He asked Anome-Liwu to bring *epoteh* and *ewethreh*, two kinds of grass, and placed them on the wall to symbolize fatherhood. The *ah-tayeh* ritual was performed accordingly and it was found that the child was born normal, healthy and free of all disease. Then the priest advised Anome-Liwu to nurture two cockerels called Etohi and Yu-Awru. At the same time, he prayed to Nanyi-Intaya-Maselo-Jinu, the invincible Supreme Creator, for

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<sup>9</sup> Mishmi teeta is a creeper which generally grows in high-altitude areas surrounding the Mishmi hills and is of high medicinal value. This has remained one of the prime items of trade for the Mishmis. This famous plant is extremely bitter in taste.

the parents and newborn's well-being, then he blessed the child for long life and prosperity.

Nowadays, on the day a child is born, a fresh branch of bamboo leaves is planted at the entrance to the house or at the gate, which signifies that a baby is born at that particular house and generally people do not go to the house unless they are specially invited to the birth ceremony.<sup>10</sup> Then, according to Baruah (1960: 48), "On the day after the birth of the child, the *Iu-a-rru* ceremony is performed, the priest offers rice-beer and two fowls as sacrifice to the gods, *Asa* and *Asila-amide*, who watch over little children, begging them to look after the new-born child, and to ward off the evil spirits coming near it. He then takes the names of the child's dead ancestors, and offers them blood and liquorice beer. He generally recites the following chant:

Had there been no Gods, the rivers and the hills would not have existed.  
There are hills and rivers; and men live on the hills. The gods protect mankind.  
Let them now be pleased and take care of the new-born child and protect him. I  
am offering them rice-beer and fowls.

The *nuhi* ceremony, which falls on the ninth day is a simple one. The priest invokes the household Gods, *Asu* and *Andra*, and prays to them to look after the child.

#### *Rituals for family well-being*

Among the great variety of rituals performed on different occasions in order to promote peace, prosperity and good health, *amyase* is very popular. It includes twelve distinct phases, each phase being identified by a specific name as mentioned by Linggi and Miso (2000: 25-27).

The *igu* performs the very first phase (*achita wu*) in his own house before moving to the invitee's house. There, he prays to the almighty that no harm is done to invitee's family members. The second phase (*aku-tou*) marks its arrival at the invitee or patient's house where he ensures that the harmless spirits will not be disturbed by the ritual acts. During the third phase (*larwoh-ayuchru*), he narrates the origin of a sacred bamboo shrub called *abratoh*.<sup>11</sup> In the fourth phase (*larwoh mraba*), he tries to drive away evil spirits through an imaginary gate in different directions whereas in the fifth phase (*amrala ayusu*), he narrates the origin lore related to the sacred necklace (*amrala*), one of the significant components of their costume. In the sixth phase (*ayenjo*), he tries to drive away evil

<sup>10</sup> See Linggi and Miso (2000: 29).

<sup>11</sup> This particular bamboo is carried by the *igus* whenever they move to different houses for ritual practice. Such bamboo shrubs are found next to the house of the *igus*. Generally they plant a branch of *abratoh* at the entrance to the patient's house and they place a few on the top of the roof to drive out evil spirits.

forces that can cause epidemics or other diseases by using spiritual powers. The seventh phase is called *ipishu-lawroche*. Indeed, it is believed that the *igu* may sometimes be unable to drive away evil spirits. In such an event, he tries to hide men's souls away in a place called *iwu loka* and women's souls in a place called *ambi loka* in order to provide full protection. In the eighth phase (*amyase*), the *igu* builds a spiritual house for family members and an imaginary sty for the pigs by chanting. Then, he offers the blood of sacrificed pigs to appease the evil spirits and to bring good health, peace and wealth. In the ninth phase (*alth-bru*), he foresees the fortune of every family member: how long one will survive, how much property he will possess, how many children one lady will give birth to, etc. Then he continues to chant while praying to the god and goddess for protection, prosperity and good health for all the family. The tenth phase is called *amra-nah* where all the members of the family assemble in a particular place. Such a process is known as *agu-toh*. The *igu* chants while dancing and sticks in the hair of each family member a feather from the chicken to be sacrificed. This will provide protection from evil spirits. The eleventh phase is called *ashanji* when the *igu* drives out evil spirits from each room occupied by female members. He then drives back the spirit from the last room of the male members, known as *elonga*, and finally drives it out of the house or village with a warning not to return. In the concluding phase (*akuju*) the *igu* foresees the possibility of a natural or supernatural disaster, which may befall the house or village in question and he/she advises them to remain alert in order to avert it.

#### *Death Stories and Rituals*

Tales or legends regarding death are very common among villagers. One goes like this:

At the beginning of the world there was no death except in a place in *Iniambrume*. In *Iniambrume*, each death caused lamentation, which was followed by an elaborate burial ceremony. Everyone then went to *Iniambrume* when news of the death reached them so that they could offer their help. On returning to their village, they also decided to observe similar rituals. A rat was killed and a loud cry was raised for its death. The people from *Iniambrume*, on hearing the news of the death, came to the village, but only found that a ritual for the death of a rat was being observed. This greatly annoyed them and they left the place in a huff. They cursed them to death. Because of this curse, death followed, but soon after the dead came back to life.

Another story says:

There was a man who had a wife. After her death the body was buried in a cave. The man again married. One day when he was out his second wife stayed alone in the house. Suddenly his previous wife appeared near the place where

poultry are kept. Though she looked like a living body yet her lips were covered with earthworms. She requested the woman to remove the earthworms so that she could regain the energy, which was in the worms. But the woman was frightened at her reappearance by the prospect of her coming back and thus becoming a rival. She took a stick and drove her away. After being driven out, the deceased woman came to a place (*Iphu-Ajoru*) where a long tailed langur used to dwell. The langur told her that he could remove the earthworms from her mouth so that she could regain the strength. But the langur had another plan. Pretending to be her benefactor, he killed her and ate her body. When people returned to the village they heard the news of her disappearance and called all the *igus* to track her down. The *igus* went to the langur's den and asked him to produce the woman otherwise they would kill him. Thoroughly scared, the langur made a grunting noise in his throat and a small fly, which was the soul of the woman, came out and escaped. The *igus* thought that there was no use catching such a small fly and let it go. [That is why till to date the Idus believe a soul never dies even after the death of the person]. To prevent the dead from coming back to life the other woman put a stone and the branch of a particular tree, which never rots, inside the grave. [Indeed, the Idus believe thereby the dead will never come back to life though its spirit travels elsewhere].

Whenever an Idu dies, the bugle (*ajuru*) made from a *mithun* horn sounds along with lengthy shouts, which symbolizes the message of death. In response, villagers start gathering and the *igu* is called, either from the same village or from another one. Depending on his/her availability as well as the distance to be covered, an *igu* generally appears on the same day, but he/she may even come the next day accompanied by his/her companions and with sacred bamboo twigs which the *igu* plants at the entrance before entering the house. After accepting a drink, the *igu* lifts the dead body onto a flattened wooden cot (*epra*) by wrapping it in new clothes. It is customary that whoever receives the message of death must come, and generally people bring new clothes or even some food items.

The final burial ceremony involves a lot of details and some taboos have to be observed while the body is placed inside the tunnel or graveyard. For instance, on such occasions weaving or even collecting firewood is not permitted. Special food is prepared and pork or other meat from sacrificed animals is specially offered to the *igu*.

On the day, on which the dead body is laid in the grave, the *igu* with his/her assistants performs a ritual dance by beating drums, blowing trumpets and smashing cymbals. This continues for at least 2 hours after which he returns to the house of the deceased. The *igu* then again takes up his/her dancing and chanting punctuated with his/her typical body movements for a while before sitting down next to the sacred bamboo structure still chanting. No one can move from that particular place without permission from the shaman who performs certain rituals. Whenever anyone wants to move, he repeats the same rituals.



The *igu* prepares a special structure called *amungo*, whereby two bamboo shoots are placed on either side of the path and split bamboo in the form of a bow is struck across the path to ward off evil spirits. Then he initiates a dialogue with the spirit while narrating in great detail the various journeys taken by the deceased before death to the world of the unknown. The *igu* invites the spirits to tell them which path is to be followed, where steps have been laid, where ladders have been fixed and bridges have been made spanning rivers and streams. In the course of such a dialogue, the *igu* strikes a sword (*ambrebi*) on the *amungo* which symbolizes that the evil spirits are driven out. The other half of the sword, which is visible, symbolizes the family's well-being. Then the *igu* chants continuously requesting the spirits to move towards the grave where utility goods are kept. This continues till morning as he tries to send the soul to the land to where all his/her ancestors have gone peacefully and advises it not to return home again.

After completing this ritual, the *igu* starts standing again in front of *amungo* while others line up behind the *igu* holding brooms. While dancing, the *igu* starts collecting these brooms and then throws them at the *amungo*. Any remaining leaves on the *amungo* are thrown away due to the continuous beating with the broom. This is to keep the dead body away from any contact with various insects. The *igu* holds a cockerel and moves from one corner of the house to another chanting all the time and then places two swords in a crossed position. With a sword in his hand, the *igu* and his/her followers move in different directions stamping the floor with their feet and continuously shouting in a particular tone of voice. There is a simultaneous blowing of trumpets and beating of drums. The *igu* tries to catch imaginary objects with the help of sword and then throws them across the door while blowing over the crossed swords placed near the entrance. No one, even animal, is allowed to enter the room. The women and men of the house gather together and sit while the *igu* swings a cockerel over their heads starting from one end to the other to the beating of drums and the crashing of cymbals. Then again the *igu* starts drawing imaginary objects from different parts of the body with the help of sword. Just like in previous movements, these imaginary objects are blown across the crossed swords placed near the door. The *igu* then sits near a cloth stretched over the floor, which symbolizes a river that needs to be crossed.

It is very interesting to note that villagers sit on either side of this laid cloth and start bartering with an imaginary boatman to cross the span of water with all their articles. As a result, arguments and counter arguments break out along with the cracking of jokes and laughter.

After settling on the fare in the form of leaves and bamboo sticks with the imaginary boatman, the river is crossed. The *igu* then implores the

soul not to appear even in dream, which is considered as a bad omen. The wide span of water is known as *kandemo*, which is not easy to cross. A sinner cannot cross the *kandemo*. To wash off their sins many sacrifices are required. If the *igu* tries to send the soul across the *kandemo* without performing any elaborate rituals, then he will be struck by the wrath of a spirit and consequently death is sure to follow. After crossing the *kandemo*, the soul can rest in any of the places in the vast expanse of territory. In the east such a place is known as *nyomo ashiku*, in the west *nyimy ashiku*, in the north *nyoto ashiku* and in the south *ati ashiku*. After completing the rituals, people are allowed to take food (Bhattacharjee 1983: 132-136). Bhattacharjee adds that after sending the soul safely across the *kandemo* the *igu*'s duty now comes to an end. He prepares to start for home. He is given fresh meat, which has been carefully kept separately. A large cockerel is also handed over as well as freshly-brewed beer in new jugs which have not been touched by others, along with rice, millet, maize, dried rats, fish and birds for the women of his house. The *igu* then starts back to his village while his/her companions help to carry the heavy load of food stuffs usually enough to cover his/her needs for more than a month. Even before arriving in the village, a shaman will again propitiate the spirits. Bamboo twigs are planted on either side of the path and split bamboos, bent like a bow, are stuck in the ground along with a *dao*(knife). A cockerel is then sacrificed, its blood is sprinkled everywhere and its meat is roasted over a fire. Upon reaching the house, all the *igu*'s ceremonial items are kept outside and only foodstuffs are taken inside the house.

### Illness and cures

I had the opportunity of seeing an *igu* from the Desali area in action curing a lady suffering from acute back pain along with pain in the abdominal area. I reached the house at night along with some Idu schoolteachers and I stayed there for 3 hours sitting just next to the *igu* while I recorded his chanting for an hour. On entering I found that a good number of young and middle-aged Idu Mishmi males and a few females were sitting in a circle playing cards. And next to them just by the hearth was one Idu lady who was lying fully covered in a blanket. Her daughter, along with some other ladies, was sitting at her head and an *igu* was chanting while beating his sacred instrument (*ripu*) in a rhythmic way. From time to time the *igu* took a plant in his hand. All the while the lady was screaming in pain. She would touch some water kept in a small bowl near the fireplace, then rub her abdomen to bring some relief. After almost 40 minutes of chanting, the *igu* took a break and sipped their local liquor from a mug. Then he started repeating the same kind of chanting.

He did not have an assistant. He did not perform a dance or even wear a typical *igu* costume. But he sat in a particular spot and chanted continuously, taking a break from time to time. He was trying to drive out the evil spirit which had caused such sickness. On one occasion the lady sat up comfortably for a few minutes, then lied down again and took up her previous posture. Some elderly Idus from neighbouring houses called in and sat besides the *igu* for sometime and shared the local liquor. After almost two and half hours I left the house though this scene went on until midnight. Only then did the *igu* leave. It may be mentioned here that in order to treat sickness, some shamans take a course on spiritual healings or even use various ethno-medicines prepared from plants, animals or other components.<sup>12</sup> Even in order to attend to a patient suffering from an acute or serious illness, the *igu* may need his or her companions for the ritual performance.



Fig. 3 An *igu* Igu chanting to heal abdominal pain of an Idu woman in Desali area (S. Chaudhuri)

### Ethno-medicines and other ritual practices

As mentioned earlier, the Idus are great believers in spirits (*khiynu*), such as, Golo, the spirit of hills and mountains, Ashan, the spirit of the forest

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<sup>12</sup> How the *igu* exactly performs the ritual and the whole course of events starting from the journey from his/her own house to the patient's house, then returning to his/her own house is narrated by Bhattacharjee (1983: 126-128).

and burial grounds, Apimi Shu, the spirit of land, etc. Any form of illness is perceived as linked to such spirits. However, sickness is not always cured by propitiating and appeasing such a wide range of evil forces by dancing, chanting or sacrificing animals. It also involves the use of a large number of plants and animals available in the surroundings. With the passage of time, some such ethno-medicinal practices are now part of a collective wisdom shared by a good number of Idus. Many such plants and animals are available which are applied in the form of juice, powder, paste, etc. Some fat of animals, birds, and snakes is applied directly to the affected area or else animal bile is taken orally mixed with water.

Diseases are classified into six broad groups, most of which are only curable with the help of the *igus*, though in some cases, commoners may also provide some medicines, which are made from indigenous substances. For instance, *aruru* are airborne or water-borne diseases, which are caught through contact; medicinal treatment is preferred for such cases. *Manu-mara* (skin or eye diseases), *apomo* (itching, swelling of the skin) can be also cured with common medicines known to Idus in general. On the other hand, *khinyu meko*, disease caused by spirits dwelling in houses, only curable through a spiritual healing process done by the *igu* (Mitapo 2000:38).

Rituals and sacrifices are also associated with agriculture as well as with hunting. In the case of agriculture, a fowl is sacrificed in the name of Malo in order to produce a good harvest. Such a sacrifice is done by a shaman or even by the person whose land is to be cultivated. Similarly, before hunting, a cockerel will be offered to the forest deity called Golo and prayers will be said for a successful hunting expedition. However, one of the most significant Idu ceremonies is considered to be *reh*: an elaborate ceremony performed over a four-day period in which the *igu* remains the central figure along with his/her companions. There are different stages in the ceremony and at each stage the *igu* has certain specific roles to perform. No doubt, every Idu dreams of performing such a ceremony at least once in their lifetime to ensure prosperity for the family, a bumper harvest and good health by driving out evil spirits. The *reh* ceremony involves multiple implications in understanding social relationships, clan bonds, kinship ties, the economic situation of the person requesting the celebration and the oratory skill of the shaman performing the ritual dances and chants. Mention may be made here of the variations in the form of *reh*, but it has traditionally remained essentially an individual celebration. However, since 1968 this has been turned into a community festival and performed centrally at Roing circle in Lower Dibang valley district. Since then, ICLS (*Idu Cultural and Literary Society*) has been trying to change this ceremony, especially the rules and regulations regarding sacrifices and expenditure, though its basic form including the

involvement of a shaman and the core of the whole celebration has been maintained. In fact, the *igus* like dancing and there is sometimes competitive spirit among the *igus* to show off their dancing and chanting skills. This is gradually becoming the central attraction of the whole central *reh* celebration. This symbolizes their identity in the context of an emerging social reality.

### **Plight of shamanism**

It is evident that the *igus* play a pivotal role even today when the whole of society is undergoing a transition process. There are multiple factors which operate collectively among the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, such as greater post-colonial administrative penetration, the emergence of a modernization process and exposure to wider world views through mass media and interactions across ethnic boundaries. However, it is evident that the number of shamans is on a gradual decline in Idu society. Though it is strongly believed that one can become an *igu* by the gift of god, at the same time some people have become *igus* by virtue of their association with the great *igu* as well as because of their strong willpower to learn the chanting. With the introduction of modern education and the availability of wider economic opportunities, up and coming young Idus, both male and female, are not greatly concerned about learning the shaman's language and they are even unwilling to work as *igu*'s assistants. Some people express the view that the modernization process and the market economy make people more outward looking, gradually destroying their sense of collective responsibilities. Hence, young Idus are not mentally ready to follow the strict lifestyle, which shamans are supposed to lead.

It is a well-known fact that *igus* cannot lead a normal daily life as they may be called upon at any time to go to different parts of Idu-inhabited areas. It is true that they traditionally enjoyed great respect from society, but in the changing context they are no longer the preferred groom during marriage negotiations. A few Idus admit that today some shamans do not even follow the strict code of conduct they are supposed to maintain according to their traditional social system and that this itself has led to the critical situation the institution finds itself in. Some add that today people have become extremely corrupt and greedy and that such persons could never become *igus*. On the other hand some old members declare that the shaman institution will never die even though the number of shamans possessing great spiritual power is dwindling. They strongly believe that in the course of time powerful *igus* will reappear; at least from the progenies of contemporary as well as past shamans.

To the question concerning the future of shamanism, *igus* themselves came out with heterogeneous responses. Some of their views are expressed here.

Aprolo Mega from Arneli village commented, “Nowadays I find that *igus* are fast disappearing. Our children are busy with their studies and no longer want to become an *igu*. I have often dreamt that somebody from my family was going to become an *igu*. My son chants very well. I hope he may become an *igu*”.

According to Giba Mow, “Shamanism will never die because since creation, God has always bestowed his blessings on each successive generation and had created *igus*. Present-day *igus* are adopting more and more borrowed powers from other tribes. In order to preserve its pure form, we *igus* have to teach young *igus* if they want to”. He adds, “An organization is needed to help the *igus* of today’s generation improve themselves. *Igus* should donate their remuneration to poor villagers. *Igus* who perform yah and rehguh should contribute because they get enough money”.

Natu Prawe noted, “There is a vast difference between the *igus* of the past and present. At present, they are Indianised, self-made *igus* who do not follow the pure and ancient form of their art. One can become an *igu* by writing down the related processes and by learning them, but that will not make him/her powerful. He has to be blessed by God and a miracle must take place within him. There will forever be *igus* as long as Idu society continues to exist”.

Buchu Tacho declared, “There will forever be *igus*. But this depends on the will of God. There will be many more *igus* in the future. After these, many will take the path that his son is taking at present. He is one of the leading *igus* of today’s generation. The situation will never decline or cease as long as society goes on existing”. He added, “There is no need for an organization. Since time immemorial *igus* have lived an independent life. If they are brought together, their ideas and powers may clash”.

### Conclusion

Various intricate aspects of shamanism reveal how pervasive the role of the *igu* is in the life of the Idu Mishmis even when their society is undergoing a transition phase. It may be mentioned here that Mishmis in general and Idus in particular are least effected by the Christian faith which has had a huge impact on most Tani tribes, such as the Adi, Nyishi, Apatani, Tagin, Hill Miri, etc. However, the heterogeneous voice of the Idu people reveals the ongoing dilemma concerning the future of the shaman institution. Many Idu elites who run the *Idu Cultural and Literary Society* (ICLS) are apprehensive about the future of such an institution. They are

consequently planning to textualize the whole genre of oral tradition related to their *igus* so that they can use these documents to train new *igus* or at least to set up their *reh* festival or various other ceremonies. In fact, shamans constitute one of the core cultural markers of the Mishmi tribes which include the Idu, Digaru and Miju Mishmis.<sup>13</sup> Of course, ICLS is yet to make a major breakthrough in this respect. However, as a first step they have tried to develop their own script which they like to use for such documentation work. It may be further noted that shamanism is a dominant phenomenon among most tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Nevertheless, with the emergence of Christianity as a dominant reality and due to the impact of the modernization process, it is loosing its sacred base amongst tribes in general, although it has not yet been completely wiped out from any of the tribes. It seems that as long as village life exists, shamanism will continue to survive, though it is bound to introduce some modifications in keeping in tune with emerging socio-political transformations in Arunachal Pradesh which may lead to a “Third order reality”.<sup>14</sup>

### Glossary of main terms

It may be noted here that because of the nasal tones in pronunciation, it is sometimes very difficult to get the exact spelling of Idu words even by the Idu scholars.

Aanyongo: ritual to detect the cause of illness.

Aayih: ritual to cure sickness.

Ah-tayeh: birth ritual performed by shamans to protect newly-born from evil spirits.

Amrasey: ritual for the protection of entire family members from malevolent spirits and for peace, prosperity and good health.

Ambrebi: a long sword with a metal handle

Amralapoh: the costume which an igu wears during major ritual performances, which is composed of eleven items.

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<sup>13</sup> My recent field work in January 2008 among the Digaru and Miju Mishmis of Lohit district reveals that there are a lot of similarities between the Shamans of the Idus and the Digaru or the Mijus in terms of costume, ritual performance, symbols etc., though their dialects differ greatly. It may be mentioned here that some Idus may call upon shamans from neighbouring Mishmi tribes for healing purposes.

<sup>14</sup> This was used by A.C. Bhagabati (2002:47-50) in order to explain emerging Arunachali societies where one can find a combination of old and new elements of culture.

- Amungo: a bamboo structure made from jungle leaves (Eyuna) erected inside the house on the wall. This is supposed to be the boat by which shamans cross rivers to accompany the departed.
- Apimi Shu: the spirit of land.
- Apomother: a kind of illness, where part of the body swells then starts itching and develops wounds, which is potentially very dangerous.
- Apomo: itching, swelling of the skin.
- Ashan: the spirit of the forest and burial grounds.
- Athomambra: skirt like costume worn by the igu.
- Ajuru: horn of a mithun which is blown during the death and amrasey ritual.
- Brochah: death ritual conducted for one night to accompany the departed.
- Dao: knife
- Ekularuma: ritual related to dreaded diseases such as epilepsy, leprosy, etc.
- Epoteh: a kind of grass used during the Ah-tayeh ritual.
- Epra: a flattened wooden cot
- Etotih: sleeveless coats worn by the igu.
- Ewethreh: a kind of grass used during the Ah-tayeh ritual.
- Golo: the spirit of hills and mountains.
- Impeh: a ritual to bring sunshine.
- Khinu / khyinyu : both benevolent and malevolent spirits.
- Khyinyu/Khinu meko: spirit dwelling at home.
- Kandemo: a place with a wide stretch of water across which the soul accompanied by the igu.
- Manu-mara: skin or eye diseases.
- Meshala: ritual performed in the case of murder or disputes where a heavy fine is imposed.
- Niambrume: a place where there was no incidence of death.
- Reh: festival for a good harvest, peace, prosperity, good health.
- Rehguh: shamans employed for their ritual performance in reh festival.
- Sha: mithun (*Bos frontalis*).
- Yah: death ritual conducted for two nights to accompany the departed.
- Yu-maru-yh or Yu-meu-ru: rituals to ward off the ill effects of spirits.

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