

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

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Received: 22 June 2021, Revised and Accepted: 26 August 2021

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.

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

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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* 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 commended 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 *Kuts*. 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 lusher 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*, *Sakei Lu lam*, *Khual Lam*, *Cheraw*, *Ral lu Lam*, and *Chheih 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*, *Nauawih Hla*,

Sakhua, and *Inthawina 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 *Kawlni Chai Hla*, *Thailungi Zai*, *Mangkhaia Zai*, *Lallula (Zopui) Zai*, *Neihlai Zai*, *Lera Zai*, *Chhim Zai*, *Darlung Zai*, and *Lalvunga 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 sing on all happy 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. Thanmawia* [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 *Thangchhuah* 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 on 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. Thanmawia*, *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 lova 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 *Pialral* (heaven). As celebrations were praised with joy and charming local area feasting, individuals anticipate the approach celebrations with extraordinary enthusiasm.

SIGNIFICANCES OF THE FESTIVALS

Agriculture in the form of slash and burn (*jhum*) was the financial existence of the *Mizo*. The *Chapchar Kut* was seen after consummation of cutting the wilderness, the *Mim Kut* was seen at the hour of the gather of maize and different vegetables, and *Pawl Kut* was commended after the yearly collects of the fundamental food grains. In this way, the celebrations of the *Mizos* spin around the *jhum* development and were firmly associated with their agrarian practices. Every one of the three principle celebrations "are in without a doubt, related with their *jhuming* [7]." With a lot of grains in their barn, and every one of the works of the year over, the locals would grab a rest and appreciate their rewards for all the hard work.

The celebrations have promoted local area feeling and have helped in affecting the attitude of the *Mizo* people. Each celebration is accompanied with dance and music, which is the image of their affection and individual inclination. The community feasts and celebrations have enlarged the limit of local area life," said *S.N. Singh* [8]. In the expressions of E.J. Thomas, the meaning of the celebrations in the *Mizo* public activity can be perused as, "it served to fortify local area fortitude [9]."

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 bound 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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