

DISCOVERY OF KANGLEIPAK

(25)

BY

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The tradition of Ngamu Usin of the Meetei Race of Kangleipak.

Every Kangleicha Meetei wherever he/she lives on the surface of the Earth knows Ngamu Usin. Though he/she does not know the tradition of Ngamu Usin, in terms of the origin of the tradition, its significance etc., he/she sees the tradition in practice many times in his/her life if he/she is an adult.

Every man and woman, including children, has a Ngamu Usin on the day of New year for the coming year. Every Bridegroom and Bride has a Ngamu Usin on the Day of Marriage for their happy and prosperous lives in their union as one on the Earth. When a person is in illness or in trouble from any source, a Ngamu Usin is performed to end the illness, trouble etc. Every year on the day of New Year, the King of Kangleipak has a Usin, this time not Ngamu (fish), but a man is chosen in place of the Ngamu. This tradition of Usin in the Kanglei Royal Palace is being performed with pomp and show every year in the name of 'Cheithapa' up to this day from time immemorial.

These things are common knowledge in present Kangleipak and ancient Kangleipak.

This tradition of Ngamu usin of the Kanglei Meetei Race is practiced as scapegoat tradition in the western world upto this day.

“In the old testament, a goat that was symbolically burdened with sins of the people and then killed on YOM KIPPUR to rid Jerusalem of its iniquities. Similar rituals were held elsewhere in the ancient world to transfer guilt and blame. In ancient Greece, human scapegoats were beaten and driven out of cities to mitigate calamities. In early Roman Law, an innocent person was allowed to assume the penalty of another;” says Britannica Ready Reference Encyclopadia.

“a goat on which, once a year, the Jewish high-priest laid symbolically the sins of the people, and which was then allowed to escape into the wilderness” says Chambers Everyday Dictionary.

The tradition of scapegoat in the western world is practiced in State level, City level and people level collectively once a year and includes beating, killing.

In contrast, in ancient and present Kangleipak, the tradition of Ngamu usin etc. does not include any physical violence. In the Usin of Kangleipak, the Usin (scapegoat or human scapegoat) will get a gift from the person whose usin it/he is putting on his head.

Kangleipak Offers

The traditional Ngamu Usin in its origin, significance and importance for the people of the Meetei Race of Kangleipak.

The ultimate God Father Creator, as the ancient Kangleicha Meetei Race called Him Ipung Loinapa Apakpa, when creating the universe, created fire first, secondly, created water, third Air, 4th Malem, 5th the Space (Nongthou Ating-aa) one by one.

According to the Wang-u-lon of creation of the Meetei Race, the Sky, the space is personified as Male Person, called by them as Salailel Sitapa (at present Ipa Sorarel) and the Malem (The Earth) is personified as Female person called by them as Ima Leimalel Sitapi.

The ancient Meetei race further presumed that the Space and the Earth co-habited and gave birth to their first son, Sanamahi Lainingthou.

This stage of the creation is indicated in the 'Leitai Nongtai Chakoi' and in the 'Laipao chakoi' (present misrepresented 'Laibou Jagoi' or Laibou Chongba) in the traditional Art Form of Dance of the Meetei Race.

The Lainingthou Sanamahi creates man and this traditional story is a Funga Wari (Fireside story) of every family of the Meetei Race of Kangleipak.

When the first son of the Lainingthou Salailel Sitapa and Ima Leimalel Sitapi became of age, the God Father Salailel Sitapa ordered His son to create Man. Immediately Sanamahi Lainingthou began his duty of creating a man and created a thing thought to be a man by him and brought it to his God Father. The God Father did not agree it was a man. But Lainingthou Salailel Sitapa gave it a Soul and released it to the water giving it the name "Namu Mitam Nga". The rough English meaning is that 'Namu, a fish created in the aim of creating a man'. The 'Namu Mitam Nga' is the first living being created in form and shape of a small black fish by the Sanamahi Lainingthou on the Earth and is in the water body of the Earth.

The Sanamahi Lainingthou created several living beings in the aim of creating a man and Salailel Sitapa, the God Father did not agree, they are man.

Lastly, Lainingthou Sanamahi created a 'Yong' (Monkey) in the hope that it was a man. 'Yong' is a name given to all kinds of monkeys in the vocabulary of the Kangleicha Meetei Race. The God Father did not agree it to be a man (Homo Sapien). Lastly, Sanamahi Lainingthou surrendered to His God Father that he could not create a man.

Then the God Father Salailel Sitapa showed His Image to His frustrated son, Sanamahi Lainingthou and told him to create a man in the likeness of His Image. Thus Sanamahi Lainingthou created a man (Homo Sapien).

This is the creation theory of the ancient Meetei Race, practically in its contents, an Evolutionary Theory.

Now please see how the Ngamu Usin Tradition (The Western Tradition of scapegoat) comes into.

When the first living "Namu Mitam Nga" was created by Sanamahi Lainingthou and gave it a Soul by the God Father Salailel Sitapa, before it was released to the water, the God Father Salailel Sitapa said to the 'Namu Mitam Nga, that "He namu Mitam Nga! Nang Munna Taroko, Hayeng Taipang Malem Asida Icha Isu Singna Pak Sanna Taraba Matamda Ngangbu Faraga Makhoigi Awa Ana Pumnamak Nangna Puduna Chatkhro Haina Isingda Amuk Thadoklabadi, Nangna Puduna Chatkadabani, Soiba Yadeko!" so said to the Namu Mitam Nga with the direction of the God Father Salailel Sitapa. Rough English translation, "He Namu Mitam Nga! You hear attentively. In the long run, when the Earth is inhabited by my descendants extensively, if they catch you and tell you to carry all their sins, misfortunes, sorrows etc. and release you again to the water, you should agree, you cannot fail this."

This portion of the direction of the God Father is not available in the scripture, but the Funga Wari (Tradition) tells very clearly in these terms. This may be due to our loss of all puyas, the scriptures by the vandalism of Puya Burning during the beginning years of Hindu Rules in the 18th century CE.

At present the Kangleicha Meetei Race practice this tradition as Ngamu Usin, not as Namu Mitam Nga Usin.

The Namu Mitam Nga which was actually created as first living being (movable) is a black fish, endemic fish, specially found in Kangleipak. It is called Meetei Ngamu at present. The length of the black small fish is about 8" at its fully growth stage, most probably not more. The changing of Namu Mitam Nga to Ngamu may be due to the Blackness of the fish

used for Usin (Ngamu = Nga + Mu = Nga means fish + Mu means Amuba, further means Black, Blackness).

From the fact that a black fish had been used for several centuries, now we call 'Ngamu Usin' from the original Namu Mitam Nga Usin as a derivative or for shortness in practical use.

Please see the Namu Mitam Nga, used for Usin initially, now we call Ngamu used for Ngamu Usin from the following photograph:



The above is the black Ngamu fish we use to day in the Ngamu usin on the new year day (Wakching Kumhou or Wakching Cheihouba), Kangleicha Meetei people have a special arrangement for worship of the Sanamahi Lainingthou at the Sanamahi Kachin of the Meetei Home for the Welfare of Household for the coming New Year. Every member of the Household has a Ngamu Usin for the coming year. The family member will simply say to the Ngamu "you take away all my misfortune, sorrow for the coming year" before releasing to the water. When a person is seriously ill, a Ngamu Usin is done to recover from the illness. For this usin purpose a Maiba, a expert in the tradition, will do the Ngamu Usin for the ailing person.

The Maiba will tell the Ngamu before releasing to the water "He Ngamu! You hear attentively. When you are created first in the universe by the Sanamahi Lainingthou as a human being Lainingthou Salail Sitapa, God Father did not accept you as Human Being, but you are released into the water as a fish giving you a soul. Before releasing you into the water the God Father said to you that when the Earth is inhabited by His innumerable descendants, they will catch you and putting on your head all their misfortunes, illness, sorrow etc. and will release you again to the water and you cannot disagree to what they say. Now I (Maipa) put on your head the misfortune, illness, danger of death etc of (name of the ailing person), you take all these things. You cannot disagree; this is the direction of the God Father, Salail Sitapa and go now to the water, your natural abode...." After releasing the Ngamu to the water, the Maiba will come back to ailing person and will say "The Ngamu has carried away all your misfortune, sorrow and danger of Death on its head and go away very

happily, and you will recover from the illness immediately” Eventually the patient becomes well.

In the case of Ngamu Usin of Marriage, two Ngamus, one for the groom and one for the bride, three persons two from the groom side and one from the bride side are required. The team is generally, as we see today, of all women team.

One woman from the groom side will hold a Ngamu fish and will say to the Ngamu to put all misfortunes, sins, shames, sorrows etc. of the groom for his life upon the head of the Ngamu fish, and one woman from the bride side will do the same things for the brides life, and then the two Ngamus will be released to the water. The 3rd woman from the groom side will pray the Almighty God Father for the welfare and happiness of the couple together in their couple life.

Regarding the state function of Usin will be performed with pomp and show.

Regarding this annual State Function, the writer will quote a para from the book “THE MEITHEIS’ by T.C. Hodson who was British Political Agent in the 19th Century CE to get a complete picture of the Event:

“The maibas nominate the man and compare his horoscope with those of the Raja and the State generally, and if they satisfactorily correspond, as is natural they should, the candidate together with the outgoing **Chahitaba** appears before the Raja and the assembled multitudes when, after worshipping his spiritual Director, the **Guru** and his own God (probably his tribal diety), the retiring **Chahitaba** then addresses the incoming officer in the following terms ‘ My friend, I bore and took away all evil spirits and sins from the Raja and his people during the last year. Do thou likewise from tomorrow until the next Chiraoba’ Then the incoming **Chahitaba** thus addresses the Raja : ‘O Son of heaven, Ruler of the Kings, great and ancient lord, Incarnation of God, the great Lord Pakhangba, Master of the bright sun, **Lord of the plain and despot of the Hills**, whose Kingdom is from the hills on the east to the mountain on the west, the old year perishes, the new cometh. New is the sun of the new year, and bright as the new sun shalt thou be, and mild withal as the new moon. May thy beauty and thy strength grow with the growth of the new year. From today I will bear on my head all thy sins, diseases, misfortunes, shame, mischief, all that is aimed in battle against thee, all that threatens thee, all that is bad and hurtfull for thee and thy kingdom”’ Then the king will give a number of gifts to the Cheithaba.

In short this is the picture of Kanglei Cheithapa ceremony. Cheithapa (Chahitaba) is the human scape-goat. The English writer says 'Chahitaba' for Cheithapa. The undemocratic and unrefined sentence **'Despot of the Hills'** is added to the ceremonial statement of the annual Cheithapa Function during the Hindu Rules of Kangleipak in 18th and 19th century CE. Some new Hindu words/concepts also are added during this time.

Namu Mitam Nga Usin, in later history Ngamu Usin, shows a very thorough and clear origin of state, and the benevolent idea of the ultimate God Father of the Universe. The Usin tradition of Kangleipak is practiced as the scape-goat tradition elsewhere on the surface of the Earth, but in limited spheres.

In ancient time the people of Kangleipak were a civilizing factor on the surface of the Earth. The Usin tradition of Kangleipak shows the Kanglei people as polite, cultured and traits of a very ancient civilized people.