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Adornments of Divinity: Unveiling the Attire, Accessories, and Equipment of Tagin *Nyibu* (shaman) in Arunachal Pradesh

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Abstract:
The cultural diversity of Arunachal Pradesh is woven with threads of traditions, customs, and rituals, each contributing to the region's rich heritage. Among these indigenous communities, the Tagin tribe stands out as custodians of a unique set of beliefs and practices that have withstood the test of time. At the heart of their spiritual life are the shamans, revered figures responsible for maintaining a harmonious balance between the earthly and the divine. The paper delves into the intricate world of the Tagin shaman, exploring the symbolism and significance embedded in their distinctive attire, accessories, and equipment.

Keywords: Nyibu, Attire, Ritual, Accessories, Equipment, Spirituality.

I. Introduction

The Tagin tribe has long captured the interest of academics and nature lovers alike, nestled among the verdant hills and rich vistas of Arunachal Pradesh. The Tagins are one of the indigenous tribes of Arunachal Pradesh settled in the Upper Subansiri District. Genealogically, they are the descendants of *Abo Tani*, the common ancestor of the *Tani* tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Renowned for their abundant cultural legacy, the tribe has a strong foundation in animistic beliefs and customs, with a strong focus on spirituality. Shamans are crucial to the religious rituals of the Tagin society as they serve as intermediaries between the material world and the spiritual world. This paper attempts to unfold the mystique surrounding the attire, accessories, and equipment of Tagin *Nyibu* (Shaman). The paper also aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the cultural and religious shades that define the Tagin community, shedding light on the vestiges of a tradition that continues to thrive amidst the changing tides of time through oral tradition maintained by the tribe.

To comprehend the essence of Tagin spirituality, it is essential to examine the intricate details of the priestly attire and the symbolic significance of the ornaments and equipment accompanying them in their sacred rituals. The attire, accessories, and equipment worn and wielded by Tagin shamans are not only symbols of religious authority but also repositories of cultural identity. The intricate craftsmanship, vibrant colours, and symbology embedded in these elements provide a window into the spiritual cosmos of the Tagin tribe. These sacred adornments are not mere embellishments rather they serve as tangible

expressions of the tribe's cosmological worldview, encapsulating the intricate interplay between the mundane and the divine.

One finds numerous enlightening publications on the socio-political and cultural lives of the people of the Tagin of Arunachal Pradesh. However, there is a notable lack of knowledge about their traditional cultures. Moreover, there is no critical evaluation of the limited ones that are available. Many Indigenous writers, anthropologists (both domestic and international), social scientists, British administrative officials, and historians have only briefly mentioned or discussed the Tagin in previous books, notes, tour diaries, and monographs. We have a very deficient body of historical data about the tribe as a result of this method. Ashan Riddi in his book *The Tagins of Arunachal Pradesh: A Study of Continuity and Change* (2006) is the first attempt to bring forth a focused work devoted entirely to the Tagin. It provides comprehensive information on the social, political, economic, religious, and cultural aspects of the tribe but it too fell short of being an exhaustive study. In *Political Socialization of Tagin tribe of Arunachal Pradesh* (2018), Tagio Kodak, discussed vividly on the Tagin traditional political system and the process of carrying out political socialization in the Tagin society. It is helpful to understand the tribe's political system and nature but this book requires some critical analysis, as some facts are not convincing. *Customary Laws of the Tagins* (2006), by N. Mitkong, dealt with the basic customary practices, judicial administration, and decision makings in civil cases. The book contains important guidelines focusing on the rules, violations, and adverse consequences in the aspects of marriage, taboos, properties, and various other customary rules in social activities, economics, crime cases, adultery barter practice, and inheritance rights but this book requires some critical analysis as some facts are not convincing. His other, book *Oral Literature of the Tagins on Creation of Universe* (2006), documented various oral literature of the Tagin. It documented the creation of different heavenly bodies, tales, stories, and myths. The author has translated shamans' chanting which is useful and helps to understand the tribe's myths and traditions. In *Culture and language of Upper Subansiri* (2012) Arak Megu & et.al, authors had compiled the book into three sections. The first section of the book gives an outline of the culture, socio-economic aspects of the Tagin, mythological background of *Si-Donyi* festival. This section also deals with the law of property and the mythological background of the *Boori-Boot* festival of the *Hill Miri* tribe which has now been merged into greater Nyishi clans since then their annual festival *Boori-Boot* is celebrated as *Boori Boot Yullo* every year in the first week of February with pomp and fervour by the community. The second section deals with the Tagin language. The third section of the book deals with the comparative study of the vocabularies of Tagin, Nyishi, Galo, and Adi. In *Gender Triumphs Unarmed in the Hostile Gorges: Re-Discovery of Border Tagins* (1997) edited by B.B. Pandey. The book provides a vivid account of the first unarmed expedition of Tagin land undertaken in 1956 by S.M.krishnatry and his wife Geeta Krishnatry whose dairy forms the mainstay of the narration. The author gives the account of Nah and Mra Tagin's lifestyle and their socio-economic condition who are settled in the Indo-Tibet (China) border. He also vividly describes the relationship prevalent between the Tagin and Tibetans and the processes leading to the Tsari Pilgrimage of 1956, border trade in the transborder scenario. The book is informative and accountable for taking reference because it is compiled through daily records of events and experiences and information collected by Geeta Krishnatry by interacting with the locals. *A Philosophy for NEFA (*2006), by Verrier Elwin, writes about the tribal affairs of Arunachal Pradesh and discusses the problems faced by the tribes. Further, it also discussed appropriate approaches and scientific ideals to be taken to deal with the problems by bringing development activities in the tribal areas. The author also writes about the importance of the traditional art of dress and ornaments. His other book, *Myth of the North-East Frontier of India* (2012)

dealt with the mythology and folklore of Arunachal Pradesh. It has nearly four hundred tales, many of which are of exceptional interest. In *Border Traders in Arunachal Pradesh* (2015) edited by Tage Tada & et.al, is a collection of seminal papers on the topic 'Border Traders in Arunachal Pradesh: Prospects and Problems', organized by the Directorate of Research in 2014. The book is a collection of various articles written by different scholars dealing with past and present scenarios of trade activities in the state, various trade routes followed by trading communities, its prospects, problems, and strategic needs, and a new approach towards trade and commerce in the context of India's 'Look East Policy'. In *Arunachal Pradesh: An Overview* (2016) edited by Batem Pertin, is a concise handbook published by the Directorate of Research. The book minutely covers every aspect of the state. It provides ample knowledge about the geography, stages of the administrative development, historical facts, and the socio-cultural aspects of its people and the state, which is very helpful while compiling facts regarding the state. In *Cross-Border Trade of North-East India* (2002), by S. Dutta is a collection of articles on border trade. The book provides the trade routes followed by the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh and the nature of trade with the neighbour countries namely Tibet, Myanmar (Burma), Bhutan, and the neighbouring tribes. Further, it gives relevant information about the commodities that have been used for trade. The mentioned published works were consulted and reviewed critically for a broader understanding while writing this paper.

II. Objective of the Study

The present paper has the following objectives:

1. To document and study the shaman attire- the materials, colours, and designs involved
2. To study the symbolism inherent in the ornaments worn by the Tagin shaman
3. To study the purpose and symbolism behind the various equipment or tools used by shamans during religious ceremonies

III. Materials and Methods

The study is empirical. Both primary and secondary sources were used to write this paper. However, primary data received greater attention for writing this article. Primary data was gathered through the use of audio-visual recording and tape recordings with consent, as well as structured and unstructured in-person interviews with knowledgeable informants such as village women, traditional women weavers, shamans, Gams or Head Gams (heads of the village council), and members of the general knowledgeable public who are well versed in traditional knowledge. To gather data, both scheduled and unscheduled interviews were conducted using questionnaires. In addition to the interview approach, an ethnohistorical approach was used to participate in and observe the weaving processes. For the current work, secondary sources were consulted through published and unpublished source materials, including books, articles, and research papers.

IV. Results and Discussion

Oral traditions are the lifeline of textless societies, serving as their primary means of preserving and transmitting knowledge, history, and culture. The Tagins are one of the oral communities of Arunachal Pradesh. They preserved their cultural diversity through their enchanting oral literature. Their narratives in the form of myths, legends, and folktales serve as invaluable sources to understand their ancestors' early ideas and psyche. The Tagin, being an oral community, serve and preserve their history, culture, wisdom, and knowledge through oral traditions. Among the Tagins, the prime source of oral narrative is the shaman;

each of the Tagin ritual sacrifices or traditional customs is associated with oral narratives transmitted and re-enacted by the indigenous shamans. This article explores the significance of oral traditions through *Nyibu agam* (shamans' words) in documenting mystic surroundings in shamans' sacred attire, accessories, and equipment, highlighting their enduring values. We shall understand the mysteries and significance embedded in shamans' divine adornment from the shamans themselves. As a shaman's belongings are full of mysteries, the shaman himself can give an authentic narration about their hidden mysteries. As such, this paper is developed after hearing from the shaman.

Their remarkable occupation does not solely determine the distinctive social standing of *Nyibu*; their ceremonial attire, accessories, and accoutrements also play a major role. The Tagin conduct two types of ritual- *Yumi* and *Hilo* rituals. For the successful conduct of rituals, animal sacrifice is mandatory. The sacrificed animals are given as offerings to the Gods. A ritual where pig and fowl are sacrificed as an offering to the deities is known as *Yumi*, and a ritual where one or more than one Mithun (Bos frontalis) is sacrificed as an offering to the Gods, is called *Hilo*.[1] A Mithun is considered as the most important and valuable asset of the Tagin. It is a semi-domesticated animal. The highest level of sacrifice or offering to the gods is a Mithun in Tagin society. Hence, they see the *Hilo* ritual as more significant than the *Yumi* rituals because of the extent of the offerings made to the Gods. Among the significant *Hilo* rituals are the *Nyeda* (marriage ritual), *Railo* (large ceremony for family wellbeing), and *Si Donyi Yullo* (community celebration).

Based on the degree of sacrificial ritual conduct, the *Nyibus* (shaman) put on ritual dresses, ornaments, and tools.[2] The *Nyibus* often dress normally in their daily life and during *Yumi* ritual, just like other members of the community, but during big rituals such as *Hilo* ritual, they don unique clothing, equipment, and accessories. Their ceremonial garments and accoutrements are believed to strengthen the shaman's ability to mediate, make them appear enticing to spirits, and offer protection when performing ritual incantations. They wear things in a way that defies social conventions and is unattainable by regular people. It is believed that the ritual is deemed ineffective and unsuccessful if the shaman forgets to wear any of the objects involved in it.

The clothing and accessories are much more than mere protection of the body against the weather. It is a form of art, on which some of the finest minds of all nations have lavished their attention. It is a symbol whereby a man's social status can be determined (Elwin, 2018: 119). Every community has a unique traditional dress style, even in the face of the widespread use of modern clothing. As such, the Tagin has unique, colourful clothing and ornaments. Tagins are specific about the choice of attire for distinct events or occasions. They have a set of attire worn by the shaman during particular ritual ceremonies such as *Hilo*, the formal ceremonial clothing of the bride and groom during the marriage ceremony, and for normal daily wear. In a similar vein, ornaments are also worn in line with the occasion or event.

The institution of shamanism in the Tagin society is not professional, elective selective, and hereditary. A person becomes a priest who is bestowed with supernatural power. It is believed that a person's destiny is pre-determined by *Donyi-Polo* (nature god), only a chosen one can become a priest. It is believed their supernatural power, powerful knowledge, and wisdom are gifted by *Dorichiji/Dori* (God of shaman).[3] Though the institution of the *Nyibuship* (shamanism) is not hereditary, but his belongings, primarily dress, ornaments, and equipment, are hereditary. If any of his sons or daughters became a shaman, then his belongings are directly passed down to them. If none of his sons or daughters became a shaman, then his belongings are passed down to his eldest son, even though he is not a shaman. If there is no eldest son, then his youngest son will inherit.[4] It is believed that a shaman's dress, ornaments, and equipment are

laden with power and wisdom. Because of these beliefs, his ritual items are not buried when he leaves for his heavenly abode. The idea is to preserve his powerful knowledge and wisdom for mankind. So that the power, knowledge, and wisdom of the shaman may remain with mankind in the earthly world.

Nyibus' Attire: The Materials, Colours, and Designs Involved

The Tagin shamans' attire is laden with symbolism, reflecting their spiritual authority and connection with the divine. *Nyibus* wear *Jatte Laklik* or *Jabu* as part of their ritual clothing. *Jatte Laklik* (Tibetan long coat) is made of warm woollen fabric such as fleece. It is a long overcoat designed in an asymmetrical collar neck chef coat. Its length reaches below the knee. The attire has a typical colour combination in their patterns and motifs that signify nature, reflecting their close connection to nature. The motifs are designed in the front of the left chest and the back. The colour combinations in the motifs are orange indicating the sun, green indicating the earth, white indicating the snow, and blue indicating the sky. The Tagin shaman adorns his attire with a *Tayin* belt designed with sea shells over an animal skin or cane rope. The belt consists of at least three lines of sea shells. The simplicity of *Jatte Laklik* makes it elegant, and it is often paired with trousers. The *Jatte Laklik* comes in maroon and red colour, they wear both colours interchangeably, but preferably they wear maroon rather than red. The Tagin mostly favour red and maroon colour. According to tradition maintained by the tribe, maroon and red signify energy, power, and the life force.[5] However, speculation of choosing such shades may be because the Tagins were widely accessible to these colours. It is current among the tribe that their ancestors widely exported *Tamin* to the Tibetan market as one of the prime articles before independent India. The scientific name of *Tamin* is Rubia cordifolia known as Indian madder, is a species of flowering plant in the coffee family, Rubiaceae. It has been cultivated for a red pigment derived from roots.[6]

Symbolism Inherent in the Accessories

The accessories of *Nyibu* comprise of *Tayin* (sea shell belt), *Tassi* (beads), *Tarum* (Headgear), *koji* (brass bangle). Each of these sacred adornments of shamans has a symbolic meaning. The shaman adorns himself with these accessories during *hilo* ritual such as *Railo* (big family or clan ritual), *Nyeda* (marriage ceremony), *Si donyi hilo* (community rites). The *Tayin*, is a sea shell belt that they wear on their waist for tying *Jatte laklik* and a piece of accessories. Further, the myth behind wearing this beautiful sea shell belt is that it gives *Nyibu* power when he travels in the sea or water in the spiritual world. According to the belief, if a shaman wears this, it allows him to flow swiftly and travel easily in the sea, ocean, river, and waterfall.[7] Besides *Tayin*, the *Nyibu* adorn himself with beautiful threads of *Tassi* (beads). *Tassi* is a generic name for all beaded jewellery of Tagin. *Tassi* has different names according to the types and values such as *Sengtor, Singteh, Sengbok*, *Sengmin*, *Mimpung*, and *Dugjis*, etc. The thread of beads that a shaman wear is usually comprised of blue and white *sengtor* (big beads), *singteh* (small blue beads), *Sengbok* (blue beads slightly smaller than s*engtor*), and *Sengmin* (smaller blue beads). The shaman wears these beads for adornment and to lure the spirits as a piece of attraction into the spiritual world. The *Tassi* is knotted with *Takam* (Tibetan brass plate) at the end. Further, it is believed that this thread of beads is not just a piece of adornment to lure the spirits or gods into the spiritual world rather it acts as a protector for *Nyibu* during his spiritual journey in their various capacities.

Another important accessory of the shaman is the *Tarum,* a headgear made of brass metal. The shaman wears this during big ritual conduct. It is designed in such a fashion that; a red knot is tied in the middle of *Tarum* with red thread in multiple circles and a pointed brass stick and copper stick are inserted inside the red knot. This headpiece is believed to a representation of the shaman's high spiritual standing. It is believed to represent the power and heavenly knowledge of *Nyibu*. Besides *Tarum*, the Tagin priest wears

Chiboh on the back of their head. The *Chiboh* is tied with *Tarum* from the back. The pointed brass stick and copper stick are used as tools for attaching *Chiboh* with *Tarum*. *Chiboh* is made of layers of animal skin, animal fur, porcupine quills, and bird feathers. The base of *Chiboh* is made of *Sorchi* (fisher) skin or flying squirrel skin and above *Sorchi's* skin or flying squirrel skin *Sisi*/*Sichi Lobo* (porcupine quills) is placed, *Sisi*/*Sichi Lobo* is covered with dyed red *Jamsor* (yak fur) and above the *Jamsor* and on the top *Ochi-okam* (black drongo) tail is placed. All of these items give an enchanting look to *Nyibu* as well as each of them has a defined role and importance. Further, these accessories aid the shaman's spiritual aura and improve their capacity for spiritual communication.

Apart from aiding spiritual aura and improve their capacity for spiritual communication these accessories are kept for protection as well. They serve as weapons during the spiritual journey. It is believed that it keeps the shaman safe from enemies during ritual conduct. The shamans are very selective about the animals, birds, and plants they will carry or travel along with in the spiritual world. They select them based on the certain qualities they endorse. For instance, *Sorchi* (fisher) is known for its cleverness, fastness, and attentiveness. It is believed that these special characteristics of *sorchi* help *Nyibu* in the spiritual world, it helps him with fast movements and keeps him alert, and with its help, he can travel to any world as fast as he can. *Sisi*/*Sichi Lobo* (porcupine quills) is put to act as a protective weapon. During his spiritual journey if any enemy comes up and tries to harm him then it is believed that porcupine quills are released automatically against the enemy.[8] Further, *Ochi-okam* (black drongo) is known for its aggressive behaviour and strong features towards much larger birds that invade its territory. It has strong and fast wings that enable them to capture prey. Similarly, yak is considered a bulky and sturdy animal. These important features and the nature of the birds and animals are used as protection measures by shaman in their spiritual endeavours. They use *Jamsor* (yak fur) and *Ochi-okam* tails as a piece of adornment and for protection. During ritual ceremonies, the shamans' headdresses frequently serve as a distinguishing feature, highlighting their pivotal role in the event. Apart from *Jamsor* and *Ochi-okam* tails, the shaman also wears *Koji* (a brass bangle) on their ankle and wrists as a piece of adornment. The shamans narrated that, in the spiritual world, the *uyis* (spirits) wear the same attire that they wear in the earthly world. They narrated that when they travel in the spiritual world, they have to look similar to the spiritual world beings. Due to such reasons, they have to dress like them to appease the spirits. Such acts and getups also ease their communication with the spirits.

Purpose and Symbolism Behind the Various Equipment Used by Shaman

The ritual equipment of *Nyibu* comprises *Lakbu* (armlet), *Riokse* (Long sword), *Mayab* (bird tail fan), and *Jarda* or *Tabu Bangnyi* (magical wand). *Labkbu* is a bracer worn by *Nyibu* for both adornment and protection. It is made of animal skin, preferably from *Setum* (bear) skin. They specifically chose bear skin because of its strong and bold features. In recent times, finding bears in the jungle has been hard because of mass deforestation and the declining population of bears. They now use Mithun (Bos Gaurus) skin and other wild animal skin. According to tradition, if an animal is huge and strong, it imbues strong power to the *Nyibu* during his journey in the spiritual world.[9]

The other important equipment of the shaman is the *Riokse* (long Tibetan sword). *Riokse* is not used only as a tool for practical purposes but also as a symbol of the priest's ability to cut through spiritual obstacles and connect with the divine. Its primary role is to give protection. In the recent past, it was one of the primary items of import from the Tibetan market. The *riokse* is carried in a bamboo bow, and the bamboo bow is often covered with deer, bear, and Mithun skin. Further, an animal skin handle is used to hang the *riokse* around their waist. In front of the animal skin handle, they attach *senyo eju* (tiger tooth), and on the

top handle of the sword, they attach yak fur as a decorative piece and protection.
Another piece of equipment of the shaman is the *Mayab,* which is a bird tail fan mostly made of *Pemah* (kite), *Kiokam* (eagle), and *Kioli* (hawk) tails. Among these birds, the shaman mainly prefers the eagle tail because of its enchanting, strong features. They consider the eagle to be the mightiest bird. Along with *Mayab*, they attach bird claws and a whistle made up of *Tabu* (a kind of bamboo). Bird claws are used for picking up objects or things, and a *Tabu* whistle is used as a key to a door in the spiritual world. The *Mayab,* bird claws, and *Tabu* whistle are tied together with red thread. It is done so to avoid detaching them from each other at the time of spiritual chantings and prayers.
Another important piece of equipment for the shaman is the *Jarda*, it is a magical wand used by the shaman during the *Hilo* ritual. It is made of *Tabu*. During normal hours, the *Jarda* is called *Tabu Bingnyi* (a stick), but when a *Nyibu* goes for the *Hilo* ritual, it is called *Jarda.* Because during such a big ritual, it doesn't remain an ordinary stick but becomes a magical wand that supports and protects the *nyibu*.[10] It helps the shaman to travel in the spiritual world. Further, in the *Tabu Bingnyi*, a small arrow is attached called *Nana richik* (a small pointed arrow like iron metal), which acts as a protector to *Nyibu*. It also helps clear the forests and jungles during the shaman's spiritual journey.
Among the many fascinating aspects of their traditions is the role, status, and utility of the traditional shamanka, a position of considerable reverence and responsibility. An interesting fact about the Tagin society concerning shamanism is that the society is very much leaning toward patriarchy and masculinity. This is evident through the norms they set for the shaman's role, actions, attire, accessories, and equipment they could carry or wear during rituals and taboos imposed on them. Since the paper is on shaman attire, accessories, and equipment, the woman is not designated with a particular outfit or accessory. We shall limit our discussion to those pointers only. In terms of shaman apparel concerns, the Tagin have a single code of apparel for both shaman and shamanka. Both shaman and shamanka wear a single code of attire, accessories, and equipment while conducting the sacred *Hilo* ritual.
According to the tradition maintained by the tribe, when a shamanka dresses in shaman attire, it gives her the power to appeal to the *uyis* (spirits) in the spiritual world. It is narrated by the shaman that when they travel in the spiritual world, the spirits in the spiritual world dress exactly like them, gracefully welcome them, and give blessings. Therefore, it is important to dress and look like them if they travel in the spiritual land. Because of this reason, they emphasized that whether it is a shaman or a shamanka has to adorn themselves with the same attire, accessories, and equipment. It is believed that a powerful and appealing appearance is very much needed to appease the spirits.
A few decades ago, the Tagin culture was home to a sizable number of well-known shamanka. They were once strong and majestic, but a recent study shows, their numbers have decreased to nearly non-existent. Even if you discover one, they are merely confined to the small rites and rituals. They are now just part of *Ponung* dance team (religious folk dance), called *Ponung Nyibu*, whose job is only confined to *Ponung* song recitation. The *Ponung* dance is a religious celebration in which shamans sing or recite a folk song. It is performed to pray and appease the deities during their annual festival or in certain big rituals. During *Ponung*, the shaman plays a musical note from *Riokse* (sword). It is a long sword, in its handle an iron disc is loosely attached, which provides a rattling sound. *Nyibus* shakes the *Riokse* when she sings the folk song. The *Nyibu* engaged in *Ponung* are not capable of divination and ritual conduct. They are just knowledgeable and confident woman whom the *Ponung* team chooses to lead their team as a leader during *Ponung* dance exhibition at the festival. Here, the shaman does not wear exquisite and elaborate dress, attire, and equipment. In terms of emphasizing and declining the woman shaman role and endorsement,

strict social norms and patriarchal society are cited as the prime causes in these passing years. According to the knowledgeable narrators and recounters, woman was often not endorsed to take up shamanism as their profession, as this was considered to be primarily a male-dominated sphere. With passing time, women have been taught to look outside themselves for a patriarchal divinity to rescue us, and they have lost contact with their divine feminine.

V. Conclusion

Amid the dreamlike landscape of Arunachal Pradesh, the Tagin tribe appears as the custodians of a distinctive set of customs and beliefs. The mysterious roles of the shamans reveal the spiritual lives of the Tagin people, who have their roots in animistic traditions. These spiritual guardians' clothes, accessories, and tools are more than just pieces of adornment; they are physical representations of a rich cultural and religious past. The richness of the Tagin shamans' cultural and spiritual legacy is demonstrated by the symbolism found in their clothing, accessories, and equipment. Every component—from ritual tools to clothing—contributes to the complex web of symbolism that characterizes the shaman's function in promoting divine communication. Comprehending the importance and worth of these tools is crucial to recognising the distinct religious customs of the Tagin tribe and the function of its shamans in conserving and transferring their cultural heritage. The shaman's attire, accessories, and equipments is a reflection of their spiritual authority and connection with the divine. They symbolize energy, power, and life force. The *Nyibu* wear these accessories, attire, and equipment during *Hilo ritual*. As tradition goes, *Nyibus* are adorned with such a style because the spiritual world demands it. As they act as a mediator between the spiritual and material world. So, when they make their spiritual journey from the material world to the spiritual world, they have to look like the spiritual world beings to communicate with them. Thus, the paper attempts to provide a comprehensive understanding of the spiritual life of the Tagin shaman, shedding light on the vestiges of a tradition that continues to thrive amidst the changing tides of time.

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Notes

1. Interview with Keke Dagiam, aged about 63 years, priest of Dagiam village under Upper Subansiri District held a Scheduled Interview on December 24, 2023 at Dagiam village. (Hereinafter referred to as *KDI*) (Keke Dagiam Interview).
2. Interview with Jekar Gusar, aged about 45 years, priest of Lida village under Upper Subansiri District held a Scheduled Interview on October 26, 2023 at Daporijo. (Hereinafter referred to as *JGI*) (Jekar Gusar Interview).
3. Interview with Taji Dadi, aged about 45 years, priest of Dadi village under Upper Subansiri District held a Scheduled Interview on October 24, 2023 at Daporijo. (Hereinafter referred to as *TDI*) (Taji Dadi Interview).
4. TDI.

5. Interview with Yadik Damba Nalo, aged about 85 years, priest of Nalo village under Upper Subansiri District held an Unscheduled Interview on December 27, 2023 at Daporijo. (Hereinafter referred to as *YDI*) (Yadik Damba Nalo Interview).
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7. *TDI.*
8. *TDI.*
9. *PJI.*
10. *PJI.*

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