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Etymology of Galo Marriage System- A Brief Note on Polygamous System

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Abstract

Arunachal Pradesh a land of rising sun compose of 26 major tribes and more then 100 sub tribes.among them galo who settled in confluence of yomgo river in west siang district and subansiri river in lower subansiri district are unique in their identity,ethnicity and culture.since immemorial time galo marriage system are unique and complex with many rituals and ceremonies. As the institution of galo marriage are gradually losing the meaning to the young and educated galo. This paper attempts to study the etymology of galo marriage system and prevalent form of polygamy system.it also attempt to outline how the institution of polygamy bridge batter relationship between sibling and family.

Keywords: Galo,Layap,Nyida,Neppe Nyida,Togu,Ome Yoar,Namra Agom,Nyibu.

Introduction: Marriage is also called matrimony or wedlock which is socially or ritually recognized union between spouses that established right and obligations between them. An anthropologist Edward Westermarck defines “A relation of one or moremen to one or more women that is recognized by custom or law” Marriage which divides the society on monogamy and polygamy which are followed by society as be a choice of situation. As recognized by the state, an organization, a religion Authority, a tribal group, a local community or peers on basic of selection of partner,economic consideration which are scrutinized by framed law and obligation.Human civilization followed different aspects of marriage specially based on Advance, tribaland aboriginal societies based on rules and regulation with framed condition of tribal society was the focus of every individual and organization.So, the Tribal inhabitant of India which composed of 645 major tribal group and among them as many as 26 major tribal and more than 100 sub tribe are found in Arunachal Pradesh. Among them Galo who predominant in west siang district are one of major tribe whose marriage system is composed of different form of unique and complex system.prevelent form of polygamy which become good and bad asset for family and society needs special outline to study by researcher of its causes and effect.

Objective of study: The prevalent of polygamy in Galo society need special exploration of its causes and effect. The reference of few Galo marriage systems through journals, books, dairies do not reach the ambit of marriage system followed practically by Galo then and now. Therefore, with this background, present work shall analysis the ethnological and changing pattern of Galo marriage system with following objective: To define different aspect of Galo marriage system.To study etymology of Nyida (Galo marriage) system.To study polygamy system and its causes and effects.To study the continuity and changes of Galo marriage system based on socio- Economic,political and modernization.

Review of literatures: In this book entitled In Abor Jungle (1983), A. Hamilton has discussed about the dress and ornament of Abor people. It also informed about abduction of girls due to high bride price.

In this book entitled Glimpses of early history of Arunachal (1989) L.N Chakravarty has discuss about- Inter village feuds. It also informed about raid and carried away few women from nearby village.

Varrier Elwin's Philosophy of NEFA (1957), Inform about the patrilineal society and form of polyandry marriage system. He also Inform about other form of marriage system based on Economic importance which result in remain unmarried and demographic less population growth.

Elwin's another work, myths of the North East Frontier of India, (1958), He discuss about the origin and ethnology of Galo. It also informed about his work on mythological history of Galo marriage system by Abo Tani (legendary forefather) and its form of Arrange child marriage.

In this book entitled slavery in Arunachal Pradesh, A. Kr. Thakur (2003), has discuss about the slave become asset for their master by indulge in marriage system.

In this book entitled the gallong (2010), L. R. N Srivastava has discussed about origin and migration of Galo and practice of monogamy and polygamy marriage system. He also discuss about the pattern of Galo marriage system with giving basic importance to economic consideration.

In this book entitled marriage and culture (Ed) (2006), Tamo Mibang and M. C Behera has chapterized the institution of Galo marriage and its etymology and its form of marriage system. Chapter on ritual and practise along with divorce by different regional entity group of Galo is discuss.

In this book entitled Adi tribes of Arunachal Pradesh (2006), S. H. M Rizvi and shibani Roy has discuss about socio- culture of Galo with physical decoration and of preference marriage it also inform about practice of social norms of marriage.

In this book entitled Tribal Village council of Arunachal Pradesh (1999), Dr.B. B Panday, Dr. D.K Duarah, N. Sankar has chaptarized on institution of Divorce. The role of

village council in solving the case of Adultery and other form of marriage was discussed as per socio- political sphere.

K. D Gupta's an introduction of the gallong language (1963), has discuss about Galo marriage system. He changed the word polyandry to cicisbeism to Galo marriage system. He also discuss about socio- political development of Galo in respect of marriage, Education and Justice which impact inter tribe and inter region marriage.

In his book entitled leadership pattern in tribal society (1991), B. B Pandey has explain socio- political view to have better inter tribe and inter regional relation institution of marriage system. He also explains enduring of new social and cultural ideas for each of sides.

Alexander Mackenzie's the north east frontier of India (1989), explain the term Abor and Gallong or Doba Adis as sub group and their relation with plain people. He also informed about raid and carry away of girls from Demaji.

Research Methodology: The important reason for taking up the present research topic is the gradual changes in polygamy system and extinction of Age old practice by Galo society. Both the primary and secondary source is consulted. Govt.published books and document for primary along with the secondary sources like books, journals, ethnographic reports and survey reports etc.were consulted.

Statement of the problem: The marriage system of Galo is complex of unique features which has its etymological origin since immemorial time. Galo follow both monogamy & polygamy. Though this paper researcher would seek to know about its institution of marriage and polygamy system and its causes and effect in the society. We have a good deal of literature on history and culture of Arunachal Pradesh and the Galo, yet we do not get a clear picture of its etymology and polygamy practice by galos of arunachal Pradesh. So, study on marriage and prevalent polygamy system was a matter for better understanding of polygamy and Galo marriage in general based on socio-economic, political and religious institution.

Discussion: Among these tribe The Galo tribe is one of the numerically second largest tribe in Arunachal Pradesh concentrated in West Siang District, in some part of East Siang, UpperSiang, Upper Subansiri and few pockets of Itanagar, Lower Dibang Valley, and Changlang district. Doba, Duba, Dobah Abor, Gallong Abor, Gallong Adi represent synonymous name of present Galo, Before 2011 Galo were part of Adi tribe and regarded as sub tribe of Adi community in writing, The Galo have been listed as a scheduled tribe under the name Gallong since 1950 which changed the term Gallong to Galo by parliament Bill on 19 Dec, 2011, to reflecting the actual Galo pronunciation of this name. Most Galos are settled in confluence of yomgo and Subansiri River, Which was bounded by Assam in south, east by East Siang, North East by Upper Siang and North west by Upper Subansiri and west by Lower Subansiri.The Galo tribe traced Their lineage from Abo Tani (fore father) as same stock from Tani group and they are trace to be Tibeto - mongoloid group. In

the early writing of scholar like Sachin Roy, mention may be found that the Galo have migrated from different areas of Tibet. The reason for their migration is presumed by the Experts that in search of fertile land or feuds among themselves or search for animals and other valuable plants brought them to the valley near siyom and sido river. To regulate a society and maintain customary laws a body consist of Elders of the village known as Gam or Gaonbura, is most remarkable aspect of a Galo society. All matters related to community as a whole and individual in particular are decided by village council called keba. There is different council for resolve the cases. They are (1) Dolu Keba (village level keba) (2) Bango keba (Anchal level keba) (3) Bogum Boka keba (Area/District level) The Galo resolve cases pertaining to single family under guidance of head of the family or by Elders, in most of the family some time few cases are resolve amicably without taking cases to keba and is termed as Namra Agom.

The cultural life of Galo are Inter connected with socio- Economic and religions aspect. Galo has their own traditional dresses and ornament. Male always prefer Tango(coat), Tadok (local beads), Adam/Aame (Tibetan plates), Tekom (Tibetan bell), and Roksi/Yoksi (Tibetan sword) which are of mixed copper and Bronze. Female prefer Tadok(Beads) worn as nackles, koji (bronze bangles), Rai Beele (Red crafted thread worn in ear), Uugi (round shape bronze fixed together and used for belt by women), jese-kore (geometrically design black and white skirt) All this was used by both male & female during ritual performance and celebration.

The Galo is clan exogamous group and is called Ali/gotra. All clan groups trace their origin from common Ancestor abo tani. Earlier and now in some areas single clan village exist and maintain strict discipline in matter of marriage. The Galo society is patriarchal who control all executive power regarding to his family and subsequently passed his Authority to the next generation if he has eldest son. Right of inheritance especially the immovable property like land, valuable trees etc. Belongs to male and some movable property like utensils and ornament belongs to the female. Marriage in the Galo community is referred to as Nyime lanam i.e. taking or bringing a wife.

The Galo marriage institution is a complex network of several rituals and practices. The exact origin of marriage is not known. But the existence of institution is traced back to Abo tani (legendary ancestor of Galo). Etymology of marriage institution begin with the first marriage of Takar Taji (A terrestrial being) and sacrifice of ten mithun was regarded as first marriage where 10 mithun was sacrificed and system of sacrificing mithun continue till date based on hepatology and divination by priest.. But the local ballads and ritual song narrate the agreement between Anyi Kari karnya (sister) and achi kara karba (brother) which result achi kara karba to take domestic responsibilities and in antonymous anyi kari karnya should embryoid with child. Along with this many local ballads highlighted the marriage of abo tani with duiy Tami (daughter of mopin, the mother of prosperity). Galo are exogamous group cannot be inter marriage and if any one breaks the clan exogamy then he/she is seen incest and face ostracism and should perform big rituals to free him/herself from incest.. There is no restriction of marriageable age of Galo but it depends on parent under

what age boy and girl be marriage or betrothed. Some time it ranges from infancy to a little above adulthood. The marriage ceremonies become success with help of Nyibu (priest) who perform ritual divination and hepatology for bride and groom.

Monogamy and polygamy is prevalent form of Galo marriage. The practice of monogamy is depends of economic status of individual and family because, a huge amount of bride price is to be paid during marriage which result monogamy in many family as general tendency. This economic consideration led married wife to share sexual relation with brothers of married husband because many of them remain unmarried due to unavailability to pay bride price. Monogamy became primary based for happy life with coparcenary. Along with monogamy polygamy is also prevalent form of Galo marriage. The systems of polygyny, sororal polygyny, non- sororal polygyny are practice by male only to keep intake in-law relation and to have better aspect of livelihood from them. Most important factors leading to the prevalence of this system is perhaps, the economic asset to be get from bride and to maintain intake relation of in- laws and During Early time the need for friendship against feuds. As same the system of polyandry, fraternal polyandry is followed by female of Galo society. The system of cross – cousin marriage, levirate, sororate marriage is prevalent in Galo society. The system of polygamy is prevalent only to enhance economic consideration by girl's parents, to keep coparcenary, in- law relation, enhance family property etc. Now the changing trends of Galo perform polygyny was only for Lust, for socio- political and economic aspect.

Bride price is paid in form of mithun (*Bosfrontalis*), cow, coarse cloth, opo (local rice beer) etc and a system of synonymous terminology of dowry is given in form of Adam/Ame (Tibetan plates), malu (brass bowl) by bride side. All form of Dowry is given to grooms family and kin recommended by groom family. Along with monogamy and polygamy Galo people solemnize by Arrange and love marriage. The system of arranged marriage was followed since immemorial between two family or clan with following social exogamous and endogamous system along with socio-economic status of family. Some time both families arranged child marriage or before birth called Nyeppa Nyida. But this child marriage can led to cause long feuds between two families if any of one refuse to continue the betroth because of changing time and situations. Along with love marriage there is prevalent of elope marriage. This marriage is regarded as bad asset for family and society especially when they were betroth with other party by paying huge bride price. The system of capture marriage was also prevalent in Galo society but with changing trends it's extinct. The Galo marriage system is solemnize with taking care of time, place and group. Luki-lumi (march-April) is said to be best time for marriage ceremony. The Galo marriage system is categorized into two i.e. simply Layap (engagement/betroth) where small ceremony of sacrificing white hen and sticks few feather to girls back hair with adhesive. This is said to be formal acceptance by girl to boy's family as in-laws. And Togu panam (sacrificial of mithun) as per convenience of both party. This institution of Togu can be done by rich or well economy family because, this ceremony involves huge amount of materials and men

power like opo(Beer), mithun, cow, beads, bronze- brass plates, along with huge amount of money and large number of work force.

To solemnize the marriage, firstly choice of bride was done followed by formal proposal from boys side to girls family with help of Lampo (mediator) if he got green signal then with few family members and With few baskets of opo (rice Beer), dry meat, fish and one coarse woollen cloth they arrive for formal proposal. Galos of pugo aalo practice yoksi-talo system where 1 sword and 1 brass plate is carry for formal proposal but this practice is not prevalent in other galo areas. Proposal is regarded as accepted if those things are received by girl's side. So, after few day gap the formalization of marriage time along with amount of bride price to be paid is fixed with consent of both parties and Lampo (go between). On fixed day bride was decorated/dressed with big brass bowl on her head as helmet, big brass plate as shield, brass wristlets, beads, jese-kore and taking her to groom village or home by her family and friends. There are many ceremonies during marriage like Nyida terrik (entertainment obstacle by groom party on way to their village with rhythm of ringing brass plates in their hand). After reaching groom's house the ritual of mithun sacrifices was held by bride side. Earlier only brother of bride do sacrifice mithun with axe. The numbers of mithunis also based on their capacity rather than ritually obligation after divination and hepatology. The sacrifice of mithun is followed by merry making with ponu/dances and songs of folklore. Some elderly women chants the life process of girl from her mother's womb to marriage till heavenly abode is called kaben kabnam. During night the ceremony of exchange and bonding of dowry was held at house of groom from bride side. sometime short argument and discussion happen to solve out the ceremony of exchange bride price. Here brass plates, tongue less bell, brass wristlets, beads, brass bowl And other valuable items was given to grooms party as means of exchange of bride price.

Married Girl remains in house of her husband by follow local taboo for five day and month as per guidance of Nyibu (priest). The married couple some time felt un-satisfaction with each other or due to many reason they divorce with each other. The common complex causes may be Adultery, Attitude of in- law, non acceptance of marriage by any of the couple, OME YOER (shorting star) flee with other lover, loss of identity led to Divorce. And the village council keba finalized the fine after through verifying the cases of divorce. The age old mythology stated that due to marriage there arise inter-tribe feuds in regard to different custom & practice which cannot be accepted by any of two parties. Now the Galo people have different matrimonial relation with other tribe irrespectively of different entity.

Conclusion: The importance of age old marriage system of galo should be preserve through abide by its framed rules and ceremonies with some modifications like stop wasting lots of money,time,materials and endanger mithun (bos frontalis). The system of monogamy and polygamy has its two faced of good and bad but in contrast with galo society the prevalent form of polygamy also become obverse and reverse side of life. The prevalent of polygamy system was enhancing due to socio-economic and political aspect of family. It may be result in enhancing more wealth, coparcenaries, and able to intake family bonding and status along with better relation from in-laws.but at same the institution of polygamy in galo

society result in mental, physical, unsuitable environment for socialization and financial torture. Also poor people reside in rural areas unable to maintain this practice of Togu panam. It also results in bad socialized home. The actual lineal system also becomes undeciphered because of many fathers and as a whole the condition of women becomes worse/deteriorating. As marriage system of Galo expenses huge amount of wealth and men power which can only be performed by rich and well-off people and this should be made little moderate by time and situation with preserving antique materials and endangering mithun (*bos frontalis*) from exchange and sacrificing. Modernization should build up new laws and regulations which may be best for the family and society.

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