From the Desk of   Editor in Chief

It is my great pleasure that   the second volume of Oriya e-folklore journal *Lokaratna* is coming   out during 2009. Lokaratna was   initiated in 2008, and we got very good response from the readers across the world.

Since folklore represent the many voices of   the   society and supports in reframing the epistemic domain of the mankind from its context, and connect with the invisible world as well,   its definition has also to be revised. First , in post modern world,   coexistence of   'many' in the web of global knowledge   again challenges the folklorists whether they would be infatuated with the globalization and allow the folklore to fit in to their objective is a moral question. Second, if folklore is to be seen from the   marginalized point of view representing   many local culture , then how the voices of many is represented in folklore research and support for humanizing the global world is another moral question.

Next   is the issue of ethics of the researchers. If folklore is the marker of 'many 'identities, is it not necessary to use folklore for local identity and maintain the   cultural diversities than to pose a monolingual and mono cultural domain? Therefore, the definition of   folklore in 21st   century needs to be revised. It means we have to ask ourselves, how folklore   can be   useful for social justice or remain as the utopia of the   people in power, where the kings and queens will reign in modern form?

Alan Dundes, the noted Social Anthropologist turned folklorist lamented that   during the later part of 20th century, many   universities   in   Europe   and United States have separated from the main folklore domain and started   the sub- folkloric   discipline like Department of Ethnomusicology, Performance study, Dept. of Music   and Dance, Department of Folk Life Study and department of Cultural Study etc. What   are the reasons of such a degeneration of folklore study in the globe? AS a lay man we should know what folklore study means and how it is helpful to the human development.

Why this happened when Folklore as a discipline influenced for quite a century in the history of humanity studies? Why the discipline slowed down   in many universities? The story   does not   end here.   Take example of   India. In a multicultural and multilingual country like India, how many universities have the departments of multicultural   and multilingual studies? Is this the inefficiency of our cultural leadership   which   failed to influence   the   policy makers? We witness how the   departments of Language and Literature, Socio -linguistics, Buddhists / Jaina Studies, and   Cultural studies are closing down. On the other hand when the Central Universities are opening in the country, not a single university has thought of opening the department of folklore. This clearly indicates

that our folklore scholarship has failed to influence the National and International attraction.

The pity is that while the same language, literature, culture, music and performance etc. are very well alive in our socio -cultural domain as cultural performance, why the academic domain fail to connect it with human / social development ? Is it the replica of our colonial mind set inherited from the academic domain to enjoy folklore as a means of intellectual imperialism? Do the folklore scholarship consider the folk as a partner? We have to examine, is there any village in India, to invite a folklorist to his village and to ask for a study to explore the meaning of their performance and culture. Our esteemed folklorists would certainly agree that the folk have nothing to do with the folklorists, and nonfolk have nothing to do with the folk.

The gap between the university and multiversity is much wider. Researcher of culture fails to educate themselves with the community knowledge. Where the knowledge of the community meets with the knowledge of the researchers? Do the researchers value the community knowledge? Do the researchers share their interpretative meaning of the item of folklore with the informants or the community at large? How the knowledge generated by the scholar does help the community to promote their human knowledge?

These are some ethical questions which need to be solved by the people in academic domain. In some point of time the hierarchy of researcher over the informant must end. Instead of learning from the laboratory the villages and cities of the country should be the laboratory and the persons those who are interviewed should be considered as the practitioner of knowledge of this multiversity.

The University Grant Commission of India recognizes Folklore as a discipline. South India and North East India have some department of folklore research. Many Hindi speaking region of India don't have folklore department as a discipline. Orissa has more than 7 universities, added with a Central University in Koraput. But the study of folklore / multicultural and multilingual education is not taken as a discipline anywhere.

II

The second volume is coming out with more strength and more support from the scholars and professionals from academic domain. Each of them is conscious of the socio – cultural situation and also has the voice of representing the pulse of the power relation between the social forces. The writers have contributed the best of their mind in this volume. Each of them is the authority on their respective discipline. Most of the articles that are contributed are based on empirical evidence and authentic sources, based on field work, followed by keen observation and interpretation.

Thematically this volume can be broadly divided in to two sections ; one is visual and oral performance and another is Ideology and cultural practices in Hindu religion. The cultural context is Odisha.

Dr Armia Mishra has contributed an article drawing the facts from the Kalaynsinghpur Block of Rayagada district of Orissa where the tribal and non-tribal people mutually share their day to day life and this create a composite culture. The cultural performance and symbols that she witnesses do not fit in to the dichotomy of western sociological model like that of great and little tradition, but it is beyond that.

Dr. Jharana Mishra and Dr Sawat Pujari have contributed the structure and function of Desia Naat - a performance of the people of Koraput. The naat represent the social memory of the local culture heroes contested the oppressors. The stories of oppression by the local landlords, and its protest by the local heroes, who are obviously from the lower castes are the themes of Desia naat.

Mr Dilip Padhi, a scholar of Koshali culture in Sambalpur has contributed his empirical essay on ethnography of Dalkhai- a ritual dance. The socio religious significance of Dalkhai base on its space, time, character and association of the community is narrated in the essay. Padhi has witnessed the Dalkhai dance as a resource of human culture that is manifested in dance and music connected with the transcendental word.

Dr Kailash Patnaik has analysed the performance of Dhanuyatra as connection between the myth and Reality. This ritual – drama is performed in a city where the mythic character of Srikrishnakatha is interwoven for a week. The presence of mythic living Gods in a modern city life becomes a stage where the time takes the audience to the remote past and modern space becomes ancient . The characters and events co exists in the socio- cultural context.

Dr Sanjaya Kumar Bag has conducted his research on traditional games of western Odisha. His research is based on children's and adults play that reflect the socio – cultural realities. His empirical study reveals a rare genres of folklore which is represented in the performance of the children and supported by the adults. This knowledge is an inherited practice of culture that is created for the intellectual, emotional and socio- cultural development of the children. But this genre is rarely found in the village children. In view of understanding the parent's role for their children's development role of traditional games can be regenerated. Dr Bag's work is a new area of research in folklore of Odhsia that need to be applied in village and schools. This has been discussed in the National Curriculum Framework -2005 published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi.

The essay on folk Sayings contributed by Dr. Nimai Charan Panda is a blend of experiential knowledge that is generated from the wisdom of the communities. The folk sayings are the essence of the experience and knowledge that is tested by the society and accepted as a social behaviour. Now a Days, it is called every day folklore. African society resolves the social and family conflict through traditional sayings that is inherited from the ancestors. Dr Panda, as one of the experts of folklore of western Odisha has explored the rich knowledge from the community sources and interpreted the deeper meaning of the sayings

which is always relevant for all time to come to analyze the human behaviour.

Dr Anjali Padhi's article on gender role is based on exploration of symbolic representation of oral tales in a given community. She has examined the tales of her locality and interpreted it from the purity and pollution point of view looking at the narratives form gender lens. The cross cultural analysis of the tales available in two different spaces of the country, again reminds of the polygenetic evolution of takes independent to the time and space.

Ms. Priyadarshini Mishra's article is based on gender disparity in Odisha affecting the universalisation of elementary education. She has critically examined the socio- economic and socio- psychological issues that are responsible for development of girls. Examining the gender stereotypes from the oral tradition she observes the issues and challenges of girl's education. Her findings reveal that culture plays a vital role in determining the gender role. In traditional society some negative stereotypes perpetuate the gender discrimination through its cultural practices, where as education as the instrument of liberation foresee the cultural materials from equity point of view where male female have equal role to play.

Dr Umakant Mishra explores the nature of Vajrayana Buddhism in the backdrop of recent exploration and excavation of around 150 Buddhist sites in Orissa. He contests the twin representations of Vajrayana Buddhism as an imitative corrupt on the one hand and as a religion involving regressive practices anchored to the charnel ground. On the other hand he argues from archaeological, iconographic and textual perspective about the religion as instrumental and oriented towards laties. He adduces various instrumental functions of deities, their ritual, etc. He then presents the poser: why and how did Buddhism then decline in Orissa after 1th-13ᵗʰ century AD. "Even if one accepts that the Vaisnava saints, while popularising the Jagannatha cult, appropriated Buddhist idioms or a state-sponsored inclusive Jagannatha cult led to the decline of Buddhism, they do not explain the decline in its entirety." If they were the decisive factors, how did other cults, particularly Saivism, retain its popularity in Orissa?"His argument is that, despite the Lingaraja temple being subject to Vaisnava invasion it continues to remain an important Saiva centre and in some measure contests the imperial Jagannatha cult" but why Buddhism declined in Orissa. Dr Lohia has such a critical question. That is ,why Rama ,Krishna and Siva are worshipped over a period of thousands of years in the subcontinent, where as why Buddha was not in India? I hope the article of Dr Mishra is the best answer to understand the historical realities of the socio – religious hierarchy and the power- patronisation to the religion that was determining the fate of propagation of dharma in the country.

Article of Dr Fanindam Deo on Mahima Dharma is based on counter claim of the rulers "challenging the authority of the temporal Kings". Xxx According to him the land and country is the creation of God and the Mahima followers roam there by the grace of God and not by the mercy of the king." Dr Deo , as a professional of social history has examined the revolutions of the voices of the deprived which was self inspired and challenging the system.Bhima Bhoi as a symbol of such a protest is still remembered by all those who try to understand the power contested.

In his article Dr Chitrasen Pasayat discuss on "Temple legend of Huma" and has examined the myth and ritual of the leaning Temple Huma. He also examined how the Chauhan rule of Sambalpur were patronising the Shiva Temple Huma and were validating their rule. The peculiarity of Huma temple is that it is a leaning temple and it is worshipped by thousand devotees every day.

Mrs. Sharmistha Barik is an independent scholar on folk culture and psychology. Her work is based on supernatural healing from the traditional devices, and relates it to the modern psychiatry. Her treatment on a folk ritual of Jarasingha reveals the inner meaning of the ritual attached to the traditional healing practice of the locality. Any individual irrespective of her disability is not alone. The community role to the mentally retarded children and barren women is treated through a supernatural device- represented in a symbolic ritual. This is the positive psychological sanction that a community has created through a ritual for the disables.

I am thankful to the contributors for their kind contribution to Lokaratna – II. I am thankful to Dr Chitrasen Pasayat, co- editor of this journal, who is all along with me to support and shape the journal. I am also thankful to Director, National Folklore Support Center , Chennai for their enormous support to keep this efforts in Odisha and create a solidarity among the thinkers, writers and the community so that the study of folklore would be more accepted and disseminated in public domain and substantially support the academic domain to revisit folklore to create a bond between the folk , non-folk and folklorist.

Mahendra K Mishra

Studying Cultural Synthesis: Evidence from a Border village in South Orissa

Arima Mishra

Studies on social and cultural change in India are explained largely through models of sanskritization, acculturation and little/great tradition. All these models assume a one-way process of change – from the low to the high castes, from the tribal to the non-tribal (be it Hindus or Christians) and from the little to the great tradition. Focusing more specifically on tribal studies, one does witness two main theoretical strands that dominate the literature. One set of studies highlights the distinctive characteristics of the 'tribal' be its culture, religion, kinship or marriage. Another set of literature talks about the integration of the tribes into the Hindu fold through the processes of sanskritization, accommodation and acculturation (Hinduization, peasantization are also terms used for such processes of integration). Many studies on tribal and non-tribal interaction thus document such processes of integration and assimilation losing sight of the fact that such processes of change are not necessarily unidirectional. Singh and others argue that sanskritization goes along with tribalization and offers ample instances of such processes[1]. Thus a particular culture (or any element of culture) might include elements of both the worlds i.e. the tribal and the non-tribal and hence is essentially syncretic. In this regard, anthropologists are increasingly realizing the problematic of studying local culture or identities as distinct boundaries/entities (Steadly 1999; Bhargava 1989). Cultures or even any element of culture as Bhargava argues 'may be more like clusters of heterogeneous elements with varying origins' (Ibid).

The paper in this context highlights cultural synthesis and the process of cultural exchange between the tribal and the non-tribal in Kalyansighpur block of Rayagada district in South Orissa. It unfolds elements of cultural exchange through plays or locally known as '*nata*' performed by the tribal in non-tribal localities during the supposedly 'Hindu' festivals. As the subsequent analysis would show, Hindu religion does not exist as a separate distinct category because many of these religious festivals discussed in this paper are less 'classical' and display blurring of religiosity, identities and distinctiveness. The tribal Kandha identify themselves with these festivals both as insiders and outsiders. As insiders, there is a conscious attempt to participate and create a space for themselves

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[1] Singh 1985, Pasayat 1993; 1998; 2003

in terms of meaning and significance and at another level they are outsiders because of their strong identity with the distinct 'tribal religion' and hence none of these festivals take place in the tribal villages.

The focus on *nata* has enabled me to look at culture through the social actors who are consciously and actively engaged in the process of exchange than the classical anthropological approach of viewing culture merely as an expressive text to be interpreted.[2] However, even while the entry point for analysis is the *nata,* the paper discusses the linguistic, economic and political dimensions of the process of exchange. Consequently, the paper does not merely contribute to the study of tribal and non-tribal cultural exchange but also unearths other levels of exchange, i.e. among linguistic groups and different castes. I wish to emphasize that the non-tribal is not a homogenous category and the tribal would have different terms of relationship with different castes in the same village. For instance, in the study area, for the tribal Kandha, the Brahmins are the landlords, the *saukars* with whom they work as tenants, the telugu *kumutis* (a baniya caste) are increasingly the role models for entrepreneurship, the paikas (a warrior caste) serve as their masters (*gurus*) who train them to perform plays and the *damba* (the scheduled caste) who are treated as inferior yet play an important role in several trading activities. Any study on tribal-non-tribal interaction and consequent process of change must take into account such diverse and multiplex relationships.

The paper falls into three sections. The first section journeys through Kalayansinghpur village in Rayagada district that sets the context for the study of cultural synthesis. The second section dwells on the plays highlighting who performs, what is being performed, how and when is it being performed and its implication for the study of cultural synthesis. The third section draws on the inferences and analyzes these in the context of the problematic of the traditional models of cultural change.

Kalyansinghpur: A confluence of cultures

Kalyansinghpur block is in the district of Rayagada (The Kings' Fort) in South Orissa and is around 40 kilometers from the district head quarters. Rayagada that became a separate district in 1992 borders the state of Andhra Pradesh. It has an area of 7,584. 7 square Km. with a population of 8, 23,000 (2001 Census) of which 4, 61,209 constitute the tribal population. The majority of the tribal are Kandha found mainly in blocks of Gunupur, Kalayansingpur, Kashipur and Bishamcuttack. Kalayansinghpur is the block headquarters

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2 Bowen (1995) discusses the increasing emphasis on the role of social actors in defining and interpreting culture.

and comprises of around 5,000 households. Rayagada flanks it on the one hand and Lanjigarh (Kalahandi district) on the other. The southwest of the village has the sacred Devgiri , 'a round hill of bare, smooth rock cave containing the lingam, pools of water and an inscription which is undecipherable' (Koraput District Gazetter 1966). The most popular Shivaratri festival is observed here which witnesses a weeklong cultural program. K.Singpur contains remains of an old fort and is surrounded on three sides by the river Nagavali. While the river has made this area agriculturally fertile, its connectivity to other areas is poor. There is no transportation to many of the nearby Kandha villages; however this has not restricted the tribal and non- tribal interaction. People uninterruptedly walk back and forth through the river.

The physical distribution of different categories of households in K.Singhpur roughly corresponds to the caste groups. The Brahmins are concentrated in *Tripathy sahi*. They have migrated to the place last 70-80 years back. In fact it is said that the then King of Jeypore (feudatory chief known as Maharaja), of which K.Singhpur was formerly a part of and was the chief village, invited the Brahmins from Ganjam district and made them settle here to take care of both cultivation and worship of temples. Such process of immigration of advanced cultivators was a necessity which served the purposes of political legitimacy of the kings (who were the Oriyas from the Kshatriya caste) through fulfilling the increased demand for revenue to the colonial government that called for more settled cultivation. Such process of immigration of Oriya castes in different parts of Orissa that accompanied a simultaneous process of attenuation of rights of the tribal over land and forest has been well documented[3]. The social formation during this period witnessed a three tier structure, i.e., a) the feudatory chief (maharaja) b) rajas/zamindars c) tribal and non-tribal cultivators.

The residents in the Brahmins locality say they are the third generation of families in Singpur. A number of these Brahmins served in the King's court. The Brahmins who hail originally from Ganjam take pride in the purity of the brahminness by calling themselves *Utkali* Brahmins. They claim superiority from other Brahmins like *Halua* (with surnames Panda, Padhi, Pal etc.) because of the latter's original association with the plough. *Halua* literally means one who holds the plough. While the *Utkali* Brahmins are essentially agriculturists, they get their lands cultivated by farm servants. Holding the plough itself by a Brahmin is considered ritually impure. The cleavage between these two sections of Brahmins continues to be relevant even today. Inter-marriages between these two sections are discouraged and looked down upon. While the *Halua* can serve as priests in temples,

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3 Deo 1989, Mishra 1999,

the Utkali Brahmins claim the exclusive rights of serving the God on special occasions like Rath Yatra. There has been major dispute in the past on such claims between these two sections of Brahmins on serving Lord Jagganath and carrying his chariot. One such instance was narrated when the *Halua* Brahmins forcibly organized Rath Jatra and pulled the chariot and soon after this incident (within one year), three members of one of the families met with accidents and died. This was narrated to emphasize Lord Jagganath's disapproval of being served by the *Halua* and hence reinforcing the supremacy of *Utkali* Brahmins. All the Brahmin families are agriculturists and own around 70-80 acres of land in and around Singhpur.

The *paikas* in the p*aika sahi* are a warrior caste. *Paika* is derived from the word *padatika* meaning infantry. They take pride being the 'descendants of the military caste who maintained the prestige of the Gajapati Kings of Orissa in battles 15th and 16th centuries' (Koraput District Gazzetters 1944). The *Paika* were also in the service of the maharajas. Many of the *paika* women used to be the kept of kings. They also maintained the tradition of dance, *gettinatya* etc. at the Kings court. They hold their head high and accept food only from the Brahmins (Koraput District Gazzetter 1966; Ganjam district Gazzetter 1995). The Brahmins however do not accept water or food from the *Paika*. In Singhpur, the *Paika* are not economically well off. They work on the land belonging to the Brahmins on a sharecropping basis. They are also engaged in hunting and doing contract labour etc.

The Telugu speaking baniya caste of *Kumuti* in K.Singhpur are concentrated in *bajar sahi* (in and around the main market). They belong to the baniya caste called *kumutis*. They are a business community. They are engaged in agriculture but mostly commercialized agriculture. They own rice mills. They are successful businessmen and have recently built fancy, huge houses. In addition, they are also into other small-scale businesses like saree shops, grocery shops. They also make poppadum for sale. For the latter work, they engage the labour of the *Kandha* women. Singhpur, like many parts of Ganjam, has a distinct influence of Telugu in several ways. The Oriya dialect spoken in Ganjam including Singhpur has a Telugu accent; the language delivery is faster and sharp unlike the Oriya spoken in West and East Orissa. Even the *Kandha* are fluent in speaking and understanding Telugu. They admit that the kuvi, their mother tongue has a Telugu influence. They clarified 'the *Kandha* in the nearby district are the same as us but the dialogue delivery is different. Our speech is faster and sharper (*kati kati*)'.   It is said that many Oriya words used in this part of Orissa are long obsolete in the refined Oriya

language spoken in Eastern Orissa. This is due to the influence of both kuvi and Telugu language. Many words like *rami* (mixed), *saman* (adequate, appropriate), *haii* (yes, okay), dhangada (young) used in everyday conversation trace their origins to either of these languages. The older generation of Oriyas including the Brahmins speaks and writes *Telugu* fluently, while the present generation manages to speak Telugu as the latter manages speaking in Oriya. Telugu channels are quite popular among the Oriya castes. Food habits also exhibit a distinct influence of Telugu speaking people.

Damba, the scheduled caste had always been living in minority in all Kandha villages. In Singhpur, they reside in the outskirts of the block. The relationships between the Kandha and *Damba* are complex and different shades of this relation have been discussed by the author elsewhere (Mishra 2008). The *Damba* who are an untouchable caste are looked down upon by all the castes including the Kandha. *Dambas* everywhere primarily have a negative term of reference. Their original caste name is *pana* who are found in Ganjam district in south Orissa. They continued to be referred abusively during the British period. The negative term of reference continues till date. The *Dambas* are the traditional drummers, a positive image that is perhaps underplayed. The drumbeat, which is popularly known as *Ganda Baja*, is played on different occasions, i.e., marriages, death ceremonies. However this service is utilized by the Oriya castes and never by the Kandha, who take pride in their own musical traditions. The *Damba* apart from trading vegetables, fruits, lentils (which they buy from either the Dongria Kandha and/or other caste groups) in the main market mostly engage themselves in making country liquor and selling it to the Kandha. Of late, the *damba* women are employed in Anganwadi centers and schools.

Besides these, Singhpur has localities comprising of government officers in the block colony, Gaudas in *gauda sahi,* potters in the *Kumbhar sahi* etc. The government officers in the block colony are a floating population who visit places according to their workplace. Majority of them are from eastern Orissa. Gaudas are ttraditionally a herdsmen caste and enjoy a ritually higher status. They are one of the few lower castes from which water and food are acceptable to the Brahmins. They say that they are descended from the Yadav tribe where Lord Krishna was born[4]. They are engaged in small scale cultivation on their own lands.

The Kandha, a few of them, around 50-60 households are in K.Singhpur itself in the *Kandha sahi* and majority live in surrounding Kandha villages with minority *damba*. The Kandha supposedly the original inhabitants of these villages identify themselves as

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4 Bolangir District Gazetteer,1968

'adivasi'. The religion of the Kandha revolves around earth Goddess and other representations of *thakurani* (female deity). These deities are propitiated on different occasions to ensure good harvest, healthy life, protection from deadly diseases like chicken pox, cholera and others unnatural deaths. All these religious ceremonies involve sacrifices of animals. Buffalo sacrifice also known as *podh puja* marks the climax of all the religious ceremonies in its meaning, significance and intensity of the ritual. It reinforces the Kandha's belongingness to mother earth thus reasserting the Kandha's exclusive identity. They claim their origin from the mother Earth (*dharni*) and treat others particularly the *damba* as outsiders. Each Kandha village has a sacred space marked for the mother earth. The *jani* (priest), *disari* (astrologer, counseller) and *bejuni* (medicine man, healer) play important roles in all religious ceremonies.

The Kandhas in and around the villages of Singhpur practice settled cultivation. They share a close relationship with the Brahmins; the latter are their landlords, masters, patrons and moneylenders. Singhpur also has few Dongria Kandhas living close to the Niamgiri Hills. They are relatively (compared to the Kutia Kandha in Singhpur) isolated. They are agriculturists but cultivate only on the forestland known as 'dongar'. Unlike the Kutia Kandhas, their interaction with the plains is limited only to selling of vegetables, lentils, and turmeric in the daily market. They also come down during the popular Shivratri festival where many marriages (marriage by capture) solemnize. It is interesting to see the difference between the Kutia and the Dongria Kandhas. The Kutia Kandha claim superiority due to the Dongria Kandhas' limited interaction with the Oriyas and Telugus, their costumes, skills in cultivation etc. They also feel that Dongria Kandha are wild and can be harmful. Dongria priests are however invited to do the worship during Buffalo Sacrifice because they feel that they have the expertise in chanting the hymns to the Earth Goddess. A buffalo is usually sacrificed by a Dongria Kandha. Brahmin landlords are invited for ensuring that nothing untoward happens (anticipating trouble from the Dongria Kandha). Dongria males are usually seen with an axe on the shoulder. They consider themselves economically inferior and say 'we are hungry people'.

The Brahmins however have a cordial relationship with the Dongria Kandha who are treated with amusement but also with respect. The relationship is translated on many occasions through ritual friendship (*mita, sangata*). Such ritual friendship witnesses a series of obligation through exchange of items like rice, turmeric, bananas, sweet potatoes etc.

Cultural synthesis through *natas*

While cultural synthesis can be studied through several elements of culture, this paper treats *nata* as the entry point to reflect on the cultural exchange between the tribal and non-tribal and also among several castes. *Nata* is derived from the word *natya,* which conveys meanings of dance, music and dramatics. While *Natya, gananatya, lokanatya, Jatra* might share a lot of historical, literary features with its counterpart in west Bengal and Bihar, *natas* as they are perceived and performed in Singhpur are different in many ways and some of these differences will be explored during the course of the discussion. *Natas* might form a part of *Jatra* but are less organized, performed on a lesser scale and are less professional. Unlike *Jatra* troupes, the *nata* troupes would not move very far and usually perform either in the same village or at the most nearby village. At the same time, *Natas* like *jatra* are necessarily performed on religious occasions. In fact they are an integral part of many local religious festivals like Ghataparba, Shivratri, Dussehra in Singhpur.

Nata has a dubious character. It has elements of both sacred and profane. It is sacred because it centers around religious occasions, performed on highly marked sacred places (temples, temporarily erect sacred spaces). Its sacred character also draws from the fact that the themes are often drawn from Hindu *puranas* and mythology apart from folk tales and stories. At the same time, it is disassociated from the religious festival as its sole purpose is entertainment and hence is performed after all the formalities of the festival are completed and the ritual is over. Thus while during the *puja*, the usual principles of purity and pollution are applicable (where these are necessary), all these are at the same time relaxed though *nata.* Sadler (1969) decodes the form and meaning of festival and argues that all festivals have a spirit of both religious and irreligious. One must note here that *nata* is not the festival itself but accompanies the festival without which the festival is incomplete yet the festival itself is usually associated with the religious only. There is a thin yet important boundary between the two. The following section deliberates on who performs, what is being performed, how it is performed and when it is being performed. While the anthropology of performative art focuses on the details of the performance as a text, significance of the context in which such performances take place is usually ignored. I argue that the occasions in which these *natas* are performed are equally important because these festivals themselves are essentially syncretic and help contextualizing the *natas.*

Natas are performed by organized groups of relatively younger boys. The *Paikas* in Singhpur are the original performers of *natas*. They monopolize this art through their traditional service (of performing the same) to the then ruling families. Of late, during the

last five-six years, the tribal Kandha have been performing *natas* in Singhpur. The Kandha of a particular village form a *nata* group and they are trained for months together by their master (*guru*) who is usually a *paika*. All *nata* groups look for the best masters and get trained. Some masters are more reputed than others. Hence, the *nata* groups go to distant villages to be trained better. These masters (*gurus)* though not highly educated, are well versed in music, rhythm (*chanda*) rhymes and presentation. The *nata* group unlike the *Jatra* artistes in many parts of eastern Orissa[5] necessarily belongs to one caste or tribe and preferably from one village. Most of these *nata* groups are not merely known by their caste/tribe but also village, hence goes the names as, Ambodala *nata* party (village name), *patbandhia* (village name), *paikas* (caste name) etc. Females are usually not a part of the party but in very few cases, the group includes smaller girls (11-14). Otherwise as in many traditions of *natya*, men master the art of being women. The males performing female roles in fact take pride in that because it is an art that is challenging. During my stay, on the day of the *nata* during Dussehra, one of the members of the Kandha *nata* group proudly introduced himself to me saying 'I am the one who will be the *heronie* (heroine) today'.

The themes as has been said earlier are drawn from Hindu mythology, puranas and also folk tales. Thus the titles of *natas* are *Draupadi Haran* (Abduction of Draupadi), *Sita Haran* (Abduction of Sita), *Haravati haran* (Abduction of Haravati), the story of Ram, *Bhutkeli* (story revolving around ghosts) etc. One of the residents on my questioning about the themes said that 'most of these *natas* are abduction stories'. The male bias through the performers (who are mostly males) and the themes (women are projected vulnerable through these abduction stories) is striking in *natas*. These stories deviate from the classic text of Valmiki's Ramayan and conforms more to the version of Ramayan handed down by Oriya poets at different periods of time. Stories from such literary texts are further converted to performative texts as these stories need to be presented in a poetic style with proper rhymes and rhythms. Deviations or reinterpretations of original epics through performance by the tribal or otherwise are common (Kapp 1989). Such texts are available in the local market, which are utilized by the *gurus*. Each play, however, has smaller episodes of humor (through jokes or others), suspense, which are drawn from the folk tales and not necessarily a part of the original themes. These smaller episodes are performed by special characters that are known as *dwari* (a comedian), alkam[6] (a smaller

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5 Chhotaray 2002

6 This word is essentially a Telugu word used in Oriya.

character who wears special costumes like a wild animal or representing a particular caste depending on what is being depicted on the stage). The Kandha as some of the Brahmin residents explained to me memorize the exact content and style of dialogue delivery, which is a combination of Sanskrit language with rustic language. They charge rupees Rs.2000 for the performance from the local organizing committee in most cases who are the Brahmins. The Kandha who also work as tenants with the Brahmins negotiate for time and space for their training. The Brahmins invite these Kandhas to perform in their localities during Dusshera.

The artistes in a poetic style perform the *natas* and hence music and songs are important elements. The musical instruments used are the tabla, mrindagam, cymbals and harmonium (none of these are tribal instruments). A separate group who sits in one corner of the stage while the artistes perform on the center stage plays these instruments. Thus the training of the Kandhas includes dramatics, songs as well as instrumental music; most of these are non-tribal instruments. The *natas* are performed in an interactive style, exhibiting perfect coordination between these two groups on the stage and the audience. The performance is far from being a monologue. Different lines are sung in chorus (with both the groups on the stage) with loud music of the instruments. To prevent monotony and boredom, special characters like *dwari* and *alkam* perform smaller episodes of comics, suspense that includes a variety of themes. The audience waits for these characters to come and responds to these scenes through claps and laughter. Such response also is related to the familiarity of these themes, which are mostly part of the everyday life. *Natas* are performed usually throughout the night. The audience comprises of people from all castes in the village and nearby villages.

When are these natas performed? *Natas* would accompany a particular religious festival. These festivals are *ghatapraba*, *shivratri*, *dussehra* that are essentially syncretic.

Ghata parba is celebrated in the months of April-May. This festival is meant to worship the village deity. This is usually performed by the *paikas*. While there is no written document available, *Ghataparba* has its origin in the tribal religion, the corollary of which continues to be significant among the Kandhas even today. The original tribal festival of worshipping village deity is known as *Ma bulani* or worship of *thakurani* (deity). Such process of aryanisation of many tribal deities in Koraput and Ganjam district has been documented (Rath 1989). The theme of *Ghataparba* is similar to the tribal festival of *Ma baulani* who is worshipped for the welfare of the people, specifically seeking protection from chicken pox and other deadly diseases. *Ghataparba* witnesses an interesting blending of tribal and Hindu religion. The festival lasts for a period of seven days. On the

first day, a temporary shade (known as *ghanta ghara*) is made for the worship of the deity. The sword, representative of the deity (one might note here that sword is symbolic of Goddess durga, more generally *shakti* in Hindu religion) is brought in from the temple Thakurani and installed at the feet of the deity (which is made of clay specifically for the purpose of this festival). The *Paika* priest initiated the worship of the deity with vermilion, sandalwood, flowers and, sacred brass utensils (huge pots). These pots would be carried (with the deity, sandalwood and flowers) by a group of 4-5 girls (pre-puberty) who go around the village and collect whatever offerings (usually rice, raw vegetables) are made by each household irrespective of caste. As and when the girls walk through the different localities within the village, women from each household come out, wash the feet of the girls and give the offerings. On the last day, these offerings (these offering would have been collected at the temple complex) would be thrown at the outskirts of the village. This is symbolic of taking out the evils of the diseases from the villages and ensuring good health of its residents. The deity visits the village through the *priest* who gets possessed with the spirit and dances continuously in a state of trance. The original elements of the tribal religion are apparent through the descending of the deity through the spirit possessor, the worship of the deity in a thatched hut, and further worship of the deity by non-brahmin priest. Hindu elements of sword, feet representative of the deity are equally marked.   Apart from the synthesis of tribal and Hindu religion, *Ghataparba* is also significant as it brings together different castes, linguistic groups where caste hierarchy succumbs to the sanctity of the ritual that is performed by non-brahmins. While worship of village deity is done in other parts of Orissa, say for instance Western Orissa, the procedure is very different. It is dominated by the Brahmins and excludes the lower castes.

Shivaratri, which is known as Shivtari *jatra* is very popular in Kalayansighgpur. God Shiva is worshipped at the sacred hilly rocky cave known as Devgiri. Many popular folk tales, mostly oral in nature, center on the origin of Devgiri and related themes. Some of these form part of the *natas*. The popularity and purity of Devgiri draws from the fact that the white lingam with five faces (known as Panchamukhi Lingam) has evolved originally through the rock. In the spirit of the true Hindu religion, a Brahmin priest worships the lingam. Menstruating women are strictly forbidden to visit the lingam. On the day of the Shivratri, all the people from K.Singhpur and nearby villages across castes and tribe assemble for the ritual. Compared to *ghataparba*, this is celebrated at a much larger scale and with great fanfare that includes both sections of the Kandha from the nearby villages both plains and hills. The ritual is followed by a weeklong celebration, known as *jatra* that includes series of varieties of cultural programs. Many stalls are placed which sells variety

of items ranging from household, eateries, children's toys etc. Businessmen (Telugu and others) from Rayagada district, Bisamcuttack and some from Singhpur put up these stalls. The cultural programs which starts on the second day witnesses *natas,* films, (Oriya, Hindi, Telugu), record dance (also known as naked dance), tribal dance mainly by the Dongria Kandha. These are performed at night. It is interesting to see how the *jatra* exhibits different traditions, the so-called little and great, traditional and modern, classic and folk, all under the same roof. These are played simultaneously to ensure that the stalls continuously receive streams of visitors and the latter are free to subtle between programs. The Dongria Kandha utilizes this auspicious occasion to solemnize marriages (marriage by capture). While more detailed research on the syncretic character of the *jatra* through the different cultural programs is however needed, one could argue that the characterization of Shivaratri as essentially a Hindu festival turns a blind eye to such process of cultural exchange that this festival accompanies.

Dusshera or Dassara as is known among the Kandha is well known in the whole belt of central and east India. Dusshera is celebrated with a lot of enthusiasm and with the spirit of togetherness. This is one festival when all the married daughters visit their parent's place particularly among the upper castes. It witnesses a series of ceremonial exchanges (cloth, sweets) between families. The festival lasts for four days. On the first day that is known as *sashti*, young Brahmin men (in silk dhotis) from the Tripathy Sahi collect sacred water from the river and start the *puja* in the Durga temple which is situated in the Brahmin locality itself. The temple does not have any anthropomorphic images. The temple is considered the original *shakti peetha* where Goddess durga is symbolized through a stone and a sword. It is said that the Brahmins who were initially entrusted with the task (by the kings) of managing the temple, are not merely expected to do regular worship but it needs to be done with utmost sincerity and highest devotion. Any negligence, relaxation would invite the wrath of the Goddess. The destructive potential of the deity is well acknowledged. Instances were narrated when a former Brahmin priest was punished for such relaxation. Originally human beings were sacrificed which is replaced by sacrifice of goats. Goats are sacrificed on the day of the *astami (*the third day) and the *prasad* is distributed among the households. The temple has a lot of open space and has a well-defined cemented boundary from all the sides that marks off the sacred space. The place is well decorated during the four days with fancy lights, loud speakers with popular folk songs and also Bollywood songs. On the day of the dussehra (fourth day) the effigy of Ravana would be burnt at the market place which witnesses large number of people from the village and nearby Kandha villages. On the same day, *nata* is perfomed in the evening.

This marks the completion of the ritual and the festival. The Kandha people perform *nata* in the Durga temple complex.

Implications

How best then one can study the local culture/s in Kalyansighpur? Does the evidence suggest a process of sanskritization (through the tribal kandhas's participation in *natas*) or acculturation? The analysis clearly suggests the limitations of these models for a variety of reasons. The first, while many studies have discussed about the tribal playing Ramayana either arguing it as a case of sankirtization or even syncretism, what is noticeable in this case is that the tribal kandhas never perform *nata* in their own village, or in the Kandha locality in Singhpur itself. Hence, it is not a blanket emulation of a Sanskrit culture. What needs to be emphasized is the role of the actors (Brahmins, Paikas, Telugus) and the Kandha who actively participate in this process of exchange. The Brahmins inviting the Kandha to perform in their locality in a highly marked sacred space and the *Paika* training them to perform are clear indications of such deliberate process of cultural exchange. For the tribal Kandha, the festival of buffalo sacrifice, worship of *ma baluani* remains the most significant rituals that characterize 'their' religion. They involve the non-tribal (particularly the Brahmin sahukars and the Telugu Kumutis) through asking for contributions (money), and witnessing the ritual. The Brahmin landlords are invited specifically to ensure the smooth functioning of the festival.

Secondly, while at one level, the tribal kandhas do absorb elements of Hindu religion through *natas*, practicing of dowry system (along with bride price) etc, this does not make them more Hindus and less tribal. They proudly identify themselves as *adivasi* (only on probing, they say they are kandhs). The political undertone of the identity of *adivasi* needs to be taken note of. The Kandha particularly the plain Kandha are highly politically aware of their status. Most of them live in Government aided colonies (named as Indira Awas), avail of government loans and subsidies. The local M.L.A and the M.Ps are from Kandha community. Such increasing political attention strains the traditional patron-client relationship that has existed between the Brahmins and the kandhas. One of the Brahmin patrons thus, lamented 'they are no more the same kandhas. Earlier, we simply had to show our finger, the work used to be done. Now, we need to go personally and request them to come and do the work. They have their own networks, before we know what the latest Government scheme is they know it. They are getting smarter'. A younger member of the Brahmin patron families added` earlier they used to call us *babu* (sir), these

days they call us *bhaina* (elder brother). Kandha are big people these days. They are getting highly educated'. Most of the Kandha work on a sharecropping basis on the Brahmins' land (the capital provided by the Brahmins and the latter labour and ultimately the produce is divided in equal proportion). The tribal Kandha are increasingly getting influenced by the Telugu Kumutis' spirit of entrepreneurship and are exploring commercial agriculture. Such influence is part of the global capital culture. Thus one of the young Brahmin man observes `the kandhas these days wear watches, have T.V.s in each house, borrow V.C.R to watch films, ride cycles, wear t-shirts and drink coke'. Such changes are neither a characteristic of Brahmin nor Telugu culture but increasing globalization. While globalization and its impact on local cultures needs to be researched further, what is clearly visible is that K.Singhpur exhibits a confluence of cultures of Telugus, Oriyas and tribal both when seen culture as text (the historical material available on the cultural synthesis) and culture through the actors/agencies. Neither the tribal nor the non-tribal can be looked upon as fixed identities or neatly separated cultures, each has elements of both.

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Desia Naat of Koraput : An Expression of their Cultural Artifacts

Jharana Mishra

Saswat Kumar Pujari

Inhabited by over a billion diverse racial groups, India presents a colourful assortment of Folk culture, best portrayed through the unique art of Folk Theatre. Variously known as the *Jatra* (Bengal, Orissa and Eastern Bihar), *Tamasha* (Maharashtra), *Nautanki* (Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Punjab), *Bhavai* (Gujarat), *Yakshagana* (Karnataka), *and Therubuttu* (Tamil Nadu), folk theatre reaches out to a large cross-section of the population. The decline of Sanskrit Drama saw the emergence of the Folk Theatre in various regional languages from the 14th and through the 19th century. Maintaining the basic conventions like, stage preliminaries, the *Sutradhara* (the narrator), the V*idushak* opening prayer song etc pertaining to its predecessor, it achieved a quick mass appeal.

The actors perform in the open with gangways attached to the make-shift stage. This helps immensely since the actors frequently converse with the audience in the course of the play. Audience participation is an essential part of Indian Folk theatre. The stage is often a huge empty space which the actors deftly manipulate accordingly with their dialogues and symbolic gestures. Loud music, dance, elaborate use of make-up, masks, and singing chorus are its hallmarks marking its difference from Modern theatre. Folk plays provide a valuable insight into the local dialect, dress, attitude, humour and wit of the regions in which they are staged. Although mythological and medieval romances are their main thrust, folk theatre acquires a timeless appeal by improvising with symbolic relevance to the current socio-political happenings.

Forms of folk drama rooted in the villages could give new impetus to modern Indian theatre Indian folk theatre is a composite art with a composite set of skills practised by artists who stage a total performance through the creation of verbal, spatial and visual patterns. Folk theatre forms such as *Jatra* from Bengal, *Tamasha* from Maharashtra, *Nautanki* from Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Punjab, *Bhavai* from Gujarat, *Yakshagana* from Karnataka, *Therukuttu* from Tamil Nadu and *Palla, Daskathia, Danda Nata, Desia Nata, Ghoda Naach,* and *Chahu Naach* of Orissa feature a wide range of make-up, song, dance, mime, improvised repartee, slapstick or stylized acting, and even acrobatics.

These folk theatres give a glimpse of styles of speech, music, dance, dress, behaviour, humour, legend, proverb and wit in their respective regions. The actors, who

are often very talented performers, speak directly to the audience - audience participation is the hallmark of Indian folk theatre - and often improvises. They are apt to mix up several moods and disciplines, from time to time bursting into song and dancing with gusto when the chorus sings their dialogue. The result is a form of drama which springs from an exhilarating freedom of expression and provides the villagers with a complete emotional experience in an environment in which ideas can be effortlessly communicated.

Folk forms have their own stage conventions and production styles. The scenography is nonrealistic and the stage is usually a bare space manipulated by the actors through the use of stylized and symbolic make-up and by codified gait, choreographic acting, and symbolic hand gestures. Change of location is denoted by movement and by word of mouth rather than by change of set and decor.

Folk theatre has inherited many of the classical conventions of Sanskrit theatre. The classical *Sutradhar* or narrator is used in several vernacular theatres, and the classical *Vidushak* appears under different names in different regions as Konangi, Komali, or Joothan Mian. Other stock characters are found in different regions.

India's genius still lies in its dance-dramas, which have a unique form based on centuries of unbroken tradition. There are very few professional theatre companies in the whole of India, but thousands of amateur productions are staged every year by organized groups. Out of this intense experimental activity, the Indians hope a contemporary national theatre will emerge, influenced by Western techniques but distinctly Indian in flavour. Many centres for theatrical training have been established in the 20th century. Among the most important are the National School of Drama and the Asian Theatre Institute in New Delhi, *Sangeet Natak Akademi* (National Academy of Music, Dance, and Drama) in New Delhi, and the National Institute for the Performing Arts in Bombay. *Bharatiya Natya Sangh*, the union of all Indian theatre groups, was founded in 1949 and is centered in New Delhi. Affiliated with UNESCO's branch of the International Theatre Institute, it organizes drama festivals and seminars, as well as serving as a centre for information.

ORISSA is a colourful region, with the blue ocean lapping its eastern shore in foaming tides, and the land studded with verdant green hills, at times rising almost from the sea; its, rivers meander weaving an intricate pattern of water mosaics in the coastal delta, while the plateaus and hill-slopes present a gigantic chessboard mosaic of yellow

and green in the rainy season. Orissa, famous for its fine arts, folk painting on walls, *patta-chitra* (painting on cloth), *chhow* dance, *Odissi* music and *Odissi* dance, and architecture and sculpture (*Konarka, Lingaraj, Jagannath* and *Khiching* temples, etc.) has justly been called *Utkala*, the land of exquisite arts.

The official language of the state, spoken by the majority of the people is Oriya. Oriya belongs to the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European language family. It is closely related to Bengali and Assamese. A few tribal languages belonging to the Dravidian and *Munda* language families are still spoken by the Adivasis (original inhabitants) of the state. The state has a very opulent cultural heritage, one of the richest in India, and the capital city of Bhubaneswar is known for the exquisite temples that dot its landscape. The famous classical dance form, Odissi originated in Odisha. Contemporary Orissa has a proud cultural heritage that arose due to the intermingling of three great religious traditions - Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The culture of the Adivasis (the original inhabitants of India) is an integral part of modern Odishan heritage. Orissa has a population of 32 million. About 87% of the population lives in the villages and one third of the rural population does not own any land other than homesteads. The aborigines or tribes, known as *Adivasis*, constitute 24% of the population, belonging to 62 different ethnic communities. Their traditional way of life centers on the forest ecosystem. Over the years, collection of forest produce, hunting and persuasion of other traditional ways of living have become increasingly difficult, influencing socio-cultural life. Issues with modernization and industrial activities, such as mining, construction of dams, roads, railways have grown to become a concern affecting their very traditional livelihood and have displaced the *Adivasi* communities.

Folk theatre which is an integral part of folk culture elucidates the richness of tribal cultural life. Performed by the folk artist and nourished by the folk artist it has a unique tradition and expression. With no intellectual overtones it is performed in a very lucid manner which affects the heart and the soul. Truth, justice and religious values are the main themes which are also the core values of their culture. *Desia Nata* which is a beautiful blend of classical and traditional form is not mere entertainment but a sacred ritual for the performers where the *natyaguru* has a very significant role. The dance and music in *Desia Nata* is very loud and expressive. The utterance, modulation and accent of the local dialect make it more vibrant.

Objectives:

- ى Do the folk plays influence the behaviour and life style of the community?

- ى How far this form of expression has enriched the composite culture of tribals of Koraput?

- ى Does this performance give expression to their inner feelings, their joys and sorrows, their natural affection and passion and their appreciation of beauty in nature and in man?

- ى Is the style of traditional presentation of *Desia Nata* on the wane?

Methodology

- ٮ Data were collected through observation, interview and case study methods from the local groups and artists of Borigumma, Kundura and Kotpad blocks of Koraput district of Orissa

Origin

Rama Chandra Deva, IV, the king of Jeypore started this trend when he wrote an Oriya play following a Sanskrit play and performed by the local people. Plays written by him are:

1. *Kumbhasura Baddha*
2. *Indrajeet Baddha*

Bikram Dev Verma followed the trend and started an association named "*JAGAN MITRA*". Plays written by him are:

1. *Banasura Baddha*
2. *Jalandhara Banddha*
3. *Radha Madhaba*
4. *Kundamala*

Initially only mythological themes were performed but gradually social, imaginary and historical themes are depicted through the *Desia Nata*.

- Some of the important mythological plays are:

  - *Rabana Baddha*

  - *Kansa Baddha*

  - *Sita Chori*

- Some of the important social plays are:

  - *Peta Parasu*

- *Dhoba Kumuti*

- *Jhalaki Rama*

- *Damu Khangar*

- Some of the important imaginary plays are:

  - *Sadhava Raja*

  - *Nagabali*

  - *Banakuma*

- Some of the historical plays are:

  - *Laxman Nayak*

  - *Birsa Munda*

  - *Bharata Chhada*

  –

Stage Craft and Performance

The Third Theater, the epic theater and classical theater is based on certain rules and regulations and has certain fixed boundaries. The style of presentation is predictable. But in *Desia Nata* the performance is extra ordinary, bold, independent & dynamic. The script writer, Director, Artists and Audience, all are native and depict folk culture.

The performance zone or the stage is stepped. For the main character, there is a chair in one side of the stage. At the other side, the musician, the *Natyaguru* / *Sandhi* and the *Palia* (Chorus Party) sit. The *Duari* sits with the audience and he is free to move anywhere. Without any written script he acts as a bridge between the performer and the audience. After worshipping the stage, there is *Ganesh Bandana*; a masked *Ganesh* usually comes to the stage. The Sutradhar or narrator sings praising the lord and seeking his blessings for the smooth conduct of the play. *Desia Nata* has established a closer relationship between the theater and the people. It projects the social aspirations, ways of life, cultural patterns and problems of the people.

- Usually after the harvest, the rehearsal starts at the *AKHADA GHAR*

- It takes four to six months to complete the play

- The performers use local dialect, so the modulation and accent is unique

- The *Sutradhar* (Narrator) sings praising lord *Ganesh*

- The *Natyaguru* seeks the blessing of the Lord for the smooth conduct of the play

- It is not mere entertainment for the performers but a sacred ritual.

Lighting and Music

Desia Nata is a beautiful blend of classical and traditional form.

- Initially, Lighting was done with *Mashaal, Dihudi & lantern*

- Now a days, Petromax, generators & modern lights are used

- Initially, Musical instruments like *ginni, mardala, mahuri, tidibidi*, and flute were used

- Now a days, harmonium, Casio, *dholak* etc are used

Key Players

There are many performers but the major players in *Desia Nata* are:

- *Natyaguru*

- *Sandhi*

- *Sutradhar*

- *Duari*

Each of them has some definite roles to play and the success of the play solely depends on their performance.

Natyaguru

- He is an outsider

- Beside writing and directing, he sometimes also acts as *Sutradhar* and *Sandhi*

- In the beginning of the play, he interacts with the masked Ganesh and seeks his blessing

- He is a multi-talented person who is highly respected among the actors

Sandhi

- He is a person with musical knowledge

- He sings the theme, and the situation of the play

- He narrates the sequence of entry of different characters

- Usually the *Natyaguru* plays this role

Sutradhar

- He is the narrator who acts as a coordinating character between the audience and the performer

- From the beginning till the end, he has an important role to play

Duari

- He can be compared with the classical *Vidushak*

- He is without any written script

- He acts as a bridge between the performer and audience

- He sits with the audience and free to move anywhere and interfere with the sequence

Audience

Audiences in the *Desia Nata* are the people from the village, where it is staged and the neighbouring villages. People come with their children, straw mats, and snacks, making themselves feel at home. At these performances there is a constant inflow and outflow of spectators. Some go to sleep, asking their neighbours to awaken them for favourite scenes. Stalls selling betel leaves, peanuts, and spicy fried things, adorned with flowers and incense and lighted by oil lamps, surround the open-air arena. The clown, an essential character in every folk play, the *Duari* in case of *Desia Nata* comments on the audience and contemporary events. Zealous spectators offer donations and gifts in appreciation of their favourite actor or dancer, who receives them in the middle of the performance and thanks the donor by singing or dancing a particular piece of his choice. The audience thus constantly throws sparks to the performer, who throws them back. People laugh, weep, sigh, or suddenly fall silent during a moving scene.

Concluding Remarks….
- The performances in *Desia Nata* are refreshingly novel in their appeal.

- Cosmic or symbolic battles between the forces of good and evil, mythological stories and legendary romantic tales are sprinkled with commentary on current social or political conditions.

- One reason for the survival of folk plays, in fact, has been their capacity to gradually adapt old themes to changing ways of life and satirize the latest local happenings.

- With the disintegration of the traditional culture and the growing impact of industrial society, however, folk theatre is gradually losing its artistic character and vitality.

- Urban influences have a weapon of matchless power - the TV and cinema - whose shadow is falling over village drama.

- Many theatre persons realize that theatre forms borrowed from the West are inadequate to project the social aspirations, ways of life, cultural patterns and problems of the people of India as a whole. Since, like theatre artists all over the world, they are interested in establishing a closer relationship between the theatre and the people, there is every reason why they should make greater use of the living tradition of indigenous theatre which has enriched their composite culture and given expression to their inner feelings, their joys and sorrows and their natural affection and passion.

- Some leading theatre groups in Calcutta, Bombay and Delhi are involved in experiments of this kind, but they are relatively few. Ultimately, the outcome of their work will depend on the resilience of the theatre form itself to withstand and coexist with the powerful invasion of commercial cinema and television sitcoms and serials.

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Maharaja Versus Mahaprabhu : An Introduction to Dhanuyatra

Kailash Pattanaik

Dhanujatra is a performance of Odisha that transports the participants, on lookers and all alike into a mythical atmosphere for eleven days and nights as well. *Jatra* is one of the most popular forms of performances in Bengal and Odisha. The genesis of the *Jatra* is traced by the folklorists in 15th -16th century through the Bhakti movement[1].

For the whole period of performance, Bargarh town becomes the mythical Mathura Nagari, Local River Jeera is considered as river Jamuna and the village Ambapalli, situated on the bank of river Jeera is identified with Gokul or Gopa.

Some of the basic characteristics *of Jatra* are as follows:
1.   A *Jatra* is completed in one night.
2.   The stage is fixed, either at the ground level or at a raised platform.
3.   Stock characters like *vidusaka* or clown and /or *sutradhara* or narrator cum stage manager are a must.
4.   An actor does not bear his dramatic persona during day time.
5.   Purvaranga or preliminaries precede the main performance.

Even though Dhanujatra has the word *Jatra* in it, it does not imbibe the basic characteristics of *Jatra,* as such. At times, it is followed verbatim whereas at other, there are interesting deviations from the accepted norms or rules of *Jatra.*

In the month of *Pusha* (or *Pousa* winter, the first half of January), the sleepy town Bargarh of Odisha, turns festive.

During **'**Dhanujatra' or 'Kansa Badha' (The killing of Kansa) performance takes place for 11days, both day and night.

In a *Jatra*, usually everything is enacted at one particular place, which we call *mancha* or stage. In this performance the whole town becomes stage. The uniqueness of the festival lies in the fact that all the episodes of this *Jatra* enacted in different parts of the town making it the largest open air theatre in the world.

The plot of the *Jatra* is mythical and has adopted from the *Srimad Bhagabat*. It begins with the marriage of Devaki with Basudeba. Kansa, the brother of Devaki, becomes the King of Mathura, by dethroning his own father Ugrasena. He puts his own sister Debaki and Brother-in-law Basudeba in prison, as he comes to know that their eighth child will kill him.

Different episodes are enacted at different places in the regime. So, Dhanujatra does not confine itself to a fixed static or dead stage, as in case of other *Jatra*'s; it rather becomes the stage for the world at large.

For that, it is said that, world's biggest 'open air theatre' held in the tiny town called Bargarh in the West Odisha.

Radhakrishna Temple of Bargarh becomes the prison of Kansa, the math of Benubaba becomes the house of Nanda, Kaliya-dalana and Nabakeli or Nouka-leela are

performed in two big ponds, in Ambedkar square of Bargarh Gopis request Krishna not to proceed to Mathura, Krishna meets Sudama in George high school complex and cures Kubuja or the hunchbacked lady near the Kali temple. The play moves sequentially day after day and the audience moves from locale to locale.

To elaborate it further, let me explain that, in this dramatic spectacle, the court of the King Kansa is the main place of performance in Mathura. It is a stage, in the true sense of the word. It is a 10 feet high stage. Every evening, episodes related to King Kansa are enacted here. Durbar scenes include dancing and singing, sword fighting, wrestling and various conspiracies and planning. This is the major venue of the *Jatra.*

The play moves sequentially day after day and the audience moves from locale to locale. Here it is analogues to the Ramleela of Ramnagar of Benars in which "the performance troupe does not enact all the scenes in the same arena every night. If the action moves from a place to a jungle from Ayodhya to Janakpuri, from an ascetic's hut to Ravana's golden castle, the acting area changes. Different scenes are enacted at different places[2].

According to scholars, the web site of District Administration says; origin of "Dhanu Jatra" is obscure. Some say it was very popular in the 18th century while others argue that is started in the 16th century. It is also believed that the *Jatra* was restarted during the British regime.

According to my informant, Shri Sadananda Panigrahi, one of the senior organizers, the *Jatra* was started in 1948.Late Chandramani Dash and some others went to Mathura and got the idea and after their return they started the *Jatra*. In its preliminary stage, along with the Chandramani Dash, there were many in the organization. Chakradhara Nayak (alias Kangali Nayak), Krushna Chandra Sahu, Tila Pradhan, Rushava Kar, Lakha Pradhan, Aparti Panigrahi, Brindaban Bishi, Bipin Sharaf, Gopal Sharaf, Munu Barik are to name a few.

Simultaneously, Shadashiba Sarangi was the organizer of Ambapali or Gopapura. Then, the *Jatra* was discontinued in1953-54 for some years. In 1961 again it was started with the initiative of Sadananda Panigrahi.

The mega affair Dhanujatra was in the initial days continued for 15 days. During Chinese invasion in 1962, it was short cut to 12 days. In 1964, when there was an all Odisha students strike, the *Jatra* performance reduced to 11 days, which is continuing till these days. In 1974-75, there was a drought. The then Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi came to see the situation. Because of the natural calamity, the *Jatra* continued for seven days.

Parallel enactment is a significant feature of this *Jatra*. From the second day, parallel performances take place in both Bargarh town and Ambapalli epitomizing Mathura and Gokul respectively. Krishna is born in the prison on the second day of the *jatra*. Basudeb exchanges the child with the Nanda's newborn baby in Gokul. In this way, parallel performances go on both in Mathura and Gokul.

The timing of the enactment is prefixed by the organizers. It is 2 pm to 9 pm for Mathura and 1 pm to 6 pm for Gokul.

When Kansa is busy with his city tour (during day time) and perpetrating atrocities,

injustice and conspiracy (during the evening hours); Krishna enjoys his childhood as a romantic lad by doing various *leelas* either with Gopies (or the milkmaids) or by killing demons, sent by Kansa to kill him. In a single day both type of performances are enacted in a parallel fashion at different places. This is a unique feature of the *Jatra*.

No *Vidushaka* or clown is seen in the Dhanujatra, which is usually a must in Jatras. Kansa's body language, dialogue and action create humor. On the other hand, Madhumangala, the main accomplice of the Krishna, creates humor with the help of other Gwalas or milkmen. These compensate the absence of *Vidusaka*.

The ordinary persons who act as the mythological characters, or become historical heroes or the legendary Saints or Bhaktas in a *Jatra* in the evening, lead the lives of ordinary persons during day time. The dramatic personas of those individuals are shed with the end of the *Jatra*.

On the contrary, the persons who act as the main characters of Dhanujatra are exceptions in this regard. They are identified as the characters they enact for the whole period of performance, both in the evenings and during daytime.

For instance, Devendra Sahu, the Assistant Sub Inspector of police, who acts as King Kansa for those eleven days, his role as Kansa does not end with the end of the evening performance. He rather moves around in the town, during day time, riding an elephant and followed by his courtiers and musicians. People of all classes address him as 'Maharaja'.

Though the people know that he is only an actor, they still want to identify themselves as his *prajas* or subjects. During the process of documentation, I have seen, how sincerely the people offer their homage to the 'King'. People shower the petals of flowers from the rooftops of their houses as a gesture of heartfelt reception. During the journey once, the King punished a driver for rash driving. As such, the actor actually lives through his dramatic persona through out the period of performance comprising eleven days in Dhanujatra.

It is not in case of Kansa only. The two boys who act as Krishna and Balaram are, then, the students of class VII and VIII respectively. They both are real brothers and belong to the village Ambapalli, the village which transforms into Gokul during the Dhanujatra. They are also treated as real Krishna and Balarama. People address Krishna as *Mahapuru*, the root of which is *Mahaprabhu* in Sanskrit.

In this context, it is significant to note that the villagers of Ambapalli do not take non-vegetarian food from the day Krishna born till the end of the *Jatra.* They do not disengage themselves from this mega-affair. They identify themselves as the real residents of Gokul, nay they become them.

When Krishna and Balram leave Gokul and proceed to Mathura, that means, to Bargarh town, which 3Km. away from their village Ambapalli, the whole village virtually weeps. The villagers fear that they may not be returning to their village in future. Almost all

the houses are adorned with <u>Purnakumbha</u> or <u>Kalasa</u>. When the boys pass through the houses, the women wash their feet, pay respect and offer them sweets and present them one or two rupee coin

Krishna Balarama   Krishna

It is worth mentioning that generally in the folk performances there is an ample scope to touch upon or interpret or comment or satirize the issues of contemporary relevance with the sole purpose to convey some specific message. For instance, in Raslila, the main companion to Srikrishna, 'Mansukh', the clown character, may comment on transport problem or rising prices in a contemporary situation[3]. Similarly in Dhanujatra, though the subject is mythical, its treatment / enactment has the potential to imbue it with contemporary relevance.

During the process of my documentation, a senior postal department officer once visited the court of the Kansa. Kansa showed his dissatisfaction over the poor performance of the department. He complained that, he had written several letters to the Nanda for sending the boys to Mathura to see the Dhanujatra, but he could guess that the letters were not reaching Nanda, other wise he could not have dared to disobey. As a result of it, he had send Akrura, to bring the boys. Upon hearing this, the officer of the postal department said humbly that, the king might have forgotten to write the Pin code of Gokul. That's why this situation arisen. The king then wanted to know, what the Pin code was. Then the officer explained all about it. It is needless to say that, the message was communicated to the spectators.

One yet another day, two officer of LIC visited the court. They requested Kansa to order his people to buy LIC policies. Simultaneously one of them explained about one of their new projects called 'Grama Bima', under which 25 per cent of total assured money would be spent on the development of the village. The King asked them how many policies they had sold both in Mathura and Gokul. The Officer provided the data. Kansa then advised them not to sell any policy in Gokul, because very soon he is going to destroy the whole village. And in that case the corporation would bear a good amount of loss.

In this *Jatra*, *Maharaj* Kansa and *Mahapuru* Krishna get equal importance, both on the "stage" as well as the hearts of the masses. The power drunken demon King Kansa might be a villain in the epics, but in this performance, he is a hero. He receives love and respect of people. It's really amazing and needs special attention. The love for the king Kansa is so deep that the lane of the actor Judhisthir Sathpally, (who used to enact the role of Kansa from 1961 to till his death in 1982) was known as "Kansa Maharaja's gali" or the *lane of the Kansa Maharaja.*

Both the Maharaja and *Mahapuru* are presented in different ways. Maharaja Kansa utters dialogue, commands people, laughs in a dreaded way. He enters the arena on a high note with the sounding of drums and other musical instruments. He enters with stylized walking and his voice and gestures are commanding. His acting is melodramatic.

On the contrary, *Mahapuru* Krishna comes in a grace full manner. He does not utter any dialogue. Madhumangala sings for him or speaks on behalf of him. *Mahapuru's* acting and appearances are realistic. He is always calm and charismatic.

According to Sadananda Panigrahi, the selection of main protagonist is very tuff. The first Kansa was Bundi Ratha of Degaon. Second Kansa was Bhimasen Tripathy. Judhistir Sathpathy, the actor who acted the role of Kansa from 1961, popularized the character and was very famous.

In the year 1983, there were five actors acted as Kansa during the performance and were discarded for their poor performances. In 1984, the present actor of Kansa character, Devendra Pradhan alias 'Eli' got selected through an interview and till today he is acting the Kansa role and became popular and famous like his predecessor.

'Krishnaleela' and 'Dadhinata' are two major performing genra of Odisha, which are Krishna centered. Kansa comes occasionally; if at all the plot demand so. Krishnaleela is operatic and Dadhinata is theatric in nature. But only in Dhanujatra; both Kansa and Krishna get equal importance. In no other performances of Odisha, this unique feature prevails.

The impact of this *jatra* is tremendous in Odisha in general and Bargarh in particular. Chief Minister of the state and other ministers make it a mandatory to pay their homage to King Kansa every year. Some times King Kansa even enquires about the progress of any particular development project related to Bargarh, his capital city, to them. Interestingly, some of the newspapers publish the general news of Bargarh mentioning it as 'Mathuranagari' during the *Jatra* period. Some Buses put the nameplate 'Mathuranagri' instead of Bargarh in their desk board. Some sweet stalls prepare a special king of sweet, during these days called 'Mathuracake" in the *Mela* or fair, which is now a days an added attraction of Dhanujatra.

Dhanujatra is a unique cultural asset of Odisha. A serious study can give it, its proper place in the pan-Indian arena. Present paper is a humble starting in this regard.

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Cultural Aspects of Traditional Games of *West Odisha*:

Dr. Sanjaya Kumar Bag

Introduction

Culture is a way of life of a group of people, the knowledge, behaviors, beliefs, values, and attitudes, symbols that they accept generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to next. Culture includes a group's skills, knowledge, aesthetics; religion, concept of universe, material objects.

Western Orissa or the western part of *Orissa* (*Kalahandi*, *Bolangir*, *Sambalpur*, *Sonepur*, *Sundergarh*, and *Athamallik* block of *Dhenkanal* district) as a culture area different from the rest part of the state geographically, historically, and linguistically; known for its unique and rich cultural heritage. It has distinctive social institutions, festivals, and verbal as well as non-verbal folkloric traditions.

Western Orissa has a wonderful exclusive tradition of games, which can be not only played by skilled or sports person, but also every member of family during leisure. Even in the modern age of technology it has more then hundred numbers of games performed by the man, women, and children of all age groups.[1] These games are varied from competitive games, games of imitation to games based on rites and rituals. Traditional games of *Western Orissa* also have a great value of festivity. In this paper I endeavor to discuss how traditional games are the products of society or culture and how they enriched the heritage of a society.

Traditional Games as a Cultural Expression

As a significant part of culture, traditional games reflect the day today life like preparing food items, collecting firewood, and other food products from forest, selling and buying of agricultural products, different traditional working culture, rites rituals, and festivity of a given social community.   There are number of games in *Western Orissa* which succinctly depict the cultural profile of this area.

Expression of day today life in Traditional Games

Traditional games of *Western Orissa* have a great space for depiction of day today activities. The game *Paen Anba* (bringing water) that is performed by both boys and girls of five to eight years age group, visualize the culinary tradition of *Western Orissa*. Participants are taking water from pond or river and prepare different traditional food items symbolically. They use different leaves and stems for preparing this food items. *Mahulbeta*[2] (collecting *Mahua* or *Madhuca Indica*) and *Kathjiba* (collecting firewood) represents the day-to-day work of collecting firewood and *Mahua* flower of forest dwelling tribal people of *Western Orissa*. The game *Kathjiba*, or *Tangia Chhane Dia*[3] (give me an axe) also a game that narrates the nuptial tradition. The nuptial

tradition, particularly *Kaniamaga* (proposal of marriage) also found in the game *Bahadia Samdhen*.[4] The game *Machhasare Ghina* (buy some fish)[5] represents the selling of fish by fisher women moving around the *Para* (settlements) in *Western Orissa*.

The *Hatbika*[6] visualizes the picture of traditional *Hat* (market), selling of agricultural product of *Western Orissa*. Here both boys and girls make an enactment of market system in two groups what they have experienced in their locality. The selling and buying of different vegetables, food items, ornaments, apparels, utensils, and other things are performed symbolically, which they have seen in their near by *Hat*. Similarly the games *Purathela*[7] and *Bhara Tangen*[8] also represent various traditional working culture of *Western Orissa*.

Games as an expression of Rites and Rituals

Rites and rituals are a conveyance of a social order that punctuate the lives of individuals and communities: rites of passage, seasonal rites and rituals marking the stages of life from birth to death and which have an existential and social meaning. They are at the centre of many popular social events on important dates in the cultural calendar and at key moments in the life of the community such as births, marriages or religious ceremonies. Many traditional Games of *Western Orissa* are associated with rites and rituals. Some of them named as *Gedi* or *Ghudel*[9], *Ganthi Ganana*[10], *Jam Bhut*[11], *Mudi Luken*[12], and *Gaur Badi*[13.]

Gedi played by all adolescent, young, and middle-aged, is a totally ritual based game. Performance of this game started from *Ratha Yatra*, the second day of bright fortnight of *Ashadh* and continues till new moon of *Bhadrab*. New moon of *Bhadrab*, which is also known as *Dansara* or *Belsara* festival in *Western Orissa*,[14] has a great socio-cultural importance. All the participants destroy their *Gedi* and buried under the white-aunt hole that known as *Duker Kheda*. *Duker* is known as a deity of diseases, and behind this performance they believed that in this way they drive out the deity *Duker* and all the diseases from their village.

Mudi Luken (hiding finger ring by bride and bridegroom)*,* which is performed by both girls and boys between five to seven age groups, represent the nuptial tradition of *Western Orissa*. This game played by two participants, one player hides the ring (this may be straw piece, or piece of an earthen pot) under the pile of dust, and another player have to find out this. If he finds that then he will win.

Ganthi Ganana (counting the node of bamboo) is a game performed during wedding ceremony by *Kharia*[15] tribes of *Sundergarh* district. In this game one of the *Sian* (senior and respectable person) asked every body to tell the name of the nine-node of bamboo stick, which represents the names their *Gotra* (lineage). *Sian* asked everybody one by one, he wins who tells each name correctly. If *Sian* asked someone and he failed to answer it, then he may be punished, which depends on *Sian*.

Performance of this game is not just for enjoyment, but also to introduce knowledge about their *gotra* to their next generation.

The game *Jam Bhut,* which is played by seven to twelve years of boys only, is a game based on tribal beliefs of witchcraft. One player does the acting as he is being witch crafted, and other players' calls up a *Gunia* (witch doctor) to treat him. The *Gunia* also performed by the participants. They do all the formalities and paraphernalia related to witchcraft, what they have experienced in their locality.

Players of *Western Orissa* also believe in scarifying animals as they have experienced in various *Puja* and festival, they imitate the enactment and performed in *Gharbanaba* (making house) game. They catch a butterfly or some insects and sacrificed this one in their symbolic performance of *Puja* at the time of playing.

Gaur Badi is a game performed by only *Magadha Gauda*[16] (milkman) community in their *Kirikachhen* Puja. This performance starts after harvesting from the tenth day of bright fortnight of *Kartika*, and ends in tenth day of bright fortnight of *Magha*. The performers start from their village and performed within their *pali/panchura*[17] villages only. This is a martial performance; they played their tricks with help of a five feet deigned stick. It is believed to be sacred that if every body should play in the name of their *Kirikachhen* deity; it would bring happiness and peace in life for the whole year.

Performance of Games at the time of Festivity

Festive occasions encompass rich and diverse elements of both intangible and tangible cultural heritage. They play a principal role in most societies as expressions of cultural identity through the collective values and beliefs that they represent. In the festive mood of *Nuakhai*[18]*, Dashara*[19] and *Belsara* people of *Western Orissa* organized numbers of games like *Hanichopen*[20]*, Thenga Pelen*[21]*,* and *Khutighicha/ Badighicha*[22]. *Humo/ Bauli/ Boria*[23] also played by young girls in various festive occasions of *Western Orissa*. Though *Bana Badi* or *Gaur Badi* is a ritual based game it is also performed at various festive occasions. It is interesting that *Bati* (marbles), *and Luklukani* (hide and seek) played by *Barabhai Bhima* in *Balijatra*[24].

Influence of culture in Traditional Games

Influence of local and contemporary culture in traditional games of *Western Orissa* is inevitable. The performers are influenced by folk theater as well as mass media, and contemporary material culture.

Influence of Folk Theater

Traditional Games of *Western Orissa* more or little influenced by folk theatre; they performed what they have seen in theatrical performance of folk drama. The games *Ram Ravan Judhha, Gada Judhha* are result of folk theater. Players what they have seen in the night they performed it at their playing time. But it is interesting to note

that when the players of traditional games perform this *Ram Ravan Judhha,* and *Gada Judhha* it is not necessary that *Rama* or *Bhima* will always win; *Ravan* and *Duryodhan* also display their victory.

Influence of Mass Media

Mass Media also have a great influence on the traditional games of *Western Orissa*. Television serial like *Shaktiman* has very deeply influenced the traditional games. The players of rurban setup has acquainted with this superman and his magical works as they have easily access to the television. They have added a character '*Shaktiman*' in some games like *Ghar Banaba*, and *Rajamantri*[25]. Participants of *Hadbando*[26] are also designating their friends as *Shaktiman* for his excellent performance. No doubt this is a recent development and influence of mass media.

Influence of Material Culture

Because of the influence of mass media, the rurban area has little bit influenced by material culture. Now a day the cold drinks are not a dream for children of *Western Orissa*. And the players make use for their games from it. They used cold drinks cap as equipments for the games *Billa/Pati/Ghacha*[27]. They also use printed side of matchbox as equipments in these games, where they generally used broken piece of earthen pot.

In *Ghar Banaba* game when they demand dowry for their son's marriage, they are asking for television, disk player, motorbike and other modern gadgets, which was not occurred before. And interesting is when they are playing *Bagchhel*[28], or *Dhadi-ki-Dhukdi*[29] in hot afternoon of summer season they challenged other party, "I will definitely defeat you, would you give me a cold drink?" or "If you are defeated, you have to give me a cold drink!" Punishment and fine for defeated group or player is a part of traditional game performance, but the cold drink as fine is certainly due to the influence of modern culture.

Impacts of Traditional Games in Western Orissa's Culture

Like any other artifact traditional games also has an incredible impact in a given culture. Traditional games are not only for physical strength, it is also a means for mass entertainment. Impulsive exchange of lore element of given community is also done in between the performance. Performance of traditional games creates bridge of unity between   playgroups as well as in society. The players also learn successful application of skill and imitative knowledge from traditional games; and this knowledge transmitted from one generation to next generation. In this way the traditional games has a great educative value, it is like an educational institution where the performers learns the behavior, friendship, and cooperation. After all traditional games are a link between past and present of a given society.

Exchange of Lore Element

Performance of traditional games as '*event*' creates a significant space for exchange of lore element. The traditional knowledge about games, as well as cultural knowledge of a given society have been exchanged between participants, and handed down generation to generation. Players of traditional games get a familiar idea about their environment, house patterns, agricultural practices, food habits, and culinary tradition through this game performance. And this knowledge exchanged with one individual to other in the context of enactment.

Successful Application of Skill and Imitative Knowledge

Players of traditional games learn successful application of skill and knowledge through the performance of game. They make their own equipments successfully, what are required for their performance. The games like *Ghar Banaba*[30], *Chasbas*[31] (agricultural works), and *Bahadia Samdhen* are just an imitation of their sociofact. The repeated performance of these games make them skilled; help them when they get the chance in a large social set up they do it successfully.

Unity among Participants

Performance of traditional games creates a strong sense of unity and mutual understanding between the players in a given community. The playgroups though they are not fixed, meet frequently, performed the games, and being united after the performance also. This unity is not just a playgroup's unity, it continues for life long, which helps them for leading a peaceful social life in future.

Traditional games as a platform of Education

Participants of traditional games of *Western Orissa* learn socialization, friendship, co-operation, unity, discipline, and different social rule regulations from the performance of game. They learn how to make house, and do household activities from the game *Gharbanaba*, and *Bahadia Samdhen*. They also get a familiar idea about agriculture form the game *Chasbas*. The game *Patral Handakhel*[32] is a unique game to accustom the players with their local environments. The participants collect a good knowledge about flora and fauna while performing this game. And it is no doubt that the traditional games are like an educational institution for children and young of a particular cultural community.

Transmission of Knowledge

In traditional games players are actively constructing knowledge through their experiences of games, they actively learn about the game world – the entire system of interaction. Players come to a game with   prior knowledge and experience about the real and game world, about games they have played before and so on. They then attempt to apply this knowledge to the new situation, provided by the game. Players

construct mental pictures, or models, in their head based on the patterns they discover during play. Through performance of games, players build up a mental model, or image, of the game system and how it plays; in essence how it works. They can then use these models to predict what would happen, experiment to find out what actually did happen, and got reflected *on* the outcome.

Tiger and goat (indoor game)

Thengapelen (outdoor game)

Linking the Past with Present

Traditional games of *Western Orissa* are conduit between past and the present social set up. Traditional games as remnants of cultural past provides much information about cultural practices, and depicts the picture of contemporary society as a mirror of culture. One can trace the traditional nuptial activities from the games *Mudiluken* as well as see the influence of modernization, as the participants are using the cold drink caps as equipments for the games *Ghacha*, and *Pati*.

Traditional Games in changing Cultural Context

We know that culture is dynamic, culture changes; people discard, modify, retain in a proportion of changing social scenario. The members at any given time cannot by themselves define the boundaries of social experience. So long as new generations are being born into society, social context will remain a dynamic process not a static setting. In a dynamic socio-cultural scenario the artifact indecisively adopt all the influence comes its way. The traditional games of *Western Orissa* also adopted many things in changing context.

Changes in Equipments

Keeping view in changing cultural scenario the choice of equipments of players of traditional games of *Western Orissa* has also changed in some extent. Now cold drinks cap, and matchbox cover are used as a substitute of *Pati* in *Ghacha*, which is generally played by pieces of earthen pot. The ready-made marbles also used in *Bati* in

which generally players using own hand made marbles from stone, though they prefer the old one for better performance. Sponge balls are in used *Pitu*, in which players are generally, use balls made of turn and discarded cloth pieces.

Changes in Performance

Changes in performance have been noticed in Traditional games of *Western Orissa* in changing cultural scenario. Rules regulations have been changed and modified in the light of contemporary cultural set up, though traditional games are not restricted to any rule regulation and always flexible in nature. The game *Bhalu Maten*[33], which is performed by unmarried girls and one young boy in the evening time, organized under the *Tiken* (?) or *Muhua* tree only; now a day due to extinction of these trees, the participants organized these games under any other trees. Performers of this game are also restricted in some tribal set up because of sanskritization, their parents some times feel that it is not good for their girls to play with one young man in a remote places.

Changes in Character

The players of *Western Orissa* are not far away from modern mass culture. The influences of visual media have a great impact in the traditional games of *Western Orissa*. Players like to use celebrity's name and names of popular items in their games. At the time of group division, the players arrange themselves in pairs by identifying some pseudonym and come to the *gad* (captain) to choose them. Here they use celebrity's name from bollywood and cricket world. Even they add some characters for their games from small and big screen. They add new characters to their games like *Saktiman*, *Harry Potter* in *Chor Pulish*, and *Raja Mantri* games. These changes are no doubt due to influence of mass media, which is certainly unavoidable.

Developing New Games

Changing socio-cultural scenario has created a good space for developing new games for the players of traditional games in *Western Orissa*. Like *Chor Pulish*, *Raja Mantri*, they have created a game '*Sarapanch*', experiencing the three tiers *Panchayatiraj* system. They have added other characters like *Chairman*, *B.D. O.*, and *Member* (ward member) to this game also. They have also developed string play *Khat Pinjra* (cot and birdcage) as they have seen it in television. They quickly design cot, net, basket, tree, peacock, and birdcage by operating string.

Conclusion

It is a fact that players of *Western Orissa* developing new games whatever may be the influence; but it is also a bitter truth that most of the traditional games of *Western Orissa* are in imminent danger of disappearance and extinction, due to the various

tendencies of globalization and modernization. There are   many games lost due to lack of proper promotion, even older people also not able to recall that exactly.

Considering traditional games as a significant part of the cultural heritage, they should be documented, protected, revitalized, and promoted. Traditional games have important values towards the overall development of the individual human being and one's community. Traditional games do not demand any substantial material and financial resources or investments, but they can contribute to better inter-cultural understanding and mutual tolerance, both within and among the communities of nation, which will contribute to build a culture of peace.

Not in *Western Orissa* in all over the world, the traditional games contribute mutual understanding and peaceful behavior to a life of different cultural and social groups, communities and nations. They are means of their identity. Therefore the significance of traditional games and identity must be strengthened and the opportunities for practicing them must be held open for all human beings especially for young people, the physically challenged and disadvantaged groups in the society.

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1. I have collected one hundred ten games from *Western Orissa* at the time of my field work for doctoral programme.

2. *Mahulbeta* basically a narrative based game performed by two groups of girls between five to seven years age group, goes on like this- one group asked another group to have for collecting *Mahua* with them- "Go to collect *Mahua* friends, go to collect *Mahua*

Make yours hair friends, make yours hair

Put up your dress friend, put up your dress."

Then another group adds-

"Have water rice friend, have water rice

We have to come back soon friends; we have to come back soon.

Go to collect *Mahua* friends, go to collect *Mahua*"

And the game goes on, narrating various day today activities of their daily life.

3. The game *Tangia Chhane Dia*, played by two groups, both boys and girls of five to seven years age groups. One playing group asked the other one when they asked for an axe, that, "why you are wanted this?" And they replied, "We would collect bamboo." Another group again asked, "What would you do with that bamboo?" Similarly they replied, "We would prepare a *jhapi* (basket)?" The first group asked again, "What you would do with that *jhapi*?" And reply of other group is, "we would keep our *chhidapata* (apparels)." The first group asked again, "Why you need basketful apparels." Other group replied that, "we would marry our son." And the question answer continues-

"What your son's name?"

-*Kadel kera*!

-What is your daughter-in-law's name?

-*Maenabati*… and at the end both group clapped their hands and said, *udijare maenabati kadel kera ramjham* (fly Mainabati, Ramjham Kadel Kera).

4. *Bahadia Samdhen* (give me daughter-in-law) is a narrative based game, played by girls in two groups. One group acts as bride and other for bridegroom. First bridegroom's group come and asked for bride- "Give daughter-in-law *samdhen*, give daughter-in-law." Then brides' group countered, "Our daughter does not how to cook and serve, how can we give our daughter?" Again bridegroom's group said, "We would teach her how to cook and serve, *samdhen* give daughter-in-law." Again bides' group countered, "Our daughter does not know how to take care household, how can we give our daughter?" Bridegroom's group replied that, "We will the take care of household, *samdhen* daughter-in-law." Like this they describe all the household activities done by women, dance in a rhythmic way slightly bending forward moving one-step ahead and one step back.

5. The game *Machhasare Ghina* (buy some fish) performed by girls in two groups. One player of a group acts as a fisherwomen and another one from other group acts as a *Sahuani* or the purchaser. Fisherwomen come and try to sale her fish, she said- "Buy some fish sister, buy some fish." *Sahuani* asked, "What type of fish do you have?" Fisherwomen replied again, "*Balia* (trout; wallagoniatu) fish my sister *Balia* fish." Then *Sahuani* takes her rhythm- "*tor balia machhke alang talang/ sagbengan libur tibur chhik chhika kelun go bai, chhik chhika kelun*." Keep away your *Balia* my brinjal and green leafs are fine, let's come and play. Fisherwomen narrate again with describing different types of fish's names, and thus game carry on.

6. *Hatbika* is a game where players learn selling and buying the foods and other traditional home needs. *Main* or 'It' act as *Pasarabali* (seller women), she asked various vegetables, food grains, fruits, and other daily needs. Other players come to her and start bargaining, after these formalities *Pasarabali* asked, "Then what you would do with this?" They replied what they have to do with that. Again she asked, "What you would do with the rest thing?" They said that, "we will through away for crow and birds!" and immediately thrown all the things of *Pasarabali* and run away from there. 'It' followed them he/she will 'It' whom she touches first.

7. *Purathela* is a game of physical exercise. *Puara* is a traditional container for preserving paddy made up of straw, which contains one *Pastama*/ four *Puti* (approximately 320kg.). In this game players roll down a big stone, and the player who covers maximum distance is the winner.

8. Like *Purathela* this game also imitate agricultural activities. *Bhara* (sheaf of paddy) and *Tangen* mean to lift up. In this game players tries to lift up a heavy stone.

9. *Ghudel* or *Gedi* is known as *Ranapa* in coastal *Orissa*. Players ride over *Gedi* (equipments specially made for the performance) and walk, dance, and play other tricks.

10. Every node of the bamboo represents the name of their *gotra*, i. e. *Soreng*(stone), *Kerketa*(one kind of bird), *Dung Dung*(one kind of fish), *Kullu*(tortoise), *Bab*(paddy), *Bilung*(salt), *Tete*(one kind of bird), *Tapo*(smallest bird), and *Kidoo*(tiger).

11. This game is an imitation of traditional belief of witchcraft of *Western Orissa*.

12. *Mudiluken* (hiding ring) it is an imitative play of *Mudiluken*, which is performed by bride and bridegrooms at the wedding ceremony. The couples are asked to take off their rings and put them in a pot of clear water. As the rings settle to the bottom, the couples are asked to churn the water vigorously. After the churning people look anxiously at the water, as the water and the ring are going to the answer the

question. If the bride's ring lags behind in the swirling water she will be an obedient wife. If it is the opposite, the groom will be obedient to his wife.

13. Game played with stick by Cattle-rearing caste.

14. Known as *Saptapuri Amabasya* in coastal *Orissa*.

15. *Kharia* tribe belongs to Proto-Austroloid race and speaks *Kharia* of Austro-Asiatic language family. They are divided into three sections namely the *Dudh*, *Dhelki* and *Pahadi Kharia*.

16. Sub-goups of *Gaud* caste. The sub-castes of Gaud are different in different district, like they are *Gopapuria*, *Marthurapuria*, *Jharia*, and *Laria* in *Sundergarh*; *Magdha*, *Jharnia*, and *Sola Khandia* in *Sambalpur* district; *Madgdha*, *Laria*, and *Jhaia* in *Kalahandi* and *Bolangir* district.

17. *Pali/ Panchura* are near by villages believing in one deity or goddess. The deity or village goddess makes her *Jatra* (yearly journey) in these villages only.

18. The festival of eating new rice, which is held in the next day of *Ganesh Puja* or *Ganesh Chaturthi* in every year.

19. This day is important in *Western Orissa* because the villagers worship their local deities or goddesses.

20. *Hanichopen* (breaking earthen pot) is a competitive game. In somre distance about ten to fifteen meters away, players are blind folded tries to hit the pot with help of a cudgel.

21. *Thenga Pelen*

22. *Khutighicha/ Badi Ghichen* (Tug of War) is generally played by men. Two participant's sits face to face stretching legs straightly in together, each holding one end of the cudgel in their hands. He wins who able to drag the other to his side.

21. Like *Kabadi* this game also played by two groups boys, each group having five to seven players. One player of a group runs shouting *chele maare gudu… gudu…* or and attempt to touch players of other group. If he s

23. This game performed by two groups. One group holding each other hands in shoulder moves one step ahead towards other group with singing a song; then second group performed in the same way. The participants singing this what they have learned traditionally from their seniors, they have also composed extempore at the time of performance.

24. *Balijatra* is a festival where the tribals worshiped *Bhima*, a rain god.

25. This game is like card games. Players pen down the name *Raja*, *Mantri*. *Chor*, and *Pulish*, with some points in paper slips and rolled it, and then they mixed these slips and choose one by one and note down their points. This process repeats twenty times more, at the end they calculate their total points, and the lowest one is declared as *chor*.

26. *Hadbando* is an arboreal game played by a group of boys only. It attempts to touch other players who

27. The game *Billa/Ghacha/ Pati* is a game performed by a group of boys. They first draw a line known as *Pat Gar*; they draw a circle ten fifteen feet away from this line, and kept their *Pati* (the broken piece of earthen pot/ cold drink cap/ matchbox cover) in the middle of the circle. They attempt to drive out the *Pati* from the circle with help of a round stone known as *Billa*.

28. The game *Bagchhel* (tiger and goat) is played by two players. One player controls four tigers and other player controls up to twenty goats. The tiger hunt the goats while the goats attempt to block the tigers' movements.

29. This game is a variation of *Bagchhel*.

30. *Gharbanaba* (making house) is an imitative of house making and doing different house hold activities by small children.

31. Like *Gharbanaba*, *Chasbas* (agriculture) is also an imitative expression of traditional agricultural activities.

32. This game is a group performance. First, players choose 'It' who draw a circle, they then asked, "*san ki bad* (small or big one)"? If 'It' said *san* then they immediately run away and ploughed same leafs from near by small tree and if *bad* then from big tree, and return to deposit in that circle. In the time of returning if 'It' touches they then they will be 'It' and again they continue the game.

33. *Bhalumaten* is an interesting game, which is played by one male and a group of unmarried females. The male player sitting down having his blind folded head on one female's lap. Other females moving around them singing songs like *Janhi Phulare Bhalu Khai Mati Ja* (ridge gourd flower oh bear! eat and get wild)… *Kaharu Phulare Bhalu Khai Mati Ja* (pumkin flower oh bear! eat and get wild)… they repeatedly singing mentioning the different names of vegetable flowers. And at the end they found the bear getting wild, which attacks the participants what they really enjoy.

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Traditional Knowledge With Reference to Folk - Sayings of West Odisha

Dr. Nimai Charan Panda

Traditional knowledge or folk knowledge is that knowledge which is possessed by the people on different aspects of life. This is exposed on proverbs. A person having such knowledge is welcome by the society. It helps the common folk in their day to day life. Today, man has developed science so to say its pick point. The scientists are challenging to keep the life immortal through scientific experiments, trying to settle in the moon and mars and measure the depth of the earth etc. On the contrary they are also in search of *Sanjeebani*, the airports of the demon king Ravana and *Puspaka Vimana* he was using as described in the great epic or *purana*. All these efforts are being taken by the elites which do not concern to common people or the folk.

Even today, they are limited to their traditional knowledge. We the so called elites cannot get any reasonable reply from them if we ask them in this regard. They are not interested to know the modern science but they give more emphasis on traditional knowledge acquired from their ancestors. In case of illness the people prefer to seek the help of the *ojha* (village priest) and the traditional physician the *vaidya*. Even they use the local medicinal herbs or plants known to them. So far as the agriculture is concerned the common folk depend on some traditional techniques. Watching the situation of environment, condition and colour of clouds on the sky they expect rain and other natural incidents which they have been experiencing from long past following their ancestor generation after generation. While purchasing cattle the common people apply their traditional knowledge to select good one so that they have not to repent later. To keep the body and health free from disease, to avoid from ill eye and to save from witch craft in the case of children these people take certain traditional preventive.

It is interesting to note that the folk sayings particularly the proverbs prevail among the people sometime act as the base of their traditional knowledge. Most of such proverbs are the outcome of the past experiences of the common folk. Watching and experiencing certain events or getting a particular result out of it, such proverbs or folk sayings are created by some wise man of the society who ultimately is left behind the curtain and nobody knows him, but the proverbs created by him and work as powerful knowledge among the common people or folk. Such proverbs are not only the treasure of knowledge but teach the people how to face the problems in time.

This paper deals on how the common folk acquire knowledge from such folk sayings and prepare themselves to face any situations. Discussion will be made mainly on the proverbs prevail in West Odisha. This region of the state of Odisha has its own identity so far as the culture and tradition particularly the folk culture and the language spoken by the people are concerned. The original inhabitant of this region is mainly the scheduled Tribes and Castes who have still kept their culture and tradition intact. However, they are influenced by the migrated upper castes in some respects. Most of the proverbs prevail among the people of West Odisha are the creation of some wise migrated people. It does not mean that the original inhabitants can not create or use proverbs. Knowledge in the form of proverbs creates confidence in the mind and manner of the common folk. These people though do not get opportunity to acquire knowledge from books, yet from oral tradition they gain knowledge which fulfill their needs and solve certain problems may be of social, economical, health and hygiene etc. even the elites also use these folk sayings to enrich their knowledge acquired from books.

Much has been told by the scholars on proverbs. Nothing new is to be said by this scholar. However, it will be better to quote a few definitions on proverbs before coming to discussion. "A proverb is a terse didactic statement that is current in tradition… or as an epigram says, 'the wisdom of many and wit of one.' It ordinarily suggests a course of action or passes judgment on a situation. [1] Proverbs are the concentrated wisdom of the ages, the dark saying of wise man". [2] "To attain the rank of a proverb, a saying must either spring from the masses or accepted by the people as true. In profound sense, it must be Vox populi."[3] "Proverbs are short sentences drawn from long experience" [4]

According to Dr. Krishnadev Upadhyaya, proverb is like that to put the ocean (*Sagar*) in a jar (*Ghaghar*). Perhaps this could be the shortest definition of proverb. "The importance which folklorists give to this genre of folk speech is evidenced by the numerous volumes of proverb and riddle collection which exist in the many languages of India".[5] Keeping in view of this popular genre of folk literature on one of its aspects the traditional knowledge an attempt has been made to discuss in this paper. Such proverbs to be discussed may be divided in to five categories such as agricultural and environmental, society and family matter, traditional therapy, health and hygiene, satirical, cattle.

Agriculture is the main source of income of the people of this area and rain is the only hope for good crops. The people were and are depending on traditional knowledge for which they used to follow the guidelines mentioned in some proverbs. A bumper crop is possible on balanced rain. Observing the conditions of the weather, clouds on the sky and some peculiar situation on the sky the peasants expect heavy rain or apprehend less rain. The following proverbs indicate the situation and make the people aware of the facts. For example,
> *Purbe Ardul Pachhime Ravi*
> *Thik Janithibu Sedine Dhui.*

It means that when the rainbow it seen on the East and the Sun-setting in the West on than day heavy rain is a must. Accordingly the peasants keep themselves alert and plan for cultivation. On the contrary another proverb says, if the whole sky is not covered with clods on the forth moonlight day in the month of *Sravan* and air blows from the South it is apprehended that there will not be balanced rain during the season and people are advised to go out in search of work to meet the day to day life. The proverb is like this:
> *Sravana Masara Adya Chauthi,*
> *Chariadu Jadi Megha Naghoti,*
> *Dakshina Digaru Bahai Baa,*
> *Bhuga Tupa Dhari Bidesha Jaa.*

Regarding cultivation of sugarcane and paddy it is mentioned in a proverb that sugarcane grows in case of lucky farmer and paddy grows for unlucky one. Indirectly it has been advised that a farmer should try to grow sugarcane to maximum height but not the paddy. Paddy crops get fall down if grow more in height which leads to loss, where as sugar cane grow more height provides more juice out of which more *gur* is collected. Thus the farmer gains the traditional knowledge. The proverb is like this:
> *Karmiar Kusher Badhe*
> *Akarmiar Dhan Bdhe.*

In another such proverb it has been told regarding yielding good crop of brinjal. Brinjal is a vegetable which can be used in many items. It should be ploughed twelve times and digging for eight times. The proverb in this regard is quoted below.
> *Ath Kuda, Bara Bihida*

Baigan Phale Muda Muda,
Pudei Khae Bamhan Budha.

It is a general practice of mother-in-law in the family that she never shows sympathy to the daughter-in-law in spite of her hard labour and attempt to satisfy all where as if the daughter does a little, she is sympathized more. A proverb in this regard is quoted below.
Kuti Kandi Baha Daldala,
Sankhli Pachhri Jhi Mala.

Husking of paddy by the daughter-in-law is a hard work where as winnowing husks is the lighter work done by the daughter. Instead of the daughter-in-law, the daughter is sympathizing. Of course not all the mother-in-laws of Indian family do this. Some are quite considerate, affectionate and sympathetic towards the daughter-in-law which is rarely found. A proverb in this regard is quoted below.
Sas bahar gali,
Rati khaan birhi chakuli.

As discussed in the previous proverb the mother-in-law harasses her daughter-in-law but this proverb proves their comprising relation. Let us examine another proverb in which discrimination in behavior or treatment to a brother and brother-in-law.
Aela re Maijhir Bhai
Ghina Jhuri Ghina Dahi.
Aela re Andarar Bhai,
Chaerdinu Ghare Adhia Nain.

When her brother comes, the sister entertains him with good food like fish and curd etc. But in case of husband's brother it is reported that rice is exhausted since last four days. This is happening in the society. No doubt being a guest the brother of the wife should specially be treated. But it does not mean that the husband's brother be neglected. A proverb quoted below warns a mother to be careful after the puberty of her daughter.
Jhi Badhbar tak Pindhitha ,
Baha Aibar tak Khaitha.

The above proverb teaches a mother that her daughter may use as much as ornaments she likes till puberty and lead a peaceful or happy life till the daughter-in-law comes. Affection, love and care of a mother for her child particularly for her son is immeasurable and incomparable .She always looks her son as a child and takes care of his food etc. For which the daughter–in-law is not so serious. Rather she cares for his earning. Keeping in view of such condition a proverb says:
Maa Dekhe Peta/ Maepo Dekhe Anta.
It means the mother always thinks whether her son eats fully or not where as the daughter-in-law is more concerned on his earning. In this connection another proverb describes the mental condition and emotion of the mother. The mother neither can depend upon the son nor on the daughter because one day the daughter goes to her in-laws house. On the contrary the son gradually comes under the control of his wife. As a result the mother gradually becomes pessimist and expresses her feeling through the proverb quoted below.

Jhee Janam Kari Juen k Dia
Puo janam kari Baha k Dia.
It means the daughter is to be given to the son-in-law and son to daughter-in-law. Likely the feeling of old man as described in a proverb is also pessimistic. In many cases

the old man is supposed to be an unwanted member of the family and counts the days for death. A proverb speaks the very truth.

> *Ghar baluche Jaa*
> *Gad Baluche aa.*

That the house means the members of the family want the death of the old man and the graveyard is ready to welcome.

Regarding health and hygiene and folk therapy many important and worthy proverbs prevail among the common folk. These people mainly depend on the medicinal herbs on which they trust and cure diseases. Besides on sorcery, branding, some rituals they believe more. They prefer the *ojha* or village priest and *vaidya* but not the doctor. From such proverbs the folk acquire knowledge which they apply whenever necessary. Regarding treatment of diseases they follow the directions mentioned in such proverbs. Many times they get good result. Let us examine a few proverbs in this connection.

> *Dine Duna Rati Una,*
> *Sakhalpuake Khankhana.*

It means one should take full-belly food at launch but nearly half at dinner. As a result the bowl on the next morning is cleaned and makes a man smart for the whole day. A proverb says, if someone uses turban on the head throughout the day and massages oil under the feet in the night a *vaidya* or physician will never be called for him. Rather he may make jokes with the *vaidya*. The proverb is –

> *Mude Pagdi Pae Tel*
> *Baid Sange Karbu Gel.*

Another proverb speaks on taking food. In this regard four persons are chosen according to their eating. The minimum a person takes the maximum he maintains sound health.

> *Ek Bel Khae Jugi,*
> *Dui Bel khae Bhogi,*
> *Tin Bel Khae Bania Bahman,*
> *Chaer Bel Khae Rogi.*

It means that a *Jogi* or saint takes food once a day, taking twice a day one can enjoy the life. The *Baniya* or the traditional medicine expert and a Brahmin take thrice a day as they are able to digest but who takes four times a day invites diseases.

It has been mentioned in a proverb regarding health. What should one do to keep himself well and not to do which creates harm.

> *Khai Challe Badhe Bayu,*
> *Khai suile Badhe Ayu,*
> *Khai Basle Badhe Pet,*
> *Khai Khale jamar Bhet.*

One should not walk after eating as it creates gas in the bowl. It is better to sleep after meals as it extends the longevity. After taking food nobody should sit to avoid fat and bally to enlarge. On the other hand if somebody eats and eats he or she has to meet the Yama, the God of Death.

The more a child is massaged with oil the more he or she retains good health as the paddy ripes properly under water.

Tel Pacha Puo / Pain pacha Dhan.

A good number of proverbs on castes are prevailed in this region. The intension of such proverbs is to criticize a caste by other caste. These proverbs generally speak on the nature of different caste.

There are some proverbs which are mainly satirical. Some proverbs make a way-ward, ill character, shrewd and egoist person naked & thus bring him to the right path. Lets us take one such proverb, as example:

> *Kuta pushe kuta / kuta mare kuta*
> *Ek kuta sashur gharen juen*
> *Ek kuta bahen gharen bhae*
> *Ar ek kuta je pusputar rahe.*

In this proverb four persons have been compared with dog. One is dog who pets dog & one who kills dog. Another one is a dog who settles in the house of father-in-law. One is dog who stays for long in sister's house & adopted son is also a dog. The widow and the divorce ladies are generally considered as the curse for the village. In fact in many cases such ladies are found to be dangerous. Nobody can control them as they have no husbands. They know everything of the village. Watching their activities and character a satirical proverb has been created they have been compared with some animals. The proverbs is

> *Gachh mal mal pipal patar*
> *Jhar mal mal tengta,*
> *Gaon mal mal raandi chharri*
> *Paen mal mal jarda.*

As the leaves of *peepal* tree tremble in normal air, the lizard tries to expose itself the *jarda* a small fish plays on the upper level of water; likewise the widow and divorce ladies like to expose themselves anywhere and everywhere which some people dislike.

It is known that even the beasts are aware about good or bad for them. In case of man if we look into we can observe that the man's body and mind are the source of qualities sand knowledge. The message of proverb is valueless for an animal but much more valuable for man who acquires knowledge and wit from it. In all aspects of life proverbs provide raw knowledge which is applied by man in due course. Whether primitive or civilized the man may be, he is rational. What the man realized from experience and presented in proverb form for should not be dismissed or ignored as mere sayings. Proverbs for folk knowledge discussed above are in fact the knowledge acquired from oral tradition. Proverbs are the treasure of knowledge which makes a man a man.

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Gender Role : Womenhood in Folk Narratives of West Odisha

Dr. Anjali Padhi

Folk narratives are powerful medium through which folk assimilates and disseminates knowledge and power of a given society. Like any other oral discourse narratives construct, reconstruct social order, define gender roles and reverse it when necessary. It is a misconception that female voices are subdued, passive and in obedience to male dominance. On the contrary, mute voices denote meaning with social bearing. Folktales explain womanhood and basic principles of female biology which signifies social reality. The three stages; menstruation, defloration and childbirth are most important events of women's life which rule and determine women's behaviour in a society and culture. It seems, these phases of female life are expressed symbolically in a narrative. A brief study will be done of some selected tales who may speak gender discourse within it. Following three folktales from Nuapada District of Odisha have been picked up for the present study.

Folktale-I : "Tol Tol Phul Dada"

The story as narrated by Sukharam Paharia is presented below:

> "There are Twelve Brothers and One Sister .One day the brothers want to go for slash and burn farming. They want to sow ragi. Therefore they ask their sister to cook food for them and bring it up the hill. Sister cooks food, breaks the egg of suibird (a small bird) into two halves. She keeps rice in one and water on the other. When brothers come from work, they become angry, because there is so little food and water. Out of anger they kill their sister and burn her flesh. They eat the burnt meat. But the younger brother buries his share of meat in an anthill. But to their surprise, they find the food in two egg halves not finishing. After some days, a tree blossomed with flowers comes out on the spot. One day the bridegroom and his party pass through the forest and find the tree and flowers. The bridegroom wants to pluck the flower but couldn't. Finally the younger brother comes and a voice comes from within the tree. "Brother, brother, pluck the flower but do not break my branches" when her brother wants to pluck the flower, it fell on his hand. A beautiful girl appears in flesh and blood. The younger brother narrates everything'. Then the villagers kill the other brothers. Turmeric paste and oil is smeared on the body of the girl and after her bath, marriage take place. The bride and bridegroom live happily"[1].

In this tale various phases of a woman's life is described. Female biology passes through different phases like the change in seasonal cycle and plant life. This tale on the one hand confirms the social reality and on the other advocates its acceptance. In the beginning of the tale the narrator explains the slash and burn type of farming prevalent in Sunabeda valley of Nuapada District. The narrator belongs to Paharia community. He explains the rituals and training imparted to small girls while performing household work. Twelve brothers kill their sister, because she hadn't brought enough water and food. The narrator has presented symbolically the social message within the tale. A girl must learn cooking and domestic chores before her marriage, otherwise she would be punished. In the second phase of the tale, the younger brother buries her sister's flesh in an anthill. As per the local culture and puberty ritual the woman has to stay in a secluded place for seven days. During this period nobody touches her. After seven days she is bathed with turmeric and oil water. Thereafter she is brought outside by her mother and aunt of the

family cladding her with new clothes. She is offered a ritualistic welcome followed by a *homa*. In the above -mentioned tale, the sister comes out of her seclusion when her brother comes near the tree. Small boys including the younger brother aged between seven and ten are given food on the day when the girl comes out of seclusion as per puberty ritual. Sigmund Freud while demystifying dream says that repressed impulse remains in the sub-conscious level of a person which resurfaces in disguise. At times the characters play reverse role too. And time space form and shape of an object also changes in a dream. One can not find grammar in dream language however dream is full of symbols[2].

The twelve brothers kill their sister and the younger brother buries the flesh and bone. A tree comes out with flowers in it. The narrator has made a symbolic disposition of a woman's life from menstruation to defloration. A certain physical perfection is required for a girl to become fit for marriage. The coming of the groom to the forest and near the tree indicates certain pre-marriage rituals. It virtually means the sister's union with her groom only after attaining complete physical growth. With most certainty, this indicates defloration in a woman's life. The younger brother is instrumental in bringing both the bridegroom bride together.

The character of the youngest brother appears as a helping character in the union of male and female characters in the tale. According to the Paharia marriage system the younger brother has to perform certain ritual during marriage. He unlocks the sacred thread binding the bride and bridegrooms hand. Then he pours water over their hand as a symbolic gesture. In traditional society the character of younger brother is inevitable for accomplishing sacred rituals. Folktale reflects the variety of folk culture. The established social norms and rituals deeply influence the conscious and subconscious minds of a person and they get amply reflected in folktales. The chronology may miss in the folktales, but the originality of the theme remains intact is a beautiful testimony of how the behavior of a person is governed by time and space.

Folktale=II : "Sunaphula"[3] (Golden Flower). (Here the narrator's identity is unknown. She is a fifteen years old girl).

> *The archetypal businessman (Sadhaba Budha) has seven sons, seven daughter-in-laws and the only dearest daughter. Her name is Sunaphula. One day the sister-in-laws asked her to become a tree and bloom to which she agreed.*
> *They dug a big pit, made her sit inside it and sealed it with clay. They then poured water from their pots and when it became evening withdrew to their respective rooms. The next morning they saw that a tree has come up there with seven golden flowers. They decorated each of the flowers on their locks. They then asked Sunaphula to get up and she got back her original human form. The golden flower from the lock of the youngest sister-in-law fell down and somehow reached the king. At the behest of the king the messengers located Sunaphula and the king knew that she become a tree where golden flowers appear. He wished to marry her. The marriage was solemnized and they led a happy conjugal life. But the other wives of the king could not tolerate this. One day while the king was out on hunting they asked Sunaphula to become a tree. Initially she was reluctant but when the queens persuaded her she agreed with the condition that they would follow the rituals strictly. The queens performed the rituals and Sunaphula soon became a tree with golden flowers. But out of jealousy they broke its branches and when it became evening somehow they sprinkled some water but Sunaphula did not get back her original form. They threw the broken tree*

and the dead like body into the river and went away. The king rescued the tree and prayed Lord Shiva who sprinkled holy water on the tree and Sunaphula came to her human form. She lived happily with the king and the wicked queens were punished.

There are parallels between this tale and a Kannad folktale "Flowering Tree"[4]. This Kannad folktale is also all about a girl transforming into a tree, flowers appearing in it and the king son being attracted. Here also the girl's changing into a tree requires certain rituals. Her sister pours two pots of water and chants some mantra. A close observation of the structure and the motif of "Sunaphula" reinforce the claim that women play an important role in every sphere of life. Seven sister-in-laws have performed the rituals of digging the pit, sealing it and pouring water. More importantly, seven is holy number and in every folk tradition seven holy pots lams and candles are used. The seven sister-in-laws justify the role of supporting characters in the story. In every folktale there is a hidden meaning. The girl transforming into a tree and flowering reflect the subconscious mysticism. Flowering in the tree symbolize a woman's attainment of physical perfection which means puberty. In the locality from where this tale has been collected this is known as *sian*. The king has been attracted by this physically complete woman and has desired to marry her. In the second lag of the tale the narrator mentions the jealousy of the step-queens towards Sunaphula. They have induced her to become a tree after the king went out on hunting to which she is not agreeing. This reluctance may be because she was in her menstruation and was impure in her body and was sexually not fit. The absence of the king may be seen as this sexual negation of Sunaphula. With most probability her final approval to become a tree at the persuasion of the queens was because she might have by then been fit for sexual conjugation. She has become a tree and flowers have blossomed in it. But she failed to get back her original human form as the ritual was not performed and the branches of the tree were broken. This means she could not attain her physical purity due to the evil design orchestrated by her step queens. There are two aspects of a woman- malevolent and benevolent. The queens here represent the malevolent aspect and act as stumbling blocks on the way of Sunaphula's attaining perfection. Contrary to this the king has tried to give Sunaphula back her human form which has been made possible by the blessings of Lord Shiva. This is in conformity with the idea that women tales believe in the crucial role played by man in giving perfection to women.

Folktale-III: "Phula Rani"[5] (Flower Queen).

> *Sade Budha had four daughters and they wished to marry the king's cook, chowkidar, counselor and the king himself respectively. When this was brought to the notice of the king he arranged the marriage of three sisters as per their wish and finally he himself married the youngest one. He made her the principal queen. The youngest sister had stated that if she happened to marry the king she would beget a number of children. In fact this happened and after marriage she conceived and her sisters became envious. They conspired to expel her from the palace. When the time for her to deliver came coincidentally the king was out on foreign expedition. The sisters removed the servants and nurses and remained on guard near the queen. The queen gave birth to a lovely looking male child and the sisters took away the child and tried to kill it by throwing in the pond. But when the child did not die they dug a pit beside the manure dump and buried it there. I its place they kept a wooden baby near the*

queen. The king came back from his tour and became sad after knowing the incident. Subsequently, the queen delivered a male and a female child and the sisters did the same trick. Still they were not satisfied and spread the rumour all trough the kingdom that the queen is an evil spirit and hence is giving birth to wooden babies. The king was disturbed and dismissed her from the palace. She stayed in the stable. The queen who was used to live in luxury had to accept this new life. But destiny had planed differently. Three trees; Arjuna, Kha and Krushna Chuda came up from the manure dump where the three children had been buried. When they blossomed people desperately tried to pluck flowers. Songs came out from the trees. Finally the king also came but could not pluck flowers. All the people came tried but could not pluck flowers. Some one sang from the tree, "If my mother comes she can pluck flowers". The king thought all but the queen herself has not tries to pluck flowers. He took the queen to the tree. The moment the queen touched the trees two delicate male children and one female child emerged from the trees and narrated the entire episode. The king became glad and took back the queen to the palace. The three sisters were nailed from above and below and were buried.[1]

Narrator plays a vital role in the structure and arranging the motif in the folktale. Since the narrator is mostly from the weaker section of the society he/she has an irresistible obsession towards the higher order in the subconscious. With some amount of imagination the characters such as farmer, labourer, deserted woman, widow, orphan, beggar in course of time take the shape of folktales. The ever-neglected and exploited women society also provides feedback for the plot construction in a folktale. Though appears frail, the woman voice is pregnant with rituals, customs, traditions of the conventional society and desire and aspiration of women. In the above-mentioned tale the four daughters of Sade Budha express their subconscious desire to achieve a certain social status. The desire of the youngest daughter to marry the king and become the queen proves that even if they are subdued and have a suppressed social status they are ambitious to achieve the higher social order. As like men women also have an attraction for wealth, power and status in the society. This is substantiated by analyzing the motifs in folktales. Wealth and power on the other hand also invite trouble as they create envy in others. Since the youngest sister has achieved wealth and power by marrying the king even her own sisters have become jealous and have planned to remove her from the palace and separate her from the king. They have been largely successful in their evil design by replacing the new-born with the wooden ones which leads the king to dismiss the queen from the palace who in turn lives a dejected life in the stable. It was by virtue of her good fate only the queen got rid of the trouble orchestrated by her jealous sisters.

The folktales are replete with motifs of sibling rivalry, co-wives rivalry, sister-in-law rivalry, mother-in-law rivalry and daughter-in-law rivalry which are common day to day social happenings. In this tale also sibling rivalry has been explicitly presented. But the symbolic disposition of women's rituals cannot be completely ruled out. Childbirth is an important development in the life of a woman. As per folk ritual the woman is kept isolated for a period of twenty one days after delivery. The locality from where this folktale has been collected adheres to this ritual quite strictly. Such women are not allowed in any

[1](This was collected from Late Chandra Sekhar Rout of village Pandrapathar in the year 2002 when he was 92 years old).

sacred social function during this period. No member of the family also touches her during this period of inhibition. After twenty one days the woman is allowed her normal life after undergoing certain holy rituals. King's punishment to the king, her isolation in the stable perhaps reflects these post-delivery restrictions. There is a lot of bleeding during childbirth and the woman is treated as impure during this period. She is kept separated from her husband and it is but obvious that union or separation of male female is purely governed by biological development of woman. The narrator has superbly presented the social ritual supported by imagination and biologically universal truth. "The experience accumulated over several thousand of generation is stored in the form up collective unconscious. The collective unconscious is reflected in dream contents or other form of thought behavior archetypes. Thus, the archetypes are product of racial experiences".[6] it is reflected in folktale, folk belief, art, painting, dance and dream of a race in a natural way.

Coming back to the context, trees have come up and have flowered from the place where the new-born babies were buried. No one from the kingdom including king was successful in plucking flower from the trees. Finally when the queen has come and touched, the children have appeared in flesh and blood. The relationship of mother and child starts from the mother's womb. The umbilical cord of child and mother's placenta use to join. In biologically term child's relationship with mother's womb is intimate. That basically is the reason when the queen, the mother touches the trees they reciprocate actively and get back their human bodies. This is one of the finest examples of mother-child relationship.

The three folktales represent the three vital phases in a woman's life. More importantly, in all these three tales women have been central to the plot construction and overall growth of the storyline. They represent the biological growth, its restriction and the rituals justifying and providing a friendly and enabling environment for a woman to attain perfection. One thing similar in all these tales is the hardship undergone by the central woman character and their final restoration. This poetic justice can be seen as the social view point towards women.

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Psycho Social Dynamics of Women Education in Odisha: A Study of Gender and Culture Variables

Priyadarshini Mishra

Introduction

Gender is a phenomenon in twenty first century to ensure male, female equality, Provide freedom for development, ensuring equal participation for all there by getting equal opportunity. Gender is one component of the gender / sex system, which refers in the "set of arrangements by which a society transform biological sexuality into products of human activity and in which these transformed needs are satisfied.

Gender culture interaction gives rise to wide spread individual differences at the macro level of psycho-social functioning of the individuals and as well as the groups. Larger the variations among the cultures in a limited geo-economic and socio-administrative space, more complex are the nature of responses to developmental process among the people. The widespread diversities are the Indian cultures have been referred to as the source of sluggish development in most of our endeavors.

Gender identities signify the role distribution of male and female in a given society. It ensuring the male, female equality provides freedom for development, ensuring equal participation and providing equal opportunity to both males & females. From psychological point of view, it is recognized that the concrete behavior of individual is largely consequence of gender identity through socio culturally enforced rules and values.

Exclusion is a social phenomenon in which the members of the group are marginalized in the process of decision making which are significant and valuable from the point of view of the society. Ogbu[1] in 2000 observed that people who are socially excluded they receive inadequate support from the public institutions. Their opportunities are constrained because mechanisms and institutions exclude them. Exclusion limits opportunities for the group through social isolation, limited access to education and discrimination is school. Most of the children who are socially excluded from school in the developing world come from in voluntary minorities. These are children whose parents differ from the dominate class, race and ethnic groups, and who have historically been marginalized in their own societies. These children often adapt to footsteps of their parents. Psychological exclusion of girls in our male biased social order, where the distribution of power, knowledge is vested with male predomination, may be creating serious limitation to women education.

Role segregation which segregates women from the power, knowledge, resources and equal opportunity. Mostly women are entitled to internal works like child rearing, performing household chores, and strengthening family lies, whiles males are assigned to external works like providing monetary support and maintain outside relations. This structure of role segregation is likely to be a serious handicap to women education.

Gender discrimination having sanction from religious & cultural practices, it is a very strong psycho social variable influencing women education. Compared to females males are the larger beneficiaries of the social order at every stage of life. Such conditions of

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[1] Ogbu

discrimination stand as impediments to women education in our country in many ways, a number of other implicit and culture specific psycho social variable also influence the women education.

Status of women in Odisha:

Women education in Odisha is a major challenge to contemporary system. It relates to major problems and issues exist in universalisation of school education in Odisha in the context of women education. The status of women in Odisha is very low. Literacy is Odisha is 63%. Male literacy is 75% and female is 51%. The literacy among rural and tribal areas is a major challenge today. The general literacy among Odisha is 23.47% of the total female population, 98% live in rural areas which reflect heavily on the low literacy of the women is the state with 29 percent. (1981 to 1991)Odisha occupies the 13th position is the country with regard to literacy & falls within 6 backward state with regard to low female literacy.

The inter-dependence of many socio-cultural and economic factors such as less enrollment of girl child in school, high dropout rate, domestic, responsibilities, child labour, financial constraints, etc are responsible for low literacy rate of the state.

The women work force constitutes only 20.79% (1991 census) in the state. The female work force constitutes 22.62% in the urban area out of the corresponding total female population. Nearly 78% of the female workers are in the agricultural sector and about 85.5% of women cultivations and marginal workers who do not get work for a major part of the year or work as casual laborers.

☞ Women's representation in administrative service, state politics, public sectors (3 out of 33 units are headed by women) etc. It is apparent that women representation is more or less negligible in comparison to that of males.

☞ Crime against women in Odisha has grown considerably 405 rapes in 1993 to 1995. 187 dowry related deaths are seen state education will be used as against of basic in order to neutralize the accumulate distortion of the past; there will be well conceived edge in favour of women.

☞ This will be an act of faith and social engineering. The removal of women illiteracy and obstacles into biting their access to and retention in elementary education will receive overriding priority through provision special support services, setting time targets and effective monitoring the state of Odisha shows a lot of inter regional variations in women literacy depending upon geography condition, ethnicity and level of development.

Women literacy rate of Odisha context:

Literacy Rate

Literacy rate of Odisha is 63%. Male literacy rate is 75% and female literacy rate is 57% which s below national average. The most vulnerable issues are total tribal literacy which is 37.37 and tribal female literacy is 23.47. The slow progress of female literacy is comparison to the female literacy indicates the disparities in addressing the issues as well as to assess the gender gap. Low level literacy in 7 tribal populated districts in the state which below 30% indicates the district disparities. The growth rate of literacy from 1971 to 2001 is from 9% to 23 % at the highest in 2001 Census in Odisha. Viewed from the

capability approach the situation can be measured and the reason of social exclusion of girls from the schooling and education can be assessed.[2]

Therefore issue of gender inequality is visible in terms of providing opportunities, professional / institutional frames work and also in disseminating knowledge base for empowerment. The female literacy in the state is although 51%, the unequal disparity of women literacy between developed districts like Khurda and Jagatsinghpur which is about 73% in one hand and in tribal district like Malkanagiri and Nabarangpur over all literacy of the districts is less than 40%. Thus the literacy gap between these districts is about 30% in case of overall literacy; but in case of tribal literacy the gap is about 40-50 percent. Similarly the women literacy of some blocks in KBK districts are less than 10% which account for the state initiative already taken up since last 50 years. It clearly indicate that inter districts / regional disparities is due to unequal distribution of resources or professional and institutional issues, lack of quality schooling and inadequate school curriculum and responsive teaching learning process. Although policy valued educational achievement as foundational for enhanced female public sphere as participation such as achievements and the public sphere were deeply marked by gender in qualities and the efforts made by the state system is evidently not enough to challenge to the gender status.

In Odisha many families, especially the poorest are the resistant to girls schooling. Girls are products of their upbringing, socialized, into sub-ordinate identities, with their neither agency nor vision for lives different to those modeled at home. Girls are generally expected to assume responsibilities in house work at a very earlier age. Role expectations from girls are that they share housekeeping chore like working and rearing up children along with mother which adversely affect their education. Low education level for girls is the small return anticipated from girls schooling.

In the education system where the teacher both Male and Female , products of high class and patriarchal society which schools are located once indifferent to gendered in equalities and to the concern of poorest girls.

Sources: Theoretical framework:
Nayar (1995) who observe that gender roles are culturally determined.
Reiter (1975) who stated that society and culture who makes man and women as masculine & feminine.
Ogbu is (2000) stated that people who are socially excluded they receive inadequate support from public institution.
Talcutta is of opinion that expressive activities of the women fulfill internal functions, for example to strengthen the ties between members of the family. The man performs the external function of the family providing monetary support and women performs the external work like child care, hose hold work etc. On the social institutions there are two models.

Fist one is role segregation which segregates women from the power knowledge, resources and equal opportunity.

The Second one is the gender role based on equal opportunity of male / female in terms of participation as a person than a female or male and equality is ensured.

2---- Perspective Plan on National Programme of Education of Girls at Elementary Level(NPEGEL), 2004, Orissa Primary Education programme Authority , Bhubaneswar www.opepa.in

It is observed that in majority of the traditional and developmental social systems, an individual has a choice to what he should or her extent as a confirmed representative of a socialization process, the consequences can be beneficial or malfunctioned. Minor or severe for every case by a behaviours socialization influence forming gender roles on expectations institutionalizing gender differences.

Gender in Indian content is perceived as non-entity. Indian socio-cultural system has created many customs and values which provide privileges to men and deprive the women. There are many restrictions to the women compared to man. In Indian women are through worshiped in ideological level. They are really sub serve to the male predominance since a long time. Therefore distribution of power, knowledge, resources and wealth is not vested to women. The authority and decision making is also not provided equally to women in the family. This discrimination is more psychologically which have been validated through social rules and practices, as a result which Indian context cultural symbols have retrained these inequality expressed in social behaviours.

Unequal distribution of work prescribed to men and women in the society confined the women in domestic domain. They become the object of the culture than the shareholder of the culture. As though the women play a vital role in creation of culture, it is the men who have owned and enjoyed the culture. Demarcation of work distribution of power and resources created disparity among the men and women. This disparity stretch away to socio-economic participation & debar women and girls from development.

From Indian context, it is true that the National and state policy is in favour of all round development of girls and empowers the women. This is a constitutional obligation since independence. Equality is the foundation of freedom. Development is not possible without education. The socio-cultural tradition recurrent in Indian society has not only debarred the women from freedom, but till now they have not been given right to speak or take a decision equally with men. Even knowledge and wealth is not equally distributed to women in society. They only adopt the development from patriarchal point of view and allow the men to participate in development than the women. Therefore it is evident that psycho-social construction of gender is directly or indirectly denies the development of women and girls than the males. In developing society when the cultural practices stand as impediments against gender development; the challenges are more complex in terms of breaking through the existing gender stereotypes from mindset of the people and also to imbibe new ideas on gender equality. Therefore gender empowerment has witnessed a struggling experience in last decades. This is not only effects the family but to institutions, knowledge and individual and the development is either blocked or failed.

Dr Amartya Sen in his book Development as Freedom, discussing on women empowerment emphasizes "education of girls" as one of the most important instrument for individual development. He recognizes the complex relationship between empowerment process, and variables of education, ownership, employment opportunities, the working of the labor market, employment arrangements, family and social attitudes in economic activities and the social circumstances affecting these attitudes.

Sen also takes of five instrumental freedom of individual these are political freedom, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees, and protective security. Out of these social arrangements cover provision of health, education and protective security.

Therefore Sen writes, "Nothing arguably, is important today in the political economy as

development as an adequate recognition of the political, economic and social participation and leader ship of women."

Martha Nasbum, in her book *Women and Human Development* the capability approach has been discussed on gender aspect more elaborately these approaches have the following development policy.

1. It emphasizes the states social obligation, prioritizing arrangements for enhanced political, economic, social freedoms which privilege investments in transparency, health, education and security for all over excellence and privilege for the few.

2. It demonstrates why it is important for women to enjoy rights and responsibilities of citizenships as men do, that the achievement equal citizenship depends on women empowerment & why empowered gender identities are best suited to individual and social/ national will being.

3. It provides a normative framework with which to assess and debate social norms, especially class, caste, religious or gender one, which can silence rational debate or identity option.

4. It demonstrates why social policy must strategies to address the ways in which personal, social and environmental factors affects the conversion of commodities, goods and services into capabilities and functioning.

5. It outlines why institution should within and be assessed according to democratic framework.

6. It emphasized fundamental importance of knowledge for change process and providing the most enabling environment for individual to come to informed rational choices.

Social embodiments approach: Robert Connell's approach

While capability approach provide a normative framework to assess the socio political priorities, institutional environments and the processes relationship and outcomes of schooling, Connell's work is used to explore how gender identities and aspirations are formed focusing on the way thing appear on the four structure of

    1. Gendered Power,
    2. Production
    3. Emotional
    4. Symbolic relations.

Connell'[3]s approach outline the gender structure, demonstrate symbolic relationship between agency and structure, which in individual are both agents and objects, constituted within but also acting on and thus able transform the social world.

Connell focuses on the application of gender equality to eliminate discrimination arguing that if gender in equalities persists, the power, position of hegemony masculinity will remain entrenched, so global inequality will invaluable persist the meets argues that gender politics has to be understood by as more than an interest group struggle over inequalities. In the most general sense, gender politics is about the steering of the gender order in history. Based on above theoretical framework we get the sources and got the inspiration to work in women education of Odisha.

Problems and Issues in Girls Education
    Generally girls are expected to assume responsibility for housework at a relatively

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3Cornell

earlier age. Even in ordinary circumstances the role expectations from girls are that they share the housekeeping chores like cooking and rearing of children along with mother, which adversely affect their education. In addition to this the direct costs of education also debar families from sending their Girls to school although school education is almost free expenses on books.   Poverty, provision of learning materials, sibling care of younger children, uniforms and distance of schools leave a heavy burden on poor families. Yet another factor contributing to low education levels for girls is the small return anticipated from girls schooling. When boy's education is viewed as an investment of family's socio-economic status and an old-age security for parents; girls are destined to be married into other families and hence yield no return to their parents.

Again pubescent girls are withdrawn from schools because of social dangers associated with male school teachers and students. Thus socialization, gender roles and sexual mores all play important roles in depriving girls of formal education.

Although a few parent who give them good education and encourage them to have a carrier, still develop invisible walls in their minds, which suppress their girl's initiatives, destroy their self-confidence. Their self-esteem even deny of pleasures at times. The parents of the daughters always live with the tension of perpetually standing guard over their daughters while sending them to school or college for education.

Girls especially from particular social groups such as SC/ST / OBC has disadvantage of their being women and socially backward in the context of primary education. Disparities in enrolment, retention and achievement level of girls and boys are significant due to some socio - economic, Socio educational psychological and socio linguistic situations.

Socio Economic Condition

Poor economic condition of the family is great hindrance to successful education. Most of the people in the rural tribal areas are practicing shifting cultivation as their primary occupation and hunting, gathering, fishing as secondary occupation.

Due to this practice they don't get sufficient food to feed the entire family throughout the year. So education for them is a luxury, which they can hardly afford. Sometimes the child is an asset and contributes to the family economy. Further due to poor economic condition both the parents go out for work and the elder girls child takes care of the youngsters. So the poor parent is of opinion that if the child is taken away from her household work to attend schools, it will further reduce the economic stability of the family.

Deep-rooted socio-cultural and traditional practices have contributed in perpetuating of gender bias, which adversely impact on girl's education. At home parent's negative attitude towards education prevents them from going to school. But those who reach school are likely to face non-supportive environment in the classroom and in school. Further in some hilly areas or area having natural barriers parents has apprehensions about the safety of their daughters.

Socio- Psychological Issues

Psychological factors have an adverse impact on girl's education. There are some barriers, taboos, and prejudices against formal education in many tribal societies. It is feared that the girls will go astray after receiving education. There are also fear of the educated tribal girls losing their moorings and being cast adrift without any goal. These

psychological feelings of people prevents girl from obtaining primary education.

Linguistic Issues

For any education the medium of instruction is of great importance particularly in tribal areas people lived in isolation they have very less exposure to the outside areas. So a tribal child who has practically no knowledge of regional language is thus placed at a great disadvantage. In schools the language of the textbook is alien to tribal girl child. In comparison to the tribal adults, the tribal girls are more esoteric in using language. School becomes an alien place for the children in comprehension of content and language as a whole for which it seriously affects the access, retention and achievement.

Some challanges

- Lack of awareness among SC/ST community
- Biased attitude towards girls
- Lack of community contact / participation with the schools
- Biased behavior of general community towards SC/ST
- Illiteracy of parents
- Less importance to girls education
- Parents unwillingness to send their children to Co-educational school
- Girls child is burdened with domestic work
- Child marriage
- Dowry system
- Malnutrition
- Bonded labour
- Health problem of the girl child
- Untouchablity
- Girl's child is engaged in sibling care and domestic chores.
- Fairs and festivals
- Lack of conducive environment for education at home.
- Scattered habitation

School Related Issues

- Lack of basic facilities in school
- Lack of responsibility of Teachers and administrators. Continuous failure in Examination of children often leads to their leaving from school
- Primary schools have no sufficient space to open ECCE Centers
- Absenteeism of female teachers
- Unattractive school environment
- Absentee teachers
- Negative attitude of the teachers towards girls
- Lack of contact and sharing between parent and teachers
- Lock of gender sensitive and relevant T.L.M.
- Unsuitable school timing

Socio Economic Issues

- Children perceived as means of income generation
- Poverty of Parents
- Engagement of girls in domestic works i.e. animal rearing, collection of   minor forest products.

ₒ Lack of minimum educational reading writing materials

Culture as the   marker of   gender disparity:

  Culture can be defined as   the values that the   society determines for its own growth. But it has been found   in the history of human civilization   that   culture is dominated by males and therefore the   women are confined to domestic domain and   males are exposed to   public domain. Even the knowledge and power are   dominated by the males than the females. The plea of   such discrimination   was   again   male biased. The reason is that   since women   bear the child and need separate   facilities that led to keep the women in domestic domain. The social in equality related to women and property   is such that the country has perpetuated the gender disparity in its culture and   customs. The issue of women subservient to   males is still influence the   mass psychology.

Cultural practices and customs are perpetuated in the   oral tradition. This is also supported by the religious rites and rituals. The irony is that, while the women is worshipped in the   temple as mother goddess in ideal religious   context , women is also burnt for dowry and many other reasons. Fire and women   have a close   affinity in life. Women starts her   morning from fire and ends her night in fire.

The proverbs and   songs   found in the traditional society reveal that how the women are looked down. Some   proverbs   run as follows
> *Gaan kania Singhani naki*

The meaning is
> A village girl's nose is always   dirty.

Even if a   girl from the village is beautiful she is always not appreciated. A prophet is not honored in his own   country.
> *Nimba Tiana, Jhia marana, Pachhaku guna .*

It means ,
> Neem curry,   death of a daughter
> Is good for future.
> *Jhia Ghia.*

 Both the   girl and   butter   should not be kept   for long. If kept they spoil.
> *Jhia janama paragharaku*
> *Jhia janama chuli mundaku.*

 It means ,
> A girl is born   to go to other's house.
> A girl is born to fire   the   oven of others house.
> *Dela nari, hela pari*

means a girl is given marriage is got rid of burden - is the cultural attitude of the society. Another proverb suns that
> *Deba jahin tahin anba bhala*.

This means you get a very good bride for your son, but you give your daughter any where you like.

Not only this, the   songs   and narratves   in traditional society of   Odisha bear the narration of gender discrimination. Folk songs of Odisha reveals the gender   disparity in the songs .Some instances are as follows.
> *Sajani Kashi baunshara dhuna*
> *Munusha khauchhe sikara tuna*
> *Maijhi chatuchhe nuna.*

 Translation :

O Companion,
The bow is   made of tender bamboo
Husband in the home enjoys   meat with   his meal
Wife is licking   the pinch of salt with rice.

 If this cultural scenario of the society, it is necessary to understand why and how the formal education address the social issues in the school system. Our education system is yet to   adopt a democratic school which really represent the socio- cultural aspects a s the marker of developmental education and provide space to everybody respecting their self identity.

Conclusion:

Gender disparity is found everywhere in our society. Even though education and literacy has improved, the mindset of the society related to gender equality has not yet been eliminated. These cultural practices affect the school practices since the   children, parents and the teachers are a part of the same social system. The curriculum , text book, teacher training and   classroom practices in Orissa schools   need much attention and regeneration in terms of setting up   gender balance education.

Gender planning in education and   gender financing are two most important aspects   in school education programme. Active community participation and empowerment is absolutely necessary to create a space for   education of girls and establishment of self esteem of girls.
 The problems are many , but the social issues can be resolved only through social consciousness and awareness.

Children in classroom, Kalahandi district, Orissa

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Imitation or Syncretism or Selective Appropriation?

Studying Religious Equations between Brahmanical Religions and Buddhism in the poly-religious landscape of Early Medieval Orissa

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1. Religious Landscape of Early Medieval Orissa

The early medieval period from 5th to 12th centuries AD witnessed several changes in the religious landscape of early medieval Orissa. The brahmanical religions began to construct huge temples in various eco-niches. Temples began to perform several roles in the cultural eco-niches of micro and meso regions. First, temple formed nuclei of appropriation and integration of autochthonous cults. Eschemann's analysis of the Hinduisation of autochthonous cults in Orissa is one primary example of the role of temple (Eschmann 1978: 84). Further, temple acted as the foci of popularisation of various brahmanical cults. In Orissa, we see the evidence of several cults – Shakti, Saiva, Vaisnava in this period. While temple building in the Indian context can be predated to 2nd century BC, it was only after 5th century AD that temple building became an important component of brahmanical religions. Third, temple also acted as the foci of agricultural expansion. There are not many evidence of land grants to temples in Orissa but epigraphic reference points out to the land grants to brahmanas who were given land grants to perform certain functions in the temple.

From religious standpoint, in addition to this process of temple-building, cult appropriation, integration and cult popularisation through pilgrimage, another important development was the emergence of tantric cults. The original source of its origin is not exactly known - it might be from the indigenous practices prevalent in communities in which agricultural expansions took place in early medieval Orissa. The primary locus of the tantric movements- was outside the structural boundary of the existing religions- not in temple, brahmanical mathas or viharas of Buddhist monastery, but in charnel ground. Ronald Davison's influential book on social aspect of Indian esoteric Buddhism locates Buddhist esoteric movements in the changing feudalisation of polity and decline of patronage to Buddhist establishments due to decline of guild in early medieval India. Buddhism due to the decline of patronage from guild, had to depend on royal patronage and mandalise its institution and religion (Davidson 2004).

2. Buddhist response

Buddhism of Orissa responded to these changes in the cultural landscape of the period by trying to make it more instrumental and laity oriented. Instrumental actions are those behaviours, which are oriented "to changing the state of the world as a means to the end of one's subjective experience (Southwold, 1983: 185). If a prayer, a spell, in its correct formulation tends to achieve the purpose for which it was recited, will be characterised as instrumental. To take an instance, if a childless woman goes to Hariti and worship her in the correct manner, perform the enjoined rituals, we will conclude that the prayer is an instrumental mean to achieve the desired end i.e. to get a child. The desired goal (getting a child) leads to change in one's subjective experience. Prayer or performance of rituals in this situation will be considered as an instrumental means while the deity performs an instrumental role.

Vajrayāna Buddhism catered to the need of the masses by inventing Buddhism, where one finds numerous Buddha, b*odhisattvas*, gods and goddesses, both in peaceful

and wrathful moods. Each god and goddess was assigned an instrumental role to fulfil the everyday needs and aspirations of the masses. The germ syllable (*bijamantra*) of each deity is believed to possess magical powers and recitations of these *mantras* guarantee fulfilment of desires. It also incorporated other elements of the period, viz. incorporation of deities from brahmanical religion, incorporation of motifs and symbols from it, incorporating tribal, Tantric-goddess tradition to its fold as well as developed an elaborate ritual structure

3.　　Vajrayāna as a religion of laity: Instrumental Buddhism

Vajrayāna tried to respond to the changes in brahmanical religion by making it more laity oriented.　For the average populace, who constituted the base of a widely spread religion, the saliency of existential wants predominated over other objectives. The Buddhist deities seem to cater to these needs. A poor man prays to Vasudhara to give him plenty. An infertile lady worships Hariti for conception. Vajrayāna Buddhism developed a vast structure of pantheon, from Buddhas to *dakini*, who fulfil these existential needs of people. The *Sadhanamala* and other texts refer to instrumental functions of each deity. The following table represents instrumental functions of these deities.

Table 1: Instrumental functions of Buddhist divinities

Category	Buddhist deities	Instrumental Function
Buddhas	Dipankara	Islanders' deity favouring merchants
	Bhaisajyaguru	Healer Buddha; worshipped for curing illness
Bodhisattvas	Vajrapani	God of Rain (ii) provide elixir of life (iii) to cure snake
	Avalokitesvara	Saviours. As savours he saves from eight or eleven fears
	Avalokitesvara in feminine form	Worshipped by woman
	Manjusri	(i) For learning (ii) destroys ignorance (iii) god of Agriculture
	Sankhananga Manjusri	for bewitching woman
	Arogyasali Lokesvara	God of healing
	Simhanada Lokesvara	Invoked to cure leprosy
	Cintamani Lokesvara	God of Wealth
	Ksitigarbha	Master of six world of Desire (ii) God of Death
	Akasagarbha	God of Wealth
Goddesses	Hariti	Goddess of fecundity, prevents small pox, protects kitchen
	Aparajita	**Goddesses of ghosts**
	Trailokyavijaya	Conqueror of evil spirit
	AstamahabhayaTara	Saviouress
	Janguli	Cure snake-bite
	Kurukulla	For bewitching lovers

	Vajra-Sarasvati	Goddess of wealth, learning
	Vasudhara	Goddess of abundance
	Parnasabari	Small pox
	Usnisavijaya	Goddess of transcendental wisdom
	Mahamayuri	Invoked in snake bite
	Prajnaparamita	Goddess of Intelligence
Gods	Yamantaka	Invoked to conquer death
	Hayagriva	God of horse traders
	Mahakala	God of wealth and hearth
	Jambhala	God of Wealth

4. Diversity in Buddhist pantheon: The *Mandala* Answer

These changes in Buddhism brought about expansion in Buddhism in Orissa. While Buddhist sites are spread both in coastal and Upland regions, these sites reveal vertical growth in Buddhist pantheon. In Orissa, fifteen forms of Avalokitesvara, nine forms of Manusri, 12 forms of Tara, Five Dhyani Buddhas, Gautama Buddha and his life (descend from heaven, eight great spectacle), numerous other gods and goddesses associated with one of the five Dhyani Buddhas have been found in various sites of Orissa.

Both the votive stupas and independent sculptures indicate the Buddhist cults of the period. Buddhist innovation in the form of instrumental deities, rituals, dharanis needed to be accommodated within the Buddhist schema. *Mandala* provided the answer to accommodate these innovations in Buddhism. Numerous stupa and sculptural mandalas have been found from Udayagiri, Ratnagiri, Laitigiri and other places of Orissa.

A *mandala* is an arrangement of deities conceived of in sets laid out along the axes of cardinal points around a centre (Gellner 1996:190). A *mandala* is divided into five sections, while on the four sides of a central image or symbols are disposed, at each of the cardinal points, four other images or symbols are placed (Tucci 1970). The Avalokitesvara Padmapani image Inscription at Khadipada records that the image was a pious dedication of the *mahamandlacarya paramaguru* Rahulacari during the reign of Subhakaradeva (Ghosh 1942: 247-8). Donaldson in his authoritative book deals with these mandalas in the sculptures of Orissa and Udayagiri's stupa was built in *Mahakrunagarbhodbhva mandala*.

In Orissa, these deities were found in many places. In terms of diversity of pantheon structure Orissa outnumbers the most important sites of India. The following table represents these forms of various gods , goddesses and Bodhisattvas.

Table 2: Tārā and her Different forms in Orissa

Different forms of Tārā	Place
1.Tārā in *lalitasana, varada mudra*	Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri, Achutarajpur, Solampur, and other places (129)
2 Standing Tārā	Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri, Solampur, etc. (10)
3 Astamahabhaya Tārā	Sheragarh (1), Ratnagiri (2)– **3**
4. Simhanada Tārā	Ratnagiri (3), Sheragarh (1), Bhubaneswar (1), —(5)
5.Khadiravani Tārā	Jaraka (2), Tikiria Temple in Banpur Achutarajpur, Ratnagiri, Baneswarnasi, Choudwar, Sundargram—(9)

6. Mahattari Tārā	Ratnagiri (2), Achutarajpur, Tiadisahi, Baudh, -- (6)
7. Mahasri Tārā	Bhubaneswar- (1)
8. Dhanada Tārā	Kapilesvara Temple in Bhubaneswar, Varaha temple Jajpur, brought from Solampur, Baseli Thakurani at Bania Sahi in Cuttack, Kapila Prasad 1 – (4)
9. Four-armed Sita Tārā	Solampur – 1
10. Four-armed DurgotTārāni Tārā	Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri (2)
11. Vajra Tārā	Ajodhya, Ratnagiri (2)
12. Cintamani Tārā	Nagaspur, Adaspur-2
Total -12	**178**

(Note: Figure in parentheses refers to number of sculptures)

Table 3: Forms of Avalokiteśvara

1.Cintamanicakra Avalokiteśvara	Ajodhya, Ratnagiri, Siddhesvara Temple – 3
2. Cintamani Lokeśvara	Khutia temple, Ajodhya -1–, Bhubaneswar (OSM), Ratnagiri, 3
3. Khasarpana Lokeśvara	In different places –17 AchuTārājpur, Balasore, Bhainchua, Baneswarnasi, Ranibandha, Mudupur, etc.
4. Lokanatha	Udayagiri (3), Jajpur, Kapila, Solampur, Bhubaneswar, Ramesvara in Baudh
5. Harihara (?) Lokeśvara/ Avalokita in Dharmacakra-mudra	Kolanagiri, Balasore, Choudwar – 4
6.Vajradharma/ Rakta Lokeśvara	Siddhesvara Temple in Jajpur, Ratnagiri, Achutarajpur, Aragarh –
7. Sadaksari	Ratnagiri – 2
8. Jatamukuta	In different places -38
9. Sankhanatha	Baudh, Udayagiri now in San Francisco Museum, Mudgala 1 –4
10. Amoghapasa Lokeśvara	Solampur, Udayagiri, Ratnagiri (4) –6
11. Sugatisandarsana Lokeśvara	Udayagiri (Patna Museum), Cuttack, Dharmasala – 3
12. Halahala Lokeśvara	Achutarajpur, Meghesvara Temple in Bhubaneswar –2
13. Standing Lokeśvara and Seating Lokeśvara in conventional mode	In different places –37
14. Visnu-Lokeśvara	Siddhesvara temple at Jajpur – 1
15. Simhanatha Avalokiteśvara	Baneswarnasi 1
Total (14)	130

Table 4: Forms of Manjuśrí

1 Siddhaikavira	Ratnagiri (bronze) –1	
2. Dharmasankha samadhi	Ratnagiri – 3	
3. Dharmadhatuvagisvara	Aragarh –1	
4. Arapacana Manjuśrí	Ratnagiri 2, Achutarajpur 1, Kusinga 1, Khiching (Baripada Museum) 1 –5	
5. Manjuvajra	Amarprasadgarh –1	
6. Manjuvara	Ratnagiri (5), Khiching (3), Nagaspur (1), Vajragiri (1), Kalyanpur (1) – 11	
7. Manjughosa	Ratnagiri monolithic stupa –1	
8. Maharajalila Manjuśrí	Ratnagiri (3), OSM (1), Paschimesvara Siva temple in Talcher (1) –5	
9. Vajrarāga	On the back slab of Aksobhya and Amitabha image at SDO- compound Museum –2	
10. Two-armed with book on utpala and varada mudra (non-textual) – both standing and seating	Ratnagiri monolithic stupa – 29, other images at Ratnagiri –12, Lalitgiri –1, Brahmavana –1, Vajragiri (OSM) –1, Udayagiri – as attendant deity in various *mandala*s as well as the central image in the rock-cut Manjuśrí *mandalas* –8, Solampur –2, Dihakula –1, AchuTārājpur –3 – 58	
Total 10	**88**	

Table 5: Cult of Eight Bodhisattvas and other Bodhisattvas

1. Samantabhadra	Lalitgiri (I) 3, Udayagiri-6, Solampur(s)1, Ratnagiri(s) 3 – 13
2 Maitreya	Ratnagiri(s &i) 4, Udayagiri 7 (s), Lalitgiri 4 (i), AchuTārājpur (i) 2, Solampur(s) 1 Khiching (s) 1, Baud 1 – 20
3. Lokeśvara	In many places
4 Ksitigarbha	Lalitgiri (i&ii) 2, Ratnagiri (s) 3, Udayagiri(s) 7, AchuTārājpur (I) 1, Solampur (s) 1 Khiching (s) 1– 15
5 Vajrapani	Ratnagiri (s&i) 4, Vajragiri (i) 1, Lalitgiri (i) 1, Achutarajpur (i) 1, Solampur(s) 1, Udayagiri (s) 5, Khiching (s)
6.Akasagarbha	Lalitgiri (i) 2, and at other places under Vajrapani section
7. Manjuśrí	In many places
8. Sarvanivaranaviskakambhin	Lalitgiri (i &s) 2, Ratnagiri 3 Udayagiri (s) 8
Other Bodhisattvas	
1.Candraprabha	Lalitgiri 1

5. Religious equations between brahmanical religions and Buddhism: some Questions

How is then religious dynamics viewed in a poly-religious context, as in early medieval Orissa? Xuanzang had this to note in Orissa about the equation between brahmanical religion and Buddhism in Orissa of 7ᵗʰ century:

> The people are indefatigable students and many of them are Buddhists. There are 100 Buddhist monasteries and a myriad brethren are Mahayanists. Of Deva temple there were fifty, and *the various sects lived pell-mell* (emphasis mine) (Watters 1961: 193).

I-tsing says thus:

The two systems (Hinayana and Mahayana) are perfectly in accordance with the noble doctrine… Both equally conform to the truth and lead us to *nirvana*… The two systems are, in like manner, taught in India, for in essential points they differ from each other… Those who worship the Bodhisattvas and read the Mahayana sutras are called the Mahayanists, while those who do not are called the Hinayanists. (Takakusu 1966: 14-15)

Sylvain Levi, in the ancient context of Nepal, wrote:

> A rigid classification, which simplistically divided divinities up under the headings, Buddhism, Saivism, and Vaisnavism, would be pure nonsense; under different names, and at different levels, the same gods are the most part common to different confessions (Levi 1905 I: 319).

On the other hand scholars point out that such similarities between Hinduism and Buddhism led to the disappearance of Buddhism India. "If Buddhism declined after Pala period… What was the real condition of Buddhism? Was it not a bundle of popular cults and superstitions, which could be called in any name? True there were few monasteries, patronised by kings and landlords and also monkish culture proclaiming the world as void entity… But the Buddhist monks were parasites living on the financial support of kings and landlords, and as soon as this financial support was withdrawn, monks of the great monasteries at once turned into beggars for whom none was to shed tears. Had Buddhism in its later forms been an organised religion with followers among the people it could not perish all of a sudden."(Bhattacharyya, 1981:15)

Kunal Chakrabarti holds the view that the "in popular understanding Buddhist and brahmanical icons came to perform the same function. Even in the realm of underlying metaphysical premises tantricism brought the Buddhist and brahmanical ways of worship close. When both the religions began to receive royal patronage irrespective of the personal faiths of the rulers it carried the universal message that the differences between them, if any, were marginal and that both were entitled to be venerated in almost equal manner. (Chakrabarti 2001: 142).

6. Shared cultural matrix

In the cultural matrix of Orissa, different religions used certain common baseline concepts. The origin of these baselines may be brahmanical or Buddhist but they formed part of the ritualistic behaviours and belief system of followers of all religions of India. Maharaja Gopacandra' inscriptions, which is dated to 6ᵗʰ century AD, states that his subordinate,

Acuyata gave land grants for provisions for *bali* (offering to all creature), *caru* (offerings to ancestors), *gandha* (sandal paste), *puspa* (flowers), and *dipa* (lamps), and so forth, for providing for the *havis* (oblations), *pinda patra*. Similarly, the two Talcher plate grants of Bhaumakara king, Sivakaradeva (number 13 and 14) refer to land grants for the provisions for *snapana* (ablutions), gandha (sandal paste), *puspa* (flowers) , *dhupa*, naivedya, caru, puja for the Lord Buddha Buddha bhattaraka in the shrine (*ayatana*) built by Amu bhattraka , as well as sleeping or resting *snapana, vandapana, lepana* of Lord . Worship of gods and goddesses, certain ritualistic practices in the worship of these deities, worship of particular gods and goddesses for fulfilment of existential goals became common to all religions of Indian in this period. Moreover in south Asian cultural context, same god and goddesses were worshipped in different religions in the same or different name. Archaeological excavations in Ratnagiri, Lalitigiri, Udayagiri have revealed images of Ganesa, Siva lingams, Mahisamardini Durga. Gajalaxmi as a decorative motif is found in brahmanical temples and Buddhist sacred complex as well. Karuna Matsyendranatha, who is a form of Avalokitesvara, is worshipped as Visnu in Nepal (**Slusser 1982**).

7. Eclecticism/Syncretism/or competition

The theme of eclecticism, which has been accepted as a truism, pervades historical writings. Historians speak of harmony, eclecticism among various religions in ancient times. Sylvan Levi's statement that the *Nepal Mahatmya* faithfully reflects the eclectic syncretism, which has nearly prevailed in Nepal, finds an exact echo in modern writing on the Somavamsis of Orissa. The authors state that the epigraphic records of the period refer to diverse creeds and point out clearly the catholicity of mind and tolerant policy of the Somavamsi kings ((Levi 1905: 204; Sarma 1983: 69).

What is missed out in these perspectives of polar opposites of antagonisms-syncretism is moot question of why particular features of another religion are incorporated by another? The incorporation of the Buddhist deities into the fold of brahmanical pantheon or vice versa indicates a more complex level of interaction and symbiosis between Buddhism and brahmanical religions. It reflects a degree of competition between the two religions in order to attract the parishioners of the other by incorporating certain baseline concepts and icons to attract the parishioners of another religion. These baseline concepts—irrespective of their provenance – were very popular. They include worship of gods and goddesses, several rites, Tantric traditions, incorporation of autochthonous deities, alchemy, various life cycles rites, etc. The origin of these features may be brahmanical, Buddhist or independent but were adapted and incorporated by other religions. Both religions wanted to incorporate within them by giving sectarian hues to these elements.

One instance of this incorporation is the incorporation of tribal elements. While the brahmanical religions incorporated many deities and identified them as forms of Siva or Sakti viz. Stambhesvari, Maninagesvari, Gokarnesvara, etc. the Buddhist incorporated into their fold under the name of Parnasabari who has been described in the iconographic texts *Sarvasabaranam bhagavati* (the goddess of all *sabaras* (Getty 1978:134). Other instances of mutual borrowing and adaptation from other contexts can be cited. Caste system is an area, which Buddhism borrowed. Even though the Buddhism denied it the fact that many kings who described themselves as *Paramasaugata* declared themselves to be believers and upholders of caste.[1] These instances of competitions through borrowing and

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1Many of the Bhaumakara rulers proclaimed that they had restored and upheld cast system. For example the Neulpur

adaptation occur in both religions. The domination and subordination each religion can only be studied in particular context. What seems to be clear in historical records of early medieval times is not of hegemonic Hinduism incorporating Buddhism, tribal elements, Tantric practices and cults through *agrahara* bramhanas but a more nuanced relation between two religions is a shared cultural contexts.

A frequent reference to syncretism, eclecticism is encountered while describing inter-religious equations. As noted earlier, Sylvan Levi stated that the Nepal *Mahatmya* represents religious syncretism. This is particularly referred to in connection with an eclectic Hinduism, which accepts diversities with an élan. The classic example is that of the incorporation of the Buddha as an *avatar* of Visnu. The *Bhagavata Purana* first refers to this. The first epigraphic and sculptural representation of the Buddha *avatar* is found in the Pallava and in Osian sun temple (8th-9th century) AD respectively.

 A religious cult is syncretic when it combines soteriological, social and instrumental religion within a single, exclusive and monotheistic framework (Gellner 1996:100) and hence opposes the use of any other system. This definition fits hardly with brahmanical religion or with Buddhism. Brahmanical religions accept high degree of cultural relation and accept diverse paths to salvation.

Rather syncretism disguises understanding of an important process of competition existing between two religions. Criticising Levi's comment that the *Nepal Mahatmya* faithfully reflects the eclectic syncretism Brinkhaus argues that the passages Levi quotes reflect rather a special from of conflict and inclusivistic attempt to resolve the conflict (Brinkhaus 1980: 279). He states that the manner of confrontation does not raise doubts about the validity of an alien religion which has an independent existence and its own set of traditions, but rather attempt to incorporate and at the same time subordinate the religion to one's own. (ibid.). Dumont's concept of hierarchical encompassment in the context of caste system applies equally to Hinduism-Buddhism relations. Dumont's concept of hierarchical encompassment postulates that the superior pole of an opposition absorbs within it a higher level what is opposed to it at the lower level (Dumont 1980: 239). For instance, practices of the Theravada and the Mahayana were absorbed in the higher poles of Vajrayāna Buddhism. Allen's remarks that Vajrayāna Buddhism is based on simple inversion of orthodox monastic Buddhism (Allen 1973: 13) is true at one level, yet at higher level Vajrayāna Buddhism integrated the *Sravakayana* practices, the Mahayana devotionalism and ritualism of Vajrayāna Buddhism within a single Vajrayāna Buddhism framework. The same applies to the relationship of Vaisnavism and Saivism. The sectarian exclusiveness of the Vaisnavas is evident for many Vaisnava texts. The *Narada Pancaratra* says that Brahma, Rudra, Surya, their *saktis* or their children should neither be worshipped daily nor even be resorted to for the fulfilment of any desire. But at the higher level, such exclusiveness gave way to the development of Hari-Hara cult. The process of polar opposition at the lower level and integration of opposition at the higher level marked the relationship of Hinduism and Buddhism. The orthodox Buddhism decried the worship of divinities, it opposed brahmanical religions but at the higher-level brahmanical deities are incorporated and given subordinate status. It also holds true to the attempt of

grant of Subhakara records that *Paramasaugata* Subhakara II established the *varnasrama* in its golden age purity in strict accordance with the scriptures (Mishra 1934- 1–7).

brahmanical religions to incorporate Buddhism within them. Buddha became an *avatar* of Visnu. Other deities like Tara, Mahakala were also incorporated within brahmanical pantheon and hierarchy.

Buddhism and Hinduism in early medieval Orissan context operated in a shared cultural environment, an environment characterised by popularity of goddesses, popularity of magic, belief in worship of instrumental deities, numerous rites, rituals, observances and cyclical and calendrical festivals. In these situations, contestation between two religions took place in a very subtle way, given the shared nature of certain base-line concepts, which are common to both religions.

8. Routinisation in Vajrayāna Buddhism

Since competition was to attract the soul and patronage of the parishioners of another religion, it is likely that such contestation found expression in idioms that were acceptable to people in general. There were certain ideologies in brahmanical religions and Buddhism, which prescribed five 'm' karas for salvation. There were of course some serious believers who believed in Tantric practices as a soteriological means to attain salvation (*mahasukha*). But many of these Buddhist *Siddhas* engage in these practices in order to learn magic and alchemy, which definitely had instrumental value.

The *Hevajra Tantra* (*Hevajra Tantra* 2.3.41-5) describes a *yogini* as one who is characterized by his being over all worldly distinction (of caste, purity and etc) The Lord said "food and drink must be just as it comes. One should not avoid things wondering whether they are suitable or unsuitable." (ibid.) This is contrary to a layman's perception of the nature of religion, which involves rituals, worship, purity etc. Even though Vajrayāna Buddhism as soteriology was esoteric, as an exoteric religion it is highly unlikely that monastic organisations of early medieval India, which had established economic interests, would have preferred the open display of such antinomian practices of esoteric Buddhism. In fact, the Buddhist *tantras* betray traces of a process of routinisation of these extreme practices. Still some members of the monastic community of the early medieval India were engaged in sexual practices as is evident from the *Kriya Samuccaya* of the 12th C (*Kriya Samuccaya* 1977 352-5).

The process of routinisation is evident from the *Hevajra Tantra* which prescribes: "First the precepts should be given, then the ten. Then he should teach *Vaibhasya*, then the *Sautantrika*. After that he should teach *Yogacara*, then the *Madhyamika*. After he knows levels of the ways of Mantras then he should begin on *Hevajra*. The pupil who lays holds with zeal will succeed. There is no doubt." (*Hevajra Tantra II* 90) Kanhapada's commentary on this passage prescribes a process from exotericism to esotericism rather than outright display of antinomian behaviour. The *Samvarodaya Tantra* (17.1-6) describes the characteristics of *vajra* master who should give initiation. They include tranquil appearance, who has subdued his passion, who knows the practices of mantra and *tantras*, who is compassionate and who is termed in treatise, who talks to sweetly to everybody, who treats all living beings as his own, who always takes pleasure in alms-giving and is engaged in yoga and *dhyāna*, meditation, who speaks truth, who does not injure living beings whose mind is compassionate and intent upon benefiting others.

"Sameness is the emblem (*mudrā*) of his mind. He is the protector of living beings; he

knows the various intentions of living beings and is regarded as the kinsman by those who have no protector. His body is complete as to sense organs. He is beautiful and agreeable to see. He knows the true meaning of consecration. His speech is clear, he is an ocean of merit and he always and continuously resort to *pitha* (power place), he is called *acarya*." (Tsuda, 1974: 294) These liberal prescriptions of the nature of *Vajracārya* contain inclusive accounts of all three *yanas*.

This might be an actual or ideal representation of a Tantric *acarya* but the fact such as interpretation is given in a core *tantra* (*anuttarayoga tantra*) like the *Samvarodaya* suggests that within monastic communities such as routinisation was at work. It was in response to the growth and development of Buddhism as primarily a religion of lay people. It is to be noted in this connection only very few deities in yab-yum pose are found in Indian context is general and in Orissa in particular.

One can suggest that early medieval monasticism favours such a routinisation and scaling down of extreme practices. In present Nepal the newer Buddhists maintain a distinction between inner and outer divinities. The esoteric deities with *Yugānadha* pose are kept in inner chamber while other deities are found in the other parts of the monastery. Only those who have been initiated to the *Vajrayāna* tradition are allowed to inner level. Whether this was in practice in the Orissan Buddhism is not known (this requires an analysis of the architecture of the monastic complex). But the near absence of the Yab-Yum images point out that an open display of an antinomian Vajrayāna practices were dissuaded in general. Another evidence of such routinisation is the absence of Buddhist deities trampling on their Hindu counterparts in Orissa. As pointed out there are certain cultural idioms, which are very popular and cut across religious idioms. One is the use of Gaja-Laksmi; the other is the popularity of gods and goddesses like Ganapati, Sarasvati, Siva and Visnu. Their representation as subordinate deities to Buddhist deities as prescribed in Buddhist literature would not have acceptance from the lay people who followed and worshipped them. The fact that Buddhist sites preserve Mahisamardini, Ganesa, *Sivalinga* and other images suggest their cross-religious appeal. To represent them as being trampled by Buddhist divinity would have been antagonistic to Buddhism as an adaptable religion, which borrowed and incorporated many cultural icons into their pantheon.

Therefore, contestation between the two religions found expressions in popular realms. They include the realm of divinities, rites, cyclic rituals, observances and other facets of everyday religion.

9. Religious Equation: Study of Iconography

One area of cross-religious borrowing and adaptation was in the sphere of iconography. The priestly class of each religion tried to attract the patronage and support base of wider social groups and sometimes the support of the practitioner of opposite religion. They tried to attract the contending religion's support base by investing their divinities with forms and symbols of competing religion and adapted and integrated them in a language and in a framework of their respective religion. Iconography was a fertile field of such cross-religious experimentation.

Lienhard's analysis of this relationship between Hinduism and Buddhism in the context of Nepal offers insight on the relationship between the two religions in our period of study. He identified three processes in his theoretical conceptualisation of inter-religious equation (Lienhard 1978: 278). These three processes are: *borrowing*— borrowing from one religion to one' own; *Parallelism* — by which functional equivalents are developed in one religion of the cults and rites of the other; and *Identification* – whereby a single cult is frequented all under different names (Gellner terms this as examples of *multivalency of symbols*).

To this conceptualisation could be identified four other processes, namely *subordination* — in which divinities are directly given a subordinate position in the competing religion; *conflation*— in which two or more divinities or motifs of the contesting religion were conflated to invent anew deity in their respective religion; *Conversion* — in which the divinities of the opposite religion were converted to be part of one's pantheon and *Combination* of any of the above six processes. The following pages analyse these processes

9.1. Evidence of Borrowing: Hindu Divinities in Buddhism

a. Mahakala: Mahakala is regarded as a form and prototype of Siva. The main temple of Ratnagiri, which was built in the usual Kalinga-style of architecture, is dedicated to Vajra Mahakala, a Vajrayāna variety of Mahakala. The popularity of the deity is still evident today is Orissa where he is worshipped as a Hindu deity. Observances (*Bratas*) in the form of *Vajra-Mahakala Brata* (this *brata* is still observed in Orissa.) In the *Sadhanamala* and the *Nispannayogavali* he is described as having one face with two, four or six arms and eight faces with sixteen arms. He shared the following characteristics with Siva:: 1 three eyes, *trisula* and decked in ornaments of serpents indicating borrowing from Hinduism. However, he is adapted in Buddhism as a guardian of kitchen. I-tsing refers to Mahakala who is found in great monasteries in India "at the side of a pillar to the kitchen or before the perch. Being always wiped with oil, his countenance is blackened and the deity is called Mahakala" (Takakusu 1966: 38). The ancient tradition asserts that he belonged to the beings in the heaven of the Great God (Mahesvara). At meal times, those who serve in the kitchen offer light and incense and arrange all kinds of prepared food before the deity (ibid.).

9.2. Evidence of Parallelism
In both religions the functional or iconographic equivalents or the both are found suggesting a process of parallelism

Evidence *of Parallelism*

Hindu divinities	Aspects of parallelism	Buddhist divinities	Function
Chinnamasta			
Iconographic			
Vajrayogini[2]	_		
1. Dhanada	Functional	Cintamani Tara	

2 Chinnamasta's Buddhist origin is discussed in the previous section.

Vajrayogini   _

2.   Durga   Functional   Astamahabhaya Tara
3.   Indra   Functional   Vajrapani

Kartikkeya

Iconographic

Manjusri[3]   _

4.   Kubera
Iconographic and functional

Jambhala [4]   God of wealth

5.Manasa   Functional and iconographic   Janguli

6.Matsyendranatha (Krsna inSimilar traditions   Karunamaya Avalokitesvara
Nepal)

7.Narayana

Iconographic functional

Sristkartar-Lokesvara[5]   Creator god

8.Nilakantha

Similar tradition

Nilakantha Avalokitesvara[6]   --

9.Saptamatrika

Iconographic and functional

Hariti[7]   Goddesses of fecundity

10.Sarasvati

Functional

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3 Manjusri is worshipped as Kartikkeya. This god is knowledge and learning is represented in the *Guhyasamaja-tantra* as Kartikkeya. In the *Manjusrimudrakalpa*, Manjusri is called Kartikkeya, Manjusri (*dvitya-duara samjpe Kartikkeya Manjusri Mayurasana*). (*Guhyasamaj tantra*: XXVII).

4 Kubera/Jambhala: Like pot-bellied Kubera Jambhala's iconographic form is represented a pot-bellied man. Kubera holds a bag of treasure but Jambhala holds a mongoose which vomits jewels.

5Narayana/ Sristkartar Lokesvara: The Buddhist god having one face and two hands is depicted with gods coming out of his body which suggest a clear copy from Sristkartar Lokesvara. An image of the deity with Hindu gods emitting from it appears on the gold window of the Lalitpur royal palace. At first glance his form is very similar to the Hindu icon of Narayana or Ardhanarisvra surrounded by ten *avataras* (eg parallelism, subordination

6**Nilakantha Avalokitesvara**: Like Siva whose throat has become blue after churning the poison of Vasuki. The Buddhist iconographic texts describe purely in terms of the description of Siva as wearing a tiger skin, having a blue throat by poison and flanked by cobras (borrowing, parallelism).

7**Saptamatrka/Hariti**: The mother goddess who carries a body in their lap. Hariti holds a child. She is regarded as goddess of fecundity.

Manjusri[8]	d/Goddess of learning	
11. Sitala	Functional	Parnasabari
12. Sri Laksmi		
Iconographic and functional		
Vasudhara[9]	Goddesses of prosperity	
13Sri-laksmi	Functional	Mahasri Tara
14.Surya		
Iconographic		
Marici[10]	_	
15.Varahi	Iconographic	Varahamukhi
16.Visnu-Hayagriva		
Iconographic		
Saptasatika Hayagriva[11]	__	

9.3. Multivalency of Symbols:

Many deities who are functionally equivalent and have shared iconographic forms is different names. Laksmi, the brahmanical goddess of prosperity is known in Buddhism as Vasudhara. Her popular form is Kumari. In Nepal Kumari worship is vital in any religious worship. Similarly Janguli is known is Buddhism as Manasa while the folk name is Jagulei in Orissa. Other instances of multivalency of symbols can only be ascertained by studying the folk deities and their traditional roles. Karunamaya-Matsyendranath in Nepal is known by different names. Buddhists always refer him as Karunamaya. Others call him *Bugadya* (the village where he spends half the year). Hindus worship as Siva while the bramhanas of Lalitpur like to relate a story, which illustrates his identify with Krsna.

8**Manjusri/Sarasvati:** Sri Pancami is celebrated as a festival of Manjusri and Sarasvati for skill and learning.

9**Sri Laksmi/Kumari/ Vasudhara**: The functional equivalent of Sri-Laksmi in Buddhism was Vasudhara. The *Vashundhara-Vratopatti Aradhana* a Sanskrit Buddhist text copied in NS 923 AC (1802 AD) claims that the goddess assumes three fold form of Vasudhara or the Maha-Laksmi or the great prosperity and Kumari, the Viraja. The *Sadhanamala*'s description of Vasudhara clearly matches with the iconographic form of Laksmi.

10 Surya- Marici. She is the goddess of dawn and is having a chariot drawn either by horses or by boars

11**Visnu Hayagriva/ Saptasatika Hayagriva**: Hayagriva, according to the Puranic mythology was primarily a demon to kill whom Visnu assumed the form of a horse-headed man. The special cognisance of the Saptasatika Hayagriva is the scalp of a horse over his head. Another aspect of the same god associated with – is three faced and eight armed and the number of arms as well as the attributed placed in his hands clearly associated him with Visnu Hajo-Hayagriva temple of Assam illustrates an incorporation of this folk deity, first by the Buddhist and followed by Hindus. (Jaiswal 1985: 1-14).

9.4. Any of the combinations:

While Sristkartar-Lokesvera illustrates an example of borrowing parallelism and subordination, Mahacina Tara/Tara represents an example of borrowing and parallelism. Similarly, Nilakantha Avalokitesvara points out the process of borrowing and parallelism at work. In most cases where Buddhism had been borrower, there seems to be a combination of borrowing-parallelism or borrowing subordination at work.

9.5. Evidence of Conversion:

Fieldwork reveals many instances where Buddhist deities were converted and worshipped as Hindu divinities in temples of modern Orissa. Now that Buddhism is totally extinct in Orissa, it is not being possible to identify the exact timing of this process of conversion. More often, the Buddhist divinities are encountered lying on the roadside and are worshipped as goddesses. Mallman has encountered a Halahala Lokesvara, who is worshipped as Brahma and Sarasvati (Mallman 1961: 203-20) goddess Bhattarika and goddess Mangala, on close iconographic examination reveals to be Tara. A Siva *lingam* in Soro in Balasore district is inscribed with a Buddhist *dharani* (De 1953:271-73). Similarly the Bhaskaresvara lingam is argued to be an Asokan pillar (Panigrahi 1986: 314). Panigrahi believes that the conversion took place around 5th century AD when Bhubaneswar was emerging as *Ekamresvara*. The temporal dimension of the conversion is important for it reveals whether the divinities of Buddhism were converted when Buddhism was still extinct, or it started later in the aftermath of the decline. In the case of the former, which seems to be the case, as suggested by the Bhaskaresvara temple, it might have involved strong resistance from the followers of Buddhism.

9.6 Evidence of conflation:

The process involves fusion of the elements of two deities into one. One instance of conflation is the Buddhist deity Yamantaka, who a conflation of Yama and Antaka (Durga). Mahasri is the conflation of Laksmi and Sarasvati.

10. Appropriation and Accommodation of Buddhism in Brahmanical Religions

There was also an attempt to develop a composite deity combining the attributes of Siva, Buddha as in Java and Bali.[12] A composite image of Hari-Hara (now in the Gupta gallery of Indian Museum, Calcutta) shows the four-armed Hari-Hara at the centre the backhands carrying a trident and a conch-shell and the front hands a skull-cup and a discuss. He bears the other usual features and there are some attendants by his side. What is unique about the image is the presence of Surya and Buddha in the left and right of the main sculpture.

The hallows around the image of Buddha and Surya and the lotus pedestal on which the former stands indicates that the Buddha was represented as an equal deity (unlike many

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12 The Baudha *stutis* of Bali have considerable Saiva admixture. Hooykas has observed that some of them make the impression of purely Saiva, while the others are shared by the Bauddhas and Saivas. He further notices that *dukuh* priest of Bali was represented in three varieties, Saiva, Bauddha and Saiva-Buddha. In important ceremonial feasts one finds four Saiva and one Buddhist priests.. Similarly at the cremation of princes, the consecration of water of the two sects are mingled together. In two important Saiva rituals, particularly important to note is their role in the *Ekadasa Rudra* ceremony, which is celebrated once in a century (Hooykas 1973: 8, 177).

Buddhist sculptures where brahmanical gods were assigned subordinate and inferior positions (Banerjea 1985: pl. XLVIII Fig 1).

Two other sculptures, now in the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta are a carved brass figure of Siva-Lokesvara and another image of Surya-Lokesvara. The brass figure of Siva-Lokesvara shows the composite two armed ithyphallic god standing on the *Samapadasthanaka* pose on a double-petalled lotus, his right hand holds up a *kapala* and the left a *trisula*, he is very sparsely ornamented and bears on the top his *Jatamukuta* a tiny seated figure of Dhyani Buddha Amitabha to whose family Avalokitesvara belongs. (Banerjea: 1985: 547, pl. XLVI Fig 4).

A fragmentary relief from Orissa shows the representation of Surya-Lokesvara. The composite god appears to have been ten-armed. Six of whose hands are gone, of the remaining two hands the two rights hold a noose and a full-blown lotus flower by its stalk and another unidentified object. The tiny figure of *Dhyani* Buddha Amitabha seated on the top of the raised coils of the *Jatamukuta* indicates Lokesvara character of the god while the full blown lotus held by his parallel hands on either side is a manner in which they are shown in the hands of a north Indian Sun icon emphasises his solar nature. The figure is dated to 11th century. (Banerjea 1985: 548).

This process was also reflected in the literary texts as well. Bodh Gaya– the most sacred pilgrim centre for the Buddhist as well as centre for Hindus provides interesting vignettes about inter-religious relationship, particularly between Vaisnavism and Buddhism. Xuanzang records that a brahmana who had built the Buddhist *vihara* at Bodh Gaya. "On the site of the present *vihara* Asokaraja first built a small *vihara*. Afterwards there was a brahmana who constructed it on a large scale." (Beal 1958: 119). The brahmana at first was not a believer of Buddha but on Lord Siva's advice he returned and built the *vihara* and his younger brother excavated the tank *(ibid*.). An important containing an inscription reveals attempt to articulate the inter-religious relationship in a manner so as to contain sectarian conflict but simultaneously offers insights into attempts to superimpose a religion (in this case Saivism) in a Buddhist complex. The sculpture represents Visnu, Siva and Surya, all in very crude fabric (Cunningham 1892: pl. XXVIII 3).

The inscription on it refers to the dedication of a figure of *Caturmukhi* Mahadeva who was installed in the "pleasant abode, the temple of the Buddha, the lord of righteousness" by Kesava, son of Ujjavala, the stone cutter "for the benefits of the descendants of the *snatakas*" (the erudite Saivite Brahmin scholar) residing at Mahabodhi. A tank of exceeding depth and holy river Ganges has been excavated for this good people at the cost of thousand drachmas" (*ASIAR* vii 1908-09:139-58). The inscription belongs to the reign of Dharmapala's reign (8th century). It reveals the subtle way in which brahmanical religions were imported to the most sacred Buddhist monument. It at once acknowledges the importance of Buddha but simultaneously it attempted superimposition and take over by the Saivite.

Similarly the Vaisnavas acknowledged Buddhist presence in Gaya. The tradition here is that Visnu here was born as Lord Buddha. The Vaisnava at first did not identify Visnu with Buddha but with the sacred Bodhi tree, which to the pious Buddhist still forms the centre of the universe. The *Prayogas* or books on ritual prescribed for Vaisnava pilgrims at Gaya and the sacred *tirthas* in its neighbourhood offers evidence of Buddhist supremacy in the

region. In Manirama's *Gaya yatra* (*MS III ASB Sanskrit Manuscript* D, 27 fol. 17 A). The pilgrim's visit to Bodh Gaya on the fourth day of his pilgrimage to holy centre is described in the following manner. "…Thereafter he should bow down before the Dharma, Dharmesvara and the Mahabodhi tree in the due order. On this occasion the following verses should be recited." "Adoration to the noble *asvastha*, the Bodhi tree whose soul is Brahma, Visnu and Siva (as means) of saving our dead ancestors and makers. The relations in my own and in my mother's family who have gone to hell, may they all come to heaven forever through seeing and touching tree. Oh noble tree, I have paid off a three-fold debt by coming to Gaya. May I be saved from the ocean of rebirth through the favours." Verses like these are found in other manuscripts like *Gayanu-Sthana-Paddhati* (*ASB Sanskrit Manuscript* MS D 26).

These evidence point out the subtle manner in which Bodh Gaya was appropriated by the Vaisnavas through the *Pipalla* (Bodhi tree), which is sacred to the Vaisnava as well. The epigraphic, textual and sculptural evidence quoted above reveal two trends simultaneously at work. On one hand there is a ready acknowledgement of dominance of a particular cult in a particular space, on the other there are attempts to elbow out, push back the dominant sect/religion from the place and replace it by a rival sect or religion.

The degree of superimposition and appropriation varied in different contexts depending on the popularity of the existing cults, its embededness in the cultural milieu, its support system and degree of patronage by the ruling elite. The *Gayamahatmya*'s acknowledgement of the Buddhist presence in Gaya speaks of the former trend (i.e. acknowledgement of the supremacy) while the inscription, which describes installation of a Caturmukhi Siva, reveals a superimposition on the Buddhist Bodh Gaya, which later on was complete with the taking over by the Mahabodhi temple by the Saiva *mahantas*. Similarly, the *Ekamraksetra*, which was a Saiva centre, came under attempted Vaisnava domination. The *Ekamra Purana*—a text of 12-13th[th] century, prescribes that the pilgrim should visit the Vaisnava temple of Ananta-Vasudeva (built by the Gangas) before paying homage to Lingaraja (18th and 25th chapters, *Ekamra Purana* 1933).

The *Ekamra Purana* narrates a story of the accommodation of Vaisnava deity at *Ekamraksetra* (Panigrahi 1986: 345) but the *Kapilasamhita*, written during the reign of Prataparudradeva (16th century), gives a contrasting view narrating that Vasudeva fixed the abode of Siva at *Ekamra* (Bhubaneswar). Thus the former, which is a Saiva text, makes concessions to a Vaisnava deity in a predominantly Saiva culture, where as the latter provides evidence of attempts at giving a superior position to Vaisnavas vis-à-vis Saivites at a Saiva centre. As noted earlier, the presence of *Garuda* with bull in front of the *bhogamandapa* of the Lingaraja temple, change over of the *ayudha* at the top of the Lingaraja, the tradition association with the change as well as the *Kapilasamhita's* narration of the story of the origin of the *Ekamraksetra* clearly suggest an endeavour at Vaisnava superimposition.

There is another evidence of such an appropriation by a rival cult. Tara is spoken in the *Haravijaya* of Ratnakara of (9th century) as a form of Candi who originated in the origin of the Arya-Avalokitesvara, and who is said to have been amidst lotus bosom (Handique 1965: 548). Sarala Das's *Candi Purana* (the author of the Oriya *Mahabharata*) speaks of Ugra Tara as a Yogini emanating from the Devi-the great goddess of Hinduism (Sarala Das

Candi Purana, ORP 101 folio 201-202). Another example of deliberate syncretism is the *Twenty one Praises of Tara*, which had liberally borrowed from Saivism and give an appearance of a hymn of Saivite nature (Wayman 1959: 36-43). Nagaraju also refers to similar attempt to incorporate Buddhism within Vaisnavism in Karnataka (Nagaraju 1969: 67-75).

These processes of appropriation of Buddhism had begun long ago as Xuanzang observes that he saw hundred monasteries in Kashmir but the religion followed in them was mixed hinting thereby that the people worshipped both Siva and Buddha (Dutta1939 I: 36-37). Xuanzang also observed a similar process in Orissa, when he referred: there are above hundred monasteries and myriad brethren all Mahayanist, of Deva temples, there were fifty and the various sects lived pell-mell (Watters1905 II: 193).

These evidence which show attempted appropriation and dominance of rival religious centres and deities of rival sects/religions operated within the boundary of shared cultural space. These competing religions and sects shared certain baseline concepts, used similar idioms, and engaged in common cultural practices. Simultaneously, they engaged in contestations to broaden their support base and religious territory by borrowing the locomotifs of their rival religions and presenting it in a manner to give an appearance of their distinct religious hues as well. Present their religions in a superior way vis-à-vis their rival religions.

The Vaisnavas liberally borrowed the Buddhist ideas of *Sunya*. The Vaisnava poets of Orissa in the 16th century employed numerous Buddhist terminologies in their poetic expressions (Balarama Das's *Virata Gita*, Acyutananda in *Sunya Samhita*). Despite these healthy competitions in a shared cultural and geographical space, there were occasional flare-ups in sectarian bellicosity. The *Dharmapuja-vidhana* refers to the *sadharmis* and the Buddhists of the Jajpur region of Orissa who are said to have been persecuted by the bramhanas (Bhattacharyya 1994: 334). The *Caitanya Bhagabata* composed by Iswar Dash towards the end of the 16th century records a tradition as how Anangabhimadeva sided with Brahmins and clubbed thirty-two Buddhists when they failed to satisfy him in answering a test. (Panigrahi 1986: 312). The *Madalapanji* (the Jagannatha temple chronicle) records a similar story of the persecution of the Buddhists by Madana Mahadeva, who is represented in the text as a brother of Anangabhimadeva (*ibid*).

11. Decline –Possible causes

How and why did these monasteries of Orissa disappear in subsequent times? Even if one accepts that the Vaisnava saints, while popularising the Jagannatha cult, appropriated Buddhist idioms or a state-sponsored inclusivistic Jagannatha cult led to the decline of Buddhism, they do not explain the decline in its entirety. If they were the decisive factors, how did other cults, particularly Saivism, retain its popularity in Orissa? Despite the Lingaraja temple being subject to Vaisnava invasion it continues to remain an important Saiva centre and in some measure contests the imperial Jagannatha cult.

Hence the reasons for the decline of Buddhism are to be located within its structure. One reason could be the monastic nature of Buddhism. Buddhist religious structures were primarily not independent structures (the Kalasan inscription in Java, the Dambal inscription of Karnataka however, refer to temples of Tara.) but parts of monastic

complexes, which were subject to Muslim invasion. The destruction of Nalanda and Vikramasila led to the fleeing of Buddhist monks to Tibet (Shastri). Taranath also referred to Turuska invasion implying Muslim invasion of the Buddhist monasteries of Bihar and Bengal (Taranatha: 137-38). It is to be noted that the decline of Buddhism in Orissa coincided with a phase of development and flourishing of Buddhism in Tibet and Nepal.

The monastic-centric nature of Buddhist religious structure was a handicap vis-à-vis brahmanical temple. Unlike the brahmanical temples, which were embedded within socio-economic niches of micro and sub regions, the Buddhist *vihara*s were elaborate structures, which required vast amount of resources to sustain them. Moreover, the monastic nature also meant that they were less embedded with various micro and meso regions.

Another significant factor for the decline of Buddhism in general is its inability to come to terms with folk practices. Eschmann has conceptualised the steps in which tribal-folk deities have been transformed into a Hindu deity (Eschmann 1978:79-99).[13] A visit along the road reveals the process of transformation at work in Orissa. Numerous village goddesses are now integrated to brahmanical religions, the most recent being Tarini. The most significant one from our point is Stambhesvari, who as a wooden goddess is now the presiding deity of a temple in Ganjam (ibid.). Hinduism easily accepts these folk practices as low form of Hinduism. Buddhism also tried to appropriate and accept them as part of Buddhist pantheon. The fierce goddesses, such as Parnasabari are instances of such incorporation and acceptance. But the incorporation and the corresponding position allotted to them in the Buddhist scheme were some what frozen after 7-8th century AD. The schematic arrangements of Buddhist pantheon prevent quick and easy incorporation of autochthonous elements.

Rather the integration came from the above, which neatly developed the Buddhist pantheon keeping their eyes on the support base of their religion. In contrast, the assimilation of folk deities into Hinduism always started from below. It is later in the evolution of the deity that the brahmanical Hinduism integrates it into its fold, introduced rituals and *bija* mantra for regular worship, invented myth and tradition to integrate it with high tradition Hinduism. The process seems to be the bottom to top rather than the top to bottom, as in case of Buddhism. This provided Hinduism a decisive leverage in capturing people at the lower level who always constitute an important segment in the sustenance and longevity of a mass religion. The monastic-centric Buddhism was a big handicap in this regard.

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13 Eschmann has conceptualised the transformation of symbol to image – from Aniconism to iconic and integration into Hinduism as involving five stages aniconic symbol invested with vermilion, irregular worship, ritual specialist in the form of *dehuri*, followed by temples, regular worship and daily rituals consisting of *gandha*, *puspa*, *dhupa*, *dipa* naivedya, *snana* (Eschmann 1978: 79-88).

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BHIMA BHOI AND HIS WRITINGS:
COUNTER CLAIMS AGAINST DOMINANCE

Dr. Fanindam Deo

Myths and legends surround Bhima Bhoi's early life like that of his mentor, Mahima Swamy. A lot of controversy is there regarding his place of birth. Scholars assign from Paiksara, Bolangir district to Kankanapada, Jatasingha and Redhakhol in Sambalpur district and even Joranda in Denkanal district, as his place of birth. [1] Also, scholars have not yet arrived on the exact year of his birth that is between 1949 and 1869. But there is no controversy regarding his year of death, i.e., he died in 1895 at Khaliapali in Bolangir. There are many legends regarding his birth but we need not to go into the details. But one aspect that whether he was blind in interesting?

N. N. Vasu, in his work says Bhima Bhoi was blind by birth[2]. Artaballav Mohanty in his introduction to Stuti Chintamani relying on medieval literature argues that, he was undoubtedly blind by birth[3]. B.C Mazumdar and Binayak Mishra speculate that, he lost his eyesight later[4]. N.K. Sahu and M. Mansingh opine that, he lost his eyesight due to small pox[5]. Chittaranjan Das[6] speculates that, due to his radical stand on caste system the upper caste people of his village threw him in a well where he lost his eyesight. Amongst the followers of Mahima Dahrma also this controversy persists. Biswanath Baba believes that, he was blind by birth whereas Sriya Devi, the adopted daughter of Bhima Bhoi strongly claims that, he was not. Kunja Bihari Baba, a *balkala dhari sannyasi*, Late Matha, Joranda also believes in the latter. (Author interviewed Kunja Bihari Baba in 1994 on *Magha Purnima* at Joranda,) Interestingly, *malikas* of earlier period predicted the coming of Mahima Swamy and Bhima Bhoi as incarnations in the *Kali Yuga*. Achutananda[7] (16th century) predicted, "*Nitya Radha* would take male form in *Kaliyuga* as Bhim Bhoi". Sridhar Das[8] wrote "Radha would take male incarnation at Redhakhol in a Kandha family. He would be blind by birth".

These compositions known as *malikas* began in the 16th century and till now are very popular in Odisha. In this literature, the writer uses apocalyptic vision to foresee the end of Kali Yuga so it is vulnerable to interpolations. These compositions need close scrutiny and analysis. In our opinion, uncritical acceptance of these compositions had led to the controversy. Scholars like Bhagirathi Nepak and J. K. Meher have sought to analyze the internal evidence in Bhima Bhoi's writings and opine that, Bhoi was not blind[9]. They quote some of the compositions of Bhima Bhoi to prove their point.

According to them in the face of information from his own writings, it would be wrong to assume on the basis of *malikas* and other unauthentic sources that Bhima Bhoi was blind. Further they say that in his autobiographical work *Stuti Chintamani*[10] he has so many references of his life, miseries, sufferings, humiliation and other personal references. But nowhere had he mentioned about

his blindness. Sitakanta Mohapatra who reviewed life and writings of Bhima Bhoi in Makers of Indian Literature Series, Sahitya Academy, New Delhi writes, "it would be more reasonable to assume that Bhima Bhoi was not blind."[11] But Bhoi's contemporary reports submitted by the Commissioners of Chhatisgarh and Odisha recorded Bhima Bhoi as born-blind but endowed with natural talents of superior order[12].

II

From the hagiographies of Mahima Swamy and Bhima Bhoi we find that both of them had uncommon birth. One is *ayonisambhuta* (not from his mother's womb); the latter was found by his foster parent. Mahima Swamy was considered *sakara* form of *Alekh param–brahman* and Bhoi as reincarnation of Radha. Former's early life is associated with holy places of India and Odisha, a *sadhu* taking care of the needy, diseased and improving the holy place of Kapilas, endowed with very super-human power. Bhima Bhoi was tribal cowherd boy, a blind illiterate. God transformed him into a poet and assigned the duty to propagate Mahima Dharma. Mahima Swamy, after twenty-four years of penance became a wandering ascetic and remained so till his death. Bhima Bhoi, an ascetic became a householder with five wives. He had one son and one daughter. Both of them predicted their death beforehand and sat on the *Samadhi* on the due date. Swamy built *tungis*, received immense wealth but later he burnt them all. He was not attached to property. He did not recognize any body to inherit. But in case of any crisis among his followers it is believed that he communicated through *sunnya bani*. Bhima Bhoi selected one of his wives as his successor. Perhaps, there were attempts to overcome obscure and low origin of the propagators respectively. Hagiography played an important role. Perhaps, it helped to overcome their shortcomings. A *sadhu* and a tribal with little or no access to sacred text and almost a non-entity to formal education could claim devotional equality if not superiority over the orthodox ruling classes; at last in the eyes of their followers.

In Odishan tradition we came across instances of *sadhus* or mystics claiming yogic power and the *Pancha-sakha* with their *bhakti-marga* counterpoising their powers of seeing the divine or Adi Jagannath against Brahmanic claim to textual knowledge. Bhima Bhoi is one step forward in this matter. He claims the visual experience of the divine everyday. His God is both *Saguna* and *Nirguna*. He resides on all human body irrespective of caste and gender.

The nature of *bhakta* is in itself pure and therefore nothing can pollute him. Bhoi, being *adesia Kandha* and a cowherd boy, was familiar with the sweat and pain of toil. In his compositions he expresses his anguish, injustice, poverty, inequality, exploitation and hopes that all this would come to an end with the victory of Mahima Swami and the subsequent establishment of Mahima Empire. Therefore, he claims the creator is amongst the people in *Sakara* form, which is superior to textual knowledge and even spiritual *darshan*. *Param Brahma* is available at the doorstep, along with the guardian deity of Odisha, Jagannath.

They are available for every ordinary sufferer in this world. Perhaps, this was to valorize the life of the *adivasi* peasants; in this we also infer that, physically seeing and meeting are held to be superior to hearing and reading. So, physically having Mahima Swamy amidst them and seeing him from a close quarter has been held as the highest spiritual experience.

The *adivasi* peasants, with oral tradition could claim devotional equality if not superiority over the orthodox ruling classes. The latter almost monopolized not only property but also the *sastras* and temples considered to be the path of salvation. Meting and listening from a close quarter with Mahima Swamy generated straight, gratifying results like the day to day works of peasants, artisans and tribal people. In Bhima Bhoi we see a step forward than that of the *Pancha-sakha* of the medieval Odisha. Nineteenth century was the prime time for economic exploitation by the *garjat rajas* and *zamidars* of Odisha. They imposed taxes on whatever was susceptible to taxation. They constructed *raja uasa* or palaces and temples at the expenses of the common men. To make the ruler's act of taxing rightful an aura was created around the ruler as divine representative on earth. They needed extra revenue to satisfy the demands of the officials, administrators of the estates. Patronage of *tantric pithas* and shrines of tribal deities in the outskirts of the new capitals of the rulers were no longer suitable to legitimize the elevated position of the new *garjat* chiefs. Rajas as *kshyatriya* kings in the *Brahmanic* model needed temples at the capital town of the estates, in front or even inside the palace. This served the religious as well as political purpose. It also had social impact. Communities were assigned various services to perform in these temples. Big temples may be of the local deity or of Jagannath with landed property and their daily rituals, in a way, were to legitimize the new status of the *garjat rajas* as the divine representative on earth called *raja-mahaprabhu*. Against this we come across *adivasi* peasant uprising in 19th century Odisha. It was against *raja-sarkar-thekedar* nexus. The rebels' main targets were land alienation, new taxation, *thekedars*, and exploiters of forced labors. Therefore, legitimization of their position was crucial for the rulers to counter the rebels.

Rulers of Odisha utilized the ideology of *raja-mahaprabhu*, *thakur-raja* based on the principle of loyalty and allegiance. The power of the ruler, obtained through loyalty to a deity, was ideologically designed as a manifestation of deity on earth. The *raja* was deputy of the deity on earth as well as the Lord of the land (Kingdom), and the subjects subservient to them. Bhima Bhoi in his writings counters the claims of these rulers. Trapping from the Odishan ruler's concept of political authority Bhima Bhoi depicts Mahima Swamy as living and loving Lord who is personally looking everybody and attending to even the neglected one. Therefore, Bhoi asked *Mahima* followers to surrender everything to Mahima Swamy instead of *rajas* or the rulers. In this, he countered the claim of the rulers and challenged the authority of the temporal Kings. He questioned the authority of the king to impose restrictions. According to him, the land and country is the creation of God and the Mahima followers roam there by the grace of God and not by the mercy of the king.

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Temple Legend of Huma in Sambalpur : A symbol of Chauhan Rule

Chitrasen Pasayat

Saiva cult is a primordial cult and it has pervaded all over India. Archaeological and historical remnants of the Indus Valley Civilization attest the fact that *Saivism* is a pre-*Aryan* conception. The availability of a large number of ancient relics i.e. stone pieces resembling phallus had led the indologists as well as historians to trust that *Pasupati* (*Siva*) was worshipped in the *Linga* (phallic) shape by the non-*Aryans* of Indus Valley Civilization. This practice of *Siva* worship seems to have spread to different parts of India from 3000 B.C. Sambalpur is not an exception to it.

The history of *Saivism* can be traced back to the first century A.D. *Siva* worship in the form of *Bhairava* worship was prevalent in the Upper *Mahanadi* valley of Odisha at least from the first century A.D., even though some other scholars are of the opinion that the *Bhairava* cult became admired from the eighth century A.D. onwards (Panda, 2004:39). All the same, people of Sambalpur area adore *Siva* both in iconic and aniconic forms. The phallic worship is the most accepted and symbolical compromise of the worship of *Siva* in his iconic and aniconic forms.

The *Somavamsis*, who began their rule in modern Binka-Subarnapur area in the eighth century A.D., were great patrons of this stream of *Hinduism.* Subsequently, the *Chauhan Rajas* who reigned Sambalpur area from about 14th century A.D. to middle of the 19th century A.D. had also extended royal patronage to *Saivism.* They built *Siva* temples in different parts of Sambalpur *Rajya* and made extensive village and land grants for regular and elaborate performance of *Seva-Puja* which is highly structured in these religious shrines.

In the erstwhile Sambalpur *Rajya* one discovers a large number of *Siva* temples constructed under the royal patronage during the *Chauhan* reigns. The most legendary among them are those of the *Asta-Sambhus*, literary meaning of which is eight *Sambhus* or *Sivas*. They are, namely *Bimaleswara* at Huma, *Kedarnatha* at Ambabhona, *Biswanath* at Deogaon, *Balunkeswara* at Gaisama, *Maneswara* at Maneswar, *Swapneswara* at Sorna, *Bisweswara* at Soranda and *Nilakantheswara* at Niljee.

Lord *Bimaleswara* at Huma is whispered as the *Adya-Sambhu*, i.e. the earliest among the *Asta-Sambhus* who appears to have been much admired during the reigns of *Chauhan Rajas* in Sambalpur. This *Saiva Pitha* is located on the left bank of the river *Mahanadi* 14 miles (24 kms.) down stream and south of Sambalpur. Lord *Bimaleswara* is worshipped in the *Garbhagriha* (sanctum sanctorum) of the temple. *Bhairabi Devi* is adored to his left and Lord *Bhairo* to his right. It is assumed that the temple is rebuilt or renovated by *Maharaja* Baliar Singh (1660-1690 A.D.), the fifth *Chauhan Raja* of Sambalpur *Rajya*. The rest of the temples are built during the rule of *Raja* Ajit Singh (1766-1788 A.D.) of Sambalpur (Panda, 1996:34-35; Pasayat, 1990:20-23; Senapati and Mahanti, 1971:51,526). All these disclose the truth that the *Chauhan Rajas* of Sambalpur *Rajya* were great champions of *Saivism*.

It is in fact, amusing and wonderful to see the *Bimaleswara* temple in leaning shape. One and all look at the temple in silent surprise. As walking on the moon is one of the wonders of our time, leaning temple at Huma is one of the wonders of medieval period. It reminds us the famous leaning tower of Pisa. The temple is positioned on the rocky cradle just on the bank of the river *Mahanadi.* The basis of leaning cannot be assumed to

be the technical flaws at the time of construction. It is also not easily acceptable that weak foundation might have caused leaning attitude of the temple.

In fact, construction of temple is quite favourite of *Chauhan Rajas* as well-known to us from innumerable temples built during their reigns. They had already established themselves as good builders. Again, the temple is not an enormous structure. There might have been interior displacement of the rocky bed on which it stands, either due to flood current in the river *Mahanadi* or earthquake, thus affecting the straight posture of the original temple. In other words, the plinth of the temple has been deviated slightly from its original arrangement and as a result, the body of the temple has become tilted or at an angle. Nevertheless, people visiting this temple stare at this phenomenon in bewilderment. Be that as it may, there is no denying the fact that this has fascinated the attention of historians, sculptures and other researchers.

Leaning Temple   Huma

Nonetheless, there is enough shelter among these rocks to harbour a variety of fish locally identified as *Kudo* fish. That is why, the river *Ghat* is known as *Machhindra Ghat*. Some rituals in connection with the reverence of Lord *Bimaleswara* are performed in this river *Ghat*. Twenty-two steps leading to this *Ghat* take you back to *Baisi Pabachha* i.e. twenty-two steps of Shri Jagannath Temple at Puri. The water of *Machhindra Ghat* is considered to be sacred. Devotees take their bath here prior to offering *Puja* to the divinity.

Now and then, people present food to *Kudo* fishes. It is mesmerizing to see these fishes accepting food from human beings with no fear. This reminds us the *Maneswara Saiva Pitha* where tortoises in the adjoining pool also acknowledge food from human beings without fear. Entertainingly, the *Kudo* fishes respond to the call of the priests and approach to the ladder of the bathing *Ghat* to be fed by the pilgrims. No one is permitted to catch them (Senapati and Mahanti, 1971:11; Pasayat, 1990:20-23). Neighboring inhabitants regard them as godly creatures and *Matchha Avatara* (incarnation) of Lord *Visnu* at Huma and *Katchhapa Avatara* at Maneswara.

It is understood that there is a secret path from the seat of Lord *Bimaleswara* to the river *Mahanadi* and the *Kudo* fishes take refuge at the feet of the deity throughout the rainy season. Similarly, it is also supposed that there is a secret path from the seat of Lord *Maneswara* to the adjacent pond. A number of myths are associated with *Kudo* fishes. As per the oral tradition, on one occasion a woman did not pay any heed to the local people and caught a *Kudo* fish and decided to slash it into pieces. While attempting to cut the fish

with her *Pankhi* (locally made knife) she was instantly altered into a stone. The stone representation of the woman was found on the riverbed for several years. Afterward, it has been swept away by the floodwater.

According to the oral tradition, the temple was inclined from the very beginning of its construction for the reason that Lord *Bimaleswara* himself desired such a temple. In order to fulfill his wish, *Maharaja* Baliar Singh built a leaning temple for the god. In course of time, the shape of the temple and associated fable itself popularized this *Pitha* far and wide. For some, from the very beginning of the construction of the temple, the temple architect might have consciously made the temple inclined towards the river keeping in mind that the centre of gravity of the body would remain outside the temple so that strong floodwater cannot destabilize the temple. Be that as it may, such an abnormal and unusual feature of the temple was not easily acceptable to the ordinary natives for which there was a need of a myth to rationalize its leaning position that Lord *Bimaleswara* desired to have such a temple for himself.

On the one hand, the myth has glorified Lord *Bimaleswara* and on the other hand the myth has helped in the popularization of this *Pitha*. It may be mentioned here that apart from the main temple, there are two small temples of Lord *Siva* and one *Vaisnava* Temple constructed latter on inside the temple complex. High boundary walls enclose the temple complex. The temples are made up of *siuly* cut stones. In *Jagamohana* burnt bricks are found as well. These miniatures are also said to have been in leaning position. But these are so small in size that they cannot lean unless they are treated to do so. In all probability, in conformity with the existing tradition and design of the main temple these small temples are also built accordingly. These temples cannot situate so, had there been any displacement of foundation area or technical defects.

As pointed out earlier, sculptures, quite pet of the *Chauhan* rulers are not found in dominating in *Bimaleswara* temple like that of the *Narasinghanath* mainly in *Vimana* portion. Even though, it is presumed that there was no sculpture of significance excepting the *Parsva Devatas*, it is quite possible that some sculptures are hidden under the thick plaster. Of course, sculptural consideration is of less significance here than the technique of construction which deserves special consideration and attention. In all likelihood, the architects avoided any type of sculptural representations on the body of the temple in order to keep it light so that the centre of gravity was free from heavy pressure.

Though we are not in possession of any documentary support to explain the plan of the *Bimaleswara* temple as a leaning temple, no clarification or findings properly convinces us to acknowledge the theory that the present shape of the temple is the effect of some natural happenings or calamities. In view of this, the *Bimaleswara* temple unquestionably bears testimony to the advanced technical know-how of the *Chauhan* builders of Sambalpur area.

The village Chaunrpur, on the right bank of the river *Mahanadi* is held to be the seat of *Raja* Balaram Dev, prior to his approaching to Sambalpur. According to the local tradition, a cowherd boy residing in a nearby village of Chaunrpur initiated worshipping Lord *Bimaleswara*. He used to take the cows to the interior jungles on the riverbank. To his utter surprise, once he found that a black cow was remaining missing for a particular time on every day. Subsequently, he started watching the movement of the cow. It was a rainy day and the river was enraged. To his amusement, he saw the cow crossing the high current of the river *Mahanadi*. One fine morning, the cowherd boy followed the cow and swam across the river and came to the left bank of the river *Mahanadi*. He observed the

cow going up to a stone and spraying her milk over it. The cowherd boy realized that there was a greater or superior power, which directed the behavior of the black cow. Thence, he observed devotion, submission and reverence to the supernatural power residing in that rock. Subsequently, people residing nearby came to know about this fact and visited the site. Seeing the location, they at once assumed it to be a *Saiva Pitha* and since then started worshipping it. It would not be out of context to mention here that the above-mentioned religious myth is connected with a large number of religious *Pithas* all over the state in Odisha, which consist of not only Saiva Pithas, but *Vaisnava Pithas* as well (Pasayat, 2003:16-18).

Oral tradition relates that his elder brother *Raja* Narasingha Dev of Patnagarh gave *Raja* Balaram Dev an award of this area. *Raja* Balaram Dev established himself initially at Bargarh on the bank of the river *Jira*. There from, he is said to have shifted his capital to Chaunrpur, on the right bank of the river *Mahanadi*. *Raja* Balaram Dev heard the miraculous incident of the deity at Huma narrated above and visited this *Pitha*. Realising the religious sanctity and popularity of this *Pitha* he allocate revenues of some villages namely Huma, Bulpunga, Dhatukpali, Gangadharpali and Mahle for the maintenance, regular worship and religious ceremonies of Lord *Bimaleswara*.

Thus, the temple had an endowment consisting of Huma and six other villages, which were exempted from assessment so long as the temple stands and the religious ceremonies are maintained. This grant is an old one, said to date back to the time of *Raja* Balaram Dev, the first *Chauhan Raja* of Sambalpur (Senapati and Mahanti, 1971:526). In other words, State funding of *Seva-Puja* has been introduced since then. Most probably, when *Raja* Balaram Dev carved out a new *Rajya* out of the province of his elder brother he named it *Huma Desa*. Thereafter, as the erudite historian Dr. N.K.Sahu has described, the period of establishment of the Sambalpur *Rajya* was about the year 1570 A.D. (Panda, 1996:35).

The village Huma and its *Saiva Pitha* may be supposed to be much older than the time of *Raja* Balaram Dev whose *Rajya* was once identified as *Huma Desa*. The following analysis unearths the reality that the continuation of this *Pitha* can at least be dated back to the eleventh century A.D. Panda (1996:34-35) recognizes some significant points that the gateway/doorjamb to the *Garbhagriha* of this temple is of late *Somavamsi* period and it is comparable to that of the *Jagamohana* of the *Narsinghnath* temple of *Gandhagiri* near Paikmal of Bargarh district. Another significant stone panel fitted to the wall of the *Jagamohana* on the proper right of the doorjamb is a broken one, depicting three *Grahas* of the *Nava-Grahas* panel which can also be dated to the late *Somavamsi* period and in all probability was fitted above the doorjamb of the *Garbhagriha* in its original state. In view of that, the doorjamb as well as the broken *Nava-Grahas* panel can be iconographically dated to the eleventh century A.D.

Additionally, according to the oral tradition prevalent in the village Huma and its surrounding area, the *Ganga* Emperor Anangabhimadeva-III (1211-1239 A.D.) has constructed this temple. Hence, it can be said with precision that Huma bears the testimony of an significant place of pilgrimage and a glorious place of *Siva* worship since at least the eleventh century A.D., if these historical relics are reckoned to be the earliest of all antiquities existing at Huma.

In the 15th and 16th century A.D., after the disintegration of the Ganga Empire of Odisha, a strong pull towards political fragmentation and decentralization of power took place. It happened partly due to the partition of ruling families and partly due to land grants

of villages by the ruler to indigenous tribal chiefs who ended up as independent potentates in the frontier zone of uncertain control like *Daksina Kosala* (roughly west Odisha). The indigenous tribal chiefs and chiefs of obscure origins took advantage of weak central authority, assumed power and formed several *Rajyas* (Deo, 2003:196).

Formation of a separate *Rajya* by *Raja* Balaram Dev in the 16th century A.D. was the result of the partition of ruling family of Patnagarh. In all probability, Huma as well as its adjoining area was a thick forested area and inhabited by aboriginal people when *Raja* Balaram Dev first arrived here. He was a reputed warrior. Owing to military necessity, his elder brother, *Raja* Narasingha Dev, the tenth *Chauhan Raja* of Patna *Rajya* entrusted the administration of this tribal dominated, hilly and forested part to him. *Raja* Balaram Dev successfully consolidated the *Chauhan* rule in this part of their *Rajya* and carved out a new *Rajya* out of the territory of his elder brother and named it *Huma Desa*.

In order to sustain his separate and independent *Rajya*, most probably *Raja* Balaram Dev had to depend upon the *Bhogas* and *Bhagas*. He had to persuade the local tribal people to become settled agriculturists so that production would increase because a tribal economy based on shifting cultivation and forest produce cannot sustain an emerging *Rajya* as analysed elsewhere by Deo (2003:96). To legitimize his status as *Raja* and to his share of the produce (*Bhaga*), *Raja* Balaram Dev granted lands to *Brahmins* and temples which contributed to the changing agrarian situation, formation of a hierarchical social order and *Brahminisation / Hinduisation* of the society.

Thus, it may be suggested here that *Huma Pitha* already existed when *Raja* Balaram Dev arrived here. Possibly, the temple was in a dilapidated condition. *Raja* Balaram Dev extended royal patronage and rebuilt or renovated the temple. Subsequently, *Maharaja* Baliar Singh, the fifth *Raja* of Sambalpur *Rajya* had also most probably rebuilt or renovated it during his time. Be that as it may, there is no denying the fact that *Raja* Balaram Dev adopted this *Pitha* and extended royal patronage.

Huma was positioned strategically in a jungle area during those days between *Sambala* (Sambalpur) and Subarnapur on the banks of the river *Mahanadi*. Sambalpur District Gazetteer discloses the fact that the chief areas of cultivation lay along the banks of the river *Mahanadi*. The cultivated plains of this area yielded numerous varieties of paddy, some of which were the finest in the country. The river *Mahanadi* was also the main out-let for the trade and produce of this area. The produce was carried in boats from Sambalpur to Binka (*Binitapur*), Subarnapur, and Boudh and even to Cuttack. Commodities were also brought back through this river route. Conspicuously, boat transport was carried on as far as Subarnapur and Boudh in the flood season till very recently (Senapati and Mahanti, 1971:86).

What's more, Sambalpur had the tradition of producing diamonds extracted from the sands of the river *Mahanadi* at *Hirakud.* Etymologically, the name Hirakud is a combination of *Hira* and *Kud*. The word *Hira* means diamond and the word *Kud* means island. Consequently, the literary meaning of Hirakud (*Hira+Kud*) is 'Diamond Island'. Hirakud to Subarnapur-Boudh was that component of the river *Mahanadi* where the diamonds and gold were procurable down the river *Mahanadi* to as far as Subarnapur (Senapati and Mahanti, 1971:273-74). Even these days, valuable stones are reportedly recovered from the riverbed of the *Mahanadi*.

In all probability, Huma region was quite important from commercial, political and social points of view besides its religious significance. *Raja* Balram Dev was not indifferent

to the reality that there were antagonism between people of different races, religions and communities. He was well aware of the problem of communalism that would weaken the State formation, cause disharmony in social life and divert the attention of people from formation of a separate *Rajya* in this area, which was his preferred goal. Therefore, he had made attempts to integrate the indigenous communities into one fold under the umbrella of the *Hinduism*. As expected, in the process of the building of a unified and separate *Rajya*, indigenous communities with their religious traditions were also successfully absorbed in the mainstream of the *Hindu* Great Tradition through its branches like *Saivism*, *Saktism* and *Vaisnavism* and various *Hindu* epics and *Puranas.*

In this context, it may be mentioned here that temple is an important agent or instrument of *Hinduisation* (Eschmann, 1978:80). Construction of a *Siva* temple led to the upward mobility of the local priests of this shrine, who were non-*Brahmins*. The royal patronage drew the attention of the people in large number from far and wide. It led to the regular flow of devotees, both tribal and non-tribal people to this *Pitha*. The coming of non-tribal devotees might have led to social interaction between the caste-*Hindus* and the local tribal people. The fame and popularity of this deity had come to be known as Lord *Bimaleswara*. By the time of renovation of this temple in 1670 by *Maharaja* Baliar Singh, this was very popular as *Huma-Kshetra* not only due to its religious importance but also owing to its socio-economic and political contributions. Businessmen as far as from Kantilo, Bolangir, Barpali, Bargarh, Subarnapur and Maniabandha were attending the fairs and festivals at this *Pitha* to sale their goods (Senapati and Mahanti, 1971:526).

State sponsorship or royal patronage to this religious *Pitha* was a firm and uncompromising measure to appease and pacify the natives and to legitimize his authority over them, which also facilitated the process of *Hinduisation* to build up a larger *Hindu* / *Chauhan Rajya* in this area. Understandably, *Raja* Balaram Dev was successful in bringing people closer to this temple and by means of this temple he was able to consolidate his authority and influence over the forest region of Huma. In a similar fashion, he adopted the *Samalei Devi* and constructed a temple at Sambalpur and extended royal patronage (Pasayat, 2003:67-84). The successors of *Raja* Balaram Dev had also methodically followed this principle of patronizing the *Saiva Pithas* in different parts of former Sambalpur *Rajya*. The most famous among them were those of *Asta-Sambhus* as mentioned earlier.

Thus, the *Chauhan Rajas* consolidated their power and position and established a superior *Chauhan Rajya* in Sambalpur. It is imperative to note down that the religious importance of *Huma-Kshetra* is equated with other *Kshetras* of Odisha namely, *Sri-Kshetra* (Shri Jagannath Temple) at Puri, *Arka-Kshetra* (Sun Temple) at Konark. It may be recommended that the rationale behind such royal patronages is to give a boost to the local cults and at the same time to capitalize on the religious sentiments of the local people to such an extent / degree that it can be used as a means for political ends. In any case, the rise of *Huma-Kshetra* in Sambalpur, particularly during the 16th century has to be accredited to the patronage of the *Chauhan Rajas*, which has helped in consolidation of the *Chauhan* rule and State formation in Sambalpur area and also facilitated the process of *Hinduisation* in this region.

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KOSALANANDA KAVYA AND JAYACHANDRIKA: MYTH AND REALITY OF CHAUHAN ESTABLISHMENT IN WEST ODISHA

Jitamitra Prasad Singh Deo

Kosalananda Kavya and *Jaya Chandrika* have defaced the reality of Chauhan establishment in West Odisha.

Kosalananda Kavya was written by Pandit Gangadhar Misra, who was a court-poet of Baliar Singh (1660 A.D.-1690 .A.D.) of Sambalpur[1] and the *Jaya Chandrika* was composed in the last quarter of the 18th century by Prahallad Dubey, the court poet of Sarangarh[2].These two literary works are highly apprised and based upon by scholars of Odisha, who go to the extent of expressing that the early history of Chauhan rulers of Patna is known from a Sanskrit work *Kosalananda* written by Pandit Gangadhar Mishra and a Hindi work called *Jaya Chandrika*, written by Prahallad Dubey[3.]

Supporting the historical value of the *Jaya Chandrika*, J. K. Sahu[4] says that, it narrates how on the defeat and death of Prthviraj Chauhan at the hands of the Muslims, his enceinte queen fled to Patnagarh in West Odisha and was sheltered in the house of one Chakradhara Panigrahi where she gave birth to Ramai Deva who eventually became the founder of Chauhan rule in West Odisha. This story is told with some alterations in the Gazetteers, travel accounts and indigenous records dealing with the Chauhanas of Odisha. The *Kosalananda Kavya*, which is the earliest of the kind, gives the names of ten Kings who lived and ruled at Garh Sambhar after the death of Prthviraja and it states that the last of the line, Visala Deva, was killed by the Yavanas (the Muslims) whereupon his enceinte queen fled to Patnagarh. The accounts of the *Kosalananda* and that of the *Jaya Chandrika* may be put to a mathematical test on the basis of a dated inscription of Narasimhanatha temple engraved by Vaijala Deva, the fourth Chauhan ruler of Patnagarh. The date of the inscription has been calculated and fixed as 17th March 1413 A.D.[5] If the three Rajas who preceded Vaijala Deva would have ruled for 50 or 60 years, the foundation of the Chauhan rule at Patnagarh would have been laid by Ramai Deva about the year 1360 A.D. As by that time Ramai Deva was a young lad of about twenty years old, his birth and the death of his father must have taken place about the year 1340 A.D. Prthviraj Cbauhan was killed in the year 1191 A.D. So, if we accept the story of the *Jaya Chandrika* we have to account for the big gap of 150 years which we can safely assign to the ten Rajas who find mention in the *Kosalananda Kavya*.

The Gazetteer's authorities also, with the common trend of these two literary works, went to the extent of expressing their views; N.K. Sahu[6] says that the early history of Chauhan rulers of Patna is known from a Sanskrit work *Kosalananda* written by Pandit Gangadhar Misra belonging to the first half .of the 16th century A.D., a Hindi work called *Jayachandrika* by Prahllad Dube written in Samvat 1838, i.e. 1782 A.D. and an Odia work named *Nrusimha Mahatmya* by Lakshmana Mishra who was living in the later part of the 19th century. H. B. Impey, who was a Deputy Commissioner of Sambalpur, prepared on the 29th May 1863 a note on the Garjat State of Patna which is of great help for study of the history of the Chauhan rulers of this ex-state. All these authorities have written about the origin of the Chauhan rulers in Patna on the basis of the long preserved tradition and although they differ on some minor details they agree on the salient point that one Ramai Deo, scion of the Chauhan ruling family of Garhsambar usurped the throne of Patna and founded the rule of his dynasty in that territory. Impey writing in 1863 states, "the Maharajas of Patna claim direct descent from a race of Rajpoot Rajahs of Garh Sumbul near Mynpooree and count back the individuals of this race for 32 generations.

"On the basis of the available evidence, it may be said that one Hamir Deo was killed about the middle of the 14th century A.D. by the Sultan of Delhi who was very probably Feroz Shah Toghluq after which his queens excepting one named Asavati .(alias Yayanti) performed the rite of Suttee. Asavati fled away to save her life and honour and ultimately got shelter at the residence of a Brahmin of Patna named Chakradhar Panigrahi. There she gave birth to a son who was named Ramai and the child became virtually the adopted son of Panigrahi.

"It was the time when the territory of Patna was being administered by an Oligarchy consisting of eight Chieftains - (*Astamallik*). These Chieftains (*Astamallik*) were the lords of eight forts (*garhs*) which are (I) Patnagarh, (2) Kagaongarh,. (3) Salebhattagarh, (4) Jarasinghagarh, (5) Sindhekelagarh, (6) Kholangarh, (7) Goragarh and (8) Kumnagarh. These Chieftains used to rule as head of the territory for one day by turn. The *Kosalananda* while referring to these eight Chiefs (whom it calls eight *Mantrins*) ruling the country by turn like brothers, also reveals that the real sovereignty was vested in the people who were selecting and appointing these *Mantrins*. This work further states that once a ferocious man-eater wrought great devastation and when all attempts to kill it became futile it was decided by the people that whosoever would kill man-eater would be the king of Patna. The *Mantrins* also hailed the decision of the people. Subsequently, it was Ramai Deo, a young man then, who succeeded in killing the tiger and the people, true to their promise, appointed him as King. The *Jayachandrika*, however, presents a different story. According to it, Chakradhar Panigrahi, who was virtually the adoptive father of Ramai was one of the eight Chieftains who were ruling over Patna by turn for a day. When once the turn of Panigrahi came, he deputed Ramai to run the administration that day. The young Ramai lavishly rewarded the army and the people and made them highly satisfied while at the same time he grossly misbehaved with the other Chieftains. Next time when once again Ramai was deputed to rule by Chakranhar Panigrahi, he managed to kill all the seven Malliks with the help of the army and usurped the throne of Patnagarh.

"It is difficult to know about the correct evidence regarding: the foundation of the Chauhan rule in Patna. This much, however, can be said that prior to the coming of the Chauhans the territory of Patna was being ruled by a popular form of Government which was destroyed by Rama Deo who started the monarchical system of Government. L.P. Pandey[7] remarks, "A branch of Patna family of Chauhan dynasty of Odisha, which the Indian students of history will ever remember as the destroyer of an ancient Indian system of popular Government soon rose to power and importance extending its sovereignty over 8 chiefs or lords of forts or Garhas as they are usually called,"

State editor Bhaba Krushna Mahanti[8] writes in the Gazetteer that from about 14th century A.D. Sambalpur came under the Chauhan ruler of Patna who was the head of a cluster of eighteen states known as the Athargarhjat and dominated a large tract to the east of Ratnapur Kingdom. Their ancestor is said to have been one Hammir Deo who lived near Mainpuri in North India and was killed by the Sultan of Delhi. One of his wives named Asavati, who was pregnant, fled away to save her life and honour and ultimately got shelter at the residence of one Chakradhar Panigrahi of Patna. There, she gave birth to a son known as Ramai who ultimately succeeded to capture power from eight Chieftains (*Asta Mallik*) and became the sole ruler of Patna. From all available evidence, Ramai Deo was the founder of the Chauhan rule in Patna. The Odisha Chauhans claim themselves to be 'Mainpuri' as well as 'Garh-Sambhari' (place located in Rajasthan) because of the fact that they regard themselves as the descendants of the Chauhan ruling family of Mainpuri, whose ancestors were Chauhans of Garh Sambhar related to famous Prithviraja III. In

course of time, the Chauhans of Patna extended their influence over surrounding territories including Sambalpur and the adjoining states.

These views show that because the scholars have not gone deep into investigating more evidences on the establishment of Chauhan power in West Odisha, they are of these opinions and J. K. Sahu[9] puts emphasis and says that it may be pointed out here that scions of the Mainpuri Chauhiins have founded various chiefships in different parts of Northern and Central India, notable among which are Rajpur, Dalippur, Partapner, Eka, Dera and Patnagarh. Further, he has done critical study and though there are different opinions regarding the date, he has fixed circa 1360 A.D. as stated above and states that all available records regarding the Chauhans of Odisha unanimously agree that the Chauhan principality at Patnagarh was founded by Ramai Deva who hailed from the ruling family of Mainpur[10].

To put much forcible or impressive expression on Chauhan establishment, N. K. Sahu[11] has gone up till the extent of saying that Ramaideva founded the Chauhan rule which became powerful within a short time. A stone inscription of the time of Ramaideva and a portion of the gate of his fort at Patnagarh are preserved in the University Museum. This statement of the renowned scholar cannot be accepted because the finding of a stone inscription of the time of Ramaideva at Patnagarh is not genuine and therefore cannot be based upon. This statement of the scholar is vague and contemplated thought.

Now, let the available records be scrutinized. The earliest record is the *Kosalananda Kavya* which was written after long duration of Chauhan establishment at West Odisha. Except *Prabodha Chandrika*[12] composed by Vaijala Deva of Patna Kingdom where the royal poet has introduced himself as an illustrious scion of the Chauhan family (Chauhana Vamsa Tilakah) in 1500 A.D. or thereabout no record or narration of Chauhans have survived and much fanciful tradition had developed within this period, which find expression in *Kosalananda Kavya*. Then, followed *Jaya Chandrika* with such capricious information because these literatures are traditional in form and hence much interpolation of the reality have found place, *Kosalananda Kavya* and *Jaya Chandrika* are *Darbar* literatures, which are of more trivial kind. Because of this reason, there are hardly any truth of the early narration and the *Astamallik* administration. Some truth of the contemporary period, when they were composed, may be found only. Therefore, only after supporting discoveries, the account of the series of events recorded in these two literary works should be based upon.

The misguiding tradition of *Kosalananda Kavya* influenced the later works and the first to be influenced was *Jaya Chandrika*. The different versions of this tradition are found in later works. It will be better to mention them serially.

(1) Mottee, T. visited Sambalpur in 1766 A.D. and gives "A narrative of a journey to the Diamond Mines at Sumbhulpoor in the provinces of Oriss."[13] He states, "Sumbhulpoor was founded by Balram Dakee of whom they relate the following history. About two centuries are past since a company of Hindus set out from the banks of the river Sommer in the province of Azmir on a pilgrimage to the temple of Juggernut. On their return the whole party was murdered except one woman who made her escape to Patna, a place thirty *coss* south from here, at that time the capital of this part of the country. She supported herself with begging until her son grew up and shewed such a happy genius for learning and such dexterity at his .exercises that the Rajah adopted him. When he succeeded, he built this place and made it his residence calling it Sumbhulpoor from the country of his father. Had his family come from the Sommer, he would have called it

Sommerpoor, whereas I should think he came from Sumbhul, a large city in the Rohilla country."

(2)   Impey, H. B., "Notes on Gurhjat State of Patna."[14]

Major H. B. Impey states that, the Muharajahs of Patna .claim direct descent from a race of Rajput Rajahs of Garh Sumbul near Mynpooree and counts back the individuals of this race for 32 generations.

Notes on the Gurjhat state of Patna by H. B. Impey is dated 1863[15] and most probably for the first time this author connects the Chauhans of West Odisha with Mainpuri. So, it shows that, the new interpolation of connecting the Chauhans of West Odisha with the Chauhans of Mainpuri developed in nineteenth century A.D.

(3)   Charles Grant[16] in "Gazetteer of the Central Provinces," has based upon the account of H. E. Impey and mentions that the Maharajas of Patna claim direct descent from a race of Rajput Rajas of Garhsambar near Mainpuri and trace it through thirty one generations.

(4)   Lethbridge, Roper[17] in *The Golden Book of India*, 1893 states about the Maharaja of Patna thus: "According to the traditions of the family, came from Sambalgarh in the Mainpuri district of the North-West Provinces, probably at the time of the earliest Muhammadan invasions." This narration shows that the interpolated link with the Mainpuri Chauhan house, of the Patna Chauhan house, which .developed in nineteenth century, finds its full expression here.

(5)   O'Malley, L. S. S.[18] in his *Bengal District Gazetteers - Sambalpur* writes that, according to tradition, Sambalpur was at an early period under the rule of the Maharajas of Patna, who were the head of a cluster of States known as the *Athara Garhjat* (i.e. the 18 forts) and dominated a large tract to the east of the Ratanpur kingdom. Their ancestor is said to have been a Rajput prince, who lived near Mainpuri and was expelled from his territories by the Muhammadans. He came with his family to Patna, where he was killed in battle, but his wife who was pregnant, was sheltered by a Binjhal in whose hut she gave birth to a son. At that time, Patna was divided amongst eight chiefs, each of whom took it in turn to reign for one day over the whole territory. The Rajput boy Ramai Deva, on growing up, killed the eight chiefs and made himself a sole ruler of Patna.

This statement also shows that it is based upon the interpolated tradition, which had developed in nineteenth century A.D.

(6)   Shreeram Chandra Mallick[19] in his *Short History of Kosala* (Odia) has based mostly upon the interpolated narration of *Kosalananda Kavya*.

(7)   Cobden Ramsay[20] states, "It is said that Hamir Deva had fled from Grah-Shambar and established himself at Manikgarh fort in the hills of Khariar. On one occasion before proceeding to battle he took leave of his seven wives and told them that should he not return they would be apprised of his death by the homeward flight of some carrier pigeons. He failed to return and was never afterwards heard of the return of the pigeons satisfied the Ranis that he had fallen. Six of them drowned themselves in the pool called Ramdarha near Narsinghnath to the north of the Patna State and the remaining Rani was found wandering in the jungles near Ramud on the border between Patna and Khariar. She was kindly treated by her preserver, a Binjhal. In due course she delivered a child

Ramai Deva who put an end to the *Ath-malik gadi* by murdering the eight chiefs and himself assuming supremacy over the eight *garhs* (forts) which he wielded into the compact state of Patna and thus introduced the administration of Chauhan family."

(8)   B. C. Mazumdar[21] informs, "There is a tradition in the form of a legend of quasi-mythical character that so early as the 12th or 13th century A.D. one Humeru of the family of the Chauhan Rajputs of Mainpuri in the United Provinces came to Patna with his wife who was then enceinte and acquired there a. position of some significance by his heroic deeds. It is also narrated in this legendary account that the son of Humeru born in Patna State became by his mythical powers the chief of the eight Malliks who had the Government of Patna and Sambalpur in their hands and thus established the Chauhan rule in the K6sala country by being installed at Gad-Sambar.

(9)   Late Siba Prasad Das[22] has fol1owed the tradition left by *Kosalananda Kavya* and *Jaya Chandrika* fully in his book, *History of Sambalpur* written in Odia.

All these accounts show that the tradition which was written in *Kosalananda Kavya* have been followed in some form or the other, till present, by scholars, who have dealt on the Chauhan establishment in West Odisha topic.

No scholar has broken the traditional tie and therefore the reality has not been revealed. J. K. Sahu[23] has so much been traditional bound that he expresses, "The tradition of the rule of the eight Mulliks is too strong to be ignored or overlooked." Moreover, as stated above J. K. Sahu has made the topic more erroneous by stating 1360 A.D. as the year of the establishment of the rule of Ramai Deva.

It has been accepted by historians that Firuz Shah invaded Odisha in 1360 A.D. during the rule of Bhanudeva III[24]. On his return journey M.A. Haque[25] mentions that, the victorious campaign was concluded by an elephant hunt in Padmatala in the Baramba state of Odisha, which is about 25 miles from Athgarh. Then, the Sultan passing through the jungles of Narasinghpur via Sambalpur returned to Kara. According to the genealogy followed by the author, Bhanudeva III ruled in between 1330-1338 A.D. Therefore, it will be better to assign Firuz Shah's invasion to the period of Bhanudeva IV, 1353-1378 A.D.

From the opinions of J. K. Sahu it seems that, he is inclined to date the establishment of Ramai Deva in 1360 A.D. most probably by supposing that the establishment of a fresh power would have been possible after the return march of Firuz Shah, in the belt of West Odisha. As seen, Firuz Shah marched back in his return journey by taking the route via Sambalpur. Now the question arises that why the establishment of Chauhan rule would not have been possible before 1360 A.D. as the other areas of West Odisha were peaceful under the suzerainty of the Kalachuris of Ratanpur[26.]

As stated above, J. K. Sahu has fixed 1360 A.D. as the foundation of the Chauhan rule at Patnagarh. This statement cannot be accepted because the scholar has reached to this opinion by accepting 17th March, 1413 A.D. as the date of the inscription at Narasi1i1hanath temple.

Recent archaeological revelation has proved the temple of Narasi1i1hanatha as a Kalachuri structure[27] dating back to 12th century A.D. Hence, the base over which J. K. Sahu depends and establishes 1360 A.D. as the probable date of the foundation of Chauhan rule at Patnagarh, cannot be accepted.

The author is of opinion that *Kosalananda Kavya* and *Jaya Chandrika* have defaced the reality of Chauhan establishment in West Odisha. For knowing the truth on this topic archaeological and supporting discovery should be searched so that the reality of the Chauhan establishment will be known.

The basic difficulty has risen because, with the tradition of these two literary works, which are debased, the site of Patnagarh has been given undue importance of being the basic site of opulence and power in West Odisha. The scientific study of archaeological history has been neglected so far. Because these two literary works are causing hindrance to the scientific study of history, they should be neglected and discarded.

The most important site of opulence and power in West Odisha is the Sunabeda plateau and its adjoining Maraguda valley complex. This plateau must have played a valuable or significant part in the history of Kosala and might have dominated or prevailed over the administration of South Kosala[28] as already known.

In sum, the *Kosalananda Kavya* and the *Jaya Chandrika* have blocked the passage for the scientific study of archaeological history of the rise of early Chauhan in West Odisha. To get the better off, the misleading literary works have to be discarded and archaeological evidences have to be searched.

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Patkhanda Deity of Jarasingha: Hope for Mentally Retarted and Issueless couples

Sarmistha Barik

Patkhanda Jatra is a popular Jatra of Jarasingha in Bolangir district. Jarasingha is a village situated on the bank of Sungad, which is a local stream. Previously, Jarasingha was under the Patna kingdom. There was a Kandha Zamindar in Jarasingha. The reigning deity of this village is *Budhi-Aai*. Every year, a festival is organized in honor of the deity on the full moon day of Asadha (June-July). But, the festival celebrated in honor of *Patakhanda* deity is very popular. It is celebrated in the month of *Aswina* (September-October). It begins on the second day of bright fortnight of *Aswina* and ends on the full moon day of *Aswina*. People believe that, *Patakhanda* cures the mentally retarded persons and blesses the issueless couples to have children. So, the deity is famous.

As per the myth, a Kandha couple was staying in a small shed in a remote village near San-Khemundi of Ganjam district. Daily, they used to gather fruits, leaves and firewood from the jungles for their living. Once, the Kandha man had borrowed some money from one money-lender. After some days, the *Sahukar* came to him to collect money. At that time, the Kandha couple had been to jungles. The *Sahukar* waited them in front of their hut. He noticed a basket full of living fishes hanging from the roof of the hut. Below the basket there was a *Panki* i.e. local made knife. He observed that, a fish automatically jumped from the *Khalei* on the *Panki* and the sharp *Pankhi* cut the fish into two pieces. It was surprising for the *Sahukar*. He saw this amazing sight. He realized that, the *Pankhi* might have some miraculous power.

In the evening, the Kandha couple returned from the jungle. the Sahukar said that, if the Kandha couple could give him their *Pankhi*, then he would waive the loan they had taken from him. The Kandha couple handed over the *Pankhi* to the *Sahukar.* At night, the *Sahukar* saw a dream. *Patakhanda Devta* appeared and told him that he was in the form of that *Pankhi*. The deity asked the *Sahukar* to carry the *Pankhi* with him. Next morning, the *Sahukar* took the *Pankhi* with him and reached on the bank of the river *Sungad*. He kept the *Pankhi* on a clean and safe place under a tree and went to have a bath. When he returned, he did not find the *Pankhi*. He searched a lot but it was in vain. He thought that, it was the wish of the deity.

That night, *Patkhanda Devta* appeared in the dream of the Kandha Zamindar of the village situated on the bank of the river Sungad and introduced himself. The deity asked him to worship him. The Kandha Zamindar said that, the presiding deity of the village is Budhi-Aai. Without her permission, he cannot worship him. So, *Patkhanda Devta* met *Budhi-Aai* and expressed his desire. *Budhi-Aai* told him that, she is the *Samanta Devi* of *Pataneswari* of Patnagarh. She is the sovereign deity of this whole kingdom. Jarasingha is under her kingdom. If she permits, then you can stay at Jarasingha.

Patakhanda Devta approached *Pataneswari Devi* and sought her kind permission. *Pataneswari* told him, "It is alright. You will also remain as my *Samanta* in Jarasingha. People will offer you special puja after the completion of my *Yatra* in the month of *Aswina* (September-October) every year. *Sindura* from my temple and *Pata-Kana* from *Samaleswari* temple will be provided to you. Then, you will get my power. Since then, *Patakhanda Devta* has been residing in the hole of a *Mahul* tree (*Madhuca indica*) in 'De-Jhar'. 'De' means deity and 'Jhar' refers to jungle. So, 'De-Jhar' denotes 'jungle of deity' or 'the jungle where deities reside'. If the tree dies due to some reasons or other, then the

deity is transferred to another *Mahul* tree. Significantly, *Patakhanda Devta* resides only in the *Mahul* tree.

There is another historical legend associated with the origin of *Patakhanda Devta*. It is said that, the fort of Bastar was besieged by the soldiers of Patnagarh. Then, an old lady used to visit the camp of the soldiers and selling *Mudhi* (prepared from rice) to the soldiers. Everyday, some soldiers were dying after having that *Mudhi*. The king of Bastar invited two *Gunias* (Black Magicians) named Hira and Madan from Patnagarh to know the reason. Hira and Madan knew that, an old lady was coming to the camp to sell *Mudhi*. She was Bastaren herself, the presiding deity of Bastar. She was coming in disguise to weaken the strength of Patna king. Hira and Madan suggested the king to win over the deity first if wanted to win over Bastar. They requested the king to worship Bastaren Devi and please her. Accordingly, Patna Raja worshipped the deity and satisfied her. He assured the deity that, after his victory over Bastar, he will make all arrangements for her worship all over his kingdom.

It is said that thereafter, the puja of Bastaren Devi has been prevalent in all village of Patna kingdom. During this war, Patna Raja had requested Pataneswari Devi to bless him. The deity presented him a *Khanda* i.e. sword, which helped the king to win over Bastar kingdom. In this warfare, the Kandha Zamindars and his subjects of Jarasingha had extended their cooperation, which finally led to victory of Patnagarh. When the king returned from Bastar, he presented the *Khanda* to the Kandha Zamindar of Jarasingha. Then, Pataneswari Devi permitted the Kandha Zamindar to worship the *Khanda*. This is why the *Patakhanda puja* is also known as *Bira-Puja* to commemorate the victory of Patnagarh over Bastar.

Now three small pieces of iron plates are worshipped as *Patakhanda Devta*. If these three pieces are jointed together, it would not look like a *Khanda* i.e. sword. Rather, it will take the shape of a *Pankhi*, a locally made knife used for cutting vegetables and fishes etc. Annual worship in the form of Patkhanda Jatra is performed in the month of *Aswina*. *Sindura* comes from *Pataneswari* temple of Patnagarh. *Pata-Kana* comes from Samaleswari temple of Patnagarh. *Chhatar* and *Kalasa* come from the temple of *Budhi-Aai*. Then only *Patakhanda* Yatra begins. When the deity appears through *Barua* or ascends in the body of *Barua*, he comes out with these three iron pieces with his hands.

Animal sacrifice is prevalent on this occasion. It is believed that, the head of the sacrificial animal ought to be dissociated from the body at one stroke only. Patakhanda Jatra in Jarasingha, besides providing entertainment, has been used to spread the message that, the deity is capable to cure the mentally retarded person and cure the 'Bandhya-dosa' of woman. This festival is based on faith and belief, where medical science has nothing much to do.

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Visioning Folklore

Reviewed by Prof. Isabel Cardigos,
Universidade de Algrave

Mahendra Kumar Mishra is a well-known Indian folklorist who specialized on the language and culture of western Orissa. The present book entails a description and interpretation of a number of   rituals, epics, songs and traditions from the district of Kalahandi   near   Western Orissa,in Central India, in their specificity as well as   in the light of mainstream traditions (as in chapter 1,2,5 and 6). It would seem that "many races of this land(Western Orissa), in order to keep their cultural identitiy alive ,have associated   themselves with the great epics of solar and lunar mythology i.e. the Ramayana and the Mahabharata(...)each and   every race of this country has tried to identify with Indian   mythology and dynasties"(p.102).

The title of each of the ten articles   will give an over all feeling of the subjects and approches   envisioned in the present book: (1) Influence of the Ramayana Tradition in the Folklore of Central India;(2) A Hero of the Mahabharata   in Folklore of Central India;(3) Drought in the Folklore of Kalahandi ;(4) The Kind Tiger and Truthful Cow: Folk Discourse in Oral and Written Literature;(5) Oral Epics   in kalahandi ;(6) Folk Epics of Western Orissa) ;(7)Ethnic Identitiy and Oral narratives ; A case Study on Kamar Tribe of kalahandi adjoining Chhatishgarh;(8) Patalaganga: A Sacred Center of Tribal Non-tribal Interaction;(9)Folk Songs of Kalahandi ;(10) Toki Parab : A festival of Female Infanticide inkalahandi.

I will single out   chapter 4, as it shows in reality of folktales and oral epics to be the symmetrical opposite of the world of myth s and epics ("Purana" and "Itihasa") , this one mostly coincide with life reality . Just as an example , while in Indian joint family system , the eldest brother is entitled to enjoy the land and property in a bigger scale" and moreover ' the younger brother also don't fight against the elders", in accordance with classical epics and "puranas"(p. 70)." In folk epics the eldest brother is a villiain and cruel , where as the youngest brother is a hero .Similarly in folktales and oral epics ,the younger sister-in-law , younger sister,younger daughter is neglected and at last she regains   her   valour"(p.71) The written discourse will represent   the "ordered" society   only. Hence the creation   of "disorder " in folk tradition is only to counteract the forces which are dominant in society ."(p.77)

Finally , a word   must be said to clarify   the   title in chapter 1.The 'festival of female infanticide " is a memory of such a festival until it was abolished   in the mid 1850's , and replaced   by the sacrifice of a young ewe. The whole description of the seven day festival is very interesting, as it reflects   the probelms of a community and the creative way to solve those problems. I would be inclined to say this of the whole collection of studies inthis book,as it combines the appraisal ot an ethnologist with a deep inside knowledge of an insider of a very rich culture.

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Paschima Odisara Lokagita

(Essays on Folk Songs of West Odisha)
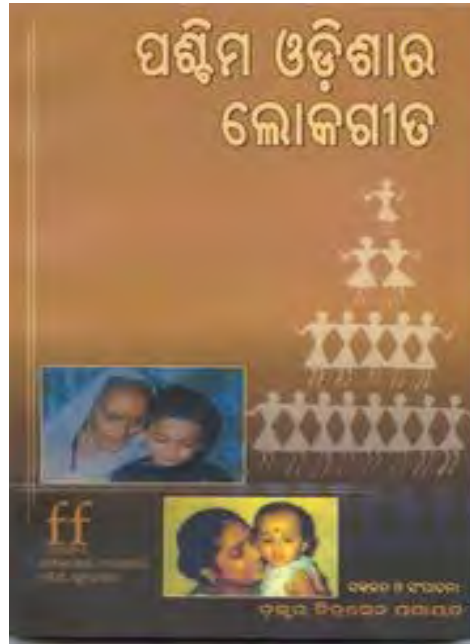
Edited by Chitrasen Pasayat
Published by Folklore Foundation, Orissa, Bhubaneswar

Published in 2008, page. 243, Price Rs 150/-

Available in Shiksha Sandhan, Bhubaneswar
Reviewed by Ms. Meenakhsi Mishra , Bhubaneswar

To ignore the existence of this huge wealth of oral poetry throughout the world in the present as well as the past, is to miss one of the great sources and products of man's imaginative and reflecting and dramatic faculties – of those things which mark him out as a human and a social animal." (Ruth Finnegan- 1997)

The compilation of   essays written by twenty nine folklorists and folklore practitioners represent a picturesque panorama of oral tradition current in the cultural practice of the people   of West Odisha. The writers belong to their localities and they have collected the   oral songs and dances during performance context - i.e. dance, ritual, entertainment drama and play.   West Odisha communities as a language area, _Kosahli_ represent   about   10   million   of   population   and   the language claims an independent   identity for its own structure, grammar and function. The symbolic representation of _Koshali_, the language of West Odisha has its own beauty of Indo Aryan language.

West Odisha as a land of forest and agriculture bear the symbol of   close affinity of man with nature and supernatural power that regulates the   thought, action and expression of the mankind. The images and alliterations, the symbols and similes, the eloquence and the taste of the songs in terms of its   _rasa_ and _dhwani_ reminds us

to imagine the *Vaidarbhi reete* and *Prasad guna* which is the best expression of language in the country . The music accompanied in these songs have similar eloquence that attracts the listener and compelled to join in the group dance forgetting his self.

The songs are known as Rasarkeli, Jaiphula, Dalkhai, Gua -Nadia, Bhamara, Gunji-Kuta, Maila- Jada and so many. There are two types of songs that are most popular in West Odisha. One is three line songs and another is four line songs. Three line songs are composed as 8 + 11 + 8 syllables and four lines songs have 14 (8+6) syllables.

Three line songs have many honorific addressed like Sajani, Baria, Dalkhai, Jaiphula, Bhamara, Malire, Galara etc. Four line songs have addresses like Rasarkeli, and Jaiphula etc.

The cultural context of the song is important to understand the meaning of the song. The content is embedded with meaning in context. The combination of music, dance and song represents the harmony of body mind and spirit.

The essays are written with empirical evidence from the field. Women are the creator of folk songs. Males use to capture it through writings. Most of the songs are contextual. Therefore, there is no song in the community that is not used in context. The purpose and meaning of using the songs in everyday life reveals a civilization of living with creativity. A woman bears the burden of life by putting basket on the head but songs in the lips. When the day is the stark reality of the life, night is the dream and imagination. Pains are not to be forgotten , but to recreated in the songs to make it generalized so that life can be meaningful to loving struggle with inspiration.

Where songs dominate the life, where is the artificial melancholy? Where is the hollow man?

There are 29 articles, each representing a genre of oral poetry found in the cultural performances of the community. But there are more than 750 songs of these verities which are drawn from the lips of the singers and about 70 percent of them are women.

The effort initiated by Folklore Foundation, Odisha is a milestone in the field of folklore study in Odisha. Most of them are belong to the villages. The scholars dance , sing and play music when the dance session goes on in the village in some occasion.

The strength of the compilation is that , while city folklorists of India lament on fast vanishing songs in the community , here are some scholars who enjoy , capture, document and disseminate the songs to show that orality is as old and as new as the human civilization, and in any point of time , orality cannot be ignored in the name of modernization.

The contributors of the volume with their titles of the papers is given below

CONTENTS:

'Sankalana Samparkare' by Dr. Chitrasen Pasayat (Ka-Kha); 'Abhimata' by Dr. Mahendra Kumar Mishra (Ga-Chha);
Chapter-1: 'Karma' by Dr. Chitrasen Pasayat (1-13);
Chapter-2: 'Karma' by Girija Sankar Sahu (14-19);
Chapter-3: 'Kandana Geeta' (Mrutyu) by Mamata Nath (20-23);

This book is released in the Navanna Festival during 2008 by the Hon'ble Minister of Mines Sri Padmanabha Behera, Government of Odisha. The book has been widely appreciated   by the Odia readers for its theme, presentation, quality of printing and the efforts that is contributed for clean editing.

Oral Epics of Kalahandi

by Mahendra Kumar Mishra. Chennai: National Folklore Support Center,
2007, p. 302, Rs 600, US $ 30. ISBN. 978-81-901481-9-1.

Oral Epics of Kalahandi is the outcome of the comprehensive research work of Dr Mahendra Kumar Mishra, a well-known scholar in the area of folk studies. The book is based on the author's intensive fieldwork in the undivided Kalahandi district, located in the western part of Orissa, which is known to the world more for its poverty than its cultural riches.

Adjoining Chhattisgarh, and thereby the central region of India, Kalahandi is an erstwhile princely state ruled by kings of the Naga dynasty. It became a district after Independence and was later divided into two districts: Kalahandi and Nuapada.

Significantly, Kalahandi proves to be a treasure house of resources for folklorists and anthropologists for being home to lakhs of tribal population. Dr Mishra's book is not only a collection of the oral epics collected from seven ethnic communities of Kalahandi, the Gond, Kondh, Bhunjia, Kamar and Banjara tribes and the Gaur community, but also those of the *Debgunias*, a singer community.

The volume contains the social history and the caste-tribe continuum of Kalahandi region down the ages. The co-existence of a number of ethnic groups has shaped the local culture of this region, nurtured by the indigenous culture on one hand and the greater Indian tradition on the other.

The ethnography of the singer community called the *Debgunias* and the resource of oral epics are discussed by the author along with the classificatory scheme of oral epics and song-narratives performed on socio-religious occasions. Each and every ethnic group has its own origin myths, culture heroes and the legendary narratives that are sung by the respective ethnic bards accompanied by traditional musical instruments.

Each community, as the patron, owns the oral epics and myths of the singer community and perpetuates the tradition of knowledge. Thus, oral narratives constitute part of the collective literature of the people who have produced the narrative. The content

of the songs/ epics contains the knowledge of the land and the forest, society and the culture in a symbolic manner. The essence of the epics is based on stones of love and war, conflict for land and resolution after a struggling life of a culture hero. Supernatural solution of natural problems is narrated in almost all the epics.

Interestingly, Dr Mishra's book reaffirms the hypothesis that the transition of forest human techno-economic life to a settled agricultural life is the foundation of most of the epics. The *Parghania* or the Gond-bard sings on such a variety of subjects as Chitalsingh Chatri, Budharaja myth, creation of paddy and origin of the Gond gods from the supreme God. These songs are believed to be true among the Gond community.

The epics of Bhima (the culture hero as well as the rain god) and Nangmati-Rajaphulia, represent the Kondh culture in oral epics. The Bhunjia and the Kamar are two endangered communities maintaining their ethnic identity through their language and group solidarity. Their oral epics are rich with local and esoteric knowledge with indigenous imagination.

Banjaras are north-western tribes who sing Raja Isalu, Ramji Huna Sati, Hiro Diwani and Lakha Banjara epics which bear the legacy of their north Indian culture as distinct from that of Kalahandi. The Gaurs are a major settled agricultural community of the region. They sing their thousand-line long *bans geet* which glorifies the culture hero and heroine of their community. Their narratives are replete with tales of struggle with their enemy castes.

Mishra's collection reveals that besides the traditional tales, the oral epics, with the passing of time, have also incorporated such episodes of recent political history as the nineteenth-century Kondh rebellion against the British rule and semi-literary songs related to droughts (1966) in Kalahandi as well as the Lakshmi Janam epic of the Debgunias. The author presents his interpretations of the epics of these seven ethnic groups keeping in view the wider cultural landscape and to comprehend the purpose and meaning of the epic songs. The oral epics as both text and performance reveal the collective memory of human creativity.

Oral Epics of Kalahandi is a well-organised and well-documented first work which will go a long way towards motivating more such work in the field. It includes relevant maps, photographs,etc. as well as a bibliography. There is also a glossary (291-99) of tribal words. The translation of the songs/epics is lucid and lyrical, though one wishes a few original ones had been included in either Devnagari or Roman script.

However, the uniqueness of the book is that the writer has tried to explore the text and performance of the epics from the singer's point of view and has interpreted the texts from their cultural context. More importantly the author, belonging to the region of his study and having access to the language of the singers and their performances, has succeeded in interpreting the texts from an insider's point of view.

Dr. Mishra is a scholar in Indian Folklore. He is the recipient of Orissa Sahitya Academy award for his work *Folklore of Kalahandi.* For the past 10 years Mishra has been working on using language and folklore in primary education under the Orissa Multilingual Education Project for ten indigenous languages. At present Mishra is the State Tribal Education Coordinator in the Department of School and Mass Education, Government of Orissa, India.

We would certainly expect   Dr Mishra to produce the many voices of

unlettered intellectuals through his creative vision which he gathers from the nature and culture.

Contents in Oral Epics of Kalahandi

Preface

Maps of Kalahandi

Chapter 1: Introduction to Kalahandi ;

Chapter 2: Methodology ;

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Chapter 4: Oral Epics of Kalahandi ;

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Courtsey: (IACLALS Newsletter , January 2009)

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Odishara Lokakahani

Compiled by Mahendra   Kumar Mishra

Published by National Book Trust, 2009, New Delhi -110016, 240 pp. Rs 85/-

Reviewed by Prof. Prof. Khageswar Mahapatra

The compiled book entitled Odishara Lokakahani is a collection of 51   folktales from all parts of Odisha. Dr Mishra has collected these stories fro different sources and has edited it for a publication. Since it is published, the book has own a good reputation for its verities of   interesting   tales and legends. The book is reviewed by Prof. Khageswar Mahapatra, a reknowned   Professor of Oriya Liiterature and Linguistics. The selected tales represent the coastal belt and tribal belt of Odisha.

There is a   preface in the book by Mishra which reflects the   multi linguality of the state and the narratives that is available in the   oral form. Orality is n eternal phenomena which cut across   time and space. The tales that is   found in Odisha have striking resemblance with many a folktales and   narratives of the   country and even out side the country. This   revealsthat   folktales have no country.

ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ଐତିହ୍ୟ ଓ ଚଳଣିରେ ଲୋକ କାହାଣୀର ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱ ସର୍ବାଧିକ । ଏହା ଏବେ ବି ଲୋକ ମୁଖରୁ ନିଃସୃତ ହୋଇ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ମୌଖିକ ପରମ୍ପରାକୁ ବଞ୍ଚାଇ ରଖିଛି । ସେହି ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରୁ ସମଗ୍ର ଭାରତବର୍ଷରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଏହିପରି ଏକ ଅଞ୍ଚଳ ଯେଉଁଠି କଳା , ସ୍ଥାପତ୍ୟ, ସଙ୍ଗୀତ ଓ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଲୋକ ସମାଜକୁ ପ୍ରଭାବିତ କରି ରଖିଛି । ଲୋକ କାହାଣୀ ଏହିପରି ଏକ ବିଭବ ଯାହା ଉଭୟ ଲୋକ ଓ ଶିଷ୍ଟ ମହଲକୁ ପ୍ରତିନିଧିତ୍ୱ କରିଥାଏ । ଗତ ୪୦ ବର୍ଷ ଧରି ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ଲୋକ କାହାଣୀର ସଂକଳନ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ବିଶେଷ ଉନ୍ନତି ପରିଲକ୍ଷିତ ହେଇନାହିଁ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ଆନୁଷ୍ଠାନିକତା ଭିତରେ ଲୋକ କାହାଣୀର ପରିମାଣ ବି ଅତ୍ୟଳ୍ପ । ଅଥଚ ଏହା ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସାମୂହିକ ମାନସିକତାର ପ୍ରତିନିଧିତ୍ୱ କରୁଥିବା ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରୁ ମନୋରଞ୍ଜନ ଓ ଶିକ୍ଷା କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଶିକ୍ଷାଠାରୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଅଧିକ ପ୍ରାସଙ୍ଗିକ ।

ସୁଖର କଥା, ନ୍ୟାସନାଲ ବୁକ୍ ଟ୍ରଷ୍ଟ, ଇଣ୍ଡିଆ ବହୁଦିନ ପରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସମସ୍ତ ଅଞ୍ଚଳର ଲୋକ କାହାଣୀକୁ ନେଇ ଏକ ସୁନ୍ଦର ସଂକଳନ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଏହାର ସଂକଳନ କରିଛନ୍ତି ଡଃ ମହେନ୍ଦ୍ର କୁମାର ମିଶ୍ର । ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ଅଞ୍ଚଳଭେଦରେ ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ଓ ଭାଷିକ ବିବିଧତାକୁ ରାଜନୀତି ଓ ପରିଚିତି କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ସ୍ୱୀକାର କରାଯାଉଥିବାବେଳେ ଲୋକକାହାଣୀ ଏହାର ଊର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱରେ । ତେଣୁ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସମୂହ ମାନସିକତାକୁ ପ୍ରତିନିଧିତ୍ୱ କରୁଥିବା ୫୧ଟି କାହାଣୀକୁ ଏକାଠି କରି ଡଃ ମିଶ୍ର ସଂକଳନ ଓ ସମ୍ପାଦନ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲୋକ କାହାଣୀକୁ ସେ ଏକ ବୃହତ୍ତର ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ବିଭବର ସର୍ଜନାତ୍ମକ ମୌଖିକ କଳା ରୂପେ ଉଭୟ ଲିଖିତ ଓ କଥିତ ସାହିତ୍ୟରୁ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଗୋପାଳଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ପ୍ରହରାଜ, ଚକ୍ରଧର ମହାପାତ୍ର ଓ କୁଞ୍ଜବିହାରୀ ଦାଶଙ୍କ ସଂଗୃହୀତ କାହାଣୀଗୁଡ଼ିକ ମଧ୍ୟରୁ ଡଃ ମିଶ୍ର ଯେଉଁ କେତୋଟି କାହାଣୀ ଚୟନ କରିଛନ୍ତି ତାହା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ମାନସିକତାର ଅଟଳ ସର୍ତ କରିବାର ଅନନ୍ୟ ପ୍ରୟାସ । କାହାଣୀର ସ୍ଥାନ, ସମୟ ଓ ଘଟଣା ଚରିତ୍ରକୁ ଏକ ଅକଣା ରାଜ୍ୟକୁ ନେଇ ଯାଇ ପୁନି ଏକ ବାସ୍ତବତାକୁ ଦେଖାଇବାର ପ୍ରୟାସ ଓଡ଼ିଆ କାହାଣୀର ବୈଶିଷ୍ଟ୍ୟ । କାହାଣୀଚୟନ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ଡଃ ମିଶ୍ର ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ସଚେତନ ବୋଲି ମନେ ହୁଏ । ଡଃ ମିଶ୍ର ଲୋକ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ଜଣେ ବିଶ୍ଲେଷଣାତ୍ମକ ଗବେଷକ ରୂପେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର କୋଣ ଅନୁକୋଣ ଘୁରି
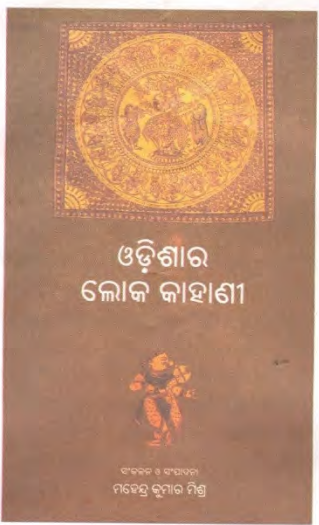
ବୁଲିଛନ୍ତି । ଆଦିବାସୀ, କୃଷି ଭିତ୍ତିକ ସମାଜ ଓ ପୌର ସମାଜ – ଏ ତିନି ସ୍ଥାନରେ ଲୋକ ପରମ୍ପରାର ପ୍ରଭାବକୁ ସେ ଦେଖି ଆସିଛନ୍ତି । ଲୋକ –ପୌର ନିରବଚ୍ଛିନ୍ନତା ସଂସ୍କୃତିର ଏକ ଅଭିନ୍ନ ଅଙ୍ଗ । ସେ ସଂକଳିତ ଲୋକ କାହାଣୀ ପୁସ୍ତକରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଲୋକ – ସ୍ମୃତିର ଏକ ଜୀବନ୍ତ ଚିତ୍ର ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ କରିଛନ୍ତି ଯେଉଁଠି ରାଜରାଣୀ, ରାଜପୁତ୍ର–ରାଜକନ୍ୟା, ସାଧାରଣ ମଣିଷ, ଅଲୌକିକ ଚରିତ୍ର, ଦେବୀଦେବତା ଓ ପଶୁପକ୍ଷୀ ସମସ୍ତେ ବିଦ୍ୟମାନ ।

ପଶ୍ଚିମ, ଦକ୍ଷିଣ ଓ ଉତ୍ତର ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସଂଗୃହୀତ ଅନେକ ଲୋକ କାହାଣୀ ଏହି ପୁସ୍ତକରେ ସ୍ଥାନିତ, ଯାହାକି ସମଗ୍ର ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଲୋକ କାହାଣୀର ପ୍ରତିନିଧିତ୍ୱ କରିଅଛି । ଉଦାହରଣ ସ୍ୱରୂପ ଶଶିସେଣା କାହାଣୀଟି

ସ୍ଥାନ, ମନ୍ଦିର ଓ କାବ୍ୟ ସହିତ ଜଡ଼ିତ । ଆଦିବାସୀ କାହାଣୀ ଜେମରା ମାଟୁ,ତୁୟୀ ବିଟନ୍, ଲାଞ୍ଜକଟୀ ବିଲୁଆ, ଦୁର୍ଭିକ୍ଷ ପ୍ରତିକାର, କାଳୀକୁତୀ ଏକ ଏକ ସ୍ଥାନୀୟ ଜ୍ଞାନର ପ୍ରତିନିଧିତ୍ୱ କରେ ଯାହାକି ମାନବ ମନର ଓ ବୁଦ୍ଧିର ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠତ୍ୱ । କାରଣ ଦୁର୍ଭିକ୍ଷ ବେଳେ ଚାଷୀ ବୃତ୍ତିଟି ହାରି ନ ଯାଇ ବର୍ଷୀ ଜଳ ପାଇଁ ଯେଉଁ କୌଶଳର ପ୍ରୟୋଗ କରିଛି ତାହା 'ଜ୍ଞାନୀବୃକ୍ଷ' ଆର୍କିଟାଇପ୍‌ର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟାୟବାଚୀ । ଲୋକ କାହାଣୀର କଥାନକ, ପଟଭୂମି, କାହାଣୀକାରମାନଙ୍କ କଥନର ପୃଷ୍ଠଭୂମି, କାହାଣୀର ବକ୍ତବ୍ୟ ଓ ଭାଷା, ତଥା ଏହାର ମନସ୍ତାତ୍ତ୍ୱିକ– ସାମାଜିକ ଭୂମିକା ବ୍ୟତିରେକେ ଏହାର ସାମୂହିକ ସର୍ଜନା ଯେ ପୃଥିବୀ ପରି ବଳିଷ୍ଠ ଓ ଦୀର୍ଘସ୍ଥାୟୀ ଏହା ପ୍ରତିପାଦନ କରୁଛି ସଂକଳିତ କାହାଣୀଗୁଡ଼ିକ । ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଲୋକ କାହାଣୀରେ ୫୧ଟି କାହାଣୀ – ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଏକ ଏକ ଭାବନା, ବିଚାରର ପ୍ରତିନିଧି ମୂଳକ କାହାଣୀ । ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ କାହାଣୀର ବକ୍ତବ୍ୟକୁ ଏକାଠି କଲେ ମୋଟାମୋଟି ଭାବେ ଆମେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସାମ୍ପ୍ରତିକ ଜୀବନ ତୋରରେ ବସ୍ତୁଥିବା ଜନମାନସର ଏକ ଅନାବିଷ୍କୃତ ଓ ଅଦୃଶ୍ୟ ମନର ଚିତ୍ରକୁ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ପାଇବା ଯାହାର କି ଆମେ ଦାୟାଦ । ଏହି କାହାଣୀଗୁଡ଼ିକ ସେହି ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରୁ ସ୍ଥାନ, କାଳ ନିର୍ବିଶେଷରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଅତୀତକାଳକୁ ଛୁଇଁ ପାରିଲା ଭଳି ସ୍ୱାଦୀ ଓ ଉପଭୋଗ୍ୟ ।

ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ପାଠକ ପାଠିକାମାନେ ଏହି କାହାଣୀଗୁଡ଼ିକ ପଢ଼ିଲେ ନିଶ୍ଚିତ ଭାବରେ ଏକ ଅନନ୍ୟ ସ୍ୱାଦ ପାଇବେ । ଦୀର୍ଘ କାଳରୁ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଜଗତରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଲୋକ କାହାଣୀ ପରି ଏକ ସଂକଳନର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ଥିଲା ,ଯାହା ପରିପୂରଣ ହୋଇପାରିଛି । ପୁସ୍ତକଟିର ଅଳଙ୍କରଣ, ପରିପାଟୀ, ଚିତ୍ରାବଳୀ ଓ ପ୍ରକାଶନର ନିର୍ଭୁଲ ସଂସ୍କରଣ ପୁସ୍ତକଟିକୁ ଗାୟୀରାର୍ଘ୍ୟ ପ୍ରଦାନ କରିଛି । ଥରେ ଆରମ୍ଭ କଲେ କାହାଣୀଟିକୁ ଶେଷ ନ କରି ରହି ହୁଏ ନାହିଁ । ଏହିଦୃଷ୍ଟିରୁ ଉଭୟ ଲେଖକ ଓ ସମ୍ପାଦକ ତଥା ପ୍ରକାଶକଙ୍କୁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଦେବା କଥା । କହିବା ବାହୁଲ୍ୟ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଲୋକ କାହାଣୀ କେବଳ ଇଂରାଜୀ ଓ ହିନ୍ଦୀ ଭାଷା ନୁହେଁ, ବରଂ ଭାରତର ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ଭାଷାରେ ବି ଅନୂଦିତ ହେଲେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ବିଭବକୁ ଭାରତର ଅନ୍ୟ ପ୍ରାନ୍ତର ଲୋକେ ଉପଭୋଗ କରିପାରନ୍ତେ ।

ପ୍ରଫେସର ଖ୍ରେଶ୍ୱର ମହାପାତ୍ର

Voice from the Field: The Speaking Child in School

Latika Kumari Mishra

I visited Malkangiri to conduct interview for different posts for Evaluation Study on Multi-Lingual Education. The Study has commissioned by Govt. of India to the NCERT. Malkangiri district is a naxal prone district of the State. The district is situated in the southernmost part of the State. In the South it is adjacent to Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh to the north. Most of the Officers reluctant to visit to the District due to the intervention of Naxals.

After professional session I went to explore the resources of the school and community of Malkangiri district. I visited *Sialimal Primary School* which is adopted under Multilingual Education programme of SSA, Orissa. I met the Chairman of Village Education Committee, headmaster, teacher and cluster supervisor of the school, interacted with them regarding the functioning of MLE programme. I also observed the classroom transaction process of class-I students of Koya language. In the context of multilingual education programme I would like to throw light on the pleasant experiences we had in the classroom.

Formalizing Education

As we know under the umbrella of Education for All (Sarva Siksha Abhiyan), different initiatives and attempts have been taken to provide quality education to the children of the age group of 6-14. As a Pedagogy and SC/ST Coordinator for four years in Koraput District of Orissa I was involved in the teaching learning process and SSA activities of Koraput district which is also a tribal dominated district of the State. Koraput district is adjacent to Malkangiri district and the socio-economic condition of both the districts is also similar to some extent. During my tenure of four years we had tried a lot to address to the need of tribal children through different programmes and activities like:

- Training programme for teachers working in tribal areas

- Conducting action research at school level

- Organisation of Co-curricular activities for children

- Distribution of free textbook to tribal children

- Distribution of reading writing materials to SC/ST children

- Release of Grants to Schools and Teachers to improve the condition of school environment and teaching learning process respectively.

All the above activities helped us to enrol more children in schools and to reduce retention problem to some extent in tribal pockets, but the major goal of SSA still remains a utopia for all. The reason being, as Oriya is the mother tongue of people of Orissa , it is the classroom transaction language in all schools including the schools of tribal areas. Hence language becomes a major barrier as neither the teachers nor the students communicate with one another. Except their own mother tongue all other languages are like foreign languages for the children. Hence, the students and the teachers can not share their

ideas, experiences with one another. There is also a big communication gap which hampers or rather paralyses the whole teaching learning process. Due to this fundamental problem even students of class- III and IV sit silently in the classroom and do not respond to the actions and words of the teachers.

But the classroom process of Sialimal School of Malkangiri District was completely different from all other classroom situations of tribal areas. As per our request, the MLE teacher of the school, Mr.Sunadhar Madakami took a language class for class-I students. There were 14 students sitting in class-I (six girls and eight boys) and all were from Koya community (A Tribal Community of Malkangiri District) of Saialimal village. Fortunately the teacher was also from the same community and he was in-charge of Multi-Lingual Education Programme of the school. When the teacher started talking with children in their language all children shouted with the voice of the teacher. The transaction process of the classroom was unbelievable on my part as I had not witnessed a classroom of such kind in a tribal area. The major observations of the classroom process are as follows:

- All Students of the class were only from 5 – 6 age group

- Teacher was using the language of the children, i.e. Koya during the teaching learning process

- Teacher was teaching by showing one big book to all students and all students were actively responding to the pictures and words of the teachers

- All students were talking with teachers regarding the pictures and questions.

- Students were able to understand the instructions of the teacher.

- Students and Teachers were talking with each other like friends.

- Classroom was decorated with different charts of Koya language.

- Children are truly engaged in the act of learning,

- Children are able to answer different questions asked by teacher during transaction of topic and after completion of the topic.

It is revealed from this situation that language is the main strength responsible for the familiarity/acquaintance of any environment. No doubt the children of class-I were very small and new to the school. They were admitted in the school during last April, 2009. But because of familiar language of the teacher they were opening up; they were speaking in the classroom and also felt their importance in classroom situations.

It can be concluded here that each child has talent and capacity to grow, irrespective of his/her community and culture. But the great challenge before us is how to explore and use the resource of their community, culture and languages for the growth of their children.