

Lokaratna

Volume IV

Lokaratna is the e-journal of the Folklore Foundation, Orissa, and Bhubaneswar. The purpose of the journal is to explore the rich cultural

tradition of Odisha for a wider readership. Any scholar across the globe interested to contribute on any aspect of folklore is welcome. This volume represents the articles on performing arts, gender, culture and education, religious studies.

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The objectives of the journal are:

- To invite writers and scholars to contribute their valuable research papers on any aspect of Odishan Folklore either in English or in Oriya. They should be based on the theory and methodology of folklore research and on empirical studies with substantial field work.
- To publish seminal articles written by senior scholars on Odia Folklore, making them available from the original sources.
- To present lives of folklorists, outlining their substantial contribution to Folklore
- To publish book reviews, field work reports, descriptions of research projects and announcements for seminars and workshops.
- To present interviews with eminent folklorists in India and abroad.
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Lokaratna

Volume IV 2011

From The Desk of the Editor In Chief

The dead cat and the tradition

A marriage ceremony was instituted in a rural family of a village. During that ceremony, the mother of the bride put a cat inside a bamboo box and locked it. Being asked , why the cat was put in a box and locked , she answered that this is the custom and tradition that is followed by her family. Being asked why the cat is put in a bamboo box and why not a another animal in an another wooden box- she could not answer it. Finally it was asked to the oldest woman of the family she remembered it and said, that when she came as the bride to this home used to listen the story of putting a cat in the bamboo box . This means that the tradition must have followed at least four to five generations. Being asked, the old woman said, the reason was nothing, but the cat was using he mouth in the sacred food to be offered to the Gods and Goddesses. So to get rid of the cat, the house owner fixed the cat inside a box, and he forgot to release the cat from the box. Mean while the cat died in the box out of suffocation. When the house owner remembered the cat he opened the box and found the cat to be dead. He took off the cat and buried in the earth. The newly wedded bride was watching this whole event was assumed that this family has the tradition of killing a cat during marriage ceremony. Needless to say this was introduced by the bride in the subsequent marriages since the senior persons were no more alive and the bearer of the tradition had nothing to question about the authenticity of the event.

May be this story true or false, or folklore! The purpose and meaning of such a tradition should be logical with reason to the future generation. They should know why and how the tradition is helpful to the current situation and fit in to the current context. The story is not one alone, there are many traditions and customs in our society which is not questioned by the tradition bearers, rather they feel proud of practicing it. Rather in order to validate and justify the custom, a new folklore is

created and thus the make belief becomes belief and belief becomes truth and truth become philosophy. Then our tradition bearers feel proud of it. Not only this, our researchers of tradition also love to document that dead cat and display the cultural image of our 'great tradition.'

During these last four years of working on folklore both in academic domain and public sphere , I have got diverse experience on its use , non - and misuse. Many people use folklore as their cultural system .They celebrate their life with natural and creative expression, which is context sensitive but not analytical as the folklore scholars do. Many folklore items in the communities are used in their everyday life, but the meaning of such customs and practices are not questioned by the tradition bearers of folklore. They follow the tradition and customs just for the cause that their ancestors were following it and they also need to follow it. The meaning of folklore is, therefore, subject to cognition and comprehension with purpose and meaning in a given context, or it may lose its social coherence. Folklorist, on the other hand try to decipher the meaning using the many glasses of theories and examine the item of folklore in her operation theatre to diagnose the why and how of the item. Both the practice and attempt need reexamination in view of its connectivity between the community of folklore and scholar community.

I observed after traveling across the country for last two years , attending many seminars and workshops, and also travelling the tribal world , in spite of an invisible danger of terrorists, I found that , the many locals are now more keen to explore their social histories. The professors of Universities have started rethinking their disciplines from people's point of view. In two universities I found that the semi-literate tribal language speakers attended two days conference on revitalizing their languages and culture in the department of English , Vidyasagar University, Midnapur of West Bengal. Another conference was in Central University of Rajasthan , Kishangarh, in same English Department, many semi literates attended the programme to work in people's linguistic survey of India initiated by Prof Ganesh Nath Devy, the founder of Adivasi Academy Tezgarh, Badodara. Gujarat.

The fate of linguistics, culture and folklore in global academic scenario, more or less has been affected by the global economic order. Ideologies, and theories have failed to establish their

strength , rather the most powerful countries have also been victimized by the most powerless groups of people. This is the creation of a situation where the most powerless can also challenge the most powerful one. The social unrest , changing climate, inequalities of human development indicators, and tension of cross border issues , all have combined together against humanity. Our modern science and technology has not been able to win the heart of the people who created unrest and in human acuties.

We are helpless in displaying our strength and vacuumed within the veil of theories and methods and our scholarship does not help the same folk from those we have been enriched.

Now our main focus will be to perhaps understand the social and creative dynamics and see the whole knowledge from people's point of view and to reexamine the meaning of tradition and to connect it with the current life situation. Another issue is to examine the tradition logically with reason if the item of culture has really a meaning or it is a bad faith only.

People's Linguistic Survey of India

Fortunately, Prof Ganeshnath Devy, the founder of Bhasha Research and Publication center in Badodara, Gujarat and Adivasi Academy, Tezgarh Gujarat, has initiated people's Linguistic Survey of India. This is a massive project initiated by the communities of Indian whose languages are either died or likely to die. Death of a language is compared to commit genocide by the major languages to the minor languages. According to the Census of India while there are 623 scheduled tribes, there are about 184 languages left with the Indian communities. In fact there are thousands of languages which have not been documented. Dr Devy's vision to document the living languages of India has led to document many languages by the communities concerned and now about more than 500 languages have been documented by the language communities alone.

II

This volume is unique in its collection and representation of culture across the globe. While the first article is about a man turning in to a tiger found among the cultural practices of the Kondhs of Odisha , it is well researched by Dr.Francesco Bighenti, an Italian scholar on Odisha studies. His argument transcends the physical realities and takes us to a realm of an unseen world of metaphysics.

Dr. Anand Mahanand speaks of the cultural geography where the nature becomes the foundation of culture. This article not only reminds of our association with the nature of the past, but also the mental text that is found among the singers.

Dr.Harvinder Singh explores the rich oral tradition of Punjab through narrating the specimen of singing tradition as well as its narrative patterns in different social occasion. In fact while the rural and tribal areas of the country have failed to maintain the dance and songs in social ceremony, Punjab has retained it as a string cultural tradition. Mr Singh has given a comprehensive picture of Punjabi oral tradition in his paper.

Dr.Bidisha Som has explored a spectrum of folklore by writing about the cognitive aspects of folk narrative. She has examined how the item of folk narrative contains the cognitive aspects and contributes to the human knowledge system. Needless to say, when most of the folklorists of India either study folklore either from anthropological or literary point of view, Dr. Som has treated folklore from psychological and narratological point of view in which linguistics also play a major role. Anuj Mohan Pradhan has taken the agricultural songs from Kondhmal and has shown how the work and song , reality and imagination go hand in hand and the local metaphor is created in women folksongs. He also has explored the context sensitive expression from the folksongs..

Dr Kailash Chandra Das has critically examined the literary texts of Odiya Mahabharata in the context of historical consciousness and has explored some vital points that speaks of his multidisciplinary approach of study and critical analysis. While Dr Das has taken the medieval period of Odisha history and found its evidence from Sarala Mahabharata, DR Padmaprasad paper on Jaina folklore is another critical examination of the influence of Jainism in literature in

Karnataka in particular and India in general. Dr Padmaprasad has vividly shown the evidence of Jaina folklore in the past and present.

From woman to Goddess is a case study of a tribal religious cult that emerged from Bastar and spread out to south western Orissa. Priyadarshini Mishra has critically examined the socio-psychological aspect of a woman who was victimized by her own brothers and later she became a goddess. A tribal women worshipped over 400 years and now the politics of religion entered in to this cult with neo political patronization. Her article is explorative and analytical from gendered perspective.

MCL Provost has given an amazing article on searching the roots of one's own identity. She gave three generations of oral history to establish the roots of origin and the story of indentured labour of Asian and African countries to Europe and America. Provost has fondly written this article and her own emotion is attached to this work. Dr. Basudeb Sunani has prepared his article on Dalit identity from the tradition and transition point of view. When Dalit issue is a modern trend, the historical perspective of its causes and reflections has been provided by Sunani.

Dr Joshi has enumerated the manifold expression of postcolonial autobiography writings by the African, India and western writers and the voices they raise of locality and belongingness. Besides Joshi has critically examined the racial, geographical and Diaspora ventures of writers of different countries and has found out how they narrate their conflicting mind with creativity. Joshi's article is enriched with the trend of post colonial discourse in writings of autobiography where, like a fiction or novel, also has the ability of expression and autobiography as a genre of literature has the strength of spelling out narrative of the self and the landscape.

Dr Chitrasen Pasayat's article is about the new rice eating ceremony in western Odisha. The paper represents the process and function of Nuakhai - festival which is a community based ceremony and celebration. Stella Paul has used personal narratives as a piece of modern folklore and has voiced the woman assertiveness in her work. She has narrated about the domestic violence as reflected in the oral tradition.

Prof Aphilak Kasempholkoon from Thailand has given a beautiful account of using the Ramayana characters and events in modern context for marketing and advertising purpose and this catering to a new creative economy which promotes value addition to the products and tourism of Thailand. This is called creative economy as spelled out by Prof Aphilak.

Prof Pulla Rao from Andhra Pradesh has written about the consumption pattern of Jatapu tribe of Andhra Pradesh. This contains the tribal economic system and their patterns of economic behaviour. Prof Uma Ram has conducted study on Tribal Education in Bastar and has presented comprehensive information with analysis on education of tribal children in Bastar with some suggestions.

Pages from the History are a new area in Lokaratna. Sri Devendra Satyarthi, a noted folklorist of undivided India had collected more than 3 million oral songs across the country. This work was published in Lahore in 1841. This book is well known as “Meet my People.” There is a chapter on Orissa folklore. Devendra Satyarthi came to Odisha during 1931 and had collected some folklore with the help of Chakradhar Mahapatra, a noted folklorist of Odisha. This book was not available to us. Fortunately, I found it in Gutenberg University archives and downloaded it. The Odisha portion of this book is retrieved and presented in this volume for our new folklorists to assess the trend of folklore study in Odisha.

Finally, I am thankful to all my friends who have been very kind enough to send their articles to me. Special thanks to Dr Harekrushna Meher, Head in Sanskrit Department , Autonomous College Bhawanipatna to have given his tireless assistance in editing the papers and supporting me in bringing out this volume during 2011. I am also thankful to my friends from abroad MCL Provost, Francesco Bighenti, and Prof. Aphilak Kasempholkoon for their humble contribution. I am also thankful to my Indian professors who have been very kind to me to contribute their papers.

I am also thankful to the Folklore Society of England who have been very generous to give their advertisement in Lokaratna Vol IV on their Journal of the Folklore Society,UK. Instead they also have wished us to put our advertisement in their journal. Thus a bond has been created among the global with the local.

I am thankful to Dr MD Muthukumarswamy and his colleagues of NFSC, Chennai to support this volume to be published in their web site for a global readership.

On behalf of Folklore Foundation, Odisha Bhubaneswar , I wish a Happy and prosperous new Year **2012.**

Mahendra K Mishra

Editor in Chief

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Director
Folklore Foundation,
Bhubaneswar

Announcement: Article for Lokaratna 2012 Last date of receiving the article from the writers and scholars is 30th June 2012.

Folklore Foundation wish to request the authors of this volume to identify and connect the writers on Indian culture , folklore, religion and literature and also from any discipline related to oral tradition and performances to contribute their research articles to Lokaratna 2012. The next volume will be publishee in the month of August, 2012. Kindly circulate this announcement to the interested scholars who wish to contribute their papers to Lokaratna.

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Part – I

Culture of Orality and Meaning of Comprehension

Kradi Mliva: The Phenomenon of Tiger-Transformation in the Traditional Lore of the Kondh Tribals of Orissa

Francesco Brighenti

Abstract

The belief in a form of therianthropy consisting of the nocturnal migration of one's soul-substance into the body of a tiger, which thereby comes to be controlled by the will of a sleeping human, forms an important component of the traditional lore of the Kondhs, a complex of Dravidian-speaking tribal groups in the highlands of the eastern Indian state of Orissa. The Kondhs never describe this type of human-to-animal transformation as the physical metamorphosis of a person into a tiger (that is, as shape-shifting) — a motif which, conversely, recurs in the main bulk of weretiger tales associated with witchcraft across Middle and Eastern India; nor do they ever describe it as possession of the human body by any tiger-spirit or tiger-deity. Besides, the transformation is reportedly not achieved through evil magic, but is rather conceived of by the Kondhs as a spontaneous psychic phenomenon affecting individuals — sometimes even children — thus predestined by divine entities. Although the majority of the Kondhs tend to believe the faculty of commanding a living tiger in dreamtime to be the prerogative of religious specialists such as shamans and healer-diviners, this supernatural ability is generally understood by them as being potentially available to laypersons as well. The little-studied Kondh weretiger-lore is of great anthropological and historical interest in that the only other area of South Asia where beliefs in similar psychic phenomena are known to be widespread is the northeastern mountain region inhabited by the Naga, Garo and Khasi tribes, which nevertheless lies at a great distance from Orissa.

1. Kondh “feline therianthropy”

Kondh tribal groups, when taken as a whole (that is, as the sum total of the tribal speakers of the closely allied Kui and Kuvi languages), constitute the largest Dravidian-speaking tribal population of

the Indian state of Orissa. Different sections of the Kondh tribe retain in their cultural traditions a complex of supernatural beliefs centering around the idea that all or most of man-eating tigers prowling around their villages are actually weretigers¹ — namely, human beings turned into tigers.

Therianthropy, derived from the Greek *thērion* (meaning ‘wild beast’) and *anthrōpos* (meaning ‘human being’), is the general category of shape-shifting in which man or woman is able to transform into animal and back. The most well-known type of therianthropy is lycanthropy (human-to-wolf transformation). The more general term therianthropy can refer to any sort of were-beast or to transformation into any animal. In South Asia, the southern regions of China, Indo-China and Indonesia the tiger (or, alternatively, the leopard), being the most formidable wild carnivorous mammal of humid tropical Asia, is the most common form assumed by alleged shape-shifters; for want of a better term, the expression “feline therianthropy” is used by the author of the present paper to designate the belief in the possibility of the transmutation of a man or woman into a tiger or leopard and back.²

The Kondh belief in weretigers implies neither possession of the human body by a tiger-deity or tiger-spirit nor any bodily metamorphosis of a human being into a tiger (viz., it does not imply any physical shape-shifting). On the contrary, the transformation is reportedly achieved through the nocturnal transmigration of a man or woman’s soul (or, better, of a type of sub-soul sometimes termed as “life-force” by anthropologists) into the body of a tiger whose will and actions thereby come to be controlled by a person in deep sleep. In other words, some Kondh sub-groups, among whom the Kuttia and Dongria highlanders are foremost, believe that the soul of certain specially endowed individuals has a faculty of commanding a living tiger in dreamtime, and they regard such individuals as weretigers.

This supernatural phenomenon is believed to relate to human beings’ desires as expressed in dreams, particularly when dreams are provoked by thoughts incurred prior to going to sleep. For instance, in a dream a person may feel a strong desire for flesh and blood, like a tiger might feel when spotting some wild animals in the jungle or some domestic ones in the vicinity of a village. Another person while dreaming may feel a strong desire of turning into a tiger and, while in such form, of causing bodily harm or death to an enemy or a rival in revenge for either a military defeat or a social offence; as an alternative, he or she may desire to kill and devour their cattle, goats, pigs, etc. The sleeping person thus runs to satisfy his or her desires, and at that moment, his/her human nature is transformed into a tiger’s nature and his/her psychic energy takes control of a tiger roaming nearby.

It is generally believed that certain Kondh individuals are predestined by the gods to develop the faculty of projecting their psychic energy into the body of a tiger during sleep. The Kondh lore about

¹ The modern English compound term weretiger (also spelt as were-tiger, wer-tiger) is formed by the union of the Old English word *wer-* ‘man’ and the word ‘tiger’ on the analogy of the compound term werewolf (from late Old English *werewulf*).

² The alternative scientific term “tigroanthropy” was proposed by the Dutch Sinologists J.J.M. de Groot (1854-1921) to designate this form of therianthropy, but it seems no one followed up on his suggestion. See J.J.M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, vol. 4 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1901), pp. 163ff.

the phenomenon of tiger-transformation is rooted in the mythology of the earth goddess, Darṇi Pēnu,³ who is worshipped with reverence and awe by all sections of the Kondh tribe. In myths accounting for the origin of this phenomenon, which were first recorded by British army officers in the mid-nineteenth century, Darṇi Pēnu is regarded as the creatrix and first practitioner of this supernatural art, whose secrets were transmitted by her to certain Kondhs after the latter's prayers. Although most of the Kondhs have currently forgotten such myths, many of them still believe that the power of tiger-transformation has a divine origin.

2. British colonial accounts of Kondh weretiger-lore

Kondh traditions about feline therianthropy do not appear to have been recorded in any Oriya literary texts anterior to the colonial period. Accordingly, the earliest written testimonies to this phenomenon are those provided by some early reports on the Kondhs authored by British colonial officers. Going back in chronological order, we first find Samuel C. Macpherson's account of the religion of the Kondhs. In a famous article of his, published in 1852, this British army officer and ethnographer writes⁴ that "Umbally Bylee" — that is, Am(b)ali-Bāeli,⁵ mythical Great Ancestress of the Kondhs and, at one time, a human manifestation of the earth goddess — originally choose to manifest herself to man in her tiger form; after she had assumed such form, she killed a large quantity of game animals (whose carcasses were eaten by the Kondhs with great delight) as well as of enemies of the Kondhs; finally, she taught the Kondhs both the art of "Mleepa",⁶ i.e. how to make themselves into tigers or leopards like she herself had first done, and the art of public war, i.e. how to kill enemies in battle. Macpherson's account, however, does not make fully apparent whether the two teachings were mutually interrelated, that is to say, whether the power of tiger-transformation was meant to be used by the Kondhs for killing their enemies in battle or not. Because, as is told in this mythic narrative, the earth goddess had asked the tribe to sacrifice human beings to her on a regular basis in return for her teachings, this story is nowadays recited by Kondh village priests at the celebration of the buffalo sacrifice that, since Macpherson's time, has replaced the older human sacrifice known in the Oriya language as *Meriā*.⁷

³ The Kui and Kuvi term *darṇi*, designating the sacred stones connected with the earth goddess, is a corruption, by deaspiration of the initial stop, of the Oriya term *dharāṇi/dharanī* 'the earth'; *pēnu* is the general Kui and Kuvi word for 'deity, spirit'.

⁴ Samuel C. Macpherson, "An Account of the Religion of the Khonds in Orissa," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 13 (1852): 216-74.

⁵ The archaic Kui name Amali-Bāeli or Ambali-Bāeli literally means 'Father's elder sister-Ego's elder sister'. Cf. Barbara M. Boal, *The Kondhs: Human Sacrifice and Religious Change* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1982), p. 91.

⁶ The Kui transitive verb *mlīpa* or *mlīva* means 'to be changed or transformed into'; when used as a verbal noun, it means 'transformation'. Another meaning of this verb is 'to change s.o. by cursing' — cf. Barbara M. Boal, *Fire Is Easy: The Tribal Christian and His Traditional Culture* (Manila: Christian Institute for Ethnic Studies in Asia, 1973), pp. 147-49.

⁷ Macpherson, "Account of the Religion of the Khonds," pp. 233, 239-40. The links between tiger-transformation beliefs and the human-sacrifice tradition appear to have been very close among the Kondhs. In former times, human sacrifice to the earth goddess represented the principal form of ritual response to supposed weretiger-attacks in the Kondh inhabited area. Tiger attacks were diagnosed by priests as signs of the goddess' profound dissatisfaction with a group — whether household, clan or village — which had failed to keep her well supplied with blood sacrifices. The immediate celebration of a human sacrifice (or, after its suppression, of a buffalo sacrifice) was deemed necessary to restore the relationship and thus

Macpherson also writes⁸ that, always according to the Kondhs, a man-eating tiger can only be (1) the earth goddess herself, embodying the wild and chaotic powers of nature incarnated into a tiger that starts killing the people when the goddess herself gets enraged with them for lack of sacrifices (thus, literally “devouring” her victim), or (2) a “Mleepa tiger” — an expression by which he translates the Kui deverbal compound noun *mlīva kṛāḍi* (‘a transformed tiger’), formed by inverting the order of the object and the verb in the verbal phrase *kṛāḍi mlīva* (‘to be transformed into tiger form’).⁹ Macpherson goes on with saying that a “Mleepa tiger” is probably controlled by that particular form of the human soul — in his opinion, the Kondh would recognize four different forms of soul — which has the power of temporarily quitting the body at the will of a deity, as would also occur when a Kondh child or youth is called to shamanhood. Such a temporary transmigration of the soul into the body of a tiger would allegedly leave the human body in a weakened, languid, drowsy and dysfunctional state.¹⁰ In spite of its imprecision, Macpherson’s seems to be the first clear recognition of the aspect of “migration of the human soul into the body of a tiger during sleep” which is now known to be an essential component of Kondh beliefs concerning the *kṛāḍi mlīva* phenomenon. As for the identity of the gods who “choose” the persons who will develop the power of tiger-transformation, Kuttia and Dongria Kondh shamans interviewed by the author of the present paper confirmed, without any hesitation, that it is the goddess of the earth herself who confers this faculty on the people, though some of them further added that the Sōru Pēnu (gods/spirits of the hills and forests), too, may “choose” the individuals designated to be weretigers, thus, in one sense “mediating” between the latter and the paramount earth goddess, from whom the power in question ultimately emanates.

Macpherson does not consider the superhuman power he terms as “Mleepa” (viz., *mlīva* or animal transformation) as being acquired through black magic arts. Indeed, in a report of his dated 24 April, 1842, some excerpts from which were published by the *Calcutta Review* four years later, he contrasts “sorcery” — meant by him as the use of supernatural powers, acquired through the assistance of a deity or spirit, to harm someone — with profane black magic and states that the *mlīva* power has more to do with the former than with the latter:¹¹

“[Among the Kondhs] the gods are held to inflict death either by ordinary means, as by a wound received in battle, or by the agency of men who are endowed by them with the power of transformation (called Mleepa) which enables them to assume the forms of wild beasts for the purpose of destruction [...]; and this gift is considered to be very commonly dispensed, as the Khonds [...] attribute all deaths by tigers to persons so endowed; for they believe that the gods did not create the tiger to prey upon man, but to hunt, to provide food for him [...]. *Magicians* are, however, believed to have acquired the power to take away life at pleasure, without reference to the will of the gods, by dark and impious arts which are purely human. Against the class of sorcerers

put a stop to serial (were-)tiger attacks. Cf. Boal, *Konds*, p. 109; V. Elwin, “Notes on a Kondh Tour,” *Man in India* 24 (1944), pp. 51-3; P. Rossillon, “Mœurs et Coutumes du peuple *Kui*, Indes Anglaises,” *Anthropos* 7 (1912), p. 652.

⁸ Macpherson, “Account of the Religion of the Khonds,” p. 239.

⁹ In Kui, *kṛāḍi* means ‘a tiger’ and *mlīva* or *mlīpa*, as has been already mentioned in footnote 6, means ‘to be transformed’ or ‘transformation’; *kṛāḍi mlīva* therefore means ‘the act or process of being converted into a tiger’.

¹⁰ Macpherson, “Account of the Religion of the Khonds,” p. 228.

¹¹ Quoted in G. Duff, “Goomsur: The Late War There — The Khonds or Wild Tribes,” *Calcutta Review* 5 (1846), p. 52.

gifted by the gods, those who have suffered by them frequently rise, to compel them by threats of plunder and by violence and by levying heavy compositions, to promise to cease to afflict them; but the magician experiences a different doom [— namely, he is often assigned extreme penalties, at least among the lowland Kondhs].”

The power, given to the Kondhs by the earth goddess, of turning themselves temporarily into tigers is defined as a “magical art” in only one passage of Macpherson’s account of the religion of this Indian tribe. The reference is found in a prayer to the earth goddess which asks for protection against, among other things, “danger from those who by magical arts become Mleepa tigers.”¹² This definition is, however, in apparent conflict with Macpherson’s own description of the “magician” as a person believed to “have acquired the power to take away life at pleasure, *without* reference to the will of the gods, by dark and impious arts which are *purely human*” (see above; italicization added for emphasis). Indeed, Macpherson regards tiger-transformation as a gift of the earth goddess to certain Kondhs and contrasts it with any “magical” achievements. It may be noticed here that the text of this Kui prayer, reproduced in a number of later publications by other authors, is given by Macpherson in English translation only. It would be therefore interesting to know what was the Kui term translated as “magical art” here. Was it possibly *kēpa*, *klēga* ‘sorcery, witchcraft’? One hundred and seventy years after the recording of the Kondh prayer in question, one will hardly know; therefore, this stray reference to *mlīva* as “magical art” found in Macpherson’s overall work is not to be given much weight in the context of the present discussion.

Coming to another nineteenth-century British army officer who has handed down to posterity an account of his experiences among the Kondhs, John Campbell, one may point out how this author has done his best to depict the power of tiger-transformation, referred to in Kondh mythology and traditional lore, as a pure superstition whose cultural background would have been provided by beliefs in witchcraft and evil magic. Campbell labels the phenomenon at issue as “Pulta Bag” or “Phulto Bag”, an Anglicized spelling of the colloquial Oriya term *pālaṭa bāgha* (literally ‘the act of converting oneself into a tiger’, an expression also applied, by semantic extension, to any human being who is believed to be able to convert him/herself into a tiger). The Oriya term is possibly a calque of the Kui *krāḍi mlīva*, which has exactly the same meaning. By the way, Campbell’s is probably by far the first occurrence ever in colonial literature of the Oriya expression *pālaṭa bāgha*. It may be presumed that he got familiar with this expression through his Oriya informants and that he, unlike Macpherson, did not know the Kui term *krāḍi mlīva*.

Campbell writes¹³ that “[Kondh] witches have the faculty of transforming themselves into tigers,” and then goes on to tell the case he had once come across of two women posing as *pālaṭa bāgha* to blackmail the superstitious Kondh people living in their surroundings and extort them food and clothing at will. Subsequently the two women confessed the imposture before Campbell, who had exposed their fraud. They stated they had hitherto lived by imposing on the credulity of the neighboring

¹² Macpherson, “Account of the Religion of the Khonds,” p. 246.

¹³ John Campbell, *A Personal Narrative of Thirteen Years Service amongst the Wild Tribes of Khondistan for the Suppression of Human Sacrifice* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1864), pp. 44-46.

villagers, who had kept on supplying them with what they demanded in order to secure themselves and their cattle from the two self-claimed weretigers' depredations. It is yet to be noted that the two alleged witches temporarily converted into tigers would have in this case, as Campbell was told, resumed their human shape out of fear as they were pursued by a Kondh whose son they would have carried off while in tiger form. In other words, they would have instantly reverted back from beasts to humans on the very spot where the incident had taken place whereas, on the contrary, according to Kondh oral traditions one of the most notable features of the *krāḍi mlīva* phenomenon would precisely consist in the total absence of any *bodily* metamorphosis from human to tiger and back. Consequently, Campbell is not describing an actual case of *krāḍi mlīva* or *pālaṭa bāgha* here.

The other supposed *pālaṭa bāgha* story related by Campbell in his book¹⁴ is equally spurious. A Kondh soldier serving in Campbell's body of irregulars, who had shot dead a free Kondh tribesman during a conflict, was persuaded that the latter was possessed of the *mlīva* power and would certainly come back from death and destroy him. The man returned to his village, terrified at the thought of the inescapable supernatural vengeance of his victim, and was there mauled by a tiger in the middle of the night just as he expected! This story, however, does not fall under the category of *krāḍi mlīva* tales as the man-eating tiger is in this case supposed to be controlled by the spirit of a *dead* man (viz., a revenant), not by the soul of a living person fast asleep.

In sum, Campbell's "Phulto Bag" stories are of no use for the understanding of the Kondh cultural tradition concerning feline therianthropy.

Yet another British army officer, C.C. Morris, who was based in Ganjam District (southwestern Orissa) during the 1860's, has left us an interesting article on "Pulto Bagh" based on his memories of service in the Kondh inhabited region. In his article he writes:¹⁵

"[O]ne of the most weird and fanciful of [Kondh] beliefs is that of the 'Pulto Bagh' [...] — that is to say, they believe that certain men's spirits have the power of quitting their bodies and entering that of tigers or panthers, wreaking their revenge in that form upon their enemies. Nearly every man killed by a tiger — and in the wild jungle life they lead there are many of them so killed — is supposed to have made an enemy of a 'Pulto Bagh'. Owing to this belief any man credited with having this power is hated and feared, but is always treated with the greatest respect, and no one would dream of incurring his enmity; hence many assume, or are willing to have it inferred, that they have this gift, for the sake of the power and profit it brings to them."

Like Macpherson, and unlike Campbell, Morris therefore grasps the essence of the Kondh's belief in the *mlīva* power. He is aware that this belief entails the admission, on the part of the Kondhs, of the possibility that a man or woman's soul can break away from the human body and temporarily migrate into the body of a wild animal so as to possess and control it. In his article Morris also relates a

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 242-43.

¹⁵ C.C. Morris, "The 'Pulto Bagh.' A Legend of India," *Otago Witness*, issue 2022, 24 November 1892, p. 39.

local story about one Samoo Manty, a supposed *krāḍi mlīva* practitioner or *krāḍi mlīvarenju*¹⁶ who had been living in the Kondh village of Baliguda (then situated in the undivided district of Ganjam) just a few years before the Indian Government established a police force there. It was reported to Morris that one night, after Samoo Manty had vowed vengeance to a youth of his village who had taken away his betrothed from him, a tiger came up to the latter's door. The young man, who owned a gun, killed the animal with a shot right between the eyes. In the morning an enormous tiger was found lying dead in the centre of the village, while the alleged *krāḍi mlīvarenju* was found dead in his house.

Thus, this mid-nineteenth-century story recorded by C.C. Morris not only tells us that a Kondh weretiger was then believed to have the power of projecting his or her soul into the body of a tiger while asleep, a fact that was later on emphasized by the famous ethnologist Edgar Thurston;¹⁷ it also tells us, for the first time ever in colonial literature, that the phenomenon of *krāḍi mlīva* was then firmly associated in the Kondh mind with the typical principle of repercussion by virtue of which, if a *mlīva krāḍi* — that is, a tiger possessed by a *mlīva* practitioner — be killed while attacking a village or being hunted in the jungle, the sleeping person who is controlling the animal will, in his/her turn, die synchronously.

In his *Ganjam District Manual* (1882) T.J. Maltby, of the Madras Civil Service, spells out the most extreme consequence of the circumstance, remarked by Morris, that among the Kondhs “any man credited with having [the tiger-transformation] power is hated and feared.” It seems that the mere fact of becoming an enemy of one such man — for instance, against the background of inter-individual or inter-group conflict and tension — urged a Kondh to perform some act of preemptive self-defence which could even result into the self-claimed weretiger's death by violent means.¹⁸

“[The Kondhs] believe in a power possessed by certain of themselves of converting themselves into panthers or tigers and in that form compassing the death of their enemy (this is called becoming a ‘Paltobhag’), and a threat from one man to another that he will so convert himself has, in my own experience, caused a threatened man to murder the man who threatened him.”

It is therefore apparent that when a Kondh explicitly threatened to another Kondh that he would assault him (or his cattle, goats, pigs, etc.) in the shape of a tiger, the threatened man being afraid of the threat used to take any action, even to the extent of murdering the supposed weretiger as a precautionary measure. Threatening one's own enemies to take revenge on them by preying upon them after being converted into a tiger seems to be an old feature of Kondh inter-clan and inter-village feuds.

¹⁶ In Kui, a person believed to be endowed with the power of tiger-transformation is called *krāḍi mlīvarenju* if male, and *krāḍi mlīvareṇi* if female (with *-enju* and *-eṇi* being, respectively, the masculine and feminine [pronominal] terminations used to form verbal nouns). Other verbal nouns used by Kui speakers to designate such individuals are, respectively, *krāḍi mlīva gaṭanju* (a male) and *krāḍi mlīva gaṭari* (a female), where *gaṭanju* (m.) and *gaṭari* (f.) both mean ‘possessed of’.

¹⁷ “[The Kondhs of Orissa] believe that they can transform themselves into tigers or snakes, half the soul leaving the body and becoming changed into one of these animals, either to kill an enemy, or satisfy hunger by having a good feed on cattle in the jungle. During this period, they are believed to feel dull and listless, and disinclined for work, and, if a tiger is killed in the forest, they will die synchronously. Mr. Fawcett informs me that the Kondhs believe that the soul wanders during sleep” (Edgar Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* [Madras: Government Press, 1909], vol. 3, p. 405).

¹⁸ T.J. Maltby, *The Ganjam District Manual* (Madras: Lawrence Asylum Press, 1882), p. 91.

This may also be evinced by the myth, recorded by S.C. Macpherson and already referred to above, about the earth goddess' simultaneous teaching of both the art of *mlīva* and that of war to the Kondhs.

Again in this connection there even was, as detailed in a 1883 judiciary report by C.H. Mounsy, the Special Assistant Agent of Ganjam, a special form of solemn oath current among the Kondhs of Ganjam District by which a man could clear himself of the charge of being a weretiger and, while in his tiger form, of aiming at the destruction of his own enemies.¹⁹

All this shows that *kṛāḍi mlīvarenjus* and *kṛāḍi mlīvareṛis* (respectively, male and female *mlīva* practitioners)²⁰ were perceived by the nineteenth-century Kondhs as evil-intentioned persons who underwent the transformation into a tiger mainly with the intent to cause economic loss (e.g. by raiding one's cattle at night), bodily harm, or even death to their enemies. Still in our days, the belief in feline therianthropy is responsible for many social tensions among the Kondhs, who may accuse a neighbor or a relative of, in the form of a tiger, killing their cattle at night.

At any rate, the murder of an alleged weretiger does not appear to have represented the first choice of an individual or community threatened by him/her if one lends credit to what Macpherson writes in this regard:²¹

“Against the class of sorcerers gifted by the gods [including weretigers], those who have suffered by them frequently rise, to compel them by threats of plunder and by violence and by levying heavy compositions, to promise to cease to afflict them.”

Macpherson's reference to some “heavy compositions” which, in his time, used to be levied on Kondh tribesmen suspected of being weretigers or on their clans of origin, most likely hints at an institutionalized system for the resolution of inter-group conflicts which is in vogue among the Kondhs still today, and which goes under the name of *ḍiba tiṇ(m)ba* (‘eating/feasting on the earth of the ant-hill’). This para-judicial system has been described by a team of researchers in the following terms:²²

“[S]uch believed killings or deaths [as those caused by persons supposedly endowed with the *mlīva* power] could not go on forever. Hence, the feuding villagers or clan members meet every six years in an open, neutral, holy ground. They make accusations against each other and confess their own guilt in the name of the earth goddess, the sun and the moon. They then come to an agreement to stop the believed killings. [...] Oral agreements are entered into in the presence of the entire gathering and peace is made. The day is marked by drinking, dining and also dancing; these all go together. Although the process is periodic and involves a long drawn-out procedure of reconciliation, the Kondhs have institutionalized the system. [...] The punishment, in the shape of goats or pigs to the guilty group, is imposed by common consent. These are instantly killed for

¹⁹ Cf. N.R. Patnaik, *History and Culture of Khond Tribes* (New Delhi: Commonwealth Publishers, 1992), p. 57.

²⁰ See footnote 16.

²¹ Quoted in Duff, “Goomsur: The Late War There,” p. 52.

²² Radhakant Nayak, Barbara M. Boal, and Nabor Soreng, *The Kondhs: A Handbook for Development* (New Delhi: Indian Social Institute, 1990), pp. 89-90.

feasting together. Interestingly, the operation appeared to be like a battle where neither side claims victory and both accept full reconciliation.”

It does not seem likely that any person accused of practicing black magic arts would ever come to an agreement with his or her self-proclaimed victims in such a smooth manner as that described above (that is, by merely paying a fine to them); consequently, this Kondh system for the resolution of inter-group conflicts caused by the activities of individuals believed to be weretigers is yet another piece of evidence testifying to the “non-magical” character attributed to the *krāḍi mlīva* phenomenon by the Kondhs. Indeed, Barbara Boal, a twentieth-century scholar who has studied the cultural traditions of the Kondhs in great detail, does not include the *mlīva* power among either witchcraft or sorcery beliefs; instead, following Macpherson, she just considers it a “gift” of the earth goddess to certain people.²³ She also stresses that, according to the Kondhs, the chain of violent, though secret, antisocial acts committed by a supposed *krāḍi mlīva* practitioner cannot be stopped by any reversal rituals aimed at restoring the previous situation; in contrast to this, antisocial behaviors manifesting themselves in the form of, respectively, curses, the evil eye, sorcery, and witchcraft (barring “pure” witchcraft without the use of any material medium, to which the power of tiger-transformation can be, in a sense, compared), can be countered by performing some complementary rituals meant to reverse such life-destroying situations due to man’s ill-will.²⁴

Therefore, Boal’s classification of the secret, violent and antisocial acts of manipulation of the supernatural whose “reality” is acknowledged by the Kondhs makes a clear distinction between the *krāḍi mlīva* phenomenon on the one side, and forms and manifestations of black magic such as witchcraft, sorcery, curses and the evil eye on the other.

3. Recent research among the Kuttia and Dongria Kondhs

Aside from Barbara Boal, during the twentieth century very few, if any, researchers have discussed Kondh beliefs in feline therianthropy in print. A team of social anthropologists and ethnobotanists led by Dr. Mihir K. Jena has recently published two monographs on, respectively, the Dongria (or Dongria) and Kuttia Kondh sub-tribes in which they address this topic to some extent on the basis of information they have received from both Kondh individuals and organized discussion groups during their field studies.²⁵ The present writer, too, did some field work in the same line among both the Kuttia and Dongria Kondhs; some interviews with Kuttia village priests (*jānis*) and shamans (*kūṭakas*) as well as with Dongria shamanins (*pejuṇis*) the author made during his field trip in Kandhamal and Rayagada districts in 2001-2002 have been published so far only in an online article in Italian.²⁶ Yet another

²³ Boal, *Konds*, pp. 109, 177.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

²⁵ Mihir K. Jena, Padmini Pathi, Jagannath Dash, Kamala K. Patnaik, and Klaus Seeland, *Forest Tribes of Orissa: Lifestyle and Social Conditions of Selected Orissan Tribes*, vol. 1: *The Dongria Kondh* (New Delhi: D.K. Printworld, 2002), esp. pp. 119-20, 264-66; Mihir K. Jena, Padmini Pathi, Kamala K. Patnaik, and Klaus Seeland, *Forest Tribes of Orissa: Lifestyle and Social Conditions of Selected Orissan Tribes*, vol. 2: *The Kuttia Kondh* (New Delhi: D.K. Printworld, 2006), esp. pp. 211, 254.

²⁶ F. Brighenti, “Metamorfosi feline dei vivi e dei morti fra i Kondh dell’Orissa”, March 2004, at:

Italian researcher, Dr. Stefano Beggiora, has interviewed some Kuttia Kondh shamans (*kūṭakas*) and shamanins (*kūṭakādus*) and has reported and discussed their opinions about the phenomenon of feline therianthropy in a book he published in 2010.²⁷ There is also a short but informative article by A.M. Pradhan in the *Orissa Review*.²⁸ What emerges from this new research work is, first of all, an almost complete agreement between the descriptions of this phenomenon provided, respectively, by the Kuttia Kondhs of the Belghar Hills and the Dongria Kondhs of the Niyamgiri Hills. This circumstance is striking because, although these are considered the two most “primitive” sections of the Kondh tribe, their settlement areas are not adjacent, being separated by vast expanses of sparsely populated jungle. Moreover, the dialects spoken, respectively, by the Kuttia and the Dongria Kondhs could be mutually understood only with some difficulty. It, thus, appears unlikely that either the Kuttia lore about weretigers has directly influenced the Dongria one or vice versa; conversely, one is led to think that both these traditional lores must necessarily derive from an archaic “weretiger complex” which was once shared by all sections of the Kondh tribe, but which is nowadays preserved in its entirety by the Kuttia and Dongria mountaineers only.

The following is a synopsis of the principal points of contact between the descriptions of the *krāḍi mlīva* phenomenon given by the Kuttia and Dongria Kondhs as resulting from a comparison and collation of the information provided in Jena et al.’s, Brighenti’s, and Beggiora’s respective studies (cited in footnotes 25, 26 and 27). Some Kui terms adopted in this synopsis, such as *krāḍi mlīva*, *krāḍi mlīvarenju* and *krāḍi mlīvareri*, are not used in exactly these forms by the Kuttia and Dongria Kondhs to designate the intended referents; nevertheless, they have been adopted here for uniformity of terminology.

1) It was the earth goddess herself, Darṇi Pēnu, who, at the beginning of time, arranged for certain people to be gifted with the supernatural faculty of transferring their soul-substance into the body of a big cat at night. At the individual level, a *krāḍi mlīvarenju* or a *krāḍi mlīvareri* is “chosen” by the hill-gods (the Sōru Pēnu) of his/her own native village. These same divine spirits are believed to determine the fate of the persons predestined to become shamans or shamanins by appearing to them in dreams during their childhood. Likewise, it is presumed that an individual predestined to become a weretiger can develop the *mlīva* power since birth: indeed, cases are allegedly known of Kondhs who could convert themselves into tiger-shape when they were still children.

2) There are no magic formulas, incantations or rites enabling one to acquire the *mlīva* power. As matter of fact, the idea that Kuttia and Dongria Kondh tribesmen supposedly possessed of the ability to make themselves into tigers are the practitioners of black magic is especially prevalent among local *non-tribals*, mostly belonging to the Hindu caste of untouchables known as Ḍoma or Pāṇa. Nevertheless, the Kondhs themselves do not seem to consider a supposed *krāḍi mlīvarenju* or *krāḍi*

<http://www.psychomedia.it/pm/grpind/magscia/brighenti.htm> (last accessed on October 15, 2011; in Italian).

²⁷ S. Beggiora, *Sacrifici umani e guerriglia nell’India britannica. Dal genocidio in nome della civiltà alla civiltà come genocidio* (Bassano: Itinera Progetti, 2010; in Italian).

²⁸ A.M. Pradhan, “Lycanthropy in Kandhmal,” *Orissa Review* 64/4 (November 2007): 60-62.

mlīvareṇi a practitioner of black magic, namely, a person who self-consciously manipulates the supernatural for evil purposes.

3) There are, however, Kondhs who reportedly feel a strong desire to master the power of tiger-transformation even though they have not been endowed with it since their birth. If such a man or woman wishes to acquire this supernatural ability, he or she must propitiate Darṇi Pēnu in secret at the *jākeri* stones (the goddess' representative symbol located at the centre of each Kondh village) in the middle of the night. Alternatively, some other *pēnus*, residing in the forest and not in the village, may teach him/her the required skills. Offerings and sacrifices are made to such deities over several nights to convince them of the complete dedication of the candidate until the latter supposedly acquires the longed-for ability to command a living tiger in dreamtime.

4) Cases are also reported in which one's ability to convert him/herself into a tiger was at some point affirmed to have been induced by the external aid of some individual already endowed with this faculty. It is believed that a young person possessing the *mlīva* power in latent form has to go through a process called *vēpka giva*²⁹ to enhance his/her power under the guidance of a senior *mlīva* practitioner. This teaching is, of course, said to be performed very secretly. Therefore, the Kondhs seem to believe that this superhuman faculty can, in certain cases, manifest itself by means of close and intimate association with some weretiger.

5) Both the Dongria and Kuttia Kondhs believe that religious specialists are far more apt than any other class of people to develop the *mlīva* power. It is thought by some of them that only some very experienced shamans and healer-diviners can fully understand the miraculous *krāḍi mlīva* phenomenon (though this might simply be due to the fact that, in tribal societies, shamans and the like are often feared as potentially abusing their power).³⁰ This notwithstanding, instances are on record of laypeople who have claimed they were possessed of the ability to turn themselves into tigers. Accordingly, one may presume that the Kondh's traditional belief system allows for some exceptionally endowed laypersons — that is, persons attributed with the ability to achieve a high degree of concentration — to claim they can change themselves into tigers.³¹

²⁹ A.M. Pradhan, pers. comm. In Kui, *vēpka* means 'to stretch forth, stretch up, spread out' and *giva* means 'to make, perform, cause'.

³⁰ Jena et al. surmise that Kondh religious authorities believed to have attained the power of animal transformation would be regarded by Kondh laypeople as "practitioners of black-magic and sorcery" (*Dongria Kondh*, p. 119) or as "master witches and sorcerers" (*ibid.*, p. 264), and that the *mlīva* power would be "one of magic's evil uses" (*Kuttia Kondh*, p. 254). Pursuing this same line of reasoning, social anthropologist Upali Aparajita has claimed that among the Dongria Kondhs all individuals believed to be able to turn themselves into tigers are regarded as "pangins" (*viz.*, *panṇeni*, a Kuvi term meaning 'witch/wizard' or 'black magician') — cf. U. Aparajita, "Religion and Belief System among the Dongria Kondhs," *Man in India* 75 (1995), p. 372. As should be clear from the previous discussion, the present author does not subscribe to this view, which is basically the same as that propagated by nineteenth-century British colonial writers like J. Campbell (*vide supra*) and H.H. Risley (*cf. The Tribes and Castes of Bengal: Ethnographic Glossary*, Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Press, 1891, vol. 1, p. 408).

³¹ For example, the informants cited by A.M. Pradhan ("Lycanthropy in Kandhmal", pp. 61-62) never state that the Malia Kondh weretigers of by-gone days, dealt with in their tales, were religious specialists. Likewise, Samoo Manty, the Malia Kondh weretiger whose story was succinctly narrated by C.C. Morris at the end of the nineteenth century (*vide supra*), was not a religious specialist at all; he was, on the contrary, described as one who *disdained* the religious practices of his fellow villagers! More in general, nineteenth-century British sources never refer to a *pālaṭa bāgha* as a religious specialist.

6) The *krāḍi mlīva* phenomenon is not about persons turning themselves *phisically* into tigers. It is a different concept than shape-changing, for a *krāḍi mlīva* practitioner, unlike a lycanthropic shape-shifter, undergoes no bodily metamorphosis whatever and does not lose his/her human body, which remains unchanged.

7) Only a part of the “life-force” (termed as *jella* in both the Kuttia and Dongria dialects) of the *krāḍi mlīvarenju* or the *krāḍi mlīvareṛi* leaves the body at night, otherwise the sleeping weretiger would die. Half of the life-force of the man or woman stays in the human body (which remains in deep sleep) while the other half of it departs in search of an animal-double.³² During deep sleep, typically around midnight (that is, after the onset of the REM phase of sleep), the *jella* of the weretiger gets out of the body and begins to roam the jungle in search of the *jella* of a big cat. The dreaming weretiger must visualize a path in the jungle leading to the animal to be possessed; when he/she finds it, his/her *jella* joins the *jella* of the animal and overpowers it by virtue of the superiority of man over beasts. After the merger of the two, the *jella* of the sleeping human being forgets its own human nature and is converted into an animal nature. Its behavior is now fully animal, though it (the *jella*) is still driven by the human instinct of the dreaming *mlīva* practitioner; therefore, while inhabiting the feline’s body the *jella* but seeks to fulfill the weretiger’s desires. It still has human feelings such as revenge, hate, love, care, etc. The whereabouts of the wandering animal is perceived by the sleeping human at home, who is fully aware of any problems his/her animal-double faces while moving outside. In the hours during which the *krāḍi mlīvarenju*’s or the *krāḍi mlīvareṛi*’s soul is united with the body of the tiger, he/she remains constantly immersed in deep sleep and cannot, therefore, react to any external stimuli. Such persons, as the belief goes, must not be shaken, disturbed or woken up from sleep by anyone as this could even cause their instant death; indeed, in this way they would be violently made to return to consciousness while still deprived of half of their *jella* or life-force.

8) According to other informants, the *jella* of a *krāḍi mlīva* practitioner can only migrate from the front part of the body (some say from the forehead). It first enters the body of a small wildcat or of a tiger or leopard cub — it is not clear whether a newly-created one or one which happens to be roaming through the neighborhood at that time. The small animal immediately starts to grow till it reaches the shape of a large adult feline. The detail of the soul being transferred from the human’s to the feline’s body and back through the front side seems to be important. It is, indeed, believed that, if the soul should for some reason exit the body of the *mlīva* practitioner from the back, the tiger possessed by it would not be able to recognize the weretiger’s village and, being confused, would attack it. Conversely, should the soul come back to the human body from the back instead of from the front side, the following day the weretiger would wake up deprived of some mental faculties such as memory, discernment, communication, etc. Even worse is the case when the *jella* of a *krāḍi mlīvarenju* or of a *krāḍi mlīvareṛi* cannot come back to its human body at the close of the night because the tiger, which is temporarily its recipient, has wandered too far from the weretiger’s own village (for it is said that the human soul can travel hundreds of miles in the body of the tiger!). In this case, next morning the *krāḍi mlīva* practitioner would be found in a lethargic state from which he or she would only recover when

³² Cf. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes*, vol. 3, p. 405.

the tiger, during one of the following nights, returns to the vicinity of the village, thus, allowing the wandering *jella* to rejoin the human body it belongs to.

9) There would also exist a very close individual relationship between the holder of the *mlīva* power and the tiger whose body his or her soul periodically inhabits — namely, the animal he or she controls at night would remain one and the same through time. During sleep at the time of possession, the *jella* of the weretiger is believed to be fully merged with that of the tiger — nay, to *be* the tiger with its full faculties. The relation is believed to be so close that, if his/her animal-double is wounded or killed at this time, the body of the sleeping *mlīva* practitioner is supposed to undergo the same fate. Thus, if the animal be hurt a corresponding hurt remains in the weretiger's body, and if the animal be killed the sleeping weretiger dies also.

10) The tiger can be directed to attack a person or his/her domestic animals by the dreaming *krāḍi mlīvarenju* or *krāḍi mlīvareṛi* either because the latter craves for blood and flesh (in certain cases even human!) or because he/she thereby means to take revenge on an enemy or rival.

11) While in animal form, a *krāḍi mlīva* practitioner is thought to be able to recognize and communicate with the souls of other weretigers who, like him or her, temporarily inhabit tigers. Several people in a given area may choose to experience transformation into a tiger on one and the same night. On occasions, particularly on very dark nights, a number of such possessed tigers may even decide to hold nocturnal gatherings in the midst of the forest.

12) Although, according to a belief shared by all Kondh sub-groups, converting oneself into a big cat is by far the most common form of therianthropy, it is admitted that the holder of the *mlīva* power can project his/her soul-substance into other living creatures too. These include wild beasts such as snakes (especially water-snakes), bears, boars and sambar deer, and even certain species of trees or plants.

13) Only village shamans³³ and healer-diviners³⁴ can establish whether serial tiger-attacks on a village are caused or not by the secret activity of some weretiger, whose identity they can discover through techniques of dream divination (not involving the use of trance) and ritual invocations aimed at gaining the assistance of the hill-gods as well as through an attentive observation of both the daytime and nighttime behavior of all the individuals who should happen to be suspected of being weretigers. In full sunlight a *krāḍi mlīvarenju* or a *krāḍi mlīvareṛi* can, for example, be betrayed by his or her skin, which is said to be extremely dry.³⁵ However, some among the most recognizable “symptoms” allowing one to identify a *krāḍi mlīvarenju* or a *krāḍi mlīvareṛi* are reportedly observed while the latter is fast asleep. These would be the convulsive shivering of the limbs, the rhythmic opening and closing of the fingers, and the involuntary contraction of the facial muscles around the mouth, with all of them reminding of the movements made by a cat while it is dreaming.

³³ Respectively, the *kūṭaka* (male shaman) and *kūṭakāḍu* (female shaman) among the Kuttia Kondhs, and the *peju* (male shaman) and *pejuṇi* (female shaman) among the Dongria Kondhs.

³⁴ The *disari* (Dongria Kondh “medicine man”-cum-astrologer).

³⁵ Pradhan, “Lycanthropy in Kandhmal,” p. 61.

14) Although, as has been mentioned above, Barbara Boal suggested that, according to the Kondhs, the phenomenon of tiger-transformation would have no “complementary rituals to redress the wrong and restore the situation,”³⁶ more recent field work (particularly the present writer’s) indicates that some kind of “healing” rites are traditionally performed by Dongria and Kuttia shamans and healer-diviners in order to reconvert an alleged weretiger into a “normal” human being after his or her identity has been “unmasked”. The most common method they use to “cure” alleged *krāḍi mlīva* cases consists in forcing the accused individuals to wear a thread, generally tied with three knots, round the waist. Sometimes a metal amulet is attached to the thread by means of knots in the thread itself. The thread must formerly have been ritually consecrated to some *pēnu* (some say to Darṇi Pēnu herself) by means of oral spells. This method is reportedly applied to male weretigers only; females are generally “cured” through the application of medicinal herbs instead. Such “healing” rites are clearly aimed at dispelling what is perceived by the people at large as a kind of “disease” — the dangerous *mlīva* power. It is believed that a person claimed to be a weretiger will cease to be a danger to his/her own and other communities only after the performance of such rites.

Conclusions

The above discussion shows that the Kondh weretiger-complex has few if any connections with witchcraft beliefs. Kondh tiger-transformation stories are profoundly different from those current among various Munda and Gond tribes in the tribal belts of Middle and Eastern India. Indeed, Munda and Gond tales about tiger-transformation invariably describe the metamorphosis from man to tiger in terms of physical shape-shifting and as a supernatural ability which can only be manifested by an act of profane — that is, non-religious — magic. In some such stories, for example, a man rubs his back in a particular manner against a white ant-hill and is then magically turned into a tiger on the spot; in other cases, he eats a certain root or alternatively sniffs, or else rubs on his body, a certain drug prepared with some medicinal plants, roots, etc. and is then magically converted into a tiger on the spot. In sum, there is always some kind of a material medium enabling the shape-shifter to get physically transformed into a feline. In this connection, it cannot be excluded that beliefs in the efficacy of some as yet undeterminable form of Tantric magic may in the past have contributed to the shaping of both the Munda and Gond weretiger-lore. By contrast, this kind of story-pattern, characteristic of witchcraft beliefs, is completely absent in Kondh weretiger-lore.

Besides, though Kondh myths state the prime source of the power of tiger-transformation to be a most powerful female deity (Darṇi Pēnu), there appears to be no connection whatever between the Kondh weretiger-complex and the cult of the Hindu Great Goddess, who is in turn, as is well-known, associated with the tiger in both her mythology and iconography. Indeed, no reference to any miraculous transformation of a human being into a tiger by the aid of the Great Goddess (or of some regional or local manifestations of hers) can be traced in the Śākta temple legends of Orissa.³⁷

³⁶ Boal, *Konds*, p. 106.

³⁷ Not even at the important shrine of Vyāghra Devī in Kulada, a locality near the southern edge of the Kondh Hills in Ganjam District at which the Hindu Great Goddess is worshipped in her feline manifestation as Tiger Goddess. On the

Consequently, notwithstanding the fact that the Hindus of Orissa use a specialized Oriya term, *pālaṭa bāgha*, to describe the phenomenon labeled as *kṛāḍi mlīva* by the Kondhs, it seems clear they have no tiger-transformation complex of their own, and that their term *pālaṭa bāgha* refers not to their own, but rather to the Kondh tradition in the matter of feline therianthropy.³⁸

Conversely, and in the ultimate analysis, the study of the weretiger-complex of the Kondhs of Orissa may provide a so far unnoticed cultural link with some tribes of Northeastern India, namely, the Garos and Khasis of Meghalaya and the Nagas of Nagaland. Indeed, the Garos and Nagas (both speaking Tibeto-Burman languages) and the Khasis (Austroasiatic speakers) each possess a rich weretiger-complex having many aspects in common with that of the Kondhs, chief among which is the notion of a migration of the human soul into the body of a tiger or leopard occurring during sleep. Further cultural parallels may be traced to the Batek “Negritos” of the Malay Peninsula, an Austroasiatic-speaking tribe whose shamans are credited with having the power of projecting their shadow-soul into the body of a tiger at night, when their human body is asleep.³⁹ The strikingly similar and convergent traditions about weretigers (who are in certain cases shaman-healers) found among these tribal peoples have practically nothing in common with the traditions about shamans, or even laypersons, being possessed by tiger-deities, tiger-spirits or tiger familiars that typify certain forms of Malay and Eastern Himalayan shamanism as well as certain tribal cults of Middle India. In fact, no divinity or spirit whatsoever is claimed to “possess” any of the supposed Kondh, Garo, Khasi, Naga or Batek weretigers during the night hours, when their soul is said to be temporarily inhabiting the body of a big cat.

probable Kondh origin of this goddess cult, see Francesco Brighenti, *Śakti Cult in Orissa* (New Delhi: D.K. Printworld, 2001), pp. 160-61.

³⁸ However, a thorough study of the thousands of Tantric palm-leaf manuscripts, popularly known as *guṇi-gāreḍi* (‘magic incantations’ or ‘magic charms’), preserved in Orissa and dealing with black magic, sorcery, and witchcraft, might help throw some light on the possible existence of any Tantric magical rites that might have been once performed by Hindu *guṇiās* (exorcists and magicians) of Orissa to neutralize people accused of being weretigers. So far, such a study has not been carried out.

³⁹ A paper under preparation by the present author will present a study of Kondh, Garo, Khasi, Naga and Batek beliefs in feline therianthropy in a comparative perspective with a view to ascertaining whether the striking similarities noticed among all such beliefs are the result of cultural inheritance or only fortuitous coincidences.

Ecological Concerns in Adivasi Poetry of Jharkhand

Anand Mahanand

The objective of this paper is to study the poems of some select adivasi writers from the Jharkhand region to explore the manner in which they show concern for their environment. For this purpose the paper intends to study the oral traditions as well as recent literature including poems of three poets, Ram Dayal Munda, Grace Kujur and Mahadev Toppo and foreground their concerns. There have been studies (for instance that of Ramnika Gupta) which discuss the features of adivasi poetry in general, but there is hardly any study so far exploring ecological concerns of the adivasi poets. My attempt, therefore, will be to study adivasi poetry to foreground these concerns. The study is carried out from the ecocriticism perspective which deals with “the relationship between literature and environment...”(Glotfelty, xviii).

Nature and the human civilization have an intimate relationship since time immemorial. If we wish to look at the nature of their relationship between the two in Indian contexts, we need to go back to the Indus valley civilization. The makers of Indus valley civilization lived in harmony with nature. Their archeology is said to have a close symbiosis with nature. Throughout the ages our indigenous traditions have been making efforts to be close to nature though we come across certain instances of disrupting it with the advent and influence of colonialism.

In recent years, there have been several attempts to raise public consciousness about environmental degradation in India. Awareness has been created in media and by government organizations for preservation of nature. We have substantial literature for creating ecological consciousness. However, the discourse about conservation of nature views nature from a utilitarian point of view. It views nature as resource or commodity to be preserved for the future sustenance of human beings. This as a modernist concept falls in the same paradigm of develop-mentality.

However, it is interesting to note that certain indigenous communities consider nature not as commodity but they maintain a kind of filial relationship treating different elements as members of the family and live in close proximity. They humanize nature as mother. C. K. Janu, the adivasi woman activist from Kerala in her narrative *The Mother Forest* reiterates it several times. As she states: “The forest is mother to us. More than a mother because she never abandons us”(5). There are examples in their oral narratives showing adivasis adopt elements of nature as their family members. The adivasis consider nature as part of their world and as part of traditions to respect nature as they find it to be sacred. In an article titled, “Friend and Freud,” in *Outlook*, Shiv Visvanathan explains that the fishermen community on the Gujarat shore gave up hunting whales once they were convinced that the whales had been there in the forms of their ancestors. In the same manner an indigenous community in Western Maharashtra considers a grove to be sacred and useful for sati Asra (water deity) and for treatment of snake bite of cattle. Hence they don’t cut them. As a result the grove is saved from the onslaught of deforestation. Madhav Gadgil and V.D. Varthak illustrate it in an article title “The Sacred Uses of Nature.” Thus we find that nature worship has been a part of the traditions of many indigenous communities in India. Sarit K. Chaudhuri in his study on the Arunachal Pradesh tribes states that “most of the tribes believe that the forest is the abode of their numerous gods and spirits, both who are benevolent and malevolent in nature. For example, the Adis of Arunachal Pradesh believe that the huge tree like *Rotne* found in their surrounding forest is the abode of the spirit called *Epom* for which they usually don’t fell such tree... The concept of sacred plant is also traceable among the Hill Miri tribe. Certain plants such as Sigrek Sin, Tam etc are considered as sacred place and naturally Hill Miris don’t spit or throw stones or urinate in such areas which may affect the spirits residing there” (4-5).

There are many instances of the tribal worshipping nature through festivals and rituals. The most obvious example will be Karamsani Puja celebrated by the tribals and rural folks in western Odisha. In this festival they plant a Karamsani branch and sing prayers so that their crops will be protected from insects and diseases. They sing around it:

Juhar go maa karamsani

Tor pade karuchhe daini go

Tor pade karuchhe daini

Niputri ke putra deu

Nirdhani ke dhana deu ani

Go maa karamsani

Tor pade karuchhu daini.

Hail, you goddess Karamsani !

We bow and appeal to you

You bless the childless with child and

Grant wealth to the poor

We bow before you goddess Karamsani.

Grant us your blessings



Karamsani plant

The tribals consider nature as life sustaining force and want to be under hr care instead of destroying it. However, in recent years there have been merciless destruction of trees, forests and rivers to set up

industries. Governments and multinational companies think forests to be the ideal place for setting up industries. They fail to understand that forests are a part of ecological system and have major roles in maintaining ecological balance. The state of Jharkhand has many industries. They have come up at the costs of many forests. The tribal poets of Jharkhand therefore are nostalgic about the forests they had grown up with.

Jharkhand is one of the tribal dominated regions of India. Different adivasi communities such as the Oraons, Mundas, Kharias and Kishans have been living in this region for a long time with their rich cultural heritage. They depend on nature for their sustenance. Different elements of nature such as forests, trees and fountains have been part of their life. Their life and culture have a close proximity with their environment. This region is also rich in natural resources such as minerals and forest products which the government and other agencies would like to exploit. This leads to destruction of the ecology. With the emergence of large scale industrialization, deforestation and displacement, their lives have been disturbed along with their livelihood. The adivasis are severely affected by this as they live in the forest regions and depend on the forests. Their association with nature is quite unique. They are displaced and hence they migrate to other places. The cultural life is adversely affected. A number of adivasi poets are concerned with this problem and have been expressing their anger and longing for the natural surrounding. For instance, Grace Kujur in her poem “ Aur Ek Jani Shikar” (“ One More Hunt,”), laments the degradation and destruction of ecology-the forests, fauna and flora. Becoming nostalgic she recalls the beauty, sight and smell of the forest which used to be close to her:

**Where is the ‘Phutkal’ tree
I used to climb to pluck leaves**

And used to sing for you?

The song of ‘fagua’

Don’t know where is the ‘ Phonyar’

Tree with soft leaves

Under which you used to play ‘mandar’and flute?

Where is the song that used to come from the bamboo groves

And the smell of bamboo shoots ? (21)

It is important to note the kind of fondness with which she mentions the names of the trees and flowers. They were dear to her as if they were part and parcel of her life. This is something striking in adivasi culture which values even plants and animal as filial members. They have a filial relationship treating different elements of

nature as members of the family. They humanize nature as mother. C. K. Janu, an adivasi woman activist from Kerala, reiterates this theme in her narrative, *The Mother Forest* (2004). She states: "The forest is mother to us. More than a mother because she never abandons us"(5). As members of a family, they are at pain if any of their member is affected. Through the trope of the family, these works oppose the instrumental relation with nature that has led to its wide spread destruction.



Mahul tree: A symbol of life sustaining element of nature

Ram Dayal Munda, a leading poet, decries the development projects that have been destroying tribal economy and environment and promoting urbanization, leading to bankruptcy and other evils. In his poem "Vikash Ka Dard" ("The Pain of Development,"), he writes:

I have become a vulture

Have been running towards the city

Before the death.

A big tree has been

Torn apart

I was told

It was for the development of the nation. (42)

In the above stanza he explains the effects of displacement. It is important to see how adivasi languages and cultural practices suffer once the people migrate and live in slums. Their languages die, as do their cultural practices and they become corrupted by the urban ugliness.

Another poet, Mahadev Toppo is also disturbed to see the destructive change and foresees the danger ahead. In a poem “ Bin Murg Ke Jharkhand Me Subah” (“The Morning in Jharkhand without a Cockcrow”), he writes:

Dada! There won't be morning in Jharkhand

In fact! The domesticated cock of yours

Which used to wake up

The village youngsters and soldiers of this country

Has been feasted on by the foreign-returned

Along with the Prime Minister! (47)

In this poem the poet states how cultural life has disintegrated in the wake of industrialization. The call of the domesticated cock, which can be interpreted as cultural identity, unity and assertion, may vanish. The adivasi youth will not identify themselves with their society but lose their identity fast.

Conclusion

It can be seen from these poems how ecology is intimately related to identity, language and cultural practices and the loss of ecology may affect these aspects of adivasi life. This evident not only in their oral narratives but also found in the contemporary poetry of the tribals.

We can also see that when the government and other agencies have been talking about “develop-mental” projects through factories, mines and industries to bring them to the mainstream, the adivasi people tell us

the other side of the story. The concerns of tribal people find expressions in the popular songs through which they express their protest. The following song “Gaon Chhodab Nahin” by K.P. Sasi which has become popular among the tribal people is one of such example:

Gaon Chhodab nahin

Jungle chhodab nahin

Mai maati chhodab nahin

Ladai chhodab nahi

Bandh banaye gaon duboyen

Karkhana banayen

Jungle katen khadan kode

Santuaries banayen

Jal jungle jamin chhodi hame

Kahan kahan jayen

Kat ke bhagwan ye batayo

Kaise jaan bachayen?

We will not leave our village

We will not leave our forests,

Nor our mother earth!

We will not give up our fights!

They built dams and drowned our villages

They cut forests and built factories and sanctuaries

Without water land and forest

Oh God of land development, please tell us

How shall we save our lives?

The tribal poets and people are speaking out against deforestation and displacement, because that affect not only their livelihood but also their language, culture and tradition and it is important for us to look at the problems from the adivasis' points of view.

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Popular Folk Poetry of Punjab

Harvinder Singh

Most of the SAARC countries including India have one common characteristic that these had been predominantly the agrarian societies for very long period. Agrarian societies are in a very close interaction with nature while producing or processing the production. Nature and poetry to a great extent are interrelated. Nature enhances people's creativity and inspires them to celebrate it in the expressive words of music which we know as songs. These songs embody their hopes, fears, dreams and aspirations. In traditional agricultural society most of the activities are performed collectively. This kind of collectivity and closeness to nature create favorable conditions and constructive environment community singing. Such poetry composed and sung by common masses is generally known as folk poetry. In this paper an attempt is made to present some of the popular and representative forms/ themes of folk poetry of Punjab with special reference to two lines poetry which is most common and is known as *tappa* in Punjab. These poems have been presented in Punjabi language in Roman script on the right side along with its English translation on the left side. These poems are self explanatory and hardly need further elaboration or explanation. Therefore a very limited analysis has been made only at the relevant places.

Punjab derived its name from water. Punj is Five and Ab means water. Present Punjab is divided between India and Pakistan. As per 2008 census of Pakistan there were 7.65 crore Punjabi speaking people in Pakistan. Similarly there were 2.91 crore Punjabi speaking people in India as per 2001 census. Pakistan has the highest Punjabi speaking population followed by India. In addition to it a large number of Punjabis are living in other parts of various countries of the world. Punjabi is the 12th largest spoken language of the world. Punjab is known for having fertile plain land, great soldiers and healthy / tall men & women. Because of its healthy people /soldiers and fertile land it is known as sword and food basket of nation. In the last century, the State boundaries have shifted twice- the violent partition of India in 1947 and re organisation of states in 1966. Present Indian Punjab has 50362 sq.kms. geographical area which constitutes only 1.5 % of the total area of the country. But it contributes 42% wheat and 30% rice to central pool of food grains of the nation. Similarly west Punjab is also the most prosperous state of Pakistan.

Punjab has a very rich tradition of folklore including folk poetry. Even a large number of songs and tunes of Hindi films are today being based on poetry and the content of Punjabi folk songs. In Punjab folk poetry have passed from generation to generation for centuries in an oral form. It has been created by anonymous folk poets. It is a verbal creation based on collective folk wisdom. Punjab is predominantly an agrarian state. Agriculture is known as the culture of Punjab. As mentioned above folk poetry is the product of pre-industrialized, agrarian societies which were in a very constructive and dialectical relationship with nature. In such societies nature in itself had been appearing to the rural folk as a dancing and singing entity in the form of the changing seasons, blowing wind and chirping birds. See the following folk poem where seasons are described as making thread on the spinning wheels of the Sun:

O! The Earth, fond of love

Dhartia piar karendie

There is a lyrical song among songs

Shandan vichon shand

The seasons are making thread

Dah sooraj da charkhera

On the spinning wheel of sun.

Rutan kadhan tand

Look at another folk poem where trees are described as singing songs of soul:

The Pipal tree is singing, the Boharr tree is singing

Pipal gavey Boharr gavey

Singing is the tree of Toot

Gavey hariola Toot

Listen them quietly o! traveler

Kharke sun rahia

Your soul will become pure

Teri rooh hojoogi soot

All these beautiful natural conditions inspired the masses to compose and sing poetry with the singing nature. Farmers (*Hali*) during tilling the land, shepherds (*Vagi*) grazing animals, women at the spinning wheels,

girls embroidering phukari and artisans at their crafts will sing & compose poetry. In addition to it during the period of pre mechanized agriculture most of the operations were performed manually using biological power - both human and animal. In other words the operations such as tilling, sowing and harvesting etc. were carried out in a sufficient longer period as compared to present day mechanized agriculture. Moreover agriculture was based on monsoon and there was a lot of free time and leisure after sowing which was utilized for creative purposes. Women folks were engaged primarily in domestic work. Absence of men from house during day time created space for women to sing while fetching water from well or spinning wheels.

As mentioned earlier nature to a greater extent inspired people to become more creative and poetic. Nature and greenery have been flourishing in Punjab from the ancient period due to adequate availability of surface & rain water and good climatic conditions. A large areas were covered with dense & thick forests known as *Jungle or Bela* There was a great diversity in nature in the form of (six) seasons in a year. This seasonal diversity led to a very rich bio diversity in this area. An eminent Punjabi poet Dhani Ram Chetrik describes natural beauty of Punjab in following lines:

"Eh Punjab karan ki sifat teri, shanan de sabh saman tere

Jal paun tere, hariayol teri ,darya parbat maidaan tere,

Bharat de sir te chhatar tera tere sir te chhatar Himala da

Modhe te chadar barfan dee seenay vich sek Jawala da.

It means:

O! Punjab I have no words to praise you

You have everything to be full of pride

Your climate, your greenery, your rivers, your mountains, your fields

You are crown on the head of India

Himalaya is crown on your head

You have cover of snow on your shoulders (mountains)

And warmth of Jawala (Spiritual Devi) in your heart.

Such beautiful natural conditions, changing seasons & attractive landscape have been inspiring people to compose & sing poetry. Vedas are the earliest form of creative poetry composed here which is a great milestone in the ancient poetry of world. Later on Naths & Jogies composed another form of distinct poetry. Then poetry composed by Gurus, Pirs, Baghtas and Bhattas etc. is one of the finest form of poetry composed on this land which have been compiled in Holy Book of Sikhs "Sri Guru Granth Sahib" .Similarly a large number of folk poems are composed by the common men and women in the form of lullabies, proverbs, songs related to birth, death, marriage domestic rituals etc. As mentioned above although there are lot of diversities & variations in the form of folk poetry yet two lines short form known as *tappa* is the most popular form. Following *tappas* express various kinds of folk life of Punjab.

Theme:lover-beloved

Sand of your fresh foot prints

Teri sajri pairr da reta

I gather and press to my heart

Chuk chuk lawan hik nu

These lines describe pain and sorrow of separation. The lover is going to war or distant place (abroad) leaving his beloved behind. She says goodbye with heavy heart and collapses kissing sand of his footprints and press it to her heart.

Ear rings are worn (by a young lady)

kani kante pae hoi ne

Buttons are better than us

Sade nalon button changay

which are close to your body

Jehrey hik nal lai hoe ne

These lines express unfulfilled desire of lover to get close to his beloved and feel that buttons of her shirt are better than him as these are closer to her body than him. There were lot of restrictions on freedom of love

during the feudal period. One of the characteristic of the folk poetry of Punjab is that it expresses the unfulfilled desires and dreams of people.

Theme: Praise of lover/beloved

My beloved is four cornered lamp

Mera yar chomukhia diva

Like the full moon of fourteenth night

Chodhvin de chan varga

In this poem beloved describe that her lover is as handsome as four cornered lamp which is comparable to the moon of fourteenth night. One of the highlighting characteristics of folk poetry of Punjab is that symbols used in it are very simple but very subtle. Here fourteenth night symbol is used for describing handsomeness of lover though full moon is on fifteenth night. Folk poets used this symbol because on fifteenth night the moon will start decreasing just after appearing whereas on fourteenth night it is almost full in size and has further scope to get completed. This shows the wisdom and minute thinking of folk people while choosing the (positive) symbols.

Scent like a field of mustard

Ave vashna sarhon de phul vargee

Anoints you, fair skinned women

Rane terey gore rang chon

Here the lover compares the beauty of his fair skinned beloved with the fragrance of mustard flower.

Another salient feature of punjabi poetry, as reflected in above two poems, is that it transcend the boundaries of self and praise the other counterpart. This becomes the basis of warm relations among individuals and sections of the society. This tendency of folk poetry is similar to the Sufi poet Bulle Shah when he says:

"Ranjha Ranjha kardi ne mein ape Ranjha hoi,

sado ne mainu dhedo Ranjha Heer na akho koi."

Here the sufi poet wish to merge his existence with his lover (God) and uses symbol of popular Punjabi folk tale of Heer and Ranjha. Where he depicte himself as Heer(beloved) and God as Ranjha(lover). Most of the Punjabi poetry tends to make dialogue with the self but praise the others while tracing the identity for self.

Here is another poem in which physical beauty of a woman is appreciated:

The woman came out of pond

Rann naha ke chhapar vichon nikli

Like a flame appearing out of an opium pipe. Sulfe di laat vargi

In rural punjab women used to gather on the pond for washing clothes and taking bath etc. These ponds were situated on the outskirts of the villages where cattle's also drank water and took bath. In this poem woman is described coming out of pond, her clothes dripping, her body gleaming in the sun. She is compared to the flame of sadhu's opium pipe. In earlier period sadhus also used to sit around these village water bodies, ponds for meditation and consume opium etc through pipe which enabled them to concentrate. Here the word 'rann' used for women has a very distinct meaning. This word is used in folk terms when the physical beauty of a woman is to be appreciated.

The beauty of maiden

Like the crimson of rising dawn

Din charde di lali roop kuari da

Here beauty of an unmarried girl is compared to the emerging redness of the light of rising sun.

Theme: Heroism Action

There is a lot of folk poetry written in praise of heroic actions of pro people bandits like 'Jagga' and 'Jeona Mour'. This concept is comparable to Robin Hood of English literature. Similarly a number of poems are available on Dulla Bhatti a Rajput who threatened the authority of Mughal emperor Akbar for his self respect. See the following poems on bandits.

They clashed on cemented bridge

Pakey pulan te larraien hoein

And nails of their hatchets (weapon) broke

Chhavian de kil lut gey

This poem describes the scene of bandits who is running after looting the rich person and is followed by police and a clash take place at a bridge. Similar situation is explained in the following poem about Jeona Mour.

A saw! A saw! A saw!(tune)

Ara ! Ara! Ara!

The carvan is on bridge

Gadian pul chadian

Jeona Mour lets out roar...

Jeona Mour ne marea lalkara

Running Jeona

Bhaj ke Jeona ne

Break the lock of safe

Jinda tor lia rokery wala

He counts the contents

Rokri nu aen ginda

Just as if he has sold the prized bull

Jeon bald vech lia nara

Theme :War

These poems express the feelings of women of Punjab whose husbands went to far away places during British period for (world) war. A very sizeable proportion of young Punjabi people used to join army or go abroad for earning livelihood leaving behind their women. Following poems on this theme express very deep feelings of women folk:

Let your kids die o! britisher

Tere maran firangia bachey

You initiate war everyday

Nit din laam cherdan

She cried in excuse of the smoke of fire

Ohley baith ke dhuein de paj roi

As her lover has gone to war

Mahi mera laam nu gia

Struck off the name O! britisher

Kat de firangia nawan

My mother- in- law has the only son

Eko put meri sas da

Theme: Mother's Love

I plant hundred of trees

Mein sao sao rukh pai lanwan

These trees are lush green

Rukh tan hare bhare

Mothers are cool shadows

Mavan thandian chhavan

Who will give such shadows?

Chhavan kaun kare?

Comparison of shadow of trees is compared to shelter that mother gives can not be replaced with.

Theme: Preference of male child

In Punjab no song is sung on the birth of girl. Contrarily In rural areas women used to make loud clamor with kitchen utensils (a metaphor for sign of domestic conflict) to sound birth of girl..In the folk poetry strong desire is expressed for male heir. Mothers and sisters sing songs and lullabies only for male child.

Swing and things,sugar puddings	<i>Hoot mate, khand kheer khete</i>
Make the cart of gold	<i>Sone di gad ghara de...</i>
On it put silver grill	<i>Roope pinj pawa de</i>
Seat kaka(son) on top	<i>Ute kake nu Bithade</i>
<i>Alar balar (tune) for bawa(son)</i>	<i>Alar balar bawe da</i>
<i>Bawa will brought wheat</i>	<i>Bawa kanak liavega</i>
<i>Bawi will clean it</i>	<i>Bawi behke chatagi</i>
<i>Bawa will get it grinded</i>	<i>Bawa kanak pihevaga</i>
<i>Bawi will make loaf of it</i>	<i>Bawi mann pakavegi</i>
<i>Bawa will take it</i>	<i>Bawa behke khavegi</i>
<i>And</i>	
<i>O! God please give me one brother</i>	<i>Ek veer dein ve rabba</i>

I have a great desire to swear (on him) Sahon khan nu bada chit karda

Above two poems are Lullabies sung for son & third one is folk poem which express desire of sister for brother. *Naths, Jogies* and Monks have a very important place in Punjab's folk life and it is reflected in folk poetry also. These *Naths* and *Jogies* resided in a place just outside habitation of villages known as *Tilas* or *Deras*. In Punjab, people have a great respect for such Monks or *Sadhus* and give them food or offerings when they arrived on their doors. Following poem describe such feelings:

Never offer als with covered face to Sadhus. Ghund kad ke khair na paea

They are just like God. Sadshu hunde Rab varge

But on the other hand there is no respect for those who are not real *Sadhus* and are duplicate and just dressed in yellow garments of Monk. Such Monks are treated in the following way:

Where are you running away O! stupid monk Kithy chaleain bubney sadha

After disturbing the nest of hornets? Cher ke bharind rangian

In these lines hornets means village women or girls.

As most of this poetry is written during the feudal or pre feudal period therefore it mainly represents the sentiments of established elite class of that time and it rarely express the feelings of underprivileged & deprived sections of the society . See the following examples:

The sons of sardars (landlords)

Put sardaran de

Eat mutton & drink whisky.

Khan bakre te peen sharaban

In marriage party of potters

Mel ghumiaran da

Squealing donkeys accompany

Vich gadhey hingde firde

Our bride shine just like glitter

Kudi tan sadi tile di dhar ey

But bridegroom looks like a potter.

Munda tan disda nira ghumiare

There is no match

Jodi tan fabdi nahin

In these poems the sons and daughters of landlords are glorified whereas lower classes/ castes are presented just in joking form.

Seldom these poems express the agony & pain of deprived sections of society as mentioned in following lines:

O! my ladies fellow-friends

Sakhio sawan garjea

Clouds are thundering in the monsoon month.

Mera thar thar kambia jee

But he who neither have the heap of grain nor seed to sow

oh!sawan nu kee kare

Has nothing to do with thundering clouds.

Jis ghar bohal na bi

one main characteristic of Punjabi folk poetry is that it describes the nature in a very attractive & beautiful way. As mentioned earlier historically Punjab was a very rich area in terms of diversity of land, seasons, climate, crops and vegetation and other kinds of bio diversity which is reflected in number of folk poems.

Theme Nature & bio-diversity

O! The Earth, fond of love

Dhartia piar karendie

There is a lyrical song among songs

Shandan vichon shand

The seasons are making thread

Dah sooraj da charkhera

On the spinning wheel of sun.

Rutan kadhan tand

O! The Earth, fond of love

Dhartia piar karendie

Your brow shines with light

Tera matha noor -o -noor

The generous sun on your head

sir te sabhar sohanda

And your skirt is lush green

Ghagra hara kachoor

The peacock is singing somewhere

kitey hare hare bagan vicho

in the green gardens

Mor bole

It appears to me as if

Saio samjee main kitay

My lover is singing

Mera dhol bholay

The Pipal tree is singing,the Bohar tree is singing

Pipal gavey Bohar gavey

Singing is the tree of toot

Gavey hariola Toot

Listen them quietly o! traveller

kharke sun rahia

Your soul will become pure

Teri rooh hojooji soot

Though the trees can't speak

Rukh bol na sakde bhanwain

But they enquire about the pain of people.

Bandean da haal puchdey

There are long and tall trees of Tahlees

Uchian lamian Tahlian

And among them there is a swing of gujree O! dear.

*vich Gujree dee piengh ve!
mahia*

Fly O! titar! fly O! peacock

Udeen ve titra udeen ve mora

Fly O! black crow

Udeen ve kalea kaanvan

Give first message to my parents

Pehla suneha mere mapean nu denvien

And second to my brothers & sisters

Dooja bhen bharawan

Give third one to my Pipals

Teeja suneha mere Piplan nu denvien

Where I used to put swings

Jithey mein pingan panvan

Theme :Secular tradition

Punjab has a composite culture where people of various religions and faiths live together. They respect not only their own but other religious faiths also. Look at the following lines which depict composite culture, communal harmony and co-existence of plural identities

I offer the goat to the Haider Sheik (pir) Haider sheikh da devan bakra

And go there bare foot Nange pairi jawan

I give the wheat bread to Hanumana Hanuman di devan manni

Without any discrimination Rati farak na panwan

I offer sweet (parsad) to the Devi Devi di mein karan kadahi

And I worship all the pir & faquires. Pir faquire dhiavan

OR

Allah ,waheguru,khuda is one and the same Alah waheguru ,khuda da na Ek hai

People are just confused uselessly. Bherman ch pai gai dunia

Lot of Punjabi folk poetry is composed about the farmers social life. In Punjab there are three main farming communities i.e Jat, Kamboj & Sainis. But here farmers are popularly referred as Jat, a dominant peasant tribe. Few poems are quoted below which reflect on peasants problems:

Theme: Peasant

O! the farmer, your life is a hell

Jatta teri joon buri

You have to go to gather fodder

Hal chhdke chari nu jana

After tilling the land

Plough & other instruments

Hal panjali kurki ho gai,vech ke

have been auctioned

Kha lea bi

And seed has been sold

Mamla nahin tarya, vahi da laha kee

Still land revenue is pending

What is the benefit of farming.

The money lenders have created an anarchy

Ni Banian ne att chuk le

All the farmers have been trapped into debt

Sare jatt karjai kitey

The farmer is feeling proudy on looking full

Paki kheti vekh ke garb gia kirsan

crop in field

Still there are so many storms & hailstroms.

Jhakhar jhola bahut hai,ghar

Be sure only when grains arrive at your home.

Ave tan jaan

Pure white sheets are worn on

Chitey chadray

though Land is mortgaged

Jameenan gahne

Look at youth of this land.

Ethon de shokin gabru

Theme:Gidha Dance - Poem*Brown brown wheat of doaba***Baggi baggi kank doabe dee**The lady who won't dance**Jehri gidha na pave**Would be treated as wife of an old man.**Rann babe dee*

Gidha is folk dance of women of Punjab. Folk poetry they used in it is known as bolies i.e exchange of words. A women or a group of women play the role of male & others female to express their feelings.

Theme:Groom's departure on her marriage

As mentioned earlier there is hardly any song composed for the birth of girl but there are number of songs available for her marriage time. The most touching songs are sung at the time of the departure of the groom..

*O! My mother the field of wheat**Mai kankan da khet**Has grown up slowly and slowly**Haoli haoli nisar gia**The country of the father**Babal dharmi da des**has been left slowly and slowly.**Haoli haoli visar gia**We are a group of sparrows**Sada chirian da cheamba ve**O!Father we'll fly away**Babul asan ud jana**We'll fly too far**Sadi lami udari ve**We are unaware which country**Babul kehde des jana*

We'll shall land

O! mom wheat plants are growing long, kankan lamian dhian kion jamian ne mai

Why daughters are born. kankan nisrian dhin kion visrian mai

Wheat plants are matured,

Why the daughters are departed O! mom.

ThemeChange and continuity in life

O! The leaf of Pipal why are you making noise, Pipal de patea ve kehi khar khar laia

You be detached now

,season has come

Jhar pao puranea ve rut nanvean

for new ones.

di aiea

This poem reveals the universal truth of continuity and change through the symbol of a dry leaf which is making noise with wind. Poet say why are you making noise you pass away now season has come for new leaves.

Theme: Mortality of life

You require a piece of land of just three & half hands

Sadhe teen hath

Dhartee teri

O! man with so much Land.

Bahuteian jagiran valea

.....

Historically Punjab was spread over long distance from Yamuna to Sindh on one hand and from Himalaya to Aravali mountains on the other. Pleasant hilly areas like Chamba,Chail and Simla etc.were part of undivided Punjab having a very rich folk songs.See following examples of pahari folk songs:

Theme:Pahari folk song

The country of chamba is situated

Uche pahaden ch des

On a high mountain

Chambe da

And every day there is a rain.

Pendi a roj jhari

There is group of teak trees on right & left

Sajen te khaben cheelen da jhurmat

And lines of other trees too.

Rukhen di pal khadi

Theme:Gadi Song

Stay tonight O! my dear Gadi Please stay tonight

Aj di ratin raho Gadia o! meria

neither the father in law

Aj di ratin raho ho

Nor mother in law is at home

Sohra bi ghar nahin sas bi ghar nahin

I am afraid of loneliness O!

Kalie jo lagda hai bhao ho!

I offer you oil and sugar

Tel bi dinia khand bhi dinia

I offer you Ghee also

Tarrke jo dinia gheo Ho!

I provide you the bed as well as blanket

Manja bi dinian khind bi dinia

You sleep in the green garden.

Tun thandian baggn vich saon HO!

On the basis of above folk poems we may conclude that punjabi folk poetry has the following main characteristics :

i) Short form of folk poetry known as tappa is the most popular form of peoples poetry.

ii)It gives the complete meaning and idea in these two lines.

iii) Content and expression of idea is more important in these poems and therefore no special instruments are required to sing them.In certain cases women folks normally use domestic utensils, clay pots or double side drum to sing them.

iv) Folk poetry openly portrays human conditions and it reveals naked truth.

v) It rarely challenges the established social order. In most of the cases this poetry strengthen the established (caste/class)order of society.

vi)Major part of this poetry represents rural sentiments & symbols.

vii)Beauty and aesthetic of nature have been described in a very meaningful and attractive form in this poetry.

To sum up culture is born among common masses in thousand years through their interaction with nature and folk poetry is the earliest form which document culture in an oral form. Culture is a way of coping with challenges of living .Punjab has been a passage to all invaders who invaded India from Central Asia for

centuries. Therefore historically it has gone through the process of construction-destruction-reconstruction for centuries. Here life cycle has always been disrupted and discontinued time and again. There is a popular saying in Punjab " Khada peeda lahe da baki ahamad shehe da" which means whatever you have eaten or drunk is yours, rest belongs to Ahamed Shah (Abdali), the frequent invader to India. Therefore, unlike South India where art forms such as classical dance, rock cut temples and sculptures etc. have been preserved. Punjab could mainly preserve folk forms such as folk dancing, folk music, folk art, folk poems... The folk culture and folk poetry may be treated as the fifth veda of Folk Wisdom of this land of five rivers.

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Toward a cognitive linguistics

Understanding of folk narratives

Bidisha Som

Introduction:

"Culture is the precipitate of cognition and communication in a human population."(Dan Sperber, 1990, p. 42). The primary and most straightforward relationship between language, culture and folklore can be based on the fact that folklore is expressed by means of language and that both language and folklore are set in the culture of the people who speak the former and produce the latter. In addition, both reflect the culture they are set in. cognitive linguistics believes that there is no objective, disembodied truth, and consequently the world is not objectively reflected in language. Language is much more than just a mirror, it describes our individual and collective experiences of the world and these experiences lead to the embodied meaning in language and discourse; and what better way to understand those deep rooted culture-specific worldview than through folklore, as folklores/folktales reside in the mind of a people not just as stories but almost like a set of norms to follow that sets the boundaries of concepts relevant for a culture? Conceptual and linguistic universals arise from the fact that we have similar bodies and brains, that we inhabit similar environments and that we communicate with each other; but relativity sneaks in through the cultural differences reflected in language and literature that throws a light on the differential aspects of cognizing the world around us.

Language is not, as pointed out by Snell-Hornby (1988:39), 'an isolated phenomenon suspended in a vacuum but an integral part of culture.' As such, language is better understood with reference to culture. According to Malinowski (1923/1938: 306), 'the study of language, spoken by a people ... must be carried out in conjunction with their culture and their environment'.

The cognitive approach to the study of culture consists in attempting to explain internal and mental reasons for the links between a particular cause and a particular effect. This approach ‘tends to use the concepts of modeling, and talks of mapping, underlying patterns and the culture-bound categorizing of experience’ (Katan, 1999: 19). In connection with this, Nostrand (in Katan, 1999: 19) ‘talks of a culture’s ‘central code’ which involves the culture’s ‘ground of meaning’; its systems of major values, habitual patterns of thought, and certain prevalent assumptions about human nature’.

Understanding Folklore/Folktales

Since its creation in 1846 by William Thomas, the definition of the term “folklore” has, as Dundes (1965: 1) puts it, been subject to a great deal of discussion. According to him, some definitions concern the definition of ‘lore’, that is the material of folklore and others concern the folk, that is the people who produce the lore. folklore has also been defined as the set of customs, beliefs, traditions and all types of folk literature(myths, legends tales, poems, proverbs, sayings, spells, etc) and experiences passed on from one generation of a folk, defined by Dundes (1965: 2) as ‘any group of people whatsoever who share one common factor’, to another either through oral tradition or through imitation. folklore is related to culture in the sense that it is, a mirror of culture. Folklore reflects culture because it relates to the way of life of the people who produce it: their ceremonies, their institutions, their crafts and so on. It also expresses their beliefs, customs, attitudes and their way of thinking. Folklore actually gives a penetrating picture of the way of life of the people who produce it (Dundes, 1965: 284). For that reason, it is, as pointed out by Malinowski (in Dundes 1965: 281), important to understand the setting of folklore in its actual life if one wants to understand it. According to Malinowski (in Dundes, 1965: 282), ‘text ... is extremely important, but without the context it remains lifeless.’ This means that one cannot fully understand folklore without understanding its cultural context.

The relationship between culture and folklore can also be shown in the definition of folktales, as part of folklore, by Lester (1969: vii) who says that folktales are stories that give people a way of communicating with each other about each other- their fears, their hopes, their dreams, their fantasies, giving their explanations of why the world is the way it is. It is in stories like these that a child learns who his parents are and who he will become. Arbuthnot (1964: 255) corroborates this idea by saying that ‘...folktales have been the cement of society. They not only expressed but codified and reinforced the way people thought, felt, believed and behaved.’

For the current paper the term folklore/folktale is understood in the broad sense where it refers to a body of traditional oral narratives that encode information about the moral, social and psychological norms in a society.

Functions of Folklore

Dundes (1965: 279-298) discusses four main functions of folklore. The first function of folklore is that it serves as a form of amusement or entertainment. The second consists in the role it plays in validating culture. The third function of folklore is found in the role that it plays in education and the fourth function consists in maintaining the stability of a culture. As to the second function which consists in validating culture, it is, according to Dundes (1965: 292) fulfilled by ‘justifying its rituals and institutions to those who perform and observe them;’ Malinowski (in Dundes, 1965: 292) illustrates this function by saying that myths, for instance, serve as a ‘warrant, a charter, and often even a practical guide’ to magic, ceremony, ritual and social structure. This is, however, not only applicable to myths. It also applies to many other genres of folklore.

As far as the third function is concerned, it is also important in the sense that most folklore is intended for younger generations in order to teach those manners, customs, beliefs, practices, and so forth. As an example, Dundes (1965: 293) says that ogre tales serve the purpose of disciplining young children, and lullabies are sung in order to put them in good humour. Fables and folktales are used to teach general attitudes and principles and to ridicule vices and misbehaviour; proverbs are used as a means to warn them against what is bad and, as Dundes (1965:296) puts it, ‘to warn the dissatisfied or over-ambitious individual to be content with his lot, to accept the world as it is and thus to conform to the accepted patterns.’

Finally, folklore fulfils the function of maintaining the stability of culture in the sense that it operates within a given society to ensure conformity to the accepted cultural norms and continuity from older generations to younger ones through the role it plays in education. the genres of folklore that

fulfill this function do so by applying pressure and exercising control over the members of a society with a view to maintaining its culture and disapproving of individuals who attempt to deviate from social conventions. Folklore also fulfils this function by expressing social approval of individuals who conform to social conventions.

Along with these functions that are typically intra-community factors, in today's multicultural and multilingual world, the folk narratives serve another crucial function, namely that of the inter-community understanding. They are sometimes used as a slice of the culture being studied.

Among the above mentioned functions of folklore, the use of folktales as a mode of 'reflecting, validating, and maintaining stability in a culture' is of special interest to cognitive sciences in general and to cognitive linguistics in particular; Cognitive linguistics investigates the internal mechanisms that achieve these goals.

Social Cognition and Cultural Artifacts

Cultural groups are held together by a "constant flow of information, most of which is about local transient circumstances and not transmitted much beyond them." (Sperber and Hirschfeld 2004) Some part of this information, which is more general in nature, is repeatedly transmitted in an explicit or implicit manner and can end up being shared by many or even most members of the group. 'Culture' refers to this widely distributed information, its representation in people's minds, and its expressions in their behaviors and interactions. As Watts mentioned (Richard J Watts 1981) "the principal goal of social sciences is to describe and explain the social use of material objectsthe total network of descriptive systems or codes will constitute the society's culture and within that culture the material objects can be considered cultural artifacts."

Noted folklorist Alan Dundes (1971) points out that folklores deal with "traditional notions that a group of people have about the nature of man, of the world, and of man's life in the world..... various underlying assumptions held by members of a given culture. All cultures have underlying assumptions and it is these assumptions or folk ideas which are the building blocks of worldview." Folklore/folktales constitute an integral part of the flow of information that eventually constitutes the shared cultural knowledge of a people, usually passed on from one generation to another orally. Whether it is entirely oral narrative or, at a later stage, exist in the form of texts, folk narratives render an experience of impersonality on the readers/listeners. It is impersonal in the sense that the stories

become an object in themselves, independent of the story-teller; an aspect of communication transform into a thing in itself, a tangible, analyzable and quotable object. From this standpoint, it becomes a cultural artifact, like other cultural symbols. These stories celebrate a tradition and through these live on the cultural symbolism, values and conceptualizations of a community. This cultural symbolism can be arrived at by delving into the conceptualization pattern at work in the creation of these folktales. There are various processes that create our image of the universe, most salient of them being the processes of categorization, conceptual metaphor and use of schemata. Therefore, an analysis of folktales on these grounds leads us to the worldview of the community in question.

Conceptualization and folktales

Cognitive Linguistics understands meaning as conceptualization, understood broadly as the stuff that mental processing is made of (Langacker 1987: 5); it involves the basic relation between mental content and the experience of the world. The world is not presented to us in a structured way, the organization and structure is imposed upon the myriad inputs by way of various mental functions of categorization, schematization etc. Culture-specific ways of understanding the world refer to the differences in these construal operations. The word cognition and cognitive derive from the Latin ‘cognoscere’, meaning “to know or have knowledge of”. Thus cognition refers to knowing or the knowledge processes. Some of the key cognitive processes are attention, perception, memory, knowledge representation in terms of concepts and categories and schematization, also called cultural conceptualization. Concepts are the ideas we think with, they are the internal, mental representations of the properties of objects and events. The objects and events that embody a concept are called a category. Similarly, schemas are the mental representations of events and objects that the mind stores, derived from our own embodied experience related to people, events and roles etc. different languages of the world reflect different patterns of creating of these schemas. Role schemas have been defined as “knowledge structures that’s people have of specific role positions in cultural group”. This includes knowledge about social roles that denotes sets of behavior that are expected of people in particular social situations. The role schema of a ‘wife’ might differ significantly from one culture to another. The exact nature of these various schema as used by different cultures can be understood by a close analysis of folktale.

That folktales reflect the community's belief and social structure etc is well known. From a cognitive linguistics perspectives, it can be said that the same cognitive mechanisms that are at work for making sense of the world and creating structure on the 'reality' and which are reflected in language structure are also responsible for creating a community specific worldview in folklore. Some of these cognitive mechanisms are the use schema and conceptual metaphors. The main contribution of the study of the cognitive aspect of discourse to language and culture studies is that discourse does not only proceed at the level of the sentence; there are other structures coming from outside the discourse and supplying global hypotheses about what is going on. Such global knowledge patterns are called "top-down" structures, using a metaphor from computational modeling of language understanding, which is equally true of folktales as discourse. One such structure is the "schemata" and is associated with how socio-culturally shaped knowledge formed by people's personal histories, vicarious experiences, and interests lead them to expect or predict aspects in the interpretation of discourse.

Schemata:

The Zulu tale of 'Untombi-yaphansi' narrates the tale of a girl who after having left her home due to unnatural death of her parent(s) goes to a far-off fantasy place where she faces many ordeals. A fantasy creature imbulu takes over her place and she becomes this creature. Her transformation occurs as part of this ordeal and during this time she goes to the river regularly to wash off the outer shell to become her real self momentarily. At one point she is seen by the king and is reincorporated into the society through her marriage to the king and subsequent killing of imbulu. This story tells of the struggle of a girl towards attaining womanhood. What is noticeable in this story is that the role schema of a girl going through the ordeal of leaving behind childhood and becoming a woman of responsibilities lies entirely upon the person involved. The society takes note of her new status, represented here in the episode of the King seeing and marrying her and thus bringing her responsibilities for which she has now proven fit.(Harold Scheub: 2006)

Compare this with a similar tale from Turkey. In the Turkish folktale 'Sister Sister dear sister', a young girl and her brother leave home due to the tortures of a wicked stepmother. The journey involves some episodes like the brother becoming a fawn upon drinking water from a spring. But the girl cares for her brother even in that state. Eventually, the king/prince happens to see her and wants to marry her. The description of the girl as humble but rational in her suggestions and caring in her attitude to her brother as a whole is a cue serving to tap a particular schema, namely the knowledge that a female has the role of attending to the needs of a male in the household primarily due to his essential role in procreation. By portraying the girl in this expected role, the narrator assures that listeners

identity with her. It activates the knowledge of the authority of the male over the female in matters related to courtship and marriage. Also the importance of a helper figure, typically an old woman, to establish marital relations has been taken care of in the tale. (Deniz Zeyrek:1997).

A notable tale from Guam ‘how the young maidens saved the island of Guam’, relates how Guam came to be narrow in the middle. A giant fish was eating away the land thus narrowing the island, the young women then wove their hair into a net to catch the creature and kept it from destroying the island. This story underlies the role women play in this society, who not only nurture but also were powerful figures in clan decision making and in community activities.(Monique R. Carriveau Storie and Kenneth L. Carriveau Jr.:2006)

In the Trobriand Islands, (Campbell, S.F: 2006) people are supremely confident of their own cultural perspectives and they exhibit a talent of weaving western folklore into their own stories, that includes even the story of Jesus. People in this place trace their descent through mother and do not consider the ‘blood’ of the father to contribute to the formation of the child, his role is merely that of a facilitator. The spirit child, who is tired of life underground in the island of Tuma, enters the mother when she bathes in the water off the beach or in tidal creeks. The way Jesus was conceived is not unprecedented in this culture. This is the reason many Trobrianders even claim Jesus to a Trobriand Islander. In the Trobriand version of the story, heaven is not in sky but underground, in the island of Tuma.

In each of these cases, the depth of the meaning in the tales will be understood only by situating them in the culture specific ‘Frames’.

Metaphor:

The role that narratives play in describing a culture and its worldview can also be fruitfully explored through its use of metaphors. The cognitive approach to metaphor by Lakoff (1987) and Johnson explains how metaphor influences and changes our perception of the world and it can be used to understand the same in a culture and its literature. As Dundes mentioned, folklore is “perhaps the most important source for the articulation and perpetuation of the group’s symbols ” and one way to explore the formation of a culture’s reality through language is to look at the role metaphors play in the process.

In a popular legend among the working class segments of Monteros society, a father explains the abstract idea of heaven and hell in terms of concrete realities of daily experience, where the scene of person working in the field with a hoe on his shoulder resembles hell (Brandes, 1980). In the oral

tradition of the Beti, Basaa, and Bulu ethnic groups of Cameroon, the orphan is an important stock character and the hero of many tales. The terrible difficulties faced by real-life orphans in Beti, Basaa, and Bulu society are hinted at in the many traditional insults (e.g., "galeux comme un orphelin"), and proverbs (e.g., "si ta mere meurt, puise moins dans le plat") from these groups (Domowitz, 1981). The folktales having the orphan as the protagonist contain elements that are important in helping to explain certain aspects of the initiation rites typical of these communities. The initiation rites are particularly severe in these societies; and by depicting hardships faced by an orphan in the big bad world, typically after his mother dies, serve as a metaphor for the initiation process at the end of which the triumphant men are welcomed back in the community.

The most notable example of the use of metaphors might be found in the *Panchatantra* which tells its stories through animal protagonists. It is interesting to see that very often in these tales, the traits—bravery, honesty, deceit, and cruelty—are all personified through some or other animal, ostensibly because these factors are actually subject-neutral, as they are present not only in humans. And it is this observation about the nature of particular nature and behavior of these animals in question that help serve as metaphor for the abstract notions, not easy to teach children.

Book 2 of the *Panchatantra* opens with a verse on the *banyan* tree—

*Deer recline in its shade;
birds in multitude gather to roost
darkening its dark-green canopy of leaves
troops of monkeys cling to the trunk;
while hollows hum with insect-throngs,
flowers are boldly kissed by honey-bees;
O! What happiness in every limb showers
on assemblages of various creatures;
Such a tree deserves all praise,
others only burden the earth. (2: 193)*

Needless to say the tree here stands for virtues and values close to the culture in question, the idea clearly rooted in the embodied understanding of the role various flora and fauna play in our lives.

Another such example comes from the ancient tale of “Charyapada”, which perhaps does not strictly fall under the category of folktales, but can still be considered by virtue of being traditional tale created with the aim to disseminate knowledge of the abstract realm with the help of the embodied human experiences. The idea of human life and the sensory inputs we receive through various senses comes alive through the sentence "ka a torubor ponchobi daal...choncholo chie poithe kaal..."(the body is like a tree with five branches...through these time enters the mind).

Folktales as a resource:

The folktales of a culture are weaved around the cultural prototypes or schemata. The target audience for these stories, more often than not, being children, these schema are then perpetuated through the stories which are passed on from one generation to another. But the study of folktales need not be restricted to children. In today's multicultural world, folktales can prove a useful resource in multicultural and integrated approaches to understand a culture and its concepts. They can reflect a culture as well as offer opportunities for increasing global understanding (Cox and Galda 1990; Hickey 1995; Nelli 1985; Perez-Sable 2005).

However, although a folktale may mirror certain characteristics of the cultural group within which it originated, it must be determined whether those characteristics are specific to a past social context or if they are enduring traits that exist today. Treating a folktale as a cultural resource may unwittingly present unintended or erroneous information mistakenly interpreted as factual information about the present (Kiriazis 1971; Mulroy 1977; Nelli 1985).

Another point to be noted is that as stories that reinforce conformity, folk narratives form a part of the hegemonic social structures that suppress alternative viewpoints, lifestyles and subaltern cultures. Thus the lessons, values and beliefs and behaviors promoted in folktales describe an idealized and stereotypical view of the culture concerned.

To sum up, one can say that the study of folk narratives provide a deep understanding of the human mind and society at work. These narratives, as a genre, have always intrigued the anthropologists, folklorists and social scientists. Today, when interdisciplinary research is the norm and not exception in scientific pursuits, perhaps it is time to have a fresh new look at these timeless narratives from the new perspective of cognitive science. Cognitive science strives to understand the human mind and using the tools and technologies of this field to understand folk narratives would only enrich both the fields of enquiry. This would pave the way for studying folklore from a human cognition perspective ("cognitive folklore", if one can use to term).

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Planting Songs in Kandhmal

Anuja Mohan Pradhan

Work and entertainment are two necessities of a progressive life. Irrespective of stages of civilization of any particular society, these two aspects of life both at individual as well as society level, has a definite bearing. Man has to work for sustenance and survival and requires entertainment for relaxation and rejuvenation. In the simplistic tribal and agricultural society the co-existence of both is visibly imminent. Perhaps, that is the reason the festivals centring agriculture activities like planting and harvesting are dotting over all the cultures of world. Long hours of monotonous ploughing and transplantation during rainy season in the highlands of Khond hills has given a vent for creative recreation. Away from the regulations of rhyme and meter , the Kui planting songs are, plainly simple, serene and refreshing. The fusion of Kui and Oriya language without a claimant of authorship is valuable.

The planting songs are sung by women folk while transplanting the paddy. The paddy fields turn lively with new rain, new plants and songs of women. The song is sung by one women and it is followed by *Huluhuli*⁴⁰ sound made by all the women. Generally, the songs are a quadrine i.e. consist of four lines. The song addresses someone without name but fondly named “Suna” or “Dhono”⁴¹ i.e. my wealth or more appropriately “My Dear”. Songs are for entertainment in the workplace. The songs are plain, indicative and some has a very interesting philosophical connotation.

The following songs were recorded by the author during various field visits in the Kandhmal district. For the purpose of this article the songs have been randomly picked. It is to mention that in Kui speaking areas⁴² the women also sing planting songs in Oriya language. The songs have traversed the ghats and adopted by the Kuidina people since time immemorial. Oriya words are used with slight modification in structure or ascent viz. “gotie” is used as “gute” in Kui. Respective Kui and Oriya transcriptions⁴³ are appended with the translated version in English and also followed by explanatory notes wherever felt needed.

⁴⁰ A tingling sound produced by wavering the tongue rapidly with an outward breath.

⁴¹ The vowel O be pronounced O in the word “cost” not as in “coast”.

⁴² Kui as a language outranks the political demarcation of Kandhamal district and ethnic Khond tribe. Kuidina will be a more wider and acceptable name for the whole Kui speaking area and people.

⁴³ Kui songs are from Sl.01 to 05 and Oriya songs are Sl.No.06 to 12.

1. *Ura tani mani pedi,
Koda jiamu e rata saree,

E rata saree dhonola,

Tatna mehi nanda redi.*

Translationnnn: The box on the cross beam,

Give me(buy for me) one red saree,

(wearing) that red saree, my dear,

I would see how looks my waist.

Note: The inherent voice is that of a young girl who has just became a woman. In her initiation to youth the long red saree symbolizes her imagination which is kept dormant in a box and when it dons waist of a young lass, she will mature plumb. Here red saree is also symbolises bridal costume.

2. *Jodi anenipada gdudu,
Jama satekanila koksana dimu,

koksana dimu,dhonola...,

Daki kosi kosi omu.*

Translationnnn:

A small pool of water beside the river,

On death of your husband

you weep, you weep my dear,

beating your chest.

Notes: The small patch of water is a pool of stagnant water created by the river, when receded. It symbolizes life of a young wife after death of her husband. She stands alone, detached from the mani stream society(river). At this moment she is left to lament beating her chest.

3. *Karagali kopukusa,*
Labengani mehana ajasaka aatula losa,

aatula losa dhono-

kanubanda lobegosha.

Translationnnn:

The green(Kopu) leaves of summer,

Seeing the youngmen-

The women folk came close to place(assembled to a place)

My dear, (in the village) Kanubanda and Lobegosha.

Note: Kusa means any curry. Kopukusa is a curry or fried item prepared using the Kopu leaves. The tender leaves of summer are eaten as greens and is a symbol of Kui culture. In this song the Kopukusa is used as a symbol of tender girls or maidens who feel shy seeing the young men from other village and they cuddle up. The villages mentioned are very remote places in Ganjam district. May be, they are used as homonyms.

4. *Baada tari pirti maalaa,*
jhioni jamato budi military wala,

mitarywalla suna,

tahajianenju rasogula.

Translation:

O' chilli plant of my backyard,
The fiancée of this girl is a military man,
Military man, my dear(or my Goldie)
Will bring her rasogola.(sweets made of cheese)

Note: Earlier, military was one of the avenues where many of Kui people joined. The military men were considered high-earning rich people. The chilli plant which is so familiar is thus addressed to intimate the good news.

5. *Baadi tani mani joma,
Oanjula budi mipe ni jama,

Mipe ni jama dhono-

Gimula paiti kama.*

Translation:

The small stool on the sitting stone,
That Youngman is your fiancée,
My dear, do your work properly.

Note: Joma or jomba is a low height sitting stool, which is also a very popular furniture in a kui household.earlier, people used to fix stones in their yards for sitting purpose. Stool on the stone means it is more comfortable. The man in the song is a nice guy who is , may be passing by the field where the women are planting paddy. An elderly lady thus chides to a young girl showing him as her would be husband. Unless she is good at her work, no one will marry her.So, in his presence she should show good work.

6. Ambo gochho nua meru,
Ambogachho tale ki yatra kalu,

Ki yatra kalu dhono,

Haribolo dak delu.

Translation:

Mango tree and the new Meru,

And what you did beneath the mango tree,

My dear,

people talk of it , all loud and clear.

Note: Meru is the concluding day ritual of Dandanacha, a 13day festival of Chaitra (April). It is a festival of spring. The young boys and girls enjoy this festival very much. As a part of ritual green mangos are decorated and distributed by the chief priest. It is beginning of eating mangoes. Here, it is questioned to the girl that what are the pranks she did . If any thing wrong she does can never remain a secret, it will come out loud as “ Hari Bol” or “ name of God’ is pronounced.

7. *Gaiku maila lathe,*
Gai palaila suruda bate,

suruda bate dhono,

sasughar keun bate ?

Translation:

(He) beat the cow with a long stick,

The cow ran away through Suruda,

My dear,

Which road leads to (his) in-law's house ?

Note: Here, the cow symbolises the house wife. Being tortured by her husband she has left home and ran away through Soroda(suruda as pronounced in kui tongue) .Suruda is a place in Ganjam district and was one of points of communication to Kuidina in earlier days. The husband has to search his wife. However, out of guilt he finds no way to approach his in-law's(Parents of wife) to bring her back.

8. *Hati gola ratirati,
badaghar jhio buluchi niiti,
buluchi rati,dhono,
niche budaib jaati.*

Translation:

The elephant roams night after night,

So is the daughter of the rich,

My dear,

She will let down her (high)caste.

Notes: The rich man is compared with an elephant. Elephant symbolises power, prestige and reputation. The young daughter of the rich man is equally careless. With this nature she will one day fall in affair with a low caste man.

9. *Patha nahin satha nahin,
Judajudi geet gauchi muhin,
Gauchi muhin, Dhono,
Mo dusa dharib nahin.*

Translation:

I have no education or any art,
I sing jotting words from here and there,
My dear,
Please excuse me.

Note: An expression of politeness of the singer.

10. *Kukur mundara budhi,*
Tini anguthire pitala mudi,

Pitala mudi dhono-

Kie sikhaila budhi ?

Translation:

It is cunning intelligence of a rogue(Dog),
Wears brass rings in three fingers,
My dear,
Who tutored him all this?

Note: This is a criticism to a young man who is very showy in nature. The young man is poor because he cannot afford to wear a golden ring. One brass ring will indicate his status. Instead, he wears three brass rings which speaks volumes of his poverty and foolish boasting nature.

11. *Malli⁴⁴ phulo kete gote,
Kahar mohini lagila tote,

Lagila tote, dhono-

Arh muhan kalu mote.*

Translation:

What is the worth of a flower ?

Who has charmed you,

My dear,

You turn face away from me ?

Note : The flower of Arabian jasmine is used for making gazra i.e.garlands used by

women of ill repute. The young women has fallen out of favour and thus addresses the song to her beloved saying, someone has charmed him that's why he turned away from her. But what is the worth of such a women casting charms? She is like a Arabian jasmine flower, sweet for a night, a synonym of ill repute.

12. *Muninga gachara chhuin,
Adha-rati hele asibe sehi,

Asibe sehi dhona,

Pati parudebu tuhi.*

⁴⁴Arabian Jasmine, Jasmin sambac.

Translation:

Slender beans of a drumstick tree,

He will come at the fall of midnight,

My dear,

Spread the mattress for him.

Note: The bean of a drumstick is long and straight. So is her lover who sneaks in after the midnight. The singer advises to the young girl to receive her lover. The song is befitting to the Girls' dormitory situation where the boys of other villages often visited these dormitory affinity later used to turn into matrimonial relations.

Folk-Songs of Arunachal Pradesh:

The Thrust on Beauty and Love

Krushna Chandra Mishra

[Abstract: With folksongs of different Scheduled Tribes communities of Arunachal Pradesh covered in this brief study, an understanding of the folk ways of living, thinking and planning social organisation has been offered to underline the fact that the tribal folk life has ever put premium on beauty and love with its conviction that the beauty of survival in the face of humbling and disabling odds really lies in the loving co-operation of all the people together to enable the communities as collective entities to ensure happy life everywhere.]

1.0 The importance of folk culture and resources in matters of tribal people's identity and community pride is simply not to be exaggerated .Elite bodies of various communities in Arunachal Pradesh have in proper recognition of such a fact paid due attention in recent years to preservation and promotion of their culture with emphasis on collective ceremonial participation in festivals that single out the uniqueness of their individual communities. Mobility and intermingling of people of different communities as regular features of modern life and social organisation have come increasingly to stress that interaction of community-specific cultures are a new need that requires to be appreciated particularly against its promised contribution to allow the people of different place and community identities to share the state's resources and opportunities offered under the modern political arrangements and the attendant administrative and development considerations. Awareness that tourism is a flourishing new area of economic gains that people could readily welcome and find

easy to be involved in has made the people in the rural areas keen about discovering a new value of their dances and songs which traditionally they used to cultivate only as means to give expression to their sense of group identity and of group entertainment.

1.1 The Draft National Policy on Tribals (as in Dr. Swaminathan Research Foundation website) under Cl.12 and Cl. 14 has the following important point to make with regard to

Tribal Art, Culture and Tradition, and again Tribal Languages.

Cl.12. Tribal Art, Culture and Tradition

Issues relating to tribal art, culture and tradition such as proper documentation of culture of various tribal communities, including arts and crafts; appreciation and encouragement of traditional tribal dance and music; commercialisation of arts and crafts; insufficient information and data base on tribal artisans and artists and lack of awareness of culture and heritage of tribal communities by the administrators and field functionaries needs to be addressed. The National Policy for Tribals will ensure the following measures:

- (i) Formulate a National Policy on Tribal Culture, including arts and crafts in order to preserve and facilitate the continuation of the rich cultural heritage of tribals.
- (ii) Organize cultural melas and festivals at the National and State levels and tribal artists, and folk art performers to be encouraged by organising training classes in their respective areas of specialisation by experts from their communities.
- (iii) Traditional costumes, musical instruments and the like to be supplied to the tribals who are well-versed in their performing arts.
- (iv) The National and State level Sangeet Nataka Academies to document different folk dances performed by the tribals of different States and identify distinguished artists.
- (v) Important folk dances to be included in the curriculum of the Schools.

(vi) The tribal textiles and ornaments to be further encouraged and displayed in art exhibitions and facilitate to market their own fabrics and ornaments.

Cl.14. Tribal Languages

Tribal languages are treated as unscheduled languages. In the wake of changing educational scenario, many of the tribal languages are facing the threat of extinction. The loss of language may adversely affect tribal culture, especially their folklore.

The National Policy aims at preserving and documenting tribal languages. Education in the mother tongue at the primary level needs be encouraged. Books and other publications in tribal languages will be promoted. Dictionaries and glossaries of tribal languages will be prepared and brought out.

1.2 The educated youth today in many ways have woken up to popularise their tradition and culture by ways of innovatively introducing changes that show a marked shift in the taste of the new generation that likes to experiment with the indigenous stuff to add to them elements of newness in look and make. Technology in a good measure is in use today by the government publicity machinery and by the NGOs and youth bodies of various communities for whom culture continues to be an important area of their concern. Also the modern educated youth have a better practical orientation towards their resources of the material culture wherein they see lying ingrained their self worth as a distinct community which they could further project positively to genuinely claim for them support that the union government of India or the state government of Arunachal Pradesh extends under various promotion policies. The rural, tribal and backward area development considered to be better ensured and qualitatively more satisfactorily addressed through the Panchayati Raj could also be helped with a predominant concentration on the culture of the people as they present it on a marketable basis and scale and gain through dance, songs , music ,cuisine and beverages and drinks.

1.3 In the light of the above, the present emphasis in the paper here is on the folk-songs of Arunachal Pradesh. Particular attention has been paid to selection of the songs as they have been collected and published by the Directorate of Research of the Government of Arunachal Pradesh or by scholars from among the indigenous communities of the state .The objective here in this presentation is to read the

songs as they are so available to dwell on the characteristic thrust they bear towards presenting the attitudes and approaches of the different communities to life in general and its changing occasions in particular wherever clearly emphasised. The care as desirable has been exercised to read the songs to arrive at a general estimate of the people as basically treading the path of Beauty and Love as they meet the complex order of challenges of life in simple ,yet unique and majestic ways.

The present approach is in line of Gandhi's dream of India as 'continually progressing along lines best suited to her genius' without turning out to be 'a third class or first class copy of the dying civilization of the west'. (Elwin1960, in Roy 1960)Also, this paper seeks to conform to the directive of Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru on planning development of the tribes people 'on the lines of their own tradition and genius.'(ibid.) Elwin (1960) explains the approach: '... we should not make them a second rate copy of ourselves. If we are to do this, we must know what that genius, what that tradition is. Otherwise we may confine ourselves to a mere preservation of the more colourful and exotic aspects of tribal culture and be tempted to isolate them as a picturesque enclave in the rather drab and conventional modern world.'(in Roy 1960:xii).Mishra (2001) has also underlined the importance of Dr.Elwin's emphasis on the development of the tribal genius in lines of the Nehruvian vision to contend that discourse of development of Arunachal Pradesh in transition would have very usefully to visualise tribal development against the available historical evidence of what suits better to ensure development planning to make the schemes introduced on various fronts yield results without potentially causing disjunction from tradition and natural endowments of the variously gifted people of the state. The concern to 'raise their standard of living' and help them 'come out of their shell, and develop a full integration with the people of the plains without losing those fine qualities which can make so unique a contribution to 'the rich and varied tapestry of India.'(Elwin in Roy 1960:xiii) has been justified in granting the priorities for development of the tribes.In this connection the importance of the resources of the material culture of the tribal communities as an 'Intangible Heritage of oral traditions and expressions'(Revel 2006) requires to be sympathetically understood to forward the tribal people the best light of representation they deserve. This line of reading folk oral literature has been adopted by Mishra (2005) with folktales of the Sherdukpen community and by Mishra and Dey (2006) with the Monpa and Nocte folktales wherein the development-oriented reading of the tales and the didactic basis that justify the use of the folk wisdom to circumvent future crises for collective safety and general prosperity of all in a society have been attempted. In Mishra and Dey (2006) it has been established that 'didactic element is basic to the folk-tales of Arunachal Pradesh, which, "on the whole ... are

remarkably original and seem to be genuine products of tribal creativity and imagination” (Elwin, 1968: xxi), though alongside this dominant motive there are other significant social and cultural projections as Datta. B et al (1994: 45) have suggested in discussing Elwin’s views on NEFA folk-tales: “There are many stories [Arunachal tribal stories] which contain information about the social order like the position of women, the prevalence of slavery, etc.” Pelto and Pelto commenting on the uses of folk-tales for various purposes hold: “The folk-tales and myths of non-literate and literate societies constitute an archive of thematic materials that have been a rich mine of information for various kinds of analysis. Sometimes these archives are used to infer psychological characteristics of people; they are often invoked for the analysis of religious beliefs; and they also serve as evidence concerning the transmission of information (diffusion) from culture to culture” (as in Dey, 1996). Further, Herskovits in this connection remarks, “Folk-tales are more than the literary expression of a people. They constitute in a very real sense their ethnography; if systematized by the student they give a penetrating picture of a given way of life” (1974: 269). It is thus relevant here to re-emphasise that the tribal folk-tales of Arunachal Pradesh may be analysed cautiously and systematically so that the didactic motive basic to majority of those tales could be neatly discerned and an abiding vision of a moral society that would be capable of catering to the needs of every member of the society – in fact, of all the societies of Arunachal Pradesh to be specific – to live a life with all decency and dignity could be brought to fruition....’ (Mishra and Dey 2006)

What has been claimed above with regard to the folktales also does hold good with the study of the folksongs. The purpose is to show in all these folk narratives – oral or reproduced in writing – that reflection in all cases of folk thinking and dissemination of experience and education is to create conducive atmosphere so that the quality of social life would be enriched to an extent where happy, safe and free accessing of life’s goals would be most naturally facilitated. In sum, folk narratives are expositions of folk insight into nagging problems that afflict life and fill it in misery and anguish. These narratives are a human storage and retrieval system or archive wherefrom need-based extraction of meaning could be done and scope for occasioning happiness at individual and universal level rendered achievable.

1.3.1 Arunachal Pradesh

Arunachal Pradesh – the land of rising sun was formerly known as North East Frontier Agency, popularly NEFA, since 1954. On 20th January 1972, the name Arunachal Pradesh was given with the inauguration of the Union Territory by the then Prime Minister of India, Smti. Indira Gandhi at Ziro,

the Headquarters of erstwhile Subansiri district. The Union Territory was later on given the status of a fullfledged State on 20th February 1987. Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India had inaugurated this 24th state of the Union of India at Itanagar, the state capital.

The original five districts of Tirap, Lohit, Siang, Subansiri and Kameng ,named after the five principal rivers that flow in the respective districts of Arunachal Pradesh, have later been divided into sixteen districts – Tirap, Changlang, Lohit, Anjaw, Dibang Valley, Lower Dibang Valley, East Siang, Upper Siang, West Siang, Upper Subansiri , Papum Pare, Lower Subansiri , Kurungkurme, East Kameng, East Kameng and Tawang.

Arunachal Pradesh is home to 26 major Scheduled Tribes communities with their language, dress code, language/dialect, dance, musical instruments, folk resources as tales and songs, arts and crafts, and the like. With special attention provided under National Manuscript Mission, Oral Literature promotion initiatives, Heritage sites development ,Primary education in local dialect/language etc. , it has come to be necessary to duly stress how community wisdom and experience have been expressed in the folk literature/orature of the people.

1.3.2 Folk-Songs of Arunachal Pradesh

“A Few Folksongs Of Arunachal Pradesh”(Duarah 1989) dealing with the selected folksongs of eight different tribal communities – Monpa,Sherdukpen, Aka,Khowa,Apatani,Adi,Idu-Mishmi and Khampti – provides us with the source for our present study. Covering heterogeneous themes and categories, these samples convey that from the eastern to the western end of Arunachal Pradesh the people enjoy a rich heritage of oral literature that still awaits sympathetic reading for a sincere evaluation especially in terms of the guidance value that the songs may offer for the present day society which faces the need to usher in harmony, understanding and peace that in turn would lead to progress ,prosperity and prestige for the people of the whole of Arunachal Pradesh for whom the task lies ahead to rebuild the state into a magnificent and mighty reservoir of unity and strength through constant engagement among the people across the broad spectrum of diversity that they so gloriously inherit.

1.3.2.1 The Monpa folksongs – *Cadi cungsi barakha* (Duarah 1989:38), Phuli Kemjang meta (Duarah 1989:38-39) - together talk of the Nature beautiful that needs to be left to be beautiful forever. The destructive role of snow, rain and sun with regard to the tender beauty of the flowers in fresh bloom is condemned thus sounding an alarm to prevent those forces of destruction from spoiling and tarnishing

beauty. This charming reference to Nature and the concomitant concern in the apprehension and implied appeal forbidding outrageous aggression against beauty that soothes the eyes, mind and soul has a parallel and more caustic remark restraining man from contributing to the build-up of social stigma involving women. Like in Nature beauty has certain definite justification to be guarded from corrupting and corrosive contact of the powerful and cruel forces of destruction, in society morality requires to be persuasively spread so that evil ways do not leave the beauty of the human form and also of the social relationship between men and women tampered and ravaged in any way. The poems in a Buddhist didactic thrust combine to impart the ideal of *sheel* or duty in a decent society where organisation of human behaviour and conduct enjoy a premium and where irresponsible and rash immorality is decried upon as condemnably paving clear the path towards social degeneracy and moral turpitude. The songs exhibit a deep and abiding interest in the protection and propagation of beauty. Beauty commands attention of the beholders. This great and unique strength inherent in beauty itself is reason enough why accumulation of beauty and virtue needs to be one avowed consideration of man. Dwelling on the idea of beauty in a marvellous way the cause is forwarded most convincingly in the songs above for the ideal practice of social equality. The beauty of the body and of the soul together and simultaneously needs to be celebrated with mind not unduly getting mired in the formal and superficial differences of beauty outwardly manifest as in a woman's body and that not immediately visible as eternally radiant as in terms of a decently self-conducting soul. Beauty ,the songs emphasise, is in being capable to see and successfully establish thereby equality above and despite differences that demand diversion , cause distraction and dilute the purity of the deliberation (on the eternal and universal equality/beauty).Equality is Beauty, and in glorifying differences there certainly lies no beauty. The Monpa folksongs therefore in a way seem to encapsulate a vision of a beautiful life in a world where equality as a social goal even across the gender categories is keenly pursued with due exercise of restraint and caution constantly prescribed to arrest the possibility of the soul's beautiful flower being crushed under powerful spells of lust.

Thus, the three folksongs together serve to sum up the Monpa world view – serious, sincere, welfare-oriented, equality-minded and careful about purity, permanence and equality. The idea is about a conscious moral society in certain emergence of which gender equality goals and fruits could be enjoyed by all the people. Social progress in a co-operative atmosphere is ensured in such cases where without inhibition and fear and psychological distrust about others is nearly absent and as a result, free and wholehearted voluntary services to the best of capacity and thinking of the people are most

effectively discharged .The Monpa Buddhism-based folk songs therefore have a distinct element of ethical education which has a sure eye on the ultimate practical gain for the society in entirety.

1.3.2.2 The Sherdukpen folksong - *Sarca sarge minta dumprag* (Duarah 1989:39) is about the wish in general that people express about owning things they see around them with almost ever being in the immediate next moment left conscious of the individual lack of resources and competence to fulfil the wish. The idea is that beautiful things even as they belong to others arouse in the people an interest in those things. Other than when passive withdrawal takes place in most cases where people accept a position to satisfy with what they are materially capable of acquiring, there could also be

1.3.2.3The Aka folksong *Gana nikhili ai tadatra cijida kuruli* ((Duarah 1989:40)) suggests that there is the ready willingness on part of the persons ,who know they still should enjoy the good and beautiful days despite their lack of resources, to get things of need in return of the services/physical labour to bring the rich their pleasure. The idea is that a social structure and social organisation in which there exists no exploitation, honourable terms of loving interdependence evolve wonderfully to be at work to grant the community life the beauty and grandeur it is resplendent with. Give-and-take and not begging, borrowing or stealing is a conscientious voluntary undertaking by people who are conscious of their social status and their inadequate fortunes for which they offer to work for the rich for the support and security of relationship they extend in prompt return. The idea is that cooperation with love, understanding and honesty and justice as the guiding principles in a society would serve, satisfy and sumptuously boost the status of people of unequal economic fortunes thereby creating conditions for harmony and progress of the people of the community as a whole.

1.3.2.4 The Khawa (Bugun) folksongs *Ri ri adiri ra ra ara ra* (Duarah 1989:40) is an example of ‘meaningless syllables put to sweet tuning (ibid.)’. From the folk interest in songs like this created simply to pander to pure entertainment needs undiluted by incursions of meaning content into singing performances, it needs to be seen that sweetness and beauty in composition of songs with apparently no meaning burden to interfere in the free enjoyment of just tone and note associations and variations involving sounds and phones. The folksong in the example shows there is sweetness in the composition. It needs to be observed here that not necessarily always that which is meaningful is also sweet. It is in the conscious attempt at freeing entertainment from the burden of thought and its attendant meaning that there seems to be the suggestion of the folksong here that beauty and soul’s

satisfaction and peace lies in transcendence of meaning. Attempts at securing meaning in the strenuousness of the efforts themselves take away the value of entertainment itself. The folksong seems to advise the community to rise above the craze for meaning to keep usefully bogged down to pure, perfect and entertaining overflowing sweetness and beauty of sounds as they come, combine and vanish.

The implication is here that feeling needs to be accorded the supremacy in every true search for heart's content. The need is to value the tribal love of the natural and spontaneous in giving rise to patterns and designs to freely and passionately understand the marvels and mysterious coincidences of life. Beauty of the tribal way of life is thus actually in not predicting and planning the very course of it, but in boldly, bravely and squarely encountering the challenges and even the risks that life at its many crucial junctures has in store.

1.3.2.5 The Apatani folksong *Cira de araca* is a love declaration where the determined lover wants to marry the girl of his liking. The folksong *Ani Ani adu nunu cada si* similarly is a love call by a young man to one young girl whom he wants to have as his life's companion and promises her happiness and prosperity. The folksong *Tapang Putapa calu* is about the manifestation of beauty everywhere around – in the melodious notes of the birds like moina, Putap and Tapang; and the beauty of the stars twinkling in the sky.

The folksongs together thus are about youth, love, companionship for life in marriage, and pride in the beauty with which the community's surroundings are vibrant and resonant.

1.3.2.6 The Adi folksongs presented here are – *Ga raja pabane* (Duarah 1989:42-43) and *Gikay gikay gikay*(Duarah 1989:43) .The *Ga raja pabane* is a praise for Gandhi.It is about the people's expectation and appreciation about people friendly and good governance-based rule.It is also about the people's love of free spirit and boldness of Gandhi. The *Gikay gikay gikay* is about how day after day life goes on with sunset, darkness, night, dinner, sleep, dreams and the new dawn.

The two songs together present the Adi people as liking through Gandhi the spirit of boldness and freedom. The Adi expectation of a good rule is also something that stands out from their folk celebrations where Gandhi is remembered and their search for good governance is further more reiterated. The community's continued emphasis on a search for happiness and beauty in all walks of

life and across the length and breadth of the day is idealised with reference to the mother's love and care and people's longing for rest, sleep and dreams .

1.3.2.7 The Idu Mishmi community's *Inni lappaci-praciwe* (Duarah 1989:43) song is a wish-list shared in all earnestness to gain as blessed gifts from different gods things that would grant the people prosperity and well-being. The gods are requested to give wealth, seedlings and crops, mithuns, costly stones for necklaces etc. brought from all the places.

Invocation to bless the Idu people with plenty and prosperity as expressed in this song establishes the recognition by the community of the role and importance of wealth in the qualitative enrichment of life. The people's awareness of the life and joy in the larger world outside and their openness about importing all that is good and enriching elsewhere are important aspects of this song. The song in most ways emphasises the aspirations of the community to live quality life at par with the known neighbours. What is unique about this Idu song is that the people are particular about their important needs and unequivocal in their emphasis on wherefrom with the gods' blessings and help they could get those things to satisfy their conscious striving for a better life.

1.3.2.8 The Khampti song *Nam hing la kyat to* (Duarah 1989:44) is about the clear bright and beautiful shining silvery bed of Noa-Dihang river once again emerging sparkling clear following the muddy and dirty water of the flood time. The *Men en ,lingkhai tak net oi* (Duarah 1989:44) song is about the value and role of labour without which getting food as one likes is difficult. Its thrust is on work – work helps; work feeds. The suggestion therefore to young children is to mind this unique need in life for avoiding laziness and acquiring the capability to fend with confidence and dignity. Their *Myong long toong how ye ritan cha nitangoi* (Duarah 1989:44) song praises village life and scholars there in the villages and the country.

The Khampti emphasis seems to be on the truth about beauty that it cannot be permanently kept covered under any mud or dirt. Temporary influences of unfavourable circumstances in life need to be understood as actually not thoroughly capable of dispossessing life of all hopes and possibilities of progress, success and happiness. Life's charm needs to be patiently awaited to appear clearing the clouds of contingencies and adverse situations in due course. The song inspires a longing for living even in the times that for sometime look to be irredeemably oppressive. Further a routine esteem for labour in practical recognition of its role in sustaining life and a just pride boosting the self-worth as in appreciation of one's own village, one's country and the educated or wise people living there go

together to show the community's thrust on the truly important ideals with which progress and happiness may be sought.

1.4 A reading of the tribal folk heritage as lies sealed in the songs of wisdom and valuable experiences of the people of different communities who live in different geo-physical surroundings with limitations and challenges of many kinds and differing intensities as attempted here may well lead us to appreciate the fact that tribal folk in their natural settings have reflected hard on the need to overcome the odds imposed by largely unfavourable conditions and to move ahead with hope, confidence ,courage and carefulness to strike the right terms in life so that the inspiring vision of beauty and love would lead to grand accomplishments of survival. The distillation from the sample of the folksongs of Arunachal Pradesh convinces that survival in itself in its strongest bid is an outcome of the undying inspiration and conviction that life needs always in all conditions to be viewed as an eternal source of beauty and love. The reading offered here suggests that in stark contrast to the handicaps inherent in most difficult rural settings where the folk way of living still holds good, there is a highly enabling vision offered in the folksongs by almost all the communities studied here to let the people know their difficulties and use their strengths properly so that they could draw out the best that lies in the world around to make the best of their life.

Notes and References:

[**Acknowledgement:**All entries on Folksongs of Arunachal Pradesh have been taken from the Journal RESARUN(Vol.XV,No.1&2, Spring-Winter Issue,1989),published by the Directorate of Research, Government of Arunachal Pradesh,Itanagar.Whereas the material selection for treatment in this paper has been entirely as per the reading preferences of the present author, the guiding comments offered in English in the source by Dr.D.K.Duarah have been the basis on which the present author has built up further analysis and interpretation of the folksongs of the various Scheduled Tribes communities of Arunachal Pradesh. Grateful acknowledgement to the said Directorate is herewith made as a matter of propriety.]

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PART -II

Discourse of
Literary Tradition
and its
Socio- Historical Perspective

Sarala Mahabharata in Oriya and Historical Consciousness: A Reinterpretation

Kailash Chandra Dash

I

The Mahabharata of Sarala Das in Oriya language which was composed in the 15th-16th century A.D. was a lasting literary contribution in a phase of all India vernacularization¹. This voluminous text is regarded as the first written form of Oriya epic and thus serves as a paradigm for the blossoming of further epic literature in Orissa in the medieval phase². The author of the text styled himself as Sarala Das for his devotion to the goddess Sarala(a local female deity who combines Sakta and Vaishnava typology in herself) and thus he had this name after the compilation of the Mahabharata in Oriya³. This Mahabharata of Sarala Das is not the correct rendering of the Sanskrit Mahabharata of Vyasa. It is only a comprehensive digest of the socio-political-cultural set-up of India as well as of Orissa in the medieval phase in the garb of the characters of the Sanskrit epic. The author calls it as Mahabharata, yet he utilizes portions of other Puranas and Upa-Puranas. He combines them with regional traditional accounts known to him. The most important aspect of the study of this regional Mahabharata in Oriya is the nature and character of the content. As it concentrates on the early and medieval phase its importance has been felt by the historians and linguists who sometimes have been tempted to use it for historical study⁴ If one looks at the study of Michel Foucault in his *The Order of Things-An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* he or she must accept certain historical situation or milieu in the composition of any literary text and so the text of Sarala Das is no exception to his idea⁵. Historical consciousness exists in the Oriya Mahabharata, but this cannot be accepted in the modern sense of the term. In Orissa this has been a debate for the last sixty years from the colonial to the post-colonial phase⁶. Hence in this paper my emphasis is on this historical consciousness in the Sarala Mahabharata after a thorough study of the views of the literary critics and historians in Orissa.

2

Sarala Mahabharata was really brought to focus in the 17th-18th century A.D. by one Pitambara Das, the author of the Oriya Narasimha Purana and before that in the whole phase of the 16th-

17th century A.D.in Orissa increasing emphasis was on the Bhagavata of Jagannatha Das, Ramayana of Balaram Das, Harivamsha of Achyutananda Das and on the texts of Bhakti by the followers of Chaitanya. In the 19th century we find this name in the text of W.W.Hunter on Orissa who in 1872 stated that Sarala Das Kavi lived 300 years ago; translated Mahabharata into Oriya⁷. It was only in the 20th century A.D there was increasing study on the Oriya Mahabharata of Sarala Das in the well-known Oriya magazines like *Utkala Sahitya* , *Mukura* and *Jhankara*. Pandit Mrutyujaya Rath started a comprehensive study on Sarala Mahabharata in 1911 in *Mukura*(Oriya literary magazine) and then in 1915 Gopinath Nandasharma in *Utkala Sahitya*⁸. The two literary critics actually contributed to the study on the time and nature of the Oriya Mahabharata of Sarala Das and they accepted certain historical trends and even events of the early and medieval India which were concealed in the garb of the narrative of the characters and episodes of this text. Another great critic Nilakantha Das in 1948-1953 delved deep into the Mahabharata of Sarala Das and found in it historical consciousness of the early and medieval phase of India⁹. In the 1950s and 1960s in the literary magazines like *Jhankara* and *Dagara* there was intense debate on the nature and content of the Mahabharata of Sarala Das and the well known participants of this debate were Gopinath Mohanty(Winner of Jnanapith Award), Banshidhar Mohanty, Achyutananda Das and Krishnachandra Panigrahi¹⁰. The study was further intensified with John Boulton`s interest in it and by the critical evaluation by Satchidananda Mishra and Gaganendranath Dash and many others¹¹. It was Gaganendranath Dash who contested the view that Sarala Das intentionally used history in the compilation of his Mahabharata and he suggested that in order to understand the mind of Sarala Das in relation to his Mahabharata one must know the Cyclic Time which he was following and that one must not forget his Sakta Hindu mind¹². The last points deserve notice in this context for determining historical consciousness in the Oriya Mahabharata of Sarala Das.

The conception of Time was very significant for the authors of the epics in early and medieval age in India. Ancient and medieval poets and writers were conscious of Cyclic Time and Linear Time¹³. The notion of Cyclical Time is essentially cosmological and one of its functions was to provide an imagined time context to myth¹⁴. Linear Time is fundamental to a perceived historical rendering of the past that is dependent on human activity¹⁵. Like all the ancient thinkers and writers of the Puranas Sarala Das had followed to a considerable extent the concept of Cyclical Time in his Mahabharata. On the other hand he was also conscious of Linear Time in his work. He followed Cyclic Time as a Brahmanical model for the legitimation of his text by the Brahmanas as we find the development of events in the Yugas. He had also developed the Vamshanucharita narrative in his different Parvas and thus itihasa came to his vision. The historical consciousness that is implicit in Itihasa has a linear form and Sarala Das was aware of this conception. Different genealogical tables are plentifully available in his Mahabharata which declare his Time consciousness and this pattern was correctly followed by the author of Madalapanji in the 17th century A.D.¹⁶.In the different Parvas(sections) of his Mahabharata Sarala Das had also used historical characters of the history of India and they were not present in the original Sanskrit Mahabharata. It indicates that he was aware of certain ruling

families in Orissa and elsewhere. The way of presenting the narrative indicates to his historical consciousness particularly his appreciation of Linear Time.

An interesting aspect of his historical sense was the presentation of Shasana Patras(Grant of donations) which were actually granted by the royal political power to the upper sections of the society in early and medieval India for multifarious purposes¹⁷. In the *Adi Parva*(First Section) of Sarala Mahabharata there is a description of *Bauri Shasana*(A Dalit Establishment) which was sanctioned by the Brahmanic Power¹⁸. The poet in this context recollected the grant of copper plate record of the kings of Orissa of the early and medieval phase by stating that a Bauri Shasana was created for one Bauri(a dalit person) by Krishna Vasudeva and he was designated as Kalindi Vipravara(a Brahmin)¹⁹. For that purpose(for the legitimation of the grant) a copper plate in the presence of the gods was inscribed which contained the evidence of the Bauri Shasana²⁰ Besides this the description of events in his Mahabharata contains Time on the basis of astrological calculation which also suggests his keen awareness of history.

3

In writing his Mahabharata the poet has followed the main outline of the story of the Sanskrit Mahabharata, but has made numerous deviations and has added to it copiously the stories of his own creation and various other matters known to him²⁰. In the final form Sarala Dasa`s Mahabharata is a new creation analogous to Kalidasa`s Raghuvamsha which is distinctly an original work, even though it is based on the Ramayana²¹. K.C.Panigrahi, a great historian of Orissa, was very confident on the historical consciousness of the poet in his Mahabharata²². He found several historical and geographical references in the Sarala Mahabarata which were mostly absent in the Sanskrit original. Panigrahi appreciating the views of his predecessors like Mrutyunjaya Rath, Gopinath Nandasharma and Nilakantha Das made a thorough study of the Mahabharata of Sarala Das and suggested that the poet had consciously and intentionally introduced several historical characters and events of early and medieval India²³. He has thoroughly studied several references and contexts of the Oriya Mahabharata to justify that the poet was really a historian. The interpretation of Panigrahi on the history of Orissa and India in the Sarala Mahabharata has been contested by G.N.Dash in an insightful focus in Oriya²⁴. The interesting debate of G.N.Dash can be stated in several points;

1. Where did Sarala Das know the political, military history of India of his period and what were his new sources?
2. The sources on the early and medieval period of India before Sarala Das were difficult to access on the part of a common man as they included in Sanskrit, Palli and sometimes in Parsi languages. Some of the sources were recorded in the copper plate grants which were not available to the common man in those days. Hence how could he read them, decipher them and where from he could get them when such type of research was not available?
3. Some of the sources on early and medieval India used by Sarala Das in his Mahabharata are mainly based on the traditional accounts which were incomplete in their messages and were

obscure on the dynastic history. How could Sarala Das know the scientific historiography in the medieval phase which was dominated by the incomplete messages of the traditional accounts?

4. The way Panigrahi interpreted Sarala Mahabharata to reconstruct the history of India indicated that the poet was aware of the historiography of the modern age. But such interpretations were not possible in those days considering the nature of the historical texts of the time. Sarala Das claimed himself as an ordinary village peasant who was ignorant of Sanskrit and so to trace the modern historiography in his Mahabharata is an artificial study and so it cannot be based on the actual history.

Thus G.N.Dash while contesting the views of Panigrahi on the historical consciousness of Sarala Das stated that the poet had a medieval Hindu mind and attitude²⁵. How could such a person direct his attention to history and how could he be able to preserve the past in such a correct manner in the different episodes of his Mahabharata? The geographical information given by Sarala Das is sometimes not correct and also incomplete and it cannot be accepted by the modern scholars²⁶. It is really difficult to discover historical sense in a proper manner in Sarala Mahabharata due to his admiration for the traditional accounts which are constructed on a historical basis. In this respect also we cannot subscribe to Panigrahi's ideas on Sarala Mahabharata. Also several additions were made in his Mahabharata in the post-medieval phase by the different copyists of the palm leaves and so his original messages were not clearly preserved. On the basis of the similarities in names(historical names and characters) as well as on the structural similarity(similarity in the political and military events of history) Panigrahi presented the brilliant historical consciousness of Sarala Das; but G.N.Dash rejected this similarity theory²⁷. Thus with his limited geographical knowledge and his admiration for a tradition-bound history Sarala Das presented his Mahabharata. Although we accept this view of G.N.Dash we cannot accept his theory that Sarala Dash was a simple believer of Cyclic Time and was not a supporter of the Linear Time²⁸. Consciously or unconsciously several waves of historical characters and events could pass through his mind during the composition and the poet might have followed the idioms of his age about which we are all ignorant.

While we deny direct and reliable historical references on the political history of early and medieval India in Sarala Mahabharata we can have abundant sources there on the socio-cultural trends of early medieval India.. Sarala Das in the 15th century A.D. presented the dichotomy of Sudra-Dvija and the resurgence of the Dalits in Orissa in several sections and that constitutes a significant aspect of the social history of medieval Orissa²⁹. The undue supremacy of the Brahmanas in the social structure, sectarian rivalry and the Hinduization of the tribal centres in Orissa have been cogently presented in his Mahabharata which can be accepted as an element of historical consciousness. In fact he had appropriated several traditional accounts of the Puranas in his Mahabharata to present messages on social harmony and even casteless society in Orissa. His study of the celebrated sacred centres in medieval Orissa-Yajpur-Viraja, Mahavinayaka, Kapilas, Konarka Arka Kshetra, Ekamraka-Bhubaneswar and above all Jagannatha-Purushottama Kshetra deserve considerable attention from the side of the historians,

sociologists and anthropologists and in his approach to these sacred centres he showed newness by pointing to the tribal root of the centres which were suppressed in the Puranic accounts of his period. We can thus detect his awareness of Linear Time in this context and they are very authentic for the historians of Orissa and India.

4

The Oriya Mahabharata of Sarala Das represents the beginning of a spectacular phase of vernacularization in Orissa. As we have seen in the work of Sheldon Pollock from around 1000 A.D. in India there began a phase of vernacularization by which local speech forms were newly dignified as literary languages and began to challenge Sanskrit for the work of both poetry and polity and in the end replaced it³⁰. Medieval Orissa around 14th century A.D. saw this transformation and Sarala Das was a representative of this phase. He was a contemporary of the Suryavamsi Gajapati king Kapilendra Deva(A.D.1435-1468) who issued most of his orders in the temples of Orissa-Lingaraja and Jagannatha in Oriya language. It indicates that Sarala Das wanted to popularize Oriya language by compiling Mahabharata and Ramayana in Oriya and in doing so he was well aware of the inner demand of his age which was increasing vernacularization. The vernacularization process began with Sarala Das in Orissa in the 15th century A.D. and found fuller expression in the advancing centuries as we find remarkable growth of Oriya literature in this phase which was absent in the pre-Sarala Das period in Orissa.

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25. *Ibid.*
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27. *Ibid.*
28. In the different sections of the Mahabharata of Sarala Das there is a clear indication of Linear Time because he was conscious of the Vansanucharita of the kings(Royal pedigrees). Several episodes if properly interpreted can indicate that the poet had some access into regional political and socio-cultural issues.
29. The section entitled Tripurasura Badha(Killing of the demon Tripura) in *Virata Parva* of his *Mahabharata* contains the idea of dalit resurgence as well as Sudra-Brahma dichotomy in medieval Orissa. This section does not follow the account which was also incorporated in Siva Mahapurana and other Sanskrit traditional accounts. It indicates that the poet appropriated this tradition for his conception of casteless society in medieval Orissa. We can also see several other accounts in his Mahabharata for a study of dalit resurgence in Orissa. See *Virata parva*, Sarala Mahabharata, Cultural Affairs, Bhubaneswar, p.78-96; *Vana Parva*, p.142; *Adi Parva, Second Part*, p.690-705 for social protest of the time of Sarala Das.
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Revisiting the ‘unbroken cultural development’ through the socio-cultural history of pre-colonial Odisha

Dr. Sharmila Chhotaray,

An analysis of Odisha’s changing social structure that problematizes the status of culture with reference to historical constructions of dominance, power and subjugation, is the thrust of this paper. The ‘unbroken cultural development’ of Odisha engages historians for an endogenous explanation. Lord Jagannatha, the presiding deity of Odisha and the nucleus of the regional synthesis⁴⁵, has received wide academic attention. This tradition shapes Odia cultural, economic and political identities significantly. By doing so, it reinforces the social order by either challenging to transform or reproducing it to maintain the status quo. The regional identity formation ‘into the flexibility and the dynamic that modifies continuously its substance and gives it a new meaning in order to make it suitable to the prevailing conditions and need of time’ shall be highlighted in this paper.

Pralay Kanungo (2003) appropriately mentions that the Odia character is not monolithic. It has been shaped by a host of factors: topography and furies of nature, emergence and decline of different religious sects and cults, long absence of an encompassing dynastic rule, fragmentation and annexation of its territory, strong influence of neo-Vaisnavism under Chaitanya, tyrannies of Hindu Rajas, Muslims, Marathas, British colonial intervention, Bengali hegemony, struggle for an Odia identity, the national freedom movement, and the post-colonial experience. Thus, for a better understanding of Odia people and society, I would examine the above-mentioned factors in whose presence Jatra originated and evolved.

A brief attention to the Hindu-Moghul-Maratha-British-Bengali rule that forms the social and cultural history of Odisha would provide a ground to discuss the contemporary social relations of the region. Reiteration of the historical development of Odia identity movements through language, education, service, landholdings, tribal uprisings, drama, art and craft, architecture and religion would therefore provide the relevance of past in the present.

⁴⁵ Due to geographical constraints (high adivasi population concentration) the uninterrupted tribal-Hindu continuum or in other words the existence of former tribals (*daitas*) and Vedic Brahmins amongst its priests are by no means an antitheses, but a splendid regional synthesis of the local and the all-Indian tradition Kuke,et.al.1986

Society in Pre-colonial and Colonial Odisha

The atypical history of Odisha renders the citizens to be nostalgic for a golden past. They romanticize Odisha's past as a land of prosperity and plenty, "morally awakened and politically powerful". A pride in the mythical past is obvious amongst Odia cultural historians and the invocation to the preponderance of glorious past in any political speech or a literary gathering have been a cliché in Odisha.

Pralay Kanungo (2003:3293-94) describes further that Hinduism had never been a monolithic discourse; rather it represented confluence of diverse cults reflecting a marvelous mosaic. 'Unlike some other parts of India, tribal customs and traditions played a significant role in shaping political structures and cultural practices right up to the 15th century. When Brahminical influences triumphed over competing traditions and caste differentiation began to inhibit social mobility and erode what had survived of the ancient republican tradition'⁴⁶. The medieval period from 10th to 18th century witnessed the result of different political and administrative units, a feeling of unity within the Odia speaking tract and a certain degree of social mobility that provided space for ordinary peasants to make contributions to popular literature and poetry.

The Resistance to Brahminic Hegemony: Vaishnavism and Popular Hinduism

'The history of Orissa is identified with history of Jagannatha' (Mukherji 1940). The dominant Jagannatha cult emerged, a heterogenous religious movement-Buddhism, Saivism, Tantrism, Shaktism- emerged as a part of medieval Vaishnavism in the first half of medieval Odisha. The Soma and Ganga dynasties built the gigantic Jagannatha temple (started in the year 1078 and completed in 1211) in Puri for supremacy of power. The kings championed Vaishnavism as Jaganntha was treated as the incarnation of Lord Vishnu. The religious syncretism resulted in tribal-Brahmin God that was appropriated by the orthodox and authoritarian *Pundits* and their representative *Thakura raja* (God-King). However, neo-Vaishnavism professed by Sri Chaitanya's Bhakti movement in early 16th century denounced and reformed the earlier Vaishnavism. Without compromising for a social reform movement, the twenty-four years of legacy of Chaitanya disseminated the divine ecstasy of Krishna's incarnation. The movement questioned the orthodox and repressive Brahminical understanding of Hinduism and advocated for the religious aspirations of the lower castes and women in society.

⁴⁶ www.members.tripod.com/~india_resource/sahistory.html

The resistance to Sanskrit, the literature of the elite, started up with compositions of mass literature in native language-Odia. It was the first move for the equal access of commons to the lord and *Vedas*. Vaishnavites from lower class and caste, who translated the Sanskrit *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, *Bhagavata* and *Harivamsa* in colloquial Odia (elaborate description on such protest literature is given in the next chapter) were called Shudramunis⁴⁷. These poet-reformers were influenced by Buddhism, Jainism and Vaishnavism 'with a predilection for the vernaculars, for syncretism with alien beliefs, and for social reforms' (Boulton 1979:234). The 'left'/non-elite/Vaishnavites from lower caste defied the orthodox Brahmins of Jagannath temple, who stigmatized the native language and codified the caste system. Mallik (2004) suggests that the literatures⁴⁸ produced were an intellectual challenge against the orthodoxy and literary hegemony of the established order. Social movements at a mass level had a greater impact to establish popular Hinduism in Odisha. However, by achieving access to Hindu scriptures, the newly constructed popular Hinduism sustained the institutional inequalities, which legitimized unequal relationships publicly. The decline of Odia civilization began with the Surya kings who began to usurp undue privileges, growing Brahminic dominance in temple and festival affairs, crystallization of social stratification and declining social mobility as a result of the new caste groups in royal administration-Patnaiks, Mahapatras, Nayakas etc. Moreover, the deteriorating maritime economy due to silting up of Odissa's major rivers, followed by political invasions by Afghans (1567), Mughals (1611), Marathas (1751) and finally British in 1803, forced Odias to face abject poverty.

It is during the rule of East India Company that the state under one rule was divided into three major parts. The Western districts were under central presidency, the southern districts were under Madras presidency and the coastal areas of Odisha division were under Bengal presidency until 1912 when it was transferred to the province of Bihar-Odisha. Although the East India Company did not interfere in religious activities in order to gain popular support, the literary, economic and political conditions of Odias were not given sufficient attention. The permanent land settlement was the only way to control the native zamindars through the stringent laws of tax settlement of Bengal. Patnaik (1973) notes that between 1806 and 1816, 1011 estates out of 2340 were auctioned to rich Bengalis. Protest against the East India Company rose up in 1818, called Paik Bidroha, because of the land settlement and the abolition of royal authority/power of the Puri King. Under the inspiring leadership of Baxi Jagabandhu Vidyadhara, the hereditary Commander-in-Chief of Raja of Khurda, the paikas (landed militia) and kings of princely Odisha fought the battle. 'For six months there was practically no British Government, at least in South Odisha. The 'rebellion was in the end ruthlessly

⁴⁷ Educated gentries from lower castes like Sarala Dasa, Balaram Dasa, Jagannatha Dasa, and Achyutananda Dasa.

⁴⁸ The Odia literature in the medieval period glorified Jagannatha in *Janana* and *Bhajana* (devotional songs), and *Chaupati* (narrative poems).

quelled' (Mansingh1962:157). The advent of a new zamindari class mostly of the Bengalis⁴⁹ was the consequence of the new tenancy law 'Sunset Law'. Banerjee (1930 cited in Mansingh. *ibid*) mentions that "Having control of judicial and executive work, the Bengalis found Odisha an easy means to get rich quick...Hundreds of old Oriya noblemen were ruined and their ancient heritage passed into the hands of Bengali zamindars"⁵⁰. All administrative posts not directly handled by the British were assigned to Bengalis 'who were perceived to be more loyal to the British rule'⁵¹.

Religious nationalism was revived in the early 19th century with the arrival of missionaries in 1822 and the establishment of Cuttack Mission Press in 1837 and the earliest British Historiography on Odisha. Behera (2002:205-12) in his analysis of historiographical writings on Jagannatha shows as to how the Lord was construed, documents the anti-Jagannatha perspectives. Many British scholar-administrators (for example, historians like Sterling (1846) and Hunter (1956)) perceived Him negatively on the basis of superstition and defamed the Lord. By interpreting Him as an irrational, yet exclusive Odia phenomenon the West sets Him off as the opposed, inimical 'other'.

Odisha's deteriorating economy was aggravated during the Great Famine of 1866. Bidyut Mohanty (1993) writes that starvation, deprivation, death and exploitation dealt by the middle class to the lower class did not only affect their lives and economy, but it also contributed to their religious status⁵². Immediately shaken by this attitude of Hindu middle class Odias, the poor embraced Christianity as the missionaries mushroomed during this time. The post-famine period saw an emerging English educated Odia middle class. The shared consciousness among them recognized the evils of petty zamindars, landlords and the Sunset Law. The printing press and magazines gave a new fixity of language and created a 'language-of-power' from the administrative vernacular (Bengali) for the cultural nationalists. The origin of national consciousness in the nineteenth century, the growth of education, the urge to preserve the Odia language from annihilation, the publication of numerous periodicals and newspapers, establishment of Odia press, the rapidly growing consciousness of the youth about the backwardness of their region, class and caste dominance, the development of communication, and the interest shown by the authorities to ameliorate the prevailing

⁴⁹Kanungo class of Bengal controlled the collection of taxes from princely states. To have direct control and later they settled and became the new zamindar class (Samantray1964:8).

⁵⁰ R. D. Banerjee, 1930-1931, *History of Orissa*, Vol II, pp.279-81Cited in Mansingh (1962:157)

⁵¹ www.members.tripod.com/~india_resource/sahistory.html

⁵² By being 'outcaste (a new caste called *Chhatara khia*) by Hindu society for having eaten at the relief centers'. The *Chhatara khias* were again 'purified' by some social reformers in order to be readmitted to their respective castes.

conditions-- these were the elements that led to the construction of Odia identity. 'Oriyas started aspiring for their territorial unification on the basis of their cultural and linguistic homogeneity' (Mohanty 2005:9).

Odia Nationalism and Language Resistance Movement: Identity Retrieved

Mahapatra (1996), Dash (1986) and Behera (2002) aptly argue that Odias had a rudimentary notion of their identity during the pre-colonial period, which got articulated when it impinged on self-definition during the colonial rule. Calcutta was the centre of trade, administration and education whereas Odias remained socially excluded with 'a feeling of oneness ...and the aspiration to remain free and united under its Rajas of Khurda'. Language politics was crucial to the affirmation of the Odia identity during the nineteenth century. It remained passive for nearly 43 years after the failure of the rebellion due to the consolidation of British rule and English education. Popular history of Odisha's independence from that of Bihar and West Bengal emphasizes the linguistic identity. Several critics have suggested that the Odia identity is largely a contentious issue. While outlining the social and cultural history of Odisha, academicians from all disciplines (Pati; 1993&2001, Nivedita Mohanty; 2005, Sachidananda Mohanty: 1999&2005, Manoranjan Mohanty; 1976, 1986 & 1993, Mahapatra; 1996, et. al) have written extensively on many factors that contributed to the rising sense of unity and cultural, social and economic identity. 'Essentialistic invocation of cultural identity is central to nationalistic discourses all around the world,' Mahapatra argues. So is the case of Odia identity formation during the colonial period. As 'a minor outpost of the colonial empire - a cultural wasteland', Odia nationalists along with the national freedom struggle commenced the agitation. The main cause of the growth of regional consciousness in Odisha was the result of uneven development in the late nineteenth century. Mahapatra underlines limitations of the internal colonialism to understand the generation of consciousness of backwardness among the Odias. The Odia middle class, whose growth was slow in comparison to that of Bengalis, focused on the causes of their backwardness and discrimination of Odias in education and employment.

The Bengali domination and the Great Famine of 1866 gave way to Odia nationalism from 1870s, through the linguistic identity movement. Controversial remarks of Rajendralal Mitra that 'Odia is a dialect of Bengali' and of Kanti Chandra Bhattacharya, a Bengali Inspector of Schools who said, "*Oriya is not a separate language*" (Boulton 1979:242) stirred the Odia educated middleclass nationalists. Significantly,

these socio-economic factors led to the 'save Odia movement'⁵³. Bengali, Telugu and Hindustani (Hindi) administrators allied with the British government and 'enjoyed an ascendancy over the Oriya speakers' (ibid.242). Apart from some Odia *Karanas*, the natives developed apathy for English education that kept the Odia language only as a spoken language. During the uncoordinated phase of Odia nationalist movement the primary concern was the independence of Odisha from non-Odia domination, (not with the Independence of India from British rule) through launching of journals, periodicals, presses and cultivation of literature. Boulton (1979:247-8) suggests that 'the chief opposition to the movement probably (came) from the middle class in contiguous regions, Bengal, Bihar, Central Provinces and Madras' and the financial support was drawn from Odia kings in Gadajit Mahal (princely states), zamindars and landed gentry.

The first Cuttack Printing Company was established in 1865 by domiciled Bengali called Gouri Shankar Ray; a Karana, educated in Calcutta, translated and printed some Odia literature and published the weekly *Utkala Deepika* through its coverage of the issues and problems of Odia society (famine news) and nationalistic ideas liberalized the idea of enlightenment among Odias. This inspired the three early nationalists and the pioneers of modern Odia prose literature--Phakir Mohan Senapati, Radhanath Ray of Balasore and Madhusudan Rao of Puri. These major nationalists instituted the period of Renaissance of Odia national life through the emergence and development of Odia language and literature, which 'underwent a transformation under the impact of Western education'. For instance, Biswamoy Pati (2001:29) draws from *Utkal Deepika* that the 'conclusions regarding the Sanskrit origins of Sadhu bhasa (high, Sankritised Odia) and its 'purity', led to the marginalization of chalet (popular, spoken) Oriya'. It is only the first modern Odia literature of Fakir Mohan Senapati who 'attempted to shift to the 'impure' spoken Odia of the coastal region--*chalit bhasa*.

Odisha was one of the first states to achieve its separate identity in 1936 as an independent state purely on linguistic basis. Around the late 19th century, the decline of native language as a mark of loss of identity emerged among the newly growing Odia middle class. The movement got its momentum when Odias controlled the schools. This was 'a victory for Orientalism, with its tenet of vernacular education' (Mohanty 2002:53). The demand for the unification of Odia speaking tract under one administration took the shape of an agitation.

In a highly complex and contradictory process, the language of the common people was recast and refashioned to constitute a new form, which bore little resemblance to the original spoken Odia of the common people (low caste/class people) in coastal region'(Pati 2001:31). Thus, having the element of an anti-colonial

⁵³ A number of champions of Oriya language such as Radhanatha Ray, Fakir Mohan Senapati and Madhusudan Das led this movement. They pioneered the modern literature through poems and stories confronting the political and cultural instabilities.

discourse, Senapati, being the president of *Utkal Sammilani* (Union) in 1917, called for a united Odisha in demonstrating independent identity of the Odias. Paradoxically, although his life and his novel have contained, with popular protests, common people's life, Pati points out that 'the vision of 'Oriya' was clearly confined to the coastal, upper-caste/class urban and feudal sections'. Similarly, the first Odia encyclopedia-*Bibidha Ratna Sangraha* written by Lala Nagendra Nath Ray appeared in order to assert and consolidate Odia identity and to subvert the colonial authority (Jatin Nayak)⁵⁴. Odia, a language spoken by 17 million people was 'saved from a political death'.

The 'development of underdevelopment' or the uneven development of Odisha state is recently getting attention. Many social scientists maintain that Odia social structure remained unchanged. The emphasis is on economic backwardness that relates underdevelopment of politics, gender, health, regional disparities, education and art. Marginalization of certain classes, castes and regional groups remains unchanged in a slowly changing society. The emerging Odia intellectuals and revolutionaries appealed and fought for Odia nationalism for an independent linguistic cultural identity and the demand for a province separate from Bihar and Bengal. It is crucial to mention here the passivity among the Odia nationalists to be part of Indian National Congress during the freedom movement primarily because the regional issues did not 'get aligned with the broader anti-colonial movement spearheaded by the Indian National Congress'. The formation of Odisha occurred in 1936 as a separate province. Twenty-four feudatory states were merged with Odisha only in 1948. Later the local struggles like Kissan Sangha and Prajamandal Andolana in 1940s against the class and caste oppressions by some zamindars and kings were more meaningful to the people than the anti-imperial movement. Independence for them was the consolidation of lands of small peasants. However, the peasants remained powerless as the ruling class occupied a large share of the agricultural land. Although the political division between princely states and coastal region got reduced after the elimination of constitutional guarantees for privy purses and royal privileges, the division can be felt further in the new political situation. After the merger of all the princely states in 1948 the system of (traditional) authority through reciprocal obligation continued to operate after Independence. Some kings and their children continued to be in politics and some equally powerful kings like the Raja of Mayurbhanj and Dasapalla generally stayed away from public life and went into business. The developed communication network and cultural level put the eastern people in a much more advantageous stage. People who happened to be the former rulers champion the regional sentiments. Thanks to the agriculture sector and implementation of poor rural industrialization schemes by the ruling party, the land situation continued to be basically stagnant in terms of social relations and productivity until the end of sixties.

⁵⁴ Jatindra Kumar Nayak explains the encyclopedia as an initiative for identity-building and the celebration of the emergence of modernity from the world of feudalism www.encyclopedia.ch

Census reports do not seem to bring in phenomenal changes in numbers since 1947. Manoranjan Mohanty's (1990) extensive study, drawing from important statistics, states that the persistence of poverty, frequency of natural calamities, increasing unemployment have coexisted with a firmly saddled middle class drawn from the upper castes. The isolated interventions of this class, self-centered industrialization policies, inefficiency in implementing the rural developmental schemes, insufficient attention to local entrepreneurship, lead to the pervasive existence of traditional pre-capitalist agriculture. Despite Odisha ranking well below national averages in terms of social welfare indicators, the issue is not necessarily one of lack of resources, but poorly managed systems of delivery, poorly informed decision making, weak policies and unaccountable delivery mechanisms. Other contributing factors include: continued dominance of traditional elite, an extremely heterogeneous population, limited decentralisation and low levels of political awareness among poor people (Das 2006). The sustained impassiveness to mass movements after independence is not only creating an impasse for development, but also is reinventing its feudal socio-political domination. The Odia identity is represented by the cultural hegemony- mythic past compounded with cultural, caste and gender hierarchies 'within the popular psyche of the nation'.

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Dimensions of Jain Folklore

S.P.Padmaprasad

Background History

Studies in Jaina folklore in India is a recent one. Though in states like West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh it started as far back as 1940s, it was only an incidental one, not specific. That means, materials (folk songs, stories etc) related to Jains were collected and discussed while dealing with such materials of all communities in a region. Even such studies had not taken place in South India. That started around 1970s. That too, recognizable part of the study has taken place in Kannada - the state language of Karnataka. In other South Indian languages, such study has not yet begun on a recognizable scale.

It is the fortune of the author of this paper to pioneer the serious study of Jain folklore in Karnataka in 1970. His friend Dr. M.A. Jayachandra started such a study from another angle about at the same time. Later, handful of other enthusiasts jumped to the field and contributed something by collecting material through field work. But none of them stayed as researchers.

Jaina Population in Karnataka

According to census report of 2001, Jaina population in Karnataka is little more than four lacs. But this includes Swethambar Jains also, who have nothing to do with the Kannada folk literature. Native Jains belong to Digambar sect and speak Kannada as their mother tongue. However, people in border areas speak both the languages like Kannada – Telugu or Kannada and Marathi.

Jaina Folklore

The folk songs, folk stories, riddles, proverbs, rituals, religious performance like ārādhanas etc., which bear an exclusive Jaina touch-have to be recognized as parts of Jain folklore. Even though detailed studies about every one of these aspects have not been undertaken so far, it is done about literary and religious aspects.

Dimensions of Jaina folklore are mainly the following:

1. Literary dimension
2. Social dimension
3. Religious dimension

Each one of these has different subdivisions.

Within the limitations of this paper, we can discuss each dimension to some extent, in the following paragraphs.

I. Literary dimension

Folk literature prevailing among Kannada speaking Jains is quite a voluminous one. Author of this paper, for the first time, collected varieties of folk songs and legends between 1972-77 and on studying it in detail, prepared a thesis in Kannada and got the doctoral degree in 1981. The book, later recognized as master piece on Jain folk literature, presents different types of folk songs sung by Jaina folk, living in different parts of the state.

1. Majority of Jain folk songs contain religious motifs like names of gods and goddess, place of pilgrimage etc.
2. Some examples for such motifs are translated below (Translator – Dr. Padmaprasad)

1. A poem tells about the tradition followed by Jains not to take food from sunset to sunrise.

Till morning rays reach the temple doors

Jains won't take curds| the little

brother also observes the vows||

3. This poem describes what to offer to whom –

Take blossomed Jasmine flowers to Arihanta

peacock brush for guruji | moist

peas to the goddess of Humcha ||

It is customary in all Indian religions that flowers are offered to god. The same tradition is followed by Jains also. But the second line is specific for Jains alone. Only Jain saints hold and use a cluster of peacock feathers bundled into a dust-sweeping brush used to brush the dust while sitting. That Peacock brush is softest and that sweeps out all germs with the dust and thus the violence caused by our movements is much reduced. Only gift the devotees can offer to a Jain saint is-such peacock brush!

Similarly – ‘goddess of Humcha’ is – Padmāvathi Yakshi. Humcha (Hombuja) is a small town in Shimoga district. Padmāvathi is believed to have stayed here and blessing the devotees.

4. A folk song called ‘Dīkshe hādu’ (song of renunciation) is prevailing among Jains. It is about a young man announcing his renouncing the world affairs and going to take dīksa, saint hood. His parents try in so many ways to dissuade him from that path. They tell him that it is difficult to follow the rules of saint hood, tell him that he can marry any spinster of his choice and live happily. But the youth negates every such offer and firmly leaves the house and takes the saint hood. This song is very heart touching.

5. Beautiful similes are found in Jaina folk songs. Some eggs –

1. “My sister is a beautiful doll. She casts shadow to the moon”.

2. “The parrots of our village (i.e., maidens) stir the water in the pond, at dawn”

3. “Who is leaning against the festival chariot at Humcha ? Moonly daughter of mine | standing there sends shadows to moon||”

6. Some other beautiful expressions please our heart. Egs-

I Planted jasmine in mind, watered heartily

Nurtured it with all love and labour | plucking flowers.

I sent it to the tower of Lord ||

(- here, jasmine represents pure thoughts. Last line means that the speaker submitted his whole life at the feet of Jina.)

2. The fragrant Jasmine in front of temple door|

Dear parrot, shed not them down | the garland of buds

is needed for Padmavva in the temple ||

(Padmavva – means mother goddess, Padmāvathi yakshi)

7. ‘Tripadi’ or three-lined poem – is the popular metre in Kannada folk songs, though some other metres are also there. Majority of Jaina folk poems are also composed in that metre. Examples cited above illustrate this point.

II Social dimension

Folk songs and stories realistically report the social relations and interactions taking place in Society. Jaina folklore is no exception. Here we find the relationships within Jain community, and also the relationships among different communities in a region. Some illustrations could be given:

1. A folk song tells that when the chariot with the idol of goddess of Humcha (Padmāvathi) was stopped by quarrelling groups. Then one leader convinces both groups and makes the stopped chariot move –

Why the chariot of goddess of Humcha is stopped?

Quarrel has flared up among farmers| My brother

The king has made the stopped chariot move

2. In songs related to Shravanabelagola – The leader asks the messenger servant to call all those who wish to see the place, to join the pilgrimage caravan –

‘O ! you the messenger with pearled ring

who beat the drum on the bank of Gutti river | tell those

who wish to see Belagola, to come with us ||’

In the same song, we get further details of pilgrims coming to this organiser host, requesting him to accommodate them, advice to other participants, gives precautions – etc. All this tells us the social relation and cordiality that existed among people in a village.

3. Another song describes the context of opening of a basadi at Ainapur in Belagaum district. That song proceeds in a spirited tone and calls people in different villages to come on bullock carts to bring the idol of Lord Neminatha, to install in the new temple. That song describes the attitude of Jains to Join hands for a public cause.

Many other such instances are available in Jaina folk literature which describe the social relation that existed in Karnataka villages.

Jaina folk stories are mainly legends. They are related to Carving of Gommata statues at Shravanabelagola, Karkala, Venur and to some other historical persons and places. Here we see the nature of relationship that existed among different communities.

III Religious dimension

This is the main domain that is covered by Jaina folk literature. Jaina folk songs powerfully express the beliefs, traditions, devotions, rituals etc., performed by them as part of their religious life.

In Jaina folk songs following specific motifs are found-

- i. Mention of Jain pilgrimage places like Shravanabelagola, Hombuja, Stavanidhi, Sommeda Shikhariji – etc.,
- ii. Jain temple in certain small villages are mentioned. Those shrines (Basadis) are still existing and daily worships are going on.
- iii. Specific religious and spiritual vows (vrthas) like – Anantha Nompī, are mentioned in certain folk songs.
- iv. Special pooja ceremonies like Mahamasthakabhisheka to Lord Gommata are described.
- v. Yakshi Padmāvathi, Jwālāmālīni, Kūshmāndīni are prayed in many folk songs. Many songs describing the generosity and kindness of Padmāvathi – are available.
- vi. Many thirthankaras like – Mahāvīra, Pārshwa, Neminātha are prayed to in these folk songs.
- vii. Songs related to dīksha (leaving the worldly links to practice spirituality) ceremony and the dilemma preceding that, are available.

Eighty percents of Jaina folk literature exhibits this dimension. Some examples can be cited here:

1. Stavanidhi in Belagaum district is a pilgrimage place for Jains. Brahma Yaksha's temple is there. People visit that temple often. This poem expresses the wish of a shrāvaka to return majestically after visiting the temple festival:

Sitting on horse back, son in front

Wearing the sacred silken Dhoti | I should return

After visiting Stavanidhi festival||

2. Another song describes how to pray and what to pray with Jina –

with the black-eyed coconut, wheat in the lap

go and bow to Jina ! O, sister

pray fortune for parent house ||

3. Cutting the child's hair for the first time is a ceremony among native Indians. Jains also follow that custom. They prefer to do that function in the temple of their family god/goddess. In one such poem, a devotee requests the Brahma yaksha to open his doors so that he can perform that ceremony before him:

Holding the pet child I'm standing long

open the door O Bharamappa | before thee

I get my child's hair cut ||

Thus – Jaina folk literature in Kannada has different dimensions. All these together establish one point in unequivocal terms – rural, illiterate Jaina folks are producing such beautiful oral literature since centuries, that is equal in grandeur to that of others and unique in content.

Sources: 1 'Jaina Janapada Sahitya-Sampadane mattu adhyayana' -Ph.D thesis in Kannada by Dr.S.P.Padmaprasad,1987,2009

2 Facets of folklore of Karnataka-H.L.Nagegowda, Pub-Karnataka Janapada trust Bangalore-2001

PART -III

Culture and Identity

From Woman to Goddess *Pendra Gadhien*: A Contested Discourse of Gender in Tribal Religious Cult

Priyadarshini Mishra

Abstract

Goddess *pendragrhien*, also known as Pendrani is worshipped by the tribal people of Western Orissa and the bordering districts of Chhattisgarh. It has a history of last 400 years. A myth of origin of Goddess Pendrani; followed by a complex ritual, is found in these areas.

The focal theme of the myth was about a Gond bride Pendrani; whose husband (bride service) was killed by her seven brothers in order to get good harvest by offering human sacrifice to Earth Mother Goddess. *Pendrani*, searched for her husband and finally found that her own brothers had sacrificed her bride service- husband. While wondering in the forest a tiger ate her and after that her spirit became a Goddess. Over a period of last 400 years she has transformed from a revengeful goddess into a blissful goddess. She is now worshipped as the Goddess of wealth in Western Orissa and eastern Chhattisgarh.

The purpose of the article is to explain how an ordinary woman became a Goddess and contested against the male predominance. Her creation myth became so popular that she became a popular Goddess and thus a new cult emerged as Pendrani Goddess cult. Though originated as a tribal Goddess she became the Goddess of both tribal and non tribal communities in the socio historical process of the region. The cult represented with the religious faith and belief explores that now Pendrani is one of the most popular and prestigious Goddess. A huge temple is constructed in Umerkote town, in addition to installation of her cult in thousands of villages in tribal areas.

An attempt has been made in this paper to examine the socio–historical processes of the indigenous communities and the dynamics of transformation of a woman to goddess in the collective memory of the communities. The ritual performance of the celebration and adoption of the Goddess in a house or in a village is a complex ritual process that captures the socio–psychological phenomena. Male shamans use to play the role of the Goddess and the divinization of Pendrani Goddess is established.

The inference of the Pendrani cult is a contestation of male predominance over the women and the whole ritual system adopted in the cult, celebrated by the males playing the role of female goddess signifies the males subjugation to the woman Goddess, thereby compensating the injustice inflicted on Goddess Pendrani when she was an ordinary woman; before her deification.

Introduction

Maa *Pendrani*, otherwise known as goddess *Pendragadien* in region of, adjoining south western Orissa is a cult found most popular during last 50 years. The Goddess has emerged from the village of *Pendravan* in Bastar district of Chhattisgarh. She is worshiped as a Goddess of wealth among the tribal people and also by the non Brahmin occupation caste groups of the locality. Gradually; crossing the political boundaries of Orissa and Chhattisgarh this cult has created a culture area.

History

According to the present Gond priest Sri Dambrudhar Netam, Goddess Pendrani had taken her birth more than 400 years ago. The origin myth related to Goddess Pendrani is found in Bastar region. The same myth has been disseminated to other localities.

Myth

There were seven Gond brothers in a village called Pendarawan in Bastar. Their only sister was *Mitki*. She fell in love with Mangtu. She was the only sister so they had adopted Mangtu as Gharjia (bride service) for their only sister. *Mangtu* lived with his wife's brothers and helped them in cultivation of land.

One day the seven brothers apprehended that their sister's husband might demand his share of cultivable land from them. So they decided to kill him. They sacrificed *Mangtu* and buried his dead body in the field. Simultaneously they thought they appeased the Earth Goddess to get ample harvest. Then they came back home.

Mitki , their sister found that her husband had not returned with her brothers from the field. She enquired from his brothers about him, but they pretended that they knew nothing about him.

Mitki, out of anxiety started searching for her husband in the forest. She had taken a dagger and a bamboo basket while coming from home. She searched all over the forest but could not find her husband. Finally she sat under a Pendra tree and started lamenting on him. She had left her hair untied; since she was in her monthly cycle. Meanwhile a tiger appeared from the forest and sprang at

Mitki and ended her life. Since she had been a disgruntled spirit; she took shelter in the *pendra* tree. The spirit became violent and started eating the passers by on the way close to that tree. Like wise she ate up many people. She ate a *Kalaren* (liquor selling women), a *Saaren*, a *Doli mai*, and a called *Nimgaman* and a shepherd called *Jhitku*.

All these victims also became spirits and formed a consortium of gods and goddesses subordinate to the spirit of Mitki; later popularly known as Pendragadien.

When pendragadien became violent in that locality, the Gond priest understood that this was the wrath of the discontented spirit of Mitki. So, out of fear and devotion the community started worshipping her along with her associate gods and goddesses. The priest suggested the family to worship Mitki – the Sati and get rid of her anger.

Since the Goddesses took shelter in the Pendra tree she was known as Pendra gadien. The deceased husband Mangtu also became a *Duma*. Rest of the Duma spirits were Kotgadien, Doli mai, Lakren, Kalaren, Saaren and the male gods were Nlgaman and Jhitku. All these gods and goddesses were worshipped after their institutionalization in her village- Pendrawan.

From a tribal woman to Goddess

The process of deification of human being after their death is a common religious belief. Not everybody who dies can be a deity. Tribal religious systems have four kinds of Gods and Goddesses. They are-1. Supreme God/ Goddess, 2. First progenitor, 3. Tutelary deity, 4. Evil spirit.(Das: 1975)

The spirit may be benevolent or malevolent. It depends on the kind of death s/he had witnessed. Nobody is intentionally evil or bad, but it is the treatment by which a person faces death turns him/her into a good or a bad spirit. This is again validated by the priests based on their experience and convention. The unnatural death, unwanted death, and accidental deaths of a person is resulted with a spirit and sometimes they become ghosts. It depends on the activities of the spirit perceived and acceptance of the community.

Divinization of spirit is a major phenomenon in the tribal religious practices. Whether the spirit is a supreme God or a tutelary deity or an evil spirit- that does not matter, rather the purpose and function of such Gods and goddesses in the context of the community determine the nature of worship. In the calendar year tribal people use to observe many fairs and festivals; and rites and rituals. Many fairs and festivals are nominated to forest and agricultural activities. For example; offering of forest products and the agricultural produces to the gods and goddesses before they are

consumed by the community, is a common practice. Without the offering of the first produce the community never consumes it.

The rituals and festivals are therefore two fold. One is directly connected to the vegetation and natural resources. Priests and community use to show their gratitude to their gods and goddesses through this. But the purpose of worshipping Goddess Pendrani is different. She had been a local goddess confined to the village at first and then became a regional goddess in Bastar. But during last 50 years she emerged to be the goddess of wealth not only among the tribal groups but other occupation caste group also invoked Goddess Pendrani to their homes through a complex ritual process which takes place over four days. The devotee who wants to invite the Goddess to his home and acknowledge her as a deity uses to spend 25, 000 rupees. The priest and the staff consist of 1- 15 persons, which includes all the associate deities and the musicians. This whole group is invited by the devotee to institute the ritual and install the Goddesses and the Gods in the new devotee's home.

Historicity of Goddess pendrani in Bastar and Koraput

According to the priests' genealogy of the Goddess, it was revealed that the first priest of Goddess Pendrani was Bogadi Netam. The most important point in the worship of Goddess Pendrani was that after the event (myth) had occurred the family members of Pendrani were her first worshippers.

Three uncles and three brothers of Goddess Pendrani started worshipping her in a hut. The uncles were Bagadi Netam, Jawa Netam, Maharu netam. The three brothers were Junga Netam, Bagadi Netam and Sagram Netam. It is not known how and why these three brothers became the worshippers and why other three brothers were not involved in it.

It is most important to note that the caste genealogy of Goddess Pendrani has retained the history of the Goddess (Mitki). When she became a Sati, her own family members realized her divinity and started worshipping her. Presently it is not a usual practice in any of the tribal family to divinize a deceased woma. But this case was uncommon. It is believed that when a woman or a man has a natural death, they don't take a form of ghost spirit and live happily as a Duma- ancestor spirit and after seven generations they cease to be a Duma. But in case of a person who faced an unnatural death, it is believed that he had not enjoyed his fullest life. Therefore his or her unfulfilled desires keep him/her as a spirit or ghost. It is also believed that if a person's life is lost/taken away in an unjust way, he/she becomes malevolent in order to avenge the injustice inflicted on him/her. Pendragadien was the victim of her own brothers, so was her husband. Therefore her discontented spirit caused harm and killed many people.

Killing of Pendrani's husband by her own brothers and herself being devoured by a tiger, were two events which contributed her to becoming malevolent. The myth makers must have considered it that; since the couple became the victim of the conspiracy of selfish humans (the brothers) and death came by fate (being eaten by tiger), they would get sympathy and support of community. A

proverb runs that *Kale kalet Dose Nang , jog naithile nai khae bagh*. The meaning of this proverb is that if someone's destiny-appointed hour of death arrives *kalet* (a poisonous snake) bites him; If someone has committed any sin or offence then the Cobra bites him. But if someone is eaten by the tiger it is his / her fate. One offence is created by human cruelty and greed and another is accidental. Both the events contribute to the destruction of an innocent and good family which a community can not approve of in terms of ethics.

Therefore, it was the myth maker who validated the community ethics through sanctioning the couple transformation form human to divine such as to compensate the loss. This validation is made through a complex ritual in which *Maa Pendrani* is invited with all her associate gods and goddesses. This again validates that the myth maker has not only sympathized the victims but has also given justice to rest of the victims and validated the community ethics. Therefore when a family member wishes to invite the Goddess into her home and install the idol, he arranges to invite all the gods and goddesses and the priests and musicians.

The team of Pendrani has the set of ornaments, and dresses made of costly cowries, red clothes, winnowing bamboo materials, the twinkling bell and all sundry items for ritual performances; along with the musical instruments are taken to the devotee who wishes to worship the Goddess. Worship means to install the Goddess as the family goddess (*Ista devi*). This whole process; comprising of a number of customs and rules-laid upon by the priests-takes four days. This may be a ritual drama for a scholar, but it is a reality for the family members to invoke and install the goddess as their *Ista devi*.

There is no concept of God with out the concept of a human in tribal religion. It is true that in Hindu religion God is unreachable for the man and there is a huge gap between god and man. But in tribal religion, man is close to the Gods and Goddesses. They even stay together. A deceased person becomes Duma - spirit and is allowed to stay in the kitchen for seven generations and then only he is subjected to immersion.

Another instance of a Kondh maiden married to Bhīma – a rain God in the village Mahulbhata in Kalahandi. This marriage was instituted to bring rain; since Bhima is considered to be the rain God. After the ritual marriage was over the Kondh maiden remained spinster and was honoured as the divine wife of her divine husband (symbolized in a stone). She remained as Gurumai (spiritual mother) till her death. After her death she was also worshipped in a stone symbol. Hundreds of Gods and Goddesses have emerged from similar events in many tribal villages. Unfortunately not all deities have the same fortune like that of the goddess *Pendrani*. Her cult has been institutionalized and socially so broadly accepted across the states of south Western Orissa and south east Chhattisgarh.

From local Legend to Universal Myth

Pendrani is a cult of recent past. The place and time of her emergence and events are known to the people and there is the evidence of her existence. She is not an imaginary goddess, rather a legendary

goddess. The question is why this goddess got a name and fame in her own locality for about 300- 350 years and suddenly became a popular goddess in other parts beyond the place of her origin. It was found that prior to 1965; the year that the drought occurred in Kalahandi in Orissa and Bastar in Chhattisgarh, Goddess Pendrani was not much popular. The worship of the Goddess spread after the drought, since the people wanted to compensate the loss of their property during the drought resorting to supernatural powers. Since the society of western Orissa and Bastar is thickly populated with the tribal communities and agricultural communities, they depend on the rain God as well as rain water for cultivation. Unless the Goddess is appeased, there is no prosperity. The community also felt that drought is also a divine event due to decay of values in the human society.

It is believed that violating the social values and ethics brings about disasters in the community. In tribal community the priest is supposed to be responsible for this. The priest plays a major role for the well being of the community. The shaman is the mediator of man-spirit communication. Therefore the social values are manifested in the rituals and festivals. The whole community trusts in values and rejects the evil. The acceptance of Goddess Pendrani is the social approval of the tribal community; which was initially not so complex but attributed by the people to the cult, in course of time. Gradually Pendrani became the goddess of wealth during the drought period and after that people started worshipping her to beget a progeny.

Process of Inviting the Goddess:

The jajman – family head invites the Priest and the shaman of the cult and the team reaches his house. A complex ritual takes place for 4- 5 days. The preparation takes place for 10 -15 days. Day wise distribution of ritual process is as follows

Text and Interpretation

The purpose of the pendrani cult is a contestation of male predominance over women. The whole ritual system adopted in the cult, celebrated by males playing the female goddess signifies the males' subjugation to the woman Goddess, thereby compensating the injustice inflicted on Goddess Pendrani when she was an ordinary woman.

One cannot easily accept such a simple myth of an ordinary woman (Miki) ascending to a divine entity. After all it was a true event and it was all about a woman who had been tortured and had become the victim. It was an injustice to her. The myth spells out the cruelty of males over females in a real world and in turn the myth spells out the revenge taken by the Ghost spirit (Goddess). Once she was institutionalized by the villagers (even to her own uncles and three brothers), she became

benevolent. This compensation of a human death to a divine birth fetched the goddess wide acceptance and community recognition; in which the ethics violated have been resolved.

It may be inferred that the compassion of Pendrani that was suppressed in her mind due to the injustice done to her, turned into revengeful act activity during her period as Ghost spirit. Hence when she got the status of a goddess she became more compassionate to her subjects and devotees. The group psychology that has transformed the personality of an ordinary tribal woman into a dignified divine entity; has been manipulated by the desire of her priests/myth makers and the collective wish of the community.

Regeneration:

In 1900 AD Sri Bikram Dev Burma, the Maharaja of Jeypore, Orissa realized the popularity of the Goddess Pendrani and constructed a temple dedicated to her in Umerkote. This was again validation and reinforcement of a tribal goddess gradually gaining her ground in the region. The construction of temple by the maharaja was a historical event for the Gond community to feel glorious that their local goddess (of a different kingdom) has been recognized by the Maharaja. The priest of this temple was a Bhatra and his family members had been worshipping the Goddess over last 100 years in Umerkote.

In 2001 the temple dilapidated and there have been no efforts since, to rebuild it. However the Goddess has been installed as the family deity (ista devi) by millions of people in the said areas. Even the nontribal occupation castes have also adopted this cult for their progeny and prosperity in wealth.

Interpolation of Pendrani with Hindu Myth:

It was in 2001, that a political leader of Umerkote had a dream from the Goddess Pendrani and initiated construction of a temple for her. He was the Block Chairman and also a contractor. He became the cultural leader of that locality by forming committees for Durga Puja, Pendrani festival etc. He collected funds from various sources the committee started constructing the temple of Pendrani in 2001 and completed the temple in 2011 over a period of ten years.

The symbiotic relationship of power and religion is a common phenomenon in Indian culture. The process of approving the local goddess by the Kings and constructing a temple was to recognize the community faith. On the other hand the Brahmins universalize the local goddess branding them as the *shakti* - power of Goddess Durga/Laxmi etc cloning them with Hindu mythology.

Similar case was with *Rakat Mauli*- a Kondh goddess of Tribal region became the fort goddess of Khariar palace. In some cases the tribal priests continue to perform their daily worship in the temple and in some places they have been replaced by the Brahmin priests.

Interestingly, in the temple of Umerkote, a Bhatra - tribal priest was engaged in worshipping the Pendrani Goddess for over a years and now, after the new temple is constructed, Brahmin priests have been appointed to perform daily worship. The reason of such transition from the tribal priests to

the Brahmin priest is justified by the committees that since the many Hindu Gods and Goddess are worshipped aside the main Goddess Pendrani, it is necessary to take Brahmin priests. The committee also finally professed that, after all Pendrani is Goddess Durga. Every goddess in this earth is a part of the power of Durga.

Thus over a period of 400 years a simple tribal woman started her journey as a human being, turned in to a ghost spirit, worshipped in her own village as a goddess, and worshipped in the Gond dominated villages of Orissa and Chhattisgarh and was later recognized as a folk goddess.

Now the Goddess is worshipped along the methods of Durga worship followed by the Sanskrit ritual system. The vicinity of the main temple is surrounded by the images of Durga, Laxmi, Saraswati,

The parswa Devata(side deities) of the temple are 1. Veerkham devta, (three wooden posts) 2. Mata kankalin (Chinnamasta, one of the sixty four yoginis),3. Mata gangaram temple,4. Mata Kothgadien Barkhamb, 5. Mata Danteswari,6. Baukshani sathan, 7. Kar Sundari Mata.

Community perception and adaptation, transition from a simple tribal woman to a divine goddess and finally her acceptance as Goddess Durga has made her a transformative character from one stage to the other. Community's social function and the priests' ritual performances, their rules and practices involve ideas and ideologies. That is imagined by the myth makers and the collective social memory. A small tragic event of a village woman, thus, over a period of time, transcends into a divine power to establish how people maintain their ethics through the religious cults and performance.

**Where Asian Indian folklore meets Arawak and Kalinago folklore,
Aural-Oral ‘Sound’ Symmetry and Asymmetry can make you jump!**

M.C.L. Provost

M.C.L. Provost with language advising from M. Washina Quintana,
and spoken testimony from D. Arakabesa Bazile and J. Amahura Riverwind
Dedicated to my family and inspiration in the language work
Herbert and Lois Provost and Rev. John Peter and Clara Bennett
and their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren

In Xaymaka (Jamaica), in the Antilles of Middle America where I was born, my Granddad, my mother’s father, taught me that we are Arawak Indian (a.k.a Taíno) while my Grandpère, my father’s father, taught me that we are Asian Indian. But what does a little child do when Asian Indian and American Indian languages and cultures collide and the stories we hear from our grandparents do not fit?

We are talking across the gaps of language here, as you will see, and this is a disorienting experience in all its meanings, no pun intended. John T. Platts’ Urdu, Classical Hindi and English Dictionary (1884), T. Schultz Arruwakki Worterbuch (1803), the Arawak-English Dictionary of J.P. Bennett (1984; 1994), and Velázquez’ Spanish and English Dictionary (2003).

A Glimpse into History

An entire confusion of Indian and American Indian mythologies, legends and folklores began when the languages and cultures of these two Peoples collided. And here is how that came to be. The Italian admiral Cristóforo Colón had sailed west from Spain, in search of a shorter route by sea, to reach the Indian sub-continent. This was supposed to replace the overland trade routes taken by merchants like Marco Polo and his uncles. At First Contact (1492), when Colón landed in the Antilles of Middle America, he sincerely believed he had accomplished this mission and took with him some “Indian” people as proof. All the same, he was mistaken. Nonetheless, the missionaries and other writers began interpreting the Native American languages and customs based on the false assumption that they had indeed reached unexplored coasts of India and that everything they knew about the Middle East and the Far East applied to these lands which were new to them. The Autochthonous Peoples of the Americas have been mistakenly defined as “Indio”, “Indien” and “Indian” since that time. And to this day, Native Americans defend their (our) right to call themselves (ourselves) Indians. But how could such a mistake have occurred?

That was only the beginning of the errors. About a hundred years later, in 1593, Francisco de Balboa and his men returned from northern South America to the Spanish Court and reported that they had seen a “tyger” (Morgan) which they knew [from the accounts of it in India, China and Africa that they had read. The American Indian “tyger”](#) (tiger) was actually a *jaguar* or *arwa* in the Arawak language [but, to this day, the jaguar is still sometimes called a “tiger”](#) (Bennett, 1984) [in Arawak folklore](#). These are only two of the many errors that occur where [Asian Indian and Native American “Indian” legacies of ourselves collide](#). [Arawaks of the Antilles, for example, are falsely said to be extinct](#).

False Cognates? Or False Friends?

[The confusion of Asian Indians with American “Indios” in the European accounts is a case of incorrect geography and mistaken identity, some might even say identity theft](#). In live as it is lived, no one uses the fancy terms of the philosophy of language, or of language teachers. [The problem, which is an error of perception, is called a false cognate](#). In French, the term is a more picturesque: *faux amis* (false friends). [It is a phenomenon we all know from humour and comedy called a pun, or punning. It includes word-pairs that occur in words and images, for example, “sun” with “☀” and “son” with “☺”](#) (homonyms) and like “☀” with “☺” and “sum” with “+” (Provost, 2002). Whether we are Asian Indian, or American “Indian”, our Indigenous thinking patterns of human double-mindedness, [and human duality, is always in search of ‘pattern-matches’ or ‘pair-mates’](#). This is why *homophones* and *homonyms* – for example, “hear”, “here”, “hair”, “hare”, or “ere”, “ear”, “heir”, “air” are always [troublesome for everyone but especially for second-language learners](#) – so that the same words have different meanings and the same meanings are conveyed by different words (Provost writing in Antone, 2003).

[The symmetry and asymmetry of word-sounds creates a kind of word-magic in myths, legends and folklores; and this makes it possible to “suspend belief and disbelief”](#). This makes anything possible. A character in a story can be or become anything or anyone that is similar or different where this Aural-Oral and Visual symmetry and asymmetry occur. It is human instinct to look and listen for people who are “like me” or “like us”, who are supposedly safe as friends. [Imagine the possibilities in India, where](#)

there are over 3000 languages (Mishra, 2010, personal communication), and in the Arawak tribal families of Middle America – which were originally over 300 distinct language families, with regional variations.

Family Folklore: Three Indians & The Disconnect

Every family has its own ‘folklore’ or ‘mythology’ and the family folklores of Asian Indians and Native American Indians have something in common. In both instances, our folklores have been interrupted and disrupted by the Colonial Social Experiment by Spanish, French, Portuguese, Netherlands and British then-Empires. After Balboa gave his report about the “tiger,” another 250 or so years later, in May of 1845, the first recorded group of Asian Indian migrants – Natives of the Indian sub-continent - landed in Xaymaka (Jamaica). Most were sent by agents of the British Empire to be indentured labourers and to supplement the economy via sugarcane harvesting with that ‘opportunity’ to pay their debts. Some also became shopkeepers, accountants, and teachers. Rampol Ton-Singh, great-grandfather, was one of them. At the age of twenty-one, great-grandfather had travelled by ship, departing India from the port of Calcutta. We children were told that our Asian Indian ancestors were Sikh and had been musicians at court, but if so, why would he have left home for a strange land? And so we were orphaned from our Asian Indian roots and were born as non-resident Indians.

Asian Indian Roots

Rampol married Ada Jacobs and eventually became Roman Catholic. His daughter, Gladys Ton-Singh, was my grandmother, my father’s mother. Great-grandmother died when my father was about 3 years old and her family demanded back her dowry when my Grandfather was to remarry. This widened the gap.



Rampol and Ada Ton-Singh Family – circa 1855



Louise Stewart-Prevost - circa 1835

Louise Stewart-Prevost was another Indian in my family tree (see photo). It is said her parents were on their way from India to Jamaica, and died on shipboard before arriving. Louise was adopted by a Captain Stewart and his wife. But Louise’s husband Jacques Christophe Prevost was supposed to have come to Jamaica from Haiti about the time of the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804), coming originally from France via Quebec. The dates do not match and, in Haiti, Dessalines had put to death as many Blancs (Europeans) as his armies could find. Louise would have had to be at least 16 when they

married. David Clifford, one of Jacques Christophe and Louise's seven children, was my grandfather, my father's father.

Is it possible that Louise's mother was Asian Indian and left her village in India already pregnant and an outcast, but died in childbirth? But, again, how to prove that? Even DNA studies presently do not go into such fine details and I could find no record of any Asian Indian women coming to Jamaica in or before 1791-1804. . . . It is also possible that Louise's mother may have been an American "Indian" who gave her baby to Captain Stewart (probably the father) to be raised by himself and his wife. All the same, our family remains convinced that Louise was Indian from India.

Arawak Indian Roots

On my mother's side, Maria, my Arawak-Spanish great-great-grandmother (my mother is one generation, younger than my father), married Xhiang, a Native of China who was also an indentured labourer later turned shopkeeper. Her daughter Rosalinda was my grandfather Herbert Hugg's mother and he taught me that we are Arawak and "Indio" (a.k.a. "Taíno").



Xhiang – Chinese
(father)

Maria – Arawak
(mother)

Rosalinda
(as a girl)

Rosalinda
(as a grandmother)

Our Indian and "Indio" [children's folktales were](#) made up of lots of fragments. Though we were Catholic, Papa taught me to love Hindu, Muslim and Sikh literatures, poetry and music and none of the language. [But he did know one folk song which seemed to originate in Jamaica and may even have Chinese influence:](#) "Me a coolie 'pon me piazza wid mi rampa pon mi shouldah" which we sang with glee and a certain pride, even though it was about lowly roots. He did not know any Hindu, Urdu or Arabic words or if he did, he never mentioned them. Meanwhile, my mother's father taught me Arawak stories, some of the language, and a children's song in Arawak mixed with English: "*Terachi, terachi*, baby can do a *terachi*" (with finger-plays about the movements of the stars and family relationships).

My parents, were born in 1930 and 1916 and my father is terminally ill. After writing I had news that John Peter Bennett, who was born in 1914 and whose wife Auntie Clara passed on nearly two years ago, is also on his return journey to the Ancestors. [I am writing this to honour them and their children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren – though my family are in Xaymaka and theirs is in Guyana \(Kayenne\), our families are made up of intermarriages between American Indians with Asian Indians and other newcomer peoples in Middle America. This is also for Washinabana's parents who have already crossed over to the Ancestors, and the grandparents of Arakabesa and Amahura also. Though](#)

they did not go to university, they worked hard and impressed on us-all the importance of knowledge-keeping, faith-keeping, teaching and learning to get back some of the knowledge that has been lost, and to teach it to our future generations..

How the stories collided

According to Louise Bennett, when all the cultures that came to Jamaica “*buck up*” (collided) with each other, “*de riddim sweet*” (the rhythm is sweet). The languages that the European then-Empires used for writing and religious education were Spanish, French, Portuguese, Dutch and English, as well as German and Italian. When the Arawak stories collided with the ideas of these foreign peoples in the course of education, the stories became fragmented and violent. As the European writers did not have the Arawak context, the stories were incomplete – most of what survives is bits of knowledge about different characters that do not have any ‘family’ or context of happy stories they fit into.

Spirit & Spiritedness in Vaca/Bhaka/Baka/Baku/Opiel/Rolling Calf

Not all examples of similar-sounding word-pairs from Asian Indian and Arawak Indian languages can be fit into each culture. For example, a famous Jamaican folk character is the “Rolling Calf”, though cattle are not native to the Americas but were introduced by the Europeans. There is even a saying about someone “born back-a cow” which in Jamaican language means someone who has no upbringing and is uncultured. In Spanish, as many Arawak People still use English and Spanish, the cow is *vaca*, pronounced “baka”, and is not sacred. So then, to be born “back-a cow” (in a field behind a cow) in English, would also mean “cow cow” and being less than human. In Arawak language, Washina recognized a similar-sounding word to the Asian Indian *Aditi* in *Adiki*, which means to be wrapped or swaddled (like a baby) (Schultz, 1803, transl. F. Soural, 2008). This seems to have no similar meaning to the Asian Indian word *bhaka* meaning “speech”.

However, let’s look more closely. In the Antilles, cattle (*vaca/baca/baka/bhaka/cow*) somehow became associated with *Opielguabiran*, who is described as Arawak peoples’ three-legged “dog-god” of the dead. Joseph Amahura Riverwind (2011, personal communication) retells a story from his father, about his grandfather often picking up a calf and raising it over his head and saying, “*Opiel cria*” apparently meaning “strong-spirited” or “strong as an ox”. But literally, the offspring of *Opiel*, or of the Ancestors. The spirits of the Ancestors in Arawak language are also called *Opiah*, which is related with *hutia* and *hupia*, a small animal that once was part of Arawak people’s diet. It is difficult to trace the Arawak stories as they were recorded by the 5 then-Empires in their 5 and sometimes German and Italian as well. The European writers’ false assumptions about reaching India clearly did not help.

The result is much more than a simple word-pair of two words from different languages – there are over 5 word-pairs, and closer to 10, here. It is also reasonable to conclude that there was some confusion over traditions brought by Africans long before the Indians who came as indentured workers, as some people in both groups could spoke and write Arabic. The Rolling Calf has only three legs. My mother said Rolling Calf was once tied-up and chained, but being so strong, the calf escaped – it is not clear whether the Rolling Calf has 3 legs or four – but I heard that in escaping he lost a leg. And so he

runs around at night, never making any sound but rattling his chain as he runs. The calf is thought of as “he” even though ‘vaca/baka’ is feminine). In his anger, Rolling Calf will charge at any one he may meet, to do them harm. And this seems to be related to the idea of being angry after being captured and chained as in slavery, and of not having a voice – which then coincides with *bhaka* (speech) in the Asian Indian languages. So then, while there may not be any direct etymological derivation, we do see a derivation of similarity in these word-pairs, via folkloricized themes such as nourishment:mother, anger:loss of voice, and spirit/spiritedness:Ancestors.

In another example, a similar idea of *baka/baku* (bacoo), which seems to be an angry spirit, occurs on the mainland in Guyana, and also in Aitiji-Kiskeya. A *baka* or *baku* is a small spirit who is said to “pel[t] stones at houses and mov[e] objects within a house. He eats bananas and milk. Sometimes the *baka/baku* is said to originate in West African languages, meaning “‘little brother’ or ‘short man’”. There is a connection in Arawak language and culture, this relates to the idea of being *Buttubattu* – a widower or person who is beside himself and almost out of his mind (Schultz, 1803). Such a person may not be able to put his grief into words (speech) and will become “out of heart” (Taylor *) with grief. This relates through sound-symmetry in the name of the Arawak ballgame of *Batey* or *Batei*. Washina and I want to suggest this was a way of dealing with any noxious feelings of guilt and ‘debt’ or ill-feeling by playing the game without touching the ball with your hands and sometimes by wearing weights that could be transferred from one person to another. Again, though *Batey* (in Arawak) and *Bhaka* (in Indian languages) are not related, the theme of voice and identity are connected.

Raakas:Raka: Demon? Or Essential Life-Spirit?

Writing on Asian Indian folklore in Trinidad, St Vincent, Grenada, Martinique, Guyana and Suriname, in his book, **Indian Caribbean Folklore Spirits**, Kumar Mahabir explains that *Raakas* is said to be a “deformed, demonic newborn child” who torments the mother until it is killed (Mahabir, 2011). This may be the same as, راکس راکس *rakkas* [for *rakkhas* = Prk. रक्खसो; S. राक्षसः], which in India, is a “malignant spirit, fiend (=rākshas), while *raka* is associated with the full moon and with a girl who has just experienced her first menstruation (Platts, 1884).

In Arawak culture, becoming a woman is a wonderful thing because it means **blossoming to become marriageable and able to become a potential mother**. The idea of becoming a woman as something to be feared was introduced via the duality of good and evil that was brought in by the culture of the then-Empires of Europe where being a woman means being cursed by sin. In the Arawak cosmos, from our research, everything had its place in harmony and balance. So then, *raakas* – without the European influence in the Asian Indian translation. - would not have been a demonic baby in an Arawak Indian view.

In Lokono Arawak, *raka* is the essential strength or spirit of a living being. *Raka* is part of the word *Akhorakali* (Thunder, a Thunder Being, a Thunder Spirit deity). *Raka* is related also to *rakasha* (earthquake), and the idea of *rakasa* (to pull out, as in drawing out or carving a canoe [spirit boat] out of a tree trunk). Meanwhile, from India there is the idea of راکس راکس *rakes* as “a guard, watchman,

protector, one who watches a field when the crop is ripening” but also راکشس راکشس *rākshas* “of or belonging to a demon, demoniacal, fiendish, infernal”. Could this reflect the introduction of the same European dualities of good and evil in Indian myth and folklore?

Saapina: Sabada: Women as Snakes

In Trinidad, Kumar Mahabir tells of hearing stories of the *saapina* a “woman who transforms into a snake” and who can be recognized by a snake pattern on her back; [this snake-woman is also seen as one who steals men’s spirits. This example of saapina](#), at least connects with the Arawak word *saba* (beautiful, lovely, pretty) and *sabañ* (handsomeness) and *sabada* (to pound crush, mash) for pounding and crushing is part of preparing the bitter *cassava* (*manioc*, or *yucca*, which is an Arawak clan Ancestor) [for food by cleansing the bitter or poisonous spirits. Cassava processing is a woman’s technology](#). The process involves washing and straining the ground cassava meal through a *matapi* or *cibukan*, which is a long woven sieve of palm leaves, resembling a snake. [If we go back to the Arawak creation stories from Aitij-Kiskeya \(Haiti and the Dominican Republic\) there we find snakes falling from trees and later becoming women when they are pierced by the woodpecker](#) (Pané, 1498).

Washina and I found some other similar-sounding words between Asian Indian and Arawak mythology: *Ahi* and *Anata* both sound like Arawak names of the *annatto* or *biha* plant. This is a red plant that is considered an aphrodisiac in Arawak culture, while *biha* (*bixa/bija*) can also mean “kiss” in related languages, but in India, *biha* is “a seed” (V. Shiva, personal communication, 2008). In Indian [lore, Ahi is a gigantic “dragon or serpent” which can drink “all the water of the earth and that lives in a mountain range that encircles the whole world” \(*online\). All the same, here again is the snake theme and the theme of seduction or reproduction for “the Ahi is known for stealing women and cows and endangering fertility”.](#)

Bali – A Deceiver

Bali in Indian mythology is a “giant monkey described as a hairy man with a long tail who tried to overthrow his brother”. But in Middle America, *bali* means “to pass” and is a suffix on the names of trees that resemble another tree, to show that it is not what it seems. Could it be possible that *-bali* became added (borrowed) from an Indian language into the names of these trees to show that any *-bali* tree is attempting to “pass” as its ‘brother’?

Brahma, Khali, Yocahu: The Image of the Gods

In closing, we looked at three word-pairs in Indian and Arawak words, that are probably the most important, from an Arawak perspective: *Kali* and *Khali*, *Brahma* and *Baibrama*, and *Calingi/Kalingoi* and *Kalinago*. These are the names of two deities and an ancient people or clan ancestor. *Brahma* is the Hindu High Creator God in India. However Pané (1498) in *La Relación*, [tells us of an Arawak cemi \(deity or spirit\) called Baibrama who is associated with cassava production](#). No Arawak etymology or derivation has been found for this word. It seems clear that Pané misheard and mistranscribed, as he did not know the Arawak languages and, as the Europeans had been in the Americas only for six years, they still believed they were in the islands off the coast of India. The closest surviving Arawak word I

found is *barareme*, a river tributary, or “sea-arm” (Bennett, 1984) and Washina agrees that this makes sense in Arawak language because salt water is important in *cassava* or *manioc/yuca* technology and in that story. There is no connection with *Brahma*, unless we use the “*yu*” of *yucca/manioca* to connect with the name of *Yocahu*, who is the Spirit of Life of Arawak Peoples, and *Brahma* and *Yocahu* do not share sound symmetry.

The case is different with the next two word-pairs. *Khali* in India is the Hindu Great Mother Goddess. Her role is to “destroy ignorance, maintain world order, and bless and free those who strive for the knowledge of God” (Encyclopedia Mythica, 2011). In the Lokono Arawak language, *khali-iwi* is “a cassava plant that grows from a seed and not from [the customary] cutting” (Bennett, 1984) and *khali-iwi* is the clan Ancestor, already mentioned. *Khali-iwi* brings life and death, and is the main principle and food around which the Arawak cosmos and knowledge are organized, for *Arruwakki* (Arawak) means meal-eater.

Lastly, *Calingi/Kalingoi*, in Asian Indian culture, according to “Pliny the Elder’s *Historia Naturalis* (77 AD) . . . [quoting] Duris (3rd century BC)” says that these Asian Indian people “lived in India” long ago “and reached the age of maturity at 5 years old”. At that tender age, they were supposed to “give birth” and then to die soon after at about “8 years of age” (Encyclopedia Mythica, 2011). The similar Arawak word is *Kalinago*, the name of one of the Tribal Families and who call themselves *Karina* or *Kalinago* people and who still have recognized territories today in Dominica and St. Lucia.

When I was a child, my father who has Asian Indian roots had told me that the Indian people had come across the ocean to the Antilles by boat from the south, going north. My mother’s father, who carried Arawak Indian roots, told me that the Creator had made Arawaks in the Americas and that some of us Native Americans had travelled from the south into the north, pursuing the Great Spirit. This is far from the Bering Strait theory that was proposed by Thomas Jefferson which Ward Churchill has exposed as false. But, my husband who is also Taino Arawak – we are Peace-Keeping people and language researchers – said to me: “what will happen when our foot prints are found going across to the east?” Of course, this is a radical idea. It is his personal folklore, and not that far from my father’s and the folklore from my mother’s father – you see, even amongst ourselves as modern people we look for similarities. Right now there is no proof or evidence other than our talk on the language.

But when we consider *Kali* – the Indian Mother Goddess – and *Khali-iwi*, the Arawak “Indian” Clan Ancestor, who is to say that centuries from today, it will not be found that Arawaks and Asian Indians from the coast of India were not visiting each other’s lands long before the Europeans?

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Dalit Folklore:**Identity and Critical Interpretation****Basudev Sunani**

Dalit term is defined as ‘masses exploited and oppressed economically, socially, culturally, in the name of religion and other factors’. They are ‘traditionally connotes wretchedness, poverty and humiliation. Hence the term has become derogatory. The non-Dalits, therefore pose the question: why should we call ourselves Dalits?’(1)

In this scenario the section of people who have been oppressed from centuries together and they have been deprived up from their rights have been isolated from the mainstream and developed their own identity through their own culture and tradition. The root cause of this isolation and deprivation is varna and caste system prevalent in Indian society. The general people have been given an innocent understanding that this caste system has been created by God. As a result, in the name of God, (who is an unquestionable character), His creation will be appreciated and accepted by all. In fact this discrimination is a creation of some opportunist group. Reality is that ‘Varna and caste came to be determined on the basis of birth. This was because the ruling class wanted to ensure for itself the exclusive possession of wealth, power and higher social status, and also because they did not want the sorrow, misery and servitude imposed on the oppressed to be transferred to the other sections of the society.’(2)

The Indian society is consisting of more than 6000 different castes. The structure of the typical Indian village is usually determined as per the population of the different caste living in that particular village. Since long centuries the dalits have been living with the insulted identity which they have derived from their caste to which they belong.

Origin of Caste

As regards to the origin of the present caste system it has been accepted fact is that Varna system is the mother of caste system.

In this regard Dr, B.R.Ambedkar has said: *“The root of untouchability is the caste system, the root of caste system is religion attached to Varna and ashram, and the root of Varnashram is Brahminical religion, and the root of Brahminical religion is authoritarianism or political power. Untouchability is only an extended form of caste and, therefore, without abolition of caste there is no hope of abolition of untouchability”.* (3)

During the period of Manu in 185 BC(4), who is recognized as the architect of the social constitution, in the form of *“Manu smrutee* “or *“Manu Sanghita”* has been codified and documented the state social law to mobilize the society. The entire *Sanhita* speaks very high about one caste “Brahmin” and very low and humiliating statement, attitude and behavior about “Sudra” This documentation not only has described about the origin of Varna but also about the origin of caste. An example can be given from the *Smrutee* on origin of caste.

The Chandala has been originated by the offspring produced by a Brahmin mother and Sudra father. Offspring from Sudra father and Vaishya mother is called Ayogaba who becomes the carpenter. Offspring from Brahmin father and Viashya mother gives to Nishad, otherwise called fisherman.(5)

In this way the caste system has been developed and spread in thousands in course of time.

Dalit folklore: A way to an ancient history.

Dalit folk, especially in western part of Odisha is very rich and has contributed to the mainstream society a lot in the form of *Ganaa/Domb baza* with various kinds of rhythms imbibed in it. Along with this their dance, songs, arts, craft, customs, rituals, festivals are unique and remarkable.

The folklore of this area speaks different about the origin of dalit community. It says that, they have been originated from the king *Lakhanbhandi Nagbanshi Raja Dungi Chuhan*. *Raja Dungi Chuhan* had four sons named *Gang, Gaagrang, Jadu and Kadam*. Now a day these four brothers are termed as *Gond, Gandaa, Gauda* and *Kondh* respectively. The descendants of these four brothers are subsequently known as different community (6). If we look back to the origin of above mentioned individual community, one can see the distinct and clear cut similarity among them. This similarity strengthen about their origin from same source in the long past. However, in course of time, they have been divided in to many castes which sustained for a long period in the society even up to till to day.

During British rule when there was demand for special provision for the deprived class people, to allot the percentage of reservation based on their population, an enumeration regarding the number was thought of in

the name of census in the year 1911. Since then they were put in the scheduled caste category to have special provision. Subsequently these *Gang, Gaagrang, Jadu and Kadam* have been broadly classified in official term as Scheduled Caste (*Ganaa*), Scheduled Tribe (*Gond and Kondh*) and Other Backward Caste (*Gauda*) in Odisha (7).

The people those who were had the strategy and conspiracy to rule over these people, they have termed different names in to different community/castes and subsequently that become the social tradition. The folk tales regarding descendants of four brothers have social as well as historical importance which needs attention and exploration of the experts in this field.

Duma: An identity of Dalit

The descendants of the four brothers believe in worshiping Duma in their Pidar. Pidar is the sacred place inside the house where the souls of the forefathers are being worshiped. Duma is the soul or Jee of a dead person. In the cultural tradition of the dalit there is strong believe that after the death of a person the *atma* or soul does not go to heaven as it is there in the tradition of Hindu believe. Instead, it remained in the earth along with the family members, where he/she was belonging earlier. Therefore on 10th day of death i.e. on *Dashaha* the departed soul from body is again invited to the house in a ceremonial ways. In this particular day all the near and dears, relatives are invited to witness the occasion.

It is not known that, particularly where the soul remains after departure from the body i.e in between the day of the death and dashaha(10th day). However, there is believed in the community that within this period the soul remains in some branches of the tree, most preferably in banyan tree. Hence, all the daily use materials like food, brush (stick), water etc are being offered to the departed soul, following the day of burial, until *dashahaghar* regularly in a routine manner.

The daily need food materials is given usually in a bifurcated way called *Delaabaat* so that from any direction wherever he /she temporarily remains can come easily and receive the offerings. Even the relatives bath in the pond by completely immersing their body dedicating to the dead persons which is called *bood*. In this way they perform all the daily activity on behalf of the dead person.

The 10th day or *dashaghar* is one of the important days. They think that this day should be celebrated in such a joyful manner that as if it should symbolize like marriage function, which he /she had enjoyed during his/her own marriage in life carrier.

In a grand function with *Ganaa Bajaa* (music party) the family members go to that particular *Delaabaat*(*bifurcated way*) along with the relatives to invite the *Duma*. Elder son plays a vital role because he is the person who usually catches and brings the *Duma* to the *Pidar*. A particular spot is cleaned in the bifurcated way to worship. Here, worship is made by offering different kinds of consumables in powder form by the aged and senior persons of the community or the community priest. As per the custom and belief, the *Duma* usually comes in the form of ant, insects etc. which is caught by the elder son under the guidance of the aged persons and then kept inside the new pot covered with new cloth. As new *Duma* is invited and placed in the *Pidar*, he/she is given optimum regards in the process. The eldest son, who usually catch the *Duma*, come to the *Pidar* of his house by walking on the new thread which is spread over, up to the *Pidar*. As they believe, this new thread symbolizes the new cloth or mat where *duma* puts his/her feet over it.

The background of spreading of new thread in the name of cloth is that the *Domb/Ganaas* were once the weaver community. Even, today, in some area of western Odisha, *Ganaa* family earn their livelihood, out of weaving. In some parts of the coastal Odisha this community known as a *Tanti or Tantipana* professionally known for their skillful weaving. They had abundance of new cloth once; therefore they pay great respect by spreading new cloth for the new *Duma*.

This *Duma* is kept inside the *Pidar* and in the next day it is identified that ‘in whose feet *Duma* has come’ to the family. Usually as per the customs of the community the *Duma* come either in the shape of paddy, paw of the elephant or paw of the cat.

The community is called *Domb/Dumb* because they practice *Duma puja* or believe in *Duma*. They are also called *Lakheghar Samaj* (a community of lakh family) because the no. of threads those are used in the weaving of a cloth is many or uncountable. Uncountable or many symbolizes lakh in the mind of academically illiterate *Ganaa* community.

Duma after being enshrined in the *Pidar* is worshiped regularly in the different occasions and festivals. *Nuakhai* is a popular festival in the western part of Odisha which is simply a *Duma Puja*. In the *Nuakhai* only the new food materials produced either in the crop field or in the forest are first offered to the *Duma* and than these are treated as fit for human consumption. The concept is this community is from primitive origin. Once the *Duma* was ordinary human being in the long past and during that period they have discovered all these eatables from the nature. To show obligation for these discoveries their subsequent generations offers their first eatables to those ancient *Duma*, who have been worshipped in *Pidar* in the name of *Devi/Devada* (God/Goddess) from time immemorial. .There after the family members starts eating.

Here, the *Duma* is not simply a myth or folklore rather an identity of the community, converted to their culture in due course of time. This culture is totally antagonistic in nature with regards to the Aryan culture. In

the Aryan cultures the departed soul goes to heaven, where as in the dalit culture departed souls again come back to the *Pidar* and worshipped by the same family members. No priest is needed for *Duma Devi/Devata* as it is required in the temple. This is because in the true sense, *Dumas* are not *Devi /Devat*, rather they are the forefathers of the community.

Music: A part of life

It is invariably seen that music, dance and songs is the part of life of the dalit community. In Western Odisha, South Odisha and Coastal Odisha, a kind of music is being drummed by *Ganaa* or *Domb* or *Hadi* community people respectively .Structurally this music has three different forms-

- 1 Murri Baza (Music without horn)
- 2 Singh Baza(Music along with horn)
- 3 Dhap Baza

Murri Baza is very popular in coastal Odisha where as *Dhap Baza* is in Southern Odisha and *Singh Baza* in Western Odisha. Usually *Murri Baza* comprises of 5 major instruments called *Nishan*, *Mahuri*, *Dhol*, *Tasha* and *Gholghola*. The structure and shape of the instrument in brief can be described in the following manner.

1 Nishan.

A cone shaped instrument, made up of iron .It is covered with cow skin where from the different kind of rhythms come. On the leather cover the two *Chemtha* (leather stick) is being beaten to produce desired rhythms.

2. Dhol

It is a kind of cylindrical, drum shaped instrument .From both the side it is beaten and two different kinds of rhythms is produced from both the side.

The hollow wooden drum is covered with cow skin in one end and goat skin in opposite end .The drummer uses his hand directly in the side where goat skin is covered, where as, one special kind of

stick called *Dhol Khadi* is being used to drum in the side, where cow skin is covered. Usually the drummer hangs this instrument in his neck and drum in a dancing position.

3. Tasha

This is also a kind of 'kitchen pan' type instrument made up soil. It is usually prepared by potter. It's open side is covered with calf skin. This instrument is usually drummed by using two sharp and thin bamboo stick. This instrument is also being hanged in the neck of the drummer while in use.

4. Mahuri

It is an instrument just like Sahnai. This instrument gives the direction to the other three instruments as the harmonium does in the modern music and accordingly different rhythms are produced and musical movement goes on.

5. Gholghola

It is an additional instrument with dumbbell shaped hollow one, made up of either by iron or steel. In side this instruments some small iron or stone balls are kept, which when shake produces sound. It is perhaps the new instrument added to the original music set since 40-60 years.

When *Dhol* is being replaced by the *Dhap*, then it is called *Dhap Baza*. *Dhap* is a kind of complete circular instrument. The width of the circular wood is around 6 inch. Here, one side is open and other side of the instrument is covered with calf skin. In this case also, the drummer hangs the instruments in one of his shoulder and drums the music, through a small piece of thick wooden stick called *Dhap Kahadi* in one hand, and in other hand, he uses small bamboo stick. Both the sticks go hand in hand to produce rhythms.

Singh Baza is called as music of battle. There is a folktale in the community that this was a common music of Ravan, the king of Lanka. They say, when king Ravan was going for any battle, the drummer use to drum and dance with this music before he stars his journey for battle Here, along with earlier said 5 instruments, additional two instrument called *Singh Luhuti* (which acts as a head) , is required. *Sing luhuti* is a smaller form of *Nishan* where two sharp Singh (horn shaped iron rod) are fitted in a horizontal way, in opposite direction. Earlier they were using horns of hyena and buffalo but now days they are using *Singh* (horn) made up of iron. This is being tied in the waist of the dancer. The dancer is called *Singhliiaa*. Mostly this two *Singhliiaa* (dancer with horn) drum very less but dance more. By the way of dance they show different poses such as piercing of the horn to the counterpart, , lifting of water full iron pot and bi-cycle etc, with the help of incisor teeth. They also lift the

coin, blade, stitching needle etc, with the help of eyelid. Apart from the above kind of poses, they also show the attack and how to defend the attack by counter part, treating him as enemy. In this way so many, one to one fighting poses with lot of gymnastic posture are demonstrated which symbolizes war situation. This demonstration motivates the viewer to participate in any challenge. May be the demon king Ravana of the Ramayana was using this music to warm up and motivate his soldier before any war.

Removing the skin from the dead animal is a scientific skill. The process of drying the skin needs another scientific skill and knowledge. Displacing the dead animal from village premises is a work, done by the untouchables, which the dalit community people have been doing since centuries till today.

There is a great relation with musical instruments and skin of dead animals. It seems that prior to the use of skin in the musical instruments, music must have been formed. This statement is of course supported by the folktale and story of the community. Determination of the type of skin of different animal for use in different instrument is a tedious job. This experiment must have taken thousand years in the process of permutation and combinations. Finally, they might have adopted to use the cow skin in *Nishan* and calf skin in *Tasha* and so on.

This *baza* is locally known as *Gana baza/Domb baza/Hadi baza*. Its enjoyable and attractive rhythms might have won the heart of other community and hence all the community hiring the *baza* and utilize, enjoy in different functions and festivals. The name symbolizes the primitiveness of that community. This may be the cultural property of a particular community which gives its identity as well.

The people of *Domb /Ganaa* community sing drum and dance through out day and night in the occasion like marriage ceremony, and other festivals. Most of the people can sing the songs and almost all the people are able to dance. The form of music is being articulated by the type of song, the singer sings. The most popular group of songs are *Dalkhai, Jaiphula,Baria, Rasarkeli, Kashi kadali, Chapkarati*, etc. By the way of singing different songs asks for different kind of rhythms.

Example of some of the songs along with their related music can be given below as

Rasarkeli Songs (Odia Version)

Rasarkeli re.....

Baate baate jaauthili

Maadideli haada,

Tate aane paali jara

Mote laage dara,

Chhadi dia dhabaaghara naagara
 Chhadaaibi jara rasa jaachaaliya re.....
 Jaa chaali jaa Saalebhataa naagara
 Panjaraa dhurkuta rasa
 Jaa chaali jaa re.....

(8)

Oh ! sweet play
 While going on the road
 I stepped over a bone,
 You are suffering from fever and I afraid of it
 Please leaves your concrete house
 I will relieve you from fever
 Oh sweet play.

Music played for this song can be quoted in the following manner

For this song though four musical instruments i.e *Nishan, Dhol, Mahuri* and *Tasha* are being basically used. However, the grammar rhythm is given below only for *Nishan* in the form of word.

Gi jaan gi jaan gi jaan gin

Gin jaa naa jaa naa , janaa janaa , gaadaan (9)

While beating the *Nishan* with the help of leather *Chemthaa* (stick), the drummer usually drums 8 *Chemthaa* in left hand and 10 *Chemthaa* in the right hand to complete a round of music *Paar*(one round is called *Paar*). This round is repeated 3 to 4 times at a stage without interruption.

Similarly, a rhythm used for *Devi / devat* can be given in the following manner. In case of *Devi/Devata Paar* usually song is not sang. The *Par* is known to both the *bajaniaa* and *Devi/Devata*. Hence, accordingly the music is played and the *Devi/Devata* dances. An example of *Bhima Budha* is given

Ja na ja na gidna gin

Gin jana jana gidna gin (10)

Here, in the left hand 6 times is beaten over the *Nishan* and in right hand 9 times is beaten to complete the round. This round of music goes continuously for a longer period until the *devat* desires to stop.

These songs are sung in their own language. It is not known that who has written these songs. However some of the people are there in the community called *Geet kudia* or *Gahank*(Singer), who usually sings more and more number of songs, especially in the festive occasions restlessly. This is not their business but definitely it is their practice and fascination and demand of the community. These people are the instant poet, who can immediately frame a song by observing a situation, incidence, happenings and reproduce it, in the favorable rhythms which attract the mass.

It is learnt from the culture and tradition of the *Domb /Ganaa* community is that, these community people are the real inventor of these musical instruments, variety of songs and different poses of dances. One can realize about the fact from the instrument and the kind of skin they have been using and the work entrusted by the society since time immemorial. What we see today is the finished and saturated version of music.

Now a day, it is seen that the musical instrument manufacturing company have been preparing different kind of *Dhol,Tasha* etc. But they are not using the original skin of calf, goat, and cow etc. rather using synthetic materials. Therefore the commercial drummers are not able to produce the sweet musical tone as it would have been produced by the skin. Hence the importance of the *Ganna baza* is deteriorating gradually and band parties are filling the space.

There are particular rhythms for particular *Duma*. These rhythms are called *Par* which is well known to the *Gana/Domb* drummer. Hence, accordingly the *Domb* musicians, as per the requirement, produce the rhythms and satisfy the need of *Devi/Devata* for their dances along with other activity. There are number of instances where the *Devi/Devata* stand over the *Dhol /Nishan* and dance .This events proves the relationship of *Devata* with musician community.

Birtiaa: Running encyclopedia of dalit community

Birtiaa are the specially designated persons, who use to move from village to village and family to family. They have lot of social importance and responsibility in the *Ganaa* or *Domb* community. They usually visit villages, when there is a social gathering like marriage, death ceremony etc. In this occasion they sing various kinds of songs with *Dambaru*, a special kind of musical instrument. The common theme of the songs are usually the origin of the community, ancestral rituals they have been performing, livelihood earning pattern of past, problems and sorrows of the community and how they got this instrument from lord Shiv to use for the betterment of the society.

In the past Sudras were denied to have access over the mainstream education. Hence, they had no option but to document their own literature and culture in a written form. Probably for this reason these communities might have assigned some persons, who will keep the entire cultural and traditional customs of the community in their memory and transfer the same in the different social gathering so that more and more people can understand, internalize and remember about themselves and their ancestor. It is in a practice from generation to generation to make the community people aware about their own culture and literature (11)

An example of oral poetry can be cited here for better understanding. The content of poetry is as below,

“*Ganaa* or *Domb* or *Pana* communities are the weaving communities. Once upon a time they were earning their livelihood out of the weaving business. This is related regarding the instrument they use in weaving. A lady is narrating her domestic problem in this poetry

“Please purchase a weaving machine

For me

Please help me in spinning and

In thread joining

Please help me to sort the cotton,

My dear

Give me ring for my ear

Ornament (Guna) for nose.

Give cloth for my waist

Ring for toe

Please tie the '*bue*' thread

(*Bue*-Specially tied in the beginning of marriage ceremony)

Another stanza of the same poem speaks about the protest of the woman against the torture of the man:

Younger and elder brother-in-law

Took me holding my hand

They did not take rice

I prepared cake for them

Brother-in- law

Please get up and take rice

I have prepared a tasty curry of gourd

I will go with you Raigarpatna

If you beat me so,

How long I will live

Can you see the fire wood inside the hearth?

And cautiously beat me

Or else

I may not live for a longer period (12)

This kind of poetry they narrate and sing by beating the *Dambaru* (a musical instrument) in the early morning of a house they visit and social gathering. All the people listen and even make some query about their culture and tradition.

Cultural Identity and Interpretation

Cultural heritage in dalit community, especially of western Odisha is remarkable. Its rich tradition speaks about their social structure, anthropological importance and uniqueness in maintaining identity.

The uniqueness adhered in different rituals performed in marriages; death ceremony witnesses many things which are not seen in the culture of so called upper caste. In dalit community it starts right from the early age of the girl. Usually girl child before being attending her puberty, she has to attend a ritual called *Kanabara*. Without *Kanabara* if any girl gets her maturity, the community people don't prefer to take her as a bride. Therefore it is performed prior to getting her maturity. In this tradition a miniature form of marriage is being performed with a dummy groom with all formality which is performed in the normal marriage. This is totally opposite to the Brahminical culture where they perform thread ceremony to the young male child.

Buasen anaa is another tradition, which is also applicable in the case of a bride; whose marriage date is fixed with a bride-groom before the marriage. In this case, if *Nuakhai* like great festival etc. falls in between, then the girl is usually invited to the would be in-law's house. In this situation, of course the bride is not allowed to share bed with her future husband but she is allowed to take part in the normal traditional worship and other related activity. After the festival is over again the girl goes back to her parent's house. This tradition of bringing the would be daughter-in-law to her would be father-in-law's house is called *Buasen anaa*.

During the marriage ceremony , the groom wears a *khagalaa*(a kind of ornament used in the neck by the women made up of silver) or holds a piece of metal. The tradition speaks that during marriage the groom wears turban and uses good cloths, as a result the *Indra* of heaven becomes jealous and kills with his *Bajra*. Therefore, to protect himself from the *Bajra* the dalit groom holds metal or wears *Khagala*.

This tradition of the dalit instigates the readers to open some of the pages of history and epics. The history and *purana* speaks that the Aryan invaded India and finally defeated the aboriginals called *Asura* or Non-aryans and ruled over them. While ruling over, if any problem was occurring they were calling *Indra* the king of heaven (Devata) through performing *Yagyan*. "Indra was the biggest intruder *devatas*, in his physique and strength too. Being repeatedly defeated at the hands of the *Assur*, kings of *Bharatvarsa*, the vandal invaders, the *Arya devatas*, decided to choose the strongest amongst them as their warlord. And Indra was appointed as the

military commander-in-chief of the *Devatas*. Then started the saga of the series of wars and battles between the *Assura* and the foreign invaders under the leadership of Indra” (13). To solve the problem the *Indra* was coming to this land and killing the *Ashura* the so called enemies with his arms called *Bajra*. To day’s dalit being the *Ashura* of the past, they may be keeping metals to protect themselves from the *Bajra* of *Indra*.

Again, there is a system in this community that, during marriage, instead of giving dowry the bride’s father receives some money from the groom’s father. This money is called *harza*. This is, on the other way, a kind of selling of girls. The groom’s father gives money, because one adult member is being added to their family to earn. Now a day a handsome of money is not given but to maintain the tradition and custom, even one rupee is also given in the name of *harzaa* which is legalized by the society.

Similarly, soon after a child is born, its parental *duma* is determined by the family head or community priest. The community people believe that a child is born along with inheriting some characters of, any one fore-father and accordingly that child is treated and honoured in different festivals and occasions. This speaks that the soul of death person does not go to heaven, rather it again come to newborn’s body and sustain in the world.

In the genetic science the character of some one is being determined by two ways i.e. through genotypic and phenotypic character (14). May be in the name of *Duma*, they determine the phenotypic character of a new born child. However, it is sure that they don’t know the word “phenotypic character” as well as scientific principle behind it but were performing the scientific activity in the name of customs.

Godhanaa Khaal: A step towards scientific sanitary measures

This is another typical tradition found in the dalit community of Odisha. In this case when a child is born, mother of the child is kept in a separate room of a house called *Pilaahaari Ghar*(birth place). Generally, all the outsiders even some of the households are not allowed to enter in to this room and touch the new born baby. They think that, if all the outsiders will touch and see the new born child, the bad eye of the viewers may reduce the health of the child. As a result, if some body enters and touches, he /she are treated as unclean and needs to have a special bath. This process is called *Chirkitia*. As such it is a scientific fact that, if the entire outsider will touch the newborn they may transmit some contagious disease which they may be having with them. To avoid this disease transmission they have adopted this method as customs.

To remain safer from this kind of unforeseen situations, they prepare a special kind of temporary place by covering with bushes for bathing of both newborn child and mother. No one is allowed to use this special bathing place except mother and new born child. Adjacent to the bathing place a drainage tank is dugged, where all the used water and waste of the genital tract after giving birth are stored. Digging of this particular tank is carried out either by husband or in the absence of husband; brother-in-law (younger brother of husband). This waste storage tank is called *Godhna Khal*. Until the newborn attains at least seven days, this tank is being used and after that it is buried and not required to use further.

They think that all the dirt of mother's womb as well as of newborn's body should not be thrown out hither and thither .They should be kept in one place so that disposal will be quick and comfortable. Sanitary measures can be ascertained from this cultural tradition of the community.

During this period, mother is always advised to drink, cooked juice of horse gram. She is also advised to use turmeric over the entire body while bathing. This may be a primitive idea of the community but when mother gives birth to a child, she requires protein rich diet to compensate the loss. Horse gram is a grain and having lot of protein in it. Dalit community people must not know the scientific protein content of the horse gram but they know the advantage of it. This concept may be an undocumented research of long centuries at their level.

In the similar way, turmeric has got antiseptic quality. During giving birth, lot of aberrations in the genital tract occurs which can be prevented by applying turmeric over the body. This is also an undocumented research of the community.

Marhaa Nishan: A means of communication

“Music is a means of communication” was a tradition of Domb /Ganaa Community. *Marha Nishan*(Death Drum) is one of the best examples of this statement.

When some body dies in a village, it becomes very difficult to inform all the near and dear to attend the burial ceremony. Therefore, they had discovered a means to inform all the relatives of the nearby village through drumming *Nishan*. In this case, a *Nishan* drummer goes to the top of the house (to use this top of house as a mobile tower) and drums the instrument in a particular rhythm, which is recognized by the society people. This system is called *Marha Nishan*. Whoever listen this rhythms belonging to the same community, they could able to know that some body has died from their own community. They believe that the sound of the iron *Nishan* covered with skin goes very faster and longer distance. This is being recognized by the people of other village or even people from same village engaged in other work in different place (15). These rhythms as a customary

moral responsibility which instigate them to come to the village .They identify the direction of the sound and accordingly immediately rush to that village to attend the burial ceremony. This rhythm of musical instrument gives information, and promotes the social risk and responsibility of the persons.

Pitaa Bhaat: Discovery converted in to tradition

There is a tradition that if some body dies in some one's family, they don't cook food for consecutive three days. During this mourning period the neighbors provide food for them and show their condolence. The neighbors cook the food and add some *neem* leaf in it which is called *Pita Bhaat* or bitter rice.

In the same way a small branch of neem leaf is also used to repel the fly from the dead body waiting for arrival of the relatives for burial. Flie helps in formation of maggots by defecating in the dead carcass. Therefore neem leaf is used to keep away from defecation of fly

Neem is a medicinal plant. This plant has been intermingled with the culture of the dalit society which may be a primitive discovery converted in to tradition since time immemorial.

Dalit women and their place in the society

Dalit women play vital role in the family as well as in the community. She is the person who actually takes the responsibility of maintaining the family. They are not dominated as like the women of other community. Some of the cultural events and instances thereon can be cited to visualize the place of woman in dalit community.

One of the most primitive and primary cultural identities of dalit community is Duma puja. This is mostly worshiped in the different festivals, in different occasions of the year. While worshipping, the eldest women of the family play a pivotal role. For any kind of praying and worship this community, need not require any priest in the pidar; rather the eldest daughter-in-laws of the house act as main priest. After her formal worship, male members along with other members of the family go and pay their respect to the duma.

Dalit woman make her own male choice for marriage and not compelled by her family members. Even *Paisaamudi* or *Udhuliaa* marriage is a form of marriage where a girl choice her partner and straight way goes to

the in-laws house. This incidence is declared in the society later on and legalized by the same society members with some fines and other social negotiations. This is, of course, not a regular form of marriage, however this system is not banned by the community rather they validate it in a formal way and give respect to the option of the woman.

Again, she also acts as one of the important work force in the family and earns equal amount of money as the man does. Therefore, in the process of marriage *Harza* is paid to the bride's fathers.

Remarriage is a common phenomenon in the society. Usually the widow prefers or family members of the widow give preference to the widow to marry her brother-in-law, if suitably available. In case, the age gap between widow and brother-in-law is more or the brother-in-law is already married then option becomes open. In this case widow can marry any one as available in the community. Other young male also don't hesitate to accept widows/divorcee which is a common tradition of the community.

Cultural harmony Vs. Caste hegemony

Domb is a community which is seen in almost all part of the undivided India (Pakistan and Bangladesh). There are more than 6000 caste in India. The prominent and dominated in respect of population of untouchable caste are Domb, Pana, Ghasi, Chamar, Hadi, Dhoba, Kandara, Bauri, Namasudra in Orissa.

If we look to the culture of above untouchable castes along with some tribes, we can see lot of similarity in it; although they live in different geographical location. They are also interdependent in earning their livelihood and cultural celebration. In Odisha the *Chamar* people do the leather wok. Leather /skin are being used in different musical instrument which the *Ganaa/Domb* presently brings from the *Chamar* community. *Ghasi* is another untouchable caste. They prepare the *Mahuri* instrument. The base part of the *Nishan* is made up of iron which is being taken care by *Blacksmith*. The base part of the *Tasha* is prepared by the potter.

Earlier, all these different parts relating to *Ganaa/Domb* baza was being prepared by *Ganaa/Domb* or untouchables of the past. In course of time when more and more division of the caste went on, some of the minor group from the untouchable might have alienated and formed sub-group like *Ghasi* and *Hadi* etc. This sub-group though might have separated and identified as a caste in the hierarchy, may be still involved in manufacturing the baza. As a result, in the contemporary time although *Domb/Ganaa* people drum the music but musical instrument is prepared with collective effort of multi caste and culture. Earlier all these caste were known as Sudra.

These untouchable castes may be of same origin but in the hierarchy structure presently they are counted as higher and lower caste and hate each other. The so called lower untouchable castes are from sudra community which has already been established in varna system.

In the mass function also the cultural unity is very much visible. Whenever there is any festival, the entire village people irrespective of castes worship the village deity. In these instances either the *Gond or Kondh* or Gardener community people act as priest and the *Ganaa/Domb* community bazania drum the music. Here, both the drummer as well as priest is indispensable and interdependent. The place where worship is donning is called *Gudi*. In the *Gudi* premises in fact caste supremacy is not considered on the basis of high or low, rather the *devi/devata* touch, embrace the untouchables and even dance over the musical instrument. There is no discrimination in *Gudi* in the name of caste which specifies the cultural harmony of different community. But the same people show different attitude, when they come back from the *Gudi* premises and manifest their caste hegemony.

Therefore, a communal effort is existed to build up a cultural heritage of dalit community which reflects the cultural harmony of caste though caste hegemony in a brahminical form is clearly distinct.

A common Origin

Though caste hierarchy is very much rampant and atrocities are common in day to day life, still culture speaks that different castes belongs to SC/ST/OBC are of same origin. Many *Duma Devi/Devatas* are same and usually worshiped by most of the SC/ST/OBC communities. These *Devi/Devatas* are *Mahalakhama, Budharaja, Bhima Budha, Mangal* and many others. *Mahalakhma* is worshiped both by *Ganaa* as well as *Gouda* community. In *Ganaa* community some of the family enshrine *Mahalakhama* as pidar devata whereas in *Gouda* community it is worshiped as a community devata. Similarly *Budharaja*, otherwise known as *Budhadeo* is being worshiped by both *Gond* and *Ganaa* community. Again *Bhima Budha* is common to *Ganaa, Goud* and *Gond*. In the same way *Patneswari, Mangla* are worshiped in *Ganaa* community and the same *duma* is worshiped by *Gond, Gouda* and other touchable and untouchable community. There is number of examples which can be cited from different sudra community. Typically, either for the *Devi* or *Devata* or deity of the above said community (Sudra), usually the *Ganaa/Domb* music is required and drummed by the *Ganaa/Domb* people. The desired rhythms needed by the *Devi/ Devata* are only known and recognized by this community people. Even a complete form of an instrument like *Nishan* and *Dhol* is kept inside the recognized temple like *Samaleswari, Patneswari, Manikeswari* although the visitor having leather belt in waist are prohibited to enter in to the temple.

Worship of bow is seen both in the *Ganaa* (caste), *Kandara*(caste) as well as *Kondh*(tribe) community, which speaks about the similarity in their origin.

Surname: A caste identity

Surname plays a great role in identifying the caste in India. Animal, Bird, Metal, Matter, Place, Reptile are the totem of the dalit, adivashi and other backward castes of India. There are certain surnames which are commonly used by both SC/ST/OBC like *Sunani*, *Bag*, *Nag*, *Naik*, *Chhatria*, *Hati*, *Majhi*, *Jena*, *Patra* etc. These are as similar as *devi/devat Duma* worshiped in their respective Pidar. In case of upper caste *Gotra* determines the origin of a clan. *Gotra* are usually happened to be the name of *Rishi* like *Bhardwaj*, *Kashyap*, *Bashista* etc. Therefore, to avoid inbreeding, in the family of so called higher caste; who are identified as per their *Gotra*, don't arrange their marriage within the same *Gotra*. In their case surname is not important. Even though surname is same but the *Gotra* is different then they go for marriage which is recognized by the society. In case of dalit community the girls and boys having same surname is not allowed for marriage, as they are treated as brother and sister. They mean, same surname of people, may be of different geographical location are counted themselves, are from single source of origin.

Even the people from different castes like SC/ST/OBC having same surname treat one another as brother. This speaks about their same source of origin and may be of same community, they were belonging, before the caste division in the society.

Therefore, surname not only determines the caste but also speaks about the unity among the community which has been fragmented in the name of caste.

Conclusion

Dalit folklore in the form of music, dance festivals, worship, songs etc gives rise to unique originality of dalit. The cultural tradition proves regarding the primitiveness of the community. Anthropological and Historical events can be derived from each of the cultural events, if interpreted properly. Unfortunately, the caste identity of dalit has pushed them to such an insulted heinous area of the society that their noble culture and traditions are undermined in all spheres. The entire cultural heritage has become untouchable and placed in an unidentified space as like their caste. However, the folk of dalit is not simply a folk but a running evidence of their originality and identity. This altogether, gives rise to communal harmony and similarity among dalit, tribes and OBCs in spite of rampant caste hegemony and hierarchy.

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Empowering the Identity: Postcolonial Autobiographical Writing

Hitesh B Joshi

Over the past half – century, Postcolonial literatures and postcolonial studies¹ have gained the attention of more and more readers and scholars throughout the world. Writers as Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka from Nigeria, Salman Rushdie and Arundhati Roy from India, Derek Walcott from the Caribbean, Seamus Heaney from Ireland, Margaret Atwood and Michael Ondaatje from Canada, Peter Carey and Patrick White from Australia, and J.M. Coetzee and Nadine Gordimer from South Africa have been prominent when major literary awards such as the Booker Prize or the Nobel Prize have been announced, and their works now appear on numerous school and university syllabus. Concurrently, their writing has provided the nourishment for a variety of postcolonial theories concerning the nature of such works, approaches to reading them, and their significance for reading and understanding other literary, philosophical and historical works. Indeed, the production of introductions to postcolonial theories has become a major industry.²

However, in this research paper I will seek to focus on the literary texts rather than the theories, and to give a general sense of the issues and choices which inform the writing and reading of those texts. I will discuss the ways in which these issues have changed over the decades, involving questions of genre, form and language, as well as social and political concerns; it will also discuss how these texts may be read and responded to in different contexts.

Another strategy frequently found in postcolonial writing sidesteps entering into dialogue on the colonizer's terms by grounding the text in autobiography, starting from the self as the central point of reference. Thus, as Chaucer's Wife of Bath challenged the dogma of male clerks and scholars by asserting 'the authority of experience', many

postcolonial writers have drawn on their childhood experience sometimes as a means of conveying pre colonial culture, a relatively innocent world preceding the impact of foreign educational systems, sometimes conveying the vulnerability of a child to the dictates of colonial power, and at the same time offering a perspective which challenges the premises and beliefs that are taken for granted in the hegemonic culture accepted by adult readers. In these ways postcolonial autobiography is often read differently from autobiographies produced in metropolitan context. For whereas metropolitan autobiographies are more typically works which seek to explore and assert the writer's individualism, postcolonial autobiographies are often written to portray the author as a representative of his cultural group, as in the case of Camara Laye's *Enfant Noir* (Dark Child) (1953) or as the embodiment of a new nation's struggle to come into being and its establishment of a cultural and ideological identity, as in the autobiographies of Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Jawaharlal Nehru and Kwame Nkrumah.

James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) and *Ulysses* (1922) both draw attention to their status as autobiographical fiction, while at the same time problematizing the issue of physical and mental colonization. Like Yeats, Joyce reveals in *A Portrait* the developing consciousness of his protagonist, Stephen Dedalus, as a divided self, who must steer his way past the institutional dogmas of religion, family and nation in order to become a writer who can 'forge in the smithy of [his] soul the uncreated conscience of [his] race'. Stephen - like Nehru, Nkrumah and Indira Gandhi, like Maud Gonne, Yeats and Padraic Pearse (one of the leaders of the 1916 Easter Rising) - conceives of his country as feminine. Thus in thinking of Emma Cleary, the woman he would like to woo, and who seems not to respond to him, he merges her image with that of Ireland:

And yet he felt that, however he might revile and mock her image, his anger was also a form of homage. He had left the classroom in disdain that was not wholly sincere, feeling that perhaps the secret of her race lay behind those dark eyes upon which her long lashes flung a quick shadow. He had told himself bitterly, as he walked through the streets, that she was a figure of the womanhood of her country, a batlike soul waking to the consciousness of itself in darkness, and secrecy, and loneliness. 12

Although *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is based closely on Joyce's own experience-his family, the school and university he attended, the culture of Dublin in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century-we should be careful not to merge the author completely with Stephen. The critic James Olney maintains that 'any autobiography constitutes a psychological-philosophical imitation of the autobiographer's personality'.¹³ In autobiographical fiction the act of imitation of the author's personality in certain

periods and in specific contexts is made more evident by the adoption of a pseudonym for the central protagonist, and perhaps the use of indirect free speech, or the sense of an interior monologue, rather than first person narrative to convey the consciousness of its subject. Joyce's subsequent novel, *Ulysses*, portrays a slightly older Stephen, who is much more self-conscious and sceptical about the identification of Ireland with Cathleen ni Houlihan or with other female figures. He also parodies and criticizes forms of Irish nationalism which hark back to a nostalgic precolonial or rural utopia, and which promulgate a singular racial identity. Hence the other major protagonists in *Ulysses* are Leopold and Molly Bloom, who are respectively of Hungarian Jewish and English-Spanish descent. Nevertheless, Joyce's opposition to Britain's colonial rule, as well as to the hegemony of the Roman Catholic Church, was clearly recognized by his contemporaries. Thus the pro-British provost of Trinity College, J. P Mahaffy, declared that at Joyce's writings demonstrated that 'it was a mistake to establish

a separate university for the aborigines of the island, for the corner-boys who spit into the Liffey.' Mahaffy's comment illustrates clearly the racial and class distinctions established and maintained by Ireland's ruling elite in this period, and their similarity to the distinctions made by ruling elites in other colonized countries. In both novels, the issue of nationalism and the writer's responsibility to his nation is debated explicitly and implicitly.

Robert Fraser comments on the significance of first person narrative in the postcolonial context as a response to colonial texts which in anthropological mode 'invariably describe the colonised human as "other"; and just as invariably in the third person plural.' In this context the 'first person singular, may also become 'the representative I' as Fraser terms it, 'in novels in which the first person singular is explicitly construed as identical, and coterminous, with the nation itself.'" But it is also significant that many of the key colonial texts to which postcolonial writers have 'written back' are narrated in the first person -for example, *Robinson Crusoe (1719)*, *Jane Eyre (1847)* and *Heart of Darkness (1902)*. Each of these novels, like many colonial travel books and anthropological texts, constructs the white European male or female observer/narrator as normative. One function of postcolonial autobiographies is to resituate the central perspective, the seeing 'eye' or 'I; and at the same time dramatize the process of the indigenous speaker's reconstruction or reassertion of his or her identity.

Writing about European autobiographies, Olney has commented that for most readers the particular interest is 'the isolate uniqueness that nearly everyone agrees to be the primary quality and condition of the individual and his experience.'" With regard to African writing, however, he argues that community is more important than the individual, the life much more socially oriented, so that he considers 'autobiography from

Africa less an individual phenomenon than a social one" The generalization Olney makes about African writing, whether fictional or explicitly autobiographical, might be disputed, but arguably postcolonial writers are as much concerned with the social context, the political and cultural forces which impinge on their community, as with the individuality of the protagonist. Nevertheless, the individuality, or perhaps the independence of the protagonist is at stake, alongside the independence of the nation to which he claims allegiance. Much early postcolonial writing addresses itself to the dual task of giving both the community and the individual expression, writing 'from the inside' in opposition to the colonial outsider's dismissal of either cultural value or individual subjectivity within that community. But there is also a tension, an ambivalence, inherent in that dual task. In both *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses*, Joyce vividly, one might claim lovingly, recreates the Dublin he felt he could no longer live in if he were to become a writer. Yeats's autobiographical poetry and prose dramatizes his commitment to Ireland, as he strives to change it and to be true to his own divided and conflicting selves.

In the West Indies C.L.R. James's *Beyond a Boundary* (1963) and his early semi-autobiographical novel *Minty Alley* (1963) depict the protagonist's growing awareness of the ways in which colour and class may circumscribe the expansion of the self. George Lamming's influential autobiographical novel *In the Castle of My Skin*, portraying a childhood and adolescence in Barbados, was published in 1953. In later decades, Kamau Brathwaite and Derek Walcott produced poetic autobiographies in *X?Self* (1987) and *Another Life* (1973) respectively, while V. S. Naipaul drew on his father's life to write *A House for Mr Biswas* (1961), and made fiction and autobiography inextricable in *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987). Autobiography and autobiographical fiction and poetry have also been important genres for Caribbean women writers, including Michelle Cliff, Zee Edgell, Lorna Goodison, Jamaica Kincaid, Paule Marshall, Jean Rhys and Olive Senior. Challenging the concept of autobiography as centering on one individual, Sistren, the Jamaican women's collective, has produced a collective autobiography, *I ionhenrtGal* (1986), which transfers the oral narratives of working-class women to a single written-text.

Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin*, like *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, explores a history of mental colonization which the protagonist seeks to escape through exile. In his Introduction to the novel, written thirty years after its first publication, Lamming wrote of the impact of British colonialism on the psychology of Barbadians during the 1930s and 1940s, a community which on the one hand took pride in its relationship to the 'Mother Country; identifying itself as 'Little England', and on the other hand was aware of the need for an independent economic and cultural existence:

It was not a physical cruelty. Indeed, the colonial experience of my generation was almost wholly without violence. No torture, no concentration camp, no mysterious

disappearance of hostile natives, no army encamped with orders to kill. The Caribbean endured a different kind of subjugation. *It* was a terror of the mind; a daily exercise in self-mutilation. Black versus Black in a battle for self-improvement."

This mental colonization, linked to a rigid class structure, created in Lamming's view 'a fractured consciousness, a deep split in its sensibility which now raised difficult problems of language and values; the whole issue of cultural allegiance between imposed norms of White Power, represented by a small numerical minority, and the fragmented memory of the African masses: between white instruction and Black imagination'.^o Although Lamming differs from Joyce in adopting for some episodes a first person narrator, and in marking a relationship between author and protagonist through identifying him simply with the first initial of the author's first name (G.), he takes a similar trajectory and structure to Joyce by enacting the development of his protagonist, G., in successive contexts: family, school, community, adolescent awareness. Thus both authors depict the consciousness of an entire community to which the protagonist is attached, but from which he also seeks detachment. In both novels an ambivalent parting is achieved at the end, as the protagonist rejects a particular call to nationalism based on racial identification, and looks towards departure from the island home. Some readers would argue that at this point Lamming is more distanced from his protagonist than Joyce was from his: Ngugi wa Thiong'o, for example, sees Lamming as endorsing Trumper's support for Black Power and diasporic racial awareness for those of African descent as a means of casting off the cultural and economic 'nets' of British colonialism.

In autobiographical writings by women in Africa, India, and the West Indies, the search for identity and self-fulfilment is even more problematical. One collection of critical and creative writing on colonial and postcolonial women's texts is entitled *A Double Colonisation* referring to the oppression of 'native' women by both the colonial and the patriarchal local cultures which confine women to domestic and childbearing duties, and discriminate in terms of both gender and ethnicity or colour. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Jean Rhys portrayed the traumatic effects of such double colonization in *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966); she also revealed the sense of disorientation and loss of identity experienced by her protagonist in her more autobiographical novel, *Voyage in the Dark* (1934). Indeed, many autobiographical works by postcolonial women narrate a descent into disorientation and madness in the face of the impossible demands and denial of worth that they face. These works include Bessie Head's *A Question of Power* (1973), Keri Hulme's *The Bone People* (1984), Janet Frame's *An Angel at My Table* (1984) and Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*. In the novels by Head, Hulme and Dangarembga, the women protagonists are assaulted physically and psychologically by men who **feel their own fragile status** in emerging or newly independent nations

threatened, and by conflicting expectations regarding their role and sexual attractiveness, an attractiveness based on Western norms of appearance and behaviour.

Other women writers have avoided the issue of sexuality by focusing on childhood and early adolescence, as do male writers such as Michael Antony, Christopher Drayton and Lamming. Indeed, Alison Donnell argues that although the dominant focus on childhood in canonical Caribbean writing has effectively used the child's vision to expose 'the complex power structures of colonial institutions and power structures ... through the child's encounter with the school, the church, the cinema and the people of the communities in **which they live; this emphasis on childhood experience 'has nevertheless limited the critical response to Caribbean literature in one important way:** it has arrested the discussion of sexuality'.² Thus Merle Hodge's *Crick-Crack Monkey* (1970), Zee Edge1J's *Beka Lamb* (1982) and Jamaica Kincaid's *Annie Joh n* (1986) all portray their protagonists' growing awareness of discrimination in terms of gender, class and colour, but end their narratives before the discovery of sexual identity. One can see a similar pattern in Australian autobiography and autobiographical fiction, though the emphasis on childhood is less prevalent there. One of Australia's best-known autobiographical novels, Miles Franklin's *My Beautiful Career* (1901) focuses mainly on the narrator's early, almost Edenic childhood on a remote bush farm, contrasted with her teenage years in a harsher and poorer environment on a dairy farm, where she feels culturally deprived and oppressed by the expectation that she should forget her ambition to be a writer and marry. Published in 1901, the year the Australian states became united under a federal government, and thus formed a new nation, Franklin's novel both endorses the ardent nationalism that led up to federation and critiques the masculine ethos of that nationalism. Early reviewers of the novel praised its 'Australianness' but were made uneasy by its feminism and romanticism. Thus Henry Lawson, Australia's leading writer in this period, wrote in his **Preface to the first edition**, 'I don't know about the girlishly emotional parts of **the book**- I leave that to girl readers to judge; but the descriptions of bush life and scenery came startlingly and painfully real to me, and ... as far as they are concerned, the book is true to Australia, the truest I ever read.'² Another early and influential reviewer, P. R. Stephensen, voices the critical assumption that has informed discussions of women's writing for centuries, that women simply transpose their lives on to the page, writing 'diaries' - seen as a female genre - rather than creative literature. Stephensen considered that, "Miles Franklin" has simply turned her girlish diary into a book; she has made literature out of the little things that lay around her-and this is what gives the book its value.' However, he also endorsed the book strongly as 'the very first Australian novel', and in an interesting merging of the woman and the country, reminiscent of other nationalist autobiographies discussed above, claimed, '[T]he author has the Australian mind, she speaks Australian language, utters Australian thoughts, and looks at things from an Australian point of view absolutely ... her book is a warm

embodiment of Australian life, as tonic as bush air, as aromatic as bush trees, and as clear and honest as bush sunlight.

My Brilliant Career has reemerged as a canonical text in various guises - as a nationalist fiction, as an autobiographical document about country life in the 1890s, and in the second half of the twentieth century as a feminist statement. It is in this role that it was endorsed and republished in 1980 by Virago Press with a Preface by Virago's Australian editor, Carmen Callil. More recently, critics such as Ian Henderson have addressed the apparent inconsistencies in this autobiographical novel and the problem of reconciling Franklin's apparent disdain for 'peasantdom' with her dedication of the book to 'the honest bush folk who toil for their future', or her romantic aspiration for an ideal partner and her 'feminist' refusal of marriage. Henderson argues that earlier readings of her text relate to the gendering of genres and modes, in which realism is seen as masculine, romance as feminine, autobiography where 'a woman finds her forewarns the voice' as feminist. Instead, he analyses *My Brilliant Career* as a 'performative' text in which Franklin consciously adopts a variety of gendered genres: 'Within *My Brilliant Career* sometimes realism is dominant, sometimes the romance mode, but neither mode is consistent for long, and even while "dominant"; each mode's "other" irrupts into the narrative. In the process, then Sybylla delivers a self-conscious performance of her displacement in either gendered mode, preferring to roleplay.

The performance of gender, and in this case the questioning of notions of a stable sexual identity, are crucial motifs in another Australian semi- autobiographical fiction, Patrick White's *The Twyborn Affair* (1979). Here the protagonist shifts between identities as Eudoxia, Eddie and Eadith. As Eudoxia, [wyborn is a transvestite and 'wife' to his Greek lover Angelo; as Eddie he works, as White himself did, as a 'jackeroo', an apprentice farmer amid an aggressively masculine society; as Eadith Trist, s/he becomes the madam of a sophisticated brothel catering to the English aristocracy in London (this part *is not* autobiographical). In this novel the struggle for national independence and self-validation is paralleled by the quest for acceptance as a homosexual. White's autobiography *Flaws in the Glass* (1981) is explicit about his life as a writer, and his complex identity as an Australian and a homosexual in what was then a homophobic culture.

Robert Fraser sees Franklin's *My Brilliant Career* as typical of many settler **colony autobiographical works in its narcissism, and its use** of 'the colonial first person singular'. It is also comparable with many other settler autobiographies in its attention to place, its assertion of belonging to a particular locale rather than a particular society, and its refusal to acknowledge the ownership of that locale by indigenous people.

Postcolonial autobiographical writing often plays a significant role in establishing the subject's sense of location and belonging. However, the desire to establish location and belonging may perform differently for settler authors, for indigenous authors, and for writers of mixed race and cultures. Examples of these different functions in autobiographies can be seen in Karen Blixen's *Out of Africa* (1937), Sally Morgan's *My Place* (1987), Bernardine Evaristo's *Lara* (1997), and Michael Ondaatje's *Running in the Family* (1982).

'I had a farm, in Africa, at the foot of the Ngong hills': thus Karen Blixen establishes her ownership, stating that the land once belonged to her and asserting her presence and being in that 'colonial singular first person.' Moreover, we are told a few lines on that this was not just a random piece of land; 'it was Africa distilled up through six thousand feet, like the strong and refined essence of a continent. Nevertheless, the title of this autobiographical work, *Out of Africa*, forewarns the reader that the author no longer belongs. One might read this text as a contest between Blixen and Africa in terms of asserting then rejecting her right to belong, and this perhaps is the narrative entrenched in much settler writing during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In addition to *My Brilliant Career*, one could include here such works as Susanna Moodie's *Roughing it in The Bush* (1852), and more recently, Judith Drake- Brockman's *Wongi Wongi* (2001), written in response to Morgan's *My Place*.

All these works share a lack of interest in the prehistory of the location and the author's family; it is the author who gives the place meaning, and who takes meaning from her presence in that place. Moreover, its significance is contained within the period of the writer's residence. For Blixen, as Gillian Whitlock points out, Africa is represented as the place where a European woman can become herself, powerful and independent. Beyond that period it has no past and no future.

In contrast, Morgan's autobiography begins with a scene in which the author is conspicuously out of place and disempowered, while the affirmative title, *My Place*, suggests a future belonging. This is the opening paragraph:

The hospital again, and the echo of my reluctant feet through the long, empty corridors. I hated hospitals and hospital smells. I hated the bare boards that gleamed with newly applied polish, the dust-free window-sills, and the flashes of shiny chrome that snatched my distorted shape as we hurried past. I was a grubby five-year-old in an alien environment.

Dust-free, sterile and distorting, the hospital is a place where the self is threatened and dissolved, full of wounded or shell-shocked white males, victims of World War II, all of them incomplete. Here the child Sally is called upon to perform the role of daughter to her white father, of compliant little girl, but cannot. The older Sally writes, 'I felt if I said

anything at all, I'd just fall apart. There'd be me, in pieces on the floor. I was full of secret fears. The alien unnaturalness of the hospital is then juxtaposed with Sally's memories of her grandmother's closeness to nature, another bedside scene where she is woken to hear the sound of a bullfrog and the call of a special bird. The opening contrast, between a self distorted and threatened in a sterile white male world, and a self remembered and sustained in connection with her grandmother and nature, sets up the scheme of the autobiography, and the later scenes where Sally becomes an intermediary between her father and her mother, and between the state and the private worlds of her mother's family. **Like the hospital, school, with its rigid and 'unnatural' regulations, presents another public realm in which Sally feels completely alien, whereas her grandmother provides a sympathetic retreat from that world.** The autobiography reiterates a contrast between the new, white imposed and unnatural world, and the older 'natural' world associated with her grandmother, a world which draws its sustenance from close attention to birds, animals and the natural environment, a world rooted both in the land and the past.

But the truth about the past and her grandmother remains mysterious, concealed by a 'white lie' as Sally's mother admits when finally confronted about her aboriginal identity. "All those years, Mum"; I said, "how could you have lied to us all those years?" "It was **only a little white lie,**" she replied sadly." **Thus, while Blixen begins her memoir with the affirmation of her 'self in connection** to the land and ends with the dissolution of that fantasy of belonging, Morgan is concerned with the quest for selfhood, and for an identity which locates her biologically, culturally and geographically. And while Kenya allows Blixen to establish herself as an *exceptional* European woman (and indeed also nourishes exceptional European men such as Denys Finch-Hatton), Morgan seeks to construct a communal identity, dissolved into a common strand of aboriginality and connected to a particular place of origin through the voices of 'ordinary' Aborigines. And whereas Blixen's narrative begins with a clearly focused autobiographical 'I' and then disintegrates at the end into a series of fragments as Finch-Hatton dies and she and her community of servants move away into an unknown future, Morgan's work builds to a climax through a series of connected narratives moving back into the past. For Blixen, her presence in Africa must be self-contained, in terms of both time and place, cut off from past or future; for Morgan, her presence and self-realization in Australia, her future, can be achieved only through a series of historical and geographical journeys, which allow a suppressed past and sense of belonging to come to the surface.

While for Blixen a European identity is taken for granted, and there is plenty of reference to all those artifacts which signal her European culture - the fine china, the silverware, the piano, the books, the furniture, the wine - Morgan's text involves the gradual discovery and recognition of aboriginality. In so doing, she constructs a

generalized aboriginal identity for the reader. This moves from racial identity, the recognition of the significance of her darker skin, and her grandmother's non-European features, towards cultural identity, **through the narration of the experiences of her great-uncle**, her mother and finally her grandmother. Through these stories Morgan also moves away from the confines of an urban location in the suburbs of Perth to the former freedom and sense of belonging in Corunna Downs. Thus her great-uncle Arthur remembers Corunna Downs:

There was some wonderful wildlife on Corunna Downs. There was one little bird, he was a jay or a squeaker, he'd sing out three times and then the rains would come. He was never wrong. While he was there, there was always good feed, but when he was gone, drought! When the little frogs sang out, we knew it was going to rain. They were lovely colours, white and brown with black spots. They were all **different, there wasn't one the same**. They used to get into the cooler and we'd have to clean it out. They were all natural animals. Wonderful creatures.

There were no insecticides to kill the birds. That's why the blackfellas want their own land, with no white man messin' about destroyin' it.

All the people round there, we all belonged to each other. We were the tribe that made the station. The Drake-Brockmans didn't make it on their own. There were only a few white men there, ones that fixed the pumps and sank wells by contract. The blackfellas did the rest.

I remember seein' native people all chained up around the neck and hands, walkin' behind a policeman. They often passed the station that way.

In this reminiscence Arthur Corunna juxtaposes both the claim to the land and the denial of that claim; the ability to know and read a specific natural world articulated in detail, as is sense of community and mutual belonging: 'All the people round there, we all belonged to each other. We were the tribe that made the station.' Against this claim is set the dismissed claim of the Drake-Brockmans, and a history of dispossession and captivity - 'native people all chained up around the neck and hands, walkin' behind a policeman'. As Ngugi wa Thiongo's novels dispute Blixen's claim to ownership through their recounting of historical, legendary ties to the land and the experience of dispossession and imprisonment, so Morgan disputes the claims of the Drake-Brockmans and other white settlers. Moreover, Morgan establishes this aboriginal closeness to nature and communal responsibility as a biological inheritance, figured through the recurring reference to a special bird call, heard by her grandmother, her great-uncle, her sister Jill and herself. Morgan's quest, with her mother and sister, leads her to that place of origin, Corunna, and to being claimed as part of the community by the people who live there. In Morgan's words, 'What had begun as a tentative search for knowledge had grown into a spiritual

and emotional pilgrimage. We had an Aboriginal consciousness now, and were proud of it.' She also declares, 'How deprived we would have been if we had been willing to let things stay as they were. We would have survived, but not as whole people. We would never have known our place.

Sally Morgan's quest stems in part from her hidden identity as a mixed-race Australian, whose whiteness is foregrounded to begin with in that white men's hospital, and whose nonwhite identity is a mystery. Bernardine Evaristo, in her autobiographical verse novel *Lara*, 31 begins with an awareness of her racial mixture (Irish and Nigerian), but like Morgan her narrator must experience a geographical and historical journey of discovery before she can fully acknowledge her Nigerian heritage, and so locate herself back in England. Despite significant differences in the contexts and contents of these two works, there are also interesting similarities. In each case their colour is connected with their sense of unbelonging, of being out of place. Both urban Australia and urban England are seen as the worlds of white people, where black people are perceived as belonging elsewhere. Paradoxically, it is only by going elsewhere, by leaving the city, that the authors can claim their place in the city. Thus *Lara* travels first to Lagos and encounters the world of her father and his relatives, and then to Brazil, where her great-grandfather had been taken as a slave, in order to locate herself in history through its associations with specific places, and then returns to 'London /, [where] Across international time zones / I step out of Heathrow and into my future.' Like Morgan, the artist, she resolves 'to paint slavery out of me, (the Daddy people onto canvas with colour rich strokes; and to 'think of my island, the 'Great' Tippexed out of it- ! Tiny amid massive floating continents, the African one / An embryo within me'.

Both these autobiographies by Morgan and Evaristo share certain scenes or tropes with Ondaatje's autobiographical *Running in the Family*. Neluka Silva has commented on the ways in which the emphasis on hybridity and multiculturalism in this text functions as a counter to the discourse of ethnic nationalism which was becoming so virulent in Sri Lanka in the 1970s and early 1980s,³⁸ Thus the marriage of Ondaatje's partly Tamil father and Burgher mother, the friction between them and their subsequent divorce, has a particular resonance in the context of the ethnic and class tensions in Sri Lanka. As a returnee of mixed race who seeks to retrieve his identity in a Sri Lankan context, Ondaatje must restage those tensions and conflicts, and seek some reconciliation between the attachments to mother and father. 'There are interesting similarities between the scenes in *My Place* and *Running in the Family* where the child must act as intermediary between a violent alcoholic father and the mother who is the victim of his outbursts. ondatje tells how his mother makes her childre act out this intermediary role:

Whenever my father would lapse into one of his alcoholic states she would send the three older children...into my father's room where by now he could hardly talk, let alone

argue. The three of them, well coached, would perform with tears streaming. “Daddy, don’t drink, daddy if you love us, don’t drink, ” while my mother witted outside and listened... These moments embarrassed my older brother and sister terribly; for days after they felt guilty and miserable.

likewise, Sally is sent to negotiate with her father whenever the family has had to flee atnight from one of his alcoholic rages. it is described as a recurring ritual drama:

he always knew when i had come, quietly opening his bedroom door when heheard the creak on the back verandah.

i took up my usual position on the end of his bed and dangled my feet back and forth...

‘Dad, we’ll all come back if you’ll good’ i stated ...[H]e responded with his usual brief, wry smile, and then gave his usual answer, ‘I’ll letyou all come back as long as your grandmother doesn’t’. he had a thing about Nanna.

the scene continues with the father’s attempt to bribe Sally into staying with him, and a demand that she make clear whether her love and loyalty lie with her mother or her father. as in the Ondaatje scenes, the demand for an allegiance to one side rather than another,the stahing of the child as negotiator on behalf of the ‘wronged’ party, is imbued with racial significance (the mother must leave behind her aboriginal parent) and reverberates in the context of the racial politics of the country as whole. in evaristo’s work also, Lara acts as an intermediary between her white grandmother and her Nigerian father, and also learns to act the penitent in face of her father’s harsh beatings; in all three works the father’s presence and the tensions between the parents bring fear, pain and guilt for the children.

All three are also hybrid texts in their use of a mixture of genres. in contrast to Blixen’s univocal text, told entirely from her perspective and in her authoritative voice, Morgan, Evaristo and Ondaatje deploy a mixture of voices, perspective and genres.

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Imagined often become blurred, as in the vivid account of his grandmother floating away in the floods or of his father's last train ride. Indeed, the text ends with the poignant admission that the past cannot be truly known, and that he will never ‘find’ his father, so is unable to see himself in terms of a patriarchal origin and descent. Even the photographs add to this sense of unknowability; rather than confirming the ‘reality’ of those photographed, and allowing us to ‘see’ them as they were, the groups in fancy dress, the parents making ape faces, the streets awash with water, all suggest transient or performed identities, moments of instability. Like Franklin and White, and like

Naipaul's characters in *The Mimic Men* (1967), Ondaatje's use of a mixture of genres denies the notion of a fixed or stable identity, and suggests rather the performance of identities.

Thinking about these autobiographical works, one is struck by how often travel, the move away from a starting place, becomes in postcolonial autobiography a means of locating oneself back in that land. One can think back to *The Interesting Narrative of Otnndah Equiano* (1789), which, after the African prologue, describes a series of journey's to and from England before Equiano finally settles there as an Englishman. Similarly Mary Seacole's *The Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacoie in Man's Lands* (1857), after her Jamaican starting point, describe two journeys to England, where she is rejected before her triumphant return as 'Mother Seacole'. Naipaul's *The Enigma of Arrival* also begins with his persistent mapping of the Wiltshire countryside, before then describing his journey from the Caribbean, his disorientation in London, and then his sense of belonging in Wiltshire again. Like Naipaul, Ondaatje mingles autobiography and travel writing in his *Running in the Family*. For both Naipaul and Ondaatje, England and Sri Lanka are made familiar and at the same time strange by a tradition of writing about them. They come to these countries with a kind of double vision, recognizing the scenes portrayed in books or advertisements yet finding the written or picture book images slightly out of kilter. Thus Naipaul's image of England is both confirmed and amended by the sight of the black-and-white cows on the Wiltshire hillside, a reminder of the images on the tins of condensed milk he remembered from his childhood. But as Tobias Doring points out, Naipaul also revisions the English landscape in terms of his Trinidadian world: the patterns of snowdrifts remind him of the whorls of sand on the beaches he walked on as a child." In Ondaatje's case, however, the recognition of scenes in Sri Lanka is influenced both by his childhood memories and by the reaction of his Canadian-born children to a world which is for them completely new.

The title of Naipaul's autobiographical 'novel'; *The Enigma of Arrival*, encapsulates one aspect of many postcolonial autobiographies. Whereas European autobiographies traditionally map a journey through life to a point of completion or arrival, many postcolonial autobiographies, as Linda Anderson points out, accept a concept of identity which embraces 'contingency, indeterminacy, and conflict:'⁴² For Naipaul, the 'arrival' is always uncertain, enigmatic, possibly yet another departure. However, autobiographies by diasporic writers such as Evaristo, Naipaul or Ondaatje differ from those of writers like Morgan, who assert their recovery of self and place in their 'home' country, or Wole Soyinka, whose trilogy beginning with *Ake* (1981) affirms his origins and belonging in Yoruba culture.

Notes

- (1) For distinctions made between the hyphenated term 'post – colonial' and the unhyphenated 'postcolonial'. Both the terms are not always used consistently, but in general the unhyphenated 'postcolonial' refers to the consequences of colonialism from the time of its first impact – culturally, politically, and economically. Thus 'Postcolonial Studies' takes in colonial literature and history, as well as the literature and art produced after independence has been achieved. 'Post – colonial' with a hyphen tends to refer to the historical period after a nation has been officially recognized as independence and is no longer governed as a colony.
- (2) Quoted by P. Balaswamy in 'A Post – Modern, Provocative, Metropolitan Mother India: Aurora Zogoiby of Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh*' in Rajeshwar Mittapalli and Joel Kuortti, eds., Salman rushdie: *New Critical Insights, 2 vols.* (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2003) II, p.52

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- 1 For distinctions made between the hyphenated term 'post - colonial' and the unhyphenated 'post – colonial' see the glossary.
- 2 See, for example, the books by Peter Childs, Leela Gandhi, Ania Loomba, Bart Moore – Gilbert and Ato Quayson listed in the Biography. See also John Thieme, *Poscolonial studies: The Essential Glossary* (London: Arnold, 2003) and the following anthologies of postcolonial theoretical essays: Patrik Williams and Laura Chrisman, eds, *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory : A Reader* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf,1993) ; Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin ,ed., *Post- colonial Discourse: AN Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell,2001) and Bart Moore – Gilbert, Gareth Stanton and Willy Maley, eds., *Postcolonial Criticism* (London: Longman, 1997).
- 3 Nayantara Sahgal, 'The Schizoph renic Imagination' *Wasafiri: Jurnal of Caribbean, African, Asian and Associated Literatures and film11* (Spring 1990), pp. 17 – 20.
- 4 This conference convened by Bismark in Berlin was attened by fourteen European nations, including Belgium, Britan, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Spain, to determine and share control over Africa. A series of geometric lines, which paid little attention to the boundaries, established by the hundreds of indigenous cultures and regions within the continent, divided Africa

into fifty regions, each allocated to one of the European powers. As H.J. de Blij and Peter O. Muller remark 'The Berlin Conference was Africa's undoing in more ways than one. The colonial powers superimposed their domains on the African continent. By the time independence returned to Africa in 1950, the realm had acquired a legacy of political fragmentation that could neither be eliminated nor made to operate satisfactorily.' See de Blij and Muller, *Geography: Realms, Regions, and Concepts* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1997) p. 340.

- 5 Stuart Hall, 'When was "The Postcolonial"?' Thinking at the Limit', in Iain Chambers and Lidia Curti, eds, *The Post – colonial Question* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 245.

Nuakhai Tradition of West Odisha (South Kosala)

Chitrasen Pasaya

Nuakhai (*Nua+khai*) denotes eating of *nua*. The literary meaning of *nua* is new. In this perspective, it is related to the new fruit of the season. Also, it stands for the first crop of the year. It is a ritual in nearly all the tribal societies found in eastern and middle India, where first fruit or crop of the season is at first presented to their deities. It has a most important weight on the life and culture of the tribal people in general. It is not a showy festivity. It is a festival of food worship. As a result, they celebrate *Dhan-nua* in *Bhudo*, *Am-nua*, *Mahul-nua*, *Char-nua*, *Kendu-nua*, and *Kusum-nua* in *Phagun*, *Bean-nua*, *Gondli-nua*, *Ankakora-nua* / *Lau-nua* in *Pond / Margasira*, *Kandul-nua* in *Pousa / Magh*, *Simba-nua*, *Pani Kakharu-nua*, *Kakharu-nua* in *Pousa*, *Maka-nua*, *Kumuda-nua* after *Asadha* and the like.

For that reason, *Nuakhai* is a philosophy of tribal life. In other words, *Nuakhai* is not simply a term but a philosophy of life. Tribal people celebrate *Nuakhai* whenever a new fruit, whether mango, *kandul*, *jahni* etc. comes to their society. The main objective of this festival is to get social sanction to a new crop, and to invoke the deities to bless the land with abundant crops. But, a pertinent question arises here why paddy in *Nuakhai* in West Odisha? In this paper, we will try to examine the following three points. First, *Nuakhai* has played a significant role during the state formation in West Odisha. Secondly, *Nuakhai* has been the source of integration and unity between the tribal and non-tribal people in West Odisha. Thirdly, *Nuakhai* has justified and helped in perpetuation of the three pillars of traditional Indian society namely Joint Family, Caste System and Jajmani System in the self-sufficient village community.

Although, the foundation of this festival has got buried in darkness, oral tradition dates it back to the time of the first Chauhan *Raja* Ramai Dev of Patnagarh in West Odisha. During his efforts to build an independent *rajya*, *Raja* Ramai Dev and his successors recognized the importance of settled agriculture for the reason that, greater part of West Odisha was preponderance with jungle and the majority of the then West Odishan people were aborigines. Their socio-economic life was very simple. They were reliant on subsistence economy which was primarily based on hunting, food gathering and shifting cultivation. This type of survival economy almost certainly could not create adequate surplus.

On the other hand, the king realized the fact that, enough surplus or additional resource was essentially required to maintain and sustain his *rajya* or state. During this period of state formation in West Odisha, *Nuakhai* as a ritual festival played a most important role. The Chauhan rulers borrowed and adopted the tribal philosophy of *Nuakhai* and fused it with *dhan* (paddy). Rice was originally, not a tribal food. The rulers intervened in the food habit of the tribal people and introduced paddy cultivation. They opened up new areas for paddy cultivation not only by introducing plough-agriculture but also by peasantising the tribal people.

Through the process of acculturation and integration, they indoctrinated the tribal people so as to ensure their subservience.

They developed this Nuakhai concept, popularized and spread it and adopted *dhan-nua* in different parts of their kingdom. As a way of compensation to the disorganized tribal socio-economic life the rulers upgraded their Nuakhai festival to levels of ritual elaboration. With the help of their priestly class, they improved it and raised it to the status of their national / state festival. In other words, they sanskritised it and converted it into a national festival of West Odisha. During this period, West Odisha witnessed an unprecedented agricultural as well as rural expansion which produced necessary surplus for the rise and growth of regional kingdoms.

The possibility of mass support for the rulers could be pre-empted when these rulers made it evident that they were willing to champion the local heritage like *Nuakhai* not only at home but also at the state level. It smoothed their progress of winning over the confidence of the local subjects. Obviously, the rulers could easily be painted as 'ours' if they appeared to be concerned, considerate and sympathetic to the religious traditions of the common people. It made the rulers easy to influence and persuade the tribal people in particular to become settled agriculturists and go for paddy cultivation. It also helped them to win over the confidence of the local subjects. There is no denying that, the rulers were not only dependent on the tribal people for the extension of peasant agriculture but also for military support.

As a consequence, it aided Chauhan rulers' efforts to bring the natives under their control and authority. Accordingly, the Chauhan power could consolidate and strengthen their *rajya* in West Odisha. The tribal militia also came in handy for the expansion of their territorial limits. As a result, integration of tribal people was realized through their inclusion into Hindu fold. In course of 'brahmanisation' in the tribal dominated West Odisha, possibly, the local tribal people were transformed into jatis and their chiefs were absorbed as Kshatriyas in to the Hindu fold. Most probably, the aboriginal tribal people might have accepted their new Hindu social status without much reluctance.

At that time, the populations of West Odisha were divided and separated as found elsewhere. The rulers were attentive and caring to the fact that religious and cultural antagonism expressed along ethnic and caste lines could tear their *rajya* apart; communalism would weaken the state; primordial concepts would cause disharmony in social life and divert the attention of the common people from formation of a strong and healthy state. These problems could not be combated by force alone.

They knew that the crucial national identity factor should be emphasized at two levels, within the larger state in West Odisha and in the regional context or regional states like Patnagarh, Sambalpur, Sonapur and Khariar. So, it was essential for the rulers to integrate the tribal people and the non-tribal people. *Nuakhai* aided rulers' efforts to bring them all on one platform. As a result of this, *Nuakhai* became the festival of all and stood for a larger society where both the tribal people and caste Hindus reside together. *Nuakhai* became the source of unity between them. It brought people, irrespective of their ethnic background, under the control and authority of the rulers so that they could consolidate and strengthen their *rajya* in West Odisha.

The most striking point about the contributions made by *Nuakhai* was that, it had been a key factor in the development of tribal dominated West Odishan society, in collapsing ethnic boundaries and in breaking up of other cultural identities towards the emergence of Patna State or Sambalpur State or Khariar state or

Sonepur state or Kosala nation as we would understand today. But this was not enough. Regional cooperation among Sambalpur, Patnagarh, Sonepur, Khariar and the like in the peculiar conditions of West Odisha went deeper and embraced the potent attributes of nationhood. These princely states, proud of their common cultures, traditions and heritage were very likely to be interested in regional arrangements. Since all these princely states were Sambalpuri / Kosali speaking and have a common heritage, these links were made into pillars of their unity and was given as much weight as moves towards a West Oriya zone or Kosala zone or Sambalpur zone. Assertion of religio-cultural roots was an essential part of acquiring a new national identity in West Odisha.

Due to food intervention, tribal people became peasants. Paddy became an important food item of tribal people in West Odisha. Even today, paddy is the staple crop of West Odisha, occupying about 85 per cent of the total cropped area. The cultivated plains yield numerous varieties of paddy some of which are the finest in India. Regarding varieties, there is a local saying "*Munsar nam jete, dhanar nam gute una tete*" which implies, "As many names as man has, has paddy only one less".

It is worthwhile to note the varieties of paddy from King's *Gazetteer of Sambalpur* published in 1932 and Senapati and Mahanti's *Gazetteer of Sambalpur* published thereafter about forty years in the year 1971. There were over 300 varieties of seed in use in Sambalpur area. The Inspector of Agriculture, who was in charge of the Agricultural Farm at Sambalpur, claimed to have collected 250 varieties from the villages of Attabira, Sason and Bargarh areas. These varieties were most simply classed by the position of the fields on which they grew successfully and effectively, viz., as *bahal*, *berna*, *mal* and *at* rice.

For example, a *bahal* variety would fail on upper *mal* terraces. On the other hand, *mal* varieties would rot in the wet *bahal*. These main classes were further subdivided into several minor groups. It may be noted here that, most of the *bahal* and *berna* lands in West Odisha are traditionally occupied by the upper castes and dominant sections of the society whereas the lower castes and tribal people generally own the *mal* and *at* lands.

The low lands like *bahal* and *berna* are generally cultivated with rice and are skillfully embanked, manure and irrigated. The uplands like *mal* and *at* are much less carefully cultivated, are not manure, and grow miscellaneous crops, such as pulses, coarse rice and cotton. Usually, harvesting finishes by the end of November. Occasionally, in the case of low-lying *bahal* lands, it is not completed till December for the reason that long duration high yielding varieties of paddy are generally grown here. As soon as threshing is over, the cultivator plough up his *bahal* fields to turn in the stubble. But the *mal* terraces reaped early in October dry up and harden fast and cannot be touched, unless, as is often the case, heavy showers fall in January or February. The bulk of the work is left for the hot summer months, when heavy storms of thunder and rain usually break once a fortnight, and give the cultivator his chance to plough. It is then too that manures are spread and worked in.

Cutting begins early in the month of September for the coarse rice of the uplands, and on the *mal* terraces it is usually finished in the month of October. The heavier *berna* and *bahal* crops are reaped in November. In the case of low-lying *bahal* lands, harvesting sometimes does not take place till December. In view of this, celebration of *Nuakhai* in the month of *Bhudo* or *Bhadrava* (August-September) in West Odisha is, in fact, a festival intended mostly for the poor *chasis* who live from hand to mouth, who do not own best

qualities of lands, who cannot grow high yielding varieties of paddy and wait for a longer time to reap the fruits of their labor and who leave themselves to the mercy of that almighty for good.

Nuakhai in West Odisha is the sanskritised or hinduised version of a tribal festival. It is evident from our discussion made so far and this point will be further corroborated in our subsequent discussion. Agriculture, as discussed above, is the main source of living of a bulk of the inhabitants of West Odisha. The major chunk of the West Oriya population receives its main income from agriculture. The great masses of tribal populations are also cultivators, farm servants and laborers. The important and main tribes of West Odisha like *Binjhal*, *Bhumia*, *Gond*, *Kondh Mirdha*, *Saura / Savara*, etc. are at the moment settled agriculturists. Despite the fact that, the festival is observed through out the tribal belt of Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar and West Bengal, it has a major influence on the life and culture of the tribal dominated West Odisha. It is not a pretentious celebration, not just an exhibition of tradition, either. It is a festival of worship of food grain.

In tribal surroundings *Nuakhai* as an institution needed a Hindu social context to survive among the caste-Hindus. It nurtured a profound appreciation and admiration for the growth of rice, which is a symbolic manifestation of life itself. Worship of food grain was not at all new. It had been there since times immemorial. In this sense, *Nuakhai* was of ancient origin. From Hindu point of view, the fundamental idea of the celebration could be traced back to the *Vedic* times when *rishis* had talked of *Pancha Yajna* i.e. the five important activities in the annual calendar of an agrarian society. These five activities have been specified as *Sita Yajna* (the ploughing or cultivating of land), *Pravapana Yajna* (the plantation or sowing of seeds), *Pralambana Yajna* (the initial cutting of crops), *Khala Yajna* (the harvesting of grains) and *Prayayana Yajna* (the preservation and protection of the produce). In view of this, *Nuakhai* may be seen as having evolved out of the third activity, namely *Pralambana Yajna*. It involves cutting of the first crop and reverent offering of the same to the mother goddess. Other activities are also very important. For example, preservation and protection of the produce is essentially important because a part of the surplus is given to the State for its maintenance and in turn the State performs its duty and responsibility towards its citizens.

In view of this, *Nuakhai* became the festival of both the tribal people as well as the caste Hindus and stands for a larger society where both the tribal people and caste Hindus reside together, *Nuakhai* became the source of unity between them. One of the most striking point about the contributions made by *Nuakhai* is that, it has been a key factor in the development of tribal dominated West Odishan society, in collapsing ethnic boundaries and in breaking up of other cultural identities towards the emergence of Patna State or Sambalpur State or Khariar State or Sonepur State or Kosala nation as we understand today.

As it has been mentioned earlier, in order to sustain and maintain a separate *rajya* and independent Chauhan kingdom, most probably, the Chauhan rulers had to depend on the *bhogas* and *bhagas*. They had to persuade the local tribal people to become settled agriculturists so that production would increase and surplus would be generated because, tribal economy based on hunting, food gathering and shifting cultivation could not generate surplus and sustain a *rajya*. In order to legitimize their status as *rajas* and to augment their share of the produce i.e. *bhaga*, the Chauhan rulers of Patnagarh extended their influence over the surrounding territories including Sambalpur and the adjoining states.

Thus, they successfully persuaded and convinced the aboriginals to adopt settled cultivation. They converted the jungles and improved the plains into agricultural lands. They invited Brahmins to spread the Vedic significance of *anna* or rice and thus justification of paddy cultivation. They settled Kultas and Agharias who were perfect *chasis*. Accordingly, they granted lands and villages to them for agricultural development of their *rajyas*. All these contributed to changing the agrarian situation, formation of a hierarchical social order and brahminisation / hinduisation / sanskritisation of society in West Odisha. Understandably, in the process of building a unified and separate *rajya*, indigenous communities were successfully absorbed under the umbrella of *Nuakhai* in the mainstream of the regional Hindu tradition in West Odisha.

Earlier, farmers were celebrating *Nuakhai* on a fixed *tithi* and *lagna* designed by the village headman and priest. Afterward, under the patronage of royal families, this simple festival was altered into a mass socio-religious event in the entire West Odisha. *Nuakhai* is a celebration that speaks of an intense ritual when people of West Odisha start their life afresh. It is an occasion of reconstruction of relationships. It gives a fresh lease of life to the tillers of the land on the assurance of fruits of their labour. It provides new lease of life to the cultivators of the land on the guarantee of *anna*. For *prana* without *anna* is absurd and unthinkable.

A visit to West Odisha in the *Hindu* month of *Bhudo / Bhadraba* (August-September) makes one well aware and alert of the ensuing thrust of *Nuakhai*. Performed soulfully and with a sacred mind, *Nuakhai* is the very corner stone of West Odisha's agrarian institution, where the literary meaning of *Nuakhai* is 'eating of new rice'. It is, obviously, the day of rejoicing and merry-making for the people as agriculture is their main livelihood. Since paddy is the staple food of the people in general, the rice crops sustain their hope and determine their fate. This is why; a non-agriculturist is also that much concerned about this ritual as a cultivator is. Customarily, each farmer offers the first grain of the harvest to the almighty and then partakes it. The paddy is given weight as the grain of rice is measured as a representation and symbol of manifestation of life itself. The significance and utility of *Anna* or rice in daily life of West Oriya people is understandable. The *Hindu* sacred texts identify paddy as a synonym of life itself (Pasayat, 2003, 2006, 2007):

Anna Brahmeti Hyajanat,

Annadeva Khalwani Bhutani Jayante, Annena Jatani,

Annam Prayantyabhisam Bishantiti.

(Meaning: The other name of *Anna* is *Brahma* who is *Iswara* i.e. God. In this sense, *Anna* is *Iswara* or God. Each life is born out of *Anna*. It is the source of energy. After death, *Jiba* or anything having a life, transforms into *Anna* for others. So, the importance of *Anna* is appreciated in every stage of life. For this reason, it is the source of life, happiness and a part of soul).

Ahamanna Mahamanna Mahamannam,

Ahamannado Ahamannado Ahamannado,

Ahamanna Manna Madantama Drwi

(Meaning: God says that He is *Anna*. I am the only receiver of this *Anna*. Whoever takes *Anna* I accept that).

Message of unity is spread through this event. It reminds every farmer that the crop they yield after great sweat and toil influences the entire life's philosophy and struggle. In view of the above quotations, it may be understood that it is the economy that decides and determines the cultural life of the people. The economy of West Odisha is predominantly based on agriculture. It is the fruit of the toil round the year that fulfills the needs of the community at large. It is a matter of great joy and happiness for the peasant and farmers admiring the fruits of their efforts and pains. Upon getting the first crop of the year, it is accepted with great respect and celebration.

Even the collection of this new rice by the head of the family is an important affair. The head of the family proceeds to the field at the *lagna* or time reckoned most auspicious for him and his family. There, he invokes the *Pancha Mahabhutas* (the five primal forces of nature) namely earth, water, light, wind, space, and offers them his devout offerings of obeisance. Then, he plucks the new grain in grateful respect, returns home and hands it over to the woman of the house for worship. Rice and *gur* are mixed, prepared, and offered in honor of goddess *Laxmi*, who is believed to bless with life-sustaining *anna*. The celebration of *Nuakhai* by the tribal people may, therefore, be viewed as a tribalised version of a *Hindu* notion of *Anna* or paddy.

The new rice is believed to be very sacred. Even in the age of science and technology, *Nuakhai* has not lost its significance with the rituals still being adhered to. Nobody eats the new cereal until *Nuakhai* rituals are performed for the reigning deity. According to the common people, the deity is the true master / mistress of their lands. As a part of the agrarian custom, the presiding deity is offered *prasad* prepared from the new rice. The household, perfectly cleaned and washed in all its details, is ready to invite the deity to partake of the first pristine produce of the new season. Considered as an expression of submission, the farmers attribute the good yield to the blessings of the deities. For this reason, the first fruit of the season is first offered to him / her as a token of reverence and veneration.

Subsequently, the people take the *Prasad* made out of the new rice. Then, they start eating the new rice. This is the *nua*, which is offered to the deity at the auspicious *tithi* and *lagna* by the *karta* of the family. Then, the same is distributed amongst the members of his household or clan. Largely, people think that the ceremonial ritual is an acknowledgement of the deity's lordship over the land and the crop. It may be understood that *Nuakhai* is a ritual after which the newly harvested rice gets the status of consumable item. No other festival in West Odisha is celebrated with such pomp and gaiety as *Nuakhai*.

Nuakhai is one of the most important annual social and religious festivals of West Odisha. It deeply influences the life of this area. It profoundly influences the culture of this area. Previously, there was no fixed or permanent day for celebration of this festival in West Odisha. The festival was held sometimes during *Bhadra Paksha* (the bright fortnight of *Bhudo* / *Bhadra*). It was the time when the newly grown

Kharif paddy started ripening. There are grounds for observing the festival in the month of *Bhadra* even though the food grain is not ready for harvesting everywhere. The one and only thought is to present the grain to the presiding deity even before any bird or animal pecks at it and variety of grain is ripe for eating. Old people also say that there was no proper irrigation facility in the past. In absence of widespread irrigation network, poor and small landholders used to cultivate short duration paddy, which were ready for harvesting before the *Nuakhai*.

Today, a number of varieties of paddy getting extinct and many more vanishing from the scene, only a bunch of stalk is picked up and presented to the deity. Every year, the *Tithi* (day) and *lagna* (auspicious time) of observance was astrologically determined by the *Hindu* priests. In Sambalpur, *Brahmin* priests sat together at the *Brahmapura Jagannath* temple and calculated the *tithi* and *lagna*. What we want to point out here is that observances of the *tithi* and *lagna* were not common all over West Odisha. *Tithi* and *lagna* were calculated in the name of *Pataneswari Devi* in Bolangir-Patnagarh area and in the name of *Sureswari Devi* in Subarnapur area, and in the name of *Manikeswari Devi* in Kalahandi area. In Sundargarh, the royal family first offered *puja* to goddess *Sekharbasini* in the temple which is opened only for once on *Nuakhai*. In Sambalpur, at the stipulated *lagna*, the head priest of *Samaleswari* temple offers the *nua-anna* or *nabanna* to goddess *Samaleswari*, the presiding deity of Sambalpur. Thus, the *tithi* and *lagna* of *Nuakhai tihar* or festival was not common all over the West Odisha. In other words, a common day of observance of *Nuakhai tihar* was barely found in all the places of West Odisha.

During the stipulated time, the households offer *nua* to their respective presiding deities in their homes. In some places, the *lagna* of celebration was/is calculated in the name of the local *Gauntia* and *Zamidar* of the village, once the *tithi* was/is fixed in the name of the reigning deity of that area. It shows how efforts were/are made in the past to localize the *Nuakhai* ritual. It also reflects the traditional nature of a village society in West Odisha and the role as well as dominance of the village headmen like *zamindar* and *gauntia* over the people. Such feudal hangovers still survive in some villages of West Odisha. In course of time, though a particular *tithi* is fixed for *Nuakhai*, the celebrations are a fortnightly event. People in West Odisha initiate preparing for the event at least two weeks in advance.

Nuakhai, also called *Nabanna* is understood to have nine colours and consequently nine sets of rituals are followed as a prelude to the actual day of celebration. These nine colours include 1. *Beheren* (announcement for meeting to fix up a date), 2. *lagna dekha* (setting the exact date and time for partaking of new rice), 3. *daka haka* (invitation), 4. *sapha sutura* and *lipa puchha* (cleanliness), 5. *ghina bika* (purchasing), 6. *nua dhan khuja* (looking for new crop), 7. *bali paka* (final resolve for *Nuakhai* by taking *Prasad* i.e. *pahur* to deity), 8. *Nuakhai* (taking new crop as *Prasad* after offering to the deity followed by dancing and singing), 9. *Juhar bhet* (respect to elders).

Therefore, the preparations begin on the day when the elderly persons of the village sit together at a holy place after the *beheren* call. As per the tradition, the *beheren* moves around the village and calls the villagers by blowing trumpet. People get together and discuss with the priests about the *tithi* and *lagna* for *Nuakhai*. It is definitely a typical gesture of priest's authority in the village. He consults *panjika* and announces the sacred *muhurat* as to when *nua* is to be taken. After an informal discussion, villagers arrive at a consensus. The incorporation of *Hindu* idea of consultation of *Panjika* and in the reckoning of *tithi* and *lagna* may be viewed as a later development. Most probably, when the caste-*Hindus* started migrating then the local tribal

people adopted the idea of astrological calculation of *tithi* and *lagna* for the *Nuakhai* festival. In the same way, when the caste-*Hindus* adopted *Nuakhai* from the tribal people, they had to put some *Sanskritik* elements to make it convenient for the caste-*Hindus* to accept it.

Nevertheless, there was an attempt made during 1960s to fix up a common *tithi* for *Nuakhai* all over the West Odisha. This attempt was not workable. Again, an attempt was made in 1991 and *Bhadra Sukla Panchami Tithi* was fixed for *Nuakhai*. This is successful. Since then, the festival has been celebrated on this day. For this, the State Government has declared one official holiday too. For the sake of convenience, a common *tithi* is set for *Nuakhai*. Yet the sanctity of the ritual of *lagna suddhi* in accordance with *rasi* and *nakshtra* has not lost its importance. It would not be out of place to mention that, the system of setting the *tithi* and *lagna* and calling elderly persons for a consensus is very different in urban areas like Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Delhi, Bangalore and the like where *Nuakhai Bhet-Ghat* is observed as a fashion and get together..

Nuakhai is celebrated both at community as well as at domestic level. After all preparations are over, there is sanctification ritual before a day of celebration, which gives credence to *Nuakhai*. This is known as *bali paka*. *Pahur (Prasad)* is offered to the *grama devta* or *devti* in a ritual. It calls for the formal ruling of the festival. Everybody comes to know that divine will now governs *Nuakhai* and no one can stop it from being observed. The ritual is offered first at the temple of the reigning deity of the area or to the village deity. Afterward, they worship in their respective home and offer rituals to the domestic deity along with *Laksmi*. In other words, during the stipulated time, the households also offer *nua* to their presiding deities in their homes. On this occasion, people wear new clothes.

It is a tradition that after offering the *nua* to the presiding deity, the eldest member of the family distributes *nua* to other members of the family. After taking the *nua*, all the junior members of the family offers their unfathomable regards to their elders. Thereafter, follows the *nuakhai juhar* i.e. exchange of greetings with friends, well-wishers and relatives as well. This symbolizes unity. This is the occasion when people lay their differences to rest and start relationships afresh. Towards the evening people meet one another exchanging greetings. All differences are discarded and elders are wished *nuakhai juhar*. On the other hand, the elders bless their juniors and wish them long life, happiness and prosperity. Even the partitioned brothers celebrate the festival under one roof. In the evening, folk dances and songs are organized in different parts of West Odisha. People dance their way to the foot tapping *rasarkeli*, *dalkhai*, *maelajada*, *chutkuchuta*, *sajani*, *nachnia* and *bajnia* beats and tunes.

Nuakhai has a rich and glorious tradition of its own. As found elsewhere, Joint Family, Jajmani system and Caste System were also the three pillars of traditional society in West Odisha. Our subsequent analysis of *Nuakhai* clearly reflects these social systems. It is really an occasion, which strongly approves and endorses the patrilineal nature of West Odishan society. It is an event when one finds filial affection and unity of the family when all from the patrilineal side participate in the festivity. The head of the family calls up all those staying outside and intimates the *tithi* and *lagna* of *Nuakhai*. Definitely, it is considered a festival, which brings all the members of an extended family together and unites people in a village and community and region.

Nuakhai is the home-coming time for persons who have left their native places in search of greener pasture. More than the celebrations, the feeling of reuniting with their families holds significance for them.

Juhar bhet, which follows the *Nuakhai* at home, is the unique aspect of this event. It is evident for its contribution to social harmony and solidarity. Thus, *Nuakhai* is a cohesive force. It has the power to attract and unite people of West Odisha. *Nuakhai* fastens hopes and aspirations of people. Relationships are renewed and repaired. Estranged souls are rejoined and reconnected. Old rivalries and bitterness are consigned to the dustbin.

Of late, it is being observed on a single day through out West Odisha except in households whose members are working outside and are unable to come. Generally, such families observe *Nuakhai* during *Dasra* or *Durga puja*. It is also an occasion when all the family members come home. It means, wherever they are, all the family members must assemble on this big day to celebrate *Nuakhai* together. This is the instance of union of family members and annual get-together. So, long wait for near and dear ones culminate in a festive mood. All ice is broken when the young of the family rush to the feet of elder ones in gesture of respect and affection.

It is a festival of masses. It is the celebration of every one. All, starting from child to old in the entire West Odisha, enthusiastically await it. All, starting from poor to rich in the whole West Odisha, earnestly look forward to it. Enemies become friends. The entire village becomes one. Earlier, there were three important aspects of *Nuakhai* namely, *Adhia*, *Bebhar* and *Bhar*. Our ancestors had recognized these practices to ensure that everyone in the traditional self-sufficient village community had the barest means required to observe the day in gratefulness to the divine mother for her generosity. It was seen as an affront to her dignity even if one needy or poor household was to be left out of the celebrations because of its indigent circumstance.

Adhia was a provision of basic things to those families of the village whose livelihoods were dependent, not on agriculture, but on their professions as village priests, barbers, washer men, blacksmiths, potters and the like in the traditional *jajmani* system. In fact, they were the traditional *sevakas* or servitors in the village community who were easily the most vulnerable. Consequently, they were provided with *adhia* for their *seva* or service to the village community. When all agricultural families of the village made this occasion by extending their goodwill in this manner, obviously, every family in the community was taken care of and nobody was left to feel sad for want of means. In this sense, this justifies the *jajmani* system in a traditional village community. This strengthens the relationship between a *jajman* and a *kamin*.

It may be mentioned here that mother worship is prevalent far and wide through out West Odisha. For instance, Sambalpur is the land of Maa Samlei or Maa Samaleswari, Patna - Bolangir is the land of Maa Pataneswari, Sonepur is the land of Maa Sureswari, Bhawanipatna is the land of Maa Manikeswari and the like. *Nuakhai* is a way to pay homage to these mother goddesses who validate and rationalize the traditional village economy based on Caste System and unequal distribution of resources. This is a way to include and involve everyone in the traditional hierarchical social structure. On this principle, when people sink their differences to start a new life on the promise of a new tomorrow consequent upon eating of *nua*, then it confirms and corroborates the same age-old tradition of exploitation.

Of course, this practice of *Adhia* which reflects unequal exchange of goods and services is on its last legs. The second kind of courtesy and kindness is extended in the form of *Bebhar* which is sent to friends, equals and neighbours as a sign of goodwill, friendliness and reciprocity of sociability. *Bhar*, the third form of humanity is offered to the relatives living elsewhere after marriage or under other circumstances. *Bebhar* and

Bhar except *Adhia* are real gesture of friendship and goodwill though these days; *Bebhar* and *Bhar* are also on the way out steadily.

Nuakhai has been observed more or less by the entire major tribes in central and eastern India, of course, with a minor difference in their nomenclature. In this context, instance can be given of *Jeth Nawakhai* among the *Dudh Kharia* and *Pahari Kharia*, *Nawakhani* amongst the *Oraon* and *Birjia* (Singh, 1982:24, 74), *Jom Nawa* among the *Munda* (Singh, 1982:74) and *Birjia*, *Janther* or *Baihar-Horo Nawai* by the *Santal* (Singh, 1982:74), *Gondli Nawakhani* by the Christian tribal people of Ranchi district, *Nawa* by the *Birjia*, *Nawa-Jom* by the *Birhor* (Singh, 1982:75), *Dhan Nawakhani* by *Korwa* (Singh, 1982:27) and so on. Russel and Hiralal (1975:326) have mentioned about the *Nawakhani* festival of the *Paraja*, a small tribe found in the Bastar region and Odisha.

Gautam (1977) has, in addition, mentioned about the new corn offering and eating rice of *Santals* in Santal Pargana which they term *Jom Nawa*. Das Gupta (1978) has noted the *Nawa* ceremony of the *Birjia*, a section of the *Asura* tribe of Chotanagpur. Bhaduri (1944:149-50) presents a short note on the celebration of this festival in Tripura renowned as *Mikatal* where *Mi* stands for paddy and *Katal* refers to new. It is celebrated in the month of *Aswina* (September-October). In West Bengal and in the coastal districts of Odisha, this festival is named *Nabanna* by the caste-*Hindus*. Nonetheless, *Nuakhai* is not simply a term but a philosophy of life particularly among the tribal people in India. They celebrate *Nuakhai* whenever a new fruit, whether mango, *kandul*, or *jahni* comes to their society. The main objective of this festival is to get social sanction to a new crop, and to invoke the deities to bless the land with abundant crops.

Nuakhai can be studied through the concept of 'spread' given by Srinivas (1952). The wide occurrence and popularity of the *Nuakhai* ritual among the caste-*Hindus* other than tribal people in Odisha, however, indicates that it is *sanskritised*. Considered as an agrarian matter, the *Nuakhai* has transcended caste, creed and religion with people rejoicing the festival with zeal and zest. The mode of its observance and the numerical dominance of the tribal people in the past in Odisha and west Odisha in particular maintain and support the argument that *Nuakhai* was a tribal festival and that the caste-*Hindus* gradually incorporated it in their fold when they came in wider contact with the aboriginals of west Odisha.

The fact of fixed time of observance determined astrologically by the *Hindu* priests also indicates strong influence of *Hindu* ideas in later stage to present it a *Sanskritik* color and image. It is commonly believed that the *Hindus* were originally celebrating the *Nuakhai* or *Nuakhia* festival. Over long period of interaction between the tribal and non-tribal peoples in Odisha, the tribal people have borrowed this cultural trait from the caste-*Hindus*.

Nevertheless, one point is clearly understandable that it is the tribal people other than the common Oriyas who are, at present, celebrating this festival. Secondly, as it is the case with all the aboriginal tribes, there was no fixed *tithi* for celebration until 1991. Thirdly, it appears that the word *Nuakhai* or *Nuakhia* has many similarities with the tribal names given for the same festival in and outside the state of Odisha, as discussed previously. Very likely, *Sambalpuri* / *Koshali* name *Nuakhai* has been borrowed from the tribal names of the similar ritual and given a regional content and flavors. Fourthly, during *Nuakhai* day, people celebrate their dinner at night with non-vegetarian food.

Eating of non-vegetarian food during a *Hindu* religious festival is generally not acceptable and permissible. In west Odisha, there is a saying that if a person does not eat meat on this day then he/she will be born as a *Baka* i.e. swan in the next life. Significantly, people irrespective of their caste background eat meat on this day. Even though, it is ethically undesirable on the part of a traditional *Brahmin* to have non-vegetarian food, he does not mind to accept it on this day. In these days, of course, meat eating has become a universal phenomenon among of all castes. Yet, basing on financial provisions various traditional dishes and cakes are prepared and offered to the presiding deity before it is consumed together by the family members.

Therefore, the occasion of *Nuakhai* is a renewal of mutual ties. It spreads love and affection, warmth and kindness all around. It binds the families in a spirit of solidarity. It unites the communities in strength of harmony. The sentimental aspect of the *Nuakhai* is most brilliantly reflected in the widely used *nuakhai bhet ghat juhar*. It is the festival of splendor and fun. It has a special significance for west Odishan people. In fact, it is a festival of thanksgiving for a good harvest. It is an agrarian festival and celebrated by taking rice from newly harvested crop after offering to the presiding deities and goddess *Laxmi*. *Nua* or new rice is offered to the deities as a mark of gratitude for a bumper harvest, good rain and a favorable farming weather.

The tribal people have easily absorbed the fundamental idea behind *Nuakhai* i.e. ritual ceremonies before eating new paddy, derived from a Hindu tradition because they have been also settled agriculturists. It appears that the tribal people started celebrating *Nuakhai* as usual in different names when they became settled agriculturists. This idea of ceremonial eating of new fruit has been applied in other areas also. For instance, in the *Gundikhai* festival held on the day of *Phagun / Phalguna Purnima* i.e. full-moon day of *Phagun* (February-March), the people of west Odisha first offer mango ritually to the deity and then takes it. In sum, efforts are made to tribalise the celebrations of a number of rituals and festivals, which might have been non-tribal in their origin and essence. On *Nuakhai*, caste-*Hindus* worship Goddess *Laksmi* along with their family deity. It is the household dimension of this festival.

An important characteristic and similarity of this ritual is the 'mother worship'. *Nuakhai* is not confined to any particular ethnic group or community in west Odisha. It is a mass festival in terms of its collective nature and the sincere involvement of the tribal people and caste-*Hindus* in west Odisha, whereas outside this region, it is not a mass festival and it is confined to a place largely to the family and group only. Indeed, *Nuakhai* is a tradition that has cultivated noble virtues of tolerance, acceptance, sacrifice, trust, affection, understanding, and social responsibilities since a long time. It is gradually being celebrated in a big way in various parts of the country.

Housewives in general start preparing for the festival a week before by cleaning up the house and furniture, washing up utensils and clothes and collecting ingredients for special dishes to be served on the day of festivity. One finds hectic economic activity with peasants and artisans working overtime to earn some quick buck. It helps them spend something extra during *Nuakhai*. Besides whitewashing of houses, new clothes are worn on the festival day. Preparations pertaining to the celebration like cleaning of house and purchasing new clothes are taken up as usual. Poor clean their mud and thatched houses with cow dung. Rich do the arrangements as per their capacity.

Weavers churn out cheap handloom *saris* as part of tradition for these common people of west Odisha. With simple designs, the weavers roll out *saris* to make them affordable and ensure that these reach the users

in time before *Nuakhai*. Keeping this in mind, the *mahajans* (moneylenders) are quick to lend money knowing the truthfully that the reimbursement is certain. The daily labourers stretch themselves for the festival as well. They are seen working until the dawn to earn some extra buck. With all households being cleaned for this annual festival, daily laborers are much in demand and have seized the opportunity to jack up their wages. *Betras* (bamboo basket makers), *Luhuras* (blacksmiths), *Kumbhars* (potters), and minor *Badheis* (carpenters) are also found working round the clock. While baskets made of bamboo are much in demand for use in the rituals and *puja*, the blacksmiths are found busy in making door latches, traditional vegetable cutters, and such other household implements. The carpenters are much in demand to take on repair work in households. While the men folk are seen toiling hard, women folk are found busy in making *Khali* (leaf plates) and *Dana* (cups).

Nevertheless, it is a festival, which brings friendship, equality, help, and cooperation and envisages the age-old tradition of this region. It helps to renew the social bonds. Thus, it strengthens the social solidarity. This indigenous culture ensures a separate identity for the natives of the whole region of west Odisha and binds them together.

Onslaught by audio video media, various cultures, tradition, modernization, and industrialization are unsuccessful to interfere and obstruct the rich tradition of *Nuakhai* in west Odisha. It is a symbol of friendship, love, and affection, which give foundation, and fosters to lead a peaceful life. People of west Odisha celebrate *Nuakhai* in much fashion and style, which off late has crossed international boundaries. In 1982, when the author was reading in Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi the students of the region first organised to celebrate *Nuakhai* in the Jagannath Temple at Hauz Khas. In the present day, it is a cohesive and unified force not only among west Odias but also among Odias in Delhi when they come and unite on this occasion.

These days, not only in Delhi but also in other parts of India like Bangalore, Goa, Mumbai, Vishakapatnam and the like residents of west Odisha have been rejoicing *Nuakhai* for the past few decades. *Nuakhai* now being observed on the fifth day of the second fortnight of *Bhadrava*, was unquestionably given a new look of homogeneity and uniformity by the then Biju Pattnaik Government in 1991. On the other hand, it has lost its enormity and variousness with the passage of time. Of course, during the period of *Garhjat* kingship, the contours of this festival have also been reshaped and restructured by the ruling elites. At that time, it was a private function with a rather more political and public character. Looking ahead into the future, our new and young generations, groping to recognize rice and wheat apart, do not appear to be too much interested to transmit the tradition forward.

Particularly during past few decades, jungles and villages are vanished due to uncontrolled urbanization and industrialization in some parts of west Odisha. Agricultural lands are mercilessly converted into non-agricultural purposes like house sites and industries. It takes generations for *chasis* to prepare a piece of agriculture land. A *chasi* nurtures his land like a child. Today, however, it does not take even an hour to destroy the same piece of land. The way we are defiling land and defying nature is only indicative of how weak our connections with mother earth are. Uncertain about the ground beneath our feet, we are the linkage between a hoary past and frightening future. Now, a pertinent question arises whether *Nuakhai* will really remain as an agrarian custom or will just be celebrated as a symbol of our heritage. The admiration and respect for the land of our ancestors depends on us. Let this noble occasion of *Nuakhai* encourages and motivates people to give a new lease of life to their roots anew.

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Songs of the Battered Women

Reflection Of Domestic Violence in Folk Songs Along Indo-Bangladesh Border in North East India.

Stella Paul

*'Dhamail deo go bherbherir ma/amra dhamail chini na/
Kichu kichu chintam pari/budha betay manoin na*

(‘Dance, O mother of Bherbheri.’ ‘We don’t know how to dance. Actually, we know a little bit, but the Big Man won’t allow us’)

Growing up as a child in a village of North-east India, bordering Sylhet district of Bangladesh, I sang this song along with my friends during a session of ‘Dhamail’- the most commonly practiced group dance in our area. In Dhamail,(originated from ‘Dhamal’ or fun) women, accompanied by a drummer, dance in a circular motion, singing songs of love, rituals, rebellion and worship. Such dance is an integral part of any social event, be that a wedding or an engagement or even ‘annaprashan’(first rice eating of a child) in hundreds of villages in the NE region.

Also, Dhamail has always been the most popular game among children, especially girls. Every day while playing, we would break into a ‘Dhamail’ dance and sing joyously whatever we learnt from our female relatives.

However, this particular song, mentioned above, wasn't sung at any social event, and was only heard in little girls' groups such as ours. The reason: it was considered a pariah for elders because of its silly lyric.

As I danced with my friends, I too would sing and break into laughter. The very word 'Bherbheri' was funny as nobody had ever heard a girl with such a name. The laughter kept us from completing our singing.

It's only after I became a journalist and started covering, among others, women's issues, that the song started making sense. I started wondering about this mother of Bherbheri. Who was she? Why did she name her girl 'Bherbheri?' Why wasn't she allowed to dance? Who was this 'Big Man' who stopped her? Was it her husband or her father-in-law? And, above all, why was the song considered silly? Was it because it spoke of an ugly reality?

Pondering over one song led me to another. In our village, every now and then, some women would come and beg for work or for food. My mother would always try to find work for them. One day, one such woman was weaning rice, while she started singing 'Ronger oto shamay na go, bare bare kaitam.'

Roughly translated, it means 'It's not something amusing that I like to talk about again and again'. I was curious and listened quietly as the woman sang on: 'Yesterday you beat me/broke my nose ring/if one wants, he can indeed go/to the market and/get a new nose ring...'

The song was a long one; it was a long tale of a woman battered by her husband. Every limb in the woman's body was sore from the beating and the song – with an extremely melancholic tune – was a cry rising straight out of her heart.

After a few weeks, the woman was back. This time she had a new song and it was pure helplessness: 'my hand and legs are trembling/Oh god, which country shall I escape to?'

I have remembered and hummed those two songs a hundred times in past few years. It has since dawned upon me that the woman wasn't just talking of the physical pain that she bore, but had other issues too. She obviously was a woman who still lived with her tormentor, hoping that things would

change. Yet they didn't and now the woman's miseries increased manifold in which, added to physical violence was neglect, injustice and helplessness.

For past 6 years, I have been collecting folk songs from villages along this Indo-Bangla border. In my collection, there are songs that describe the anguish of women with vivid clarity:

“shisukale putrer adhin/jaubankale swamis adhin/bridhokale putrer adhin”

(As a child, I was a slave of my father/as a young woman, as slave of my husband and as an old woman, I am a slave of my son)

The song definitely is a lamentation of a woman who never tasted freedom in all her life.

In another song the woman cries “Oh god, I feel like tearing open my chest and show my injuries, but who is there to see them?”

Illiterate, unorganized and alone, but women victims of domestic violence have been telling to the world, the cruelty that they are facing day in and day out.

The question is are we ready yet, to pause, listen and accept as this rustic, yet true documentation of the violence? If we do, it will certainly help us better equip ourselves in the fight against violence against women and emerge as a safer, better society.

PART - IV

Creative Economy and Culture in Education

**'Creative Ramayana' for the Value Adding of Thai Products and
Tourism:
A Study of 'Creative Folklore'⁵⁵**

Aphilak Kasempholkoon

Abstract

"Creative economy" has played a significant role in globalized Thailand since the past decade. In the commercial world, many narratives are used extensively to add value to products, including the tale of *Ramayana*, which is a very prominent story in Thai society. The story was transformed into many local tales and legends. This article is an attempt to consider the tale of *Ramayana* as 'creative folklore', to examine how the tale of *Ramayana* persists and is reproduced in the creative economy to add value to local products and to promote Thai tourism by using folkloric methods in combination with the concept of creative economy.

The study reveals that the tale of *Ramayana* is a very important "cultural capital" and is "reproduced" to add value to products and cultural tourist activities, especially in the places where the tale of *Ramayana* is told as a local legend. The reproduction of *Ramayana* not only

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The term "creative folklore" is invented by Professor Dr. Siraporn Nathalang, a famous Thai folklorist and the head of the serial research mentioned above, from the term "creative economy" to explain the use of folklore in creative economy.

reflects the dynamism of the tale in Thai society but also becomes an eminent example for the creative use of narrative or folklore in the value adding of products and services in other cases.

Keywords: Thai folklore, folktales, Ramayana, creative economy, cultural reproduction

Introduction

In the past decades, folklore data were widely collected for the sake of study. Most of them were at risk to dissolve and their cultural valued were examined delicately. However, since the era of capitalism, these folklore data, which used to be 'cultural data', have been commercially valued as 'cultural capitals' in the process of transforming 'culture' into 'product'. This is also the result of the decline of the previous development strategy which has science and technology as its main instrument. Due to the decay of natural resource and the equality of manufacturing technologies, prosperity therefore belongs to those who own the 'creative ideas' to invent new distinctive products and services which have capability to satisfy the need of people.⁵⁶

The process of transforming culture into commercial product becomes known as "creative economy" or "creative industries". The terms were first governmentally accepted in United Kingdom when the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, in 2001, defined that creative industries are "*Those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property.*"⁵⁷

In 2003, **World Intellectual Property Organization** (WIPO) marked out on creative economy as "*industries that include the cultural industries plus all cultural or artistic production, whether live or produced as an individual unit. The creative industries are those in which the product or service contains a substantial element of artistic or creative endeavor.*"

Afterwards, **United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization** (UNESCO) described on **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development** (UNCTAD) that "*industries originated from creativity, comprehension and potential ability in afford making from the making and the usage of intangible intellectual properties*" are creative economy. (Akhom Teomphitthayaphaisit, 2010)

Anyway, creative economy was redefined in details in **Creative Economy Report 2008** by **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**:

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ณรงค์ชัย อัครเศรณี. "ค่านิยม" ใน John Howkins (เขียน) คุณนากร วาณิชยวิรุฬห์ (แปล).

The Creative Economy: How people make

money from ideas. Bangkok: TCDC, 2007. (in Thai)

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Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2001 , p. 04

*"The creative economy is an evolving concept based on creative assets potentially generating economic growth and development. It can foster income generation, job creation and export earnings while promoting social inclusion, cultural diversity and human development. It embraces economic, cultural and social aspects interacting with technology, intellectual property and tourism objectives. It is a set of knowledge-based economic activities with a development dimension and cross-cutting linkages at macro and micro levels to the overall economy. It is a feasible development option calling for innovative multidisciplinary policy responses and interministerial action. At the heart of the creative economy are the creative industries."*⁵⁸

In all the above definitions, both national and international organizations mentioned that creative development of cultural resources going along with technological ways of lives brings to commercial profits for services and products. At present, 'creative economy' plays significant roles in Thai society, and many local narratives are widely used in creative commerce.

In the case of *Ramayana*, one of the important Thai literatures adopted from Indian great epic, it is interesting how this "Thainized" story persists and is reproduced. Therefore, examination of creative *Ramayana* usage through folkloric eyes is mainly concerned in the three points below.

1. Popularity of the tale of *Ramayana* in Thai Society
2. From *Ayodhya* to the World of Free Trade: Thai Tale of *Ramayana* for the Value Adding of Local Products
3. Creation for Recreation: the Tale of *Ramayana* and the promotion of Thai Cultural Tourism

1. Popularity of the tale of *Ramayana* in Thai Society

Ramayana or the tale of King *Rama* (an incarnation of *Vishnu*) is venerated as a great epic of India which are known all around the world together with *Mahabharata*, so the large amount of different versions have been composed for a very long time and then spread out with the ascendancy of Indian civilization into Southeast Asia. The adoption and transmission of *Ramayana* in Southeast Asian countries depend on the original sources and the way the tale was carried out to surrounding regions.⁵⁹ The first inscription of *Sukhothai* period (12th Centuries C.E.) mentioned a cave called "Rama cave", this is evidence demonstrating that Thai have been familiar with the tale of King *Rama* since then.

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United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. "Creative Economy Report 2008" sited in Sukanya Sutchaya. "Creative Economy and Cultural management". Document in *Ubon Wattanatham* National Academic Conference on Culture: Man, Trade and Rice in Maekhong Region (23rd-25th December 2010) (in Thai)

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Siraporn Thithathan. *In Localities Exist Tales and Toys* (Bangkok: Office of National Culture, 1991), page 132. (in Thai)

Ramayana in Thailand is called “*Ramakian*”, which means “the honor of King *Rama*”. *Sathian Koset*, an important Thai scholar, argued that Thai *Ramakian* was the integration of *Valmiki’s Ramayana* and other *Rama* tales from several sources.⁶⁰ Some thoughts and details in all versions are adjusted by “Thainized” methods and are adjusted to suit Thai culture. The story of *Ramayana* was then presented in various literary forms. The most popular version is ***King Rama I’s Ramakian Verse Play*** in *Rattanakosin* period. Such popularity caused the reproduction of *Ramayana* texts, as well as other artistic branches: performance, musical art and fine art.

Since the ancient Thai believed that some episodes of Thai *Ramayana* (*Ramakian*) once occurred in their locality, each of them has been brought about oral historical accounts. In *Lopburi* Province of the central part of Thailand known as “the city of *Hanuman*”, there are many places in which the names are connected to the story of *Ramayana*, such as King *Rama cave*, Queen *Sita cave*, *Phali cave*, King *Rama road*, Prince *Lakshaman road*⁶¹. Here are some interesting examples:

1) **The legend of Lopburi Province:** After conquered *Thossakan* (*Ravana* in Thai version), king *Rama* built a city for *Hanuman* by an arrow-shot cast. The name “the land of *Phrommat*” was given to the place that his arrow named *Phrommat* fell into. A lake nearby was called “Arrow dipping Lake”. *Hanuman* built a city wall which has become “three-peaked mountain”. The heat of the arrow created white chalk soil. *Phrommat* arrow was too hot to keep away from water and can cause some cases of fire, as well. So the shrine with water bowl was built to keep such arrow.⁶²

2) **The legend of Thap Kwai Mountain:** The monkey king *Phali*, *Hanuman’s* uncle, killed *Thoraphi* the Buffalo in a cave of a mountain. Its head was thrown away to a lake called “Buffalo’s head lake”. While *Thoraphi’s* head was throwing, it hit a part of the cave to crack into a rock that fled to “Headrock Village”. The monkey king also destroyed the cave entrance to avoid other rascal buffalos, so the mountain was named *Thap Kwai* (hidden from buffalo) Mountain. The near place that flooded with *Thoraphi’s* blood found red metallic ore from its blood color⁶³

3) **The legend of Samo Khon Mountain:** Prince *Lakshaman* (king *Rama’s* Brother) was pricked by *Mokkhsak* spear, so *Hanuman* fled to take the divine medicine plant on “the mountain of drugs” or *Sapphaya* Mountain which is believed that situated in *Chainat* Province today. Reached at the mountain of drugs, *Hanuman* pulled up the whole mountain and then carried it in hurry. While he was flying over *Lopburi* province, he saw the divine medicine plant from the light of the big fire. (*Hanuman* made that fire himself since the city had just built). So he took only the medicine plant and dropped the mountain in flame. The burned mountain became *Samo Khon* Mountain.

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Sathian Koset. Ramakian Guidebook. (Bangkok: Silpa Bannakan, 1972), pp 233-234. (in Thai)

61

(in Thai)

Siraporn Thithathan. **In Localities Exist Tales and Toys** (Bangkok: Office of National Culture, 1991).

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(in Thai)

Siraporn Thithathan. **In Localities Exist Tales and Toys** (Bangkok: Office of National Culture, 1991).

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Thai)

Phasuk Intarawut. “**Lopburi Legends**” through <http://www.vichakarn.com> on 12th November 2011. (in

Apart from *Lopburi*, in *Nakhon Pathom* province, the story of *Phali* and *Thoraphi* fighting also existed and became a place name legend of “Buffalo Horns village” or *Thambon Khao Kwai* in Thai. In *Udon Thani* province in the northeastern part, an ancient site called “*Rama* and *Lakshaman* town”.

In the divine absolute monarchy in the past, Thai kings were regarded as ‘the incarnation of Vishnu’, so their names were entitled with the word “*Rama*”, the name of Rama’s city “*Ayodhya*” became the name of the former capital city, and the name of an ancient pond in *Ayutthaya* city “*Nong Sano*” was changed to “the lake of *Rama*”.

The popularity and veneration of *Ramayana* in Thai society also spread out to all parts and classes, some localities accepted and adapted this popular narrative to be their own sacred *jatakas* (the previous lives of Buddha stories) or place name legends.

2. From *Ayodhya* to the World of Free Trade: Thai Tale of *Ramayana* for the Value Adding of Local Products

For decades, with several ways to reproduce *Ramayana* tale, especially by localizing and linking them with localities, this famous story has been used along with creative economy ideas to create many fascinating new products and to add more commercial value to the old-made ones.

2.1 Traditional Thai *Ramakian* and the making of Commercial Profits

This method is the creation of both conventional-formed and trendy products from traditional versions of Thai *Ramayana*.

2.1.1 Traditional Versions and the making of Traditional Products

For a very long time, the Thai have creatively taken some prominent motifs⁶⁴ from the *Ramakian*, up to their needs or appropriation, to name many things in cultural lives. It is noticed that *Hanuman* and *Hanuman in his star-spring yawn*⁶⁵ motifs are always selected to make sacred religious objects such as *Hanuman* sacred tattoo or sacred objects in “*Hanuman-like*” shape. Other interest examples are:

Thai boxing gestures: *Hanuman* presenting the ring (punching by both hands together), Cutting *Thossakan’s* head (neck kicking), *Montho*, (*Thossakan’s* queen), sitting on the throne

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In folklore, the term “motifs” means smallest distinctive elements in each narratives which can be divided into 1) characters 2) objects 3) behaviors or incidents.

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In Thai *Ramayana* tales, the star-spring yawn was the most distinctive character of *Hanuman*. He often used this manner to prove who he was.

(jumping then putting the elbow on the opponent's head), *Hiranya*⁶⁶ rolling the earth (striking back by the elbow), King *Rama* wandering in the forest (punching and kicking at the same side of the opponent's body), Throwing the *Mokkhasak* spear (putting the elbow over the head then hitting on the opponent's face), etc.

Thai dancing gestures: *Hanuman* courting Lady *Suphanna Matcha*⁶⁷, Hanuman courting Lady *Benyakai*⁶⁸, King *Rama* following the golden deer.

Thai plants: *Phiphek's* fruit (beleric myrobalan), *Hanuman* sitting on a throne (jatropa), *Sita's* robe (staghorn fern)

Moreover, for decades, characters' names are picked out for some dishes to call for attention. An outstanding case mentioned here is "*Rama taking a bath*", a new-invented recipe made from rice with cooked pork and Thai morning glory in gravy. Green color of Thai morning glory is correlated with King *Rama's* green skin acknowledged in Thai *Ramakian*, and the gravy is compared to the bathing water. This dish is so favorite that two alike menus have been invented, which are "*Lakshaman taking a bath*" (noodle) and "*Sita taking a bath*" (pure vegetable and gravy).



Picture 1: "*Rama taking a bath*", a Recipe from King *Rama's* Characteristic

66 A fierce org mentioned in an early episode of Thai *Ramakian*

67 A mermaid, *Thossakan's* daughter

68 A daughter of *Phiphek*, *Thossakan's* youngest brother

As for Hanuman, this significant character is used as commercial brands such as “Hanuman battery” (Hanuman in his star-spring yawn character), “Hanuman match” (flying Hanuman) or “Hanuman rice pack” that can be seen in the picture below.



Picture 2: The Uses of Hanuman Character as Commercial Brands

2.1.2 The Traditional Versions and New-Invented Products

Sometime traditional *Ramayana* tales are reproduced as brand new stuffs that are suitable for technological development and modern world preference like *Ramayana* comics, online games, card games or animations. All bring to related stuffs: color books, models, etc. Hanuman, again, is emphasized and concerned as an animal character to catch children’s attention.



Picture 3: Popular Ramayana Comics for Thai Kids

2.2 Local *Ramayana* Tale and the Commercial Value Adding

In some places where the tale of *Ramayana* is localized as legends or oral histories, the value adding of local outputs come from local *Ramayana* elements. For example, *Tha Hin* village in *Lopburi* province stands from times to times the famous homemade chalk soil industry that has included in “*One Tambon One Product*” project (OTOP)⁶⁹. People there promote their chalk soil industry by the “belonging” *Ramayana* tales: King *Rama*’s arrow fell in *Lopburi* land then the soil there became white chalk soil. The aforesaid can be calculated as creative ways to turn cultural capital to commercial profits.

2.3 New-Invented *Ramayana* Tales and Cotemporary Commerce

From original Thai *Ramayana* some “extra stories” can be invented. A distinctive example is the movie “*Hanuman Meets Seven Heroes*” by *Chaiyo Film* (Thailand) and *Tsuburaya Production* (Japan) in 1974, which created by mixing both *Hanuman* character as King *Rama*’s great soldier with Japanese hero character. This movie told about “*Kho*”, a boy who was shot to dead by an antique smuggler gang. Lady *Ultra*, female head of *Ultra Men*, summoned his soul into *Hanuman* Body. Disguised as *Hanuman*, *Kho* protected good persons and distinguished the bad ones. One day five monsters from a scientific error were rampaging and destroying Thailand. *Hanuman* had lost in his sole combat, so He *Ultra Brothers* fought together then overcame. Main characters were: *Hanuman*, *Ultra Man*, *Lady Ultra*, *Ultra Seven Ultra Man Sophie*, *Ultra Man Jack*, *Ultra Man H* and *Ultra Man Taro*.⁷⁰This *Hanumanic*-super heroic film was very popular in this period. So two years later, the movie ““*Hanuman Meets Eleven Heroes*” modified from the former version with four new characters (*Lord Ultra*, *Ultra Man Leo*, *Ultra Man Astra* and *Ultra Man King*) and “*Hanuman Meets Five Mask Riders*” were produced.



⁶⁹ Thai governmental commercial project that a village has to have at least one product for sale started in 2002.

⁷⁰ Wikipedia. “*Hanuman Meets Seven Heroes*” through <http://www.wikipedia.com> on 11th November 2011. (in Thai)

Picture 4: The Movie "*Hanuman Meets Seven Heroes*" (1974)

Both *Hanuman* and *Ultra Men* were regarded as hero characters, so the cross-cultural and cross-periodic meeting of the two heroes was possible in imaginative boundary. Such creative idea and presentation beyond traditional frame make this movie highly interesting. The identity of *Hanuman*, however, was conventionally kept in traditional costume, flirtatious deeds (with Lady Ultra) and dramatic Thai monkey-like manners while *Ultra Men* were manifested as popular Japanese heroes. This incongruity turned to uniqueness and brought about money.

From the aforesaid, Thai *Ramayana* tales effectively work in contemporary markets from the stuffs made or marked by the original-versioned tales and the imaginative-invented ones. Localities with *Ramayana* legends commercially apply these "cultural capitals" to establish oldness and incredibility for their goods.

Nevertheless, it is notable that *Hanuman* in creative economical application is seen more often than other characters, even King *Rama* or Prince *Lakshmana*. King *Rama* character is mentioned in royal activities since he represents Thai kingship in absolutely high status. *Hanuman*, on the contrary, exists with excellent fighting ability as King *Rama's* great soldier and recognized as an animal character which Thai children usually love.

3. Creation for Recreation: the Tale of *Ramayana* and the promotion of Thai Cultural Tourism

According to the familiarity with *Ramakian* that has been repeatedly localized, the relationship between the tale of *Ramayana* and localities is recounted for creative cultural tourism. An attractive traditional Thai performance about *Ramakian* may be likewise regarded as a part of a tourist program.

3.1 Visiting the Places believed to be from *Ramayana*

Since *Ramakian* is localized and well-known among the Thai, not only exotic natural sceneries but also "*Ramayana* battle scenes" make tourists impressed. Today visiting the sites related to *Ramayana* is promoted, especially in *Lopburi* province where **Tourism Thailand Organization** (TTO) set traveling programs to see the places mentioned in local *Ramakian* (for examples: *Samo Khon* Mountain, The *Rama's* Arrow Shrine, *Sappaya* Mountain).

The promotion of cultural tourism by using the tale of *Ramayana* indicates dynamism of modern world tourism. Different from traveling just for entertainment in the past, enjoyable and knowledgeable tours attract contemporary Thai middle class.



Picture 5: The *Rama's Arrow Shrine*, Lopburi Province.

3.2 Establishing Enduring Objects from *Ramayana* Stories in Related Sites

A concrete way to emphasize the *Ramayana* tales belonging to local places is to build up statues of some attractive characters like *Hanuman* statues on “*Hanuman Peak*” of *Samo Khon* Mountain and in front of a hotel in *Lopburi* province. Also, in some sites, information boards about a *Ramayana* event that “once occurred” there are usually situated for tourists.

3.3 Playing Traditional Thai *Ramayana* Performance for Tour Promotion

To promote cultural tourism in Thailand by setting a traditional performance programs becomes very popular among the Thai and foreigners. Conventional *Ramayana* Performances: *khon*, shadow play, puppet, which used to be performed only in the royal court in the past, play a significant role today in appropriate occasions.

It is sighted that *Ramayana* tales are widely and variously applied for cultural tourism. One of the most interesting points is to travel “follow King *Rama's* paths” in meaningful sites related with local *Ramakian* where are believed once the real scene of the great. Besides, traditional *Ramayana* performances not only publicize Thai culture but also support and make affords for local artists, who are encouraged to preserve all these artistic branches.

Concluding Remarks

The study of Thai *Ramayana* tales from creative folklore aspect is an example to show how local narratives are used as cultural capitals, especially among people in the central part of Thailand who take their own inherited and new-invented tales, myths, legends or even oral histories. The local tale of *Ramayana* is colored, then transformed into several products, souvenirs, new entertainment (like movies, comics or animations) and cultural tour programs to support modern market and recreation. These outstanding phenomena bring about academic interests in backgrounds, concepts, methods to create services and products from local accounts, and commercial functions of folklore in contemporary world.

To transfigure local sources for commercial profits, however, needs careful consideration in various aspects for appropriation and highest benefits. *Sukanya Sujachaya*, Thai famous folklorist and one of the scholars who has initiated creative folklore study in Thailand, gave an important point of view that **what** and **how** to apply cultural heritage in free trade society, to **whom** “benefit” and “profit” belong, **must** be considerably concerned.⁷¹

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Consumption Patterns Of Scheduled Tribes
In Andhra Pradesh:
A Study Of Jatapu Tribe In Seethammapeta Mandal Of
Srikakulam District

D. Pulla Rao

Abstract

The Constitution of India seeks to secure for all its citizens, among other things, social and economic justice, equality of status and opportunity and assured the dignity of the individual. Several provisions have been incorporated in the constitution for safeguarding and promoting the interests of the scheduled tribes in various spheres so as to enable them to the join the national mainstream. In our study the income and expenditure relationship examined across different income groups indicate that, there is a decline in the share of food expenditure as the income increase, indicating as inverse relationship between per capita income and share of food expenditure. More than half of the food expenditure of these households is found to be on the consumption of cereals while it is on non-cereals items in case of households living in the villages in the plain areas. The tribes living in the villages in plain areas are using relatively more number of commodities than the people living in the very interior areas.

Introduction

The tribes generally have a group of families living together and these groups have pre-historic economy, with several rituals and customs. Certain tribal languages have no script except speech. They live in interior forest areas far away from the civilized world. They have slash burn cultivation and hunting of the wild animals as the way of life. They have a common religion, common customs and live as a community. In general tribes are of peculiar type of people living all over the world. Agriculture is the prime and predominant occupation of tribals and the culture of the tribal communities is reflected in their agricultural practices. The agro-climatic conditions and the resource potentialities differ from one tribal area to another. This is due to the nature of soil, fertility, availability of water etc. Due to prevalence of unemployment and underemployment, agriculture alone cannot sustain them throughout the year. So the tribals must rely on labour works and the forest produce which occupies and play an important role in their daily life. Hence the tribal economy may rightly be called as agro forest based economy. The isolated location of the tribes from the main stream of life is hindering their economic activities. The illiteracy among the tribals and the rich forest produce tempted the money lenders and small traders to exploit the tribals. India ranks the second in having the tribal concentration in the world next only to Africa. India holds unique position in the concentration of tribal communities. There are about 532 scheduled tribes in India. They speak about 100 languages and 255 subsidiary languages.

The growth rates of scheduled tribe population in Andhra Pradesh are 5.47, 2.24, 6.50, 2.79 and 3.01 for the years 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2001 respectively. Except 1961 and 1991, the decadal growth rate of tribal population is more than the growth rate of general population. From 1951 to 2001 the tribal population has increased by five times but for the general population it is only 1.5 times.

The tribal villages are inhabited by different variety of tribes. The important tribes are Gonds, Andhs, Thothis, and Kolanes in Adilabad district. Koya, Konda Reddies, Naikpads in Khammam, Warangal and Godavari districts. Bagatha, Valmiki, Kondhs and Jatapus in the districts of north coastal Andhra Pradesh. Chenchus in the pockets of Mahaboob Nagar, Kurnool and Prakasam Distiricts. The social structure of the various tribal groups resemble with each other tribal groups. It is due to their similar clan organizati3ons. The social practices, customs, beliefs and code of conduct are very nearer to each other tribal groups. Almost all the tribal groups in Andhra Pradesh eat cooked food. Some tribes in higher community status generally do not accept cooked food from other tribal communities who have lower than their status. The tribal economy is with very poor economic conditions and almost intertwined with the social phenomena.

Methodology

The primary data comprise of collecting information during the months of June and July of 2010 from the selected sample tribal households in the tribal areas the multi stage stratified random sampling method is used for the study. There are four stages in which sampling process is carried out. The first stage is selection of district, the second stage consists of selection of mandal, the third stage consists of selection of villages and the fourth stage is of selection of households. Out of the nine districts of Andhra Pradesh which have concentration of tribal population Srikakulam District is selected.

The second stage of sample consists of selection of mandal. The selected Seethampeta is only the tribal concentrated mandal out of 37 mandals of Srikakulam district. Out of 37, 19 mandals have tribal population in Srikakulam district, with a total of 11, 9304 tribal population. Seethampeta alone is having 40, 189 tribal population (33.69 per cent of total tribal population of the district).

The third stage of sample consists of selection of villages. The Seethampeta mandal consist of 113 revenue villages and five uninhabited villages formed by 24 panchayats and 290 hamlets. To examine the socio economic conditions of prominent tribes in Srikakulam District i.e. Jatapu, the specific tribe population concentration is considered in the selection of villages. Specific tribe population with 80 per cent and less than 90 per cent in the respective panchayats are considered as criteria for selection. After identification of specific tribe concentration in the panchayats the Jatapu concentrated 10 villages are selected. To examine the differences in the living patterns of Jatapu tribe households in Plain and Interior villages, among the 10 selected villages purposively 5 villages Panukuvalasa, Manapuram, Pedduru, Pedarama and Valegaadda villages on road side plain villages of the Seethampeta mandal are selected. Similarly the remaining 5 villages Jayapuram, Kusumuru, Talada, Tadipai and Pedapolla are selected from the interior parts of the Seethampeta Mandal.

In the final stage from Jatapu concentrated villages a number of 20 households are selected from each selected village and as a whole from the selected 10 villages a total of 200 Jatapu tribe households are selected.

This paper deals with the consumption patterns of Jatapu Tribes in Seethampeta Mandal of Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh.

Consumption Patterns of the Sample Households

The consumption expenditure pattern at a point of time speaks about the living standards of the people. To analyze the patterns of consumption, household data have been obtained from individual households regarding the expenditure on food and non-food items. Data relating to daily routine items of expenditure have been obtained for a period of 30 days. Where as data relating to occasional items of expenditure are collected for a period of one year. The expenditure data on specific items obtained for one year have been converted for one month to facilitate comparison.

The relationship between income and expenditure on food and non-food items, has assumed greater importance in the thinking of many economists. Notable among them is Engle. Engle's hypothesis regarding the income consumption relationship, postulates that, the share of expenditure on food declines with the rise in income of the families. Against this background of Engle's hypothesis, the income-consumption relation of the different tribes is analyzed; as the present study refers to a single point of time, cross-section analysis is attempted. Village-wise average household monthly income and expenditure and average per capita monthly income and expenditure on food and non-food items is estimated.

Consumption on Food Items

It can be observed that the share of expenditure on food items is high in case of all villages and also for the total as a whole. Thus, the results of this study are consists are with the Eagle's hypothesis of income expenditure relationship. To examine Engle's hypothesis in detail the sample household's average household and average per capita expenditure of all the sample households on various food and non-food items is collected. It is evident from Table-1 in the total quantity of food consumption; rice constitutes a substantial quantity (58.30%). Out of 58.30 per cent of rice 32.78 per cent of it purchased from open market and the rest of 25.52 per cent from the fair price shops, run by government at subsidized prices.

The other important items purchased from the fair price shops by the tribal households are Sugar, Kerosene and Vegetables that constitute about 14.00 per cent in their total purchases. Other items like pulses, edible oils and meat constitute less than 5 per cent each. The variation in the percentage of quantity purchased by the households in the interior villages is relatively low when compared to their counter parts in the villages in the plain areas.

Table-1: Consumption Pattern of Quantities of Food

(Quantity in Kgs.)

S. No	Village	Rice from Open market	Rice from F.P shops	Other items from F.P shops	Pulses	Edible oil	Meat	Vegetables	Total
I. Villages in plain areas									
1	Panukuvalasa	581	335	340	68	70	72	286	1752
2	Manapuram	575	315	215	65	61	75	253	1559
3.	Pedduru	512	418	196	75	75	75	282	1633
4	Pedarama	545	431	148	68	63	65	225	1545
5	Valegedda	584	445	185	82	60	60	254	1670
II. Villages in Interior areas									
1	Jayapuram	350	325	220	55	49	65	189	1253
2	Kusumur	425	380	237	65	57	58	130	1352
3	Talada	355	319	204	59	59	58	151	1205
4	Tadipai	395	345	139	65	63	40	195	1242
15	Pedapolla	450	402	160	55	55	45	180	1347
	Total	4772 (32.78)	3715 (25.52)	2044 (14.04)	657 (4.51)	612 (4.20)	613 (4.21)	2145 (14.74)	14558 (100.00)

Note: The figures presented in the parenthesis are percentages to total.

Tribal people in general spent a higher proportion of their income on food items. Their food items include the cereals like rice, Ragi, Samalu, Maize, Jowar, Bajra, pulses, like red-gram, black-gram, green-gram, horse-gram etc., They also consume other items like vegetables, meat, fish, edible oil, salt, tamarind, jaggery etc., It is evident from the field data that almost 58.56 per cent of the average monthly household expenditure spent on food items. Among different villages, expenditure on food items is relatively higher among the households living in the interior villages rather than counter parts in the villages in plain areas. Further it is noticed that nearly 70 per cent of food expenditure is spent on rice by all households. The information relating to the consumption pattern of value of food is presented in Table-2.

It can be noticed from the table that the information relating to consumption patterns of value of food corroborates with their consumption pattern of quantities of food. The households living in the interior villages are spending more proportion of their incomes on food items rather than their counterparts living in the villages in the plain areas.

Table-2: Consumption Pattern of Values of Food

(Amount in Rs.)

Sl. No	Village	Rice from open market (Kgs.)	Rice from fair price shop (Kgs.)	Other items from fair shop (Kgs.)	Pulses (Kgs.)	Edible oil (Kgs.)	Meat (Kgs.)	Vegetables (Kgs.)	Total (Kgs.)
I. Villages in plain areas									
1	Panukuvalasa	3680	1530	720	1090	2020	1680	844	11564
2	Manapuram	3300	1442	772	920	1820	1520	635	10409
3.	Pedduru	3929	1096	800	980	1760	1590	725	10880
4	Pedarama	3640	1313	718	1046	1800	1115	778	10410
5	Valegedda	3650	1306	681	990	2000	1560	710	10897
II. Villages in Interior areas									
1	Jayapuram	3370	1569	670	650	1712	900	720	9591
2	Kusumur	3330	1236	685	890	1600	1250	680	9671
3.	Talada	3100	1220	640	780	1240	985	625	8590
4	Tadipai	3100	1390	690	790	1260	1020	643	8993
5	Pedapolla	3127	1306	572	755	1820	1520	635	9735
	Total	34326 (34.07)	13408 (13.38)	6948 (6.90)	8891 (8.85)	17032 (16.91)	13140 (13.04)	6995 (6.85)	100740 (100.00)

Note: The figures presented in the parenthesis are percentages to total.

Expenditure on Food and Non-Food Items

Average monthly household expenditure and per capita expenditure of tribal households on non-food items reveal that about 46 per cent of the average household and per capita expenditure has been spent on non-food items. On the average monthly per capita expenditure on non-food items is relatively higher on items

such as clothing, fuel lighting, cosmetics etc., by the households living in the villages in plain areas. On the other hand the households living in the interior villages are spending more on the items like tobacco, pan, beverages, festivals and ceremonies, house repairs etc. It is interesting to note that the per capita intoxicants expenditure is very higher among the households in the interior villages rather than their expenditure on education and health. The information relating to consumption on food and non-food items by the selected households in the interior and plain villages are presented in Tables 3 and 4.

Table-3: Annual Per Capita Consumption Expenditure by Food and Non -food Items by the Households in Interior Villages

S. No.	Items	Annual average per capita income groups						Total (in Rs.)
		Below 2000	2000- 2500	2500-3000	3000- 3500	3500- 4000	4000 above	
I. Food items								
1.	Cereals	55.63	53.16	49.76	44.67	40.72	-	49.30
2.	Pulses	3.26	3.47	4.62	5.68	6.03	-	4.14
3.	Other food items	10.29	10.95	11.14	12.51	13.03	-	11.56
	Total food	69.18	67.58	65.52	62.86	59.78	-	178 (65.00)
II. Non – Food items								
1.	Fuel & light	3.25	3.46	3.72	4.24	4.71	-	4.12
2.	Tobacco & Pan	5.24	5.12	4.79	4.16	3.68	-	4.51
3.	Intoxicants	5.29	4.46	5.12	4.91	3.78	-	4.68
4.	Clothing	4.14	4.67	4.79	5.28	5.87	-	5.13
5.	Festivals	5.19	4.37	3.26	4.14	4.12	-	4.62
6.	Health	0.56	0.83	1.37	1.46	2.23	-	1.24

7.	Education	0.37	1.29	1.44	2.43	3.02	-	1.68
8.	Travel	1.23	2.12	2.16	2.14	2.38	-	2.91
9.	House repairs	1.12	2.31	2.66	3.12	3.46	-	2.82
10.	Cosmetics	1.21	1.41	1.58	1.16	1.12	-	1.21
11.	Consumer durables etc.	1.27	2.36	2.46	2.28	2.69	-	2.03
	Total Non-food	30.82	21.42	34.48	37.4	40.22	-	1104 (35.00)
	Total Expenditure	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	-	282 (100.00)

Note: The figures presented in the parenthesis are percentages to total.

It is evident from the Tables 3 and 4 that the percentage distribution of annual per capita consumption expenditure according to different villages income groups of households. It can be observed from the field data that the expenditure on food item is relatively high among the households in the first three lower income groups who are particularly from the interior villages. That means the proportion of expenditure on total food items is declining with an increase in income in case of all villages. Among the different food items, expenditure on cereals is decreasing while that on pulses and other food items is increasing with an increase in the income in all the individual cases. On the front of non-food items, the expenditure on tobacco and pan, intoxicants and festivals is relatively higher in the lower income groups particularly households from the interior villages. On the other hand the expenditure on clothing, health, education, cosmetics and house repairs are relatively higher in case of higher income groups particularly among the households from the plain areas. Thus the expenditure patterns of the households synchronies with the general expenditure pattern of the rural sector.

Table-4: Annual Per Capita Consumption Expenditure by Food and Non Food Items by the Households in the Villages in Plain Areas

S. No.	Items	Annual average per capita income groups						Total (in Rs.)
		Below 2000	2000- 2500	2500- 3000	3000- 3500	3500- 4000	4000 above	
I. Food items								
1.	Cereals	-	43.16	40.54	36.82	33.67	28.46	36.52
2.	Pulses	-	5.34	5.69	6.21	6.52	7.18	6.71
3.	Other food items	-	8.64	9.97	12.33	15.03	16.62	10.66
	Total food	-	57.14	56.26	55.36	53.22	52.26	192 (54.00)
II. Non – Food items								
1.	Fuel & light	-	4.12	3.29	4.47	4.80	5.26	4.27
2.	Tobacco & Pan	-	3.19	3.16	3.41	3.53	1.59	2.86
3.	Intoxicants	-	4.12	3.35	2.81	3.72	2.12	3.12
4.	Clothing	-	3.27	4.28	5.32	5.16	6.43	5.26
5.	Festivals	-	4.56	3.28	3.16	2.53	1.66	3.23
6.	Health	-	3.12	4.46	5.10	5.24	5.37	5.16
7.	Education	-	3.61	4.72	5.02	5.41	5.48	5.33
8.	Travel	-	3.12	4.16	4.27	4.38	4.33	4.29
9.	House repairs	-	2.53	3.23	3.36	3.52	4.67	4.52
10.	Cosmetics	-	3.68	4.32	6.12	6.74	6.92	6.43
11.	Consumer durables etc.	-	1.46	1.71	2.16	2.76	3.06	2.53

Total Non-food	-	42.86	43.74	44.64	46.28	47.74	164 (46.00)
Total Expenditure	-	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	356 (100.00)

Note: The figures presented in the parenthesis are percentages to total.

The major proportion of non-food consumption constitutes their expenditure on clothes health education and others. Across the villages the extent of expenditure among the households of interior villages is more on food items rather than on non food items. The percentage of money spent on entertainment constitutes less than 2.85 per cent and it is relatively higher in case of households in the villages in plains. Across villages the households of plain villages spent more income on clothes, health, education and others in their total non-food expenditure. Where as the expenditure on these items are very limited in case of households in the some of the interior villages. The households in the interior villages spent more of their incomes on tobacco, pan, intoxicants, ceremonies and festivals in their expenditure on non food items rather than on clothing, education, health etc.,

To know the further applicability of Engle's law, the percentage distribution of annul per capita consumption expenditure across different villages are income groups of households It can be observed from the field data that the expenditure on food item is relatively high in the first three lower income groups. That means the proportion of expenditure on total food items is declining with an increase in income in case of all villages. Among the different food items, expenditure on cereals is decreasing while that on pulses and other food items is increasing with an increase in the income in all the individual cases. On the front of non-food items, the expenditure on tobacco and pan, intoxicants and festivals is relatively higher in the lower income groups. On the other hand the expenditure on clothing, health, education, cosmetics and house repairs are relatively higher in case of higher income groups. Thus the expenditure patterns of the households synchronize with the general expenditure pattern of the rural sector and the law propounded by Engle's.

Possession of Consumer Durable Goods

Tribal economy is a subsistence economy and any possession of consumer durable goods can be taken as a positive response to modern ways of living. Information relating to the possession of 10 goods like; furniture, radio, watch, tape recorders, television, cycle, scooter, fan, iron, almirah, gas stove, cooker has been collected from the sample households. Scores are given on the basis of possession of the articles. A score of '0' is given for non possession of any of these goods and a score of '1' is given for possession of any one of these

goods. Thus scores are obtained on the basis of minimum and maximum scores of '0' to 10. It has been found that no single household is having more than 8 of these identified items. So the scores of possession of goods across villages are presented in Table-5.

It can be observed from the table that as a whole nearly 40.50 per cent of the households are not having any of the selected goods and in this case among the tribes the proportion of households of interior villages are relatively higher than other households living in the villages in plain areas.. The households of interior villages possessed limited commodities compared to the households in the villages in plain areas. The change in the assets composition among the households of different villages reveals the process of transformation taking place in the living pattern of the households living in the plain areas.

Table-5: Distribution of Households by Score of Consumer and Other Durable Goods

S. No.	village	No. of durable goods							Total
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I. Villages in plain areas									
1.	Panukuvalasa	8	5	3	2	0	1	1	20
2.	Manapuram	7	4	4	3	1	1	0	20
3.	Pedduru	6	6	3	2	2	0	1	20
4.	Pedarama	5	7	4	2	1	1	0	20
5.	Valegedda	7	5	3	2	1	1	1	20
II. Villages in Interior areas:									
1.	Jayapuram	9	6	2	2	1	0	0	20
2.	Kusumur	11	7	1	1	0	0	0	20
3.	Talada	8	6	3	2	1	0	0	20
4.	Tadipai	10	6	2	1	1	0	0	20

5.	Pedapolla	10	5	3	1	0	1	0	20
	Total	81	57	28	18	8	5	3	200
		(40.5)	(28.50)	(14.0)	(9.0)	(4.0)	(2.50)	(1.50)	(100)

Note: The figures presented in the parenthesis are percentages to total.

Expenditure on Selected Special Items

Information relating to the household expenditure on certain item, which reflects modern living has been obtained. The items chosen are toilet soaps, face powder, tooth paste/powder, wristwatch, transistor, torchlight, chairs, television, and cots. Scores are being given according to the possession of selected items by the households. It is interesting to note that a higher proportion of households living in the villages in plain areas are spending on more number of selected items rather than the households living in interior villages. It may be observed that the responsiveness to modernity in terms of household expenditure on selected goods is more pronounced in case of the households living in the villages in plain areas rather than the households living in the interior villages. Hence the scores of selected goods across villages are presented in the Table-6.

It is indicated that only 6.0 per cent of households are without any selected commodities and most of them belongs to the interior villages. In the group of 39.0 per cent who possessed one commodity also the households in the interior villages are more in number. The other 26.0 per cent possessed two items, 13.0 per cent has three items, 8.0 per cent are having four items, and 4.0 per cent are with five items. 2.5 per cent possessed with six items, 0.5 per cent with seven item and 1.0 per cent household are possessed with a maximum of 8 selected commodities among these households the households living tin the villages in plain areas are more in number

Table-6: Distribution of Households by Score of Expenditure on Selected Goods across Villages

S. No.	Tribes	No. of selected goods possessed									Total
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
I. Villages in plain areas											
1.	Panukuvalasa	-	6	6	3	2	1	1	-	1	20
2.	Manapuram	-	6	4	4	4	1	1	-	-	20
3.	Pedduru	-	7	5	3	2	1	1	1	-	20
4.	Pedarama	-	9	6	3	1	1	-	-	-	20
5.	Valegedda	-	8	4	3	2	1	1	-	1	20
II. Villages in Interior areas											
1.	Jayapuram	-	8	6	4	1	1	-	-	-	20
2.	Kusumur	4	10	4	1	1	-	-	-	-	20
3.	Talada	2	9	6	1	1	-	1	-	-	20
4.	Tadipai	6	8	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	20
5.	Pedapolla	-	7	6	3	2	2	-	-	-	20
Total		12	78	52	26	16	8	5	1	2	200
		(6.0)	(39.0)	(26.0)	(13.0)	(8.0)	(4.0)	(2.5)	(0.5)	(1.0)	(100.00)

Note: The figures presented in the parenthesis are percentages to total.

Conclusions

The pattern of consumption expenditure of tribal households at tribe level reveal that the selected Jatapu households spend a higher proportion of their incomes on food items than non food items. However, the income and expenditure relationship examined across different income groups indicate that, there is a decline in the share of food expenditure as the income increase, indicating as inverse relationship between per capita income and share of food expenditure. This is more or less noticed in all the villages. Also it is observed that among the households living in the roadside plain villages they spend proportionately less amount of

money on food items while in the remaining households living in the interior villages they spend relatively more income on food items. Further, more than half of the food expenditure of these households is found to be on the consumption of cereals while it is on non-cereals items in case of households living in the villages in the plain areas. Among the food items, the expenditure on cereals is decreasing while the expenditure on other food items like edible oils, vegetables etc is increasing with an increase in income.

On the front of expenditure on non-food items, the relatively lower income groups particularly those who are living in the interior villages spend more on tobacco and pan, intoxicants, festivals and ceremonies and fuel and light. On the other hand, the households living in the villages in plain and roadside areas the households spend more on clothing, health, education, cosmetics, travel, and consumer durables. It is evident from the analysis relating to the expenditure on selected 10 commodities which represents modernity and change in the consumption patterns among the households reveal that only 3.73 per cent households are not utilizing any one out of the ten commodities. The households living in the villages in plain and roadside areas are using relatively more number of commodities than the households living in the very interior areas. It may be observed that the responsiveness to modernity in terms of households' expenditure on selected goods is more pronounced among the households living in the plain and roadside villages.

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Issues in Tribal Educatio in Bastar, Chhattisgarh

Mrs Uma Ram

Introduction

Bastar, a part of Dandakaranya in ancient time, is both a district as also a division in Chhattisgarh. Till 1997, it was a single district division in Madhya Pradesh. Bastar today is a division with five districts namely Bastar, Kanker, Dantewada, Narayanpur and Bijapur Tribal population. This is a heavily forested, tribal-dominated area. The entire division is a notified scheduled area. A brief demographic glimpse of the area can be had from the following table:

S.No	Indicator	Kanker	Bastar ⁷²	Dantewada ⁷³
1	Area (Sq. Kms)	5,285.01	8,430.44	10,227.46
2	Forest Area (as %)	63.53	84.36	98%
3	Population (2001)	6,51,333	13,02,253	7,19,065
4	Tribal Population (%)	56.36%	70%	66%
5	Major Ethnic Tribes	Raj Gonds, Maria, Muria, Halba	Maria, Muria, Abuhjmaria, Dhurva, Halba, Bhatra	Maria, Halba, Dorla, Dhurva, Gond, Telga
6	Poverty Level (%)	50+	55+	60+
7	Literacy (2001)	73.31%	45.48%	30.01%
8	Tribal Students at	54,305	1,37,761	81,801
	(a) Primary level			
	(b) Secondary level	20,332	25,329	10,623
	(c) High-school level	7,118	10,331	5,960
	(d) Hr. Sec level	2,596	3,610	2,799

Source: District-wise Socio-Economic Development Indicators in Chhattisgarh, 2005

Directorate of Economic & Statistics, Chhattisgarh

School Education In Bastar: An Overview

District Primary Education Program (DPEP) has been running in Bastar since 1998. Earlier, school education in Bastar was administered by the Education Department. Later it was selectively

⁷² Includes present-day Narayanpur district.

⁷³ Includes present-day Bijapur district

shared between Education Department and Tribal Welfare Department. Subsequently it was transferred entirely to the Tribal Welfare Department. Officially, the enrollment status is 100%. However, the credibility of this is dubious because of various factors. The drop-out phenomenon extends to all years of school, but it is very pronounced at the "transition points" that is, when a student completes Primary, Secondary and Hr. Secondary standards and has to move from one school to another. It can be seen that for every 100 tribal students enrolled in Primary School, only 2.62 tribal students make it to the Higher Secondary level in Bastar. For Dantewada and Kanker districts, these figures are 3.42 and 4.78 respectively. How many among these clear the XII Board exam? How many take the trouble to seek admission in a College? A recent survey in Bastar by an NGO indicated that not even 1% of the students enrolling in Standard I eventually enter the portals of the College. The drop-out ratio among girls is much higher than the drop-out ratio among boys. The high drop-out phenomenon has given rise to tragic-comic habit of tribal youth mentioning in a plain-faced manner their academic qualification as 'Eighth-fail' or even 'Fifth-fail'. One of the reasons for the high drop-out is the ill-match between the formal school term(s) and the tribal calendar. For instance, the peak season for NTFP collection and processing in Bastar (January-March) clashes with the time for annual examinations.

Almost all primary schools are co-education schools. Although there are some private schools run by Christian and Hindu organizations, the tribal students' strength in these schools, especially the Christian schools, is very negligible. On the other hand, their strength is almost 100% in Government schools. Mid-day Meal program is run in all Government schools. Around 20% of the tribal students study in boarding schools, locally known as "Ashram Shaala". The show-school in Bastar, especially in the field of tribal education, is the Ramakrishna-Vivekanand School in Narayanpur run by the Ramakrishna Mission. It was set up in the mid-eighties with the object of providing public-school quality education to the tribal children in Abujmarh. This school has an impressive record, as indicated by the Board-examination results. Mata Rukmani Seva Sanstha (a private organization inspired and guided by the ideals of Vinoba Bhave) runs a number of ashram schools especially for tribal girls in Bastar, Dantewada and Bijapur districts. Vanvasi Kalyan Ashrams and Saraswati Shishu Mandir also run several good schools for tribals in Bastar. The state of government schools run by the Tribal Welfare Department in Bastar can be surmised from the following table.

S.No	Indicator	Kanker	Bastar ⁷⁴	Dantewada ⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Includes present-day Narayanpur district.

1	Number of teachers per school at			
	(a) Primary Level	2	2	1
	(b) Secondary Level	4	3	7
	(c) High School Level	6	10	6
	(d) Hr. Sec. Level	18	15	7
4	Student-Teacher Ratio at			
	(a) Primary Level	33	39	65
5	(b) Secondary Level	37	40	16
		29	27	25
6	(c) Hr. Sec. Level	7	7	11

Source: District-wise Socio-Economic Development Indicators in Chhattisgarh, 2005

Directorate of Economic & Statistics, Chhattisgarh

High absenteeism of teachers in the schools in Bastar is a major challenge in addition to the inadequate number of teachers in the schools. Schools close to towns have more teachers than class-rooms (or even chairs!) in the school, while schools located off the connecting roads that require walking some distance have hardly one teacher.

Likewise, hidden beneath the student-teacher ratio is the fact that even in schools where a teacher has around 40 students to teach, these 40 students belong to various Standards. Consequently, one teacher in one poorly classroom handles 40 students belonging to three or four different standards! How he can run such parallel classes teaching entirely different subjects from entirely different text

⁷⁵ Includes present-day Bijapur district

books, is best left to our imagination. In the single-teacher EGS⁷⁶ schools, teachers commonly handled all five standards simultaneously! Now these EGS schools have converted to normal primary schools.

A third point that emerges from the above table is the very impressive teacher-student ratio (7, 7, 11) at the Higher Secondary level. Hidden under this impressive figure is the sad point mentioned earlier that barely 3 out of 100 PS-level students make it to the higher secondary level.

Issues In Tribal Education

The woes that ail tribal education in Bastar are largely those that ail tribal education in other parts of India (maybe the world). The entire process of education in tribal areas inadvertently (or advertently?) aims to supplant the traditional value-system with another system that is almost the opposite of it! This happens in various ways.

Language is a major issue. The tribal child in Bastar has to simultaneously contend with at least three languages: (a) his mother tongue that could be Gondi or Bhatri or Dorli or Dhurvi or Telga or Halbi (b) Halbi, which is the lingua franca in Bastar⁷⁷ and (c) Hindi, the official medium of instruction. Add to this English, which is taught from Standard I. With plans being afoot to get Chhattisgarhi included in 8th Schedule of the Constitution as the official language of the State,⁷⁸ it is only a matter of time before the child will be saddled with yet another language.⁷⁹ None of the local tongues in Bastar

⁷⁶ EGS=Education Guarantee Scheme. This was a well-intentioned scheme of the Madhya Pradesh Government. Under this scheme, if a parish had 30 primary-level students but no school, and if it demanded a school in its neighborhood, the Government guaranteed opening such a school within 90 days. The scheme, however, required the community to ensure (a) suitable building for the school, and (b) suitable candidate (VIII Pass) to serve as a teacher. EGS schools were later subsumed under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and made into Primary Schools.

⁷⁷ Halbi is the tongue of the Halbas. It has close affinities to Marathi. It was the language of the Maratha soldiers who came and settled down in Bastar when Bastar came under the sway of the Peshwa rulers of Nagpur. Bastar has pockets of the major tribes, and the gaps are all filled up by the Halbas. Halbi therefore became the lingua franca of the region. Its status was further strengthened when it was adopted as the court language of Bastar.

⁷⁸ The Legislature of Chhattisgarh has already unanimously passed the necessary resolution in this regard. The matter is pending at the Central level.

⁷⁹ Speaking on the issue of language for tribal education at a Discussion Group in Raipur recently, Shri.Nand Kumar, Secretary, School Education, Chhattisgarh, shared an experience that reflects how good intentions aim contradictorily toward tribal education. When the proposal for teaching tribal kids in Bastar in their native tongue for the first two years of school was placed before a former Chief Minister, he turned it down arguing that that would further isolate the tribal. He emphasized, instead, the need to initiate them into English from Std I so as to equip them to face the challenges of globalization. The current Chief Minister, with the best of intentions like his predecessor, took an opposite view and insisted that early education should be in the kids' mother-tongue because this will lend a status and respectability to the tribal tongues which in turn will boost the tribal child sense of self-respectability. Needless to add, the tribal kid is caught between various good intentions and suffers in the process!

has a script of its own. The medium of instruction in schools is Hindi. The Text Books are in Hindi and in Devanagari script. In effect, for the tribal child in Bastar to be instructed in Hindi, it is analogous to a British school-boy in England being taught in French medium! To say the least, the child's mind is baffled, and this state is commonly misjudged as low IQ among tribal students.

The matter is made worse by the prejudice against tribal ways ingrained in the teacher's mind. Most of the teachers are non-tribals. They have their homes in the towns and, given the state of transport system, their commuting between home and school is erratic and takes away much of their time and energy. The Government tried in vain to adopt a system of local employment, but this ran into a legal hurdle.⁸⁰ The worst among the teachers simply play truant. The best among the teachers approach their job in a misconceived missionary mode. They believe their mission is to "civilize" the tribal kids and to "wean them from traditional ways" to assimilate them into the "national mainstream". The Government believes in no less, without realizing the terrible ramifications implied in this mission.

Every year, come July and large-scale campaigns (*Shaala Utsav*) are organized to attract kids to enroll in schools. Apart from publicizing the virtues of formal education through posters, wall-scripting and radio, loud rallies are organized in the villages and parishes. The teachers and others make rounds for door-to-door calls to motivate children and their parents. A lot of money and energy goes into all this. People in the mainstream are very conscious about educating their children.⁸¹ Why? Because they consider education as an enabling factor, an acquisition that will enable the child later to find a worthy livelihood. Tribal parents love their children no less. Why then are they so lax with regard to sending their children to school regularly? An investigation done in this regard led to a shocking revelation that education as it exists in Bastar is a disabling factor.¹ The indifferent schools produce Tenth-pass or Twelfth-pass upstarts who, often spoilt by the scholarship cash-money given by the Government, pick up expensive vices, give up the traditional activities of the family (like gathering NTFP) and at the same time they are not good enough to succeed in the outside world. Eventually, they just hang around the pan shops. The tribal elders in Bastar are understandably not too enthusiastic about formal school education.

⁸⁰ A similar attempt by the Government of Tamilnadu was challenged in the court. The matter went up to the Supreme Court, which turned down the Government order saying that the Constitution does not provide for "district-wise" reservation.

⁸¹ As a development worker rightly observed, the urgencies of a government servant on being transferred include (a) to find a home, and (b) to find a proper school for his kids.

The well-intentioned Government has opened a number of Ashram Shaalas to facilitate tribal education in Bastar. However, these have shown a flip side over the years. Unscrupulous politicians have reportedly tried to draft workers from the tribal hostels. This has led to serious fissures in the traditional forms of leadership in tribal Bastar. The belligerent attitude of the hostel-leaders when they visit their villages is seen as emergence of the dandy culture that is perhaps effective in politics but disastrous to cohesiveness of the tribe and community.

Formal school education and, later, the reservation-ladder that beckons the diligent among the tribal students is leading to what anthropologists term 'de-tribalization'. The system may facilitate temporal triumph of the individual, but this comes at the cost of disintegration of the tribe. The system of reservation of constituencies in the electoral domain is also doing a similar kind of damage.

The content of the syllabus for education in Bastar is not different from what it is in the rest of the State. The need for a more relevant content and syllabus has often been recognized, but effective action in this regard is yet to come. Shri.Digvijay Singh, former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, speaking in Bastar on tribal development felt that the essence of this lies in enabling (through education, capacity building, legislation and facilitation) tribals to realize higher incomes from their traditional lines of economic activity.ⁱⁱ He was speaking in the context of Bastar and was referring to non-timber forest produces (NTFP) the processing of which constitute the traditional economic activity of the tribes in Bastar. NTFP and tribal agro produces in Bastar are worth over Rs.1000 Crores per annum.ⁱⁱⁱ The major NTFP that are traded in large quantities include tamarind, mahua, kosa cocoons, mango, harra, tree-borne oilseeds like tora, karanj, kusum, sal, apart from tendu leaves. The tribals collect these from the forests and after rudimentary processing, bring them to the weekly markets for sale to the traders or their operatives.⁸² The tribal in Bastar, who is owner of the produce^{iv} gets as low as 20% of the value; the balance 80% passes on to a long chain of middlemen and traders.^v None of the text books in Bastar have any content regarding the best practices for harvesting and processing NTFP. How damaging this can be can be judged by the case of Kosa. Bastar has two kinds of Kosa: one is cultured in farms and is known as *daba kosa*. Another occurs naturally on *Sal* (*Shorea Robusta*) trees. This second variety, known as *raily kosa* is exclusive to Bastar. An estimated 5 crore cocoons of *raily kosa* are harvested every year. Less than 2% of this is processed within the district. The bulk is removed to small towns in Bihar where yarn is drawn from the cocoons and woven in high-value Bastar Kosa fabric. Why? because the locals reportedly lack the skill to process kosa. Similar is the

⁸² These operatives are locally called *kochiyas*.

case in varying degrees in respect of all other NTFP. Over 1000 truck-loads of tendu leaves are transported from Bastar to towns in South India (where around fifty truck-loads of tobacco exist) for use in beedi-rolling. The logical way should have been for fifty trucks of tobacco from these towns to be brought to Bastar to activate the beedi industry locally. The schools, however, continue to neglect the need to impart vocational training to strengthen the traditional lines of economic activity in Bastar. The schools remain a disabling force.

The traditional 'school' of the tribal in Bastar was in the *ghotul*.⁸³ The best of what is in tribal culture owes to the *ghotul*.^{vi} However, under the influence of the new education, the *ghotul* has suffered a systematic disintegration. Today, it is almost defunct (except perhaps in some remote interiors of Bastar where too it is reported to be very irregular).

To conclude, based on the Bastar experience, some suggestions could be made at this point to make tribal education meaningful, creative and livelihood-friendly. These are as follows:

- The Big-brother attitude of educators must end. The approach to tribal education has to be a two-way transaction of give and take, based on an informed appreciation of traditional tribal values and wisdom.
- The purpose of tribal education must be (like elsewhere) to (a) impart the '3R's and (b) to refine and lead further the legacy of traditional wisdom (c) to facilitate strengthening of the traditional economic activities.
- Ways and means could be explored to involve *ghotul*-kind of institutions to integrate traditional and new forms of education.
- The content for schools in tribal areas must be different (at least partially) from the general content.
- The panel that has power to design tribal education must include professional anthropologists and also traditional community leaders.
- The school terms and daily timings must be according to the tribal economic calendar.

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ⁱ For a fuller discussion of this point, see *Reading Beyond the Alphabet*, Ed. Brij Kothari, Vijay Sherry Chand and Michael Norton (2003) Sage Publications. This book is a collection of papers presented at a Workshop on Lifelong Literacy organized by IIM, Ahmedabad in August 1999. The point here is picked from the opening article by K.S.Ram in this book.

ⁱⁱ Vide *The Tamarind Route to Gram Swaraj*, RG Mission, Jagdalpur (2000)

ⁱⁱⁱ Vide *Imli Andolan In Bastar*, RG Mission, Jagdalpur (1999). This figure based on the Mandi's official records relates to 1999. At current prices, this is well over Rs.2000 Cr.

⁸³ The Village Dormitory, common in many indigenous societies the world over.

^{iv} In terms of the Provisions of Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, gram sabhas in tribal areas have ownership rights over locally available NTFP.

^v Vide *Imli Andolan In Bastar*, RG Mission, Jagdalpur (1999).

^{vi} See *The Muria And Their Ghotul* by Verrier Elwin (OUP)

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PART – V

Pages from the History

(This is the extracts from the well known book “ Meet My People “ written by the great folklorist Devendra Satyarthi during 1931. The book was released in 1941 in Lahore with a foreward by noted writer Mulak Raj Anand.. He had extensive tour to many parts of India and had collected three million songs across the country. His visit to Orissa is presented here to introduce the readers that how folklore of Orissa was collected during pre-independent period to search for a National identity cutting across the language, religion and castes and venturing for unity in diversity.

(Editor)

HOMAGE TO ORISSA

Devendra Satyarthi

SINGING across the centuries, Orissa, or Utkal, as the Oriya-speaking people call their homeland, can claim to have a long tradition of folk-poetry. So much of it is concerned with the earth that one feels like listening to the soft whispers of Mother Earth.

At Puri, where I began my Orissa tour in 1931, an Oriya friend said, " Very little Oriya folk-poetry has been recorded so far. You will have to go to village huts and rice fields, if you must listen to the singing voice of the Oriya people. You won't find even the slightest mention of the crash of the biggest of our kingdoms in the peasant songs, but so far as the emotions of the heart are concerned, you will find an excellent record."

I came down to Cuttuck, and visited the surrounding villages to gather peasant songs, all sharply etched on the mind of Orissa that I saw all around. I visited some of the States as well, enriching my collection, and marked how the half-starved peasant had been facing hunger and poverty.

I found some rare stuff, and it was really astonishing that the Oriya peasant, even while facing starvation, rejoiced in the kingdom of the heart, and derived peace and a sort of detachment.

We hear the singing voice of the people and see them busy in household work. Finding their companionship in trees and birds, hills and streams, they make a living poetry of nature. Words, as simple as the daily speech, have the morning freshness. Occasionally, one feels that the song must have been composed by nature herself.

The villager earned a difficult livelihood, but his cultural training has been such that he did not lack in appreciation of life in its loveliest aspects. Amidst the grinding poverty runs the wonder of nature with the brilliancy of lightning. Maybe, the flash of joy is brief, but, for the same reason, it is all the more precious. The conception of beauty in the human form and the consolation of the human personality have always touched the mind of the villager, even when his t nigger for

bread is grim.

There is very little bitterness. No great fuss is made about domestic problems. But the variety of human personality, drawn with accuracy, passes before us. The village flirt, the

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conceited lover, the hard-working housewife, the new bride under the folds of the bridal sari, the guest seeking hospitality, the old man with a bit of advice to the younger ones you find such stuff.

The four-line piece with a common refrain is generally sung as a song by young girls. The first line forms a background, an image taken from nature or home life ; sometime it directly deals with the following comment. The refrain may be jamo dali lo, i.e., O branch of the jamun tree.

327 At the doorway lies a round stone.
Your back received beating like a stone,
You look clever.

O branch of the jamun tree.

328 The bamboo with four branches,

My four brothers wear ear-rings and bracelets.
They work in the Cuttuck durbar,
O branch of thzjamun tree.

321) Rub your bangle, rub your finger-ring,
All know, including your neighbour!).
Why do you feel shy now ?

branch ofthejamun tree.

330 On the road goes a chariot.

I have been with you for twelve years.
You didn't get me a nose-ring.

O branch of the jamun tree.

331 O firefly,

Don't be sad that you are nothing,
There is light at your back.

branch of the jamun tree.

332 Water below the boundary-line,
You may frighten, I don't fear,

I shall wear a flower on my hair-knot.
O branch of the jamun tree.

HOMAGE to ORISSA 173

333 The betel-nut is cut into pieces.

Give up the State service, my love,
My royal forehead is paining.
O branch of the jamun tree.

334: Stone-bits on the new road,
Our Raja has a white mare,
She runs towards the battle-field.
O branch of the jamun tree.

Everyone shouts, rupee, rupee, rupee.
I could not buy beauty for silver,
I have lost all means.
O branch of thejamun tree.

330 Water of the new tank.

You gave me in a big house, mother,
They give me even the kerandi fish after counting.
O branch of the jamun tree.

337 The bangle touched the elbow.
No justice left at Gumma village,
Brother exploits sister.
O branch of the jamun tree.

The refrain may be Mo Ramo re, i.e., O my Rama, Lo Koili, i.e., O kail, or still different. The singer, addressing the branch of the jamun tree, the god of her heart, or even the little bird, comments on her life.

Marriage-songs are many. The mother, soothing the weeping bride, who feels sad and dejected while bidding adieu to her parents' home, addresses in a soft tone. In some of these songs even the bride opens her heart.

m MEET MY PEOPLE

338 Selecting a good house.

Your father gave you in marriage, my golden daughter.

Father-in-law and mother-in-law are alive,

Theirs is a zamindari,

They are in State service.

You will have no trouble, my golden daughter,

Our son-in-law controls the affairs,

He carries a business in rice,

Everything will be in your hands, my golden daughter.

339 Don't weep, don't weep, I say, my golden daughter,
After eight days we shall know your news,
Your aunt with her sari wiped out your tears,
Why are you so much dejected ?

340 O koily my silken swing on the sandal tree,
With tears I sat on it, O hoiL

O koil, the gold comb I have at mother-in-law's,

The sandal oil I left back at my mother's home, O koil.

O koil, the honey at my mother's home was so sweet,
My childhood days I passed in joy, O koil.

O koil, has my mother no memory of mine ?
Is her soft heart a stone now, O koil ?

O koily I am a fish out of water.

Shall I not once see my mother, O koil ?

There is a four-line pattern sung in the fields while the day's work goes on. It is also adapted to a dance with a variance of the rhythm and the time.

341 The branch of the kakharu looks lovely,
When will the flower blossom ?

Looking towards the fair-faced one my years are passing,
When will she be kind to me ?

HOMAGE TO ORTSSA 17f,

342 The bird of this side of the stream
Flew across,
The dark-faced girl
Got one pice from me.

343 The drum is torn, the drummer is dumb,
The one-eyed dancing girl is dancing ;
The Raja is deaf, the minister is foolish,
He follows as he likes.

344 The lower leaf drops,
The upper leaf laughs,
The middle one says,
My day draws nearer.

345 The shining white stick.

How do you get the beating ?
O God, I shall die,
My bones are crushed.

There are other songs sung by the carters as they drive the bullocks. The reference to the bullock-cart forms a special note.

346 The bullock-cart makes the creaking noise
By the side of the Bentu tank,
The cartman's face looks pale,
He longs to see the fair-faced woman.

The ploughman has his own high-pitched, long-drawn tune. He talks to the bullocks and likes to share his feelings with them in a mood of confession. He knows his limitations, yet he declares that he is no less than Ban Mali, or Krishna, in his humble vocation, while he dreams of a plough made of gold and yoke of silver,

176 MEET MY PEOPLE

347 Tiny, tiny, the black bullock's eyes,
Put your feet nicely, O black one,
Fine sand will rise before us.

348 Go on, go on, O bullock, do not brood over,

After a while you will be free,

You will get green grass and cold water.

349 I haven't yoked the bullocks in the company of ploughmen,

I haven't taken lesson at a school,
What song shall I sing, O ploughman,
I am ploughing with the old bullocks.

350 Red, red, son of the cow is red,
More red is the god of Dharma.

The god of Dharma is true for the four Yugas,
He drove his chariot in the dry sand.
Take the chariot across, O charioteer,
Let the night be passed in Lanka.

For the gold plough the silver yoke,
The bullock made of diamonds and gems
Ban Mali himself is the ploughman.

Certain Oriya folk-songs are known for the sense of humour and irony. Sometimes, the singer shows a remarkable craftsmanship, singing extempore banking upon stock phrases and idioms.

352 You came to see me, dear, you did well.
No place have I for you to sit ;
The way you came, dear,
The same way you may go.

A drop of water I would offer you, dear,
The earthen pitcher is broken ;
Don't sit, go away hastily, dear,
How long will you keep standing ?

HOMAGE TO OR I SS A 177

I would give you apeerha, dear,
You would rest for a while ;
Some child took it away, dear,
I had only one.

I would give you oil, dear,

You would rub on your body ;

Some chilli is mixed in it,

Your eyes will burn in case you use it.

I would give you utensils, dear,

Not even a brass pot in the house ;

I would have brought one from a neighbour,

My leg got crippled.

We would talk of joy and sorrow,
Dear, I have got fever ;
Do not sit beside a sick person, dear,
Make haste to go back home.

I would give you money to spend, dear,

I have nothing with me ;

I really feel, dear,

I should curse my luck.

Had you been here yesterday, dear,

I had prepared sweet cakes ;

For life-time you would have remembered, dear,

They were so sweet.

It is my bad luck, dear,
It didn't happen that way ;
Who will know my heart's pain,
All that I feel, dear ?

It is getting late, go back, dear,
Your residence is far away ;
Come some day again, dear,
Stay with me,

17* MEET MY PEOPLE

After some days, dear,
My son will come to invite you ;
Don't take it ill, dear,
Hurry up to go.

My house must have always, dear,
Persons staying as guests ;
Last month I had to spend, dear,
One maund of extra rice.

How will you go on foot, dear,

Tell me, how will you go back ?

If I had a bullock-cart I would offer you, dear,

I am not such a miser.

I shall give you a spinning-wheel,
It is lying broken ;

Have it repaired and send it back, dear,
Through a person coming this side.

Last year during the Dot Purnima, dear,
At your residence, dear,
The comforts I had, dear,
All I remember.

It will not be over if I go on, dear,
All your love ;

It will be night, day is no more,
How long will I tell ?

The voice of the Oriya woman is heard in the entire range
of these songs. Her greatest wish is that she should at least
get one son, for in the absence of one, it will be impossible
for her to enter the doorway of heaven.

353 O kharkhari flower, I worship you,

Any goddess may keep me under her protection,
The rice is seven-year-old.

Let the son of my lap sleep in the folds of my sari,
While I die, send me to heaven,

HOMAGE TOORISS A 170

Sometimes at the pitch of her voice, she addresses her husband, when he thoroughly disappoints her.

354 Hell with you, O man with burnt face,
No more will I stay in your house ;
At daytime I will beg some rice,
At daytime I will eat,

With my hands I will cook and eat and get fat,
In the open will I sleep.

But the husband may still seek her companionship, while he invites her attention to his plan to leave for Burma, where he will work hard to make a good living.

355 Come, O diamond girl,
We will leave for Rangoon.

Rice and vegetable curry,
What more will I say ?

Tea leaves in that country,

You can save money and keep in your hands.

Trunks and boxes in that country,

Rupees you can keep one row above the other.

Come, O diamond girl,
We will leave for Rangoon.

And ultimately the quarrel between husband and wife may end in the Song of the Stomach. It is a free confession of one's disappointments in the daily struggle of life.

355 For this stomach,

For this stomach I left for Bengal,
 For this stomach I had all struggle.
 For this stomach I pounded rice,

180 MEET MY PEOPLE

For this stomach I reaped the paddy.

For this stomach I worked on a shop.

For this stomach I received cane-beating on my back,

For this stomach I went on dancing

For this stomach I took to spinning,

For this stomach I find abuses on my lips,

For this stomach I met Tarn Raj.

For this stomach.

Some of the songs deal with the seasonal outlook and the influence of every month of the year on the mine! of the singer is depicted in the Ear a Mail songs. The Chait Parva songs breathe the air of the spring festival, ft may be merely a love song with a little twist, or it may be symbolic of the new sap rising in the trees ; the whole month ofChaita is spent in singing and dancing,

young men and maidens, ever eager to take up opposite sides, sing in competition. Every Chait Parva song draws upon nature ; it strikes the passions and emotions of both the singers and The listeners.

Oriya folk-songs are an integral part of Oriya culture. Many songs deal with images of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana, as they passed their days in the forest. Some move round Radha and Krishna.

Surely, whenever one happens to listen to an Oriya folk-song, and, thereby gets a useful hint of the people's musical tradition, one's heart jumps with joy, saying, ' Sing, Orissa, sing, dear ? '

(Courtesy: Project Gutenberg, Germany)



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