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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 culture, folklore, education, and language pedagogy.

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The objectives of the journal are:

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- 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
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Dedication

This volume of Lokaratna is dedicated to the memory of Prof John Miles Foley, professor, Department of Oral Traditions in Missouri University, USA. He was the noted scholar of Oral Epic Research in our time to explore the unspoken narratives of the human civilization. He was our inspiration to delve us in to the ocean of folklore.

We the members of folklore foundation offer our heartfelt gratitude to his immortal soul. He will always be remembered by us for thought and knowledge manifested in his letters.

Mahendra Kumar Mishra

Editor in Chief

Lokaratna



From the Desk of the Chief Editor

In 1995, I met Prof John Miles Foley in the IX International Society for Folk Narrative Research (ISFNR) in CIL, Mysore. He listened to my paper "Ethnic Identity and Oral Narratives" and asked me about my research background. I expressed how Indian rural scholars lacked reference books on folklore, also the research problems. He asked me if I had gone through the books of Milman Parry, Albert B Lord and of course his own writings. I said, "I have heard these names, but have no scope to read them due to lack of library and lack of purchasing such costly books from abroad. He gave a smile and said, "Okay, when I go back please remind me about the books. I may be of help to your work."

I came back but forgot to write to him. One fine evening I got my new computer and started emailing to my all connected folklorists writing to them about my work on folklore. Foley, after getting my email wrote to me, "I am sending some books for you."

After a month or so, a huge parcel of books worth about 45 000 rupees reached my home. I was surprised to see these books which I had just not expected.

Foley was kind enough to send all the published Oral Tradition journal, and some valuable books on oral Tradition, Epic formula, Epic Composition and many books on oral epics.

It was his efforts that helped me to work on oral epics of Kalahandi which appeared in 2008. I took about 15 years in researching a rare genre of oral epic narratives in Kalahandi reaching 7 ethnic groups collecting and interpreting 24 epics texts..

It was his generosity to send such a huge stock of books relevant to an Indian scholar working for the forest people of Kalahandi.

Foley was the intellectual progeny of Albert B Lord and Milman Parry. His research has inspired many Asian scholars and Institutions. The Chinese Institute of Ethnic Literature is one, led by Prof. Chao Gegin. I visited this institute in Beijing during 2012, I came across many scholars of Prof Foley working in Chinese oral tradition..

His absence is a great loss to the whole folklore community of the globe. But his contribution has led so many people inside and outside the university to pursue his research and walk the road for a quest for oral tradition. Now about more than 400 oral epics in this globe have been

significantly exploring the most unknown areas of culture that was orally performed. It is the centurion work of Pary, Lord and Foley in West and China, India, Vietnam, Philippines, Turkey and the Central Asian states that have unravelled a new horizon of oral epics of the lands, without these, the civilisational histories and its narratives are incomplete.

This volume is significant in terms of completing 9 years of Lokaratna, 9 is a number with cultural significance in Indian myth. It represents the completeness of the matter. We don't feel that we are either complete or incomplete. But we are happy that the Lokaratna is gradually gaining international attention and good number of articles are also coming to us. This journal is also placed in many digital libraries of the globe. This is a matter of great satisfaction. Need less to say, till date we have not spent a single penny to edit or produce the work due to the cooperation and collaborative efforts of our friends. It is also because of the contribution of technology, though it is always discussed that technology is enemy of traditional folklore. But the reduction of digital divide and access of technology to the most nonliterate communities signifies the end of both the end and ensures that, humanity can survive, by both the end of human existence.

I am thankful to Dr Anand Mahanand, the executive editor without whose efforts this work could not have been made possible. I am also thankful to the contributors who have faith in our intellectual endeavour. I am also thankful to Prof Mark Turin, University of British Columbia, USA for his kind support to publish this journal in his web site for a wider dissemination across the globe.

Mahendra Kumar Mishra

Editorial

Memory, Loss and Retrieval



Collective memory is the base on which forms of folklore usually flourish. But the base for the memory is the community and its core values, such as cooperation, commonality, caring and sharing. As we are moving towards the life style that is based on corporate culture, individual identities, fragmentations, cyber space and post modernism, such community based values are fading away from our society. As a result, the folk forms, performances, rituals and practices which normally flourish under such values are also diminishing day by day. There have been multiple attempts towards preservation, documentation and dissemination of these forms both at the government and non-governmental levels. Writers have a unique way of making use of these folk forms and integrating them to other forms. They make use of folk myths, folk sayings and songs in their master pieces in myriad creative and innovative ways. The works of Tagore, Karnad and Mahasweta Devi exemplify such innovative attempts. This how folklore and literature are beautifully blended. Language and pedagogy also play an important role in disseminating these forms. We are happy to note that we have been able to bring all these forms and practices together in this volume of Lokaratna. These articles enlighten us on issues related to these forms in the present contexts. Each contributor of this issue made a significant contribution towards the above mentioned goal.

Sarita Sahaya in her article titled “ Mythological Conception of Tridev and Indian Society: Beliefs, Philosophy and Social Control” discusses believers’ comparison to the power of the trinity with state machineries. Thus, she tries to connect the past with present in a very interesting way. C.M Bandhu, on the other hand in an article titled “ Bharath: Oral Epics and their Performances in the Himalayas” discusses how different forms of folk oral epics are performed in the himalyan regions. Tatyanya Fedosova in her article “Altai Heroic Epos and Its Role in Forming Ethnic identity” explores how epic can play a significant role in forging ethnic identity of a community. P. Subbachari’s paper “The Concept of Mental Text of Epic – An Encounter of

East and West” compares the process of learning orally in Indian tradition and the literature created in that process. His intensive study and elaborate description of research lay bare a rare and unique tradition. N.S Grebennikova’s article “Landscape Codes in the Culture of Mountainous Altai” explores how landscape codes help us to unravel and understand signs and their significance. Mahendra K. Mishra in his informative and scholarly article “ Tribal Folklore and Oral Tradition” discusses the role of community in the making of culture and curriculum and underlines that the role of the community should not be overlooked as it plays a significant role in participation and preparation of pedagogy of the child. Digambar M. Ghodke in his article “ Language and Culture of the Waddar Community in Maharashtra” gives an overall view of the unique culture and language of the Waddar Community in Maharashtra. Indranil Acharya and Anjali Atto in their article “Politics of Cultural Amnesia :A Case Study of Machhani Folk Drama Form of Purulia” discuss the Machhani folk form in detail and explain how the form became a victim of the politics of exclusion. They interrogate the criteria set by the western experts for an endangered folk theatre and highlight the features that make them immortal. Jayanta Kumar Dash in his article” Happiness to Gross National Happiness: A Theoretical Perspective” gives a historical perspective of happiness and explains what it means in Bhutan in the context of constitutional commitment. Hari Madhav Ray in his article “ Riddles and Leisure Time Ridling in Rajbanshi” analyses ten riddles that are available in Rajbanshi language and describe their socio-cultural specificity and distinctness. Shradha Sharma’s article “ Heroes of a Folktale” deals with features of folktales and message they provide to us. D Aradhana Das and Debashish Mohapatra in their article “Loyalty Towards Own Language and Culture: A Case Study of Tai Phake discuss how language is being used to capture political power, how they can face danger and what should we do to preserve our languages. They also throw light on how loss of language can lead to loss of identity, culture and so on. Shaktipada Kumar in his article “ Purulia Chhou Dance: A Mnemocultural Response to the Performing Traditions of India” foregrounds the vigorous and artistic dance form which has wild and aesthetic body movements. He introduces the dance form, elaborates its feature and highlights how it is different from other forms and its significance in the history and culture of the people. Sarat Kumar Jena’s article “Colonial Modernity in British Odisha and the Rise of Fictional Narratives in Odia Literature: Locating Gopinath Mohanty’s Tribal Narratives” foregrounds how colonial modernity had an impact on the writings of the time. He foregrounds this impact by analysing different aspects of the novel *Paraja*. Ratna Prabha Barik’s article” Human Rights and Constitutional Safeguards of Tribals India: A Theoretical Perspective” makes a study of the relationship between human rights and constitutional rights of the tribal people. Anuja Mohan Pradhan’s article “An Orthography for

Kui Language” deals with the need for a suitable coding procedure for Kui language which should be easier to adopt by children at the primary level and for dissemination. Nguyen Huynh Trang and Hemanga Dutta in their article “Language Attitudes and English as a Global Linguafranca: An Empirical Study among the Overseas Vietnamese Students” explore the language attitudes of Vietnamese towards English. Subhasis Nanda’s article “Text, Text Factors and Reading Comprehension: Issues of Bilingual Learners” discusses how a text type, its length and form can have an impact on reading comprehension of bilingual learners. In a related article titled, “First Language as a Resource in the ESL Writing Classroom” N. Satish Kumar explores the use of learners L1 to facilitate language learning. Jayanta Kumar Das in his article “Language Syllabus: Perspectives from Educational Value Systems, Linguistics and Psycholinguistics” discusses the factors that lead to change of syllabi and explores criteria for designing appropriate syllabus. Aishwarya Gulati and Archana Gulati’s article “Imaging the Mind: Portrayal of Contemporary Issues in Visual Arts” deals with representation of contemporary problems depicted in visual arts. Tara Purnima in her article “The Tales of the Tribes: Animation as Participatory Film-making Practice” discusses the participatory aspect of animation film. Binay Pattanayak’s article “M-TALL Akhra: Children’s Languages in Quality Education in Jharkhand, India” deals with the role of M-TALL Akhra in imparting education to children effectively. The articles are thus, scholarly contributions and interventions to prevalent issues and ideas. A field based research paper on pata paintings of Odisha written by Mamata Dash entitled Feminization of Folk Art: A case study of Patta Painting Of Odisha, explores the gendered discourse of folk art. The Lotha-Naga Traditional Cultural Beliefs and Practices: Reflections in Folk Narratives written by Rembemo Odyuo reflects the beliefs and customs as narrated in the oral tradition of Naga community.

. The Volume includes three book reviews. In addition to these we have two interviews of prominent scholars of language studies namely Professor Ganesh N. Devy and Professor Michael Kenstowicz. The Lokaratna Khajana section includes Baul songs of Bengal in English translation. It also has five folktales. We hope that the articles, reviews, interviews and folk forms will be an enlightening and interesting treat to our readers. We thank the contributors for their contributions. We also thank Subhasis Nanda for formatting and proof-reading the articles. Thanks are due to Dr Mahendra K. Mishra, Editor-in-Chief and our editorial team members for reviewing the articles and giving their valuable feedback. Finally we wish our readers Happy Reading!

Anand Mahanand,

Executive Editor, Lokaratna

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Mythological Conception of *Tri-Dev* and Indian Society: Beliefs, Philosophy and Mental Satisfaction

Sarita Sahay

Abstract

The aim of this study is to show that how do many believers of Hindu religion compare the nature of their popular gods Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva (tri-dev) with the three forces of state apparatus operating differently for social control in India. The similarities between the nature of these three gods (tri-dev) and the three forces of state apparatus operating differently for social-control may appear fortuitous but they are notable. The myths and symbols of tri-dev represent the various attributes of the constituents of Indian state having authority to make and enforce law and judicial decision. This article analyzes the general characteristics and functions of tri-dev, which includes Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva along with their spouses, limbs, weapons and vahans (carriers) in respect of drawing philosophical as well as real attributes of the authorities engaged in social-control. Mythological stories, as far as possible, have also been put-forth as examples for illustrating the characteristics of the authorities concerned.

Key words: Tri-dev, Myth, Symbolic-characteristics, Philosophy, Society, Social-control.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to social scientists (Leach 1982, Jha 1994, Lowie 1921, Sharma 1994) during the early stages of the development of human societies human beings were fully depended on natural forces. Their day-to-day experiences made them aware of the importance of sun, air, clouds, thunder, fire and water and they subordinated themselves to these natural forces calling them “supreme” as they were uncontrollable. Later on, these supreme forces were given the shape of gods (Basham 1967). Thus, we find that gods were simple personifications of certain aspects of nature in those times.

In Vedic times in India, the dominant gods or the natural forces were: *Varuna* (the god of water and guardian of cosmic law), *Prithivi* and *Dyaus* (the gods of the earth and the sky respectively), *Indra* (the god and bearer of rain), the *Maruts* (the spirits of tempest and thunder), *Vayu* (air- god), *Agni* (fire- god), *Soma* (a plant, source of vigour), *Chandrama* (the god of moon), *Surya* (sun god), *Usha* (the goddess of dawn), and *Ratri* (the goddess of night).

Latter on during Brahmanic period elaborate mythological stories were created about these gods in order to describe the common experiences, beliefs, emotions and sentiments of people. Generally these mythological stories contained certain moral lessons to be followed by the mankind. These mythological stories were told and passed on from generation to generation.

We find that in Indian mythology every god has been associated with special symbols. These symbols could be any object, like multi faces, multi limbs, flowers, books, weapons, words, and animals. It is assumed that in order to preserve the various characteristics of the gods, people took the help of idols and symbols.

Attempts have been made to interpret these symbols and myths from time to time. With changing times, the interpretation of these symbols and myths, had also changed (Ions 1964). They were moulded in such a way as to fit into new social condition. This helped to retain the early beliefs. According to anthropologists (Ember and Ember 1995), myths cannot be proved as historical facts. Myths belonging to any community are frequently considered true by that particular community and are used for the welfare of human beings.

This article analyses what stands crystallised and unfolded in the figure pattern of symbolism of *Tri-dev*, dominant Hindu gods, in respect of drawing the philosophical qualities of the authorities engaged in social-control. Indian people find similarities between the nature and function of *Tri-dev* who, according to belief, control the universe and the three different authorities responsible for social-control. A comparison has also been made between the mythological and the real qualities of the concerned authorities.

1.1. METHODOLOGY

In order to gain information about the impact of different mythological and religious stories on the psychology and the ritual-performances of the people several field visits were made. During survey, it was found that the Indian people compare and co-relate the nature of three famous gods Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva (*tri-dev*) with three forces of state apparatus who work for social control in present society. It was noticed that the similarities between the nature of *tri-dev* and the three forces of social control not only gave mental satisfaction to the believers but were helpful in making their believe in gods firm. This was the situation, which gave a new topic of research to study about these similarities in details.

Prior to continue research in this direction a literature review produced little information about such comparison. The information that has been published either dealt with the mythological stories connected with these gods or was about the interpretation of symbols attached to them, especially of Shiva. Thus, the next step was taken to perform an exploratory study aimed at generating a hypothesis and formulating questions to know about the opinion of people about these three gods and the three forces of social control.

In order to obtain public opinions about the symbols and myth, focus group (2 to 3 people) discussion method was used as principal tool. On some occasions, a single interview technique was also used to avoid any confusion. Information was collected from 200 households with a total population of 1100 people, consisting of both sexes and of different age groups. Most of the participants were educated up to graduate level. However, the majority of them had not read the Hindu religious books. They had gained information about these three gods by their elders of their families. The participants were encouraged to present their own view about the general characteristics and functions of these three gods along with their spouses, limbs weapons and *vahans* (carriers) comparing those with the nature and functions of three forces of social control. The opinions of the participants about all the symbols attached to these three gods were similar. However, the mythological stories they gave in support of their views were different. The stories presented in this article are those, which were given by the majority of the people and others were omitted only to minimize the length of this article. At the end of the each story, the name of the religious book is also given where one can find that story in elaborated form. In addition, religious books, journals and periodicals were used in researching and writing the article.

The study was conducted in three major cities of India: Gaya (Bihar), Ranchi (Jharkhand) and Indore (Madhya Pradesh).

2. TRIDEV AND THE AUTHORITY ENGAGED IN SOCIAL CONTROL

According to Hindu belief system Brahman, the world spirit is the Supreme Being, the God of gods; of whom Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are three manifestations. It can be said that the Supreme God Brahman by becoming Brahma performs creation, by becoming Vishnu performs maintenance and by becoming Shiva performs destruction of the world. Thus Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva are the most powerful energies of God (Turner and Coulter 2000; Vishnupuran 1990). These beliefs, fitted in with the concept of life, a cycle of life, death and rebirth.

Similarly, these three authorities engaged in social-control are also the three function of state. As we know all human beings live in societies and develop their personalities within them. Government, a complex procedural norm for social-control, is another of the basic institution present in all societies. The circumstances out of which it arises are needed for overall control of the individuals, groups, organization and institutions of which societies are composed. Government performs several functions in serving a society's need for regulation and protection. The function of government as institutional agencies are described as legislative; the making of laws, executive; putting the law into effect, and judicial; interpreting and supporting the enforcement of the law (Anderson and Parkar 1964).

When Indian people compare the characteristics and functions of *Tri-dev* with three institutional agencies, they find amazing resemblance between them. It may be called as fortuity but the findings of the comparisons seem to be noticeable. It helps to the majority of people in drawing the philosophical characteristics of the concerned authority based on their belief only.

In general, people in India believe that Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva exercise their allotted powers only and honour each other's authority. In this way they maintain a perfect equilibrium. During this study, the participants gave numerous examples of mythological stories illustrating how these three gods maintained equilibrium honouring each other's authority. One of them is as follow:

A daitya (demon) king named Hiranyakasipu obtained a boon from Brahma, as reward of his religious observances, that he would not be stain by any created beings; neither by man nor by animal. He would not die neither during day nor at night. He would not die upon the earth or in the heaven. He would not be killed; neither by fire, nor, by water nor by the sword. After receiving such a boon, his pride fostered by his supposed immunity. He brought the three worlds under his authority and declared himself as god. Prahlad, his own son, a great devotee of Vishnu refused to worship him. Hiranyakasipu tried to kill his son many a times but did not succeed. One day angry Hiranyakasipu asked Prahlad if Vishnu was every where why he was not visible in the pillar? Being told that Vishnu, though unseen, was really present there, Hiranyakasipu tied Prahlad with the pillar and struck it saying that he would then kill both together. Immediately, Vishnu in the form of a being who was half-man and half-lion, came forth from the pillar, hold Hiranyakasipu by the thighs with his teeth and tore him up in the middle. Brahma's promise was honoured by Vishnu for it was evening when Vishnu slew him; it was neither day nor night. It was done under the dropping of thatch and this according to a Hindu proverb is out of the earth and not in the heaven. He was not killed by any weapons but teeth and nails. Also he was not killed by a man or an animal but a creature which was half-man and half-lion (Bhagwat puran).

Thus, Vishnu performed his task ensuring that Brahma's words were honoured. The believers claimed that similar to Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, the three authorities of the state--legislature, executive and judiciary are expected to work with an understanding that one authority of the state would function without encroaching upon the other's jurisdiction. This concept of separation of power is helpful in maintaining the equilibrium.

3. SAGAR- MANTHAN: A SYMBOLIC ACT OF REDISTRIBUTION OF POWER.

The doctrine of separation of powers amongst the various gods and supreme beings is found to exist in the Hindu mythology since beginning. All the natural-gods of Vedic period were having their allotted functions.

According to believe Brahman (the world spirit) separated his power for the smooth functioning of the universe, in three forms—the first was the creation devolved on to Brahma, the second function of maintenance devolved on Vishnu, and the third function of destruction devolved on Shiva. Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva have equal status and they enjoy their supreme authority in their respective fields of function. It is assumed by the believers that with the equal functioning of all the three gods, the universe is smoothly run.

It was noted during the study that for the believers the story of *Sagar-Manthan* (churning of ocean), appears to be a symbolic act of decision-making and redistribution of power among the various gods and demons. The story of *Sagar-Manthan* is as follows:

Devas (gods) and Danavas (demons) assembled together to settle all the matters such as power and function. With the advice of Vishnu they churned the ocean (Sagar-Manthan). Fourteen jewels emerged due to churning which included Amrita (elixir of life). With the help of Vishnu Devas were able to grasp it, drinking of which gave the Devas immortality. The other articles were distributed among the Devas and Danavas. Vishnu got Lakshmi (goddess of wealth), Kaustubh Mani (a gem), and Sankh (conch). Thereby he got full control of finance in addition to other characteristic powers of state executive. Shiva was given vish (poison) and Chandrama (moon) helpful in his function and power (Vishnupura-1.9.75 to 112).

3. 1. SYMBOLS, ATTRIBUTES AND FUNCTIONS OF BRAHMA vis-à-vis STATE LEGISLATIVE

The function of Brahma is creation and one who has been entrusted with the work of creation must be learned otherwise one will not be able to carry out one's functions without error and may disturb the balance (Danielou 1964). People believe that this was the reason why Sarsavati was made the spouse of Brahma. Sarsavati is the goddess of learning (Getty 1962; Ions 1967; Turner and Coulter 2000).

Brahma is shown having four heads which according to believers depicts that a member of the legislative has to be four times wiser as compared to ordinary man. Brahma is shown wearing white bearded that is a symbol of maturity and experience. This indicates that a person performing the function of creation should be matured and experienced. The *vahan* (career) of Brahma is *Hansa* (swan) which is the symbol of 'sacredness'. It connotes that the legislator must be endowed with honesty and right conduct along with the capacity to discuss good and bad as according to the mythology the swan has the capacity to separate water from milk.

In this way comparison of the characteristics of a legislator with Brahma makes people able to conclude that a legislator should be learned, matured, wise, honest and of right conduct.

3.2 SYMBOLS, ATTRIBUTES AND FUNCTIONS OF VISHNU vis-à-vis STATE EXECUTIVE

It has been mentioned that the work of Vishnu is maintenance. For performing the role of maintainer Vishnu has to mediate between the antagonistic energies active in the live process of the universe. To restrain the over-bearing impact of destructive powers he descends into the universe in one or other *avatars*, and after curbing the terrible forces which threaten the general ruin, he restores a working equilibrium (Bhattcharji 1970). Similarly the role of executive is to maintain law and order against the activities of offenders of law which are antagonistic energies and create challenges against the existence of a state.

It is understandable that a person who is working for maintenance must not be short for the funds and should have ample financial resources. People believe that this was the reason

why Lakshmi was made the spouse of Vishnu. According to myth, Lakshmi is the goddess of wealth (Ruhela 1971).

Vishnu is *chaturbhuj* (having four arms). According to believers it indicates that a person who belongs to executive should be much stronger than an ordinary man. Vishnu's bed is shown to have been made of Sheshnag (king of snake) and Vishnu is shown resting on it very calmly. Believers explain that it signifies that there can be numerous problems in the administration and the persons belonging to the executive must tackle them very calmly and patiently. Sometimes Vishnu is shown lying and pondering very quietly on the bed of Sheshnag which indicates that an executive must think about all problems of the masses with devotion and concentration. Vishnu's four hands carry *Chakra* (wheel), *Padam* (lotus), *Gada* (club), and *Sankh* (conch) respectively (Vishnupuran-1.9.66 to 68). *Chakra*, *Padam*, and *Gada*, are the symbols of governance power, power of eminent domino, and executing and protecting power respectively. The *Sankh* (an article from *Sagar- Manthan*) was given to Vishnu for the purpose of publicizing all executive regulatory decisions and orders. It is well known that a *Sankha* produces a very loud sound and alerts a large number of persons. The *vahan* (vehicle) is *Garud* (eagle) which moves very fast. It indicates need of fast movement for the executive. Again, Vishnu is shown as a handsome a healthy person. Physical fitness is important to work efficiently.

To illustrate how a maintainer should provide help to needy people gave an example of a mythological story:

Once an elephant went to river for water. Somehow the elephant was dragged in by a crocodile. The elephant began to drown and so deeply submerged that only a small part of his trunk could be seen over water. The elephant prayed to Vishnu for his rescue and it is believed that when Vishnu came to know about the elephant's pitiable condition, he became so anxious that he ran bare footed leaving aside his fast moving vahan Garud and finally rescued the elephant (Bhawatpuran).

For the believers in the above-mentioned story the elephant represents the normal man having faith in maintainer and the crocodile represents the anti-social elements. Running of Vishnu bare foot without *vahan* indicates the promptness of a maintainer.

3. 3. SYMBOLS, ATTRIBUTES AND FUNCTION OF SHIVA Vis-a -Vis STATE JUDICIARY

Shiva is the third member of the Hindi trinity (*tri-dev*) and he represents the destroyer but has aspects of regeneration. According to the teaching of Hinduism, death is not death in the sense of passing into non-existence, but simply a change into new form of life. He who destroys therefore, causes being to assume new phase of existence-- the destroyer is really a re-creator (Banerjea 1953; Wilkins 1994).

Through the general picture of Shiva believers deduce some of the important attributes of a judge as Shiva's function is destruction, considered to be equivalent to doing justice. Shiva has three eyes. The third eye is in the middle of forehead. These three eyes are said to devote his insight into past, present and future. He has a serpent around his neck. His hair is thickly matted together and gathered above his forehead into a coil and a new moon is shown above it. On the top of it he bears the river Ganga. His body is generally covered with ashes. His throat is blue from the strain of deadly poison which would have destroyed the world if he had not taken it after its emergence at the time of *Sagar-Manthan*. His *vahan* (vehicle) is white bull known as Nandi. He is armed with a weapon called *trishul* (three pronged trident). In one hand he holds a *damru* (rattle) which he used as a musical instrument while dancing. A begging bowl (symbol of ascetic character) always remains at his side. It is well known that the effect of moonlight is cooling.

According to believers, the moon on the head of Shiva suggests that a judge should hear all sorts of fact without getting agitated and excited. Shiva has *tri-netra* (three eyes). The characteristic of this third eye is that whenever it is opened, anything that comes before it gets destroyed. Similarly whenever the judiciary gets embroiled in the intricacies of the bare facts of a case it, in order to dispense justice based on wisdom, breaks the fabrics of social, economic and political barriers. This is the act which Shiva performs by opening his third eye. Shiva is shown to have Ganga springing from the locks of hairs on his head. According to belief, the Ganga is considered to be holiest of the holy things. This depicts the nature of a judge who is supposed to be a holy person dispensing justice to all alike as the Ganga makes holy all those who come into contact with it. The purpose of *damru* of Shiva is that whenever a judge goes to decide some issues between some parties, the parties are given notice and hearing. It is also well known that a *damru* produces sound but less in comparison of *sankh* of Vishnu. *Sankh* and *damru* are symbolic of the nature of procedure followed by the executive and judge for the action taken by them in their respective field. The *vahan* of Shiva Nandi (bull) indicates that a judge should move slowly and continuously before arriving at any decision.

As mentioned above the function of Shiva is to destroy that is equivalent to doing justice. A person who is doing justice must have an element of '*kindnesses*'. That is why Parvati is made Shiva's spouse. According to myth, Parvati is the goddess of kindness (Crooke 1894). Justice without kindness is incomplete.

Through the image of dancing Shiva, the Natraja believers deduce some more characteristics of a judge. Natraja depicts Shiva performing the cosmic dance. In one hand he holds a *damroo* (rattle) symbolizing creation. In another hand, he holds the sacred fire, the symbol of destruction. With his right foot he tramples the demon of ignorance; the left foot is raised to symbolize salvation. A third hand points to the hope given by the raised foot, and a fourth is held in the gesture of blessing. The whole figure is surrounded by an arch of flame, represent *Prakriti* (nature) brought to life by the animated figure of Shiva contained within. The dynamism of the dancing figure with its flying belt and flowing locks contrasts with the

tranquillity of his face and the hand raised in blessing. Believers explain that a judge should perform his duty without getting agitated and also without any feeling and emotion.

4. CONCLUSION

To many believers of Hindu religion the concept of *Tri-dev* and their functions appear to be depicting the distribution of power in a manner similar to the three forces of state apparatus operating differently for social control in India. People also interpret the symbols associated with these three gods and derive meanings in such a way that appears to be analogous to the different concepts involved in the functioning of the modern state. Mythological stories and the events described by the believers in support of their comparison and view may appear fortuitous to the non-believers but appear to be meaningful to the believers even in the present context. The people who participated in this study claimed that though their belief cannot be proved scientifically, that give them mental satisfaction.

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Bharat : Oral Epics and Their Performances in the Himalayas

C.M. Bandhu

1. INTRODUCTION

With hundreds of languages and dialects South Asian Region is very rich in its epic tradition both in oral and written forms. Many of the oral traditions exist across the political borders. Various types of narratives of western Nepal are also found in Kumaon of India. Such heroic poems are known as Bharat in Nepal. This Bharat is also known as BhaDa in Doti and Kumaon of India which is popular as Panwada in Garhwal. In Doti and Kumaon HuDkeli is also a term used to cover all epic performances of the Hudkya people who use a folk instrument called HuDka. The HuDka is popular folk musical instrument in the central Himalayan region. The word 'BhaDa' is derived from 'bhata' - a Sanskrit word which means a brave fighter. Such fighters are called *Paikela*.

Some of the narratives are known by their special terms. Malu Shai is one of them which is highly popular in Kumaon. In Kumaon 'Baphaul' is a term used for the common narratives popularized by a special narrative of the hero called 'Baphaul'. Another example of the Bharat known by its own term is *Chaitelo of Gori dhana*. In this paper, I have used the word *Bharat* as it is more common than other terms.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dharma Raj Thapa (1959) has written about the song of the Hudke people. One of the popular Bharat known as '*Kashi Ram paikelo*' was published by Padip Rimal (Rimal, 1971). Deva

Kant Pantha (1975) informed about different bharat performances in Doti. Chalise(1982) mentioned about the performances of Bharat and Nepal Yatri(1984) gave a detailed text of *Bala Raja Kashi Ram* (Yatri,1984:) Next year Jaya Raj Pant published a full text and analysis of *UdaChapala*(pant,1985). Sharma (1985) collected and analyzed five bharat texts from Doti (Sharma, 1985 :). Some writers reprinted and commented on some of these bharat narratives (Parajuli 1992, Giri 2000b, Lamichhane2002, Sharma and Luintel 2006). Basudeo Bhaisab (2005) gave a detailed description of twelve BhaDa or Bharat performce of Doti region. Pant discussed on Hudkeli giving details of its performance situation and types (Pant, 2007). Yama Lal Ghimire (2010) published *Mangala Rautko Bharat* with explanations and comments (Ghimire, 2010) and produced a dissertation on the bharaat of Acham containing ten bharat narratives and their analyses. Pant (2011) has recently worked on two narratives : *Piri Borako bharat* and *Gori dhanako caitelo*.

3. TYPES OF BHARAT

Sharma (1985) has presented a collection and analysis of following Bharats of DoTi region without any classification. They are - *Lali Saun*, *Sakaram Karki*, *Rani Raut*, *Purchaun Rani BiTTha* and *Bima Raut*.

Certainly, the legendary narratives called *bhaDa* are considered the most important tradition of the region and some scholars talk only on the *BhaDa* narratives as heroic poetry . Bhaisab(2006) has listed twelve of them. They are : *Rani Maula*, *Bhiyan KaThayat*, *Sadeu bala*, *Rani Raut*, *Uda Chapala*, *Sangram Singh Karki*, *Biga Paneru*, *Deuwa Paikela*, *Narsadhauni*, *Lali Saun*, *Chura Kati*, *Kala Bandari*, *Bala Raja Kashi Ram*, *Rumala BiTThyani*, *Mangala Rawat* and *Bina KaThayat*.

Pant(2007) has classified the bharat narratives into three types - mythological, legendary and social. He has also listed about 80 bharat performances of all three types. Actually some legendary bharats have become mythological over a period of time and some social bharats contain legendary characteristics as well.

Ghimire (2011) collected ten bharats from Acham, 6 of them are historical and four are social. The historical epics deal with legendary heroes like *Kashi Ram*, *Chaita KhataDi*, *Deepa BuDh Thapa*, *Ari Raut*, *Lali Saun* and *Suja bija*. And rest of the Bharats such as *Ghogi Sal*, *Pucha Mal Asha*, *Bimal Rout* and *Saruwa Kauni* are social.

4. HISTORICITY

Different types of Bharat are related to different stages of the history of western Nepal and Kumaon. Uda-Chapala and Bhiyan KaThayat are related to king Brahmadeva (14th century) of Doti. The bharats of Kashi Ram, Rani Raut, Chaita Khetadi and Suja Bija are related to Trimal Chand (1625-1628) of Kumaon. The Bharats of Biga Paneru, Deuba Paikelo, Narsha Dhauni and Chrua Khati are related to Pahadi Shahi(17th century) of Doti.

5. THE FOLK HEROES/ MAIN CHARACTERS OF THE FOLK EPICS

Many of the Bhadas narrate the stories of the kings and fighters of the Doti and Kumaon region of the medieval period. Rani Maula was a queen of Brahmadeu who ruled over Doti in the 14th century. Just after marriage, the queen left for pilgrimage and the King of Kumaon Baladev saw her when she was meditating at the bank of the river Ram Ganga. As she was very beautiful, King Baladev wanted to marry her. But Rani Maula informed that she was already married to Brahmadev. After a fighting between two kings they knew that they were keen brothers and Rani Maula was compelled to return to Doti. But she died after she arrived near the Ajmer kot, the palace of the Doti king.

Bhiya KaThayat - the fighter of Brahmadev (14th century) was arrested by the king of Kumaon. He was released but was again trapped and killed. His brother Chiyan kaThayat defeated the army of Kumaon and made Doti free of taxes.

The Bharat of Uda-chapala is supposed to be of the period of Brahmadeva. This is a narrative of wrestling and fighting between Uda KaThayat of Kumaon and Chapala pyula of Doti. Both of them were killed at the end. This also is supposed to be an event of 14th century.

The Bharat of Sadeu Bala has interesting story of bravery. At the age of 12, he left to visit his sister who was married to Kali nag. After he arrived to his sister's home suddenly they embraced each other. The sister of Kali Nag reported his brother that an unknown boy had embraced his wife. Then there was fighting between Sadeu Bala and kali nag. Finally Sadeu Bala killed the Kali Nag. After the death of her husband Gori dhana killed herself jumping in the river. As Sadeu bala did not like to live without his sister he also died jumping in the river. This is performed during the month of chaitra (March-April). A bharat known as *Gori dhanako chaitelo* narrated by Sobi HuDkya of BaitaDi is textualized by Jaya Raj Panta (2010) which is collected from the field by Amba Dutta Bhatta. In this bharat the main performer is assisted by a female performer.

Gori dhana is a girl who is married to a naga raja as described in the epic. The epic is full of colloquial expressions, fixed phrases images and figurative language. Though the performance is in monologue, being narrated by a main performer, the reported speech contain dialogic expressions making the epic performance more powerful. The tragic plot of the epic makes it highly pathetic and leaves deep feelings of pathos in human relations.

Rani Raut was a hero who married Motima - a girl already engaged with Meladev Kalauni. But Kalaunis killed him during his head shaving at the holy place. His son Soya Raut takes revenge of his father's murder.

Bhaisab has given a different version of the story of Bigha Paneru. Paneru was appointed as a ruler for an area called MalDhik in Baitadi. But the people were not satisfied with his rule. They requested Udyot chanda, the king of Kumaon for help. He sent an army under the leadership of Bibhogi chind and Paneru was defeated. The courage and skill of fighting of Bigha Pinero who is supposed to be of late 16th century is described in the epic of Bigha Paneru. But Pant has given a different version of the epic with analysis which shows that Paneru was in the time of the king Pahadi Shahi.

King Hari Shahi of Doti placed a dog on his throne and the fighters of his court were asked to bow down to him. But Dauba Paikela killed the dog which caused an uproar in the palace. In a narrative of Daub Paikela his courage and skill is described. The event goes back to late 16th century.

Sakaram Singh Karki was a fighter who defeated the fighters of Trimal chanda of Kumaon(17TH century) and was killed in a conspiracy while fighting with the army of Garhwal.

The epic of Narshadhauni describes the fighting between Kumaon and Doti held in the 18th century. Narshadhauni - the bravery of the fighter of Kumaon is narrated in the epic. Courage and bravery of Hyukala , the wife of Narshadhauni is also described in the epic.

During the reign of Pahadi Shahi, the king of Doti, Lali Saun was one of the heroes. But the king sent Tuna Air - saun's nephew to kill him. Another epic describes courage and valor of Chura Khati, a fighter of Bajhang.

Kashi Ram is one of the most popular hero in the whole region. Many scholars have collected the bharat of Kashi Ram. King Trimal Chand ordered his courtier Hind Pati Shahi to ask Kashi Ram to be present at the court. The King ordered him to go to Morang Garha and

collect taxes. He came back home and asked his mother to make preparation for his journey. But his mother told him not to go to Morang garha as his forefathers did not return from the place. As he can not deny the order of the king he left for Morang. As he reached, certain conditions were put to him before collecting taxes. He had to fight with many fighters. Finally, he was wounded and death was certain for him. He sent a message to his mother that he remained there and he asked his brother to take revenge with the enemy. Other versions of this epic are also collected (Rimal 1972, Nepal 1985, Bam 2005) and published.

6. BHARAT AS PERFORMANCE

a. The performers

The performers of these heroic narratives are called Hudyas in Nepal and their performance is also known as Hudkeli. HuDka is a two sided drum being played by the performers of the narratives. The performers come from a caste of the low level of social hierarchy who are known as Bhat, Ran bhat, Ran champa, Damai, Dholi or Auji.

b. Time and Space

The bharats are performed on birth and marriage ceremonies, festivals and on special occasions. Generally they start in the afternoon, if the epics are shorter and earlier if they are longer. It is performed in the courtyard or an open field surrounded by the audience.

c. The costume and instruments

The performers of bharat wear special costume during their performance. It varies from place to place. Traditionally, they wear a white gown, a white turban with red ribbon. They also have special belts, with small bells. The main performer is distinct in his dress. But his supporters also wear gown and turban.

d. The HuDko – a musical instrument

HuDko is a popular musical instrument of the region comprising western Nepal. This musical instrument is widely used in the Himalayan region as well as in the plains.

e. Bharat as an epic performance

Bharat as an epic performance is started with invocation, narrating the events by the main performer and followed by the supporters. In some performances an interlude is inserted in the middle or in the end of the performance to entertain the audience.

f. Narration of events in sequence

The performers present long narrative of Bhada and their events in sequences. It shows a characteristics of a formulaic poetry. For example when a hero is described how he dressed himself, all the items of dress are described one after another. In the same way when he is greeting the elderly persons and his relatives such as grandfather, grand mother, father, mother, elder brother, elder sister etc. he does one after another in order.

7. BHARAT AS A TEXT

The text of the performance is oral. The performer learns it from his forefathers. It is presented from his memory. It starts with the invocation and ends with a message. The main performer narrates the story in prose. He also sings in the intervals and his assistants follow him. Though it can be said an epic performance, many of them are shorter. Some of the characteristics of the epic are:

a. Supernatural characters

There are supernatural characters in some of the epics. Even the social epics contain supernatural characters. They meet their beloved ones in dreams, they talk after twenty two days of birth, they can defeat thousands of enemies in the battle field.

b. Tragic ending

Most of the oral epics of this region are tragic. This makes the performances highly effective.

c. Dialogue in monologue

The dialogues of different characters of the narratives are reported by a single person. They are presented as reported speech. But they are like dialogues which are very lively. Such reported speeches are the key sources for understanding the characters of the epic.

8. BHADA: A HERITAGE AT THE VERGE OF EXTINCTION

Many of the narratives are now at the verge of extinction. They are forgotten or shortened or changed. As the members of the society of the older age passed away these narrative also become extinct with these people. The internal unrest of the people that lasted over a decade in Nepal also caused to extinct different types of performances including Hudkeli. As people

have found other sources for entertainment they take less interest in traditional performances. On several occasions the performers are compelled to complete their presentations in a limited time, many of them are shortened. Migration, shift of interest and negligence of the patrons of the performers have caused to put the tradition at the verge of extinction.

9. BHARAT PERFORMANCES A PART OF THE KHASA CULTURE OF THE HIMALAYAS

As the bharat performances of Nepal, Kumaon and Garhawal present common heritage they are the great sources of Khasa culture. The Pahadi languages of the Himalayas share and express the common culture and age old heritage in the highly stylized forms of oral epics which need our immediate attention for their preservation and promotion.

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Altai Heroic Epos and Its Role in Forming Ethnic Identity

Tatyana Fedosova

Ancient Turks considered Altai a core of the world and drew the family tree from this place. In tales, myths, and heroic legends many Turkic and Mongolian people call Altai their ancestral homeland. Altai is one of ancient places of people's settlement.

Indigenous people of Altai Republic are Altaians. It is a Turkic speaking people who preserved many ancient features in the language and culture. The most universal genre in the Altai folklore is a heroic epos (kai chorchok), originally incorporated motives of myths and sagas, fairy tales, and legends, songs and ceremonial poetry, national aphorisms, etc.

The fund of the Altai epic tradition is made up by 258 fixed texts. Out of them 142 texts are published in different editions. Besides, a 12 volume edition "Altai Baatylar" ("Altai Warriors") in the Altai language and "Altai Heroic Legends" in a series of "Folklore Monuments of the People of Siberia and the Far East" was published in 1997.

The sources of culture of Altai ethnic groups, its figurative and semantic stock, norms of communication, formats of ethnic psychology, i.e. mental characteristics and archetypical constructions go back to the heroic epos. The epic contains a cultural code of an ethnic group; it accumulates social, moral, ethical, and aesthetic norms and laws, creating a basis for forming a collective national identity. Its content is defined by a set of special symbolical markers and axiological meanings.

The heroic epos forms **the self-image** of an ethnic group a typical feature of which is the aspiration of an ethnic community to bring to its content some characteristics of an ideal of its own ethnos and to underline the most original qualities of a national character. The self-image of

an ethnos, or a national identity, along with its idea about time, space, honor, duty, etc. is one of components of a national mentality.

The basic marker of identity which personifies a set of features reflecting the ethnic essence is the image of Der-Suu (Earth-Water) connected with the concept of “native land”. It is an ideal locus, which is glorified in all epics. A small native “Earth-Water” appears not simply as a developed space, but as a world copy as a whole. A native land is always a limited space, designated by the reference points-markers having the most accurate co-ordinates. First of all, it is a mountain - the ancestress, a sacred semantic center of the area. Another sacred center of the native land is a Tree which, as well as the mountain, embodies the same idea of the vertical connecting together three worlds. And the third one is a tethering post which occupies the same semantic line as a mountain, a tree, a river, a hearth fulfilling the function of connecting the worlds.

It is remarkable that a special attention in the epos is paid to a microstructure of a place (mountains, valleys, a taiga, a grove, lakes, rivers, certain kinds of trees etc. are constantly reviewed). Close connections of the ethnos with a life environment are simultaneously underlined. An example of an ontological connection of the person and the nature is the origin of some mythological heroes: Thus Ochy-Bala, a maiden-bogatyr (worrier) calls the mountain covered with coniferous wood her father, and she calls a steep her mother. In the epos “Khan-Altyn” the origin of the bogatyr is also connected with natural substances: his father is a sacred mountain (Ak-Sumer) with six sides, and his mother is a sacred dairy lake with six gulfs (Ak-Sut-lake).

Thus, the epos reflecting landscape and environmental conditions of a life of Altai people, establishes their world outlook connection with natural-geographical phenomena. The native land of Altai is a center of gravity and a key of social behavior of people, uniting an isolated set into a single society with its own traditions and lifestyle, ways of thinking and perception of life.

Another characteristic of the ethnic identity of Altaians, according to ethnologists and ethno-psychologists, is the aspiration to preserve blood-related connections during many generations, a respectful attitude to ancient traditions and habits, and unquestioning fulfillment of them. These social, moral, and ethical values, norms, and laws are accumulated to the full extent in the epos “Maadai-Kara”.

Mother’s instructions to her son Kogudei-Mergen in their essence represent a set of rules, skills of communication, and norms of behavior of a person in a society, thus forming the so-

called ethical code of the ethnos. One of the first precepts in mother's instructions to Kogudei is honoring the seniors.

The fact that the keeper of ethical values of the ethnos is a woman, speaks about a deep archaic character of the epos when the authority and a priority of the female was firm. A woman as a mentor and an adviser acts in the epic as a compiler of values, i.e. the hero starting his way supplied with major axiological values of the ethnos, firstly, checks out the degree of their effectiveness, and, secondly, transfers them to the next generation for the tradition not to be interrupted.

Ethical relations presented in the epos, not only reflect and fix the norms of an interpersonal communication in the consciousness of an ethnic group which in itself promotes a culture preservation, but they also express a certain type of sociality in the Altai society. Thus, the Altai etiquette "goes out far beyond the frameworks of what is accepted to be etiquette, and is presented as an original algorithmic expression of philosophy of life and worthy abiding in it in signs of an action".

The epos concentrates the super-significant idea for the early culture genesis of protection and preservation of peace on the native land. It is found out in the plots often connected with the liberation of the native land from overseas conquerors, and the type of the hero-warrior, the defender of the native land, the peaceful life restoring justice. "*For the people and for the father//You should fight up to the end!*" [3. P. 63]. Thereupon the opposition native/foreign is accentuated. While expressing the concept of "foreign" the expressive and colored lexicon is often used; the foreign, as a rule, is as black as soot, dirty with a bad smell, ugly, and iron. The place where Kara-Kuly, the hero's enemy lived is described in such a way in "Maadai-Kara". "Foreigners" are always aggressive, they encroach the hero's homeland, the latter in his turn most of all values the world and well-being of his people. Peacefulness as one of the basic features of Altaians is marked by all ethnologists and ethnographers. Not casually, one of the most widespread epithets of the native land of Altai is "peaceful", and also "blessed".

The myhtopoetic world model

Organically includes basic images of Altaians about the Universe system. According to mythological views of Altai people, as well as other Turkic peoples, the sky was represented as a dome over the earth with an aperture; through this crack people could communicate with a deity during the most critical moments.

The epos accumulates all ethnic mythology and ecological views of an ethnic group. The mythical mindset of an ethnos is implemented in it through the system of numerous ecological codes. **To my great regret**, for the lack of time I cannot speak about these codes and only name

them: The most important ones for understanding the semiotics of a natural world are the following: vegetative, ornithological, zoomorphic, and astral codes.

Rituals and customs

Speaking about the formation of a collective ethnic identity, it is necessary to mention separately rituals and customs which are described in the epos, because they encompass all empirical experience of the ethnic group, its anthropological and ecological practices. The epos depicts the rituals of worshipping the earth, fire, the owner of Altai, spirits-patrons of a tribe, and patrimonial mountains. One of the most important functions of rituals is the fact that they “form and support the feeling of a community of the ethnos as a whole, they allow the separate personality to feel the ethnic identity. Besides, they preserve the axiological orientations of the ethnos. The custom of worshipping sacred patrimonial places, which has remained till today, is described in many epic texts.

Being the keeper of meanings, the so-called bank of the information of ideas about the world, the epos is a special type of a world outlook conductor, ensuring a link of times.

Link of times

Numerous allusions and reminiscences from the heroic epos penetrate all modern culture (literature, painting, music). The Altai culture of the second half of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries brought into the focus an ethnic and cultural component of a national identity, having addressed the cognition of what are Altai and Altaians. Thus in a poem “Great Nomad Camping” poet A. Adarov asks a rhetorical question which testifies about a persevering search of a collective national identity: *“We wandered for thousand years,/crossed continents./Where is our home land?/Whose children are we,/small children and old men?”*

An attempt to realize the spirit of the people, its “passionate energy” is characterized also in B. Bedjurov’s poetic reflections. In a poem “The Song to the Lands and Waters of Altai” the poet calls the sacred lands of Altai a source of high spirit: *“Spirit of the people – from Altai,/this ancient spirit of freedom.”*

The search of authenticity is also characteristic of B. Ukachin’s poetry. For the Altaian it is very important to understand himself in a context of his own ethnic history. It is distinctly expressed in B. Ukachin’s poem “Rock Paintings of Altai”: *“In my thoughts I go quickly to the forgotten ancestors./Their souls are strong and minds are clear!/I learn both to be kind and brave,/reading you, rock paintings.”*

Thus, the modern Altai poetry, comprehending the moral experience of the ethnos, brings to light its fundamental values and its representations focused in the epos.

It is quite natural that the myth and the epos space, which is the center of sacral images, became for the Altai painters an area where a cultural memory of the people revived. The products created on the motives of the mythology and epos, for the majority of them is a deep internal requirement, a way of dialogical contact with the archaic culture.

During my report you have seen the illustrations of the Altai heroic epos made by modern artists Ortonulov, A. Ukachin, M. Chevalkov V. Tebekov S. Dykov. They demonstrate different artistic styles and manners. Each of them gives a personal phenomenal-existential interpretation of the archaic mythology and the epos. The true ethnic identity is shown in their practice in its modern form as a special construction created in a global space as a representative of the ethnic mytho-poetic world.

The undertaken analysis allows to assert that at the heart of the reference of modern masters of culture to the epos and archaic archetypes is “a focus of all collective memory, all experience through a prism of the “desired”, i.e. the actualization of a moral ideal of a society and people”.

Summary

This thesis is based on the idea that the heroic poetry is the key to understanding the moral values of the Altai people. The ideals of native tribes are drawn from concrete examples of epic poetry and described in their historical and cultural context. The continuity of these values is shown in various expressions in the daily life of the Altai people today. The following ideals are presented:

- Relationship of the Altai people to Heaven
- Oneness with the land of the Altai and natural environment
- Preciousness of family
- Tolerance and peacefulness
- Freedom and courageousness (in saving the Altai from oppressors)
- Generosity in hospitality and in blessing others
- Group mentality (for mutual help)
- Unique expression of beauty as reflection of nature
- The mastery of music and art/

Thus, the Altai heroic epos and other folklore genres embody numerous ethnic axiological meanings, repeatedly verified by time, which serve as an original reference point for people's behavior and the guarantor of their self-preservation. It possesses a huge creative

potential, carrying out an informative and symbolical role in creating modern culture which confirms the thesis of French researcher F. Braudel that identity is a living modern result of the past.

Thanks for your attention. I would like to present a copy of “Maadai Kara” in Russian language to the Centre of Russian Studies. The book is illustrated with photos of Upper Altai.

Семиотика природы

The astronomical code most fully reveals the connection of a microcosm of the person with a macrocosm of the Universe in a context of an ethnic view at the world. Among the most frequently mentioned astronomical objects are the North Star (Altyn Kazyk), the Pleiades (Ulker, Mechin), the Milky Way (Kardyn Doly), Orion (Yuch-Myigak), the Big Dipper (Deti-kaan). Altaians singled out these constellations especially from others, and they have acquired independent mythological conceptualization. One of the most favourite motives of the heroic epos is a transformation of heroes into stars.

Zoomorphic code. The epic space is densely populated with zoomorphic mythological beings: Andalma-Muus, Dutpa, Mongus, and shulmus (imps). In the heroic legend “Alyp-Manash” the description of a seven-head mythological monster Delbegen is given. In eposes “Malchi-Mergen” and “Ochy Bala” there is a Dark Blue Bull. One of the episodes in the development of an epic plot is a struggle of a maiden-bogatyr against the mythical dark blue bull sent by the owner of the underground world Erlik.

Vegetative code. A tree is a major image of the Turkic mythology and religion. As a mountain, a tree fulfills the role of a center of the world; it connects the earth with the sky. Therefore all major processes which occur in the nature and society are associated with a tree. The most revered trees for Altaians were the following: a birch, a larch, a poplar, a cedar, a pine, a fir, and a spruce. A poplar is one of sacred trees for Altaians, for this reason it is mentioned almost in all heroic legends. The hero wins his adversary in the epos “Alyp-Manash” with the help of a poplar.

In “Khan-Altyn” there is a description of a process of “revival” of worriers with the help of archyn (juniper). The use of juniper in these actions is explained by the fact that this plant especially valued by Altaians, was used during ritually magic actions. It played a role of a charm and possessed an ability to drive away evil spirits.

Ornithological code. Birds were considered to be a link between people and the upper world. In such epics as “Kogutey”, “Solotoi-Mergen” and others the image of a mighty bird Khan-Kerede, the king of the feathery is mentioned. This image corresponds with a solar bird of

Garuda from the Old Indian mythology. One of the main legends is a legend about the abduction of soma-amrita – an immortal drink by this bird.

A special place in the epos of the Altai tribes is given to an eagle.

Geese and ducks are connected with a cosmogonic myth. A raven acts as their antipode. It is the representative of the lower world or the messenger of the hostile party.

The image of a cuckoo has a multi-plane symbolic meaning in the epos. It is a symbol of fertile Altai, possesses an ability to revive people by its singing, and also to predict events and to tell the fortunes. The image of gold cuckoos occurs practically in all Altai epic texts.

Живопись

The complete epos of Altaians is embodied in **I. Ortonulov's** illustrations for a multivolume series of the Altai heroic epos "Altai Baatylar". The artist went by the way of overcoming ethnographic validity to the creation of capacious artistic images characterized by the degree of generalization and monumentalism, which are typical of national epic legends.

The original illustrations to legends "Altyn-Koo and Brothers", "Baatyr Altyn-Koo", "Altyn Kos" are created by painters **A. Ukachin** and N.E. Olchenov.

M. Chevalkov embodies traditional mythological images, trying to transfer in a generalized form those hidden senses which are coded in them, in his own way interpreting the Altai mythology and the epos. His paintings "SUU Eezi" (Spirit-Master of Water), "Mai-Ene", "Ot-Eezi" (Spirit-Master of Fire), "Shamanistic Ritual" are a result of processing a huge ethnic and mythological material. The life of people depicted and transferred so realistically in his pictures, is perceived not as genre scenes, but as epic canvasses.

V. Tebekov recreated a special ethnic world in a cycle of "Souls of Altai Ancestors". The ancient Turkic tradition, on which he leans, is not hermetically closed by certain borders for him, the artist more likely perceives it as something ancient, ancestral, possessing exclusively universal legacy, not correlating with any particular nationality.

S. Dykov's works present an essence of a variation of one substantial theme resulting from a physical and philosophical vision of the world - Man as part of nature, involved in the common world order. The artist comprehends and recreates difficult semantics of ritually ceremonial actions, mythological and epic images, and speaks about the immemorial beginnings.

The Concept of Mental Text of Epic : An Encounter of East and West

P. Subbachary

How is it possible to memorize 40,000 lines of Epic in the mind? Is it only a mnemonic technic? How the manifested or the performed text has been embedded in the mind before it was performed. Whether the memory having a language? Whether a person remembers a text in his own language? Whether the text, embedded text in the mind does have a language or the memory itself is a language. What are the technics of retaining a very long text for several years? Folklorists of west have been thinking answers for the raised questions from decades together. Right from the Elias Lonnrot to Lauri Honko and John Miles Folly the scholars attempted to discuss the issue of existence of the text before it is sung or performed. The recent concept of the existence of the text prior to the performance is the “Mental Text”. The concept and theory of the Mental Text has been proposed by the Finnish legend-folklorist Lauri Honko. He discussed the earlier proposals of various scholars and made the concept of ‘Mental Text’ and this has been considered the latest theory on Epic.

What is the language of thinking and thoughts is a thousand dollar question. Several scholars are working on oral traditions and oral literature, from many disciplines, attempted to decipher the secret of preservation of very long epics in human brain, and to know mechanics of oral compositions.

I propose to make a relook at the concepts of the scholars of East and West and to make my own analytical views on the concept of mental text or the existence of the epic or the long sung narratives before they are performed.

Thousands of years of traditions of Indian technics of memorizing poetry and various texts still are very surprising phenomena for the west. The renowned scholar of the “Orality and

Literacy” made a serious discussion on the textuality of Vedas and suspected that the hymns might have been written and then memorized. Her discussion is given here for further discussion.

“There is no doubt that oral transmission was important in the history of the Vedas. Brahman teachers or gurus and their students devoted intensive effort to verbatim memorization; even crisscrossing the words in various patterns to ensure oral mastery of their positions in relation to one another, though this later pattern was used before a text had been developed appears an insoluble problem. In the wake of the recent studies of oral memory of the Vedas actually worked in a purely oral setting – if there ever was such a setting for the Vedas totally independent of texts. Without a text, how could a given hymn - not to mention the totality of hymns in the collections be stabilized word for word, and that over many generations?”¹

The Vedas are memorized not only word-by-word but also phoneme by phoneme and note by note only through oral transmission. Even today, Vedas are learnt not by reading the printed text but only recitation under the training of senior guru. The fathers in traditional families teach various parts of Vedas only by recitation and make their children to recite and learn. There are various parts in four Vedas and various parts are being memorized and taken to next generation by different sects among Vaidik Brahmins. Each sect specialize each part of Vedas. Some families of Brahmins belong to Rajahmundry area specialized in some parts of Vedas and these parts are not practiced by any other Brahmin families in the country.²

The traditional special *Chandas* (prosodic orders) and the system of musical notations help the practitioners to memorize the Vedic Shlokas. The printed texts of the Vedas are helpful to read along with the commentaries of various scholars. The Veda mantras are translated into various Indian languages too. The age-old belief system related to the practice that makes various restrictions like ‘women are not allowed to learn Vedas’ and ‘even male of other than Brahmin Castes are not allowed to learn Vedas’, all such other restrictions too are set aside.³ Persons irrespective of gender, caste and creed are memorising the Vedas and following the same mnemonic technics. Hence, the Vaidik Brahmins do belong to the mnemo-culture.

Ong herself mentioned various other folk groups of different countries who memorize epics and narratives of rituals word by word. She took this information from various scholars.⁴ The scholars found various ways and methods that help in memorizing the texts. The formulas, the units of phrases, the *Chandas* and so on are helping methods to memorize as they found in their research. These entire phenomena are helping methods. Hundreds of folk performing families in each language areas of India are still memorizing thousands of lines and pages lengthy epics in their traditional methods. Folk performing artists learn the epics word by word and the

¹Ong Walter J. 1982. *Orality and Literacy - The Technologizing of the Word*. London. Routledge. Pp 65-67

²It is told by traditional gurus.

³At least partially. Some of the traditional still believe and practice these restrictions.

⁴Ong Walter J. 1982. *Orality and Literacy - The Technologizing of the Word*. London. Routledge. Pp 57-65

total story line of the epic only through participating in performances along with their fathers. They do not even conduct special coaching at home to their sons to teach the recitation of various epics of their repertoire.

There is another kind of mnemonic art which is a literary art surviving in the Telugu Land i.e., Telugu language. It is called Avadhanam. Avadhanam is, composing a poem orally and spontaneously in response to a question or a suggestion of subject by any other person. The literal meaning of Avadhanam is memorization it is also called Dharana. The traditional science of yoga defined the meditation with three stages.

“In the philosophies of Yoga and Vedanta, meditation is a mental process by which the meditator becomes one with the object of medication. Concentration (Sanskrit Dharana) is the primary stage of this process; when concentration becomes effortless and continuous, it takes the form of meditation (Dhyanam), in which the mind flows continuously toward its object. The culmination of meditation is total absorption (Samadhi) in the object of meditation.”⁵

The art form of Avadhanam is another kind of Dhyanam; hence, some of the Avadhanis or the spontaneous poets practice yoga particularly to get the stage of Samadhi. Some of the Avadhanis claim they get the capacity of memorization from the blessings of the Devi (the ultimate goddess) and they worship the Goddess Parvathi or the Kali and some Sarasvati. Some more Avadhanis admit it is only their regular practice and no miracles. Because of their mental practice of exercise, they could memorize hundreds and thousands of poems in their mind, could recite any place, and at any time and any, more times. There are several kinds of Avadhana forms. One poet has to take on eight questioning persons at a time and compose poems within few seconds, answering their questions. After composing all of the poems the poet has to memorize all of the poems and to recite back all of them word-to-word and phoneme to phoneme. It is a kind of cerebral game and literary game. If a person answers eight persons it is called Asthavadhanam (astha is eight) and if it is for hundred persons it is called Shatavadhanam (Shatha is for hundred), if it is for thousand questions it is called Sahasravadhanam (sahasra is thousand). It is really amazing and awesome to create thousand poems, memorizing them and finally reciting them back verbatim is the greatest skill of the brain and a challenging task. This kind of memorizing art is a unique quality and an exclusive asset of Telugu. Many Avadhanis admitted that this memorization is possible because of the Chandas or the prosodic settings they learn and follow. Scholars of west propose the similar idea. They called oral formulas and multi forms.

The above example of Avadhanam is from the tradition of the poets of the elite or educated class. The Telugu land is very rich for oral epics hundreds of oral epics and their singing traditions are still alive. Many folk art forms are still containing and conveying the epics to the general folk despite the modern developments and entertaining media. Some of the performers still can perform certain epics like Mallanna Katha, Mahabharata fifteen to forty days that is of

⁵Swami Adiswarananda. 2011. *Meditation and Its Practices*. Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama Publications. P. 4

one hundred and fifty to two hundred hours and bigger than the Siri Epic, that is textualised by Lauri Honko and his team. Very important and to notable fact is none of the oral epics of Telugu has been textualised and published in their full length. The Gene H. Roghair has dedicated much of his time on the collection and analysing the Epic of Palanadu but he did not textualise the epic verbatim, but he summarized it and translated into prose. As such, no oral epic of Telugu has been textualised.

Textualising of the oral epic is like taking a still photograph of a person. The person was there before the photograph with a different kind of appearance and he would be there in future with some more different kinds of shapes and appearance. Similarly, when an oral epic is recorded it is of, capturing of one version of its life. It would have as many versions as it is performed, before the capture and after too. Still the sung part of the epic is memorized verbatim and reproduced in all of the versions. I found this phenomenon in countless performances of oral epics. In addition to prose and songs, there is another kind of prose. It looks like prose when it is written on paper but it sounds like a song when it is performed. Some scholars called it as stylized prose and some called it as the heightened prose.⁶ However, it is a song genre. Hence, the epic performed and the epic written are not the same. It is a transformed new genre. Textualisation is a new kind of process that transforms a genre into a new genre. Hence, the textualised epic should be defined as a Laboratory Genre or Scholarly Genre.

I need not repeat or summarize the scholarly discussion that was made on the processes of composition of the epics by the singers of various countries before they perform the epic in a performance. They thoroughly discussed how the long epics are memorized. What element helps the singers to memorize very lengthy narratives for years together and reproduce the same? Lauri Honko did this summarising work and made a thorough discussion on the methods of thinking of Milman Parry, John Miles Foley, Paul Ricour Johnson-Laird, Ruthu Finnegan, and Zumthor. The Western scholars brought forth the concepts like “frames”, “schemata”, “scenarios”, or “mental models”.⁷ Honko took all good ideas on the existence of the text in the mind before it is presented in a performance. Finally, he proposed the Idea of “Mental Text”.⁸ Honko did not stop at the discussion of the concepts of the scholars from west. He also discussed the concepts of Rasa in Indian Mahakavyas and the definitions of epic and the concept of epic. He has gone through many treatises written on Indian Kavyalankara in English. He tried to correlate the ideas of Indian soil with his concept Mental Text.⁹

⁶Gene Roghair calls it as heightened prose. “Towards the end of a passage the style changes to Sprechstimme or sung speech. This is followed in turn by a response sung by the accompanists”. Roghair Gene. 1982. The Epic of Palnadu. New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 51.52.

⁷“William Hanks points out that “these fixed data structures are definitionally selective and therefore incomplete”. Honko Lauri. 1998. Textualizing the Siri Epic. Helsinki: Folklore Fellows Communications. p. 99

⁸Honko Lauri. 1998. Pp. 94-99. Lauri Honko spent lot of his valuable time for his theoretical argument and proposal of the concept of “Mental Text”. It is his brain child.

⁹ IBID pp. 118-119.

Honko too posed the same vital question; “By way of “text”, what precedes a performance of an oral epic?” Instead of making a brief and crisp definition, Honko had to explain his idea of mental text in a considerable length. He says:

*“To be able to understand the production of text in actual performance, it seems necessary to postulate a kind of “prenarrative”, a pre-textual frame, i.e., an organized structure of relevant conscious and unconscious material present in the singer’s mind. This pre-existent module seems to consist of 1) storylines, 2) textual elements, 3) their generic rules of reproduction as well as 4) contextual frames such as remembrance of earlier performances, yet not as a haphazard collection of traditional knowledge but in the case of distinct epics of active repertoire, a pre-arranged set of elements internalized by the individual singer. We may call this variable template a ‘mental text’ ”.*¹⁰

It is really a struggle to define the concept of mental text. Even after giving a detailed discussion and many comparisons, he called the mental text as a template. He also mentioned that this template is not a fixed one forever. This may also vary time to time. He says, “Mental texts are not stable and they alter and develop during the performance career of a singer.”¹¹

The concept of the Mental Text was well received by the European scholars. However, some of the American Scholars did not accept the concept and ridiculed saying where Mental Text is and said it is nonsense.¹²

One has to appreciate the great effort of the scholars of the west on understanding the existence of the epic before its presentation or the performance, how it lies in the mind of an epic singer and what is the process laying in the mind prior to the production of text. The scholars from west discussed the ideas of rasa and the discussed the definitions of Epic in Kavyasastras in India. However, they did not discuss the cerebral game mentioned above, the Avadhanam in which a poem is created spontaneously and the same is memorized forever. They even did not touch the ideas of Vedanta regarding production of text through the processes of “*Para, Pasyanthi, Madhyama and Vaikhari*” which was primarily applied to the Veda Mantras, latter the concept is applied to the production of epic texts too. Indian belief system believes that the art of creation of literature is a gift given by Goddess Sarasvati and many other gods and goddesses. The same is believed in the creation of epic text. It is coming out by the grace of the goddess. The concept of *para* model is based on the concept of on believing the gods gift. The concept is elaborated here.

The Indian Vedanta and Kavya Sastra also thought about the existence of the Text before its performance. The Bhritrihari’s Vakyapadiya widely discussed the four levels of spoken word

¹⁰IBID p. 94.

¹¹ IBID.

¹²Peter Casus redclued the idea of mental text. He asked where is the mental text how can you see it. Can you open the brain and see it. Folk Life News Letter. Chennai: National Folklore Support Centre.

and particularly the three predeceasing levels to the spoken word. These four levels are Called *Para, Pasyanthi, Madhyama and Vaikhari*.¹³

The Indian concept, which has been coming down from many centuries, regarding the *Shabda* and *Artha* the eternal relation between these two and the process of the production of the *Shabda* or the text is very widely discussed by various schools of thought. Even the schools which stand opposite to each other come to an idea that the *akshara* the sound the phoneme has got down to the earth by the grace of a Goddess or the *Shakti*. It is a divine spirit might be a god or a goddess, may be *Shiva* or *Shakti*. According to Jahanava Natai Das “In the *tantra* system the *purva mimamsaka's* theory of the eternality of *shabda* (sound) and *artha* (meaning) is accepted. They go a little further to assert that *shabda* and *artha* are the embodiment of *Shiva* and *Shakti* as the universe itself. They name their original source as *shabdartha-brahman* instead of a mere *shabda-brahman*.

For, that is the source of both the objects and their descriptions. Words and their meanings - what they denote in the objective world - are the variety of manifestations of *Shakti*. Just as a *sankalpa* - a pure thought - has to pass through several stages before it actually manifests as concrete creative force, the sound of a particular mantra also has to pass through several stages before it is fully experienced by the listener in perfection. These stages are termed as *para, pashyanti, madhyama* and *vaikhari*”.¹⁴

It is also believed that these four stages of *vak* or the text are related to four kinds of *Shaktis* or powers and all these *Shaktis* are believed to be goddesses.

Vaikhari is the grossest level of speech, the speech of the physical tongue, which is heard through the external senses. It is ordinary verbal speech, which we all hear and use in our day-to-day life. *Vaikhari* literally means flowering. It is the stage when the seeds of thoughts flower into words or actions. *Vaikhari* is an expression of *Kriya Shakti* – the power of action.

The second level of speech is *Madhyama* is mental speech or thoughts, which corresponds to the subtle body. *Madhyama* expresses *Jnana Shakti*, the power of knowledge and wisdom. It is verbalized but not audible.

The third level of speech *Pashyanti* is where; it is the state of visual imagery. Here sound leaves its audible nature and manifests as feeling. ‘*Pashyanti*’ means ‘that which can be seen’. In this stage, sound possesses attributes like colour, form, etc. only those endowed with discernibility can perceive these attributes. The *Shakti* corresponds to this stage is called *Ichch Shakti*. That means the power of will.

¹³See: Jahnava Nitai Das

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¹⁴IBID

The fourth and highest level of speech is *Para*, the transcendent sound, which is beyond the perception of the senses. *Para* is all pervading and all encompassing. *Para* is pure intention. It is un-manifest. It is the sound of one's soul, a state of soundless sound. The speech flows directly from the Cosmic Creator. It expresses *Ambika Shakti* - the Universal Mother. It exists within all of us. All mantras, infinite syllables, words, and sentences exist within *Para* in the form of vibration in a potential form. In *Pashyanti* and *Para*, the power of one's words is manifested.

This is the traditional science and can be said traditional belief system. The science and the belief system are not the same. For that matter, they are opposite. The belief system may not be or cannot be a science in most occasions. When the syllables, the sounds, the text are considered as the manifestation of the power or a boon of gods and goddess there cannot be any method to explain the actual the process of mind i.e., the method of creation of text in the inner layers of mind.

The scholars of west too, at a level believed the divine spirit behind the creation of text by singers. Lauri Honko mentions it as "poetic or divine inspiration".¹⁵

Conclusions:

We have to think in a different way about the precursor processes of epic performance or the creation of text. Text is something to do with the language that is spoken or/and written. When there is no process of writing or speaking inside, before the performance the process cannot be called as a text or mental text. The existence of performed text in the mind as it is cannot be viewed are proved. Hence, the term or the construct of Mental Text is only an imaginary concept and cannot be proved.

The concept of four stages of *vak* or text that is proposed by the Hindu treatises is also primarily depending upon the belief system. Some rishis or seers might have experienced the four stages of the *vak* and might have experienced the divine spirit or the power of the God. Such experience cannot be disseminated or proved to others as a linguistic theory. The concept is something to do with the individual experience. Individual experiences cannot be made as experiences of everybody. Such experience either cannot be proved, as a science to be understood by everyone, or cannot be brush it aside as a false thing or rubbish. The concept is experienced and advocated, as a science by sages and rishis, but still cannot be analysed as a linguistic theory or a theory of performance.

A poet writes a poem based on his experience of life and his competence of language. A performer describes a story based on his experience of life his competence of spoken language and the skill of his narration and music that he learnt from performances, from his childhood. A singer who describes the marriage of the God Mallanna can take the experience of a marriage he has seen and participated in his village or in his cultural area. He cannot describe a marriage happens in a church in a different country.

¹⁵Honko Lauri 1998. P. 96.

Similarly, any narration of epic is totally based on the life experience of the performer and the theme he learnt right from his childhood. The performer of the epic stores the whole gamut of experiences of his life may be he has seen, maybe he has heard, may be smelled, or may be experienced by all of his senses. The performer stores all his experiences in his mind or brain. Similarly, he memorizes the text of the epic he learnt in his brain. He retrieves the text while his performance on stage. The performer narrate the epic not simply he observed from the performance. His performance includes his capacity of narration his approach of the world and his total worldview and his language. He narrates epic as a culmination of all the factors that are mentioned. All the experiences are transformed into his thoughts. Any epic then remains in his consciousness that is nothing but his memory. The performers reveal their memory in the form of spoken and sung text in the performance. Hence, the precursor to the performed text is nothing but the thoughts of the performers. The thought may be the memory of visual, aural, or any other sensual capacity of the singer. The thoughts cannot be a text cannot be defined as a text or mental text. Thoughts themselves are a language. A poet thinks of a poem and he knows more than one language. He writes the same poem in three languages. The three texts are different languages. We cannot say that the poem is there in his mind in all three languages. When a human being thinks about something. We cannot say he or she is thinking in his/her mother tongue. Therefore the thinking or the thoughts themselves are a kind of language and the same is not is a text and there is no text in the performer's mind before he performs the epic. The thoughts and feelings of the performer takes the shape of spoken or sung word when he performs the epic. I would like to define these thoughts and his experience of life and learning as pre-life of epic or epic pre-life. I particularly want to call it as "Protoepic". This proto-epic is not a genre but a precursor state of the performed epic. This concept is proposed for further discussion among the scholars.

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Landscape Codes in the Culture of Mountainous Altai

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Abstract

This paper considers the natural landscape of the Altai as a cultural and aesthetic phenomenon, its mythpoetic dimension, its basic landscape metaphors and codes in the system of artistic reality. The space of the Altai is considered as a unit of national identity, as a materially expressed substance, and as a special semiotics complex, represented in culture.

Keywords

Cultural landscape, ethnic culture, the culture text, world picture, code, symbol.

Introduction

One of the topical problems of a culturological science is to reveal deep interrelation of man, nature, and culture. At the beginning of the 21st century, during an epoch of ecological threats, the idea of a harmonious universal is represented as especially significant. The type of nature

perception and diverse forms of nature vision are important constituents in making a world picture of the ethnos. They reflect its relation to a natural universum on the whole, reveal the world outlook and cultural and historical bases and culture orientations. Numerous ornamental "signs" and universal "schemes", nature as a scene of action and a landscape allow us to consider a natural image as a cultural phenomenon which generates diverse forms and ways of its artistic modeling.

Main Issues

Each space has a special status, its own cultural and historical value, and its semantics. So, the space of the Altai, according to the Finnish scientist L.Harvilahti, is given a special status in the culture thanks to its historical and cultural value (the centre of Eurasia), semiotic marks and sacredness of its space [1, p. 12].

The space to become mastered by a human should be organized and structured, that is, it should turn into a landscape. But that is not enough. The landscape will not become humanized if there will be no human (cultural) senses in it, if it will not become a text, if it will not be connected with other texts, and if there will be no interaction with a culture system.

Starting from a wider understanding of space, it is possible to define a landscape, as rather a sustainable organization of space, as an original environmental structure. Landscape is an environment in the fullest and widest sense of this word. This is a material "means" of the cultural mark and communication, and simultaneously it is a set of symbolical forms with its meanings and values. Because we enter into certain mutual relations with nature, there is a necessity of interpretation of these aspects.

Landscape as a natural geographic complex in the literal sense, not in a metaphorical or philosophical sense is one of the most ancient texts of culture already owing to the fact that the mythological consciousness imparts all its elements with deep senses and sometimes with imperceptible symbols closely connecting landscape and myth. As a result, myth is materialized and becomes a direct inhabitancy. Thus, a basic text of culture is formed in the spiritualized landscape which, in a sense, is and an arch-text, and a proto-text, and a pre-text, and a hyper-text.

Recently the problem of landscape and its reflection in art has started to attract an increasing attention. Theoretical geography, historical geography, «humanitarian geography» deal with the problems of a cultural landscape, «axiological geography» is being created. Different

scientific geographical approaches to a cultural landscape are developed in the works of Yu.A.Vedenin, M.E.Kuleshova, V.N.Kalutsky, E.Yu.Kolbovsky, F.N.Milkov, A.N.Yamkov and others. The variety of approaches and definitions of a cultural landscape is great. As a theoretical definition, the author accepts an idea about a cultural landscape developed in V.L.Kagansky's works where there is an attempt of systematization of approaches to a landscape in a culture as a whole [2]. A cultural landscape is a terrestrial space, a vital environment of rather a large, synergetic group of people, if this space is simultaneously whole and well-structured, contains natural and cultural components, is practically, semantically, and symbolically mastered [3, p. 65].

Aesthetic, axiological, and ethical aspects of a landscape have become an object of research for researcher-humanitarians. The landscape, in their view, is an important culture-forming factor, a special semiotics complex with images and symbols inherent in it. Culturologists and philologists have created a number of important works on this problem. For example, V.N.Toporov's works on the research of semiotics of a city, a phenomenon of "city natural boundaries," Yu.M.Lotman's works on space semiotics, D.S.Likhachev's works on semantics and poetics of a park landscape have received wide popularity.

It's worth mentioning that culturological aspects of a landscape are very well developed in the Anglo-American criticism. It is enough to mention the works of such authoritative scientists as J.Appleton, S.Bourassa, S.Shama, S.Lorsch, etc. [4].

One of the major components of a cultural landscape, according to researchers, is the spiritual culture of a local community and its perception of the surrounding nature and space. At the heart of the relation of the Altai ethnos to the natural landscape environment there is a steady ontological connection between man and nature, fixed in the reproduction of ecologically significant elements in the language, religion, and folklore. This fact resulted the specificity of all text of culture of Mountainous Altai which is based on the system of ecological concepts (eco-concepts) which along with the mythological concepts (mytho-concepts), and the concepts of reality form a special mytho-ecological world picture of the ethnos (similar to a world picture of other small peoples, such as Khakases, Tuvinians, the North people).

A set of basic signs reflecting the ecological essence of the ethnos is concentrated in the Altai folklore. One of its components is the image of Der-Suu (Earth-water) connected with the notion of "the local earth." The Earth of Altai in the unity of its existential, special, temporal,

cultural, ethnic, and spiritual dimensions reflects an idea of national identity and acts as an object of spiritual love, as “a national kernel,” a source of special “passionate energy.”

As an archetype, Der-Suu is some kind of abstract invariant and is shown in the most various forms, from an elementary neutral, as a landscape part, to the most difficult philosophically symbolic motive. The components making an indissoluble unity of an archetype of Der-Suu, the earth and water, in all their displays are not only the object of an aesthetic admiring in the Altai culture, but also are perceived as an extremely concentrated designation of the native earth.

The Altai culture, both traditional and modern, shows a "presence" of a landscape and its elements in the system of an artistic reality. It is an original power resource in which are concentrated rich archaic layers of culture and unconscious ethnic models that are mastered by modern culture.

As the culture creates various codes, including the codes of the objective and spatial environment, it is possible to speak about a special "landscape" code that arises from landscape images and symbols accompanying them. Such landscape images as "Katun," "Belukha," and “Altyn Kel” are the mediators between the sensual phenomena and the spiritual content in the ethnic culture. In designing the symbolics of the national macrocosmos, these images are nuclear, around which numerous peripheral elements of different degrees of importance and modality are grouped. It is not the space of material objects as it is, but the space of senses and meanings.

It is remarkable that a mythological world picture of the Altaians includes notions that are not typical of a continental landscape of a residing ethnos, such as "sea" and "ocean." The numerous rivers and water reservoirs of Altai are elements of special sacral geography. The **river** as a mystical road of ancestors in a traditional religious mythological consciousness was associated not only with a real waterway, but also with a mystical axis of the world model. Unlike a vertical axis of the world, which has an associative connection with a mountain, a tree, a totemic pillar and with any vertical allomorph, the river represented the binding beginning of the worlds horizontally.

If water transfers the idea of eternal changeability, then mountains, being motionless and invariable, personify eternity, absolute stability, and firmness of nature. And this ratio of a static and dynamic character was a basis of an order of a universe for Altaians which, in its turn, has found a reflection in artistic culture. Thus in modern painting the essential place is occupied with

difficult images and motives connected with wild nature. Water elements (Suu), acting in their various forms – a river, a stream, a spring (arzhan), or a waterfall occupy a dominant place in the creative works of Altai artists.

The river Katun became an original ethnic core like the "Russian" Volga, "the Cossack" Don, "the Ukrainian" Dnepr, etc. Complex metaphorical constructions are associated with this central waterway of Mountainous Altai connected with its perception as with an original "mythological vertical" connecting all circles of the universe. Beginning in the past, the stream promptly rushes into the future, and the Katun becomes a prototype of all relic mythical rivers which are worshipped in Altai. A distinctive feature of a stream of this mountainous river, its power, and precipitancy are reflected in V.Chukuev's pictures "the Katun," "Sunny day," "the Katun in Manzherok," "By Manzherok," "Spring awakening," G.Choros-Gurkin's "the Katun in spring," V.Elnikov's "the Katun rapids," Yu.Fedotov's "the April Katun," V.Zaprudaev's "the Birth of the Katun," and E.Buchnev's "the Katun silence."

Considering the universality of the notion of "landscape" providing the integrity of perception of the surrounding space, the use of the term "an astronomical landscape" seems justified concerning astronomical objects, which are frequently employed in Altai poetry and prose. Among the most often mentioned are the North star (Altyn Kazyk), Galaxies (Ulker, Mechin), the Milky Way (Kardyn Toly), Orion (Yuch-Myigak), and the Big Dipper (Deti-khaan). Altaians singled out these constellations especially from others, and they have received an independent mythological conceptualization. Their mention has a different importance in a quantitative and qualitative relation in Altai poetry and prose and testifies to the multifunctional importance of an astronomical landscape.

One of the favourite motives of the heroic epos is the transformation of heroes into stars. For instance, in "Maadai-Kara," the main character, Kogudey, and his wife turn into stars. In heavenly darkness near them Altyn Kazyk (North Star), "a bride who has become a star," the constellation Seven Khaans into which seven warriors were turned, and the constellation of Yuch-Myigak.

Thus conditionally the functions of an astronomical landscape can be reduced to several substantive statements (and to their variants): an introduction of a mythological context, time and space designation, disclosing an emotional and psychological condition of the lyrical hero. Besides, the astronomical landscape most fully reveals the connection of a microcosm of a person with the Universe macrocosm in the context of an ethnic outlook of the world.

Any natural landscape has a sound component in which even the silence is a special type of sounding, a special type of sound. I.I.Zemtsovsky considers music as a specific musical landscape, as an intonational portrait of the ethnos in its real historically developed diversity, but behind this landscape he sees powerful layers and thicknesses of the extra-musical by its nature ethno-genesis [5, p. 302].

Thus the sound ideal of the ethnos is directly connected with the ethnosphere, space, and millennia mastered by people. A basic characteristic quality of various genres of the national musical Altai tradition is onomatopoeia, which is present in the voice parts of shamans' mysteries (miracle plays), religious practices, song poetry, etc. In shamans' mysteries, for example, music becomes a means of communications between the world of people and a sacral world of spirits serving some kind of a speech metaphor. In the course of the shaman's ritual, a shaman, unlike a kaichi (an epic throat singer), limited to frameworks of a strict metric organization, could change a rhythmic pattern, alternating prose and verses, a dance, and a song. In shaman's songs, the basic component is onomatopoeia, an imitation of birds, voices of animals, and spirits.

In the plastic arts of national Altai dances, which carried out an archaic magic and ritual function, as well as in music, the figurative perception of a natural complex is reflected. The magic of dance, sometimes in the form of primitive body movements in the basis of which there is an imitation of movement of an animal and flight of birds, would have provided good luck to hunter gatherers. Symbolical signs were reproduced in dance plastic, and in a pattern of a dance. A person in a dance was assimilated to a bird, an animal; therefore, among ritual poses of the Altai dances, there are often poses in which the wrists are used to imitate the head of a snake or a bird. In their genesis these symbols and conventional signs fixed general representations, basic and universal concepts of ethnic culture. Thus music and dance, being semiotic systems, generate special artistic senses in a uniform field of ethnic culture, promoting the formation of an overall world picture.

A phenomenal existential development of a locus of Altai in modern prose and poetry (B.Ukachin, A.Adarov, K.Telesov, D.Kainchin, R.Todoshev) is also realized through the system of numerous eco-codes. The main ones in understanding semiotics of the natural world are vegetative, ornithological, zoomorphic, and astral codes, each of which covers the basic philosophical opposition of nature/civilization.

An important component of a cultural landscape is the associative landscape. In a historical and cultural space of each ethnos there are the sacral, memorial landscapes storing the memory of the major historical events or great persons possessing strong religious, artistic, and cultural associations. Conditionally they can be designated as an associative landscape in which the cultural component is often presented not in a material, but in a mental form, on association of an object with any phenomenon of culture. Sacral landscapes have strongly pronounced ethno-cultural connotations.

Conclusion

The use of a culturological discourse in the analysis of "the Altai text" has allowed us to consider a natural landscape as a cultural, aesthetic, and historical phenomenon, to reveal a mytho-poetic dimension of a natural space, and main landscape codes and metaphors. The landscape in the Altai culture acts as a space, an image, and a metaphor. The landscape optics in many respects defines the strategy of the modern Altai art, influences formation of the nature in painting, the figurative perception of a natural complex in plastic and plots of national dances, and defines the intonational shape of a musical culture. Thus the space of Mountainous Altai acts as a unit of national consciousness, as a materially expressed substance, and as a special semiotics complex, represented in culture.

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Tribal Folklore and Oral Tradition

Mahendra Kumar Mishra

“More than any other social species we engage in collective thinking, and in doing so we create a world of culture and value that becomes an integral part of our natural environment. Thus biological and cultural characteristics of human nature cannot be separated from human kind emerged through the very processes of creating culture and needs this culture for its survival and further revolution”.

(Fritzo Kapra in Turning Point pp.324)

Tribal folklore should be understood from the point of view of tribal as the creator, consumer and transmitter of their own creation. Folklore of tribal world always connect the integrated world view of man with nature, animate with inanimate, past with present and dead with the living being. These are some of the elements that can be understood from the cultural context and there is a need to understand the tribal folklore from tribal point of view. Oral tradition in tribal society is created as a part of their socio-creative need which validates and perpetuates their wisdom and knowledge across the time. It is a process that changes with the time and space keeping the values and customs in oral tradition. Therefore it is always contextual and rests in individual as a social memory.

Most of the tribal societies in India form the nature of oral society. Influence of modern education and modern culture clash with their epistemology and worldview. As a constructor of Indian *aranayak* culture, tribal people share their knowledge as a part of community resources

and therefore non-authorship is the basic character of oral non-literate society. The values and morals the tribal people inherit from their ancestors are the outcome of intergenerational knowledge that associated their mind with the environment across the ages. They experienced their journey of quest from their own land and environment. They are the authority of tradition in their own space and their expression is locally imagined, shared and valued. They connect their past with the present, living being with the dead and ideas in to realities in their own space. The visual metaphors and simlies, allegories and symbols created among the oral poets are the verbal expression energised with high creative order which unfurls their situated cognition. Spoken in a language that is small and precise in a line of a poem or a narrative, it is always meaningful. Therefore the discourse of written in tribal literature is incomplete without understanding the meaning of the unspoken/hidden discourse that lie between the two lines of their verbal repertoire.

Living with nature is a natural phenomenon of learning from the nature, or more often than not, being with the nature. Needless to say, tribal people don't claim their mastery over the matter, but feel as one of the creatures of the greater creation like any other birds and animals, living being or non-living being. Therefore the Earth, water, air and the fire are the energy of the space they live. The contemporary Eurocentric ideologies has disconnected the human from the nature and separated mind from the matter. Rejection of tribal life world in one's ownland and impose European model of development compelled them to abandon their traditional knowledge and tempted them to be civilized. On the other hand Fritzof Kapra, the author of Tao of Physics and Turning Point has aspired to maintain the relation of man with the environment by relooking the whole than the part of human development for a sustainable world of equity.

Oral tradition, popularly known as folklore is a part of social function and social control in tribal society (Bascom: 1982), It is not just entertainment or expression that we research. Scholars use to study the oral tradition from its content and try to get meaning. But, looking from the tribal worldview, there is no such activity among the tribal that they consider without objective, purpose and meaning. Once we know their language and knowledge we will be exposed to their creativity, expression and understand the purpose and meaning of using folklore as a part of their social necessity and values. The intergenerational knowledge that is handed down among them is not taught but it is a spontaneous learning cutting across the age, sex and situation. The functions of the genres of oral tradition in tribal communities are manifold. The

user of folklore knows the purpose, context and meaning of using the item of oral culture. For instance the songs and tales, the riddle and proverbs, the legends, myths and oral epics in tribal society have its own purpose of action. Therefore while the creator of folklore has their entrepreneurship for any productive activity, folklorists study the folklore to get the universal meaning to understand the diversities of human conditions.

In this paper I will discuss some songs and tales and epics that explore the nature of oral literature among the tribal society, rather than representing it from a scholastic point of view. I hope the songs and tales will speak their own purpose and meaning than I interpret it. Tribal oral tradition is rich in its cultural capitals. Knowledge on forest and struggling for endurance against wild animals and exploring nature is portrayed in their narratives. Nature offers them the economic sustenance and they in turn pay abeyance to the Earth Mother Goddess for it. Another aspect is their social solidarity and social ethics that regulates their living values and morals. Besides, tribal entered to written world have both community and individual creation. While collective oral expression is socially shared and learnt, individual writing of tribal writers followed modern literary genres to express their thought and imagination which are mostly about their contemporary live situations. Codification of tribal oral tradition in their respective scripts is a major step taken by the literate tribal writers. They document their creation myths and caste history for ethnic revitalization. Based on the cultural practices intertwined with oral narration, tribal oral tradition may be divided into three major categories.

1. Songs of entertainment (love song, work song, marriage song, lullabies, narratives; songs nominated to different stages of marriage ceremony, birth rites, pre-puberty rites, and death rituals.
2. Creation myths and tributes of Supreme Gods and Goddesses, tales of clan origin and etiological myths, myths of first progenitor and first priest of the clan deity, story of clan based expansion and distribution of land and territories
3. Oral epics and prose narratives (socio- historical, imaginary)

The genre of song can be considered from a Santali and Munda proverb. The Santali people use to say, *Sunge Susung and Kajige Durang*. It means when we walk it is our dance and when we speak it is our song. Another line in Khasi oral poetry is that the flower tells us about the season. The tribal songs represent the subtle human sensibilities of different situations that

are full of direct narration with visual metaphor drawn from the life experience associated with nature.

I will present some Kamar and Paraja songs from Kalahandi and Koraput in order to elicit the nature of tribal oral narratives.

KAMAR SONG:

The common motifs of Kamar life and oral tradition are closely connected to their space and movements. Their metaphor of space is also manifested in their oral tradition.

The two lined songs are full of visual imageries, similes and metaphors drawn from the natural environment. The nature of the birds and animals are compared to the nature of human being. This can be evident from the Kamar songs.

Some of the songs are highly symbolic embedded with situated cognition and therefore unless the nature and context of the natural object is analyzed, it would be difficult to arrive at a meaning. This is because how the kamar people perceive and connect their mind with the materials they are associated with. The object of nature is not just a resource, but a part of their life world that has shaped their intellectual ability in context.

Consider the following song

1. A land compared to an empty heart and the seed of love sown in the land is falling in love.

Dahi ja gadiun bha buneya kasa
Chini buneya kas,
Mamacha beti lagun kulu kein aha
Taibin kulukein asha,
Lele sundar phuni kulu kein asha.

-Cropped the wood and parched the land
O Chini! I've parched
Sowed Kang and Kasla, O Chini! I have sowed.
I cherish my uncle's girl

O Chini! How dinky you are.

I cherish you.

In the above song, it is narrated that a Kamar young unmarried lad has sown 'kang' and 'kasla' on the hilly land, making it plain and cultivable by parching. He yearns to marry his maternal uncle's daughter. The dry heath is the young men's heart. In it he has fostered the ardent desire to achieve his lover, simultaneously with the harvest of 'Kang' and 'Kasla' on the land. He cherishes his uncle's daughter.

2. Tol seed compared to a Kamar maiden's eye

*Chaitmase kandamalien wetun gulun towa,
Kandamalienke sajnu ache bichi bichi dua,
Lele sundar phuni, bichi bichi dua.*

-O kanda malien,
Went out! For 'tol' in spring
Eyes of my kanda malien bewitch
O kanda malien, you bewitch, do.

Above song is also embedded with visual metaphor. Seed of 'tol', the fruit of mahua has a shape congenial to that of the eyes. While collecting 'tol' in the month of 'Chait' (March) the Paharia Kamar youth ruminate the attractive eyes of his beloved *kandamalien*. The lovely round eyes of his beloved intact in shape are incorporated in the 'tol' seed.

Honey hive as compared to abducting Kamar girl

*3.Dadaga ja mariun bha tedun ke dekha
Chini tedun ke dekha
Mamacha betike muin ghichunke dekha
Le le sundar phuni ghichunke dekha.*

-I'm peeping at the hive
For I'll kill the bees
To gather the juice

I'm peeping
For I'll snatch my uncle's daughter, my beloved
O beauty, I'll snatch you.

Collecting honey is a regular practice of the Kamars. The resemblance between relishing honey by extracting it forcibly and marrying the cousin by snatching her, is an excellent analogy captured in the above four line song.

Stiff char berry compared to hard and unkind heart of a Kamar girl is

4.Chahar ja chipa bha chapun bale khat
Mamacha betilagun patan bale ante
Le le sundar phuni patan bale ante.

-I'll break the char berry
And eat the kernel within
Seduce my uncle's girl
O my cousin dinky, you enchant
I shall seduce you.

The stiff cortex of the *Char* berry is hard to break. Still the youth wants to break it and delight in the kernel. Analogically, it is essential to pierce the stubborn exterior of the lover to procure the nectar within. The likelihood between the savour of the fruit and the love of the darling's heart is perceivable in the above song.

The parajasongs of the maiden of Koraput are much more than the mortal love. The Parajagirl imagines the ancestors spirit and narrates

We all are the duma of our ancestors,
We are the earthen toys of our ancestor's creation
We are the creation of their customs,
Always old, but remain ever new.
Oh Duma God
You are an ardent lover
Staying in the mango tree,

How long you will smell
The fragrance of *baula* mango flowers
Wearing the Malang flower
Open your eyes open.

Oh God of *Chaitra* – spring,
You have created this earth,
All the song and dances
And the secrets of love
Under the salap tree
Under the Mahul tree
Among the dangda- young man and dangdi- young woman
You gave them eyes
To make two bodies in to one
Through silent signs.

You have given light in the moon
And attractive tune in the flute.
The human of past is the god of present
The ancestors of are installed in the long stones
In the middle of the village,
In their living world they might, here, have played the game of love
They might have also played dance, and might have listened
The sounds of bangles of their beloved maidens
Must have felt the warm breathing of their young maidens,
And might have danced in the festival of Chaitra.⁽¹⁶⁾love songs of kajodi)

It is not the individual feelings that matters, but their everyday life connection with their natural and social environment that has created a space for them to recollect the feeling of love of their ancestor compared to them in present time. Love is also intergenerational and the symbols of stone speak a lot of their ancestors love story. The emotion of love is also communal that regulate the present self with the ancestors past. Ancestor's spirit residing in a stone under a

¹⁶Mishra Subash , KajodiraPreetigeeta- (in Odia) Love songs of Kajodi, 2014, Bhubaneswar

mango tree enjoying the fragrance of the mango flower is the signifier of their unforgettable bond with their clan.

While love songs represent the imagination of the youths, oral myths and epics represent the complex culture of the community or clan bearing the clan origin, caste origin, kinship, stratification and shaping of their settlement with technological inventions. The myths are remote events of their ancestors and the epics are recent stories of their clan heroes. The deep meaning of their culture is embedded in their symbolic language that captures the racial history. For instance in a Gond caste genealogy when a line is narrated that the Gond first progenitor killed a white tiger and settled his territories. It is not exactly true that the white tiger was killed; rather the meaning of white tiger might be white coloured coloniser (Brahmin, Muslim and British) during colonial rule. This symbolizes how the community or clan shape the meaning of culture through symbolic language. It is only in oral myths that the meaning is deciphered from the rituals, but in the oral epics, the meaning is culturally enriched with the racial memory. Thus as a rare genre, oral epics encompasses the whole range of cultural representation of the location touching the geo-political and Eco cultural aspects with ideologies that connects them between the past and present showing the way to future. The glory of the community heroes with the Gods are the source of inspiration that regenerate the lost memory and invigorate the current generations.

Based on my own collection of oral epics in kalahandi, I present the classificatory scheme of the oral epic and myths in a table

Horizon of Oral Epics:¹⁷

Tribe/Caste	Sub-caste/Bard	Musical instruments	Name of the epic songs/ caste genealogy
Gond & Bhatara	Parghania	Kifri (fiddle), bana	‘Purja’ caste genealogy. Chitalsingh Chhatri
Kondh	Marals	Dhundhunua	Janamkhena— Creation myth ‘Bhimasidi’ —Rain God Bhima
Nangmati	Boguas	One String Musical	Nangmati Rajphulia-epic

¹⁷ Mishra, Mahendra Kumar 2008, Oral Epics of kalahandi, NFSC, Chennai,

		Instrument	
Binjhal	Birthia	Mandal Jhanj (cymbal)	Jati Janam-creation myth, origin of Binjhal festival of epic song. Bariha king of Borasambar.
Banjara	Bhat	Dhap	Meramma-creation of Goddesses, Lakha Banjara -culture Hero Mithu Bhukhia Sewa Bhaya Banjara god
Gaurs (Milkman, Cultivators)	Ghogia jachak	Bramhaveena Local harp wind instrument	kharatmal, Barakhena Bansgeet Bans .
Dom (Scheduled Cast)	Birthia	Muhuri, Tasha	Jati janam- How they Dhol became a musician community. Madhab King Katha-geet, Salaban raja Katha-geet

ETHNIC BARDS AS AUTHORITY OF TRADITION

The Parghanias—Gond bard recite the caste genealogy “*Purja*”- caste genealogy which is a long sacred narrative. The Gondpriest ‘Jhankar’ recites the invocation song on Chaturbhuj Budhadeo, Lingadeo and Janghadeo representing the ancient glory of the Gond gods and heroes.

The Bogua and the Marals—two distinct ethnic bard of the Kondh tribe recite *Janamkhena*—creation of the Kondhs, and *Bhimasidi*—the epic of Bhima. Bhima is the rain god and culture hero of the Kondhs. Similarly, the Birthia for Binjhal tribe and the Birthia for the Doms recite the *Jati Janam*- origin of caste and Purthi Janam- creation of the earth during the Dasahara festival and the community rituals. The Kamars recite Bad-devtar Khena as their creation myth. The Ghogia for Gaur caste sing Barakhena Bansgeet representing their clan Gods and Goddesses. The narratives were recited during their post-harvest festivals and during marriage ceremonies.

FEMALE SINGERS AS BEARER OF TRADITION

The Gurumai and the Ghogien in Gond, Kondh and Bhunjia community invoke the ‘Duma-utra song’— invoking the ancestors, which is the family history or caste genealogies of the respective tribes. BhimaBiha- marriage of Bhimais another ritual found among these tribes

performed where the scarcity of rain is felt. These communities perform the ritual to resolve the drought situation occurred in Kalahandi. People organise a marriage ceremony of the Rain God *Bhīma* with Kondhen— a tribal girl to get rain.

All these narrative poetry is commonly termed as Geet, Puran or Khenā, Janam Khand and also Jati Puran. The fisher folk (Keuta) community, call it Geeta.

The content of the sacred narrative varies from tribe to tribe, depending on their socio-economic status. In Gond Purja—the history of the Raj Gonds it is narrated that they were the land owner and administrative head in Gondvana. The Kondhs have already adopted cultivation as their major occupation. In their '*Pod puja*'—buffalo sacrifice festival the main Priest (Govajani) worship *Dharnimata*—Earth Mother, Goddess Laxmi and Goddess Durga. He offers milk to Laxmi and sacrifice buffalo for Goddess Durga.

The buffalo sacrifice ritual of the Kondh tribe reflects the origin, migration, settlement, transition from food gatherer to food producer technologies and ultimately the land owner and local administrator of their 'chak'—habitat. The Kamars—a minority tribe in their Bad Devtar Khenā—a long narrative song, invoke their supreme God to help them in hunting and collecting forest products and pray for the intact jungle without external attack by any other community. It has been so as they still live on forest products and hunting.

Similarly the Banjara, Gaur, and Bhunjia oral epics bear their cultural life world.

TRIBAL ORAL TALES

Cutting across age, time, space and language oral tales fulfil the creative urge of the story tellers. In Saora community of Odisha, story tellers are known as Kata-bir-mar, which mean male story tellers and female story teller is called Kata-bir-boi. Male singer is called Kinkin –mar and female singer is kinkin –boi. In kondh community singer is padambu taya for male singer and paadambutai is female singer.

Here some tales of Kamar tribe of Odisha is presented which proves that how the people create their story in their cultural context and decipher meaning. Unless a culture is explained, it is difficult to get meaning from a story. Though, the story is understood, it is necessary to know how a story contains the deep meaning of a culture.

TWO WIVES IN FOREST AND A WIFE AT HOME (A KAMAR TALE)

There was a hunter in a forest. Every day he used to hook on the forest in search of prey. It was winter. There was a terrible cold. The hunter slept with his wife. In the morning he said to his wife, "It is terrible cold in the house. I would like to go the forest. I would like to prefer the forest."

His wife asked, "Why do you like the forest than my home?"

He replied, "I have two wives in the jungle and only one wife at home. So I would like to be in the jungle." Listening to this, the hunter's wife became suspicious. She thought, "Oh! Therefore my husband likes to spend most of his time in the forest, and remains absent from home. Let me see how the other women win this race would not allow the two witches to enter in to my house."

In the evening the hunter set out to the jungle with a gourd full of water. He said, 'See, I am going to the forest, better you take care of the house. Take care of the fire and water.' Saying this, the hunter left home. His wife knew the place of hunting in the forest. So she planned to go to the forest to know what her husband was doing with the other two wives. The hunter burnt a fire in two places and sat in between waiting for the hunt. Since he was in the middle of the two fire places, he was not feeling cold. His wife went to the forest and arrived at the place where her husband was waiting. While coming to that place, she stepped in to the dry leaves. The hunter could listen this. It created an illusion in his mind that an animal is coming to drink water. He shoots an arrow to the direction from where the sound was coming.

The arrow hit his wife. She cried and said, "Oh Ma, I will die." The hunter soon went there and found that the victim was none other than his own wife. He took his wife near the fire. He asked her, why did you come here in this dark and cold night? His wife replied with pain, "I was jealous when you told that you have two wives in the forest. So I did come to fight with them."

The hunter said with grief, "Oh No! I was just kidding. The two fires I set in both the side of my place are like two wives; since they give me warmth in the winter night. There are no women in my life except you. Oh, why did not you understand it?"

But it was too late. His wife died there. The hunter repented. He was very sad and thought why he teased his loving wife when he set out for a hunt. After that he gave up hunting and married a woman and lived happily, and adopted cultivation for his livelihood.

THE YOUNGER BROTHER STORY (A BHUNJIA TALE)

There was a Bhunjia old man who has two sons. The old man was happy with his elder son's earnings, but was unhappy for his younger son was not doing anything. The younger son was in love with a young girl of his village and was spending his time with her.

One day the old man was angry and said to his young son, you are useless, nothing to earn, you are a donkey. Get out of my home.

The young boy was sad and left his home and went to meet his beloved girl. It was evening time. She was coming from the river after fetching the water in a pitcher. The young boy met her and said, my father called me and donkey. No sooner he spoke this he turned in to a donkey. Now the young girl took the donkey in to her home and hides him. In the night she left her home and eloped with the donkey to a distant place.

They reached Chieftdom where the king was issue less. All the women of the kingdom were issueless and they had no hope for bearing child. The Chief found a girl with a donkey and learnt everything from her. He gave her a space to stay. There was a dry champa tree in front of the Chief's house. When the girl started staying in the home and poured water in the tree it gave flowers. Soon after the event the barren women of the land started bearing the child. After that the donkey got back his human form. Since the Chief had no child he adopted the girl as his daughter and gave his territory to the couple.

What symbols these two tales carry? One is all about the symbolic meaning of fire in winter compared to the warmth of the spouse in the night. This is the cultural language that the kamar people use; One cannot understand how the warmth of the fire is compared to the warmth of a woman unless he is from a forest and has no clothes to wear except depending on the fire in winter.

Other story is also symbolic one. The barren women started bearing child symbolizes with the blooming of flowers in the dry tree. A donkey turning in to a human form is assurance of the girl who tried her hard to make her lazy husband capable of working. The tales are small, but full of meaning with energy in context. Even though it has its contextuality, when it is unravelled it becomes universal and enjoyable. After all the tales of human or animals or

plants and flowers come from the creative imagination with reason and logic representing the situated cognition.

DISCUSSION

“Writing the nature of a society where the written culture is absent and oral culture prevails,” Walter J Ong, a noted litterateur describes, ‘human beings in primary oral cultures, those untouched by writing in any form, learn a great deal and possess and practice great wisdom, but they don’t ‘study’.”

The dichotomy of creator of culture and interpreter of culture certainly has two different objectives. One is to live in the culture and another is to understand the diversities of culture to get meaning.

Ong¹⁸ further explains that people in oral culture learn from apprenticeship – hunting with experienced hunters, for example – by discipleship, which is a kind of apprenticeship, by listening, by repeating what they hear, by mastering proverbs and ways of combining and recombining them, by assimilating other formulary materials by participation in a kind of corporate retrospection – not by studying the strict sense.(Ong :1982:Orality and Literacy)

Based on Ong’s concept of oral culture, it can be inferred that the irrespective of oral or written, human mind are highly experiential and rich with knowledge of introspecting the world around them. This is same in case of tribal also. Tribal people understand the epistemic world; they express their mind in silence with precisely meaningful words. It also indicates that energy of the word lies in the energy of their world. Their oral tradition is full of many visual metaphors, symbols, imageries and similes. Since they are the part of aneco-cultural system they don’t feel like consciously study their own culture. The knowledge that has been collectively constructed by the community is reflected in their creative art and expression is repetitive, performative to listen and to tell or sing.

Fritjof Kapra, in his Turning Point¹⁹ argues that,

¹⁸Ong, J, Walter, Orality and Literacy and Beyond, 1982,

¹⁹KapraFritzop, 1983,Turning Point,

“As human beings, we shape our environment very effectively because we are able to represent the outer world symbolically, to think conceptually and to communicate our symbols, concepts and ideas. We do so with the help of abstract language, but also nonverbally through painting, music, and other forms of art.” (Capra pp. 321 : 1983).

The art and craft, music and dance of the tribal represent the static art in which the orality in silence is recurrent.

Studying the indigenous oral tradition Archibald mentions,

“Animals and supernatural characters are present in most Indigenous traditional stories. In response to the reason for the presence of animal characters in the stories, Ellen White explains that, “If I was to mention a name and point at one of you I might be injuring you [and] the whole universe”²⁰(Archibald, 2008, p. 137). It is necessary to understand the Indigenous belief systems, worldviews, and cosmology before approaching indigenous oral narratives. In some oral narratives, the animals and the supernatural characters are neither fictitious nor fake. Instead, they are rooted in the Indigenous worldviews, cosmology, and belief systems (ibid).²¹

What is the relevance of the oral tradition of a non-literate endangered community in the 21st century? Do we really need it? What elements would interest the readers and how they could accept it? Do the songs that is highly contextual will be appealing for the modern readers? Do the folktales that they narrate is helpful to understand the ground realities of life?

Can the universal truth embedded in the tribal folktales equally educative to others? Can it be generalized for a wider social context that reveals the human universal truth? How the idea of a forest dweller community who equally adopted four to five occupations for their livelihood, can be helpful to our contemporary world which is entirely different to them? Can they forget their group solidarity and identity and become individuals at par with us and become individualistic? Will it be not proper to educate them in their territory and afford them a

²⁰Archibald, 2008, p. 137

²¹<http://blogs.ubc.ca/etec540sept10/2010/10/03/orality-%E2%80%93-indigenous-knowledge-through-oral-narratives>

sustainable and durable world where they find the meaning of human values, rather to migrate to other state and suffer? Is it so that the forest people will be the knowledge provider for maintaining eco cultural diversities? Now the environmental scientists use to lament for a green world to which the tribal priest also invoke the Earth Mother Goddess to keep the Earth green and fertile. Can these tribal be branded as still a savage people because they don't have the writing system?

Can there be a system where the strength of oral culture - learning through apprenticeship - and 'corporate retrospection' can be clubbed with the modern management system, where people from both the culture can learn from each other and mould the technological world with the ecological world? Can it also be possible that the first educated tribal youth be the saviors of tribal development system and promote the community to a level where they can live with minimum human conditions?

Language and Culture of the Waddar Community in Maharashtra

Digambar M. Ghodke

Introduction

Denotified and nomadic tribes (DNTs) in India are the itinerant groups of people who have always been looked down upon by sedentary communities for their unsettled and deviating life style. With the enactment of the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA) of 1871, these so called criminal classes, being subdued in the social stratum, were never treated as human beings. Likewise their languages too were distorted and deformed. Although not satisfactory but more or less discussion over the lifestyle, customs, culture and traditions of the DNTs has taken place in certain ethnographic studies undertaken by the British officials of the time, the comprehensive studies of these communities are still unavailable. The present paper is an attempt in this direction. It deals with Waddar one of such DNTs focusing on its origin, legends, socio-cultural life, Festivals and religious ceremonies, eating habits and clothing, etc.

Waddar Community: Tracing back its Origin

Waddar is the geo-historically dislocated pan-Indian peripatetic community found in many parts of India. Apart from Andhra, Karnataka and Maharashtra, the community is reported to be found in the other states of India and also in neighbouring Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka (Ethnologue Report, 2009). As per the report of Joshua

Project, there are 3,352,000 Waddars in India and in Sri Lanka, their population is 1,52,000. In Pakistan there are 5,700 Hindu Waddars and the population of Muslim Waddars is 103,000 (see Joshua Project). However, in the absence of the concrete data, unsubstantiated is the place of their origin yet neither Waddars themselves have any knowledge of their origin; those who know the similarity between Telugu and their own heritage language trace back their origin in Andhra Pradesh, the Telugu speaking state while some attribute it to the origin of their tribe name 'Waddar', 'Vodda', 'Odra' which is said to have some relation with the origin of the name 'Orissa'. According to Nanjundayya and Iyer (1931),

'No reliable information is available about their origin. They are said to have arrived in the Mysore State from Orissa, Odra- Desha'. (1931: 659-60)

They conclude that the 'Voddas' are the Telugu castes of earth-diggers who originally came from Orissa. Edgar Thurston (1909) had also expressed the similar view about the origin of Waddars. He writes,

'They are Telugu people, who came originally from Orissa, whence their name' (1909: 422).

Bones' (1912) writing is also supportive of these views. He states,

"The derivation usually accepted in the south is from Oriya, formerly Odra, and now Orissa, as it was from that region that these gangs are said to have first emanated". (1912:104)

However, these scholars in the field of ethnographic studies seem to have taken an ambiguous stand on the issue of the land of origin of Waddars: on the one hand they accept the fact of Waddars' being Telugu and at the same time trace back their base in Orissa. The matter of the origin of Waddars becomes more controversial and unreliable when some of the scholars rely on the etymological origin of the word 'Waddar' to understand it. They associate it with the etymological origin of 'Orissa', a state on the southeast coast of India. The name Orissa is derived from the Pali or Sanskrit words Ora (Ura) or Odra Desa. Taking the base of the word 'Odra', these scholars argue that Waddars might have originated from Orissa. However, this argument fails to produce any satisfactory and acceptable evidence to establish this connection of Waddar with

Orissa; as to how, when and why the community left Orissa as there is no linguistic or cultural connection of the community with Orissa at present. Further, looking at the involvement of Waddars in the traditional occupation of digging wells and canals, some other scholars refer to the mythological stories to establish the connection of Waddars with Bhagirath, the King of Surya Dynasty who believed to have brought the River Ganges to Earth from the heavens (cf. Nanjudayya & Iyer, 1931). Numerous are the stories to talk about the royal and mythological connections of the Waddar community but none of them do produce any authentic and reliable evidence to establish this linkage. Nonetheless, the resemblance of their language with Telugu supplies a ground for the speculation regarding their land of origin. As the language (the point whether it is a language or a dialect will be discussed later in 1.8.1 below) shares great amount of commonality with Telugu, the official language of Andhra Pradesh in India, unreasonable it would not be to call Andhra as their land of origin but the historical connection again remains untraced. The mention of Waddars being ‘Telugu people’ or ‘caste’ is already there in the ethnographic works on Indian tribes and castes by Edgar Thurston (1909), Nanjudayya and Iyer (1931). However, the uncertainty of their origin still persists when we consider it in the light of Thurston’s (1909: 424) speculation. He writes:

“Besides Telugu, they are said to speak a peculiar dialect among themselves; and, if this should turn out to be Uriya, the question might be regarded as settled”.

This statement by Thurston provides a ground for an assumption of the Waddar being other than Telugu language. But their Telugu connection might not be dismissed right way as besides language it is also evident in the name of the family deity of the majority Waddar people i.e. Venkatramana, another name of Lord Balaji at Tirumala a hill town in the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh, India. Yet owing to the absence of historical evidences and the present disconnection of the community with any state – the community members do not claim to be the ‘sons-of- soil’ of any place neither does any state claim them to be their own people – it becomes difficult to associate it with any land after all nomads are they, how they can have a permanent place of their

settlement wherever they went that land becomes their own. Baines (1912) remarks this particular quality of adaptability among the members of this community. He comments,

“Thus they do not, like many of the migratory tribes, return to their native country, but settle in the Province. In the upper parts of the Jamna valley, for instance, they seem to have given up their traditional pursuit and taken to weaving coarse cotton wrappers, with a little cultivation thrown in”. (1912: 104)

Thus *prima face* the nature of adaptability among the Waddars in the environment they are placed in appears to be the main reason of the ongoing change in their socio-cultural life and language as well. Of course, many other factors are responsible for it.

Legends

Legends are the part and parcel of human society; there is seldom any society, tribal or cultured, which does not claim its legendary past. Waddars share many legends related to their community and traditional occupation of tank-digging.

As per the legend shared by many Waddars and mentioned in Thurston (1909), Nanjundayya and Iyer (1931), and Nagendra Kr Singh (2006), Waddar man and woman were created by Lord Shiva out of the drops of sweat from his body to dig a well to quench his and his wife Parvati's thirst while they were wandering on the earth in hot summer days. The man and woman, who were provided with a crowbar, a pickaxe and a basket for this task, fulfilled it and quenched the thirst of the God who being gratified, asked the couple to demand the boon. The undue and excessive demand made by the couple made the god so annoyed and indignant that he cursed the couple and their coming generations with the life of hard work i.e. digging wells and tanks and poverty forever.

Another legend is related to Bhagirath, a Hindu mythological King who is believed to have brought the River Ganges to earth from the heavens to quench the thirst of his drought-ridden subject and to relieve his 60,000 ancestors from the curse of Sage Kapila. Waddars believe themselves to be the clan of the King Bhagirath from whom they inherited the well and tank-digging occupation. King Bhagiratha, using his architectural skills dug the peak of the mountain having the shape of Lord Shiva's coiled hair and constructed the canal with the help of the people from his kingdom to

change the flow of the river southwards. Thus the Waddars are believed to have descended from the Surya Dynasty (cf. Chavan, 2007).

The 12th century legend related to Jasma Devi, a deity of Od (as called in Gujarat) community in Gujarat also replicates the tank-digging occupation of the community. Jasma, the wife of a simple pond-digger man called 'Rooda', from the Waddar tribe was so attractive and beautiful that the King Siddhraj Jaisingh, upon seeing her, was mesmerised and expressed his wish to marry her to make her the queen of Gujarat. Jasma's loyalty towards her husband and self-respect made her to spurn his offer and rebuke the king for his evil thoughts towards a married woman. To protect her honour and save the people of her community from the torture, for persuading Jasma to marry him, of the vicious King, Jasma committed sati. It is believed that her curse made the tank waterless and the king without an heir to the kingdom of Gujarat. The Jasma Devi Temple was constructed in her memory near a tank called 'Sahasra linga Talav' located near Pattan, Gujarat in the 12th century (cf. Wikipedia).

Multiple identity of Waddars

Being the wandering tribe, to move from one place to another in search of manual work like digging wells, canals, building dams, bridges, quarrying and breaking stones, constructing roads, making grindstone and millstone for sale has been the age old tradition among the members of the community. Perhaps a few of them have raised themselves above the level of poverty, financial paucity, with the loss of their traditional occupations on account of mechanization, has remained the lot of their lives. While describing Waddars, Edgar Thurston, a superintendent at the Madras Government Museum, refers to Mr. H. A. Stuart who describes the Oddes or Voddas, who are commonly called Wudders as "the navvies of the country, quarrying stone, sinking wells, constructing tank bunds, and executing other kinds of earthwork more rapidly than any other class, so that they have got almost a monopoly of the trade (1909: 422). The negative social attitude towards Waddar people is reflected in Nanjundayya and Iyer's description (1931). They write,

“In common parlance a Vodda denotes an uncommonly heavy-looking, rude, and uncivilized person”.

This insolent connotation of the Waddar being ‘ugly’, ‘rude’ and ‘barbaric’ is still the part of social mentality. In Maharashtra and Karnataka, a black complexioned person of any caste is referred to as ‘*Kala Waddar*’ or ‘*Kari Wadra*’ meaning ‘black Waddar’ and his/her filthiness becomes the mark of ‘being Waddar’.

Although Ethnologue (2009) uses the term Waddar to refer to the community, Waddars are known by different names in different linguistic regions. For instance, in Andhra Pradesh they are referred to as Woddollu and in Tamil Nadu as Ottan-Nayakan and Oddars. In Maharashtra, they are known as Vadars or Wadari and in Karnataka as bhoi/bhovi (Bhat, 1983). In North India and Pakistan, they are known as ‘Od’. The other alternate names for Waddar, mentioned in Ethnologue (2009), are Od, Orh, Vadari, Vadda Beldar, Werders, Wodde, etc. The ethnic population of India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka is 3.2 million (Ethnologue, 2009). In Thurston and Rangachari (1909) and Nanjundayya and Iyer (1931) the name ‘Vodde’ and ‘Odda’ are used to refer to the people from the Waddar community. Baines’s (1912) remark regarding this multiple identities of Waddars is noteworthy here. He states

“They are practically of one origin under various titles. In the Dravidian country, where they are most numerous, they are called Ottan in Tamil, and Vaddar in Telugu and Kanarese. It is by the name of Od or Odia that they are known north of the Dekkan, up to the Panjabi”. (1912: 104).

Multiple might be the terms to refer to the community, their being a Telugu caste is the common aspect found in the information available in the ethnographic and sociological works of Thurston (1909), Nanjundayya and Iyer (1931), Nagendra Kr Singh (2006).

Subgroups of the Wadars and their Traditional Occupations

The Waddar community in Maharashtra is divided into three subgroups, as per their traditional occupations. The nomenclature used to refer to these groups too has similar kind of association. However, in Karnataka, we come across the variation in this division. Indeed, Baines (1912) mentions only two, *Kallu* and *Mannu*, of them. Let us take a brief account of these subgroups:

1. ***Mati* or *Mannu* Wadar:** The name is derived from *mati* (Marathi) and *mannu* (Kannada) both meaning ‘soil’. The Wadari name for them is *gampalor* or *mantor* or *mannor*. *Moflor*, carriers of soil on their head, and *gadulor*, carriers

of soil on the donkey's back, are the two subgroups in this community. The major occupation of this group is digging of earth and carrying of soil with the help of self-owned donkeys for piling it to construct canals, roads, and edges of lands, etc. They are pig-breeders as well. In past, the person who owned more number of donkeys and pigs considered to be wealthy by the other members from the group (see Chavan, 2007 and Yetekar, 2010). Baines (1912) while talking about the expertise of this subgroup in well-sinking states

“The Mannu, or earthy, Vaddar, are migratory, and seek jobs upon large undertakings, working together in their own gangs, by the piece, in the manipulation of which standard they show marvellous resource and ingenuity. They are adepts with their large spades, and no unskilled labour can touch them in the output, either on the flat or in well-sinking”. (1912: 104)

2. **Kallu or Dagad Wadar:** The name comes from *kallu* (Kannada) and *dagad* (Marathi) both meaning ‘stone’. The Wadar name for them is *ralore or bandalore*. They work in stone quarries. They shape stones into grindstones, millstones, and carry them on the back of their own donkeys from one place to another for selling these products. They also shape stones to use them in the construction of mansions and create artistic statues of gods, people, animals, and birds, etc. It is believed that most of the forts and other admired monuments of stones in India must have been constructed by this group. The presence of a large number of people from this group in the occupation of construction is supportive to this assumption.
3. **Gadi or Bandi Wadar:** This group derives its name from the Marathi word *gadi* and Telugu and Kannada word *bandi*. They are called as *bandlore* in Wadari language. Its major occupation is the transport of stones from one place to another. Traditionally, they used stone-wheeled carts and harnessless *he* buffaloes to pull it (cf. Ratna Rao, 1990; Bhimrao Chavan, 2007). In past in search of work, they would wander from one place to other keeping their meagre household luggage on this cart; unremittingly this wandering life is still in their

lot, but only those carts have vanished. Even today they are mainly engaged in stone quarry work, rubble supply and construction of roads.

H. A. Stuart in his report in the Manual of North Arcot district of Tamil Nadu talks about the expertise of the community in quarrying stone, sinking wells, and constructing tank bunds and states their monopoly in these works. Apart from the three subgroups, mentioned above, found in Maharashtra, there is one more subgroup which is called as *Uppar Bhovi/ Oddar*, the salt and lime quarry workers in Karnataka. Being endogamous, matrimony outside the subgroups was not strictly allowed in the past and the tradition, with some ignorable exceptional cases, is still in continuous till date. It means a gadi/bandi Waddar boy can marry a gadi/bandi Waddar girl only not kallu/dagad Waddar girl or mannu/mati Waddar girl so on and so forth (cf. Chavan, 2007; Pawar, 2008; Yetekar, 2010).

Gotras

Within these subgroups there are different gotras/clans, named in Wadari language as *gundglor*, *gunjaor*, *rapanor*, *pallapor*, *pitlor*, *rapanor*, *sanpangor*, *kunchapor*, *wallapore* and so on. In each subgroup, there is a section: brotherly and non-brotherly *gotras*. The gotras are grouped together, for the sake of maintaining exogamy, as *Shivagana* and *Gangagana*.

The *gotras* grouped under one *gana* are brotherly clans. For example all the *gotras* from *Shivgana* are brotherly clans and members from the *gangagana* form the opposite non-brotherly clan for them and *vice versa*. Marriages within these brotherly clans, viz. *Shivagana* and *Gangagana*, are strictly prohibited. Marriages within the section are considered incest. For example, the clans such as *gunduglore*, *dandglore*, *gunjaor* belong to *Shivagana* and *pallapor*, *pitlore*, *rapanor* etc. are from *Gangagana*. Hence a marriage between *dandagalore* and *dundugalore* is incest. (cf. Pawar (2008), Bhimrao Chavan (2007) and Prof. Yetekar (2010). A man or women from *Shivgana* can marry a woman or man from *gangagana* and *vice versa*.

Socio-Cultural Life of the Community

In the Census Report, 1871, the Waddars are described as being “the tank-diggers, well-sinkers, and road makers of the country who live in detached settlements, building their huts in conical or bee-hive form, with only a low door of entrance” (as

quoted in E. Thurston, 1909). Thurston describes members of the Waddar community as 'merry-making', 'contented with meagre earning', and 'indulgent in intoxication' people.

They work in gangs on contract, and every one, except very old and very young, takes a share in the work. The women carry the earth in baskets, while the men use the pick and spade. The babies are usually tied up in cloths, which are suspended, hammock fashion, from the boughs of trees. They are employed largely in the Public Works Department, and in the construction and maintenance of railways. They are rather a fine-looking race, and all that I have come across are Vaishnavites in theory, wearing the trident prominently on their foreheads, arms, and breasts. The women are tall and straight. They eat every description of animal food, and especially pork and field-rats, and all drink spirituous liquors." (Thurston, 1909: 423)

The description given by Thurston, except for a few trivial differences, is applicable to the Waddars in Maharashtra and in other parts of India, especially of Andhra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Most of the Waddars are engaged in the work of digging lands, stone quarry and road construction. It is a reality that both men and women and even their small children have to work for their livelihood.

Religion

Waddars seem to be the worshipers of Hindu deities. They follow Hindu rituals and celebrate major Hindu festivals. However, certain tribal characteristics revealing their distinct socio-cultural identity are still the part of Waddar community. As per the data collected by Joshua Project, an organisation studying the 'unreached ethnic groups' of the world for the spread of Christianity, almost all (99.94%) the Waddars in India follow Hinduism and rest them (only 0.06 %) have converted to Christianity. All the Waddars from Sri Lanka are only Hindus whereas in Pakistan the bifurcation between Hindu Waddars and Muslim Waddars is given. The population of Hindu Waddars is only 5,700 while there are 103,000 Muslim Waddars who apparently seem to have converted to Islam. The people cluster mentioned for both the groups in the project, however, is 'Telugu'. The primary language mentioned for the groups is 'Od': 3,200 of Hindu

Waddars and 52, 000 of the Waddar Muslims from Pakistan speak this language (see Joshua Project). The same language is said to be spoken by the group in north India. Waddars, as per the reports of the former British officials of India and ethnographers both British and Indian, in Bombay Presidency, Mysore (1931) and south India (1909) spoke the corrupt version of Telugu language.

Customs

The adaptation of Hinduism: its customs, rituals and traditions by the Waddars seems to be a fairly recent phenomenon which might have been the outcome of their contact with other Hindu communities. Although this imitation is significantly growing these days, Waddars used to have their distinct rituals, dressing style, customs and traditions which marked their incongruity with other groups. Let us discuss this difference with reference to the ritual of marriage and occasions of social get together in the community by focussing on the typical aspect only in brief as the elaborate discussion here might turn the study into an anthropological research.

Marriage

The nuptial system of the Waddar community is certainly the mark of its distinct cultural uniqueness. The marriage system could be understood in parts: pre-wedding and during wedding.

a) Pre-wedding

i) *Gotra* and nuptial bond

As mentioned in above *gotra* of the person plays role in deciding the marital relationship. Waddars are very orthodox on this issue, in case of the violation of this norm i. e. if the marriage takes place with the *gana* (*shivgana or gangagana*), the families of the bride and bridegroom have to undergo a social boycott. In past, the parents themselves, taking the consent of the bride and bridegroom for granted, would make a decision of marriage their wards. Once the agreement between the parents of bride and groom took place, they would convey it to the *baid* (the community leader) and *panch* (a council of people, commonly accepted as the leaders by the concerned group of the community) and the *panch* would give the permission to the marriage only if the norm regarding the *gotra* and *gana* are observed. The remarkable aspect of the Waddar marriage system is that no dowry is

demanding by the groom or his family instead 'bride's price' is offered to the bride's family by the groom's side. No demand of money or other belongings would be made by the groom's side and the expenses of marriage would be either shared by both families or borne by the financially sound family of the two.

ii) *Gadhuv*: Ceremony for deciding the day and date of wedding

The decision regarding the day and date of marriage would be made in the presence of *panch* or community members before 15-20 days of the marriage day in a small social function at the bride's place which is called as 'gadhuv' in Waddar language. This declaration is made with the consent of *panch* and other members from the community, generally to avoid overlapping of wedding days.

b) During Wedding

i) *Gandam*: A sacred ceremony

Another ritual followed till date, in the Waddar marriage system is what is called as '*gandam*', a ritual of putting on the sandal ointment on the body of bride and groom in the temple of their family deity (*kuldevta/devi*) at their places separately before 2-3 days of the actual day of marriage. On the day of this ceremony, usually the sacred day (such Monday, Tuesday, Friday or Saturday) of their family deity, women from the community are invited to wear new glass bangles (usually of green colour) by the families of bride and groom at their respective places separately. In the evening women from the community bring a bucket-full of hot water each from their own houses and bathe the bride/groom amidst singing of the traditional wedding songs by the women. After that the bride/groom is made to put on a new sari/dress and taken to the temple of her/his family deity wherein a ritual of putting on the sandal ointment on the bride/groom's body takes place.

ii) *Gangasthal* (a place of water)

In past marriages in Waddar community would last for five days, depending on the financial position of both parties. On the first day of wedding five *suvasinsis* (married women whose husbands are still alive), including the mothers of bride and groom, by putting *airamunthyal* (small earthen pots,

containing water) on their heads and men along with other guests go to the place of water to perform the *puja* of Ganga, the goddess of water.

iii) **Jyadi** (a ceremony of formal agreement between paternal parents)

After coming back from the *gangasthal*, the *panchs*, relatives and guests of both sides would come together in the marriage pendal for the ritual named as *jyadi* whereas the *pancha* would make the paternal parents of both bride and groom to declare the agreement of marriage (orally), which is very peculiar, between their wards in the presence of the community members. For this ceremony black woollen blanket used to be spread at the centre and *shyasa* (a square design of uncooked rice by spreading it in vertical, horizontal and cross order) would be made by the male members, especially from the opposite *gana*, on it around which all members would seat for the ceremony of agreement; then betel leaves and areca nuts would be distributed among the male members present on the occasion then only further rituals of the wedding would follow. Waddars did not consult the astrologer for the auspicious day, date and moment of the wedding earlier; they even did not need, like other Hindu castes, a Brahmin priest for performing the rituals during the wedding ceremony.

iv) **Feast for Wedding**

The food such as *bhakaris*, *dal- rice*, *curry*, *chutteny* and *lapsi*, a sweet made of broken wheat and jaggery, would be offered, on the day of *phasum* (on the first day evening), the ritual of rubbing turmeric on the bodies of bride and groom by each other and others amidst the singing of traditional marriage songs by the Waddar women. On the day of actual wedding, in past, Waddars would offer goat meat, *bhakari* (round flat unleavened bread made of jowar) and rice.

Festivals and religious ceremonies

Waddars used to have (these days this phenomenon has been vanishing fast) a strong attachment for the community life. They would take every care to abstain themselves from the action that would result into the declaration of the social boycott by the *panchs* and other members of the community. Waddars celebrate the Hindu festivals such as Dussera, Diwali, Ugadi (Gudi padva), etc. The festival of Ugadi has a special

importance among the Waddar community people; they come together to worship their family deity on this day. However, the uniqueness of their social life lies in the ceremony of performing the *puja* of their family deity in the presence of the people from their *gotra*. The aspects which confirm this distinctiveness of their socio-cultural life need to be focussed here.

a) Community Puja of Family Deity

Waddars follow, although some of them are disinterested in and consider it ritualistic these days, their age old tradition of social-get-together. On the Third or fourth Tuesday in Ashadha (called as akadi in Waddar language), the fourth month of Hindu calendar, Waddars living in same area (Waddar Galli) perform *puja* of *Maragamma* or *Mariaai* and by scarifying billy goats and cocks. Waddars of the same *gotra/kulum* come together after every three or five years to perform the *puja*, lasting for 2-3 days, of their family deity- Yallamma, Margamma, Durgamma, Dharamjadu, Venkatramana, etc. To meet the expenses of this ritual, including pendal, music, feast and other incidental demands, it is obligatory for the families from the concerned *gotra/kulum* to give *vanta*, a financial contribution from each married male member of the family.

b) Rituals and Rites performed on the Occasion

This particular ritual of performing *puja* of the family deity in the community gathering is arranged to bestow a person from the concerned *gotra* as a priest for the deity. The authority of performing *puja* is a legacy of an elder son from a particular family of that *gotra/kulum*. To bestow the elder son this responsibility after the death of his father (if there is no son, the nephew of the person is given this responsibility), the procession, amidst the performance of dance and traditional songs, is taken to the place of water (village well) where the heir apparent's head is cleanly shaved and a sacred bath is given to him. After putting on new clothes by that person, the *puja* is performed. Each family invites their relatives from other *ganās* and *gotras* as the guests, who bring gifts in form of clothing, pots copper or brass or stainless steel and money for the hosts, on the occasion of this ceremony.

c) Songul, performance of traditional folksongs and folkdance

On this occasion of social get together the philanthropic groups of Waddar artists from different places are invited to perform traditional Waddar folksongs and folkdance by sending *shyava*, the invitation sent through *shallavod* (the messenger from the community), with the assurance of suitable honorarium and hospitality. The competition of performance between these artists groups (each group consists of 10-12 male members only²²) takes place which the guests and hosts, including men, women and children enjoy throughout the night. The artists from the group stand in circle holding *dumadi*²³, and beating it with the other hand and one of them (the leader of the group) stands at the centre by tying this tool around the waist and beating the surface of it with two sticks to create rhythm, singing a folksong and performing a folktale while other performers from the group would act as chorus. Simplistic presentation with the minimum stage properties available is the special feature of their performance.

Jat Panchayat/Community Council

Like other nomadic tribes Waddars have their own caste council, which is called as *jat panchayat*, an autonomous court like system of the community to resolve disputes among the members. This council although has no formal structure as such but it consists of the elderly people (*panchas*) with good social, usually financial status; the leader of the *jat panchayat* is called as *baida*. The community members have to revere the verdict, whether acceptable or unacceptable as there was no guaranty of unprejudiced, impartial, and fair decisions, made by this *panchayat* lest have to face social boycott. The community members, in past, had no right to lodge a complaint against the wrongdoer from the community in police; both parties were to appeal for the justice from the *pancha* committee by paying a particular amount called as *kunam*, an allowance paid to the *panchs* for their travelling and other expenses (refer Ramnath Chavan, 2002).

Eating Habits and Clothing

Omnivore as the group is, Waddars eat all kinds of food. Their vegetarian food consisted of *bhakri* made out of *jowar*, *dal* (lentils) curry, and select cheap vegetables

²² Women are not allowed to participate or perform in it; they can simply be the audience.

²³ a flat surfaced hollow (from the other side) piece of leather in curricular shape held in one hand, used exclusively by the Waddar artists.

earlier while eating chapattis was considered to be the sign of richness so were prepared only on special occasions in past. Non-vegetarian food such as goat-meat, chicken, fish, etc. on what they called as *gandawaram* (masculine days) such as Sunday and Wednesday and also on the day following the festival is almost a social custom and prestige among the Waddars while on others days as well, except Saturday mostly and the holy day of the family deity in some cases, they like eating *bombil*, a small edible lizardfish (see Wikipedia) and dried or salty fish. Not eating non-vegetarian is considered to be ‘a non-Waddar’ feature by the elderly Waddars. Although *mati-waddars* eat pork, it is not common among *gadi waddars* (they even consider it unholy to touch pigs) and *patharwats*; irrespective of the subgroups, no Waddar does eat beef. In past, they also ate the flesh of wild animals like rabbit, deer, mountain lizard, and even wild mice.

Waddar men in past wore dhoti, kurta, a traditional shirt and turban while women wore long saris but they did not put on bodice earlier as they believed that Sita, the wife of lord Rama, was captivated by Ravana because of her love for the blouse made of the skin of golden deer. The Waddar women wore brass or silver bracelets in their left hands and glass bangles in right hands. Waddars, being the strict adherents of the patriarchal norms, did not allow their women, in past, to put on foot wares of any kind. Women were even not allowed to use cosmetics or exhibit their beauty. Women breaking these norms considered to be dissolute.

Linguistic and Cultural Heritage

All Waddars, irrespective of the states from which they come, speak Waddar or Wadari (as known in Maharashtra) (abbreviated as ‘wbq’ in Ethnologue, 2009 but here as WL) a Dravidian, South-Central language, closely related to Telugu. The language is influenced highly by Telugu and to some extent, due its long contact, by Kannada and Marathi languages. Because of the presence of a large number of Telugu words in their dialect, one can trace back its origin to Andhra Pradesh. Tracing its linguistic lineage, Ethnologue (Lewis, 2009) identifies it as Dravidian, South-Central Telugu Language. In relation to the language of Waddars, Braines (1912) states

“Their appearance shows that they belong to the darker race, and their language, though modified by distance into a variety of local dialects, has a Telugu basis”. (1912:104)

Thus, the language seems to have the Telugu origin but having been in contact with other languages in other regions it has undergone divergence. In the absence of a written script, the intergenerational transmission of the language has been oral. It is this heritage language which distinguishes this group remarkably from the other groups previously existing in the barter system of Maharashtra. The other ethnic groups in Maharashtra, although named by different caste names, might feel a sense of integration to the local traditions and cultures because of their common linguistic inheritance. But Waddars and certain other DNTs are often considered outsiders because of their different linguistic identity. While commenting on the Waddar language Nanjundayya and Iyer (1931) state,

“A Vodda is so very noisy, even in his sober conversation, that any loud and disorderly talk is known as Vodda’s secret conversation”.
(1931: 659)

Being nomads, they are neither insiders nor outsiders anywhere. In Maharashtra, for example, their distinct linguistic and cultural traditions have kept them away from the mainstream of Marathi speaking population. Similarly, their language cannot easily be accepted as one of the dialects of Telugu because it does not have much affinity to Telugu language or culture. In other words, a monolingual Telugu speaker and a Waddar speaker will remain mutually unintelligible. The Waddars’ is also unlike the cultural affinity between Padmshali and Telugu, Marwari and Rajasthan or Sikh and Punjabi.

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Politics of Cultural Amnesia: A Case Study of Machhani Folk Drama Form of Purulia

Indranil Acharya
Anjali Atto

INTRODUCTION

It will be pertinent to flag off this discussion on endangerment with the moving lines from Australian Aboriginal poet Oodgeroo Noonuccal's (1920-1993) poem, "Last of His Tribe", taken from her anthology- *The Dawn Is At Hand* (1966):

Change is the law. The new must oust the old.
I look at you and am back in the long ago,
Old pinnaroo lonely and lost here,
Last of your clan.
Left only with your memories, you sit
And think of the gay throng, the happy people,
The voices and the laughter
All gone, all gone,
And you remain alone
I asked and you let me hear
The soft vowel tongue to be heard now
No more forever. For me
You enact old scenes, old ways, you who have used
Boomerang and spear.

You singer of ancient tribal songs,
You leader once in the corroboree,
You twice in fierce tribal fights
With wild enemy blacks from over the river,
All gone, all gone. And I feel
This sudden sting of tears, Willie Mackenzie
I the Salvation Army Home.
Displaced person in your own country, Lonely in teeming city crowds,
Last of your tribe.¹ (Oodgeroo 29)

THE POLITICS OF EXCLUSION

If you go close to Indian theatre you may never return.

Edward Gordon Craig (Hollander 1)

In her groundbreaking research work titled *Indian Folk Theatres* (2007), Julia Hollander begins with this quotation of legendary British theatre personality Edward Gordon Craig. She passionately reminisces her first visit to India in 1991 to lead workshops for a small theatre company in Mumbai. She also laments over the fact that her experience of theatre work in the United Kingdom was largely spoiled by her knowledge of politics, money and competition. However, she discovers an uncanny similarity between the metropolitan theatre world of Mumbai and that of her UK theatrical business. Finally, she is advised by her Mumbai friend to explore another Indian theatre scene far from the metropolitan din and bustle. She admits how the rural hinterland of the country contains a radically different type of performance art. Even there she can sense the degeneration. In her own words:

In recent decades it had started disintegrating, threatened by the accessibility of other entertainments and a general trend towards Westernisation. But if I wanted inspiration, then I should go in search of it. (Hollander 2)

She lives up to her promise and visits her playwright friend Veenapani's house in the south-eastern state of Tamil Nadu to document a popular folk theatre form- *Therukoothu*. Next, she comes across BalwantGargi's book *Folk Theatre of India* in a second-hand book shop in London and decides to re-visit India for the documentation of another extremely popular folk theatre form *Chhau* of Seraikella in the eastern part of the country. She is also drawn to the *Sankirtana* folk drama form in the north-eastern state of Manipur- an all-woman performance.

But, unfortunately, she never mentions the name of *Machhani*- a form equally popular like *Chhau* in Purulia district of West Bengal- in her book of two hundred odd pages.

This paper wants to examine the politics of exclusion by highlighting the virtues of a critically endangered folk theatre form- *Machhani*. It also raises a few questions regarding this amnesiac tendency of leading theatre scholars and researchers-

- What are the criteria of an endangered folk theatre form, especially set by the western experts?
- How do these experts develop a network of native informants in India to identify the fledgling folk drama forms?
- Is there any pattern in leaving out a particular form in a region where another form receives maximum critical attention?
- Will this process of selective amnesia really lead to a comprehensive mapping of the available folk theatre forms in India?

In the light of the above questions and the harsh reality of impending extinction of a popular folk drama form, the paper would attempt to provide a ringside view of what this form really is and what are its salient features that immortalize its appeal to the rural folk even today.

PLACING *MACHHANI* IN THE CONTEXT

The two most famous and influential folk dramas of Manbhum tradition are “Chhau” and “Machhani”. Now-a-days Chhau has travelled a long distance and reached the international platforms but unfortunately the other form Machhani is now on the verge of extinction. Some of the Machhani artistes of the rural areas of Purulia are still trying to keep the tradition alive by their own initiatives, but this endeavour will not be successful without the help of government and the common people. The other folk art forms of West Bengal like *Aalkapof* Murshidabad, *Gambhiraof* Malda, *Latoof* Burdwan are comparatively in a good condition; but Machhani is still now far away from the spot light of media and assistance of the intellectuals and government. The poor and illiterate labour-class people of the village are trying their level best to protect the last ray of Machhani tradition. The “GhughiyanMachhaniDahagi” team, from Ramkrishnapur (Notundi) m of Para police station, demands a special mention in this case. This team, through their performance in different villages and in some government-held functions, is trying to promote, propound and preserve this dying folk art form.

Though the dramatic practices of Manbhum have successfully enhanced the importance of Bengali theatres and yatras, no one could deny the fact that even three decades ago, its own drama forms i.e. Chhau and Machhani were very popular among the people. Machhani was mainly performed during the village festivals and 'Charak' (the festival dedicated to Lord Shiva); but it was also performed in various household programmes. The Machhani team sometimes performed free of cost. Not money, but infotainment was the main target of such performances. It is pertinent to note that the way Machhani is close to the life of down to earth people of the villages, Chhau is not. To depict the reality of society in a direct and artistic way is the main characteristic of Machhani. The intellectual persons of society have now realized the importance of folk tradition. As a result, reviews and research works have increased in this field. Though not expanded to the foreign countries, some of the universities of West Bengal have included folk drama study in their syllabus. Some folklore academies have also been established. So we could expect that Machhani will also get such attention and will be preserved as a part of pure folk culture in future. In this context the name of *Centerfor Communication and Cultural Action*, a famous non-government organization of Kolkata and its CEO Sanjib Sarkar should be mentioned with gratitude. It is through his endeavour that in 1987, the then Deputy Director of the Department of Culture and Information, West Bengal came to Ramkrishnapur of Purulia to watch the Machhani performance. And from that time Machhani got the importance as a traditional, independent and powerful drama form. But that was all. After that this folk culture received nothing other than some reviews in newspaper, some government aid functions and a programme on television. The condition of the artistes is even worse. But if it gets the proper treatment, it could be a great mass-media serving a greater social, national and cultural purpose other than being a mere form of entertainment. It is seen that both the Hindus and Muslims show their interest in Machhani. In this way it becomes a fine medium of communal harmony and peace. Rishi Mahata, Congress Hari of Malthor village, Jhogru Mahato, Haradhan Mahato of Ramkrishnapur are some of the senior Machhani artistes who are still alive. If they are aided and awarded by the government then the whole Machhani cultural society will be rejuvenated in a way.

THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF THE WORD “MACHHANI”

There is a lot of conflict in the cultural connotation of the word 'Cho' or 'Chhau'; in the same way there are different assessments of the significance of the word 'Machhani'. But if we consider it according to the local language and culture we could come to the conclusion that in

Kurmali language 'acting' or 'imitating' someone's character, style of walking, talking and behaviour is called "Chhaeeb". The person who is imitating is called "Chhaeebaha". The word 'Chhaeeb' as the origin of 'Chhau' is more appropriate than the theory of 'coherence of six ('chhoy' in Bengali) taal'. But it is not clear that the word 'Machha' or 'Machhani' has also come from 'chhaeeb'. According to a famous Kurmali language expert Laxmikant Mutruar, the word machhani has its origin in the Kurmali word 'Jurimachha'. In Kurmali if two persons are identical in their appearance, age, type, style of walking, character etc. they are called 'Jurimachha'. As Machhani is also all about imitation, may be the word has come from Jurimachha.

Eminent researcher Bireshwar Bandyopadhyay has observed in his essay *HariyeJaoaLokonattyo*:

These folk-drama teams were almost in each village of Para block. The fishermen are called 'Machha' and their wives are called 'Machhani'. If a person resembles another in the village together they are called 'Jurimacha'. So in this region if a person satirises or imitates someone then the act is called Machhani. (2)

This drama is about the wife of "machha" or a fisherman. If we talk about the subjects of these short dramas we can see they are taken from day to day life of the layman. For instance, a machhani or fisherwoman is selling her fish on the village roads, crying "Does anyone want fish?" Three or four boys of the village come to her dancing and offer their love for her- this is the subject of the drama. It is thought that the first Machhani was written by a village writer. Most of the folk-writings are anonymous. In the same way it is unknown to us who wrote the first Machhanipala.

Another folk critic Sanjib Sarkar agrees with Laxmikant Mutruar's theory. He says-

The word machhani perhaps came from the Kurmali word 'machha'. The Kurmali word 'Jarimachha' means resemblance of one person to another in height, shape and age. Thus machhani means presenting actions of the other person through mimicry. (3)

Machhani dance is performed only by the fishermen or "keot" caste of Purulia. It is said that in the past there were no fish markets in that place. So the village fisherwomen used to sell

their fish from door to door. This motivated the village poets to write Machhanipalas. Here is an example of how these songs are-

Brother be careful, machhani is throwing arrows from her eyes.

Brother be safe it will hurt you; machhani is throwing arrows from her eyes.

MACHHANI- SUBJECT, CHARACTERISTICS, ARTISTES AND PRESENTATION

Machhani is a fine specimen of ancient folk drama tradition which has its own prominent features and uniqueness. If we travel through the path of changes in the history of traditional drama we could also see the changes that have come in Machhani tradition. The analysis of this folk form gives us the impression of a different and independent art form from which the modern drama could borrow many things- like its variety of themes, social contexts and unique presentation style.

Like the tradition of folk literature and folk culture, the theme of Machhani is totally based on mass society. It mirrors the society and culture of the contemporary time. The important aspects of an incident or the burning issues of the present days become the theme of Machhanipalas. Machhani could present these heavy-weight issues in a light hearted and ironical way and could affect the conscience of the common people. Uniqueness in subject, dialogue and presentation is Machhani's main forte. The subject may be the problem, idea or protest of an individual person as well as it may be about a number of persons or characters. But the time of the performance never exceeds fifteen to twenty minutes. Sometimes it takes only five minutes to perform a whole drama. Machhani is not presented for a long period of two or three hours together. Rather it is the collection of some skits. We could easily guess the subject and nature of the performance from its name. The palas are- "Kolikal", "Khannokhach or Harphot", "Ladai-r Pitha Khaoa", "KanarSangsar", "Dova Jhita", "Khepcha Lecha Dhudur Pencha" etc. All the skits are based on common people's life and culture. The characters of these plays are all down to earth people who are far away from the civilized, cultured and educated society. They represent the labour class, illiterate and oppressed social underdogs like- weavers, 'Lada', gatekeepers, 'hadhaida', kabiraj, mechheni, laya, bagal, kulhu, charjuhari etc. They belong to the lower strata of society. But it is not that there are no upper class characters in these plays; only those characters do not influence the main features of Machhani. Its main purpose is to depict the life and condition of the marginalized people.

Kiriti Mahato, a noted folk expert observes-

Though dialogues are delivered during the plays but its main feature is the abundance of songs and dance (Mahato 17).

Each play becomes colourful with the wonderful blending of dance and music. As one could find evidence of individuality in these songs, one could also realize the uniqueness and artistry in their dances. The dance is known as Machhani dance. In fact the performance of Machhani starts with 'khepchalechhadhudhurpencha' dance. It is a dance form in which the performer dances in bare body and his body is uniquely painted with ashes, chalk powder and black ink that gives the performer a different, colourful and distinct look. They move in a strange gesture along with the beat of 'dholok'.

There is no printed book on Machhani till now. The plays are not individual products; they are the result of team work. The performers are not used to deliver any written or memorised dialogues. Their dialogue is based on the subject and the improvised situation. The performer has to be skilful in singing and dancing. He tries to depict the character in his own distinct way. The costumes are very common and simple. The men sometimes play the role of women if needed.

The time and place of this performance is uncomplicated. All the performers are villagers and they perform on the village-roadside or at any open place of village. If possible, the villagers arrange for temporary shades and lights on the spot of performance. The audience sits around the main stage. Sometimes they also sing refrains with the performers. As a result, a bond is established between the performers and the audience and Machhani becomes more entertaining for all. None of the performers is a trained actor. Their acting is based on their experience of real life and society. They only try to present these experiences through their performance. They create their dialogue on the spot and describe the matter aesthetically through different gestures of their body. So the audience could easily relate with them. In the remote areas where newspapers, television and radio are still not easily available, Machhani could act as a good medium for the dissemination of knowledge. It has a balance of entertainment and mass education. When the People's Theatre and street dramas have their own importance in an age of Internet and multimedia then Machhani also needs to be resuscitated.

Machhani has a great resemblance with “Gambhira” dance form of Malda district. But while Gambhira has successfully managed to get reputation as an art form in the world of folk

performance, Machhani has not been so lucky. To explain its cause Dr. MitaGhohBakshi said in her book *PuruliarLokosangskriti*:

One of the most important reasons behind this may be for the fact that most of the artistes of Gambhira are educated. They are aware of the schemes and procedures of government. On the other hand, Machhani is performed by the illiterate village people. They are totally ignorant of such aids and schemes. So they do not get necessary financial support to establish their art-form and thereby are not so much known to the world.(Bakshi 215)

MACHHANI SONG AND DANCE

Machhani could easily be called a dance-drama for the abundance of songs and dance in these plays. As Machhani dance cannot be put together with Chhau or Natua, in the same way Machhani song is not identical with Jhumur, Tusu or Bhadu. Machhani songs have their own enchanting tune and its dance has different and strong gestures which match with its soul. The main reason of Machhani's popularity lies in its songs and dances. It would be clear if we consider some examples:

SONG

“ I have Hukarnol in my home, I will gift you anklet selling that
and after that you will kill me.

I am not lying to you, I will give you a waist band
and after that you will kill me.

My words are not lies, I will gift you earrings
and after that you will kill me.

There is a town at Loutandihi; I will bring gold coins for you
and after that you will kill me.

I have a pair of pigeons at home, I will buy jewellery sets for you selling them
and after that you will kill me.

I have ripe ladies-fingers in my home; I will bring bangles for you
and after that you will kill me.”²

Machhani is a lively and active folk-art form which has its direct orientation with the understanding and experience of common people's life. It is dedicated to society. So in its dance and song we can find the diligence, mental skill, common sense and emotional outcome of a

layman. It keeps the account of the contemporary society. This drama form suits very much to the zeal of the time because it contains the history, society, class oppression and the thoughts of social development.

There are a huge number of songs in each pala of Machhani. But before we end up the musical nuances of Machhani, one song should be mentioned. It is a sad thing that one of the Machhani songs is blindly imitated and plagiarised into Hindi. That Hindi song has now become very popular and is pictured on a superstar of Bollywood. The name of the superstar is Amitabh Bachchan and the plagiarised song is “Jiski Biwi lambi”. The main Machhani song in the Kurmali language is-

Jakorgharedangabohu ho takorbedinaam
Lafailafaikanchrapadoidanrikkethikkam.
Rang bin mardakjenia....

Jakorgharechhutubohu ho takorbedinaam
Ghonghaighonghaipanianai, harikkethikkam.

Jakorghare kana bohu ho takorbedinaam
Andhargharemitikpadoiaalokkethikkam.

Jakorgharekhorabohu ho takorbedinaam
Hurdchukhurdchukdhenkikutielkebkethikkam.

MACHHANI PALAS

It is mentioned earlier that Machhani has no printed scripts and it has no individual author. So it has been moderated from time to time. The change in its language could easily be seen. Just a few days earlier it was sung and performed in pure Kurmali language. But now Kurmali has been replaced by Manbhumi and other local dialects. As per the requirements of folk-drama, it is against the rule to create a written form of this oral tradition. But we have tried to provide a whole Machhani Pala in transcribed form to showcase its merits in terms of social representation. It is difficult to translate it verbatim; but we have tried to present it, keeping in mind its true essence.

MACHHANI PALA

"LADAI EATS PIE"

(Enter Ladai and Hadhada)

Hadhaida (sings): Oh! What has happened to Lada?
His moon-like face paled.
He has eaten fifty-six pies one by one.
Oh! What has happened to Lada?
He is only trembling but he cannot walk.
Oh! What has happened to Lada?
Is there any doctor in this village?

Dahari: Yes. There is.

Hadhaida: O Doctor, O Doctor.

(Enters Doctor)

Doctor: Doctor is coming, coming on a broken car.

A great Doctor I am.

My home is at Purulia.

Live in Nilkuthidanga of Purulia.

Tell me who is the patient?

Hudhuida: Here is the patient.

Doctor: Oh my god! Could he be a patient? He looks like a juiceless lifeless stem
of a tree. If he is to be cured then I need help of someone efficient other
than me.

Hadhaida: Then call him.

Doctor: Hey! Compounder! Where are you?

(Enters Compounder)

Compounder: Listen to what happened after that...

I went to give treatment in a house.

I examined the patient.

His wife served him well for three days in his fever.

But I needed some more clothes, otherwise how could I cure him!

Listen to what happened after that...

Why are you calling me Doctor?

My home is at Birhi, crossing Shiyal.

Doctor: See, this is the patient.

Compounder: Is this the patient? He is looking like a stem of tree.

Doctor: What is his name?

Hadhaida: His name is Ladar Chand and my name is Hadhaida Chand. Please see him
Doctor.

Doctor: I will. But does he have anyone with him? Call the person.

Hadhaida: (to his wife) Come! Come! Doctor is calling.
(Enters Lada's wife)

Wife: Tell me my love, how are you?
I thought of not making pies.
But my friend requested me to make it.
See the consequence now; it's a matter of life and death.
Happiness is not written in my fate.
He ate forty to sixty pies at a time.
And after eating the pies his belly has come out badly.
Tell me my love, how are you now?

Doctor: What is your relation with him?

Wife: He is my husband.

Compounder: See doctor, he is her husband and she is his wife.

Doctor: Don't you feel ashamed of him?

Wife: No. Why should I feel so? He looked like Kartik. But now because of illness his health has broken down.

Doctor: One part of his body is boiled and the other part is burnt.

Compounder: Examine his nerve.

Doctor: I am feeling uneasy to touch him. He will not live more than three days.
His nerve is very weak. Give him husk to eat.

Wife: Will he be alright then?

Doctor: How many rice you took to prepare the pie?

Wife: Near about 60kg.

Doctor: Who threshed it?

Wife: He threshed the rice and I helped him.

Doctor: And who made the pies?

Wife: I made them and he kept them.

Doctor: Now I will examine with the pipe (stethoscope). Car has left Adra.

Compounder: Shake the tummy of Lada.

Doctor: One, two, three, four, five, six,
There is nothing unknown now.

Seven, eight, nine,
His condition is not good.
Ten, eleven, twelve,
Now start crying.
Sixteen, seventeen, eighteen
Break out crying.
Nineteen and twenty
You should perform the funeral in proper way.
Now give me my fees.

Compounder: If you want to cure him you have to call fifteen to sixteen Shamans.

Wife: What will happen then? What will they do?
Will he be alright then?
Are you feeling better now husband?

Lada: No...No...No....
(Lada died)

Wife: O! He is no more now.
I thought of not making the pies.
But my love wants to eat it.
Now see what has happened.
It became a matter of life and death.
O brother he is no more now.
Cholera has attacked
My friend is not responding.
O brother, he is no more now.

Compounder: He has passed away, an owl is singing in ominous tone.
Come with spade to perform the funeral works.
We will go after the dead body of Lada.
I also have to flee from this place.

CONCLUSION

Despite all tall claims and strong statements, a sizeable section of endangered folk drama forms have eluded a non-Indian like Ralph Yarrow in his book *Indian Theatre: Theatre of Origin, Theatre of Freedom* (2001). It has also remained beyond the domain of discussion of Indian theatre in the publications of critics like AnandaLal and RustamBharucha. Especially the

state of evaluating folk drama in the Bengal context remains horribly inadequate. Even the book titled *Folklore of Bengal* (2006 revised edition) by the eminent folklorist Asutosh Bhattacharya does not even mention the name of *Machhani Pala*, an endangered folk drama form, in his section entry on 'Rural Drama'. It seems the critics, scholars and researchers have remained ignorant of such threatened folk theatre forms in the rural heartland of Bengal.

Notes

1. Willie Mackenzie was a full-blood Aboriginal, the last surviving member of the Darwarbada tribe of the Caboolture district. He died in 1968, age unknown but probably in the eighties. His tribal name was Geerbo, his totem the native bee. The 'Mackenzie' came from his family's first white boss, a selector of that name.
2. The translated excerpts of Machhanipala are part of one UGC Major Research Project on the documentation and translation of Bengali folk drama in the context of endangerment.

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Happiness to Gross National Happiness: A Theoretical Perspective

Jayanta Kumar Dash

‘Greatest good of the greatest number’ means greatest happiness of the greatest number’:-

Bentham

“The philosophy of Gross National Happiness suggests that economic Development be tempered by Spiritual and Environmental Concerns”.- Bhutan Observer (October 24, 2008, p.2)

Abstract

Happiness is a universal philosophy. It is sought to the individuals as well as the society. It is as old as the creation of the human civilization starting from the old epics to contemporary era. Taking this, His Majesty King JigmeSingyeWangchuck, the Fourth King of Bhutan, first enunciated the principles of the philosophy of Gross National Happiness, using this specific terminology in the late 1980s; the concept itself, however, is very old in the local parlance. From the core of Himalayas, being a land-locked country Bhutan has initiated a new paradigm of happiness i.e. Gross National Happiness in the Bhutanese constitution. In Bhutan the principles of Gross National Happiness is adopted as a developmental measure for the establishment of peace, prosperity and happiness of the country.

Kew Words: Happiness, Gross national Happiness, Himalayan Kingdom, Bhutanese Constitution.

INTRODUCTION

From time immemorial human beings have been trying to lead a life of peace and security. When these are not available to them, they have pursued towards the means to get it. The chief object of contemplation of all philosophers down the ages has been to secure a social and political order which can ensure a happy and dignified life. The customs, laws, inventions, discoveries, rules and regulations etc. are being created for the purpose. History of the human race is full of wars and revolutions against authorities who have failed to provide a happy life to the subjects. It is in tune of what Bentham observed that the actions of men are guided by the consideration of pleasure and pain. That pleasure is nothing but the other name of happiness.

MEANING OF HAPPINESS

The term 'happiness' is subjective and involves a complex web of interfaces among multitudes of emotional processes involving audio-visual and sensory realizations of unexpected or expected chain of events of various alternatives. It is almost very difficult to provide an exact definition of happiness. In a very crude form, happiness can be defined as a mental or emotional state of well-being characterized by positive or pleasant emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy. It is of such fundamental importance to the human condition that life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness were deemed to be unalienable rights by the United States Declaration of Independence. The United Nations declared 20th March the International Day of Happiness to recognize the relevance of happiness and wellbeing as universal goals. (Mishra, 2014) So happiness refers to a profound state of mind and a life that is good for someone.

The meaning of happiness is different from man to man. One person's happiness may not be the happiness of all. For example, a rural person may derive happiness just by being able to visit an urban town, whereas, an urban dweller may or may not be happy to have a prolonged stay in the rural settings. Happiness depends on one's karmic consequences i.e. the accumulated positive or negative merits of his own deeds. One will experience happiness or sufferings of various types, on various scales in the time span of a lifetime, and even beyond this life. If one believes in the reincarnation of consciousness. Happiness is really in the mind of an individual. It depends on how much a person is able to accept the situation and make him or her happy within the context of that situation. With proper training of the mind, happiness can be conditioned. The government's wise policy and the people's daily practice is to accept those things or situations which are impossible to alter, or inaccessible, or unachievable, but to alter those that can be changed for the benefit (both short and long term) of the country and its people. Happiness is

feeling good enjoying life and feeling it is wonderful. Happiness in Chinese language is “anything positive and good life” (Robin, 2001:478). It is a longevity, prosperity, health, peace, virtue, and comfortable death which are the best values in life. Happiness includes material abundance, physical health, virtues and peaceful life, and a relief of anxiety about death. The ultimate aim of the Chinese conception of well-being is a state of homeostasis in nature, human societies and individual human beings, brought about by the harmonious relationship between them. The material accumulation and the worldly hedonism pointed out those good things are inevitably followed by bad things. Similarly misfortune is replaced by blessing. But the natural way of life is simple spontaneous, tranquil, weak which far from the hedonism. (Wu, 1991).

Happiness in philosophical usage

In the philosophical usage Haybron (1989), a renowned philosopher has argued that ‘happiness’ has at least two important senses viz ‘psychological happiness’ and ‘prudential happiness.’ These senses denote different concepts, used by different theorists to refer to different things, which each has several competing conceptions. When two people talk about happiness it is not obvious, according to Haybron, whether they are talking about the same thing or they may be using the same term, but they may be using that term to refer to different subject matters altogether (Haybron, 2011). Psychological happiness’ refers to a broad and long-lasting aspect of an individual’s state of mind. This is to be distinguished from the discrete emotion happiness. ‘Happiness’ is often used to denote one of the garden-variety emotions, similar in effect to the emotion of joy which fits naturally alongside other typical emotions such as disgust, envy, sadness, shame, anger, jealousy, fear, surprise, and so on. Such emotions are episodic or occur in response to a particular event. Psychological happiness, in contrast, is a long-term psychological state, which is generally considered to be central to an individual’s well-being (Gilley, 2006).

In the same way, Indian philosophy is abounding with the ideas and the means to attain happiness. These could be traced in many scriptures and religious texts in India. From, SrimadBhagawat Gita to the Ramayana, happiness has given prominence and exposition. The customs, stories and folklores too reflect Indian concept of happiness. In the era of Hinduism, one can find two types of happiness. The first is happiness that comes from achievement and pleasure, from the Good Life. The second is happiness that comes directly from God. In this regard there are four solutions to the problem “What is the need of the people?” the typical view of four aims of life such as Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha. ‘Artha’ and ‘kama’ taken together correspond to the Good Life. ‘Artha’ literally means “thing, object, and substance” and is usually

translated as wealth but has the better implication of accomplishment, experienced success, reputation and control. 'Kama' means pleasure but is not limited to physical pleasure. **(Basham,1975)** According to Bhagwat Gita human beings possesses the three cosmic qualities or Gunas such as Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas . The knowledge of these three Gunas holds the entire universe and all creatures under their control. These things play a vital position to each and every one for their progress, prosperity and happiness in life.Happiness may be a part of the Bhakti cult movement of Hindu religious movement of the medieval period promoting the belief that salvation and happiness is attainable by everyone. It is God who is the almighty and supreme soul who can only advocate salvation and this can only help us to be happy in our life **(ibid:72)**.Vivekananda's principles of nationalism, internationalism and universal brotherhood are the great pillars of universal happiness and peace. His spiritual philosophy was based on the Vedanta philosophy. It is a philosophy of Veda which means knowledge which leads the human civilization towards the path of salvation and mokshya, is one of the goals of every soul emerging towards eternal happiness.Mahatma Gandhi's uncompromising commitment to ahimsa or nonviolence, the experience of oneness with others and nature as the foundation for his vision of humanity, Sarvodaya (upliftment of all), satyagrah (agraha towards satya), Ramarajya (benevolent and transparent administration) and the concept of spirituality (love and faith on the supreme almighty) are the living legends of happiness which the world has been realizing today.

Happiness, State and Political Theory

State shall come into being for life and shall continue to exist for better life. Justice or the doctrine of proper station in society shall make life worth living. The greatest happiness of greatest number should be the objective of all states and all laws made by the state. Promotion of virtue should be the sole aim of state, as that can provide happiness to the people...and so on and so forth. These observations or arguments advanced by Aristotle, Plato, Bentham and Rousseau hint directly or indirectly towards happiness or how to make people happy in a Political system. Therefore to promote happiness has been regarded by all the political philosophers down the ages from ancient to these days as the sole objective of the state.

The concept of happiness in political theory can be traced back from ancient Greece. It is Socrates who obtained a unique place in the history of happiness as he is the first known figure who argued that happiness is actually obtainable through human effort **(Alkire, S., Santos, M. and Ura, K., 2008)**. In the words of Plato, the disciple of Socrates and the teacher of Aristotle, in his "Republic" or "Concerning Justice", he wanted to establish an 'Ideal state' and where there is

justice, principles, guidance which ultimately brings a peaceful and prosperous life to its subjects which ultimately leads to happiness. (ibid: 23). Aristotle was one of the philosophers to ask the question that 'what is happiness' and where happiness is to be found. According to him happiness is the supreme good that supplies the purpose and measures the value of all human activity and striving. It is for the sake of happiness he wrote that 'we all do everything else we do' (**Oswald, Andrew J., 1997**) According to him happiness is the supreme good that supplies the purpose and measure the values of all human activity. He enshrines happiness as a central purpose of human life a goal in itself (ibid:122). He enshrines happiness on the cultivation of virtue among the individuals. Rousseau in his 'general will' insisted upon the idea of two wills i.e. the real will and actual will. According to him the actual will was the will which was selfish, irrational and thought of the good of the individual alone without bothering about the welfare of the society. On the other hand the real will was higher, nobler and supreme which impelled the person to think of the wellbeing the individual as well as society (Ibid.). The general will of him is nothing but the sum total of all the real wills of the individuals which are based on reason and foresightedness of the individuals. Jeremy Bentham, the father of utilitarian school of thought believed that principle was the most reasonable guide to both individual morality and public policy. He argues that laws of all nations should be rationally based not on emotional interpretation. For this he introduced a separate type of principle that is the 'greatest good of the greatest number' means greatest happiness of the greatest number (Bentham, 1907(eds)). Mill states that the ultimate source of all "moral obligation," and by derivation, all norms of justice, is the Greatest Happiness Principle. This principle holds that happiness, defined as pleasure and the avoidance of pain, is the ultimate end, with reference to and for the sake of which all other things are desirable.

Happiness to Gross National Happiness

Gross National Happiness (GNH) is a new dimension of happiness, evolved from the land Bhutan, a 'Dharmic Kingdom' (**Rabten, 2008**), in order to ensure 'Happiness' or the pursuit of 'Happiness' as the cardinal objectives of Bhutan since the days of its birth as a unified-autonomous political entity. So that the ancient religious codes and scriptures of the Constitution of the modern democratic Bhutan until attach very much importance to 'happiness'. If one looks at the various norms included in the Legal Code of 1729 that followed the days of the unification of Bhutan, it was mentioned in clear terms. It asked the government to promote happiness and it was regarded to be the sole objective of the existence of the government. It declared that "if the Government cannot create happiness (dekid) for its people, there is no purpose for the Government to exist." (ibid.). In a similar vein, under the caption 'Laws of Bhutan' and ' A brief

outline of the proper course of action for the Dev Rajas', J. Claude White(1978) in his book written in 1909 had hinted at that and mentioned that 'the most effectual and shortest method of securing happiness is by administering and strict justice.

Buddhism and Gross National Happiness

Gautam Buddha , the light of Asia , is the chief source behind the philosophy of Gross National Happiness, which was developed by the tiny Himalayan country Bhutan. Buddhism was introduced to the people of Bhutan in eighth century. Its influence was so pervading that it has shaped the nation's history and played a vital part in the life of its people. Suffice it to say that the people of Bhutan are mostly Buddhists. Bhutan's state religion is Drukpa Sect of Kargyupa, a branch of Mahayan Buddhism. Bhutanese language and literature, art and crafts, drama, music, ceremonies and events, architecture, and basic social and cultural values draw their essence from Buddhism. Just as the kingdom's history is characterized by religious landmarks, the influence of religion is highly visible in everyday life. Hundreds of sacred monasteries, stupas, religious institutions, prayer flags, and prayer wheels mark the country side, providing a strong infrastructure and atmosphere for the teachings of their living faith.

One of the five principles of Buddha's global ethics is that 'I will act for the welfare and happiness of all beings'. According to His teachings 'happiness' is a quality of mind that arises from positive mental attitudes, without having the intention to harm others, desire to provide help and support to all around and to remain content with what it has. In order to achieve 'happiness' one must work to develop a mind, which is enlightened, intellectual and civilized, and one must be diligent in following right philosophy associated with the teachings of Buddha. To achieve 'happiness' one should analyze one's thought and action in everyday life as well as those causes and conditions that are deeply interrelated. Every person who desires 'happiness' should firmly draw a line between 'happiness' and 'unhappiness' in the mind and then this distinction must be translated or put into constant practice. Buddha also talked about two types of happiness - ultimate and relative. The former means the wisdom of complete enlightenment in which emptiness and compassion are found to coexist in an inseparable, permanent and internal manner. Relative happiness, on the other hand, is defined as an attitude of not harming, of helping others and in being content. Relative happiness, however, is impermanent and can change depending on the situation (Tashi, 2004:483).

In Bhutan, Since the inception of hereditary rule of the kings in 1907 five kings have provided leadership and direction to Bhutan towards its progress and development. The third

King Late JigmeDorjiWangchuck, in the late 1960s, proposed for change in the conventional patterns of rapid modernization. To him the goal of development was to make “the people prosperous and happy.” On the occasion of Bhutan’s admission to the world body i.e. the United Nations Organization (UN) in 1971 he highlighted the goals of “prosperity and happiness” in his address. This vision, first articulated by the late king was elaborated by the fourth King, JigmeSingyeWangchuck, who declared in the first years of his reign that “our country’s policy is to consolidate our sovereignty to achieve economic self-reliance, prosperity and happiness for our country and people.” While the emphasis was placed on both, prosperity and happiness, the latter is considered of more significance. He is rather called as the father of the developmental philosophy called ‘Gross National Happiness’ in Bhutan (it is elaborated further in the succeeding paragraphs). The present King JigmeKesharNamgyelWangchuck has been passionately following his father’s footsteps in translating the philosophy into reality.

The Preamble of the present Constitution of Bhutan mentions ‘happiness’ as an objective to fulfill. Happiness is also given statutory importance as Article-9 of the Constitution of Bhutan (2008) directs the State “to strive to promote those conditions that will enable the pursuit of Gross National Happiness.”Schreven (2007) has explained the objectives of Gross National Happiness as “Bhutan seeks to develop a society in which every Bhutanese citizen is fairly happy, in which development will be balanced between rural and urban areas, where the environment is not being destroyed at the cost of economic growth, where government provides service to the satisfaction of the people, where cultural identity and traditions are meaningfully integrated in change, where a culture of care is nurtured, whether it be family, the office or the environment. Bhutan holds the promise to show to the world a happy society...”

In this regard In his Coronation speech, the Fifth King, His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, said ‘I have been inspired in the way I look at things by Bhutan’s development philosophy of Gross National Happiness ...tome it signifies simply ‘Development with Values’ .(Ura, 2008:45) . In his words GNH might be described as a path of ‘Holistic’ which recognizes all the aspects of people’s needs, may be these spiritual or material, physical or social etc; a ‘Balanced’ way of development which emphasizes a balanced progress towards the attributes of GNH; a ‘Collective’ View of happiness to be an all-encompassing collective phenomenon; ‘Sustainable’ environment Pursuing wellbeing for both current and future generations and an ‘Equitable’ measure of Achieving reasonable and equitable distributed level of wellbeing. From these terms, the complexity of the concept is clearly seen. However, the greatness of the concept lies in its simplicity in giving priority to happiness and the term

‘happiness’ here reflects the creation of enabling conditions where people are able to pursue wellbeing in sustainable ways. This expresses the idea that happiness should be pursued as a common public good.

The 4th king says ‘if the government cannot make happiness of the people than there is no need for the government to exist’ (Bhutan Observer,2009:5) In his words ‘GNH at its core comprises a set of values’ he described that promoting collective happiness as the end value of any development strategy. For him GNH is described in the following five aspects such as: Holistic: Recognizing all the aspects of people’s needs, be these spiritual or material, physical or social. Balanced: Emphasizing balanced progress towards the attributes of GNH, Collective: Viewing happiness to be an all-encompassing collective phenomenon. Sustainable: Pursuing wellbeing for both current and future generations. Equitable: Achieving reasonable and equitable distributed level of wellbeing.

Lastly he said that though the complexity of the concept ‘GNH’ is clear but the greatness of the concept lies in its simplicity in giving priority to happiness and the term ‘happiness of the people’(Ura, 2008:57) by reflecting the creation of enabling conditions where people are able to pursue wellbeing in sustainable ways.

Framework of Gross National Happiness

The Kingdom of Bhutan has developed a strategy to implement the concept of GNH. Since that time Bhutanese people have always taken a unique approach to everything. Bhutan has inspired many around the world by placing the happiness and prosperity of each of its individuals ahead of economic wealth. This is the central idea behind Gross National Happiness (GNH), Bhutan’s development philosophy. (Mehera, 1974).The philosophical mission of maintaining GNH generates great interest, yet it creates more responsibility to us in Bhutan to ensure that we don’t lose that special and unique perspective for our country. So in order to translate GNH into the life of Bhutanese the GNH commission has developed the following four pillars and nine domains.

There are four pillars and nine Domains of GNH. These are (i) Conservation of the Environment. (ii) Equitable and Sustainable Development, (iii) Good Governance; and (iv) Preservation of Culture (Centre of Bhutan studies, 2008, 2011) ‘. These are discussed as under:

I. Conservation of the Environment

Enshrined in the country's constitution is Bhutan's resolve and commitment to "maintain at least sixty percent of the country under forest cover at all times." Presently, 72% of Bhutan is forested and more than a third of the country falls within the protected area network. To conserve biodiversity effectively, we must first understand and catalog what we have, and then assess how key populations are doing. Conservation of a target species or ecosystem ideally begins with establishing a baseline and then working to attain a certain desired state for that target. The Bhutan Foundation is committed to supporting its partners in Bhutan in achieving this through building capacity for conservation in partnership with various stakeholders. While Bhutan has been lauded as a global frontrunner in conservation efforts, it comes with distinct challenges. For example, we often have to forego economic opportunities for the sake of conservation. And, in the wake of increasingly erratic weather patterns, flash floods and natural disasters are becoming more commonplace, driving home the realities of climate change. Although Bhutan is a carbon-negative country, it does not escape the wrath of global climate change. Much of Bhutan's revenue generation is highly dependent on hydropower that relies on glacial melt water and surface runoff. The Bhutan Foundation supports local initiatives to mitigate carbon emission and prepare for and adapt to climate change. At the national level, it seeks to promote Bhutan as the poster child for what a country can do, as part of the global community, to combat and prepare for global climate change, in the hopes that bigger, richer countries will follow suit.

II. Equitable and sustainable development

Social and economic development is the core of Bhutan's development policy so that the people may enjoy higher standards of health care, education, and social services and less hardship. To address the needs of present and future generations, Bhutan envisions higher standards of living and access to modern amenities and technology across all parts of the country. A crucial element of this growth and development is equality, which will enable the benefits of development to reach the poorest and the weakest. Bhutan has achieved impressive development and improved the lives of many people under the dynamic leadership of His Majesty the Fourth King, and this has laid the foundation for faster, more equitable, and more humane development. Bhutan is committed to uplifting the well-being of the people further, especially those who live in remote and inaccessible areas and those who are disadvantaged.

III. Good Governance

Good Governance is the most important pillar of GNH. Without it, the other pillars would become baseless and meaningless. Good Governance guarantees that there is sustainable and

equitable development, the environment is conserved and culture is preserved and promoted. Values such as integrity, trust, responsibility, discipline, diligence, cooperation, care, courtesy, patience, politeness, friendliness, knowledge and skills, creativity, innovative, accountability, impartiality, visionary, dynamism, receptiveness, and approach-ability have important role to play in the organization and administration of a nation. They help to shape and nurture the development of the highest possible standard of behavior. It is, therefore, essential for all to reflect and translate their understanding and practice of the positive values in their work and conduct. Good governance is the governance of transparency and accountability in the context of Bhutan. It is the most vital and active pillar for bringing happiness of its people. So the people must become more proactive in their involvement with the exciting government in Bhutan. The world is watching our new democracy evolve in Bhutan, and efforts to succeed with good governance with a priority basis. The themes of Good Governance are based on human Resources Development. Human Resources Development is important as it promotes efficiency in the functioning of the government and is a major path to achieve GNH in Bhutan.

IV. Preservation of Culture

Many countries have lost much of their cultural heritage with the dynamic changing of times. But Bhutan made a sincere and respectful effort to preserve its culture. For it, GNH is also about its culture and how people live life as human beings, as families, and as a society, its values that Bhutan aspire to individually and collectively. Its distinct architecture, cultural events, traditions, and rituals are all aspects of the Bhutanese way of life. The challenge is more profound today than ever before to restore and maintain these elements through cultural preservation. Blessed with exceptional leaders and forward-thinking citizens, Bhutan remains distinct and unaffected amidst the world that too often faces crises. To help the government in its meaningful work to achieve Bhutan's development goal of Gross National Happiness and to continue the development success the country has achieved so far, the Bhutan Foundation aligns its programs to support initiatives under all four pillars of GNH.

Nine Domains

The Centre for Bhutan Studies has further identified nine domains for GNH. It is the mantra of policy and planning commissions that while economic performance is recognized as necessary for enlarging self-reliance and increasing the standard of living, its importance should be balanced against non-material goals such as emotional and spiritual growth and development. These

domains are Living standard, Health, education, Time Use, Good Governance, Ecological Diversity, Resilience, Psychological Well-Being, Community vitality and Cultural diversity.

Conclusion

From the above, it may be concluded that happiness is the mantra behind the progress and prosperity of nations. It is the corner and founding stone of Nationalism and Internationalism which leads ultimately a global peace and happiness. From the ancient to modern, there is a march towards the search of peace, prosperity and wellbeing of the people of the nations, which aims to achieve happiness. Towards this perspective Gross National Happiness is an alternative means and measures of happiness. Following this the United Nation also declared 20th March as World Happiness Day. If happiness is the ultimate goal than from Bhutanese perspective Gross National Happiness is a means to achieve it. Being a least developed country, from the core of Himalayas, Bhutan is rightly implemented the plans and policies of the Buddhist principles of life and attainment of nirvarn or salvation.

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Riddles and Leisure Time Riddling in Rajbanshi

Hari Madhab Ray

Abstract

The objective of this article is to study riddles and leisure time riddling in Rajbanshi. The author aims to analyse twelve selected leisure time riddles from general linguistic perspective.

1. INTRODUCTION

Rajbanshi is an Indo-Aryan language which is mainly spoken in North Bengal in the districts of Coochbehar, Alipurduy, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, Malda, and Dinajpur (North & South) of West Bengal. It is also spoken in Goalpara of Assam, Rangpur of Bangladesh, Jhapa and Morong in Nepal and also some parts of Bihar and in North-East India. Different terms are used to refer to this language as for example Kamrupi, Kamtapuri, Kamta, Rangpuri, Desi or mui-tui Bangla etc. Rajbanshi has a rich tradition of folk lore and folk literature transmitted from one generation to the next. Riddles used by children and adults form an important part of this tradition. These are specific to socio-cultural settings and gatherings. Riddles are shared and enjoyed amidst a social gathering. The origin of many riddles are obscure, but are thought to be antique and old in vocabulary selection. The riddles are not simply an instrument for amusement for the children, teenager and adults but a worthy of serious study from sociological, cultural,

ethnological and anthropological, comparative and linguistics point of view. Language used to express riddles is often redundant, ornamental, or rhythmic in nature. Its meaning is concealed, to be found through clues given by the riddler.

The aim of this article is to describe twelve riddles of Rajbanshi from linguistic point of view. The article has the following sections 1. Introduction 2. Folk-lore, folkliterature and riddles 3. Research methodology 4. Riddles and leisure time riddling in Rajbanshi 5. Observation and Analysis. Riddles collected for this work is from both the sources: primary and secondary and the author is also a native speaker of the language.

2. FOLKLORE, FOLK LITERATURE AND RIDDLES

Rajbanshi has a very rich and popular tradition of folk-lore and folk literature. The folk tradition is generally transmitted orally from one generation to the next through some religious and cultural practices. According to A. K. Ramanujan, “It pervades my childhood, my family, my community. It is the symbolic language of the non-literate parts of me and my culture.” He adds , “Aesthetics, ethos and worldview are shaped in childhood and throughout one’s early life by these verbal and nonverbal environments”. The origin of many riddles are obscure, but are thought to be antique and old in vocabulary selection. William J. Thomas introduced the term ‘folklore’ in England, opines that “There are many popular rhymes which cannot be definitely assigned to any specific moment in history. The very same popular rhyme may have been existence for decades, each time adopting itself, now to one and now to another manifestation of actual life, and being subjected sometimes to slight, sometimes to very extensive changes.”

A. K. Ramanujan (1994) in his essay ‘Who Needs folklore’ has divided folklore into three broad categories- Verbal folklore, Nonverbal folklore and composite performing arts. Verbal folklore consists oral tradition with specific genres—proverb, riddle, lullaby, tale, ballad, prose narrative, verse or a mixture of both and so on. According to Ramanujan “Verbal folklore is the literature of the dialects, those mother tongue of the village, street kitchen, tribal hut and wayside teashop.” Nonverbal folklore has the genres- Dances, Games, floor or wall designs, objects of all sorts, from toys to outdoor giant’s clay horses and Composite performing arts is a mixture of both the oral and nonverbal in street magic or in theater.

While commenting on folklore Ramanujan says, “It is well known fact that folklore items like many other sorts of items in cultural exchange are autotelic that is they travel by themselves without any actual movement of population. A proverb, a riddle, a joke, a story, a remedy, or a recipe travels every time it is told. It crosses linguistic boundaries any time it is told.”

On the other hand, Elias Lonnrot mentioned about riddles and riddling, “As mathematics is in the schools of the learned, so is the riddle in the home schools of the folk. Both exercise the mind to understand the unknown, starting with the known facts.”²⁴

Riddles are formally structured. They are available in verse, song or in rhythmic prose. The riddles are used by the young children. The older people may also use while they converse with the children or play with them in leisure time. The texts and words of riddles are not so tight even the order of words if changed or manipulated with the pattern the riddle may serve its purpose. However, the children modify the words and its rhyme according to their convenience. Velchuru Narayan Rao mentions, “Children use riddles in games while adults use them in rituals. Also, adult use of riddles occurs in tales presenting problem solutions such as marriage, selection of a husband by a woman, selection of a minister by a king and a selection of a successor to the throne. Utterance of wise people, statements of lovely ladies to young men and utterance of deities or their priests are made up of riddles”. He adds, “Problematic solutions such as choosing a husband, king, or minister in folktales reflect the worldview that a person is predestined to fill the role.”

There are lots of work on folklore, folk literature and riddles are carried out in Bengali language. Lalbihari De's *Folktale's of Bengal* (1912, London) is one of the pioneering work in this area. Shri Dakshina Ranjan Mitra Majumder's *Thakurmar Jhuli* and *Thakurmar Jhuli* are the best collections from rural Bengal. Dr. D. C. Sen has narrated folkstories of Bengali at great length in his work, *The Folkliterature of Bengal* (1920, Calcutta University). *Bengali Household Tales* (1912, London) by W. McCulloch is a good collection and depiction of Bengali folk stories. K. N. Bannerji's *Popular Tales of Bengal* (1905, Calcutta). C. H. Bompas has mentioned about the richness and popularity of Bengali folkstories in his article, *Folktales of Bengal*. Francis Bradley Birt has also collected the fairy tales of Bengal. Beside Shankar Sengupta has published so many articles on folktales of Bengal in *Indian Folklore*. Dr. Ashutosh Bhattachary's critical study 'The Folkliterature of Bengal' deserves special attention. Rabindra Nath Tagore's *Lokeshaitya: the oral tradition in Bengal Children's Rhyme* is also one of the pioneering works in this area.

²⁴ The Sound Finnish Riddle Collection. 1844.

In Rajbanshi there has been very little systematic works done in this area. Panchanan Barma himself felt the need to preserve the folklore and oral traditions of Coochbehar and Assam. He collected so many idioms and proverbs from the old people and published it in 'Rangpur Sahitya Patrika'. Dr. Girija Shankar Roy's book 'Uttarbanger Kshtriya Jatir Puja-Parbon' and Dr. Dwijendra Nath Bhakat's 'Rajbanshi Loksahitya'; Dr. Dipak Kumar Roy's 'Rajbanshi Samaj aro Sanskritir kichu katha' are noteworthy. We have found fragmented list of riddles in different magazines and journals published from North Bengal. Dharma Narayan Barma has also listed some riddles in his book 'Kamtapuri Bhasha Sahityer Ruprekha'. The first systematic analysis of Riddles are found in the book 'Uttarbanger Rajbanshi Dhandha' written by Dhaneshwar Barman.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Riddles collected for this article are from both the sources: primary and secondary. I personally interviewed 4 native speakers of Rajbanshi language from Coochbehar district of West Bengal. Besides another method sending questionnaire to the informants is also used to collect data. I have used the social-networking site FACEBOOK. In my Timeline I had posted the following on 23rd July, 2013.

'Riddle' is an English word. What is the equivalent term used for 'riddle' in your language? It could be any language, the standard variety you speak or the regional variety which is often called dialect of X or Y. I am addressing it to those who are in my Facebook friendlist or outside of the social network site, if you happens to know about it please write to me on my wall or send me an email in the following id harimadhabray@gmail.com. As for example, the equivalent term for riddle in Bangla is 'dh'adh'a' and in Rajbanshi 'sollok' or 'silluk'. Here is an example from Rajbanshi, 'uTh buRa mui boisong' answer: 'poi'. 'You get up and I will sit' Answer: 'bamboo pillar'. If you could send me some examples and its literal translations, sense meaning that would be really helpful. Thanking you in anticipation. Best wishes, Hari Madhab Ray.

Following my Facebook post so many friends who are on my Facebook friendlist replied me on my Timeline and some of them sent me email mentioning about what is equivalent term and some examples from their mother tongues. Though I have collected so many riddles of Rajbanshi language through my interactions with the speakers and Facebook friends here for this article I have only selected twelve riddles for analysis.

4. RIDDLES AND LEISURE TIME RIDDLING IN RAJBANSHI

Thomas A. Burns gives a typology of riddle occasions; (a) as part of rituals such as initiation and wakes (b) in courting (c) in teacher-student counter (d) while meeting someone (e) as embedded in other expression genres, narrative or songs (f) in leisure time riddling. For this article leisure time riddling is chosen for analysis. This type of riddling combines with competition and entertainment. This type of riddle may be practiced inside the house hold or outside home. Children along with other family members in home situations may participate in riddling before or after the meal. The participants may be seated on the floor, bench, or may be in bed before preparing to go to sleep. All the members of the family or a new comer, guests or relatives may actively or passively participate in riddling. Usually a person will pose a riddle to someone and if that person does not know the answer the riddler will pose it to other participants. If the answer is unknown to all of them riddler will win and gain supremacy over others and the riddler may give some clues or hints and finally give the solution to the riddle. The other participants will also pose riddles to the riddler and this way they enjoy leisure time in solving puzzles and riddles.

Riddles may be practiced outside home or in the courtyard in a small gathering in Winter. The boys and girls, men and women sit around [aguner bhiRa] ‘born fire’. The participants can be invariably from another village or town. However, they may be divided in a group or the riddler may pose his riddle to an individual. Usually, the old men and women don’t participate in the initial phase of riddling but later on they may also involved in giving clues and indication to the participants. They may also pose riddles if a situation demands or other young children request them to pose a riddle.

Here are the list of Rajbanshi riddles selected for analysis represented in Bengali Script and also in IPA (2005 modified). The phonemic symbols appearing in Rajbanshi texts in alphabetical order: /a, æ, b, c, d, ɖ, e, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, ɔ, p, r, ʈ, s, ʃ, t, u/. In addition /^h/, /~/, / ɹ / are used for aspirated consonants, for nasal vowels, dental consonants respectively. Each riddle is represented in a table, the first horizontal column it is written in Bengali script and also in IPA; in the second column the interlinear morphemic gloss is given, the third column gives the free translation of the riddle, the fourth column represents the note and other information about the riddle, and the fifth column gives us the information about the data source. The symbol X is

used to give a segmentation and also for matching with the rhyme in the riddle, the symbol Y used for break and pause in the line of a riddle.

1. রাজার বেটি মাই X বাচ্চা হাতে কাপড় পিন্দে Y বড় হইলে তার নাই। X ভাংতি: বাঁশের নোকা	[raja-r beṭi mai X bacca hate kapoṛ pinde Y bɔɽo hoile tar nai X] [bʰaŋti: bɔ̃ʃ-er noka]
Morphemic gloss	[king-GEN daughter daughter X child from clothes wear Y adult become her not] [Solution: bamboo-GEN culms]
Free Translation	The daughter of a king wears clothes at her childhood but when she becomes young, she does not. [Answer: bamboo culms]
Note	Bamboo tree is an integral part of Rajbanshi culture and daily life. Different house hold items are made up of bamboo stems, sticks. In fact bamboo stems are used as pillars for hut. Different types of bamboos are found in North Bengal. Some people make vegetables of bamboo shoots. The children often play with bamboo sprouts which are almost rotten. If the outer layer of the bamboo sprout is removed from inside it looks yellowish. Here the analogy is made in a direct way with the princess but without any vulgarity.
Source	Shanti Bala Das (Abo), Vill-Kalirhat, Sitai, COB, WB.

2. উঠ বুড়া Y মূই বইসোং। Y ভাংতি: পই	[uṯʰ buɽa Y mui boisoŋ Y] [bʰaŋti: poi]
Morphemic gloss	Rise old Y I sit Y
Free Translation	The old person you get up and I will sit (fit in). [Ans: bamboo pillar]
Note	In Rajbanshi locality some houses are made up of straws and bamboo stems which are cut to fit in and used as pillars to support the structure. The bamboo which is used as pillars may not last for so many years. The old pillar has to be replaced by the new one. We can also say that old and orthodox ideas should be replaced by the new, young and innovative ideas as change is in the nature.
Source	Dipali Ray, Vill-Konachatra, Sitai, COB, WB.

3. জঙ্গল থাকি ব্যারাইল টিয়া X সোনার টুপি মাথাত দিয়া। X ভাংতি: কলার মোকচ	[jɔŋgol tʰaki bærail ɽiya X sona-r ɽupi matʰat diya X] [bʰaŋti:kolar mukoc]
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Morphemic gloss	Jungle from come out parrot X gold-GEN hat head-LOC put on X
Free Translation	A parrot has come out of the Jungle wearing a golden hat [Ans: banana florescence]
Note	Different types of bananas are found in North Bengal. Banana flower looks beautiful. It is often pinkish and shines. People use this flower as vegetable. Here the analogy is between the physical appearance of a parrot and banana florescence.
Source	Shanti Bala Das (Abo), Vill-Kalirhat, Sitai, COB, WB.

4. খোলামের উপুরা খোলাম X এই সিল্লুক খান ভাংতি দিয়ার না পাইলে Y গুটি সুদায় গোলাম। Xভাংতি: কলার গচ	[k ^h olamer upura k ^h olam X ei sillukk ^h an b ^h aṅti diyar na paile Y guṭi sudday golamX] [b ^h aṅti: kolar goc]
Morphemic gloss	Courtyard-GEN top courtyard X this riddle-CLS solve give not get Y ancestry all servant X
Free Translation	There is layer (courtyard) one after another, X if you cannot solve this riddle Y your whole ancestry is servant. X [Ans: Banana tree]
Note	The outer surface of banana stem can be removed one after another. This outer surface is used in rituals. It can be used as plates. The people also make boats by banana stems which float on water surface easily. The idea of courtyard is taken to understand the meaning of this riddle and it has a sarcastic tone and rebukes the whole ancestry of the participant if s/he cannot answer it.
Source	Jatribala Ray, Vill-Konachatra, Sitai, COB, WB.

5. উটিতে ঝকমক বসিতে পাহাড় X লক্ষ লক্ষ জীব মারে না করে আহাড়। Xভাংতি: চটকা জাল	[uṭite j ^h oko moko bosite paharX lakk ^h o lakk ^h o jib mare na kore aharX] [b ^h aṅti: cōṭka jal]
Morphemic gloss	Rise-PRST moveable sit-PRST mountain X lac lac creature kill not do eat X
Free Translation	While it stands out (comes out of the water) it is moves/dances while it sits (dropping on the water) it looks like a mountain, X it kills thousands of

	creatures but it does not eat anything. X [Answer: Kind of net]
Note	Fish are found in almost all the seasons in North Bengal. The local and non-local fish are also reared in a pond. A square size net is fasten in bamboo stems properly sliced and tighten up with another stem. This net is used for catching some local fish in particular small in size. The net is compared with a mountain. .
Source	Shanti Bala Das (Abo), Vill-Kalirhat, Sitai, COB, WB.

6. তিন তের X মধ্যে বারো X নও দিয়া মিলন করো Xমোর সোয়ামীর এই নাম X Yপার করি দেও বাড়ি যাং। X Yভাংতিঃ ষাইট) শাটি([tin tæro X mɔdd ^h e baro X nɔo diya milon koro X mor soyamir ei nam Y par kori dæo baʈi jan Y] [b ^h an̪ti: ʃaiʈ (ʃaʈi)]
Morphemic gloss	Three thirteen X middle twelve X nine by add do X my husband this name XY cross do give house go XY
Free Translation	Thirteen multiply by three and add twelve and then nine. The result will be the name of my husband, now please take me on the boat and send me on the other side of the river. [Answer: Sixty]
Note	The women don't take the name of their husbands, it is forbidden. They always refer their husband by calling them as X's father, X's uncle etc. In this riddle it is beautifully put by a woman who is telling the name of her husband by the use of this riddle in an indirect manner, and also testing the ferryman's intellectual capabilities. The answer is sixty, and in Rajbanshi the word for sixty is [ʃaiʈ], the adrese will have to correlate with ʃaiʈ 'sixty' and ʃaʈi 'name of a fish'.
Source	Shanti Bala Das (Abo), Vill-Kalirhat, Sitai, COB, WB.

7. পক পক পকিলা X চাইর মাথা বারো ঠ্যাং কোটে দেখিলা।X ভাংতিঃ গাই ছ্যাকা	[pɔk pɔk pɔkila X cair mat ^h a baro t ^h æŋ koʈe dek ^h ila] X [b ^h an̪ti: gai c ^h æka]
Morphemic gloss	Word Word Word X four head twelve legs where seen X
Free Translation	Where have you seen four heads and twelve legs?
Note	At the time of extracting milk from the cow, the man kneels down, the calf is there beside. Including the head of the utensil, there are four heads and twelve legs, because when the man keels down it seems he has also four

	legs- total twelve legs and four heads. It allows the participants to imagine the unexpected.
Source	Ratan Ray, Vill-Nishiganj, Mathabhanga, Coochbehar, WB.

8. চাইর শিশি মধু ভরা X খিল নাই তার উবোধ করা। Xভাংতি: গাইয়ের বোট	[cair ʃiʃi mɔdʱu bʱɔra X kʰil nai tar ubodʱ kɔra] X [bʱaŋti: gaiyer bot]
Morphemic Gloss	Four phial honey filled X socket not upside-down do X
Free Translation	There are four phials full of honey but they are kept upside down [Ans: Cow's nipple]
Note	In Rajbanshi society is agrirarian. They keep he-cows for ploughing and cows provide milk which they use for making ghee, curd etc. The milk is compared with honey in this riddle and phial with cow's nipple.
Source	Shanti Bala Das (Abo), Vill-Kalirhat, Sitai, COB, WB.

9. জলপাইগুড়িত আগুন নাগিল Y শিলিগুড়িত বেরায় ধুমা Y মহাজনের মাল ছোবা যায় Y চাচেয়া মরে চুয়া। X ভাংতি: হুকা	[jɔlpaigur-it agun nagil Y ʃiligur-it bæray dʱuya X mɔhajan-er mal cʰoba jay Y cæceya mɔre cuya] X [bʱaŋti: huka]
Morphemic Gloss	Jalpaiguri-LOC fire get Y Siliguri-LOC emit smoke X lender-GEN thing waste goY shout rat X
Free Translation	There is a fire in Jalpaiguri Y and the smoke emits from Siliguri, X lender's stored things get reduced Y and the rat shout vehemently Y [Ans: hookah]
Note	In northbengal tobacco is cultivated and the people smoke tobacco by hookah. The whole process of smoking in a hookah is beautifully displayed by this riddle.
Source	Dharmnarayan Barama, SEE in the reference.

10. আচড়াইলে তো ভাঙ্গে না Y টিপিলে তো গ্যাল্লেস। Yভাংতি: ভাত	[acʰaile to bʱaŋge na X ʈipile to gælleʃ Y] [bʱaŋti: bʱat]
Morphemic Gloss	Throw EMP break not Y press EMP soft
Free Translation	If you throw it will not break but if you press it is so soft and easily

	breakable.
Note	Everybody eats rice. It is prepared in special utensil called ‘haRi’ and whether is properly cooked one need to press it.
Source	Mrinal Ray, Vill-Konachatra, Sitai, COB, West Bengal.

11. হেতি গেনুং X হুতি গেনুং X গেনুং মরার হাট XX একনা গচ দেখি আছিলুং X ফলের উপুরা পাত। XX Yভাংতি: আনারস	[hetti gænuŋ X hutti gænuŋ X genuŋ X mɔrar haʈ XX ækena gɔc dækʰi aɕʰiluŋ X pʰɔler upura pat XX] [bʰaŋti: anarɔʃ]
Morphemic gloss	Here went X there went X went Mara-GEN marketXX one tree saw come X fruit-Gen above leaf XX
Free Translation	I have traveled here, I have traveled there and I also went to the place Marar Hat and I had seen a tree which has a fruit wrapped up inside leaves.
Note	The pineapple fruit has lots of thorns and it is covered in leaves. In north- Bengal because of the climatic condition pineapple grows in abundance.
Source	Dipali Ray, Vill-Konachatra, Post-Br Chatra, Sitai, Cob, west Bengal.

12. চুটুত পাকড়া X মধ্যত ভ্যাকড়াX ভাংতি: খই	[cuttut pakɽa X mɔiddot bʰækɽa X] [bʰaŋti: kʰɔi]
Morphemic gloss	Lexical Redup-sound jump X inside bend X
Free Translation	While jumping it makes a sound ‘cuttut’ but in the middle it is bend
Note	The flattened rice is very popular and liked by the Rajbanshis. The process of making this rice is described here.
Source	Jatribala Ray, Vill-Konachatra, Post-Br. Chatra, Sitai, COB, WB

5. OBSERVATION AND ANALYSIS

The riddles may have an introductory element or a concluding element. The introductory elements may include ‘As I was going and visiting place X, Y, Z’; virtually meaningless phrases, words reduplication or some conventionally nonsense words to rhyme with the concluding

formulae. As for example ‘p□k p□k’; ‘ilkici bilkici’, ‘riu riu’, ‘ai ai ai’ or [etti genuN, □tti genuN, genuN ---ha□]- are introduced to rhyme with the next important word of the riddle. In some riddles opening formulae rhymes with the closing formulae, in some only the opening element is present, in some only the concluding elements or introductory and concluding are not present in some riddles. The concluding element may promise an award for success, threatens a penalty for failure, or include derogatory attitude and abuse as in 4.

It has been observed that the solution to the riddles refer some objects or household items which are found in the culture. These things are part and parcel of their lives. As for example Riddle no. 1 and 2 refer to bamboo sprout and bamboo stalk, 3 and 4 directly banana florescence and banana stem, 5 refers to kind of net but indirectly variety of fish and act of fishing in a particular manner, 6 refers to sixty, but indirectly refers to a name of a person whose name is kept by the name of that fish (Sati). 7, 8 refer to cows and act of cow-draining and milk, 9 refers to hookah, 10 refers to rice, 11 refers to pineapple and 12, flattened rice.

The person who does not know the language will be unable to capture the imagination of the riddle makers and users. The flora and fauna of North-Bengal, its trees, fruits, vegetables animals, insects, household items, agricultural tools etc are well depicted in the riddles. Nobody can tell us who has created the riddles, it is passed on from the old generation to the new. And following Ferdinand de Saussure, Riddles definitely belong to Langue but not to the parole. It belongs to the community not to a particular language user. These are part of indigenous knowledge of a community. According to Warren (1991) Indigenous knowledge is basically local. It is actually oral and mostly undocumented. (Ellen & Harris, 1996). It generates through informal experiments, intimate understanding of the environment in a given culture and accumulation of generative wise intellectual reason of the day to day life experiences (Rajasekharan, 1993)

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Heroes of a Folktale

Shraddha Singh

I have absolutely no doubt that most of the readers of this article remember the sweet story of “РЕПКА”. For those, who don’t, here is how it goes.....

Посадил дед репку, выросла репка большая-большая,
Пошёл дед рвать, тянет потянет вытянуть может,
Позвал дед бабу, баба за деду дедка за репку,
Тянут потянут вытянуть не могут,
Позвала баба внуку, внучка за бабу баба за деду дедка за репку,
Тянут потянут вытянуть не могут,
Позвала внучка жучку, жучка за внуку внучка за бабу баба за деду дедка за репку
Тянут потянут вытянуть не могут,
потянут вытянули репку...

Did you find the story interesting and intriguing? Yes, this is the power of a folk tale. Generally the characters of a folk tale are very black and white and the message is very clear but the way story unfolds is very unique and has held interest of people across generations, geographies, ethnicities and genders.

Another interesting fact about the folktales is that they have been passed on from generation to generation through just word of mouth. It was only in late 18th century when the

historians across the globe starting writing down the folk tales. So what is the purpose of folktales and how come they have survived the time when empires didn't? The second part is difficult to explain but the first part can be partially deciphered. The folk tales generally and basically explain the wonders of the world. They are stories about people across time and their anxieties, imaginations, fears and wants. Folktales can be broadly divided into four types, a) Fairytale, b) Smart guy tales, c) Fables and d) Tales about "Whys" and "Hows" of different natural phenomenon. Also, there are certain common elements of a typical folk tale like generally the theme, characterization; setting and plot are very similar across them.

In this session of mine, I am going to talk about *the heroes of a folk tale*. What are the common characteristics which exist in all the folk tales? What are the dissimilarities of these heroes if any? Do these heroes have a personality or they are just rendering the purpose of the tale? Do the folk tale heroes exist at all? These are some key questions that we will go through some lesser visited aspects of the omnipresent and never ending folktales...

Let me start with a very simple but popular Russian folk tale, **Repka** (The Turnip). The grandfather sows a turnip seed. Then after few days a turnip grows from the seed. Grandfather tries to pull out the turnip but apparently it is too big for him. He calls for help and slowly the entire family gets busy with the job of pulling the turnip out. Finally, the regular house rat too is summoned for help and the turnip comes out and is stored to safety. Moral of the story is very simple that contribution to a cause is always significant irrespective of the size or capability of the contributor. So who is the hero of this story? Is it the grandfather who sowed the seed or is it the rat who finally enabled the family to get the job done. To be honest...it doesn't really matter. The characters of this story are just the vehicles to push the story ahead. For our purpose, let us assume that the grandfather was the hero. I tried to go through various sources online and in print to figure out if we have a version of this folktale where the characters have some depth or there is some commentary, overt or subtle regarding them. Till now, I am not successful in my efforts. During my research I observed that most of the sources have either copied the folktale from another source or have mindlessly translated the version of the same that they may have heard from someone. This is a very dangerous trend as we need to have some inventory where the content is treated with respect that it deserves. I will talk about the sanctity of the content collation and management but that is for some other time. In this article let me stick to the topic of studying the folktales heroes. So the grandfather of Repka is more of a caricature and can be replaced by any other character in the story without any impact on the outcome whatsoever.

Post Repka, I moved to another very popular folktale called Vasilisa, The Beautiful. This tale is slightly more complex. This tale has some similarities to the popular western folktale Cinderella, with mother dying and step mother with two stepsisters troubling the beautiful damsel in distress, Vasilisa. There is a small twist in this tale in terms of Vasilisa's mother giving her a magic doll who will help her whenever needed. Also, this story has a Baba-Yaga (which means a witch when loosely translated). As the story goes, the step mother sends Vasilisa to Baba-Yaga to fetch fire. Vasilisa with help of her magic doll is able to successfully get the fire and neutralize her step mom and step sisters, the neutralizing part was unintentional of course. This was the point when I thought the story is over when I read this folktale for the first time but unfortunately it was not. Then somehow Vasilisa finds a kind old lady for whom she weaves some fine cloth. The old lady presents this to the King and King in turn marries the maker of the cloth...and they lived happily ever after. I did find some parts of this folktale very cute but overall this one is a confused tale and does not have any clear moral or teaching. Having said that, there is a very interesting character in this tale in form of magic doll which keeps on helping Vasilisa whenever and wherever required. This doll was given to Vasilisa by her dying mother with instructions that she has to feed the doll when she needs any help from it. Magic doll is symbolic in nature as it signifies the morals and blessing of Vasilisa's mother and her own intuition. If you closely look at the solutions provided by the doll, beyond the regular folklorish exaggeration you will realize that there is a clear hint of Vasilisa's character and upbringing in them.

Coming to Vasilisa's character, she has all it takes to be a typical story "Hero". She is beautiful, kind and honest with takes on the situations head-on. What makes Vasilisa unique is that unlike other female lead characters in the folk tales, she doesn't wait for prince charming to come and rescue her but takes steps which lead to her escape from the witch. Throughout the story her character is very strong but polite. For the time being, we will leave Vasilisa and jump to the next folktale and its Hero.

This folk tale has all it takes to make a blockbuster movie. A king, his obedient son, grand theft, twisted plot, treachery and a happy ending...the name of this one is "Tsarevich Ivan and Grey Wolf". This story starts as a regular folk tale with a theft in the palace and princes trying to solve the same. As the story progresses, there is an interesting twist in form of Grey Wolf which actually has grey shades of character. Grey wolf helps the righteous prince to not only get the actual thief but also deal with his treacherous brothers and get a bride for himself. What attracted me to this story is that it has two heroes, first one is the righteous prince who has

honest intentions but at time falls prey to his own temptations and then there is Grey Wolf, who starts off just as a wolf and then turns into a savior angel. Both these characters equally qualify to be the Heroes, for this discussion I will go with the Grey Wolf. If you look at the characteristics of a wolf, the animal is associated with cunningness, predatory nature and definitely not gratitude and loyalty. But this one has both along with magical powers. My take is that the writer of this story (although this story appeared in the collection by Alexander Afanasyev, the writer for this story like most of the other folktales is not known) might have come across a human character who by profession or situation might be on the wrong side of goodness but actually turned out to be a pure soul despite his/her flaws and limitations. Grey Wolf is actually very unconventional and unlikely but a true hero.

The last folktale that I am going to talk about is “The Two Ivans”. This folktale is nearly lost due to another short story by Nikolai Gogol called “How the Two Ivans Quarreled”. Yes, that too is a very interesting satirical tale but this one too has its own charm. This is a simple story of two brothers, both named Ivan. One of them is rich, selfish, cunning and childless and the other one is simple, in fact slightly foolish, trusting and charitable with 7 children and of course poor. The entire story is about how Ivan the Rich continuously cheats Ivan the Poor of his magical belongings. Ivan the Poor gets conned by his brother till the very end of the story when the tables are turned and Ivan the Rich has to pay for his deeds. The hero of this folktale, Ivan the Poor is a trusting guy. What is significant about this story is that despite of being cheated by his brother continuously, Ivan the Poor does not shy away from helping him whenever needed. This quality is unique to the character. Trust is also a very integral part of a hero, although it generally puts him in trouble. This characteristic is presented in an exaggerated manner in this folktale.

This journey of folktales has been a magical one for me. I went through numerous Russian folktales of various kinds and thoroughly enjoyed most of them. One common characteristic that I could figure out in all folktales was that the purpose of the tale took precedence over any character, situation or even the hero. The reason I selected the above given tales is that all of them represented a different kind of hero and heroism. All the stories at surface level are mutually exclusive to each other but still have a subtle common thread. The only commonality in all the four heroes is their morality. Grandfather sowed a seed so that family could benefit. Vasilisa stands a higher ground regarding her step mother and step sisters. The Grey Wolf helps the prince till the very end and Ivan the Poor never ditches his scheming brother.

Let me end this piece with a famous quote from Diana Wynne Jones (a noted writer of adult and child fantasies), *“If you take myth and folklore, and these things that speak in symbols, they can be interpreted in so many ways that although the actual image is clear enough, the interpretation is infinitely blurred, a sort of enormous rainbow of every possible color you could imagine.”*

Loyalty Towards Own Language and Culture A Case of *Tai-Phake*

Aradhana Das

Debasish Mohapatra

A.L.Krober (1923) said, “Culture, began when speech was present, and from then on, the enrichment of either means the further development of the other.” As no two languages are ever so similar therefore, unconsciously to a large extent the world of a particular community is built up on the language habits they use. In most cultural myths like the “Tower of Babel”, the Native Americans believing in “Great Deluge(Flood)”, Queen Victoria’s policy to introduce English language to gain power and rule our country etc all these examples shows the strength of language in infatuating ones culture. Separating people from their speech is a way ahead to separate them from their culture. Both are interrelated and are homologous mental realities.

Language forms an important part of human civilization. The total number of languages in the world is not known, but its number is currently disappearing at an accelerated rate due to the process of globalization and neo-colonialism, where the economically powerful lingo dominates other languages. In order to grab opportunities and run along in a fast pace the smaller groups learn the language of the proletariat, thus providing them an authoritative license to rule them with time. This process slowly erases their dialect as they could not produce sufficient material for their future generations. There is a general consensus that, taking over of power by a language over another language builds up its dominance, hereby wiping out the culture along with the lingo. This theory within which we can explore the power relations between dominant and minority groups was conceptualized by the Italian political writer Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937).

In most cases the consequence of the necessity of contact, literacy, and liberty similar to that of a foreign land provides the chance to an alien discourse to actively penetrate into the local medium, even as they affect the history of its use as a means of communication there, as well as the history of the literature that comes embedded in it over time. Thus, in order to keep alive ones tradition, strong will and determination along with language and culture both are vital. In this context I would like to introduce the Tai Phake people of Naherkatiya sub-division of Assam, who succeeded in preserving their identity over more than 200 years.

It was in 1775, that the Tai-Phakes migrated from the Hong Kong valley in East Myanmar and made their homes here; stretching through Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. It is a branch of the great Tai race that entered Assam in the latter half of the 18th century. The word Phake has been derived from the Tai words 'Pha' meaning wall and 'Ke' meaning ancient or old i.e. an old king's family or dwellers of stony land. The Tai Phake is a small reclusive microscopic community of Assam who reside in nine small villages in the districts of Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and Arunachal Pradesh. Also known as Phakial's they are the immediate descendants of the Ahom race. Residing mainly in Namphake village (in Naherkatiya sub-division of Tinsukia District) they have kept alive within themselves their ethno-cultural identity, customs and traditions with a minimal of 2000 souls.

Physiographically, the area of the Phakes in Assam comes under the majestic Brahmaputra valley surrounded by the lower Sewalik range of Great Himalayan Mountains. The area is interspersed by many rivers and rivulets but the main river of Nam Phake and Tipam Phake villages are the Buridehing River. The Tai Phakes mostly reside on the banks of this river Buridehing and its myriad tributaries. While Nam Phake and Tipam Phake villages are in the Dibrugarh district, Bor Phake, Mounglang Khamti, Man mo, Long Phake, Nonglai, Ningkam Phake, Phaneng Phake in Tinsukia Districts are also their settlements. A few are scattered in Arunachal Pradesh in India.

The Tai-Phake people are amiable and nature lovers. They are mostly village centered, where their community members are closely knit by ties of blood or marriage and a communal spirit of co-operation. Like any other primitive community of the world, the primitive Tai people, i.e., the roots of the Tai Phake are dependent on nature for their basic requirements for survival like food and shelter through eco-friendly conditions. They lived on hunting and fishing and gradually transformed to cultivation. Agriculture is the main occupation of the Tais after the stage of hunting and fishing, and it paved the way for the further development of the society.

The people adjust themselves to the environment and as a result a particular way of their life is evolved. Their material life is sufficient enough to maintain their daily lifestyle. They are not extremely poor or rich either. It's mainly an agrarian society, where people plough their own rich, and they too weave their own dress in their household handlooms in traditional styles. Therefore the rate of production is small to get to their needs. Marketing of products is very small in their community.

RELIGION AND MATERIAL LIFE

The Tai Phake people are followers of Buddhism, yet at the same time they follow some traditional practices of worship also. Hence their religion can be divided broadly into two:- Buddhism and Traditional religious beliefs. Almost all the festivals observed by them are connected with religion. The Buddhist monastery at Namphake village was established in 1850. The head priest of the Namphake Buddhist temple is Gyanapal Bhikhu. The affairs of the monastery are run by the monks with active cooperation of the people. Some of the important religious festivals of the Tai-Phake community are as follows: - Poi Sang Ken or Pani Bihu- the Tai-Phake calendar starts with a new year from the first day of the festival and it is celebrated for the following three days. During this festival, the villagers wash the idol of the Buddha and play with water. Buddha Purnima- is celebrated after Poi Sang Ken on full moon day. Barsha Bash- during this festival, the Buddhist monk undertakes fast for three months from the full moon of "Ahara" to the full moon of 'ahin'. Poi Akwa- during this festival, the Buddhist monks gather in a particular place and pray to forgive them for their sins. Poi Ma ko Chum- during this festival which is celebrated in the month of February, fire is set on "Mejis" on the river bank. They are the lesser known Buddhist Population of Assam but with these minimal souls they have succeeded in keeping their beautiful coloured tradition alive.

FOOD HABIT AND DIFFERENT KINDS OF FOOD

Food itself has meaning attached to it. As a means of retaining one's own cultural identity people from different cultural backgrounds eat different foods. The ingredients, methods of preparation, preservation techniques, and types of food eaten at different meals vary among cultures. Rice is the staple food of the Tai Phakes. They cultivate varieties of paddy and amongst

them 'Khoa tai' is said to have brought by their forefathers from the place of their origin, which is mainly used for their consumption. Their meals consist of cooked or steamed rice wrapped in banana or tara or kau leaves that known as "khau how" and boiled vegetables. Moreover many wild leafy vegetables such as "pukut", "khi kai", root products, stems of herbs and creepers, leaves of eatable plants etc. are widely used. Beside this their meals comprise of meat, fish, eggs, steamed rice, dry fish, sour fish, dry meat, rice cakes. Tea is their favorite's beverage. We have mentioned earlier that rice is the main foods of the Tai-Phakes. They prepare different kinds of items from rice. Some of them are, Khao ho (steamed rice As Topola Bhat), Paing (rice cakes), Khaotek (Akhoiladdu), Khaomao, KhaoHaing, Painglam, Paingnung etc. Thephakiels have a very well structured process of preserving. Professor BhimKantaBaruah opines that "from their technique, we may have an idea about the process of the Tai-Ahom of preserving the dead bodies".

As per the food habits of the Phakiels their attire too are colourful. Men, women, children and the aged all wear the unique traditional outfits woven by their own hands. The colours of their dresses are expressive of their ages. The girls wear white sarongs; women stripped red, yellow and green sarongs and old women deep purple and blue sarongs with strips. The men wear lungis known as Phanoot, a kurta, and a folded chadar. The Tai Phake women are adept in the art of weaving and dyeing. In almost every house there is at least one indigenous loom, and the woman folk produce various textile items with distinctive characteristics cloths of marvelous texture, colour and traditional design in their age old technique. The cloths they produce are mainly meant for their own consumption, with hardly 10% of their products sold because of lack of arranged market.

But whatsoever be the economic condition of this Tai Phakes, their food habits, traditional dressing style, festivals and religion together have binded them together as the four pillars of their identity.

LANGUAGE

Linguistically the Tai Phake falls within the Tai group of Sino-Tibetan family of languages. But Paul Benedict and Professor Matisoff have classified the language of the Tai as well as Tai-Phake under Tai-Kadai family. It is similar to the Chinese Language both in its Phonologies and grammer. Sentence structure, tonal and monosyllabic quality of words also adds to the flavor of the Chinese. The Phakial language has ten vowel phonemes, 15 consonant

phonemes, two semi-vowels, a few diphthongs and three consonants clusters. It is a tonal language and retains six prominent tones-rising,falling,high(mid),low, high(falling)and low(mid).It is also monosyllabic. Suffixes are added to retain the monosyllabic quality of the words. The Phakials also have a sound knowledge of Pali. First a team of villagers were provided with the Pali knowledge and now they assist these teachings deliberately in a Pali Teaching center in the village. The people in this village claim to be hundred percent literate. A primary school was established in the village in 1910 and a high school too is situated nearby. While conducting my survey one of the village teacher proudly said that “We are proud that our Namphake village had succeeded in producing a number of doctors, engineers and lawyers.”

In the midst of this rich linguistic culture there are also traits of geographical influence in the language structure. Since the village is surrounded mainly by Non-Phake speaking tribes or other ethnic groups, it has become very difficult for them to retain their language in its original form. With the people of other language communities they speak Hindi, Assamese or English thus becoming multilingual in their dialect. The influence of Assamese is more prominent than the other two so many scholars often term the Tai Phakes as bilingual. It is of no doubt that they have still been able to keep their language among themselves but the hybridization has also slowly laid its impact on their language.

The Tai Phakes are plain and fortunate people; their oral and written literature is a rich reflection of the affectionate, lively character, love for freedom and happy life. There are hundreds of volumes of manuscripts preserved unscientifically in the monastery and at homes, on themes like history, fables, novels, proverbs, folktales, riddles, Jataka tales, religion, astrology, architecture, herbal medicine, and lots more. Many old manuscripts are in need of scientific preservation. The Telegraph stated a news on June 25th about five ancient religious manuscripts on pure gold plates which were languishing in a monastery library in the Tinsukia village and would have probably remained unknown to the world had a priest not taken the initiative to reveal the “golden past”. Bhante Gyanpal Bhikkhu, the head priest of the Buddhist monastery in the historic Nam-Phake village, has revealed for the first time that they have in their possession five manuscripts in pure gold. He also sought the government’s help to preserve the rare manuscripts which are believed to have been brought to Assam from Myanmar around over 200 years ago.

An image of their writings

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LITERATURE

The literature of the Tai Phakes include both oral and literary. As a branch of the great Ahom race the Tai Phakes carry along with them the tradition of Buranji writing. They have two important Buranji, called 'LikKhou mung' and 'LikKhouKhun'. In this Buranji their origin and the coming up of various dynasties of kings are written in detail. There are other old manuscripts which provide them the knowledge about the creation of the world and the universe. In the Buddha Vihar too religious literatures like Tripitakas and the Jataka tales are famous. Another literary work, 'Story of the Lineage' is a biography of Gautam Buddha, his life and his preaching. Various other literatures have been preserved in the Buddha Vihar of the Namphake village. An approx. rate of 3919 number of old literatures are found, written on handmade pulp-paper and the leaf of *sanchi* tree. 'Likbois' is another kind of interesting customary practice carried out by the people. This manuscript depicts the history and the personal qualities of the deceased. They donate a copy of this Likboi to the Buddha Vihar in memory of the dead.

Many other literary works are being produced by scholars and other research persons to maintain this rich cultural and linguistic variety. The head priest said that –“The monastery’s library now has only around 400 manuscripts, though there were 2,500 just a few years ago. “In

all, there are five such manuscripts in gold. The sizes of three manuscripts are 18 inches in length and six inches in breadth, while two others are 14 inches by six inches”.

An Australian scholar named Stephen Moore started a research project titled “Tai Phake Premier” which involves the recording of stories, songs and history of the Tai Phake people as well as the transcription, translation and analysis of manuscripts. His project is the first of the teaching material to be produced in the Tai language. Another scholar Biju Moran has produced a paper on the Tai Phake word list, case tone, number, person etc. titled “Tai-Phake Bhakha and Sanskriti”.

Some of the unique features in this community are:-

- 1) Marriage: - A girl is not accepted by a groom’s family if she does not know the art of weaving her husbands’ lungi.
- 2) Dress:- People respect it and wear their own traditional attire wherever they go, irrespective of all ages. Every household has a handloom to weave their dresses.
- 3) Economy:- Even though their economy is less advanced they do not allow people of other tribe or community to set stalls or market in their village. Thus there is only a few small stalls (I have seen only one), an Eco-camp where their traditional materials and books on their community are available. They reside in Chang-Ghars mostly because of flood caused by the Dihing River.
- 4) Material life:- They do not have furniture’s to decorate their rooms, rather they prefer ‘Pati’, which are laid all over their house.
- 5) Religion:- , these people true followers of Buddhism. Flowers are a main part of their prayer so every Tai Phake people have flower gardens in their home. The use of candles over diyas is another prominent feature to be marked in their religious norms. In 2009 the village was visited by Thai princess Rajkumari Mahachakri Sirindhorn in order to make friendly ties between them.

CONCLUSION

The cultural realism of the Namphake village and their point of difference have become a space of cooperation instead of confrontation within the adjoining communities. The desire to save their identity is so strong that they have remained unchangeable and have succeeded to maintain their culture over 200 years. The impact of modernization and globalization are to be found in fragments in this village. Their geographical location among other communities, their need for academic and governmental institutions has no doubt made them enter into a modern global touch. But in spite of this involvement with modern science and technology, they have not

submitted their identity to its luxury. They are hardworking village people who imbibe the will to keep their rich identity intact.

The grab of globalization and modernization are too strong in today's context for any small racial tribe to run away from it. Its impact is so enticing that people of all cast and colour wants to grab and taste it. People are blind and deaf from the magic of modernization. The acknowledgement of a foreign language as more prestigious slowly kills the whole civilization to death. The loss of language or language endangerment has become a global phenomenon. A total number of 3074 languages in the world are endangered. The North East India has only around 3% of India's population; its linguistic and cultural diversity makes it one of the world's linguistic hotspots. A huge number of linguistic diversity is found in this region, but due to the absence of sufficient attention by the people and the government much of these diversities are at lost. This loss leads to identity crisis. When identity as being becomes inferior against identity as becoming then there arise differences within the people. This difference later paves the way to their extinction.

Language is power and the moment one has a command over the governing language one feels powerful. It is immensely a democratizing installation, a person who learns it immediately gets the rights attach to it. Language is a verbal medium through which one can get access to the complexity of literature and enrich ones history and culture. Thus learning a new language means acquiring new knowledge. It is of no ill interest if an individual or a community is bilingual or multilingual. What counts more is the interest and respect of the people towards their language. It is our mistake that we tend to make the second language as our prime dialect and vice-versa. The problem of language endangerment and loss can be mended through safeguarding ones' culture and history. It should be more of an identity as being against identity as becoming.

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APPENDIX (PICTURES)



The Buddhist Monastery (Buddha Vihar)



Tai Phake Men And Women and their unique Attires



Chang-Ghar a common design of their Home.



The Beautiful Umbrellas imported from Burma and are unique in their tradition.

Purulia Chhou Dance: A Mnemocultural Response to the Performing Traditions of India

Shaktipada Kumar

The richness of the folk culture of the western part of West Bengal is captured very appropriately by a popular saying of the locality i.e. '*choilleinaachaarboilleigeet*' means 'walking is dancing and talking is singing.' A single district having about fifteen different song genres and dance genres prove the above mentioned saying. Jhumoir among the song genres and Chhou among the dance genres are the most popular art form of Purulia district. Chhou and Jhumoir cannot be separated from one another and that can be easily noticed in the Chhou dance performances. The most essential part of these performances is to foreground the body; body becomes the centre of the attraction. The most crucial is the various bodily movements which become the mouthpiece of a particular society and its culture. Body plays the most important role in the performances. The Chhou dance is famous for its vigorous and wild bodily movements. The mudras in Chhou dance is different from other dance forms and practiced and performed by male members only. The movement of this dance basically shows *tandava* form of Indian dance movement which is guided by the Bir Rasa. Heroism is the main spirit of Chhou dance like heroic poetry. The heroic, the virile and energetic representation of the Chhou dance bears the spirit of epic poetry where heroism tends to be the dominant theme. Purulia Chhou is primarily a spectacle of heroism ('Bir-Rasa') that demands absolute dedication, physical fitness and concentration on the part of the performers. It would be a failure if I try to capture the electrifying body movement

of the Chhou dancers without some image



The Chhou dance was recognized as the intangible cultural heritage of humanity in 2009 by UNESCO. Intangible heritages are those which do not have any physical identity and have deeper meanings to humanity. Chhou performance is a medium through which a particular culture articulates its distinctiveness and qualitative cultural singularity by using the body. The Chhou dance is a famous form of *nrityanatya* (dance drama) which is known for its use of ornamented mask, musical instrument, dynamic body movement of the dancers and various other aspects. There are three trends of the Chhou Dance viz. Purulia Chhou, Mayurbhanj Chhou and Seraikela Chhou which cover almost the whole plateau of Chhota Nagpur. The major inhabitants of Chhota Nagpur plateau are of tribes, castes and other backward classes. The most attractive part of Purulia Chhou is its use of huge gorgeous mask which needs a graphic representation here



Indian reflective tradition is largely cultures of memory; memory is articulated through various cultural forms like image, text, music and performance. Performing traditions of India is fundamentally mnemocultural where generationally imparted memories get generated through embodiment and enactment. Folk belief, supernatural traditions are not just the sustaining of a particular culture, creed and custom but simultaneously have deeper meanings toward all these. Why do people still continuing these practices? What is the significance of such doings? To answer all these questions we need to think from the very basic structure of human communications over millennium.

Human history from the primordial period to the present can be understood through different communication systems. Human communication can be broadly classified into two categories i.e. verbal and visual. Every culture generates cultural forms and they can be divided into verbal and visual creations. The mode of communication changes through the changes of certain communication system. The communication systems from the prehistoric period to the current day can be analysed through the following communication systems:

1. Gesture and Speech
2. Scribal/ Inscriptional oblige
3. Print
4. Audio/ Visual
5. Digital

Above mentioned five communication systems are the dominant systems in various times. Each and every system has its distinctiveness and shortcomings. A new communication system or a new medium comes only when we find shortcoming in a system and could not communicate the inside with the outside the way we want. But the dawn of new communication media or systems cannot replace the previous communication systems. Gesture and speech are mnemocultural media through which a particular community expresses itself even today. Most of the performative traditions like song traditions, dance traditions, festivals are part of mnemoculture which does not require any surrogate bodies as the body is made to go through and become the centre of attraction. What happens when non-inscriptional (mnemoculture) culture confronts inscriptional culture? What is the difference between the mnemoculture and print culture? Chhou performance or song cultures of Purulia are also a kind of medium through which a particular culture articulates its distinctiveness and qualitative cultural singularity.

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Colonial Modernity in British Odisha and Rise of Fictional Narratives in Odia Literature: Locating Gopinath Mohanty's Tribal Narratives

Sarat Kumar Jena

Abstract

The early fictional narratives in Odia literature is the consequence of the emergence of the colonial modernity in different forms. The Odia novel which established as a genre of the Odia literary canon in the early twentieth century is an outcome of the social realistic tradition set by Fakir Mohan Senapati. Since then, the fictional narratives in Odia had been representing the subaltern voices in the literary space largely replicating the impression of the social realistic tradition set by Senapati. The progressive writing in Odia literature may be seen critically to find out the politics of (mis)representation of the indigenous societies and cultures of British Odisha found particularly in the ethnographic novels. It is carried out in this study by examination of Gopinath Mohanty's tribal narratives during the progressive age and later. The study locates the criticality of literary (mis)representation in Gopinath Mohanty's tribal narratives with reference to the effect of colonial modernity, nationalism and subnationalism in British Odisha. This study evaluates the historical dimensions of the Odia literary canon till progressive era and compares the primary and secondary resources on ethnographic representation of Gopinath Mohanty.

Key Words:

Colonial Modernity in British Odisha, Rise of Odia Fictional Narratives, Social Realism and Early Odia Fiction, Progressive Writing and Tribal Narratives of Gopinath Mohanty.

EARLY COLONIAL MODERNITY IN BRITISH ODISHA: PRINTING PRESS AND JOURNAL MOVEMENTS: EARLY FICTIONAL NARRATIVES IN ODIA

The 'Orissa Mission Press' or the 'Cuttack Mission Press' established in 1837 at Cuttack by Christian missionaries became instrumental in publishing the fictional narrative in Odia. Publication of *Phulamani O Karunara Bibarana* (The Story of Phulamani and Karuna, 1857-1858) is the first instance of fictional narrative in Odia literature; this is the first ever instance of a translated version of the same Bengali title whose narrative glorifies Christianity. Later Ramshankar Ray (1858-1917) serialized a historical romance *Soudamini* (1878) in Utkal Madhupa ("The Utkal Honey Bee" journal in Odia) and discontinued after thirty chapters due to

the closure of the journal in 1880. Subsequently Ray serialized another novel *Unmadini* (1893) in *Indradhanu* ("The Rainbow" journal in Odia) and discontinued due to the closure of the journal. Ramshankar Ray's first full length novel *Bibasini* (1891) was serialized in *Utkal Prabha* ("The Utkal Light" journal in Odia). Another novel *Anathini* (1885) by an unknown author was serialized in *Pradeepa* ("The Light" journal in Odia) (Patnaik 2009: 5-9). The first full length Odia novel *Padmamali* (Padmamali, 1888) by Umesh Chandra Sarkar (1857-1914) was published and printed by Cuttack Printing Company. The narrative in *Padmamali* is modeled over the historical romantic tradition set by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838-1894) and its structure has a regular rendering upon the 'ornate Kavya tradition' found in medieval Odia poetry - a conventional Odia poetic tradition set by Kavi Samrat Upendra Bhanja (1670-1740).

The introduction of print technology and the advent of journal publications in British Odisha are instrumental which paved the way for the fictional narratives in Odia literature in the later part of the nineteenth century. The consequence of Naanka Durvikhya (The Great Famine, 1866-1867) is worth mentioning in order to understand the socio-economic plight, corruption and anarchy of the colonial effects in British Odisha. In latter period it formed major literary revolutions that established the Odia fictional narrative as an established genre in Odia literary canon and prepared a ground for the realistic narratives in Odia literature and subsequently in Indian literature.

REPRESENTATION OF SUBALTERN VOICES: SOCIAL REALISTIC NARRATIVES IN ODISHA LITERATURE

The socio-economic breach created by several company policies and the effect of the great famine of the 1860s may be considered as the key factors of the social realistic narrative in Odia literature. By the end of the 19th century social realism in Odia literature appeared in the narrative of Fakir Mohan Senapati's *Chamana Athaguntha* (Six Acres and a Third, 1897-99). For Senapati, an administrator and reformer under the feudal regime of British Odisha, social realism became a critique of the colonial modernity and a tool against the feudal power and social anarchy in British Odisha. Sisir Kumar Das observes Senapati's social realism as a changing force in Indian literary tradition. He notes:

Chamana Athaguntha can be described as the culmination of the tradition of realism that first appeared in the play Nil Darpan and sustained by such plays as Jamidar Darpan and Cakar Darpan, and the novels such as Govinda Samanta, Samaj, Sansar, Svarnalata, and Pan Laksmat Kon Gheto. All these plays and novels contain

elements of realism in varying degree but none can match Fakir Mohan's novel in respect of its minute details of social life and economic undercurrents regulating human relationships and the variety of characters representing traditional occupational groups (Das 1991: pp. 296-297).

Senapati's literary styles, techniques and themes became a role model for the progressive Indian literature. His fictional voice instituted in his novels and short stories became a critique of the colonial modernity and the British Raj.

NATION FORMATION: LOCATING ODISIA SUB-NATIONAL IDENTITY IN ODISIA LITERATURE

The later part of the 19th century and the early 20th century began a new trend in Odia literary tradition. Novels and short stories of Fakir Mohan Senapati (1843-1918) and poetry by Radhanath Ray (1848-1908) and Madhusudan Rao (1853-1922) realized a new sensibility in Odia literature. The formation of the Odia identity during the British Raj is led by the dominant ideology of language politics, literature, culture, nationalism and sub-nationalism etc.; latter it is realized through the formation of Orissa Province on 01 April 1936. Subhendu Mund has a keen observation of the historical changes took place in British Odisha. He appropriately notes:

Subnationalism takes many forms but at the most general level all forms of subnationalism can be seen as manifestation of a search for community or identity different from the community or identity offered by shared citizenship of an existing state. The rise of Odia subnationalism was, in fact, an expression of the quest of the Odia people for their identity. And a variety of issues related to language, culture, literature, religion as well as social reform, politics and economics were subsumed in this quest. During the active period of the movement, roughly between 1860s and 1936, there were conscious attempts by journalists, poets, playwrights, historians and novelists, with the active help of zamindars, feudal lords and kings, to re-construct the Odia identity by re-creating a 'national' history (Mund 2007: pp. 220-221).

Hence, the change in Odia identity keenly observed by Mund may be seen as the consequences of the demands of the newly emerged nationalistic movements, which may be seen historically as an outcome of the Sepoy mutiny and various social and political issues and effects related to it. However, the formation of the Orissa Province on 1 April 1936 may be seen as the critical point that culminates the identity question in Odisha.

COLONIAL MODERNITY: ODISHA SUBNATIONALISM AND PROGRESSIVE LITERATURE

The formation of the Odisha state in 1936 brings in a distinct socio-political identity through literary movements and critical literary imaginations. Literary associations and publications of journals and periodicals in British Odisha could liberate socio-cultural, political and socio-economic identities of the newly formed colonial province. Sitakanta Mahapatra examines the course of the progressive movement in the post Fakir Mohan era. He notes:

Around 1936, there were two noticeable literary movements in Orissa. One was represented by the Nabajuga Sahitya Sansad formed in 1935. Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi, who edited Adhunika, the mouth piece of the Sansad, was the main voice of this progressive movement.....The other literary movement was represented by the Sabuja Sahitya Sansad which had been formed almost at the same time and had as its mouthpiece the journal Juga Bina (Mahapatra 1989: 143).

However, the establishment of the printing presses, rise of literacy rate and readership, conventional ideologies over the nation formation in India and the rise of the journal movements in 1930s in colonial Odisha may be seen as critical courses of the Odia literary canon. Mahapatra finds that, the rise of the journal movements in the colonial Odisha could energize the progressive movement in Odia literature. The political and geographical allocations by the British regime are responsible for the new subnationalism in this region; further supplemented by Odia consciousness.

THE RISE OF ODISHA NOVEL: SOCIAL REALISTIC NARRATIVES IN POST-FAKIRMOHAN ERA

A close reading of Odia fictional narratives in 1930s and 1940s reveals that the subaltern classes and the agrarian societies of the coastal and the tribal districts are represented as the essential constituent of the fictional narratives. Jitendra Narayan Patnaik examines the socio-political reality in British Odisha and the objective of the newly formed Odia fiction. He notes:

The socio-political life of Orissa in the 1930s and 1940s was suffused with the pervasive spirit of Gandhian and Marxist ideologies. While non-cooperation

movement and other nationalist movements became an integral part of all public and fictional discourses, ideas of socialism and social justice fired the imagination of writers and artists. The formation of a separate province of Orissa in 1936 was a great event which instilled a sense of distinct Oriya identity. This, coupled with the widespread adoption of western education, led to the emergence of a large number of novelists who perceived Oriya society in terms of its poverty, tribal culture, westernization and quest for political, economic and intellectual freedom. Among the significant novelists who reflected, in their fictional narratives, the ethos of Orissa in the nineteen-thirties and nineteen-forties are Kalindi Charan Panigrahi, Kanhu Charan Mohanty and Gopinath Mohanty (Patnaik 2009: 44).

The early period in Odia fiction is an outcome of the colonial modernity emerged in the form of translation practices and missionary activities due to the advent of the print technology introduced in 1850s. Cuttack plays an important role in establishing the colonial modernity in Odisha; it is posed as a powerful colonial space as the cultural and political capital of British Odisha. The major novelists appeared in the post Fakir Mohan period are Kalindi Charan Panigrahi (1901-1991), Kanhu Charan Mohanty (1906-1994), Gopinath Mohanty (1914-1991) and Surendra Mohanty (1920-1992). The fictional narratives by this time highlight the historical movements, social changes and dominant political ideology of the 1930s and 1940s. The 1930s and 1940s in Odia literature may be considered as the culmination of the social realistic tradition set by Fakir Mohan Senapati. Jitendra Narayan Patnaik examines the time line of Odia fictional narrative tradition roughly from the early period from 1857 to 1940s. He writes:

While the first major event in the hundred-and-twenty-year old history of the Oriya novel is the publication of Fakir Mohan Senapati's Cha Mana Atha Guntha in 1897, its full potential as a legitimate literary form was realized during and after the nineteenth-thirties when Gandhian and Marxist ideologies as well as the politics of resistance against colonial power and a pervasive sense of social reform in the wake of exposure to modern educational system led to a renewed vision of social and historical forces that found felicity of expression in the new fictional form of the prose narrative (Patnaik 2009: 66).

THE PROGRESSIVE AGE AND THE REPRESENTATION OF THE TRIBAL IDENTITY IN ODIA FICTION

Early 20th century finds the emergence of tribal narrative in Odia literary canon. Two prominent tribal novels may be considered as influential. Gopal Ballav Das (1860-1940) follows the social realistic trend set by Fakir Mohan Senapati. His *Bhima Bhuyan* (Bhima Bhuyan, 1908) is the first ever tribal novel in Odia literature. It is written in 1898 during the serial publication of *Chamana Athaguntha*. The central character in *Bhima Bhuyan* is Bhima and the narrative is set on the Bhunya tribe which lives in the hills and jungles of Keonjhar district in colonial Odisha. Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi's short story *Shikar* (1936) deals with the dilemma of the tribal belief system, modernity, socialist ideology and exploitation of the tribal by the non-tribal high caste Hindu feudal power structures. The central character in *Shikar* is Ghinua who belongs to the *Kondha* (an indigenous tribe of Odisha) tribe of Odisha. It is Gopinath Mohanty who established the tradition of tribal narrative in Odia literature. Publication of Mohanty's *Dadibudha* (1944) marks a shift in progressive Odia literature; the main stream Odia literature adds a supplementary fictional space; it shifts its focus from the coastal area in British Odisha to the inaccessible tribal area. Jitendra Narayan Patnaik writes:

Dadibudha marks a significant shift of focus in Oriya fiction from the social conditions of coastal districts to those of the tribal districts of Orissa (Patnaik 2009: 72).

The narrative of *Dadibudha* is a novel turn in Odia literary canon. It is the first ever novel on the tribes of Odisha which deals with the after effects of the Christianity and the disintegration of the primal society and culture during the invasion of the colonial modernity in the hills and high lands in British Odisha.

PROGRESSIVE TRADITION: GOPINATH MOHANTY'S TRIBAL NARRATIVES

Odia fiction revived its themes and techniques during the progressive age. At the same time it ably realized the tradition of social realism set by Fakir Mohan Senapati. Influenced by the nationalist and sub nationalist movement in literature in 1930s and 1940s in British India, Odia novel demonstrated a political agenda of the dominant nationalist theory. Odia fictional writing appeared as the spokesperson of the subaltern in colonial Odisha; the poor, the women, the underprivileged, the tribal, the peasant and the untouchable etc. became the prime concern of the

newly formed social novels. A minute examination of the fictional narratives in Odia literary canon during 1930s and 1940s reveals that the subaltern classes and the agrarian societies of the coastal and the tribal districts are represented as categories and as essential constituent of Odia fictional narratives. The dominant ideologies which shaped the course of the progressive novel writing in Odia are; Marxist and Gandhian thoughts, idea of a free and independent nation, formation of the Orissa province in the 1936 and rise of Odia sub nationalism (Patnaik 2009: 44). The Pragatibadi (progressive) tradition in Odia literature is an outcome of several fusions. The formation of the Odia Progressive Writers' Movement in 1935 (Mund 2011: 35), and the inclusion of the subaltern classes in the literary site, the journal movements in Odisha and the formation of the 'Orissa province' in 01 April 1936 etc. are the major events in the political history of Odisha in 1930s. The freedom struggle of India and the Marxist and Gandhian ideology, and the exclusion policies of the British Raj were also instrumental in shaping Gopinath Mohanty's tribal narratives. The available literary models of the Fakir Mohan era and the literary tradition of the progressive period may be seen as influential in Mohanty's tribal narratives.

The Odia novel emerges as the vehicle of expression of the agrarian society of British Odisha. In the early years of the 20th century, Fakir Mohan's narrative model plays an important role and constitutes a literary tradition par challenging. During the early years of novel writing, few Odia authors tried to deviate from the set codes of Senapati's theme, style and technique. Gopinath Mohanty's *Dadibudha* appears as the first ever fictional narrative on the tribes of British Orissa with its notable representation and modernist treatment in theme and style. This outstanding variation in Odia fiction has been observed critically by Jatindra Mohan Mohanty. He writes:

A few novels that provide a representative cross-section of the variations from Phakirmohan tradition may be specially noted at this point. They are Manemane, Malajanha, Basanti, Matira Manisha, Ha Anna, Homasikha, Kanamamu and Dadibudha (Mohanty 2006: 401).

GOPINATH MOHANTY: THE COLONIAL MODERNITY AND ODIA TRIBAL NARRATIVE

Gopinath Mohanty has written more than twenty four novels. His major novels are written on the model of social realistic tradition set by Fakir Mohan Senapati which depicts the tumult of social, political and cultural changes that happened during the colonial and post-colonial period both in the rural and urban, and in coastal and tribal districts of Odisha. His novel

Amrutara Santana (The Children of Nectar, 1949) received the first ever Kendriya Sahitya Akademi award in 1955 for fictional writing in Indian languages. Gopinath Mohanty received Bharatiya Jnanpith award in 1971 for his novel *Mati Matala* (The Fertile Soil, 1964). He is the first ever non-tribal novelist who authored more than four major novels along with numerous short stories, novellas, anthology of grammar on Kuvi Kondh, Gadaba and Saura (tribal communities) languages and poetry on the life of the Paraja and Kondha tribes of Odisha.

Gopinath Mohanty's first novel *Managahirara Chasa* (Inside the Scope of Mind, 1940) is a retroscope on a series of passionate affairs between a young man Radheshyam and a number of women (Patnaik 2009: 71). The narrative set on the coastal Odisha provides an individualistic view of personal tumult and fails to imbibe the social issues as prevalent in Mohanty's later writings. Gopinath Mohanty's *Dadibudha* (The Great Grandfather, 1944) is set in a remote Paraja village in the undivided Koraput district in Odisha. The narrative of *Dadibudha* is an account of the disintegration of the Paraja belief system. Publication of *Dadibudha* marks the beginning of a major development in Odia fiction. The attention of the Odia fictional narrative shifts its focus towards the tribal people and their indigenous culture instead of the portrayal of the intricate problems of the coastal districts, culture and society; the major appeal of the Odia fictional narrative of the 1940s finds a new dimension in Gopinath Mohanty's tribal novels. Jatindra Mohan Mohanty registers the shift in the reader's attention in the fictional narrative of 1940s in Odia literature. Mohanty agrees to Jatindra Narayan Patnaik (Patnaik 2009: 72). Mohanty writes;

Dadibudha was one of the early novels of Gopinath, who grew to great eminence after independence. Dadibudha had a singular distinction. It shifted the readers' attention from the social condition and issues related to people in the coastal districts, particularly in the Cuttack district, to social conditions, habits, beliefs and manners of living of the tribals, in this case the Parajas, of the southern districts of Orissa (Mohanty 2006: 409).

The significant shift in Odia fiction identified by Jatendra Narayan Patnaik and Jatindra Mohan Mohanty may be seen from the perspective of changes those happened due to the colonial encounter in the Orissa Province. The coming of the colonial modernity in the late 19th and early 20th century in different forms in British Odisha and its representation in Odia literary canon in the tribal narratives of Mohanty may be seen as a trace of the substantial location of the British Raj. Hence, the case of Mohanty's first ever tribal narrative in *Dadibudha* is a colonial development.

The narrative of Mohanty's *Dadibudha* is based on the tribal way of life of the Paraja community found in the undivided Koraput district. In *Dadibudha* the fictional account renders on the rituals, customs and belief systems and social and cultural values of the Paraja tribe and its complex inconveniences during the encounter of the Christian ideology and the indigenous tradition in the hills and jungles of Odisha. Literally 'Dadibudha' is a residual of a date palm tree which remains on the top of the hill and takes care of the Lulla village down the hill side. The Paraja tribe believes that Dadibudha is the ancestor God of the Paraja village and it is responsible for life, death, worries, and happiness of the villagers. The central character in *Dadibudha* is Rama Chandra Muduli. He is the village headman. Thenga Jani son of Rama Chandra Muduli is betrothed to Saria Dan. Thenga deserts Saria, and elopes to Assam with a Christian Domb girl Santosh Kumari of the same village. Since then the Lulla village comes under the spell of the evil spirits. The *dishari* (the priest, the oracle and the religious authority in the Paraja community who is a male member of the Paraja community and who claims a close contact with the gods and ancestors) of the village announces that Thenga and Santosh are evil *dumas* (the spirit or the life-force of a dead; in Paraja it is believed that the life-force of the evil spirits live in the body of some of their community members and bring chaos and fall) and will be punished accordingly. Following the incident the village faces numerous tiger attacks and diseases thereby causing untimely death of the village folk. At the end of *Dadibudha* the ancestor God 'Dadibudha' descends on *gurumai* (the soothsayer in the Paraja community who claims a close contact with the gods and goddesses and the dead ancestors) and commands the villagers to leave the village to lead a prosperous life. The villagers shift to another high land leaving behind the ancestral god 'Dadibudha'.

The course of the narrative in *Dadibudha* visualizes the disintegration of Paraja belief system; in the narrative the tribal way of life has been casted as a dilemma of the indigenous society and culture and it is represented under the unceasing threat of the newly emerged colonial modernity especially the spread of Christianity in the hills and mountains of Odisha. *Dadibudha* is the first ever fictional narrative in Odia literature which depicts a clash of indigenous religious views and the ideology of Christianity and caste questions in tribes. The disintegration of the primal way of life is depicted in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958). The significant note in the narrative of *Dadibudha* and *Things Fall Apart* is the perception and methodology of representation by a non-tribal and a tribal author on the disintegrated tribal society and culture; Gopinath Mohanty is an outsider to the Paraja community of the Eastern Ghats, whereas Chinua Achebe (1930-2013) is a member of the Igbo community which lives in the south eastern Nigeria. Hence, the narrative approach of Mohanty in *Dadibudha* may be seen different than Achebe's.

The narrative of *Dadibudha* is more inclined to the ethnographic details and the tragic view of the disintegration of the primal life, whereas the course of narrative of *Things Fall Apart* is socio-realistic and historical, and largely promotes ethnic pride. Mohanty in *Dadibudha* is sympathetic with the Paraja tribe and Achebe in *Things Fall Apart* commands truth of the history without communal compassion. Achebe achieves this by leading the legacy of a fictional author's foot prints to a far height diverging against minute ethnographic details of the Igbo.

Narrative of Gopinath Mohanty's *Paraja* (Paraja, 1945) offers a tragic vision of the disintegration of the Paraja social and cultural way of life where the capitalist enquiry of the land and land holding and the emerging new economy in the highlands become a prominent site. Gopinath Mohanty's fictional narrative in *Paraja* epitomizes the 'struggle to survive' as epitomized through the tragic endeavour of a Paraja family which dwells in Sarsupadar—a remote village in the hills and mountain ranges of the Eastern Ghats in undivided Koraput district in Odisha.

Sukru Jani and his family in *Paraja* are represented as the victims of the colonial forest guard and the feudal *sahukar* (landlord who lends money to the poor) Ramachandra Bisoi. In the opening of the narrative of *Paraja*, Sukru Jani the head of a Paraja family of Sarsupadar village is found hardworking and full of potential who believed in the wealth of life in the hills and jungles of the Eastern Ghats. He is hopeful of the future. When he refuses to send his daughter Jili to the lecherous forest guard he is heavily fined for clearing his allotted portion of the jungle for growing seasonal crops. His sons Mandia and Tikra are caught by the colonial authority while brewing unlawful country liquor inside the jungle. Sukru Jani and his two sons Mandia and Tikra degraded as *goti* (bonded labourer in the tribal communities; they work on the agricultural field, built house, clear jungles and look after the cow herds in the jungle for their tribal and non-tribal owners, they live on food and shelter and are never paid daily wages for their hard labour and during the festivals they are allowed to visit their own family and community; tribal community often lack ready cash for several festivals and customs and they become *goti* for years to repay their debt to the money lender.) and both his daughters Jili and Bili are sexually exploited by the highway contractor and subsequently by the Hindu Sahukar.

Consequently, Sukru Jani is deserted by his tribes' men and is trapped by the non-tribal men, law and order of the state and colonial authorities. Mandia could not marry Kajodi to whom he is betrothed and Jili is deserted by her lover Bagla. Jili ends up as a concubine of the *sahukar*. Sukru Jani and his sons repay the debt to the Sahukar but the Sahukar did not release their piece of land and his daughter Jili. They fail to win the court case against the Sahukar in the Jeypore

court. Out of rage Sukru Jani and his two sons execute the Sahukar and surrender to the local police station. *Paraja* depicts how the tribe failed when it is seen confronting the newly emerged law and order in the highlands during the advent of modernity and colonial encounters in the hills and mountains of the undivided Koraput district. It portrays a tragic view of the tribal way of life in the Eastern Ghats in Odisha.

Gopinath Mohanty's *Amrutara Santana* is the first ever novel in Indian languages which received Kendriya Sahitya Akademi award for the best fictional writing in a regional language ever. While the earlier novels *Dadibudha* and *Paraja* deals with the socio-cultural life of the Paraja tribe, Mohanty's *Amrutara Santana* is a rich and vivid rendering on the Kuvi Kondh tribe of Odisha. Kuvi Kondh community is one of the primitive and most populated tribal communities in Odisha.

The narrative of *Amrutara Santana* examines the conjugal life of the Kuvi Kondh and it attempts to measure the existing morality of the tribe. The narrative is set in a Kuvi Kondh village in the undivided Koraput district in Odisha and is opened on a Kondh festival day. Sarabu *Saonta* (the chieftain of the Kondha village and an able leader of the Kondha community) of a Kondh village in the Eastern Ghats is seen hopeful, jest and happy; he plays his flute as he takes away his last breath. During his life time Sarabu *Saonta* could earn a name for his family and village by keeping up the traditional values of the Kondh community. His son Diyudi is a sensuous and a greedy young man who is married to Piyu. Piyu is a committed Kondh woman and believes in the values of the martial institution which is set by the tribal customs and tradition. Diyudi dejects Piyu after their first child is born. Under the influence of *handia* (country liquor brewed from rice and *mahula* flower; botanical name: *Madhuca longifolia*). Diyudi once visits Sonadei who is a sensual woman with an impotent husband and who lives in the neighbourhood Kondh village. Both of them fall for each other. Diyudi gradually drifts towards Sonadei and ignores the presence of Piyu who now turns as an object of sickness and complains health disorders. Very soon Diyudi marries Sonadei and brings her home which becomes a heart breaking incident for Piyu. At the end of the narrative a dejected Piyu is found leaving for her parent's village with her child. In the sub plot of *Amrutara Santana* a stark description of the relationship of Pubuli and Harguna is portrayed. Pubuli is the sister of Diyudi and the youngest child of the dead Sarabu *Saonta*. She is depicted as a faithful company of Piyu. For years she waits for her childhood love Harguna's proposal for marriage. When Harguna the *Saonta* (the chieftain in the Kondh tribe) of the neighbouring village does not reciprocate to Pubuli, she runs

away with Besu another *dhangda* (the male adolescent and youth in Paraja and Kondh community) of her village. *Amrutara Santana* depicts the sensual and distorted state of the microscopic life of the Kuvi Kondh. Throughout the narrative of *Amrutara Santana* the presence of the shadow of the dead Sarabu Saonta depicts the unsteady socio-cultural values of the Kondh, whereas Diyudi's representation reflects a contrasted connotation against the existing value and belief system of the tribe.

Apahancha (Unreachable, 1961) by Gopinath Mohanty is another remarkable fictional narrative on the tribe of the Eastern Ghats. The narrative of *Apahancha* depicts the reduced state of an ambitious and educated tribal man K Timaya alias K T Dora who employs democracy as a tool to trap his community. He influences his kinsmen and gets elected to the assembly. In *Apahancha* the central character Timaya appears as the product of a corrupt democratic system. He earns wealth out of the way by deceiving his own community. In the subsequent election he is thrown away of his position. He regrets his past and turns as a social activist in the hills. The novel depicts the failure of the democratic values under the post-war industrialization and the emergence of the new economy and the anxiety in the tribal districts in Odisha.

There are more than a dozen of novellas and numerous short stories written by Gopinath Mohanty on the tribes of the Eastern Ghats. His fictional narratives on the tribal population of Odisha provides a visualization of the landscape, culture, socio-political system, custom, dance and music, ritual, belief system, tradition, myth and folklore etc. of the primeval society of the undivided Koraput and Kalahandi districts. In his fictional accounts Mohanty offers an anthropological sketch of the tribal life of the Eastern Ghats. His ethnographic and realistic narratives have two dimensions; at one level they provide scientific data on the tribal way of life and at other its association with the fictional endeavours of the narratives put the 'tribal identity' in question. Hence, the narratives of Gopinath Mohanty on the tribes of the Eastern Ghats may be considered as not free from the biased writing on a non-tribal author.

The shift in between the eighty eight years in between the first translated novel in Odia literature (*Phulamani O Karunara Bibarana*, 1857) and Gopinath Mohanty's first tribal novel *Dadibudha* (1944) may be examined critically. *Phulamani O Karunara Bibarana* reproduced by the Christian missionaries was modeled upon the Christian ideology with enough compassion for widowed and poor Hindu women; whereas Mohanty's tribal novel is an outcome of the colonial modernity where he is sympathized with the indigenous society and culture. Critical observations

made by Jitendra Narayan Patnaik on Gopinath Mohanty's tribal novels may be studied on the context of 'politics of representation'. Patnaik writes:

Three of these novels revolve round the lives, customs and rituals of tribal communities, and it is chiefly this element of his fiction which has earned for him fame and recognition at the national level. As a member of the state civil service, Gopinath Mohanty had the opportunity of working, in the early forties, in Koraput, a district with a predominantly tribal population. He got deeply interested in the tribal lifestyle and culture, and transformed them into rich fictional narratives. The novels of Gopinath Mohanty published during the forties are not only among his best works, but also are forerunners of his later novels which continued to articulate his preoccupations with tribal life, the predicament of downtrodden and the anguish of human existence torn between freedom and social restraint, nature and culture (Patnaik 2009: 72-73).

Jitendra Narayan Patnaik finds Mohanty's sympathy appropriate with the tribal way of life found in the Eastern Ghats. By circumstance, Mohanty appears at the tribal site as a colonial elite and his preoccupation with the tribal way of life seems questionable. A non-tribal author's involvement in the tribal society and culture is a romantic affair itself and is a colonial model of the modernity. Patnaik never questions about Mohanty's predicament in sympathizing with the tribes.

CONCLUSION

Dadibudha is the saga of the Paraja belief system and the emblem of the disintegration of the traditional Paraja society, village and its cultural values against the set values of modernity. Gopinath Mohanty's *Paraja* may be considered as an extension of his *Dadibudha*. *Paraja* depicts the conventional attachment of the Paraja tribe to their forest, highland and their subsequent denial of access to these natural belongings during the British Raj. The fictional narrative in *Paraja* is an individual tragedy that conveys the shattered dream of the community. Collectively it portrays the changes those occurred when the Paraja tribe came in contact with the colonial order and the modernity. Mohanty's *Amritara Santan* depicts the Kondha tribe of Odisha. It is the sensual description of the falling of the Kondha conjugal life and relationship, fail of the indigenous system and socio-cultural values of the tribes which is disintegrated and lost in

personal greed and immorality. The narrative of *Apahancha* is a remarkable representation of the tribal society that portrays failure of moral of the tribal people and fail of industrial revolution and democratic values.

At one level Mohanty's tribal narratives which depict richness of folk culture and belief systems, landscape of the Eastern Ghats, and traditional values of the primitive societies of the undivided Koraput and Kalahandi districts of Odisha raises a question of 'identity crisis'; the collective identity of the tribes in Mohanty's tribal novels are biased by his own prejudices. His social realistic narration of the primal life provides the maxims of modernity and indigenous tradition where traditional values are shrunk to its tragic end and ethnic identities are disintegrated to its extreme.

Gopinath Mohanty joined civil services under British regime as a colonial administrator in 1938 (Mahapatra 1992: 8) and he was posted in the undivided Koraput district which is the habitat of the several indigenous communities. He lived a considerable period among the Kondha, Paraja, and Saura (primitive and non-primitive communities) communities of Odisha. As a high caste Hindu colonial administrator-author Mohanty's participation in the colonial projects may be seen in his archetypal tribal novels. His tribal narratives are not free from his non-tribal high caste Hindu and colonial elite prejudices. Henceforth, the ethnographic novels of Gopinath Mohanty may be scrutinized with postcolonial viewpoints to find out the course of the narrative body based on the ideology of nation-state, nationalism and sub-nationalism, ethnic identity, (mis)representation and displacement etc.

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Human Rights and Constitutional Safeguards of Tribals in India: A Theoretical Perspective

Ratnaprava Barik

“Tribal peoples are peoples who are “not indigenous to the region (they inhabit), but they share similar characteristics with indigenous peoples, such as having social, cultural and economic traditions different from other sections of the national community, identifying themselves with their ancestral territories, and regulating themselves, at least partially, by their own norms, customs, and traditions.” (Article 1.1. (a) of ILO Convention No. 169.)²⁵

Abstract

Tribal community in India has been most susceptible section the uneven, ascendancy and manipulation centered culture. They are being deprived from their socio-economic and political rights. The condition of Tribal communities is leading unchanged even after centuries. The violation of fundamental human rights and the state brutality has been perpetrated on them. Tribal communities have faced isolation and social discrimination like that of Dalits from the mainstream society. Understanding of current Tribal societies need a basic respect to the historical processes, which have determined the course of consecutive changes in ideological, political, economic and socio-cultural life of the Tribal communities. In the constitution of India accords several statutes where the rights of Tribal communities are protected and social justice is determined for their protection and wellbeing. However, the constitutional safeguards has not been successful in this respect. Therefore, there is an upwelling of Tribal movements throughout the country for their rights. The present paper explores within the larger framework of tribal human rights in general and how tribal rights violated in particular, in India.

Keywords: Tribal Community, Tribal Human rights, Constitutional safeguards, Dalits

INTRODUCTION

²⁵I/A Court H.R., Case of the Saramaka People v. Suriname. Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations and Costs. Judgment of November 28, 2007. Series C No. 172, par. 79.

The Tribes are 'indigenous people', but the practice and solicitation of the term 'Indigenous Peoples' is a multifaceted subject that has been challenged from the past. However, in India, the term has no official recognition as all Indians are indigenous for India. In India the vital factor is that the indigenous people are particularly known as the 'Adivasi' which literally means the first or original dwellers of the land. However, some Indian historians had viewed tribes as indigenous much before the emergence of the discourse on this term internationally and nationally. In the words of anthropologists, the community of people are called tribal which supervene to be the indigenous and autochthonous meaning Adivasi or Adimjati people of the land. They had long settled in different parts of the country before the Aryan-speaking people penetrated India to settle down first, in the Kabul and Indus valleys and then within a millennium and a half, to spread out in slow stages, over large parts of the country and push their way of life and civilization over practically the entire area of the country along the plains and river valleys²⁶.

Inclusive growth is the essence of developmental strategy across the economies. Since the introduction of economic reforms in early nineties, there has been greater focus of development and planning towards enhancement of human well-being and reduction in inequalities along with growth of per capita income especially targeting vulnerable social groups, viz. STs, SCs, etc. This wellbeing encompasses individual attainment in the areas of education, employment, health care, nutritional level and amenities like electricity, water supply, sanitation, housing, etc. besides guaranteeing them their civil rights and protection against atrocities or crimes.

TRIBAL PEOPLE IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

The Tribal people in India have a long history even before the arrival of the colonial government. The Tribal societies that existed prior to the colonial intervention had their own rights and duties within their autonomous sovereign framework. India is a multi-lingual and multi-cultural country. It has a rich heritage with composite culture. Its diversity in society reflects in the multitude of culture, religions, languages and racial stocks. The population of the country comprises of different castes, communities, social and ethnic groups. The tribal population represents one of the most economically underprivileged and marginalized groups in India. The globe contains 200 million tribal populations which constitute 4 percent of the global population.

²⁶Annual Report (2010-11), Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, 2011

India provides the largest concentration of Tribal population in the world, excepting in Africa.²⁷ In India there is greater diversity among Indian tribal population in comparison to other countries in the world. The geographical barriers did not play a major role in maintaining complete socio-cultural isolation of different tribal groups; instead the contact across time and space either directly or indirectly brought changes in the identities of the tribal people. The term Tribe in Indian context has never been defined precisely and satisfactorily except identifying with certain indicators, which are both internal and external. However, the tribal community possesses a wide range of variations, which are manifested in their socio cultural milieu. The commissioners for Census of India in different census reports named Tribal groups differently as Forest tribes, Agricultural and Pastoral castes, Animists; Tribal animists or people following tribal religion; as Hill and forest tribes and as tribes (1941). Since then the term 'Tribe' in Indian context by and large is synonymously used as Adivasi(Original settlers), Girijan (Hill Dwellers), Vanyajati (Folk Communities), and Anusuchit Janajati (Scheduled Tribe). In this identification process not only many common masses have been enlisted into the fold but also various new names have been imposed, which the tribal people even do not recognize for themselves. Article 342 of the Constitution of India has designated these communities as 'Scheduled Tribes' (ST)²⁸. The tribes of India who are unable to defend them and were gradually forced to recede before the invading hordes of such people, as the Dravidian, Indo-Aryans and Mongolians coming from the West, North West and North East. These people took shelter in the forest and mountain ranges. Those who were left behind in the plains generally disappeared either by absorption or by acculturation.

The Constitution of India had recognized tribal population as weaker section of society based on their socio-economic backwardness and the age-old social discrimination and physical isolation that they had been subjected to. The Tribal Communities are designated as Scheduled Tribe under Article 342 (1) of the Constitution of India. They can be categorized as (A) Primitive Tribe renamed as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, and (B) General Scheduled Tribes. Although the tribal are a minority and constitute about 8.2 per cent of the total population in India or 85 million people in absolute number but unlike scheduled caste population, the tribes are not discriminated against in the same way by the mainstream Hindu population. There are at present more than 700 tribal groups each with their distinct cultures, social practices, religions, dialects

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²⁸ Behera and Parida, (2014) 'Investing in Globalization', commonwealth Press.p.125.

and occupations and are scattered in all States and Union Territories in India except for the states of Haryana, Punjab, Delhi, Chandigarh and Pondicherry.

The total tribal population of India has been estimated as 104,281,034 that constitutes about 8.61 per cent of the total population of the country (Census 2011). The tribal communities are spread over 15 per cent of the geographical areas in various ecological and geo climatic conditions varying from forest, hills, plateau and plains. They are still living with primitive agricultural practices with stagnant population, lowest literacy rates and are at the lowest rung of human index. 75 groups or sub groups of tribal communities have been identified as 'Primitive Tribal Groups' (PTGs) on the basis of criteria adopted by the Planning Commission. Out of 62 tribal communities of Orissa, 13 have been identified as PTGs. The State of Orissa has also the distinction of having largest number of both tribe and PTGs in the country. PTGs are small group in pockets confined to far-flung inaccessible areas with precarious living conditions. By and large they have maintained their cultural group identity with their distinctive living pattern. The population of Scheduled Tribes has been on the increase since 1961.

TRIBALS AND THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN INDIA

Human rights situation of the tribal peoples in India is quite gloomy and its future is very miserable. Starting from independence, tribals were rightly found as the main victims of the trends of developments and infringements by non-tribals. They were leading a relentless and unimpeded life. The affirmative action programmes could not simply keep the pace with the marginalization of them. Presently, the situation of the tribals fits into a classical left wing extremism. According to the figures of the Ministry of Home Affairs 21 out of 28 States are afflicted by armed conflict and majority of these States are afflicted by the Naxalite conflicts, the extreme left wing armed opposition groups. The Naxals (Maoists) are active mainly in the tribal belts in mainland India. Neither the Naxal movement is led by the tribals, nor do the demands of the Naxalites relate to the tribals. The tribals simply fit into their class-war of the Naxalites. They are victims as well as perpetrators, and the pawns of the conflict. The government continues with its knee-jerk reactions. The Forest Rights Act, 2006 was adopted in December 2006 but it is yet to be implemented. The Relief and Rehabilitation Policy has been revised twice since 2003, the latest one was made public in November 2007. A National Tribal Policy has been in the pipeline since 2004. Now, the government has proposed to set up a Land Commission. In reality

there is the high degree of violation of their rights in different grounds. Some of the may be headed as under:

VIOLATION OF RIGHTS OF TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

Human rights are the birthrights of every human being and they form an integral part of the socio-cultural fabric of humanity all over the world. However, they are vulnerable to abuse and violation. Human rights can be understood as abstract norms and values protected in laws, constitutions, and international conventions. At the same time, human rights are cultural concepts that are slowly evolving in response to social change or contestation²⁹. One may explore how human rights have become applicable to the realities of Tribal lives, and how one can build on the international conventions and agreements that have accomplished this task to understand the dimensions of Tribals' human rights in the Indian society. Tribals human rights provide fundamental insights into the causes, manifestations and consequences of human rights violations experienced by Tribal communities. In India, the last quarter of the 20th century has been a witness to the growing recognition of the place and relevance of human rights due to pressure from various collective movements. It is obvious that this concern in human rights is rooted in the denial of life and liberty that was a pervasive aspect of the emergency. The mass arrests of the leaders of the opposition and the targeted apprehension of those who could present a challenge to an authoritarian state are some of the dominant images that have survived. The civil liberties movement was a product of the crisis. Preventing subjective detention, imprisonment, the use of the judicial process non-transparently and custodial violence were on the agenda of the civil liberties movement. Fortwo decades, movements of peasants, tribals, Dalits, women, students and working class movements have highlighted human rights concerns (Shah, 2004). Thus, human rights have become prominent on the national and international agenda. Coinciding with the United Nation Declaration, the Indian Constitution also replicates that, the State will not distinguish against any citizen on grounds of birth, place, ethnic, religion, caste and agreed that the promotion and protection of all human rights is a legitimate concern of the State. These include basic survival rights to health care, shelter, food and social security; the right to work; the right to education; and the right to participate in the cultural life of one's society. However, there

²⁹ Nair, R. (2006). *Human rights in India: Historical, social and political perspectives*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

is a huge gap between the ideal of the human rights laws and the reality of continuing gross human rights violations of Tribal communities in India ³⁰.

VIOLATION THROUGH LAND ALIENATION BY NON-TRIBALS

Article 366(25) of the Constitution of India refers to Scheduled Tribes as those communities who are “scheduled” in accordance with Article 342 of the Constitution through a declaration by the President. Scheduled Tribes tend to live in specific areas and the Constitution of India recognizes these as “Scheduled Areas.” The constitutional safeguards as provided in the 5th Schedule of the Constitution of India and various other State level laws which among others prohibit transfer of the lands of the Tribal communities have failed to prevent widespread land alienation of the Tribal people. The core cause of the land alienation has been the Land Acquisition Act-1894 under which the government can exercise its sovereign power to take away any land in the name of public purposes. The non-tribals have also illegally occupied thousands of acres of land belonging to Tribal communities by force in the world. Mostly in tribal belts there are the establishment of industries and factories. As a result of which the tribals are being displaced from their natural homelands by using force. With the establishment of the industries in the tribal areas, the tribal people are losing their fertile lands and the remaining lands close to the industry become unfertile and lose productivity. Irrespective of all the provisions the government has failed to check land alienation.

VIOLATION OF FOREST RIGHTS

After the emergence of private property and the emergence of modern nation states, as Tribal communities have no legal rights over the lands they have been living on and cultivating for generations, it became easy for the non-tribals to acquire the land of Tribal people. Often, the law declares these unregistered lands as reserved or protected forests, or sanctuaries and national parks. The access of Tribal communities to forest produce or to the grazing of cattle is rendered illegal; they are threatened and penalized for entering into the forest. A large number of these people belong to the Tribal community's. They live every day under the unpredictable threat of being evicted from their homes; the only legal protection they have is the due process of law. Over the years, when these people have protested against oppression by the forest department or

³⁰ Poulter, S. (1998). *Ethnicity, Law and Human Rights*. The English Experience, Oxford Clarendon Press.

raised their voices to demand legal rights, the State has used force to suppress them to the extent of denying them the right to life. The National Forest Policy of 1988 recognizes symbiotic relationship between forest and Tribal communities yet; the Tribal people have been systematically victimized under the Forest Act of 1927. When the Forest Conservation Act of 1980 came into implementation, thousands of acres of land of Tribal communities were encroached overnight. In 2006, the government of India brought the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act. The Act is aimed at undoing the age-old injustice done to Tribal communities by restoring and recognizing their pre-existing rights³¹. The recognition and restoration has been, however passing through rough weather in respect of its implementation. The Government of India till today has failed to notify the Rules of Procedures of the Forest Rights Act of 2006. In the meanwhile, Tribals continue to be prosecuted for accessing minor forest produce. There were 2, 57,226 forest cases pending against 1, 62,692 Tribal communities between 1955 and 30 June 2006 under different Sections of the Forest Act of 1927.

DISADVANTAGED DEVELOPMENTAL POLICIES

Tribal people who constituted 8.6% of the total population of India as per 2011 census also constituted 55.1% of the total development project-induced displaced persons up to 2010 on account of megadevelopmental projects like industries, mining, dams, wild life sanctuaries, parks and conservation of nature, etc. Development projects have become more problematic particularly in Andhra Pradesh during the last few decades. In this context take the Polavaram dam, which is to be built across the Godavari River which will displace around 400,000 people in the three states; Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Orissa. Of them at least 150,000 are Tribals particularly vulnerable Tribal groups dear to livelihood and preservation of distinctive cultural heritage are in shock and the rest mostly Dalits dependent on minor forest produce for their livelihood. Displacement not only disrupts the lives of the individuals and families concerned, but also their entire communities and societies. In many cases, due to displacement, socio-economic systems and community structures break down³². As a result, Tribal communities are at the lowest point in every socio-economic indicator. Moreover, they are

³¹ Suresh, H. (2003). Fundamental rights as human rights. Mumbai: Sabrang Communications and Publishing Pvt. Ltd.

³² Huhua, Cao. (2009). Ethnic Minorities and Regional Development in Asia. Amsterdam University Press.

seldom rehabilitated. As India's active economy involves further resources, Tribal communities face more displacement. In the last three years, the National Policy on Resettlement and Rehabilitation for Project Affected Families of 2004 was amended twice in 2006 and 2007, but failed to address the problems of displaced people. Tribal communities must resist for their right and democratic conscious people should support them in this respect.

VIOLATION OF CULTURAL AND LANGUAGE RIGHTS OF TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

Tribal communities have been unable to safeguard and promote their language and culture; even though Article 19(5) of the constitution states that a cultural or linguistic minority has the right to conserve its language and culture. This means that Tribals as individuals and groups have the right to use their own language, to practice their own culture, to study their own history, tradition and heritage etc.³³ The state cannot, by law, impose upon them any other culture or language. While the state may not have enforced any language or culture on them, neither has it taken any positive steps worth the name towards meeting this provision of the constitution. Rather, the steps taken are far from being in consonance with the provisions laid down in the constitution³⁴. The posture that they adopted has invariably been in the direction of assimilation into the language and culture of the major community, rather than protection and promotion of the distinct language and culture of the Tribal communities. Schooling extended to Tribal communities for example, has invariably been made in the language of the dominant regional community of the respective states or in English. The result is that Tribal communities are increasingly losing knowledge of their own language and culture. Indeed the promotion of language and culture has been left to Tribal communities themselves. Yet, because of lack of control over human, organizational and financial resources, the Tribal communities have not been able to take effective measures in this direction. Only where such support has been made available in some form or the other the Tribal communities have been able to protect and safeguard their culture.

VIOLATION OF PESA ACT IN INDIA

To reinforce the constitutional provisions for protection of the Tribal communities, this important Panchayat (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) PESA Act 1996, has been enacted in

³³ Xaxa, Virginius. (1999). Tribes as Indigenous people Economic and political Weekly, 34 No. 51 December 18-28, Pp. 358.

³⁴ Sharma, B. D. (2001). Tribal Affairs in India: The Crucial Transition. New Delhi: Sahyog Prasth Kuteer.

recent years. The act empowers the scheduled Tribes to safeguard and preserve the traditions and customs of the people, their cultural identity, community resources and customary mode of dispute resolution through the Gram Saba. Interestingly, the provisions of the Panchayat Act hardly find its due place in letter and spirit. However, there are extensive violations of the PESA Act, 1996, in mining and land acquisition in the Scheduled Areas of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orissa. Clause 4.e.(1) of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, provides that —every Gram Sabha shall approve the plans, programmes and projects for social and economic development before such plans, programmes and projects are taken up for implementation. Again, clause 4. (i) says that —the Gram Sabha or the Panchayat at the appropriate level shall be consulted before making the acquisition of land in the Scheduled Areas for development projects. And before resettling or rehabilitating persons affected by such projects in the Scheduled Areas, the actual planning and implementation of the projects in the Scheduled Areas shall be coordinated at the State level³⁵. Despite the above provisions for the rights of the Tribal communities, no necessary initiations are taken up during any developmental project to take the opinion and consent of the Gram Sabha, which constitutes people's opinions. The recommendations of Gram Sabha are not made mandatory prior to granting prospecting license or mining lease in many cases. For example in the case of Polavaram a multipurpose project, Gram Sabhas are not conducted in villages and people's consent has not been taken. This process is neither followed in Andhra Pradesh nor in the neighboring states like Orissa and Chhattisgarh. Even though this project did not get environmental clearance, construction of project has been initiated. The Constitution entrusts the Governor the task of ensuring peace and good governance in Schedule Five Areas, with absolute powers over the state government towards this end. Governors were also required to submit an annual report to the Parliament, which was meant to be an independent assessment on administration in Schedule Five Areas. However, since the enactment of PESA, Governors have slowly but surely been developmental projects like industries, mining, dams, wild life sanctuaries, parks and conservation of nature, etc.

Development projects have become more problematic particularly in Andhra Pradesh during the last few decades. In this context take the Polavaram dam, which is to be built across the Godavari River which will displace around 400,000 people in the three states; Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Orissa. Of them at least 150,000 are Tribals particularly vulnerable Tribal groups dear to in terms of livelihood and preservation of distinctive cultural heritage are in

³⁵ Sachar, R. (2009). Human rights—Prospects & challenges New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House.

shock and the rest mostly Dalits dependent on minor forest produce for their livelihood. Displacement not only disrupts the lives of the individuals and families concerned, but also their entire communities and societies. In many cases, due to displacement, socio-economic systems and community structures breaks down.³⁶ Even though PESA is projected as legislation transforming tribal representation, in Fifth Schedule areas, the tribes feel as much culturally deprived and economically robbed as under colonial rule. Neither PESA in the last decade, nor the Fifth Schedule before it, has helped the tribal communities “acquire the status and dignity of viable and responsive people’s bodies,” as Parliament had intended.

Tribal local governments are often ignored in development plans and the benefits of any actual development “rarely percolate down to the local tribes,” which are “subordinated to outsiders, both economically and culturally. PESA and the Fifth Schedule have also not prevented large corporations from gaining control over the natural resources which constituted the life-support systems of the tribal communities; neither have they made the tribes prosperous from the mineral-rich land on which they live. In fact, the tribes have “gradually lost control over community resources such as forests to both settlers and the State; and one author would go so far as to equate non-tribal acquisitions with tribal displacement. Deceit and the active connivance of state employees with non-tribal communities is another debilitating factor reversing, in this case, the benefits of land reform legislation. Shankar’s study of tribal lands in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh revealed a nexus between traditionally influential nontribal landowners and corrupt government officials. The latter exercised their discretionary powers to favour non-tribes by transferring lands over which tribal communities may have had a valid claim. Even in a tribal majority state like Jharkhand in the north, the tribes are the worst affected in the population since the state government’s mining operations and hydroelectric power projects exploit natural resources in the resource-rich tribal areas, thus making the tribes “outsiders in their own land.” Faced with this onslaught, many tribes have resisted settlers, the government and private enterprises, and sought to reassert their identity. For instance, in the Bengal region The Kamatapur tribal movement has cited neglect, exploitation, and discrimination, and demanded a separate state.

Tribes in the neighboring state of Orissa have demanded a prohibition on private consortiums that intend to mine bauxite from one of the most richly endowed regions in India. Similarly, in the south, Kerala’s tribal population has recently begun to defend its rights by banding together in various political groups at the state and local community levels in order to

³⁶ Huhua, Cao. (2009) . Ethnic Minorities and Regional Development in Asia. Amsterdam University Press.

compel the administration to review land alienation, poverty, and exploitation by private enterprises. It is far too easy to dismiss these incidents as mere consequences of “misplaced development strategies”³⁷ and lack of interest among state administrations.

The critics of tribal governance in India see the dangers in an extremely narrow compass, criticizing provisions in PESA as “impracticable” or the states as legislatively ignorant. In sum, they believe that good civil administration alone will assuage tribal woes. To begin with, PESA only marginally altered the power balance between state governments and the tribes because of ineffectual participation by the former, and the “general tendency at the state level to monopolize power rather than share power with people at large.” This apathetic attitude has manifested itself in two forms. First, the majority of the states with tribal populations procrastinated in their decentralization programs. Although all states with Scheduled Areas have now enforced PESA, their past dilatory performance has led to the risk of delays in future amendments necessary to reflect changed circumstances. Second, when they did legislate, the states either ignored tribal “customary law, social and religious practices and traditional management practices of community resources or enacted incomplete laws.

STATUS OF PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TRIBAL GROUPS (PVTGS)

Many of the PVTGs have been on the verge of extinction. As per statistics of 1991, there were only 24 Sentinelese, 32 Great Andamense, 89 Jarawa, 101 Onge and 131 Shom Pen. There were only 23 families comprising about 100 members of Karbong tribe reportedly surviving in Tripura⁷ but the government of India has not recognized the Karbong tribe as “Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group”. There are specific programmes meant for the development of the PVTGs but their implementation has been poor and the government has failed to establish independent monitoring mechanism.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS FOR THE SCHEDULED TRIBES IN INDIA

The constitution has devoted more than 20 articles on the redressal and upliftment of the underprivileged. Recognizing the special needs of STs, the Constitution of India made certain special safeguards to protect these communities from all the possible exploitation and thus ensure

³⁷ Singh, M. (2009), Address at the Chief Ministers’ conference on Implementation of the Forest Rights Act, November 2009

social justice. Article 14 confers equal rights and opportunities to all, Article 15 prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of sex, religion, race, caste etc; Article 15 (4) enjoins upon the State to make special provisions for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes; Article 16 (4) empowers the State to make provisions for reservation in appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens, which in the opinion of the State, is not adequately represented in the services under the State; Article 46 enjoins upon the State to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and, in particular, the STs and promises to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. Further, while Article 275 (1) promises grant-in-aid for promoting the welfare of STs and for raising the level of administration of the Scheduled Areas, Articles 330, 332 and 335 stipulate reservation of seats for STs in the Lok Sabha and in the State Legislative Assemblies and in services. Finally, the Constitution also empowers the State to appoint a Commission to investigate the conditions of the socially and educationally backward classes (Article 340) and to specify those Tribes or Tribal Communities deemed to be as STs (Article 342). The sixth schedule- The Constitution also refers to the administration of Tribal Areas in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram by designating certain tribal areas as Autonomous Districts and Autonomous Regions and also by constituting District Councils and Regional Councils (Article 244(2)). To ensure effective participation of the tribals in the process of planning and decision-making, the 73rd and 74th Amendments of the Constitution are extended to the Scheduled Areas through the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996.

There are many provisions in the Constitution of India which safeguards for the welfare and development of the tribals. It provides a number of articles under various heads. These heads are classified under four major categories. They are Protective Provisions (Arts. 15, 16, 19, 46, 146, 342, etc.), Developmental Provisions (Arts. 46, 275, etc.), Administrative Provisions (Arts. 244 & 275) and Reservation Provisions (Arts. 330, 332, 334, 335, 340, etc.). The Protective Provisions have safeguarded tribal people from social injustices and all forms of exploitation.

The Developmental Provisions promote with special care of educational and economic interests of the weaker sections like the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes. The Administrative Provisions under the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of the constitution of India gives special powers to the States for the protection and governance of tribal areas and the Reservation Provisions ensure due representation of the Scheduled tribes and Scheduled castes in legislative bodies and government jobs. Article 244(1) , Article 244(2) , Article 275(1) , Article 342 , in the

constitution of India specifies the tribes or tribal communities as Scheduled Tribes. Article 330 signifies the Reservation of seats for the Scheduled Tribes in the House of the People. Article 332 deals with the reservation of seats for the Scheduled Tribes in the State Legislative Assemblies. Article 334 provides reservation of seats and special representation to cease after sixty years. Article 164(1): In the States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, there shall be a Minister in charge of tribal welfare who may in addition be in charge of the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes or any other work. Article 338 reads there shall be a National Commission for the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes to be appointed by the honorable President of India. Article 335 Claims of Scheduled Tribes to services and posts. Article 46 promotes the educational and economic interests of the Scheduled tribes, Scheduled castes and other weaker sections. Article 371(A) envisages Special provision with reference to Nagaland. In the fifth Schedule of the constitution shows the provisions as to the Administration and control of Scheduled Areas. Sixth Schedule of the constitution provides the Administration of Tribal Areas. Besides this the constitution of India also signifies separate status to the states and the tribal areas of the states. With special reference to Odisha the provisions deals with the existence of different tribal in various parts of the territory.

CONCLUSION

In the end it can be said that rights are the indispensable and inalienable parts of human being. It cannot be differentiated as tribal and non-tribals, as our constitution defined that all men are equal in the eyes of law irrespective of caste, colour, creed, religion and sex. Like the fundamental rights and duties, human rights also play a great role in the life of the individual. But the violation and encroachment of tribal human rights creates many socio- economic problems. It affects the nature and welfare of human beings, and creates many disorders in the society as well as in the state. It is possible to imagine the life chances of Tribal communities improving through the implementation of practical measures along with considering the rights accorded. However, the stillness on human rights tends to carry with it the threat of a reoccurrence to interventionism and the management of a distinguishable group of people as a problem 'well-intentioned of assistance, not as a group of human beings to whom society has bestowed the responsibilities and duties. So, there is the immediate need of the constitutional guarantee, which will govern and protect the rights and sovereignty of Tribal communities. On the other hand, this would lead to a vanishing of the various Tribal communities from the human civilization. Thus, there is an immediate need to constitute the socio-economic life of the indigenous people. Lastly the present cry should be on the practical implementation of the governmental policies which are only in the

pen and paper. The government of India has failed to implement its obligations and commitment as provided under the Constitution and international human rights law.

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Feminization of Folk Art:

A Case Study of Patta Painting of Odisha

Mamata Dash

Going down the memory lane I still remember as a young anthropologist, while doing my Ph.D. on Chitrakar community of Raghurajpur village of Puri district of Orissa, I was attracted by the linear house pattern of the village, almost homogenous occupational status (as patta painters) of the population, family structure and such other anthropological issues. Being a small repertoire of folk art of Patta painting each household of the village allures me to stop at the door step and look at the painting. There I used to meet the male person of the household and take my interview while keenly observing the painting work. Many a times I had to do the job of interpreter if any foreign tourists or clients come to buy any painting or to interact with the artisans. The only time I talk to the women folk of the village is when I need some water, take food in my host family, if the head of the household is a widow or if I have to ask some exclusive women related questions.

But off late when I started my career in Women's Studies and started looking at things through a gender lens same painting work reflected a different connotation. The incredible but invisible contribution of women artisans in the whole painting process and the inherent stereotyped gender roles putting a glass ceiling on their talent and aspiration became more visible. I realized Patta painting is one of many folk art form which reflects the gender dynamics of Folk art.

This article is an endeavor to unfold this intrinsic gender dynamic involved in Folk art. The methods used for the study are mostly observation and informal interview with both male and female artisans.

The objective of my paper is:

To assess the nature of Patta painting as a folk art form,

To explore the gender perspective of the folk art of patta painting

To find out some solution to breeze the gender gap.

Key words:- Folk Art, patta Painting and Gender Relation and gender issues.

Etymologically folk refers to the common people of a society or region and folk art refers to any art produced by the common people depicting their day to day life and believes.

Art is an expression of the intrinsic qualities and meaning man finds in reality with things, persons, events or life. Art is the manifestation of one's imagination as well as conception of any fact, ideas or beliefs. Art, in this way is not necessarily the manifestation of mind of the artist alone rather it owes its inception to entire social and cultural setting where the artists lives in.

And when these artistic works, such as paintings, sculpture, basketry etc. are produced typically in cultural isolation by untrained often anonymous artists or by artisans of varying degrees of skill and marked by such attributes as highly decorative design, bright bold colors, flattened perspective, strong forms in simple arrangements, and immediacy of meaning it is called Folk Art.

As defined in the free dictionary art originating among the common people of a nation or region and usually reflecting their traditional culture, especially every day or festive items produced or decorated by unschooled artists are called folk art. Folk art encompasses art produced from an indigenous culture or by peasants or other laboring trades people. As there are thousands and thousands of culture and cultural beliefs across the globe there are corresponding folk art and it is difficult to draw upon any unanimous frame of reference for folk art. Folk art includes various art forms like dance, music, and painting etc. Patta painting of Odisha is one of many folk paintings.

Patta painting is a typical regional art of coastal state of Odisha in eastern India. It expresses the religious and mythological aspect of the Odiya ethos giving a panoramic view of the epic *Mahabharat*, and *Ramayan* in general and *Jagannath* culture in particular. Orissa, the abode of traditional art and craft is highly esteemed and identified with the cult of *Lord jagannath*. The daily ritual of the cult of Jagannath has encouraged many form of art and craft like appliqué, pottery, "Patta painting etc. The artisans are brought to Puri to supply various items required for the rituals of Lord Jagannath Temple (Sahoo:1988:20). Closely associated with the Jagannath culture, patta painting adds greatly to the glorious painting tradition of Orissa. Although the painting tradition of Orissa has passed through the various historical phases and there has been some degree of impact of modernization in recent years, the Orissan type continues to maintain its originality in "Patta painting" popularly known as "Patta Chitra"

Why should Patta painting be categorized as Folk art.

Folk is primarily utilitarian and decorative rather than purely aesthetic. It is characterized by a naïve style, in which traditional rules of proportion and perspective are not

employed. It expresses cultural identity by conveying shared community values and aesthetics. Folk art encompasses a range of utilitarian and decorative media, including cloth, wood, paper, clay, metal and more.

Folk art are simple, direct, and characterized by its non-educational, hereditary, indigenous and community based in nature. Patta painting has a religious utilitarian origin. It owes its origin to the Jagannath cult and its devotee's religious need. In olden days the devotees from different part of country while returning back from pilgrimage after Visiting Supreme trio of Lord Jagannath used to take these patta paintings with them to have a daily *Darshan* of the trio and worship them at their home. These earliest types of Patta paintings are called Yatri Pattis (Painting for pilgrims) which are of different shapes like circular, triangular, rectangular, square etc, and not very aesthetic. Secondly these paintings traditionally are produced by a particular community called Chitrakar.

This form of painting transcends generation after generation without any formal training. Rather this is inherited as family or caste occupation. Patta painting is the caste occupation of Chitrakaras. Despite all these similarities the age old patta painting is unique for its indigenous style of preparing canvas, brush, and pigment- the major prerequisites of painting.

However, the tradition of Patta painting is indigenous in its nature. Starting from the preparation of the base or canvas till the final touch of the work, Patta painting is unique in its style.

All these characteristics put Patta painting as form of folk art.

Folk art of Patta painting: an analysis from gender perspective

As Collingwood (1938) puts it, the emotions of sentiments, expressed through art are moulded and influenced by various aspects of the society one lives in and by one's day-to-day life. Thus, art is a part of one's social and cultural life. In the widest sense, as Herskovits (1951) says, art is a product of culture, and explicitly or implicitly explains various ethos and eidos of the culture one lives in. The concept of "Gender" is also nothing but social construct. It reflects one's social attitude embossed with cultural ethos and eidos. Thus both Gender and Art owes their origin to society.

Secondly any folk art be it tribal dance, music, drama weaving, or basketry etc is a microcosm of male-female roles within the family and society. Men and women either work together or depicted by their gender roles in the different forms of the art.

Above all art in the simplest sense is a creation and women are the source of any creation and can not be ignored from any form of art be it folk, traditional or modern.

Thus there is an imperishable rather umbilical relationship between gender and folk art . .

Coming to patta painting, there is a deep rooted nexus between women and this age old painting tradition. It not only controls the intra caste division of the chitrakaras but also regulates mate selection procedure. The whole of Chitrakara Community is divided into three Badas or groups on the basis of responsibility of Anasara patti (the paintings of Lord jagannatha, Devi Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra worshipped inside the sanctum sanatorium in the absence of supreme trio during anasara). But the chief of Balabhadra bada (subdivisions) takes the final decision over other two chiefs, if any discrepancy arises.

Besides knowledge of painting work is one of the criteria for match selection for chitrakara boys and girls. The girl/bride with better /more knowledge on patta painting the more appreciated, even more than any educational qualification and less the material demand from in-laws side. Even the physical boundary for marriage is fixed within *Atharnala*, (Cannal with 18 drains), the entrance of Puri Town, apprehending that beyond that the prospective brides might not possess the knowledge on Patta painting. A piece of patta painting is mandatory among all other gifts the bride takes with her to the in-laws house at the time of marriage.

Thus the life of chitrakaras particularly of the women revolves round the art of patta painting.

How much engendered is patta paintings

This folk painting (Patta painting) is basically a family craft, rather than an individual perfection. Each and every member of Chitrakara (painter) family contributes to the painting work. Women do almost all the preliminary works like preparation of the 'Ranga' (colours), 'Atha' (glue) and 'Patti' (canvas) and finally the work of lacquering. The young girls and boys help their parents in their work too. Especially the girls above the age of 8-9 years help their mothers in grinding the tamarind seeds to be used in preparing the glue. Sometimes they also assist in preliminary painting works like lining thickly the borders and figures that do not need much expertise. The boys, below the age of 10-12 years, devote much of the time in learning the painting skills from the elders and also assist their parents in their leisure time. The youngsters below the age of 12-13 years after learning the craft gradually paint independently and thereby help the family economy. Thus there is an informal but clear cut division of labour among all the family members so far as craft is concerned. Like any painting the whole process of patta painting can be divided into three aspects, namely I. base or canvass, II. Brush, III, colours (both preparation and process of colouring)

I Base/ Canvass:

patta painting “Patta Chitra” as the name suggests is an art where Chitra (Picture or painting) is done on a piece of ‘Patta’ which means cloth. But there are also other connotations of the word ‘Patta’. According to some people in the remote past the painting was done with the help of brush prepared from locally available screw pine stick called ‘Patta’ so the name ‘Patta’ painting. Some others say that the original nomenclature is Pata Chitra, as the style of painting was traditionally done on Plank of wood or ‘Patta’. However, the first explanation is more authentic and universally accepted.

Unlike the other types of paintings i.e. Kangra painting, Madhubani painting or Tassar painting etc. ‘Patta painting’ is done on a special type of canvas called ‘Patti’ which is a primed cotton cloth. The preparation of this canvas is stated as follows :

Procedure

The process of canvas preparation passes through four successive stages like : -

- a) Atha Tiari (Preparation of the glue from the tamarind seed)
- b) Khadhi Tiari (Preparation of chalk powder liquid)
- c) Patti Laga (Application of glue and chalk powder over the cloth)
- d) Patti Ghasa (Making the surface of the primed cloth smooth by polishing)

a) Preparation of glue from tamarind seeds:-

Tamarind seeds are soaked in water for about 12 hours, preferably for one night to make them soft enough for grinding. Then the seeds are taken out of water and ground in two phases; first on a rough grinder called sila for once or twice and then the pulp is made more fine by a smooth grinder called Chikkana Sila. This pulp is then mixed with water in 1:2 ratio and is cooked for 30-45 minutes on the traditional hearth. The solution is stirred with a ‘Danki’ (wooden spoon) from time to time till it is poured from the ‘Palama’ (earthen plate) and is allowed for cooling down, after which the glue is ready for application. Generally the tamarind seeds are preserved against insects by adding turmeric powder. This is done by women.

b) Khadi Tiari (Preparation of chalk solution)

A white chalk stone, locally known as ‘Khadhi Pathara’ is ground to fine powder. As the stone is a soft one it does not take much time to be powdered. The powder is mixed with water in the ratio of 1:2 in a pot. Then about 400 gm of tamarind glue is mixed with the solution to make it sticky so that it will adhere to the canvas well. This is also mostly done by women .

c) Patti Laga

The application of tamarind glue to the cotton cloth which is used as base for Patta painting is called ‘Patti Laga’. First of all, a clean cotton saree or cloth about 5 – 5.5 mtrs. of length is taken and its borders are cut off. Then the saree or the cloth is cut into two equal halves

and one of them is spread lengthwise over a plain mat over which tamarind glue is thickly and uniformly applied twice with the help of a piece of cloth and is left for drying by pressing four stones at four corners, so that it will not shrink in the sun. Utmost care is taken so that no crease is left on the second layer cloth while spreading it. After it is dried fully, the cloth is taken out of the mat gently. This is done by both men and women mostly by the elderly ones. Once the 'Patti' is dried, the solution of chalk powder is applied on both the sides with a piece of cloth in a similar manner left for drying. Two or three such coatings of chalk solution is applied with an intermediate interval for drying each time, in order to make the base more perfect which will reduce the amount of colour consumption at the time of painting.

The application of chalk powder solution is also called 'Khadi Laga' (as chalk stone is locally called as 'Khadi'). Which is again done both by men and women

d) Patti Ghasa

'Patti Ghasa' is smoothening of primed cloth. The Patti is spread on the cleaned floor and is rubbed with 'Bagada Barada' (a stone with rough surface) to make the surface smooth. After this the patti becomes smoother but still has small rough patches. So the patti is once again rubbed with a comparatively fine-grain stone, locally called 'Chikkana Barada' till the surface of the Patti is totally polished and fit for painting work. Sometimes they first of all cut the patti according to the required size and then make it smooth. After the completion of the polishing work on both the surfaces, the Patti becomes ready for painting. This is mostly done by the women.

II Preparation of colours

- a) The colours used for patta painting are indigenously prepared at home. The Chitrakaras prepare different colours with different raw materials and different procedures. Basically they prepare six colours like (1) Sankha (white) from small conch shell mixed with elephant gums, (2) Kala (black) from black shoot of the burnt weeds mixed with oil, (3) Hengula (red) from a mineral stone called 'Hengula' (4) Haritala (yellow) from a type of mineral stone called Haritala or opiment, (5) Geru from red ochre stone and (6) Pacha (green) traditionally by processing the 'Kasturi' stone available in the navel of a special breed of deer called 'Kasturi'. But now it is prepared by processing the extracts of various leaves.

All the colours are however prepared by the women artisans after collected by the men. However in contemporary times they prefer to buy herbal colours (excepting white and black, which still they prepare at home, or use fabric colours as there is no more forests to get raw stones

II. Brush:-

Unlike the other paintings, Patta painting is done with a special kind of brush. Traditionally they prepared the brush by crushing a portion of the root of 'Kia' plant (Screw pine) called KIA KATHI. Then they prepare it from the body hair of different animals like mongoose, farm rat or buffalo tied to a polished thin bamboo stick with gum of elephant apple tree. The body hairs of buffalo is used to prepare thick brush while for the thin brush, the body hairs of the mongoose or farm rats are used. This is done by men as women are not supposed to touch dead animals.

Division of duties (rather than Labour) associated with Painting:

Sl No.	Nature of work	Types of work involved	Sex of the craftsman		
			Male	Female	Both
1.	Collection of raw materials for painting	a. collection of tamarind	-		✓
		b. Collection of mineral stones	✓	-	-
		c. Collection of body hair of animals	✓	-	-
2.	Preparation and processing of the raw materials	a. Preparation of tamarind glue	-	✓	-
		b) preparation of colour	-	✓	-
		c. Preparation of brush	✓	-	-
		d. preparation of canvas	-	-	✓
3.	Painting work	a. sketching of motif	✓	-	-
		b. application of colour	-	-	✓
		c. Preservation of painting	-	-	✓ -
4.	Marketing		✓	-	-

It has been revealed from the above table that the collection of raw materials is usually done by the women and men. Excepting collection of mineral stone, preparation of brush and marketing the end product women do all in all other jobs. All the menial and time consuming jobs associated with the painting is mainly done by the females. But females are never asked while deciding the price. Nor they have any control on the income out of painting.

Though there is no formal and distinct division of labour, the total job of the craft is carried out on the basis of a conventionally approved division of labor. They classify the works into two types like, (1) *Bhidokama* (Hard work or skilled labor) and (2) *Halkakama* (light work or unskilled labor).

The differentiating criteria between these two, according to the artist, is the mental involvement. The more the requirement of mental involvement the more intricate the work is.

Apart from physical labor, the skilled work requires both mythological knowledge and mental exercise where as the unskilled works are done only mostly with physical labor with minimum mental involvement. Since the women spend more time with household chores, they get hardly sufficient time to put their brain on painting work. Whenever they get leisure, they only help their male counterparts in painting which involves mostly physical labor. They are not even allowed to negotiate with the customers.

However following is a brief table of division of labour:

Skilled And Unskilled Work And Division Of Labor In Patta Painting

Sl No.	Nature of work	Types of work	Skilled/ unskilled	Sex of craftsmen	Age of craftsmen
1.	Collection of raw materials	a. Collection of tamarind	Unskilled	Female & male	Children
		b. collection of mineral stones	Skilled	Male	Adult
		c. collection of animal hairs	Skilled	Male	Adult
2.	Preparation and processing	a. grounding tamarind seeds	Unskilled	Female	Young & Adult
		b. preparation of tamarind glue	Unskilled	Female	Adult
		c. preparation of canvas	Semi-skilled	Females	Adult
		d. preparation of colors	Unskilled	Male & Females	Adult
		1. Processing the raw materials by crushing and cooking			
		2. Addition of exudation of elephant apple tree to the color	Skilled	Male	Adult
		3. Mixing up of exudation and color	Unskilled	Male & Female	Adult
		e. Preparation of brush	Skilled	Male	Adult
3.	Painting work	a. sketching of motifs	Skilled	Male	Adult
		b. Application of colors	Unskilled	Female	Adult
		1. Hengula Banaka			
		2. Ranga Banaka	Skilled	Male	Adult
		3. Luga Pindha	Skilled	Male	Adult
		4. Gahana Banaka	Skilled	Male	Adult

		5. Mota Kala	Skilled	Male	Adult
		6. Soru kala	Skilled	Male	Adult
		7. Gachha Lata	Unskilled	Male	Adult
		8. Sankhapota	Unskilled	Male & Female	Adult
		9. Border	Unskilled	Male & Female	Adult
		e. Presentation of painting	Skilled	Male	Adult
4.	Marketing	a. Price fixation	Skilled	Male	Adult
		b. Taking orders	Unskilled	Male & Female	Adult & old
		c. Delivery of orders	Unskilled	Male & Female	Adult & old
		d. Transportation of product	Unskilled	Male	Adult
		e. Customer dealing	Skilled	Male	Adult

Investment of time and labor by women

As patta painting is a household or family craft, family acts as the basic production unit as well the marketing unit for the craft like any other household chores. So it is not so easy to say the exact time invested by a Chitrakara woman for the craft work. Their involvement with the painting is prodigious.

In the morning while preparing food, she does all the craft works which are possible inside the kitchen. Such works include processing the tamarind seeds to prepare glue, grinding the mineral stones and putting the tamarind seed in water to process it next day etc. If calculated all such works will amount to approximately 2 hours of continuous labour in the morning hours though unskilled in nature.

The women always try to finish up the cooking and other household work as soon as possible by 10 O'clock so that they can join their male counterparts to help in craft work. In the mid day from around 10 O'clock till 12 to 1 O'clock, they help in pattighasa (Smoothening the canvas) or ranga ghotibe (mixing of exudation of elephant apple tree with the colours) or sometimes in ranga banaka (applying colors to the background of the canvas etc. They take up works which does not requires much concentration and expertise. At about 1.00 pm. They again go to serve lunch to the family members and clear the utensils and houses. Then again from 2.30 or 3.00 pm. Till evening around 5.30 or 6.00 pm. They spare their time for painting work or other works related to the craft. During night hours, they remain associated with painting work such as

lacquering the finished paintings which takes nearly one hour. So as a whole, in a day a woman invests around 7 hours of labour in average for painting.

But now-a-days as they need not process the raw materials like mineral stones to prepare colour or lacquering on the painting due to introduction of various water proof chemical colours in the painting technology, they save a lot of time which was invested previously. Moreover, availability of electricity at night increases their working hour at night too. So at present they are able to invest around 9 to 10 hours of labour for the craft in a day.

The availability of modern amenities has not only increased the working period of both women and men but also has enriched the horizon of their traditional, religious and mythological knowledge. During evening hours they no more visit the temple premises to listen to the religious scriptures, rather they assemble near the television set which works as a medium of informative entertainment.

But inspite of spread of educational facilities, women from chitrakar caste do not prefer to go to school. Barring a few i.e.three to four house holds the girls are still getting married at the age of 16-17 years.

Apart from that when Govt. is focusing on skill development, women are not given proper skill development training nor given a chance for field exposure. In crafts exhibition they are given a job of sales person but not as the crafts person as an independent identity. No women till now has achieved the title as Master crafts person(better to be used in place of Master craftsman) .

Possible solutions:-

- In order to breeze these gender gaps it is high time to conduct more and more research on the practical gender needs of these women artisans.
- They should be given proper education and exposure to establish themselves as independent crtisans not as a helping hand to their male counterparts.
- Department of tourism and handicraft and mass communication should work with proper coordination so that this can be used for their livelihood.
- Men and women artisans should be given equal scope and opportunity so that they can equally participate in this folk art and sustainit in the adverse tide of modernization.

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The Lotha-Naga Traditional Cultural Beliefs and Practices: Reflections in Folk Narratives

Rembemo Odyuo

Abstract: The Lothas have been primarily a vocal people. They did not have a known written form till the advent of the Christian missionaries who framed the Lotha alphabet in the 19th century. This did not mean, however, that the Lothas did not satisfy their literary inclinations. Their literature, though oral, found expression in the art of telling stories which are now preserved as the folklore of the Lotha people. This paper is an attempt to look at some of the traditional cultural beliefs and practices embodied in their tradition and as reflected in their folk narratives. In this essay, folk narratives refers to any traditional literature that has been passed on by word of mouth and they may include all traditional literature; myths, legends, songs, folktales etc.

Key Words: Naga, Oral tradition, Naga society, Naga marriage system & inheritance of property

“No one in oral societies doubts that memories can be faithful repositories which contain the sum total of the past human experience and explain the how and why of the present day conditions. Whether memory changes or not, culture is reproduce by remembrance put in words and deeds. Through memory the mind carries culture from generation to generation” -Jan Vansina

Traditional cultural practices reflect values and beliefs held by members of a community for periods often spanning generations. They had evolved from the people's way of life since time immemorial. They may relate to the less important aspects of social life including food habits to more defined and stringent as the specific duties and obligations of men and women. The following are some of the traditional cultural beliefs and practices of the Lotha-Nagas:

Birth of a Child & Ceremonies

The birth of a child is sacred, and therefore the parent of the unborn child has to fulfill certain norms in order to give birth of a child. It was an aged old custom among the Lothas that a Lotha woman during pregnancy may not allow to touch or eat meat of some wild animals. It is believed that by doing so curse may fall upon the couple or the unborn child. She was also not allowed to kill of any wild animals. It is most important that neither the husband nor the wife should kill a snake during this time. By doing so it is expected that the child would have a tremulous tongue when the child is born. It is also forbidden to an expectant mother to cut her hair. Any hairs which fall out are carefully collected and twisted into the hair-band.

At the time of delivery she is attended by women folk and an old midwife called *Oshangessi*. The husband is allowed to remain on her side at the time of delivery. In the past when a women experiences a very painful birth the husband is said to make fire and fumigates his wife or exchange a hot 'rice beer' with her. Also the husband occasionally spits on his fingers and puts a little of his saliva on the woman's stomach. By doing so it was believed that a woman can give birth to a child without much difficulty.

After a child is born, a name is given to the newly born other than that which is to be his/her name. This is done in order that the evil spirits may be deceived and go away, thinking they are in possession of the real name. If the newly born is a boy, a cock is killed, and a hen in the case of a girl. The fowl meat is then cooked which is called '*ethihan*' (birth-meat) and is served only to the mother who gave the birth and the midwife *Oshangessi*. No members of the household including the husband can eat the birth-meat. If it were to be eaten by any member of the family or the husband, they may not have a good relationship with the newly born.

On the sixth day, the male child is christened. On the contrary, if a female child is born, the christening takes place on the fifth day. On the sixth day and fifth day, in the case of a boy and female respectively, the child's grandmother and an old woman, would be invited to do the honour. On this day, either piglet or big is killed and the meat prepared for the ceremony is called '*mvuchok han*' (ceremonial meat).

On the sixth day morning, a boy, and on the fifth day, a girl will be called to the house of the newly born. The boy/girl will be asked to half-bend facing towards the rising sun. The old woman then performs a ritual by lifting up the child and will place the child six times on the back of the boy/girl and sing the ritual song:

To a male child, the woman says:

*“Ralo ha nini nzo wotav,
Sophano ha nini nzo wotav,*

*“You will go with him to the jungle together,
You will go with him for hunting together,*

And to a female child, the woman says,

*“Otssungo ha nini nzo wotav’
Ojulo ha nini nzo wotav,*

*“You will go with her for collecting fire wood together,
You will go with her for fetching water together,*

After this ritual is performed the child’s ears is pierced and hair is cut. Now the child is ready to be carried for the first time.

Marriage System

Marriage is the union of a boy and a girl to form a family with social and religious consent, in which the mates, their parents and the village elders have to give their consent. Marriage in Lotha dialect is called *Yanbi Yanthan* . The norms are very clearly defined. The form of marriage most common and widely accepted in the Lotha-Naga society is monogamy. Monogamy is a form of relationship in which an individual has only one partner during his or her lifetime. Polygamous system of marriage was also practised among the Lotha-Nagas. Child marriage is unknown among the Lotha-Nagas. Widower or widow remarriage is allowed in the society without any loss of respect or social stigma.

In the past, *Longapvui* (a go-between or intermediary), preferably an elder woman, is engaged to convey the proposal. Normally she visits the girl’s house more than once as the matter has to be acquainted through slow degree. When the *Longapvui* goes and

offers *soko* (rice beer) to the girl's family, and if the offers of *soko* is accepted by the girl's family, it means the proposal for marriage by the boy's family is accepted. After this is done both the parties sits and discussed of the marriage plan and the bridegroom gives the girl a rain-shield (*phuchyo*), a small carrying-basket (*eyingkhangdro*) and a *dao* handle. In some cases, the groom used to give *okhyak/phari* (basket) and *onhyan* (rope to carry the basket). The bride in return gives to the groom *Lechapsu* (*dao* holder) and *Ruve* (apron).

The following articles were the gifts given by the girl's family or relative's as a token of love and appreciation to the bride on the wedding day:

1. *Chumo Teri* (bobbins thread) for weaving cloths
2. *Lepok* (*dao*)
3. *Vekhuro* (sickle)
4. *Moro* (winnowing fan)
5. *Chohchu* (spade)
6. Domesticated animals, including pigs, chickens, dogs, etc
7. Food items, including paddy, rice, chilies, etc
8. Dress and ornaments, etc

In the past, it is the custom of the Lothas that no marriage is allowed to take place before *Pikhuchak* (feast of prosperity). For it is a belief that if marriage takes place in the village before the feast of prosperity, the prosperity of the village is hindered. After *Pikhuchak* (feast of prosperity) a day is fixed for giving *Hanlam* (price of equilibrium). Before giving any other marriage price, price of equilibrium called *hanlam* is given three days prior to the wedding day.

Divorce

Divorce amongst the Lothas is less common and unlike marriage there is no ceremony connected with it. Divorce may be on any ground like infidelity, barrenness, pregnancy by another man, adultery, ill-treatment and desertion. Whatsoever may be the cause of divorce, it is intimately connected with refund of the bride price depending on the merit of the case.

The following are some of the cases which results in the termination of marriage:

1. If the wife leaves her husband and goes away out of her own decision, in this case, she or her parents do not get back any part of the bride price.
2. If the wife goes away for no fault of the husband, not only she will not get anything, but also she will have to repay the cost of the marriage to her erstwhile husband. And if the wife goes back to her parents, the burden of repaying the bride price may fall under her parents. But if she goes away with her paramour, he will bear the formalities.
3. Termination of marriage because of husband's infidelity, or incompatibility, and not for wife faults, the wife may be allowed to take her personal belongings only including clothes, ornaments, weaving apparatus, agricultural implements etc.
4. Again termination of marriage resulting from wife's infidelity, the husband gives Rs 10 to her as divorce cost. And if the wife goes away with her paramour the husband will get back a part of his marriage expenses which is generally paid by her paramour.
5. If the husband deserts his wife for no fault of her, the husband will have to pay a heavy fine which is settled by discussion between the two parties.

Generally and since marriage is a difficult and costly affairs for a man, a husband does not desert his wife. And since remarriage of a wife is not very easy, the wife generally does not take initiative for separation. Whatever may be the cause of divorce; it is talked and settled, whenever necessary with fine, between the two families.

Inheritance of property

Inheritance is understood to be transmission of property from person to person at death or before death. It is practiced separately according to the type of the society i.e patrilineal, matrilineal or bilateral. In the context of Lotha-Naga society, the family organization is patrilineal and therefore inheritance is inherited exclusively by the male heir. It is an age old customs amongst the Lothas for a father to divide his property among his sons during his life time. In many cases, the youngest son usually gets a lion share of the family property, but he has obligation relating to the care of his aged parents.

When sons marry and set up a separate household, each son received his portion of the father's property. In the case where a father died leaving with no male heir, or grandsons, brother, brother's son, the property is inherited by the male members of first relatives and they are responsible to look after the daughter until they get all matured. Daughters have no role in the inheritance even in the absence of a male child of the family. If there is no male heir, a daughter may have become fit to be the care-taker being entitled to its portion, but the property reverts back to the male line subsequently.

The property mainly comprises of cattle, household articles and so on but the land can be held either by the village, a clan, or an individual. Heirlooms such as the ancient *daos* and spears which the Lotha so prizes are held in trust by the senior member of the clan in the village, provided he has done all the social gennas. To alienate them would bring disaster on the whole clan.

Conclusion

For centuries, the given context of the tradition remained static and idyllic. However, with the introduction of education, the acceptance of Christianity and the process of globalization that has permeated in the Lotha-Naga society have deeply impacted them in every aspects of their life. Nevertheless, it is observed that in spite of the various changes that were introduced and the manner in which the Lotha-Naga adopted and incorporated them into their lives, the intrinsic values and principle survived and remained firmly with the people.

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Language Pedagogy

An Orthography for Kui Language

Anuja Mohan Pradhan

Abstract

Need for an orthography for Kui language has been an issue for more than 150 years. Its perishing folklore and creation of new literature calls for a suitable coding procedure which should be easier to adopt by children at primary level and should also be equipped to hold intact the nuances of a spoken language.

Kui language is predominantly spoken in the district of Kandhamal in the state of Odisha in India, by the people belonging to tribes and castes residing in the district since time immemorial. The Kui language, however, far surpasses the drawn and re-drawn political boundaries of the district. The language is also used in the neighbouring districts of Ganjam, Nayagarh, Kalahandi and other states of the country viz. Assam where mass migration to Tea plantations has occurred more than a century ago. As the spatio-temporal effect is well visible, there exist regional variations in the vocabulary and ascent of the language even within the Kandhamal district. Above the pattern of tribe and caste population, Kui is the language of masses of the Kui speaking cultural landmass.

Linguistically, Kui is a south Dravidian language which is considered as a sister language of Kuvi, Kui language is more closely related to Telugu than closer Sanskrit based language, Odia. Kui language has its own vocabulary and grammar, its set of pronunciation which is unique in its character. Rev. W W Winfield³⁸ explains, “It is one of the lesser languages of the great Dravidian group, displaying a very near kinship to Telugu, and preserving in its grammar essentially Dravidian formation largely unaffected by any Sanskrit or other alien element.”

³⁸ A Grammar of Kui Language, Rev. W W Winfield, pp228-229.

Absence of full aspirates halves the number of the letters in an alphabet of Sanskrit based language. Kui being a phone based language, its nuances lie in the phonetic variations which may seem to be homonyms but carry a splendid separate meaning, The voice modulation amply compensates the halving of letters in the alphabet. Hence, Kui has a huge store of vocabulary which meets its day to day need for speech and song.

The phonetic alphabet of Kui consists of vowels and consonants, The vowels are both short and long. Sometimes the vowels stretch longer than usual 'long' vowels, The consonants, however, are pronounced in a very different pattern, For instance, କ (ka) in Odia is used always as ka alone. In Kui each consonant is used in three forms, For instance, ka is pronounced as Ka (as in cost), ka.. (as in coast) half ka. Such phonetic variations can create a good volume of vocabulary which makes good of absence of aspirates. The spelling seems same, but the modulation in pronunciation is used for a different meanings . For example, koju (hen), kÖju (horn of an animal), ୠe (to refuse) . ୠ is the guttural , pronounced by chocking air with back of tongue in the hard palate and released for a short duration . This is applied to both consonants and vowels. In Kui some words begin with gutturals. On the contrary, in Olchiki the letters are pronounced with a vowel prefixed to a consonant. Ka is pronounced as aK. Further, Kui is an agglutinative language, grammatical relations are expressed not by changes within the roots, but by suffixes added to the roots or compounded with them .

Beyond these grammatical limitations, Kui is a sweet language to the ears. Absence of aspirates makes the language softer and subtle. Kui has a rich oral literature in various genres. Rev. Winfield³⁹ admits the fact that, *“In general, it may be said that, though Kui is poor as a medium for higher philosophical discourse, it is an excellent language in which to tell a story.”*

A brief over view of Kui oral literature may help in better understanding of the language. The oral literature consisting of various genres were being handed over from generation to generation and sometimes added to the corpus by the creative people which does not require a formal education *per se*.

LITERARY FORMS IN KUI LANGUAGE

Folk Tales:

Folk tales represent the prose from of Kui oral literature. The stories are called ‘Kerondi’ in Kui. The stories in Kui include fables and parables, stories of Gods, stars etc. The folktale *Kulo*

³⁹ ibid

and *Dohu*. (B. Boel) describes the story of origin of Khonds and Domanga from two brothers and their siblings from various clans. The *Oda* (goat) *Kerondi*, *koju* (hen) *Kerondi*⁴⁰, *Metka* (PI. Of peacock) *Kerondi* are some of the popular stories. Modern concept of short stories has just made an entry in Kui literature⁴¹.

USE OF PLANT AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS FOR MEDICINAL AND OTHER USES

The Kui people, in the long run have developed their knowledge bank on use of various plant and animal products for medicinal and other uses. Those experiments and observations are from time immemorial. To cite a few, the juice from soft leaves of Guava tree, unripe pomegranate, unripe lemon is used to cure fractured bones, clotted blood of goat boiled with little salt is taken to cure dysentery. Powder of dry mustard is tied around the neck for curing cold of children to animals and from fishing to childbirth. There is peculiar believe that, if a dog is given tip of its own tail, it becomes more aggressive. This author, therefore, considers such branch of knowledge as a distinct category of Kui oral literature. Besides medicinal use, Kui people also have developed knowledge base on use appropriate wood for specific purposes based on strength, tensile and longevity.

RELIGIOUS CHANTS

Like mantras in Sanskrit, the Kui people use their own mantras during various rituals and social occasions. Such mantras begin with salutations to the Gods or forefathers to whom they worship at the moment and also mention sun and moon as witness to the event. These mantras are chanted with offerings of liquor, rice, fowl etc.

SONGS:

From time immemorial Kui songs are sung by people speaking the language. Generally, Kui songs are composed by the men folk and sung with rhyme and music. When young men of a village visit dormitories of their village, on occasion of a bride coming, Kedu etc. sing songs playing music with *Khanjani* (hand drum like daffli), flute, small symbols and change. Tuhtu pota (a wooden bird with a flapping tail for producing rhyming sound during dance in kedu). The women or girls dance to the tune and do not sing while dancing. Researchers like Winfield and J.E.F. Pereira are of the opinion that Kui language has no poetry. Pereira says “the songs of the Khonds have no pretensions to poetry – that is, poetry in the sense of finished literary productions.

40 *Place of Fowl in Kui Culture*, Pradhan, Anuja Mohan, Orissa Review, Feb-March, 2005

41 *Tahiee*, Pradhan, Anuja Mohan, ATLC Bhubaneswar, 2015, is the first Kui short story collection

They are composed in a rude and often ungrammatical language; they are loosely constructed, and carelessly worded and vague in meaning; they are destitute of anything in the nature of meter of rhyme; and above all they often a grotesque medley of the serious and the ludicrous, resulting in a frequent descent to what is known as bathos⁴². At the same time, Pereira also mentions “But yet they possess a peculiar charm of their own. They are eminently true to nature; and their crude and half-developed thoughts, struggling through a mist of faulty expression, occasionally afford a glimpse of high imaging of tender feeling, and of fanciful imagery. And when they are sung to the weirdly plaintive melodies that seem to have been caught from the sigh of the wind in the gloomy depths of the forest, or they reach an intensity of beauty that is enchanting.” These views are self-contradictory and about a century old. If poetry is to be assessed in the light of Wordsworth’s definition, i.e., “Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings arising from emotion recollected in tranquility” the Kui songs fall within the scope. In modern times, subtle difference of a song and poetry is stressed no more. The Kui songs have plot, sense of rhyme, metaphors and smiles and above all the power of imagination. The kui songs (may also be called poetry) can be divided into following categories based on their theme.

LOVE POEMS:

Every man is a poet when he is in love. The sentiment of love, which is probably as old the human race, has been the subject of both poet and painter from time immemorial. To a people like the Khonds, among whom real courtship and reciprocal feeling of affection form the preliminaries to marriage, it becomes the great topic of song. Love poems constitute the major bulk of Kui songs. Love has the imagination of youth, faith of a maiden, lyrics of a bird and politeness. The love poems very often depict the humbleness of lover, promises for future and pleadings. It sometimes speaks of the occasions, the dance and vivid picture of surrender. The Songs “*Badu budi nisadu daRi, Bestaiminge kui kanja gaRi*”, can be cited and rhyming. Love songs are melodies, having beautiful tune and rhyming. Of late, many such songs are cast to the tunes of many Hindi/Oriya popular film numbers, e.g. “Gudiya roothi rahogi”. “in najaron ko tum dekho” etc.

RELIGIOUS SONGS:

The women sing songs in the Kedu festival while they feed the sacrificial buffalo. Those songs like “*E siro Ri benjamu*” speak of sympathy to the sacrificial animal and pray for good crops and fortune. Besides the ethnic religious songs, the missionaries have added Church songs

42 *Some Khond Songs*, Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal > Volume LXVIII, Issue 1, 1899

i.e. 'Penu gaNi' in Kui to be sung aloud in the church and other Christian festive occasions like Baptism and New Year/X-mass processions. As clear by name, they sing glories to the name of God, Jesus and Mother Mary, e.g., "gira Desa nai", "nenju puni basari tangi Eta tasu Re maneja" etc. Many of the church songs have been composed by many Kui speaking native people and published booklets. Those poems are devoted to many gods and bear the name of poet very often. The gods in his poems are not ethnic gods, rather the Hindu gods like Krishna and others. Shree Saranga Dhar Pradhan has also authored Kui devotional songs and published by the academy of tribal dialects and culture, Bhubneshwar unlike songs of Shri Sudaya Aabaa, his songs are devoted to ethnic Gods.

EVENT BASED POEMS:

Kui poets also sometimes, played the role of chroniclers. Many songs were composed and spread like a detailed news report. The events like air crash at Penabida, inauguration of Burbinaju Dam by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Murder of a woman and child while travelling in a bus, introduction of Baimala bus etc. have left living memories in the minds of people. In most of the cases, the names of the poets are unknown though songs are quite popular.

OTHER POEMS:

Beside the above stated traditional categories of poems, a new set of poems has arrived in recent years. These poems are need based and pinpoint a social issue like adult education, prohibition etc. Some songs by Ghumusar Mahila Sangathan, like "Nagali Ajana gaRi Ajasi soru birata" can be cited as examples. Mr Klemant Nayak, Uma Charan Digal are some of the contributors to such songs appeared in audio cassettes form. Many kui songs about the beauty and glory of Kui culture and Kuidina are presented in State organized Kandhamal Mahostsov i.e. the official annual festival of Kandhamal district. "Ese sanjane Kuidina, Iupu lupuna Punga Pusana" is one such example.

RIDDLES :

Like any other developed languages, the riddles in Kui language are short, apt and signify the symbolism and common sense of people. Elders ask riddles as favourite mind sport to children, maiden to young men and alike. For examples, Chuno iduta dara side (There is no door in the white house) means an egg; "kogeri kogeri DeTi tari, esoli sinDanga TaTanari" (She has a slim waist, still wears so many sarees) – means an onion; "neDe baDi senDo suga" (neither is rock with water source above) – means the saragosa palm from where the sweet juice oozes and

taken as a drink. As the riddles are not in popular use nowadays, Kui language may lose its valuable collection in near future.

SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE, SLANG ETC.:

The symbolic language is very sparse, said and understood by very few people. In the marriage negotiation meeting, the spokesman from bride side will say, “*Paiti kama selu aleka deri kelenga siaderu*”. *Aleka* means a pair, *deri*-big, *Keleka*-big knives used for cleaning shrubs, but the meaning as a whole is to provide a pair of buffaloes as abride price. The maidens also use some symbolic language to communicate among themselves before the young men or strangers. Such language will have particular prefix or suffix in each word. For examples; *Ipninu epninu dipniki sapnini mapniji*, (where are you going) etc.

Slangs are the pungent part of every language, however they have strong communicative power. The words used are short tense and intended to hurt opponent’s feeling. However, the abuses and slang show the observe picture of the existing social values. Possible categories may be to (i) immoral or illegal relations, (ii) curse or natural disaster or disease, (iii) self-cursing or conditional (*kRaDi bele desa*) etc., (iv) comparative characters (*saru dehngi ruga kanju*) etc.

KUI WRITTEN LITERATURE

Some of the notable works in Kui language, came out in pre-independence i.e. pre-1947 and post independence are listed below along with the script used by its authors.

PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

J P FRYE

- ❖ *Dialogues and Sentences in the Kondh Language with an English Translation (1851)(Odia)*
- ❖ *Fables in the Kondh language with an English Translation (1851) (Odia)*
- ❖ *Fables in Kondh language with an Oriya translation(1851) (Odia)*
- ❖ *Primer and Progressive Reading Lessons in Kondh Language(1851) (Odia)*

A. B. WILKINSON

- ❖ *The Gospel of Mark in Kui and Khondi (1893)*
- ❖ *The History of Joseph in the Kui or Kondh Language*

J. E. FRIEND PERREIRA

- ❖ *Grammar of Kui Language (Roman)*

W. W. WINFIELD

- ❖ *Grammar of Kui Language (1928) (Roman)*
- ❖ *Vocabulary of Kui Language (1929) (Roman)*

OLIVER JAMES MILMAN

- ❖ *The Gospel of Mark in Kond or Kui (1915) (Roman)*
- ❖ *Model Kui Reader for Infant Class (1915) (Roman)*
- ❖ *Gospel of John in Kond or Kui (1916) (Roman)*
- ❖ *The Acts of the Apostles in Kond or Kui (1918) (Roman)*
- ❖ *Model Kui Reader for Std II (1919) Christian Hymns in Kui (1925) (Roman)*

POST INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

LATE SARANGDHAR PRADHAN

- ❖ *Tribhasi Kui Vyakaran (Odia)*
- ❖ *Kui Bhakti Gitika (Odia)*
- ❖ *Jeda Johari (Odia)*

LATE THEOPHILS DIGAL

- ❖ *Kui Bhasa Siksha (A short term Course) (Odia)*

SHRI SUDAYA AABAA

- ❖ *Penu Paheri (Devotional Songs) (Odia)*
- ❖ *Sabitree Brata Kata (Odia)*
- ❖ *Penu Paheri(2nd Ed.) (Odia)*
- ❖ *Gita (Odia)*

RAGHUNATH RATH

- ❖ *Kui Dhog dhomali (A Collection of Kui Riddles) (Odia)*

CATHOLIC CHURCH

- ❖ *Khristo Dharma Kata (The Book of Rosary) (Odia)*

LATE DR. PARAMESWAR PRADHAN

- ❖ *Kuibhasa Sikshan pustika (Kui Language Learner,)1st Ed(Odia)*

THE BIBLE SOCIETY OF INDIA

- ❖ *The Holi Bible in Kui (Odia with diacritical marks)*

KLEMANT NAYAK

- ❖ *Right To Information Act(Odia)*
- ❖ *Oriya-Kui Shabdkosh (Odia with diacritical marks)*

MANSINGH MALLICK

- ❖ *Kui Language Learner (Odia)*

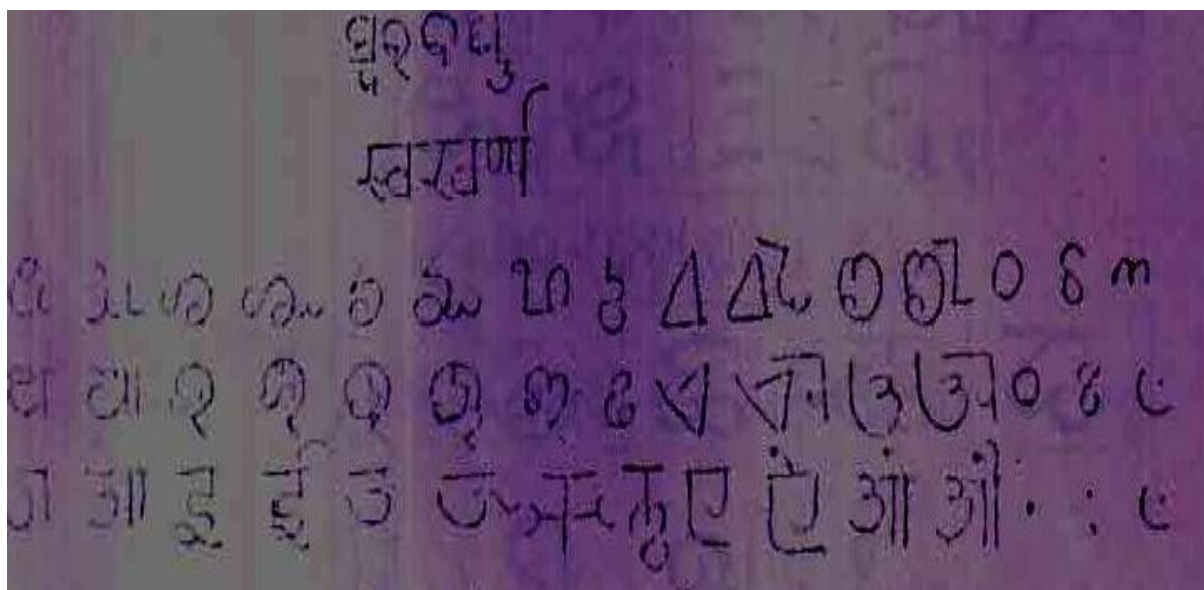
ANUJA MOHAN PRADHAN

- ❖ *Kuidina Piopota- Anthology of Kui Poems with Odia Translation (2006) (Odia)*
- ❖ *An Oriole from the Hills-English Translation of Kuidina Piopota (2007) (English adaptation)*
- ❖ *Tahiee- First Kui Short Story Collection (2015) (Odia)*
- ❖ *Kui Language Learner-(2nd Ed. Co-authored with Dr. Paramanand Pradhan) (Odia)*
- ❖ *20 books of Pictorial tales for children translated under National Translation Mission, CIIL, Mysore. (Odia)*

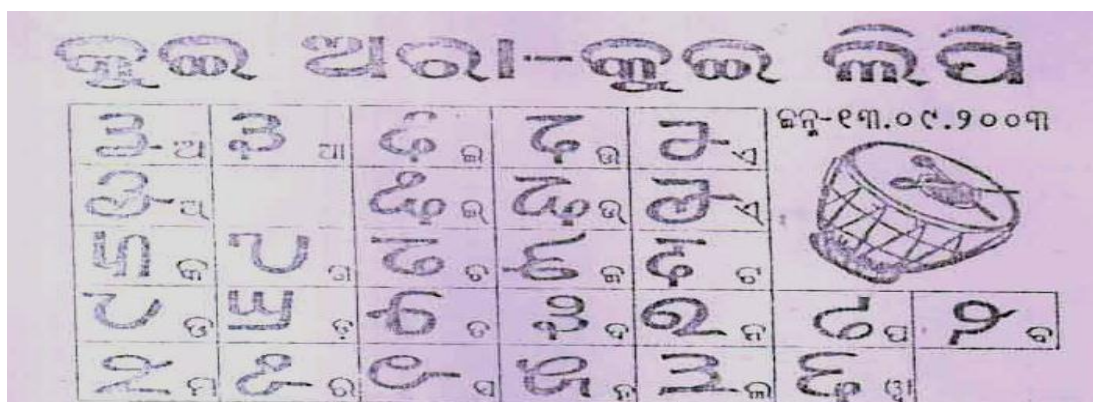
SEARCH FOR A SCRIPT FOR KUI LANGUAGE

Prof. Khageswar Mohapatra observed that” However, in recent past, between 1935-85, at least four scripts have been devised for the languages- Santhali, Ho, Sora and KUI”. His claim for Kui was based on the script or a set of alphabet designed and developed by Late Dayanidhi Mallick. Late Mallick was a school teacher by profession and could feel the problem of teaching little children in a language other than their language spoken at home. A partial image of hand written script⁴³ of late Mallick is reproduced below :

⁴³ Source : Prof. Khageswar Mohapatra



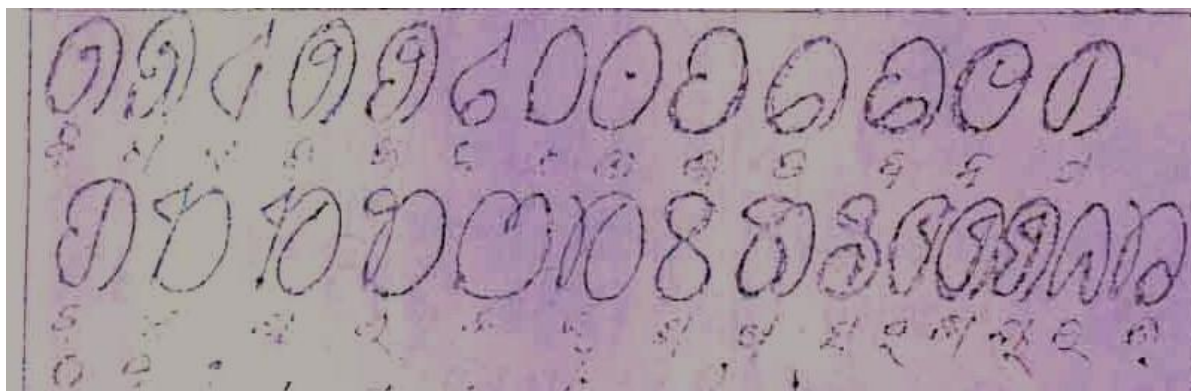
A separate script for Kui language, named as “Kui Ora lipi” was developed by Late Dasura Mallick. The Ora lipi, alike that of Late Mallick was individual and solitary effort with no known expert follower knowledgeable enough to explain the rules of using the script. A partial image of the Oralipi⁴⁴ is reproduced below:



One script has been developed by Shri Biswanath Pradhan. Shri Pradhan is an ex-Services man, now in his seventies holds his script so sacred and not placed for public or

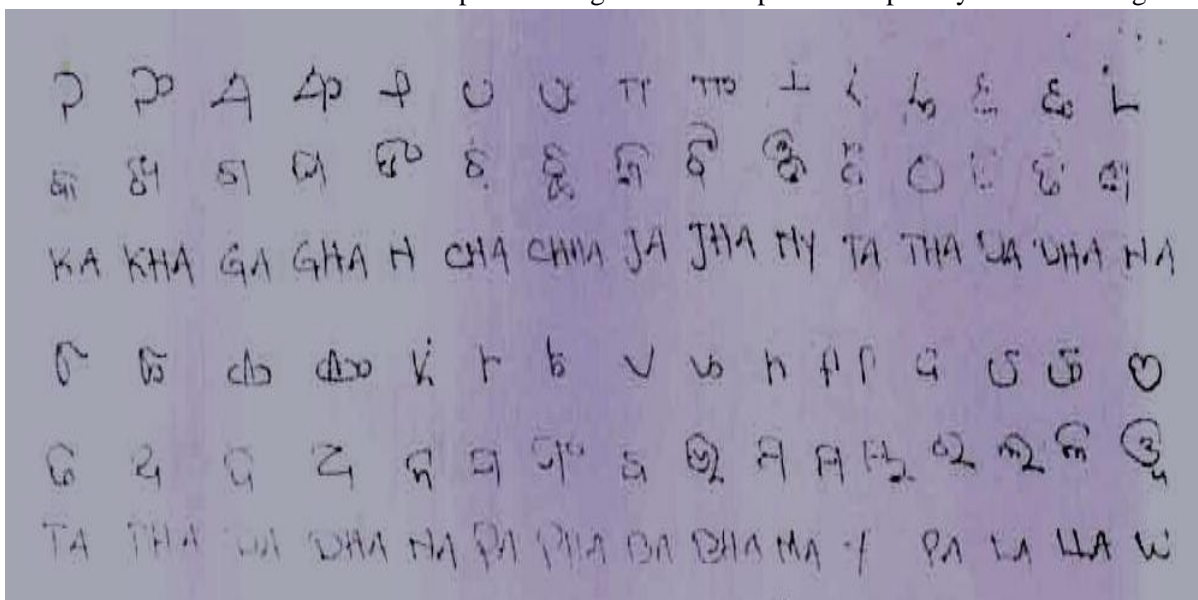
⁴⁴ Source : Shri Raghunath Rath, Balliguda

academic discussion. An image of the script⁴⁵ is re-produced below:



One more script was developed by Shri Dinabandhu Kanhar. Shri Kanhar is an officer under Govt. Of Odisha who feels well the need of proficiency in Odia and English as well. He has developed a primer named *SATEKA GRAMBINAA* (*LET US LEARN AT A TIME*). A partial image of the script⁴⁶ developed by Shri Kanhar is reproduced below:

One more script has been developed by Shri Mansingh Mallick. Shri Mansingh Mallick, though a Livestock Inspector by profession is a Kui language enthusiast, having authored a book of Kui Grammar. A partial image of the script⁴⁷ developed by Shri Mansingh



Mallick is reproduced below :

⁴⁵ Source: Shri Bishwanath Pradhan

⁴⁶ Source : Shri Dinabandhu Kanhar

⁴⁷ Source : Shri Mansingh Mallick.



USE OF ODIA, ENGLISH AND IPA

Odia being the medium of education is taught as the Mother Indian Language and given the first language status in Odisha. It can be seen from the indicative list of publications in Kui, Odia alphabet is very often used for writing Kui. However, its shortcomings in writing Kui is well demonstrated. The Bible Society of India has used a set of diacritical marks viz. Hiatus, double hiatus etc. in addition to the matras in the Odia alphabet to codify the long pronounced vowels, consonants and chocking gutturals. In the Kui Bible, published in 2006. These diacritical marks have been used. This innovative use of diacriticals has, to a long way, bridged the gap between spoken and written Kui language. An image of the Kui Bible is reproduced below.

Use of English alphabet for Kui has been reducing. English adaptations as made in the book An Oriole from the Hills by this author. English, which itself has a multiple and varying phones subjected to usage, requires a practised adaptation to formulas of adaptation. Hence, its use is quite minimal.

IPA I.E. INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ASSOCIATION

Multiplicity of scripts for Kui language calls for a critical review on usability of the script by masses. This may be a good debating point for linguists. However, as a speaker of the Kui language, it is felt that, all the available scripts should be analysed, atleast in light of following

parameters:-

1. Mass familiarity
2. Scope for accommodating all types of phones of Kui tongue.
3. Easy visual recognition
4. Naming of Letters assign to a particular phone alike English, Olchiki.
5. Scope for accommodating words imported from other languages.
6. Burden of a new alphabet on school children .
7. Technical Compatibility by using existing softwares.
8. Solidarity with language policies of Govt .of Odisha.
9. Scope of using Kui Orthography in other Tribal languages of the state.

The seven available scripts, if mapped against these parameters. All scripts except Odia and English are not at all familiar to masses. Strictly speaking, Odia alphabet is more popular than English alphabet.

It is not certain that whether all these alphabet can codify all phones at Kui language. Odia and English alphabet are clearly out of the race. Whereas, by uses of locally developed alphabet, there are no symbols for longer consonant or gutturals. Only the use of diacriticals by Bible society has developed signs for Kui phones. All alphabets are distinctly different in their look. The virtual distinctions are well deciphered when the alphabet is popularly used. In English and Olchiki the letters have their names and used for specific sound. In case of Odia the letter and sounds are same. The set of locally developed alphabet do not have name for letters. Rather, the alphabets are but substitutions to odia alphabet. Any language is enriched by adopting words from other languages. If any alphabet for Kui has only letters for Kui phones, it cannot accommodate popular words from other languages. Therefore, the original letters as picked by winfield are inadequate for new words. Therefore, all the developers have created all the aspirants, though not required for Kui phones.

The new set of alphabet should be judged on the basis of usability by the speakers. The developers must calibrate whether their alphabet will be easily adaptable to the school children. The children should be taught to give life to the language. In the school students are being taught Odia, English and Hindi in upper primary classes. Kui will also be taught in primary level .Any alphabet adopted will certainly be an addition to the burden to school children. Because they have to practice learning new set of hand writing along with above said three languages. In this regard,

the method adopted by the Bible Society is handier. Only by adopting few diacritical marks with Odia matras load of a new alphabet can be avoided. Teaching these marks will be easy.

Technical compatibility is required for mass production of books in Kui language using any set of alphabet. English and Odia have a good number of software whereas the locally developed alphabets are yet to advance a step in that direction. The language software like Unicode can be used for Odia and English.

Govt of Odisha emphasizes for teaching in Kui language at primary levels in Kandhmal district. Govt. of Odisha, through its Multi Lingual Education (MLE) programme has devised some books and appointed Kui Teachers. In absence of well recognised and popular alphabet it uses Odia alphabet though its limitations are well demonstrated. Kui language or any set of alphabet will certainly require Government patronage for its adoption into education system. Odisha has a large number of tribal languages which do not have a set of alphabet. The preservation of indigenous knowledge is a must and it can be achieved through protection of indigenous languages. This experiment in Kui language, with multiple scripts, state medium of teaching and language of higher education should be a precursor for progress of other tribal language.

CONCLUSION

It is well said that spoken languages have lived longer than the written languages. True, but the spoken language is the mirror that reflects the present. The legacy of development or gradual changes in the language can only be traced through the chronological written language. The regional variations of the same language can only be recorded and made popular to reduce the knowledge blockades among the speakers. The tribal languages, unlike any other language, are not sanguine to speakers of any particular tribe or community. It is well remarked by researches, those community claim ownership to the language and go by themselves as approving authorities and ferment opinions of infringement among the speakers. Such an attitude comes as an impediment for the development of the language. Children of a spoken language are the most important users of the language. Hence, any development in this regard should be calibrated against the usability and adoption by the Kui language writing method adaption process, it is well belt, that no other method suits better than used Odia alphabet with diacritical marks for writing Kui language.

Language Attitudes and English as a Global Linguafranca: An empirical study among the Overseas Vietnamese Students

Nguyen Huynh Trang

Hemanga Dutta

Abstract

There has been a rise of learning English as foreign language or as a global linguafranca or a contact language bridging the gap caused by culture and geography in the last few decades in the world and Vietnamese students' contemporary attitudes towards English in relation to their mother tongue Vietnamese is not an exception to this popular trend. The participants in this survey are a group of Vietnamese students pursuing their undergraduate and postgraduate studies in India and Taiwan. This paper also identifies the issues governing the attitude of the respondents in terms of cultural and linguistic identity put forth by the widespread knowledge of the English and Western life style. To achieve these objectives, a questionnaire was delivered to thirty-five students who have been studying in India and Taiwan where English is the medium of instruction in the academic curriculum. The findings reveal the positive attitudes of the respondents towards English and their adherence to western ethos and cultural attributes.

Keywords: *Attitudes, linguistic and cultural identity, linguafranca*

INTRODUCTION

English is considered as the language to interact with the wider world community; to take advantage of what the present-day world has to offer (Savage, 1997); to gain social power and capital (Smitherman, 2004) or just simply to dream of better worlds (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996, cf. Nguyen 2012). Therefore, it has become the first choice of many people in non-English speaking countries for their foreign language learning. In Vietnam, English used to be popular in the South of Vietnam during the American invasion because many people worked for the

American administration or provided services for American soldiers (Brown, 1991; Duiker, 1983 cf. Phan, 2009). In fact, English was the most popular foreign language in South Vietnam from 1958 to 1968 in schools and university (Wright, 2002 cf. Phan, 2009). However, since the implementation of “doi moi” (the renovation policy) of the Government in 1986, English has been studied more and it is served as a means of industrialization and integration of the country. Particularly, English has become the most popular since 1989 in political, economic and socio-cultural aspects of Vietnam. Importantly, many Vietnamese learners start learning English during secondary school and since 2003 the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) has placed English in the elementary education curriculum, students start learning English at the third grade (Phan, 2009). In addition, English also becomes an important tool for thousands of Vietnamese to seek jobs or to study, either overseas or domestics. In other words, English experienced rise and fall of its status because of the historical change in the country. The increase in the number of people learning English and the globalization brings some impacts on linguistic and cultural identity of the country. Hence, the usage of English somehow has influenced on the language and culture identity of Vietnam. For instance, more words and special terms in English have appeared in Vietnamese newspapers, magazines, websites and the usage of English in almost all the domains of life make Vietnamese youngsters attracted towards Western lifestyle in terms of food, dress codes, music, etc.

Keeping in consideration these notions, a research to investigate the attitudes towards English, which is popular in Vietnamese context and the impacts of knowledge of English and western culture on Vietnamese learners would be of utmost importance. The following parts of the paper try to explore the above theme through a survey done on the undergraduate students who have been studying abroad.

Aim and methodology of the study

The survey aimed at showing the attitudinal aspects of the Vietnamese students who have been taking undergraduate and postgraduate programs in India and Taiwan towards the growing popularity of English and widespread influence of Western culture. A questionnaire was forwarded to around 40 students via email out of whom 35 responded back. The participants were chosen for the following reasons.

- (1) They are all adult and considered as young generation of the country. It also seems that all of them have the same purpose of learning English.
- (2) They are supposed to have the same English learning background because most of them previously have studied English at school as well as have rather good level of proficiency to meet English requirements of the Institutions where they have been studying.

(3) They are assigned to study the programs in the countries where English is the medium of instruction.

(4) They are studying in the Asian countries and hence the effects of western lifestyle are minimal, as opposed to those who study in western countries.

Through the study, it was expected that the attitudinal patterns of the respondents towards the use of English as a foreign language (EFL) within the context of Vietnam and the relationship between language knowledge and culture could be observed.

The questionnaire

The questionnaire used for collecting the data for this research paper includes three parts. The first part of the questionnaire contains personal information of the respondents: gender, their study level, the point of time when they got exposure to English. The second part of the questionnaire is concerned with the attitudes of the respondents towards the usage of English in Vietnamese context in general. The third part investigates their frequency of the usage of English in some domains of life as compared to the rest and the intricate relationship existing between the knowledge of English and Western lifestyles and linguistic and culture identity. The questionnaire is based on the statements having four-point Likert scale and their responses are ranked as strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (DA) and strongly disagree (SDA).

Data analysis and discussion

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The sample includes 35 Vietnamese students at postgraduate studies at universities in India and Taiwan where English is the medium of instruction. 22 of them were male constituting 62.9% of the group as the higher number of the group, whereas 13 was female, which constitutes 37.1% of the group. 28.6% of them were undergraduate students whose age ranging from 18 to 22 and 71.4% of them were postgraduate students whose age ranging from 22 to 35. Only 17.1% of the respondents started to learn English in primary school and the majority of the sample started to learn in secondary school (82.9%). It indicates that the majority of the respondents have the same duration of learning English as a foreign language subject at school.

Opinions on the idea of considering English as a global language

The respondents were asked to give opinions on attitudes towards the use of English language based on the questionnaire with different statements. The three first statements elicited responses about evaluating English as a global language. Fig. 3 shows that the respondents

positively recognized English as a global language. 71.4 % of the respondents strongly agreed and 28.6% of them agreed with the statement that English is the best language in terms of a bridge between people irrespective of race, culture and geography. Majority of the respondents also thought that English is important for International communication (40% strongly agreed and 54.3% agreed). Responding to the third statement, although 20% disagreed and 14.3 % of the respondents strongly disagreed that English is the best language of the world in all fields, there were more than 60% of them strongly agreed and agreed. Responses to these three statements indicate that the respondents have positive attitudes towards English and consider it as a global language in communication as well as in various fields.

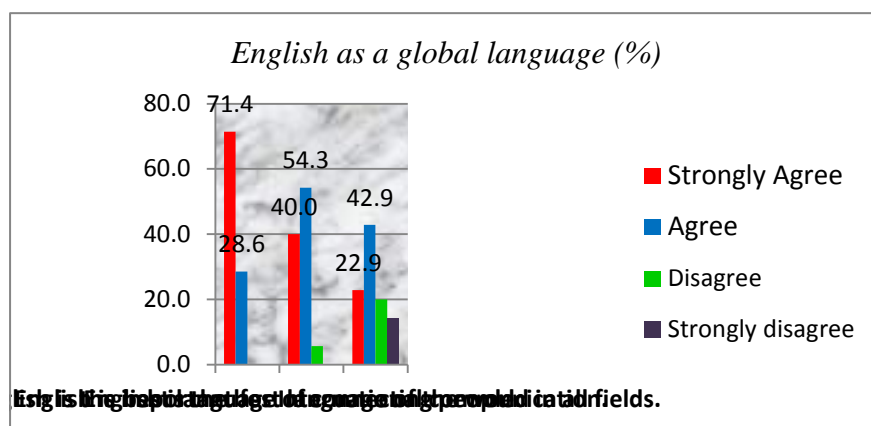


Fig. 3: Respondents' attitudes towards recognizing English as a global language

Attitudes towards the social and instrumental value of English

Table 1 shows the respondents' attitudes towards the social and instrumental value of English. Being undergraduate and postgraduate students learning in the English medium instruction in another country, the respondents recognized more about the value and the importance of knowing English. Majority of the respondents strongly agree and agreed with the statement that knowledge of English offers advantages in seeking good jobs. It indicates that they realized that English is necessary for their jobs. The responses from statement 5 and 7 show that the respondents they have positive attitudes towards those who speak English. More than 80% of the respondents showed their agreement to the statement that when someone speaks English, I think he or she is educated. More than half of them also gave an impression of those who speak English. Responding to statement 6, more than half of them (54.3%) agreed that knowing English gives them much knowledge about the world. As can be seen from table 1 that, 14.3 % strongly agreed and 45.7% agreed that English is the language, which enhances one's social status in the society. Similarly, while responding to statement 9, 20.0% and 40.0% also showed

an agreement that English is the language, which gives any individuals better avenue of life. This indicates that they have instrumental motivation of knowing English and hence it is advantageous in this era of globalization with a better job, good social position, etc.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
4	Knowledge of English offers advantages in seeking good jobs.	60.0	31.4	5.7	2.9
5	When someone speaks English, I think he is educated.	42.9	28.6	22.9	5.7
6	Knowing English helps me know more about the world.	25.7	54.3	17.1	2.9
7	When someone speaks English, it creates a good impression for him.	37.1	25.7	28.6	8.6
8	English is the language, which enhances one's social status in the society.	14.3	45.7	17.1	22.9
9	English is the language which gives any individuals better avenue of life.	20.0	40.0	28.6	11.4

Table 1: Respondents' attitudes towards the social and instrumental value of knowing English

4.3. Opinions on the use of English in education

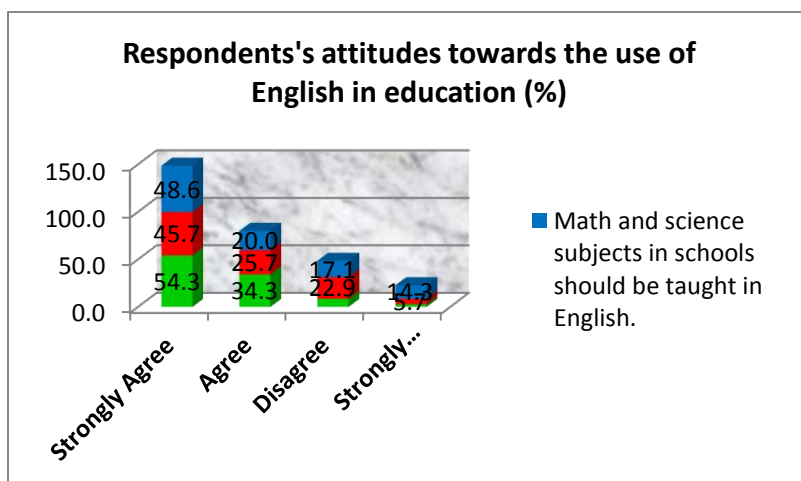


Fig. 4: Respondents' attitudes towards the use of English in education

Fig. 4 presents respondents' attitudes towards the use of English in education. The data show that most of the respondents supported the use of English in education with high percentage of them strongly agreed and agreed to the three statements in this section. Half of the respondents strongly agreed (54.3%) that all children should be required to learn English. Being undergraduate and postgraduate students, they strongly supported to the use of English in undergraduate and postgraduate studies. They also expressed their strong agreement to the statement that math and science subjects should be taught in English (48.6% strongly agreed and 20% agreed). It is a clear indication that the respondents recognized that English is very important in education in Vietnam not only learn it as a foreign language.

Respondents' attitudes towards the use of English in media and public

When asked about the attitudes towards the use of English in media and public, most of them replied in affirmative (fig.5 below). Among the items asked in this section, the highest percentage of the respondents (57.1 strongly agreed and 25.7% agreed) was found that they accepted that there should be more English movies shown at cinemas. The majority of the respondents also stated that more English newspapers and magazines should be published (42.9% strongly agreed and 31.4 % agreed) and a similar percentage of the respondents (79.0% strongly agreed and agreed) accepted the idea that there should be more TV and radio programs in English. The responses imply that these kinds of media in English become more attracted to the respondents. Responding to the statement that there should be more explanations in English in museums and national monuments, there was a high percentage of the respondents showed their agreement (51.4 % strongly agreed and 28.6% agreed). This indicates that they want to attract more foreigners coming to the country understand more about the history of their nation.

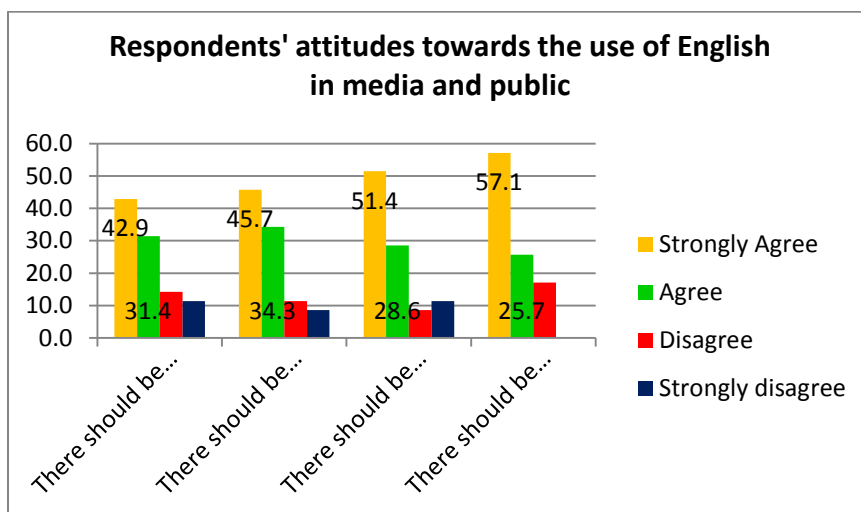


Fig. 5: Respondents' attitudes towards the use of English in media and public

Respondents' attitudes towards the varieties of English

Fig. 6 below shows their attitudes towards the varieties of English. Majority of the respondents show their preference to the standard English of native speakers. 88.6% admitted that they prefer talking and listening to native speakers of English. Being students in the country of non-native speakers of English, the respondents did not like much English variety of these people. More than half of them (51.4%) reported that they don't like the English of non-native speakers. Responding to the English spoken by Vietnamese, majority of the respondents (34.3% strongly agreed and 22.9% agreed) showed their no interest when hearing Vietnamese speak English. It can be implied that they admitted that Vietnamese English should be improved.

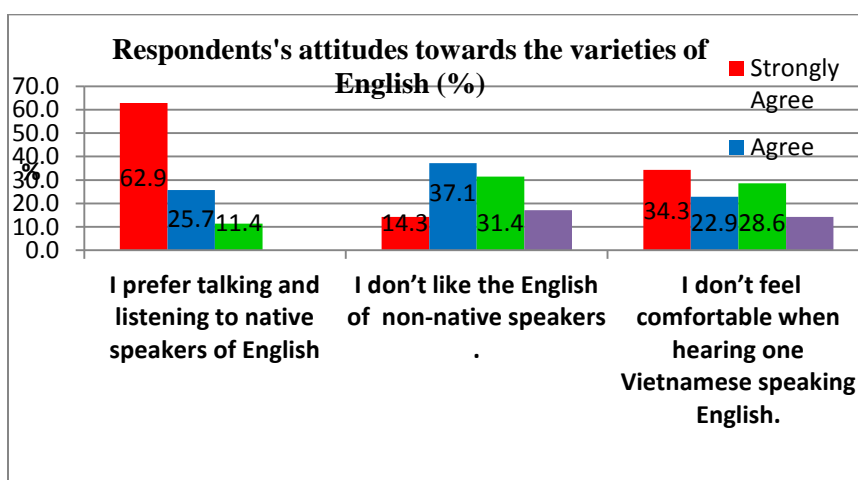


Fig. 6: Respondents' attitudes towards the varieties of English

Influence of English on linguistic and cultural identity

The third part of the questionnaire was designed to ask the students to find out whether they are influenced or not by the English language perceived. The following sections will present the results from the respondents.

Frequency of activities given in English

Respondents' frequency of using English in some activities was obtained through the use of a five-Likert scale questionnaire with Always (A), Frequently (F), Sometimes (S), Rarely (R) and Never (N). Fig.7 below displays the percentage of the activities in English, which the respondents carried out relating to their academic concerns as well as entertainment. Among different types of activities asked, English can be found as a tool for reading academic materials of the respondents with 71.4% reported that they always do reading English academic books or papers and 28.6% frequently do that. Besides, only nearly half of the respondents (45.7%) frequently read English newspapers or magazines. It is interesting to find that 51.4% of the

respondents always listen to English music, 22.9% always do and 25.7 % sometimes. It is indicated that the respondents are much favor of listening to English music. For reading newspapers or magazines in English, only 11.4% always do and 45.7% sometimes do this activity. Half of the respondents replied that they sometimes use English to chat with friends. It is implied that these participants have some international friends so English is used as a means of communicating and making relationship. It can be concluded that English has some extent influence on the respondents' life in terms of academic and entertainment fields.

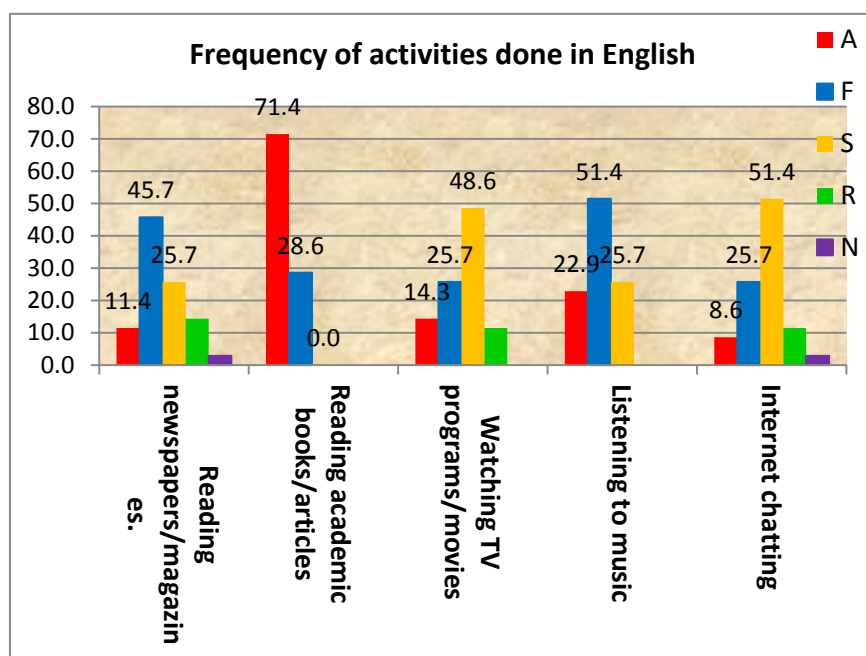


Fig. 7: Frequency of activities done in English

Influence on linguistic identity

When asked about the influence of English on their language, most of the respondents showed that they have some extent of influence. Particularly, majority of the respondents (77.2%) admitted that they like mixing some English words when having conversations with friends from their country. This tendency is so popular among Vietnamese youngsters. 37.1% and 54.3% of the respondents also showed their pride when speaking English. It can be implied that English brings some great effect on these respondents who have been learning and using it for a long time. The respondents also stated that they want to use more English in their daily life (28.6% strongly agree, 48.6% agreed with the statement). Although majority of the respondents (45.7%) showed their agreement with the statement that expressing ideas in English is easier than in

mother tongue and thereby it could be conjectured that English has some influence on the language of these Vietnamese learners.

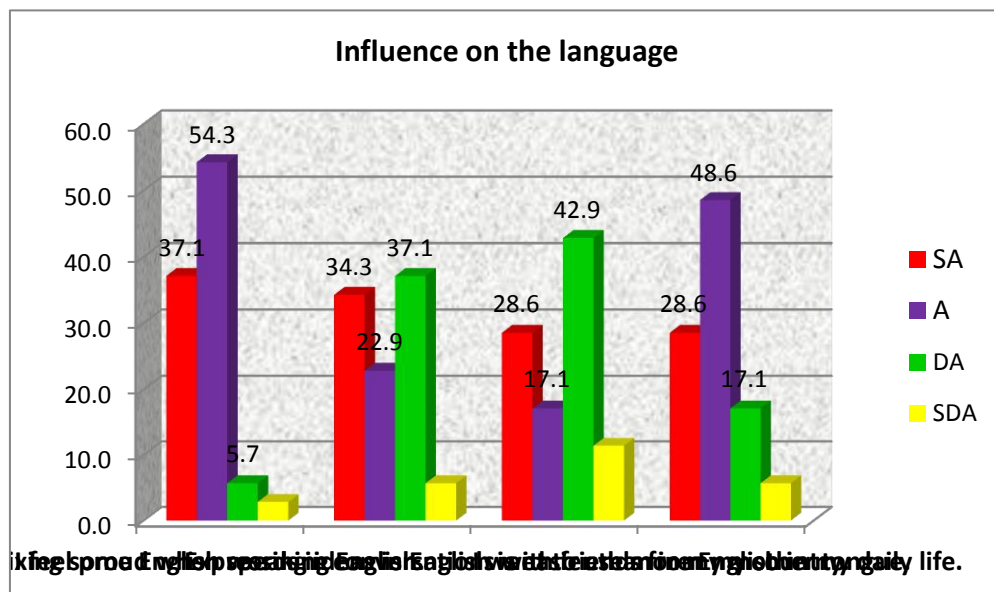


Fig.8: Influence of English on the respondents' language

Influence on cultural identity

Language has strong bearings upon the socio cultural conditions and perceptions of the community. Language does not emerge in isolation but it represents the cultural competence of the speech community which includes the knowledge of the history, art, literature, folk traditions, music to mention a few.

Fig 9.below shows the areas, which according to the respondents are most likely influenced by the knowledge of English and Western lifestyle. The data shows that the respondents do have some influence on their cultural identity in terms of food choice, dress codes, types of music, etc. Among the various areas, music appears to be the one which has been greatly influenced t (45.7% strongly agreed and 11.4% agreed). However, only a minuscule portion of the respondents (14.3% strongly agreed and 22.9% agreed) claimed that everything can be influenced.

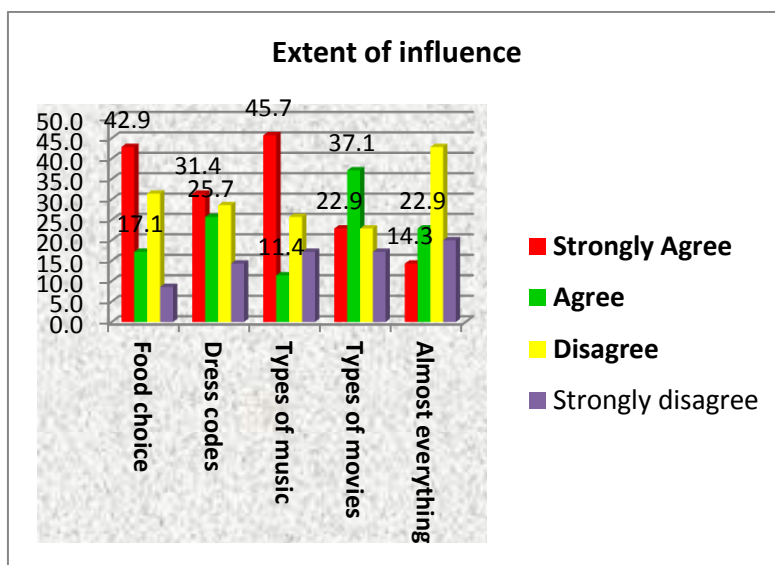


Fig.9: Extent of influence

Conclusion

English is neither a national nor an official language in Vietnam but it is widely learned as a foreign language at all stages of educational system. The attitudes towards English are noteworthy to investigate because this language has some effects on Vietnamese language and culture in this era of globalization. The findings on the influence on the language and culture of Vietnam are also very noticeable.

Although English is only considered as a foreign language, it is highly evaluated as a global language by the respondents. From the data in this paper, we can conclude that majority of the respondents realized the importance of knowing English for the sake of the integration of their country and remarkably, they expressed their positive attitudes towards English in Vietnamese context. The data show that the respondents feel that knowledge of English can be instrumental in seeking better job avenues, widening knowledge, higher social status in the societal hierarchy. They supported the use of English in education. They also wanted an increase use of English in media and public in their country. Another important finding is that although the respondents have positive attitudes towards native speakers of English, they do not like Vietnamese speaking English to another Vietnamese, which is necessary to be considered in the country. The results of the survey also demonstrate that knowledge of English has an inexorable influence on the Vietnamese learners in terms of language and culture. Within the results of this study, it can be ascertained that the attitudes of Vietnamese learners of English in the context of foreign language

play an important role in language policy of the country and the widespread popularity of English as a foreign language has some impeccable influence on the native indigenous, linguistic and cultural identity of the country.

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Appendix

(Attitudes towards English language) SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Part 1:

A.Personal Information (Tick relevant fields or fill in the blanks)

Age (in years)	18-22		22-35	
Gender	Male		Female	
Studying programs	B.A.		M.A.	
Started learning English	In primary school		In secondary school	

Part 2:Language Attitudes

Think of the ideas given and indicate your response using the given scale. Tick the appropriate box.

English – as a global language	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
English is the best language of connecting people.				
English has the qualities for a world language.				
English is the best language of the world in all fields.				
English – as a useful language	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Knowledge of English offers advantages in seeking good jobs.				
When someone speaks English I think he is educated.				
Knowing English helps me know more about the world.				

When someone speaks English it creates a good impression for him.				
English is the language which enhances one's social status in the society.				
English is the language which gives any individuals better avenue of life.				

Opinions on English in education in your country.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
All children should be required to learn English from primary schools.				
English should be the medium of instruction in undergraduate and post-graduate studies.				
Math and science subjects in schools should be taught in English.				

Opinions on English use in your country	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
There should be more newspapers and magazines in English.				
There should be more TV and radio programs in English.				
There should be more explanations in English in museums and at national monuments.				
There should be more English movies shown at cinemas and on television.				

Opinions on the varieties of English	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I prefer talking and listening to native speakers of English.				
I don't like the English of non-native speakers.				
I don't feel comfortable when hearing one Vietnamese speaking English.				

Part 3: Influence of English on the language and culture

1. How often do you do the following activities (Tick the appropriate choice)

	English				
	A	F	S	R	N
Reading newspapers/					

magazines					
Reading academic books					
Watching TV programs/movies					
Listening to music					
Internet chatting					

1. Influence on language use

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel proud when speaking English.				
I like mixing some English words in conversations with friends from my country.				
Expressing ideas in English is easier than in my mother tongue.				
I want to use more English in my daily life.				

2. How do knowledge of English and Western lifestyle influence on your lifestyle?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Food choice (e.g. fast food)				
Dress codes (e.g. jeans, T.shirt)				
Types of music (e.g. Pop, Rock)				
Movies (e.g. English movies)				
Almost everything				

Text, Text Factors and Reading Comprehension: Issues of Bilingual Learners

Subhasis Nanda

Abstract

This study discusses various text related factors which affect readability and in turn, the process of reading comprehension. It also presents and discusses the data collected from ESL learners and teachers, seeing their perspective(s) on text factors, especially text length and its impact on reading comprehension at various levels. The sample population for this study comprises of 25 learners at intermediate level, who are indentified as underachiever learners of second language in the respective class and 6 teachers of who teach in the same institution. As tools this study uses questionnaires for both learners and teachers followed by interactive sessions. The findings suggest that these underachiever learners' have a negative view towards the texts they are prescribed which in turn may affect their attained level of comprehension.

Introduction

The approach to teach and learn English as a second language has come through many developmental processes. So also does the approach to material designing for the same cause. Yet, it is observed that the number of so called “bright learners” who grasp the and make a nice use of the prescribed materials is much less than the learners who struggle to get a grip over their learning, who are ultimately termed as “Underachievers”. When the material, especially for reading comprehension, do not let the larger chunk of second language learners enjoy the act of reading in their comfort zone, it becomes imperative for researchers to look into the factors associated with texts to help further improvisation of instructional materials to suit the purpose. This study aims to discuss the variables that affect readers process the textual input at a higher cognitive level and come up with an advanced comprehension of a text. It also tries to find out learners' and teachers' perspective towards the difficulties second language learners and teachers faces from a text they attempt to read.

Problems of Learners in Advanced Reading Comprehension

Though the second language textbook addresses the recommendations made in National Focus Group (2011), National Curriculum Framework (2005) that at higher academic levels materials should encourage higher order skills like critical thinking, logical reasoning, analytical skills in a second language classroom, there are inadequate facilities to channelize such innovations for positive outcomes. First of all, there is less awareness that language skills; especially that reading comprehension occurs at various cognitive levels. Involving analytical skills in reading does not mean dictating answers of such questions to learners and asking them to memorize that. This happens due to lack of awareness among teachers about the difference of various levels of comprehension. So they use same teaching style and strategies always. Unfortunately, most of the classes in India have a large classroom population. Same was the case with the class size taken as the sample for this study. There no uniformity of language proficiency i.e. the class is a mixed ability group, even though academically they are at the same level. There is no focus to average or below-average readers. They are treated the same way like proficient readers whose number is much less than the underachievers. This creates a fall in self esteem of the underachiever readers. This fall of self esteem filter the higher cognitive processes to be involved in their act of reading.

As a paradox to the objectives set in the syllabus that the learners will be taught to involve higher order skills for intensive reading of the text, the prescribed texts are long enough to take more than 3-4 sessions to complete. This number of breaks and long time span of completing a single text asks too much from the underachievers when it comes to performing the follow up activities. As the activities come at the end of the text, they tend to forget much vital textual information. Thus they become passive recipients for the advanced comprehension tasks. In this part of the world, in job teacher training programmes are not adequately organized to purposeful orientation of teachers towards the new syllabus, its objectives and strategies to achieve them. Though it is not a total fault of the teacher, teaching suffers the inadequate methodology because of lack of coordination between curriculum and in-job teacher training programmes.

Moreover, the entry behavior of the learner, as mentioned in the syllabus is that they are expected to have achieved skills of basic proficiency. Still the teachers teaching methodology or strategies guide learners more towards literal comprehension and memorization.

As most of the learners of Odisha come from rural societies, and a majority of them are first generation learners (Meher, 2010), it is quite obvious that their world knowledge as vocabulary strength will be less than expectation. Thus, though there are welcome changes in +2 syllabus, the demands from these rural, first generation underachiever readers becomes inappropriate. Exposing them to long expository texts, that have more number of unfamiliar concepts than narrative or persuasive texts and expecting the readers to achieve advanced levels of comprehension seems unrealistic.

Background of the study

The present study focuses on regional medium students of a government junior college and their problems in reading comprehension at the expected level as mentioned in their syllabus for English. As per the syllabus, learners are expected to have a basic proficiency in all language skills. The syllabus also spells out the objectives of teaching of reading comprehension to these students. It says, as the learners have a master over basic reading comprehension skills, they should be taught incorporating higher order skills of reading like inferential and evaluative reading, analytical skills, critical and reflective response to the text etc. which are skills associated with intensive reading. But the textbook is still has long texts which take at least 3-4 sessions for the teachers to teach. And practically a large Indian second language class is never a homogeneous group of proficient readers. It always is a mixed group of proficient, average and slow readers who read the same text, applying different strategies and achieving different levels of comprehension.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss various text factors which affect reading comprehension and to know the perspective(s) of learner and teachers as well on this issue.

Readability and Reading difficulties

Text readability is a measure of how well and how easily a text conveys its intended meaning to a reader of that text. According to Richards et al. (1992, p. 306), “readability refers to how easily written materials can be read and understood. It depends on many factors including;

- (a) The average length of sentences in a passage
- (b) The number of new words a passage contains
- (c) The grammatical complexity of the language used.”

The notion of readability is, of course, a controversial issue, since researchers claim to have found that linguistic complexity may not be detrimental to comprehension.

Each reader represents an individual pattern of linguistic strengths and needs; however, we can identify general patterns as a beginning point for instruction. The studies done by Spache (1981) and Gough and Juel (1991) say, reading difficulties tend to fall into three areas as discussed below;

Some readers are challenged by word identification. They may not understand that letters represent sounds in a systematic way; they may experience difficulty in recognizing consistent patterns within this system. Other readers may be able to accurately decode but do so at a very slow and effortful rate. Still others may do well with short words but falter when faced with the multisyllabic words so often found in upper- level text. Lack of efficient word identification can seriously interfere with comprehension.

A second pattern involves readers who are challenged by fluency; that is, they do not have a large store of automatically recognized sight words. They may be relatively accurate decoders, but they often apply decoding strategies to words that they should know without overtly matching letters and sounds. They may experience difficulty with irregular words, or words that do not fit letter-sound patterns. As a result, they read slowly and, because they are primarily concerned with accurately identifying words, their comprehension often falters.

Readers who are primarily challenged by comprehension represent a third pattern of reading difficulties. They may be able to fluently identify words, but they lack workable strategies for comprehending and remembering what they read. They may lack a strong vocabulary base and be unable to assign meanings to a wide array of spoken words. These readers often do not understand that reading is a highly interactive process; they expect comprehension to just happen as a result of saying the words.

Factors Affecting Readability and comprehension

A number of factors influence the readability of a text. These are broadly categorized under the two following categories:

- Reader factors
- Text factors

Reader factors

Readability of a text depends on more than just the text itself. There are many characteristic features that a reader brings with him to his interaction with the text and those have an effect on how well a text is comprehended.

Characteristics of the reader:

- Background knowledge (how much you already know about the material or related concepts)
- Reading ability - vocabulary and comprehension
- Interest
- motivation
- Attitude

Text factors

In a text, there are a number of physical features such as font size, clear design and layout and extra textual features (pictures and diagrams).and other characteristic features Text type, text length, vocabulary difficulty, text coherence and cohesion, syntax of a text which may affect readability and comprehension.

In order to facilitate readability layout, titles, headings, subheadings and fonts can be altered along with adding aids as appropriate. These may include: pictures, diagrams, charts, maps, tables, graphs, vocabulary lists and definitions, glosses, pre- and during text questions, abstracts, L1 abstracts, hypertext links to further texts or non-textual aids, footnotes, recapitulations etc.

Thorndyke (1977) and Meyer (1975) say regarding interrelationship of text type and comprehension that, knowledge of the structure of a text facilitates comprehensibility and recall. Thorndyke says, “Comprehensibility and recall were found to be a function of the amount of inherent plot structure in the story, independent of passage content. Recall probability of individual facts from passages depended on the structural centrality of the facts: Subjects tended to recall facts corresponding to high-level organizational story elements rather than lower-level details.”

Text

A text is a language unit with a definable communicative function which can be spoken or written. Many researchers have tried defining “text” in a comprehensive way.

Karatay (2007) stated that the text is a meaningful, logical and related structure composed of all structures based on language. The text is to express an opinion or experience in writing (Hartman and Hartman, 1996). Everything which is the subject of reading, has a narrative integrity and is written is a text (Ozdemir, 1983; Iseri, 1998; Gunay, 2003).

According to some researchers every object established meaning from itself is a text. It is not possible to limit the text, only in writing. A novel, a picture, thought, sculpture, mathematical equation .They all can be a text. (Short, 1992; Lenski, 1998; Siegel, 1984)

A text is something which has the potential of giving some meaning. The cognitive level of the meaning to be derived or the comprehension is always influenced by the type of text the reader is reading. As per Glossary of Reading Terms, texts are usually of four types. They are;

Text type

According to the structure and objectives producing a text, it has been divided into several types. Different scholars hold different nomenclature while addressing text types. Urquhart and Weir (1998), Prahlad (1989) and Florida Center for reading Research (FCRR) considers four text types. They are;

Expository Text

Expository writing is a mode of writing in which the purpose of the author is to inform, explain, describe, or define his or her subject to the reader. It reports factual information and the relationships among ideas. Expository text tends to be more difficult for students than narrative text because of the density of long, difficult, and unknown words or word parts.

There are five types of expository texts. They are;

- Sequence or time order
- Listing
- Compare and Contrast
- Cause and Effect
- Problem-Solution

Descriptive Texts

A descriptive text is a text which lists the characteristics of something. Descriptive texts are used in all forms of writing to create a vivid impression of a person, place, object or event e.g. to:

- describe a special place and explain why it is special
- describe the most important person in your life

Descriptive writing is usually used to help a writer develop an aspect of their work, e.g. to create a particular mood, atmosphere or describe a place so that the reader can create vivid pictures of characters, places, objects etc.

Argumentative Text

Argumentative texts depart from the assumption that the receiver's beliefs must be changed. They often start with the negation of a statement which attributes a quality or characteristic activity to something or someone (esp. scholarly texts). They also include advertising texts, which try to persuade their readers that a product is somehow better, at least implicitly, than others.

Narrative Text

A narrative text tells a story from a particular point of view and can be presented using words, images and/or sounds. Its purpose is to narrate events, entertain and engage the reader in an imaginative experience. Narratives can also be used to teach, persuade or inform the reader. While narratives are often fictional, they can be based on fact. Structure of a narrative text contains:

- An orientation that sets the scene and introduces the characters
- A complication that describes events those lead to a problem
- A resolution that describes how and why the complication is resolved
- A reorientation that ties up loose ends (optional).

There is evidence that knowledge of the structure of a text facilitates comprehensibility and recall. In investigating both structure and content variables, Thorndyke (1977) found that "Comprehensibility and recall were found to be a function of the amount of inherent plot structure in the story, independent of passage content. Recall probability of individual facts from

passages depended on the structural centrality of the facts: Subjects tended to recall facts corresponding to high-level organizational story elements rather than lower-level details.”

Thorndyke’s work was based on narrative texts. He proposed that like sentences, narratives have their own internal structure and grammar rules for simple stories were proposed. But similar results were found in other text types including expository texts. Meyer (1975) found five basic organizations of expository discourse: collection, description, causation, problem/solution, and comparison.

Text Complexities

While reading a text to comprehend, a reader has to deal with a lot of factors which makes the text complex or simple for the reader. Several such factors are discussed below.

As per the number of new words a reader encounters during the reading process, texts can be classified into 3 categories (Treptow, 2006). They are;

2.6.2.1 Independent level

Relatively easy text for the reader, with no more than approximately 1 in 20 words difficult for the reader (95% success)

2.6.2.2 Instructional level

Challenging but manageable text for the reader, with no more than approximately 1 in 10 words difficult for the reader (90% success)

2.6.2.3 Frustration Level

Difficult text for the reader, with more than 1 in 10 words difficult for the reader (less than 90% success)

Quality of Text

The quality of writing can also affect reading comprehension. Text that is poorly organized and difficult to understand can slow reading speed and significantly hinder reading comprehension. Poor-quality writing may slow decoding speed, as well as syntactic recognition and sentence comprehension. For a particular learners group, inappropriate quality reading material can also cause readers to lose motivation while reading, which negatively affects reader’s higher cognitive engagement with the text and thus, comprehension, is affected negatively.

While looking at all the above elements that affect reading comprehension, it becomes unclear to predict when reading comprehension begins. The cognitive elements that give rise to

good reading comprehension are not isolated from each other. Children sometimes have trouble putting the pieces together and understanding how these basic skills relate to reading. A good reading teacher does not merely teach the basic skills, but also teaches how those basic skills relate to each other and helps children integrate these various elements to support their reading development.

Text Length

Hauptman (2000) mentions that grammar, vocabulary, and the length of the text determine the level of difficulty of the reading task. A problem all reading test developers face is how long the texts should be.

Johnston (1984) notes that texts used in reading comprehension tests tend to be many and brief. The length of texts that candidates are exposed to, will influence the strategies and skills that the candidates may be asked to deploy. If texts are too short, it may not be possible to test expeditious reading (search reading, skimming and scanning), but only careful reading.

Engineer (1977) found that when texts longer than 1, 000 words were used, the abilities that could be measured changed. The suggestion is that longer texts allow testers to assess more study related abilities and to reduce reliance on sentential processing abilities that might tap syntactic and lexical knowledge more than discourse processing abilities. And the ability to identify the main idea of long texts might be qualitatively different from the ability to identify the main idea in shorter texts. It is also likely to be much easier to measure reading speed using longer texts than with a number of short passages with associated questions. A common argument in favor of the use of longer texts is that this practice reflects more closely the situation where students have to read and study long texts. However, in many reading tests a number of short passages are used for the reason that this allows a wider range of topics to be covered thus may reduce the potential bias from a restricted range of topic areas. In developing reading tests, test developers should be aware of the compromise between maximizing authenticity by using the sort of long texts that students might have to read in their studies, and minimizing content bias by using several short passages.

According to Urquhart and Weir (1998), in a second language teaching or testing context, reading for comprehension is always time bound. So, length of a text will always affect strategies employed by readers and the cognitive engagement of readers with the information extracted

from the text in a given time frame. This view looks at length and time as two adjacent variables for comprehension.

Discussing the Data Collected and its Implications

To gather data to achieve the above objectives, questionnaires were administered to learners and teachers. The learner questionnaire was administered to all 32 students who showed interest to be a part of the study irrespective of their reading proficiency level.

The responses from the learners may be biased of their relationship with the teacher thus, in order to get a clear and objective data; teachers were also administered with a parallel questionnaire.

A Discussion of learners' Response to Questionnaire

The data collected through learners' questionnaire shows that most of these learners lack motivation for reading in English. This lack of motivation is caused by inadequate and inappropriate teaching and learning practices in L2 classroom. The techniques used by teachers reflect a "spoon feeding" practice so far as comprehension is concerned. This subsection presents that learners lose interest and attention while reading because of lack of adequate vocabulary and lack of aware for better reading strategies. Most of the learners are not familiar with asking questions to teachers and get their doubts clarified. As every individual learner comes with individual schema for the concepts which are in the text and familiar to them, it is natural that they interpret these concepts differently. The confusion in the individual interpretation and the unanimous interpretation should be fixed in the classroom. This is not a regular practice in L2 classroom or with all L2 learners. This lack of two way question-answer and discussion filters out the possibility of higher cognitive engagement with the textual information. The data also show that the learners have problems to deal with longer texts for various reasons. It becomes difficult for them to recollect concepts and interpretations from the previous session and relate those with the portion of the text they read at one time. In longer texts, learners encounter more vocabulary or difficult phrases. As they are learners from a L1 educational background, they do not have that reading speed or fluency to cover a long portion of the text quickly. Thus they need breaks per sentence or paragraph while reading a text. So naturally they will take more breaks while reading a longer text. This way the comprehension will rely more on memorization of factual understanding of the text. Also learners may find it difficult to organize vital ideas or concept across the text for a global meaning and higher or advanced levels of comprehension is hindered.

A Discussion of Teachers' Response to Questionnaires

The above analysis of responses of teachers to the administered questionnaire, presents data on teachers attitude towards reading skills, techniques used to teach reading comprehension and their view on text length. Most of the teachers consider productive skills are more important and needed for learners than receptive skills like reading. Teachers still believe in the old school of methodology by paying less focus on learners' interaction, doubts or questions; which when suppressed, minimizes the motivation to read and enquiry about the interpretation(s). A one-to-many approach of teaching reading comprehension always floats with the surface meaning or literal meaning of the text.

On use of lengthy texts and covering them in a series of classes, many teachers are not convinced. They say, teaching comprehension becomes a bit difficult with a single text taught in chunks. They also believe, if smaller texts are used it will pose less difficulty to teach and less complexity to learn.

Implications

Text length should be controlled and decided as per learners' entry level performance at a given level, which can be asserted through surveys by govt. bodies or NGOs in a larger scope because this study has found out that teachers and learners, both, face difficulties and thus, change the teaching/learning strategies as far as lengthy texts are concerned. The study does not rule out the role and impact of other text factors discussed in the paper. But it is noteworthy that, when a text for 12-14 page, on an average, is taught to learners across 3-4 sessions as a part of intensive reading for comprehension at various cognitive levels, somewhere the demand is more on memory than cognitive processes. Rather, texts can be chosen in a way that one text could be used and covered in one session with some follow up activities. Textbook designers may also have an eye of level of complexity and text type while choosing and adapting the texts. As far as achieving the goals stated in NCF (2005), teachers should also be oriented regarding how to use these materials in large classrooms.

Conclusion

This study gives a glimpse of some of the text factors which are not much focused when reading comprehension is discussed the way academicians and researchers talk about approaches to material development and methods of teaching. This study brings home a reality that we cannot expect all learners and teachers to be at ease with the materials. This study presents the perspective of underachiever bilingual learners of rural background regarding reading

comprehension and their difficulties with handling the reading texts. If the findings of this study leave any impact on textbook designers, the larger chunk of learners, who are termed as underachievers in ESL classrooms, will be benefitted.

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First Language as a Resource in the ESL Writing classroom

Nainala Satish Kumar

Abstract

It is a well-known fact that in a grassroots multilingual country, like India, especially in rural ESL contexts, children grow up in an 'immediate atmosphere' of the mother tongue. As a result, concept formation happens in their primary means of expression-the first language and by means of 'accommodation'/'assimilation' extends to the second language. Moreover, in the early learning years of a child, the entire system of language (syntactic, semantic, phonological, etc) is operated in her/his L1. These learners enter the ESL classroom with a more enabled language that can serve as a valuable pedagogic resource. This resource, however, is largely neglected and even perceived as a hindrance, particularly in the writing classroom. This converts a 'comfortable bilingual composing activity' into a frustrating monolingual one, resulting in poor performances.

This study, therefore presents an attempt made to use the more enabled language, L1, as a resource during various phases while composing in English for class IX regional medium learners.

The pre and post test scripts analysis show that the use of L1 during various stages of L2 writing has enabled these second language writers to write a matured composition linguistically, syntactically and semantically with an enhanced motivation.

Problematising Composing in Rural ESL Classroom

Learners in the rural ESL classrooms, regardless of their ability and proficiency in the target language are expected to compose and write in English (henceforth referred as L2). As a result of the limited linguistic proficiency, many students often 'fail' in the endeavor. However it needs to be recognized that these students come to ESL writing classroom with an already well developed ability to think and express their thoughts in their mother tongue (hence forth referred as L1) as their world knowledge and concept formation are deeply rooted in their L1, which

instrumentally operates the entire system of language (syntactic, semantic, phonological, etc).

The role of L1, however in teaching English writing if any is normally restricted to the translation of sentence structures and grammatical rules, but the pedagogic value of the cognitive aspect of L1 has rarely been exploited and even negated by perceiving as hindrance and interference. As a result of the restriction and negation, a potential pedagogic resource goes underexploited and even wasted. Very few studies, in the Indian rural context have explored the potential of the powerful resource, i.e., more enabled language, L1 in ESL writing classroom.

The objective of this study, therefore, is to explore and tap the facilitative nature and the thinking value of L1 to provide a cognitive scaffold to enabling writing skills in L2.

Previous Studies

For ESL learners L2 writing is a ‘bilingual activity’ in which writers can avail the advantage of two languages for performing various cognitive operations simultaneously (Wang, &Wen, 2002; 239). Research in ESL composition has already proved that students use their L1 while composing in L2 as a ‘fairly common strategy’ (Krapel, 1991; 49) (Friedlander, 1990; Wang, 2003; Wang & Wen, 2002; Wolfersberger, 2003; Woodall, 2002).

Research studies in the last decade could successfully investigate the purposes for which L1 is used. Some of these purposes are; generating ideas (Akeyl, 1994; Friedlander, 1990; Wang, 2003; Wang & Wen, 2002; Wolfersberger, 2003; Woodall, 2002), planning and organisation of texts (Wang, 2003; Wang & Wen, 2002; Woodall, 2002), evaluating the text produced, process controlling, back tracking either to generate more text or, alternatively to check back on the success of the match between expression and the intended meaning(Wang, 2003; Wang & Wen, 2002; Wolfersberger, 2003), or solving linguistic problems while formulating text (Wang, 2003; Whalen & Menard, 1995).

Many of these studies have used think aloud protocols and have provided a wealth of knowledge about the use of L1 in the L2 classroom. However, this wealth is restricted to the incidental use of L1 by the students while composing in L2. An examination of these studies also reveals that the nature of use of L1 is incidental, spontaneous and student self initiated. There are hardly any studies that have investigated the effect of deliberate and teacher initiated use of L1.

Very few studies (Lally (2000) & Stapa & Majid (2009)) have examined the effect of deliberate use of L1 in L2 writing. These studies have reported that the deliberate use of L1 facilitated better organization and coherence and also resulted in compositions with more number of ideas and better quality essays with reference to organization, vocabulary, language and mechanics.

The present study is based on the outcomes of these earlier ones, but with a difference. Although these studies focused on the use of L1 in L2 composing, all of them have confined the role of L1 to only one phase of the process, i.e. brainstorming which is the phase of idea generating. They have not attempted to investigate the effect of use of L1 during other phases of the composing process which include organising, composing, drafting, revising, and editing. Since the past studies proved that writers use L1 throughout the entire writing process, the possibility of using L1 throughout the process is feasible.

The objective of this study, therefore, is to explore the facilitative nature or the pedagogic value of L1 i.e. use of the language capabilities, available knowledge, and world knowledge accessed through L1 to provide cognitive support to generate ideas, organise, plan and (re)write narrative opinionated essays enabling writing in L2.

Research Questions

Following are the questions, which this study investigates and tries to answer

1. Will the deliberate use of the mother tongue (L1) in the preparatory phases of ideas generation, organization, composition and reflection and revision support L2 development in writing?
2. Will the use of L1 help to develop a qualitatively better developed L2 written product with reference to the content, organization, vocabulary, and language use of the opinion based narratives?

Hypothesis

The hypothesis is that the use of L1 as a resource, in ESL writing classroom during the stages of prewriting i.e. brainstorming-for idea generation, organizing, and planning, and during the composing stage as well as the post writing reflection and revision stage would generate

written products with a large number of ideas which could also be complex. This would produce more cohesive and qualitatively better L2 texts with enhanced language use.

Subjects

In total, 49 class IX participants mostly first-generation learners from a regional medium school, located in a small town, irrespective of the proficiency have participated in the study. But many of them were irregular to the intervention study. Thus the participants who were regular throughout the period of study were 16 accidentally with an equal gender ratio. It should be noted that the data (pre and post test scripts) of regular 16 participants is considered for analysis.

Tools used

1. Pre and post intervention study group discussions were conducted to note students' opinions, classroom procedures and practices of teaching writing.
2. Pre and post tests were conducted to capture the entry level as well as exit level writing proficiency of the students in order to measure the growth, if any.
3. Whole class discussions were conducted before and after the intervention study to note the students' opinions concerning use of L1.

Data Collection Procedure

The procedure of data collection involved conducting some teaching sessions for 8 days which included teaching a sample task and also teaching three other tasks.

Teaching Strategy employed

Teaching strategy involved using their more enabled language, i.e., mother tongue at various stages of writing process. During all teaching sessions as part of intervention study, same strategy was followed. Since the class lasted only for 40 minutes each piece of composition was extended for over a period of two days which involved producing a rough draft and a final draft on two consecutive days in the following manner.

Whole class was given a topic to brainstorm for ideas using their mother tongue and also English. Choice of language for expression was left to them. Since the students' proficiency in English is very low, they came up with ideas in their mother tongue with occasional English

words and phrases led by the topic. During the phase of brainstorming, the students were allowed to interact with their fellow students and also with the researcher to think and discuss for ideas. The words and phrases which students came up with were listed on the board randomly. After listing on the board, L1 was used to negotiate for relevant ideas with the students through questions and explanations in order to shape them.

Later, these ideas were arranged in order using L1 as a tool for discussion. Next, the words and phrases which were in L1 were translated into English with the help of the already provided dictionary and researcher being the other source. Then, the students were instructed to write individually with the help of the ideas organised on the board.

On the following day, the students' scripts were returned with feedback, mostly in L1 provided by the researcher based on which they were instructed to compose a final draft using feedback as input. Before that in the class, a consciousness-raising session was done regarding their first drafts in which they were made aware of the different features which they are expected to improve to write better.

After this, they were instructed to write individually again. The final drafts were collected and recorded. Since the tasks are enabling in nature, no time and word limit is imposed on the students while writing. During the entire process, researcher has donned the role of a facilitator.

Data analysis and Findings

Data (16 students'), pre and post test scripts, is analysed both quantitatively as well as qualitatively keeping the intervention task scripts aside and the findings are as follows.

Quantitative Analysis and Findings

Category of Analysis		Pre test	Post test	Difference(-/+)
Linguistic Fluency (no of T-units)		5.87	17.5	+11.63
Syntactic Maturity (MTUL)		4.39	6.45	+2.06
Semantic Complexity	Introductory Statements	1.18	6.06	+4.88
	Reasoning Statements	3.75	9.56	+5.81
	Concluding Statements	0.81	1.75	+0.94
Linguistic	Number of NP	11.06	41.81	+30.75

Complexity & Variety	Variety of NP	7.5	21.25	+13.75
	Number of VP	5.81	18.87	+13.06
	Variety of VP	4.43	9.87	+5.44

Table.1⁴⁸

Growth can be observed in the post-test scripts with reference to various categories that are briefed as findings in the following lines.

Linguistic Fluency: The index of text length with reference to number of T-units increases from 5.87 (pre-test 16 scripts) to 17.5 (post-test scripts). This indicates that the subjects are able to generate a larger number of idea units increasing the text length. It can be inferred that the use of L1 has eased the access to content which was then translated and composed in L2.

Syntactic Maturity: The average number of words per T-unit has increased from 4.39 in the pre-test scripts to 6.45 in the post-test scripts. This suggests that as a result of the use of L1, the students are able to produce more syntactically mature scripts by densely packing T-units with more words resulting in longer sentences which would probably contain increased number of clauses.

Semantic Complexity: Three different types of statements in the post-test scripts namely: introductory/stance making, reasoning, and concluding statements (6.06, 9.56 and 1.75 respectively) are more than the mean number of statements in the pre-test script (1.18, 3.75 and 0.81 respectively). This implies that post-test scripts are semantically more complex than the pre test scripts.

Linguistic variety: In the pre-test scripts, the mean value of total noun phrases and variety of noun phrases are 11.06 and 7.5. By contrast, in the post-test scripts the values have increased to 41.812 and 21.25. The increase in the number and variety of noun phrases, 'nouniness' is considered as a mark of mature writing indicating growth.

The mean value of verb phrases and variety of verb phrases in the pre-test are 5.812 and 4.437.

⁴⁸ Only mean values are presented in the Table.1

On the contrary the mean values of the post-test scripts have increased to 18.875 and 9.875.

It can be inferred from the above figures that the post-test scripts are linguistically more complex and exhibits a significant growth. Thus, this implies that with the use of L1 the students are able to generate more and varied vocabulary while composing.

Qualitative analysis ⁴⁹ and Findings

In order to capture the nature of words used in sentences and statements, in other words ‘small gains’, a qualitative analysis of the scripts with reference to semantic complexity is attempted below.

In the analysis, kinds of statements used in both pre and post test scripts are examined. Thus the focus is on intra paragraph and inter-sentence level. At the paragraph level, three kinds of statements, namely introductory statements, reasoning statements, and concluding statements are analysed.

Introductory statements

An appropriate introductory/stance making statement is missing in both the scripts (**J** and **G**). In one of the scripts (**J**), introduction is completely absent because hardly any meaning can be made out as it is a spelling mistake-ridden script (*Smokoivg is a bad hallofl*). In the other (**G**), the introductory sentence is written ‘*Smoking is a bad habit*’; but supporting details are missing. Another problem is that this introductory sentence is also not appropriate as the stance taken is not made explicit.

By contrary, in post test scripts well written introductory statements are used by the students. An introductory statement with supporting details (explaining personal choice) is prominent in the first script (**J**)(*Every child likes playing games. I like chess, skipping and kho-kho.*). The second script (**G**) begins with an apt introduction, making the stance explicit followed by the personal statement supported with a list of examples (*Yes, Every child likes playing games. I like playing games. For example shuttle, skipping, chess, cricket and carrom.*). Use of the phrase ‘*For example*’ to list the examples is a notable feature.

⁴⁹ Owing to the space limitation of the paper, only two selected subjects’ scripts-both pre and post test scripts are analysed qualitatively.

Reasoning statements

In the pre test scripts, reasoning statements used by the student to support the stance taken are very few in number with limited supporting detail expressed in the form of individual words, phrases and run on sentences. In the first script (**J**), the reasons are not intelligible (*smoking is a wetinee pallethion forms sallokivg It has bad Efocots somikg Is can It was a werthes devyed can was camves*). In the second script (**G**), very limited reasons are written in incomplete as well as run on sentences expressed in interconnected words and phrases. (*It gives bad smell. Smoking because cancer and health problems it causes. because smoking causes lungs spoil.*).

On the contrary, in both of the post test scripts reasoning statements are not only well written and more in number but also very well elaborated with supporting details. In the first script, a significant variety is seen in the reasons stated. (*First, I like play chess because in that peaceful, improve the knowledge and entertainment.*

Next, I like playing skipping because in that enjoy and funny games, physical fitness and entertainment and hight growing.

Finally, I like play kho-kho because I practice running friends with enjoy and this games happiness.). In the other script, the reasoning statements are expressed in detail displaying a considerable variety in the statements and the supporting details (*First, my Favourite game is shuttle because I meet my friends. I play shuttle. I spend time with my friends. I play shuttle with my playing friends.*

Next, I got entertainment for playing shuttle.

After that, I play shuttle causes body fitness.

Later, I play skipping because physical exercise.

Before, mind power is increase so, I play chess.

Next, I play shuttle just for fun.

After that, I play cricket with my friends for entertainment.

Later, I play carom with my brothers and sisters for concentration. Concentration increase because play carom.).

Concluding statements

In the pre test scripts, similar to the introductory sentences, appropriate concluding statements are also missing. No concluding statement is seen in the first script (**J**) as it is unintelligible. But in the second script (**G**), a concluding statement with mistakes is written (*so, smoking is Avoide.*).

By contrary, both of the post test scripts ended with well written concluding statements and these statements are of different nature. First script was concluded with a statement which includes a summary of all the ideas expressed in the script. An appropriate use of the conjunction; *so* is seen in this conclusion. And the other script was concluded with a statement which is conclusive in nature (*Because of all these reasons every child likes playing games.*).

Pedagogic Value of Deliberate Use of L1

The post test scripts demonstrate growth/maturity in terms of ideas, and language use compared to the pre test scripts. Use of L1 during various stages of L2 writing has enabled the ESL writers to write a matured composition reflecting a range of various developmental patterns including linguistic, syntactic, and semantic fluency, variety and complexity that enhanced their L2 writing capability. On the whole it can be concluded that the use of L1 had its effect on the entire process of composing. Use of L1 also has a non-linguistic benefit as it acted as a motivating factor.

Deliberate use of L1 has created opportunities for the students to access their existing rich bank of world knowledge and language capabilities. Use of L1 prompted the students to think freely without any hurdles and enabled them to generate and express ideas in L1. The deliberate attempt has initiated the students to activate the process of searching for equivalents in turn triggering expression in L2 and thus eased the composing by facilitating dialogue and discussion not only among the students but also with the researcher (teacher) and enabled them to accept the feedback and reconstruct the entire composition.

In the Indian in rural context, where students bring their world knowledge and well-developed capabilities into the ESL classroom, this becomes beneficial in developing the

proficiency of English, in this case writing.

In these contexts as the learners' L2 proficiency is less than their capability in L1, composing in L2 becomes a scaring activity as the learners cannot think and compose in L2. But composing, mediated through L1 facilitates easy access to ideas and thoughts which reduces the fear factor and stress. And there by the presence of a resource, L1 throughout the composing process in L2 eases composing and increases the confidence and motivation of learners to compose freely with enhanced motivation. As L1 forms an intimate part of the learners' identity, use of L1 creates space for learners' self identity and self assertion to emerge.

Along with the facilitative effect of instructed use of L1 on composing in L2, the findings also imply and suggest that the use of L1 should be encouraged in the ESL writing classrooms as well for enabling other skills.

Limitations of the Study

This study is not applicable to all ESL classrooms. The study holds validity in a homogenous classroom where learners among themselves and teachers share a common language. In heterogeneous classrooms the study is of little relevance.

Pedagogical Implication of the Study

The study provides input for policy makers and curriculum developers, particularly at school level to deliberate the use of L1 as a resource, especially as a cognitive tool and also as a motivating factor that solves affective problems of the rural learners who scare away from English.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study can also be extended to enable the other productive skill, speaking and also with varied nature of tasks involving generating ideas as students were involved in peer talk; arguing and discussing.

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Language Syllabi: Perspectives from Educational Value Systems, Linguistics and Psycholinguistics

Jayanta Kumar Das

Abstract

In this paper, I first try to establish a background for the discussion of different syllabus types and the theoretical underpinnings underlying each of them. To this end, I provide a historical perspective of syllabus along with the factors causing for the advent of different language syllabus types. Then, I discuss the four syllabus types that are mostly used in current language teaching. Finally, I discuss the ways in which these syllabus types can be implemented in language curricula for learners studying at various levels.

Issues related to syllabus

The role of language syllabus cannot be overemphasized in the arena of second language pedagogy. Though the need for a language syllabus is commonly felt, several applied linguists have questioned the need of a pre-selected and pre-sequenced document that maps the territory to be covered in a year's teaching (Tickoo, 2003, p: 236). This dissatisfaction with the conventional syllabi (i.e. pre-selected syllabi) has led to two broad approaches to syllabus design such as product approach and process approach. These two approaches have given rise to a number of language syllabus types which are discussed in greater detail in the next section.

Over the years the definition of syllabus along with the scope of it has always changed. It has happened so because of the growing insights and new levels of understanding that we bring to our existing theories, research and practice. As a result of this we have developed new theories, research with new objectives, and practice which fulfils the present day demand and need. In recent years, the focus of various language syllabi has shifted away from structure to situations, notions and functions to topics and tasks. The process still continues and will continue as we begin to grow with times and experiences.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) in their proposed framework (i.e. Method: Approach, Design, Procedure) for the systematic description and comparison of methods, place

‘syllabus’ at the level of Design. To them, the scope of syllabus is limited within the definition of linguistic content and a specification for the selection and organization of that content. Many others (Breen, 2001 & Prabhu, 1987) have interpreted syllabus in different ways depending on their perceptions on what constitutes a language and how that language is learnt. In the next section, while discussing various theoretical underpinnings and how they have shaped different syllabi, I basically talk about theories involved in language and language learning, and how they get reflected in language teaching.

Language syllabi can be distinguished from one another if they are evaluated on certain parameters such as the aims and objectives, emphasis, organizing principle, theories of language and language learning involved, nature of the syllabus, methodology if prescribed or not, instructional materials to be used etc. It is these parameters which form different syllabus types. In the following section I discuss four major syllabus types and the theories these syllabi have been ingrained in.

Syllabus types

Just like we have so many methods to fall back on to teach language, there is a long list of various syllabi available for us. Structural syllabus, content based syllabus, lexical syllabus, topic based syllabus, situational syllabus, notional syllabus, functional syllabus, skill based syllabus, task based syllabus, retrospective syllabus, procedural syllabus and process syllabus, to mention a few of them, are some of these syllabi which can be used for language teaching at various levels of educational system. However, not all syllabi are equally successful or popular in the field of language teaching. There are some syllabi which are not that extensively used as compared to their counterparts. This happens depending on how much scope and the kind of platform a particular syllabus provides for language learning/acquisition to take place in a formal context (or may be outside of it).

I have mentioned in the section above that changes in thought on language and language learning have resulted into different syllabus types. Along with this, changes in educational policy also has direct bearing on language pedagogy and therefore on language curriculum (Finney, 2002). Above all this, the educational theories have also provided a broad framework and essential concepts for language pedagogy. I refer to Clark (1987) who talks about the framework developed by Skilbeck (1982) to explore the value systems underlying

educational traditions, and relate it to language syllabus types. I do this with a discussion of the four syllabus types specified by Breen (2001) in *The Cambridge Guide to TESOL*.

Though various syllabi are being used to teach language, generally speaking, there are four types of syllabus currently used in most language teaching (Breen, 2001). They are 1) Formal syllabus, 2) Notional-Functional syllabus, 3) Task-based syllabus, and 4) Process syllabus. I discuss each of these syllabus types in the following. While discussing these syllabus types I have constantly related them to the three educational value systems proposed by Skilbeck (1982), and the parallel developments in the fields of Linguistics (Structuralism, Functionalism, Sociolinguistic theories) and Psycholinguistics (Behaviourism, Cognitivism, Humanism):

Formal syllabus and Notional Functional syllabus

Both formal and functional syllabi constitute a paradigm which provides propositional plans of language knowledge and capability. Language knowledge and capabilities are regarded as the appropriate outcomes which will be organized and presented in the plan. They also purports the way of representing what learners need to know and be able to do. According to White (1988) they can be categorized under content syllabus. However, these two syllabus types differ in what each of them focuses upon and selects as appropriate content for language lessons.

- 1) Formal syllabus: Even after the advent of communicative language teaching (CLT) in the late 1970s, Formal syllabus, variously referred to as the ‘structural’ or ‘grammatical syllabus’, is the most extensively used syllabus in the language pedagogy even to this day. This syllabus can be associated with the movement of structuralism in Linguistics in the early 1960s which mainly describes what language is. Language form learning is the ultimate goal of this syllabus. It treats language as a systematic and rule-based phenomenon which can be taught to the learners by bringing in the sub systems such as phonology, grammar, lexis or morphology of it to the forefront.

If we analyse Halliday’s (1973) distinction between the textual, ideational, and interpersonal functions of language and how underlying knowledge of each of these is represented in language user’s mind, we can find that the Formal syllabus gives priority to how the text of language is realized and organized in speech and writing. We can also see that

this syllabus gives only a supportive role to the meanings or ideas conveyed through language and to the ways in which we behave socially with language.

As far as the theory of language learning is concerned, this syllabus can be associated with the psycholinguistic theory called Behaviourism. In Behaviourism, the ultimate goal is mastery learning with repetitive exposure of the stimulus. It never encourages inaccurate language production. This gets reflected in Formal syllabus very clearly. Formal syllabus includes a lot of exercises which focus on drilling, pattern practice and sentence construction etc. It designs tasks in such a way that there is almost no chance of learners producing wrong language structure. A Formal syllabus anticipates that a learner will gradually accumulate and synthesize the various parts of the language learned through repetitive practice (Breen, 2001: p, 86).

Looking at Formal syllabus from the viewpoint of the three educational value systems, it falls under *classical humanism*. One of the goals of *classical humanism* is to develop learners' general intellectual abilities (Clark, 1987). Formal syllabus by emphasizing on mastery of language structure, demands the ability of memorization on the part of the learners. Since Formal syllabus has pre-selected objectives to be achieved, it can be partly associated with *reconstructionism* one of the three educational value systems.

In 1970s, research in the social and conversational use of language, coupled with growing dissatisfaction with learners' apparent failure to use the linguistic knowledge outside the classroom, initiated a major change in syllabus design (Breen, 2001) which led to Notional-Functional syllabus.

2) Notional-Functional syllabus: Though Notional-Functional syllabus is categorized as content syllabus (White, 1988) along with the Formal syllabus, it has a different organizing principle unlike the Formal syllabus which has grammar/linguistic structure as its organizing principle. This syllabus includes notions and based on these notions the associated functions as its organizing principle. It is a kind of syllabus which proposes to bring a communicative approach to language teaching. Unlike Formal syllabus which describes what language is, Notional-Functional syllabus explains what language does.

In 1970s as a result of increasing research in the field of Applied Linguistics, the focus shifted from language form to language use, and thereby to language functions. Several sub-branches of Applied Linguistics such as *functional linguistics*, *sociolinguistics* and *pragmatics* have contributed immensely to the formation of such a syllabus. The focus of these sub-branches was to analyse language in use and with the relationship between the language code and how people behave with language in social groups in certain social situations with the help of certain communicative functions.

Hymes' (1971) model of communicative competence can be related to have influenced Notional-Functional syllabus. Hymes (1971) proposed that our knowledge of language embraced a knowledge how to use language in appropriate ways in order to achieve particular purposes and participate in particular everyday events and situations. Likewise Functional syllabus selects a set of functions to be used correctly and appropriately to fulfil certain communicative purposes.

Shift of focus from form to function which is meaningful in Functional syllabus brings us to Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis. Input hypothesis says input should be meaningful. When the focus is on the meaning, form is automatically learnt. Learners can better associate themselves with meaning than with form.

The notion of Speech Acts has also its share in Functional syllabus. This notion embodies the idea of the actual and sometimes the hidden meanings which people attribute to what they or others say. Speech Acts theory is less concerned with how people use language to convey meanings, but more with the 'force' or 'value' that people either intend in their utterances or which they give to the utterances of others.

In educational psychology, Cognitivism can be associated with Functional syllabus. Unlike Behaviourism which believes learning can be observed and recorded, Cognitivism believes in the deeper structure of mind which cannot be mapped by mere outward change in behaviour. Thus it believes in generative use of language. Functional syllabus makes learners use language functions generatively in varied contexts.

Functional syllabus like the Formal syllabus spells out a set of propositional behavioural objectives to be achieved at the end of an academic year. This can be related to the

educational value system, *reconstructionism*. In reconstructionism, curriculum is carefully planned around taxonomies of objectives, which the learner should be enabled to master (Clark, 1987).

During 1980s, the wider development of CLT evolved in two new directions (Task-based and Process syllabus types) subsequent to functionalism. The Formal and Functional syllabi are designed mostly keeping *how linguists described language* in mind. But in Task-based and Process syllabi *how language learning is actually undertaken* is given the prime importance.

Task-based syllabus and Process syllabus

These two syllabus types fall under process plans of syllabus design (Breen, 2001). Unlike the propositional plans (Formal and Functional syllabi) which has content for its organization so that it may harmonize with the objectives of a course, process plans address the ways in which learners may achieve objectives, and how they navigate the route itself. In the categorization of syllabi, White (1988) puts there two types of syllabus under ‘method syllabus’. This is so because of the emphasis these two syllabi put on learning.

Just as Formal syllabus and Functional syllabus differ from one another on the grounds of organizing principle, Task-based and Process syllabi also differ from each other even though they share same roots.

- 3) Task-based syllabus: More recently, a person’s knowledge of use of language has been extended to a person’s capacity to participate in discourse (Widdowson, 1978). Task-based syllabus emphasises on ‘how’ a learner may engage his or her communicative competence in undertaking a range of tasks. It also addresses how learners may develop this competence through learning (Breen, 2001). In Task-based syllabus, the organizing principle is tasks unlike the above discussed syllabus types for which the organizing principles are language aspects such as forms and functions. The curriculum designer selects suitable tasks to encourage interaction and, through it, negotiation of meaning. Learners struggle while dealing with the tasks would enable the acquisition and refinement linguistic knowledge and its social use.

In Task-based syllabus type we talk about two types of tasks: (i) communication tasks and (ii) learning tasks. Communication tasks focus upon the actual sharing of meaning through spoken or written communication. This emphasises on purposeful use of the target

language. On the other hand, learning (or *metacommunicative*) tasks help in exploring the workings of the knowledge system, how these may be worked upon and learned (Breen, 2001). Learning tasks help in carrying out communication tasks better.

Prabhu's (1987) Bangalore Project in which he uses tasks which are preselected helped to give rise to Task-based syllabus.

Krashen's (1982) theory of Input hypothesis which emphasizes on meaning and $i+1$ can be associated with Task-based syllabus. In Task-based syllabus learners achieve accomplishment when they successfully solve the problem by using language for some meaningful purpose. Krashen's (1982) $i+1$ can be materialized when the task at hand is made a little challenging just above the learners' current proficiency level, a communicative purpose can be created.

Task-based syllabus focuses upon communicative knowledge as a unity of text, interpersonal behaviour, and ideation (Halliday, 1973).

During 1980s, Social-constructivism in Linguistics and Humanism in Psycholinguistics have influenced a lot in shaping Task-based approach. Learners are given prime importance in the process of teaching and learning. Teaching and learning is planned based on the experiences students bring with them to the classroom. Based on their experiences, tasks are designed. Task-based syllabus maintains this view about language learning that 'what' learners have learnt and how teaching and learning are done are unavoidably interrelated (Breen, 2001).

Because Task-based syllabus keeps control over learners to a certain extent, it can only be associated with *Progressivism*.

4) Process syllabus: Process syllabus, by and large, is an extension of Task-based syllabus. It focuses upon procedures for learning to account for the actual social situation in which learning will take place (Breen, 2001). The Process syllabus focuses upon three processes: communication, learning, and the purposeful social activity of teaching and learning in a classroom. A Process syllabus develops when there is collaborative decision-making happening by the teacher and learners in a language class (Breen, 2001). The decision that is

taken can pertain to the purposes, contents, and ways of working as a meaningful part of the content of lessons or series of lessons.

Process syllabus has its deep root in several educational disciplines that have contributed to English Language Teaching (ELT). In Linguistics this syllabus can be associated with the theory of social-constructivism. Due to its flexibility towards language teaching and learning, any pedagogical theories can in some way or the other can be related to Process syllabus. Further, in Psycholinguistics, this syllabus can be associated with *Humanism*. Finally, in educational value system, it can be clearly identified with *Progressivism*. Progressivism believes that curriculum should be very flexible so that it can foster the desired growth every individual who wants to be educated aspires. Complying to *Progressivism*, Process syllabus focuses on the natural growth of the learning by giving the learners a complete freedom to determine their educational goals and ways how to accomplish them.

Implementation of Language Curricula

To decide which syllabus to be implemented for which level; whether the decided syllabus to be used will be used as it is without bringing any change into it or it will be adapted, if adapted to what degree, are some of the issues which are very difficult to address. I say so understanding the fact that every level of learners in different educational contexts is different. Before implementing a particular syllabus at a particular level of learners, a thorough need analysis of that level is necessary. The needs analysis should cover the target level's past situation analysis, present situation analysis, and target situation analysis. Finally, it is the discretion of the teacher who understands their learners' needs better than a syllabus designer will play a crucial role to decide which type of syllabus can be used for a specific group of learners.

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Imaging the Mind: Narrative on Contemporary Issues in Visual Arts

Archana Gulati

Aishwarya Gulati is a class VII student from Delhi Public School, Risali Sector, Bhilai. As a curious child she is always attracted towards bright colors, enjoyed herself playing and plucking the flowers. She used to eat food by looking at flying birds in sky. The best thing was that she guessed the names of the animals by looking at different shapes of the clouds. When she was 4 years old she attended one marriage ceremony. Aishwarya commented that there is a rainbow in the sparkles attached with the bride's dress, this surprised everybody.



As Aishwarya grew, she enjoyed putting *rangoli* and *mehandi* beautifully. She used to put *mehandi* even in drawing copy without drawing it with pencil. She also made dresses of Barbie doll on copy and kept herself busy with dressing them. With all these activities, we could realize that if proper guidance is given to her for drawing and art, she would be able to improve more in it.

In her pre-school days, there was a system to bring birthday cards for other children and she never failed to make and color the small cards for them. She colored so nicely that it didn't smudge the drawing. She also got first position in a drawing competition when she was studying in Prep. She is also interested in making paper art and decoration such as making Christmas tree.

Now that she is growing, she is able to shade and make the drawings more perfectly. She actively participates in decorating notice boards in school and other drawing competition.

She is also a good cook. She experiments with different recipes and prepare delicious food.

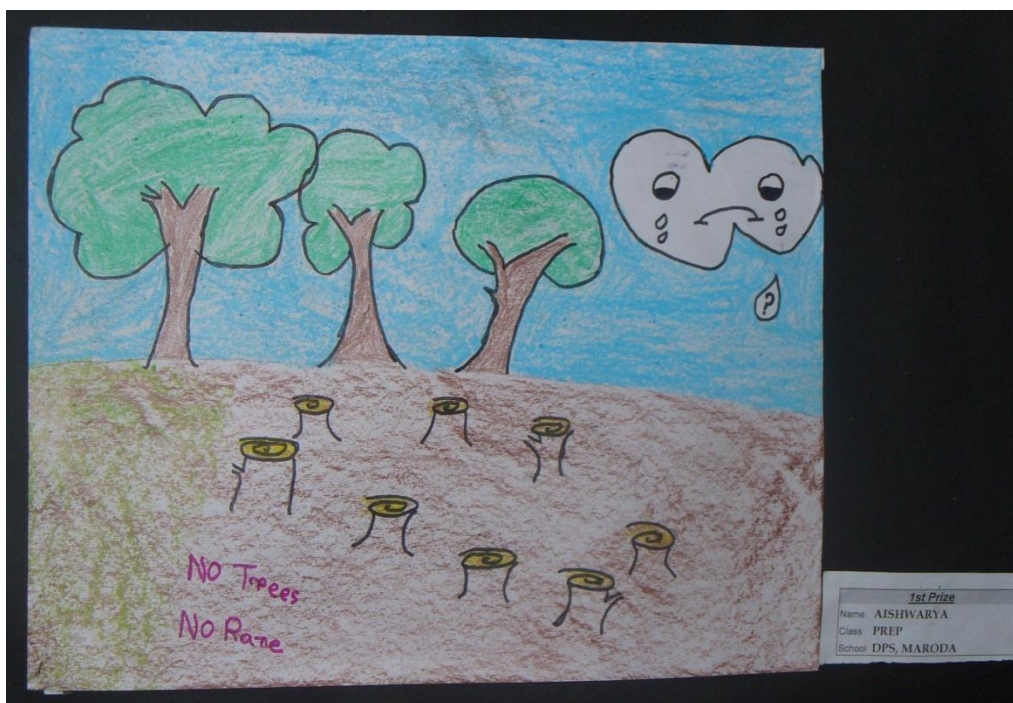
Some of the work of Aishwarya Gulati



Christmas Tree



3-D Snowflake



Drawing made in a competition (Got First Prize)



Rangoli



Mask Preparation



Drawing prepared for school



Diya Decoration



Quilling Greeting Card



Drawing made in a competition

What is important is to understand what Aishwarya has imagined in her mind and that have came up in visual form in her hand.

Being asked, Aishwarya narrated the pictures hse had drawn. She has hundreds of such illustrations. Some of the illustrations are representative of her creative mind. The visual text speaks the general over view of the picture, but what meaning this picture carry? Is it something that an onlooker view or it has some thing other than that. Every picture has a narrative and that is conceptualised before she drew the picture.

Let's read out the narration regarding the pictures that Aishwarya has said,

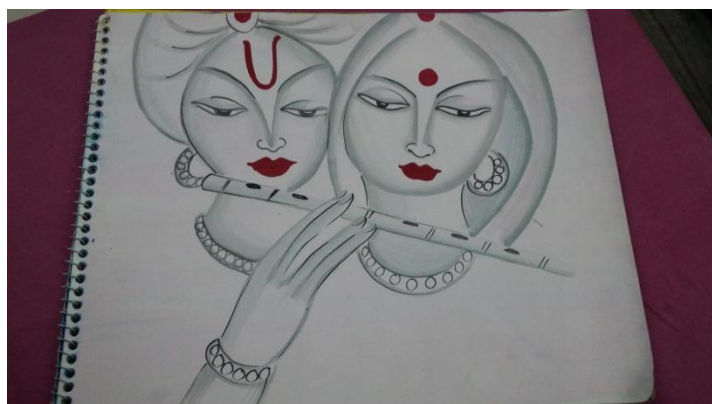
Park

I have shown colorful trees because I want everything to be colorful like the tree of different colors and shades. I have drawn green grass because it is hygienic for our health. The person walking along the path is myself. It is the evening time. The birds are going back to their home.



God

The tilak is the significance of the god Krishna and instead of a peacock feather here we can see a button like symbol which is the significance of the third eye of lord Shiva. Krishna is very fond of playing flute so that is why he is holding a flute. The Radha's bindi is different from the original bindi. Here the eyes are enjoying the music played by Krishna on flute.



Dance – I

The girl is imagining that she is dancing along the clouds in the sky with two lamp posts beside her. These posts give the white portion of the shadow. She is doing ballerina which is a form of a dance. I made this drawing because I love ballerina a lot much.



Dance – II

It is a scene of a stage performance. The girl with pink dress is the leader, she has different hair style than others. The significance of different color dress is the feeling of joy in them. Also a leader is always uncommon.



Global Warming

It is because of our selfishness the earth is getting melted like an ice-cream. One of the main reasons for the global warming is cutting down of trees. I feel very hurt when I see someone cutting a tree. Trees are our friends, they give us fresh air. If there are no trees, it is very difficult

for us to survive. Cutting of trees also lead to greenhouse problem. They also help us reduce the threat of flood, as the roots of the trees absorb water.

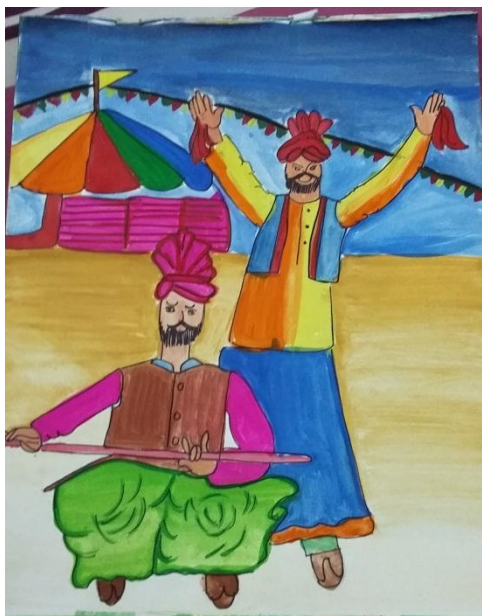


Halloween is a western belief about the vampire and ghosts. In the night of 31st October, it is believed that all the evil spirits like ghosts, goblins etc come out. In the picture the lady, horror faced pumpkins, owls and other insects are the significance of it. Children wear spooky dresses and go house to house for collecting chocolates.



Culture

Here I have drawn a picture showing bhangra dance which is performed by the people in Punjab on the occasion of wonderful and colorful festival baisakhi. It is the harvest festival. Wheat is cut in the fields and sold in the market. People from Punjab also celebrate it as their new year. It is celebrated on 13th April every year.



Conclusion

It is evident from the children's art that the more they are imaginative and close to the nature the more they are able to portray the picture. We found that while the adults are unable to draw picture, children very easily draw picture to their imagination. Aishwarya's art is the life world of her contemporary time. She can feel the horrors, enjoy the culture, feel the colours from rangoli and find a space for dance, but at the same time she also has the serious view of looking at the contemporary issues that the human society come across. Melting of an Ice cream is compared the the loss of human ecology is some thing very hard to believe how a science teacher is unable to explain to the students and how a child is able to explain this in a picture. This metaphor is possible with the children because of their openness, curiosity, art of questioning, imagining the realities and think for future society. Dancing in the cloud, imagining Srikrishna with out a peacock feather signifies her alternative thought to see the Radha and Krishna in a different angle. The half closed eyes –ardhanimilita chakshu – signifies the mudra of Yoga.

What is important is to promote the children's creative activity through art and craft. The paper craft and the illustration Aishwarya has made engaged her mind, hand and finally interest with imagination is one of the finest example as to why one should engage the children in arts. It is told that a picture is worth than thousand of words. Let's believe that even our interpretation is also not sufficient enough to explain why Aishwarya has imagined in her deep thought.

Voice from the Field

The Tales of the Tribes: Animation as Participatory Film-making Practice

Tara Douglas

We are aware of the enjoyment that young people get from watching the cartoon programmes that are beamed on the multitude of commercial cable television channels, including the Disney Channel, Nickelodeon, and Pogo, that now provide entertainment in even the more isolated regions of India. Indeed, television entertainment now competes with traditional past times, including oral storytelling and performances. To amplify this point, many young people from tribal communities are now quite familiar with popular cartoon heroes such as Chhota Bheem and Doraemon, but they are losing touch with their own cultural heritage of stories - for example, in North East India the legends of Abotani, the cultural hero of the Tani tribes of Arunachal Pradesh.

Modernization has come suddenly to the North East region over the past two decades. The mountainous terrain that has hampered the construction of road and railway connections and the fact that the area is landlocked still makes for relative isolation, and yet the impact of introduced market forces in the traditional societies, and the migration and settlement of mainland people to the North East has heightened the struggles for resources and the competition for a limited number of jobs and other assets.

Outside in the wider world, little is known about this area that is connected to the rest of India by the Siliguri corridor, less than 23km wide. However, in the United Kingdom I had come across some unusual cultural artefacts from Nagaland in the colonial collections stored away at the British, Horniman and Pitt Rivers Museums, and further investigations in libraries pointed to rich traditions of indigenous folklore.

Picture 1: Naga artefacts were documented and collected during the British colonial period.

Folktales have provided content for many well-known animation films including those adapted by Disney. The reasons for this are that the stories tend to be short; they often have a moral within the storyline; they illustrate common fields of experience and because the dramatic narratives of conflict are graphic and vivid, with archetypal characters and magical or supernatural characters that are suited to the medium of animation.

I had a background in animation from Art College, and I had personal interest in working with indigenous content. This led to questions of how adaptation from the oral to the audio visual form could be approached by a media professional such as myself in an ethical way, to engage collaboration with local artists and produce digital representations that would be acceptable to the communities themselves as well as to wider audiences. This practice-led project was to produce a sample collection of five short animated folktales from the North East and from Central India on the one hand, and a thesis entitled *Tales of the Tribes: Animation as a Tool for Indigenous Representation* that addressed two research questions on the other.

When clubbed together, five short films would deliver a programme of about half an hour duration which is ideally suited for cultural or school screening programmes and would enable me to investigate a small part of the diverse heritage of the region, including some communities with traditions of painting and sculpture and others with more craft based skills. On the basis of the threat of the imminent loss of the indigenous folk narratives, the questions were can participatory practices be used to reconnect the young generation with existing cultural forms and practices, and if so, how this could be done.

Participatory film-making

The objective, short-term outsider vantage point has produced research that Aboriginal peoples reject as distortions of their reality (Castellano 2004). For example, the images produced by colonial anthropology described indigenous cultures worldwide as archaic, primitive and remnants of the past. On the other hand, participatory research receives a positive reception from Aboriginal communities (Smith 1999). Alia's (2010)

argument that decision making by consensus and collective action has carried greater weight in traditional societies than individual accomplishment further supported the choice of participatory methods for both the film-making and the research.

Participation promotes a more egalitarian relationship between the researcher and the subject. The method of participant observation was used by Verrier Elwin (1902-1964) to record and document tribal cultures in Central and in North East India. His approach had been “to settle down among the people, live with them, share their life as far as an outsider could, and generally do several books together” (Elwin 1964, p142), and as Munshi (2005) pointed out, this delivered intensity compared to the work of other anthropologists. Participation by the community in every stage of the research supports a more comprehensive outcome and also encourages confidence from partners to conduct their own research (Webb 2009). However, time limitations and logistical factors restricted my capacity for Elwin’s long-term commitment.

Currently, most of the states in the North East region are affected by some form of conflict and the reasons for this range from separatist movements, to communal and inter-ethnic conflicts. Konwar and Chakraborty (2013) have confirmed that there are still fewer quality institutions of higher education in the North East than in other regions of India and the lack of opportunity for young people in the regions of this study leads them from the rural areas to the urban centres for education and employment.

Elwin’s approach of activism had been directed towards empowering the marginalized, as seen in his role in devising policies for the people of North East India (NEFA), which strengthened their position over land and resources in comparison to the situation of the Adivasi communities in Central India. An approach of participation that invites multiple voices in the interpretation of indigenous stories into films also promotes empowerment - that of self-representation for the postcolonial context.

To set up a collaborative environment to adapt the stories with local guidance, I proposed partnerships with local organisations and institutions to organise five regional workshops. In the workshops we would introduce animation as a tool for young artists. Breaking from the dominant approach to animation production in India, which is geared towards producing animation in large quantities for the commercial market, the

participants would work with us as a team to select and develop a favourite folk story from each area for a short animated film to see how this could be done. These workshops were held in Nagaland (2009), Sikkim (2010), Manipur (2012), in Ahmedabad for the Gond film (2012) and Arunachal Pradesh (2013), and I also invited at least two young Indian animation students or recent graduates to each workshop team to contribute their digital skills, required to create the script, storyboard and animation.

Picture 2: An animation workshop held at the Nagaland Institute of IT and Multimedia, 2011.

The decision of which communities to work with was determined by my contacts with local collaborators. I had already worked with a group of Pardhan Gond artists from Madhya Pradesh who created artwork for an earlier project, *The Tallest Story Competition* (2006) produced by West Highland Animation in Scotland. I had also made contacts in the fields of art and culture in Nagaland, Sikkim, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh and these led to local collaborations with these states for adaptations of stories from the Angami, Lepcha, Meitei and Tani traditions.

Picture 3: The animation workshop held at the National Institute of Design to develop the Gond animation story in 2012.

The workshops organised for this project were three weeks long and the participants from the age groups of 18-40 were required to take this time off from their regular activities to attend. On average there were about 15 regular attendees at each event. These participants were selected by the local partners and for the most part they represented some of the dominant tribal groups in each state, with the exception of Manipur where no tribal participants were invited by local collaborators, reflecting the wide socio-cultural gap that is a source of socio-political rivalry between the Hindu Meitei of Manipur valley and the Christian tribes.

Picture 4: Participants of the Animation Workshop in Manipur working together to design characters, 2012.

The current priority on politics in the North East is not to be underestimated. On the one hand is evidence of political drives towards establishing common identities, by which different groups identify common elements on which to construct a common history: for example, a pan Naga identity. On the other hand deeply embedded sustained attitudes of tribalism manifest in the allocation of economic benefits on communal grounds accounts for counteractive forces to assert separate tribal identities based on connections to particular geographical areas. In the predominantly Christian state of Nagaland, recent revivalist trends to preserve Naga culture, customs and heritage beyond the museum environment (Shikhu 2007; Joshi 2012) brings storytelling and representation to the foreground and presents the motivation from the Government of Nagaland to support the animated story from this state. However, the political interests of promoting one's own culture also reflects a contrasting perceptible lack of interest and support for the cultural representations of rival groups.

Picture 5: Young animators working to create the title sequence for Man Tiger Spirit, the short animated story from Nagaland.

Picture 6: Animation students record Gond stories from Pardhan artist Venkat Raman Singh Shyam at the National Institute of Design, 2012.

During each of the workshops the teams engaged in the pre-production phase of the animation film-making process: this is where the crucial planning for the film takes place; where decisions are taken as to what content to include, what to leave out, and the structure and form of the film takes shape. Traditional storylines can often be mystifying, and a viewer does not have the reader's option to reread or clarify details with the storyteller. However, just as the power to decide what to narrate and what to leave out influenced storytelling practices under colonialism, the dilemmas posed by adapting folktales to animation films requires negotiation between the animation film-maker and the storyteller to avoid perpetuating dominant paradigms.

Sanders (2006) distinguishes between adaptation and appropriation, where the underlying meaning and context is changed to subvert the story and incorporate new values and perspectives. In his lifetime, Elwin recorded thousands of folktales from various indigenous societies in India and his published volumes include *Myths of Middle India* (1949), *Tribal Myths of Orissa* (1954), *Myths of the North-east Frontier of India, Volume 1* (1958), *A New Book of Tribal Fiction* (1970) and *Folk-tales of Mahakoshal* (1980).

His method of translation was simple and above all, he avoided either adding any new images or suppressing those of the original, and in this way he was committed to maintaining the authentic meanings of the stories as far as possible. This aim was transposed to the production of the animated series, where considerable attention was directed towards deconstructing the oral narratives with elder members of the specific communities during the initial phase of research.

Picture 7: Traditional priest Tama Mindo was able to tell us about the Wiyu spirits of the Tani folktales, 2013.

Colonial attitudes that linked the authenticity of indigenous cultural and artistic practices to the handmade and the rural (Errington 1998) have implied that when indigenous people use the media, link to the international community and become politically active, they also risk being perceived as inauthentic (Dean and Levi 2003). The influence of Western culture on indigenous art also challenges ideas of purity and raises questions about adaptations of indigenous folklore and art forms for digital media and animation. However, Bhabha's (1995) work has given insight about hybrid postcolonial identities illuminating the interdependence of colonizer and the colonized and this suggests that modern indigenous young artists can explore and communicate the complexities of indigenous identity and representation using contemporary forms of mixed media and animation. For the media professional positioned outside the community, authenticity can be assessed in the commitment to representing the meanings of the stories and accurate cultural details, the participatory method of practice to incorporate inputs from the participants and by the commitment to continued self-

reflection, to identify and critique one's own influence on both the interpretation and the approach.

Picture 8: Animators and students of Thangka painting work together in the Animation Workshop in Sikkim, 2010.

Each of the workshops began with storytelling sessions for participants to pitch their favourite stories. The group then voted to choose one story to develop into a short film. This democratic method of story selection was appreciated by the participants who contributed to discussions on the pros and cons of each story as material for a film.

Research on the traditional visual arts of the respective tribes was also important at this stage. By inviting young local artists to participate in designing characters and backgrounds based on this research, this provided for their contribution as they explored ways of using locally available materials to create the artwork and models for the films.

Picture 9: Professional artist Pemthingley Lepcha works on character design for the short animated story from Sikkim, 2010.

The project encouraged the young artists to bring some of their own cultural traditions into the form of the film, but demands were not imposed for exclusively hand-made artwork, and digital technology was used to manipulate the artwork and sound recordings in the production and post-production of the films.

Picture 10: Participants in Arunachal Pradesh making animation models in the workshop held in Naharlagun in 2013.

Elwin's intention to make the tribal people known was to increase affection and respect for them from the rest of the country. This matches the second reason that our workshop participants gave for adapting their traditional stories for animated films – they wanted to raise awareness of the value of indigenous cultures in wider society, with the long term aim of contributing to reduce the discrimination that is reported by young indigenous people in India.

The pervasive exposure to commercial animation worldwide and in India has led to lofty expectations of narrative, presentation and technical sophistication. Commercial, computer generated 3D animation is now the most preferred animation style and programmes such as those produced by Disney and Pixar are benchmarks for comparison. For example, even the participants in Arunachal Pradesh expressed their hope for animation comparable to *Kongfu Panda* (DreamWorks, 2008) to emerge from their own cultural content.

The five films of the *Tales of the Tribes* series are now completed. The production that has taken over five years has been carried out through various models depending on the availability of support. At the time of this research, the resources for professional animation production and post-production were not accessible locally. Advances in the media and communication technologies of globalization have made it viable for indigenous young people to use animation as a tool to represent parallel histories in India; however, although these young people in India enjoy watching animated films, most have no exposure to the creative animation process. Animation is a meticulous discipline that has meant the requisite involvement of young trained animators to deliver the series of films.

The production of *the Tales of the Tribes* has been accomplished through non-commercial methods and experimentation. The development of indigenous animation is more appropriately situated in the fields of art and education than in the commercial industry as this research has shown how cultural dominance results when the primary drive is to reach large audiences and maximize profit. Therefore the decision to carry out this animation film-making activity in the social and educational domain rather than in that of pure entertainment reduces compromises of commercialization that are at definite odds with indigenous world views.

This project has shown how animation production can be carried out effectively by early career animators based at institutes or with independent studios that are interested in developing original content and design that will make them stand out. Discussions with the young animators that have worked on the *Tales of the Tribes* have

disclosed an overall feeling that animated feature films produced by Indian companies lack originality, and this has been attributed to investors playing safe with “an equivalent of what is a successful thing outside”.

The original content and the opportunities the project gave the young animators for experimentation with interpretation and design in the animation medium was invaluable. Not only did the animators themselves become more aware of the cultures they were working with during the process of collaborating with traditional artists, but by engaging media professionals in post-production, this has also contributed to delivering production standards that aim to satisfy both local and wider audiences beyond the indigenous groups.

Picture 11: Anuj Kumar, a graduate in Animation Film Design uses software to manipulate the artwork for the short film *Nye Mayel Kyong*, from Sikkim 2014.

In conclusion, from the point of view of the film-maker, indigenous folktales can provide original content for animated films. However, ethical practices that respect cultural sensitivities must be at the forefront of any work that engages with indigenous cultural content. In contrast to research that aspires to objective distance between the researcher and informant, Elwin’s active approach towards knowledge creation for social benefit in the interests of the group is inspirational and captures the sense of responsibility that is the foundation of indigenous research methodologies (Smith 1999).

Where cultural symbols and rituals are referenced, contextualization is essential and all contributors must be acknowledged. The basic moral imperative for reciprocity that is upheld by indigenous societies (Kirkness and Barnhardt 1991) makes it a requisite to provide copies of photographs and to demystify the processes by providing relevant training for indigenous collaborators, assistants, guides and informants. As a person who is outside the local community, I am constantly reminded of the need to review my approach to identify and question assumptions and to accommodate contrasting approaches for participatory research.

The last phase of the *Tales of the Tribes* project remains: the films will be presented by an animated master of ceremonies: a graphic representation of Verrier Elwin

would be a character that is appropriate to the context of the indigenous stories and he may also assist in bridging the cultural gap for international audiences. Support has been applied for from the Government of Meghalaya to create these animated linking sequences using a combination of handmade artwork and computer technology.

As the presenter, Elwin will bring the five separate stories into the wider narrative of a storytelling competition; this format that references that of the earlier *The Tallest Story Competition* series down to the Trophy that is offered for the story that gains the most votes from audiences, provides a way to engage audience interaction and accurately document the numbers of viewers.

Picture 12: A graphic representation of Verrier Elwin by Arak Sangma, 2013.

To enable this remaining chapter, the films must be dubbed into several local languages (those of the communities that are represented), in addition to Hindi and English, so that they can be screened and discussed by young audiences in India as a starting point for introducing new tools for indigenous self-representation and to sustain the oral narratives.

Picture 13: The author with Nyibo Tama Mindo, Arunachal Pradesh 2013.

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M-TALL *akhra*– a center for research and innovations in Children’s Languages and Quality Education in Jharkhand, India

Binay Pattanayak

Potential in the state’s multilingual environment

Jharkhand is a multilingual state based on its rich cultural traditions from 32 tribal communities and more than 18 languages. In every village of the state, children relate and communicate in various types of languages, other than Hindi. The state government, in a unique manner has declared 12 tribal and regional languages as official languages of the state. They include *Santhali, Ho, Mundari, PanchPargania, Nagpuri, Khortha, Kharia, Kurukh, Kurmali, Odia, Bengali* and *Urdu* other than Hindi.

However, education of children is pre-school learning centre (*Anganwadis*) and Primary school (classes I to V) is initiated in Hindi, which is not the mother tongue of a majority of children in the state. This creates a high level of language disadvantage for every child. Consequently, neither a child, in a majority of cases, understands the teacher or text in neither the classroom, nor the vice versa. Attitude of teachers and school also adds further salt to the children's frustration. Lack of comprehension and continuous disadvantages related to children's identity and development accumulate in the form of fear, frustration and illusion.

Majority of children discontinue their participation in school activities and ultimately leave the school.

M-TALL ... an attempt to support children

To understand such issues in the schools, the M-TALL (Mother-Tongue based Active Language Learning) *akhra* at Jharkhand Tribal Welfare Research Institute (JTWRI), Department of Welfare, Government of Jharkhand undertook a state wide socio-linguistic survey in the state with support of UNICEF. The study was conducted in 216 villages in 72 blocks of all 24 districts of Jharkhand. Interaction with approximately 4000 respondents, 18 from each village, was done to gather information for the study. Following are the key findings of the survey related to Mother Languages in Jharkhand. Over 96% of the population in Jharkhand communicates in tribal and regional languages at home. The tribal languages include Santhali, Ho, Mundari, Kurukh, Kharia etc. and regional languages such as Nagpuri, Khortha, Panchparganiya, Bangla, Odiya, Urdu, etc.

Only 4% of the people communicate in Hindi as their mother tongue.

The percentage of people who speak regional languages is around 30.6%. The breakup includes:

Khortha (17.5%), Nagpuri (8.2%), Bangla (2%), Maghi (1.6%), Urdu (0.6%), Panchparganiya (0.3%) and Odiya (0.3%).

Around 65.7% of the surveyed population use Tribal languages as their mother tongue. These include Santhali, Kurukh, Mundari, Sadri, Ho, Oraon, Khadia etc. The tribal language used as mother tongue by largest number of people is Santhali (33%), followed by Kurukh (9.5%), Mundari (7.6%), Sadri (6.7%), Ho (5.6%), Oraon (1.1%). Khadia, Pahadiya, Birhori and Pachhiyari are spoken by around 2% of the population.

A total of 19 major mother tongues are used by people in Jharkhand.

Santhali, Khortha, Kurukh, Mundari and Ho emerged as dominant mother tongue languages in Santhal Pargana, North Chotanagpur, Palamu, S. Chhotanagpur and Kolhan Division respectively.

The socio-linguistic documentation in Jharkhand turned out to be an eye-opener for all concerned! It depicted the extremely high level of multilingualism in the state. This report familiarized us with this wonderful language diversity of the state. It also highlighted the enormous challenges children face in rural areas when schools operate in a different language.

Accordingly, the M-TALL *akhra* explored some possibilities through following activities.

1. Shared the findings of this documentation with all concerned – government, civil society, media, universities, tribal language forums, teachers, etc. and strive for policy level amendments
2. Printed children's bilingual Picture Dictionaries in nine tribal and regional languages for use in Anganwadi Nursery School Kendras and Primary Schools of the state

Findings of the sociolinguistic survey ...

3. Developed *BhashaPuliya* (a comprehensive children's language readiness package) for use in initial days of children in *Anganwadi Nursery School Kendras* and Primary Schools of the state

Salient features of *BhashaPuliya*:

BhashaPuliya is a children's language readiness package that aims to bridge home language/s of children with the language/s of ANSKs and primary schools in Jharkhand. Series of child-friendly activities have been integrated in this package in a systematic manner to enable children to actively participate in these activities and acquire the desired skills which form the building blocks of the pre-school education programme. *BhashaPuliya* consists of 12 key learning milestones covered through 12 activity guidebooks, learning ladders touching upon all the activities in a sequence, learning assessment format, activity progress chart, baseline format, guidebook for *BhashaPuliya*, an academic calendar for whole year, folders for collection of local words and stories/ songs.

This package intends to promote activity based learning in a child friendly learning environment.

The activities have been carefully chosen through a lot of research and consultations with children, *Anganwadi Sevikas* and community members from different language groups in different parts of the state. These include games, songs, dances, stories, painting, making toys, nature observation, etc. which children like to take part in. After each activity in and around the Anganwadi center children are supposed to be divided into small groups of 4-5 children and encouraged to discuss their experience about the activity in their mother tongue/s. This enables children to interact with each other and share own experiences about the activity not just at that time, but also from their communities. While discussing about the experience they speak, listen, think and talk to each other in a playful manner. In the process of such interactions every child picks up a lot of ideas, insights, knowledge, skills and also confidence in language/s. When it turns out to be a multi lingual environment, children pick up a 56 tongue based active language learning (M-TALL) using children's previous knowledge, background, skills, styles, pace, and learning processes. The language learning theory as articulated by the National Curriculum Framework, 2005, and position paper on language learning emphasize on this. For a multilingual state such as Jharkhand, this is proving a pathfinder for children's pre-school and early grade learning.

Preparations for M-TALL in Primary Education

At present the M-TALL *akhrais* working on the pedagogical renewal at Primary level for promoting mother-tongue based active language learning. It is also attempted to formulate a policy on M-TALL for designing a comprehensive plan of action for strengthening the mother-tongue based language pedagogy in the state.

A letter received from the state education minister (Annexure 1) reflects the significance of these activities for the state and also her interest for extending whole hearted support for M-TALL for primary level. use this as a rich local learning resource. This enables every child to interact with the picture, text, peers, teacher, parents and self and also this lays a strong foundation to the language learning skills of the child/ren along with the enrichment of own knowledge, skills, attitude and interest in the concept, first in own mother tongue closed followed by the same in Hindi and other languages depending on the level of language diversity in the group and the level and direction of interaction.

This also strengthens the roots of the mother tongue/s of all the children and the overall cultural traditions of the concerned communities.

Mere SikhnekaAina- Reflection of children's learning

To track and enhance the learning progress of every child learning trackers (*Mere SikhnekaAina*) have been developed. The level of interest of every child is various activities, level of participation, and acquisition of knowledge and skills are recorded by the concerned *Sevika* on a daily basis. For each milestone the progress of each child is indicated through three broad indicators: i. I have learnt it; ii. I am learning it; iii. I will practice more. The reflection of progress of every child enables the *Sevika*/teacher to know how many children need further support to enable them acquire the desired learning skills.

The content, pedagogy and assessment processes practiced in the pilot *Anganwadi* Centers (ANSK) have been reviewed by national level experts from NCERT and NIPCCD. They have appreciated this as a good practice related to children's acquisition of basic language skills. In this approach children are encouraged to participate in a wide variety of friendly activities in a print rich environment. Languages of children in each *Anganwadi* have been mapped out and a range of stories, songs, riddles, paintings, toys and games in the 9 tribal and regional languages have been compared and shared with the *AnganwadiSevikas*.

Anganwadi Sevikas have been trained to encourage children interact mostly in own mother tongues in the initial 3-4 months. In this period children take part in the activities rigorously as per the 12 activity guidebooks, learning milestones and learning resources. In this process, children acquire a good level of language learning skills in own mother tongues. This provides them a reasonable level of confidence and interest. This works as a learning foundation for children. Gradually the *Sevika*/teacher starts using Hindi words to enable children relate to Hindi in a phased manner. The picture dictionary provides several types of pictures and words related to those in both local languages and Hindi.

This approach continues using the state's academic calendar which provides them month wise and week wise activities covering all the content as per children's background, context and requirements. The total package is actually the pre-school learning package for holistic development of each child. However it starts with mother.

Learning tracker for every child's progress

Variety of aspects of language and culture from each other's language and develop a fascination and respect for each other's languages. While they remain busy in these interactions, the *Sevika* keeps on noting down the new words floating from the expressions of children from different language groups. She writes these words on the blackboard. Children keep on observing these symbols on the blackboards and keep on deriving initial patterns from those symbols. On many occasions the *Sevika* draws a small picture along with the words, this enables children to relate to it in a logical manner.

The *Bhasha Puliya* was piloted in one hundred Anganwadi centers (ANSK) of the Ranchi district. For this all the *Sevikas* were trained through a state level residential training. Baseline information on status of ANSKs and also the languages and learning levels of all children in 3 – 6 year age group was mapped out.

Development and use of bilingual picture dictionaries

To enable children take more interest in various topics and themes, bilingual picture dictionaries were developed in 9 tribal and regional languages. They are in *Santhali*, *Ho*, *Mundari*, *PanchPargania*, *Nagpuri*, *Khortha*, *Kharia*, *Kurukh*, and *Kurmali*. Around twenty pictures on each of the forty eight themes have been carefully drawn. These are used as the

starting point for small group discussions among children of different language groups. When children discuss these, the *AnganwadiSevikain* Anganwadi or, primary school teacher encourages children to narrate own experiences and ideas around the picture in own language.

New words used by children are noted down by the facilitator for use later. These initial discussions in Mother Tongue enable children strengthen their basic language learning skills. Gradually, these discussions are encouraged in Hindi to enable children use their initial language learning skills to pick up the basics of Hindi communication.

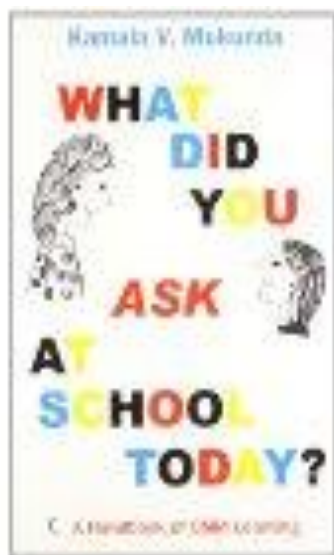
These picture dictionaries are used as a part of the *BhashaPuliya*. Role of a teacher or, parent is to encourage a small group of children (more useful if children from different language groups are there!) look at a page together and discuss various elements of the picture in own language and share their experience with each object or, event.

Book Review

WHAT DID YOU ASK AT SCHOOL TODAY?

A Handbook of Child Learning

P. Sunama Patro



What Did You ask at School Today?

Author: Kamala V. Mukunda

Published by: Noida: HarperCollins Publishers, 2009.

ISBN 978-81-7223-833-9, xvi, 287 pp.

What Did You Ask at school Today? Is perhaps the most comprehensive book on child psychology available in India and is primarily written for teachers who are often caught between their own strongly held belief about child learning and the reality. This book supported by decade long research issues in psychology bridges the gap between the educational questions related to child learning and the results of researches done in the field of Psychology making it relevant for teachers. It skillfully presents the teacher's wonder and belief about child's learning, motivation, intelligence, biopsychosocial shifts in the development of the child and most importantly provides time and space for teachers to question their perceptions, establish connections between theory and practice related to classroom experiences. Each chapter of the book can stand on its own as far as the body of research done in the area is concerned yet

evidently related with other chapters. Each paragraph below presents the focus of each chapter along with its relevance to Indian classroom contexts. Finally, a critique of the book has been provided in the form of conclusion.

This book begins with the discussion on the most researched object 'the human brain'. Following the tradition of psychologists chapter one briefs the readers about the current understandings of the brain, its structure, the way it functions and provides an explanation of evolutionary psychology in relation to education. Its relevance in the Indian context lies in understanding the primary and secondary abilities to learn a child is equipped with which can help us to tailor our teaching.

The second chapter *Learning* discusses three types of knowledge, namely conceptual, procedural and higher order reasoning skills that we as teachers wish to promote but are unaware of. It unravels the principles behind the sophisticated nature of human learning with evidence from classroom researches. Teachers can refer to the suggestions provided to develop these three types of knowledge.

Human *Memory* is closely related with learning. This chapter provides us with explanations of the workings and the organization of the human memory in terms of processing the learning or knowledge. This chapter is an insightful venture into the human memory and helps teachers to understand the importance of exposure to information and rehearsal of that knowledge for better retention and recall.

Chapter three on *Child Development* discusses the cognitive growth of the child. The issue of attainment of cognitive maturity as a continuous process is the crux of this chapter. This whole process is a part of the 'critical period' and the understanding of which can equip teachers expose children to a qualitative surrounding which can facilitate as well as accelerate learning as the period is otherwise known as 'sensitive'.

The yearlong dichotomy between *Nature and Nurture* in shaping the children's cognitive abilities is the crux of chapter five. It discusses how biological primary abilities in a child believed to be the contribution of nature can be exploited to develop the biologically secondary abilities by exposing it to a 'normal environment'. It sensitizes teachers to understand the individual differences in abilities in children and improve the environment where both nature and nurture complement each other.

The next chapter *Moral Development* explores the validity of Rousseau's argument *children were born 'noble savages', and that if only we would not corrupt them, they would grow up to create the perfect society*. This chapter primarily focuses upon the process of socialization and how it makes an impact on the 'natural generosity' the child is endowed with. It also debates

on the issue of moral vs. convention and explains how the process of internalization can be facilitated to learners through teaching to make a correct distinction between the two.

In this chapter the author has taken the arduous job of exploring a fuzzy area like *Intelligence*, what it is and how it can be measured. It discusses the validity of its definitions and puts emphasis to develop a measure which should be universal and applicable to any culture and should not discriminate any class or cannot be dependent on a notion called literacy. Teachers can relate their understanding of it to educate children for intelligent behavior.

Chapter eight views *Motivation* as one of the variables which has far reaching consequences in teaching-learning. It can be attributed both to the teacher and the learner. How motivated a teacher is to motivate? And how *motivated* a student is *to be* motivated? This chapter sheds light on issues such as students' unawareness of their own deeds, their unmet physical needs, and pressure to perform unchallenging and irrelevant works, their own held beliefs about teaching and learning resulting in negative motivation. Teachers can encourage children to understand and reflect on their own drives and desires which can yield positive results.

Learning is believed to be a result of teaching and to know how much of learning has happened we take the help of tests. *Measuring Learning* is a vital part of teaching because 'learning' in today's world has become accountable. This chapter begins with the discussion on two forms of assessment and draws attention to the testing system prevalent in current times. It highlights issues related to reliability, validity and objectivity in test preparation and emphasizes tests to be skills based, application oriented and open-ended. This chapter provides teachers with insights to develop authentic assessment techniques and learner awareness of the rubrics of assessment.

Chapter ten on *Emotions, Learning and Emotional Health* offers a clear progression of ideas as per the title. It begins with a discussion on several types of emotions in connection with the academic contexts and the effects of positive and negative emotions on learning. The various measurement scales to regulate the intensity of learning and the importance of self-esteem have been discussed under the third part of the title 'emotional health'. Teachers can be encouraged to promote awareness among learners about how to work in a self-regulated manner to achieve emotional well-being.

This last chapter provides a brilliant description of adolescence in terms of physical, cognitive, hormonal growths in children. Adolescence is all about change and being personal. This has been highlighted in this chapter though never undermining the influence of schooling on it. The section on 'school and the adolescents' contains the *dos* and *don'ts* are purely results of the researches the author has carried out which can help teachers understand the shift in their learners.

Conclusion

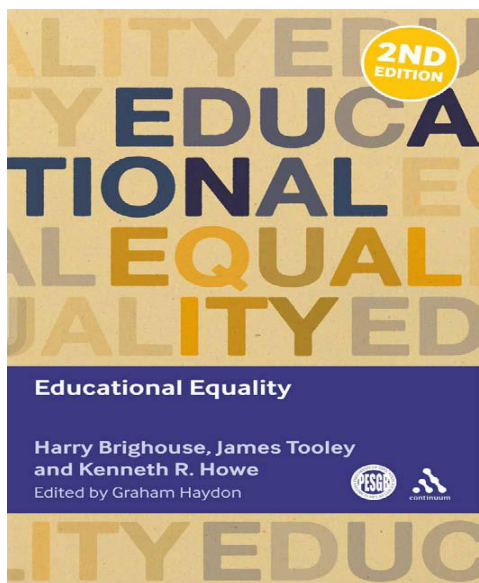
Being directed towards the teachers this book clearly depicts the system of education as well the educational psychology of parents and educators. Backed by various studies the arguments provided in this book are related to the most common phenomena in teaching-learning environments with special attention to child psychology. There are numerous issues which can be taken up to conduct classroom researches. What is more important is the readability of the text. The explanation of the psychological terms like motivation, intelligence, and cognitive growth in children are dealt with precision. To give my final words to the book, 'the more you read this book the more you become an explorer'.

Book Review

Educational Equality

(Authors- Harry Brighouse, Kenneth R. Howe and James Tooley)

Nittala Noel Anurag Prasanth



One measure of equality or inequality is a society's level of social mobility, and among the indicators of that are the factors that influence access to professional careers. The advantages of coming from a relatively wealthy family and having parents of professional status and in particular the advantages of having gone to certain independent schools and certain high-status and highly ranked universities are increasing rather than diminishing. The United States has often been viewed as a less class-conscious society, though at the same time one in which there are great inequalities of wealth and of opportunities in life. On both sides of the Atlantic education is very much bound up with inequalities in life chances. There are important differences, among them most striking is that in the USA there is no equivalent to the great advantages in certain career paths apparently achieved by attending independent private schools when compared to the UK context. The relationships between economic and educational inequalities are not straightforward. It is observed within the same society some have an annual income in millions and others only in thousands, this disparity provides ground to at least label this as inequality in material conditions, even if there is room for debate as to what if anything is wrong with such disparities.

Meritocracy

The Meritocratic Conception: An individual's prospects for educational achievement may be a function of that individual's talent and effort, but it should not be influenced by her social class background. (Brighouse, p. 28)

On the meritocratic conception of educational equality, it is legitimate for an individual's prospects for educational achievement to be a function of that individual's talent and effort. This conception implicitly acknowledges, of course, that there will be differences in actual educational achievements between individuals; its concern is that the processes that lead to these differences should be fair ones.

Leaving aside the point recognized by both Howe and Tooley that a person's tendency to exert an effort in education is likely to be influenced by their social class background, there is a need also to acknowledge that there are disabilities that can severely limit the talent and the capacity for effort of certain individuals. The most obvious case is that of severe learning difficulties; but there are also psychological conditions such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) that can limit the kind of concentrated and continuing effort that is conducive to learning. Additionally, some severe physical difficulties, which are in no way correlated with intellectual limitations, may make it difficult for individuals to maximize the effort they put into education while also coping with everyday life in a society geared to the normally-abled.

A strict application, then, of the meritocratic principle as a measure of fairness could lead to the conclusion that it is not unfair to certain individuals, because of disabilities innate or acquired (e.g. through accident) end up with extremely limited educational achievements. Given the extent to which educational achievement is correlated in our kinds of society with other advantages in life which was part of the reason for a concern with educational equality in the first place, it makes one wonder whether some other kind of consideration must be given, beyond the meritocratic principle itself, to those who would fare worst under that principle. This is a point recognized by all the contributors to this volume. Should special attention be given to benefiting the least advantaged, who may not be confined to those with disabilities; those, for instance, born into the most deprived or dysfunctional family environments may also be considered among the least advantaged. If there should be special attention to benefiting the least advantaged, should it be interpreted as part of the demands of a concern with equality or as a separate ethical demand?

How the education systems contribute to educational inequality

- Unequal distribution of school children among the public and private schools
- Funding to the schools
- Distribution of teachers

Gewirtz et al. looked at the operation of the 1988 reforms in three overlapping local education markets in London. Their research looked at both the demand side i.e. how parents chose schools and the supply side i.e. how schools attracted and selected pupils. On the demand side they found a distinct difference, correlating strongly with the social class and educational background, in the ways parents choose. They distinguish three classes of choosers.

- ‘Privileged, or skilled’ choosers, mostly better educated parents, were better able to understand the public sources of information, including the information offered by the schools themselves.
- Semi-skilled choosers are less aware than the skilled choosers of the need to find a good match between the school and their child: as Gewirtz et al. put it, ‘the process of school choice is abstract, more a matter of finding the “good” school rather than the “right” one’ (Gewirtz et al., 1995, p. 44).
- Finally the least well-educated or ‘disconnected’ choosers ‘almost always began with, and limited themselves to, two schools. These would be schools in close physical proximity and part of their social community whereas the skilled choosers tended to arrive at two schools after a winnowing process’ (Gewirtz et al., 1995, p. 45).

Gewirtz et al. conclude that the unequal sophistication of parents as choosers in the educational marketplace bodes ill for educational equality.

What is educational equality and why does it matter?

The reasons behind disadvantaged children performing much less well than advantaged children on any reasonable measure of academic achievement, debate focuses more on the quality of the schools themselves, the character of the peer group the children have in school, and the broader social environment, including the family influencing learning and upbringing. Modern industrial societies are structured so that socially produced rewards such as income, wealth, status, positions in the occupational structure and the opportunities for self-exploration and fulfillment that come with them are distributed unequally. Education is a crucial gateway to these rewards; a person’s level and kind of educational achievement typically has a major influence on where he/she will end up in the distribution of those potentially life-enhancing goods.

How much does educational equality matter?

The radical conception calls for equal prospects for educational achievement between people with different levels of natural talent. But some people are born with considerably less cognitive ability than others, and for some of them there is a very low ceiling on the level of achievement they could reach, regardless of what educational resources were spent on them. One might think that equal educational prospects between them and people with perfectly ordinary levels of talent were impossible, but that seems unlikely; in order to equalize prospects one could severely damage the more ordinary children by, for example, lobotomizing them. To do this would be seriously morally wrong for several reasons, including that children have a right to physical and psychological integrity.

Educational equality is not as important as that right, which is why the right presents a barrier to achieving educational equality. But this does not mean that the radical conception fails to pick out a value that should be pursued as far as is permitted by the constraints imposed by other important values. No reason has been offered here to think that equality matters at all, and some will no doubt think that it doesn't, in which case there is no need to worry about any real world conflict with economic growth. But reasons have been offered for thinking that educational equality matters. If achieving it fully would involve compromise of other values, one has to know what those values are and whether the reasons for them mattering are strong enough that they should take precedence in any trade-off.

Benefiting the least advantaged

The position of the least advantaged is another thread that runs through the discussion in this volume. Brighouse treats benefiting the least advantaged as a distinct value, a distinct ethical demand, one could say it can outweigh the demands of equality, though the latter still weigh strongly. Howe agrees with the importance of benefiting the least advantaged, but he does not think this has to be treated as a distinct value; he suggests interpreting equality in a way that already incorporates attention to the position of the least advantaged. Tooley on the other hand thinks that Brighouse should focus entirely on the education of the least advantaged and stop worrying about equality at all.

One value which is outlined and is less often appealed to explicitly in public debate is the value of benefiting the least advantaged. The basic idea here is that it really matters that social institutions should be designed to benefit those who have the lowest prospect for having a

flourishing life. These include some people who have very severe disabilities, and also those who have the lowest incomes and lowest places in the occupational structure and status hierarchies of a society. The immediate thought will be that, surely, it is by educating the least advantaged as well as possible that one can maximize their benefit, so educational inequality cannot serve them, because it just diverts resources to the more advantaged. But that is not necessarily true, especially in our, highly unequal, world.

Perhaps wealthy parents could be permitted to buy unfairly unequal educational opportunity for their children, say by paying for them to attend elite private schools, or by paying for extensive private tuition. As a result, those children have an unfairly better chance of getting the college places, jobs and status, to which all are aspiring, than other similarly talented and hardworking children do. But because parents can invest in their children, they do so, and so the total stock of human capital in society is enhanced; the economy can then harness the productivity gains, due to that enhanced human capital, to the benefit of the less advantaged. Abolishing elite private schools, as the meritocratic principle is likely to require in most circumstances, might thereby harm the less advantaged over time.

The design of social institutions should be justifiable to all who live under them. But there is a deep arbitrariness to the distribution of particular talents and behaviors, and those who lack the talents, or are not well socialized into the behaviors, that a particular society rewards have much less access to the fruits of social cooperation than others. A reward schedule is justifiable to those who face, unfairly, worse prospects from it; to the extent that it can be shown that someone else would have worse prospects than they do if any other set of social institutions were adopted.

It can be observed that some schools with low-income populations ‘beat the odds’ by getting them to perform well on tests and achieve at a level high enough to secure employment and perhaps even college places, but it is known that these schools are extremely rare, and also there is no clarity on how they beat the odds. There is no reliable technology for educating high proportions of high need students to high levels of achievement. It can be concluded from these observations that there is something naive in hoping that educational equality can be fully achieved through measures directed solely at schools.

Book Review

A Nomad Called Thief Reflections on Adivasi Silence (Editor G.N.Devy)

Koutuk Dutta

Ganesh. N. Devy was a Professor of English at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Boroda. He is now a renowned literary critic and activist and is the founder and director of the Tribal Academy at Tejgadh, Gujarat. He is an activist for the cultural and human rights of the nomadic communities and the adivasis of India. He is the founder of Bhasha Research and Publication Centre at Vadodara for documenting the socio economic and cultural aspects of these marginalized communities. The sole purpose of his Tribal Academy at Tejgadh is to educate and empower them. His publications and addresses have displayed his deep interest in the culture, language, historiography, ethnography and literature of diverse marginalized speech communities of India. As a profound thinker, with his penetrating insight and untiring penchant for good work, he initiated a movement for the welfare of the indigenous communities of India. His recent books, besides the one under review here, include 'After Amnesia; Tradition and Change in Indian Literary Criticism'(1992), 'Of Many Heroes; An Indian Essay in Literary Historiography'(1997) and 'Indian Literary Criticism: Theory and Interpretation' (2003).

'A Nomad Called Thief Reflections on Adivasi Silence' penned by G. N. Devy , investigates as the blurb on the back cover informs us 'the inadequacies in the way adivasis have been looked at and thought about, resulting in their complete marginalization and oppression'. We are further informed that the book explores the major causes which result in 'Tribal Aphasia', and 'Tribal Silence'. It also becomes a vivid account of the violence experienced by tribals and highlights the inducting of tribals in the communal violence of Gujarat in 2002. The content of the book confirms that ten separate essays which comprise the whole text of the book are published under a single title "A Nomad Called Thief: Reflections on Adivasi Silence". This book is dedicated to Mahasweta Devi who brought the author to the nomads. In the acknowledgements, Devy gratefully mentions *The Hindu*, *The Times of India*, *Indian International Centre Quarterly Seminar*, *Budhan* among publications and *Penguin India and Bhasha Publications* among publishers. He shows his heartfelt gratitude to Sarah Boltwalla , Kavita Patel and Sonal Baxi for their translation, documentation and transcription. He also admitted the constant encouragement provided by Orient Blackswan and its editor Vidya Rao.

The first essay *The Incomplete Blood Cell* is a very moving story, which shows the pathetic plight of the adivasi communities who are suffering from a genetic defect, medically known as 'sickle cell' anaemia. Starvation and malnutrition in generation after generation is the cause of this perpetual anaemia. Devy's vitriolic attack is reflected in his inimitable expression – "I think it should be possible for all human beings to recognize the right to having a complete cell as a human right". This essay is concluded with the reference to Mahasweta Devi's story with a victim of sickle cell disease as the hero.

The second essay *A Nomad Called Thief* is the story about Denotified and Nomadic tribes of India that covers a population of approximately six crores. The British had branded them as 'Criminal Tribe' in 1871. The essay highlights that "being illiterate and ignorant of the law of the land, the DNT's know very little about the police prosecution. Mahasweta Devi, Mallika Sarabhai, Bhupen Khakhar, P. Satchidanandan, G.Spivak and G.N.Devy actively removed the stigma attached to these tribes by their rigorous plan of work.

In the third essay *Kikiyario- Adivasi Voice and Violence*, the author represented categorically two incidents of the earliest days of the Gujarat riot which are evidences of tribal unwillingness to participate in the communal frenzy. The fourth essay, *Threatened Speech* categorically states that 'Most of our literary critics and art historians are innocent about the existence of adivasi art and literature and our response to them is trapped in quasianthropological parameters.' The essay arrives to the corollary that there is a fivefold structure of Indian languages in terms of development. The five fold structure of Indian languages are five language families- i) Indo-European; ii) Dravidian; iii) Austro-Asiatic; iv) Tibeto-Burmese; v) Semito-Hamitic. The fifth essay *Language and Reality* is relatively very short essay and seeks to convey the idea that-'Language as a social institution, the nature of its exact origin, and the clear sequence in its formation are some of the mysteries in the epic text of human evolution.'

The sixth essay *Adivasi Knowledge and Aphasia* is unique for its group discussion style. The author managed to assemble several renowned activists, professors, speech- therapists, translators, scholars and students, and discussed on adivasi knowledge system and reached to the conclusion that tribal mode of obtaining knowledge is very instrumental for the larger society. Self-reliance is the only way to development. Once we make the decision to become self reliant and try everything within our means to achieve it, we can achieve holistic and sustainable development. This is the keynote of the seventh essay 'Development'. The eighth essay 'Reaching Out' is the author's inner realization of a philosophic truth that 'the moral authority that

individuals gain out of the community work they do, possesses a certain degree of permanence'. The author also felt that 'this freedom can be understood only through a direct personal experience' And this goodness and freedom allows the human to be divine'. In the same vein G.n. Devy compared his contribution to the cause of the tribal communities with the song of Orpheus. He realizes that one must sing that song of Orpheus in one's own time to make this world more beautiful and more humane. The last essay of this book *Gandhi Again and Never Again* is a very impressive entry in author's diary on the Independence Day of the year 2000. Keeping the Gandhian philosophy in the core of his heart, the author promised that –“If all follow ‘aprigraha’ as an ideal of action, all can attain ‘samata’ i.e. total freedom.”

This extremely scholarly book of rare intellectual observation makes a profound contribution to indigenous literature. This book will open new vista of the Indian indigenous discourse with its epoch- making insights. This book has neither preface nor bibliography. But this excellent book ties adivasi life with the discourses of literature, politics, culture, race, identity and nationalism and will consequently make significant and meaningful contributions to other disciplines of study.

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The Man Who Created Bhasha: ***An Interview with G.N. Devy***

Ivy Imogene Hansdak

In June 2015, my interest in the work of Professor G.N. Devy among the Adivasi people of India (alternately called ‘tribe’, ‘janjati’, ‘indigenous’ and ‘aborigine’) took me first to the office of Bhasha Research & Publication Centre (BRPC) at Baroda and then to the Adivasi Academy at Tejgadh, Gujarat. I began by interviewing his dedicated team of colleagues, such as Vipul Kapadia, Dr. Arvind Pratap, Naginbhai Rathwa, Naranbhai Rathwa, Ukedbhai Rathwa, Bhavsingbhai Rathwa, Varia Manishaben and others. Through their words, the extraordinary story of Bhasha gradually took shape. This story began in 1996 with one man’s dream to preserve the endangered oral languages and literatures of India. His long journey would take him into a world of mysterious beauty and silent misery until, almost two decades later, his dream would surpass its original purpose. Today, his flagship organization, Bhasha, has come to epitomize the people’s struggle everywhere to preserve their endangered languages and cultures against powerful global hegemonic forces.

The creation of Bhasha in 1996 deserves special mention since it has the singularly dramatic quality of a great tale of human endeavour. In brief, Professor G.N. Devy caused ripples in the Indian academia by resigning from his teaching post at the M.S. University, Baroda, soon after winning the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award for his book, *After Amnesia*. Despite the tide of skepticism against him, he forged on ahead with the support of his wife, Surekha Devy, who taught Chemistry at the same university. He began by establishing Bhasha and then commenced on the publication of a literary journal called *Dhol* that aimed at documenting the Adivasi languages, literatures and performing arts of Gujarat. Within a few years, this vision had grown bigger and he had gained many enthusiastic supporters. As a result, the state government allocated 10 acres of land at Tejgadh to Bhasha in 1998 for the purpose of establishing a tribal research institute - the Adivasi Academy – which was inaugurated in 1999. An Adivasi Museum was started here with an extensive collection of tribal arts and crafts. A discussion was also started with the tribal elders, leading to research that was formalized into a Diploma in Tribal Studies and given recognition by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New

Delhi. During this time, the ongoing research opened up new areas where intervention by Bhasha was considered necessary for the survival and improvement of endangered Adivasi communities, particularly in areas such as micro-finance, food security, agriculture, health care and education. Today, the Adivasi Academy has diversified until it incorporates many areas unrelated to the original purpose of the founder. A Primary School for Adivasi children has flourished where teachers use tribal languages in the classroom. A Clinic has been started with a resident MBBS doctor and an ambulance to provide free health service to surrounding tribal villages. In collaboration with the UNICEF, Bhasha has been involved in a project for health awareness, education and child protection in 133 villages (within one Taluk) of Gujarat. At the same time, the Adivasi Academy also boasts of an infrastructural growth at par with any academic Centre of Excellence: a Library with over 65,000 books, a Museum of rare tribal arts and crafts, an Archive with the musical recordings of many tribal groups, and even a digital Consortium that can link up with other tribal museums within India. On another front, Bhasha has organized a series of Chotro International Conferences at different venues within India where indigenous people from all five continents have congregated in a polyphonic discourse on endangered languages and cultures of the world. These have borne fruit in several erudite publications from leading publishing houses in India and abroad. The most recent achievement of Bhasha has been the *People's Linguistic Survey of India (PLSI)*. This monumental task, undertaken a century after Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India*, has led to the publication of over 50 volumes from Orient BlackSwan, which are noteworthy for their meticulous research and analysis of the linguistic situation in India.

To sum up, the wide-ranging and holistic nature of Bhasha's work among the tribal people of India proves that Prof. G.N. Devy's vision has surpassed itself. Like the Pithora painting in the Adivasi Museum, his idea has grown from a small seed into a mighty Tree of Life! IVY: You have spoken and written about the Tribal Imagination several times. In your "Preface" to *Painted Words* – your seminal anthology of Tribal Literature published in 2002 - you have described it as "dreamlike and hallucinatory" because it is, according to you, not bound by temporal and sequential constraints. Do you still believe the same today; twelve years after those words were written?

G.N. DEVY: Do you recall that classical statement by S.T. Coleridge on the distinction between Fancy and Imagination which every student of literature is asked to internalize? In it, Memory is described as a carrier of Fancy and the intuitive grasp of the universe as the basis for Imagination.

I have thought deeply about this and I find the position problematic. The fact is that Memory is a means of managing Time that humans developed at a certain stage in the evolution of the linguistic ability, particularly the invention of the past-tense sentence as a viable structure for articulation of perception. Humans have passed through several phases of development or evolution of Memory. The latest phase is where an artificial or man-made memory – the memory chip – has started acquiring greater competence than the natural memory. Just as Memory is aligned with the notions of time, Imagination is aligned with the notions of space. You may recall that when the theory of relativity in the physical sciences gained currency, the literary imagination too underwent a significant change. This is so because the idea of space accessible to the human intelligence has always determined the limits of human Imagination. Given this close correspondence between Imagination and the perception of space, it is natural that different civilizations grasp what Imagination is (and what it is not) differently. For instance, the land-craving civilizations started casting their imaginations on a vaster scale than the others. Think of colonialism in this way and it starts yielding greater sense. Adivasis have a unique relation with land. This relation with land has deep roots in hunting, gathering as well as pastoral phases of economy, rather than the agrarian economy which places a premium on land-holding as a social status marker. I, therefore, look at the major modes of historical memory controlling expression, as if space and time are in a continuum in the minds of the tribal ‘makers’. These layers allow you to cross eons effortlessly in a single narrative without distracting the sense-fullness of the communication. I hold on to my words as before.

IVY: In the same “Preface”, you have said that Tribal Literature and Arts contain “subversions (that) are more playful than ironic”. Could you please elaborate on this?

G.N. DEVY: ‘Irony’ suddenly acquired importance in Western Literature when Modernism became the central current of Architecture, Arts and Literature of the West in the closing years of the nineteenth century. Modernism has given the world some of its greatest literary works. Yet, in one area it does not compare well with several previous literary epochs, and that area is the use of Myth. Precisely at the time when modern Psychology was engaged in developing understanding of the functioning of the Collective Unconscious, modern literature arrived at an impasse in its dealing with the most crucial holder of the collective unconscious, which is Myth. Thus, irony – so highly valued by Modernism – had to place Myth in the backyard of literary expression. It was only occasionally that someone like an Irish Joyce or Yeats could relate to it somewhat meaningfully. Others had to remain content with ‘ironic subversions’. I was thinking of this

situation when I encountered in several epics of Adivasis a great ease with the most ancient of their mythic memory. And, I am not talking of those epics that are still alive and are being continuously renewed and re-composed. I found ‘playfulness’ in the way in which the contemporary Adivasi mind can cope with myths that form part of their collective memory. I thought it would be useful for readers of the anthology, *Painted Words*, to appreciate this.

IVY: A little later, in the “Introduction” to *Indigeneity: Culture and Representation* – the proceedings of the Chotro Conference of 2008, published in 2009 – you have pointed out the “gross cultural neglect” faced by Tribal languages which have remained outside print technology. But isn’t this true for many non-Tribal languages too? Why have you singled out only Tribal languages for your attention?

G.N. DEVY: It is true that the languages that have remained outside print technology have been facing neglect from all quarters. These include languages spoken by Adivasis as well as languages spoken by non-Adivasis. The book, *Indigeneity*, was a collection of essays by scholars and activists from all parts of the world about the situation of the indigenous peoples, aborigines, Adivasis and nomads from all parts of the world. As its Editor, when I was writing the Editorial, I stated that the languages of the indigenous have remained neglected. The context justified that statement. This does not mean that one can be insensitive about the neglect faced by languages of many other non-Adivasi communities. All over the world today, there is a great danger of a total language extinction lurking. It is comparable to the extinction of bio-diversity. When a global crisis of this magnitude is facing us, one cannot think of only one’s own context. But when one is thinking of a particular plant species (or animal species), it would be justified within that specific context to speak about the danger and risk faced by that particular species. My statement on Adivasi language needs to be read with this caution.

IVY: An MA elective course titled “Writing from the Margins” is in the process of being prepared by the Department of English, IGNOU, New Delhi. In it, both Dalit Literature and Tribal Literature are included. Do you consider an MA course of this nature viable and effective in terms of retaining the distinct identity of Tribal Literature or does Tribal Literature run the risk of being submerged within the larger corpus of Dalit Literature?

DEVY: It is a good idea. We should have such courses in many colleges and universities. I do not think in the least that placing Dalit Literature and Adivasi Literature together will take away anything from either of them. If possible, we should also bring in Black Literature from the US,

besides African Writings that foreground ethnicity and protest, and many such schools and movements. I am an ardent believer in Comparative Literature and multilingualism. To offer only Adivasi Literature or the Adivasi Literature of a particular Indian state or a particular ethnic group would take away much from it. Good literature stands out in the thick of a literary crowd. I am convinced that placed alongside the best literature of the world, some Adivasi literary creations can stand with pride entirely on their merit. Their seclusion, on the other hand, would submerge them in an outpouring of false and shallow pity.

IVY: Since its inception in 1996, Bhasha seems to have diversified from an institute dedicated to the study and preservation of Tribal literatures, languages and performing arts into other areas such as health care, education, micro-finance, even social activism. The monumental *People's Linguistic Survey of India* is also complete. So, what next?

DEVY: That the Adivasi Academy could be dreamed about and established has been a source of great satisfaction to me. It was an uphill task and the obstacles on its way were far too many. I have a sense of pride when I see that all the younger Adivasi colleagues are managing the Academy with such perfection. It is now an institution with an uncommon staying power. I am glad it is so. The *People's Linguistic Survey of India* was a dream that was wild, crazy and entirely exasperating. To think of those 50 volumes covering more than 700 languages, spread over 50,000 printed pages surely was not easy and not practical at all. But, I am glad that the *PLSI* is now completed and the volumes have started appearing in print. In both these undertakings, failure would have been a more natural outcome than success, so vast was the scope of both. If either or both of these have attained even a small measure of success, it is so entirely because I learnt to work together with a large team, learnt to respect collective work and collective production. If that method is followed, many of our unfinished missions and tasks can be completed. Now that the *PLSI* is complete, I plan to sit down and write about the methods I used in seeing such big projects through. It would be a mistake to gather so much experience and then to not share it with the younger generations. This is even more important in times when Hope seems to be running out of luck.

.IVY: As an academic and a scholar who has surprised the world with his refreshingly unconventional thinking and approach, what would you like to say to the younger generation of academics today, especially in terms of your work at Bhasha?

DEVY: I would like to repeat what Shelley's Prometheus said: "Hope, till Hope creates the thing it contemplates." I am convinced that the younger generation today is far better equipped for intellectual trajectories of demanding nature and humanitarian tasks of larger magnitude. However, man often forgets that the ends do not justify the means; it is the means that bring the ends their dignity and beauty. So, aspire we must, but not be tired of the length of the road. And the beginning is always with oneself. As Gandhi said, "Be the change that you want to see in the world."

IVY: You have spoken and written about the tribal imagination several times. In your preface to *The Painted Words* –your seminal anthology of Tribal Literature published in 2002—you have described it as "dreamlike and hallucinatory" because it is, according to you, not temporal and sequential. Do you still believe the same today, 12 years after those words were written)?

DEVY: Do you recall that classical statement by S. T. Coleridge on the distinction between Fancy and Imagination which every student of literature is asked to internalize? In it Memory is described as a carrier of fancy, and intuitive grasp of the universe as the basis for Imagination. I have thought deeply about this and I find the position problematic. The fact is that Memory is a means of managing Time that humans developed at a certain stage in the evolution of the linguistic ability, particularly the invention of the past tense sentence as a viable structure for articulation of perception. Humans have passed through several phases of the development or evolution of Memory. The latest phase is where an artificial or man-made memory – the memory chip—has started acquiring greater competence than the natural memory. Just as Memory is aligned to the notions of Time, Imagination is aligned with the notions of Space. You may recall that when the relativity theory in physical sciences gained currency, the literary imagination too underwent a significant change. This is so because the idea of space accessible to the human intelligence has always determined the limits of human Imagination. Given this close correspondence between Imagination and the perception of space, it is natural that different civilizations grasp what is Imagination (what it is not) differently. For instance, the land-craving civilizations start casting their imaginations on a vaster scale than the others. Think of colonialism in this way and it start yielding greater sense. Adivasis have had a very unique relation with land. Their relation with land has deep roots in hunting, gathering as well as pastoral phases of economy, rather than the agrarian economy which places a premium on land-holding as a social status marker. I therefore, look at the major modes of tribal imagination as non-invasive and not-ossified. I see in it layer upon layer of historical memory controlling expression, as if

space and time are in a continuum in the minds of the tribal ‘makers’. These layers allow you to cross eons effortlessly in a single narrative without distracting the sensefull-ness of the communication.

I hold onto my words today as before.

IVY: In the same Preface you have said that Tribal Literature and Arts contain “subversions (that) are playful than ironic. “ Could you please elaborate on that ?

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Adivasis and nomads from all parts of the world. As its editor, when I was writing the Editorial, I stated that the languages of the indigenous have remained neglected. The context justified that statement. This does not mean that one can be insensitive about the neglect faced by languages of many other non-Adivasi communities. All over the world today there is a great danger of a total language extinction lurking. It is comparable to the extinction of bio-diversity. When a global crisis of this magnitude is facing us, one cannot think of only one's own context. But when one is thinking of a particular plant species (or animal species), it would be justified within that specific context to speak about the danger and risk faced by that particular species. My statement on Adivasi language needs to be read with this caution.

IVY: An MA Elective Course titled "Writing From the Margins" is in the process of being prepared by IGNC, New Delhi. In it, both Dalit and Tribal writings are included and I am one of the Expert Committee preparing course materials on Santali oral narratives and a few poems on contemporary themes. Do you course of this nature viable and effective in terms of retaining the distinct identity of Tribal Literature or could it be submerged within the larger corpus of Dalit Literature?

DEVY: It is a good idea. We should have such courses in many colleges and universities. I do not think in the least that placing Dalit Literature and Adivasi Literature will take away anything from either of them. In fact, if possible we should also bring in the Black Literature from the US, the African Writings that foreground ethnicity and protest and many such schools and movements. I am an ardent believer in Comparative Literature and multilingualism. To offer only Adivasi Literature or the Adivasi Literature of this or that Indian State or this or that ethnic group would take away much from it. Good literature stands out in the thick of a literary crowd. I am convinced that placed even with the best literature in the world, some of the Adivasi literary creations can stand with pride entirely on their merit. Their seclusion, on the other hand, will submerge them in the outpour of a false and shallow pity.

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The Adivasi Academy



The Adivasi Museum



Pithora painting at Adivasi Museum



Adivasi children at Bhasha Primary School



Naginbhai Rathwa at Bhasha Library



Vipul Kapadia at Bhasha Office



Dr. Arvind Pratap at Bhasha Clinic



Narenbhai Rathwa at Adivasi Museum



Adivasi Academy Bookshop



Adivasi Artist at Work



Surekha and Ganesh Devy with grandson Ishaan



INTERVIEW-2

Interview of Kenstowicz

Hemanga Dutta



1. What made you choose linguistics as your career option?

I studied Russian in high school (something quite unusual at the time) and later in college. I was a combination psychology-philosophy major and so linguistics was a natural choice to combine these interests. At that time, there were very few schools that offered linguistics as a Ph.D. option (let alone as a B.A.); but University of Illinois was starting a program staffed by the first graduates of the MIT program. It was an exciting period to be in the field, just as it was changing to a new paradigm.

2. How can an individual contribute to the society as a linguist?

Language is the primary factor that distinguishes our species. Understanding its nature has been a key question in both the western and nonwestern traditions.

3. What kinds of professions can an individual take up after having a formal degree in linguistics?

Until recently teaching and research have been the primary sources of employment for linguists. But with the advent of computers and the internet, the machine-human language interface has become an area of considerable interest in the high-tech domain. In addition, second-language acquisition teaching and research continue to grow as the world becomes more interconnected.

4. What are the applied fields of phonology and phonetics?

If I understand the question correctly, there are lots of areas where the basic understanding of language sound structure and its realization in speech are critical. These include speech recognition and production, language forensics, language and the law, speech pathology, second language acquisition, to name a few.

5. Do you think we can empower a community by documenting their language or writing a grammar book of their language or creating literary pieces in that language?

Yes, certainly. Language is the primary vehicle for the transmission of culture. Being able to speak the language fluently (and there are degrees of fluency by the way) is the best way to maintain the culture. The vocabularies of many languages are treasure troves of knowledge of the physical and spiritual environments of traditional peoples whose loss could be compared to the disappearance of animal and plant species.

6. It is seen that some languages are more powerful and popular in the world as compared to the rest. What are your views as a linguist?

Yes, in language-contact situations, one language often becomes dominant. The received view is that this reflects the power and prestige (political, economic, military) of the speakers rather than any features of the structure of the languages themselves (beyond simple vocabulary).

7. What kind of puzzles and challenges inherent in the sound system of a language motivate you?

I have been continually fascinated with the features of stress and tone. They are seldom indicated in orthography but are perhaps the most salient properties distinguishing one language from another, at least at initial exposure. To take a simple example, in the Bantu

languages a syllable can be realized contrastively with a high or low tone. The verbal morphology is very complex, with the word built up from a root plus various suffixes marking distinctions like, active, passive, causative, reciprocal and a rich system of tenses to which are added prefixes marking the person, number, and gender-class of the subject and object. When all of these possibilities are multiplied out, the paradigm of a simple verb can number well over a million words. A fluent speaker assigns a tonal contour to any given word in the paradigm effortlessly. When one considers that the tone of a syllable often involves rules that delete, insert, or shift the tone from one location to another one (possibly in a different word), the mystery of how this is done only increases. What is the nature of this computation? How is it learned? These are the kind of questions that continue to motivate our field.

8. We have seen that there is a transition from rule-based phonology to constraint-based approach of optimality theory. What kind of approach do you think is better for the researchers?

Rule-based systems, particularly when combined as sequential operations, often provide simple but elegant descriptions of how the sounds of a word change depending on which other sounds appear in their local environment. Constraints are useful for characterizing the more static shape of words such as which sounds may appear at the beginning or end of a word. Understanding how these dynamic and more static properties interact remains an unsolved problem in our field.

9. To what extent do you think the intuition of the native speakers help a phonetician or a phonologist to conduct quality research?

If the linguist is not him/herself a native speaker, then the intuitions and judgments of the language consultant/informant are critical. A speaker who is sensitive to the language can direct the researcher to related phenomena than can help to shed light on the analysis of a particular point. A well-known paper by the American linguist Edward Sapir ("The Psychological Reality of Phonemes") makes this point quite elegantly.

10. What are your views on Indian linguistics or phonetics? Are you familiar with the theories of Paninian linguistics?

I am only a beginner in this domain and so cannot comment here.

11. What are the recent techniques and tools phoneticians implement these days to conduct research?

There are a variety of instrumentations available to supplement simple transcription of spoken language. Particularly important for our field has been the development of Praat by Paul Boersma and David Weenink. This free and easy-to-use system (<http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/>) has a variety of tools to analyze the acoustic structure of speech and can be an easy point of entry into our field.

12. To what extent variations within the same language are important for a phonetician?

If they are systematic they can point to incipient sound changes and dialect differences and may point to alternative ways of articulating an underlying phonological contrast.

13. Do you think accent matters these days? Do you think an Indian should adopt British or American accent while talking in English?

These are socio-linguistic questions that I do not feel competent to comment on.

14. What are your major research papers and books in phonology and phonetics?

I have written two graduate-level phonology textbooks: “Generative Phonology: Description and Theory” (Academic Press, 1979, co-authored with Charles Kisseberth) and “Phonology in Generative Grammar” (Blackwell, 1994). The materials from the undergraduate and first-semester graduate courses I regularly teach are available free through MIT’s Open Courseware: <http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/linguistics-and-philosophy/24-901-language-and-its-structure-i-phonology-fall-2010/> and

<http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/linguistics-and-philosophy/24-961-introduction-to-phonology-fall-2014/>

Many of my papers over the past 20 years are available at my MIT Linguistics Dept. site: <http://web.mit.edu/linguistics/people/faculty/kenstowicz/>

15. What are your future projects in Linguistics?

My recent research has focused on East Asian languages, particularly Korean and Chinese. I would like to learn more about Japanese and its structure.

16. Tell something about your personal achievements in linguistics.

I most enjoy working with the many graduate students and visitors we have had over the years in the MIT (and earlier the University of Illinois) linguistics departments.

17. Could you please say something for the researchers in the field of Indian linguistics?

I would say that the field could benefit by greater exposure of the research being done today on the Indic, Dravidian, Tibeto-Burman, and other minority languages. Also, the field of Indian English championed by my former colleague Braj B. Kachru is a rich topic that should be continued.

Lokaratna Khajanaa:

A Treasure Trove of Folklore

Baul Songs (Translated)

Dhriti Ray Dalai

Fakir Lalon Shah (1774 -1890) of undivided Bengal could be regarded as one of the most eminent of Baul singers, a representative segment of the folk song tradition emanating from South Asia. There was much controversy surrounding Lalon's religion with some opining that he was born into the Kayastha caste of Hinduism and others claiming him to be of a Muslim weaver's family. Adopting a syncretistic attitude to religion, Lalon Shah opined that every man irrespective of one's religious affiliations could attain a knowledge of the Divine. God was to be found in man's own heart and in every aspect of creation. This emphasis of Lalon on the formless divinity was later manifest in the songs of Rabindranath Tagore whose *Religion of Man* (1931) further acknowledges the Viswakabi's reverential attitude and indebtedness to the philosophy of Lalon.

Albeit the three poems translated by me here have chosen randomly yet they serve to focus on the principal philosophy of Lalon. 'The Many-Hued Flower!' ('Ek Phule Char Rang Dhareche') celebrates God's creation in all its glory and establishes Him as having emerged from no particular geographical territory. Similarly, 'Questions, Divine!' ('Kare Sudhabo re Marmakatha, Ke Bolbe Aamay') problematises the human conceptions of the Divine with the possibilities of Him being a fundamentally formless entity. The last one, 'Lalon says, 'What is Caste?' ('Jaat Gelo, Jaat Gelo, Bole E Ki Ajob Karkhana') addresses the Hindu's fear of excommunication from one's caste when such worries are baseless in Lalon's casteless world.

The Many-Hued Flower!

Fakir Lalon Shah

This Flower holds four colours;
And how beautiful it renders the city of love!

Sans roots, it has stem;
And sans branches has leaves.
How strange is it
But whom to ask about it!

It floats in the waters of creation
From one bank to another;

And draws a white bee hectic
To its mid.

O mind, dive into the ocean of love.
The flower that bears the Prophet
Is no ordinary flower
Lalon says, its roots have no country of origin.

Questions, Divine!

Fakir Lalon Shah

Whom to tell of the soul's agony,
Who will tell?
What is He – formless or of form –
The kind almighty!

The day the formless divinity
Floated in an egg on the water
What form was he?
And how do we perceive him?

When as a star he emerged
Five Holy men gilded appeared
Formless or of form
Was the kind almighty?

The lord of the universe,
Why did He call *Barakat*⁵⁰ the 'mother',
Was He not husband he?
Wonders Lalon only!

Lalon says, 'What is Caste?'

Fakir Lalon Shah

'Loss of caste', 'Loss of caste' was strangely everyone's worry
But none were into the path of truth and glory.
On your arrival on this earth
What caste were you?
And on your return
What caste you took?
Tell me the truth.
Brahmin – Chandali – Chamar – Muchi
All by the water same are purified.
What I see and hear are disgusting,

⁵⁰ The Urdu word 'Barkat' may have more than one connotation. But here I have interpreted it as Nature.

When it is known death spares no body.

On breaking bread with a prostitute

Doesn't jeopardize one's caste

Lalon says, 'what is caste?'

This illusion stays.

All poems are translated from Bengali published in Abul Ahasan Choudhury (Ed) *Lalon Samagra*. Dhaka: Pathak Samabesh, 2009.

Folktales Retold by Anand Mahanand

The Monkey Turns into a Prince

Once upon a time, there lived a monkey in a particular island. The island was beautiful with different kinds of plants, flowers and fruits. The monkey lived there happily. There was a temple on a hillock in the middle of the island. People would come there often to spend their time. They liked the monkey very much and offered him food. Children would play with the monkey. So the monkey enjoyed the life in the island.

Once a group of tourists from a city came to the island on a ship. They came from a far off kingdom. They offered the monkey food and the monkey also gave them fruits of the jungle. He played with them. There was a deep friendship between the monkey and the tourists. The tourists had to go back to their city after their stay. They wanted to take the monkey along with them. The monkey also wanted to go along with them. So they brought the monkey along with them to the city.

In their kingdom, the king had made an announcement. His daughter would marry the person whose hand writing was very good. Many people came to the princess and showed their hand writing. But the princess did not like anyone's handwriting. Finally, they sought permission of the princess to bring the monkey and show his hand writing.

The monkey went to the princess and wrote something. It was very beautiful. The princess liked it so much and said she would marry the monkey. The monkey was cursed by a witch. Before that he was a prince. So as the term of the curse got over, the monkey again became a prince. The princess was happy to see him as a prince and married him. Both of them lived happily ever after.

The Prince and the Princess

Once upon a time in the kingdom of Pratapgarh there lived a powerful king. He had a son who was very handsome. His name was Veerenda Pratap Singh. There was another kingdom called Sonagarh. In that kingdom there lived a princess called Tripura Sundari whose fame of beauty reached far and wide of the region. The prince of Pratapgarh wanted to marry her. His minister's son was also fascinated by the beauty and wanted to marry the same princess. The prince decided to make his journey to Sonagarh with his people. It was a long distance and they had to cross the jungle. When he met the Minister's son in the morning, he told him, "I would like to begin my journey to Sonagarh tomorrow and marry the princess there. I would like you to accompany me along with other officials of the palace." The Minister's son replied, "Maharaj, that will give me immense pleasure. I will certainly accompany you." But he was jealous of the prince and thought of something else. He made a plan to puncture the prince's plan. He accompanied the prince. On the way they came across a river. The river had a magnificent power. It would turn a boy into a girl. The minister's son knew about it but the prince did not. So he asked the prince to have a dip in the river and his wish would be fulfilled. Without knowing this, the prince took a dip. Then the prince became a girl. The minister's son and the people left him and went towards Sonagarh. He told the princess that the prince would not come as he had turned into girl. So he offered to marry her. The princess said, "I will wait for him and marry him only because I have heard so much about him and I love him."

The prince was alone near the river. He prayed God for help. The God appeared before him and again turned him into a prince. Then he proceeded towards Sonagarh and met the princess. The princess was happy to see him. They married and came to Pratapgarh. The prince became the king and he sent the minister's son to jail.

Two Friends

Once there was a fox and a wolf in a jungle. Both of them were friends. Though they were friends, each one was proud of himself as each thought that he was cleverer than the other. One day a hunter set a trap to catch animals. He covered a pit with sticks and dry leaves. The fox knew about it but didn't tell to the wolf. As the wolf was walking without knowing that there was a pit, he fell into it. He cried for help but no one came to his rescue. The fox finally decided to help him. He advised the wolf to climb up and come out holding his tail. Then he offered his tail to hold and come up. The wolf was already angry. He pulled the fox down. As a result both of them fell down.

The hunter would come any moment. They thought there was no point in pulling each other's leg. They needed to work together and come out of the pit. So they made a plan. The wolf climbed up and offered his tail to the fox to hold it and come out. As the fox held the wolf's tail, he pulled him up. Thus both of them saved their lives.

The Cake Eating Couple

Once there lived an old man and his wife. They had seven daughters. They hardly had any special food. One day, the old man said, “ We haven’t eaten anything special for a long time. I feel like eating some pancakes. “The old woman replied, “ Your idea is fine. But how can I make cakes for so many people? The old man said, “ I have thought of a plan. You wait for them to fall asleep, and start making cakes after they are asleep.” The old woman said, “ Yes, that’s a good idea!”

The youngest of their daughters was listening to this. She told about their parents’ plans to her other sisters. The girls also thought of their plan. They decided to take one kitchen equipment along with each of them , and went to sleep. The elder one took the pan. Another girl took the bowl. The next girl took the ladle. In this manner, all the equipments for making pancake were hidden by the girls. Then the old woman started grinding the flour as they went to sleep.

Both the husband and the wife were happy. But when the old woman saw them, she found them asleep with the equipments. She told her husband, “ Yes, it will be done tonight.” When she went to look for the pan, she did not find it there. When he went to look for the ladle, she did not find it there. Like that she did not find any of the equipments. When they got up in the morning they came to know about the mischief played by the girls. They got angry and thought of a plan to get rid of them. The old man said, “ I shall take them to the forest and leave them there. “ He told them, “ Girls, we will go to the forest to pluck mangoes tomorrow. You all should be ready early morning. “The girls agreed and got ready.

They walked to the forest in the morning. They carried water in the bottle gourd pot. When they reached the jungle, the old man said, “ I will wait for you’re here. You go ahead, pluck mangoes and come back. You can give me the bottle gourd pot. I will sit under this *mohul* tree.” They agreed with their father and walked ahead.

The old man had hatched the plot. He drank all the water from the bottle and made the pot empty. Then he hanged the pot on the branch of the *mohul* tree and came back home to his wife.

The girls climbed up the trees and plucked mangoes, ate a lot of them. Then they remembered their father and shouted for him from the tree. When they shouted for him, the pot which was hung made a sound, “ HUUUUN.” They thought their father was waiting for them under the tree and responding to them saying “yes”. After some time, they were thirsty. They climbed down and came near the *mohul* tree. But the youngest daughter could not come down. They forgot about her and came to the *mohul* tree. They did not find their father there. So they came back home looking for their father. They even forgot about their youngest sister. The youngest one sat on the branch and called for them but there was no response. She was frightened and started weeping.

The prince of that kingdom came to the forest for hunting. When he stood under the tree, drops of tears fell on his head. When he looked up, he saw a beautiful girl, sitting on the branch

and weeping. He helped her to come down. He took her to his kingdom and made her his queen. Both of them lived happily.

The Seven Sisters

Sadhaba, the businessman had seven daughters. They reached their marriageable age. Among them, the youngest one looked most beautiful. The chief's son from another village came to know about her beauty and wanted to marry her. But she had an unmarried elder sister. So how could she marry before her elder sister's marriage? But the boy's parents insisted to make her their bride. So the girl's parents agreed to get her married. The boy's parents came to see the girl and their marriage was fixed.

On the marriage day, the bridegroom came in a procession. The bridegroom's people were received and treated with care and respect. Then the marriage ritual started. The bridegroom sat on the *bedi*, (elevated stage) and waited for the bride to come. The bride's father hinted to the bride's companions to get her to the *bedi*. They went and asked her to come:

Get up dear and come out

Your groom awaits for you at the alter

She replied:

I am not able to get up my dear friends

I am not able to sit down

My elder sister has made my hair

And I get a terrible headache

The time was running out. The groom's people asked the girl's aunt to get her to the alter. The aunt went and said:

Get up dear and come out

Your groom awaits for you at the alter

The girl replied:

I am not able to get up my dear aunt

I am not able to sit down

My elder sister has made my hair

And I get a terrible headache

It was getting late. The groom's people were restless. They requested the girl's family members to accompany to the alter but the girl said the same thing and did not come. Finally the boy said, "Let me go and try." Usually it is not allowed for the couple to meet before marriage, but since it was a case of emergency, people allowed the boy to go and get the girl. He went near the girl and said:

*Get up my dear come to the alter
Time is running out
We have to travel a long distance
We have no time to lose.
The girl replied:
I know my dear
But I am not able to sit or stand
My elder sister has made my hair
And I get a terrible headache*

The boy wanted to see her head and the decoration made by her girl's elder sister. He could see a black snake in the hair. It had bitten her head and that was why the girl's head was reeling in pain.

The boy took out his knife and immediately killed the snake. A medicine man was called and he cured the girl. Then the marriage ritual was conducted. Both of them came back home and led a happy life.

The End

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