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Lokaratna is the e-journal of the Folklore Foundation, Bhubaneswar. *Lokaratna* is a peer-reviewed International journal with ISSN: 2347-6427. The purpose of the journal is to explore the rich cultural tradition of India for a wider readership. Any scholar across the globe interested to contribute to 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:

- To invite scholars to contribute research papers on any aspect of folklore, literature, socio-political issues, linguistics, and language teaching in English. They should be based on the theory and research methodologies widely adopted in the areas concerned and empirical studies with substantial field work.
- To publish seminal articles written by senior scholars on Folklores, making them available from the original sources. It would help present the lives of folklorists, outlining their substantial contribution to existing resources.
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E mail:

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From the Chief Editor's Desk

THE world civilization has been shaken by a virus Covid- 19. We as human beings consider as the best creation of the universe, but we failed to fight an invisible virus, and millions of lives were lost without care and respect. Time compelled us to rethink our nuclear power and the science we feel so proud of our invention. Where is the human power to fight a virus? We lost many of our friends and relatives, many known and unknown warriors of Covid-19. A back to nature and back to humanity has initiated with the historical blunders we have done. We have destroyed the earth, the ecology, and the universe. We do not have anything to hand over to our posterity. What life do we live? Has our life and our time has given us that liberty to live a life of dignity?

When Gandhiji practiced nonviolence, many modern people laughed at him. Now consider how the states fall prey to organized violence, losing their autonomy and how the power is shifted to terrorists. They are challenging the state authority, and the people in power are helpless before them. A similar case is for ecology. How much do you detach the mind from matter? The thousand years of philosophy and moral economy have tumbled down. The way we have destroyed the earth is a great threat to humanity, and there is no scope to go back to the green world, also no opportunity to live a peaceful life with breathing air. Many challenges are cropped up in our life. We know that we still make mistakes and mistakes.

Powerful countries have become powerless. People are insecure in democracy. Again, the ghost of capitalism has spread worldwide to end the poor, not poverty. A girl from UP who took her father in a cycle crossing 1200 kilometers during a pandemic is the best example of dehumanization. Making duplicate vaccines to earn money by some people is another example of human cruelty and inhumanity.

Now, we are conscious of our mistakes; mitigating the damage and recreating a world of the new order is a big challenge.

What literature and folklore, language, and creativity can do in this pandemic, except taking shelter in the past or ruminating the present to escape or aspire for a better future humanity. Yes, there is a hope, a hope for survival in the onslaught of death and its dreadful imagination. We must hope that humanity will survive with the heap of moribund civilization. With all these in mind, we mustered the courage to go ahead with our aim and ambition to create solidarity among the thinkers, writers, scholars and prepared this volume with a sense of grief and hope.

Meanwhile, our elder colleague, Prof Subhendu Mund, breathed his last in May 2021. He was one of the active members of the Editorial Board of this journal. His sudden demise made us helpless. What happens when a leaf or a branch of a tree is broken and fallen? We feel so without him. We feel his absence and console his family members to muster the courage. Therefore, we pay our tribute to the great soul Dr. Subhendu Mund and pray to God for his soul peace in heaven.

At the same time, some new friends have joined the Editorial Board of this journal. Of course, our presence is accidental, but the continuity of this work must be immortal to see the future world commemorating our beloved past. I thank Dr. Anand Mahanand, Dr. Subhashis Nanda, and Dr. Priyadarshini Mishra for their endeavour to bring out this work today. I also thank Prof Mark Turin, Dept of Anthropology, British Columbia University, who has always been supportive to Folklore Foundation in disseminating the journal Lokaratna to an international readership through his channel.

Mahendra Kumar Mishra

31st July 2021

Bhubaneswar

Editorial

Honouring Mother Earth: Celebrating the Bounties of Nature



We are happy to launch the fourteenth volume (June 2021) of *Lokaratna* in this new season. The season has changed now. From summer, we are stepping into the rainy season. The change of season has brought about many changes on the earth. This change is accompanied by many rituals and festivals-Akshaya Trutia, Seetal Sasthi, Savitri Brata, etc. Recently in Odisha, the Raja Parba was celebrated. It is celebrated in honour of Mother Earth. It is believed that the earth gets menstruation during these three days cycle and has a ceremonial bath on the fourth day. Farmers do not plough the fields these days out of respect for Vasumati or Mother Earth.

The harsh summer season is just over for all animals and birds, trees and insects, and the pleasant monsoons are approaching. The change came when it had looked like the summer would persist forever! There are pre-monsoon rains. The earth is calm and pleasant. It gives so much relief to all living beings. Birds sing out of happiness, green leaves dance like waves on trees. Mountains and fields

wear lush green looks. It is pleasant to see the moving clouds in the sky. Peacocks dance, spreading their beautiful feathers. Farmers are happy as it is the sowing season ushering new hope in them. They realize the wonder of Nature. Just a few days back, they experienced the sun's scorching heat, but the atmosphere has transformed to a new form now! They bow down before Mother Earth for such wonder. The Raja festival is a celebration of the womanhood of the Bhoodevi.

The tradition of venerating Mother Earth is traced back to ancient times, even to the pre-Vedic and pre-historic periods. Mother Earth is worshiped as a goddess who is a personification of Nature, motherhood, fertility, creation, protector, and someone representing the bounty of Nature. She is benevolent, malevolent, and all-powerful. Venerating Mother Earth continues even in different forms in different parts of our country. It is heartening to see that this volume of *Lokaratna*, particularly the folklore section has some discourse about the celebration of Mother Earth, nature worship, and issues related to womanhood. The articles here touch upon the subjects of nature worship, womanhood, and fertility. The article "The Nagini Devi Temple in Himachal Pradesh: A Scrutiny through the Folkloristic Prism of Myths and Lore" by Smriti Dutt gives an account of the Nagini Mata and the myths, beliefs, and legends surrounding her. Kailadbou Daimai's article "Echo from the Mountains: Documentation and Revitalization of Liangmai Folk Songs" explores different themes and social and cultural activities the Liangmai Folk Songs represent. Amit Rauth and Prajwala Pakhrin Bhutia's article "Tamang Folk Songs: An Exploration" foregrounds the richness and enduring Nature of Tamang folk songs. Swapan Kumar Pradhan's article "Nepali Folklife and Folk Culture" demonstrates that the diverse communities of people and their forms of folklore in Nepal contribute to the composite Nepali culture. This time, we have introduced a new section called Discourse on Gender, and here

we have some interesting and pertinent articles. In the article "Situating Gender in the Interface between Natural Habitat and Cultural Traditions of Odisha," Nachiketa Singh and Sangita Dhal describe the age-old relationship between humans and the natural world and discuss how women play a dominant role in the performance of rituals and traditions that help in maintaining a harmonious relationship between the natural world and the humans. Priyadarshini Mishra's article "The Idea of Demonic and the Politics of Gender and Witchcraft in Odisha" explores how the age-old system of witchcraft influences the socio-psychological beliefs of people in the contemporary era and how ordinary women are stigmatized and victimized by the people. Anjelica Marinescu's article "The Romanian folklore dance *Călușarii*: from taumaturgic, cathartic, apotropaic, and *communitas* ritual, to UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity" offers an elaborate discussion on *Călușarii*, one of the oldest folk dance forms. Archana Gaur's article "Re-writing Mythology: Women as Writer and Critic" explores how women writers re-write mythological narratives from their perspectives.

The literature section follows the Discourse on Gender section. Here too we have some exciting articles showing aspects of folk life, issues of communities and cultures. Moumita Roy, in her article "An Ecocritical Reading of Lal Behari Dey's *Folk Tales of Bengal*," studies Lal Behari Dey's seminal book and explores the representation of the folk life as portrayed by Lal Behari Dey. Saloni Malhotra's article "Islamophobia in the U.S. Post The 9/11 Attack as Featured in the Bollywood Movie: *New York* (2009)" studies a film and discusses how the immigrant Muslims and their forms of culture are represented in popular culture. Arpeeta Sharma's article "Understanding the History and the Continuous Resurgence of the Gorkhaland Movement" explores people's struggle to preserve

their identity and culture. She also hints that culture can be better safeguarded if identity is intact. Pradip Kumar Panda's article "V. S. Naipaul's *The Suffrage of Elvira*: Democracy in the Making" foregrounds the immigrant culture in Trinidad by studying V.S. Naipaul's novel *The Suffrage of Elvira*. He also indicates how democracy can provide a favourable condition to enable cultural forms to flourish. The language and pedagogy section is rich in scholarly articles dealing with cultural and pedagogic issues facing our society. Harvinder Negi's article "Language and Culture Documentation in Collaboration with the Local Community: Field Experiences" discusses the role of local communities in the preservation and documentation of local languages in the context of endangered languages. Shruti Tripathi's article "Language Barriers in Curricular Transaction at Primary and Upper Primary Schools of Tribal Areas of Dhar District of M.P: A Case Study of Selected Schools" experiments how a tribal child is deprived when their home language is not used in the classroom. In their article, Kandi Kamala and Gedam Kamalakar, "Indian Higher Education System: Challenges and Suggestions," explore some of the challenges prevalent in the Indian higher education system and offer suggestions to overcome them. Dr. Uddalak Datta, in his article "Revisiting Education for an Alternative Approach: An Action Anthropologist's Perspective" states that the prevalent education based on western paradigms aiming at economic growth needs revamping drawing inputs from indigenous knowledge system. Tannistha Dasgupta's article "Peer Assessment as a Learning Tool: Perspective of Undergraduate Engineering Students" emphasizes peer assessment as an essential form of alternative assessment in the emergence of NEP 2020 and studies students' perspectives on it. Purna Bahadur Kadel's article "Assessment Practices in Master's Degree at Tribhuvan University: What Do Pre-service Teachers Say?" surveys teachers' beliefs in assessment practices prevalent

in Tribhuvan University in Nepal. Timee Ronra Shimray's article "Teachers' Beliefs in Developing Critical Thinking Skills Using Folktales in Ukhrul, Manipur" proposes using local folktales to develop learners' critical thinking skills. Srinath Karnati, in his article "Multidisciplinary Institutions in the context of NEP-2020: A Study of English Language Teachers in Gurukula Schools," argues for a multidisciplinary model of education and states that the Gurukula schools are an excellent example of it. Dandu Harish, in his article "Benefits of Content and Language Integrated Learning Concerning Pedagogical Challenges in Teaching English," discusses CLIL in the context of the new education policy.

The Book Review section has five book reviews. The first review is a book review by Dr. Ajit K. Pradhan and Dr. Pramod K. Das. They have reviewed a book titled *Literature for Language Skills* authored by Professor Anand Mahanand. The second review is based on a new Buddhist novel written by Dr. Pradeep Das titled *Charu Cheebara O Charya* in Odia and translated by Prof Suman Mahapatra. It is a seminal work after *Neelashaila*- a historical Novel of Surendra Mohanty. The novel represents the 8th-century Buddhist regime by the Bhoumakara dynasty in Odisha and the people's socio-cultural history. It is a love story of a Buddhist monk with a queen with a blend of romanticism and philosophical ideas of Buddhism. The third review is Lohitaksha Joshi's critical analysis of Prabodh Hota's poetry collection- *Flickering Flames*. The fourth book review is by Samuel Dani. Samuel Dani reviews Lohitaksha Joshi's book *Essays on Culture: New Perspectives*. This book unravels the critical indigenous knowledge unexplored so far. The fifth book is an Ethnographic novel in Odia, entitled *Dura Akashara Tara- A Star far in the Sky* " written by Dr. Basanti Mohanty, a fiction writer of Odia has written on Mrs. Bela Dei, a noted folk singer of Nabarangpur. This novel is the life story of an

untouchable woman singer Bela Dei who dedicated her life to public entertainment in performing oral singing in Desia language for over five decades.

The Interview Section is a treat this time. We have interviews of three exponents: Professor B. N. Patnaik, a leading linguist; Professor V. Ganeshan, former Vice-Chancellor of CIEFL and eminent Professor of German and Sri Mitrabhanu Gauntia, the reputed Sambalpuri lyricist and writer.

The present volume is enormous in terms of its size and its richness in the quality of articles. Most of the articles are scholarly with an adequate level of research. They are relevant and on contemporary topics reflecting of current issues. This volume will be a wonderful gift to our readers! I thank Dr. Mahendra K. Mishra, the Editor-in-Chief, for his constant support and encouragement. I also thank the members of the Advisory Committee and Board of Editors for reviewing the articles. We lost one of our members of the Editorial Board—Professor Subhendu Mund, a couple of months back. We pay our homage to the departed soul and express our gratitude to him for his contribution. We welcome Professor Shilpa Das, who has joined as a member of the Board of Editors. She is a distinguished faculty from the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, and has talent and experience in literary studies, painting, design, and publishing. Welcome on Board, Dr. Shilpa Das!

The illustration on the cover represents Mother Earth. It is based on the Gond painting motifs and is designed by Dr Monali Sahu. Thank you Dr Monali Sahu for your valuable contribution.

With these words, I offer the fourteenth volume *of Lokaratna* to you-- dear readers!

Anand Mahanand
Executive Editor



Obituary

Dr. Subhendu Mund (1951 - 2021) was a well-known Odia poet, critic, lyricist, story writer, translator, and lexicographer. He breathed his last on 29 May 2021. He was also an internationally renowned scholar in Indian English literature. He is internationally acknowledged as an authority in the early phase of Indian writing in English. He started his teaching career in 1973 as a Lecturer in English and has held positions both as a teacher, Head of English Department, and as an educational administrator, finally retiring as Principal, BJB Autonomous College in 2009.

He was the Chief Editor: Indian Journal of World Literature and Culture, Vice-President: Indian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies, and Chairman: Association for Studies in Literature and Culture. Dr. Mund was also associated with various literary and cultural organizations, including Sahitya Akademi and Odisha Sahitya Akademi.

Dr. Mund was a creative writer, but he has also published works of translation, critical essays and book reviews, research papers, and books in Odia and English. One of his works has been translated in Kannad.

Dr. Mund's wife, Pranati, is a well-known singer, musicologist, and social activist. His elder son Prasenjit is Assistant Editor, The Times of India, Kolkata; second son Abikshit is Regional Manager, Branch Head, Cannon India Ltd., Mumbai; and daughter Pallabi Assistant Professor in Dayanand Sagar Academy of Technology and Management (DSATM), Bangalore.

Dr. Mund was one of the active members of the Editorial Board of Lokaratna journal of Folklore Foundation. His absence is distressing for us. We, the Folklore Foundation members, pay our sincere homage to Dr. Mund.

Mahendra Kumar Mishra

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Folklore

The Nagini Devi Temple in Himachal Pradesh: A Scrutiny through the Folkloristic Prism of Myths and Lore

Smriti Dutt

B.R. Ambedkar University, New Delhi

Abstract

Communities around the world have treasured certain traditions and beliefs over ages and India is no exception, especially the communities residing in the remote regions, away from the fast-progressing lives in the cities. Most of the beliefs and values have sprung with an objective to find solutions to everyday problems with experience, but some beliefs appear calculated and based on scientific reasoning. With the passage of time and the advent of modernization, as better alternatives began to develop, the reasoning part behind the origin of these cultural beliefs and superstitions gradually became defunct which is why that most of these beliefs appear unsubstantiated, uncorroborated, and false at present. While most people just discard such beliefs as mere superstitions, several communities still treasure, follow and believe in them and similar is the case with traditional healing practices that have benefited people and saved lives since ages. Traditional healing refers to health practices, approaches, knowledge and beliefs within communities that incorporates certain ceremonies or plant, animal or mineral-based medicines to treat ailments. Through modern-day research and understanding of history, it seems evident that cultures across the world have always used flora and fauna to treat or alleviate different illnesses which elucidates nature as one of the best physician or healers.

Key words: Nagini Devi Temple, Communities, Folklore

Introduction

Traditional healing practices are about as old as human history, and such practises are deeply rooted in experience, spirituality, and religion. While most practices are already lost, several are on the verge of extinction. The best method to find about such natural cures is to revisit the myths of a particular community. Every culture treasures certain healing practices that are a part of the myths, anecdotes and the folktales of that particular culture that are gradually becoming defunct but are beneficial and effective even today. One such improbable seeming practice is a

significant part of Kangri community's tradition; a community with age old customs and a rich heritage, residing in a rugged terrain, guarded by soaring hills known as Kangra. Kangra, the most populous district of Himachal Pradesh in India, has numerous tales and folkloric traditions that are part of wonderfully confounding history of the region and its people which explicates that there is a lot more to Himachal than its beauty and calm. Kangra is scrutinized as one of the most religious and pious places in Himachal Pradesh and is known to be the abode of several gods and goddesses. Majorly living a life distant from the other parts of the country due to the strenuous hilly routes, the community seems to have found an answer to every problem in the diverse fauna and the dense flora present amidst the hills of Himachal.



This paper attempts to focus on a sacred ancient temple, known as the *Nagini Mata Temple* situated amidst the hills of Kangra, sixteen kilometers away from the Noorpur city in the Koditika region and investigate the rich yet undiscovered myths and traditions that enwreathes this sacred abode. The paper also brings into consideration several myths and legends behind the inception of this sacred and divine abode of goddess Nagini. The temple is renowned for Mata Nagini's idol, predominantly a female serpent and also contemplated as the goddess of snakes as per the local belief of communities comprising majorly Hindu Brahmins, Rajputs, Dogri community as well as several Tibetans, collectively known as the Kangri community. The deity in the temple is believed to have mystical and ineffable powers that serve as a counteragent even to the most noxious snakes. Whenever a person residing in the area suffers a snake bite, he/she is

brought to the temple immediately for treatment and made to undergo specific rituals, so as to be cured, accompanied with enchantment of mantras by the temple priest in order to seek blessings and help from the demiurge. There used to be a specific open space for the treatment for the affected person which is now mostly partitioned and bordered along with some of the space being walled. The donations to the temple are generous as several people who have experienced the blessings of the goddess as well as the ones who have recovered from an ailment support the temple even if they no more reside in Kangra. “Donations for maintenance of the temple come from metropolitan cities like Delhi, where people from Kangri community have settled but still have faith in the goddess and feel gratitude towards her for her blessings,” said a devotee who came to the temple with his family.



The Healing Process:

The clay available in the temple and the water that mystically emerges from just underneath the idol of goddess Nagini are the two significant aspects of the cure. The clay is referred to as ‘shakkar’ and is the first thing that is applied to the affected part of the body; its benefitting yet undiscovered composition is known to pull the poison out of the body. The consumption of the holy water expedites and hastens the healing process. Despite having an untraceable origin, the water is always sufficient for use. Obscurity behind the genesis of water in the temple has often astonished the locals and the visitors; the flow of water appears to be little from where it emerges

but it gradually levels up and is available in abundance. The copious availability of this holy water helps run several water mills in the temple. Considering the medicinal value of the water, it is also supplied to the nearby villages. People around the country take the water as well as the clay from this temple as a blessing of goddess Nagini and keep it in their home to use and benefit from it in the times of need and it seems that their belief has never disappointed them. The community claims that not even a single affected person has died after the application or consumption of the holy earth from the temple. It is observed that the affected person stays for as long as a couple of days to an entire month in the temple depending upon the extremity of the venom but the instant he is completely cured of the poison, s/he is unable to stay inside the temple because ants begin to crawl on his body. The presence of ants is considered as a proof of being fully cured of any toxins because ants also stay away from the ones who are infected with poison.



“I remember when my uncle got bit by an extremely venomous snake and his body began to turn blue. People from the village gathered and one of them threw water on his body and the water evaporated in an instant which made people realize the extremity of his condition and so he was rushed to the *Nagini Mata Temple*. He stayed there for weeks without any comfort or aid. He survived on whatever was given to him by the priest and gradually the blue tinge in his body started to fade. I felt bad about his condition as he was not even allowed to have something to sit on because the priest told us that he'll recover better and faster in a completely natural environment. There were also some other affected people in the temple and it was observed that the ones who stayed there without any additional comfort recovered faster. I was just a child and

I still remember the day he came running back to his house because he couldn't stay there even for a moment after the poison left his body. He never told us much of what he experienced, and we never asked. We just prayed to the goddess for her blessings and my uncle's well-being, narrated Advocate Joginder Dutt, a 78-year-old man born in Nurpur, district Kangra currently residing in New Delhi as he recalled the incident from his childhood." He further added that this incident made his belief in the goddess firm and said, "I know that it is difficult for people to believe in things like this today but no one has the right to question the beliefs of the ones who have observed, experienced and benefitted from certain traditions and folk practices. I feel that belief is a strong emotion and a person's body begins to cure itself when the person begins to believe in the process of the treatment, be it a trained professional doctor or a traditional healing practitioner reliant on basic natural elements like water and earth."

Legends and Anecdotes

Although this practice is no longer encouraged, especially due to the development in medical sciences and its influence, the natives of the region show strong faith and belief in the temple's deity and its tradition of curing snake bite victims, and the practice is still thriving and successfully curing people. People came to know of this sacred abode of goddess Nagini and her mystical powers, when years ago a person suffering from extreme vitiligo residing in Kodi-tika, the place where the temple is situated now, saw milk flowing in a channel in his dream. Soon after he woke up, he rushed towards the place that came in his dream as the place seemed familiar to him. He was surprised to find milk in a channel which usually had water but considering his faith in God and his miraculous dream as a blessing, he drank from the channel. To his amazement, his vitiligo began to dissipate away and soon after when his body recovered completely, he began to see water again instead of milk. He shared his experience with every person he met and this incident became a famous anecdote and is told to the younger generations and the outsiders even today by the community and the temple priest. The old man who got cured gave the rest of his life in the devotion of the goddess and it is believed that his descendants are the current caretakers and priests in the temple. After such recurring incidents of healing and increasing faith among people, a grand temple was constructed gradually and people around the country began to visit the temple since then.



Another famous and important anecdote associated with the famous temple is about a snake charmer who heard of the great goddess and devised a vicious deed to become exceedingly powerful. He thoughtfully orchestrated a plan to steal the idol from the temple. He vigilantly went inside the temple during the night and kept the idol in one of his snake baskets and hurried to escape the place. The only thing that he had to keep in mind was to not to keep the idol of the goddess Nagini on the floor because he was aware of the fact that the instant it is kept on a surface, the idol would permanently establish itself there. While the snake charmer was rushing to escape the borders of Hiamchal, the king of the region saw the vicious happening in his dream. The snake goddess herself appeared in the king's dream to make him aware about the malicious act of the snake charmer and the angry goddess ordered the king to rescue her and even guided the king towards the path that led him to the wicked snake charmer. The king was also ordered to install the idol back in the temple where it originally belonged. Fearing the wrath of the snake goddess, the king immediately left in the middle of the night and chased the thief in obedience to the guidance of the goddess and successfully ensnared the serpent. Even after repetitious orders and warnings, the serpent refused to open his snake basket or to give it away and because of his continuous struggle and stubbornness, the idol fell on the ground and got permanently established over there. Since then that place in the Kandwal region of Kangra came to be known as *chotinagini* and is considered an equally sacred and significant abode of the goddess.

Devotees from around the country visit *ChotiNagini* and pray to the goddess regarding their wishes and aspirations and when those wishes would come true, the devotees revisit the temple and offer little golden metallic snakes to the goddess that are sold outside the temple. The tradition of offering these golden snakes is a gesture to thank the goddess for her blessings. These golden snakes also represent goddess Nagini herself because it is believed that once in a year a unique, uncommon but a resplendent golden snake is seen in the temple by some fortunate and blessed people and it is surmised to be the goddess herself who visit the temple occasionally to bless the devotees. It is believed that a glimpse of the goddess brings fortune, luck and prosperity to the person. There are countless other folktales and anecdotes that tell the miraculous story of goddess Nagini. One can often find her presence in other ancient Indian epics where she is addressed with different names and often appear in different forms. Goddess Nagini finds a mention in the significant Indian epic *Ramayana* written by Tulsidas where she is addressed as Sursa, a Hindu goddess and the mother of snakes who is given the task to test Lord Hanuman by creating obstructions in his way to Lanka. Goddess Nagini is also considered a manifestation of goddess Mansa who emerged as an energy from the mind of Lord Shiva. Goddess Mansa is also believed to be the sister of Vasuki, a serpent King that finds a mention in Hinduism and Buddhism. The term 'mansa' signifies wish and it is believed that goddess Mansa fulfills all the wishes of her sincere devotees similar to goddess Nagini.



The devotees around the world come to *Nagini Mata Temple* in order to find the solutions to their problems and they tend to bring a variety of offerings to impress the goddess, but the most

common offering is coconut, *mishri*, red *duppatai*.e. a kind of stole along with *sindoori*.e. vermilion. Offering salt and broom to the goddess is also a significant part of a very old tradition as it is believed that offering these two things would cure any kind of skin disease, a person is suffering from. The temple is also famous for its traditional practice of sacrificing a male goat to the goddess in exchange of the fulfillment of the wishes and desires of the devotees. The sacrifice was mostly done by the ones who came to the temple with the wish to have a son or a grandson so that the family could have an heir. The practice is highly discouraged now and is even banned by the high court. The temple is an inseparable part of almost all the occasions and festivals celebrated by the people around. Whenever there is any marriage ceremony or a grand celebration of any sort in the region, the first invitation card along with other offerings and some money is offered to the goddess Nagini to seek her blessings and ensure the wellbeing of the entire family. There is also a popular tradition of wearing several red bangles by the brides for the entire first year, after the marriage which is known as *chooda*. After a year this *chooda* is offered to the tree inside the temple premises along with red *duppatas* and *sindoor* because these bangles are considered auspicious, it isn't considered appropriate to throw them even after they break or splinter. Another practice that has been a part of the temple's tradition since ages is the offering of the harvested crops by the farmers. Every season when the crops are harvested, some part of the harvest is offered to the goddess to seek protection of the crops and wellbeing of the farmers.

Customary annual fair, Traditional food and Folksongs

Along with various rituals and practices that are an integral part of the afore- mentioned primeval temple, the Nagini Mata Temple is also known for its grand annual fair that celebrates the extant powers of the goddess Nagini. According to Hindu mythology and Hindu calendar, the months *Shravan* and *Bhadon* corresponding with July and August, are considered to be the holy months to worship and venerate the snake goddess. It is a prevalent reliance that the devotees who worship the goddess during these months are liberated from the trepidation of snakebites henceforth. On every Saturday of these two inclement months, a traditional ceremony called *Puja* is organized which is performed by the head priest and the Royal family of Nurpur. Post the *Puja* ceremony where the goddess is honored and worshipped, a resplendent fair is organized inside the temple premises locally known as *Mela Naginimata*. This fair is organized for the

entire two months and is known to be the longest fair celebrated in the entire state. The fair is a beautiful culmination of diverse colors, music and art. Magicians from across the state attract the crowd while they perform certain amusing acts and shows. Countless stalls are prepared constituting of different food items, toys, idols of goddess Nagini, books and a lot of other attractive things. The snake charmers from all over the country also visit the temple during these two months to receive the blessings of the goddess. People gather to watch them play the instrument that helps to control the snakes, known as a *been*. Several stalls in the fair also sell beautiful *morpankhsi*.e. the peacock feathers in bulk, that people buy to put up on their walls to scare reptiles like snakes and lizards and to keep them away from their home.



Several other stalls sell *prashadi*.e. a religious offering for the devotees, pictures and idols of the goddess Nagini as well as the local food items. A traditional local dessert known as *Angrassa* which is specific to and only found in this part of the state of Himachal Pradesh is served on various food stalls. *Angrassa* is made using fermented rice flour and sugar. The batter is fried in a complicated shape and soaked in sugar syrup before serving to the people. The dessert has a deep orange tinge to its appearance, and it often looks like *Jalebi*, another famous North Indian dessert but is completely distinct in its flavour. The other food stalls abundantly sell *pakodas* which are basically fritters made using onion and potato, dipped in a specific spiced batter. The locals, who regularly visit the temple on weekends are often seen enjoying *Angrassa* and *Pakodas* with their families in the temple's garden, after receiving the blessings of the goddess and attending the morning *Aarti*.e. a devotional song, sung by the devotees while they worship the deity. These two food items are believed to be a part of this particular fair as well as this region since the origin of this temple. Along with the traditional food, several legends, myths

and anecdotes, the temple has also inspired the composition of several folksongs by the Kangri community. These songs are written and often sung to please the snake goddess and express gratitude for her blessings as well as the miraculous healing power of the temple. Devotees also sing these songs while trekking towards the temple in big groups to impress the goddess. One such song, often sung by the devotees in the local Kangri Dialect is mentioned below:

“Nagini de mandir anjojaanavebhagdon
Mandira de aasepaase mor je volde
Sher mare lalkaravebhagdon
Nagini de mandir anjojaanavebhagdon
Doorandorantemaatabkhagattereaunde
Bolan jai jaikaravebhagdon
Nagini de mandir anjojaanavebhagdon
Mansa, Sursa, Kodi Mata,
Maiyyan ji de naam hazaranvebagdon
Nagini ne mandir anjojaanvebhangton”

The afore-mentioned folksong roughly translates to: “We are all have to go to *Nagini Mata temple* in order to worship and seek her blessings. Countless peacocks are singing and dancing around the temple ensuring the safety of devotees from the venomous snakes. One can hear the roar of lion amidst the hills of Kangra around the temple. Despite being the king of animals, the lion worships and bows in front of the goddess. The devotees come from extremely distant places to receive the blessings. Goddess Nagini has several names and people worship her in various forms but in whatever name or form you worship her, she’ll shower blessings on you and fulfill all your wishes, and therefore one must visit the temple and seek the blessings, bliss and blessedness.”

While the afore-mentioned folk song venerates the power of the temple as well as the goddess, it seems discernable through this paper that such folk traditions and practices are presently grappling with the fear of extinction because of the lack of faith among people. Despite being questioned, mistrusted and doubted by many and appearing as almost unbelievable to a present-

day society that functions entirely on practicality and rationality, *Nagini Devi temple* has managed to preserve and treasure its rich history, tradition, culture and folklore in a fast progressing world which is mainly because of the faith, credence and confidence of the Kangri Community in the powers of goddess Nagini, their rich traditions as well as their faith in the beliefs and experiences of their ancestors. Through this investigation I basically tried to document, analyze and present the ‘forgotten’ and ‘obscure’ lores surrounding the age - old tradition of healing and curing the victims of snake bite along with the alterations and modifications that these practices have gone through in the face of modernity.

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Echo from the Mountains: Documentation and Revitalization of Liangmai Folk Songs

Kailadbou Daimai

Centre for Studies in Language, Literature and Culture.

Utkal University, Bhubaneswar.

Abstract

Folk song plays a very significant role in the socio-cultural life of Liangmai people. It is a medium to express pleasure and pain, sorrow and joy, spiritual and moral values, and traditional and cultural knowledge. It is a rich form of cultural heritage that contributes towards maintaining the history of the people and plays vital role in connecting generations, establishing cultural identity and helps transmit cultural values, beliefs, knowledge, etc. The notable significant of these folk songs is that people do not learn it through established institution, but by participation. They are narrated from memory and transmitted verbally from one generation to another. Liangmai has very rich repository of folk songs and these songs are referred to as pou-pehlu, meaning 'grandfather-grandmother song'. Different genre of Liangmai folk songs may be conveniently classified as songs of love and yearning, work songs, recreational and merrymaking songs, village guarding songs, rhymes, children songs and lullabies. The Liangmai community, however, is undergoing a stage of transition due to the influence of modernization thus causing a neglect to the ethos of traditional culture and the oral tradition. Many facets of their culture, like singing of folk songs, are no longer practice by the current generation. Folk songs have been replaced by Christian hymns in most domains in present Liangmai society. As such many Liangmai youths do not realize the importance of their folk songs. However, if the vibrancy of these songs is taught to these young people there are high chances of reviving the once popular folk singing tradition. This paper is an attempt to unearth the beautiful world of folk songs in Liangmai culture and document it. The study explores different genres of Liangmai folk songs and the role it played in building society, acquiring and transmitting knowledge and wisdom. The paper aims to bring back the 'echo from the mountains' in the present modern society.

Keywords: Oral tradition, folksong, culture, language documentation, language revitalization

Introduction

Folksongs are generally connected to simple rural people. It reflects their essence of living and philosophy of life. It is known to be originated among the people of area and passed through generations by means of oral traditions (Beck 2017:763). It can engage people with the richness of the culture in an emotional way. This nexus between the folksongs and the folks representing that area or language can be analyzed as:

“Folksongs not only help in understanding the socio-cultural and religious life of the community but also human psychology and the adaptability of an individual to his/her culturally constituted world” (Punia 1993:11).

In 1954, the International Folk Music council defined folk music, which includes folk song, as:

“the product of a musical tradition that has been evolved through the process of oral transmission. The factors that shape the tradition are: (1) continuity which links the present with the past; (2) variation which springs from the creative impulse of the individual or the group; and (3) selection by the community which determines the form or forms in which the music survives” (Lloyd 1967:15).

The Liangmai has very rich repository of folksongs. They are referred to as *pou-pehlui*, which means ‘grandfather-grandmother song’. It implies that they are songs of the forefathers. Authorship of most of the folksongs is unknown. Songs played a very significant role in the socio-cultural life of the people. It is the medium to express pleasure and pain, sorrow and joy, spiritual and moral values, and traditional and cultural knowledge. The notable significant of the folksongs is that people do not learn it through established institution, but by participation. They are narrated from memory and transmitted verbally from one generation to another. Singing was part of the way people communicated. Other Naga tribes also used songs to convey messages. For instance, *Ao* warriors would announce their successful return from headhunt by a dark sounding *meyu-* a poly vocal song without words that could be heard far and wide; visitors approached a friendly village in song and were greeted in return by the singing villagers and later bid farewell with farewell songs (Graham-Bower 1952: 220-21).

Folksong is a rich form of cultural heritage among the Liangmai. There are different genres and it has moral, social and political role to play. It imparts knowledge on various fields and was used for different functions. When one is not happy or angry with another person, songs were used to express the feelings instead of talking and using explicit words. Angry facial countenance was not used; rather a person used a song to express his feelings or wishes. Then the other person would understand that the one singing the song is not happy or sad or angry. One would listen to the lyric of the song and understand the intended meaning. There is a story of a certain person named *Hulianping*. It so happened that another person called *Mathiuchunpiu* took *mbung* (a traditional basket made of cane) from *Hulianping* but did not pay for it for a long time. One day they met and instead of asking for the price of the *mbung* upfront, *Hulianping* sang a song, '*riliuzumaninglonangtitingiu, etizimenglak, ata zo!*' (Thinking of a maiden's face, you are worried and I couldn't get proper sleep as well, my ward). Hearing the song *Mathiuchunpiu* understood what *Hulianping* meant and responded, 'yes uncle, I have been thinking of paying the price of your *mbung*'. This is how people communicated with each other using song. The use of song prevented and avoided confrontations (physical or verbal) and the intended message was delivered in a peaceful manner.

In today's 'modernized' world we are losing the many voices of indigenous peoples and local communities, including Liangmai. Many times, we think these voices are irrelevant. Many of us do not realize the importance of our culture, language, and tradition. It is partly because we are not taught about our culture. Traditional and cultural practices are left neglected in this 'modern' generation. However, if the vibrancy of one's culture is taught to young people there are high chances of reviving one's cultural heritage. This paper is an attempt to unearth the beautiful world of folksongs in Liangmai culture. The study explores different genres of Liangmai folksongs and the role it played in building society, acquiring and transmitting knowledge and wisdom, etc. The aim of this paper is to bring back the 'echo from the mountains' in the present modern Liangmai society.

Ethnographic Profile

The Liangmai is one of the Naga tribes that inhabit Manipur and Nagaland states of Northeast India. The term 'Liangmai' is a compound word, and it literally means 'the people who have

grouped themselves in support of each other to live together in one area as one community or tribe' (Daimai 2020: 1). The language spoken by the people is also referred to by the same name and it belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family. The language is grouped, along with Zeme and Rongmei under the Zeme sub-family by Burling (2003). More recently, this subfamily is referred to as Western Naga by Post and Burling (2017). Ethnically, the people are of Mongoloid stock. They live in a compact and contagious area spreading across North-western Manipur and Southern part of Nagaland. Though the people called themselves Liangmai, they were not recognized as one officially for a long time. The British clubbed Liangmai and Zeme together and called them '*Kacha Naga*²', the term that stuck with them even after the British left. However, much to the delight of the people, the nomenclature of Liangmai in Manipur was finally corrected in the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2011³. The term '*Zeliang*' is used to refer to Zeme and Liangmai in Nagaland state. Till the last census of India, i.e. 2011, Liangmai was not listed separately. *Kacha Naga* was used in Manipur and *Zeliang* in Nagaland. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain the exact figure of Liangmai population. However, based on the census of India, 2011, the total population of Liangmai is believed to be approximately 50000⁴. The Liangmai Naga Council (LNC), an apex organisation of the tribe, also gives a similar figure. The population is predominantly concentrated in Tamei sub-division of Tamenglong district, Manipur.

Reference on Liangmai in the written literature of earlier period can be seen in Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. III, Part II (1903: 480), where he listed some vocabularies of Liangmai under the name '*Kwoireng or Liyang*'. The term '*Kachcha Naga*' was also used by Grierson; however, the language specimen he used was of Zeme Naga. In Bhattacharya (1963) 'The Gazetteer of India: Manipur', Liangmai was mentioned as *Liyengmai*. Graham-Bower (1952) also mentioned the people as *Lyang* in her book 'Naga Path'.

There was no writing system among the Liangmai in the past, as such their history is not written down. However, they have very rich oral traditions and their history, tales, songs, sayings, chants, etc. were handed down from generation to generation orally. According to their oral history, there were certain evidences of emigrational movements. Though their original homeland and the migration routes could not be fully established, claims are made regarding the origin based on oral literature. Pamei (2001: 1-2) mentioned of a folksong sung by children in

villages while playing game even today. Boys and girls come together and sit in a row, each holding the waist of the one in front and they sing swaying to the melody:

Sinluang, Sinluang, nap birutio....tio....

When the song ended, the boy or girl at the end of the line comes in front of the leader and says:

Apeh! Akinatekbungkabuinakambamiza

Akinatekbunglengpilosua!

(Grandma! A mithun has broken my little brother/sister's bowl,
So give me one again.)

It is said that this song speaks of a place of abundance. Some believed it to be the present Sinlung in China while others opines that it refers to Siang district in present Arunachal Pradesh. There is no chronicle whatsoever to prove whether this 'Sinluang' has any reference to the two aforementioned places. This claim is based on the hypothesis that Liangmai originated from China and migrated to the present settlement via Siang region. At one point of their migration, they came and settled at Makhel⁵, known as *Makhiang* to Liangmai. There is a certain song about life in this place; '*makhiangluang so kalunriliye, katan kahoriliye, aliuasamai to sou si, koi mai so aleng pi lo*'. The song talks about life at *Makhiang* where men folks compete with each other in strength and in looks. This kind of competition was popular among the people in olden days.

The Liangmai ancestors left Makhel and travelled southward and settled temporarily at *Ramtingkabin*, meaning 'a squeezed land'. From there they moved to *Chawangphungning*; *chawang* meaning 'king or chief' and *phungning* meaning 'flat/plain plot of land'. As the name suggests, it is presumed the concept of king or chief developed among the people in this place. After their strenuous journey, they came and settled in this place. After the land was divided among clans, they choose a chief and gave him the best area and he was to govern the settlement. It is believed the following song was sung that day:

Chawangkimaanaaiwi

Nremrathingnabuankatiukum

Khaohang gem makhuiwangkabamkum

Mazo he sangpiu-niumakngao

Kabui kha lenne

(Our king's front yard is leveled and beautiful.

So many come and go, like the birds that feed on the berries of banyan tree;

Like bees flying in and out of their honey-laden hive on a rock on high.

It is good enough to make others jealous).

The people are believed to have lived at *Chawangphungning* for many generations before over population force them to moved westward and settled at *Makuilongdi*, which means 'big round mountain'. This place is the last place where this group of people lives as one. They disperse from *Makuilongdi* and names like Liangmai, Zeme and Rongmei originated based on the direction they migrated. The people of Liangmai, Zeme and Rongmei still uphold the spirit of brotherhood to the present day. The term *Zeliangrong*⁶ is commonly used to refer to these groups of people.

Materials and Method

The research was done through participatory observation. The collection of some of the songs is done in their natural settings, which adds significantly to the conservation and propagation of the cultural elements. While some of it were documented from older Liangmai folks who have knowledge of folksongs. More than 50 Liangmai folksongs were documented for the present research and the data were collected in audio-visual format. The data were collected from Tharon village, Jalukie and Tamenglong town. It is a qualitative research that made used of translation, transcription and annotation processes. Translation and transcription of source texts was done right after the field work. Classification of the folk songs was based on its usage and function in the community.

Folksongs of Liangmai

Liangmai folksongs are the echoes of heroic deed, custom and tradition, belief and philosophy of life, mode of entertainment, romantic relationship, sorrow and joy, beauty, wealth, strength and so on. For the present study they may be conveniently classified in the following groups:

- (i). Songs of love and yearning,
- (ii). Work songs,
- (iii). Recreational and Merrymaking songs,
- (iv). Village guarding songs,
- (v). Rhymes, Children songs and Lullabies.

Songs of love and yearning

Love themes predominate the folksongs of Liangmai. Songs of love and yearning, expressing mutual attraction between man and woman are particularly popular. Songs of failed love and heartbreak also form a popular genre. These songs expressed eternal human sentiments. The imagery of a lover waiting impatiently for her beloved forms one beautiful aspects of Liangmai love songs. These songs are often rendered through layers of meanings and metaphors are used extensively. Such imagery of luminous beauty should not be overlooked in Liangmai folksongs.

Many love songs are credited to a particular author and people continue to sing the song attributing the composer's name. One such song is a song composed by Mr. *Guithuanang* of Tharon village. The song goes like this:

Tanoukariuwang piu chunsi
Aholiuhaimathen
Kabannung ra dedou khat dinlo
Taniuluan rai khe
Karia wan kami ting karumsainiu
Rikhang zo riwang za lankakinthiu za
Wang kherikhanganaikito mala diti
Delamkhaimatha la
Aram kamiuphiankakengkaninai nu
Ben ruanmatha zing zing bam khe
Amarailiutuphui
Nreimbangbei lam so ruandou
Kamaikakimaikagum dan za
Wang kamnitiwanglakge
Kapiubuansiriliuniu

*Rikhangnangnagen kata na zi-e
Malan lo rikhangnamliangmatiu za zi-e
Riliupuihorin zo anaikangzangwang za zi-e
Pe manuan e riliumakimailiunakum-e
Ahodilin rai kaphunliu to gai zi
Nabuanphaizan lo rao
Rikhang zi lo nakhem rai liu-e
Zikiu rai lo nasai sui wang
Nakhempuithiu bam ni-e ira
Nato zo wangakhempuithiu bam nihoriliu
Piu buanruang so madui
Rikhangruang so madumpou
Anaikaruang za lung bam rai khe
Ahochamtomaning za saikachunsi liang liang-e
Aki niubuipuang ha lo tad chiu
Sangpiukhenkhainangthiului ma
Aman buipuangkakiu man timaikiwang la
Rikhang zo sai ha wangkhetiu za
Mingsai guan kheriliu zo nang ra ping-e chiu lo
Nang pum gen khaisaitii ping mak.*

(You know the mind of the one who have ten brides
My beloved you played.....
Let spring, the time of marriage, passed
Oh bachelor! Then we will return and make merry
Let us return together even if our family's name is shamed
Where shall we rest?
When our village has plenty
Then we will join hand and sing the whole day.
I behold my beloved
We met beneath the banyan tree

When everyone after getting the banana leave return
We will linger some more
The fresh bud of leave looks good on you
Wear it oh man! It looks good on you
Oh beloved! You look like a Meitei maiden
My beloved! Sleep, I am your lover
Lie down again, I will follow you
I want to be your groom
I want to bring you home as my bride
The fairest among the buds
The most able among man
Let us live together for some more time
Thinking about my beloved's words
I had a glimpse of what you desire
While my kin went to chase the bull
You were given off to a foreigner
Do not bring the bull as bride's price
My man! Let us go away and die.
Do not say such thing.
Please say you fear dead, my love
But I am not afraid to die for you.)

The song talks about failed relationship with a woman he dearly loved. Their feeling was mutual but due to pressure from the girl's family, she was married off to a man of another village. In the song, the author used his imagination and created it as a dialogue between two lovers. The song reminisced about how the two lovers met beneath a banyan tree. The man compared the woman's beauty to a fresh bud of leave and compares her to a Meitei maiden. The woman likens the man to be strong and perfect. The song laments their failed affair; however, it ended with a sense of submission to fate, no matter how heartbroken they were.

Songs of the broken hearted seem to be more popular in Liangmai legend. Another song of this theme, composed by a man named *Khamping* goes like this:

De zeng piu mangai la
Riliumai mi kamwangsai
Iniudeto bam hui la
Tingtheng i suamang man za kab-e
Zi meng amang lam man sang sang
Suansusai ha kamgua
I amang man tiniu-e
Tingiu za zi sa-e
Changram ki chiukawi lung so
Aluiruanmaniu to
Khampingaluiruanmai kai to liang rai lui-e

(How could I forget?
When all the maidens are married off
For what should I mourn?
Forever I will dream and cry
I go to sleep and always see you
But when I get up everything is gone
I could not stop the dream
I don't want to fall asleep
May you live well at Changram
But do not ask about me or my song
My song will be known to the hundreds.)

Work songs

Liangmai is an agrarian society. People work their field for most part of the year. Hence, Liangmai people have developed many songs related to agricultural work. Such songs are referred to a 'luma lui', which can be translated as 'field weeding song'. There is a common practice among Liangmai known as 'magutbo'. It refers to the practice where members of a village come together to work in the field of one of the members and then goes to work on another member's field when the first one is finished. This practice will be followed until the

field of all the members is covered (such practice is still followed today). It brings the villagers together even at work and the spirit of oneness and unity is uplifted. Another form of practice popular among the Liangmai is 'kazenglubo'. It refers to hiring of hands by particular person, usually a wealthy one, to work in his field. A person can take the *kazeng* 'wage' of youths or womenfolk of the village.

Luma lui has various themes ranging from love to courting someone of opposite sex, to songs of wisdom and moral lessons. These songs provided an avenue to forget the fatigue and hazards of hard work. Both men and women sing songs throughout the day while cultivating the field. The songs also give rhythm to their work. The villagers often said that singing while farming helps the work progress quickly. There are songs that are sung while going to the field, while working on the field and while returning from the field. Some songs that are sang while going to field are as follows:

Kalolam meng kum

Kabenriuniumatailo

Achunhai-e

Kaduichung bam di

Tin kamakkum

Kapiubuanruina khat

Buansuanna bam-e

(While going to the field

I observed a yam leave

My mind is like that leave

That doesn't get wet even when there is water

I also saw a new sapling growing well.)

This song has philosophical implication. It talks about a grown man whose strength or knowledge has reached a point where it could not be increased anymore. Such a man is likened to a yam leave that could not get wet. The song also talks about a new sapling growing with

reference to young people growing with much opportunity to learn. Another song that is sung on the way to field is:

I kalomengkiuchiu
Nthingnakhuanhaigui
Nakhuanhaikachang-e
Buipuangniuriangguangchiu
Lola guan ne nthingna zo
Amalo zo! Nthingnakhuanhaichangnge za roukhe

(I hear a sweet song of bird
On the way to the field
Your voice is magnificent
The cattle has become scarce
Now is the time of shortage, Oh bird!
My friend, listen to the song of the bird
It is real.)

People draw inspiration and hope from nature. This song talks about a beautiful song of bird which lifts up the spirit of mankind in the time of scarcity. The sweetness of a bird's song concealed the bitterness of insufficiency and harsh reality of life. Other than songs with moral significance, there are also songs that talks about the real event of cultivation. One such song is:

Sou mengri?
Apuimengri
Magutmaipuimengri
Magutmaiymatailo
Apuimengdoumakhe me?

(Who is late?
My mother is late
The one who magut is late

See! The one who magut
Whether my mother has come.)

Agricultural songs consist of various themes. Songs that convey the feeling of attraction to opposite sex is one popular theme among younger people. They sing to each while working in the field. A young man starts singing addressing to a group of girls who works near him. He usually sings for the one he admires. Real names are not used, rather using of nick names endearing the person he/she admires is popular among Liangmais. One popular name used for addressing a girl is *kiumainai*. The girl gives an indirect but reciprocal response through songs.

Young man: *I lo kanipui to*
Buipuangimanlui-e
Karam luangriman ten
Nakhenlui-e
Riliumai zo

Young woman: *Rikhangnaro-e*
Nakhenthiuchengmakge
Buipuang to din dolo
I matha sui wanglui-e

(Young man: For the one I love
I could bring the biggest bull
I can work the whole mountain
What do you say?
My fair lady.

Young woman: Oh bachelor!
Stop teasing
Do not do as you wish
Do not mention about a bull
You don't have to pay anything
I will come for free.)

There are also songs sung by young man to convey his feelings to a lady of his heart while working together in the field.

Young man: *Kiumainai*
Kalomasipuitu
Magutni-e chiu lo
Alochunglo ten chiu
Alongamwang
Suannai kin zing
Khang-liu zing thiukhe.

Young woman: *Rikhangmai din dulo*
Kalomasimakziumangam-e
Din dulo

(Young man: Convey to *kiumainai*
The one who is good in weeding
That I want to work together with her
I work on a secluded field
Tomorrow the boys and girls will work on my field
Come along.

Young woman: Oh bachelor!
Don't say such thing
I am embarrass for I am not as good as you think
Don't say such thing.)

People also sing about their land and village while working in the field. The beauty and abundance of the village are common theme of such song.

Hey! Nking lam lung
Maki-khouiteitiumak
Akenmaniu no
Ndanakinsuangwi

Nchuamkhuan to makiakhuan-e
Maniukum bam-e
Nking lam bam nung
Hey! Malan lou
Maki-khou la suangwi-e
(Hey! You who live outside
I do not eat foreign food
Ask about my well being
It is better than your generation
People ask about the sound of drum and trumpet
Hey! You who live outside
Return for our land is better than any foreign land.)

In this song, the singer earnestly appeals his villagers who have gone out of the village to live in foreign land to return to the village because it is the best place to live.

Another song sung in praise of one's village is

Aram thaluanluang
Katana wi-e
Kaken patsaisangmainiubuan
Kakha-kami niuphungzuan
Nthingnapapoi to kalenbokum
Aram renzainungsuangwi-e
Tiu kamlakbo ram-e chiu lo

(Everything is good in my village *Thaluan*
When autumn comes foreigners and guests throng the village
Outsiders come to sell meat and fish
Like a bird that protects its baby
The village gate gave us protection
Our land is a land of abundance.)

There are also songs that are sung while constructing a grand traditional house known as *kakiuky*. Such house is built by someone who is wealthy. A person who build the house offered bulls and other animals to the villagers. The villagers will bring all the materials needed, like, wood, bamboo, cane, thatch, rope, etc. to build the house. One such song is

Iniuapouzanmangairaoziu
Singdiky bam thiuni za
Magahtiangdii ha wang
Kamaikaimairuang so
Malan wangatiangpuanmachap lo
Aliatkythiu bam-e

(Not wanting to forget my grandfather's name
I am building a grand house
I brought a *magah* (kind of wood) for pillar.
From among the hundreds
I rise up my pillar
I will build a new house
Erecting a pillar
I am building an *aliatky* (a house where people come together to compete in different activities).)

Village guarding songs

Back in the days, inter-village feuds and wars are quite frequent. For this reason, Liangmais live in high hills so that they can easily spot an enemy approaching. Not only this, but they also built walls and gates surrounding the village for protection. It is the duty of the men folk to protect the village from danger, be it from wild animals or enemies. They set duty for young men to guard the village at night. Men guarding the village sing songs while they perform their duty. Such songs are called *kaluangpangbolui* or *kaluangakhebolui*. Some village guarding songs are as follows.

Ka akheche

Sou na ne lo
Kaholin le Malobouhaichiu lo
Mpui ram duangkhechiu
Kasang tad kabin meng mainiu
Hai Maloboumaguibampou-e
Kasang sang kabin meng mainiu
Hai Malopoupui-piu-e
Huna wjiu lo

(Hey! Who guards the village?
It is Kaholin and Malobou
They will guard your land and house
They will take care of guests
And visitors who bears news
They will host the guest
And treat them as family.)

Another village guarding song is

Kari khekalengtoukabamkum-e
Niunamai ping dulo
Akhemunsokamaisairasai
Akuanruambui-e
Kamaisai ra sai
I aben dan rai bui-e

(Like an eagle guarding its nest
I am guarding the village
Do not be afraid
Children of my village
If anybody dies in my guard

You can cut my ear
If anybody dies
I will cut off my own hand first.)

They patrol the entire length of the village passing each other throughout the night. Their songs let the resting villagers know they are secured and there is no danger. Singing also helps them to keep themselves awake. When the last cock crows they sing:

Maruina zo! Khuang ta lo
Nalengkaban pi te
Iniukhuangnizakhuanggumak-e
Tingbanglamsumaruirengkadibo-niukhuangziukak-e

(Oh! Rooster! Crow no more
I will give you grains.
I am not crowing at my own will
I am only singing back to the big rooster in the east.)

Recreational or merrymaking songs

Recreational activities consist mainly of singing, story-telling and drinking in Liangmai life. One common recreational event is known as *phiangoubo* which means ‘gathering of peers’. It refers to gathering of adult male and female of the village to sing and drink for the whole night. They would cook, eat, drink, sing and make merry all night long. Songs that are usually sung in this gathering is called *phiangoubolui*, meaning ‘song of gathering of the peers’. Some *phiangoubo* songs are:

Diaodiao so khe
Khingkhing so khe
Kiumaiyang piu ki lang so
Khangsa di ki
Khengsi rai tiukhewangdunapiu

(Let us start making noise
Let us start dancing
We will drink and eat in this house
Let us pluck fruit and eat in this house.)

The theme of *phiangoubo* song is vast. They sing about love, brotherhood, village, relationship, wine and many more. The beauty and strength of youth is one popular theme of *phiangoubo* songs. Some of such songs are

- (a). *Phiangoukhe, phiangoukhe*
Karacham din kumchiu
Kiumailiunai lung nimakziu
Akhangbuichi ha chiu
Akenmaiphiangoumak-e

(Let us gather and make merry
Let us gather and make merry
Like the old tale says
Not wanting to stay with his lady
A man chase after a bull
My friend did not join the merry making.)

- (b). *Aliuri-ngani za sang manu*
Zaobungdelengngou za
Khangkiangmaisak lo
Chakha-chami du deleng lo
Akhangaliukatiusuangwi-e

(We want to make merry
We do not want to see wine container
Let old men drink it
What is the use of meat and fish

Youth is better than food.)

- (c). *Tazaobungpuanwang lo*
Nkhatlapiuzaopuanwang lo
Nkhatlapiu tat mariu meng
Tazaobungpuanwang lo
Mathen sang ngalinkhe

(Bring the wine container
Nkhatlapiu bring the wine
Go and bring the wine
Let us drink and make merry whole night.)

- (d). *Hey nrinra meng bon khe*
Nkhatpiutu meng bon sukhe
Akhangkapangmbelo
Nrinrakawi meng bon talak ge

(Hey! Let us gather under the banyan tree
Let us assemble at Nkhatpiu's house
Make way foolish man
Let us not stop gathering.)

- (e). *Kagan tiusadiutikhuangkhai*
Tuwiditikhuangkhaichiu
Khununggiangmai
Giang lo ne

(Even if the curry is bad we share
We share good curry too
Dear folks let us unite

And build our relationship.)

Rhymes, Children songs and Lullabies

Parents and grandparents used rhymes and songs to play with children. Some of these are pure lullabies and others are meant for amusing and humoring a child. A mother or a babysitter adopts several methods to lull her child. These rhymes and songs are usually fanciful composition and are often meaningless. Yet some of it is found to be associated with mythical and legendary Liangmai stories. A babysitter would usually stand outside the house in the evening with a baby on her back, waiting for her mother's return from field and sing songs like

- (a). *Mairammaipuiwangso so*
Kiumaiyangpuiwangmakge
Kiumaiyangtuwangluangkalang lo
Nanahtuluangkhalak de

(Other's mother has started arriving
Kiumaiyang's mother has not arrive
Come and take *Kiumaiyang* fast
I am already tired.)

- (b). *Mairammaipuiwang zi kanepou*
Hey! Kiumaiyangpuiwangri-e
Kiumaiyangpui bung phungloulouna
Kasuloulouna wang-e
Mairammaipuiwangso so kamni
Apuiapupenraoroikanna
Adi wangniancho

(Other's mother comes early
Hey! *Kiumaiyang* mother comes late
Kiumaiyang's mother has arrive bouncing her basket

Other's mother have all arrived
My mother and father stopped by to pluck mushroom
That's why they are late.)

- (c). *Kiomainaikhang-e*
De phungchiukhang lo
Matai di phung
Phiura di phungziukhang-e
Sou nakapou la
Kiumaiyangniu param kapou tang ra lui-e

(*Kiumai's* aunt came
What did she bring?
She brought salt
She brought chilly
Who will see her off?
Kiumaiyang will accompany her till her village.)

- (d). *Makhouna pe patatuzuan*
Miusipum khat lengzuan
Tuwangkamiu min
Arainaziukapkapchui ta ne
Tu tunaatoute
Zu zunaatoute

(A pigeon's grandmother sold her grandchild
She sold her for a single grain of rice
Now the paddy is ripe
She laments the lost her grandchild.
Tu tunaatoute
Zu zunaatoute.)

Children play songs usually imitate the sound of nature and are often onomatopoeic. Songs that are frequently sung by children includes:

(a). *Tang tangna*

Lei siak, lei siak

Ruina bum phum, bum phum

Ngiona bum phum bum phum.

(b). *Titipui*

Za zapui

Wang teitiu lo

Wang zaosak lo

Wang katamtiu lo

Marakpha

(Imitating sound of mouse

Come and eat rice

Come and drink wine

Come and eat chutney

(Children will run off in different directions after saying this).)

(c). *Maru de*

Apoktiukhe

Sou nakalanlan la

Pak da

Aruanna bam ne

Akopalui, akopalui

We are hungry

Let us borrow and eat

Who will repay

We will run

I will stay alone

(Sound of running).

One common rhyme that I learn while growing up is as follows

Ape kamni?

Kabi ling ni

Kabikamni?

Kathu tuni

Kathu kamni?

Kathoduani

Kathokamni?

Kami mate ni

Kami kamni?

Kadui run me ni

Kaduikamni?

Kabuisakni

Kabuikamni?

Kakuituni

Kakuikamni?

Maluang kata lam pakni.

(Where is grandmother?

She went to plant yam

Where is the yam?

A boar ate it

Where is the boar?

It got caught in thorn

Where is the thorn?

It was burned.

Where is the fire?

Water has extinguished it

Where is the water?

A cow has drank it
Where is the cow?
A tiger ate it
Where is the tiger?
It ran off to far flung mountain.)

Discussions and Conclusions

Folksongs are primarily based on everyday life. It reflects the social, traditional and religious life of the people. The songs are themselves a medium of record keeping in Liangmai society. Earlier people take pride in inheriting, singing and talking about these melodies but the present generation does not share that same feeling. As such, the lack of documentation and written record possesses the threat of partial and gradual loss of information with every passing generation, which may collectively cause a major loss of information in near future. As a result of rapid urbanization and cultural transformation, the traditional knowledge bank is dwindling. The performance and performers of this unique cultural resource among the Liangmai is decreasing with each passing generation, which is a matter of grave concern. Only handful old patrons have the knowledge of folksongs and that too is fast diminishing due to lack of practice and use. Religious conversion has reduced the number of followers of the traditional religion drastically. Age-old religious practices are no longer observed by the masses; as such the local people have lost interest in maintaining and preserving the rituals, chants as well as folksongs. In fact, conversion has put a ban on performing rituals and in some cases singing of folksongs, which are an integral part of the Liangmai ethnicity. All these factors have created a threat in revitalizing the folksongs of the Liangmai.

The influx of popular modern music worsens the fate of folksongs as young people have more inclination towards modern music. They have no knowledge of traditional love songs but mainly listen to western and bollywood songs. Lately, K-pop (Korean) songs have become very popular among youngsters. There are few local composers and singers who sing in Liangmai but their tune is highly influenced by modern music. The traditional tune is almost lost in this modern era. Though agriculture remains the main occupation and livelihood of the people after conversion, restriction on singing folk songs have done the damage. During my fieldwork I noticed, to my

surprise, that the villagers have stopped the practice of singing agricultural songs while farming. I had to request them to sing, to which older folks obliged but younger people have no knowledge of it. Back in the days, recreation for the people means gathering of peers at one place, drinking rice beer and singing songs, but such practice has stopped after conversion. On top of that, modern entertainment facilities like radio, television, tape, phone and internet have reached even to interior Liangmai village and replaced traditional recreational activities like *phiangoubo*. After becoming Christians, inter-village feud, war and headhunting decreased among the people. As time goes by, it was no longer necessary to guard a village. As such village guarding has become irrelevant and songs accompanying it are no longer sung. With the coming of modern education, children learn English rhymes and play songs at school. Most importantly, after conversion only Christian songs and hymns are sung in social gatherings, ceremonies, and celebrations. Hymns were translated into Liangmai but folksongs were never written down. The domain for folksongs is almost non-existent in the present modern Liangmai society.

Protection and conservation of Liangmai culture and traditions must be given high priority. There are immense traditional knowledge and wisdom veiled in the folk songs. There are needs for the preservation and propagation of intangible cultural heritage of Liangmai.

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Endnotes:

1. Narrated by PhenlakhbouMarenmai, dated 30th September 2016, Tharon village.
2. It is supposedly derived from Angami word '*ketsa*' which means 'thick forest'. The story behind the term has it that when Britishers came to Kohima and asked the locals pointing towards the Liangmai and Zeme inhabited area whether any people lived beyond the thick forest. The local people answered in affirmative saying that there are people living beyond the '*ketsa*'.

Since then, outsiders referred to people living beyond the thick forest as '*Ketsa Naga*'. Later the word got corrupted as '*Kacha Naga*' or '*Kachcha Naga*'.

3. The Bill amended the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950, to modify the scheduled tribes in the states of Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh. It substituted '*Kacha Naga*' with Liangmai and Zeme respectively in Manipur. For details see <http://www.prsindia.org/billtrack/the-constitution-scheduled-tribe-order-amandment-bill-2011-2096/>.

4. A-11. Individual Scheduled Tribe Primary Census Abstract Data and its Appendix. www.censusindia.gov.in. Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India. Retrieved 20th September, 2020.

5. In the migratory pattern of the Nagas, this place is considered a point of dispersal of many Naga tribes to their present location. To commemorate their dispersion, they planted a wild pear tree and also erected a stone which remains intact till today. The Liangmai calls this rock *Tadmaratu* (tad: go, mara: scatter, tu: rock/stone). Hodson (1911: 13) has also noted, "At Maikel (Makhel) is to be seen a stone, now erect, which marks the place from which the common ancestors (of the Nagas) emerged from earth. Maikel is regarded as the centre from where the migration took place,". It is located at present day Senapati district of Manipur.

6. It is a composite name formed by putting together the first syllables of the three tribes: Zeme, Liangmai and Rongmei. "This composite name came into being with the formation of Zeliangrong Naga Council for the first time on the 15th February 1947 at Keishamthong, Imphal, with the objective of closer affinity and stronger unity of Naga and for furthering the economic, socio-cultural, educational, and political achievement of their tribes" (Rongmei and Kapoor 2005: 106). The Zeliangrongs are believed to be the descendants of a common ancestor, with common origin, ethnic, cultural and linguistic affinity. There are numerous cognate root words shared between these three languages. Bradley (1997) used the term 'Zeliangrong' in his classification of Tibeto-Burman language as a subgroup of the Southern Naga of the Kuki-Chin-Naga branch, and Liangmai was placed in this group.

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Tamang Folk Songs: An Exploration

Amit Rauth

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Kalimpong College, West Bengal

Prajwala Pakhrin Bhutia

Former Assistant Profesor, Rockvale Management College, Kalimpong

Abstract

Despite the impact of colonization, modernization, globalization, and marginalization from the mainstream culture there are still many performing culture remnants that are able to enact and continue their traditional cultural practices or “life-worlds” rich with folktales, folklores, rituals, songs, aphorisms and performances. Tamang community, is, one such indigenous tribe who have their own unique culture, tradition, language, dress and social structure. Folk Song reflects and personifies the untouched inner core of any ethnic group. Tamang community has a rich collection of folk songs for every occasion. The songs are always accompanied by a musical instrument called “Damphu” or “Damfu” which resembles a large tambourine. In our endeavour of writing this paper we shall evince how the Tamangs of Darjeeling hills portray their contemporary life, document their everyday practices and reveal their ideas, hopes, aspirations and conventions which are connected with their traditional past. The folk songs of the community narrate the rituals, philosophical thoughts, love and romance, happiness, praises to Gods and Goddesses and their everyday practices which depicts the “life-worlds” of the Tamang community. However, their folk songs till date still remain mostly ignored and unexplored in research done by mainstream as well as oral tradition.

Keywords: mainstream, performance, lifeworld, culture, Folk songs, Tamang

Introduction

Despite the impact of colonization, modernization, globalization, and marginalization from the mainstream culture there are still many performing culture remnants that are able to enact and continue their traditional cultural practices. Tamang community is one such indigenous tribe who have their own unique culture, tradition, language, dress and social structure which gets depicted

in the folklores, folk tales, rituals, songs, aphorisms and performances which constitutes the lifeworld of the community. Tamang is one of the major tribal groups inhabiting the sub-Himalayan region of Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma and Bhutan. In India they are spread across the Darjeeling Himalayan region, Sikkim and in the Northeastern states today. They are a race of primitive ethnic group of people who speak Tibeto-Burmese language who are trying hard to keep their identity intact and still grappling with problems of preserving the language, traditions and customs. According to Boas languages have the “...power to make us understand the roots from which our civilization has sprung, to impress us with the relative value of all forms of culture...” (Boas 1904:524). This quotation is still relevant till date and, therefore, calls for attention to any researcher who is finding ways to deal with the issue on language extinction. The Tamang language is failing out of use in Darjeeling hills and being replaced by Nepali, the dominant language in this part of India. Unless the current trend is reversed, and the community finds some other alternative ways of restoring back their language use in their day to day lives it won't be wrong to say that this community and its distinct language and culture will soon fade away and become an endangered language. This is partly because there are rarely any people left who can speak and converse fluently in the language. The case gets even worse when it comes to the younger generation who hardly has any connection with the language. Their own mother tongue has become a foreign language for them. Studying Tamang songs would bring about new kinds of enquiry and avenues and would also serve us to know more about the Tamang community. Thus, one of the objectives of our paper is to document the Tamang songs and preserve them and thereby make the Tamang people aware of the dangers, in days to come.

Tamang Wayee/ Tamang Folksongs

Folk songs reflect and personify the untouched inner core of any ethnic group. It expresses solidarity and speaks volumes of their identity. Tamang community has a rich collection of folk songs for every occasion and is known as 'Wayee'. The songs are always accompanied by musical instrument called 'Damphu' or 'Damfu' which resembles a large tambourine. Dance performance is an integral part of the Tamang folk songs i.e., one is incomplete without the other. So, for every song there is a dance performance and vice-versa.

Tamang folk songs or Wayee are purely sung in Tamang language. Dr.JasYonjonPyasi(2014) opines that Wayee is sung only during special occasions and festivals while gathering with their relatives, but presently, those songs are mixed with Nepali words and are modernized which mars the originality of the song. So, in this light the purity of Wayee is lost in the modern Nepali version of the Tamang Selos which can be sung by any person and has become a genre of music for entertainment and dancing accompanied by the traditional instrument called Damphu. The original Wayee gives the feeling of Godly wisdom and a pure feeling from deep within which is missing in the modern Tamang Selos.

Colonel Santabir Lama Pakhrin (2064) has expressed that Tamangs did not sing every time and everywhere like we see today. They sang only during special occasions like marriage, get together of families. The person who knew how to sing Wayee had to be requested to sing by offering him a censer (Dhupauro) with aromatic incense (sang) strewn on lighted coals and a gift which usually was 'airak' or alcohol along with other eatables. They started their song by invoking the Gods and Goddesses and seeking their blessing with the aromatic incense that is burning in the censer followed by other songs. In the end, they used to offer the 'airak' to Gods and Goddesses first and then to others as Prasad/devotional offering.

In our endeavour of writing this paper we shall evince the connection of Tamangs with their traditional past, which is getting filtrated because of "acculturation, assimilation and marginalization." This is a small effort to bring to light the beautiful and pure Wayee, which if not explored will simply remain ignored and with time it will get lost in the mainstream culture. These kinds of folksongs, folktales, folklores, genealogical stories have been passed down orally from the ages by the Tamba (historian/language originator/storyteller/custodian of rituals and customs of Tamang) in its pure form gives us an insight into the customs, rituals and traditions of Tamang people. The songs are about the origin of the universe, Gods and Goddesses, prayers to the tutelary deities, nature, customs and rituals prevalent in society.

There are different types of Wayee. In this paper, however, we will make an effort to touch only on few areas of its vast variety. Wayee always begin with the phrase 'Amailay Hoi Amailay' which is a way of invoking the mother or paying homage to the maternal bonding. It is a kind of showing respect and giving importance to the mother who has given birth to all the Tamang sons

and daughters. Some scholars are also of the view that ‘mother’ here refers to Goddess Parvati, consort of Lord Shiva, personified as Peng Dorje, the creator of the Tamang musical instrument ‘Damphu’.

It is difficult to translate Tamang Wayee into English or any other language and sing because the rhythm and tunes will not match. We try to elicit the beautiful incantations so that everybody may enjoy and understand the rich culture and traditions that the Tamangs have to offer.

In this paper we will be translating (mostly literal translation taking help from Mr. H.B. Kalden, L.B. Tamang and Mr. Pradeep Pakhrin) and giving an analysis of the ‘SanglaWayee’, ‘DamphuSengbaWayee’, ‘Tambala Wayee’ in reference to the text ‘Tambala KaitenWayeeRimthim’ by Col.Santabir Lama Pakhrin and Kadin Sungbala Chu Wayee, which is a newly composed Wayee by Lama L.B. Tamang of Kalimpong Tamang Gumba which is a blessing based Wayee sung during wedding ceremony. During this ceremony the couple are taken to the ‘Chesum’, the worship room, and are asked to sit holding a ‘khada’ in their hands and a plate with two butter lamps is lit in front of them and as the ‘dampharay’ starts singing and blessing the couple they sprinkle some rice grains and ‘totola flower’ (sacred medicinal flower of the Tamang community) in the khada and towards the end the couple has to fold the khada and keep the blessing with them forever.

SANGLA WAYEE - Purification song

Sango Sango Sangthano

Offering incense purifies our surrounding

Hyulla Nedha SivdamoChanchanPoimaseSangthangla

I offer Mugwort (Titepati) incense to please the Village God, Water God, Snake God and other Goddesses

KebaSipdaDipdamiDalingPoimaseSangthangla

I offer the fragrant JuniperusRecurva (Juniper) incense to purify our home from the impurities brought by birth and death

ThapriThupsumDopdamiDhisimPoimaseSangthangla

I offer the most fragrant incense to our tutelary Deities to protect and purify our homes

GyagarDanriSangmasiShrikandseSangthangla

I offer the aromatic sandal wood incense to the Divine beings of the flat lands/plains

BoilaChyoriInsamiSuykpaBoiloseSangthangla

Deities, if you are from Tibet, then I offer you the fragrant incense made from pine trees

Syargi Lada InsamiSunpathi Se Sangthangla

If you are from the East, I offer you the aromatic incense made from dwarf rhododendrons

Logi Lada InsamiPoikarSangseSangthangla

If you are from the west, I offer you the incense made from Sal Tree.

NupgiChyoriInsamiBhairungSangseSangthangla

If you are from the North, I offer you the aromatic incense made from fragrant JuniperusRecurva (Juniper)

UilaChyoriInsamiSurchanSangseSangthangla

If you hail from the center of the earth,I offer you the fragrant incense made from Nepalese Sassafras/Malagiri

NamgoNimaDawa Da TakpaSangseSangthangla

To the ethereal sun and moon, I offer the aromatic incense made from Himalayan birch

Sala SabjiDholmadaPoimaKuseySangthangla

I offer the pure and fragrant incense to please the mother earth

RanglaPholoDipdamiSurchanSangseSangthangla

I offer the aromatic incense made of Nepalese Sassafras/malagiri to the guardian deities of our home

Sango SangoSangoSangthangla

Deities, please accept our humble offering of this aromatic incense and purify us all. Wayee are songs which are written and sung in pure Tamang language and is taken on high esteem by the Tamang community. A person who can sing Wayee are respected, and they are requested to sing only on special occasions by placing an aromatic incense on a censer/thurible and a gift consisting of Airak or alcohol along with eatables. They start the SanglaWayee, i.e., the invocation of the Gods and Goddesses song. Incense burning is very important in all religions as it is believed that it purifies our surrounding and the fragrance it spreads purifies everyone and it pleases the Gods as well.

SanglaWayee is about purification and asking for blessing. In Tamang community it is believed that God is omnipresent and present in any form. Tamangs being nature worshippers hold the village God, water God, earth Gods and Goddesses, Gods of the snake world, all the tutelary deities, all the divine forces hailing from all the four directions and all deities from far and wide on very high pedestal. They have a strong feeling that nothing can move forward without worshipping them. They believe that if these celestial beings are pleased then good things will happen in the village, marriages will be successful, work will be accomplished, children will be healthy, and no bad omen will prevail in the village.

Tamangs use a lot of medicinal herbs for treating ailments and they have the knowledge of the forest, herbs, trees and plants. They are also aware about the importance of the different kinds of aromatic herbs which are used as incense to please Gods and to purify the surrounding. The main aromatic incense they use are Titapati (Mugwort) to please the village Gods and Goddesses, JuniperusRecurva (Juniper) to purify any impurities caused by birth and death, sandalwood to the deities from the flat lands or plains, they use dwarf rhododendrons for the divine forces of the east. Sal tree incense for the Gods from the west, Nepalese sassafras (Malagiri) is offered to the Gods from the center of the earth and the guardian deities. Himalayan birch incense is offered to the sources of energy - the sun, moon and the sky. All these offerings and the aromatic fragrance will please the divine and will shower blessings for all.

DAMPHU SENGBA WAYEE – Damphu Creation song

Amailay Hoi Amailay

Mother oh mother

RapseChiwa Chu Damphu

Sitting and playing this Damphu/ large tambourine

KhalsaySangbaBilawa

Can you tell who made it?

Tor TorJyomoGangrimi

Up in the mountain tops

ShikarKlangwa Peng Dorje

While Peng Dorje was hunting

TangsarBokeySatsenam

Killed a male ghoral (mountain goat)

Ambursingh La Gherori

He made a circular shell using Koirala / mountain ebony wood

Tangsar Ra LadiSangshi

Ghoral / mountain goat's skin was stretched

GyagarDanlaKatapsingh

Bamboo from the flat lands was used

BattisKilaTerere

He made 32 bamboo spokes around the circular shell to tighten the skin

PusuRangbaJedereng

Which jutted out like thorns

Peng DorjeSeSengthanba

It was made by Peng Dorje

DamphuChyamaPlack Dhruva

Damphu made a soft ‘Tap’ sound when he tried playing

RapseChyamaChoyi Dhruva

He started hand drumming which let out a loud reverberating sound throughout the mountain tops

SaraswatiKairanBamu

It was like an instrument blessed by Goddess Saraswati (Goddess of learning and music) herself. In this song there is a beautiful folklore attached to the origination of the ‘Damphu’, the identity of the Tamangs. In shape it resembles a tambourine but is larger and is made by Peng Dorje who used to reside in the mountains. Once, he went out hunting and killed a Ghoral (mountain goat) and returned back home which gravely saddened his wife, Ruisang. Unaware of this consequence he wanted to repent for the sin committed and made up his mind to cheer his wife as well. So, he decided to use the hide of the goat to make a musical instrument. He then made a circular shell out of koirala wood (mountain ebony), and stretched the hide over the shell chanting the names of his ancestors and different Gods and Goddesses. He fixed them together with 32 spokes made of bamboo from the flatlands radially which resemble like thorns jutting out. He also fixed a split cane of bamboo nearly 2 inches long and half inch broad on the lower part which gave timing to the instrument. He tried beating the new instrument and it made a soft sound and nearby he saw a Danphe (pheasant) and Munal (female pheasant) dancing perhaps to woo the female.

Peng Dorje imitated the movement and went in front of his wife and danced by beating on the instrument which cheered her up. He then named the instrument Damphu taking the inspiration from the Danphe bird. The instrument made such unique and reverberating sound that it was like a blessing from Goddess Saraswati (Goddess of learning and music). Since then, Damphu is used to narrate the ancestral stories, prayers to Gods and Goddesses, rituals and customs. It is an integral part of the Tamang life world.

TAMBALA WAYEE – Song of Tamba (Historian/Storyteller/Custodian)

Amailay Hoi Amailay

Mother oh mother

Amailay Hoi Amailay

Mother oh mother

ChoilaNgawaKhambuling

Tibet is the center and source of all the sacred religious text and script

Mila NgawaChondende

Lord Buddha is the most eminent human

Sala NgawaAmarling

The most important place on Earth is Burma because of it rich source of precious metals and stones

HyullaNgawaUrgenling

The most sacred village is the birthplace of Guru Rimpoche

DongdaNgawaChandan Singh

Sandalwood tree is the most significant tree in Tamang community

NelaNgawaDorje Den

Bodhgaya is the center of pilgrimage for all buddhist

GadheJyawaJambuling

This world is very beautiful

GhoshiKelaWaAakela

Not sure if I will ever have a rebirth

KorshiThangoJambuling

Keep exploring the world till you are able and fit

Hyangla Dharma Musami

Always do good deeds and have faith in God

SisinilaTharbaling

Your Heaven is here on Earth

KorshiChyagiJambuling

Keep exploring and experiencing this world

GadheJyawaJambuling

This world is very beautiful.

Tamba is the ancestral historian, language originator, custodian of all the rituals and customs of the Tamang community. He is the person who is the source of all the folktales, folklores, Wayee, which narrates the history, praises to Gods and Goddesses and all the rituals and customs related to the Tamangs. In this song the Tamba is informing and giving advice to the future generation. According to him, Tibet is the source of all the sacred religious text and scriptures, Lord Budha is the most eminent human because he is the precursor of the Buddhist religion. He sings about Burma which has a rich source of all the precious stones and metals, he says the birthplace of guru Rinpoche is the most sacred village. Bodhgaya is the center of pilgrimage for all Tamangs and everybody should visit such places and get blessings. Thus, it evinces the assimilation of the Bon, Buddhism and Hinduism and its primitive social customs.

He also informs that this world is beautiful and worth exploring. It has so much to offer us. Life is beautiful and one should love and respect life because rebirth is a vague belief, so it is best to keep exploring the wonderful places of this world when one is alive. Moreover, one should not think of going to heaven after dying. Instead, they should perceive everything in this world as a reality and take time to explore and continue doing good deeds. In this way even the transitory

experience of life transcends and permeates into an everlasting joy forever and one can have a feeling of heaven staying in this mortal world.

KADIN SUNGBALA CHU WAYEE – Blessing song for wedding ceremony

ChuriSyambalaKharbariChuriThanbalaDhermari

Kept here is a beautiful, decorated plate

KharbariMannangMlaYuthangsiNangsalChashiMrasi Nam

Pour one cup of rice on the plate and light a pair of butter lamp

Chu SebuSemu La Karma Ri

Destiny brought this bride and bridegroom together

NangsalRangleYalTashse

May they shine bright always

DubhoRangle Tag Disay

May they flourish like the green grass

Bar PeepalRangle Tag Disay

May you stay strong together like the banyan and peepal tree

Gandhi RangleCherengshi

May you have a long and vast life like the sea

Nam NamFamsomCherengshi

May you bloom like the mustard flowers bright and yellow

Chu Jambuling La Khorlori Tag DisiLasiChasi Nam

May you stay together and blessed in this journey of life

Chu YulsariDasugo

And do visit the village now and then

Marriage (Brelsang) is an integral part of any community. It is a happy ceremony and everyone present there blesses the couple. In a Tamang marriage 'Dampharay' (person who plays the Dhomphu and sings) hold a very high position, they are like the Tamba who invoke the Gods and Goddesses to bless and protect the couple from all harm during the ceremony. There is a moment in the course of the wedding where the Dampharays bless the couple through a song (Wayee). Sometimes the songs are from the collections of Wayees but most of the time they compose songs on the spot which is the magic of the Damphu or the blessing of the Gods that the words keep flowing in their song.

In this song there is a description of a beautiful plate which could be made of gold, silver, copper or brass, where a cup of aromatic rice is poured and two butter lamps are lit with fragrant flowers all around the plate. Destiny plays an important role in marriage that's why sometimes even people who are not known to each other get married and have a good life. It is destiny that brings two people together to lead a happy, prosperous and content life which is as bright as the two lit butter lamps, as green and flourishing like grass. The couple are blessed to stay strong together like the banyan and peepal tree and to bloom like the mustard flowers i.e., blessing them with a child. They are also given the blessing to always support each other, to be together forever and wherever they happen to go, never to forget the village and to come back now and then.

Conclusion

Tamang tribal group has always been an area of interest for scholars and researchers to study because of its rich cultural and traditional background. Tamang community is full of surprises, every time some new avenue opens up which seems to be an untrodden path and delving deep inside it gives us more information and insight into the tribe. The work is an attempt to touch on a small speck of the Tamang song 'Wayee' which is the most integral part because the songs tell us about the history, rituals, traditions, customs of the Tamang community through the mouth of the Tambas, which is unfolded in many scholarly books written by scholars of the past and the

present and also through oral literature in the form of folktales, folklores and songs. Thus, the information and insights pertaining to Tamang community, drawn from their songs are critical in understanding the symbolic significance of the community and will be useful and serve more realistic and concrete sources to gain a perspective on their performative world.

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Nepali folk-life and folk-culture

Swapan Kumar Pradhan

State Aided College Teacher of Kurseong College,

P.G. Dept. Of Nepali

Abstract

Nepali, as a linguistic community on the one hand and Nepal's nationality on the other hand, is a conglomeration of four primary classes (Varnas – Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra) and thirty-six castes. Linguistically, these four classes and thirty-six castes can be divided into three major families - the Aryans, the Mongols and the Agnes. According to Indra Bahadur Rai, the cultural amalgamation of these three major families is called Nepali culture. Historian Kumar Pradhan [1] further states that, 'The Aryanbhshi people like Khas Bahun-Chhetri, Kami, Damai, Sarki and the Tibeto-Burman linguistic groups like Newar, Magar, Gurung, Murmi (Tamang), Sunuwar, Thami, Rai and Limbu speaking different languages and dialects of their own, manifest some ethnic similarities yet build up culturally a single Nepali ethnicity. He does not include the Agnes (igneous) family in Nepali. In his view, the word Nepali refers to a language, a political connotation of Nepal's nationality and a cultural meaning of a group united for many reasons beyond political or national contours. [2] Hence, Language is the primary source for cultural identity. Another scholar, ChudamaniBandhu states that language has a special significance as a carrier of the culture. [3] To this day, Nepalese are scattered on various parts of the Indian globe such as Kumaon and Gadwal in the west, Sikkim, Darjeeling, Dooars, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya in the east and other countries like Myanmar, Nepal, Bhutan, Malasiya, Brunai, Singapore, Hongkong and different European countries, American states and Australian continent. Therefore, the traditional behavior recognized and perceived by that linguistic community residing all over the globe indeed implicates a Nepali folk culture.

Key Words: Nepali Folk-life, folk-culture, language,nationality

Introduction: Nepali folk life and folk culture

The folk-life of every Nepali caste and creed, place and region have diversity in nature. Nepalese scattered around the world have diverse geography, natural features and lifestyles. For example, there are cultural dissimilarities between Nepali folk life of Sikkim, Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Dooars and with that of the Eastern Region. The difference here does not mean discordance, rather it is the uniqueness found in the same lingual communities. Such diversity among the same ethnic group can be understood as the cultural characteristics of the Nepali folk-life related to different geographical and natural conditions around the globe. Folk culture is built on the cultural influence of folk life. Writer Mahavir Agrawal also considers folk life as the cultural origin of any country and the folk culture as the source of energy of human race. Furthermore, some scholars consider folk culture as a folk-only subject. Thus, Nepali folk-life, folk-tradition and folk-culture can be traced in this manner.

Nepali folk life is the Spiritual contemplation and simple lifestyle, reconciliation, devotion to a well-meaning God, adoration, reverence and faith in nature-worshippers and deities, charity, interest in religious deeds, fortune-telling, Omens, sorcery, witchcraft, wishful attitudes towards faith, unconditional support in hardships, social contentment, merrymaking, singing and dancing on different occasions, working hard, hunting, staying away from all treacheries and so on. Nepali folk-life is the natural and mental richness of the enthusiastic tendency imprinted in the behaviors of everyone, which encourages to stay away from all evils and to be honest, to be sincere, to show case courage whenever needed, to stay away from crowd and stay in solitude.

Looking at Nepali folk-life, folk-tradition and folk-culture, Nepali society is both familial/domestic and social. The family prefers to live in harmony despite the usual quarrels and disagreements. That is why the quarrel between husband and wife is called 'straw fire', which means the quarrels between the couples flares up within a flick of a second and dozes off in a second. Joint family culture is very rare in Nepali folk life. After the marriage, most of the sons leave their ancestral place and live on their own. They usually celebrate fairs and festivals and socio-religious celebrations throughout the year. They follow their own culture as per the clan they inherit. Nepalese of different classes and castes have their own traditional and racial music, dances, and musical instruments for entertainment. There are different types of costumes,

jewelries, and deities according to their castes and creed. Although there is a thin difference in food habits due to practical and geographical reasons, there is diversity in cultural cuisine too. Such as the Newars make *qwanti*, Rai make *vachipa* and khas make *Dar*. It is customary to eat satvik plain and tamasic rich food according to caste and creed. Milk, curd, honey, ghee and vegetables are favorite drinks and foods in common. As Nepali folk life is agro-based life, animal husbandry and farming are the main occupations.

Some scholars have noted that some cultural objects, arts and ideas are the cultural expressions of each race even if their ancestors hadn't had practiced. In Nepali folk-life too, the ancestors have always shaped the festivals as per the likes and compatibility of the community. For Example, the Nepali ancestors reshaped the *Dussehra* or *Shukla dasami* into *Dasain* and added *fulpati*, *bhejo* feast, *tika* and added *bhaitika*, *deusi*, *bhailo* etc. in *tihar*. Thus, in Nepali folk life, *Dashain* and *Tihar* festivals are observed as great festivals.

Among the festivals of *Dashain*, on the day of *Dashmi*, the custom of putting on rice grains usually colored in red, on the forehead is a symbolic custom prevalent amongst the Nepali lingual community all over the world. On this day, the head of the family put the *tika* prepared with rice grains, curd and colors as a mark of blessings to the youngsters and relatives. This custom is observed nowhere in the world except amongst the Nepali folk life. The custom of worshiping crow, dog, cow, cowherd, and brother during *Tihar* festival is also a purely Nepali folk culture, which cannot be observed anywhere in the world. The tradition of having such a rich culture is a glorious practice found in the Nepali folk life. After *Dashain and Tihar*, another important festival in Nepali folk life is *Maghe Sankranti*. On this day, everyone takes a dip in the cold water defying the cold early in the dawn and seek blessings from the Elders of the family. After this ritual, different kinds of roots dug out of the field is shared and eaten. Different kinds of sweets, delicacies are prepared and shared amongst the neighbourhood.

Catechism and untouchability are still prevalent in Nepali folk life. Even though the present generations have been rejecting the social malpractice of untouchability, social rejection, the caste discrimination, and untouchability are still subtly seen in the marriage ceremony and social rituals. But in the Nepali folk-life of Sikkim-Darjeeling and Eastern Region of Nepal, the

disparity on the grounds of caste or creed is vanishing. Religious fanaticism is outright rejected and not taken seriously; all castes and religions breathe free and are inseparable. Apart from the prime festivals, many Nepali folk festivals are slowly out of practice and other festivals like *Chauthi*, *Jatra*, *Shukla Tithi*, doesn't have social importance as that of 'Bhanu Jayanti', 'Phulpati Shova Yatra', 'Asad Pandra' etc. On the context of media, culture taking over the public importance. Litterateur Indra Bahadur Rai points out that—"All the Nepalese houses in Darjeeling used to have everyday cleaned clay hearth. It had a hanger fitted just above the hearth loaded with firewood, bamboo string underneath, a sheaf of meat and green chilies tied with it, outside the house little farther used to be dust-heap. The intrusion of modern amenities like cooking gas and pressure cookers in the kitchen chores have replaced the earthen hearth, wooden hanger, bamboo blower, tongs and dried meat. The sink in the kitchen have replaced the dunghill and dust-heap now." The Indian Nepali folk-life consists of all castes and tribes with Nepali language as a common *lingua franca* uniting the social fabric. The Aryan and Mongol communities use a common mother language, Nepali which is of the outmost cultural significance in the Indian Nepali folk life.

Marriages in Nepali folk life are always arranged or love marriage since time immemorial. The system of intra family marriage among the Gurung, Tamang, Magar, Thakali and other castes still exists as a folk custom, where the marriages between maternal relations take place. It is evident that to participate in the wedding procession and to have meal and fun is a customary thing. Having attended the marriage ceremony and gifting a pair of pigeons as a mark of startups after washing the feet of the bride is a must thing. Rarely a social fine of certain amount is imposed if any daughter marries outside the castes. But in Indian Nepali folk life, there is no such restriction on inter-caste marriage and no such ritual is practised upon. In the context of the whole Nepali folk-life, the widows are well accepted by the brother-in-laws amongst the communities like Rai-Limbu and Tamang, Sunuwar, Jirel, Dhimal, Satar and other castes. The custom of elopement by force is sometimes found in Thakali and Magars. In Nepali folk-life, the divorce is denounced; hence the decision is never taken in haste. If the wife walks away with another man, it was customary to fine the adulterer in presence of five prominent heads of the community popularly called as *Panch Bhela*. An extinct but real custom to chop off the head of the adulterer/offender with the permission of the *Pancha Bhela* gathering ever existed in the

society. The favorable season to marry is in the months of Mangsir, Magh, Phagun, Vaishakh, Jeth and Asar.

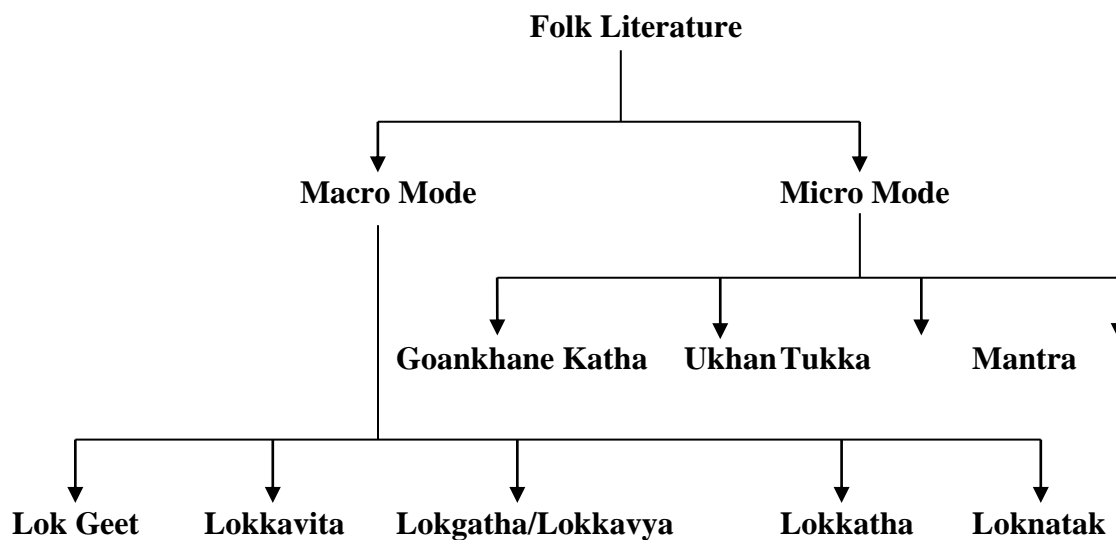
In Nepali folk-life, however, there is a tradition of believing in Lamaism, Hinduism as well as the old religion. Being a nature worshiper, they believe in Lama, Hindu, Dharmi and Ishta Deva. In the far western districts of Dandeldhura and Baitadi in Nepal, a rare folk-tradition of selling a daughter to please the deity as an offering is still in practice. They are called Dewki. In addition, the custom of offering calves, goats, ducks, chickens, pigeons, sheep, etc. is still the same. Goth Puja, Undhauli-Ubhauli Puja, Bhumi Puja, Sikari Puja, Pitri Puja, Nag Puja have been in practice since time immemorial. In Nepali folk-life, Sutak after birth and Rajaswala (menstruation) are still considered to be ceremonially unclean and graver than death distress.

Belief in witchcraft, ghosts, sime-bhume and log-lagan is in practice. Wild medicinal weeds heal minor injuries. There is a popular belief that kamalpitte is used to cure the jaundice. It is believed that children should be taken to the hospital only after they have been weeded out, otherwise it would be useless to inject the needle to the patient. Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays are considered inauspicious days. Wednesday is considered to be inauspicious day to start any work hence on this it is forbidden to start any agricultural work.

In any deaths in the family, it is customary for both Aryans and non-Aryans to abstain from salt and oil, to keep aloof from others not to be touched by strangers, and to mourn separately. Some follow the method of cremation, and some follow the method of burial. It is customary to perform monthly (masiki), forty-five, barkhi, shraddha after the funeral or ghewa. Falaincha, Chautaro, Mani or Chaitya are also built in the memory of the deceased. Nepali folk life is simple, plain and hardworking. Apart from some social and religious norms, everything else is cultural in nature. According to Tulsi Bhattarai, "From Panchpatra to Poteri, from Khadkaula to Dadu, from Gagro to Lohota, Tapari-Duna, Gajra, Batule Pira, Bida, Radhi, Ghoom, Doka, Bhune, Pechasam, Gahut-Gowar, Mundhum-Akshata, Deurali, Bhimsenapati, Dhyangro "Every word like TinchamkeChulho, Theki-Dudhero, Tolung, etc., is full of age-old culture." Such cultural race are now becoming artificial, dry and mechanical due to the influence of media culture, and the indifference shown by the so-called aristocracy towards folk-culture as a norm,

writes Dor Bahadur Bisht. [4] "How good it is to try to establish a modern and enlightened tradition by abandoning norms and other traditions." There is also a fear that appropriate and virtuous customs will be abandoned."The infinite power of the people, courage, attitude, passion, hatred, etc. can be considered as the conscious existence of Nepali folk-life. The following are various contemplatives, materialistic folk arts found in Nepali folk-life:

Folk Literature (Lok Sahitya):



Folk language (Lok Bhasa):

EsthaniyaBhasika, EsthaniyaSabdha, Thegaharu, Bal boli ka Sabdha, Gharelu Naam/Upanam, GophyaBhasa, Palsi Kura, Gali, Tuk mile ka Sabdha/Anukriti, Gothale Kavita, Ukhan, Tukka, Cutkila etc.

Folk Medicine (Lok Okhti):

Bikhuma, Bojho, Satamuli, Budo Okhati, Neem, Mangar Kanje, DhungayKanje, TarwarePhool, Pakhen Bet, Simal, BhatiGuyenlo, Anak, Nakima, Raj Briksha, Pinase Lahara, Halure Lahara, Bet Lauree, PanchAmle, Bakhri Lahara, Chimphing, Khirra, RagatayJhar, Urilo, Asuro, BhuiChampa, Angeri, Padina, Jatamansi, Chinde, Khokim, Lali Guras, KharetoJhar, Gurjo, ParpareTimbur, Avijaloo, Khamari, Kali Banmara, Tamarke, Sisno, Sonth, Juvano, Jaifal, Methi,

Marti, Padina, KaloHaledo, Toprezar, SiruwaJara, Buhari JharkoJara, SiundikoGubo/Paat, Asuro, Hadjoda, Chariamilo, Dubo, Ghiukuwanri, Hing, Silaji, Birenun, Chiroto, Pakhanveda, Jau ko paat etc.

Folk rites (Lok Samskar):

Jaat Karma/Nwaran, Bhat khuwai/ Pasni, Chudakarma, Vratbandha, Guniu cholo, Ihi/Bell vivaha, Vivaha/Lagna, Vaitarnee, Dasdan, Daahasamskar, Saiyadi Dan, Kiriya/Ghevaa, Paitalis, Barkhi, Sraddha, Cawpadee ,Halsaro, Maijharo, Harelo, Muthi Line, Nwagi, JhyankoPakaune, Pangsamang, Chhewar, Faraklo etc.

Folk Costume (Lok Vesbhusa):

Kane Topi, Feta/Paggadi, Pete Bhoto, Daura, Eastcoat, Suruwal, Malayaposh, Lagunti, Kachad, Dhoti, Kandhauri, Patuka, Gado/Dumden, Dumptra, Dumpyu, Thayaktak, Bakkhu, Gunyu, Choli, Majetro, Ghalek, Khasto, Barko, Pachauri, Hembari, Lachha, JaliRumal, Kane Jutta, Teki, Panda, Bokcho/Nokcho, Bethan, Thali, Kamlo, Galancha, Dolai, Dosalla, Fattu, Liu, Bakkhu etc.

Festivals and religious traditions (DharmikCarbar):

Vaishakh Sankranti, Vaishakh Purnima, Shukla Ekadashi, Nag Panchami, Janai Purnima, KusheAunsi, Rakshabandhan, Krishna Janmashtami, Teej, Ganesh Chauthi, Sohra Shraddha, Mahalaya, Nauratha, Phulpati, Dashami Tika, Tihar (Kaag Tihar, Kukur Tihar, Gai Tihar, Goru Tihar, Bhai Tika), Dhan Triodashi, Indra Jatra, Mha Puja, Bhimsen Puja, SwasthaniVrat, Maghe Sankranti, ChaiteDasai, Vasant Panchami, Saraswati Puja, Saune Sankranti, Bhadaure Purnima, Mahashivaratri, Ram Navami, Baha, Sohraya, Satyanarayana Pooja, Puran Katha, Kul Pooja, Sansari Pooja, Udhauli-Ubhauri Pooja, Goth Pooja, Sikari Pooja, Nag Pooja, Bojudevata Pooja, Vayu Pooja, Khyak Pooja, Ganesh Pooja, Guru Pooja, Devarali Pooja, Kumari Pooja , Mangena Pitri Puja, Tongshim Puja, Dhanya Purnima, Choh, Nara Puja, Hla Puja, DantaBarang, Testa puri, Dol Thakur, Testa Punau Puja, Dol Puja, Thulo Ekadashi, ChandiPurne, Bala Chaturdashi, Chamanungi etc. In Indian Nepali folk life, the above mentioned religious occasions and some special days are also celebrated as social celebrations, such as Bhanu Jayanti, AsarPandhar, Pahilo January, Cavis January, PhulpatiSovayatra, Kalashayatra etc.

Folk Foods (Lok Khanpan):

Gundruk, Sinki, Kinema, Filungeko Achar, Chindeko Achar, Radish Achar (Pharsi ko Biya ko Achar, Silam ko Achar, Til ko Achar Kapra ko Munta ko Achar, DudhePindalu ko Achar, Kerau ko Achar, AankheTimbur ko Achar,Rambheda Sidra, Aduwa, Lasun, Bhakiamlo, Lapsee, Amala, KerakoBuga, Koirala ko Phul ko Achar), Nakima, Celroti, Thekni, Batuk, Fulauro, Jhilian, Bhotmari, Malpuwa, Babar, Kurauni, Khichdi, Bhujuri, Bhutko, Kheer, Sukuti, Bhutuwa, Dhendo, Jaad, Sagun, Samhebbji etc.

Folk God (Lok Debata):

Mashto, Bahu, Dhandar, Kawan, Kalosilto, Bhavani, Bantpal, Dhawalpuri, Hangare, Gura, Tharp, Kalshilt, Darhe, Babiro, Rum, Budhu, Mhavai, Khapar, Marudha, Vayu, Khyak, Bhimsen, Bhairav, Dudhesilto, Dadhe, Larichal, Kailash, Ganesh, Vishnu, Kumari, Lato, Banno, Baskote, Ukhadi, Talikote, Ba, Liudi, Ramal, Dhurapani, Guru, Malika, Kalika, Jalpadevi, KankaSundari, Khesmalini, Yugelini, Himalini, Satkanya, SiktaKhauBudhi, BalmeBudhi, KulungBudhi, MangtevaBudhi, Molu Sikari, Khamang, Mangena, Budhibajjai, Sanni, Seem, Sunargaonle, Puwanle, Huma, Himbungma, Singbung, SingbungSukilohas, Banni, Buddha, Avalokitesvara, Guru Padmasambhava, Kali Bhagwati, Maiya ra Goraiya, Barham, Bhuiyanhar, Morang Thakur, Modeko, Morang Buru, Tarung, ChamkiBudheni, Lati Budheni, KhokeBudheni, KunjeBudheni, EkleSikari, BagaleSikari, ThokareSikari, CakmakeSikari, DhanuSikari, SidhaSikari, Hangma Raja/ Hangma Rani, Panchpandav, kalika, Sumna/Paruhang, Sitlung, Mitlung, Taralung etc. In Nepali folk life, after gods and goddesses, witches, ghosts, Sinda, Simebhume, Chaunda, Chundel, Jagitre/Ban jhankri (UlteJhankri, Sankhutte Ban jhankri, Ritte Ban Jhankri), Oja-vijuwa, Dhami, Jhankri, Phedangba, Vaide, Janapaa, Bungthing etc.

Folk Dances (Lok Nirtya):

Sangini, Rateli, Dhannach, Balan, Ghatu, Sorathi, Maruni, Rodi, Kagte, LakheNach, Khyali, DumfuNach, JhankriNach, ChabrunNach, Danphe Chari Nach, Nirgun Lok Nach, Bethi Lok Nach, KhukuriNach, MadaleNach, deuda, DhemeNach, BatolNach, JhumaNach, SakhiNach, ChudkiNach etc.

Folk Weapons (Hath-Hatyar):

Khukuri, Bancaro, Khurpa, Hasiya, Sikkal, Culesi, Karda, Cura, Sanaso, Bahuli, Cimta, Odan, Jhir, Basula, Kuttee, Bauso, Kodalo, Khanti, Pharuva, Kanta, JorDamlo, Mal Damlo, Bario, Chapra, Phali, Jabi, Jhangle, Ghuentro, Sika, Ghatta, Jhato/Cakki, Dhiki, Silauto/Lohoro, Ghyampi /Ghanto, Sulfa etc.

Folk Instrument (Lok Baja):

Sarangi, Panchebaja, Naumatibaja, Damphu, Madal, Galing, Dhyangro, Rilba, Lava, Khanjadi, Feri, Murali, Damru, Ghanti, Kartal, Ektare, Pakhwana, Kalibaja, Khankar, Shankha, Karnal, Narsinga, Sahanai, Tamko, Damaha, Dholaki, Kusule Baja, Chamar Baja, Sitar, Veena, Murchunga, Tanpura, Mridang, Dhol, Chabrung, Hudka, Kutkute, Khin, Dhime, Jhyali, Kathtal, Mujura, Dandi, Vinayo, Bansuri, Tunga Pivacha, Urni, Odhani, Arwaj, Gangmen, Damangara, Dha, Paschima, Rinai, Nairiv, Kochankhi, Dajriv, Dangakhi, Manar, Dubki, Bhantia, Golkibaja, JorTammal, Tasa, Bana, Nagbeli Baja, Khaa: baja, Ponga, Dekubaja, Lavatama, Vay, Kangling , Hong, Piphirbeen, Ta, Ghusya, Bhusya, Chusya, KubhuchaThakari, Dandtal, Gopal Dundi, Ginar, Handia, Tainai, Dhillbu, Jhanjhar, Champ, Damakhi, Dimki, Nagara, Damangara, Jor Nagara, Dafla , Dhyabuk, Dajakhi, Dammakhi, Manar, Bhote Sarangi, Bhote Sitar, Golki, Jormal, Pasa, Kharkari, Dongken, PongaLaba, Kochakhin, Nayakhin, Tammar, Talki, Masak, Muhari, Singbaja, Bay: Dhimaha, Kothaki, Damnagara, Thaa: Baja, Dankhi, Damarkhi, Dheraj Baja, Penta, Banno, Bhattiya, Joratmach, Pakhwaj, Tasa, Dana, Capelli, Dilubu, Thakri, Tadhuyya, Gaja etc.

Folk Music (Lok Samgit):

Bahramasa, Kaura, Zhaure, Khyali, Deuda, Poila, Rasiya, Cello, Sangini, Hakpare, Ghanse, Singaru, Chudka, Tappa, Thadi, Labari, Zitta, Scientology, Sunimaya, Yanimaya, Zhanga, Jethe, Asare, Bali Saune, Dai, Palam, Phiri, Bhanjadi, Sakela, Sendo, Hamkailo, Kaikdamai, Malsiri, Vivas, Magal, Mangal, Sagun, Fag, Asika, Joda, Karant etc.

Conclusion:

Nepalese as a race resides all over the world, to be more precise, in West Bengal, Sikkim, North-Eastern parts of India with their own purpose and profession. With different ethnic backgrounds,

languages, dialects, beliefs, customs, rituals etc. they composite a distinct race called Nepalese. Though diverse in settlements but composite in culture, Nepalese are a close linked community. The Nepali folk life is easy, simple and pure as that of water fountain. Therefore, Nepali folk-culture is a pure, fresh and practical folk essence thrived in Nepali soil.

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Situating Gender in the Interface between Natural Habitat and Cultural Traditions of Odisha

Nachiketa Singh

University of Delhi

Sangita Dhal

University of Delhi

Abstract

There is an urgent need today to rediscover the umbilical cord that binds human beings with the proverbial ‘Mother Earth’. The ongoing global pandemic has reignited the debate over the colossal damage, which the mankind has caused to the nature, thereby risking human security and lives of other species that are being endangered and are found to be near extinct now. In the context of this impending danger, bordering almost an existential crisis, this paper intends to delve into a pertinent question of how a delicate balance can be maintained between the ever increasing human needs and an ever depleting resource base of the nature. By redrawing the contours of socio-cultural trajectories, while placing women at the center of a new discourse as agents of environment protection and preservation, the paper tries to explore the age-old customs and traditions of the society, embedded in deep engaging conversations with nature through the lens of popular festivals. It examines the interconnected linkages between women, culture, and environment in the larger framework of feminist discourse. To address the issue of human alienation from the natural environment, cultural traditions and customary religious practices performed by women folks in Odisha are being examined here as possible avenues to reconnect ourselves to our natural habitat

Key Words: Globalization, Environment, Conservation, Gender, Cultural Traditions, Festivals

Rf Introduction

Since time immemorial human beings have shared an intimate relationship with their natural habitat, known as 'mother earth'. This umbilical relation has never been severed ever since human race has come into existence and defines the unique bond between them. It is characterized by cultural traditions, customary practices and religious beliefs, which are intrinsically linked to the nature. The continuum of 'Nature-Human' relationship has many dimensions. Apart from socio-religious, cultural and economic aspects of human life, the most important physical dimension of the natural environment from where human beings draw their life support are intrinsically linked to the nature such as the air, water and food. Thus, this multifaceted and multidimensional interdependence and interconnectedness between human beings and 'Mother Nature' becomes an interesting subject of social enquiry with a legitimate concern for nature's conservation.

There has been a renewed emphasis of late on the issues of environmental conservation at a time when the human civilization is confronting with the most challenging task of salvaging the damage caused by air, water and other forms of environmental pollutions. The human race today is facing a serious threat to its survival due to increasing environmental degradation. The fine balance between human needs and nature's capacity to provide resources for its sustenance is disturbed to the extent of natural environment being at the receiving end now. Before this catastrophe devours the entire human civilization, it is necessary that efforts should be made to focus on alternative models of human existence with emphasis on a more harmonious relationship between nature and human beings. The much-needed ethical balance between them based on a mutually beneficial relationship has been grossly eroded today due to the modern methods of organizing economic, social and cultural lives of people in the era of globalization.

Globalization in the contemporary times is seen by critics as a bane for human civilization, for it is not only creating a yawning gap between the rich and poor in terms of huge income disparities but also is proving to be a wedge between human beings and the nature. The focus on economic development based on industrialization, urbanization, increasing international trade, commerce, migration and market-oriented production system has created a new culture of consumerism only to result in more alienation of human beings from the nature. It is often seen that in the quest for

economic growth and prosperity, human beings have disturbed the delicate ecological balance leading to highly detrimental consequences on the environmental front. The contemporary discourse on biodiversity conservation and sustainable development focuses on this issue. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations too highlights the importance of climatic change and its catastrophic impact on the lives of millions of people on earth. It is believed that the goals of sustainable development need to be accomplished through a more environment friendly, humane approach to development so as to create a rational balance between the needs of our economic prosperity and earth's capacity to facilitate it.

Human civilization has however, lived for thousands of years on the surface of earth and has evolved sustainable and environment friendly methods to support life and livelihood, which included the age-old traditions and customs that made their life, evolve and prosper in harmony with nature and without damaging the natural habitat. But, in the post-industrial revolution phase and more recently in the post second war period till the advent of globalization; a steady decline in environmental consciousness and lack of sensitiveness to the slow but dangerous degradation and damage to the natural environment and biodiversity is being witnessed. This brings us to the debate whether we need to revisit the age old cultural and religious traditions of our society, which allowed us to live in harmony with the nature and at the same time make a living out of our organic relationship with mother earth without damaging it.

This paper highlights the importance of bio-diversity conservation with an objective to situate women as a gender category in the natural habitat, thereby making them agents of nature's preservation. It further aims at explaining the interesting equation between cultural and religious practices with that of the diverse natural surroundings of a traditional society situated in Odisha through the lens of popular festivals. It is found that an intricate connection between women and nature has been historically evolved by age old traditions of religious-cultural festivities across the length and breadth of the state of Odisha. Thus, an attempt is being made here through this research paper to explore the carefully crafted triangular relationship between women, nature and cultural traditions of Odisha, which complements and supplements the process of bio-diversity conservation directly and indirectly. There are traditional socio-religious practices embedded in Odisha's rich cultural heritage, which are celebrated through its myriad festivals and *parbas*. It is said that Odisha has thirteen such *parbas* [festivals] in the entire calendar year of twelve months.

Gender-Environment Debate: Eco-feminism and Feminist Environmentalism

Before examining the cultural and religious practices performed in close nexus with the ecological space and the natural habitat of human beings, it is pertinent to throw some lights on the gender and environment debate to put it in the right perspective. The idea of a harmonious relationship between women and environment and how bio-diversity conservation and myriad cultural practices performed by women in traditional societies proves to be a catalyst to preserve nature, is highlighted in these debates. Women share a very close relationship with the nature, which is distinct from that of men. This view point has been substantiated by the proponents of 'Eco-feminism' in the west, who described the link between gender and environment as inseparable. The eco-feminist argument holds that there are important connections between the domination and exploitation of nature and women. Since domination of both women and nature has happened simultaneously in all patriarchal societies, women have a personal stake in ending this domination of nature by their male counterparts. The feminist movement and the environmental movement, therefore aim to achieve the common goals of a non-hierarchical and egalitarian society, conscious of the environmental protection and preservation. The eco-feminist argument thus explains how women and environment have been put hierarchically below men in the socio-political milieu that is rooted in a system of ideas, value and beliefs that perceive both women and nature as inferior and subservient. The contemporary feminist discourse highlights the fact that women are identified with nature, which the male dominated patriarchal system devalues and considers as being of a lower order of existence than itself. Vandana Shiva's formulation on gender and environment explains violence against nature and women as reflective of the very perception about them as inferior to men and culture by the patriarchal system.

However, closer home in the developing world alternative perspective to eco-feminism has offered a formulation based on material link between women and environment for the sake of their livelihood and survival. Using this argument of feminist environmentalism, one can examine the challenges being confronted by women in general and rural women in particular in India. It is not an exaggeration to conclude that after decades of experimentation with the process of globalization, which has brought about a paradigm shift in the discourse of development, rural poor households have become victims of environmental degradation, where women have found themselves at the receiving end of a disadvantaged position. This has become a universal

challenge across all the developing countries. The economic policies of the neo-liberal state, complementing globalization are distinctly guided by typical male centric objectives. However, these theoretical propositions based on 69ashay69erized69 of perceived realities of our society often ignore the micro-level exceptions of some traditional societies, where deep seated gender discrimination is not the issue before women, when it comes to the bio-diversity conservation. Rather they play a much more important role in this endeavour and become a vital stakeholder in natural conservation as cultural agents of the society.

Situating Women in the Culture-Environment Conversation

It is often seen that biodiversity and cultural diversity complement each other. There is an intimate relationship between the conservation of biodiversity and the celebration of cultural diversity. This relationship is celebrated through different cultural festivities across the length and breadth of our country. Odisha, which is a predominantly an agricultural society, situated in the eastern coast of the country has a rich tradition of cultural diversities being celebrated through many of its festivals that are intimately linked to agriculture such as ploughing, sowing, harvesting etc. The villages of Odisha have a rich tradition of social and cultural festivities that are linked to nature. Both urban and rural people celebrate various festivals throughout the year religiously with community participation, which are mostly a part and parcel of village life in Odisha. People celebrate these regional and local festivals such as *Makar Sankranti*, *Shamba Dashami*, *SreePanchami*, *MaghaSaptami*, *Jagara Amavasya*, *Dola Purnima*, *JhulanaJatra*, *MahaBishuva or Pana Sankranti*, *Akshay Tritiya*, *NrusinghaChatturdashi*, *Savitri Amavasya*, *SheetalaSashthi*, *Raja Sankranti*, *Sri GundichaRatha Yatra*, *SudashaBrata*, *Ganesh Chaturthi*, *Gamha Purnima*, *Khudurukuni Osha*, *Janmashtami*, *Nuakhai*, *Durga puja*, *Kumar Purnima*, *Dipavali Amavasya*, *Kartika Purnima*, *Prathamastami*, *Dhanu Sankranti*, etc., which have deep connections with nature and natural habitat.

Parts of this research article dealing with cultural traditions and practices of Odisha and the role of women in the participation of the same are drawn from childhood memories and shared experiences obtained from our association with people in the ancestral village in the district of Jajpur in Odisha. Much of the information was obtained from oral history of traditions and customs shared by elders in the family. These are also based on keen observations of rituals,

customs and cultural practices, which have been part and parcel of village life in rural Odisha. The methodology used here is participant observation and study of popular culture based on ethno-cultural studies.

Cultural Traditions: Deepening Relations between Society and Biodiversity Conservation

The intimate relationship between women and environment is carefully woven around cultural diversities manifested through many customs and rituals observed during the various festivals of the state. In Odisha it is often said that the diverse population in the state observe more than thirteen festivals in twelve months, which literally means each month of the year brings an auspicious festival to celebrate. Being predominantly an agrarian state, every festival barring a few religious ones has direct links with the nature in general and agricultural practices. It's a fact that the diverse regions of Odisha inhabited by both tribals and non-tribals have their own tribal and Brahmanical traditions and customs, who are always found complimenting and influencing each other. One finds these cultural traditions perfectly in tune with the ecological spirit and in sync with the environmental consciousness. There are thirteen important ritual-based festivals in a single calendar year, which are celebrated in Odisha, apart from that there are special festivals observed by the tribal population of the state engaged in the various agricultural activities. Odisha has one of the largest concentrations of tribal population 22.13 per cent in the whole country, which constitutes about 7 million population. The tribal people celebrate their cultural identity and distinctiveness in their social organization, language, rituals and festivals and also in their dress, ornament, art and craft. The Sixty-two tribes, which constitute 24% the of total population of Odisha vary in their size, degree of socialization and economic patterns. Important tribal groups are Kondh, Koya, Bonda, Gadaba, Parja, Santhal, Juang, Oroan, Gond, Ho, Bhumia, BinjalandBathudi. Majority of these tribal population inhabits in the forests and hilly regions of Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Phulbani, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Balangir, Kalahandi and Koraputs district. The most important fact about these tribes is a fair degree of gender equality in almost all their communities. Hence one sees an inclusive character in the social and cultural fabric of these tribes. Women in these tribal communities participate equally in their cultural and ritual practices along with their men counterparts, which are mostly associated with their economic activities in the surrounding natural habitats.

Being an agrarian state in the eastern coast, rice is the staple food and paddy is the principal crop in Odisha. Most of the festivals [Parvas] therefore, usually revolve around paddy cultivation. From the beginning of the process of cultivation right up to its culmination in the form of harvesting, is celebrated through the various rituals and festivities. This cyclic process is marked by continuous reverence to nature and Mother Earth. Each of these festivals has two components marked by rituals and social festivities involving people. While the festivals constitute the joyous celebrations by the kinsmen of the community, the rituals are a series of rites and customary obeisance to the mother earth. These social and communitarian events are integrated with the agricultural processes, which are age old practices followed by all communities irrespective of the religious beliefs people adhere to. Even tribal communities follow these customs and traditions. So, there exists a secular approach to the observance of these rituals, which is seen as an obeisance to the mother earth. One interesting fact of the cultural and agricultural activities is the central role of women in performing both rituals as well as participating in the festivities associated with them. Odisha has its own distinct mosaic of festivals and age old traditions that gives it a unique cultural and ethnic identity. The following section describes some major festivals of Odisha to explain the deep interconnections between nature, human beings and popular culture.

Pana Sankranti: The festival of Worshiping Nature through Nurturing Plants

The Odia calendar year commences on *Mahabisuva Sankranti*, the first day of Baishakha in accordance with the solar calendar. It marks the advent of summer and is indirectly linked to agriculture. *Bisuva Sankranti* is celebrated as the first day of the Odia calendar, which marks the end of spring and welcomes the summer season. This festival is also known as Pana Sankranti, Mesha Sankranti and Chattua Sankranti. The word '*Bisuva*' in Odia means equator and on this day the sun fully rests on the equator, making the duration of the day and night equal. And from here on, the sun starts its journey towards the northern hemisphere, which marks the beginning of the summer season. This day is thus considered auspicious and is celebrated religiously. Women in Orissa celebrate this first day of the month of the New Year by worshiping the sacred Basil (Tulsi) plant. It falls on the day, which is known for its remarkable rise in the heat of the sun. The ritual observed on this day is associated with the Sun God and Tulsi plant, where

women put a small earthen pot with a hole in its base over the Tulsi plant so as to let water drops fall continuously on the roots of the sacred plant till sunset.



Source: oriyaonline.com/blog/category/72ashay-festivals/

It is believed that this act symbolically represents the importance of water, which sustains life on earth and should be provided to all in the month of summer. It's a common knowledge for everyone how useful Tulsi leaves are for human body because of its immense medicinal value. On the religious side too Tulsi plant is worshipped by the Hindus as sacred and is found in all holy places and in every Odia household, planted in the 'Chaura', the small elevated structure that holds the plant. Its leaves are used for every religious festival. On the cultural and festive side, this day has the significance in terms of community and family celebrations too. People make delicious pana, (a sweet beverage/smoothie) made of the ripe bela [wood apple], cottage cheese and sugar, which is offered to the Sun od and then distributed amongst family, friends other community members. The panais considered to be a cool and healthy drink for the summer months in extreme hot condition. In this whole exercise women remain at the forefront of



carrying out all the rituals, from worshipping the Sun God and Tulsi plant to performing their socio-cultural roles.

Source: oriyaonline.com/blog/category/73ashay-festival

Akshaya Tritiya: The Auspicious Festival of Agriculture

Though the festival called *Pana Sankranti* or *Mahabishuva Sankranti* is known as the Odia new year, the actual agricultural new year in Odisha however is observed on Akshaya Tritiya (the third day of the lunar month), which falls just few days after the Pana Sankranti. Akshaya Tritiya is the festival that celebrates the sowing of the seeds in the paddy fields. The popular belief associated with this festival is that the rituals performed on this day ensures good crop during the year. The ritual is characterized by the ceremonial sowing of the kharif paddy seeds in the field, which remains moist after few rainy showers on preceding days. This is considered to be a favourable condition for sowing seeds. All the rituals are performed in the paddy field with female members of the family carrying paddy grains to the agricultural field and offering puja to Goddess Lakshmi. Akshaya Tritiya is the most auspicious day according to the Hindu calendar, when people apart from sowing seeds also lay foundation of new houses, ponds, tanks, temple,

etc. This is the day when the construction of the chariots for the famous annual Rath yatra of lord Jagannath at Puri begins.

This major festival of Odisha, *Akshaya Tritiya* is celebrated across the state with traditional 74ashay, which holds a special significance in the cultural landscape of Odisha and is closely associated with Rath Yatra at Puri. Although the festival of Akshay Tritiya is celebrated mostly in the rural areas of Odisha as a major agricultural festival, this day, which is considered to be the most auspicious of all days of the year, is generally preferred for commencing any new venture. As a tribute to this belief, the day is marked for the initiation of chariot making (known as *RathaAnukula*) of the famous Rath Yatra of Puri. The tribal farmers also observe Akshaya Tritiya as the *Dhanabuna Parva* (the festival of sowing paddy). On this day, the tribal people of northern and south-west Odisha, first worship 'Mother Earth' with incense sticks, light lamps and offer animal sacrifice in the form of rituals. In all these rituals women participate along with their male counterparts. The legend has it that animal sacrifice increases the fertility of the land, which in turn results in the high yield of crops during the harvesting time. The tribes have a deep sense of reverence for 'Mother Earth' and believe that good harvest depends on her blessings.

Raja: The Celebration of Femininity and Womanhood:

The people of Odisha celebrate another important festival called *Raja* or *Raja Sankranti* (fertility festival), which celebrates the menstruation of the mother earth, which is personified as a woman. This festival is observed for three days consecutively in the last days of Jyestha and through the first day of Ashadha and concluding on the third day. The conception underlying the festival is that Mother Earth is a woman on her menstrum phase at a very tender stage during these days when monsoon sets in Odisha. During these three days no farmer engages in any kind of agricultural activities like ploughing, tilling, cutting or digging the land, for it is expected not to inflict any pain on 'Mother Earth'. To celebrate this symbolic reverence to 'Mother Earth', young girls are given special status during these three days, when they do not even walk barefoot. Young women and girls are spared from household chores and are allowed to spend most of their time in swings and eat specially made rice cakes baked for them. This festival is similar to *Teej*, which is celebrated in north India. During these days, due to the onset of rains the earth soaks maximum water. Early morning on the fourth day, the womenfolk perform a bathing



ritual of Mother Earth called *VasumatiSnana*. In this ritual women use the grinding stone (shilapua) used in the household as a symbolic representation of 'Mother Earth' for this Puja. Different varieties of grains (pancha sashay) are sprinkled in the courtyard. This puja is symbolic of the process of cultivation. *Raja* or the fertility

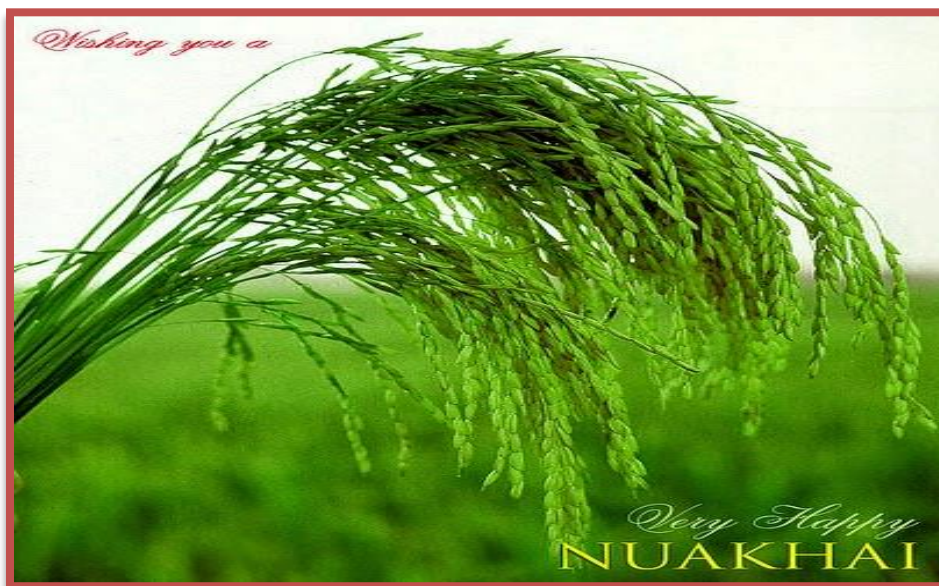
festival is a very secular community festival as well. Young women and girls indulge in merry making, singing songs and playing on the swings on all the three days, while their male counterparts play kabbadi in the village playground, which is also known as *bagudi*. *Raja*, which is a secular and socially and agriculturally relevant festival, is also celebrated by the tribal people of Odisha as an occasion to show their reverence to Mother Earth.

Gamha Purnima: Worshipping Cattles

There is another auspicious occasion called the *Gamha Purnima* or the cow worship day in the festival calendar of Odisha. This day is nationally observed as Raksha Bandhan but finds importance in Odisha as the *Gamha Purnima* or worship of Gomata or the cow. This ritual is observed on the *Sravana Purnima* as a mark of honour to Lord Baldev, the elder brother of the presiding deity of Odisha, Lord Jagannath. Lord Baldev is also known as 'Haladhara' (Carrier of Plough), who represents the farming community and is represented by holding a plough on his shoulder. This instrument called *Hala* (plough), which is used for tilling the land is worshipped along with the cow or bullock. On this day, people worship the bullocks and cow who are given ceremonial bath in water mixed with turmeric paste to wash off the impurities and mud that may still be on their bodies even after the ploughing is over by the *Sravana Purnima*. Turmeric is both auspicious and has medicinal value with germicidal properties. Oil is applied on their horns, vermilion tikkas are applied on their forehead and then rachis or sacred threads are tied to their horns and bells are hung from their necks. This day is dedicated to remember the contribution of

cattles like cows and bullocks in the day today lives of farmers and common people and how indispensable they are in the rural agrarian economy of the state. The day is celebrated by eating rice cakes, organizing cattle fair and other community functions.

Nuakhai or Nuakhia :Bio-DiversityConservationIt is a festival that is widely observed across western Odisha, which is celebrated to consume the new rice grain for the first time after the fresh harvest. It is agriculture based socio-cultural festival when the new agricultural yields such as cereals, millets, pulses, sal seeds, mahua flowers, vegetables and even fruits like raw mangoes are offered to the community deity before selling in the market and using them for personal consumption. In western Odisha there are several types of songs and folk dances performed on this particular socio-cultural festival with primary focus on agriculture. In the tribal communities, the village priest distributes new paddy to every household of the village. The house wives clean the house, smear the walls and floors with cow dung and mud mixture and paint them with murals with fine artistry. They cook the new rice with brand new earthen pots. All members of the household carry the food prepared from the new rice and take them to offer to the village deity. Once this ritual is over they sit together and consume the food, which is considered sacred. This festival is a social occasion, when people indulge in merry making and celebrate the harvesting season by praying to Goddess Samaleswari, the presiding deity of



western Odisha
for a bumper crop
next season
through divine
blessings.

Source
:<https://www.mysambalpur.in/nuakhai-juhar/>

This practice of *77ashay* (grain) puja has been prevalent in India since time immemorial. *Arnna* (grain) in hindu scriptures refers to Brahma, the Creator that explains life in the living and the living after death becomes arnna. In India, grain is therefore considered to be a gift of God and is believed that the grain by itself is God. So these cultural and religious beliefs are practiced in the form of rituals that involves the preservation and obeisance to the Mother Nature.

Central to these agricultural festivals is the deep sense of reverence to Goddess Lakhmi, who is considered as the goddess of wealth, prosperity and good fortune. Goddess Lakhmi constitutes an integral part of the Odia culture and is worshipped in diverse forms as the deity of the paddy field and also the rice plant. She is worshipped twice in the annual Odia festival calendars, which are observed both at community level as well as in every household. These two occasions are Kumar Purnima on the full moon day of Ashwina as Gaja Lakshmi and secondly in a more traditional manner in Odia households on every Thursday throughout the month of Margasira, preceded by the holy month of Kartika. Therefore, every Thursday of Margasira month has a special significance for the female folks of the Odia households.



Source : Twin Idols of Goddess Laxmi at Ancestral Home of The Author's at Rambagh, Jajpur;

Image Source: Author

The symbolic form of the deity (Goddess Lakshmi) and the ritualistic manifestation is called 'Mana Basa' or Mano Osa, where *mana*, a container made up of bamboo or cane (Mana is a unit of measuring grain) is filled with grains of paddy and worshipped as a symbol of Goddess Lakshmi. These manas are polished with liquidified mixture of clay/mud and cow dung and are decorated as icons of human face. *Mana Basa Parva* is a secular ritual, observed by all housewives, who personally worship Goddess Lakshmi in the form of 'Mana', without the help of a male priest. The practice of this ritual lies in the belief that Goddess Lakshmi's kindness for her devotees from all castes and communities shall always protect the peasants and ensure their prosperity and well being.

Conclusion

The cultural traditions of Odisha, where women have a very important role to play are in perfect sync with the nature and its natural habitat. Being a predominantly agricultural state, Odisha presents a diverse socio-cultural canvas in harmony with the nature. In other words, it is observed that the popular culture in the social domain has evolved around the nature and its preservation. Thus, agriculture as an occupation is practiced by people not only as a source of livelihood but is celebrated as a socio-cultural event throughout the year. In different seasons, different festivals are observed with elaborate rituals to express gratitude to Mother Earth by way of worshipping and preserving its environment. In the cultural traditions of Odisha, women are seen playing a very pivotal role in carrying forward these age-old traditions and cultural practices intrinsically associated with the nature and Mother Earth. It is noted that women are dependent on nature for drawing sustenance for themselves, their families and society. They are not only conscious of this dependence but are equally conscious of their duty to preserve it. In the present times when the entire humanity is debating about the possible danger to the survival of mankind due to myriad threats to the environment, women in their dual capacity as socio-cultural ambassadors and protectors of the environment are proving to be an important catalyst in bio-diversity conservation in Odisha.

Thus, while making a concluding observation, it is established that women in Odisha as agents of bio-diversity conservation and torchbearers of a deep-rooted cultural legacy are immensely contributing to the larger cause of environment protection and its preservation through their dual

role in the family and society. This is reflective of the importance of indigenous people and their cultural traditions as critical facilitators of biodiversity conservation. The United Nations' much talked about 'Sustainable Development Goals' can be best realized by encouraging the role of such women in biodiversity conservation in different parts of the world, where they seem to be engaged in a nature-culture interface, while promoting their economic interest. The traditional women of Odisha are thus considered to be the best example of such practices to promote biodiversity conservation in the face of an interventionist and aggressive market-oriented culture of the global economy today.

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The Idea of Demonic and Witchcraft :

Politics of Gender in Odisha

Dr. Priyadarshini Mishra

Jayadev Institute of Social Science Research, Bhubaneswar

Abstract

The idea of demonic and witchcraft was an ancient practice and is still perpetuated in India's belief-system. Even in modern times, the idea of witchcraft is prevalent, for which the National Commission of Women and National Commission of SC/ST are serious about it and have taken steps to eliminate it by formulating the laws and orders. However, the socio-psychological roots of witchcraft and witch-hunting in India inflicted among the poor and illiterate women have not received adequate attention by scholars. Therefore, I would like to discuss here the issue of witchcraft in the tribal society of Odisha through some fieldwork and case studies to justify that how the female is a victim of this age-old belief. I also study the socio-economic and psychological reasons behind the practice.

Key words: witchcraft, belief system, socio-psychological, demonic, women

Demonic, witchcraft, sorcery, black magic is found across the world civilization irrespective of traditional and modern. All these practices were contributory to resolve the humanitarian crisis, and it has its biological, psychological, and socio-religious foundation in which both males and females were a part. In India, Tantra is found to be both benevolent and malevolent. In ancient times there were many sects and cults, and there was a battle between them. For instance, the tantric Buddhists had tussle against the Tantric Hindus, the Shaiva cult against the Shakta/Vaishnava cult fought each other to win over the other. The tantra cannons were written to resolve the human problems applying a supernatural power and spirit to get rid of physical ailments, socio-psychological issues, and spiritual conflicts. I want to highlight some of the

cultural practices found in the tribal areas of Odisha in the context of demonic and witchcraft and elicit how the good and evil of the tantric cult degenerated into an unsubstantiated social practice promoted by the senior men and women, leading to gender discrimination.

Alison Rolands has discussed witchcraft to eliminate women's power and maintain patriarchal order due to the women's sexuality, single woman, problematic economic positions, and women as mid-wives with illicit medical knowledge. He writes, "more radical feminists stress that the persecution was the work of men who held judicial power that they exercised with savagery on the bodies of female victims"(Ronald, 2009, 3- 5).

Whether it is witchcraft, sorcery, or black magic, women engaged in these practices fall prey to being blamed whereas male witches or sorcerers, or diviners are safely escaped from their social activities. The reason for such discrimination in this domain is consequent upon three significant aspects of society. Thus, the witchcraft in Odisha could be understood from a psycho-cultural, socio-economical and spiritual point of view.

The phenomenon of witch and witch-hunting has witnessed phases of change and transformation in society. Although most rural people in India are possessed with faith and believe in witches and witchcraft, a significant section of the population is opposed to such superstitious beliefs. We have looked at the dimension of the conviction of people regarding the practice of witchcraft and the related violence emerging from it.

Witch-hunting is an age-old tradition considered to be driven by the superstitious beliefs of people in rural India. The woman who is perceived to be practicing witchcraft is punished severely by the whole community and branded as 'Dayan,'Chudail.' It is one such dangerous superstition that often kills the victim. The belief in the practice of witchcraft is part of almost all living societies, and some traces of it can be felt at various degrees among all communities, especially Dalits and Adivasis. The practice is dominant among socially excluded communities of states like Jharkhand, West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh. (Report of *Dalit Studies*,P.34)

My hypotheses are as follows:

1. A society with a belief in witchcraft and the demonic idea is culturally shared, and the society believes it. Life after death is believed in Indian society. There is a mid-world between

the living being and the deceased person when they do not get the whole salvation for their premature or accidental death; they complete their time being in the mid-world.

2. Labeling the woman as a witch or evil doer for her sorcery or black magic is for grabbing land or greed for sexual abuse. The false allegation against such women results in acquiring the landed property of older and issueless women and young widows. The neighbours start suspecting the victim when somebody is ill and blame her.

3. The rites and rituals, fairs and festivals, attributed to gods and goddesses, contribute to believe the spiritual world. Fear and devotion are two critical traits regulating the socio-religious function and validate the culture with the concept and belief of benevolent and malevolent spirits.

Witchcraft in ancient India

Magic and witchcraft have a long history in Hinduism, recorded in the ancient *Atharva Veda*. This Veda contains mainly mantras used for witchcraft or sorcery, curing diseases, destroying enemies, safeguarding crops and animals. They can be classified as hymns meant to secure longer life, get good wishes of the deities, ward off misfortune, pardon the misdeeds, obtain the kingship, as well as others.

These hymns also include charms to cure diseases and heal wounds; imprecations against demons, sorcerers, and enemies; charms to obtain a husband, wife, or son; and charms to obtain prosperity in the house, field, cattle, business, gambling, and kindred matters.

Alam and Raj have discussed that witchcraft prevails in rural and tribal India due to poverty, illiteracy, and superstitions. They state that despite the Constitution of India has provisions to fight against such superstitions vide Article 14, 15(3), 15 (4), 21, 51. There is a severe lack of attempt to eliminate these social evils. (2018 SSRN-id3130547.pdf). Witchcraft is a social practice limited to the private domain and hardly approved by the domestic and public domains in many parts of India.

Demonic and witchcraft has a close bearing on spirituality embedded in a living being or within a spirit of a deceased person occurring with an untimely death or accident. Men and women dying unnatural death become demonic. After death, their vital part or being suffers, and it

persists in the earth's atmosphere. All the ghosts, demonic, are their vital parts, and they persist. However, the soul with a natural death goes away to its heaven after some time and again takes birth. Witches are the living being who supports demonic through tantric practice.

The interplay between the visible living being with the invisible vital part is often found in rural societies. The belief is ingrained in the psyche of the people, and they believe it to be true. The deceased person lives invisibly around her environment, resting in some trees and forests, often like to possess a living human body and satisfy their unfulfilled desires. These unsatisfied souls come back to society and wish to enjoy humanly pleasure through food, dress, and demand worship to get satisfaction possessing on a living being. When a society is surrounded with such invisible dreadful characters, people are bound to satisfy these evil spirits to get rid of them. To understand the ghost communities, I had fieldwork in Kalahandi, Koraput, and Mayurbhanj, and I found dozens of ghosts and spirits traveling around the environment searching for a hunt. Some of these cases are as follows:

The invisible world of demonic and witchcraft

North and South Odisha is a thickly tribal populated district, and the tribal people in this land believe in life after death. On my field study, I enquired about witchcraft and came across a tribal expert Dr. Adikanda Mohanta, who explained about 11-12 kinds of witches in the tribal regions. According to his version, in tribal society, spirits intermingle with human beings endlessly, thus creating races whose genealogies are inseparable from the spirits who live in the earthly or watery nether worlds. It is an invisible world where the boundaries between heaven and hell are ambiguously defined and are always porous.

Black magic is the practice of tantra that draws on assumed malevolent powers. This type of magic is invoked when someone wishes to kill, steal, injure, cause misfortune or destruction, or for personal gain without regard to harmful consequences.

Due to jealousy, hate, or some personal enmity, the *witch* uses tantric devices to harm or take someone's life. This process ruins the targeted victim's life by the witch hunter, known as *bana mara*-black magic. The witches have a close link with the invisible spirits. By a tantric practice, the women gain the favor of the invisible moving spirits. Once they attain the evil power, they start making mischief against their enemies, creating a terrible situation in the village. Dr.

Mohanta said there are ten kinds of spirits (Bhuta). They are 1. *Pichasini*, 2. *Sanyasini*, 3. *Utchkia*, 4. *Claudia*, 5. *Puskura*, 6. *Thunder* 7. *Anthukuda*, 8. *Dhankudra* and 9. *kalia Kudra* and 10. *Krupa*. The women folk died on different occasions, or accidents use to become bhut nominated to the incident, e.g., if a woman has committed suicide with a rope or by eating poison, she becomes *Utchkia Bhut*, and her spirit is not mingled so easily unless she takes revenge of her enemies. It is believed that the spirits taking the help of the witches are supposed to harass the living being, and this belief creates suspicion among the victims of the family, and then they start torturing the women in the name of the witch. The categories of ghosts (bhut) present in the mid world of life and death are as follows:

1. Petasuni Bhut: If a pregnant woman dies with a child in her womb, she becomes a Petasuni-bhut (ghost or evil spirit) spirit of running after the children. They are called Chudkin abduct other's children. They are controlled or eliminated through Gunia.

2. Sanyasini Bhut: If a Brahmin wife dies, mainly while worshipping, she becomes sanyasini bhut. This spirit creates obstacles during puja-worship.

3. Saharia Bhut: If a woman/girl passerby dies while walking along the road due to lack of food and water, she becomes Saharia Bhut. Her spirit harasses the passerby.

4. Uchkiabhut: When a person commit suicide by poison, drowned in the water, fallen from a tree, and lost her life.

5. Puskura Bhut: On an inauspicious date, if some women die, they become bhut and walk on the roof of the house.

6. Thubda Bhut : (if the unmarried young girl dies- they become bhut and take shelter in a Sahara tree. If the ghost is a woman, she searches for a man, and if a man searches for a woman. Finally, they physically meet, and the ghosts are known only from their existence without their feet on the ground.

7. Anthukuda Bhut: If the issueless women die and her ritual is not observed correctly, they become bhut. In the house where these bhuts do rest, the house owner becomes barren and issueless.

8. Panchua Bhut: if a tender child dies, they are buried in earthen vessels. The Dahani- witch use to dig them from the earthen pot and give life to the child. Then they start eating the child. However, during this period, if someone sees them, they leave the child and run away.

9. Kudra Bhut: These are of two types i. Dhan Kudra (worship of the threshing floor – Khala)
ii. Kalia Kudra: eating hen, and goat; the thieves, when caught or dies, become such ghosts.

10. Krupan Bhut: if a greedy man dies, he becomes a miser bhut and collects money.

Pardhia Bagh and Bagh Dumen

A man turning into a tiger takes revenge on his enemy. This man is known to the villagers. He rubs his buttock in a specific tree and turns into a tiger. After killing the victim and sucking his blood, he again rubs his body in the tree and gets back his human form.

A woman eaten by a tiger becomes a Bagh dumen- tigress and eats the passerby. Gunia is the spiritual diviner and expert to resolve such bhuts if they catch the living human being.

GUNIA

The function of Gunia is to protect the people from the evil spirit. The spiritual experts driving out the witch or ghosts are known as Gunia. Their function is to know the type and degree of spirit and accordingly take the measure. *Gun* means to hypnotize or to tame or harm someone. A person affected by guni can be saved if a mendicant with higher supernatural power can apply his power and save the victim. Garadi is the mantra and the medicine to save a life from the snake bite.

Pangnia: Black Magic:

Black magic is the practice of magic or tantra adopted by a man that draws on assumed malevolent powers. This type of magic is invoked when wishing to kill, steal, injure, cause misfortune or destruction, or for personal gain without regard to harmful consequences.

Due to jealousy, hate, or some personal reason, the so-called Tantric uses cheap tactics to create adversaries in someone's life, which in turn ruins his/her life, known as Black Magic or tantra.

Pangan - Witches use it to harm somebody commissioned by his enemy or use evil power.

Nashan: To kill the enemy by using magical power commissioned by his/ her enemy.

Gunia: The Gunia, or the tantric person knowing such knowledge, is engaged by the enemy to harm or kill the victim.

Banmara: The Gunia applies tantric magic by which the victim will be affected.

Gardi: A woman witch who harms people whom she likes to exploit. This exploitation could be making the victim weak by applying magic spells or doing some sort of incurable diseases.

Chuhini: A Woman witch who sucks from the person whom she likes. Generally, the handsome youths or men are victimized by the bloodsuckers. It is believed that the witch is satisfied by sucking her blood in a string hanging from the roof. The man becomes weak and finally dies. The evil spirit uses to stay in the forest, hills, trees, river, and graveyard. If someone pollutes their space, they become violent.

The demonic lives are classified as follows:

Apadevati

Tortured women dying unnatural death become witches. The visible world is regulated with the invisible demonic world. The whole space is full of invisible demonic. Those who do not get salvation become Preta (male ghost), Pretini, or Petini (female ghost). Petini use to remain in between the natural world and the world of rebirth.

Pnagniani

A group of women follows an aged tantric woman. The divorces, widows, and women who are husbands are not under them to follow this esoteric knowledge. To attract their males. They become naked in a closed room and learn tantra in the night. They go to the graveyard-Smasana. They become naked and walk in their hands. While walking, fire use to come out of their mouth. They like to suck the children's blood. They have sharp and attractive eyes. If they are caught naked, you burn their dress to defeat or cease them. They are active during Amavasya black moon day. It is said that the sexually dissatisfied women use to join in this act.

Witchcraft in Modern Time

Seema Yasmin, the Stanford Health Communication Initiative director at Stanford University, conducted a study in Gujarat in 2018 and revealed that women in India are labeled as *Dayan* or *Chundel*, a woman with the black magical power to harm others. According to India's National Crime Records Bureau, more than 2,500 Indians have been chased, tortured, and killed in such hunts between 2000 and 2016. Witch hunts primarily target women and exploit India's caste system and culture of patriarchy. Men who brand women as *Dakan* capitalizes on deeply-rooted superstitions and systems built on sexism and patriarchy to blame females. The accusations of sorcery are used to oust women from the valuable land that men want. Witches are also convenient explanations for rising infant mortality rates and deaths from malaria, typhoid, and cholera. News of witchcraft cases is frequent in the television and newspapers, and the cases in the police stations are ordinary.

About fifty women have been alleged to witch hunters and murdered in Sundargarh for witchcraft by 2001, as revealed from the police record. Again 15 murders have been found in the police record in the Mayurbhanj district. There must be many cases that have not been lodged in the police station to avoid the litigations. In May 2011, two persons, including a woman, were killed as witches by their relatives in Bisoi and Karanjia in the Mayurbhanj district. In April 2011, members of two families in Deogarh district were paraded and forced-fed animal excreta after being accused of witchcraft.

The government of Odisha in the Legislative Assembly passed the Odisha Prevention of Witch-Hunting Bill, 2013, with imprisonment up to seven years and penalty for offenders.

The case study that is presented in this chapter is self-explanatory. The narratives are clear to imagine the realities of the events. However, the invisible part of the events is an individual threat and a social danger to allege any witch to anybody one likes, based on the superstitious assumption. If someone dies or falls ill, some woman connected to that family can be branded as a witch, and the ultimate result may be the murder of that woman. The case study reveals some events that signify a terrible psychological state of mind that a Psycho-Neurologist can examine the person's State of mind in whom such doubts arise.

The major supernatural spirits were the supreme God from whom the whole universe is originated, then comes the first progenitor of the first person of the community, next comes the tutelary deities of the village. All these gods and goddesses promote human prosperity. However,

the fourth one is wicked spirits -believed to be the premature souls of deceased man and woman who survive in the ethereal region around the villages and try to satisfy their unfulfilled urges what they could not enjoy when they were alive.(Das,1969, 429)

Exploitation Of Woman in Socio-Economic Domain

Tribal couple killed under witchcraft suspicion August 2, 2014, Baripada August 2:In the latest witchcraft-related murder, an elderly tribal couple met a gory end in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district. A superstitious-bound man hacked to death the couple—Ankura Party (65) and Mukta Party(60)from Dhanusahi village suspecting them to be practitioners of witchcraft. The 24-year-old assailant Bira Singh Bari committed the cold-blooded murder of the couple and surrendered before the local police on Friday with the weapon used in the crime. While confessing to the crime, Bira was unrepentant. He was under the firm belief that the couple cast an evil spell on two of his younger brothers leading to their untimely death last year, said an official.

Witchcraft has led to several killings and human torture in the human settlements predominantly inhabited by tribal people in the Mayurbhanj district.

Thanks to lack of education, dogmatic belief in witches and evil spirits causing calamities fromfamine to flood is widespread among tribal communities in these areas. The recent rise in cases of witchcraft-related murder has become a significant cause of worry for law-enforcing agencies in the Mayurbhanj and Sundargarh districts.

Rourkela: Witch-Hunts in OrissaPrafulla Das inSundargarh

The torture of three women in an Orissa district accusing them of being witches draws attention to the way superstitions rule the lives of tribal people in the State.

ASHOKE CHAKRABARTY



Rani Birla and Jhala Bhangra were beaten up because a quack accused them of casting an evil eye on a child.

It was 11-30 p.m. on April 21. The residents of Uttam Basti, an unauthorized colony on the outskirts of Rourkela city in Orissa's Sundargarh district, were about to retire for the day. However, unfortunately, a group of nearly 20 men had other ideas: they dragged three women- Munni Bandra, Jhala Bhangra, and Rani Birla-all past 60 out of their homes and beat them up. Some of them also raped Munni. Rani Birla witnessed Munni's rape, while Jhala, whose eyesight is weak, heard her screams.

As the three women were tortured under the cover of darkness, their families were beaten up and kept confined to their homes. When the attackers had had enough, they threw the women on the railway track nearby and poured kerosene on them, threatening to set them on fire if they moved. They did not, in the end, carry out this threat, but Munni did not survive the beating and the rape. She died the following day.

What had Munni and the other two women done to deserve this? Someone in the tribal hinterland of Sundargarh had pronounced them to be witches. A neighbour of Munni, Jaipal Purthy, led the attack. A local quack, Birsa Munda, had led him to believe that the three women cast an evil eye on his daughter. So Purthy had taken his nine-year-old daughter Shanti, who ran a high

temperature and complained of stomach pain, to Munda. Unable to provide any cure, Munda blamed the three women.

Purthy then took his daughter to a nursing home in Rourkela, but the girl did not recover. She breathed her last at the nursing home at around 10 p.m. on April 21. Purthy immediately returned to the colony to punish the women. While some of the attackers were local residents, others were called from the nearby settlements. Munni's small house is now locked. She was unmarried and had lived alone for nearly 30 years. Jhala and Rani are yet to come to terms with the horrifying experience. "Do we look like witches? We were tortured for no fault of ours. We know nothing about witchcraft," Rani told Frontline.

The Gandomunda police have arrested four men, including Purthy. Eight other accused, including Munda, are absconding.

The Uttam Basti incident is not an isolated one. The tribal-dominated Sundargarh district has recorded at least 50 deaths due to suspicion of witchcraft since 2001. The local word for witch, Dahani, has powerful repercussions for the tribal population, and almost invariably, it is the women who are at the receiving end.

Quacks seem to be the best bet in any illness for the tribal people living in the remote hamlets. So, when diseases such as malaria and diarrhea claim life, they often blame a woman for it, accusing her of casting an evil spell. This makes villagers decide to get rid of the horrendous soul, and the woman is punished, sometimes with death.

The problem is not restricted to Sundargarh. Tribal people in many parts of Orissalink their problems to sorcery and witchcraft. Many tribal communities also believe that death is the work of evil spirits, black magic, and witchcraft.

Mayurbhanj, another tribal-dominated district, has recorded 15 deaths related to belief in witchcraft since 2003. The problem also exists in Keonjhar and Phulbani districts.

The police only know of harassment that follows a woman's branding as a witch when a suspected witch is killed. However, hundreds of unreported incidents where "witches" are harassed, ostracized, banished from their villages, tonsured, physically tortured, and even forced to eat human excreta. The assailants are usually relatives or neighbors of the suspected witch. In

addition, there have been cases where the entire village or the panchayat ganged up against a suspected witch.

The reasons for the superstitious practice are not far to seek. The health care service in the interior districts is poor, and in many areas, tribal people must walk miles to the nearest health center. The problem is accentuated by illiteracy, poverty, and lack of awareness. There is no road to thousands of villages in the State, and hundreds of schools do not have enough teachers.

Murders induced by belief in witches have left many families shattered. In Birwal village under Lathikata block of Sundargarh district, 14-year-old Sumati lives alone. Budhuni Singh (50) was throttled to death by Samara Gauda, a 19-year-old from the village, on March 20. Samara believed that Budhuni practiced witchcraft and was responsible for his brother's insanity and his father's death a few months ago. Samara is now in judicial custody. He was arrested by the BrahmaniTarang police the day after the murder when some people informed the police that they had seen him killing Budhuni.

The story of Noni Ekka (40) of Tainsar village of Lathikata block is equally pathetic. She was branded a witch in May last year. The villagers tonsured her head and made her eat cow-dung and cow bone. She was beaten up, paraded naked, asked to cross the BrahmaniRiver and not return to the village.

Noni's troubles started after she accidentally touched a girl in Sukhi Ekka's neighborhood while looking for her son Manoj. It was around 11 p.m., and the girl was sleeping. Noni's touch gave her a start, and she fainted, presumably out of fright. Nevertheless, her parents blamed Noni's "witchcraft" for it.

A case was registered on May 28 after Noni reported the incident to the court of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Rourkela. The 13 people arrested for torturing her are now out on bail, and the matter is pending before the court. Deserted by her husband, Noni leads a life full of uncertainty, struggling to feed her four children.

In another case, Bisaka Munda of Kurga village had a high fever that gave her shivering fits. The quack whom her family consulted pronounced her to be possessed by evil spirits. They kicked and punched the girl through the night to drive the evil spirits away. Unfortunately, she died in the process, and seven members of her family have been charge-sheeted.

Though women are traditionally the victims of such witch-hunts, men find themselves at the receiving end sometimes. For example, in January 2003, Dhuleswar Barik of Alapaka village in Sundargarh district hacked to death six men because he suspected one of them of practicing witchcraft. He was awarded the death sentence by the trial court last year. The matter is pending before the High Court.

There have been many cases where people, trying to propitiate the gods, have killed young boys and given their blood an offering. Likewise, quacks are sometimes killed when their cures fail. "The problem is a combination of poverty, superstition, lack of medical care, and illiteracy. It makes a deadly mix," said Narendra Nayak, a Professor of Biochemistry in the Kasturba Medical College at Manipal in Karnataka and the Federation of Indian Rationalist Associations president. "The solution to the problem lies in improving the levels of literacy, creating a scientific temper and improving the medical infrastructure," said Nayak, who has been making visits to tribal pockets of the State to organize demonstrations of tricks that the tribal people believed could only be performed by those claiming to possess supernatural powers.

Witch-hunts have also been reported from the coastal districts of Orissa. Two years ago, in Krushna Prasad block of Puri district, a woman branded as a witch was tied upside down, and four of her teeth were removed after the local panchayat decided to punish her. The incident drew the attention of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). "It is a serious problem when people take the law into their own hands and kill people in the name of witchcraft and sorcery. It is even more unfortunate that belief in witchcraft continues to prevail in the coastal region of Orissa despite the spread of education," said A.B. Tripathy, NHRC Rapporteur for Orissa and Jharkhand, who investigated the Puri incident. "The government should undertake a State-wide study and find out the dimensions of the problem. Then, the authorities should take necessary action, and the civil society should be organized to fight superstition," Tripathy said. "The women's self-help groups (SHGs) should be activated through various government agencies and banks to motivate people."

Nayak said that belief in witchcraft is not unique to Orissa. "The problem is severe in the tribal heartlands of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh," he said. "Even in a city like New Delhi, people have superstitions, but they usually do not go to the extent of killing people. According to Nayak, the Federation of

Indian Rationalist Associations, a body of 65 rationalist organizations from different parts of the country, has demanded a law to separate religion from politics, administration, and education. The new law should ban state-sponsored religious activities, he said. "The country will never progress unless superstitions are removed. We cannot afford to have quacks making a fool of everybody, including Central Ministers," Nayak said.

The old women/widows are only alleged as witches and are humiliated, raped, and murdered, and mostly the allegation comes from the menfolk. The hidden agenda behind blaming the older woman as a witch is to grab the landed property of the old woman/ widows. Another is entirely blind belief and superstitions. The third reason is to take personal revenge against somebody. People use the witch, and the conflict arises. Finally, the witches are also sexually abused, tortured, beaten, and polluted with human excreta, if their mantra power will vanish if they are tortured or raped. After making them physically impure, their spiritual power is seized, and they cannot harm anybody. However, these beliefs are assumptions, and there is no scientific reason behind this.

1. The psycho-cultural aspect of witchcraft is attributed to the worldview and belief people do have about the life after death or the malevolent spirit operating the evil spiritual world. Cultural values related to witchcraft are an invisible act, and it is believed to be true. However, it is conducted by some men or women whom society believes to be the agent of such evil spirits. Therefore, society believes it to be accurate, and the cause and effect of such acts significantly affect society and individuals.

2. Socio-economic aspect of witchcraft is a complex matter. There are several instances of labeling a man or a woman as a witch or the agent of witchcraft and people afraid of them. They have a social identity of doing both good and bad of the society depending on the situation. In some cases, they are helpful to remove the evil spirit, and in some cases, they are harmful to the people. It depends on who is employing them for what. Personal animosity is a cause of taking shelter of a witch hunter to take revenge on his/ her enemy. However, the other reasons for labeling a man or a woman have a socio-economic bearing. The first one is for sexual abuse of a woman by a man, and the second one is grabbing the landed property of a woman who is alone, an older woman, a widow, and has no progeny. This is a family and clan affair. A woman labeled as a witch could be a young woman recently married or a divorced woman who denies the males

of her family to have sexual relations, and the males label them. The males and the females believe it since the cultural tradition has validated the presence of a witch in a woman's body. Thus, for sex and land, a woman is alleged to be a witch and is tortured, mutilated, or even murdered. Generally, such cases are often reported in the police station, but the social silence helps the culprit, or the criminal save his life and blames the woman.

3.Spiritual:Belief: Even though education and modernity have influenced the tribal people of Odisha, the belief of witchcraft is continuing in themindset of the people. It is not that the educated people have not changed. However, in the name of rituals and spirituality, and witchcraft, they manipulate law and order and allege the womenfolk as a witch for exploiting the land and abusing women.

Over time, the belief in witchcraft is fading off. However, the issue of males considered sacred and holy being a magician, the womenfolk are victimized for superstitions embedded with the mollified intention of land grabbing or sexual abuse.The reason is the tradition and conservative superstitions that give is to such socio-economic and gender discrimination.

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Notes

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The Romanian folklore dance *Călușarii*: from taumaturgic, cathartic, apotropaic, and *communitas* ritual, to UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

**Angelica Marinescu
University of Bucharest**

Abstract

Călușari is one of the oldest, most spectacular and most recognized Romanian musical-choreic rituals. This article explores, based on literature review, the cultural-historic archeology that defines the *Călușari* narration and ceremonial as a syncretic practice, a morphologic description of this magico-religious and mythic-fictional complex ritual, as well as its theoretical framing. The communist regime (1944-1989) used the *mise-en-scene* of the traditional dance as a representation of national identity, encouraging its stage performance, while its religious meaning, ritualic or *communitas* functions were ignored (the religious activities were forbidden, and any ‘superstitious’ belief discouraged). After the 1989 Revolution, a revival of the traditional dances took place in Romania and all Eastern European countries, this time giving them back their religious meaning, considering especially the works of ethnographers and folklorists. The co-existence of the staged form and the still alive ritual in some villages, allowed the inscription, in 2005, on UNESCO’s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, *Călușari* becoming a national identity mark and country branding tag.

Key-words: *căluș*, *sânziene*, ritual, taumaturgic, cathartic, heritage

Introduction

This paper theoretically investigates the Romanian traditional folklore ritual of *Călușari*, the evolution of the theories that framed the scholarly approach of the ritual, as well as the co-existence of folklore and folklorism, and its inscribing as a masterpiece on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2005.

Călușari is a magical-religious, narrative-ceremonial complex, with multiple discursive and meaning levels, and a multiple socio-cultural stratification levels (Eliade 1969/1994: 39-49, Neagotă 2007/8: 32-55). As a narrative and ceremonial local tradition, we can consider the ‘diachronic intertextuality’ perspective (Caprettini 1992: 22), as the local tradition can be defined as a palimpsest of diachronies; the various texts have to be approached as intertextual and contextual stages (Culianu 1994: 34-43, 1998: 8-9, 22-28). Tradition is defined as ‘a set of values, symbols, ideas and constraints that determine the adherence to a social and cultural

justified order by referring to the past and that ensure the protection of this order' (Balandier 1986, Géraud, Leservoisier, Pottier 2001: 52). Thus, a traditional dance could be defined as being 'a variant of an ideal materialized text (somatic expressed under a spatial-temporal-energetic aspect according to some morpho-syntactic rules and stylistic and aesthetics rules, variant that is in a close correlation with other types of traditional texts ([...] *co-texts*) and adherent to some social, cultural, magical-religious rules' (Petac 2015). This dance is considered a reminiscence of an ancient cult, bringing together two mythological representations: the veneration of the *rusalii*, *iele* (mythological feminine creatures, having sometimes positive, sometimes negative powers) and the worship of the horse (Ghinoiu 2013) (*Călușari* means horse-riders/knights). In traditional culture, this ritual was part of the entire system of beliefs concerning the souls of the dead and dangers of being possessed by evil powers (among them, in Romanian folklore, the *rusalii*, *iele*, *sânziene*). The paper gives place to the relationship between *călușari* și *iele/rusalii* (Vuia 1921-1922/1975: 215-254, Vulcănescu 1985, Giurchescu 1984/12-13, 2009).

The inclusion on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage was possible due to the re-definition of folklore, operated by UNESCO, with a focus on cultural meaning and social value (Gibson 2009). UNESCO adopted in 2003 the definition of intangible cultural heritage, linked to oral traditions, rituals and festive events, social practices, traditional arts and knowledge, founded on communities, promoting mutual understanding and sustainable development (UNESCO 2003). Heritage is a form of cultural mediation, marking the 'continuity and perenity of the culture in time' and the belonging to that culture and sociality. The patrimonialization is a way to confront the contemporary society issues, the cultural crisis linked to globalization and industrialization, and mass culture (Arendt 1972), a symptom of identity crisis, translated as a 'tyranny of the memory' (Nora 2007). As 'inheritors' of the past cultures, we are 'fascinated by identification of vestiges, archives and traces of the indiciary cultures, textual and memorial' (Lamy 1996). 'Heritage' has its root in the word *patrimonium* (lat.) implying the idea of something transmitted by our predecessors (Davallon 2002), the gift, from the ancestors, of the milenial memories and the reception of this gift by the present-day descendants (Babelon-Chastel 1994, Mohen 1999: 101).

The magic and ceremonial complex of *Călușari* choreic ritual

Included in the musical-choreic traditional folklore rituals, *Călușari* has taumaturgic, cathartic, apotropaic, and *communitas* functions (among others Eliade 1992: 231, Ispas 2003, Neagotă & Benga 2011). The *Călușari* ritual presents elements of local European shamanic practices (Ginzburg 1989/1996: 137-138, 249-250) and simulated possession (Grottanelli 1998: 39-59). *Călușul* belongs to an archaic magic-religious ideology, marked by extatic experiences, illness and possession states, trance, also a choreutic and musical therapy, which classifies the *Căluș* in the same morphological class as the *Rusalii* in Romania (Eliade 1970/1980: 200-204, Hedeșan 2006), *tarantism* in Italy (De Martino 1961/1994: 187-283, Pizza 1998: 49-81), etc. The relation between extatic experiences with typical symptomatology (catalepsy, trance, cyclothymic seizures, possession, and extrasensorial perceptions) and therapeutical dance/music were presented in trans-cultural case-studies by Rouget (1980), for example. Giurchescu analyzes the complex trance-healing/exorcism dance in *Călușari* (1984/12-13). Extatic and quasi-extatic experiences occur in the context of curing/exorcising a disease with daemonic inspiration, possession states, choreutic and musical trance, specific to the initiation rites (Eliade 1958/1995: 87-103).

The ritual of *Călușari*, *Căluș*, *Căluț* or *Căiuți* dance used to be practiced on the territory of the three main historical regions of the nowadays Romania (Moldova, Oltenia and Transylvania) (Burada 1975: 54), during different times of the year (Stoian-Irimie 2020: 383-390). The *Călușari* ritual contains initiation archaic elements (an uneven number of members, reclusion in the woods, the initiatic secret, the horse symbol, the ritualic use of clubs and swords), as in the case of initiatic societies of dancers with clubs/swords in the rural Europe of the Antiquity, Medieval and Premodernity (Eliade 1973: 115-122, Eliade 1976/1997: 100-105, Eliade 1980/1991: 51-55, Eliade 1983/1988: 236-240). The *Călușari* dance contains mythical gestures and magic formulas of a group made up only of men (Costin 2008: 65-69), a structure of *Männerbund* type (see also Ollănescu 1897: 55-56; Niculiță-Voronca 1912: 62-69, Bucșan: 1976) of *Călușari* brotherhoods in the rural Romanian rural world. The *Călușari* swore on the group's flag to treat each other as brothers, to respect the customs of the *Călușari* and to remain chaste for nine days (Eliade 1975: 161). Ginzburg notes that 'they dressed in female attire and wore white veils over the face, spoke with a high pitched voice and operated in groups, lived an itinerant lifestyle going from settlement to settlement offering their services as *shamans*' (1991). Cornier et al. note that their main religious service was a ring-dance (*hora*), held in spring in order to bring rain and fertility to the crops; they danced faster and faster till they reached an altered state of consciousness and communicated with the goddess - *Călușari* might have been priests of the Eastern European goddess *Irodessa* who was probably another form of goddess *Artemis* (Cornier et al. 1997: 101).

The ritual possesses a clear structure consisting of a number of interrelated elements: the flag-raising, the distribution of roles, the *călușari* dance, and the use of apotropaic means (Kocój 2013: 565-575). The meanings of the dance are in connection to the Horse-God (the mask worn by the *Mut*), the effigy (the flag of the *Căluș*) and a totem (*Ciocnitul Călușului*), magic transfer of divine fertility by enchanting a salt stone (*drob de sare*), which is given to the cattles, and of a pitcher (*blid*) with seeds, for the fertility of the fields, as well as magic healing plants always carried along (Pavel, 2004: 223-234), but also to the *iele* worship.

The relation of *iele* and *călușari*

The relationship of the *călușari* with the *iele* as inscribed in the mythic-fictional nature of healing narrations, is polyvalent and ambiguous, being marked by a game of power between the *daimonic* group of *iele* and the brotherhood of *călușari*, with a background of a complex configuration of magical-religious symbols. According to Eliade, the *călușari* were known for 'their ability to create the impression of flying in the air' (1975: 161) which he believed represented both the galloping of a horse and the dancing of the fairies (*iele*).

In the Romanian traditional communities, there is a belief that the *iele* (also called *rusalii/șoimane/vântoase/milostive*) become active at that time of the year. The *iele*, *sânziene*, *vântoase*, *măiestre*, *rusalii* are fairies (*zâne*), nocturnal supernatural beings from the family of feminine *daimons* (see Neagotă 2008), whose manifestation is musical-choreic. They are at the same time wondrous and terrible, meeting them does not leave anybody unchanged (unless the meeting is avoided, by the protection of the *pelin* magic plant) (Neagotă & Benga, 2011: 121-164). According to Mircea Eliade, *sânzienele*, central figures of Romanian folklore, have their origin in a Roman cult of goddess *Diana Sancta din Sarmizegetusa*, which became *Sânziana* < *Sanctae Dianae*) (1966, Eliade 1980, Kernback 1983 see also Daicoviciu 1962), while 'Dianiatici' (possessed by goddess *Diana*) became *zănateci* (crazy, lost) (Pârvan 1911: 120). Ernest Bernea writes: 'Drăgaica is an agrarian custom, in Muntenia [...] The custom also bears

the name *Sânzienele*' (2009). It is said that seeing them induces state which is dangerous: possession, illness (Talpă 2020: 96-102). *Sânzienele*¹ have their own ritual of prosperity, practiced on the 24th of June, in Bucovina, Moldavia, Oltenia, Transylvania, Banat, and Maramureș, connected to agrarian rites. In his *Descriptio Moldaviae*, Dimitrie Cantemir mentions the ritual of *Sânziene* or *Drăgaica*, supposing it has an origin in the 'old Dacian idols' like *Ceres*: 'For at that time of the year, when the harvest is ready, all the girls of the peasants from neighbouring villages gather together and choose the most beautiful one, whom they call *Drăgaica*. They walk together across the crops, decorate her with a crown of spikes, and many colorful kerchiefs [...] the girl who embodied *Drăgaica* can only be married after three years' (1716). Anton Maria del Chiaro, mentions, in Muntenia: 'A few girls will dress as men, and one of them, still in her maiden clothes, holds in her hands a sword and wanders, gathering money, at the houses of boyards [...] That girl is named *Drăgaică*' (1718). While the *Sânziene* have a solar character, connected to Greek gods Dionysos and Apollo, still reminiscing in popular traditions: 'Apollo was coming, in the ancient Greece, from the North Danube, above the clouds, in a chariot with four white or red horses, as Saint Ilie in the glass icons, made by the Romanian peasants' (Gimbutas 1974: 30).

In the popular belief, whoever meets the *Sânziene* can travel up to the skies with them, play and sing in their circle (*hora*), turning wise with foreseeing gift, or knowing the magic song (*cântul măiastru*), given the unending harvest gift (the flour that never ends), dancing continuously, but also can become dumb, crazy, cripple. He is in any case considered as a 'sick person', a kidnapped, a victim, 'one taken by *Rusalii*' (*cel luat de Rusalii*), a '*șoimănit*' in the popular narrations, and this is the 'patient' of the *călușari*, and this is what ideologically sustains the ritual, the ceremonial, the archaic pattern practice of the *cathartic* dance of the *călușari* (Eliade 1997: 103-105. Eliade 5/1973: 115-122). Due to their connection with the fairies (*iele*), the *călușari* were believed to be able to cure the victims of fairies and for around two weeks (between Easter and Pentecost) would travel to all the local communities where they would dance (Eliade, 1975: 160, 161). The *călușari* are seen as healers, to those whose minds were taken by the *rusalii*, with whom they are fighting, thus protecting humans, cattles and crops (Lawson 1953: 6). The *călușari* took the sick person (*șoimănit*) to a crossroad, laid him on the ground and danced around him faster and faster till one of the priests lapsed into a trance (McGlynn 1999). The dramaturgy, on a pattern myth-ritual, anniversary incidence of the *Căluș*, the role of the '*șoimănit*' has a deep meaning in the mythical, experiential, ceremonial-ritual syntax: it is a *social disease*, of a small community, it is an individual disease, but the healing is collective, *communitas* level, thus eliminating the risk (Neagotă & Benga 2011: 121-164). In the narrative-mythical situation, healing means profilaxy, in a magic dramaturgy, but also returning in the same place and time, where the meeting between the human and the world *beyond* took place, which will reverse the meeting effect (id.). We can perhaps read the prescriptions of 'how to not be touched by *Iele*' in a reverse key, we can read how to communicate with them and with

¹ The meaning of the words *Sânziene*, *Drăgaica* overpose: the plant with gold-yellow flowers, *Galium verum*, which blossoms during the period of this ritual; an agrarian popular festival; the girls who dress as *drăgaica*, mean fairies (*iele*).

their dimension, how to accede to the initiation of a controlled contact with them, and to whom it is accessible: as possession trance, or extatic trance induced by the cathartic dance, catalepsy induced by music and narration (id.), this is what *Călușul* is, with its iatric and cathartic values. This calendaristic anniversary, which involves the whole community, is specific to *Căluș* ritual. At that same place, at the same time, the Iele will come again, and will return to the sick person, the qualities that he had before: thus we see the return, the calendar, the cycle as a necessity for the outcome of the narration.

If we look from this perspective, we can also understand why the ritual is being lost in the community intermemory, as the narrations on the *Iele/Șoimane/Milostive* could not be fed – the happenings of everyday life of the communist Romanian village, subject to a violent and acculturating history did not include the magic diseases, and did not require any more the magic healing (id.). As Ginzburg notes, the persistence of the oral traditions referring to temporal journeys to the world beyond is due to the extatic continuity of narrated experiences (1989/1996: 137-138, 249-250). Thus, at the intertextual-diachronic level of narrative and ceremonial transmission of this tradition, a dysfunction perturbed the proliferation of that local heritage, leading to a gradual loss of identity of that community (Neagotă & Benga 2011: 121-164). Thus, the ritual becomes a festival, a show, instead of having augural and profilactic value.

Historical documentation and scholarly perspectives: from folklore to folklorism to intangible cultural heritage

The *Călușari* ritual and dance is extensively mentioned in historical documents, starting with Dimitrie Cantemir (1712-1714 / 1967: 208-210 / 2007), the 17th century musical notations of Ioan Căianu (*Kájoni János*), or Dozsa mentions a festivity given by Sigismund Bathory în 1599 (*Kornis Ilona*, Pesta 1859 in Nicolae, 2005). The foreign diplomats and travelers to the Romanian Provinces mention the dance in their accounts: Anton Maria Del Chiaro describes that, during the Rusalii week, groups of gypsies walk through the fair masked, and with sounding metal at heels (Del Chiaro 1718/1929: 19); Sulzer, an officer in the Austrian army, describes the dance of the *Koloscharentanz* (Odobescu, 1908: 351, Oprișan 1969 : 32-33). In the first regional ethnographic descriptions we find also mentions of the dance of *Călușari*: Frâncu & Candrea 1888, Liuba 1898, Novacoviciu 1902, Popescu-Sângeriu 1898, Rădulescu-Codin & D. Mihalache 1909, Tușescu & P. Danilescu 1908, Cristescu 1910, etc. (vezi Cristea 2008: 13-28). During the period of European Enlightenment and Romanticism, while the Romanian provinces were aspiring to gain their independence, the theories of the Latin origin became important, and this is reflected in connection to *Călușari* in the works of Micu (1792/1848: 55), Bojîncă (1832: 179), Bariț (1882), Braniște (1891: 230) - the *Călușari* is mentioned as an agrarian ritual (Pamfile, 1910: 75) having its origins in the Roman Empire (see for example Petru Maior, cf. Nicolae Iorga, 1901: 238). Another theoretical approach to this ritual was that of the tradition of the *Căluș* related to the magical and religious manifestations from ancient Greece (rites of Rhea's priests, *korybantes*, the magic dance of Demeter's priests, *agyrtai*) and, on the other hand, with *Kabeiroi*'s cult from Samothracia and the Thracian ludic processions named *kolabrismos* (Speranția 1915: 3–53, Iorga 1936: 86). The theories taking into account the origin of the ancient local foundation in an Indo-European common substrate have started from the comparison with similar European traditions, as the weapon dances are certified both in the Western and Balkan countries - and with convergent structural aspects (group structure, clothes and accessories, music and specific choreography) (Vuia 1921–1922; Dunăre 1956; Eliade 1970; Kligman 1981; Giurchescu 2004). The dance has also been associated with the Christian beliefs,

as it was performed during the week before the *Rusalii* - the Christian feast of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, The Pentecost (Heliade-Radulescu 1843, Burada 1975: 54). Sabina Ispas shows that this tradition is inscribed within the tradition of Christian thaumatagic games of mixed origin, judeo-romanian, typical to the first Christian centuries, in syncretism with the war games of those times (Ispas 2003: 148-184, Aldea 2014) in the Eastern Roman Empire, present till the XIIIth c. C.E., while the variations are due to different influences (as in *Morrice Dance* or *Pauliteiros*) (Ispas 2003: 151-152 și 154-155).

The phenomenon of *folklorism*, the performance of folklore, connected to ideologies and politics of different periods and different paradigms dominating the social sciences, marks also the perspectives according to which *Călușari* ritual was framed. The folklorism is considered to be 'a second life of the folklore that has as specific moment the reproduction of the phenomenon [...] out of the contexts in which it appears, normally and in other other goals than the ones it was created for' (Ispas 2003: 40), being perceived as a 'form of idealization by revalorization and reinvention of a selective assumed past' (Kostin 1982, Cuisenier 2005: 92). As 'sub-category of the folklore' (Smidchens 1999: 56) part of the folklore process, folklorism creates new variations (Istenic 2011: 55), being 'a conscious repetition of a folk tradition seen as a symbol of an ethnic, regional or regional culture' (Smidchens 1999: 56). During the communist times, *Călușari* was caught in the propaganda tools, 'the valorization of the peasant dances was dominated by the choreography patterns of Moiseev type, a pattern having the roots in the egalitarian ideology assumed by the Soviets' (Petac 2015). It is to be mentioned that the two types of dance coexist and communicate, the folklore and folklorism ones, as a traditional event can adapt to the social reality (Petac 2015). During the years of communism regime in Romania (1944-1989), the attention of the scientists was especially directed to the choreographic component and due to its spectacular complex choreography; *Căluș* has been intensively promoted as a stage show. However, there have been published studies, which escaping the censorship, have offered precious information with respect to the dynamics of the tradition both in keeping the dominant functions and forms of expressions and also in their transmission (Pop 1970; Pop 1975). Mihai Pop affirms that the show is the last expression of the slow deritualisation of the folk culture elements (on the line *ritual-ceremonial-performance*) (Pop 1999: 203-208), thus pointing out the organic filiation between the 'amateur artistic movement' and folklore (Petac 2015).

The theoretic and field researches of *Căluș/Călușari* ritual gained a new momentum after 1989: Semuc (2001), Ghinoiu 2003, Ispas 2003, Giurchescu (2004), Cristea (2008), Costin (2008), Neagotă & Benga (2011), Kocój (2013), Știucă, 2013, Stoian-Irimie (2020), Petac, Silvestru, 2015, etc. The *Căluș* was included on the list of UNESCO representative intangible heritage in 2005, becoming the country branding emblem. In 2001, a group of Romanian researchers started working on the candidation file for UNESCO: Ioan Opriș, Florin Filip, Ion Ghinoiu, Narcisa Știucă, Doina Ișfănoni, Sanda Larionescu, Dorin Teodorescu, with governmental support, which was admitted on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2005 (patrimoniu.ro). The inclusion on the UNESCO List determined the revival of the ritual in some communities, with a co-existence of folklore and folklorism forms, while dancers are no longer understood as „the famous *Călușari* from X village” but „Romanian folklore ambassadors” and more recently – „representatives of a UNESCO masterpiece” (Știucă 2013).

Conclusion

Călușari is the best documented historically and scholarly of the Romanian musical-choreic rituals. While still practiced in some parts of the country, it became nationally and internationally famous for its vivid choreography and music. It turned into a symbol of Romanian folklore, and a tag of country-branding, with the inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List. This recognition triggered more interest in the dance, as form of folklorism, but also in the alive ritual.

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Re-writing Mythology: Women as Writer and Critic

Archana Gaur
Research Scholar (Ph.D.)
Department of English and Modern European Languages,
University of Lucknow, Lucknow.

Abstract:

This paper aims to foreground the politics of gender, embodiment, myth, and memory through an analysis of rewritings by select Indian women writers. While the scholars of contemporary literature have focused on the economically and politically surcharged re-presentations of women from the past by many women writers, they have overlooked the literary re-writings that were undertaken so concertedly by medieval women. Women rewritings of myths, legends, and history, as a genre and praxis, came into being to challenge the hitherto unprecedented mainstreaming of assumptions about feminism's central tenets which had led to a weakening in the ability of women's writing to unsettle those culturally central texts that have proposed been written under the influence of patriarchy. Contemporary women's re-writings have debunked the myth of 'women' as a monolithic category. Writers like- Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni (born 1956), Trisha Das, Pratibha Ray (born 1943) and Iravati Karve (1905-1970) have evocatively re-written women personae from myths, legends, and history by subverting the phallogentric order and retrieving the silenced/marginalized voices.

This interdisciplinary study (which employs feminist Foucauldian frameworks, theories of embodiment, and affect, among others) aims to analyse how women rewritings influence the recuperation of silenced/marginalized cultural knowledge and thus it endeavours to map out the transformations in the image of women within and without. The study aims to analyse primarily the cultural technologies of memory and their power structures and their fair use within the rewriting. Thus, this paper examines the politics of rewriting by analysing the women writers' re-

moulding Helene Cixous' notion of "écriture feminine" ("feminine writings"), and Elaine Showalter's 'Gynocriticism' (Waugh).

Keywords: Feminism, Cultural Scripts, Mythology, Re-writing.

Rewriting does not simply dictate the past but it re-molds it with each attempt, by getting influenced by the writer's context, experience, memory, and perception. The past and present works together in rewriting and here enters the concept of 'Employment' given by Hayden White, wherein he discusses, when we re-write history, we also rewrite the present by incorporating contemporary values, which lead us to ask new questions and develop new insights. These values, beliefs, questions, and insights guide the research and presentation of that history and thus lead to the creation of new history, which in turn leads to a new understanding of the present. Writers like, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni (born 1956), Trisha Das, Pratibha Ray (born 1943) and Iravati Karve (1905-1970) have evocatively represented woman personae from myths, legends, and history by subverting the phallogentric order and retrieving the silenced/marginalized voices. The Women re-writing culturally historical narratives creates new hopes and visions for the future; therefore, by rewriting history, we also rewrite our future. The study supports this transmission of memory from past to present and future in the form of rewriting.

Etymologically, 'Re-Writing' means writing something again in a different manner or language, where 'Re' stands for again or repetition and 'Writing' stands for putting out in words in the form of written language. Rewriting at the level of individual and collective, constitute remembrance and active role of mind and memory. The system of belief imbibed in our minds and behaviour is what creates the piece of work, and it is the experience of the present that gives those texts a shape. Although one can carry past in the form of practices but is in no way ineffectual of the present. This interplay of ideology and re-writing, assist in the presentation of the memory and imagination through new writings.

The relation between re-writing and memory (as mentioned above) is what extends the discussion to the cognitive level of understanding of narratives- past and present. Besides the

interplay of ideology and re-writing, another important thing that arises with the interaction of the two is 'memory' or more precisely, 'cultural memory'. Thus 'Memory' plays a very important role in 'Writing'; 'Remembering' along with constant 'Forgetting' and 'Imagination' involved in the process of Re-writing.

Many writers have engaged themselves with rewriting (Jeanette Winterson, Margaret Atwood, and Helene Cixous) to challenge the traditional myths in the contemporary era. Within this context, we may wish to recall the practices of translation, glossing, and obfuscation in favour of the retelling of stories from the oral tradition, written down, moreover, in the feminine vernacular, for instance, the rewritings that were undertaken by other medieval women like Marie Corelli, Christine De Pizan, and Julian of Norwich. The concerns of transforming memories in contemporary women's re-writings, therefore, are ones with which the feminist medievalists have long been familiar. Indeed, the range of theoretical frameworks offered by this paper provides exceptionally helpful ways of reconsidering the types and imperatives behind women (re)writing in this modern period too.

The present paper investigates this representation of the memory of the cultural scripts by contemporary writers and the phenomenology of cultural memory associated at individual and group levels. *Yuganta: The End of an Epoch* written by Irawati Karve (1905-1970) carries the characters and story of the epic Mahabharata re-written and reframed in a contemporary voice. The most prominent characters from the epic are discussed at length. The bunch of Male and Female characters is woven in a way to depict the cultural influence and reshapes them with the authorial intention imbibed in every word. Thus, the intentional fallacy takes its ground in every text. Now the question arises, how do we find the reconstructing voice within the text? Although the whole book is a product of Irawati's mind but to map out the re-writing and its effectiveness and relevance we need to find evidence within the text. As we find Irawati Karve commented on her attempt to re-write, in the following words,

By contrast, the next essay, on Kunti, though still including narrative elements, examines textual issues explicitly and includes Karve's own comments on the situation. She is clear about the extent to which women's lives were dictated by

the fathers and husbands, seeing Kunti as an example of a woman who consequently endures only sorrow, while she also remarks at interval through the chapter on Kunti's unbending will (xiii).

This statement carries Irawati Karve's thoughts that are involved in making the reader perceive characters in a completely new light with modern lenses. Thus, a contemporary text with cultural context has its relevant scope from past to present and provides a further vision of the future. The knowledge and power structure existing for a long time and the forces struggling to talk about the silence and the gaps in the representation of women in society and social memory through literary narratives has been taken into great consideration while discussing several mythological re-writing. The purpose and the relevance of discussing the re-writing from the point of view of finding the reason for those gaps that existed between the genders are done to foreground the memory structure and the retrieval that fills up the blank aspects of female self from linguistic space as revolted by feminists to reshape the intentionally fixed gender identities.

Trisha Das, in her book *The Mahabharata Re-Imagined*, maps out the intellectual spaces of the prominent characters from the epic tale of Mahabharata. She has written several books on the similar theme of mythology and folktales. Her book titled, *Miss. Draupadi Kuru* and *Kama's Last Sutra* take their plots from famous epic and historical narratives. Trisha Das as a female writer attempted to portray a wide range of characters (like- Draupadi, Kunti, Amba, Gandhari, Bhishma, Karna, etc..) within the current framework. For Instance, in her famous text *Miss Draupadi Kuru*, we find Draupadi exploring the New Delhi of modern age India, instead of the ancient Kingdom of Hastinapur. Trisha Das has taken her characters from the past, and showcased them in a new setting, and changed periodically. With the strategy of providing old characters - a new setting, the Writer covers the private spaces of all the male and female characters. On one hand, she seems like retelling the similar old traditional story but as soon as we move ahead with the narration, a new contemporary voice of the conventional character is heard through each line.

These texts are examined by mapping out the writers' use of technology of their memory in their rewritings that deal with mythical and cultural past. The analysis of texts taken up for this

paper provides a critical framework for understanding memory as a locus of the evolution and transformation of women's material and experimental lives. In the contemporary context, we find old and new literary pieces constantly re-visited and are still re-visiting cultural past in the form of re-mapping of mythic figures and characters by jotting down cultural imprints from their memory.

Earlier thinkers such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle have a completely different worldview from that of modern writers and thinkers such as Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, and Michael Foucault. Rewriting has been done in varied forms ranging from oral storytelling to print/published circulation of books. These oral tales (preachers), manuscripts, (papyrus and parchment), and published materials were circulated within the limits of the then-existing advancement of resources. Thus, each narrative has its impact on the receptor's psyche in one or another way. As it is a general saying that we are, what we remember from the stories we have heard. It is not just the existence of narratives that matters but their impact on the masses.

Society as a construct could be said to have various levels of distinctions, it is either categorized based on their religious or cultural practices, or some divide it based on- caste, class, colour, or creed. One of such categorical distinctions covers humans to be divided based on their gender or sex and is recognized as-Male and Female. To be born a man or woman in any society is more than just a simple biological fact. It is rather, a biological or physical truth with the social implication, that women constitute a distinctive social group. The female body has always been defined by its traditional set pattern of role fixation. Similarly, it is masculine traits that helped Male hold the role of Master in society, and it is these stereotypical notions that provide support to the dominant power and authority that Men hold over females. It is female gender got degraded in its position from equality to downtrodden. But male, they had been the master, the part of Symbolic system. Jacques Lacan explains the concept of The Symbolic System by emphasizing the ultimate place or authority figure given to Male as a central force. According to M. A. R. Habib, "Lacan effectively reformulates in linguistic terms Freud's account of the Oedipus complex. Freud had posited that the infant's desire for its mother is prohibited by the father, who, threaten the infant with castration complex" (Habib 589). Whereas females are the part that falls out of its periphery. In this Symbolic system, women are always suppressed, as her role is that of a Slave. With the advent of time women has felt this discrimination and has raised voice in the direction of equality.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni (born 1956), through her book *The Palace of Illusions*, tries to keep forward a life that needs readers to understand the issues and perspective of Draupadi, a strong female leads of the ancient mythological narrative Mahabharata. The writer believes in the act of writing as it is an action against forgetting and it helps society generate compassion towards the unknown miseries of women and their gender. Discourse existing in society does not show concern towards the females (and others, considered as inferior to the dominant group), is because there is no authentic information available about the life and story of these marginalized sex. The book moves in a progressive, chronological manner by depicting the story from the birth of Draupadi till her death in her own words and through her mind, and also with an emphasis on prominent scenes related to her personal life that were never narrated by Patriarchal narratives.

The ground on which one can favour feminism is the positive changes that came with the movement out of all discrimination and demeaning of female sex within Patriarchy. We can establish that female rebellion against males to secure a position in society and come out of the pre-proposed cultural narrative model. "It is not the rebellion against the male, but the conventional male" as said by Helene Cixous (French Feminist writer, Founder of the first department of women studies) in her famous feminist essay 'The Laugh of the Medusa', discards the autonomy of male forces of patriarchy and masculine literature running through generations. With the coming of each new age, the stories and knowledge have taken new shapes based on the retrieval of the past by the masses.

Memory, encoding, and decoding of the knowledge by the 'Author' and 'Reader' have always been the central issue of culture as a large portion of culture is served in the form of narratives to generations and through writing author support or negate ideology. Pratibha Ray (born 1943) in her book *Yajnaseni*, makes Draupadi the writer of her story and names her Krishnaa, who passes her views as commentary on social laws and cultural norms that discriminate, male and female. She gives a parallel discussion about Sita (from the epic Ramayana) and her life with her own, to analyse the social setup and its characteristics for a long time. In the book, *Yajnaseni*, male features as the dictator, whose role is to preserve Dharma, by imposing the responsibilities (in name of necessary actions), on the woman to carry it forward. Krishnaa's own life as a girl, daughter, wife, friend, and lover is directed by several male contenders who decided the rules for her conduct. As, famous literary thinker, Louis Althusser

(From 'Ideology and the State' 1969 essay) says, "Ideology is a 'Representation' of the Imaginary Relationship of Individual to their Real Conditions of Existence" (Waugh 55). This subsumes the imaginary and material nature of ideology and the hegemonic forces exercise control on the human subjects through these imaginary and material substances and as a result 'Ideology Interpellated Individuals as Subjects'. Althusser discusses, first, Ideological State Apparatus (Religion, family, education, legal, political, etc., forces that belong to private domain) and Second, Repressive State Apparatus (the forces that belong to the public domain), that fashioned the role of conventional women and thus there has been constantly writing and rewriting done to understand the constructive nature of the ideological Apparatuses working in society and culture as it affected the rights of a major section of the population.

Re-writing in the favour of understanding the phenomenon of memory and portrayal of the ideology in the retrieval of culture must be studied from the perspective of psychological and behavioural aspects. Wherein the existing content needs to be evaluated, if it is still relevant or if the changes that are demanded under the forces of changing time (such as feminism and gender study) are for the right cause, and if it is the requirement for the age to change ideologies. Why is it that since the time of the very first writing done by a female writer in favour of equality to their 'Gender' is still not able to get the ground of liberalism? Till the time people attain perfect equilibrium the re-writing and re-shaping of old narratives will continue as the pen helps the suppressed class to present their reality and sensitize the dominant class of males towards female misery of being treated as secondary at family, workplace, education, and has less representation when compared to men.

Going through each aspect of re-writing myths the questions that could be faced is like - Why is the topic of mythological studies, still relevant and taken as a matter of discourse? Does it help anyway in changing the ideal way of living? Does the writer propose any shortcomings, or the advantage of the narratives based on the contemporary requirements? Even the contemporary writings are a portrayal of hegemonic forces that supports the tendency of patriarchy that failed to respect women as equals and so every story written takes its source from the past and thus leads to normative functioning of the literature and society. Feminism is still a movement that is trying hard to establish its new normative ground of repetitive portrayal of changing ideals that takes women out of the clutches of unfair masculine control. The re-writing by women gives women the power of language and word and so she makes herself a creator of

her fortune. With the same language, she re-creates the past that kept her away from all articulations and now she has language, and she can speak for herself, keeping in mind that she first needs to detach herself from all ideological forces that could limit her writing.

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Literature

An Ecocritical Reading of Lal Behari Dey's

Folk Tales of Bengal

Moumita Roy

Jamia Milia Islamia University, New Delhi

Abstract

Ecocriticism reflects a discourse that began in the twentieth century as a theory, also known as green literature in the western academics. However, ecocritical praxis in India writings dates back as early as the ancient Upanishads. Indian school of critical thought has embraced the sublime and the sustainable, the connection between human and physical environment through themes of morality and ethical philosophy. Hence, in the wake of this interdisciplinary discourse, it is significant to do green reading of Indian indigenous writings. This paper is an attempt to study ecological themes and treatment of the subject in a collection of Bengali folktales by Lal Behari Dey that was published in 1883 as an anthology written in English. This is an attempt to contemplate ecocritical representation in folklore literature of India and how folklore incorporates climatology, oceanography and land ecospace through simple oral transmission of tales. This provides a unique perspective towards human and environmental cultural experience, in indigenous agrarian society of the third world. A few select stories which are relevant for discussing the man vs environment's tussle and man's experience in the all-encompassing vast environment has been taken as a matter of discussion from this voluminous collection splendidly illustrated by Warwick Goble.

Key Words: Ecocriticism, discourse, Folktales of Bengal, praxis, environment

Introduction

Environment as an area of concern has risen over the past few years. With growing concerns of sustainable development, judicious living, and harmony with natural elements for a healthier lifestyle has brought humanities and environmental studies closer. My paper was inspired from reading Katherine Adler's thesis on the study of ecocriticism in German fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm. I was encouraged to search for a collection of fairy tales in India that has worked closely with ecocriticism even before the term was brought to mainstream studies. Ecocriticism which is understood as post structuralist approach to human interpretation of the environment, and how man and nature, culture and nature, reciprocate each other. The significant tropes and myths that shape our understanding of the environment around us were embedded in fairy tales, children's story for the purpose of emphasizing on moral values. Western writers believe that eco-critical consciousness has evolved out of a need to study western nonfiction on nature. However, in Indian consciousness, eco-critical writings have evolved since the days of Kalidasa. Vaikanasha warns King Dushyanta to not kill the deer in *Shakuntala* :

"King this is a hermitage deer. You should not-you must not kill it! Indeed, indeed no missile should be shot, scorching like a flame through velvet petals, this young fawn's tender head."
(Act I)

Lawrence Buell's study *The Future of Environmental Criticism* is a crucial critical work that interrogates sustainability of the planet for most organisms and how the environment as a place is crucial for both aesthetic purpose as well as lived experience. Similar questions of existential crisis have been probed by Dipesh Chakrabarty on "the finitude of humanity" by thought experimenting a "future without us". Eco-critical thinking is essentially inbuilt in the Indian consciousness ever since ancient times. The integral interdependence of man with nature for its agrarian based society in India has inspired nature and natural writing style among authors. Some pioneering writers are Anita Desai, Raja Rao, R K Narayan, Manohar Malgonkar,

Kamala Markandaya, and Amitav Ghosh. However, this paper focuses on Reverend Lal Behari Dey's anthologized oral folktales of Bengal published in 1833, and its closely knit connections with ecology and environmental themes. A major concern for this paper is how natural elements form an essential trope for Bengali folklore and how the indigenous culture of Bengal reflects an eco-conscious lived experience.

Lal Behari Dey's conversion into Christianity failed to disassociate him from the Hind culture that he had been raised in. The folklores in this anthology are more attuned to ecology and natural elements as are many folktales of Indian written before this, ideally a green reading of the Panchatantra shows the many environmental tropes, the birds and the beasts of indigenous to India.

In the story *Life's Secret* Prince Dalim Kumar's life is forever bound to the life of a boal fish and should someone take away the necklace that is hidden away in a wooden box in the boalfish, Dalim Kumar's death is certain. His stepmother, the Suo queen, manages to steal the necklace and cause a spell of eternal death to Dalim. His body lay in a garden house, but accidentally he would revive every night when his stepmother put away the necklace and fell dead the next morning. The study of ecocriticism concerns itself primarily with the connection between human culture and the physical world. The human experience is not bereft of nature but rather an intrinsic part of it. William Cronon comments that "human acts occur within a network of relationship, processes and systems that are ecological as they are cultural." Fertility and death are tropes that are duly associated with nature in Indian culture. Just as Medusa's head was severed by Perseus, the king's son and the minister's son in the story *Pakhshiraj* encounters a demon serpent with a crown jewel or 'manikya' and frees an ethereal princess. This magical cohort, with lush green landscapes and fairy tale bowers, in an Eden like state where they fabricate the death of a snake, snatch the jewel, and win a princess is a representation of man's unquenchable thirst to conquer nature and natural wealth. But with every acquisition of natural wealth comes a price. This trope has been invested even in ancient Upanishads as ethical concern; environmental justice is demanded against the brunt of civil exploitation. However, an interesting thing to note would be that the snake is not killed or beheaded by the two characters in the story *Pakhshiraj*, unlike in Greek mythologies, because in Indian culture the snake is symbolic of Vasuki who in Indian mythology is revered and worshipped as wish master. This preservative approach towards natural elements is almost always entwined with religion or

mythologies in India. In the story *Pakhshiraj*, the author has described an aquatic adventure into a palace brimming with abundant flora and fauna indigenous to Indian ecosphere “the rose with its many varieties, the jessamine, the bel, the mallika , the king of smells , the lily of the valley, the champaka” . The marriage of the king’s son and this princess in the underworld is a union of natural physical elements to that of human culture. However, this union is soon wrecked by the greed of Phakir’s mother who captures this water nymph princess at the behest of the Rajah. The immense greed of human possession that disturbs the “prakriti”, the abundant all-giving nature, is carefully treated, in Lal Behari Dey’s stories.

The Story of Sweet-Basanta brilliantly entails a typical Bengali folklore with tropes of greed, lust, love and magical natural elements. A woman is born out of a *toontoon* bird, marries a Brahman and gives birth to two boys. The element of magic in Bengali folklore is always born out of nature and natural elements, suggesting ecological consciousness and close-knit connection with the environment. The two brothers Swet and Basanta are introduced to an extraordinary fish consumption which they start to spew *maniks* or jewels when they laugh and pearls when they cry. However, these magical adventures in the folklores have an entailing misadventure that suggests that unethical appropriation of ecology comes with terrible consequences. Such moral interruptions in this folklore are an awareness towards sustainable living. In this story, the brother Basanta is captured by a merchant ship, tied to a post and “alternatively whipped and tickled all day” while his brother Swet is escorted by an elephant to become a king, the wife of Basanta is separated from her child in this misadventure and her grief knows no bound. Perhaps an old trope of *karma* from Indian school of ancient ethical thinking that believes natural elements to be preserved and avarice must be controlled.

Conclusion

A significant amount of folklore literature is anthropocentric in nature, that is human consideration and human experience on land is given utmost importance. However, Lal Behari Dey’s anthology creates a space for both aquatic eco-culture as well as land ecology. Mentz’s apprehension that sustainability rhetoric demands ‘land’ and ‘humans’ to be the center of discussion and often rejects oceanography or blue environment. It has been dealt with subtlety and in these folklores. Man, and environment, including aquatic space and marine life has been

addressed to in detail. Lal Behari Dey’s collection with its amusing illustrations is not a “fantasy pastoral” demanding a “happy stable relation between human beings and non-human environment” (Mentz), it is rather critical of this continuous tussle between man and environment through an exceptional storytelling with fairy-tale themes. Lal Behari Dey’s collection is as much a potential specimen for green reading as it is for understanding culture.

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Islamophobia in the U.S. Post The 9/11 Attack as Featured in the Bollywood Movie: *New York* (2009)

Saloni Malhotra

Abstract

Is Islamophobia higher in the American and European States? Are Muslim immigrants in these states often threatened by? Are these immigrants mistreated and detained and imprisoned on mere suspect basis of having a Muslim surname? How do movies cover the social exclusion of the Muslim communities in these states? These questions need some thoughtful research in the academic studies; henceforth, this paper will utilize the qualitative research method to study and probe into the issue of Islamophobia specifically in the United States after the 9/11 attack as shown in the Bollywood movie *New York* (2009). Islamophobia is also relatable to a much larger issue active worldwide, that is of color, aka Racism which is strengthening the innate and unchangeable negative characteristics attached to the Muslim community. By retrieving narrative data, dialogues, expressions and scenes from the film, this paper shall capture an insight into the sudden upturned lives of Muslims as well as Southeast Asian and even middle Eastern communities given to the events of 9/11 attack. It is also an attempt to add to the already existing research in the matter of racism in general.

Keywords: Islamophobia, 9/11 attack, global terrorism, representation

Introduction

Edward Said talked extensively about Orientalism (Said, 1978), which is, the misrepresentation of the Muslim community by the West by ways of attaching negative characteristics to them and displaying the same in their literary as well as visual texts. This leads to a highly misunderstood understanding of the Muslims as well as the Middle Eastern natives. It is a cause which leads to a direct effect on the minds of people worldwide as they gravely fear any or every person belonging to the Muslim religion or have a name that is evidently Islamic. This intense discrimination and fear of the Islamic culture and people belonging to the same is called Islamophobia. Islamophobia is also relatable to a much larger issue active worldwide: *Racism*,

which is about strengthening the innate and unchangeable negative characteristics attached to the Muslim community. Therefore, I would like to hypothesize that the Bollywood movie *New York* efficiently displays vilification of Muslims and incidents of Islamophobia in the U.S. after the 9/11 attack. By retrieving narrative data, dialogues, expressions and scenes from the Hindi film *New York*, this paper shall capture an insight particularly into the sudden upturned lives of Muslims as well as Southeast Asian and even middle Eastern communities in the United States given to the events of 9/11 attack.

Rationale

It is through Said's Orientalism that we understand as to how the West look upon and debate about Islam that has shaped the social attitudes and behaviours of people in terms of the way they treat people from this religion. Similarly, several thousands of Indians, Muslims or Middle Eastern natives were known to have been abducted and detained on random suspect basis in the United States post the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers. Eventually, however, it was ineffective in curtailing terrorism, because none of the registered people were found to hold any relation to terrorism. By specifically analyzing the Bollywood Movie – *New York*, that released in 2009, which I believe, has very effectively and relevantly showcased this scenario, I also believe that it brings back the colonial standards of life for this section of society even during the post-colonial period.

Literature Review

There are few critical studies done that contrast the aim of the study to some extent. Previous research concerning Islamophobia suggests that Muslims are being stigmatized as very negative since 9/11 through Bollywood movies. With the passage of time, these movies have started to misrepresent Muslims, in a severe manner as well as to a large extent. This kind of undesired portrayal of Muslims in these movies has risen sharply since the Twin Tower attack of 9/11 as well as the Mumbai 26/11 attack. Currently, Bollywood constantly portrays non-Indian Muslims and sometimes Indian Muslims adverse to society. To many extent Muslims are being portrayed as disloyal, adverse, cruel, evil, terrorist, distrustful and anti-national sort of person (Zafar 97). The compiled findings of the study reveal that 24.66% Muslim characters are positively

represented, 31.81% are neutral and 43.23% are negatively portrayed. The results indicate that Bollywood aims to misrepresent the image of Islam not only in India but across the world.

Nevertheless, previous research also states that plenty of national as well as international conferences along with publications are held and released which discuss the prominent approaches to Islamophobia (Hafez et al. 210). Few reports from the convention claim that some speakers linked the origin of Islamophobia with the ‘white supremacy’ (Elman et al. 144). All three of these aspects are related and interdependent and endure what is known as “Orientalism”. In *Orientalism*, Said predominantly analyses the eighteenth-century academic writing where “the West” has given anyone who reads such works a particular and supposedly “objective” view of the Middle East, North Africa (the near Orient) and Asia (the far Orient). Another study also claims that anti-Islamic bigotry differs from anti-Muslim racism, which indicate that all the negative features and connotation attached to the Muslim community are unchangeable. It is argued that modern Islamophobic political angle in Europe is particularly racist, despite that it gets covered behind the anti-Muslim bigotry.

In her research base book *Behind the Backlash: Muslim Americans after 9/11*, author “Lori Peek has studied the stereotypes, stigmas, and discrimination against Muslims, Islam religion and its many peaceful followers, including Arabs and Middle Eastern which became full blown.” Peek's work has successfully voiced the stories and voices of 120 Muslim American citizens, bringing into forefront their brutal experiences of navigating the tension and difficulties they experienced in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the U.S. (Peek)

Methodology

The analysis has been conducted by doing qualitative analysis which has been done by watching the movie several times and targeting specific relevant scenes from the movie in order to interpret the text with the context it is in. Since the aim of this study is to find out the elements of Islamophobia in the movie *New York*, a qualitative discourse analysis has been selected as the most suitable for the study's aim. For a large number of studies in the field of media, the media language analysis can make a substantial impact. This language analysis includes three main aspects: the social identity constructions, certain constructions of social relations, and the certain ways of representing the world for example, gender (Fairclough et al. 73). Since the aim of this

study is to analyse movies, the only source of data remains the movies itself because this thesis applies a qualitative research framework. When discussing the results, a detailed description to discuss the relevant dialogues, characters, scenes, arguments related to the gender discourse is done.

Analysis

The movie begins with ‘Omar’ (Neil Nitin Mukesh) to who ‘Roshan’ (Irrfan Khan,) who is an FBI agent, finds and brings to custody, and forces him to stalk another suspect and a friend of ‘Omar: ‘Sameer’ (John Abraham), who is thought to be a terrorist. As ‘Omar’ begins to recall his relationship with ‘Sameer’, which began nine years earlier, he introspects on how their lives got changed after 9/11. When ‘Omar’ agrees to become an FBI spy, he understands that this is not the first time ‘Sameer’ has been targeted by the government. ‘Sameer’ is detained by the FBI just 10 days after the Twin Tower attack for being a terrorist without evidence. Omar eventually finds that ‘Sameer’ belongs to a terrorist group who are soon to target New York but Sameer reveals how circumstances after 9/11 forced him to become a terrorist which have been displayed in dark scenes from the time when ‘Omar’ was put in jail under detention without evidence and severely tortured. The film has displayed the cruelties of how he and his fellow prisoners from similar communities are miserably tortured behind the bars. On finally getting released, ‘Sameer’ is seen to undergo the aftereffects of the torture, that is, struggling with symptoms of PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). His wife ‘Maya’ (Katrina Kaif), also one of the three friends in college takes care of him and gives him all the love and healing, however, the scars are too deep for him to be the same person.

To begin with, the way in which ‘Omar’ is taken into custody, interrogated and forced to spy on ‘Sameer’, shows stark vilification of Muslim and Indian origin people living in the U.S. Secondly, despite ‘Sameer’ being eventually released due to lack of evidence, the mental impact of being detained and tortured had permanently changed him where he is seen to exhibit symptoms of PTSD. It is manifested in ways which seem difficult to understand for those around him, leaving him with feelings of deep resentment towards the FBI.

Now, Rutgers Center for Security, Race and Rights has claimed that about more than 150 Muslim human rights cases were filed across the U.S. since 2001 where merely eight percent of

them made it to the trial. Yet, most of the cases were terminated by judges in the pre-trial phase itself. Muslims have not only experienced more discrimination since 2001, also, they have not been able to find justice in the courts. While most of the civil rights violations barely get proceeded, the success rate of those which do also remains dreadfully less (Aziz).

As far as few dialogues and scenes from the film are concerned, ‘Omar’ is seen to have spoken “They are behind us because of our colour” which evidently displays the injustice against them based on colour towards Browns in the US. Furthermore, there are illustrations and scenes where ‘Sameer’ is shown being tortured in jail along with his fellow so-called ‘suspected terrorists’. There are brutal defamation scenes wherein these suspects are being urinated upon and beaten to death. Later, ‘Maya’ is also seen to be working as a Human Rights Activist wherein she interviews such similar encounters with other Brown men and women who recall similar brutalities while under detention. Another such case interrogation is done where the character ‘Zilgai’ (Nawazuddin Siddiqui) is giving his statement and fighting against the discrimination. He is later seen to have committed suicide post his outbreak of frustration while being overly questioned by an officer.

Conclusion

Muslims in a post 9/11 America will remain to be a subject of discussion and remembered as one of the most discriminatory post-colonial periods. Of note, despite not being a real-incident film, the scenes and series of events from *New York* are quite close to the harsh reality of what happened with the Muslims for at least 3 years in the U.S. after the 9/11 attack where thousands of Muslim innocents were detained without evidence on the suspect of being a terrorist. There is no doubt that historical colonial dynamics are reproduced in contemporary postcolonial environments when we look at texts showing such incidents. There is plenty of research done to bring the problem of Islamophobia in limelight, one of the reasons of which is Orientalism by Edward Said. My research paper aims to contribute to the field in academic studies. Having said that, it does not guarantee fully capture the scenario of discrimination that persists in the world even today against Muslim communities. There is scope for further research by looking at a lot of actual data and quantitatively analysing the same.

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Understanding the History and the Continuous Resurgence of the Gorkhaland Movement

Arpeeta Sharma

PhD Scholar

Centre of Women Studies, University of Hyderabad

Abstract

The demand for Gorkhaland, which includes the region of Darjeeling and its adjoining areas, is a demand for a separate statehood within the Indian nation. The demand started with a call for a separate administration for the region has evolved into a demand for a separate state within the nation. The present paper intends to historicize the movement, specifically focusing on the 1986 and 2007 phase, which witnessed not only change in power in the region but also became a landmark in terms of the mass mobilization. The paper also explores the existing state-region discourse on the demand. The discussion concludes with the recent resurgence of the demand in 2017 and tries to understand the reasons behind the continuous resurgence of the demand. This paper draws its data from various sources like archival sources, movement literature and news articles. These diverse sources enable a structured reading of the movement history and its continuous resurgence.

Keywords– Identity, Movement, Region, Centre-Periphery and Resurgence

1.1 Introduction

The demand for Gorkhaland is the formation of a separate state for the Nepali speaking population within the Indian nation. While the history of the demand for separation can be traced from colonial period, the demand has undergone transformation from one of administrative separation to statehood formation (*Why Gorkhaland*, 2009). The two aspects that has remained consistent in this demand is the separation from Bengali dominance and the need to remain an integral part of the Indian nation. The desire for latter is visible in the formation of the *Indian Gorkha* identity. This identity performed two functions, first, it severed its migrant history with Nepal, which has been used to discredit the demand and question the loyalty of the community and the second is to further cement the community's ties to the nation through the rich martial history of the Gorkhas in the Indian Army.

In 2017 the state of West Bengal made the Bengali language mandatory for schools all over the state. This led to a massive protest by the Nepali speaking population residing in the region of Darjeeling and its surrounding areas. As the dominant language in the region is Nepali, the residents viewed this forceful implementation as a means to further marginalize the community. This protest became the catalyst of the 2017 resurgence of the Gorkhaland movement.

The present paper focuses on the brief history of the movement, specifically looks at three instances of assertion that has had an impact on the history of the demand. While the demand for Gorkhaland found its strong impact in the 1986 under Subhash Ghisingh and his party Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF), and its massive resurgence in 2007 under the leadership of Bimal Gurung and his party Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM), echoed the anxiety and the need for assertion. Similarly, its resurgence in 2017 further clarified that the anxiety of the community was still present. Therefore, the paper intends to historicize the movement through the existing literature from the perspective of the state and the people, its reasons and how the issue of identity still exists.

1.2 Reading Histories: State Vs the Gorkhaland Movement

An official document published in 1987 by the Government of West Bengal can be interpreted as the State's response to the Movement. The document was published twice in the course of the 1986 movement. One of the main reasons for the continuous focus on the 1986 movement can be read in terms of the change in the perception of the region. The second document published by

the government is a kind of 'follow up' on the situation in the Hills and the stand of the State Government after the agitation. The document includes an analysis of the movement and the GNLf by the State Government. The discussion of the issue between the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister and the stance of the State Government on the question of Gorkhaland are also looked into.

Critically analysing these State generated documents, although the promises made by the state ensured a better future for the people in the Hills, the 2007 movement proves otherwise. One can compare the proposed changes in the official documents to what has happened in reality.

As the State took a survey of the 'aftermath' of the movement in the Hills, it provides a detailed description of all the statistical and social changes that have come as a result of the movement. While the industry (Tea and Tourism) of the Hills, which largely contributes to the State's economy, was greatly affected by the movement; there were many ethnic groups who were unable to identify with the 'Gorkha' identity and hence resisted it. What becomes increasingly clear here is the State's need to draw an image of the movement as one which was led by power hungry mongers. The movement is depicted as one which only catered to a select few while the majority was left in a state of poverty. The plight of the tea plantation workers is focused to defend their statement. The closing of the plantations during the agitation took away the livelihood of all these workers. However, according to Mona Chettri in *Choosing the Gorkha: At the Crossroads of Class and Ethnicity in the Darjeeling Hills*(2013), the tea plantations were a major site of political turmoil. She traces the political history of the tea plantations parallel to the assertions of cultural identity taking place outside it. The 1986 movement saw the tea plantations emerging as a major site for enlisting supporters of the movement.

Chettri further elaborates that the education brought in by the missionaries was accessible only to the urban dwellers, while those in the tea plantations were more occupied with sustaining themselves. The argument made by the State on the loss of the daily wages of the tea plantation workers due to the movement can be read through Chettri's analysis of the wage conditions of these workers. The closing of the plantations which were privately owned, and other State controlled industries with the workers receiving wages below the fixed rate, incurred heavy losses for the State rather than the workers.

L.S.S. O'Malley's *The Bengal District Gazetteers: Darjeeling* (1907) was one of the first informative documents about the region and its people. It was this text that was used, by the state to establish the migrant history of the inhabitants, in its official document. T.B. Subba's *The Gorkhaland Movement and the Human Rights Violation in India* (2010) focuses on the human rights violations that took place during the 1986 movement. He brings out his personal experiences by narrating how his family was treated by the police. Therefore, while officially there were many cases of attacks on the Police, the atrocities on the general public by the forces cannot be overlooked. It may be said that the attacks on the forces were in retaliation against the violation and violence meted out to the people.

The relation between the State Government and the GNLFF is read as a fight between forces of national integration and those of disintegration. It has tried to show the factions within the party and how they were motivated for their own gain. Ghisingh's call to the fellow Nepalis to support the movement is looked upon as a call with an anti-national undertone. As a result, the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) was set up after the Tripartite talk. However, the regional autonomy of Darjeeling under the larger West Bengal administrative setup was still unaccepted, resulting in the 2007 phase of the movement.

The dominant discourse on the Gorkhaland movement, as cited by the state, has been as a threat to national unity. When one begins to trace the origins of this argument, we are able to read its emergence during the 1986 phase of the movement when the state strongly opposed the demand and equated it with the secessionist movements like *Khalistan*. An official document published by the state of West Bengal in 1986, as a response to the movement, states "Following the sequence of events in Darjeeling over the past few months, can one not link it with the agitations for Khalistan and independent Assam, Tribal Tripura, and Mizoram, Jharkhand, Kamtapuri, Uttarakhand and similar other movements?" (Government of West Bengal, 1986: 30)

In the above statement, an equating of demands of statehood with those of complete separation is witnessed. This forceful similarity blurs the line of the objective behind each demand. We can see the aftermath of this accusation even now as the demand is often referred to as a threat to national unity due to the region's proximity to Nepal and its shared history. While there were similarities in terms of the anxiety resulting from marginalization, the demand of Gorkhaland,

since its inception, has been a demand for a state within the Indian nation. Even the term ‘Indian Gorkha’, symbolises this intent.

1.3 Brief History of the Demand

The history of the formation of the region began with the British annexation in 1835. As per the 2009 booklet published by the Gorkha JanmuktiMorcha (GJM), *Why Gorkhaland*, the region, though was a part of the Bengal presidency, was always kept away from the Bengal judiciary by the British government. Even with these arrangements, the people belonging to the region demanded for separation from the Bengal presidency. The GJM traces the demand of separation from the colonial period to add emphasise to the long struggle that the people have undergone. It is crucial to note these demands as they focus on the unease and anxiety developing amongst the populace of the region. Townsend Middleton’s *Anxious Belongings: Anxiety and the Politics of Belonging in Subnationalist Darjeeling* (2013) refers to it as the ‘anxious belonging’ that continues to grip the community. The necessity to establish the historicity of the demand not only shows the need to establish a separate identity for themselves and move away from Bengali dominance, but also to prove the existence of the community since the colonial period. Even though the Constitution of India dictates that those who resided in India during Independence were its legal citizens, the fact that the community continues its demand sheds light on the apprehension and alienation still existing in the minds of the populace.

Middleton traces the origin of this anxiety from the colonial period when immigration first started. With the British providing opportunities for the Nepali migrants, they did not make this community British-Indian subjects. He argues that the demand for the state stems from the ‘illegal’ status that the community still has to contend with. He mentions that her respondents were annoyed, during his fieldwork, when he asked them about their migrant history

Historically, the status of the community has been a precarious one. As T.B. Subba in *Ethnicity, State and Development: A Case Study of the Gorkhaland Movement in Darjeeling* (1992) and Middleton (2013) point out, the loyalty of the community was questioned after Independence. The fact that the Gorkhas were instrumental in quelling the 1857 mutiny invoked a sense of distrust amongst the general population towards the community. There were letters urging the Gorkhas to join the nationalist movement, demanding that “...the Gorkhas too should rectify

their mistake and help India” (Middleton, 2013: 613). As mentioned before, the community also faced expulsion from the North-east parts of the nation and Bhutan. Middleton mentions how India refused to provide shelter to the Bhutanese-Nepali refugees. These people were led back to Nepal through Darjeeling. The psychological impact of the fear plaguing the inhabitants of Darjeeling can only be imagined. Therefore, the questioning of these elements, of their loyalty and legality in the nation, added to their fear, leading to the assertion of their belongingness.

The post-independence era saw the re-emergence of the demand, the nation became independent but “...the area once again became a colony ruled by new masters” (*Why Gorkhaland*, 2009: 3). The demand remained the same but was taken up by a new political organization. In 1952, the All-India Gorkha League (AIGL) submitted a memorandum demanding for separation and in 1955, there was a demand for the formation of a new state comprising Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, and Coochbehar Districts. The demand continued to re-surface in 1968, 1981, 1983, 1986, 1998, 1999 and 2005 before the second phase of the movement began. There were new political organizations like the Pranta Parishad and GNLF which took it upon themselves to demand for separation.

The language movement in the region became a landmark moment in the struggle for recognition. The acceptance of the Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule as an Indian language was viewed as gaining a step closer to the acknowledgement of the belongingness of the community. Again, the proponents of this movement belonged to the educated section who believed that language inclusion would lead them to the goal of recognition. The contestation around the name of the language is also crucial to understand the struggle for identity. Ghisingh believed that the language should be called Gorkhali as opposed to Nepali. The realization of this demand came in 1992, but the name of the language remained Nepali.

1.4 The Gorkhaland Movement of 1986

In 1986, the demand for separation took a new turn when Subhash Ghisingh established his party, GNLF. The demand which had seen different manifestations in the region now witnessed a growing resentment amongst the inhabitants towards the state. The call made by Ghisingh soon became one of the most violent phases in the history of the region. This change in their image became crucial as there began a change in the general perception towards the community. For the

inhabitants of the region, this move made the community a strong warrior group and for the state, the community became a threat. This change in their image from being docile to ‘militant’ reshaped the history of the movement.

In Kalimpong's Untold Story (2007), Janice Mukhia refers to the events of Kalimpong massacre as a reflection of the situation in the region during the 1986 movement. The day that is being written about is the 27th of July 1986. This incident was also captured in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006). The town of Kalimpong was the centre of this event. The author reminisces about this as the day when there was to be a peaceful march in the town for the demand of Gorkhaland. The people had come together dressed in their best attires to participate. The author recounts how the people were unaware of the army personnel surrounding the areas. It was then that the firing took place, which resulted in the mass killing of the people. The author retells this event to remind the people of ‘our story’. The peace protest that was to take place on that day became an event of carnage. This event, therefore, transcends the protest rally and becomes etched in history when the call of ‘our maato’ (our land) resounded everywhere.

The 1986 phase was considered a milestone in the demand for statehood. Ghisingh became an icon and the face of the movement. His defiance of the state made him a threat to the ruling Bengali Government. The fact that the state published statements detailing how the demand was unconstitutional, rendering the movement a threat to the nation's unity shows the change in the attitude of the state towards the region. The enforcement of Section 144 and the militarization of the region began a new chapter of incarceration, death, and turmoil in the history of the region. This history culminated in the formation of the DGHC, an autonomous hill council, in 1988.

“Why the name Gorkhaland? ... only the ethnic name of any place or any land... can germinate the real sense of belonging in the conscience of the concerned people” (Middleton, 2013: 611). The above statement was made by Ghisingh when asked why he named this imagined state as Gorkhaland. The state government, in retaliation, published an official document dismissing the claim and calling Ghisingh and the demand anti-national. Ghisingh dismissed the accusation and remarked, “for, weren't we just longing to be called Indians?”(Middleton, 2013: 614) In another interview, he remarked that the then Prime Minister Morarji Desai had “described us as foreigners and said we were welcome to go back to Nepal... But if there is Gorkhaland then our

identity as Indian belonging to the Indian state, will be clear” (Middleton, 2013: 614). Middleton (2013) reads these retorts along the trajectory of Ghisingh’s politics and argues that “Ghisingh and the GNLF were not just summoning a history of anxious belonging, they were also producing it” (Middleton, 2013: 614).

The troubled existence of the community with its migrant roots has always been used to argue the demand of separation. The tag of foreigners has always haunted the Nepali-speaking populace of the nation. Therefore, Middleton argues that this fear, or as she refers to it ‘anxiety’, was used by Ghisingh through his rhetoric against the 1950 peace treaty. He used the treaty to portray the ambiguous position the community held. He added that, in order to cement their position, the treaty had to be re-addressed. Ashlesha Rai in *Women in Gorkhaland Movement: A Sociological Study* (2015) reiterates the 1986 phase as the second phase of the demand, as she categorises the smaller separation demands before this as the first. Ghisingh had demanded for the scraping of Article VII of the 1950 treaty as it allowed the citizens of both countries, ‘reciprocal privileges’. This permission added to the existing alienation felt by the Indian Gorkha community, as the line of distinction between ‘us’ (Indian Gorkha) and ‘them’ (Nepalese) began to blur. Even though legally they were citizens of the nation, the fact that the people went on to support him, in one of the most turbulent and violent phases, shows how deep this fear runs. It should also be remembered that it was around this time that the expulsion of the community from various regions of the Northeast began.

Ashlesha Rai (2015) divides the 1986 movement into three phases- first, the clashes within the party, which resulted in high casualty rates; second, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)) retaliation wherein measures were taken to counter the movement through violence; and third, the deployment of armed forces by the state to quell the movement and counter the attacks of GNLF on government offices. In 1988, Ghisingh agreed to the formation of DGHC within West Bengal, which reportedly disappointed some of his supporters. Interestingly, Ghisingh took a backward step towards the end of his reign, almost before the 2007 phase began, when he began campaigning for the Sixth Schedule. He had earlier dismissed taking on a tribal identity stating that “...We are civilized. Look at me, I wear a three-piece suit and shoes!”(Middleton, 2013: 615). While 1986 saw large scale participation from the hills, a similar

rise was seen in 2007, where the existing party, the GNLF, was overthrown by the GJM and the demand for Gorkhaland was resurrected.

1.5 The Gorkhaland Movement of 2007

“The Awakening of the Sleeping Giant” (Upendra, 2008) is a depiction of how the people of the region felt about the re-awakening of the demand for a separate state. While the author has mostly written about his emotions regarding this resurrection, they are seen as resounding in almost all the participants of the movement. The writer recalls how a CPI (M) party member reacted to the question of the demand. He felt that the demand was unfair as the government of West Bengal had always provided for the people of the region. While the government has always provided for the region, it has always been subject to the approval of the government, not its people. The government developed the region for promoting it as a holiday destination. Any development that has occurred has been on the basis of maintaining this image of the hills. Therefore, the region has faced a kind of cultural ghettoization where, in the name of development, the government, and by extension, the Bengali hegemony has been naturalised and the people of the region have been acculturated into this image. Hence, the demand for a separate statehood is seen as an aberration as, according to the state, development is taking place; but this constricted form of development does not accommodate the aspiration of the people of the region. The writer, therefore, looks at this awakening as the dawn of a new era where the people will fight for their assertion. He adds that some of the participants of the 2007 movement have selflessly acted for the greater good. He looks at the present movement as a way through which the people have become united, striving towards a single goal.

The momentous victory of Prashant Tamang in the Indian reality shows Indian Idol in 2007, was hailed by the hills not only as a victory of the Nepali-speaking population of the country, but also as a means through which the community was gaining mainstream recognition. “For one shining moment, a marginalised minority historically discriminated against as “outsiders” and “foreigners” assumed its place at the centre of the national imagination” (Middleton, 2013). Two

instances happened that changed this jubilation to anger and resentment. First, Tamang sang a Nepali song, *Bir Gorkhaliby* the Darjeeling band *Mantra*, glorifying the strength of the Gorkhas, after which he was crowned the winner, and the second was the remark made by a Radio Jockey (RJ) building on the caricature of the *bahadur* or the Gorkha guard, which resumed the discussion on Gorkhaland at the national level. Ghisingh had already ruled over the region for more than a decade without bringing any change in the situation, and his recent stint of demanding Sixth Schedule status for the region was heavily criticized.

The comment made by the Radio Jockey (RJ) became a turning point in the history of the region as it paved the way for the resurgence of the demand of statehood. There was a massive protest on the streets of Siliguri, resulting in a struggle between the protestors and some Bengali outfits, who were against the demand. This led to the deployment of the central forces. The Indian reality show that Tamang won faced strong criticism for dressing him as a *bahadur* for the re-enactment of a song. The song was picturized based on the actor who was also dressed as a ‘Gorkha guard’. The RJ further added that “All momo (dumpling) shops will remain closed as the Nepali guy has become Indian Idol” (Middleton, 2013: 616). Both these comments re-enforced the modes used to marginalise the community.

One indeed begins to question what position the community occupies in the social structure of the nation. The mainstream media has often highlighted the community in terms of its occupations, which has also become its identity marker. The contestation between the two terms Nepali and Gorkha, where the latter has been adopted by the leaders of the movement, also has strong connections to the marginalization faced by the community. Both the terms have been misrepresented by the mainstream media and have led to the further alienation of the community.

The rise of Bimal Gurung, who was a close associate of Ghisingh and led the Prashant Tamang fan club in the region, and his party GJM initiated the demand for statehood in 2007. Gurung stirred the discussion against the leadership of Ghisingh and formed the new narrative of the movement, which would follow the non-violent principles of Gandhi. *Gandhian* as his party called the movement, garnered massive support among the people. The past horrors of the 1986 phase were still fresh in the minds of the people and no one wished to repeat it. Therefore, while everyone supported the demand, no one supported the violent methods. The fact that this phase

supported methods of non-violence also encouraged women to come out in large numbers. Soon, women became a visible part of the movement.

The discussion on the 2007 phase of the movement has to begin from the downfall of Ghisingh's political power. While he did 'rule' the region and claimed to be its *raja* or king, the eventual rise of the demand through a new leader and party meant that there was a growing resentment among the people. Niraj Lama (A 'Dictator' Deposed, April 2008) refers to him as the 'Dictator of Darjeeling' as he recounts the events that led to the fall of one of the most influential men in the region, starting the process of the resurgence of the demand. Ghisingh was not allowed to enter the hills by the members of the opposite faction led by Bimal Gurung.

As the events led to the removal of the leader, there were steady changes in the allegiance of its party members. With Gurung setting the stage for the new phase of the movement that was dubbed as non-violent, moving away from its predecessors, the new phase demanded three goals- the demand of statehood, the proposal for Sixth Schedule to be dismissed, and the removal of Ghisingh from power.

The rise of Gurung, who was earlier a close associate of Ghisingh added a new trajectory to the history of the movement. He had been overseeing the activities of the Prashant Tamang Fan Club in the region and was active in the mobilization of people to support and help in the victory of Tamang. While he was doing that, Ghisingh was seen rallying for the support for the Sixth Schedule and urging people to replace the idol of Durga with rocks (Lama, Mountain Autocrat, Still, July 2006) and refusing to openly support Tamang. His dismissal of Tamang proved to be his downfall as there were posters stating that if Tamang did not win, Ghisingh will not be allowed to come back (Middleton, 2013). The fact that the people were scared of Ghisingh's power resulted in their quiet submission, but there were pockets of resistance especially from other political organizations in the region.

When Gurung began speaking against the GNLFF supremo, he gained mass support. Gurung's stand against the Sixth Schedule also helped him garner support. He used the past as a reference to show the mistakes made by Ghisingh and his party GNLFF, as they had used force to demand statehood. The trauma of 1986 was still remembered by the people and so, when he claimed that the 'new' phase (2007) would follow the Gandhian way of non-violence, he found region-wide

support. Additionally, there were other external factors that had an influence on mobilizing the demand. Statements by State ministers like Ashok Bhattacharya and Subhash Chakravorty, who called Indian Nepalis ‘outsiders’ and ‘foreigners’ and remarked that the community should have been ousted from the country along with the British colonial rule (Chhetri,2008), further added fuel to the demand.

The demand at its core is a need to belong and with the community’s past filled with questions of belonging and of being ousted from their ‘homes’, the need to establish an identity separate from the dominant group becomes more potent. This became clear on September 28th, 2007, when people gathered in Siliguri to lodge a complaint against the comment made by the RJ. This protest march led to a skirmish with local Bengali groups resulting in the deployment of the army and para-military forces. The direct impact of this tussle was witnessed in Darjeeling where the All Gorkha Student Union (AGSU) initiated a protest march demanding justice, chanting slogans of warning and threat against the Bengali Government (Middleton, 2013).

This transition of festivity that began with Tamang’s win to the resurgence of the demand highlights the anxiety that continues to grip the Nepali-speaking population in the nation. As Middleton refers to the statement issued by the AGSU, “The recent Siliguri riots have prompted us to speak out. The incident made us feel that the Gorkhas are not safe. We always have to prove our identity in this country. This is happening to us because we do not have our own land... The Gorkhas require their own land!” (2013: 618). He assesses that even after the 1986 phase and the establishment of DGHC, the anxiety still continues.

1.6 Reasons for Continuous Resurgence

The demand for statehood, at its core, is the demand for a ‘home’ for the Nepali speaking community of the nation, which will also cement their claim on their Indian identity. The Indo-Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty, 1950 has been viewed as controversial and is asked to be reformulated by the leaders of the movement. The treaty allows the citizens of both sides to reside and work on the other side. This makes the position of the Nepali speaking Indian citizen precarious as their position of being ‘truly’ Indian is continuously questioned. In the 1986 phase of the movement, Ghisingh demanded to re-evaluate the treaty, which was voiced again by Gurung in 2007. The burning of the treaty on July 27th, 1986, in Kalimpong (27th JULY 1986 –

Kalimpong Massacre and Saheed Diwas, July, 2019), which ultimately led to the Kalimpong massacre, demonstrates the angst that the people have felt towards this treaty. The porous border between the two countries has led to these citizens being called ‘foreigners’, questioning the loyalty of the Nepali community in India.

The open border system between the two countries has given concerns to the other side too. Vidya Bir Singh Kansakar in *Nepal-India Open Border: Prospects, Problems and Challenges* (2002), writes about this from the perspective of Nepalese, and how this has affected the country when the same accusations are rallied on the migrants of Indian origin. Interestingly, the demand for the re-formulation of the Treaty is recommended by Kansakar not because of these concerns, but due to the continuous influx of migrants. He traces this system to the colonial period when the British government kept an open border to serve their own purposes. The first was for the recruitment of soldiers into the British Army, and the other was for the import of raw materials from Nepal and the export of goods to Nepal and Tibet.

The increase in the settlement of retired armed personnel originally from Nepal and their subsequent employment as guards and as domestic help here increased their demand in India. These people were ‘celebrated’ for their sincerity and devotion, and it is crucial to note how these characteristics became their trademark, making them fit for a certain type of employment. Nepal also witnessed its share of migration into the plains of Tarai, where the hill people did not wish to move. The weather condition was conducive for Indian migrant workers who were skilled labourers. While people from the hill regions began their migration to Indian regions like Darjeeling and Shimla, those from India chose to settle in Tarai.

Due to the open border system, there have been accusations, based on the theory of ‘Greater Nepal’, which suggests that the increase in population in the areas near Nepal was ultimately to annex them. While these theories have been disregarded, the loyalty of the community is still being questioned. The inability to distinguish between the migrant Nepalese and those of Indian origin has resulted in all of them being viewed through the same migrant lens. As Subba (1992) points out that the identity of Nepali was always associated with Nepal, which affected the Indian Nepali community. The open border system further affected this position as the migration continued and blurred all the lines of distinction. This uneasiness is echoed by the leaders of each

phase of the Gorkhaland movement. Furthermore, he adds, that the notion of ‘going-back’ has never been a part of the Indian Gorkha rhetoric as they were all born in India and have never been associated with Nepal.

Lopita Nath in *Migrants in Flight: Conflict-Induced Internal Displacement of Nepalis in Northeast India* (2005), refers to the community as an Internally Displaced Population (IDP), and describes them as a community that has been forced to migrate and leave their home due to the violence that they have endured. The violence or conflict faced by such communities can be based on the grounds of religion, the distribution of natural resources or manipulation orchestrated by the authorities for military and political purposes. She argues that the forceful displacement of the Nepali community to the Northeast has not been highlighted due to their history of mobility and small numbers.

The migration of the Nepali community to India took place over two waves; the first was to Sikkim and Darjeeling and the second was to the Northeast and Southern Bhutan. The issue of displacement faced by the community in the latter two regions is critical in order to understand the movement. The fact that Nath (2005) refers to the community as ‘migrants in flight’ proves that the fear the people face, which has resulted in the continuous resurgence of the demand of Gorkhaland, is not unfounded. One cannot deny the threat the community has faced during and after the movement. Nath quotes Monirul Hussain (1993) as he discusses the “threat of Nepalis’ in the region. He writes, ‘irrespective of their length of stay in Assam [they] virtually became dangerous unwanted foreigners, who were threatening the socio-cultural and political identity of the Asamiyas in their traditional homeland” (Nath, 2005: 65).

The demand for a homeland is not just for the community living in Darjeeling but is shared by the Nepali speaking population of the entire nation. As Nath in *Migration, Insecurity and Identity: The Nepali Dairymen in India's Northeast* (2006), traces the emergence of the community in Assam and other North-eastern states, she engages with the debates on the issues of security that the community has faced. Therefore, she looks at this question from historical and political perspectives. The community, which was able to establish itself in Assam through colonial assistance as a source of revenue, soon found itself being ousted from its land.

This exclusionary process continued in the post-Independence era especially during the Assam Movement (1979-1985), which was about establishing who comprised the ‘son of the soil’. The Nepali community in the region faced the threat of being ousted as they were perceived as foreigners. This resulted in their forceful migration or internal migration to other areas. The threat on the lives of the inhabitants forced them to leave their possessions behind and settle in the border areas adjoining the region. The demand for Bodoland also added to this threat as their militant activities forced the Nepali community to permanently leave the region (Nath, 2006: 144).

Another issue that the community has witnessed is that of the mass exodus from Bhutan and the North-East. The exodus of the people of Nepali descent in Bhutan during the 1980s and 1990s added onto the already precarious position of the community in India. Again, the exodus of the community from Manipur in the 1980s also added to the fear of being ousted from the country. The demand for separation persists even now, with the recent 2017 resurgence. This makes one wonder if the position of the community has undergone any change at all or has remained the same.

Assam was not the only region where such problems were taking place. The community faced similar reactions in Manipur and Meghalaya, and even outside the country. The forceful displacement of the community in Bhutan stemmed from the fear of the growing Nepali population in the country. The mass exodus of the community from Meghalaya in 1987 led to the displacement of approximately 7000 to 10000 people as they were forced to move to the Indo-Nepal border. Owing to the continuous exclusion faced by the community, “the more educated began to reassess their political status and democratic rights in the region. This led to a search for an assertion of Indian Nepali identity in Northeast India” (Nath, 2006: 145). One can also read how such tactics of segregation added to the demand for a separate state.

The failure of the region and the nation to acknowledge the identity of the Nepali community has led to the urgency to assert their existence. As Nath suggests, the need to assert their Indian identity is the result of the hostility that they have faced in the Northeast. This reaction has had its effect in Darjeeling with the leaders citing examples of these acts to support their demand for statehood to ensure the safety of the community in the nation. Interestingly, Nath also points out

how the term ‘Nepali’ itself becomes a homogenizing agent, as not all these people belong to the same caste, class or ethnic backgrounds. As a result, this term becomes significantly loaded as it encompasses caste, language and ethnicity. This identity is superimposed by the term ‘Indian’, thereby legitimizing their claim on the land. It is then that the community refuses to call itself Nepali and calls itself Gorkha, thereby severing their ties to their origin and completely becoming a part of their ‘host country’, India.

David Gellner in *Warriors, Workers, Traders, and Peasants: The Nepali/Gorkhali Diaspora since the Nineteenth Century* (2013), interrogates the issue of identity amongst the Nepali/Gorkha Diaspora. Like Nath, he points out that while a diasporic community has strong ties to their place of origin, there may be cases where ‘to establish themselves in their new host societies people of Nepali cultural background sometimes are obliged to *deny* that they have any diasporic leanings’ (Gellner, 2013: 2). The assertion of the Indian Gorkha identity falls in this category. As he explains the reasons for the migration of the community, he focuses on the rise of the Nepali identity in Darjeeling through the acceptance and celebration of the Nepali language in the region. With the demand for the inclusion of the same as an official Indian language, the move to assert the claim of belongingness of the community was evident. As Darjeeling became the focal point of ethnic diversity, it was the Nepali language that became a common thread connecting them. There began a rise of a strong Nepali consciousness which culminated into a common identity for the people not only belonging to the region but dispersed throughout the nation. Gellner refers to Hutt while stating “in this diaspora, as in many others, much of the “common culture” was constructed after the migrations, not prior to them” (Gellner, 2013: 7).

Their occupational identity as *gualas* or as *chowkidaars* also became a point of ridicule for the community. Gellner rightly points out, to the rest of Northeast India, that Nepalis were “branded as ‘foreigners’ and ‘migrants’...[and] nicknamed *Dajus* (coolies or porters), *Bahadurs* (chowkidars) and *Kaanchas* (household servants). If they raise any demands-literary, political or economic-they are often told to go to Nepal, as the Governor of Assam did recently” (Gellner, 2013: 4). This perspective is not just specific to the Northeast, but the entire nation.

The issue of belonging stems from the migrant history of the community and the region. The region was clubbed together with Bengal during the colonial period to serve as a retreat for the

British officers. While some argue that they are not migrants as they came with the land, the issue of migration nevertheless cannot be overlooked. The history of the region and its people, along with its geographical position has been used to dismiss the claims made by the movement. The fact that Ghisingh consciously made the demand of Gorkhaland for the Indian Gorkhas who speak Gorkhali, thereby negating the ‘Nepaliness’ of the community, points to the need to sever ties with the community’s Nepali roots. While the move to call the language Gorkhali instead of Nepali was not accepted, the term Indian Gorkha or *Bharatiya Gorkha* was widely agreed upon. Interestingly, the need to create a separate identity from their Nepalese counterparts was as crucial for the community as highlighting their ‘Indianness’. Therefore, more than being called a Gorkha, being called an Indian took precedence.

Subhakanta Behera in *Trans-Border Identities: A Study on the Impact of Bangladeshi and Nepali Migration to India* (2011), argues, that the attack on Nepalis can be read as a by-product of the Assam movement, where the main targets were the migrants from Bangladesh. The impact of migration on the position of the communities from India needs to be further investigated to better understand the demand of statehood. The cultural similarities between India, Bangladesh and Nepal need to be understood to analyse the patterns of migration and to read its effects on the regions bordering these countries. As he compares the migration of these two communities, the threat from Bangladeshi migrants was more than those from Nepal. The discourse on Nepali migration put forth is the one of relative calm due to the Friendship Treaty of 1950, their religious similarity and the ‘floating character of the migrants’ (Behera, 2011: 10). This argument becomes interesting as it completely challenges the demand made by the Indian Gorkhas to reject the treaty. While the community is known for its migratory character, the treaty blurs the line between those who are from India and those who are migrants from Nepal. Although the article discusses in detail the effects of migration on the security of the nation, it completely neglects its effect on the culturally similar communities inhabiting the border regions between the two nations, in this case, the Nepali-speaking Indian citizens. As a result, identity becomes an issue for both the host population (Indian Gorkha) as well as the migrant population (Nepalese).

Behera also reiterates the argument posed by the state on the alleged threats posed by the demand of Gorkhaland. The geographical position of the region, with its international boundaries and its

proximity to other North-Eastern states, and its shared history with Nepal are often used to deny the demand of statehood. The speculation on the formation of Greater Nepal has always been associated with the demand of statehood. The regions under the rule of imperial Nepal before the Anglo-Nepal War of 1814-1815 were identified to be a part of this image of Greater Nepal. The fact that there were organizations in Nepal demanding its formation does add to the threat to Indian national security. Even so, the distinctiveness maintained by the Indian Gorkha from their Nepalese counterparts makes their position clear that, even with cultural similarities, there is no shared political allegiance. While the demand of statehood clearly mentions the formation of Gorkhaland within the Indian nation, the rise of the Nepali identity as a strong force combating the issue of recognition soon became as important as their Indian identity.

1.7 Conclusion

The constant resurgence of the demand for separate statehood witnessed its recent revival in 2017, when the movement began because of the compulsory implementation of Bengali language in schools across the state. The demand was a result of the further marginalization that this rule caused in the region, which is Nepali dominated. Even after its retraction by the state, the movement did not seem to waver and lasted for 104 days. The region was thrust into chaos as the movement resulted in the deployment of armed forces by the state, violent protests and clashes with the forces, and the destruction of government property. The movement was able to capture the attention of social media and used the platform to publicise how the events were unfolding. The ban on internet and the disconnection of the telephone services by the state meant that their contact to the ‘outside world’ was severed, rendering the region in a state of isolation. This brought out discussions on the violation of human rights by witnessing social media posts from all around the world against the state initiatives. The movement finally subsided in September 2017, and we witnessed a new leader, Binay Tamang, take the centre-stage as Bimal Gurung and his followers went ‘underground’.

The constant resurgence of the demand highlights the anxiety that the community continues to undergo. Even after the 2017 phase subsided, a discussion on the NRC brought about similar reaction by the community. While the state has expressly denied that the

community will be targeted through this, the history of forceful displacement and the continuous question on the community's origin add to the existing anxiety. As Dinesh Sharma notes.

The Gorkhas need to be wary of the exercise because we have always been seen as the 'outsiders' in the larger Indian context. For most people, it is easier to assume that the Gorkhas have come to India from Nepal, because we speak the same language, rather than try to understand the deep-rooted and complex history of the community. Although identified by their language and ethnicity, the Gorkhas living in different parts of India have their own unique history and its sense of identity with respect to the place they reside. (Sharma, 2019)

In another article Surabhi Tamang (WE ARE INDIGENOUS TO LAND. BORDERS MOVED, NOT THE PEOPLE, September 2019), responds to a comment made by the Tourism Minister Mr. Goutam Deb that, if the National Register of Citizens (NRC) is implemented in the state, then the Hills will be empty as the entire Gorkha community will be 'thrown out'. While the statement was made as a caution to the people, the backlash became centred on claims of indigeneity. While the state government has expressly denied any attempt at the implementation of NRC in the state, the warning statement could have been made due to the influence of the ruling national party, BJP, in the region. What becomes interesting here is that this claim not only revived the ever-existing discussion of belongingness that has plagued the community, but also opened the counterargument on infiltration from Bangladesh in the state. The Indo-Nepal Friendship Treaty, 1950 agrees to a porous border between the two nations, this blurs the lines of distinction between Nepalese migrants and Gorkhas of Indian origin. As one of the respondents suggested, there are many migrants in the region who are gradually able to 'become' citizens and even vote, which the treaty does not allow. Therefore, one is unable to ascertain whether these people can be considered legitimate citizens when even those with valid proof are looked at with suspicion.

As discussed above, the relevance of the issues raised by the community since the colonial period, continues to be a source of anxiety even in the present period. Therefore, the paper intended to understand the history of the demand, the subsequent movement, its reasons for

continuous resurgence and its relevance in the present political scenario. The objective was to trace this fear and its execution that the community continues to undergo.

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V. S. Naipaul's The Suffrage of Elvira: Democracy in the Making

Pradip Kumar Panda

Lecturer in English

Anchal College, Pdmapur

Abstract

The purpose of this paper lies in analyzing the struggle of a Diaspora community blossoming as a democracy with flying colors. The methodology depicts the characters interacting with one another to participate in the emerging democracy. The fun of sharing involves all kinds of tricksters, defectors, and bribers of V. S. Naipaul's *The Suffrage of Elvira*. The East Indian community in Elvira, a district in Trinidadian vicinity reflects a mixed-up modernity by arousing developed political sensibilities as the migrants from India remaining in half-way house between feudalism and capitalism try to avail of the bliss of democracy and in course of over-reaching the standards of a fair democracy, expose their loopholes of being trapped in bribery and crafty pecuniary impulses. The third-world endeavour in Elvira gaining independence in 1962 manifests itself with an upsurge to pick and choose a leader with just ways of representation that claim a reader's compromise with the follies of the characters liable to quit fairness at the advent of money. An image of a multi-cultural picture of India in Trinidad is featured by usual Hindu-Muslim quarrels able to be settled and pacified for a bigger end of electing one's own in the vicinity inhabited by the Negroes and the Spanish attempting to establish proximity among one another, i.e., a Negro with a Muslim.

Key words – Democracy, Diaspora, campaign, Election, Multiculturalism

A gregarious public impulse is often titillated and is on the verge to be mutilated before gaining the affability of a conscientious and matured assimilation of each one into the fair political society. The Indian immigrants in Elvira unconsciously seek to restore their memory and hope of the past, aspire to see daylight even when the political manifestation is yet to sprout up and is still in rough and tumble situations while the third world democracy is in its making. The Elvirans despite the presence of religious factions and mutual hostility unite to pull together to take the reins. Above all it is a search of self-hood for the India Diaspora in Trinidad. SurujpatHarbans fights tooth and nail to win his cause of leadership in an alien land. In other words, the East Indian Community forming a newly emerging colonial capitalist society desires to win the laurels during a period of growing socio-political awareness and establishes its Indian identity in Elvira. Suffrage opens new avenues and a broader perspective in multi-racial Elvira. The Elvirans now cross the Rubicon. *To summarize*, voting attracts all in the sway of election of an MLC. SurujpatHarbans foregrounds his loss of money to pay off the rum-account and his fear of turning a beggar before winning the election. Further Baksh, offering his vote in favor of SurujpatHarbans, negating himself and sharing all his muslim-votes to gain two thousand dollars is a blot on democracy. Lorkhoor, the confidante of Preacher is ready to share 800 votes to pocket an amount of money from Harbans' party. The tricksters in democracy are paid through underhand means for a sudden gain and a taciturn change. Political stratagems work efficaciously, and democracy is graded below the salt to be a tricky game of the greedy, the shrewd and the cunning. Each one tries to save his skin and turns tail when there is no gain in the bargain. This democracy is incapable to prove its worth and to shine elegantly while it sprouts up. It looks ugly before it blooms. Naipaul despite vociferating people's follies and foibles recreates us in the game of politics and he shows the protagonist Harbans come round successfully even when he is on his last legs.

Naipaul's Intention for a Judicious and Secular Democracy

The Novel, *The Suffrage of Elvira* opens a treatise on the democracy that is on the making. A nation commemorates a form of government that involves people, their consent and depends upon their fidelity to the candidates who seek to represent. People greet and people reject the leaders' behest. The decrepit Elvira House is known as the great cocoa estate circled by the high standing trees and the beautiful flowers. It is a remnant of Elvira which signifies the crumbling

down of the old feudal way of living giving way to the oncoming democracy. It is described by Naipaul as “the old cocoa house, abandoned now and almost buried in tall bush.” (Suffrage-10)

People abandon the old, the feudal lying in it remains but embrace the new that pre-figures loquacity, gullibility, discussion and consent along with corruption and money-making. The dog, firstly, is a sign of good or evil omen. Secondly, the old servile attitude to the feudal lords is criticized as “dog”, (Suffrage-1) typified by the sycophants. Such attitude is prevalent both in the old and the new worlds. However, servitude to the master becomes out-dated to vanish “into the bushes in front of the cocoa-house as implied by the dog.” (Suffrage-1) Democracy approaches as a government of free choice and liberty in exercising opinions. Democracy is a Daniel come upon people’s judgment to make the leaders with each one’s endorsement of opinion and by free and fair participation by the mass of Elvira.

Democracy fetches its innovations onto the vicinity of Elvira and people realized the possibilities since the second general election in 1950. Democracy probes its roots in a multi-religious social manifestation. The bitterness of separatism and discordance is put down expressing a gregarious boost towards collective participation. A spirit of togetherness and unanimity strengthens the fragile atmosphere prevailing in Elvira, made feebler by religious hostility and impregnated with a communal tinge. However, election shapes and designs the paraphernalia of unity and congregation. Harbans reflects a secular attitude which seems matured and worthy of dictation. He utters to Baksh, “In this modern world everybody is one. Don’t make no difference who you is or what you is. You is a Muslim, I is a Hindu.” (Suffrage-17) Democracy adapts to a judicious tone to its secular nature undoing parochialism, narrow-mindedness and religious bigotry. Democracy is ordained with the unified (super) sense of “SarbadharmaSambhava” to offer a holy esteem to all with sharing and tolerating the minor idiosyncrasies that are mostly man-made. Thus, democracy bears a charmed life in Elvira undoing the cultural hiatus cursed by religious animosity.

Naipaul imparts a humorous tone to the characters, and they all belong to the local atmosphere of Elvira, well-versed in campaigning of election. Most of them are talkative; some are glib talkers. Above all, all engage themselves and are caught in the snare of money-making connived by the business of politics. Each and everyone in the scene of election campaign claims to have more

ability than one really has. They are entreated newcomers to the scene of politics and expose their pecuniary tendencies at the cost of transgressing loyalty. They are far from being elites or judicious individuals as expected in a sound democracy. Gillian Dooley comments, “The characters in *The Suffrage of Elvira* are a typical Naipaulian mixture of charlatans and fools. No one appreciates the meaning of democracy, and the implication is strong that the people have not been prepared and educated for self-government.” (Dooley) They are not yet learned enough to realize for a rule by themselves. The bribes and money grabbed with a promise to offer a large share of votes dominate the hours of election. An infringement of the words to one candidate and violation of the loyalty to receive a better gain from the other is best illustrated by Lorkhoor and Baksh near the election hours.

Characters with Idiosyncrasies and Eccentricities

The characters are ushered in by the novelist with their discrepancies and peculiarities. Baksh poses himself as a great leader though he has “none of the dignity of the leader.” (Suffrage-12) He is a drinker of puncheon rum. He can make money as a tailor in shirt-making. He remembers no religious quotations of the Muslim prophet. He boasts of a well-constructed house though he has none of such grand buildings. It is because of his volubility in talking and his uncontrollable habit of drinking, he is termed as the “mouther.” (Suffrage-12)

Haq with his moustaches and beards is a little black man who is both a destitute and a fanatic. Harbans looks dignified and esteemed by others as he seems to give an ascetic touch to his money making. He is tall but looks taller than he is because he is not bulky. Foam, the eldest son of Baksh is described by Naipaul as “An overgrown boy with a slab-like face.” (Suffrage-11) Foam and Lorkhoor are rivals. Foam claims his dexterity in loud speaking and criticizes Lorkhoor who adjusts by the efficacy of three big words always audible from his mouth “This is the voice of ever popular Lorkhoor” and adds “begging you and imploring you and entreating you and beseeching you to go to the New Theatre.” (Suffrage-19) The utterances of the same words while offering a show to the people draw him into Foam’s criticism. He is said to win the stupid with his proud ways of talking.

Preacher had conceived dreams to reach the Legislative Council even before the scenario of democracy and elections.

Mrs. Baksh is the wife of Mr. Baksh, the well-known Muslim leader. Mrs. Baksh is undaunted and never possesses a kind of social fear to express to the visitors. She is well-marked by aggression and contempt. She is never coy as generally the lady's bear. Naipaul expresses, "Mrs. Baksh was combing out her thick black hair that went down to her hips. She nodded to Harbans, cleared her comb of loose hair, rolled the hair into a ball, spat on it and threw it into a corner. Then she began to comb again." (Suffrage-21) Besides, her skirt exceeds her knees characterizing the modern fashion. She bears love for the children, the little Bakshes, seven in number and carefully puts up with the drunkard husband.

Herbert behaves like a glutton very often. He is kind where he should be tough and tight. He is often scolded for his casual disposition. Chittaranjan is a man endowed with opulence. The goldsmith, Chittaranjan has won his esteem not only in Elvira but also, is affable to the Spaniards of Cordoba, Negroes and even Muslims. His house is well-known as the biggest one in Elvira. The children collect "Silver shavings and gold dust" left out in his porch. (Suffrage-25) He has replaced his teeth with gold teeth and some other he has filled with gold. Besides, by dint of his influence, he controls about five thousand votes.

Ramlogan is a rum-shop owner and appears humorous. He is lonely and has lost his wife long ago. He is never visited by his daughters. He picks up quarrels with Chittaranjan, because the roots of the flower-tree and the bed-fruit tree are in his yard, but they surround Chittaranjan's yard where the bed fruits fall and the flowers beautify. Finally, they exchange words on the issues of the fence between their yards. He feels shy because he controls no votes.

Mr. Cuffy is a negro, aged and wears a tight suit and holds a bible. Nelly is the lovable daughter of Chittaranjan, and his father wants to settle her marriage with Harbans' son.

Elections and democracy are on the issue. Harbans distributes "Sweet drink and rock cakes" (Suffrage-26) to poor people's children to win their favor in election. Foam, in course of his conversation with Harbans talks about the awareness on democracy "In Trinidad, this democracy is a brand-new thing. We are still creeping. We are a creeping nation." (Suffrage-27) Democracy anchors the people who are fascinated by its adventures. The rock and roll with democracy, is a new gusto by the Elvirans.

The rivalry in politics emerges from the people indulged in campaigns. Foam, the campaign manager of Harbans and Lorkhoor, from the side of the preacher are at tug of war. They fight because they belong to the hostile camps in politics. The bargaining of votes is a secondary affair. Naipaul says about Foam, “He worked not so much for the victory of Harbans and the defeat of preacher, as for the humiliation of Lorkhoor and Teacher Francis.” (Suffrage-43) Lorkhoor is favoured for he speaks good English, writes poems and stories to people’s appreciation. He, gradually, is known as the star of the Elvira Social and Debating Club. Foam ventures to get involved in loud speaking but often he takes to painting. Foam the campaign-manager of Harbans; Lorkhoor and teacher Francis for preacher have bird’s eye view at each other’s group activities. To persuade one’s own and dissuade the initiative of the other is the political paraphernalia during the election hours.

Democracy and Its Destiny

The fate of democracy is discussed, and the ways of the people’s behavior are observed in a context of the campaign before the election. Mrs. Baksh utters her feelings, “Everybody just washing their foot and jumping in this democracy business. But I promise you, for all the sweet it begin sweet, it going to end damn sour.” (Suffrage-43) The scene of democracy that begins well may meet a bitter end. Foam paints culverts, poles, pillars and tree-trunks with a slogan that arouses people’s mirth “VOTE HARBANS OR DIE!” (Suffrage-44) Baksh and Foam adjust the loudspeaker on the van, the quintessential article to resonate the name of the contestant and his party Dhaniram and Mahadeo are humorous characters included in Harbans’ entourage. Dhaniram is a glib talker engaged in gossiping with a tinge of holiness and is considered “something of a buffin.” (Suffrage-46) Mahadeo is a driver and makes his laborers obedient. The reverberations of the words such as campaign, candidate, committee, constituency, and legislative council please Dhaniram till his heart’s content. Dhaniram marks the particular religious vows on his Esso Calender by a pencil. Harbans spends a lot on things like the loudspeaker and rum-account. Dhaniram, the adviser to Harbans pacifies him saying, “otherwise somebody else going to spend on them.” (Suffrage-51) Dhaniram, though is a Hindu priest loves chanting Christian hymns like “Jesus, loves me, yes, I know.” (Suffrage-53) Harbans is puzzled and desperate at the squandering of money by his campaign members. Harbans shedding tears says, “I ain’t got no friends or helpers or nothing.” Everybody only wants money money.”

(Suffrage-55) However, Harbans keeps calm when Baksh appeases him that he (Harbans) must keep an eye on the community and not bother about the money spent. The campaign committee engages in the social welfare works of visiting the sick Negroes with doctors and medicines. Besides, they offer sweet drinks to the Negro children. Foam is always ready with posters reading “HITCH YOUR WAGON TO THE STAR VOTE SURUJPAT (PAT) HARBANS CHOOSE THE BEST AND LEAVE THE REST.” (Suffrage-59) The hot issues of election keep the candidate and the campaign-manager at daggers drawn.

The advancement of capitalism and the departure of feudalism is indicated in the novel in instances. The picture of Mahatma and King George V at the round table conference, is a background to Harbans and associates for the first time, having a meeting to make out their election strategy. The Indians present in Trinidad make a plan to solve their cause as the Indians in India through the efficacy of elections. The migrated Indians, who are far removed, now, from their native lands resolve their plight through the same means. The coming of the English symbolizes the arrival of the capitalist relations. The picture of King George-V indicates about the present liaison with English ways. A capitalist relation creates strife by undoing the age-old peace. Democracy with its hutch patch is lining with capitalism where the people are both money-makers and politically aware citizens. Democracy, in the Elvirans’ scenario, is the byproduct lying as a half-way house between money making and political modernism; characterized by votes, candidates, election and campaign.

The election-affairs of Harbans keep Baksh’s family engaged and alert. The slogans painted by Foam change in their temper and effect. Instead of writing VOTE HARBANS OR DIE, (Suffrage-60) he paints with a direct tinge to Harbans’ victory “WIN WITH HARBANS” and “WE WANT HARBANS.” (Suffrage-60)

The Dog’s-Episode - Fortune & Misfortune Apprehended

The dog-affair of Herbert is also related to the future state of the election. The younger brother of Foam, Herbert is mentally feeble and tender-hearted. He catches a dog from outside and treats it as a member of his family naming it “Tiger.” Herbert has a great appetite for food and behaves unusually before the guests. The dog is very weak at its arrival but gains health because of Herbert’s care. The puppy is described, “The eyes were rheumy dead. The puppy itself looked

half-dead.” (Suffrage-61) Democracy is symbolized by the signs of fate, the dog being the fortune or good-luck enshrouded by an evil covering. Democracy, at its approach is meek, feeble and shy. However, its success is presented by the building up of good physique developed by the dog with tenderness and affection of Herbert. The apprehensions against democracy are hard to be borne against time. It appears, to everybody, the election would turn pale. Mrs. Baksh says, “This election starting sweet sweet for some people, but I promising you it going to turn sour before it end.” (Suffrage-63) Herbert is apprehended to behave the absurd way for he suffers from gas and appendicitis. He is scolded for he plays too much with the dog. Everybody despises its presence but tolerates for Herbert considers it his loved pet. Mrs. Baksh hates more for the dog comes into the vicinity of the Bible. Herbert is beaten by Mrs. Baksh and he sobs. The happiness of the family lies in dependence on the election’s know-how. They are fully indulged and are part and parcel of Harbans’ election affairs. Whether election proves to come out with flying colors or turns to a fiasco is the hot issue in the Muslim family.

Secularism in the Diasporic Community

The Baksh family is the unit of culture in Elvira. The Bakshes read Bible with no religious abhorrence. The narrow-mindedness of religious differences does not encroach upon the family’s peace. The humble hut of Baksh shelters the little Bakshes, seven in number sleeping squeezed among each other “under the single flour sack coverlet.” (Suffrage-66) It is a humble family in destitution, purged of religious bigotry, hangs after politics to eke out its living.

Elvira inhabits the varieties in the society. The feeling of togetherness keeps at an arm’s distance the separatist tendencies and the communal difference. It is an all-encompassing locality brightening the comprehensive life fetched by a unity and semblance of Hindus, Muslims and Christians. The beliefs are shared and intermingled to bridge the gap and alleviate the bitterness of communal hiatus. Naipaul says, “Things were crazily mixed up in Elvira. Everybody, Hindus, Muslims, and Christians owned a Bible; the Hindus and Muslims looking on it, if anything, with greater awe. Hindus and Muslims celebrated Christmas and Easter. The Spaniards and some of the negroes celebrated the Hindu festivals of lights.” (Suffrage-74)

Lorkhoor is the campaigner for preacher whose efficacy in announcement to carry the people in a sway is worth noticing. Lorkhoor’s speeches draw everyone’s attention. “People of Elvira, the

fair constituency of Elvira”, Lorkhoor said, “Unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains. Unite and cohere vote for the man who has lived among you, toiled among you, prayed among you, worked among you. This is the voice of the renowned and ever popular Lorkhoor begging you and urging you and imploring you and entreating you and beseeching you to vote for the preacher, the renowned and ever popular preacher. Use your democratic rights on Election Day and vote one, vote all. This good people of Elvira, is the voice of Lorkhoor.” (Suffrage-74) Lorkhoor is envied for his correct English Mr. Cuffy is his associate in campaign. Lorkhoor is mistaken as a tourist for his correct English.

Politics involves encounters, tricks, conspiracies, and humours with the characters of various traits. It is less divine and more a kind of evil commitment by a man himself. The words “obeah and magic” (Suffrage-77) point at the awful tricks connived by one against the other. Mostly, it has a comic sense in the game of politics. Mahadeo attends the sick. Harichand is a printer who earns through printing the papers and posters for the election. Chittaranjan expresses about the readiness not yet exhibited by people’s commitment for the election. Chittaranjan wins people’s loyalty for they seek confidence in him in their necessities either when they want money or when they write to the government Chittaranjan claims his affiliation to the neighbours in all walks of their lives and remarkably expresses it to Rampiari’s husband. However, politics has an evil thrust on the people. Politics is condemned as a business and “politicians were all crooks.” (Suffrage-88) In contrast to the previous argument, politics is esteemed as the only means to take us to the pedestal of multi-cultural richness and offer the Elvirans a democratic identity. Selwyn Reginald Cudjoe says, “The election offers the people of Elvira a chance to recognize their cultural diversity and to rejoice in its richness. There is no need to wage a divisive struggle to achieve temporary power. Lorkhoor, for example, rhapsodizes about the unity of the races and the religions as the most important pre-requisite for the realization of the liberation and identity of Elvira’s people.” (Cudjoe) Lorkhoor begs his people their unity and their collective votes where dwell the religious communities mixed up and interspersed with one to the other. It is all eyes awakened at the oncoming scene of election. Each party strives to crow over the other and make that a fallen foe but with a cohesion among the religious communities.

Democratic Politics and It’s Ugly Nature

Democracy is yet to blossom as a flower. The democratic awareness gives out a faint recognition of itself in Elvira. People are yet to be conscious about their political rights. The votes are counted not with ideals, but money and the expectations often change with greed or reward of money. The equality offered by the Universal adult suffrage has no influence yet and is considered a non-sense affair on the new election pedestal of Elvira. Voting appears sour, tasteless and purged of its vigour. The novelist condemns the approaching democracy yet to come round, dwindling and tottering in its fragile form, "People in Elvira don't know the value of their vote." (Suffrage-96) The friendship and good-will among neighbours turn to treachery, cheating and breaking down of fidelity, trust desecrated from moment to moment. Lorkhoor is pointed fingers at for his defection and for hanging after women in the name of campaign. Matrimony is treated as abnormal. He despises and disdains the constraints of the society. Chittaranjan possesses the gold teeth and has a commanding voice in Harbans' election affairs. He controls a large number of votes and is honoured both by the party people and the common public, mostly neighbours. The holds over votes call forth the complexities in the election affairs. Elvira lies between the devil and the deep sea to face a new challenge of political commitment.

The game of politics is tinged with conflicts. Foam and Lorkhoor are at tussle from the loudspeaker van. Both say differently and conclude with the same sentence saying in favor of their contesting candidates. Foam says, "Mr. Harbans will leave no stones unturned to help you." (Suffrage-106 & 107) In the same strain Lorkhoor voices, "Preacher will leave no stone unturned to help you." (Suffrage-107) Both the parties take vows before the public to offer them the best leaving nothing undone.

Similarly, Ramlogan and Chittaranjan exchange words over the falling of the bed-fruits. Each kind of conflict is a threat to democracy. The falling of the bed-fruits may cause a conflict is obvious beforehand and the falling of the framed picture of king George-V and Mahatma Gandhi is a blot on democracy. The utterance of the Supreme Court in matters of fighting is the voice and awareness of the lay citizens on democracy. The dog is despised at times to bring ill-fortune but is loved to fetch good luck too. The passage of the dog, Tiger is also considered crucial.

Democracy is a craze for a win in election. The apprehensions are either for a win or a defeat in election. Everyone remains estranged and awaited at the results of the coming election. Mrs. Baksh says to Mr. Baksh, "In this election sweetness that sweeten you up, Baksh. But see how this sweetness going to turn sour sour." (Suffrage-92)

However, democracy is celebrated to ordain a shared life of participation and consent. It brings together people staying at an arm's length from each other. It reaches a solution, overcomes conflicts by the peaceful discussions alleviating tension. Those who take up arms are destined to receive each other with open arms sooner or later as the virtues of democracy promise an Arcadian life to the citizens. It is indispensable to built castles in the air before the citizens to keep up the spirit of election.

Domestic Conflict Between Neighbours

The humour with the common folk receives a thorough treatment by Naipaul. The clean-naked chicken of Mr. Chittaranjan is hurt dead by Foam. It used to enter Ramlogan's yard, dig up the garden to shatter its beauty. Chittaranjan and Ramlogan rebuke at each other, exchange hot words being neighbours. Ramlogan is termed a Nazi spy and Chittaranjan a Supreme Court fighter. They quarrel over the fence and forbid each other to share each other's belongings. Ramlogan often promises to build his own fence and criticizes Chittaranjan at his pride of owning the fence "Why you don't put a fence around your daughter too? (Suffrage-123) The conversation creates in the readers a solid mirth. Chittaranjan retorts back to Ramlogan saying "you, a man like you, who should be running about kissing the ground in case she walk on it." (Suffrage-123)

It is the plea of Baksh to Chittaranjan asking to settle a marriage of his daughter with his own son, Foam, the Campaign manager of Harbans. Chittaranjan, the goldsmith expresses his haughty behavior saying despising words to Baksh, the Muslim, "I don't want nobody to pass over their obeah to me and I ain't give my daughter all that education for she to runabout with boys in the nighttime." (Suffrage-128) The difference in religions has been transcended a little extent, i.e. to share in politics. But the social barriers are enough to restore the differences. A Hindu father, Chittaranajn, by virtue of his commitment to his own daughter denies her marriage

to a Muslim boy, Foam Baksh and expresses abhorrence before Mr. Baksh, the Muslim father. Chittaranjan says, “We is Hindus, you is Muslim.” (Suffrage-129)

Election Campaign and Its Hullabaloo

The communal hiatus pervades the political arena. A breach of matrimony with the persons from the Muslim religion creates a fear of losing the Muslim votes. Baksh expresses his wrath, “Harbansain’t going to get no Muslim vote. You say it yourself. Negro and Muslim is one. All right. Preacher getting every Muslim vote in Elvira.” (Suffrage-129) The communal separation infiltrates into political commission and thus is the face of democracy, hazy and dejected. People at stone’s throw from each other are at tug of war.

Democracy is condemned to its core at the commencement of its actions. Teacher Francis expresses before the Bakshes the inability of the Elvirans to accept democracy with its ideals of duty and privilege. “The ordinary people of Elvira don’t really appreciate that voting is a duty and privilege.” (Suffrage-135) Mrs. Baksh voices the dark future of the election affairs, “this election begin sweet for everybody but the same sweetness going to turn sour sour in the end.” (Suffrage-136) Democracy, at the beginning, seems to be a strange affair tormenting the citizens with its apprehensions created in them of a bleak forthcoming. The going is tough at the first step but the events take their smooth turns. The citizens remain awful whether democracy holds a straw in Elvira. GillianDooley comments, “Elections provide a wonderful setting for observation of human nature at its most manipulative and grasping, and the campaigns in Elvira provided Naipaul with the perfect fictional world for this small comic masterpiece.” (Dooley)

The motion of the election affairs shifts its attention variously. Harbans’ men worry about the plight of the Negroes. Mahadeo visits the sick Negroes and expresses tenderness of care. Some of the party’s people like Sebastian are meeting their last days growing old, sick and feeble. The death of five puppies creates fear in the public of ominous happenings. Mr. Cuffy’s expressions are quite philosophical, “God hath made man upright, but they have found out many inventions.” (Suffrage-145) The dogs represent the witnesses who were to be fed out but could not live to survive further. Harichand demands Harbans to give him opportunities to serve him through

printing works for he would gain an amount having printed the election papers. The campaign-party endeavours to win the favor of the poor Spanish in Cordoba. Dhaniram expresses the mixed-up modernity for open solicitations by the Indian girls. Such is the obligation of Harbans to establish trust on Chittaranjan's daughter. Dhaniram's doolahin is deserted by her husband. Harbans is puzzled calculating the votes that shift the equilibrium towards preacher. He says, "Preacher have four thousand votes. I have three thousand Hindus and Spanish ain't voting." (Suffrage-198) The terror intensifies by Lorkhoor's speeches that belittle Harbans and eulogize preacher," Preacher is gaining new support. Ladies and gentlemen, this is the voice of Lorkhoor. The enemy's ranks are thinning and preacher will win." (Suffrage-148 & 149) The rum account in Ramlogan's shop increases and Harbans is bewildered and dejected to lose both money and votes. Harban's expenditure is at par with preacher's God work directed towards the elections. But both are at hostile camps to face each other and remain poles apart.

As the saying of Leo Tolstoy goes, "There is no peace without war." (Tolstoy) Moments of joy alternate with pathos and lamentations. So are changed the situations over time to bring Ramlogan and Chittaranjan together offering bread-fruits, Zacoba and grape-fruit juice to each other's family over which they often caused violence. In their conversation, they discuss the stupidity of democracy and the deterioration in the modern days. Ramlogan, both with humility and humour expresses the foolishness of equality, "Everybody equal. People who ain't got brain to work and those who lose their brain to work. Everybody equal." (Suffrage-161) Besides, they voice the help or money that everybody demands before they vote. Democracy is belittled and rated worse for its pecuniary tendencies involved in making the voters the vultures lying with their avarice. The union between the two bitter enemies, though they stay as immediate neighbours suggests a forthcoming of consent, good will and discussions.

The stratagem by Harbans' party before the election is efficacious to topple the opponent, the preacher. Baksh takes on the responsibility to seize the Muslim votes that would, otherwise, benefit the preacher. Before the cunning strategy is connived, Baksh remains reticent and responds ironically at people's questions about the election. His appearance "As a deepman with a deep secret" (Suffrage-155) arouses the anger of Mrs. Baksh. Baksh is scolded by Mrs. Baksh because he, having begun the havoc drew all into the hullabaloo of election but now he rests on his "fat tail like a hatching fowl." (Suffrage-155) The plan to split the opposition votes works

out when Baksh, fetched with two thousand dollars, acquiesced to stand as a candidate to snatch the Muslim votes that may, otherwise, favor the preacher. Harbans, Chittaranjan and Baksh discuss, “once the Muslims don’t vote for Preacher, we all right.” (Suffrage-164) Each one agrees to take up the gauntlet.

The symbols, now, are suggestive of future happenings. The dog, Tiger is believed to ordain good fortune and dispel evil happenings from Elvira. Besides, the increasing health of the dog indicates undoing of spurious entangles attached to Herbert’s family. The barking of Tiger at Lorkhoor signifies the dangers enshrouding him soon.

The day of nomination reveals the stratagem designed against preacher. Each contestant expressed his profession, i.e. Harbans is known as a transport contractor, Baksh, a merchant tailor and preacher as a proprietor. The serious turn over in the events is that Harbans has motivated and paid in cash to Baksh to figure as a candidate for the election. Lorkhoor apprehends Baksh, “A man who gives bribes is also capable of taking bribes.” (Suffrage-175)

The postures imaging the candidates are on houses and culverts. They look bright with their facial make-ups such as moustaches, spectacles and ties. The election symbol of Baksh is the star and that of Harbans is the heart. Fuom preaching for Harbans repeats “Vote the Heart” (Suffrage-176) from the loudspeaker van. Chittaranjan and others follow suit.

Each one adapts to his own style of campaign. Mahadeo notes the names of the sick Hindus and Chittaranjan maintains his visiting outfit. Ramlogan promises a case of Whisky for the winning party. The members of the party in campaign introduce one another on the stage in degree of each one’s popularity and catch of votes, that is, Fuom, after him Mahadeo, then Dhaniram, whom follows Chittaranjan and finally Harbans. The order ascends as rated by their personalities and affability. Harbans expresses his fear of turning a destitute having wasted all his money. He says in grief the irony underlying democracy, “This democracy is a strange thing. It does make the great poor and the poor great. It make a beggar – yes, don’t stop me, I is a beggar – and I begging for your vote.” (Suffrage-179)

Lorkhoor, the supporter of Preacher turns turtle by having secret negotiations with Chittaranjan and Dhaniram to part with 800 votes for a sure win of Harbans. The Traitor does not fail to take

bribes, defects his fidelity to Preacher. Harbans' party could smell a rat, Lorkhoor and strived hard to take the reins of election by paying through underhand means. Lorkhoor, now, is to rub Peter to pay Paul.

Voting and Election: Mainframe of Democracy

The calculative tendencies lead the party people to count the votes beforehand and remain prepared for a win. Baksh is relied upon to change their fortune towards a victory. Still the caution that captivates their minds whether the Muslims vote for the preacher. Being pretty sure of a win, they venture to arrange for a motor-car parade on the evening of the polling day. They move heaven and earth for a sure success of Harbans.

The sad events occur before the election hours. Mr. Cawfee, the favourite of the Preacher passes away. As reported by Herbert, the ominous ways happened that Mr. Cawfee had kicked the dog, which in turn, brought him misfortune of death. Mr. Cawfee died resting on his hair as Talmaso died sitting down along with the horse. Further, the doolahin of Dhaniram elopes with Lorkhoor. She deserts Dhaniram and his old lady. The celebration of motor car parade followed the funeral ceremony of Mr. Cawfee. He passed away when the polling intervals knocked at the door of Elvira.

The affiliated events that happen during nomination continue till the Election Day. Mr. Baksh abstains from fighting the election. He declares his support for SurujpatHarbans "This is the voice of Baksh. Mazurus Baksh here. This is the voice of Baksh, asking each and every one of you, the good people of Elvira, to vote for your popular candidate, Mr. SurujpatHarbans. Remember, good people of Elvira, I, Mazurus Baksh, not fighting the election again. I giving my vote to Mr. SurujpatHarbans. For the sake of unity, my good people. This is the voice of . . . Baksh." (Suffrage-206)

The motor-car parade looked grand and splendid. Harbans, Chittaranjan, Dhaniram and Mahadeo took the first car. Mrs. Baksh and the young Bakshes had a car to themselves. Mr. Baksh and Foam were in one van along with loudspeaker. The party of Harbans shouted, "Do

you part, man! Vote the heart!” (Suffrage-206) The first half of the motorcade possessed the candidates and the party; and the second half contained food and drinks.

The day of election approaches and the voters are to know the ropes. Agents are already engaged. Sitting under the shade of the trees they mark names on the electoral lists, hand over cards to voters, and advise to mark an X on the ballot papers, especially to the casual voters and the old persons coming to vote. The two marks of X are conveyed to be a mistake. Democracy is a blunder as the voters are mobilized to vote for the heart. Apology for votes is a form of machination by the tricksters in campaign. They face their opponents who deny the voters to cast for the heart and say ‘You want to kill him or what? Not inside the heart, man.” (Suffrage-213) Finally, democracy is confusion before attaining justice. The role of the agents is essential to turn the table during the election hours. Democracy is a tottering doll to amble its erratic ways. The food van regularly takes rounds to feed the accommodated people, the agents and the concerned representatives. Democracy is a greed for benefits by making a false show of offers that the people cannot wait to defer. Mobilization in the name of motivation has its day to plunder votes in the approaching democracy. Foam’s taxi-driver voices, “What you want for elections is a strong agent. Strong agents.” (Suffrage-218) The maximization of the number of participants breeds life in democracy. Thus, it is, at times laughed at as a government of the herds. “It was a fantastically high poll, more than eighty three percent” (Suffrage-217) say the official reports. Democracy declares its stability on consent, agreement, and peaceful observation. But it relies on force to ordain justice onto itself. “The ballot box sealed, signed and brought out to the steps” (Suffrage-219) is under the strict watch of the police. High security is needed to obtain law, order and justice. Democracy offers justice by the hand of force when the citizens are yet to be in the shoes of the civilized ones. The defeated candidates throw in the towel but the victims take a close shave. The winner’s pull of votes resonates in the ears, “Baksh 56. Harbans five thousand.” (Suffrage-22) Again, it is repeated “Harbans five thousand, three hundred and thirtysix.” Somebody again utters, “Thomas seven hundred . . .” The counting is treated auspicious for the government turns down command of the royal rod but awards high scores to the consent of the mass, the common people striving to attain equality with the facilitated ones. The ruler and the ruled begin to see daylight. All are equal. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. SurujpatHarbans, one from the common category of people

risers to the occasion as the “onble member of the legislative council, Mr. SurujpatHarbans.” (Suffrage-223)

Social Transformations Along with Election: Superstructure of Democracy

The issues along with the election feature the super-structure of a democracy. Nelly Chittaranjan picks up her own ways. Her father, Chittaranjan is conservative enough for the older ways of an auspicious marriage to a Hindu boy. He had perservered his best for the victory of Harbans with a hope to offer her in marriage to Harbans’ son. Harbans refuses for she is alleged of spending nights with Foam, his own campaign-manager, a Muslim boy. An emancipation of her also influences the surroundings imbued with politics. She, along with her days, spends life in London, and goes to the dances. She fetches home presents such as an umbrella for the father and four China birds for her mother which they easily reconcile to. Selwyn Reginald Cudjoe says, “Prominent among the younger generation is Nelly Chittaranajan, who is intent on living free of the proscriptions that bound her father to the older world. Although she is a victim of ethnic superstition, she also embodies the rising sense of liberation that pervades the political climate. Nelly’s psychological development is not fully worked out in the text, but she does negotiate some of the problems of the old world-new world dichotomy.” (Cudjoe) The running away of the doolahin, the daughter-in-law of Dhaniram with her new lover, Lorkhoor, the confidence man of Preacher to occupy in Port of Spain is termed as liberation from the feudal obligations.

Democracy has its variform reflections. The burning of the new Jaguar plane of Harbans is compensated by another furnished by the Insurance Company. Harbans, after his win, has to settle accounts, “Harbans spent the rest of that night settling his bills. The taxi-drivers had to be paid off, Ramlogan’s rum-account settled, petrol vouchers honoured, agents given bonuses.”(Suffrage-224) Harbans, the victor forgets his huge expenditure after his victory. Thus, democracy seems a costly affair of the big. A secular sense pervades Elvira’s atmosphere after the election, “The people of Elvira were to get religious consolation. The Muslims were to get their Kitab, the Hindus their Kattha, the Christians their service.” (Sufrage-234 & 235) As in other novels, the East Indians in Trinidad transcend the parochial Hindu-Muslim faction to reach a larger society washed off its feudal credos. Cudjoe remarks, “Much more tightly crafted than

The Mystic Masseur, *The Suffrage of Elvira* examines the East Indian Community within the context of the newly emerging colonial-capitalist society during a period of growing social awareness.” (Cudjoe)

The election in Elvira points to the conspicuous transformations with their socio-political significances. Naipaul says, “Harbans won the election, and the insurance company lost a jaguar. Chittaranjan lost a son-in-law and Dhaniram lost a daughter-in-law. Elvira lost Lorkhoor and Lorkhoor won a reputation. Elvira lost Mr. Cuffy and Preacher lost his deposit.” (Suffrage-24) The state of transition in Naipaul’s novels is uttered by Yashoda Bhatt, “*In Mystic Masseur*, life in the island of Trinidad and Tobago at the time of the first general election is viewed and life at the time of the second general election is portrayed in *The Suffrage of Elvira*. Significant transformations are taking place among people and society and Naipaul’s novels are a documentation of them.” (Bhatt) *The Mimic Men* is such a concept of an island politician in the same strain.

The mismatch of the situations in politics and the readiness of the people cause topsy-turvy in democracy. Thus, Bhatt points out, “Naipaul brings out the irony of the situation which involves the arrival of democracy in the islands, but the people are not prepared and ready for it. The incongruity of the situation is viewed with an attitude of amusement and the novels become social comedies. The liberal democratic institution of the west with their humanism and liberalism are transplanted in the Third world but the unprepared people find themselves comic entities caught in them.” (Bhatt)

Success Of Democracy: A Saga of the Diaspora of Elvira

Democracy seems to blow its own trumpets despite the hindering impulses remaining not mitigated. Money-Making with bribes and corruption topples over the idealism of democracy that remains far-fetched in the third-world nations sprouting recently. Democracy cuts a sorry figure when it dwindles between the remains of the colonial hegemony and the emergence of the new nations in the deplorable conditions of their making, mostly appearing as the hybrid constructions, out of both the leftovers and the native originalities. The dreams of the Elviran democracy seem far-fetched though the election and the stereo-typed processes that are borrowed machinations convey a success with repeated election of candidates without a psycho-social

serenity to the temperaments that tend to over-reach the aspirations that remain solely contemplative and not yet in spontaneous manifestations. Naipaul, can probe into the minimized society of the expatriates that are mostly Indians in origin and never does he carry his point till the exfoliation of the Negro cultures, the African that does not pass muster till the zenith of his imagination. A Trinidadian picture seems a replica of Indians imaged elsewhere, which is Naipaulian talent by fits and starts to appease the Indian ways in the third-world decorum. Naipaul hits hard on the sentiments infringed with bribes and corruption, and never endangers with sapless descriptions of the democratic paraphernalia. Naipauls feels into the subjects and realizes in their tone and style transformed with a superficial modification in their specific junctures of rebuilding themselves. Naipaul is most genial in the delineation of the indigenous disposition of Indians in the third-world scenario, with the ventures of leadership in Harbans, an economically tinged democrat, Ganesh, a mystic politician and Ralph Singh, the colonial politician, turned down along with his people. Naipaul has a panoramic sweep to thrill the readers with his matured insight of the widely occupied indentures and his judicious pronouncement about their plight in socio-cultural constraints.

The fate of Elvira hangs in the balance despite its success in the ways of political representation. An aspiration of the Trinidadian state to reach and appease the Marxian-utopian ideals of establishing equity between the privileged and the unprivileged is presented in *The Suffrage of Elvira* as a preparing democracy making the participants practically aware of their personal status, economic ability and social success before landing at the political platform. An attempt for a Marxian economic stability and democratic strength brings into account the perversities that come on the way such as bribery and corruption. Naipaul adapts to broken language and phonetic awkwardness to indicate such absurdities. The words are eggshactly for 'exactly', wat for 'what' and "pussonal" for 'personal', etc. Putting his remarks on such incongruities of action and language as observed in a democracy, Dooley says, that Naipaul "falsifies the pace of speech, sets up false associations, is meaningless to people who do not know the idiom and unnecessary to those who do." (Dooley) An indulging in election seems primarily money-making where the ideals have not probed into the realization and consciousness of the newcomers in politics. The expressions follow suit, setting a synchrony of language and activities.

The state betwixt and between democracy and socialism for the creation of a democratic-socialist state at the larger level looks intransigent when judged from the manners of the individual dwellers. The bud is yet to disseminate its fragrance as a flower. However, Elvira feathers her nest for a future equanimity. The dreams of a liberal state with collective keenness of participation, that is with a spirit of commonness wait for a filtering down of socialist credos into the up growing democratic structure of the Elvirans. The meanness of behavior spoils the humanist and democratic spirit. Harbans lacks the conscience of a representative and invests money in election to earn money further. Lorkhoor defects preacher and compromises with Harbans' party to grab money at the eleventh hour. Baksh forgets his representative individuality to support Harbans solely on payment of money. The discrepancy between aspirations and actions causes an alienation that pervades the socio-cultural stage, i.e. Elvira in the beginning looks ugly to beautify her disposition and strengthen her construction into a political unity at the face of multi-religious fractures and social confusion. Three cheers for Elvirans.

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Language and Pedagogy

Language and Culture Documentation in Collaboration with the Local Community: Field Experiences

Harvinder Negi

Abstract

In recent times, linguistics has started to focus on working in collaboration with the host community by encouraging active participation and involvement of the latter in the documentation of language and culture. This idea of engaging local community in research work to maximize the benefits to the host community has found wide support and the community centered documentation work (Good 2012). The success of such collaborative efforts varies on factors like attitude of the participants and the community to record their language and culture and awareness of the endangerment situation and inner motivation to revitalize it. The paper explores issues in community centered documentation and share field experiences from Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. It focuses on the language endangerment situation in Kinnaur and also attempts to highlight the community beliefs on such language documentation work.

Keywords: Tibeto-burman, Community engagement, Language endangerment, Language choice

Introduction

Kinnauri² is the language of the Kanawara or the kinnaura tribe of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh, India. The language belongs to the west himalayish group of Tibeto Burman language family. There are around 45000³ speakers of Kinnauri living in Kinnaur and outside the region. Their history is not available in written records. The available information is blend of folklore, myths and legends. From folklore, the western himalayan region was once inhabited by the Austriatic

² The language is locally known as ‘kannoringskad’ or ‘kanawari.’ It has eight mutually unintelligible varieties spread over the region. Kinnauri is also used as cover term for all speech varieties in the region. The paper focuses on the language spoken by most people in the region - ‘Kinnauri’. In this paper, Kinnauri will be used to refer to the language.

³ The figure is based on 2011 Census of India data. Total population of Kinnaur region is estimated 80000, out of which around 45000 speak Kinnauri variety which is the subject of study.

language speaking Munda people. Later, the Dasas or the Dravidian inhabitants of the Indus valley civilization were pushed into the region by the Aryans from central Indian plains. They mingled with the Mundas which resulted in a mixed culture which was a blend of animist beliefs of indigenous mudas and the deities of Dasas. Khas people came to this region from the eastern side of Himalayas which were followed by the mongoloids from the north Himalayan territories. Present day inhabitants of Kinnaur region are believed to represent the blend of the early inhabitants. Another popular folklore describes the region as the 'Land of Gods.' Legends says, 'when people from the plains first came here, one seeing the natives of the land they exclaimed, 'kinnara,!!! meaning 'what kind of men !!!' They were tall; fair skinned with no hair on the body or face. They lived in merry and loved songs and dances. The visitors described them superior to human and closer to God hence calling them 'kinner' or 'half men- half god.' The folklore believes that present day Kinnaura are the descendants of these earliest inhabitants.

It remained a mystic place for many with people seldom venturing out of the region. They were self-sufficient and relied on their own produce and animal wealth to meet their needs. Farming had many hardships and education was limited to few. Still, they lived merrily with a rich folk life. They would work hard in the day; dance and sing folk songs in the nights.

In recent times, exposure to the outer world changed the folk life and livelihood. The traditional pastoral farming was replaced by cash crops and means of livelihood changed with the access to better education. Younger generation could not resist the invasion of new language- Hindi, and the mainland north Indian culture. As a result, Hindi replaced Kinnauri in the region and became the main lingua franca. The exposure to outer world also brought changes to the demography in Kinnaur which used to be inaccessible and out of bounds for visitors- Indians and foreigners. All visitors from outside the region had to get permit to visit the region. This condition remained till the late 80s after which it was opened to all due to the pressure of globalization. As a result, many hydroelectric projects and other such commercial ventures entered Kinnauri and brought with them workers. The natural beauty of the region attracted the tourists to Kinnaur who were already hunting for newer places to visit after favored tourist destinations like Kashmir and Kullu-Manali, Shimla no more attracted them due to militancy and excess exposure respectively. With newer means of livelihood and access to education, local languages and culture were

ignored. Youths who were now exposed to the modern lifestyle wanted to assimilate with the mainland culture and developed negative attitude towards their language and culture.

According to the UNESCO list of endangered languages, Kinnauri is listed as ‘a definitely endangered’ language which means that the intergeneration transmission of language has discontinued. Newer generation does not speak or spend time with their grandparents and as a result they are growing unaware of their rich cultural heritage and identity. Kinnauri is an oral language with no writing traditions, without intergeneration transmission of the language and culture its rich oral legacy and language has become vulnerable to being lost.

Field linguists have been visiting the region for a long time now and have managed to collect data for their language description projects. The native speakers assist in the process of data collecting, willingly or unwillingly, with no real stake or active role in the entire documentation process. During my interactions with the elders, I found eagerness among them to record the fast-disappearing songs, proverbs, indigenous knowledge and more. I decided to work towards it and started from Ropa village and with active involvement of the local community recorded as many aspects as possible of the oral literature before it dies. The native participants support community engagement in any kind of field documentation to work in the direction of language and culture revitalization. They do not want to be treated as a subject but want to become equal participants in the efforts to preserve or revive the fast eroding linguistic and cultural resources.

Literature on Kinnauri Language and Culture

Kinnauri is an unwritten language which has a rich cultural heritage present in the form of oral literature. The region is among the least documented linguistic regions. There have been sporadic studies on its language and culture. Among the earliest scholars to write about the land, people and language of Kinnaur were the British travelers Alexander Gerard and Grahame Bailey. Grierson later incorporated Bailey’s data in his iconic work of the Linguistic Survey of India. After India’s independence from the British rule in 1947, the Chinni tehsil of Mahasu⁴ district alongside Kinnauri speaking villages of Mahasu were joined to form a separate district of

⁴ Present day Shimla. Kinnaur was earlier represented as ‘Chinni’ and was a part of the erstwhile Bushahar province.

Himachal Pradesh in 1965 and named Kinnaur. Since then, the civil servants posted in Kinnaur had been writing about the land and people of Kinnaur in their leisure time. There is enough interest in the linguistics community of the languages of the region with Ph.D.s being produced on it⁵. In the ambitious task of documentation of languages of India- Peoples Linguistic Survey of India which concluded in 2014, there was an entry on Kinnauri language and oral literature collected with the active participation of the community.

A brief bibliography of the available literature on Kinnaur is as follows;

- Alexander Gerard. 1841. Account of Koonawur, in the Himalaya,
- Tikkaram Joshi- He was a scholar at the Royal Court of Rampur Bushahar in present day Shimla district. He compiled a ‘Grammar and vocabulary of kanawar,’ for the Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, 1909.
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- Harvinder Negi. Kinnauri language. In Peoples Linguistic Survey of India. 2014. Himachal Vol. Kinnauri. A number of researchers are working on Kinnaurilanguages and the research work produced by them is available with varied ease.

Research Context

The current research paper is a result of the field work to document the language and oral literature of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh, conducted during May to July in 2016. The study was based in Kinnauri speaking villages of Chinni, Kothi, Dunni, Brelangi, Telangi and Pangi of Kalpa tehsil and Ropa village of Pooh tehsil. The total population in the selected villages was around 18000. Most of the participants in age group 25-40 years were bilinguals and spoke fluent Hindi and Kinnauri. Youngsters in age group 15-25 years spoke fluent Hindi and knew Kinnauri but didn’t speak fluently. Children in age group 5-14 years spoke mostly Hind and few spoke or Kinnauri. Hindi was used extensively at home, schools, shops, village meetings and with friends.

⁵ (1) N. Ramasubramanian. 1966. A descriptive analysis of Kinnauri. Kurukshetra, and (2) A. Saxena. 1992. Finite verb morphology in Tibeto-Kinnauri. Oregon.

Hindi was also the medium of instructions in schools. In last two decade people have moved away from traditional livelihood and are working in government offices or have their own business where Hindi is used for communications. Their children are growing up in an environment with extensive exposure to Hindi and negligible use of Kinnauri. Still some children growing in villages with their grandparents speak Kinnauri as their home language. The shrinking domain of Kinnauri language is threatening the future of Kinnaur as a home language. It can rightly be said that the language is endangered due to changing demography. With the speakers moving to newer languages from Kinnauri the oral literature is also critically endangered. Younger generation might altogether forget about the legacy of their ancestors which has survived so far in the form of oral literature.

One aim of the study was to record as much language data and oral literature to work towards the revitalization of Kinnauri. It was decided to engage community in the work and make them aware of the need to record oral traditions with the idea to maximize the benefits of the study. The research was conducted as audio video records of songs, dances, visual arts, interviews, narratives and through informal communications. The collected data is to be analyzed and made accessible to everyone for larger circulation. Community will have access to the entire corpus which will be used for language maintenance and revitalization efforts.

The scope of the paper is restricted to discuss problems faced by researchers in engaging with the community in field documentation and to share some of the concerns of the host community. In general cases, most researchers plan the field study with an agenda. It can be to collect data for Ph.D. dissertation, to write a research paper or for academic requirements. There can of course be genuine interest to work for language maintenance and revitalization. Whatever be the interest of the researchers, the aims is to maximize the benefits of the study for everyone. In recent, linguists have come to believe that it is best to work in collaboration with the community for best results. It helps both, researcher as well as the host- the former get the much-required data for research and the later gets training in language documentation which they can use for such work in future. In the community centric documentation model, the community works in collaboration with the researcher who is generally an outsider. For the success of the study, the community should be willing to actively participate in the study which is possible only if they have

awareness of the language situation and inner motivation to work on revitalization of the language. Researchers working among communities in North America and Australia have successfully completed community centric documentation, but, the model may not be successful in other parts of the world.

Experiences from the fieldwork

I planned to conduct language documentation in Kinnaur by engaging the community. The host community was unwilling to collaborate in the study. They were aware of the critical situation of Kinnauri language and culture but lacked inner motivation to work to save it. They did not see loss of language or culture as a problem, rather for them, it was natural for old things to die and new things to come. Though, they agree to give data for the study, only because they wanted to be a good host. Also, some in the community didn't trust outside researchers due to their past experiences when promises were made to publish children books, grammar and dictionaries but once the study is over they never returned. Some educated adults wanted to know whether the materials being produced in the study will be accessible to them and how will it help in saving their language and culture. some pressing questions that the community had for us were-

Youngsters in age group 15-25 years had ample exposure to life outside Kinnaur and wanted to speak Kinnauri and adapt to the North India culture and assimilate with the mainstream. They think Kinnauri culture and language is backward and has low prestige. Parents too wanted their children to learn Hindi and English which would help them in education and jobs.

Under such circumstances, faced with difficult situations to engage community in language documentation might cause frustration. Many researchers might decide to quit, not bothering about the situation of language. The easy way is to collect data, which they are willing to give, and complete the research. But the situation is grave in communities like Kinnaur which is facing threat to its language and culture due to Hindi which is fast replacing later from all domains. It is upon the researchers to understand the needs and concerns of the community before starting a research. The community feels cheated by researchers since they feel that they are used for data. The community should be clearly informed about the research objectives, and they should be considered equal participants in the study. The community should have access to materials

collected and also get co authorship or acknowledged for any publications. The researcher should contribute in language maintenance and revitalization by imparting training to community members in language documentation so that they may continue the work. Literature materials maybe produced for use by community. The collaborative work will be a success only if all the participants are considered equals.

Vitality of Oral literature

For the time that I was in the field, I witnessed oral literature in Kinnaur fading away from public memory, from a time when I was growing up in my grandmother's lap to the present time when a child knows only of one lap and that is laptop. I spent much time listening to stories and lore from my grandma who was a monolingual Kinnauri speaker. Now I think that growing up under her care was part of my cultural nourishment. I grew up strongly attached to my roots. In present, children do not know about stories, lore or even the language. They cannot talk to their grandparents because the former speaks Hindi only and the former is a monolingual Kinnauri speaker. This has left them confused about their identity. In May 2014, at 34 years, I decided to start aggressive work in recording oral literature of all genres. None in the village know old songs associated with life histories and glory of past legends. Many other genres of oral literature too was lost to the younger generation. Only people to know about much of the old traditions were elders in the village who were above 80 years old. I could identify four of them and collaborated with community members to write down six songs related to life histories of past legends, besides collecting personal stories, proverbs, and narratives. We got the lyrics recorded by persuading young girls to sing and produced eighty CDs of the songs.

The CD along with the lyrics was distributed to each household. These songs were out of memory for past 30 years or longer. People were excited to have recovered a piece of lost legacy. They now wanted to record their oral traditions that were on the verge of being lost. We engaged everyone interested to record as much oral literature by using mobile phones or recorders. Elders were willingly participating in the recording sessions and were excited that the oral legacy is being preserved for larger circulation and for future use.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the outside researchers need to understand the requirements of the host community before they plan a documentation work. Also required is a balance between the language and culture documentation and actual preservation work since the motive behind a field research should not be just to record, transcribe, print books, articles and grammars, or deposit the data in the archival libraries but there should be efforts to revitalize the language and culture. The tribal communities are now aware of the danger of loss of the language and culture thus look forward of any outside help to revive it. A collaborative language documentation and preservation work can benefit both the stake holders i.e., the researcher and the host community.

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Language Barriers in Curricular Transaction at Primary and Upper Primary Schools of Tribal Areas of Dhar District of M.P:

A case study of selected schools

Dr. Shruti Tripathi

Assistant Professor English

RIE, NCERT, Bhopal

Abstract

English is taught as a second language in many schools in India. In other schools it is also taught as a third language. Thus, to say that when a child comes into the school, s/he comes with a language that s/he has considerable command over will not be wrong. This language is the mother tongue of the child, a language which is spoken at home and one in which the child feels the most comfortable. In a school environment where the language of instruction is different from the mother tongue the child finds herself/himself in a position which is alien, thereby increasing problems in understanding. As a result, we find that levels of comprehension and critical thinking start declining at a slow pace. These hurdles or barriers in curricular transaction which are mostly in the form of choice of language can be monitored and lessened to a considerable extent. Moreover, these problems increase for children coming from the tribal belts, where language spoken at homes is completely different from that being used in the schools. The present research paper tries to highlight these barriers and their impact on curricular transaction. It also tries to come up with certain remedies for resolving this very pertinent issue.

Keywords-home language, mother tongue, language barriers, tribal

Introduction

Language is the ability to acquire and use complex systems of communication, particularly the human ability to do so. Language is the divine gift of the god. It is language that distinguishes man from animals. Language is man's finest asset. To the philosopher, language may be the instrument of thought, for we think through language. Language is an extremely important way

of interacting with the people around us. Without language we cannot communicate with people. As it is a vital tool for communication. We all know that we are living in multilingual world that is becoming globalized and thus it is very important to know more than one language. Learning language fascinate opportunities to develop their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills and to express themselves with full confidence. We should not also forget Moon when he says, “Of all the pedagogic tasks teachers face, getting inside learners’ heads is one of the trickiest; it is also the most crucial therefore reflective practice encourages us to understand our learners and their needs”. (Moon, 2004).

A **home language** is a language (or the variety of a language) that is most commonly spoken by the members of a family for everyday interactions at home. They are also called the *family language* or the *language of the home*. The speakers of home language are considered to be an authority on their given language because of their natural acquisition process regarding the language, as opposed to having learned the language later in life. According to Zafeirakou “Teaching the foundational skills (early literacy and numeracy) and critical thinking in a language that the child speaks and understands is one of the most effective ways to reduce school failure and drop out in the early grades. More importantly, these foundational skills significantly increase learning later on” (Zafeirakou, 2015: 1)

A **medium of instruction** is the language used by a teacher to teach students. Simply put, it is a means of conveying information to students. Such a medium could be the official language in the country or it could be the native mother tongue of the students. Deciding which language to use for instruction is important because it can affect the way the students learn. According to UNESCO “Children whose primary language is not the language of instruction in school are more likely to drop out of school or fail in early grades. Research has shown that children’s first language is the optimal language for literacy and learning throughout primary school” (UNESCO, 2008:1). Also, the Global Monitoring Report on Education for All in 2005 underlined the fact that worldwide the choice of the language of instruction and language policy in schools is critical for effective learning (Ouane& Glanz, 2010).

The term **curriculum** refers to the lessons and academic content taught in a school or in a specific course or program. In education, a curriculum is broadly defined as the totality of

student experiences that occur in the educational process. The term often refers specifically to a planned sequence of instruction, or to a view of the student's experiences in terms of the educator's or school's instructional goals. **Curriculum Transaction** is the effective and desired implementation of the curriculum contents on the basis of aims and objectives listed in the curriculum. Curriculum Transaction incorporates effective planning for providing learning experiences for its learners, organization of planning, administration/implementation of the organized planning and evaluation of the implementations by the implementer and the experts in the relevant field.

A **language barrier** is a figurative phrase used primarily to refer to linguistic barriers to communication, i.e. the difficulties in communication experienced by people or groups speaking different languages, or even dialects in some cases. Barriers may arise in the class due to language use also. Therefore, this communication gap between the teacher and ESLLs allude to feelings of demotivation, frustration, low self-esteem and fear of failure (Naka, 2017). While language is arguably an important tool to express oneself and to bridge gaps and transcend barriers, it can also seem an insurmountable hurdle especially if the language or the medium is new. Therefore, Zull suggests that “educators should seek to meaningfully engage learners’ in learning through stimulating their emotions” (Zull, 2004).

Tribal Profile of Madhya Pradesh

The state of Madhya Pradesh has the highest Scheduled Tribe population of 15.3 million in the country. When the proportion of ST population forms 8.6% of the total population in India, a 21.1% of the total population in M.P. is constituted by Scheduled Tribe (ST) population. The decadal increase from 2001 to 2011 in ST population of Madhya Pradesh was 0.8% as compared to 0.4% in India. The main tribal groups in Madhya Pradesh are Gond, Bhil, Baiga, Korku, Kaul, Mariya and Sahariya. Dhar, Jhabua and Mandla districts have a more than 50 percent tribal population.

In Khargone, Chhindwara, Seoni, Sidhi and Shahdol districts, 30 to 50 percent of the population is of tribes. Bhil tribe concentrated mostly in western Madhya Pradesh in Districts Jhabua, Dhar, Barwani, Khargone, Alirajpuretc consists of major tribal population of the state. Gond tribe concentrated mostly in western Madhya Pradesh in Districts Betul, Hoshangabad, Chhindwara, Balaghat, Shahdol, Mandla, Sagar and Damoh and on the banks of Narmada, Vindhya and

Satpura forms the second largest population of Madhya Pradesh and Largest in India. Kol tribe concentrated mostly in North eastern Madhya Pradesh in Districts of Rewa, Shahdol, Sidhi, Satna forms the third largest tribe of M.P. Saharia concentrated mostly in Northern Madhya Pradesh in Districts of Guna, Shivpuri, Morena, Rajgarh. Korku tribe live in Chhindawara, adjoining the forests of Satpura ranges in Bhainsdehi, Chicholitahasils of Betul district and Harda, Timarni and Khirkiya tehsils of Hoshangabad district. Baiga tribe mainly live-in dense forest and hilly regions of Mandla, Dindori, Shahdol, Umaria, Balaghat and Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh. They are considered as an offshoot of the Bhumias of Chhota Nagpur. Members of Bharia tribe mainly live in Jabalpur and Chhindwara. In Chhindwara they live in Patalkot in Tamia block.

Profile of Dhar

Dhar district lies in the south-western part of the Madhya Pradesh, and it has got hilly undulating and plateau topography throughout its area. District has a triangular shape. The Vindhyaachal ranges divide the region in two parts. Magaraba is a highest peak in the region. Its height is 751.0 meter above mean sea level. In south part of the district, the plains and valley of Narmada, are densely populated. According to recent census 54.50 percent of the people of the region belonging scheduled tribes. This zone is the land of the Bhils who the second most important tribe of the State of Madhya Pradesh are. Bhilala is another tribal group which occupies highest position in the social hierarchy among the tribes of this zone. They consider themselves superior to the Bhils and are so treated by the latter. In spite of the largest number of educational institutions in their areas, the Bhils of the Western Zone are amongst the most backward tribes. Crushing poverty forces them to employ their children for supplementing their income. The tribals in these areas have their own distinct language such as Bhili proper (Patelia), Bhilodi, Adiwasa& Rajput Garasia, Bhilali (Rathawi), Chodri, Dhodia, Dhanki, Malvi, Gujar, Nimmari and Dubli. The means of instruction in the schools is basically Hindi. It is seen that children face a bit of difficulty in the initial class but as they progress they cope up with the language and in the higher classes this difference in the home language and the medium of instruction do not prove to be a major barrier in their learning process.

Need and Justification of the Study

The Indian Constitution assigns special status to the Scheduled Tribes (STs). Traditionally referred to as adivasis, vanbasis, tribes, or tribals; STs constitute about 8% of the Indian population. There are around 573 Scheduled Tribes living in different parts of the country, having their own languages different from the one mostly spoken in the State where they live (Malyadri, 2012). The term tribe or tribal is not defined anywhere in the Constitution although according to Article 342, ST represents the tribe or tribal communities that are notified by the President. Tribes are not part of the traditional Hindu caste structure. Scheduled Tribes are one of the most deprived and marginalized groups with respect to education.

Statement of the Problem

After going through the studies already conducted in the area, it is found that language is an all-pervasive aspect in education. The difference in the home language and the medium of instruction caused many children to struggle with their learning and comprehension, especially among the tribal community who are socially and economically marginalized. With emphasis on the above problem the present study is titled as **“Language barriers in Curricular Transaction at Primary and Upper Primary Schools of Tribal Areas of Dhar District of M.P: A case study of selected schools of Dhar.”**

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are –

1. To identify the home languages of children studying in primary and upper primary schools of tribal dominated district of Dhar in M.P.
2. To study the difficulties faced by ST children of the study area, i.e., Dhar district of M.P., whose home language is different from language of instruction, during curricular transaction.
3. To suggest measures to overcome the language difficulties faced by the children belonging to Scheduled Tribes of the study area whose home language is different from the language of instruction in schools.

Research Questions

The proposed study emerges from the following research questions

1. To what extent the home languages of children in schools of tribal dominated districts of M.P. namely, Dhar are different from their school language?
2. What difficulties do the schedule tribe children face during curricular transactions whose home language is different from their school language?
3. What steps can be taken to overcome the language difficulties faced by Scheduled Tribe children of Dhar districts whose home language is different from the language of instruction?

Scope and Delimitations of the study

The scope of the study covers a wide range. It examines language barriers in curriculum transaction. However, due to time and budgetary constraints the study was delimited on different aspects as follows

- The study is confined to Primary and Upper Primary Schools of Tribal Areas of Dhar District of M.P.
- There are a number of factors affecting curricular transaction, the present study aims to study the language barriers.
- The study is limited to the students, parents, teachers and members of the School Management committees (SMCs) of Dhar district.

Methodology

The present research work is an “ex-post facto study”, where an effort is made to study the language barriers in curricular transactions at primary and upper primary school of tribal areas of Dhar by conducting a survey. Case-study research method was adopted in carrying out the study. For the present study 5 schools, from Dhar district of M.P. state were taken as the sample. The schools were selected on the basis of dominance of ST students in the schools. Further the initial and terminal classes of primary (Class I and V) and upper primary (classes VI and VIII) levels were included for the purpose of the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data were collected in four phases in each school:

- Phase – I Collection of Data from the Authorities and by Observation
- Phase – II Collection of Data from the Teachers
- Phase – III Collection of Data from the Students

Phase – IV Collection of Data from Members of School Management Committee

On the completion of the data collection, the data sheets were filed school wise and then student wise. The scores were tabulated on the basis of the answers received and for the open-ended questions coding for similar answers was done. The scores arrived were tabulated in Microsoft Excel for further analysis and calculations. The data was analysed using qualitative techniques of thick description.

Analysis and Interpretation of Results

1.Home Language of Children vis-à-vis School language

1.1 Home Language vis-à-vis School Language among students of Dhar

1.1.1 Primary

The percentage of scheduled tribe primary students by their home language (s) in Dhar district is given in table 1.1 and the corresponding figure 1.1.

Table 1.1 Percentage of Scheduled Tribe Primary Students by their Home Language (s) in Dhar District

N = 160

CLAS S	Only Hindi	Only Bhili	Hindi & Bhili	Hindi &Patel iya	Hindi & Gujjar	Hindi &Malvi	Hindi &Nim ari	Total
I	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	22 (32%)	2 (3%)	2 (12%)	43 (57%)	0 (0%)	69 (100%)
V	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	39 (43%)	7 (8%)	14 (15%)	31 (34%)	0 (0%)	91 (100%)
Total	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	61 (38%)	9 (6%)	16 (10%)	74 (46%)	0 (0%)	160 (100%)

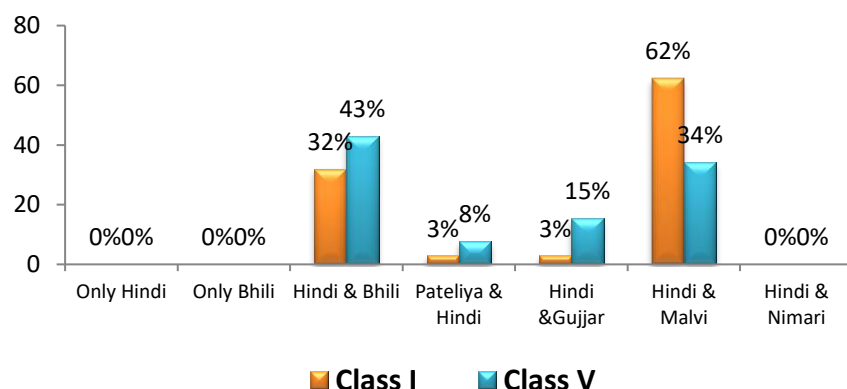


Figure 1.1 Percentage of Scheduled Tribe Primary Students by their Home Language (s) in Dhar District

From the results of table 1.1 and the corresponding figure 1.1 it can be seen that among the students in Class I in Dhar district none speak only Hindi or Bhili; 29% speak Hindi and Bhili; 1% speak Pateliya and Hindi; 9% speak Hindi and Gujar; 43% speak Hindi and Malvi; and none speak Hindi and Nimari. Similarly among the students of Class V in Dhar district none speak only Hindi or Bhili; 39% speak Hindi and Bhili; 7% speak Pateliya and Hindi; 14% speak Hindi and Gujar; 31% speak Hindi and Malvi; and none speak Hindi and Nimari.

1.1.2 Upper Primary

The percentage of scheduled tribe upper – primary students by their home language (s) in Dhar district is given in table 1.2 and the corresponding figure 1.2.

Table 1.2 Percentage of Scheduled Tribe Upper-Primary Students by their Home Language (s) in Dhar District

N = 393

CLAS S	Only Hindi	Only Bhili	Hindi & Bhili	Hindi &Pateli ya	Hindi & Gujjar	Hindi &Malvi	Hindi &Nima ri	Total
VI	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	68 (32%)	61 (29%)	0 (0%)	80 (38%)	4 (2%)	213 (100%)

VIII	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	104 (58%)	43 (24%)	0 (0%)	21 (12%)	12 (7%)	180 (100%)
Total	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	172(44 %)	104(26 %)	0 (0%)	101 (26%)	16 (4%)	393 (%)

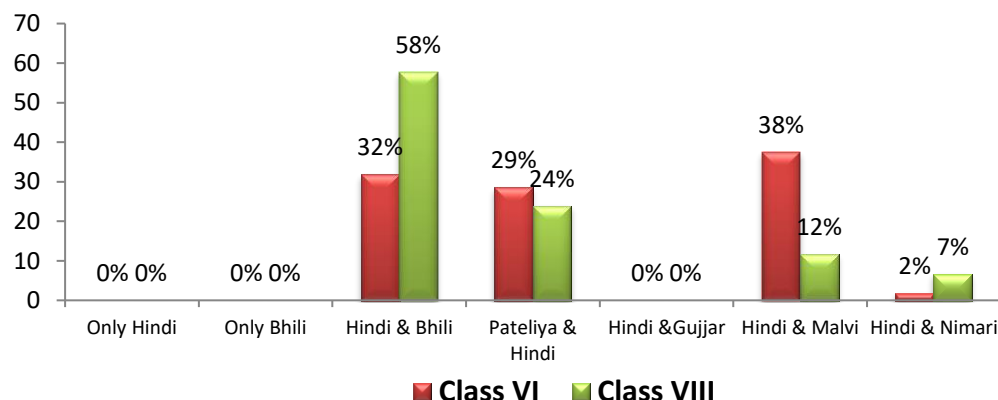


Figure 1.2 Percentage of Scheduled Tribe Upper-Primary Students by their Home Language (s) in Dhar District

From the results of table 1.2 and the corresponding figure 1.2 it can be seen that among the students in Class VI in Dhar district none speak only Hindi or Bhili; 32% speak Hindi and Bhili; 29% speak Pateliya and Hindi; none speak Hindi and Gujar; 38% speak Hindi and Malvi; and 4% speak Hindi and Nimari. Similarly among the students of Class VIII in Dhar district none speak only Hindi or Bhili; 58% speak Hindi and Bhili; 24% speak Pateliya and Hindi; none speak Hindi and Gujar; 21% speak Hindi and Malvi; and 7% speak Hindi and Nimari.

2. Language Barriers in Curriculum Transaction

2.1 Language Barriers among the Students of Dhar

The class-wise data of Scheduled Caste students of Dhar district regarding aspects of language in which they face difficulty is given in the lines that follow under different sections as primary and upper primary.

2.1.1 Primary

Percentage of scheduled tribe primary students of Dhar district by the difficulty they face in different aspects of language is shown in table 2.1 and the corresponding figure 2.1.

Table 2.1 Percentage of Scheduled Tribe Primary Students of Dhar District by the Difficulty they face in Different Aspects of Language

N = 20

Aspects of Language in which Difficulty is Faced	% of Students facing difficulty
Reading	12 (60%)
Writing	8 (40%)
Comprehension	14 (70%)
Speaking	6 (30%)
Grammar	16(80%)

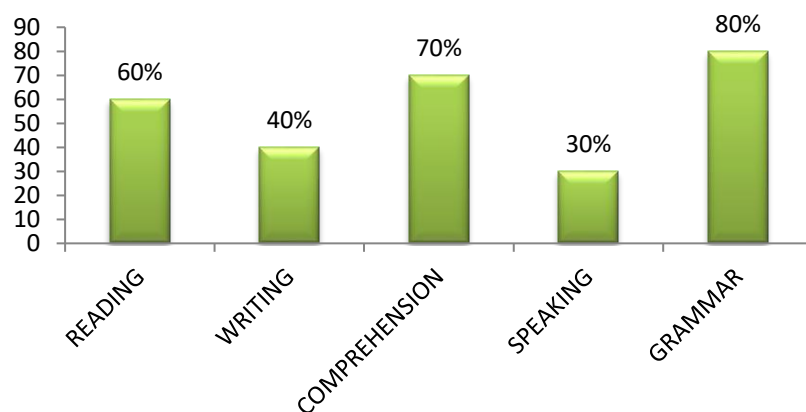


Figure 2.1 Percentage of Scheduled Tribe Primary Students of Dhar District by the Difficulty they face in Different Aspects of Language

From table 2.1 and the corresponding figure 2.1, it can be seen that 60% of the Scheduled Tribe (ST) students in Primary Classes of Dhar district face difficulty in reading; 40% find difficulty in writing; 70% find it difficult to comprehend; 30% find it difficult to speak; and 80% face difficulty in grammar.

2.1.2 Upper Primary

Percentage of scheduled tribe upper – primary students of Dhar district by the difficulty they face in different aspects of language is shown in table 2.2 and the corresponding figure 2.2.

Table 2.2 Percentage of Scheduled Tribe Upper-Primary Students of Dhar District by the Difficulty they face in Different Aspects of Language

N = 20

Aspects of Language in which Difficulty is Faced	% of Students facing difficulty
Reading	6 (30%)
Writing	4 (20%)
Comprehension	8 (40%)
Speaking	2 (10%)
Grammar	14 (70%)

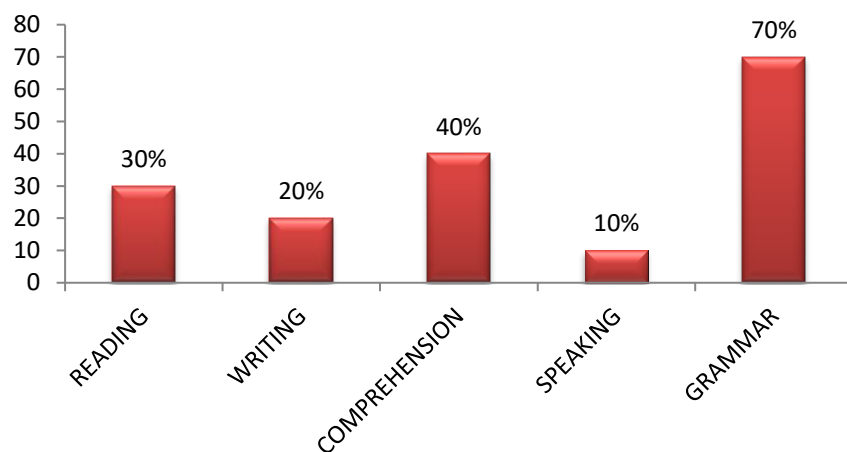


Figure 2.2 Percentage of Scheduled Tribe Upper-Primary Students of Dhar District by the Difficulty they face in Different Aspects of Language

From table 2.2 and the corresponding figure 2.2, it can be seen that 30% of the Scheduled Tribe (ST) students in Upper-Primary Classes of Dhar district face difficulty in reading; 20% find difficulty in writing; 40% find it difficult to comprehend; 10% find it difficult to speak; and 70% face difficulty in grammar.

2.1.3 Perception of Teachers of Dhar District Regarding Language Difficulties

The perception of teachers of Dhar district regarding language difficulties among students is presented in table 2.3 and corresponding figure 2.3.

Table 2.3 Perception of Teachers of Dhar District about Language Difficulties faced by the Students

N = 41

Type of Language Difficulties	% of Teachers
Improper Pronunciation	14 (34%)
Lack of Vocabulary	11 (27%)
Improper Structure of Language	8 (20%)
Lack of Comprehension	4 (10%)
Problems in Spellings	3 (7%)
Irregularity	1 (2%)

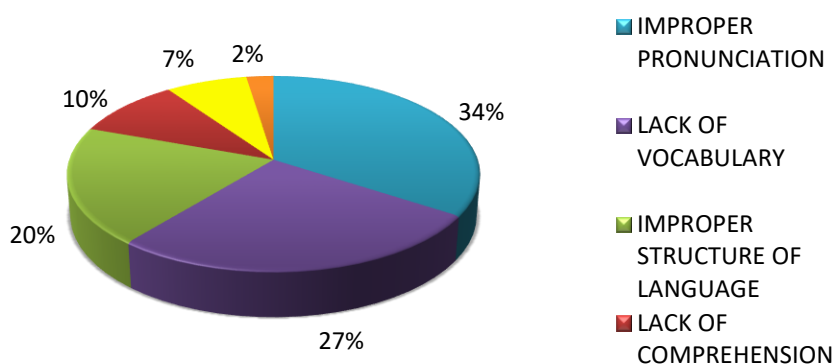


Figure 2.3 Perception of Teachers of Dhar District Regarding Language Difficulties among Students

On analyzing the results of table 2.3 and the corresponding figure 2.3, it can be seen that 34% of the teachers of Dhar district see improper pronunciation as a language difficulty; 27% feel lack of vocabulary as a difficulty; 20% say that improper knowledge of the structure of language as a difficulty; 10% perceive lack of comprehension as a difficulty; 7% of the teachers are of the view that problems in spellings acts as a difficulty; and 2% of them find irregularity in attending classes as a language difficulty.

2.1.4 Language used by the Teacher of Dhar district in the Teaching Learning Process

The data related to the language used by the teacher of Dhar district in teaching learning process collected using the Classroom Observation Schedule is presented in table 2.4 and the corresponding figure no. 2.4.

Table 2.4 Percentage of Language used by the Teacher of Dhar district in the Teaching Learning Process

N = 41

Class	Only Home language	Only School language	Both
I	0 (0%)	1 (17%)	5 (83%)
V	0 (0%)	2 (25%)	6 (75%)
VI	0 (0%)	7 (64%)	4 (36%)
VIII	0 (0%)	10 (63%)	6 (38%)

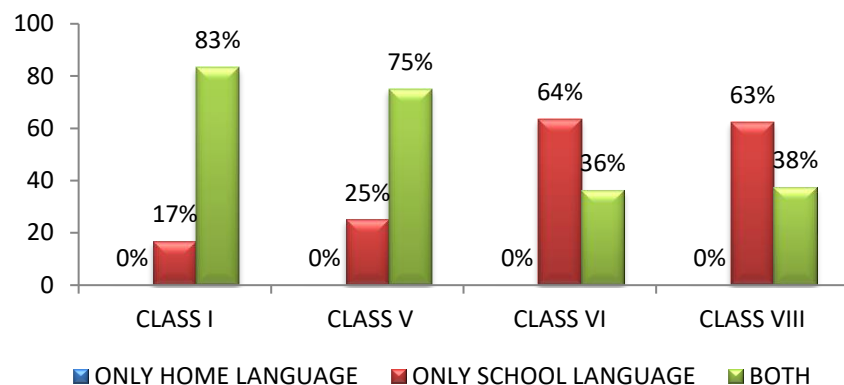


Figure 2.4 Percentage of Language used by the Teacher of Dhar district in the Teaching Learning Process

From figure 2.4 and the corresponding figure 2.4 it can be seen that none of the teachers of Dhar district in any class are using only home language in the teaching learning process. While 17% teachers in Class I; 25% in Class V; 64% in Class VI and 63% in Class VIII are using only the school language in the teaching learning process. Moreover 83% teachers in Class I; 75% in Class V; 36% in Class VI and 38% in Class VIII are using both the home language and the school language in the teaching learning process in Dhar district.

2.1.5 Teacher's Non-Acceptance of Home Language in Dhar District

The data related to the non-acceptance of the home language by the teacher of Dhar district collected using the Classroom Observation Schedule while the teachers' took class is presented in table 2.5 and the corresponding figure no. 2.5.

Table 2.5 Percentage of Teacher's Non-Acceptance of Home Language in Dhar District

N = 41

Class	Percentage Of Teachers
I	1 (17%)
V	2 (25%)
VI	5 (45%)
VIII	7 (44%)

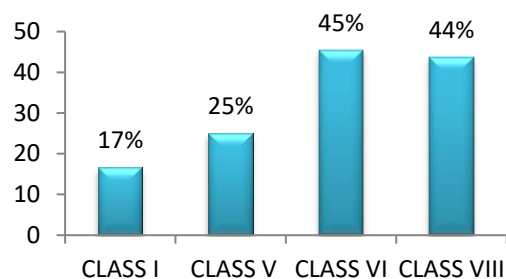


Figure 2.5 Percentage of Teacher's Non-Acceptance of Home Language in Dhar District

From table 2.5 and the corresponding figure no. 2.5, it can be seen that 17% of the teachers in Dhar district did not accept the use of home language in the Class I; the percentage for teachers not accepting home language is 25%, 45% and 44% in Class V, VI and VIII respectively.

2.1.6 Encouragement of Teachers for Home Language: Dhar District

The data pertaining to encouragement rendered by the teachers of Dhar district to communicate in student's home language collected using the Classroom Observation Schedule is presented in table 2.6 and the corresponding figure no. 2.6.

Table 2.6 Percentage of Teachers who Encourage the Students to Communicate in their Home Language

N = 41

Class	Percentage Of Teachers
I	1 (17%)
V	1 (13%)
VI	1 (9%)
VIII	1 (13%)

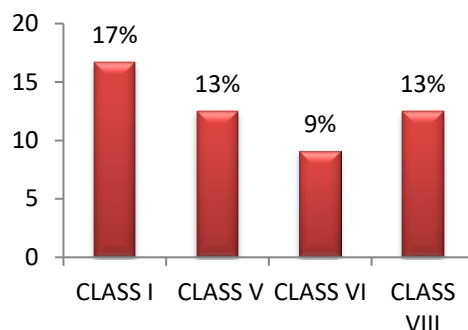


Figure 2.6 Percentage of Teachers who Encourage the Students to Communicate in their Home Language

From table 2.6 and the corresponding figure no. 2.6, it can be seen that only 17% teachers teaching in Class I of Dhar district encourage students to communicate in their home language. This percentage is 13% for Class V; 9% for Class VI; and 13% for Class VIII.

2.1.7 Classroom Observation: Dhar District

The data related to the aspects of classroom processes of teachers of Dhar district, collected using the Classroom Observation Schedule while the teachers took class is presented in table 2.7 and the corresponding figure no. 2.7.

Table 2.7 Percentage of Teachers Employing Various Modern Classroom Procedures

N = 41

Class	Aspects of Classroom Procedure	Percentage of Teachers Employing Various Classroom Procedures
I	Joyful	1 (17%)
	Activity-based	2 (33%)
	Interactive	3 (50%)
V	Joyful	1 (13%)
	Activity-based	3 (38%)
	Interactive	2 (25%)
Vi	Joyful	2 (18%)
	Activity-based	1 (9%)

	Interactive	2 (18%)
VIII	Joyful	1 (6%)
	Activity-based	1 (6%)
	Interactive	1 (6%)

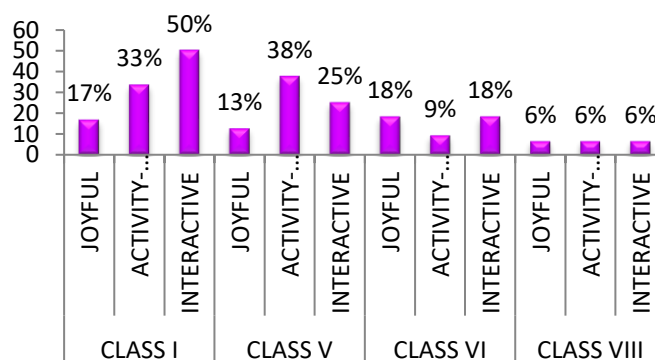


Figure 2.7 Percentage of Teachers Employing Various Modern Classroom Procedures

From table 2.7 and the corresponding figure no. 2.7, 17% of the Class I teachers of Dhar district, use joyful method of teaching, 33% use activity based-method and 50% use interactive procedures during their classroom teaching; while in Class V 13% teachers try to make their teaching joyful; 38% use activity – based procedures and 25% use interactive procedures of teaching. When it comes to Class VI 18% of the teachers ensure that their teaching is joyful; 9% make use of activities to teach and 18% make the class interactive. Lastly among the teachers of Dhar district, who teach in Class VIII 6% see to it that the classroom procedure is joyful: 6% make the class activity based and 6% of the teachers make use of the interaction during the classroom teaching.

3. Perception of SMC members

In order to obtain the suggestions from SMC members to overcome language difficulties, 10 Focus Group Discussions were held in Dhar district.

3.1 Outcomes of FGDs in Dhar district

SMC members of 10 schools in Dhar district, were of the opinion that school language does influence school results, especially at primary school level. It was learnt that SMCs had not taken

steps to bridge the gap between home language and school language. On this issue of involvement of the community in resolving problems, all SMCs emphasized that they had involved community in resolving problems. They had discussed problems with parents in PTM meetings on a regular basis. The issue of developing materials in home language had received prime attention of SMCs. Many school committee members agreed that if bilingual textbooks are developed it would prove effective in resolving language barriers for understanding basic school subjects. Some SMCs pointed out that bilingual dictionary should be developed and even teachers should be trained to use them adequately to resolve the problems that arose due to language barriers.

3.2 Perception of Teachers

A questionnaire was administered to 41 teachers from Dhar district. Their responses indicate their perception regarding the various ways that can be used to overcome language barriers in curricular transaction. Their suggestions are presented in the tables and figures that follow:

Perception of Teachers from Dhar District

Table- 3.1Percentage of Teachers of Dhar District about their Perceptions to Remove Language Barriers

N = 41

Suggestions	Percentage of Teachers
Bilingual method of teaching	20 (49%)
Bilingual dictionaries	11 (27%)
Use bilingual teaching learning material	4 (12%)
Use audio-visual material	3 (5%)
Activity based teaching	2 (4%)
Simplifying textbook language	1 (2%)

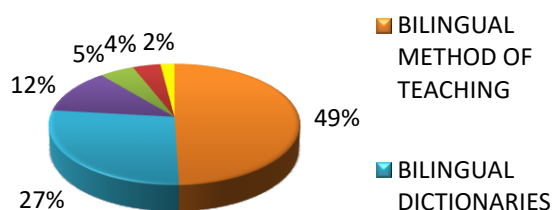


Figure 3.1 Percentage of Teachers of Dhar District about Suggestions to Remove Language Barriers

From Table 3.1 and the corresponding figure 3.1, it can be seen that 49% of the teachers of Dhar district suggested use of bilingual methods of teaching to overcome language barriers among the students; 27% said that the bilingual dictionaries can be used; 12% expressed their view in favour of use of bilingual teaching learning material; 5% opined that audio-visual material can be used; 4% stressed on the use of activity based learning and only 2% conveyed that simplifying the textbook language can help in overcoming language barriers.

Conclusion

The conclusions drawn from the findings are as follows:

1. None of the students in any class in Dhar district speak only one language, they can speak and understand Hindi and at least one of the home languages.
2. Almost two-third of the students in Class I in Dhar district can speak Hindi and Malvi.
3. The prominent languages spoken by students in Class V in Dhar district is Hindi and Bhili and Hindi and Malvi.
4. Student of Class VI in Dhar district speak a combination of Hindi and one of the languages from Bhili, Pateliya or Malvi.
5. In Dhar district, two-third of the students speak both Hindi and Bhili.
6. In Dhar district, among the students of primary section, two third of the students face difficulty in reading in the medium of instruction and four-fifth of the students are not comfortable in studying grammar in the medium of instruction, while among the students of

upper-primary, just one third faced difficulty in other aspects of language but three-fourth of the students faced difficulty in grammar.

7. Majority of the teachers of both Dhar district, felt improper pronunciation and lack of vocabulary was the major cause of language difficulty in all the classes.
8. In Dhar none of the teachers used only home language for teaching in any class, all the teachers either used the medium of instruction or both the home language and the medium of instruction.
9. The non-acceptance of home language by the teachers of Dhar district is less in the primary classes but it is more in the upper-primary classes.
10. In Dhar district, less than one-fifth of the teachers encourage the students to communicate in home language.
11. In Dhar district, less than half of the teachers try to make their transaction process joyful, activity-based and interactive in the primary classes.
12. The teachers who try to make their transaction process joyful, activity-based and interactive in the upper-primary classes is just one-fourth.
13. Teachers from Dhar district were of the opinion that bilingual method of teaching is suitable for classroom transaction. The language in textbooks in most of the subjects is often difficult for learners to comprehend the concepts, especially in mathematics, therefore, teachers should use simple language and also encourage bilingual responses from learners to facilitate learning. Further they suggested that activity-based teaching would certainly help the learners in understanding the different concepts and also develop their language skills. Use of bilingual dictionaries would empower the learners.

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Indian Higher Education System: Challenges and Suggestions

Dr.Kandi Kamala, Asst Professor

Dept. of Political Science, Government Degree College for
Women (Autonomous) Begumpet

Dr.Gedamkamalakar

Dept of Political Science Osmania University Hyderabad Telangana India

Abstract

Over the past 20 years, universities have been faced with sustained change, driven by external factors. This has led to the evolution of the teaching and research mission and the creation and rise of the third mission. Such mission extension has led to the emergence of entrepreneurial universities which has seen a move from traditional research and teaching business models to business models which incorporate a much wider range of activities, to meet stakeholder demands as well as sustaining and growing universities in the era of intense national and international competition. This special issue extends knowledge by providing novel insights into the multidimensional antecedent contextual influences, consequences, and implications of university mission expansion. We also provide a foundational research agenda which will help guide future research exploring the changing and expanding university missions and business models. Higher education system plays an important role for the country's overall development which includes industrial, social, economic etc. Indian higher education system is third largest in the world. The role of Indian higher educational institutes such as colleges and universities in the present time is to provide quality-based education in the field of education, research etc to empower youth for self-sustainability. This paper includes the key challenges that India is

currently facing in higher education and includes some initiatives taken by the government to meet those challenges.

Key Words: Higher education system, Empower, Self-Sustainability

Introduction

Higher education means different things to different people. If we talk about higher education in terms of level, it means to gain higher educational qualification by the teaching-learning process in the higher educational institutes such as colleges and universities. Moreover, higher education imparts knowledge, develops the student's ability and also gives him/her a wider perspective of the world around. Higher education becomes input to the growth and development of industry and also seen as an opportunity to participate in the development process of the individual through a flexible education mode. Higher Education in India: Next to China and United States India has the third largest higher education system in the world in terms of size and its diversity and largest in the world in terms of number of educational institutions. After independence Indian higher education attain a massive growth. In the Indian system, higher (tertiary) education starts after the 10+2 (i.e. ten years of primary and secondary education flowered by two years of senior secondary education). Framework of higher education in India is very complex. It includes various type of institutions like universities, colleges, institutes of national importance, polytechnics etc. Universities are also of different types like central universities which are formed by government of India, by an act of parliament which are responsible for arranging and distributing resources required by university grant commission(UGC), State universities, Deemed universities (aided and unaided) and Private.

Universities. India has a federal set-up and the Indian constitution places education as a concurrent responsibility of both the center and state. While the center co-ordinates and fixed standards in higher and technical education, school education is the responsibility of state. Under the department of higher education there are several regulatory bodies and research councils which are responsible for the higher education in India.

Regulatory Bodies:

University Grant Commission (UGC)

All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)

Council of Architecture (COA)

Research Councils: Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR)

Indian Council of Social Sciences Research (ICSSR)

Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR)

National Council of Rural Institute (NCRI)

Project of History of Indian Science Philosophy and Culture (PHISPC)

Challenges of Higher Education System in India:

- Gap between the Supply and demand: In higher education, India has a low rate of enrolment i.e. gross enrolment ratio (GER), at only 19%. If we compared to china and brazil GER is 26% and 36% respectively.
- Lack of Quality Research work: There is no shortage of funding for the top Indian Institutions such as IITs, IIMs and other institutes of national importance. However, budget for the Research is not under spent due to the insufficient good quality research work. Due to the limited focus on Research and Internationalization, very few Indian higher educational institutes are globally recognized.
- Number of Research papers published in India has increased continuously for the past few decades but reflected in low citation impact if compared with other countries like Germany, United States, France and China.
- Indian higher education is facing with the problem of poor quality of curriculum. In most of the higher educational institute's curriculum is outdated and irrelevant.
- Shortage of Faculty and High Student-Faculty Ratio: In most of the state and central universities more than 30% of faculty positions are lying vacant. While the student enrolment in higher education is growing with faster rate in the last few years.
- Inadequate Infrastructure and Facilities: Apart from the highly recognized higher educational institutes in India most of the colleges and universities lack in the basic and high-end research

facilities. Many institutes are running without proper infrastructure and basic facilities like library, hostels, transport, sports facility etc. which is desirable to rank the quality institution.

- Presently there is a very less collaboration of higher educational institutes with industries.
- Low employability of graduates is one of the major problem in India. Only a small proportion of Indian graduates are considered employable. Placement outcome also drop significantly as we move away from the top institutes.
- Initiatives taken by the government in the area of human resource development:
- A project has been taken up to make a national digital library of eBooks on various subjects and topics and another set up through which highly qualified faculty of centrally sponsored institutions like IITs, IIMs and central universities would offer online courses free of cost.
- Another special scheme called “Udaan” for girl students has launched by the Central government. Under this scheme mentoring and scholarship will be provided to enable meritorious girl students to transit from schools to technical education without any difficulty and to promote teaching and learning of mathematics and science at senior secondary school level by providing free resources.
- The focus of the project is to overcome the low enrolment ratio of girl students in prestigious technical institutions and enable them to receive special incentives and support so that they can join these institutions and go on to take leadership roles in the future.
- Another interesting step is the launching of a mission named after freedom fighter and educationist Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya to build a strong professional cadre of teachers by addressing all the issues related to teachers, teaching, teacher preparation, professional development, curriculum design, design and development of more effective pedagogy and better assessment and evaluation methodologies.
- The Central Government has also launched a scheme called Unnat Bharat Abhiyan for the promotion of technologies from the laboratory to the ground. Under the scheme, higher educational institutes would connect with villages in their neighbourhood and address the various problems faced by them. The scheme would particularly look for the solutions for water management, organic farming, renewable energy, infrastructure, and livelihood. IIT, Delhi is the coordinating institute of this scheme. About 130 villages have so far been adopted by IITs, NITs across the country under the scheme.

- RashtriyaAvishkarAbhiyan has launched to revive interest in the technology among youth through support for innovative learning based on observations and experimentation. The focus would be on learning outside the classroom through direct interaction with the environment around the educational institutions.
- Under the Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) programme, India's ministry of human resource development and department of science and technology will "create a channel for US professors in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to teach in Indian academic and research institutions on short-term exchanges", as per the website of the US Department of State.

Suggestions for Improving the System of Higher Education

- There is a need to implement innovative and transformational approach from primary to higher education level to make Indian educational system globally more relevant and competitive.
- In higher educational institutes Industrial co-operation must be there for the development of curriculum, organizing expert lectures, internships, live projects, career counseling and placements.
- Higher educational institutes need to improve quality, reputation and establish credibility through student exchange, faculty exchange programs, and other collaborations with high-quality national and international higher educational institutes.
- Government must promote collaboration between Indian higher education institutes and top international institutes and also generates linkage between national research laboratories and research centers of top institutions for better quality and collaborative research.
- There is a need to focus on the graduate students by providing them such courses in which they can achieve excellence, gain deeper knowledge of subject so that they will get jobs after recruitment in the companies which would reduce unnecessary rush to the higher education.

Conclusion

In this paper we have presented the present situation of India in higher education sector. We also identify the challenges like demand-supply gap, lack of quality research, problem of structure and basic facilities, shortage of faculty etc in the higher education. The implementation framework

for twelfth plan aims to focus on improving quality of state institutions, to revamp financial aid programs, to interlink expansion, equity and excellence. To improve the higher education system, we need to improve teaching pedagogy, build synergies between research and teaching, and facilitate alliance of higher institutions among themselves, research centers and industries. This is necessary not only to take care of economic growth, but it is also essential for social cohesion and to empower the country's youth.

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Revisiting Education for an Alternative Approach: An Action Anthropologist's Perspective

Dr.Uddalak Datta

Senior Director, Language and Learning Foundation, New Delhi

Abstract

The contemporary paradigm of education reflects inconsistency in regard to expectation and outcome. This is largely due to the paradox emerging out of synonymous notions of education and schooling, and the gap between envisaged essence of education and curricular activities in schools. The crisis also has an organic linkage with the over-all approach for development and modernization, which is affiliated largely to western paradigm which is too economics centric. To come out of the paradigmatic inconsistency, it is an imperative to explore alternative approaches. In this paper, attempt has been made to browse through the efforts made so far to justify the prerequisite of maintaining diversity adopting context-specific approach in development initiatives, including education, to ensure sustainable development globally and through certain contemporary situations to indicate a possible approach for India in particular.

Key words: Education, Alternative Approach, Perspective, paradigm, inconsistency

The Contemporary Paradigm

The core essence of education in envisions throughout the ages has not been changed. Aristotle defined education as “the creation of a sound mind in a sound body. It develops man's faculty, especially his mind so that he may be able to enjoy the contemplation of supreme truth, goodness and beauty of which perfect happiness essentially consists.”¹ Contemporary definitions of education envisage ‘integrated and comprehensive view of learning’², which is well reflected in following four pillars of education suggested in the Delors Commission Report to UNESCO (1996):

- *Learning to know* acknowledges that learners build their own knowledge daily, combining indigenous and ‘external’ elements.
- *Learning to do* focuses on the practical application of what is learned.
- *Learning to live together* addresses the critical skills for a life free from discrimination, where all have equal opportunity to develop themselves, their families and their communities.
- *Learning to be* emphasizes the skills needed for individuals to develop their full potential.

In this conceptual framework, it is clearly indicated that education is not limited to knowledge and skill building; it has a larger scope as a learning process. As Schumacher observes, “When people ask for education, they normally mean something more than mere training, something more than mere diversion. Maybe they cannot themselves formulate precisely what they are really looking for; but I think what they are really looking for is ideas that would make the world, and their own lives, intelligible to them” (Schumacher: 1993). Going by this notion, Schumacher further observes that “the essence of education, I suggested, is the transmission of values, but values do not help us to pick our way through life unless they have become our own, a part, so to say, of our mental make-up. This means that they are more than mere formulae or dogmatic assertions: that we think and feel with them, that they are the instruments through which we look at, interpret, and experience the world” (*ibid*: 1993).

1. <http://www.preservearticles.com/201105056299/meaning-and-definition-and-concept-of-education.html> viewed in February 2013.
2. EFA Global Monitoring Report in http://www.unesco.org/education/gmr_download/chapter1.pdf viewed in February 2012.

This notion is echoed in the key policy documents of our country as well. The aims of education, as envisaged in National Curriculum Framework 2005, should “simultaneously reflect the current needs and aspirations of a society as well as its lasting values, and the immediate concerns of a community as well as broad human ideals. At any given time and place they can be called the contemporary and contextual articulations of broad and lasting human aspirations and values”. Over this backdrop, if we look at the prevailing scenario in Kerala with highest literacy

rate and impressive educational indicators, it draws our attention for its employment situation. Paradoxically, it is a region with the highest unemployment rate, especially of educated youth, in India. As educated youth are refusing to engage themselves in low-paid and unskilled jobs and instead wanting only more gainful employment opportunities, of which there is a shortage, Kerala has witnessed mass migration of its unemployed labour force to the Gulf countries. The remittances from Gulf have been used mostly for construction purposes. As there has been scarcity of skilled labourers within Kerala, it all led to wage rates within Kerala going up dramatically (Krishnakumar, 2012). And, to fill in the gaps, people from other regions of India started migrating to Kerala. The irony is, majority of the Kerala migrants to Gulf are engaged in semi-skilled or unskilled labour, which they refuse to occupy in their own state! Obviously, the national aspiration of attainment of improved quality in every Indian through education and what is reflected above and in the statistics like high crime rates in Kerala (and in many other states as well) do not show a converging progression.

Of course, India is reflecting a global issue through the above-mentioned inconsistencies. Similar situations, often not preferred to be considered as ‘inconsistencies’ though, are reflected in the trends in countries like Japan, which is a source of inspiration for the so-called ‘developing’ countries. Against the impressive educational and economic indicators, incidences of delaying marriages for career prospects, not having children to avoid expenses, parasite singles, *furita*, high crime rates are some of the key issues haunting Japanese society now. Like Indian situation, Japanese curricular framework too envisages fostering “attitudes to acquire wide-ranging knowledge and culture, and to seek the truth, cultivate a rich sensibility and sense of morality, while developing a healthy body”³ through education. Perceptibly, the indicators of current Japanese society are not reflecting the essence of the curricular expectations. History suggests that Japan has been struggling to streamline the synchronization of curricular framework and the school-system since post-world war II situation.

3. Basic Act on Education (Act No. 120 of December 22, 2006) in <http://www.mext.go.jp/english/lawandplan/1303462.htm> viewed in February 2013

The Concerning Issue

What must have caused the break in the continuum between expectations and outcomes of education as evident in the scenarios depicted above? A remark of Einstein is of significance in finding a sense of direction – “Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school”. It is an indication towards the fact that the ‘schools’ have lost the notion of contextual relevance. The view of Mortimer Adler expressed in as early as 3rd decade of 20th century is more pointed – “If one examines the education which now prevails from the elementary school through to the university, one discovers that the opposite theses are at work. Influenced by the myths of progress and utility, failing to recognize the constancy of human nature, and denying, implicitly or explicitly, man's distinctive rationality, the existing system has completely discarded the permanent studies or, what is almost as bad, put them in the university where they are out of place” (Adler: 1939).

The genesis of the concept of ‘school’, as observed by Gardner, is rooted in prehistory. By the time phonetically based writing system was invented, several cultures had already achieved a high degree of complexity, featuring, for example, considerable division of labor. Probably, various educational regimens, on the order of apprenticeships, had been created by this time. Yet, it was the need to instruct young persons, presumably boys, in the skills of literacy that gave rise to the first school. I shall define a school here as an institution in which a group of young persons, rarely related by blood but usually belonging to the same social group, assemble on a regular basis in the company of a competent older individual, for the explicit purpose of acquiring one or more skills valued by the wider community (Gardner: 2004).

Over this backdrop, if we analyze the indigenous educational institutions, say a youth dormitory prevalent among many ‘traditional’ societies, we find the two key features:

- The curriculum is based on the life and context around, and that is why the goal of the process is nothing but to imbibe a solid sense of belonging in the mind of the student to the worldview of the society. In the process, the students could reflect the worldview in their own identities.

- The transactions are oral communications, and the teaching-learning process is largely through hands-on practices, a mode Gardner has described as ‘apprenticeship’.

In a way, the proposition of the dormitory, and possibly of the early school, is much closer to the essence of education as envisaged all throughout in the modern paradigm of education. Ironically today, “schools seek to monopolize the domain of knowledge, and one is almost led to believe that without schools there is no learning. Schools process knowledge and people, schools measure one’s morality, emotion, and cognition; and schools – with their characteristic rituals of examination and time-table – have almost absolute control over the child’s body and mind” (Pathak: 2006). Modern schools show resistance to be ‘inclusive’. These are dimensions quite far from the universally envisaged essence of education.

Factors Identified

And this brings us to the most critical question of this discussion – what must have been the root cause of the mismatch, between essence of education and prevailing school formats, we are concerned about. Modernization of education systems by replacing indigenous systems with western format of schooling is a consequent of influential change processes of ‘development’, “an agenda conceived by the West, led by the United States of America, to bring ‘happiness and peace’ to the rest of the world, often described as the ‘third world’ or the ‘South’ by the rich and technology-oriented Western countries, through helping them to overcome poverty and transition from ‘traditional’ ways of life to ‘modern’ ways of life to ensure well being and happiness. Obviously, the intended changes are defined and have been defined so far from Western perspective of ‘good life and well being’, grossly ignoring local perspectives” (Datta: 2010). To be precise, the notion of development has been narrowed down to economic well-being only disregarding the fact “how economic activities are embedded in the cyclical processes of nature and in the value system of a particular culture” (Capra, 1989).

And, the systems of education today are tuned to the skewed notion of development; “with the coming of industrialization, and the increasing demands for knowledge and skills, education became increasingly associated with schooling and with the sort of training and instructions that went on in special institutions” (Balogun: 2008). This format, by design, promotes ‘information’

and ‘skill’ rather than creation of ‘knowledge-base’ and enhancement of ‘world-view’. By and large, the inputs being provided through such school education are aligned to equip an individual to imbibe information and skill-sets conforming ‘western perspective of good-life and well-being’. Thus, the contemporary format of ‘modern school’ has evolved out of Western perspective. All other countries switching over to this format have miserably failed to contextualize its dimensions to be compatible to diversified worldviews. They have allowed their schools to continue with the overwhelming power to dominate their education systems, what Pathak has described as the ‘crisis emanating from the dynamics of modern institutions’ (Pathak: 2006).

Any Alternative?

It is quite evident from the discussions in previous sections that it is not practical to think of an alternative approach for education in isolation from the larger scheme of development. It is, therefore, crucial to bring in change in the development approach itself. Diversity, in both physical and cultural situations, is a reality causing relativity. Due to relativity, there cannot be a uniform way of looking at things. In development process, therefore, it is imperative to work out context-specific approaches, which are appropriate to concerned contexts. The concept is not something fresh; it is already reflected in the concept of ‘appropriate technology’. Appropriate technology implies the best possible option for a particular context from among the pool of technologies available. Like technology, an ‘appropriate approach’ should be adopted in regard to each of the aspects within the larger proposition of ‘development agenda’.

So, to adopt an appropriate development agenda, diversity needs to be respected; to maintain diversity, it is non-negotiable to help people exploring the world through their own ecological paradigm which further contributes in an intense manner to this cultural diversity conservation process. Going by the proposition of Leo Apostel (on worldview)⁴, a nation should envisage an education system in concurrence to kind of human resource it expect to have among its citizens within the framework of its world-view, which further should be an continuum of the national world-view. It is important for imbibing self-esteem to our next generations whom we intend to see negotiating with the ever-changing world with confidence and identity, and, being envisaged

as the mechanism of human resource development, education system is the most crucial component of social change process of a nation in the contemporary time to make this happen.

But how we go about it? The futurologists have reacted to the contemporary trends in development agenda in this way - “By changing our relationship to the resources that surround us, by violently expanding the scope of change, and, most crucially, by accelerating its pace, we have broken irretrievably with the past. We have cut ourselves off from the old ways of thinking, of feeling, of adapting. We have set the stage for a completely new society and we are now racing towards it.And it is this that calls into question man’s capacity for adaptation – how will he fare in his new society? Can he adapt to its imperatives? And if not, can he alter these imperatives?” (Toffler: 1971). Perhaps, Bhutan has been able to provide an answer to the last question posed by Toffler. As a part of the worldview, Bhutan has registered the conviction that “unlike certain concepts of happiness in current western literature, happiness is itself multidimensional – not measured only by subjective well-being, and not focused narrowly on happiness that begins and ends with oneself and is concerned for and with oneself. The pursuit of happiness is collective, though it can be experienced deeply personally. Different people can be happy in spite of their disparate circumstances and the options for diversity must be wide” (Ura et al: 2012). Going by this conviction, Bhutan has bypassed the concept of Gross Domestic Product as the measure of well-being, instead has come up with the index of Gross National Happiness (GNH), which measures “the quality of a country in more holistic way and believe that the beneficial development of human society takes place when material and spiritual development occurs side by side to complement and reinforce each other”⁵. Bhutan's principles have been set in policy through the gross national happiness index, based on equitable social development, cultural preservation, conservation of the environment and promotion of good governance.

4. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_view viewed in February 2013.

5. The 2010 Gross National Happiness Index – Part 1 (Ppt presentation)
<http://www.grossnationalhappiness.com/multimedia/powerpoints/> viewed in February 2013

The concept is not a ‘new’ one. Being a Buddhist country, the worldview of people of Bhutan has always been connected to essence of Buddhist economics which “tries to maximise human satisfaction by the optimal pattern of consumption” while modern economics “tries to maximise consumption by optimal pattern of productive effort” (Schumacher: 1993). It has been a continuum of reflective process that has led Bhutan to attain this stage regarding finding an alternative approach of development. The Legal Code of the country (dated 1729) observed that “if the government cannot create happiness for its people, then there is no purpose for government to exist” (Ura et al: 2012). Five centuries later, the Constitution of Bhutan 2008 (Article 9) ensures that “the State shall strive to promote those conditions that will enable the pursuit of Gross National Happiness” (*ibid*: 2012). In fact, Schumacher was precise in his statement that “the study of Buddhist economics could be recommended even to those who believe that economic growth is a question of choosing between ‘modern growth’ and ‘traditional stagnation’. It is a question of finding the right path of development, the Middle Way between materialist heedlessness and traditionalist immobility, in short, finding ‘Right Livelihood’” (Schumacher: 1993).

Bhutan’s GNH index has 9 domains, education being one of the standard domains. The other domains include living standard, health (standard domains), psychological well-being, community vitality, cultural diversity (Innovative domains), time use, good governance, ecological resilience (newer domains). Previously “the main aim of education had been to fight ignorance and attain spiritual knowledge; the current philosophy of education rooted in GNH is based on the following objectives: ensuring the realization of the innate potential of each and every child; instilling an awareness of the nation’s unique cultural heritage and values, both traditional and universal; preparing young people for the world of work, instilling in them the dignity of labour and creating an awareness of the importance of and the many opportunities which can be found in agriculture as an occupation” (Ugyen et al: 2010).

It is remarkable that Bhutan has formulated policy to convert all schools into ‘green school’. A green school uses the "natural environment as the integrating context" for all learning. It uses the local natural environment to teach students concepts in all disciplines, while emphasizing hands-on real world learning experiences. A green school also incorporates the community in the

process, so that the school becomes a place for the whole community to learn and contribute to — in this way, students develop stronger ties to their community, a greater appreciation for the natural world, and a heightened commitment to serving as active, contributing citizens uses the local natural environment to teach students concepts in all disciplines, while emphasizing hands-on real-world learning experiences⁶. Thus, “the education system pays particular attention to imparting to the students a sense of belongingness and respect for the culture and tradition of their country” (Ugyen et al: 2010) and assumes that for the wellbeing of a people, it is essential

6. www.thegreeninterview.com/.../files/BhutanGreenSchool.pdf viewed in February 2013

to include their spiritual and cultural needs in the process of development. The proposition is new and has been rolled out recently. If they can bring about what they have perceived, this would make the new education system of Bhutan distinctive from the education systems of rest of the world.

It is obvious that Bhutan has a unique context and any proposition designed in that context would not be compatible for contexts of other countries. The learning from Bhutan is not what exactly they have done (or have proposed to do), but the spirit of resisting invasive neo-liberal trends. Undoubtedly, Bhutan has taken the lead in going for an alternative approach

The Indian Context

India can also boast of offering an alternative model of schooling. Rabindranath Tagore had shown the world that an alternative model of schooling is a feasible proposition by setting up *Santiniketan*. Amratya Sen, who was a student of this institution, have described his experience as following:

The school was unusual in many ways, such as the oddity that classes, excepting those requiring a laboratory, were held in outdoors (whenever the weather permitted). No matter we thought about Rabindranath’s belief that one gains from being in a natural setting while learning (some of us argued about this theory), we typically found the experience of outdoor schooling extremely attractive and pleasant. Academically, our school was not particularly exacting (often we did not have any examination at all), and it

could not, by usual academic standards, compete with some the better schools in Calcutta. But there was something remarkable about the case with which class discussions could move from Indian traditional literature to contemporary as well as classical Western thought, and then to the culture of China or Japan or elsewhere. The school's celebration of variety was also in sharp contrast with the cultural conservatism and separatism that has tended to grip India from time to time (Sen: 2005).

Clearly, the approach has been a shift from Macaulay's design of education. This is precisely what Gandhi had envisaged – 'the willingness to learn from others, yet the courage to retain one's own identity' (Parekh quoted in Pathak: 2006). Unfortunately, we failed to take the initiative of Tagore forward to bring in a paradigm shift in Indian education system in spite of the fact that *Santiniketan* was a successful experiment. What is more unfortunate that not only we could not retain the model in its original form, we could not even sustain the spirit of the original initiative as one of the possible alternatives; today's *Santiniketan* has retained few fragmented attributes of its original form and spirit. Apart from *Santiniketan*, there have been other experimentations across the country in the non-government sector in search of alternative models over the years; some of these experiments have been successful at a miniature scale and also have succeeded in influencing governmental strategies (largely) in regard to pedagogical methodologies, but not in terms of a paradigm shift towards alternative model of education yet.

May be, we need to learn from Bhutan how to initiate a reflection process with the backdrop of invading trends of globalization as a national agenda. We need to ask ourselves fundamental questions to zero in on our collective world-view and aspirations as a nation. Pathak has articulated the need for such a reflection in his following words:

It is in this context that cultural globalization acquires added significance. Because it means more speedy and sustained interaction of cultures – the intensity of which, as I have already indicated, we did not experience earlier. That is why new questions and anxieties begin to confront us: Who are we? What is our culture? Does globalization enrich our culture, and make it more fluid and flexible? Can we exist as an equal partner in the globalizing process? Or, do we lose amidst what is being critiques as 'cultural

imperialism'? Can we survive, resist, experiment and innovate? Can we evolve an appropriate *art of resistance* to cope with changing times, and live with delicacy, symmetry and creativity? (Pathak: 2006).

The *art of resistance*, as Pathak has termed it, should be the coherent essence of the alternative approach towards education to help our younger generation to cope with changing times with 'delicacy, symmetry and creativity', being confident with own identity.

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Peer Assessment as a Learning Tool: Perspective of Undergraduate Engineering Students

Dr Tannistha Dasgupta

Assistant Professor

VIT-AP University

Abstract

Peer assessment is an effective tool for transferring ownership of the assessment process to learners, thereby enhancing their motivation and involvement in learning. Besides, learners gain insight into the assigned task while assessing others which makes peer assessment an important component of ‘Assessment for Learning’. However, it is important to determine learners’ views on peer assessment as limited research is available from Indian classrooms. An attempt has been made in this study is to explore the perspective of learners on peer assessment as an instrument for learning and developing awareness of task-expectation. Data is collected from 127 1st year engineering students of VIT-AP University, Amaravati, India. A questionnaire with a Likert scale of four possible responses and open-ended questions were administered among the subjects. Results found that learners have a positive perception about peer assessment as a learning tool, besides, it is motivating, and they believe that it promotes self-reflection via peer evaluation. As for its limitations, learners highlight the challenges like unfamiliarity with this mode of assessment, issues with the modality, and lack of confidence in doing an effective assessment. The study suggests that a developmental process may be initiated by the teachers that leads towards more mature peer assessment for enhancing learning and assessment experiences in the classroom.

Keywords: peer-assessment, assessment, student’s beliefs, learning tool, critical thinking

1.0 Introduction

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 states that by the 2022-23 academic session, teachers need to be ready for a major transformation in the assessment practice. According to NEP 2020, the primary aim of assessment is for learning, and this is going to be the underlying principle for assessment at all levels of education. A holistic progress card will be issued to the students which would include peer assessment along with other formative assessments. At present, peer assessment is becoming increasingly popular in classrooms as there is an effort to shift from the traditional testing of knowledge to the culture of assessment for learning. This new assessment culture provides students with an active role in learning and assessment.

Studies have reported several advantages of using peer assessment for the learning process. For instance, peer assessment not only increases motivation but also makes students responsible for their learning. Other benefits found in studies include in-depth learning, autonomy, interpersonal skill, critical thinking, and considering assessments as a component of the learning process rather than an isolated component (Boud&Falchikov, 2006;DeGrez, Valcke, &Roozen, 2012;Ibarra-Sáiz, Rodríguez-Gómez&Boud, 2020; Lladó et al., 2013). Engaging students in assessment processes lead to their empowerment and gives them with skills needed for their career advancement and lifelong learning.

Despite the encouraging results reported above, many studies highlighted the challenges that are associated with peer assessment. Vickerman (2009) states that in non-anonymous peer assessment, students often over mark their peers as they think it might affect their relationship. Other issues like the accuracy of the marks and feedback received from peers, interpersonal dynamics, the complexity of the process, difficulty in following the rubric etc. were found in a few studies (Rotsaert, 2018, Rotsaert, Schellens, &Panadero, 2018, Topping, 2009).Therefore, peer assessment can be difficult to students as they lack knowledge and expertise in this area.

Most of the studies have dealt with the benefits and drawbacks of peer assessment, however, a few studies have explored the perceptions and beliefs of learners about this approach of assessment. Research done Lladó(2013),PaswanandGollakota(2004), Vickerman (2009), and Wen and Tsai (2006) have found that students' attitude towards peer assessment was positive, and it had helped in the learning process by making them feel that they were also an important stakeholder in the assessment process. However, little research is available regarding peer

assessment of Indian classrooms and students' opinion on peer assessment. Therefore, this study explores the perceptions of students on peer assessment in the Indian context.

2.0 Context of the Study

The subjects of this study were 127 1st year undergraduate students of VIT-AP University, Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh, pursuing engineering programme in the branches like computer science, electrical, or mechanical. They belonged to the intermediate level of proficiency in English, and were from various L1 backgrounds like Telugu, Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Bengali, Odia, and Marathi. Their compulsory English course was divided into theory and laboratory hours. For this study, they were assigned two tasks from their laboratory activities, namely, group discussion and mock interview. The tasks were conducted during two different classes- duration of each class was of 1 hour and 40 minutes. Students were given an evaluation rubric for assessing their peers for each task. Since students were not familiar with such assessment practice, they were briefed about how to assess their peers objectively using the rubric. Since classes were conducted remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the assessments were also done online on MS Teams (Learning Management System of Microsoft).

3.0 Data Collection

A questionnaire was used (Appendix A) to collect data on students' responses to gauge their perceptions on peer assessment, using MS Forms. Data was collected after the subjects had completed peer assessment of both the tasks (group discussion and mock interview). The subjects belonged to 2 different batches; each batch had close to 70 students. Out of them, 127 students had completed the questionnaire.

14 groups were formed for collecting data, each group had 4-5 members. The group composition was changed for each task. 7 channels (channels A-G) or breakout rooms were created on MS Teams for online peer assessment. Each channel housed 2 groups, for instance, group 1 and group 2 were assigned channel A, group 3 and group 4 were assigned channel B, and so on. For each task, one group was performing or doing the activity, and the other group members were individually assessing each member of the performing group. Each group took turns to do the given task and assess their peers using the rubric. The rubric for the group discussion task was

adapted from Texas Education Agency (2006) to suit the subjects of this study. The rubric for the mock interview task was developed for this study based on the feedback given by the students to make it simpler than the rubric of the group discussion task.

Next, subjects were given a questionnaire to share their views on peer assessment. The questionnaire had 18 questions and 4 open-ended questions. The 18 questions were to be answered on a Likert scale of four possible responses, ranging from 0-3; “0-Strongly Disagree”, “1-Strongly Disagree”, “2-Agree”, And “3-Strongly Agree”. The multiple-choice questions aimed at finding out subjects’ opinion on the following aspects,

- peer-assessment as an instructional method
- peer-assessment as an assessment tool
- developing autonomy/learning responsibility
- developing collaboration
- affective factor- level of inhibition
- effectiveness of the rubric
- teacher’s ability to explain the activity

To explore subjects’ perspective on the effectiveness of peer-assessment as a learning tool, 9 out of 18 questions (Q. 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 14, 15, 16, 18) were designed on this. To gauge their opinion on the efficacy of peer-assessment as an assessment tool, 4 questions were included in the questionnaire (Q. 11, 12, 13, 15). The other categories had 1 question each.

In addition to the multiple-choice questions, there were 4 open-ended questions to obtain subjects’ feedback on their overall experience with peer assessment. One question each was asked on the following aspects.

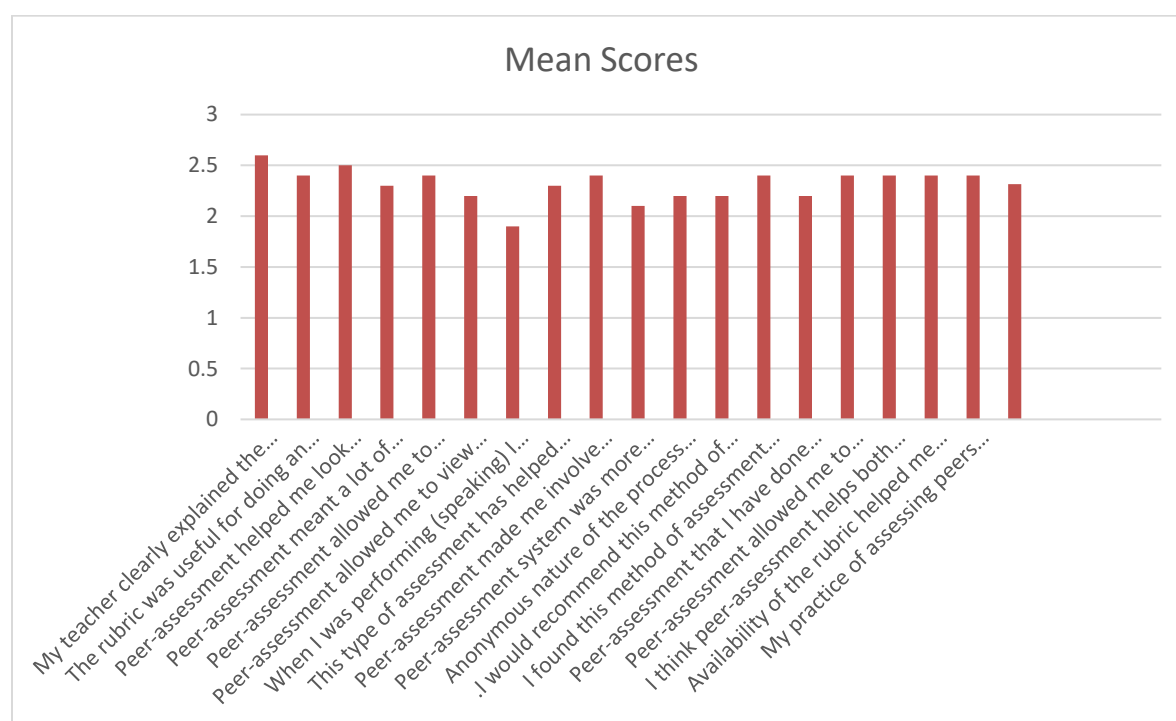
- two positive experiences about peer assessment
- two difficulties with peer assessment
- changes suggested about the rubric (if any)
- comments to share their views

4.0 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Responses of each subject to the multiple-choice questions (Likert scale) were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Each multiple-choice question was marked between 0-3. The mean score of each question was calculated using Excel to find out the extent to which peer assessment was favoured or otherwise by the students. A higher score was associated with favourable perception of the subjects with peer assessment.

The global score of the responses of the questionnaire showed that overall subjects' opinion on peer assessment was positive. The average score of most of the multiple-choice questions was above 2.1 on a Likert scale of 0-3 (Figure 1). It suggests that most of the subjects agreed with the statements in the questionnaire (score "2" represented "Agree" in the Likert scale). Subjects believed that peer assessment was an effective learning and assessment tool along with its ability to develop different aspects like autonomy and collaboration.

Figure 1: Mean Scores of Multiple-choice Questions

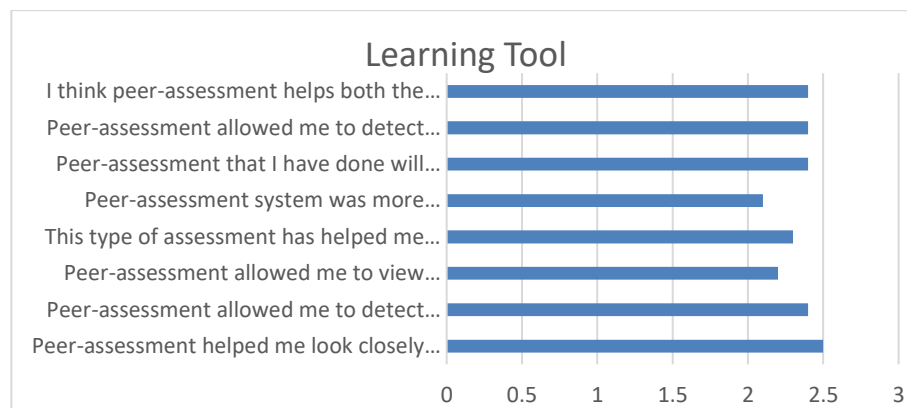


Learning Tool

Based on the data collected from the questionnaire it was found that the majority of the subjects believed peer assessment was an effective learning tool. This is evident from the mean scores of

the eight questions on the effectiveness of peer assessment as a learning tool; viz. average score of question numbers 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 14, 15, 16, and 18. The mean scores of these questions are given below in Figure 2. The mean scores ranged from 2.1 to 2.5, indicating a favourable disposition of the subjects on peer assessment as an instrument for learning.

Figure 2: Mean Scores of Questions on Learning Tool



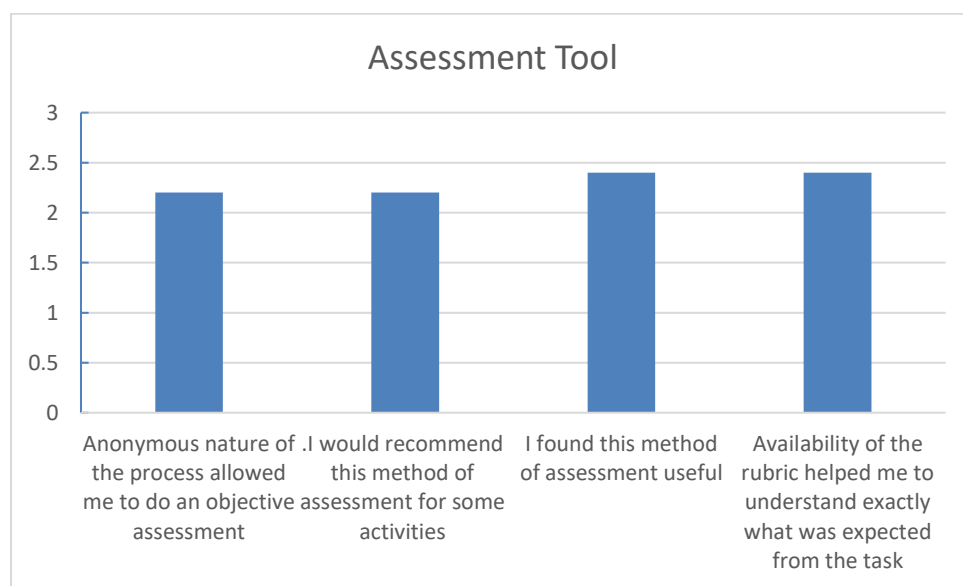
The highest score (2.5) was for the question which asked if peer assessment helped them look closely or understand what they should do to improve their performance. The high score here implies that learners indeed believed peer assessment guided or assisted them to identify the actions that they need to take to perform better.

The lowest score (2.1) was for the question that had asked whether peer assessment was more motivating than traditional assessments. This could be due to the reason that students feel less motivated whenever they are assessed, irrespective of the mode. However, since the score is above 2, it could be claimed that most of the students agreed that it was motivating when compared to teacher-led assessments. The mean scores of the other six questions ranged between 2.4 to 2.2 suggesting that subjects believed that this approach helped them identify their own mistakes and those made by others, learn from peers while assessing them, perceive learning critically and constructively, develop skills that would be beneficial in future, and perform better. Besides, they also believed that peer assessment benefits both the assessor and the test taker. The overall positive perspective of students on peer assessment as a learning tool is also reflected in their responses to the open-ended questions which are discussed later in the article.

Assessment Tool

The mean scores of the questions on the efficacy of this approach as an assessment tool ranged from 2.2 to 2.4 (Figure 3), indicating a positive view on the issue addressed here. Subjects' views indicated that they found this method of assessment to be beneficial, anonymous nature of the assessment helps to retain objectivity (not influenced by their relationship with peers), they recommended peer assessment for future activities, and sharing the rubric was most beneficial (2.4) to them as it helped them to understand the expected outcomes of the task. Hence, largely they believed that peer assessment was an effective assessment tool.

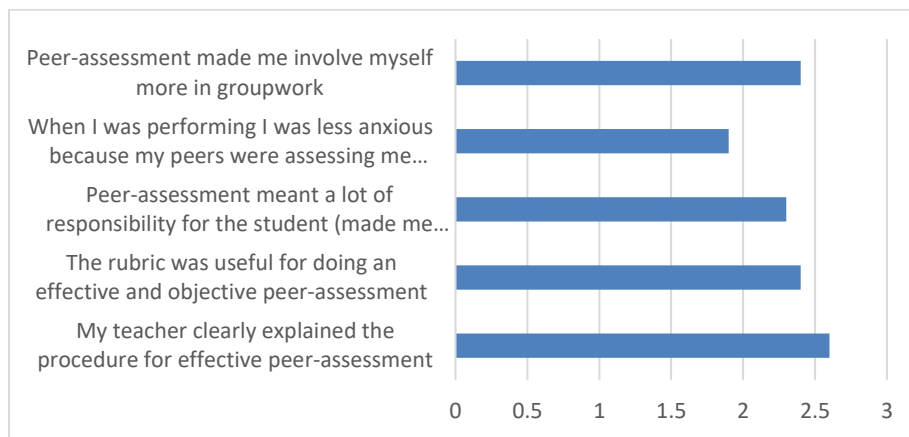
Figure 3: Mean Scores of Questions on Assessment Tool



The questionnaire also had five more questions to capture subjects' perspective on developing autonomy/learning responsibility and collaboration, affective factor (level of inhibition), effectiveness of the rubric, and teacher's ability to explain the activity. The mean score of each question is given in Figure 4. The average scores ranged between 1.9 to 2.6, suggesting a positive perspective of the subjects on the questions asked. For instance, their opinion was that peer assessment boosted collaboration among them by involving them more in the group activity (2.4). Subjects also reported that the availability of the rubric was crucial for doing an effective and objective assessment (2.4). They also claimed that peer assessment made them feel responsible, in other words, they reported about 'transfer of ownership' (2.3). Also, subjects'

opinion on teacher's explanation about the procedure of peer assessment was positive (2.4). However, contrary to the expectation, it was found that the teacher's absence in the assessment process did not reduce the level of anxiety in the subjects (1.9). This could be due to the reasons like learners are generally anxious about being assessed irrespective of the assessor, fear of being judged by the peer group, lack of confidence in speaking. However, further probe needs to be done to identify the reasons behind this opinion of the subjects.

Figure 4: Mean Scores of Questions



Open-ended Questions

Positives

There were four open-ended questions to gain more insight into subjects' opinion on peer assessment. The first question asked the subjects to share two positive aspects that they found about peer assessment. The responses to the questions were analysed using WordCounter, an open-source software, and Excel. Analysis of the responses of the subjects showed that the most common benefits of peer assessment which are given below.

- Learning from peers
- Increased collaboration
- Heightened involvement/active learning
- Self-reflection/ self-evaluation
- Critical thinking
- Fun
- Making friends
- Develop confidence

It is worth considering some quotes from subjects to illustrate their perspectives on the benefits of peer assessment.

You get to learn from others' mistakes, increases confidence.

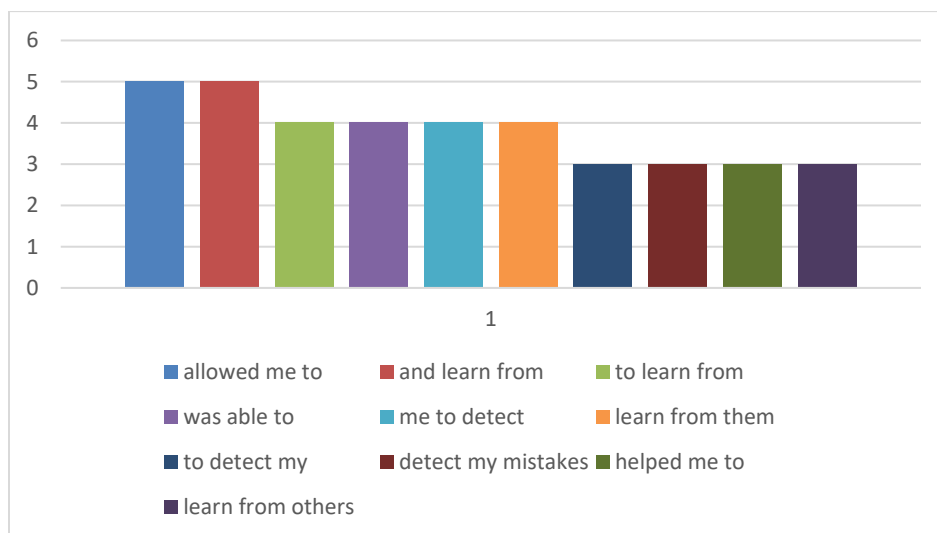
It was new type of assessment which helped me to learn from others mistake and adapt their good skills, involvement increased.

Positive aspect about the peer assessment was that I was able to learn from others mistake while I was evaluating so that I would be aware of not committing those kinds in future. Other thing I would highlight is that the whole discussion went on like a casual conversion but not with stressed atmosphere where we would be tensed to deliver, so here I had an opportunity to open myself.

Critical thinking and observation.

Trigram analysis (Fig. 5) was done to detect the most frequent phrases used in their responses. It is evident from this analysis that subjects perceived peer assessment as a learning tool. This corroborates with the results found in the mean scores of the questions on peer assessment as a learning tool.

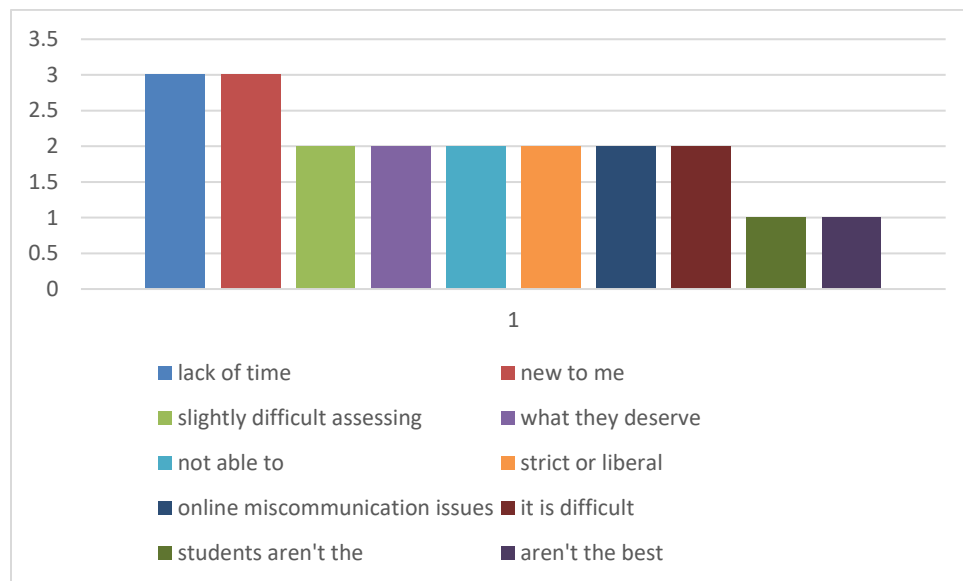
Figure 5: Positives about Peer Assessment



Challenges

Trigram analysis (Fig. 6) was done to detect the most frequent phrases used in their responses while reporting about the challenges they had faced during peer assessment.

Figure 6: Challenges of Peer Assessment



From the trigram analysis, the issues they reported about peer assessment could be segregated into categories like lack of time, unfamiliarity with this type of assessment, high responsibility, online/technical issues, and lack of trust o the ability of peers to evaluate. However, many subjects reported that they did not face any challenges during peer assessment.

Rubric

Feedback was collected from the subjects on the two rubrics that were used for peer assessment of the given tasks (group discussion and mock interview). The most frequent expressions were extracted from their responses to understand their views on the rubrics. Figure 7 illustrates a ‘Treemap’ to represent the subjects’ perspective on the two rubrics. Based on the most frequent responses of the subjects, it could be concluded that they were satisfied with the rubrics and did not suggest any major changes. However, the rubric used for group discussion was perceived a complex. A few quotations from their responses are given below.

It may be a little more detailed and less complex.

I think of just simplifying the marking scheme at least for the students to mark.

I think nothing to change, coz' it helped me a lot, working in groups. I felt very good and understood the reason behind the assignments given

The rubric helped me to understand the task and it is very helpful to do tasks and assignments.

Figure 7: Feedback on the Rubrics



Comments

To gather further data on their perspective on peer assessment, a comment section was added which was not guided by any specific question. The most frequent responses are given in a ‘Treemap’ in Figure 8. Based on the comments received from the subjects, it can be said that they appreciated the new approach, however, some of them found it complex as it was a new experience for them.

Figure 8: Comments



Conclusion

Peer assessment has been found to be an effective learning strategy for learners to construct their knowledge about a concept while assessing the performance of their peers. It is one of the useful strategies to engage in 'assessment as learning' that fosters active thinking and self-assessment via peer assessment. This process enables learners to reshape their thinking and eventually lead to critical thinking. This research aimed to find out if the students also believed in the efficacy of peer assessment as a learning tool.

This study attempted to explore the perception of students on peer assessment as a learning tool, and it has found that the subjects of the study had an overall positive perception of this approach. The findings of the study corroborate with the results of previous research on peer assessment (Boud & Falchikov, 2006; De Grez, Valcke, & Roozen, 2012; Ibarra-Sáiz, Rodríguez-Gómez, & Boud, 2020; Lladó et al., 2013; Vickerman 2009). Subjects stated that peer assessment helped them learn from others, enhance collaboration and participation, promoted self-evaluation and critical thinking, develop confidence, and was an enjoyable process of learning. The major issues that they faced were unfamiliarity with this mode of assessment, the issue with the modality, i.e., online assessment, lack of confidence in the appropriate evaluation of their peers and self. These issues could be resolved with adequate training and practice. Since the subjects perceived peer assessment as an effective tool for learning, this approach of assessment could be integrated into classroom evaluation practices along with teacher-led assessments. In the long run, this could build metacognitive and professional skills among learners that would benefit them in the future.

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Appendix A

QUESTIONNAIRE

	Questions	0	1	2	3
1.	My teacher clearly explained the procedure for effective peer-assessment				
2.	The rubric was useful for doing an effective and objective peer-assessment				
3.	Peer-assessment helped me look closely or understand what I should to do to improve my work				
4.	Peer-assessment meant a lot of responsibility for the student (made me more responsible				
5.	Peer-assessment allowed me to detect my own mistakes and learn from them				
6.	Peer-assessment allowed me to view learning critically and constructively				
7.	When I was performing (speaking) I was less anxious because my peers were assessing me instead of the teacher				
8.	This type of assessment has helped me develop skills that will be useful to me in my future career (evaluating projects, working in teams etc.)				
9.	Peer-assessment made me involve myself more in groupwork				
10.	Peer-assessment system was more motivating than the traditional system of teacher's assessment				
11.	Anonymous nature of the process allowed me to do an objective				

	assessment				
12.	I would recommend this method of assessment for some activities				
13.	I found this method of assessment useful				
14.	Peer-assessment that I have done will help other students improve their work				
15.	Peer-assessment allowed me to detect mistakes made by others and learn from them				
16.	I think peer-assessment helps both the performer (speaker) and the evaluator for improving				
17.	Availability of the rubric helped me to understand exactly what was expected from the task				
18.	My practice of assessing peers helped me perform better in this task or will help in future for similar tasks				
19.	Name two aspects you consider positive about this peer-assessment experience.				
20.	Name two difficulties or obstacles you found with the peer-assessment process				
21.	What would you change about the rubric? (if any)				
22.	Share your comments on peer assessment.				

0- Strongly disagree

1- Disagree

2- Agree

3- Strongly agree

Assessment Practices in Master's Degree at Tribhuvan University: What Do Pre-service Teachers Say?

Purna Bahadur Kadel

Department of English Education

Tribhuvan University, Nepal

Abstract

This is an attempt to study the existing assessment practices in master's degree at Tribhuvan University. The main objective of this study is to explore the existing assessment practices in master's degree at Tribhuvan University. Phenomenological research design has been adopted in this study in which 6 pre-service teachers were selected as a sample through purposive non-random procedure. In-depth-interview as a tool was administered to pre-service teachers to collect data. The findings of the study were assessment as a motivating tool, lack of uniformity in internal assessment, promoting self-regulated learning through assessment, enhancing learner autonomy through assessment, and required for revisiting existing assessment system. Furthermore, the curricula and existing assessment system are to be contextualized as per the interests of the stakeholders in the semester system in master degree at Tribhuvan University.

Keywords: assessment practices, phenomenological, motivating tool, uniformity, self-regulated, and learner autonomy

Introduction

Tribhuvan University (TU) has an attempt to develop university campus, Kirtipur as a center for excellence academically. It has introduced semester system in all master degree programmes in education, humanities and social sciences, management, science and technology and agriculture at University Campus, Kirtipur in 2014 with the aim of maintaining the quality as per the

international standard. The faculty members of each discipline of university campus at TU were assured to be provided additional honorarium of 50% of their salary by the incumbent University Authority; however, this assurance was only confined in words but not in action. TU extended semester system in master degree programs across Kathmandu Valley in 2017 and it further introduced the same programs across the country through its constituent and affiliated campuses in 2017. Semester system in master's degree in all the constituent and affiliated campuses across the country has been introduced since 2019 to produce efficient and professional human resources to fulfill the requirements of human resources in the country.

Examinations have traditionally dominated students' assessment procedures and the vast majority of current undergraduate courses continue to assess student learning by the end-of course examination (Scouller, 1998). Annual assessment system was failure to assess the actual efficiency and quality of the learners and it could not change their learning culture. The students who adopted rote-learning also did well in their examination (Biggs, 1973 as cited in Scouller, 1998). However, annual summative assessment cannot transform the assessment as a tool for learning.

TU has adopted internal and external assessment systems in the semester system to assess the abilities and qualities of students in constituent and affiliated colleges. The internal and external evaluation systems in each semester are being implemented. A Forty percent mark has been assigned for internal assessment. It is the main essence of semester system in master's degree in which three assignments are made provision to be implemented with 10 marks of each assignment in each semester. Furthermore, attendance of 80% of the learners of the total classes is made mandatory for the eligibility to appear in the semester end external examination. The attendance of 80% is allocated for 5 marks. To meet the objectives of the curricula of each semester, the presentation is allocated for 5 marks by each of the learner so as to develop their communicative competence and confidence on each subject. However, having allocated 60% marks for external evaluation is held at the end of each semester for each respective subject. The modality of internal assessment through assignment to test the learners' abilities varies in each department and discipline at university campus. Due to the lack of concrete policies from the Dean's office of Faculty of Education, there are inconsistencies in administering the formative assessment in each semester in constituent and affiliated colleges. The Faculty of Education

should play a vital role to navigate the constituent and affiliated colleges across the country regarding the appropriate concrete and transparent policies of assessment to produce efficient and vibrant pre-service teachers.

I have been teaching in the semester system since the launching of semester system at M.Ed at the university campus of TU in 2015. There is always controversy among the faculty members and students in administering the internal assessment in each semester. Furthermore, there is a lack of maintaining the uniformity of the internal assessment in terms of mode of testing the students' achievement, duration of assignment, maintaining the deadline of submission of the assignment and grading. The most striking issue of assessment in semester system is the administration of the external examination. Assessment has not been taken into consideration as a tool for learning by the students. Assessment is grading, reporting of the students' achievement, and supporting in their learning. Assessment refers to supporting for learning and certification.

Review of Literature

Assessment incorporates the summative and formative assessments. I have included theory of summative, formative assessment, assessment as a self-regulated learning tool, and practices of grading system across the world in this section.

Assessment

This study would be a great contribution and steppingstone in the field of assessment system to make policies for the nature of assessment and different abstract issues of testing in semester system. There is a symbiotic relationship between learning and assessment (Hernandez, 2012). Assessment is the only way to know whether what has been taught has been learned or not. It is a bridge between teaching and learning. The role of assignment is supporting and enhancing learning (Black & William, 1998). Assessment can be as making "judgement about students' work, inferring from this what they have the capacity to do in the assessment domain and thus what they know, value, or are capable of doing" (Joughin, 2009, p. 16). In fact, assessment is a type of evaluation of students' potential abilities and capacities to perform in their practical life. Students' learning is supported by setting appropriate tasks to assess their learning by focusing

on the process of learning and providing feedback that is effective by developing their autonomy (Carless, 2007).

According to Boud (2017), the main functions of assessment are: firstly, to contribute to certifying the students' performance through summative assessment which validates formally in terms of their achievements; secondly, to provide students with useful information, constructive feedback to aid their learning through formative assessment; and finally, to develop their self-judgment skills or self-monitoring ability regarding their own learning. In fact, assessment is a tool both to evaluate the performance of the students and to reinforce them in learning. It incorporates class work, home assignment, oral presentation, portfolio, project production, short quizzes, formal test, and examination (Berry, 2008). Assessment which provides prospects for meaningful learning is a crucial driver for students' learning (Carless, 2017). It should be able to engage and motivate the students in learning. So, both teachers and students should be accountable in learning through the thoughtful implementation of assessment. It should focus on the promoting and enhancing students' learning (Sambell, McDowell & Montgomery, 2013). Assessment tasks are to be conducive to stimulating students' learning appropriately. It has to incorporate formative assessment for learning and summative assessment for certification.

Summative and Formative Assessment

The main aim of summative assessment is to provide information on what the students have learned in each period of within content. This type of assessment is generally conducted at the end of the formal classroom instruction so there is no any chance to provide constructive feedback to the learners in this system of assessment. Summative assessment measures the degree to which larger goals or objectives have been gained. It depends on grade level and desired learning goals. It is more general than the formative assessment. Moreover, in summative assessment, assignments are designed to gather cumulative information on students' learning and assigning grades or marks to the students. Summative assessment is for review, transfer, and certification as well as accountability to the public.

However, formative assessment is to aid learning that is referred to classroom assessment for learning. According to Cizek (2010), formative assessment was coined by Scriven in 1967. It is administered midstream during some unit of instruction. The primary purpose of formative

assessment is to identify the students' strengths and weaknesses, to assign educators in the planning of subsequent instruction, to aid students in guiding their own learning, revising their work, and gaining self-evaluation skills and to foster increased autonomy and responsibility for learning on the part of the students (Cizek, 2010). Formative assessments are used to check students' learning process. It is ongoing process of learning activities during the academic session to improve learning (Abedi, 2010). Peer feedback, self-evaluation and teacher feedback are the main strategies to develop productive learning process (Carles, 2015). The self-assessment, peer assessment, and teacher's assessment are emphasized the learning enhancement and accountability of learners. Formative assessment consists of self-assessment, peer assessment, teachers' assessment of students' learning, and the administration's assessment of students' learning. Formative assessment is used to observe, evaluate, and monitor the learning process for the purpose of enhancing effective learning.

In this regard, Black and Wiliam (1998a as cited in Abedi, 2010, p. 182) state that "formative assessment as encouraging all those activities undertaken by teachers and by their students, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged". There are teachers' feedbacks that support students' self-regulation of learning which are: teachers need to formulate explicit assessment standards and help them form judgment of their own work; they can generate chances for students to generate feedback for themselves and peers; they can encourage teacher-students dialogues to understand and internalize feedback before acting on it; they should allow opportunities for students to take further action; and they need to promote positive motivating for learning (Nicol & Macfarlane, 2006). The assessments of learners are to be well designed, implemented, analyzed and interpreted them by the faculty members meticulously. Only then, the assessed assessment of learners will only be effective in providing teaching and learning (Muffo, 2007; Schilling & Schilling, 1998 as cited in Wang & Hurley, 2012). The research-oriented assessment help in order to promote the efficiency and impact on assessment practice (Banta, 2002).

Formative assessment is a progressive force in learning. It offers techniques of feedback on progress or process of reviewing and recording achievement (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Ecclestone and Pryor (2003) argue that formative assessment is an interactive pedagogy based on constructivist ideas about learning and integrated into a wide range of learning and supporting

activities. Self-assessments are important components of the learning process that should be understood in terms of how they influence where learners direct their study time and energy (Sitzmann, Ely, Brown, & Bauer, 2010).

Formative assessment has been regarded as a powerful weapon to enhance students' motivation and achievement. There is a positive relationship between formative classroom assessment and students' motivation and achievement on both classroom and large-scale assessment (Brokhart, 1997, 2007; Black & William 1998a; McMillan, 2004 as cited in Couley & McMillan, 2010). During the conducting formative assessment, the teacher can find out specific students' misunderstandings to provide feedback to students to help them correct their errors. Formative assessment has been categorized into low level formative assessment and high-level formative assessment. Low level formative assessment is rudimentary, but high-level formative assessment is marked by a complete dedication to fully integrating the characteristics into teachers and students' practice. Low level formative assessment is mostly planned, general, after the instruction of a unit, mostly prescriptive, and teacher determined; but high-level formative assessment is varied assessment, informal, spontaneous, specific, for low achievers, flexible, unplanned, teacher and student determined (Cauley & McMillan, 2010).

Formative feedback affects students' achievement goals. According to Brown (1999), feedback should have three components: what is going to be assessed, a judgment of the students' work needs to be provided, and the feedback given to students should help them to address the gap between what they know and what is expected to know by them. There are two kinds of achievement goals: performance goals and mastery goals. Performance goal can be enhanced through publicizing the results, comparing students' abilities and rewarding them who outperform others. However, mastery goals emphasize learning, understanding, improving, and mastering new skills. Teachers promote students' mastery goals through evaluating their progress, providing them opportunities to improve treating mistakes as a part of the learning proves, verifying evaluation, methods and making evaluation private (Ames, 1992; Patrick et al, 2001; Meece, Anderman & Anderman, 2006 as cited in Cauley & McMillan, 2010).

Students adopt mastery goals when evaluation (a) is tied to progress towards individual goals; (b) considers active participation; (c) provides positive feedback on strategies use (Kaplan & Maehr,

1999). There are five key practices to support formative assessment: provide clear learning targets, offer feedback about progress towards meeting learning targets, attribute student success and mastery to moderate effort, encourage student self-assessment and help students set attainable goals for improvement.

Assessment as Self-Regulated Learning Tool

Assessment is a tool to make the learners as self-regulated in their learning. Classroom assessment is thought to facilitate the development of self-regulative expertise which focuses on high quality feedback, use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies and opportunities for collaborative and independent problem-solving practice (Davis & Neitzel, 2011). In high quality feedback, the students will be self-regulated if they are provided with useful comments and feedbacks regarding grammar, content and writing which help them monitor their own performance and academic attainment independently. Cognitive and metacognitive strategies help them to be very thoughtful and self-monitor of their own performance and knowledge. Opportunities for collaborative and independent problem-solving practice are another self-regulated expertise which helps them to be self-regulated learners.

Brew (1999) argues that assessment must be made as an integral part of learning process so peer-assessment is a must in formative assessment to enhance the evaluative skills of the learners. Falchikov (2007) argues that the learners can develop lifelong learning skills including reflection, autonomy, self-efficacy, diplomacy, problem-solving and responsibility through peer-assessment.

Methodology

I followed a phenomenological research design in this study in which formative and summative assessments are regarded as phenomena for the learning and certification respectively in the semester system. The reality of this study is that if the formative assessment is motivating and adequate, it can be a learning tool. Administering of formative assessment can help the students to be as self-directed learners. The sources of knowledge on the existing practices of assessment at semester system are pre-service teachers who are learning in the fourth semester in the Department of English Education at Tribhuvan University. I administered in-depth-interview to

the pre-service teachers who have been incorporated in teaching and learning activities in the fourth semester. In-depth-interview was used as a tool to collect data to address the objectives of this study. I selected 6 pre-service English teachers (3 girls and 3 boys) who have been studying in the fourth semester in the department of English education, Tribhuvan University through purposive non-random sampling procedure to maintain the inclusive responses. I selected 2 respondents with grade 'A', 2 respondents with B+ and 2 respondents with grade 'B' in first, second and third semesters. The respondents were entitled as R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, and R6 in this study.

I respected the human rights of the pre-service teachers in course of conducting this study. I would like to assure the respondents that the data collected from them were secret and maintained confidentiality of the information. The personal right and freedom of respondents were also maintained in course of collecting data.

Results and Discussion

I transcribed each in-depth interview with the pre-service teachers meticulously with controlling my possible prejudice and biasness. Having coded and decoded the data, I developed 20 common basic themes out of 35 similar codes. Subsequently, I merged similar common basic themes into 10 organized themes. Eventually, out of 10 organized themes, I developed 5 global themes which are analyzed and discussed as follows:

Assessment as a Motivating Tool

Formative assessment is very helpful for learners to develop all of the soft skills and knowledge in the particular subject. Some of the assessments are assigned to the learners as group assignment. One of the respondents R1 argues that;

we were given more group work as an assignment than individual assignment in third and fourth semesters which help us to be close and to learn in one another in the group. We learn much better in collaborative work than in personal work. While collecting the data and theory for carrying out assignment, we were overwhelmingly excited to work together. We felt very delightful and pleasure in course of doing the assignment.

In fact, group assignment is very exciting and motivating. Motivation is one of the important factors in second and foreign language teaching and learning. The tutor in the semester system should be very smart and considerate while assigning the tasks for internal assessment. Motivating assignment should be assigned to the pre-service teachers. The respondents R2 states that;

of course, sir, these all assignments motivated me for further learning because, I have been engaged in searching, reading, writing, exploring, taking guidelines and suggestions to carry out the assignment before the expiring the deadline so formative assessment occurs before and during the instruction and mainly it should provide impetus for further study.

Formative assessment motivates the learners to explore referential books, theses and articles to make the assignment perfect in order to ensure the good grades. Internal assessment helps them promote positive motivation for learning (Nicol & Macfarlane, 2006).

Lack of Uniformity in Internal Assessment

There is a lack of uniformity of internal assessment in Central Department of Education, Humanities and Social sciences and Science and Technology at Tribhuvan University. There is no uniformity of internal assessment even within Central Department of Education. Internal assessment is distributed for 40 marks whereas external assessment is allocated for 60 marks. Each assignment is allocated for 10 marks of 3 assignments. Attendance and presentation are allocated for 10 marks of each 5 marks. In English Education department, first and second assignments are assigned the individual and group exploratory assignment whereas third assignment has been set for paper and pencil assessment. One of the respondents R4 states that ;

Most of the teachers assign us individual work; but some of them only assign us group work as assignments. In mathematic department, paper and pencil test as assignment is administered at the beginning of the semester as first assessment; however written examination as assignment is conducted prior to about a month of semester end external examination.

Teachers usually return the assignments with specific feedbacks and comments to the learners so that they could improve the further subsequent assignment. The primary purpose of formative assessment is to identify the students' strengths and weaknesses through the right feedback (Cizek, 2010). Some of the faculty members provide only general comments and feedback in their assignments. The learners cannot correct properly due to the abstract and vague feedbacks and comments provided by the teachers. There should be teacher manual regarding the internal assessment to guide the teachers with specific guidelines. In this regard, one of the respondents R6 states that ;

there is a lack of uniformity regarding the internal assessment in university campuses in the different departments. In the Faculties of Management and Science and Technology, students have got lowest grade is B+. However, most of the students in the Faculty of Education have got B which is unsatisfactory for us. If the students get B-, the certification is not issued.

There must be consistency of assessment in each semester. Faculty of Education should prepare the clear internal assessment guidelines of each semester for the constituent and affiliated colleges. There is no uniformity of internal assessment in the constituent and affiliated colleges of Tribhuvan University. There should be uniformity of awarding the grades to the learners. Tribhuvan University has not followed the actual semester system in its constituent and affiliated campuses. The university should observe the semester system and grading system at recognized universities at home and abroad. It should implement semester system as per context of our country to address the interests of stakeholders.

Self-Regulated Learning through Assessment

Formative assessment in semester system plays a vital role to make the learners self-directed. In course of doing assignment in different subjects, the learners are successful to select adequate source of books, and articles through browsing the different search engines like Wikipedia, libgin, google scholar, advanced googlesearch etc. to address the issues in the assignment as a self-regulated learner. One of the respondents R5 argues that;

assignments as formative assessment help me to be very resourceful and accountable to carry out my tasks. I would be concentrated on the assignment to make better than other colleagues. Of course, assignments help me to be very studious and hardworking. I consult the issues of the assignment with my classmates and roommates. I consult it in the library to make my assignment better than others.

In fact, internal assessments in the forms of different assignments are beyond the text and textual related tasks which make the learners become really researchers. Assessment is a tool to make the learners self-regulated in their learning. The respondent R6 states "since I joined semester, I have been studying beyond textbooks in order to widen the horizon of knowledge. I have developed writing for publication." Classroom assessment is thought to facilitate the development of self-regulative expertise which focuses on high quality feedback, use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies and opportunities for collaborative and independent problem-solving practice (Davis & Neitzel, 2011). Learners of M.Ed in English become self-regulated learners through the internal assessment in the forms of different assignments.

Enhancing Learner Autonomy through Assessment

Learner autonomy is essential to make the learners accountable to their learning to achieve the goal of achievement. The main objectives of the curriculum of M.Ed in English are to support the learners to be autonomous learners. In course of carrying out the assignment, the learners become responsible to accomplish their own assignment independently. One of the respondents R2 states that;

the assignments in first, second, third and fourth semesters help me to be autonomous learners. I have been accountable to my own study and conduct the assignment. This assignment makes me very cautious regarding my own learning. I did not take up any responsibility in learning during my study at bachelor level; however, having completed my third semester, I have realized as an autonomous learner.

Students' learning is supported by setting appropriate tasks to assess their learning by focusing on the process of learning and providing feedback that is effective by developing students' autonomy (Carless, 2007). Had the internal assessments implemented properly in semester system, the learners would be autonomous. Such pre-service learners would be the professionally sound prospective teachers who would be exemplary in the arena of English Language teaching in the future.

Revisiting Existing Assessment System

The assessment practice in the semester system in master degree at Tribhuvan University is running in the beginning phase. It takes time to get maturity in the culture of internal and external assessments. The faculty members are to be more professional academically to run the semester system smoothly. In this regard, one of the respondents R4 states that

the university authority decided to make the university campus as the center for excellence. The faculties who are assigned to teach in semester system are to be at least M.Phil and Ph.D holders with substantial number of publications at home and abroad. However, the quality of the passouts from semester systems are not as authority of university expected.

The existing practices in the semester system must be revisited meticulously. The authority of university has transferred the teachers who are with neither M.Phil nor Ph.D degrees from constituent colleges from the valley and out of the valley at the center departments. The passouts from the semester system in master's degree are the ambassadors of Tribhuvan University. One of the respondents R5 argues that

I expect improvements regarding the formative assessment; more interactive engagement between teacher and students and changing the professionalism of the teachers. Both teacher and students should dedicate in learning achievement. The teachers should adopt student-centered techniques, focusing on research-oriented assignment. Students are to be involved in the process of evaluation in the assignment in the internal assessment.

The present practices of grading system must be revisited to standardize the semester system in master's degree internationally. If the students intend to upgrade their grades, the Faculty of Education should offer them the opportunities to upgrade their grades. The faculty members at the university campus should be either M.Phil or Ph.D holders to make the teaching and learning more effective. More importantly, there should be the culture of involving students in the evaluation of their peer's assignments so that they can enhance their evaluative skills. The curricula of master's degree of each subject is to be revisited in order to incorporate the inclusion of students as the assessors of their peers' assignments. In this regard, Falchikov (2007) argues that the learners can develop lifelong learning skills including reflection, autonomy, self-efficacy, diplomacy, problem-solving and responsibility through peer-assessment.

Conclusion

The existing assessment practices in master's degree at Tribhuvan University are not satisfactory for various reasons, such as lack of uniformity in the internal assessment, failure to follow the academic calendar, failure to manage the professionally sound faculty members etc. However, internal assessment exerts positive influence on the pre-service teachers who have become self-regulated and autonomous learners. There should be revisiting the assessment practices in master's degree since the semester system begun 2014 so every 5 years, there should be modification of the curriculum, and assessment system in the semester system in master degree at Tribhuvan University. The students are to be incorporated in the process of formative evaluative system as assessors.

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Appendix

Guideline Questions

1. What do you think regarding the type of formative assessment of each subject that you got in each semester?
2. Do you think that each assignment motivate you further learning. If so, how?
3. Do you expect to get back your assignment with feedback and comments from your tutors? Share your experiences.
4. What improvement do you expect regarding the formative assessment in terms of nature, and creativity of the assessment in the department of English education for the improvement of learning of the students?
5. Are there any uniformity regarding the nature of assessment of each subject in the department?
6. How does the assessment help the learners to be self-regulated learners?
7. Do you think that assessment provide in the internal evaluation make the students become self-directed learners?
8. Could you give any model of assessment for the department of English education?
9. What are roles of self-assessment and peer-assessment rather than teacher assessment in formative assessment?
10. What type of formative assessment can develop all round aspect of students?

Teachers' Beliefs in developing Critical Thinking Skills Using Folktales in Ukhrul, Manipur

Timee Ronra Shimray

Ph.D Scholar

EFL University, Hyderabad

Abstract

Developing critical thinking skills is one of the major aims in the field of education. This paper aims to find out the beliefs of English teachers of Ukhrul town in developing critical thinking skills using folktales. A telephone semi-formal interview was conducted to attain the purpose of this study to eight English teachers at different schools handling classes from VI-XII. The questions were mainly focused on the importance of using folktales in developing critical thinking skills. The result of this study indicates that the use of folktales could help students to develop their critical thinking skills, motivates in learning the language and helps in acquiring cultural values.

Keywords: critical thinking skills, beliefs, folktales, develop, motivates

Introduction

Tangkhul is one of the tribes in Manipur and most of the Tangkul people settle in Ukhrul District. They are closely knitted with their culture, beliefs, customs, etc. Tangkhul people have many folktales and have been passed on from generation to generation. This happened because, since their great fore-fathers basic education for both boys and girls were given through folktales orally.

The importance of critical thinking skills is in demand not only at college level but also at school level. Almost all the schools in Ukhrul, Manipur, prescribe their own books from different

publications for classes VI-VIII and use books prescribed by the state boards from classes XI-XII and mostly it has separate Grammar textbook and English Reader. Folktale is generally known as people's stories where folk means a group of people and tale means a story and so it is everyone's story and has been passed on from generation to generation orally. As the time progresses, many folktales have been documented in a written form. According to Dawkins (2012), folktale is defined as "a story handed down by the oral tradition from mouth to ear among people..."

Advantages of reading folktales

Folktales depict the activities of human's daily life, especially people living in small villages and towns. It is familiar to teachers and students and so they can relate with their lives, thus it does not become hard to comprehend the lesson. Folktales revolve around the daily activities of humans. Students in Ukhrul are well familiar with farmers though they do not go to the field, the students are aware of weaving and the structure of the house and how it runs. When the stories revolve around what they have already seen and known, it is easier for the students as well as the teacher to learn and teach the terms or the situations.

Though we may see many familiar things in the stories, they have deeper meaning than most of the other stories (Mantra and Kumara, 2018). There are certain things one cannot understand just by mere reading. At times one has to find out the background, enquire the elders to get the accurate reasons or the answers, contemplate and understand the stories.

Reading folktales has a lot of scope to enhance critical thinking skills. Some of the sub-skills are interpretation, inferences, analysis, reasoning, evaluation and decision making. In many of the stories there are conflicts between characters, or some implicit meanings are given. When the students are given an opportunity to think and teach them how to think their critical thinking skills improve. (Mantra and Kumara, 2018)

Folktales are by nature varied (Mantra and Maba 2018). Reading folktales not only improves the grammar and vocabularies but also an opportunity to find out and be aware of their values, beliefs, practices, history and customs which have been observing since time immemorial. When

we read the story of Longmela (a Tangkhul Naga folktale), we came to know that there was a practice of 'Morung' where the youngsters lived and learned the basic education and other works. It was like a school of this time in those days. We also came to know that education for girls was not neglected. There were different dormitories for both boys and girls. It has a large scope to enhance reading skills (Mantra and Maba, 2018 & Westland, 1993). Reading involves thought and schema and these would help in reasoning and justification. And thus enrich the skills of reading.

It is also a powerful source of motivation for children (Mantra and Kumara 2018). Folktales are usually short and therefore do not bore the students because of the length. The length of the stories grasp the interest of the students before exhausting reading it. Mahanand (2003) "Folktales are ideal for language classes because of their practical length". Furthermore, stories involve the daily activities of humans and are familiar to many situations. Moreover, there are also characters who carried good personalities that could inspire the students.

Folktales engage the students with stories (Mantra and Kamara 2018) and could maintain proper classroom management. While reading, the children could be engaged by giving them an opportunity to infer, predict, reflect, etc. The teacher could make use of the folktale to carry the conversation or discussion in the classroom and creates a platform to practice thinking as well as speaking. Folktales carry moral values. When folktales are read to students, they would learn the values which are not there in other prescribed books.

Definition of critical thinking

There will be poor learning or no learning without good thinking skills. "The only capacity we can use to learn is human thinking. If we think well while learning, we learn well. If we think poorly while learning, we learn poorly" Paul and Elder (2005, p.10). There is a connection between thinking and learning. Teaching how to think is important for the teachers. Teachers can bring authentic materials as a supplementary reading in the classroom to help and teach how to think. Let us see some of the definitions of Critical Thinking. It has been defined by many thinkers and scholars.

According to Dewey, Critical thinking is an “active , persistent, and careful consideration of a belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds which support it and the further conclusions to which it tends”. (Dewey, 1909, p. 9 as cited in Fisher, 2001, p. 2)

Glaser defines as “(1) an attitude of being disposed to consider in a thoughtful way the problems and subjects that come within the range of one’s experience; (2) knowledge of the methods of logical enquiry and reasoning; and (3) some skill in applying those methods. critical thinking calls for the persistent effort to examine any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the evidence that supports it and the further conclusions to which it tends. (Glaser 1941, p. 5, as cited in Fisher, 2001, p. 3)

Ennis, (2013), defines critical thinking as “reasonable and reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do”.

Fisher and Scriven define critical thinking as the ‘skilled, active interpretation and evaluation of observations, communications, information and argumentation’ (Fisher and Scriven 1997, p. 20 as in Fisher, 2001, p.11).

Critical thinking is a contrast to traditional methods of teaching where information is one way. It is an ‘active’ process which means thinking by oneself and producing its own conclusions according to the reasons and claims given. It is also important to be thoughtful in finding and recognizing the problems and do ‘the logical enquiry and reasoning’ and make a decision. Fisher and Scriven said mere thinking is not critical thinking. Thinking needs to meet standard qualities such as clarity, relevance, reasonableness, etc and so they use ‘skilled’. Fisher and Scriven see interpretation as an important sub-skill to draw out the conclusions, evaluation for it is the process of checking the quality, merit, value etc. ‘Observation’ is nonverbal. It is required for interpretation and evaluation. Fisher and Scriven use the term ‘information’ which is the factual information and the term ‘communication’ which means going beyond factual information. Finally ‘argumentation’ presents the inferences based on reasoning for conclusions.

Why do we need critical thinking skills to be developed at school level?

According to Dewey, the aim of education is to learn how to think. Instead of teaching what to think, teachers should teach them how to think. For education should not end inside the

four walls. It is for lifetime, and it is needed by every individual every day. Teaching listening skill, speaking skill, reading skill and writing skill should not be teachers' only goal. *NCF* (2005, p.2) emphasized the basic concern of education is to "to enable to make sense of life and develop their potential, to define and pursue a purpose and recognise the right of others to the same...". Starting from how many pens and pencils they would carry, and in which bench they would sit, all these shape the starting of critical thinking skills. Students would have to decide which college and which streams they want to go to. The society needs critical thinkers to run the system we have. The big companies need critical thinkers. Mere knowing how to read and write are not suffice for the future every country dreams for.

"The function of thinking is to create meaning, make sense of the events of our lives, sort events into categories, and find patterns for us". (Aliakbari and Sadeghdaghighi, 2013)

Critical thinking should start from the school level and therefore, teachers themselves need to be good critical thinkers, giving ample of practices to students to become critical thinkers.

Method

The samples of the study are the English teachers handling classes V and above. There were eight teachers who willingly shared their teaching experiences and shared their perceptions if folktales were read to students or by students in the process of learning and acquiring skills.

The study was carried out through a telephone informal interview. The questions were planned carefully by the researcher. The informal interview was intended to reveal their beliefs and their opinions if folktales were introduced to students in the classroom in the process of learning and acquiring language and skills.

Findings and discussion

Sample 1: sample one teacher handles classes VI-VIII and teaches English. According to her any story would excite students and help them in improving LSRW and thinking skills.

Sample 2: sample two teacher handles classes VIII and above and teaches English in her school in Ukhrul town. According to him, Naga/Tangkhul folktales would help in developing thinking

skills of the students as well as other skills related to language learning because folktales would give them stronger background in comprehending the story and would help them in analyzing, reasoning and evaluation and which would also grasp their attention in these processes.

Sample 3: sample three teacher handles classes VI and above and teaches English. He believes that folktales as a great source of motivation in learning English. Folktale would give excitement to the students as it is related to them and folktale gives awareness to the students about the culture and practices of the community and helps students in the process of thinking as well. Therefore, all these would help students in not only learning skills and moral values but would help in improving their thinking skills.

Sample 4: sample four teacher handles classes VIII-X and teaches English. To him, learning and acquiring skills depends on the methods of teaching the teachers implement. He also supports that folktales would definitely help students in developing thinking skills as folktales depicts our daily activities and livelihood of the community and many incidences had happened and still happening for example the status differences between the rich and the poor as in *Maitonphy and Shimreishang*. This kind of existing differences in a community could be analysed and bring harmony in the society.

Sample 5: sample five handles higher classes i.e. classes XI-XII. He considered folktales would really play a great role in developing thinking skills. When he teaches a story which is not familiar to the students he brings related or similar stories and explains the stories. He also said that class IX students' thinking skills are slower when the unfamiliar stories are brought into the classroom. However, they could relate it once the teacher brings the related stories. He firmly believes that folktales (familiar stories) would help them in developing thinking skills. Folktales are rich in history and cultural background and there are many related ideas that they can still apply in their lives and in their daily activities.

Sample 6: sample six handles middle school and teaches English in her school. According to her, other unfamiliar stories are of great help in enhancing their imagination and exploring other cultures. At the same time the disadvantage is there as well, as the students are not familiar with

the new cultures, they might be demotivated and shun to learn. Therefore, folktales would help learning and enhancing their critical thinking skills as they are familiar with the stories and the activities in the stories and thus motivate them to improve their critical thinking skills.

Sample 7: sample seven teacher handles classes VIII-X and teaches English in his school. This teacher has a strong belief that folktales can really help students in enhancing their critical thinking skills and other skills. His students read folktales in the classroom in Tangkhul language and not in English. The students show great interest in reading their own folktales and they are doing very well in their first language. If folktales are read in English, they will do much better than they are now in developing critical thinking skills and other language skills.

Sample 8: sample eight handles classes VI-X and teaches English in his school. According to him, if folktale is read in the classroom, it will help students in enhancing their thinking skills, as folktale is very close to them. It motivates the students and would definitely help in discussion after the lesson. Therefore, it not only retains in the memory of the students but also can utilize it for discussion even at home. It could create a habit of discussion after class even for other subjects as well.

From the above, we know that familiar stories arouse interest and motivates the students to think and take part in the activities and give their attention to the stories. Most motivation theorists and researchers believe that motivation and learning go hand in hand in the process of teaching and learning. Reading folktales would help students to develop habits of thinking and discussion and this would help students to enhance their thinking skills.

“Motivation drives learners in reaching learning goals. It is important to recognize the fact that motivating learning is a central element of good teaching. This implies that learners’ motivation is probably the single most important element of learning”. (Filgona, J., Sakiyo, J., Gwany, D. M., & Okoronka, A. U., 2020)

Limitation

The samples were very limited and were done through telephone informal-interview to attain the purpose of the study due to Covid-19. The researcher could have done better by giving questionnaires, face to face interaction and classroom observation.

Conclusion

Reading folktales during the language class would motivate and help students in developing critical thinking skills which is the need of every individual not only in academic purposes but also in living their daily lives. Therefore, the use of folktales in the language class could be effective and feasible and utilize the authentic materials by the teachers. This would not only help in learning skills but give awareness about the cultures and values of the tribe and learn to live in peace and harmony.

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Multi-disciplinary Institutions in the context of NEP-2020: A Study of English Language Teachers in Gurukula Schools

Srinath Karnati

Research Scholar, Department of Education
EFL University, Hyderabad

Abstract

The NEP-2020 clearly states that multi-disciplinary institutions are imperative for the holistic growth of students in the education system especially in the context of globalization. The purpose behind multi-disciplinary approach to learning is that it expands the scope of prospects along with the creativity of the learner. The aim of the paper is to understand the level of awareness, perspectives and opinions of Gurukula English post-graduate teachers (PGT) on multidisciplinary approaches in Secondary Education (9, 10, 11, and 12) as proposed by National Education Policy, 2020. This study also attempted to gauge some of the current multidisciplinary teaching practices followed by the PGTs of English language. The data was collected through a questionnaire that consisted of both closed-ended and open-ended questions. On the whole twenty-three teachers participated in the study. The obtained provided responses were analysed by following the interpretative method. Findings of the study showed that the majority of the PGT teachers are positively inclined towards multidisciplinary approaches in the secondary phase of education. The conclusions of the research effectively demonstrate that organizations and institutions should allocate more time, energy and monetary support to multidisciplinary education as it would bear fruits both to the teacher and the learner in the near as well as the long run.

Keywords: NEP-2020, Multi-disciplinary, Globalization, English language teaching, Gurukula schools.

Introduction

English is a global language; the English language teacher plays a significant role in shaping the academic needs of student-learners venturing into other branches of knowledge. A student is empowered only when he or she learns a language in the spirit of multi-disciplinary thinking. Promoting multi-disciplinary thinking is of immense importance in the context of globalization in order to compete at national and international levels. Preparing English language teachers to think in multi-disciplinary ways will enable them to move towards institutions that prepare students for a global environment where employability skills are largely measured by one's ability to articulate using innovative strategies.

The current study has based itself largely on the definition of the term multidisciplinary as provided by Oxford dictionary: "combining or involving several academic disciplines or professional specializations in an approach to a topic or problem." An equally useful definition of the term is also provided by the Cambridge online dictionary: "[involving](#) different [subjects](#) of [study](#) in one [activity](#)". The definition is further elaborated as, "relating to or involving people from different types of work or who have different types of knowledge". What both these definitions have in common is included in the "fundamental principles" guiding the NEP-2020. According to the NEP-2020 there is a growing need for "multidisciplinary and a holistic education across the sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, and sports for a multidisciplinary world in order to ensure the unity and integrity of all knowledge" (NEP 2020, P.5). In other words, the aim of the NEP-2020 is to bring together different kinds of knowledge to ensure that there is inclusiveness in how we approach learning. Instead of being trapped in the narrow realms of one's own specialization it is important to include other disciplines as that would be an assurance for the all-round development of the human personality.

Rationale for the study

Gurukula schools consist of teachers and learners from extremely diverse socio-economic and cultural back grounds. Therefore, they are appropriate sites for us to find out the future possibilities of multi-disciplinary education. The underlying rationale of the study is to raise awareness in the teaching fraternity of the NEP-2020s vision of creating multi-disciplinary institutions that meet the present and the future demands of learners.

Methodology

For data collection, a questionnaire was designed considering two types of questions in mind. In the questionnaire there are two sections; section one focussed on fifteen YES/ NO questions and section two focussed on five open-ended questions. The sample of the study was Post-graduate English language teachers of Gurukula society, Telangana. Totally twenty-three teachers participated in the study. The provided responses were analysed by following interpretative method. The context of the interpretation is restricted to the responses given by the English language teachers. The study is entirely based in finding the extent to which the concept of multidisciplinary education could be usefully applied across institutions. Interpretative method as a tool of analysis is useful to understand the responses from language teachers who come from diverse social backgrounds. For the purposes of the study the researcher chose teachers from social welfare, minority welfare, tribal welfare, BC welfare and general society in order to ensure that the findings are as objective as possible and provide a consensus view with regard to multidisciplinary education. The study also included female teachers to ensure fair gender representation.

Objectives:

- 1) To encourage stakeholders to invest resources in multidisciplinary education
- 2) To ensure changes in the Curriculum making it more multidisciplinary in content
- 3) To promote multidisciplinary education across institutions

Research question:

- 1) What is the extent of awareness on multidisciplinary education among Post-graduate English language teachers of Gurukula society?
- 2) What are their individual views and opinions on multidisciplinary approaches in Secondary Education (9, 10, 11, and 12)?

Review of related literature

National education policy-2020 revamped the old education structure of 10+2+3 to 5+3+3+4. The Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, NEP-2020 Dr.Kasturirangan called it “an integrated yet flexible approach to education” (Draft NEP-2019, 28). The aim of the new policy is to “create an overarching integrated approach to education” (Draft NEP-2019, 29). The +4 in the above mentioned structure explains secondary phase of education (9, 10, 11, and 12). The policy mentioned, “this last phase of four years of secondary school education will facilitate multidisciplinary studies, preparing the students for the next phase of undergraduate programs” (Draft NEP-2019, 28). The policy also mentioned that this phase provides multiple entry and exit options to the students.

According to National education policy-1986 and 1968 policies the structure of education up to undergraduate level was 10+2+3. The +2 in the above mentioned structure explains intermediate education. The 1986 policy focussed on some sort of specializations like M.P.C, C.E.C etc. for a period of two years, preparing students for next specialization at under graduation levels such as B.A, B.Com, B.Sc etc. Although the learners were interested in other subjects they could not venture into them as the structure of the policy was restrictive in nature. Moreover, it did not provide any multiple entry and exit options to the students.

P. Aswini and Dr. R. Srinivasan (2016) focussed on understanding the nature and relevance of authentic multidisciplinary content in English language classrooms. In their paper they point out that, “Authentic multidisciplinary content provides a context for meaningful and interactive learning”. They also state that the amalgamation of concepts of other subjects while teaching English language helps the students to know how the language gets modified and is used in other life situations.

Research Study

Sl No	Yes/No questions	‘YES’ Responses	‘NO’ Responses	Data-Interpretation
1)	Do you know the fact that the National Education policy -2020 has been introduced recently?	22-Yes	1-No	Out of the twenty-three responses to this question, the provided data indicated that except for one all of them are aware of the NEP 2020. Based on these responses it is evident that almost all the teachers are aware of the New Education Policy 2020. In the view of the researcher, the “yes” indicates that the respondents have a general idea of the NEP 2020. However, it does not necessarily mean that the respondents have an in-depth awareness of the Policy.
2)	Are you aware of the fact that National Education policy -2020 emphasized on multidisciplinary education?	21-yes	2-No	Out of the twenty-three responses to the question only two of them were negative. The rest of them were aware of the fact that the Policy emphasized on multidisciplinary education. It is a good sign that teachers know about this fact. According to the researcher, since the majority of the teachers are aware of the fact that the policy emphasized multidisciplinary education, it highlights the other fact that there is

- 3) Do you know what multidisciplinary education means? 21-yes 2-No

enough public discussion on it.

Out of the twenty-three responses to this question, the provided data indicated that except for two, all of them know the concept of multidisciplinary education. According to the researcher, since the English language teachers know it, there is a possibility of the teachers using that knowledge in their teaching and consequently benefitting the students. However, based on this one cannot arrive at a conclusion that they know it and use it thoroughly.

- 4) Do you think it is beneficial to focus and promote multidisciplinary education? 22-yes 1-No

Out of the twenty-three responses to this question, the provided data indicated that except for one, all of them are of the opinion that it's beneficial to promote the concept of multidisciplinary education. Since the majority of the teachers expressed a positive opinion that it is beneficial, the researcher believes that the teachers are actively involved in incorporating multidisciplinary knowledge in their teaching. This attitude of the teachers definitely adds to the strength of the National Education

policy-2020.

5)	Did you ever feel that you missed the opportunity of multidisciplinary educational environment during your education?	17-yes	6-No	Out of the twenty-three responses to this question, the provided data indicated that seventeen teachers expressed that they missed the opportunity of multidisciplinary educational environment during their education. However, the remaining six teachers expressed the contrary. Based on this, the researcher understands that the majority of the teachers were not really satisfied with the teaching practices that existed in their schools in which they studied. This could be because of the insufficient exposure to new ideas on education at these institutions. However, a few teachers were okay with the educational ambience that they had received.
6)	Did you ever face a situation where in you had to move to other institute because of lack of multidisciplinary courses available in the institute that you were a part of	8-yes	15-No	Out of the twenty-three responses to this question, the provided data indicated that eight teachers had to shift to other schools as multidisciplinary option was not available to them whereas fifteen teachers did not feel anything as such. Based on this one can understand that the provision of

in?

multidisciplinary environment from school level itself would have been a better option. However, as most of the teachers felt alright with the education system that they were part of, this aspect needs to be discussed further.

7) Did you feel 11-yes 12-No
unhappy to move
to other institute
because of
unavailability of
multidisciplinary
courses available in
the institute that
you were part of?

Out of the twenty-three responses to this question, the provided data indicated that eleven teachers wished that there had been the availability of the courses that they wanted to study. Half of the teachers were okay to move to other institutes for the courses of their choice. The reasons are primarily institutional restrictions on the kind of courses that are available for any stream. For example, a student of political science cannot avail courses from other departments. The focus on over-specialization is another reason for a lack of multidisciplinary environment.

8) Do you believe that 22-yes 1-No
it is beneficial to
the English
language teachers
to know more

Out of the twenty-three responses to this question, the provided data indicated that except for one all of them believe that that it is beneficial to know more about

	about multidisciplinary educational teachingpractices?			multidisciplinary educational teaching practices. This indicates the interest of teachers towards knowing more about multidisciplinary educational teaching practices. This also indicates the importance of conducting more teacher training programsand workshops that focus on multidisciplinary educational teaching practices.
9)	Do you have 19-yes awareness about 4-No multidisciplinary educational teaching practices?			Out of the twenty-three responses to this question, the provided data indicated that except for four all of them are aware of multidisciplinary educational teaching practices. The Researcher believes that the result of English language teachers having an awareness of multidisciplinary educational teaching practicesis that the classes are lively and informative. However, based on their ‘YES’ response one cannot arrive at the conclusion that they have an in- depth knowledge of it.
10)	Do you give 23-yes examples from 0-No different branches (Mathematics,			Out of the twenty-three responses to this question, the provided data indicated thatall of the sample teachers are already following

	science, philosophy etc...) while teaching English language?			themultidisciplinary teaching approach in some or the other form. Despite the fact that some of the teachers do not know the name of the concept, they are already incorporating it in their teaching. Therefore, if they are provided sound training in multidisciplinary teaching, they may perform even better.
11)	Do your students involve more when you use multidisciplinary examples in your English language teaching?	22-yes	1-No	Out of the twenty-three responses to this question, the provided data indicated that except for one all the English language teachers informed that the students were proactive when the teachers gave multidisciplinary examples in the classroom. This highlights the fact that multidisciplinary teaching approach results in better teaching and learning. Hence, it is a reminder of the importance of teacher training for promoting multidisciplinary teaching.
12)	Do you believe that the English language teachers, knowing more about multidisciplinary	22-yes	1-No	Out of the twenty-three responses to this question, the provided data indicated that except for one all of them believe that for English language teachers to know more about multidisciplinary educational

educational
teaching practices
creates better
learning scope for
the learners?

teaching practices creates better
learning scope for the learners.
Therefore, it is very important to
equip English language teachers
with the knowledge of
multidisciplinary teaching practices
so that learners benefit more. The
overwhelmingly positive responses
reflect favorably on the mind-set of
the teachers who are progressively
inclined to support
multidisciplinary teaching
practices.

- 13) Do you think the 22-yes 1-No
multidisciplinary
educational
environment helps
the students choose
better career
opportunities?

Out of the twenty-three responses
to this question, the provided data
indicated that except for one all of
them are of the opinion that
multidisciplinary educational
environment helps the students to
opt for better career prospects.
Since majority of the teachers
believe that it helps the students,
the teachers may incorporate these
types of examples in their English
language classes. Students may
have better understanding of other
areas such as social issues,
philosophy and history etc. when
they are exposed to
multidisciplinary teaching

14 Do you want to improve your knowledge about multidisciplinary educational teaching practices? 22-yes 1-No

practices.

Out of the twenty-three responses to this question, the provided data indicated that except for one all of them want to improve their knowledge about multidisciplinary educational teaching practices. This shows the keenness of the teachers to enhance their knowledge. Based on this, one can also understand that the majority of the teachers are willing to update their new teaching practices.

Since majority of the teachers expressed their interest in improving their knowledge of other disciplines it can be understood that we need to bring systemic changes by introducing flexible environments that allow open-ended exchange of ideas between departments.

15 If you are given an opportunity to teach other subjects (History, Law, Sociology etc...) are you willing to take up the 19-yes 4-No

Out of the twenty-three responses to this question, the provided data indicated that nineteen teachers are willing to teach other subjects apart from English language while four teachers are not okay with it. Majority of the teachers are okay to

opportunity?

shift from English language to other subjects. The reason for this willingness to venture into other avenues is because of their desire to acquire and expand their knowledge base. But, a few of them are not inclined to do so. This may be because of their passion towards English language teaching or that they may not be as comfortable with other subjects as they are with English.

1) What kind of multi-disciplinary practices do you follow in your teaching?

As a researcher based on responses I observed that though the teachers by and large use multidisciplinary practices while teaching English language it is important that they are given a more structured and theoretical foundation in multidisciplinary teaching practices. My observation is supported by the previous responses of the respondents. For an example, one of the respondents mentioned that he/she brings in “divergent ideas to discuss particular topic” while another said that he/she provides “examples connecting to the current issues”. Based on these responses it can be deduced that with more conceptual clarity, the teachers can be empowered to do more in the class.

2) How do you think that the multidisciplinary educational environment is beneficial to the teachers?

As a researcher, based on the provided responses I understood that some of the teachers are of the opinion that multidisciplinary educational environment improves their creativity, enhances enthusiasm and consequently class performance. Some of the other teachers are of the opinion that their knowledge and skills get updated. For an example, one of the respondents mentioned

that- “It leads to the holistic approach to reach the level of the students” while other mentioned that “it might not make an individual a master of all but it surely provides an individual a minimum knowledge of mélange of domains”. Some of the other teachers mentioned that it creates more scope to learn in short time, and the students get more information. Based on these responses one can understand that all almost all of the teachers are positively inclined towards a multidisciplinary educational environment.

3) How do you think that the multidisciplinary educational environment is beneficial to the learners?

As a researcher, based on the provided responses I noticed that some teachers said that in the multidisciplinary educational environment the learners become more attentive and it makes the learning process easy, interesting and better and also more learning occurs in less time. Some of the other teachers said it helps learners to develop divergent thinking, and also prepares them for manifold job opportunities. For example one of the respondents mentioned that “it develops the social and civic sense” while the other said that the “learner could choose the best possible area in which he/she can excel themselves. Some teachers said that it develops creativity and also helps them to comprehend better the relationship between subjects and use it in their lives”. Based on these positive responses it can be suggested that the more the multidisciplinary educational environment the better the learners’ holistic growth. Therefore, the governments should invest more time and energy in order to bring relevant changes in the education system.

4) How did you feel when you have to move to other institute because of lack multidisciplinary courses available in the institute that you were part of?

As a researcher, based on the provided responses I understood that some of the teachers were not aware of it when they did their education. However, the majority of respondents felt disappointed, unhappy, and inconvenient and tensed when they had to move to other institutes. It could be because of several reasons such as the ambience of their old place, human relations with people, facilities available etc. Only a few of the respondents saw it as an opportunity to explore something new. The data indicated that the majority of the respondents preferred to have education in multidisciplinary environments. Therefore, policy-makers can enable the creation of

this kind of educational ambience so that many would be satisfied with their teaching and learning.

5) What can be done to promote multidisciplinary courses in the teaching community?

The responses indicated that majority of the teachers expressed the opinion that infrastructures and basic amenities need to be provided to teachers so that teachers can focus on effective teaching. Some of the respondents mentioned that awareness needs to be raised through seminars, conferences and workshops. However, half of the respondents emphasized on the importance of training. For example, one respondent mentioned that “teachers should have freedom and be encouraged to use the methods and materials that suit the class” while the other respondent said that teachers’ intrinsic desire and motivation are important for development. Based on this I can say that the promotion of multidisciplinary teaching practices would become fruitful only when there is proper inclination and coordination between the teachers and the system.

Findings

The findings revealed that majority of the teachers are aware of the National Education Policy and multidisciplinary education that the policy spoke about. However, based on the subsequent responses of the respondents it is understood that the teachers do not have an in-depth knowledge of the concept and policy. Similarly, the majority of the teachers have expressed a very positive opinion of multidisciplinary approaches in Secondary Education. Findings also revealed that many of the teachers follow multidisciplinary practices to some extent similar to CILL and STEM etc. It does not necessarily mean that they are doing it thoroughly. At the same time there are teachers who do not know much about multidisciplinary teaching practices. The findings broadly indicate that there is enormous scope for intervention by governments and stakeholders to do much more for the creation of multidisciplinary environments.

Recommendations

Based on the responses it is observed that, providing training pertaining to multidisciplinary teaching practices would empower the teachers more. There is a great deal of participant willingness to globalize educational environments to make them more and more inclusive,

diverse and holistic. Policy-makers could capitalize on the human element by channelizing the motivation of teachers and students by introducing more training and development programs.

Conclusion

This is both a theoretical and data-based study carefully examining how teaching and learning could achieve global standards in educational institutions. One of the ways in which this could be done is by promoting multidisciplinary education as emphasized in the NEP-2020. The NEP-2020 succinctly states that multidisciplinary education is both our past as well as our future:

“A holistic and multidisciplinary education would aim to develop all capacities of human beings -intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, and moral in an integrated manner. Such an education will help develop well-rounded individuals that possess critical 21st century capacities in fields across the arts, humanities, languages, sciences, social sciences, and professional, technical, and vocational fields; an ethic of social engagement; soft skills, such as communication, discussion and debate; and rigorous specialization in a chosen field or fields. Such a holistic education shall be, in the long term, the approach of all undergraduate programmes, including those in professional, technical, and vocational disciplines.” (NEP-2020, 36)

Not enough work has been done in the area of multidisciplinary education and its implications for teachers and learners in the classroom. The limitation of this study is that its sample is confined to English language teachers. However, further studies can go into other areas of knowledge in order to explore its utility. Longer research projects could be taken up with larger and more geographically diverse samples.

This paper provides the direction for future studies by showing that multidisciplinary environments can achieve global standards if favorable conditions are created in educational institutions

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Benefits of Content and Language Integrated Learning with Reference to Pedagogical Challenges in Teaching English

Dandu Harish

Research Scholar, EFL University

Abstract

English Language Teaching seems to be a problem when it comes to Teaching-Learning process of it as a foreign language or second language. Especially, in countries like India where its population is huge, and classrooms are usually large. Indian classrooms are the miniature of the nation with a lot of diversity. Despite seemingly appropriate curriculum, proper planning, and well-qualified teachers, the teaching-learning process sometimes seems to be futile when the actual skill development is not happening as expected. Whenever a new method comes in to light it usually comes up with the fulfilment of the gaps of the previous method. In India, when it comes to English language teaching still the same age-old methodological usages are in practice which are teacher- centered. Some of those methods are not aiding students to express their own subject thoughts using English language. In EF EPII world survey for proficiency, India got 20 rank which indicates high proficiency, in 2015, and 34th rank in 2019 that indicates moderate level of proficiency. As the English language levels of proficiency is decreasing year by year, there is an urgent need to bring changes in our language teaching methodological practices. This paper attempts to find a solution to address the Pedagogical challenges that the teachers are facing. Especially, with reference to Teaching and Learning English by suggesting an innovative approach that is Content and Language Integrated Learning. CLIL is a dual-focused educational

approach in which an additional language is used for the Learning and Teaching of both content and language.

Key words: Content and Language Integrated Learning Second language; foreign language; and (CLIL).

Introduction

Language is a medium through which human beings communicate. Mostly by using language, exchange of ideas, knowledge, beliefs, opinions, and information etc. take place. According to Noam Chomsky (1965) Children are born with an innate ability to learn any human language. He also claims that certain linguistic structures which children use so accurately are already imprinted on the child's mind. Since, the language is used for many purposes, the role of language teaching and learning became very significant. Therefore, to create interest among learners in terms of language learning, the teachers should be well equipped with innovative teaching-learning methodologies.

In India, in terms of teaching and learning process of content subjects and languages there are many methods and approaches. So as in the English languages teaching and learning process, such as Grammar translation, Direct-method, Bilingual method, Community language learning and Cooperative learning and so on and so forth. The above-mentioned methods and approaches assisted the English language teaching and learning process to some extent. India is well known for its multilingual-cultural-social classrooms. Considering these multi-facets how best the nation is going to use them for the development of Education is a huge challenge ahead. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language.

Pedagogical challenges in Teaching and Learning English in India

In teaching learning process, the student- teacher and the school-society relationships play a very significant role as school is the miniature of a society. The policy makers take considerations of different types of organizations and committees from society to prepare as best policies as

possible. The new National Education Policy 2019 aims to transform the curriculum & pedagogy by 2022 to bring holistic development among learners. In spite of the efforts by the policy makers and teachers to implement policies yet the outcomes are not as expected since there are very less good methodological practices. Therefore, there is a dire need to work in this area to provide better Quality of Education.

In India's population half of the percentage are youth. They fall between 20 to 30 age group. If this youth is trained properly with quality education, they can contribute to the development of the nation in a better way. According to India Today news article, almost 30 million youth are added to the country every year in which 60 per cent is from rural areas only. But, the present pedagogical innovations are very much applicable to the improvement of urban education while rural learners are neglected. If this rural and urban youth are not treated equally how they are going to contribute to the development of the nation. Keeping this in mind the 'first language policy (1970) emphasized three language formula. But it was implemented like a programme not a policy says NCERT (1986).²

The main pedagogical challenges for teaching English are;

- Lack of Cultural aspects in the teaching English
- Teachers' teach-language v/s students' speak-language at school
- Lack of collaborative work within the institution & among teachers
- Teachers prioritize performance of content subject over language

CLIL as alternative Approach

CLIL at India is a 3-year project co-funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ Program. They are associated with universities such as Pondicherry, UCLM, Chitkara, and Manipal Universities in India. It is further aimed at developing a new model of bilingual and multilingual education by introducing 'Content and Language Integrated Learning' (CLIL) as an innovative pedagogical practice in the Indian education system for preserving the nation's multilingualism. Mc.Dougald (2009) argues that the subject teachers those who deal with content they should be

given more opportunities with language teaching and learning to incorporate language skills in students.

After the research of three years, CLIL at India finds that CLIL is very much needed to develop languages and encourage local languages, similarly NEP1 2019 also emphasizing to save India's rich native languages. The main components of CLIL is 1. Culture 2. Content 3. Cognition and 4. Communication. These 4 Cs are very much close to multilingual and multicultural Indian society and Education, and they need to be implemented as soon as possible to achieve certain goals.

Content: National Curriculum Framework (NCF-2005) recommends the use of students' local language, traditions skills including tales, and proverbs in the textbooks. Providing them with the home environment is very much needed to stimulate learning interest among learners.

Culture: Pluri-cultural and pluri-lingual nation India always needs approach like CLIL. This culture ensures a shared sense of community and increased empathy towards other people.

Communication: National Education Policy 2020, says students learn and grasp very soon, if the concept is non-trivial in their home languages. In the same way, the CLIL approach, in a language class encourages the teacher to use the home language of the learner and encourage multilingualism.

Cognition: as research proved children pick up a new language extremely fast between 2 to 11 years and their multilingualism has great cognitive benefits to the learners.

Relevance of the study

This paper aims at integrating the NEP 2019's3 proposal of encouraging multilingual education and CLIL to bring out better English language learning outcomes. As NEP 2019 says, India has the rich heritage of ancient knowledge, culture and language guiding light for the policy, in this sense how best policymakers utilize nation's rich heritage and culture to develop the nation is important. India is one of the countries which signed and promises to achieve 17 global goals by 2030. In that 4th important global goal is Quality Education. These all 17 global goals are interrelated to each other, with this 4th goal there is a chance of achieving the other goals.

Objective

To find out the Teachers interest in using CLIL for their teaching & learning process in terms of below aspects:

- Language and Non-language subjects
- School teacher and
- National Education Policy Draft 2019

Methodology

	t-test for Equality of Means						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	-2.008	8	.079	-2.20000	1.09545	-4.72610	.32610
TOTALD1	-2.008	6.735	.086	-2.20000	1.09545	-4.81110	.41110
Equal variances not assumed	-1.622	8	.143	-2.20000	1.35647	-5.32802	.92802
	-1.622	7.996	.144	-2.20000	1.35647	-5.32827	.92827
Equal variances assumed	-2.613	8	.031	-3.20000	1.22474	-6.02427	-.37573
TOTALD2	-2.613	5.470	.044	-3.20000	1.22474	-6.26859	-.13141
Equal variances not assumed	-1.897	8	.094	-1.20000	.63246	-2.65845	.25845

Equal variances assumed	-1.897	5.369	.112	-1.20000	.63246	-2.79273	.39273
TOTALD3	-1.423	8	.193	-1.80000	1.26491	-4.71689	1.11689
Equal variances not assumed	-1.423	5.496	.209	-1.80000	1.26491	-4.96526	1.36526
	-2.361	8	.046	-10.60000	4.48999	-	-.24607
Equal variances assumed	-2.361	7.974	.046	-10.60000	4.48999	20.95393	-.24010
TOTALD4						-	
						20.95990	
Equal variances not assumed							
Equal variances assumed							
TOTALD5							
Equal variances not assumed							
GRAND Equal variances assumed							
TOTAL Equal variances not assumed							

The researcher adapted questionnaire and did some changes, researcher followed an email questionnaire method to collect the data from teachers by creating a google form. The researcher prepared a five-point scale questionnaire; this questionnaire has five dimensions. Such as follows

1. CLIL material 2. Collaborative learning 3. Content 4. Future CLIL and 5. LSRW

The data collected from 10 teachers from south India who got training on CLIL. In this group of a sample, teachers from government schools, University Teachers and research scholars were

chosen. These teachers had an experience with both traditional methods and the CLIL approach in their teaching.

Results and Discussion

Based on the descriptive analysis of the data on the research variable “designation” of the teachers, it is inferred that each of the five dimensions of school teachers mean value is less than the University teachers. The calculated p-value is 0.046 less than at 0.05 level of significance. It means that there is no significant mean difference exist between schoolteachers and university teachers on the opinions of CLIL approach.

4 Table Showing of t-test and degrees of freedom and significant values for Designation

Dimension-1:

When looked at individual dimensions, the dimension-one calculated p-value is 0.079 greater than 0.05 level. Hence, there is no significant difference between schoolteachers and university teachers on the opinions of CLIL materials. The test results find that there is no difference in using CLIL materials for language teaching by the University and School Teachers.

Dimension-2:

In the second dimension, the calculated p-value is 0.143 greater than 0.05 level of significance. This explains that there is no significant mean difference in school teachers and University teacher on the opinions of Collaborative learning. Both teachers believe that Students’ participation is very much high when learning is happening as a group activity. These interactive activities, with the students in the group, resulted in greater learning and motivation.

Dimension-3:

In the Third dimension the calculated p-value 0.044 is less than 0.05 level of significance so, there is no significant mean difference in school teachers and university teachers on the opinions of LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) skills. University teachers believe that their students improved a lot in terms of English language proficiency skills after the use of CLIL approach.

Dimension-4:

In the dimension-four, the calculated p-value is 0.094 greater than 0.05 level of significance. It means that there is no significant mean difference in School teachers and University teachers on the opinions of CLIL content.

Dimension-5:

In the last dimension the calculated p-value is 0.193 greater than 0.05 level of significance. Here also there is no significant mean difference in School teachers and University teachers on the opinions of future CLIL. The teachers together accepted and prefer to use the CLIL approach in future in both school and university levels.

For the variable subject, it is inferred that in each of the dimension the mean of the Language subject is greater than Non-language subjects. And the overall calculated p-value is

0.121 greater than at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, there is no significant mean difference between Language subject teachers and Non-language subjects teachers in using CLIL in their teaching and learning.

	t-test for Equality of Means						
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	1.702	8	.127	2.00000	1.17482	-.70915	4.70915
TOTALD1	1.671	6.161	.145	2.00000	1.19722	-.91108	4.91108
Equal variances not assumed	.422	8	.684	.66667	1.57839	-2.97311	4.30644
Equal variances assumed	.426	6.788	.683	.66667	1.56347	-3.05387	4.38720
TOTALD2	1.426	8	.192	2.16667	1.51955	-1.33742	5.67075
Equal variances not assumed	1.560	7.993	.157	2.16667	1.38844	-1.03556	5.36889
Equal variances assumed	2.936	8	.019	1.58333	.53926	.33980	2.82686
TOTALD3	3.348	7.700	.011	1.58333	.47288	.48545	2.68122
Equal variances not assumed	2.073	8	.072	2.41667	1.16555	-.27110	5.10443
Equal variances assumed	1.906	4.852	.117	2.41667	1.26765	-.87197	5.70531
TOTALD4	1.736	8	.121	8.83333	5.08692	-2.89712	20.56379
Equal variances not assumed	1.839	7.705	.105	8.83333	4.80220	-2.31485	19.98152
Equal variances assumed							
TOTALD5							
Equal variances not assumed							
GRAND Equal variances							

assumed							
TOTAL	Equal variances						
not assumed							

Figure 2. t-Test for subject5

Dimension-1:

In dimension one the calculated p-value is 0.127 greater than at 0.05 level of significance so, there is no significant mean difference in the opinions of CLIL materials for the variable Language and Non-language teachers.

Dimension-2:

In the second dimension, the calculated p-value is 0.684 greater than at 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is no significant mean difference between Language subject teachers and non-language subjects' teachers experience in Collaborative learning. By using CLIL, both the subject teachers accepted that collaborative learning can motivate students to learn the English language.

Dimension-3:

In the third dimension, the calculated p-value 0.192 is greater than 0.05 level of significance. This reveals that there is no significant mean difference in LSRW skills. In this sense, both the language and non-language teachers believed that with help of the CLIL approach there is a high possibility of developing English language proficiency.

5 Table Showing of t-test and degrees of freedom and significant values for variable Subject

Dimension-4

In dimension four the calculated p-value 0.019 is less than at 0.05 level of significance so there is no significant mean difference between Language and Non-language subjects' teachers on content-based learning. This reveals that language subject has more chances of learning a language with the help of content than Non-language subjects. There is a positive attitude of the Language teachers more in comparison to the Non-language teachers to use CLIL approach.

Dimension-5

In the final dimension, the calculated p-value is 0.117 greater than at 0.05 level of significance. Which means that there is no significant mean difference between Language teachers and Non-language teachers on the opinion of future CLIL. It means both the subject teachers accepted the CLIL approach teaching and learning.

Implications of the study

- CLIL can be used as effective method of teaching to improvise the English language skills and the subject matter too
- Irrespective of Language and Non-language subject, we can prefer the CLIL approach than other traditional methods.
- That this CLIL approach can be better used effectively in both University and School levels
- CLIL is the approach makes the students present in the class, activities are the best way to engage the students, and both the language and Non-language teachers can make use of them in this approach.

Limitations of the study

CLIL is a new approach in the Indian context, it was introduced only five years ago. Therefore, it was difficult to collect data from a large sample. This study is limited to only Southern part of Indian states such as Telangana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry.

Conclusion

In India, most of the schools affected by the above mentioned pedagogical challenges, especially when it comes to English language learning. CLIL gives much importance to the cultural aspects, it further gives importance for the multilingual education. With this CLIL curriculum students' active participation and peer teaching and group activities take place more. One subject to other subject teachers work collaboratively for fruitful results. According to this Language and No-language teachers should work together to integrate language and content. The stakeholders of Indian education can make an attempt to administer the CLIL approach considering its proven success in the European Countries. There are many factors to be considered and, indeed, explored when considering how to implement CLIL—whether partially, fully, or even not at a

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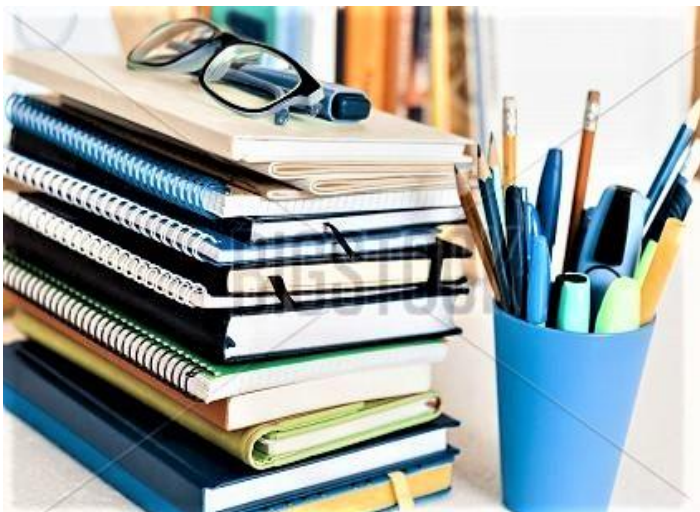
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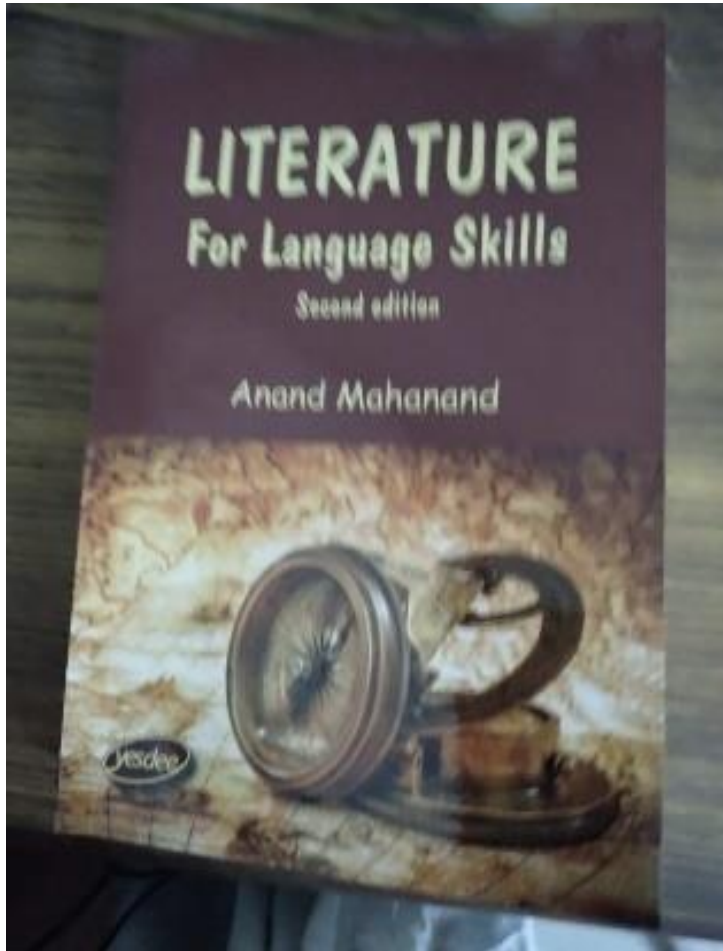
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Book Reviews

Book Review – I



Literature for Language Skills

Second Edition

Anand Mahanand

Yesdee Publishing Pvt Ltd, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. 2020

ISBN: 978-93-88005-47-0

Pages:191

Price: Rs 195/

In an age of digitalization and skill development; the book *Literature for Language Skills* is indeed a useful resource for language learners and teachers to enhance one's language skills by using literature. The primary focus of the book is to make the teachers and learners of English enhance their basic language skills like listening, speaking, reading and writing by using different genres of literature like a story, novel, poetry, play, autobiography, essay, travelogue etc. Moreover, the book highlights how literary texts can be used as authentic materials for language classes; more specifically for English language classroom activities. This book is a resource book for the teachers of English which will help them to sensitize the learners of the different types of texts and contexts, especially in multilingual contexts. Designed as a resource book; this can be used to help both the teacher and learner autonomous while developing their language skills.

Divided into five chapters, the book is not only innovative but also keeps track of the present need of the time where language enhancement and skill development are given the utmost priority for the academic performance of the learners as well as for obtaining the desired job. As Prof. B N Patnaik rightly mentions in the Forward of the book; the author, Anand Mahanand“...has chosen extracts from literature carefully, keeping in view their interest value and literary quality. These belong to various genres and thus introduce the students to different styles of discourse”.

The first chapter of the book is titled “Understanding Literature” where the emphasis is given on ‘understanding the concept of literature’, its definition, ‘the relationship between Language and Literature’ and ‘Literature and Language Classroom: The Indian Context’. This chapter acts as a passport to access different uses and functions of literary pieces in developing language skills; having the interconnection between literature and language; proceeding further to have the discussion on literature in the language classroom in the Indian context with an emphasis on the methodological shift to CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) with a suggestion to integrate literature with language teaching followed by language learning activities.

Titled as “The Role of Literature in the Language Classroom” the second chapter underlines the reasons for using literary pieces as authentic materials, be it ‘encouraging’, ‘motivating’ in developing learner’s language awareness, language acquisition and interpretative abilities. This chapter provides a few steps in literary appreciation followed by some suggested activities for appreciating a text like analysis of theme, structure, logical development, intertextual link, inference and figures of speech.

The third chapter of the book is titled “Forms of Literature and Their Potential for Language Education”. In this chapter examples of stories, novel, poetry, play, essay, autobiography and travelogue are used to enhance different language skills like listening, speaking, reading, writing skills of the learners. “The Three Little Goats”, “The Fox and the Crow”, “The Chameleon”, “The Scarlet Letter”, “Seven Ages of Man”, “The Proposal”, “Shyness My Shield”, “The Mighty Banyan”, “A Hillside Story” etc. are used as authentic materials to enhance learners’ basic language skills. This will not only cater to learners’ various learning styles, but also engage the learners to learn the language effectively.

Titled as “Literary Texts as Materials” the fourth chapter highlights how the selection of suitable texts matters a lot in the teaching-learning process to have a broader world view of the students. The selection of texts need not be limited to a particular region rather it should be inclusive and accommodative keeping in mind the level of learners, their cultural backgrounds, literary backgrounds, linguistic proficiency and other factors. Effective materials help in effective learning. Teachers need to adopt and adapt the materials based on the needs of their classroom. Furthermore, in this chapter, the author has succinctly highlighted how literary texts can be used in the language classroom.

Chapter five of the book titled “Using Literary Texts” focuses on how to design effective tasks by using literary texts. This chapter provides a few innovative examples of literary texts and how they can be used as materials for enhancing the language skills of the learners. “The Postmaster”, “The Eyes Have It”, “Sorrow”, “My Parents and Early Life”, “Shooting an Elephant”, “The Early Married Life of the Morrels”, “The Old Man and the Sea”, “Chitra”,

“Heaven of Freedom”, “ The Solitary Reaper”, “The Walking Encyclopedia Walks no More” etc. are used to develop basic language skills of learners.

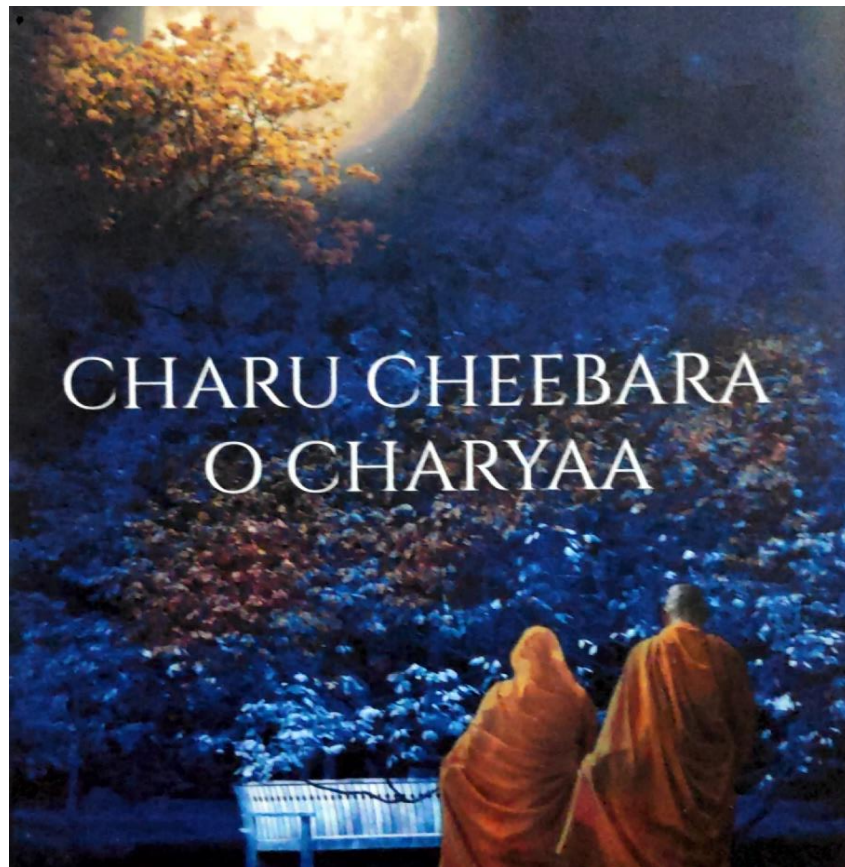
Anand Mahanand, the author of the book has made successful attempts to establish the integration of language and literature teaching through different activities and tasks. Learners need both literary and language skills. Texts can be chosen from the learners’ mother tongue to have better familiarity while exploring new possibilities for language learning. The tasks suggested in the book can be used at various levels of teaching. Anand Mahanand has used these materials at the post-graduate level at the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, India. It has shown effective results. This book will be useful for students, teachers, researchers of the English language and literature. As Widdowson (1997) has appropriately mentioned that literature is the ‘vehicle for engaging with the language’, the book *Literature for Language Skills* has provided enough opportunities to the language learners and teachers to engage with it to enhance their language competence.

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Book Review 2



CharuCheebara O Charya

A Buddhist Novel by Dr Pradeep Dash,

Publisher : Blue Rose Publication, New Delhi

Pages:640

Year of Publication : 2021

ISBN: 978-93-5427-085-7

**Reviewed by Dr Suman Mahapatra, Former Professor,
Dept of English, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack**

Man has been constantly in quest of a truth: some are in search of a scientific truth from their observations of the empirical world, some pursue their *sadhana* to attain a higher philosophical truth for the redemption of mankind and some, like the creative artists, reveal a permanent truth and a world view with their perceptions and understanding of the larger canvas of life and human nature. All their strivings are towards a meaning and fulfilment. When I sit to record my reading and response to Pradeep Dash's award-winning novel *CharuCheebara O Charyaa*, I am conscious of the noble attempt he has made in delving deep into the almost unexplored regions of Odisha history and Buddhist culture that in fact impelled me to take up this project, voluminous and difficult though. But I am not wholly able to concentrate: my mind is constantly distracted and unhinged of its poise and equanimity because the whole of mankind is in peril and panic on account of the entire world having been threatened by Corona virus taking a heavy toll of lives. The outbreak of the pandemic is causing havoc on mankind. However, I make an attempt to put down a few lines on the above work as its translator to refresh the memory of the discerning readers; and my endeavour will hopefully relieve me of the ongoing shocks of ruin and disaster, momentarily though.

CharuCheebara O Charyaa published in the year 2018 earned Pradeep Babu Odisha's the most prestigious award 'Sarala Sammana' of 2019 that re-established his literary stature, an outcome of his creative pursuits over a period of more than thirty years. He has carved out a distinctive place in the domain of Odia literature with his publication of eight short story collections and three novels. The present novel woven around the Odisha history of about two hundred years (eighth century to tenth century) is primarily a historical novel, a rare specimen of its kind in Odia literature. It dramatises the period when the kings of Bhoumakara dynasty ruled Odisha for about two hundred years, especially, the first hundred years that witnessed the able administration, the glory and achievements of four of its mighty kings. Needless to say, history is

a record of events, historical figures and also of eminent personalities that have left footprints in the annals of time for enriching human civilisation. It is a study of the past, of the growth of a nation, its life and culture and a transmission of the inherited order and values, the configuration of which takes place in the changing mindsets evolved through the passage of time. Some people, who are immersed in the immediate present, its materialistic needs and aspirations, might dismiss the study as obsolete and worn out. But this myopic approach is soul-killing at the disregard and discard of culture-specific norms and values of human civilisation down the ages.

A historian apparently deals with the facts and events, real figures and personalities supposedly with objectivity, free from bias or prejudice; it's a realistic representation. But a historical novel or drama is an imaginative re-creation of the past; it dramatises history, making the events and figures interesting in a fictionalized world, thereby establishing it primarily as a work of art. Fact and fiction are harmoniously juxtaposed in the structure, some interesting episodes and characters are incorporated to add to the sense of drama and novelty. The history, however, is the base on which the superstructure of the art form is built, though the artist by virtue of his creative power selectively adds colour to its canvas to make it a literary artefact, transcending the spatio-temporal limits.

Time-ruled occurrences notwithstanding, the historical fiction acquires its universal and eternal significance by its revelation of truths, its depiction of human feelings and failings and the projection of a world view. That's why the historical plays of Shakespeare, Marlowe's *Edward II*, Sir Walter Scott's novels, Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* and Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*, to take a few examples, are monumental works of literature that have constantly attracted critical attention. The truth revealed in the historical fiction is not confined to a time and clime, but it touches reality at a higher point. In this context, the observation of Pradeep Dash is worth quoting: "It is said that history is not true, it is half-truth. The novel based on history is telling the truth as it alone reaches the centre of truth, it touches the very marrow of time and society, strikes the very core of the heart. The past that the writer encounters through his triple power of information, imagination and assimilation is not only truth, but it attains the height of greater truth. Let me not further discuss and interpret the novel in the light of such definitions and yardsticks, but it becomes poignantly imperative to accept that this artefact is not history, but a novel based on history – nothing but a novel."(English rendering mine)

In the backdrop of Odisha history of more than two hundred years during the reign of Bhoumakara kings, the novel presents a real picture of its people, its socio-political and cultural dynamics of the time. We get a vivid description of the history of Odisha and its socio-political developments from the time of Harshavardhan for a period of more than three hundred years as revealed in the account of Ananda Kashyapa to his wife and daughter, the discussion of Mahasandhibigraha with the king and other members in the closed meeting and also from the talk of Prajnya to his disciples. It also highlights the glorious achievements of Kharavela in making Odisha reach the pinnacle of power and prosperity. The locale in this novel is Guhyadebpataka, the capital city of Bhouma kingdom, intermittently shifting to Ratnagiri Mahavihara and some other places like Khadipada, Kupari and Ayodhya. Buddhism was the state religion during this period of Bhouma regime, the religion and its institutions received royal patronage for its spread and sustenance though other religions had no threat from the administration.

However, the novel brings into focus, the origin of Buddhism and its growth apart, the later developments in Buddhism that came much long after Lord Buddha like *Tantrayaana*, *Bajrayaana* and *Sahajayaana* whose elaborate discussions have been made in its body. Tantra essentially believes in *Shakti*, the female energy or the principle which is at the root of the whole of creation. The Ultimate Reality is *Chit* or Consciousness which is *Shiva*. Shakti is the activating principle or force by means of which Shiva becomes all powerful, and according to this philosophy, the world with all its manifestations is nothing but the sport of Shiva and Shakti, the Absolute and Its Inscrutable Power. Without Shakti, Shiva is 'shaba' or a dead body. The belief in *Tantra* arises out of the natural weakness of human beings, their lower appetites, and their love for the concrete. It combines philosophy with rituals, meditation with ceremonies and renunciation with enjoyment. Hence it is more pragmatic and a realistic apprehension of body-spirit union. The aim of *Tantra* is to sublimate bhoga or enjoyment, into yoga or union with Consciousness. If one misses the point of transcendence or the experience of the bliss, the essence is lost.

The above aspect of *Tantra* is the basis of *Sahaja* whose detailed description is given in the novel when Prajna and Jayadevi pursue their *Chakra sadhana* in the cremation ground; the union of *sadhaka* and *sadhana-sangini* after performing all the rituals makes them attain the height of bliss and endows them with immense potentiality. By such sadhana Prajna achieves

PanchaAbhijnana, a rare and wonderful power. Similarly, Luipada and Dombika, Padmasambhava and Mandaradevi are perfectly accomplished *sadhakas* of great height. The novelist with his deeper study and prolonged research has been able to shed adequate light on the subsequent growth of the above 'yaana's in the changed scenario, and they have been harmonised in the structure of the novel in the form of discourses given by scholars and *sadhakas* and *sadhikas* in different contexts.

The addresses and discussions become so scholarly and metaphysical that a reader is transported to a different world altogether so as to be exposed to distinctive elements and intricacies of the *Sahajayaana* and *Bajrayana* sects. The novel attains a spiritual height because of them, though the reader sometimes longs for a reprieve from its seriousness. However, the same is successfully achieved by bringing in the episodes of love and feelings arising out of them, the socio-political scenario, war and invasions, the conspiracies and intrigues going on in the palace and finally the dark and devastating picture of the calamity due to drought. It is certainly a laudable achievement on the part of the novelist to integrate the serious discussions on Buddhism and its philosophy, the ideas and essence of the later developments in the above religion in the organization of the plotline and portrait of the characters. The novel is of a different dimension because of its spiritual content and message, of a different colour and taste but for its adroit amalgamation of history and fiction. It certainly reminds the reader of the dichotomy between the two worlds, constantly striving for his elevation towards the higher one. The message is perceptively clear and conspicuous in a world bereft of spirituality and human relationships, having a lasting impression on the readers.

Love is a major theme in the novel that is celebrated through two pairs of lovers, Jayadevi and Prajna, Basabi and Sivakara; the consummation of love takes place through their realization and pursuit of *Sahaja sadhana*. The love of Maharani Jayadevi for her Acharya Prajna, though a transgression of social morality and marital sanctity, is not acceptable to Prajna in the beginning but the sapling of love was planted in her heart from the day she joined as a student in the University of Nalanda. But the fact remains that Prajna renounced the world at the age of seven in quest of meaning and fulfilment of life because of which there was no room for love and other worldly things in his heart, he evaded the proposal of her parents to accept her even as a *sadhana-sangini*, if not as wife. Jayadevi pined for his love even after her marriage with king Sivakara and still waited for an answer from her lover Prajna if he would accept her as a

sadhana-sangini. The bewitching beauty of the Bhouma queen, her steadfast love and devotion, however, snatched away his mental peace and stability; his conflicts and confusion were finally resolved by the greatest sadhaka Luipada's convincing explications of *Sahaja sadhana* in favour of accepting her as his *sadhana-sangini*. Similarly, Sivakara was totally broke after the queen Jayadevi renounced the world to be a Buddhist mendicant and left the palace, it was Basabi's love for the king that grew in her heart from the very adolescent days sustained him. Sivakara was also drawn to her from the day he saw her in the palace garden, he became more loyal and grateful to her after her sacrifice and services saved him from the jaws of death when he was fatally wounded in his single-handed fight against the lion. He was also in conflict and vacillation to accept Basabi after his wife's abandonment, but it was the same Luipada who restored him to his normalcy by his recommendation of accepting her as his *sadhana-sangini*.

The *Sahaja sadhana* seems to be the real panacea to bring both the pairs of lovers together that pined for fulfilment in love long since, and the novel finally sings the glory of love despite its too many hazards and impediments. Prajna and Jayadevi have no other motive except the pursuit of their sadhana with a view to achieving further accomplishments and heights. The love of Basabi is undeniably genuine and selfless who sacrifices herself only for the sake of love. She has no expectations from the king, no regrets for accepting her longed for person without any power or position.

It is noticeable that lovers after they attain fulfilment are removed from the scene, their love remains pure and untouched by the vicissitudes of the palace conspiracy and intrigues and also unaffected by the disastrous consequences of the natural calamity. Love perhaps has no place in a world contaminated by lust for power, and treachery, hence in the fitness of things the lovers are conspicuously absent. Even the marriage of the king Shubhakara with the daughter of an Amatya, much lower than his social status, is an affirmation of love but the same love was heartlessly rejected by his wife Madhavi to gain power and the throne, quite unbecoming of a wife in the Indian tradition and values. The novel confirms love as an emotion, its failings and fulfilment, and also as an ideal or value that sustains the world order.

The institution of marriage as we find in the novel is not an avouchment of love and fulfilment but glaringly bereft of them. The exceptionally beautiful Jayadevi finally accepts Sivakara, notwithstanding her love for Prajna, compelled by the major condition of the truce after the conquest of her father's kingdom of Raadha by Sivakara. Her marriage is not out of choice but an imposition by a conqueror. Even after, she is denied her rightful due as a wife, her love and recognition by her husband, the king who is all the time awfully busy in his state affairs, in his mission of conquest and war. Had she been granted the basic emotional and psychic needs of a woman, quite possible that she could have compromised with her new identity. Jayadevi is grievously hurt when the king goes on a war mission leaving her behind at the advanced stage of her pregnancy despite her entreaties to postpone it. After the baby is born he comes back quite late after the kith and kin and guests leave after a particular celebration in the palace. She has been thoroughly neglected though she is quite knowledgeable and sound in all matters of administration, politics and diplomacy. The pride and superiority of the male ego is perhaps squarely responsible for widening the chasm leading to the marital deadlock. The king realizes it later but in vain as the situation by that time has become irretrievable.

This marital incongruity and discord might be one of the major factors for a revival of the unrequited love in Jayadevi, drawing her close towards her Acharya. The novel espouses the cause of woman, her will and choice as a human being but not to be taken as a commodity; once it is outraged it has far-reaching consequences. Marriage becomes a tight rope around the neck of the spouse from which he/she seeks a release. However, the fulfilment in love is unequivocally an adequate compensation for the failure and frustration in the institution of marriage. In the process the novel transcends to a greater height. Madhavi Devi is also justly dealt with for her inhuman treatment of her husband and treason, she has been hurled to the prison for the rest of her life. It is perhaps the retributive justice meted out to her for her transgression.

Education and culture form the essence of a nation and civilisation, their growth contributes towards the essential fabric of the social structure, and the novel dwells upon the same element with its focus on scholarship and academic interest through the citadel of learning at Ratnagiri. Ratnagiri Mahavihara happened to be a renowned university like Nalanda whose historical significance came to limelight after the excavations were made by the archaeological

department. Students and scholars from inside and abroad, Buddhist mendicants, both ladies and gents, pursued their studies and sadhana there with immense facilities and provisions made available to them. It reached the pinnacle of glory and academic heights by the help and support of the kings. Scholars like Prajnya joined as faculty to make further studies in *Tantrayaana* and *Sahajayaana*. Discourses and discussions were organised regularly where eminent scholars and *sadhakas* like Luipada, Padmasambhava, Mandaaradevi, Rahularuchi, Prajnya presented their thought-provoking ideas and analysis with lucid illustrations. Maharani Jayadevi, a real scholar as she was, was drawn to this Ratnagiri Mahavihara to pursue her studies. However, whether it was her avid academic interest or her unfulfilled love that attracted her to Ratnagiri is a million-dollar question. But her probing mind was clearly evident in her participation. The institution was fully patronised by the Bhouma kings as it happened to be the centre for the propagation and preaching of Buddhism, giving shelter to a lot of Buddhist mendicants and scholars.

The novel is rich in human content, the entire gamut of human experience forms the essential part of its vast landscape. Characters are born, grow and reveal themselves through their movements, actions and thinking. Being a historical novel, a number of characters representing different sections of the society connected with the royal household of Bhouma kingdom automatically figure adding to the plethora of human prototypes. The nature, behaviour and working of their minds starting from the king to the ministers and officials down to the maids and attendants are deftly delineated in it. A different world representing the *sadhakas*, *sadhikas*, Buddhist monks and nuns, and their thinking and ideals with the conflicting views and challenges is its speciality. The plot glides on, complicates with the interface of the characters and situations.

The beginning of the novel is quite dramatic, it arouses tremendous curiosity and interest, the reader being in a world of wonder and magic. The very waiting of Devadutta, the former court dancer, for the greatest *sadhaka* Luipada in the precincts of his hermitage begins the novel. The event relates to the past. Then the thrill and suspense are carried on till the narrator unfolds the mysterious book of copper leaves, and as pages turn one after another, the events of Bhouma kingdom encompassing almost a period of hundred years and characters existing then are

projected. The constant interplay of the past and present adds to the element of drama and organic growth.

The ending is equally gripping and painful. The whole picture of Bhouma kingdom takes as it were a dramatic turn after Lord Jagannath in the form of Buddha is shifted from the temple to an underground cave in a different kingdom named Koshala in the fear of enemy attack, but unfortunately, Lord vanishes mysteriously from that place. Thereafter, misfortune befalls the kingdom, an ominous bird sits on the temple of Bajra Barahi and then the kingdom passes through the ruins and disaster of drought. It also witnesses the invasion of the Rastrakuti king, and the king Shubhakara taken as prisoner. A sordid picture of conspiracies and intrigues hatched by the queen against king Shubhakara emerges which of course is exposed, leading to the imprisonment of the queen for treason. The kingdom suffers a lot and is almost devastated because of no rain for more than a year. The deluge is as though let loose upon the kingdom. The Tantra puja appeasing Maa Bhairavi finally brings rain but at the sacrifice of the king Subhakara himself. The novel ends pathetically but the sacrifice of the king is for a greater cause, the benefit of the people which reiterates the nobler idea of service and sacrifice enshrined in Buddhism. King Shubhakara emerges as the most ideal figure amongst all for his deep concern to save his kingdom at the cost of his life.

The ending of the novel with thunder and rain after a pretty long time of death and destruction strikingly resembles the ending of R.K.Narayan's *The Guide* where life is restored to the village with the rain at the sacrifice of Raju guide, mistaken to be a swami by the villagers. The macrocosmic disorder or dislocation is as if manifest in the microcosm of Bhouma kingdom. One is reminded of the Elizabethan World picture where Elizabethans believed that that there is a close correspondence between the lower and the higher world. Any dislocation in the celestial bodies duplicates in the lower world i.e., in the body-politic in the form of some calamity, or the death of the king, rebellion or war. That we notice in the Bhouma kingdom. The ending, though very tragic and painful, envisages a new beginning with the advent of rain, of course, at a greater sacrifice. It seems to be a retribution for the violation or transgression, whether knowingly or circumstantially, made by the major characters in the novel. It ends with an affirmation of the supremacy of the Absolute, its mysterious designs incomprehensible to man, utterly helpless and

insignificant before the gigantic power. It presents a topsy-turvy world order, a grim and sordid picture. The wrath of Maa Bhairavi comes to an end as it were with her appeasement by a greater sacrifice.

A discerning reader may observe at the end that the world of the novel is stripped of its life and vitality and all the major characters that contributed towards its substance and spirit gradually disappear making the stage almost empty. The Bhouma world is totally deserted. Another important figure Rahularuchi, the Principlal Acharya of Ratnagiri Mahavihara, who is really a noble soul and a devoted Acharya, sacrifices his life for the cause of the institution he heads. He dies of sunstroke while he returns immensely happy with the assurance given by his dearest disciple Kalipada to provide for the expenses of the institution during the period of calamity. With his fall a great human being, a benefactor of mankind meets his tragic death. The President of the Immortals probably has drawn the final curtain of his life. What is pertinent is that not a single soul is available for a restoration or regeneration. Even Mahasandhibigraha who renders his services lifelong ungrudgingly to the kingdom, the loyal army chief Bajraditya are no more found on the scene. The final stage in the novel is almost barren and deserted like a Jacobean tragedy, death hovering all around; the scene parallels the ending of Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*. Whether the rain and thunder that appear at the end of the novel would usher in the germination of new life or cause devastating flood playing havoc on mankind is simply left to conjecture. It reminds one of the very ideas of the oft-quoted line in *King Lear*: 'Is Man no more than this?'

Its larger arena apart, the novel captures the readers by its brilliant poetic descriptions of the beauty and splendour of Nature, of the serenity and tranquillity of the hermitages that provide a magical touch and wonder to the art form. The miraculous happenings, though inexplicable by reason and rationality, like the appearance of the Lord with two fruits that gives a new life to king Sivakara when he is at the threshold of death, the going of Prajna in a subtle form from the tempest-ridden ship to save Jayadevi from a death-like situation and his final union with her and above all the description of the wonderland of Luipada's hermitage at the beginning cast an eerie glow and excitement. The make-believe world of wonder and mystery is blended organically and artistically with the structural progression. The novelist's knowledge of dance as an art form, its *taala*, *laya*, *mudra* and *maana* described in the performances of Gurumaa and Basabi that made

the audience spellbound is clearly evident. Similarly, the writer's foray into the forbidden area of astrology found in the discussion of the king Shubhakara and Acharya Parasara, and also in the conversation between the same king and the TantrikaKrushnapadaAchari is remarkable. The perception and understanding of the novelist present a wider spectrum with a greater variety of events and characters, and rich in philosophy. All said and done, its thorough reading and analysis of Buddhism and *Tantrayaana* and *Sahajayaana* in detail, its exposition of the history of Ratnagiri and the Buddhist viharas mostly unknown to the larger reading public impart to it definitely a special place and mark of distinction in the domain of literature. The sadhana undertaken by Pradeep Dash to bring to limelight the stranger and less trodden regions of Odisha during the Bhoumakaras in the form of a novel is really admirable. May Lord Jagannatha shower His choicest blessings on him for the enrichment of art and culture of our land!

I have intentionally retained the original title *CharuCheebara O Charyaa* in my translation. These words are Sanskrit and Charu means the sacrificial food in a 'yajna', and also cooked rice received by Buddhist mendicants from the householders as alms, Cheebara is cloth generally used by Buddhist monks and nuns and Charyaa means their conduct and practice. While translating these words into English, I am afraid, they would not bear the same potential or poetic effect as each language has its own beauty, elegance and flavour which are beyond translation. The alliterative effect of the original title cannot be brought out by their English equivalents. The same title will hopefully fit in with its broader perspective. Similarly, I have retained certain words like *siddhi*, *sadhaka*, *shramana*, *sangha* or *sangharm* as the English equivalents of these words, I feel, do not have their potential or deeper suggestion. Honestly speaking, I had to traverse an arduous journey while translating the novel as I came across the deeper complex ideas of Buddhism, of later developments like *Tantrayaana*, *Sahajayaana*, etc. with their typical Buddhist terminology and tantric practices, and for that I depended wholly on the notes and explanations provided to me by the writer. An attempt has been made to render the typical Buddhist and *Sahajayaana* ideas and beliefs into English approximating them to their meanings and connotations. Similarly, translating the technical and typical words used in the dance form also created a problem; however, the same has been overcome by the help and suggestions of the writer and also my friend Prof. Saratch.Satapathy. At the end 'Notes' has been appended to explain the Buddhist terms and native words for the convenience of the readers.

I thank the writer Shri Pradeep Dash for permitting me to translate his finest work into English from the core of my heart, know not how far I have been able to rise up to his expectations. I am particularly thankful to my friend Sarat for his valuable suggestions and guidance whenever I felt diffident to move ahead with the project for not finding the correct and appropriate English equivalents to some of the Odia words and expressions. When I was in two minds whether to take up this project because of the size of the book and its nature and philosophy, my dear wife constantly gave me strength and inspiration for which I am immensely grateful. My reverence is due to my uncle Shri Mahimohan Tripathy who has all along been a source of inspiration to me. My thanks are due to Blue Rose Publishers, New Delhi who made my hard work of almost two years take a concrete form and shape to be available to the larger reading public. I thank Ms. Supriya Devi for making my manuscript final to send it to the press. This humble self-will deem itself fortunate if this painstaking effort is well-received by the discerning readers, both inside and abroad.

Last but not the least is my reverence and dedication to Lord Jagannatha without whose grace this effort would not have seen light of the day. Surrendering at His lotus feet,

Suman Mahapatra

Book Review – 3



Publisher:Urania Publishing House, Bargarh, Odisha

Flickering Flame

By Poet Prabodh Hota,

Reviewed by Lohitakshya Joshi

Reader in English

K.V. College, Kantabanji (Odisha)

Indian writings in English have come of age and have become an independent canon. From Indo-Anglican to Indian writings in English, it has traversed a long distance in terms of theme, language, locale and writers' sensibility before being established as a separate and independent canon. Most of the first-generation Indian writers of English were carrying the tag of 'Eurocentric approach'. But it has unmistakably come to its own of this stream of consciousness so that question regarding the justification for Indian writers of English and the rationale for literature in a language that does not come naturally to the writers are no more deemed a relevant question now. Indian writings in English have become a natural urge and the writers are expressing themselves with utmost ease and flamboyance. Our writers have indigenized English to express their own theme, sensibility and locale.

It is always a herculean task to forward a review of any creative writing. What motivates and urges the writers, especially poet is quite difficult to understand. A reader reads the lines where as a critic and reviewer tries to read between the lines. This makes a big difference between a reader's perception and a critic's comprehension of a creative work. Often it brings in an element of irony. When the western writers such as T.S.Eliot and William Jones used oriental/Sanskrit words in their writings it created a lot of euphoria among the contemporary readers. But later on critics view it as a part of a larger agenda and compulsion of the writers. It is now seen as a compulsion to refresh the English readers and break the monotony. So at the outset I make a humble submission before the readers that my review and estimation of Prabodh's poems may not have the finality.

Flickering Flames, the very title of the book is suggestive of an urge, spontaneity, brimming of emotions and experiences which the Romantic poet William Wordsworth termed as the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling recollected in tranquility". A serious reading of Prabodh's poems confirms an irresistible emotion finding an easy and spontaneous outlet through his words.

The book comprises forty-eight poems on myriad subjects and moods, but the poet has largely been successful in maintaining a symmetry and continuity with certain exceptions of course. He tries to weave all his poems in a single thread of continuity and sustenance in terms of theme, mood and language which we call “stream of consciousness”. More specifically, we find this stream from the first poem “Pinnacle of Glory” through the fourteenth one “Golden Deer”. The first poem evokes a sense of surrealistic, flimsy emotion in readers, reminding the style of writing of the Nigeria-born British writer Ben Okri. In the very next poem “Tug of War” the poet encounters realism accentuating a bleak future. Again in the third poem “Sketch of a Fountain” the poet delves into the deeper philosophy and meaning of life. Up to the poem number fourteen, “Golden Deer” this stream continues and this happens to be a spontaneous poetic engagement where inner poetic urge and emotion matter.

After this poem the poetic urge and sensibility are broken by the mundane realities around. The poetic consciousness is turned towards societal commitment- the poet is drawn to his people, theme, images, issues, locales around him. Now there is a finer shift from the spontaneous creative to a conscious poetic engagement. “Homage to Gandhi”, “At Beniadhass”, “Crocodile Assembly”, “72nd Step for Independence”, “Suicide Note of a Farmer”, “Heroes of Pulwama” are some of the poems of this phase. These poems may be seen as a deviation not merely in term of theme, but also in term of the approach of the poet. We find a strong undercurrent of satire running through most of these poems. Satire has its own purpose of reforming the socio-political order. Prabodh does not use satire on a lighter vein, but deep down we find a defined agenda of bringing out a better social order based on the new world view.

In the post-colonial literature we find the dominance of the presentation of nightmarish experience. This emanates due to the gap between expectation and reality. People had a dream, a hope for a fresh beginning free from the colonial subjugation. They expected self-rule based on equality. But the political development and governance in the postcolonial period is different from what they expected. It was a kind of ‘everybody fighting for his/her share of the national cake’ and without any concern, commitment for the nation. This particular sentiment finds expression in most of the postcolonial literature. Prabodh is no exception which he calls in his poem “72nd Step for Independence”, “Promises and compromises/Visions and illusions/Meetings and submittings/Integration and disintegrations” (Page 57).

As has already been mentioned earlier, Hota has largely been able to bind his poems in a single thread with the exception of some of the poems and more specifically “If All is Well”. It stands in clear contrast to all his poems in terms of theme, language, mood and morality of the poet and on the broader canvas the stream of consciousness which he creates for himself in the rest of his poems. It appears to be a standalone poem which does not fit into the poetic landscape and narrative framework he has woven in *Flickering Flames*. In order to follow a rhyme pattern the poet appears to have compromised with his thought process. He seems to be carried away by what the English language could do, obsession for the feel of words, their sound qualities and in the process the language leaves the ideas of the poem far behind, lost in the depths and mystery

of the words. In fact language has other organizations such as metrical, phonological, semantic, thematic and it determines what the poem says and how it says. But not being a native user of English, often in the process ‘what is said’ is lost in ‘how it is said’. But there is nothing to worry as it has happened with some of the famous Indian poets of English. And this being Prabodh’s maiden attempt, this obsession with the English language can be seen as part of the learning process to become a consummate artist.

Poetic explorations of the places, people to which the poet belongs, owes his identity to coincidentally turns out to be his search for the self, an effort to establish his self with his own milieu and people. This is also an emerging trend of connecting to the roots and an attempt to discharge the poet’s societal commitment. A sense of belongingness to the places of his land and landscape come fresh on his creative landscape. Such themes and images facilitate the poet to locate his identity and self in his own landscape, with his own people. “Suicide Note of a Farmer”, “Nation Laments with Danojhala”, “At Beniadhass” are some of such poems which have an overt connotation of the poet’s societal commitment through his discovering the self. Through these poems the poet asserts his identity before the readers. The images, incidents and locales are depicted with utmost accuracy and with all minute details so that the readers get a feel of the places and people. These images and locales are not deceptive and representative. They represent whatever they show, nothing beyond and nothing less. By reading these poems one can visualize the characters, incidents and images. For example in “At Beniadhass” the lines such as “The zigzag road/In the valley of Sunabeda/Infested with tigers/and wild creepers/with dark green foliage/And hundreds of small streams/Which again and again/Appeared on our path/which didn’t check/but made our way to Beniadhass /Looked like/Beautiful letters of an invitation card” (page 33) present before the readers a documentary-like narration and the readers can easily find and relate themselves to the places travelling on the zigzag road with wild creepers and foliage around. The readers also get the feel that unless one has the first-hand experience it is not possible to depict it with such accuracy. In this regard Prabodh has made his way to find himself firmly rooted to his soil. The poet being an individual of the soil cannot keep himself away for long. A poet’s life is integrated with the socio-cultural traditions and moorings of his locality. Prabodh expresses ample testimony of this poetic consciousness. This search for roots has become a trend in modern Indian writers of English and it is seen as a tool to assert their identity and originality of theme, feelings, experiences and technique. Earlier, this search for roots was limited only to the Diaspora writings as they were living in a land which does not naturally belong to them. So these writers have a crave of belongingness for their homeland, a sense of nostalgia. But since the Indian writers of English were subjected to criticism of writing under the shadow of their English counterparts, this search for roots can be seen as a literary technique to wriggle out of that criticism and establish their own identity, assert their self and give a feel of their own soil. We find in *Flickering Flames* such a poetic consciousness leading to commitment in the establishment of Indian poetry in English as an independent genre.

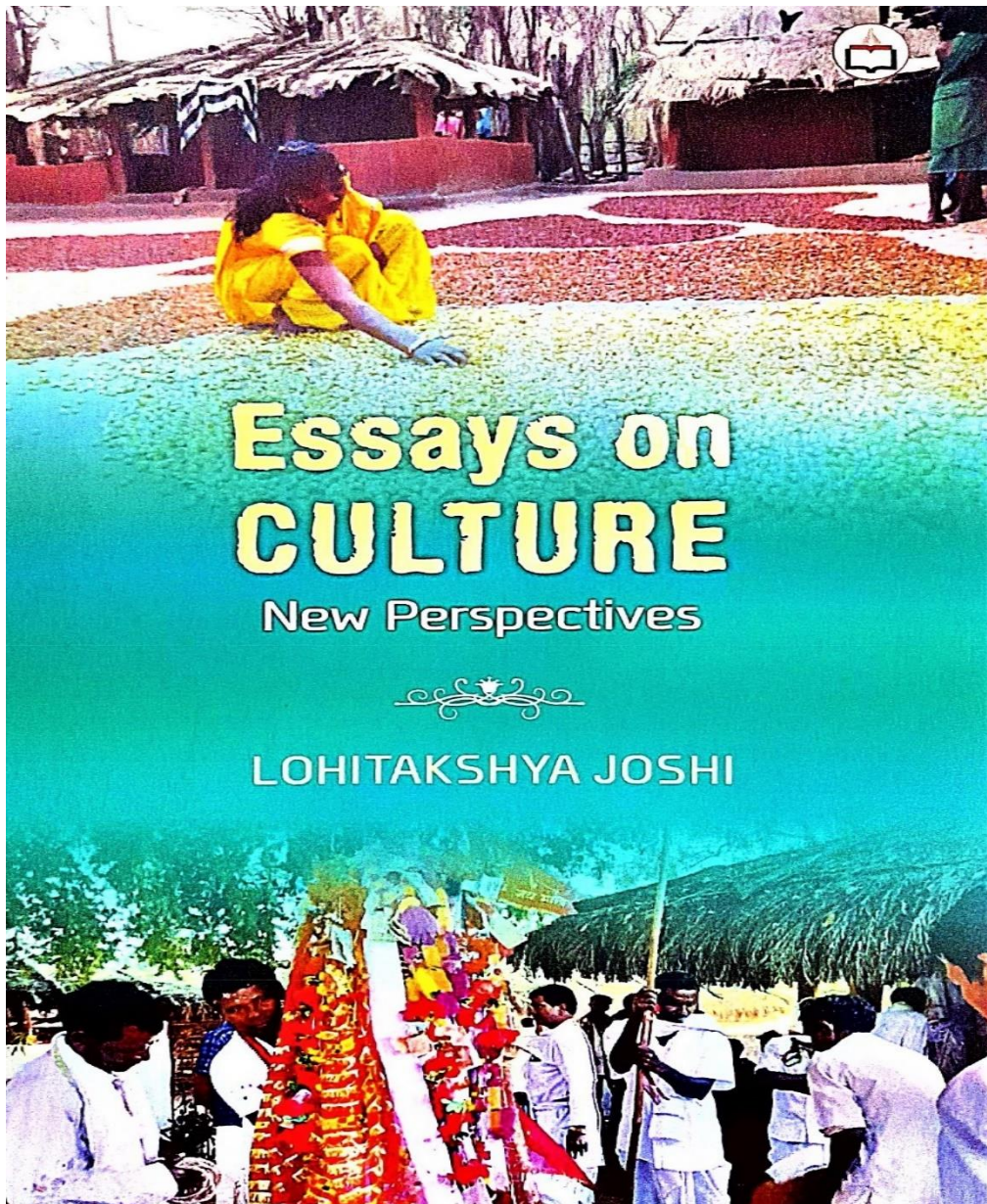
In fact this search for roots does not dominate and lure Prabodh for long. With these few poems he establishes himself as a poet rooted deeply into his soil with a certain degree of firm societal commitment. This phase of nostalgic harking back to the place is over and he realizes the world and feels in his pulses. Poetry for him becomes a medium to interpret life and philosophy with all its facets. “Waning Moon”, “Golden Deer”, “Autobiography of a Candle” “Meeting at Sand”, “Secret Desires”, “Wind in a Railway Carriage” are some of his poems where he raises these questions, laments and tries to explore the deeper meanings and values of life. In this phase of poetry Prabodh sounds more metaphysical which reciprocate well to the issues he chooses. A few lines from “Wind in a Railway Carriage” are worth-mentioning here. “Gusty wind blew heavily/Making passage/Through the windows/Dismantling players’ playing cards/For which they blamed/Each other unnecessarily/That the wind was excused” and again, “But when the wind set apart/Another woman’s clothes/Laying her chest bare/the woman cursed the wind first/Corrected her clothes next” (Page 27). In this poem and especially in these two stanzas, the poet resorts to the elemental question of life. He shows how we do not feel hurt when our luxuries are disturbed but react sharply when somebody questions our very elemental self which we call necessity. As a bystander the poet presents the objective correlatives of this philosophy of life citing two very common examples. This is a common everyday experience which never touches our heart and mind. But Prabodh with his genuine poetic sensibility, is deeply moved by this incident and raises a serious question about it.

In Flickering Flames, most of the poems evoke a sentiment which is genuine and authentic. The observation he has referred to is very apt and the tone is conversational befitting the themes and situations.

Prabodh’s poems are evocative in nature, the language is polished, neat and chiseled. His experiment of acclimatizing on indigenous themes to English language has been almost easy, natural and acceptable. I firmly believe *Flickering Flames* will prove its worth to become a ‘good-read’ among its readers.

Book

Review 4



Author :Lohitakshya. *Essays on Culture: New Perspectives*,

Authors Press, New Delhi: 2021. PP98, Rs.495/\$25.

Reviewed by Samuel Dani

Department of English

B. P. College ,Boden, , Odisha, India , 766111

Essays on Culture: New Perspectives

With the establishment of Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham University in 1964, cultural studies as an academic discipline received incisive treatment of transdisciplinarity and altogether a novel direction. That is not to say that literary theorists were oblivious to the greater question of culture before. On the contrary, the like of Mathew Arnold and F.R. Leavis had already dealt with the hermeneutical dimension of culture as the pulsating domain of human identity, activity and incessant interaction. Way back in 1869 Arnold's "Culture and Anarchy" had created ripples in the field of literary theory, and in this seminal text he established an agenda for High Victorian Culture. His advocacy in support of it was to draw in all the best available globally. In other words, he defined culture as perfection and refinement in collective human endeavour. But such an idealistic view-point got a beating when Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall- the CCCS trio- re-evaluated culture and questioned as to how culture of the elite with its sacrosanct associations of refinement and sophistication could not be reflective of the culture of the toiling class. Stuart Hall, who succeeded Hoggart at the CCCS, privileged the organic working class culture over the mass culture. He made incisive study of the Post-War Capitalism-induced consumeristic culture of the English working class. His works underscored as to how the working class consciousness is shaped up by the capitalistic forces.

In spite of laudable projects on lived culture of the English working class and making of the class consciousness, the CCCS had to be wound up. However, the Centre pioneered cultural studies which turned out a paradigmatic shift especially in literary theory, and since then, needless to emphasize, it began to gain currency in Anglophonic academia. But the kind of theoretical tools and postulates that CCCS and other such centres in the West churned out were/are of little help in problematising the greater issues of culture in indigenous societies of Africa and Asia. Of late, homegrown scholars in India, in particular, strive to understand the culture of the indigenous communities in their own terms which drive home a novel perspective to cultural studies. This book under review is a case in point.

The author Lohitakshya Joshi writes, "I have tried to look at treatment of indigenous culture in a new perspective, breaking all traditional boundaries". He also very consciously jettisons all "traditional boundaries" not to provide an alternative to that relinquishment but strives to help the reader see "the difference". It is this "difference" that constitutes the strength of this slim volume. The book contains eleven essays. The first one "Folk Culture in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*" strikes the keynote. Published in 1958, *Things Fall Apart* introduced a new Africa, an Africa that had long been denigrated by the colonizers (which include of course the

colonial masters, white missionaries, slave traders and overseas anthropologists). The author gives a detailed analysis of how Achebe has drawn upon the fecund culture of Nigeria to craft the novel, and at the centre of the novel is not the protagonist but the folk culture which is anchored in Igbo world-view.

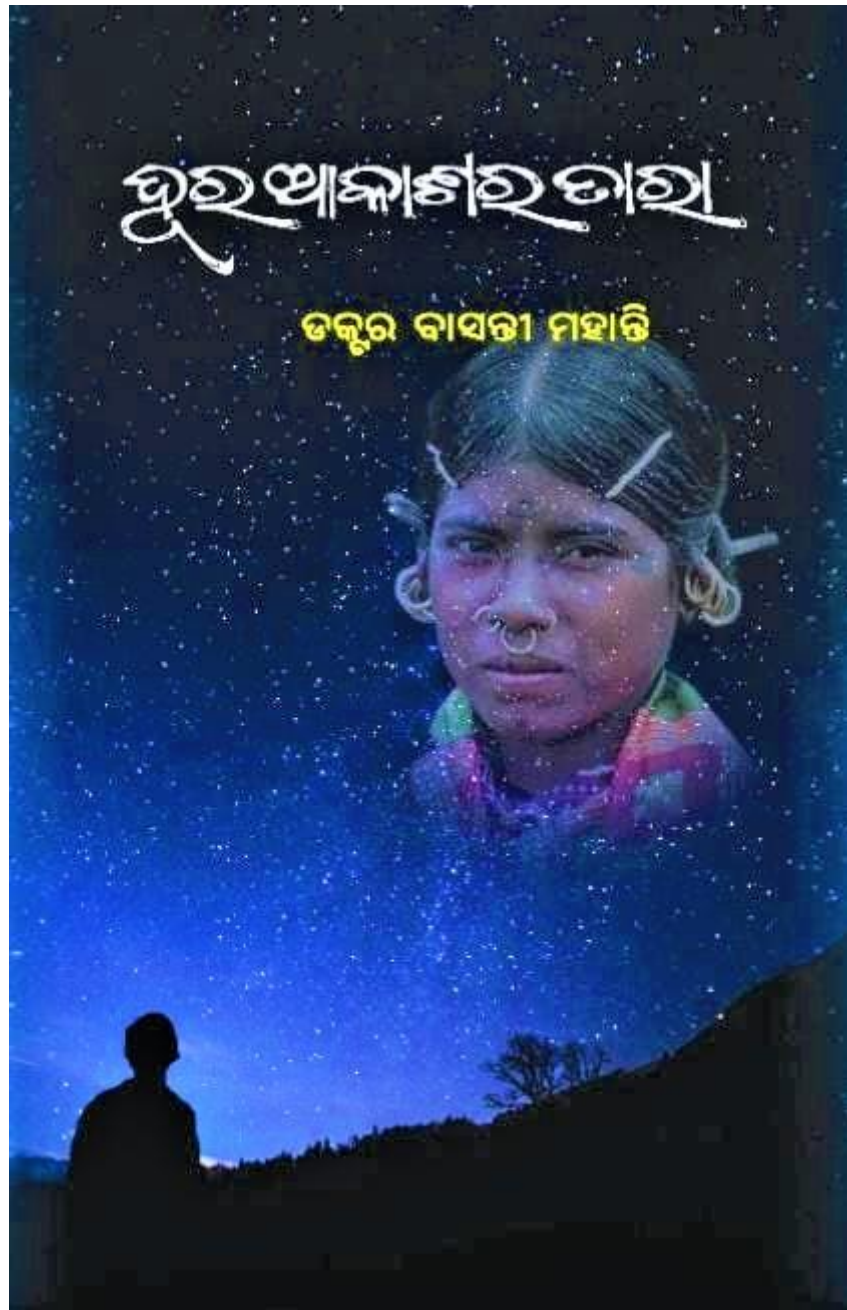
“The Kitchen-shed Concept of Chuktia Bhunjia”, the second essay, gives an insight into how a primitive tribe living in the secluded border of Chhatisgarh-Odisha constructs a kitchen-shed which is more of a shrine than a mere place of culinary activities. It is the sanctum sanctorum of the Bhunjia life, and the author throws light on how the Bhunjia ontology is interwoven into the institute of the kitchen-shed. And the next essay styled “A Socio-Cultural Interpretation of Kunabara or Arrow Marriage” gives an insight into the tribal’s understanding and necessity of a pre-puberty rites. Pre-puberty ritual wedding of a girl to an arrow is laced with symbolism which the author tries to unravel. In “Ogbanje Child: An Inquiry into the Socio-Cultural Context” the author makes brief yet succinct study of apotropaicism among the indigenous communities of Odisha. Ogbanje is an African term which means a child “who does not live in this world for long because of its strong bond with the other world” and therefore it dies to be in the other world, but it takes rebirth. Apotropaic rituals are performed to break the cycle and ward off the evil spirit. Apotropaic names are given to such infants, but what is more revealing in this essay is that caste plays an important role in the ritualisation of apotropaicism.

In “Goud Badi: A Traditional Dance Form” the author makes an inquiry into a caste-based dance form. He gives a detailed account of the aesthetic grandeur of the dance and concludes that it is based on the philosophy of communitarianism. The next essay, “A Folkloristic Interpretation of Paharia Folktales” is folkloristic study of four Paharia folktales. Having analyzed the constituent elements such as Time, Characterisation, Plot Structure and Poetic Justice, the author gives hint as to how a tribal folktale captures sense of Time in which collective as well as individual life is played out. “Multiculturalism in Nuakhai/Nabanna” makes an engaging reading on the most important agrarian festival of Western Odisha. Besides being a festivity of transcultural bond, what is germane to it is the geo-centric world-view and the author situates it in change and continuity. In another essay “A Comparative Framework of Nuakhai and New Yam”, he draws striking similarities the two festivals have and establishes how the two become “a mark of identity, unity and the collective ethos of the two societies”.

“Religious Beliefs of Chuktia Bhunjia Tribe: An Overview of Sunadei Jatra” zeroes in on the institution of Sunadei, the presiding deity of the Bhunjia. The festivity associated with the deity is ritual affirmation of intra/inter-tribal solidarity within the jurisdiction of the deity and further states as to how it fulfills collective psycho-religious needs of the tribes. “Chausathi Yogini: Textual Analysis of *Nrusingha Charita* by Juga Das”, as the title indicates, is a textual analysis of folklorised epic written by a tribal poet of Western Odisha. Drawing upon the story of *the Ramayana*, the poet weaves an epic lore to transpose it on Western Odisha. The author makes an objective inquiry into the mythographictranspositionality. The last essay “Studying Culture: Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* and Gopinath Mohanty’s *Paraja*” has a marked affinity to

the first essay in the anthology and, on a closer reading one gets the feel that it is a sequel to the latter. However, the author presents two different worlds of the tribal life, dexterously crafted by two eminent novelists. *Things Fall Apart* presents “a realistic narration of pre-colonial Nigeria with its rich and vibrant culture which denigrates due to the advent of the colonial forces which Achebe terms as a terrible disaster”. *Paraja* gives a vivid sketch of “the exploitation of the innocent tribe by the cruel and merciless elements of a hostile world”. Achebe gives a realistic depiction of how Christianity becomes a disruptive force to the Igbo culture. The book is a testament of resistance against the colonial power-structure that gets manifested in multiple ways, and similarly, in *Paraja*, the moneylender and other forest officials exploit the tribe. Inscrutable perplexing legal system of the colonial power-structure becomes pernicious to both the Igbo and the Paraja. Calamitous allurements of Christianity mops up the identity of the indigenous. Both the writers problematise the key issues and bring to sharp focus how indigenous culture withers away. However, unlike Achebe, Mohanty lacks authorial empathy and lived-in experience which makes him gloss over the inner conflict the tribe is compelled to countenance and go through. Both the writers map out cultural moorings with adroitness.

This slim book of eleven essays will be a welcome addition to the micro-study of culture and benefit both students and researchers of Folkloristics. Conclusively, an introductory note in the beginning was a necessity which the author should have included. As the essays have already been published in journals the selection is definitely dictated by thematic parity and congruity. Beyond question, it is a reader-friendly volume which scholars will find worth-shelving.



Dura Akashara Tara

Author Dr Basanti Mohanty

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The book under review titled *Dura Akasara Tara* (or *Star of a Distant Sky*), written by Dr. Basanti Mohanty, has been published Agraduta, Cuttack in 2021. It is based on the life of a famous folk singer called Belmati Dei.

Belmati Dei, a legendary community folk singer, was thriving in our contemporary time in the Nabarangpur district of Odisha. She was a renowned oral singer performing her oral singing in Desia language in the community singing ceremonies named 'Git Mara' over five decades. "Git Mara" means an oral song competition in front of a huge audience between the male and female singers to defeat each other in composing songs then and there. She was an untouchable woman, enduring for her subsistence with meagre income in agricultural labour. Everybody sings the song in Koraput, but Belmati Dei was incomparable from her childhood to sing songs. She learned many songs from her father and the oral tradition. She had the creative imagination and a sharp memory to compose songs from the immediate situation in the poetry competition of folk singers. Hundreds of folk singers assemble in the Git Mara festival – a festival of song competitions of unlettered singers, popularly known as Git Kudia for males and Git Kudien for female singers. Bela Dei was an extraordinary singer to use her and intelligence to counter by kind of questions performed by the competitor's singer. Answer to such questions composing the song before such an audience need utmost courage and confidence, for a woman like Bela Dei to defeat her counterpart through songs with appropriate witty reply with creative imagination with a sense of knowledge on the oral text.

Belmati has a life of difference. She lived as an engaged singer with a community identity where her responsibility was to attend and attract thousands of people listening to the Desia oral songs to compete with the male singers and defeat them.

Belmati as a woman has encompassed many phases. One is her youth period when she became a singer and became a part of married life. However, when she lost her husband, lost her son, and discovered her daughter's elopement with a bus cleaner, she faced the intricacies of life. Despite her disaster, she was active in community singing. She enjoyed the nectar of creativity, a supernatural world of songs and music in a crowd where she was entertaining thousands of people. The Collector of her district explored her and encouraged her singing, promoted her to participate in Delhi, Bhubaneswar, and many other places of Odisha. She gained name and fame

and money, but her insecure life with her family members and the exploitation of relatives made her a pauper. She lived an isolated life in the absence of her husband and only son, and she was distressed in her home and surrounding. Her later life was miserable when she was struggling for survival. The pity is that she was an identity of the Desia language and oral tradition, but at the same time, her personal and family life was tumbled down. The endurance of life both in disaster and in a high universe of creativity is a binary opposition that has even been portrayed in this novel. The characters' emotions, the conflict of life, freedom, and responsibilities of her stages of life are full of pathos in real life and transcendental in poetic expression. Briefly, this is the essence of the novel, which compels the readers to delve into the personal agony, challenges, sorrows, and trajectory of her life world in a manner, which is emotive and at the same time mysterious. Her inner conflict of two realms of binary life has compassionately narrated by Dr. Basanti Mohanty, which moves the readers with the conditions of Belmati. The cultural context, folklore, myth, festivals, and social customs have given this novel space for the readers to discover the tribal and so-called untouchable culture in a stage where the social reality embedded in the art of singing is the central point in this novel.

Dr Mahendra Kumar Mishra

Interviews

Adivasi languages cannot be neglected, if we really mean to provide primary education to every child in his or her mother tongue— Prof. B N Patnaik

A conversation between Prof. B N Patnaik and Dr. Sanjaya Kumar Bag, on 30 April 2021.

Sanjaya Kumar Bag

Prof. B N Patnaik (1942—), former faculty of English and Linguistics, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Kanpur, is one of the known linguists. His *Complementation in Oriya and English* is the first study of Oriya grammar in the generative linguistics framework. He has worked on generative syntax, computational linguistics, socio-linguistics, educational linguistics and conversational analysis. He is a co-editor of Noam Chomsky's *The Architecture of Language*. His current interests include medieval Odia literature, pragmatics and conversational analysis. On *Sarala Mahabharata*, he has published research papers and two books: *Introducing SaaralaaMahaabhaarata* (2012) and *Retelling as Interpretation: An Essay on Sarala Mahabharata* (2013). He has a blog on *Sarala Mahabharata* saralamahabharat.blogspot.com and also a ten- hour video course on this celebrated work. He is the author of a collection of personal essays: *Language Matters* (2018). Prof. Patnaik has been a member of various national-level committees including the UGC Committee for Indigenous Languages and the Classical Language Committee of the Government of India. Presently he lives in Bangalore.

Sanjaya Kumar Bag (1976—) is a student of folklore and a story writer in Odia. He has been writing stories since 2001 and has published two anthologies of short stories: *Barnaboadha O Madhubabunka Katha* (2009), *Bir nang Debi* (2017) to his credit. As a scholar of folklore, Sanjaya has published *Paschima Odishara Paramaparika Kreedha: Eka Lokatattwika Adhyayan*

(2008), a folkloristic work on traditional games, *Lokadhara*:

Paramparika Sarjanasila Jibanadharara Adhayana (2012), a theoretical work on the concept of folklore and contemporary folkloristics, *Odishara Lokakreeda* (2017), a book on folk games of Odisha published by Odisha Sahitya Akademi, and *Odishara Adibasi Sanskruti*:

Paramukha Abadharana (2019) by Black Eagle Books, Bhubaneswar. Some of his stories have been translated into Assamese, Hindi, and in English. The Hindi translation of the story “Barnabodha OMadhubabunka Katha” has been included in the Hindi (MA) syllabus by IGNOU, New Delhi. The English translation of the story ‘Kalasyahi’ as ‘Black Ink’ has been included by Oxford in the volume *Listen to the Flame: Texts and Readings from the Margin* (2016). Sanjaya works as a faculty in Eastern Regional Language Centre, Bhubaneswar.

Sanjaya: Odia has got the classical language status. In this context, what possibilities do you visualize about this language?

Prof. Patnaik: One good thing that has happened after Odia got this recognition is that the language has received considerable media attention, which had not happened in the last many years. In focus is the present situation of the language which, it is said, is not encouraging. In practice, it is still not the language of state administration. It is not the most predominantly used language at the level of higher education, even in the early stages in any stream: arts, commerce and science. It is not yet the language of modern knowledge in the fields of science, technology, humanities and the human sciences and it is not a language of economic opportunity at the national and the global levels. These days, many parents, even in semi-urban areas, prefer to send their children to English-medium schools and these schools discourage the use of Odia by the students when at school. In this context, the media’s attempt to sensitize the Odia speakers to its present situation is a constructive thing. If the speakers are really serious about their language, then things will change for the better. We know what to do to start with, namely, use Odia in domains it has not been used so far.

Recently, “The Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Odia” has been set up. This is a consequence of Odia being accorded the status of classical language. We hope that scholars will now show interest to work on ancient and medieval Odia literature, language, culture, grammar and other knowledge systems, and folklore. We can also expect to see translations of our classics, and authoritative and modern editions of the same.

Hopefully, the major classical texts will be digitalized. Here I am not talking about scanned material being uploaded on the internet because the system cannot process the same for queries and other operations. Scanning the texts can solve the problem of storage (of books, palm leaf manuscripts, etc.) but will not contribute to research. For that, the material must be in text-format which can be processed by the system (i.e., search engines and similar operations can apply).

Sanjaya: How do you evaluate the potential of a language for its growth? How do you evaluate the development of a language? What can be done for the development of Odia?

Prof. Patnaik: Whether and to what extent a language is developed is a matter of in how many and how diverse contexts that the language has been and is still being used. If a language is not used to create and disseminate knowledge in, say, science, technology and law, that language will be considered less developed than the one which is not deficient in this respect.

As for the *inherent* ability of a language to grow, all languages are equal in this respect. But despite this, in actuality, there are developed languages and there are underdeveloped and undeveloped languages. If a certain language is developed and a certain other language is not, it is merely a matter of the use these languages have been and are being put to. For various reasons, entirely non-linguistic, people live their lives at different levels of awareness. Not all speech communities are concerned with the neurological structure of the human brain or the human genetic endowment in physicalist terms, for instance. In our country itself, there are communities who live the eighteenth or the nineteenth century life, and there are people whose life styles are of the mid-twenty-first-century. So, their communicative needs are not the same; they cannot be the same. As a result, some language is used only in limited domains and some other, in very many domains.

As for the development of Odia, we must use it in many and new domains. This will enrich its vocabulary and styles of expression. Across centuries, many foreign words have been nativized in Odia; so today, we must not be reluctant to borrow from other languages. Nativization will inevitably follow. Borrowing (an inexact and unfortunate term in this context because there is no returning) does not undermine a language; often it empowers a language by increasing its expressive power.

Sanjaya: What is the role of literature for the development of a language?

Prof. Patnaik: Literature contributes significantly, in my opinion, to the development of a language. Literary language enriches the vocabulary and the stylistic range of a language. Eminent writers coin words and collocations, and sometimes extend the meaning and the use of some of the existing words. They say things in new ways; as a result, the expressive power of a language increases. A developed language, i.e., a language used in a wide variety of contexts, has often a rich literary tradition.



However, it is wrong to think that a language can develop if imaginative literature (poetry, drama, fiction, etc.) alone is created in that language. The role of knowledge- (based) literature for the growth of a language is immense. Creation of both *kavya* (imaginative literature) and *shastra* (knowledge literature) is important for the development of a language.

Sanjaya: After Odia received the classical language status, much stress is being given on research and the development of Odia language. In this context, is there reason for concern that the other languages spoken in Odisha, including the Adivasi languages, are going to suffer neglect?

Prof. Patnaik: Research on the classical phase of Odia, translation of major works (including *lokavani* or *sahitya*) of that period, etc. is one project and modernization (i.e., development) of Odia is another project. These are unrelated. Whether a regional language has classical status or

not, it must be modernized, that is, be enabled for use in a wide variety of domains, including the knowledge-based ones.

From the above, it does not follow that development of other languages of the state could be neglected. That *must not* happen. Some years ago, the State government is reported to have written to the Central government to include Kosali and Ho in the Eighth Schedule. Since the Eighth Schedule contains languages, not dialects, the government's recommendation amounts to a tacit cognition of the status of Kosali and Ho as languages. It will not help if Kosali and Ho are neglected in the language development project of Odisha.

Adivasi languages can simply not be neglected, if we really mean to provide primary education to every child in his or her mother tongue. A truly welfare state tries to give equal educational opportunities to all learners to the maximal extent practicable.



Sanjaya: Why is the progress of Odia unsatisfactory when it comes to the development of knowledge (-based) literature in this language?

Prof. Patnaik: For decades, Odia speakers have been accessing modern knowledge at a sophisticated level in any subject, be it in science, technology, law, social sciences or humanities, through English. So many are not comfortable with Odia when it comes to producing sophisticated knowledge (-based) material. This is only an explanation, not a justification of the situation.

By the way, in which language did the great PathaniSamanta write *Siddhanta Darpana* in the nineteenth century? Sanskrit, not Odia! The reason is the same. Odia did not have the resources needed for reporting the findings of one's research in a technical field like astronomy. It is a different matter that he wrote it in Odia script. Writing Sanskrit in *Devnagari* script was possibly not the norm then. Sanskrit is still written in Odisha in the Odia script at the high school level at least.

Creating knowledge literature in our language is a great challenge and a great opportunity as well. It has to be done and done soon enough. Preparation of bi-lingual dictionaries and glossaries of technical terms are certainly necessary, but these cannot create knowledge discourses. Translation of the knowledge texts in English into Odia can help in a big way in the production of knowledge discourse in this language.

Sanjaya: What is your opinion on the linguistic studies of Odia?

Prof. Patnaik: Although there is a good tradition of linguistics in Odia, there doesn't seem to be much work being done on Odia linguistics in Odia today from the perspective of modern thinking on language and linguistics. I may be wrong but my impression is that in the recent years, there seem to have been more M.Phil. and PhD dissertations and research publications on Odia language and linguistics in English. My understanding is that linguistic research on Odia is being neglected in the University departments of Odia.

I hear that our Sahitya Akademi has initiated a project on a comprehensive grammar of Odia. There is a great need for it. It should be published in both Odia and English. Although some studies exist, there is the need for an exhaustive description of Kosali phonology, morphology and grammar. I do not know to what extent Ho has been studied.

At the same time, there *must* be interesting and readable popular-level linguistic literature in Odia language on at least some of the fascinating concerns of modern linguistics: language universals, language acquisition, language being a biological endowment and connected issues, discourse, conversational structure and meaning, natural language understanding, among others.

Pragmatics, conversation analysis and discourse have recently emerged as important areas of research. Some research, rather scanty, in this regard with respect to Odia language has been published in English language. Maybe I am wrong - I haven't seen many publications on these issues in Odia language. This lack, if indeed it exists, has to be addressed.

Sanjaya: Why did you think of retelling episodes from *Sarala Mahabharata* in English?

Prof. Patnaik: E. M. Forster once said something like the following: when one has a beautiful experience, one feels like sharing it with others. Reading *Sarala Mahabharata* (after my retirement from IIT Kanpur service) was an overwhelming and elevating experience for me.

Sarala had, in ample measure, what Shelly called “myth-making imagination”. His *Mahabharata* shows how remarkably innovative he was as a story-teller and how refreshing and how deep, a thinker he was. Besides, he was able to articulate profound thoughts in a deceptively simple language. I felt like sharing my intellectual delight of reading *Sarala Mahabharata* with those who do not know Odia. So, I thought of retelling in English some of those episodes which were novel in Sarala’s retelling – “novel” with respect to *Vyasa Mahabharata*. It has been a joyful experience for me, to say the least.

Sanjaya: Do you think it is the case that in *Sarala Mahabharata*, the cultures and traditions ignored by the dominant classical tradition have been given significant importance?



Prof. Patnaik: I think so. Ekalavya, the un-named *kirata* king who defeated Drupad and Kirataena, among others are the shining examples of courage and integrity. And no one in the world of *Sarala Mahabharata* is dearer to the Supreme god than Jara, the *savara*. The relationship between Him and Jara is about God needing man rather than man needing God. This latter is the fundamental idea of *bhakti* in the classical tradition. Jara is not part of it. Call his bonding with Bhagawanana-*arjya* (non-*aryan*), if you like. Since he was sought by Bhagawan, one can interpret his relationship with God as Sarala’s great respect for the non-*aryan* tradition. This apart, Sarala conceives of the ideal society as the one in which the urbanites and the forest dwellers live in harmony, with mutual goodwill and feeling of equality. See his ‘Musali Parva’ in his *Mahabharata*.

Sanjaya: What do you think should be our attitude towards English today?

Prof. Patnaik: We have to learn English, as language, and learn it well. The society (not just the government) must provide the necessary facilities to the poor and marginalized people to learn this language. English is the main language of (economic) opportunity in today's world. (Even if de-globalization takes place, English for us will still remain the main language of opportunity, as it was prior to globalization.) Anti-English attitude is against our interest. In fact, the anti-English attitude may be viewed in today's context as a reflection of the colonial mind set.

Hopefully, sooner than later, if we work sincerely, seriously and hard for it, Odia will become a language of knowledge. But even then, Odia will not become the main language of opportunity outside Odisha. How many (and of what kind) job opportunities, for example, can Odisha offer? Will there be an economic environment outside Odisha, where the Odias and the non-Odias will interact with each other in Odia language for mutual benefit? But this does not mean at all that we must not work urgently for making Odia a language of knowledge.

These days some in Odisha seem to think that if you say one must learn English well, you are anti-Odia. This "either-or" position is self-defeating. We must learn both Odia and English well, and Hindi too. Some seem to take the phrase "English is the killer language" too literally and too seriously. The one who said this (David Crystal) never advised anyone (including those who speak the languages, supposedly threatened by English, not to learn English for that reason.)

Learning English (all over the country, not just in our state) has unfortunately got closely connected with studying in an English-medium school. In Odia medium schools also one can learn English well. This was indeed the situation till only about fifty years ago in Odisha.

Language learning, be it one's mother language or another language, takes place throughout life. At school, only the foundation can be laid so that the learner can learn the language on his or her own. As far as English is concerned, roughly speaking, a carefully designed 500 – hour course spread over school classes taught by competent and trained teachers would be sufficient for the creation of this foundation, I think. The investment in terms of time and money will be much less than the same if one goes to an English medium school to learn English. It is high time we consider this option.

INTERVIEW WITH AN EMINENT LYRICIST

Padmashree, Mr. Mitrabhanu Gauntia



By Dr. Akshaya Kumar Panda
Principal Utkal ManiGopabandhuMaha Vidyalaya, Khamar, Angul, Odisha

After writing the Sambalpuri-Kosali Lyric ‘Rangabati’ the lyricist MitrabhanuGauntia had never imagined that one day it would bring him international reputation. Now-a-days, it has become usual for people of Odisha, Chhatishgarh, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal to play the song during the processions of marriage ceremonies, idol emersions or the victories of political parties.

The song was broadcast for the first time on the first Wednesday i.e. on 4th May, 1978 by All India Radio, Sambalpur in its special programme “SURMALIKA” (a monthly new Sambalpuri song programme) under the music composition of Prabhudatta Pradhan, and was sung by JitendriyaHaripal and Kumari Krishna Patel. After its improbable popularity, a record manufacturing company of Kolkata (the then Calcutta) Ltd. (INRECO), recorded the song, but

the disc release was delayed because of some legal dispute and finally released in 1979. The song got official recognition as it was played in the tableau of Odisha as a part of the celebration of the Republic Day of India in New Delhi in 2007.

In the meantime, JitendriyaHaripal (the male singer) and MitrabhanuGountia (the lyricist himself) have been awarded “Padmashree” (the 4th highest civilian award) by Indian Government and Kumari Krishna Patel (the female Singer) has been awarded D.Lit. by Utkal University of Culture, Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The Telugu version of ‘Rangabati’ (Bulli bulli) sung by R.P. Pattnaik and Usha has been included in V.N. Aditya’s popular Telugu film Sree Ram in 2002 and the song is also featured in Nila Madhav Panda’s Bollywood Movie *KounKitnePani Mein*, (in a dance sequence of Radhika Apte and others)sung by Krishna Beura and Rekha Rao in 2015.

Because of the sensuous sonority, ‘Rangabati’ has become popular in foreign countries also. It has been broadcast several times on Radio Mascow and B.B.C. London. The Korean girls also tapped their feet to the tune of ‘Rangabati’ during the 7th World Water Forum at Daegu, Gyeongbuk, South Korea in 2015. The noted singer Sankar Mahadevan also sang ‘Rangabati’ at the inaugural Ceremony of the 22nd Asian Athletic Championship held at the Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar in 2017. Because of unprecedented popularity of the song, the native village of the lyricist, MitrabhanuGountia “Bilung” has been renamed as ‘RangabatiBilung’ by Government of Odisha after getting the no-objection from the Department of Home Affairs, Government of India.

Padamasheree Mitra Bhanu Gountia, the lyricist of the song ‘Rangabati’ answers questions posed to him by Dr. Akshaya Kumar Panda, Associate Professor of English- cum - Principal, UtkalmaniGopabandhuMahavidyalaya, Khamar, in the District of Angul, Odisha. Dr. Panda happened to be an approved artist of All India Radio, Sambalpur also.

Q.1. By profession you are a teacher. How and when did you start writing Sambalpurilyrics ?

Ans. As there was no school in our village I would have become illiterate.. But, being the eldest son of Gountia (revenue collector & head of the village), under a princely state as per the desire of the king of Bamra, I was educated at any cost. Hence I was taught by a private tutor, arranged by my Grandfather, when there was no scope for imparting formal education in my native village.

After completion of class – 3rd in 1953, I had to appear a written test for admission in to class – 4th at Saletikra U.P. School of my maternal Grandparents village Saletikra (now in the District of Bargarh). BuddharayaGountia, my maternal grandfather, was a writer of ‘Leela Natak’ (a performing art, organized by the local theatrical group). Having been inspired by my grandfather, I also tried to write lyrics, but, secretly because of my shyness. However, my shyness disappeared by the occurrence of an interesting event. For publication in our school Magazine *PRABAHA* our class teacher Kumarmani Choudhury invited writings from students. He imposed on us to write and contribute one article each. In this way a period of one month elapsed and one day Choudhury Sir got angry and asked us to write something and show to him on the spot. Finding no other way out, I showed him three of my writings, already kept in my pocket, trembling with fear and respect. He went through them attentively and showed high appreciation. Those three writings were: an essay entitled ‘ParikshaChinta’ (Exam. Worries) two poems entitled ‘Masa O Odasha Kali’ (The quarrel between mosquito and bug) and ‘Golak Dhanda’ (The Riddles). To my good fortune, all these were published in our school magazine *PRABAHA*. It is a matter of regret that these writings are not with me now. Besides, I have lost two poems, written, when I was a student of class – 10th entitled “Rutu Rani JebeHasidie (when the spring smiles), Mama BhauniraKhiliKhiliHasa” (Mama Sister’s Loud Laugh) which were brought out in the then children’s Magazines of Odisha. I repent now, for not preserving them with care. Starting from children’s literature, I was also devoting time in writing Odissi, (classical lyric of Odisha) Chhanda (a short narrative, sung, continuously without repeating the first stanza), ‘Champu- Kavya’ (Admixture of both prose and poem) and devotional songs of odia literature in my youth. However, this explanation is just a prelude to your original question.

All India Radio, Sambalpur centre was established on 26 May, 1963 and its authority invited writings in Sambalpuri from the local lyricists. The words of an eminent poet of Odisha

Gangadhar Meher“ Uchchaheba pain Kara Jebeasha, uchchakara age nijamatrubhasa” meaning - “if you want to become great in future first make your mother tongue great” had inspired me a lot. From that day onwards, I fully focused my attention on writing lyrics, radio-plays, poetic-plays, musical-features in my own mother-tongue i.e.Sambalpuri and that practice is still continuing.

Q.2. Could you please say in brief regarding the origin, growth and development of your master piece ‘Rangabati’?

Ans. I am born in a village called “Bilung” in Bamra block of Sambalpur District where ninety percent population belong to scheduled tribe such as ‘Kisan’, ‘Munda’, ‘Khadia’and,‘Oram.’ So, it is obvious on my part to have been deeply influenced by the culture and tradition of the people with whom I live.

I personally join their all socio-culturalprogrammes, enjoy their open-minded dance and songs. I have also closely seen the customs of marriages like udulia (eloped marriage), ghichabiha (marriage in a forcible manner) sindurbiha (arranged marriage celebrated by putting vermilion on the forehead of the bride) prevailing in their community. As per custom, a newly married bride must come to our house to seek the blessings of my father (head man of the village) before leaving for her in-laws house. Such girl has spent her childhood and adolescent days in our village in playing ‘humo’ (a traditional rural game of girls) and singing ‘sajani’ and ‘galara’ (traditional Sambalpuri folk songs) with joyous mood while working in the field.

A tribal girl, in the midst of her youth searches for a mate. She chooses a strong and stout youth as her male partner who is efficient and strong to work in the field. The youth, who is capable of ploughing in the field, sowing seeds, manuring, digging the soil and levelling it, making the ridge around the field, closing the breach and rain-cuts of the field at the time & reaping corn, etc. The lyric ‘Rangabati’ has been written under the shadow of such tribal culture and tradition. ‘Rangabati’ is not only one lyric. It is a sequel song of the previous two songs of the same programme broadcast for the first time on radio. Most of the listeners do not know this. The song was broadcast on each Wednesday of May, 1978 in a special monthly programme entitled “Surmalika” prepared by All India Radio, Sambalpur Centre. As per the programme, three songs used to be broadcast one after another.

The first solo song was meant for singing by a female voice, the second, by a male and the third one a duet by both male and female voices. But unfortunately during disc recording, these three songs were not recorded all together serially. Only the last duet was recorded, ignoring the previous two solo songs (by male & female voice) and as a result, original sequence of the song has become incoherent and obscure.

Firstly, the financial condition of the tribal family is usually not good. Earlier, I have told, regarding how a tribal girl chooses her own match, when she attains the age of adolescence, so also the hero of 'Rangabati' has passionately thought of a beautiful girl as his match. Emotionally thinking about her he has slept in his chalkuria (thatched hut) and seen her in the dreams. While in deep sleep he has met that beautiful girl (like laxmi) in his dreams.

The girl is reluctant to come near him because she cannot take a decision unless or until she knows him well. In their tradition, after marriage also a tribal girl goes for another, if she discovers impotency in her male partner. But here, the beautiful girl has chosen him as her perfect match, who has come in her dream. She has decorated his Chhechri Khat (torn- rope-woven bed stead) with gold lace. The young boy has searched for his dream girl.

The first line of the male singer :

“Nain bajaarughunguruJhumuru
JhumuraankhiJhankigala.
Jhum JhumJhumjhumurare
Jhum Jhuma Jhum Jhumkabala
Jhumuraankhinjhanaki gala re —” |0|

The first line of the female singer:

“Jhuma rani JhumiJhumi
Kala JhimJhimjhimrati
Besi dela dihenjhikimikisajo
Sapanegalinmuinmati.” |0|

While in sleep, the tribal girl has seen the lover approaching towards her. Nida Mausi (The angel of sleep) has decorated her with glittering ornaments. At this moment a handsome youth looking like prince has come to her riding on a winged horse. The girl now dreams of riding with the much awaited prince-like youth on the winged horse. She is overwhelmed with joy listening to ‘duldulibaja’ (a traditional folk rhythm of indigenous percussion instruments) When the fairies of heaven have greeted her with hulhuli (forming huluhulu sound by horizontal movements of tongue by odia women in auspicious occasions) and prepared to bid her farewell with bridal dress, her dream has come to an end. She has questioned to herself “who will bring me my dream prince with whom I was immersed in a dream” ?

The last song of the programme is “ Rangabati re rangabati” has been listened by all and has been being listened to till date. The youth has, at first sight, requested his ladylove to speak something with a smile. She has bowed down her face with shyness. The king and the queen of the dream world are now extremely happy to have been bound in the single thread of a garland. They have expressed their happiness becoming wife and husband. The long cherished desire has been fulfilled. They have fructified their relationship and tied their bond of love with depth and intensity. Thereafter, as true Indians, they have aspired to rebuild the nation. They also wish to carry on the legacy of Bharat (their own country) and Odisha (their own state) to create a new Utopia. They also wish that their such noble deeds shall be imprinted in the holy inscriptions like *The Geeta* and *Puranas* for ages.



Q.3. Why did you choose the word ‘Rangabati’ for the last song (duet) of the Programme, despite the availability of innumerable mellifluous words in your native tongue ?

Ans. Yes, very often people ask me the same question, “why I have chosen the word ‘Rangabati’ for this lyric?” In our Western Odisha, many girls are named after the suffix ‘bati’ such as ‘Kalabati’, ‘Tarabati’, ‘Rasabati’ and ‘Nurabati’. But in case of this lyric the word ‘Rangabati’ has spontaneously originated from my pen. Apart from this, I have also written numerous songs having the title like ‘Rasabati’, ‘Mayabati’ and ‘Kalabati’ which have been broadcast time and again by all India Radio. In this context, it is pertinent to mention here that Fakir Mohan Patnaik, the eminent Sambalpuri singer had sung “ Sunagauntiaghararpala” (Listen to the drama of the

gauntia family) and got its disc recorded. Ofcourse, I have nothing to say on this controversial issue.

On the other hand the persons who have listened to my these three songs, ask me sometimes, “ Gountia Babu ! why don’t you write another lyric equivalent to ‘Rangabati’ ? My humble answer will be to them like this that “I openly submit that this ‘Rangabati lyric’ has been written only by the blessings of Maa Samaleswari (The presiding deity of Sambalpur) and Shree Jagannath (The Lord of the Universe).

Q.4. What is your opinion on the present and future position of Sambalpuri lyrics ?

Ans. Folk song is the source of all kinds of literary forms. Our Sambalpuri language was alive in its language, folk songs, folk-tales, jokes and proverbs when expected numbers of poets and litterateurs were not writing in it. It is a good symptom that these days poets and litterateurs are committed to this creative pursuits. There are so many Samalpuri-lyric poets in Western Odisha. Many more collections of Sambalpuri lyrics are also available here. Some of them have already been published and others, yet to be published. As the stock of vocabulary of the language will be proliferated and developed, so also the language will be enriched after publication of all writings in book forms.

Q.5. How do you envisage the future of Sambalpuri-Kosali Language?

Ans. The issue of naming our language Sambalpuri or Kosali has been dragged into controversy. However, the future of this language is very bright. Besides lyric poems, long narrative poems like *The Ramayan* and *The Mahabharata* (epics) have already been written in this language. Many short narrative poems, essays, novels, plays, One-act-Plays, poetic plays, short-stories, children’s literature are being written continuously. Hence the writers are now working hard to enrich the language by writing on all its literary forms with dedications. The grammar books and dictionaries of this language also have already been published. Hence it is easy to contemplate, how a great future of this language waiting ahead. However, whether the name of the language will be “Kosali”, “Sambalpuri” or “Sambalpuri – Kosali”, this has so far not been resolved till

today. If such quarrelling situation carries on, it will be difficult for our language to get recognition from the Government. In connection with this issue, a tug of war has ensued between the learned people of Balangir and Sambalpur. Some people are unnecessarily engaged in finding loopholes, instead of making efforts to arrive at a solution to the main problem. It is heard from some reliable sources that Government have decided to name it as “Sambalpuri- Kosli”, but I have no evidence so far with me relating to this matter. However, I am confident, very soon the name related dispute will end with a unanimous resolution.

Q.6. You have written numerous lyrics, plays, poetic-plays, patriotic and devotional songs in Sambalpuri Language. Have you ever thought of publishing them in book form ?

Ans: I have already told you, earlier, that during my studenthood, many of my writings were published in the leading children’s magazines of Odisha. At the age of 33, a collection of Sambalpuri lyrics entitled *TageSutaMalePhul*(A garland with a single thread) was published in 1975 by RastraBhasaSamabaya Press, Cuttack. It contained 150 lyrics with opinions of the eminent poets and litterateurs of Odisha like Kabichandra Kali CharanPattanaik, SriSatyanarayanBahidar, Prof. Gobinda Chandra Udgata, Mahanta Sri Nilambara Das et al. Having seen the publication of a collection of Sambalpuri songs for the first time at Cuttack, many more litterateurs were overwhelmed with joy. Since then, I have not been able to go for further publication because of reasons, beyond my control, though tried.

I was given a senior fellowship for working on “Folk/ Traditional and Indigenous Art” by the Department of culture, Government of India which has been successfully completed in a book form entitled *The Folk songs of Western Odisha*. At present, I am trying to publish my complete works entitled *MitrabhanuGranthabali* of about Four Thousand Pages- for which, a huge amount of money is required. So I have applied for sanction of funds, to the chairman, Western Odisha Development Council for the purpose and waiting hopefully for the same. If at all it is sanctioned, the process of publication of the complete works will be expedited and my dream will come true.



A collection of song-poems published by SriGauntia.

Q.7. What is your message to the lyricists, writers and the vocal artists of the upcoming generation ?

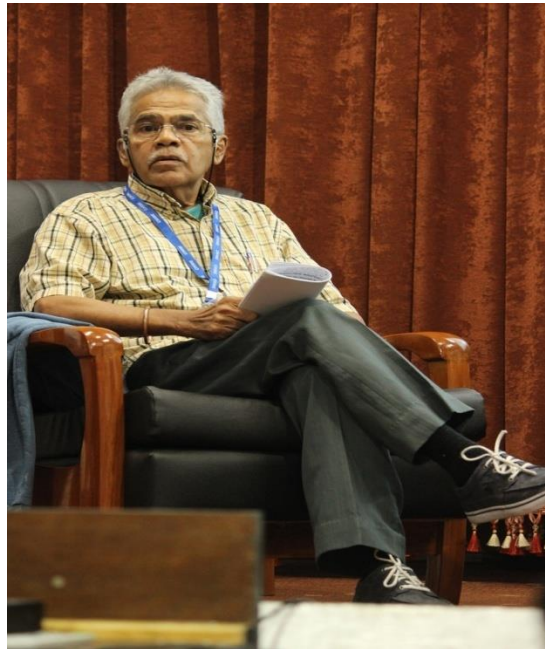
Ans. I am an ardent worshipper of my mother tongue and have dedicated my life to the cause of Sambalpuri native literature. In this context I always show my obstinacy. Such stubbornness you will not only find in me alone, but also it exists in each and every poet and writer of the soil. Such tendency fully prevails in the very culture and tradition of Western Odisha. We vouch with determination and toil hard to achieve the goal. By means of this avowal nature we have enabled our literature grow, develop so rapidly and reach the summit. As the purity of a piece of gold is tested by means of touchstone, so also the quality of a person is known when we mix and converse with him. We always work with positive attitude and strong determination. Consistent perseverance is the key to success. People of Western Odisha are born with this nature and I hope, the language of my native tongue will impel us to proceed ahead. We also resort to all fair means in achieving the end causing no harm to anyone.

Jai Jagannath, Jai Maa Samaleswar

A Convesation with Professor Vridhagiri Ganeshan

By Prof Anand Mahanand

Professor VridhagiriGaneshan has been an eminent Professor of German. He earned his Ph.Din German Studies from the University of Munich,Germany and taught at CIEFL (now English and Foreign languages University, Hyderabad) for more than thirty years. He served as the Head of the Department, Dean of School and Vice Chancellor of EFL University. After his retirement, he teaches German in the US and divides his time between India and the U.S. Professor Anand Mahanand, Executive Editor, *Lokaratna* had a conversation with Professor Ganeshan. An excerpt of the conversation is given below.



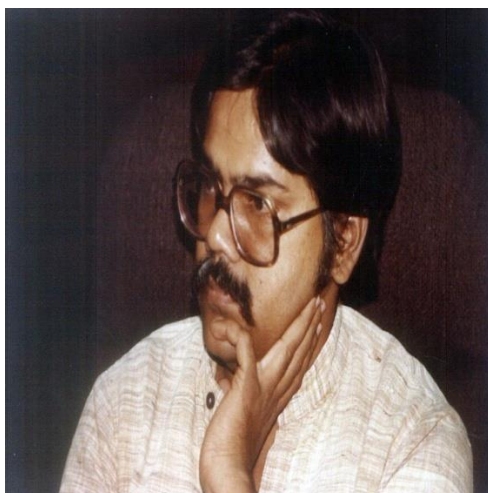
AM: Sir, you have been a renowned Professor of German. You have earned prestigious degrees and recognitions. You are an iconic figure when it comes to German Studies in India. Could you please tell us something about the beginning and your journey as an academician?

VG: I went to a Tamizh medium school till I completed the 7th Standard. Then I went to an English medium school. This was in Bengaluru. When I finished my Higher Secondary School

education, we moved to Hyderabad. I did my Pre-University Course (PUC) at Nizam College in Hyderabad. Prof. Pattabhiraman taught me mathematics there. Trigonometry and Coordinate Geometry had lot of problems with me. Obviously in the final examination I did not get the required marks to continue my studies at an engineering college. That was quite a tragedy, because Mahan Bharath lost an excellent engineer! I was interested in languages. Therefore, I did my BA (Hindi Literature, History, Political Science) and MA (Hindi Literature) from the Arts College, Osmania University. I had taken German as a second language in my BA. In 1967 I was awarded a scholarship (1967-1972) by the German Exchange Service (DAAD) to go to West Germany to obtain an MA in German Studies. Later on, I received a Doctoral Fellowship from the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Germany (1972-1975).



In 1975 I returned to India with a Ph.D. in German Studies from the University of Munich. Prof. Ramesh Mohan who was that time the Director of Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL) in Hyderabad met me in Munich and invited me to join the faculty and build up the Department of German. I received the required nest warmth from everyone at CIEFL and successfully did my job for 32 years. From 1980 to 1982 I was Professor of German and Head, Department of Foreign Languages at the University of Mumbai, but returned to CIEFL IN 1982. At CIEFL, I was Head, Department of German; Dean of Studies, Foreign Languages; and for some time also Vice-Chancellor (1996-1997 and 2004-2005).



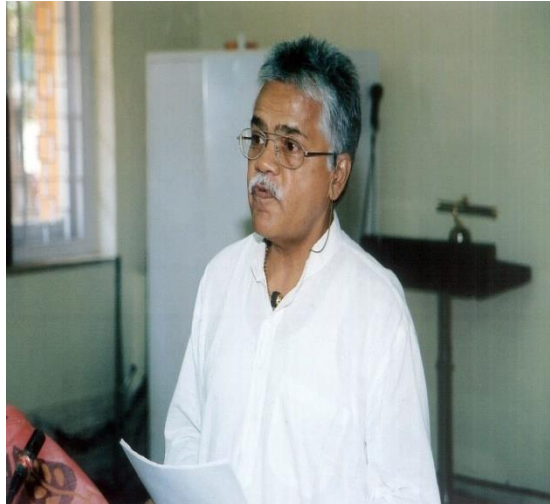
I was an Alexander von Humboldt-Fellow at the University of Munich from 1987 to 1988 and again from 1994 to 1995). I was also selected for the "Jakob-und-Wilhelm-Grimm Preis" of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the year 1990 for my "scientific and educational contribution to the advancement of German Language and German Philology".

In 2007 I took voluntary retirement and relocated to the US. Between 2008 and 2014, I taught in Atlanta German and Hindi at Emory University, Georgia State University, Georgia Tech and Goethe-Centre. At present I live in the US. I do come every year for about six months to India to give talks and conduct workshops.

AM: You have been a successful classroom teacher and very popular among students. Could you please tell us some of your teaching methods and approaches?

VG: Well, starting as a learner of German as a Foreign language, as a student of German language and literature, and then as a teacher in the field of German Studies and teacher trainer, I did come across numerous methods in the context of teaching a foreign language. I did get acquainted with and tried out all kinds of methods like Communicative language teaching, Direct Method, Grammar Translation Method, Immersion Method, Suggestopedia, Task-based language learning, The Audiolingual Method, The Natural Approach and Total physical response, to mention a few.

The problem is that all methods are prescriptive in nature. Different theories about the nature of language, how languages are taught and learnt can differ from culture to culture depending on several factors like the environment, materials available, and infrastructural possibilities and non-possibilities. For example, one should not be overemphasizing the so-called direct method in a multilingual country like India. This method may be effective in monolingual countries. We, as language teachers, should think globally, but handle locally and not the other way round.



Methods are open to wide interpretation by materials developers and teachers.

The rise and fall of methods are mainly due to the influence of profit seekers, promoters and forces of the intellectual marketplace.

Language teaching is a massive industry where much is done in the name of profit and glory. Most methods have been developed in Europe or US. Most of the Indian teachers are made to believe that that anything imported from Europe or US by nature effective and advanced.

Methods developed in a specific educational, social and cultural context cannot be exported wholesale and used in countries with different philosophies, values and beliefs. A language teacher should not be forcing his/her students to adhere to any particular or limiting methodology. Informed teaching is bound to be eclectic meaning a mixture of methods and approaches.

A pragmatic teacher should be open to using of a variety of ideas and procedures from different existing approaches and methods.

A committed and critical teacher should make use of all possible methodologies and approaches at the appropriate time, for the appropriate activities, and for those students whose learning styles require that approach.

What we need in India is a pluralistic approach to language teaching from a cross-cultural perspective. I would call it a bhelpuri method which is different from a samosa filled in with foreign potatoes.

AM: What is the scenario of German Studies in India now?

VG: The famous German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe has said: „Im Deutschen ist man höflich, wenn man lügt!“ (In German you are polite when you lie!). I don't want to be polite while answering this question.

German studies as an academic discipline at Indian universities is currently not in a good shape. It has only a peripheral status in the humanities landscape at Indian universities.

Teaching German as a Foreign Language in India has a tradition of over 100 years. Until the 1970s German studies was a cramped replica of the 'Germanistik' as practiced in the German speaking countries. Several of us who studied in West Germany returned to India in the mid-70s and took up the task of remodeling German Studies in India. We built up departments of German Studies at various universities using different concepts.

Those days, students who successfully completed their MA in German could come to CIEFL in Hyderabad and attend the courses: 'Post-Graduate Certificate in the Teaching of German' (PGCTE) and 'Post-Graduate Diploma in the Teaching of German' (PGDTE). Some teachers also tried to obtain an M.Phil. or Ph.D. degree.

The concept of German Studies in India did differ from university to university in curriculum as well as methodological and didactic approaches, because the country as such does not have a uniform educational system. Even infrastructural facilities like library varied from place to place. The fact is that almost two-thirds of the teachers of German in the country have been teaching without any Germanists in India teach without any research experience.

There was only one professional journal in India called "German Studies in India ('Indo-German')" which was founded in 1977 at the University of Kerala. I was associated with this journal as a member of the Editorial Board. It doesn't exist anymore.

Since 2007 the scenario has changed. Post-graduate courses in German are dying an unnatural death. Many universities are not conducting the MA programmes any more.

Today BA in German is offered by several universities. The BA course lasts six semesters. Most of the students, after they get their BA degree, are not interested in continuing their studies at the post-graduate level. They all prefer to look for a job at corporate companies where they can use their knowledge of German and earn money.

Ideally the students should be enabled in the BA course to develop their speaking and reading skills as well as acquire cross-cultural communicative competence. That will help them to find suitable jobs. But this does not happen. Instead, the students are offered lectures on German linguistics, literature, culture and civilization. They are also taught translation with the result, when they enter the job market, they don't have the required professional skills. They learn them on the job. But all these half-baked people bestow upon themselves generously high-sounding titles like "German Expert", "German Consultant".

As part of German Studies also language courses in German are being offered at many universities and colleges, but not in an effective manner. To make the scenario worse, numerous

street corner private German institutes have come up, where half-baked teachers of German are dishing out not so correct German to vulnerable customers.

Thanks to the benevolent attitude of the German Cultural Institute ‘Goethe-Institut’ called Max Mueller Bhavan in India German is sold as a commodity by making young Indians believe that great study and work opportunities are waiting for them in Germany. Many young people are encouraged to get some language certificates and then go to the Indian educational institutions, especially to schools, to teach German as a Foreign Language. The process of learning and teaching a foreign language requires that the teachers should have excellent linguistic skills, a good pronunciation, wide vocabulary, knowledge of teaching techniques and didactical skills. The bitter truth is that most of the German teachers in India today do not have the necessary professional competence. Most of the teachers of German do not possess adequate linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, strategic Competence, social competence and intercultural competence.

In a multilingual country like India, where one always strives for “unity in diversity” trying to hold the nation together as a whole learning different Indian languages in schools is much more important than learning languages from other cultures. The Indian students can learn German once they have started their studies at the universities. Until then they just don’t need it. India has done the big mistake of letting Germans tell us how German should be taught in this country. We should not be letting foreigners to meddle around with our education system. Germany does not invite any so-called native speakers from Great Britain or France to come and tell Germans how to teach English or French in German schools! Why are we doing it? I am even of the opinion that we should not let British Council tell us what kind of English is to be taught in India. In spite of big rhetoric, we lack as a nation self-respect and are still leading a life as if we are still colonized.

AM: What is your opinion about education in the Indian tradition and our dilemma today?

VG: In ancient India, the motto of all upbringing and education was: Know yourself. One was expected to realize that accumulating knowledge does not end with a full stop but with a question mark. In the process one had to learn to merge one’s “I” with the universal “I” (tat twamasi). This would free the human being externally and internally from all the worldly ties. The goal of acquiring knowledge was chitti-vritti-nirodha, i.e., control over the body and mind.

Education is what liberates: sa vidya yavimuktaye. It was not about accepting the world around you as part of yourself and yourself as part of this world: atmavatsarvabhutesu yah pasyatisapasyati. What was important was an objective liberation of the self through subjective (re) thinking - a kind of internal and not external research.

One acquired the knowledge first with the help of a teacher, the guru, who was a preceptor and not a partner, who introduced and explained different aspects of various branches of knowledge to his students. The different phases of this learning and thinking process were: listening, learning

by heart as a process of internalizing the information learnt (and not learning by heart as a mechanical exercise), recognizing, watching, perceiving, knowing, experiencing, becoming wise and being ultimately free from worldly bondage. The inner vision, the

Introspection was more important than externally oriented search and re-search. 'Search or re-search?' - that was the question!

Within this educational system, knowledge was always associated with self-experience, and self-awareness through which one ultimately gained wisdom. This did not mean that you acted all the time only independently. On the contrary one did with modesty consult others who were considered to be more knowledgeable. This attitude can still be seen today in family life in India. Even if you are more qualified through a higher formal education, when dealing with the elder members of the family who may be formally less educated than you, you do act mostly going by the equation: age = wisdom.

Another important aspect of this way of thinking and living was that the texts that were studied were not 'critically' evaluated in today's European 'scientific' sense. It was more important to learn the contents of the scriptures and books, internalize them, understand them and then depending on one's perception give one's own commentary on them by trying to put oneself psychologically in the mindset of the author

One was not a 'critic' in the European sense, but a 'sahridaya' (one with an empathetic and compassionate heart as that of the author). Thus, for every religious or literary work or document there were different commentaries that existed equally alongside one another thus ensuring a great space for a multi-perspectivism. It was left to the reader to gain access to the original text with the help of one or more of these commentaries, depending on his needs, educational requirements and his current state of mind and his cognitive ability.

In the Indian tradition, there are no clear and exact definitions for most of the terms we use in our cultural and intellectual life contrary to the European, particularly German, urge to define everything clearly and exactly. Indian culture actually assigned different contents to each word, but also different words to each content depending on the context and the situation. For example, there are Hindu Gods who have 108 names (in the form of attributes as nouns), but 108 Gods are also known with one word as 'bhagwan'.

The well thought assumption was that the number of things in this world and the thoughts associated with them numerically exceed the total number of words in any language and therefore nothing can be defined exactly. If one wanted to ultimately understand the entire world, this was possible only through an inner perception and silence, which was considered the highest form of communication.

The so-called educated Indian of today vacillates between two worlds. His roots are largely cut off thanks to the education system that was imposed on Indians during the colonial era which is

predominant even today without critical reflection over it. Today's Indian does not have a sound base in his own culture, he imitates the European-American culture with overenthusiasm with a hidden inferiority complex.

The dilemma is that while inside he is still an 'Indian' (though he doesn't like to admit it!), outwardly he wants to be 'European' and 'modern' claiming he wants to keep up with the outside world. Our priorities are totally wrong and we are absolutely confused.

AM: Your favorite topic these days have been cross-cultural communication. How is it relevant to the young people in India and abroad?

VG: Today we are all living in a globalized world, where lot of cross-cultural communication is taking place. There is lot of professional interaction going on between different countries. There are companies in which people from different countries work together. As people from different cultural groups take on the exciting challenge of working together, cultural values sometimes conflict. We can misunderstand each other and react in ways that can hinder what are otherwise promising partnerships. That is why for the young people looking for career opportunities cross-cultural communicative competence has become an essential skill.

People living in different cultures have different habits, values and ways of expression. These differences are cultural differences which cause problems when people communicate. Cross-cultural communicative competence is the skill to successfully interact with people from other ethnic, religious, cultural, national, and geographic groups. Cross-cultural communicative competence comprises a set of cognitive, attitudinal and behavioral skills.

When you work with members of other cultural groups in a company you are bound to experience other ways of speaking, other modes of behavior and other views of life.

In our own culture we can afford to take much communication for granted. In situations of cross-cultural communication, the context of our own culture may lead us to interpret another person's words, behavior or attitude quite differently from the way in which that person intends them to be interpreted. We may not be aware of the patterns of interpretation which members of a particular culture use.

Cross-Cultural Communicative Competence means acquiring appropriate knowledge about other cultures and necessary skills to successfully interact with people from those cultures. In any cross-cultural interaction there will be always some misunderstandings and cultural shocks due to differences in attitudes, in cultural assumptions, in the ways of structuring messages and expressing one's thoughts.

Young people all over world, also in India will have to develop an understanding of bases of cultural differences. They should understand the influences of culture on communication and

associated behaviors. They should develop the required intellectual curiosity, tolerance and empathy towards foreign cultures and people from those cultures. They should also possess an open-minded attitude to others and other cultures. They should learn to handle culture shocks and seek clarification from the other person whenever there is misunderstanding in the cross-cultural interaction. Then only one can become an effective partner in a cross-cultural interaction.

AM: One of your research interests is Representation of India. Recently you posted a picture of a sculpture representing fashion. You claim that fashion is not modern or western but ancient and Indian. Could you say something more on it?

VG: Let me put the record straight. I didn't say: "Fashion is not modern or western but ancient and Indian." What I said was that Fashion is not exclusively a western phenomenon. Each culture during the course of history had its own kind of fashion which was developed according to local needs and perceptions. If you trace the history of clothing and jewelry in the Indian culture you will be very impressed. If you would look at the sculptures at many Indian temples, you will see what kind of clothes people used to wear in ancient India.

Starting from Indus Valley Civilization period through the Vedic period, Mauryan period, Gupta period, Chalukya period, Mughal period until the British period, when the European clothing came in, you will find how Indians used different kinds of textiles like cotton, flax, silk, wool, linen, leather, etc. and designs with vibrant colours. You will find an amazing variety of clothing people used all over India. You can't just generalize it, as it is done today by the ignorant younger generation, by just using few words like saree, salwar-kameez, dhoti, kurta and turban. Find out what kind of clothing these words describe: Achkan, Adhivastra, Andpratidhi, Angarkhi, Angla, Chiton, Choli, Chudidar, Dupatta, Ghaghra, Jama, Kanchli, Kumba, Kurlra, Kurpasaka, Kurti, Lengha, Nivi, OdhnaParidhana, Polka, Puthia, Pyjama, Shalwar, Shervani, Sulhanki, Tirlta, Upavasana, Upavita, Usnlsa, Uttariya, Vavri, and Veshti.

When it comes to jewelry, you will find varieties of earrings, necklaces, medallions with gem stones, bracelets, anklet, rings, bangles, etc. made of gold, silver, copper, different gem stones and ivory. Find out what are these ornaments: Aad, Chaulari, ChudaKatisutra, Kayura, Kinkini, Kundela, Machi-Suliya, Mekhela, Mukatavati, Muktajala, Nath, Niska, Nupura, Paklari, Pattia, Rakhdi, Ratnajali, Rukma, Satlari, and Tevata. Don't forget what kind of ornaments the South Indian temple jewelry offers. The hair styles you see in the sculptures meant both for women and men show varieties like hair woven into a bun, hair coiled in a ring on the top of the head, and different kind of beards.

Even the headgear had different forms and shapes like Pashtun style pakol, Punjabi and Rajasthani style pagdi, and Punjabi style dastar, to mention a few. Let us therefore be proud of

the Indian tradition of fashion before we admire the European fashion, because ghar ki dhal murgibarabar!

AM: What is culture to you? How do you view culture in a globalized world?

VG: Culture is a complex concept, with many different definitions. But, simply put, ‘culture’ refers to a group or community with which we share common experiences that shape the way we understand the world. Culture manifests itself in ideas, behavior patterns and products. Whereas behavior patterns and ideas can be observed the ideas underlying them are not always visible and therefore can be understood only if one is prepared to accept the other culture as a system in which the members of that culture organize and interpret the world around them according to their circumstances and needs.

Culture conditions the language and language conditions the culture, both are intricately interwoven and one cannot and should not separate them. Within a culture values and practices are shared by people with similar upbringing, similar kind of education and life experience. Culture is partly inherent and partly learned. Every culture is on the one side rooted in deep beliefs and forms the basis for self-identity and community identity, but on the other hand highly dynamic. In the globalized world of today it is not enough to know only one’s own culture. We all need adequate cross-cultural communicative competence.

Cross-Cultural Communication takes place when two persons from different cultures interact with each other irrespective of the language they may use to communicate with each other. When it comes to cross-cultural communication, the differences in communication values and norms can make problems the interaction between people from different cultures quite problematic. Communication across cultures can be affected by participants’ interpretations, assumptions and expectations which largely derive from their own cultural background. That is why becoming aware of issues in cross-cultural communication is becoming increasingly important in the globalized world.

AM: Thank you for your time. It was great to get your responses.

VG: I would like to thank you, Prof. Anand Mahanand for facilitating this interview and for giving me an opportunity to share information on my life and my idiosyncratic views on my professional career and life in general. I wish everyone who is reading this interview whatever he/she wishes for himself/herself. I am open to academic interactions. Please contact me via email at germanganeshan@gmail.com

THE

Contributors

Dr Ajit Kumar Pradhan, Associate professor, Centurian University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Email : ajitkumar1@hotmail.com

Dr Akshaya K. Panda, Principal, UtkalamaniGopabandhu College, Khamar, Anugul. Odisha.

Email: ugmkhamar@gmail.com

Prof. Anand Mahanand is Executive Editor of the journal –Lokaratna, Professor in the Department of Materials Development, Testing and Evaluation, EFL University, Hyderabad.

Email: anand@efluniversity.ac.in

NAME: Archana Gaur

Research Scholar (Ph.D.)

Department of English and Modern European Languages,

University of Lucknow, Lucknow.

ADDRESS: 14/528, Sector-14, Indira Nagar, Lucknow. Uttar Pradesh (PIN CODE: 226016)

EMAIL ID: archana.gaur278@gmail.com

Dr Arpeeta Sharma is a Ph.D in Gender Studies from the Centre for Women's Studies,

University of Hyderabad.

Email: arpeeta@gmail.com

Prof. B.N. Patnaik is a former Professor, Dept. of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Kanpur

Email: bn.patnaik@gmail.com

Dandu Harish, Ph.D Scholar, Dept. of Education, EFL University, Hyderabad.

Email : ndandu6@gmail.com

Prof. Ganeshan, V. Ex- Vice Chancellor, EFL University, Hyderabad. Professor of German

Email: germanganeshan@gmail.com

Dr.GedamKamalakar, Asst. Professor, Dept of Political Science Osmania University
Hyderabad Telangana, India 500007
Email: [kamalakrou@gmail.com](mailto:kamalakarou@gmail.com)

Harvinder Negi, Dept of Linguistics, University of Delhi. He been the State Coordinator for
Peoples Linguistic ,Survey of India for Himachal Pradesh
E mail: negi.harvinder@gmail.com
KailadbouDaimai, Centre for Studies in Language, Literature and Culture.
Utkal University, Bhubaneswar.
Email: kailadboudaimai@yahoo.co.in

Dr.KandiKamala,Dept. of Political Science,Government Degree College for Women
(Autonomous) Begumpet, (Affiliation) of Osmania University, Hyderabad,
Telangana State, India, 500016.
Email: kamala.ranu@gmail.com

Mr.Lohitaksha Joshi, Reader in English
K.V. College, Kantabanji (Odisha)
E mail. lohitakshyajoshi9@gmail.com

Moumita Roy, Ph.D. Scholar, Jamia Milia Islamia University, New Delhi
Email: cmoumitad@gmail.com

Dr Nachiketa Singh, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science,
SGTB Khalsa College. University of Delhi, Delhi-110007
Email: nachiketa@sgtbkhalsa.du.ac.in

Dr Pradip K. Panda, Lecturer, Anchal College, Padmapur, Dist. Bargarh, Odisha.
Email: ppanda746@gmail.com

Dr Pramod K. Das, Asst. Professor, KIIT, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Email: pramodkdas11@gmail.com

Dr Priyadarshini Mishra, Principal of Jayadev Institute of Social Sciences and Research,
Bhubaneswar .

Email: Shreeparnna@gmail.com

Dr Purna Bahadur Kadel, Department of English Education, Tribhuvan University, Nepal

Email: kadelpurna@yahoo.com

Sanjay K. Bag is a scholar in the field of folklore studies and a creative writer in Odia.

Email: ndandu6@gmail.com

Dr Sangita Dhal, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science,
Kalindi College, University of Delhi, Delhi-110009

Email: sangitad1502@gmail.com

Saloni Malhotra, Ph.D Scholar, Christ university, Bengaluru

Email: saloni.malhotra@eng.christuniversity.in

Samuel Dani , Dept of English , BP college Boden, Odisha, India

Samuel.dani@rediffmail.com

Dr. Shruti Tripathi, Assistant Professor English, RIE, NCERT, Bhopal

Email: shruti05071980@gmail.com

Smriti Dutt, Asst. Professor, B.R. Ambedkar University, New Delhi.

Email: duttsmriti9876@gmail.com

Srinath Karnati, Ph.D Scholar, Dept. of Education, EFL University, Hyderabad.

Email: srinathkarnati7@gmail.com

Dr Swamy Bairi, Asst. Professor, GITAM School of Humanities and Social Sciences,
GITAM Deemed to be University, Hyderabad.

Email: sbairi@gitam.edu

Dr Tannistha Dasgupta, Assistant Professor, School of Social Sciences and Humanities,
VIT-AP University, Andhra Pradesh

Email: tannistha.dasgupta@gmail.com

TimeeRonraShimray, Ph.D. Scholar, EFL University, Hyderabad.

Email: timeer.shimray@gmail.com

Dr Udalak Datta, Senior Director of Language and Learning Foundation, New Delhi

uddalak.datta@llf.org.in