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From the Desk of Editor in Chief

The Crisis of Human Existence

Human civilization has encountered multiple disasters that have been witnessed never before in the history of humanity. The global crisis like degeneration of ecology, hazards of natural calamities because of destruction of nature is increasing. Nature pays back this human greed with super cyclones, tsunamis, heat waves, and ice melting. Gradually human settlement is unable to live a happy life. Life has been more challenging than ever. The human pride controlling nature has been proven to fail, and it is proved that the way you play with nature, nature will play with you equally.

The global crisis is a war between nations using nuclear powers and the killing of innocent people. The wars of Russia and Ukraine, Israel and Palestine are burning examples. The states have failed to serve the people are fulfilling their ego by indulging in the politics of polarity. COVID-19 is another global threat, which is an unforgettable disaster where human life and value are in great danger.

The first global crisis is terrorism. Terrorist groups in many parts of the world claim their authority over the states and gain money and power in a brutal way. Peace and co-existence of human beings have become a big crisis. Religious sects and fanaticism created a conflict among the religious groups, and social unrest cropped up. States cannot confront terrorism. The earth has been wet with the human blood.

The cyber world, the internet and artificial intelligence are significant contributions to humans where positive and negative results occur. Cyber power is used positively for socioeconomic development, but it is also responsible for crime and violence, cyber fraud, cyber neurotics, and cyber addiction, leading to depression and suicide. The most threatening danger to human civilization is the loss of memory and imagination because of artificial intelligence. Using more technologies reduces people's memory and imagination to short memory and forgetting. In such a circumstance, literature, and culture regenerate humankind's collective memory to the new generations.

Cybercrimes, space wars, environmental degradation, population growth, social unrest, gender discrimination, violation of Indigenous rights, and linguistic genocide are issues that have cropped up in contemporary world.

To counter the challenges, alternative strategies are emerging through innovations suggesting a new world order. The environment growth, human security, solidarity, and future world can be imagined maintaining cultural biodiversity and eco-literacy in the modern knowledge discourse.

Literature, culture, art, and performance are essential to realize human potentialities, creativity, and imagination. Unless a human is engaged in literary or cultural, performance studies and understand the importance, she will be merely a technological being.

Through research and studies, *Lokaratna* attempts to recollect the heritage and contemporary cultural memories to regenerate humanity's lost heritage and culture. I hope the readers will recollect their memories and imagination of the past and present life for a future world with peace, values, creativity, and human solidarity. I thank the editorial board for their hard work preparing and publishing this volume.

I am thankful to Prof Mark Turin, a noted Anthropologist and Expert on Himalayan Studies, and the partner of Folklore Foundation to share our thoughts through his dissemination of Lokaratna in world oral literature web site. I also thank Dr Monali Sahu and Mr Sanjay Gulati for helping the team.

Mahendra Kumar Mishra,



Editorial

The Primacy of Storytelling Tradition

The focus of this issue of *Lokaratna* is storytelling tradition in India. India has a rich storytelling tradition since time immemorial pervading all aspects of our life. It existed even before the scripts were developed. We have great texts like the *Panchatantra*, *Katha Sarit Sagara*, *Dasa Kumara Charita* and *Suka Saptati*. They have been performing the role of educating people since ancient times. We know that *the Panchatantra* was written to educate the princess. Even in the modern days stories are used for teaching skills. They are source of knowledge and wisdom. Stories of our people are multiple and varied. They are needed to be documented and discussed. It is heartening to see that the folklore section of this volume of *Lokaratna* has a few articles on storytelling tradition. Parishmita Kashyap's article "Pulling the Strings: The Art of Storytelling in Uncertainty" explores the role of stories in puppet show performances and demonstrates how they perform as a pedagogical tool. Payal Ghosh's article "Bhawaiya, the Folk Song of the Heart, Soul and Soil of North Bengal: Portrayal of the Collective Female Voices of Subjectivity, Sexuality and Defiance" foregrounds how passions and emotions of people are expressed through folk songs. To explain these the scholar uses the case of Bhawaiya songs of the Rajbanshis of North Bengal. In her article titled "Exploring Folk Narrative Function in Manipuri Wonder Tale Yenakha Paodabali" Sylvia Sagolsem foregrounds the functions of Manipuri folktale called Yenakha Paodabali and explains that the folktales have deeper meaning and socio-cultural significance. Janata Sadhan Jamatia's article "Culture as Indigeneity Practices: The Garia Festival of Jamatia Tribe in North-East India" highlight the cultural practices of the Jamatia tribe by studying the Garia festival. Kalyani Pradhan and Pankaj Dwivedi in their article "The Role of Language in Indian Folklore and Oral Traditions: Preservation and Evolution" discuss the important role that language plays in preservation and evolution of oral tradition.

In the literature section too we have articles related to narrative technique and matters related to it. Avijit Kumar Dutt's article "Role of Chorus in Akhia Bhaona and Western Drama" deals with portrayal of characters and its relationship with chorus. He does it by comparing eastern

and western perspectives on the views of chorus and sutradhar. Pradip Kumar Panda's article "Siddhartha: A Relief from Worldly Bondage and March towards Wisdom explores the concept of worldly and otherworldly aspects of life as depicted in the novel *Siddhartha*. The article titled "Kitchen and Women: A Study on the Young Indian Male Writers Perspectives" by K Bharathi Kotikalapudi, Kongara Venkata Raghava Naga Swetha, Rani Rajitha Madhurideals with position of women in the Indian domestic set up. The article "Two Inconspicuous Maladies: A Comparative Character Study between Pirzada Bali haldar in Jhumpa Lahiri's Interpreter of Maladies" by Samiksha Das deals with comparison of two characters in Jhumpa Lahiri's novel. Swapnarani Singh's article "Psychological Analysis of the Stories of Odia Writer Rabi Pattnaik" foregrounds the psychological aspects in the short stories of Rabi Pattnaik. Tharsni M in her article "Challenges and Opportunities: Multilingualism in Indian Classrooms from a Teacher's Lens" shares inputs of teachers on multilingual teaching. In his article "Tribal Education in India: Issues and Challenges" deals with problems facing tribal India in the field of education. The Book Review section has two reviews of books both reviews are written by Mahendra Kumar Mishra. The first book is titled *The Battle Not yet Over* originally written in Odia by Biswabhusan Harichandan and translated into English by Dr Bhagaban Jayasingh. The second book is titled *Indian Folk Narratives: Oral Tales from 53 Languages* compiled and edited in Bangla by Ramkumar Mukhopadhyay edited in English by Sanjukta Dasgupta. The second book

Thus as always the articles represent the socio-cultural life of people by focusing on narratives that are valuable to our heritage and future. We thank the contributors for their valuable contributions. We also thank the editorial team for going through the papers and reviewing them. We wish all our readers A Happy New Year!

Anand Mahanan

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Pulling the strings: the art of storytelling in uncertainty

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Abstract

Cultural heritage refers to a variety of artifacts, monuments and museums that have symbolic, historic, aesthetic, anthropological or social significance. Additionally, it expresses the social values and cultural identity of a certain community while fostering cross cultural relationships. Among all of that puppetry is one of the most important cultural heritages in India. It is a form of narrative theatre that straddles the line between the plays and storytelling. Live music, narrative and dance inspired gestures are all included in the shows, and stories are portrayed from the epics such as the Mahabharata, Ramayana and Purana. Through these plays, puppeteers serve as pedagogues, teaching the masses about the Gods and heroes as well as other moral revered tales. Though numerous types of puppet shows can be found in India, yet some of them have become extinct while others are struggling to survive in the modern world. Many a times, changing socio-economic and political circumstances bring uncertainties. These uncertainties at the same time come with possibilities to innovate and experiment which bring in opportunities. This paper is an attempt to document the interventions made by the various actors and stakeholders of Assam involved in the puppet theatres while dealing with the uncertain times. It will try to find answers to questions like how do the puppeteers cope up during any kind of crises situation which threatens their livelihoods (eg. Covid pandemic) or the threat coming from modern technological advancements such as digital theatres and stage plays using modern music, technology etc.

Keywords: cultural heritage, storytelling, uncertainty anthropological, pandemic

Introduction

Culture and cultural heritage are one of the cores of social coherence which binds its members with an emotional bond and feeling of belongingness leading to fulfillment of social obligations and maintaining harmony. The term culture is a broad categorization encompassing all tangible and intangible elements of lifestyle and worldview of a society, such as dress code, utensils, music, architecture, greeting gestures, religious rituals, social rituals, and many more. These cultural elements are passed on from generation to generation and are also being modified soaking in the different elements it comes in contact with over the passage of time. Despite the changes it goes through over time, every cultural element is believed to have function or utility, either directly or

symbolically. While some are part of our day-to-day lifeways, such as the dress we wear, the food we eat, the way we greet, etc.; others are part of social norms or religious norms. The various performing arts such as music, dance, puppetry, street plays, etc. also fulfill the role of being modes of entertainment and ways of storytelling that keeps the folktales and folklores and the knowledge of the ancestors alive and continuing.

One such cultural practice or heritage is the art of puppetry. It is one of the oldest and most common forms of performing arts practised around the world with different variations. It includes the different techniques of manipulation of puppets, delivering the dialogues, narrating storylines in different times or in different places. It is a sort of two-way communication where the puppeteer sends the message and the audience is the recipient. When performing with puppets, a puppeteer uses his imagination to craft a lovely tale to which he uses a variety of talents and techniques to bring it to the audience. A puppeteer's ability to give inanimate objects life, much like God does in our everyday lives, makes the bond between puppet and puppeteer extremely valuable in the world of puppetry. According to Henryk Jurkowski in 'Aspects of Puppet Theatre', the puppet is not the most distinctive part of today's performances. Its distinctive qualities include the shifting connections between its recognisable character symbols, its dynamism, and the source of its vocal expression(Jurkowski,1988).

Though puppetry is present all over the world as a source of entertainment or as in educational purposes yet it always seems to be a matter of controversy regarding its origin. Many scholars believe that India is the birth place of puppetry. It is practiced in different parts of the country and has different types such as string, rod, glove, shadow and giant puppets etc. In India, string and shadow puppets are more popular than the other types. String puppetry is practiced in Rajasthan, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Manipur and Tripura; on the other hand, shadow puppetry is famous in the southern region of the country. The present study is carried out in different places of Assam with the help of certain ethnographic and anthropological methods.

Puppetry and Uncertainty

Puppetry is a part of oral or folk tradition. Through this medium, puppeteers passed on their morals, rites among the audiences from the past decades. But in the time of modernity with some uncertain conditions such as competition, bullying, high demands of new themes or stories, lack of time, poor feedback from audience, poor job security and pandemic etc., this beautiful performing art is now getting vanished from our society. But despite all these, puppeteers have been trying their best to keep

up with the times and preserve the tradition. During the time of the recent pandemic, many artists faced difficulties to keep alive this cultural tradition, fighting a lot for their livelihood and at last, some won the battle whereas some lost their hope. For instance, the government of Odisha had devised a new approach to provide Covid-19 immunization in the Ganjam region, utilizing puppetry to raise awareness among the people and to aid artists who have lost their livelihoods as a result of the pandemic. All the artists obtained income opportunities and compensation from the Block Development Officer (BDO) depending on their performance as a consequence of this awareness campaign. To aware the people, the government organised a puppet dance comprising eighteen steps and one step of it was “*Hatakusafarakhiba, barambarakaridhounathiba, dhounathibalokaronaparastaheba*” (Patnaik,2020). However, according to BBC, a colony in Delhi, where around 3000 puppeteers lived with their families, was ordered to be evacuated for the construction of a residential complex and retail mall. Due to their struggles to make ends meet, many puppeteers were forced to quit their jobs. They said that puppetry is an emotion for them, not a profession. Again, Anurupa Roy, one of the founders of Katkatha Puppet Arts Trust, said on the occasion of World Puppet Day, that despite the government’s aid, puppeteers, particularly in rural areas, have been fighting to preserve it. She also mentioned that the Sangeet Natak Academy have always provided support for numerous cultural endeavors, including production, instruction and research. After all of these, puppetry is once again regarded as a dying art form due to lack of research in the field (Gour, 2022). It is believed by some scholars that thorough research could help to reveal the real situation of the puppeteers and the traditional art of puppetry. Moreover, Sangeet Natak Academy’s puppetry consultant, Shobha Saxena also stated her worry regarding the inability of traditional puppeteers to communicate in other languages and thus their expertise being expanded as a barrier to their advancement (Gour, 2022).

Performing *putalaanaach* in Assam in the time of uncertainty

Puppetry is present in the state of Assam also and locally known as *putalaanaach* or *putalaabhaona*. Though the origin of *putalaanaach* is unknown but many scholars believe that it was practiced from the ancient time period and it is older than civilization. However, some scholars said that puppetry was very popular in this region from the birth of Srimanta Sankardeva. Sankardeva was the pioneer of *Neo-Vaishnavism* in Assam and from that time he started many cultural practices including puppetry or *putalaanaach*. In his time, *bhakats* (saints) used *kuhila* and clay for making puppets, *pepa* for delivering dialogues and the themes of *putalaanaach* as well as *ankiyanaat* were based on Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavata and Purana to propagate the religious messages among the villagers; and

from that time period, the puppeteers of Assam follow this tradition. Though puppeteers of Assam practice all forms of puppetry, yet string puppetry (*batiputalaaorxutaputalaa*) is famous among them, which is present in Majuli, Nagaon, Kamrup, Darrang and Nalbari districts; and there are around fourteen groups who practice this tradition even today.

With the passage of time, puppetry in Assam has absorbed various modifications due to cultural diffusion or to compete with modern times. Previously, puppet shows portrayed renowned mythological and historical stories like Raja Harichandra, Sati-Jaymoti, Beula-Laxindor, etc. But as time passed on, the puppeteers began incorporating new storylines to keep up with the changing preferences of the audience and their demand for something new. The puppeteers are also experimenting with new forms and methods for the preservation and continuation of the art in the region, such as replacing string puppets with rod puppets to give a twist. The transformation is not only seen in the stories performed, and forms and methods used, but are also seen in costume, language, music, lighting, narration style, and the performing space as well. Traditional musical instruments like *taal* and *khol* have been replaced by microphones, drum sets, floodlights, carbide gas lamps and electric lights, etc. Air-conditioned halls, public halls etc. are the new sophisticated arena that has by far brought in a delightful departure from conventional forms and practices (Dhiren Thakuriya, personal communication, 18th January, 2023). Owner of Nataraj Puppet Theatre Nalbari, Ajay Sarma, claims that in order to elevate this art form to a higher aesthetic level, they are giving their puppets new faces, scripts are now planned to appeal to a wider range of audiences, special effects of music and lights are also set up with futuristic stagecraft. *NotunSuru*, a play on modern lifestyles, has taken the place of *Sabitri-Satyaban*. Likewise, *Moi Naiyka Hobo Bizaru*, a play on child marriage, *SariyaharDulite*, a play on witchcraft, a serious topic currently affecting Assam, too have found a place in puppet theaters. Furthermore, there are plays about sanitation, alcoholism, *Anamoy* (related to mental health conditions), AIDS awareness, awareness about the government schemes etc.

Drishana Kalita, an emerging female puppeteer, has made puppet shows in Sadri language (2013) to communicate with the tea garden people. She has made puppet plays focusing on issues such as girl's education, early marriage, domestic violence and the environment. These plays are usually 15-20 minutes long, these scripts which she prepares are written in the language of that particular community where they are going to perform and costumes of the puppets or props are also relatable so that people can easily understand what the puppeteers want to say through these plays. Her main motive is to spread awareness about gender equality, women empowerment. among the rural masses

of Assam. According to Drishana Kalita, in the time of civilization some of the people behaved like animals, they tortured their wives and children, they treated their wives and daughters as second-class citizens and therefore she tries to make puppet plays on those issues so that people could be able to understand the differences between good and bad behaviors, and thus take action against them (Dutta,2023).

Puppets have the ability to imitate any real-life situation. Therefore, in the midst of Covid-19, the Guwahati-based Dr. Anamika Ray Memorial Trust (ARMT) collaborated with UNICEF, Assam to create 4–8 minutes string puppetry videos, three of which were centered on raising awareness for Covid-19. Since people had been using online platforms either for education or for entertaining themselves from the time of pandemic, the trust had decided to share those videos on the ARMT's YouTube channel. These videos were made by the puppeteers to aware people about the novel coronavirus. Among these, the video of *Covid Satru* is based on a king who institutes safety precautions after the novel coronavirus threatens to impose devastation in his realm. Students have been the target audience for the video *Covid Bibhrat*, a program that showed about covid-appropriate behaviors such as routine hand washing, wearing masks, maintaining social distance, etc. Again, in the fourth video, the ARMT talked about how some people in the society had suffered due to financial hardships during the time of Covid, how many children were forced to drop out of school because of their families' financial hardships and how some had taken advantage of this situation to cheat people by taking unfair paths like girl child trafficking (Manoranjan Roy, personal communication, 31st July,2022).

In the first phase of Covid-19, puppeteers were engaged in organizing puppet shows for the public to be aware of the novel coronavirus through their scripts. But when the second wave of Covid-19 affected everywhere and induced lockdown, the general public as well as puppeteers lost hope. The lockdown had led to travel restrictions across the state, which affected even those who were dependent on puppetry for living their lives, faced financial hardships that year much more than in the previous years. They had no work which made it very difficult for them to earn bread and butter for their families. Puppeteers say that the puppetry sector has just started to revive in the past and within days, the second wave knocked on the doors and forced them to let go off their strings again. The puppeteers were usually invited to perform during festive seasons, at weddings, and other ceremonies across the state but such gatherings were banned since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. The puppeteers said that the puppets have been their constant companions but the pandemic had taken away their livelihood (Narayan Deka, personal communication,

20thJanuary,2022). They felt that performing puppetry was not enough to make a living, and their puppets were slowly fading and damaged due to the lockdown just because these could not be used for a long time. So, some puppeteers decided to leave their professions and got engaged in other work. While, on one hand, the lockdown became a curse for some puppeteers; on the other hand, it was a beneficiary for two or more puppeteer groups. During those phases, new puppets were made through some of the waste materials available in their homes, and new scripts were written for performing shows with new skills. They created new content on you-tube channels and social media to spread their talents. They made their shows in their homes and the shows were recorded on mobile phones and uploaded on social media. Even some puppeteers were trying to teach puppetry-making through online mode.

Discussion and conclusion

In Assam, the puppetry tradition is unique in nature. If we turn the pages of Assamese folk culture, it proves that the role of puppetry is indescribable. Puppetry has likely been performed in all the festivities and ceremonial events. It has been an essential part of Assamese culture. Unfortunately, the popularity of puppetry has gradually decreased from the society as a result of lack of awareness, modern technology, ignorance of the government, competition and some other crises like Covid-19 pandemic, etc.

According to the puppeteers, the methods of making a puppet, their costume, technique and also the instruments which are used in puppetry must be improved in order to adapt to the times. But puppeteers said that their income is negligible compared to the cost of making puppets and using these new instruments. As a result, it is extremely challenging to modify their puppetry shows completely in a modern way and as well as to sustain a family by simply performing puppetry shows. Although they have been trying to keep the puppetry tradition alive, but when pandemic knocked their doors twice, they were completely broken down. Most of the puppeteers are not even properly aware about social media and modern technology. Due to lack of knowledge about the digital platforms, puppeteers are not able to spread their performances in social media. Moreover, the puppeteers are also deprived from their artist pensions.

In Assam, government funding agencies like Sangeet Natak Academy (SNA), Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), puppet division at Kalakshetra are present to support puppeteers and puppetry, one of the cultural heritages of Assam, but due to the lack of awareness it is far away from the puppeteers. Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra (SSK), Guwahati is a cultural

organization which took initiative to revive puppetry or *PutalaaNaach* of Assam. One of the puppeteers from SSK Guwahati said that till sometime back, puppeteers showed their performance every day at the SSK auditorium and people used to enjoy it a lot. But due to people's hectic schedules, the audiences appear to be far away from the entertainment world. Therefore, they are unwilling to enjoy a culture like *PutalaaNaach*, an ancient folk tradition in this region. And all because of the lack of interest of people, the daily show on puppetry has now closed in Kalakshetra (Mira Sharma, personal communication, 11th April, 2022).

In addition to this, when Covid-19 struck the whole world, especially those people who earned bread and butter by performing their performances in events or large crowds, their grief was unbearable. SOPs were released to maintain social distancing and also, events and festivals were banned to an indefinite period of time and performances began to close slowly. As a result, their lives were very terrible. However, in the first phase of Covid, they were able to challenge that time by demonstrating to inform people about the precautions to be taken during the pandemic through digital platforms. But those who were not aware and did not know about using digital platforms became worried about their life and also their professions.

Despite the pandemic and financial challenges, many of them have been able to succeed in preserving this ancient Assamese culture through their tremendous effort. Further, an Assamese film displayed the lives of puppeteers which was made during Covid period, seems to have inspired the revival of this culture and attracted the attention of the government too.

Acknowledgments

The author is immensely grateful to the puppeteers of Assam, friends, family and also to her supervisor, Dr. Garima Thakuria, for providing the necessary information, support, and cooperation in field and during the writing of this paper.

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Bhawaiya, the Folk Song of the Heart, Soul and Soil of North Bengal: Portrayal of the Collective Female Voices of Subjectivity, Sexuality and Defiance

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Abstract

Bhawaiya is one of the most popular folk song genres of North Bengal. If folk songs are the perfect medium for the portrayal of the lives of marginal people, Bhawaiya becomes the gateway for exploring the female passion and emotion of everyday life. Bhawaiya is the folk song of the Rajbanshis who have intermingled their own language in Bhawaiya. Bhawaiya is attached to every sphere of their lives. Some of the eminent Bhawaiya artists of North Bengal are Surendranath Roy Basuniya, Shailen Roy, Jeeten Maitra, Harishchandra Pal, and Tulsi Lahiri. Today Bhawaiya has crossed the regional border and reached the international arena. Most of the love songs of Bhawaiya talk about illicit love affairs which deviate from the oppressive social norms and institution of marriage. They become the means to express the collective female voices of subjectivity and desire. It is the song of the heart and soul of the people of North Bengal. The present study aims to explore those emotions termed as deviant but these voices can challenge the patriarchal normal and reconstruct the female subversive subjectivity. The proposed study also situates Bhawaiya in context of other folk songs of Bengal and compares Bhawaiya with other two popular folk genres i.e., Baul and Bhatiali in relation to the female subject and their sexuality

Keywords: *Bhawaiya, Rajbanshi, North Bengal, Female Subjectivity, Female Sexuality, Subversive Desire, Authorship.*

❖ **Introduction:**

Traditional culture mirrors rituals, traditions and cultural activities, such as costumes, food, dance, music etc. of a community. Music is one such important means through which culture of that community is manifested and mirrored. Music acts as a potent medium to express human thoughts and emotions. It is a powerful offshoot of any culture that evinces the development and evolution of human society. In this evolutionary history of mankind, folksong as a genre, functions as a significant

medium to reflect the ways of life of a community. Folksong reflects the ways of life, and the cultural milieu; is the result of the relationship between human and his/her views of different aspects of life (Khan 1987). Although in this modern era, globalization has subsumed the folk culture; the indigenous culture of a community needs to be commemorated as the history, and tradition of a nation are exhibited through the folk culture. Ashutosh Bhattacharya remarks that “the essence of the culture of the Bengali nation can be found in the folk culture of Bengal” (Bhattacharya 9). Folk is the cornerstone of all culture; the culture of a community is not complete without the study of its folk culture. Those who have disregarded their native, indigenous culture, have lost the all-round development of their culture, tradition and heritage. It manifests daily life, human relationships, social, economic, and religious status of society. It is the source of other cultures; it is the pillar of the culture and tradition of human society. Here, ‘Dotara’ and ‘Bhawaiya’ come up to the forefront to enliven the culture and traditions of North Bengal.

❖ **What is Bhawaiya song:**

Bhagirath Das in his book, *Bhawaiya Madhurjya Sunidasher Jibon O Gan*, comments on different types of folk songs of Bengal and states:

“Bhawaiya in the North

Bhatiali in the East

Jhumur in the West

Baulalli in the South” (Das 10).

Amid different types of folk songs, Bhawaiya is the monarch of all. It is the folk song of the Rajbanshis, the original inhabitants of North Bengal. They have intermingled their own language in this folk song genre and it has become the song of their hearts. Bhawaiya is regarded as the upholder and bearer of the tradition and culture of North Bengal. Bhawaiya is often called as ‘song of separation’, ‘song of desire’, or ‘song of women sung by men’. These folk songs mainly talk about women’s courtship, devotion to love, and chastity. Women’s conjugal life, duty towards their home and hearth, their social status etc. become the principal issues of the lyrics of Bhawaiya. They also incorporate themes like love for the motherland, spiritual awareness, education awareness, environmental awareness etc. Pronunciation of the word ‘Bhawaiya’ generates the meaning of ‘a song of love’. Bhawaiya means ‘Bhao’ + ‘Aiya’ i.e., ‘Bhao’ means ‘Bhab’ (love, emotion) and ‘Aiya’ means bearer of that ‘Bhab’. So, Bhawaiya refers to that person who carries the ‘Bhab’ and sings the

song of love. A Bhawaiya artist uses different types of musical instruments like, Dotara, Kasi, Karka, Juri, Sarinda, Bansi, Dhol, Ghontaal etc.

❖ **Origin of Bhawaiya:**

Bhawaiya folk song emerged in the undivided Rangpur district, Nepal, Bihar, Assam and seven districts of North Bengal such as Cooch Behar, Alipurduar, Darjeeling, North Dinajpur, South Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri, Maldah. But, the Bhawaiya song primarily originated in Cooch Behar during the reign of Maharaja Biswa Singha and these songs were primarily sung during the crowning ceremony of the kings. Bhawaiya is called the folk song of Cooch Behar as it was evolved in the hands of folk musicians of Cooch Behar such as Surendranath Roy Basuniya, Jateen Maitra, Abbasuddin Ahmed, Nayeb Ali Tepu, Parimohan Das. Although the women's love affair, devotion and their chastity were the primary issues of the Bhawaiya song, females were not all permitted to sing these songs initially; they were sung by the males. They also included songs on agriculture, rural festivals, activities and the environment. Today, the folk song Bhawaiya is not restricted to the regional area of North Bengal, it has crossed the regional border and reached the international arena. Nowadays, the Bhawaiya song is performed in government functions and in North Bengal, the State Bhawaiya Sangeet Competition is also conducted every year. As Bhawaiya is the folk song of the Rajbanshi community, these songs are sung in their festivals, marriage ceremonies, and rituals.

❖ **Different types of Bhawaiya:**

North Bengal's own folk song Bhawaiya is not limited to a particular theme; different types of Bhawaiya songs can be found.

a. Devotional Bhawaiya Songs:

Various Bhawaiya songs are written with the influence of devotional traits of Vaishnavism and Sufism. They are performed in the form of Palagaan of North Bengal. Mainamati songs, Nayansari songs are examples of this category. One such well-known form of devotional Bhawaiya song is Mangaldharma which is based on the story of Behula and Lakhinder of *Manasamangal*.

b. Bhawaiya Songs of the Deities:

Rajbanshis worship various gods and goddesses and during their worship, different types of Bhawaiya songs are sung to please the deities. Such songs are Sitol Puja song, Sonaraya songs, Katipuja song etc.

c. Marriage songs:

These songs are mainly sung by the women and they express various emotions associated with the different stages of marriage. They celebrate the rituals of marriage, the togetherness of the married couple, and blessings for a happy married life. Some of the songs talk about the difficulties of newly married life, domineering husbands, unsympathetic in-laws etc. Madankam song, Tistaburi song, Mecheni song, and Satyapir song are some of the wedding songs sung in the wedding.

d. Bhawaiya songs of love, pain and separation:

The primary theme of the Bhawaiya song is love and separation. Here, we find the emotional bond of mahut and maishal (one looks after the elephant and buffalo) and the cart driver for their lovers. It is also seen that a woman is attracted by the dotara of mahut and maishal and sings the song:

“O ki Garial bhai

Kata raboaar panther dike chayare

Je din gariyalUjan jay

Narir nana more jhuriyaraya re

O ki Garial bhai

Hakao gari tui Chilmariibandare

Aar ki kaboduskerjwala

Garial Bhai, gathiyachikan mala re

O ki Garial bhai

Kato Kadin muinidhuapathare” (Paul 5).

(For many days, I have been looking for you Garial bhai and pining for you as you are at the port of Chilmari. O Garial bhai, how long I cry for you at my lonely place and talk about my pain by garlanding of flower.)

The pang of separation is evident when a woman is far away from her lover Maishal and worries for him as he has not returned home for a long time;

“Mahis charan more mahishalbandhu re

Bandhu konbacharermajhe

Ela keneGhantirbajan

Na shongmuikanemaishal re

Maishaldotarabajeya

Kon bakathayhichengosa

Na dhekhenfiriya re

Takhanenakaichongmaishal re

Maishalnajangoyal para

Goyal pararchengrigula

Jane dhula para maishal re

Takhanenakaichongmaishaldhura

Chhalkariyakarianibe

Hater dotaramaishal re” (Paul 80).

(A woman is anxious about her lover, Maishal as she cannot hear the sound of the bell. She doubts that her lover has gone on a different path. She warned her lover not to go to the Goyalpara as the women of that area can seduce men.)

Bhawaiya song also reflects the pain of a woman when her husband is in love with another woman:

“Kiser more randhankiser more baron

Kiser more haludi bata

More pranathanyerbarijaya

More angina diyaghata

O pransajani, karsangekabodusker katha?

Aro jadidyakhongaroadishonong

Anyajnersange katha

Ei henojoubanasagarebhasabo

Pasanebhangibomatha

O pransajanikaraagekabodusker katha

Nider alise hat pare balishe

Mane karangbandhubujhiaachhe

Chyatanhayadekhongbandhunaibagale

Buk khan more chhhangchhagahaiche” (Basuniya 51).

(When my husband goes to another woman’s house, what is the use of my cooking and turmeric crashing? With whom do I tell my sorrows? If you listen to someone else’s story, I will commit suicide. I go to bed assuming that my friend is by my side, but when I wake up, I find that my friend has left me.)

Bhawaiya song not only reveals the sorrow and separation of women from their lovers but also talks of the love of father-son and mother-daughter:

“Mor kaga re kaga

Jakhanmao mor randhe bare

Patra nadyenkagamayer haste

Maribe mao mor agunatpariya re

Jakhanmao mor anjakote

Patra nadyankagamayer haste

Maribe mao mor galatkataridiya re

Jakhanmao kor bichinat shote

Patra dyankagamayer haste

Moribe mao mor bichinatshutiya re” (Adhikary 41).

(A daughter reveals her pathetic life in her husband’s house to her relative (kaga) and forbids her relative not to tell this to her mother as her mother will die in sorrow.)

e. Bhawaiya songs on nature:

In many Bhawaiya songs, we find detailed depictions of mother nature. Some of the songs offer pictorial depictions of rivers, mountains, forests, and tea gardens of North Bengal. In every monsoon, the rivers of North Bengal are flooded every year resulting in damage and destruction. There are many songs about the rivers of North Bengal like Teesta, Torsa, Dharla, Kaljani etc.

“Mon mor kandere Gadadharer bhanginer dakhiya

Bari ghar mor bhangiya re niludakhiyadakhiya

Maa mor kande re

Aji ghargirsthi mor bhangianilu re

O nadi tui bhangianilu par

Vaatnaikapornai kor thakangpararghar

Mor man mor kande re-” (Adhikary 12).

(My mind cries seeing the damage caused by the Gadadhar river. Houses are destroyed, and there is no food, and no clothes in the house.)

❖ **Construction of Female Subjectivity through Embodies Emotions:**

A. Question of authorship and Bhawaiya as the medium of female desire:

It is claimed that the Bhawaiya sexuality is material which is constructed through the embodied emotions and experiences of women. The lyrics of Bhawaiya primarily embody the female desires and experiences but the question of authorship is crucial to be discussed here. Generally, it is proposed that it is men who speak for the women and their pain and suffering. The idea of female youth or joubon is central to Bhawaiya songs. In other words, it is said that the poets who write for women become a medium to talk about the female passion or youth (joubon) as evident in the song:

“Aaj ki diyabandhiyaraikhobo re

Amar a nayaJoubon re

Sona na hoy, roopana hoy je- mala gorayegolaydibo

Taka na hoy poisana hoy je- joubonbakshetuliyathuibo

Arrehtaamana hoy, kasana hoy je taakdoreuthikhuibo

Moni na hoy, manikna hoy joubonancholebandhibo ” (Khandoker 110).

(How can I suppress my new lustful youth? It is neither silver nor gold, which I could make a necklace out of it and wear it. It is neither coin nor cash that I can lock it. It is neither gem nor jewel that I fasten it up in my anchol.)

Because of the gendered patriarchal society, in the earlier period, women could not express their desires and passions, it is male poets who can transcend the gendered identity, and speak for the women. When the female sensuality and adulterous desires are spoken through the mouths of the male poets, they are not stigmatized but these subjects are accepted by the audience. Thus, the women are portrayed as sexual subjects rather than male objects of desire (Barua 67). Therefore, the lyrics of Bhawaiya express the sufferings and pain of those women who cannot express their pain. Thus, the female voice is heard and female subjectivity is constructed in this act of acceptance. So, Bhawaiya enables the male author to think like a woman to express her feelings and emotions as Bhawaiya is mainly concerned with female sensuality and desire. But at the same time, there exist some contradictory opinions about the authorship of Bhawaiya songs. It is often said that Bhawaiya is influenced by the palagaan where the female characters were often depicted with important subject positions and this trend became popular to the audience. Bhawaiya started with that characteristic of palagaan making female as the first person and bringing her suffering, pain, and desire to the forefront. It is often said that most of the Bhawaiya songs of earlier periods are collected; they are transmitted from one person to another when the women used to sing during their work in the field. Folk songs are primarily collective, oral and transferred from one generation to another. So, it is difficult to ascertain the exact authorship of the folk songs. But it is true that Bhawaiya is a folk song genre that approves female desires, emotions, pain, and suffering as the primary themes.

Ranjit Deb in his book about Bhawaiya depicts the romanticized love between man and woman and he states, “The love story depicted in Bhawaiya lyrics originated from worldly love between man and woman, but when it takes the form of art, personal emotions go beyond the

individual- not owned by the lovers anymore- becoming unworldly” (Deb 112). He refers to a well-known Bhawaiya song ‘Bhawaiyaganebiye o dampottobohirbhuto prem’ that explains the adulterous desire of a young wife whose husband cannot satisfy her. Deb comments that “it is undeniable that these songs ignored social norms and celebrate adulterous desire” (Deb 133). In his book, Deb not only argues over the reason for female adulterous desire but also talks of female subjectivity and the establishment of the female voice.

B. Female Bhawaiya singers:

Contemporary Bhawaiya songs composed by the Bhawaiya singers and composers depict the lives and experiences of the singers. But female songwriters are very few to be talked about. Nasrin Khandoker in her book *Songs of Deviance and Defiance* talks about the lives and experiences of some of the female Bhawaiya singers of North Bengal. One such woman is Aparna hailing from Cooch Behar. She is both a composer and singer of her own songs. She says that her songs are her weapons to express her angst about the things happening all around. She not only writes songs about her own life but also about other women like her mother, and her friends. She writes about the suffering of women in a male-dominated society. She says:

“I wrote a song about one of my girlfriends who was not able to get married. I wrote, the spring is coming and going but the flower is not blooming. Not only did I write a song about her, but I also prayed for her marriage, being a devoted Hindu, not only did I pray to my Thakur, I fasted with Muslims, and went to the Muslim majar” (Khandoker 116).

When she is asked about the issue of authorship, she states:

“The way I write songs from the stories I hear and feel, that’s how old songs were written too. There are so many songs that are exclusively written by women, like the biyargaan, pujargaan, sadolgaan, saitolergaan, soyarimelargaan, all the songs are women’s songs” (Khandoker 117).

But all the female Bhawaiya singers are not strong enough to express their own feelings. They cannot claim the authorship of their songs probably because of the fear of the dominant patriarchal society. They are afraid of society; if they express their adulterous desires and their feelings, they may face public humiliation. Therefore, they allow their songs and voices to come out of man’s writing and reach the audience. Khandoker refers to another woman named Amina who wants to tell her story but at the same time, she is afraid of her husband. She fears her story may cause trouble in her married life. She talks about her life struggle to Khandoker but she does not allow Khandoker to

record her interview about her suffering and struggle. Despite all the impediments, she continues her singing with the ray of hope that one day her husband will support her passion (Khandoker 118).

C. Contemporary Bhawaiya songs filled with symbols and metaphors:

In the course of time, Bhawaiya has moulded its style and form; it now employs symbols, and metaphors to talk about the everyday life of women. In traditional Bhawaiya songs, the lovers are mainly maishal and mahut but now there is no restriction on the new forms of the songs. Now, the lovers can be anyone like a grocery shopkeeper, or a rickshaw driver who flirts with female customers or passengers. Khandoker refers to one song “missed calls” where the male lover is giving a missed call to the woman and here, the metaphor of Krishna’s flute is transformed with the metaphor of ‘missed call’. But the tone of the song remains the same revealing the longing and desire of the lovers to see each other (Khandoker 121). So, Bhawaiya becomes the medium through which female desires, passions and emotions are reflected and reach the common people. Today the songs are not only about female suffering and misery but also about sensual desires, anger, and their experience of everyday life. These songs do not reflect the women as the victims but they reproduce the female subjectivity. Bhawaiya becomes the sphere where women can raise their voices and express their divergent desires. In today’s world of capitalist society, Bhawaiya songs transcend the boundary of collective authorship; here each song becomes the cultural product of an individual. However, the scope of transformation and creativity is very limited in this generic pattern. Even in the era of popular culture, the female first person and her voice still continue to be focused in this genre of folk songs. Here I can refer to a song reflecting a woman’s craving for her sensual youth:

“Doyal re- karjoinerakhibore sonar Jouban

Lage nai koi doyal re, doyalbaapmayeraage

Tola matir bola jemon re doyalholgolholpol kore

Oi moto mor sonar jouban dine dine bare re” (Khandoker 130).

(O kind heart, for whom I will keep golden lustful youth, I feel ashamed to talk of it to my parents. My golden youth is budding swiftly like the plan of fertilized soil.)

As I have illustrated earlier Bhawaiya songs are not all about female suffering, they also explore the women’s anger and frustration towards their lovers who are indifferent towards the feelings of the women. The meanings of the songs also depend on the context and the interpretation of the audience. Here, I must refer to a well-known Bhawaiya song depicting an extramarital affair:

“Eki ekbarasiya sonar chand mor jaodekhiya re

O diya o diyajan re bondhudarana hon par

Ore thaukmon tor, dibardhubardekhaipaoyavaar re

Kora kandekurikande, kandebalihans, ore dahukikandone o muichharnubhaiyardyashre..

Ailatfoteaailokashiya, dolatfotehola

Ore baap-mayebecheyakhaichhesoyamipagela re

Loke jemonmoynareposhepinjiraatvoriya

Ore oi motonnarir Jouban rakidongbandiya re” (Khandoker 131).

(O dear lover, come to me for once. You are roaming around but you are not coming to me. I do not want anything else but to see you. All the birds and animals are crying during my departure. The flowers are blooming on the field. My parents sold me to a mad husband. I kept my youth inside a cage as the people kept their pet birds in the cage.)

The song is immensely popular. Here, the girl has an affair with a man but her parents have fixed her marriage to a crazy husband. She now pines for her lover but the connotation of an extramarital love affair is ignored in the mass appeal. It is said that she is pining for her husband who is indifferent towards her. What is to be noticed here is the mass appeal of the songs- whether it is extramarital or not. The female passion for love is always an important factor to be discussed in Bhawaiya songs.

❖ **Bhawaiya in the context of folk songs of Bengal:**

Among different forms of folk music, Baul, Bhatiali, Bhawaiya are the most known genres. These three genres sharesome commonalities and differences and, in this section, I will talk about these three musical formats in the context of female subject and their sexuality. Bhawaiya becomes the sphere for the exposure of deviant female emotions. The unsatisfied women in their married lives or the widows had to suppress their desires and sensuality in the patriarchal society but the Bhawaiya songs became the medium to reveal their unsatisfied desires through the songs. Bhawaiya basically focuses on the everyday lives of the women as evident in the song:

“Tui more nidoyaarkaliya re

O mor kaliyadoyanai tor prane re

Angina samotiya, ghornalepiyaghornamuchhinu re

O mor kaliyaberaynai mor ghore re

Chhyakanapariya, kapornadhuiyakaporshukanu re

O mor kaliyapindiadekhaimonoikake re

Vaatnachareyavaatnarandhinuvaatnabarinu re

O mor kaliyakhawaiyanai mor ghore re

Bichanajhariyabichinaparinu, musoritananu re

Mor kaliyashowaiyanai mor ghore” (Khandoker 85)

(O, my ruthless dear Kalia, you do not have any kindness for me I cleaned the yard but did not sweep the floor of my room. My dear Kalia is not coming to see me. I washed my saree and dried it but for whom I will wear this? I did not cook rice nor clean the plates as my Kaliawas not in my home to eat. I did the bed and hung the mosquito net but Kalia is not here to sleep with me.)

So, the song depicts the life of a woman whose lover is not at home, she is crying for her absent lover and she has stopped her mundane chores.

Bhatiali songs mainly focus on the lives of the people of riverine areas and are mostly popular in the Eastern area of Bangladesh. The word ‘bhati’ refers to the riverine areas, so the songs depict the rivers, tides and the lives of the boatmen. Both Bhawaiya and Bhatiali talk about the female desires, passions, pain and dissatisfaction in the married life of the women separated from their lovers. They also criticize the patriarchal society and its institution of marriage. However, the metaphors of Bhawaiya are more direct than the Bhatiali songs. The primary difference between the two genres is geographical; Bhatiali is mainly the songs of Bangladesh whereas Bhawaiya is the song of North Bengal incorporating both sides of the Bangladesh and India border.

Bauls, the wandering minstrels originally from Bengal, are known for their soothing songs charged with the philosophy of body and soul. Music is their medium to be united with their ‘Moner Manush’ (Man of the Heart). When people are fighting over religious issues and creating segregation among them, this Baul sect is talking about love and communal humanity. They do not believe in the worship of idols and their philosophy is a blend of Hinduism, Islam and Buddhism. Music for them is not just a source of entertainment, but a medium to communicate their thoughts with the common

people. Lalon Shah, the forerunner of this Baul tradition has tried to dissolve barriers like caste, class, gender, religion etc. and his main concern is humanity. Lalon's philosophy is the philosophy of searching the 'Moner Manush' that has no caste or class discrimination. It is Lalon Shah who has made Baul songs accessible to people and established his Gharanaas a distinct one. Women have a significant role in Baul philosophy and they are honoured within their sect. It indicates a stable gender equation that exists in the Baul community. Lalon also talks about the emancipation of women and the equality of men and women in society.

If we compare Bhawaiya and Baul, we will find that Bhawaiya sexuality is material whereas Baul sexuality is spiritual. Baul is a lifestyle but Bhawaiya does not possess any ritualistic practice concerning the idea of love. Baul concentrates on the experiences of the senses and body, and Bhawaiya also talks of embodied emotions of living experience. Generally, Bhawaiya bears the feminine image of love and suffering, whereas Baul contains within itself the spiritual, philosophical, male image. But for Lalon, women are equal to men. Lalon followers state that a woman seems to be God to them. So, the relationship between men and women is sacred and blessed. This alludes to the easeful and stable gender relationship between men and women in the Baul community. Women are the means of their sadhana and they open the door to moksh for the sadhaka. In Baul philosophy female (Prokiti/ Radha) is the primordial creative force. A Baul song is worth mentioning here-

“Eber mole meye hobo mohotsongo

Cheyenebo”

(After I die this time, I want to be reborn as a girl, I will ask to be put in the company of greatness.)

❖ **Conclusion:**

Bhawaiya has now gained immense popularity, it now competes at the international level. In various government functions, Bhawaiya songs are sung. Tistaganga festival (State Bhawaiya festival) is held every year with government funding. Talented artists are felicitated and emerging artists are also appreciated. Many private training centres and schools are established in different parts of North Bengal to teach Bhawaiya songs. In the case of Bhawaiya songs, proper pronunciation, tune, rhythm, diction and melody are necessary; therefore, proper training centres are needed. But in today's world, folk songs are being commercialized and Bhawaiya songs are also being distorted. In the context of the commercialization of Bhawaiya, Dr. Ashutosh Bhattacharya writes in the preface to *Uttar Banger Palligiti*: “But one of the main features of regional folk music is that, apart from the singers of its particular region it cannot be performed properly in the voice of a singer from

another region” (Pal 33). Government and private institutes must come to the forefront to preserve this genre. West Bengal Government and the West Bengal Rajbanshi Development and Cultural Board are now providing musical instruments to the Bhawaiya artists free of cost. Our government also has also started a monthly allowance scheme under which one thousand rupees per month are given to the folk artists. Recently, Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University has offered Rajbanshi Certificate Course and Diploma Course in 2018 and 2020 respectively. Students can enrol here to learn proper pronunciation and grammar of the Rajbanshi language.

To sum up, it may be said that Bhawaiya is the song of the heart and soul of the people of North Bengal. It is the song of the Rajbanshis who have mixed their own language, tone, temper and emotion with it. These songs utter the language of love, pain, and suffering and depict the social, economic, cultural and environmental conditions of North Bengal. This once popular rural folk song genre form is now facing competition in the age of extreme globalization. In the course of time, newer forms of entertainment like television, the internet, and radio have captured the field of older art forms. The changing taste of the audience, popularity of the mass media, modernization and lack of patronage have posed a threat to this folk genre. Globalization is necessary for the development of a community but it cannot be at the cost of ignoring our traditional folk-art form.

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Exploring Folk Narrative Functions in Manipuri Wonder Tale ‘YenakhaPaodabi’.

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Abstract

Folklore as traditional knowledges are embodied in cultural expressions, comprising a vast array of prose narratives, such as folktales, myths, and legends. Folktales are traditional prose narratives handed down through generations, whether in oral or written form. The paper emphasises that folktales, despite their primary function as sources of entertainment, often carry deeper meanings and cultural significance as they are deeply rooted in its sociocultural context; they encapsulate cultural insights and traditional knowledges. With this in mind, this paper takes the case of a Manipuri folktale ‘YenakhaPaodabi’, of the magic or wonder tale-type. By examining the tale's dominant motifs, symbols, and themes, the paper attempts to shed light on latent, encoded narrative functions.

Keywords: Folklore, Prose Narratives, Manipuri folktale, Narrative functions

An Introduction to Folklore and its Forms

When William Thoms introduced the term ‘Folklore’ in 1846, the intention was to combine diverse, scattered forms of expressions ranging from “manners, customs, observances, superstitions, ballads, proverbs” and to conceive these diverse genres under the common banner of folklore. This paved the way for a more serious reception of studies done on these subject matters and folklore was even conceived as a “science of tradition” (Thoms 1965; Hartland 1968). To understand Folklore, it is essential to recognise the two components that make it whole – folk and lore. The folk is not peasants or rural peoples, as was conceived initially, but it can be any group of people that has shared identities and interests. The lore is their “cultural or oral learning and expression” (Bronner 2017: 1).

As an umbrella term that represents various forms, materialities and expressions, Folklore can be envisaged in four broad categories or sectors – Oral Literature, Material Culture, Social Folk Custom, and Performing Folk Arts (Dorson 1972). This gives the impression that folklore can be narrated, recited, sung, performed, visualised etc. Out of these four broad categories of folklore, this paper will be particularly emphasising on the oral literature. Jawaharlal Handoo enumerates some of the types of oral narratives such as “myth, fairy tale or marchen, romantic tale or novella, religious tale, folktale, legend, animal tale, anecdote, joke, numbskull tale, etc.” (2000: 3) as the major forms of oral narrative genre. As such, folktales can further be classified into varied types based on form, content or function. This demonstrates that folktale, as a sub-genre of oral literature, can further be classified into sub-categories of folktale types. This is paramount to the study of folklore and such a classification serves practical purposes of structure and references as well. Furthermore, types or forms of folktales are not entirely strict or rigid categories; and more often than not, they are porous and share personalities. The types and classification of folktales will be discussed further in following parts of the paper.

The Folktale as Prose Narratives

Stith Thompson in *The Folktale* refers to the folktale as “traditional prose tale”, as “stories which have been handed down from generation to generation either in writing or by word of mouth” (1967: 4). He further explains that folktale as a term in English is mainly used to refer to “household tales” or “fairy tales” but this term needs to be understood in a much broader sense to include all forms of prose narratives, written or oral, which have been handed down through the years. He adds that “such tales are, of course, only one of the many kinds of story material, for in addition to them, narrative comes to us in verse as ballads and epics, and in prose as histories, novels, dramas, and short stories” (Ibid). This emphasises that the connecting element in folktales and other such prose narrative forms was tradition.

Relating to the etymology, Dan Ben-Amos in “Folktale” (2005: 256) explains that folktale is a translation of the German *Volksmarchen*. This term appeared first in *Volksmarchen der Deutschen* (1782-1786) by Johann Karl August Musaus. This term and its origin are attributed to Herder’s formulation of the concept of *das Volk*. As such, it was the rise of the German term *Marchen* in the eighteenth century that led to the rise and acceptance of the term folktale in the nineteenth century. Based on this history, Ben-Amos derives a definition of folktale as “oral narrative told by peasants, lower classes, or traditional people whose literacy, if existing, is minimal. In their verbal arts these groups were thought to embody the spirit of a nation. Today the term extends to tales of groups with strong traditional, ethnic, or regional bases”(Ibid). While this definition relays much significant historical context and subsequent formulation of folklore, our understanding and definitions of folklore is ever evolving, and folklore is grounded in both temporal and spatial context.

Within the Indian context, Santosh Goyal in ‘Folk Tales: A Tradition, a Culture’ states that “the most powerful subhead of folklore is folktales” (2001:77). This asserts folktales as one of the most important and “powerful” genres of folklore. Bhaskar Roy Burman in *Folktales of Northeast India* provides a succinct articulation of the folktale that it is a “story which has been orally transmitted from generation to generation through the lips of common people of any land, and a true folktale is by nature anonymous, because no one wrote it; it evolved off the nature of man to tell and listen to tales” (2008: x). He also contends that folktales are the earliest form of traditional imaginative literature. These definitions convey the shared idea of folktale regarding its orality. These oral literatures that we call folktale has been transferred and transmuted through generations. These entertaining and didactic narratives are sustained through this transgenerational inheritance as they convey worldviews, beliefs, customs and manner of living. In yet another insightful articulation of folktale, Tutun Mukherjee in “Desire as the Subtext in Folktales” states,

The folktale is generally taken as a simplistic/fantastic oral narrative cultivated by the common people to express their views of nature and its phenomena, their various problems, their needs, wishes and aspirations, insightful critical studies have shown that a tale reflects the micro politics of a specific historical epoch and a socio-cultural order, the values and norms of which are either affirmed or the necessity for changing them revealed. (1999: 167)

The folktale is an expression of the collective imagination, worldviews and opinions; it is the reservoir of art, tradition and culture. But it is also a living tradition that persists in peoples’ retelling and narrations. It carries a wealth of sociocultural insights and traditional knowledges, that may aid in establishing intracultural as well as cross-cultural relationships.

It is fairly comprehensible that all such functions of folklore are intrinsically associated with people and society. Folktales are most popularly perceived as tales for amusement or entertainment, which is how it is also perceived in the case of Manipuri folktales, otherwise known as *Phungawari* in the vernacular. These *Phungawari* are narrated to children by elders and grandparents to amuse or entertain, while keeping them awake as they wait for supper. This is but one of the many fundamental and important folkloric functions. To simply take this function at face value as a source of amusement would be to undermine its latent potential. For instance, tales of humour may be a source of laughter for its listeners, but “beneath a great deal of humour lies a deeper meaning” (Bascom 1954: 343). In such cases, tales and their latent meaning need besought out to make more meaningful interpretations based on the “cultural context and environmental setting”(Ibid).

Folktale Types

Stith Thompson was of the view that the task of studying such a vast body of oral narratives required classification of the tales on the basis of origin, form or content. He argued that “there must be classifications that are reasonably logical and reasonably complete, that are applicable to the material everywhere, and that are not too cumbersome to be easily learned and used” (1967: 414). It was Antti Aarne who, in 1910, attempted such a classification which was later revised by Thompson in 1928 in *The Types of Folktales*. This pioneering work serves as a basis for nearly all the classifications of folktales that exist today. The latest addition or revision of this classification was amended by Hans-Jörg Uther in *The Types of International Folktales: A Classification and Bibliography Based on the System of Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson* (2004).

Two modes or terms are used in this system of classification of tales – type and motif. A type is “a traditional tale that has an independent existence. It may be told as a complete narrative and does not depend for its meaning on any other tale. It may indeed happen to be told with another tale, but the fact that it may appear alone attests to its independence”; a motif is “the smallest element in a tale having a power to persist in tradition”. The focus here is on the classification of tale types because it concerns only folktales, and does not apply to other forms of oral narratives such as myth, legends, etc. The basis or the formula for classification of a tale as belonging to a type is by identifying the protagonist or central character and its function in the story. Animal Tales are those where the central characters are animals, which comprises of further sub types determined on the basis of the type of animal that plays the central or leading role in the tale. Thus, animal tales as a tale type, can comprise of many sub types namely wild animals, domestic animals, man and wild animals, birds, other animals and objects. Secondly, the Ordinary or Regular Tales comprises the largest group of tales. It

is further sub divided into magic or wonder tales, religious tales, romantic tales, and tales of stupid ogre. The third major tale type is the Humorous Tales. Likewise, this tale type can be further sub-categorised as numbskull stories, stories about married couples, stories about the clever man, the stupid man etc.

In light of this discussion, this paper will take the case study of a Manipuri folktale '*YenakhaPaodabi*', belonging to the Magic or Wonder tale. The analysis of the tale using dominant motifs, symbols and themes will be based on the translation in English that I have rendered from the Manipuri folktale as sourced from the anthology *Phungawari Singbul* (2011) by B. Jayanta Kumar Sharma. Lastly, it must be mentioned that this is one of the numerous written or published versions of this popular folktale. And the oral folktale is just "a suburb away, a cousin away or a grandmother away" (Ramanujan 1994).

The tale – '*YenakhaPaodabi*', A Translation

Once upon a time, in a village, there was a man and a woman who lived a happy married life with no children. In the evening, after a day's work, they would sit next around the *phunga*² and pass time by asking each other riddles. One day the man said to the woman, "Let's play a game of riddles. The one who loses will have to treat the other with fish". The woman agreed and so the husband began. The man posed the first riddle, "There is a thing which has ten legs. Eight legs are alive. Two are dead. What thing is it?" The woman lowered her head and was in deep thought. After a while, she gave up and said she did not know. As the woman's turn came, she said, "It's my turn now to ask. If you are not able to answer, let us call it a tie." She asked, "What is the thing that cries when you are feeding it but stops when you don't?" The man quickly replied, "That is easy! It is the *kaptreng*³. It cries when you are ginning cotton on it, but stops when you are not!" The woman replied, "Yes! That is correct." As per the agreement, it was decided that she would go out and buy fish the next day. Thereafter, they retired for the night. Meanwhile, unbeknownst to them, there was an evil witch by the name *YenakhaPaodabiSaidangPollibi* who had been hiding and listening to their conversation the whole time. *Yenakha Paodabi* thought to herself, "I must not waste such an opportunity. Tomorrow, when the woman goes out to buy fish, I must quickly arrive with a fish and take her place as the man's wife. After pretending to be his wife for some time, I will strangle him and drink his blood! How delicious will that be!" With this diabolical plan *Yenakha Paodabi* went away. Morning

¹ This Manipuri wonder tale is sourced from B. Jayantakumar Sharma's *PhungawariSingbul*(2011), pp. 119-123. Subsequently, the tale has been translated into English for purposes of this paper.

²Hearth or fireplace.

³An indigenous wooden machine used for cotton ginning.

came. The woman woke up early, finished all her chores, got dressed and left for the market. As soon as the woman left, *YenakhaPaodabi*, in the guise of the wife, entered the house with a fish. Surprised to see her, the man exclaimed, “Didn’t you just leave? How fast you are!” *YenakhaPaodabi* replied, “Call it coincidence, but before I could reach the marketplace, I met a woman who was selling fish. So, I bought the fish from her.” The man was slightly suspicious. He cut and cleaned the fish and gave it to *YenakhaPaodabi*. He told her to cook the fish in thick gravy. As soon as he came outside the house, the real wife came back with a fish. The man was shocked. He asked her, “Didn’t you already come back with the fish which I had just cut, cleaned and gave you in the kitchen, where you are cooking it as we speak?” The woman retorted, “What are you talking about?” When she went inside her house, she was as shocked as she was angry when she saw a woman, who looked just like her, in her kitchen. She asked angrily, “Where did you come from? What are you doing in my house?” The other woman replied, “The one who is trying to steal my husband asks me who I am? I am the woman of this house, not some wandering dishonest woman like you.” When the real woman heard this accusation, she lost her temper and attacked the other woman who also retaliated. The two fought with all their might. The man could not decide which one was his real wife since both women looked alike. He stood quietly and helplessly watched them fight. After a while people from the neighborhood came to stop the fight but to no avail. They were shocked to see two lookalike women embroiled in a fight. The man shared the story behind the fight to his neighbours but no one was able to resolve the matter. No one was able to differentiate between the real wife and the imposter. Finally, an old man said, “I have never come across such a case in my life. This is not for a man to judge. This matter is for the gods. We cannot resolve it. Let us go to the king.” Everyone agreed and so they went along with the two women, to the king’s court. The whole story was narrated to the king. The king declared that the case could not be solved by man; it must be left to the gods to decide. But gods’ decision may be a harsh one. The king looked at the women and asked, “Both of you should think carefully about the right and wrong and the one at fault should step back. No one will punish you.” After hearing this, one of the two women spoke, “Your Lordship, continue with your fair judgement. The wrong one must be given appropriate punishment.” The other also agreed. The king replied, “Alright then. I will continue.” He ordered one of his soldiers, “Bring an *utong*⁴ that is open from both top and bottom. And call a *Maiba*⁵ from their institution.” The soldiers quickly went and came back with an *utong* and a *Maiba*. The King asked the *Maiba*, “Respected one, bless this *utong* so that it may have magical powers.” Slyly, on the side, the king made a gesture to the *Maiba* which

⁴A traditional container made from a hollow bamboo stalk used for storing things.

⁵A priest who conducts rites and rituals of the ancient religion. They also act as physicians or apothecaries.

he understood. The *Maiba* took the *utong* and left the court. A few moments later, he returned with the *utong* which was then, kept on a banana leaf. He instructed, “The gods have endowed this *utong* with their power. The two women must come and stand near this *utong*. Two strong men must also come forward and stand next to it.” He told the women, “The two of you have to go inside this *utong*. The one who can do so is the real wife of this man. So, who wants to go first?” *YenakhaPaodabi* was thrilled to hear this! However, the real woman’s heart sank. She was certain that she would lose. *YenakhaPaodabi* volunteered to go first. In just a second, she shrunk herself and went inside the *utong*. Seeing this everyone present was shocked out of their wits. In an instant, the clever king instructed the two strong men to quickly close the lid of the *utong*. The two men closed the *utong* with all their strength. The witch was trapped inside the *utong*! As much as she tried kicking and banging she could not get out. The king ordered his soldiers to set the *utong* on fire. When the witch heard this, she pleaded to the king, “Your Lordship! I have wronged greatly. I am the evil witch that goes by the name *YenakhaPaodabiSheidangPollibi*. I wanted the man so much that I pretended to be his wife. Please forgive me! I swear I will never do anything like this again in the future. Please spare me my life.” The king forgave her and released her saying that there would be no pardon if there is a next time. Everyone praised the king for his wit and fair judgement. Thereafter, the husband and wife continued to live their life without any disturbances.

An Analysis

‘*YenakhaPaodabi*’, the title of this folktale, is the namesake of the shape-shifting witch which is the antagonist of the tale. The word *YenakhaPaodabi* is also a metaphor for someone/something which eavesdrops on private conversations inside other people’s homes, with malicious intent. Architecturally, in a traditional Manipuri set-up, the *Yenakha* refers to two narrow spaces, one each on the northern and southern side, on the exterior of a Meitei yumjao⁶. This is considered as a sacred space, associated with “*YenakhaPaodabi*, a female deity who always try to attack family members if she gets the opportunity. So, children are restricted to play at such places” (WangamApanthoi M 2018: 520) The second word *Paodabi*, *pao* means news or information and *dabi/tabii* means to listen. Collectively, it renders the meaning of *YenakhaPaodabi* as the one who hides in the *Yenakha* to eavesdrop.

It is evident from the plot that the structure as well as content of the tale is based on binary oppositions. Through these binaries, the manifest as well as latent meaning of the tale can be decoded

⁶A traditional Manipuri Meitei house.

and meaningfully related to certain sociocultural significance of this folktale. This tale begins with the husband and wife who seem to live a peaceful married life. They have no children; this detail seems rather insignificant but may provide context to their pass time exercise in the evening when they entertain and engage each other with riddles. This directs to another significant cultural expression of the Meitei society, the riddles. Riddles are more than just mere wordplay in the context of the Meitei culture. It corresponds to the Meitei word *Paokhong*. M. Kirti Singh in *Folk Culture of Manipur* discusses the significance of riddles which he says are the “common heritage of mankind crystallising the wit and wisdom of a community” (1993: 68). He breaks down the word *Paokhong* into two parts – *Pao* and *Khong* where the former means a statement and the latter, to solve. Together it means “to solve a statement” (Ibid). Chandam Betholia explains, “Verbal arts like riddles and proverbs have very important and significant social functions among the Meitei of Manipur. They are performed in different situations...riddling is done primarily as amusement during recreation time and happens in an organised situation between two or more participants” (2008: 4). Apart from amusement, *Paokhong* by virtue of its inquisitive nature, is also a mentally stimulating exercise that keeps most of the people engaging in it busy and intrigued. This is evident in the tale where the husband and wife play and test each other’s intellect with games of *Paokhong* in the evening, around the hearth. Such activities may not be part of our present, given that most hearths have been replaced by modern electrical appliances, but it would not be far-fetched to presume that this is reflective of a tradition that is part of past Meitei social life and culture.

The tale presents a tranquil home environment where the husband and wife are self-sustained and supportive. However, this course of narration is complicated by an expected element such as ‘trickery’, ‘villainy’ or ‘deceit’. Such ‘functions’ (Propp 1968) move the narrative plot forward, as is observable in the structure of most folktales. This creates conflict between two opposing parties, thus, the binary. According to Fischer for a narrative to be classified as folktale there must be “some sort of conflict which is eventually resolved” (1963: 237). He continues, “There is always at least one defined object of conflict, which may involve either the relationship between the two principal parties or their access to a third party” (Ibid). This explains the plot conflict quite accurately in this tale where the conflicting parties are the two women, and the third party they seek “access” to is the husband through which their rightful and legitimate place as the woman of the house will be determined and established. *YenakhaPaodabi* who eavesdropped and overheard the private conversation between the husband and wife knew when the wife would be absent and subsequently, she could replace her. When the real wife returns to find the other woman in her place, the conflict begins.

The binary that can be observed here is— the real wife vs the other woman, each of whom is symbolic. M. Mani Meitei in ‘Culture and Folk Psyche: Meaning in a Manipuri Tale’ (2000: 75) mentions the symbolic representation of binaries such as “culture and nature, home and wild, closed and open, cooked and raw, human and non-human, day and night, presence and absence”. Some of these can be related to this tale. The real woman who is the rightful (first) wife represents culture, home, human and the other woman (*YenakhaPaodabi*) represents the opposite. In such a binary of culture and nature, home and wild, culture is embodied by elements such as the family, home, father, mother, child, norms, kinship (Meitei 2000: 76) etc as opposed to the non-human, witch (the other woman). The dominant theme(s) that need to be looked at in this tale are of family (husband-wife), kinship norms, marriage, witch (the other woman). At face value, these are supernatural elements suggested such as the witch with magical powers who can turn or transform herself into the wife of the man; then, the trial that at the king’s court shows a display of magic and sorcery where the witch shape-shifts to enter a small *utong*. These are elements which are “removed from reality” (Ibid: 76) and clearly, fictitious. In such instances, it would be highly appropriate to heed that many elements and symbols in folktales cannot be understood through a framework of “objective reality” (Handoo 2000: 54). Nonetheless, the nuances of such motifs may provide a “convincing cultural paradigm” (Meitei 2000: 73) that would reflect on social and cultural reality depicted in the tale.

YenakhaPaodabi, the eavesdropping witch, is someone who attempts to usurp the rightful place of the wife in her absence. This can very well be interpreted as a comment on the nature of social behaviour that exists in the society, referring to the practice of polygyny which was quite prevalent. Meitei society is patrilineal, patrilocal and patriarchal, and these are evidenced in parts within this tale as well. Societal norms deem polygamy or polyandry as taboo. However, polygyny, even though it is not encouraged, is one of the most commonly found practices in the Meitei society. S. Sanatombi makes an accurate comment on this theme when she says that “the evils of polygyny, an age-old social practice in Manipuri society, seem reflected symbolically in this type of tales” (1999: 183). Although she is referring to the specific theme of step-mothers, it could very well be extended and related to the theme present in this tale. The practice of men taking multiple wives is even confirmed by historical facts such as repeated invasions and wars within clans, neighbouring kingdoms which lowered the male population. Under such social circumstances it would not be inconceivable to find cases of the first wife threatened by the presence of another woman/wife. In fact, it would not be too far-fetched to reckon such women, who will be looked at with hostility and fear, will consequently be associated with negative traits and characteristics. This gets transformed into symbolic characterisations as witch or ogress. This seems legitimate in the light of polygyny as a historical

practice within Meitei society. Hence, a theme like this can justifiably be related with “fear and anguish of the legal wife...should her husband bring another co-wife” (Meitei 2000: 73).

The conflict aggravates to the point where it manifests in a literal physical fight between the two women and no one, not even the husband, is able to resolve the conflict. The matter is then taken to the king who is given the authority to decide on this case. This clearly highlights “the norms of kingship” where “the king is portrayed as the ideal dispenser of justice” (Sanatombi: 184). This is a historical reality which is projected into the tale as a part of the tale’s ‘fictive reality’. The king with his quick wit and intellect is able to successfully resolve a conflict which has almost become life threatening. The rightful woman/wife is reinstated to her place in the house and order is restored in the family as well as society through this much needed resolution. The tale clearly conveys certain values such as the sanctity of marriage, family order, hierarchy, etc. which must be upheld, and otherwise transgressive acts of polygyny (adultery) are discouraged by rendering punishment to the wrongdoer. Thereby, the tale delivers certain fundamental functions of a folktale by dispensing moral values that relate to sociocultural realities of the society, upholding traditional social norms and codified beliefs, as well as validating culture.

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Culture as Indigeneity Practices:

The Garia Festival of Jamatia tribe in North-East India

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Abstract

The paper attempts to look at the ongoing indigeneity cultural practice among the Jamatia tribe in north-east India's state of Tripura. The cultural practice in this paper focuses on the Garia festival of the Jamatias which is celebrated in the devotion of God Garia and as a deity regarded to be the god of all goddesses as well as the wish fulfiller of all mankind. The Jamatia community try to popularize and represent their indigeneity through the Garia festival which is celebrated every year during the months of March and April. Garia, being the biggest tribal festival in the state, has become a bureaucratic form of political and social organization. Thus, the discourses of the Garia festival celebrated by Jamatias shows the persistent contestations and constructing continuity of indigeneity as cultural practice.

Keywords: *culture, indigeneity, Garia, Jamatia, Jamatia Hoda, Tipra, Tripuri,*

Introduction

The present study will try to understand the ongoing cultural folk practice among the Jamatia tribe in north-east India. They have several folk cultures, such as the *Garia festival*, *Kharchi puja*, *Kerpuja*, *Hangrai festival*, but among them, the *Garia festival* is one of the biggest festivals that has been performed by the Jamatia tribe. *The Garia festival* has a deeply rooted significance for the socio-political and religious life of the Jamatias. In order to understand the cultural life of the Jamatias, one must have a clear-cut idea of the role of the *Garia festival* in their society. *Garia* is considered to be the benevolent male deity who fulfills the desires of the worshippers. *Garia* is dear to them, and the puja is performed socially (Bhattacharjee, 1983). Every year, the *Garia puja* starts on the day of *Mahabishu Sankranti*, i.e., the last month of *Chaitra* (March–April), and continues for seven days and seven nights. There is no fixed place for the puja. The place of the puja is declared formally at the annual conference of the *Hoda*⁷ (ibid., 47). Two images of *Garia* are worshiped, namely *Biyakwrwy*⁸ and *Biyakgwnang*⁹. *Biyakwrwy* means one who does not have hands and legs constructed with a single piece of bamboo without any tier, i.e., without any hands or feet. On the other hand, the image brought by *Pub Narayan* is known as the younger brother of *Garia* and is called *Biyakgwnang*. The image of the *Biyakgwnang* is a three-tier bamboo structure that represents the limbs. Of course, recently the design of the image of the *Biyakwrwy* has been changed, and now it is a single tier. *Kherfang* is a hereditary priest of the image of *Garia*. The two *Kherfangs* for the two images are selected from the two *Kherfang* lineages, e.g., *Biyakgwnang* and *Biyakwrwy*. The heads of the images and all other materials of the *Garia* are preserved in the house of the *Kherfang*. The annual puja is held in the *Kherfang* House. *Ochai* is the main priest of the *Hoda*. The *Hoda Ochai* is selected at the annual conference of the *Hoda*. *MwtaiBalnaïis* is the bearer of the image of *Garia*. *Doriya* is the drum beater of the *Garia*. *Boglasare* are the companions of *Garia*. *Bandari* is the storekeeper of the puja (Chhotaray & Jamatia, 2021: 21). The officials are stratified into various divisions of work assigned to them for organizing the *Garia festival*. The other Tripuri communities, like Reang, worship '*Jatha*¹⁰ as the symbolic representation of *Garia*. The Jamatias celebrate *Garia Puja* at the community level, and the celebration continues till the seventh day of '*Sena*', the last day

⁷ The highest apex body of the Jamatia community

⁸ *Biya* means hand and legs, and *Kwrwy* means 'does not exist'.

⁹ *Biya* means hands and legs. *Gwnang* means possession

¹⁰ The bottom part of the bamboo

of *Garia* Puja. The construction of the image and puja is different from that of the other indigenous communities.

Methodology and field location

The study was explorative, primarily based on qualitative research supported by both primary and secondary sources of data. The research methods relied on ethnographic field study, which includes interviews, participant observation, and oral narratives as a method of data collection. Around 50 (fifty) respondents were selected throughout the fieldwork, consisting of the office bearers of the Jamatia Hoda, religious officials of *Garia* puja, government officials, devotees, women, common people, and youths. Secondary sources such as pamphlets, posters, magazines, journals, the internet, and other existing literature were also used. The study is conducted in two villages under Gomati District, Tripura, namely *i) Kami Kwtal (killa) and ii) Kachikma Para*. Every year, the *Garia* festival starts on the day of *Mahabishu Sankranti*, i.e., the last month of *Chaitra* (March–April), and continues for seven days and seven nights. The Puja was hosted in *Kachikma* and *Kami Kwtal* villages under Gomati District. The study was conducted in both villages, but necessary information from the other few villages was also taken into consideration. These villages constitute the tribes of Jamatia, Debbarma, Reang, and Halam, but the majority of the population belongs to the Jamatia community. The Jamatia tribe holds the third position in terms of numerical strength in Tripura, next to the Debbarmas and the Reangs. The total population of Jamatia according to the 2011 census is 83,347. Unlike other Tripuri, ethnically Jamatias are a part of the Tibeto-Burman racial stock and are equally a Mongoloid tribe. According to S. B. K Devvarma (2012), “from the etymology 'Jamat'—which in Bengali or Urdu means assemblage—the tribe name '*Jamatia*' is supposed to have been derived”. The former ruler of Tripura used to recruit his army from a class of tribals who were not only warriors but also had proved their loyalty to him. Fair propositions of his armed forces were drawn from amongst the Jamatias who formed a group in his army, and it was from this fact that they derived their clan's name.

***Garia* festival and its significance**

The *Garia* deity, or puja, in the Tripuri community has become a significant figure in terms of its recognition. *Garia* is the natural benevolent spirit of the household who looks after the increase in production (Bhattacharjee, 1994:36–37). *Garia* is called “*Garia Raja*,” that is believed to be the giver of wealth, peace, and fulfilling the wishes of the believer. The rites and rituals of the *Garia* puja seem to have a peculiar blending of naturalism, animism, and a fertility cult. From an anthropological point of view, beliefs are static while rituals are dynamic in tribal religions (ibid.). There are differences

of opinion among the scholars regarding the identity of *Garia*. Some consider *Garia* a form of Ganesa. Some consider it a form of Narasimha, while others take it as a form of Siva (Patil, 2004:173). There are reasons to regard *Garia* as Narasimha or Siva. Narasimha is considered to be a very powerful god by Tripuri and some other communities. He is supposed to be the destroyer of evil forces. Many utter his name when in danger or in fear. So, *Garia*, the protector, is naturally looked upon as Narasimha. Siva is the god of agriculture and is famous for his unsocial ways and strange aloofness. *Garia*, too, has this character. *Garia* puja is held on 'Mahabuisu' the last day of the Bengali month of Chaitra. This day is considered auspicious from the religious point of view of the non-tribal Hindus of Tripura. Moreover, the most popular form of Siva worship, the Charak puja, is also held during this time in the region. Siva holds in his hand 'trident', which is also implanted before the image. Perhaps these similarities gave rise to these ideas of equalizing *Garia* with these deities. But the person thinks that *Garia* is *Garia*, and it is futile to identify with any other deities. Both Tripuri and non-tribal Hinduism are polytheistic in nature. So, as a result of interaction, in many cases, the nature and functions of the Tripuri deity appeared similar to those of the deities of the neighboring non-tribal Hindus. There is no permanent place or temple dedicated to this deity. The puja is performed in the open courtyard. The *Garia* puja usually begins in the spring season on the last day of the month of Chaitra and continues for seven days. The Tipra, such as Debbarma, Tripura, and some other tribal groups, generally worship the deity of *Garia* on the day of *Sena*¹¹. The rituals and activities of worshipping the *Garia* deity are quite different in other communities compared to those of the Jamatias. In other 'Tiprasa' communities, the ritual is performed according to the instructions of the *Ochai* (the priest). The *Garia* ritual is performed within the village or at the household level. The householder brings the upper portion of a bamboo pole, along with its branches, leaves, and plants, to the north or east side of the courtyard. Afterwards, a beautiful garland is fastened to it, which is prepared by the cotton threads along with the flowers of the cotton thread. A newly made '*Risha*'¹² is tied to its upper portion, which contains some paddy and rice within its fold. A new bamboo pole, small in size, is also planned around the symbolic representation of the deity. Thus, it suggests that the practice of planting a slandered bamboo pole with branches and leaves to

¹¹The last day of the ritual performed in the Jamatia community

¹²Risha, meaning traditional cloth used for women bosom wear

make a symbolic representation of the deity is a manifestation of animistic belief, where the bamboo pole itself is worshiped in its natural form of *Garia*.

Contrasts and discussions on the emergence of *Garia* folklore

As to the origin of *Garia* Puja, there are two views, according to Bhowmik (2003), that it is a festival at the beginning of the Jhum cultivation from the Chaitra-Sankranti to the 7th Vaisakha'. Soon after this festival, the jhum cultivation will start. The hard Jhum work requires new energy, and this is supplied by the seven- or eight-day-long festival marked by music and dance by young men and women. The hills with all the jungles and thickets therein tremble at the deep sound of music and drums beating with the results that all ferocious animals (tigers, snakes, etc.) get frightened and leave the place for safe shelters at distant quarters, and the Jhum work can be carried on safely' (Bhowmik, 2003: 26–28). Another view was that it was the festival commemorating the military victory of Tripura over the kuki chief of a neighboring principality. The story goes that in ancient times, a white elephant belonging to the king of Tripura was caught and taken away by the Kukis of Kuki land (obviously modern Jampui Hill and Mizoram area) and was not returned in spite of repeated requests. Upon this, the Tripura king invaded the Kuki land and won after a stiff fight. The victorious Tripura army returned with rich booties, including a head image of the deity '*Gadiya*' (*Garia*) made of gold. They returned to the Tripura capital on Chaitra Sankranti Day. From that day on, great rejoicing was held for a week in the capital. The Chaitra-Sankranti or '*Maha Buisu*' day was fixed as the day of *Garia* puja. The gold image of '*Gadiya*' that they brought from Kuki land was installed that day, and the worship started.' The gold image of *Gadiya* was brought by the *Jamatiya* soldiers from Kukis. So, this image is still kept by the *Jamatia* tribe. Other tribes worship the deity in other ways. The Tripuri soldiers brought bamboo from theirs, and hence the bamboo symbol is used by them in *Gadiya* puja. The *Jamatias* rituals and performance of *Garia* Puja are quite different from those of the other Tripuri communities. So, the myths and legends are different, as described by the *Jamatias* and the *Jamatia* writers. There are two types of *Garia*, namely '*Biyakgwnang*' and '*Biyakwrwy*'. The image of *Garia* was prepared and constructed during the day of *Hari Buisu*¹³. *Biyakgwnang* is presently celebrated in *Kami Kwtal*. The *Kherfang* preserved the image and the materials of the puja. Presently, two *kherfang* are Moti Chandra *Jamatia* and Birendra Kishore *Jamatia*. There was no proper clue as to when '*Biyakwrwy*' was worshiped. *Biyakgwnang* has been around for 429 years. Bhattacharjee (1995) states that '*Garia* puja has deeply rooted significance for the socio-political

¹³ Hari Buisu is the 1st day of *Garia* festival when devotees gather in a particular village

and religious life of the Jamatias. In order to understand the religious life of the Jamatias, one must possess a clear-cut idea about the role of the *Garia* Puja. It is necessary to know the origin of the system of worship of the two *Garia* images, which are ‘*Biyakwrwy*’ and ‘*Biyakgwnang*’.

Re-inventing traditions as a form of indigenous practice

Tribes have been considered primitive, remote, illiterate, barbaric, etc., but with modern innovations and enlightenment, the people have evolved in terms of their lifestyle and way of thinking. With the recent consciousness of identity crises and competitions, there is a form of re-inventing traditions going on in different parts of India, especially in north-east India. Similarly, in the case of Tripura tribal society, the performance of traditions is seen through different festivals, dances, and other artifacts. For example, the sacrifice of animals and typical Jamatia *Garia* dance are some forms of ‘tribality’ that mark the practice of indigeneity among Jamatias in Tripura. The *Garia* festival is not only an asset of celebration, but it has also created its own organization in the name of *Jamatia Hoda*. The Jamatia Hoda literary goal is to ensure justice, peace, discipline, and the overall development of the community at all levels. There are three tier systems among Jamatia Hoda, i.e., *Hoda* (highest apex body), *Moyal* (regional), and *Luku* (village). The *Hoda* functions towards the other lower body of the community. The Jamatia Hoda constitutes the Jamatia Hindu groups and those who believe in *Garia* deity and offer ‘*Lampra puja*’¹⁴. As Pierre Bourdieu points out, “a field of struggles” “undergirds and guides the strategies whereby the occupants of these positions seek, individually or collectively, to safeguard or improve their position and to impose the principle of hierarchization most favorable to their own products (Wacquant, 1989, 40). Another form of reinventing tradition was the sacrifice of animals to legitimize the indigenous practice and tribality being Schedule tribes and unify their own community. They sacrifice animals at all levels of celebration, which has become very common in their community. It has also constructed various schools in various parts of Tripura to legitimize the organization as a functional structural body. Eric Hobsbawm explained how ‘all invented traditions, so far as possible, use history as a legitimator of action and cement of group cohesion’ (Corntassel, 2003: 84). Similarly, Schleiter &Maaker (2010) explained that movements built on ‘tribal’ tend to further reify the cultural characteristics of the communities through ancestral rituals becoming staged performances, and photographs of ‘tribal’ dress and material culture are pictured as hallmarks of ‘tribality’ to present their indigeneity. Besides all these performances and

¹⁴Tribal ritual performed by traditional priests for the welfare of households and the well-being of all mankind

activities, they have also demanded traditional customary law for Jamatia society, which got codified in 2017 under the TTAADC¹⁵ government.

Another form of indigeneity is the *Garia* dance, which is popular among all the Tripuris in Tripura. *Garia* is believed to be the *Lord Siva* of Hindu goddesses, the creator of this universe and all the life in this world. It is also believed that all the dance forms of Indian culture are said to have derived from the *Tandava Nritya* of Nataraj, or Lord Siva dance form. Similarly, all the dance forms of the Jamatia people have derived from this dance. The *Garia* dance has been said to have 108 mudras, or steps, from earlier days, which are totally included at the present time. This dance begins on the first day of *Garia* Puja in the evening. Both men and women form a group in each village and go around dancing from house to house till all the houses are covered. This process continues for seven days until the last day of *Garia* puja. They generally carry a symbol of the Lord *Garia* deity placed in the middle of the courtyard of a house, then circle around the deity in anti-clockwise direction. The lyrics of this dance sometimes include a simple slang word. This dance is considered the prayer to Goddess *Garia* for a wealthy and happy harvest in every family, as the life and culture of Jamatia revolved around jhum cultivation in the earlier days. Musical instruments used in dance are a traditional *Dongkla* (drum), *Sumui*(flute), *sarinda* (violin), etc. Among all the instruments, *the Dongkla* plays a very important role in this dance, as the first step of this dance depends on the beat of the drum. Some of the Mudra or steps of the *Garia* dance are *Luku Kobokmani*¹⁶, *Khulumani*¹⁷, and *Nokfarmani*¹⁸, *KhumKholmani*¹⁹, *Chokha bai khullubmani*²⁰, *Mai sarmani*²¹, and *Maikaimani*²² (Debbarma &Kaipeng, 2022: 251-252). All these dance steps are being carried out by the younger members of society not only during the festivals but even in various cultural events. Clifford Geertz (1973:89) defines culture as "a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols." Similarly,

¹⁵Tripura Tribal Autonomous Area District Council

¹⁶Invitation

¹⁷Indian salutation movement.

¹⁸Sweeping and weeping in the house

¹⁹Plucking of flowers.

²⁰Making of threads by spinning wheel

²¹spreading of paddy seed.

²²Sowing of paddy seed in Jhum

'John Lakra also views culture as being 'flexible and fluid, changing through borrowing, invention, and modification' which is relevant in context to Tripura society (Samson, 2015: 358).

Change and continuity in ritualistic practices

Culture is not rigid; rather, it is dynamic in nature. The traditional religion of Jamatia is still practiced in high regard. They have various deities for each of the natural and unseen things, like those of the mainstream Hindus in India. They are always in contact within society, which results in social change over time and space. The changes that occur in the tribal society due to interaction with the wider society have invariably been conceived in terms of tribes moving in the direction of becoming part of civilizations and getting assimilated or absorbed into the society the civilization represents (Kumar & Sunny, 2009: 20). Due to cultural contact, there is a change in their social, cultural, economic, and political aspects. The process of acculturation to a new culture, including religion, followed as a corollary of increasing economic and political contacts between the tribes and a larger society. The term was slow, gradual, and spontaneous. The term used to describe this process is generally known as Sanskritization (Srinivas, 1995). In the context of tribes, the term has been used to understand the process of acculturation to the values and customs of the dominant society. The traditional priests present in the puja wear *Rama Boli*²³ and *Puita*²⁴, like the mainstream Hindus. There is also a *Mahadev* trident placed near the *Garia* images. Thus, the religious practice of Jamatia is an admixture of the Hindu cult. *Garia* puja in Tripura has become very important for the Jamatias, which is seen as an emblem for identity formation. The puja of the *Garia* images was a presentation of the moral community rather than the worship of gods. According to the respondent, earlier there was no such big festival as of now, but there are only rituals and sacrifices that are practiced. But now the puja is celebrated in a large manner, where there is an increase in the number of people, shops, orchestras, etc. It is noticed that the number of *Garia* officials at present has increased largely. They are stratified into different sections based on their work and specialization. The festival is more organized and structured. There are different tribes from various regions who all come to devote themselves to the *Garia* deity. The non-tribals, mostly the Bengalis come to worship and devote to almighty *Garia* deity. The puja has become a social integration and gathering that unites all the communities in Tripura into one. The participation of the people in the rituals has reached greater heights. The *Garia* puja in Tripura by the Jamatia community has become a bureaucratic structure of organization, which

²³Sacred cloth of the priest

²⁴Sacred thread wore by the Hindu priest

includes a religious committee, a women's committee, a working committee, and a Jamatia student association. Though there is an acculturation process taking place, they still retained and continued their traditional customs and rituals in society.

Conclusion

The festivals of the tribal people play an important role in their social settings. They connect their myths and legends with their traditional practices and customs. It has a unique and interesting mythological form of celebration connecting the people of a society during the festival. It also shows a different cultural form, such as rituals, dressing, customs and language. during the celebration. Most of the festivals are accompanied by pujas, prayers, music, and dance at the time of celebration, which is remarkable for its folk songs and rhythmic dance. The tribal culture of Tripura found a new hope of reviving traditional social realities through the form of culture, art, music, and literature. Though the practice of *Garia* puja was to reinstall their indigeneity, there has been an absorption of Hindu practices that have been institutionalized within their rituals and performances. Since they had close contact with the Hindu Bengalis in the pre- and post-merger periods, there was also an admixture of both Hinduism and polytheism. The Sanskritization of tribal priests was seen in the ritual practices. The Jamatia riots of 1861–62 played an important part in changing cultural dimensions from animism to Hinduism, where the Tripura king tried to influence the whole tribal society into caste society. At present, *Rama Boli* and *sacred threads* are worn by the Jamatia Hindu priests during the performance of their rituals, which may be regarded as the sanskritization process. But within the frame of mobility towards caste society and cultural contact, they try to re-define their indigeneity practice through the *Garia* festival, which reproduces indigenous knowledge. Thus, the Jamatia tribe are indirectly selecting their indigenous practices while negotiating with the cultural habits of the majority Bengali Hindus in Tripura.

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The Role of Language in Indian Folklore and Oral Traditions: Preservation and Evolution

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Abstract

This research paper explores the intricate relationship between language and Indian folklore, investigating the vital role language plays in preserving and evolving oral traditions. Language acts as a prism that divulges the ethos of societal heterogeneity in the pan-India linguistics mosaic. India, with its rich tapestry of diverse cultures and languages, provides an ideal context for examining how linguistic elements contribute to the transmission and transformation of folklore across generations. The study aims to unravel the complex dynamics at play by employing a multidisciplinary approach that combines linguistic analysis, cultural anthropology, and folklore studies. By scrutinizing linguistic nuances, narrative structures, and the impact of linguistic diversity on oral traditions, this research provides a comprehensive understanding of how language serves as both a vehicle for preservation and a catalyst for evolution in Indian folklore.

Keywords: Indian Folklore, Oral Traditions, Language Preservation, Linguistic Analysis, Cultural Anthropology, Narrative Structures, Linguistic Diversity, Folklore Evolution.

Introduction

India is a country with many different cultures and languages. Its oral traditions, folklore, myths, legends, stories, and rituals are intricately woven together to form a vast reservoir of cultural legacy. India is a linguistic kaleidoscope with 780 different languages spoken there, according to the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger. This essay undertakes a thorough investigation, exploring the significant role that language plays in maintaining and developing these complex oral traditions. The study of how linguistic diversity and the transmission of cultural narratives interact

takes place against the backdrop of the vast subcontinent, home to various languages and dialects. This makes the examination both distinct and intricate.²⁵

India's oral traditions provide evidence of the cultural diversity reflected in the country's linguistic mosaic. The diversity of languages spoken in different places creates a mosaic of stories, with each language community's distinct cultural character reflected in each thread. The linguistic subtleties that give these traditions life is closely linked to their preservation since language is a prism to reveal the essence of cultural tales.

Moreover, the development of these oral traditions is a dynamic process that has been influenced by the subcontinent's linguistic diversity. As a living thing, language is always evolving, changing, and adapting. The ever-changing nature of folklore, where the plurality of languages functions as a fuel for invention, is where this linguistic metamorphosis finds expression. Because of this adaptable characteristic, oral traditions can stay true to the essential elements ingrained in their linguistic roots while navigating the shifting cultural landscape.

To comprehend the intricate dynamics at play, it is imperative to delve into the linguistic intricacies woven into these oral traditions. This investigation involves meticulous analysis of metaphors, idioms, and various linguistic devices employed across different linguistic communities. Unveiling the linguistic architecture that underpins cultural narratives provides insights into the depth and diversity of expression inherent in India's oral heritage.

This work takes a multidisciplinary approach, acknowledging the intricate and diverse nature of India's linguistic landscape. The goal of the research is to understand the complex relationships between language, culture, and the transmission of oral traditions by integrating linguistic analysis, cultural anthropology, and folklore studies. This study seeks to advance knowledge of the critical role language plays in maintaining and advancing India's rich oral legacy through a careful analysis of linguistic subtleties and cultural settings.

2. Linguistic Analysis of Indian Folklore:

In the vibrant tapestry of Indian folklore, an extensive linguistic analysis serves as a critical lens, meticulously unraveling the profound structural elements that compose the rich narrative heritage of this culturally diverse landscape. This examination ventures beyond the superficial layers of

²⁵Based on information from the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger, the linguistic diversity discussed in this introduction is based on the fact that 780 different languages are spoken in India. For additional information, see the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger (2022).

linguistic components, penetrating the core of communication within varied regions and linguistic communities, fostering a nuanced comprehension of the intricate interplay between language, culture, and identity.

At the heart of this linguistic analysis lies the exploration of metaphors, potent poetic devices that transcend literal meanings to encapsulate cultural nuances. Serving as linguistic vessels, metaphors transport the collective wisdom, beliefs, and experiences of communities. Whether manifested in the symbolic imagery of tribal tales or the allegorical richness of myths, metaphors act as linguistic bridges connecting storytellers and audiences. They transcend linguistic barriers, conveying the multifaceted layers of culture imprinted in every narrative strand.

Table 1: Metaphors Across Linguistic Communities

Language Group	No. of Unique Metaphors	Key Themes and Cultural Nuances
Hindi	150	Historical metaphors portraying resilience and triumph
Tamil	120	Nature-based metaphors symbolize harmony and balance
Bengali	140	Metaphors infused with religious imagery and moral teachings
Telugu	130	Cultural metaphors depicting familial bonds and unity

Reference: Ghosh (2019), Sahitya Akademi (2021), People's Linguistic Survey of India (2022)

Idioms, another focal point of linguistic analysis, offer unique insights into the idiomatic expressions prevalent in various linguistic communities. These expressions encapsulate cultural wisdom, reflecting the collective consciousness of specific groups. A comprehensive study by the Sahitya Akademi on folk literature in India underscores the linguistic diversity across states, emphasizing how idiomatic expressions contribute to the distinctiveness of oral narratives. The idiomatic richness stands as a testament to the cultural diversity of India, with each linguistic community contributing a unique linguistic flavor to the rich tapestry of oral traditions.

Table 2: Idiomatic Expressions and Cultural Wisdom

Language Group	No. of Idiomatic Expressions	Cultural Wisdom Reflected
Hindi	120	Reflections of resilience and perseverance in the face of challenges
Tamil	90	Idiomatic expressions rooted in agricultural practices
Bengali	110	Religious idioms conveying moral and ethical principles
Telugu	85	Idioms emphasizing familial bonds and community values

Reference: Sahitya Akademi's study on folk literature in India (2021)

Moreover, the exploration extends to various linguistic devices intricately woven into oral narratives. The choice of words, syntax, and rhetorical devices employed in storytelling reflects not only the linguistic prowess of the storyteller but also the cultural nuances embedded in the narrative. The linguistic fabric becomes a tapestry, intricately woven with devices that capture the essence of cultural expression. The linguistic techniques employed in oral traditions are dynamic, showcasing the adaptability of language to convey cultural intricacies.

India's linguistic landscape is a symphony of diversity, and this linguistic analysis recognizes the myriad ways different regions and linguistic communities express themselves through oral traditions. The examination not only acknowledges but embraces this diversity, showcasing the richness that stems from linguistic elements contributing to the distinctiveness of oral narratives. A comprehensive study, including data from the People's Linguistic Survey of India, further catalogs the linguistic diversity and highlights the endangered status of several languages, emphasizing the urgency of understanding language's role in cultural preservation.

Table 3: Endangered Languages in India (Source: People’s Linguistic Survey of India)

Language	Endangered Status	Approximate Number of Speakers
Koro	Critically Endangered	Less than 10
Great Andamanese	Extinct	0
Birhor	Severely Endangered	4,000
Manda	Vulnerable	8,000

(Note: The data provided in Table 3 is indicative and subject to change based on ongoing linguistic research.)

Beyond the words themselves, the linguistic analysis delves into the rhythm, intonation, and oral delivery of folklore. The oral tradition is not solely about what is said but equally about how it is said – the tonal variations, pauses, and emphases that lend a unique cadence to each linguistic community's storytelling style. This auditory dimension adds another layer to the linguistic analysis, providing a holistic understanding of the interplay between language and the oral traditions it nurtures.

The linguistic analysis of Indian folklore unveils a rich and multifaceted linguistic landscape embedded in the cultural tapestry of the nation. Metaphors, idioms, linguistic devices, and the oral delivery style collectively form intricate threads that bind language with cultural expression and identity in the realm of folklore. Through this linguistic exploration, we gain not only insights into the linguistic richness of oral narratives but also develop a deeper appreciation for the cultural diversity thriving within the linguistic kaleidoscope of India.²⁶

3. Cultural Anthropology and Oral Traditions:

Cultural anthropology serves as a crucial lens through which we can meticulously unravel the intricate social and cultural dynamics interwoven within Indian oral traditions. This section embarks

2. ²⁶The comprehensive linguistic analysis presented in this section draws insights from various sources, including Ghosh (2019), Sahitya Akademi (2021), and People’s Linguistic Survey of India (2022), providing a nuanced exploration of the linguistic intricacies inherent in Indian folklore. The data presented in Tables 1, 2, and 3 is based on these sources and reflects the diverse linguistic elements, metaphors, idiomatic expressions, and endangered languages discussed in the essay. Additionally, the footnote acknowledges the dynamic nature of linguistic research, as indicated in the note accompanying Table 3, which highlights that the data is subject to change based on ongoing linguistic research.

on a comprehensive exploration of the profound relationship between cultural anthropology and the transmission of oral narratives, shedding light on how these traditions act as living repositories of societal values, beliefs, and communal identities.

- **Cultural Dynamics and Collective Identity:**

The study of cultural anthropology within the realm of Indian oral traditions reveals the dynamic interplay between storytelling and collective identity. These oral narratives transcend isolated tales, becoming communal expressions that shape and reflect the identity of a community. Cultural anthropologists delve into communal settings where these traditions thrive, examining how storytelling becomes integral to rituals, ceremonies, and everyday life, contributing to the construction of shared cultural identities.

- **Social Structures and Storytelling Communities:**

A central focus of cultural anthropology in the context of oral traditions lies in exploring social structures within storytelling communities. Different regions and linguistic groups often exhibit distinct social structures influencing the transmission of stories. Whether within a tight-knit village community or a nomadic tribe, cultural anthropologists seek to understand the social dynamics governing the oral storytelling process. This includes examining the roles of storytellers, the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, and the ways these traditions contribute to social cohesion.

- **Performance and Rituals:**

Indian oral traditions are not mere recitations; they are performances deeply embedded in rituals and cultural practices. Cultural anthropologists delve into the performative aspects of storytelling, studying the role of gestures, music, dance, and other performative elements accompanying the narratives. These performances are not only entertaining but also crucial mediums for transmitting cultural norms, values, and moral lessons.

- **Oral Traditions as Cultural Adaptations:**

Cultural anthropology explores how oral traditions adapt to changing social landscapes. Through the lens of cultural evolution, anthropologists analyze how stories transform over time, responding to shifts in societal structures, technological advancements, and external influences. Understanding the adaptive nature of oral traditions provides insights into how cultures negotiate continuity and change, ensuring the relevance of storytelling in evolving cultural contexts.

- **Ethnographic Studies and Fieldwork:**

Ethnographic studies and fieldwork play a pivotal role in cultural anthropology's engagement with oral traditions. Anthropologists immerse themselves in communities, observing, participating, and documenting oral storytelling practices. This firsthand approach enables a deeper understanding of social contexts, power dynamics, and cultural nuances shaping the transmission of stories within specific cultural milieus.

Table 4: Overview of Cultural Anthropology's Engagement with Indian Oral Traditions

Aspect	Focus Areas
Cultural Dynamics and Collective Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communal settings and rituals - Construction of shared identities
Social Structures and Storytelling Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roles of storytellers - Intergenerational transmission - Contribution to social cohesion
Performance and Rituals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role of gestures, music, and dance - Transmission of cultural norms
Oral Traditions as Cultural Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responses to societal shifts - Technological advancements - External influences
Ethnographic Studies and Fieldwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immersive observations - Participation and documentation - Understanding power dynamics

Reference: Linguistic analysis of narrative structures in Indian folklore

Cultural anthropology provides a comprehensive framework for unraveling the social tapestry woven into Indian oral traditions. By examining collective identity, social structures, performances, and cultural adaptations, and through immersive fieldwork, cultural anthropologists illuminate the intricate connections between storytelling and the vibrant cultural landscapes of diverse communities across India. This interdisciplinary approach enriches our understanding of oral traditions as living, dynamic expressions of culture, continually shaping and being shaped by the societies that foster them.²⁷

4. Narrative Structures and Linguistic Diversity:

The intricate tapestry of narrative structures in Indian folklore stands as a testament to the profound linguistic diversity that defines the subcontinent. This section embarks on a meticulous and critical analysis, examining how the nuanced intricacies of language across various communities shape distinctive narrative forms within India's vibrant cultural landscape. The inherent linguistic diversity in India not only gives rise to unique storytelling patterns but also reflects the deep-seated cultural identities woven into the traditions of storytelling.

4.1 Comprehensive Examination of Narrative Structures:

A thorough exploration of narrative structures unveils the myriad ways in which linguistic communities express their cultural narratives. The deliberate selection of vocabulary, nuanced syntax, and strategic use of rhetorical devices significantly contribute to the distinctive flavors characterizing each storytelling tradition. These narrative structures function as cultural artifacts, encapsulating the very essence of linguistic diversity within the broader tapestry of Indian folklore.

Table 4.1.1: Comparative Analysis of Narrative Structures Across Linguistic Communities

Language Group	Unique Vocabulary	Syntax Characteristics	Rhetorical Devices
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3. ²⁷The insights presented in this section draw from a linguistic analysis of narrative structures in Indian folklore, contributing to a nuanced exploration of the symbiotic relationship between cultural anthropology and oral traditions. The reference to this linguistic analysis serves as a foundation for understanding the linguistic intricacies discussed in the essay. The information provided in Table 4 outlines key focus areas within cultural anthropology's engagement with Indian oral traditions, reflecting the diverse dimensions explored in this interdisciplinary investigation. The comprehensive understanding presented here is indebted to the collective efforts of linguistic analysts and cultural anthropologists whose work contributes to unraveling the rich social tapestry woven into the fabric of Indian oral traditions.

Hindi	Rich historical vocabulary, emphasizing resilience and triumph	Complex syntax for narrative depth	Strategic use of allegory and symbolism
Tamil	Nature-centric vocabulary symbolizes harmony and balance	Simple and poetic syntax	Metaphors and similes for cultural expression
Bengali	Infusion of religious imagery and moral teachings	Varied sentence structures	Alliteration and repetition for emphasis
Telugu	Cultural metaphors depicting familial bonds and unity	A balanced mix of simplicity and complexity	Irony and paradox for narrative impact

Reference: Ghosh (2019), Sahitya Akademi (2021), People's Linguistic Survey of India (2022)

4.2 Linguistic Nuances at Play:

In the linguistic analysis of narrative structures, a keen focus is directed towards the subtle nuances embedded in the choice of words and expressions. For instance, languages such as Hindi may adeptly employ historical metaphors, portraying resilience and triumph, thereby intricately shaping the trajectory of the narrative. Conversely, Tamil narratives may gravitate towards nature-based metaphors, symbolizing harmony and balance, offering invaluable insights into the cultural ethos of Tamil-speaking communities.

Table 4.2.1: Linguistic Nuances in Indian Folklore Narratives

Language	Dominant Metaphors	Expressive Syntax	Cultural Nuances
Hindi	Historical triumphs	Complex and descriptive	Emphasis on resilience and strength
Tamil	Nature's Balance	Poetic and rhythmic	Connection with natural harmony

Bengali	Religious allegories	Varied and expressive	Moral teachings and cultural richness
Telugu	Familial and unity metaphors	Balanced and versatile	Emphasis on community bonds

Reference: Ghosh (2019), Sahitya Akademi (2021), People's Linguistic Survey of India (2022)

4.3 Regional Variation and Storytelling Preferences:

The influence of regional variation emerges as a significant factor in shaping narrative structures. An in-depth examination of linguistic communities across different states reveals not only linguistic diversity but also distinct regional storytelling preferences. For example, the storytelling traditions in West Bengal, characterized by the Bengali language, may seamlessly incorporate metaphors infused with religious imagery and moral teachings, adding an enriching layer of cultural significance to the narrative tapestry.

Table 4.3.1: Regional Storytelling Preferences

Region	Dominant Language	Unique Characteristics	Cultural Significance
West Bengal	Bengali	Religious allegories and moral teachings	Deep cultural and moral integration
Tamil Nadu	Tamil	Nature-centric metaphors	Harmony with natural surroundings
Northern India	Hindi	Historical triumphs and resilience	Emphasis on strength and endurance
Andhra Pradesh	Telugu	Familial and unity metaphors	Strengthening community bonds

Reference: Ghosh (2019), Sahitya Akademi (2021), People's Linguistic Survey of India (2022)

4.4 Dynamic Interplay between Linguistic Diversity and Oral Transmission:

The interplay between linguistic diversity and oral transmission emerges as a critical factor in understanding the continuous evolution and adaptation of narrative structures over time. As a dynamic process, the oral tradition is continually influenced by linguistic shifts and adaptations within communities. This dynamic interaction between language and storytelling significantly

contributes to the resilience of oral traditions, allowing them to flourish amidst the ever-changing linguistic landscape.

Table 4.4.1: Evolutionary Dynamics of Oral Transmission

Linguistic Shifts	Adaptations	Impact on Narrative Structures
Lexical changes	Integration of modern idioms	Evolution of narrative vocabulary
Grammatical shifts	Adaptation to contemporary contexts	Altered syntactical structures
Phonological adjustments	Inclusion of new cultural references	Shaping of narrative themes

Reference: Ghosh (2019), Sahitya Akademi (2021), People's Linguistic Survey of India (2022)

4.5 Preservation of Cultural Identity Through Unique Narrative Forms:

The preservation of cultural identity is intricately linked to narrative forms that are shaped by linguistic diversity. Each linguistic community contributes uniquely to the broader cultural mosaic through its narrative structures. These stories, extending beyond mere sources of entertainment, serve as powerful vehicles for the transmission of cultural values, norms, and collective memories, fostering a deep sense of cultural continuity.

Table 4.5.1: Cultural Identity Preserved Through Narrative Forms

Language Group	Cultural Values Encapsulated	Collective Memories Transmitted	Impact on Identity
Hindi	Resilience, triumph, and historical pride	Communal history and shared triumphs	Reinforcement of cultural identity
Tamil	Harmony with nature, balance, and poetic expression	Connection with natural surroundings and ancestral wisdom	Sustaining cultural rootedness
Bengali	Moral teachings, religious allegories, and rich traditions	The moral fabric of society and religious heritage	Cultural identity is deeply ingrained
Telugu	Emphasis on familial bonds, unity, and community values	Intergenerational wisdom and communal strength	Strengthening community identity

Reference: Ghosh (2019), Sahitya Akademi (2021), People's Linguistic Survey of India (2022)

4.6 Narrative Structures: A Closer Look

4.6.1 Hindi Narrative Structure:

- **Dominant Themes:** Historical triumphs, resilience, and strength.
- **Vocabulary:** Rich historical vocabulary.
- **Syntax:** Complex and descriptive for narrative depth.
- **Rhetorical Devices:** Strategic use of allegory and symbolism.

4.6.2 Tamil Narrative Structure:

- **Dominant Themes:** Nature's balance, and harmony.
- **Vocabulary:** Nature-centric metaphors.
- **Syntax:** Poetic and rhythmic.
- **Rhetorical Devices:** Metaphors and similes for cultural expression.

4.6.3 Bengali Narrative Structure:

- **Dominant Themes:** Religious allegories, moral teachings.
- **Vocabulary:** Infusion of religious imagery.
- **Syntax:** Varied and expressive.
- **Rhetorical Devices:** Alliteration and repetition for emphasis.

4.6.4 Telugu Narrative Structure:

- **Dominant Themes:** Familial bonds, unity, community values.
- **Vocabulary:** Cultural metaphors.
- **Syntax:** Balanced and versatile.
- **Rhetorical Devices:** Irony and paradox for narrative impact.

The study of narrative structures and linguistic diversity in Indian folklore unveils a captivating interplay between language and culture. The distinctive storytelling patterns observed across linguistic communities serve as windows into the profound cultural richness of the subcontinent, underscoring how language functions as a powerful tool in shaping and preserving the diverse narratives that constitute India's oral heritage.²⁸

5. Language as a Catalyst for Folklore Evolution:

Language, a pivotal instrument in the preservation of oral traditions, concurrently emerges as a dynamic force propelling folklore evolution. This section scrutinizes the profound impact of language changes, stemming from linguistic shifts, borrowings, or adaptations, on the transmission, reception, and ultimate shaping of cultural narratives. Through an exploration of instances where

4. ²⁸The comprehensive exploration of narrative structures and linguistic diversity in Indian folklore presented in this section draws upon the works of Ghosh (2019), Sahitya Akademi (2021), and the People's Linguistic Survey of India (2022). These scholarly references provide invaluable insights into the linguistic nuances, cultural contexts, and regional variations embedded within the diverse narrative forms discussed. The tables presented (Table 4.1.1, Table 4.2.1, Table 4.3.1, Table 4.4.1, and Table 4.5.1) synthesize information from these sources, offering a comparative analysis, of linguistic nuances, regional storytelling preferences, evolutionary dynamics, and the preservation of cultural identity through unique narrative forms. The detailed examination of specific narrative structures in Hindi, Tamil, Bengali, and Telugu (Section 4.6) further enriches the understanding of the intricate relationship between language and cultural expression within India's vibrant oral traditions.

linguistic evolution catalyzed the transformation of traditional narratives, we delve into the intricate interplay between language and the dynamic nature of cultural storytelling.

- **Linguistic Shifts and Narrative Dynamics:**

The evolution of language introduces nuanced shifts in linguistic structures, vocabulary, and expressions, instigating corresponding changes in the storytelling landscape. The transition from archaic forms to modern vernaculars serves as an example, redefining the resonance of traditional tales and influencing their cultural significance and accessibility. This linguistic metamorphosis reflects not only the changing linguistic preferences but also the adaptability of folklore to contemporary linguistic norms.

- **Borrowings and Syncretism:**

The dynamic nature of language involves constant interactions, fostering borrowings and syncretism from diverse linguistic sources. This linguistic amalgamation breathes new life into oral traditions, creating a cross-pollination of cultural elements. The infusion of words, phrases, or idioms from different linguistic origins enriches narratives, creating a fusion that resonates with contemporary audiences and enhances the cultural tapestry of storytelling traditions.

- **Adaptations for Contemporary Relevance:**

Language evolution empowers storytellers to adapt traditional narratives to align with contemporary contexts. The malleability of language allows for the seamless integration of modern idioms, references, and societal nuances into age-old stories. This adaptive process ensures that oral traditions remain relevant and relatable across generations, transcending temporal and cultural boundaries. It showcases the dynamic interplay between tradition and innovation, allowing folklore to evolve without compromising its fundamental essence.

- **Influence of Globalization on Folklore:**

In an era of globalization, language undergoes rapid transformations due to increased cultural exchanges. The global interconnectedness of communities introduces new linguistic elements, significantly impacting the fabric of folklore. Traditional narratives absorb international influences, resulting in stories reflecting a globalized perspective while retaining cultural roots. This phenomenon highlights the fluid nature of language and its role in shaping folklore within a broader, interconnected cultural context.

- **Resilience and Persistence in Linguistic Evolution:**

Despite linguistic evolution, oral traditions exhibit remarkable resilience in preserving their essence. The adaptability of folklore to linguistic changes emphasizes the dynamic equilibrium between tradition and innovation. The persistence of cultural narratives, even in the face of linguistic evolution, underscores the enduring power of storytelling to transcend linguistic flux. It highlights the ability of oral traditions to navigate linguistic shifts while maintaining the cultural heritage embedded in their narratives.

- **Case Studies and Exemplary Instances:**

This section provides illuminating case studies and exemplary instances that vividly illustrate how linguistic evolution has played a transformative role in specific oral traditions. Through detailed analysis, it elucidates the mechanisms through which language acts as a catalyst, either preserving the authenticity of narratives or instigating innovative adaptations. These examples serve as insightful snapshots into the dynamic relationship between language and the evolution of cultural narratives.

The study of language as a driving force behind the development of folklore, in short, highlights the complex interplay between linguistic processes and the dynamic character of cultural narratives. Language and oral traditions interact in a complex way that highlights the adaptability and durability of folklore and demonstrates how linguistic evolution both reflects and influences cultural transformation.

6. Conclusion:

This research journey has delved into the intricate relationship between language and Indian folklore, revealing a symbiotic interplay that defines the cultural tapestry of the subcontinent. Language emerges as a dual force—a preserver of cultural heritage and an agent of evolution within the realm of oral traditions. The nuanced exploration of this interplay enhances our appreciation of the dynamic nature of storytelling in the Indian context, illuminating how language acts as a catalyst for the resilience and adaptability of cultural narratives across generations.

The linguistic diversity inherent in India, with its 780 languages according to the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger, provides a unique backdrop for examining the profound role language plays in the preservation and evolution of folklore. The comprehensive analysis employed

a multidisciplinary approach, intertwining linguistic scrutiny, cultural anthropology, and folklore studies to unravel the complex dynamics at play.

The linguistic analysis of narrative structures exposed the rich tapestry of oral traditions woven into the linguistic landscape. Metaphors, idioms, and various linguistic devices showcased the depth and diversity of expression inherent in India's oral heritage. Tables catalogued unique metaphors, idiomatic expressions, and endangered languages, shedding light on the intricate linguistic nuances contributing to the distinctiveness of oral narratives.

Cultural anthropology illuminated the social dynamics interwoven within oral traditions, exploring collective identity, social structures, performances, and cultural adaptations. Ethnographic studies provided immersive insights, emphasizing the living nature of oral traditions as repositories of societal values, beliefs, and communal identities.

The examination of narrative structures and linguistic diversity underscored the captivating interplay between language and culture. Each linguistic community contributes uniquely to the broader cultural mosaic, showcasing the adaptability and resilience of folklore to linguistic changes.

In the exploration of language as a catalyst for folklore evolution, the study highlighted how linguistic shifts, borrowings, and adaptations influence the transmission and transformation of traditional narratives. Case studies and exemplary instances illustrated the transformative role of language in specific oral traditions, further emphasizing the intricate relationship between linguistic dynamics and cultural metamorphosis.

This research illuminates the profound symbiosis between language and Indian folklore—a dynamic relationship that breathes life into cultural narratives, ensuring their preservation and evolution across the ever-changing landscape of time. As language continues to weave the intricate threads of oral traditions, its role as both preserver and innovator cements its significance in the vibrant cultural heritage of India.

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Role of Chorus in ‘Ankia Bhaona’ and Western Drama:

A Comparative Study

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Abstract

This research paper intends to discuss certain aspects of chorus of Ankia Bhaona and western dramas. Chorus is an integral part of Ankia Bhaona and this prominent character is popularly called as sutradhar. As the name suggests, chorus links narratives and incidents by shaping the unity of time, place and action. Chorus is also seen present in ancient Greek dramas. This character has also been presented in English literature from the Elizabethan to Modern age. Though sutradhar from Ankia Bhaona and chorus in Western dramas have certain similarities, portrayal of these characters in oriental and occidental perspectives differ from each other on certain issues. This research paper is an attempt to make a comparative study of the chorus present in Ankia Bhaona and western dramas.

Key Words: Chorus, Sutradhar, AnkiaBhaona, Western Plays, Perspectives

Introduction:

Drama is an elusive, peculiar and enthralling form of literature. A drama is associated with performance of characters and this performance is presented on a stage. Sometimes, a drama may be staged in an open field and without a decorative stage. Yet, it is mostly associated with the world of theatre that commonly suggests a space in which characters perform before an audience. In the western culture and civilization, theatre means a place of performance. The same is termed in oriental culture as ‘Mancha’. As the evolving nature of the theatre has been determined by the presence of the audience in Western culture and literature, the same is also seen in India and its parts.

Apart from the traditional and common characters of a theatre or a ‘Mancha’, a chorus is a singer or a group of singers who perform his/their role in the form of songs. While the appearance of chorus took place in western culture in the middle of the sixth century BC, Shrimanta Shankardeva introduced chorus or ‘sutradhar’ in his first drama ‘Chinhajatra’ staged in 1468 AD. It is to be mentioned that this drama was the first drama to be written In Indian regional language.

2. Objectives of the Study:

This study tries to focus on:

- Role of ‘Sutradhar’ in ‘Ankia Bhaona’
- Role of Chorus in Greek Drama
- Role of Chorus in English Drama
- Comparative analysis of ‘Sutradhar’ and Chorus
- Conclusion

3. Review of Related Studies:

Authors and scholars have already discussed the role of ‘sutradhar’ in ‘Ankia Bhaona’. It is an integral part of ‘Bhaona’, introduced in Assamese culture and literature by Shrimanta Shankardeva and this aspect has been discussed by various scholars. Chorus and the impact of this prominent character have also been studied by researchers and scholars. Some of such books are as follows:

Satyandranath Sarma in ‘Asomiya Natya Sahitya’ has made a comprehensive analysis of ‘Ankia Nat’. Various forms of this one act play have been discussed in this book and ‘Ankia Nat’ and ‘Ankia Bhaona’ have also been discussed in this book.

B. P. Chaliha has elaborately discussed cultural trends of Shankardeva in ‘Shankardeva: Studies in Culture’. Chaliha has narrated the relevance of Shankardeva’s contribution to Assamese religion and culture.

Dr. Keshavananda Dev Goswami has made a detailed description of ‘Ankia Bhaona’ in his book ‘Ankiya Bhaona’. Various forms of this one act play have been analysed in this book and in doing so, the author has beautifully presented its distinctive features and contribution to Assamese religion and culture.

Pradip Jyoti Mahanta in ‘Bhaona: The Traditional Vaisnavite Theatre’ has made a detailed description of ‘Ankia Bhaona’. This article is published in ‘Bhakti Movement and Shrimanta Shankardeva’, edited by Dr. Dayananda Pathak.

Prof. S. P. Sengupta has made a comprehensive analysis of Greek literature in his book ‘A History of Greek Literature’. In it, he has discussed the epics of Greek literature. The epic poets, the Attic theatre and many other forms of Greek culture and literature have been discussed in this book.

Allardyce Nicoll in his book 'The Theory of Drama' has discussed dramatic theories, tragedy, comedy and tragi-comedy forms of drama. He has discussed Aristotle and Greek drama, Horace and the Roman drama and many other great dramatists and their works.

Britannica Online Encyclopedia in its article 'Chorus' analyses the origin of this dramatic form. The chorus in Classical Greek drama and the use of it in modern plays are thoroughly discussed in this article. Importance of Chorus in relation to a plot is also discussed in this article.

Although a good number of books and research works have already been published which deal with 'Ankia Nat', Greek drama and English drama, there is hardly any book or research work which deals with a comparative analysis of 'sutradhar' and chorus. Hence, this study may be considered as a maiden work in this field.

4. Methodology:

This study relies on primary and secondary sources and brings out a comparative analysis of collected resources.

A. Primary Sources:

In order to collect data systematically and scientifically, certain research methodology has been adopted. 'Ankia Bhaona' performed by artists in Nowgong and other parts of Assam have been enjoyed to collect data. Similarly, some dramas from Greek and English literature like 'Oedipus, the King', 'Mourning Becomes Electra' etc. have been enjoyed while staged at various places of India.

Observation methods have been adopted to collect the relevant information while enjoying these dramas. Questionnaire method has been used while interviewing these performers.

B. Secondary Sources:

Library work has been undertaken in some libraries like Krishnakanta Handique Library, Gauhati University, State Library, Assam and District Library, Guwahati, Assam to get information on 'sutradhar' and chorus.

5. Analysis:

Shrimanta Shankardeva and his disciples and followers have composed '*AnkiaNat*' which has become a popular form of literature and culture. 'Ankia Nat' is a form of one-act play that refers to mythological characters and their spiritual and devotional activities. Shrimanta Shankardeva and his disciples have presented various narratives collected from 'Bhagawat Puran' and other scriptures and

these narratives have been presented before audience with the help of acting, song and dance form. Traditional folk life of Assam, folk elements and folk narratives has been presented before the audience of 15th and 1st Century.

Like 'Ankianat', the great Greek started theatre in ancient Greece in the beginning of the 5th Century. The first plays were performed in the 'Theatre of Dionysus' and it became popular in Greece. Theatre spread over ancient Greece. As Dionysus is the god of wine and fertility, theatre had its origin in religious ritual to appease this god. With the passing of time, comedy, tragedy and satire plays became the important genres of theatre which was accepted and enjoyed by the audience of the country.

a) Role of 'Sutradhar' in 'Ankia Bhaona':

'Sutradhar' may be defined as the character that links incidents and events in 'Ankia Bhaona'. Shankardeva introduced 'Ankia Nat' and in doing so, he followed the dramatic form of the plays, composed in Sanskrit language. However, he added certain distinctive features in 'Ankia Bhaona' and made 'sutradhar' more prominent with its appearance from the beginning to the end of one act play, popularly known as 'Ankia Bhaona'. While the 'sutradhar' is present in Sanskrit plays only at 'Nandipath' and preludes, this character in 'Ankia Bhaona' makes its presence throughout the one act play, composed by Shankardeva. Sutradhar starts introducing characters of the play to its audience and at the same time, it interlinks events and incidents.¹ Narratives which were not possible to stage or a 'Mancha' are also presented by 'sutradhar' by giving their accounts. Even 'MuktimangalBhatima' which was introduced by Shankardeva is also offered by this important character in 'Ankia Nat'.

'Sutradhar' has become an integral part of a play. As this character remains present from the beginning to the end, the actor who performs the role assumes responsibilities and becomes tired and exhausted. Considering this tedious responsibilities, the role of 'sutradhar' is made only for the beginning and the end. In this way, 'sutradhar' is set free on certain extents with the passing of time.

b) Role of Chorus in Greek Drama:

Like 'sutradhar', chorus performs song in Greek dramas to provide a suitable atmosphere to plays. The word 'chorus' means a large organized group of singers who perform with orchestra or Opera Company. It started in Greece when a large group of singers gathered together and danced and sang to appease Dionysus, the god of wine and fertility.² This group sang dithyrambs or lyric hymns to

appease the god. The number of this group was later reduced by Aeschylus, the great Greek ruler in the 5th Century B.C.

Some prominent dramatists like Sophocles, Euripides and others introduced chorus to narrate their dramas. The tragic protagonists' fate was narrated by the group of singers in order to aggravate the reaction of the audience. In this connection, reference may be made to 'Oedipus Tyrannus' in which the chorus narrates the plight of Oedipus, the son of Laius. ³

In Greek plays, chorus serves as a link between the playwright and the audience by offering background and information about the characters. Chorus at the same time establishes a link between the audience and the characters when they exchange dialogues with the protagonist or other characters of the drama. In this connection, reference may be made to 'Antigone'. The later dramatists like Aristotle and many others have also supported the use of chorus in order to bring the unity of dramas.

c) Role of Chorus in English Drama:

Importance of chorus has been supported by the later dramatists and critics of Greek literature. In the days of Aristotle, the Greek drama completed its process of growth with two distinguished characteristics like chorus and the unities. During the time of Aristotle, chorus is fully become a band of singers and dancers who sing odes to appease god. The lack of scenery and the stage can be conveyed to the audience with the speech made by chorus.

With the passing of time, the art of drama came to the hands of wandering minstrels and people around Europe came to know about drama and its distinctive features. Meanwhile, renaissance took place in the 14th century Europe and drama became a popular art form in this continent. Many English dramatists like Nicholas Udall, Richard Edwards, Robert Greene, Thomas Kyd, Christopher Marlowe etc. started composing dramas with all its distinctive features.

During Renaissance, the role of chorus has been revised. Instead of a group of singers, a single person performs the role of chorus who is present only in the prologue and epilogue of a drama. In this regard, reference may be made to Christopher Marlowe's 'The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus'. In it, chorus appears in the beginning of the play and at the beginning of third and fourth Acts. In the epilogue of this tragedy, chorus again appears and he suggests a moral from the life story of Doctor Faustus. Though the chorus in 'The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus' is not dramatically essential, this character contributes a lot to the plot of the play.

The use of the group chorus has again been introduced in some modern plays. In this regard, reference may be made to some modern playwrights like Eugene O'Neill and T.S. Eliot. Eugene O'Neill's 'Mourning Becomes Electra' and T.S. Eliot's 'Murder in the Cathedral' may be mentioned in this regard as these modern plays have group chorus.⁴

d) Comparative analysis of 'Sutradhar' and Chorus:

The detailed study on 'sutradhar' or chorus proves the fact that this character plays a significant role in 'Ankia Bhaona' and Western dramas from their inception. While the concept of chorus in 'Ankia Bhaona' was borrowed from Sanskrit dramas, chorus had its beginning in Greek literature in religious and festive manners. Though 'sutradhar' and chorus have similar responsibilities, certain differences can also be seen as these characters perform in oriental and occidental culture and literature respectively. In the following lines, a comparative analysis of 'sutradhar' and chorus is made in order to see their similarities and differences.

In both 'Ankia Bhaona' and Western dramas, 'sutradhar' and chorus play an important role while narrating the plot to the audience. Situations, events and narratives which are not dramatized may be narrated by the chorus. 'Sutradhar' and chorus in this way fulfill all necessary narratives which are essential to the plot of 'Ankia Bhaona' and Western dramas. It should also be observed that 'sutradhar' and chorus often suggest some morals on the basis of the plot of dramas and thereby they act the role of preachers for the audience and also for the characters. These morals offered by them also help audience to realize human responsibilities and limitations. As far as the unity is concerned, 'sutradhar' and chorus also provide unity of time, place and action to the plays.

Certain differences may also be observed between 'sutradhar' and chorus. In 'Ankia Bhaona', there appears a single chorus to perform his duty. On the other hand, chorus is a group of singers in Greek dramas. Although, the Elizabethan dramatists have made one single chorus, the modern dramatists again form chorus as a group of singers. It should also be mentioned that 'sutradhar' always performs some responsibilities to arouse spirituality among audience. Chorus, on the other hand is sometimes related to merry making as the group of singers use to appease Dionysus, the god of wine and fertility. While the role of 'sutradhar' is purely based on spiritual activities, the role of chorus is linked with spirituality and entertainment by offering prayer to the god of wine and fertility.⁵

e) Conclusion:

'Sutradhar' and chorus in this way are essential parts of 'Ankia Bhaona' and western dramas. 'Sutradhar' may be termed as the producer who comments of various incidents, events and narratives

of the play. Chorus also plays a distinctive role while offering prayer to the god of wine and fertility or narrating stories to the audience. It should also be mentioned that both 'sutradhar' and chorus are used to introduce the audience to those important events and narratives which form the plot of dramas. As a result, plots of these plays can be well knitted with the help of these characters and by doing so, interest of the audience can be achieved easily. Henceforth, 'sutradhar' and chorus may be defined as two important characters that do not merely perform. But they offer a suggestive end to dramas and analyze the plot from the perspectives of the plot, playwright and the audience.

Notes:

1. Goswami, Malinee; 'Treatment of the Puranas by Shri Shankardeva; Dr. Dayananda Pathak (ed.) *Bhakti Movement and ShrimantaShankardeva*, p. 111
2. Britannica Online Encyclopedia; *Chorus*, p. 1
3. Sengupta, Dr. S. P. A History of Greek Literature, p. 103
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**Siddhartha- A Relief from Worldly Bondage and a
March towards Wisdom.**

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Abstract

It's an attempt towards the freedom from worldly entanglements that Siddhartha arouses in him a quest to traverse the world of illusory infatuations to reach the state of enlightenment of the self or to become the illustrious one. Siddhartha's desire to turn to a *Samana* or a monk is an expression of his inner expectation to become like *Gotama*, the wise one after long days of meditation, fasting and practices of ascetics. During the ancient days, to find a way out from *maya* or illusion of the world was regarded as a pride among the Brahmanas; renunciation was considered a bliss, not an escape; it was not magic to arrive at spiritual awakening but the culmination of one's struggle in life towards perfection of one's being, a realization of one's soul placed in the phenomenon of one's existence.

Key Words: Salvation, Knowledge, *Samana*, Ascetic, *Sansara*

Siddhartha's wish is itself a desire which can be appeased only after a long perseverance in the ways of ascetics. The state of contentment of one's being is attained when one experiences timelessness. One who transcends time also overcomes the transitory attractions of the world. In other words, joy of spiritual experience is attended by one who can undo the caprices for worldly success. Any earthly achievement is a fiasco to offer troubles later on. It's only Karma-Yoga in the name of God; performance in the world with solicitations to divine touch and obligations provides joy of living and takes us towards self-realization or the supreme bliss, *Mahaananda*. The fulfillment of worldly pursuits or mundane success offers transitory happiness but involvement in the world with a pursuit towards divine realization offers supreme joy that is permanent and indestructible. In search of the truth, Siddhartha renounces his home, his parents and after a strenuous endeavour, he experiences bliss in the end. Siddhartha's contemplation is enthusiastic being one with the objects of nature to make him reach the state of acquiring wisdom. Siddhartha grows through stages. His ceaseless quest to turn to a *samana* being relieved from the hotchpotch of daily life is astounding and it is expressed since he is a child. Siddhartha says to Govinda: "Tomorrow morning my friend, Siddhartha is going to join the *samana*. He is going to become a *samana*." (Siddhartha – P8). Seeing

in Siddhartha an extreme desire, his father has to compromise with him and allows him to join the ascetics or the wondering monks. His father says, "If you find bliss in the forest, come back and teach it to me. If you find disillusionment come back and we shall again offer sacrifices to the gods together. Now go, kiss your mother and tell her where you are going." (P.10)

Referring it as a past story, Siddhartha along with the *Samanas* learnt self-denial. In other words, he learned to negate his own self through the ways of meditation. He could vacate his mind of pre-occupations. He left himself to put his being in others' shoes. He fled from his own self to become any other being such as an animal on a stone but returned again to his own self. He could learn through meditation from the *Samanas* to lose oneself to become that of others and return back to own self again. But the troubles of life cycle again captivated him. It was no freedom of the soul.

The journey of Siddhartha in search of enlightenment was during the time of Gotama Buddha who had attained enlightenment or *nirvana* and was preaching the disciples. Siddhartha and Govinda happened to reach the town of *Savathi* and Gotama's favorite abode was the *Jetavana* grove presented to Gotama by *Anathapindika*, a great devotee of Buddha. Gotama preached to the people that life is full of suffering and pain. The desires in life cause suffering. Someone can undo his suffering by lessening his desires and attain salvation. Eight fold paths are recommended by Buddha to end suffering. The steps are right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. But Siddhartha, the protagonist of Hermann Hesse's novel was not satisfied as Buddha could communicate to the people only how to live in virtuous ways and how to abstain from evil. But he wished Buddha should communicate what he experienced at the hour of enlightenment. Words and teachings were not helpful to transmit to the people his exact experience that he remained transformed as the Buddha, the illustrious one.

The protagonist of the novel learnt to recognize unity of thought in the teeth of diversity of appearances. One has to overcome the ego of the self; resignation to one's inner consciousness takes one to seek Brahma, Atman. The Divine or the Absolute is perceived by one who transcends egoist manifestations and environmental infatuations. Siddhartha was both one and separated from all others at the same time. He became his own disciple and learnt from himself to probe into the secret of his own.

Kamala was a contrasting foil to the life of an ascetic. Siddhartha who had grown unkempt hair and thick beard had to shave his untidy hair and ugly beard to look cheerful and appealing. Lads who looked handsome and put on fashionable dresses visited *Kamala*. Besides, they had money in their pockets to please *Kamala*. Long days of austere life and the days of severity of the ascetics had made Siddhartha disgusted with him. He had never yet reciprocated with a woman. But the stir of sex in him grew stronger, the affiliation with the courtesan, *Kamala* made him forget the wandering

life of a *Samana*. His inner hesitation or denial to be with *Kamala* subsided; it was replaced by his proximity with *Kamala*. Siddhartha said, “I can think, I can wait, I can fast” (P.46) when *Kamala* urged him to obtain money, clothes and shoes. Siddhartha’s allegiance with *Kamala* could remodel Siddhartha from a celibate to a worldly, romantic dandy and a man of fortune.

Siddhartha began to love the world heart and soul. The earlier *Samana*, then grew to be a man of business and prosperity with *Kamaswami*, the merchant. Simultaneously he spent his splendid time with *Kamala* and became “her pupil, her lover and her friend.” (Siddhartha – 54) He brought plenty of riches and lots of money for *Kamala*. Siddhartha became well-versed in the art of love with *Kamala* though the thought that he had been a *Samana* once pre-occupied his mind. However, the reciprocation between Siddhartha and *Kamala* grew intensely stronger in intimacy in course of time. *Kamala* said thoughtfully, “You are the best lover that I have had. You are stronger than others, suppler, more willing. You have learned my art well, Siddhartha. Someday, when I am older, I will have a child by you. And yet, my dear, you have remained a *Samana*. You do not really love me – you love nobody, Is that not true?” (P.59)

Siddhartha had to move through the life-cycle of an ascetic. It was set in motion vigorously but it slowly dwindled down in itself. Siddhartha was made to stop, made to sleep. The wheel remained mobile for long to revolve time and again to come to a halt someday. He was fated to become rich and opulent. “The world had caught him; pleasure, covetousness, idleness and finally also the vice that he had always despised and scorned as the most foolish-acquisitiveness, property, possessions and riches had also finally trapped him. They were no longer a game and a toy; they had become a chain and a burden” (P.63). To an ordinary man, the world of involvement or *sansara* is a felt effect. In contrast to it, to Siddhartha, the intermingling with *Kamala* and *Kamaswami* was a mere game, a trifle, an ephemeral incident. The songbird in the golden cage of *Kamala* was dead by the time Siddhartha quitted from the company of *Kamala*. Siddhartha’s disappearance and the death of the songbird were symbolic and synchronous. Siddhartha acquired the “soul sickness of the rich” (Siddhartha – 62). He acquired dissatisfaction, displeasure and lack of love like feelings. Siddhartha was no more able to play the game of *sansara* or the world to resign him to pay attention to the secret message of the spirit within and the unity of nature.

Siddhartha, the protagonist retired from the world of human inhabitation into the forests, the natural abode with the river. His awareness grew towards the holy *om*, a sound which offers us purity and perfection of being relieving us from the material world that captivates us and makes us impure with allurements and infatuations. Siddhartha realized his follies and mistakes in his action. He awakened himself to the consciousness of Brahma, the divine factor with in oneself that seemed indestructible and permanent. His past seemed to be lost, his desires no more pained him. He was

surreptitiously pronouncing *om*, entering into the nameless, and experiencing Godhead or the divine source within oneself emanating newness and refurbishing transcendence of worldly hotchpotch towards a unity of being.

It was again rejuvenation and reawakening. Siddhartha had lost his riches and he could no more remain the past Brahmin boy, the past Samana or Siddhartha the rich one with Kamala. He had not yet lost the practices of fasting, waiting and thinking. He had to preserve the practices of meditation and ascetic way to search for Brahma and regard the super conscious soul, Atman. He had lost himself in “power, women and money” (Siddhartha – 79).

Soon he could transform himself as he could understand that neither a teacher nor any kind of ritual could offer him the ultimate peace of salvation. He had undergone multifarious experiences as a merchant, a rich man, a drinker of wine and a partner of Kamala. He was no more a *samana* at the same time. All forms of life in him were transitory. He could listen from the river the sound of unity which could reveal him all secrets. He could transcend time.

Siddhartha met the same ferryman named Vasudeva who could acknowledge him that the river produced thousand voices contained in its unity. Siddhartha said; “Is it not true, my friend that the river has many voices? Has it not the voice of a king, of a warrior, of a bull, of a night bird, of a pregnant woman and a sighing man, and a thousand other voices?” (P.86) Vasudeva nodded acquiescing that voices of all living creatures are possessed by the river. The voice of river is not simply the sound of water. It possesses in its sway the voice of unity of all beings. The sum total experience of life is reflected to a seeker of renunciation when he sits meditatively by the side of the bank. One can perceive it when one has overcome the varied entanglements of life. Siddhartha returned to the same place from where he had entered in to the world in search of freedom. A wholesome experience resonated in his ear and by its multifarious sound cleansed Siddhartha of *maya* or illusion of the world that bred discontent in memory. He accepted all kinds of painful experiences to relieve them from within to gradually reach at his contentment of his being, rounding with in him as *om*.

The illustrious Buddha passed away, Kamala collapsed by snake-bite; Siddhartha managed to keep his own son born from Kamala’s womb. Siddhartha further appeased Kamala by assuring the protection of their son. At Vasudeva’s question to Siddhartha why he looked sad though he was not entirely captivated, Siddhartha said, “No, my dear friend. Why should I be sad? I who was rich and happy have become still richer and happier. My son has been given to me.” (P.92)

Siddhartha’s involvement in the world fetched him new troubles. At the ferryman’s hut, Siddhartha sought to nurture the young lad. But the young lad behaved as a disobedient one and didn’t express love to his father. The son after the death of Kamala didn’t offer solace and happiness

to his father. Rather he experienced discontent as the son became wayward and went on his own way. *Vasudeva* could convince *Siddhartha* that it was again an illusory affiliation that would trouble him and he should purge himself off leaving the wayward son to his own course. The wound of separation from his son could be cured by pronouncing the word *om* which could awaken him towards equanimity of his soul.

Assessing it in the present context, a series of events and happenings, sights and contacts, affiliations and separations is arranged in harmony to offer *Siddhartha* a unity of belongingness. It offers him an organic knowledge of perfection where the fear of the world is undone from one's being to free oneself from illusion of attachment and offers freedom of thinking and knowledge of the world becomes spontaneous. Everyone is that of the wise man though he is with none. The symphony of varied sounds merged in the word, *om* creates elation in *Siddhartha*. Troubles of life, aspirations and secret hopes come to *Siddhartha* and again leave him. *Siddhartha* now is not affected by anxieties and trepidations of the world no more subdue him. He emerges to be free of burdens, desires and the wholesome attraction of the world, *maya*. Knowledge is obvious to the serene and super conscious *Siddhartha* standing by the river with *Vasudeva* at his side "And all the voices, all the goals, all the yearnings, all the sorrows, all the pleasures, all the good and evil, all of them together was the world. All of them together were the stream of events, the music of life." (P.107)

Siddhartha has splendid conversation with *Govinda* to reveal the ways of salvation that he seems to attain finally. If one strives for freedom of the soul as a goal it becomes an obsession. One should not be a seeker of anything like salvation. It is obviously an attainment of the release from desires. Salvation cannot be reached when it is desired. After a series of experiences in life, one can obtain wisdom surreptitiously. Worldly knowledge can be transmitted but not wisdom. It cannot be communicated in words, teachings or doctrines. Our thoughts and expressions are "half the truth" (P.112) but salvation is consummation of our experience, it is otherwise "totality, completeness, unity." (*Siddhartha* – 112) Buddha distinguished between *sansara* and *nirvana*. Suffering is separated from salvation. Hermann Hesse opines that one has to transcend the transitory moments of time. *Siddhartha*, the protagonist differs from *Gotam Buddha*, the illustrious one by not illustrating a water tight compartment between a saint and a sinner. One cannot remain separating between *Sansara* and *Nirvana*, evil and good, illusion and truth. Folly and wisdom are part and parcel of everyone's life, being intermingled and interrelated. Buddha preaches to leave the world but *Siddhartha*, the protagonist conveys *Govinda* to love the world to outstrip time. As perceptions differ, what is wise for one is nonsense for the other.

One should accept the world, not reject it. One can overcome the evil and the illusion by love and benevolence. Though Buddha rejected earthly love, he loved humanity. However *Siddhartha* of

Hermann Hesse imagines *sansara* and *nirvana* as one, one cannot be placed separately from the other. Siddhartha finally in his smile, turns to a perfect one like Gotama the Buddha. The smile of Siddhartha is a smile of unity signifying synchrony between birth and death. Love of the world transforms every contradiction of opposites such as suffering and salvation into purity, a holy pilgrimage. The Nation comments on the novel Siddhartha “A superb English Translation by Hilda Rosner of the Swiss Nobel Prize Winner’s allegory of man’s search for the meaning of life.....” The Sunday Times remarks, “A novel of great pellucid beauty a book to be read by all likely to appreciate its subtle distillation of wisdom, stylistic grace and symmetry of form.”

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Kitchen and Women: A Study on Young Indian Male Writers' Perspective

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Abstract:

This paper demonstrates a critical analysis of the characterization of middle-aged women in the popular literary works namely 'That's the Way We Met,' by Sudeep Nagarkar and 'I Too Had a Love Story' by Ravinder Singh. It provides an extensive observation towards their gender stereotypical narrative style and thought process in developing the middle-aged woman characters by these two writers. It traces out the usual conservative patriarchal thoughts and the tendency of male writers to show 'kitchens' as the exclusive spaces for women in their narrations. The present scholarship also identifies the unconscious conventionality of the contemporary young writers, who consider themselves as modern thinkers, and yet prefer women mostly to behold the domestic works and kitchen duties over doing anything else. In the books of these writers, the middle-aged women are usually regarded as the people to use kitchens as their power centers to make decisions, gossip, conspire etc.

To add more, these literary works recognize the unannounced yet principled proposition of men in Indian households that middle-aged women take up cooking and serving as their primary job over anything else. The researchers believe that, to emphasize on this notion, people hail women as the personification of Goddess Annapurna, the deity of food and nourishment. The predominant male nature of defining, tuning, and conditioning the role of a woman in a family is thoroughly discussed in this paper. Re-visioning and revising the thought of tying up kitchens with women by these young writers is the primary goal of this work.

Close and critical reading technique was used to interpret these two works and the feminist approach was given for an effective result. This paper leaves a scope for doing similar research on the other contemporary popular male writers' works.

Key Words: Modern; Perspective; Women; Cooking; Kitchen; Literature; Gender stereotype; Preconditioning; Defining boundaries, Household; proposition.

Introduction:

In this modern era, a woman strives hard and progresses well in various fields, in spite of finding obstacles in her path due to the need of balancing both her personal and professional settings. However, the predominant patriarchal view prescribes her only an inevitable role in the kitchen and preserves the notion of limiting her to her domestic life as long as it is possible. The same domestic role is preached for her in the literature too, from ages. Many male Indian writers, in their popular works, still showcase kitchen as the exclusive domain for women. These writers reflect their conservative thought process through their characters.

The thought process of youth is usually influenced by the works of such popular writers in any era. Therefore, the researchers made an observation and worked on the literature produced by Sudeep Nagarkar and Ravinder Singh since they are those two young modern popular Indian writers who produce the potential pulp fiction with relatable themes to serve the interest of youth and their books take the position of the best sellers at times. This phenomenon of being an author of bestselling books has attained the 'Youth Achievers Award 2013 to Sudeep Nagarkar, while providing a popular contemporary young writers' position to Ravinder Singh among the other popular writers. However, the matter of concern in this paper is their being subtle yet implying positions to the middle-aged women in the kitchens and providing only an inevitable domesticity for female entities in the households through their narrations.

In India, a woman, right from her childhood, is altered to think of fulfilling the domestic needs of her family members as her primary duties. In that process, she is made to enact as the in-charge of the kitchen. In other words, an undefined yet evident principle of Indian patriarchal tradition always positioned women in the kitchens, making them find their identity mostly in cooking, serving, and in the other domestic chores. To emphasize on this custom, people glorified women as the embodiment of Goddess Annapurna. Although it appears to be a token of gratitude, it strikes the thought that the idea of hailing women as Annapurna is a manipulative and fine-tuning framework to restrict them to kitchens. The preconditioning idea of defining a particular sphere for women by

men consciously drew boundaries and limited their progress for centuries together. Thus, it potentially closed the doors to their opportunities of growing in different directions for a longer time thus, creating complexity and challenging elements in life due to this type of implicit male thinking.

In any society, right from the early ages, due to the biological forms of the male and the female, the dividing line of work has been drawn between both genders, thus, a male is expected to provide while the female is emphasized to nurture. The role of a mother is divergent compared to a father. When a woman gives birth to a child, she also gives rise to her intuitive ability to understand the needs of her child. She is always inclined to the needs of the baby without laying much effort. Due to this ability to adapt to a child's responsibility in a very natural way, a woman is also expected to accept the responsibility of catering to the needs of the other family members along with her child. In other words, a woman is always expected to care for the household. Usually, the mother's cooked food creates a great bond between a mother and her child along with creating affection among her and the other family members. Therefore, Indian culture identifies and portrays Indian women as the deity Annapurna.

In India, the young girls are usually expected to learn cooking at an early age so that they can cook for their spouse's family after their marriage, without feeling it as a change and a challenge. We also see the phenomena that the women who cook deliciously and regularly are considered as the more prominent members of the family than the women who do not cook or are incapable of cooking. Indeed, the women of early generations are sometimes reminisced by the younger generations for their greater abilities of cooking. In the same way, a mother's delicacies are also well remembered by her child throughout the life.

However, in case a mother holds the inability to cook due to the pressing professional circumstances or any other reasons, she is usually made to feel guilty by the rest of the family members or the extended family members or the peer group etc. So, a woman usually makes cooking as a definite habit along with checking the food needs of family members too. Thus, eventually, a woman is molded in such a way that she starts believing the kitchen as her area of power and control and prefers to make every family member dependent on her for food.

In other scenarios, men who still carry the patriarchal male thinking due to their upbringing and the societal conditions do not allow themselves to enter into the kitchens. These men, in spite of holding the ability of managing cooking and other domesticity well, do not prefer doing any of these chores after their marriage since they believe that it is the duty of women, not of men any more. Certainly

the literature, movies, and other influential media also take their sinful part in influencing people to carry such discriminative thoughts and make male individuals less empathetic towards women.

The changing societal situations and gender roles have pushed women not only to take care of her family and household but also to earn for the family. Women, today, have evolved as individuals who are capable of balancing their personal, professional, and social lives and dealing with many other roles at a time. Yet, it is an undeniable truth that her pressured lifestyle makes this condition really challenging for her. Still, a woman is expected to take care of the family and its food needs in the position of the same goddess Annapurna.

To add more trouble, literature is still in the condition of producing the conventional gender roles of women in the present social circumstances. Not only literature but also movies and television serials significantly represent women characters most of the time as the people who belong to only kitchens. Thus, this paper focuses on the portrayal of middle-aged women as the in-charges of the kitchens in the popular literature of contemporary young writers.

Literature Review:

According to Craik,(1989), the kitchen may be seen as one of the significant areas which have an all-inclusive style of construction. Yet, it is the control center of domestic space from which all can be seen, and to which all defer. Craik further clarifies that it is the view and basis of familial control, but still, it is controlled by its very personalization and manifestation. ‘The kitchen has become the double-edged sword of domesticity, at once the metaphor for family life and the sign of domestic isolation. Robson (2006) says, cooking for family members is a female activity shared, or rotated among other female members. Thus, the kitchen is a site of female cooperation, jealousy, and various other charged emotions. When kitchens are viewed from a feminist perspective, they vaguely appear to be the sites of women's power. In this connection, Rosie White (2008), in her study, offers a view on revisioning the past and the new way of looking at the present, which helps in understanding the necessary changes that become an inevitable part of any debate within the Marxist and feminist critics. However, in spite of the kitchen, named as the domestic space for women, Pierce, (2010) states that the socio-cultural and legal forces discouraged women from entering into a field that was traditionally familiar to them, while men were granted professional training and entrepreneurial freedom to take advantage of an expanding market. This resulted in male-dominated restaurant kitchens in America during the twentieth century, while women remained the primary cooks just in their homes, not effectively being able to take advantage of their cooking and kitchen skills to become the professionals in this area. This situation gives an account of lack of modern thinking in the society

and limiting women only to kitchens. Despite the adoption of modern thinking and revising the Marxist and Feminist theories, women's oppression is still visible upon which Sarah Gamble (2016) emphasizes in her study. She analyzes the novel 'In the Red Kitchen' by Michele Roberts and says that the fundamental association of women with the kitchen never changes. The nature of women's oppression may change over time however women's fundamental association with domestic spaces would never change. In further discussion, Angela (2018) talks about 'the power dynamics of domestic kitchens in different geographical contexts. She makes it a point that the gender specific nature of domesticity, which contrasts the perspectives of considering women's primary responsibility for cooking as inherently oppressive, becomes a potential empowerment for women irrespective of the terrain she lives in. Angela explores the complex, spatially distributed, character of power surrounding domestic cooking, and the relationship between gender, power, and domestic space by foregrounding the experiences of a range of women from across the globe. She also examines the increasing role of men in domestic settings, assessing the extent to which their engagement in cooking and other domestic practices may be challenging conventional understandings of the relationship between gender, power, and space. Focusing on the spatial dynamics of the domestic kitchen, Angela advances a more nuanced understanding of the co-constitutive nature of the relationship between gender and power, including the instabilities and slippages that occur in the performance of various domestic tasks. Other than the discussion on power, gender, space, Mazzonetto et al., (2020) in their study, make a mention of the other part of responsibility of women as mothers - the gatekeepers of the transmission of food-related meanings and practices to their children. However, the authors exclaim about the unknown ways of mothers transmitting the cooking-related knowledge to their daughters. The authors did their research on twenty-seven women, which implies the ideology of how women alone are expected to take the responsibility of cooking in domestic conditions.

From the above readings, the researchers learned the role of women being limited to the kitchen irrespective of their age, community, society, independence, education, financial and many other circumstances. As a further study the researchers preferred to focus on the contemporary male Indian writers' perspectives of kitchen being as Indian middle-aged women's place.

Objectives:

- 1) To identify the male writers' perspective towards kitchens as the exclusive spaces of women

- 2) To prove the young modern writers' character portrayal of middle-aged women as typical kitchen species
- 3) To challenge the notion of domestic practices being exclusively the duties of women.
- 4) To elaborate the need to revisit, revise and reform the views of both the male and female genders on the view of the kitchen being the exclusive space for women.

Methodology:

The researchers followed the qualitative method namely 'close reading' to acquire their findings, by giving a feminist approach to the text in the novels, 'That's the Way We Met,' by Sudeep Nagarkar and 'I Too Had a Love Story' by Ravinder Singh. Revisionist theory was used to formulate the idea and define the context of discussion. Character analysis is another approach utilized to identify the intention of these authors in the portrayal of middle-aged female characters in their works.

Summary and analysis of 'I Too Had a Love Story' by Ravinder Singh

Ravinder Singh is a middle-aged MBA holder along with a background of computer science engineering. As soon as he realized his writing potential, he had decided to become a full-time author after gaining some work and life experience in Microsoft Corporation. Sadly, his girlfriend passed away in 2007 before they got formally engaged to her. This sad consequence resulted in adapting his own story as the theme of his first novel 'I Too Had a Love Story' which was published in 2008. Thus, this novel carries the author's biographical elements. Singh claims that writing this book helped him to cope with the tragedy in his life. All the nine novels he authored, gave him a broad experience in writing. However, this debut novel of Ravinder Singh was republished multiple times due to its popularity. This book has remained as one of the bestsellers in a span of 6 years.

To summarize the story of this novel, Ravin and Khushi meet through Shaadi.com and get interested in each other. They take their relationship a step higher by informing the matter to each other's parents who later meet and decide their engagement and wedding dates. The unexpected and a forlorn finale makes the readers go through an emotional roller coaster because the female lead meets with an accident just three days of her engagement. After taking a great struggle for life, she dies. The tragic end devastates and jolts the readers.

However, the learned and informed female readers, who are especially from the middle age, may get irked with some of the elements of this novel, since these elements clearly showcase the patriarchal

and conservative thoughts of the author about women. The following are a few to analyze and comprehend the same.

First of all, in this work of Ravinder Singh, the middle-aged women always would be in the kitchen preparing and cooking food for the family or guests with hardly any mention of rest. Other than that, it is always the woman who opens the door and welcomes the visitors which makes the reader fall in the thought as to why women should always open the door, even when she is busy with her domestic chores and the other family members are enjoying their leisure.

For instance, the following passages of his work “I too had a love story” give readers a glimpse of his portrayal of women.

When the protagonist Ravin goes to Faridabad to meet his love Khushi, Khushi’s mother is the person to open the door. She welcomes him and also shows him the way to the drawing room while asking him to get comfortable with her warm welcoming nature. This is the repeated gesture of hospitality by a middle-aged woman in the work of Ravinder Singh. The researchers suspect the author’s intention here if he thinks that these kinds of gestures of hospitality should be followed by only women in every home. Moreover, the same passage again talks about Khushi’s mother rushing into the kitchen after receiving the guest.

“While we made ourselves comfortable, she asked me if I was well and if my journey had been comfortable. Then she went out of the room, saying I “*Main bas abhiaayi.*” Probably, she went to the kitchen.” (page no. 74)(Ravinder Singh, 2009)

Through the above monologue of Ravin, the researchers investigate the thought process of the author. He thinks that a middle-aged woman, after welcoming the guests, should rush into the kitchen but not anywhere else so that she can arrange some snacks for them.

When Khushi’s parents visit Ravin’s home, again researchers’ see Ravin’s mom finding Kitchen as her regular place of responsibility while other family members are not emphasized upon serving the food needs of the guests by the author.

“While they enjoyed their lemon squash, my mom returned to her kitchen. She was very busy.” (page no. 145)(Ravinder Singh, 2009)

The above lines tell us that all the others are enjoying and relaxing except Ravin’s mom who goes into the kitchen to prepare the meal since it is lunch time and she totally becomes busy with cooking.

It is clearly portrayed that neither Ravin nor his father has the habit of helping the women of the family in the preparation of lunch.

When Khushi meets with an accident, Ravin visits her house to console her parents. Next day morning, the following narration appears.

“By 9:20 I was ready and through with my morning prayers. While coming out of my room, I saw Neeru and Ami di in the kitchen.” (page no. 170)(Ravinder Singh, 2009)

The lines say to us that the protagonist gets ready by 9:20 after finishing his morning routine. And when he comes out of his room, he sees the younger sister and the elder sister of Khushi in the kitchen. The researchers question this portrayal of women by the author anytime and every time being in the kitchen.

In addition, it is also observable that in spite of beholding a deep sadness in heart and mournful circumstances in the family, the mother character is expected to cook and serve food on time.

In the following passage we see that everyone is nervous and anxious about the condition of the female protagonist. And it was time for the males to visit the hospital. The father of the female protagonist says the following lines.

“We are getting late for the hospital. Why is breakfast not ready yet?” Dad asked the females of the house, looking at the kitchen door. We had to reach the hospital and send Jiju and Deepu, who had been there all night, back home. No one but Mumma dared to answer the question. “It’s almost done,” she said. And in a short while, breakfast was served.” (page no. 170-171) (Ravinder Singh, 2009)

The above lines describe that kitchen and food are attributed to women as the inevitable responsibilities forever. These lines also show the ignorance of males with respect to the agony of the mother or any other females even in the sad situation of having a family member in hospital in a sick condition. The female members are just expected to fulfill their duties even in such an ordeal. With the help of close reading of the above narration, the researchers also identify the intention of the author to emphasize on the fear of the female entities towards the authoritative male by using the word ‘dared.’ This word highlights how scared the middle-aged mother and the other female members of the family are in expressing their concerns and sadness that devastates them in this dire situation.

Summary and analysis of 'That's the Way We Met' by Sudeep Nagarkar

Sudeep Nagarkar is an Electronics Engineer and an MBA holder. His first novel, 'Few Things Left Unsaid' was published in 2011. Till 2020, twelve different novels were authored by him which highlight his potential as an author. He is the recipient of the 2013 'Youth Achievers' Award for writing the highest selling novels in the genre of romance. His book 'It started with a friend request' was the most popular fictional book of 2013 according to Amazon India. Sudeep Nagarkar has authored six bestselling novels. He was featured on the Forbes India longlist of the most influential celebrities. He also writes for television and has given guest lectures in various renowned institutions like IITs and well-known organizations.

The story of 'That's the Way We Met' by Sudeep Nagarkar is the sequel of 'Few Things Left Unsaid'. Aditya and Riya continue their love story in this book too. They go through lots of struggles and pain only to realize that they love each other very much. The situations they go through strengthen and deepen their bonding. This novel has a second lead couple named Mohit and Sonam who are the best friends of the main lead. Both the couples take us through a wonderful experience filled with love and bliss. The twists and turns like a female lead marrying to another person and denying her lover etc., engage the readers throughout the novel and give a wonderful experience of a romantic journey.

While the readers are immersed into the adventurous characteristics of both the female and male leads, they also experience the interludes of a few annoying portrayals of middle-aged female characters by the author. These female characters behave conventionally and conservatively throughout the novel.

For instance, when the male protagonist Aditya has a nightmare that the female protagonist Riya has met with an accident, he goes to her house to verify the same. Then the following first-person narration describes the author's intention of showing a middle-aged female as fulfilling her duty of welcoming the guests and going into the kitchen.

“Reaching her apartment, I walked up the stairs with a heavy heart and rang the doorbell.

Riya's Mom opened the door. She welcomed me and went inside the kitchen.” (page no. 9)

(Sudeep Nagakar, 2012)

In the same page, following the above situation, Aditya searches for Riya to check if she is okay.

Then Riya's mom enquires him as the following,

“Aditya, will you have a cup of tea? Riya’s Mom asked me from the kitchen.” (page no. 9)
(Sudeep Nagakar, 2012)

The above lines give us an account of the situation that, when the protagonist reaches his girlfriend’s house in that sad and anxious state, he gets welcomed by the mother of his love warmly. However, soon after welcoming, she goes into the kitchen. When the male protagonist sits in the drawing room, he hears her from the kitchen, asking him whether he would like a cup of coffee. The researchers point out this to show that middle aged mothers are expected only to be in the kitchens and cater to the needs of the guests, at whatever the time or whenever they arrive. Although it appears to be the hospitable nature of these women Characters, it also raises the thought that they have nothing else to do or no other thought to carry but to always be nice and welcoming people and maintain the same stature and nature to please them. The writers never try to show significant and strong dialogue or monologue in these female characters.

When the main lead couple Aditya and Riya along with the Second lead couple Mohit and Sonam, visit Sonam’s house while they were on vacation, the following narration can be read.

“Soon Sonam’s Mom emerged from the kitchen with glasses of juice on a tray which she coaxed us to take. Sonam introduced all of us one by one to her Mom. We exchanged greetings and she went into the kitchen to supervise the household chores and prepare something for us to eat.” (page no.89)(Sudeep Nagakar, 2012)

The lines again show us that soon after welcoming them, she gets into the kitchen to bring some refreshments. She also urged them to have juice she brought for them. Soon after the introductions, she again goes back into the kitchen to check in the progress of the chores and to cook something for the guests to eat. No where it is shown that Sonam’s father helps her in any of these chores.

The following lines show us that Sonam’s mother offers snacks to her guests.

“Her mom came with pakoras on a plate.” “Beta, please eat some. I have made these especially for you. They are Sonam’s favorite’, said Sonam’s Mom handing me a plate of steaming hot pakoras.” (page no.90)(Sudeep Nagakar, 2012)

The researchers notice that in Indian context, women in particular, feel an urge to provide eateries to the guests and others which is a tendency that appears in them to be an injected quality of hospitality at a subconscious level.

“His dad had already retired for the day and was asleep in his room. After exchanging pleasantries with elders, Mohit’s Mom served us dinner consisting of theplas with pickle.”
(page no. 129) (Sudeep Nagakar, 2012)

The above lines incorporate the idea that Mohit’s father calls it a day and takes no responsibility to receive and serve the guests or support his wife or mother in these aspects. On the other hand, Mohit’s Mom and grandmother are still awake to greet the guests and serve them dinner, which makes researchers enquire about the intention of the author as to why the writer entrusts this kind of service orientation only to the female characters. The author makes these women characters sacrifice their sleep and hide their exhaustion to express their affection and assistance to the guests while making the male characters unbothered. It can be understandable that the youth who read this kind of popular fiction would never be able to learn any better thought process associated with women empowerment from the books of these writers.

When the main female lead Riya wants to talk to her mother about her wish to get engaged to Aditya, the following narration appears.

“She told me that she had woken up early in the morning, not having had much sleep due to a tense state of mind. She had gone into the kitchen where her mom was preparing breakfast.” (page no. 144) (Sudeep Nagakar, 2012)

The above lines shed a light upon the notion of the author that one can always find the middle-aged female members of the house, nowhere else but in the kitchen because, as per the inbuilt patriarchal view of the writer, cleaning and cooking should always be a part of a woman’s day to day chores. Repeatedly, the researchers detect this kind of portrayal of middle-aged women in the kitchens of Nagakar’s works.

Women’s portrayal in the TV serials and films of contemporary age

Literature usually gives us a glimpse of the hard-hitting reality of the society as to how patriarchy is deeply entrenched in the minds of Indian men. In fact, the writers or the people in any other field of art generally take their views to the public domain with a perspective of giving a direction to the ignorant people over a particular issue and change their thought process by filling the gap, be it in literature or any other art form including movies, TV serials, etc. Predictably, a responsibility lies on the shoulders of these impactful people that they should project things which are not endangering the society and rightly directive, constructively criticizing wrong things and acceptable in portraying the lifestyle etc., through their respective forms. Unfortunately, when it comes to women empowerment

and gender equality, these art forms reflect people's age-old thoughts rather than showing a positive understanding and progressive perspectives. These art forms still show the kitchen as the right place for women.

Thus, this paper also provides a glimpse of instances from a few select movies, t.v. serials, and novels from contemporary times to show the same. In other words, the researchers question upon not giving a modern outlook to the female characters even in such powerful areas which examine a great influence over the individuals. For instance, the renowned female movie director and critic Gauri Khan, in her movie 'English Vinglish' represents the male perspective through Sridevi's character. One such dialogue is as follows.

“Mardh khanabanayetoh kala hai, auratbanayatouskafarzhai!” It can be translated to ‘if men cook it is considered as the art, and if women cook, it is just their duty!’.

“A way to a man's heart is through his stomach.”

The above second quoted text is not only a popular saying in India but it is the main story line that explains the idea of the director of the movie 'Lunch Box.' It is a 2013 Indian written and directed by Ritesh Batra. In this movie, in order to find comfort in her agitated psyche due to being an ignored woman by her husband, the female protagonist tries to find a way to reach another man through her delicious cooking. At the beginning of the movie, to her disappointment, the food prepared by her is always ignored and denied by her husband. This situation emphasizes the thought of the director that the husband's relishing the food prepared by her could potentially pave a path for that couple to have a happy life.

Many Indian television serials portray the kitchen as a space shared by only female entities. The kitchen is a site of female cooperation, jealousy, and other charged emotions in TV soaps. It is a place for women to aspire or sometimes to conspire. It is also painted as a place to portray women as ignorant and unsophisticated in their mindsets, irrespective of their level of education, which basically make viewers feel to ridicule them. For instance, in the current popular television serial "Saath Nibhana Saathiya " which translates to 'Stay with me, my love' in one of the scenes, the character 'Gopi bahu' washes her husband's laptop in the kitchen sink. The other infamous character named Kokilaben always talks to other women characters with a reference to the kitchen [Rasoyi] "Rasodemeinkontha " which means "who was in the kitchen". These contemporary movies and daily soaps like many others justify the findings of the researchers which say that the kitchen is the right place for women according to the mindsets of the patriarchal mindsets of writers or directors.

Conclusion

After referring to a few works of popular writers', the researchers have come to the conclusion that be it literature or by any means of connecting art forms of society majorly proves that the odd condition of patriarchal nature of men still exists in the society and it defines kitchen as the place only for women. A woman's cooking ability is always recognized and revered while her other contributions are usually unrecognized or credited and veiled.

Nonetheless, this scholarship explores the need of not limiting middle-aged women to domesticity. It highlights the subconscious portrayal of middle-aged women of these writers which is evident only through the kitchen in their works. It is believed to be a result of upbringing and women as well as their exposure to the external elements which are conventionally considered as routine and culturally deeply rooted into patriarchal nature. This portrayal leaves a deep impact on individuals and it is subconscious and psychologically influential on the mindsets of the readers of the similar type of literary works.

In a nutshell, the researchers opine that these contemporary popular young male writers hold the responsibility of providing middle-aged women characters, the nature of vividness, individuality, decision-making ability and the freedom to express oneself even in the areas of life which are out of the kitchen space. These efforts can change the course of thoughts of people in this aspect and provide broad thinking to the youngsters and the other individuals.

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Two Inconspicuous Maladies: A Comparative Character Study Between Mr Pirzada and Bibi Haldar in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*

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Abstract

The short story collection *Interpreter of Maladies* was written by Jhumpa Lahiri, correspondingly mapping the cultural conundrums in foreign spaces by diasporic entities. The story of Mr Pirzada is one such typical case that demonstrates the marginalisation of the titular character. He is thrown into the despondent affairs of being an outsider in America as his native land is in the throes of partition. His immutability is compared and tallied with that of another titular character Bibi Haldar. She is in the throes of despair of a physical malady that renders her ostracised from society. In this paper, I will attempt to connect the linkages between the two characters and their individual manifestations of maladies as they embody and personify.

Keywords: diaspora, partition, malady, postcolonialism, loneliness, estrangement

I. Introduction

Jhumpa Lahiri is an acclaimed author known for her collection of short stories titled *Interpreter of Maladies*. The collection was published in 1999 and received widespread recognition, winning the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2000. It consists of nine stories that explore themes of love, cultural displacement, and the immigrant experience, particularly that of Bengali Americans. The stories are set in various locations, including India and the United States, and delve into the lives of characters struggling with identity, communication, and loneliness.

Lahiri's writing style is characterised by its elegant prose, attention to detail, and emotional depth. She skillfully captures the nuances of human relationships and portrays the complexities of cultural assimilation and the challenges faced by individuals caught between two worlds. *Interpreter of Maladies* remains one of Lahiri's most celebrated works, establishing her as a prominent voice in contemporary literature. The collection showcases her ability to craft poignant narratives that resonate with readers and provide insight into the human condition.

Although the term "maladies" is used in the title of Lahiri's book, it does not specifically refer to a particular disease or disorder. Rather, it symbolises the various emotional, cultural, and personal

struggles faced by the characters in the stories. In the short story collection, Lahiri explores different forms of maladies that afflict her characters, such as loneliness, miscommunication, cultural dislocation, and the challenges of assimilation. The stories depict characters who are navigating complex emotions, facing personal dilemmas, and trying to find a sense of connection and belonging. By using the term "maladies" metaphorically, Lahiri highlights the universal experiences of human suffering and the difficulties of navigating life's challenges. The stories in the collection offer insights into the ways people can be affected by emotional or psychological maladies that affect their relationships, self-identity, and overall well-being. The work uses the concept of maladies as a lens to explore the complexities of the human condition and the struggles individuals face in their everyday lives.

II. Mr Pirzada as a Malady

The titular Mr. Pirzada is a botany professor from the East Pakistani city of Dacca (now Bangladesh). He is studying a specific type of tree in New England for a year at the time the story takes place, while his wife and seven daughters stay in East Pakistan. The 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War breaks out while he is living in a suburb outside of Boston, putting his cherished family in danger and making it difficult for him to return home. He shares dinner and the news on TV nearly every night with Lilia, her parents, and other family members for the remainder of the war.

Even though he and Lilia develop a unique bond, he is ecstatic to find out that his family is secure and that he can go back to his house. Lilia is frequently impressed by the grace and generosity of Mr. Pirzada. He constantly presents himself nicely, as though "in preparation to attend a funeral at a moment's notice." In addition, he is incredibly kind and endearing, as shown by the candies he gives Lilia with "superb ease." While also developing new rituals with Lilia, Mr. Pirzada is torn between two worlds and yearns to be with his own girls. In order to feel more at home with his family, he even wears a watch that is set to Dacca's time zone. Lilia portrays Mr. Pirzada as someone who is "balancing in either hand two suitcases of equal weight," even though she won't completely understand how tough his position is until the end of the story. In other words, Mr. Pirzada manages himself with the utmost grace despite being pushed in opposing directions.

Mr. Pirzada is a representation of the cultural uprootedness caused by the partition of Bengal. The partition of Bengal refers to the division of the Indian province of Bengal into two separate entities: West Bengal, which remained a part of India, and East Bengal, which became a part of Pakistan (later Bangladesh). It was a significant event in South Asian history and had far-reaching consequences for the people living in the region. The division was primarily based on religious lines, with Hindu-majority areas going to India and Muslim-majority areas going to Pakistan. This division

resulted in the displacement and migration of millions of people, creating a massive humanitarian crisis.

In the context of Mr. Pirzada, he could be seen as a character who embodies the cultural dislocation experienced by many individuals and families as a result of the partition. He may be portrayed as someone who had to leave his homeland, abandon his roots, and adapt to a new environment. This cultural uprootedness can lead to a sense of displacement, nostalgia, and longing for the homeland left behind. The term "malady" can be used for Mr Pirzada, as he figuratively embodies the term. The term suggests that the cultural uprootedness experienced by Mr. Pirzada is not merely a physical displacement but also a psychological and emotional affliction.

The traumatic experience of the partition and the loss of a familiar cultural milieu can have profound effects on individuals, their identities, and their sense of belonging. Through Mr. Pirzada's character, the author explores themes of identity, loss, and the human consequences of political decisions. By depicting the challenges faced by characters like Mr. Pirzada, the story can shed light on the impact of historical events on personal lives and the enduring effects of cultural uprooting caused by the partition of Bengal.

Lilia draws parallels between her parents and Mr Pirzada as both hail from the same imagined community, theoretically in the lines of *Imagined Communities* by Benedict Anderson, as is elaborated in the story:

The ten-year-old Lilia observes similarities between her Bengali parents and Mr. Pirzada, a Pakistani from Dacca. They spoke the same language, laughed at the same jokes, looked more or less the same ... ate pickled mangoes with their meals, ate rice every night for supper with their hands' ... In a foreign land the fact of belonging to a different country becomes meaningless as though their countries are different but their cultures are the same. (pg. 94)

Chandrima Karmakar explicates that "the diasporic Indians (including the diasporic Indian writers) understand their 'roots' by listening to the narrations of the elders in the family. These narrations affect them to such an extent that some of them decide to go to India and see for themselves what had been only the 'imagined India'". (Karmakar, 2015, p. 85) She further expounds:

Every piece of diasporic writing reflects the metamorphosis of the 'Indian' into a diasporic. The sublimity of the Indian diaspora has generated a literary canon that highlights the significance of this phenomenon. It speaks of the pain of displacement, both physical and socio-psychological, and a feeling of temporariness. (pg. 86)

Lilia, who is a second-generation immigrant, presumes upon a hypothetical identity that is only heard from secondary sources like Pirzada. She was very much acculturated into the dominant host country's cultural dynamic. Karmakar elaborates:

The second-generation immigrants, as seen earlier, grow up visualising a 'concept' that is presented to them by their parents. For many, India is probably a picture of a singular state, a district, or city/town from which their parents hail. As Lahiri states, her experience of India is largely that of a tunnel imposed by a single city we ever visited, by the handful of homes we stayed in, by the fact that I was not allowed to explore the city on my own. (pg. 87)

Lilia was raised in a Boston suburb. While Lilia's parents, who immigrated from Calcutta, strive to teach her about the food, neighbourhood customs, and family members they left behind in India at home, she is only taught American history and traditions at school. When Lilia meets Mr. Pirzada, a man from East Pakistan (now known as Bangladesh), who starts visiting Lilia's house for dinner most nights, her interest in her cultural origins grows. And Lilia begins to understand how hard it is to be cut off from one's hometown and to be caught between two cultures when the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971 breaks out, making Mr. Pirzada fear for the lives of his wife and daughters. The story implies that although living in diaspora might bring new opportunities and exciting cultural exchange, it also means accepting feelings of alienation as well as a certain amount of cultural and personal loss as Lilia and Mr. Pirzada struggled with the distance between the U.S. and South Asia. Lilia is unique among her friends in that she has a dual understanding of two different cultures: the one her parents left behind and the one she learns about at school. Lilia takes map tests at school on the Thirteen Colonies, which would go on to form the original U.S. states. But at home, she has "a map of the world taped to the wall," with lines painted to indicate her parents' trips to South Asia. These two different maps represent how Lilia's two worlds are different from one another. While her world at school only covers a small portion of the United States, her world at home is more expansive and focused on the Indian subcontinent.

The distinction between these two maps highlights Lilia's dual cultural affiliation, providing her a more varied outlook on the world than her contemporaries. And because she lives in two different universes, Lilia is able to comprehend concepts that those around her do not. For instance, Mr. Pirzada has no idea what to think when he sees pumpkins on porches around Halloween. As a result, Lilia educates him on jack-o'-lanterns and even demonstrates how to carve one "like others [she] had noticed in the neighbourhood." Lilia is able to pick up on "neighbourhood" knowledge and habits that her parents and Mr. Pirzada often find difficult to understand because she was raised in this American suburb. In a similar vein, Lilia is astonished to learn that while the TV news is constantly on at her home, many of her classmates don't; for instance, the family of her friend Dora keeps their television off. Since Lilia and her family learn about world events through television, the absence of TV in Dora's home suggests that Lilia is more aware of current events than her peers are.

Lilia starts to feel as though she does not entirely belong among South Asian immigrants or among white Americans as she grows closer to Mr. Pirzada and the violence in East Pakistan increases. When Lilia and Dora go trick-or-treating while dressed as witches, many of Lilia's neighbours remark that "they had never seen an Indian witch before." This is only one instance of Lilia feeling excluded in her largely white neighbourhood. Lilia is eager to partake in Halloween customs, but the residents of her suburb make her feel strange due to her race, even if she and Dora are wearing the same outfits and carrying out the same activities. Lilia experiences familial alienation on occasion as well.

Mr. Pirzada struggles to "belong" in the same way as Lilia does, showing that there is some degree of isolation present in the experience of diaspora. Lilia must go through the sorrow of separation herself when Mr. Pirzada leaves; only then would she understand "what it means to miss someone who is so many miles and hours away, just as he had missed his wife and daughters for so many months." Here, Lilia comes to the realisation that her sentiments of grief are not particular to her; rather, they are shared by everyone who has loved ones who are a vast distance away (i.e., "many miles"). Furthermore, Lilia's use of the adverb "hours away" implies that the difficulty of diaspora is temporal—she is also cut off from her family's history and forebears.

In the end, *When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine* makes the argument that Americans' insistence on a sanitised story of their own freedom makes it challenging for them to recognise individuals in other countries—or even those on American soil—who are struggling. "No one at school talked about the war followed so faithfully in my living room," Lilia says. Later, she is horrified to discover that Dora's home has no TV at all, in contrast to her parents' constant viewing of the TV news. At Lilia's school, the American Revolution, which took place centuries ago, is still relevant, but none of her classmates are aware of the Bengali independence movement, which is taking place at the time.

In fact, this emphasis on American independence in the narrative purposefully obscures knowledge of previous conflicts. Because Lilia studies the American Revolution "every year," there is no room in the curriculum for anything else. The teacher prevents Lilia from reading about Dacca, the East Pakistani city where Mr. Pirzada is from, informing her that there is "no reason" to consult a book if it is not about the American Revolution. This is perhaps the most striking instance. Lilia is prohibited from learning the history of a contemporary conflict while she is required to re-learn the history of one from the past. Despite being thousands of kilometres from Dacca, Mr. Pirzada has a very different perspective than Lilia does because of their firsthand involvement in the Bangladesh independence fight. The novel subtly asks for a more comprehensive view of history and current events—one that considers the human costs of previous revolutions and of ongoing conflicts throughout the world—by demonstrating how difficult and nuanced the lived experience of revolution is.

III. Bibi Haldar as a Malady

Bibi Haldar is suffering from an enigmatic illness. The woman has not been cured despite numerous tests and therapies. She has been advised to gain weight, lose weight, avoid garlic, drink egg yolks in milk, and stand on her head. She is confined to the house of her dismissive older cousin and his wife because to the unpredictable episodes that can occur at any time. The women in their neighbourhood keep an eye on Bibi, who manages the inventory for her brother's cosmetics shop. She only receives food, a place to stay, and a piece of cotton each year to renew her clothing. Bibi mop-ups the shop while vocally speculating as to why she was doomed to this fate—alone and envious of the nearby wives and mothers—and sweeps the area.

It is determined by the women that she desires a male. Bibi declares the details of her own wedding as they show her mementos from their nuptials. Bibi is heartbroken about the idea of never getting married. She is comforted by the women by being wrapped in shawls, having her face washed, or being given new blouses to wear. Her cousin Haldar appears after a particularly violent fit and offers to take her to the polyclinic. Marriage is suggested as a treatment. Relations may calm her blood is what they proposed.

There are several plausible explanations for Bibi Haldar's illness. The unidentified illness resembles epilepsy but also makes reference to female hysteria, a Victorian-era diagnosis of emotional imbalance in women that was treated by sexual stimulation. As a result of misogynist interpretations of women's physiological and psychological states, female hysteria has long been disregarded. In the end, "relations" is proposed as Bibi's treatment, which parallels hysteria in both the diagnostic and the treatment. Her lack of an epilepsy diagnosis is a sign of the subpar medical treatment that a woman in her situation might get. Her cousin/boss doesn't care about her and merely pays for her accommodation and board. The cost of full healthcare is prohibitive for Bibi's class.

It is intriguing that Bibi is "cured" by the child. It supports the idea that she needs "relations," but it can also be taken in a different direction. Bibi is initially thought to be unable to care for herself. She receives meagre assignments and is not seen as suitable for marriage. She initially becomes distant when she is left alone. After the birth of the child, Bibi is forced to reorganise her life in order to care for the child. Bibi assumes charge when given responsibility for the first time in her life and disproves her cousin. Bibi only required a chance and some faith. It is evidence of both the strength of the person and the strength of women.

The Treatment of Bibi Haldar examines gender roles. Indicative of the masculine domination in the community where Bibi lives and the out-of-date mindset of the locals is the belief that Bibi can be healed not by medicine but rather by a man. The fact that Bibi is not a woman is a topic of significant

dispute. The learned tasks associated with taking care of men and children outweigh biology. "A woman" is defined as someone who cares for a man's family, cooks, and sews.

The women in Bibi's village who look after her tell the story. This strengthens the notions about gender roles that are implied in the story. Even if they don't in their tribe, women are in charge in the story. Whatever power the ladies have, they do use it. They stop doing business with Haldar's cosmetics store in retribution for the way he treated Bibi, damaging him. However, they never act alone; they always act in groups. The only men mentioned are Bibi's condescending cousin and the unidentified stranger who causes Bibi to become pregnant. In the end, the child's entire village of moms renders the absence of the child's father inconsequential.

The story takes care to leave out any references to Bibi's pregnancy. Was she sexually assaulted or otherwise forced into a relationship, possibly by her cousin? There is no proof to support this. Furthermore, there is no evidence to support the opposite. We don't receive any information that would allow the women of the community or us to make an opinion or even a hunch regarding the father of the child. It appears as though the pregnancy just happened. As far as the pregnancy being as a plot device, it was.

The Treatment of Bibi Haldar is organised in accordance with the cycle of the regular seasons. The summer, when her father had discovered that Bibi's biggest attacks take place, is when she makes her endeavours to locate a husband. When Bibi's niece becomes unwell in the autumn, she is expelled. She receives total abandonment during the winter. She becomes pregnant by the spring and gives birth in the summer. Bibi's life enters a new chapter as it enters the spring, a season of rebirth. There is a pun in the story's title. The "treatment" given to Bibi Haldar includes both the "relations" prescribed to treat her illness as well as the manner she is treated by her cousin and her community. The question is whether her treatment is simply a better treatment.

The concern of her family members as well as that of the entire village is expressed in the opening sentence of the story *The Treatment of Bibi Haldar*. The scene in the story where Bibi Haldar falls and people quickly rush to soothe her "bearing palm fans and sugar cubes, and tumblers of refrigerated water to pour on her head" is another illustration of brotherhood. (pg. 161) In a different instance when she experiences a hysterical attack, "a group encircled the convulsing girl at once, eager to assist in any way possible" occurs. (pg. 167) Concerned individuals observe her vulnerable state. Even though Jhumpa Lahiri was not born or raised in India, these episodes in the novel demonstrate the backwardness of Indian culture and also demonstrate that she has a realistic understanding of Indians, their ideology, religion, and traditions.

"Ideology, language, and culture are the very issues of debate in Jhumpa Lahiri's book". (Chhabra, 2005, pg. 71) Through the portrayal of Bibi Haldar's sister-in-law, who avoids her like she has a

contagious illness out of fear of her presence rather than treating Bibi Haldar as a hysterical patient, she has very skilfully addressed the diseased psyche of Indian people. The woman started wrapping woollen scarves around her tumultuous abdomen because she believed that Bibi's presence would infect the unborn kid. Bibi was given unique soaps and towels for the bathroom. The scullery maid claimed that Bibi's plates were not washed with the other dishes. This disregard for a patient brings to light misconceptions about ill-advised mindsets.

Jhumpa Lahiri has effectively captured the anxiety of Bibi Haldar, a lady who is eligible for marriage and who also desires a male in her life. Her anxiety and want to wed suggest that she feels men are the protectors and mould women's lives, and as a result, she also views marriage as a significant event in life. Jhumpa Lahiri describes every last detail of Bengali marriage in *The Treatment of Bibi Haldar*, including butter poured in fires, garlands exchanged, vermilion-painted fish, trays of shells and silver coins. As soon as the word of Bibi Haldar's marriage reached the community, grandmothers started checking almanacks to choose the most auspicious times for the ceremony, once again demonstrating Indians' faith in astrology and horoscopes. Her neighbouring friends prepare her for the interview:

Most likely the groom will arrive with one parent, a grandparent, and either an uncle or aunt. They will stare, ask several questions. They will examine the bottoms of your feet, the thickness of your braid. They will ask you to name the prime minister, recite poetry, feed a dozen hungry people on half a dozen eggs. (pg. 165)

Jhumpa Lahiri paints a detailed picture of Indian marriages in this passage. She expertly illustrates how a girl is meticulously scrutinised before marriage from top to bottom and how she is interrogated by a lot of people on the groom's side. But when her cousin and his wife shamelessly decline to officiate her nuptials, Bibi Haldar's expectations are abruptly dashed. It has been pricey to marry her off. He does not want to spend his money on buying a bed, assembling a dowry, ordering bracelets, or feeding guests. This depicts Indian society as it really is, where a girl's birth is seen as a time of sadness rather than celebration and she is expected to be a burden on her family. The girl child is always considered the “powerful means of withdrawal, regression, decay, death and destruction”. (Myles, 2005, pg. 60)

IV. Conclusion

Drawing on the above analyses, we can measure the origins and the effects of individual maladies on the titular characters. Their illnesses are dissimilar, in the sense that, Mr Pirzada has a metaphorical ailment of cultural estrangement from his homeland, while Bibi Haldar embodies more of a physical ailment that objectively looks down upon ill-informed Indian society. Both are

inconspicuous, meaning, the metaphorical diseases afflicting them remain unseen and unobserved. By delving into the depths of their circumstances and surroundings, one can gather a sense of coherence about their subjectivity and interiority.

The point of view in *The Treatment of Bibi Haldar* was from a member of her community who might also have been a carer for her, and this point of view had a negative impact on how Bibi Haldar's treatment was shown. In addition to having a real ailment, Bibi Haldar's marital situation was also considered to be somewhat of a sickness. The chapter's speaker proves that Bibi indeed experiences paroxysms and that numerous diagnoses and treatments have been applied to her condition, but she makes it clear that her illness appears to be related to her single status. Bibi's illness causes her to be treated like a pariah. She is frequently lonely and would love nothing more than to find a husband. Despite the fact that no male seemed to be interested in her, some physicians think that this will help treat her sickness instead of all the other treatments they have tried. She is treated even more like an outsider after learning that the couple she lives with is expecting a child out of concern that she might pass her illness to the child. Bibi began to isolate herself even more by refusing to go out in public since she felt so rejected by her family.

Lilia observes that Mr. Pirzada frequently acts strangely despite his stern demeanour when watching the civil war unfold on television. These seemingly odd quirks reveal a man who is desperately attempting to keep his sanity and impartiality while facing a grave uncertainty about the fate of his loving wife and daughters. Lilia, for instance, observes Mr. Pirzada's "composed and alert" demeanour while he studies news clips about the Pakistan-Bangladesh conflict, despite the fact that his pocket watch is set to Dacca time and that he consistently winds it up and places it in front of him when he joins Lilia's family for dinner.

While carving Lilia's Halloween pumpkin, Mr. Pirzada's knife slips as an Indian official declares on the news that India may go to war with Pakistan unless the world finds a means to accept Bangladeshi refugees (from the Bangladesh/Pakistan conflict). Mr. Pirzada appears to be a man without deep emotions, yet this is obviously not the case. The extravagant consideration and devotion Mr. Pirzada shows for Lilia (he always brings her fancy candy to dinner) demonstrates his fondness for kids. Furthermore, it's possible that Mr. Pirzada's own suffering and agony about the future of his own girls inspired his attentive concern for Lilia.

While both Mr. Pirzada and Bibi Haldar grapple with personal challenges and cultural identity, their circumstances and backgrounds overlap significantly. Mr. Pirzada's story focuses more on displacement and longing for family, while Bibi Haldar's story emphasises societal stigma and isolation.

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Psychological analysis of the stories of Odia writer Rabi Pattnaik

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Abstract

Nowadays we have seen various experiments in the field of Odia fiction. Especially the stories are very rich in these contents. Between the various experiments psychology or psychoanalysis is one of the very popular and greatest experiments. If we look at the history, the study of psychology began in the year of 1854. However, its application to literature is even newer. Because the novel 'Hunger'(1, 2) written by Knut Hamsun in 1890, has been recognized as the world's first psychological novel. From this point of view, the issue of appearance of psychology in Odia literature in 1926 is discussed. But with a little more depth, it is not impossible to explore psychology in the first Odia story 'Rebati'. In this way even though psychology is a new department in the field of literature, its diversity is definitely acceptable.

Key words- Psychology is literature more than science.

Introduction

In this way, by understanding each department of psychology, successful experiments with some section can be seen in the stories of Rabi Pattnaik. Especially psychoanalysis, cognitive psychology, humanistic psychology, behaviourism and analytical psychology are some of the main ideas of the psychological school that have been applied by the story writer in his work. Apart from this, due to Mr. Pattnaik being particularly influenced by existentialist theory, the influence of existential psychology is also evident in his stories. From this point of view some of the great story collection of Rabi Pattnaik are Asamajikara Dairy (The Diary of Antisocial)- 1964, Andha Gali raAndhakara (Darkness of Dark Street)- 1972, Ragatodi – 1979, Bahurupi (Polymorphous)- 1979, Hiranyagarbha (Golden Womb)- 1982, Galpa (Story)- 1982, Bisubharekha (Equator)- 1983, Raja Rani (King Queen)- 1987, Bandhya Gandhari (Sterile Gandhari)- 1988, Amarilata – 1990, Bichitra Barna (Weird Completion) – 1991, Chayaputrara kala (Death of Sani)- 1991 etc.

Freudian thoughts

Freud first introduced the concept of 'Thanatos', the death instinct, in his essay "Beyond the Pleasure Principle". He theorized that humans are driven toward death and destruction, famously declaring that "The aim of all life is death"(3) We know that one day we will die. And in our conscious mind we want to die. As a result, we take help from other people to manifest our dream. This tendency of the humans is described in the story 'Ipsa' (Desire). In psychoanalytic theory, a defence mechanism is an unconscious psychological operation that functions to protect a person. Regression and reaction formation is the part of this mechanism (4, 5, 6) and in the story 'NirjanDuipa re Bilapa'(Lamentation in the lonely island) the writer focus on this concept. The conflict between life instinct and death instinct can be seen in the story 'Manar aluodehara chai'(Light of mind shadow of body). Beside this 'Asamajikara diary' (Diary of Antisocial) is an extraordinary work of the writer. In this story we can see the struggle between the 'id' and 'Ego' in man or in other Words the demonic and human nature within man. In fact, every person who covers the social gap hides an antisocial person- Those who express themselves by rejecting the social or egoistic call. "Ego says go away,id speaks take a good look at life. Ego resists this mistake, this sin, this crime- this ignorance has no atonement. Id shouting twofold: this world is false, this society is false. This world is bounded by falsehood. Hear,there is no ignorance, no sin, no virtue,whether sinful or virtuous. The bodies of the deceased will merge into the soil. There is no life after death. There is no haven there is no hell. All are imagination all are illusion. So enjoy whatever is at your finger tips. XXXX who is pulling me forward with an irresistible force? And the force behind is pulling me back at the same speed. I am as steady as the centre of a tag- of- war. This fight is between man and monster. Between good and evil, does good always win in the fight between good and evil? (Story collection- 1st part –P- 59-61) In fact, there are suppressed hopes in the subconscious mind of humans that can be considered anti social in the eyes of society. Its manifest form, which we also call self confession, can be seen in the above work. Similarly, the importance given to the individual and the inner self above society and the world, and the reality of death and a positive view of death attests to support centred on existentialism among the writer. Well according to McDougall hunger is the greatest instinct. But in 'Kadi Komala' story, the writer describes sex as the greatest instinct. Beside this, the writer also indicates that from the beginning of creation, how the instinct of sex has been controlling the human being very well. We can see another experiment inolfaction, or the science of attraction, through the sense of smell in the story of 'Champa phula'(Champa flower). In this story, the writer describes how the olfactory membrane plays a role in smelling and subconsciously assessing in detecting another human's pheromones. According to Freud the five psychological stages are the oral, the anal, the phallic, the

latent and the genital(7,8) In modern psychology, the genital stage is considered the final stage of psychological development. During this stage, individuals develop a strong sexual interest in the opposite sex. In 'Konark' (Black Pagoda) story the writer describes this stage very beautifully. Kleptomania is a mental health disorder that involves repeatedly being unable to resist urges to steal items that one generally doesn't really need. Often the items stolen have little value and the person could afford to buy them. In the story 'Kalam'(Pen) the writer focus on this problem. "Manjulas desire grew stronger, she will steal. She will quickly pick up a piece from the pen. She slowly come closer and started playing with the pens casually. How is her body shaking? Sweating profusely, she can't keep herself steady. Trembling can I take? Did anyone see? This is an opportunity, If not, not any more. Eyes are burning in the fire of intense desire. The whole body is trembling in excitement. What a joy in this excitement? The first unbearable experience of her life is no longer the case. She started trembling her face is already embarrassed. Her lips are trembling, eyes are burning, and tears come. How? The throat is going to dry. Oh no, she will probably faint in a while. Holding her breath, she lifted the pen. She returned, keeping the pen between the vanity bag and her palm. (Story collection- 1st part- P- 149- 150) In the process of evolution, this human race has been gone through many changes from a wild man to a human being. In this change, if there is something unique in man, it is human nature. Genetically, human beings are prone to get from their ancestors, such as nudity, meat eating, polygamous nature and unfettered life. Which man tries to suppress in the social sphere. And in this effort, he really hurts himself. So, the uncivilized man hidden in the civilized man is the real man. The story 'Bana Batoirachampu'(Song of the traveller who lost the path) represents these types of thoughts. According to Freud, the inner instinct of a person, which he named the 'Id' instinct, is the true instinct because it remains in the child from the mother's womb. This instinct is controlled by the ego instinct as the person ages. Therefore, the true instincts of human beings are the desire for a free life or the support for the individual existence,as can be seen in the same text. The hidden instinct of human beings, which we can call the 'Id' or the Death Instinct (Thanatos), is always rejected by human beings, according to Freud. This rejection is called reaction formation, which is the act of reacting in the opposite way. This type of human nature, or in other words attempt to reconcile man with his instincts, can be seen in the story 'Vetana' (Meet). "After going about 100 feet, someone's shadow appeared. I was shocked, just like my face- a copy of mine that I see in the mirror. The same reflection I had was mirrored by him, and he was looking at me. After that my reflection asked looking at me, "Do you recognize me? Look carefully." I am there, like a stone wall, standing freeze, just looking at him in amazement. Sometime passes, and then I see the colour of my image suddenly change, turning into black. The pair of eyes became violent, burning like a candle in a strange way. Even a sword comes into his hand. He roars, Swing the sword. The whole

earth is cut with that sword, cutting humans to pieces. He is laughing out loud. He looks terrible with red blood all over his body. He scatters a lot of wealth, precious stones and money XXXX He forcefully exposes a woman. The woman escapes. He pulls off her dress and licks it, destroying her breasts with his strong thrusts. The woman cries. My image, however, trembles in anger and talks obscenely. After that, he bites her and hugs her, then sits on her. After that, after sometime, he drags another woman and the same thing happens again. XXXX he was shouting, look at me. Do you see me? How much are seeing? Are you seeing yourself? XXX his hands and feet are growing and covering the entire field, the entire village, the entire earth.” (Story collection – 2nd part- p- 298- 300) these lines are the powerful example that how all the human beings are controlled by death instinct.

Post- Freudian thoughts

Mr. Pattnaik not only influenced by the Freudian approach, but he was also influenced by various Post – Freudian psychologist. That’s why he experimented with various PostFreudian theories in his stories. According to post Freudian psychologist the personality is develops in a predetermined order through eight stages of development(9). According to the theory, successful completion of each stage results in a healthy personality and acquisition of basic virtues. Failure to complete a stage can result in a reduced ability to complete further stages. In ‘Badmas’ (Rogue) story the writer describes the failure 4th stage which is comes as inferiority and 5th stage as Role confusion. According to Freud with the birth of human being sex instinct is born in him. But according to post- Freudian Carl Jung it is related to our past birth. Infect it’s totally genetic. It has continued with humans since the creation of human society. It was as normal and natural as it was for a man living in the wild forest. It became so unnatural for the humans bound by rules and regulation by becoming a society. No matter how much man tries to suppress this sexual instinct through religion and mythology, it does not die. “After that, many times, many centuries have passed, but it has always been seen vaguely in the dark and not in the light. By then everyone’s mind is filled with hatred, fear and abuse towards him. The king’s command is to beat and kill whoever sees him in the light of day. The vigilance of thousands of people was beaten with the stick of big policy, and the snake could not dare to come out in the light. So, he hid himself in darkness. But I have discovered him under every man’s garden, home and the dark corner. There is no such house, no such place where he is not, but in that darkness, no one has made a search for him. His house is in the dark, he comes in dark, in the dark he bites then hides in the dark. XXXX Hundred thousand strong bound by ethics, the guard of a hundred thousand of consciousness. Still the snake doesn’t die; it was mighty, ever-immortal. I started running away from the city and village in fear of her. A Hundred of ashrams were built in the deep forest. How much hard work, how much mantras, how much unspeakable cruelty to oneself, to strengthen myself, to

free myself from the hypnotic power of the snake, how many kinds of fasting, meditation ideas, but no, there is no escape from it, only a few moments of liberation. Once again you have to come back into that bracket. It's like a prisoner's temporary release." (story- collection- 1st Part- p- 529- 530) therefore, what God has done can be broken or suppressed by the human society that is impossible. In 'Takshaka' (Gliding Snake) story the writer describes this thought very beautifully. Apart from this, we can concenter this from scientific point of view or Newton's third law (Action Reaction) for every action force there is an equal reaction force in the opposite direction. So if a person can easily accept the sex drive, then he can get rid of the chaos that is going on. "This time I decided. I will leave that snake in the yard of my house. I will make a pet with milk and banana. Accepting him, I will bring his out of the dark house room and leave him in the flood of light. Maybe he will be blinded first by the flood of light. May bite in retaliation, but I will bear it all because I know that he won't be violent once he gets my love and affection." (Story collection- 1st part- P- 531- 532) Human hunger is greater than his religion and God or in other words hunger is the greatest god. The story 'Dharmantara' (Religious Conversion) is based on this thought. In fact, the psychologist Abraham Maslow in his theory 'Hierarchy of needs' (Psychological Needs) (10) proves this.

Conclusion

Definitely the science of psychology benefits society and enhance our lives. Psychologists examine the relationship between brain function and behaviour, and the environment and behaviour, applying what they learn to illuminate our understanding and improve the world around us. In this field the role of literature is also appreciated. Definitely psychology or in the other word science describe the problem of people. But literature will force a person to think about his own problems.

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Challenges and Opportunities: Multilingualism in Indian Classrooms from a Teacher's Lens

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Abstract

In an increasingly diverse and interconnected world, the use of multiple languages in educational settings is gaining prominence. This synthesis paper delves into the attitudes of teachers towards incorporating multiple languages in the classroom and investigates the associated benefits and challenges. The article highlights that while multilingualism is celebrated, not all teachers embrace it, shedding light on the various perspectives within the educational landscape. Drawing from a survey conducted by Macmillan Education India, the study reflects the varied understanding of multilingualism among teachers. Challenges faced by students, teachers, parents, policymakers, and communities are explored, along with solutions to promote multilingual education in Indian classrooms. The article emphasizes the importance of addressing reservations and hesitations among educators to create inclusive and effective multilingual learning environments.

Keywords: Multilingual education, teacher attitudes, linguistic diversity, language policies, classroom challenges, language hierarchy, cultural inclusion, teacher perceptions, Indian education, language resources.

Introduction

In today's interconnected and multicultural world, linguistic diversity has become a prominent feature of many educational settings. As societies continue to experience an influx of diverse populations, the concept of using multiple languages in the classroom has gained traction as a pedagogical approach. This paper aims to delve into the attitudes of teachers towards the incorporation of multiple languages in educational contexts, as well as investigate the associated benefits and challenges.

The utilisation of multiple languages in the classroom is grounded in the belief that language is not just a means of communication but also a powerful tool for fostering inclusive and effective learning environments. By embracing linguistic diversity, educators seek to create classrooms that respect and value students' diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This approach acknowledges the potential of students' native languages as valuable assets for learning, rather than viewing them as obstacles to overcome.

While there is a growing recognition of the benefits of multilingualism in education, it is crucial to question, "Do all the teachers and other stakeholders embrace multilingualism?" The answer would be 'Certainly not'. Many of the teachers and other stakeholders are not willing to implement multilingualism in the classroom due to various reasons. When I had a talk with some of the government school teachers in Tamil Nadu about multilingualism, some of them were not aware of the concept of multilingualism itself, and some gave the constraints behind implementation. This conversation made me realize and demystify the myth that 'everyone welcomes multilingualism'. I realized that there are different perspectives on multilingualism. Despite the stress on the benefits of multilingualism in the classroom by policymakers, educators, and researchers, ultimately the front-line worker i.e. teacher who transfers the knowledge, has to believe in it. I was under the illusion that whatever we as researchers do, it reaches the teachers, and they implement it in the classroom. This conversation gave me the shocking reality that cleared the fog in my eyes: not every teacher is aware of and embracing multilingualism. This synthesis paper aims to explore the attitudes and perspectives of teachers who may harbor reservations or hesitations towards multilingualism in the classroom.

Despite the evidence supporting the advantages of using multiple languages in educational settings, there exists a range of factors that contribute to the resistance or reluctance of some teachers and stakeholders. These individuals may hold various beliefs, concerns, or misconceptions about the implementation of multilingual instruction. Understanding their

perspectives is essential to addressing these reservations and promoting an inclusive and comprehensive approach to multilingual education.

By synthesizing existing literature from secondary sources, this article aims to provide insights into the perspectives and reservations held by teachers regarding multilingualism in the classroom along with discussing some possible challenges that might be encountered in the language classroom, and solutions to overcome the same.

Exploring the attitudes -Yay or Nay?

Multilingualism - An Overview

Multilingualism refers to the ability to speak, understand, and use multiple languages proficiently. The definition of multilingualism itself is a little problematic because of the diversity and complexity of understanding it. For instance, Joshua Fishman(1970), a renowned sociolinguist, defines multilingualism as "the ability of a speaker to use two or more languages for communication within a single speech community" (p. 5). This definition emphasizes the use of multiple languages within a particular speech community. In addition to that, "the ability of societies to support and promote more than one language or script, as well as individual speakers' and communities' ability to use more than one language for communication, either by choice or by necessity" (UNESCO, 2003). This definition highlights both the societal and individual aspects of multilingualism.

François Grosjean(2010), a renowned expert in bilingualism and multilingualism, defines multilingualism as "the phenomenon whereby individuals or communities can communicate in more than one language" (p. 395). This definition emphasizes the communicative aspect of multilingualism. On the other hand, Colin Baker (2011), a leading expert on bilingualism and multilingualism, defines multilingualism as "the ability of an individual or a community to use more than two languages effectively and appropriately for communication in a range of domains" (p. 3). This definition highlights the effective and appropriate use of multiple languages across different domains of communication.

Multilingualism is "the ability of societies, institutions, groups, or individuals to employ two or more languages either individually or in societal interaction in various domains of life (home, work, school, governance, etc.)", The European Commission (2011) defines it. This definition emphasizes the use of multiple languages in different domains and contexts.

Furthermore, Li Wei (2018), a leading scholar in multilingualism, defines multilingualism as "the presence of two or more languages in a person or community, where a person or community has competence in more than one language, with varying degrees of proficiency and use" (p. 5). This definition emphasizes the varying degrees of proficiency and language use within multilingual individuals or communities.

These definitions by prominent scholars emphasize communication, proficiency, and the use of multiple languages within specific contexts. As one can see, there is diversity in defining the term 'multilingualism' which itself may provide confusion among the stakeholders.

Understanding Multilingualism in the Indian Context

India is a linguistically varied nation, with a wide variety of languages being spoken in different parts of the country. It is home to numerous regional languages, such as Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, and Gujarati, among others. A dynamic and diverse linguistic landscape characterizes the nature of multilingualism in Indian classrooms. Students have a variety of mother tongues, languages, and dialects that they bring with them from their various linguistic backgrounds. The educational system is faced with both opportunities and challenges as a result of this language variety.

The inclusion of a regional or local language alongside the national language, which is frequently Hindi or English, is one of the most important features of multilingualism in Indian classrooms. In many Indian states, there are distinct regional tongues that are taught at educational institutions (Baldauf & Kaplan, 2011). For example, in Tamil Nadu, the medium of instruction is Tamil, while in West Bengal, it is Bengali (Sridhar, 2016).

In such multilingual classrooms, students simultaneously learn and advance their abilities in several languages. Depending on the situation, the discussion, or the social dynamics, they may switch between languages. This code-switching and code-mixing is a typical occurrence, and children frequently utilize many languages to express their ideas, make sense of topics, and interact with peers and professors (Ramanathan, 2005).

The teaching and learning methods used by educators are also influenced by the presence of multiple languages in the classroom. Educators in multilingual classrooms employ translanguaging strategies, which involve using multiple languages to enhance learning (García & Li Wei, 2014). Translanguaging strategies, which strategically use many languages to aid in comprehension and learning, are frequently used by teachers. Translanguaging takes into

account students' linguistic resources and encourages them to use their native tongue to help their comprehension of brand-new ideas before progressively switching to the target language (García, 2009).

Nevertheless, there are drawbacks to multilingualism in addition to its advantages. The disparity in linguistic proficiency among pupils is one issue (Mohanty, 2006). Some pupils might be better at speaking the local tongue, while others might be better at Hindi or English. Communication, comprehension, and engagement in the classroom may all be impacted by this disparity.

The dearth of resources and content in several languages is another problem. Despite efforts to provide learning materials and textbooks in regional languages, the accessibility and caliber of these resources might vary between locales and languages. This may lead to unequal educational opportunities and prevent all pupils from being included.

Increased awareness of the value of encouraging multilingualism in Indian classrooms has recently emerged. Inclusionary language policies that recognize and value the linguistic diversity of students have been developed. The objective is to establish a setting in which learners can study many languages, preserve their linguistic and cultural identities, and become proficient in both regional and national languages.

Attitudes of teachers towards multilingualism

Numerous research suggest that the majority of educators and students support multilingualism. Being multilingual enriches cultural diversity and improves communication abilities (Ramanathan, 2005). Teachers understand how crucial it is for pupils to continue to be proficient in their home tongue while also learning new languages. Moreover, students frequently have a strong bond with their home tongue since language and cultural identity are intimately related. As a result, students may take pride in their ability to speak various languages and appreciate the chance to do so (Mohanty, 2013).

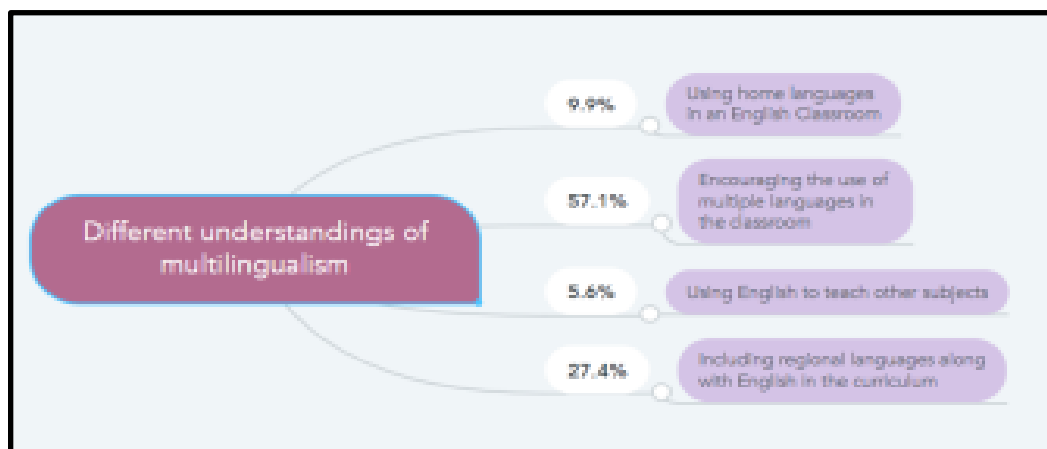
However, some teachers and students may face challenges related to language proficiency imbalances or limited resources, which can lead to negative attitudes towards multilingualism. In some cases, students from dominant language backgrounds may hold negative attitudes towards minority languages or dialects (Sridhar, 2016). There can be a perceived language hierarchy in classrooms, with Hindi and English often enjoying higher prestige. This hierarchy can influence

attitudes, as students and teachers may view proficiency in Hindi or English as a marker of success or social mobility (Ramanathan, 2005).

An analysis of the report by Macmillan Education on the perspectives/ attitudes of teachers is discussed below.

The survey by Macmillan Education India (MCI) was self-initiated to develop a self-learning online course on multilingualism for the British Council. The questionnaire was employed with both open-ended and closed-ended questions to find the perceptions of teachers on multilingualism and its significance in Indian classrooms. From the survey, we could find six themes that helped us understand their perceptions. Almost 923 teachers participated from different parts of India, aged between 18 to 50. Among them, 75% of them were female, and the rest were male participants. Moreover, 83% of teachers were from North India, leaving a small portion for South Indians. Teachers at private and government institutions and teachers who take online classes at the moment participated. Besides, teachers were working at a foundational level, preparation level, middle school and secondary school, and urban, semi-urban, semi-rural, and rural area schools in the targeted areas. From the survey by Macmillan Education, the teachers' understanding of multilingualism has varied answers, which is reflected in Figure 1.

Figure 1



Note: The above figure is created using Mind Meister software using the data taken from the Macmillan report.

The figure above implies that the teachers who participated in the survey do not have a proper or clear understanding of multilingualism. Almost 57.2% of the participants considered

multilingualism as encouraging the use of multiple languages in the classroom; 10% of them opted that it means using their home language in the classroom; and 27.4% of them chose multilingualism as including regional languages along with English in the curriculum. Their perspective on multilingualism is completely different. However, these heterogeneous views do provide lots of insights to ramify the implementation of multilingualism in the classroom.

Use of the learner's home language in English as a Second Language classes

There were mixed attitudes towards the use of the learner's home language in English as a second language classes. Despite the positive outcomes of the use of home language, some teachers put forward the disadvantages of using a learner's home language in ESL classes. For example, some teachers believed that using their home language would not make them pickup English as readily and might make them feel inferior to other English-speaking learners. The data from the survey is given below in Figure 2.

Figure 2



Note: The above figure was created using MindMeister software using the data taken from the Macmillan report.

As Figure 2 depicts, among the participants, 22.90% of the teachers considered learners to value their culture more when using L1. 9% of the teachers felt that using their home language would make them inferior to other students and 73.10% of the teachers opted that the learners feel confident about learning another language. Besides, 17.80% of teachers thought that the learners may not be able to pick up English as readily if they use the home language in an ESL classroom.

Besides, some of the teachers, surprisingly has different stances from the majority of the teachers' perspective. The excerpts from the survey have been given below:

Excerpt 1

Students feel more comfortable and understand the cultural diversity while also respecting it but the use of other languages in an English classroom could also hamper their efforts to learn it or readily accept it.”

Excerpt 2

“They become confident to speak up without hesitation. However, the use of too many languages should be avoided.”

Excerpt 3

“I am not sure if I am awake enough for this! I am an old school teacher and prefer that the English class sounds like an English class. Occasional explanation in the vernacular wouldn't harm, but it's not a practice I celebrate.”

Excerpt 4

“The use of the language spoken at home does simplify concepts (specifically, difficult terms), but that is only because English isn't used as frequently as it should be. Teachers 'choose' Hindi because it is more convenient. If they choose English instead, learners would get used to that just as well, even though it might take a little longer and come with a little more patience.”

The excerpt and dataaforementioned provide an insight that 'not all the teachers embrace multilingualism'. Some teachers are still reluctant to adopt multilingualism due to various reasons and constraints. The reasons for the reluctance are discussed in the next section.

What can be done?

Ramification of Multilingualism in Indian Classroom

Implementing multilingualism in Indian classrooms can have several ramifications, challenges, and steps.

- ❖ By accommodating the language diversity of pupils and enabling full participation in the learning process, multilingualism fosters inclusive education (Garcia, 2009).
- ❖ It aids in addressing the educational exclusion of learners from linguistic minorities (Mohanty, 2006).
- ❖ Improvements in problem-solving abilities, metalinguistic awareness, and language competency are just a few of the cognitive and linguistic benefits that multilingual

education can provide for students (Baker, 2011).

- ❖ It promotes understanding between various populations and aids in the development of intercultural competency (Baker, 2011).
- ❖ The rich cultural history connected to many languages and dialects is preserved and promoted by the inclusion of multilingualism in Indian classrooms.
- ❖ It promotes a strong feeling of identity by recognizing and appreciating kids' mother tongues (Mohanty, 2006).
- ❖ To increase social relations and social cohesion among students from various linguistic origins, multilingualism is encouraged (UNESCO, 2013).
- ❖ It promotes intercultural understanding and eliminates linguistic barriers in communities and classrooms (Garcia & Li Wei, 2014).

Challenges and solutions

Below, we explore challenges that may arise in a language classroom and examine potential solutions to address these barriers from the viewpoints of various stakeholders.

Student's Perspective

Challenges

1. Language Barriers: For example, in a multilingual classroom, a student from a rural area might struggle to understand lessons conducted in a regional language, leading to academic difficulties.
2. Cultural Isolation: An example could be a student from an indigenous community who feels culturally isolated when the majority of classmates belong to a different linguistic or cultural background.

Solutions

1. Bilingual Education: In response to the language barrier challenge, a solution could be implementing bilingual education, where students are gradually introduced to the common language alongside their regional language. For instance, students in a tribal region might first learn in their mother tongue and gradually transition to the national language. Adopting instructional strategies that recognize students' linguistic capabilities and encourage translanguaging practices is necessary for multilingualism (Garcia & Wei, 2014)
2. Cultural Inclusivity: To address cultural isolation, schools can incorporate culturally

diverse content into the curriculum. For example, including stories, festivals, and history from various cultural backgrounds can make students feel more connected to their heritage.

Teacher's Perspective

Challenges

1. **Teaching in Multilingual Settings:** Teachers might find it challenging to adapt their teaching methods in a multilingual classroom. An example could be a teacher struggling to effectively engage students from different language backgrounds in a science class.
2. **Resource Limitations:** Teachers may lack access to adequate teaching materials in multiple languages, impacting the quality of education they can provide.

Solutions

1. **Professional Development:** Teachers could undergo professional development programmes that equip them with strategies for teaching in multilingual classrooms. For instance, training might help a teacher learn how to use visual aids and non-verbal communication effectively to overcome language barriers. It entails raising teachers' linguistic awareness and developing their capacity to instruct learners from a variety of linguistic backgrounds (Garcia & Menken, 2010).
2. **Multilingual Resources:** Schools can develop or provide teaching resources in multiple languages. This might include textbooks, digital resources, and visual aids, allowing teachers to deliver content in a more accessible manner. Provide educators with the tools they need to instruct in multilingual classrooms (UNESCO, 2013).

Parent's Perspective

Challenges

1. **Communication:** Parents may struggle to communicate with teachers when they do not speak the language of instruction. For example, a parent who speaks a regional dialect may find it difficult to discuss their child's progress with a teacher who primarily communicates in a national language.
2. **Cultural Disconnect:** Parents may fear that their children will lose their cultural identity when the primary language of instruction is different from their own.

Solutions

1. **Language Support:** Schools can offer translation and interpretation services to bridge the communication gap. For instance, parents could have access to interpreters during parent-teacher meetings, ensuring clear and effective communication.
2. **Cultural Engagement:** To address concerns about cultural disconnect, schools can organize cultural events and activities that involve parents. For instance, celebrating festivals, languages, and traditions from various cultural backgrounds can help parents feel more connected to the school environment.

Policymakers' Perspective

Challenges

1. **Policy Frameworks:** Policymakers may struggle to develop and implement effective language-in-education policies that accommodate linguistic diversity.
2. **Resource Allocation:** Allocating sufficient resources to support multilingual education can be a financial constraint, impacting the implementation of policies.

Solutions

1. **Policy Review:** Policymakers can periodically review and adapt language-in-education policies to reflect the linguistic diversity of the region. For example, they might consider revising policies to include more support for bilingual education and regional languages.
2. **Development of Curriculum and Materials:** Create frameworks for multilingual curricula that incorporate a variety of languages into the teaching and learning process. Create or modify educational resources and materials that take into account the linguistic diversity of the students.
3. **Create assessment systems that take pupils' multilingual proficiency into account.** Create assessment instruments that accurately measure pupils' language growth while taking into account their different linguistic origins.
4. **Resource Investment:** Policymakers can allocate adequate funds to ensure that schools have access to high-quality instructional materials, teacher training, and support services for multilingual classrooms. For example, budget allocation can prioritize areas with higher linguistic diversity, particularly minority languages.

Community Perspective

Challenges

1. **Community Engagement:** Engaging the broader community in supporting multilingual

education can be a challenge. For instance, a community might be unaware of the benefits of multilingualism and may not actively participate in school activities.

2. **Attitudes and Stereotypes:** Negative stereotypes and biases related to certain languages and cultures can hinder community support for multilingual education. For example, prejudices against a particular language or culture might lead to resistance.

Solutions

1. **Community Involvement:** Actively involving community organizations and local leaders in advocating for and participating in multilingual education initiatives can bridge the engagement gap. For example, local leaders can participate in school committees to promote multilingualism.
2. **Awareness and Sensitization:** Conducting awareness campaigns can help change attitudes and combat stereotypes. For example, hosting community workshops and information sessions can promote the benefits of multilingualism and dispel misconceptions.

Other possible ways

Expanded language offerings

Increasing the range of languages offered in schools, including regional languages and indigenous languages, to cater to the linguistic diversity of students. Providing opportunities for students to learn additional languages beyond their mother tongue.

Technological integration

Leveraging technology to facilitate multilingual learning through interactive digital resources, language learning apps, and online language platforms. Exploring possibilities for virtual language exchange programmes and online collaboration with students from different linguistic backgrounds.

Translanguaging pedagogies

Promoting translanguaging pedagogies that encourage students to use their full linguistic repertoire to enhance learning. Integrating multilingual practices into classroom activities, such as group discussions, project work, and collaborative learning.

Multilingual Teacher Education

Enhancing pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to teach in multilingual classrooms. Incorporating multilingual teaching strategies, language awareness, and cultural sensitivity into teacher training programs.

Collaborative Partnerships

Encouraging collaboration among educational institutions, linguistic experts, and community organizations to support multilingual education initiatives. Partnering with parents, local communities, and language speakers to create a supportive language learning environment.

Research and Policy Advocacy

Researching to generate evidence on the benefits and effectiveness of multilingual education in Indian classrooms. Advocating for supportive language policies at national, state, and local levels, based on research findings and best practices.

Conclusion

The acceptance and efficacy of this instructional technique can be substantially impacted by instructors' attitudes toward multilingualism. Some educators might be concerned about upholding order in the classroom, handling linguistic variety, or viewing multilingualism as a threat to the dominance of the dominant language. Additionally, a lack of opportunity for professional development in this field or limited exposure to multilingual education throughout their training could be factors in their hesitations. Implementing multilingualism can result in changes in how society views and feels about linguistic diversity, fostering an appreciation and respect for many languages (Garcia, 2009). It might undermine linguistic hierarchy and promote a linguistic environment that is more inclusive and equitable (Mohanty, 2006).

The goal of this paper is to enable an understanding of the obstacles and reluctances to multilingualism while acknowledging the diversity of points of view. Doing this adds to a thorough discussion on multilingual education and identifies the areas that require more assistance, instruction, and awareness-raising campaigns to encourage openness and acceptance. We may work towards creating solutions that harness the potential of several languages for enhancing educational experiences and encouraging the academic achievement and cultural inclusion of all students by comprehending and addressing the worries of teachers and stakeholders.

Key actions include creating inclusive language policies, supporting teachers' professional growth, and encouraging stakeholder engagement. Teachers can advance

translanguaging pedagogies and develop stimulating learning environments by valuing and incorporating students' varied language repertoires.

While additional research is required to determine whether multilingual practices are beneficial in Indian classrooms, the prospects for the future seem encouraging. The opportunity to improve multilingual education further lies in expanded language offers, technological integration, and inclusive evaluation methods. Promoting cooperative alliances and supporting language laws can lead to constructive change.

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Tribal Education in India: Issue and Challenges

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Abstract

Tribal education in India is a complex and multifaceted issue that has been a subject of concern for policymakers, educators, and researchers for decades. This article provides a comprehensive review of the state of tribal education in India, focusing on the challenges, initiatives, and potential solutions in this context. The article begins by discussing the historical and socio-economic factors that have contributed to the educational disparities faced by tribal communities in India. It highlights the unique cultural and linguistic diversity among tribal groups and how this diversity often poses challenges in delivering effective education. Furthermore, the article examines the various government policies and programs aimed at improving tribal education, including the establishment of tribal schools, scholarships, and affirmative action measures. It also discusses the role of non-governmental organizations and community-based initiatives in addressing the educational needs of tribal communities.

The challenges of infrastructure, teacher recruitment, and retention in tribal areas are explored, along with issues related to the quality of education provided. The article also delves into the importance of culturally sensitive curriculum and pedagogical approaches in tribal education.

It is proved that education is the sole means to establish peace and brotherhood in the world.

India is a land of a multitude of culture, religion, language and races. Tribal community in India constitute a small portion of the total population with their indigenous culture, language and their unique lifestyle. Education is the sole means to establish peace and unity in the world and education is the key to tribal development. Tribal community in both rural and urban is facing various social and psychological problems in getting education. Educating tribals is not common task like educating non-tribals. They need special efforts by the government. The study is purely depending on secondary data of census of India, published and unpublished reports of Government and Non-Government Organizations and the observations done by researcher in the field. This

paper is a conceptual framework and understanding related to tribal education and related challenges in India.

Keywords: Tribal education, India, indigenous communities, educational disparities, government policies, cultural diversity, sustainable approaches, community-based initiatives.

Introduction:

The term 'tribe' is derived from the Latin word 'tribes', meaning the 'poor or the masses'. In English language the word 'tribe' appeared in the sixteenth century and denoted a community of persons claiming descent from a common ancestor. The word 'tribe' is generally used for a socially cohesive unit, associated with a territory, the member of which regards them as politically autonomous. Often a tribe possesses a distinct dialect and distinct cultural traits. India is a home to a large variety of indigenous people. The present study is to analyse status of tribal education with growth of education, literacy rate and gap between Scheduled Tribes and other social categories from the years to 2011, gross enrollment ratio, dropout rates and gender parity index in India. Along with this, it tried to highlight the status of tribal communities' education, the galore issues and challenges of play roles as an educational barrier. The Scheduled Tribe population represents one of the most economically impoverished and marginalized groups in India. With a population of more than 10.2crores, India has the single largest tribal population in the world. This constitutes 8.6 per cent of the total population of the country (Census of India, 2011). Education is one of the primary agents of transformation towards development. Education is in fact, an input not only for economic development of tribes but also for inner strength of the tribal communities which helps them in meeting the new challenges of life. It is an activity or a series of activities, or a process which may either improve the immediate living conditions or increase the potential for future living. It is the single most important means by which individuals and society can improve personal endowments, build capacity levels, overcome barriers, and expand opportunities for a sustained improvement in their well-being. Professor Amartya Sen recently emphasized education as an important parameter for any inclusive growth in an economy. So, education is an important avenue for upgrading the economic and social conditions of the Scheduled Tribes.

Education is one of the means of the development, which transfer society from backward to develop one. The nation's culture,socio-economic progress is based on educational status of the citizen. Education is one of the primary agents of transformationtowards development. Education is in fact, an input not only for economic development of tribes but also for inner strength of the

tribal communities, which helps them in meeting the new challenges of life. It is an activity, or a series of activities, or a process, which may either improve the immediate living conditions or increase the potential for future living. It is the single most important means by which individuals and society can improve personal-endowments, build capacity levels, overcome barriers, and expand opportunities for a sustained improvement in their well-being. Education is an important parameter for any inclusive growth in an economy.

Literacy and educational attainment are powerful indicators of social and economic development among the backward groups in India. Currently, the tribes lag behind not only the general population but also the Scheduled Caste population in literacy and education. This disparity is even more marked among Scheduled Tribe women, who have the lowest literacy rates in the country. The male-female gap in literacy and educational attainment among the scheduled tribes is significant. Education, especially in its elementary form, is considered of utmost importance to the tribal because it is crucial for total development of tribal communities and is particularly helpful to build confidence among the tribes to deal with outsiders on equal terms.

Despite the sincere and concerted efforts by the government for the overall development of the scheduled tribes, they are still far behind in almost all the standard parameters of development. They are not able to participate in the process of development, as they are not aware of most of the programmes and policies made for their upliftment. This is mainly due to the high incidence of illiteracy and very low level of education among the tribal people. Hence, the educational status of the scheduled tribes and the role of governance in this direction are highly essential. So, education is an important avenue for upgrading the economic and social conditions of the Scheduled Tribes.

Status of Tribal Population in India:

India has total tribal population of 10.43 crores which is 8.6% of total population of India as per 2011 census. The literate tribal population constitutes a majority in the northeaster states of Mizoram and Lakshadweep (94.4%), Meghalaya (86.1%), and Nagaland (86.5%). The states with no Scheduled tribe groups are Punjab, Chandigarh, Haryana, Delhi and Pondicherry. The percentage of literacy of tribes was only 8.54 per cent in 1961 which has increased to 63.1 per cent in 2011. But female literacy of tribes is only 54.4 per cent compared to male literacy of 71.7 per cent. During the post-Independence period, the Indian government implemented legislation and allocated funds to facilitate access to enrolment in primary education in India. As a result, both

literacy rates and gross enrolment ratios of boys and girls across the general population have increased substantially during the past 50 years. Gross enrolment ratio of ST boys is more than ST girls in all classes. The gross enrolment ratio is higher in class I to V which is 137.2 for ST boys and 136.7 for ST girls but it is only 90.7 and 87 in class VI to VIII. It implies that the tribal enrolment declines significantly in higher class. So far as educational problem in tribal is concerned, it is closely related to their cultural practices and economy. The hunter and gatherer tribes wander from one place to another in search of hunting birds and animals as well as the collection of food from the jungle. Shifting cultivators also change the place of residence each year to the purpose of doing shifting cultivation. In this situation, they have to face the problem of non-enrolment in the schools, because permanent settlement is a must for the enrolment in school. Agricultural tribes and Artisan tribes live permanently in the villages. Their children are enrolled in the schools, but they have to face the problem of nonattendance and dropouts due to their poverty and workload during peak agricultural season and the season of collection of some minor forest produce under Government or private contractors. Tribal, working as migrant labour, move from one place to another in search of work. They move with their family. In this situation, they have to face the problem of non-enrolment, non-attendance and dropouts.

Causes of Low Literacy among the Tribal:

The following are the main causes of low literacy among the tribal:

- i. Non-enrolment, non-attendance and dropouts due to cultural practices and migration for work.
- ii. Poverty
- iii. Syllabus not according to tribal area/environment
- iv. Lack of educational institutions in remote tribal areas
- v. Medium of teaching not in tribal languages
- vi. Examination system
- vii. Absence of teachers
- viii. Lack of coordination between parents and teachers
- ix. Time-table of the school not according to workload of the tribals
- x. Lack of Tribal Education Policy
- xi. Holidays not according to tribal economy
- xii. No proper implementation of various schemes of educational development

Means to Remove Low Literacy:

The existence of low literacy can be removed by the following means:

- i. Attempt to rehabilitate the families of hunter, gatherers and shifting cultivator's in permanent villages.
- ii. Establishment of community residential schools in all tribal areas only for the tribal.
- iii. Inclusion of local events and culture in the syllabus,
- iv. Appointment of female teachers of the community.
- v. Teaching in tribal languages.
- vi. Examination in tribal languages.
- vii. Time-table of school according to workload of tribal communities.
- viii. Arrangement of holidays according to tribal economy.
- ix. Arrangement of free accommodation, food, dresses and reading materials.
- x. Proper implementation of different educational development schemes.
- xi. Establishment of non-formal educational institutions.
- xii. Establishment of vocational education institutions.
- xiii. Encouragement of sports in the schools.
- xiv. Encouragement of music and dance by the schools.
- xv. Encouragement of craft making by the schools.
- xvi. Formation of a separate tribal education policy.

Consequences of Illiteracy:

The existence of illiteracy brings the following consequences in tribal society:

- i. Blind faith / belief in superstitions
- ii. No attempt to root out social evils
- iii. Belief in Dain (witch), Spirits
- iv. Poverty
- v. Crime
- vi. Juvenile delinquency
- vii. Exploitation
- viii. Oppression
- ix. Lack of modern occupation
- x. Lack of awareness to their rights

- xi. Victim of different kind of diseases
- xii. Lack of interest in scientific knowledge

Problems of Tribal Education:

There are many critical issues and problems in the field of tribal education. They are as follows:

I. Medium of language –

Language is one of the important constraints of tribal children which prevents them access to education.

II. The Location of the Village –

The physical barriers create a hindrance for the children of a tribal village to attend the school in a neighbouring village.

III. Economic Condition –

The economic condition of tribal people is so poor that they do not desire to spare their children or their labour power and allow them to attend schools.

IV. Attitude of the parents –

As education does not yield any immediate economic return, the tribal parents prefer to engage their children in remunerative employment which supplements the family income.

V. Teacher Related Problems –

In the remote tribal areas, the teacher absenteeism is a regular phenomenon and this affects largely the quality of education.

VI. Lack of Proper Monitoring Proper monitoring is hindered by poor coordination between the Tribal Welfare

Department and School Education Department. Government Policies and Programmes for Tribal Education: After independence, following the provisions of our constitution under Articles 15(4) and 46, our Central as well as State government have established primary, middle and high schools in tribal areas. A number of voluntary organizations have also come forward in tribal area for the purpose of educational development in tribal areas. As a result, the literacy among the tribals has been achieved to some extent, but still far away from the national literacy rate. Again, there is also vast difference in literacy rates of male and female. Starting from the First Five Year Plan Period (1951-1956) the government is steadily allocating financial resources for the purpose of tribal

development. Towards, the end of the plan (1954), 43 Special Multipurpose Tribal Development Projects (MTDPs) was created. During the Third Five Year Plan Period (1961-1966), the government of India adopted the strategy of converting areas with more than 66 per cent tribal concentration into Tribal Development Blocks (TBDs). By the end of Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-1974), the number of TBDs in the country rose to 504. Additionally, in 1972 the Tribal Sub-Plan Strategy (TSP) was implemented by the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare. TSP was based on twin objectives of socio-economic development and protection against exploitation. It was generally implemented in the areas where the Scheduled Tribe population was more than 50 per cent of the total population.

Problems of Tribal Education

Analysis and study of data's clearly underlines that in spite of constitutional guarantees and persistent efforts tribal communities, continue to lag behind the general population in education. The reasons for this can be categorized as external, internal, socioeconomic, and psychological- the external constraints are related to problems and difficulties at levels of policy, planning, implementation and administration. Internal constraints refer to problems associated with the school system, content, curriculum, medium of instruction, pedagogy, academic supervision, monitoring, and teacher related problems. The third set of problems relates to social, economic and cultural background of tribal's and psychological problems of first- generation learners. There are disadvantaged individuals and groups. These deprived sections of the community have to struggle hard for survival and development. Education has been acclaimed as the prime mover of development. It opens the doors to modernization. The development of disadvantaged groups like scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, the minority groups, etc. cannot be achieved simply by formulating welfare schemes for backward classes but it requires a multispectral, multidepartment approach

Suggestions:

Some suggestions for improvement of tribal education are as follows) Literacy campaign – Proper awareness campaign should be organized to create the awareness about the importance of education. Extensive literacy campaign in the tribal dominated districts may be undertaken on a priority basis to literate the tribal.

b) Attitude of the tribal parents –

The attitude of the tribal parents toward education should be improved through proper counseling and guidance.

c) Relevant study materials in local languages –

All study materials should be supplied in local languages of tribes.

d) Appointment of Local teachers and female teachers –

It is suggested to appoint more tribal teachers and female teachers in the tribal areas .The ecological, cultural, psychological characteristics of tribal children should be considered carefully by the teachers in tribal areas.

e) Stipends and various scholarships –

Since higher education among the tribes is less, special ST scholarships should be provided to the tribal students perusing higher education, particularly in medical, engineering, and other vocational streams.

f) Residential schools –

More residential schools should be established in each state and districts and extended up to PG level in tribal areas.

g) Social security Social security of students, especially of adolescent girls is of great concern in residential schools.

h) Proper Monitoring –

Higher level officials should check the functioning of schools frequently relating to the teaching methods, working hours, and attendance registers.

Conclusion:

Education is the key to tribal development. Tribal children have very low levels of participation. Though the development of the tribes is taking place in India, but the pace of development has been rather slow. If govt. will not take some drastic steps for the development of tribal education, the status of education among tribes will be a story of distress, despair and death. Hence time has come to think it seriously about tribal education and inclusive growth. So, there is an urgent need for various govt. interventions, planners and policy makers to address this problem and allocate more funds in the central and state budgets for tribal education. Easy access and more opportunities should be provided to the tribal children in order to bring them to the mainstream of economic development. Easy access and more opportunities should be provided to the tribal children in order to bring them to the mainstream of economic development. Education, especially in its elementary

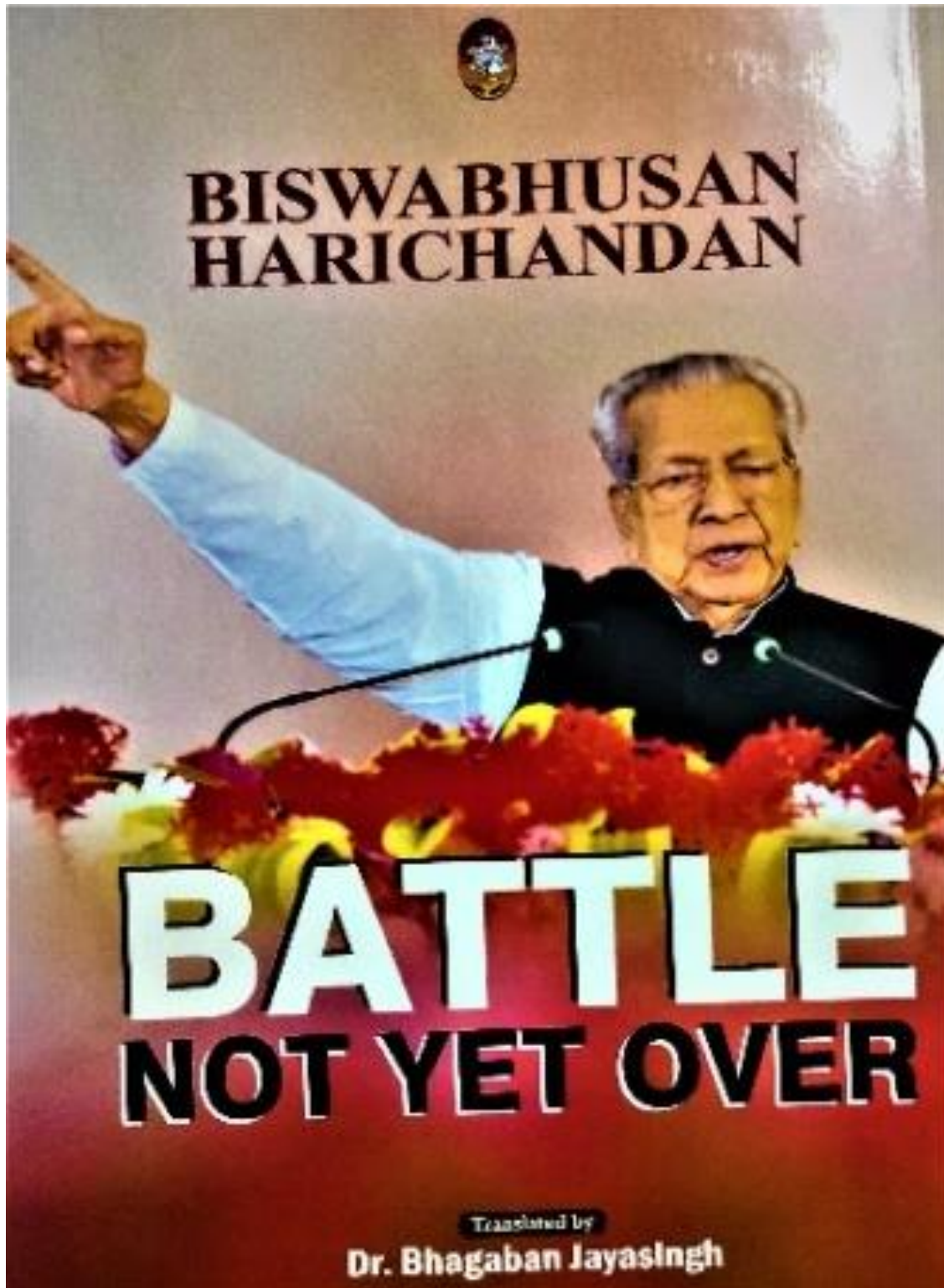
form, is considered of utmost importance to the tribal's because it's crucial for total development of tribal communities and is particularly helpful to build confidence among the tribes to deal with outsiders on equal terms. Despite the sincere and concerted efforts by the government for the overall development of the scheduled tribes, they are still far behind in almost all the standard parameters of development. They are not able to participate in the process of development, as they are not aware of most of the programmes and policies made for their upliftment. The article emphasizes the need for a holistic and sustainable approach to tribal education, one that recognizes and respects the cultural diversity of tribal communities while ensuring access to quality education. It advocates for increased collaboration between government agencies, NGOs, and local communities to bridge the educational gap and empower tribal populations in India.

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Book Review-1



Battle Not Yet Over

Original Writing in Odia: Biswabhusan Harichandan

Translated into English by Dr Bhagaban Jayasingh

The book *Battle Not Yet Over* is an autobiography of Sri Biswabhusan Harichandan, a noted statesperson of Odisha who played a critical role in shaping the politics of Odisha over six decades. Born in the royal family of Ranpur estate of Puri Kshatriya lineage, the author has given a historiography of his contemporary scenario of political conditions, cultural and Ethnic revitalisation of the Paik of Odisha, playing the role of a dramatist, and a column writer. Harichandan has extensive experience of a fond childhood, with an emerging leader within his thoughts and actions, and he completed his school education and experienced his college education at S.C.S. College, Puri. His father, Parashuram Harichandan, was a Gandhian, a freedom fighter and a versatile writer of Odia literature. He was a poet, a dramatist, and a public speaker well-known for his constructive work following Gandhi. He served his region in many capacities as a political leader and was active in politics and creative writing. Biswabhusan, by way of his inherited leadership with a glorious heritage from his family background, showed his leadership skills and shined as a leader for his teachers. As a warrior in spirit, he thought of joining the army, but finally, he joined in law. Cuttack High Court was his workplace, and he was active in cultural activities during his stay in Cuttack. His famous drama, *Maha Sangaramara Maha Nayak*, is based on the first freedom movement of Odisha during the first two decades of the 19th Century and was a landmark in the history of Odia drama tradition.

Sri VishwaBhusan Harichandan, the present governor of Chhattisgarh and former governor of Andhra Pradesh, has a pleasing and dynamic political and career.

The translated book contains one hundred twenty-two articles connected to his early childhood life, school education, college education, studying Law in Cuttack and practice law in Cuttack High Court and joining politics in 1971. After that, his trajectory of political life became a historical account of contemporary political situations. His company with the national politicians and leaders and Odisha's legendary leaders bear the political journey's struggle and success. He was the upright-spoken person of his political ideology and a noncompromising personality for his

commitment to fostering democracy for the people. Representing people's voices and sustaining the trust among the people to maintain his political ideology are the markers of his clean politics.

Viswa Bhusan was born on 3rd August 1934 to a royal family of Banapur principality in the Erstwhile Puri district of Odisha. His father, the Late Sri Parshuram Harichandan, was a literary figure, a dramatist, and a freedom fighter. After Independence, he was the Vice-Chairman of the undivided Puri Zilla Parishad from its beginning till its abolition. Hailing from a family of warriors and freedom fighters' tradition in Odisha, Vishwa Bhusan was greatly influenced by his father and his historical past. Khurda was the last independent fort until 1817 when Boxy Jagabandhu and his lineage fought against British rule and left an indelible mark on the history of freedom in Odisha. As a descendant of a freedom fighter race, Harichandan was a brave and righteous person from his studenthood, and his childhood paved the way for his future leadership.

Sri Vishwa Bhusan Harichandan completed his honours degree in economics from S.C.S. College, Puri and passed out his L.L.B. degree from Madhusudan Law College Cuttack. He married Supriya Harichandan, and his two sons are Pruthwiraj and Prasenjit. Pruthwiraj is now the general secretary of the B.J.P. in Odisha. During his stay in Puri, he actively participated in the State Reorganisation Commission 1956 for a complete Odisha based on Odia language territory. He has given a vivid story of agitation after the killing of Bengani and their role in demanding the Government for state reorganisation, bringing back the Odia-speaking territories into Odisha. However, the Government of India and the Government of Odisha did not allow it to do that.

Shri Viswa Bhusan Harichandan joined as an advocate in the High Court of Odisha in 1962 and became a successful lawyer. His stay in Cuttack with the intellectual and creative people led him to be a dramatist and an author in his recreation life. He is a true patriot of the motherland. After a successful inning in the law profession, he decided to join politics. He joined the Bharatiya Jan Sangh in 1971. Soon, he became a prominent leader in Odisha. Leaders like Hare Krishna Mahatab Biju Patnaik and his contemporary seniors respected his leadership and personality. National Leaders Atal Bihari Bajpayee and Lalkrishna Advani were of high regard to Biswabhusan for his sincerity, clarity in making decisions with logic and analytic vision with transparency. His memories are vividly represented in the episodes of this biography and display the noble leadership

of Harichandan with a moral quest for life in Odisha's cultural, political, and social domain. Allahabad High Court gave a verdict to Indira Gandhi for her malpractice in the election, and that led to a resistance against her in which J.P., Biju Patnaik, Bajpayee and many opposition leaders were involved. Harichandan led the pre-emergency activities in Odisha with Biju Patnaik and others. He was arrested during the Emergency and imprisoned for his active leadership against the ruling party in Cuttack High Court. After returning from jail, Harichandan became a leader of national reputation for his sacrifice, and during the formation of the Janata party, he was the pioneer in Odisha.

Harichandan trajectory of life is full of adventure. He stood up for whoever he met or whatever debate he encountered, and his words remained. As a person with honesty and ethics, he took many steps in the State to provide justice to the people. His brevity and Biju Patnaik are well known. He was fond of Harichandan, but whenever there was a debate, the latter never surrendered and fought with him for the cause of the people.

His association with Jaiprakash Narayan against the corruption and unruliness of the then government led by Indira Gandhi was a landmark in the history of Odisha. Harichandan led the J.P. movement in Odisha. He fought against the threat of democracy in the historic Jaya Prakash Narayan Movement of Sampurna Kranti. He was put in jail during the Emergency for months together. As a chairperson of the High Court Bar Association Action Committee, Shri Harichandan led the Lawyers' agitation in Odisha against the supersession of Judges in the Supreme Court in 1974 and roused public opinion against the dictatorial regimes of the Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then, Prime-Minister. This movement gave birth to a new political ideology in which most non-Congress leaders were united to safeguard the democracy in the country. Harichandan, as a brave and straightforward leader, led the State with the ideas of J.P. and Bajpayee to bring a political and social transformation by promulgating pro-people laws to safeguard the land of tribals and other such groups.

After the 1977 election, the Janata Party came into power, and Harichandan became the minister. He took many commendable steps in Odisha, such as the elimination of corruption in supply, reform in Sahitya Akademi, Navakalebara of Sri Jagannath and reform in temple administration, and

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regeneration of Martial Tradition in Odisha, land ownership of the State and many more. His joining the Bharatiya Janata party aligned with Atal Bihari Bajpayee and Lal Krishna Advani led Odisha to set up B.J.P. in Odisha under his presidency. Meanwhile, he was sabotaged by Janata Dal, for which he again joined the B.J.P., pursued by Advani. He continued B.J.P. to strengthen the party.

The BJD and B.J.P. coalition government was formed, but Harichandan was firm in his commitment and was equally upright in an issue arising by the cabinet or the Chief Minister. He had never compromised with the rule of law. He pleaded for the State and people's justice for any work against the people's interest or the law. Many such anecdotes and legends of Harichandan in this autobiography interest a reader in distinguishing Harichandan from the rest of the colourless leaders without having any reflective actions.

The episodes like the super cyclone, Adivasi land rights, single window system in land matters, Kalinga Nagar shutout, Koshal movement, opposition to POSCO and Vedanta, rehabilitation and resettlement, rural development plan, Kondhmal riot, loss of Ratna Bhandari key of Jagannath temple, Paik rebellion, including many fields related issues. His most important decision as the revenue and law minister was to oppose the Chief Minister, who believed that land belonged to the State and the government was an elected trustee for five years. It is responsible for safeguarding the state-landed property, and the Government cannot sell it to any private body.

Shri Harichandan, a stalwart in Odisha politics, was elected to the State Assembly of Odisha five times viz. 1977, 1990, 1996, 2000 and 2004. He won the 2000 assembly election by a margin of 95,000 votes against his nearest rival, breaking all the previous records in Odisha.

Shri Harichandan was Minister in Odisha Government four times viz. 1977, 1990, 2000, 2004 and continued as such till 2009. During his Ministerial tenure, he managed essential portfolios like Revenue, Law, Rural Development, Industries, Food and Civil Supplies, Labour and Employment, Housing, Cultural Affairs, Fisheries and Animal Resources Development Departments. He was the founder and President of the Bharatiya Janata Party in Odisha in 1980 and was elected President for another three terms till 1988. He was also the leader of the B.J.P. Legislature Party in the State

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Assembly for 13 years, i.e., from 1996 to 2009. He played a very prominent role in the Government, for which he remained in the public's gaze. He always fights for the people's cause, for which he is highly respected by the people, Administrators, and politicians, irrespective of their party affiliations.

During his tenure as a cabinet minister in 1977, the essential commodities, which were scarce during the Emergency, were freely made available at economical prices, and the price line was steadily maintained. His stringent actions against the black marketers and hoarders made him extremely popular in Odisha.

As Revenue Minister, he emphasized the computerization of land records, simplification, and codification of revenue laws for convenience of administration. He took bold steps to restore Adivasi land, which was illegally and fraudulently transferred, by amending Regulation 2 of 1956 and making it more stringent. He also reorganized the revenue administration by making it more pro-people.

As Industry Minister, he took the initiative to introduce a single window system and got the Industry Facilitation Act passed. The much sought R.R. Policy of the State, which brought a revolutionary change in the field of Rehabilitation and resettlement of displaced persons, was the brainchild of Sri Harichandan, who, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Cabinet Sub-Committee, gave it final shape, which was then, the best R.R. Policy of the Country.

The most critical role Harichandan played as the Law Minister in Odisha was to safeguard the land of the poor people of Odisha which was Due to his stiff opposition; the State was saved from selling away all the surplus government land for repayment of the Government's loans for which the State Cabinet had already decided while he was absent from the headquarter. He said that the State owns the land, not the Government, which has limited powers like Trustees. He vehemently opposed the sale of the surplus govt. Lands and was able to get the decision changed.

His constant endeavour since 1978 helped essentially in giving National recognition to 'Paik Bidroh of 1817', the historic war for freedom by the Oriyas under the outstanding Leadership of

Buxi Jagabandhu against the British regime by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri—Narendra Modiji, who directed its bicentenary celebration in the National level.

Shri Harichandan is an ardent democrat who fights against corruption and for human rights, democracy, democratic values, and citizens' rights, especially those of oppressed people.

Shri Harichandan is a reputed columnist who has authored several articles on contemporary political issues and historical, social, and cultural matters, published in all leading Odisha newspapers and some Delhi English weeklies.

His literary contributions are “Maha Sangramar Mahanayak”, a drama on Buxi Jagabandhu, the supreme Commander of the Paik Revolution of 1817, six one-act plays Marubhatash, Rana Pratap, Shesh Jhalak, On Maharani Padmini of Mebar, Asta Sikha, On Tapang Dalberg's heroic war & sacrifice, Manasi, (social) and Abhisapta Karna (mythological), Swachcha Sasanara Gahana Katha, an anthology of his 26 short stories and “Ye Matira Daka” a compilation of some of his selected published articles, "Sangram sari nahin", his autobiography, which has focussed on his struggles in political, administrative, social, cultural & other fields during his long public life.

As a senior contemporary to Sri AtalBihari Bajpayee and Sri Lal Krishna Advani, Sri Hari Chandan is a seasoned politician with brilliant knowledge of law and governance, constitutional provision, and socio-cultural understanding. As a critic and Creative writer, he has pointed out the social, political and governance disorder and has tried to fight the injustice. As a frank and just man, he has never compromised with the law and the unruly against the State. For him, good governance rests on the capabilities of the politicians. He is a voracious reader with diverse knowledge of literature, history, political theories, social history, and ecological understanding. Sri Harichandan, thus, represents three generations of Indian politics in which he guides the younger and respects the elders irrespective of political affiliations.

As a true lover of democratic ideology, Sri Harichandan has always been an ideal model for the forthcoming generations of this country. His passion for Chhattisgarh stems from the Savari Narayan temple, where Jagannath is worshipped in the bank of Mahanadi, and he believes that the

Aryan culture and religion has flowed through upper Mahanadi valley to Odisha, forging a culturalunity between Chhattisgarh and Odisha.

The book *BattleNot Yet Over* is a masterpiece of a person with heritage, politics, leadership, literature, creativity, and sportsmanship.His personality, knowledge,experience, and compassion for people with a solid commitment to a democratic value in politics and the social sphere can be witnessed in this book. Given the opportunity, Harichandan could have been a successful Chief Minister of Odisha, but the turning point in politics is flexible on time; it turns upside down or vice versa. As the Governor of Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, he has playeda diplomatic role in politics and is a compassionate person to safeguard the public interest.

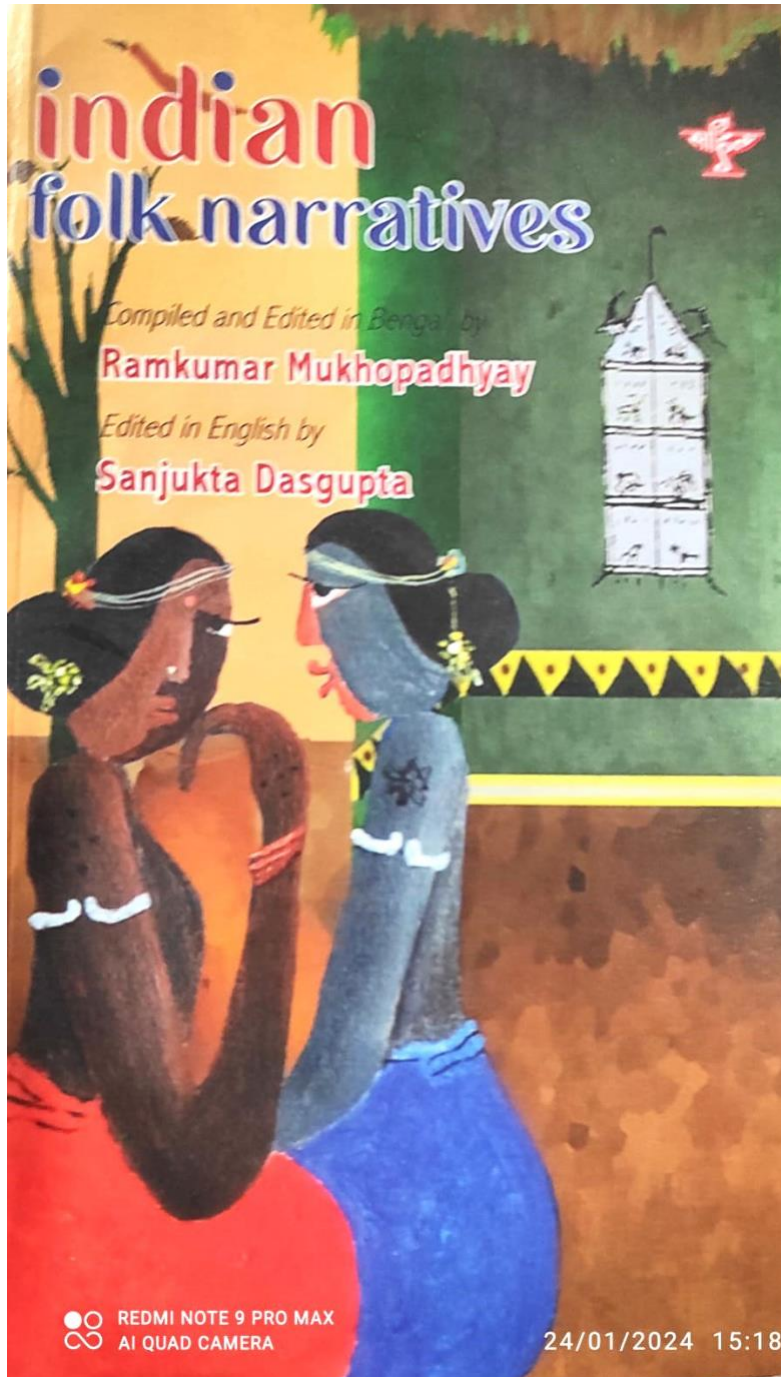
The translator has tried translating the text written in Odia in the first person, which must be more comprehensive and lucid. The translator tried translating the Odia text into English, keeping the coherence and cohesion. As it is said that translation from one language to another is a creation of equivalence and not original, the piece of the translated work can be enjoyed with the equivalence of Odia text originally composed by Harichandan. This book will be substantially valuable for scholars to study Odisha's socio-political and cultural history and movement since it is a historical account of a politician who made history during his time.

Reviewed by Dr Mahendra Kumar Mishra

Chief Editor: Lokaratna

Book Review -2

Indian Folk Narratives



Oral Tales from 53 Languages

Compiled and edited in Bangla by Ramkumar Mukhopadhyay

Edited in English by Sanjukta Dasgupta

Publisher : Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi

First Published 2022

The original compilation of this volume before translated into English language was entitled *Bharatjoda Kathan Katha* written in Bangla. The compilation is comprised Indian oral narrative tradition consisting of one hundred thirty stories in fifty-three languages collected from both written and oral sources. The Editor has compiled these stories and translated into Bangla which was translated into English in a workshop and finalised. The Director of this translation project was Dr Sanjukta Dasgupta, a meticulous writer to make this project successful. A Translation workshop was organised in which 130 stories were translated. Sri Ramkumar Mukhopadhyay along with Sanjukta Dasgupta and the translation team meticulous in translating the meaning of the texts to maintain the equivalence of folktales in English. In the introduction to this book Sanjukta Dasgupta defined the objective of the compilation and translation of Folk Narrative of India for wider readership. She also has discussed on historical over view of oral tradition research in India quoting Tagore, Ruth Finnegan, Ramanujan, and others. She has emphasized the importance of documenting these folk narratives for a representation of subaltern oral literature globally to realize otherrealities of Indian literature embedded in the oral society of India. She has discussed about the community transmission of oral narratives and its socio-cultural functions to witness the wisdom, values and social ethics of the community narrated by the Story tellers. She asserts that the marginalised literature is game changer in the field of literary studies, studying its text, context to explore the aesthetics, semiotics and stylistics. Oral Tradition is the marker of communicative competence where speech act, speech situation and speech events are occurred. However, this is best possible in the context of narration between the storytellers and the audience. This book is the documented folk narratives for reading and enjoying it.

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The collection is a major breakthrough in the history of Indian literature, especially folk narratives, after the seminal book *Folktales from India* edited by Ak Ramanujan. The purpose is quite clear: to recognise the unheard voices and make use of these narratives in multiple contexts.

The languages folk narratives the editor has included are :Ao,

Adi,Andamanese,Bhil,Bhojpuri,Bodo,Dinsha,Dogri,Garhwali,Gond,Haryani,Lepcha,Maithili,Pal i,Rajbanshi,Rupini, including 24 scheduled languages excluding English.

In her introduction Sanjukta Dasgupta has given a critical analysis of the written and oral tradition of India complementing each other. She had discussed the commonality of motifs. She referred Ramanujan and established that oral narratives contain the nuances of Indian oral society and without the collective expressive tradition of India, written tradition is incomplete. In fact, most of the written epics and myths of India are derived from the oral tradition and have enriched Indian literature. Because of the oral tale are unwritten, these were neglected and written language dominated the oral embedded in collective unconscious.

Sri Ram Kumar Mukhopadhyay originally collected these 130 stories from 53 languages of India selecting from thousands of oral and written narratives. He has made an excellent statement on Indian literature. He said mentioning Indian folk narrative that its relationship with modern Indian literature almost nonexistent. The writers question the authenticity of the ancient oral tradition, but they forget that the rich repository of knowledge that reflects in the socio-cultural and linguistic repertoire are missing from the modern literature. These artificial boundaries are the hurdles in understanding Indian literature. A nation cannot stand without the ancient tradition since literature and culture is a base for the modern tradition. Oral Tradition is a trend, a movement and a perpetuation of the oral knowledge from past to present like a river. So, there is no such thing called ancient in oral tradition. If this is true, then we also have to believe that Sanskrit literary tradition is also equally nonexistent for the modern writers. Any cultural and literary tradition existed in a society cannot be altogether forgotten since there is a cultural continuity of literature in oral and written. Ramanujan has interpreted Indian literature in the orbit of oral written and oral. However, Mukhopadhyay has made a valid question by raising the modern writers' concept of oral narratives in India, and how they are not into this genre.

The themes of Oral Narratives in this volume signifies the basic nature of Indian literature. The collected narratives do have temporal context in case for Buddhism and Hinduism , but many narratives don't have time and space and are purely context free, but the concept of literature is not linear in Indian literature, rather the theme is important than the space and time.

The themes of the oral narratives discussed in the introduction part of this book portrays the nature of narratives found in India. These narratives cut across the socio cultural , psychological, ethnic, human philosophy , nature, social ethics, wit, love, hate, power structure, and human questions on meaning of life and death. Some valuable questions need a serious thought and wit to understand then narratives in release from the work and enjoy happiness, power in social structure, crime , and such other themes are highly relevant in human experience. The diverse cultural themes in narratives contains the classic value, ethics, nature of human life and resolve the questions of life.

The book is a rich repository of folk narratives with varied human experience. The beauty of the narratives lies in its ethnic characteristics. Here the regional or ethnic tales have their North East and the tribal stories of middle India and stories from different regional languages have the local and regional flavour , and portrays the diversity of cultural expressions of India.

The stories of North East are close to the nature and spirit in relation to human existence. In fact, the elites of north east have also contributed to modern literature, but equally have the spirit of understanding and preserving their oral narratives. The Ao story of a tree spirit falling in love with a girl , and marriage in the land of the dead, the Andamanese tales the son of the earth , the Adi tale the gift of the corn seeds ,Bhilli myth the origin of the gods, the Bongcher Brother bird, and the story of horn bill, the Chakma story of Jhum cultivation, the Gold story Mahadev and the jackal, the tiny black bird, the khasi tale the birth of pan supari and tobacco, , The Kokborok story the tiger and the fox, the Lepcha tale, A paradise on earth, and the frog and the rain, Missing story the tussle between the a dog and a boar, and the tribal stories from Santali, Rupini Mizo, Mog stories are full of an integrated worldview of a world that is different from the modern world. These stories bear the symbiotic relation between the birds, animals, trees and fruits and flowers and human, animate and inanimate who believe the co-existence of nature and

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human with the blessings of spirit .The stories from the languages like Bangla, Marathi, Gujarati, Maithili, Kannada, Tamil , Telugu , Odia, Malayalam, Hindi, Kannada, Assemese, and Sanskrit are related mostly to the human individual and their relation, social events of families and societies, and some divine stories from Dravidian and Aryan Stock retold in local setting where the themes are town, capital, king , queen princes, minister, pundits, and thief's, cultivators representing an urban and agricultural societies. Stories related to society and family are also found mostly in regional languages.

The tales type and categories are varied, and it was a difficult task for Ramkumar Mukhopadhyay to collect, edit ,classify and arrange the stories .Though it is arranged alphabetically , the themes are broadly from forest, universe, environment, trees, rivers, and mountains, villages, society, family, town, capital, and tribal areas. Thus, the Indian folk narratives not only contain the multidimensional aspects of Indian narratives, but also to the multicultural and diverse cultural mosaic of Indian folk tradition.

This book is essential to explore the Indian knowledge system through the oral tradition available in multilingual and multicultural setting. The folk narratives in different languages are performed in living tradition. This compilation will also connect the researchers to conduct studies in cultural psychology, anthropology, social history , folklore , linguistic study and literary studies. The stories are also helpful in understanding the Eco literacy and cultural bio diversity which is a topic for future literary studies. The narratives not only introduce the modern readers with the world of fantasy and imagination from which they can get imaginary reality. Some narratives are the marker of ethnic and regional, and national identity, and some narratives are used for narrative therapy, Some for-discourse analysis and some for cultural revitalisation. Thus , these stories will reveal the unseen voices of India which has been perpetuated in the collective mind of the singers, story tellers and many people of India who form an unwritten society , but are vibrant with their voices in a living tradition.

It is hoped that the readers will enjoy this book and explore the collective memory and consciousness of Indian mind to the extent that people can understand that life is neither past or present, but life is like a flowing river, to serve the universe with its water.

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Folk Narratives are also like a flowing river which changes its route and keep the roots in its expressive movements.

Mahendra Kumar Mishra