

FINAL REPORT

Safeguarding the intangible culture of “Kandha” tribes in the district Kalahandi

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Introduction:

Tribal Society: Meaning;

According to Oxford Dictionary "A tribe is a group of people in a primitive or barbarous stage of development acknowledging the authority of a chief and usually regarding them-selves as having a common ancestor. D.N Majumdar defines tribe as a social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous with no specialization of functions ruled by tribal officers hereditary or otherwise, united in language or dialect recognizing social distance with other tribes or castes According to Ralph Linton tribe is a group of bands occupying a contiguous territory or territories and having a feeling of unity deriving from numerous similarities in a culture, frequent contacts and a certain community of interests.

L.M Lewis believes that tribal societies are small in scale are restricted in the spatial and temporal range of their social, legal and political relations and possess a morality, a religion and world view of corresponding dimensions. Characteristically too tribal languages are unwritten and hence the extent of communication both in time and space is inevitably narrow. At the same time tribal societies exhibit a remarkable economy of design and have a compactness and self-sufficiency lacking in modern society.

Characteristics of Indian Tribes:

- Kinship as an instrument of social bonds.
- A lack of hierarchy among men and groups.

- Absence of strong, complex, formal organization.
- Communitarian basis of land holding. Segmentary character.
- Little value on surplus accumulation on the use of capital and on market trading.
- Lack of distinction between form and substance of religion
- A distinct psychological bent for enjoying life.

Geographical location of tribes:

Tribals in India originate from five language families, i.e. Andamanese, Austro-Asiatic, Dravidian, and Tibeto-Burman. It is also important to

point out that those tribals who belong to different language families live in distinct geographic settings. For example, in South Orissa there are languages that originate from the Central Dravidian family, Austro-Asiatic (Munda) family and the Indo-Aryan. In the Jharkhand area, languages are from the Indo-Aryan, North Dravidian and Austro-Asiatic. Tribals in India live in the following five territories.

1. The Himalayan belt: (Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, hills of Uttar Pradesh and Himachar Pradesh)
2. Central India: Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa, and Madhya Pradesh. 55% of the total tribal population of India lives in this belt.
3. Western India: Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Goa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli.
4. The Dravidian region: Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
5. Andaman, Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands.

Tribal Culture:

Orissa occupies a unique position in the ethnographic map of India for having the largest variety of tribal communities. Although they are found in all the districts of the State, yet more than half of their total strength are found in the districts of Koraput, Rayagada, Naurangpur, Malkangiri, Kalahandi, Nauapara, Kandhamal, Baudh, Keonjhar, Sundargarh and Mayurbhanj.

The tribes of Orissa are at various stages of socio-economic development. At one extreme are the groups, which lead a relatively secluded and archaic mode of life keeping their core culture intact; while at the other extreme there are communities, which are indistinguishable from the general agricultural communities.

Any society - tribal or otherwise, comprises of organized groups of people who have learnt to live and work together interacting in the pursuit of common goals. Each society has its own rules of business and tricks of trade, which helps its people to define their relationship with one another and live and work together. Therefore a society is a going concern and functions and perpetuates itself on the basis of the rules for living together.

The tribal people express their cultural identity and distinctiveness in their social organization, language, rituals and festivals and also in their dress, ornament, art and craft. They have retained their own way of managing internal affairs of the village mainly through two institutions namely, the village council and the youth dormitory. The dormitory is the core of tribal culture and it reinforces the age-old traditions. In Orissa this institution occurs among many tribal communities in some form or other. The Juangs call it Majang and Darbar, the Kondhs call it Dindaghar, the Bhuyans call it Dhangarabasa and among the Bondos it goes by the name Ingersin. Of all the tribes the dormitory system is well organized among the Juang. Conspicuous in the village, the Mandaghar is the largest hut. It has wall on three

sides and is open in front. The wooden parts and side walls are earned with decorative symbols depicting animals. The boys hang their changu, a flat tambourine like drum, which is used at the time of dancing. In front of the Mandaghar is the small open space where dance takes place almost every night after the day's work is over. The dormitory is so to say a school of dancing and expression of the communal art of the people. The elders of the village assemble at the dormitory house every day for every important event in their corporate life. Here they discuss matters concerning the welfare of the village, settle the distribution of swidden and fix date and time for celebration of the village festivals, etc. In these respects the dormitory may be considered as the centre of social, economic and religious life of the village.

The amazing conglomeration of traditions, beliefs, sorrows and philosophies that together constitute and vitalize the rituals and festivals of the tribes, has descended from antiquity and has been preserved unimpaired to the present day. Every facet of their life covering round-the-year activities is intimately connected with religious beliefs and ritual practices. It is these aspects of their culture that give meaning and depth to their lives, and solidarity to their social structure.

The tribes believe that their life and work are controlled by supernatural beings whose abode is around them in hills, forests, rivers and houses. It is very difficult to standardize the Gods and spirits as their composition continually changes when old ones are forgotten with the introduction of new ones. Their Gods differ from one another in composition, function, character and nature. Some are benevolent; some are neutral and some are malevolent. The malevolent spirits and Gods are cared more than their benevolent counter parts as they can bring misery.

Manipulation of environment being the main concern of the tribal, all the ritual acts are directed towards stimulating natural processes. Illness or misfortune is attributed to displeasure and malicious act of the Gods or ancestors. The sacrifice of different kinds of livestock accompanied by all the rites and ceremonials of

fetishism is considered appropriate appeasement. Moreover, their extremely superstitious nature prohibits the undertaking of any enterprise unless the Gods are first appeased and the omens, after being carefully considered, are adjudged to be propitious.

Among the tribes there are religious functionaries who cater to their spiritual needs. For example, the hierarchy of priests among the Saoras may be divided into three categories. The Buyya is a priest who presides at agricultural festivals and offers sacrifices that especially characterize these occasions. The Kudan is a shaman who combines the functions of priest, prophet and medicine-man. The sacerdotal head among the Juang is called Nagam or Buita, Pujari or Sisa among the Bondos and Jani among the Kondhs. The post of these officials are mostly ascribed but not achieved.

The ceremonies and festivals of the tribes can be classified into two groups, that is, those that relate to the individual families and those that relate to the village as a whole. The ceremonies and rites relating to birth of a child, marriage, death are observed family-wise whereas those relating to various agricultural cycle, eating of new fruits, hunting, etc. are observed by the village community.

Some of the important festivals observed by the tribal communities of Orissa include Guar ceremony of the Saora, Gotar of the Gadaba, push Punei of the Juang, Kedu of the Kondh, Karam festival of the Oraon, Chait Parab of the Bondo and Magha Parab of the Santal. With the advent of time, traces of borrowing from Hindu Pantheon and religious ceremonies are noticed among the tribes of Orissa. They have started worshipping Siva, Parbati and Lord Jagannath. Hindu festivals like Raja, Laxmipuja, Dasahara and Gamha are also becoming popular among them day by day.

The tribes of Orissa, despite their poverty and their pre-occupation with the continual battle for survival, have retained the rich and varied heritage of colorful dance and music forming integral part of their festivals and rituals. Among them, the dance and music is developed and maintained by themselves in a tradition without aid and intervention of any professional dancer or teacher. It is mainly through the songs and dances the tribes seek to satisfy their inner urge for revealing their soul. The performance of these only give expression to their inner feelings, their joys and sorrows, their natural affections and passion and their appreciation of beauty in nature and in man.

Although the pattern of dance and music prevalent among them vary from tribe to tribe yet there are certain features common to all. Tribal dances have some accompaniments by means of which the rhythm is maintained. This consists of clapping of hands or beating of drums or an orchestra of different instruments. Every dance is accompanied by a song, which is sung by the performers. Men and women, young and old dance and invariably sing but the accompanying orchestra or music is usually provided by the male members. Tribal dance is characterized not only by its originality and spontaneity but also for its wide range of movements. Many parts of the body such as head, back, arms, feet, finger, etc. are brought into play. Some of the tribal groups put on colorful dancing costume during their performance. Like dance, the songs sung by different tribal groups differ from one tribe to the other. Among the tribes everyone is a musician and poet. When happily inspired, they can coin a song then and there and sing it. Like any others, when they see things of beauty and meet pleasantly, they exhibit this pleasure and happiness by composing songs.

One finds in these songs humors, jokes, romance, satires, criticisms, acquisitions and anger. Though there is no modernity and fineness, their ideas being natural, the compositions are good, inspiring and melodious. On the occasion of performing Pujas and observance of festivals the songs sung are different. Such songs are adopted from the past so many years. These songs describe the history of gods, the process of creation and some epic stories.

The joy of free life finds expression in tribal art and craft. It is through this endeavor their cultural self-image and aesthetic sensibilities are visualized. The artistic skill of the tribal people is not only manifested in their dance and music but also in their dress and ornaments, wall paintings, woodcarvings and decorations, etc. The beautiful wall-paintings and floral designs of the Santals and the ikons of the Saoras which depict geometric designs and stylistic figures of plants and animals are the best example of tribal art. The multicolored designs and relief figures of animals and human beings which decorate the walls of Mandaghar in Juang society are indeed works of very high order. Similar wall paintings and decorations as observed among the Mundari group of tribals are also very attractive.

Numerically, the second most important Scheduled tribe of Kalahandi is the Khond, Kond or Kandha. They are found everywhere in the district and have three main divisions, viz., Kutia, Dangaria and Desia. The Kutia Kandha lives in a house, the floor of which is below the level of the ground around the house. The Dangaria Kandhas are known as Malia Kandhas. They live in high land hills. The Desia Kandhas live in the plain area with other non-tribals. Kui is the mother tongue of the Kandhas but they know Oriya and speak with others in this language. The Kandhas are generally dark in complexion, though, among them, some fair skinned persons are also found. An average male Kandha is about 5 feet 4 inches

in height. They are slim but muscular. The females are slim too, but shorter in stature. The Kandhas are generally simple in nature, innocent, truthful and credulous. The common surnames of Kandhas are Pradhan, Mallick, Konhar, Majhi and those who worship deities have surnames like Dehury, Jhankar, Jani etc. The Kondhs form numerically the largest group among the 62 tribes of Orissa. Customarily they were once famous for their brutal acts of human sacrifice (Maria sacrifice) to achieve the end products of bumper crops and killing of infants for better yield of turmeric. There are various sections among the Kondhs. Racially the Kondhs relate more closely to the proto-Austroloid stock with considerable Mongoloid admixture. They are divided into two logistic groups, Kui and Kuvi. The Kandhas have their loyalty to their erstwhile feudatory chiefs in Orissa and elsewhere. They are treated as valiant warriors and discharged their services very faithfully to their rulers. They offered their valuable services at the time of freedom movement. To name a few among them are Chakara Bisoyi and Dohra Bisoyi. Their behaviour is pleasant and they are extremely hospitable to guests, giving protection to enemies if they take refuge. They are generally kind and cheerful and are lovers of recreation.

The culture of any community is closely associated and assimilated with its history since time immemorial. Further the existence of culture is the base of history. Therefore, the craze to know the way of life of any community requires study and analysis of cultural history of that tribe deeply. If one thinks of cultural history of primitive tribes one must turn towards South Odisha, the hub of tribals. So, this Kalahandi region, the domain of tribals has become centre of study and research. Although the tribal population in Odisha has around 25%; their contribution in the

development process of the state is outstanding. Their tradition and culture is broad and uncommon. And the cultural history of tribals of this undivided Kalahandi have special importance all over India.

The anthropologist study gives an account that there are 62 types of tribes in Odisha. They all live in the above district although their number is so small. As far as the population of a tribe is concerned the Bhumia, Bhatra, Gond, Koya, Paraja, Kondh constitute above one lakh each, while other 26 tribes population is around 1000. They have their culture of own which is linked to their ambiance and language. Literarily the definition of their culture is so broad that we appreciate and accept every aspect of their life style which is associated with culture. Let us have a glance at their culture from different perspective such as social and religious milieu, village system, folk literature, dance and song, fairs and festivals, way of life and folk art.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this paper are

1. To Safe guide the Intangible Culture of Kandha Tribe in the district Kalahandi.
2. To identify the normal practices, and practical problems of the Kandha tribe people of Kalahandi.
3. To identify the Changes at their Culture & Tradition (Dance, Song, Language, Literature & Folklore etc.) in modern days.
4. To identify the Local and their own resources, and plane for the livelihood Sustainability at their own place.
5. To identify the effect of modernization in the Culture of kandha tribe in the district Kalahandi

6. To outline conclusions based on the findings of the study and to put forward some suggestions in the context of quality assessment.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Indian tribal society is a unique society with diversity of nature and people. In our country, known for the extreme poverty of the masses, the Kandhas constitute the core of the poor. Poverty, poor health and sanitation, illiteracy, invasion of outsiders on tribal culture and other social problems among the Kandhas are exerting a dragging effect on the Indian economy. The Five Year Plans formulated the implementation of a series of investment-backed schemes and projects for the betterment of the conditions of the Kandhas living in the rural and urban areas. Many of the tribes with their forest-dwelling culture do not have the motivation or the skill of settled cultivation. As a result, their land has been alienated to their better endowed tribal neighbours or non-Kandhas.

The outsiders have entered into tribal vicinity and polluted the sanctity of tribal culture, threatened their socio-economic standard and other aspects of life. When the government is trying to assimilate the tribal people with the mainstream, the tribal people fail to accommodate the speed of development and they react and revolt the process of change. There have been many tribal studies in India based on tribal economy, land alienation, socio-economic development, tribal culture etc. It is highly imperative to have a look at these tribal studies by various Anthropologists, Research scholars, etc.

Since tribal people are at different social, political, economic and ecological levels, their problems also differ in degree from each other. These differences can be seen in terms of hill tribes and plainsmen; between those who are engaged in forest-based economic pursuits and the ones who are employed as settled agriculturists; or between those who are Hinduised or converted to Christianity; and those who are adhering to an unadulterated tribal way of life.

Socio-cultural Life of the Tribals :

Normally the primitive tribes express the cultural identity through their custom, tradition, festivals, dress and ornaments. A certain name is coined especially for the identity of a tribe especially Kandha One can have a clear view from this name. Every tribe has a certain place of origin and its spreading they have their own oral and written language for interaction of each other. The matrimonial alliance of a tribe is arranged in its own community as they oppose inter community marriage. Each tribe has its own social bond, administration, tradition and judicial system. All these play a key role in maintaining law, youth dormitory, worship and enchanting, economic policy, collection of food, hunting, shifting agriculture, and handicraft and so on for their lively subsistence. Indeed all these things are a case study of cultural history of tribes for the new generation of writer.

Salient Features of Tribal Socio-Cultural Life :

1. They live in relative isolation usually in hills and forests in interior area.
2. Their social identity is defined and redefined from time to time.
3. They constitute simple societies which are socio-culturally homogeneous.
4. They have their written and oral language or dialect for communication.
5. A particular tribal community is endogamous and is divided into a number of exogamous divisions.

6. They have low access to education and health care services.
7. They possess their own socio-cultural history which may be shallow and un-written.
8. They have their rich cultural tradition and heritage although their social organization is simple.

A. Life Style of Kandhas : I meet Smt. Butki Budi , of Perumanji village, Th. Rampur, Age about 78 year she is a house wife and belongs to Kandha community, she share their life style with us.



Food: Generally three principal meals taken by the Kandhas , one in the morning at about 7 am then at about mid-day between 12noon to 1pm and lastly in the evening at about 7 to 7.30 pm. The maser food taken by the

Kandhas are such as;

Cereals: Paddy, millets, Kueri,Janha,Kathia and maize.

Pulses: Greengram, Blackgram, horsegram,Kandul,Jhudung,and Cutting.

Vegetables: Brinjal, Pumpkin,Cabbage,bean, Field bean, green Banana, Papaya, tomato,potato, onion, cauly flower ,chilly etc

Green Leaves: Kaapa Kusa, Munga Sag, Bhaji Sag etc.(Collected by the Forest)

Drinks: Liquor is the most



essential for the Socio-Cultural and Religious Ceremonies, mostly they used Mahuli and Salap as there drinks

Narcotics: Topari(Pika), and Bidi are the main narcotice of Kandha people, the raw tobacco rolled in a Sal of Kendu leaf is known as Topari.

Dress and Ornaments

In the recent past,the male member dress the upper portion of the body was left bare but in cold season they were covering it with Chhadar, the male were using a



head gear known as Kapda Gaspa with long hear.

The female are cover from the lower portion of the waist to the upper portion of the knee by a cloth which is known as Retang(Shari), the front

portion of the body is covered by Uromi which is hangs from the neck upto the abdomen. The lower portion of Uromi is tied by a cotton string worn round the waist. The girls from 5 to 9 years of age wear only Topa and upper portion of the body remains naked.

Ornaments: the Kandha were wearing in different part of the Body

Head:

1. Sireni-(Made out of Plastic and wood)
2. Vinanga-(Made out of Iron or Alluminium)
3. Jhaptang- Iron Hair Clip
4. Talmotang- Leaf ball used inside hair knot
5. Beni- made out of local grass worn on the forehead.

Ear:

1. Kiu kichadaka- made out of aluminium or iron , worn on the upper portion of the ear.
2. Olanga- made out of aluminium, silver/gold and worn on ear lobe.

Neck:

1. Saska- beads neckless
2. Kagdanga- brass or iron ring
3. Lebu sikding-glass beads.

Arm:

1. Baatanga(Bahuti)- made out of aluminium or Silver.

Wrist:

1. Muapajanga- made out of brass
2. Paola- made out of aluminium or Silver
3. Sadang- Glass Bangles.

Finger: (1) Kaju mudinga-made out of aluminium or iron or brass

Waist:

1. Japi Saska-beads
2. Tedi Sikidinga- waist band made out of aluminium
3. Toderi-waist band made out of aluminium

Ankle: Koda Baning-made of brass/aluminium

Toes: Kalu Mudinga-made of brass aluminium

Tattooing (Bana):

The Kandha female tattoo on their body. They do not believe in any reason or superstition for tattooing, they do it only for beautification. The tattooing(Bana) is done only on the face and arms of the female. The unmarried girls tattoo

three sport on the both side of the upper cheeks, some female tattoo on the both the arms, the Kandha male do not tattoo.

B. Traditional Village Council: I meet Sri Kuja Majhi from Kalingpadar village , he is a Naiko of his village, age about 70 years, he narrate me about the traditional village council of Kandha Society.

The village council is considered to be the cultural centre of tribal village. It

comprises various posts and their duties to perform.

The head of the village council is the head of the village. The head of a village is normally selected



as per seniority and talent. His commitment, love and affection towards villagers are also taken into consideration for selection as head. Almost all the tribe calls the head as “NAIKO”. Assistance is chosen to help the head is called as “CHALLAN”. The duty of convening a meeting is rested on the shoulder of “BARIK”. The priest of the village is regarded as “DEHURI”. Apart from that the posts of the council of village of all the tribe is different from each other. For example the head of the Koya village is “WARDE”, the Paraja’s the “MUDULI”, and the Sauras’s the “GOMANGO” and so on. The religious head of the Kondh community is the “JANI” who is assisted by “BIS-MAJHI” during the time of meeting. These are the aspects which are the main source of cultural wave of tribes that provide alot of account regarding their culture.

C. Youth Dormitories: I meet Sri Khakhri Parabhoi from Musanal Village of Lanjigarh Block, he is a Naiko of his village, age about 65 years, he narrate me about the Youth Dormitories (Dhanga,Dhangdi Basa) of Kandha Society.

The youth dormitories (Dhanga, Dhangdi Basa) play a major role for keeping the



tribal culture and tradition afloat. And most of the tribe has such institution for unmarried youths. The boys and the girls spend nights there in separate room in the dormitories.

An open space is there

opposite to the dormitory which is meant for practising dance. It would not be wrong to say it as school for improvement of dance. This dormitory has another importance particularly choosing of life partner by the youth. It is indeed a democratic institution for promotion and carrying culture of tribes and we have to recognize the role of dormitory in this regard is uncommon.

D. Ceremony of Kandhas : I meet Sri Murti Mahji from Karlapat village , he is a farmer and he is a Kandha , age about 70 years, he narrate me about the Ceremony and Festival of Kandha Society.

Ceremonies are inseparable part of the way of life of tribals. There are two types of ceremony so far as the observation at family level and community level is concerned. The family level ceremonies mainly include Newly Born Babies, Marriage and Death. These ceremonies have specific custom and convention, for instance the Naming Ceremony of the newly born baby which is taken place on 21st day after birth. There is also provision of prayer and worship to the forefather for blessings. This ceremony also includes the drawing of “Muruja’ and “Jhoti” in tantric design. Similarly during the time of death rites there is also the rule of drawing tantric design and offering of non steam rice, wine, cocks etc. for pleasing the spirits of the deads. These ceremonies are conducted in the presence and guidance of Jani, Sisa and Gurumai.



Marriage(Sedi Tatam):

Monogamy is the predominant form of marriage among the Kandha but in some village polygyny is also noticed. Adult marriage is the rule. The marriageable age in case of male is between 20 to 24 years and in case of girls 17 to 20 years there are generally four types of marriage in kandha society such as:

1. Arranged Marriage (Sadi Bengana)
2. Marriage by Capture (Reja Nona)
3. Marriage by Employment (Guisat Sedi)
4. Marriage by service (Ghar-join Sachenja)

Divorce:

If the Husband or wife gets any information that his or her partner is entangled with somebody else or he/she is lazy and does not cooperate fully in agriculture and household works then they can divorce to each other. There is no rule or ritual for the divorce in



case of husband , he simply drives her away from the house and in case of wife she simply goes back to her parents house.

Remarriage of widow/widower and Divorcee:

In Kandha Society the Widow can remarry, she can marry the younger brother of her husband or other person of her choice. The widower also can marry the younger sister of his wife.

E. Culture Associated with Religion : I meet Sri Khema Majhi from the village Kukurbhusi , he is a Jani of his village, age about 38 years, he narrate me about the Religious Believes and God Goddesses of Kandha People.

All tribes are the worshipper of nature as they felt the presence of divinity in nature. Indeed, this is important from religious ground. They give more emphasis on three elements of nature. They worship the soil as mother earth, sun as religious god and water as the life giver. But the head decides the observation of different festivals on considering the religious culture. So it is noticed that there is some uniformity and diversity of observing festivals. The aim and objective of religious

objects are as follow: (a) prayer for blessing (b) system of improved bread earning (c) worshipping and remembering of forefathers (d) welfare of world (e) recreation (f) environment protection



and (g) integration among communities. The religious practices go on in tribal culture all over the year, e.g. construction of home, shifting cultivation, sowing of seeds, setting of wooden pole in the ground, hunting and worshipping. These practices are the mainperspectives that keep alive the religious culture till now.

The divine powers have been identified by Kandhas with a group of powerfull deities and spirits which control and influence the wey of life of individual as well as community. All these deities and spirits have there own influence. Some deities are responsible for illness, misfortune and unusual happening in the village, they believe that the spirits live in native hills, forests, stremes and inside the dwellings and there nos. increases by the addition of the dead ancestors or by the death pertions.



Gods and Goddesses:

1. Dharuni Penu (Earth Goddess)
2. Soru Penu (Hill Goddess)
3. Piju Penu (God of Sacrifice for fulfilling the wish)
4. Mamli Penu (Home Goddess)
5. Budharaja
6. Thakrani (Goddess of Community)

F. Song, Dance and Festivals : I meet Sri Sana Majhi from Kalingpadar village , he is a Farmer of his village, age about 35 years, he narrate me about the Song, Dance and Festivals of Kandha Society.

Other aspects that associate with tribal culture are folk song, folk dance, fairs and festivals which cannot be ignored or side- tracked. Although these are source of pomp and gaiety, still these are collectively reflecting tribal culture. They prefer to



perform song and dance in group rather than pairs or single. They play traditional tribal musical instruments such as dhol, nisan, tasha, jhanj, muhuri etc. The expression of the parts of

the body like eye, head, waist and hand attract others and especially at the time of dance which is parallel to the tune of musical instruments. Usually these types of song and dance are organized at the time of fair and festivals. The main festivals include Chaiti Parab, Pus Parab, Sim (bean) Parab, Aam (mango) Parab, Bhairabi Jatra and marriage ceremony. They put on their traditional dresses and ornaments well on these occasions so as to sing and dance in groups. The Pus Parab and

Chaiti Parab of almost all tribes of Kalahandi region is recognized as main festivals and Dhap, Bajashal, Shingbaja etc.

In kandha culture & tradition “DHAP” is the most important folk dance of tribal people of Kalahandi. This folk dance is mainly played by the kandha people of Kalahandi. They are also popularly known as the “DESHIA KANDHA” or “KOSLI KANDHA”. It is basically the social & group dance of the kandha caste people of Kalahandi.

ORIGIN OF “DHAP DANCE” AND ITS MYTHOLOGY:-“Dhap nrutya” or “dhap dance” is originated from the time immemorial or from the time when the civilization of the kandha caste peoples started. Its origin is closely related with the mythology. It is believed that in the past time the kandha people used to play this dance for their entertainment purpose, for their sexual enjoyment, for the selection of their life partner & for the protection of the national integration.

So, this dhara or this has been pursuing from that time. And from that time they use to dance as their folk music, their own mythology, & their own puranas.

This dhap dance is mainly played by the kandha caste people of Kalahandi. They are also called the adibasi, kutia, dongria etc. Without the kandha people the dhap dance cannot be formed. So, the kandha caste people has been closely related with the dhap dance of Kalahandi.

The DHAP DANCE is called so because of the name of the instrument “DHAP” used. And the song which use in dhap dance is known as the dhap song.

In this dance.....

INSTRUMENT USE IN THE “DHAP DANCE”:-

Dhap is the leading instrument of this dance but it contains more additional instruments to make it more attractive. These instruments have the vital role for the dhap dance. These instruments increase the beauty of the dhap dance.

ADDITIONAL INSTRUMENTS OF DHAP DANCE:-There are different types of additional instrument of the dhap dance. They are: - Salap(big nisan),Banci,Ramkathi etc. These instruments may be clear as below.They are

SALAP:-Salap or the big nisan is most important instrument of the dhap dance. The salap is made up of the salap wood & the leather of the buffalo. Its height is about 2 & half foot. The radius of its face or circle is about 6 foot.

BANSI:-Banci is the another vital instrument of the dhap dance.It is the symbol of love & the symbol of romantic feelings. So, it is known as the romantic instrument of the dhap dance. It is made up of bamboo. With the sur or the sound of the banci the dhap player play the dhap music. The sound of the banci is very interesting & beautiful to hear.

RAM KATHI:-Ramkathi is another most important instrument of the dhap dance.It is made up of the sial wood. it is about 2 inches wide & 10 inches in height. There is a small hole for holding the ramkathi with finger. And there are some small holes putting of pairs of gini. The ramkathi is specially played by the female dhap dancers .When they play the dhap dance at that time they hold the ramkathi & play the ramkathi in the dhap dance. It is connected with mythology. In the Ramayana when bira hanuman worship the god Ramachandra for the satisfaction of god for his devote, with holding the sial wood kathi or the ramkathi. With the name of ramachandra that kathi became to known as “RAMKATHI”. At that time bir hanuman played the ramkathi to worship god ramachandra. In this way the female dancer play the dhap dance with holding kathi of sial wood which is known as the

ramkathi. From this belief the female dhap player has been playing the ramkathi in dhap dance.

THE MAIN OR THE CENTRAL OR LEADING INSTRUMENT OF THE DHAP

DANCE:-The most vital or important instrument of the dhap dance is the “DHAP”.

The dhap has the central role in the dhap dance. The dhap is the main instrument or the leading instrument of this dance. The dhap player lead



this dance & other instrumentalists support & follow the music of dhap in the dhap dance.

SHAPE OF “DHAP”:-The radius of the face of is about dhap 3 foot & 1 foot wide. In dhap the sial wood is used & on the sial wood the leather of monkey(hanu mankad) is always covered.

MAKING PROCESS OF “DHAP”:-The making process of dhap is very interesting. First of all the ring of sial wood, sial rasi(rope) and the wet monkey’s leather is taken. The monkey’s leather is dried & after that once again water is strinckled over it to be wet. is .The wet monkey leather is covered & binded by the wet sial rope. In the middle of the dhap there is a small ring or bamboo or sial rope is wanted. The wet monkey leather is then covered on the big ring of the bamboo or the sial & connected to the small ring & it is lay on the sun light to become dry. After that it is decorate by the colour & decorative iteam & “DHAP” instrument is ready to play.

INSTRUMENTALISTS,DANCER,SINGER OF THE DHAP DANCE:-

The role of the instrumentalists, dancer & the singer of dhap dance is very indispensable. The dhap player play the role of the instrumentalists, the role of the dancer & the role of the singer simultaneously. They perform the dance the possessing the hasya & the sringar rasa for exchange their feelings among the dhangiri(young girl) & the dhangara(young boy).The dhangiri of the kandha caste & the dhangara of the same



caste play the dhap dance with more interestingly & more beautifully. The instrumentalists play the dhap song & play the dhap dance very beautifully. And the female dhap dancer also sing the dhap song & play the dhap dance more beautifully.

The dhangara dhangiri exchange their happiness,romantic feelings among them.When they dance at that time they forget all their sadness. With the playing of the dhap dance they show their culture & tradition to other. For its development they try always in cultural field. In this way the instrumentalists,dancer & the singer has the vital role in the dhap dance.

PRESENTATION STRUCTURE & TECHNIQUES OF THE DHAP DANCE:-



The presentation structure of dhap nritya or dance is very important in dhap dance. The presentation style & structure of dhap dance is very interesting & very attractive .When the dancer perform the dhap dance at that time they follow the following structures.They are such as:-

- (i)-Mandalakar structure.
- (ii)-Chakramandalakar structure.
- (iii)-Ardhamandalakar structure.
- (iv)-Samantarala structure.
- (v)-Dhanutirakara structure.
- (vi)-Bikshyiptakar structure or Jugalabandi structure.

Songs of Kandha People:

(I)-“A-AN-AN-AN.....

LE LE LE LE LE LE LE LE

HANSAKE PARUA GILE

HELANE GUSIAN BELA GO

TARE NARE BAJANA

GUTE MALIPHULE GUTE BASANA JE”

(II)-CHHADARASA BALI GA A LI GITA

CHHAKE DIA CHHALA CHHALA AMRUTA JE

CHHAYALI DHANGIRI DHANA

(NAEN)CHHANE CHHANE BALI CHHA MASA

RAHELU DHANARE

RASAKHIA MAR MANA,

KAEN KHATHA KAETHILU,KADALI BANE

AKHI NINDA PORE NAEN

PHULA KHUSAKE,PHULA LESAKE

LASALASAKE DHANA!

NURUCHHA ,THANA BASAKE...

RAP RAP SANKUL SANKUL

TAKE NETA BUDA BUKUL

TAR MA KE BALANA ATA

SE GUNE KERACHHE KHETA

A BAI NEE DEGA, PAESA NE TAR BHAGA”

From the above song the romantic feeling among the dhangara & dhangiri are arises when they play the dhap dance with dhap song. So the nada,rasa,or sound of dhap dance is very romantic & very important for dhap dance.

Perceived Religious Changes

The results from the study show that most of the tribals have converted themselves to Christianity or Hinduism. Some have transformed themselves due to situation, some due to outside force and some from the influence of the society and some have transformed for their betterment, and some, just because it is more acceptable to the modernized Indian society.



Education and Literacy among Tribals

Modernisation has its positive aspects too, modernisation has brought along with it education and literacy which has helped the tribes to get themselves better living conditions and has also aided them from being exploited by the non-tribal groups. It can be seen from the results that most of the tribals encourage their children to pursue education and send them to schools and colleges for education. It is also seen from the study that in many cases the parents are not well educated or sometimes not at all educated but they prefer to send their children to school. On the other hand Government has also been actively participating in providing education to the backward people by employing various schemes and facilities that helps the poor people to get educated.

Employment Scenario among Tribals

In earlier days the tribals used to practice



agriculture and herding of cattle. They used to cultivate the land which not only helped in maintaining the fertility of the soil but also helped in preserving the natural environment at its best, but today in this developing scenario the practices of agriculture and cattle herding is at its extinction level. Workings in factories and corporate offices have become the trend, and the agricultural practices are no more being carried amongst the tribes, with very few tribes today having any land-holdings. The study reveals that the tribals residing in Kalahandi are no longer into agriculture and cultivation practices, and hardly any tribal family possess cattle. Land holdings are very few amongst the tribals in Kalahandi; the Kandhas in Hamirpur have very little land holding. Most of the Kandhas are working in Kalahandi Steel Plant and some are daily laborers. Kandhas of Orampara mostly work in private companies and in shops or run small businesses of their own. The Kandhas in Lanjigarh are mostly daily laborers. The tribes of Luakera cultivate several local vegetables and grow some crops to sell in the local market for their livelihood. The Kandhas at Balughat are mostly vehicle drivers and daily laborers.

The Status of Awareness about Their Own Culture

All the tribal communities have their own amazing culture and traditions. Similarly Kandha have their own rich customs and traditions. It is good to know that now tribal



communities are aware of education and its value but it is sad that their own new generation who are highly educated youths are not that much aware of their own tribal religious culture and practices. The youth are the group who can retain and

participate in the process of carrying forward their culture, but it was not in this case. Most of them do not know even their tribal languages; they do not know the significance and the importance of many religious practices, the cultural ceremonies and many more activities practiced in their day to day life. While interviewing the young generation, a large number of youth belonging to these major tribes of Kalahandi wanted to get modernised with total acceptance of the modern culture, and in this way the youth are ignoring their cultural and traditional values. Most of the young people refuse to carry forward many of their social rules and customs. In the rush of modernisation they are leaving behind their own cultural heritage by adapting and accepting other cultures.

The Status of Traditional Customs and Beliefs Practiced among Kandhas

Time has changed and modernisation has made its influence visible on the society. People are getting civilized day by day and their life-style is changing with time and so are the Kandhas of Kalahandi. Drastic changes are being perceived and the rich cultural heritage that once was the identity of the tribes is no longer being followed.

The Kandhas used to worship the nature, like trees and mother earth and they protected them, but today there are very few persons left who follow these practices. Though the practice of sacrifice which was once practiced by Kandhas, and which is no longer being practiced today, is a positive change in itself.

The practices of body inscriptions and tattoos have changed though the individual tribes believe that it differentiates them from other tribes, but still their children do not follow these practices.

Practices of washing hands of guests are still followed amongst the tribes and the dancing style are still practised during ceremonies and celebrations and songs in their own languages are sung. All these traditions provide certain uniqueness to each tribe. But, the use of traditional crafts and equipment like pots, baskets, mats

etc. are rarely used amongst the tribes. be educated and literate as they perceive that this will help them in their future and to be competent enough to be a part of the society.

Cultural activities followed during ceremonies of sorrow

Earlier tribal women used to know how to prepare the local handmade products of their community and they used to practice it in their daily life. But when they were asked whether their family members used to practice in making the local products, they replied that now days very few people are involved in, or are interested in making those local products like brooms, mattresses, baskets, vessels, cutlery etc. Yet, the present study revealed that the knowledge of making only brooms and mattresses is available with the Kandhas but they are rarely making use of these traditional skill forms anymore

Family members involved in practices of using locally made products of their communities in daily life

The tribal communities also organize cultural programs for their tribes such as seminars, gatherings, get-togethers etc. Gatherings and community get-together were mainly found to be followed by the indigenous people, but these gatherings and get-togethers occur only during festive occasions. Tribal gatherings, get-togethers, seminars etc. are the activities or programmes through which tribal people get to meet each other. They exchange their views and ideas in these types of ceremonial get-togethers.



Kandhas Offering Prayers to the Dead/Deceased

The graph below shows the cultural activities such as songs, dances, offering prayers, sacrificing, fasting etc. that reveals the glory of God for the Kandhas.

From all these cultural activities, offering prayers and fasting are regularly practiced in their day to day life

Views on Modernisation in Relation to Their Tribes

While interviewing the tribal people, they were asked what were their views regarding modernisation in relation to their tribes, whether modernisation helps in development or does it diminishes the cultural values.

Majority of population said that modernisation helps in their development, economically and socially and only very few people said that due to modernisation extinction of culture happens. People today want to be modernized so that they can satisfy their needs and to cope up with the changing scenario. Needs of the people have increased and in the rush of satisfying their needs people have lost their originality and want to come along with the mainstream. It depends upon each tribe to help them to tackle this situation and it becomes the responsibility of the government to support the tribes to preserve their culture, by providing necessary requirements for their development

Whether They Liked Their Children and Descendants to Preserve the Religious Cultures and Traditions

Even if to a greater extent the Kandhas have forgotten their age-old tradition like dance, music, songs, folk-tale, their own dialect and many more traditions, still when they were asked whether they would like their children and their future generations to preserve their religious customs and traditions or become modernized in every aspect which would result in vanishing many of their traditional practices, the answer was quite obvious. To this they answered that



they want to preserve their traditional values but be modernized as well so that they can cope up with the drastic change occurring in the society and come out of the feeling of perennial backwardness.

It is a contradictory situation where modernisation has brought along with it both positive and negative changes. All developmental programs should be implemented efficiently and effectively for successful progress. It is very important for a nation to preserve its culture and tradition for overall growth of the country.

Conclusion:

The dormitory organization, **da-she-hada** is an important traditional social institution of the Dongria Kandha. In spite of incursions of modernity the institution is still found in an active state; people value all its functioning in the greater interest of the community. It serves as a centre for socializing young and un-married girls and their boyfriends shaping their personality structures. Dormitories teach them how to behave and act conforming to the prescribed cultural norms and standards. They become instrumental in upholding the value of societal living and intra- and inter-group relationship in the basis of mutual help and cooperation. They inculcate this value in the minds of young children, the fast growing future youth. The dormitory goers are in all respects young and able bodied and they form a vibrant sub-population, the source of strength of the village community. The dormitory organization also serves as a matrimonial agency providing opportunities to the unmarried boys and girls to select their life partners. A girl after her tenure of apprenticeship in dormitory comes out an ideal Dongria

woman capable of efficiently managing her own conjugal family and handling any on-toward situation in life.

The educated Dongria youth, in recent years have become scornful of its continuance and have raised their voice against it, admonishing the practice. Notwithstanding this, the positive values of the institution of youth dormitory are being held in high esteem by the people. Being an important social organization, its continuity is considered essential as it could be tapped in a very modest way for bringing about economic development of the people. Taking the help of this institution improvement of female literacy could be achieved. Girls' dormitories can be at the same time developed into ideal centers for imparting formal education to the Dongria girls and boys.

Dongria Kandha is characterized by an absence of economic stratification, although economic grades among them are present. Absence of a well-defined division of labour in primitive society does not favour hereditary skill development leading to the formation of artisan classes or guilds. For them spontaneous co-operation in domestic and economic life becomes essential. It is the dormitory organization that imparts the training and enables the children to participate in all spheres of activities, be they social, economic or religious.

The dormitory organization of the Dongria Kandha shows that it is one of the very important institutions which embrace a host of others. Development functionaries need to be aware of its utility. The institution is in the process of transformation. But to what extent the transformation is beneficial for the society remains an open question to all. The Dongria Kandha social structure is subject to two opposing forces acting upon it: one for continuity, conservation, apathy for the

traditional institutions and the other for changes, showing dissatisfaction with the existing conditions, substitution of old values with new.

The tensions generated as a result of such confrontation between the younger generation, one believing in tradition, the other coming under the influence of new system of education and social intercourse with the outside culture are symptomatic of weakening social solidarity and group strength. Nevertheless, the traditional youth organizations can be mobilized and their potentialities can be harnessed for the betterment of the community.

Research Questions

The research questions of the present study are:

- How modernisation is affecting the religious customs and traditions of kandha tribes of kalahandi?
- What are the key differences existing between the religious customs and traditions of indigenous group of Kalahandi.

Definition of Key Terms

- Tribal Culture: The tribal people express their tribal culture and distinctiveness in their social organisation, language, rituals, and festivals. It is a precondition for members of a tribe to possess a strong feeling of identity for a tribal society to form.
- Traditions: An inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action or behaviour (as a religious practice or a social custom).

□ Customs: Practices followed by people of a particular group or region. Here customs are defined in the context of practices followed by tribal people related to their festivals and marriages.

□ Religion: The tribals believe that their religions have narratives, symbols, traditions and sacred histories that are intended to give meaning to life.

□ Modernisation: The tribal people have started the act of improving and adopting the process of modern ways, ideas.

□ Urbanisation: This is the aftermath of industrialisation, where economic restructuring of a place brings in rapid changes in the social life as well.