

*Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage &
Diverse Cultural Traditions of India*

Research and Training of Traditional Folk Dance SINGH BAJA

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Introduction

Each dance has its own typical characteristics, pattern, origin, need, message and values as well as ethos. However, when analysed it reveals human, social, economic and geographical dimensions. Kalahandi, the region under study, is a land with rich cultural heritage. The literally meaning of Kalahandi is Kala 'art' and handi is 'pot' or the store house of art and culture. In other words the repository of art and culture. The social life of this district is endowed with many art form particularly, performing art forms. They are as follows:-

- a) Ghumura
- b) Singh Baja
- c) Gourbadi / Banabadi
- d) Madali
- e) Dhap
- f) Dandari
- g) Ghadel etc.

Not to mention the dying art forms like Kendera or Mudtopu etc. the above seven form of dances still prevail, performed and enjoyed by the people of rural as well as urban locations.

The present study report is an attempt to explore, understand and sustain the Singh Baja dance form as performed and enjoyed by in this district. Singh Baja is known by various names. One of them is it is known by Dom Baja. That would mean it is practised and played by the youth of Dom Community i.e. the scheduled caste community - 'Dom' caste people. It is therefore clear that it is a community

dance but has greater acceptance by the people of all other community or caste group, it is being used by them as a must in many social rituals and functions.

Objectives

The objective of this report is to produce and represent the final form of:

- [a] Research on the origin, nomenclature and usage of Singh Baha,
- [b] To train a group of youth to acquire proficiency in playing and performing the form and
- [c] To analyse the transformation and assess the future of the dance form.

Methodology and Data Collection

The data and information regarding the objective No.1 was collected from secondary sources like books, journals and other periodicals available in the region. In order to identify youth for the dance form, sufficient cares were taken to motivate the community youth to come forward and learn the dance form. If not for profession but for the sake of preservation of the art-dance-form. Senior and old artists and performers like

- 1 Sri Rima Mangaraj, Sergarh, Uffer, M.Rampur, Kalahandi - DHOL
- 2 Sri Sitaram Bag, Sergarh, Uffer, M.Rampur, Kalahandi - MAHURI
- 3 Sri Tikelal Harijan, Sarian, M.Rampur, Kalahandi - NISHAN
- 4 Sri Banka Sangi, Maidapur, Dist.Nabarangpur - NISHAN
- 5 Sri Ananta Harijan, Maidapur, Dist.Nabarangpur - DHOL
- 6 Sri Bidyadhar Mangaraj, Tetelchuan, Kamthana, Kalahandi - MAHURI
- 7 Sri Nilambar Mangaraj, Tetelchuan, Kamthana, Kalahandi - TASA
8. Sri Bikram Harijan, Mahaling, Golamunda, Dist.Kalahandi - MAHURI

were located and engaged in identify the youth for the training. The youth were motivated through a focus group discussion and one-to-one counselling. Finally 10 youth (male) agreed to co-operate and undergo training in various aspects of the dance form.

In order to analyse the transformation of the dance form the author/ researcher had to move to nearby district and many location in the district, attended many marriage and other rituals like thread ceremony to measure and document transformation. The future of the dance form was inferred accordingly.

Origin and Nomenclature

As noted earlier Singh Baja is a dance form of Dom (SC) caste, practised as a profession. In the Indian cultural context there are many dance form or even art forms are based on caste group. For example Badinacha-Banabadi-Laudi-Kaisebadi etc. are of the Yadava caste. The Ranapa, Paika Akahada, Malkhamb are of the Paika or warrior caste. The Chaiti Ghoda of the fisherman caste and the Ghuduki Nacha, Patar Saura and Sabar Sabaruni are of the Sabar tribal group. Hence, it is not uncontextual to have a dance form associated with the Dom caste people of the society. Therefore, what is important is that the dance form has acquired the professional standard and acceptance by other caste group of whatever hierarchy. All caste people need this as part of sacred ritual in the ceremonial occasion, be it marriage, thread ceremony or birth and death rituals.

The Singh Baja is also known as 'Dom Baja' for the simple reason that the persons of 'Dom' (SC) caste play or perform this dance. The dance, in its original form, it is a traditional dance, performed by generation. It passed on to the next generation through the able guidance of the senior performer be it father, uncle or other in-laws. The dance form is also known as 'Biha Baja'. Because of the fact

that in marriage rituals and its various components, the Baja is must. Without the sound and beats of 'Mahuri' and 'Nishan' no part of the marriage ceremony is complete. It is regarded auspicious to play the music. But the most popular name is 'Singh Baja'.

It is termed 'Singh' or the pre-fix 'Singh' to the word 'Baja' is very natural and simple to understand. The 'Nishan' that is used by the performer is fitted with two singh or horn, made up of iron (Figure). The Singh or Horn is about 4 (four) feet long. One end is attached to the Nishan and it is projected in the form of a horn of 'Buffalo' or a human mustache, projected and curved inside at the end.

The other reason of naming the dance as Singh Baja, is for the fact that the players i.e. Nishan players (mostly two persons, who are the main attraction of the dance) behave or fight like Singh or the Lion. As it is well known that the jungle is ruled by the Lion King. And there lives only one lion in a jungle. As the performer while playing this dance walk or manoeuvre like a Lion, thus the dance has acquired the name of Singh Baja. It is not unnatural on the part of a ancient people to acquire the skill of different animal or imitate the animal in our profession or skill.

Another school of thought opined that the Nisha are fixed with something like 'Nisha' or mustache. From the word 'Nisha' it could have been 'Nishan' and the player is also known as 'Nishania'. In older days the Singh was not made of iron but original horn of Deer or Sambhar horn was fitted into the Nishan. Due to government restriction and non-availability of animal horn the iron made horn could have been used.

In some place of Kalahandi and adjacent Nabarangpur district the dance is also known a 'Singh Khela' besides 'Singh Baja'. As noted earlier Singh Baja is

auspicious in many rituals. But Singh Khela is the additional performance by the Nishan players. The two Nishan players, engage in duet and exhibit many acrobatic and various stunt. It is at that time the Singh or horn (be it of real animal horn or iron horn) are fitted to the Nishan. Basing on this part of the dance form the Singh Baja is also known as 'Singh Khela'. The sports, body fitness, and style of the movement/manoeuvre is more like game than dance. These game style is in addition to the sound or music of the normal accompanying musical instruments.

It is natural for a dance form, which evolved during the Vedic period and has survived for such long period of about 5,000 years to have different nomenclature in its long journey. Here the Vedic origin of this dance form need to be mentioned. As per the Vedic references the Dom caste is known as 'Pana'. The word Pana have been a transformation of word 'Pani' which mean Bazar or business. Since Vedic period the Dom or Pana caste people co-habit with the tribals or aboriginal in the semi-mountain tract. The Adivasi are avid agriculturist whereas Dom are the business class and commercial herders. They also trade the product of the Adivasi to the people in the plain and simultaneously ensure supply of essential commodities like salt, oil, clothing etc. to the Adivasis. This co-existence is seen for thousands of years even today. In Kalahandi there is a popular saying Kandha (Adivasi) is 'Raja' or (King) and Dom is 'mantri' or minister. The Kandhas do every thing on the advise of the Dom.

Therefore it is natural for the Dom to be part of economic as well as social and cultural life of the tribals. The Dom address the Adivasis as 'Thukria' which might have evolved from the word 'Thakur' or Lord. That would mean the Dom consider them as Lord of the land. Similarly the Adivasis address the Doms as 'Jalangia' that means networking people or person who establish relationship with the outside world. In fact, the Adivasis communicate and organise themselves

through the Dom. It is therefore apparent that the Doms play significant and well define roles in the day to day activities or even in the seasonal or annual rituals, ceremonies and functions of the Adivasis. Hence the Doms were assigned specific duties in the religious, social and cultural behaviours. It could further be fortified that no Adivasi Jani-Jatra is conducted until and unless the Guruj from Dom house of the village comes. Similarly the 'theka' or 'bahini' from the Dom parja of the village is must for the 'Ghanta Yatra' of the Kandhas. In that perspective the playing of musical instrument by the Dom parja mandatory in all the religious festivals and social functions. It could be inferred here that all the musical instruments used by the Dom paraja in the dance form are designed by the Adivasis. It will be made more clear while we discuss the musical instruments.

Instruments

Dhol, Mahuri, Nishan and Tasa are the four basic musical instruments of this dance form. In modern days or present days Jhumka and Ramkathi are also used by some group, may be to accommodate more persons or add variety to the music or Rhythm. In either case the basic (Four) instruments are the most common and without even one the music is not complete. These instruments are most likely designed by the Adivasis, as it is seen from the shape , size and availability of the basic materials or equipments. Many house hold articles are used to prepare instruments. The household articles are re-designed with the help of the Dom caste people. For example the 'Dhol' has been the remade version of 'Pargal' an empty piece of log used to allow movement of water from one agricultural land to another. Both side is covered with cow skin to make a Dhol. Similarly 'Tasa' is made from the 'Tasala' or 'Telunee', a wide bowl or basin made of clay. It is covered with cow-hide and beaten with bamboo stick to produce sound. Similarly Nishan is prepared and Mahuri is an improved or alternate version of flute.

The other observation is that all these instruments are carried by the player themselves or hung in the neck, shoulder or tied to the waist. As noted above these instruments are designed by the Adivasis or the Lord of the Dom community who co-exist with them. So the Dom community regard them as the God themselves. The Dhol, Nishan, Tasa and Mahuri are respectively treated as Brahma, Bishnu, Maheswar and the Goddess Durga. And are worshipped as such sanctity, ethos and norms. They are regarded as living God present in the house.

In an another version these instruments are regarded as family member and respected as such. The 'Mahuri' regarded as 'Maa' or mother, Dhol as father, 'Nishan' as son and 'Tasa' as 'Kalkali' or 'Bhodbhadi' i.e. the talkative daughter. This nomenclature has enough significance and truly related to the role played by each individual in the family. The detail description of all these instruments are given below:

[a] Mahuri

As noted above Mahuri is regarded as mother goddess Durga or the parental mother. The eternal mother, who protect, promote and give us prosperity. In either case 'Mahuri' is treated in famine perspective.

Mahuri is a modified version of flute. Like flute a piece of Bamboo with four holes in the body but open in both end is used. The sound producing end is fitted with funnel shaped brass Kahali or amplifier. The blowing end is fitted with the another brass pipe of one inch diameter. The brass pipe is narrowed to form a cone shape blowing end. The blowing is done with help of mouth like any other blow instruments like flute, clarion or sahanai. Where as these instruments are



straight the Kalahandi Mahuri is Tri-bakra, having two acute angle joining three pieces. The blowing is done through 'pika' a flower shaped object made out of palm leaf. The size is less than one inch or two cm. or little smaller but more than one cm. The pika is fitted to the cone a top the blow pipe and the player blow. Simultaneously with the help of the fingers of both the hand control the hole in the bamboo part to produce different rhythm or sound. The Mahuri is the lead instrument. It is played first and basing on the 'Raga' or 'Laya' guided by the Mahuri other instruments follow. The Mahuria decides when to end a particular 'raga' or when to change to another 'raga'. It is considered auspicious to listen the Mahuri first and then the beats of other leather instruments.

[b] Nishan

Nishan is the central instrument or thematic instrument of 'Singh Baja'. Because it is the Singh, 'Horn', that are fitted to the Nishan by which the form is termed as Singh Baja. The Nishan players always stole the show and remained as the centre of attraction.

Nishan is a leather instrument, that is a deep pot type iron bowl is fitted or covered with cow leather or wild animal hide, may be spotted deer or sambhar. But more appropriately the cow leather. The leather treated with salt and dried, later greased with castor oil and a paste made of gum, oil and Jhuna. (Both gum and Jhuna are rasin - extract of certain tree). The leather cover is tighten with slings of leather rope drawn to the bottom side of the pot and alternatively drag up and down to surround the

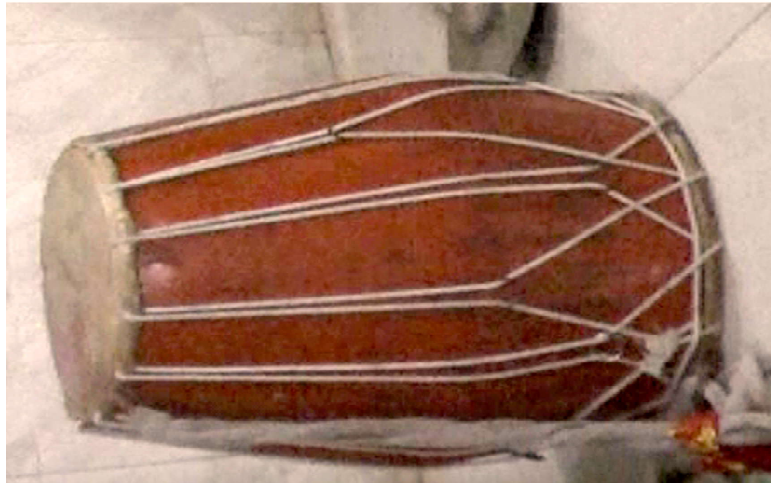


entire periphery of the leather circle. The pot use to have a small hole at the centre below. Along the lower centre the leather rope are tied in a such a manner to leave a small circle of two inch diameter.

The tightly fitted leather is beaten with the help of two 'Chimuta'. Chimutas are strong rope made of leather strings. Knitted to look like the long hair done by the women or girl. The player plays the Nishan with both hand with the help of the 'Chimuta'. Nishan is not very big, it is less than one feet in diameter, and not very heavy too. It is tied to the waist of the player. When not performing or showing acrobats or marching to some place the Nishan are kept on a circular pad made of cotton or paddy straw, called 'ainra'.

[c] Dhol

The Dhol or Drum is an essential instrument of North, South and Western Odisha dance forms. Similar to Dhol but smaller in size are used by dance forms of coastal Odisha. Mrudang, Khol, Nal etc. are differently shaped Mridangam, having both playing ends, though of different shape. The major difference between Dhol and other similar musical instrument is that Dhol is played with a solid wooden stick in



one hand and plain hand in the other. The size of both the ends are of almost equal. Usually Dhol is made of wooden log hallow and with thin layer of wood. Both the ends are covered with leather or cow skin. The leather cover of the two

side are firmly secured with leather ropes crisscross the sides and goes on through out the body of the wooden coat. To make it soft and flexible castor oil or burnt castor seed paste is applied to the leather cover. The drum is hung on either left or right shoulder of the drummer or Dholia, depending on his comfort and or practice. Similarly the dholia can carry the wooden stick on either hands. While performing the dholia make some movement to add variety to the Nishan players. While playing in static posture, in a Bajashal (shed for the Baja walas) the Drum is rested or kept on a 'ainra' made of paddy straw and oval in shape to give the drummer some height to play the instrument. Drums are also considered very sacred by the group.

[d] Tasa

Tasa is wide and shallow made of burnt clay. As noted earlier in this report the household articles like Teluni/Telen, which is about 12 to 16 inch diameter are used to make Tasa. It is covered with thin leather as that of a goat or kurtra an wild animal. Often sheep hide is used in the Tasa making. Like Nishan the upper leather cover is tighten with rope or skin rope connecting end-to-end. There is no hole at the bottom of Tasa nor the skin is oiled to make it soft. The Tasa is played by the player with two thin seasoned bamboo sticks with both hand, more particularly held between



the thumb and the index finger. Since Tasa cover is dry it produces typically different sound, that is rapid but light, of low pitch. That is why the Tasa sound is identified with feminine tune. Tasa is hung on the neck of the performer and positioned on the belly. So that the player can play while walking or moving. It is

also played in the sitting position. While playing in the Bajashal (shed) like other instrument it is kept on a 'ainra' circular pad of paddy straw.

The Players

Singh Baja is typical combination of playing music and performing art. It is also a typical combination of art and game - more like sports and acrobatics. Singh Baja, besides being a community based dance form is also a platform of games, and sports exhibition. Hence, the players play multiple role of instrument player, dancer and sports person. Thus the player are divided into two major category:

- [a] Instrument player and
- [b] Instrument player as well as performer

[a] Instrument Players

I] Drumer, or Dholia (Dhulia) is a male player. Normally the Dholia wear a Dhoti in the Paika or soldier style. Normally coloured cloth is used. In the upper body a multi-coloured shirt, half - hawain, or a fatei type shirt is wore by the drummer. Sometime the drummer uses arm-let and wrist-band in both the hand. The drum is hung on the should in a tangential manner. Very often drum is played in a sitting posture. But when the Nishan players are engaged in a duel the drummer control their movement by mediating or directing them while leading the drum to a definite beat. Thus the Dholia has liberty to move around and attract attention of the viewer.

ii] Mahuria plays Mahuri. The Mahuria wear simple dhoti of white colour and a plain colour shirt. His dress or costume is simple but elegant. Sometime Mahuria put a angabastra hang on the neck. His role is that of a senior artist and

the leader of the team. Mahuri and Mahuria lead the team. The Mahuri is always played at the beginning of the dance or play of rhythm. The Mahuria decides the Tala and Laya to be followed for the occasion. As the team reaches the place of performance it is the Mahuria who conduct the Puja for invocation of the god and goddess and play the tune to appease them.

iii] Tasa Player - He is also a non-dancing participant of the Singh Baja form. His dress are similar to that of the Drummer, but the Tasa player is always seen to sit in his place and perform/play. While walking he simply walk; hanging the Tasa in his neck and play. Tasa player is a supporting player of the group. Tasa player is known as Tasalia.

Iv] Nishania - Nishania is the Nachania of the Singh Baja dance form. It is only because of their performance the Singh Baja is also known as Singh Khela. There are two Nishan players in a group or team of Singh Baja dance form. They perform or show individual as well as duet skills and / or stunt. The play includes imitation of animal, bird and other living creatures, details of which will be discussed in the style of the dance section. The costume of the Nishania is different from the other participants. They wear thigh length tri-kachha or triple tied tight fit Dhoti in the form of 'Langot'. It gives protection as well support the pressure of Nishan and sitting and sleeping acrobats. The colour of the cloth is multi-color and normally a saree as wore by the woman folk. The Nishania wear a short skin fit jacket or a colour sandos-banyan.

In the arm they use bend made of thick or round cloth with bunch of peacock feather fitted to them. In the wrist they use wrist band and in the ankle put on a chain of bells or Ghunguroos. The player while intent to perform the 'Khel' fix their Nishan with the singh or horns. They also put or decorate their face lips and

body with colour or talcum powder and lip-stick etc. While not performing the Nishan is played in the sitting posture from the Baja Shal or shed.

Costumes

Costumes are in integral part of any folk performing art. Even in tribal background dress is made to look 'different' and attractive. Many of the costumes wore by different players in the dance form are narrated above. In this portion we would like to know more about the Nishan player. The Nishan player in the Singhbaja is known as Nishania, and also by the term Singhlia. The Singhlia is the centre of attraction in this dance. Hence, they wear many more additional costumes to make themselves visible or conspicuous. The arm-let they wear is known as 'bahuti'. It is a cotton band fitted with peacock feather which is projected away from the body. That give them more space and signal the other player to keep that much of distance. In the waist they put a chain of 'Ghugurla or Ghagudimala' brass bell of bigger size than 'Ghunguru'. While performing they also wear a Kavach' or 'armour' the protective clothing worn by the soldiers. It is made of sea-shell-knitted closely in the front side of the chest. It act like a shield from the accidental hit by the 'Singh' or 'horn'. The kachha they wore are so short that it almost appears like the cloth worn by the wrestlers or 'Malla Yodha'. In Sarala Mahabharat it is described as:

“bahar holia pabeni je kopen sira jhuni

Trikachha basan se Malla Kachheni pindhu I

Lambita juda hate drudha kari bandhi” II

As seen from the above stanza besides the Tri-kachha or Kachheni, the player also wear long hair (or they keep long hair) for the duration of their performance. While engaged in the duel they put a knot to the long hair.

Occasion of the dance performance

There are various occasions when the dance is performed. However, the most popular being the marriage ceremony and the thread ceremony. Marriage is a universal function involving all class and caste of people. Where as the thread ceremony is popular among the Brahmins, Kshtriyas, Paikas and even a section of the Kandhas. The marriage and thread ceremonies have various components or segments. The sound, music or rhythm is in sacrosanct with the stage and state of the ceremony. The details are discussed in the section for Pars.

Besides the above occasions the other important event when the Singh Baja is played is the religious or spiritual events of different caste or tribal group. Special mention may be made about the tribal groups. The tribals and the Dom (Pana of SC group) have symbiotic relationship. They together lead a life of intersectoral life and culture. As noted earlier the Dom have sanction of the Kandhas to be part of many religious and spiritual functions. without the Baja - combination of Dhol, Nishan, Tasa and Mahuri no religious function is complete. In some tribal functions such as Jani Jatra, Boilen Jatra, Toki Parba, Kenarani Parba, Poel Unasa, Dial Puni and Push Puni and many more. However, in all these religious functions the Singh Baja is played without Singh or horn. That is when it is known as 'Murali Baja'. Murali is a form of Singh Baja, without horn, but with more spiritual conotation. In Chaitra Parba of the tribal community the procession is incomplete without Singh Baja. The pars, laya and raga differ from each other occasion.



Dance Style - The Khel

The centre of attraction of Singh Baja is Singh Khel. Khel is sporting events presented by the Singhlias. There are two Singhlias in a band of Singh Baja artists. Other three players simply play their instruments and nominally take part in the sporting sequences. While performing their duet items the Singhlias hardly play their Nishan. As long as they play their Nishan in sitting position, they are termed as Nishania but when they exhibit acrobatics they are the Singhlias. However, doing the acrobates they play Nishan and participate with the rest of the team as and when they get opportunity. While showing acrobates the position of the Nishan is moved from the front waist to upper belly or to the backside of the waist.

Basing on the physical and thematic point of view 'The Khel' (sporting type) is of 5 (five) type. They are :

- [a] Sikar Nacha - Hunting Dance
- [b] Manisha - Pashu Nacha - Man - animal dance
- [c] Jantu Nacha - Wild animal dance
- [d] Malla Nacha - Wrestling Dance, and
- [e] Jodi Nacha - Duet / Duel Dance

These dances are entertainment oriented and based on various 'rasa' or emotions or feelings. They simply present aesthetic impression of a work of art. The valour, peace or tranquil, Rudra or ferocious, Chakita or astonished, love and lust are some of the 'rasas' (emotions) presented by the Singhlia. Here it is pertinent to note that all these Nacha/Dances are the day to day activity of man in the lap of nature. His daily chorus is an art of living with the nature. Hence, the

dances are the symbolic representation of what one does in the normal course of life, the skill one adopts and the duelism of man and nature, not man against nature.

[a] Sikar Nacha

In the initial phase of human life, man was a hunter man. While hunting man adopts many skills to trap the 'hunt'. And on the other hand the 'hunt' adopts many methods to escape the clutch of man. The Sikar Nacha presents or depicts the survival of each other. It is one of the highly entertaining nacha or khel of the Singh Baja. In their language the activity is 'Jantamara Akahada' (Jantumara Akahada). One of the Singhlia plays the role of an animal by moving with both hands and legs. And acts like a wild animal who has sensed the presence of a hunter (Shikari). The other Singhlia uses his Nishan with horn as if a gun or sharp hunting equipment and chases the animal with utmost care. The movement of each player depends on the animal they select to hunt. It could be Kutra (hornless deer), Varha (Wild boar), or Sambaramara (Large Deer) etc. This particular dance attracts urban viewers who have never seen a wild animal or know about their behaviour in the wild.

[b] Man - animal Dance

Food and security are basic needs of any living organism, so is man and animal. In this type of dance the Singhlias depict the fight scene between man and animal, particularly man and the tiger. Kalahandi was once very famous for its forest and wild animals. The Royal Bengal Tiger (RBT) was present in large numbers. There are many stories about hunting and fighting tigers with bare hands. This dance sequence is the commemoration of such heroic deeds by the common man.

[c] Jantu Nacha

Kalahandi was not only known for its forests but also for the rich agricultural products. The domestication of animal was known to early agriculturists. Among the domesticated animals cow, buffalo, sheep (Ram), goat, dog and cat are well known. In the Jantu Dance the Singhlias depicts various habits, behaviour, likes and dislikes of such domestic animals. The fight between Bulls, Dogs and Cats are very attractive. They walk and produce sounds like these animals and entertain the audience. In this dance sequence the Singhlia perform the job of a mimicry artist. Similarly in this section the typical behaviour of some wild animals are also presented. The Bhalu (Bear) Nacha, Harin (Deer) Nacha and 'Bagha (Tiger) Nacha are equally famous. Sometime birds like peacock and snake dance are also performed. These later two are very difficult and need special training and practice. 'Dukukhia Akahanda' teach animal dances, 'Sanpjol Akahada' teach the pairing dance of snakes which depicts the mating behaviour of the snakes. Similarly the 'Mudali Akahada' teach them the animal dance, more appropriate is the animal which fight head-on.

[d] Malla Nacha

Malla Nacha or wrestling dance is the duel between the two Singhlia. Some time some of the two different group of Singh Baja meet each other, they invite the other Singhlia to engage in a duel. That is in order to establish their supremacy over skill. This particular skill is practiced in the Mal Akahada. Wrestling is a very old and popular form of entertainment in the human society. It also encourages healthy life and healthy competitions. The presentation of this dance relates the audience to puranic stories or Mahabharat stories. Like real life wrestling the Singhlia lock their hands, beat thigh, dash their chest and back etc.

In all sense of the term it is a heroic dance style. When the duel take place between two opposite group, like team from groom side and team from Bride side invite each other for a fight. And it almost appear real fight. Sometime the audience too pass many comments by way of encouragement to their side of dancers. The ultimate aim of one party's Singhlia is to attack the other party's Singhlia by aiming at his Nishan and make a puncture in it. Once the Nishan of the opposite party is punched it is treated as victory for the attacking team.

[e] Jodi Nacha

In this sequence the acrobate, stunts or games are shown in pairs. Both do or act same things with utmost care to make it evenly matched. Basa (sitting), Naradha (running), Pencha (pointing), Nagalmuda (plough design), Kaparia, Phari (rounds) and Ubha or Thard (stand-up) etc. are different posture of the Jodi Nacha.

Sometime both the Singhlia perform a stunt by helping each other. While one hold a needle on his lips the other pick it up in a Sirshasan Mudra - inverted pose, head resting in his hands. Or Pickup a paper currency note lying in the ground. These are all very difficult poses, need lot of practice, endurances and flexibility. These stunts are known as 'Haksa Akhada'. Similarly in Nangal Muda Akada the Singlias pose like a plough and in 'Kapria Akhada' they do the pose of a kapar or leveller in the agriculture field.

In 'gaibula akhada' the performers show the nature of movement of a group of Bullocks while harvesing/crusing the paddy. All these are imitation of the normal activities in the rural life scenario.

Layas and Pars

In Singh Baja there is no song. Even the Rhythm is less important compared to the stunts or acrobats. But like other music and rhythm Singh Baja has also defined composition of Swar-Layas. These swar and layas in colloquial language is known as Pars. In a marriage or thread ceremony there are different phases or stages of a ceremony. Say for example in marriage there are Degansan, Haldi, Lagan, Batbasa, Bandhumilan, Jhia Bidai, Mahujhar and Modojharen etc. For each activities there are different Pars of the Badya and Layas of the Mahuri.

[1] UDHLIA PAR MUSIC:-

In this pose the Singlias show the Singh Khel by following the music. They are like:-

(a) GADI NIKIDA/GADIDAKI NIKIDA
1 2 3 4

(2) -BASA/BASNI AKHDA PAR MUSIC:-

In this poses the Singlias (instrumentalists who play Nisan) sit by holding the Nisan & show the Singkhel. So, this par music is known as the Basa music. It is also known as the Basin Akhda par music.

The music is as follows. They are like:-

THE TAL -DADRA

“GIDI JAGI NIKIJA

TIKI TATI TIKITA.”

(3) -BECHURANGA/SAPJOLA:-

In this pose the Singlias show the Singkhel by showing the acting of the Bechuranga (like the Scorpio run on the soil). So, it is so called as the Bechuranga. It is also known as the Sapjola because this pose is same like the pose of the Sapjola (Snake running). The above par pose include the following music. They are like:-

TAL-JHAM

“GIN GIN/GINGIN GIN

1 2 3 4 5 6

GIN GIN/GINGINS

6 7 8 9 10

TAK TAK /TAK TAK TAK

1 2 3 4 5

TAK TAK TAK TAK S

6 7 8 9 10"

(4) -PENCH:-Pench is another most important pose of the Singbaja music. The music of this pose is as follows. They are as follows. Like:-

TAL-DADRA

“JIKJAJHA JIKJAJHA JIKJHATITA

1 2 3

TIK TATA TIKTATINA”

4 5 6

(5) -DHENKI CHALA:-

In this pose the Singlias play the Singkhel like the pose of the Dhenki chai (The paddy is prepared as the rice with the help of the Dhenki). So, this pose is known as the Dhenki chal. The following music include in this pose. They are like:-

TAL-KAHARBA

“GADHI N A S /TIKTIK TIKTA

1 2 3 4

GIDHI N A S /TIKTIK TIKTA”

1 2 3

(6) NARDA : In this pose the Singlias run here & there & play the music in the pose of running. So, it is so called as the Narda pose. The following music include

in this pose. They are like:-

TAL-KAHARBA

“GIN CHIK/JIKJANA

1 2 3 4

GIN CHIK/NIKJANA”

12 3 4

(7) **NANGAL MUDA-:** Nangal Muda music is another most important pose of the Singbaja music .In this pose the artiste play this Singkhel like the pose of the Nangal(it is the farm instrument) Muda.So, this pose is known as the Nangal muda music.The music of the Nangal Muda is as follows.They are like:-

TAL-KAHARBA

“DIGDHADHA

1

DIGDHADHA

2

/GIGDHADHA

3

DHES

4

"TIKTATA TIKTATA/TIKTATA TES”

1 2 3 4

(8) **HAKSA-:** It also another most important pose of the Singbaja music.

The music is as follows:-

TAL-KAHARBA

“GAJINIKIJA /GINJAGINIKIJA

TAKITIKITA/CHHIKTAKI CHHIKITA”

(9) DHUKUKHIA:-

Dhukukhia is also the vital pose of the Singbaja music.

Music of this pose:-

TAL-KAHARBA

“TAK GINTI/GIN JHA

1 2 3 4

TAK TAKI /CHHIK TA”

1 2 3

(10) **GAON BULA:-**In this pose the Singlias play the music by following the pose of the Ga a bula(the pose of the cow).So, this pose is known as the Ga a bula pose.

The music of this par is as follows:-

TAL-DADRA

“GINJANA GINJIGINA

1 2 3

KHITITADA TIKTA KITA”

4 5 6

(11) **MUDALI:-** It is also one type of the Akhada pose.It so called the Mudali par pose because the player play this pose like the pose of the Mudali(benting the head & play the music.)

TAL-DADRA

“GEN GEN GEN /GEDEN GEN S

1 2 3 4 5 6

GEN GEN GEN/GEDEN GEN S”

1 2 3 4 5 6

(12) MAL LADHE I :-This pose is the pose of fighting to each other. So, it is sop called as the MAL LADHE I.

TAL-DADRA

MUSIC OF THIS POSE:-

“DIGDIG DIGDAG DHIN

1 2 3

DIGDIG DIGDAG DHIN

4 5 6

TAK TAK TAK

1 2 3

CHHIK TAK TIK”

4 5 6

(13) JANTUMARA OR THE SIKARA NRUTYA POSE -

The most important music poses of the Singbaja is the Sikaranrutya or the hunting to Animal. In this pose the Nisnia or the Singkhel player play the Singkhel in the pose of the hunting. The Nisnia bind the Nisan which is attached with the sing in his waist & play the Singkhel. In this techniques the artiste show the Singkhel with enlarging their legs & body, moving their body front & to the back.

(10) GAON BULA:-TAL-KAHARBA

MUSIC OF THIS POSE:-

“KIDITAKI

1

NIKIDHA

2

/KIDITAKI

3

NIKIDHA

4

KIDITAKI

1

NIKIDHA

2

/KIDITAKI

3

NIKIDHA

4

“DHAGI

1

NIKIDHA

2

/KIDITAKI

3

NIKIDHA

4

KIDITAKI

1

NIKIDHA

2

/KIDITAKI

3

NIKIDHA”

4

(14) ANTHU AKHADA POSE:-

In this pose the artiste play the Singkhel with the pose of the Kneel down position. Anthu means knee. So, this pose so called the name of the Anthu Akhada dance or the music.

“GIDI JAGI NIKIJA
TIKI TATI TIKITA.”

(15) PAISA BETA DANCE:*

Paisa beta dance or the music form is the most vital technique of the Singbaja music. In this pose the Singlias play the Singkhel with showing the paisa beta with the help of the mouth & the help of the eye. So, this type of dance form is the most important for the Singbaja music or the Singkhel music.

The music of the par is as follows.

“GEN GEN GEN /GEDEN GEN S

1 2 3 4 5 6

GEN GEN GEN /GEDEN GEN S”

1 2 3 4 5 6 -

(IX) DIFFERENT TYPE PARS USE IN THE SINGBAJA MUSIC. -

In the Singbaja there are different type of Devis par played by the Singlias to satisfied to the god & the Goddess before the playing of the Singbaja music or the Singkhel. They are like:-

- (1) -BHOENRO PAR.
- (2) -DE GANSAN PAR.
- (3) -DURLANACHA PAR
- (4) -HALDI KHELA PAR.
- (5) -JHI BOLEN PAR.
- (6) -LAGAN PAR.

- (7) -BAT BASEN PAR OR BAT CHALEN PAR.
- (8) -BANDHUMILAN PAR.
- (9) -MODO JHAREN PAR.
- (10) -MUHUJUAR PAR.
- (11) -BIHASALIAPAR.
- (12) -PANTI DUMURI PAR.
- (13) -MANGALPAR.
- (14) -KHARDIA PAR.
- (15) -KALSAPAR.

The above par may be clear as the following ways.They are like:-

(1) BHOENRO PAR.:-

The Singlias of this Singbaja music play the following music for the worshipping of their * Devta (One character who acts as the devta) Bhoenro.

MUSIC:-

(A) KIDI GIJA GIJAN/KIDI GIJA GIJAN

1 2 3 4 5 6

KIDI GIJA GIJAN/ GI JAN GIN''

1 2 3 4 5 6

(B) KIN GIN GIN /KIN GIN GIN

1 2 3 4 5 6

KIN GIN GIN /GIDANA GIN S''

1 2 3 4 5 6

(2) DE GANSAN PAR:-The people go the Temple or the Gudi & worship him/her by giving the Tel(Oil) & Haldi for the satisfaction of the Devis or the Devtas.So, they play this type of the music before the playing of the Singbaja or the Singkhel.

MATRA-14

MUSIC:-

“GINGAJINA

1

KINKIN

2

KITINA

3

/KITINAK

4

GIN GADIGIN GADIGIN TUM

5 6 7 8

CHAK TUM/ CHAK TUM TUM CHAK”

9 10 11 12 13 14

TALI- 1, 4, 11

KHALI-8

3) GANSAN PAR:-The instrumentalist play this music during the time of the marriage ceremony of the bride & the bride groom.So, they play this music.

MATRA-14

MUSIC:-

“GINGAJINA

1

KINKIN

2

KITINA

3

/KITINAK 4

GIN GADIGIN GADIGIN TUM

5 6 7 8

CHAK TUM/ CHAK TUM TUM CHAK”

9 10 11 12 13 14

TALI - 1, 4, 11

KHALI-8

(4) DURLANACHA PAR:-

This par music is another most important music of the Singbaja music.in this par the Bajianas play the Durianacha par music.At the sametime in the marriage ceremony the people lift to the bridegroom with the help of the Paria(it is the things which is made with the bamboo pati).They also so show the dance by following the Durianacha par music. TAL-DADRA

MUSIC.-

“GIN GADINI KI GIJIN/ SGIN GAJINI KI

GUIN S

GAJIN/KINKI GIJIN S”

(5) HALDI KHELA PAR:-

The Haldi Khela par music is played by the player at the time of the playing of the Haldi in the marriage place or at the place of the Modo(or Bedi).So, they play this music for the above purposes.

TAL-DADRA

MUSIC:-

“GINGIN GINGIN GIN S

1 2 3

GINGIN GINGIN GIN S”

4 5 6

(6) **JHI BOLEN PAR:** - The Tai which use in this par is the same as the Tai of the Dichandi tal. This par is played at the time of the bidae programme of the Bride in marriage ceremony; MATRA-14

“GINGIN GIDINGIN/GIN GIN GIN

1 2 3 4 5 6

GIDIN

7

TUM CHAK TUM/CHAK TUM TUM

8 9 10 11 12 13

CHAK”

14

(7) **LAGAN PAR OR THE HASTA LAGAN PAR OR MANGAL PAR:-**

This par music is very important music of the Singbaja team. It is also the very indispensable for the Hast lagana of the bride & the bridegroom in the marriage ceremony programme. So they play this par music for the marriage programme of the bride & the bride groom. MATRA-14

“GIDIGIN SGIDIGIN SGIJAGIN

1 2 3 4 5

GADAGINS

6 7

TUM CHAK TUM CHAK TUM TUM

8 9 10 11 12 13

CHAK”

14

(8) **BAT BASEN PAR OR THE BAT CHALEN PAR :-**

This par is played by the people in the purpose of the walking of the people in the marriage ceremony. So, they play this par music.

“GIN GIN GIN /GIN GIDIN GIN GIN

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

GIN GIN GIDIN/GIN GIN GIN

8 9 10 11 12 13

GIDKI GIMDHA”

14 15

“TUM CHAK TUM CHAK TUM

1 2 3 4 5

TUM

6

CHAK

7

TUM CHAK TUM CHAK TUM TUM

8 9 10 11 12 13

CHAK”

14

(9) BANDHUMILAN PAR:-

The people play this music at the time of the Welcome ceremony of their friends which are popularly known as the Bandhumilan. So, this par music is known as the Bandhumilan par music.

MATRA-6, TAL-DADRA

“JAGI NIKI GIN /JA KI DA

1 2 3 4 5 6

JA GIJINI GIN JA KIDA S”

1 2 3 4 5

(10) MODO J HAREN PAR:

This par music is played by the Bajanias when the marriage ceremony is ends & they want to make the feast or the Bhoji. The Modojharen is the last feast of the marriage ceremony. So, they play this par music & play the Singkhel to each other (Among the Singlias or the instrumentalists).

TAL-DADRA

MUSIC:-

“GADINI GINKI GIN / GIDAGIN

1 2 3 4

GINGIN GADINI

5 6

GADIN GINKI GIN / GIDAGIN

1 2 3 4

GINGIN GADINI”

5 6

(11) MUHUJUAR PAR: -

Before the Barati (PROCESSION) the player play this par music. After this par music the Bridegroom party start their travel to the bride house. So, at this time they play this type of music.

“GIN GA JINA / GIN GA JINA GIN

GIN GIN GADI / GIN GADI GIN S

TUM CHAK TUM / CHAK TUM TUM CHAK

TUM CHAK TUM / CHAK TUM TUM CHAK”

(12) BIHASALIA PAR

“BIHA” means the marriage & “SALIA” means the place where the marriage is take place. So, the people play this par music in that place which is known as the Bihasalia.

“TAK TAK TAK I TAK GIDINI GIDINI
 GIDINI GIN TAKTAK/ SGIN TAKTAK
 GADI GINA GIN JA GIDA S”

(13) PANTI DUMURI PAR:-

TAL-KAHARBA

MATRA-8

MUSIC:-

TALI-1 MATRA

KHALI- 5 MATRA

“GIN GAJINIKI GAJINIKI TA
 GIN GAJINIKI GAJINIKI TA”

(14) KHARDIA PAR:-

It is also the most important

“GIDA GIN JHA/GIDA GIN

1 2 3 4

GIDA GIN JHA/ GIDA GIN JHA

1 2 3 4 5 6

KHITA KHIT TA/KHITA KHITTA

1 2 3 4 5 6

KHITA KHIT TA/KHITA KHIT TA’

1 2 3 4 5 6

(15) KALSA PAR:-

This par is played by the people at the starting of the marriage ceremony programme. So, they play this par music.

TAL-DADRA

“GINI GINI GIN/JAN JANS

1 2 3 4 5 6

Training & Production

Training and production is one of the objective of the present report. Although it is a community oriented dance or a dance form that is confined to a given community, the educated youth are reluctant to accept it as a profession. However, after some changes or fusion the dance is attracting youth from the Dom caste and even in some pockets youth from other caste groups are also showing interest in the dance. The dance was limited to Dom caste because this caste group was also engaged in the disposal of dead animals like cow, bullock and buffalo etc. Hence, they had access to leather and hide of dead animals. Even the Dom caste people had knowledge of treading and tanning of leather/skin. It is therefore, the dance became confined to them. Now that the instruments have undergone changes and plastic materials are being used these instruments are not considered 'not-to-be-touched'.

under the above circumstances for the present training and production the following youth have been selected from among about fifty (50) interested youths. Most youth who are selected for the training are from nearby villages of the Bhawanipatna town, the Headquarter town of Kalahandi.

List of Youth Trained

1	Pabitra Gahir	Dhol
2	Jagdish Goud	Jhanj
3	Upendra Bag	Nishan
4	Lagna Naik	Nishan
5	Rathanka Naik	Nishan

6	Sanu Munda	Taal
7	Hemanta Behera	Tasa
8	Suresh Thanapati	Taal
9	Dhirendra Podh	Nishan
10	Tickchan Podh	Tasa
11	Sibul Gahir	Tasa
12	Bibhuti Gahir	Taal
13	Pinkulu Kaibarta	Dhol
14	Chandan Kaibarta	Dhol
15	Rakesh Kaibarta	Nishan
16	Bhakta Kaibarta	Tasa
17	Bidyadhar Mangaraj	Mahuri
18	Nilambar Mangaraj	Mahuri

Among the youth many youth acquired skill to play multiple instrument like, a single player can play Nishan, Dhol and Tasa. But as far as Mahuri is concerned only two youth and adult could manage to learn Mahuri. Similarly in the limited period of training the Khel like Sanpjol, Manisha-Pashu Nacha etc. could not be covered. However, four youth named Sri Pabitra Gahir, Sri Sana Parabhoi, Sri Lagna Naik, Sri Rakesh Kaibarta have acquired the skill of Singhlia or Singh Khel artist. The present writer is happy to state that these artists are in touch with the writer and many of them are successfully engaged in the profession, although of fusion type.

Conclusion

This part of the report is an attempt to assess and record the changes or modifications taken place in the dance form. Dance form are inherent part of intangible cultural heritage of a set of people. It can't die but it is certainly subject to changes and transformation. Modern culture has influenced our food, house, education, clothings, thought processes and above all the culture. The culture being a dynamic entity of a people and the place it automatically absorb change agents and changes itself. The net result being, the change is so slow and permanent that one hardly notice the change and at each state of time one accept it as our own.

Singh Baja has also undergone many changes, if one take a look in the time frame of 20 to 25 years. The instruments, costume, rhythm and dance style (Khel) have been transformed yet it is the same Singh Baja. One accept it without any question.

The Instrument

- [a] A new instrument 'Jhumka' is added to the team. It is a metal case of iron or brass with iron balls inside. It produces sound when moved with the hands. The player uses a pair of Jhumka. Jhumka is neither costly nor difficult to play. Hence, it got easily accepted in the team. If added bits of modern or contemporary rhythm.
- [b] The Tri-bakra Mahuri has been replaced with a straight 'Sahanai' type Mahuri. It is easy to procure and replace as these are widely available in the market. The Rhythm is not same as Mahuri but it serves the purpose.

- [c] The 'Tasa' is no more made of leather either Goat or Kutra but of plastic leather and played with a pair of plastic rod. Bamboo sticks are not having that strength to beat the Tasa to produce sound. The sound produce from leather Tasa and plastic Tasa are quite different
- [d] The Nishan players now play or beat the Nishan with thick rubber, mostly the inner rim of the truck tyre. These are easy to get from the 'Bangar' or 'Kabadi' walas. The availability of leather rope is very remote these days. This has also changed the Rhythm scale.

The Dance

As far as dance style or Khelas are concerned many Khelas have been dropped. The Singlia neither practice them nor the audience have time for such stunts. On the other hand stunt like lifting the cycle and many such new stunts have been introduced.

Par is an important aspect of the Singh Baja. For each event or occasion the 'Pars' is different. For example if a female guest, like sister or aunty arrive the invitation or welcome par is of a particular set, where as if a male guest arrives like brother, uncle or father-in-law etc. the 'Par' become different. But now a days instead of par the Singh Baja players prefers to play a popular Hindi film dhun. The change is done unnoticed as marriage or such events are celebrated in the some family once in a blue moon, may be 10-12 years gap. Hence, many do not insist on the traditional beat, rhythm, song, music or par etc.

Similarly the changes in the costume are also noteworthy. The Singlia now a day use a short pant instead a 'dhoti' (long saree) and tri-kachha. And as a

precautionary measure put a protective kachha over it. As far as other players are concerned the Dholia also uses a short pant and rest like Mahuria, Tasia and Jhumka wala use long trousers of the same pattern and colour. The attire is more like a band party.

Some group of Singh Baja even gone a step forward and inducted two additional drumset, tambourines and cymbal sets in addition to the traditional Nishan, Tasa, Dhol and Mahuri. The number of participants in the group have risen to 10 to 12 persons. The present form of Singh Baja is devoid of Singh or horn and it remain only a commercial-professional Singh Baja Drum Set fusion. Occasional user does not differentiate the modernisation or fusion from the original form.

But it is matter of concern that the Singh Baja is in the verge of rapid transformation, and if adequate measures are not taken the time is not far when the traditional dance form of a strong, energetic, dynamic community will vanish from the cultural scenario of Kalahandi and adjoining districts. Hence, all the cultural minded persons, researchers, intellectuals and cultural administrator should come together to save this dance form from further transformation to reach a state of dying-art form.

COMPLETE PERFORMANCE UNDER THE SCHEME OF ICH The Traditional Folk Dance of Singh Baja



COMPLETE PERFORMANCE UNDER THE SCHEME OF ICH The Traditional Folk Dance of Singh Baja



RESEARCH WORK UNDER THE SCHEME OF ICH The Traditional Folk Dance of Singh Baja



RESEARCH WORK UNDER THE SCHEME OF ICH The Traditional Folk Dance of Singh Baja



RESEARCH WORK UNDER THE SCHEME OF ICH THE TRADITIONAL FOLK DANCE OF SINGH BAJA



**RESEARCH WORK UNDER THE SCHEME OF ICH
THE TRADITIONAL FOLK DANCE OF SINGH BAJA**



TRAINING PROGRAMME UNDER THE SCHEME OF ICH The Traditional Folk Dance of Singh Baja



TRAINING PROGRAMME UNDER THE SCHEME OF ICH The Traditional Folk Dance of Singh Baja



**INSTRUMENT USING THE TRADITIONAL FOLK DANCE OF
SINGH BAJA
UNDER THE SCHEME OF ICH**



DHOL

NISHAN



TASHA

**INSTGRUMENTS USING IN THE
TRADITIONAL FOLK DANCE OF SINGH BAJA
UNDER THE SCHEME OF ICH**



MAHURI



JHUMUKA



JHANJ