

## FOLKLORE IN RELATION TO ANTHROPOLOGY

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Having a very remote antiquity in the collection, study and analysis the subject of folklore has always been regarded as the most distinctive and scholastic venture in highlighting human dimensions. Folklore embraces a boundless heterogeneous field of study. Thus its affiliation to the humanities in the one hand and to the social sciences, on the other, is highly distinguishing and unique in itself. Folklore, by virtue of its novel approach in exploring interconnected domain, is specifically related to anthropology having a precious tradition of interdisciplinary understanding. From long time past a good number of world famous anthropologists became attracted to the nature and extent of folkloric research tradition and the specific features of the materials constituting the theme of the subject mentioned. The united appeal of the American Folklore Society and the American Anthropological association during the beginning the 5<sup>th</sup> decade of the last century explored the new and deep analytical pattern of the thinking of the present period. In Europe, the organised efforts of the folklorists and the ethnologists were closely seen and which was substantial in total human understanding. In India, at that lime or sometime later folkloric materials were seen to be published in anthropological/ethnological journals with anthropological orientations. Ultimately folklore research domain has been influenced by the categorical methodology of anthropology. It has been done through the adoption of field work tradition. Eventually folklore study has been highly influenced by the ideology of interdisciplinary understandings.

Right from the days of W.J. Thoms, to whom the credit of coining of the term folklore goes, the study and researches in folklore have been receiving different treatment through the ages. It has been defined by the scholars in different ways and the diversity of definitions sometimes causes confusions amongst the persons devoted to the discussion of this branch of study.

Moreover its affiliation to the humanities and also to the social sciences is very interesting, though it brings confusion in the understanding of the subject as a whole. These two groups of workers utilize the materials of folklore according to their own lines of thinking. But, on the whole, the subject in question is a vast one and it embraces a complicated filed of knowledge in relation to the different activities of man.

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Like folklore the field of anthropology is also vast and boundless though the latter is somewhat systematic. Amongst the different branches of anthropology, cultural anthropology comes very near to folklore so far as the underlying thoughts and ideas of the subjects concerned are taken into consideration. A close link is to be detected between the definitions of folklore and culture which is the basic concept in cultural anthropology. William Bacom has shown the resemblance between the definitions of the terms folklore and culture. The former indicates "the manners, customs, observances, superstitions, ballads, proverbs, etc. of the olden time." It was propounded by W.J. Thoms in his letter to *The Athenaeum* in the year 1846. On the other hand, E.B. Tylor introduced the term culture in 1865 in his book *Primitive Culture*, published in 1871, in which he discussed the matter in an analytical way. Culture, according to him, incorporates that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. These similarities in the basic concepts of folklore and anthropology have brought the two branches of study under common category. Anthropologists studying the non-literate societies always use the folklore materials to focus the different facts of workings of the human society. Folklore constitutes a part of culture which is considered as a pertinent sphere of study of the cultural anthropologists in understanding the nature and extent of the society of man.

The history of the development of folklore acknowledges the fact that though it has been the point of discussion of scholars belonging to the diversified disciplines yet folklore has received due recognition from the works of the anthropologists. The reputed earlier anthropologists like Tylor, Boas and Frazer had given much importance to folklore in their researches in connection with the study of human society and culture. Tylor in his *Researches into the Early History of Mankind* (1865) focused the different beliefs and attitudes of man in his day to day living. The different attitude system of men was authentically discussed by him in the later years when he published his *Primitive Culture* in 1871. Sir J.G. Frazer's vast collections of folklore and superstitions spread over the twelve volumes of *The Golden Bough* (1911-12), the most celebrated book of world-wide fame. The work mentioned is considered as the pioneer in the systematic collection and study of folklore materials from the different parts of the world. It was Boas who took a keen initiatives in the study of folklore, the background of anthropology. The American Folklore Society of those days was very much influenced by the anthropologically oriented scholars like Boas who edited the journal of the Society from 1903 to 1924. In his celebrated works on the collection of folklore of the Tsimshian and Kwakiutl, Boas put forward the proposition that corpus of traditional tales in a particulars culture reflect the traits of material culture. These tales are essential in the understanding of human society as he thinks the tales provide many valuable clues to the vanished elements of tribal history. While writing about the

“Growth of Indian Mythology” he has opined that : if we have a full collection of the tales and myths of all the tribes of a certain region, and then tabulate the number of incidents which all the collections from each tribe have in common with any selected tribe, the number of common incidents will be the larger the more intimate the relation of the two tribes and the nearer they live together” (Boas, 1896). He collected folktales from different aboriginal groups and then tried to evaluate the geographical locations and linguistic divisions of these with examples. He considered that the recording of folklore was a fruitful field technique for the anthropologists. It helps in the understanding of the very nature of culture with minimum chance of overlooking of the different traits. Most of the time it provides an ethnocentric approach to the way of life which Boas has felt in his study on *Kwakiutl culture as reflected in Mythology* (1935).

This particular line approach had been maintained by Boas ‘worthy pupils like Benedict and Herskovits for a greater period. Benedict gave a befitting lead in the anthropological folklore in America in the capacity of the editor of the journal of American Folklore Society. Her remarkable work, *Zuni Mythology* (1931), opened a new vista in the study of folklore in the anthropological background. Herskovits has done a tremendous work in the understanding of culture through folklore studies. He has emphasized that “a substantial body of folklore is more than the literary expression of a people. It is, in a very real sense, their ethnography which, if systematized by the student, gives a picture of their way of life” (1948 : 418). Recently Bascom has done a series of works in the field of anthropological folklore which have caused a great deal in the revival of the techniques of study started by Boas. In his Presidential Address to the Sixty-fourth annual meeting of the American Folklore Society, 1952, he has tried to present the practical aspect of the utilization of folklore materials in the study of culture vis-à-vis anthropology. He emphasized that ‘folklore is studied in anthropology because it is a part of man’s intelligently realized traditions and customs, a part of his social heritage. It can be analysed in same way as other customs and traditions, in terms of form and functions, or of interactions with other aspects of culture. It presents the same problems of growth and change, and is subject to the same processes of diffusion, invention, acceptance or rejection, and integration. It can be used, like other aspects of culture, for studies of these processes of those of acculturation, patterning, the relation between culture and environment or between culture and personality” (Bascom W.R. 1965 : 28-29).

It is to be noted that anthropological approach of folkloristic study has attracted the attention of many non-anthropological folklorists who have attached importance to the systematic attempts of anthropological folklorists. Herbert Halpert, in his article, “Some undeveloped areas in American folklore” has drawn the attention of the non-anthropological folklorists to utilize the ethnographic data in their study. He is supported by many renowned folklorists like Alan Lomax, Mac Edward

Leach, etc. The reputed historian-folklorist like R.M. Dorson has strongly opined that the field-workers in folklore would be very much benefited from the ethnographical studies. Stith Thompson has emphasized that folklore and ethnology are interdependent disciplines as their intimacy is so deep that it is very difficult to draw boundaries between the two. The folklorists try to enquire into the traditional social organization and material culture whereas the ethnologists feel helpless in their study if they do not know the songs and stories, myths and beliefs of the people they study. In Europe, the organized efforts of the folklorists and ethnologists are closely seen. In the United States, the study of folklore with the direct help of the ethnologists has opened up new vistas. The folklore of the North American Indian, explored through the joint efforts of the folklorists and the ethnologists is now considered as better recorded and analysed than that of any non-literate group. The American Folklore Society has been receiving the active interest and fruitful participation of the American anthropologists since its inception.

P.E. Goddard's observations, though made fifty eight years ago, deserve mention in tracing the relation of folklore to anthropology. He asserts that folklore materials can better be utilised in the study of social contact amongst the different linguistic groups in a country. He has pointed out the fact that closely related languages of the Siouan stock were spoken in the Northern Plains and on the South Atlantic Coast of North America discloses that the present far separated peoples were once in social contact. Among the unlettered people folklore takes the place of literature in which the total life and activities of the people are reflected. It is seen that the folk narratives are not the product of a single person. During verbal transmission these are subject to moulding by a number of individuals until they reflect the conceptions of the average people of the community concerned. At the time of studying and analyzing folklore as a part of culture it should be classified and the geographical areas over which a particular type of folklore are seen to spread over should be determined. From the nature of distribution of folktales the areas and centres of cultural transmission and inter-change can be detected.

Therefore, from the above discussion it is seen that the folklorists related to the different disciplines like history, psychology, literature, etc. possess a keen interest in the utilization of anthropological methods in the study of folklore. On the other hand, the anthropologists have realized the importance of folkloristic materials in the study of anthropology has not yet been so much benefited by the analysis of the folkloristic materials though it is the richest country in the world so far as the vast wealth of folklore is concerned. India is to be considered as a fruitful field in the adoption of folklore as a methodological tool in the study of society and culture.

The study of Indian folklore started as a branch of Indology. The traditions of India's diversified culture and civilization attracted the attention of many persons of the West, interested in the study of comparative religion, mythology, philology,

etc., and they began to unveil the different features of India's age-old customs and way of life. The study of folklore got stimulations, first of all, from William Jones, the founder of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal started in 1784. In the journal of the Society a few writings on the different aspects of folklore began to publish regularly. The Bombay branch of the Asiatic Society, established in 1804, also took initiative in the matter. A large number of articles on folklore began to appear in the pages of the Indian Antiquary which was started at Bombay in the year 1872 under the editorship of James Burges. In that journal folklore received a special treatment and it had been separated from the antiquities. The publication of the book entitled "Hindu manners, customs and ceremonies" in the year 1897, written by J.A. Dubois threw some new light on the manner of collection and display of the folklore materials. In this connection special mention may be made of a large number of writings, on Indian folklore by R.C. Temple and W. Crooke. They were the editors of the two journals viz. Punjab Notes and Queries and North Indian Notes and Queries respectively. Since then a good many western and Indian scholars devoted their lives to the collection and study of folklore in Indian background. Of them the names of J. Ferguson, J.D. Anderson, M.A. Sherring, H.H. Risley, E.A. Gait, H. Beverly, E.T., Dalton, W.G. Archer, C.H. Bompas, D.A. Mackenzie, Lal Behari Day, G.S. Dutt, S.C. Mitra, D. Mitra-Majumdar, are important. The authentic writings resulted from the painstaking works on Indian folklore found their place in the pages of the famous journals of Indian and foreign origin. Still today some of these are publishing valuable materials on the subject in question. Mention may be made of the journals like the *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, Bombay (1886), *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, London, (1886), *Journal of the American Folklore*, New York, (1888), *Folklore*, London (1890), *The Calcutta Review*, Calcutta, (1890), *Man*, London, (1901), *Modern Review*, Calcutta, (1907), *Journal of the Mythic Society*, Bangalore, (1909), *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Patna, (1915), *Man in India*, Ranchi, (1921), *Ethnos*, Stockholm, (1936), *Journal of Indian Anthropological Society*, Calcutta, (1938), *The Eastern Anthropologist*, Lucknow, (1947), *Vanyajati*, New Delhi (1952), *Journal of Society Research*, Ranchi, (1958), *Folklore*, Calcutta, (1952). Besides, the latter mentioned journals a few professional journals in the regional languages have recently been started to appear regularly. The Bengali Journal *Lakasanskriti* (1971), brought out quarterly by the Academy of Folklore, Calcutta, has already won over the heart of the lovers and researchers of folklore. When the vast amount of folklore materials from India received a world wide publicity through these journals, a few anthropologist were very naturally attracted to these invaluable materials of Indian society and culture. The first Indian anthropologist who realized the importance of the utilization of folklore materials in understanding Indian Society was S.C. Roy. Roy, through his extensive field investigation in Chotonagpur, could understand the importance

of customs and traditions in the day to day life and activities of the people and that was why he wanted to shape the very system of collection and analysis of these materials in a scientific way. He expressed his ideas thus : “the collection of folklore materials, particularly folk traditions and folk customs and folk rites, has not hitherto been altogether neglected in India. But the task of systematizing, sifting and analyzing them yet remain to be undertaken”. (Roy, 1932 : 353). He attracted the attention of the folklorists working in India to the activities of the Folklore Society of London and in the inaugural issue of 'Man in India' he wrote : “If cannot fail to be of great assistance to Indian students of folklore if they bring themselves in closer touch with such a society as the Folklore Society of London through a more active co-operation with its aims and ambitions and by establishing themselves as members of the society”. He devoted his journal to the cause of scientific study of folklore in addition to the different anthropological discussions. Prof. D. P. Mukherji while commenting on the trends of works of the Indian sociologists once remarked : “It is not enough for the Indian sociologist to be a sociologist. He must be an, Indian first, that is, he is to share in the folkways, mores, customs and traditions for the purpose of understanding his social system and what lies between it and beyond it. He should be steeped in the Indian, lore, both high and low “. (1958: 238).

The next anthropologist who devoted much time in the study of tribal folklore was Verrier Elwin. He made extensive field work in Assam, Orissa and Central Provinces where he tried to focus on the life and activities of the people through the analysis of their folklore. In this connections the names of D.N. Majumdar and S.C. Dube should be mentioned as their works on tribal folklore materials are still in vogue in the ethnographical works of the anthropologists. But it is grievous to point out that at present no serious attempt are made to analyse these folklore to get an overall idea on the workings of the various factors of the societies concerned. The Indian anthropologists of the present period are reluctant to utilize folklore materials as methodological tools in the study of human society though there is a great possibility in this regard. It is high time; the anthropologists should lay stress on the vast wealth of folklore materials to expose the intermingling pattern of social environment of men in India.

There are so many factors in folklore which can be utilized for the anthropological study of the society and culture of the people both tribal and non-tribal. Here, by way of example, we have attempted to show the importance and the immediate necessity of utilizing the nature and extent of the patterns of worship of the folk deities and festivals connected with them in the anthropological study. The social anthropologists in India are very keen in tracing out the inter-personal, inter-caste and inter-communal relationship patterns and stresses are being laid by some to examine the trends of unity in the overall diversity of the different groups of people. In India this sort of study can be taken up with the help of numerous

festivals of the folk deities who are found in the open field, at the foot of a tree, or by the side of a stream. These deities are considered as the tutelary deities of the village and they are propitiated by all the villagers irrespective of castes and classes. In West Bengal these deities are to be found at each and every village and they are known as Chandī, Sitala, Manasa etc. All these deities are, most of the time, found in the possession of the lower caste people. The priest of these deities also come from these communities. There is always a legendary background which illustrated the connection of the deity with the particular lower caste family officiating as the priests. The impact of the great tradition of Hinduism have caused a great deal in the upgrading of these deities and due to which lower caste priests have been replaced by the Brahman priests. A number of folk narratives are seen to be associated with the phenomenon of gradual introduction of these folk deities into the fold of Hinduism. These narratives are recognized as Mangal Kavyas. In Medieval Bengali literature a vast amount of materials relating to the growth and development of the different Mangal Kavyas are seen which are observed by the lower caste-people and then how it has been upgraded to the level of the orthodox Hindu fold, The social anthropologists can easily take up these folk narratives to evaluate the traditional set up and the interactions of through and ideas of the different segments on the society. The scientific analysis of these narratives should also be supplemented by the direct observations on the nature of worship and the pattern of participation of the people from the different caste and communities.

Throughout the south-western region of West Bengal and the eastern border of the Santal Parganas district of Bihar it has been noted that each of such deities is worshipped in a definite number of villages at different time throughout the year. The village headman makes the preliminary contact and the non-Brahman priest arrange to worship the deity following the traditional customs of the village society. In the worship of these deities a large numbers of villagers belonging to the different castes and communities stand on the common platform and they observe some common restrictions in the taking of food and drink. A unique pattern of the distributions of the different services and subsequent remunerations on the basis of caste and community is seen which is governed by age-old customs and traditions. The number of ballads that are generally recited in praise of the deity present many interesting points on the socio-religious life of the rural settings.

Much has been said about the *Gajan* festival of villages of West Bengal by the different scholars. The festival is centered round two different village deities – Dharma and Siva. The former festival, held in the month of *Vaisak* (April-May), is known as the Gajan of Dharma and the latter one is called as the Gajan of Siva which takes place in the month of *Chaitra* (March-April). The scholars differ amongst themselves in their opinions about the origin of Dharma, the worship of whom takes place in each and every village of the south-western part of West Bengal. But the people from the lower ranks of the society are found to participate

in a large number and naturally a great many indigenous elements are seen to be associated with the propitiation of deity. Some scholars are of opinion that in due course the Gajan of Dharma has been transformed into the Gajan of Siva because of the impact of Hinduism. Both the *Gajans* are essentially the same but certain differences are to be marked in the nature of participation of the people and the appointment of Brahman and non Brahman priest. The Dharma-Mangal Kavyas illustrating the growth, development and the introduction of Dharma into the greater fold of Hinduism from the non-Aryan state reflect many interesting features of study from the anthropological view points. A comparative study of the two Gajan festivals in the background of the nature of participation of the different castes and communities would reveal many interesting points on the inter-caste and inter-communal interactions. The ballads that are recited during the festivals are still to be analysed sociologically to evaluate these in the context of the society and culture of the indigenous population of Bengal.

The folkloristic materials on the nature and the patters of the fold deities can easily be taken up as important tool for studying the matrix of the rural society. The nature of participation of the people in the different phases of the ceremonies after breaking through all the barriers of castes and classes indicates the trends of social integration. The methods of study should be conducted in the following way :

#### **The Folk Deities**

The deities that are worshipped over a particular geographical region should be collected systematically and then these should be grouped as per their importance in the life and activities of the region. Then the groupings should also be made in the hierarchical pattern of the deities. The Vedic and non-Vedic traditions amongst the deities are to be brought out and a record should be kept about the interactions of the two traditions over each other.

#### **The Cults of the Folk Deities**

The nature of worship of the individual deity should be analysed very carefully to have a correct idea on the indigenous elements and also the diffusion of the foreign elements in it.

#### **The Priests of the Folk Deities**

The traditional non-Brahman priest of the deities and their status in the socio-religious life of the region are the chief matters of concern here. The roles played by the priests belonging to the low caste groups in the day to day life of the high caste people would reveal the socio-ritual status of the villages. The pattern of interactions of the Brahman priest and the non-Brahman priest and of their impact on the life of the locality should be focused.



### **The Fairs and Festivals**

The nature and types of fairs and festivals connected with the worship of the village deities and the behavioral patterns of the people in the common participation of these collective rituals are of special importance in the study of the social relationship of different kinds.

The whole study is to be conducted from two aspects – one from the vast amount of oral traditional materials together with the direct observations from the actual field, and the other from valuable wealth of folk literature that have already been collected and published by the scholars of different disciplines. These materials are still waiting from proper scientific analysis which is the task of the anthropologists, specially who have devoted themselves to the studies of folklore.

## **II**

Folklore's relationship to anthropology would be more clearer and intriguing when it is evaluated in the sphere of interdisciplinary research understandings. Anthropology as a holistic subject on human life-ways is characteristically interdisciplinary thinking oriented. In this connection it is to be noted that the discipline of folklore is symptomatically multidisciplinary in orientation and approach. It is out of the question to expect all types of expertise from a sole personality – there develops the necessity for the galaxy of scholars and workers having proficiencies in various facets of human thinking pattern and workmanship. When they dedicate themselves in the spirit of team work with the designing of homogenous view-points to explore human dimension, there develops what is known as Interdisciplinary Research. It is to be noted with paramount importance that from long time past some erudite scholars with anthropological persuasion started focusing the study of folklore in the line of interdisciplinary standpoint as conceived by anthropology in its disclosing of various mysteries relating to human phenomena. Since long time past the discipline of folklore has been investigating into the life, thinking and activities of human communities throughout the world and by means of its focus of attention and requisite analysis it could explore the vast dimensions of human existence in its totality. Mention may be made that right from its inception this particular discipline has been attuned with the variegated situational contexts of the scholars from the diversified disciplines. By being developed from the concept of oral traditional materials in the earliest phase of its study folklore has travelled a long way through the ages and during this continuous phase of its journey folklore could assimilate multitudes of thoughts and ideas from various disciplines meant for unveiling the human mysteries of different nature and extent. As a result of this embracing deliberately of the thoughts and ideas of different spheres of study centering round human achievements folklore could reflect in itself a particular pattern of synthetic amalgamation of multifarious ways and means to present itself as a complete study of man. The inquisitiveness and

analytical attitudes of many scholars, especially in Europe, in the domain of human studies during the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century gave the folklore a new and effective turn. Considering all these affairs which were raised in the global perspective the eminent folklorist of those days and the Founder President of the London Folklore Society, Sir Laurence Gomme, wrote a book, in 1892, entitled, *Ethnology in Folklore*, in which he categorically established the discipline of folklore as the part and parcel of human science. He emphasized that the human patterns and perspectives could never be explained categorically without the help of folklore study, and at the same time, folklore could not be brought under clear exposition without its close marriage with the different disciplines of social sciences pledged to explore human consequences. It was perhaps the first serious attempt to draw the attention of the scholars in various disciplines studying human affairs to assemble at the common platform to make folklore an integrated and all purposive medium of study. Then it was during the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century folklore received an all-rounded effort and enthusiasm of the American social scientists and through a long term and depth-oriented discussion folklore was substantially raised to the level of integrated human science.

Of late, folklore study throughout the world has attained the status of an independent discipline devoted to the exploration of multiplex human socio-cultural system. By this time specific methodological tools have been adopted to utilise these in the domain of folklore study and researches. But what is more important is that all the aspects of the study in folklore must be conducted through the employment of interdisciplinary research methodology. As because folklore by virtue of its development through the ages has been characterized by the close-set impact of multiple thought patterns, so this particular domain cannot be properly focused without the exposition of the different bases of its formation of various situations in human life and lore through the application of interdisciplinary research understandings.

Man is versatile as a social animal and the society organised by him is vast like an ocean, and naturally it is very difficult rather impossible for a person to develop an overall idea of the complicated nature of human society with the help of his only specialized knowledge centering round a particular discipline. At the same time it is not at all possible for most of the scholars to get themselves acquainted with all the branches of knowledge dealing with man and his cultural achievements through time and space. The social research comprises the methods of studying and analysing the social process and then to find out the way to enter into the actual working of the social behaviour patterns. Various branches of the social sciences try to explore the nature and extent of the social process according to their own line of thinking. But it is to be noted that the comprehensive approach to the social problems would be very much productive if the boundary lines of the different disciplines are lifted to form a concerted sphere of study of the different

facets of human society. It can easily be understood from close observation that various social sciences do not work exclusively with discrete entities while studying the different social perspectives. Amongst many proposals that have been forwarded for the integration of various enquiries relating to human life and lore, none seems to enjoy the greater acceptance than the suggestion which instigates that particular problems be studied and analysed by a group of specialists from the different disciplines. Interdisciplinary research tends to cultivate amongst each participant a greater familiarity with the concepts and methodological procedures of other branches of study. In the way, interdepartmental cooperation provides important insights into the difficulties and obstacles which stand in the way of an effective integration. By showing that different disciplines use different levels of obstructions in their conceptualization as well as different methods in their approaches to problems, the interdisciplinary study and research project may actually lead to the realization that no connexion can be established between the respective fields of investigation.

The recognition of folklore as a holistic or multifaceted domain of human understanding is well-established now. Therefore, it is to be noted that in the sphere of the study and researches in folklore interdisciplinary approach is a must during the present day circumstances. Folklore has been universally regarded as the pragmatic expression of the psychology of man whether in the fields of philosophy, religion, science and medicine. This pragmatism in the background situation of human history is intelligible only when a number of disciplines surrounding human dimensions are put together to delve deep in the matter. There are numerous topics of study in folklore which can never be made totally successful until these are analysed in the perspective of all the disciplines, partly or wholly engaged in the study of the topic or topics concerned. As for instance, take the case after study of folktale. A folktale may be collected from the actual field or it can be studied from ready-made collections made by some other persons. Scholars from different disciplines study folktales but their angles of vision characteristically vary from one another. A man from literature would naturally restrict himself in the literary value of the folktale. The anthropologist would go into the socio-cultural importance of the tale in the perspective of the overall social forces influencing in man and his society. The linguist's main interest would be limited to the linguistic structure in the composition and also in the narration of the tale, whereas the cultural historians may find the tune sequence in relation to the different facets narrated in the tale of a particular human community. The psychologist attempts at studying the folktale of same type would find much materials in examining the group mentality and psychic traditions contained in the folktale. Folktales constitute the integral part of folklore study and from time immemorial scholars in the sphere of folklore have been collecting folktales to utilise these oral traditional materials in understanding the nature and extent of human civilization, and also in distinguishing one group

from the other in different ecological and cultural settings. It is beyond question that the analysis of folktales should be backed by the objectives put forward by the above-noted five distinct disciplines if the multidisciplinary perspective of folklore study is to be focused in the strict sense of the term.

In a country with heterogeneous human communities and multifarious beliefs and thoughts as well as diversified philosophic orientation like India, this sort of interdisciplinary study is inevitable especially in the domain of folklore and traditions. Folklore is intimately related to the basic patterns of life of the people of India; specially it is very much sensitive in the way of life of the rural/tribal communities. It was S.C. Roy, the father of Indian Ethnology, who, first of all, drew the attention of the Indologists to the functional aspects of folklore amongst the Indian people. He elucidated that the people of India lived in an atmosphere of folklore "from cradle to the grave", and thus he demanded proper scientific analysis of that branch of knowledge to find out the interacting patterns of human thoughts and sentiments. At the time of doing any action-oriented work for the overall development of human communities, the study and analysis of the folkloric materials related to the sentimental issues and value orientation must be done with careful attempts to conduct the work of development in a proper way. But the categorical success of this study pattern is dependent on the multidisciplinary outlook.

Development is now regarded as a very delicate and effective phenomenon in human social and cultural systems. It is, no doubt, a significant area of social concern specially of the folk society characterized by traditional background. The development of any society is directly effected by the four dimensions - population, organisation, environment, and technology; these are specifically interdependent in nature and extent. Thus their inacting patterns can only be evaluated through the adoption of interdisciplinary analysis. Otherwise, the whole attempt would result in a fruitless effort. The unidisciplinary approach to the various workings of the human communities provides a partial, top sided view of the socio-cultural reality. It has been accepted by all concerned that the different problems in human societies are caused by multiple forces which are closely linked with variegated reasons. Unidisciplinary approach to understand and clarify these reasons would prove totally baseless which will remind us the well-known touchy scene of a few blind men's attempt to understand the nature of an elephant by simply feeling its various parts of the body. In the present day research activities we have been deviated from this sort of superficial attempt to view the objects or various phenomena. Now the time has come to establish an integrated pattern of relationship amongst the different disciplines trying to understand the different parts of the whole perspective of man and nature, and thereby to develop a concerted study circle for having a closer and full-fledged view of the situation. It has been seen that mutual borrowing of concepts and techniques of analysis enhances the depth of study and it naturally helps in exploring the vast horizon of the phenomenon concerned. In human sciences we

very commonly make attempts to study the problems of social change and development. There is no denying of the fact that their problems are the outcome of large, section of human behaviour and multifarious human sentiments - the basic elements of folklore. The history of human civilization is a long process of change and continuity and there is an essential need for thorough interdisciplinary ideas to analyse the innumerable facts of various transformations of culture and traditions.

The study of various social institutions like marriage, kinship, medicine etc. is to be processed through biological interpretation in order to get the completed perspective of cultural patterns encircling these institutional phenomena. Culture is specifically the product of biology, and therefore, in human science culture is regarded as part of biology of man. Biological evolution, the direct outcome of human emergence, calls forth cultural change and cultural evolution gives rise to biological, adoption. Thus culture in all spheres of human life is needed to be evaluated in the background of the biological development which needs interdisciplinary methodology. Medicine is regarded as a bio-social institution. Medicines are applied to check and cure the diseases which are considered as the bio-cultural interaction of cultural evolution. In the attempt for the treatment of disease a well-integrated bio-cultural perspective functions in the social system of the people concerned. The biological and cultural constitution of reality plays a significant role in the treatment of disease. In the domain of etiology of diseases there are tradition-bound folkloric materials. Amongst the tribal and rural communities there are lots of complicated belief-patterns surrounding the causes of diseases and their successive treatment. These would be meaningful only when we put specific stress on these and come forward to evaluate these in the light of human experiences, sentiments, inquisitiveness based on direct observations as well as their relation with ecology and environment in whose midst the folk society has been developed through time and space. Thus, in the study of the public health and hygiene as well as for the overall development of this sphere, a close-set analysed of various factors of human biological features and cultural traditions is to be met with an integrated outlook. The whole process needs a new methodological principle in which age-old separatist ideas would find no place.

It is painful to note that in spite of its inevitability the interdisciplinary atmosphere has not yet been properly developed, in our country, in the broadest and multiplex horizon of folklore research. As a perfect human centred discipline specifically based on the altitude of exploring holistic life and activities of human beings folklore needs all rounded approach through the different angles to be put forward from variegated disciplines constituting the full-fledged human science. It is to be noted with great concern that the descriptive presentation of the folkloric materials has become obsolete now-a-days and there is an urgent need for an integrated functional approach in the analysis of the various facets of the data

collected from domain of folklore. The folklorist must come down to the people not as an amateurist but as a professional trained worker well-versed in the proper utilisation of methodological tools for time long and depth-oriented field research. It is due to this changed trend folklore has ultimately been identified as the categorical social science having multidisciplinary understandings. It is to be noted that this very concept has changed, to a great extent, the nature and extent of folklore study and research throughout the world. It is high time, Indian folklore domain should follow this trend of new thinking through the utilisation of the methods and principles of social sciences to create a parallel study pattern to run side by side with the present day global situational context.

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