

SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF TUSU SONGS

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Abstract

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Music is a living form of art. In folk society it forms an integral part of its life-cycle-daily, occasional and annual. Folk music is conditioned by racial habits, formalized as culture. It remains grafted with belief and reason the study of folk music, thus, becomes meaning full to understand how it reflex the society of which it forms an integral part. One of the most important prevalent trends of folk songs is 'Tusu' which is prevalent in Rarh Bangla in a special manner. 'Tusu' song is known in different places of Rarh in different names and sung in different ways with mixture of lyrics and tunes. 'This festival is not only a festival of Hindus. It is like a true public festival and local people from all the religion like Kora, Mahato, Munda, Lodha, Santal participate in this festival. 'Tusu' is not limited to any religious command. It is not limited to any treatment. The unmixed joy of people is evolved through this festival. The influence of tribal lyrics and tunes are clear in the 'Tusu' songs of Purulia region. 'Tusu' is worshipped as the Goddess of crops. This song can also be heard throughout the month of *Poush*.

Keyword - *Rarh, TusuBrata, Chaudal, Paush, SatiGhat, Tusudoll, Tusu, Bol, Ghat*

Introduction

"The impact of music on human life is gracious and profound. The presence of music with individuals, nature and societies all over the world. In general, the significance of music in human life is undeniable because, no other adjacent fine arts can activate human sensory feelings, imagination, thinking as much as music does. History of Indian music proclaims the fact that music become a medium to attain a world of spirituality and some sort of deliverance."¹

"In ancient period, common people expressed their opinion through simpler tune which was known as Deshi Sangeet. Later on this Sangeet is known as Folk song. Folk song usually means byword songs- that is to say – the songs which run

through the adoption of oral tradition based on ‘Shruti’ (which has been heard) and ‘Smriti’ (which has been remembered) are known as folk songs. The peasant class is the originator of these folk songs.”² Folk songs, according to lexicon, are those oral songs which are sung by the illiterate countrymen through the ages generation after generation. The ancient scholars of folk songs supported the aforementioned definition of folk songs.”² The history of Indian songs is mingled with the history of folk songs, the folk songs being the source of Indian songs. The history of Indian songs are created with the great works of great composers of music. The great composers appeared in different era and kept the course of Indian songs uninterrupted. The history of songs depends on racial and ethnic research of people. If we discuss about the Indian people then it can be seen that as most of the races have evanesced in a single body so different types of songs have been mingled to create a special trend. “The Negritor race coming from Africa, started living in different places of India. They were scattered in Andaman, Nicobar, hilly region of Tribankoor, Kochin, Rajmahal at Bihar and Assam. Then come the names of ancient Astroloyed and Proto-Astroloyed races. People of this ancient Astroloyed race are converted into different aborigines of India. Santal, Munda, Todo etc. have descended from the ancient Astroloyed race. Santal Pargana of South India and Rar region of West Bengal are their habitat. Their custom, rituals, festivals, dance and music are still alive among us. Their songs and dance are occupying a great place in our folk songs. Many of the lyrics and tunes of these aborigines have merged with the lyrics and tunes of conventional folk songs of Bengal, specially of Rar Bengal. The people of Mediterranean races namely Tamil, Karnataka live in Northern Gangatic region of Punjab, Sindhu, Rajputana and North Western region. As a result, their tune was mingled with the folk songs of those region. Moreover, the Mongolians established their habitat in the North

Eastern region and made the folk song more glorious. The last is the Vedic Aryan race or Nordic who started living in Punjab, Rajputana and around the borders of North Western region. Their songs are also merged with the folk songs of those regions. As the race of one region mingled with the other so the folk songs of India have also mingled with one another. The Pre-Vedic period men were divided into three classes, namely – Hunters, Herds men and Farmers. Then, men in rhymed motion and women in solo timber started to express their thoughts like songs.”³ The result of this expression was ancient songs and folk songs. The ancient man used to dance and sing socially in groups to celebrate birth & death, hunting, marriage ceremony, hypnotism etc. which can be traced out in history. Flutes made of bone and musical instruments made of leather are the instances of musical instruments found due to the excavation in Mohenjodaro and Harappa. These are the instances of demotic musical instruments. Flute made of bone is an example of the most ancient musical instrument. The famous musicians of that time namely Kohal, Bimba, Bashu, Matanga etc. have mentioned popular art based local songs as ‘DeshiShur’ (country melody). Thereafter, we get acquainted with some other groups. Those groups were usually known as ‘BoudhaJaan’, ‘SahajJaan’ and ‘HeenaJaan’. ‘SahajJaan’ is a collective group. The lower class people of the society as for example – fisherman, barber, goldsmith, harijaan were included in this group. The people of this class used to express their happiness through small verses which were known as ‘Charja Pad’. ‘CharjaGeeti’ is composed in demotic language. This language is forefather of present Matheli, Bengali, Assameese, and Oria languages. The demotic material can be observed in the language and lyrics of ‘Charja Pad’ which is considered as forefather of folk songs as well as Baul songs. The main idea of the ‘baults’ is – “ We have stuff in us, what is there in the universe.” So, they find the universe within themselves. They have sacrificed

everything in the name of God through their 'Baul Song'. So, to define the folk songs, it may be said that folk songs are the style of expression of non artificial hearts of group of people or a person from rural civilization which initially keeps streaming depending on oral tradition but without being influenced by 'RaagSangeet' (Indian classical songs) or modern popular songs. Such ancient form of singing style is folk song which is keenly related to day to day life of human. Diversity in tune, lyrics and articulation of folk songs can be observed from region to region. So, impact of folk song is different in different places. The 'Tusu' festival in the Rarh region of West Bengal is also such a festival. 'Tusu' song is sung on this occasion starting from 'AgrahayanSankranti' through the whole month of 'Poush'. 'Tusu' song is known in different places of Rarh in different names and sung in different ways with mixture of lyrics and tunes. 'Tusu' festival is not only a festival of Hindus. It is like a true public festival and local people from all the religion like Kora, Mahato, Munda, Lodha, Santal participate in this festival. 'Tusu' is not limited to any religious command. It is not limited to any treatment. The unmixed joy of people is evolved through this festival. The influence of tribal lyrics and tunes are clear in the 'Tusu' songs of Purulia region. "Tusu' is worshipped as the Goddess of crops. Idol of 'Tusu' can seen in different places which almost look like female dolls. Generally, the idol wears a crown made with glass paper and a saree made with red and blue colour papers. The idol wears golden ornaments in its hand and neck which are made with glass papers"⁴. This song can also be heard throughout the month of *Pousha* in the region of Birbhum, Bakura, Bardhamaan, Purulia, Medinipur and Murshidabaad due to the celebration 'Tusu' festival. In the Bakura district of West Bengal, at the dawn of AgrahayanSankranti, 'Itur' and 'Khola' is brought home to give life to 'Tusu'. "The woman folk sings songs throughout the month of *Poush*. Young girls along

with young boys and even aged women participate in the song. The convention of 'Tusu' festival differs from region to region. This 'Tusu' festival is prevalent in different regions of Purulia, Birbhum and Bakura of Rarh Bengal. Though the object and time of the celebration of the festival is same but its convention differs from place to place. ”⁵ 'Tusu' is named as *Toshala Devi* in Bankura. Apart from that the waves of joy flow in different parts of Bardhamaan during the month of *Poush*. Then comes the time to part with 'Tusu'. There are various festivals prevalent in the peasant society related to the harvest. 'Tusu' is the most famous among them. I happened to be in a Tusu fair for the first time in my life, The fair was being held on both sides of the Kassai river and Satighat. I saw gaudily dressed men and women, individually and in groups, pouring in large numbers from all directions chanting songs loudly with Tusu images of various moulds. They make Choural in various decorations. On the day before PoushSankranti they awake whole night and they were singing various song based on Tusu. On the day of Makar Sankranti, in the early morning they all came to the river with all musical instruments. It has been seen in some Tusu fairs that tribal women come with branches of flowers singing Tusu songs loudly. Caudal (Chaturdula) or a flower house, a kind of palanquin in which Tusu should be placed is so decorated with colorful papers and flowers that it has been become the symbol of Tusu itself now and it is immersed into water. It is amazing for strangers to see countless caudles or flower house being immerge into the stream at the fairs. A large number of people joined in this fair. Tusu parties facing each other's debating in songs, the situation in which can be compared with Tarja Lorai or Kobi Lorai. This day the people enjoy very much. They also eat various sweet dishes like Pita and Puli. The life force of the people of the world is revealed easily through various festivals. So

through the tusu festival People forget their pain, sorrow, fatigue and previous disappointments and appear with a new energy in the festivals.

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