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## A Study of Folk Arts and Folk Life of Odisha

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### ABSTRACT:

The name Odisha is derived from Sanskrit word **Odra Desa**-Ancient writers Pliny and Ptolemy described the Odra people as Oretes. Hence Paundras, Utkal, Mekalas, Kalinga all constitute the region of Odisha, Since Prehistoric days, the land of Odisha has been inhabited by various folk people like 'Adivasis' and Dravidas. Contemporary Odisha proud for its rich cultural heritage and Folk arose due to the Cultivation and religious traditions. Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism have of modern Oriya heritage. This topic is given ideas of folk art and culture of Odisha. Key Words: Religion, Culture, Heritage, Tradition, Folk

### Introduction:

Odisha, Formerly Known as Orissa and eastern part of Indian state. The region is also known as Utkal. **Utt** means developed and **Kala** means Art.

The name Odisha is derived from Sanskrit word **Odra Desa**-Ancient writers Pliny and Ptolemy described the Odra people as Oretes. Hence Paundras, Utkal, Mekalas, Kalinga all constitute the region of Odisha, Since Prehistoric days, the land of Odisha has been inhabited by various folk people like 'Adivasis' and Dravidas.

Contemporary Odisha proud for its rich cultural heritage and Folk arose due to the Cultivation and religious traditions. Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism have of modern Oriya heritage.

The Folk occupied a middle ground between civilized elite people and uncivilized called 'Savage'. They are Partially literate. Who are Folks? Earlier view is that -Uneducated, Rural and savage. Gramin Brother's concept farmer or rural. Present view According to Alan Dundes's 'A group of people with certain common Practice of course we are.

### CLASSIFICATION OF FOLKLORE :

According to Rechar M.Dorson:- There are four Categories like-

- (i) Oral Folklore
- (ii) Social Folk custom
- (iii) Material Culture
- (iv) Performing Folk Art

## FOLK LORE AND FOLK LIFE

ORAL FOLKLORE Folk Poetry		SOCIAL FOLK CUSTOM Celebration & Festival		MATERIAL CULTT. Folk Art		PERFORM FOLK ART	
I.	Gita	(i)	Car Festival	I.	Patta Chitra	Folk music - Odishi	
	Gobinda	(ii)	Konark Dance Festival	II.	Sand Art	Folk Drama-	
II.	Odishi	Recreation & Game		III.	Bottle Art	Danda Nacha	
III.	Odia	(i)	Bhabata Tungi	IV.	Santhala &	Daskathia	
	Bhagabat	(ii)	Kotha Ghar		Saura Paintings	Pala	
	a	(iii)	Playing Cards	Folk Craft-		Folk Dance-	
IV.	Bhajana	(iv)	Raja Doli	I.	Silver Filigree	I.	Chhau
V.	Champu	(v)	Gouda Badi Khela	II.	Brass and	II.	Sambalpuri
Folk Epic –		(vi)	Paika Akhada		Dhokra works	III.	Gotipua
(i) Sarala Mahabharat		Religion:-		III.	Horn & Bone	IV.	Karama
(ii) Bilanka Ramayan		I.	Hinduism		Craft	V.	Dalkhai
		II.	Buddhism	IV.	Plam leaf	VI.	Odishi
		III.	Jainism		Etching	VII.	Ramaleela
		IV.	God Jagannath Cult.	Folk Architecture –		VIII.	Gotipua
		V.	Mahima Dharma	I.	Stone Carving	IX.	Kandhei
				II.	Temple		Nacha
					Achitecture		
				Folk clothing-			
				I.	Tassar Pata		
				II.	Sambalpuri		
					Saree		
				Folk Food			
				I.	Chhappan		
					Vog		
				II.	Rasagolla		
				III.	Mudhi-		
					Mansa		

Folk Performances are two types ritualistic and non ritualistic. Ritualistic: Bihu, Pala etc-And Non Ritualistic; Jatra, Snake Charmers Play etc.

Folk Art as the name suggests, bears a socio cultural imprint of a society. From place to place and time to time it is represented in various forms that suit to the occasion and purpose as well. It may take recourse to a dance form, music form, art form and even a theatrical performance as per the choice of the promoter or as defined in a customary tradition of a particular event. Although instant entertainment is the distinctive outcome of this art style yet, it nourishes the social behavior cultural traditions, religious needs and above all artistic creativity is redesigned and redefined through these art forms. Its contribution towards financial engagement of a class of people remains as an undercurrent to promote the trend that cannot be undermined.

### The Purpose:

Visvanatha Kaviraja a Sanskrit poetician of Odisha in his famous book entitled Sahitya Darpana states: Chaturvarga-phala-praaptih sukhaat alpadihyamapi... that reveals the utilitarian aspect of literature and art culture. To him it is a medium for easy achievement of four fold human goals viz. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksa, Although he does not undermine the role of regular Sastras yet he is of the opinion that “katuka-usadhoh-pasamaneeyasya rogasya sita-sarkaro-pasamaniyatve kasya vaa rogeenah sita-sarkaraa-prabruttih nasyaat”( who can ignore sweet medicines for healing diseases in the event of availability of both sweet and sour medicines). Being a scholar of this soil he has well understood the spirit and it speaks of the reality behind popularity of folk arts also.

The history reveals that Odisha, a land famous for its cultural heritage has witnessed a lot of stressful moments that caused immense political turmoil and social imbalance in different phases of time. No doubt, such a scenario is not at all hygienic for maintaining a cultural ethos as it impedes the flow of educative spirit of common man striving hard to meet the minimum need of bread and butter and secured living in the absence of a strong ruler who is expected to defend the land and its cultural spirit as well. Thus, dragged into such darkened periods it is evident that there might be a need of simple and easy mode of preserving culture and imparting the most needed basics of education. And a penetrating look at the present form of folk art gives rise to such a notion that it was a vital medium of preserving culture and imparting basic knowledge although it appears quite raw in nature. The use of dialects and colloquial languages makes it clear that all classes of society were in the targeted group of this art culture. Unlike the other forms of entertainment it is not meant for upper class people of the society. That's why perhaps it has retained its popularity even in the modern society of present days. Popularity of 'Jhamu yatra', observed in these days speaks of the reality of the fact. Thus, only time pass or temporary entertainment as the aim of

folk arts can never be a reality behind such an art culture. The needs and peculiar problems of the life of people find an expression in folk art. Thus their life and life style, celebration, issues, social life and concerns find expression in the various folk art forms.

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### Art forms and Traditions:

Coming on to be drama form of folk art mostly it has a religious imprint and is performed during various festive occasions. For instance Chaiti Ghoda is a dance form of folk art performed by a particular class of people and bears a religious characteristic. Similarly, during Holi festival Gopaal Ogaala is a popular folk art performed by the Gopal community. Although religious spirit is shown through these art forms yet the educative spirit of the art deserves much more importance. Pala and DaS Kaathiaa two other art forms are quite rich in this category that awaits skilled music and deep knowledge of various treatises such as scriptures, great poetries epics, Sanskrit Kavyas and so to say a command over many branches of education. Thus, although performance of these events awaits religious occasions yet a learned counsel only can yield real benefit out of these and in the absence of such an audience group the performance also cannot be evaluated, That's why very often contests are organized in this form of folk art and are famous as 'Vaadi Pala'.

Another aspect that attracts our attention while dealing with the tradition of folk art opines that there is a constituents reciprocation between general literature and folk art where folk art has influenced general literature and also it has borrowed a lot from the general literature, Sadhaba Jhia and Chakhi Khuntia of A.C. Mohanty, Chanchalyakar of Rati Mishra, Kathaghoda and Nandika Kesari of Monaranjan Das are some of them where incorporation of folk theme/ character is effectively dealt with Whereas the popularity of Vichitra Ramayana' composed by Vishwanath Khuntia a well-known medieval Odia poet, influenced folk art and an art style called puppet dance became quite famous by using the melodious songs extracted out of it.

Among the folk dances the Chhau has achieved a worldwide recognition. Bearing an imprint of our past martial art style it has added many feathers to its credit. Paaika naacha keeps close proximity with that of Chhau in spirit and represents the same rehearsal skills of soldiers.

Like soul songs there is a trend of folk musician Odisha that has a prime focus on rural life. These songs vary from place to place but the tune has its uniqueness and remains apparently same. The performer changes the topic so as it fit its context with the occasion and thus it is rendered in any devotional and festival occasions and a group involvement is well apprehended in this form.

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### Modern Perspectives:

As viewed earlier there is a significant attempt in modern Odia literature to incorporate plots and characterizations borrowed from folk culture. It has becoming a trend now in order to bring new taste and fresh experiments are still visible. More important to mention here that running in the process of massive globalization almost all cultures, languages, socio-religious activities of entire globe are under huge pressure to assimilate a hybridization process. In the advent of global entertainment media the process has undergone massive ramification and a number of experiments are carried on to produce newer and better taste by adopting such hybrid process. There is a hoard of commercialization of every trend. It has established a new school of education and thus, the experimental hybridization of our culture with that of others cannot be checked rather, it should not be checked also as language and culture are by nature dynamic if we put a bar it will die.

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### Conclusion:

Folk art provides knowledge about anthropological history of a region. Rich diversity of Odisha's culture has been embedded in the folk art of Odisha. Large number of tribal community living in out of state and for their intense interaction with other communities has shown its impact on this trend. Folklore culture is the back bone of our rich folk dance and folk art tradition. These are true and also it is a fact that the culture is losing its original taste but we must not forget that our society is also changing along with its tasting ability. That's why gain pleasure out of parodies produced out of religious prayers in spite of strong orthodox objections. We cannot stop using parodies composed out of folk-lore for the election campaigns. In fact we are leading out life in a society where comfort and entertainment play a vital role. We can call it an era of entertainment and that's why innumerable satellite channels are operated globally. So how can the hybridization be checked? There is every possibility we can experience nudity in folk art, but in an era of global commercialization is evident. In the beginning we have viewed that there must be a financial assistance involved in developing this trend and for the same reason we may experience these consequences after modernity is incorporated and assimilated into it.

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