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A Quarterly Research Journal

on

Tribal Life & Culture



Vol. X (2nd Issue) □ Sl. No. 32 □ April — June, 2001

Published by :

Tribal Research Institute

Govt. of Tripura

Agartala

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Published by Tribal Research Institute, Govt. of Tripura & printed at
Tripura Printers & Publishers Private Limitd, Melarmath, Agartala,
Tripura (West).

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IDENTIFICATION OF COMMON JHUM CROPS AND VARIETIES OF TRIPURA

DR. B. B. SARKAR* AND MR. M. R. DEBBARMA**

Jhum cultivation or shifting cultivation or burn and slash method of cultivation is locally known as "Hook Khwlaima" has been a traditional and age old practice of tribal population of Tripura. In the past both central and state government has given tremendous effort to stop jhum cultivation as it has ill effect on environment. At present traditional jhum cultivation is unproductive and uneconomic. But jhumia cultivators are still practicing jhum cultivation for maintaining of their socio-cultural heritage than the economic factor. The low production and productivity of present jhum crops is mainly due to reduction of jhuming cycle. The jhuming cycle of Tripura is presented in Table - 1.

Table :- 1.

Jhuming cycle in different agricultural Sub-Division of Tripura.

Name of Dist.	Name of Agri Sub-Division	Jhuming cycle (Years)
Dhalai	Gandachara	5.2
	Chowmanu	5.4
	Salema	4.2
	District average	4.9
North	Kanchanpur	4.9
	Kumarghat	4.4

*1. Deputy Director of Agriculture, Dhalai, Ambasa.

**2. Agricultural Inspector, Office of the D. D. A. (D)

	Panisagar	3.3
	<u>District average</u>	<u>4.2</u>
West	Jirania	3.4
	Teliamura	4.5
	Khowai	3.4
	Mohanpur	4.2
	Melaghar	3.0
	Bishalgarh	3.1
	<u>District average</u>	<u>3.6</u>
South	Rajnagar	2.9
	Bagafa	3.3
	Satchand	3.5
	Matabari	3.2
	Amarpur	5.3
	<u>District average</u>	<u>3.6</u>
	* State average	4.07

Although Jhum Cultivation has detrimental effect on environment but jhumia cultivators are maintaining a good number of crops and valuable germplasms/varieties which are in need of proper identification and conservation scientifically. Considering the value of jhum crops and varieties an attempt has been made to identify the common jhum crops and varieties. The lists are presented in Table-2 and Table-3 respectively.

TABLE :-2**LIST OF JHUM CROP'S VARIETIES IN TRIPURA**

SL. NO.	NAME OF CROPS	VARIETIES
1.	Rice (Mai)	Garu Kwchak, Garu Kufur, Beti, Galong, Galong Kwchak, Galong Kufur, Dhum, Jhum Malati, Garu malati, Madhu malati, Kiski badam, Taraka, Adhuma, Makhumai mokail, Maidani, Kaparak, Guria, Dudung, Thuturu kwchak, Thuturu kufur, Mami hungar, Mami watlak, Mai chikan (Like khasa), Badia, Mai kerung, Mami kwchak and mami kufur.
2.	Maize (Magadam)	Magadam mami, Magadam maisa, Magadam kuli and Magadam sikam.
3.	Fox tail millet (Maisui)	Maisui, Maisui kaising bului.
4.	Pearl millet (Maisinga)	Maisinga, Daga maisinga (Like Sugarcane)
5.	Pigeon pea (Khakleng)	Khakleng kwrak, Khakleng kului, Khakleng samtai, Khakleng mereng.
6.	Cotton (khoul)	Khoul kufur, Khoul Karma.
7.	Roselle (Pat)	Pat Mukhwi, Nalia pat.
8.	Sesamum (Siping)	Siping kufur, Siping kasam.

9. Pumpkin (Chakumura) Chakumura jhapi, Chakumura kengkuia, Chakumura durukung, Chakumura muksam, Chakumura Watleng.
10. Ash gourd (Khaklu) Khaklu muksam, Khaklu watleng, Khaklu matam, Khaklu maitug.
11. Brinjal (Fantak) Fantak barak.
12. Chili (Masa) Masa barak, Masa chikan, Masa sinja khi, Kamranga.
13. Cowpea (Sabai) Sabai kwchak, Sabai kufur, Sabai wacheng, Sabai bulu, Sabai muksam.
14. Yam (Tha) Tha sikam, Tha maituk, The mwsalikwchak, Thungui, Thadug, Tha mayung khi, Tha muya (direct eating), Tha taktui, Thamwkang, Thamukwchak, Thacheer, Thakun, Tha randak, Thaktui waksa, Tha reang.
15. Elephant foot Batema
16. Edible arum (Khama) Mog khama (kwchak) Khama
17. Water nelon (Mamfa) Mamfa kwchak, Mamfa kufur.
18. Sweet melon (Thaichumu) Thaichumu muksam, Thaichumu kamranga, Thaichumu bungki, Thaichumu gurumsa.
19. Spices (Hukni masla) Banta, Khunrupui, Sam khaka, Muilok banta.

LIST OF IDENTIFIED JHUM CROPS IN TRIPURA

Table :- 3

Sl. No.	Name of Languages		Name of crops				
	English	Local	Rice	Maize	Fox tail millet	Pearl millet	pegeon pea.
1.	English	Rice	Rice	Maize	Fox tail millet	pearl millet	Pegeon pea.
2.	Botanical name	Oryza sativa	Zea mays	Setaria italica	Pennisetum glaucum	Cajanus cajan	
3.	Kokbarak	Mai	Maga-dum	Masui	Maisi-nga	Khak-leng	
4.	Bengali	Dhan	Bhutta	Koon	Bajra	Arahar	
5.	Oria	Dhano	Macca	Kanghu	Bajra	Harad	
6.	Telugu	Vadlu Biyyamu	Mokka jonna	Korra	Sajja	Kan-dulu	
7.	Tamil	Nel	Makka cholam	Tengi	Kambu	Thuva-rai	
8.	Malayalam	Nellu	Cholam	Thena	Kambu	Thuvaran payaru	
9.	Kanada	Bhatta	Musuki-Navane najola.	Sajje	Thogari		
10.	Marathi	Bhat	Makka Rala	Keng	Bajri	Tur	
11.	Gujrati	Dangar	Makki	Kang	Bajri	Tuver	
12.	Panjabi	Chaul	Makki	Kangni	Bajra	Harhar	
13.	Hindi	Dhan Chaul	Makka Makayee	Kakum	Bajra	Arhar	

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7.	Tamil	Nel	Makka cholam	Tengi	Kambu	Thuva-rai
8.	Malayalam	Nellu	Cholam Makka cholam.	Thena	Kambu	Thuvaran payaru
9.	Kanada	Bhatta	Musuki- najola.	Navane	Sajje	Thogari
10.	Marathi	Bhat	Makka	Keng Rala	Bajri	Tur
11.	Gujrati	Dangar	Makki	Kang	Bajri	Tuver
12.	Panjabi	Chaul Dhan	Makki Makayee	Kangni	Bajra	Harhar
13.	Hindi	Dhan Chaul	Makka	Kakum	Bajra	Arhar

Name of Crops					
Yam	Cotton	Roselle	Sesamum	Cucurbita Pumkin	Ash Gourd
Yam	Cotton	Roselle	Sesamum	Pumkin	Ash Gourd
Dioscoria bulbifera	Gossipium Spp.	Hibiscus sabdariffa	Sesamum indicum	Cucurbita maxima duch	Benincosa ceriffera savi.
Tha Suchuna	Khoul	pat	Siping	Chakumura	Khaklu
Chupri Alu	Karpas	Mesta	Til	Misti Kumra	Chalkumra
Khamba Alu	Kapa	Khata kaunria	Rasi	Boiti Kakharu	Pani Kak- haru
Pendalam	Pratti	Erragogu	Navvulu	Tiyyagum madi.	Budidagum madi.
Kiahangu	Paruthi	Sivappu	Ellu	Parangi- kai	Sambal Poosani
Kaccil	Paruthi		Ellu	Vellari mathan	Kumball- anga
Kantigen- asu	Hatti	Kempup- un drike	Yellu	Seegum- bala	Budugum- bla.
Gorradu	Kapus	Tambdi Ambadi	Tili	Tamda- bhopla	Kohala
Ratalu goradu	Kapas	Chunchh	Tal	Bhura Kohala	Kohala
Ratalu	Kapah		Til	Walaiti halwa kad	Petha
Rattaloo	Kapas		Til		

Name of Crops					
Brinjal	Chilli	Cowpea	Elephant food.	Edibla Arum.	Remarks.
Brinjal	Chilli	Cowpea	Elephant food.	Edible Arum.	
Solanum melongena	Capsicum frutescens	Vigna catiang walp	Amorpho-phallus campanulatus Blume.	Colocasia Spp.	
Funtak	Masa	Sabai Bulu	Batema	Tha badiya /Khama	
Begun	Marich	Barbati	01	Kachu	
Baigan	Lanka	Bora-gudi	Olua	Saru	
Vankaya	Mirapa-kaya	Bobba-rlu	Kanda	Chemadu-mpalu	
Kathari-kai	Milakai	Thatapa-yaru.	Senai	Sambu sapan	
Vazhu-thana	Mulaku	Mamba-yar	Kachil	Chembu	
Badane Kayi	Menas-kayi.	Alasande	Suvarna gedde.	Kesavina	
Vange	Mirchi	Chavli	Suran	Alu	
Vegan	Marcha	Chola Choli	Suran	Alvi	
Bengan	Lal mirch	Lobia	Jimikand	Arvi	
Baingan	Lal mirch	Lobia	Jimmy-kand	Akhi Dhueya	

Pattern of Consumption and Saving of Mog & Tripuri Tribals of South Tripura

Dr. Bibhas K. De*, Ar. Raju Majumdar **, Sri Dhabal Krishna Debbarma *** & Ar. Utpal Dhar ****

Abstracts :

The MPC (Marginal Propensity to Consume) and MPS (Marginal Propensity to Save) of Mog and Tripuri tribals of South Tripura district were analysed. The study reveals a significant difference between MPC and MPS of these two groups during the period under study (1999 - 2000). Further the tribal house holds of Mog communities are more or less having lower disposable income as compared to the Tripurians by having more propensity to save as compared to Tripurians and accordingly less propensity to consume.

Introductions :

Tripura, a tiny state, situated in North-East corner of country having a geographical area of 10,486 km². Out of which approximately two third area is exclusively reserve for tribals under TTAADC (Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council) as per 6th schedule of Indian constitution. The state may also be identified as land of 'unity in diversity' as a total of 19 tribal communities along with plain land cultivator Bengali population.

It is believed by the section of intellectuals of the state that the Tipprahs or the Tipperaahs came originally from the Bodo

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home in central Asia and are said to have first settled in India in a place near present Allahabad. They preferred to call themselves as "Children of water Goddess" and are therefore known as 'Tiphra' or the 'Tippras' and in later time they became to be known as the Tipprahs (Twi = water, Phra / pha = God). According to Alexander Mackenzie, Bodos who live in Tripura near the southern boundary of Assam are known as 'Tripuris'. Thus it is assumed that according to the name of Tripura State they are named Tripuris. But it is yet to be known, whether they are actually originated from Tibeto-Burmese or from Sino-Austrian origin as revealed from cultural and Linguistic similarity with Austrian. However research in depth may also reveal that Bodos might have originated from ancient Tripuri Community. Keeping all these views in mind many research works are still continuing on actual origin of Tripuri community.

Mogs are the tribes which constitute only 2.94 percent of total tribal population in the state, belonging to Buddhist religion. They are believed to have migrated in the state from Chittagong hill tracts of Bangladesh and having mongoloid origin.

The rural tribals of both the communities are one of the ignored sections of the poverty stricken masses, who have taken out arms, which is more prevalent in Tripuri communities and got involved in the insurgent activities in the state. The magnitude of backwardness of the rural tribals can not simply be ignored without considering the environment in which they live. Most of them have their habitates in hilly isolated and difficult terrains and these areas are still inaccessible. Due to absence of motivation, demonstration effect has not brought about any desirable change in their standard of living. But these rural tribals somehow manage their existence with living standard well below the poverty line. The present study was undertaken to assess the marginal propensity to consume and save between these two tribal communities i.e. between Tripuris and Mogs.

Methodology :

Among the four districts of Tripura, South District is selected for the present study based on maximum number of these two communities inhabited in the district. The list of blocks along with their population status (community wise) was collected from government office and then on the basis of proportionate Mog and Tripuri population of Rupaicheri block, under Sabroom Subdivision is Selected for the study.

List of villages are collected from block office and among the different villages, 4 nos. of villages are selected randomly basing on the population of both the communities. Sixteen nos. of respondents from each villages are selected, eight each from both the communities randomly. Thus making the total nos. of respondents to sixty four, thirty two each from both the communities.

Marginal propensity to consume and save measures the relationship between income, consumption and savings. The marginal propensity to consume measures the incremental change in consumption to the change in income. Thus where C stands for consumption and Y for income.

Marginal Propensity to consume

$$MPC = \frac{\Delta C}{\Delta Y}$$

The relationship between consumption and disposable income is estimated by linear consumption function. The linear relationship used is

$$C = a + by$$

C = total consumption per house-hold (in rupees).

b = marginal propensity to consume

y = total disposable income per house hold (in rupees)

a = intercept i.e. level of consumption at zero level of income.

The relationship between consumption expenditure and income is estimated by using Keynesian hypothesis which implies that consumption is a linear function of disposable income. The co-efficient of income variable of linear consumption function directly provides a measure of MPC.

Marginal propensity to save can be easily calculated by using the following formula $MPS = 1 - MPC$

Results and Discussion :

All the sample households are classified into two groups, on the basis of their community. Prior to analysing the marginal propensity to consume and marginal propensity to save, it is important to examine the distribution of disposable income and per capita disposable income among these two categories of households. (Table - 1) The table reveals that Tripuri community is having more disposable income and per capita income with Rs. 25,413.60 and Rs. 4868.50 followed by Mog Community with Rs. 20,677.10 and Rs. 3961.13 respectively.

Table - 2 represents the distribution of consumption expenditure among two tribal communities. It shows that among Tripuri Community, the proportionate spending on nonfood items is less than the Mog Community but for food item it is vice-versa. In Tripuri community Expenditure on food item is found to be Rs. 20,569.90 over the nonfood item with Rs. 5742.70, whereas in Mog Community, they spend Rs. 13,569.20 on food item over non-food item of Rs. 6,394.20. It is more interesting to observe here that Mog Community spent less on food item in comparison to Tripuri Community with 67.97 percent against 78.18 percent and on nonfood item it is vice-

versa with 32.03 and 21.82 percent respectively.

Table - i : Distribution of disposable income and per capita disposable income among different categories of sample households.

Categories of Households	Gross Annual income (Rs.)	Non Tax liability (Rs.)	Disposable income (Rs.)	per capita disposable income (Rs.)
Tripuri	26,782.80	1369.20	25,413.60	4,868.50
Mog	21,663.60	986.50	20,677.10	3,961.13

Table-2 : Distribution of Consumption expenditure among different categories of sample households.

Categories of Households	Expenditure on Food items	Expenditure on non-food items	Total consumption Expenditure
Tripuri	20,569.90 (78.18)	5,742.70 (21.82)	26,312.60 (100.00)
Mog	13,569.20 (67.97)	6,394.20 (32.03)	19,963.40 (100.00)

(figures in parenthesis indicate percent to the total)

Table No. - 3 : Consumption and Savings of different Categories of sample households (a) This value was estimated from GD or Gs divided by GI

Categories of Households	Gross Annual income (Rs.)	Household consumption (Rs.)	Gross savings or Gross disavings (Rs.)	Gross Savings and Gross income ratio
Tripuri	26,782.80	26,312.60	470.20	0.017
Mog	21,663.60	19,963.40	1,700.20	0.078

Table-3 reveals Savings pattern of both the communities are

with positive trend with Rs. 470.20 and Rs. 1700.20 per household respectively for Tripuri and Mog communities. It is also interesting to note that Tripuri Community having more income per household per year are capable of less savings in comparison to Mog Community. As a result of which gross savings and income ratio is found to be higher in Mog Community with 0.078 followed by Tripuri Community with 0.017 only which is 4.6 items higher in Mog Community over the Tripuri Community.

The relationship between income and consumption is generally measured by marginal propensity to consume. It measures the incremental change in consumption as a result of a given incremental change in income. In other word, the marginal propensity to consume is the ratio of Change in consumption to change in income.

To estimate the relationship between consumption and disposable income, linear consumption function based on Keynesian hypothesis is fitted to the data. The estimates of regression coefficient, their coefficient of multiple determination are as follows.

Marginal Propensity to Consume (MPC)

Tripura Community

$$C = 3762.281 + 0.973 Y$$

$$R = 0.84^*$$

Mog Community

$$C = 3256.363 + 0.892 Y$$

$$R = 0.81^*$$

R is significant of 1% level of significance

Marginal propensity to save (MPS) = 1 - MPC

Tripuri Community = 0.027

Mog Community = 0.108

The estimated equation show that the variation in per capita consumption of tribal households accounted for 81 to 84% which is explained by the variation in per capita disposable income Y. The regression coefficient and coefficient of determination are significant at one percent level.

The marginal propensity to consume was higher in Tripuri Community with 0.973 followed by Mog community with 0.892. The minimum per capita consumption, even when the per capita income is zero (autonomous consumption) is found to be higher for Tripuri community in comparison to Mog community with Rs. 3762.28 and Rs. 3256.36 respectively.

Accordingly it is obvious to have lower marginal propensity to save by the Tripuri community over Mog community with Rs. 0.03 and Rs. 0.11 (approx.) respectively.

Conclusions :

It may be concluded from the above study that the Tripuri community is less aware about the future of their livelihood as compared to the Mog community. Though the community is having higher disposable income but able to save less which does not reflect a sound economic level of development for this community over Mog community and nor a sound economic status of the former community in respect of future investment capability of the later community. It may so happens as a result of age old tradition of living together by three Mog Community with more advanced bengalis at the place before their migration. Thus the study suggests to increase awareness among the Tripuri Community and policy formulation to encourage savings among the Tripuri Community.

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The Jamatias in Transition

Dr. P. N. Bhattacharjee *

Jamatia Tribe with a population of 44501 as per 1981 census ranks third among the 19 Sch. Tribes in Tripura in respect of population. They mostly inhabit in Amarpur and Udaipur Sub-Divisions of South Tripura District and Khowai and Sadar Sub-Divisions of West Tripura District. Their spoken language is Kok-Borak which belongs to the Bodo Branch of the Tribeto-Burman language group.

The Jamatias do not live in insolation, economically, politically and socially they are in contact with many other tribal and non-tribal communities of Tripura. The closeness of the Jamatias with other neighbouring communities has altered and is constantly altering their traditional ways of life in all respects. Their present style of living in far deviated from their traditional and customary ways and represents an admixture of tradition and modernity now. The important factors responsible for these changes are :-

i) Economic conditions ; ii) Environments ; iii) Urbanization; iv) Education ; v) Political Situations and vi) Psychological make up.

(i) ECONOMIC FACTORS :

The economic factors may be considered as one of the most important factors in changing the traditional pattern of their life. Their traditional pattern of economy has rapidly undergone a transformation. In the past, shifting cultivation played an important role in bringing self-sufficiency to a Jamatia family. There was enough virgin land available for Jhum cultivation. There was no daily market nearby. They did not purchase

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cotton, jute, rice, firewood, fish, vegetables etc. from the market. Their chief marketing commodity was salt, kerosine oil and dry fish. The man-land ratio was quite comfortable.

But the situation altered rapidly due to partition of India when thousands of Hindu Bengalee refugees of East Pakistan (Now Bangladesh) entered Tripura. In some areas these refugees out-numbered the Jamatias. The ratio of the land-people and now showed a distinct change. There were too many people and too little land. This affected the self sufficiency of their economy and gradually shrunken additional source of income. They then began to work as daily labourer in the forest Department, P.W.D. etc.

In the past, the system of reciprocal labour system existed among the Jamatias. The exchange of labour for agricultural or house construction work was their traditional system. But now they are very, much commercialised. The system of reciprocal labour has been replaced by labour for cash payment.

Government service is now a subsidiary source of income to the educated section of the Jamatias. The younger generation is very much attracted by government service which is regarded as a boost to their social status. Government employees who own agricultural land in addition are held in high esteem. Many of them are busy in extending their property and providing better education for their children. The economic disparity has been growing bigger and bigger within their community. Thus, the emergence of landholding and landless classes in the traditionally classless Jamatia community may now be described as a new dimension to their economic life.

With the development of communication, markets and business centres have come up in their localities. Many of them purchase their essential commodities from these markets. Many small traders often come to these villages to purchase agricultural

products and take them to the urban centres. This has produced a number of go-getters in the community who are aware of the current market prices of each and every agricultural commodity.

The involvement of the Jamatias in trade and commerce was almost nil even a few years ago. They were completely dependent on agriculture. But now they are gradually taking up this line of profession. Now Jamatias, though few in number, are engaged in the business of dry fish, timber, transport, fishery etc.

The modern economic organisations like insurance, large scale multipurpose Co-operative Societies, Gramin Banks and agents to various so called investment companies have now been successful to a great extent in changing their age-old custom of borrowing from local money lenders under heavy interest.

The extension of the facility of the cattle insurance scheme has saved them from the danger of any sudden death amidst their bullocks, cows etc. Now they had no need to go to the village mahajans (money lenders) to borrow money at an exorbitant rate of interest.

Now modern Co-operative societies have branches in all the Jamatia areas. These societies purchase jute, cotton, etc. directly from the producer. This has helped them to get just price, for their products. The steady growth of the number of Jamatia share-holders in these Co-operative Societies are gradually replacing their indigeneous traditional Co-operatives.

The Gramin Bank is also playing an important role in changing their traditional economic system. The Jamatias are now aware of the rules and regulation of bank loans. Many of them have transaction with banks.

Though even to-day, the Jamatias are following the traditional method of cultivation, their gradual awareness regarding the

utility of manure, insecticides, hybrid seeds, irrigation facilities undoubtedly shows the trends of modernization.

In this way, the Jamatias got mixed up with numerous urban characteristics which has greatly affected the homogeneous and traditional ways of life.

(ii) **ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS :**

The early Jamatia hamlets were surrounded by small hills, and jungles. They produced various kinds of agricultural products, hunted wild animals and collected firewood, sheets of bamboos and roots of various kinds of herbs and creepers which were used in the preparation of food item.

But urbanization, deforestation and the growth of population have changed the ecological balance and also their traditional ways of life. Their forests which meant so much to them at one time are now no longer all that precious. They now have to purchase bamboo, shan (Shan grass) etc. for the construction of their house, which was unthinkable to them even forty years ago. The early Jamatia folk songs, folk literature and folk festivals which developed and flourished around the forest and Jhuming has been gradually disappearing due to the extinction of Jhuming.

(iii) **THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION :**

With the spread of modern education many Jamatias are residing in School and College hostels in Tripura and other places. As a result of this contact with the outside world they are becoming aware of the customs and traditions of other communities tribal and non-tribal. Consequently their outlook, attitude etc. have undergone quite a remarkable change. This change is reflected in thier words, actions, modes of behaviour etc.

Owing to their stay in hostels, far away from home in early

childhood they have little scope to get acquainted with their own traditions and customs. Moreover owing to the influence of urban life, they fail to form any high opinion about their own culture and traditions. This attitude of the young generation is gradually weakening the age-old socio-religious beliefs of the Jamatias.

In the past, the Jatra (folk opera) song was very popular among the Jamatias. The jatra on historical themes with plenty of sword fight and songs, jokes were very much popular among them. But now-a-days the jatras dealing with social problems have replaced the former in the hearts of the Jamatias.

Their traditional songs are now sung to the tunes of popular Hindi and Bengali film songs. The traditional Jamatia songs are on their way towards extinction.

Similarly, folk riddles, proverbs and folk tales are liked only by females and other personalities of their community. The young generation is completely indifferent.

(iv) THE IMPACT OF POLITICS :

The Jamatias are still well-known for their unity. The power and authority enjoyed by the Chief (hada-akra) of their hada is unparallel. He holds an unquestionable command over the members of his community.

But since independence, the various elections of Parliament, State Legislature and Village Panchayats have created a new awareness among them in the matter of political rights and privileges.

All India Political Parties like Congress, C.P.I (M) and regional party like T.U.J.S have followers in them. With the emergence of diverse political parties with different political ideologies the once united Jamatias are now politically divided. All these various groups are now guided by their respective

party leaders and not by their traditional chief.

Now-a-days, possession of western education, secular outlook, sound economic condition and oratory capability are receiving more importance than the age old leadership of the village councils.

There is a change in the values, too. The old and experienced village leaders are gradually fading out of the limelight due to the newly emerged concept of political leadership. The young generation in the present political activities.

The changes that occurred in the economic, social, political and environmental condition of the Jamatias have left distinct marks on their food habits, dresses and ornaments, games and sports their attitude towards traditional system of treatment of any illness etc.

FOOD HABITS :

In the past, partaking of chicken and pork was prohibited among them. But the young boys now enjoy it without any hesitation what-so-ever. The use of chira, muri (a kind of fried rice), and tea is a new addition to their food and drink items. The use of spices and other modern devices is gradually replacing the old ways of preparation of food by boiling, grilling roasting over an open fire etc. Many of them now relish non-traditional food items as a result of living in boarding house etc.

The gradual deforestation has also changed their food habit to some extent. Their traditional cakes are not as popular as sweets available in shops now. In the past they used to take it during cold, wet mornings, sitting around a fire and warming their shivering bodies at the same time. But it is a rare sight now-a-days.

The change that has come over their dresses, ornaments and also the style of sporting them is also significant. Tailor made

shirts and trousers have replaced dhuties and Kanchwlwyborok (a kind of shirt). In the past, the Jamatia women used to wear black coloured ganjees (vests), risa, pasra etc. but the ganjee has been replaced by tailor made-shirts. Their traditional ornaments have been replaced by glass bangles and imitation jewelleryes, earrings, necklaces etc. from the local market.

In the past, their necessary clothes were woven on their traditional handlooms. The yarns of the clothes were spun from the cotton collected from their Jhum. Now-a-days ready-made coloured yarns from the market has replaced it.

In respect of house-hold articles also, a change can be seen. Modern suitcase, cup and saucer, various kinds of aluminium utensils, buckets etc. have replaced their traditional bamboo and earthenware articles and utensils.

Their traditional games like sukuy, bakhadebamak, muilaktwylak aching jang, bagakana, kakrima etc. have been replaced by foot-ball, volley-ball, card game etc. The mode of recreation has also been changed. The folk games for sports of the Jamatias are on their way out.

The traditional systems of treatments by the Ochai (medicineman) is losing its popularity day by day. They no longer depend completely on the magical formulae of Ochai for their treatment. The villagers now want immediate result. Unlike the older generation they have no time to wait and see.

The expansion of modern medical facilities in the tribal areas, the availability of medicines for certain common diseases like malaria, dysentery etc. in the nearby markets, and the immediate result of these patent medicines are the important factors for this changing attitude of the Jamatias.

The negligent attitude of the modern doctors and the educated section of the Jamatias towards their traditional system of

treatment is discouraging the young generation to learn this profession.

But still to-day the traditional system is popular among the women folk. A good number of tradition-oriented Jamatias, however, take the story of the efficacy of the Ochai's treatment with a pinch of salt. In the present adverse economic situation, it has become very difficult on the part of the traditional Ochai to survive due to the hard competition on the part of modern allelopathic medicinemen.

Culture is dynamic, the culture which ceases to be dynamic becomes a burden to its people. The Jamatia culture is also dynamic and it has been enriched by the influence of different tribal and non-tribal culture from time immemorial. Since, the Jamatia tribe is an admixture of different tribes of Tripura from ethnological point of view, the assimilation of the cultures of those constituting tribes took place in the remote past. This may be considered as inter-tribal acculturation. The distinct marks of this inter-tribal acculturation are still perceptible in thier different socio religious functions.

It should be noted that the Jamatia culture is based mainly on their different socio-religious functions which include the rites, rituals, ceremonies worships customs, manner, beliefs and the folk literature connected with them. So, in discussing the influence of other culture, cultural contact conflict and acculturation in Jamatia tribe, attention should be paid to the above mentioned socio-religious institutions and functions.

Though the contact of the Jamatias with the plains people (Bengalees) and the influence of modern factors have moulded and constantly monlding their traditional culture, they have still retained this principal institution to a greater extent.

The Jamatia Vs. plains people acculturation had taken place

mainly through two processes namely :

1. The natural process and
2. The modern process.

The natural process may further be divided into two stages:

i. Non-formal stage or pre-1863, i.e. from time immemorial to the Jamatia revolt of 1863, A.D.

ii. Formal stage started since 1863 A.D.

NON-FORMAL PROCESS :

The non-formal process started not in any systematic or organised way. There was no conscious effort on anyone's part. The factors that helped this process are the earlier administration, geographical situation, importance of Bengali language, royal patronage, trade and commerce, pattern of cultivation in the plains, polytheistic worshipping etc.

Since the Jamatia tribe arose from a section of the warriors of the king of Tripura, they were naturally in contact with many Bengalees who worked in the army and the civil administration in different capacities.

Geographically, Tripura was surrounded by Bangal on three sides. Moreover, Bengali was the official language of Tripura during the rule of the early kings. So knowledge of Bengali was a status symbol. Many learnt it.

The kings of Tripura were the patrons of Hinduism in their state. They had constructed many temples in Tripura and appointed Brahmin priests there. This paved the way for contact with the plains people.

Trade and commerce also played a significant role in the process of acculturation. The entire trade and commerce of Tripura was in the hand of the Bengalees. The participation of

Jamatias in trade and commerce was almost meagre. The Bengalee traders purchased jute, cotton, mustard seeds, sesame etc. from them at the marketing centres of the interior areas. On the other hand the Jamatias purchased mainly salt, dry fish, various types of ornaments made of silver, beads, agricultural tools such as scythe, potteries etc. They were dependent on the Bengalees for the necessary articles of their every day life except agricultural products. The Bengalees were in most cases their teacher, barber, priest, tailor, shopkeeper, blacksmith etc.

They were the most common businessmen, the Jamatias ever came in contact with in those days. Slowly small business centres and market places came up in the midst of their settlements as a result of business activities with the plain people. The Jamatias in this manner grew close to the Bengalees.

Their shifting to the plain areas with the starting of the wet cultivation which were easily accessible to the plain people also brought them in closer contact with the plain people.

Religious custom : Above all, the polytheism of the Jamatias were similar to the polytheistic neighbouring Bengalee Hindus in many respects. They also worshipped plants, trees, rivers, stones and propitiated evil spirits as part of their regional religious culture in addition to all India deities of Hinduism.

Moreover, the concepts of many traditional deities and ceremonies of the Jamatias were similar to those of the deities of the neighbouring Bengalee Hindus. The objectives were also in many cases almost the same. As for example the maylwngma is the deity of paddy to the Jamatias, the Twyma is the deity or river, Maykwtal Chamani is the festival of the eating of new rice, Ker Puja for protection from the evil spirit etc. have close affinity with aims and purposes of the Laxmi Puja, Ganga Puja, Nabanna festival, Kali Puja etc. of the neighbouring Bengalee Hindus. Thus the polytheism of both the neighbouring

communities helped the process of acculturation to a greater extent.

In this context it should be noted that though the Jamatias lived close to the Bengalee Mohamaden Villages for a long time, acculturation between two communities is negligible. The monotheism of the Mohamadens was perhaps one of main obstacles in their acculturation with the polytheists Jamatias in matter of religious beliefs and practices.

THE FORMAL PROCESS :

The preaching of Vaishnavism started among the Jamatias in a formal manner from 1863 under the patronage of king Birchandra Manikya who was a devout Vaishnav. In 1863, Jamatia revolt took place under the leadership of a Jamatia headman, Parikshit Jamatia.

Bir chandra Manikya suppressed the revolution with the help of the Kuki tribe and arrested Parkshit Jamatia along with his followers. He however, adopted a lenient view towards Parikshit's attitude and pardoned him and his followers and asked them to embrace Vaishnavism. Parikshit and his followers were the Vaishnavised and were given sacred thread. They pilgrimaged to sacred places like Brindaban, Nabadwip, Puri etc. Since this revolution, they were accepted as Kshatriya by the king of Tripura.

The Jamatias changed their traditional food habits. Rearing of pig, fowl etc. were given up, Tulshi plants were planted in every house. Tulshi beads were used. Hari Sankirtan was sung in order to follow the paths of Vaishnavism. In this way, this whole way of life was very much influenced by Vaishnav practice. This new way of life led them to think of themselves as superior to all other neighbouring tribes. The non-Jamatias were not allowed in kitchens. The Jamatias began to were sacred

thread. They came in close contact with the non-tribal Goswamis (spiritual guide). In this way the Jamatia revolt of 1863 led them to embrace Vaishnavism which ultimately transformed this antagonistic warrior tribe to a tamed one.

But the rigidity of the Vaishnav practices and the impact of neighbouring plains people led to the growth of an orthodox section amidst them, with an extremely neglecting attitude towards their own traditional socio-religious practices. This negligent attitude of the orthodox Vaishnavas gradually started a chain reaction among them.

CHRISTIANITY :

The influence of Christianity began very recently. Educational facility and other sorts of assistance provided by the missionaries and their services have been attracting the Jamatias, mainly the youths, towards Christianity.

Very recently, a new organisation of non-christian young Jamatias named Lampra Garia Badal has emerged under the leadership of Sri Krishnadhan Jamatia an educated youth from Hathai Kwchuk village of Teliamura in West Tripura District.

The aim of this mission is to revive their traditional socio-religious functions through a reformation movement. The chief aims of this movement are - i. Prohibition of offering of wine and sacrificing of animals and birds, in the Pujas, ii. to stop the worshipping of the evil spirits, iii. to appoint only the Jamatia Ochai (Priest) in their Pujas and iv. to begin the worship of only the Garia and the Lampra.

But a section of non-christian Jamatias oppose this movement as it is a deviation of their traditional rites and rituals. The offering of wine, sacrificing of animals and propitiation of evil spirits are considered essential for their religious functions. They believe that those deviations would be harmful to them.

Prohibition of wine and sacrificing of animals in th Pujas are unthinkable to them.

However, in spite of the opposition of the older generation, the movement is gaining support from the young and educated section of the Jamatias. This trend is leading to the emergence of a new pattern of the Jamatia socio-religious functions without wine and sacrificing of animals and thus a new type of the Jamatia Society.

In conclusion, it may be said that in spite of this influence of Vaishnavism and their close contact with the neighbouring non-tribals for a long time, they have maintained the principal characteristics of their traditional culture. They have made a synthesis in this respect. Along with the performance of thier traditional pujas and festivals like Garia Puja, Ker Puja, Lampra Puja, Maykwatal Chamani, Gang Puja etc. they perform pujas of certain regional deities worshipped by the neighbouring Bengalee Hindus like Sani Puja, Laxmi Puja, Trinath Puja etc.

In respect of Sraddha (death rites), going by the Panjika (almanac) for ties and Tithies, the wearing of sacred thread, reading of holy books like the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the the Gita, the Chaitanya Charitamrita prohibition of certain food articles, and the pilgrimage to the sacred places of the Hindus like Varanasi, Brindaban etc. are all connected with the concept of with concept of all India Hinduism.

Thus the present day Jamatia culture is a synthesis of their traditional culture, Vaishnav culture, regional non-tribal Hindu culture and all India Hindu Culture.

In this way the external influence enumerated above been constantly bringing down their impacts on the traditional Jamatia culture. And the Jamatias, while maintaining the principal aspects of the culture, are assimilating those influence bringing about acculturation in many facts of their cultural identity.

Tribal folk literature of Tripura and metaphysical thoughts there in

Dr. D L Bhowmik

The folk literature of the tribes of Tripura is being collected for sometime past from verbal sources — songs, tales etc. Only a small collection has been made so far. Though this is valuable chiefly as literary compositions, yet it contains some speculation on God, deities, sprites, after life, birth etc. Thus the folk literature is a source of tribal Meta physical and spiritual thinking. In the following pages, a brief account of this literature involving metaphysical thinking of the tribes of Tripura is given. So far only the folk-literature of the main tribe (Tripura or Tipra) is collected to some extent, and that of other tribes as in the offing. We shall refer to whatever titbits are available from all these pieces of composition and glean the meta physical speculations of the unname tribal poets and story tellers.

Tripuri Folk Songs

Let us note the following folk songs of the Tripuri tribe. The songs are all in the Tripuri language which is not intelligible to the outside world. Hence only a para pharse in English will be given here on the basis of the Bangali rendering given by N. Deb Barma, the Station Director of Agartala Station, All India Radio, West Tripura, the Compiler of the collection of songs. Only some important lines in Tripuri will be given. Now for the songs no 37, Birth and death are in evitable in the eternal course of life. The soul is undying. It goes from one body to another. Birth is followed by death and death by rebirth. Why are you afraid of travelling along the Path of life?

This song seems to be a Para phrase of a few verses of the Bhagavad Gita, chapter-II. As in the Gita, here in this song too,

the immortality of the soul (fala) even after death and rebirth or transmigration of the soul from one body to another are admitted. The following lines carry these ideas —

barak himani lama doyari

hima-male lama Caai mano

Sagani sagafala saga solai faiai

acayai thuai acayai

fala-many saloi fire.

(i) O my beloved, I can not pass my days being born of a human mother. If I were born of a sow or a hea my life could be short. I have come to the world market but have not even four price with me. So I could not make any shopping. I know that human life is the best, but I will never again come to a human life.

In this poem the idea is expressed that one can be born as a man or as an animal. This indicates that the soul can enter anybody it likes. In Hindu conception also there is the same tenet the soul's wondering among eighty four lakhs of youes or wombs. The conception of rebirth or transmigration of the soul is inherent in it.

In the statement of the Poet ' I will never again come to humanlife' two conceptions are underlying -

(a) rebirth as another creature.

(b) final emancipation or liberation of the soul from the cycle of birth and death. The poet is fed up with human life.

(ii) None can be away with the writings on the firehead of man by this destiny

naisoka nakha

bora langkha takha

Cini Karama lekha.

Only the first stanza of the poem is quoted here because this portion contains some philosophical thinking. Here destiny or unseen All dispenser is assumed. This is nothing but the God as the creator and sustainer of the creation the idea of a predestined plan of life is not also met here. This shows destiny or God as all powerful and and human beings having no freedom at all.

iv) In the month of A sin negotiations for marriage begins ease send your final word about our wedding. If mother does not her consent, father will of course give his, for father is the representative of God (Kaithar). If father does not agree, mother perhaps agree, for mother is the representative of the creator rima.

In this song we get two names for God- Kaithar and larima. Further father and mother are regarded as representative of God on the other hand this is a way of showing respect to the parents and on the other there is a Philosophical significance of this statement. It is that man is a miniature representative or from of God. This perhaps echoes the upanisadic statement tattvamare (that thou art)

The last stanza is worth quoting for its melody and the aforesaid philosophical idea

may Sayaiba babuda sayan

babu ba Kaithar yada

babu Sayaiba mayche sayan

may be Larima yada

The name of Kaithar or Kaithar is not given in any lost of tribal deities of Tripura, and is found in this anthology of folk songs, collected from around Agartala Town.

vi) The Jasmine flower is needed for worship of the God

Surya (Sun), the Malati flower for the worship of Canola (The Moon God), the water lily for Laksmi, Karavi for the mother i.e. Kali and Krsna cuda for Krsna-worship.

(Suryamukhi that Surya nobhajimani malati candre bhajimani Padma Laxmi Ma bhaji mani, Karabi may na bhaji mani, krsna cude bhajimani).

These songs Nos. 36 and 48 in the collection give the names of some principal deities adorned by the tribals of Tripura. Barring the solitary name Mamita, all other deities are taken from the general Hindu Pantheon. The deities Kali, Durga, Krshna and Surya are names of the supreme being in Sakta, Vaisnava sects among the nontribal Hindu Society. They have not made any change in their status and worship. These deities as the forms of God. Mamita may be looked upon as Laksmi, for it is a deity of wealth and the Puja, follows the Durga Puja of course Mamita is a special deity of the Kalai Sampradhay.

Fate as a big force

In a number of songs of the tribal, of Tripura, fate is regarded as responsible, for human weal and woe. The words like adrs ta (unseen), Kapal (forehead) the writings on the forehead) bhagya (fortune) etc. are used to denote this fate. It is an unseen force they believe, like a god or goddess. Also it is believed that none can alter the course of fate. The proverb goes that what is lotted can not be blotted.

FOLK TALE

A few folk tale of the tribals of Tripura are now available. These have occasional reference to Gods, spirits, deities. The following are some instances.

i) Two sisters were married in two families. The younger sister's husband was very rich, but the elder sister was married to a poor man. As a result the younger sister became very proud

and one day she insulted her elder sister who visited the house. The elder sister was greatly shocked. She was thinking of her poverty. She returned home and got no peace of mind. At night she dreamt a dream. She saw God before her. God said to her, I have noted your poverty and the insult. I feel for you. I will make you rich. Awake and you will find your house full of gold. When the woman awoke she found gold everywhere in her house. Thus she became rich by the grace of God.

This story contains the following metaphysical conception. God is there. He is all powerful. He is also compassionate towards distressed humanity. He can appear before a man in a dream. He can bestow wealth to the poor. He can do wonderful things.

The story does not tell in what form God appeared to woman. But it is clear that God is not always formless, but assumes a form when necessary. This is also the general Hindu view about God. He is both nirakara and sakara, nirguna and saguna. He is not confined to any limitation. This is his infinity and all powerfulness or all doing power.

ii) There were a brother and a sister in a kalai family. The brother gradually fell in love with the sister and wanted to marry her. The sister did not like the idea at all and vehemently opposed the proposal. But because of the insistence of the brother the marriage was at last finalised. The sister then fled away from the house and climbed upon a lofty tree by the side of a river. Her mother went in search of her and found her there. She asked her to come down. But the girl won't. She prayed to God to save her from this awkward marriage and also to make the tree taller. Upon this the tree grew taller and taller. But the girl still did not feel safe. She asked king Yama (Pronounced Yama) to send her a ladder made of gold so that she might ascend high in the sky with the help of the ladder. The prayer was granted. The girl

ascended the sky by the ladder and finally escape the undesirable marriage .

This story has ideas similar to the above. There is God above. He is merciful and all powerful. He responds to the prayer of the distressed. He can save the devotees by wonderful means. God is addressed in one passage of the story as King Jama (Yama-
raja). The underlying idea or belief is that all names belong to the one God as stated in the Rgvelic line

ekma sad vipra
bahudda vadanti.

The one self-existing Reality is called by various names by the Sages.

Conclusion :

In the foregoing pages Mataphysical tradition of the tribes of Tripura is outlined as far as possible from different sources Inscriptions, folksongs etc. Besides these sources in writing there are unwritten beliefs of the tribal community about matters metaphysical any spiritual. Most of the tribals are unlettered and do not derive any Philosophy from books. But they have firm beliefs about God, deitiesm spirits, evil spirits, life after death, rebirth etc similar to those available from the scanty diterature cited above.

In addition to this, the annual worship of the Fourteen Deities at old Agartala (Tripura) also provides some important Mataphysical cenceptions. Though a number of (fourteen) deities are worshiped in the Puja as in the Durga Puja. The Puja is really regarded as worship of one God named Chaturdasa-devta. All deities are looked upon as constituting one whole. Thus unity in all diversity is believed to be the ultimate Reality, as in the Durga Puja, the goddess is regarded as the only Reality, because it is called Durga Puja.

The Metaphysical and spiritual tradition of the tribes of Tripura, is by and large, the same as that of the non-tribals and may be regarded as derived from the latter because of close connection between the two communities for long.

The Royal family of Tripura became attached to Hindu religion and philosophy from very early days and they adopted Vaisnavism, Saivism and Saktatism.

The tribal people slowly followed their examples and thus the Hindu religio-philosophical concepts entered the tribal society by slow degrees. Only the Buddhist and later Christian tribals remained outside this trend for they adopted the concepts of those faiths. Yet they are not totally free from all Hindu rites and beliefs.

In fine tribal metaphysical thoughts comprise the lofty monistic conceptions of the royal family as expressed in the inscriptions noted above and the less developed, vague popular beliefs of the general tribal masses amounting to dualism and pluralism in some cases.

But the speciality of age old Hindu Philosophy and customs are never denied by the tribals of Tripura but followed in their own ways.

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Select Novels of Thomas Hardy and Sudhanna DebBarma—A Study in Parallels

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Both Sudhanna Deb Barma (1917-1998) and Thomas Hardy 1840-1920 were petty-bourgeois novelists of rural life and their fictions are essentially preoccupied with tragic contradictions of rural society. But while in Hardy's novels, the contradictions are a few shades keener, in Hauchuk Khurio, these contradictions are implied and less acute. Social forces in pre-industrial rural England had been in confrontation and tension, material condition mature because British empire ruled upon the vast colonies and accumulated large capital while India remained badly exploited and material conditions were not allowed to develop.

The Princely state of Tripura resisted this on-slaught of the British Capitalism for a longer period or the British did not think it profitable to arrange the merger of the state with the Union. Whatever may be the reason Tripura remained under the Kings till the time India became free and the indigenous people of Tripura had to fight against the king for their rights and privileges. Popular movements against the Kings gained momentum in the early part of twentieth century. Jan Shiksha Parisad was one such movement which aimed at establishing schools in the interiors of the State. This type of social movements was responsible for the spread of education among the people. Sudhanya Deb Barma was an active participant in the movement, or rather, he was one of the pioneers in the movement for social progress. After India became free, tribal population of Tripura experienced a turmoil vis-a-vis the in-flux of people of Bengali origin from east Pakistan. These people mostly were of lower middle class rank, tradesmen and other skilled people. A tension

was generated and confrontation between different classes of immigrants and tribals developed in different parts of the State. Pressure was there on land and limited resources but this social tension only helped the advanced section of the tribals to embrace a materially and otherwise a better view of life. Tribal Youths, on the other hand, felt that they had been pushed towards an area of competition. But historically, this will only help a stagnant society living at an undeveloped stage of production level, to move out of the stagnant stages. Sudhannya Deb Barma's novel Hachuk Khurio caters to the taste of the literate readers who might have entered the domain of the middle class or lower middle class living in the Urban Centres of the State. He has a problem with his readers as Hardy did have. Hence Mr. Deb Barma's and Hardy's movement towards a fully developed critical realism was laborious and uneven. Placed within both their own declining rural enclave and the social formation at large and viewing it through the immobilising perspectives of myth in the case of Hardy and through the milieu of the rural landscape in case of Deb Barma, Hardy's situation as well as Deb Barma's was ridden with contradictions. They are contradictions inseparable from their productive relation to the Metropolitan audience in case of Hardy and the urban, semi urban audience in case of Deb Barma. Mr. Deb Barma found favour with the urban tribal and Bengali readership. So was the case with Hardy whose use of pastoral and mythological forms occasionally reflect and anxious pact with that readership and he also deploys the "Universalising" frames of the fable, ballad and classical tragedy to confer major status on fictional material which may not be dismissed as or merely provincial import. In case of Deb Barma, within the radical provisionality of his productive practice is inscribed a second, more fundamental provisionality the desired un-closure of social forms themselves.

Hardy's novel The Return of the Native as well as Deb Barma's Hauchuk Khurio Volume-II depict the rural life in two dissimilar parts of the globe. Everything even in fiction has to happen somewhere but there is no place more remarkable in the rich history of the Victorian novel than Egdon Heath. Hardy was writing at the end of the great flourishing of the realistic tradition in English fiction, he felt himself bound by the conventions but often he defied traditions to communicate his sense of the way the world worked. The significance Hardy grants in the Return of the Native to Egdon Heath comes very close to subverting the normal order of things in the Victorian novel. The health is not only a vividly evoked environment, it also contains an energy which is felt by all those who dwell on it, and energy with the power to change the nature of those who are at all receptive to it.

Similarly, in Hauchuk Khurio Deb Barma portrays the rural landscape which nurtures and nourished the tribal folk, they owe to the nature their simplicity and straight forward attitudes to life. While Hardy's Egdon defines change and rules the destiny of man, Deb Barma's nature succumbs to change and social pressure. Naren, the hero of the novel observed the palpable change all around. Population explosion thanks to the migration from east pakistan, poses a challenge to the wild forests and hills. Wild animals like deer etc. have disappeared from the hills. Tiger's abode is replaced by refugee camps. Man makes in-roads into the depth of forests and hence chirping of birds like Maina, Dhanesh are no longer heard. Nature also in Deb Barma's novel undergoes transformation along with the transformation of tribal society. Rivers do not remain navigable round the year. Rain water stagnates and floods occur. Many of the ills have a reference to the unscientific partition of the subcontinent which was forced upon the people to make room for the greed of the unscrupulous politicians. This cruel and inhuman act of

partitioning the country on the basis of religion has been responsible in many senses for the unnatural migration and concomitant ills which till the day have been plaguing the life of the hills.

We see this change in the terians of Tripura through the eyes of Naren who is the Central character in the novel. His is the Central consciousness and other characters move around him. In other words they are the foils for him. In this volume Hauchuk Khurio we see Naren a matured young man with a degree in medicine and yet unemployed. Unemployment is a curse in the life of an educated youngman and soon his dreams about life starts fading. Memory or Mita, an urban girl does not make him romantic anymore. In his rural surroundings Mita is a misfit. This episode in the opening chapter of volume-II illustrates the complexity of life that haunts the educated sections of the lower middle class or poor tribals who have received exposure to the Western model of education.

The opening chapter of The Return of the Native uniquely in Hardy and unlike almost all Victorian novels is not concerned with any of the characters but is devoted entirely to place and Egdon is at once marked out for the reader as an environment set apart, extraordinary. In the first chapter, there is curious relationship between the child-like and the sophisticated in which the adult and the adolescent sometimes vie and sometimes coalesce in the narrative voice. The child growing up absorbed many of the elements out of which the novel is formed. Of course characters appear. For Hardy, any landscape, however singular in itself is ultimately valuable for its human association. At the end of the second chapter of the novel, the human figure on top of the barrow is seen in aesthetic term as the justification of the whole composition. The Environment gains significance when brought into relation with man. But the inter-relationship of man with Egdon is of a kind rarely found elsewhere. Hardy's

Egdon repulses human attempts at transformation. On the other hand, the characters themselves are transformed. Deb Barma's rural landscape itself is subdued by man and transformed. Tribal economy and culture based on jhum cultivation undergoes transformation. Women folk have forgotten the use of handloom. Naren's neighbours do not use the indigenous cloth. Jhum is out dated. Thread is not available and the beautiful cloth the tribal women did weave named Rignai Barak becomes a memory only. Hence, tribals have become accustomed to the use of cloth produced by cotton mills. The wind of change sweeps over the Countryside. The semi-urban tribals have given up their simple food habits and are accustomed to rich and delicious dishes which the Bengali's prefer. Even the marriage system of the tribals has become complex. Earlier the grooms had to give the bride price to marry. But now the bride's father is to give dowry. It has become a difficult proposition for poor tribal father's to give their daughters in marriage because they are too poor to arrange dowry for the bride-groom. Naren has a sister named Malina. He is unemployed and his father is a poor farmer. He is tormented with the thought of his sister's marriage. Naren observes that there is a change irrespect of attitudes and social mores. There is a drift perceptible and this drift of the tribals must be stopped but the situation is too much for him and hence his loneliness and frustration.

He visits his former beloved Sabita who is married to Bimal at his instance. Bimal's poultry farming is in a bad shape. The domestic fowls are ill but no veterinary surgeon is around. The Government hospitals donot come to the rescue of the poor. Meaningful Government encouragement in respect of private enterprise remains absent. Bimal cherishes a desire to sell his farm and join as an employee under the Govt. even in the capacity of a peon. Service under the Govt. was and is the goal of an unemployed. This is a pointer to the death of all private

initiative and eventual degradation of the country in respect of capital formation. The then Congress Government appears to have no worthwhile planning with regard to the uplift of the vulnerable sections of the society by initiating such welfare schemes like the protection of arable land from the erosion of rivers, management of fisheries and the like. Government it appears, is more interested in elections and loot of the Government treasury and corruption. Naren becomes sad and morose. He looks around and finds his friends and countrymen lack in proper direction and are given to gambling, card-playing and such other vices. Naren's ancestral house is situated Mataidangar para. The villagers are drifters. His neighbours such as Bharat Chandra, Harajay, Katagdiari and others assemble around Naren for advice. Naren observes that the poor among them have become poorer. More and more people are coming down poverty line and swelling the ranks of the day labourers, of part time farmers. Bharat Chandra is the link between the town and the village. He visit the officers in the Court and turns himself into a broker and squeezes money out of the fellow tribals in the name of Jumia rehabilitation and passes the share to the town babus like circle inspector, amin babu etc. Deceit, bribery etc. are precisely urban vices or virtues which are by now manifest in Bharat Chandra. In the character of Bharat Chandra and urban babus, the tribal society meets its Nemesis.

Naren is ceased with a keen desire as to how to lead the race to the path of progress. The tribals could boast of a glorious past. They one defeated the designs of the Delhi emperors and till the other day, they were a free people. Freedom of the tribals from the slavery of bad habits, vices and superstitions etc. became Naren's only obsession.

Naren also engaged himself inwardly in political activities. He finds that the tribals have mostly joined the Communist Party and other socialist organisations. Hence, the Government

shows a degree of indifference towards the uplift of the poor tribals. There are some negative attitudes resorted to by the Government. Efforts are there to bribe some tribal leaders who, in turn, will cheat the fellow tribals and pauperise them. Naren finds that he is to take a bigger responsibility but it is not possible on his part to go against the stream so it appears that he is given to inaction like Hamlet the prince of Denmark. How can he be happy in such surroundings ? He cannot think of a faithful personal relationship at the moment. After a long wait he gets an offer of appointment as a doctor under the Government but he hesitates whether to join the service or not. His wavering casts a gloom on the minds of his parents and near relations. He decides to play in a bigger role. He has a task to guide his people towards a goal of self-sufficiency. Slogan shouting politicians appear to him more internationally given. The leaders of the tribals are after ministerial birth in the Cabinet and loaves and fishes of office. The plight of the down trodden remains unchanged.

However, at the instance of Bimal his brother-in-law, Naren comes down to reality. He joins the Government service and starts serving the people in the capacity of a doctor. He earns reputation as an honest doctor but honesty does not yield anything rather honest persons find themselves sooner in troubled water. Hence, Naren is seen standing in the way of black-marketers in medicine who have put medical service to ransom. He is transferred at the whims of one Raicharan Saha who trafficks in medicine. Ministers and drug traffickers are in league and so the people of the locality stand unitedly for Naren. Mita joins him in the hospital as a nurse. She finds that she has to shoulder a greater task now. She should work hand in hand with Naren. Her love for Naren transcends the barriers of personal dominions and finds that her love for Naren does not stand in the way of her love for the down trodden and the victims

of social oppression. Rather, her love finds a bigger dimension and it is sublimated and ennobled and she, along with Naren by her side, has miles to go.

The idea of sublimated love is foreign to Hardy's hero and heroine. Hardy designed Clym and Eustacia as natures opposed in certain ways brought together for disaster by catastrophic physical passion. This seems clear through Eustacia's attitude to Egdon Heath. She hates the heath but Clym does not. Clym has some resemblance to Naren. The narrator observes "If any one knew the heath well, it was Clym. He was permeated with its scenes, with its substance and with its odours. He might be said to be its product". (Hardy : 17). And yet he has been sent off to Budmouth and then to Paris to become a rich gentleman. He returns to Egdon with an atmosphere of these places clinging to him, stimulating Eustacia to hopes of release from the heath. Eustacia in a reverse pattern spent her formative years in Budmouth, a seaside resort of fashionable society and she came to live with her grandfather on the heath after Clym had left it. Despite her background, despite her unwillingness to be where she is "It is my cross, my misery, and will be my death," (Hardy : 82) she says. Eustacia remains what she is at the end of the novel. But Mita in Hachuk Khuraj shows development. At the end of the novel she is seen to outgrow her former self as a romantic lover. Eustacia's end is tragic but Mita's is not. Eustacia hates nature and cannot endure the heath but Mita more and more loves nature and her surroundings. Clym on the other hand appears never to be out of harmony with the heath. When Eustacia marries Clym it is as if she is marrying a foreigner. She and Clym live together for a couple of months, the initial passion burns itself out at a rapid rate. Their love is dissipated as it is not informed by higher goals, as it does not transcend the narrow concerns. Selfish love is only self-defeating and is bound to end in exhaustion and death. Eustacia refuses to learn one lesson of

the heath well understood by her husband Clym, patient endurance. And so we see her driven by the heath to her death. With her death much of the darkness is removed from the novel but so also is most of the passion. Egdon remains calm and sunny. Thomasin and Diggory contract a respectable marriage. Clym finds his muted vacation. He opens a school to teach the heath people. He appears never to be out of harmony with the Heath. Clym finds his happiness by transcending his personal concerns and here he comes closer to Naren. Both the characters are central characters in their own right and it is through their consciousness that we have a glimpse of the vision which inspires the novelist.

Hardy's Clym and Deb Barma's Naren share some traits in common. They are inspired by missionary zeal and dedication. Naren, a farmer's son does not possess Clym's sophistication but he, though employed a doctor by the Government and enters the class of the professionals, could easily declass himself. He remained a people's doctor, rather a revolutionary. It appears that Naren is the mouthpiece of the novelist and he is much in advance of his time.

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