



“Echoes of Arts: Exploring the Tribal dance and Heritage of Mayurbhanj.”

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Abstract:-

The study focuses on the rich and vibrant Tribal Traditions of Mayurbhanj. This district known for its deep roots of cultural heritage. The tribal communities consisting like Santal, Ho, Munda, Bhuyan, Bathudi, Khadia and Bhumij. These tribal communities have kept their alive through own old customs, Dances, Music, Festivals and Rituals. In Mayurbhanj, the famous Folk dance is Chhau' which known as 'Martial Art in dance'. This is dance popular in Mayurbhanj though out Odisha across all over world. The Chhau dance form is recognized by UNESCO for symbolize fusion of Marital Arts, Folk tradition and storytelling. This dance is preformed during Chaitra festival and Mahavishuba Sankranti or Odia New Year' which are celebrated every Year. Another dance form Know as Jhumar Pantasalia', which dance also most popular in Mayurbhanj. This dance performed by Kudmi people in their festivals like 'Bandana', Karam' and Makara Parva' or Tusu Parva'. These festivals are agriculture based festivals, the Kudmisperformend their traditional Pantasalia dance. The 'Santal' community is the second largest community in Mayurbhanj. Their Dance form known as 'Santali dance' which dance performed in Sohrai (a harvest and cattle festival) Baha bonga (a spring flower festival) and Karam are prominent festival to celebrate nature and fertility. In these festivals the santal people performed their Santali Dance. The changu dance another tribal Dance which Dance performed by the Bathudi and Bahuyan communities. The 'Ho' and 'Munda' communities have their own traditional tribal dance which known as Mundari and Ho'dance form. These people performed their dance in harvesting festivals like Mage Parab' or 'Baha Parab' and Sohrai.

The study is based on visits to villages and talks with the tribal dancers, the village head man, elders and through the historical records. This study highlights how dance is not just an art form but a way of life. It closely tied to nature, faith and community spirit. The article talk about the beautiful customs and traditional music instruments add beauty to every performance. Today tribal dances

and traditions face many challenges a specially for Modern lifestyle, Migration and Changing economies are putting pressure on traditional way of living. But the study point of views that many local people, artist and tribal organization are deeply dedicated to preserving their culture. They reach the youth for exploring new ways to protect and promote their cultural heritage. This article explores the dance music and rituals of tribal communities are focusing their living tradition and inspired their future generation of Mayurbhanj district.

Key words:- Mayurbhanj Tribes, Tribal Dance and Music, Cultural Heritage of Mayurbhanj, Agricultural Festivals of Tribes

I. Introduction(Tribal Landscape of Mayurbhanj):-

Mayurbhanj district in Odisha is known for its rich cultural identity and tribal Heritage. In which district, several prominent tribal communities were found such as the Santals, Hos, Mundas, Bhuyans, Bathudis, Khadias and Bhumij. These communities have preserved their cultural heritage through traditional dance, music, festival and custom passed down across generations. According to the census reports, 2011 the area of Mayurbhanj 10,418 square Kilometer. It had a population 2,519,738 of people per square Kilometer. ⁽¹⁾

The tribes occupied 58.72% of the population. As per 1931 census, In district of Mayurbhanj comprised the Santal (28.6%), Kolha (12.07%), Bhumij (8.70%), Bathudi (5.19%), Bhuyan (2.26%) the Kudmi (6.77%). The Santal are second largest group in Mayurbhanj. ⁽²⁾

The tribal communities have several cultural practices, like Dance and Music play important role in tribal society. The tribal people performed their Indigenous dances during festivals and agricultural celebrations. These traditions are not only performances but also social expressions of identity and heritage.

Tribal Dance Form: Living heritage:-



Tribal Dance is a vibrant expression of a community's living tradition. It reflects the stories, values and traditions of people who have live close to nature for generations. These dance are often performed during festivals, harvests and religious ceremonies. Every step of dance, song and costume has special meaning, showing respect for live and the land. Tribal Dances bring people together, strengthen bonds and keep old customs living their society. There are many kinds of tribal dance performed in Mayurbhanj District such as Chhau, JhumarPantasalia, Santal, Ho, Bhumij, Munda and Changu Dance form that is popular in Mayrbhanj, throughout Odisha and a cross the world. These dances are recognized by UNESCO for its cultural significance of martial arts, storytelling and folk tradition.⁽³⁾

The Jhumar, Pantasalia dance also famous in Mayurbhanj. These Dances practice by Kudmi people. Another Prominent tribal Danceform like 'Santal', 'Ho', 'Munda', 'Changu', 'Bhumij' and 'Khadia' which dance performed by the tribal people in Mayurbhanj. These are following here:-

The ChhauDance(Martial Art Dance):-

Mayurbhanj is well known in the cultural heritage of Odisha. Mayurbhanjits famous for their important festival named 'ChaitraParva' at the end of Chaitra Month in summer. This festival also known as 'MahaVishubaSankranti' or 'PanaSankranti'. On this special day, farmers celebrate the start of the new farming year. In this festival performed Chhau dance and celebrate its with great devotion and Joy.⁽⁴⁾

Traditionally Chhau Dance is a folk dance performed in eastern India like Odisha (Mayurbhanj), West Bengal (Purulia) and Jharkhand(Seraikala). This Dance divided into three forms named as follows:-

(I) The PuruliaChhau of West Bengal

(II) The SareikalaChhau of Jharkhand

(III) The MayurbhanjChhau of Odisha

The PuruliaChhau of west Bengal:-

The PuruliaChhau dance is celebrated in the sun festival (chhat Puja) in West Bengal. In this dance, dancers are wear large masks that match the characters they Play. For Example- If someone is playing a lion, they wear a lion mask and a costume and they even walk on like a lion.⁽⁵⁾

The SeraikalaChhau of Jharkhand:-

The SeraikalaChhau dance was first developed by Gajapati ruler of the region. In SeraikalaChhau dancer uses symbolic masks and their expression and movements help show which character they are playing.

The MayurbhanjChhau of Odisha:-

In the MayurbhanjChhau is performed without masks and is technically similar to the SeraikellaChhau. (6)

The word Chhau derived from the word 'Chhauni' which mean 'a military camp'. Some scholars suggested that the word Chhau is derived from Sanskrit word 'Chhaya' which mean 'Fake Smile' or 'Disguise'.⁽⁷⁾

InChhau dance used various type of musical instruments. These instruments produce strong, energetic sounds that create a feeling of bravery power in the mind naturally. Many festivals and rituals related to Lord Shiva and Bhairav are connected with Chhau dance.⁽⁸⁾

Generally two Dhumsa,four or more Drums, two Mahuri and chadchadi are used in Chhau Dance. The traditional instrument are played along with dances depicting different moods and moments. There are different music overtures for Arjuna, Ramachandra, Lord Shiva and different other character. Maharaja Krishna Chandra BhanjaDeo (1868-1882) who was a patron of arts with various improvements in the lives of the people of Baripada. He made a significant contribution to preservation of chhau dance. RamaharijeetBabarta encouraged the king to bring expert Chhau Dancer from Seraikala to Baripada. Initially two renowned artists UpendraViswal from north region another is Banamali Das expert dancer in Chhaufrom Seraikala. The King provided land and made arrangement for his maintenance. At that time two dance academy established in the involvement of UpendraViswal and Banamali Dash these respective region known as Northern region and other is Southern region. During the reign of Maharaja Sriram Chandra BhanjaDeo (1892-1912)patroned of Chhau dance. He annually granted two thousand rupees for development of Chhau dance. Artist like Jadunath Ray and NarendraNath Ray introduced western Musical instrument and classical raga in Chhau performance.Jadunath Ray was honoured with the title 'SangectBhushan'.⁽⁹⁾

Jhumar Dance (Patasalia Dance):-

Jhumar Dance or Paantasalia Dance is a popular traditional folk dance performed by the Kudmi community in Mayurbhanj. The Pantasalia Dance performed during the harvest seasons and festivals. This dance is Tune based songs and a distinctive rhythm. The Shumar songs are 'SwaraPradhan' which meaning theyare based on the melody with a unique rhythm. There are two main dance form known as one is 'Nachuni' and other is 'Pantasalia Dance'.

Nachuni Dance:-



Nachuni Dance is the solo Dance form Jhumar Dance, which is popular Dance form performed by Kudmi women in Marriage ceremony, Birth ceremony and Festivals. This dance also performed by male which dancer known as 'Rasika'. This dance established in 18th century Rasika or the male Dancer wear 'Dhoti' and other hand the Female Dancer or Nachuni wear saree the yellow colour has a red border.⁽¹⁰⁾

Pantasalia Dance:-

Pantasalia Dance is another form of Dance performed by the Kudmi people. This Dance is a group dance. Both males and females join together. They performed Pantasalia Dance in agricultural related festivals like Karam festival, Bandana festival and Makar or Tushu festival. The female and males dancers wear Uniform Saree and Dhoti.⁽¹¹⁾

Their traditional instruments like Dhol, Madal, Bansi, Nagara, dhak and Shehnai are use in the Jhumar Dance. This dance promotes fraternity, equality and social values through its hand holding during the Pantasalia Dance form.

Santal Dance:-

The Santal Dance is a traditional and vibrant folk dance performed by the Santal community. These dance is known as "Anej". The Santal community has several traditional dance forms such as Dasai, Lagre, Soharai, Pata, and Hunta. These dances reflect their unique cultural expressions tied to seasonal festivals, rituals, and communal celebrations. It is second largest tribal community in Mayurbhanj and other part of Jharkhand and West Bengal. The dance features steady foot movements smooth hand gestures, and dancers moving in circle. It focuses on the strong beat of drums and other traditional instruments. The dance is an express of Joy, Unity and Deep root connection to the land. During the festivals they honored by the harvest and fertility seasons. The most important festivals for the Santali Dance include Sohrai (a harvest festival), Baha Baonga (Spring festival) and Karam festival (a fertility festival). Typically the male and female dances participate in the traditional festivals. They wear colourful traditional Santali tribal attire and adorned with beads and Jewelry. Traditional instruments like the Dhol, Dhamasa, Madal and Fulte using the Santali people. The Santali Dance reflects the community's deep connection with nature.⁽¹²⁾

Ho Dance:-

The HO tribes are an Austro-Asiatic Munda ethnic group of India. The HO people practices the 'Sarna' religion. The term of Ho derived from 'HO'

language which meaning 'Human' and 'Human Being' in their language.⁽¹³⁾

Dance is an important part of Ho tribe. The 'Ho dance known as "Dubul Shun". Dance and Music are important aspect of the cultural life of Ho people. Both song and dance are key expression of ho art and culture. Especially the Ho tribe performed their dance during 'Mage Parab' which is the one of the significant festival celebrate by the HO community. In HO village have own dance ground known as 'Akhra' which is an open space with firm soil. It is located under a large tree in every Ho villages. Traditionally, the Ho music has a variety feature of instruments such as the 'Dama' (a type of Drum), 'Duman' (Barrel Drum) and 'Rutu' (Flute). These instruments add an unique rhythm and melody that represent their musical and cultural identity.⁽¹⁴⁾

Changu Dance:-

The Bathudi community is mainly found in Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar district of Odisha. According to 2011 census, the population of Bathudi around 2,17,345. They classified as Hinduised Scheduled Tribe of Odisha. The primary occupation of the Bathudi community is manual labor. The chief god Badam and chief Goddess is 'Badamani' worshiped in 'Athara Deula' located in Similipal. They use to peak local Odia language in own way, they have no specific in mother tongue in Bathudi community. But the Bathudi community have own dance form named 'Changu'. The Changu dance specially popular in Thakurmunda and Karanjia block. During the Uda festivals, the Changu Dance performed in every Bathudi village. The Changu Dance is an Unique and Significant part of the cultural heritage of Mayurbhanj. The Bathudi community used to chant the names of Badam Thakura and Salai Devi by creating a rhythmic sound through biting his hand on his chest. Later they invented a instrument based for their dance. The name of the instrument came from the words 'Chhapudua' meaning biting hand on the chest angu or angaru meaning (from the body) which, together formed known as 'Changu'. Both male and female dancers performed the Changu dance in circle or semi circle steps and they involve quick footwork. The tradition musical instruments are drum and flutes with the music driving the rhythm of the performance. The dancer wears colourful costumes with traditional jewelry by the Bathudi women. The Changu Dance is not just a form of artistic expression, but also a way for the Bathudi communities to celebrate their joyful way of life.⁽¹⁵⁾

Role of Dance in Tribal festivities:-

Dance plays a significant role in tribal communities. The tribal people of Mayurbhanj



celebrate their agriculture related festivals as such Sohrai or Bandana, Tusu or MakaraParab, BahaBonga, Sarhul, Mage Parab and Karam. The tribal communities celebrates similar agricultural or seasonal festivals but they call them by different name and have unique rituals, dance and customs.⁽¹⁶⁾

During the tribal festivals, tribal people dance together to express their happiness, unity and respect for nature. Dance is not only for fun or joy but also it is a way to keep their cultural heritage.⁽¹⁷⁾

Musical Tradition of Tribes:-

Music is a one of the important part of Tribal life. Music is not just for entertainment but a way to connect with nature, express emotions and celebrate important events. The tribal Music is often pressed down orally transformed from one generation to next generation. Each tribe has its unique musical style instrument. Their tribal songs that reflect their way of life. Traditionally tribal instruments different type Drums, like Madal, Dhol, Flutes, Chadchadi, Dhamsa and Metal balls. These instruments are often hand made using natural material like wood, leather and bamboo. The tribal people sing and performed jmh dance during festivals, wedding, harvests and religious ceremonies.⁽¹⁸⁾

Modern Challenge: Tradition and Transition:-

Today tribal communities face so many challenges with the rise of Modern Life Styles, Technology, Urban Influence and traditional ways of living are slowly changing. The younger generations are migrating for higher education and jobs leaving behind their cultural roots. As result, many old customs and rituals forgotten by the tribal people. Despite these struggles, many tribal people are finding ways to balance modern life with their cultural heritage. Many Groups, Elders and Artists are working together to teach the youth for preserve their cultural identity. This time of transition is difficult, but also full of hope as tradition and modernity can come together to build a bright future.

II. Conclusion:-

The tribal communities of Mayurbhanj such as the Santal, Ho, Munda, Bathudi and Kudmi have preserved their cultural identity through their vibrant dance, music, rituals and festivals. These practices are not just part of their heritage but also reflect their way of life, spiritual beliefs, and close bond with nature.⁽¹⁹⁾

The Dance like Chhau, Jhumar, Pantasalia, Santali, HO and Changu performed in social gathering like marriage and birth ritual. They also performed their dance in agriculture relate festival

like Makar, Bandana, UdaParva, Karam festival and Sarhul or BahaBonga or PhulaBhanguni ties to keeping old age tradition alive.⁽²⁰⁾

Today the globalized world people engage in diverse cultural activities such as ritual and festivals, reflecting a blend of tradition and modernity. By preserving tribal culture is not just the responsibility of the communities. Government body educators and civil society must support to documents, teach and promote tribal art and dance forms.

In conclusion the tribal cultures are facing modern challenges with awareness, respect and collaborative efforts. The Dance helps them express their emotions, celebrate their life and preserve their, cultural identity for the future.

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