
UNIT 3 DEVELOPMENTAL AND EVOLUTIONAL MODELS

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3.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you will able to:

- describe folklore studies in the Indian context;
- classify important terms and concepts in Indian folklore;
- list out the significant scholars and their contribution; and
- identify some models used for folklore study and their evolution.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

'Developmental and evolutionary models' as the title of this Unit, talks about the important ideas that have been developed by folklorists or people studying, collecting, analyzing and presenting folklore, especially with relation to Indian folklore. How important is the study of our folklore to a deeper and better understanding of our culture? How do communities such as caste-groups, tribes etc. maintain their identity in present times where social changes and technological advances have brought about socio-political and cultural upheavals? How does the folklore of any particular group help in maintaining this identity? How do we understand and deal with the rich body of oral literature in our country where texts have a long oral history preceding their written or materially recorded forms? Indeed in our country where there are multiple traditions of performance, narration, literature and other forms of cultural expression what models can be used to study folklore which contains within it all the above forms of expression

and many more such as production of artifacts and objects of daily use among others? These are some important questions that folklorists have asked themselves when faced with the rich and diverse folk culture of our country that is deeply connected to what can be called 'Classical' culture at one end and 'Popular' culture on the other.

There have been many debates about some categories that have been used to discuss Indian culture in general and folk culture/ lore in particular. Some examples of these categories are 'Margi/Deshi', literate/ non-literate/ oral/ written, Sanskritised/ 'regional' etc. Without delving too deeply into definitions of these categories it can be said that scholars over time have felt that these categories are fluid, porous and have a mutually complimentary relationship with each other or are linked to each other in many ways. Therefore it is important to be aware of these relationships while studying folk art, literature, etc. as opposed to thinking of them as 'fixed'.

Another important viewpoint is about the nature of folklore itself. Is folklore something to be preserved as sweeping social changes within our country and globalizing forces in the larger context threaten the survival of traditional folk arts? Some feel that folklore shares a much more positive, living and interactive relationship with the present and is capable of dynamically adapting itself to produce new meanings voicing the socio-political concerns of a community. Many scholars have studied how folklore reflects the experiences of women in changing rural and urban spheres while many have studied folk-performers who have used traditional ways of singing/ dancing/ story-telling to voice present day social concerns about the downtrodden.

In the following section let us look at some important ideas and concepts related to the study of folklore which includes identifying the sources of folklore, its collection and compilation, analyzing collected materials, drawing theories or conclusions from it, testing those conclusions through discussions with other scholars and documenting collected materials through various technological media. The following section (3.3) deals with some developmental concepts which can be developed into models. Section 3.4 deals with some models of study as they have evolved and have been applied to Indian contexts.

3.1 SIGNIFICANT AND PIONEERING CONCEPTS OF PROMINENT FOLKLORISTS

In this course we are dealing with folklore and culture and different conceptual perspectives. In the following point I will discuss with you regarding the folklore and cultural studies in Indian context with reference to Indian scholars.

3.1.1 A. K. Ramanujan 'domestication', 'counter-systems'.

The body of Indian mythologies is vast and varied. Indeed the word 'mythology' itself may not be adequate to contain all the literary, oral and written genres of our country. Traditionally the Ramayana and the Mahabharata are thought to be 'Itihasas' or 'chronicles' that contain the narrative of a hero or heroes and many other episodes that seem to defy organization. Both the epics contain extremely subtle debates about ethical issues and there are as many traditions of reading, understanding and transmitting these texts as there are episodes from which

different caste-groups draw their tales of origin. 'Purana's are another body of literature which shows this amazing variety. There are the great Sanskritic Puranas such as Agni-Purana, Skanda-Purana etc. and there are Puranas related to local deities, village deities, local caste-groups, village/ folk heroes and their exploits etc. the latter are broadly called 'Folk- Mythologies'. In these folk mythologies there are recognizable characters both divine and semi-divine such as Siva-Parvati or Rama-Lakshmana etc. but they perform different functions and actions and act in episodes with very different intentions from their 'Puranic' roles. In his study of the 'Maleya madeshwara' narrative Ramanujan looks at the story of Madappa a godly figure of southern Mysore. Madappa has to look for his parents on this earth and destroy an evil king and bring peace to his devotees. His travels and exploits in southern Mysore are the source of the names of many places in that area making this a 'sacred geography' so to speak. There is a strong element of 'Localising' here. Ramanujan proposes four ways of understanding the relationship between Sanskritic and Folk Puranas; 1. Both share major divine personalities such as Siva, Vishnu, Surya etc, 2. The divine heroes appear in Folk-Puranas with different episodes and functions, 3. Folk elements are local and have a regional relevance which does not have a pan-Indian recognizable element, 4. Folk heroes may perform actions that are similar to those of Puranic heroes such as finally killing evil kings or demons similar to Vishnu's killing of the Asuras Madhu and Kaitabha etc. There is a fifth way which 'garbles' the Puranic tale in its local retelling over time. The Sanskritised retelling of local legends may also 'garble' events and meanings in their retelling of local legends. The divine figures when they appear in the local milieu are 'domesticated' and 'incorporated' in human bodies that 'sweat, stink, defecate and menstruate...' as can be seen in myths and tales of village goddesses etc. This process by which the divine and heroic figures are 'localised' and 'contemporized' or made immediately familiar and human to the local audience is called 'Domestication'.

'Counter-systems' and their identification in the body of Indian folklore has been another important concern of Ramanujan. In the context of what he calls 'Women's tales' meaning '...tales told by women' and '...tales that are centered around women' there are contrasting viewpoints to those found in classical literature. The viewpoints of women, peasants and illiterate workers on ideal wifely behaviour or concepts such as chastity etc. offer a sort of opposition or 'counter' to accepted classical mores. However, the relationship is not one of mutual opposition alone but one containing many subtle links which positions the classical and folk at different ends of the same 'continuum'. An example of this can be seen in the varied understandings of the concept of 'Karma' which defines individual destiny or fate. In the classical concepts it includes actions and their consequences spread over many births following a scheme whose logic may not be understandable to the individual due to its vastness. However in the story of the 'Lampstand-woman' ('Dipada-Malli' a Kannada folktale) fate appears in the form of 'mother-fate' or 'Setivi-Tayi' who arbitrarily or willfully writes the fate of the individual on his/her forehead at birth. Indeed the good hero/heroine often has to go through sufferings without any apparent reasons. These sufferings are also worked out within a single lifetime.

The above two concepts of 'domestication' and 'counter-systems' are only two of the many innovative ways of looking at collected materials proposed by Ramanujan. Both look at ways in which what we call 'Classical' and 'Folk' are sought to be related and compared with each other. This is especially relevant in

the Indian context where categories are fluid and contain mutual oppositions within a complimentary framework.

Check your progress 1

Note: 1) Your answer should be about 30 words each;

2) You may check your answers with the possible answers given at the end of the Unit.

1) What do you understand by 'Domestication' of myths or any mythic character?

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2) In which context did Ramanujan identify 'Counter-Systems'?

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3.2.2 Jawaharlal Handoo; history-writing and the Palace Paradigm, folklore and paradigm- shift

In what ways can documented and undocumented materials of folklorists benefit the communities or sources from which they have been collected? What role do our oral traditions play that is different from the written or 'Classical' traditions? It is felt that written or recorded histories invariably tend to focus on Kings or ruling figures and the power structures that emerge from them. Giving the example of the medieval Sanskrit work 'Rajatarangini' written in Kashmir, Jawaharlal Handoo speaks of this recurrent pattern in literature and history writing where royalty and power, growth and decay of kingdoms, wars and bloodshed play the dominant role rarely recording the voices or experiences of the ordinary, the everyday and the 'Folk'. Written histories seek to chronicle events that diminish the importance or presence of ordinary people or entire groups of people that may be living on the fringes of society. The structures of these narratives call to the mind palaces, stone-bridges and other physical and architectural structures that are visible symbols of royal authority. It is however not as if this paradigm called the 'Palace Paradigm' died with the advancement of modern society and social changes. Colonial attitudes encouraged feudal and elitist values and this paradigm continues to be alive in present day structures of narration and discourse in many ways.

The folklorist in this situation has to find new ways of positioning his/her material as a point of resistance to the Palace Paradigm. The potential of oral materials

has not yet been fully assessed nor have folklorists collected these oral materials extensively. In this context the Bhakti movement which flowered forth in medieval India contained the seeds of resistance and social change. Emphasizing shared experience and collective expression, the Bhakti movement produced many forms of performance and participation (for example bhajan and sankirtan) very much like the oral traditions of various communities. Indeed this participative element where there is an interactive relationship between performer and audience, teacher and taught and the Divine and the devotee or powerful and powerless is absent in the written history models where interpolations or changes in the 'fixed' text are not possible for lay-people. Thus oral texts by virtue of their fluidity, shared experience and living presence among people constitute a space for 'Public opinion' within a community. Where the performer interacts with the audience, where the members of the community participate actively in producing narratives at the same time as they preserve certain other narratives they may consider sacred there is scope for building a public sphere. In written histories there is only one version which is 'frozen' in time. It is here that the folklorist has to look for ways in which the potential of folklore to function as a space which promotes public discussion and presents alternate histories to officially recorded histories can be better utilized. This is a new direction compared to the older ideas of focusing extensively on the forms and features of folk literatures.

The relevance of folklore materials, identifying those materials that have not received due importance and their collection, the uses of such materials in building spaces for public discussions and opinion making are the inputs that are suggested to the contemporary folklorist working in the Indian context. Indeed folklore methods can lead the way for creation of participatory expressions that can add to modern ideas of public opinion and public space. Folklore has always held the potential for Paradigm-shifts and the realization of this potential itself can be thought of as a Paradigm-shift.

Check your progress 2

- Note:** 1) Your answers should be about each 30 words each;
2) You may check your answers with the possible answers given at the end of the Unit.
3) Describe briefly the 'palace paradigm'.

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3.2.3 Soumen Sen; study of particular ethnic groups (Khasi-Jaintia), 'preservation'.

What are the methods through which a tribal community living in a particular geographical location can be understood in its fullness? What are the ways in which an 'Ethnic group' can be defined as distinct from other ethnic groups or communities living in the same area? Is the folklore of such an ethnic group

something 'precious' to be preserved or are there other ways of looking at it? What sort of theoretical position should the folklorist adopt when understanding and discussing a particular group? Answers to these and other questions are sought in a detailed study of the Khasi-Jaintia tribes of the North-east by Soumen Sen.

The concepts of 'Tribe' and ethnicity are themselves open to debate with the rapid migration of tribal people to urban centers and ensuing educational and professional opportunities. The process of 'progress' creates its own problems for the tribal community when it comes to maintaining its identity in new areas. Added to this is the phenomenon of modern mass media, entertainment and other non-traditional forms of expression that appeal more to the younger generations, perhaps making traditional lore appear 'remote' by comparison. For the folklorist there is the problem of understanding the community by reconstructing its history through oral texts and dealing with the question of 'Preservation'. What is 'Preservation'? It can be understood in three ways; preservation of physical artifacts which have ritual and/ or daily use, preservation of traditional activities such as weaving etc. and preservation of oral/literary/cultural traditions. Perhaps it is easier to preserve artifacts as they are physical objects; however each aspect of the preserving effort whether in the form of collection of objects, reconstructed villages, encouragement of traditional arts/crafts and ways of production, documentation of oral literature and performances and other methods, needs to be thought about carefully. Here the folklorist can be potentially useful in ensuring that preservation does not freeze or 'objectify' the materials collected but can play a vital role in giving back to the community a feeling of 'itself'.

The context for the folklorist to function within is the slow change of tribal societies over time and understanding the role of the folk artist within this society. In this case the study has aimed to be highly integrated and multi-disciplinary. The folklorist needs to be aware of methods of study in history, sociology, literature, performance, religion and ethnomusicology among others. The methods of prominent folklorists who have pioneered concepts outside the Indian context also need to be studied and applied to local data carefully. In the context of the Khasi-Jaintia tribes it is important to focus upon features such as the matrilineal nature of this tribal society, the ancestors and gods worshipped by its people, the myths of origin recorded in tribal songs and literary materials relating to the same wherever relevant, traditional occupations and knowledge systems such as native medicine etc. occasions of community dance and music among other issues. The folklorist however has to seek constructive answers to how his/ her study of a particular area does not remain an academic exercise but can potentially play an energizing role for the community it studies and the people outside the community who wish to know more about it.

Thus in the above section it is not just the process of folklore study within a particular area that looked at in detail but the role of the folklorist in defining the idea of 'preservation' of a particular culture is also sought to be discussed. Differing from older models where folklore was collected somewhat arbitrarily perhaps and its formal analysis, today's folklorist needs to be aware of the multiple cultural, national, developmental and international contexts that surround his/ her efforts.

Check your progress 3

Note: 1) Your answers should be about 30 words each;

2) You may check your answers with the possible answers given at the end of the Unit.

4) What is 'preservation' of folklore?

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5) What challenge does it pose for the folklorist?

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3.3 SOME IMPORTANT MODELS OF STUDY

In this course we are dealing with folklore and culture in different conceptual perspectives. In the following points, I will discuss some important models of study with you regarding folklore and cultural studies in Indian context.

3.3.1 Frames and oicotypes.

A frame can be simply defined as a loosely sketched background of cultural attitudes of a community or region against which the individual story can be viewed. The events of the individual story can thus be understood with reference to their cultural context and may be compared to similar or dissimilar stories and contexts from other parts of the world.

An oicotype can be understood as a specific pattern of folk tale which told and retold within a particular community or region. This pattern may have recognizable features such as a prince and his loyal servant, a young bride and her kind/ cruel mother-in-law, a greedy and secretly lustful holy man, a recognizable chain of events such as being lost in a foreign land or being reborn in a different body etc.

The uses of setting up frames and oicotypes can be twofold, firstly to discover and compare similar story forms across various social groups and secondly to become aware of features that are peculiar to the local and try to relate them to the universal. This model of cataloguing material and identifying its features can make comparative studies of folklore within a society or region easier. Aarne-Thompson divided the folktales collected by them into four broad categories; animal tales, ordinary folktales, jokes and anecdotes and lastly formula tales.

These categories have further indexes of 'motifs' or 'the smallest element in a tale having the power to persist in tradition'. These indexes are numbered and tabulated so that a motif or type or sub-unit can be identified easily.

Attempting to apply this to the Indian context Brenda F. Beck proposes four distinct patterns which can potentially become Indian oicotypes. These patterns are;

- sibling bond,
- patron/client bond,
- threat of an adversary, and
- strength of individual desires.

The sibling bond refers to bonds between two or more brothers or between brothers and married or unmarried sisters etc. The patron/ client bond refer to the relationship between prince and courtier or merchant and servant or queen and friend/s etc. The threat of an adversary refers to attacks by demons or asuras or ferocious beasts etc. and the strength of individual desires refer to the quest of the divine/ semi-divine/ heroic individual and the adventures he undergoes.

Check your progress 4

Note: 1) Your answers should be about 30 words each;

2) You may check your answers with the possible answers given at the end of the Unit

6) What are frames and oicotypes?

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7) What ecotypes are proposed for the Indian context?

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3.3.2 Historical reconstruction and contextual study

What are the modes in which folklorists can examine and analyze their data or materials collected from a region over a period of time? Can folklore give some clues about a long lost period of history? Can a particular period in the development of a society be reconstructed by looking carefully at folklore? Perhaps the pioneers in this attempt were the Grimm brothers. Living in Germany

in the early half of the Nineteenth Century, they attempted to revive mythologies of the old Germanic gods and goddesses.

Coming to a much later era, Vladimir Propp the Russian Folklorist known more for his model of 'Structural analysis' of folklore stressed on the need to investigate and understand the historical foundations of folklore. Historical studies should be able to demonstrate older folklore under layers of the contemporary and should give clues to historical conditions responsible for such changes over time. Thus it is possible to see distinct stages of history through a study of folklore as it contains traces of people's lives.

In the Indian context some historians have been inspired by the potential of folklore to offer valuable historical insights. D. D. Kosambi is such a historian who attempted to study folk festivals and rituals and separate the several layers of history surrounding them. His book, 'Myth and reality: studies in the formation of Indian culture' contains his attempts to discover and stratify various periods of history through specific studies. In recent years there has been a growing awareness of how folk literature can function as a 'history' by itself and not necessarily a source waiting to be analyzed for clues.

Contextual studies of folklore seek to include elements of social sciences in their methods and outlook. Social sciences such as anthropology, sociology, linguistics etc. are the disciplines from which the folklorist can draw concepts and apply them to methods of folklore. A folklorist therefore has to be multi-disciplinary in his efforts to first achieve a holistic picture of the community he is studying and later to present such a holistic view to others. The social and historical contexts of folklore whether in the form of performance, literature, oral history, artifacts, knowledge systems etc. provide a fuller and deeper area of exploration.

Check your progress 5

- Note:** 1) Your answers should be about 30 words each;
2) You may check your answers with the possible answers given at the end of the Unit.
8) What is contextual study?

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3.3.3 Folklore as discourse and performance

The term 'discourse' refers to the various uses of language in its written and spoken forms. This includes diverse activities that may take place in private and

public spaces such as speech-acts, writing, talk, conversations and announcements among others. The analysis of this use of language which has come to include the non-verbal is called 'discourse analyses'. This looks at the relations between discourse and its context (social, regional etc.), discourse and power-relations (social groups, individuals, nations etc.), discourse and interaction (between individuals/ groups in various settings), and discourse and memory (individual and collective). Usually the spoken or written expression is said to contain clues regarding the speaker's intention.

Looking at folklore against this background is a challenging task for the folklorist to decide what aspects of folklore can be covered under this model. While some feel oral literature is best suited to be looked at and analyzed under this heading others feel the overwhelming performance and ritual aspects of folk culture in general also can be interpreted through this method. Central to this idea is the growing awareness among scholars that the term 'performance' can include popular entertainment, speeches, political demonstrations, meetings, conferences, rituals, celebrations etc. Thus the scope of performance has moved beyond the usual ideas of theatrical/ dance/ music events to include a much wider range of expressions both rehearsed and spontaneous.

Another topic important to this idea is 'text'. While it is generally believed that oral texts can be more fluid than written, this is not necessarily true in the Indian context. Many traditions have rules for pronunciation, intonation etc. that are passed on from one generation to another without any variation. The Vedas are one such example. In tribal societies myths of origin which may be recited by a group of specialists allow for no deviations or interpolations. Many hymnal traditions like the 'Tevarams' or devotional hymns addressed to Shiva in Tamil are passed on through generations with their meters and tunes disallowing any changes by individual performers. On the other hand written texts can change significantly in the hands of performers. The scripts of Kathakali plays or Yakshagana and some Terukoothu plays are an example of this. The written text of the play might be very brief but may take hours to perform as the performer is free to interpret certain portions for as long as he wants. Against this background it is indeed challenging for the folklorist to identify what aspects of oral and written folk texts can be considered relatively 'fixed' or 'fluid'. Thus the relationship between oral and written is one that has many layers and forms that change from region to region and society to society. Another aspect of folklore is its potential to disturb and question accepted power equations and relations within a society. While appearing to confirm accepted values a performance can actually question the values it seems to be embracing. Traditional songs and storytelling methods can also be used by folk performers to produce laughter and ask questions. Revolutionary social messages can also be coded in the traditional ways of performance. The clown- figure or 'Vidushaka' can relate contemporary issues through asides from the stage in the middle of the theatrical action. This potential to disturb poses an important area of study for the student of folklore.

While eminent scholars from the past like Dr. Raghavan have focused on folk theatre like Yakshagana and Therukoothu seeking to discover links that relate these forms to ancient dramaturgical texts like the Natyashastra, today's scholar of performance and especially folk performance needs to situate his efforts in the greater contexts of social and developmental changes that endanger traditional arts and their audiences.

Check your progress 6

- Note:** 1) Your answers should be about 30 words each;
2) You may check your answers with the possible answers given at the end of the Unit.
9) How are the ideas of 'discourse' and 'performance' applicable to Indian folklore?

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3.4 LET US SUM UP

There have been many pioneering concepts of folklore around the world in the past few decades. The effort here however is to look at few significant concepts that have proposed unique ways of looking at and thinking about folklore especially in the Indian context. This is because of the unique features of Indian culture in general and folk culture in particular which have large bodies of oral traditions and literature and where forms may be seemingly similar but may function very differently in different contexts. One only has to look at the various local traditions of an epic like the Ramayana to get a sense of the variety of retellings one common narrative may go through. Added to this is the constant questioning of the folklorist's role within the context of national and developmental processes and social changes that seem to threaten the existence of some varieties of folklore. Though it is not possible here to represent the many innovations and original approaches of various folklorists working on each of the diverse regions of India, the effort has been to give few different and important concepts to the student.

Through the years the study of folklore in the Indian context has posed many challenges to its students. During the colonial period when folktales were collected and documented the emphasis was upon using this information to understand particular communities by administrators and missionaries. After Independence, scholars studying folklore began to feel the inadequacy of non-Indian models in categorizing and understanding Indian materials. Through the years many scholars have proposed models for such a study. Here only three of many such scholars have been chosen for their ideas and concepts which have contributed greatly to developmental models of study. A. K. Ramanujan's concepts of 'domestication' and 'counter-systems' are important to understand the relations between the categories of Indian culture such as 'classical', 'folk', 'literate', 'non-literate', pan-Indian and local etc. These categories are by no means fixed or static but shifting and dynamic. The 'Palace Paradigm' proposed by Jawaharlal Handoo is important to understand how power structures tend to get reinforced in official or written histories and the potential of oral histories to provide a 'counter' to this. The participatory nature of folk culture also produces a space for public discussion

and opinion making which has tremendous potential for questioning prevalent power-relations. Soumen Sen provides some models for studying folklore of a particular ethnic group, in this case the Khasi-Jaintia tribes of the north-east. This is specially challenging as the student has to first come to terms with the migration of people from traditional locations, professions and lifestyles, though remaining 'Tribal' at the level of self-identity. Here he discusses the idea of preservation of folk culture and its benefits and dangers. The folklorist has to be especially sensitive to the fixed and relatively fluid aspects of tribal culture in relation to its traditional knowledge systems and cultural expressions such as songs and dances pertaining to particular occasions etc.

In the next section certain evolutionary models of study are looked at. Frames and oicotypes contain tools like story-indexes and categories that can make interpretation easier. Some oicotypes as applicable to the Indian context have been suggested here. Historical reconstruction and contextual studies though developed in non-Indian contexts can and have been applied to Indian materials. This is especially relevant when dealing with oral literature in general. Looking at folklore as a discourse which includes historical, political and performance aspects is another model that is sought to be constructively evolved in the Indian context, not the least due to its potential for providing participatory and public space.

Thus, as said in the beginning 'developmental and evolutionary models' are those concepts, tools or models of study or formulations that have helped folklorists to further their study and discipline. These models are still evolving and not simply neat conceptual formations or formulae. As folk culture has been accepted as a living dynamic body and not a fixed mode of expression the study of folklore also has to come up with structures that are constantly 'evolutional'.

3.5 ACTIVITIES

We have together discussed the problem. Do you recall some folktales you may have heard/ read in the past and identify its features such as region, pattern of events or any other that you notice. Try to write down from memory any performance of folk artists you may have attended. What narrative/ song/ any other were performed? What costumes were worn? To which region of India did the performers belong?

Visit museums where folk artifacts and items of folk culture are preserved. Record your views on the collection and your responses to them. Watch performances of folk arts wherever possible whether on TV or other media. Try to locate people practicing activities like weaving, pottery etc. in your neighborhood or region and observe them.

3.6 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READINGS

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- ii) Muthukumaraswamy, M.D. and Kaushal, Molly (eds). Folklore, Public Sphere and Civil Society. National Folklore Support Center: Chennai. 2004.
- iii) Sen, Soumen. Khasi-Jaintia Folklore. National Folklore Support Center: Chennai. 2004.

- iv) Goswami, Indira and Pattanaik, Prakash (eds). Indian Folklore. B. R. Publications: Delhi. 2001.

3.7 GLOSSARY

- Margi/Deshi** : a term for expressing different modes of Indian fine arts, performing arts and culture in general.
- Bhajan** : song related to devotion.
- Matrilineal** : society in which a female is head of the family and decent is traced through the mother not by father. All property belongs to the women, remains with her till she is alive and is passed on from mother to daughter.
- Khasi-Jaiantia** : tribe belonging to Mongolian group.
- Kathakali** : traditional drama of Kerala, which includes all three forms of performing arts (music, dance and drama).
- Yakshagana** : traditional drama of Karnataka, which includes all three forms of performing arts (music, dance and drama).
- Terukoothu** : traditional drama of Tamilnadu, which includes all three forms of performing arts (music, dance and drama).

3.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

- 1) 'Domestication' of myths refers to the process through which a Puranic story or well-known myth acquires a local and familiar nature and becomes the source of local place-names and local legends. The same can happen to well known mythic characters and divine personalities who can acquire human and familiar characteristics including human bodies that perform daily functions. These characters may have a pan-Indian identity but in the local version may have some peculiar traits and go through specific events not known elsewhere.
- 2) Ramanujan discovers the beginnings of 'Counter-systems' in the context of women's tales or tales told by women and tales about women.
- 3) The 'Palace Paradigm' refers to the dominant trend in written histories or official histories where kings/ royalty or existing power structures tend to get reinforced through the narrative. These written and sometimes oral traditions talk of events connected to people in power and seldom talk of the ordinary and the everyday. Oral literature by comparison has greater power to question existing power relations in a society as it is participatory and there is an immediate relationship between performer and audience.
- 4) Preservation of folklore means firstly preservation of physical artifacts whether they have ritual or daily use, secondly preservation of traditional activities like weaving, basket-making etc. and thirdly preservation of oral/literary and cultural traditions.
- 5) Preservation can potentially 'freeze' the objects or traditions it seeks to preserve. At the same time it is an essential tool through which future

generations can get a feel of their culture. In this situation the folklorist has to understand the subtle tensions surrounding the many social, national, developmental and international contexts of the preservation effort.

- 6) Frames are a general background of cultural attitudes prevalent in a particular community or region against which an individual story can be viewed. Oicotypes are specific folktale patterns popular with a particular community or region.
- 7) The four oicotypes proposed for the Indian context are;
 - sibling bond (between bothers or brothers and sisters or sisters)
 - patron/ client bond (between king and courtier, prince and servant etc.)
 - threat of an adversary (asuras, ferocious beasts, magicians etc.)
 - strength of individual desires (setting out on an individual quest)
- 8) Contextual studies of folklore attempt to draw tools and concepts from social sciences to better understand their material. Social sciences such as sociology, linguistics and psychology among others provide methods and outlook to the folklorist who seeks to be multi-disciplinary in his approach.
- 9) The term 'discourse' refers to the various uses of verbal and non-verbal language in their written or spoken forms. The analyses of such usages in a society whether in the personal or public sphere is called 'discourse analyses'? Over the years ideas of 'performance', which includes theatrical and non-theatrical activities, have tended to coincide with ideas of discourse as both employ texts and language use. In the Indian context where there are complex and fluid notions of 'text' and interweaving threads between oral and written literatures the student of folklore has to be especially sensitive to local or specific data and how it relates to greater contexts.