

The Folk Art and Artists in Mask Making of Chhau Dance of Purulia, West Bengal: An Empirical Study.

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ABSTRACT

Indian subcontinent has rich folk culture and heritage. Where, Chhau is not only a name now. Chhau is the oldest dance form in Indian history. Chhau dance is the golden cultural heritage of Eastern India, especially in the adjoining lands of Odisha, Jharkhand and West Bengal state. As per the origin of the dance, there are three Gharanas i.e. Saraikella Chhau, Purulia Chhau, and Mayurbhanj Chhau. In the present time, the importances of dancers are playing a vital role and became popular worldwide. Chhau dance is performed on several occasions of the national, international as well as in the local specific tribal festivals in Purulia and the other part of the West Bengal. It is more than a folk culture rather than an identity, reflections of history, tradition, and everyday life of the involved persons. This culture is highly demanded to endeavour to describe and analyse the socio-cultural life for sake of culture. Mask is an essential part of the dancers as well as the art. The dancer performs the role but the actual performance is based on the mask. Masks are also known as mukhosh. Charida village is a hub of mask makers, which falls in the Baghmundi block of Purulia district. Here basically sutradhar community belongs as mask makers apart from others. Traditional Anthropological tools were applied for data collection. In this article, the researcher has made efforts to describe the pro and cons of mask making. Ebb and tide of the everyday life of mask makers. Problems and prospects of this art is also another thrust area of this work.

KEY WORDS: Chhau Dance, Chhau Mask, Sutradhar Community, Economy, Mythical episodes, Mythical Characters

INTRODUCTION

India is a land of diverse culture where we found several distinct folk arts and the artist. In this subcontinent Chhau is not only a name now. Chhau is the oldest dance form in Indian history. Chhau dance is the golden cultural heritage of Eastern India, especially in the adjoining lands of Odisha, Jharkhand and West Bengal state. As per the origin of the dance, there are three Gharanas i.e., Saraikella Chhau, Purulia Chhau, and Mayurbhanj Chhau. In the present time, the importance of dancers is playing a vital role and became popular worldwide. Chhau dance is performed on several occasions of nationally, and internationally, as well as in the local specific tribal festivals in Purulia and the other part of West Bengal. It is more than a folk culture rather than an identity, a reflection of the history, tradition, and everyday life of the involved persons. This culture is highly demanded to endeavour to describe and analyse the socio-cultural life for the sake of culture. The mask is an essential part of the dancers as well as the art. The dancer performs the role but the actual performance is based on the mask. Masks are also known as mukhosh. Charida village is a hub of mask makers, which falls in the Baghmundi CD block of Purulia district. A mask is an object normally worn on the face, typically for protection, disguise, performance or entertainment. Masks have been used since antiquity for both ceremonial and practical purposes. They are usually worn on the face, although they may also be positioned for effect elsewhere on the wearer's body. ^[1] In India, in carnivals and ceremonies we can see various types of masks. In west Bengal there are so many types of mask dancing can be seen, these are Rabankata Nritya of Bankura and Bishnupur, Mukhakheyel of Jalpaiguri, Mahakali of Darjeeling, Gambhira of Malda, Singhacham of Kalimpong , and Chhau of Purulia.

The mask making communities are the Sutradhar (clan) people of Charida village of Baghmundi CD Block, Purulia. They were taken to Charida from Burdwan by the local king of Baghmundi Madan Mohan Singh Deo ^[2] for making of images of God and Goddesses and settled there from then. They were given land to settle by the local King. At that time Chhau dance has gained popularity among the local masses and the image makers of God were said to make the mask for the dancers as it gave the dancer a new look. They made the wooden mask for the dancers then. But it was too heavy to wear and dance. So, in need of Chhau dance, they made new masks made of clay and in course of time and demand of the dancers they make these mask which is

now famous all over the World. In old times, at the end of the rainy season, generally the mask makers engaged themselves in mask making because chhau dance is held after the chaitra sankranti (April) and continues till the end of jaishta (June). So, the groups collected masks in this season. Besides this, the mask makers used to prepare mask in summer to protect the mask from damping as papers clothes and clay are used to prepare mask ^[3]. In recent times the mask makers are engaged in their profession throughout the year as the masks are not only used for dance but to decorate houses in Govt. And Non Govt programmes. Usually, tourists visit Ajodhya hill throughout the year and collect mask from the village Charida, so the mask makers are naturally always busy in mask making in whole year. The artists prepare two types of masks, one of them is to dance and the other to decorate house. Naturally the mask which is prepared to decorate house is small in size, those cannot be used for wearing and the other masks are comparatively large in size. These are used for dancing.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chhau dance has an unbroken relation with the essence of Indian culture. This dance form that flourishes in the forest area of Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal has already attained widespread acclaim, internationally as an art. By its distinct confluence of the classical and folk traditions, this art form carved a niche for itself of being counted as the dance of the traditional and classical discipline. It is based on the foundation martial art techniques. The most striking features are the multi coloured, splendid, artistic and attractive mask and magnificent headgears that form part of the decoration and costume design. It consists of dance movements called as Nritya – karnas as described in Bharata's Natyashastra and hand gesticulation as found in Nandikeshvar's Natyashastra, and is also endowed with varied regional movements of folk forms(Badriprasad 2008) [1].

Masks are the most important part of Chhau dance. It gives the dancer a new character and takes the dancer to a new world and makes him feel of that epic character (Chowdhury 2015) [2]. The heritage of Chhau dance starts with its mask. The masks give a new character to the dancer (Bhattacharya 1972) [3]. At first the big wooden masks were used for the dance but in recent days it has changed in need of the dancers (Chowdhury 2015)[4]. Chhau masks were introduced so that you could forget your real identity and get into the role you were portraying.(Satpati

2008)[5]. At first the masks were not used by the chhau dancers but after the starting of pala chhau, it seemed that there should be a mask used to give the person that particular look. (Santra 2003)[6].

Earth soil, torn pieces of paper, rags, glue made of flour. Small chisel made of wood, wooden hammer, Scissors, dye of different shades. Different types of feathers Bamboo Sticks, ashes threads (including iron threads), and brush are needed for making a mask. (Chowdhury 2015)[7]. The masks are always baked in sun-shine and never in fire. According to the characters the mask is painted and decorated. The artisans are well versed in the use of colours. Dark yellow or bright orange are the colours used for Gods and Goddesses like Devi Durga, Laxmi and Kartik. White is generally used for Lord Shiva, Ganesh and Goddess Saraswati. Goddess Kali is painted black or blue. A talisman or a tilak is applied on the forehead of Lord Rama and Krishna. The Asuras are painted in black or deep green with thick moustaches, protruding teeth and large eye (Satpati 2008) [8].

Chhau dance is very popular in Purulia, Bankura and Midnapore. All the characters in the dance are required to wear masks and as such cannot express the moods with facial expressions. Such moods are expressed with body and head (with the mask) movements. While mask movements show anger, shoulder and chest movements portray joy, melancholy, courage etc.(Bhattacharya 2003)[9]. The mask making community (sutrathar) are not engage in mask making the whole year, they also make images of Gods and Goddesses. (Chowdhury 2015). The main time of making a Chhau mask is summer because the clay is only dried in direct sunlight. (Bhattacharya 2003) [10]. Increasing costs of the raw materials, poor marketing and interfering middleman are some of the chief factors which cuts off the profit percentage to make the Chhau mask makers poorer day by day. (Chowdhury 2015) [11]. Illiteracy is not seen among the mask making community (sutrathar clan). (Satpati 2008)[12].

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH

Chhau is a world-famous dance in recent times as well as the last 2-3 decades. To know about Chhau dance is very easy as social media through the internet explore this dance worldwide, but without whom the Chhau dance would have been possible, they are the mask makers of Chhau. Village Charida is famous for making this extra ordinary beautiful mask.

The objectives of the study are:

1. To explore the status of Mask makers of Charida village and other places of Purulia district, West Bengal.
2. To examine the mask making process and the mask makers' present problems.
3. To examine the mask making process and the mask maker present problems.

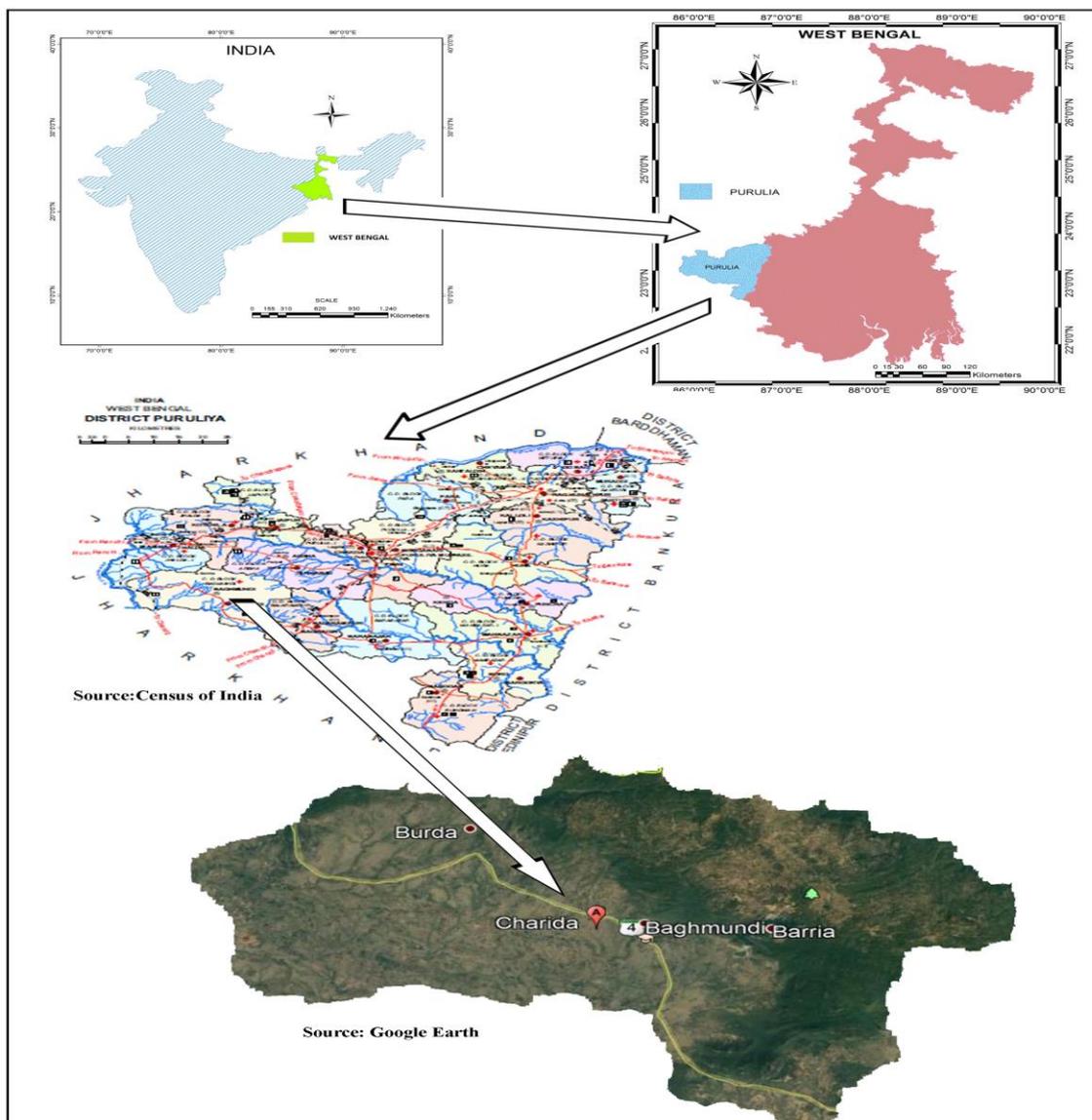


Fig 1 : Map of Study Area:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Area of the Study: For this research, the field work was conducted at Charida village of Baghmundi Block of Purulia district

Tools and Techniques: This is an empirical and field-based study. Purposive sampling is used for selecting the informants. Following literature review and conceptualization of concerned study materials, a design has been made for empirical studies based on conventional anthropological researches as well as use of integration of self-introduced techniques. Researchers collected the primary data by applying anthropological tools and techniques such as Observation, Interview, Schedule, Life history, Photography and Audio-Visual aids. The secondary data are collected through various books, documents and internet.

Analysis: Chhau Mask makers or artist of Purulia is now known as world wide and they got the GI tagging. Mask making art is very famous now. Here we are trying to give details about the mask making process as well as the mask making artist status.

Raw Materials used for the mask:

1. Earth soil
2. Torn pieces of paper
3. Rags, glue made of flour
4. Small chisel made of wood
5. Wooden hammer
6. Scissors
7. Dye of different shades
8. Different types of feathers
9. Bamboo Sticks
10. Ashes
11. Threads (including iron threads)
12. Brush

They have to collect the *Jari*, *Chumki*, *Puti*, colour, and brushes from the Barabazar market of Kolkata.

Mask Making Process

Simple ingredients and tools are used for making the masks. Earth is collected from the bed of a nearby hill stream, torn pieces of paper, rags, glue made of flour, small chisel made of wood, wooden hammer, scissors, dye of different shades. The making of Chhau masks is a multistage process. It goes as follows:

A clay model of a mask is first made and dried in direct sunlight to make it hard. This is the first step known as "Mati Gora". It is then covered with powdered ash. Then layers of old newspapers moist with gum are pasted on this powdered layer referred to as "Kagoj Chitano". A thin layer of fine clay will be applied known as "Kabij Lapa". On drying, the old torn cloth is pasted on it effectively with sticky clay is known as "Chita Mati". It is also known as Kapad setano (pasting of cloth). The mask is then polished, "Tapi Palish", with a wooden spatula. With a small tool, "Batali" the features of the face are defined and cleaned. This is known as "Khushni Khoncha". A layer of clay water is applied to it. On drying a layer of zinc oxide or "Khoru Mati" is applied to it. According to the characters the mask is painted and decorated. The artisans are well-versed in the use of colours. Dark yellow or bright orange are the colours used for Gods and Goddesses like Devi Durga, Laxmi and Kartik. White is generally used for Lord Shiva, Ganesh and Goddess Saraswati. Goddess Kali is painted black or blue. A talisman or a tilak is applied on the forehead of Lord Rama and Krishna. The Asuras are painted in black or deep green with thick moustaches, protruding teeth and large eyes. Silver and golden foil cut in different shapes, a string of beads, pith works, and coloured paper flowers, feathers of hens and peacocks are used for decorating the masks. A type of oil is applied to the mask for a fine finish.

A finished Chhau mask weighs up to 3kg and costs about 2000 INR. Costs depend on how long it has been in the sun shine as it takes about 3 consecutive sunny days to finish one. Three ordinary masks can be made by each artisan in the course of five days. The masks are always baked in sun-shine and never in a fire.

Types of masks

Chhau masks are made for the dramas of mythical characters like Shiv, Durga, Ganesh, Kartik, Ravana, Ram etc. the dramas locally call as "Pala" which are as follows:

- Tarakasur Badh,

- Mahisasur Mardini,
- Tandav Nritya,
- Nidhubone krishnakali,
- Arjuner Dorpochurna,
- Bomkesi Badh etc. are some of the famous dramas of all times.

But in recent times dramas are made for the social awareness programmes like ‘Corona Awareness programmes’, Government programmes like ‘kanya Shree’ , birthday celebration of Netaji Jayanti etc..

The price of the mask:

There are three types of sizes are mainly made by the mask makers: large, medium and small.

Large masks: 2000-2500 INR

Medium masks: 800-1200 INR

Small masks: 140-450 INR

* *Source: Rajib Dutta, Charida Mukhosh Ghar, Namopara, Purulia.*

Socio-Economic condition of Mask Makers:

Mask manufacturers in Purulia, West Bengal, can have a wide range of economic and social standings depending on a number of factors such as their individual skill, the demand for their products, and the state of the economy. The economic and social conditions of Purulia's mask makers are discussed below:

Artisan Communities: Masks in Purulia are typically made by communities of artists or by families that have been manufacturing masks for many years. These groups may have their own economic and social structures, with members passing on their expertise to the next generation.

Traditional Livelihood: Making masks is often a person's sole or primary source of income in Purulia, where it serves as a traditional means of subsistence. The demand for masks and the availability of venues to demonstrate and sell their works, however, can have a significant impact on the stability and income levels of the community.

Seasonal Nature: The popularity of Chhau masks and performances tends to peak around major festivals and other cultural celebrations. Because of this, high seasons may bring more orders and income for mask makers, while off-peak periods may be less busy.

Local Market and Tourism: Purulia's home market and the influx of visitors both contribute greatly to the survival of the mask producing sector. Masks can be sold to visitors and residents alike, or through middlemen such as gift shops and cultural groups. The market's health can have a bearing on the mask producers' standard of living.

Government Initiatives and Support: Traditional arts like manufacturing Chhau masks are often supported by government and non-profit efforts. Training courses, monetary aid, marketing help, and attendance at cultural events are all examples of possible actions to take. Improved access to education, training, and the marketplace can have a significant impact on the economic well-being of mask makers.

Challenges: The Purulia mask industry may confront difficulties like narrow customer bases, cheaper mass-produced rivals, and the constant juggling between artisanal standards and customer preferences. Their ability to make a living is vulnerable to economic swings and the accessibility of essential supplies.

It's vital to keep in mind that mask manufacturers might come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. While some mask makers may have found financial success, others may still be struggling. The economic and social conditions of mask makers in Purulia can be improved by efforts to preserve and promote indigenous art forms like Chhau, as well as through support from the government and society.

Profile of Mask Makers

While there may not be publicly available statistics on the demographics of mask makers in Purulia, West Bengal, we can provide a basic summary of the profile based on the larger context of artisans and traditional craftsmen in India. It's worth noting that mask making can attract people from all walks of life, therefore this description may not apply to every professional in the field. However, the following traits tend to be consistent.

Artisan Communities: There are certain villages or families of artisans in Purulia that have been manufacturing masks for decades or perhaps centuries. Culture, society, and religion in such groups often go hand in hand with the work they do.

Age and Gender: Craftspeople of all ages and both sexes are needed to create a wide range of masks. You might easily come across master artisans who have been honing their technique for decades. Both men and women can participate in passing the art down from one generation to the next within families.

Rural Background: Many Purulia mask artists originate from more rural upbringings. The art form usually flourishes in rural areas where ancient customs and values are still observed. Natural resources, raw materials, and a communally supportive environment are all made more accessible in rural areas, which is good for the preservation of traditional crafts.

Education and Literacy: Literacy and Education Levels: The educational attainment of mask manufacturers varies widely. Some people may have minimal literacy skills while others may have never completed elementary school. However, their main strength is in perfecting the age-old art of mask manufacturing, a skill that is typically acquired through apprenticeships and on-the-job training.

Caste and Community: In some societies, members of particular social groups (castes) or communities (communities) are considered experts in the art of mask building. Traditional mask making knowledge, skills, and techniques may be helped forward by social and caste dynamics.

Economic Background: Some mask makers and their family make a comfortable living from their craft, while others may have other sources of income or work in related fields. Market demand, seasonal changes, and the accessibility of sales prospects for their masks are all potential economic drivers.

Problems Of Mask Makers

Like their counterparts in other areas where traditional crafts are practised, the mask makers of Purulia have to contend with a number of difficulties. Some typical problems that Purulia's mask producers may face are as follows

Market Demand and Competition: Mask manufacturers may face challenges from both fluctuating market demand and intense industry competition. Altering tastes, mass-produced substitutes, and a lack of marketing and distribution options all have the potential to dampen interest in traditional handicrafts. The industry of mask making could be negatively affected by this.

Financial Insecurity: Due of the ebb and flow of demand, many mask producers struggle to make ends meet. They may have trouble making ends meet and providing for their family during slow times when they receive few orders.

Limited Access to Resources: Mask makers frequently rely on natural resources and raw materials, yet these supplies can be difficult to come by. However, it may be difficult to find or pay for such materials. The availability of raw materials for masks can be impacted by deforestation, environmental changes, and constraints on resource exploitation.

Technological Advancements: Traditional handicrafts such as mask manufacturing may be threatened by technological developments in the areas of competitiveness and production efficiency. It can be challenging for mask makers to keep up with technical developments while yet maintaining the craft's traditional spirit.

Skill Development and Succession: It is essential for the survival of the mask making art form that knowledge and techniques be passed down from one generation to the next. It can be difficult to ensure the continuation of expertise and craft when possibilities for formal training, skill development, and apprenticeships are scarce.

Lack of Government Support: Government initiatives, programmes, and policies may not always provide sufficient assistance for mask makers. Growth and development of the art form may be stymied by a lack of financial support, marketing channels, and investment in supporting infrastructure.

Socio-economic Conditions: Problems in the Social and Economic Environment: Mask makers, especially those from underprivileged backgrounds, may face difficulties in the areas of education, healthcare, and social security. Their health and happiness in general may be affected by these things.

Many groups, governments, and cultural advocates are working to improve the lives of Purulia's mask manufacturers and address these issues. Overcoming these obstacles and ensuring the longevity of this cultural heritage can be achieved with the help of skill development programmes, financial aid, market links, and campaigns to preserve and promote traditional arts.

Markets For Mask Makers

Mask designers in Purulia have access to a number of different sales venues. Here are some markets where masks could be sold:

Purulia, West Bengal, and the surrounding districts provide enough opportunity for mask makers to sell their wares to local and regional customers. You can reach a large number of people who are interested in purchasing your traditional goods by setting up stalls at local fairs, festivals, and cultural events.

Markets Specialising in Traditional and Handmade Goods: Working with markets, boutiques, and curated stores that focus on traditional and handmade goods can help mask makers reach a wider audience and sell to more discerning customers. Tourists and others looking for genuine artisanal creations are the typical customers of these shops.

Online Platforms: The reach of mask producers can be further widened beyond their physical locations through the use of internet platforms and marketplaces. To reach a wider audience and increase sales, mask makers may consider establishing an online presence through sites like Etsy, Amazon Handmade, or regional craft marketplaces.

Cultural Events and Exhibitions: Exposing one's masks to a wide audience can be facilitated by taking part in cultural events, exhibitions, and craft fairs not only in Purulia but also in other cities and states. Art lovers, collectors, and people curious about historic crafts all congregate at these shows.

Collaborations with Artists and Performers: Mask makers can work with musicians, dance companies, theatres, and other cultural institutions whose performances feature masks. Partnerships formed via such endeavours have the potential to be fruitful in both the short and long term.

Export and International Markets: Exporting can be fruitful for well-established mask makers who have the resources to serve wider markets. In order to sell masks to foreign markets, it is necessary to locate potential buyers abroad, network with fair trade organisations, or work with export brokers.

Commissioned Work and Custom Orders: Mask makers can also take on special orders and commissions. Collaboration with individuals, groups, and institutions who need masks for things like theatrical shows, art installations, and cultural events is possible.

For mask manufacturers to successfully sell their wares at these markets, they must engage in marketing and promotional efforts, as well as create networks and foster relationships with potential customers, cultural organisations, and art enthusiasts.

DISCUSSION & FINDINGS

As per the fieldwork, here we found that Sutradhar clan people mainly engaged in mask making but also few tribal peoples were engaged in this profession. Basically, Mask makers of Purulia are the Sutradhar clan (carpenter) people of Charida village under Baghmundi block. In this village, not only sutradhar people are living but also tribal people can be seen as well. Bhumij tribes are found frequently in the mask making. This village is mainly dominated by Hindus. Kayastha Brahmin is also found in this village and they took different surnames as Bhat, Roy. Bhumij tribe has their surnames as Munda and Mura, and the sutradhar clan people took Dutta, Paul, Shil and Sutradhar.

Charida is the main cradle of mask-making communities but this is not only the place from where the masks are collected for Chhau dance; the other places are Aimundih, Dumurdih, Dimdiha, Joypur, and Bandwan. They have engaged themselves the whole year in mask making in recent days as the orders from various Govt and Non- Govt organization made them busy on doing this. The mask makers are busy in mask making throughout the year, in spite of that, they also made traditional images of Gods and Goddesses like Shiva, Ganesh, and Durga. That is why the making process and similarities are found in this case. There are so many types of masks available in the market. Mask is prepared according to the items of the chapter of epics like Ramayana, Mahabharata, and other mythological events that are about to be staged for performance. Naturally, the mask makers are told to prepare the mask for the special event. In

this case, some of the mask-makers experienced and adapted in the special mask for the performances. Sometimes they are ordered to prepare the mask of birds, animals, etc according to the relevance of the chapter of epics. Mostly there are three types of masks are prepared for used in Chhau dance as follows;

1. Masks of Mythological characters- Shiva, Durga, Karitk, Ganesh, Laxmi, Saraswati, Mahishasur, Ravana, Mahiravana, Parshuram, Ram, Laxman, Arjun, Kirat, Kiratini, Bakasur, Tarka, Shumbh, Nishumbh, Abhimanyu, Krishna, Balaram, Bali, Sugrib, Bhim, Pramila, Sita, Luv, Kush etc.
2. Masks of animal characters- tiger, lion, pig(barah), bear, Garur, Hanuman, Jatayu, peacock, Heron, Fox etc.
3. Masks of comedian characters- Nandi, a cow (Lord Shiva's Vehicle according to Purana), Vringi, a cow (the brother of Nandi), demon, rakshash etc are also found.

It has been heard that they first used heavy wood to make the mask. But for the inconvenience of the Chhau dancers, they use paper, cotton clothes, and mud to make a useful mask for the Chhau dancers. The artisans of Charida normally have their workshops in their own houses along the main road for direct trade with customers. They are busy round the year and, practically every house and every member of the household is seen occupied in making masks or assembling decorations for headgears. The masks produced from this village of Chhau dance groups of entire Medinipur, Purulia and Bankura districts. The relationship between the mask makers and dancers becomes important; the mask makers naturally try to develop their masks for the uses of the dancers as well as to attract the viewers. On the other hand, the dancers want to have such type of mask in order that they can influence the audience and use the mask with ease. For this reason, there is relativity between the mask makers and the dancers as well. The popularity of Chhau dance sometimes depends on the mask as it can attract the attention of the audience. It is also important for the dancers to submit the actual event of the epic to the viewers. So the performance of dancers is also important to have the popularity of their dance. So the viewers can be impressed not only by the performance of the dancers but also the attractive mask.

Mask Makers of Purulia

Mask plays a vital role in Chhau dance. The artists of Charida are famous for making masks. But masks are also available at Dimdiha, Amandih, Joypur, Bandwan, and in the Madhya Bazar of Purulia district as well. Awinash sutradhar, Suchand Sutradhar, Durga charan Sutradhar, Hiralal

Sutradhar, Nakul Dutta, Srinath Sutradhar, Mohit Sutradhar, Anil Sutradhar, Dwijen Sutradhar, Nepal Sutradhar, Ramcharan Sutradhar, etc. of Charida were very famous in the past time for making extra-ordinary masks in the past time. Madhu Bhat (Roy) and his son Hiralalal Bhat (Roy) of Dumurdih were also famous. The next generation who are continuing this tradition is Manoranjan Sutradhar, Jayanta Sutradhar, Triguni Sutradhar, Falguni Sutradhar, Dharani Dhar Sutradhar, Parimal Dutta, Laxman Manna, Bishu Dutta, etc of Charida. Bablu Sutradhar, Pintu Sutradhar, Dilip Sutradhar, Devdas Sutradhar of Dimdiha, Kanchan and Chandan Bhat of Dumurdih, Sanjoy Sutradhar of Joypur, Congress Sutradhar of Aimundih, Haradhan Sutradhar of Gengara, Rajib, Pradip, Partha, Suku Sutradhar, Rabindranath Sil, Sunil Sil of Purulia Town, Bandwan's Sachin Paul are the next generation mask makers. In this case, one thing is notable that the mask making in Purulia is only done by Sutradhar society and the traditional images of the Lord are also made by them. That is why the making process and similarities are found in this case. Many of the Sutradhar people are not engaged in making Chhau mask they are only engaged in making traditional images of Durga, Kali, Saraswati, Laxmi, Ganesh, Shiva, etc. The artists of Charida and Dimdiha make both masks and images of the Lord. Purulia town's sutradhar society has a kinship relation with the Charida and Dimdiha's sutradhar society.

CONCLUSION

Regarding this, empirical study researchers have selected the village Charida which is a village of Baghmundi Block under Purulia district of West Bengal. Generally, the mask has a great market in the district of Purulia and its surrounding villages. So many artists and mask makers are engaged in this profession for a long time. These masks are not only used in Chhau dance but people use them as decoration of the house. To make a mask many things are needed like colour, jari, colourful feathers and so on. In that case, the market of colour, brush, shoal, colour feather is also healthy in the case of an economy, the dress of Chhau dancers is also related to it. Basically, the dressmakers have found out their livelihood in it, for this reason, dressmakers and their related instruments are also needed according to the demand of the market. So, mask and its makers are naturally benefitted from those materials which are available in the market. This is why there are so many materials that have become needful to this effect. Mask making is dependent upon its demand, so mask makers could find out their healthy market in the past time, but gradually its popularity is reduced, so the artists do not get enough interest in this profession.

On the other hand, the market of a mask is not demolished till today because people like these masks to decorate their house wall, so it can be said that there is enough market of a mask. They are not only making masks for Chhau dance, they make a small mask so that anyone can take this from them and the market should always be on for them. After 1993, miniature in the mask-making process is seen (Rajib Dutta). So it can be said that the impact of globalization can be seen among them. Many of them came to Purulia town about 20-25 years ago and stayed there.” Charida Mukhosh Ghar” is the most famous Chhau mask-making stall of Purulia town which is situated at Namopara in Purulia.

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