

**ETHNOMEDICAL PROFILE OF THE HOS :  
A STUDY IN WITCHCRAFT**

**THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF DELHI  
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**BY :**

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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that Surendra Kumar Singh, a Ph. D. Scholar in the Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, has prepared this thesis entitled "Ethnomedical Profile of the Hos: A Study in Witchcraft" under the supervision and guidance of Professor R.S. Mann.

The present work incorporates the result of his independent studies and embodies his own research. The contents of this thesis did not form the basis of award of any previous degree to any one or the candidate himself to the best of my knowledge and belief. In my considered opinion, this thesis is fit for submission for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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## *Preface*

There exists a popular phrase in Spain, *Yo no creo en brujas- pero hay*: 'I do not believe in witches-but they exist! It is in the minds of the people and the Hos are not exception to it. During the field work, I met many of them who always narrated their encounters with witches. My own interest in witchcraft began in 1992-1993, while conducting field work among the Grasias of Northern Gujarat.

Eventhough when I started my field work among Hos of West Singhbhum and chose Ruia as my focal village, I intended to focus on Ethnomedicine as a whole. But in 1995, two entire families were killed as the witch-hunters believed that some of the females of these families were withces. These 'accused' females were believed to have brought misfortunes to them. When I started enquiring about this, to my utter surprise! I found that there are many more such cases on it-- and the belief in Witchcraft among the Hos is deeply rooted.

This finding made me to work on witchcraft. However, I have focussed on witchcraft as an important component of Ethnomedicine. The present study is an attempt to understand and explore the social framework and cultural nuances of witchcraft in the wider perspective of Ethnomedicine.

## *Acknowledgement*

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# **Chapter - I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Disease with its pain and suffering is the most predictable of human conditions: it is biological and cultural universal. In prehuman times, as among animals today, disease was almost entirely a biological phenomenon. As our primitive ancestors evolved into man, their diseases, many of which they brought along with them and new ones they acquired along the way, ceased to be purely biological phenomenon; they acquired social and cultural dimensions as well. For with human life, unlike other forms of animal life, disease threatens in major fashion not only the biological safety of the sufferer and his fellows but also the social and economic life of the group.

Man has sought to cure the sufferer. Rubin says, “ By necessity man has undoubtedly always been concerned with questions of health and survival , and has sought within the framework of his knowledge solutions to the problems of illness” (Rubin 1960). In learning to treat disease man has developed “a vast complex of knowledge, beliefs, techniques, roles, norms, values, ideologies, attitudes, customs, rituals and symbols, that interlock to form a mutually reinforcing and supporting system” (Saunders 1954). This vast complex and all of the other items we might think to add to the list constitutes a “medical system.” The term properly embraces the totality of health knowledge, beliefs, skills and practices of the members of every group. In short, we view every medical system as embracing all of the health-promoting beliefs and actions and scientific knowledge and skills of the members of the group that subscribe to the system.

Since the end of World War II, anthropologists, both sociocultural and biological, have turned in increasing numbers to the cross-cultural

study of the medical systems and to the bioecological and sociocultural factors that influence the incidence of health and disease. In part, their interest have been theoretical, sparked by the desire to understand man's health behaviour in its widest manifestations; and in part their interest have been applied, motivated by the belief that anthropological research techniques, theories and data should and can be used in programmes designed to improve health care in both developed and developing nations.

These anthropologist are referred to as 'Medical Anthropologists' and the field they represent is the new anthropological subdiscipline, 'Medical Anthropology'.

The field of medical anthropology embraces many perspective and foci of concern. Conceptually these may be ranged along a continuum, one end of which is marked by a biological pole and the other, by a sociocultural pole. Towards the biological pole we find those anthropologists whose dominant interests include human growth and development, the role of disease in human evolution, and paleopathology (the study of disease of ancient man ) etc. Towards the sociocultural pole we find those anthropologists whose dominant interest include traditional medical systems (Ethnomedicine), medical personnel and their professional preparations, illness behaviour, the doctor-patient relationships and the dynamics of the introduction of western medical services into traditional societies, etc.

Paul Fejos (1963) says" To be ill is dangerous, to be cured is important and desirable. This is perceived by all cultures and they go doing about it in their own way decicated by their own cultural idioms". This perceived condition is fulfilled by securing the service of a personnel who is a doctor in modern society and healer, known as Shaman in primitive society. Though in both these offices objectives is

same, the approach of fulfilling this objective differs-the doctor speaks of science, whereas primitive man takes help of magic. He thus introduced the terms 'materia medica' and materia-magica' in medical anthropology.

The tracing of contemporary medical anthropology begun with four different sources;

1. The interest of physical anthropologists in topics such as, evolution, adaptation, comparative anatomy, racial types, genetics and serology;
2. The traditional ethnographic interest in primitive medicine, including witchcraft and magic,
3. The 'Culture and personality' movement of late 1930's and 1940's , with collaboration between psychiatrists and anthropologists, and
4. The international public health movement after World War II.

Fabrega defines the field of medical anthropological inquiry as one that "(a) elucidates the factors, mechanisms and processes that play a role or influence the way in which individuals and groups are affected by and respond to illness and disease; and (b) examines these problems with an emphasis on patterns of behaviour." (Fabrega 1972).

According to Fabrega, two foci in medical anthropology are western biomedical and ethnomedical systems. These two systems are based on different etiological theories and set of concepts. The western system involves biologicistic perspective or an ailment is explained in terms of germ theory, malfunctioning of body or physiological problems. On the other hand, ethnomedical system is based on various human experiences, with an emphasis on emic perspective. In this the focus

remains on the way in which a community or group conceptualizes and tackles its health problem.

These ethno-medical systems are viewed by anthropologists as socio-cultural systems which give an outline of theory of illness and its cause, the entailing process of treatment, the role of practitioners in diagnosis and, treatment and so on. In brief, ethno-medicine is a product of peoples' culture, emanating from the super natural world. The term ethnomedicine is, thus, used to refer to those beliefs and practices relating to disease which are the products of indigenous cultural development and are not explicitly derived from the conceptual framework of modern medicine.

At the level of community-several ethnomedical practices are combined- Shamanistic treatment, herbal methods, house-hold therapies, etc. The different systems and ways of treatment are combined , and this is all done to achieve complete and effective treatment. With this, the term 'medical pluralism' is often used to designate the state of co-existence and combination of various strategies, ways, methods and systems of diagnosis and cure.

Each medical system is not only a product of a particular historical milieu and cultural apparatus, it also has its own cognitive categories. These cognitive categories are varied in different societies. In traditional especially tribal society, largely, the entire etiology of disease and causation, apart from, naturalistic, moves towards personalistic systems too.

Foster and Anderson, while surveying the ethnomedical literature dealing with causality concepts, present a dual division of naturalistic and personalistic cognitive framework to 'explain' the presence of disease. Further they argue that though these terms refers specifically

to causality concepts, they can also conveniently be used to speak of entire medical systems (i.e., not only causality, but all of the associated behaviour that stems from these views.

In naturalistic systems illness is explained in impersonal, systematic terms. This systems conform, above all, to an equilibrium model; health prevails when the insensate elements in the body, the heat, the cold, the humors or dosha, the yin and yang, are in balance appropriate to the age and condition of the individual in his natural and social environment. When this equilibrium is disturbed, illness occur. On the other hand, a personalistic system is one in which illness is believed to be caused by the active, purposeful intervention of a sensate agent who may be a supernatural being (a deity or a god), a non-human being (such as ghost, ancestor, or evil spirit) or a human being (a witch or sorcerer). The sick person literally is a victim, the object of aggression or punishment directed specifically against him, for reasons that concern him alone (Foster and Anderson, 1971 , pp. 53).

A large number of works have been done in the field of ethnomedicine by various medical anthropologists. These works have explored the dynamics of the interface between herbal medicine and spiritual healing, the social implications of indigenous medical knowledge, the role of power and semantics in an illness situation, doctor-patient relationship, comparative analysis of indigenous and modern medicine. However an indepth study attempting to situate the witchcraft beliefs and practices as an important component of ethnomedicine is still awaited. In India the gap in this domain of anthropological knowledge appears to be bigger. The present study is an attempt to understand and explore the social framework and cultural nuances of witchcraft thereby contextualizing it in the wider perspective of ethnomedicine. Witchcraft studies in the ethno-medical researches acquaint us with native theories of disease causation, the local specialists in health care system, the

processes of health restoration, the pharmacopocia that is usually restored to.

## WITCH CRAFT

The word witch is derived from the old English wicca (pronounced 'witcha' meaning male witch) and wicce ('female witch', pronounced 'witcheh') and from the verb wiccian, meaning "to cast a spell". The word 'witch', applies to female as well as male witches.

Witchcraft is defined as the belief that members of a community employ supernatural means to harm others in ways which are socially disapproved. More broadly, witchcraft is believed to be magic. Magic, according to Encyclopaedia Britannica, is a "ritual performance or activity that is thought to lead to the influencing of human and natural events by an external and impersonal mystical force beyond the ordinary human sphere". The so called influencing of events is not accomplished by the individual practicing magic. The rites and ceremonies that he/she undertakes in the nature of magic are merely symbolic expressions of what he/she wants to do. Mantras and incantations that accompany such ceremony are the prayers and petitions to supernatural powers to achieve those ends. The work is, thus, believed to be done by the deity or spirit, after receiving "directions" through the rituals.

All magic, whether approved or disapproved, has four elements:-

- A. The Performance of a ritual
- B. The use of material substance and objects that have symbolic significance, such as hair, nails etc.
- C. The chanting of prescribed spells, and
- D. The prescribed condition of the performer--in other words, the taboos and restrictions incumbent upon the practitioner by virtue of his being the 'spiritual' leader responsible for actualising the

aspirations of the people.

Though magic is supposed to be a natural term, witchcraft is usually conceived as a form of destructive magic. When we talk of witchcraft in anthropology, the concept of 'Sorcery' comes into light. Though these two terms, i.e., witchcraft and sorcery are taken as synonymous by most of the people, there is a subtle distinction between them. The witch is classified as a weird and aberrant person, who moves through an obscure compulsion or spirit possession, while a sorcerer is an ordinary person using deliberate techniques and external means familiar to other adult members of the community and is moved generally by simple ill-will (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1993). However, both these terms here have been clubbed together and both have been classified as harmful or a device to harm others through the supernatural occult power. We intend not to demarcate these two terms but discuss them together.

Oxford dictionary defines witchcraft as sorcery or use of magic - and defines witch as "a woman said to use magic, esp. for evil purpose". Lessa and Vogt, opine that witchcraft is the exercise of evil through an immanent power. Witchcraft, unlike sorcery, is derived from within, and can not be learned. A witch's power to do evil may be dormant and not be used or it may be increased by practice, but it is nearly always inherited. J.D.Kirk says that witchcraft is the essence of evil vicious and inscrutable that whirls through the universe and seeks asylum in sinful souls in which the germs of wickedness lie ready to be quickened into life. Sorcery is not transmitted in the germ plasm: a child can never be guilty of sorcery, but the kind of precocity in him which enables him to circumvent an adult or the accepted code is a sure sign of incipient witchcraft. Both vices are, however, identified with the malice and jealousies that motivate antisocial conduct. Both of them occur only where you find stresses and strains in life, where, in other words, there are tensions, actual or potential between

people. Hence, it is relatives and neighbours, but never strangers, who use witchcraft or sorcery against one another.

In the light of above mentioned facts, it would be relevant to review briefly some works, done on this topic.

Several theories have been put forward to explain the phenomenon of witchcraft. According to one theory, it had historical origins in the cult of Diana and witchcraft as found in Europe at the time of the major persecution was merely a development of this cult. Others have linked Witchcraft with the devil of Christian theology and yet others have held that it was the product of specific social conditions which obtained in the Middle ages. The subject has also been connected with magic, and has been studied in the light of the various general theories on magic evolved by antropologists in the latter half of the 19th century and early years of 20th century.

### **Witchcraft in Judio-Christian Tradition**

Witchcraft is considered to be purely from Judio-Christian tradition though it is freely used in context of premitive societies. According to Judio-Christin tradition devils being spiritual cannot do their own dirty works. They, therefore must require physical bodies to get the works done. They acquire these bodies either by entering (Phenomenon of possession) or by signing pacts with human beings.

In this tradition, the concept of witchcraft was ultimately associated with the evil and witches were supposed to be individuals (mostly females) who were either possessed by devil or had entered into pact. Often the witches attended the conference of devil, stereotype being-travelling on a broom stick. In Judio-Christian tradition witchcraft assumes the existence of power/force. The belief goes that all power had to come

from God. For God to be all powerful and good, he had to delegate capacity for evil to the devil. So devil is the source of evil power and it brings forth some sort of relationship between devil and the evil doers. Thus the belief is that whosoever thinks/plans evil for others, is necessarily, possessed by devil.

### **Witchcraft in Graceo-Roman Times**

According to the leading authorities on magic in Greece and Rome, processes believed to be specifically magical are known to have been employed in both these societies to produce rain, prevent hail storms, drive away clouds, calm the winds, make animals and plants prosper, cure sickness and so on. At the sametime, magic was also used to ruin an enemy's crops or make his cattle sicken: in the city, it was used to strike down an enemy when he was on the point of making a speech or taking an important part in some public celebration: or it was used to prevent a rival from winning a race or some other events in the public games. Death was quite frequently considered to be the result of witchery, and such beliefs were not confined to any one sector of society. Though the practice of magic for beneficent purposes was considered legal and even necessary in Greece and Rome, magic and spells which were intended to cause harm were always held to be illegal. **Plato** made a distinction between professional knowledge of maleficent practices and mere amateurs. He opined that professionals who tried to do evil should be condemned to death, amateurs on the other hand, ought to be let off lightly. **Plato** also attacked those who believed they could summon up the dead and even bend the gods to do their will by spells as well as by prayers.

**Lucan** presents us with three hypotheses which focus on the relationship between magic and religion :

- (1) When the magician invokes, curses or threatens the Gods, he

assumes that they have certain weaknesses he can exploit. This is either because the Gods are capricious or because the magicians know their secrets, which are withheld from other mortals, sometimes because of their shameful nature.

2. The existence of some strange kinship between the magician and the Gods, or a certain affinity and sympathy with them.
3. To understand the mentality of the magician it must first be realised that the Gods of the Greeks and Romans were held to be largely subject to the same physical and spiritual laws as men.

In Gracero-Roman beliefs, evil has its own proper sitting --the night. For evil is ultimately achieved by combining a series of techniques which have been passed down from one generation to the next. Night is looked upon as the proper time for committing evil deeds, because of its silence and the atmosphere of secrecy that surrounds it. Horace's witch, Canidia invoking the power of night, is worthquoting here for the realistic analysis:-

'Night and Diana, ye faithful witnesses of all my enterprises, who command silence when we are celebrating our most secret mysteries, come to my assistance, and turn all your power and wrath against my enemies'.

In Horace, if it is Diana, we find a similar invocation addressed to Selene in Theocritus. A particular kind of sexual significance was attached to the deities. They are either virgin goddesses or goddesses of erotic mysteries; not mother goddesses, for whom love meant principally fertility. There is a documentary evidence of the existence over a period of centuries of the belief that certain women (not necessarily always old ones) could change themselves and others at will in animals in classical Gracco-Roman times; that they could fly through the air by night and

enter the most secret and hidden places by leaving their bodies behind; that they could make spells and potions to further their own love affairs or to inspire hatred for others; that they could bring about storms, illness, both in men and animals, and strike fear into their enemies or play terrifying jokes on them.

### **Christianity, Paganism and Witchcraft**

Inevitably, with the triumph of Christianity in Europe, there was a fresh evaluation of earlier creeds. The spiritual leader of Christian faith, condemned Paganism and treated their predecessors' belief in much the same way as Pagans had treated Christianity in earlier days.

In the past, Pagans had claimed that Christians worshipped an ass's head, that they killed children, and committed other atrocities at their gatherings. The Christians on the other hand, criticized the Pagans with justification of pointing out the stupidity and irrationality of some of their myths and rites, as in fact, already been condemned by the moral philosophers of classical antiquity. With scant regards, the god of antiquity were equated with devils; or after the inevitable process of simplification had taken place, with the devil himself. The elements of piety, morality, and decorum in the private and public worship of the Greeks and Romans were forgotten.

There were several laws forbidding the practice of most kinds of magic in the Christian legal systems, just as there were others condemning what were already called idolatrous form of worship. Apart from several laws, there was one which makes it a capital offence to honour or to invoke devils. (Book IX of the 'Theodosian' Code). The laws of book IX, title 18, in Justinian Code and other ancient legal codes, adopt much the same position.

Well known passages in the writings of the Church Fathers, on the subject show that belief in Witch craft was wide-spread. The magic art were much the same as they had been in earlier periods-astrology, divination, spells and enchantments, and belief in the power of sorcery, etc. But the activities of witches were interpreted from a theological point of view as a phenomenon not wholly real. Here quoting of St. Augustine in the light of his own experience, is worth memorable:-

‘When we were in Italy, we heard of certain women, inkeepers by trade, who were so learned in the Black Arts that by giving Cheese to travellers of their choice they could change them into beasts of burden.’ (A passage in De Civitate Dei, St. Augustine).

Though he was doubtful about the physical possibility of these changes taking place, he believed that the devil had induced a special dream state in those who believed themselves transformed. While in this trance, the person involved believed that certain things were really happening to him.

If the effectiveness of the Black arts could not be entirely denied (particularly since the Bible considered their powers genuine) it was possible in certain instances to limit the scope of the Devils power. But what had been common enough before the advent of Christianity was thought to be less likely afterwards. Furthermore, the physical effects, formerly believed to have been caused by the Devil, could now be attributed to his spiritual rather than physical dominion.

There are a large number of specific cases which provide evidence of belief in Black magic during this period, but we restrict our enquiry to the magical powers of witch..

After the fall of the Roman empire, the power of the strix, stria

strign or masca (as the witch was variously called in low Latin) lived on for centuries in the minds of the people. The famous historian **Zosimus**, gives an example, in which Flavius Stilicho's wife made use of a witch to prevent the Emperor Honorius from consummating his marriage with one of her daughters. (Zosimus, V, 28 (ed. Reitemeier))

If witches were particularly prevalent in the parts of old western empire (Roman), their effect on the lives of numerous people in eastern *Byzantine Empire*, was hardly less remarkable. One of the more aggressive Fathers of the Greek Church constantly preached against superstition in general. But in some of his sermons he attacked women, who used magic, with particular vigour.

Byzantine historian Procopius, tells us that Antonina, wife of Belisarius, 'made use of philtres which her family alone knew how to make, as if her family consisted of a dynasty of witches.' Another Byzantine historian, Nicetas Acominatus Choniates, refer to the spells, which Euphrosyne, wife of the Emperor Alexius III, used to learn the future.

### **Witchcraft amongst the German and Slavonic peoples**

Witches continued to exist in Europe a long time after the fall of the Roman Empire. The same is true of the witch amongst European peoples who were not part of the classical world.

Among the Germanic tribes, each individual social class had its own particular brand of magic: even the Gods used magic in certain circumstances. The practice of magic in these tribes also corresponded to their logical and social order (the 'logos' and the 'ethos'), however surprising this may seem. It is true of other communities which have

recently been studied, that maleficent magic flourishes during certain states of tension. In the highest level of Germanic society, the kings practised magic publicly, and their success was more or less generally admitted.

Among the Swedes, 'Erik of the windy hat' had remarkable powers as king and magicians. In other cases, the trials and misfortunes of the community were attributed to the fact that the reigning monarchy lacked the necessary magical power to deal with the adverse circumstances. But coming down in the social scale we also discover that in ancient Scandinavia, every magical activity was thought to be the property of a particular family.

The division of human activities according to families presupposes the handing down of knowledge from the period of myths. Witchcraft or maleficent magic has its own special terminology, and is completely defined by the word 'seid'. There are passages in Icelandic sagas in which whole families are accredited the power of witchcraft:- father, mother and children. However, in the classical world, women, or particular types of women, were believed to have more special powers. There are numerous passages in the Edda which allude to the skills of women in magic and the dangers run by those who allow themselves to be dominated by women. Such a one, for example, was Angerbode, mother of the wolves who will ultimately eat the sun and the moon :

'East of Midgard, in the Iron forest,  
Sat the old witch.  
She fed the fearful race  
of Fenrer... (Les Eddas)

More or less mythical stories about the power of specific witches are also to be found in the old Slav chronicles. The story of king Duff of



'female witch', Scotland, for instance, supposed to have taken place at sometime between AD 967 and 972, follows a typically well-worn pattern. According to the Chronicle, an illness which King Duff caught was attributed to witchcraft. Investigations were made and some witches were eventually found cooking a waxen image of the king over a slow fire. This explained the nature of the king's illness, since he was in a continual sweat. (It explains the phenomenon of imitative magic or doctrine of 'Like produces like' of Frazer). Once the women had been condemned, the king was restored to health.

### **The Ancient Laws : Towards Witchcraft**

The history of European witchcraft is closely linked to the problem of distinguishing between objective and subjective reality. For many countries people, even now everything which has a name, even everything expressed in words, has a physical reality and is not merely a concept. Thus, if the name 'witches' exists, it is because they are really such things, and if their flights are referred to, then those flights really take place in the air around us. If tales are told of the ability of witches to change themselves into animals, it is because they have really been seen to do so and even been wounded in their animal forms. (Baroja, 1964)

The classic witches' tale has a much deeper significance historically, psychologically and anthropologically speaking than might at first seem likely. For centuries, Europeans have been divided into two main groups, first, those who believe in the reality of such occurrences and secondly, those who believe them to be a figment of the imagination, possibly caused by the devil. In the first case, if such things really occur, there must be some civil and religious laws to deal with; and if they do not occur, the alteration of laws must be there.

Mentioning of the most famous European laws--the Salic Law--



which brings in Witchcraft at one point and includes three short chapters on the topic, would be more relevant here:

“If one man shall call another hereburgium or herburgium, runs the wording of the law and accuses him of having carried a cauldron (aeneum or inium) to the place where witches (stiriae or striae) meet, and shall be unable to prove it, let him be arraigned himself and condemned to pay a fine of two thousand five hundred denarii, that is sixty two solidi and a half. (cf. Du Cange, Glossarum (Paris, 1733))

Another law runs as follows:

‘If any person call a free woman stria (or stiria) or evil one, and fail to prove it, they shall themselves be arraigned and fined seven thousand five hundred denarii, which are sixty two (one hundred and eighty seven in some texts) solidi and a half.’

However, the underlined law is totally different from the above two:

If a stiria eats a man and is put on trial, she shall be sentenced and condemned to pay eight thousand denarii, which are two hundred solidi.’

This particular law seems essentially Pagan in conception. It also contains an early allusion to witches’ covens which is different from those of classical times. However, we can connect it with the witches scene in Macbeth, when the three witches foretell Macbeth's career at dead of night. The belief in witchcraft and their coven resulted in the focussing on their deity, whom they worshiped.

### **The Witches' Goddess:**

The Goddesses of witches which frequently occurred in the pagans

and christian traditional writing were Diana, Holda and Herodias, of which some accounts have been quoted earlier (especially, Diana).

Burchard, Bishop of Worms from 1006 to 1008 or 1025 (probably in eleventh century), writes in his famous book *Decretales*, "those who believe in witchcraft should do penance for two years." (Burchard of Worms, *Decretorum libri xx* (ed. Cologne, 1584). Further quoting from the same book on earlier section of magic, he asks, "Do you believe that there are women who, like the one the people call Holda, ride by night on special animals in the company of devils which have been changed into women, as some people --deceived by the devil--believe? If you do so believe, you should do penance on the appointed days for a whole year."

John of Salisbury in his *Polycraticus*, also writes about the witches with Herodiade, the queen of night who summons nocturnal gatherings and those who attend are punished or rewarded according to their deserts. The childrens were sacrificed to lamiae, being cut into small pieces and greedily devoured. He further comments that those who have such experiences are but a few poor women and ignorant men with no real faith in God.

The above quoted passages, describe in detail the nature of witches covens. In it, there are references to banquet and rites in which human flesh is eaten, and also to a kind of tribunal which functioned at these covens punishing some and rewarding others.

Women, however, were more subject to the attacks of the Devil than men. Women were certainly thought to be more liable to do evil. The Bible held this view and Pagan authors and church fathers did so too. (G.G. Caulton, *Medieval Panorama. The English scene from conquest to Reformation*, New York, 1957)

There is ample proof of this, for example, in the series of capitals at Vezelay. Satan uses a woman as a musical instrument. Else where, in the porch of the church at Moissac there is the particularly horrible detail of two serpents hanging from the pendulous and flaccid breasts of a woman. A tod sits on her sexual organs while the devil looks on unperturbed.

### **The Sabbath**

The 'sabbath' appears for first time in inquisitorial trails in the Carcassonne and Toulouse regions shortly after the trials of Guichard, Enguerrand de Marigny and the Countess Mahaut, shortly also, after the promulgation of the bull, between 1330 and 1340. From the very beginning, the 'Sabbath' always took the same form. There are descriptions attributed to Anne Marie de Georgel, and Catherine, witches of Toulouse in the fourteenth century. These descriptions elaborate, how they met some men, dressed in the hide of beasts and abused their power over them to have a pact with Satan/Devil. The descriptions also highlight how on every Friday night they were carried to the Sabbath and submitting to their pleasures were taught all kinds of sacret spells. They were also advised to offend God and honour the Devil.

In the Lyons region the sorcerers called their meetings Le fait (the fact) and Devil was referred as le mortinet. The ordinary people called these strange gatherings a 'synagogue'. At the beginning of fifteenth century, people practised black magic and worshipped devil in Carcassonne , Toulouse, Dauphine, Saroy Lyons, Switzerland, the Tyrol and Po valley toward Italy.

In 1435, Jean Duprat, the Inquisitor of Carcassonne, examined eight men and women who had banded together under a woman called Mabile de Marnac . Paul Viguier, Armande Robert, Matheline Figuier boasted of the Sabbath they had attended in the mountains at Alaric . Two shephards,

Catala and Poul Rodier, were accused of being poisoners and magicians. They had summoned the Devil by night, at a cross road, by sacrificing a black hen, in order to promote strife in the district. (Lanothe Langon and number of other writers have referred to these trials)

In Novmandy, witches were called scobaces or “women with brooms’ because of their supposed practice of flying about on broomsticks .

Nicolas Eymerich pointed out the existence of three sorts of witchcraft

- 1) The witchcraft of those who practice devil worship making sacrifices, prostrating themselves, singing prayers, lighting candles, and burning incense, etc.
- 2) The witchcraft of those who merely respect the devils and mention them in litanies along with the saints, asking for their intercession with God.
- 3) The witchcraft of those who summon up devils by tracing magical signs, by placing a child in the middle of circle, by using a sword or a mirror (Nicolas Eymerich (1376).

Johannes Nider, a Swiss theologian, in mid fifteenth century described how the Swiss sorcerers seem to have engaged in all usual practices. They brought on tempests, sterility in men and animal; they travelled through the air to distant places and harmed those who tried to prosecute them. Women were thought to be responsible for making love potions-- out of beans and cock’s testicles amongst other things--and were also believed to eat human flesh and steal childern. (Johannes Nider, 1435-37)

Baroja (1964), divides the writings of many scholar on the subject of witchcraft, in there main groups:

- 1) Those who share the Views on witches-covens of the 'canon Episcopi' and other works of the early medieval period ; believing them to be rituals presided over by a Pagan divinity.
- 2) Those who accept that the 'Sabbath' genuinely takes place in the presence of satan, complete with pacts, etc.
- 3) Those who dispute both the previous views of the nature of meeting and find natural causes to explain the evidence, as either (a) mere consequence of judicial procedure, torture, etc. (b) the effects of stupefying drugs, or (c) the result of the mental deficiency of the person giving evidence.

### **Belief in Ancient India**

The behaviour of an individual as well as members of a group is shaped by his belief system. This belief system is internalized in the process of socialization. The core of the belief system consists of attitudes and values. By values, we mean preference or Choices, on a scale of things that people desire and require. In this way, belief system can be defined as an organised body of ideas, attitudes and convictions centered around values or things regarded as important or precious by a group. A belief system is a social product which arises out of the matrix of symbolic interaction ( Young, 1957).

Belief is an impression about things, whether good or bad, right or wrong and which have certain impact on mind, It can also be false or true, persisting in the society because of the group support. In continuity to these beliefs, practices exist which are the activities of both heart and hand and guided by former. Human practices are individualistic as well as part of group behaviour. Certain practices are the product of long standing customs arising out of cultural beliefs and norms.

These cultural beliefs and practices give birth to many rituals being manifested in actions. The phenomenon of witchcraft is one of the byproducts of these cultural beliefs and practices. The belief in evil doing and doers has existed from time immemorial.

In ancient Indian literatures, though, we do not find the description of witchcraft as such, the domain of magic finds mention in the texts. The religious life of the people esp. vedic people, is well reflected in the classical literature -- and at the later phase of vedic age, magic is dealt in.

We have much knowledge of the religion of early Aryans in India. Through different excavation at Indus valley sites focus has been put on the religious life of the people. Since, the script is yet to be deciphered, the scope of obtaining a very reliable data on religion and magic becomes limited. The religious life of vedic people is reflected in the Vedas. Our concern here is the Atharva veda consisting mainly of magical spells and incantations in verse. It possesses an atmosphere of simple animism and sympathetic magic. Though often in the Rig veda, we read of a mysterious entity called Brahman; in many context brahman is the magical power in the sacred utterances (mantra); sometimes implying a sort of supernatural electricity. The brahman was more powerful than any earthly kings or any god; by his accurate performance of sacrifice he maintained all things, and was therefore the supreme social servant, by the slightest variation of ritual he could turn the sacrifice against his patrons and destroy them, and was therefore the most dangerous of enemies, There are also evidence from hymns regarding the mystical identification of god, victim and sacrificer - and from here sacrifice obtained a greater importance.

With the passage of time, new development in thoughts occurred - and these came from ascetics of less rigorous discipline. The original motive of Indian asceticism was the acquisition of magical power. The brahmins claimed this already, by virtue of their birth and training, but

there were other types of power, obtained by other means. By the magical power acquired through asceticism, the person could work miracles, he could crumble mountains into sea; if offended he could burn up his enemies with the glance of his eyes, or cause the crops of a whole people to fall. If respected, his magical power could protect a great city, increase its wealth, and defend it from famine, pestilence and invasion. His magical power reflected both malevolent and benevolent acts.

Like early vedic period, we have examples of magical mysticism in Buddhist literature in Vajrayana or “the Vehicle of the Thunderbolt”. The lesser vehicle taught that release was obtained by the gradual loss of individuality through self discipline and meditation. The Great vehicle added that the grace and help of heavenly Buddha and Bodhisattvas assisted the process. The followers of the new teachings taught that it could be best attained by acquiring magical power, which they called vajra (thunderbolt or Diamond ). By practice of high stage of detachment and mental training, the practitioners acquired supernatural powers. These monks did not live regularly in monasteries under orthodox discipline, and attempted feats of sorcery and necromancy.

The chief divinities of new sects were the “Saviouresses” (*Taras*), the spouses of the Budhas and Bodhisattvas. There were also a host of lesser divinities mainly called by the names of demons, such as “outcaste women” (*matangis*), “demonesses” (*pisacis*), “sorceresses” (*Yoginis*) and “She-ghouls” (*dakinis*). It was thought that these deities should be compelled rather than persuaded. The text books outlining the means (*sadhana*) of doing this were called Tantras and hence the new cult is often referred to as tantric. By pronouncing the right formula (mantra) in the correct manner, or by drawing the correct magical symbol (yantra), one might force the gods to bestow magical power on the worshipper and lead him to highest bliss.

Among the many formulae of tantric Buddhism, one that is specially famous - the “six syllables” (sadaksara), *Om mani padme hum* (Ah! the jewel is indeed in the lotus) may be sexual in its original significance, mystically repeating the divine coitus of heavenly Buddha and Prajnaparmita and of Avalokitesvara and his Tara. In sexual union with a female devotee he and his partner would become Buddha and Tara, lifting all taboos. These things were however, done under strict control, and only by initiates at sacred ceremonies.

Another form of mystical ceremony, practiced in India is Tantra or Tantric. This sect is still prevalent in practice. Tantra is based on the concept of union also known as yoga, between the creator and the creation. Even though the goal of Tantra is the attainment of total samadhi (union with the almighty), sex--either real or imaginary--is the base of the philosophy. The philosophy centres around the union of Shiva and Sakti, is practiced by the Saadhka (tantric) and his female partner (yogini), seen as Sakti, either physically or through inner visualization. The saadhka acquires the siddhi (power) through saadhna, (an act performed with great perseverance.:

Another trap in tantra, is the vamacharya or left handed (from the fact that goddess sits on the left of her lord) path. The members practiced these ceremonies for much greater efficiency. Small groups of initiates met at night, often in a temple or private house, but also frequently in burning ground, among the bones of the dead. The group formed a circle, seated around the circumference of a large circular magical diagram (*yantra mandala*) drawn on the ground. There was no class distinction at the ceremony--all were equal. After regular evening worship, the propitiation of ghosts and other rites, the group would indulge in the five M's (*panchmakara*) *madya* (alcoholic drink), *mamsa* (meat), *matsya* (fish), *mudra* (symbolical hand gestures) and *maithuna* (sexual intercourse). But

the Dakshinacharya or right-handed do not indulge in five M's.

Through the *Kundalini's* (the sex energy force) journey, the ultimate stage in yoga and tantra--Nirvana (spiritual bliss ) is attained. The whole tantric system is geared to making the Kundalini rise from the 'mooldhara chakra' (its resting place) based below the genitals and above the rectum to the Sahasrara Chakra, based at the top of the head. It is here that the sadhaka decides whether or not to use his power for witchcraft--either --white or black. The Aghori Panthis, the seamy tantrics function more to harm others. A sadhak who turns to black magic for monetary gain uses his newly awakened power to curse, gain further power at the expense of others, or for "*mooth*" which is murder by remote control.

Aghori, or those practicing the seamy side of tantra, are known to eat corpses, and have intercourse with them too. Many tantrics on human skulls (the brain being the repository of intelligence) practice magic in graveyards and cremation grounds. This is regarded to give them power over demons and spirit. This power over spirits enables the tantric to use them as his weapon against his enemies.

Necromancy is a prominent aspect of tantra magic. Animals and even humans are slain as sacrifice for the purpose. The practice of this sacrifice in human societies developed to fulfil a few specific purposes of living. Gradually it became the common custom which fashioned into a particular trait. Though the practicing communities had their logic and practical explanation behind that dreadful practice, yet other saw it in mischievous attitude which undermined the sacred human life. In order to make challenges with the unfavorable hazardous situations and thereby to adjust themselves with the surrounding, some people started appeasing the spirits--controlling these total perspectives through the sacrifice of the best creation of the world, i.e., human beings. Perhaps a particular idea developed into the remote past in order to achieve some good

materials, the highly valuable things needed to be sacrificed. Since the life of human being was taken by those people as the highest excellence so they were naturally tempted to forego the human life for higher advantages. This belief pattern ran down through generations and has been considered as the specific purpose of enhancing spiritualism amongst the persons indulged in it.

However, According to Hindu mythology the throwback to devil and ghosts is basically the result of the impression that death makes no man. Death as an end is not acceptable-so life of some other sort is visualised after death. And life is subtly linked with human existence in that it interferes in human affairs, at the instance of a medium . In other words, God and ghosts basically exist to cater to human needs and desires.

These needs and disease are realised through awakening of supernatural powers, which lie dormant in each of us. This is done through meditation which involves such an intense concentration that one becomes part of the object, one meditates on. This results in acquiring power to control it. In other sense, it means that nature and its laws can be coded to serve the experienced devotees, whether witch or sorcerer. This meditation is at the sametime linked with performance if specific rituals, chanting of mantras to get success. The very success depends upon right procedure of rituals and correct pronunciation of mantras--and belief in the rituals plays an important role in it.

### **Witchcraft Studies in Anthropology and other fields**

In Anthropology, witchcraft studies have been done by various scholars and these scholars have interpreted it accordingly. The phenomenon of witchcraft has attracted many anthropologists to put focus on it.

Witchcraft is an explanation of how or why certain events occurred, and it usually involves the application of magic by a person to bring about a desired result. Witchcraft can have many functions in society. It provides an outlet for aggression and hostility, it is a way of resolving tensions and conflicts, and it provides a scapegoat for society. It can regulate the hostility that arises in any social situations. And it can explain such things as failure disease or misfortune. It has often been pointed out that witchcraft can act as a mechanism of social control by regulating the behaviour of certain members of groups, People can be forced to follow certain patterns of behaviour either because they are afraid of becoming the victims of a witch or because they are afraid of being accused of witchcraft.

**Evans Pritchard** through his work among Azande, focussed extensively on the phenomenon of witchcraft. He also differentiated between a Witch and a Sorcerer, according to which, witchcraft is the inherent power to harm others by supernatural means, while sorcery is learned and is the harmful or aggressive use of magic. Further, he adds that witchcraft among Azande is quite a natural phenomenon. A 'zande expects people to be ill, i.e. to be bewitched and it is not a matter of surprise for him. The concept of witchcraft, nevertheless, provides them with a natural philosophy by which the relations between men and unfortunate events are explained. They believe that a person is designated as witch, because of an inherited organ or substance called 'Mangu' which is oval, located somewhere between the breast bone and the intestines, and is variously described as reddish, blackish or hairy. Male inherits mangu only from male and female from female. An autopsy may be performed to determine, the presence or absence of mangu. Witchcraft explains unfortunate events, but only if these events are unusual and inexplicable(Pritchard, 1937).

**Clyde Kluckhohn** in his book Navaho Witchcraft says that there

are a number of distinct methods of carrying out malevolent activities. He argues that Witchery and sorcery are so closely linked that, many Navaho regard sorcery as merely a branch of witchery. Kluckhohn mentions, four types of malevolent activities viz. Witchery, Sorcery, Wizardry and Frenzy Witchcraft. Witches are associated with death and the dead. They are likewise closely associated with incest. Suspicion of incest means, by that very fact, suspicion of witch activity and vice versa. Anyone can become a witch, either male or female. Witchery, is most often, learned from parents, grandparents or a spouse, but spouse also often remains ignorant about the other half, being a witch. Killing a near relative, normally a sibling, is a part of initiation into witchery. A person becomes a witch in order to wreak vengeance to gain wealth or simply to injure wantonly. Sorcery, on the other hand, is essentially an enchantment of spells. He does not need to encounter his victim personally at all. By merely obtaining a portion/part of the victim's clothing or personal offal (hair, nail, urine, body-dirt etc.), he buries it with flesh, or other material from a grave, or under a lightning struck tree. The sorcerer, then recites a spell, often setting the number of days, after which the victim is to die. The Wizardry type, involves the central concept of injecting a foreign particle (stone-bone, quills, ashes, charcoal) into the victim. This is sometimes, referred to as "Bean-shooting". Sucking or objects taken off from a victim is the special cure of it (Here the victim, more often than not, takes help from neighbouring tribes like Hopi, Pueblo-Indians, etc). The last and the most interesting type is the Prostitution way, which refers to three different sets of activities. First is the Frenzy witchcraft, wherein, certain plants are used for love-magic or for success in trading and gambling. Second, there is the ceremonial witchcraft, which exists to cure the victims of the first set, known as prostitution way chant. Finally, there is a form of divination which utilizes some of the plants, especially Datura, which are employed in Frenzy witchcraft, known as Datura divination. Kluckhohn, further adds that the fear of talking about witches is very strong, as Navaho

believes that it might be revealed and consequently harmful (Kluckhohn, 1944)

**Lessa and Vogt**, opine that a witch frequently has an animal form such as cat, werewolf or a bat. Witches can project evil over great distances, without moving or they may transport themselves at great speeds, in order to do some needed mischief. The evil eye or evil tongue, are variants of witchcraft, some people can cause great harm, simply by looking or speaking, often without evil intent (Lessa and Vogt, 1958)

**Walter B. Cannon**, on the other hand, says that phenomenon of death caused by witchcraft or sorcery, or due to taboo violation, is common and widespread. He emphasizes on the psychological aspect, while dealing with 'Voodoo death'. He argues that, where belief in sorcery, witchcraft or supernatural sanctions is firmly held, fear alone can kill. Highlighting the physiological charge due to fear rage, hunger and pain, Cannon says that through fear the body is stimulated to meet an emergency. Through the sympathetic nervous system, muscles are prepared for action, by the production of large amounts of adrenalin and sugar and by the contraction of certain blood vessels. When the condition is not met by action, or is prolonged, a state of shock may result. The pressure is reduced, the heart deteriorates and blood plasma escapes into tissues. Lack of food and water, thus deteriorates physiological state. A continuation of this condition may lead to death, within a few days. This state of physiological changes due to psychological crisis, occurs, when a person himself sees the voodoo magician, indicating his voodoo object, towards him or when he comes to know of the same, through someone else. This phenomenon of voodoo death is present among the natives of South America, Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Islands of the Pacific, as well as, among the Negroes of near by Haiti (Cannon, 1942, 58).

In a through study of the relationships between witchcraft and other

aspects of social order, Nadel compares witchcraft among four African societies. He groups the society into two pairs, the Nupe and Gwari in northern Nigeria and Korongo and Mesakin in the Nuba mountains of central Sudan. Within each pair there is a great deal of cultural similarity, but witchcraft beliefs differ.

In comparing Nupe and Gwari witchcraft beliefs, Nadel points out that nature of witchcraft beliefs are evil and meant to destroy life. Nupe witches are always women, while among Gwari witches and their victims can be members of either sex. This can be explained by the strong antagonism between the sexes in Nupe society, and by the fact that only women are accused of witchcraft and only men have the power to defeat witchcraft. Among Gwari no such antagonism exists. Digging deeper into the social factors involved, Nadel stresses the economic and social independence of women in Nupe society. Women generally work as traders and their husbands, who are agriculturists, are often in debt to them. Women sometimes also refuse to have children, thus freeing themselves for their jobs. This creates a role reversal so strong that it is reflected in Nupe witchcraft patterns.

In comparing witchcraft among the Korongo and Mesakin, Nadel focusses on their similarity in many fronts-- environment, language, economic, political etc. However, he says, to understand witchcraft we must understand the age grading that occurs in both the societies. Males are divided into age groups focussed on the display of virility in athletic activities. At puberty this virility is formalized in a ceremony where each boy receives an animal from the herd of his mother's brother.

Nadel notes that Korongo have no witchcraft beliefs at all, while Mesakins are obsessed by fears of witchcraft and accusations of being a witch. The distinction between these two societies lies in this fact that while among Korongo the mother's brother never refuses to give his

sister's son an animal, among the Mesakin the mother's brother always refuses at first, and often the animal must be taken by force. Thus, quarrels are frequent, and if something happens to the youth during such a quarrel the mother's brother is usually accused of witchcraft.

The difference between these two groups could be attributed to cultural differences in adult attitudes towards life and especially towards growing old. Both groups fear aging. Yet the Korongo accepts it, whereas Mesakins try to avoid it. Mother's brother sees the demands for a gift as a reminder that he is growing old. The gift anticipates the death of the donor, since upon his death the entire herd will be turned to his heir, the sister's son. Korongos are prepared for a gradual decline, whereas for Mesakins it is harder to accept. The gift giving and insecurity at older stage describes their belief about witchcraft. (Nadel, 1960)

**J.D. Krige** describing witchcraft among Lobedu of Transvaal make the distinction between the day witch (Sorcerer) and the night witch (witch). He says that the co-operative Lobedu society prescribes all economic competition, but suppressed rivalries are projected into the magical realm of witchcraft. He further says that magic and witchcraft occur only when there are interpersonal tensions. The Lobedus picture witchcraft as criminality incarnate, an intrinsically evil influence in the universe which can manifest itself only through a human being: it is independent of all the supernaturals, but it is not a capricious power, and it is thought to be set into motion only by malice, hatred and similar motives and generally only against some specific individual. The art of witchcraft involves supercausation, is mysterious and transcends the operation of natural cause and effect. This occurs only where we find stress and strain in life, where in other words, there are tensions, actual or potential between people, Hence it is relatives and neighbours, but never strangers, who use witchcraft or sorcery against one another. (Krige, 1958)

## **Studies on Witchcraft in Recent Times**

The facts about phenomenon of witchcraft ascertained from vivid accounts by the judges, Inquisitors of earlier centuries, have interested many peoples in recent years. They have been studied by legal historians, doctors specializing in psychiatry ; anthropologists and a horde of Satanists and Anti Satanists, who believe in witchcraft in the same way as earlier authors did. The glimpses of historical facts about witchcraft involves a unique Complex of emotions and beliefs. In recent times various scholars have studied witchcraft and its different parameters and have analysed and described it .

Margaret Murray, accepts most of the material about ‘Sabbaths’ given in the witch trails and, at the sametime, holds that witches worshipped a mysterious Horned-God of extreme antiquity, dating from prehistoric times. Murray also claimed that witchcraft is a survival of Paganism.

Alan Macfarlane in his famous work ‘witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England’ establishes some important facts from Essex . Firstly, theories about the satanic pact, devil worship and nocturnal gatherings of witches were almost absent from Essex. Secondly, it was most unusual for an outsider to hunt for witch and initiate accusations; normally suspicions arose spontaneously within the community. Thirdly, he highlights the crucial role of the cunning folk, the village experts on the diagnosis of witchcraft and the use of counter magic. It was they whom the victims consulted, who confirmed and crystalised their suspicions and who encouraged the accusations which eventually led to legal prosecutions. Finally, he offers a plausible socio-economic explanation of the underlying rationale for the suspicions. He demonstrates that the witch and her victims were always neighbours, but not equals, ‘the victim would be relatively well off and the witch poor’. The better off neighbours, feeling anxious and guilty at having failed in his or her social obligations (at some time by

refusing), would later interpret any misfortune as due to the offended women's curse (Macfarlane' 1970)

**Keith Thomas's** work *Religion and Decline of Magic*, centres around 16th and 17th century England. He describes how people thought that a witch could harm the health of humans and of animals (a proces called Maleficium); and accusations and trials centred upon this. He discusses, for instance, the belief in the efficacy of a righteous curse; beliefs about the devil, possession and exorcism ; the functions of witch-belief in accounting for misfortunes and reinforcing moral standards. The significant aspect of the book was to explain and understand what happened at the village level, by focussing the personal interactions between the alleged witch, the supposed victim and the local community. (Thomas, 1971)

**Christina Lerner's** "Enemies of God" (1981) and 'Witchcraft and Religion' (1984), mentions the Scottish witch hunting. She describes about how the typical scottish suspect was an elderly woman, "with a sharp tongue annd filthy temper, fairly low in the social scale and unpopular, she had made some request from a neighbour, been refused, and shown her anger. Lerner also attributed to the confessions of witch that how they met Satan in form of a man or a dog, renounced baptism and sworn allegiance to him, had sex with him and attended the nocturnal gatherings. Lerner also pays special attention to the question of gender in relation to accusations. In scotland the ratio over averaged between 80 percent women to 20 percent men. The male suspects were generally the husband or brothers of accused witch, drawn into the net of a multiple trials., Those accused of witchcraft, Lerner believes, were usually those, "who do not fulfil the male view of how women should conduct themselves", their position was made worse by social and economic dependence and by increased demands for peity and moral conformity

imposed by both the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, women being then regarded for the first time as fully responsible for their own spiritual salvation.

**Clive Holmes** has stressed that popular opinion manifested itself both in accusation and verdicts. He picks out three beliefs as being clearly “popular” -- the preponderance of women as witches; the idea that their powers were hereditary, especially in female line; the animal familiars. (Holmes, 1984)

A currently vigorous area of the witchcraft is the issue of gender. Until the rise of feminism in 1970's, scholars had not paid attention to the fact that most of the accused were women, and that of these, many were past the menopause. Feminists seized on this as evidence of gross patriarchal oppression, and though their arguments were crude and inadequately based, they spurred historians into serious consideration of the point. Internationally, it has usually been seen as an echo of religious stereotyping of women as morally weak, credulous and lustful (Quaife, 1987) and it has been further suggested that their tasks, “as cooks, healers and midwives” easily led to suspicions of using magic (Levack 1995).

**Carol Karlsen** strongly argues that in America most accused women were not under the control of male relatives and were, or were about to become, economically independent; they were usually above childbearing age, and had in several cases broken gender norms by sexual misbehaviour, by pride, or by unusual religious views. The accusations reflected a struggle to claw back control of property into male hands and force women to accept their “proper” role (Karlsen, 1987).

**Francisco Bethencourt** has linked the issue of sex and age by commenting that medical theory in seventeenth century Portugal, the Evil Eye was attributed to the emission of “foul, fetid and malignant fluids”

from the eyes of a woman who was *mal menstruada*, i.e. menstruating irregularly at her menopause , (Bethancourt 1993).

For **Hester**, gender and indeed sexuality is central. Taking economic contextualization into view, she points out that widows and spinsters who tried to support themselves by a craft (e.g. brewing, weaving ) threatened men's livelihoods by their competition, and therefore were just as much a social "problem" as those who become dependent on charity (Hester, 1992).

**Favret-Saada** worked in a rural area of western France. She writes that ' a set of words spoken in crises situation' is retrospectively identified as the cause of harm, and then speaker as a witch. In witchcraft 'words wage war'. With the degree of participation in her study she became so deeply involved in the beliefs she was studying ,at one point began to fear that witchcraft was being directed against herself. This helped her in gaining confidence of a handful of informants who perceived themselves as victims of witchcraft attacks and interpreted their misfortunes in this way (Favret-Saada, 1980).

Many other scholars have also put focus on the phenomenon of witchcraft in **India** though a full fledged work on witchcraft is lagging behind, few scholars have focussed their attention on this. Number of works done on the subject in India is very less when compared to European or African studies. It would be relevant to mention some works done in India.

**Carstairs** in his book 'Death of a witch' focusses on the belief behind witchcraft in Sujarupa village (Rajasthan). He says that illnesses caused by witches were feared even more than those ascribed to gods, demons and male and female ghosts. Many supernatural agencies which could bring misfortune, sickness or death upon a family, the one most

feared was the dakan or witch. Deaths of small children or unnatural deaths are always attributed to the work of a witch. Witches can temporarily discard their human form and turn themselves into cats or ants. In this form they can slip out of their house unseen in order to foregather with other witches at a burning ghat, at midnight. Here they resume human form and ride marked on the backs of hyenas (In European lore all this was described, except that the witches ride on wolves). The witch devours the liver of a victim and she could only be appeased by sacrifice meant to her.

Carstairs further says that the identity of witches by witch-doctor is not revealed. This reason behind this is that the witch is still alive and would be furious if her secret is revealed. She is also credited with the magical power of knowing at once if her name was spoken and might cause harm. Carstairs also puts forward the strange belief of villagers that if any one eats food with the witch, one also becomes a witch.

Further in his book, he narrates the killing of an old female, Dhapu (the supposed witch) by the villagers, who according to them, was behind the sickness and death of many people. Carstairs opens how such stubborn beliefs in witchcraft serve a social/psychological role. One function such beliefs serve in a community in which the deaths of infants, children and young women are all too common is to provide a scapegoat. The women of Sujarupa mourned these premature deaths with bitter grief but instead of reproaching themselves they directed their anger at the nearby witch. (Carstairs, 1983)

**Chaudhary's** study is based on Santhal witchcraft. He highlights the prevalence of witchcraft in Santhal villages and the witches as responsible for many illnesses and diseases and for untimely or unnatural deaths. Many a time false accusations also occur to settle personal accounts--consequently leading to killing of supposed witch.

**Majumdar**, illustrates the belief in witchcraft among Hos. The physical illness, disease and death are traced to the interference of Bonga, invoked by witches to cause loss or damage to the property and physical harm. Disease, deformity and death may all be due to the mischief of the witches and to overcome this, sacrifices are offered to the malignant Bongas. The witches cause harm through method of Najomadani (Najom-means poison) in which najom is mixed with oil or cooked meat. The najom is not destroyed when heated or boiled, so that when a man takes such meat preparation, he is sure to be attacked with diseases, which more often than not prove fatal.

Majumdar says that witches are either barren women both old and ugly, or whose ways of life are strange and mysterious. The witches of the village may invoke a particular malignant bonga, and set it against a person or his cattle. The Hos believe that the witch, if she wishes to kill a person must shoot an arrow at an effigy of the man or at his shadow. The man thus acted upon will die suddenly. He will develop consumption which is believed to cause holes in the lungs and a slow but terrible death. The arrow is generally shoot at midnight without being detected. The witches also make effigy of the person they wish to harm, with powdered rice or wheat flour. And then they prick it with thorns, believing that the victim will suffer similar pricks resulting in boils and ulcers all over his body. The method of contagious magic is also used by the witches (Majumdar, 1950).

**Roy** gives an account of Munda witchcraft. He say that Mundas are great believers in the power of the evil eye. They do believe in witches and their power to harm others. Repeated sickness or chronic diseases are attributed to the work of a witch. Witches through their magical power appease spirits and through these spirits they cause harm to others. The witch rouse up a particular spirit to afflict victims. Witch finder among mundas is known as the Sokha, Mati or Bhagat, who is responsible for

detecting the witch. Through their ritualistic trance, Bhagat claims to have seen the witch who has roused up a spirit to cause harm. The witch is then told to pay the fine, required for sacrifices to appease the infuriated spirit. In case of denial of guilt and refusal to pay the fine demanded, the suspected witch is not unoften severely thrashed, dispossessed of land and in some cases driven out of the village. In times, people accused of witchcraft but denying the charge by which. have sometimes been beaten to death. (S.C.Roy, 1968)

**Sohaila Kapur** gives a vivid account of witchcraft prevalence in Western India. She in her book describes the practice of black magic in Maharashtra, Kerala, Karnataka, Bihar, Goa and other states. The belief in black magic or witchcraft in these regions are discussed respectively.

In Maharashtra 'Mooth marana' or murder by distance is a method of getting even with ones enemies. A few grains of rice or millet are activated by mantras and flung into the air. This stuff, once airborne, is believed to outdistance the fastest jet in its search for the victim. It discovers the victim and hits him with such a force or impact that he collapses and dies. The strike-force of this fistful of revenge is believed to be tremendous, because of the potent mantras fed into it. It is an effective weapon of the witches and sorcerers.

A well known ritual in Maharashtra for mastering spirits involves infant corpses. The corpse should be exhumed from the grave and then washed in milk. The contaminated milk should then be collected in bowl, converted into ghee and then used into lamp which is kept alight continuously for forty one days. The corpse meanwhile is dressed in a brand new set of clothes and reburied. During the crucial forty one days, the witch or sorcerer prays, meditates and cajoles the spirit of the corpse to materialize before him or her. If the concentration is intense the spirit appears before him/her and enquires about the masters wishes. The spirit

is then a slave of the witch or sorcerer, trapped to do his/her bidding for as long as desired.

Foetuses and their dubious uses in black rituals centres around the infamous Oddiyan phenomenon of Kerala, which was deeply feared at times. Oddiyans were apparently, members of a tribe that excelled in witchcraft. Oddiyans, in night, grab the pregnant females and drag her off to a secluded spot, rip out her foetus, and if it is a male, make off with it. In case it was female, the foetus would be unceremoniously thrown into the bushes. The oddiyans believed that foetus not only be male, but also that it should belong to a woman pregnant for first time. Apparently, this blood-thirsty let made a potion of foetus, by mixing it with special herbs and leaves. The mixture when applied to their limb joints, was said to transform them into animals. In its animal form, an oddiyan prowled about looking for victims. It waylaid passers-by and harassed them into hurling stones or abuse at it. This 'insult' provided an excuse to commit murder. No sooner was the pebble thrown or a curse muttered than the oddiyan is resumed human form and strangled the victim. ( A second century Greek manuscript 'The Golden Ass' recounts a similar Greek belief in metamorphosing witches who changed into animal form to carry out their ghoulish activities.)

In Bihar witches can metamorphose themselves into animals and can cause harm or sometimes death to the victim. Another witchcraft or Sorcery act associated with pregnant women is that of the hadal, the spirit of a woman died in childbirth. The hadal phenomenon is peculiar to Maharashtra and she is sought by witches or sorcerers for their own purposes. The person in search of hadal is asked by his guru to identify those who carried the dead woman's corpse to the cremation ground. The earth stepped on by two bier-bearers in the rear is collected in a tin-box. The earth constitutes one of the prayer materials used in invoking the

hadal. The next day, the initiates goes to the particular cremation ground and squats naked on the ground. He / she burns incense and repeats the incantations taught by his guru. The hadal in this way, subjugated and does anything the witch or sorcerer wants it to do.

In Karnataka, witches during their black magic rituals, worship Kali and Durga, though indirectly. The deity is given the name of Sakini or Dakini and is worshipped with incantations, wine and meat in lonely places- preferably in jungle or a crematory. Deities with the curious names Shakini, Dakini and Lakini are worshipped for purposes of witchcraft. Some of the common effects of witchcraft are said to be a sudden lack of concentration. in one's work, an illness that is impossible to diagnose, friends who became inimical, worms appearing in one's food and a state of buddhishambham or physical immobility, where one is rooted to a spot.

The worship of ksudradevatas (demon-gods) and pretas(spirit) is believed to infuse a witch with incredible occult powers. The pretas are captured and witches get their earthly tasks performed by them. Another ritual known as the 'Bhanamati', involves a rag doll peppered with pins. In this accupuncture like occupation, pins are driven into doll's joint. the image is given a name that of a victim, and then it is thrown inside the victims's house, may be his terrace, garden or anywhere in the vicinity. Some also bury it. Witches in Karnataka also believe in capturing pretas near corpses in a cemetery. The spirits are more easily captured, it is believed, when the body has been dead for not longer than 10 to 12 days, or may be a month, and the spilit is still hovering near it, before entering a higher place of existence. At that time, it is still moving around with memories of its early life and probably still has some unfulfilled desires left. Through propitiation of mantras and offering of wine and flowers, the spirit is brought under control for black activities. A male witch in Karnataka is called 'matagara' and a female, ' matagathi'.

The Goans have similar belief of witchcraft. The Goans believe that pregnant women are often bewitched by jealous women. There is also reports that witchcraft in Goa has become a flourishing business. The witches, charge money for their heird works. Goans also believe that weak and gullible person is infinitely more prone to possession by Saitan. In cuncolim--Goan's alleged sorcery centre, near Margao-legend had it that a witch's corpse which the local church refused to consecrate, remained fresh for a year and a half after it was buried uncremoniously in a public cemetery.

In Kerala, there is one strong saying 'the more gruesome the witch/sorcerer's intention, the deadlier in the effect'. witches are believed to make their victims insane by mantras. ( Kapur, 1983)

**Pokarna** discribes the belief supernatural causes behind illnesses and diseases among Manchwa and Begas villages (Jaipur Tehsil). Under the title of indigenous health care system--Pokarna focusses on the phenomenon of witchcraft--as one of the causes behind illnesses. Witches cause sickness through their power and sometimes intrusion of ghosts in one's body is attributed to them. The villagers believe that a person can either die or suffer from haemorahage/bleeding due to "kaman and mooth", a work of witch. This can also cause paralysis. It means cereals thrown on anyone after preparing it with charm is done in order to produce disease. (Pokarna, 1994)

Vitebsky in his work among Sora's of Orissa, describes the supernatural intrusion behind the cause of illnesses and sometimes death. The most striking feature of this community is the females, serving as a shaman. The Soras believe in the witchcraft And many deaths and illnesses are attributed to it. In one particular case, Vitebsky focusses on the death of a male sora, speaking through Shamanistie ritual regarding the cause behind his death. The ritual was conducted by the funeral Shaman, Kumbri,

to know the cause behind the death of Jamano. Through the inquests, Mengalu, a fellow Sora, was found to have used his magic. Mengalu's sorcery was responsible to the death of Jumano. The main reason behind the sorcery was personal animosity or even dispute over a plot of land.

Among the Soars post-mortem dialogue embodies a quest by the living for certainty from the lips of the dead. The dead can speak to the living through Shaman's. (Vetebsky, 1993)

Similarly, many other works have been done on witchcraft and detailed descriptions have been accounted. It appears that in almost every societies, whether primitive or modern, witchcraft is present, though in different pattern and intensity. The belief in witchcraft is embedded in social matrices, wherever it is present. At the same time it is interlinked with other aspects of social organisation. There are different means of nullifying of witches' effect, used by the indigenous healers, known differently in different societies. There are not only different methods used by witches to harm his / her enemies, but also various devices of witchdoctors to counter his / her attack and identification of the concerned witch.

With these descriptions, I venture into the Ho society. The present work is focussed on the prevalence of witchcraft and various parameters related to it. The aim of the present study is:

1. To study the existing pattern of witchcraft among the Hos.
2. To study the beliefs and attitudes related to witchcraft practices in the Ho tribe.
3. To find out the interrelationship of witchcraft with other aspects of social organisation.
4. To study the degree of integration of different elements of

medicine to the whole social system and the cultural responses related to it.

5. To explore the social and cultural responses to illness and death as afflictions or misfortunes from the 'emic' standpoint.
6. To explore the existing organisation of counter-witchcraft in relation to witchcraft.
7. To study the role of formal and non formal organisations towards witchcraft.
8. To study the notion of change in witchcraft beliefs and practices.

## **Chapter - II**

### **APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGY**

## CHAPTER II

### Approaches & Methodology

#### Growth of Fieldwork Tradition

Anthropology, since its inception, has travelled a long path—the journey includes its nascent phase to mature position. Anthropology in its long journey established itself as a distinct discipline with wider horizons and deeper insight into its subject matter. The discipline cuts across the entire liberal arts curriculum, taking other disciplines into its fold across sectors of time and space that otherwise might have remained neglected; it studies people from all times and in all places. It also distinguishes itself from the disciplines it overlaps by its holism (all-inclusiveness) and its relativism (considering people in terms of their own cultures).

To achieve this phase of excellence, anthropology with its research methodology and the vital statistics of field work had been and has been gaining a new platform in understanding and interpreting human behaviour and society. Many scholars have contributed with their approaches and methods to make its wings wider—and in this process, the introduction of field work method has been the utmost achievement.

It is said that anthropology begun with the description of exotic people and their customs. The earliest accounts of travellers on savage life remained the only source of information for the anthropologists for long. In its nascent phase anthropology drew heavily from these reports but with passage of time, the anthropologists realised the necessity of visiting these savage or primitive people about whom they talked, atleast once. This soon paved a new path in anthropological journey. Since then, it has crossed four stages of its development. Penniman gives four phases

of growth of Anthropology i.e.

- A. Formulatory Period (before 1835).
- B. Convergent Period (1835 to 1859)
- C. Constructive Period (1859 to 1900)
- D. Critical Period (1900 onwards)

The Formulatory Period centred around the writings of Herodotus, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle etc. Though, these scholars wrote on various aspects of human societies and cultures, they were not anthropologists. Their views contributed to theoretical foundations of anthropology. On the other hand, the works of John Locke, Montesquieu, Kant, Simon and Comte also enriched the theoretical base.

Convergent Period, shaped the theories of culture with divergent views on origin of biological and social aspects of man. The major scholars of this period were Marx, Lyell and Smith. At the end of this period, Charles Darwin with his publication of origin of species, gave a new dimension to world anthropology.

In Constructive period, anthropology was considered as an independent discipline and a distinct field of research. It was also marked by works of classical evolutionists, which accelerated scientific researches and publications in the field of other cultures.

The evolutionists primarily relied on conjecture and comparative method. The interpreted data were secondary in nature and therefore history reconstructed by them was speculative. Tylor and Morgan were the main advocates of this school, whose writing focussed on culture and society. The data were collected from different regions and were compared with the purpose of formulating laws of evolution or the origin of cultural traits.

But soon, it was realised that the method of second-hand data collection should be replaced by more authentic one, to arrive at better and more genuine propositions—the beginning of critical period. Field work as a first hand data collection tool kit heralded a new beginning in anthropological arena. Evolutionary school was criticised for its logical arena. Evolutionary school was criticised for its speculative approach and were labelled ‘Arm Chair Scholars’. The work of functionalists like Malinowski and Radcliff Brown showed the importance of intensive first hand data collection with field work method.

It is not so that with the works of functionalist, history of ethnographic account begun. Previous scholars also put forward the ethnographic account, but it was based on secondary data. The expedition under the leadership of Haddon and Franz Boas, led an academic journey in anthropology. Boas, the exponent of ‘historical particularism; went to Baffin Island in 1883. In 1888, he visited the Eskimos and with this study, depiction of ethnographic account, through first hand narration was highlighted.

Boas referred to all minute details of the Eskimo Community. Soon , he was identified as a veteran ethnographer.

A.C. Haddon in 1902, organised yet another group voyage to Torres Strait. This voyage resulted in group researches in social anthropology, separating field work tradition from conjectural and evolutionary ethnological work.

In the beginning of 20th Century, Radcliff, Brown and Malinowski with their extensive fieldwork studies, helped anthropology to shift its paradigm in much more stronger way. Brown’s study of the Andaman Islanders reflected his deep insight into the social life of the native people. He not only recorded the myths and customs of the islanders, but also

attempted a sincere interpretation of their social institutions, which implied discovery not of origin but of meaning.

Malinowski's contribution to field work tradition is par excellence and has no parallels amongst his contemporaries or even among present day anthropologists. His study amongst Trobri and Islanders, is considered to be a field work' in true sense. His focus on participant observation and use of native language for data collection helped anthropology to establish itself as such a discipline the presence of which enriched the academic world. Malinowski's four steps of field work viz.

- (a) learning of local language,
- (b) data should be collected and Verium as stated by the people,
- (c) Imponderabilia of social life, and
- (d) Behaviour and its frequency, proved to be an instructor to the students of anthropology.

On the otherhand, Levi Strauss, though not a field worker in true sense, laid emphasis on analysis rather than data collection. He proposed a new method to anthropology known as New Ethnography or Ethno-Science, highlighting the importance of linguistics in anthropological data analysis. This resulted in field work as investigators oriented tool. His study of 'myth' remains unparallel till date.

In the middle of the twentieth century many dynamic anthropologists such as Leach, Raymond Firth, Pritchard, Mayer Portes, Nadal, Parsons and Merton, with their works added new dimensions to field work traditions.

Leach, in his study, "Political Systems of Highland Burma" (1954), proposed a creative solution by considering conflict itself as a form of structure. His focus on alternative modes of actions, highlighted the significance of decision making. Thus, he explained change not by

preconceived causal factors, but on the basis of realities as they existed. In his hand, field work became dynamic and diachronic.

Raymond Firth, with his study among Tikopians, proposed dual-synechronic model. He focussed on the choice of behaviour and evaluation of efficiency towards any given goal. Firth hoped that intensive studies of these choices would lead to the explanations of change not only in single societies, but also on a cross cultural level, so that “laws” of change may eventually be discovered.

Pritchard’s works centre around the considerations of History. He urged the anthropologists to search for laws or regularities which were to be sought in history. He argues that this would reveal that there are sequences of development in time. His work began a new chapter in anthropological approaches where history was linked with anthropology.

Mayer Fortes’ works moved around discovery of social laws while studying any society. On the other hand, Parsons and Merton, critical of certain presuppositions of classical functionalism refined its methods and with their models, added yet another dimension to field work tradition.

Moving still further, Clifford Geertz makes a distinction between anthropologist as pilgrim and anthropologist as cartographer. As pilgrim, he journeys through, invariably for more than a year, the nuances and matrices of a culture, usually different from his own. Imbibition of the ‘other culture’ is an experience—a conscious experience of being enculturated—and a key to comprehend an emic view of the people. As Cartographer, anthropologists’ task is to ‘collect data’, which, after being sifted and analysed, yields the ‘picture’ of a society the way it is organised and endures over time. (Geertz, 1988)

Maurice Bloch, makes a distinction between two realms of knowledge, i.e. Sensational (which can be verbalised) and non-sensational (expressed symbolically while studying).

Of late, it has been urged that native members (on whom study is being conducted) be used as co authors. So as to make any description more authentic. This has resulted into change in context—from colonial to free and from subject to partner.

Beginning from the 1970s there has been a shift in cultural anthropological methodology—from participant observation toward the observation of participation. During participant observation ethnographers attempt to be both emotionally engaged participants and coolly dispassionate observers of the lives of others. In the observation of participation, ethnographers both experience and observe their own and others' coparticipation within the ethnographic encounter (Barbara Tedlock).

The anthropological discourse has been marked by an extensive use of what is known as the “ethnographic present” . Scholarly anthropology developed from the age of discovery, and was founded upon an exploration of unmapped cultural territories. In this vein, anthropology has continued to contribute to the expansion of the world horizon. Field work is diacritical in the anthropological practice. While it lasts, it is radical experience of estrangement and relativism. Afterwards it becomes memory and the backbone of objectivism (Hastrup Kirsten; 1995).

Anthropologists in India too have relied upon field work methods while carrying out their studies. The scholars like S.C. Roy, Majumdar, Madan Elwin, Hamendorf, Vidhyarthi, Oscar Lewis, to name the few, have enriched Indian anthropology with their vivid description of Indian society. Madan is of the view that field work is “living intimately with group of strangers.”

Field work, hence, becomes vital organ as well as an integral part of anthropological discourse, with its focus on ‘emics’ rather than ‘etics’

of culture. As it was argued by the anthropologists that the discipline is the science of human society—and to realise the scientific nature of the discipline, objectivity was added to its purview. Even a single dose of subjectivity was discarded—and a healthy debate on subjectivity versus objectivity surfaced.

To make any inquiry, plethora of techniques, methods were sought, by which data had to be collected. Incorporation of the study of complex societies under its nexus has led to adoption of some sociological methods of data collection too such as formal interview, questionnaire, Sampling and Survey methods etc.

Some of the techniques and methods which are used in data collection are observation (participant and non-participant) Interview, schedule, case study, interview-guide, life-history, etc. In recent times inclusion of visual aids has highlighted the role of visual anthropology in data collection.

To sum up, one can say that field work over the years have undergone various kinds of refinements but its basic tenets remains the same till date. These refinements and modifications have only enriched and enhanced the use of fieldwork as the principal method and technique of anthropological research. NO wonder, it has become the hallmark of anthropological enquiry.

## **B. Social Research and Research Process**

An anthropologist primary goal is to explore and gain an understanding of human society and culture. Social research gives a distinct shape to it with the aid of field work. Social research may be defined as a scientific undertaking which , by means of logical and systematized techniques, aims to discover new facts or verify and test old facts, analyze their sequence, interrelationships and causal explanations

which are derived within an appropriate theoretical frame of reference and develop new scientific concepts and theories which would facilitate reliable and valid study of human behaviour.

Technique is the means or device or contrivance used for collecting or processing data relevant to context of scientific enquiry.

Method is the interrelation of many techniques. It structures the actual device and implicates a goal. It may be defined as a system of complete set of rules of procedures, including techniques necessary to accomplish the task in attaining the scientific goals.

Methodology provides the procedure to undertake research. It includes the procedures used to formulate the body of empirical knowledge. It is an analytical approach for codifying consistent and notable elements of an universe of enquiry.

Research process undertaken by the investigator refers to overall scheme of scientific activities for the gain of scientifically attested knowledge. It involves different stages i.e., formulation of a problem, hypothesis, research design, measurement, data collection, data analysis and generalizations.

### **My Own Encounters and Experiences in the Field**

Field work is such a common place term in anthropology that often the scholars of the discipline tend to take it for granted. The very idea of field work prompts us to think in terms of established field work techniques. However, when we take an account of the history of anthropology in general and history of fieldwork in particular, it is not very difficult to notice that the field work has been an everchanging phenomenon. The fact of the matter today is that the methods and techniques of fieldwork are no more confined to the standards prescribed

by classical anthropologists, such as Malinowski and Brown. Times have changed, societies have been transformed and as such, the methods of field work too. Objectivity in the fieldwork is no more a standard norm. The cognition and subjectivity of the fieldworker is an accepted fact.

In the light of this background I am encouraged to take the liberty of revealing my actual encounters in the field. There were times when I was perplexed by my inability to use the standard and established techniques. I was unable to use them though their theoretical validity is not denied.

The present work is focussed among Hos of Ruia village, near Hatgamharia (Jhinkpani Block) of west Singhbhum district in Bihar. The village Ruia is mostly inhabited by the Ho tribe. (Ethnographic profile has been discussed in chapter 3). The village is approximately 5 kms south east of Hatgamharia (Hatgamharia is about 34 kms. south of Chaibasa). Thoguh, Ruia is the focal village, but for a lot of clarification, counter checks and to search for various parameters related to witchcraft, I also moved to different villages.

Chaibasa, the district headquarters of West Singhbhum, which is inhabited by good number of Hos also happen to be my birth -place. As such, I have many good friends from the community. I have spent a great deal of time with them and many of my childhood memories remain fresh till date. Despite being a non-Ho, I have enjoyed a good rapport with them. I have also shown many shades of their life, have attended their festivals and marriages. To some extent, this encouraged and enabled me to watch some of their cultural practices closely.

Therefore, the selection of this community for my doctoral study was natural enough. Further, it is a fact too well known that this tribal community like several others, is a vast repository of anthropological subject matter.

While I was still in the process of deciding upon my focal village, I was helped by one of my HO friends who took me to Ruia. My friend was a native of the same village and after having had a preliminary survey, I was convinced that the village suited the purpose of my study. Lying in the interior part of the region, Ruia witnessed the natural existence of traditional life of the HO community to a considerable degree.

As has been mentioned at the outset, my study pertains to the field of medical anthropology. The focus of the study was to be Ethnomedicine among HOs. However, my encounters during first two visits to the field, set me thinking about further narrowing down the focus. After a lot of contemplation, debates and discussion with friends, teachers and especially my supervisor, I decided to work upon 'witchcraft' among HOs rather than ethnomedicine per se. of course, this was to be conducted within the parameters of medical anthropology, since witchcraft is believed to be the main reason behind most of the diseases.

June, 1994 was my first visit to the field. The one-month trip chiefly focused around establishing rapport with the villagers and a collection of preliminary ethnographic data, as well. There I came to know about the high prevalence of witchcraft in the community. Many of the deaths and diseases were attributed to witchcraft. My next visit to the area was in November, 1994. I was at Chaibasa when I came to know about the killing of a few members of a family by the villagers. Some of the leading local newspapers reported the incident. The reason behind the killing was attributed to witchcraft. One female was accused as a witch and along with her, some of her family members were killed as they were denying the accusation. When I started gathering information on this, there surfaced conflicting opinions. Almost all the newspaper reports were of opinion that grabbing of property was the main reason behind this killing. On the contrary, the villagers argued that the female was a real witch and had caused many deaths with her magical power.

When I started collecting the cases of witchcraft from newspapers, I was surprised to know that almost every year a good number of females as well as males were killed due to witchcraft accusations. At the same time, the district Administration took it very seriously and a 'witchcraft cell' was formed. The administration started reviewing the cases since 1991 and F.I.Rs. were lodged in many police stations. Many old cases were reopened.

Few political leaders from the community also came out openly and started criticising the killings. They urged the community members to stop such brutal attacks, failing which they would renounce the traditional 'Sarna' religion.

These incidents further prompted me to refine my focus of study. By focussing upon the Ethnomedical profile, I could not have done justice to the phenomenon of witchcraft which asked for a separate study in itself. It dawned upon me as my utmost responsibility to undertake a detailed and analytical study of the witchcraft among Hos.

The idea of an anthropological study of Hos enthused almost every member of the community I met. This included mainly the educated members of the community, settled in and around Chaibasa as also in Delhi. They were all, very encouraging, firstly, because no contemporary study of Hos existed and secondly, because the study was being undertaken by an individual who had been seeing them from close quarters right since his childhood. They felt that whatever recorded information existed was absolute and outdated. As such it did not bear much relevance today. Moreover a study by an individual born and brought up in the same set up (region) would provide a more realistic picture and in anthropological parlance an "emic" perspective.

However, a turning of the table was witnessed when I revealed to

these individuals the change in the focus of my study. Those who had become my confidants during the first two visits began to show reluctance to cooperate with me. Witch craft is a tabooed subject. They insisted on my studying other aspects of Ho life. Some thought it was an irrelevant topic. Others smiled it off as too difficult to probe. Still others showed signs of scares. All this compounded my inquisitiveness regarding witchcraft. The urge to discover more and more about the subject grew stronger. Human mind is thirsty for knowledge. I decided to take up the challenge without having any second thoughts about the subject. All this was not without an element of loss. On the one hand, I had to win the confidence of my informants all over once again. On the other hand, I had to scan through the existing literature on the subject. The whole endeavour was to begin from a new end. Naturally enough, this caused a considerable delay in the completion of my work.

The reason behind their discouragement can best be attributed to the beliefs pertaining to witchcraft, the details of which will be discussed in the chapters to come.

The task of gaining support and establishing the lost rapport was not a cake walk. When I restarted my field work towards the end of 1995, I found it extremely difficult to launch an immediate probe on the subject. To overcome this, I still tried talking about other aspects of their life—at times about matters which would bring me closer to the subject of witchcraft and at times about totally unrelated matters. The most important thing now was to keep up the rapport that I had established with them during my earlier visits. Simultaneously, I also started looking for informants from other parts of the region.

There is an organization named JOHUR, which keeps an account of the newspaper cuttings on various aspects of the area and separate cuttings of witchcraft as well. There I met two other informants who

after sometimes started coming close to me. They narrated stories on witchcraft and also invited me to their villages. Even though the invitation was given, I could see their reluctant face, when probe deeply on the subject. Sometimes they spoke too little, sometimes they kept mum despite my assurance of not revealing it to anyone. Same was the case with villagers. On few occasions, I also accompanied some of the newspaper reporters, just to make myself acquainted with individuals of other villages.

Slowly and gradually, the reciprocity of sharing ideas between me and my informants, started improving. The most difficult part was to make them astonished by narrating witchcraft stories of different regions, so as to speak them on their beliefs in the subject. As an anthropologist, my primary goal was to collect information, I hated myself for telling lies sometimes, as I narrated some concocted events. Many-a-time it worked, many-a-time it did not.

Though I was introduced to the villagers by my friend, my intentions were questioned initially. But as I explained to them that my visit to their village was owing to an academic requirements, their suspicion subsided.

The most difficult question to be answered was why this village? I comforted them by telling that my friend—a native of same village, wanted me to visit his village.

Another problem which had to be overcome was that of language. The educated and youth members of the community are able to speak and understand Hindi. A few members speak even English, but the old generation always spoke a mixed dialect of Ho (their language) and Hindi. Many-a-times I had to consult others to understand their views or opinions. To overcome this, I bought a book on Ho grammar and vocabulary. Despite this sometimes I found myself in a miserable situation, as I had to often

consult the book. In initial phase, 'nativisation', a hall mark of field enquiry was incomplete, I consulted and took help of some other informants who could talk in Hindi. Two of them gradually became my interpreter friends.

Twice I had to cut short my stay in the village due to ongoing Jharkhand agitation and their declaration of economic blockade—this resulted in failure of transportation service. Sometimes, the agitation took such a violent turn that I had to come back to Delhi. With all this, I become the ultimate sufferer.

However, on the whole, mine was a stationed or resident type of field work. Although it was not in one long stretch. I kept visiting the village at regular intervals—the last lag of my stay being from November '97 to January '98. Residing in the village involved a lot of adjustment and compromises with the rural living style. I abided by emic perspective, viewing their life and cultural features from a natives' point of view. But in many of the situations, I found myself neither fully participant nor non-participant. I realised that despite my regular presence there, I has sidelined on many occasions—and I adhered to the in between these two, which may in technical jargons be termed as "Quasi participant."

Few members became so close confidants that they shared some personal problems. Though it shows a propinquity (nearness) sometimes emotional boundary overflow and subjective bias came to the surface. And only thing I could do was to minimize it. Sometimes I also found that with these people formal interview sessions turned into informal ones, leading to a situation, which in academic jargon may be put in between two strings of formal and informal.

At the early stage of rapport establishment I always asked about almost every object. Though some of the things were familiar to me, I inquired as if I am seeing it for the first time—sometimes it made them

laugh and I also laughed with them—this helped a great deal in coming closer to them.

Sharing of food, cigarettes and especially traditional drink *diyeng* (Rice-beer) helped me greatly in unveiling the curtain of stranger type image. In the later phase, even many members of the community came to know my liking of 'Rassi' (filtered rice beer) and whenever I visited them they offered it to me. These very members also taught me the etiquettes of Ho life performed on many occasions.

I could not resist myself from writing down my maiden beer drinking. I once accompanied my friend to his uncles home, where I was offered rice beer (traditional drink). I was told by my friends uncle that since I am an anthropologist, I should not say no to the traditional drink. I had to take it and as I had consumed three big glasses of rice beer. I could realise for the first time what inebriation meant.

Like other anthropologists, I was also not an 'interventionist' I kept my eyes and ears open to observe the natural behaviour of people, through out the field work. Sharing of jokes and slangs enabled me to come closer the youths. The otherhand, showing of curiosity, in enquiring trifles also helped me in establishing rapport with a good number of villagers-some of them became my best informants, considered as "key to success" in anthropological probe.

Though there occurred some difficulties initially, regarding the maintainance of personal hygiene, especially use of open field for toilet, with passage of time it became very normal. On the contrary, I think experiencing all these are an integral part of fieldwork. Best use of time and opportunity was made to observe and interact with the villagers, in every sphere of life. I made every endeavour to maximize the degree of my nativization.

The adoption of tools and techniques depends upon the nature of the field and the problem. The techniques which I applied during my field work are Observation, Interview, Schedule, case study method, Genealogy, Photography etc. Interview guide was also made use of in many cases.

Observation helped me in watching day to day activities, festivals, rituals and other aspects of the social life and also in observing the rituals of witch doctors.

Schedule helped me collecting data on perception of health, disease, death, witchcraft, counter witchcraft and so on. As the majority of the population was illiterate, interview method was the most vital. It helped making face to face interactions.

Case study and genealogical methods were applied for knowing the life histories of witches and witchdoctors.

I also made use of photography and I consider this as a means to keep memories and intimacy intact.

Staying away from home, definitely sometimes leads to a sense of deprivation-deprivation of the company of those whom we consider our very own, dissociation from the life one is used to. Such a sense of deprivation causes certain basic human weaknesses to surface. This also leads to some kind of conflict within the fieldworker. The sense of being a complete self begins to get destructed. Deviation tends to creep in. At this stage, field work becomes secondary and saving of the self takes primacy over one's work. One starts seeking some kind of a support to keep his self intact. The temptation to indulge into personal relationships begins-and in this state of mind, I think, keeping in touch with people back home though letters, comes as a vital aid.

If a prolonged stay on the field makes one homesick at times, leaving the village on completion of one's study is no less a painful experience. If detachment despite participation is an anthropological pre-requisite, attachment in close association is an equally natural outcome of human existence. Nevertheless, one's professional requirement has to take primacy over one's personal satisfaction. As such, I had to bid farewell to the villagers after the completion of my study. However, the greatest satisfaction in this departure was that of having gained an intellectual insight into their socio-cultural realities—an endeavour which would probably keep me pre-occupied in the years to come.

## **Chapter - III**

### **VILLAGE AND ITS PEOPLE**

## **CHAPTER III**

### **VILLAGE AND ITS PEOPLE**

This chapter provides a description of the socio-economic, historical and demographic structure of the district and the village Ruia, and its inhabitants, main focus being on Hos. Village Ruia comes under Hatgemia thana of Jhinkpani Block of west Singhbhum, which is the southern most district of Bihar. It came into existence a couple of years ago as a result of the old district of Singhbhum being divided into two parts in 1990, viz. East Singhbhum comprising old Dalbhum sub-division and west Singhbhum consisting of old Chaibasa and Saraikela sub-divisions. The district is bounded on the north by the districts of Ranchi and Purulia (West Bengal), on the east by East Singhbhum and parts of Mayurbhanj district of Orissa, on the south by districts of Orissa and on the west by the districts of Gumla and Sundergarh (in Orissa). The total area of the district is 9907 sq. kms and the district headquarters is located at Chaibasa.

#### **Brief History of the District**

As far as the nomenclature of the district is concerned, there are three distinct theories. According to one theory, due to abundance of lions in the region, it was named Singhbhum. Another theory describes Singhbhum as the land of the Singh family of Porahat, deriving its name from its patronymic chief long before the HOs migrated to this tract of land. But the HOs, on the other hand assert that the district has been named after 'Sing Bonga', their supreme deity and the creator of the universe (Singh, 1978).

A careful examination, however, suggests that there is a greater force in the last one especially when we take into consideration the fact that throughout Chotanagpur the aborigines, have a fondness for naming

rocks and hills after their numerous gods and goddesses, e.g. Marang Bonga (Mountain God). Hence the land where they live in, might have been given the appellation of 'Sing Bonga', the 'Sun God.' (Bradley, 1910)

The feudatory states of Saraikela and Kharsawan, which formed part of the state of Orissa were integrated with Singhbhum in 1949. Its boundaries have remained intact thereafter. The reorganisation of the districts in the state of Bihar which took place after 1971 did not affect the districts of Singhbhum. The early history of undivided Singhbhum was influenced by the Hos who migrated from the Chotanagpur plateau and overcame the Bhuiyas who then held part of Singhbhum. The Hos successfully maintained their independence in the South of the district. The north of the district came under the rule of the Singh family of Porahat who claimed to be Rathore Rajputs, whose head was formerly known as the Raja of Singhbhum. It is said that their ancestors were three brothers in the bodyguard of Akbar's general, Man Singh who supported the Bhuiyas against the Hos.

During the Mohammedan period, the Hos were left alone more or less by the rulers although nominally they had whole of the Jharkhand country stretching from Rohtasgarh to the frontiers of Orissa. British relations with Singhbhum date back to late eighteenth century when a small British force marched against the Raja of Dalbhum. The district of Midnapore which included Dalbhum had been ceded to the East India Company in 1760. In 1765, a force was sent against the neighbouring Zamindars, but it could not subdue the Raja of Dalbhum. Another force was sent under John Ferguson in 1767. The Raja was captured and sent to Midnapore in confinement. The nephew of Raja, Jagannath Dhal was installed on the throne. However, the new ruler fell into arrears of yearly revenue and there was an expedition against him, which eventually resulted in his attack against his successor Baikunth Dhal with a large

force. Consequently in 1777, Jagannath Dhal was reinstated in the estate on payment of revenues due to him. In 1818, Raja Ghanshyam Singh Deo of Porahat tendered allegiance to the British. His main aim was to be recognised as the Lord Paramount over the chiefs of Kharsanwan and Seraikela and also to obtain assistance in reducing the Hos. The Hos resisted stiffly but their bows and arrows were of no match to the British equipment of war. In 1831, the HOs joined the rebellion of the Mundas of Chotanagpur. The immediate result of these troubles and kol insurrections in parts of Singhbhum was the establishment of the South West Frontier Agency (SWFA) by Regulation XIII of 1833. Dalbhum, which had hitherto been included in Midnapur, was transferred to Manbhum district. After the conquest of the Kolhan in 1837, it was considered advisable to bring all the Ho Pirs (divisions) under the direct management of British Government. A new district was consequently constituted to be known as Singhbhum, with Chaibasa as its headquarters. When Act X of 1854 was passed, Singhbhum became a non-regulation district under the jurisdiction of the Lt. Governor of Bengal.

The Indian forces stationed at Hazaribagh had rebelled, soon to be followed by a detachment of the Ramgarh Battalion sent from Ranchi to quell the rising at Hazaribagh. The Principal Assistant Commissioner fled and sought the protection of the Raja of Saraikela. The insurgent forces were backed by Arjun Singh, Raja of Porahat who was declared as a rebel by the British Government. Arjun Singh and his followers surrendered in February 1859. An era of peace and progress followed- which was broken almost forty years later by the Birsaite rising, the effects of which, however, were not very widespread or great. (The encyclopaedic District Gazetteers of India, 1991)

## **Geography and Physical features**

The Singhbhum district is situated in the South -Eastern Portion of the Chotanagpur Division and lies between 22°-0' and 22°-26' of north latitude and 86°-53' and 85°-26' of east longitude. The district is a hilly upland tract. The South-West portion of the district consists of a group of hills known as the 'Suranda' or 'Seven hundred hills'. The plain land in the district is largely confined to the valleys of the South Koel river and Subarnrekha river in Dhalbhum.

Singhbhum is topographically diverse. The district receives north-western spin which constitutes the northern boundary of the district. Its ranges include the Dalma range near Chandil, the trap range and the quartzite range. Forests in the district cover approximately one fifth (1/5th) of the total area of the undivided Singhbhum. Three types of forests are (1) dry thorny type (ii) semi evergreen type and (iii) moist tropical deciduous type. Sal is the main tree species. The other species are Asan, Dhaura, Jamun, Bija, Karam, Simal, Kendu, Arjun, Gamhar and Bamboos. Mahua and Kusum are also found. The greater part of the district is covered by the iron-ore series and granite rocks. The principal rivers of this district are Subarnrekha and South Koel, along with small rivers like Roro, Sanjay, Marang, Gora etc.

The fauna that are more abundant are the deer, spotted deer, four-horned deer, wild buffaloes, tigers, leopards, hyenas, jackals, wild dog, wild cat, elephant, monkey etc. There are varieties of 'snakes, viz. Karait, Ganhuan, Ajar, Viper, Dhamin etc. in the district. Besides snakes there are variety of insects, poisonous and otherwise. There are ants, bees, wasps, scorpions and centipedes. Fish are abundant in the larger rivers and ponds.

The district is very rich in mineral deposits of iron, manganese,

ore and copper, while quartzite, chromite, limestone, yellow and red ochre, China clay also occur. District is also known for minor deposits of asbestos, mica lead ore soapstone and slate.

The district of present, comprises of 3 sub-divisions (Singhbhum Sadar, Saraikela and Chakradharpur), 23 Community development Blocks, 15 towns and 2859 villages (2780 inhabited villages and 79 uninhabited villages).

The community wise breakup in Singhbhum is Hindus 24% approx, Muslims 3% , Christians 4%, Scheduled castes 4% and Scheduled tribes 65%. Of the Scheduled tribes, Hos 35% , Mundas 9% , Santhals 10% and Bhumij 7% are the largest groups. (Census 1991).

#### West Singhbhum:-At a Glance

1. Population	17.88 lakhs
A Male	9.10 lakhs
B. Female	8.78 lakhs
2. Rural Population	15.05 lakhs
3. Urban Population	2.83 lakhs
4. Scheduled tribes	9.78 lakhs
5. Scheduled Castes	0.91 lakhs
6. Area	8012.10 sq. k.ms.
7. Density	223 sq. k.ms.
8. Percentage of rural population	84.1%
A. Literate males	22.51%
B. Literate females	8.86%
9. No. of villages	2915
10. No. of Gram Panchayats	323
11. Blocks	23
12. Sub-divisions	3

13. Total Population of Tribals	9,74,100
(According to 1991 census)	(54.4%)
14. Major tribes	
% of Total population	
HOs	35%
Munda	9%
Santhal	10%
Bhumij	7%

### **A brief History of the tribe**

The focal village in the present study was Ruia (Hatgamharia thana) of Jhinkpani Block. The study centred around the Ho tribe of the village.

Regarding the origin of the tribe, Majumdar writes that; Singbonga is self created, and he created the earth from a lump of clay (hasa). To people the earth, he made it habitable by creating all kinds of trees, herbs and grass, rivers, and tanks and birds and beasts of all sizes and descriptions. And the 'horohonko' or the sons of man were born of the egg of a bird, Hur or Swan. Out of Swan's egg came forth a boy and a girl. They were the first human beings by whom the earth was peopled. But this creation did not last long. Singbonga was some how offended by his own creation and he became enraged. In his fury he created an atmosphere of blazing flames. When all life was thus destroyed, Singbonga saw the folly of his fury and repentance seized upon him. He then began to seek out traces of life and approached all the lesser gods to find out if they had hidden any soul. At last, Nagebonga or the water-deity, came with a pair of living souls, which she kept under the sheet of water, a brother and sister, and with this pairs, Singbonga decided to recreate the world of man. As the pair were consanguineously related, as brother and sister, sexual intercourse

between them could not be natural, so what else could the high God do, but to offer them Handia, an intoxicating beverage and the intoxication and abandon, effected through this liquor made sexual intimacy between brother and sister possible, and the Hos were created. (Majumdar 1950, pp. 251-252).

The Hos do not have any tradition of being the earliest settlers of the area. Their affiliation to the Mundas in language and culture, may mean that they branched off only a few centuries ago. Many of the villages in Kolhan were originally reclaimed by other castes, and in their southward expansion, the Hos appear to have eliminated the original Khuntkatidars. (Majumdar 1950). The settlement report of Kolhan (The final report on the Resettlement of the Kolhan Government Estate) says, "the Hos certainly came into Kolhan from the north or northwest." According to the Encyclopaedic District Gazetteers of India (Chapter on Paschimi Singhbhum)-the early history of undivided Singhbhum was influenced by the Hos who migrated from the Chotanagpur plateau and overcame the Bhuiyas who then held part of Singhbhum. On the other hand, historian opine that Hos entered Singhbhum from Ranchi around 10th century. It was the time when traditional Munda-Manki system was being threatened by Monarchy rules, the freedom lovers 'Hos' migrated to Singhbhum and defeated Bhuiyas and Saraks (Shrawak Jains), the earliest inhabitants and captured lands.

The name 'Ho' is derived from the word 'Horo', meaning 'Man'. The Hos have their own dialect. Ho is regarded as belonging to the Kherwarian group of Austro-Asiatic family of language (Singh, 1990). The tribe is divided into many Killis (clan) viz., Pingua, Hansda, Purty, Banra, Hembrom, Sundi etc. and each killi is a totemic group.

## **The village and its people**

The Village Ruia, is named after the first settler 'Raudia'. The history of the village is merely four or five generations old. The previous name of the village was Raudia, but with passage of time, 'Rau' turned into 'Ru' and di into 'Ie', hence the present name Ruia.

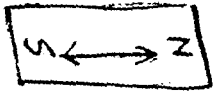
The population of the village is approximately 3000 (three thousand) and is spread over 4 to 5 kilometers. The village is divided into 14 tolas, which are Sergasai, Duinyasai, Hoimadkamsai, Sangisai, Schoolsai, Mahaburusai, Doyegutusai, Raghunathsai, Matasai, Putkarsai, Deurisai, Jarikasai, Hurdubsai and Nizamsai.

The main inhabitants are Hos (major killis (Clans)-Pingua, Khandait, Purty, Banra, Jarika etc.) The other inhabitants are Gope, Lohar, Tanti, Thakur but their population is very negligible.

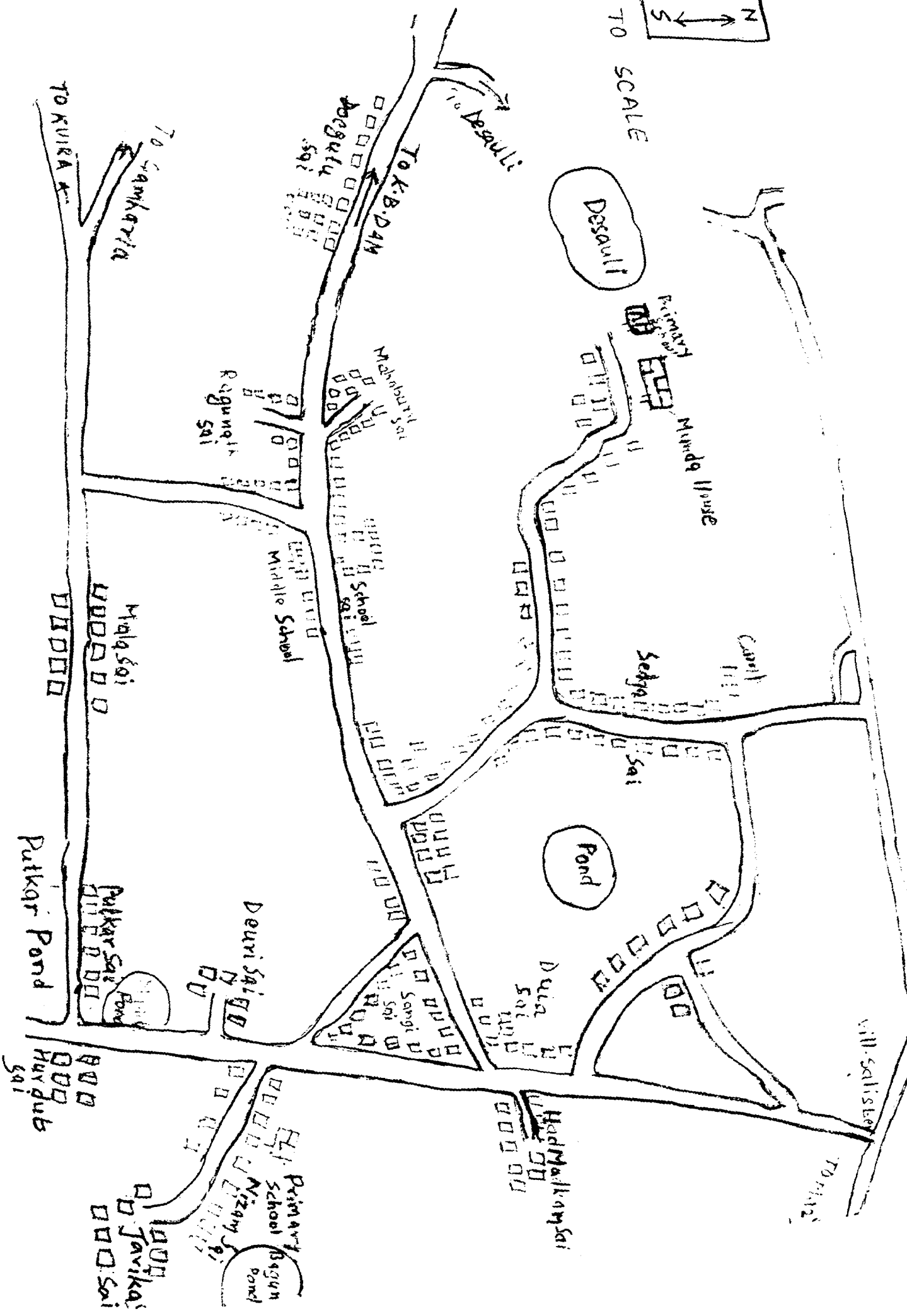
The village is one of the largest revenue villages of the district. It is a single panchayat village. The two systems of panchayat i.e., traditional system (Munda-Manki system) and Modern Panchayat run simultaneously.

Education has found its presence in the village and children go to school though not regularly. There are primary schools in the village, but the lack of higher school facilities restricts the interest, especially of girls. The Hos are more regular to school than other castes or tribes, in the village. There are many Hos who are doing jobs in different cities or towns but their contribution in making other fellows conscious of education is very negligible. Keeping the resources in mind, boys are more preferred than girls, while providing education.

**Birth Rituals:-** Any birth in a family is a matter of joy and celebration. At the time of birth, mother is kept in a separate room. After birth,

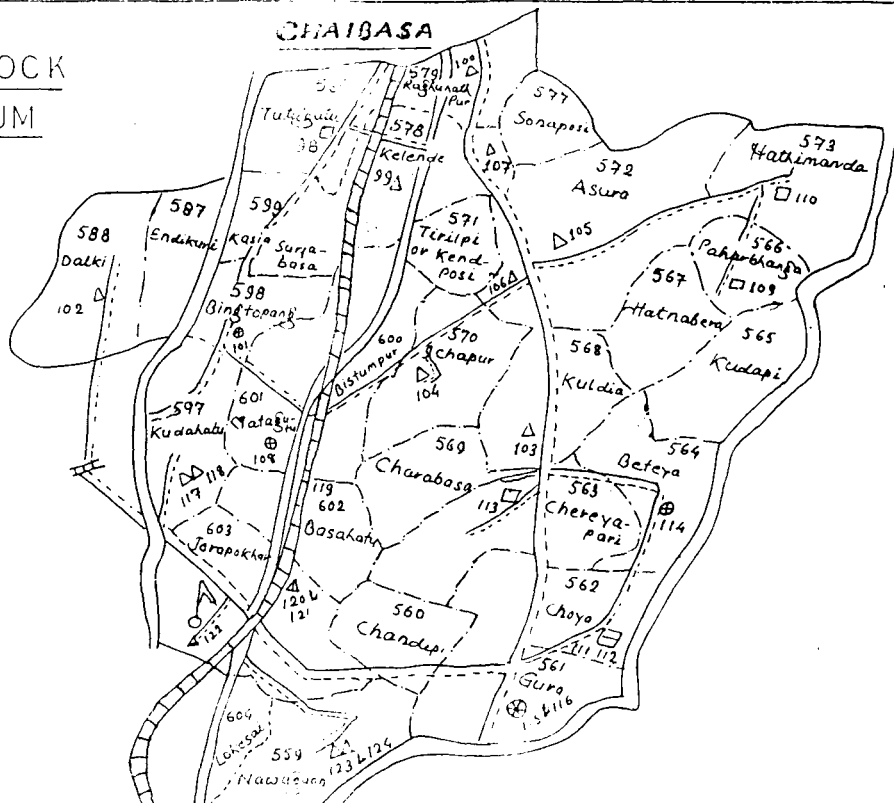
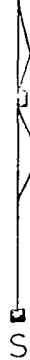


NOT TO SCALE



N

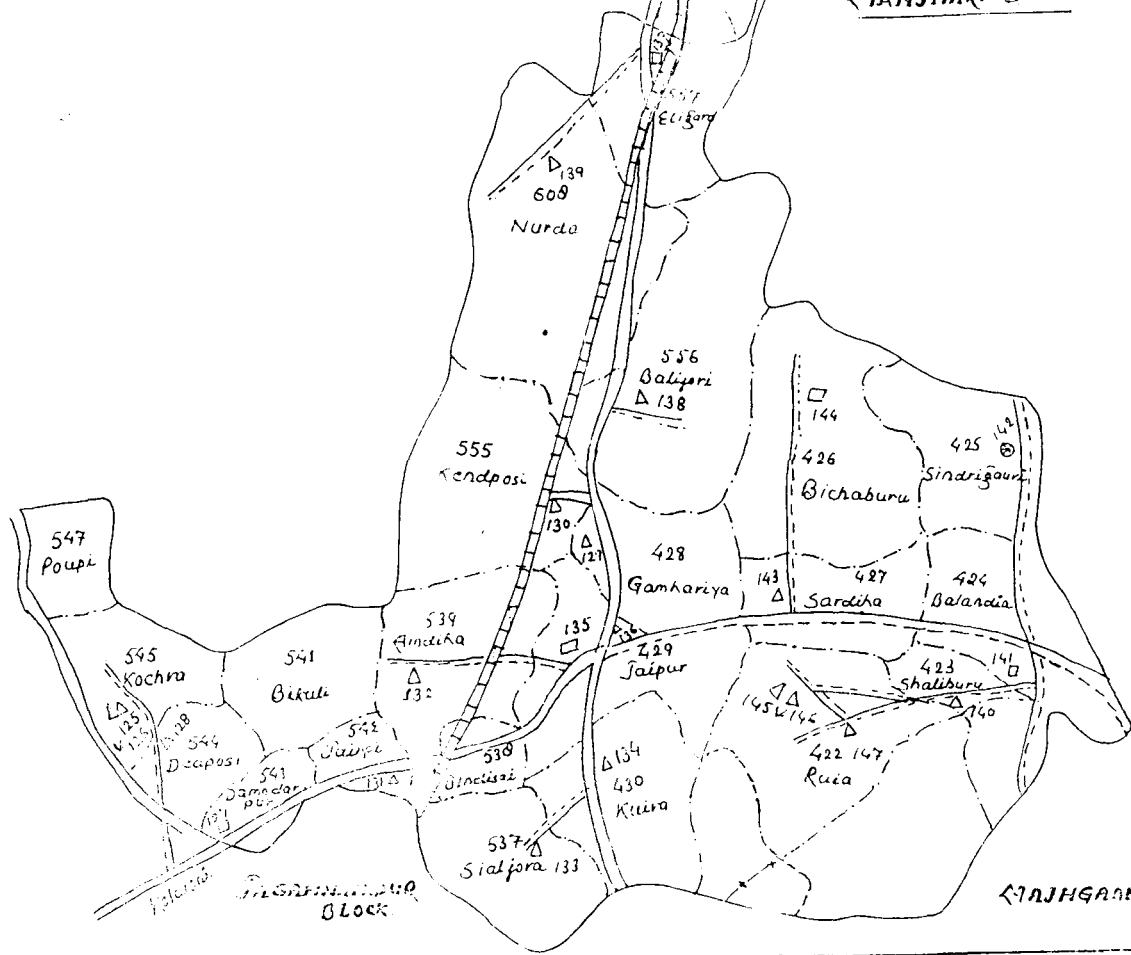
**MAP OF JHINKPANI BLOCK**  
**DIST- WEST SINGHBHUM**  
**SCALE - 1" = 1 MILE.**



- 1 BLOCK BOUNDARY
- 2 RAILWAY LINE
- 3 VILLAGE BOUNDARY
- 4 P.W.D. ROAD
- 5 D.B. ROAD
- 6 R.V.C.R.
- 7 BLOCK HEAD QUARTER
- 8 KACHCHA ROAD - GREEN LINE
- 9 SUPER SENTETIVE BOOTH - ⊕
- 10 SENTETIVE BOOTH - □
- 11 NORMAL BOOTH - △

TANTO Block

MANJHARI Block



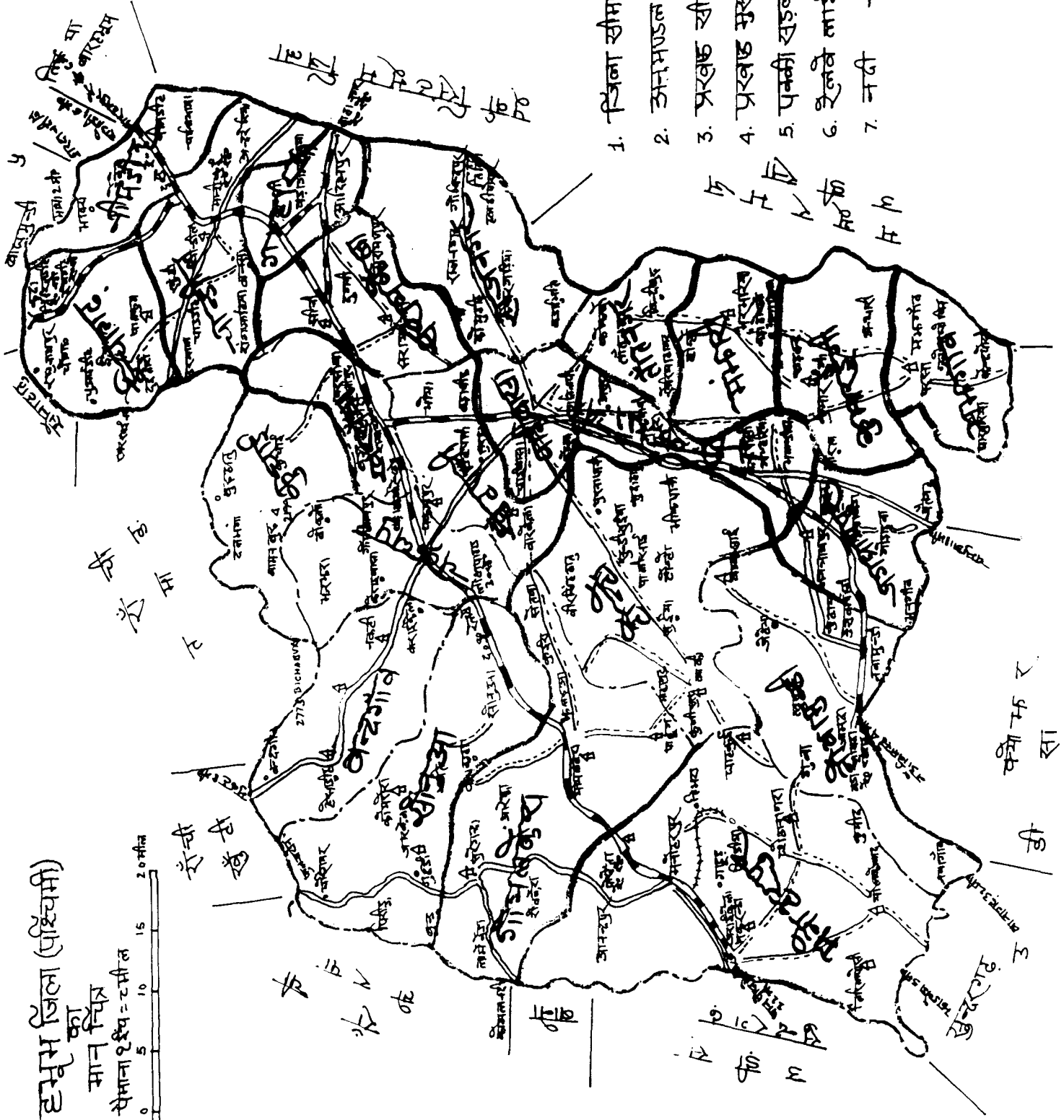
KAJHGAN Block

# सिंहभूम जिला (पश्चिमी)

का  
मान चित्र

पैमाना १ इंच = २ मील

मील 5 10 15 20 मील



1. पिना सीमा रेखा →
2. अजमपुल सीमा रेखा →
3. प्रकट सीमा रेखा →
4. प्रकट मुखालम →
5. पक्की सड़क एवं कच्ची सड़क →
6. इलवे लाईन →
7. नदी →



*A view of the focal village*



*Women working in a khalihan in the focal village*

mother along with child is considered polluted for seven days (Besci). At the time of delivery, a Dai mid-wife is called, who helps the other elderly females of the family. Naval card is cut by the father, and an arrow is kept by him at the bedside if it is a male child, the belief being that the child would become able to safeguard not only himself but also the family and society at large, against enemies. An arrow is kept by the father.

On eighth day, Narta is performed. Clothes are washed, food is cooked in new utensils. Mother and child are given a bath, puja is performed in Adin (kitchen), so that child would be accepted as new member of the family. Worship of Adin is very important because after death ancestors of the family are placed here. The main purpose of this is that the child is introduced to ancestors (*Hadam hodi budi ara*).

On the 21st day, relatives and villagers are invited. Meat, chicken and traditional drink (diyeng), after being offered to ancestors, are shared by all present there. This ceremony is known as '*Anda Achatu*'.

The nomenclature of the child is still based on traditional rituals. The child takes the name of one of its ancestors. The ritual involves a brass pot is filled with water, rice is also put and turmeric is added into it. Dead ancestors and dieties are worshipped. By calling the name of ancestors, clan members, *urad* is dropped into the pot. If the *urad* touches the rice, that name is kept. It continues till the *urad* touches the rice.

Apart from this, there is yet another system of nomenclature. The child is given the name of the day, on which it is born. For example, sombari, Gurubari, Budhni, Mongol, Budhu, Shukra etc. Now-a-days new names are also given, which is a result of cultural contact.

After the nomenclature ceremony, new cloth is given to the child and the mother is presented a new saree.

**Family & Kinship:** For every Ho, family is considered very important. Family is patrilineal, patriarchal and patrilocal. Family is a male dominated unit, but it never shows that females are inferior in status, as they too have an equal share in decision making. Most of the Hos consider family as a first school of learning, where the child learns not only norms of the society but oral traditions too are handed over to him/her by old family members. The child belongs to father's Kill (clan).

Three types of family could be witnessed among Hos viz, joint family, nuclear family and stem family. Every male child has right over his father's property. Daughters have no right over land. If the daughter is unmarried she does have the right over land but after her marriage, her share of land is divided amongst brothers. Usually no division of property is witnessed as long as father is alive. A widow too has a share in her late husband's property. There are incidents of neolocality after marriage but father plays a major role even after that.

Socialization of the child entirely depends upon family's atmosphere. Family is the smallest unit of production and consumption. After marriage, wife comes to her husband's family. Though husband enjoys authority over family matters, relationship between wife and husband is very harmonious. Though polygynous family is also a feature of Hos, no such case is present in the village under study. Husband enjoys full right over his wife's domestic and sexual reproductive affairs.

**Kinship:-** It is an important aspect of Ho society. The authority pattern shows the existence of patrilineality and the mode of residence is patrilocal. A child belongs to his father's killi (clan) Ho society is

divided into many totemic killis, after the name of plants or animals. Such as Pingua, Banra, Purty, Hembrom, Deogam, Sumbrui, Sinku, Khandait etc. A totem is held in very high reverence. The Hos are by and large practice tribal endogamy and killi exogamy. Different names are used for different kins. Incest with primary kins are seen as an offence not only to the family but also to the Killi. It is dealt with severity. At the time of need help of consanguinal as well affinal kins are sought and the help is very reciprocal.

Members of the totemic sept cannot marry within the Sept. Elders of the killi enjoy remarkable hold of authority. Killi plays an important role in decision making. The members of one generation behave towards one another as brothers and sisters while all men who are of the same generation as one's father are addressed as *Gungu* (fathers brothers). Classificatory as well as descriptive terms are prevalent in Ho society.

Some important kinship terms:-

<b>English</b>	<b>Ho</b>
Father	<i>Apu</i>
Mother	<i>Eyang</i> or <i>Anga</i>
Father's father, Mother's father	<i>Tatang</i>
Father's mother, Mother's mother	<i>Jiang</i>
Father's elder brother, father's elder brother's wife, mother's elder sister, Mother's sisters's husband, wife's elder sister's husband	<i>Gungu</i>
Father's sister's husband, mother's brother	<i>Kumang</i>

Elder brother	<i>Bau</i>
Younger brother	<i>Undi, Boko</i>
Elder sister	<i>Aji</i>
Younger sister	<i>Undi Kui</i>
Husband	<i>Herel</i>
Wife	<i>Hera</i>

**Marriage:-** Pairing among Hos are considered essential to fecundity. For every Ho, legitimate mating is not only important but desirable too. Hos are killi exogamous and violation of this is considered incestuous and is taken very seriously. Usually a Ho does not marry outside his/her tribe, but there is no societal prohibition against it, today. Previously marriage was preferred at short distant villages, but there has come a change in it. A Ho may marry his mother's brother's daughter and his father's sister's daughter.

There are many traditional ways of acquiring mates viz-marriage by negotiation, (*andi*) marriage by capture (*oportepi*) and marriage by mutual consent (*Rajikhusi*), etc.

In marriage by negotiation, groom side sends a messenger to bride side. The messenger (*Dutam*) is acquainted with both sides. If the proposal materialises, *Gonang* (bride price) is fixed, which is demanded by the bride side. If both the parties are ready (*Raji*), after fixation of *Gonang* or *pan*, turmeric with oil is put on the representatives of the bride's side indicating the fixation of marriage. *Gonang* includes, money, ox, calf etc. The receiving of gonang indicates that female is also important to the society and are not considered inferior. The preliminary feast before the marriage ceremony is known as *Bapla* (preliminary arrangement for a marriage).

Diuri (village priest), who is well versed in the marriage ceremony performs the rituals. Marriage amongst the Hos is a communal affair and all the villagers participate in it. One thing here becomes very important that young people of both the sexes have a free hand choice in marriage.

The most striking feature of this marriage from is that Hos are very conscious of making any marriage a successful. Right from the stage of initiation of negotiation to the fixation of marriage, every single omen—good or bad—is taken note of. A knowledgeable person is consulted thereon and he performs puja, if the omens are of ill nature. It is believed that, if puja is not performed against ill-omens, marriage will not last or the marriage union would bring ill luck to both the sides.

Marriage rituals are performed at groom's house, where bride is brought along with her relatives. After marriage, bride is introduced to the groom's ancestors in Ading.

A modification of the Andi, along the lines of Hindu marriage (like the inclusion of the burning of the sacred fire, ritual performed by Pandit) by well-to-do and educated Hos, is known as *Diku-Andi*.

The another form of marriage is oportipi (capture), arising out of the inability to pay the bride price. Young men capture wives for themselves owing to economic hardships and high rates of gonang. Many a times it is mutually arranged, where bodily capture is put up.

Marriage based on mutual love often results in elopment and is socially recognised. This form of marriage is called '*Rajikhusi*'.

Marriage rituals in both the cases are performed after wards. A lesser amount of gonang is fixed, which connotes the social kind or heritage.

The system of gonang reflects a bond of social heritage and obligation towards other relatives.

**Economic Organisation:-**The economy of Ho society is of mixed type. They are settled agriculturists and along with it carry on on occasional hunting and fishing. Every Ho is attached very much to the surrounding forest, which provides them leaves woods and wild fruits.

The most important crop raised by the Hos is Paddy, which is their staple diet. Along with it they also produce pulses (Urad, Mung, Aharar), Bajra Mustard etc. Vegetables are also grown in the fields like tomato, potato, brinjal, ladiesfinger, chilli etc.

The whole family plays an active role in economic sphere. In economic pursuit, women play even more active part than men, considering that they have all the feminine and domestic duties also to attend to. Apart from the daily domestic chores, they put their labour in transplanting paddy, harvesting the crop and preparing the *Khalihan*. They do not plough.

The adults work in fields and forests while the children graze their livestock. Apart from ploughing and harvesting the crops, men are also engaged in embankments, fishing, hunting, threshing etc. Making of bows, arrows, nets and other such equipments is also done by men. The reciprocal cooperation in economic undertaking even today is the salient feature of their daily life.

The Hos recognise the merit of specialisation in arts and crafts and it is taught to younger generations with great interest and pride. Hos are also engaged in animal husbandry. Cows, buffaloes, bulls, bullocks, sheep, goats, hen ducks are the main livestock of the people. Barter system is still practised but, the concept of money too is present. The system of paying in kind than cash is still practiced in the village.

Weekly hats are one of the major essence of economic life of Hos. Selling, buying for a week is done here. It is also a place of recreation and every Hos eagerly waits for the hat day. Consumption of traditional drink (diyeng) is done by almost everyone, male or female. Weekly hat not only reflects the economic transaction but also is a place for gossiping, recreation and choosing spouses.

Opening of mines, railways, factories, well knitted transportation, governmental job opportunities have introduced, a shift from primary to secondary occupation.

Traditional drink (diyeng or Haria) is yet another item which is interwoven with the Ho identity. At every occasion, whether festival, puja, marriage, merrymaking, ceremonies, welcoming of a guest etc., diyeng is served and shared. The diyeng is prepared out of cooked rice. Water is left in the pot. Ranu, a herb (collected from the country side) is mixed into it and left the cooked rice is left for two or three days for fermentation. The diyeng is consumed after fermentation.

**Political Organization:-** The political life of the Hos centres around traditional system of panchayat which speaks a long history of 'Munda-Manki system'. These posts are hereditary. Munda is the headman. He is a primus inter pares'-a chief among equals and not the superior or overlord. Manki is the head of a few village mundas. At present, Manki-Munda system is based on Wilkinson's rule (after the name of Capt. Wilkinson, the final conqueror of Kolhan).

Munda is empowered to perform police duties and collection of land revenue. He is a linking chain between villagers and the administration. Every administrative enquiry or matter is sought through the Munda to villagers. The political affair of the village is managed by Munda with aid of village panchayat which includes the elders of the village.

Maintenance of law and order, punishment or imposition of fine on offenders is done by the village panchayat. Any offence which hurts the communal sentiment and the disputes related to land are looked after by the village panchayat.

Under the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908, Deputy Commissioner had been given power to have a guiding control over them. Mundas and Mankis get share in the collected revenues. These two hereditary posts enjoys a respectable status not only in the village but also outside the vilalge. Without informing the Munda, no administrative matters, developmental works, criminal investigations could be done.

Modern panchayat also runs simultaneously in the village, but it is the traditional panchayat which enjoys greater support of the villagers.

**Festivals:-** Festivals are very important to Ho society. Festivals are not only a means of recreation but are a medium of communal solidarity too. When asked, the people say that non-observance to festivals may bring ill luck to the society. Thus, festivals are celebrated with same traditional rites and same utilitarian motives. Diuri (village priest) performs the rituals of festivals. Festivals are performed at *Desauli* (village sacred place) In every festivals, the *tata-gunguko* (ancestors in general) and *ham-hoko* (family ancestors) are worshipped.

The important festivals of Hos are (i) *Ba* festival (ii) *Hero* festival (iii) *Jomnama* festival (iv) *Maghe* festival

*Ba* festival is the first festival of the Hos. It is celebrated at the time when flowers of Sakhua start sprouting. *Ba* means flower in Ho language. The festivaal date is fixed by Diuri. The place where the festival is celebrated is known as '*Jayra*'; and *Jayra Buri*, is the deity of the jayra. It continues for three days viz, *Guri*, *Marang* and *Basi* festival.



*A view of the Desauli*

*Haro* Festival is performed at the day when the seeds of paddy are spread in the field. One He-goat is sacrificed. Malevolent Bongas are also worshipped and offered. It also continues for three days.

*Jomnama* festival is celebrated only for one day. When the paddy is ready for harvest diuri gives the date of festival. Puja is offered by sacrificing a red hen. Flattened rice (*Chura*) is offered, which is threshed from the paddy of the field.

*Maghe* festival is the most important festival among the Hos. It is celebrated for seven days. Each day's ritual is called by a different name such as *Anader*, *Otoilli*, *Gaumara*, *Guruparav*, *Marang parav*, *Basi Parav* and *Har mageya*. It is generally celebrated at the last day of the year. This festival is considered as festival of last day of the year and first festival of the coming year (*Din turu bochor mundi parav*). No change occurs, once the day is fixed for festival. Ancestors as well as village gods (Bongas) are worshipped in Dessauli. The whole village takes part in the celebration. The festival is observed in each village after the harvesting is over.

The word *maghe* means obscene language, which starts after the end of fourth day ritual, *Guri parav*. *Marang* (big) parav is the most important amongst all days celebration. The last day ritual is typical ceremony, known as '*Har mageya*' or expulsion of the spirits (Bongas). The villagers armed with sticks come out and begin hunting the spirits, with vociferous songs and incantations. The Bongas are chased and expelled outside the boundary of the village. Then the people come back to the village. The festival is celebrated with this belief that in coming year, villagers would get enough rain and healthy harvest.

**Religion and Magic:-** Religion and magic are two another distinguishing aspects of Ho life. The Hos are ancestors worshippers. All the

supernatural or superhuman identities/objects are called Bonga. Sing Bonga is the supreme deity of the Hos. The other bongas are *Nage Bonga*, *Dessauli Bonga* (God presiding over the Hatu i.e. village) *Narsimhpat Bonga*, *Handeburu Bonga*, *Marang Bonga*, *Disum Marang Bonga*, *Dindikuar Bonga*, *Bengrapat Bonga* etc. They are the benevolent Bongas. The malevolent Bongas are, *Takra Bai Borombhut Karachurdu Bonga*, *Bostomchurdu pitesandi Bonga*, *Halmadlore Dainkara Churdu Bonga* (the female who dies during pregnancy), *Har Bonga* (expelled Bonga), *Manglel Bonga*, *Dandi Bonga* (witches), etc.. Names of the Bongas have been enlisted by different Deonwas (witch doctor) of the area whom I met.

Meaning of Bonga: The word 'Bonga' has a very widespread connotation in Ho society. Even the presence of 'Bonga' is also reported in neighbouring tribes like Santhals and Mundas. The Rev. P.O. Bodding writes "All the spirits worshipped by the Sonthals are called Bonga". S.C. Roy translates Bonga as deity as well as spirit. He writes "the idea that the Mundas are worshippers of malevolent spirits appear to have arisen from confounding these two classes of deities who are manita-bongas or gods to be worshipped with a class of spirits who require to be appeared or propitiated. This latter class are indeed no gods at all non are they believed by the Mundas to be such." (Roy, 19 ). Hoffman explains Bonga as a being beyond the reach of sense perception.

Majumdar (1950) considers Bonga to be a power, a force, and the religion of the Hos as Bongaism. The Bonga is possessed by every individual, every animal, every plant, every stream, rivulet, tank, rock, tree, forest, field, mountain. It is possessed in greater or lesser degree by man which gives him his power over , or makes him submit to others.

The Hos consider Bonga to be a god, deity, spirit, power etc. All

these terms are combined in 'Bonga'. Not only the gods or spirits are referred as 'Bonga', but also the villagers sometimes refer witches as 'Dandi Bonga'. Thus, the term Bonga has been used for god, deity, spirit and sometimes for witches, whenever need and mention of the term 'Bonga' occurred. The villagers also refer 'Bonga' to both benevolent, as well as malevolent spirits.

Dessauli, always has a fixed abode which is situated somewhere outside the boundary of the village. It is usually under a tree, where the Hos place a flat stone slab on which Dessauli is believed to rest.

All the Hos offer periodical prayers and offerings as a part of thanks giving service. Bongas and ancestors are worshipped on every important occasion. Religion is intricately woven with every aspect of Ho life.

The village priest is known as Diuri who is always a Ho. The post of Diuri is hereditary. On the other hand, Deonwa may be a non-Ho. It could best be summarized in one sentence that "Diuri is born but Deonwa is made."

Impact of Hinduism and Christianity could also be found, still the traditional tribal religion is intact.

Magic is yet another salient feature of Ho life. Almost every villager would speak of black magic, when probed deeply. The presence of witches and sorcerers are embedded in their thoughts. Magic, is one of the greatest weapon to harm enemies by the witches.

In coming chapters realm of magic would be dealt extensively.

**Death:-** Death among Hos is called '*Gonoe*'. After the death of any Ho, there are two ways of performing, the last rites viz. (i) Burial and

(ii) Burning.

After the death of an individual, his body is embalmed with turmeric. Some water is thrown over the roof of the house and the dead body is given a bath with water falling from the roof. Then the 'Atanura' ceremony is performed. In this ceremony, the members of the family put their hands under the palm of the dead man and take away his possessed belongings by speaking out the names of different items. This is a symbolic way of relieving the dead man of his worldly responsibilities. Thenafter the dead body is taken to burial site where the ground is dug to his size in a north-south direction. The head is to be placed towards south while the legs to be placed towards the north. Before the burial, the body is taken around the dug-spot from south to north and the dead body is entered into the spot from the south end. After being placed in the dig, the body is covered with earth, put first by family members and then by others. In the end, a big stone is put over the site.

In case of burning, the body is kept over a funeral pyre made in the shape of a box. After the cremation, remains are collected in the pipal leaves using a twig of pipal tree. The bones are kept in a pot which is then painted with 'holon' (ground rice) and turmeric powder. This pot is then buried inside the ground. After this, "Kiyader" i.e., calling of the dead man's spirit, to Ading (the inner room of the house where cooking is done and ancestral spirits are venerated), is done. The whole process is called "Rowa ra aader yaroo keya ader". The Rowa is called from the site of burial to the Ading. Ash is laid over the floor inside the house so that the arrival of the spirit may be noticed by the imprints formed upon the laid ash. The process of calling the spirit is repeated seven times. If the spirit does not arrive even now, then a puja (dessauli and ancestors) is performed in order to include him in the group of already established ancestral spirits in the Ading.

In the end, a communal feast is held in which all the villagers and relatives are invited and in which they all contribute by bringing in various items required for the feast.

**LIFE AFTER DEATH:-** The Hos believe in rebirth and even in re-incarnation. The ample belief in rebirth shows the presence of life after death. At the sametime, Hos are ancestors worshipper. They have a strong belief in the spirits, classified into malevolent and benevolent.

The villagers believe that the spirits of those who have died unnatural, hovers around. They many-a-times, possess the individuals all by themselves or are directed by the witches or sorcerers to do so. It is believed that witches, by the virtue of their magic, make these spirits, their pet ones and through these spirits harm their enemies. Every witch is credited with the control of a number of malignant spirits, whom the witch can use in any way desired.

**Chapter - IV**

**ATTITUDE AND BELIEF SYSTEM**

**TOWARDS WITCHCRAFT**

## CHAPTER IV

### **Attitude and Belief System: Towards Witchcraft**

The two terms, belief and attitude play an important role in anthropological enquiry. Attitude is defined as a way of feeling or thinking about someone or something, especially as this influences one's behaviour. Sociologically, attitude refers to certain regularities of an individual's feelings, thoughts and predispositions to act towards some aspect of his/her environment.

Belief, on the other hand, is the feeling that something is true or that something really exists e.g. belief in supernatural power. Beliefs are neither true nor false. The efficacy or validity of belief is not tested by knowledge or experience of the physical or social universe. Thus the primitive people in all parts of the world "believe" in the world of spirits and took various means to propitiate or control evil spirits. Belief is generally recognized to the extent that an idea fills the minds to the exclusion of possible alternatives we tend to hold it true. Over the years, it may be institutionalised.

These two terms on many occasions, show an intersection of each other. For example, if one believes in the existence of supernatural beings, his attitude substantiates it. The realm of belief, certainly affects the sphere of attitude.

The inhabitants of the village, have a strong belief in the presence of supernatural beings. As mentioned earlier, they believe in the concept of life after death--and their thought not only centres around the existence of supernatural being, but also around the presence of super human agencies (witches and sorcerers), believed to be one of the causes behind disease and death.

It is believed among Hos that a witch (locally called Dandi (a long)), is one who has supernatural power acquired through 'Saadhna' and has a complete know-how of magical process. It is a prevalent belief among the villagers that the witch learns the art of black magic, under the supervision of her guru at graveyard in the dead of night. It is also believed that she can make anyone especially children, sick by casting an evil eye. She has the power to make the atmosphere malignant by her magical presence. She can also cause an incurable wound by her targeted (Saadhit) invisible magical arrow. She knows the art of calling spirits or ghosts for her ill-doings. If she curses anyone, it is bound to succeed.

Male and female both can be a witch but usually females are accused of being a witch. It is believed that a female can become a more powerful witch than a male. The witchdoctors believe that it is only because the advantage of her physical condition. While practicing black magic, one needs to offer blood to the worshipped God or Goddess and also one has to offer blood to the spirits or ghosts, one is engaged in invoking. In the natural cycle of female body, females witness menses (monthly bleeding from the uterus)-and it is this menstruating blood, which is naturally available to the females to offer the Goddess or the invoking spirits. Further, it is believed that since uterus is considered to be the place of inception, it is the blood of life. And offering of this blood pleases the Goddesses or spirits, whom the witch propitiates. The male witch on the contrary, lacks it. It is believed that by offering this menstruating blood, females pleases the spirits effectively, during learning process and afterwards. It enhances the power in witchcraft practices.

One of the Deonwa residing in Chaibasa said that male witch is known as Bokos. The Bokos are also believed to be very dangerous and

notorious and are always engaged in vexing their enemies. Males are also accused as witches.

To neutralise the effect of witch victimisation, witch -doctors (locally called Deonwa or soka) are approached and consulted. The Soka is considered more powerful than the Deonwa. The Deonwas also learn their art under the supervision of a guru. Training goes for several months to several years. The guru teaches them the curing mantras and makes them acquainted with the world of supernatural. It is believed that the Deonwas know the art of curings not only the witch cases but also find out the cause behind the suffering, which may occur due to the displeasure of Bongas or spirit intrusion. They also have knowledge about herbal medicines and prescribe these herbs to the patients, if the disease is due to natural cause.

Deonwas can also harm the people but usually they do not engage in this, since it is believed that it reduces their power of curings. The only major difference between Dandi and Deonwa is that Deonwa performs his art in keeping with the norms of society.

The villagers believe that when a person is not able to perform his normal duties effectively, he/she is sick. If one is performing his routined task effectively, he/she is considered healthy. These two terms, health and disease, are linked with one's capability or incapability to work like others. The villagers ascribe all their physical or mental sickness to four main causes viz (1) natural causes (2) Displeasure of Bongas, (3) Spirits of the dead, and (4) Witchcraft. In all cases of disease villagers consult Deonwas (witch doctor) who is competent to treat all of them.

Disease due to natural causes, i.e., fever, cold, cough, pain, etc. are treated by their indigenous pharmacopoeia. The cure is sought with

herbal medicines. The area is surrounded by forest and the herbal medicineman collects the herbs from the forests. Even Deonwas have the knowledge about these herbs. Whatever the disease or sufferings, villagers approach Deonwas, who find out the cause behind the diseases. It is the required knowledge to deal with these diseases. However, if the disease turns into a chronic case, the villagers assign it to something else, i.e., either the displeasure of Bongas or spirit intrusion or the mischief of the witch. It is believed that if the suffering is due to supernatural agencies or human agencies, no alternative medicine could work effectively.

The efficacy of *materia magica* is embedded in the villagers thought process and whenever any individual suffers from any disease, witch-doctor is approached. The villagers believe that since the cause of the disease emanates from the society hence the cure should be sought in the society itself and by the person who is well-versed in this.

Displeasure of Bongas is another reason behind the disease and suffering. The Bongas may cause suffering, if not propitiated and offered on the ceremonies and at the beginning of any new work. It is believed that the routined offerings to Bongas is necessary. Almost every villager can be found performing the puja of bongas (including ancestors) at the time of harvesting, or constructing houses or closing the Khalihan work (*Kalam utandi*). Every Ho is particularly conscious of his Ading. No outsider, except family members, are allowed to enter one's Ading. Even though, family members do take care of purity while entering the inner most part of Ading, where ancestors are venerated. It is believed by the villagers that if any family member, even children, enter the Ading without taking care of purity, Bongas get angry and cause suffering. Many of the villagers says that in such a case they, just propitiate the Bongas, to forgive the person. It is the only reason

behind introducing the bride to the ancestors of groom's family, after marriage.

It is also believed that there are few malignant Bongas like 'Har Bonga' who is excommunicated from the neighbouring village and may cause harm independently or by invoking of witches. Deonwas are approached for this. These bongas possess the individual's body and only by propitiation and offering, they can be pleased. If not pleased properly, they may cause death of that individual.

Witches are yet another dimension of Ho life. Witchcraft is supposed to be the deadliest means/device to harm the enemies. Witches could cause the projection of some morbid object into the body or the abstraction of some important element from the body. Witches mischief not only acts on some part of the body but also on some objects which have been connected with it. Almost all the unnatural deaths are attributed to witchcraft.

It is believed by the villagers that the witches are always in close association with the spirits, especially at the time of causing harm. The practice of witchcraft is prevalent to such an extent that villagers believe that witches invoke the malignant bongas and use it not only against human beings but against the cattle, too.

The villagers say that many a times, their cattle have become sick and sometimes have died. When their cattle become sick they approach Deonwa who reveals that so and so has caused this sickness - and by offering sacrifices asked by the Deonwas to do so, they save their cattle. One of the villagers told me that recently his ox fell sick. When the sickness continued for few days, he approached the Deonwa, who cured the ox. It was the work of a witch whose name was not revealed by the Deonwa.

In a similar incident of Nakti Panchayat of Karaikela Block, Kanderam Gagrai, his wife Balma Gagrai and his family members were beaten mercilessly. Sri Ram Gagrai, brother of Kanderam Gagrai, accused Balma Gagrai for causing sickness to his son and an ox. Sri Ram Gagrai and his family accused Balma as a witch and her witchcraft magic behind this suffering. With the help of some villagers Sri Ram and his son Indra, forced Balma to come along with them to a Deonwa of Sinni. It was revealed by the Deonwa that it is the ghost of Balma's parental home, who has caused this. After this the villagers imposed the fine of Rupees three thousand on Kanderam, as economic punishment, Kanderam paid the amount under the pressure.

But when after a few days of this incident, there came no relief to the child and the ox, Sri Ram along with a few villagers attacked the Kanderam and his family. They were beaten up. A bullet was also shot at Kanderam's son. Kanderam along with his family members managed to escape from there. A complaint was registered in Karaikela Thana, subsequently leading to the arrest of three accused.

Regarding the nomenclature of witch, locally called Dandi (a long), one deonwa opines that the word 'Dandi' has originated from the word '*Dahin*' meaning jealous. Both a female as well as a male, could be a witch, but it is believed that usually females become witch. The Deonwas (witch doctor) say that witches acquire some art of classical '*Chandi Bidhya*'. Witches worship Goddess Kali and the Goddesses associated with Kali, such as *Dakini*, *Chandi* etc.

Witchcraft is a secret art and the witches are believed to learn this art under a guru in graveyards. The night of *Amavasya* is believed to be the most important night for witches to harm anyone. The villagers say that when any female goes to graveyard at night, she performs some magic at home, so that all the family members would be

in a dead sleep until she comes back.

The villagers believe that witches dance naked in graveyard, which is considered to be the part of learning process. If any passerby is found, witches kill him through their magic.

The villagers believe that witches sacrifice their most lovable object i.e., son, husband or a close relative, as a part of their last initiation. The month of *Kartik* is an important month for old as well as new witches. Though the training of a new witch could begin on any day, *Kartik* is supposed to be the most suitable month for training as the worshipped Goddess could be propitiated effectively.

Witches know the '*Sanjivni art*'. They have the power to awaken the dead by invoking mantras. Witches also know the spots where spirits hover around and by invoking and propitiating they capture them to use as pet spirits. The witches are supposed to have a great control over the manipulation of supernatural world. The success of magical process is attributed to the effective and accurate chants and incantations of mantras.

It is said that a witch could become so powerful that she could kill even the witch-doctor. The villagers say that by each killing witches became more powerful in the art of black magic. In the witches fraternity a witch credited with maximum killing enjoys a very respectable position. These witches sometimes, attack the witch doctor who tries to nullify their attack on victims.

The witches are believed to know the art of transformation. They can transform themselves into animal forms such as cat (*Bilay*), Dog (*Seta*), pig (*Sukuri*) rat (*Chuta*) moles (*chundi*) etc. In this transformed state they enter the victims house and suck blood or saliva trickling

down the corners of the mouth of the sleeping person, causing the victim to fall sick or ultimately to die.

The villagers narrate many instances when witches in these transformed form were chased and beaten and early in the morning the beating imprints on the body of some female were seen.

Sanatan Pingua, Aged 38 years is an educated Ho, living in Ruia village. He narrated an event, when a mole was killed by the villagers. The mole was entering the house of one villager at night. The villagers chased and killed that mole. Early in the morning, it was found that an old female died nearby. It was noticed that there are imprints of sticks on the body of that dead female. Sanatan says that she was a witch--and was entering into house to harm someone by transforming herself into a mole.

Satish Koda, a retired school teacher is a renowned Deonwa of the area. Due to the Paralysis in his leg, he is not practicing regularly. He says that he knows the art of transforming oneself into tiger . He says that many a times, on the sandy road, one can find few small pebbles, making a line on the road. Where the line ends, these small pebbles could be witnessed being inserted deep into it. According to him, sometimes these are not mere pebbles but are magical (spirits) who have stopped there due to the start of the mornings. Those who know this secret collect these pebbles and makes a 'Mala'(chain) of it. The person who wants to transform himself, sits on the ants-hill and rubs his buttock on it. During this, he/she keeps that pebble chain on his /her mouth and chants mantra taught by his/her guru. When one rubs his/her buttock on it, he/she receives a severe pain. When he/she rolls down to the ground due to intolerable pain, he/she becomes a tiger. The posterior turns into mouth of the tiger and upper side into posterior of the tiger. In this form, he/she kills his enemies or any passer by.

And when he/she wishes to return into the original form, he/she takes the pebble chain out of his/her mouth.

He says that he is aware of a person who knows this art and whenever Satishji meets that person, he (Satishji) would write to me to come and see this happening. Since, his legs are not functioning properly due to paralysis, he is not able to show it himself to me. Some of the villagers in fact claimed that they have seen Satishji in the tiger form. They say that one day they were returning from a neighbouring village they heard the tiger roar from behind and when they looked back, they were amazed to see that Satishji's upper body has turned into tiger, but lower body has no change. They asked Satishji not to scare them and Satishji came to his original form. Later Satishji narrated the villagers that he just wanted to have fun, hence, he turned into tiger.

The witches also harm their victims through contagious magic. They collect certain things which once formed a part of the person, as for example, hair, nail, spittle or some articles used constantly by the person and through their magical formulae, harm their victims. Witches can even harm their victims by merely obtaining the dust of their feet.

'*Mooth marna*' and bean-shooting are other mechanisms of inflicting harm, employed by witches. She is also engaged in effigy burning and pricking method. It is believed that she makes an effigy of her victim from soil or powdered rice (illi) and burns it. This results in severe itching or burning inside the victim's body, which ultimately leads to death of her wantonly, victim. She makes a statue of wantonly victim. Then she pricks pins or thorns into this statue and it works on the principle of sympathetic magic- "like produces like". Her inserting of pins or thorns into the statue results into the pricking or burning in her victims body. It is assumed that through incantation of magical mantra she produces the desired result.

It is a very strong belief amongst Hos that her incanted magical spells cover very long distance. Her invisible arrow works like a missile, which is targeted at a particular victim. It is owing to this belief that most of the villagers show their reluctance to come closer to infront of witches, if they know about it. Most of the villagers even do not dare to speak about the witch, since it is believed that she will come to know about it and may cause harm in retaliation. For this reason it is very hard to make any villager speak on witchcraft, unless the interaction level and mutual trust is very high.

Same is the case with any Ho of the region. It is a widespread belief that a witch can cause an incurable wound and chronic disease by her magical spells. In this case, no other alternative medicine is effective. Only the local magico -religious healing of Deonwa can cure this wound or disease. It is also believed that these wounds or diseases consequently lead to the death of the patient.

Shanti Kui, resident of Sarjamhatu village under Sonua Thana, worked as a maid servant of Ponde Hembrom. In November, 1995, Ponde's wife gave birth to a child. Two days after the child birth, Ponde's wife witnessed a wound on her breast, which she brought to the notice of Ponde. Ponde consulted the village Deonwa for this. It was revealed by the Deonwa that his maid-servant Shanti has caused this wound, with her witchcraft magic. Ponde forced Shanti to cure this wound. Shanti kept on arguing her innocence but no body believed her. One day she was killed and her deadbody was drawn into river by tiding with a heavy stone. Shanti's husband reported it to the police, when she did not arrive at home. Later police recovered the dead body and arrested Ponde Hemberom.

Similar incident occurred in Kabragutu village, near Chaibasa, where Menjo Sundi was accused as a witch by her brother in-law,

Krishna Sundi. Krishna developed a wound. Krishna spread the rumour that his bhabhi (sister-in-law) Menjo has caused this wound by her magic. She was asked by the village Panchayat to leave the village and if she comes back she would be killed. (Further discussed in next chapter).

In Katkara village of Goilkera Block, 45 years old Jobna Purty was killed by Manjhi Samad. Manjhi Samad accused Jobna of causing a swelling in his legs. Manjhi believed that it is Jobna, who is causing this through her magical power. Under distress he killed jobna. After arrest, he told the police that Jobna was a very powerful witch. It was the affect of her magic that when he was killing her, his leg became disformed. (Prabhat Khabar, 28.7.96).

The villagers believe that witch not only directs and controls ghosts or spirits to harm but also causes the snake or scorpion bite to her victims. There are many incidents narrated by villagers, when witches have caused the death of their victims through snakes. In Simalbeda village of Saraikela thana in Sept 97, Khoka Manjhi died due to snake-bite. The family members of khoka manjhi consulted the Deonwa Rayabu, for this. The Deonwa revealed through his divination that Bijo Manjhain is the witch and she has caused this snake bite. It is Bijo who has caused the death of Khoka Manjhi. The agitated family members along with villagers, beat Bijo and her family members mercilessly and were thrown out of the village. The villagers also threatened that if Bijo and her family members come to village, they would be beaten to death or killed. The local police intervened into it and a case was registered. (Uditbani, 19th Dec, 1997).

In another case, two females Kuni Kui and Jingi Gwalan of Manjhau thana were killed by fellow villagemen Jumban Sawain and Ankura Sawain. After killing these females, Jumban and Ankura buried

the dead bodies, near Torlo river. The Police exhumed these dead bodies and arrested Jumban and Ankura after investigation Jumban told the police that his daughter had died due to snake-bite, two years ago. But he believed it to be the case of witchcraft and accused these two females, after consulting a Deonwa. He had attacked these females two years ago. But then the village Panchayat intervened into it and imposed a fine of rupees two hundred on Jumban for this attack. Since then, he was waiting for the appropriate time to kill these two witches. On 25<sup>th</sup> October 1995, he got the opportunity and killed them with the help of Ankura.

The witches are considered as anti social elements in Ho society. They are always engaged in negative functions. It is believed that since they deviate from the normal discourse of society, they never play a positive function. On the contrary, Deonwas have a positive role in the society. When the Deonwa finds out by divination the proper Bonga to which to appeal, offerings are made to the spirits concerned, without ascertaining who the Dandi is. The witch only acts as a medium-and the villagers believe that if they kill or excommunicate all the witches from the village, people would be immune from most of the diseases.

Usually the identity of witch is not revealed by the Deonwa. It is believed that if the name is revealed, the concerned victims family members and relatives would kill the witch and it would enhance rivalry. The Deonwas say that since they are capable of neutralizing the witch-attack by their acquired knowledge or divination, there is no need to reveal the name. Many witch doctors admit that the tussle between them and witches go on and by the grace of the benevolent Bongas, they cure the witch-victims.

It is believed by the villager that any one can become

witch but not witch doctor, because it is the benevolent Bongas who choose the person who can become witch doctor. It is this strong belief that makes every individual of the village approach Deonwa at the time of distress, as they say that it is the Bonga who cures the disease and Deonwa is simply a medium. When the Deonwa comes into trance, whatever he speaks is the word of Bonga.

The art of witchcraft runs into family generation too. Usually the mother teaches it to her daughter and later to her daughter-in-law. The daughter, after marriage goes to her husband's house, where it is carried by her next progeny--making it a triangular operation.

The Deonwas are of the opinion that if it is not practiced by second generation or if the next generation of family gives it up the whole family faces a dire consequence. It is because the pet ghosts or spirits start tormenting the family members.

It is held by the villagers that if any witch is forced to eat excrement she would forget the art of black magic. In Parodih village, Manoharpur, a middle aged female Chintamani Bhumij, was subjected to this treatment. Chintamani's brother-in-law, kristo Bhumij accused her as a witch after Kristo's son Shankar fell sick. Kristo consulted the village Deonwa. The Deonwa after divination, revealed that Chintamani has caused the sickness of his child. Kristo along with a few villagers, forced chintamani to eat excrement, her face was painted black and she was forced to move around the village. After this, she was beaten by the villagers. When she fainted down, the villagers thought that she is dead and fled away.

In an another incident 37 years old Chutni Mahtain of Samram village (Gamharia thana) was also forced to eat faeces as her brother in law accused her of being a witch and causing sickness to his daughter. (Discussed in chapter -5).

The people fear witches. The villagers say that the witches can bring any kind of misfortune. Usually the witches are avoided, no body wants any confrontation with them. It is this fear that no villager or Ho, whom I met, revealed the name of any witch. They believe that if their name is revealed, they would certainly come to know about it and would retaliate and kill. The attitude of fear is most important aspect in witchcraft--and death is the ultimate culmination of this fear. Right from the childhood, the child inculcates the fear related to witchcraft. The social environment around him makes him see the witches and the phenomenon of witchcraft as a tabooed, and secret art. No body wishes to divulge any information on the identification of the witch. The fear of being attacked or harmed by witches, on disclosing their names is embedded in his thought. The causes behind most of the diseases or mishaps in life are attributed to witches.

It is not so that only illiterate or country side villagers speak of witches and their modus-operandi, but a good section of literate villagers also speak of witchcraft and the sacred art of witches. I stayed with a retired bureaucrat. who is now engaged in agricultural activities. His sons are well-settled in different towns. He has a strong belief in the efficacy of witchcraft and the curing methods of witch doctors. On the other hand, he makes use of bio-medical facilities as well. His wife is also an educated Ho. Last year, their third son died due to heart problem. But he and especially his wife believe that a night before the death of their son, they heard a strange kind of laughing. They became so scared that they did not come out to find who was laughing. They say that it was certainly the work of a witch, who might have caused the death of their son. They say that since their family is doing very well in all the aspects someone might have felt jealous of it and has caused this misfortune. He and his wife, strongly believe in the art of witchcraft They have been consulting Deonwas to know the cause

behind the death of his son and the meaning of that strange laughing.

Many other educated villagers also narrated their encounters of witch cases and witch-huntings. On the other hand, they also consult biomedical doctors, for their natural sufferings. During first few meetings, they had vehemently rejected the existence of witchcraft in Ho society. But prolonged stays and interactions revealed that it was only out of a notion of distrust towards the field worker. But slowly and gradually when interaction bond cemented, a free flow of information on the topic began. On many of the occasions they allowed me to witness the healing processes performed at their homes. Some of them also helped me by convincing the fellow villagers of the purpose of my stay. They are of the opinion that witches do play their mischievous acts to harm people which many a time ends in death. When any disease turns into chronic one or other alternatives are not able to provide instant relief, they turn towards indigenous medicine. Many cases have been followed where traditional medicine took on edge over modern medicine. However, a few educated villagers always denied their belief in witchcraft. While talking to me they always said that whatever the nature of disease, they go to nearest biomedical consultant. The Munda of the village Ruia, Mr. Subhash Pingua never said anything on witchcraft. He always put forward the impression of his non-believing attitude. But twice or thrice. I collected information of his performing, puja through witch doctor. Whenever encountered he used to say that it was his nearest kin or relative who has consulted it. Mr. Munda works as a medical practitioner for which he has no license. Few people come to him to consult him and he gives tablets or injections to them.

However, on some occasions villagers ultimately turned to seek the help of Deonwas, though initially treated by Mr. Subhash. Even he had called a village meeting, where Deonwas were to perform their knowledge to find out the cause behind two deaths i.e., one of an infant

and another of an old lady. The villagers doubted that it was the case of witchcraft. The finding rituals did not occur before me. Munda too did not respond well. After a very long and tedious wait I was told that the particular ritual has been postponed for another day. On the very next morning when I enquired about it, to my utter disbelief, it was revealed that Deonwas performed the ritual very late at night and they (Deonwas) through divination found that it was the *Har Bonga* (expelled spirit) or *jinda bhoot* (live ghosts) who might have been directed to cause these deaths especially of the infant.

The exclusion of my participation of the performed ritual to my mind, was at the instruction of the Munda. Similar to it, there were also a few villagers who vehemently refused the existence of witchcraft even.

If probed deeply and extensively, the element of change in the system of attitude and belief could also be witnessed. For this, apart from the focal village, I had moved to other surrounding villages as well as other posts of the district. The total paraphernalia of witch identification to witch hunting is entirely a village matter or community based judgement. The whole village panchayat looks into the matter and society based norms are taken into account while dealing with witchcraft and counter witchcraft. The witchcraft cases are generally dealt by villagers themselves and no help from other agencies like Police or Judiciary are sought either in witch hunting or imposing of fines or social boycott.

However, of late, a good number of cases, have been and are being reported to police. Many people have been put behind the bars or have been sentenced to imprisonment by Honourable district court. Since 1991 atleast 100 cases have been recorded in different police

stations. Some of these cases have been disposed off and some are under trial.

On the other hand few educated Hos especially the younger generation does not believe in the efficacy of witchcraft and are advocating the non-existence of this phenomenon. They say that they do not believe in it and will never consult the witchdoctor. One of such villagers is a retired chief engineer of Steel Authority of India. Ltd. (SAIL). He lives in Chaibasa but goes to his village regularly. All his children are either well settled in different jobs or are in good academic institutions. He is of the opinion that all these witches, their art and witchdoctors and their tantrums are totally false. In the name of witchcraft innocent people are either being killed or expelled from the village, so that conspirer would grab the land of the accused. He says that he had many heated encounters with the Deonwas on whom he does not believe. On one occasion he says that if witches know the art of 'mooth-marna' or are skilled in 'bean-shooting', they should be sent at border areas, so as to kill the national enemies.

However, the number of such non, believers is not very large. At the same time, a few of them gave false impression before me when the questions were put in triangulation method, some of them spoke extensively on the topic and their encounters. (Discussed in next chapter).

The main aim here, is to bring forward the prevalent belief pattern of villagers towards the phenomenon of witchcraft. The existing attitude and belief system would give a brief insight into the topic concerned. The nature of witchcraft and counter witchcraft has been dealt with in the following chapters.

## **Chapter - V**

### **NATURE OF WITCHCRAFT**

## CHAPTER V

### Nature of Witchcraft

The phenomenon of witchcraft among the Hos is an age-old practice. Regarding the origin of the witchcraft, the inhabitants simply say that it has been continuing since ages. As mentioned at the outset, the universe and the first ancestors of Hos were created by the Sing Bonga (supreme God) and the root of religion was traced. With passage of time, as the older generation believes, the element of magic came into it. The recourse to various sort of magical manipulations came into existence to win over the nature around them, which (nature) many-a-time brought unwanted or undesired happenings. The whole cosmos of the religio-magical or magico-religious domain finds mention even in the classical texts also. The narrative mythological histories of tribals also focus on this aspect.

Those who took the practice of control over nature were called the magicians—and as the time passed the notion of witches and sorcerers—believed to have a great control over the magical manipulations—came into the magical fold.

Here we would like to mention that the anthropological distinction between ‘witch’ and ‘sorcerer’ according to which whether the power is innate or externally required, have not been used by us. We have used the simple term ‘witch’ for the person (male or female) believed to cause harm by magic.

Witchcraft was so universally believed by the Hos during British rule that Captain Wilkinson counselled his Assistant not to take precipitate action against it for fear of disturbances. Further, he expressed his apprehension that so long as this conviction in the

efficacy of witchcraft persisted, punishment would not deter Hos from committing murder. Captain Wilkinson also took elaborate precautions to prevent ghastly murder of witches by warning the village heads (Munda) that any one guilty of such murder would be dealt with severely and might receive capital punishment. Not satisfied with this measure alone, he instructed his Assistant in Kolhan to remove alleged witches to other villages. He ordered that the relations of the afflicted were to be persuaded to bring patients to a dispensary, especially established for the Hos at Chaibasa. He was of the opinion that numerous cures thus effected would in time overcome their morbid practice. But the measures proved effective only in theory and did not result in eradicating the prejudices against witchcraft. (Capt. Wilkinson to Lt. Tickell, May 1837 to Dec. 1840).

Lt. Tickell, while decrying the practice, defended the Hos in the following words, “ a fearful number of people (among themselves) have fallen sacrifice (witch-hunt) to the horrid superstitions respecting witchcraft; but such crimes, common to the barbarous ages of all nations, but too prevalent formerly in our own, must be, by the impartial observer, attributed more to the depravity of the judgement than the heart.” (Lt. Tickell, 1840).

Majumdar (1950) in his study mentions witches and sorcerers (human agencies) as one of the agencies of causing diseases, as believed by the Hos. Further he writes that witches are usually members of the tribe but are anti-social and they take delight in their nefarious practices. The witches of the village may invoke a particular malignant Bonga and use it against their victims. The witches by shooting an arrow at an effigy of the man or at his shadow may cause consumption which is believed to cause holes in the lungs and a slow but terrible death. The witches also take help of contagious magic by obtaining bodily parts of

their victims such as hair, nails, clothe, etc. The witches are known to take hair cuttings and pairing of nails of intended victims, and bury them in courtyard for a week or so, and dig them out on the night of the new moon. She cleans the surface of the hut and spreads ashes in the circle of the floor-then the witch kindles a fire with dried faggots inside the circle and throws the obtained hair or nail clippings into the flames. Thrice the smoke is swallowed by the witch, and incantations and formula are recited. She collects the ashes in a new earthen pot. By mixing it with oil or with fruits, she offers it to the victim. If he or she partakes to it will suffer but not others who may unsuspectingly drink or eat them. This whole episode results in high fever, dysentery or nausea, which comes unaware to him.

Majumdar, further adds, the method of transformation of witches into cats and causing harm to their victims by entering into their houses. Witches are credited with control over a number of malignant Bongas and with their (Bongas) aid harm their intended victims. Witches are a dreaded entity to the Hos. Lastly Majumdar writes that the belief in witchcraft is so strong that whenever they suspect any person as being a witch, the feeling runs so high that the unfortunate suspect is put to all sorts of ordeals to prove her innocence. Attempts to coerce women to confess their identity have led to violence on them. Some are naturally innocent and many cases are annually brought to the Kolhan Court for decision (Majumdar, 1950, pages 191-195).

Singh (1978) considers witchcraft as one of the reasons-as ascribed by Hos-behind the physical sickness. In case of witchcraft, the remedy was to put the person denounced by a 'Sokha' or witchfinder, along with all members of his family to death in the belief that witches breed witches and sorcerers. In exceptional cases, the denounced were ordered to undergo an ordeal which was seldom refused: "The person denounced has either to dip his/her hand into boiling ghee or water or

stand upon red-hot Koolharee (Shovel) when if scaled or burnt, he/she was declared guilty or he/she was tied up in a sack and thrown into the water, with option of floating on the top, if he/she could.

Dalton (1872), Risley (1891), and O'Malley (1910) also put focus on the practice of witchcraft and the belief associated with it.

Since then Ho society has witnessed a great deal of change in almost every aspect of life. However, more or less their belief structure remained intact, though changes in it could also be witnessed.

Witchcraft today amongst Hos is one of the major ingredients of their social organisation. The Hos conceive witchcraft as an art of magic which is meant to harm others and witches are those who harm others by their magical power. The whole process of witchcraft in the society partakes the nature of 'holism' and it is embedded in the thought process. Witchcraft amongst Hos is not a separate entity which, could be viewed in isolation. The very nature of witchcraft makes a profound impact on almost every aspects of social life. The inhabitants live with it-and it is this fact which makes the phenomenon of witchcraft holistic in nature.

In the preceding chapter, it has already been stated that witch amongst Hos is known as Dandi, (Dayen, popular name for witch) has its origin from the word 'Dahin' (jealous) as explained by one of the Deonwas. According to which, the Dandi has an element of Dah (jealousy - Ho term for jealous is *erel* or *hisinga*) against others (her enemies). With passage of time, it (Dahin) turned into Dandi. The exact historical nomenclature is not known. However, on the other hand, I think Dandi has its origin from the word '*dae*' meaning 'a victim of sacrifice. Since it is a widespread conviction in the Ho society that witches sacrifice or offer sacrifices to their worshipped deities by



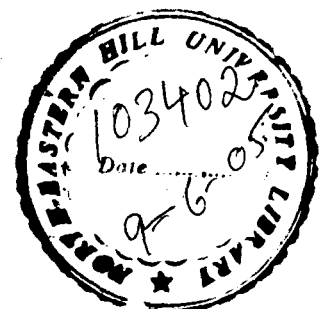
killing their enemies. This 'victimization' for sacrifices is an essential prerequisite to the art of witchcraft. The word Dae, might have been over the years, changed into Dandi who is believed to offer the victim for sacrifice to her worshipped deity or spirit.

Having discussed the origin of the word Dandi (the witch) in Ho community, it is important to see as to 'who' in this society come to be branded as the witches. Males and females both can become a witch but usually females are accused as a witches. Generally widows, old ladies, barren (issueless) females or females who have a weird look are branded as the witches. However quarrelsome females or the vocal ladies of the family who could put threat before the other kins are also branded as witches in the society. These are, however, neither the prerequisites nor the defining characteristics of those who are labelled as witches. These only express certain general attributes of potential witches.

Persons living in seclusion and doing mysterious behaviour which is not normal, are also branded as witches. Males are also labelled as witches and it too, does not speak of any particular prerequisite.

As regards the process of becoming a witch, several views are held by the village inhabitants including the Deonwas.

The villagers are of the opinion that witches learn the art of witchcraft secretly at night under a guru, who is also a witch. They invoke and worship the deity. Most of the simple folks are not aware of this fact as whom the witches worship. At the sametime, the most of the villagers have no clear cut idea of witch training. There, at the graveyard the guru teaches them the mantras of different nature and makes them perfect into it. The disciples also get a know-how of supernatural world. The training continues until one is considered to



have mastered the art of black magic. This may take from a few days to a few months. The completion of the training is marked by the sacrifice of the disciple's most lovable object viz. the husband or child (son, daughter). And in their absence that of the nearest kin. After this sacrifice, the disciple is declared as a complete witch.

The whole process of training is under a strict and secret supervision of the guru. Before being declared as a witch capable of working independently, the trainee goes through many trials such as surviving the threats of ghosts, who come in different forms, and putting to scrutiny one's art of 'Sanjivini Vidhya'. The Sanjivini Vidhya means the art of awakening the dead. It is experimented on trees which are first dried up by use of mantras and then enlivened again. Having survived these tests, the trainee is asked for the human sacrifice after which she/he is considered complete in the art of witchcraft.

The view of the Caste Hindus on the last initiation rites is very close to it. The caste Hindus speak that the witch offers for sacrifice either her 'Kokh' (Womb; i.e., to whom she has given birth to—son) or her 'Maang' (hair parting; i.e., the person who has put vermilion on her head—husband). As regards the 'Kokh' she sacrifices her eldest son or daughter. If she does not have any issue, it may be her dearest relative. Sacrifice of a son is supposed to be the more powerful aspect of gaining control over magical manipulation than the sacrifice of a daughter.

Similar incident is also witnessed in case of 'Oddiyan Phenomenon of Kerala' (mentioned in Chapter-1), in which male foetus of pregnant females are snatched by the Oddiyans.

The reason behind this practice however, was not rationalised by caste groups to whom I also talked while conducting field work. On the

other hand in case of Oddiyan, the practicing magicians believe that the potion made out of the foetus after then mixing with special herbs of leaves, enables them transform themselves into animal forms when rubbed into limb joints.

The healers or Deonwa (witch doctor) among Hos put an elaborate description of witch formation. They are of the opinion that the phenomenon of witchcraft has been continuing since long (the exact period of origin is not known). Further they say that witches worship Goddess Kali and her different forms e.g. Dakini, Rankni, Jugni etc. The time for training is night but the training period is not fixed i.e., it goes round the year. The month of 'Amavashya' is very important as the witches indulge in their malignant wishes mostly in this month. Anyone who wishes to learn the art approaches the guru. The guru however does not immediately take her as a disciple but first checks his/her sincerity. When the guru becomes certain of the determined wish of the approaching disciple, the training starts. The training goes for several days to months at graveyard, where all the intricacies of supernatural world and mantras and rituals related to invoking of spirits and deities as well as worshipping rites are performed.

The witches also dance naked at the graveyard, making a circle of human chain. The guru keeps a close eye on the learning witches during the whole process of training. When the disciple performs all the learned art upto the full satisfaction of the guru, the disciple is asked for the last prerequisite i.e., final initiation rite where the disciple is required to sacrifice her most lovable object, that is, sacrifice of either husband or son/daughter or nearest relative.

It is important here to note the point 'the wanted disciple approaches the guru'. It clearly shows that villagers know about who the witches are—and accordingly they are approached by the wanted person,

who wants to become a witch. Despite this, the society members never revealed the name of the witch, whenever inquired by me. It is in their fear psychosis that if they reveal the name to anyone the witch would certainly come to know of it and in retaliation would cause harm to them.

As regards the complete know-how on witches training, not only the villagers but most of the witch-doctors also show their ignorance. They confess that the art of witchcraft is so secretly performed that even family members have no knowledge of the fact that one of the females of their family is indulged into it.

The guru does not always come from outside the family. Many of the females learn the art as to continue the family tradition. The mother being the witch passes down the art to her daughter or daughter-in-law and the family tradition of witchcraft continues. One of the family member has to continue with it and if it is not continued, it (discontinuity) brings a bad omen to the family.

The reason behind this as explained to me is that the deity worshipped by the witch and the captured spirits harass the family, if not worshipped and propitiated. Some of the Deonwas, too say that they know many families who were subjected to misfortunes only because of this discontinuity. However, at the same time, there are families who have relinquished the tradition and after prologned propitiation have appeased the deity for their discontinuity.

Mr. Satish Koda (a Deonwa of village Balandiah) gives a vivid account of the witch formation and his own encounters with the witches. Mr. Koda became so closely associated to me that he revealed about the identification of a few witches of the village and the neighbouring areas.

According to Satish Koda, witches worship Goddess Kali, who has two main forms of worshipping Satvik (benevolent) and 'Tamsik' (malevolent). The witches worship the 'Tamsik' form of goddess. The witches acquire the knowledge of classical 'Chandi Vidhya' (Chandi is yet another form of goddess, considered to be 'Raudra' (fieriness)). Further he says that witches are generally females. Since the art is very secret, witches practice it at night in graveyard.

As regards the formation of witches he focusses on more or less the same methods as mentioned earlier. He remembers one Santhal woman, who was a witch and was very friendly to him. Satishji wanted to have a glimpse of the witches training and asked the female to take him to graveyard, which she declined. But after much persuasion, she promised to let him have a glimpse of the witches' worship. The Santhal witch offered him 'pan' to chew. After chewing the pan, he went to sleep and had a dream.

In dream he saw that many females and one male are worshipping naked at graveyard. A 'Diya' (lamp) was burnt and they were moving in a circle. One lion was sitting in middle of the circle. According to him, the lion must be either deity or ghost whom the witches worship. They were reciting . 'Hirla matu hirla'. At the same time they had dug a big pit and were jumping across it. One who crossed the pit was considered successful.

The another theory of witch formation highlights that the woman who learns the art of witchcraft, recites the 'Adhaiya Mantra' (Adhaiya-two and a half) in the series of one, eleven and twenty two. For this the female puts water in a fixed Ber tree at 'Brahma Muhurta' and recites and practices the 'Adhaiya Mantra'. During this process, ghosts or spirits, come in different forms and threaten her. If she is not scared, she is considered successful. To become a powerful witch, the female

at the night of 'Amavashya' goes to the graveyard and recites the mantra. While performing this she puts on 'lahanga' made of broomstick. She also lights a lamp (diya) in a skull and performs dance under the supervision of her guru. The initiation of witchcraft is completed after the human sacrifice.

The Lahanga used by the witches is invariably made of old and used broomsticks though the reason behind this is not known.

According to Ranjit Singh Nag (witch-doctor) the witch-training goes in three stages. The first stage starts at guru's house. After a few days of initiation the training is done under the 'Peepal' tree. The guru witch with her accumulated power calls a lion under the tree. When the lion comes, a diya (lamp) is kept at the lion's head and recitation of mantras (which he does not know) starts. The mantras enables the new witch to acquire the power of the mantras.

The second stage starts when one becomes efficient in first stage. The second stage, starts at graveyard, where mantras or rituals of invoking of corpses (dead body) is done. In this the witches learn the power to bring the dead body back to life. The first test is done on trees, in which tree is dried. and then it is brought to normal condition. After the successful experiment on trees, it is practiced on human beings or cattle.

The third stage is the final initiation ceremony. After successful completion of previous two stages, the witches sacrifice their most lovable object i.e., either the husband or the eldest child. This sacrifice is 'must' for all witches and only after this their initiation into the art of witchcraft is considered complete. After this sacrifice she is declared an independent witch, who has had the control over supernatural manipulations.

The other dimension on witchcraft studies are regarding its function, wherever it is practiced . The Hos believe this to be the mechanism of expressing personal misfortunes. Any misfortune is accredited to witchcraft. In other words, the mechanism of witchcraft provides a readymade or most suitable explanation, if anything goes wrong in the society. Individuals do suffer from different diseases or abnormalities, misfortunes do occur in one's life-and all such inexplicable phenomenon are interpreted differently in different societies or communities, according to their own world view. The Hos explain witchcraft to be the most potential cause behind most of their misfortunes or diseases. The ill-luck or change in the discourse of daily life activities are easily explainable, resulting out of witchcraft. The chronic diseases, mental illness etc. are also attributed to witch's spell and explained accordingly. It may, many-a-time, reveal the unscientific notion to the outsider, especially to those who have an insatiable appetite for scientific explanations. For the Hos, however, it is very much a part and parcel of their life, where the phenomenon and prevalence of witchcraft is embedded in their social milieu. They show their unquestionable belief, when asked about the presence of witches and their malignant acts. To them witches do exist and cause misfortune, disease or ultimately death to their victims. The whole cosmos of Ho life centres around supernatural world and the practitioners who have a knowledge of manipulating this very supernatural world, according to their wish.

Witchcraft to them has always a negative connotation-meant to harm others. The benevolent or white-witchcraft as emerged in recent times, is not a reality. The positive aspect of witchcraft as claimed by modern witches, does not exist. Witchcraft is considered to be harmful and those who practice it, are engaged in insidiousness. And the very notion of this conviction is manifested when the inhabitants say that

those who are jealous of someone, turn to witchcraft. Those practicing witchcraft believed it to be a means of acquiring magical power, by which they can harm their enemies or those who put resistance to their wishes. And this acquiring of magical power results into gaining of a powerful social position, though it may not be an approved way of societal norms. This could well be explained in this manifestation that 'people fear witches' and this notion of fear towards witchcraft enables the practitioners to have a different position/status in the existing social-set-up.

It does not mean that witches enjoys a respectable status in the community. They are accused for diseases, misfortunes or deaths and even punished. Punishment varies from economic (fines imposed) to social boycott to excommunicating from the village to killing of the witches. My chief aim here is to delineate the function of witchcraft as manifested in the Ho community. The dwelling in witchcraft domain could be considered a defence mechanism for the witches. Oppression of the weaker section (especially females) in the society at times is so severe that certain individuals belonging to this section prefer to be branded as witches rather than remain the victims of oppression. This acts as a natural mechanism of defence.

The accusation of one being a witch and causing harm to others is done by nearest kins and relatives and neighbours. It is the relatives who accuse any witch for bringing misfortune, causing disease and death in their respective families. The sudden death or chronic disease consequently leading to death of family members or diseases and death of household cattle or the failure of any routine activities undertaken- all these are attributed to the influence of some malevolent neighbour.

Another very important aspect of this accusation moves around the tension in social relationships. Tension existing between two

families could also lead to the mechanism of accusation, if any misfortune or death occurs in any of the families. One of the females would be accused for bringing misfortune with her witchcraft and this accusation is spread in the village.

The spreading of the message within no times spreads as a wildfire-and by the time accused argues his/her innocence, the accuser gathers the support of his own pressure group. The impact of pressure group is sometimes so severe that recently occurred diseases and deaths are also labelled to be caused by the 'accused', witch.

The major role in any accusation mechanism, apart from the person suffered or his/her relatives, is played by Deonwa (witch-doctor). Deonwa is approached to cure the illness or suffering and through his set of identifying rituals' (the methods of identifying or detecting the cause behind the suffering) he finds out the cause. The reason behind the suffering may be many e.g. Incest violation, displeasure of Bongas, displeasure of ancestral spirits, intrusion of soul or mischievous acts of witches, etc.

The intrusion of spirits into victims body could occur independently or by the invoking of witches. Our main focus here is the phenomenon of witchcraft and we have focused only on those aspects where witches, directly or indirectly are involved in causing disease, death or other misfortunes. The Deonwas through their divination or trance (Rum) find out the cause and act accordingly. Usually they do not reveal the name of the witch, though it is not a set pattern as many deaths of witches and their family members have occurred, only after deonwas have revealed the name.

The most important aspect of the whole accusation process, involving witch-doctors, is the manifestation of the existing tension of

social relationships between the accuser and the accused family. Any misfortune brought upon the family of 'accuser' results into attributing it to the act of the potential witch who is close to the locality. It is very important to note that it is the nearest relatives or neighbours or fellow village inhabitants, who to some extent, speak or give the nod to one's character. In other words, one's behaviour pattern, social or unsocial, many-a-time, is labelled and recognized by the person living in close vicinity, which is a feature of a close knit community. To my mind, this entire episode is embedded in social set up. The sufferer when accuses, his/her misfortune to be the act of 'suspected' witch, he/she gathers a pressure group accordingly.

Some of the leading local journalists, administrators and educated Hos (non-believers) are of the opinion that it is a preplanned mechanism to settle scores with their rivals — and the easiest way is to accuse one's misfortune to be the deed of the 'suspected' witch. This entire process—from misfortune to accusation to identifying trials of witch-doctors-according to them, brings a desired outcome, i.e., eliminating or excommunicating from village or imposing economic fines on the family of suspected witch. In this whole episode, the family members of the accused witch also suffer. There are many cases, where not only the 'suspected' or 'accused' witch but her family members too were killed.

One of the members of the family being a 'witch is itself a matter of disgrace to the family. The trauma of being a member of witch's family haunts the entire family. Not only this, but relatives either distant or near, do not move forward to help, once anyone is branded as a witch. The only reason being 'avoidance' of people's wrath.

The entire episode of witchcraft is, so deeply rooted in the

social organization of Ho society that it needs to be viewed in relation to other aspects of social organization. The whole belief pattern has to be judged not only from the point of believers but also from the point of belief 'operation' while dealing with case of witchcraft. If a witch is responsible for the illness or death the community may be able to find her off or break her power. If the witch is arrested, tried and executed, her power over victims will not work or future illnesses could be avoided.

The meaning and interpretation of beliefs related to witchcraft e.g. "the witch eats the soul of the victim" or "the witch sucks the blood of the victim" or "witch eats the liver or kidney of her victim(s)" and so on—are to be seen from the expression of villagers or community members, because the very fact that they resort to witch detecting rituals or rituals related to counter-witchcraft, substantiates the expression of the above held belief. In other words, the whole process of witchcraft, from belief to counter rituals revolves around the expression of magico-religious experiences of the community.

The Hos believe in the efficacies of witchcraft and witches' mischievous acts. The popular beliefs among the Hos are many. The community believes that there are many ways of inflicting harm by witches. Either they work independently or invoke and capture hovering ghosts, whom they use for their services.

In the preceding chapter some of the beliefs concerning witches' made of attack have already been cited. Nevertheless, there are many other ways too. One of the most popular beliefs prevalent among the community is that witches suck the blood of their victim. The few villagers opine that witches use the straw made of 'Puwal to suck the blood. The puwal straw is put on the body of victim, who is asleep, and witches drink blood of their targets. This results into extreme sickness

and loss of weight consequently leadings to death of their victim. According to Koda, he has cured many people from this sickness. Once he had seen a female witch sucking blood from the body of a child, who lived in his neighbourhood when he was at Jagannathpur. He had beaten the witch with a stick, who was in the transformed state of a cat. Early in the morning he heard and found that an elderly female residing nearby had in prints of beating on her body. When he went to see the female, she pleaded not to reveal this to anyone, since he had given her the punishment. The female urged that she would never again indulge in this act.

Narrating other encounters, he says that his both sisters-in-law (brother's wives) are witches. One day while he was sleeping, he felt that something was going out of his body and someone was present in his room. When he opened his eyes he saw that one of his sister-in-law was bent upon him, having a straw. He asked her what she was doing there, and noticed that, she had disappeared. He says that to his utter surprise his room was bolted from inside.

Another method of inflicting harm to the enemies is to collect dust from beneath the foot of victim. The witches practice it regularly. They collect the 'dust' from the footprints of their enemies and at graveyard perform magic on it. It results into burning of the feet of the victim, whose dust has been collected. The burning sometimes becomes so severe that if not treated on time, the life of sufferer might be in danger.

Witches also take out parts of their victims body. The liver, heart and kidney are the most sought after bodily parts by the witches. The villagers say that witches eat these parts. It is believed that witches, by obtaining these parts from victims body, eat either by cooking or frying. The villagers believe that Soka or Deonwa can save the life of victim,

only when witches have not eaten them, otherwise the victim can not survive.

The witches dance naked in the graveyard or at their meeting place. They only put broomstick wrapped on their waist, otherwise upper part is totally bare. There are many villagers who would say that they have encountered witches dancing naked. However, they would also add that witches should not see them, as they would kill those who have disturbed them.

Choterai Pingua of village Saliburu is a practitioner of Ayurvedic medicine. On the first few hours of our meeting, he completely denied the existence of witchcraft. But slowly and gradually, he said that once he was coming back from neighbouring village, while treating one patient, he saw six to seven females dancing naked near Purnadih pond. The witches were dancing in circular motion and a 'diya' was kept inside the circle. In the meantime he coughed and all the witches disappeared, but nothing happened to him. He says that it was first time in his life that he had witnessed witches dancing naked.

Jerang Sinku of Khairpal village says that he too has seen the witches dancing naked, while he was coming with a few friends from the neighbouring village.

Jerang also says that on dark nights, witches light lamp on the index finger of their hands. He remembers that once he along with his friends was going to attend 'Ba' festival dance, they saw few females going ahead of them, and there were lights on their index fingers. There was no movement in the light, it was very straight. After few moments, the lights disappeared and once again they saw the lights near the dance venue (of Ba festival). Jerang says that they were witches.

The witches also transform themselves into animal forms, which

has been discussed in preceding chapter. Jerang says that in Khairpal, there used to live a 'Tanti' female, who was a witch. Almost all the villagers were aware of it. He says that she has been seen in transformed form of a 'pig' several times. Many encounters are there where villagers have seen a pig vanishing near the door of her house.

Once Jerang's servant while putting manure at his field early in the morning saw an ox coming towards the field. The ox went behind a tree and to his utter surprise he saw that an old lady was seen coming from behind the tree. There was no sign of any ox nearby. Later, when the servant narrated it to them, Sona Ram Sinku (deonwa and Jerang's relative) said that she was a witch, who at night had changed herself into an ox and at the dawn of morning came to her original human form.

The means employed by witches vary from arrow shooting to contagious magic to transforming themselves into animal forms and harming their enemies to pricking method to sucking blood and eating bodily parts and so on. The entire community lives with witchcraft beliefs and also fears it.

The points raised in the preceding discussion and the implications of these beliefs are highlighted in the following case studies.

## **The Accused Witches:**

### **Case-I. Name of the accused witch-Menjo Kui**

W/o	Charan Sundi
Place	Kabragutu Basti
Village	Lagia
Age	40 Yrs.
Education	Illiterate

Menjo is the mother of the two children and is currently staying at Chaibasa with her two sons. Menjo and her husband had sufficient agricultural land.

Since 1993 (month and date she does not remember ) she was being harassed by her relative Krishna Sundi. Krishna is Charan's fathers elder brothers son). Krishna Sundi and his family members first accused her for causing sickness to his family members.

Towards the end of 1995, Krishna developed a wound on his arm-pit. Krishna accused that Menjo was a witch and by her witchcraft she had caused this suffering. Krishna and his family members were of the opinion that Menjo with her power was eating Krishna by bringing wounds on the different parts of his body. When this incident occurred, Menjo was pregnant.

Charan and Menjo denied this allegation. Krishna gathered the support of fellow villagers with help of Munda and Deonwas. Krishna consulted two Deonwas, Dora Sundi and Bhagwan Sundi for his suffering and it was revealed by the Deonwas that Menjo was causing those wounds.

One night when Charan (Menjo's husband) was about to take dinner, their house was attacked by Krishna and his group. One arrow was also shot which went into wall crossing Charan's leg narrowly. Charan and Menjo bolted the doors from inside. When Charan yelled why it was being done to him, few villagers shouted back that his wife, Menjo was a witch and was causing suffering and illness to them. Once again he denied the accusation.

Twice or thrice within a week she was attacked at home at night. When the situation became very serious, she and her husband contacted all their relatives, but no one came forward to help, as it would have brought trouble to them. She managed to convey the incident at lupunguta missionary (near by her village). Message was conveyed to Father Dine and Father Mathews. She was brought to the missionary by the Holy Fathers.

With help of some journalists, the matter was brought to the notice of then IAS Mr. Amit Khare.

The villagers had demanded rupees two thousand plus two he goats and one quintal rice as fine, if Menjo was to stay in the village.

Amit Khare provided her a job at his office and also a room to stay at the Yatri Nivas (Amla tola, Chaibasa).

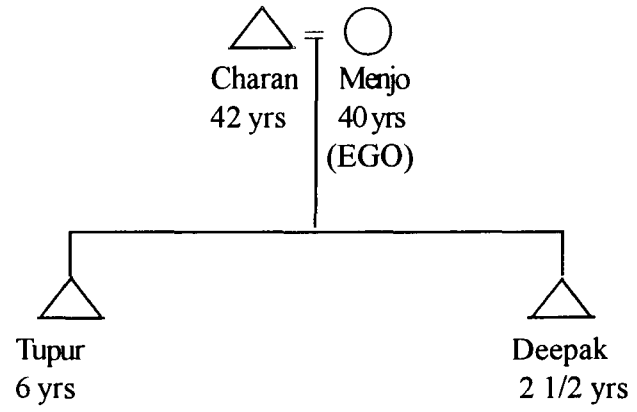
Menjo says that here at office too, the other people (especially villagers) were very suspicious of her presence, since she was accused as a witch. Once she was threatened by her fellow villagers at the office and she became so scared that she fled from there and came back after many days.

She does go to her husband's house at Lagia but avoids staying there.



*Menjo Kui , The accused witch with the Field Worker*

# Genealogy of MENJO KUI



## **Case-II Name of the accused witch-Chutni Mahto**

Age	36 yrs.
Education	Illiterate
Village	Mahtandih, Gamharia

Chutni Mahto is an oriya by origin and presently attached to Free legal Aid society (Jamshedpur) which is engaged in rehabilitation of accused witches. I met Chutni at Chakradharpur where she had to come to attend a seminar on 'Menace of witch hunting and Free Legal Aid', organized by SERSA Chakradharpur in association with Free Legal Aid Society. Chutni could not study because her mother was not interest into it and at the sametime there was no one at home to share household jobs with her mother.

She was accused of being a witch, after her husband's (Dhanjay Mahto) elder brother's (Bojohari Mahto) daughter Nepi Kumari aged 22 yrs., started vomiting and became very sick. Nepi was taken to village Deonwa. It was revealed by the Deonwa that it was a case of witchcraft, Chutni was accused for this sickness.

On the 3rd of Sept. she was accused for Nepi's Sickness. The Panchayat meeting was called. The panchayat also hold Chutni responsible for Nepi's sickness. Chutni and her husband denied the allegation. A few more witch-doctors from different villages were consulted by Bhonjari Mahto. Chutni says that she had no idea as to what the Deonwas did which brought Nepi into trance and she fell down at the door of Chutni's house. Just after this, her Jeth's (husband's elder brother) started beating her. She was forced to eat 'excreta'. The reason behind forcing her to eat 'excreta' is that the villagers believe that if any witch is made to eat excreta', she would forget her art.

After this horrible incident she first approached her relatives and well-wishers, but no one came forward to help her. She also approached Mr. Champai Soren (MLA), who advised her to return to village and promised to look into this matter. But she came to Adityapur at her father's home.

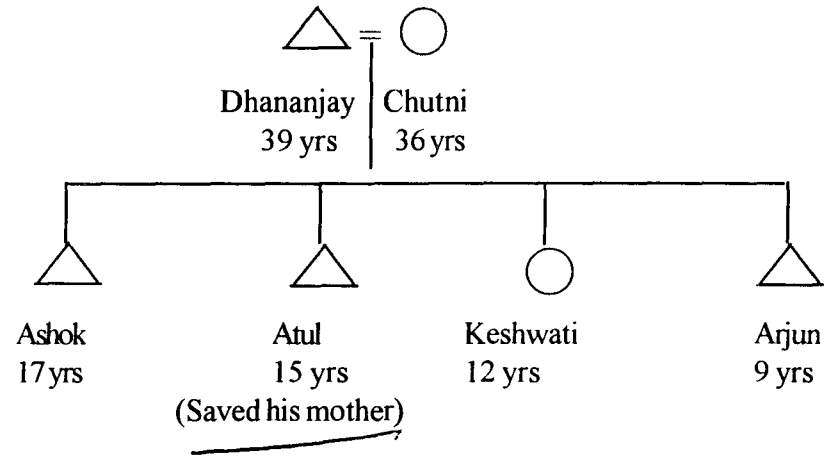
She registered a case on the 6th of Sept. When the villagers came to know about her having a complaint at Police station, they decided to kill her. The police suggested her to stay at her father's house, till the case was disposed off.

She says that she is the first member in her family to be accused of witchcraft. She believes that since her husband is alone and they have sufficient land to cultivate, his cousins want to grab the land.

Deonwas who performed the ritual are (1) Burju Manjhi, (2) Sufal Manjhi (3) Dukhu Mahto (4) Hore Mahto (5) Leghak Mandal

Since this incident she has been staying with her brother at BeerBansh village. Free legal Aid society has given her job at their centre. I met her on 25th Jan, 1998, till then the case was in operation.

# Genealogy of Chutni Mahtain



### Case III

Name	<b>Chandu Bandia</b>
Age	22 yrs.
Village	Padia

The Paria massacre occurred on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April '95, where seven- people were killed. Chandu's mother was accused as a witch by Kundia Bari. Kundia Bari's two children died at short intervals. Kundia and his relatives believed that it was due to Chandu's mother, who was a witch and had caused death of these two young children.

Kundia's brother Junia is a Deonwa who had also detected the cause of death of these two children as being the work of Chandu's mother. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September Kundia along with a few villagers attacked Chandu's house. There were twelve persons involved in it, who were Kundia Bari, Govind Hembram, Bishnu Kuli, Kulay Melgandi, Sao Bari, Lakho Bari, Jandoy Bari, Butru Jamuda, Sujam Jojo Chandra Mohan Bandia, Junia Bari (Deonwa), and Mangru Bandia.

Chandu was raped by them and was left as they thought she was dead. After this they killed Chandu's parents, and her five brothers and sisters. It is also believed that before being killed Chandu's mother was also raped. All the people, who attacked and killed Chandu's family members were intoxicated.

Bagun, her brother and Lalita, her sister survived because they were staying at a relative home. The village Munda is her relative and was not present on that day. Chandu first informed her maternal uncles. After much persuasion she lodged on F.I.R. at the nearest Police Station. Six people were arrested by Police and six were still absconding.

Since this incident she has not gone to her village. Her agricultural land is looked after by Munda. One out of the twelve accused, Mangru is her distant relative, who was forced to indulge in the crime, failing which he was threatened to be killed.

Chandu has been provided a room at Yatri Niwas by district administration. She has also been provided with a body-guard, Jaysri Banra, since she is the only witness to the incident. Chandu says that she still receives threats and is being asked to withdraw the case. Wherever she has to go, she is accompanied by her body-guard.

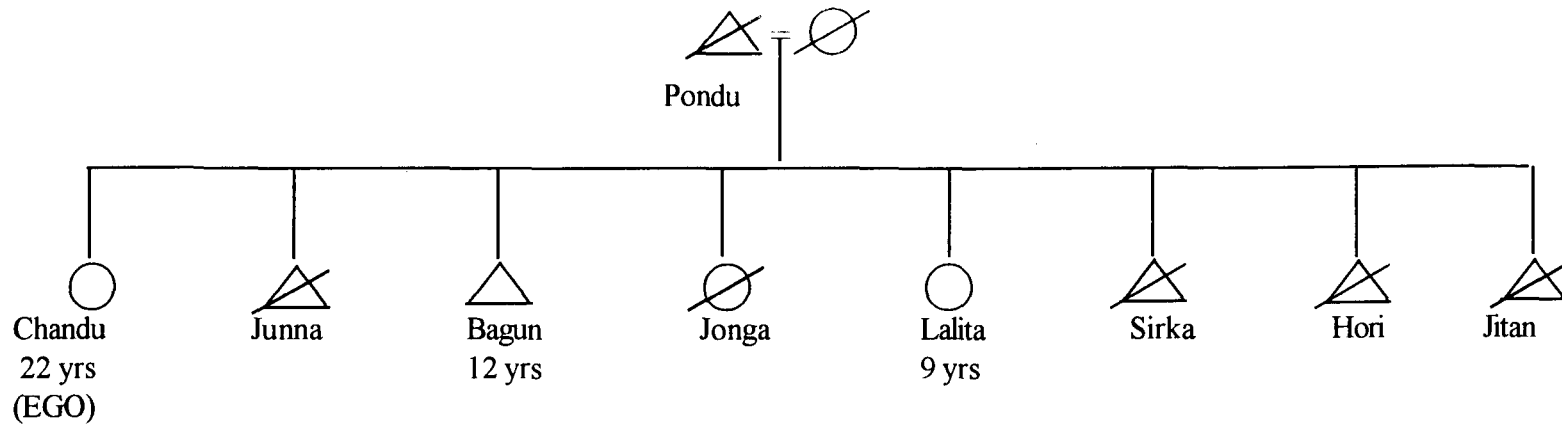
However, she complains that she is never informed of any trial dates and says that nothing has happened since then.

She does not believe in witchcraft and never before in her family was anyone accused of witchcraft. Now she wants to sell all her village property and never wants to return to Paria. Chandu believes that the motive behind this killing was to grab her land by the relatives.



*Chandu Bandia, a survivor of Paria witch-hunt massacre incident*

## Genealogy of Chandu Bandia



# All the dead persons were killed in Paria Witch-hunt Massacre

*Are accusers? Were they released?*

#### **Case-IV**

Name	<b>Sona Muni Kudada</b>
Age	22 yrs.
Village	Chimnihatu

Sona Muni Kudada is the daughter of an accused witch. One day the villagers attacked her home and killed her father. However, her mother managed to escape the assault. Currently she is staying in Jamshedpur with her mother and two brothers and is attached to Free Legal Aid Society.

When I contacted her, she did not respond to me and said what has happened with her, has been narrated by her in Seminar. Enough has been written about her and now she does not want to speak.

Nevertheless, what I could gather was that three out of six accused (witch-hunters) have managed to get bail and are now threatening Sona Muni, to withdraw the case. She has been advised by the police to put on application in the court for the same that the bail granted to these three witch-hunters should be revoked.

#### **Case-V**

In Baugutu village six members of a family were killed, on charges of witchcraft. The villagers believed that women members of this family were witches and had been causing deaths and misfortunes to many families in the village.

The six members killed are Sohrai Munda (60 yrs) his wife Jatiani (55 yrs.) . Widowed daughter Gurubari (35 yrs), Young unmarried daughter Chitu (22 yrs.) and two children of Gurubari.

Gurubari was suspected as a witch. The village Deonwa revealed that Gurubari had caused death of Rode Munda's (village headman) son, three years ago. His second son Dindu had been suffering from sickness for a few days. Gurubari was accused for this too. The Deonwa revealed to Rode Munda that if he did not kill the witch, she would kill his entire family. Rode Munda then decided to eliminate Gurubari. A village Panchayat was called and in this panchayat they decided to kill Gurubari and her family members.

However, police suspects that it was because of tension existing between Gagan Munda and Sahrai Munda, over some 'Kusum' tree. Police says that certain vested interests of grabbing the property of Sahrai Munda can not be ruled out as well.

And it was not possible unless the entire family was killed.

Police has lodged case against sixteen villagers. However, most of the villagers did not speak on this matter. (Source, Pinaki Ranjan, Journalist, Ispat Mail).

## **Case-VI**

A 50 years old Lalita Mudi of Lakritola hamlet of Tilaitand village (Thana Nimidih) was killed by villagers.

The villagers believed that Lalita was a witch. The people suspected that if she kept her hand on any child, either the child became severely ill or died. A child was suffering from prolonged illness, at Lalita's neighbour hood. When the family members of the child consulted Deonwa, he said it to be the act of a witch. Since Lalita was a religious lady and was suspected of being a witch, she was mercilessly beaten and killed by the fellow-villagers.

## **Case-VII**

In 1991, Mangu Hembram, village Ruchau (Kuchai Thana) was killed by a few villagers. Mangu Hembram was suspected of being a witch (Male). The Case is registered in Kuchai Police Station under P.S. case number 13-97, dated 16-5-91.

According to this case, Mangu Hembram, worked as a bonded labour/male servant of Gura Soy. On May 15 th he slept near the cattle-shed of his owner's house. Early in the morning he was found dead. The police investigated the matter, especially the Deonwa because he was the neighbour. Police got no clue in this murder case.

However, after five years of this incident one of the villagers claimed that he was a witness to Mangu's murder. A few villagers wrote a letter to re-open the case. It was later revealed that one of the Deonwas of village, with help of a few villagers had killed Mangu, as the Deonwa accused Mangu for witchcraft and alleged that Mangu is causing sickness to his Natini (daughter's daughter). Mangu was suspected as a 'Male Witch'.

The villagers told the police that after a few years of Mangu's murder. Deonwa himself revealed that he had killed Mangu for being a male witch. (Source Kuchai P.S. and local newspapers).

## **Case -VIII**

In village Kuchibeda, Krishna Purty was killed by a few villagers. The wife of Krishna has lodged a complain in Noamundi Police Station, where she has suspected that her husband has been killed after abduction.

Police got no cooperation from the village even though after fifteen days, his dead body in a very bad state was found.

Krishna purty was accused of being a male witch by Mathura Purty. Muthura's daughter was sick for several days. When consulted, Deonwa revealed that Krishna's black magic was the reason behind his daughter's sickness. A few villagers also alleged the same. After this allegation the news of Krishna being a male witch, spread like wildfire.

Several times Mathura and Krishna had a hot exchange over this. A meeting was called by Mathura Purty-and it was here that they (villagers) decided to eliminate Kirshna, as he would bring more misfortune to village inhabitants.

Several villagers is an inebriated condition called Krishna out and after beating him mercilessly decapitated him.

Police has registered a case and arrested a few villagers. (Source-Aawaj dt. 16.11.96).

### **Case -IX**

In Narangbeda village. Parvati Gope along with four other family members was killed.

Parvati Gope was accused as a witch. Many children fell sick at a time and due to lack of medicinal facilities, a few died of this sickness. The village Deonwa, attributed the cause behind this sickness and deaths to witchcraft. The Deonwa revealed that Parvati had caused these deaths.

A village Panchayat was called and it was decided in the meeting that Parvati along with her family members had to be eliminated, since it was believed that if it was not done, more deaths would occur due to Parvati's black magic.

However, police have a different story in this incident. The police says that the Deonwa wanted to have a sexual relationship with Parvati. He had already attempted it once, but could not succeed in his lustful wish. since then he was hunting for the right moment to settle his scores with Parvati. And the death of the few children provided him the opportunity to accuse Parvati of being a witch and causing the death.

On the other hand, villagers strongly believe in Parvati's being a witch. (Source-Hindustan 12.10.95).

*No conclusion of this chapter?*

## **Chapter - VI**

### **COUNTER WITCHCRAFT**

## CHAPTER VI

### Counter Witchcraft

It is difficult to trace the antiquity of disease in human society. But, our experiences with life tell us that disease (s) must have been there since the emergence of mankind. And the need and the nature of man compelled him to look for the means to overcome the disease afflicting him. These means are what we call as 'cures'. So, for every disease faced by man, there was an endeavour to find a cure. Thus, disease and cure have been the twin companions of man right since antiquity.

Further, the intertwined concepts of disease and cure are directly related to the amount of knowledge or the world-view possessed by the human beings as members of a community. In other words, no abnormality in human condition can be called a disease unless the community identifies it as such (e.g. Thonga's belief that stomach worms are for digestion). Interestingly enough, there is no such known community where no abnormality is identified as a disease. This again goes to prove that disease is an inevitable truth of human life. And this is an everlasting truth, for the greater the knowledge possessed by man, the greater is the number of diseases identified by him. Consequently, the greater is the search for cures.

These twin concepts of disease and cure as essentials of culture, have been the subject matter of anthropological studies, especially of medical anthropologists. When diseases and cures are dealt with within the biomedical parlance, it is known as 'materia-medica'. But, when it falls outside the purview of biomedical science and is dealt with by indigenous societies in their own ways, it is known as 'materia magica'.

The aims in both the cases are one, i.e., to find a way to eliminate or overcome the disease. In the former, this goal is achieved by the trained doctors, based on scientific knowledge and principles. In the latter, it is achieved by the specialists of magico-religious world, based on beliefs and rituals.

Coming to the present study, witchcraft may not be called a disease in itself. Nevertheless, wherever present, witchcraft is believed to be a potential means to create abnormalities or diseases, consequently leading to death . And therefore, once again, search for the means to counter the effects or attacks of witchcraft. This is what is called as counter witchcraft.

Like the twin existence of disease and cure, counter witchcraft is practiced wherever witchcraft has its presence. Here counter witchcraft has been dealt as medicine in itself.

For the specialists who use magico-religious means to break the supposed witch's spell, different terminologies have been used. He or she may be called the wise man/woman, white witch, anti-witch, cunning man/woman, medicine man/woman, magician , witch-finder or witch-doctor. James Murrell, a famous Essex 'cunning man' (d. 1860), used to refer to himself as 'Master of witches.' (Jacqueline Simpson, 1995). Simpson (1995) coined the term 'witch-buster', inspired by the American terms 'crimebuster' and ghostbuster.

However, in this present study we have used the word 'witch-doctor' for the specialist who neutralises the effect of witches' attack and provides a cure to the patients. His job is not only to find the cause behind the suffering, but also, by seeing the symptoms of the suffering, to provide a cure to the sufferer. He works as a doctor to the witch attack and counters the effects of witchcraft. To my mind, any study on

witchcraft is not complete, unless we talk of counter-witchcraft, since it provides a clearer and more elaborate understanding of the topic.

The witch-doctor among the Hos is locally called 'Deonwa'. Deonwa is derived from the word 'Devyagya', meaning the one who is considered suitable by Dev (God).

Another term used for witch-doctor is 'Soka' the etymological explanation of which could not be provided by any villager. However, Soka is considered more powerful than Deonwa. There are very few Sokas in the area.

The phenomenon of counter witchcraft in the community is considered as a mechanism of doing welfare to the society. Unlike witchcraft, it is held positively by the community. The villagers not only know who the Deonwas are but also talk freely about them. However, the villagers are comparatively reluctant in talking about witchcraft as against counter witchcraft. The training procedures and the curing methods of the witch-doctors are well known to most of the inhabitants. But my presence as well as inquisitiveness in Deonwas, were not appreciated at initial stage. My intentions were always suspected though it was not a hindrance especially my taking notes and genealogical tables, which a few of the Deonwas referred to as 'Kursinama.' The then I.A.S. Mr. Amit Khare had warned that if any death or harassing of females in the name of witchcraft occurs in any village, witch-doctors concerned would also be punished. It was this fear psychosis that made them reluctant in revealing anything regarding the apprenticeship or methods of curing I was even deprived of photographs. As they believed that I would cause them harassment by the district administration. But when the purpose of my visit and inquiry was narrated up to the point of their satisfaction, a slow and gradual flow of information began .

However, even after having gained a respectable amount of acceptance by the villagers, the secret mantras or incantations were not revealed freely. Of the twelve Deonwas of the area whom I met, only three helped me in recording and writing of the secret mantras. Nevertheless, two mantras which I recorded were not narrated in detail. Since these two mantras are in the traditional Ho language, few of the villagers as well as some of my Ho friends living outside expressed their limitation in translating them. Some others altogether refused to listen to the mantras, since these dealt with the supernatural world and the witches. The Mantras are lyrical in form and have a traditional tune, the playing of which they believed would bring bad omen. the first mantra is for detecting the cause behind the suffering of the patient and the second one is for invoking of the Bongas.

Apart from these constraints, I did not experience any major hindrance in collecting data on counter-witchcraft.

Almost in every village, the presence of Deonwa can be found, or in other words, every village has its own Deonwa(s). Everyone cannot become a Deonwa, since it is a wide spread belief that those who have been chosen and blessed by the Bongas can become Deonwas. Hence, unlike witches, Deonwas are treated with reverence and respected by the villagers. He is considered magico-religious specialist of the community. However, for the religious rituals every village has its own 'Deuri' (priest) who performs all the religious ceremonies-and the post is hereditary. The Deonwas are made. It is not a hereditary post. Nevertheless, the Deonwas also have a good knowledge of religious world. They are not only the healers but are also the repository of religious and supernatural world.

There are no essential prerequisite for becoming a Deonwa, in the sense, that anyone can choose to pursue the apprenticeship.

Anyone who wishes to go under the apprenticeship approaches the Guru (Deonwa). The guru teaches him (disciple) the mantras and makes him acquainted with the magico-religious cosmos. The training goes for long, but there is no fixed period of training. It entirely depends upon the disciples ability to memorise and recite the magical chants taught by the guru. But it is only part of the whole process of 'becoming' Deonwa. The training usually takes place at night at guru's house, where a Chabutra (platform) is erected, considered as the worshipping place. The trainees may bring offerings to be made. The guru chants the mantras and trainees repeat it. The chanting and repetition of mantras of different nature goes till guru thinks about one's successful performance of the mantras. On every sunday or on tuesday in some cases, guru beats the trainees with hunter made of 'Sawai' grass. The disciples propitiate and invoke the Bongas. In this process, one comes into trance. While in trance, when guru beats them with hunter the trainees do not feel the pain and no imprint appears on their bodies. The villagers as well as the Deonwas say that it is because of the Bongas wish.

The most important part of the apprenticeship is 'trance'. It is believed that only he who is preferred by the Bonga comes into trance. In other words, the community considers it (coming into trance) as a 'wish' and 'blessings' of God. Everyone who is going under training, is not blessed by the Bonga. Very few of the trainees become Deonwas.

In the state of trance, the trainee Deonwa is out of his normal mental state. He behaves strangely, runs here and there, goes to jungle and so on. In the jungle, he is guided by the Bongas in gaining the knowledge of herbal medicines and the nature and symptoms of different diseases. During trance, he is possessed by Bongas. In this, "Altered state of consciousness" the Deonwa appears to be a medium of Bongas who guide him to get familiar with supernatural world and ethnomedical

plants as well. The experiences and expressions of the possession are culturally conceived in the community. It has a social context and the interpretation of 'possession' is culture specific.

Sometimes, it is the guru's worshipped deity who possesses the disciple and makes him move towards the jungle. In the jungle he is given insight into ethnomedical plants and their uses. When the trainee Deonwa performs the successful incantation of mantras, tried by the guru, his last rites of apprenticeship is considered complete. The guru declares him as Deonwa and he is accepted by the society.

On the contrary, Soka's training procedure is not like that of the Deonwa. The villagers as well as witch-doctors hold the belief that Soka is not only chosen by Bongas, he is also trained by them. The Bonga(s) possess him and direct him to perform pujas and teach him the etiology of diseases and its cure. During this period, he refrains from taking food prepared by others, cooks for himself, and does not take the traditional drink. When he is possessed by the Bonga(s) he appears like a mentally upset individual. But when the training ends, he comes back to his normal state of mind. The community has a strong conviction that since he is chosen and trained by Bonga(s), his specialization into the art of counter-witchcraft is of a greater degree than that of the Deonwa.

After the completion of training, the Deonwas or Sokas have a different status in the society. Though they live ordinary lives, doing agricultural and household chores like everyone else, they perform the role of specialist when they are approached to cure the patient. They are considered as a link between the human world and the supernatural world.

There are different methods of curing which are employed by Deonwas to detect witches and their attacks.

One method employed by Deonwa, to detect the witches' attack, is by putting mustard oil into urine. The urine of the patient is taken into a bottle or some other object and is brought to Deonwa. Deonwa then takes it into 'dona' made of leaves and pours few drops of mustard oil into it. The Deonwa during the whole process recites mantras. The Deonwa sees the picture of the responsible witch or the Bonga who has been directed by witches to cause harm.

Another method is by 'seeing Sindoor'. Either the patient himself brings the sindoor or one of the family members or relatives brings the sindoor wrapped in leaves. Before taking it to the Deonwa, the Sindoor is touched against the patient's body. The Deonwa holds the sindoor leaf with both his hands. The position of the hands is such that both the palms are joined together facing the sky and the sindoor leaf is placed over the fingers. Then he starts calling out the names of all Bongas one by one including that of the Dandi Bonga. In this process, the umbool\*(shadow) of the witch or the Bonga sent by her to cause harm, appears in the sindoor. If the Bonga is instructed by any witch, 'he' reveals it to the Deonwa. In some cases the face of the witch itself may appear in the sindoor, when the name of Dandi-Bonga is called out.

Another method of detecting the witches' attack involves keeping of some Aarwa rice (rice from unboiled paddy) over two small bamboo sticks, which is then rubbed over by the Deonwa. The Deonwa starts calling out the names of Bongas (including Dandi). As soon as the responsible name is called out, one of the sticks reduces in size. Thus the responsible Bonga or witch is identified.

Still another method of identifying the witch causing harm involves moving of the palms over Aarwa rice kept in a 'soop' (winnowing basket). It is known as 'Hata goso' (to rub rice in a winnowing basket)

for purposes of divination, e.g. to determine what spirit is inflicting harm or someone. Hata means 'soop'). While the Deonwa does this, a man is made to sit on a 'peedha' (square stool) kept over a lota . As soon as the name of the Bongas (including witches) causing harm is called out, the peedha starts rotating. To prevent himself from falling, the man sitting upon it places both his hands on the ground.

In yet another method, the responsible witch or her directed Bonga is identified by a person coming into Rom (trance) when the Deonwa perform the 'Hatagosa'. The person who comes into trance is known to the society and works as a helper to the Deonwa. The Deonwa keeps on chanting the mantras while performing 'Hatagosa'. Then he starts calling out the names of Bongas one by one. The man in trance sees the 'Umbool' (shadow) of the troubling witch/Bonga. The man who comes into trance is, at the beginning of the Hatagoso, given some rice which he holds tightly in one of his hands. And as soon as his possession by the Bonga begins, the hand holding the rice starts shaking, which is then followed by the shaking of his body. In this way, the person who comes into Rum , identifies the Bonga behind the suffering of the patient.

The person who comes into 'Rum' is also supposed to have received the blessing of the Bongas, to assist in the ritual of identifying witches or Bongas sent by the witches. While performing the Hatagoso. Sometimes more than one person are made to hold 'Aarwa rice' or one of their hands. Sometimes only one person comes into trance and in some cases more than one are possessed by Bonga to be in trance. The one who comes into trance is considered to be liked by the Bonga. The 'coming into trance', is one major feature of 'Hatagoso ritual' and whenever there is need of assisting the Deonwa in Hatagosa ritual, these identified people are called. One such case of people coming into trance is cited in case histories (Case-8).

Yet another method as practiced by Satishji (a Deonwa) is that one boy is asked to bring a lota of water after taking bath. He is made to sit before him. the paraphernalia of the ritual includes sindoor, Akshat (Aarwa rice), flower, sweets and incense sticks or 'Dhoop'. The aarwa rice is kept on the floor and the lota is placed over it. After this, the different possible causes behind the disease are written such as

*Dhokhe* (witch), *Bikhe* (poison) , *Saanp* (snakes) *Bicchu* (scorpio), *Bhut* (ghost/spirit), *Bimari* (disease) *Ban* (arrow), *Apna Abhichar*, *Paraya Abhichar* (Black magic).

Then he starts reciting the mantras:-

*Chal Chal Swarg Patal Chal, Charo Aatal Chal*

*Damdi ke Sona, Charo Kona*

*Ipare Chakva, Upare Chakvi,*

*Hath chale mite chale, Balmukund chale*

*Mahadev ke pujan Lathi*

*Mai Swari, Baap tore godha*

*Jo na chale, Bhansoor tora Marda*

*Dhokhe Bikhe samp bicchu chal*

*Bhut Bimari Ban chal*

*Apna paraya kiya karayh abhichar chal*

*Amuk ke tan me jaun bikh ho tone per chal*

*Yahan ki Bidhyn na kamru kumakhya ki Bidhya*

*Naina yogini sidh guru ke bande paon.*

(move, move, move, move towards heaven, move towards four corners, damri's gold towards all corners, this side is a male ruddy goose and that side a female ruddy goose, hands move, Balmukund (deity) move for worship of Maha dev, your mother is a pig. your fathers an ass, one who does not move. Move witches

poison, snakes, bicchu, ghost, disease, move towards the cause of disease, it is the knowledge of Kamru Kamakhya (a place in Assam known for tantra Vidhya), Naina Yogini/Jogini disciple of guru.

Slowly and gradually the boy whose hand is kept beneath the written mantra, starts shaking, and stops above the cause responsible for suffering. This is repeated for three times to get confirmed. If the witch is responsible the hand stops over Dhokhe—and thus, the cause is identified.

Once the detecting ritual has been performed to identify the witch responsible for the suffering, the Deonwa turns to the curing procedure. If the Bongas have caused suffering independently, they demand certain things like, puja or some sacrifice to be done to please them. They also reveal why they have caused suffering and accordingly their demands are met.

But to neutralize the witches spell, a separate method is employed by the Deonwa. The paraphernalia of this method includes, vermilion, Chengna (a small chicken) hayar (Ground powder of wooden ember) and brick, statue made of soil etc. The Deonwa performs puja at patient's home (if the patient is very sick, puja is done at his bedside) by chanting Bandana (prayer) mantras. While chanting the mantras the Deonwa holds the Chengna in both his hands clubbed together. With chanting of mantras, he comes into trance.

After the invoking mantras, he along with his assistant goes to a separate place, where the puja continues by sacrificing the chengna and the offering is made. The statue is kept on the puja spot and blood of the sacrificed chicken is offered. Having done this he does not come back to the patient's home, since it is believed that malignant spell of witches has been taken out with the Deonwa himself. And if he comes

back to the patient's house, it will bring another misfortune caused by the witch. Before going out to a separate place after performing Bandana, the door of the patient's room is shut (without bolting). The patient then is considered to be cured from the witch's spell.

The villagers as well as the Deonwas are of the opinion that the sacrifice and the puja works as a 'Ram-Baan' to the patient. At the sametime, it gives them an ultimate satisfaction of being cured by the method and the specialist which form an integral part of their society.

Sikandar Pingua, aged 30 had been sick for a few days. The village Deonwa Dibi (village Ruia) was consulted. It was believed by the family members and neighbours that he was being harassed by Mindi's ghost. Mindi was a local unmarried girl, who was impregnated by someone. The villagers were very reluctant in naming the person. She died during labour pain. The inhabitants hold that to whosoever was possessed by her, fell severely sick. After Dibi identified the cause he had to perform puja. Meanwhile, the Munda who also practices as medical practitioner (for which he does not have required degree) started medicating him. This infuriated Dibi and he did not perform the puja. But after two days when no improvement was witnessed in Sikandar's condition, Dibi was once again asked to continue his ritual. He performed the puja in the evening which I witnessed with the permission of the family members. Dibi had held a \*chengna in his both the hands and was chanting mantras and Bandana in a rhythmic tune, near Sikandar's bedside.

### **Mantras:- No. 1**

#### **Invoking Mantra**

*Munde Sang Mochri, Sarag re bishoy, Sarag re,  
re aai re biso nam re, aai re biso nam,  
Mokopri Sang Gide sang Mochri, Sarag re bishoy,*

*Sarag re, aai re biso nam re, aai re biso nam,  
Bete Sang Gula Sang Mochri, Sarag re bishoy,  
Sarag re, biso nam re, aai re biso nam,  
Pota Sang Komle sang Mochri, sarag re bishoy  
Sarag re, aai re biso nam re, aai re biso nam,  
Komle Sang unta Sang Mochri, Sarag re,  
Re aai re biso nam, re aai re biso nam,  
Pota Sang unta Sang Machri, Sarag re bishoy,  
Sarag re, aai re biso nam re, aai re biso nam,  
Dori sang Tokna sang mochri, sarag re bishoy,  
Sarag re, aai re biso name re, aai re biso nam,  
Dori sang Pada sang mochri, sarag re bishoy  
Sorag re, aai re biso nam re, aai re biso nam,  
Talka Sang ongli sang mochri, sarag re bishoy,  
Sarag re, aai re biso nam re, aai re biso nam,  
Rita sang Ongli sang Machri, sarag re bishoy,  
Sarag re, aai re biso nam re, aai re biso nam.  
Bome sang Garia sang Mochri, Sarag re bishoy  
Sarag re, aai re biso nam re, aai re biso nam,  
Bome Sang Jang Sang Mochri, sarag re bishoy  
sarag re, aai re biso nam re, aai re biso nam.*

## **Mantra No. 2**

### **Bandana Mantra**

*Ise ch Jodhre...najar bana kare, najar chadan kare  
alang bandana devta, alang bandana matui,  
Dayen kare bandana, alang bandana nesedi,*

*Rankni kare bandana, alang bandana nesedi,  
Dandi Kare bandana, alang bandana devta, alang bandana  
nesedi,  
Bajigar bonga kare bandana devta, alang bandana matui,  
Mangilal bong kare bandana, alang bandana tumari,  
alang bandana devta,alang bandana kite,  
Jugni kare bandana, bandana devta, alang bandana mai  
bandana tumari aare devta, alang bandana maiya,  
Bameyapat kare bandana, alang bandana matui,  
Dindi kuwar Narsimhpat re bandana devta,  
alang bandana matui  
Ande buru Lotipat re, bandana devta, alang bandana matui  
bandana tumari, alang bandana kite.  
Jugni aati kare bontana, alang bandana kite,  
alang bandana mai,  
Charpukri Narsimhpat, alang bandana devta,  
alang bandana mai,  
Har .... bhaguti, bandana devta, alang bandana mai,  
are bandana, alang bandana mai,  
Ase chinta kare bandana, alang bandana kite,  
Ase .... kare bandana devta, alang bandana mai,  
Chenta kare bandana, alang bandana devta,  
alang bandana kite.  
Nanamgutu Bengapat bandana devta, alang bandana kite,  
Tamdiagoda Dariadas bandana devta,  
alang bandana kite,  
Burungi paremay Hare kada bhaguti, alang bandana devta,  
alang bandana kite.....*

*benebandlang bandana kite,  
Kekur darmay renkatam churdu, bandana tumari,  
alang bandana kite,  
Har devta Bajigar bhaguti, bandana tumari,  
alang basdana kite, alang bandana devta,  
alang bandana nasadi,  
Nage churdu kore bandana , alang bandana kite,  
Nadekada churdu kore bandana tumari  
bandana kite,  
Garakaturi kore bandana, alang bandana devta,  
alang bandana kite,  
Aadebhaguti kade re, bandana tumari,  
alang bandana kite,  
Rochonkada re bandana devta,  
alang bandana kite.... .*

After performing this ritual, he along with a villager, went a separate place, where he sacrificed the Chengna' and dropped a few drops of blood. Puja was also performed with Sindoor . Dibi directed the spirit that since her demand is met, she should leave Sikandar now. I could not witness and photograph it properly as I was told to stay at a distance and owing to darkness I was not able to see it properly. It was later narrated to me by the Dibi's assistant.

On the very next day I found Sikandar at his field. When I enquired about his condition, he said that after the puja he was fine and there was improvement in his condition. The family members kept mum on enquiry whether Mindi was directed by some witch to cause harm , but the neighbours opined that it was a mischief of a Dandi. The paraphernalia used by Dibi was the same as used by others for neutralizing witches' spell.

Turam Banra, aged 31 years, narrates that once he was returning to Ruia from a neighbouring village and saw a female with an infant near Bagun pond. Turam says that he was drunk and could not identify the female. He wondered who the female was. After reaching home, he slept. But next day his condition became very serious. He narrated the incident to his family members. A Deonwa was consulted who revealed that it was the witch who had made him sick, but after puja and sacrifice, he was cured.

In another incident, few females were mourning the death of a small child (aged 2 months approximately). The only words that were audible were 'Dandi-Dandi. On enquiry, it was revealed that some witch had caused the death of that child. My interpreter Sanatan narrated that the child died suddenly last night. At noon, the child was cremated. The next day early in the morning, when I reached that house, it was revealed that some witch had caused the death of that child. My interpreter Sanatan narrated that the child died suddenly last night. At noon, the child was cremated. The next day early in the morning, when I reached that house it was revealed by a few villagers that they saw two hairy dogs at the gravesite, who were trying to sniff at graveyard. Those villagers chased the dogs. At a long distance, two lantern like things were seen by the villagers. It is a belief among the inhabitants that witches were on hunt for their prey. Those two dogs were certainly witches. The family members were also of the same view.

The very next day of this incident an old lady who had gone to the jungle early in the morning to collect woods and was coming back from there after a both, collapsed as soon as she reached near the door of her house. Munda was approached for treatment. One Soren Lohar had witnessed that around 3 A.M. in the morning, when he had woken up, he saw two young boys aged 10 to 12, clad in white clothes were carrying

a stretcher like thing. But after sometime they disappeared.

There surfaced a conflicting view on this incident. Few villagers were of the opinion that it was the mischief of 'Jhanta Bhoots (live ghosts) who were forced to vacate neighbouring village after puja. Since the woman had gone to the nearby jungle early in the morning, she was attacked/ possessed by jhanta bhoots. On the contrary, some villagers were of the view that someone might have directed them to cause harm.

A summon was sent among villagers to gather at the old lady's house, where Bagun and Dibi would detect the cause behind the infant's death and the old lady's sickness. When I reached there with Sanatan and Billu, it was informed that Dibi was overdrunk and Raudia ( man who comes into trance and assists village Deonwa) had been called to assist Bagun at the Hatagoso method. But Raudia refused to do it. The villagers say that Raudia refused it because there was a tension between these two families. Another man from Nizam toli was called. In the meantime, a few villagers wanted me to go to my camp as it was not sure whether the ritual would be performed or not, as the man from Nizamtoli had not come. The villagers who had gathered there were having Diyeng. Around 10.30 P.M. or 11. P.M. Santanan asked me to return, as the ritual would not be performed that night. But early in the next morning, I was told that the female had died though the puja was performed and it was found that the jhanta bhoots had caused this and were asking for sacrifice. The Deonwa had promised to do so the next morning. Since the female died, no sacrifice was made. She was cremated at noon-

The villagers say that someone might have sent these spirits to cause deaths. When that old lady had gone to the jungle, which was her routine work, those spirits might have attacked her.

There are a large number of cases, which the villagers would narrate, where either a witch has acted independently or has sent her captured spirits to fulfill her malignant wish. Many a time, witchdoctors have detected it and cured the victims. Many-a-time, before anything could be done by witchdoctors, the victims died.

The twin concepts of witchcraft and counter witchcraft are an integral part of the larger belief system of society, which has deep roots in the thought process of community members. These belief systems not only have an impact on other aspects of social organization but at the sametime, are manifested in the daily life activities.

The Deonwa's activity receives meaning not only in relation to the sufferer's/patient's world view but is significant also to the fellow members of the community. While in trance or possession, the Deonwa dwells in the supernatural world to identify the cause behind sufferings of the patient. The 'calling out the names of different Bongas (spirits /deity) involves his dwelling in the other world. But it does not dissociate him from this world, where he is living. Rather the outer world represents the cause of events in this present world. This appreciation (understanding) is shared in the community and people may be specialists (Deonwa) to a greater or lesser degree. At the same time this shared understanding without a surrounding environment can not be manifested. In other words, there can be no witchdoctor without a surrounding society and culture.

The Bongas' existing in the society, as manifested in their belief system, either act independently or are directed by witches to cause harm. The fact that Bongas exist and are made to cause harm to others' needs to be judged in the community's held belief. If the spirits exist in the surrounding environment and are captured and made to bring suffering and disrupt the health of inhabitants, the role of Deonwas

becomes very important, who in trance contact with the other world to detect and neutralize their attack. The Deonwas not only have the understanding of this phenomenon but they also act upon it. The society bestow the responsibility of performing rituals to counter the effects of witchcraft.

Since the Bonga is capable of causing things to happen in the human world, it assumes the notion of a 'power'. The Deonwa's work chiefly consists of harnessing this power, for which they have been blessed by the God. Though, it is also harnessed by witches who capture Bongas (spirits) to fulfill their malevolent wishes the community holds that harnessing of this power by Deonwa(s) is blessed by the God for doing welfare to the society. And this enables them to counter witches spell. However, some witches become so powerful in this 'harnessing mechanism of power' that they pose threats to the witchdoctors even.

The trance of the witchdoctors or specialists are different from the trance of the patient who is possessed by some spirit /ghost. The trance of the witchdoctor is the need of the hour and is directed towards providing relief to the patient from the abnormality. When the cure is sought, the Deonwa comes to his normal position, assuming the different roles to play like other community men. On the contrary, when any villager is possessed by same medium and comes to trance, it reflects the uncontrolled behaviour, for which a cure is must. The witch-doctor's experience and the ritualistic exercises are a service to the community in as much as they heal the patients.

Diagnosis and treatment of Deonwas are meant to provide a cure to the patient. At the sametime, this cure brings back the community's assurance of being cured by such specialists who have acquired power with the blessing of Bongas to perform positive functions. In other

words, Deonwas curing procedure not only deals with patients suffering and witches effect, but by providing relief they reinstate the belief of the present audience, who are the part of the society.

The ritualistic performance of the witchdoctors may seem irrational or of limited world view to the members of modern society, as the cause an effect relationship does not have a scientific foundation. The process has to be seen from the culturally perceived beliefs which have deep roots embedded in the social milieu. However, these rituals of curing have to be seen through the eyes and ears of the inhabitants of the society, wherever those are being performed or practiced. The entire paraphernalia of this phenomenon reflects a notion of totality, not only to be seen vis. a. vis. belief systems and environmental surrounding but also with other aspects of social organization. These rituals of Deonwas express the need and feelings of the community members by restoring the patients health. The villagers say that the Deonwas' diagnosis and treatment provide them a satisfaction of being treated by community's specialists. It could well be understood in this manifestation, when they say that since the cause of suffering is in the society, cure must be sought in the society itself and by the person who is well versed with the social norms and beliefs and has a specialization of doing so. The Deonwa, as villagers hold, understands better than others, the symptoms and nature of diseases in the community.

Being a Deonwa, is probably the oldest profession in the community, covering the multiple roles combined in one, where as in modern society the role is played separately by doctors, psychotherapists, fortune tellers and so on. The role of magico-religious specialist is acquired by means of oral education process, which are accepted in the society.

The Deonwas with their supernatural power, not only cure the

patient of witch-victimization but are also able to make witches vulnerable. The belief goes that witches dance naked at graveyard and perform their magical prowess nakedly. There are many incidents when Deonwas have caught them in this state.

Satish Koda narrates his encounters with witches, whom he caught naked when they were indulged in group dance. He remembers that once, he saw two-or three females (exact numbers he does not remember) going naked near the Bhilawa tree at Balandia village. He took the cloths secretly and hid it on the Bhilawa tree, and came back to his house. He fell asleep and after sometime when he wake up, he remembered than he had hidden the cloths. When he went to the spot he found that one witch was standing naked near the Bhilawa tree. He said that it was not his intention to harm them and gave her their cloths. The witch did not say anything. The female, Satishji says, was Bagun Thathera's wife, a fellow villageman.

When asked why didnt they take their cloths from the tree, he says that witches do not go near the Bhilawa tree, for which he has no further explanation.

Another encounter he remembers is when he was a teacher at Jagannathpur. With the learned mantras, he called witches of the locality. All the witches including two males came naked. The witches argued that he had called them, but not called the old muslim lady, who was also a powerful witch. The witches further alleged that since the muslim lady was from a reputed and well-off family, he did not call her. Satishji called that old lady, who became very angry as she was well acquainted with Satishji.

Villagers recall many more such incidents , when Deonwas or Sokas have forced witches to come to the spot where rituals were being

performed by Deonwa (s) to detect the cause behind suffering of any patient-and it was found that such and such witch had caused the suffering.

Not only this the villagers also say that sometimes sokas from different regions (especially from Orissa) are invited to punish the witches. The villagers say that there are many Soka's who have licenses obtained from the state government or the district administration to perform this ritual and to find out who are the witches who have caused harm to the victim concerned.

### **Implications of Power Structure in Witchcraft**

Power is the capacity to participate effectively in a decision - making process (Robertson, 1977). It is all about who gets it, how it is obtained, how it is used and to what purposes it is put. In any community, those who enjoy power, have a distinct status in that community-and they perform their role accordingly.

The concept of power has been elaborated and analyzed by different thinkers. Here, the focus is to analyse the implications of power structure in witchcraft. The focus is put on the gain and control of power vis-a-vis witchcraft and counter witchcraft, and how society thinks them to be.

Having discussed the nature of witchcraft, and counter witchcraft, it becomes very important to know how these people acquire power in the society and how they guide the behaviour of fellow community men.

The gaining of supernatural power by both witches and witchdoctors has been discussed. The Ho society considers witchcraft in negative term i.e., it is meant to harm others. On the other hand, witchdoctors

rituals have a social sanction; in positive direction i.e. it is meant to cure victims of witches' attack.

Since witchdoctors are for the welfare of society and are supposed to have a link with supernatural world-they, for this, enjoy a remarkable status in the society. Their specialization as a healer gives them ample opportunity to play an active role in community.

On the contrary, witches do not enjoy such status and do not influence the decision making process of society. They are feared and they do not have any social back-up. The villagers say that there are witches who become so powerful in their magical manipulation that sometimes witchdoctors also fear them. However, whenever they are caught or detected for causing harm, the society takes very strong action against them.

Another aspect is of Gender consideration. As the Ho society is patrilineal and patripotestate, males enjoy a greater degree of authority than the females. Though females do take part in household decision making, they do not have any role to play in community's decision-making. And it is this aspect, which is very important. Deonwas play a greater role than the Dandis. Dandis are usually females-and it brings them to the receiving end. Any threat to the male ego from female leads to accusation of being a witch. The defence mechanism of weaker section collapses down. The accuser with the help of Deonwa, convinces the panchayat to take punitive action against the 'accused' Dandi.

While taking to so called accused witches, I also found that the accused witches always narrated this fact that the accuser with help of

pressure group, implicated them falsely. At the same time, the females of powerful individuals do not suffer this agony; they are not accused as witches. Nobody raises their fingers on them. The power of a Deonwa is assessed by his ability to manipulate supernatural forces. Their healing practices are a manifestation of this power. In this regard, some Deonwas are more powerful than the others. This differential control over the supernatural forces at times leads to inter-Deonwa rivalry. The death of late Raudia Budha is a case in point. Raudia Budha was a very powerful Deonwa of Ruia. His disciples, Bagun and Dibi are of the opinion that someone had hired a more powerful Deonwa to kill him. Thus, it was a case of inter-Deonwa rivalry. Some others believe it to be a case of Deonwa-Dandi rivalry.

The Deonwas usually do not indulge in malevolent act. The villagers are of the view that if any Deonwa starts practicing black magic, his power vanishes. And with the end of healing power, his social prestige also vanishes. He loses his influence over community. It has already been said that harnessing of supernatural power is done both by Deonwa and Dandi. But since, Deonwa is considered as a specialist, who neutralizes the effects of witches, his status, in society is more prominent than that of Dandi. Being the healer in community his opportunity to gain power is greater than that of the witches.

## Case histories of Deonwas

### Case I

Name	<b>Dibi Titilingye</b>
Age	50 years
Village	Ruia

Dibi is the most famous Deonwa of Ruia village. His grandfather Dibi came to Ruia from the village Gagri (near Chaibasa) Dibi's father was also a Deonwa. Dibi learnt the art of becoming Deonwa from Raudia Lohar. Due to some problem with his Guru Raudia he did not continue with him. Dadabuda was his another guru.

He learnt the mantras from guru. He says, one has to repeat and memories the mantras rigorously on every Sunday guru beats the disciple with hunter made of 'sawaigrass: This beating ritual is considered to be a test. During the training when guru recites the mantras, the trainee comes into trance. Here onething is very important to note that only those trainees come to trance (Rum), who are chosen by the Bongas (Gods). When one comes to trance, as Dibi says, Bongas come upon him and it is their blessing which leads one into trance.

Dibi says that he did not offer anything to his gurus, as Guudakshina (offering made to guru, after the completion of training). He did not learn anything from his father.

Almost every villager goes to Dibi whenever a problem arises. He does not take anything from the patients.

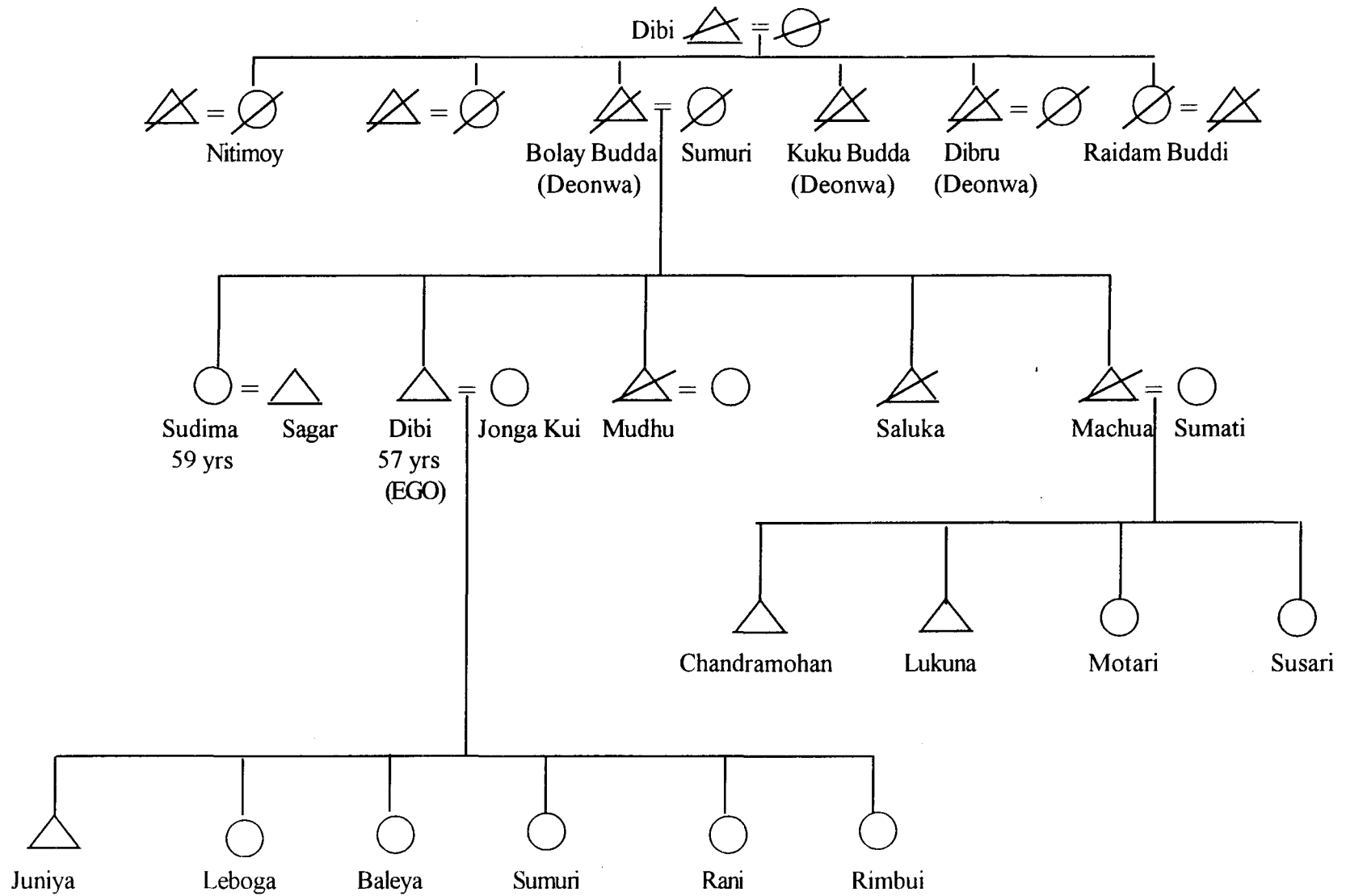
He detects the cause behind suffering (of patient) through divination. He recites the mantras and Bandana (invoking recitals) in a very rhythmic

tune. His worshipped God is Hanuman vir, lifting the mountain. During Dussehra he collects rice from villagers, prepares, 'Handia' (Diyeng) and offers it to his worshipped Bonga and other benevolent Bongas.

He says that he has no definite knowledge of witches' training process, but strongly believes in the presence and efficacy of witchcraft. He does not stop the witch activities, he only checks and counters her effects. He never had any direct clash with the witches. He also does not reveal the identity of witches, even though he detects their hands behind the suffering of their victims.

Previously he used to teach a few people but now he has stopped it since no one approaches him. During my stay at village almost everyday he was seen performing puja. His help is also sought by neighbouring villagers. He also helped me in recording two mantras, one being the Bandana and other being the detecting mantras.

# Genealogy of Dibi



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Note: At Present No Deonwa in the Family, except Dibi.



*Dibi*      ❁ *Deonwa*

## Case -II

Name	<b>Bagun Khandait</b>
Age	55 yrs. (approx.)
Village	Ruia

Bagun Khandait is another popular Deonwa of village Ruia. He learnt the art of becoming Deonwa from three gurus, Jitu Birua of Sandia village, Dubo Gope of Kalimati and Raudia Lohar of Ruia village. He spent six months under each of his gurus, which was in three different years. He says that all his gurus taught him the same mantras and rituals. On every Sunday guru beats them with hunter; he claims that he has still some imprints on his back (which he did not show).

He used to go to the guru with Aarwa rice, Sindoor (vermilion) and flower of Golchin. Guru makes a platform at his home and it is considered as temple (worshipping place). Bagun emphasises that everyone cannot become Deonwa, even though he is being taught by guru, but only those become Deonwa who are chosen by Bongas. From time to time the guru tests his disciples where disciples are required to perform successful display of mantras related to snakes, scorpions, Bongas etc.

During Durgapuja his last initiation of apprenticeship occurred (under each guru), where guru offered him blood of pigeon or duck, which was mixed with rice to eat. he offered one dhoti and one Ganjee (vests) to his gurus.

He says that through divination, when he comes into trance, he sees the power concerned behind suffering, even witches are seen if they are the cause of suffering. His method of curing is different. He

also gives local herbal medicines, but if it doesnot work, sacrifice and offering of small chicken is made.

When asked how he knows the power causing suffering he says that he invokes all the Bongas, by keeping Sindoor in his hand and the Bonga even Dandi Bonga, if named comes. How does he know the coming of Bonga who has caused harm? To this he asserts that the hands start trembling and he comes into trance. And during trance he finds out what they (Bongas) want and how they would be pleased. The Bongas, if sent by witches also reveal the name of witches.

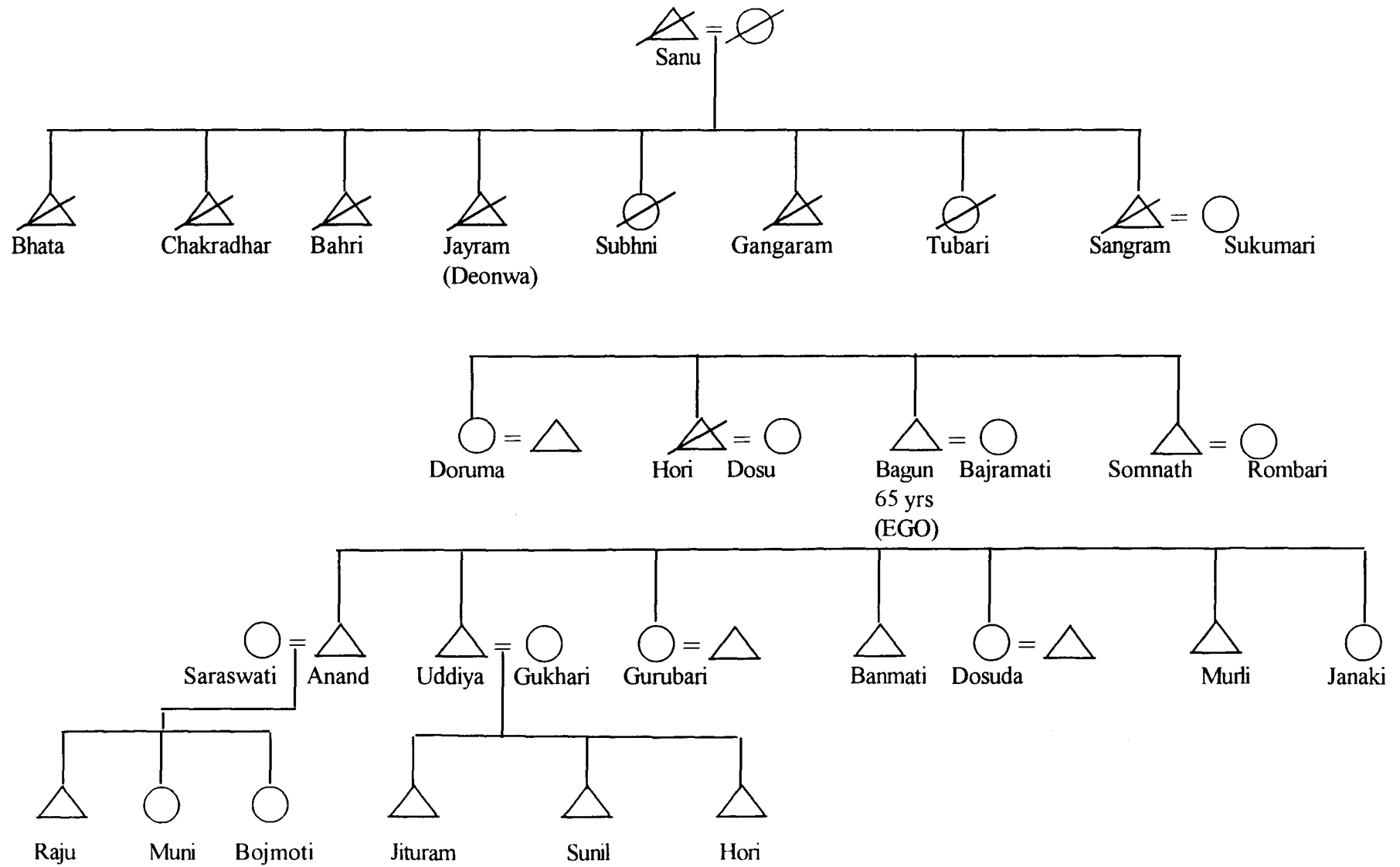
He says that witches do harass their victims and also know the art of transformation . Further he says that his worshipped Bonga, many-a-times captures the malevolent bongas who does not wish to come and then he comes to know about the cause of suffering of the patient.

He says that sometimes he and Dibi perform the puja together.



*( Standing)( L-R ) : Sanatan, Bagun,a Deonwa with the field worker*

# Genealogy of Bagun



### Case -III

Name            Satish Koda

Age             86 years

Village        Balandia

Satish Koda is a retired school teacher.

He stays at Balandia (his native place) with his son and his family. He has sufficient land to cultivate, which is looked after by his only son. Since his teens, he wanted to become a witch-doctor. He learnt the apprenticeship under Natwar Das, an oriya guru. When he was posted at Hazaribagh, he came in contact with Natwar Das. His guru taught him all the arts of Mantra and tantra. He lived very long with Natwar Das and under his supervision did 'Saadhna' to acquire magical power to cure the patients, suffering from supernatural and human agencies attacks.

He has completed the 'Saadhna' of Gayatri Mantra- and considers this mantra to be the most effective among all curing mantras. He has also compiled a small book of mantras, which was taught to him by his guru. He says that he did it to enrich the art of Deonwa apprenticeship, so as to enable the Ho Deonwas master the different mantras. He says that his guru was very powerful ojha, hence he wanted to propogate his knowledge to others.

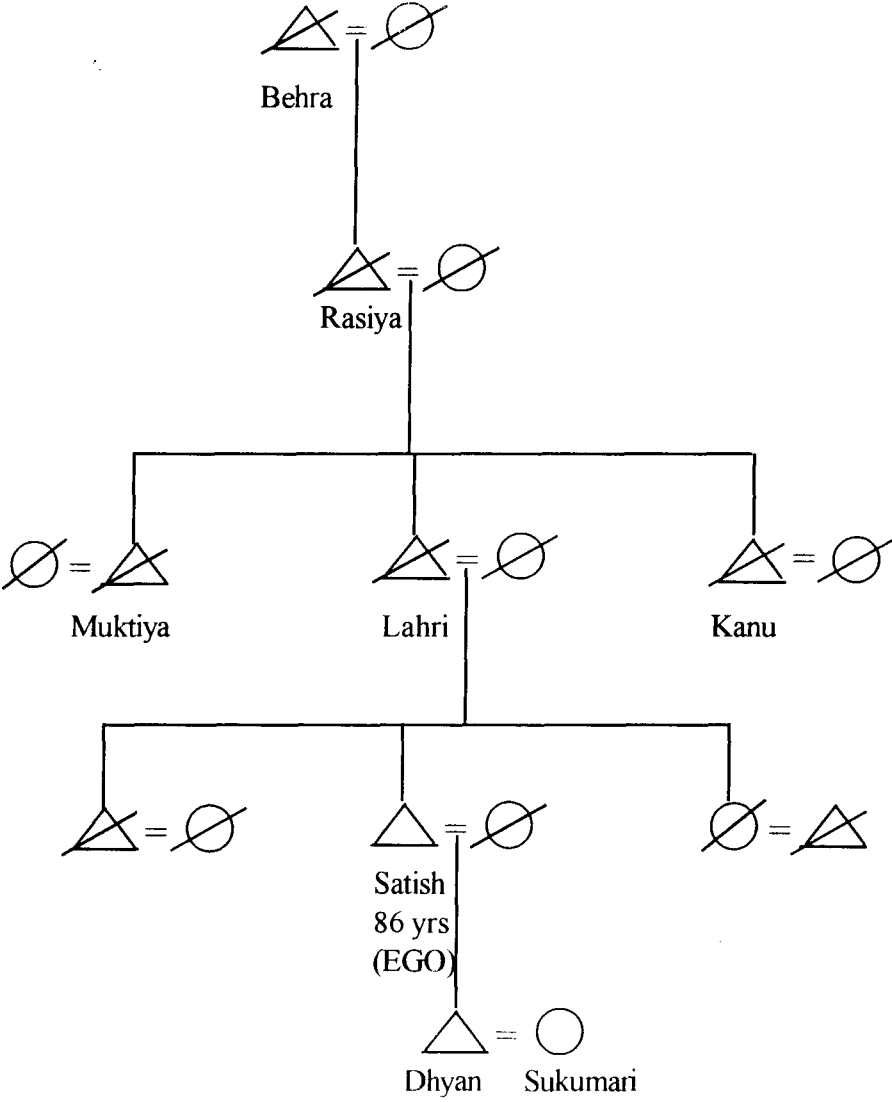
Now-a-days he doesnot practice the puja since he has become very old and has a minor attack of paralysis in his legs. However, whenever anyone comes to him, he only recites 'Gayatri Mantra' to cure the patient. He claims that he knows the art of transformation, especially into tiger but he is not able to perform it due to his illness.

He took my address as whenever he would come into contact with the person who could perform this, he would ask me to come and witness it. He knows a person who knows this art, but he did not reveal his identity.

He believes that almost in every village there are a few witches. Even in his village Balandia there are 6 to 10 witches or more, whom he knows. He presented me his book of mantras which he has compiled.

Satish Koda is very popular in the region. Not only the villagers of neighbouring villages know him, but he is known even in other distant areas. He has not taught this art to anyone. He wanted his son to learn this but the son is not interested.

# Genealogy of Satish Koda





*Satish Koda , a Deonwa with the field worker.*

#### **Case-IV**

Name            **Jadhav Khandait**

Age             36 years

Village        Ruia

Jadhav was trained as a Deonwa under Chandramohan Gagra and also by his grandfather.

The training of Jadhav continued for two years, in which guru taught him all the rituals and mantras of curing different diseases. The guru also made him acquainted with the supernatural world involving the benevolent and malevolent Bongas. All the mantras recited by the guru and then repeated by the disciples, according to him, involves oral tradition.

For two years, he rigorously memorised the mantras. The training occurred at night. On every Sunday he used to offer Banana, Jaggery, sweets, incense sticks etc. to the guru. He says that those who come into trance are considered to be preferred and liked by the Bongas. The Guru used to beat them with hunter made of 'Sawai' grass. During trance, one does not feel any pain of beating, because of the blessing of Bongas.

He further says that his guru's Bonga possessed him and only then he came into trance.

His principal method of curing is by vermilion wrapped into leaves, which he does not open. After invoking all the benevolent Bongas such as Gram Bonga, Desauli Bonga, Singbonga, he worships his own Bonga. It is the worshipped Bonga who then possess him and

enable him see the shadow of the Bonga who has caused suffering to the patient.

When the Bonga appears in the shadow and demands the offerings to be made to him, he promises to meet the demand and asks him to cure the patient/sufferer. And then he offers the demanded object to the Bonga. It is also revealed during this ritual, whether any Bonga or spirit has been directed by any witch to cause harm.

However, when I asked him about the nature of witchcraft and the counter witchcraft spells in detail, he said to me that he has not learnt these spells and no such cases come to him. On the other hand, villagers say that he does cure such cases and people go to him. The only reason behind not revealing anything on this aspect, is the fear of being caught by police. As district administration has circulated that if any unwanted incidence occurs in the name of witchcraft, the village Deonwas will also be prosecuted along with concerned persons.

Even he refused to speak anything on his genealogical tree, which he calls 'Kursinama.

### **Case-V**

Name           **Ramesh Sinku**

Village         Karanjia

Age             35 years.

Ramesh Sinku is a Soka. He is not very old in this profession. Since 1984, he has been performing the role of Soka.

In 1984, as he recounts, he suffered a sudden loss of his mental

balance and started wandering aimlessly. He had no idea what he was doing. One day he went a nearby jungle and felt that he had been directed to perform puja for seven days. He had to cook his food himself. He came back and narrated it to his father, who felt it to be the blessing of Bongas. He was given a separate room in the house, where he cooked for himself and restrained from the traditional drink also. Everyday he used to go to the jungle and chanting Mantras, which he considered to be the blessing of Bongas. Within seven days he had an idea about curing methods, and herbal medicines, which was bestowed by the deities on him.

And after few days of puja he became normal and at the instruction of Bongas, started curing the patients. The news soon spread to different villages that he had become a chosen worshipper of God and had acquired supernatural power to cure. He cures the patients only on Tuesday and Sunday. The paraphernalia of his puja includes coconut, incense sticks, lamp (Diya), Aarwa rice, Vermilion and Banana. His worshipped deities are Ram, Krishna, Hanuman and Chunna Bonga. He believes that it is the Bongas who cure the sufferers, through him. He is only a medium.

When any patient comes to him, he brings sindoor and keeps it at a distance from his sitting place. The Soka then asks the patient as to whose sindoor is this and from which village he/she has come? After this he worships his deities, who reveal to him the problem and the reason behind this and also as to how to overcome the problem/suffering. He also visits to sufferer's home, if needed.

If the sufferer is not able to come, any member of the family or relative brings the 'Sindoor', by touching the sufferer's body. Ramesh wanted to obtain a license from the government for this, but his father disapproved of it, as it would have brought enmity with others, especially from witches families.

When I asked, on what pretext they apply for the license, he says that he can answer all the queries such as how many seeds are there inside the papaya and so on. He would never fail as it is the Bongas who would answer the queries. However, there is no such provision in that region.

Many people from neighbouring states like Orissa also come to him, as the villagers say.

The cases related to witchcraft come in large number and everytime he has cured the patient, as his neighbours say. He says that sometimes due to hostility, even family members or relatives get the work done through witches to harm even own family members or relatives. He strongly believes that if the suffering is due to supernatural power directed by the witches, no medicine other than magico religious rituals can cure.

It is not so that everytime Deonwas or Sokas take an edge over witches or counter the effects of witchcraft. Sometimes, if the witch is



*(R-L): Sanatan, the interpreter; Ramesh Sinku, a Soka and the field worker*

more powerful, the healer may land into trouble.

Till date no body has approached him for the apprenticeship. He thinks this is owing to the fear among people regarding the training method. The knowledge of his own condition immediately before he became a soka scares them.

### **Case-VI**

Name	<b>Topoy Pingua</b>
Age	32 years
Village	Ruia (Tola-NizamRuia)

When I met Topoy Pingua, he was at his Guru's (Gole Pingua's) house. There I also met Madan Gope, who too was interested in becoming a Deonwa but gave up in the middle of the apprenticeship.

Topoy has been practicing it for ten to eleven years. He learnt this art for six years at Gola Pingua's house. Where a small platform was erected for worship. There were ten to twelve persons undergoing the training. Everyday the disciples used to bring either Jaggery or banana along with them to offer to the Bongas. The recitation and repetition of mantras started with the invoking of Singbonga, Tulusguru, and the worshipped deity of the Guru (which they did not mention, specifically).

Topoy and Gola say that it is the blessing of Bonga by which one comes into trance. When topoy, after six years, was chosen by Bonga to be a Deonwa, he became mentally disturbed and ran towards jungle. Both consider that it is only the Bonga who makes them run towards the jungle, and enables them to identify herbs to be used for different

diseases as well as the intricacies of religious-magico cosmos. The Bonga chose him as his representative to provide cure to sufferers. When Topoy started feeling that Bongas have taught him the knowledge of curing practices, which he displayed before his guru, Gola who declared him as a complete Deonwa.

Gola, the guru of Topoy, thinks that his disciple has acquired more power than him. Topoy offered a 'hen' as a 'gurudakshina' to Gola.

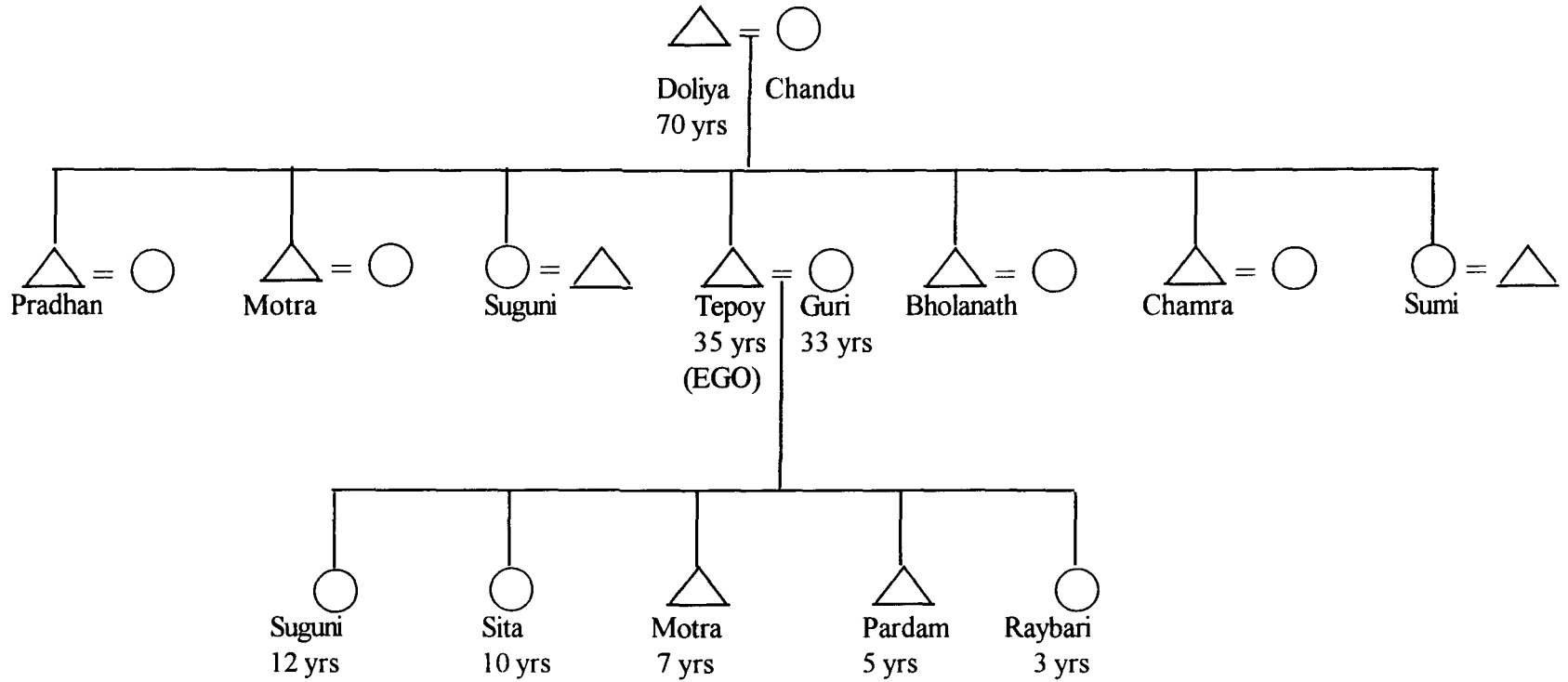
Topoy cures the patients through two main processes -the vermilion type and Hatagosa type (discussed earlier). Topoy says that witches many-a-time do not attack directly but sends their pet ghosts or captured spirits to harm their enemies. However, Topoy also opines that due to personal enmity or the greed to grab one's land/property, sometimes innocent peoples are also killed in the name of witchcraft. Nevertheless, it does not mean that there is no existence of witchcraft.

Topoy thinks that the period of apprenticeship is a tough process and sometimes people get scared of the process. Madan Gope left the training only out of this fear. After seeing the condition of Topoy when he was clesed by the Bonga. Madan got scared. During the training sometimes, in trance Topoy used to beat the fellow trainees with hunter. This all scared Madan and he simply left the apprenticeship in the middle. Madan's father Krishna is also a Deonwa but since then he never dared to continue the training.



*(L-R) (First row, standing) : Topoy Pingua, Gole ; (L-R) (Second row) : Madan Gpoe , the field worker, Sanatan*

# Genealogy of Tepoy



## Case-VII

Name	<b>Ranjit Singh Nag</b>
Age	50 years
Occupation	Witch-doctor
Place	Bara Nimdih, Chaibasa

Ranjit Singh Nag is a full-time healer. Almost every day he performs the puja and the patients come to him with their sufferings. The puja is performed early in the morning as well as in the evening and goes for hours. On the right side just after entrance (of his house) there is a puja mandap. In the middle of mandap there are trees of neem, pipal, white flower and Sidh tree. The sidh tree is enacted there by Sidheshwar Baba, who was a famous hermit. On one side of the tress, there is a heap of coconuts, which are token of '*Manauti*' offered by worshippers. The puja mandap was erected during his grand father's time. Almost on every side of the mandap, there are imprints of '*Sindoor*'.

Ranjit's worshipped deity is 'Goddess Mansa'. Since the age of ten he has been initiated into it and has learnt the apprenticeship under four gurus, Boyor Nag, Tuka Baba, Gora Guru and Doman Baba.

The paraphernalia of his puja includes-*Aarwa rice, sindoor*, hen (white black and red), ground powder of red colour (bricks), black, white, and yellow (turmeric). When he is dealing with witchcraft cases, apart from above mentioned puja items, lemon (5) , red cloth, needle (5) and a blade, is required, which are brought by the patient.

If any patient visits his mandap for cure, he performs puja at his

mandap for three days. He says that most of the people are cured within three days. If not cured, then on the fourth day a hen is sacrificed at another place.

At the sacrificial spot, a mandap is made of items and a 'Kalash' is kept in the middle of it. Then he invokes Goddess Mansa by lighting a 'diya' (lamp), in which mustard oil is put.

The reason for keeping '*Kalash*', as he explains, is to call and catch is it the ghost/spirit, who has possessed the victim.

He also uses two statues made of soil, one being a boy and another being a girl. As he believes that, since there is no definite shape of any ghost, the witches use these two statues of boy and a girl, for symbolizing supernatural powers of the two genders.

So, whenever the case of witchcraft comes to him, he also makes these two statues, and performs puja at a place other than the victim's house. He claims that just by touching the nerves (of hand) he can ascertain whether it is a case of witchcraft or not. If the victim is male he touches right hand and if it is female he touches the left hand.

He does not protect his '*Aasan*' (sitting place) by mantras, as he has complete faith in his worshipped deity, who has never failed him.

While I was talking to him, two tribals came from a nearby village, asking him to perform puja. They became very suspicious of my presence and my writing pad and took him to a corner to talk. When I inquired about their purpose of visit and the village they had come from, Nag did not reveal anything.

However, he narrated a few encounters with witches in the process of curing.

At Pancho village, a witch has caused 'dumbness' to one villager. He claims that he had cured the patient through his puja. During trance, as he remembers, the witch had threatened him, as she revealed that she was not alone but it was a combined effort of four witches. They even attacked him through their mantras but did not succeed, since he had the blessing of the Goddess Mansa. He says that while he was performing the healing rituals, he had witnessed a female onlooker, whom he considered to be a witch. She was present there to counter his spells. But by invoking his duty, he had punished the witch by making her severely sick. He did not reveal the name of the witch, as he has no license for this and also because the villagers would have killed her.

People from different sections come to him to get cured. The neighbours of Nag, consider that he seldom fails in healing. People also take him to different cities, towns and villages to provide help to people. Before going to other places, he performs puja at his own mandap.

**Case no.-VIII.**

Name            **Raudia Lohar**

Age             32 yrs.

Village         Ruia

Raudia assists the Deonwas in Hatagoso ritual. As said earlier that while Deonwa performs hatagoso, an another man comes into trance (Rum). The person who comes into trance, sees the shadow of Bonga, who has caused harm.

Raudia says that when the Deonwa recites mantras in hatagoso ritual, he comes into trance. His hand in which he keeps rice, starts

shaking which is then followed by the shaking of his body. In this altered state, he sees the shadow of Bonga. The shadow of the Bonga who has caused suffering is relatively more clear than other Bongas. Everything of the Bonga, he sees, are big, i.e, teeth, head, body etc.

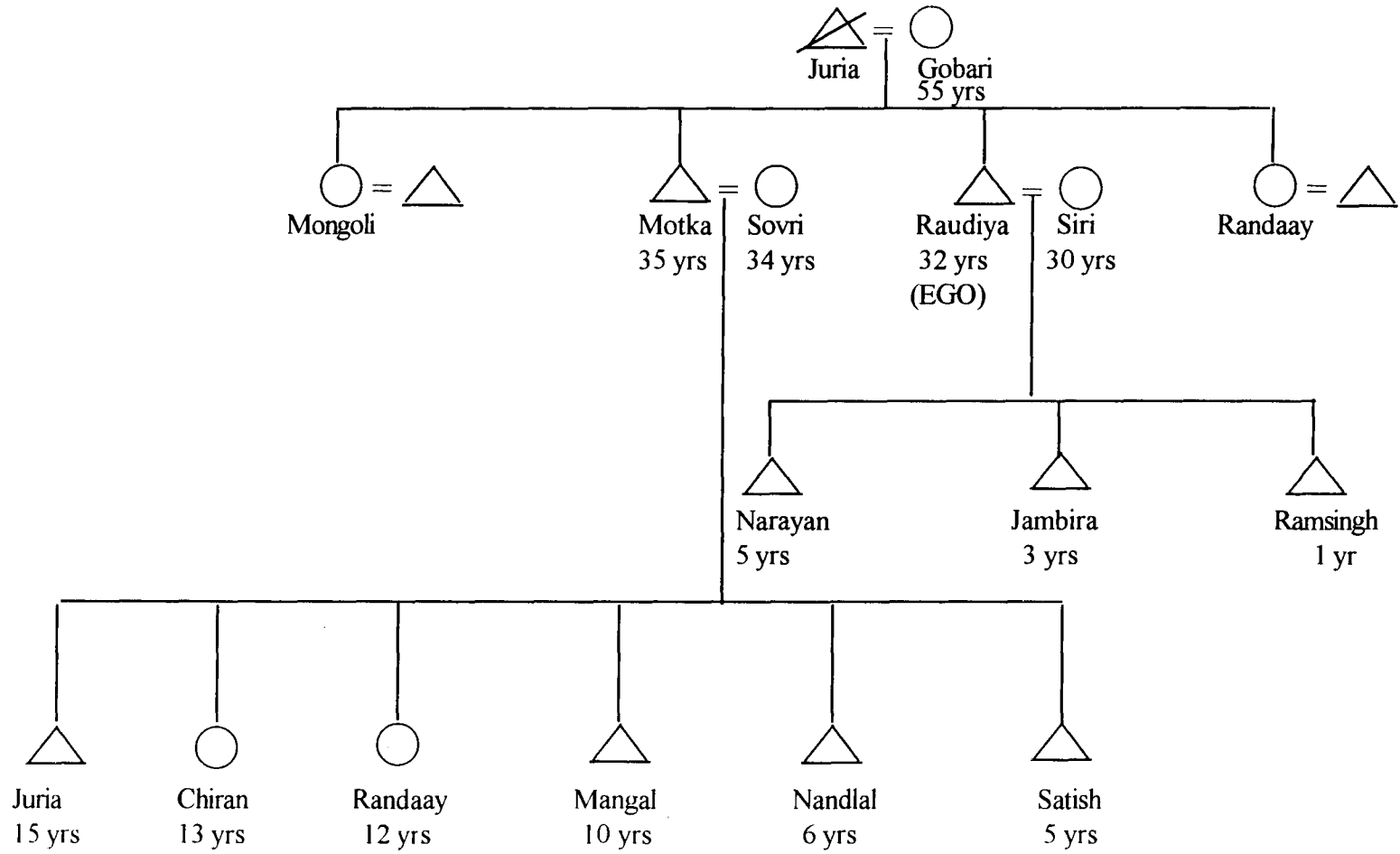
It is the Bonga who tells Raudia, what he wants and why he has caused harm etc. If guided by witch to harm the concerned person (victim), Bonga also tells it to him.

In trance, he asks the concerned Bonga, what he wants, (*China nam tana*). Then the Bonga reveals what he wants (*Aai Ninai nam tana*).

After the end of hatagoso ritual Raudia tells to the Deonwa about the Bonga's demand and how to perform puja as directed by the concerned Bonga.

Conclusion

# Genealogy of Raudiya Lohar





*(Back row) (Third from L): Raulda (wearing a shawl) , an assistant of Deonwa.*

## **Chapter - VII**

### **WITCHCRAFT AND ADMINISTRATION**

**(FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL AGENCIES)**

## **CHAPTER VII**

### **Witchcraft and Administration: Formal and Non-formal Agencies**

The main focus in this chapter is to highlight the role of different formal or non-formal agencies operating in the region on witchcraft. Their efforts have brought a notion of attitudinal change in the inhabitants. It is only because that “change comes in so many forms and rates and is so pervasive a phenomenon in social life, that one may well question the need for a special study of social change within the social sciences” (Smith, 1975).

Change is inevitable and in the last two centuries change has been so rapid and pervasive that it seems very natural and normal condition of life. Almost every society, modern or traditional has witnessed some amount of change. With the new climate emerge different concerns, pushing aside the older traits and values.

The rate and direction of change in almost every aspect of social organisation could well be witnessed. However, change at the attitudinal level occurs not as fast as at the material level. The Ho society has witnessed a great deal of change in almost every sphere of social life. Different factors have contributed to bring about change in the society. The role of administration (district), voluntarily organizations, journalists, educated Hos have all had an impact on bringing change in witchcraft beliefs and practices, though not as much as in other aspects.

As mentioned at the outset in this chapter that change has become such an inevitable part of social life, that it needs a separate study. However, the focus here is only on change pertaining to witchcraft.

A number of witchcraft cases are also mentioned in this chapter collected from the police records and court trials, as these (cases) are the result of changing attitude.

The village panchayat, headed by the Munda-Manki system, has a tremendous impact on Ho society. All matters of disputes in the village are looked into by the panchayat. The witchcraft cases are by and large settled by the members of village panchayat, though many cases, have been reported to different police stations.

The then IAS Mr. Amit Khare in 1992-93 took initiative in this regard and established a 'witchcraft cell' within the District Administration. A 'special cell' in the police head quarter was formed to look into the cases of witchcraft. An order was passed to enlist all the Deonwas or Sokas of the area. The District administration also circulated that if any death or harassment occurs in the name of witchcraft, the Deonwas as well as Munda of the village will be prosecuted along with the accused witch-hunters. Before going into detailed analysis, it is important to look into the number of cases and deaths reported to police stations of the west Singhbhum district.

Year	No. of Cases	Deceased	Deceased (F, M, C)
1991	14	23	14F, 6M, 3C
1992	15	25	18F, 5M, 2C
1993	18	25	19F, 5M, 1C
1994	12	15	13F, 2M,
1995	12	21	10F, 2M, 9C
1996	7	9	4F, 5M,
1997	7	7	6F, 1F hurt
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>84F, 1F(hurt), 25M, 15C</b>

(Source SP Office, W. Singhbhum)

F-Female, M-Male, C-Child

The accused witch-hunters were implicated under various sections of India Penal Code. The sections under which the witch-hunters were booked are IPC's -34, 109, 120, 120 'B', 201, 211, 302, 307, 316, 323, 324, 325, 326, 341, 364, 379, 432, 448, 452, 487 and 489 (see appendix - V )

District Administration organised different rallies and meetings to deal with the grievances of the inhabitants, as well as to bring forward a new attitude amongst Hos. The Non-governmental organizations, school children, Mundas, Mankis, journalists and local leaders also took part in the rallies.

Not only this, different health centres or camps were set up to provide better clinical facilities to the people. The reasons behind this, as many opine, was to keep people away from the healers and consequently from witchcraft.

The 'special cell' for witchcraft was formed to provide quicker and proper investigations. The police officials are of the view that still they have miles to go. It has certainly brought a change in the outlook of the inhabitants and many cases have been reported to police stations. Police have arrested many individuals and have earthed out many conspiracies, hatched in the name of witchcraft. Many cases have been on trials. However, many incidents of witchcraft and related killings are not being reported to the police. And if reported, the reluctant attitude of the inhabitants in revealing the name of the 'accused', results into failure of investigation. Police finds its very difficult to probe into the cases.

The district police superintendent Mr. Alok Raj (IPS) says that he has instructed his subordinate to take immediate action against all those who are 'responsible for the witchcraft killings, wherever it

occurs. Further he says that prompt actions have been taken and culprits have been booked under different sections of Indian Penal Code.

The Honourable court has also taken cognizance of these reported cases on the basis of police F.I.R's (First Information Report). Many cases of witch hunting are under trials and some cases have been disposed off. While many such cases are being investigated, the district administration has also taken steps to rehabilitate some accused witches, mention may be made of Chandu Bandia and Menjo Kui. Chandu is currently working in hostel mess of Mahila college, Chaibasa, whereas Menjo Kui is employed as a peon in District commissioner's office. The two have been allotted a room each at Yatri Niwas, Chaibasa. It became possible only with the help of district Administration.

The efforts of police have certainly brought a notion of change in the villagers attitude. The people fear in being indulged in witch-hunt. It was this fear that at early stage of my field work, villagers as well as witch-doctors, showed their reluctance in revealing any data on witchcraft. However, despite these efforts, witch -hunting has been occurring in good numbers.

With the help of some leading local journalists, police has received an impetus in its investigations. Many journalists have been reporting and writing regularly on this aspect. And whenever any such witch-hunting occurs, local journalists probe deep into it and come out with detailed reports of the incident. A few journalists are of the view that witchcraft has become a chronic phenomenon in this region and a large number of deaths occur every year only because of belief in witchcraft. They also suspect that there might be some deaths which go unreported. Further many such deaths are believe to have occurred because of some powerful individuals of the villages, who find witchcraft



*A procession against superstitions in Kharswan Block led by the then District Collector Mr. Amit Khare.*



*People taking out a procession to create awareness about witchcraft*

beliefs to be a medium of eliminating their rivals or a means to grab the property of their relatives. It is based on the equation of simple statistics by which they accuse one of the females of that family as a witch and hold her responsible for bringing misfortunes in their families. The pressure group is created, matter is put before the panchayat, where decision is taken to eliminate the female (accused of being a witch) alone or with the other family members. Many-a-time Munda and Deonwa also play an active part in it. A few journalists say that grabbing land or sexual gratification may also be the reasons behind the witch hunting.

On the other hand some other Institutions like JOHUR (Jharkhandis organization for Human Rights), Mahila Samitis, Missionaries, Free legal Aid committee etc. are working sincerely to create awareness among people. Organising rallies, protest marches, and awareness programmes such as 'Andhviswas Birodhi Yatra', are some of the activities in which these institutions are engaged. These institutions also intervene in any case where either the family is being harassed or threatened for witchcraft. To keep itself well informed, JOHUR keeps a record of paper cuttings on witchcraft cases. It is from here that I got a good amount of secondary data.

The Free Legal Aid Committee (FLAC), apart from the awareness camps, is also engaged in organising Anti-witchcraft rallies, Seminars and in rehabilitating the accused witches. They had organized an Anti-witchcraft rally at Patna, where the so called accused witches narrated their stories. This committee also provides free legal advices to the families who are either being harassed or threatened for witchcraft. In January 1998, they had organised a Seminar on "Witch Hunting Menace and Legal Advice". I was also invited to attend the seminar. Individuals from different fields and Munda-Mankis of different villages were also invited. During this seminar I met Sona Muni Kudada and Chutni

Mahtain. (Case studies cited). FLAC also provided the free legal advice, through legal experts, to all those who raised some queries on the matter. A short street 'drama' was staged to show the nature and practices of witchcraft. FLAC has also made a documentary on witchcraft under its awareness programme. The FLAC officials say that the committee is going to establish a 'Rehabilitation Centre' at Barbos (W. Singbhum). The committee has also proposed an act (Witch Affliction Resistance) against witch Exploitation (See Appendix .- VI)

These efforts of formal and non formal organisations have made in roads in the Ho society. The social workers have been putting their sincere endeavour against this menace.

Even a good number of educated Hos opine that the practices of witch-hunting should be fought tooth and nail, for it is a deterrant to the societal progress. However, they believe that a large number of population still have a very strong faith in witchcraft. A few educated Hos consider that the prolonged belief in witchcraft is due to illiteracy and poor health facilities. They are of the opinion that efforts should be made to educate the masses, health facilities should be provided properly. And only then the witchcraft could be eliminated.

However, my personal findings reveal that many of the educated Hos to have a string belief in withcraft and consult Deonwas whenever need arises. Though they also consult biomedicine practitioner, their belief in the efficacy of traditional medicine is intact.

Despite changes in other aspects of the social organisation , there has been very little change in their mental attitude. And this mental attitude makes them believe in witchcraft and its power.

At the few first meetings certain educated Hos vehemently

denied their belief in witchcraft and even in the existence of witches in the society. They kept on harping upon their resistance to Deonwas and their procedures of identifying witches behind the misfortunes or deaths. However, through internal triangulation method and cross verification, it was revealed that their claims were false. Some of them had been consulting Deonwas.

In one such case Mr. Samanta, employed in forest office (at Chaibasa) narrated that his own maternal uncle was a Deonwa and before going for any curing, he and his assistants used to create such an atmosphere, as if there is witch's hand behind the misfortune. When asked whether any of his family member was accused as a witch before, he denied at first. But later accepted that two of his females had been accused of being a witch—which he claims to be totally false. On being asked that since his family has suffered such an accusation, he does not believe in witchcraft, he did not respond. And after a few meetings, he started avoiding me and stopped talking.

Many more such cases were reported which were similar in nature.

The point of mentioning such cases is to highlight the fact that how far educated Hos reject and accept presence of witchcraft in their society? It seems that changes have certainly occurred, though their belief in witchcraft has not shattered. The mental attitude, being the 'core' of one's personality, resist more to change than the peripheral one.

It would not be correct to point that change has not occurred on this front. There are many Hos who do not believe in it and have been advocating the falsity of witchcraft. They consult biomedical practitioners, whenever, any problem related to health and illness arises. They go to

the nearby towns to consult doctors. Many such Hos are of the opinion that they also persuade their relatives to avail the advantages of biomedicine. Some converted Christians, I met, do not believe in the efficacy of witchcraft. They are of the opinion that practice and accusation of witchcraft and counter-witchcraft have become means to settle scores with enemies. They attribute illiteracy, poor health facilities, limited exposure, as some of the reasons behind the witchcraft practices.

On the contrary, a large number of population do not agree with it. They consider witchcraft to be real and have a strong belief in the efficacy of indigenous medical practices. The saying that “modern medicine does not provide relief, when the suffering is due to witchcraft” aptly describes the social recognition to witchcraft. And to combat witchcraft, they take recourse to counter-witchcraft. They have a strong conviction in the efficacy of indigenous medical system, which is considered a part of the cultural system.

### **Case-Studies: From Police F I Rs**

#### **Case-I**

Case number	24/97
Dated	11-5-97
Thana	Jhinkpani
Plantiff	Sona Ram Das;
Defendent	Turam Balmuchu & others.

The case was registered by Sona Ram Das of Village Kudahatu at Jhiakpani police station. He earns his livelihood by selling kerosene oil. He has one daughter, who is married in Orissa, but his 7 year old

grandson, Dilorodas was brought up by Sona Ram and his wife, Panno. On 10th of May '97, when he was coming back from his brother's home, he was told by a young boy that his wife and grandson have been killed and buried by some of the villagers. He found that his belongings were thrown out of his house.

On 6th of May '97, the daughter of Turom Balmuchu had died. Panno, wife of Sona Ram was accused for this death. She was suspected of being a witch. Turam, Lakham, Murli and Dumbi decided to kill, Panno. Even a year ago Sona Ram had altercation with Turam alias Pagla. Turam always accused Panno of practicing witchcraft. Sona Ram suspects that his grandson may have been an eye-witness to the incident (Panno's killing).

The defendants have been charged with section 34, 201, 302, 364 of Indian Penal Code.

#### **Case-II.**

Case number	40/97
Dated	21.7.97
Police Station	Gamharia.
Plaintiff	Dhano Mardi
Defendant	Nuna Hansda

The case was registered by Dhano Mardi of village Babidhi. His 70 years old wife Buda Mardi was chopped off with *Kulhari* by Nuna Hansda, while working at agricultural field. He was an eye-witness to it.

Buda Mardi was accused of being a witch. While attacking with the *Kulhari*, Nuna Hansa had accused her of bewitching his child to death.

Dhano in the F.I.R., lodged that his wife had gone to Nuna Hansda's house, before coming to the field. After half an hour, Nuna's infant had died of some disease. Nuna accused Buda for this. Buda was also accused earlier by Nuna of causing death to his 6 years old son Lugu.

Police has changed Nuna under section 302 of IPC.

### **Case-III**

Case number	64/96
Dated	2.12.96
Police Station	Jhinkpani
Plentiff	Lungi Kui
Defendant	Shamu Gagnai

The case was registered by Lungi Kui, aged 50 years of village-Tolaparamsai.

Ponay Gagrai, brother of Shamu Ganrai had died of some disease. Lungi and her husband Shankara Gagrai started beating Shankara with a stick and also threatened her by accusing her to be a witch. Scared, she fled away from there but her husband did not return home. Early in the next morning when she went towards Chopra longer with her brother-in-law she found the head of her husband at Panduna Ho's land. the beheaded body was not found. She informed the village Munda, Hauschandra Gagrai, of the incident.

She accused Shamu Gagrai for her husband's murder. Shamu had been accusing Lungi and her husband for being witches.

The defendant was booked under section 302/201/34 of Indian Penal code.

#### **Case - IV**

Case number        31/96;  
Dated                28.11.96  
Police Station      Tonto  
Plentiff             Damu Tamsoy  
Defendant           Dugi Tamsoy.

Damu Tamsoy of village Sanlisiya has registered a case against his cousin Dugi of Badalisuja.

Dugi had attacked Damu's wife with sword. When his wife yelled for help, Dugi fled away from the spot. Dugi had accused Damu's wife as a witch and causing death of his wife, who had died three months ago.

Dugi was booked under section 302 of Indian Penal code.

#### **Case-V**

Case number        41/96  
Dated                13/9/96  
Police station      Jagannathpur  
Plentiff             Goma Bobonga  
Defendant           Unknown

Goma Bobonga of village Barananda, worked as a servant to Jogna Agaria. Jogna was staying at Bolani (Orissa) with his family. Goma used to take care of his cultivable land and house. On 8th of September 1996, Jogna had come to his village. Jogna and Goma had gone towards his Insaiburu land. While returning, around 8 A.M. they met an unknown person. Jogra had asked him about his purpose of

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wandering. After this Goma mored forward, followed by Jogna. Goma heard a bullet shot; as he turned back, he found that jogna was lying on the ground. that unknown man had fled away. Jogna told Goma that jyotin Agaria had hired that man to kill him. Jogna was brought back to his house where he died at 10.30 A.M.

Goma suspects that Jyotin Agaria had got Jogna killed. Jyotin always accused Jogna and his wife for witchcraft and also threatened to kill them.

Police had booked the case under Section 302 of IPC and 27 Arms Act.

Many more such cases have been registered in different police stations. On the basis of such F. I. Rs the court deals with the cases related to witchcraft killings. Some of such certified copies of court proceedings have been put in appendix. -IV)

No Conclusion

**Chapter - VIII**

**FINALE**

## CHAPTER VIII

### FINALE

We have so far <sup>NO</sup> analyzed the various parameters related to witchcraft and various beliefs and attitudes related to witchcraft practices amongst the Hos. The entire paraphernalia of existing witchcraft has been discussed and many case studies have been cited. There are many such other cases and variations of rituals related to witchcraft practices that have not been mentioned as the underlying principles and nature of such cases and rituals are the same mentioned in the work.

Witchcraft is the belief that members of a community employ supernatural means to harm others in ways which are socially disapproved. Broadly witchcraft is considered to be magic. Though magic in anthropological literature is supposed to be a natural term, witchcraft is usually conceived as a form of destructive magic. In anthropological inquiry, witchcraft and Sorcery, another term associated with destructive magic, have a subtle distinction between them. The witch is classified as a weird and aberrant person; who moves through an obscure compulsion or spirit possession; while a sorcerer is an ordinary person using deliberate techniques and external means familiar to other members of the community and is moved generally by simple ill will (Encyclopedia Britannica). Sir Pritchard (1937) has also differentiated between these two terms. However, in Ho society there is no such distinction; witch and sorcerer are classified together and are referred to by one word 'Dandi'. Dandi is one who causes harm to others through his/her black magic. Witch's power is not inherent rather it is learned. Male and female both could be a witch but usually females are more likely to be accused as witches. The number of male witches is very less.

The women are considered as more powerful in the art of black

magic than the male counterpart. The belief is held that as the Deonwa(s) point out, that the black magic practitioners require to offer blood to worshipped gods or deities at early stage of initiation, since females undergo menstrual cycle at regular intervals, they are at an advantageous position than the male counterparts. The menstruating blood enables the females to offer blood to appease and propitiate the worshipped deities. Francis Bethencourt has linked the issue of sex and age by commenting that in medical theory in seventeenth century Portugal, the Evil Eye was attributed to the emission of “foul, fetid and malignant fluids” from the eyes of a woman who was *mal menstruada*, i.e. menstruating irregularly at her menopause. (Bethencourt, 1993). Lerner also held the view that menstrual blood could harm crops and foods, kill bees and so on which made easy to slip into thinking that there has some form of dangerous magic inherent in all women. (Lerner 1980, 84)

However, this is not the case in Ho society. There is no such emission of fluids from the eyes of a witch. The blood discharged out of uterus during menses is considered important because uterus is regarded as the place of birth.

The prevalence of witchcraft amongst Hos is deeply rooted in society and accusation and counter accusation occurs frequently. Witchcraft among them provides an answer to misfortune events and also to seek reason behind unnatural and untimely deaths. Evans Pritchard (1937) in his classical work among the Azande, puts the same view. While describing witchcraft among Azande, he says that “most important however is the usefulness of witchcraft in explaining why an event occurred. Science can not tell us what happened, beyond mentioning the laws of probability. The Azande find both comfort and an opportunity to retaliate in their explanation of why an unfortunate and unusual event took place”. The villagers (Hos) also believe that witches cause

unfortunate events or untimely deaths due to their black magic. A witch could cause prolonged disease/sickness, loss of mental balance, failure of crops, misfortunes and so on, with their malignant practices.

The disease and death could occur due to some other reasons i.e., physical imbalance, displeasure of Bongas, but witchcraft provides them a readymade answer to explain the reasons. Here mention of two cases, in which death of an infant and an old lady has been cited (mentioned in chapter-6). The emic perspective behind these cases has been explained. However, these two deaths could occur due to extreme cold and other reasons, which could have been explained with germ theory. In the first case the child might have caught influenza, since the mother used to go out to work. In the second case the old lady, after having had bath in pond at early hours of the day, might have suffered paralysis due to cold. But the villagers are of the opinion that it was the routined tasks, which these females used to do every day; but nothing happened earlier. The belief in witchcraft provided them a plausible reason to explain these two deaths. Here it would be relevant to mention the description of Sir Pritchard (1937), “ Where we talk about the crops, hunting and our neighbour’s ailments the Zande introduces into these topics of conversation the subjects of witchcraft. To say that witchcraft has blighted the groundnut crop, that witchcraft has scared away game, and that witchcraft has made so-and-so ill is equivalent to saying in terms of our own culture that the groundnut crop has failed owing to blight, that game is scarce this season and that so-and -so has caught influenza. Witchcraft participates in all misfortunes and is idiom in which Azande speak about them and in which they explain them. Witch-craft is a classification of misfortunes which while differing from each other in other respects have this single common character, their harmfulness to man”.

The mechanism of accusation is another parameter of witchcraft. The accusation of practicing witchcraft and causing harm amongst Hos are always done by neighbours, Kins and nearest relatives. Marwick while highlighting the Cewa belief in sorcery says that sorcery has a social reference. Sorcerers never attack strangers they always attack their relatives. (Marwick, 1965). It is they who attribute any misfortune, sickness, or even death to women living in close vicinity. The Hos also opine that if the Dandi's demand is not fulfilled, she may curse. The level of interaction between the accused witch, supposed victim and local community is personal i.e., there is always a reciprocal interaction between accused and accuser. Any unwanted event occurred after the witch's behaviour or act leads to accusation. Some cases have been cited earlier. In one such case, a 35 years old female was mercilessly beaten to death near Rajkharswan. One child had died and it was accused by the grieved family members that the accused female had come to their home and had kept her hand on child's head — and had gone. Soon after her departure, the child died.

This case has been cited here to highlight that there exists a cordial interaction between accused and the accuser, but the event behind the misfortune is described or explained in terms of witch's behaviour or act. In many other cases accusation is done by the nearest kins or neighbours. Larner(1984) in her work on Scottish witch-hunt describes that the Scottish suspect had made some request to a neighbour and on being refused showed her anger. Same has been described by Alan Macfarlane (1970) and Keith Thomas (1971).

However, their findings are not fully applicable to Ho society. For example, Macfarlane's demonstration that the 'witch' and her 'victim' were always neighbours but not equals. The victim would be relatively well off, the witch poor; and Larner's description that 'the typical scottish suspect was an elderly woman with a sharp tongue and a filthy,



*A dead woman: Murdered after being accused as a witch at Amda, Kharswan*

temper, fairly low in the social scale and unpopular...’.

The suspected witch always may not be poor and her victim relatively well off, and woman with sharp tongue and a felthy temper and low in social scale and unpopular. These are not the definite prerequisites among the Hos. There are many cases where, female(s) of relatively well off kins are accused as being a witch and misfortunes attributes to her magical power. Nevertheless, their findings that the neighbour or kin, feeling anxious at having failed in his/her obligation, would later interpret any misfortune as due to the offended woman’s curse, aptly fits to the Ho community.

Keith Thomas describes that ‘a witch’ could harm the health of humans and of animals (a process called maleficium), and accusations and trials centred around them; and misfortunes attributed to witchcraft then frequently consultation with a ‘cunning man’ or ‘wise woman’ who confirms the victim’s pre-existing suspicions is framed within a broad context of the Tudor and Stuart mentality at every social level. He further discusses the belief in the efficacy of a righteous curse; belief about the devil; possession and exorcism, the pressures for conformity in rural communities; the functions of witch-beliefs in accounting for misfortune and reinforcing moral standards. (Thomas, 1971).

The Hos have a device of counter-witchcraft in witch-doctors (Deonwa). The villagers frequently consult the witchdoctors for cure against witch’s attack. The Deonwas also perform the rituals to propitiated the ancestral Bongas, who also cause distress independently. But the malevolent Bongas and spirits are propitiated and guided by witches to harm the wantonly. The villagers believe the witches capture the spirits and make them their pet ones so as to use them against their victims. Whether there is a prolonged sickness, misfortune or even death, villagers consult Deonwa(s) to get remedies or cure. The Deonwa has

different methods to nullify the effects of witch's attack. Through his curing rituals he identifies the cause behind the suffering and seeks to cure it. Thomas's description also highlights that misfortune attributed to witchcraft is consulted with a cunning-mom or wise woman. But his point that they (cunning man or wise woman) confirm the pre-existing suspicions does not suit in the Ho society in the context of pre-existing suspicions only.

In Ho community, male and female both can become a witch. Kluchhohn (1944) also describes that among Navahos both man and women may become witch although references to male witches are considerably more numerous. However, among Hos female witches are more numerous than male witches. Among Hos usually females are accused as a witch, though there are a few cases where males have also been accused. Generally widows, old ladies, barren or issueless females or females with a weird look, quarrelsome females, females who pose threat to male kins by being vocal etc. are branded as witches. Clyde Kluckhohn (1994) observes that almost all the female witches mentioned in the actual anecdotes are old women; some informants insisted that only childless women could be witches. Nadel (1960) opines that Nupe witches are always women and only women are accused of witchcraft. Majumdar (1950) says that among Hos, witches are either barren women both old and ugly, or whose ways of life are strange and mysterious.

To me these are, however neither the prerequisites nor the defining characteristics of those who are labelled as witches in Ho community. These only express certain general attributes of potential witches. Christina Larner (1981, 84) believes that "those accused of witch-craft were usually those who do not fulfill the male view of how women should conduct themselves".

Hester argues that witch hunting rested on the assumption of male social, sexual and moral supremacy and was used to reinforce these; the relation between the sexes was one of conflict and violence, in witchcraft accusations were a weapon for ensuring. The subordination of women. (Hester, 1994).

But in the Ho society the relation between the male and female or between the two sexes is not usually that of conflict and violence. Women are not held as inferior to male, they play a definite role in household decisions. In the Ho society too women are accused more often than the men folks. Though there are cases where man have been accused , but such incidents are few and far between.

The Hos have a very strong belief in the art of witches transforming themselves to the animal forms i.e., cat, dog, bull, rat etc. The villagers always speak of this metamorphosis in which a witch changes her form (esp. animals) to harm her victims at the dead of night. The people opine that witches in the form of a cat or rat enter the house of the victim and either licks the saliva oozing out of victims mouth or eats the kidney or liver or sucks the blood with straw made of paddy. This leads to sickness, loss of blood and consequently death. The metamorphism of witches into animal forms have been discussed by many scholars and even in the classical works on witchcraft viz. Graceo-Roman beliefs, historical writings on European witchcraft and also by anthropologists. Castairs (1983) also describes it in his work in Rajasthan that witches can temporarily discard their human form and turn themselves into cats or ants.

To my mind, the depiction of witches turning into any animal forms, should be seen with social surroundings i.e., the animals are usually those who are present in the social environment. For example in European tales, witches ride on wolves; in other parts in hyenas and

so on. Among the Hos animals are cats, rats, bulls etc.

The villagers (Hos) narrate many such stories where a witch had been beaten in her changed animal form and later it was confirmed that such and such female was severely ill or there were beating imprints on her body. Thus, the belief in witches transforming themselves into animal forms to harm their enemies does not remain merely a belief, but the validity of this belief is reflected in their real world. Baroja (1964) writes that 'the history of European witchcraft is closely linked to the problem of distinguishing between objective and subjective reality. For many country people, even now everything which has a name, even everything expressed in words, has a physical reality and is not merely a concept. Thus, if the name 'witches' exist, it is because they are really such things, and if their flights are referred to, then those flights really take place in the air around us. If tales are told of the ability of witches to change themselves into animals, it is because they have really been seen to do so and even been wounded in their animal forms'.

Regarding the initiation of witches into the profession Hos believe that anyone who wants to learn the art approaches a guru, who teaches the disciple the various mantras and magical incantations. Training takes place at night in the graveyard under the strict guidance of the guru. The last initiation rites i.e., acceptance of disciple as an independent witch to dwell in the witchcraft end with the disciple sacrificing his/her most loveable object i.e., husband, son or nearest kin. However, Kluckhohn (1944) describing the witchery in Navahos says 'that killing a near relative, normally a sibling is a part of the initiation into witchery way'. Similarly, the Hindus living in towns (west Singhbhum) also believe in this principle. It is said that the witch in her last initiation rites either sacrifices her 'Kokh' or 'Maang' and

only after this sacrifice, the disciple is declared as a witch who can now practice witchcraft independently.

Witches also capture the dead spirits and propitiate some malevolent Bongas and set them against her victim and even cattle. Majumdar (1950) also describes it. The witches either harm their enemies/victims through these mediums (Spirits and Bongas) or act independently. There are different methods (cited earlier) which witches imply to harm their victim(s). The witches can also harm through long distances, which works definitely. Their procedure of causing harm also constitute contagious magic and imitative magic. In contagious magic, the witches obtain the victims bodily part i.e., hair, nail etc. and practice black magic to harm the victim. On the other hand, in the imitative magic pricking or burning of effigy is practiced to harm the victim. It would be worth to quote James Frazer's description of the principles of magic. Frazer (1911-15) says that "if we analyze the principles of thought on which magic is based, they will probably be found to resolve themselves into two: first, that 'like produces like' or that an effect resembles its cause; and second, that things which have once been in contact with each other continue to act on each other at a distance after the physical contact have been severed. The former principle may be called the 'Law of Similarity' the latter the 'Law of contact or contagion'. From the first of these principles, namely the law of similarity, the magician infers that he can produce any effect he desires merely by imitating it: from the second he infers that whatever he does to a material object will affect equally the person with whom the object was once in contact". Kluckhohn (1944) also describes the phenomenon of these two principles among Navahos.

The villagers do not reveal the name of the witch. It is utmost impossible to make any Ho speak the name of village witch. It is

believed that if her name is revealed, she would certainly come to know and will cause harm or injuries. Carstairs (1983) narrates his own encounters while conducting fieldwork in Sajarupa that “the identity of the witch was not revealed. The reason for this was of course, that the witch was still alive, and would be furious if her secrets were revealed. What is more, she was attributed with the magical power of knowing at once if her name was spoken”. Further highlighting the beliefs he writes that “such stubborn beliefs must serve a social and a psychological role. One function such beliefs serve in a community in which the deaths of infants, children and young women are all too common is to provide a scapegoat: the woman of Sajarupa mourned these premature deaths with bitter grief but instead of reproaching themselves they directed their anger at the nearby witch. Fear of the witch, together with suppressed anger, was every mother’s experience when her child fell sick. This is an important element in Rawat’s outlook on the world as a dangerous place in which evil spirits lie in wait for the unwary—but at the sametime it is not easily disclosed or discussed, out of fear of what the witch might do.

The villagers speak that witches dance naked in the graveyard by making a circle and—if any passersby is seen to witness it, he is killed. The villagers also opine that while going to graveyard or going to learn the art or going to meeting place or for hunt, the witches perform some sort of magic at house, so that no family members could notice her going out at the dead of night. The magic works until she comes back and it is this magic which makes even spouse or family members being ignorant of the fact that one of the female of the family is indulged in witchcraft. Kluckhohn(1944), while describing the witchery says that ‘a spouse also remains ignorant that the partner is a witch’. The witches meet regularly to perform rituals.

The concepts like Sabbath, Coven, etc., used in ancient historical

accounts on witchcraft and even by the neo-paganists, have been filtered down to the local cultures and have acquired different shapes and meanings owing to local cultural perceptions. For example, when the Hos speak that witches meet secretly at night at graveyard or at some other places to perform their magical rites, it seems that they refer to a group of witches who frequently gather together to perform their rituals. It may not have the classical perceptions of 'coven' but the structure and functions which it performs is that of coven.

The Goddesses of witches' as mentioned in classical witchcraft are Diana, Helda, Herocius etc., whom the witches worshipped. These goddesses were considered the queen of nights. In the Ho community, it is believed that witches worship goddess Kali and her associated deities viz. Dakini, Jugini, chandi etc. The witches appease those deities to gain magical power.

The accusation of being a witch is not only stigma to the accused witch but also a disrepute to the family honour. The stigma is so severe that the distant relatives even do not intend to link themselves with the 'witch's family. Sometimes even family members take a strong step against the witch. One such case as narrated by journalists and also reported by the local newspapers, an accused witch was killed by her brother-in-law, as it had become a matter of disgrace and shame for him to tolerate the accusation of being a member of witch's family.

The main aim of citing the above case is not only to highlight the stigma related to witchcraft but also to highlight the fact that witchcraft is a tabooed aspect and it has a negative connotation in Ho community. Witchcraft is considered as an anti-social practice and is not approved by the society. There is no social backing to it. In other words, society does not consider witchcraft to be white i.e., meant for the welfare of society; it is always considered black i.e., a means to harm others. This

connotation of witchcraft among the Ho community goes against the claim of modern witchcraft and modern witches that their art is useful to humankind. Modern witches like Gerald Gardner, most important creator of modern witchcraft; Alex Sanders, Sybil Leek, a best known witch of modern England; Bobbie, a California witch; George Patterson, a California witch and founder of the Georgion branch of witchcraft, etc. claim that their craft is for the welfare of human beings. Even, we have an example of Indian modern witch, Ipsita Roy Chakrabarti who claims that "witchcraft is based on scientific truth. It is not necessarily evil. Any science can prove to be evil if put in the wrong hands. We witches can prove beneficial to society. Our presence is soothing to those in distress. Our touch can calm. Our eyes can comfort or impart energy as the need be". Further she explains that witches derive power from the elements: earth, water, air and sun. The element emits rays and energy which we absorb during rituals. These rays can correct imbalances, restore mental disorders. They can even cure physical ailments. We are reservoirs of these rays and cosmic energy".(The Illustrated weekly of India, May 29, 1988)

But among the Hos witchcraft is considered as being negative in function. Whenever they were asked, if witchcraft ever produced any good to society, almost all strongly denied it. They strongly argue that witches can never do good to any community; they always do harm to the society.

There are also certain beliefs related to making any witch forget the art of witchcraft, e.g. forcing the witch to eat excreta, so that she would forget her craft. This belief is well reflected in their action too. Mention may be made of Chutni's case, in which she was accused of being a witch and causing sickness, and was forced to eat excreta.

The witchcraft not only functions to explain misfortunes or

sickness or unnatural deaths, it also becomes a medium of scapegoat and any unexplained or inexplicable happening is explained through it. At the same time, it also works as a 'defence mechanism for the witches', too. Though being labelled as a witch is a stigma, it also provides defence to the witch as once declared as a witch, most of the people do not intend to harm her for fear of her vengeance. The accused witches and her family members however, speak that the fellow villagers never accuse the females of influential and powerful people and it is here that the implication of power structure in witchcraft comes into play.

Related to the phenomenon of witchcraft is the counter witchcraft. The analysis of witchcraft in any community is not complete unless focus is put on counter-witchcraft, since these are intertwined concepts. This is so even in Ho society. Whenever people talk of witchcraft or witches, the concept of counter-witchcraft or witchdoctors certainly comes up. The Ho community has a well developed and pronounced device of counter witchcraft, reflected in the Deonwa and Sokas. They are the healers who neutralize the malignant effects of witches. Everyone can not become Deonwa; it is believed that only those who have been chosen by Bongas, can be a Deonwa. Though the apprenticeship goes under a 'guru' where one learns all the intricacies of mantras and gets familiar with the supernatural Cosmos, one becomes a Deonwa only after receiving the blessing of benevolent Bongas. The people as well as the Deonwas say that it is only when an apprentice comes into trance that he is judged to have received the blessings of the Bonga or is chosen by the Bonga to be a Deonwa. In this trance or altered state of consciousness, the apprentice is directed by Bongas to move towards nearby jungles where he is further trained by the Bongas and also acquainted with the herbal medicines. The witchdoctor has a visionary experience of supernatural world. Weston La Barre (1970) calls Shamanism as 'direct visionary experience'. Witchdoctor is considered

as a linking chain between supernatural and human beings.

The people frequently approach him for cure. Almost in every village, there is one or more than one Deonwa. Soka is considered more powerful than the Deonwa, since the belief is held that he is chosen and trained by the Bongas. Case studies have been cited of the training procedure of Deonwas and Sokas. There are various methods employed by these healers to detect the cause behind the suffering i.e. Hatagoso ritual to 'Sindoor seeing process. The Deonwas usually do not reveal the name of concerned witch. These Deonwas are generally males. They lead an ordinary lives, doing household chores, like everyone else. But when they are approached for seeking cures of any remedy or ailment, they work as a specialists.

The villagers have a strong faith in the efficacy of Deonwa's curing rituals and whatever the ailment it may be, he is approached. In his curing process, he comes into trance, culturally believed as being possessed by the Bongas. The villagers believe that it is the Bonga who cures the sick person or helps in detecting the concerned witch; he is simply a medium. It is the underlying principle that 'Bonga cures the sick person victimised by 'witch' and 'he is simply a medium' or the 'Bonga speaks through his mouth when he is in trance' etc. that make villagers approach them to seek help. He not only cures the patients but also restores the faith of sick person as well as present audience in the efficacy of his curing. And this aspect has to be seen from specific cultural perspective since people give an emic explanation for this.

It is believed that since the cause of the disease or suffering is from the society, hence, cure must be sought within the society itself and by the person who has a better understanding of 'emic worldview' or 'culturally perceived cause and effect' behind the disease and its cure. Vetebsky (1995) writes that "the Shamans not only are responsible

for curing and the magical protection of society, but they are also regarded as repository of valued cultural and mythical knowledge”. There can not be any witchdoctor without a surrounding society and culture . In other words, witchdoctor and the efficacy of his healing power gets meaning only in the surrounding culture. The beliefs and rituals related to healing or the encounters with the witches and related episodes are culture specific.

The phenomenon of witchcraft and counter witchcraft has a social context to specific cultural practices. The total episode and beliefs and attitudes related to these concepts may seem peculiar and exotic to an outsider, but to the villagers, it is an integral part of the whole culture. Hence, these must be seen in holistic and cultural relativism. And only then the relevance and functional aspect of these concepts could well be understood and analysed.

In the ‘trance’ or altered state of consciousness, the witchdoctor carefully domesticates the society’s belief in his ability to control and channelise his supernatural power, meant to cure the sufferer. His healing rituals are considered to restore the health of the fellow villagers who are attacked by witch (s) malignant wish. At the sametime, it also confirms the community’s faith in his specialization by providing a satisfaction of being cured by the socialized specialist.

The villagers speak of the ‘stratified power’ of the witchdoctors in which witchdoctor’s experience gained through supernatural propitiation and control. This could be well explained by this fact that the community believes that witches exists and cause harm even the death of their victims through their craft and hence the help of witchdoctors are sought. Even if the ‘victim’ or sufferer does not get relief, he is never disillusioned by the failure of healing rituals. He further seeks help of another Deonwa who is considered more powerful than the previous

one, since he believes that some powerful witch's magic is behind his/her suffering.

The belief in the supernatural power of Deonwa, blessed by Bongas and his efficacy in healing rituals gives an utmost psychological satisfaction to the patients being cured by the specialists. And it is this belief or satisfaction that makes people approach him rather than any other system of medicine especially modern medicine. Most of the villagers are of the opinion that no medicine other than indigenous, can cure or neutralize the ailment caused by witches. The pharmacopoeia of traditional medicine has a social backing, since it has been continuing down the ages and at the same time it provides a close interaction between the 'sufferer' and the 'healer'. It does not mean that biomedicine does not follow a close interaction pattern, but to the Hos, biomedicine is an alien medicine and its efficacy still has to be realised by most of the people. Paul Fejos (1963) points that "to be ill is dangerous, to be cured is important and desirable . This is perceived by all cultures and they go doing about it in their own way dedicated by their own cultural idioms. This perceived condition is fulfilled by securing the service of a personnel who is a doctor in modern society and healer, known as Shaman in primitive society. Though in both these offices objective is same, the approach of fulfilling this objective differs—the doctor speaks of science whereas primitive man takes help of magic.

However, there has occurred change in the beliefs and attitudes. The converted Christian Hos and educated people have started consulting the doctors and have realised the efficacy of biomedicine and its practitioners. They also do not believe in the old beliefs on witchcraft and counter witchcraft and doubts the efficacies of these two concepts. They held witchcraft to be a false and opine that it has become a means to settle personal scores or to grab the property of the kins by accusing

any female of the kin's family of being a witch. The recently happened misfortunes are attributed to be the cause of the accused witch and in this pretext, these certain individuals not only take help of Deonwa(s) but also influence the village panchayat. And then it becomes easy either to impose fine or excommunicating or even mass killings.

The local journalists and police also believe in the same predispositions. District Administration has formed a 'special cell' to deal with witchcraft cases and since 1991 more than hundred witch hunting cases have been reported and 'First Information Reports'(F.I.R.) have been registered. Not only this many witch-hunters have been booked under different sections of 'Indian Penal Code' (I.P.C.). However, police officials say that the police finds it very tough to investigate because of villagers reluctance to reveal anything. They doubt that there may be many cases which go unreported.

Various social organisations have also taken the witch- hunting cause and efforts like demonstrations, rallies, awakening programmes, seminars, street plays etc. are being pursued seriously. The local journalists have been also reporting these cases in local newspapers. Even the Missionary Fathers are helping in these social efforts. The educated Hos also work as a pressure group against witchcraft. These social workers consider that illiteracy, poor health facilities, limited interaction with outside world, are some of the reasons behind the community's belief in witchcraft.

However, a large number of people do not think so. They have a very strong belief in the witches and their craft and opine that witchcraft is a real entity. The witches power to harm the victims and therapeutic intervention of the witchdoctors are interwoven in the social matrices.

Are the witches real? Do they really cause harm? Do witchdoctors really heal? — are some of the queries which need to be seen in cultural specific attitudes. Vetebsky (1995) opines that ‘these queries are one part of the total phenomenon. The most vital aspect is its interdependence and interlinkage with other aspects of social organisations, since these aspects are affected by the manifestation of beliefs’.

The Hos consider witchcraft to be an integral part of culture, which is linked with other aspects of social organisations. It has a direct bearing on almost every aspect of society viz, religion, economy, political organisation etc. The belief in the efficacy of witchcraft is embedded in the thought process and unless this mental attitude witnesses a change, the belief of the community can not be uprooted. Community, considers witchcraft to be real and claim that witches do exist and they work supernaturally to the injury and even to the deaths of their victims. This is reflected in the community’s action while dealing with the witchcraft cases. Levi Strauss (1963) highlights three areas of beliefs:-

- (i) The sorcerer’s belief in his or her techniques,
- (ii) The victim’s belief in the sorcerer’s power, and,
- (iii) The community’ belief in the power of sorcery.

The belief is so deep rooted that witchcraft has become an integral part of the culture and is imbibed by the younger generation. Young (1957) writes, “the behaviour of an individual as well as members of a group is shaped by the belief system and this belief system is internalized in the process of socialization.” The certain practices are the products of these long standing customs arising out of the cultural beliefs. These cultural beliefs and practices give birth to many rituals being manifested in actions— and the phenomenon of witchcraft is one of the by products of these cultural beliefs and practices.

The belief and conviction in witchcraft is so widespread that the diseases, deformities and deaths are all attributed to the witches. The witches are a fearsome entity and whenever situation arises witches are killed. There are many cases where some family members along with the suspected witch were also killed. Singh (1978) highlights the belief that “witches breed witches and sorcerers. In case of witchcraft, the remedy was to put the person denounced by a Soka or witchfinder, along with all members of his family to death.” Capt. Wilkinson in his letters to Lt. Tickell (1837 to 1840) writes, “so long as this conviction in the efficacy of witchcraft persisted, punishment would not deter Hos from committing murder”. Majumdar (1950) writes that “the belief in witchcraft is so strong that whenever they suspect any person as being a witch, the feelings run so high that the unfortunate suspect is put to all sorts of ordeals to prove her innocence. Attempts to coerce women to confess their identity have led to violence on them. Some of them are naturally innocent and many cases are annually brought to Kolhan court for decision.”

G.L. Kittridge (1958) opines that “every witch is prosecuted not because she amuses herself with riding a broomstick or because she has taken a fiend for a love; she is hunted down like a wolf because she is an enemy to mankind.”

There may be cases where innocent people are killed and on pretext of witchcraft personal enmity are settled but the belief in witchcraft still remains unshattered to a greater degree. Lack of health facilities at the village levels, illiteracy, ineffective progressive pressure groups and disinterest of the educated and well placed Hos to work as a reference group to curb the menace of witchcraft are some of the reasons behind the continuation of the witchcraft practices. Though some local organisations have been continuously fighting against it, it

may only be hoped that in times to come, witch-huntings will stop and people would take recourse to alternative medicine to fight diseases and death. Lt. Tickell (1840) writes, “ a fearful number of people (among themselves) have fallen sacrifice (witch-hunt) to the horrid superstitions respecting witchcraft; but such crimes, common to the barbarous ages of all nations, but too prevalent formerly in our own, must be, by the impartial observer, attributed more to the depravity of the judgement than the heart.”

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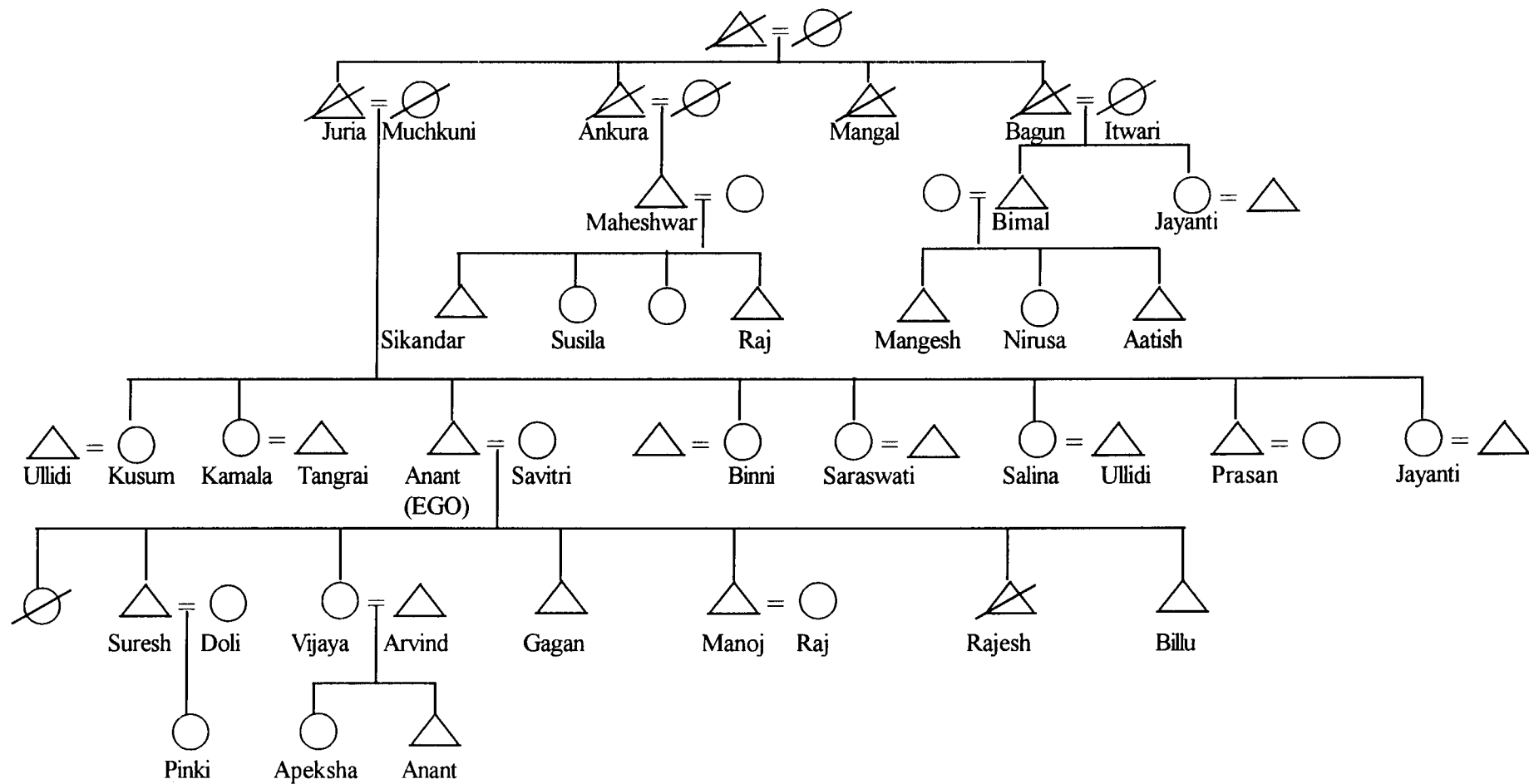
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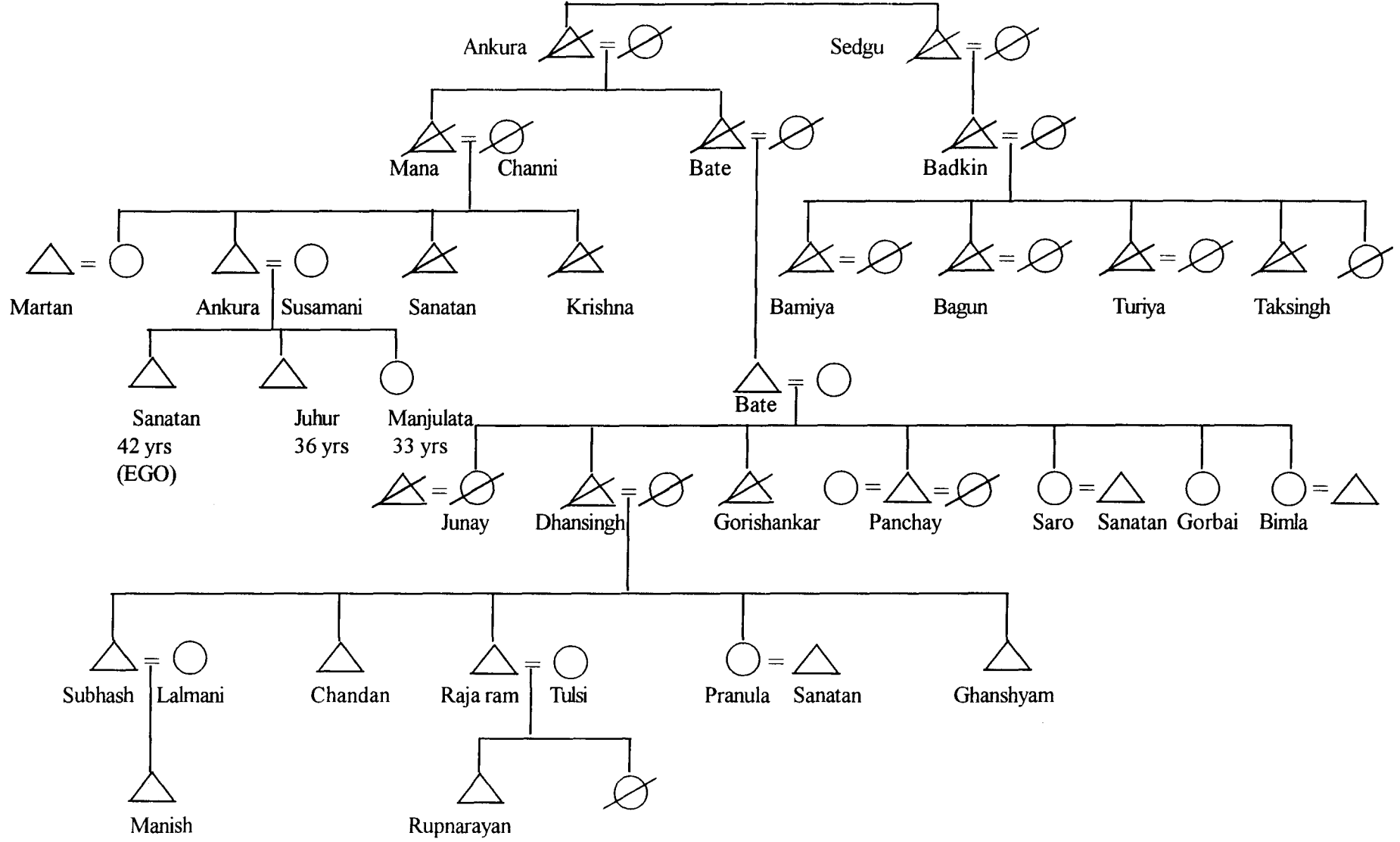
## **APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX -I**

### Genealogy of A. K. Pingua



# Genealogy of Sanatan Pingua



**APPENDIX -II**

# GLOSSARY

## Ho Term

<i>Ading</i>	the inner room of a house where the cooking is done, and where the ancestors are venerated.
<i>Adin nida</i>	midnight.
<i>Agom</i>	the promise made to one of the greater spirits (Sing bonga, maran bonga, nage) to perform a certain sacrifice upon receiving some specify favour (god crops, health); an outgrowth sign (sindoor) pearled rice grains wrapped in leaves ) of this promise.
<i>Aji</i>	older sister.
<i>Andi</i>	marriage; to marry
<i>Apu</i>	father
<i>Ara</i>	son-in-law.
<i>Atan</i>	to receive something in the open palms of both hands held together .
<i>Ba</i>	flower
<i>Baba</i>	paddy
<i>Badchom</i>	sabai grass; used to make ropes and hunter.
<i>Bajigar</i>	gypsy
<i>Bala bundu</i>	relations through marriage
<i>Banda</i>	a tank or pond
<i>Banji</i>	barren

<i>Bapala</i>	to make preliminary arrangement for marriage,
the	feast on that occasion.
<i>Bare</i>	younger brother or male cousin (used by a
woman)	
<i>Bar-ji</i>	pregnant (two-souled)
<i>Basa</i>	a residence; to reside
<i>Bau:older</i>	brother or male cousin
<i>Bau-honyor</i>	A man's wife's older brother; a woman's husband's
	older brother.
<i>Bayer</i>	a rope
<i>Bilae-a cat</i>	
<i>Bindiram</i>	a spider
<i>Bin</i>	a snake
<i>Binti</i>	prayer; to pray
<i>Bir</i>	jungle
<i>Bisiyan</i>	poisonous
<i>Biswas</i>	belief; to believe
<i>Biti-haya</i>	greed (y) for possessions
<i>Bochor mundi</i>	the completion of the yearly cycle, (e.g. for some
	crops used in prayers.
<i>Boda</i>	a male goat
<i>Boko</i>	younger brother
<i>Bonga-buru</i>	traditional sacrifices to the spirits.
<i>Bonga-era</i>	to get rid of (e.g. for sickness or a spirit inflicting

	sickness) by performing a sacrifice.
<i>Bos</i>	ancestral line or family.
<i>Buru</i>	mountain; hill.
<i>Busu</i>	straw
<i>Buta Asora</i>	one's near relatives.
<i>Buti lai</i>	the umbilical cord.
<i>Chandu</i>	moon or month
<i>Chandu reya</i>	menstruation
<i>Chatu</i>	an earthen pot.
<i>Chauli</i>	husked uncooked rice.
<i>Chauli jan nel</i>	to divine; to inspect rice grains to discern what spirit is harming someone, etc.
<i>Chela</i>	a disciple
<i>Chenta</i>	Harassment; to harass.
<i>Chenta ho</i>	A man intent on inflicting harm on others.
<i>Chera</i>	Beautiful
<i>Chukudi</i>	A four-concerned leaf cup used es. to hold the rice grains etc. for sacrificial purposes.
<i>Churdu Bonga</i>	The spirit of a woman who died in child birth.
<i>Chatu</i> -a mouse.	
<i>Da</i>	water
<i>Dada</i>	older brother
<i>Dae</i>	A victim for sacrifice

<i>Dae daka</i>	collective noun for the victim and all things required
<i>Dai</i>	older sister
<i>Dalob</i>	to cover
<i>Dalob tapa</i>	to cover completely (so as to bury)
<i>Danan</i>	to hide (behind); hidden
<i>Danan kaji</i>	a secret, mystery.
<i>Danda</i>	a stick
<i>Danda:nam</i>	to search out by moving a stick around, e.g. in a trance (rum)
<i>Dande</i>	a fine; punishment
<i>Dare</i>	To offer a victim.
<i>Deran meran kaji</i>	hearsay
<i>Dhorom</i>	religion
<i>Diku</i>	a non-tribal
<i>Din mundi</i>	the completion of sometime, e.g. of the yearly cycle of a crop.
<i>Dinda</i>	an unmarried man or woman; a virgin.
<i>Diuri</i>	a priest
<i>Dos(o)</i>	guilty; to accuse.
<i>Duku-ichi</i>	to cause suffering to
<i>Duku-sasati</i>	to persecute, inflict suffering upon
<i>Dutam karji</i>	a matchmaker

<i>Enga</i>	mohter
<i>Era</i>	wife , woman
<i>Ere</i>	an omen
<i>Erel</i>	jealous (also called hisinga)
<i>Gandu</i>	a stool
<i>Gaun</i> father's wife (younger	a mother's younger sister; the wife of one's younger brother; one's father's other than one's mother)
<i>Giyu</i>	shame, disgrace, shyness; to be ashamed.
<i>Gee: senger</i>	fit (convulsions)
<i>Gom</i>	wheat
<i>Gonoe</i>	death
<i>Gonon</i>	cost, value, bride price, to set a price.
<i>Goso</i>	to rub
<i>Gungu</i> brother's of one's	great grandparent; great grandchild; older of one's father; his wife; older sister mother; her husband.
<i>Guru</i> who divining.	a teacher; a perosn such as soka or Deonwa teaches other mantras for purposes of
<i>Ham buri</i>	a man and wife.
<i>Ham hoko</i> ading)	old men, ancesters (whose spirits are in the
<i>Hanar</i>	mother-in-law.

<i>Har-dorom</i>	to drive a way, ward off
<i>Hasu</i>	sickness; to be sick
<i>Hata</i>	winnowing basket
<i>Hata: goso</i>	to rub rice in a winnowing basket for purposes of divination, e.g. to determine what spirit is inflicting harm on someone.
<i>Her-mut</i>	the sacrifice held before the sowing of the main crop; the feast held on that occasion (also called <i>hon ba</i> )
<i>Hero porob</i>	the sacrifice and feast held after all the sowing has been completed about the month of July.
<i>Herel</i>	husband
<i>Hesa: daru</i>	the pipal tree
<i>Hisinga</i>	envy
<i>Ho</i>	a man ; a Ho; the Ho language.
<i>Hamo-ura</i>	to regain a healthy body (after wasting away due to sickness, etc.)
<i>Hon ocho</i>	desendants
<i>Honor</i>	to roam, wander
<i>Jano</i>	contagious
<i>Jari</i>	very weak from sickness
<i>Jayer</i>	the sacred grove (also called <i>desauli</i> )
<i>Ji</i>	spirit
<i>Jono</i>	Broom

<i>Jowar</i>	to greet; a greeting; hello.
<i>Jowar-sara</i>	to worship.
<i>Kaji ayer</i>	to foretell, prophesy; to inform beforehand.
<i>Kented</i>	quarrelsome
<i>Keya-ader</i>	to call into (used of calling the shades of a dead member of the family into the ading)
<i>Kili</i>	clan
<i>Kui</i>	a woman
<i>Kursinama</i>	geneology: one's family tree.
<i>Mage</i>	the feast observed in each village after the harvest work is finished; obscene language used then; to use obscene language.
<i>Mani sunam</i>	mustard oil
<i>Manki</i>	the headman of a confederation of villages each of which has a headman called <i>munda</i> .
<i>Maran</i>	big, great
<i>Mayom</i>	blood
<i>Med</i>	eye
<i>Med-najor</i>	to cast a spell by the evil eye; a spell so cast.
<i>Mochon</i>	the edge of some elevated surface.
<i>Muchad</i>	to finish , put an end to,
<i>Mulu: Chandu</i>	the new moon; next month
<i>Munda</i>	a village headman
<i>Najom</i>	to poison deliberately either by witchcraft or by

	ordinary means; witchcraft; to practice witchcraft.
<i>Nama era</i>	bride
<i>Nama kowa</i>	bridegroom
<i>Nida</i>	night
<i>Nida Pan</i>	night time
<i>Otongar</i>	a person who supposedly waylays children for human sacrifice.
<i>Papi</i>	sinful
<i>Paraw</i>	to read; to study; to go to school
<i>Randi</i>	a widow
<i>Ranu</i>	ferment for rice beer; yeast for bread; medicine.
<i>Rasi</i>	Juice; the liquid resulting from the fermentation on top of a rice beer brew.
<i>Red</i>	a root e.g. of a tree; medicine
<i>Red:bugin</i>	to cure by medicine.
<i>Roga</i>	disease
<i>Rowa</i>	sow
<i>Rum</i>	a trance; to shake in a trance.
<i>Sai</i>	a tola, a separate section of a village.
<i>Sara</i>	to curse ; a curse
<i>Sarub</i>	of an evil spirit, to take possession of someone.
<i>Sasan</i>	a burial palce
<i>Sasan diri</i>	a large stone put flat on the ground over a grave

<i>Seba</i>	to serve, be a devotee to (e.g. some spirit)
<i>Seta</i>	a dog
<i>Sinduri</i>	vermillion,
<i>Sorog</i>	heaven
<i>Sukuri</i>	a pig
<i>Tapan</i>	the promise made usually to one of the malign spirits (Churdu bonga, Dandi, etc.) to perform a certain sacrifice upon receiving a specified favour.
<i>Teta gunguko</i>	ancestors
<i>Takub danda</i>	a staff used by an old or sick person or by one who is in a trance ( <i>rum</i> ) is assisting a Deonwa.
<i>Uku Kaji</i>	a secret
<i>Uli-da</i>	saliva
<i>Umbul/Umbool</i>	shadow, shade
<i>Undi</i>	younger brother or cousin

**APPENDIX -III**

SP office, Chakrasa W. Singhlaury

पश्चिमो सिंहभूम, चाईबासा जिले में वर्ष-1995 से 1997 तक डायन-भूत से संबंधित काण्डों की विवरणी ।

क्रमांक	वि०प्र०सं०	थाना का नाम	काण्ड सं०/दिनांक	धारा	अभियुक्त/आरोपित	मृतक सं०/पु०/बच्चा	फलाफल
1.	171/95	चक्रधरपुर	40/95, दि०-5. 4. 95	147/148/149/452/364/302/8	12 § 5§	1/1/5	आपत्त-60/95 दि०-12. 5. 95
2.	195/95	गुवा	31/95, दि०-12. 4. 95	302 भ०द०वि० ।	1	1/-/-/	सी०स०-19/95, 30/4/95
3.	460/95	मनेहरपुर	38/95, 12. 8. 95	302/201/34भ०द०वि० ।	4	1/-/-/""	-35/95, 28. 9. 95
4.	462/95	जगन्नाथपुर	33/95, दि०-14. 8. 95	302/201/34भ०द०वि० ।	7	1/-/-/ ""	दि०-29. 10. 95
5.	360/95	खरसावाँ	16/95, दि०-27. 6. 95	302 भ०द०वि० ।	1	1/-/-/ ""	दि०-6. 11. 95
6.	565/95	बंदगाँव	42/95, दि०-28. 9. 95	302/34 भ०द०वि० ।	4	1/-/-/""	40/95, 31. 11. 95
7.	585/95	कुवाई	22/95, दि०-7. 10. 95	147/148/149/452/302/380 ""	21	1/1/4 ""	22/95, 12. 12. 95
8.	609/95	मंझारी	23/95, दि०-26. 10. 95	302/201/34भ०द०वि० ।	3	2/-/-/ ""	28/95, 30. 11. 95
9.	658/95	सोनुवाँ	29/95, दि०-9. 11. 95	302/201/109/120बी § ""	5	1/-/-/ ""	30/95, 30. 11. 95
<u>वर्ष- 1996</u>						21	
1.	330/96	खरसावाँ	28/96, दि०-29. 7. 96	302/201/34भ०द०वि० ।	2	-/1/-/ ""	31/96, 27. 10. 96
2.	379/96	जगन्नाथपुर	41/96, दि०-8. 9. 96	302भ०द०वि० एवं 27आ०स० । §	2	*/1/-/ ""	2/97, 23. 1. 97
3.	419/96	खरसावाँ	36/96, दि०-7. 10. 96	302/201/34भ०द०वि० ।	5	1/-/-/ ""	दि०-21. 12. 96
4.	458/96	गोयलकेरा	23/96, दि०-28. 10. 96	302/201/120बी § भ०द०वि० ।	5	1/2/-/	दो अभिकागिगतारी हेतु लम्बित ।
5.	504/96	मंझगाँव	39/96, दि०-23. 11. 96	302 भ०द०वि० ।	1	1/-/-/ ""	31/96, 30. 12. 96
6.	521/96	श्रीकमानो हाटगम्हरिया	64/96, दि०-2. 12. 96	302/201/34भ०द०वि० ।	2	-/1/-/ ""	3/97, 25. 2. 97
7.	518/96	टोण्टो	31/96, दि०-28. 11. 96	302 भ०द०वि० ।	1	1/-/-/ ""	5/97, 28. 2. 97
<u>वर्ष- 1997</u>						9	
1.	25/97	जगन्नाथपुर	5/97, दि०-26. 1. 97	323/325/341/307भ०द०वि० ।	1	1/-/-/ ""	11/97, दि०-28. 3. 97
2.	133/97	चक्रधरपुर	31/97, दि०-13. 4. 97	302 भ०द०वि० ।	2	1/-/-/ ""	-41/97, दि०-31. 5. 97

3.	222/97	श्रीकमानो	24/97, दि०-11.5.97	364/302/201/34आठोडोदि०	1	1/-/-/	आर०प पत्र-38/97, दि०-30.6.97
4.	337/97	गम्हरिया	40/97 दि०-21.7.97	302 आठोडोदि०	1	1/-/-/	"-32/97, दि०-6.8.97
5.	401/97	चक्रपुर	66/97, दि०-26.8.97	302/201/34आठोडोदि०	6	1/-/-/	"-102/97, दि०-23.11.97
6.	494/97	सरायकेला	77/97, दि०-11.10.97	452/307आठोडोदि०एवं27आठोडो	2	जहमी, 1 औरत	एक अमिठक गिरफ्तारी हेतु ल०।
7.	602/97	चक्रपुर	103/97, दि०-9.12.97	302/201आठोडोदि०	5	1/-/-/	4 अमिठक " " " ।

आरक्षी अधीक्षक,  
पश्चिमी सिंहगढ़, गार्हवाला ।





- 2 -

मिम्हारी ते मुरघु के कारण मेरी पत्नी युद्धा माडीं को आपन समझकर टंगी ते  
मईन काटकर हत्या कर दिया है ।

एही हमारा क्याप । मैं अपना बयान पढ़वाकर तुन व समझकर टोक ।  
लिखा पाकर अनेबाये हाथ का निवाान बना दिया ।

हउ/- दीप तही  
बानी माडीं ।



4 2 -

हमारा दावा है कि मेरवी पत्नी पानमौली दास को डाकू होने के तद्दिह में सुराम बालमुषु उर्फ पन्ना पिता दिगु बालमुषु , 2. लखन बालमुषु , 3. दुम्बो बालमुषु दोनों पेठ बाम्बिया बालमुषु , 4. मुरली बालमुषु उर्फ मोरम पिता मोरतिह बालमुषु तथा ताण्डुदाहायु धाना कीकानो जिना वठतिहसूम ने मिलकर कहीं से बाकर मेरो अनुपस्थिति में दिनांक 7.5.97 को रात्रि में हत्या कर दिया एवं नाति डोबरौ दास को बराबर उसके साथ रहता था हत्या करते देखा होना इतिमिथे उसको भी हत्या कर दोनों के नाम को कहीं छिपा दिया है ।

यहो हमारा कथान है हम अपनाकथान ठो अपने बरेर भाई देवेन दास के समझ पदवा कर तुन को समझ लिया तथा कथान तहो लिखा वाकर अपना बायां उरुंठा का निरागन बना दिया ।

हो/- टोप तहो

मौनाराम दास ।

Source - SP office, Chaikasa, N. Singhbhai

क्रमांक:- 1126/30770

प्रतिवेदन-1

प०सिंहगुम, वि०ग०सिंहगुम:-173/97

वाईबाता, दि०-21.4.97

चक्रधरपुर थाना काण्ड संख्या-31/97 दि०-13.4.97 धारा 302 मा०सिंहगुम ।

प्राथमिकी को तथ्यो प्रतिनिधि नोटे दी जा रही है, जिसे इस काण्ड में प्रतिवेदन -1 को मान्यता दी जाती है। इस काण्ड का पर्यवेक्षण आरक्षी उपा०, चक्रधरपुर करेंगे। अनुसंधान जारी है, जैसे वो प्रतिवेदन भेजा जायगा।

1. वादो का नाम :- नरुन महतो पे० रव० नुन महतो ग्राम बामोद थाना चक्रधरपुर जिला प०सिंहगुम ।
2. प्रतिवादो का नाम :- लक्ष्मी कान्त महतो पे० अमृत महतो ता० बामोद थाना चक्रधरपुर जिला प०सिंहगुम ।
3. अपराध एवं धारा :- ग्राम बामोद थाना चक्रधरपुर जिला प०सिंहगुम में टाँगो से मारकर नरो हत्या करना। धारा-302 मा०सिंहगुम ।
4. घटनास्थल :- ग्राम बामोद थाना चक्रधरपुर, थाना से 9 कि०मी० पश्चिम ।
5. घटना कि तिथि:- दिनांक:-13.4.97 को 15-30 बजे ।
6. घटना की सूचना :- दिनांक:-13.4.97 को 16-30 बजे ।
7. अनुसंधानकर्ता :- ज०सिंहगुम यदुनन्दन चौधरी ।

ज०सिंहगुम/स०सिंहगुम/आ०सिंहगुम/आ०सिंहगुम/आ०सिंहगुम/आ०सिंहगुम ।

आरक्षी उपा०

पश्चिमी सिंहगुम, वाईबाता ।

मेरा नाम नरुन महतो पे०नून महतो ता० बामोद थाना बामोद थाना चक्रधरपुर जिला प०सिंहगुम का हूँ। मे आज दि०-13.4.97 को समय नामालूम 17.45। नि रविवार को आज थाना के दारोमावो के सामने ग्राम बामोद के मेरा मतोजा पि पिता बामोद के घर के अग्नि घटना स्थल पर रवेच्छा से बयान देता हूँ कि आज मेरा मतो मतिमा पितोपत्त महतो पिता रव० बितेन्द्र महतो ग्राम बामोद मे मेरे घर आया और बताया कि आज को मी मेरो दादी, उम्र करीब 80 वर्ष लगभग के जब करीब 15-30 बजे शाम में वह मेरो मी के साथ अपने अग्नि में बानवरी को चारा पाचो दे रही थी कि गाँव के लक्ष्मीकान्त महतो पे० अमृत महतो अपने हाथ में टाँगो लेकर मामो देते हुये आया और मेरो मी को बोली कि तुम डायन हो तुम्हारी मेरे जानवरी को तथा मेरा दादा को एवं मेरा मतिमा हिमन्तु को डायन कर के मार दिये हो आज तुम्हो बिन्दा नहीं छोड़ूँ कहते हुये अपने हाथ में लिये टाँगो से गर्दन को काट दिया जिसके जमोन पर गिर गयो को पुनारा 2-3 टाँगो गर्दन पर फिरे तरफ को काट दिया जिससे वहाँ पर खून से लथपथ होकर मर गयो है उक्त सुचना पर मैं अपना मतोजा पितोपत्त महतो पे० रव० बितेन्द्र महतो के साथ घटनास्थल पर जाये तो देखा कि मेरो मी रिक्ता देवो अग्नि में खून से लथपथ एवं गर्दन कटा हुआ मरी पड़ी है। इतो पिय गाँव के फुजा महतो पिता रव० हिमन्तु महतो, 2- रामचन्द्र महतो पिता बामोद महतो, 3- किशोरा महतो पिता मोह ग महतो आदि तथा गाँव के लक्ष्मीकान्त महतो लोने भी जाये और मेरो मी को मरी पड़ी देवे। इसके बाद हत्या करने वाला लक्ष्मीकान्त महतो को गाँव में खोज किये पर गाँव में नहीं मिला। मेरा दावा है को गाँव के लक्ष्मीकान्त महतो मेरो मी पर हुआ अन्तकालिक घात में डायन का आरोप लगाकर टाँगो से गर्दन काटकर हत्या कर दिया है।

यहो मेरा बयान है अपना बयान बह वो बदला कर खून लम्ब किया और तहो पाकर अपना हस्ताक्षर बना दिया।

क्रमांक 4018 / अ०शा०  
प०सिंहभूम, दि०/मा० सं०- 521 / 96  
श्रीकप्तानो/हाट गम्हरिया/ धाना काण्ड सं० 64/96 दिनांक 2.12.96 धारा 302/201/34  
भा०द०बि० ।

प्रतिवेदन-1

वाईबासा, दिनांक 12/12/96

प्राथमिकी को तय्यी प्रतिनिधि नोचे दो जा रही है, जिसे इस काण्ड में प्रतिवेदन-1 को मान्यता दो जाती है । इस काण्ड का पर्यवेक्षण सहायक आरथी अधीक्षक, किरीबुरु करेंगे । अनुसंधान जारी है, आगे भी प्रतिवेदन भेज जाएगा ।

1-वादी का नाम :-

लुंगी कुई पति स्व० शंकरा गगराई ता०-हाट गम्हरिया

2-प्रतिवादी का नाम:-

टोला परमसाई धाना-हाट गम्हरिया जिला-प०सिंहभूम  
शामु गगराई पे० स्व० तेरगिया गगराई ता०-हाट -  
गम्हरिया टोलापरमसाई, धाना-हाट गम्हरिया जिला-  
प०सिंहभूम एवं अन्य साथी ।

3-अपराध संघ धारा :-

तिर काट कर नर हत्या करना तथा शव को छिपाना ।  
धारा 302/201/34 भा०द०बि० ।

4-घटनास्थल :-

ग्राम हाट गम्हरिया टोला परमसाई धाना से करीब 3  
कि०मी० पूरब-उत्तर, न०नं०-428

5-घटना की तिथि :-

शुक्रवाक 9 दिन पूर्व, दिन शनिवार समय अंकि्त नहीं ।

6-घटना की घण्टा :-

दिनांक 2.12.96 समय 14.00 बजे ।

7-अनुसंधानकर्ता :-

अ०नि० मोहन शर्मा ।

आ०महा०/स०सी०आर०/स०आ०अ०/आ०नि०/अ०क० ।

आरथी अधीक्षक,

परिचमो सिंहभूम,वाईबासा ।

हमारी नाम लुंगी कुई पति मृतक शंकरा गगराई उम्र करीब 50 वर्ष ता०-हाट गम्हरिया टोलापरमसाई धाना हाट गम्हरिया जिला-प०सिंहभूम/वाईबासा का रहने वाले हैं । मैं आज दिन सोमवार ता० नामाभूम/दि० 2.12.96 को समय करीब 14.00 बजे आप हाट गम्हरिया धाना के पुलिस पदाधिकारी के समक्ष हाट गम्हरिया वस्तो में अपना ब्यान देहो माथा में दे रही हूँ । हिन्दो में अनुवाद हमारे गाँव मुन्डा हरिशचन्द्र गगराई कर रहे हैं कि दिन शनिवार दिनांक ना मालूम आज से करीब 9 दिन पहले हमारे गाँव के शामु गगराई पे० स्व० तेरगिया गगराई का छोटा भाई पोनाय गगराई को मृत्यु बيمारी से हो गयो थी । जिसको दाह संस्कार में हमारे पति शंकरा गगराई तथा मैं भी उसके घर गयो थी, वहाँ पर दोपहर के बाद करीब 2 बजे दिन में पहुँचो तथा मृतक पोनाय गगराई के अंतिम संस्कार में हम दोनों पति पत्नी सामिल हुए थे । शामु गगराई हमारे पति शंकरा गगराई को डन्टा से मारने लगा और हमारा भी बाँह पकड़ कर बोला कि तुम डायन हो तुमको भी नहीं छोड़े छोड़ेंगे । हम डर करके वहाँ से भाग आयो । लेकिन हमारे पति शंकरा गगराई वापस नहीं आये आज सुबह मैं दोपरा जॉंगर के तरफ अपने देवर अर्जुन गगराई के साथ गयो तो अपने पति का तिर का भाग पाण्डुना हो के खेत में पड़ा हुआ देखे तथा उसका सैन्डो बनियाईन उजना रंग का गंजो तथा एक धुलू रंग का अन्डरविपर वहाँ पर पड़ा हुआ देखे जो मेरा पति घटना के 9 दिन पहल कर निकला था । हारे पति का शरीर का शेष थड़ बाकी खोज किया । अभी तक नहीं मिला है । इसको सुपना मैंने ग्रामीण मुन्डा हरिशचन्द्र गगराई को दिया जो अपने गाँव के लोगो के लेकर दोपला जॉंगर दोहर गये तथा मेरे पति का तिर/माथा/कपड़ा पड़ा हुआ देखे ।

मेरा दावा है कि शामु गगराई पे० स्व० तेरगिया गगराई ता०-हाट गम्हरिया टोला परमसाई धाना-हाट गम्हरिया जिला-प०सिंहभूम/वाईबासा ने अपने अन्य साथियों के साथ मेरे पति का हत्या किया है । घटना का कारण यह है कि शामु गगराई हमको तथा हमारे

पति के विगत कुछ महीनों से डायन कहा जाता था तथा जान से मारने को धमकी दिया करता था ।

यदि हमारी ब्यान है लिखा ब्यान को पढ़वा कर तुन वी समझ लिया तही लिखा पाकर अपना दाहिना हाथ का अँगूठा का निम्नान ग्रामीण मुण्डा के समक्ष बना दिया ।

आर. टी. आर्.डी.

जुंगी कुर्ब

Source - SP office. Chaikasa N. Singhbhum

क्रमांक:- 2512-305770

प्रतिवेदन-1

पोसिंहभूम, वि०प्र०सं०:- 401/97

चाईबासा, दि०-13 सितम्बर, 1997

चक्रधरपुर थाना काण्ड संख्या-66/97 दि०-26.8.97 धारा-302/201/34 भा०द०वि० ।

प्रार्थमिकी को सच्ची प्रतिलिपि नीचे दी जा रही है, जिसे इस काण्ड में प्रतिवेदन-1 को मान्यता दी जाती है। इस काण्ड का पर्यवेक्षण आ०उपा०, चक्रधरपुर करेंगे। अनुसंधान जारी है, आगे भी प्रतिवेदन भेजा जायगा।

1. वादी का नाम :- उदय बोदरा पे० स्व०कुसनु बोदरा उम्र 35 वर्ष ग्राम-तिलफोरी था०चक्रधरपुर जिला पोसिंहभूम ।
  2. प्रतिवादी का नाम :- मतो बोदरा पे० स्व०सारांगी बोदरा, 2. राउतु बोदरा पे० स्व०सारांगी बोदरा, 3. मताका बोदरा पे० बारता बोदरा, 4. चोमा पे० स्व०दुबईरा बोदरा, 5. लुकनु वान सिंह पे० स्व०कोनो वान सिंह सा० तिलफोरी 6. श्याम बोयपाई पे० बामिया बोयपाई सा०बुद्धरेगोरा सभी थाना चक्रधरपुर ।
  3. अपराध एवं धारा:- डाक-भ्रूत का आरोप लगाकर मिल जुलकर हत्या करना व लाश को फेंक देना एवं लड़की को अलग कहीं रखना धारा-302/201/34 भा०द०वि० ।
  4. घटनास्थल :- ग्राम तिलफोरी था०चक्रधरपुर, से 5 कि०मी० दक्षिण ।
  5. घटना कि तिथि:- दिनांक-18.8.97 को 10.00 बजे रात्रि ।
  6. घटना कि सूचना:- दिनांक-26.8.97 को 14.00 बजे ।
  7. अनुसंधानकर्ता :- अवर निरोधक, जे०पी०सिंह ।
- आ०महा०/स०सो०आर०/आ०आ०/सो०/आ०उपा०/आ०नि०/आ०को ।

आरक्षी अधीक्षक,

पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा ।

हमारा नाम उदय बोदरा पे० स्व० कुसनु बोदरा सा० डोमरडोहा था०चक्रधरपुर वर्तमान ग्राम तिलफोरी था०चक्रधरपुर वि०- पोसिंहभूम है। मैं आज दि० नामालूम-26.8.97 दिन मंगलवार को चक्रधरपुर थाना आकर करोब दो बजे दिन में आप थाना के इंस्पेक्टर साहब के समक्ष अपना बयान देता हूँ कि मैं अपने चचेरा भाई कुसनु बोदरा पे० सा० बोदरा सा० तिलफोरी था०चक्रधरपुर जिला पोसिंहभूम है को पत्नी नागेरी कुई को ..... बनाकर रहे हुये था उससे शादी कर लिया था कारण कि हमारा चचेरा भाई कुसनु बोदर लकवाग्रस्त था, एक आँख भी खराब था वह धुम धुम कर मोख माँगता था और कभी कभी धर आता था उसे पत्नी से कोई मतलब नहीं था। नागेरी कुई से मुझे एक लड़की भी पैदा हुई है। उसका नाम सोमा कुमारो उम्र करोब 9 वर्ष है।

आज से करोब 10 दिन पूर्व दिन मंगलवार तारीख नामालूम 19.8.97 को 8 हमारे गाँव के 1. मतो बोदरा, 2. राउतु बोदरा पे०उत्तुवहोसारांगी बोदरा, 3. मोटका बोदरा पे० बारता बोदरा, 4. चोमा पे० स्व० दुबईरा बोदरा, 5. लुकनु वान सिंह पे० स्व० कोनोवान सिंह सा० तिलफोरी था०चक्रधरपुर, 6. राउतु बोदरा के घर में रात में उस समय रात के करोब 8 बजे थे। मैं अपने घर में बैठकर अपनी पत्नी से बात कर रहे थे। ये करोब 10 वर्षों से अपनी पत्नी नागेरी कुई के हो पर रहते हैं। खेतो वापों देखते हैं। इनके चचेरे भाई कुसनु बोदरा को खेतोबारी अथवा पत्नी नागेरी कुई से कोई मतलब नहीं रहता था। उसी समय इनको गाँव के राउतु बोदरा इनको बुलाने आये कि चलो शराब पीना है। मैं भी उनके साथ गये थे और सब के साथ मिलकर दारू पीये करोब 10.00 बजे रात्रि में ये अपने घर चले आये और अपनी औरत नागेरी कुई 48 वर्ष एवं अपनी लड़की सोमा कुमारो के साथ सो गये उसके करोब आधा घंटा के पश्चात उपरोक्त मतो बोदरा, राउतु बोदरा, मोटका बोदरा, चोमा बोदरा, लुकनु वानसिंह, श्याम बोयपाई सभी हमारे घर में धुम, धुम लगातार-2

और बोलने लगे कि तुम्हारी औरत डायन है। हमलोग उसे खत्म कर देंगे। इस पर मैं बोला कि मेरी औरत डायन नहीं है। उसे मत मारिये, इस पर वे लोग गाली देते हुये बोले कि अगर विरोध करेगा तो तुमको भी जान से मार देंगे। इतना कहते हुये राउतु बोदरा हमारी औरत नागेरी कुई का सिर पकड़ लिया और मुँह दाब दिया, चोमा बोदरा, लुकनु वानासिंह, ह्याम बोयभाई, मोटका बोदरा उसका पेर और देह दाब दिया मतो बोदरा फंसुली से उसका गर्दन काट दिया सिर धड़ से अलग हो गया जब मैं विरोध करने लगे तो बोलता था कि तुमको भी जान से मार देंगे मैं डरकर कुछ नहीं बोले उसके बाद वे लोग मेरी पत्नी के सिर को बोरा में रख दिये तथा लाश को हमारी औरत के शाल में लपेटकर सभी गाँव के दक्षिण रेलवे लाईन से नाला के पास ले जाकर फेंक दिये। मुझको भी साथ ले गये वे लोग ले जाते वक्त धम्को दिये थे कि अगर थाना पुलिस में खबर करोगे तो जान से मार देंगे। मैं डर कर सूचना नहीं दिया। लेकिन ग्राम जेनाबेड़ा में जहाँ मैं मजदुरी करता हूँ वहाँ कुछ लोगों से उपरोक्त बातें बतायीं तब वे लोग बोले कि इसकी सूचना थाना को दे दो तब मैं उसकी सूचना दे दो घटना के समय मेरी लड़की सोमा कुमारी भी मेरे साथ ही रहती थीं इस घटना को वह भी आँखों देखी है। परन्तु मेरी लड़की सोमा कुमारी को राउतु बोदरा अपने ससुराल ग्राम तुईरा था0सोनुवाँ भेजवा दिया ताकि वह घटना के विषय में किसी से नहीं बता सके।

मेरा दावा है कि उपरोक्त व्यक्तियों ने एकमत होकर जमीन हूँपने के उद्देश्य से भूत-डायन बताकर मेरी पत्नी नागेरी कुई को हत्या तंत्र हथियार से गर्दन काटकर कर दि दिये ताक्ष्य धिमाने के उद्देश्य से मेरी लड़की को घर से जलगारहे हुये है।

यही हमारा बयान है मैं अपना बयान पढ़वा कर सुन वो समझ लिया तथा सही पाकर गवाह के समक्ष बायि अगुंठा का निशान बना दिया।

ह0/- टोप सही  
उदय बोदरा

**APPENDIX -IV**

District=Singhbhum(West).  
In the Court of the 2nd Additional Sessions Judge of  
Singhbhum(West) at Chaibasa.

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Dated the 4th day of June, 1993.

Present:- Shri B. K. Sinha,  
2nd Addl. Sessions Judge of  
Singhbhum(W) at Chaibasa.

Sessions Trial No. 23 of 1992  
From an order of commitment dated 9-3-1992  
passed by Shri Radha Govind Singh Nagesh, Subdivisional  
Judicial Magistrate, Chakradharpur at Chaibasa, in G.R. Case  
No. 118 of 1991.

State =Versus= Kerse Gagrai (25 years)

Charge Under Sections 302 and 201 of the  
Indian Penal Code.

For the Prosecutions:- Mr. K. K. Bajaj, Advocate,  
Addl. Public Prosecutor.

For the Defence :- Mr. H. L. Tiu, Advocate. (*undefended panel*)

J u d g m e n t

1. Accused Kerse Gagrai stands charged under section 302 of the Indian Penal Code for committing murder of Raimuni Kui alias Loso Burhi on 10th April, 1991 in Indruwa jungle. He further stands charged under section 201 of the Indian Penal Code for throwing the dead body of deceased Raimuni Kui alias Loso Burhi on the slope of the hill near Bikramlor Nala with intention of screening from legal punishment.

Case of the prosecution is based upon fradbeyan informant Gondo Gagrai, son of Late Pandu Gagrai of village Indruwa, Police Station Keraikella, recorded by S.I. R.P. Ambastha at Keraikella Police Station on 14-4-1991 at 12 Hours. Prosecution case is as follows:-

On 10-4-1991, the informant had gone to Chakradharpur market and from there he returned to home at about 4 P.M., and Kerse Gagrai, who lives near his house at

village Indruwa, told him that he has a quarrel with his aunt (Chachi), so let us go to call her. Bagun Gagrai, whose house is also situated near the house of informant, was stalking Powal and Kerse also called ~~me~~ him. Thereafter, the persons, informant, Bagun and Kerse proceeded towards Indruwa check dam. When they reached Indruwa dam then Kerse disclosed that he had cut his Chachi and gestured towards the dead body of informant's Chachi and asked informant that the dead body has to be removed, and if they will not co-operate with him, then he will cut them. The informant saw that the neck of his Chachi was chopped off and she was lying dead. The informant and Bagun out of fear fled away. At that time Kerse gave out that if they disclosed about such happenings to Munda, then they will be also killed. It has been further alleged that the informant's father had married informant's aunt Raimuni Kui alias Loso Burhi and the informant's step-mother is also called in the village Loso Burhi. It has been further alleged in the F.I.R. that about three months back a child of Kerse had died and so Kerse was calling informant's step-mother a witch-craft. Kerse, after the occurrence, fled away with wife. Today in the morning, the informant narrated about the occurrence to village Munda and he along with Munda came to Keraikella Police Station and gave fardbeyan. The fardbeyan of ~~xxxx~~ the informant was forwarded to the Officer-in-charge Bandgawan Police Station for registering a case under section 302 of the I.P.C. and the Officer Incharge of Keraikella ~~xxxx~~ Police Station taken up investigation. Thereafter, at Bandgawon Police Station, a case was registered on 14-4-1991 at 12 Hours under section 302 of the I.P.C. against Kerse Gurai and a formal F.I.R. was also drawn up.

The Officer-in-charge, Keraikella Police Station also took up investigation, recorded statements of informant, Bando Gagrai, taken the statement of Sakari Munda, who had

come along with informant at the Police Station. Thereafter came to the place of occurrence along with informant and inspected the place of occurrence which is situated in village Indruwa which is a road running from Indruwa village towards south which runs towards Robo jungle and is lying in between hill and the forest and is popularly known as Bikram Lore. The Investigating Officer further made inquest of the dead body of Raimuni Kui alias Loso Burhi in presence of witnesses Sakari Munda and Lakhan Diggi and prepared Inquest report. The body was found in decomposed condition. Thereafter, made search of blood-stained stones lying 20 yards away towards south from the dead body. The seizure list was prepared in presence of

witness Sakari Munda and Kusnu Bakira, prepared dead body Chalan and sent the dead body for post-mortem examination at Sadar Hospital, Chaibasa, through Constable. Thereafter, recorded statements of witnesses Somai Gagrai, Bagun Gagrai. The accused Kerse Gagrai was not found in village. On 16-4-1991 arrested accused Kerse Gagrai at village Nakti and recorded the confessional statement of the accused. The Investigating Officer also recorded statement of witnesses Ranki Gagrai and Dado Gagrai ~~xxxx~~ aged about 7 years said to be ~~sixty~~ eye-witness to the alleged occurrence of murder. On 16-4-1991 sent the blood-stained earth seized in connection with case for chemical examination to Forensic Science Laboratory, obtained the post-mortem report and after completing all shorts of investigations, submitted charge-sheet under sections 302/201 of the I.P.C. against accused Kerse Gagrai. Cognizance of the alleged offence was taken by the Subdivisional Judicial Magistrate, Chakradharpur at Chaibasa on 12-7-1991 and vide order dated 9-3-1992, the case was committed to the Court of Session by Shri Radha Govind Singh Nagesh, Subdivisional Judicial Magistrate, Chakradharpur at Chaibasa.

4. The accused sent-up for trial pleaded not guilty to the charges read over and explained to him in Hindi and claimed to be tried.

5. The simple defence of the accused is that he is quite innocent and has been falsely implicated in this case and has ~~committed~~ not committed any such offence. No defence witness has been examined on behalf of accused.

6. The point for determination is whether the prosecution has been able to level the charges against the accused beyond all reasonable shadow of doubts?

F-I-N-D-I-N-G-S

7. As many as 10 P.Ws. have been examined on behalf of prosecution. P.W.1 is Dado Gagrai, who is a child aged about 8 years claiming himself to be eye-witness to the alleged occurrence. His evidence has been noted down in form of question and answer after full satisfaction of the court with certificate that the witness though a child is competent to depose who understands simple questions. He deposed in Ho language for which help of interpreter was taken and the interpreter put questions to the witness in Ho language and the answer of the witness from Ho language to Hindi language, and in this way, the evidence of the witness has been recorded. From going through the evidence of P.W.1 recorded in question and answer form, it has clearly come in his evidence that accused Kerse Gagrai killed his grand mother (Raimani alias Loso Burhi with a Dawli, the weapon of assault at Bikram Lor Nala. He deposed that Kerse called his grand mother at Bikram Lor Nala and his grand mother was going ahead and behind her he was going and behind ~~her~~ him accused Kerse was going, and when Kerse killed his grand mother, he returned along with Kerse and when returned home along with Kerse, Kerse was washing his dawli in the water. His mother was not at home. She was at Hat, and when his mother returned from Hat, he narrated her about the occurrence. The witness gestured towards the accused standing in the dock. Thereafter, his cross-examination was also made in question and answer form. The first question put to him in cross-examination was this occurrence is of how many years ago, to which, he answered the occurrence is of one year ago and in next question, he answered today he ~~is coming~~ along with his father. The third question was put whether his father had tutored him. He answered in negative that his father has not tutored him. The next question was whether he knows about any other occurrence, to which, he denied. The next question was put that prior to a week which of the vegetable had been served with rice by his mother, to which, he answered that he does not know. The last question was put that Kerse had not killed his grand mother, to which, he answered that it was Kerse who had killed his grand-mother. From scrutinising the evidence of P.W.1, I find that though he is a child witness, has in clear words answered

the questions put to him during his examination-in-chief and cross-examination and nothing appears from his evidence that he is a tutored witness.

8. P.W.2 is Ranki Gagrai, the mother of P.W.1. From her evidence this much has come that when she returned from Hat, she came to know from her son Dado (P.W.1) about the killing of <sup>Rainuni</sup> ~~Rainuni~~ alias Loso <sup>Burhi</sup> ~~Loso~~ at the hands of Kerse. She after knowing the murder of Chachi went to Nakti and from Nakti she proceeded to village Ramgarh. P.W.3, Soma Gagrai is the husband of P.W.2 and father of P.W.1. He came to know about the occurrence on 14-4-1991 when he was returning to village from his place of service at Tenughat. According to him on 14-4-1991 at village he came to know from his son Dadu that grand mother had been ~~is~~ killed by Kerse. He further deposed that his wife Ranki in order to inform him about the the occurrence went away from home on the date of occurrence. Though P.W.3 is a hearsay witness to the occurrence but this much has come that when his wife along with minor children went away from village in his <sup>in</sup> search and in this way he met with them ~~at~~ village Nakti and came to know about the occurrence. P.W.4, Gondo Gagrai is the informant of this case. He deposed that the occurrence is of Wednesday about a year and five months back. He had gone to Chakradharourt Hat and returned ~~to~~ village home at 4 P.M., and near his home, he met with Kerse Gagrai but Kerse did not tell him anything. In next line, he deposed that his Chachi Rainuni alias Loso Burhi was at his home. Again he deposed after return from Hat, he did not find his Chachi. Thereafter, he deposed that he did not go anywhere and remained in the house. He denied about going to Indruwa dam. He was declared hostile by the prosecution since he did not support the prosecution case ~~on~~ material point about going along with accused Kerse and witness Bagun at Indruwa dam and also making <sup>in</sup> confession before him <sup>by accused Kerse</sup>. His attention was drawn towards his previous statement recorded under section 161 of the Cr.P.C. by the Investigating Officer, to which, he denied of such statements. P.W.8, is Bagun Gagrai. He deposed that the occurrence is of Wednesday in the noon. He was stacking Powal. He and Gondo <sup>with</sup> Kerse went in search of dead body of Loso Burhi to Bikram <sup>Love</sup> ~~dam~~ and there they saw the dead body. But he denied that Kerse made extra judicial confession before him that he ~~person~~ killed Loso Burhi by means of dawli. Thereafter, he denied to support the prosecution case. He was also declared

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hostile and his attention was also drawn towards his statement recorded by the Investigating Officer and he denied about such statement made before Police. The Investigating Officer examined as P.W.10 has been ~~examined~~ <sup>confronted</sup> with the previous statements of P.Ws.4 and 8 and he deposed that those two witnesses had given their statement in support of the prosecution case regarding proceeding along with accused Kerse towards Indruwa dam and making of ~~extra~~ <sup>extra</sup> judicial confession by the accused before them and also about asking them to help him in disposing of the dead body, and on their denial, also giving <sup>off</sup> threatening to kill them <sup>and about</sup> the efforts made by accused ~~and~~ <sup>stop</sup> Kerse in allowing the dead body of Loso to roll on the <sup>top</sup> of hillock.

9. P.W.5, Kusnu Bankira is a witness to the seizure list regarding seizure of two blood-stained stones. He has put his signature upon the seizure list which is marked Ext.1/1. P.W.7, Sakari Munda is also witness to the ~~se~~ seizure list as to seizure of two blood-stained stones who also put his signature on the seizure list which is Ext.1/2. P.W.6, Lakhan Diggil and P.W.7, Sakari Munda, witnesses of Inquest report have supported as to the preparation of Inquest report in their presence. P.W.6 put his L.T.I; on the Inquest report and P.W.7 put his signature which is Ext.1/3. P.W.9 is doctor who conducted post-mortem on the dead body of Raimuni Kui, wife of Late Pandu Gagrai on 15-4-1991 at Sadar Hospital, Chaibasa and P.W. 10, Rabindra Prasad Ambasth is the Investigating Officer of this case.

10. Ext.3 is the fardbeyan, the basis of prosecution case. Ext.4 is formal F. I.R. Ext.5 is carbon copy of Inquest report of this case and Ext.6 is the seizure list as to seizure of two blood-stained stones. Ext.2 is post-mortem report conducted by P.W.9. Ext.1 is the signature of P.W.4, Gondo Gagrai, the informant of this case, though declared hostile by the prosecution but admitted his signature upon the fardbeyan which is basis of the prosecution case.

11. From scrutinising the ~~extra~~ <sup>of</sup> prosecution evidence, I find that P.W.1, Dado Gagrai is the only eye-witness to the occurrence of murder of Raimuni Kui at the hands of accused Kerse Gagrai. Though the prosecution case was also based upon the extra judicial confession made by accused Kerse Gagrai before informant, Gondo (P.W. 4) and Bagun (P.W.8) but those witnesses have not supported the prosecution case as to making of extra judicial confession by the accused. But those hostile witnesses P.W.4 and P.W.8 have supported the

prosecution case to this extent that the occurrence is of Wednesday. P.W.8 has further supported the prosecution case that he along with Kerse and Bando went to Bikram dam and saw the dead body of Loso Burhi. So this much has come that at the time of seeing the dead body of ~~Loso Kui~~ <sup>Loso Burhi</sup>, by P.W.8, Bagun Gagrai, Kerse was very much present. In the evidence of P.W.1, it has come that the weapon of assault was a dawli made of iron and fixed in a danda. The doctor (P.W.9) found the following antemortem injuries:-

(1) Head separated from 4th ~~cervical~~ <sup>cervical</sup> vertebra by sharp and heavy weapon. Lower part of abdomen ruptured. Coil of intestine coming out.

P.W.9 vide para 4 gave opinion about nature of weapon to be heavy and sharp cutting like dawli. He proved the post-mortem report prepared by him. He opined that cause of death was due to above antemortem injuries. It appears from perusal of Ext.2, the post-mortem that there is no mention about the name of weapon of ~~an~~ assault, rather <sup>the view</sup> is only mention about nature of weapon heavy and sharp cutting. P.W.9, doctor has deposed about the name of weapon dawli. When a suggestion was put to him on behalf of prosecution during his examination-in-chief. During cross-examination, P.W.9 deposed that the above antemortem injuries can also be possible by other type of sharp and heavy weapon. It is true that the doctor has to ~~an~~ opined about the nature of weapon and the doctor cannot be a competent person to say about the name of weapon of assault. The weapon of assault is to be proved by the ocular witnesses who happened to see the occurrence. In this connection, the doctor's evidence that nature of weapon was heavy and sharp cutting corroborates the version of P.W.1 that dawli was the weapon of assault that caused such injury to deceased Raimuni Kui. So I find that no any contradiction has come in the evidence of doctor in order to belie the prosecution case that sharp cutting ~~an~~ weapon such ~~an~~ as dawli has been used as weapon of assault for committing murder of Raimuni Kui.

12. The learned defence Counsel in his argument attacked the credibility of ~~an~~ child witness in this way that he is incompetent to depose in the eye of law because P.W.1 does not say about date, month and time of occurrence. On these points, his evidence is silent. On the other hand, the learned Addl.P.P. in his argument submitted that the child witness (P.W.1) has understood the questions put to him during examination-in-chief and also during cross-examination and has given rational answer thereon and that under section 118 of the Evidence Act, a child of 6 or 7 years is a competent witness to give evidence in court.

In this support, the learned Addl.P.P. cited ruling reported in A.I.R. 1953 Patna 246 and 1971 Cr.L.J. 1750 Himachal Pradesh. Another ruling has been cited reported in A.I.R. 1937 Patna 662 in which their Lordships have held that "in a case where the guilt and innocence of the accused depends almost wholly upon the evidence of ~~one~~ small boy, the court should take that evidence down in the form of question and answer." In the instant case, the evidence ~~of~~ of P.W.1 has been ~~xxxxxxxx~~ noted down in form of questions and answers, and that simple questions ~~have~~ been put to P.W.1 and the witness has given rational answers ~~there~~ throughout. There is no any answer given by P.W.1 to guess that he is not understanding the questions or to show that he is not competent to depose in this case. From making scrutiny of the evidence, it appears that there is no any suspicion that P.W.1, the eye-witness of the case, has not deposed what he saw, rather the facts have been set-up in his mind and so he is deposing like There is also natural human conduct of P.W.1 being a child since he does not know what is a police station and who is Munda and Manki and what are their powers. So as per natural human conduct, he firstly, told about the alleged occurrence to his mother (P.W. 2) who had returned from Hat in the afternoon. Through there is some delay in lodging F.I.R. but the explanation met by the prosecution that P.W.2 along with P.W.1 had gone away from village Indruwa in search of Somai Gagrai (P.W.3), the husband of P.W.2 and so P.W.2 did not inform either to Munda or the police regarding the alleged occurrence came to know through the lips of her minor son (P.W.1). It is also known fact that in the ~~or~~ Tribal area the persons usually do not disclose about any happenings quickly, rather they used to make some delay, and such delay, can be ignored considering that the witnesses belong to Tribal Community.

13. It appears that the blood-stained earth and stones could not have been produced as material Exhibits of the case with the reasons that those were sent to Forensic Science Laboratory for chemical examination and the Chemical Examiner's report could not be received by the Investigating Officer who submitted charge sheet in this case. The Chemical Examiner's report might be an important ~~or~~ piece of evidence in a case if the prosecution would have based upon circumstantial evidence to connect whether those blood-stained belongs to a human-being or to else. But in the present case the prosecution case is based upon the ocular evidence of the eye-witness. So, ~~there is~~ no any infirmity has been caused due to ~~proof~~ <sup>non</sup> proof of report of Forensic

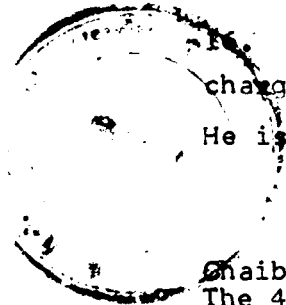
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Science Laboratory.

14. From going through the evidence of P.W.10 who is the Investigating Officer of the case, I find that he has conducted investigation thoroughly and there is nothing to dis-believe his testimony that he had done a purfunctory investigation.

15. After making scrutiny of the prosecution evidence and also having regard to the facts and circumstances of the case, I am of the considered opinion that the prosecution has been able to level the charges against the accused beyond all reasonable shadow of doubts. The non-support of the prosecution case by the informant has not proved fatal to the prosecution case because the sole eye-witness of the case stands firmly in support of the prosecution case and there is nothing to discard the testimony of P. W.1, the sole eye-witness. The guilt of the accused that he has done to death Raimuni Kui alias Loso Burhi by calling her in Bikram jungle has been proved through cogent evidence adduced on behalf of the prosecution. It has also been proved that it was none else than the accused, in order to screen away from legal punishment, rolled the dead body of Loso Burhi on the slop of hillock after her murder. So both the charges under sections 302 and 201 of the I.P.C. have been amply proved against the accused.

100/2



In the result, the accused is held guilty to the charges under sections 302 and 201 of the Indian Penal Code. He is, therefore, convicted thereunder.

Chaibasa:-  
The 4th June, 1993.

*[Signature]*  
4.6.93  
2nd Additional Sessions Judge,  
Singhbhum(Nest), Chaibasa

Dictated & corrected by me.

*[Signature]*  
4.6.93  
2nd Addl. Sessions Judge  
Chaibasa

P.T.O.

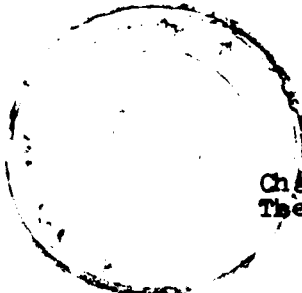
(40)

17. Heard the learned Counsel for the convict as well as the learned Addl.P.P. for the State on question of sentence. The learned Counsel appearing for the convict submitted that since the convict is of Tribal Community, so alternative punishment of life imprisonment may be awarded instead of capital punishment. The learned Addl.P.P. submitted that the murder had been committed by the convict on the evil superstition of deceased playing ~~with~~ witchcraft so severe punishment may be awarded to the convict.

18. Having regard to the submissions of the parties and considering the facts and circumstances of the case and the status of the convict and considering that the convict as well as deceased belong to Tribal community, so I am of opinion that sentence of life imprisonment shall meet the ends of justice in this case. Hence, the convict Kerse Gagrai is, hereby, sentenced to undergo life imprisonment under section 302 of the I.P.C. He is also sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for two years under section 201 of the I.P.C. Both the sentences shall run concurrently. Issue Convict Warrant.

*DK*

*DK Singh*  
7.6.93  
2nd Addl. Sessions Judge, Chaibasa  
7-6-1993



Chaibasa:-  
The 7th day of June, 1993.

Dictated & corrected by me.

*DK Singh*  
7.6.93  
2nd Addl. Sessions Judge, Chaibasa  
7-6-1993

Aman, Steno.\*



*g/with certification  
filed by 11/11/93  
H-11/11/93*

जिला:- पश्चिमी सिंहभूम

न्यायालय चतुर्थ अपर सत्र न्यायाधीश, पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा।  
दिनांक, चाईबासा, 24 फरवरी 1997.

स्ववाद संख्या:- 107/1993

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

उपस्थित:-

श्री प्रशान्त कुमार  
चतुर्थ अपर सत्र न्यायाधीश  
पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा।

विद्वान अनुमंडलीय न्यायाधिकारि दण्डाधिकारी, कुधरपुर द्वारा जी०आर०  
231/1991 } गोइल्केरा थाना काण्ड संख्या- 16/1991 } में पारित दोरा सुपुर्दगी  
आदेश दिनांक 03-04-1993 के विरुद्ध।

बि हा र स र का र

-बनाम-

- १। गंगा हांसदा, पे० डुबराई हांसदा, उम्र 43 वर्ष,
- २। बुधू नाग, पे० तुराम नाग, उम्र 27 वर्ष,
- ३। सोमा गगराई, पे० स्व० सिखा गगराई, उम्र 41 वर्ष,
- ४। चेतन समद, पे० जूरिया समद, उम्र 29 वर्ष,
- ५। रिदित हांसदा, पे० डुबराई हांसदा, उम्र 40 वर्ष,
- ६। सोमा हांसदा, पे० होदीराम हांसदा, उम्र 45 वर्ष,
- ७। डीबाई पूर्ति, पे० स्व० बाया पूर्ति, उम्र 25 वर्ष,
- ८। राउत समद, पे० स्व० हिन्दू समद, उम्र 25 वर्ष,
- ९। हिन्दू हांसदा, पे० स्व० डुबराई हांसदा, उम्र 44 वर्ष,
- १०। सुरसिंह गगराई, पे० स्व० तुराम गगराई, उम्र 35 वर्ष,
- ११। मागू कंीरा, पे० स्व० जुादू कंीरा, उम्र 43 वर्ष,
- १२। तुरी समद, पे० हिन्दू समद, उम्र 35 वर्ष,
- १३। बेरगा कंीरा, पे० स्व० जुादू कंीरा, उम्र 33 वर्ष,
- १४। सादो तेशुम, पे० गूसातेरुम, उम्र 29 वर्ष,
- १५। रामराई कंीरा, पे० बेगू कंीरा, उम्र 40 वर्ष,
- १६। सोमा नाग पे० स्व० दामू नाग, उम्र 50 वर्ष,
- १७। रधुनाथ गोप, पे० जोतो गोप, उम्र 35 वर्ष,
- १८। रादो समद पे० स्व० गोरा समद, उम्र 40 वर्ष, रभी राविनान  
बारा, थाना गोइल्केरा, जिला पश्चिमी सिंहभूम।

आरोप:- धारा 147/148/149/324/364/302/201 भा०द०वि०।

अभियोजन की ओर से:-

श्री ए०वे० सेन

रफाई पक्ष की ओर से:-

१। श्री री०एस० प्रसाद

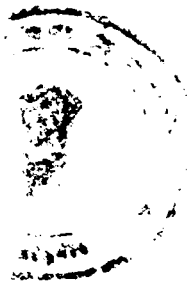
२। श्री एस०वे० जायरवाल

निर्णय

11. उपरोक्त सभी अद्वारहों अभियुक्तों भा०द०वि० की धारा 302/149 के अन्तर्गत समान उद्देश्य से जानो कुई, बीरंग कुई, मुक्ता ग्वालिन तथा जाम्बो कुई को हत्या करने के लिए आरोपित है। उपरोक्त सभी अभियुक्तों भा०द०वि० की धारा 201/149 के अन्तर्गत समान उद्देश्य एवं साक्ष्य उपाने के नीयत से जानो कुई, बीरंग कुई मुक्ता ग्वालिन एवं जाम्बो कुई के लाशको नष्ट करने हेतु भी आरोपित है। उपरोक्त सभी अभियुक्तों भा०द०वि० की धारा 307/149 के अन्तर्गत समान उद्देश्य से गोरा समद को हत्या करने के प्रयास करने हेतु भी आरोपित है।

12. सूक्त गोरा समद के फर्दबयान के अनुसार स्क्षिप में अभियोजन का कथन है कि दिनांक 17-07-1991 को सूक्त के गांव के सादो समद गांव में धूमकर सभी औरतों को बोला कि गांव के उत्तर चेतनखेड़ा नदी के किनारे डाईन-भूत के सम्बन्ध में फरका होगा। अतः सभी गांव वालों को वहाँ इकट्ठा होना है। सूक्त का आगे यह कहना है कि उपरोक्त सूचना के आधार पर गांव के प्रायः सभी औरत एवं मर्द सुबह 06.00 से 07.00 बजे उपरोक्त स्थान पर जमा हो गये। सूक्त का यह भी कहना है कि उक्त सभा में सूक्त, सूक्त की पत्नी जानो कुई, सूक्त की बेटी बीरंग कुई, सूक्त का दामाद मोटाई बारी, गांव के दोनों मुंडा तथा बहुत सारे लोग गये थे। सूक्त का आगे यह भी कहना है कि जब गांव के सभी लोग जमा हो गये तो सादो समद उठे होकर जोलने लगा कि गांव में जानो कुई, बीरंग कुई, गोपी ग्वाला, ओलका हासिदा की पत्नियों डाईन हैं, तथा वे लोग डाईन-भूत चलाकर लोगों को जान से मारती है। सूक्त का यह भी कहना है कि सादो समद के उक्त आरोप का जब सूक्त, सूक्त की पत्नी, सूक्त की बेटी को कही कि उपरोक्त आरोप बिल्कुल ही गलत है, तथा कोई भी प्रमाण नहीं है तब सादो समद, माणू बंकीरा, गोपी बंकीरा, बेरगा बंकीरा, रामराई बंकीरा, सोमा हासिदा, रिन्दु हासिदा, गणाराम हासिदा, तुरीय समद, रासतु समद तथा सोमा गणराई एक राय होकर सादो समद के हुंम पर उठने लगे कि जितना गांव में लोग है सबको काटकर फेंक दें। उसके बाद उपरोक्त सभी लोग सूक्त की औरत, जानो कुई, सूक्त की बेटी बीरंग कुई, गोपी ग्वाला तथा ओलका हासिदा के पत्नियों का हाथ पोंछे की ओर रस्ती से बान्ध दिये और कहने लगे कि यही लोग डाईन हैं। सूक्त का आगे यह भी कहना है कि उपरोक्त आरोप सादो समद लगेरह सूक्त का भी हाथ रस्ती से बान्ध दिये और उसके बाद उसे उठा से माथा एवं पोंछे पर मारे, जिससे मून लहने लगा। सूक्त का आगे यह कहना है कि उसके बाद उपरोक्त अभियुक्तों हत्या करने के नीयत से सूक्त तथा उपरोक्त औरतों को केरेलु टुंगरी के तरफ ले जाने लगे। सूक्त का आगे यह कहना है कि उसी बरत सूक्त का गोतिया लोगो रुन्नी एवं गथाराम समद सूक्त को अपने घानदान का समझर पूजा लिया, परन्तु उपरोक्त चारों औरतों को डकेले एवं लाठी से मारते हुए जान मारने

रूक के नीचे से ले जाने लगे। रूक का आगे कहना है कि उस बहुत अभियुक्तों के हाथ में तीर-धनुष, भूखा लाठी था इसी उर से रूक अभियुक्तों को नहीं रोक सके। रूक का आगे कहना है कि उपरोक्त घटना घटित होने में सुबह 06.00-07.00 बजे से लेकर शाम 05.00 बज गया। रूक का आगे यह भी कहना है कि उसके बाद रूक अपने घर आ गया और जब ब्यारिश होने लगी तो छुपकर थाना गया और घटना की सूचना थाना में दिया। रूक का आगे कहना है कि अभियुक्तों के उर से गाँव वाले गवाली नहीं दे सकते हैं तथा जो लोग घटना देखे है वे लोग वही। रूक का कहना है कि रूक का दामाद मोटाई बारी, गोपी गवाला, डोल्का हासिया, बोगी हुन्सी, गयाराम समद आदि बहुत सारे लोग इस घटना के गवाह हैं जिन्होंने घटना देखा है। रूक का आगे कहना है कि घटना से लगभग 20 साल पहले गाँव के चम्पा कुई की हत्या सादो समद किया था और वह जब से जेल से छुटकर आया है गाँव में धम्काता-चम्काता रहता है। रूक का आगे कहना है कि उसे <sup>शक</sup> है कि अभियुक्तों उपरोक्त आरोपों की हत्या कर दिये होंगे। रूक का यह भी कहना है कि उँडा के चोट से उरका सर पट गया है और उसे पीठ आदि में भी काफी चोट लगा है।



33) रूक के उपरोक्त बयान के आधार पर गोइल्हेरा थाना काण्ड संख्या 16/1991 भा0द0वि0 की धारा 147/148/149/324/307/364/34 के अन्तर्गत दर्ज किया गया तथा पुलिस द्वारा अनुसंधान प्रारम्भ किया गया। अनुसंधान के दौरान मुल्लि <sup>द्वारा</sup> जानो कुई, बिरंग कुई, जाम्बो कुई तथा गोपी गवाला की पत्नी का लाश बरामद किया गया तथा उपरोक्त मृतकों की लाश अन्त्य परीक्षा हेतु र दर अस्पताल, चाईबासा में भेजी गयी। तदुपरान्त अनुसंधान समाप्त कर पुलिस द्वारा उपरोक्त अद्वारहों अभियुक्तों के विरुद्ध भा0द0वि0 की धारा 147/148/149/324/364/302/201 के अन्तर्गत आरोप पत्र स्मर्पित किया गया। उपरोक्त आरोप पत्र विधान अनुसंधानीय न्यायिक दण्डाधिकारी, त्रुधरपुर के न्यायालय में दिनांक 14-10-1991 को प्राप्त हुआ। अभियुक्त के अवलोकन से प्रतीत होता है कि उपरोक्त आरोप पत्र के आधार पर विधान अनुसंधानीय न्यायिक दण्डाधिकारी द्वारा दिनांक 01-11-1991 को उपरोक्त अपराधों का रजान लिया गया, तत्पश्चात् दिनांक 03-04-1993 के आदेशानुसार इस वाद का दौरा सुपुर्द क्रि कर दिया गया। त्रि भा0द0वि0 की धारा 302 का अपराध रिफ्त सत्र न्यायालय द्वारा विचारणीय था।

34) दौरा सुपुर्दी के बाद इस वाद का अभियुक्त विधान सत्र न्यायाधीश के न्यायालय में दिनांक 08-04-1993 को प्राप्त हुआ। विधान सत्र न्यायाधीश ने अपने आदेश दिनांक 15-04-1993 के अनुसार इस वाद को इस न्यायालय में निष्पादन हेतु स्थानांतरित कर दिया। अभियुक्त के अवलोकन से प्रतीत होता है कि अभियुक्तों के विरुद्ध दिनांक 15 जून 1993 के आदेशानुसार आरोपों का गठन किया गया तथा उपरोक्त आरोपों का राराशि चिन्हों में पदकर अभियुक्तों को रुना एव सम्रा

दिया गया, जिसे ~~सुनने-समझने~~ सुनने-समझने के बाद अभियुक्तों अपने विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों को अखीकार करते हुए विचारण की मांग किया। तदुपरान्त अभियोजन द्वारा कुल सात साक्षियों का बयान अपने पक्ष में कराया गया। तत्पश्चात् दिनांक 06-03-1996 के आदेशानुसार अभियोजन का साक्ष्य बन्द किया गया तथा उसके बाद दिनांक 29-08-1996 को अभियुक्तों का बयान भा0द0प्र0सं0 की धारा 313 के अन्तर्गत दर्ज किया गया, जिस दौरान अभियुक्तों से आने विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों को अखीकार किया।

5. इस वाद में यह विचारणीय है कि क्या अभियोजन द्वारा अभियुक्तों के विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों को युक्तियुक्त सन्देहों से परे सिद्ध किया गया है ?

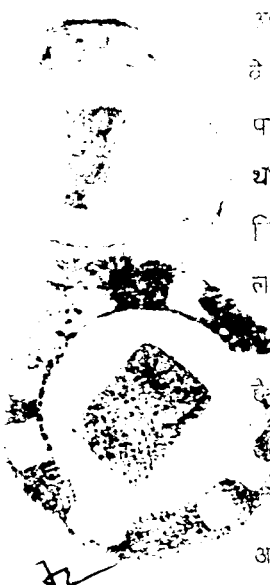
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7. इस वाद में अभियोजन द्वारा अपने पक्ष में कुल सात साक्षियों का परीक्षण कराया गया है। अभियोजन सा0सं0 1. अल्ला हासदा मूक्त जाम्बो दुई का पति, अ0सा0सं0 2 गोपी गवाला मूक्त मृत्तिका मुपता गवालिन का पति, अ0सा0सं0 3 गलाराम समद, अ0सा0सं0 4 बोगो सुन्नी को अभियोजन द्वारा आरोपों को पता करा गया है। इन उपरोक्त साक्षियों ने अभियोजन वाद का रमर्शन नहीं किया था। अ0सा0सं0 5 गोरा समद इस वाद के दूक तथा लथय के गवाह हैं।

अ0सा0सं0 6 रेयद अहमद गान इस वाद के अनुसंधानकर्ता हैं। इस साक्षी के गवाही के अवलोकन से प्रतीत होता है कि दिनांक 21-05-1994 को इस साक्षी का मुख्य परीक्षा पूरा नहीं हो रहा था, चूंकि न्यायालय की कार्यविधि समाप्त हो चुकी थी। अतः इस साक्षी के बाकि बचे बयान हेतु दिनांक 13-06-1994 का दिन निर्धारित किया गया था परन्तु अभियोजन के अवलोकन से प्रतीत होता है कि न्यायालय द्वारा बाब-बार प्रयास करने के बावजूद भी उपरोक्त साक्षी अपने बाकि बचे

बयान को दर्ज कराने हेतु न्यायालय में उपस्थित नहीं हो सके। यहाँ यह उल्लेखनीय है कि इस सम्बन्ध में इस न्यायालय द्वारा दिनांक 06-09-1994 को वायरलेस मेरेजिस्ट्रार उधीक्ष, सासाराम को भेजी गयी थी ताकि अनुसंधानकर्ता रेयद अहमद गान को बाकि बचे गवाही हो सके। उसके बाद दिनांक 17-11-1994 को एक पत्र पुनः आरक्षी उधीक्ष रोहतार को भेजी गयी परन्तु उसके बावजूद भी अनुसंधानकर्ता उसी स्थित नहीं हो सके। इस सन्दर्भ में दिनांक 19-06-1996 को एक पत्र न्यायालय अभियोजक, विचार सचिव, पटना को भी भेजा गया परन्तु उसके बावजूद भी अनुसंधानकर्ता उपस्थित नहीं हो सके।

अ0सा0सं0 7 मुन्ना प्रसाद, सदर अस्पताल, सासाराम में कार्यरत प्रधान लिपिक, जिन्होंने मृतकों के अन्त्य परीक्षण प्रतिकेदनों पर साक्षर सं00 को धरती के लिफाफट एक हस्ताक्षर को पहचाना है तथा उपरोक्त आरोपों मृतकों के अन्त्य परीक्षण प्रतिकेदनों को प्रदर्शक प्रदर्शक "6, 6/1, 6/2 तथा 6/3 के रूप में सिद्ध किया है। यहाँ यह भी उल्लेखनीय है कि इस वाद में साक्षर



के०के० चौधरी, तत्कालीन चिकित्सा पदाधिकारी, सद अस्पताल, चाईबासा द्वारा मृतकों का अन्त्य परीक्षण किया गया था। परन्तु न्यायालय के बारंबार प्रयास करने के बावजूद भी डाक्टर चौधरी उपस्थित नहीं हुए और इसी कारण मृतकों का अन्त्य परीक्षण प्रोत्वेदनों को अ०सा०सं० 7 के द्वारा सिद्ध कराया गया। उपरोक्त मीरिया राक्षय के अलावे इस वाद में प्रदर्श "1" एफ०आई०आर० प्रदर्श "2" अनुसंधानकर्ता द्वारा निर्मित किया गया अधिग्रहण पर्ची, प्रदर्श 3 जख्मी गीरा स्मद का जख्म प्रोत्वेदन, प्रदर्श "4", "4/ए", "4/बी" एवं "4/सी" मृतकों का मृत्यु स्मीक्षा प्रतिवेदन, प्रदर्श "5" अधीक्षक केन्द्रीय कारा बक्सर का प्रतिवेदन तथा प्रदर्श "6", "6/1", "6/2" एवं "6/3" मृतकों का अन्त्य परीक्षण प्रतिवेदन को भी अभियोजन द्वारा अपने पक्ष में अभिलेख पर लाया तथा सिद्ध कराया गया है।

विद्वान अपर लोक अभियोजन का कथन है कि इस वाद में सभी अभियुक्तों पर लगाये गये आरोपों को अभियोजन द्वारा अ०सा०सं० 5 के बयान के युक्तियुक्त सन्देहों से परे सिद्ध किया गया है। अतः अभियुक्तों को उनके विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों का दोषी करार देते हुए उचित सजा दी जाये। दूसरी ओर सफाई पक्ष के अधिवक्ताओं का कहना है कि इस वाद में अ०सा०सं० 1, 2, 3 एवं 4 को अभियोजन द्वारा विरोधी घोषित किया गया है। चूंकि इन साक्षियों ने अभियोजन राक्षय का समर्थन नहीं किया है। सफाई पक्ष के अधिवक्ताओं का यह भी कहना है कि अभियोजन सा०सं० 6 जो इस वाद के अनुसंधानकर्ता हैं कि गवाही पूर्ण नहीं हो सकी है अतः उनके द्वारा जो कुछ भी अपने मुख्य परीक्षण में कहा गया है उसे अभियुक्तों के विरुद्ध किसी भी तरह से प्रयोग में नहीं लाया जा सकता है। सफाई पक्ष के अधिवक्ताओं का यह भी कहना है कि अ०सा०सं० 7 एक औपचारिक गवाह हैं, जिन्होंने औपचारिक रूप में मृतकों के अन्त्य परीक्षण को सिद्ध किया है। उपरोक्त कथनों के आधार पर सफाई पक्ष के अधिवक्ताओं का कहना है कि इस वाद में सिर्फ अ०सा०सं० 5 ही एक ऐसे तथ्य के गवाह हैं जिनमें अभियोजन द्वारा अभियुक्तों के विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों को सिद्ध करने की जिम्मेदारी सापी गयी है। सफाई पक्ष के अधिवक्ताओं का आगे यह कहना है कि माननीय उच्चतम न्यायालय तथा माननीय पटना उच्च न्यायालय द्वारा विभिन्न निर्णयों में यह स्थापित किया जा चुका है कि सिर्फ एक साक्षी के कथन पर किसी भी अभियुक्त को तभी दोषी करार दिया जा सकता है जब उस साक्षी का बयान सुसंगत, अटल तथा पूर्ण रूप से विश्वसनीय हो। विद्वान सफाई पक्ष के अधिवक्ताओं का आगे यह कहना है कि चूंकि अभियोजन सा० सं० 5 का बयान सुसंगत अटल एवं पूर्ण रूप से विश्वसनीय नहीं है अतः सिर्फ अ०सा०सं० 5 के बयान के आधार पर ही अभियुक्तों को उनके विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों का दोषी करार नहीं दिया जा सकता है। सफाई पक्ष के अधिवक्ताओं का यह भी कहना है कि अ०सा०सं० 5 ने अपने बयान के बख्शा 24-25 में यह साफ-साफ कहा है कि जब उसे छेड़ से चोट लगी तब वह बेहोश हो गया था। जब उसे होश आया तो उसने यह संख्या कि सभी अभि

अभियुक्तों ने चारों आरतों को ले जाकर जान मार दिया है। अधिवक्ताओं का यह भी कहना है कि इस साक्षी ने अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण के दौरान यह भी स्वीकार किया है कि उसने आरतों को ले जाते हुए नहीं देखा और न उसने मारते हुए देखा था। इन परिस्थितियों में अधिवक्ताओं का यह कहना है कि चूंकि इस साक्षी ने केवल यह सन्देह व्यक्त किया है कि अभियुक्तों ने आरतों को ले जाकर मार दिया है। अतः केवल <sup>शिका</sup> के आधार पर ही अभियुक्तों को उनके विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों का दोषी नहीं ठहराया जा सकता है। उपरोक्त कथनों के आधार पर सफाई पक्ष के अधिवक्ताओं का कहना है कि अभियोजन द्वारा <sup>अभियुक्तों</sup> के विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों को युक्ति-युक्त सन्देहों से परे सिद्ध नहीं किया जा सकता है। अतः अभियुक्तों को उनके विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों से उन्मुक्त किया जाये।

13. <sup>साक्षी</sup> दोनों पक्षों के अधिवक्ताओं को सुनने के उपरान्त मैंने अभियोजन पक्ष के अधिवक्ताओं का सावधानी पूर्वक अवलोकन किया। यह उल्लेखनीय है कि अभियोजन सारो 1, 2, 3 एवं 4 को अभियोजन द्वारा विरोधी घोषित किया गया है। चूंकि इन साक्षियों ने अभियोजन पक्ष का समर्थन नहीं किया है। अ0सा0सं0 1 एवं 2 जो मृतक जाम्बो कुई तथा मुक्ता गवालिन के पति हैं ने अपने मुख्य परीक्षण के दौरान यह साफ-साफ कहा है कि उनकी पत्नियों की हत्या कैसे तथा किसके द्वारा की गयी उन्हें इसकी जानकारी नहीं है। इन साक्षियों को अभियोजन द्वारा विरोधी घोषित करने के उपरान्त इनका ध्यानाकर्षण इनके द्वारा अनुसंधानकर्त्ता के समक्ष पूर्व में दिये गये बयानों की ओर कराने पर इन साक्षियों ने साफ-साफ कहा है कि इन लोगों ने पुलिस के समक्ष ऐसा कोई भी बयान नहीं दिया था। अभियोजन सारो 3 गलाराम समद तथा अ0सा0सं0 4 बोगो सुन्ही ने भी अपने मुख्य परीक्षण के दौरान यह साफ-साफ कहा है कि उन्हें घटना की कोई जानकारी नहीं है। इन साक्षियों को भी जब अभियोजन द्वारा विरोधी घोषित कर इनका ध्यानाकर्षण अनुसंधानकर्त्ता के समक्ष दिये गये बयान की ओर ~~कराया~~ कराया गया तो इन्होंने न्यायालय के समक्ष यह साफ-साफ कहा है कि इन लोगों ने पुलिस के समक्ष भी कोई बयान नहीं दिया था। इन परिस्थितियों में मैं पाता हूँ कि अ0सा0सं0 1, 2, 3 एवं 4 ने अभियोजन पक्ष का किसी भी तरह से समर्थन नहीं किया है।

14. जैसा कि पूर्व में उल्लेखित है अ0सा0सं0 6 सयद अहमद खान जो इस वाद के अनुसंधानकर्त्ता हैं कि गवाही पूर्ण रूप से नहीं हो पायी है, जबकि इस संदर्भ में उनके गवाही हेतु न्यायालय द्वारा पूरी कोशिश की गयी। इन परिस्थितियों में अनुसंधानकर्त्ता के अधीन साक्षियों को इस वाद में अभियुक्तों के विरुद्ध प्रयोग में नहीं लाया जा सकता है। अ0सा0सं0 7 मुन्दिक्का प्रसाद एक आपत्कारिक गवाह हैं जिन्होंने चारों मृतकों के अन्त्य परीक्षण प्रतियेदन पर डाक्टर कृष्णान्त चौधरी के हस्ताक्षर एवं लिखावट को सिद्ध किया है। इस साक्षी ने अभियुक्तों के विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों के <sup>विषय</sup> में न्यायालय के समक्ष में कोई भी बयान नहीं दिया है।

210. उपरोक्त विवेचनाओं के आधार पर यह साफ परिलक्षित है कि अभियोजन का पूर्ण वाद सिर्फ अ0सा0सं0 5 के बयान पर ही आश्रित है।

211. माननीय उच्चतम न्यायालय तथा माननीय पटना उच्च न्यायालय द्वारा विभिन्न मुद्दों में दिये गये निर्णयों द्वारा यह स्थापित किया जा चुका है कि सिर्फ एक साक्षी के बयान के आधार किसी भी अभियुक्त को तभी दोषी करार दिया जा सकता है जब उक्त साक्षी का बयान सुसंगत, अटल तथा पूर्ण रूप से विश्वसनीय हो। इस सन्दर्भ में 1996 ई।पी एल जे आर 74 एच सी, 1996 ई।पी एल जे आर 747, 1996 ई।पी एल जे आर 226 में दिये गये निर्णयों का अवलोकन किया जा सकता है। अतः उपरोक्त स्थापित नियमों के आधार पर अब यह देखना है कि क्या अभियोजन सा0 सं0 5 का बयान सुसंगत, अटल एवं पूर्ण रूप से विश्वसनीय है ~~कि~~ ~~रखे~~ ?

212. अ0सा0सं0 5 गौरा समद इस वाद का सूचक है तथा वह मृतक जानी कुई का पीता एवं मृतक बिरग कुई का पिता भी है। इस साक्षी ने अपने मुख्य परीक्षण में स्वयं यह कहा है कि सादो समद, चम्पा कुई की हत्या करने के जुर्म में 20 साल की सजा काटकर गांव लौटा था। इस साक्षी ने अपने प्रतिपरीक्षा के दौरान कथित 16 में यह भी स्वीकार किया है कि चम्पा कुई साक्षी के बड़े भाई की पत्नी थी। इस साक्षी ने यह भी स्वीकार किया है कि चम्पा कुई की हत्या के मुद्दमे में उसने गवाही दिया था। साक्षी के उपरोक्त स्वीकारोक्ति बयान के आधार पर यह निश्चित रूप से समझा जा सकता है कि इस साक्षी तथा अभियुक्त सादो समद के बीच एक तनावपूर्ण रिश्ता था। इन परिस्थितियों में इस साक्षी के बयान का सावधानी पूर्वक मूल्यांकन करना आर भी अनिवार्य हो जाता है।

213. अ0सा0सं0 5 ने अपने मुख्य परीक्षण के दौरान यह कहा है कि घटना के दिन सुबह रामराई बंकीरा तथा मांगू बंकीरा बोले कि चेतनखेरा नदी के किनारे मिटिंग होगी जिरमें मारने का फैसला किया जायेगा। अतः सभी लोग वहाँ चले। इस साक्षी ने आगे कहा है कि उपरोक्त सूचना के आधार पर साक्षी अपने पत्नी जानी कुई, बेटे बिरग कुई के साथ वहाँ गया। साक्षी का कहना है कि मिटिंग वाले स्थान पर गांव के बहुत सारे लोग इकट्ठा हुए थे। साक्षी ने अपने बयान में आगे कहा है कि जब मिटिंग शुरू हुई तो अभियुक्त सादो समद बोला कि उसका लूका जो जवान था उसकी मृत्यु साँप काटने से हो गयी है आर उपरोक्त साँप ड्राईन लोगों द्वारा भेजा गया था। साक्षी का आगे कहना है कि सादो समद मिटिंग में यह भी कहा कि यह राधगी, इसकी पत्नी जानी कुई, बेटे बिरग कुई एवं लोका तथा गोपी की पत्नियाँ लाईन ह, उन्हें फँस लो। साक्षी ने आगे यह कहा कि मिटिंग में अभियुक्त रघुनाथ, गोपी, सादो समद, मांगू बंकीरा, बेरग बंकीरा, रामराई बंकीरा तथा अन्य अभियुक्तगण थे, जिन्हें वह देखकर पहचान लगा। साक्षी ने आगे अपने बयान में यह कहा है कि रघुनाथ एवं गोपी मिलकर उनके आरत तथा उसके बेटे को फँसे। उपरोक्त ५

दोनों अभियुक्तों ने स्वयं मिश्रित अन्य दो आरतों को पकड़ा तथा सभी को बान्धकर महुआ पेड़ में बान्ध दिया। तत्पश्चात् मांगू बंकीरा एवं सादो समद बोला कि यह ये सभी लोग डार्किन हैं इन्हें मारकर छत्तम कर दो। इस साक्षी ने अपने बयान में आगे यह कहा है कि सादो समद इन्हें भी मारने के लिए बान्ध दिया था लेकिन बाद में जबकि सादो समद इस साक्षी का छोटा भाई रिश्ता में लगता है इसलिए छोड़ दिया। साक्षी ने आगे अपने बयान में कहा है कि उसके बाद अभियुक्त बेरगा बंकीरा इसके दर पर डंटा है। मांगू बंकीरा जिस्से बूँन बहने लगा। इस साक्षी ने अपने बयान में आगे यह भी कहा है कि बेरगा बंकीरा बान्धकर रखे गये सभी आरतों को भी डंटा है मारा, तत्पश्चात् सभी अभियुक्त जान मारने के नीयत से चारों आरतों को जंगल की ओर ले गये। उसके बाद साक्षी थाना चला आया तथा घटना की सूचना दारोगाजी के रख दीया। इस साक्षी ने अपने बयान में आगे यह कहा है कि घटना तथा मिटिंग को गाँव के बहुत सारे लोगों ने देखा है। इस साक्षी ने अपने बयान में यह कहा है कि बाद में इन्हें मांगू बंकीरा तथा सोमा नाग से पता चला कि अभियुक्त लोग चारों आरतों को मुद्दिरिधू पहाड़ पर लेजाकर उन सभी हत्या कर दिये है। इस साक्षी ने आगे यह कहना है कि सोमा नाग गिरफ्तारी के बाद अपना दोष स्वीकार किया तथा उसके बतार्ये अनुसार पुलिस द्वारा मृतकों का लाश बरामद किया गया। इस साक्षी ने यह भी कहा है कि इसने अपने मृतक पत्नी तथा बेटे के लाश को पहचान किया तथा लोल्का हांसिदा तथा गोपी खाला ने अपने-अपने पत्नियों के लाश को पहचाना। इस साक्षी ने न्यायालय में सोमा नाग, रघुनाथ गोप, मांगू बंकीरा, रामराई बंकीरा सादो समद, सादो तसुम, सिद्धिदु हांसिदा, गंगा हांसिदा, डीबाई पूर्ति, सूरसिंह गंगराई, बुधू नाग, राउत समद, सोमा हांसिदा, तुरी समद, बेरगा बंकीरा को पहचाना तथा कहा कि इन्हीं लोगों द्वारा चारों आरतों को को पकड़ कर ले जाया गया तथा उनकी हत्या कर दी गयी। इस साक्षी का स्फाई पक्ष द्वारा काफी लम्बा प्रतिपरीक्षण भी किया गया है। इस साक्षी ने अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण के दौरान यह स्वीकार किया है कि उपरोक्त सभी अभियुक्तों को उसके गाँव के हैं इसीलिए वह उन्हें पहचानता है। प्रतिपरीक्षण के दौरान इस साक्षी ने यह भी स्वीकार किया है कि मिटिंग को छोड़कर लिखित सूचना नहीं दिया गया है। उसने यह भी कहा है कि मिटिंग में गाँव के लगभग एक-दो हजार आदमी उपस्थित थे। इस साक्षी ने अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण के दौरान यह भी कहा है कि सादो समद के जेल से लांटेने के एक महीना पश्चात् यह कैद हुआ। इस साक्षी ने अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण के कालिका 23 में यह स्वीकार किया है कि घटना के दिन सरका दामाद गाँव में नहीं था। इस साक्षी ने अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण के कालिका 24 में यह कहा है कि जब डंटा है उसे मार लगी तो वह बेहोश हो गया। इस साक्षी ने यह भी कहा है कि जब उसे होश आया उस बख्त चारों आरत वहीं थे। इस साक्षी ने आगे यह भी कहा है कि वह लगभग दो घंटा तक बेहोश रहा और जब उसे होश आया तो उसे गलाराम समद ने पानी पिलाया। तत्पश्चात् गलाराम समद बोगी रुन्धी उसे वहाँ से ले गये, जबकि वहाँ पर अन्य कोई दूसरा नहीं था। इस साक्षी ने

अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण के कलिका 25 में यह कहा है कि मिटिंग के बाद उसे होश आया तो वह समझा कि सभी अभ्युक्त जिन्का नाम उसने बताया तथा पहचाना है उन्हीं लोगों ने चारों ओरतों को ले जाकर मार दिया है। परन्तु इस साक्षी ने यह स्वीकार किया है कि उसने ओरतों को ले जाते हुए या मारते हुए नहीं देखा है। इस साक्षी ने अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण के कलिका 27 में यह स्वीकार किया है कि दारोगा ने क्या लिखा था नहीं बता सकता। उसे उक्त बयान पढ़कर भी नहीं सुनाया गया। वह दारोगा के बयान पर अपने अंठे का निशान लगा दिया।

2148 इस साक्षी द्वारा न्यायालय में दिये गये बयान के <sup>उलना</sup> धर्मराम इस साक्षी द्वारा पूर्व में प्रार्थिमकी में दिये गये बयान से करने पर में पाता हूँ कि दोनों बयानों में काफी विरोधाभास है। इस साक्षी ने न्यायालय के समक्ष अपने बयान में यह कहा है कि घटना के रोज सुह में अभ्युक्त रामराई बंकीरा एवं मांगू बंकीरा गाँव में धूम-धूमकर यह कह रहे थे कि क्तनखेरा नदी के किनारे मिटिंग होगी। जबकि प्रार्थिमकी में इस साक्षी ने कहा है कि घटना के तिथि को सादो समद बारा गाँव में धूमकर सभी ओरत एवं मर्दों को बोला कि ग्राम बारा के उतर क्तनखेरा नदी के किनारे डाईन-भूत का फेला होगा। सभी को जाना है। इसी तरह अ0सा0सं0 5 ने न्यायालय के समक्ष यह कहा है कि रघुनाथ एवं गोपी ने सभी चारों ओरतों को पकड़कर तथै बान्धकर महुआ पेड़ में बान्ध दिया, जबकि प्रार्थिमकी में इस साक्षी ने यह कहा है कि प्रार्थिमकी के नामजद सभी चादहों अभ्युक्ताणों ने चारों ओरतों को पकड़कर उनका हाथ पीछे बान्ध दिया। इस साक्षी ने न्यायालय में यह कहा है कि सादो समद तूँकि उसका छोटा भाई रिरता में लगता है इसीलिए उसे छोड़ दिया। जबकि प्रार्थिमकी में इस साक्षी ने कहा है कि बोगो सुन्धी तथा गलाराम समद जो इसके गानदान के थे, ने इन्हें सुझाया। इस साक्षी ने न्यायालय के समक्ष यह नहीं कहा है कि अभ्युक्ताण उसे भी बान्धकर चारों ओरतों के साथ ले जा रहे थे। जबकि इस साक्षी ने अपने प्रार्थिमकी में यह कहा है कि चारों ओरतों के साथ उसे भी अभ्युक्ताण बान्धकर चेरौबिरी टूंगरी की तरफ ले जाने लगे। इस साक्षी ने न्यायालय के समक्ष यह कहा है कि बेरगा बंकीरा ने स्वयं उसे तथा चारों ओरतों को उँडा से मारा। जबकि मारपीट के बारे में प्रार्थिमकी में इस साक्षी ने सभी प्रार्थिमकी के नामजद अभ्युक्ताणों पर आरोप लगाया है। उपरोक्त विरोधाभास घटना की रीति से संबन्धित विरोधाभास है, जो मेरे विचार से काफी महत्वपूर्ण है। इतना ही नहीं अ0सा0सं0 5 द्वारा मुख्य परीक्षण के दौरान दिये गये बयान तथा उसके द्वारा प्रतिपरीक्षण के द्वारा दिये गये बयान में भी काफी विस्मृतियाँ हैं। इस साक्षी ने अपने मुख्य परीक्षण के दौरान यह कहा है कि बेरगा बंकीरा सभी ओरतों को जो बान्धकर रसिगदीये उसे उँडा से मारा। जबकि इस साक्षी ने अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण के दौरान कलिका 25 में यह स्वीकार किया है कि मारते हुए भी इन्होंने किरि को नहीं देखा था। इस साक्षी ने अपने मुख्य परीक्षण के दौरान कलिका 6 में यह कहा है कि सभी अभ्युक्त चारों ओरतों को जान मारने

के लिए जंगल की तरफ ले गया। जबकि कडिका 25 में इस साक्षी ने स्वीकार किया है कि उसने उन लोगों को ले जाते हुए नहीं देखा। इस सन्दर्भ में साक्षी संख्या 5 द्वारा कडिका 25 में दिया गया यह बयान काफी महत्वपूर्ण हो जाता है, जहाँ इस साक्षी ने यह कहा है कि जब वह होश में आया तो यह समझा कि सभी अभियुक्तों जिन्होंने उरने नाम लिया है ने चारों ओरतों को ले जाकर मार दिया है। अतः ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि अभियोजन साक्षी संख्या 5 केवल के आधार पर न्यायालय में यह कहा है कि अभियुक्तों द्वारा चारों ओरतों को जान मारने के नोयत से जंगल की तरफ ले जाया गया तथा उनकी जान मार दी गयी। इस साक्षी द्वारा मुख्य परीक्षण के दौरान कडिका 9 एवं 10 में दिया गया बयान कि सोमा ने अपना दोष पुलिस के समक्ष स्वीकार किया और उसी के बयान के आधार पर पुलिस तथा गाँव के लोगों द्वारा मृतकों की लाश बरामद की गयी। स्वीकार योग्य नहीं है क्योंकि अनुसंधानकर्ता की पूरी गवाही इस न्यायालय में नहीं हो पायी है अतः उक्त स्वीकारोक्त बयान के आधार पर भी अभियुक्त सोमा नाग के विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोप सिद्ध नहीं होते हैं।

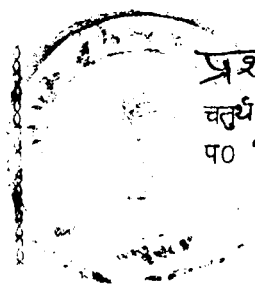
158. चूंकि अभियोजन सा 0 सं 5 के बयान में काफी विरोधितियाँ हैं अतः जब तक उपरोक्त साक्षी का बयान किसी दूसरे साक्षी द्वारा सम्पूर्ण नहीं किया जाता है, मेरे विचार से केवल सा 0 सं 5 के आधार पर ही अभियुक्तों को दोषी ठहराना न्यायोचित नहीं है। इस सन्दर्भ में यहाँ यह कहना तर्कगत होगा चूंकि सा 0 सं 5 के का बयान संगत, अटल एवं पूर्ण रूप से विश्वसनीय नहीं है अतः माननीय उच्चतम न्यायालय एवं माननीय पटना उच्च न्यायालय द्वारा उपरोक्त दिये गये निर्णयों के आधार पर केवल इस साक्षी के साक्ष्य के आधार पर ही अभियुक्तों को दोषी नहीं ठहराया जा सकता है।

16. उपरोक्त विवेचनाओं के आधार पर मैं इस निष्कर्ष पर पहुँचता हूँ कि इस वाद में अभियोजन द्वारा अभियुक्तों के विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों को युक्तिपूर्ण सन्देहों से परे सिद्ध नहीं किया जा सका है अतः मैं सभी अभियुक्तों को उनके विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों से उन्मुक्त करता हूँ। अभियुक्तों के अवलोकन से यह प्रतीत होता है कि अभियुक्त सादो समद, मांगू कंकीरा, रामनाई कंकीरा, सोमा नाग, रघुनाथ गोप, सुरी समद तथा सादो तंरुम काराहाजत में है अतः यह निर्देश दिया जाता है कि उन्हें सुरन्त कारा से मुक्त कर दिया जाये, यदि उनकी आवश्यकता किसी अन्य वाद में न हो। इस वाद के बाकी बचे जमानतीय अभियुक्तों को उनके द्वारा दिये गये बन्द पत्र के दायित्व से भी उन्मुक्त किया जाता है।

लिखाया एवं सुधारा

प्रशान्त कुमार  
24.2.97  
चतुर्थ अपर सत्र न्यायाधीश  
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24/2/97

जिला:- पश्चिमी सिंहभूम

न्यायालय, चतुर्थ अपर सत्र न्यायाधीश, पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा।  
दिनांक, चाईबासा, 12 जून 1997.

सत्रवाद संख्या:- 102/1993  
\*\*\*\*\*

उपस्थित:-

श्री प्रशान्त कुमार  
चतुर्थ अपर सत्र न्यायाधीश,  
पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा।

श्री यूके ठाकुर, विद्वान मुख्य न्यायिक दण्डाधिकारी, चाईबासा  
द्वारा ली० आर० केस नम्बर- 450/92 गुवा थाना काण्ड संख्या-43/92  
में पारित दोरा सुपुर्दगी आदेश दिनांक 23-02-1993 के विरुद्ध।

बि हा र स र का र

- बनाम -

सुखराम सिरका पिता कानू सिरका, उम्र-42 वर्ष, साकिन-कंटोरिया,  
थाना-गुवा, जिला- पश्चिमी सिंहभूम।

आरोप:- 302/307/34 भा०द०वि०।

अभियोजन की ओर से:-

श्री सी०सी० सरकार

चाईबासा पक्ष की ओर से:-

श्री वस्त्रा कुमार सेन गुप्ता

नि र्त य  
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§1§ अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका भा०द०वि० की धारा 302/34 के अन्तर्गत वीर सिंह अंगरिया के साथ मिलकर समान नीयत से सुखराम सिरका की हत्या करने हेतु आरोपित है। अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका भा०द०वि० की धारा 307/34 के अन्तर्गत वीर सिंह अंगरिया के साथ मिलकर समान नीयत से पालो सिरका की हत्या का प्रयास करने हेतु भी आरोपित है।

§2§ पालो सिरका के फर्दबयान के अनुसार अभियोजन का कथन है कि 26-08-1992 के रात्रि लगभग 10-11 बजे सूचक अपने पति सुखराम सिरका के साथ खाना पीकर घर में बेठी हुई थी, तभी बाहर कुछ लोग कुत्ता-धुंती कि हल्ला करते हुए सूचक के घर पर चढ़ गये। सूचक का आगे कहना है कि उक्त आवाज सुनने के बाद भी सूचक एवं उसका पति घर के बाहर नहीं निकले और दरवाजा के बगल में खड़ा होकर देखने और सुनने का प्रयास करने लगे, तभी दरवाजा के छेद से किसी ने दो तीर चलाया, जो सूचक के पति को पेट एवं सीना पर लगा, जिसके

कारण लख्मी होकर सूचक के पति जमीन पर गिरकर मर गये। सूचक का आगे कहना है कि उसके बाद कुछ लोग बोल रहे थे कि नहीं मरा है। डाईन को मार दो, तब दरवाजा तोड़कर घर में वे लोग घुस गये और सूचक को भी दो तीर से मारे, जिससे सूचक को बाये कन्धा एवं छाती पर लखम पहुँचा और वह लख्मी होकर गिर गयी। तत्पश्चात् सभी लोग वहाँ से भाग गये। सूचक का आगे कहना है कि अधिरा होने के कारण तीर चलाने वालों में से किसी को भी वह पहचान नहीं सकी। सूचक ने अपने फर्दबयान में आगे कहा है कि उसे सन्देह है कि उसके पति का बड़ा भाई कानू सिरका और उसका बेटा सुखराम एवं रान्धी सिरका ने तीर से मारकर हत्या कर दिया है तथा सूचक को भी तीर से मारकर लख्मी किये हैं या किसी से करवाये हैं। क्योंकि वह घटना के लगभग डेढ़ महीना पहले भी वे लोग डाईन कहकर झगडा किये थे तथा पाँच वर्ष पहले भी मारने का प्रयास किये थे।

§3§ सूचक के उपरोक्त फर्दबयान के आधार पर गुवा थाना काण्ड संख्या 43/1992, भा0द0वि0 की धारा 302/324/307/34 के अन्तर्गत अज्ञातों के विरुद्ध दर्ज किया गया एवं पुलिस द्वारा अनुसंधान प्रारम्भ किया गया। अभिलेख के अवलोकन से प्रतीत होता है कि पुलिस द्वारा अनुसंधान समाप्त कर सुखराम सिरका के विरुद्ध भा0द0वि0 की धारा 302/307/324/34 के अन्तर्गत आरोप-पत्र समर्पित किया गया। साथ-ही-साथ उपरोक्त आरोप-पत्र के कंडिका 08 में यह दर्ज किया गया कि एक अभियुक्त श्रीर सिंह अंगरिया के विरुद्ध अनुसंधान जारी है। उपरोक्त आरोप-पत्र विद्वान मुख्य न्यायिक दण्डाधिकारी के न्यायालय में दिनांक 21-12-1992 को प्राप्त हुआ, जिसके आधार पर विद्वान मुख्य न्यायिक दण्डाधिकारी ने उसी दिन अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका के विरुद्ध उपरोक्त अपराधों का संज्ञान लिया। ~~अभिलेख~~ अभिलेख के अवलोकन से प्रतीत होता है कि दिनांक 23-02-1993 के आदेशानुसार अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका का मुकदमा मुख्य न्यायिक दण्डाधिकारी द्वारा 4 दोरा सुपुर्द कर दिया गया चूंकि भा0द0वि0 की धारा 302 एवं 307 का अपराध सिर्फ सत्र न्यायालय द्वारा विचारणीय था।

§4§ दोरा सुपुर्दगी के उपरान्त इस मुकदमें का अभिलेख विद्वान सत्र न्यायाधीश के न्यायालय में दिनांक 15-03-1993 को प्राप्त हुआ। अभिलेख के अवलोकन से यह प्रतीत होता है कि विद्वान सत्र न्यायाधीश ने अपने आदेश दिनांक 15-04-1993 के अनुसार इस मुकदमें का अभिलेख इस न्यायालय में निष्पादन हेतु स्थानांतरित कर दिया। तत्पश्चात् दिनांक 29 जनवरी 1994 के आदेशानुसार अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका के विरुद्ध

आरोपों का गठन कर आरोपों का तार हिन्दी में अभियुक्त को सुना-समझा दिया गया, जिसे समझने के बाद अभियुक्त अपने विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों को अस्वीकार करते हुए विचारण की मांग किये। तत्पश्चात अभियोक्तन द्वारा कुल 09 साक्षियों की गवाही अपने पक्ष में करायी गयी, तदुपरान्त दिनांक 04-06-1997 के आदेशानुसार अभियोक्तन साक्ष्य बन्द किया गया एवं दिनांक 05-06-1997 को अभियुक्त का बयान भा0द0सं0 की धारा 313 के अन्तर्गत दर्ज किया गया, जिसपर अभियुक्त ने अपने विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों को अस्वीकार किया।

§5§ अब इस वाद में यह विचारणीय है कि क्या अभियोक्तन द्वारा अभियुक्त के विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों को युक्तियुक्त सन्दर्भों से परे सिद्ध किया है या नहीं ?

म = त ट य

§6§ उल्लेखनीय है कि इस वाद में अभियोक्तन द्वारा अपने पक्ष में कुल 09 गवाहों की गवाही करायी गयी है। अभियोक्तन साक्षी संख्या 01 बिक्रम सिरका §ग्रामीण मुंडा§, अ0सा0सं0 03 उनू सिरका, अ0सा0सं0 04 जगना सिरका एवं अ0सा0सं0 08 पाली कुई §सूचक एवं मृतक सुखराम सिरका की पत्नी§ तथ्य के गवाह हैं। अ0सा0सं0 09 डा0 योगेन्द्र सिंह एक डा0 लिनके द्वारा मृतक सुखराम के शव का अन्त्य परीक्षण सदर अस्पताल, पाईवासा में दिनांक 28-08-1992 को किया गया था। उपरोक्त मांछित साक्ष्य के अलावे अभियोक्तन द्वारा प्रदर्श "1" §जिप्तसूची पर गवाह बिक्रम मुंडा का 'हस्ताक्षर' एवं प्रदर्श "2" §अन्त्य परीक्षण प्रतिवेदन§ को भी अपने पक्ष में अभिलेख पर लाया तथा सिद्ध किया गया है।

§7§ विद्वान अमर लोक अभियोक्तक का कथन है कि इस वाद में अ0सा0सं0 08 पाली कुई एक चषमदीद गवाह हैं, जिन्होंने अपने बयान में साफ-साफ कहा है कि अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका ने ही मेरे पति को तीर से मारकर लख्मी रख कर दिया जिसके कारण उसके पति की मृत्यु हो गयी। अपर लोक अभियोक्तक का आगे यह भी कथन है कि उपरोक्त चषमदीद गवाह के अलावे अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका अपना दोष ग्रामीण मुंडा एवं अन्य ग्रामीणों के सामने स्वीकार करते हुए यह कहा था कि उसने ही मृतक को घर के अन्दर तीर से मारा था। उपरोक्त साक्ष्य के आधार पर विद्वान अमर लोक अभियोक्तक का कथन है कि अभियोक्तन द्वारा अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका के विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों को युक्तियुक्त सन्दर्भों से परे सिद्ध किया गया है। अतः अभियुक्त को दोषी ठहराते हुए उचित सजा दी जाये।

§88 दूसरी ओर सफाई पक्ष के अध्यक्षता श्री वरुण कुमार सेन गुप्ता का कथन है कि अभियोजन साक्षी संख्या 08 इस वाद की सूचक है। श्री सेन गुप्ता का आगे यह कहना है कि उपरोक्त साक्षी ने अपने पदेबयान में यह साफ-साफ कही है कि अपरा होने के कारण, उसने तीर चलाने वालों में से किसी को भी नहीं पहचान सकी थी, परन्तु न्यायालय में उपरोक्त साक्षी ने यह कहा है कि अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका ने उसके पीठ एवं उसे तीर से मारकर मार मार कर दिया था। श्री सेन गुप्ता का कथन है कि उपरोक्त विरोधाभास काफी गंभीर किस्म का है, जो अ0सा0सं0 08 के पूरे बयान को सन्देह के घेरे में ला देता है। श्री सेन गुप्ता का आगे यह भी कहना है कि अ0सा0सं0 08 ने अपने प्रति-परीक्षण में भी यह स्वीकार किया है कि ~~अपरा~~ <sup>उसने</sup> चलते वह यह नहीं देख देख सकी कि कौन तीर चलाया है। उपरोक्त परिस्थिति में अ0सा0सं0 08 के मुख्य परीक्षण में दिये गये बयान के आधार पर अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका को उसके विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों को दोषी नहीं ठहराया जा सकता है। श्री सेन गुप्ता का आगे यह कहना है कि अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका द्वारा दिया गया ~~साक्ष्य~~ <sup>साक्ष्य</sup> तथाकीयत स्वीकारोक्ति बयान स्वेच्छा से दिया गया प्रतीत नहीं होता है। साथ-ही-साथ अ0सा0सं0 द्वारा यह स्वीकार किया गया है कि उक्त स्वीकारोक्ति बयान पुलिस के समक्ष दिया गया था। अतः इस आधार पर भी उपरोक्त स्वीकारोक्ति बयान भारतीय साक्ष्य अधिनियम के अन्तर्गत ग्राह्य नहीं है। अतः उपरोक्त स्वीकारोक्ति बयान के आधार पर अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका को दोषी नहीं ठहराया जा सकता है। उपरोक्त अभियोजन वाद में उपरोक्त विसंगतियाँ दर्शाते हुए श्री सेन गुप्ता का कथन है कि अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका के विरुद्ध इस वाद में कोई भी विधि सम्मत साक्ष्य नहीं है। अतः उसे निर्दोष करार देते हुए <sup>उसके</sup> विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों से उन्मुक्त किया जाये।

§89 दोनों पक्षों के अधिवक्ताओं को सुनने के पश्चात मैने अभिलेख का साक्ष्यपूर्वक अवलोकन किया। अ0सा0सं0 09 डाक्टर योगेन्द्र सिंह के साक्ष्यपूर्वक अवलोकन करने पर मैं पाता हूँ कि मृतक के शरीर पर उपरोक्त साक्षी ने अन्त्य परीक्षण के दौरान कुल 04 लछम पाये थे और जिसमें से लछम संख्या 02, 03 एवं 04 किसी तीर द्वारा पहुँचाये गये थे। डाक्टर ने लछमों ~~पर~~ <sup>के</sup> परीक्षण के बाद अपना मन्तव्य दिया है कि मृतक की मृत्यु अत्यधिक रक्त स्राव एवं आघात के वल्ल से हुई थी। उपरोक्त चिकित्सक के उपरोक्त मन्तव्य से यह साफ परिलक्षित है कि मृतक सुखराम सिरका की मृत्यु मानव बल के कारण हुई है। यहाँ यह भी उल्लेखनीय है कि सफाई पक्ष के द्वारा

मृतक के हत्या होने की बात को अस्वीकार किया गया है। अतः इस वाद में अब केवल यह देखना है कि क्या अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका ने मृतक की हत्या ~~किया~~ है या नहीं ?

§10§ अ0सा0सं0 08 पालो कुई इस मुकदमें की सूचक तथा वह मृतक सुखराम सिरका की पत्नी भी है। इस साक्षी ने अपने मुख्य परीक्षण के दौरान यह कहा है कि घटना की रात्रि वह अपने घर के अन्दर पति के साथ थी, उसने यह भी कहा है कि वह घटना देखी है। इस साक्षी ने अपने बयान में आगे कहा है कि सुखराम उसके पति को तीर से मार दिया तथा उसे भी तीर से मारकर लक्ष्मी किया। इस साक्षी ने अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण के दौरान कंडका 04 में कहा है कि घटना के समय काफी अंधारा था और घर का दरवाजा अन्दर से बन्द था। इस साक्षी ने ~~अपने बयान में~~ अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण के दौरान यह भी स्वीकार किया है कि तीर घर के बाहर से चलाया गया था एवं अंधकार के चलते उसने नहीं देखा कि किसने तीर चलाया है। यहाँ यह उल्लेख करना भी तर्कसंगत होगा कि साक्षी संख्या 08 जो इस वाद की सूचक है, ने अपने पर्देबयान में भी यह स्वीकार किया है कि अंधकार के चलते उसने तकिर चलाने वालों में से किसी को भी पहचान नहीं सकी। अतः उपरोक्त साक्षी द्वारा पर्देबयान एवं प्रतिपरीक्षण के दौरान दिया गया बयान कि उसने तीर चलाने वालों को अंधकार की वजह से नहीं पहचाना उपरोक्त साक्षी द्वारा मुख्य परीक्षण के दौरान दिये गये बयान कि सुखराम सिरका द्वारा तीर चलाकर मृतक तथा साक्षी को लक्ष्मी कर दिया था, सन्देह के घेरे में ला देता है। यह उल्लेखनीय है कि इस वाद में अ0सा0सं0 08 के अलावे कोई दूसरा इस घटना का चषमदीद गवाह नहीं है। माननीय उच्चतम न्यायालय के विभिन्न निर्णयों द्वारा यह स्थापित किया जा चुका है कि किसी एक गवाह के गवाही के आधार पर किसी भी अभियुक्त को तभी दोषी करार दिया जा सकता है, जब उक्त गवाह की गवाही सुसंगत, अटल एवं पूर्ण रूप से विश्वसनीय हो। ऐतिहासिक पूर्व में देखा जा चुका है अ0सा0 सं0 08 का यह दावा कि अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका ने मृतक एवं साक्षी संख्या 08 पर तीर चलाया था, पूर्ण रूप से सन्देह के घेरे में है, क्योंकि उपरोक्त साक्षी ने अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण एवं पर्देबयान में यह साफ-साफ कहा है कि उसने अंधकार की वजह तीर चलाने वालों में से किसी को भी नहीं पहचाना। अतः उपरोक्त परिस्थिति में मैं इस निष्कर्ष पर पहुँचता हूँ कि साक्षी संख्या 08 का उपरोक्त बयान सुसंगत, अटल एवं पूर्ण रूप से विश्वसनीय नहीं है।



§11§ अ0सा0सं0 01 ने अपने बयान में न्यायालय के समक्ष यह कहा है कि अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका पुलिस के आने के पहले अपना दोष स्वीकार किया तथा कहा कि मृतक को घर के अन्दर ही वह तीर से मार दिया है। इस साक्षी ने अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण के दौरान कंडका 06 में यह कहा है कि उसे ग्रामीण मुण्डा की हैसियत से किसी भी अपराधी को गिरफ्तार करने का अधिकार है। इस साक्षी ने कंडका 06 में यह भी स्वीकार किया है कि अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका को वह गिरफ्तार <sup>कर</sup> <sup>र</sup>थाना में डाकुआ के मदद से ~~भेज~~ दिया था। इस साक्षी ने आगे यह भी स्वीकार किया है कि सुखराम को गिरफ्तार कर लिया गया उसके बाद वह अपना दोष स्वीकार किया। इस साक्षी ने उसी कंडका में आगे यह भी कहा है कि पुलिस के आने के बाद सुखराम कहा कि हत्या किया है। परन्तु न्यायालय द्वारा पूछे गये प्रश्न के उत्तर में इस साक्षी ने आगे कहा है कि घटना के एक सप्ताह के बाद सुखराम अपना दोष स्वीकार किया एवं जब वह दोष स्वीकार कर रहा था तो पुलिस वहाँ पर मौजूद नहीं था। अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण के दौरान कंडका 07 में इस साक्षी ने पुनः यह कहा है कि घटना के दूसरे दिन सुबह पुलिस आयी और लगभग 12 बजे दिन में लाश लेकर चली गयी।

§12§ अभियोजन सा0सं0 03 ने अपने मुख्य परीक्षण में यह कहा है कि अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका जब पुलिस आयी तब मुण्डा, मुखिया तथा गाँव के अन्य लोगों के सामने ~~कहे~~ स्वीकार किया कि उसने अपने चाचा सुखराम सिरका को तीर से मार दिया है। अ0सा0सं0 03 ने अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण के दौरान यह स्वीकार किया है कि पुलिस जब अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका के साथ मारपीट किया तब वह अपना दोष स्वीकार किया कि उसने ही मृतक को मारा है।

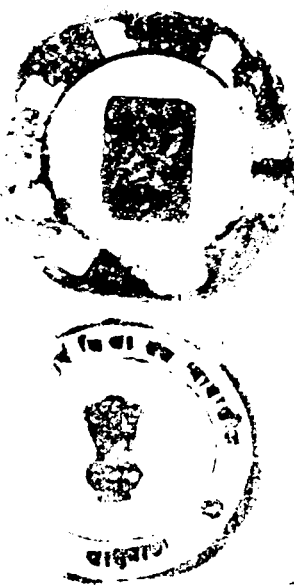
§13§ अ0सा0सं0 01 द्वारा मुख्य परीक्षण के दौरान दिया गया बयान कि पुलिस के आने के पहले सुखराम सिरका ने अपना दोष स्वीकार किया दो कारणों से स्वीकार योग्य नहीं है। प्रथम कारण यह है कि अ0सा0सं0 01 ने अपने प्रतिपरीक्षण के दौरान यह स्वीकार किया है कि जब उसने अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका को गिरफ्तार किया, तब उसने अपना दोष स्वीकार किया। इस साक्षी ने अपने बयान के कंडका 06 में यह भी स्वीकार किया है कि पुलिस के आने के बाद सुखराम सिरका अपना दोष स्वीकार किया। अतः उपरोक्त साक्षी सं0 01 का बयान यह दर्शाता है कि सुखराम सिरका ने स्वेच्छा से अपना स्वीकारोक्त बयान नहीं दिया था <sup>जब</sup> उसे गिरफ्तार कर लिया गया, तब वह दबाव में अपना स्वीकारोक्त बयान दिया। साक्षी सं0

01 के उपरोक्त बयान को नहीं मानने का दूसरा कारण यह है कि साक्षी संख्या 03 ने अपने मुख्य परीक्षा के दौरान ही यह कहा है कि जब पुलिस आयी तब अभियुक्त मुण्डा, मुखिया तथा गाँव के अन्य लोगों के सामने अपना दोष स्वीकार किया। साक्षी संख्या 03 ने अपने प्रतिपरीक्षा में यह भी स्वीकार किया है कि पुलिस द्वारा मारने-पीटने के बाद अभियुक्त अपना दोष स्वीकार किया। उपरोक्त परिस्थिति में अभियुक्त का तथाकथित स्वीकारोक्ति बयान भारतीय साक्ष्य अधिनियम की धारा 25 के अन्तर्गत ग्राह्य नहीं है। क्योंकि पुलिस के समक्ष दिया गया स्वीकारोक्ति बयान अभियुक्त के विरुद्ध उसे दोषी करार करने हेतु प्रयोग में नहीं लाया जा सकता। उपरोक्त तथ्यों के आधार पर मैं इस निष्कर्ष पर पहुँचता हूँ कि अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका को उसके द्वारा दिये गये तथाकथित स्वीकारोक्ति बयान के आधार पर दोषी नहीं ठहराया जा सकता।

§14: अभियोजन साक्षी संख्या 02 कानू सिरका, अभियोजन साक्षी संख्या 05 रेन्सो सुरेन, असा0स0 06 साव अगिरिया एवं साक्षी संख्या 07 मोहन सिरका को अभियोजन द्वारा विरोधी घोषित किया गया है, क्योंकि इन साक्षियों ने अभियोजन पक्ष का समर्थन नहीं किया है। इन साक्षियों का अभियोजन इनके द्वारा पूर्व में पुलिस के समक्ष दिये गये बयान की ओर कराने पर इन साक्षियों ने साफ-साफ न्यायालय के समक्ष कहा है कि इन्होंने ऐसा बयान पुलिस के समक्ष नहीं दिया था। अभियोजन साक्षी संख्या 04 बगना सिरका जप्तसूची के गवाह हैं और इस साक्षी ने अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका के विरुद्ध कुछ भी नहीं कहा है। अतः इस साक्षी के साक्ष्य से अभियोजन को कोई लाभ मिलता हुआ प्रतीत नहीं होता है।

§15: अभिलेख पर उपस्थित अभियोजन साक्षियों के बयान का सावधानी पूर्वक अवलोकन एवं विवेचना करने पर मैं इस निष्कर्ष पर पहुँचता हूँ कि अभियोजन साक्षियों का साक्ष्य विश्वसनीय एवं स्वीकार योग्य नहीं है। अतः उपरोक्त साक्ष्य के आधार पर अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका को उसके विरुद्ध लाये गये आरोपों का दोषी नहीं ठहराया जा सकता है। उपरोक्त परिस्थिति में मैं इस निष्कर्ष पर पहुँचता हूँ कि अभियोजन द्वारा अभियुक्त के विरुद्ध लाये गये आरोपों को युक्तियुक्त सन्देहों से परे सिद्ध नहीं किया जा सका है।

§16: उपरोक्त विवेचनाओं एवं निष्कर्ष के आधार पर मैं अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका को निर्दोष पाते हुए उसे उसके विरुद्ध लाये गये आरोपों से उन्मुक्त करता हूँ। अभिलेख के अवलोकन से प्रतीत होता है कि अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका काराहाजत में है अतः यह निर्देश दिया जाता है कि अभियुक्त सुखराम सिरका को अदिलत कारा से मुक्त कर दिया जाये यदि उसकी आवश्यकता किसी अन्य वाद में न हो।



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पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा

प्रशांत कुमार  
12.6.97  
चतुर्थ अपर स्त्र न्यायाधीश  
पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा

**APPENDIX -V**

# The Indian Penal Code: Act XLV of 1860

## Sections

- 34: When a criminal act is done by several persons, in furtherance of the common intention of all, each of such persons is liable for that act in the same manner as if it were done by him alone.
- 109: Whoever abets any offence shall, if the act abetted is committed in consequence of the abatement, and no express provision is made by this code for punishment of such abatement, be punished with the punishment provided for the offence.
- 120: Whoever, intending to facilitate or knowing it to be likely that he will there by facilitate the Commission of an offence punishable with imprisonment, voluntarily conceals, by any act or illegal omission, the existence of a design to commit such offence, or makes any representation which he knows to be false respecting such design, shall, if the offence be committed, be punished with imprisonment of the description provided for the offence, for a term which may extend to one fourth, and if the offence be not committed, to one-eighth, of the longest term for such imprisonment, or with such fine as is provided for the offence, or with both.
- 120(B): Whoever is a party to a criminal conspiracy to commit an offence punishable with death, imprisonment for life or rigorous imprisonment for a term of two years or upwards, shall, where no express provision is made in this code for the punishment of such a conspiracy, be punished in the same manner as if he had abetted such offence.

- II. Whoever, is a party to a criminal conspiracy other than a criminal conspiracy to commit an offence punishable as aforesaid shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding six months, or with fine or with both.
- 201 whoever, knowing or having reason to believe that an offence has been committed, causes any evidence of the commission of that offence to disappear, with the intention of screening the offender from legal punishment, or with that intention gives any information respecting the offence which he knows or believes to be false, shall, if the offence which he knows or believes to have been committed is punishable with death, be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years and shall also be liable to fine; and if the offence is punishable with imprisonment or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, and shall also be liable to fine, and if the offence is punishable with imprisonment for any term not extending to ten years, shall be punished with imprisonment of the description provided for the offence, for a term which may extend to one-fourth part of the longest term of the imprisonment provided for the offence, or with fine, or with both.
- 211 Whoever, with intent to cause injury to any person, institutes. or causes to be instituted any criminal proceedings against that person, or falsely charges any person with having committed an offence, knowing that there is no just or lawful ground for such proceeding or charge against that person, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both; and if such criminal proceeding be instituted on a false charge of an offence punishable with death, imprisonment for life, or imprisonment for seven

years or upwards, shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years, and shall also be liable to fine.

302 Whoever commits murder shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine.

307 Whoever does any act with such intention or knowledge, and under such circumstances that, if he by that act caused death, he would be guilty of murder, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine, and if hurt is caused to any person by such act, the offender shall be liable either to imprisonment for life, or to such punishment as if herein before mentioned.

316 Whoever does any act under such circumstances, that if he thereby caused death he would be guilty of culpable homicide, and does by such act cause the death of a quick unborn child, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine.

323 Whoever, except in the case provided for by section 334, voluntarily cause hurt, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees, or with both.

324 Whoever, except in the case provided for by section 334, voluntarily causes hurt by means of any instrument for shooting, stabbing, or cutting, or any instrument which, used as a weapon of offence, is likely to cause death, or by means of fire or any heated substance, or by means of any poison or any corrosive substance, or by means of any explosive substance, or by means of any substance

which it is deleterious to the human body to inhale, to swallow, or to receive into the blood, or by means of any animal, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.

- 325 Whoever except in the case provided for by section 335, voluntarily causes grievous hurt, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years, and shall also be liable to fine.
- 326 Whoever, except in the case provided for by section 335, voluntarily causes grievous hurt by means of any instrument for shooting, stabbing, or cutting, or any instrument which, used as a weapon of offence, is likely to cause death, or by means of fire or any heated substance, or by means of any poison or any corrosive substance, or by means of any explosive substance, or by means of any substance which it is deleterious to the human body to inhale, to swallow, or to receive into the blood, or by means of any animal, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine.
- 341 Whoever wrongfully restrains any person, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to one month, or with fine which may extend to five hundred rupees, or with both.
- 364 Whoever kidnaps or abducts any person in order that such person may be murdered or may be so disposed of as to be put in danger of being murdered, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine.

- 379 Whoever commits theft shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.
- 432 Whoever commits mischief by doing any act which causes or which he knows to be likely to cause an inundation or an obstruction to any public drainage attended with injury or damage, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to five years, or with fine, or with both.
- 448 Whoever commits house-trespass in order to the committing of any offence punishable with death, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or with rigorous imprisonment for a term not exceeding ten years, and shall also be liable to fine.
452. Whoever commits house-trespass, having made preparation for causing hurt to any person or for assaulting any person, or for wrongfully restraining any person, or for putting any person in fear of hurt, or of assault, or of wrongful restraint, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years, and shall also be liable to fine.
- 487 Whoever makes any false mark upon any case, package or other receptacle containing goods, in a manner reasonably calculated to cause any public servant or any other person to believe that such receptacle contains goods which it does not contain or that it does not contain goods which it does contain, or that the goods contained in such receptacle are of a nature or quality different from the real nature or quality thereof, shall, unless he proves that he acted without intent to defraud, be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.

498 Whoever takes or entices away any woman who is and whom he knows or has reason to believe to be the wife of any other man, from that man, or from any person having the care of her on behalf of that man, with intent that she may have illicit intercourse with any person, or conceals or detains with that intent any such woman, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.

498(A) Whoever, being the husband or the relative of the husband of a woman, subjects such woman to cruelty shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine.

**APPENDIX -VI**

पर तलवार का आघात लगा, लेकिन इलाज के बाद वह बच गई। गाँववालों का कहना था कि मानिकुई डायन थी।

छानबीन करने के बाद फ्लैक को पता चला कि इसके पीछे ओम्भा का बहुत बड़ा हाँथ है। एक टीम बनाई गई, जहाँ-जहाँ ओम्भा-गुणों का पता चला उनसे बातचीत करने का सिलसिला जारी रखा। ये स्पष्टतया पाया गया कि ओम्भा कुछ न कुछ जड़ो-बुड़ी की दवा जानते हैं लेकिन पूर्ण जानकारी के अभाव में रहस्यमय स्थिती पैदा कर लोगों का शोषण करते हैं।

फ्लैक ने अबतक डायन समस्या को लेकर क्या क्या किया है।

— फ्लैक ने डायनप्रथा पर लिखा और अपने साहित्यों में दूसरे अखबारों में प्रचार शुरू किया। फ्लैक के लेख अंतरराष्ट्रीय पत्रिकाओं में भी छपे।

— फ्लैक ने एक रणनीति बनाई; डायन को लेकर जनजागरण अभियान प्रारम्भ किया। सर्व-प्रथम पोस्टर बनाए गए, नुककड़ नाटक के दल तैयार किए गए जो गाँव में जाकर सम्बन्धित विषय पर मंचन करते एवं ग्रामवासियों के साथ चर्चा करते।

— 1993 में डोक्यूमेंटरी फिल्म बनाया गया। और 1997 के जुलाई माह में फ्लैक ने डायन पर गोष्ठी आयोजित की जिसमें तथाकथित 40 डायनों ने हिस्सा लिया उन महिलाओं की कंस-स्टडी तैयार की गई। इस दरम्यान फ्लैक ने एक कानून महाविद्यालय बनाया और लोगों में वितरित किया, जिसमें ऐसे कानून बनाने का प्रस्ताव है जो डायन कहकर चिह्नित करने वाले लोगों को अपराधी माना जाए।

— पुनर्स्थापना — फ्लैक ने डायन पिड़ोत मठि-लाओं के लिए पुनर्स्थापना के ख्याल से केन्द्र बनाने की सोची। सिंहप्रम परिवम में वोरबॉसग्राम में पुनर्स्थापना केन्द्र फ्लैक द्वारा बनाया जा रहा है।

— फ्लैक ने डायन प्रताड़ना विरोध के अधिनियम का प्रस्ताव तैयार किया है जो इस प्रकार है।

डायन :— वो व्यक्ति, जिसके पास किसी

दूसरे व्यक्ति के विषवासानुसार किसी भी व्यक्ति को काला जादू, बुरी नजर, मंत्र अथवा किसी अन्य विधियों द्वारा क्षति पहुंचाने की क्षमता हो।

पहुँचानकर्ता!— वह आदमी जो या तो किसी व्यक्ति को डायन के रूप में चिह्नित करने के लिए दूसरे व्यक्ति को उकसाता अथवा सुविधा देता है जिसे कि चिह्नित व्यक्ति को हानी पहुंचे अथवा पहुंचाने की सम्भावना हो।

ओम्भा :— ऐसा व्यक्ति जो यह दावा करता है कि उसमें डायन को नियंत्रित करने की शक्ति है इसे गुणा अन्य किसी नाम से भी जाना जाता है।

अनु:- 1 डायन चिह्नित करना :— जो व्यक्ति या तो किसी व्यक्ति को डायन के रूप में चिह्नित करता है अथवा इस पहचान की दिशा में कोई कार्य सम्पन्न करता है, को तीन महीने तक की कैद अथवा 1 हजार रु० का जुर्माना अथवा दोनों ही सजा दी जा सकती है।

अनु:- 2 उकसान पहुंचाना :— उस व्यक्ति को जो किसी व्यक्ति को डायन चिह्नित कर उसे शारीरिक या मानसिक हानी पहुंचाता है उसे 5 महीने की कैद या 2 हजार रु० जुर्माना अथवा दोनों ही सजा दी जा सकती है।

अनु:- 3 जो कोई भी किसी भी व्यक्ति का स्वयं अथवा दूसरे व्यक्तियों द्वारा हानी पहुंचाने के उद्देश्य से डायन के रूप में चिह्नित करने का सूत्र-धार बनता हो उसे तीन महीने तक की कैद अथवा 1 हजार रु० तक जुर्माना अथवा दोनों ही सजा दी जा सकती है।

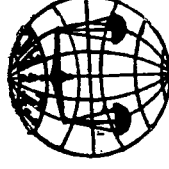
अनु:- 4 डायन उपचार :— जो कोई भी भाड़-फूक या टोटका द्वारा डायन के रूप में चिह्नित व्यक्ति को शारीरिक अथवा मानसिक यंत्रणा पहुंचाने की दिशा में कोई कार्य करेगा उसे एक वर्ष तक की कैद सजा दी जा सकती है।

अनु:- 5 प्रक्रिया :— इस अधिनियम के अन्तर्गत किया गया अपराध कानून के अन्तर्गत जमानत के अयोग्य तथा समाधि अपराध होगा।

अनु:- 6 नियम बनाने की शक्ति :— राज्य सरकार सरकारी अधिसूचना निर्गत कर इस अधिनियम से सम्बन्धित प्रावधानों पर नियम लागू कर सकती है।

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★ डायन सम्बन्धी महीला उत्पीड़न समस्या क्या है ?  
★ वह किस तरह होती है ?  
★ उसके आयाम क्या है ?

आमुख :

इतिकसर्वी शताब्दी के दहलीज पर खड़े आज सम्पूर्ण विश्व को विज्ञान ने एक नया आयाम दिया है। कुछ ही वर्षों में हम मंगल ग्रह पर या समुद्र के नीचे बस्तिया बसा रहे होंगे। ऐसे समय में अगर कहीं से वह खबर आती है कि एक महिला की हत्या हुई कारण वह महिला "डायन" थी — कि उसके ऐसी अलौकिक शक्ति थी कि उसने घर बैठे एक व्यक्ति का कलेजा खा लिया था — कि उसने मात्र देखकर ही किसी की हत्या कर दी थी, तो यह कारण मात्र विज्ञान को ही चुनौति नहीं देता अपितु मानवीय अधिकारों की रक्षा में प्रयासरत तबान सम्बन्धित संस्थाओं एवं व्यक्तियों के ऊपर करारा प्रहार भी करता है। तथा कथित 'डायन' समस्या से पिडीत तमाम लोग की ऐसा महिलाओं को सुरक्षा कैसे हो : जबकि यह मान्यता सामाजिक मान्यताओं, अन्धविश्वासों एवं संस्कृतियों का मुलौटा मोढ़े हो एक भीषण चुनौति है। कि, लिमल एड कमिटी, जमशेदपुर इस संदर्भ में विभिन्न आयामों में प्रयासरत है कि पलैक समाज के तमाम प्रगतिशील लोगों, विचारकों, राजनेताओं, पत्रकारों एवं मानवाधिकारों की रक्षा में कार्य कर रहे तमाम व्यक्तियों एवं संस्थाओं से इस कुरीति को समाप्त करने के अपने अभियान में समर्थन प्राप्त करे।

डायन सम्बन्धित अवधारणायें क्या है ?

"डायन" का अर्थ क्या है ? और किसे डायन कहा जाता है ?

डायन ऐसा स्त्री को कहा जाता है जिनके पास अलौकिक शक्ति है जो किसी साधना से उसे मिली और वह किसी तंत्र-मंत्र की जानकार है। जिसके प्रयोग से वह किसी को नजर लगा सकती है, मार सकती है। लोकों में घरणा है कि डायन बिद्या सिखी स्त्री मनुष्य का कलेजा निकाल लेती है और कुछ दिन पढ़ के ऊपर रखने बाद खा जाती है। वह अदृश्य शक्ति चलाकर शरीर में प्राण धामक घाब करती है जिसका इजाज नहीं हो सकता है। डायन के बारे में यह भी

विश्वास है कि वह अदृश्य रूप से लोगों पर बार कराती है।

ऐसे विश्वास के आधार क्या है ?

ऐसा कहा जाता है कि डायन की बिद्या सिखने के लिए अपने किसी प्यारे व्यक्ति को मृत्युदण्ड दिया जाता है। ऐसा करने पर ही उस औरत का निपुण डायन माना जाता है। डायन बिद्या में एक मंत्र सिखाया जाता है जिसके प्रयोग से भूत बुलाने और उसे अपने अधिकार में रखने के लिए किया जाता है। डायन सिखने वाली महिला को आम-वस्था के दिन आठ रात को इमबान में नंगे नाच करवाया जाता है। ऐसी महिलाओं को इतना भयंकर समझा जाता है कि लोग उस की नजर से दूर रहना चाहते हैं। डायन मक्की या फसलों पर भी कृप्राभाव डाल सकती है। इस तरह की स्त्री को अस्वामाजिक स्त्री माना जाता है।

तथाकथित डायन किस प्रकार कार्य करती है।

- डायन अगर भाप है देती तो वह फलितभूत होता है।
- ऐसी धारणा है कि डायन दुष्य या अदृश्य बाण मारकर लोगों को न ठीक होनेवाला घान कर सकती है।
- डायन किसी को भी नजर लगाकर बीमार कर सकती है ज्यादातर ऐसी बातें बच्चों के बारे में कही जाती है।
- ऐसा समझा जाता है डायन किसी को भी बिध खिनाकर जानसे मार सकती है।
- कहा जाता है कि जिसप्रकार बिठोला साँप अपनी फुंफकार से हरी-भरी जमीन को बंजर बना देता है ; डायन भी साँसों की हवा से ऐसा कर सकती है।
- डायन की पहचान :

बाब में जब कोई बीमार होता है तोहसके पीछे शोकारण देखे जाते हैं, भूत और डायन। ऐसा कहा जात है कि ओभा के पास ऐसी बिद्या होती है वह

डायन का पता लगा लेते हैं। डायन की बिद्या को सिखाने एव इस शक्ति को नियंत्रित करने वाला ओभा को ही समझा जाता है। किसी व्यक्ति की बीमारी होते ही ओभा को बुलाया जाता है। ओभा झंड़ फूक करते-करते डायन की बात करता है एवं उसकी हलिया बगैरह बताता है। बीमार बच्चा या व्यक्ति मर गया तो लोगऐसा समझने लगते हैं कि जब तक ओभा द्वारा डायन इंगित महिला को मार डाला नहीं जायगा तब तक बच्चे इसी तरह मरते रहेंगे। पलैक जमशेदपुरने 10 म म से 9 केशों पाया है कि रोग प्रस्त व्यक्तित, को मोत ही डायन-चित्रि करने का कारण होता है जिसने ओभा का ही हॉय होता है। अभा पर लोगों का विश्वास उसके द्वारा जड़ी-बुटी से रोगों के ठिक होने के कारण हुआ है।

**A M I T K H A R E R E P O R T**

डायन हत्या की विभरसती का विवरण।  
साभार उपायुक्त प० सिंहभूम 1995.

वर्ष	केस की सं०	मृत्यु
1991	14	23
1992	15	20
1993	18	25
1994	12	15
1994	12	24

यू रबरक हुआ पलैक डायन समस्या से —

बाननी सहस्रता-एव मानवीय अधिकारों की रक्षा में सर्वेसम फ्री-लिंगल एड कमिटी ने 1991 में सर्वों एव महिलाओं को अधिकारों के सन्दर्भ में विशेष रूप से कार्य करना आरम्भ किया। इसी सन्दर्भ 1991 में मनिकुई की घटना उसके सामने आई।

1991 में मनिकुई करनडीह, जमशेदपुर की एक महिला, जिसके घर 6 वर्ष पूर्व मार्च महोने की एक रात ; बस्ती के साथ - आठ आदमी मिलकर घावा बोले जिसमें मनिकुई के पति एवं एक बेटा को मौत के घात उतार दिया गया। मनिकुई के सर

**APPENDIX -VII**

# Six of a family lynched at Kuchai

## MAIL NEWS SERVICE

■ KHARSWAN, Oct 8:

SIX members of a family were brutally killed in Bauguttu hamlet under Kuchai police station here on Saturday. The head of the household, Sohrai Munda,

suspected that the women in the family practised witchcraft. Though the police believe the

grisly incident is just another case of witchhunt which is so prevalent among the superstitious tribals, the possibility of an attempt by certain vested interests to settle

the family.

On being informed about the mass murder, the West Singhbhum police superintendent, Mr V G Deshmukh, along with the police party visited the remote village and recovered the bodies today.

been on a tour of this region also visited the Kuchai police station under whose jurisdiction Bauguttu hamlet is located.

According to reports, at around 1.00 am on Saturday, a large mob of villagers, numbering about 100, attacked the house of

station some 25 km away from the place of occurrence, about the gory incident.

The police thus could come to know about it 14 hours later.

It was learnt that the village folks suspected that the women



Slain bodies of men, women and children depicted a spine-chilling scene at Bauguttu under Kuchai ps. Photo: Pinaki Ranjan

three women and two girl-children were among the dead, a rather belated report from the area said.

According to a prima facie assesment of the incident by the Kuchai police, the some villagers

mutual enmity cannot be ruled out as well.

As a matter of fact the police are persuing this line of theory that the mass killing could well be hatched by some interested party with a motive to grab the land of

The police team had to negotiate about 20 km on foot in the hilly terrain to reach Bauguttu village in Relahatu panchayat.

Meanwhile, the deputy inspector general of police (Chotanagpur range) who had

Sohrai Munda and lynched all six members of the family including the family head, Sohrai. They were axed to death by the angry villagers.

The village chowkidar informed the Kuchai police

members of the family were witches. Sohrai Munda's family comprised, his wife, Jatiani, 55,

widowed daughter, Gurubari, 35, young unmarried daughter, Chitu, 22, and two children of Gurubari.



# ओझाओं ने डायन के नाम पर महिला को मैला खिलाया

## अंधविश्वास की बेदी पर पुनः एक महिला के बलिदान की तैयारी

कार्नाटक संसारदाता  
सप्तमकेला, १० अक्टूबर

डायन के नाम पर हुई पाड़िया व बाउपुदू नरसंहार की घटना की मूल अभी धमा भी नहीं है कि गम्हरिया के सामरम गांव की एक महिला की अंधविश्वास के बेदी पर बलि देने की पृष्ठभूमि तैयार हो चुकी है। डायन के नाम पर ओझाओं के निर्देश पर छुटली महतो नामक एक ३७ वर्षीय महिला को न सिर्फ पीटा गया बल्कि मानवाधिकार को ताक पर रखकर सरोजाम उसे जबरदस्ती मानव गम्हरिया थाना में एक प्राथमिकी भी दर्ज करायी गई है।

प्राप्त जानकारी के अनुसार गम्हरिया क्षेत्र के अंतर्गत स्थित सामरम पंचायत के निवासी धनंजय महतो की पत्नी छुटली महतो अपने तीन पुत्र व एक पुत्री के साथ शांति से जीवन गुजार रही थी कि पिछले दिनों हुई उसके एक रिश्तेदार की पुत्री की बीमारी ने उसके जीवन में जहर घोल दिया। प्रताड़ित महिला छुटली महतो के बयान के अनुसार रिश्ते में उसके जेठ की पुत्री लगातार कई दिनों से बीमार चल रही थी एवं ईलाज के पश्चात् भी उसकी स्थिति में सुधार नहीं हुआ। गांव के मानिक नामक कविराज सह ओझा से लड़की के पिता भोजी महतो ने जब अपनी पुत्री की तपियत में सुधार न होने का कारण पूछा तो कविराज ने कथित तौर पर कहा कि लड़की पर जादू-टोना किया गया है, इसलिए दवा से उसका ईलाज

संभव नहीं। मानिक नामक कविराज ने छुटली महतो के अनुसार उस पर डायन होने का सीधा आरोप लगाया। छुटली के अनुसार इस घटना के दौरान हुई बकझक के पश्चात् गांव में एक सभा का आयोजन किया गया एवं भोजी महतो ने उसे डायन साबित करने के लिए विभिन्न जगहों से चार ओझाओं को न्योता दिया। उज्जयलपुर के सुफल माझी व डुडु महतो, नवागढ़ के लेहासी बरजू माझी को भी संयुक्त रूप से साथ महतोईनडीह निवासी बरजू माझी को भी संयुक्त रूप से झाड़ फूंक के लिए बुलाया गया। छुटली ने रोते हुए कहा कि इन ओझाओं ने न जाने क्या किया कि लड़की झुपती हुई आई एवं उसके दरवाजे पर गिर गई। महिला के अनुसार इस घटना को एक सावित्र के तहत अंजाम दिया गया एवं घुवती के दरवाजे पर गिरते ही कथित तौर पर भोजी महतो व मानिक मारो-मारो करकर उसे पीटने लगे। इसी दौरान उन्होंने महिला के मुताबिक उसे पकड़ लिया एवं जबरम उसमें मुंह में मानव मल डाल दिया गया। ज्ञात हो कि क्षेत्र के उध्विश्वासी इसे डायन विद्या नष्ट करने का एक साधन मानते हैं। छुटली के मुताबिक वह रोती चिल्लाती रही पर उसे बराने के लिए कोई सामने नहीं आया। इस घटना के पश्चात् उक्त महिला थाना न जाकर सबसे पहले अपने एक-दो श्रृणुधियों को कहने पर विधायक चंपाई सोरेन के घर गई। विधायक ने उसे दूसरे दिन आने का वादा किया परंतु आने में उन्हें विलंब होने पर महिला ने गम्हरिया थाना में एक नामजद प्राथमिकी दर्ज

करायी। इस घटना के पश्चात् सरायकेला के विधायक चंपाई सोरेन सोमरम गांव पहुंचे एवं पुलिस के भी घटनास्थल पर पहुंचने के कारण उन्होंने इस मामले में हस्तक्षेप करना उचित नहीं समझा। महिला ने यह भी बताया कि दरवाजे पर पहुंचकर उक्त लड़की ने ठीक होने का दोंग भी रखा। स्वयं पर अत्याचार की कहानी सुनाते-सुनाते महिला रो पड़ी एवं उसने स्वयं प्रश्न किया कि बताइये क्या मैं डायन लगती हूँ? मौके पर मौजूद भाजपा नेता बास्को बेसरा, कांग्रेस सेवा दल लिला अघाहा सोमरम गागराई व सरायकेला बार एसोसिएशन के सचिव के पी डूबे ने घटना की निन्दा करते हुए दोषी व्यक्तियों पर कार्रवाई की मांग की। इन्होंने अलग-अलग जारी बयान में कहा कि लोग अक्सर गरीब व बेसहारा महिलाओं को प्रताड़ित करते या उनकी जमीन-जायदाद हड़पने के लिए उसे डायन की संज्ञा दे देते हैं। इन्होंने प्रशासन से डायन समस्या व डायन के नाम पर हो रही महिलाओं की हत्याओं पर रोक लगाने की मांग की है जबकि प्रताड़ित महिला छुटली ने कहा कि इस घटना के पश्चात् वह गांव में मुंह दिखाने लायक नहीं रही है। उसने कहा कि गांव के कुछ लोग डायन का आरोप लगाकर की कभी भी हत्या कर सकते हैं। जीवन से उन्नत दुकी महिला ने अपने बच्चों को सुरक्षा प्रदान करने की मांग की है। समाचार लिखे जाने तक किसी की गिरफ्तारी नहीं हो सकी है।

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