

Chaiti Ghoda : At the Door of Extinction

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The man was vagrant. The enthusiasm to soil could not indulge him. He wandered forest to forest, hill to hill in search of food or livelihood. But one day he learnt to smell his soil, he dug soil to fulfill his hunger and got trees full of fruits. So he desired to settle permanently. Gradually cities raised their heads. For the maintenance of these cities and also for peaceful life and protection from invasion of alien army, administration was required. King / monarch was the pivot of this administration. The contribution of horse in maintenance of kingdom and as an aid in war would not be avoided. In this regard the role of horses on the page of ethics and history can be found after this findings and one must say horse is the symbol of bravery.

As a memory of this braveness/bravery, Chaiti Ghodanata took a special place in Odisha folk culture.

In the grassroot of creation of drama if 'Veerpuja' is admitted, the clear information about the antiquity can be found out. The main object of 'Veerpuja' was : pursuing the life of brave persons, their ideals should have been accepted by all for the welfare of the society or nation. According to the views of 'Dr. Ridge way' the creation of drama is possible only through the life history of the dead great brave persons (Heroes). In this regard, the contribution of the Heroes, 'the



horse' is also acceptable. So on the root of creation of drama, though the contribution of horse in negligible or indirectly yet it is not worthless.

The applicability of 'Katha Ghoda' is also there in our tale of folk. An unusual incident or character has been described in between the word 'Katha Ghoda - Pani Piee'. But in the field of Odia Folk Drama, there is a tradition of celebrating a special function basing on this 'Katha Ghoda'. In 'Nakai', a folk drama of Uttar Pradesh, a comedian gets an entry on the stage sitting on the back of 'Ghoda' and he causes other to hear comics about his favourite horse.

In Odisha 'Ghoda Nata' is a traditional festival of Kaibarta. Being it begins with full moon day of month of Chaitra, is known as 'Chaiti

Ghoda Nata'. The Kaibartas are busy involving in the drama till the eighth day from full moon day of 'Chaitra Masa'. Getting their horses danced, singing songs along the village wide road, they used to collect money and clothes etc. In some places, there were gathering of several parties of 'Ghodanata'. Chudamani, within jurisdiction of Basudevapur police station of Balasore district and Goramati nearer to Bhadrak are the places where gathering of parties of Ghodanata is very common as a tradition. A horse from the 'Bindhya Mountain' was got hold to Vyasadeva, the son of Parasa and Yojanagandha the daughter of Kaibarta as he was willing to play with the horse. From that day the horse became a domestic animal. For its memory, this is a imagination of this Ghodanata.

There is another legend/saying of using the Ghodanata in the interior area of Odisha. Lord Shri Ramachandra had presented a Ghoda, being satisfied with their behaviour for the fisherman helped him cross the 'Saraju river' at the time of travelling to the forest. The horse was at their hand from that day and for keeping that day memorable, after worshipping the Ghoda, the Ghodanata is held on the full moon month of Chaitra.

'Kaibarta Geeta' book of Achyutananda Das, a poet of the age of five saints, is a famous religious epics in the part of the fisherman.

The creation of this Ghoda is mentioned in this book. Lord was sleeping in the leaf of Banyan tree at the time of destruction.

He is named Kaibarta as he took birth from the root of the ear of Lord.

One day a trout fish swallowed Dasraj in the state of his sleeping. Tearing the belly of trout fish, Lord rescued Dasraj by virtue of his meditation / Yoga. So, Dasraj and his descendants make fishing and make their livelihood. Chaitra festival is an auspicious day / festival for every Kaibarta society.

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