



Research Article

Unified Mythology Followed by A Group of People from Jhargram: A Critical Study of Santali Mythology

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Abstract

Jhargram, a newly declared district town in the lap of the Indian state of West Bengal, has many times been found to have interested its visitors with many things. The population in it is one of those interesting factors that are of various races, various language families, various ethnic groups, and various mythologies. In this big population, the Santal community is inseparable, which confuses many people by the duality found in its mythology because it combines the tastes of both polytheism and monotheism. This present paper aims to get the readers aware of this sort of confusion prevalent on the lap of this small and beautiful town.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Santal community has a pretty deep relationship with the language, literature, and culture found in this small town. The mythology, followed by this Santal community, sometimes looks like the mythology of a polytheistic religion and sometimes looks like the mythology of a monotheistic religion. A cursory study on the mythology followed by this Santali community will surely confuse the readers in determining the type of mythology followed at Jhargram.

Analysis

A study on the various factors in the life of the people from Jhargram remains incomplete if the mythology followed by many of its people is somehow missed. Like the other facts, mythology in this area has a deep and inseparable relation with the history, literature, language, and culture of this area. Mythologies followed in this area are more than one in number. Among all those mythologies, Santali mythology is pretty

remarkable, which is followed by a group of people living here. One of the interesting facts of this mythology is the fact of unification, as the tastes of both monotheism and polytheism are combined in it, which results in a big confusion to determine the specific type of mythology they actually follow.

Monotheism in Santali mythology

The things reaching our minds, after hearing about monotheism, are the existence of only one deity and the existence of only one prophet. Having a look at the mythologies around the world, one reader will definitely get to know about some of the great monotheisms like Zoroastrianism and some of the great monotheisms of the Abrahamic religion, i.e., Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and the tendency of worshiping only one deity that is in all of these. In Zoroastrianism, the deity is "Ahura Mazdā". In Judaism and Christianity, the deity is "Yahweh". In Islam, the deity is "Allah". The followers of these religions are generally found to be of the strict opinion that God is the creator who has created everything one by one. According to them, God is the only entity that is the "everything" in miniature, and worshiping God means worshipping all.

- Having a look on the mythology followed by the Santals, one will find the tendency of following supreme God who is "Thakur jiu", "a Sanskritized term used for the name of the Supreme God in Santal traditional belief" and the "word 'Thakur' means Baba (Father) and Malik (owner of everything), Maran Isor (High God), who is worthy to be worshiped, and 'jiu' means supernatural spirit of God with the personalities of omnipresence and omniscience". "The etymology of the name 'Thakur jiu' does not represent the idea for polytheism nor Animism, but they express the Santals' attempt to present their God in language known to them". Like Christianity, the 'Thakur jiu' is, thereby, the creator who is omnipresent and omniscient. In the story of the creation in Santali books, the supreme power of this "Thakur jiu" is prominently seen. He has played an enormous role in the process of creation on the earth that was earlier nothing but a big rock.

Apart from this, the followers of these religions believe in the concept of the first couple, the forefather and foremother of the human race. In Christianity, the concept is prominently projected. 'Adam' and 'Eve' are believed to be the couple who came into being many years back and led to the creation of the human race on Earth.

- The concept of the first couple is in Santali mythology too. The 'Adam' and 'Eve' are here in the form of "Pilchuharam" and "Pilchuburi", the first male and the first female in the life of Earth. They came into being in a bit different way, which is a part of the story of the creation of life in the world. As the tale says, "Jaher Buhri", the companion of "Thakur jiu", once lacked the water for a bath. The germs of her body were so huge in quantity that a statue of a bird could easily be made of them. She then made a male bird and a female bird and coloured them with red coloured 'sindur', black coloured 'kajol', and

white coloured dust made of the 'sakha'. "Thakur jiu" and "Jaher Buhri" then gave it the vital force, and they became living beings named "Da Chere". They laid an egg, and from that egg, one male human creature named "Pilchuharam" and a female human creature named "Pilchuburi" were born. They were the first male and female created by God, who remind us of the similar concept found in Christianity.

The concept of only one prophet is pretty inseparable in monotheistic religions. This prophet works in circulating the message of God and, thus, promoting it. He is one human being with a superpower. Utilizing his superpower, he does many things in favour of life on Earth. In Zoroastrianism, the prophet is "Zoroaster". In Christianity, the prophet is "Jesus Christ". In Islam, the prophet is "Mohammad". A similar thing is found prominently in the mythology followed by the Santals.

- The concept of a prophet is also prominent in Santal mythology. They find "Marang Buru" as the prophet of this religion, who is not a living being and invisible, and who worked in the story of the creation of life on Earth. According to the story of creation, "Marang Buru" supervised an Earthworm to lift the soil upwards to create land on the water. Along with that earthworm, some other creature sorts of things worked in lifting the soil, which were pretty much obedient, i.e., "Magar", "Putimach", "Crocodile", "Lobster", "Boalfish".

Beside these, monotheism like Zoroastrianism has one interesting fact regarding the seven angels who are called 'Yazata' and who are the "member of an order of angels created by 'Ahura Mazdā' to help him maintain the flow of the world order and quell the forces of Ahriman and his demons. They gather the light of the Sun and pour it on the Earth". A cursory study of Zoroastrianism tells a lot about the fact of the seven angels.

- A bit similar thing is found in Santali mythology, as the couple of offspring of "Pilchuharam" and "Pilchuburi", the first male and female creatures of the earth, were seven in number. They started breeding geometrically, and thus, the process of creation that was started by God had a fresh go.

Thus, the above paragraphs get the readers pretty much aware of how the tastes of monotheism are pretty dominant in the mythology followed by the Santals, a part of the people living at Jhargram. Be the prophet visible, be it invisible, it finely reminds the readers of the concept of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Zoroastrianism regarding the fact of the existence of a prophet in monotheism.

Polytheism in Santali mythology

One of the things that reaches our mind, after hearing about polytheism, is the tendency of worshiping many Gods and Goddesses who are responsible for various objects of nature, just like a political parliament is made up of various ministers, responsible for various departments of a government. Some of the polytheistic mythologies in the world are Greek, Teutonic or Germanic, Roman, Hindu, and Norse. The tendency of

“worshipping nature” is another fact of many of the polytheistic religions across the globe.

- As the followers of those mythologies mentioned above, the followers of the Santali mythology worship the Sun, a natural object. As the sun is worshiped in Greek mythology, Teutonic or Germanic mythology, Roman mythology, Hindu mythology, Norse mythology, respectively, as “Helios”, “Sól”, “Sol”, “Surya”, “Sol”, in Santali mythology, he is worshiped as “Sing Bonga”. Sing means the sun, which produces heat that was pretty necessary, along with water, air, to start the big process of creation by “Thakur jiu”, the supreme God or the creator.
- As the water is worshiped in Greek mythology, Teutonic or Germanic mythology, Roman mythology, Hindu mythology, Norse mythology, respectively, as “Posaidon”, “Ægir”, “Neptune”, “Varuna”, “Rán”, in Santal mythology she is worshiped as “Gongamoni” and “Podmamoni”.
- Of all other natural objects, trees are worshiped in this mythology with a big significance. As the mythology unfolds, the story of creation makes the readers aware of the big significance of “Sal Tree” and “Mohul Tree” in this mythology. According to that, the earth had once started to be crowded by both moral humans and immoral humans who were the descendants of seven couples of kids, born on the lap of “Pilchuharam” and “Pilchuburi”. “Marang Buru” had been assigned to take care of the kids of “Pilchuharam” and “Pilchuburi” initially, but when those immoral humans started to create problems, he abandoned the company of those descendants. The moral humans, on the way to find “Marang Buru” and to bring him back, started meditating. Once the meditation is completed, they shoot an arrow, thinking that this arrow will fall on that specific place where “Marang Buru” lives. Finally, that arrow was found under a “Saal Tree”. Since that time, they started worshipping the “Saal Tree” and “Mohul Tree”.
- Trees, sort of things like grass, another natural object, are also worshiped in this mythology, and they also have significance. In the process of creation, the seeds of this grass-like creature were carried through the mouth of some of them who came downwards, as per the instruction of “Marang Buru”, in search of water once upon a time. These seeds gave birth to “Korom” and “Sirom,” who are still worshiped.

Thus, the readers get to know about the taste of polytheism, dominant in this mythology, followed by the Santals, a group of people on the lap of this beautiful town. The charming unification has, thereby, been finely portrayed.

CONCLUSION

The story of these interesting facts found at Jhargram, this way, is pretty exciting. This peaceful town is, thereby, obviously a big and charming storehouse of many interesting facts that are found to owe much of their fulfillment to the accompaniment of the fact of unification found in Santal mythology. The Study on the various factors of this place remains incomplete if the mythology, that followed by the Santali community of this

place, is somehow not studied. In the same way, the study of the Santali mythology remains incomplete if the fact of the unification in the Santali mythology is missed. Besides interesting the readers and viewers, this unification leads to confusion in determining the actual type of this mythology. The followers of both polytheism and monotheism will find this area home to them, as the tastes of both polytheism and monotheism are prominent here.

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