

**Complimentary disciplines and their significance in India- Oral traditions,
folklore and archaeology.**

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Abstract-

The paper is an attempt towards understanding the importance of the disciplines of folklore and culture studies, especially those pertaining to the oral tradition which forms an important part of the intangible heritage of man and his environment and the discipline of archaeology in India. Both are complimentary disciplines and needs to be studied for a holistic understanding of the term culture and folk traditions in a society. The paper traces a brief background of both the disciplines of folklore studies as well as archaeology as it developed in the sub-continent and thereby attempts to highlight the need to perceive and understand both. A cumulative study is an imperative necessity in the recent global world where the term 'culture' denotes a much wider definition than was connoted decades ago as part of the civilisation of man.

Key words-

folklore studies, archaeology, tradition, supplementary studies

Main paper-

“If you take myth and folklore, and these things that speak in symbols, they can be interpreted in so many ways that although the actual image is clear enough, the interpretation is infinitely blurred, a sort of enormous rainbow of every possible colour you could imagine”- Diana Wynne Jones- British author (16 August 1934 – 26 March 2011- famous for her writings on fantasy novels for children and adults). As it explains the various reflections of folklore, it goes deeper to explain the myriad hues of expression of folklore across the globe. As regions evolve through time and across various modes of habitation- ranging from pastoralism, agriculture as well as agro-pastoralism, there remains a vast majority of disciplines outside the commonly known realm to be explored- about communities who still survive on hunting and gathering, those who move around from place to place in search of food, still others who maintain and practice various types and forms of food-growing, gathering and procuring habits, including slash and burn methods or the jhum (shifting cultivation in India). With varied ways and methods of livelihood accommodation, as regions differ, so does language and ways of communication, dress code or costumes and various thoughts and beliefs, rites and rituals which goes to express the intrinsic ethos of every socio-cultural, religious and political phenomenon. In the process of the development of culture, human civilisation leaves behind its mark on the canvas of time. As each new habit and habitation entails their very intrinsic ways of expression, the discipline of folklore and folk culture is further woven into the fabric of society and its culture and religion. Thus, the very essence of folklore forms the base of the intangible heritage of the history of man and his environment. With the Indian sub-continent, having its plethora of sub-cultures, regions, religions and communities, the nation presents an intricate body of expression in the form of folklore and folk traditions, including arts, lore, dances, music and songs. As much part of the intangible heritage is interlaced within the story of the development of Indian culture, the discipline also refers to the sister-disciplines of social sciences for a holistic understanding of the subject. Thus, as history and its various channels of expression, including archaeology aid the process of understanding the tangible heritage of civilization, it also supplements and aids the process of appreciating the vital role of the intangible heritage. Thus, folk tradition and its

development and growth down the ages have aided variously in understanding the different paraphernalia's of history and her sister disciplines of anthropology and archaeology. Taken the two disciplines together, it renders an important perspective in understanding the gradual development of man down the path of history. This paper is an attempt in the direction towards understanding the significant part of archaeology in constructing and understanding oral tradition- why is there a need and how it can be complimented through research. Though it is a humongous task to highlight the entire nation within a single paper, but this attempt helps to focus upon few significant approaches on the need to study oral traditions, which has, in the past aided various comparative areas of research work pertaining to the sister disciplines of history and archaeology. The paper attempts to extend a discussion on the need to associate the two disciplines of folklore and archaeology and how they supplement and complement each other towards a better understanding of man and his environment.

Introducing concepts of folklore studies and archaeology in India-

Both the disciplines of folklore and archaeology began as part of the study of Indology in India under the initiative of the British during the colonial period. Forming an important part of the parent discipline- "Indology, the sub-disciplines of culture studies, Sanskrit and ethnography formed important branches and folklore, especially the written materials or the 'frozen' variety formed an important part of this branch of knowledge." (Handoo: 1987). Though various attempts have been made to further the research of the gradual development of folklore studies in India, very little has been made towards the direction of imparting a holistic approach towards the discipline. Thus, little and scattered evidences are prominent from various parts of India, which gives important information about the local development of studies in various regions pertaining to folklore. Archaeology, on the other hand has a more well-recognised beginning in the colonial era, dating back to more than 400 years ago. On the other hand, though extensive work has been done throughout in various parts of the nation, especially after Indian independence, yet very little remains to be imparting a complimentary approach towards the discipline of folklore and oral traditions. Some significant works in recent times have highlighted the importance of ethnography and

ethnoarchaeology, however, the references are more towards the tangible heritages of folk tradition, including manuscripts, musical instruments, huts and other settlements, etc.

Oral traditions and folklore- important contributions down the path of history in India-

With varied regions across the nation offering their intrinsic ways of life, the culture of India reverberates with a multitude echo of customs and traditions- preserved in the various vernacular languages of the nation. Thus, is woven the art of storytelling within the cultural mosaic of the nation. With various recent publications highlighting important and significant aspects of folktales from across the nation, they also help to keep an age-old tradition alive- the messages conveyed through the art of storytelling. Significantly, it should also be mentioned here that the practice of storytelling in India can primarily be divided into two broad categories. In further explaining this, one can refer to the help from the *akam* (meaning inside) and *puram* (meaning outside) traditions of Tamil literature- where the *akam* tradition signifies the stories retold within the household and the *puram* tradition signifies those recited and narrated outside the household and in various public places. Almost all oral traditions all across India occupies these two patterns. Thus, there is an element of the stories which is famous and handed down through generations within households, while on the other hand, there is a section of stories, which are famous for being retold in public places. This latter is often retold with the help of various props, e.g. the *patachitra* traditions of West Bengal or shadow puppetry using leather puppets as part of the tradition of Kerala- *Tholpavakoothu* or even the *Bhopa* storytelling tradition in front of a tapestry in Rajasthan. In all of these instances, the stories are represented through oral epics- depicting the characters of the stories and these often function as a portable temple. The characters can be historical incidents or stories from mythologies as well- and mostly refer to the victory stories and ballads of local princes and kings as well as local deities who act as the protector of various villages. Often the riddles and ballads refer to the use of animal characters which serve as moral lessons towards the listeners. And alongside the wide range of people telling stories with the help of

props, it is also important to mention about the large number of storytellers across the nation- whose profession was specifically to tell stories. Thus, mention may be made of the *kathaks* of Bengal- whose recitations used to be referred to as *kathakatha*. As the tradition of *kathaks* is almost a dying art, some specialised narrators are still seen thronging the banks of the *ghats* of Benaras. Often well-travelled people, these storytellers used to be paid for their services and thus, were often also hired by *zamindars* or local kings and ministers on auspicious occasions or even otherwise- to tell stories of mythological characters as well as various incidents which they have encountered in the various lands that they have visited.

On the other hand, the other aspect of storytelling speaks of narration within interiors or home and other areas where the listener and narrator are directly displaced away from a public gathering and hearing. This form of storytelling in India occupies the narration and subsequent passing of the tradition to the following generations. In this procedure, the stories are handed down from predecessors in the form of parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts. Mostly retold for the amusement of young children, the ideas and themes of the stories often include fictitious characters from mythology or otherwise. The stories are shorter in comparison to the other ones which are recited to a wider public. The use of language, repertoire, pitch and body expressions changes from the former as well- to suit the likes of a young child. Thus, as stories from *Panchatantra*, *Jataka tales* or the *Puranas* are repeated, quite like the former process of storytelling in public places, they also weave various stories from local oral tradition or simple stories woven with fictitious and imaginary characters by the narrators.

Important work has been contributed towards understanding folklore and its various channels of expression by certain dignitaries in Bengal over the last one hundred years in India, including Gurusaday Dutta, Rabindranath Tagore, Abanindranath Tagore, Dineshchandra Sen, Dhakshinaranjan Mitra Majumdar, amidst others, the last four decades have also witnessed various other folklorists across the nation contributing substantially towards the understanding of folklore and storytelling in India, e.g. Devendra Satyarthi, Durga Bhagwat, Krishna Dev Upadhyaya, Prafulla Dutta Goswami, Kunja Bihari Dash, Ashutosh Bhattacharya and many others. And to this was added the work of several recent Indian scholars as well, including- M. D. Muthukumaraswamy, Vivek Rai, Jawaharlal Handoo,

Birendranath Dutta, P. C. Pattanaik, B. Reddy, Sadhana Naithani, P Subachary, Molly Kaushal, Shyam Sundar Mahapatra, Dr Bhabagrahi Mishra, Jyotindra Jain and others. It is also important to note that towards the 1970's the significant approach and teaching of folklorists, trained from various universities in USA and Europe and adept with modern theories and methods of folklore research, set a new trend of the study of folklore in India- including important scholars like Gunther D. Sontheimer, Clinton Seely, Arjun Appadurai, A.K. Ramanujan, Frank Korom amidst others. Mention should also be made of Finnish folklorist Lauri Onko and Peter J. Claus- an American folklorist- whose important field work on Siri and Tulu epics also led the path towards the understanding of new folklore studies in India. Over the years, various institutes have also been established across India- whose contributions substantially helped the discipline of folklore and folk culture studies, including The Central Institute of Indian Languages, the National Folklore Support Centre or Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, amidst others. Also, it should be mentioned that since the nation with its wide range of socio-cultural diversities and several traditions, customs, rites and rituals- there are hundreds of others who contribute through their diligent efforts of gathering information or helping various folk artists and dying arts and traditions to survive the test of time – of whom many work away from the limelight and this paper also agrees that until and unless an exhaustive work is undertaken dividing the entire region into various divisions- it becomes an impossible task to highlight the significant approaches of different culture and studies pertaining to them. This kind of study is also an imperative necessity in modern times of globalisation as culture does not remain constant and narrates an evergreen story of changes and varied expressions.

Archaeology- important contributions down the path of history in India-

The history of archaeology in India began more than four centuries ago with “First European notices of the living temples and ancient monuments of India are found in the reports of travellers and sailors in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and the first half of the eighteenth centuries. These notices relate primarily to west and south India.” (Chakrabarti, 1982). Thus, began the efforts of several European travellers, including the British and Portuguese with principally two different types of monuments being dealt with at this time- the rock-cut caves

of Western India and the temples of South India. With the primary efforts being those of principally the sailors, thus, the regions of exploration were also limited to the coasts and associated borderlines of the nation. Still later, gradually the investigation started spreading towards the interiors under the initiative of various British administrative officers who were posted at various parts of the nation. Several of these works started influencing various Indians later on to take up different studies to explore their identities better and to understand the historical development of their past, however, the main initiative to understand the past about India's archaeology began after the independence of India through attempts of understanding the socio-cultural ethos of the nation and the gradual development of its history.

Amidst the most important early records stand the temples of south India with the records of John Huighen van Linschoten in the late sixteenth century and Pietro della Valle in the early seventeenth century. As the former (Linschoten -1905) was "unhappy about 'pagodes, cut and formed most ugly'" Valle (1664) was detailed, objective and supplemented his descriptions with detailed ground plans of south Indian temples. And among the rock-cut caves, the important ones which were noticed were the rock-cut caves of Deccan- e.g. Elephanta, Kanheri and Ellora (anon. 1785; Sen 1949). With some detailed descriptions at times, the writings did not include historical references, "except occasional references to Alexander." (Chakrabarti, 1982). Apart from these, gradually other parts of the coasts started to be explored as well, including important landmarks like- the Orissan coast and the Jagannath temple of Puri (the White Pagoda) and the sun temple of Konarak (the Black Pagoda), were also recorded during this period (D. Mitra 1968).

Thus, started a journey through centuries and through the efforts of various British administrative officers. Mention may be made of the period starting from the middle of 18th century onwards with the efforts of various important persons in the disciplines, primarily concerning the historical geography of the country, e.g. 1758 Anquetil du Perron (anon. 1785) was interested in the precise measurements and plans of the Ellora rock-cut complex and its associated mythology. About 1760 he investigated Elephanta and Kanheri. Carsten Niebuhr's visits to Elephanta, was also important as he made drawing of some of the most important architectures of India (anon. 1785). "In both du Perron and Niebuhr one detects a

positive awareness of India as an area of historical and archaeological research. Niebuhr wrote: 'One still finds among the Indians, one of the oldest nations of the world, so many valuable remains of antiquity, which deserve more attention from the literati of Europe, than has been hitherto bestowed on them' (anon. 1785)"(Chakrabarti, 1982). What followed soon was decades of various explorations that concentrated upon Indian historical geography, e.g. M. D'Anville (1753, 1775), whose work involved in identifying antique sources mentioned in old literature, e.g. Palibothra of the Classical sources which refers to Pataliputra. Other contributions included that of Joseph Tieffenthaler, du Perron and James Rennell (1786-88). Finally, with the establishment of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta on January 15, 1784, under the initiative of William Jones, the first opportunity for Asian researchers was published in 1788 and a museum was established in 1814. "The aim of the Society was 'to inquire into the history and antiquities, the arts, sciences and literature of Asia'. Three historical factors explain the success of this society. First, it was increasingly clear that the early British role of the trader would be replaced by that of a territorial ruler, and the time was ripe for a systematic investigation of the country. Second, as Poliakov (1974: 183-88) has shown, in their attempt to free themselves from Judaeo-Christian thought, Western philosophical thinking, particularly that of the French Encyclopaedists, turned to India for the origin of culture and religion. This attitude is well reflected in the writings of Voltaire, who was 'convinced that everything has come to us from the banks of the Ganges, astronomy, astrology, metempsychosis, etc.' (Poliakov 1974: 185). This particular image of India exerted considerable influence on German Romanticism (Wilson 1964). Third, the closing years of the eighteenth century witnessed the growth of many literary and philosophic societies in Britain (Plumb 1966: 167):" (Chakrabarti:*Ibid*) and it is also important to understand that "the foundation of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta was entirely in keeping with the scientific spirit of late eighteenth century Britain... and the point which must be stressed is that William Jones (of later times) and many of his contemporaries were not interested in accurately observing and reporting on Indian antiquities and monuments. For them, the basic problem was to integrate the emerging historical knowledge of India with contemporary notions concerning the origin of culture and civilization and within the framework of the unitary origin of man as laid down in the Bible. These provided a significant frame work for interpreting the Indian past. Jones's linguistic hypothesis linking Sanskrit to Greek, Latin and

other languages, is only a part of this interpretive framework evolved in the context of pre-evolutionary thinking.” (*Ibid*) It is also important to understand that the discipline of archaeology also undertook explanations of looking into migrations of people from various parts of the world and “From the middle of the nineteenth century, however, an entirely contradictory hypothesis was generally promoted- India was at the receiving end of various cultural influences and migrations of people emanating from regions further west. Whether this reversal of opinion had something to do with the establishment of the Raj in the post-Mutiny period is, of course, difficult to determine, but the coincidence is too clear to be overlooked.” (Chakrabarti:1976).

Thus, the story of archaeology continued in India, with various emphasis from different British civil servants and mention may be made of Colonel Colin Mackenzie- whose carefully crafted drawings and sketched of over ‘2,000 measured drawings of antiquities, carefully drawn to scale, besides facsimiles of 100 inscriptions, with copies of 8,000 others in 77 volumes’ (Imam 1966: 17) and also Francis Buchanan, (whose south Indian surveys were published in 1807) and James Prinsep (the period beginning of 1830) and wrote for the Asiatic Society-. ‘What the learned world demands of us in India is to be quite certain of our data, to place the monumental record before them exactly as it now exists, and to interpret it faithfully and literally’ (1838). And the period also saw the significant growth of deciphering Indian script where Prinsep himself played the key role.ⁱ With the help of understanding Brahmi and Kharosti scripts, also started the work of understanding ancient Indian numismatics and one of the most important numismatist of the time was James Tod- soon joined by James Prinsep among others (Imam 1966: 17). The work concentrated upon the north-west and the north Indian plain and south India (with the digging of megaliths). With the several studies of many Buddhist stupas that followed in due course of time, mention may be made of Alexander Cunningham (1843), who gave ‘an account of the discovery of the ruins of the Buddhist city of Samkassa’ or Sankisa.ⁱⁱ

With the various studies of ancient sites, by the middle of 19th century, the knowledge about the rich history of the nation was brought to light with a clear understanding. Cunningham tried to ‘justify the systematic archaeological exploration of India on the grounds that politically it would help the British to rule India and lead to an easier acceptance of

Christianity in the country. As the head of the newly constituted Archaeological Survey in 1861, Cunningham himself initiated the explorations he proposed, but it must be understood that by the middle of the nineteenth century the basic nature of the monuments and historical sites in India was well understood. It is worthwhile to recall that around this time the study of Indian architecture took a systematic shape. The primary credit here goes to James Fergusson, who undertook an architectural survey between 1834 and 1845 and arranged the Indian architectural remains in an evolutionary order on the basis of his analysis of structural features (Allchin 1961)” (after *Ibid*). Soon, the journal- Indian Antiquary was started by James Burgess- which was famous for its detailed inscriptional and other historical studies. The emphasis was put on architecture and structure and their relation to history. Soon, the discipline of field archaeology started to be highlighted under John Marshall in 1902’s- as the head of Archaeological Survey of India, who was directly involved in forming the course of Indian archaeology until 1928 and “Under Marshall the Archaeological Survey of India became the largest single organisation of its kind in the history of archaeological research and witnessed its most glorious and 'imperial' period” (Chakrabarti, *Ibid*). Later followed the excavations of Aurel Stein in Baluchistan, of N. G. Majumdar in Sind, and the excavations at Taxila- with some of the historical sites along the Gangetic valley and also mention should be made of the contributions of Indian scholars at this time, including Ram Raj, Bhagawanlal Indraji and Rajendralal Mitra- with making their marks felt in the study of Indology in the nineteenth century- “making archaeology as an important discipline in Indian academic thinking” (*Ibid*). Though, the period also saw the work of Mortimer Wheeler, the severe financial cuts imposed by the Government of India in the 1930s did not help archaeology in the post-Marshall period. The works of noted archaeologist- Wheeler and geologist- Robert Bruce Foote of the Geological Survey of India (credited with first identifying the Palaeolithic implement in India (a handaxe) in a gravel pit at Pallavaram near Madras). Foote's subsequent explorations helped to shape the area of prehistory, thus exploring places like- Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat- with each being paleolithic tool bearing sites. Still later, many others helped to study prehistory sites and tools in India, including L. A. Cammiade (1930) and M. C. Burkitt (1930)- along the Eastern Ghats which fringe the Andhra coast. The systematic studies also helped to label the various modes of culture levels, including- Lower Palaeolithic, Middle Palaeolithic, Upper Palaeolithic and

microlithic industries and also along with these studies, developed a need to understand the climatic conditions that favoured the development of these. The following decades witnessed the various explorations on geological perspectives at various places of the nation, including Kashmir, Gujarat, Orissa, under the able guidance of various scholars, including N. K. Bose and D. Sen of Calcutta University (1939-1942) and H.D. Sankalia.ⁱⁱⁱ As the brilliant contribution of Sir Mortimer Wheeler continued, several Indian universities also started getting interested in the work of pre-history in India. However, after the partition of India- a new chapter opened in Indian archaeology- with different archaeological practices being held in Indian, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri-Lanka and Nepal and the “the number of basic discoveries since 1947 is surely impressive. These discoveries belong to all phases of the archaeological sequence beginning with the Lower Palaeolithic. Most areas have been well surveyed, yielding thousands of sites from all periods. The most important beneficiary has been prehistoric and protohistoric research. In the field of prehistory there is hardly any area outside the Indo-Gangetic alluvium that has not revealed its own prehistoric succession. As far as protohistory is concerned, the results are even more complete. The distribution of the Indus civilization sites has been satisfactorily worked out both in India and Pakistan, revealing an extent and complexity that was not imagined before. The background of the Indus civilization is now well understood.” (*Ibid*). With an increasing number of archaeological journals and publications including, monographs, reports and miscellaneous journals- the various works are further highlighted and the process continues.^{iv}

Folklore, oral traditions and archaeology-

The discipline of archaeology started to develop in India as an “adjunct to ancient historical studies” (Chakrabarti: *Ibid*) and in pre-independence days, the primary impetus was on historical materials that would help to “highlight the Indian literate civilisation” (*Ibid*). Several Indian universities started getting inspired to take up the work. Significant also to mention is the main theme that also ran under the exploration- the process of influences of various other cultures from outside the nation who came and settled in India. Thus, the

emphasis started to be focussed upon the study of tradition, culture groups- as, which D.K. Chakrabarti mentions as 'descriptive-historical'- "the piecing together of various pieces of information about these cultures and their integration in general descriptive terms." However, this procedure is also not short of its minus points as Chakrabarti (*Ibid*) further added- "One of the reasons why archaeology in the sub-continent still fights shy of the rigours of modern scientific planning and analysis is that the current approach, rooted in ancient Indian historical studies, does not demand any rigorous scientific planning and analysis (Agrawal and Chakrabarti 1979)."

However, though the discipline of folklore and the study of oral traditions in India is a recent one, but the very inception of the understanding can be traced back to the words of Alexander Cunningham as he proposed in his Memorandum of Instructions to his assistants written in 1871- (1873): 'Archaeology is not limited to broken sculptures, old buildings and mounds of ruins, but includes everything that belonged to the world's history . . . our researches should be extended to all ancient remains whatever that will help to illustrate the manners and customs of former times'. (after Chakrabarti, *Ibid*) and one of his biggest inspirations was following the footsteps of Chinese pilgrims to the region- Fa xian and Xuan zang. Both these hypotheses have one thing in common: emphasis placed on movements of people as an explanation of historical change. In the historical studies on ancient India this explanation, which is rooted in pre-evolutionary thought-patterns, has served as the cornerstone of almost all historical explanations. It is also forgotten that the linguistic hypothesis of William Jones, which gave rise to the Aryan hypothesis, is part of the paradigm of pre-evolutionary Universal History.^v

With various thinkers and educationists experimenting different genres of Indology, the field of understanding expanded considerably. Here, mention should also be made of D.D. Kosambi, whose works towards understanding Indology helped to gather information regarding original discoveries of megaliths, microliths, rustic superstition and peasant customs. He also made impressive use of scientific methods in the fields of archaeology, ethnography and philology. His masterly analysis is logically consistent and profoundly stimulating. The conclusions are often startling, but always convincing and undeniably important as a landmark in the study of Indian tradition. And with reference to Kosambi, it is

also important to add that according to historian Irfan Habib- "D. D. Kosambi and R. S. Sharma and Daniel Thorner brought peasants into the study of Indian history for the first time."^{vi} Thus, what started as Indology, with the expertise and aid of various leading thinkers helped to shape and re-mould the aesthetics pertaining to the study of folk traditions and archaeology. And hence, as can be understood from the above discussion pertaining to the disciplines of folk culture and archaeology in India- the disciplines evolved as the attempts of understanding various facets of human socio-cultural history. What started as the understanding of the rich historical tradition of India's past percolated down to the study of architecture and geology-analysing the development of specific patterns of architecture and habitation. Still, in later times, the need to understand the ethnography of various places helped to render the discipline of archaeology the aspect of ethnography- with the remarkable efforts of stalwarts like V.N. Mishra, Late Malti Nagar, Rajguru, D.K. Bhattacharya, Dilip Chakrabarti and others. As the important aspects of peasants and the habitation of common man came to be understood, the disciplines of folk culture studies further received an incentive towards the right direction. The impetus was felt to understand the present ethnographic situations and study the important roles and functions of modern day tribes and their ways and methods of living. Such an approach brought the discipline of archaeology closer to folk studies, however, the discipline of ethnoarchaeology remained quite distinct within its periphery, but it is also an imperative necessity to understand the need for exploring the various facets of folk traditions across the nation to help in 'piecing together the past'- as mentioned by Dr. K. Paddayya- the ex-director of Deccan College Post-graduate and Research Institute, Pune. Thus, the paper also proposes that instead of perceiving the discipline of folk culture and oral tradition as a separate subject, it is important to view it as part of the whole for a proper understanding of the topic. Though, over the past three decades, the discipline of folk culture and studies has evolved as a separate discipline in India, yet, it is also important to understand that it existed as part of the bigger picture all through the study of human history, which can be understood from the above discussion. The aspect of folk culture was there when the first Buddhist caves were discovered and it was still there to reckon with when Alexander Cunningham went on his various journey across the dense jungles of West Bengal in search of mapping the topography of the region and the historical ruins. Without a knowledge of the locals, it would have been impossible to

understand the significance of the historical ruins in the first place. Thus, as stories from the locals helped to gather information about ‘old monuments’, ‘mounds that often yield different types of stones’ and caves that have ‘various designs and pictures drawn on their walls’- it might have been difficult to gather information about the detailed topography as far as the history of various interior parts of the nation goes. This is even true in present times, as various teams of workers, helping in various archaeological excavations and sites often relate to stories of how specific ‘mound’ outside their village peripheries often help to yield bones and ‘strange looking objects’ which they collect and use as household materials, including lamps, querns and pestles or doorsteps or decorations for staircases or steps leading to their houses. Thus, though folk culture studies might not have been marked as separate and distinct fields to study, but the basis of information that the discipline delivered, always helped to shape thoughts of archaeology as well as history throughout time. Hence, it is also important to mention that the discipline of the study of folklore and oral traditions should not be looked upon not as a subaltern area of research, as the richness of information that one can access through a rigorous field study of the same, can help to gather valuable information pertaining to the basic questions that archaeologists often are confronted with- the processes of migration and the ways of habitation. The paper also adds in its conclusions that there are various other ethnoarchaeologists and anthropologists whose diligent efforts in the disciplines of folk culture studies and archaeology has helped to gather vital information and the author extends a piece of heartfelt thanks for all those whose efforts make the bigger discipline shine as a beacon towards the right direction. There might have even been names of various others which deserve special mention and the author also takes the responsibility of mentioning a note of regret in non-deliberate omission of several of such names related to the study of folklore and archaeology in India. Thus, a proper exhaustive study towards the direction can help to further refurbish the necessary information and add to the plethora of knowledge pertaining to the disciplines of folklore and archaeology studies in India. This can also form a rich source of information for generations to come for referring as an encyclopaedia of information. With various works pertaining to both the fields over the last three decades concentrating upon the disciplines of folklore studies and archaeology in India- new horizons opened up for future research work, especially pertaining to the understanding of the growth

and development of man and his environment down the ages and the efforts to preserve, appreciate and recognise the importance of intangible heritage.

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Notes-

ⁱ "The process of decoding the Brahmi script began in the late eighteenth century with the decipherment of two ninth-tenth-century inscriptions by Charles Wilkins (1788a, b). It culminated in the reading of the Asokan edicts of the third century BC by Prinsep in about 1837 (Prinsep 1838). About the same time Prinsep and others read the Kharosthi script which had been current, principally in the northwest (Sircar 1976)" (from Chakrabarti, 1982)

ⁱⁱ This publication is important because for the first time it lays down the basic methods employed in Cunningham's subsequent surveys (Cunningham 1843). The main guide in this case were the writings of Fa xian, whose travels in India in the fifth century AD provided the basic geographical bearings; all that Cunningham did was to make a topographical survey of the ruins with comments on their probable identification. (*Ibid*)

ⁱⁱⁱ (1949) discovered a rich Lower Palaeolithic industry in Mayurbhanj, Orissa. In 1946 H. D. Sankalia of Deccan College, Poona University, published the results of his prehistoric investigations in Gujarat. (*Ibid*)

^{iv} Mention the following leading annual journals and bulletins: "Pakistan Archaeology (Government of Pakistan), Ancient Pakistan (Peshawar University), Ancient India (Government of India), Indian Archaeology - a Review (Government of India), Ancient Nepal (Government of Nepal), Puratattva - Bulletin of the Indian Archaeological Society and Man and Environment (Indian Society for Prehistoric and Quaternary Studies). On the whole, one tends to agree with Jacobson (1979): 'Today there are few world areas of comparable size where knowledge of the ancient past is growing so rapidly and over so broad a geographical and chronological spectrum'." (*Ibid*)

^v 1784 to 1830 There are at least three records of field discoveries (Davis 1790; Duncan 1798; Babington 1823) and some descriptions of ancient monuments (Chambers 1788; Harrington 1788; Goldingham 1795, 1798; Mallet 1799; Stirling 1825; Alexander 1830) during this period but it deserves attention (*Ibid*)

^{vi} Habib, Irfan (Seventh reprint 2007). *Essays in Indian History*. Tulika. p. 381 (at p 109).
